

# Climb out of that well of election malaise

**M**y college philosophy professor often said that art and pop culture mirror society's angst. Driving to an appointment last week, these Lennon-McCartney lyrics came on the air: "I'm so tired, I haven't slept a wink. I'm so tired, my mind is on the blink." Indeed.

Later that day, this surfaced on social media: "Good night moon, goodnight zoom, goodnight unshakable sense of impending doom." For those unfamiliar, this is a clever twist on a child's bedtime tale. All of the above addresses the anxiety, insomnia and strange dreams prevalent in these times. It collectively captures the nature of this brutal election season, and the realization that there is no floor to this dark well.

Joe and Jane Q. Public quite frankly are sick of it all. So tired of the bickering, the attack ads, the telephone solicitors, and daily e-mail bombs. Suffering through the evening news, another negative report surfaces of lies by our leaders, of laws ignored or broken with no consequences, pandemics dismissed as nonsense despite some 200,000-plus US deaths and the ongoing average of 1,000 deaths per day.

This inability of our leaders to work for us is not governing, it is constituent abuse. The hate atmosphere is robbing us of what is special about the United States of America. The USA that steps up to the plate and pulls together in a crisis.

The Greek poet Hesiod wrote: moderation is best in all things. We have forgotten who we are, that the majority of us are moderates. We have more in common than not. It bears repeating that most of us simply seek the company and affection of others, the right to speak our minds, to worship as we believe and pursue employment for food, shelter, and health care.

Hearing falsehoods often enough, people start to believe them. Most of us are not rogues gone wild, or Antifa, or crazed child abusers, or raging QAnon. We just want to live peaceful lives in peaceful communities.

Time to turn to reason, and realize people must be evaluated by their character and behavior. It is possible to simultaneously appreciate ethical law enforcement officers while condemning violent abusive ones; to protest and advocate for end to violent treatment of people of color while also condemning senseless property destruction.

Look around. Take note of the good in the world and our community. Remember the influential rulings of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg as we express gratitude that we lived during her court term. We reaped the benefits of her wisdom. Fortunate is the public for Dr. Anthony Fauci for his scientific reasoning, his refusal to be swayed from the facts, and his prediction of a reliable tested vaccine in early 2021.

Locally, our situation improved so that our health department director approves of limited in-person learning. Conserving Carolina held its celebration of annual accomplishments, including its efforts to have no more missing links connecting DuPont with other parks and protected properties. Their noted speakers, Audrey and Frank Peterman, are national advocates for engaging people of color in national parks.

We reside in a community of thoughtful people, such as the city resident who donated to the water department, so prevent water cut-offs for needy citizens. Our community continues to give to non-profits such as Safelight, Salvation Army, IAM, CFHC and United Way, to help our fellow citizens whose employment status and pocketbooks are suffering during the pandemic.

With gratitude for his service and heroism, we grieve with broken hearts the loss of Deputy Ryan Hendrix, and thank our local men in blue for keeping us safe. We commend the group creating a fund for the benefit of his children. (Donations accepted at the sheriff's department.)

Free speech is guaranteed in the constitution. Citizens may pick up the phone and call those Senators that blocked a Supreme Court Justice nomination in the 2016 election year, but now hypocritically want to do the opposite this election year.

Alternating between fury and helplessness in this turmoil? The ballot box is the one definitive method of expressing opinions of our leaders. Plan to use one of these three options: Vote in person November 3; request an absentee ballot through the Henderson County Board of Elections website ([www.hendersoncountync.gov/elections](http://www.hendersoncountync.gov/elections)), or take advantage of early One Stop Voting for 15 days in October at 4 locations. (Details in the above link.) You may also register to vote at one stop voting and on Election Day, provided you bring the proper paperwork and proof of residency.

Insomnia and anxiety? No time for you, so be gone. There is still much good happening in our corner of the world.

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