

May 4, 2020

Dear Briarwood Families,

The month of May has usually brought such joy, excitement and also some anxiety as we prepare for the end of the school year. Normally we would be sitting down with our calendars and scheduling various graduation ceremonies, academic and sports awards banquets, final exams, and of course Mother's Day celebrations and any birthdays that occur this month. But this year, May looks a little different. It feels a little different too, and that is okay. Different doesn't mean bad, it just means that we have to adjust our expectations. So instead of thinking of all the changes and some disappointments that this May presents to us individually, let's focus on helping others.

Helping others helps to alleviate stress, and it helps to maintain balance within our own wellness wheel. We want to encourage you and our students to find a neighbor that needs some help around the house, or needs their car washed since it's been sitting for so long, or to send cards to a nearby senior resident home or the local police department/fire station. Zoom with friends or family you have not seen in a while. Find out if there are any safe volunteer projects that you can do as a family. By doing for others, and not dwelling on the disruption to our lives, we can tend to our emotional, physical, spiritual and social dimensions on the wellness wheel.

And as for the ceremonies or changes to what we normally would do in May, we can still do them, just *differently*. Have a private award ceremony at home or a graduation party with the family and videotape it to send to family members who can't be present. Grill outside for Mother's Day or order pizza instead of the big family restaurant-type dinner you normally have. Be an example to others, to our family members, and even to ourselves, that doing things differently can provide new ways to celebrate important events, to go outside of our own situation and help others feel connected and a part of something bigger.

"A long, healthy, and happy life is the result of making contributions, of having meaningful projects that are personally exciting and contribute to and bless the lives of others." (Hans Selye)

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