



A Classical Education for the Modern World

## Dear Families,

As we spend our time trying to reflect on and manage this stage in our lives, here are some thoughts I wanted to share with you.

Over the last 5 weeks, I have been talking with many of our staff, colleagues and Latin parents about their children (our students), some who are creating havoc at home. What can I possibly say to them, the adults who are trying to control and direct their housebound, albeit irritable children?

The new maxim for this time needs to be **if your child is happy, the house is happy**. So, there becomes this need for far more *compromise* than many of us would normally tolerate. I think we all believe that a moderate amount of good schooling is going to be better than nothing for right now. A good education is a human core value, and thus we continue to validate that belief as we proceed with our Washington Latin distance-learning programs.

At the same time, we also have to understand that right now, being a **good-enough parent**, is going to be the thing that we all need to learn to do, moving forward. We can longer hold on to the notion that being the “perfect” parent is real, let alone possible or even healthy. In order to raise a child well, one ought not to try to be a perfect parent, as much as one should not expect one’s child to be the “perfect student”, or to become, a perfect individual. Perfection is not within the grasp of ordinary human beings.

We cannot, nor should we expect of ourselves to perform at levels aimed at perfection that once marked what “experts” defined as “parenting excellence”. That ideal standard was our guiding principle *before* our school closed and the world stopped spinning on its traditional axis.

**Good-enough parents** understand that nature has created children to be quite resilient. We would not have survived as a species if that were not true. As long as parents don’t mess up too badly (and sometimes even if they do), the children will turn out OK, and OK is good enough.

Almost everyone I know says they're having trouble concentrating. There was a Harvard Business Review article a couple of weeks ago speaking directly to this issue. If you’re feeling constantly exhausted right now, don’t be surprised. This is a common experience of **grief**. When people feel a low level of anxiety throughout the day, now weeks, it manifests in our mind and body. It leaves us feeling exhausted by the emotional drain of it.

Let’s not drive ourselves into the ground right now. Let’s at least **use this moment in time to reflect on what’s important**, rather than trying to maintain ***disproportionate levels of performance*** in such a singular and difficult period.

Finally, there's a word I want to pass along: **self-compassion**. This really is a shocking time. There's a reason we're calling this crisis unprecedented. We're dealing with a deadly virus that's incredibly worrisome and indeterminate. It's okay to feel lousy. It's okay to not be working efficiently from home. Give yourself and your family members more *self-compassion* and more of a benefit of the doubt than you usually would.

Thank you.

***Jack***  
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