

As part of my duties as the school counselor I was tasked to come up with some tips to help ease the stress of the unknown. I have always found that talking to someone who has a direct experience with something can be helpful. The following is the result of my research.

DISCLAIMER: My niece who is teaching in South Korea shared the following information with me. She lives in a city the size of Grand Island. They have NO cases of the virus although she lives in an area of origin of the disease. Cases in South Korea showed up in January, right at the end of their school year. Students are still not in session. However, by following the tips below South Korea has significantly decreased the number of new cases from 800 per day to around 74 in her region. People in her city began following the tips below on February 16 and keeping a city of 100,000 diseases free for over a month is amazing.

The key to their success is that EVERYONE follows the tips.

Some prevention tips started out as individual choice but as the country found out what worked things were mandated. If that happens here it will seem like an over-reaction but she said not to panic. If things are mandated...it just means that what they want works. Please keep an open mind. In some ways we are more fortunate than some countries because we aren't the first to get the virus. At this point in time things are getting under control in South Korea and she said she feels safer there because of the protocols, which are followed by EVERYONE. That is the key to prevention....EVERYONE needs to follow the tips as best as they can. I know I repeated that several times but my niece also repeated it several times.

Here are the tips they are using successfully to prevent the spread of Covid 19.

- **Stay home!** This means EVERYONE. The pandemic hit there at the end of their school year. I know it might seem difficult for students to stay home. For parents, making your kids stay home will be one of your biggest challenges. People, especially healthy teens, feel good and that's the problem. She said so many people have the corona virus and are asymptomatic or show no signs. The asymptomatic ones are the most dangerous folks to have out on the street. You can have it and be spreading it to others and don't know it. At her school they reminded students that they can still communicate using snap chat, phones, zoom, Face time, and even video games. Side note on this: ***ONE person in South Korea is responsible for 6000 cases. So, if you think it won't matter if you go out because you feel fine, think again.*** A woman they call Patient 31 led to those 6000 cases. She felt okay but refused the free testing. She went to church and had close contact with people. She had a

car accident later that day and they found the virus when treating her. She has been linked to over 6000 cases.

- **If you do need to go out, wash your coats and pants upon returning.** If you had on mittens wash those too. Laundry detergent and a low heat will kill the virus.
- ***Clean your phone!*** Use Alcohol wipes or sanitize with a spray or rubbing alcohol on a tissue. The virus can live 96 hours on a phone.
- **Take your temperature twice a day.** Ninety percent of cases are linked to a temperature. If you have been to a bigger city or traveled out of the state take your temperature more often. Early detection is key to stopping the spread and helps with the success of treating the symptoms. Side note: She said they have checkpoints in and out of her city where they stop you and take your temperature and test on the spot if you have a temp. Most stores make you take a temperature when you go in. Yes, it does seem harsh and a violation of rights but it is for the good of ALL. Train stations in her city have thermal heat detectors in place to catch potential carriers. Again, that may seem odd but has proven affective in the prevention of the disease.
- **Wear a mask.** This may contradict what you have heard on the news. However, they do work. They work so well that in South Korea it is against that law to not wear a mask. Some will tell you that if you wear one and come in contact with some who has it that you could be more at risk because you trap the virus. However, they have found that if ALL wear masks, the sick keep the disease to themselves and the healthy have an extra barrier. Her exact words were: "If masks didn't work the government wouldn't spend as much time and money mandating them." In her city the schools had to turn in all of their masks to the government. The government now dispenses two masks per week to each citizen based on the end digits of their birth year. Masks can be picked up at post offices or pharmacies. This ensures all have protection. She said that was one of the first federal mandates that went out.
- **More on masks.** I know they can be hard to find but there are several tutorials on YouTube showing how to make masks. Some don't even

require a sewing machine. If you do have a mask of the paper type she said they told them they can be put in the sun for 2-3 hours and sanitized that way.

- **Limit group size.** The US guidelines are saying groups of 10 or less. In South Korea that number is no more than four.
- **Lastly, what you choose to do does matter.** We all have free will to do what we want. Please consider others in your decisions. If you must work, be cautious. Wash those hands, phones and clothing items. If at all possible stay home for the two weeks. If you don't get it and follow the tips you will have a better chance of staying healthy and keeping those around you healthy. Remember, each time you put yourself in a situation to be exposed the incubation period starts again.