

Dear Class,

Remember, [resilience](#) is the ability to overcome adversity. It's also the ability to accept what is beyond our control and work around it. As I've said before there really isn't much we can do about what life has sent our way, but there is a WHOLE lot we can do about how we choose to deal with it.

Now ... I have a confession to make, well actually I have two confessions to make. Confession #1, I do not enjoy nature. Yes I said it, I'm not a nature lover. Believe me I've read enough to know that nature is good for me and my soul blah, blah, blah. I don't care, I don't enjoy nature, I find it very boring. My idea of enjoying nature is getting in my car, driving over to the mall and walking around. Oh how I love that kind of nature!

Confession #2 I don't like to smile, well let me clarify. I don't like people telling me to smile (for that matter I don't like people telling me what to do, period), especially when it comes to taking a picture. I like to say - no pictures I'm in a witness protection program. The truth of the matter is I really don't mind the pictures I just mind having to smile. Smiling for a picture feels awkward to me, it feels forced and makes me uncomfortable.

Why am I baring my soul like this you might ask (besides entertaining myself)? Well, I have a point to make. Since the pandemic I've started to enjoy going for long walks outside (horror of horrors) and I've started to smile. What can I say...! As I walk I notice the beauty that surrounds me, the vibrant colors of the flowers blooming on the trees, the green grass against the blue ocean or sky and I stop to appreciate how lucky I am to be quarantined in such a beautiful place. Sometimes I even stop to take pictures. Also during my walks I've noticed that, as I move 6 ft away from the person coming towards me, I smile at them! Oh my, what's the world coming to!

Remember when we talk about resilience and what makes us resilient, the ability to be mentally agile makes us resilient. The ability to see multiple options in order to solve problems makes us very resilient. I had a problem, I needed to exercise and I couldn't do it the way I like to. So I came up with a solution that I would have never **ever** entertained under normal circumstances. I'm doing things differently than I usually do. I could have held rigid to how I normally do things and said I'll just wait it out (believe me it was tempting). But I know if I had done that it would not have been in my best interest. These are not normal circumstances and there is not much I can do about that, but I surely can choose to do something that's in my best interest and good for my well-being and going out for a walk and smiling are good for me. The most amazing thing is, I'm enjoying my nature walks and flashing a big smile at people as they pass me by.

During this very difficult time I have two proposals. Proposal #1 do things differently. Be flexible when you can. Now is a time to think about what is in your best interest and that of your family and decide accordingly. If you can continue to do things the way you have been, great! However, when you can't and you have the option I encourage you to

actively choose to do things differently. Remember flexibility makes us more resilient. It's good for the brain. And it usually makes us feel good to be flexible.

Proposal #2 when you can, make good happen. On those days that you feel up to it, I'm proposing that you make lemonade out of lemons. I'm not suggesting, by any means, to deny the feelings of confusion, sadness and anxiety we all are experiencing. What I am suggesting is that a byproduct of doing things differently can be making the good happen. When actively choosing to do things differently, think about how you can make the good happen and go for it. Think about what you want to achieve and ALL the ways you can go about achieving it. Remember achieving your goals feels good. So make good happen every chance you can.

So if you need to do exercise and don't enjoy nature, take a walk outside. If you like routines but find it difficult to stick to one because of the circumstances try to be more spontaneous. If you don't like or have family traditions or rituals, start making family rituals. Do things differently. I guess in a way I'm advocating for upside down day. And above all hunt the good. Honestly, along the road of doing things differently you will most likely make good happen, I encourage you to acknowledge that good and celebrate it.

One last thing, once this pandemic is over I will most likely go back to my nature walks at the mall. I will growl when someone tells me to smile. I'm flexible. I'm flexible when it comes to making lemonade out of lemons. And I'm flexible when it comes to making change. No one is saying that what you do differently today will be the new normal. All I'm saying is make good happen now, by doing things differently during this difficult time.

This pandemic will be over sooner or later and we will all look back and say...?

Wishing you flexibility and goodness,
Susan

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