Franklin Delano Roosevelt once suggested in a time of great stress for Americans that, "We have nothing to fear but fear itself." Pandemic is a scary word. "Pan" means all and "demos" means people. This pandemic will affect all people and people have a right to worry about it. But do they have a right to panic-buy and hoard essential items? If you have been to the grocery store lately you know what I mean. Understandably, people are concerned about the health and well-being of themselves and their loved ones. But the pandemic is also bringing out the worst in us.

How do you explain the rise of stockpiling, hysteria, xenophobia and conspiracy theories amid the coronavirus? Stephen Taylor, a clinical psychologist, in an online Discover Magazine article says, "Fear is an emotional, behavioral and physiological coping reaction to perceived threats. As we've seen in this pandemic, the fear arrives well before the actual infection – people are experiencing anticipatory anxiety. It is a means of keeping themselves safe and protecting their families. By and large, fear is an adaptive response. It is a useful alarm system that stops us from getting into danger. It's only when it becomes excessively intense or persistent – or when there is no danger – that it becomes a problem."

Continuing, "We have two levels of thinking. We have our rational mind that tells us, "No, I don't need to buy another roll of toilet paper." But we also have a more primitive, visceral, gut reaction that says, "Well, I better be safe than sorry." The herd instinct can also kick in, where people suspend judgment and start doing what everyone else is doing. So, if everyone else is panic-buying supplies, people follow the herd."

The coronavirus is particularly frightening to people because so much about it is unknown. Uncertainty causes many people concern because all the facts about the virus are not known. What is known is that it kills people and is more deadly than influenza. We've all seen graphic images on the Internet of people wearing masks and protective gear. Most people have not had any direct experience with infection of COVID-19. It seems that the illness is generally mild, unless you're an older person or frail. You may even have had the infection and not shown any effects which really is frightening because you might be a carrier and not even know it.

Individuals react differently in how they cope with threat. Taylor states, "Most people are appropriately concerned. But some people find self-isolation stressful, and some will worry about their friends or family. Most people will get through this without debilitating anxiety. That said, there will be a proportion of people – and it's really difficult to predict how many – who respond with excessive debilitating anxiety. These are often the people who have pre-existing anxiety disorders or emotional problems. Or people who have personality characteristics, such as a tendency to be intolerant of uncertainty or a tendency to worry a lot about minor things."

"Excessive coping would be someone who’s worried all the time and is frightened of foreigners because of fear of infection. They're constantly checking their own body temperature or checking news sources, especially dramatic news sources, and they're getting alarmed at the images they see. They're becoming highly isolated and are experiencing symptoms like headaches, insomnia and irritability because they are so stressed out."

"A normal response would be paying attention to credible news sources and avoiding websites devoted to conspiracy theories or rumors. They are following the guidelines of health authorities, they have a two week supply of food and toiletries and are prepared for the possibility of self-isolation. They should also have a plan to fend off the boredom of two weeks of isolation. They might be concerned, but it's not consuming their life and they are able to get on with their every day life." Sounds like he is describing OLLI members at the end.
JUST FOR LAUGHS

Some tourists in the Natural History Museum were looking at the dinosaur bones. One of them says to the guard, "Can you tell me how old these bones are?"

"3 million and four years and six months," says the guard.

"Good heavens," says the tourist. "How do you work out the age so precisely?"

"Well," the guard answers, "they were 3 million years old when I first started working here. And that was just about 4 1/2 years ago."

Deborah Simpson
March, 2020

The Newsletter is always looking for content from our readers. This may be in the form of original work or items you have found interesting and may wish to pass on to others. We always welcome any suggestions you may have to improve the newsletter or criticisms of it. The Newsletter exists to inform and entertain our readers.

Contact Bob Grady at yvoorg@aol.com or any presenter or staff member.
VOICES and VISIONS

Enrolled in an art, photography, or writing course? The OLLI Editorial Committee invites you, as an OLLI student, to submit your work to our yearly literary and arts publication, Voices and Visions. Have you wondered what Voices and Visions is? Voices and Visions is a yearly publication created by OLLI members that showcases your writing skills, your interests, or your creative works in the form of artwork of any kind. We want to see what you have created and what you would like to share with the OLLI community. If you are an OLLI member this year, and have taken classes, you are eligible to submit your work. As your Editorial Committee, we meet and go over the submissions to find places for them in Voices and Visions. If needed, we will get in touch with you about any editing that might need to be gently done. We have a photographer who will work with you to be sure we get photos of your artwork to look its best. Guidelines and submission forms are online. If possible, we ask you to submit your forms online to LizHanahan@aol.com OR leave them in the OLLI office, though an email to Liz is highly preferable. DEADLINE: June 15th, 2020

Walking Activity

“Nature quiets the mind by engaging with an intelligence larger than our own.”

Come and walk in nature with some OLLI friends. Experience the beauty in our different communities. All walks are easy with some minor hill climbing. We will walk for approximately an hour. Third Wednesday at 10:00am. Meet at parking area. Bad weather will cancel the walk.

April 15th: DeDominicus Preserve, Old Lane, Cheshire. (Route 10 to Old Farms Road. At crest of hill there is a kiosk on left. Park on the side of the road. The trail is through the woods. More challenging, as it is not paved and there are hills. The beauty is well worth it! Hiking boots recommended.

May 20th: Hopbrook Trail, Naugatuck. Parking at lot at the intersection of Routes 63 and 188.

Questions? Diane Visconti (203)215-8548 or email Vis1795@aol.com

The OLLI Walking Activity will continue at the discretion of the involved OLLI members.

OLLI Travel:

The OLLI trip to the New York Philharmonic has been cancelled, and Friendship Tours is refunding fees. The OLLI trip to Harlem has NOT been cancelled by Friendship Tours, so any OLLI member who wants to cancel needs to contact Friendship Tours directly at 1-800-243-1630.

STAYING CONNECTED WITH OLLI @ HOME

- Sign up for our weekly e-newsletter (go to olli.uconn.edu and click the blue button that says "Add Me to Your Email List") to receive updates every Monday
- "Like" us on Facebook to participate in interactive posts and "Virtual OLLI Cafe." (https://www.facebook.com/olliauconnwaterbury/)
- Email yvoorg@aol.com or osher@uconn.edu with your own tips on how to stay busy during this time, photos, interesting stories or news articles, original work (paintings, drawings, writings) to be featured in our Newsletters
CLUB CORNER

All OLLI Club meetings on campus are suspended for the remainder of the Spring 2020 semester.

That said, feel free to get creative! Is your club able to meet remotely through online programs like Zoom? Are you able to share with each other over email or social media during this time? Let us know what you come up with and we can spread the word!

MORE INFORMATION REGARDING FUTURE SEMESTERS/COURSE PROPOSALS TO FOLLOW

OLLI LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

Council Members
OLLI officers are part of the Leadership Council, which is the principal representative body of the OLLI membership.

President
Ira Mickenberg

Vice President
Mila Limson

Secretary
Mary Peitler

Asst. Secretary
Joyce Conlan

Find a full list of OLLI Clubs and Committees and their descriptions on Page 3 of the course catalog!

PARKING INFORMATION

OLLI members with University-issued parking decals may park in the following locations on the following days:

**Fridays, any time:** UConn's attached ramp garage (entrance on North Elm St.) or Scovill Street Garage (33 Scovill Street)

**Monday - Thursday, morning - 5:00pm:** Scovill Street Garage

**Monday - Thursday, 5:00pm or later:** UConn’s attached ramp garage or Scovill Street Garage

If you would like to utilize OLLI at UConn’s parking options, you must submit an application for a parking permit at: park.uconn.edu/olli-parking-permit-application/

If you do not want to purchase a permit, find other local parking areas here: http://www.waterburyparking.com/pricing/

Questions?
Call (860) 486-4930

Missed a newsletter?
Find past issues online @
https://olli.uconn.edu/weekly-newsletters/

Volume 23, Issue 6
March 27, 2020
What I Can’t Do, and What I Can

For most of us our days are much quieter now, home most of the time, and observing “social distancing.” For lack of something else to do, I decided to check my Visa balance online. While this is usually a fairly depressing enterprise, I was surprised to find a very low balance! When I looked at the transactions, I realized how much money I was saving by not going anywhere! So, here are some things I can’t or don’t do anymore that are in my usual repertoire:

1. Out to eat with friends
2. Go to the hairdresser
3. See a movie
4. Buy gas (no place to go!)
5. Shop at the mall (and I am restraining myself from buying online!)
6. Attend my house of worship (and the House of Pancakes afterwards!)
7. Doctors and dentists co-pays for regular checkups
8. Visit museums
9. Go to the theater
10. Starbucks

I also received three refunds, one from Yale Repertory Theater, one from the Regal Cinema (sadly, “I Am Patrick” was cancelled), and one from a local club which postponed a luncheon. I got to thinking about my newfound wealth, and decided that one thing I could do was increase my annual donation to the OLLI Sustainability Fund. This way, when OLLI begins again (either in the summer or fall) I will help to keep this terrific program going. OLLI, like all institutions and businesses, will take a financial hit from the economic repercussions of COVID-19. You received a letter a few weeks ago from the OLLI Leadership Committee’s outstanding Fundraising Committee (Vickie Nardello, Larry Rifkin, and Ira Morrison) asking for your help and explaining how your donation will get us to our $10,000 goal of securing a $25,000 grant from the Osher Foundation. Now may be a time to answer that letter and send in a larger donation than you usually do to OLLI. I know I receive so much from this terrific program - new friends, new knowledge, new skills, and new places to visit.

Please consider joining me in making a larger (or even an extra) donation. Thanks for thinking about this. Stay strong, stay healthy, and oh, yes, stay six feet away!
Reflections On Isolation Caused By Coronavirus

For me this pandemic feels like a sword of Damocles ready to destroy life as I know it. A respite for me in dealing with this crisis is to try to inject some humor by exaggerating observations. Membership in OLLI has been the remedy for the social isolation that we anticipated with retirement. Now, however, we are appropriately encouraged to practice social isolation to contribute to our own and society’s well being. Nothing is more depressing than watching the ineptness of our government’s response to this inevitable pandemic. Much has been written about the government’s vacuous reassurances and tardy responses.

My wife and I are adapting to these difficult times. Here are some observations. I’m told that prolonged home time is an ideal excuse for spring cleaning. Just as I settle in an easy chair to read, I’m asked to dust, wash down walls and windows and vacuum in crevices never explored. Instead of having breakfast with a friend in a coffeeshop, I’m clutching a mop and a Swiffer.

We have not done panic buying. Being shoppers at Costco we’ve always had adequate supplies of paper products. We are set with toilet paper for a month. Stop and Shop, another market site, accommodates the elderly, that’s us, by allowing us to shop from 6:30 to 7:30AM. Hey, I’m retired. How about exclusive shopping from 10:00 AM until noon so I can enjoy my morning sleep?

With business so depressed it is easy to get service people to come to the home. Our poor plumber was regarded with suspicion when he came to the door. We avoided being in the same room with him and wiped doorknobs as he moved through the house. Fortunately he spent most of his visit crawling around alone in the sub-basement.

Drives through the country are fun but lunch is now takeout and eaten in the car or as a picnic instead of going to a cafe. The social calendar is filled with cancellations. The refrigerator is stocked with food for cancelled family celebrations. How long does corned beef last?

The satisfaction of accumulating wealth by not eating out or going to shows and movies is countered by the dread of watching my retirement assets nosedive. This reality also dulls the joy of the 30% off CVS coupons. The country is running out of PPE—personal protective equipment, such as masks and gowns, yet in our home PPE means walking around with hair curlers (just kidding). Somehow the fear of coronavirus has impacted on the two of us congregating. Each of us must remain in isolation. Statistics say that forced quarantines lead to a burst of divorces afterwards. Fortunately for us our retirement has helped us adjust and enhanced our closeness.

On the bright side this pandemic is occurring at a time of global warming with a premature spring time, light traffic and adequate time for meal preparation. I do think it is time for us retired folks to learn about social networking, learning through Zoom and checking out on-line resources.

Ira Mickenberg M.D. President of OLLI Leadership Council