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of Southern California

Choose Love.

July 28, 2020

I have been hearing a lot lately from family, friends and colleagues - **they're hitting the COVID-wall**. After four months of social isolation, longer workdays or not working at all, and frustrating environmental circumstances, the walls are starting to close in.

We long for a return to normalcy, a return to the way things were and a sense of control. We want to believe the warm weather and summer winds will magically blow the virus away long enough for a reprieve to enjoy all that summer brings, before preparing for fall and the return of the flu, and perhaps a second surge.

What we know to be true is we did a good job in flattening the curve from March to June. It could have been much worse, even though many people got sick and many people died: **forty-seven times more people than who perished on 9/11**. Yet, because we didn't see 145,000 flag draped coffins on the evening news, nor a continuous crawl with the names of the deceased at the bottom of our screens, we became removed from the threat – "it was happening elsewhere" "it couldn't be that bad" "the numbers were low", right?

We became numb to the deadly reality of this virus. We became weary and impatient, economically and politically challenged, and we suspended our belief in science, ignored common sense and let our guard down. So, we came back together - on beaches, in neighborhood bars, and at backyard family BBQs – and cases spiked - because the virus doesn't move, people move the virus.

So, despite our best efforts COVID is here with a vengeance, with counts higher than ever. On the day of this writing, California surpassed New York for the first time in the number of COVID cases and is only second to Brazil worldwide, resulting in one-third of California, the fifth largest economy in the world, being closed for business.

My main point today is to share with you the advice I've been giving to family, friends and colleagues who have hit the COVID-wall: **turn off your ringers and turn off your screens**. Listen instead to that divine spirit within each of us which speaks to what is best about us, our passion for creation. Focus instead our time and energy on our humanity, our art, our culture, that which makes us who we are...sentient human beings. Create! Sing, dance, perform music, sculpt, paint, write, pray, love – whatever it may be. Now is the time to share with one another what we believe in, what we value, where we come from, what we stand for, and what we don't, to manifest a future filled with our art, our culture, our love, to offset that COVID-wall of fear and negativity that some of us might be feeling.

It's time to choose love and lead with our hearts.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Henry N. Tuttle".

Henry N. Tuttle
President and Chief Executive Officer

[Health Center Partners of Southern California](#), a family of companies, includes a [16-membership organization](#) of federally qualified health centers, Indian Health Services Organizations, both urban and sovereign, and Planned Parenthood of the Pacific Southwest, collectively serving 850,000+ patients each year, for 3.6 million patient visits each year, at 160 practice sites across San Diego, Riverside, Imperial counties, with the seventh largest provider group in the region. [2018/2019 Impact Report](#).