

WE ARE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER

LOVE IS THE ONLY RATIONAL ACT

We would like to thank **Gabriel Gutierrez, MD** for contributing this timely Covid Wellness Tips issue as part of his Wellness Project. **Gabriel** grew up in Daly City, California. He completed his medical school at UCSF, and he is excited to train at Contra Costa because he believes that it will develop him into a well-rounded physician who delivers quality patient-centered care to diverse medically underserved populations.



"I was thinking about the wellness project and saw we can write up a wellness tip for the rest of the staff. I've been reflecting on this idea for a while now and have made it a daily routine. I feel residency has been going great for me regardless of the rigor imparted on us and I feel this tip has a lot to do with it, so I thought I'd share."



Love one another.

This is a **daily morning exercise** to guide one's thoughts and actions throughout the day. It acts as a centerpiece for the soul to tether itself onto when the events of the day sway us in multiple directions. The exercise establishes love as the centerpiece, so that when the fatigue of the day sets in, when tragic events around the world occur, or when new wildfires poison the air, **we can always focus on love to bring us back to balance**. In doing so we can see that amongst all the irrational happenings in our daily lives, **love serves as the act that will always make sense**. It's the act no one ever questions because its understanding is universal. No patient ever questions the extra attention given to them, no janitor questions someone holding the door for them as they wheel their cart down the hall, no family member questions the random message of gratitude in the middle of the day. And so, the exercise is very simple, involving four steps.

1. Think of those you love.

This can be your significant other, parents, siblings, friends, neighbors, **anyone that is meaningful to you**. Think about how their day is going and how it could go today. What's their routine like? What hardships may they be facing? What joys are they waiting for?

2. Think of why you love them.

Ask yourself why you love them? What things do they do for you? Is it the way they treat you, their presence, are they devoted to you, do they care for you or make you smile. Are they understanding?

3. Now think of the ways YOU can show your love to them.

This can be in small or big ways. It can be any act, giving a phone call, sending a letter of gratitude, planning a nice dinner, or cooking a meal and sending it to them, spend a whole day with them, simply telling them how much you love them and that they are appreciated.

4. Act

The last step is action. This is key because the exercise frames love as an act not a thing. Without action those people you love may go their whole lives without knowing you're loved by them. It also gives a sense of accomplishment for the day. We can be having the worst day where we just don't want to do anything, but when we at least showed love to one person then the day can make sense, it can have meaning.

The goal is to **make this exercise a habitual practice each morning so that our thoughts and actions are guided by love**. Love for those close to us and those around us. It serves to fan the flame that is within all of us, and as the fire grows, more and more people can feel it from farther away. It can grow from a morning routine to an in the moment intervention at work where you can stop and ask yourself, how can I show love to this person? It can be during an altercation, or before seeing the last patient of the day to ensure that person receives the same quality care as the first person. **When our thoughts and actions are focused on love, we can walk through this life with a certain degree of serenity**. Serenity in knowing that the world may not be perfect, life may not go as we hoped or planned, yet beauty remains in this life, and our actions contribute to this beauty. **With love, we keep the flame alive**.

We care about you. Thank you for all the wonderful things you do here at work. **BE WELL AND TELL!** Inspire us and share your joy (*Wellness hobbies, recipes, dance videos, fav. pets/nature/plants photos, poems, stories, painting, workouts, relaxation, DIY projects!*) Send them to: CovidWellness@cchealth.org. Team Members: Priscilla Aguirre, Claire Battis, Amanda Dold, Patricia Hennigan, Helena Martey, Brian M. Johnson, Kristin Moeller, Kimberly Nasrul, Samir Shah, Sonia Sutherland, Arlene Trimble