

Coronavirus Fight Offers Good Ethical Lessons

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There is no doubt that coronavirus is a terrible disease that causes havoc, sickness and even death to many people around the world. If we are to succeed in overcoming the aggressive effects of coronavirus, we need to pay attention to some valuable lessons in ethics.

One of these lessons is that within a few days we already miss the luxury of socializing freely with each other. We are no longer gathering in large groups to watch sports or artistic activities. We need to be mindful that when we shop for such basic products as toilet tissue, how lucky we have been prior to recent coronavirus times. We ought to be thankful for the way things used to be. The fact that we want to return to pre-coronavirus days indicates that we feel grateful for life as it used to be. We should now recognize that we were fortunate in the past and we hope in the future to return to our previous happier ways of living. While we should practice social distancing, we also ought to be helpful to each other.

We should also learn about the value of co-operation. In this case, co-operation goes beyond thinking about people who look like us and use the same language. If we are to conquer coronavirus, we must realize the need to co-operate with those who have different religions, racial origins and different nationalities than our own. We can learn from the mistakes of other countries and from their successes about what works and does not work well in other locations. We can help each other regardless of the differences we may have in our cultures and traditions.

Viruses are entirely self-promoting. They have no particular respect or concern for the culture, ethnicity, age, religions or the political preferences of their victims. In order to mount effective deterrents against coronavirus, humans should set aside such differences in our battle against this persistent illness.

Presently, we have no effective cure that can eliminate coronavirus, although medical scientists are hopeful that in time they will develop a vaccine that humans may use to make those who are vaccinated immune to coronavirus attacks somewhat like the flu vaccines are now used by many citizens. Such vaccines will not kill the virus but it will mean that those vaccinated will not be suitable hosts for coronavirus to spread from one unvaccinated human to another unvaccinated human. Coronavirus is thought to be generally more contagious than influenza. Some scientists say perhaps three times more contagious.

So we have an ethical obligation to practice social distancing, both for the protection of ourselves and for the good of others. In this case, we also have an ethical obligation to be guided by scientists and medical experts who can bring their best knowledge into play in controlling coronavirus.

Those who are middle-aged and normally healthy may not be as badly affected by coronavirus. Children and older citizens are at greater risk of death. However, those at any age whose health is already compromised by heart or lung problems, diabetes, and other health difficulties are also at higher risk of death.

Even those who normally experience good health and those who have compromised health problems all share an ethical obligation. We need to pay attention to the advice that medical doctors and scientists share with us about how we can limit the dangerous effects of coronavirus. In simple terms, the ethics of the golden rule come into play. Treat others as you would want to be treated yourself and, if you are a politician, telling the truth is also a good ethical idea.

In the senior apartment building where I reside there are many residents who do not own cars. It has not been unusual for those who do have a car to help those without transportation to get to the drug store or the grocery store for everyday supplies. It is a good ethical opportunity for those who can do so to help those who are in need of help. Whether we are thinking of those who live close to us or those within a much broader area, it is a good ethical motto to realize that we are all in this coronavirus challenge together.