

School at Home! With Texas Governor Greg Abbott closing schools until at least May 4, 2020, Coke County families are incorporating different activities in to their daily routines, in addition to packets from their teachers and online instruction.



...West of 98
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He and fellow explorer Robert Scott were heated rivals. Shackleton was dubiously sent home early from Scott's Antarctic expedition in 1904. When Norwegian Roald Amundsen beat everyone in the race to the South Pole in 1911, Shackleton looked for his own Antarctic adventure to pioneer and settled on his ill-fated transcontinental expedition.

As Shackleton assembled his crew, he hired some men based merely on a five-minute interview. Shortly before *Endurance* became trapped in the ice, Shackleton disastrously passed on a decent landing place that didn't suit his expeditionary goals. As his men struggled to survive, Shackleton made mistakes. He lost his temper. He upbraided a man for hunting without approval and ordered the meat abandoned (which he soon regretted when the meat supply ran low). Shackleton was no Superman, no action hero, no guru of leadership arts. That's what makes his story more compelling. Shackleton was a flawed human. He sought fame and fortune in his life's pursuit - Antarctic exploration - and when bad luck and poor decisions thrust him into unimaginable adversity, he rose to the occasion.

Shackleton showed creativity in his leadership. As the ship was trapped in ice, he kept his men cheerful with plays and athletic competitions. When he identified a pessimist in his crew, he moved into the man's tent to prevent his attitude from spreading. But as the trip turned more harrowing, his most critical tools were very mundane. As the men crossed the open sea, waves crashed into the boats. The men hadn't been warm in months, but now they couldn't stay dry. Water instantly froze to their clothes in sub-zero temperatures. Their clothes were threadbare. Their boots weren't waterproof. Frostbite seemed inevitable. Yet,

Shackleton's men fought it off by working their toes in their boots. They were exhausted. They stayed awake by focusing on this tiny task. Every waking second, Shackleton had his men focus on moving their toes. The seconds turned to minutes, to hours, to days.

Sometimes, the leadership we need arrives in flawed heroes or tiny acts of perseverance. If the big picture is daunting, focus on simple tasks you can control. Shackleton's men would've been lost without focusing on those simple tasks. As we fight through these new, unknown challenges in our world (and the monotony and anxiety that comes with it), remember the Shackleton expedition fighting off the frostbite in their toes.

Let's get through this second by second, minute by minute,




hour by hour, day by day. James Decker is a lawyer, farmer, and mayor in

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