

This Too Shall Pass

Category: Uncertainty

written by Deborah Levin | August 13, 2020

I don't know when I'm going to see my daughter again. When she left with her family this morning after a two-month stay, she hugged me tight, sobbing softly into my shoulder. Trying to keep my own tears in check, I reassured her that I'll visit soon. "We'll find a way," I whispered. Though neither of us knew exactly what that might look like in a few weeks' time, we held on to hope as we let go of each other.

Self-quarantine is not required after travel from New York state, but being on a six hour plane ride to California would involve unknown exposure, and I know my daughter would want me to observe the same precautions she did when they first came here. It was the first of June and directions seemed clear. We made a list of grandchildren-specific quarantine rules to be observed under the same roof. Meals at separate tables. Hugs one-way only (the four-year old twins grabbing our knees). No bath time or bedtime books. Swimming at opposite ends of the pool. After getting through the first fourteen days safely, we relaxed our restrictions and interacted as one large unit protected within our family pod.

It was a glorious summer. Even with the deluge of COVID-related news reports, we remained happy and optimistic. Any underlying skepticism I felt about life moving forward with a sense of normalcy was buried beneath the barrage of sounds and the frenzy of activity common to a household with young children. The simple delights of re-discovering the world through a child's eyes filled my heart and soothed my worried soul. Now, I have no idea when I'll be able to experience that again.

Before the pandemic, *uncertainty* was not a big word in my vocabulary. On a whim, I searched for synonyms in my 1977 edition of Roget's Thesaurus. I found eleven. Each of those in turn led to dozens of other words that offered nuances of meaning: a hint of fear; an air of mystery; a degree of doubt; a matter of chance; a question of safety; a state of instability. COVID-19 presents with all of these and more, as defined by each of us personally.

I'm a very decisive person. All black or white, no gray. I favor order over chaos, neat over messy. This virus is messy, I'm certain. I will have to learn to live with that.

Deborah Levin

Mt. Kisco, New York