1. **Consider the situation.** We’re all navigating a new normal within our worlds and law practices; give the benefit of the doubt to those you encounter who are dealing with the isolation and new home and work environments.

2. **Gentle gestures.** Handshakes are no longer possible in most situations. However, there are many alternative gestures and greetings that convey the same sense of collegiality. Consider adopting the greeting or gesture that best expresses your welcome and your farewell.

3. **Pick up the phone.** Sometimes direct contact through telephone or video is not only easier, but relieves much of the stress and promotes increased civility, as we are addressing each other directly, and the likelihood of misunderstanding the message is reduced.

4. **Avoid confrontation.** There are many ways to respectfully point out differing views, especially when it relates to the safety and well-being of ourselves and others. Unless you are in a position that requires you to enforce mask or social distance guidelines, consider starting with a civil discussion rather than an accusation.

5. **Elevate etiquette.** Small enclosed places such as elevators present a new challenge. Before entering an occupied elevator, ask the occupant if they prefer that you wait for the next one, or if all are comfortable riding together, find new ways to social distance, such as facing the elevator walls.

6. **Continue to cover the cough.** At least until you can cough in relative privacy. We know it’s only our allergies kicking up, but in meetings and other gatherings, even the most innocent cough or sneeze raises anxiety. Find a way to be as discreet or distant as possible, for the comfort of everyone.

7. **Plan ahead.** Protocols for in-person gatherings have changed greatly, but we can all agree that some form of screening benefits everyone in attendance. Consider streamlining the screening process by placing a hygienically safe clipboard and replaceable pen at the entrance to your office, or designating an employee to inquire upon entry, of any person as to their possible exposure.

8. **Time matters.** This pandemic has shown us that time flows in different ways than we experienced in the past. Unless there’s a compelling reason, accommodate requests for extensions of time or change of dates.

9. **Distance makes the heart grow fonder.** If you must remove your mask to take a sip of water during a deposition or meeting, try to do so in a location that maintains at least the social distance guidelines, for the comfort and protection of all.

10. **Practice patience.** Such a simple thought, but during these times, we’re all dealing with things that no one even considered a year ago. We can’t know what goes on behind the scenes in anyone else’s lives, but we can control our own reactions. Count to ten, and try to think of something peaceful before allowing others to upset your balance.

11. **Think before you click.** Don’t hit the send button on the response to the nasty email or text that you just received until you’ve carefully considered your response. Your first reaction may be to respond in kind, but you’ll be far better off in the long run if the response is simply kind.

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