

To the UW Medicine Community:

When we began writing these letters the days were shorter, nights were colder and the ferns had yet to unfurl. Enough time has passed that the changes we've seen outside our windows have been mirrored by changes in ourselves.

Day by day, small shifts to our routines have been transformed into habit as the interruption of our regular rhythms offers the chance to choose a different path. On an individual level, it might be embracing less time in a car (and more on our feet or two wheels), or cooking most dinners at home, or greeting strangers with a "hi" as we pass by at a distance on an evening stroll.

We have talked about grieving the loss of normalcy in our work and our lives and hear a lot about the "new normal" ahead. Often this feels more like a directive than a choice. The truth is, we're at a pivotal point of opportunity, where we have the chance to turn a critical lens on whether our old "normal" really served us, shed what we no longer need, and co-create new ways of being based not on compulsion, but choice.

For years, the fabric of UW Medicine had been stretched thin across competing demands and a host of acronyms (e.g., EMR, RVUs, FIT, RO1s). We are now collectively in a pandemic we can't fix, facing financial challenges we can barely fathom. In these incredibly stormy and uncharted waters, we have learned how we can come together and leverage remarkable ingenuity and creativity to keep us moving forward. The question we now face is how will we use this pause? How will we choose to shape our future?

Under normal circumstances, the systems and routines we abide by are very resistant to change. This crisis that has brought us to a moment of pause and transition that cuts across every aspect of our lives. As a UW Medicine community, let's leverage this turning point to shed those parts of the old "normal" that didn't support our well-being and embrace new ways of being that will connect, sustain and fulfill us going forward.

Here's what you don't want to miss in the world of well-being:

- **UW Medicine Well-Being Day:** On Tuesday, May 26, we will offer a series of mindfulness and well-being trainings including the mindful use of technology, self-compassion and grounding practices. Please hold 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. on your calendars and join Dr. David Levy, professor in the UW Information School; and School of Medicine faculty members, Dr. Elizabeth Lin, Family Medicine, and Dr. Tony Back, Oncology, for a [virtual convening on Zoom](#) to promote our well-being.
- **Bioethics Grand Rounds:** The University of Washington Department of Bioethics and Humanities invites you to [Bioethics Grand Rounds: COVID-19](#), a special four-part series offered via Zoom that aims to provide practicing healthcare workers from across disciplines the opportunity to reflect on difficult ethical questions that have arisen during the pandemic. [Register for the series.](#) **Today from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m.: Session 2 – Ethics in PPE Conservation: Homemade Masks and Supererogatory Actions.**

- **Free Yoga:** Be Luminous Yoga is offering unlimited live and on demand Yoga for all of UW Medicine through July 15. Check out [The Whole U](#) for details.
- Make sure to check out the fabulous [list of local and national discounts and free offers](#) for our care providers that has been compiled by our friends in Advancement.
- As we are navigating the challenges and stresses COVID-19 has put on our systems, please continue to share your [questions and concerns](#) with us for our **Friday 3 p.m. [Town Hall](#)**.

We know we are entering another challenging phase of life with COVID-19, and that we will all make additional sacrifices in our process of rebuilding. Let's continue to do this together with the care and compassion we have seen shine through in our most difficult moments thus far.

We are so thankful to be a part of this remarkable community and for the work and sacrifices each member has already made. Together, we can build a UW Medicine that doesn't simply return us to where we have been, but rather moves us toward a future we will collectively envision.

With gratitude,

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