

July 8, 2020 Update

Hello Healers,

Reflection: *Behind the Mask*

On Wednesdays, I usually pick up groceries for the week. So, today, is my shopping day. I'm excited. If it is anything like last week's trip, I'll leave feeling hopeful.

Here's why. Almost everyone in the store was wearing a mask. Shoppers were respecting each other's distance. From store employees to shoppers, people were saying "hi," were saying "excuse me," were saying "can I help you?" In the fruit section, one shopper was squeezing a grapefruit and when she started to put it back to try another a young girl with her said "I think we should keep that since we touched it, we don't want someone else picking it up." The shopper thanked her for the reminder and put it in the cart. People were thinking of others.

When I checked out, even though we were separated by newly installed plexiglass, the barrier didn't stop the clerk from asking "how was I doing?" and we had a nice conversation while my food was being scanned and bagged.

Behind the masks, people were kind, sharing, accommodating, helping. Too often what we see behind the figurative masks we wear is bitterness, anger, separation and disunity.

The irony didn't escape me.

Daily in the news and in our own communities we are reminded that we have yet to learn to love our neighbor as ourselves. We rant, we rave, we blame, we shame, we accuse and abuse: we elevate self over selflessness. Anne Lamott writes in her work *Bird by Bird*: "you can safely assume you've created god in your own image when it turns out god hates all the same people you do."

Here we were in a grocery store, a randomly gathered community, intentionally masked, supporting each other—getting through this together.

I walked out of the store smiling. While my mask may have covered my mouth and nose and hence that smile, anyone could have seen the joy of the moment in my eyes.

When the masks come off, may our fully exposed expressions continue to be neighborly, to be ones of unity and harmony.

Reminder:

Our next fall schedule update will be posted on July 15.

Be Safe. Be Well. Be Healers and Helpers,

Rich Lloyd, President