

## COVID-19 Health System Updates

March 29, 2020, Sunday

It is the weekend but it sure doesn't feel like the weekend.

Before COVID-19, for our many weekday work colleagues, the weekend provided time to pause and reflect; to recover physically and emotionally; to connect with others at home, in the community, or perhaps in houses of worship; and to restore ourselves in preparation for the coming week. For our colleagues who work weekends, this restoration may similarly occur on weekday days off.

In the time of COVID-19, the opportunity to strengthen personal connections, reflect, recharge, and recover has become much rarer, but it has never been more important.

Many of you are so deeply engaged in the mission right now that the idea of taking time for yourself to reflect and recover perhaps feels unwarranted or simply impossible. Even taking just a couple of minutes to go to the [wellness resources](#) on the [employee resource website](#) might feel like a stretch given the pace and intensity of the work.

But here is the catch. Finding time to care for ourselves allows us to better care for others. At times the work is overwhelming and prevents us from finding time for self-care. But just like on an airplane in an emergency, we've got to put on our oxygen masks first, so we can have the strength to put them on others.

There are no easy answers for this and no quick fixes. The loss and the suffering that you are experiencing can be totally overwhelming at times. That is a normal human response.

And while we keep working, we do in fact work to stay connected and are reminded of all the good we are doing.

One of our colleagues, Donald, sent me an idea that hit home. It reminds me of similar practices stretching back thousands of years during times of great duress.

He writes...

*Mount Sinai is a very special place. Day in and day out, an outsider looking in would be amazed by the teamwork and camaraderie that exists around the health care system. Sitting at home this weekend, I am thinking about my colleagues, and thinking about*

*how we can honor our own health care workers, honor health care workers around the United States, and honor health care workers globally.*

*I would like to start the Mount Sinai Miracle Minute.*

*At 12 noon, every day, I would like us to stop and pray, or reflect, or simply offer silence for just one minute... for each other, for our families, for health care workers worldwide, and for our patients and communities... In these extraordinary times, I believe this exercise will help give people a feeling of pride, and connection to each other, and the fortitude to go on.*

*I believe that the Mount Sinai Miracle Minute will give us strength, because together, nothing can beat us.*

The world is taking a moment for all of us at 7 pm each day, clapping and cheering, applauding our bravery.

We can do the same for ourselves.

Donald, count me in. Starting today, I will be setting my smartphone alarm for 12 pm every day and, in that moment, doing exactly as you suggest.

It might just be me and Donald doing this.

But I hope it will be you too.

Vicki R. LoPachin  
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