

St. Mark of Ephesus Orthodox Cathedral

Parish Nurse Ministry - October 2020

“We are not sanctified by the place in which we live, but by the way we live,”

St. Iakovos, Tialikis of Evia

I can only imagine how it's been in such an unusual time but pray all are staying safe and continue to practice the mandated guidelines of maintaining social distancing and hygienic methods as well as continuing to wear face coverings when in public not only for yourself but for others.

Recently there was article about longevity and maintaining good health in the face of diversity. In a study by Barbara Fredrickson a psychology professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill she stated finding positive meaning may be the most powerful leverage point for cultivating positive emotions during times of crisis. A term 'positivity' is described as a mix of realism, hope, and compassion. The American Psychological Association call post-traumatic stress a process of acknowledging the bad in a constructive way and let yourself feel what you're really feeling. Then think about what's important to you right now and what's in line with our values. That could be more kindness, spirituality, appreciating life in all its big and small moments, finally act on these goals.

Dr. Maria Sirosis who wrote A Short Course in Happiness stated the happiness that helps in great difficulty is realistic and recognizes fears and anxieties but looks for meaning that can nourish and sustain us.

Of course, as Orthodox Christians we equate these methods in our daily lives with our faith and prayers. Our Lord graced us in all ways with His love.

It's said up to one-third of Americans are saying this pandemic is having a serious impact on their mental health. Three strategies Dr, Sirosis suggests are

Connect with friends: she states from numerous studies that good relationships keep us happier and healthier and, it's not the number of friends but the quality of our relationships that matter. She also stated that resilient people know how to shape their lives now and won't feel victimized as she says happiness doesn't come from the outside.

Move and breathe: Another important way to improve your wellbeing and happiness is increasing physical activity, which can boost your happiness and release feel-good brain-chemicals calming the anxious mind. Also, take a moment to savor and appreciate such as a beautiful sunrise listening to the birds sing or recalling cherished memories or listening to favorite music. Studies showed that with aging and life experiences and by keeping physically mentally and socially active we see growth in the neurobiology of wisdom. You don't get upset when things go wrong you focus on the positive and on people and connections you feel great when you have a sense of purpose. In an article about aging some healthy ideas are eat less, eat enough to maintain a healthy weight. Have a drink or two a day if you're able, keep the faith those with faith live longer whether it's the socialization, volunteerism, stress-reducing prayer and attitudes of gratitude. cultivate close

friendships avoid loneliness, have social time when it's safe or online, be of good cheer, stimulate your brain, exercise at least 45 minutes a day find a purpose and eat mostly a plant-based diet.

We are so blessed in our Orthodox faith to follow the holy path set before us and with little suggestions we'll get beyond this trial.

Glory be to God for All things. And as always if you notice any changes in your health or wellbeing please contact your health care provider and our holy Fathers who are praying for us.

In Christ Elizabeth Ashton RN