

COVID-19 CANCELLATIONS – THE GIFT OF TIME

What to do when...Work, School, Church, Events, Trips are cancelled?

by Susan Vogt

FIRST THINGS FIRST

Survival: If you are faced with illness, loss of income, or no discretionary time because you are responding to the needs of Covid-19 victims – **Lean on us who have the time to help.**

For the rest of us: Covid-19 and cancellations may be an inconvenience but we have the gift of extra free time that has been opened up by the cancellations. Following are some ideas.

PAUSE

1. It's OK to feel sad

It's human to regret missing something you planned to do. Take a moment to grieve your loss...and then go on with your life.

2. Be prayerful

Assuming that your basic needs of food, clothing, shelter, health, and income are met, remember that some of our "neighbors" are in need of these basics. Be grateful and prayerful.

3. Respond to those in need.

Assuming that your brain is still open and working, consider what actions you may be able to take to relieve someone's lack of food, clothing, shelter, health, or income. After that –

USE YOUR FOUND TIME WELL

Work: If your job is reduced, delayed, or the venue changed to home, BUT your income is not seriously impacted you have the gift of extra time. You could always binge watch TV or videos but what may you have been putting off because you just didn't have the time?

1. Clean or Declutter – your home. See [Living Lightly blog](#) for ideas.
2. Exercise – Start or expand home exercise options. Climb those stairs, walk, or bike more.
3. Cook – Offer extras to neighbors who don't have the time or places that feed the hungry.
4. Garden – Get your garden ready for planting.
5. Repair – something that's broken.
6. Communicate – Talk on the phone or internet with friends and family.
7. Meditate, Read, Write.

School: If you are a student or parent of a student, a school closure changes everything. College and high school students can often continue studies at home if they have a structure or are self-motivated. For elementary age students it's harder not to just fritter the time away and requires more parental involvement. But what to do when the school work is done?

1. Have a Family Meeting to plan a family outing or "inning". See [Just Family Nights](#).
2. Creative play – Pull out those old board games (Monopoly, Scrabble, cards, Settlers...)
3. Tell stories or answer one of these [65 Family Questions](#)
4. Play outside – Ride bikes, hunt for recyclable trash, Hide & Seek, skate
5. Read library books
6. Play dress-up with stuff around the house.
7. If all else fails – Help around the house.

Church: It's good to gather and pray with people who share your faith and values. But, with churches, mosques, and temples also canceling services it doesn't mean that you need to be in a spiritual desert.

1. Have "Church at Home" – a special meal that includes breaking bread and grape juice.
2. Include scripture, discussion, petitions, the Our Father, sign of peace, a blessing, song.
3. See [Beyond Grace and Bedtime](#) for additional ideas.
4. A Church "Service" need not always look like worship. Consider these [Family Service ideas](#)

Events & Trips: Put these nice but optional things in perspective.

Follow the advice of Queen Elsa in *Frozen* and *Let It Go*.