



INNER RESOURCES

By Leah Taub

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Isolating at home. What to do?

I cannot speak to the situations of those in dire circumstances; I can only speak for myself whose situation was not dire, just strange. Time to dust off those inner resources and let them serve me.

COOKING

Immediate change of gears. Goodbye diners and restaurants; hello stove and kitchen, and back to the kitchen, and again to the kitchen.

I'm a pretty good cook, not great but o.k. One thing I have to say about myself is that I am very creative. The combinations I have put together amaze even me. My freezer was well stocked in the beginning; then two neighbors started shopping for me. After a few weeks I ordered takeout a couple times and have done more of that in recent weeks. I am thinking seriously of venturing back into the supermarket soon.

PLAYING THE PIANO

What better time than now to perfect piano pieces that I have been working on for years. Home alone with lots of time. For about two weeks I diligently spent hours at the piano and was actually improving before I lost interest. Two weeks ago, Joan asked me to play the piano during her weekly Zoom visits with friends, to which I am invited, so I'm now dusting off a few tried and true pieces. It's been good for me to have a goal to work towards.

SCRAPBOOKS

I developed a stack of pictures of my great-grandchildren when I last saw them in Baltimore last January but never incorporated into the scrapbooks. Finally, I took the plunge and picked up the photos, scissors, and sticky things. Pasting photos in albums has always been good therapy for me, so once I got back to the task, I found it pleasurable.

READING

I do not have a book that I have been caught up in. A few weeks ago, I picked up a book that I got as a Confirmation gift back in 1944 at the age of 15, *A Golden Treasury of Jewish Literature*, published in 1937. I read some short stories that held my interest but alas, most of them ended tragically, so I put the book back in the bookcase from whence it came.

WRITING

I ground out several pieces about our present situation; one on toilet paper or lack thereof, several on the months of March, April and May. Then I didn't feel like writing any more. I was tired of the considerable time I was spending at the computer and gave myself a break. I started watching afternoon movies on TV but first I had to give myself permission to do that. (I always feel I should be producing something.)

ART

I have a collection of colored pencils, black pencils, watercolors, a *How to Draw* book, artist's pads. I have the desire to draw images that look like something. Alas, I have no natural skill. However, I DO HAVE TIME TO LEARN. I think I will save my art practice for my old age (I am presently 91).

I did, however, pass some pleasant moments painting on stones. I bought the paint a couple years ago to touch up a steppingstone and though my work would have made a third-grader proud, it still gave me pleasure doing it. On one small flat rock I painted "Grandmother's Garden," and on another small oval stone I painted flowers.

HOUSEWORK

The activity of housework is not in my vocabulary. I do as little as possible, primarily the bathrooms and the kitchen. It will take me ten minutes to wash the kitchen floor; I am seriously thinking about doing that soon.

EXERCISE

I am woefully derelict in that department. I have occasionally walked around the block (having to stop occasionally to catch my breath) but that's another "don't feel like it." Almost daily I bend down to pick weeds from the garden, even though I don't feel like it, if that counts for anything.

Ballet: I have taken three ballet classes on Zoom and even though I do the barest minimum, I know that it is good for me to continue.

Zoom meetings: I learned about Zoom early on as soon as public classes and meeting were cancelled. Since then it's been a book discussion group, Bethlehem Neighbors, Clara's Tea and Talk I started going to Joan and Bob's Friday night group and have even been on with my greats in Baltimore.

Driving my car: I didn't go anywhere for 7½ weeks; then I ventured to the home of friends for a cookout. Today I ventured to a friend's house to see her pretty garden and to hear a violin and cello concert given in the driveway by the couple who live across the street. These outings were held outdoors and each one was a real tonic for my well-being.

Bringing us back to inner resources. Some people can handle isolation better than others. I am sure I would go mad if I had to be confined to a tiny apartment with no activities to keep me busy, or just confined. Here we are, valiantly trying our best to keep our physical health and our mental health, listening to the experts and listening to our hearts.

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