

Letter to the Editor: Avoiding COVID-19 and humans

Written by Gallupsun Staff
Friday, 03 April 2020 07:02



Dear Editor:

What did I do with the unexpected time off due to the pandemic? Well, I stayed at home to prevent germ-sharing and germ-spreading. And read about COVID-19, and watched the news about COVID-19, and talked about COVID-19.

What else did I do? Sipped coffee and gazed at the birds and squirrels outside my window. Some internet surfing. Some reading. Some writing. Texting with family, friends, and coworkers. A little cooking. A little cleaning. A little organizing. Drank decaffeinated tea. Nibbled on peanut butter eggs. Trump may cancel Easter, so I ate some of my stash of holiday candy while waiting for the COVID-19 microbes to conk out in Ohio.

Then I found some old teeth whitening strips and bleached my choppers. Then I shaved my 120 pound dog's wooly fur. Tried to give her a stylish lion-look with a mane and a mohawk down her back, but she more resembled a laughing hyena. Drank another cup of tea and checked email and text messages. Snacked on Doritos. Watched funny animal videos on YouTube.

Added a nap. Too cold to work in the yard. Ate homemade turkey chili. Watched the evening news about COVID-19. Prayed for a vaccine and a cure. Went to bed.

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That was day one.

The next day, I went into the office to learn how to use teletherapy, the online mental health therapy services via high-resolution, live video conferencing. Can this old dog learn a new technology trick? And I have to look at myself on camera 40 hours per week until the pandemic is over. Argh.

The next day, I woke-up to the sound of a bouncing ball and laughter. My heart smiled. The sound felt familiar, comfortable and normal - neighborhood kids playing basketball. My dogs barked at the spring squirrels. A red robin perched in my tree.

But a pandemic is circling our planet. Americans need not only pray for Americans, but all humans on our Earth.

The following excerpts are from an article on the internet by Dr. Abdu Sharkawy, MD, that gave me some reassurance:

“The coronavirus is here. But fear not. Mass panic is also here. Fear. I’m a doctor and an infectious diseases specialist.

I’ve been at this for more than 20 years seeing sick patients on a daily basis. I have worked in inner city hospitals and in the poorest slums of Africa. HIV-AIDS, hepatitis, tuberculosis, SARS, measles, shingles, whooping cough, diphtheria ... There is little I haven’t been exposed to in my profession. And with notable exception of SARS, very little has left me feeling vulnerable, overwhelmed or downright scared. I am not scared of COVID-19.

I am concerned about the implications of a novel infectious agent that has spread the world over and continues to find new footholds in different soil. I am rightly concerned for the welfare of those who are elderly, in frail health, or disenfranchised who stand to suffer mostly, and disproportionately, at the hands of this new scourge. But I am not scared of COVID-19.”

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Dr. Sharkawy ended his article with the following words:

“I implore you all. Temper fear with reason, panic with patience and uncertainty with education. We have an opportunity to learn a great deal about health hygiene and limiting the spread of innumerable transmissible diseases in our society. Let’s meet this challenge together in the best spirit of compassion for others, patience, and above all, an unfailing effort to seek truth, facts and knowledge as opposed to conjecture, speculation and catastrophizing.

Facts, not fear. Clean hands. Open hearts.” InsideSources.com.

President Trump wrote in his prayer declaration on March 14: “On Friday, I declared a national emergency and took other bold actions to help deploy the full power of the federal government to assist with efforts to combat the coronavirus pandemic. I now encourage all Americans to pray for those on the front lines of the response...”