



# Ten Lessons I Learned in War That Can Aid in Coping with COVID19

Julie Barker, LCSW, NBC-HWC

*Deployment is basically a prolonged crisis. Being effective in a prolonged crisis requires strategy and management techniques. The coronavirus and its effects on us as individuals, as a nation and as a global society will be a long-lasting crisis with unknown ramifications...ultimately it comes down to a shift in mindset.*

1. Denial vs Fear vs Acceptance of Reality: Accept Reality. Focus on the mission, put the fear in the back of your mind and just move forward.
2. Focus on the Mission and Managing Fear: Whatever your mission (your job, buying groceries, taking care of your kids), focus on the meaning and purpose it brings to you. Minimize exposure to news.
3. Not an Army of One – it's *not* all about you: Shift mindset to "We're on the same side, against the virus" and individual and collective decisions will change.
4. Don't Lose Yourself - it is *also* about you: Take time for self-care.
5. Turn the Humor up to 11: Laugh. A lot.
6. Connection: Reach out, don't hide. Even when we need to "socially distance," get inventive.
7. Trying to work at 100% long term is unsustainable and dangerous: Offer grace and self-compassion during this time, focus less on "tasks" and more on ourselves and our families.
8. Gratitude and Giving: Giving helps us as much as it helps others and it can give us purpose.
9. Retaining our Humanity: If there was ever a time that we needed to look on others with compassion and seek to understand, it is now.
10. Have a plan and know this will pass: This situation will eventually change and the crisis feeling will pass. Just like anything, it's always helpful to remember that nothing is permanent.

*We will all be affected by the coronavirus, and our world will not be the same. But I believe if we are intentional, have foresight, accept the current reality and have a plan, we can choose our best possible outcome, for ourselves and our world.*

***Breathe. Ground yourself. And wash your damn hands.***