

8. The Great Pandemic Awakening of 2020

Without question, an enormous wakeup call to humanity occurred during the Great Pandemic of 2020. In the beginning of the year, residents and guest of Huwan, China began coming down hard with a flu, that flu was recognized as particularly ugly and dangerous, and it began to spread rapidly and widely.

Initially, governments, health systems and humans dismissed the threat, thinking it was no big deal. Later, people started being sickened by it, and dropping dead, all over the world. Alarm bells sounded. Before long, it was recognized as a global crisis. Governments shut down societies, initiating travel bans, closing workplaces, ordering people to stay at home or in place wherever they were, stranding millions.

It was a great reckoning, initially met with disbelief, then fear and panic, then despair, grief and pain. Fear is not rational, and initially many people responded in all kinds of unthinking and ignorant ways, like trying to blame each other for harms by another species of life, hoarding, exploiting the situation by buying up needed resources and selling them at inflated prices, firing employees and evicting renters. Hospitals made front-line emergency and epidemic care workers, exposed to the virus, crowd together in rooms, without protection, for mandatory meetings, spreading disease. People crowded into bars. Gun and ammunition sales escalated. People threatened each other and treated each other poorly.

Stock markets crashed, falling by half, on average, globally, rivaling losses of the Great Digression. Billionaires lost hundreds of millions. Middle class people saw paper numbers they'd been focused on as the meaning of life divide by two, erasing decades of effort. Corporations' viabilities evaporated. Managers saw anticipated bonuses turn into smoke. Interest rates were reduced to zero, or less. Airlines lost billions. Oil prices fell radically. Festivals were cancelled. Toilet paper was hoarded.

People were laid off from work, as employers sought to protect their money and their businesses. Businesses shut down. Public events were cancelled. Transportation systems stopped operating. Hospitals and other medical systems got overwhelmed. Healthcare workers got sick and compromised. Government leaders and workers infected each other in meetings. The virus harmed the young and old.

It was an unprecedented crisis, something many weren't prepared for, which many didn't handle well. Great harms were suffered, physically from the disease, and also socio-economically from its fallout.

However, in the midst of it all, something started happening to people. We were forced to slow down, stay at home, stop working, and quit running around frantically in our vehicles and lives, being busy.

Three-fourths of people in the U.S. had almost no savings, a paycheck or two away from homelessness. Those started questioning life in which they were stressfully and anxiously running as hard as possible, living hand-to-mouth on the threshold of collapse and ruin, while doing exactly what they were told, unable to afford healthcare, in the wealthiest nation on Earth. They realized that didn't make sense. They saw how readily their providers abandoned them, and realized that was not real wealth.

Billionaires and millionaires saw their businesses, empires and net worths collapse. Though they were safe from the disease in extravagant homes and gated communities, they learned just how much so many people resented and disrespected them as human beings, especially after they ignored woeful pleas for help from the more unfortunate, which they had little contact with and appreciation of.

Middle-class people saw how close to the edge they truly were, with little savings or employer loyalty.

All witnessed our President, who had eliminated the nation's pandemic response functionality while funneling resources to the already wealthy, who dismissed the virus as a hoax to attack him personally, who lied about what he and government were doing about it, added a trillion dollars to an already trillion dollar deficit, and was seen on video saying it was only to serve his prospects for reelection.

We witnessed our environments and air cleaning up almost overnight, as cars and factories stopped. We had opportunities to step back from our lives and realize how they were not serving us as beings. We began to use the time to reflect, get informed, have quiet time and meditate, and many awakened. We read, played with our children, spent time together as families, listened to music, danced at home.

We took time to call people we loved, really connect and support each other, and felt the power of it. We began to recognize brokenness in many systems, and ways of being, behaving, thinking and doing. We realized this was affecting most humans on Earth, and that we were really all one, in our diversity. We sought solace in nature, which was balanced and wholesome, and found it to be a great teacher.

With time, peace and quiet, for the first time, perhaps ever, many of us began to feel differently inside. Many of us began to shift our awareness, spirit and consciousness. Many of us woke up and changed. We determined to change ourselves and our lives, refocus and create new ways, states and worlds. When the long, dark crisis of the disease epidemic finally ended, we devoted ourselves fervently to that. We dropped employers, systems and relationships that failed us in the hard times, as they'd dropped us.

We came to believe that we can change. We committed ourselves to changing. We really did change. We changed ourselves, deep inside. We changed what we did and how we behaved. Consequentially, our worlds changed, for the better. It took a long time, and commitment, and a great deal of hard work. The Greatest Generations were forged in the crucible of the crisis of the Great Pandemic of 2020.