

Opinion

The first time around there are no rules to go by

Laurie Holthouse, Contributing Writer | June 1, 2020



It's week 11 of the COVID-19 stay at home/Quarantine/Shelter in Place order, or whatever name you want to give it. I keep having several ideas go around in my head and I wanted to get them on paper.

First, in my current job I have been involved in meetings related to shutting down as well as opening back up, and it has been quite a task knowing what to do for both. Colleges are going through the same thing. When there are rules and policies set, it is done by looking back at what was done previously and evaluating what worked and what did not. In the current situation, there is nothing to look back to for guidance, which is why the first time through there are no rules. Now is the time we will be looking at for the next time to see what worked and what didn't, and then create the rules and policies going forward. This also creates the need for flexibility as we have no past experience to lean on yet, and things then change daily, or sometimes even hourly. Yes, it is frustrating. For everyone, including those trying to guide the rest of us through. But we are not yet through the first time.

Yes we now have experience with the shut down and can have a body of evidence to look at and evaluate what worked and what didn't. We do not yet have experience to look at for the yellow phase, green phase, and what comes next (Pennsylvania's categories) so the first time around is what we are still experiencing. We need to continue with patience. Yes, I know it is not easy learning patience but it is worth it in the long run.

Second, I have heard questions about whether the government has the right to do all of these

snut downs, and now I've heard it explained is this. The government power is called Common Good. It is part of our Constitution. Our individual rights do not extend to what would be harmful to others, so what our governors have been doing is not a flexing of their power. It is protecting the majority of the people. No, masks are not great, but your mask is to protect others and theirs is to protect you, from droplets that may contain the virus, so for the Common Good.

Covid-19 is not the flu and no one yet has immunity, which is a large part of the problem. Scientists are still learning about it, but learning and creating solutions take time.

So, what to do. Keep a routine. Fill your day with purposeful activity and even try something new. Schedule family fun time/game time/cooking time together, or doing something together that interests all of you. Reach out to your elderly relatives and friends by phone as they may not know how to use social media. Do something for someone in need such as help them get food and leave it on their porch. And always, exercise and eat right. If you are affected economically, look into some of the jobs that are available right now that are essential workers. They are hiring.

COVID-19 masks op-ed protocols rules

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