

Hope – antidote for anxiety

Right now we are placing a lot of hope in the future that from Covid19 pandemic we can learn, grow and become better people. That our children, grandchildren, great-great grandchildren and all our ancestors to come will contribute to a better world. But if we tune into global media we hear: panic, panic, everything is out of control. Whereas the Buddhist view is: relax, everything is out of control. This is a subtle shift in thinking but huge in the way we look at our present situation.

'We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them.' Albert Einstein.

We are struggling with what's happening around us. We are anxious, frightened, depressed and overwhelmed, but let's not kid ourselves, we were incredibly anxious, frightened, depressed and overwhelmed before Covid19. One thing this pandemic has done, is to give us the opportunity to re-examine the way we're living, and to think about the possibilities of how we can live in the future.

This is a gift that we can't ignore.

We have the opportunity to use this time of isolation to become the people we have always wanted to become. It's time for men who have been acting like boys to step up and women who have been acting like girls to stand in their true power.

There is a critical need for us to control what we can control and let go of the part we can't control. And this is so important at this time. We cannot influence the source of our external circumstances but we can act responsibly by following the guidelines for us all to come through this. We can influence our internal thoughts and feelings by doing the following:

- Be aware of our reactions.
- Explore our reactions.
- Imagine how we would advise a friend.
- Ride with life's ebbs and flows, don't swim against the tide.
- Look for what we can learn in each new situation.
- Be kind to ourselves and others.
- Be compassionate.

This is the time to create certainty within ourselves and being entirely reliable in the present. When we are clear with ourselves, it helps us to traverse the difficulties of the outside world.

Choose what we watch on television. Sending love and compassion globally but acting with deep love and compassion for ourselves and those we are in contact with.

Walking and writing longhand are both activities that our brain and body can be in time with. Walking allows the space and time for our thoughts to slow down and move in sync with our body, calming the nervous system and releasing the endorphins that soothe the body. So does writing longhand. Now is the time to start a journal, use this time to get to know yourself better.

We become what is in our hearts and what we think about most of the time. Author Elizabeth Gilbert says: 'This is who I am: my heart. This is where I live: my mind.' This is the time for kindness and compassion to self and others, and choosing how we go forward.

Hope is knowing what we are capable of, looking back with compassion about where we've come from, but looking forward to coming out of this pandemic with a better understanding of the human condition, more compassion for ourselves and others, and a deep respect of our planet.