

Consequences

Empty streets, people wearing masks, closed institutions, and alarming daily news on the number of new infections and deaths. The first few months of 2020 were truly completely out of the ordinary. No one expected something like this to happen, even though global pandemics with many fatalities are not just a catastrophic fiction, but also the subject of futures studies. Based on assumed events, futures studies develop several possible scenarios, including extreme and worst-case ones, which can be used to prepare for similar situations and reduce their impact. Events such as pandemic outbreaks are called wild cards; that is, unpredictable events with devastating consequences that may happen at any time.

The virus entered my world right at a moment when everything seemed as taut as a rope that was at a breaking point: that point when assignments, obligations, and deadlines start getting out of hand and the feeling of helplessness starts affecting your sense of wellbeing and your health. Then suddenly, we ended up in isolation. It took a couple of days to get used to it, and then we realized that everything would last a bit longer and be more challenging than we initially expected. Once we got used to it, we realized we would even prefer to keep certain advantages of this lifestyle. In all the free time we suddenly had available, we were able to catch our breath again. By distancing ourselves from our jobs, schools, social media, acquaintances, friends, and extended families, we had more time for ourselves and our loved ones. And it was great. The streets and roads got a break, the parks breathed in some fresh air, nature woke up in its spring attire, and animals returned to towns. In two months we acquired new skills and habits and spent more time outdoors, exploring pretty, peaceful little nooks close to our homes. To many, this period provided insight into what really matters in life, society, and the world. We all hoped to somehow be able to preserve all of this even after the pandemic was over. Until the next time.

Until then, let us not forget that the only space we have is the one we live in. That we should be responsible and fair to ourselves and to everything in our control. In the end, everything that happens to us is the consequence of our actions. However, we need to be aware of this not only when a crisis hits, but also when everything seems to be just fine.

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