



The Sedgewick Papers

Our **hope** for you is unshaken; for we know that as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our consolation.

2 Corinthians 1 : 7

I read this recently :

It's OK if you were hopeful last week, but are afraid this week. Neither emotion invalidates the other, and neither makes you weak or foolish.

I wonder how often you are asked how you are ? So often our immediate response has been to indicate that we are OK.

However, the present situation has led to many of us really engaging with that question much more deeply than we might have done in the past. I think some of us might now be listening more thoughtfully to the responses we receive. I think we are engaging much more carefully to each other.

In the past I think the question, "How are you ?" often tended to be a conversation opener more than a genuine invitation to someone to share their needs and situation with us. But I think Coronavirus and 'Lockdown' has changed that. We are genuinely asking about the well-being of others and want to offer new levels of support and encouragement.

We are in difficult and challenging times. It is not a demonstration of strength to try to appear to be in control, unafraid, or unaffected by what is happening. How we feel is how we feel and that is OK !

We should also recognise that we can feel differently from day to day and even hour to hour. It is OK to feel lonely or frustrated – and equally no one should feel guilty for enjoying some peace and quiet or a few hours in the garden. It is OK to experience a gamut of emotions – and OK to be open about them.

Perhaps what we should try to do is be more open when we ask, or answer, the question "How are you ?" and we might learn to be better listeners and sharers of our true state of mind. We don't expect others to make things right, but deeper communication enables us to care more for each other.

I believe God gave us prayer that we might communicate better with Him and share our innermost thoughts and cares. Perhaps during this enforced period we should really work to improve our communication with our God and with each other.

With thoughts and prayers

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