



SEVEN TIPS TO STAY POSITIVE DURING COVID-19

Now we are on the eve of what may become a second wave of the Covid-19 virus, I want to remind myself of ways I can stay positive and loving toward myself and others during this time. As a (hermetic) astrologer, I draw inspiration for this from the laws of the cosmos. I come up with seven tips. Maybe you can benefit from them too. Feel free to share this message.

The laws of love and strife

I am often reminded at this time of the beautiful poem on nature by Empedocles (5th century BC). He identifies two basic laws in the universe: the law of love, which binds together all that is fragmented, and the law of strife (sometimes called the law of hate), which separates all that is one. He presents the law of love as a centripetal force and the law of struggle as a centrifugal force. We can observe these laws everywhere in nature and (thus) also in ourselves.

Empedocles makes it clear to us that the law of strife is inherent in material reality and for that reason inevitably colors our existence on this planet. The law of love is inherent in a spiritual, non-material reality. Human life on earth, in summary, consists of navigating between these two laws. Hermetic philosophy holds that the fragmentation of existence offers us opportunities to discover the unity behind it. That unity is love.

And now: the tips!

Tip 1) Take good care of your body (Moon and Mars principle)

At the most basic level, Covid-19 touches the physical system: our bodies. Healthy physical routines are the first step in a loving approach. These include, for example, healthy and moderate diet, adequate exercise, as well as forms of physical care that are good for body and mind. During this time, this proves challenging for many of us. Taking good care of your earthly vehicle is a first step of love.

For some of us, this physical care also extends to others, such as those who work in caregiving or are active caregivers. They in turn need our care and love, for their healing work extends beyond making people physically healthy.

Tip 2) Tune in to information that enriches you spiritually (Mercury principle)

The mass media, including social media, sprinkle massive amounts of opinions and facts on us regarding the Covid virus. What characterizes much of this communication is "strife," for example, strife over what the facts are or strife over what measures are or are not good for society. Our antennae pick up this information and fill our mental reality with this strife. However, we are not will-less victims of this information; we can choose what we focus our attention on. Therefore the tip: consider the information you are especially attuned to and ask yourself what effect this information has on you. Is that also what you desire? Is this information spiritually nourishing? If not, consider how you can adjust your information diet.

Tip3) Think, speak or write healing thoughts and words (Mercury principle)

(The Mercury principle is about receiving AND sending. Therefore, a second tip from this principle).

All that conflicting information we receive comes from somewhere: from ourselves. Consider the thoughts you have had in a day, the words you have spoken or written, and ask yourself: is this what I really want to think, say or write? Am I doing justice to myself and the other person by doing this? If the answer is not a "yes" throughout, rethink your thought or return to your words. You can do this activity alone or with another person, for example at the end of a day. You will find that it benefits your mental health -and that of others!

Tip 4) Realize what connects you (Venus principle)

The pandemic throws people back to survival instincts. This creates many forms of strife that pit people against each other, such as the struggle for scarce resources (money), wanting to be right at the expense of another, distrusting the motives of government officials, et cetera. Characteristic of strife is the dual reality of me versus the other, us versus them. Because of this, we easily forget that there is also a reality that actually connects us. To dwell on what connects you to the other, especially when that other seems so different or distant, is one of the most loving things you can do for yourself AND that other.

Tip 5) Practice gratitude (Sun principle)

The pandemic brings many dark situations our way: our loved ones get sick or die, we get sick ourselves, we no longer see our colleagues or our children, we are no longer allowed to touch anyone, we lose our jobs, et cetera. It is more than understandable that we experience these circumstances as difficult and sad, or become angry. Yet every darkness also contains light: help comes from unexpectedly, for instance, or job loss brings new opportunities your way. Being loving towards yourself during a difficult period means focusing your attention now and then on aspects of your life that ARE going well or that MAKE you happy. After all, those aspects are always there. Feeling grateful for these aspects of your life is honouring the highest in yourself (because on that level you create your own experiences). If you 'practice' being

grateful for a while, you will find that there is more and more to be grateful for. And that immediately makes your life -and that of those around you!- a lot more enjoyable too. That's a good thing.

Tip 6) You don't have to know everything, trust the higher knowing (Jupiter principle)

The pandemic creates a lot of uncertainty. Part of us tries to get a grip on this by developing beliefs about how 'things' are and what we may or may not be able to do. When we consider this process, we see that these beliefs often work exclusively: 'I know how things are, you don't', 'I do the right thing, you don't', et cetera. Making space for the not-knowing is also a form of love. The higher octave of this consists of the realisation that all knowledge is present at another level in our world. This realisation frees us from the urge to ward off uncertainties with beliefs; we can surrender to this higher knowing. This is loving yourself, others AND God.

Tip 7) See the growth that can come from limitations (Saturn principle)

The pandemic produces limitations in daily existence in many ways. These limitations are seen as very frustrating and some people ignore them or take to the streets to resist them. However, in the limitations of existence we also find the greatest opportunities for growth. Consider the simple image of the gym: whoever experiences the most resistance (e.g. in the form of heavy dumbbells), develops the most muscle strength. This principle also applies to life in general: limitations in material existence, which are now everywhere, offer many opportunities for spiritual growth. Matter and spirit are communicating vessels: limitations on one plane go together with (opportunities for) expansion on the other, and vice versa. The impossibility of travelling to another country creates space to explore new territories spiritually. Limitations on a social level create opportunities for new inner connections. Not being able to do what you care about (e.g. going out), creates space to rediscover what you care about. Either way, material limitation enriches your spiritual repertoire. That is perhaps the highest potential of these times.

Finally, how do we approach this practically?

Write the seven tips on a note and preferably read through them briefly at the beginning and end of each day. Reflect on the tip that is (has been) important to you that day and then accept in love your own feelings, thoughts and actions of that day (being loving starts with yourself). If after seven days you do not notice any effect, throw the note away. If you do notice an effect, carry on and pass this message on to others.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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