



SEE Educating the Heart & Mind LEARNING

A Special Message to the SEE Learning Community



Dear Friends,

The COVID-19 health crisis is impacting all of us. As has been stated by others, there is no human enemy in this crisis- this is not one person's or country's fault. Our common humanity means that we all want, and deserve, happiness and health. Our interdependence means that what affects one of us affects us all. In difficult times, people naturally come together to face challenges with more strength. Yet a large

in community during times like this. We should continue to reach out and support one another through phone calls, messaging, video chats, and 1:1 interactions. We can compassionately reach out to ensure that our neighbors- especially the ones most vulnerable to the virus- have access to the support they need. And although the SEE Learning educational program is on hold in many places where schools are closed, we can still use what it teaches us to help us through this challenging time. How can we apply compassion, awareness and ethical engagement now?

Compassion is the wish to relieve the suffering of others- from those closest to us, to those we may have never even met. In this case, we can take action to keep the virus from spreading by following the basic precautions offered by health officials. We can reach out to others who are experiencing anxiety and fear from the threat of the illness. We can also practice self-compassion through taking care of ourselves in a mindful way. We can boost our immunity through getting enough sleep, and through attending to our physical and emotional well-being.

We can notice the focus of our attention. Are we ruminating on future “what-if’s” that none of us has control over? When we perceive a threat to our well-being, the nervous system goes on alert. But over-vigilance could lead to a compromised immune system and stress response that actually decreases our ability to be most helpful to ourselves and others. Using awareness, we can acknowledge the pull towards worrying and instead place our attention on what we can do to stay healthy and safe. We can place our attention on the gratitude we have for our family and friends, all the health care workers, and the countless individuals who are selflessly working for the benefit of us all. We can also use a body-based resiliency strategy such as grounding or resourcing to re-connect with sensations of well-being and to help our nervous system return to our resilient zone.

Finally, this crisis is revealing (or perhaps highlighting) ways that the systems we interact in often privilege some and leave others at a disadvantage. For example, as schools close in the U.S. and elsewhere, there is concern for students whose families are food-insecure and who depend on those meals provided at school. We heard on the news this morning that one school district is creating a drive-through system to deliver pre-packaged meals to parents: this is a creative, though a temporary, fix. It’s our hope that we can take this crisis as an opportunity to work more closely together to discern and create ethical solutions that address the roots of these problems- solutions that will benefit us long after this particular challenge has passed.

Please note that our staff are continuing with our work and are here to support you as needed. Our thoughts are with the whole SEE Learning community as we face this challenge together. We remain incredibly grateful for the efforts you’re taking to learn and to live with compassion, awareness and ethical engagement in your personal and professional lives.

Warm regards,
Christa Tinari, MA