



## [Processing the present and preparing for the new normal](#)

Posted on [22nd May 2020](#) by [Alex Hawke](#)

Like many of you I've been facing the challenges of navigating and leading during this crisis. You probably realised a while ago that the plan can't be to just 'sit this out' or 'weather the storm' until life returns to normal. We have to accept that some things won't be the way they were. The world has changed. People are talking about BC and AC – Before Corona and After Corona.

As teams, organisations or churches we quickly learnt to cope and (mostly) adapt well to meet the initial practical challenges and we can be proud of that. We also, however, need to process what's happening to ourselves and the world and be like the men of Issachar who understood the times (**1 Chronicles 12:32**).

This is also a time to rethink, review and evaluate what we do and prepare for life beyond corona. It's not simply a case of 'keep calm and carry on.' Keep calm yes, but change and prepare as necessary.

**Here are a few questions for leaders that can help us navigate, process and prepare in the weeks ahead:**

**What is God saying or teaching us?** Make time to listen to God; don't just plough on. There are lots of voices and opinions; value God's above them all. Block time for it.

**What new or different needs are there around us and how can we serve?** It's tempting to go into self-preservation mode but it speaks powerfully when we don't in times like this.

**What do the people we are responsible for need right now?** What does our community need? Too often we assume we know. Ask.

**What do I need right now?** Those of us who are responsible for others need to look after ourselves too. Practise self care. You, your family and team will be glad you did. Operating in crisis mode is exhausting; we need to still be functioning in the medium and long-term, not just the short-term.

**What have we lost?** It's important to acknowledge losses and grieve them. Process along the way so it doesn't hit you later in one big wave that takes you out (I've been there, it was horrible). Staying hopeful is important but so is acknowledging that this is hard for everyone. We lose trust if we're out of touch with reality, trying to put a positive spin on everything.

**What are we grateful for?** What do we realise we've taken for granted until now? Gratitude is a powerful weapon against hopelessness, despair and despondency. Give time to give thanks.

**How is our world, our culture and community changing?** How will that affect what we do and how we do it? There are some things to keep and likely some things to let go of that are no longer effective or relevant. Many of us were talking about change before corona. Now some of those plans have to be changed all over again.

**How can we stay true to our vision and mission even though the way we do things has had to change?** In the scramble to adjust don't forget why you exist. Crises have a way of helping us see what really matters and what just isn't as important as we thought it was.

**What new possibilities does this situation create?** The cliché is true: in every crisis there are opportunities. Don't miss them. New ideas and initiatives could be waiting to develop. Also, as one national director in our organisation noted, we now have something in common with everyone on the planet which we didn't have before. The shared experience the world is going through can help us relate and identify with people in a new way. There is also clear evidence of increased spiritual hunger right now which we must make the most of.

**What are we learning that we don't want to forget when things improve?** Maybe some things we had to come up with now can be kept along with other insights we've gained along the way.

**A prayer:** Lord, we've never been here before. Please help us to navigate this territory and perceive what is happening. We ask you for insight and wisdom to lead effectively. We pray we would learn the lessons You are teaching us and not forget how much we need You. Shape us for what lies ahead. Holy Spirit make us brave to face the changes this is bringing upon us. O Lord be glorified through Your people in this critical hour. For Yours is the kingdom, the power and the glory, Amen.

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The views expressed in this blog post are personal to the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the GC network.



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