

March 20, 2020

Dear Grace Community:

Today marks the end of our first week moving away from our campus and each other and into a remote learning format. I want to thank the faculty for working quickly and fervently to get their plans in place for their students. I am enjoying following along on Google Drive with what each class is pursuing at home. And I want to thank our parents for reaching out and letting us know how it's going. Your photos and messages are heartening and inspiring.

What I am gathering is that our students are jumping right in and even leading their parents in the ways we learn at school! And your updates help us stay connected to your experience. I hope that this unusual time might generate more connection in our own families and inspire more creativity in the ways we teach and learn. I want to keep pushing us to ask ourselves what is most essential and core to us about learning and how can we focus on that more fully right now? I have seen all of you in this community lean in to teaching children in new ways; it's inspiring to say the least.

There is no doubt that this is a very challenging and frightening time for all of us. It takes me back to 9/11 when my own children were two and four years old. We had to limit our consumption of media as parents because we did not want our young children to see images of the towers coming down or see the destruction and chaos of the event. I remember many trips to parks and the woods and how therapeutic it was for all of us to be immersed in nature. I hope you are finding some time for that right now as well.

As hard as it is to remain calm, anything we can do to center ourselves as adults right now will be so important to how our children come through this difficult time. I am trying to finally build some daily meditation into my life and I know it is already helping me to be a strong member of my adult family. Both of my college age children are home and each of them has a host of fears and anxieties about this virus and what it means for their futures. We eat at least two meals together these days and it is a fruitful time for us to laugh, reminisce, and even process what is happening around us. It can also be hard to find time alone right now but it is essential to our ability to reset and be present when others need us. I am encouraging you to care for yourselves as much as you can.

We are pleased to send you the Gryphon News today. We hope it provides some helpful updates as we strive to stay connected and informed. Wishing you continued good health and wellness!

Warmly,

Jen Danish