

In This Issue

- The Need for Control
- Staying on Track: Senior and Junior Tasks

****Common App Update:** The new essay prompts have been sent to college admissions consultants like myself. We are now working with rising seniors on these essays so that they are completed before summer break. Call now to sign up for essay services!

Helpful Links

For info about SAT I, II, and AP Tests go to:

www.collegeboard.com

For info about ACT test go to:

www.act.org

For info about test optional schools go to:

www.fairtest.org/university/optional

For info about financial aid go to:

www.FAFSA.ed.gov

www.fastweb.com

www.finaid.org

For college search info go to:

www.collegenavigator.gov

www.collegeprowler.com

To take a virtual tour of college campuses go to:

www.youniversitytv.com

To learn about Colleges That Change Lives go to:

www.ctcl.org

Control: How Do We Find Control in a World That Seems So Out of Control?

I can't explain it, but I seem to be on a Janet Jackson kick lately. Maybe it's because her songs bring me back to my high school days or maybe it's because the blend of her empowering lyrics and multi-layered musicality of her songs feed my soul. I was listening to her song, "Control" the other day and I was struck by their message:

**When it has to do with my life, my life
I wanna be the one in control....
I don't wanna rule the world,
Just wanna run my life
So make your life a little easier
When you get the chance just take control**

I think it is fair to say that very few of us want to rule the world, rather we aspire to have some semblance of control over our personal lives. This is particularly true of this period of time in which so many of us have felt powerless when it comes to what we can control and that which we can't.

It's one year into the COVID 19 pandemic, and we still face tremendous uncertainty. Yes, we are making progress as many people are starting to receive the C19 vaccine. This step is one of the most critical we need to take to make any forward progress with getting the virus under control. So much is left uncertain-schools, vacations, life milestones, jobs, ability to return to sports and playing/hanging out with friends, summer camp. So, how do we navigate these still uncharted circumstances? As Janet Jackson sings, all we want is to run our lives. In this article, I am giving you the chance to "just take control."

We can only control what we can control. The rest of it, we have to learn to feel comfortable and make

Keeping on Track:

Seniors: If you know where you will be attending college in the fall, congratulations! Keep those grades up and stay involved in your activities. Don't forget to send in your midyear reports...this is YOUR responsibility.

If you are still waiting to hear from a college about wait list status, continue the wait BUT consider making a Plan B. If you are safely able to do so, revisit the campuses to which you were accepted and ask deeper questions that now are on your mind. Talk with current students. Send Admissions folks any updates on important accomplishments.

If you are still awaiting word about acceptances, keep those grades up and stay active in activities.

Juniors: Start taking the SAT or the ACT (if you can do so safely) and practice ahead of time. Important test dates:

ACT: Here is the link for the latest ACT information:

<https://www.act.org/content/act/en/covid-19.html>

SAT: Here is the link for the latest SAT information:

<https://pages.collegeboard.org/sat-covid-19-updates>

If it is safe to do so, start visiting college campuses to get a better sense of what you want in a college. In the absence of in-person tours, utilize resources like: www.youvisit.com or www.youniversitytv.com.

Think about whom you want to ask to write letters of recommendation, and ask them now. Popular teachers will fill up quickly.

Start working on those personal statements!**

Keep the grades up, stay involved in extra-curriculars, and take as rigorous a course load as you can successfully manage.

****We are helping students with their college admissions essays now! Schedule your appointment today.**

peace with that which is out of our hands. Let's start by looking at the basics:

Meals-what you eat and when you eat are completely up to you. Choosing to eat low sugar, high fiber and protein foods will increase your energy levels and enable you to stay more focused and energized. Furthermore, your ability to problem solve will be enhanced. If breakfast is not your thing, be sure to have a small morning snack. Eat small meals throughout the day if three larger meals do not appeal to you. Eat when you are actually hungry. Try not to feed your stress. Drink plenty of water-64 ounces per day is what is recommended. Keep a large water bottle filled and at the ready in your workspace.

Exercise-keep that body of yours moving! Why? Increased blood flow and oxygen help your ability to focus and stave off stress. The physical act of moving enables you to work off tension and anxiety from the day. Now that the days are getting warmer, go outside for a walk, hike, run, rollerblade, or bike ride. Grab a friend, stay socially distanced, and shake a leg! Going outside isn't your thing? There are plenty of apps like Headspace that offer indoor workouts. On-Demand also provides free workout sessions. There is no excuse to getting your body the exercise it needs to function!

Sleep-lack of sleep is no joke. The deprivation of rest can lead to depression, increased anxiety, lack of ability to focus and stay organized, and the inability to problem solve. According to the CDC, children ages 6-12 need approximately 9-12 hours of sleep, while teenagers ages 12-18 need approximately 8-10 hours per sleep. Create proper sleep hygiene by implementing a sleep routine at night: close down screens at least one hour before getting into bed; set out your clothes and school materials the night before, make a list of the things you want to accomplish or address tomorrow and place it somewhere you can easily access it tomorrow; listen to relaxing music-this will vary from person to person, read something calming; take a nice hot shower or warm bubble bath before you go to sleep; stop eating and drinking about an hour or two before you get into bed; engage in mindfulness meditation prior to getting into bed; engage in calming conversations during this time-avoid fighting or stressful discussions before bedtime.

Engaging in activities- what do you REALLY like to do? What are your hobbies and passions? Find a way to do them. You may have to get creative in order to do so, but it is really important to ensure you are doing activities you find relaxing and enjoyable at least 2-3

Helpful Mantras

-I am enough-I am doing my best and good enough, particularly in these uncertain times is enough to get the job done. I can build from here.

-I am strong: in uncertain times it is difficult to know how strong we are capable of being. Have faith in your resilience and your ability to withstand even the greatest of challenges. Reinforce yourself with trusted family and friends.

Pay it Forward: Do you know someone who is looking for college admissions advice? Send them this newsletter or forward us their contact information. We want to help!

Contact Us

<http://www.Academic-Ally.com>

Hannah@Academic-Ally.com

610 647-3959 ext. 107


times per week. After all, we cannot have you working at all times with little opportunity to play!

Socializing-It is easy to forget to check in with friends and family during these isolating times. We fill in the gaps with activities, eating our stress away, anything we can do to rid ourselves of the discomfort we may be feeling in the moment. But one of the most healing tools we have at our fingertips is each other. Take a walk with a friend; write a letter to a relative you have not corresponded with in a long time; Zoom or FaceTime with someone. Ask them how **THEY** are feeling and if there is anything you can do to support them. Be honest with how **YOU** are feeling and let them know if there is anything they can do to help you. Connectivity is very important to mental health-it makes us feel validated to know someone else is having a hard time and reassures us that we are not weird if we are managing to find our own silver linings amidst the chaos of COVID 19.

Attitude-as hard as it might be to believe this, we do have control over our attitudes and mindset. Yes, these times are extremely trying-no one knows how much longer this pandemic will last; no one knows how long it will take before we reach “herd immunity”, no one knows...no one knows....And it’s unsettling and frustrating. But we **can** breathe, and we can decide to maintain as positive an outlook as possible. When that becomes difficult, we can lean on others until we are strong enough to re-launch again and start anew. Our attitudes are our greatest weapon to survive this time.

Flexibility-so speaking of attitude, I always like to use the analogy of being a palm tree vs an evergreen tree. Over the past few winters, we have all witnessed the disastrous destruction that occurs during harsh winter storms-tree branches snap, powerlines go down, and tress trunks fold like toothpicks. These trees are too rigid. Unlike their tropical counterparts, the palm trees, that manage to withstand hurricane-force winds and bend in order to prevent breaking. Being like a palm tree enables us to learn to be more accommodating in circumstances that feel intolerable or uncomfortable. We learn to sway with the motions and examine situations with a more accommodating lens. While rigidity can feel more empowering, it is also deceptive as it can lead us to miss out on new experiences and ways of trouble shooting.

As Janet Jackson sings, “[We’ve] got [our] own live[s] and wanna make [our] own decisions, when it has to do with [our] life [our] life, [we] want to be the



one in control.” To some extent we can do that right now by starting with what we **can** control!