

While Sheltering in Place

(A Guide and Workbook)

During the Time of Dread, the Corona Virus Global Pandemic



The Mbongi structure was (is) a physical structure that our Ancestors created to have a place where our best minds were charged with the responsibility to capture, critique and clarify those “things which concern us dearly,” especially our wellbeing. Picture taken by Baba Dr. Wade Nobles in Mali, West Central Africa in 2002.

#ZolaUpOnUs

User Guidelines

This workbook is designed as a hands-on interactive tool to help us create ways and activities that intentionally guide our focus on being well. It is formatted as multiple strategies (five Star Zola up on Enhancing our Family; eight point Resurrecting our Community; ten Principles of Personhood Right Conduct; two Fundamental Rules of Culture; and Living the Virtuous Life). Try to complete some of the suggested activities in each cluster.

The first and main strategy is the *“Zola up on Us Five Star Family Enhancement Plan.”* The esteemed, Nganga, Kimbwandende Kia Bunseki Fu-Kiau, taught us the BâNtu-Kôngo term **Zola** that means “love.” Our African ancestors knew and understood that **Zola** (“love”) is an energy/power that can and does “activate” our self-healing power (potential) which is called “Ngolo.”

We pray that you will first review the entire workbook and then select one of the clustered strategies to work through with your family. Be creative. Be fearless and unapologetic and unashamed in your **Zola** “uppin” on Us. What do any of the strategies look like through your family’s and your eyes? How do you do **Zola** as a dance, spoken word, game or other performance? Then as follow up and follow through, share what you have created with the rest of our family on our hash tag, **#ZolaUpOnUs** and send your special creativity to our restoring wellness archive to lawfordg@gmail.com

Remember only we can save ourselves. We must heal we and not just me.

Enjoy this workbook and value the time in creating ways to not only survive the Corona Virus Global Pandemic but to thrive in the post COVID-19 Pandemic and beyond.

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The Corona Virus Global Pandemic

Some negative impacts of COV-19 Pandemic are listed below. Pay attention to what you are feeling and experiencing. Behaviors to attend to are:

1. Impatience
2. Anger
3. Fear
4. Agitation
5. Dis-belief
6. Confusion
7. Unforgiving

This is a time when we must control the above seven, especially “Impatience,” “anger,” and “fear” by honoring and encouraging our ability to be well and to see our personal needs as the mirror of the needs of our family and community.

The following clusters are designed to guide, activate and focus our attention on wellness and not on the dread of Corona death and sickness.

Contending with the Moment

Myers L. (2020) "Culturally-Grounded Conceptualizing and Contending with COVID19", ABPSi, Culturally-Grounding and Supporting Our Communities During COVID-19 Worldwide Pandemic DC

- Use the time to learn more about ourselves, one another, building trust and community.
- Establishing and strengthening our relationship to the Divine within us.
- Learning to love our true Divine selves by showing ourselves the same forgiveness, mercy and grace we would want extended to us and which we would extend to others.
- Increase authentic, non- judgmental communication with ourselves and others.
- increase courage and commitment to stand up for what is right, what is just, and what fulfills the role we have played historically as the moral and spiritual leaders of our time.
- Create and do rituals that demonstrate respect for all life flowing with music and dance.
- Do not to speak that which we do not wish to create. Food is medicine. Sleep and exercise are essential. Seek fellowship with those that uplift you, and stand for good.

Enhancing Family During and After this Time of Dread

Nobles, W. (2020) "Zola Up on Us" Five Star Family Enhancement Plan" ABPSi, Culturally-Grounding and Supporting Our Communities During COVID-19 Worldwide Pandemic

In our African traditional beliefs, "love" (KiKongo) is called "Zola" and "Zola" activates our "self-healing capacity." We should "Zola Up On" our families, each other and everyone we cherish. Consider each of the five stars as a "living star." As we engage in the five-star plan, we engage in activities that activate our life capacity to heal and be well. For each star, be creative and try to make up different things, dances, drama (play), word puzzles, proverbs, etc., that represents and brings to life the particular star.

"Zola Up on Us:" Five Star Family Enhancement Plan

(Remember, Remind, Reframe, Revitalize and Reward)

1. **Remember:** Remember who we are and whose we are. We should remember that we are a magnificent people birthed from the womb of Mother Africa. We are African people living in the diaspora (USA). From Kemet (Egypt) to Kansas City, from Sudan to Suriname, from Ouagadougou to West Oakland, from South Africa to South Carolina, from St. Croix to St. Louis, from Mali to Mississippi, from Brixton to Brooklyn, we have been visionaries and have borne visionaries and the valiant, peacemakers, powerbrokers, scholars and seers scientists, business magnates, and healers. We are awesome beyond measure and as ancient as the origins of humanity itself. We belong to a people deeply rooted in spirit that is expressed in our bodies, traditions of family-hood and kinship.

Zola (Love) has healing power. Think about and discuss the many forms of Zola (love) expressed in our daily lives and strengthen and inspires us

Neighborhood (Resurrecting) Community

Karenga, M (2020) "Black People Rising and Reaffirming: Resurrection, Repair, Renewal and Remaking Ourselves and the World." KIPAS NEWS & NOTES, LA

The central teachings of our traditional spiritual, psychological and social systems for living (renewal and resurrection) was to:

1. Seek and speak truth of ourselves and the world;
2. Do and demand justice in our relationships, society and the world;
3. Remember and revere our elders and ancestors;
4. Cherish and challenge our children to have and demonstrate ethical and expansive conceptions of themselves;
5. Care for and struggle with the vulnerable in their efforts to raise and liberate themselves;
6. Have a rightful relationship with the environment;
7. Love each other, AND respect each other
8. Constantly struggle to bring, increase and sustain good in the world.

Do this and do it righteously and together as Black men and women, then we can “stand up in the social coffins” constructed for us, as survivors of our intended burial, and as builders of a new world where life and love and the happiness they bring are cherished in an honored, deeply devoted and daily practice.

How can you and your family practice each one of these? Collectively create specific activities that inspires us to be even better at living and doing what we do.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

Personhood (Revitalizing) Conduct

The Ten Principles of Initiatory Mastery

1. Mastery of one's thoughts
2. Mastery of one's behavior/actions
3. Devotion to a higher purpose
4. Faith in the ability of the teacher to teach the truth
5. Faith that one can know/recognize the truth
6. Faith that one can use the truth
7. Freedom from resentment when punished
8. Freedom from resentment when wronged
9. Ability to tell right from wrong
10. Ability to tell the difference between the real and the unreal

Think about and discuss ways to do and show mastery of each so as to be and do that which is life affirming.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

Two Rules of Culture

1. Sense of Appropriateness: The rule of culture wherein behavior is governed by its purpose and directed by notions of formality, deference and civility.
2. Sense of Excellence: The rule of culture wherein behavior is governed by the synthesis between personal style and character and the desire for perfection, affirmation and ascension

Think about and discuss ways that you or how you can teach your children to conduct themselves in appropriate ways that demonstrated your (their) best

1. _____

2.. _____

Living the Virtuous (Society) Life

Goddard, L and Patricia Nunley, "Corona Pandemic: Suggestions for Maintaining Health and Wellness" (Submitted to Oakland Post Newspaper Group (2020) Oak, Ca.

Our Ancestors in ancient Kemet, believed that the cardinal virtues of Ma'at were designed to achieve human perfectibility and to keep order, maintain respect, and bring oneness with the Creator. Ma'at represents the ethical and moral principle that everyone was expected to follow throughout their daily lives. **The virtues are interdependent and inseparable.**

During and after this time of dread, we should think about and discuss ways to practice living the "virtuous life" wherein we act with honor and truth in matters that involve family, the community, the world, the environment, and the Divine.

Truth – This is the perfect environment for rumors to spread like wildfire.

Be especially mindful of this reality and diligently seek to ascertain the truth to avoid allowing reckless panic to drive your decisions.

How can you and your family speak and do truth? Create specific activities that inspire us practice truth telling, especially to power.

1.

2.

3.

Justice – The reality is during times like this, we as a people, will collectively be negatively impacted. Do not fall prey to participating in or encouraging behaviors that are unfair or unjust. Even if you have the power and authority. Do not be a bully. Share your power; allow others to practice having a "voice".

How can you and your family create specific activities that allow you to practice being just and fair?

1.

2.

3.

Righteousness – Engage in behaviors that demonstrate acts of kindness and consideration. Do unto others as you would like them to do to you. Heaping loving kindness on others keeps you in a positive state.

Think about and discuss ways you and your family can practice behaviors that demonstrate acts of kindness, even when it is not desired or warranted

1.

2.

3.

Reciprocity – Make sure everyone has a role in helping the family during this time. Engage in activities that are mutually beneficial to everyone. Do not blast music that only you like; do not hog shared spaces or items, etc.

Think about and discuss ways you and your family can model volunteering to do things for each other and the whole family.

1.

2.

3.

Balance – This principle relates directly to the strategies noted below in Harmony. Balance being in your “own space” with being “together in the space.” Balance also is important as it relates to EVERYTHING the family consumes during this time.

Think about and discuss ways you and your family can find the right mix in everything you do (work, play, sleep time awake time, reading, watching TV, etc.)

1.

2.

3.

Harmony – As time passes getting along with each other can become more challenging. Schedule intentional breaks from each other. Call it meditation time, reading time, or journaling time.

Think about and discuss ways you and your family can find harmony in doing what you do beyond trying to balance “my time/space” and “our time/space.”

1.

2.

3.

Order – Predictably the current chaos that some are experiencing can be worse. Remember to stay in control of the things that you can control.

Think about and discuss ways you and your family can intentionally establish and maintain order, include eating, sleeping, and playing.

1.

2.

3.

Each virtue, as interdependent and inseparable concepts, should also be used personally and collectively to address the emotional effects of this worldwide pandemic about the way we be we in the world.

In personally doing these life affirming activities, while “sheltering in place” and “beyond this time,” we can break the chain to Western hegemony (thought domination) and mend the disconnect with the best of African being.

Follow Up and Follow Through

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Which “activity” did you choose to try?

What did you and your family do? be specific, describe what you did or are doing?

How did the activity show Zola (love)

How did it make you and/or members of your family feel?

Tell us about yourself

Age Group

Child/youth (0-15)

youth (16-25)

Adult (26-59)

Older Adult (60+)

Unknown

Gender

Male

Female

Prefer not to say

Other _____

Please indicate where you live.

Town _____

Country _____

Send these pages to
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Thank you for your responses