

Baltimore filmmaker documents grandparents' travel in RV during Civil Rights Era



Carla Joelle Brown is nearing completion of a new film that documents her grandparents' journey in a RV around the country in the 1960s— during the heart of the civil rights movement when racism and discrimination made such travel nearly impossible for African Americans. (See article on page 7) Photo Credit: Sarah Nelson

Dear Black People: Coronavirus Will Kill You

By *Nsenga K. Burton, Ph.D.*
*NNPA Newswire Culture and
Entertainment Editor*

Coronavirus or Covid-19 or “rona” as some are calling it will kill you. You may have seen some of the conspiracy theories, myths or outright lies floating around the internet stating that black folks cannot get coronavirus. You may have the false belief that those with “melanin poppin” cannot get this deadly virus or if they get it, will not die from it. Stop the madness.

Actor Idris Elba, NBA stars on multiple teams, and black folks in your everyday life have it. You may have heard the sad case of retired nurse Pat Frieson, 61, who became the first casualty of the virus in Illinois. What looked like an asthma attack has now been classified as coronavirus. Frieson has a sister in the same hospital also suffering from the same symptoms and now fighting for her life. Frieson and her sister are black.

Ives Green, a 58-year-old runner, and award-winning Special Olympics athlete, became the first person in Louisiana to die from coronavirus. He lived in a facility for people with developmental disabilities and had limited exposure to people from outside of the facility. His family is still trying to figure out how someone seemingly in great health, contracted coronavirus. Green is black.

You may have heard of Dr. James Pruden, 71, an emergency room doctor in



Paterson, NJ, who is now in critical condition after testing positive for coronavirus. He is a trained first responder who is in charge of the hospital's emergency preparedness unit and lead the hospital through the swine flu outbreak in 2009. Dr. Pruden is now fighting for his life and he is black.

Melanin is not Vibranium and America isn't Wakanda even in the Marvel Universe, so why some black people, who are often disproportionately impacted by medical conditions for a myriad of reasons, believe they are immune to coronavirus is beyond me? For those who think Idris Elba isn't “black, black,” the British-born brother's parents are from Sierra Leone and Ghana meaning he is African in addition to being a black Brit which makes him unequivocally “black, black.”

For the record, people in 19 African countries have tested positive for coronavirus and for sure they are “black black.”

To make it plain, I'm not talking about skin color, I'm talking about identity. If you are African living anywhere in the world including the continent, black American, mixed race, biracial, Hotep, Greek, GDI, hood, bougie, religious, atheist or any category of black, there isn't a magical pill or pigment that's going to stop you from getting coronavirus if you come in contact with someone who has it.

Even if you don't think you have it, you very well could have it and knowingly or unknowingly spread the virus that may not be fatal to you but could be fatal to others. It is called being asymptomatic. Merriam-Webster's dictionary uses asymptomatic in the following sentence to give people a better understanding of the meaning of the word:

“Those measures could work slowing the spread of the virus, which is also believed to be spread by asymptomatic people.”

My point is coronavirus will kill you and other black people so wash your hands and stay away from others outside of your home as much as possible, especially older folks. Listen to those in power you can trust.

If restaurants, gymnasiums and other

businesses are closed, stay away from them. Some restaurants are still delivering and responsible gym owners are posting at-home workouts for their clientele on the web. I've also heard folks saying only two percent of the U.S. population will get it. For the geniuses out there, that amounts to 6 million people which is not a small number.

As for all of the conspiracy theories, the rapid spread of coronavirus happens when your President hires a science denier as head of Health and Human Services who promptly cuts the CDC's budget on managing infectious diseases by 80 percent and is still trying to make more cuts to said budget.

Oh, and suppressing important information and holding press conferences about coronavirus that are evasive and filled with misinformation and flat out lies. Just because your xenophobic President calls it the Chinese virus, doesn't mean it only impacts the Chinese. Oh, and there are black Chinese people too but that's another article (see Jamaica). If you haven't before, now is the time to practice self-care. There is no conspiracy and black people can and are dying from this virus. Coronavirus is real and those of us who have been historically denied competent and compassionate healthcare should be the most vigilant in adhering to guidelines and mandates to prevent the spread of the deadly virus, especially to our most vulnerable populations.

Nsenga K Burton, Ph.D. is the founder and editor-in-chief of The Burton Wire. An expert in intersectionality and media industries, Dr. Burton is also a professor of film and television at Emory University and co-editor of the book, Black Women's Mental Health: Balancing Strength and Vulnerability.

Both federal and state tax deadline changed to July 15!

Baltimore—Please don't waste your money on paid preparers when you can get your taxes done for free! Tax Deadline Day has now been changed to July 15, 2020 so there is no need to rush to file your taxes before April 15. If you earned \$56,000 or less in 2019, you could qualify for free tax preparation services from the nonprofit CASH Campaign of Maryland. While the CASH Campaign and their partners are on temporary hiatus due to the coronavirus, they will resume taking appointments again soon. Keep Your Money - Why waste it on paid preparers when you can get it done for free and on time for the new July 15 deadline? For more information, visit: www.bmorefreetaxes.org or www.cashmd.org



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We want to hear from you.

What are you doing to stay motivated and positive during these times?

The Baltimore Times will be sharing #OnAPositiveNote entries to highlight how our neighbors are overcoming a very challenging time with positivity. Join us.

ON A POSITIVE NOTE

Send us an email at btimes@btimes.com with the subject line #OnAPositiveNote. Tell us in 200 words or less (or send a 2 minute video) sharing how you have been creative in overcoming the challenges the COVID-19 pandemic has caused.



#OnAPositiveNote

Fear and loss in a time of plague

By Bill Fletcher, Jr., NNPA Newswire Contributor

The anniversary of the loss of my first-born has, by coincidence, landed right in the middle of this time of fear and pandemic. We have witnessed, over the past weeks, a President of the United States who perpetrated denial and lies about the overall situation, allegedly in an effort to calm us; more likely to calm the markets.

Our collective fear rests largely in facing the unknown. We have no idea what to expect and how severe the situation will become. The results of this plague may ultimately be no worse than a very bad flu, but all indications are that, at a minimum, it will place severe stress on an already problematic medical system. And, yes, people will die.

For far too long as a country, we have lived in denial regarding the ever-present threat of pandemics. Trump was not alone in that self-deception. Scientists have warned us that these dangers existed and, in the context of environmental catastrophe, the dangers associated with viral pandemics have increased. Yet, too many of us have thought that we personally, or we-the USA, would be immune. We have assumed that others would suffer and die but that somehow there was a wall or force field that protected us. Denial is easy and innocent; and seems safe.

When my wife was first pregnant, thirty-five years ago, there was nothing that would have led us to believe that there would not be a happy ending. Yes, we knew that there were such things as premature births and other complications. But we were both healthy and took the pregnancy seriously. With each month, our excitement grew. And then the unexpected happened and our first-born emerged alive but too young and too undeveloped in order to survive. Three days later she was gone.

Don't get me wrong. I am not blaming us for being naïve. I am saying that the shock of reality threw us in ways from which we have never fully recovered. There is a level of insecurity that emerges out of such a crisis that never completely vanishes because you have faced a disturbing reality: tragedy can hit in the most unexpected ways and the pain is excruciating.

This planet—and not just 'America First'—is living through yet another crisis. We regularly face wars, poverty and pestilence. But for many of us in the so-called global North—the more developed countries—there is a tendency to believe that immense tragedy is exceptional. Yes, it can happen, but it usually happens to someone else. And even when it is bad, it is temporary and well 'they'—whoever 'they' is—will get over it.

We are facing a different reality with Covid-19 and economic collapse. Both are affecting everyone, in one-way or another. We now know that all of us can be shaken, very directly, by global tragedies. And, no, this situation is not something that someone can just 'get over.' This is a situation that will take time to heal and will necessitate a full break from denial. It will also necessitate, as Senator Sanders and others have so eloquently articulated, solidarity rather than exclusivity.

The pain resulting from fear and loss does not completely vanish in time. Rather, we get used to it and adjust to it. But it leaves us with a sense of insecurity that also does not easily disappear because we have had to face a daunting fact: it can happen here and, yes, it can happen to us.

Bill Fletcher, Jr. is the executive editor of globalafricanworker.com and a past president of TransAfrica Forum

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Community Affairs

SBA disaster assistance available to Maryland small businesses impacted by Coronavirus

Baltimore— The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) is offering low-interest federal disaster working capital loans to Maryland small businesses suffering substantial economic injury as a result of the Coronavirus (COVID-19). SBA acted under authority, as provided by the Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act recently signed by the President, following a request received from Gov. Larry Hogan March 18, 2020. The disaster declaration makes SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL) assistance available in the entire Commonwealth.

“SBA is strongly committed to providing the most effective and customer-focused response possible to assist Maryland small businesses with federal disaster loans. We will be swift in our efforts to help these small businesses recover from the financial impacts of COVID-19,” said Administrator Caranza.

Eligibility is based on the financial

impact of the COVID-19. The interest rate is 3.75 percent for small businesses, and 2.75 percent for private non-profit organizations. SBA offers loans with long-term repayments in order to keep payments affordable, up to a maximum of 30 years and available to entities without the financial ability to offset the adverse impact without hardship.

Applicants may apply online, receive additional disaster assistance information and download applications at <https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela>. Applicants may also call SBA's Customer Service Center at 800-659-2955 or email disastercustomerservice@sba.gov for more information on SBA disaster assistance. Individuals who are deaf or hard-of-hearing may call (800) 877-8339. Completed applications should be mailed to U.S. Small Business Administration, Processing & Disbursement Center, 14925 Kingsport Road, Fort Worth, TX 76155.

The deadline to apply for an EIDL in the state of Maryland is December 21, 2020. For more information about COVID-19, visit: Coronavirus.gov.

For information about SBA resources and services, visit: SBA.gov/coronavirus.

We Count Too

By Wisdom Cole
**National Organizing Manager,
NAACP, Youth & College Division**

As a millennial in 2020, this will be the third time the Census has occurred in my lifetime. The first time it happened I was six-years-old in the first grade and my mother was pregnant with my baby sister. I remember the Census distinctively because they would play the Census commercials over and over while I was watching Nickelodeon.

My mother had to still work while she was pregnant as well as raise me and my younger brother with the help of my grandmother who had just came Nigeria to help with the pregnancy.

Sometimes my mother would have to leave us at home when she had to work long hours and both her and grandma did not like opening the door for strangers. I would be home watching cartoons after school hearing the Census

volunteers knock on the apartment door multiple times, and even though we were home, we would never answer. If I really think about it, I am very unsure if my changing family at the time was counted in the 2000 Census.

The last time the census happened in 2010, I was a 16-year-old high school student and I made sure that we defi-

the 2020 Census is quickly approaching, I applaud all the ways the Census Bureau has made the Census more accessible, but I recognize that there is still so much work to be done to ensure that everybody is counted. You can complete the census online, by mail or in person, which is great for young people living life on the next flight like myself.

to-count” are in fact some of the most necessary to be counted as the lack of resources for hospitals, public safety, and school infrastructure would impact them the most.

There is over \$675 billion in federal funding tied to this year’s census count and we cannot go through another census like the one in 2010, where over 800,000 black people were not counted and we missed out in the Census, costing our community over \$16 million dollars. We must think about the future of the black community both present and those to be born in the next decade. This federal funding will be necessary for the world all people including young black people will be growing up in.

The NAACP as well as our collation of partners through the racial equity anchor collaborative, have taken the initiative to GET OUT THE 2020 COUNT.

We recognize that there are multiple factors that will inhibit a complete and accurate count of the census, so we are urging all of our members, activists, and allies to map the count. Through a very special partnership with ESRI we are able to identify the hard-to-count communities and use our power to mobilize our friends, families, and loved ones to be counted so that all of our needs are seen and heard in the 2020 Census.

For more information about what you can do to make sure everyone is counted in the 2020 census, visit makemyfamily-count.org/mapthecount.

“The last time the census happened in 2010, I was a 16-year-old high school student and I made sure that we definitely did a better job of filling out the census that year. I remember actually filling it out together with my mom, and what caught my eye about the census that year was the questions they asked about race.”

nately did a better job of filling out the census that year. I remember actually filling it out together with my mom, and what caught my eye about the census that year was the questions they asked about race.

I did not think the question was inclusive at all of anyone who was an African immigrant and identifying their country of origin. I could see how confusing it could be for someone still forming their understanding of their identity in America or still on the pathway to citizenship.

I share these Census stories because as

Like many other millennials, I am not constantly checking my mail unless I’m expecting something from Amazon, and I’m not home waiting for someone to come to my house unless we planned to meet there. The online option of the census works for me but I understand that it does not work for all of us. There are communities with limited access to the Internet, single parent households where the provider has to work long hours, and immigrant families that are unsure of the information that is necessary to provide.

These communities classified as “hard-

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Baltimore area philanthropic couple to receive Sadie Award

By Stacy M. Brown

The Children's Guild Alliance, a nonprofit organization serving children, families and child-serving organizations, will honor Guy E. Flynn and Nupur Parekh Flynn with the 2020 Sadie Award for their leadership in innovation and philanthropy.

The Sadie Award recognizes people who embody the organization's spirit and vision of making the seemingly impossible possible.

Guy E. Flynn practices law at DLA Piper, one of the world's largest law firms, where he serves as chairman of the firm's Maryland real estate practice and partner-in-charge of the firm's Baltimore office.

Nupur Parekh Flynn is considered among the foremost women in the Baltimore area whose skills in board leadership have gained respect throughout the region. She serves as a trustee of LifeBridge Health; a trustee of the Baltimore Museum of Art; and a trustee of the Open Society Institute – Baltimore. She is actively involved with the United Way of Central Maryland.

"The Sadie award is very special," Guy Flynn told the Baltimore Times. "My wife and I are very philanthropic people, particularly when it comes to issues involving children. We think there's a tremendous need around those issues and the well-being of children, and, in addition to the arts, we've focused our philanthropic efforts on children's issues."

Flynn noted that, initially, The Children's Guild wasn't a familiar organization to him and his wife. But, after researching the nonprofit, the couple was "blown away by the depth of the work they do and how long a period



Guy E. Flynn and Nupur Parekh Flynn will receive the 2020 Sadie Award for their leadership in innovation and philanthropy from The Children's Guild Alliance, a nonprofit organization serving children, families and child-serving organizations.
Courtesy Photo

they've been in this space."

"We really thought that this is a worthy organization and one that has done a lot of good work in the community, so we are thrilled," Flynn said.

Recognized globally as a top lawyer, Guy Flynn serves as a trustee and board president of The Walters Art Museum. He also serves as a trustee and executive

committee member of the Baltimore Community Foundation; a trustee of the Living Classrooms Foundation; a director of Maryland Legal Aid; a governor of The Center Club; and a member of the Baltimore City Ethics Board.

"Part of the legacy of DLA Piper, and I've spent my entire career at the firm, is the tremendous legacy of giving back,"

Flynn said. "While being an extraordinary group of lawyers and civic leaders, we have to set an example of finding the time to practice law at the highest level but also taking our roles as leaders in society very seriously. We live, work, and play in the city in which the issues that we all confront exists. It would be folly not to address them head-on to the best of one's capability."

Flynn and his wife were raised in a similar fashion, which included the inculcation of philanthropy.

"I was raised by people who were professionals. My father was an immigrant from Jamaica, who came to the U.S. to attend medical school at Howard University," Flynn said. "He became a successful radiologist in Howard County, and my mother was very successful in business. In both cases, they instilled the idea of excellence, the same characteristics at DLA Piper. They also demonstrated the need to give back and help people.

"My wife's parents immigrated from India, and they raised her and her sister as very philanthropic people. My late father-in-law worked at Morgan State University, and he was very much a part of that circle of African American men and women who contributed to a lot of good civic works.

"My mother-in-law was a beautiful Indian woman who taught at Coppin State, Baltimore City Community College, and in prisons. She was an artist who enjoyed donating art to those less fortunate.

"My wife and I were raised the same way, and we view each other as amplifiers of this mission of ours where the idea is to do as much good for as many people as we can."

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Baltimore filmmaker documents grandparents' travel in RV during Civil Rights Era

By Stacy M. Brown

Carla Joelle Brown is nearing completion of a new film that documents her grandparents' journey in a RV around the country in the 1960s—during the heart of the civil rights movement when racism and discrimination made such travel nearly impossible for African Americans.

Growing up, Brown says she was riveted by stories from her grandparents, Baltimore residents Benjamin and Frances Graham, about their travels. She knew it was unusual for them to traverse the nation because they were African American.

When the Graham's started their journey, President Johnson had just signed the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and the Watts Riots had erupted in California.

"My grandparents were unintentional civil rights pioneers when they traveled across the country by RV," said Brown, who received her bachelor's degree in 1998, and a master's in fine arts in 2001 from the University of Maryland, College Park. "This was a year after the signing of the Civil Rights Act [of 1964], which prohibited racial segregation in public accommodations, and the same week of the signing of the civil rights Voting Rights Act and eruption of the Watts riots."

To put the complexities involved in the journey into further perspective, Brown's grandparents had no prior camping experience.

They were accompanied by their three small children and embarked on their maiden voyage to the New York World's Fair in their newly purchased 17' Stardust RV Trailer.

In the end, they traveled for 35 years, in three trailers, while racking up more than 94,000 miles, spending \$32,600, and visiting every state but two.

Brown captures the adventure in the new documentary titled, "Everyone But Two: The Life, Love & Travel of Benjamin and Frances Graham."

"My grandfather kept a travel log, and I decided that I wanted to retrace their steps," Brown said, adding that she plans to complete the journey by going to the few places her grandparents didn't.



Carla Joelle Brown retraced steps of her grandparents' journey around the country. Above left, Carla revisited Hermits Rest, Grand Canyon, Arizona in 2018. (Photo: Thomas A. Huggins). Above Right: Frances Graham at Hermits Rest, Grand Canyon in 1989. (Photo Courtesy: Grahams)



Frances and Benjamin Graham with daughters, Old Orchard Beach, Maine in 1965.

Photo Courtesy: Grahams



Benjamin and Frances Graham, in 1970.

Photo Courtesy: Grahams.

The film will examine how the RV lifestyle allowed her grandparents to break barriers and travel to predominantly white spaces of the outdoors in a racially divided America.

"My grandparents met a lot of friends who were white and they have managed to stay in touch over the years," said Brown, who has worked for nearly 20 years in Baltimore, examining themes of gender, race, and family. "It was a counter-narrative to what you might think."

In retracing her grandparents' journey, Brown noted that she wanted to see what

it was about their travels that made the couple inseparable, and also discover what inspired them to throw caution to the wind as though they were the only two people in the world.

"Most importantly, I wanted to truly understand how the simple act of physically being in the predominantly white spaces of the outdoors broke barriers in a racially divided America," she said.

Today, the notion of African Americans traveling across the country in an RV remains unusual, Brown said.

"I want people to take away from this

film that there are people out there that look like me, people of color, and see themselves out there doing this," she said. "There is so much out there in this country to see, and we're paying tax dollars for it. There are some African Americans traveling by RV, but you really have to be in the right place at the right time to witness it. And in general, I don't see that many people of color exploring the outdoors."

To view the trailer for Brown's documentary, visit: www.everyonebuttwo.com.

Anthony Levine epitomizes the Ravens' way

By Tyler Hamilton

The Baltimore Ravens announced they have agreed to a one-year deal to bring back veteran defensive back Anthony Levine. This will be Levine's ninth season in the NFL and eighth season with the Ravens.

Levine's reputation as a grimy, 'do whatever it takes player' is the epitome of the Ravens culture. He is the underdog, an undrafted free agent out of Tennessee State who spent his first two seasons on the Green Bay Packers practice squad before joining the Ravens in 2012.

"I take pride in my hard work. I go out there and take coaching. I give them all that I have and they give me all that they have, so it works out," Levine said last March. "I've been a guy that's on the bubble my whole career. Every year I come in I have to make the team. I have to prove myself every year. You're never safe. Every year you have to come out and show you still got it."

The Ravens promoted Levine from their practice squad during his first season in Baltimore but he was placed on injured reserve after his first game. Levine recorded a tackle on special teams in his only 2012 appearance.

Special teams would be where he made his mark for the Ravens. He finished second on the team with 11 tackles in 2013. His excellence on special teams opened the door to playing time on defense. Levine also made three starts for Baltimore that season, playing both cornerback and safety.

Progressing from special teams to a



Anthony Levine's reputation as a grimy, 'do whatever it takes player' is the epitome of the Ravens culture.

Courtesy Photo/Baltimore Ravens.com

more involved role is a path that Ravens head coach John Harbaugh also took. Harbaugh broke into the NFL as a special teams coach with the Philadelphia Eagles before adding defensive backs coach to his resume. Naturally, Levine is a player that Harbaugh pulls for.

"Levine is a great leader. Anthony Levine does a great job spearheading special teams. He's a big veteran there," Harbaugh said during the Ravens end of the season press conference.

Levine's contribution off the field is another area where he also epitomizes the Ravens' approach. The Ravens' have long been a pillar in the Baltimore community. He has been a part of various community outreach programs ranging from providing coats for the homeless and team football camps for the youth. His foundation, 4EVERY1 Foundation has also worked to help Baltimore.

Bringing Levine back for another season was a good move for the Ravens. It was an effort to bring back a player that exemplifies the gritty spirit in Baltimore.

Is it time to consider mortgage refinancing?

By Christopher G. Cox
Publisher and managing editor,
www.realesavvy.com

As unsettled as the economy is currently—and it is likely to continue to be for the foreseeable future—the time might be right to consider refinancing your mortgage loan.

"Maybe it's a good time to refinance, or maybe not," said Donna Murphy, deputy comptroller for compliance risk policy in the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency. "It depends on how far a consumer is into their mortgage and a lot of other factors, such as how high their current mortgage interest rate is."

"Answering that question depends on what the consumer's objective is," added Richard Taft, deputy comptroller for credit risk policy, also with the Comptroller of the Currency's bank supervision policy unit. "Are they trying to maximize their available cash? Are they refinancing because they want to have lower debt as they retire?"

Answering these and other important questions, he continued, "[It] demands a more sophisticated approach than answering a call from a loan broker who offers to help you out with your mortgage or find you a lower mortgage interest rate."

Murphy notes that the consumer's objectives are critical because there are also options regarding what type of loan is being sought.

"If you have an adjustable rate loan and this is a time when fixed-rate loans are relatively low," she continues, "you might want to make sure your costs are stable going forward. That could mean looking at the potential benefits of a 15- or 20-year fixed-rate mortgage."

As a way to get started in what can be a somewhat complicated decision regarding whether to refinance, Murphy suggests that consumers start by seeking advice from a bank where they have existing relationships.

"The key is to find someone who will walk you through the range of products that are available, and the pros and cons associated with them," she said.

There are some helpful resources and



websites such as the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, Murphy explains, which has a section on its website that walks homeowners through the different stages of the mortgage loan application process.

Another of Murphy's suggestions is to consider getting estimates from at least three different lenders of the costs and rates associated with refinancing a loan so that they can "comparison shop." "One of those three," notes Taft, "should probably be your current lender. If you have a good repayment history, your current lender might be your least expensive option because they have an incentive to try to keep you."

Both Murphy and Taft strongly warn consumers to be aware of mortgage scams.

"If someone cold calls you," Murphy said, "don't give them information over the phone. Go to the Internet to search for the official website of whatever lender you're thinking about talking to. Way too many people get caught in scams where somebody is offering to fix your credit score or get you a quick loan."

Another warning offered by Bryan Hubbard, deputy comptroller for public affairs, who recalls the period around 2008 when many consumers refinanced their mortgages as a way to take the equity out of their homes.

"At this moment people need to look at what may be ahead," said Hubbard. "They should consider the value of the equity in their home today and be very careful about taking out cash and using it in a way that does not improve their financial condition or the value of the property.

"We don't want to see people who are struggling, turn their homes into ATMs."

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15 ways to stay both sane and safe while social distancing

Muncie, Indiana – Practicing social distancing to mitigate the COVID-19 pandemic may sound scary or impossible to do, but there are ways to appropriately handle the process, according to Jagdish Khubchandani, a health science professor at Ball State University.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has issued guidelines to limit the spread of COVID-19 that include recommendations for social distancing—a term epidemiologists use to refer to a conscious effort to reduce close contact between people and hopefully stymie community transmission of the virus.

“Social distancing can be tough on people and disrupt the social and economic fibers of our society,” Khubchandani said. “Given the existing crisis of isolation in societies—with probably the loneliest young generation that we have today—social distancing can also take a personal health toll on people, causing psychological problems, among many others.”

Khubchandani recommends 15 ways to counterbalance the effects of social distancing:

1. Maintain a routine. As much as possible, social distancing should not disrupt your sleep-wake cycle, working

hours, and daily activities.

2. Make social distancing a positive by taking the time to focus on your personality and personal health, reassessing your work, training, diet patterns, physical activity levels, and health habits.

3. Carve time to cook for yourself and others in need. Add more fruits, veg-

etable, vitamins, and proteins to your diet (most adults in the United States do not consume enough fruits and vegetables). Get 2-3 meals a day.

4. Go for a walk or exercise at home. Definitely go out in nature as much as possible. Only half of American adults today get enough exercise.

5. Do not let anxiety or being at home lead you to indulge in binge eating or alcohol and drug use. Don't oversleep, but do sleep at least 7 hours. Our recent study found that more than a third of Americans sleep less than 7 hours.

6. Social distancing can cause anxiety and depression due to disruption of routines, isolation, and fear due to a pandemic. If you or someone you know is struggling, there are ways to get help from a distance.

7. Think forward and try to make best use of technology to finish your work, attend meetings, and engage with coworkers with the same frequency that is required during active office hours. The good news: Working from home can make people more productive and happier.

8. Small breaks due to social distancing are also times to reassess your skill and training—think of an online course, certification, training, personality development, or new language to learn.

9. Engage in spring-cleaning, clear

that clutter, and donate non-junk household stuff. Household clutter can harbor infections, pollutants, and create unhygienic spaces.

10. Social distancing should not translate to an unhealthy life on social media. While you can certainly become a victim of myths, misinformation, anxiety, and fear mongering, you may also inadvertently become a perpetrator, creating more trouble for communities.

11. Based on American Time Use Survey and leisure related time-spending patterns worldwide, we spend too much time on screen. Except for 1-2 times day to watch national news for general consumption and local news to check spread of COVID-19 in your own community, you are likely over-consuming information and taking away time from yourself and friends and family.

12. Reach out to people and offer help. Social distancing should also help reinvest in and recreate social bonds. Consider providing for and helping those at risk or marginalized (e.g. the elderly, disabled, and homeless; survivors of natural disasters; and those living in shelters). You will certainly find someone in the neighborhood who needs some help, this can be done from a distance, on phone, or by online activities and giving.

13. Check your list of contacts on email and phone. Certainly, there are people you have not talked to in a while—time to check on their wellbeing and connect. This will also help you feel more connected, social, healthier, and engaged. Be kind to all; you never know who is struggling and how you can make a difference.

14. Engage in alternative activities to keep your mind and body active such as: listening to music and singing, trying dancing or biking, yoga or meditation, taking virtual tours of museums and places of interest, sketching and painting, reading books or novels, solving puzzles or engaging in board games, trying new recipes and learning about other cultures, etc.

15. Do not isolate yourself totally (physical distancing should not become social isolation). Don't be afraid, don't panic, and do keep communicating with others.





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