

*Crises* carry the ***seeds of opportunity*** if we approach them in the right way, which means clearly understanding the facts and strategizing a response that ***HELPS US EMERGE STRONGER AND WISER*** on the other side. We can ***remember who we are*** and our true purpose, which is to ultimately leave our planet ***better for the next generation***. Sometimes it takes an apparent tragedy to ***wake us up***. The coronavirus pandemic can be a wake-up call if we face the facts soberly and move into immediate **right action** to mitigate the damage and optimize the upside.

This guide covers all components from necessity, and practicality, **to enlivening hope and resiliency.**

## ***A Guide for These Times:***

### **The First Priority: immediately start social-distancing practices:**

1. Greet with fist bumps, bows, or namastes.
2. Avoid all small, medium, or larger groups and areas where many congregate.
3. Stay home or isolated if you have any symptoms of anything and especially symptoms such as fever over 100.4F, cough and shortness of breath please leave the building.
4. If you are experiencing symptoms, Consult the Missoula County Department of Health website on where to get screened and how to get help.  
<https://www.missoulacounty.us/government/health/health-department>
5. Apply the hygiene and social-isolation principles recommended by the Center for Disease Control, including washing your hands frequently for 20 seconds and stay 6 feet away from others.

### **The Second Priority: prepare yourself on a logistical level with:**

1. A 14-day supply of non-perishable foods; this has been recommended by the FDA and is a reasonable amount to be safe and prevent hoarding.
2. Bulk medicines for anything you will need over the next six months *if possible*.
3. Make sure you are stocked with everything from propane canisters to critical supplies.
4. Be conservative with your finances and maintain as much cash reserve as possible for the likely economic shocks. If you don't have any reserves, see if you have allies who might backstop you in a pinch. Get on Venmo or Paypal so you can pay people virtually for services vs. cash.

**NOTE:** it's imperative you do not hoard medical supplies that will be needed by the system such as N95 masks. Most of the interventions we need individually are low-tech.

### **The Third Priority: prepare your emotional and community support network:**

1. Talk with your family and get everyone on the same page, discuss roles, opportunities, and needs as this scenario unfolds
2. Get to know your neighbors and convene small gatherings (with adequate social distance) to discuss where there are resources that can be shared or optimized, especially if critical pieces of your own infrastructure breaks. Make sure to have phone and email contacts for people.
3. Families with children will likely need to isolate or create shared clusters of a few families that share the load of parenting and homeschooling for when schools are closed. Small clusters of 2–

3 families will be easier to minimize the viral exposure and collaborate on self-protection protocols.

4. Elderly or sick people will need to identify people, ideally young adults, who can shop for them, run errands, and handle things that might bring them into contact with sick people. Think of this as a kind of buddy system that can also provide some social exchange and some employment for the youth who are likely going to face financial hardship.
5. Determine who is going to feel the most isolated in your network and make a plan for regular Skype or Facetime calls to check up on them.
6. Identify people who are most likely to be vulnerable to the economic impacts and see what you can do to help them weather what is coming.
7. Get on social platforms that connect you with neighbors, allies, and good information and resource-sharing (Zoom, Facebook, Time Banking, etc.)

**The Fourth Imperative: Create a positive outlook to optimize your own psychological and physical health to boost your immunity and your resilience.**  
**The most basic recommendations for self-care:**

1. Sleep at least eight hours every night.
2. Get regular exercise, preferably outdoors.
3. Eat a balanced and healthy diet.
4. Meditate or pray daily to focus your mind and uplift your consciousness. Double down on your spiritual practices.
5. Work with fears as they arise but don't let them overwhelm you.
6. Focus on opportunities, not doomsday scenarios: how can this situation cause positive changes that we and the world need anyway? This keeps us out of a hopeless victim mentality, which is bad for our health.
7. The basic principle here is that for you to be a positive example and support to others, you need to double down on practices of self-care so that you can uplift people who are going to be experiencing fear, anxiety, and scarcity.

**The Fifth Imperative: start looking for the opportunities of what you can do at home, which helps so you don't feel bored and anxious:**

1. Take up a hobby you have long wanted to do, or projects around the house
2. Gardening has the benefit of providing fresh vegetables for the family and creating more local resilience the deeper into this we get.
3. Have you long wanted to write a book? Start a blog? A podcast? This will be a good time to express your creativity.
4. Take your cooking abilities to the next level.
5. Take more online courses. Work on a virtual degree.
6. Think of ways to monetize your skills, like coaching others on Zoom or Skype. Get entrepreneurial as there will be new opportunities to serve needs in a way that generates money for your family as well.
7. Learn new computer programs and skills, from video editing to website design.
8. Create a book club online with friends and do a video call every week to share what you're reading. Create a reading list that will grow you in the months ahead — and you'll actually have time to do it.
9. Get recommendations from all the friends you trust for the "hidden gem" movies that you might have missed.
10. Take time in retreat if your commitments allow.
11. Have deeper, longer conversations with people you have let drop away in your life. Renew your social connections virtually.

**Sixth: get involved in improve-the-world opportunities that this extended break from business-as-usual will provide. The more you focus on the opportunities, the more you unleash your creativity and focus on the positives. Some things that the pandemic may push us into that will help us in the long haul:**

1. Creation of stronger and more resilient local networks, which prepare us for other disasters as well as giving us more connections in our community.
2. Virtualization of work. Telecommuting will force more people to get creative in how we engage our work and spend less of our time commuting in the future. This will help to reduce our carbon footprint, which is important to address climate change.
3. Source more food locally, and energy too.
4. Reduce dependency on the global supply chain so we don't buy nearly as many goods that are made on the other side of the planet.
5. Shift from over-consumption to a more experiential and relational life.
6. Deepen your personal growth practices and your ability to be calm in a tempest. This cultivates your capacity for more conscious leadership
7. Identify emerging leaders in the community who can be nominated or recruited into future political roles, raising the caliber of our political leadership on the other side of this.
8. Focus on what unites us rather than what divides us, even in a contentious election season (which will move mostly online). The pandemic can help us cross political divides as we work on shared solutions to community challenges.
9. Cross-generational collaboration: since this will strike elderly populations hardest and the youth the least, it can activate more cross-generational relationships, which can help us in addressing other societal issues as well.
10. New kinds of entrepreneurial ideas and visionary solutions will emerge. New businesses will be born. Necessity is the Mother of Invention and crises force innovative thinking. What could you incubate in this time of crisis that will demonstrate real value in the time after?
11. This can lead more people to the recognition that we truly are one interconnected human family now and that we can only solve our challenges when we work together. In essence, this crisis can propel us into more of a sense of global solidarity and citizenship, which is the hallmark of the next stage of evolution. Our collective grief for those we lose will also bind us together.
12. The best-case scenario is ultimately for us to approach this global pandemic as something that calls us into a higher level of collaboration, creativity, and conscious living. We can emerge living more sustainably, peacefully, and enjoyably with our local communities. We can develop more skills for independent lifestyles. We can cultivate a higher-quality, less-expensive lifestyle with less stuff.

***Let's write the story of 2020 as a year not solely as a global tragedy but as a difficult birth of a new way of being. Just as the toughest life experiences can catalyze our greatest personal growth, so can this planetary emergency lead to a real evolution of our species.***