

IN TIMES OF UNCERTAINTY, DO NOT STRESS ABOUT WHAT YOU CANNOT CONTROL – FOCUS ON WHAT YOU CAN

Hi Year 7, I hope you are keeping well.

Having done many phone calls and emails to parents and students, I know there are many questions going on in all our heads:

When will Lockdown end?

When will we go back to school?

When do we get back to normal?

When can I hug my grandparents again?

When will we be safe to play with our friends?

The list goes on.....and the list of questions underline how uncertain these times are. If only we knew dates, details, an outline of what the future will be like.

But the Lockdown uncertainty is just like normal life, but magnified.

For example, when a close relative is ill, there may be no certainty about how long the illness will be, how serious it could get and whether there will be recovery in the long term. Stressing about that is no good. Denying it is happening is no good. Accepting the situation moment by moment, day by day, and thinking how can you help in the present is the only thing you can control.

For example, you may worry about your GCSE exams in the future and whether this lockdown will impact on your chances of success. Stressing about it is no good. Denying the GCSE exams will happen is no good either. Accepting that while you cannot sort out your future and exams, you can do the tasks set by each teacher on Teams, you can read and keep your mind sharp, you can go on BBC Bitesize and swot up on subjects or skills you think need more attention. YOU CAN TAKE CONTROL.

Uncertainty creates stress because we always want to know what will happen next. We don't like surprises, shocks or being on the back foot. But life will always have uncertain times. When you go for a job interview or apply for an apprenticeship or apply to University, there is no guarantee, which creates stress and worry. But you can control how well you prepare for the interview, how well you prepare the application, how prepared you are for the job. That is in your control. Knowing that should calm you.

So let's look at your type of day now....

You are in control of whether you get up as if it is a school day and have a whole day to manage.

You are in control of whether you respond to the microsoft Teams notifications from every teacher.

You are in control of whether you contact the teacher through teams or by emailing school at school@durhamjohnston.org.uk if you have a technical or learning issue.

You are in control of whether you feel healthy or not. You decide whether you exercise or laze around.

You are in control of how you behave with your parents and siblings each day. You can make it happier and funnier or heavier.

You are In control of whether you text or phone or contact a friend, relative or grandparent to provide company or good conversation.

In these times, it can be easy to focus on what we cannot do, what we cannot control, what we do not know.

But you all know you have school you can contact, a teacher you can email, a relative or friend you can talk to.

And your school will always be here. It feels a little more socially distant and awkward at the moment – but it is still here for you.

“Notice and appreciate the present moment. Too often we spend all our time in our minds, or in our phones. Just embrace what is in front of you.”

Your tutors, your Head Of Year, your school is missing you. Keep safe. Focus on what you can control.

Mr Noble