



# THE PANDEMIC vs THE MIND

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“The ability to cope with challenges and difficulties, to restore and maintain a new balance when the old one is destroyed, and the ability to absorb shocks and bounce back.” Sounds like a super-hero power? No. It’s just resilience, something we all possess. As we move closer to the two-year mark since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the idea of resilience becomes even more relevant. I believe that one of the first steps toward resilience is acknowledgment of challenges. This means that we should avoid the temptation of denial, trying to convince ourselves that our challenges don’t exist, or that they will just disappear by themselves. Once we are able to accept what we’re going through, we can progress toward applying coping mechanisms and finding solutions. It is a fact, that as we get older, life challenges seem to increase and intensify. These may include the pressures of school life, contending with the demands of parents, pursuing our desires, navigating our social space with peers and so on.

How can we do this? We can start by embracing healthy thoughts, hearing the negative ones but challenging them with counter-thoughts, embracing hope. Accepting change is often necessary for improvement to occur. Fostering wellness is critical.

The mind and the body are two powerful allies, and we should take care of both. You know the drill: healthy diet, exercise and rest! It helps to also connect with others; whether it is family, friends, colleagues, or support groups. The power of this should not be underestimated. This is why a program such as Mind and Motion, is a great opportunity for youths to connect with each other and form strong networks. The pandemic has posed many restrictions to our social habits and the ability to connect with each other, but it has not made it impossible. With technology and the proper use of social media platforms, we can still connect with each other in various groups and enjoy comfortable spaces where we can freely express our thoughts, concerns and challenges. Parents have a role to play in facilitating this, through a balance between appropriate supervision and allowing their children to have access to these media.

The key thing to remember is that, the pandemic along with other aspects of our lives, will be challenging overcoming. However, one of the most powerful tools available for us to use, is “the mind.” Once we take the necessary steps to equip the mind, the rest will follow. In the battle of the “the pandemic versus the mind,” the mind should win!