

Adapted from Arrow Leadership Resource

Six Questions You Should Be Asking as COVID-19 Shifts

The last year has been a hard grind for everyone. For some, it has been brutal. In the midst of crisis, there wasn't much time for us as leaders to reflect. And now that the end might be in sight, the temptation is to keep our heads down and push through. After all, we are tired, and there's much to do before lockdown is released.

As this second wave of COVID-19 begins to shift we urge you to find and take some space to intentionally reflect on this crazy time. It's important for our mental, emotional, spiritual and physical health. These factors greatly impact our leadership.

Here are six reflection questions to get you started. You could tackle one question a day or carve out a longer time to reflect on more. Find a quiet space, get out your journal and ask God to guide you.

1. What do you need to grieve? The losses have been significant over the last year. We may have lost a someone we cared about in our family, congregation, community or network and there hasn't be opportunity to mourn them properly. Many plans, hopes and dreams have been dashed. Special events and life markers have been cancelled. There's been separation, suffering and sickness. Lost jobs and financial strains. Loneliness and hard decisions. Make a list. Share the grief and these losses honestly with God.

2. What can you celebrate? Make a list of blessings you've received or seen. Who has stepped up around you? What innovations have worked? Where have there been breakthroughs? How has God provided and protected? Give thanks to God. Write some encouragement notes. Take time with your team to celebrate.

3. What have you learned? Make a list of what you have learned about God, yourself, leadership, your team, your church and the world.

4. What do you need to take with you? As we begin to move out of this second wave, what learnings, mindset, habits, patterns or perspectives do you need to take with you from this difficult season? You have a unique opportunity to incorporate these things into your life and leadership going forward.

5. What do you need to leave behind? Moving from one season to another gives you permission to leave some things behind. What mindset, habits or perspective do you need to leave behind?

6. Where will you catch your breath and get some rest? Many leaders have been working long hours; some have been working nonstop. Long-planned vacations that were already a needed oasis of rest and refreshment were cancelled. Then there's been the emotional toll of high-stress situations and hard decisions over weeks and months.

You likely need to make some time and take some steps to restore although you may be tempted to keep your head down and keep pushing through. If you are depleted—and you likely are more depleted than you think—you can't just keep going like nothing happened. This is especially important should there be more COVID-19 disruptions coming. It's important for your mental, emotional, spiritual and physical health to intentionally reflect, so you're better prepared to lead through the upcoming season. Find a calendar and mark some long weekends and vacation time. Even though these may be staycations, they can make a real and needed difference.