

COVID-19: Some Lessons Learned

by Phillip W. Weiss

So far, the COVID-19 crisis has confirmed the following:

- 1. It does not take much to destabilize the economy.**
- 2. There is no job that is one hundred percent indispensable.**
- 3. If elected officials are given the opportunity to act like dictators, they will take that opportunity.**
- 4. Direct management of the economy by government has arrived.**
- 5. The economy of the United States can absorb huge losses without totally collapsing.**
- 6. An international pandemic is not enough to stop partisan bickering.**
- 7. The mass media spins stories to convey a political message.**
- 8. The only thing certain about the future is that nothing is certain other than the fact of our own mortality.**
- 9. Humans do not shape the future, rather the future shapes us.**
- 10. Panic-mongering is an effective form of social control.**
- 11. Take nothing for granted.**
- 12. The health care industry lacks the capability to effectively deal with a mass nationwide emergency.**
- 13. The United States economy may not fully recover for a long time.**
- 14. Some of our most cherished social institutions - schools, organized religion, entertainment - will be the first to shut down during a crisis.**

15. An international crisis is not enough to decrease tensions between nations.
16. International political organizations are worthless during a period of international crisis.
17. Humans are capable of being nasty and selfish, and courageous and generous.
18. Norms of social conduct are subject to change.
19. Inalienable rights are easily violated.
20. Economic slowdowns cleanse the environment.
21. Social isolation is part of life.
22. Friendship is a rare commodity.
23. Substance abuse solves nothing.
24. A street-based subculture exists and is getting larger.
25. Economic growth is dependent on confidence in the future.
26. The pomposity of an elected official is virtually boundless.
27. There is no crisis too serious that a politician will not try to exploit it.
28. Rumor is more believable than facts.
29. If you do not care about yourself, then no one else will.
30. To ventilate is to produce hot air.
31. Any fool can act out.
32. Selective application of the law is worse than having no law at all.
33. Education is essential; organized school systems are not.
34. The government needs to nationalize strategic industries.
35. The subway is a pest hole.
36. Cynicism abounds.

37. Toddlers wearing face masks is something truly grotesque.
38. A virus can be contained but not destroyed.
39. A vaccine may be worse than the disease.
40. Beware of social engineering.
41. Lifestyles change; human nature does not.
42. People are fragile yet resilient.
43. Social institutions are props.
44. Cyberspace is a paltry replacement for physical human contact.
45. Ban the handshake and civilization as we know it will end.
46. Those who complain the loudest about partisanship are its worst offenders.
47. A face mask is stigmatizing.
48. A face mask is a metaphor for disease.
49. A face mask is a barrier.
50. The face mask is now a critical commodity.
51. Economy versus health is a loaded choice.
52. People are flawed yet strong.
53. Whom can you touch?
54. Life is more than just a collection of material things.
55. Do not confuse selflessness with showboating.
56. The word hero is prone to misuse.
57. The mass news media is a propaganda machine.
58. The health care industry prioritizes care.
59. Politics is an integral part of the decision-making process.

60. Times of crisis produce weird dreams.
61. The movie theater will soon go the way of the drive in.
62. The crisis has accelerated the process of ghettoization of the city.
63. The racial divide is bigger than ever.
64. Tens of millions of people are unemployed, yet society continues to function.
65. People can be wacky.
66. Crisis tests our commitment to civilized behavior.
67. Relationships require reciprocity.
68. People will use crisis as an excuse to avoid responsibilities.
69. Maybe three people on this planet care about me, and three may be too high an estimate.
70. Aging is irreversible.
71. Health is vulnerable.
72. A crisis magnifies the feeling of isolation.
73. Be thankful for having steady income.
74. Do not take a job for granted.
75. Be thankful for being functional.
76. Praying does make a difference.
77. Women have tremendous political power.
78. The economy is driven by the consumer.
79. Lockout the consumer and the economy will crumble.
80. Stockbrokers are heroes too.
81. The bigger the crisis, the more hysterical the news.

82. There is a lot to write about.
83. Cigarette smoking is a most repulsive behavior.
84. There is no crisis too big that a cigarette smoker will not smoke a cigarette.
85. To think of the past is to contemplate the future.
86. Be open to caring for people.
87. it is easy to lose faith.
88. No economy is ever totally shutdown.
89. Mass unemployment does not stop people from laughing.
90. The mass media never sleeps.
91. Fake News knows no bounds.
92. Fake News is packaged as real news.
93. The bigger the crisis the more hysterical the news.
94. Organized religion is subservient to civil authority.
95. Beware of the politician who uses religion to score political points.
96. The good old days are gone.
97. A crisis does nothing to improve personal health.
98. The face mask is the symbol of a new age.
99. People want to spend money but not at the risk of dying.
100. Scream disease and people will flee.
101. Life is unpredictable.
102. Every restriction in response to the virus is a victory for the virus.
103. Be wary of those who preach civil disobedience.
104. If given a choice between booze and religion, people will opt for booze.

105. Religion is a private matter.
106. Closing a church does not necessarily mean suppressing a religion.
107. Booze produces immediate results; religion does not.
108. The minister who craves a congregation is a politician in disguise.
109. Religion and politics share many similar features.
110. Public debt is not the same as private debt.
111. Gratification can be delayed for just so long.
112. Policy makers never get it quite right.
113. Interest groups are selfish.
114. The term public interest is a abstract concept.
115. Politicians tend to grandstand.
116. News reporting is the most popular form of entertainment.
117. Journalists are the most popular media stars.
118. Cities as presently structured are becoming obsolete.
119. There is nothing wrong with thinking well of others.
120. A well timed phone call can save someone from despair.
121. Human beings are capable of immense acts of cowardice, and heroism.
122. Never underestimate the power of stupidity or the human spirit.
123. A good decision is at best educated guesswork.
124. Life is a crapshoot hopefully without loaded dice.
125. There is no such thing as a level playing field.
126. Crisis is a time for innovation.
127. Humans are creative.

128. Humans persevere.
129. Humans have a way of figuring things out.
130. There is a lot of human potential going to waste.
131. Cultivate the mind and good things will happen.
132. There is a fine line that separates stupidity and genius.
133. Youth shall inherit the earth.
134. The senior citizen has much to offer.
135. To consume is fun; to produce sublime.
136. The marketplace has its limitations.
137. Collaboration between the public and private sector is unavoidable.
138. Civil authority is supreme.
139. Never underestimate the special qualities of a New York City bagel.
140. There are few actions more pleasurable than having a New York City bagel
with a cup of tea.
141. If you do not love yourself, then you cannot love others.
142. It is so easy to become cynical.
143. Commerce generates wealth, and pollution.
144. Those who listen well have a special gift.
145. Circumstances change.
146. It does not take much effort to transform a city into a ghost town.
147. Making war on a virus is like picking a fight with the ocean.
148. People continue to amaze.
149. The crisis of today is the “good old days” of tomorrow.
150. We spend too much time bickering instead of doing.

