



4 May 2020

Dear Parents and Boys of Hudson House

I am sitting at my son's desk in his bedroom teaching him Grade 3 English, Afrikaans and Maths... so if you feel times are different and uncertain, trust me I feel it too.

We have all had to adapt and transition into a new kind of 'normal' and this has not been easy. But I do believe that College boys are strong, and show determination more than most, and so I am trusting that you Hudson's boys have begun to adapt and are being the best son, sibling, friend and citizen that you can.

I have walked through the House a few times in the past 7 weeks since all the boys left. It is a weird feeling seeing all the mattresses overturned, Bester's Quad silent and the pool tables gathering dust... but this is a normal sight in the holidays. The difference this time and the weird feeling is that usually in the holidays when the house is empty, I'm counting the days down until they return with, if I'm honest, a touch of dread as I know it is the calm before the busyness begins when all the boys return.

This time, I'm wishing they were back! I'm wishing the noise from the 3<sup>rd</sup> form dormitories was flooding into my kitchen, and the loud music from the 5<sup>th</sup> formers could be heard in the corridors. Not knowing when "bells – go – ring" will be shouted again by the 3<sup>rd</sup> formers is an uncertainty I do not welcome. For the first few weeks, the quiet and calmness on the campus was peaceful. But as the days go on of not having our beloved College boys and Hudson's boys on the campus, it has become more and more dis-heartening. Mainly for the many memories and opportunities that are being missed by the boys, no more so than the matrices. This 'unfair' feeling is certainly hard to shake-off when you think of the boys not being able to run onto Goldstones or play on Papes, and take part in a Friday Night Shout. I find myself having to try and draw on perspective when I have these feelings or thoughts, that even though 'things are unfair', we have so much to be thankful for and so much we can still try and achieve during this trying time. Watching stories on the news and reading certain articles has allowed me to put my family into perspective. There are so many people out there, both in our country and in the rest of the world, with so much less than I have, than we have. When things eventually do return to more of a normal state we will have much to give thanks for as we look back at how we got through this time, however that might have been.

Boys, you may be enjoying not doing the odd bolt or having to sign for guarding because you left your dormitory light on, but I certainly hope you are showing self-discipline and some independence at home. It is vital that you are following the academic programme laid out for you by your teachers. I know it is not always easy to focus and keep going so I encourage you, if you have not already, to create a routine of sorts that will keep you accountable. Include short breaks, exercise and some snacks in between to keep you going. Don't be quiet when things are difficult, chat to your mates and to your family and express how you are feeling.

Every Hudson House boy knows that there is something "within these walls that bonds the hearts of men", and I can assure you that is not limited to the boys. We look forward to having you gentlemen back on our campus, whenever that may be. Things will not be as they were before, not straight away at least. It will be important for us to play our part in ensuring that we keep ourselves, and friends and

our families safe when we do return. But for now, you have a role to play as a family member and I encourage you boys to do that to the best of your ability. "Hudson House can trust me in all things". The opening line of our DNA is something I want to encourage you with during this time. Be the best dish-washer, tea-maker, self-studier, grass-cutter... whatever it is your family requires of you, do it to the best of your ability and allow your parents to trust you during this time. Understand that your parents are holding things together for you and may be taking a little more strain than you realise. The uncertainty around finances and work will certainly be mounting and I want to challenge you to be a support to them by doing your best. Allow them to trust you with your academics and get on with it, doing it to the best of your ability!

Our Head of House, Kaid Morsink, wanted to send a short message to the boys, found below;

*Good day Hudson House Men*

*I hope you all are doing well and working hard during these tough times. It is very unfortunate the impact this pandemic has had on us, our academics, sport and cultural activities but is something that is needed to ensure our safety.*

*I really wish we could be sitting on the side of Papes watching the Red Army or on Goldstones, throwing our bashers up, or even on the side of Lamonds watching our mates play on a Saturday. It is a challenge we have to overcome and I am confident you will do so. It is going to be hard but nothing should stop a Hudson's Boy from giving his best.*

*I'm sure you have all set out schedules for work and been doing some exercise, so keep it all up and hopefully we'll be back in the walls that bonds us men!*

*Work hard and enjoy the time with your family! Keep safe.*

Take care and God bless you and your families.

Yours sincerely,

Kyle Emerson

Housemaster: Hudson House