

Leading by example



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YOU REALLY LEARN a lot about yourself and the world in which we live writing down and sharing your thoughts on this and that with thousands of readers each week. Sometimes there is so much on your mind the words flow faster than the Egan Chutes. Other times they trickle onto the page slower than the season's last drops of maple sap. Since the invisible monster we call COVID-19 first began stomping heavily on the people of Ontario in late January, there certainly hasn't been a shortage of significant happenings requiring our full attention. In response to taking in this flood of information, everyone of us has had to adjust our daily routines and way of life in one way or another to help prevent the spread of the pandemic. Living under the State of Emergency we find ourselves in, we have learned that by taking action communally, provincially, nationally, and internationally ? although of course we are always supposed to be at least two metres apart ? we as individuals can make a difference and change the world for the better. During this transitional period of fear and uncertainty we have been told repeatedly that if we abide by the inconvenient but necessary restrictions implemented by the province and the feds, we can overcome this public health crisis. We have also been told that through physical distancing, practicing exceptional hand hygiene and cough etiquette, and staying home we can save lives. In order to limit the potential of community spread, we have seen, and for the most part accepted, the prohibition of social gatherings of more than five people that has caused concerts and signature events like the Rockhound Gemboree to be cancelled, and hockey on all levels to suspend play. Yet, after visiting his family's cottage to check on the plumbing, Premier Doug Ford invited his daughters over for a six-person social gathering on Mother's Day. Yes, I understand that he allegedly only spent an hour at the cottage, and yes I understand that his family's Mother's Day celebration had limited attendance, however now more than ever we need our leaders to lead by example. When others throughout the province are being issued a minimum fine of \$750 for the same offence, the Premier's actions force us to question to whom these laws apply. South of the border we have seen a similar sort of defiance regarding measures being taken to protect the public from the spread of the pandemic by U.S. President Donald Trump and Vice-President Mike Pence. Although it was recently made mandatory for all White House staff to wear masks when entering the West Wing because two aides tested positive for coronavirus, both so-called leaders of the ?free world? have continued to ignore the directive they ordered. In light of the fact actions always speak louder than words, we need to question what the actions of our leaders are communicating; and, whether their behaviour is genuinely in-line with their words. No one is perfect, but the actions of a truly responsible leader never tell us to do what they say and not what they do.