



# Rachel WRITES

by Rachel GARBBER

## BREATHE IN, BREATHE OUT

It seems these days that the pandemic is moving on silent but lightning feet. Time to stop and take stock!

What better way than the little meditation practice called the sufi stop. It involves marking a pause in your daily activities. As you're walking, washing the dishes, or checking your phone - suddenly a bell rings, and you simply stop what you're doing. You spend a long moment just noticing. Notice what was going through your mind. Notice how your body feels, every part of it. Notice the sounds around you, the sights, the here-and-now.

Breathe in. Breathe out. The hamster's treadmill has stopped spinning. So long, stress!

Who would have imagined millions of people worldwide would be invited to stop and take stock in this way, more or less simultaneously? But we are, thanks to the concerted effort to stop the spread of the novel coronavirus. Opening my email or looking at Facebook, I am struck by the plethora of suggestions for keeping busy at home. What if we just stopped for a long moment, and looked at how we are spending our lives?

What if we used this opportunity to change our routines and check our priorities?

### NOVEL NEWS

If I just touch my computer or my phone, an avalanche of information floods in about the novel coronavirus, some of it invaluable, some misleading, some downright hilarious.

Like the one about Vladimir Putin releasing 500 lions into the streets in Russia to keep people at home. That's in the hilarious category, and totally not true. In fact, Russia has yet to announce any lockdown against the coronavirus. (That's tragic.) But the story of the lions has spread like a virus.

Here's one that comes from a group of doctors in Boston:

"Suppose you catch the virus. You will give it to 3 other people, and they will each give it to three others, and so forth. Here is how the math works, where you, the 'index case,' are Number 1:

1 3 9 27 81 243 729 2,187 6,561 19,683 59,046 177,147 531,441 1,594,323 4,782,969 14,348,907.

"So, in just 15 steps of transmission, the virus has gone from just one index case to 14.3 million other people. Those 15 steps might take only a few weeks.... The first person may be young and healthy ... but many of those 14 million people will be old and sick, and they will likely die because they got a virus that started in one person's throat."

This is invaluable information, if we can grasp it. "If we can get the number below 1, the epidemic will die out. This is the point of the quarantines and social distancing, but we are not doing it fast enough," concludes the doctors' open letter.

From the New York Times comes another item about losing the sense of smell, or anosmia. Some people who tested positive for COVID-19 reported they had lost the sense of smell before other symptoms developed. So some medical experts say people who lose the ability to smell or taste should isolate themselves for at least a week. Intriguing.

Then there is the item sweeping social media, purportedly from a Chinese doctor, saying to drink lots of water to wash the virus down into your stomach where gastric juices will kill it. Pulmonologist Dr. Thomas Nash of the New York Presbyterian Hospital noted the major site of COVID-19 contraction is the nose and sinuses, and "drinking water has no impact." Now that item just downright misleading.

The same item said to identify the onset of COVID-19 by breathing in, holding your breath for 10 seconds, and breathing out again; if that causes you to cough, you have fibrosis caused by COVID-19. But Dr. Nash said the breath test was "just made up," reported Reuters. It will tell

you nothing.

But breathing in and breathing out, deliberately and with awareness: That can calm your mind. Just stay two meters away from me while doing it!

### THE REAL DEAL

Want some real information about how to protect your family's health during the COVID-19 pandemic? You can find it in a new 24-page guide in both English and French from the Quebec Government. The "Self-Care Guide" tells all, and you can download it as a PDF file from [www.quebec.ca/en/health/health-issues/a-z/2019-coronavirus](http://www.quebec.ca/en/health/health-issues/a-z/2019-coronavirus).

### HIT THE PAUSE BUTTON

Activities usually announced in this space are all on an extended pause during this period of physical isolation. Many events planned for April and May are also cancelled, such as the Bury Women's Institute's Flea Market/Craft Sale, and the CAB's volunteer week celebrations.

Some services are morphing into alternative modes such as work-from-home, service by email or phone, or other creative ways to fill our needs while respecting the order to stay at home. For example, the bilingual income tax assistance program in Sawyerville is closed, but Danielle Paré asks that previous clients of this service call her for more information, and to know how to proceed. Info: Danielle, 819-889-2614.

### CHURCH SERVICES

**Baptist.** No services until further notice. Contact Pastor Michel Houle at 819-239-8818.

**Anglican.** Until further notice, all church services and gatherings in Bury - St. Paul and Cookshire - St. Peter, are suspended. Bishop Bruce Myers offers Home Prayers on Sunday mornings at 10:30 a.m. on Facebook, and at [quebec.anglican.ca](http://quebec.anglican.ca) (see Worship Videos) Info: 819-887-6802, or [quebec.anglican.ca](http://quebec.anglican.ca).

**United.** No services until April 12. Printed weekly worship services and announcements are available for pickup in the porch of the Sawyerville United Church and at the back door of Trinity United Church, Cookshire. Those interested in receiving a printed version of the service by regular mail, or a digital copy of the service through email, please contact Rev Tami Spires at 819-452-3685, or by email at [spiresta@hotmail.com](mailto:spiresta@hotmail.com), and leave your contact information. "Pastoral Care is ongoing during this uncertain time; please contact Rev Tami for any of your needs." Info: 819-889-2838 (listen to the message).

Do you have news to share? Call 819-300-2374 or email [rawrites@yahoo.com](mailto:rawrites@yahoo.com) by April 6 for publication **April 15**, or by April 20 for **April 29**.

## Valoris cesse son test pilote par mesure préventive

La Régie intermunicipale du centre de valorisation des matières résiduelles du Haut-Saint-François et de Sherbrooke (Valoris) a décidé le 19 mars dernier d'interrompre un essai pilote sur la ligne CRD avec une filiale de 3R Valorisation de Montréal par mesure préventive, et cela pour une période indéterminée.

Un des employés du centre de tri aurait été en contact avec une personne potentiellement infectée par la COVID-19 dans son entourage immédiat. Le direc-

teur général de Valoris, Denis Gélinas, et le directeur de l'usine, François Thibault ont rencontré les employés pour expliquer la situation.

« Le centre de tri multimatières de Valoris est un espace fermé et restreint dans lequel nos travailleuses et travailleurs réalisent leurs tâches. Malgré le fait que nos employés ont des stations de travail qui permet la distanciation sociale, nous avons pris la décision de cesser les opérations pour l'instant à la lumière des informations reçues. Nous avons expliqué

les différentes options qui s'offrent à nos employés et d'autres décisions seront prises dans les jours qui viennent. Pour l'instant, c'est la sécurité et la santé de nos employés qui priment », a expliqué le directeur général, Denis Gélinas.

Valoris ne recevra plus les résidus de construction, rénovation et démolition le temps de réorganiser ces opérations. Par contre, Valoris continue de recevoir les déchets résidentiels et les matières organiques des municipalités.

**Vachon**  
CÉRAMIQUE

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*Journal régional*  
**Le HAUT-SAINT-FRANÇOIS**

**AVIS**

**Veillez prendre note que l'assemblée générale annuelle du journal régional Le Haut-Saint-François, prévue pour le mardi 21 avril, est reportée à une date ultérieure. La tenue de la rencontre vous sera communiquée lorsque la situation le permettra.**