Thoughts from James | May 3, 2020
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Triage – Transition – Transformation

Triage: The act of urgently creating a level of stability and reduce unnecessary uncertainty during a time of crisis.

Transition: Passage from one state, stage, subject, or place to another.

Transform: How must we change and how can we change in a post-Covid world.

These terms were brought forth in a Zoom Conference this week put on by the National Conference of Student Activity Advisers. They resonated with me deeply and were able to add some strong language for me to understand where we are in this global process of living amidst Covid.

Like many of you, the sense and feeling of “triage” has seemed like a non-stop roller coaster ride since the beginning of March for me. How can I help? Where can I do the most good? How do I go about doing that, when it seems overwhelming? Ultimately, this made me draw on an excerpt from the physician's oath, “I will not be ashamed to say, “I know not,” nor will I fail to call in my colleagues when the skills of another are needed for a patient's recovery.” This has led my form of triage to be asking questions, seeking out conversations with others and finding ideas and resources on how others are serving and coping and drawing upon that.

Transitions are never easy. We know that this process is going to require us to examine systems, on how we can best prepare for the varying stages of change this will bring about. For me, this begins and ends with, “what is in the best interest of all students.” Yes, this will require extra work and will hopefully lead us to talk with students, hear from them, learn from them and do our best to make their experience better. Communication with the biggest stakeholders in our education system (the students) will be paramount to making key transitions smoother.

This all leads to transformation. I have heard the power phrase .... “the new normal.” Whatever we choose to call what is on the other side of this, I believe ‘transformation’ all centers around us reimagining what is possible. Letting go of rigidity, and the status quo to find creative ways to make the world a slightly better place for all. When we will get to the transformation stage, a quote from Deepak Chopra might help us get there: “All great changes are preceded by chaos.”