

## Suzanne Blackwell's Top 10 for Chaotic Times

*I'm no expert, but just jotted down strategies I've picked up over the years for getting through a "crisis" ... but also for getting through life in general. Same thing? If you care to read this, may there be a gem or two that you can use, too.*

- 1) **Dispel Fear** – When you find yourself focusing on what you DON'T want, flick the switch to what you DO want. Then "Make it So": Phrase the new thinking like it has already happened. ("I'm worried about my parents as they travel home from abroad. I'm not there to help them" becomes "My parents are safe & healthy. Others are there to help them if they need help.") Thoughts are the engines of action. Positive thoughts = positive actions.
- 2) **Stay Connected** ... in a REAL way – Reach out to people as a human being. A REAL voice can convey so much more than a text. A smiling face is so much more soothing than an emoji. Feel privileged if you are healthy enough to be out in the world and contributing your time for others. Treasure those with whom you are self-isolated, knowing that others may be very alone.
- 3) **Seek Serenity** – Take 10 deep breaths, have a bath, listen to or make music, create something with your hands, pray or meditate, go for a walk ... whatever slows you down and helps you relax. Humans are optimal when they are calm. We are NOT the best version of ourselves when we panic. A few moments are sometimes all that is needed. Take time to be calm and be your best you!
- 4) **Support Others: Share** – A no brainer? Maybe ... but keep asking yourself what skills, talents & interests you have and how you can help the world in your own way. Care for someone's pet or child. Prepare a delicious meal. Find innovative solutions to a problem. Volunteer. Cover off for someone at work. Build or create something. Give things away. Consider ways to support strangers, locally or around the world. ALSO: Remember that non-humans need our support, too ... we are the custodians of the animals, plants, and environment that we also depend on. They are all part of the beautiful world we inhabit. Support them, diligently, too.
- 5) **Change Your Mind** – If your thoughts are not those you want to have a "permanent home" within you, then CHANGE them. Acknowledge & be aware of your very natural human feelings & emotions, but have the courage to let them go (or let them BE) and move on. "I'm so scared right now. I don't know what to do." Becomes "I am frightened in this moment but it will pass. What can I do right now that will help me carry on?" You are in charge of what you think and therefore in charge of what you do. If you don't like it, change it!
- 6) **Reframe to Gratitude** – Re-orient yourself to what you DO have and what you are thankful for, RIGHT NOW! Always come back to "I am so thankful for ... I HAVE ...". Gratitude is a game-changer. It will give you the strength, motivation, means and courage to change your mind ... and then change your actions and your world!
- 7) **Move Your Body** - Your health & wellness is ALWAYS what makes you the most effective version of yourself. Moving is what our bodies were designed to do. Even if you are confined to a small space or a chair, there are always "on the spot" movements you can do – in pain-free range of motion, of course. Swing and reach your arms. Move your legs in different directions. Bend, twist, and extend your trunk. Wiggle & wave your hands & feet. Turn and tip your head. Dance. Walk. Run. Do your favorite stretch. It's easy and will re-energize you!
- 8) **Laugh & Have Fun** – A sense of humor can be a light in dark moments. Look on the bright side of things, find the fun in everyday moments, & help others do the same. It takes creativity & quick intelligence to be witty in a non-judgemental way. How can you turn a straight face or a frown into a smile, a chuckle, or a full-on belly laugh?
- 9) **Remember What's REALLY Important** – Is watching that next episode worth ditching time checking up on a loved one? Is chasing that paycheque worth sabotaging your own integrity? Is hoarding & creating a mountain of garbage compatible with keeping the beautiful natural spaces you love to be in? Will you be remembered as the person with the most toys or the one who made a positive impact? Ask yourself what really MAKES the "world you want to live in." Check your everyday actions & make sure they support that world ... in the long term.
- 10) **Speak & Act in We (not Me)** – Listen to your speech & thoughts. If you hear "I, Me, Mine" change it to "Us, We, Ours." "I need this" becomes "How do WE get through this together?" "That person has it all & I have nothing" becomes "I have this that I can share with others." It is pretty obvious which approach is going to get us through this ... and even allow humanity to thrive & find opportunities to change, evolve & grow. This crisis can bring US together, not tear US apart. This world is OURS to own & learn from. WE have got this! GO HUMANS GO!