

Mercy High School
Counseling Department

GOOD NEWS

May 2020



A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

May 2020

Good News

May 2020

THERE'S A TIME FOR KEEPING SILENT 🔇 AND A TIME FOR
SPEAKING UP 🗨️ A TIME FOR DABBLING IN A DREAM 🌙 AND A
TIME FOR WAKING YOURSELF UP 🕒 A TIME FOR WAITING
YOUR TURN ⌚ AND A TIME FOR RUSHING AHEAD ⚡ A TIME
FOR SOAKING UP THE SUN ☀️ AND A TIME FOR STARING AT
THE STARS ✨ A TIME FOR SETTING LIFE ABLAZE 🔥 AND A
TIME FOR FIZZLING THE FLAME 💨 A TIME FOR KEEPING IT
REAL 📄 AND A TIME FOR KEEPING IT TOGETHER 🎀 A TIME
FOR SAYING YES ☑️ AND A TIME FOR LETTING GO 🎈 A TIME
FOR TAKING THE RISK 🎲 AND A TIME FOR TAKING YOUR
TIME 🌀 A TIME FOR PLANTING THE SEEDS 🌱 AND A TIME
FOR HARVESTING THE GARDEN 🍂 A TIME TO BELIEVE IN
FAIRYTALES 🏰 AND A TIME FOR MAKING YOUR OWN MAGIC ✨
A TIME FOR STANDING IN THE STORM 🌩️ AND A TIME FOR
SEEKING SHELTER 🏠 A TIME FOR GOING THROUGH IT 🌊 AND A
TIME FOR GROWING FROM IT 🌱 BE PATIENT @POSITIVELYPRESENT

Important May Dates

May 1st: Deadline for any changes to course requests for the 2020-2021 school year.

May 8th: Last day of school for Seniors.

May 15th: (10:30am) Virtual Coffee with Counseling: an informative session for parents of current juniors via Zoom. (Topics of discussion will be geared toward what we know and what is still unknown, regarding the impact of COVID19 on the college application process.) An email invitation has been sent to Parents of the Class of 2021.

May 22nd: Last day of school for 9th, 10th, & 11th grade students.

****For the Class of 2020**** A Virtual Gift Exchange

Dear Seniors,

You have so many gifts. You are brilliant, outspoken, creative, and kind. Your class includes talented artists, beautiful musicians, incredible athletes, effective leaders, agents of change, hard-working students, and caring friends. Although this school year does not look the way any of us hoped it would, we, Mercy's Staff, are so grateful for one specific gift: having been able to teach, guide, observe, and know the 185 of you in Mercy High School's Class of 2020.

We thank you for sharing your many gifts with us over the last four years. In turn, I asked our staff: "If you could give Mercy's Class of 2020 anything as a graduation gift, what would you give them?"

Please turn the page to virtually unwrap them.

**I WOULD GIFT MERCY'S CLASS OF 2020 WITH A
"SEEING HEART", SO THEY CAN MAKE A TRUE
DIFFERENCE IN THE WORLD.**

-MRS. MALS

**My gift to the
Class of 2020 would
be a one day trip to
any day in your
future so you can see
all of your hard work
paid off.**

-Mrs. Lavelly

**I would gift Mercy's
Class of 2020 with (1)
infinite curiosity about
life (2), a relentless
desire to learn and
grow and (3), an
unlimited supply of
books!**

-Mrs. Taniguchi

**I would give the class of 2020 "love goggles" so they could
see all the love being sent to them that they were not able
to feel and see in person.**

-Mrs. Mallory

**I would gift you all with hope, so you may
always overcome the trials of your lives
and achieve your dreams.**

-ms. stachura

I would gift Mercy's
Class of 2020
a 3 week vacation to
a country of their
choice to learn about
their roots!

-Mrs. Schmitt

**UNLIMITED PRINTING,
RICE KRISPY TREATS
FOR BREAKFAST, AND
WONDERFUL
MEMORIES OF YOUR
TIME AT MERCY!
-MRS. BENNETTS**

I would gift you
a big weekend
celebration
starting with
Prom and ending
with Graduation!

-Mrs. Wilson

I WOULD GIFT THE CLASS OF 2020 WITH
THE ABILITY TO SEE THEMSELVES 20
YEARS FROM NOW, AND SEE HOW
BEAUTIFUL THEIR LIVES ARE WITH THEIR
STRONG RELATIONSHIPS, WONDERFUL
FAMILIES AND SUCCESSFUL CAREERS.

-MRS. WALDSMITH

I would give a diffuser and
essential oils to last through college
for zen and well being!

-Mrs. Zimmerman

I WOULD GIVE THEM KNOWLEDGE OF
SELF-WORTH...KNOW THAT YOU CAN
BE AMAZING AND ARE VALUABLE
ON YOUR OWN AND FIND THE PEOPLE
IN LIFE WHO RESPECT
AND APPRECIATE THAT.

-MS. SCALZI

I would give you each
the gift of a
"Do Over Day",
allowing you to either
reexperience one of
the best days of your
life, or to relive one of
the worst days and
make it a better one.

-Mrs. Brown

for the class of 2020, I
would gift a lifetime of
gatherings to
celebrate all the
future milestones of
your mercy sisters:
college graduations,
weddings, job
opportunities and
class reunions. This is
only the beginning!

-ms. mcmaster

I WOULD GIVE EACH MEMBER OF THE CLASS OF 2020
A FUTURE PROFESSION THAT SHE IS PASSIONATE ABOUT

- MRS MC GAVIN

I would give to the
Class of 2020 a strong
sense of hope and
moments of joy to
carry them through any
of life's storms.

-Mrs. Lusch

I would gift
the class of 2020 a
special time machine
that allows them to redo
March, April, & May,
without COVID19 and not
be behind in real time!

-Tarps

**I would give mercy's class of 2020
a mirror that always reflects their inner beauty
and strength of character!**

-Mrs. Sattler

**I WANT TO GIFT THE SENIORS THE ABILITY TO SEE
THEMSELVES AS I SEE THEM: STRONG, INDEPENDENT,
INTELLIGENT, AND AMAZING HUMANS.**

-MRS. BYRN

**I would gift seniors with 2
weeks in Hawaii. They
would have a hotel on the
beach, room service, and
chauffeured car at their
disposal for snorkeling and
surfing trips.**

**There would be luaus every
night and sunshine every
day.**

-Mrs. Hessler

*A year of free,
unlimited Starbucks!
(because that's what I
want right now)*

-Mrs. Sosnowski

**I would gift Mercy's Class of 2020
some extra credit points in your college
classes next year for how well you've dealt
with all of the changes!**

-Mr. Morris

navigating relational issues within your quaran-team

.....

No matter the relational closeness between you and your family, the *physical* closeness between you and those you are homebound with, is bound to lead to some annoyances, disagreements, communication challenges, or dissonance. Here are 4 healthy ways to cope with your own individual circumstances, from one end of the relational spectrum, to the other.

family bonding

Come up with something that your family can do together that might take your minds off of our current situation. It could be as simple as family walks, a game or activity you play together regularly, or a few one-time fun experiences to enjoy and feel good about. For example, a parent of a 9th grader shared with me that her daughter took a left over, plastic Easter Egg and hid it somewhere in the house for her siblings to find. Whoever found the egg was celebrated, and then hid the egg somewhere else, for the rest of the family to search for, throughout the week. This little game is still going on and has created a healthy family competition in their home.

communication

Most relationships, including familial ones, are not made to withstand being near each other all hours of the day (especially without the option to get out). With that said, this is not the time to hold our feelings inside and allow them to manifest as built up resentment and irritation. Doing this can lead to unexpected explosions of emotion or misdirected anger (can be misdirected at

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the wrong person, or can come out as anger rooted in something random), and most importantly, can have a negative impact on your physical and mental health.

Instead, this should be a time where we are working on developing or improving healthy communication skills and using those skills to express our feelings and needs to each other. Let your family members know how you are feeling and listen to them if they share their feelings with you.

Need some help with that? Here is one of the most basic (and effective) communication skills that can be used to 1. express your feelings about a situation, 2. ask for what you need, and 3. do so without attacking someone or saying something you may regret later.

This tool is called an “I Message” (rather than a “You Message”) and requires the following formula:

“When you _____ (insert the thing your family member did), **I feel _____** (insert how you feel), **because _____** (insert why you feel this way or why this is important to you), **and I’d like it if _____”** (insert what it is you need from this person in the future)

Here is a nonsense example to help you better understand using this formula:

Let’s say that I live with my grandfather (I don’t) and that I am really into expensive, gourmet pickles (I’m not). I have had a really rough week and am saving the last gourmet pickle in our fridge, to enjoy on Friday, and reward myself for surviving a tough week of life. When I go to eat my celebratory pickle on Friday, I find that my grandfather has eaten it.

Rather than attack my grandfather and hurt his feelings, I might say:

“When you eat my gourmet pickles without asking me, **I feel** frustrated and disappointed, **because** they are expensive, they are my favorite and I look forward to eating them, **and I’d like it if** in the future, you asked me first before eating them.”

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SELF CARE

This is so important, always, and even more so, now. Self care during home quarantine will likely look a bit different for us than it did before. The first step to effective self care is figuring out what your needs are. You may need more sleep, or some alone time, you may find that you need healthy stress relief, or you may find that you need a way to fight boredom. After you figure out what it is that you need, you will likely need to get creative in finding an activity, practice, or resource in order to fulfill that need, keeping in mind that our access is very limited for now. For example, “alone time”, meaning, having uninterrupted time to yourself, may not be possible right now. An innovative way to create alone time right now, might be to find a corner of your home or a space outdoors, where you can pop in some headphones and tune everyone else out visually and auditorily.

ASK FOR HELP

If you're really struggling with managing life at home, reach out and talk to someone about it. Sometimes simply talking things through, or a good old vent session can make a world of difference. Facetime a friend or set up a Virtual Meeting with a Mercy Counselor and get some of your frustrations out.

If you believe that things are more serious than the usually daily, family annoyances, some professional intervention may be best. You can reach out to your Mercy Counselor about this or ask your parent/guardian to sign you up for an [Online Counseling Service](#).

If you believe that you are in immediate danger at home, please call 911.

Written by Mercy Counselor, Mrs. Trish Brown

COLLEGE CORNER

NEGOTIATING FINANCIAL AID

The current state of our world has altered how seniors and their families are making college decisions. Worries about distance, living on campus and finances are a few of the concerns families have. A new resource was launched on April 15 and provides form letters for students to request additional funds from a college based on changes to their family's financial picture. This program, Swiftstudent, is a platform developed by many leaders in the education world.

From their website:

Started in 2020, SwiftStudent is the only free, central repository of financial aid appeals / requests letter templates for students. It is a free, foundation-backed resource designed with college students and financial aid officers.

SwiftStudent is a solution for students who don't feel empowered with information to advocate for themselves, and financial aid officers with limited capacity to reach all students facing special circumstances that are barriers to their education.

SwiftStudent is powered by the company FormSwift, a leading provider of tools to help you easily create, edit, and sign any document. The content for SwiftStudent was organized by the Seldin/Haring-Smith Foundation in partnership with students;

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financial aid officers; college counselors; and other experts from the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA); Achieving the Dream; Everett Community College; Generation Hope; Higher Learning Advocates; Hope Center for College, Community and Justice; Indian River Community College; Institute for Women's Policy Research; Montgomery College; National College Attainment Network; National Student Legal Defense Network; New America; Northwest Florida State College; Reach Higher at the Common App; and U Aspire.

Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice recently hosted a free webinar on this resource. You can register for the webinar and watch it on-demand [here](#). You can learn more about SwiftStudent [here](#).

As always, your counselor is able to meet with you regarding your college decision. Be well!

Written by Mercy Counselor, Mrs. Holly Bennetts

Write it on your heart
that every day is the best day in the year.
He is rich who owns the day, and no one owns the day
who allows it to be invaded with fret and anxiety.

Finish every day and be done with it.
You have done what you could.
Some blunders and absurdities, no doubt crept in.
Forget them as soon as you can, tomorrow is a new day;
begin it well and serenely, with too high a spirit
to be cumbered with your old nonsense.

This new day is too dear,
with its hopes and invitations,
to waste a moment on the yesterdays.

~ Ralph Waldo Emerson,
Collected Poems and Translations

This past winter, my family lost a good friend, Paul, after a decade long battle with ALS. Right up until the time of his death, if you asked Paul how he was doing he would say, "It's a good day for a good day." Those words really helped Paul, his family, and his friends focus on the good in each day.

Right now, we are all called to focus on the good in each day and in each moment. And at the end of the day, reflect on the good and move on to the next day. What can you be grateful for? A meal, heat, internet, the sunshine, no uniform skirt, a warm shower, a friend that makes you laugh? Do something today that brings you joy and when you feel like it's hard to have a good day, focus on that good. "Write it on your heart."

**Written by Mercy Counselor,
Mrs. Holly Bennetts**

This is not the New Normal

Wikipedia tells me that the term *New Normal* was adopted after the 2008 financial crisis when business operations changed and did not go back to pre-crisis times. We use the term all the time now, to suggest what we are doing now is what we can expect to be like from here on out. People use it to describe new drivers, retirement, and life after loss. The common denominator is that it used after something happens or concludes.

There is a problem with applying this term to our CURRENT REALITY. The *new normal* implies the world we are currently living in is what we will be living in. Think about it. In recent history, *new normal* is taking off our shoes at the airport after we moved through the immediate response to 9/11. It applies to schools running active shooter drills in the wake of all the tragedies that have plagued our schools. It applies to the life of retirement after decades of work. It does not apply to this very temporary situation we are living in with *stay at home orders*, social distancing, closed schools, and increased unemployment.

Words matter. When we think we are living in a *new normal* we can increase worry, stress, and anxiety. This is now our life. This is now how we live. This is normal. This is contrary to our current world, everything about what we are doing now is abnormal.

I am going to challenge you to change your words.

Current Reality. A simple mindset change to using these words really offers more opportunities for growth and change. *Current realities* evolve, they change and they are not permanent. They are in the here and now, not forever. *Current reality* unlocks a glimpse into the future. *Current reality* acknowledges that what we are living in is in the present, or even foreseeable future, but it is not permanent. This fills me with hope and optimism. While I have moments of joy and grace, overall, the *current reality* is not fun, it is stressful, it is sad, it is entwined in losses but it is also not forever. It is temporary, it will evolve, it will change and we will emerge to something new.

We have started to learn about phases for re-opening states and regions. This means the current reality will continue to change and we will enter into our new normal. I am hopeful our new normal will bring about a new level of empathy, continued focus on family time, less busyness, more handwashing, and greater self-awareness. What are you hoping for when we arrive at the new normal?

Written by Mercy Counselor, Mrs. Holly Bennetts

.....COPING WITH..... COVID19 cancellation grief

In last month's issue of *The Good News*, I referenced a Harvard article where one professional referenced grief as the most commonly shared experience for human beings currently enduring the impact of covid19. There are some very obvious losses one may be grieving during this time: losing a loved one to this or another terrible disease, loss of the ability to gather for the death of a loved one, loss of employment or income, loss of health, etc. In addition to some of these more tragic losses, there are also many personal losses in the form of cancellations, that perhaps fall on the other end of the Grief Spectrum. These losses can also significantly impact one's mental health if not managed with care.

As a student, you may be grieving the loss of canceled events such as Ethnic Bazaar, Sweepstakes Assemblies, Talent Show, athletic seasons, and Moving Up, to name a few. How can we not open our hearts up to our Seniors, who are grieving the loss of canceled milestones and traditions such as Kairos, Moving Up, Senior Prank, Prom, Graduation, & Senior All Night Party. These are all high school norms, things we look forward to, and you have permission to feel disappointed, sad, or angry as each event is canceled, postponed, or virtualized.

As a parent, you are likely grieving the loss over canceled performances, celebrations, and traditions too. You as well,

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have waited years to witness, celebrate, and support your child through these experiences and milestones and have permission to experience your own grief process too.

I'm hoping these 3 tips can help.

1. Validate your grief.

We often have these auto-pilot responses to negative feelings. For example, if a small child is crying over something minor, we may automatically say: “Aww, but you’ll be okay, don’t cry.” or nowadays, if someone states: “I miss my friends so much and it makes me so sad that I can’t see them!”, we may automatically say: “But we are so lucky to be healthy and you will see them again soon!” The worst thing anyone can do right now is “but” themselves or “but” others. We do not want to dismiss each other’s grief or dismiss our own. Avoiding grief simply does not work-it always finds a way to creep back into our thoughts or behavior, often in unhealthy ways. We want to acknowledge grief, face grief, and feel grief. The more often we can respond to ourselves and others with understanding that **all loss can be difficult and painful** right now, the healthier our healing can be.

2. Respect the process.

Everyone grieves differently-there are no instructions on how to grieve loss, there is no “normal”. Your feelings will vary person-to-person, loss-to-loss, and sometimes, day-to-day. Just allow yourself to feel what you feel and do the same for others. “You do you” has never rang more true than right now. Establish coping practices that allow you to deal in healthy ways and know that uncertainty will play a big part in your process.

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3.Be present.

In the Harvard article I referenced last month, I learned about Ambiguous Grief and Anticipatory Grief. We have some fogginess to our losses here, causing ambiguity. For example, some cancelations may be rescheduled, although can we truly do so with confidence in our ever-changing current reality? We also can feel anticipatory loss before it occurs. For example, we have not yet lived through the date when our Class of 2020 was scheduled to cross the stage at the Detroit Opera House, yet we can feel the loss of that canceled ritual already.

You may decide to reschedule some things, others you may virtualize or find a way to pivot creatively, and some events may simply not happen. The healthiest way to respond to Ambiguous and Anticipatory Grief (after facing grief and coping with the subsequent feelings) is to do our best to live in the now. Live our current reality day by day or even week by week. Take life in bite sized morsels, rather than filling your entire plate.

There is a word that we Mercy educators are using often these days and that is: *grace*. To give grace means to be generous with your good will. Give yourself and give others grace. Try to be patient with yourself and with others. We have all experienced covid19 related loss, we are all experiencing trauma, and we are all grieving.



Congratulations to **Anna Rimatzki '22** and **Raquel Segars '21** for being named 2020 Joyce Ivy Summer Scholars. Bravo to both young women for their outstanding commitment to scholarship, leadership, and community!

The Joyce Ivy FOUNDATION

The [Joyce Ivy Foundation](#) was founded in 2006 by a group of Midwest natives who had the opportunity to attend such colleges as Princeton, Harvard, Dartmouth, and Brown. Recognizing that students from the Midwest are under-represented on these very selective campuses, they collaborated with the primary goal of providing talented young women from the Midwest these same kinds of educational opportunities. The Joyce Ivy Foundation seeks to provide exposure, encouragement, and financial assistance to young women who have the academic, intellectual, and leadership potential to attend the nation's most selective institutions of higher education.

The Joyce Ivy Foundation recently announced the names of ninety-two young women selected to receive scholarships to participate in summer pre-college academic programs at the Foundation's partner colleges and universities, including Barnard College, Brown University, Cornell University, Emory University, Harvard University, Johns Hopkins University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Smith College, Stanford University, Washington University in St. Louis, and Yale University.

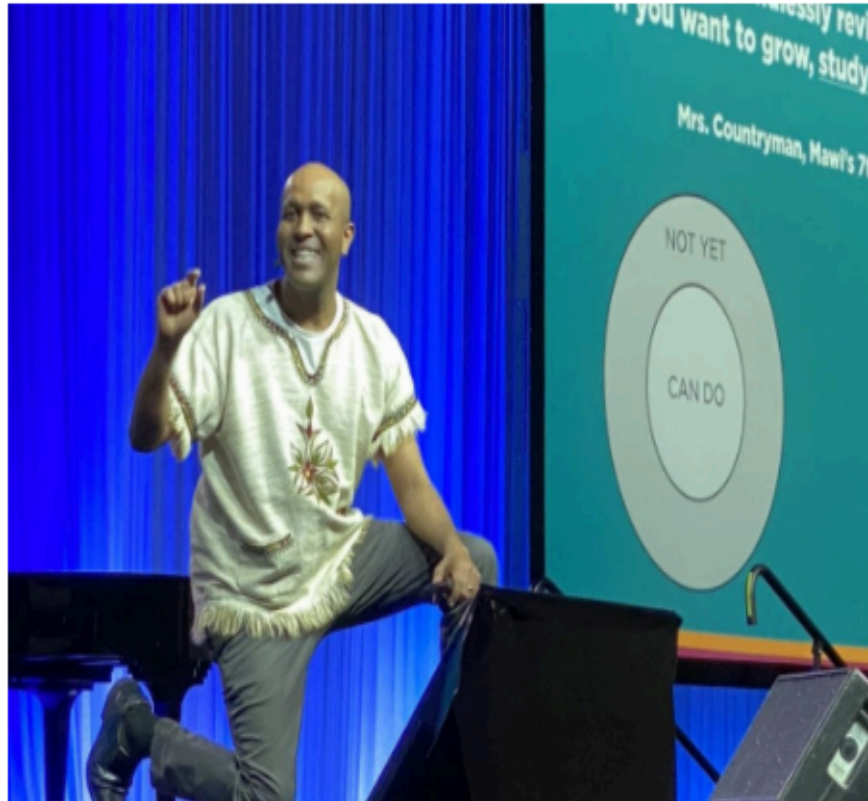
The 2020 Summer Scholars come from all seven of the Midwestern states currently supported by the Foundation – Michigan, Ohio, Nebraska, Missouri, Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota – and attend 64 different secondary schools. This year's recipients were selected from one of the largest applicant pools in the Foundation's history, 388 applications in total.

According to Allison Jegla, Vice President for Program Development and Member of the Summer Scholars Selection Committee, "These young women are leaders in their high schools, activists in their communities, and thoughtful classmates and friends. Our 2020 Summer Scholars truly represent the talent and potential across the Midwest." To learn more about the Foundation and to read the full press release go [HERE](#).

Written by Mercy Counselor, Mrs. Kristen Casey



mercy
Loves
THE CHASS
of 2020!

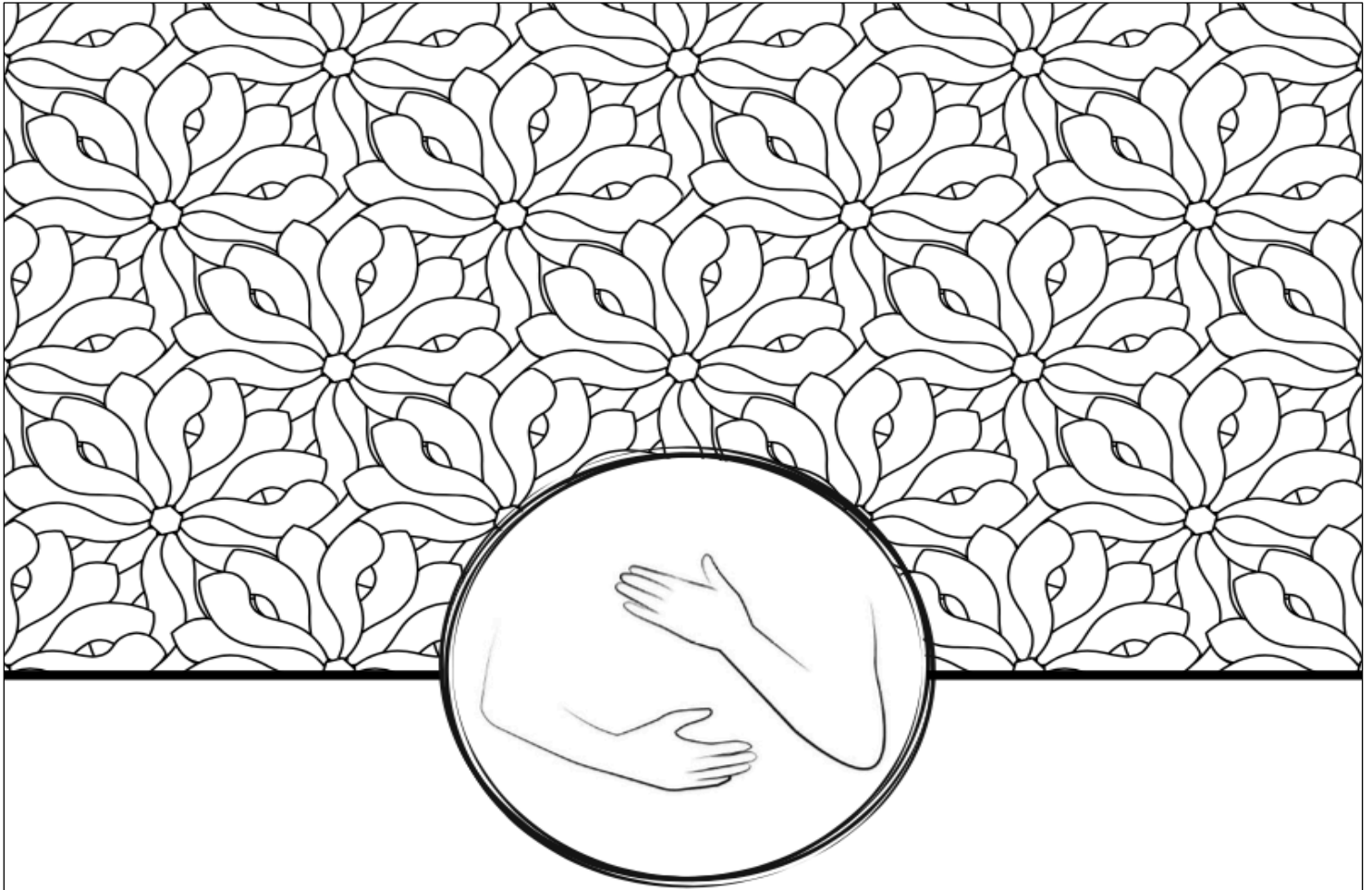


We all know the phenomenon of “summer slide” when, unfortunately, students tend to lose academic ground. With many states canceling in-school instruction for the rest of the academic year, how do we combat a “COVID-19 learning slide” while keeping the social and emotional health of our youth front and center? Parents! Learn how to empower your students’ parents to slow a learning dip during this unprecedented time.

Learn proven, evidence-based SEL strategies that have had profound effects on millions of students. Mawi Asgedom will explain how parents can help students expand their Can Do Circle in both academic and personal areas and adopt a growth mindset for future success.

Join us **Thursday, May 7th**, for a [free webinar](#) and discover how to help your students and their parents through COVID-19 learning.

This month we are sharing a section of coloring pages created by the amazing organization Self Care is for Everyone. We hope you enjoy this calming stress relieving boredom buster!



STAY-AT-HOME SELF-CARE COLORING BOOK

@selfcareisforeveryone



What is something
you need right now?

@selfcareisforeveryone

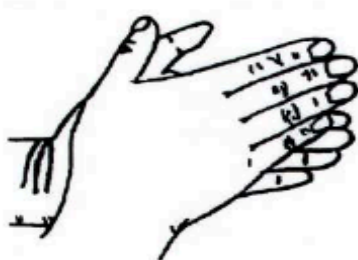




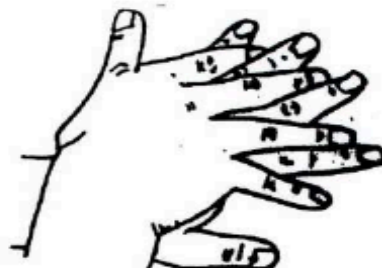
Create
space
for
yourself

@selfcareisforeveryone

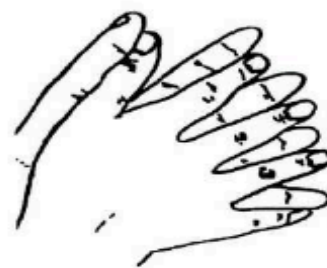
AS YOU WASH YOUR HANDS,
CONSIDER USING THIS TIME TO
FOCUS ON YOUR BREATH,
SAY A MANTRA, OR SIMPLY FOCUS
ON SOMETHING THAT MAKES YOU
FEEL GRATEFUL.



1. Palm to palm



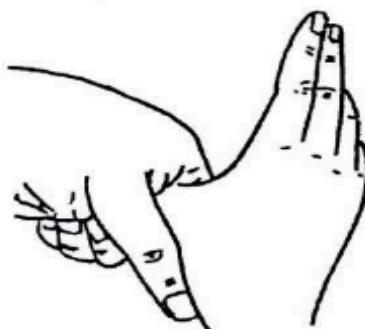
2. Right palm over left dorsum,
left palm over right dorsum.



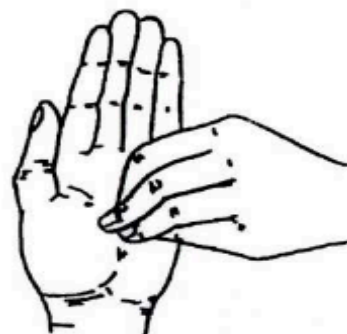
3. Palm to palm, fingers interlaced.



4. Backs of fingers to opposing
palms with fingers interlaced.



5. Rotational rubbing of right thumb
clasped over left palm & left
thumb over right palm.



6. Rotational rubbing backwards
and forwards with clasped
fingers of right hand in palm
of left hand and vice-versa.

Hands and wrists rubbed till end of 10 sec period. The number of strokes in each step is five.

@selfcareisforeveryone

SELF-CARE IDEAS:

(In no particular order, choose one or none)



Read a book or just a chapter



Reconnect with your breath



Fill your time
with your
favorite hobbies!

@selfcareisforeveryone



Drink a warm beverage

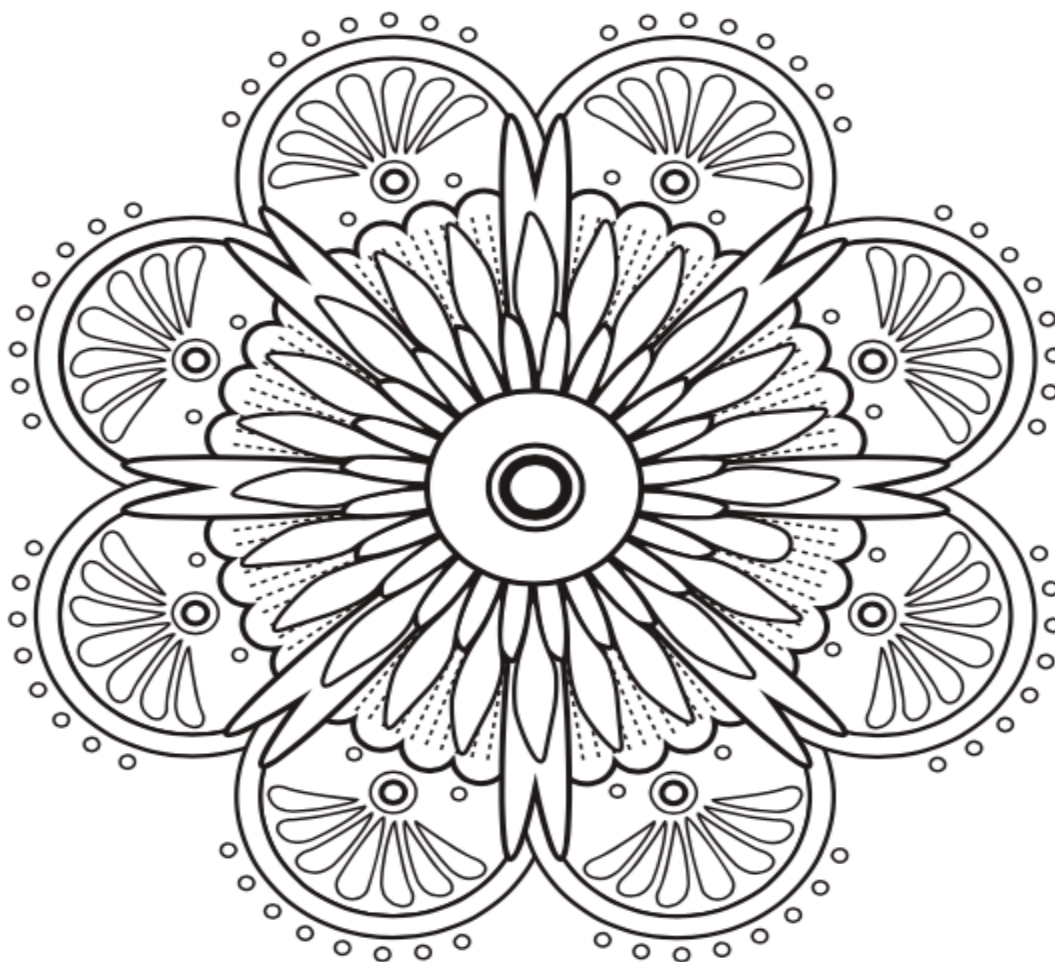


Listen to your favorite music!

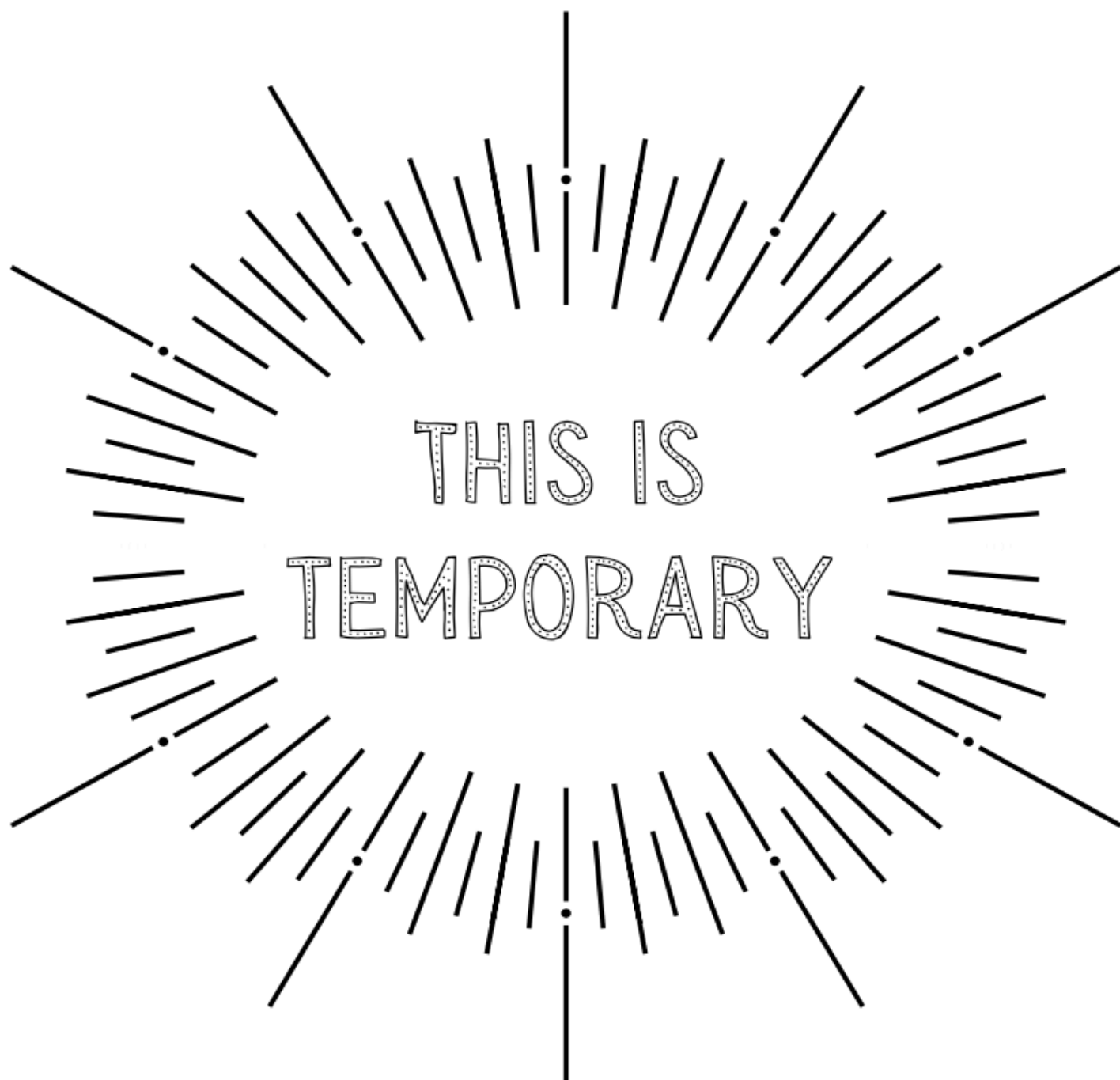


Take care of your space

YOU ARE
NOT ALONE.



@selfcareisforeveryone



@selfcareisforeveryone

JUST IN CASE
YOU NEED THIS TODAY:

You are loved.

YOU ARE NOT A FAILURE.

YOU ARE NOT A WASTE OF SPACE.

YOU ARE WANTED.

I BELIEVE IN YOU.

YOU CAN DO IT!

JUST IN CASE
YOU OR SOMEONE YOU LOVE NEEDS THIS:

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:

1800-273-8255

Okay2Say:

okay2say.state.mi.us

To Write Love on Her Arms:

twloha.com