

Hello Friends, Family & Neighbors,

One week ago, I held a party for 40 people at my house to talk about the federal deficit. I shared food, wine and conversation. A few days later I had to email those people and let them know we had been at a conference with 18,000+ people where someone had tested positive for COVID-19. Luckily my family and everyone at the party seems to be healthy and safe, but it made me realize that we need to change our norms quickly.

A few days ago I spoke to my childhood friend, Yaneer Bar-Yam who is an MIT PHD. Yaneer is running the New England Complex Systems Institute an organization that has worked for the UN and US government on many of the most challenging problems in our lifetime. Yaneer and his team of over 1,000 volunteers is providing crucial information on the Coronavirus on a website which you can view here:

<https://www.endcoronavirus.org>

Amongst other initiatives, The Institute for Complex Systems is trying to spread information about a way that individuals, families and communities can have a significant impact on slowing the growth of this epidemic by working together and creating “Safe Zones”. Their key recommendation for families and groups is to immediately create a safe-zone that protects the group by discussing, agreeing-upon and strictly adhering to a shared set of norms. Essentially, all group members agree on what to do and not to do (ie. not to take public transportation, not to eat food prepared by anyone outside the safe-zone, use hand sanitizer when entering the home, etc). If all families/groups do this quickly, it can be one of the best combatants to slow/ stop the spread of the Coronavirus.

Based on their guidelines our family/group (including extended family members and several international students who couldn't go home) met yesterday and discussed and agreed to live by the following norms to create as safe a place as possible to do our best to prevent catching or spreading the coronavirus. We will reassess these agreed norms regularly as things change.

Please feel free to share this with others and consider agreeing to your own norms or leverage the norms below.

—Adam Rizika

Coronavirus Family/Group Norms to Create Safe Spaces

Agreed as of 3/12/20

Avoid

1. Restaurants - anyplace with food preparation
2. Any places where there are 20+ people for an extended period of time or where need to stand within 6 feet of others (longer than pop-in/pop-out)
 - a. Bars
 - b. Cafes
 - c. Movies
 - d. Shows
 - e. Sports events
 - f. Mall
 - g. Places of religious worship
 - h. Gym during peak hours (Sanitize before and after using equipment. don't shower in the gym)
3. Busy elevators - take stairs if possible
4. Public transport (as much as possible)
5. limit hugging & shaking hands when possible
6. Air travel
7. Only go to doctors offices if necessary. If you have to go, wear a mask
8. Other groups that don't have agreed upon norms similar to your group

To Do

1. Try to go places during off-peak hours
2. Buy food online but if you go to market, wipe down grocery carts or go off-hours
3. Uber with hand sanitizer - before & afterwards
4. carry purell and use frequently
5. wash hands all of the time
6. Evaluate every day if kids should be pulled from school
7. Limit visitors to those in the Safe Zone broader circle and provide hand sanitizer at front door(s) and ask all visitors to use it when coming into the house
8. Spread the word and encourage other families/groups to develop similar norms