



CHESAPEAKE BAY
OUTWARD BOUND SCHOOL



DISCUSSING COVID

Reflections regarding our lives now and into the near future.

OBJECTIVES

- Students discuss personal opinions and perspectives on life issues during stay at home orders.

MATERIALS

Students will need:

- Paper for journaling if required

Teacher will need:

- Online learning platform such as Zoom

TIME

Varies

LESSON INTRO

This lesson plan is a compilation of questions and prompts that teachers can use in various formats, such as introductory questions to virtual sessions or self-paced journal activities. These should serve as a starting place for you, what else have you noticed in your class or group that you can bring up?

FACILITATOR TIPS AND NOTES

1. While we've seen teachers, supervisors, and colleagues staying positive, finding joy in small things, and looking for the silver lining—stay-at-home orders and schools' moving to distance learning have impacted us all. Acknowledging what is hard, reflecting on personal strategies to cope, walking through the grief process... these things are needed as we move through our new reality.
2. Know your group! Some of these questions may be too hard or need some prefacing before you ask them. The idea is for these prompts to spark conversations. Be curious, ask follow-up questions, ask for students to share their experiences if it's a safe space to share, and share yours!

REFLECTION PROMPTS

On Life in General:

- If you could keep one thing going from home quarantine, what would it be? Why?
- If you could change one thing back to “normal” right now, what would it be? Why?
- What have you learned about yourself?
- Do you think we will be *more* connected to our devices after this? Why, why not?

On Communication:

- What is frustrating about communicating only through technology?
- What is good about communicating only through technology?
- What new ways of communicating will never go away?
- What new communication habits have you formed?

On Relationships:

- Who has been a missing part of your community over the past few months?
- Have there been any surprises about who you have stayed connected to or not?
- Have you noticed your relationships with your neighbors change? How so?
- Share the highs and lows about spending so much time with your family.
- What roles do you take at home?

On Coping:

- What have you been most afraid of?
- Have feelings of anxiety surprised you? Or did you expect them to come?
- What's something you've 'gotten used to'? Something you *haven't* gotten used to?
- What is good for you. Are you doing that thing?

- What losses have you had? (access, friendships, opportunities, events, daily routines, etc..)
- Where have you seen yourself in the grief process?

These are normal grief stages and we all move through them at different times and in a different order.

Denial & Isolation

People in this stage can deny the reality of the situation. It is a normal reaction to rationalize our overwhelming emotions. Denial is a common defense mechanism that buffers the immediate shock of loss, numbing our emotions. We block out the words and hide from the facts. We may start to believe that life is meaningless, and nothing is of any value any longer.

Anger

As reality and its pain emerges, we are not ready. Intense emotions can be deflected, redirected, and expressed instead as anger. The anger may be aimed at inanimate objects, complete strangers, friends or family. Rationally, we know that one person is not to be blamed. Emotionally, however, we may resent a person or organization for causing us pain. We might feel guilty for being angry, and this makes us more angry.

Bargaining

The normal reaction to feelings of helplessness and vulnerability is often a need to regain control through a series of “If only” statements. If only I had known sooner, If only I had better equipment, If only they hadn’t lost a job, If only...

Depression

There are two types of depression that are associated with loss. The first one is a reaction to practical implications relating to the loss. Sadness and regret predominate this type of depression. We may worry about not spending enough time with others that depend on us. This phase may be eased by simple clarification and reassurance. We may need a bit of helpful cooperation and a few kind words.

The second type of depression is more subtle and, in a sense, perhaps more private. It is our quiet way of separating or feeling the distance.

Acceptance

Reaching this stage of grieving is a gift not afforded to everyone. The acceptance stage is not necessarily a mark of bravery that shows we’ve resisted other stages. This phase is marked by withdrawal and calm. This is not a period of happiness and must be distinguished from depression.

Coping with loss is ultimately a deeply personal and singular experience — nobody can help you go through it more easily or understand all the emotions that you’re going through. But others can be there for you and help comfort you through this process. The best thing you can do is to allow yourself to feel the grief as it comes over you. Resisting it only will prolong the natural process of healing.

<https://psychcentral.com/lib/the-5-stages-of-loss-and-grief/>