

May 29, 2020

Dear Community,

Thank you for your response to our [survey](#) asking whether these letters are of value to you and if you'd like to continue receiving them. We are humbled by your positive feedback, and your affirmations come to us and ripple back out again. These letters will continue; please note that future ones might arrive bi-weekly or monthly and via the AxiosHQ email platform.

There will be more to come. So, let us now **focus on the present**.

## What to do?

This letter was originally envisioned with a very different tone, but the powerful emotions and actions surging from the deaths of Mr. George Floyd, Ms. Breonna Taylor, and others cannot *not* be acknowledged. If we've reacted with anger, sadness, horror, and confusion after witnessing and/or experiencing injustice and violence, **we are human**. If seeing or joining crowds of protesters creates dissonance within us because of our value of protecting each other through physical distancing, then **our brains are working** and our hearts are stretched. If we are feeling shaken, overwhelmed, and **asking what we can do**, then keep reading.

We've written about how the COVID-19 pandemic mobilized so many into action and others into homes. Amidst all the change and uncertainty, we've learned *how beneficial it is to pause, sit in quiet, and breathe*. A [previous letter](#) shared simple guidance on how to be mindful and **come back into the present moment through breath**. Here is a [three-minute guided meditation on breathing](#) from Jon Kabat-Zinn that is very accessible. Sitting still and pulling inward brings calm and clarity, yet we still might also feel the need to *do something...*

## What can I do?

During times of change and uncertainty, there are some things we must do to stay alive and to thrive. We've [written about needs that extend beyond food and shelter](#) to belongingness, creativity, and



contribution. **We feel the need to do, often through helping others.** This is especially true during the pandemic and amidst times of pain, anger, and sorrow. We want to help.

If we take a few moments to pause and reflect, we might ask: *Why do I want to help? Am I making a difference?*

**One way to think about this:** [Rachel Naomi Remen, MD](#), wrote a powerful, ever-relevant essay, "[Helping, Fixing, or Serving?](#)" that includes:

*Helping, fixing and serving represent three different ways of seeing life. **When you help, you see life as weak. When you fix, you see life as broken. When you serve, you see life as whole. Fixing and helping may be the work of the ego, and service the work of the soul...***

*Serving is different from helping. Helping is not a relationship between equals. A helper may see others as weaker than they are, needier than they are, and people often feel this inequality...*

*Serving makes us aware of our wholeness and its power. The wholeness in us serves the wholeness in others and the wholeness in life. The wholeness in you is the same as the wholeness in me. **Service is a relationship between equals: our service strengthens us as well as others.** Fixing and helping are draining, and over time we may burn out, but service is renewing. **When we serve, our work itself will renew us.** In helping we may find a sense of satisfaction; in serving we find a sense of gratitude.*

**Why it matters:** It's been a few months since the start of the pandemic, and people have been running and adapting at high speeds to help others. Even with tremendous generosity of spirit and deep reserves, this becomes unsustainable. **If we approach doing as service, then we view each other and engage as equals...and this exchange fills and affirms us and will make a difference.**

**The bottom line:** When we feel we can't do enough, when we don't know what we can do, and when we're tired from doing so much for so long, we can **pause and breathe**. And it is always within our capacity to ask and listen to **how we might serve**.

This week's short list of curated resources highlights ways to serve others and care for oneself. Please feel free to share these and many more points of light found on our [Share & Care page](#) with your teams, communities, and families.

## Promote well-being

- SERVE OTHERS by [practicing mindfulness](#)
- PUT ON OUR OXYGEN MASKS FIRST. [Free mental health services](#) for those without insurance or non-covering insurance
- For [DOE graduating seniors: FREE Next Step program](#) this summer at UH Community Colleges!
- Saturdays (5/16–6/6): [Oprah's Your Life in Focus: A Vision Forward](#)

## Decompress and have fun!

- READ JK ROWLING'S NEW STORY, [The Ickabog](#) (chapter-by-chapter)
- Saturday, 5/30: FREE SCREENING of ["August at Akiko's"](#) + Live Q&A w/ director Christopher Makoto Yogi
- LAUGH! [James and the Giant Peach readings](#) with Taika Waititi, Meryl Streep, Chris Hemsworth, and more (for Partners in Health)
- 6/6: [Dear Class of 2020](#) (livestream) w/President & First Lady Obama, BTS, Gaga, and more

## Support Local

- [VOLUNTEER](#) and serve others
- SUPPORT:
  - Last chance! [Pop-Up Mākeke market](#) closes 5/31
  - Small and local businesses highlighted by the artists' [Haku Collective](#)

## Stay connected

- 4 PM HST, Saturday, 5/30: CELEBRATE graduates with [Mele in Hawai'i concert](#)
- 8 Ways to [BUILD COMMUNITY](#) (say hi to dogs!)

## Work from home (and with kids)

- ADJUST OUR LENS: [Learn from endurance athletes](#) (patience, pacing, process, purpose)

- SUPPORT families: "[Parenting during crisis](#)" w/Rob Evans EdD and Michael Thompson PhD

During this graduation season and when we seek to find our way through pain, anger, and trauma, we leave you with poetry from [Lucille Clifton](#) (1936-2010), whose work, the Poetry Foundation describes, "emphasizes endurance and strength through adversity". This poem is often read at the St. Mary's College of Maryland commencement ceremonies:

***blessing the boats***

*(at St. Mary's)*

*may the tide  
that is entering even now  
the lip of our understanding  
carry you out  
beyond the face of fear  
may you kiss  
the wind then turn from it  
certain that it will  
love you back  
may you open your eyes to water  
water waving forever  
and may you in your innocence  
sail through this to that*

In service ~  
*The OSF Team*