



# Congregation Ner Tamid

on the Greenspun Campus for Jewish Life, Learning, and Spiritual Renewal

## Iamoverit in the Time of Corona

Having traveled to four states in the last five months: Tennessee, Arizona, California and Utah, I have witnessed first hand how different mask mandates and vaccinations differ from place to place. In some places there is not a mask to be seen. In others, when asked if there is a mask mandate, the response is, "It's up to you. I moved here from California because I didn't want folks telling me what to do." As a country we are all over the map. But as human beings, we are tired, discouraged, and angry.

One might call it "Iamoverit" syndrome. For nearly two years our country, our families, and each of us individually have gone through a lot. We have lost loved ones. We have been separated from loved ones. We have missed important gatherings. Our children have been taught virtually and we are afraid that they are falling behind. Those who feel vaccines and masks are the answer are angry at those who refuse to abide by this. And those who are disinclined to take the vaccine or wear a mask or even be tested are upset at what they feel is government interference in their lives. It would appear we are more divided than ever.

I get it. I suffer from "Iamoverit" syndrome from time to time. When I travel to different states, I get the feeling of whiplash over what the proper response is. I always try to err on the side of caution, even if I am the only person wearing the mask in the room. But there is another part of me, that is beyond weary, beyond frustrated, and that is the part that understands that this is no time to be divided.

Typically, national crises bring our nation together. Partisanship disappears, and people rally around the flag. But, in this time of corona, we have not managed to do so. And we really need to. For without our collective will, the virus will continue to fester and kill and destroy lives. We may be "overit" but the virus is not over us.

I preach resiliency with frequency. And I will continue to do so. However, resiliency speaks to our state of mind. That can only take us as a society so far. We need action by each and everyone of us to do our part. If choice were the solution to protecting our society, then I would be all for it. And yet clearly mandates can only go so far, especially in a time of "Iamoverit".

So, take a moment and reflect upon this time of corona. Its impact on our lives, our society, our world, and think about what you might do to help change things. History has shown that pandemics come and go. But the duration and impact depends upon how a society acts. This is our moment to stand together. *If not now, when?*

Sanford Akselrad