



THE FROMM INSTITUTE
FOR LIFELONG LEARNING
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO

FROMM FOCUS

The Newsletter of the Fromm Institute

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ON THE BOARD'S STATEMENT OF RECENT EVENTS:

Last week we shared a Statement from our Board of Directors. As you know, it is difficult to create a statement for an organization with many voices. The letter below from Board Member Sam Lauter illustrates the ongoing interchange that our Board and our Program are committed to hearing and discussing within the Fromm Institute Community.

Dear Fromm Institute Community,

I have had the honor of serving on the Fromm Board of Directors for 21 years. For many years it was frequently joked that I was the only Board member with a student parent and the only one who for 15 years was ineligible to be a student. I can not speak more highly of the quality and dedication of my board colleagues and I can not recall one decision by the Board that I've ever disagreed with.

Which makes this disagreement that much more difficult. I do not support the statement made by the Board last week regarding the circumstances following the death of George Floyd. While I take very little issue with what was said, I do not believe it said enough. It is my opinion that in missing what we left out, we left out what is most important to say now.

There is zero question our country has never gone far enough when confronted with all of the atrocities inflicted upon our fellow Americans that preceded George Floyd's death. Our country has never honestly dealt with over 400 years of history from slavery to Rosewood, FL and Tulsa, OK, to Emmett Till and Medgar Evers, to George Floyd and Breonna Taylor.

While I appreciate and agree with the sentiment of listening and learning, it is also time to condemn. Not condemn police brutality, although I certainly condemn that. Not condemn the murder of George Floyd, although I'm certainly outraged by that also. But to condemn the systemic racism that is so clearly a part of the fabric of this country. The racism that leads to the murders of black men and women with hardly any fallout. The racism that leads to African Americans earning a fraction of what white Americans earn for the same jobs. The racism that prompts a woman to feel she can call the police in order to threaten a black man who happens to be birdwatching. The racism that means I don't have to teach my son about what to do if he's stopped because of his skin color when he leaves the house. The racism that sees government resources go to communities impacted by natural disaster but somehow be unavailable when it's a community of color. The racism that is driving voter suppression under the guise of "voter

fraud” when very little evidence exists. The racism that leads to my friend being stopped for “fitting the description” when the description was a 5’10”, stocky, light skinned black man, and my friend is 6’5”, skinny and dark skinned.

The justified outrage on our streets for the murder of George Floyd by a white police officer isn’t about Floyd and isn’t about the police. It’s about everything I write above and so much more. I believe it is the responsibility of every American, not only our board, to condemn this racism, and to work to fix it. It is the responsibility of every American to own this as our problem, not a problem affecting African-Americans alone but a problem affecting us all. This is our racism and our country, and until we all condemn it and accept it is all our problem to solve, there will be no resolution.

I truly believe the Fromm Institute is a treasure. I tell everyone that being a Frommie added years to my father’s life. I am forever grateful for the work and effort put in by my board colleagues. On this, however, I step away and call for an assertive statement, one that recognizes we are long past aspirations and learning alone, but also condemning and acting.

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Sam Lauter

FALL 2020 - SAVE THE DATES

We are still in the process of planning out the Fall 2020 Session. We will be offering two live Zoom courses per time slot in our regular schedule, with classes offered at 10am-11:40am or 1pm-2:40pm, Monday through Thursday. There will be a total of 16 courses and each course will be \$85 – less than \$11 per class session. Members of the same household may enroll under one student’s name and participate in the course together from the same computer. We will likely email the course offerings sometime during the week of **August 10 or 17** – watch your email inboxes and our website for more information.

August 24, 2020 – Enrollment Begins

September 14, 2020 - Classes Begin

November 5, 2020 - Classes End

November 9-November 12 - Make Up Week

Holidays (no classes)

Monday, September 28 - Yom Kippur

Monday, October 12 - Columbus Day



Fromm Institute Student Association president Susan Kaplan recalls, rather humorously, her stay-at-home experience in this week's **Express Yourself**. Submissions to **Express Yourself** are accepted on a rolling basis and can be articles, opinion pieces or notes, written by you, the students or others in the Fromm Institute family, who want to share something with the larger community. Email your submissions to **Scott Moules** in the Fromm Institute office (moules@usfca.edu).

DEVELOPING A ROUTINE FOR THE “NEW NORMAL”

BY SUSAN KAPLAN

It was March 16 – already not a good sign that Fromm had cancelled the spring session! But that afternoon my six-year old computer made some crashing/gunshot noises and quit working. The next morning I rushed over to Apple when they opened because I thought there would not be a line at the Genius Bar due to all the publicity about COVID-19. I was right! I only had a short wait. I had to fight the Executive Director to go out of my Assisted Living because we were going to “shelter in place.” But that “order is as of midnight,” I said, “and it is only 9:15 AM.” I learned quickly that it cost \$700 to fix a six-year-old computer. I, impulsively, bought a new MacBook Pro (thank goodness for credit cards). The thought of being “locked-up” without my “trusty” computer was too much to bear. Little did I know that the changes were so vast, and that my troubles were just beginning.

After about two weeks of “sheltering in place” and accomplishing nothing and feeling that I was wasting precious time, I could foresee that this was going to be a long haul. Several of my friends said they were not going to go out until there was a vaccine. I thought I would go back to the gym when they reopened in late spring, but soon realized no reopening was going to take place anytime soon, and that elders were the “target” population for COVID-19.

My next discovery: the refrigerator was too close, I was sitting too much and gaining weight. The pound-demic, for sure had hit. I badly needed a routine and a schedule!

I sampled a Yoga Zoom class organized by the Assisted Living. That was too slow and boring. I needed more activity. Zoom was a new experience for me – I had never heard of it before March. Soon I was inundated with the wide choice of online lectures, classes, performances, television possibilities, email and phone calls. But no indication of resuming the nightlife that I so enjoyed with no kids, husband or anyone to worry about – movies, theatres, concerts, opera, ballet, all dark!

EXPRESS YOURSELF



Seeing members of my family and friends via Zoom or FaceTime was lots of fun and the geography no longer stood in the way. But I was sitting way too much and needed to get back to regular exercising or the pound-demic was going to win!

I started walking in “Hamsterville” - my name for the second-floor garden and walkway that I had never explored, even though I’d lived in the Assisted Living for 16 months. I visited a variety of exercise Zooms and finally found a bunch of classes that I liked. I planned a program of varied exercise Zooms (all free) for Monday through Saturday. In addition I continued walking, at “Hamsterville” twice a day. The food at my Assisted Living was too good – so eliminating desserts, bread and potatoes and ensuring that the portions were smaller helped the pound-demic. No way could I consider eliminating chocolate and wine!

I found that I liked being alone and exploring my new computer, despite the frustration of Google, Apple and Microsoft in a three-way contest. I have the daily routine that keeps me busy and energized. Exercise takes up about two to two-and-a-half hours, piano practice about an hour, reading (I am now only a week or two behind with the New Yorker), TV news about one-and-one-half-hours and Zooming and telephoning (much too long). And there is even some time set aside for socializing with my friends at the Assisted Living (many of whom also attend Fromm). I am as busy as I was in the “old” world!

Long-range planning is out! “What am I going to do tomorrow?” is in!



THACHER ART HOUR

Wednesday, June 17 & June 24 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Online via Zoom

This is a reminder to those of you who art-inspired or want to explore your inner creativity to join **Thacher Gallery** staff and artists for a family-friendly arts session. Each meeting, we will suggest and lead a new project using household supplies. You are invited to join in or bring whatever you are working on, from knitting to coloring books. Stop by for a short time or the whole hour.

You’ll explore techniques for creating a still life drawing. This will be the first session in a two-part series. In the **first session (June 17-registration closed)** we’ll select our objects, arrange the composition, and do some initial sketches. During the **second session (June 24)**, we’ll add color and complete the artwork!

Suggested supplies: drawing paper, pencils or crayons, 3-7 objects gathered from your home, and a clear space for arranging your objects.

IN THE VIRTUAL GALLERY

FROMM INSTITUTE VISUAL ARTISTS

This week, long time Fromm student and avid photographer **Herbert Goodman, MD** shares some of his pandemic birding photographs. If you are interested in submitting your work for consideration in the Virtual Gallery, send images, sound files, links to webpages, or links to moving art/movies to gallery coordinator **Scott Moules** at the general Fromm Institute email box (fromm@usfca.edu).

HERB GOODMAN

My wife and I have been walking around Stow Lake during the pandemic. I was aware that the Great Blue Herons were in their nest about to lay eggs. I brought my camera and clicked away. It's amazing what other birds are around the lake and in the city. Of course, it takes a long lens to capture far away.



American Robin



Ring-Neck Duck, Female



Steller's Jay, SF Stow Lake



Great Blue Heron, SF Stow Lake



Double Crested Cormorant

gather

GATHER OFFERS MORE GREAT WAYS TO LEARN.

Hello Fromm Community! Several weeks ago we introduced **Gather**, a tool for adults of all ages that fuel their curiosities by making the best formal and informal learning opportunities more easily accessible. We've been gratified by the response by the Fromm community, and we've recently redesigned the site to make it even easier to navigate, as something to complement the learning you are already doing with the Fromm Institute.

WHAT IS GATHER?

Gather is designed to be a single place to easily find and register for a variety of high-quality learning experiences from a network of trusted educational providers. These range from one-time talks and conversations, to formal classes that meet with others over several weeks using Zoom or other online platforms. Providers include universities and cultural organizations from around the world. Gather is updated each week with more than 100 new classes and learning opportunities, each of which links directly to an organizer's website. Using **Gather** is free, although some of the classes have fees that are payable directly to the course provider.

HOW DO I GET GATHER?

To access **Gather** and receive a weekly update on all the new learning opportunities, please go to <https://www.gotgather.com/subscribe>. After entering your email address, you will be able to browse all of the available opportunities. **(Some of you have reported trouble connecting directly from this newsletter, so it may be easier to type the address directly into your browser if you are experiencing difficulty.)**

If you have any trouble accessing **Gather**, and/or if you'd like to share any feedback or suggestions with us, please email alex@gotgather.com or rob@gotgather.com. We always love to hear from you and we will be happy to assist you!

Here is a reminder that The Fromm Institute Student Association updates its Coronavirus Resource page frequently with links to information about services and entertainment during our stay-at-home period. You can access the page directly at <https://www.frommfisa.org/coronavirus-updates-and-resources>

Some additions to the page include a link to The **COVID-19 Anxiety Workbook**; Cirque du Soliel who are offering free 60 minute specials. Also, the **San Francisco Opera** is offering weekly free opera performances and **San Francisco Symphony** has a collection of podcasts which you can subscribe to, including a twelve part podcast with Fromm Institute's own **Prof. Scott Foglesong**. **San Francisco Ballet** is streaming weekly with content from the archive. **UCSF** is offering free exercise classes and the **Jewish Community Library** has created a calendar of virtual learning opportunities and online resources.

If you have any suggestions or want to reach out to the Fromm Institute Student Association head over to frommfisa.org. You can also email them through the website (choose Contact Us) or at frommfisa@gmail.com.



GUIDED CREATIVE MOVEMENT CLASS FOR ALL AGES

San Francisco Village and USF's Intergenerational dance troupe, **Dance Generators**, invite you to the last June creative movement class via Zoom on June 27, at 11 a.m.

To register, please contact aschaffer3@usfca.edu.