

How Can We Promote Civility and Compassion in These Difficult Times?



By Isabel Neira-Sanchez – Liberal Arts Major

Civility is how you behave, and how you treat others. If you are a civilized person, you are kind and humane wherever you are, and wherever you go, especially when no one is looking. We must promote courtesy and compassion in these difficult times that many of us are experiencing. Wherever we are, it is important that we wear a mask, adhere to social distancing mandates, and be patient when outside or inside. If you are doing these few things, I do not doubt that you will continue to be healthy and protect others. If we are doing these things, we are helping our community. Also, respect all the safety rules and regulations that have been put in place. We must protect each other so we can become stronger together. I know that the past year has not been easy for many of us. Currently, it is difficult to smile, but we must do it because this is healthy for us. I know that many of us have lost our loved ones, family, and friends. This is happening all over the world, this happened today, and more than likely will happen tomorrow. We have become vulnerable in this situation; however, we must always try our best to maintain.

How can I promote compassion for others in these difficult times? I think that we can start with having many volunteers and organizations helping communities to cope with the stress of the pandemic. That is one way to help and show compassion to others. I am a student at Hostos Community College, and I am part of the Student Leadership Academy (SLA) and the Student Government Association (SGA). My role in SGA is to prepare minutes because I am a senate secretary. Through this pandemic, I helped the SLA during the winter sessions assisting the students who were in those events. Also, I interviewed some students who wanted to enter the SLA. In the SLA program, we need volunteers and welcome all who help there. This program is amazing, I would say because it helps students to develop their skills.

I help as a volunteer at Lincoln Hospital taking the temperature of incoming patients in the main entrance. During the pandemic, I did many hours in both programs. I feel very happy to contribute something at Hostos Community College. I did many more hours in other programs as well. Also, I am part of an amazing committee at Hostos Community College called “Hostos Veladas Hostidianas.” My role there is to give remarks regarding the Hostos College Wide-Senate, the Senate Executive Committee, and the Library Committee. Thank you to all of those who are representing those programs such as president, directors, professors, coordinators, and the students who are part of those amazing programs. Thank you. If you are a civil person, then I know you appreciate everything that is surrounding you. As a student and mother of two little kids ages 6 and 7 years old, I would say these times are not easy, but do not stop continuing your studies, you must finish achieving your goals. You are not alone, we are together.

According to the article, “New York Times” by Lucy Tompkins, she shows us how COVID-19 has affected professionals, even those that have two master’s degrees. In the article, an engineer woman by the name of Ms. Stephanie Fitzgerald said that, “It was very unexpected because they said they had gotten the payroll protection, and we weren’t to worry. And



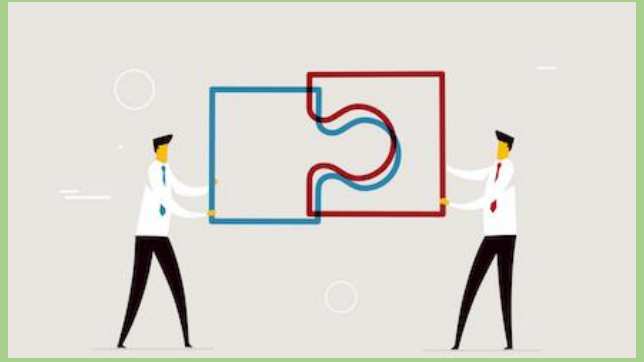
So let us begin anew -- remembering on both sides that civility is not a sign of weakness, and sincerity is always subject to proof. Let us never negotiate out of fear, but let us never fear to negotiate. Let both sides explore what problems unite us instead of belaboring those problems which divide us.

— John F. Kennedy —

AZ QUOTES

then they called me up that morning before I was supposed to come in and said, “Hey, pack up your stuff.” Getting laid off right in the middle of this whole situation is almost nightmarish” (Tompkins). Ms. Fitzgerald is a mother and an educated woman with two master’s degrees. She earns enough money for her family and plans to buy a home. But when the pandemic came in 2020, she was unemployed. If you work hard, study hard, and then your boss says, “please do not come, we don’t have any more jobs for you,” how would you feel? Of course, you feel bad; we are humans, and we need many things, especially if you are a mother with kids. Children need many things, such as school supplies, food, medicine etc. I can understand how she feels, and I feel this is so sad for her and her family. I am writing about her unemployment because this article can connect with many of us. Due to the pandemic, many of us are currently unemployed. Today is the reality, we have many people who are without jobs and they need some help. Some of them have serious problems like stress and fear. I know many people are dying because of COVID-19 and are panicked to go outside. Adults and children are stressed and/or depressed. Many children get stressed because they have a lot of energy, and they need to exert their energy; but at home, everyone needs to do their homework, and spending many hours on the tablet is not healthy.

We need to reopen the schools while maintaining that they are protected from the pandemic. Throughout these times, I have spent more time with my family. This is my favorite part of staying with them, but this situation is not easy. When the pandemic came in the earliest days of 2020, my husband got COVID-19 because he was working in the supermarket and many of his coworkers had COVID-19. Some of our friends died from COVID-19. Then, he was without a job while the children and I have been studying online. My children are in first and second grade. They need my assistance, especially my son Brandon; even though he is smart, I need to assist him because first grade is a challenging grade. He needs to get ready for second grade. My daughter Stephanie is smart as well. She did all her classes and homework in her room alone, but I still need to watch her. In the middle of the pandemic, my husband Ordonez, my children, and I had plans to exercise for 30 to 40 minutes at home. Exercising helped us to burn a little bit of our energy, especially my children, since they have a lot of energy. I spoke with many moms who said to me that their children are very sick, and they have stress. As a result, they do not want to do anything, they do not even want to go outside to walk because they panic to go outside. Today we must work at home, we must study at home, we must teach our kids at home, we must do everything at home. Sometimes, this affects our health. And many of us get sick about this problem.



That is why I encourage all of you to take care of yourself, and always be safe. If you have kids, please be calm and do exercises with them, as this is very helpful and healthy for our bodies. And please eat more vegetables, grains, fruits, as these items make our immunological system healthy.

Work: cited

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/10/22/us/pandemic-unemployment-covid.html>