



I'm obviously aware that there are more important issues going on in the world that require your attention. But I also know some people want to take a break the 'news' and welcome a distraction.

If that's you...here is a series of 10 posts I made in the first two weeks of March called **"In times like this."**

I hope you find them helpful and inspiring.

Please stay healthy, happy, and sane during this crazy time!

#1: 7 Golden Rules to Follow During a Crisis

In times like this... here are 7 Golden Rules to follow:

1. When times are tough, we need optimism, empathy, gratitude, and compassion more than ever. We need to actively give it. We need to openly receive it. We are all in this together!
2. You never know what someone else is going through behind closed doors. Things like this can have crippling effects on people's livelihoods, trigger those with high anxiety/depression, and debilitate those with pre-existing medical conditions. Don't judge. Don't assume. Don't downplay.
3. Fear keeps you sharp. Being scared paralyzes you. Panic NEVER helps. Remaining positive and poised is always the right move. The harder that is to do... the more it is needed. Embrace the temptation of getting overly worried.
4. Your 'true colors' are revealed by how you act during adversity. Make sure your values and behavior remain aligned.
5. The information you consume dictates your attitude, perspective, mood, and outlook. What you feed your mind is just as important as what you feed your body. Choose wisely.
6. Stress is 'the desire for things to be different than they are.' If you want to reduce your stress during these times... learn to let things be.

7. You have zero control over what happens in life. You have 100% control in how you respond.
Choose responses that empower you, move you forward, and improve your situation.

I'm an eternal optimist

I believe positivity > negativity

I know 'this too shall pass'

#2: Will You Invest Your Time... or Waste it?

In times like this... with events cancelled, travel banned, schools closing, sports shutting down... we don't control the inordinate downtime many of us are being forced to have.

But we absolutely control what we do with it!

Are you going to INVEST this time? Or WASTE it?

Are you going to use this time to grow, develop, and improve your life?

Are you going to use this as an opportunity to deepen connections with family and friends?

Are you going to use this time to start/finish a new project?

In times like this... self-care (mental, physical, and emotional) is even more important. Now is the best time to read, work out, write, meditate, listen to a podcast, watch a documentary, sleep in, and spend quality time with loved ones.

You owe it to yourself, to those you love, and those you serve to work daily on filling your own bucket and becoming your best self.

"You can't pour anything from an empty cup."

You need to fill your cup first so you can pour into others and be the best _____ you can be (You fill in the blank: spouse? Parent? Executive? Teacher? Coach? Entrepreneur?).

In times like this the world needs you at your best.

With all of that said, please know I am well aware that everything I just mentioned is NOT easy to do when you are stressed, anxious, worried, or depressed. When all you feel like doing is closing the shades, pulling the covers over your head, and crying in the fetal position. There is nothing fun/easy about feeling that way.

But it's when you are feeling down that self-care is even more vital. Reading an inspiring book or going for a long walk can be the best remedy for stress. Listening to an educational podcast or having lunch with a friend from college can be the antidote for feeling anxious and worried.

In times like this, we must work together to lift each other up and unconditionally offer support, love, and compassion...

#3: You Must Keep a Healthy Perspective

In times like this... you must work extra hard to keep everything in perspective.

This is an unprecedented and uncertain time... and you need to look extra hard for things to be grateful for.

And remember, 'this isn't about you.'

This is about us... all of us.

Even in times like this I have so much in my life to be thankful for.

My heart goes out to the college athletes that have had their seasons cancelled. To the hourly workers, waiters, and Uber drivers that will see their finances decimated. To the parents who work 9-5pm and have to figure out childcare with schools being cancelled.

Yes, my business is taking a major hit. But so is everyone else's. I'm not alone.

I'm truly grateful I have my health, I can make quality time to spend with my kids on their break, and I have two major projects I can now focus on:

1. I just started writing my second book
2. I am building a brand new keynote

If you look for the good... trust me... you'll find it.

#4: Creating a System to Overcome Adversity

In times like this... you must have a system to overcome adversity.

Here is the 3-step process I follow any time I'm faced with a major challenge, adversity, or difficult situation (not just for the Coronavirus):

1. Give yourself permission to temporarily feel scared, disappointed, worried, irritable, or anxious. There is nothing wrong with these feelings. They are normal/natural. Sit with your emotions. Don't try to suppress them.
2. As your anxiety escalates and things feel overwhelming... take a moment to refocus your lens and regain poise and composure. Become a spectator to your own emotions and to reframe your mind set. Be present. Do your best to not overreact.
3. Once you feel centered, determine what is the best response to the situation. Looking through a purely objective lens, what is your best option? What behavior will move you forward? What actions will improve your circumstances? What mindset will get you through this? Acknowledge that you don't control what is going on... but you control your response. Hold yourself fully accountable.

When things seem bleak, like they do now, there are 2 things I know for certain:

1. EVERY adversity will reveal opportunities. They may not be obvious at first... and you may have to look closely... but they are there.
2. When adversity strikes... coupling that with a bad response (bad attitude, bad mindset, bad habits)... things get exponentially worse.

#5: What is True Mental Toughness?

In times like this... mental toughness is vital. But the true definition of mental toughness is often unclear and misunderstood.

Mental toughness is the ability to focus on the most important thing... regardless of the current circumstance, environment, or situation.

It's the ability to reframe your perspective and focus solely on what is right in front of you at the moment (W.I.N. - What's Important Now?).

It's the ability to be fully present... not distracted by the past or worries about the future.

It's the ability to block out distractions, eliminate unnecessary noise, and 'control the controllables.'

Mental toughness is a skill... thus... it can be improved with purposeful practice.

I can't think of a better (or more needed) time to practice than right now, can you?

#6: Your Inner Circle Will Help Get You Through

In times like this... it's crucial that you have an inner circle that you trust and respect... and equally important... that you know cares about you and wants to see you safe, happy, and well.

In times like this you need a support system. You need people you can vent/laugh/cry/share with. You need people to keep you sane during disruption. You need people hold you accountable.

While in this specific situation (Coronavirus) it is wise to create 'social/physical isolation' to reduce the spread of the virus... you do NOT need to create 'emotional isolation.' In fact, that is the last thing you want to do.

In times like this... you need love, support, and community more than ever. We all do.

If you are anxious, worried, and overwhelmed... please reach out FOR help.

If you aren't... thanks please reach out to OFFER help.

In times like this we need to ban together emotionally and increase love, empathy, and compassion.

#7: Are You Socially Responsible?

In times like this... it's vital that we behave in a socially responsible manner.

Each of us needs to make sure our current behavior aligns with the tenants of sound leadership... and that we do what is right.

Remember, leadership never goes out of style and leaders will always be in high demand... especially in times of crisis.

Unlike this picture, here are actual 4 ways for you to exude true leadership and be socially responsible:

1. It's socially responsible to follow all recommended guidelines and best practices to slow the spread of the virus. This is not a time to believe you know best (and for 'regular' citizens to think they know more than qualified medical professionals).
2. It's socially responsible to only share legitimate, valid information. Sharing info riddled with myths, bogus facts, and outright gossip only increases the chaos, fear, and panic. Poor information spreads just as fast as sound information.
3. It's socially responsible to only purchase what you truly need... so that there is enough for others as well. Obviously, we don't necessarily know exactly what we need (or how much we need)... so use your common sense. Act with civility. Don't be selfish... and above all... don't be opportunistic.

#8: You Need to Find Your Calm

In times like this... it's crucial that you remain calm, centered, and poised. That you find inner peace in the chaos.

You can't stop the chaos, but you can be the calm.

This is much, much easier said than done. But the harder it is to be calm; the more important calmness becomes.

And once you've found a sense of calm, peace, and stillness... try to be a source of that to others.

Be a shoulder to lean on.

Listen actively without judgment.

Help others find poise.

The more frantic things get... and the more people's lives become disrupted... the more common it will be to see people behaving in less than civil ways... we will see a societal increase in frustration, irritability, and selfishness.

Don't succumb. Don't judge. And most certainly don't retaliate.

Fight their panic, anxiety, and frustration with even more calmness.

#9: How to Develop a New Daily Routine

In times like this... your daily routine becomes the foundation of your mental, physical, and emotional well-being.

This current crisis has upended everyone's daily routine. And this uncontrollable disruption can have massive consequences if you don't take control back.

Now is the time to stay steadfast in your previous routine (if it was working well), make necessary tweaks to your previous routine (if it was just working OK), or start from scratch and design a new routine (if it, well, sucked!).

With mandatory social distancing and self-containment (cough, cough - quarantining) in effect, most people's major discomfort now comes from having too much free time!

How crazy is that? Two months ago everyone complained that there wasn't enough time... and now I hear people complaining that they are bored because they have too much free time!

Embrace this new freedom and make the most of it. Maximize this time by investing in your personal development and connections with loved ones.

Now is the ideal time to create new/improved habits that will stick with you long after this mess clears up. How cool is that? You've been gifted 2-3 weeks to create a runway and a springboard for the rest of your life!!

I recommend you do at least one thing per day for your mental, physical, and emotional health.

- **Mental:** read a book, write, watch a documentary, listen to a podcast/audiobook, take an online course/class (Google Masterclass)
- **Physical:** take a walk outside, follow an at home workout (Google Fitness Blender), eat healthy food
- **Emotional:** Call a friend you haven't spoken to in a while, follow a guided meditation (Google Headspace), journal

I recommend you do these in the morning if possible... to level up your mindset for the rest of the day.

I also recommend you start small and build up. Try things in 10-15 minute increments... and gradually increase.

Now that you have more flexibility in your schedule... design your day with intention! Design your life with purpose!

What you do now - mentally, physically, and emotionally will determine who you will be when things go back to normal. Choose wisely.

#10: It's Business as Unusual

In times like this... there have been major debates on whether it's appropriate to conduct 'business as usual' during a time of crisis.

There certainly is no 'right answer' as things heavily depend on what industry you're in, what your product/service is, the size of your business, etc.

Most of the world has been forced to shut down in some capacity.

But that doesn't mean business should.

However, 'business as usual' simply isn't accurate.

We should be conducting 'business as UNUSUAL.'

Especially small businesses and in-person service based businesses (who at present have been hit the hardest so far).

Small businesses should be doing everything in their power to keep their company afloat... to support those on their team... and support those they serve.

However, it's vital to openly acknowledge the massive elephant in the room... and admit there is nothing 'usual' about the world right now.

They need to speak openly and honestly with their staff/team members about what is happening and their plan for supporting them unconditionally. They need to make sure their team knows they have their back and they are in this with them.

They need to do the same with their clients/customers. They need to bend over backward to offer highly personalized, customized solutions to any and all of their needs.

Small business owners need to model excellent leadership to both of these groups and share the optimism that 'things may be different during this unprecedented time' - but that doesn't mean they are necessarily bad/worse... or permanent.

This is the best time for small businesses to serve with integrity, authenticity, and compassion.

This is the worst time for them to appear opportunistic, insensitive, insincere, or desperate.

Remember, the way small businesses treat those on their team... and those they serve now (when business is UNUSUAL)... will dictate their strength/success later (when it's back to business as usual).

For those in businesses (large and small) most directly impacted (gyms, restaurants, etc.)... I wish you the strength to work relentlessly to do everything you can to be creative, be open to making temporary pivots, and to leading your team through this crazy time.

The most effective way to do that is through open, transparent dialogue.

Talk to your team. Talk to your clients/customers. Welcome their solutions and suggestions. Involve them in this process. Let them know how much you value them, appreciate them, and support them.

Do NOT throw in the towel, leave your team guessing in a cloud of ambiguity, or leave your clients/customers on hold.

Your team needs you now.

Your clients/customers need you now.

The economy needs you now!

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Jeff Schlossnagle - Omnicell (Vice President of North America Sales)

