



Canadian Covid Care Alliance  
Alliance canadienne pour la prévention  
et prise-en-charge de la covid

## HEALING THE HEART OF MEDICINE: TRUSTING OUR MORAL COMPASS



Introductory Article  
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When I was in eighth grade, we had a class trip to a conservation area. The goal was to learn how to use topographical maps and compasses to guide us when in the wilds, something very useful to learn if you don't want to get lost. We were expected to obtain our own compass.

My father grew up on a farm and was an avid outdoorsman. He knew how to use a compass quite well and he was excited when he heard of my trip. His father had given him an excellent compass many years before, but living in the city he had not had an opportunity to use it for quite some time. When we finally found it amongst his seldom-used camping gear in the basement, it was pretty dusty and had lost some of its shine. But it still worked, and I remember taking it gingerly into my hands as he stated it now belonged to me. With both delight and pride, I cleaned it up and looked forward to the class trip.

At the conservation camp, we were paired up and given a topographical map, placed in a location marked on that map, and then told to find our way to another specific location. We were given one hour to do so.

I thought that seemed like a lot of time, but it turned out that navigating with topographical maps and compasses was much harder than it looked; we barely made it to our destination on time. Our teachers looked relieved when our cherub faces appeared at the meeting spot.

Life is often like that. In fact, it is much harder, because we seldom know the destination in advance. That's why a compass is even more important, and we all have one, even if we have it tucked away in the basement.

Unlike my story above, each of us already has a moral compass, we don't need to be given one. And whether we realize it or not, we use it on a regular basis, consciously or subconsciously.

Like my story above, it can be hard to read it and use it well. It takes time, study and repetitive use to get really good navigating with it. And when we do, we can avoid getting lost, or when we do, we can find our way back on track more easily.



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Our COVID experience, like a difficult walk in the woods, has challenged us with peaks and valleys, twists and turns along the way. This regular series of articles is an opportunity for us to refine our moral compasses together. The destination is important, of course, but the journey of learning to utilize and trust our own moral compass together is the real goal. Thank you for joining us.

The CCCA Ethics and Law Committee