

STAYING CONNECTED IN TIMES OF PANDEMIC

by:

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Relationships are built on communication. As social beings, we rely heavily on interactions and interconnections to maintain good relationships and happy disposition

Action, they say, speaks louder than words. But words still speak clearer than actions. Whether we like it or not it is inevitable for the human being to interact and communicate every day. We talk spend time together, attend social gatherings and make people feel they are valued through our simple gestures of appreciation and concern are very much needed. These things happened often in class, well they used to.

At present there is a big shift in our daily dealings and connectivity. One can imagine the drastic changes when the pandemic started in 2019. We now have to maintain social distancing and avoid large social gatherings and satisfy ourselves with online meetings.

Adjustments also had to be made in our educational system. Before Covid -19, online and modular learning might have been familiar in other countries but not in the Philippines.

Despite this reality, suddenly the terms blended, asynchronous, synchronous, modular, flexible, web-based, online, virtual and e-learning become not just part of teachers' everyday parlance but also the only available learning modality.

Covid-19 suddenly converted classroom teachers into virtual instructors. It surprised most of us, big time!

Designing online classes and preparing lessons, are already challenging enough. How much more if you also happen to be a parent of a student or students still adjusting to their new realm of normalcy?

Our personal experiences were challenging. We have to be familiar with the learning management system (LMS) that our school would be using for the online classes. We have to think of how to present lessons in an online format, where students would have to do their work independently or with minimal supervision.

On top of these was making time to assist the learners on their respective class worksheets. One of them can work unsupervised on most subjects but the other would start with formal education. Children are mostly confined in their homes. When the such time finally arrived that partial face-to-face classes are being held.

Many parents can probably feel the frustration and the difficulty that come with the current setup. Undeniably, students are doubtly baffled by the pressure of course work, the lack of appropriate tools and equipment such as mobile phones and computers, difficulty with an unreliable internet connection, scarcity of funds for internet services, handicap in the use of technology, bewilderment in unclear lessons, absence of field of experts within reach who can assist in the learning process and other concerns.

All these exist and alongside the psychological trauma that health scare brought. Keeping in touch, all should strive to connect to keep us engaged in a lifetime of learning, to help us attain some sense of normalcy, and to soothe our collective anxiety.

Sadly, the only sense of connection that we mostly have during this pandemic is mediated by technology. Teachers continue to connect with our students through the aid of social media.

References:

Staying Connected During the COVID 19 Pandemic

<https://www.fnha.ca/Documents/FNHA-Staying-Connected-During-the-COVID-19-Pandemic.pdf>