In a time of social isolation, distance learning, and working from home, it can seem as though the potential for creating (or sustaining) meaningful partnerships is stifled. But, what some of us are learning is that times like these provide the perfect opportunity to form partnerships with others committed to doing mutual good work – whether that be in the classroom, an organization or business, an institution, or our personal lives. The desire to create these beneficial relationships does not, and cannot, end with social isolation. It goes much deeper, and this is a time, dare I say an opportunity, to build the foundation for new and meaningful partnerships.

Collaborations strengthen our ability to do our good work even in (especially in) times of uncertainty and stress. For our office, this means coming back to our “why” and our wheel. This means asking questions like “how can we continue to live out our “why” under current constraints?” and “how can we support our Peabody community at a distance?”

This also means doing more of what we love – connecting with our Peabody partners and colleagues all across the Vanderbilt campus to make sure we are supporting the well-being of our students, staff, and faculty in new and creative ways.
4 Ideas for Meaningful Partnerships, cont.

When it comes to collaboration, 4 ideas are key:

1. Communication. Essential in any collaborative work, effective partnerships are centered around not only speaking, but listening to one another. This active listening shows respect for those you are working with. We all have a lot on our minds right now and the simplest gift we can give one another is the gift of listening… and maybe a little dose of encouragement too!

2. Shared vision or goals. Take time to create these – don’t rush this step! When the going gets tough, you need that vision and goals to refer back to and gain clarity around why you are committing to working together.

3. Reciprocity. True community-building happens in spaces where we allow others to contribute and participate in meaningful and beneficial ways. Spaces where we take care of the needs of others and trust that they are also going to respect our needs is foundational to any collaborative venture.

4. New and exciting (and yes, sometimes a little scary) ideas. We have heard it said that these are unprecedented times - but great things can be born out of uncertainty! Now is the time to stay open-minded and listen when you feel your inner self saying “hey, this could be really good for me” or “I have always wanted to do this!” Now is the time to consider who you might be able to partner with to make those ideas a reality.

Potential collaborations may lie in our new online classroom environments, in our friendships and relationships that we are working to maintain in a time of social distancing, or through the networking we are doing on LinkedIn. Now, more than ever before, we are seeing that they go way beyond physical proximity. And now, more than ever before, is the time for us to come together in community with all of our potential partners and collaborators: our friends, classmates, neighbors, families, colleagues, and even acquaintances. Opportunities abound – here’s to making the most of them!

Partnerships in Action! Be sure to check out our Upcoming Events on pg. 5 for exciting programming with the Peabody Library!

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The Good News

by Thich Nhat Hanh

The good news they do not print.

The good news we do print. We have a special edition every moment, and we need you to read it.

The good news is that you have wonderful eyes to touch the sky.

The good news is that your child is there before you, and your arms are available: hugging is possible.

They only print what is wrong. Look at each of our special editions. We always offer the things that are not wrong. We want you to benefit from them and help protect them.

The dandelion is there by the sidewalk, smiling its wondrous smile, singing the song of eternity.

Listen. You have ears that can hear it.

Bow your head.

Listen to it.

Leave behind the world of sorrow, of preoccupation, and get free.

The latest good news is that you can do it.
4-7-8 (or Relaxing) Breath Exercise

by Dr. Andrew Weil

UTTERLY SIMPLY, TAKES ALMOST NO TIME, REQUIRES NO EQUIPMENT, & CAN BE DONE ANYWHERE!

Although you can do the exercise in any position, sit with your back straight while learning the exercise. Place the tip of your tongue against the ridge of tissue just behind your upper front teeth, and keep it there through the entire exercise.

Exhale completely through your mouth, making a whoosh sound. Close your mouth and inhale quietly through your nose to a mental count of four. Hold your breath for a count of seven. Exhale completely through your mouth, making a whoosh sound to a count of eight. This is one breath. Now inhale again and repeat the cycle three more times for a total of four breaths.

Note that with this breathing technique, you always inhale quietly through your nose and exhale audibly through your mouth. The tip of your tongue stays in position the whole time. Exhalation takes twice as long as inhalation.

This breathing exercise is natural tranquilizer for the nervous system. This exercise is subtle when you first try it, but gains in power with repetition and practice.

Do it at least twice a day. You cannot do it too frequently. Do not do more than four breaths at one time for the first month of practice. Later, if you wish, you can extend it to eight breaths.

Food for Thought (and Energy!)

Brown Rice Waldorf Salad

INGREDIENTS
2 cups cooked brown rice
1 apple, cubed
1/2 cup raisins
1/2 cup pecans or walnuts
1/3 cup mayonnaise
2 teaspoons cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons sugar or honey

INSTRUCTIONS
Stir all ingredients together in a large bowl until thoroughly combined. Serve room temperature or chill. Delicious, healthy, and kid-approved!
Did you know March flew by and it didn’t leave like a lamb. But it is over and we are well into Spring. Spring is a season of renewal. In uncertain times, it is easy to become overwhelmed by uncertain thoughts. I remind myself that the glass truly is half FULL. A new season and new month allow us to RESET. So far, 2020 presented challenges most of us have never experienced and the future is unclear. So, what can we do to reset our minds, body and spirit? What’s really in that glass?

Most of the winter season, I purged my home of the old and unnecessary. Many people are engaging in this process now. Sound daunting? Start small...a sock or junk drawer. Accomplishing a small task can spur you on to tackle the big stuff like a closet or garage. Working remotely has allowed me to assess how I was using my time professionally and personally. Setting up my home office presented good challenges that lead to more purging. See a theme?

I’ve always known the importance of exercise in being physically healthy and balancing mood. But I struggled to intentionally incorporate exercise into my daily life. With less distractions, I integrated walking and stretching into my day. I will replicate this behavior when I return to campus because I know it can be done. I have taken intentional breaks, instead of sitting for so long my back and shoulders ache. I have connected with my neighbors in meaningful and fun ways, including a porch “happy hour”. It was a welcome reprieve from worry.

Don’t want to imply I have used all my time wisely. I have snacked and snacked some more. Not good. I love to oil paint and had to move my painting area to a brighter room, so I could work remotely. BUT, I have yet to pick up a paint brush. I am giving myself grace. Moving forward, I will incorporate some painting into my week. Painting brings me joy!

What do you do that brings you joy? Have you been able to engage with it since our world was upended? If yes, I envy you and plan to join you. If you haven’t, there is still time. Don’t know exactly what brings you joy? Now is a great time to try new things like knitting, sewing, jogging, cooking, drawing, blogging/vlogging, belly dancing, etc. Speaking of dancing, if you enjoy dancing, then there are various virtual dances parties just about every day. My favorites are DJ DNice and Debbie Allen’s Wednesday dance classes. I love to dance and I am terrible, but the joy I experience from dancing is huge.

In these uncertain times, DON’T STOP LIVING! Find your joy and engage in it more and more. Stay well!

Need a break? Dance like nobody’s watching with Dance Church!

Dance Church® Go is a live-streamed movement class that offers a fun and inclusive approach to dancing. Next class streaming April 8th HERE at 5pm PST/8pm EST.
Upcoming Online Events

Office Hours - Office of Student Engagement & Well-Being
4/9, 2:30-4 p.m.
4/10, 9:30-11 a.m.
4/14, 2:30-4 p.m.
4/16, 2:30-4 p.m.
4/17, 9:30-11 a.m.

Peabody Paws - April 9, 12-1 p.m.
In partnership with the Peabody Library, all Peabody students, faculty, and staff are invited to take a “paws” during their day and share your pets, kids, favorite plants, or even a special coffee mug. We’ll have some questions and discussion prompts to share about your furry (or green!) friend, or you can just sit back and soak in the cuteness. Stop by for a bit or join for the full hour. Join HERE.

Meditation Mondays - April 13, 11-11:30 a.m.
Co-Sponsored by the Peabody Office of Student Engagement & Well-Being and Center for Student Wellbeing, we invite all Peabody faculty, staff, and students to a free guided meditation every Monday. Join HERE.

Iris Book Club - April 22, 12-1 p.m.
Co-hosted by the Office of Student Engagement and the Peabody Library, this semester’s book is Life’s Great Question: Discover How You Contribute to the World by Tom Rath. Includes an online assessment about your unique contributions and how you can apply them personally and professionally. The first 15 people to sign-up will get a free Kindle copy. RSVP to karen.swoopes@vanderbilt.edu to reserve your copy. Join the call HERE.

“We’ve Got Game(s)” Happy Hour - April 23, 4-5:30 p.m.
Put your ‘game’ face on and come join the Office of Student Engagement and Well-Being and the Peabody Library staff for a celebratory end-of-the-semester afternoon of games, giggles, and good times. Hope you can make it! (Zoom link coming soon!)

Vanderbilt’s new online tool provides mental health and wellness modules to:
- build resilience
- help manage anxiety or depression
- develop skills to manage stress
- promote good sleep hygiene

Based on cognitive behavioral therapy, mindfulness and positive psychology, these action-oriented programs build self-awareness and self-management skills for emotional health.

Sign up here

Feedback or questions: Contact us at PeabodyOSE@vanderbilt.edu

If you are a student in need of additional support or resources, please contact Assistant Dean Monique Robinson @ monique.robinson@vanderbilt.edu

Be sure to follow us @PeabodyOSEW