

STAY STILL

by:

ANA MAY C. DONIEGO

Teacher I, Ipag Elementary School

In the life we are living, difficult challenges, natural calamities and unwanted consequences are inevitable. We cannot avoid or stop them from coming into our life. All of this has become common to us, and it is no surprise when things don't go the way we planned. However, more than a year ago, when a widespread virus known as the Covid-19 virus affected all countries around the world, including the Philippines, it became an unexpected twist in everyone's life. The sudden arrival of the Covid-19 virus resulted in major changes in different systems of industries. Plenty of regions in the Philippines went into various degrees of quarantine because of the increasing number of Covid-19 patients in their respective areas. Transportation and establishment operations are limited and only follow a maximum number of passengers. Filipino workers are still on the hunt for jobs to sustain their families' needs. And the traditional face-to-face classes of students are altered into distance learning modalities. The Department of Education (DepEd) established various tools or methods for blended learning with the purpose of letting all learners continue their education despite the hindrances the pandemic caused to students' education. Through the use and function of the advanced technology we have nowadays, the shifting of the educational methods of students has become possible. Modern technological apps and websites enable learners to attend classes on different video conferencing platforms through the internet and, on the other hand, allow learners with insufficient resources like gadgets and the internet to take modular learning. It may seem easy to look at the changes that have happened, but adjusting to online learning necessitates proper planning, long preparation, concentration, and a certain level of skill. Because it can be difficult for both students and teachers to adjust from the accustomed

techniques and habits developed over many years in traditional face-to-face classes to coping in the new environment of an online class.

Before the beginning of online classes, teachers participate in a variety of trainings and webinars to gain a better understanding of the new normal learning modalities for all learners. Teachers were the first ones who took the first step in learning how to adapt to the new altered education system during the pandemic. They spend tons of sleepless nights finishing PowerPoint presentations and module papers, together with editing their video lessons, despite the unfamiliarity with several online apps. Teachers also exerted effort in learning the use and functions of numerous icons and buttons in different types of video conferencing apps, so technical difficulties will be avoided during online classes. It is seen that not all teachers are familiar with the advanced technology of today's time. That's why they double their hard work in studying to familiarize themselves with the various kinds of technological innovations. Setting aside the threat of the Covid-19 virus, teachers bravely risk their health and safety whenever going outside their houses to arrange and deliver modules so students will have lessons to learn. All teachers showed an extreme amount of dedication to learning towards the new normal learning modalities so they could give the best teaching to their students. Learners, on the other hand, had to also make a significant adjustment during the online class transition. Students who lacked sufficient resources had to consider and settle for what gadgets and internet access they had, to attend classes online. Communicating among classmates and teachers seems like a challenge to most students, especially when they are having trouble understanding the given lessons. Because not all households will be able to provide upgraded gadgets and an enhanced internet connection because the essential needs of the family will come first. Some students are having trouble comprehending blended learning and are receiving poor grades as a result. That's why students are staying up 'till midnight to study their lessons and finish all the required tasks. Even though they are under a lot of pressure, students still manage to continue thriving for the dreams they want to attain for themselves. All of these challenges and difficulties both students and teachers encounter

in the new normal learning environment during the pandemic can really be exhausting. Long periods of time spent staring at a laptop screen can consume a lot of energy and have an impact on the eyesight of students and teachers. It's been a year, and everyone is still finding it difficult to conform to the new normal system of the world. Teachers and students showed that struggle is indeed real, but a determined heart aiming for success will always stay still.

References:

Teaching in the new normal | The Manila Times

The rise of online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic | World Economic Forum
(weforum.org)

Teaching and Learning: A New Normal for K-12 Schools (schoolbox.com.au)

The Official Website of DepED Division of Bataan