

# Dr Mark Arcuri

## Transformational Tips Newsletter



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Hi !

Thanks for checking in again as we go through the biopsychosocialspiritualenvironmental model of self-care or, as I like to say, resilience. The past to e-letters have been a bit lengthy. Today's will be shorter as we look at **Social Self-care as a Way to resilience** whether in the face of COVID-19 or just in living life as usual. COVID-19 really doesn't change anything about self-care, you see. Hopefully one of its silver linings is that it can help us remember the importance of self-care, and encourage us to re-connect for now, and for always. If we do, our lives will be better for it, as will the lives of all those around us.

### **You Know How to Practice Social Self-care**

None of you really needs strategies for practicing social self-care though I will throw in some suggestions, below. Perhaps we can use a boost of understanding why it's important, but we all know how to be social. The trick is to feel that it's *okay* to be social in your own way; to understand that being social in ways that speak to who you are the ultimate in being social, to notice your social efforts for what they are, and to do these things that you are already doing with a new sense of honor and recognition and intention so that you can build upon them at this time when we are being told we must be 'socially distant.'

As a quick the aside, the idea that we must practice social distancing in the face of COVID-19 is terribly misguided and a notion that I feel history will judge quite harshly. *We need social connection more now than ever!* What we best be

mindful of is *physical distance* not social distance. So, please, join me in rephrasing what the experts are foolishly demanding and let us help to change the language around this!

### **Social Is a Lot of Things, and Uniquely Yours to Define**

Merriam-Webster defines 'social' as, "involving allies or confederates." That's it. Simple. Anything that we do that engages others, especially those with whom we feel some sense of comradery, is all it takes to be social. What is most important is that we see our social efforts for what they are, celebrate them as integral to who we are – as expressions of our authenticity – and as examples of what, and whom, we hold near and dear, and as serving a critical purpose in our lives. When seen this way our social connections are core to building resilience.

Some of my friends make fun of me. They call me Kermit the Hermit. I connect with people a good part of the week in my coaching and testing sessions, and I love that! But, yes, they are social connections. In my off time, though, I'm more likely to be enjoying my home and other activities on my own, and keeping in touch with others by text, email, Zoom, or (rarely) by phone. Even these I tend to limit. While in my off time I don't often seem people in person. Still, all of these are social activities. And this is where my friends fail me. What they miss is that my definition of social, is simply about connecting with people. It's different from theirs and too often in our lives when we are different from someone else, they have a hard time seeing us. They can be quick to judge, and they impose their own their labels.

The journey back to one's authenticity, the journey of Paradise (re)Discovered, is about shedding the perceptions and dogmas and judgments of others, which have played a role in shaping us over the years, and embracing how we see life, how we choose to live it, and how we can be true to our own hopes and dreams and desires without undue influence from others, while at the same time embracing others for who they are even when different. We can always learn from others, yes. They give us tremendous data to consider. But we can never be true to our own authenticity if living the life another prescribes. And if we are not true to who we really are we also can never be there for them.

Like many people around us, COVID-19 seems to challenge us to connect with, embrace, celebrate, and to hold on to our own unique authenticity. In terms of social self-care this has been relatively easy for me so far; I am used to being alone and my coaching and some testing services continue every day in the virtual realm as they always have. But this may not be the case for you. To be in balance with your biopsychosocialspiritualenvironmental self and thus

resilient you must practice social self-care in the most meaningful way for you.

### What some clients and friends have suggested

- Call a friend and plan a dinner “together” in a parking lot, each with a takeaway meal that you enjoy in your own car but parked next to each other for good conversation.
- Plan a virtual coffee, tea, or other happy hour – Zoom is free for all; many of us have Facetime on Apple devices; Skype is an old standby.
- Connect with online gaming portals with friends or to make new friends; many are free.
- Text.
- Email.
- Phone.
- Start a blog, whether people comment or not you are reaching out to the collective energy – powerful social connections that never go unnoticed!
- Star or join a virtual book club or movie club, or a writing club, again with Zoom, Facetime, Skype, or another way.
- Volunteer virtually – read stories for your local library, staff a hotline.
- If you are not in an at-risk category, volunteer in person to deliver meals, help at a shelter, shop for others, or anything else that speaks to you.

### What Transformational Opportunity in It All

We are living in unprecedented times, at least those of us under 100 years old. But the opportunities for social connection abound despite the temporary limitations we face. Connections made now can be some of the most powerful and transformational of your life *if* you approach them from a place of authenticity rather than from the pressures of what others expect of you or think you should do. For those of us, like me, who have spent a lifetime doing what others think we should do, this is an incredibly liberating moment!

Gone are the pressures to conform to others’ expectations, to attend that party that you really don’t want to go to, the meeting, the blind date, or any number of other things. You are blessed to do things *your* way and, in your time, now. The only requirement is that you do *something*, something to connect you with your allies or confederates. What will you choose?

So, , how will you notice, maintain and even enhance your social connections in the coming days, in ways that are truly authentic to who you really are? **Hit**

Reply Now to send me an email and let me know. I will compile your suggestions and send them out to all in a week or so once this series is complete! And I will send you a free gift in favor.

With blessings and gratitude, and the greatest of connection,  
Mark.



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