



Imagining life in a post-Covid world!

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As I sit at my desk at 4:30 AM, wondering at the blurring of time zones and trying to take in the sudden deceleration of life as we knew it, I am amazed at the rapid pace of this global pandemic that has upturned our lives in a completely unprecedented manner. I look back at all the times I have experienced such disruptions in our lives and try to draw parallel with past, yet somehow nothing comes close to it.

This coming from someone who has experienced, along with most folks in my generation in India, events like Indo-Pak War leading to Bangladesh's liberation, Imposition of emergency, Assam agitation followed by riots, Indira Gandhi's assassination followed by riots, Punjab's insurgency, Mandal Agitation followed by riots, Rajiv Gandhi's assassination, Harshad Mehta Scam, Bombay blasts, Dot-com bubble burst, Gujarat riots, Mumbai's monsoon flooding, Ketan Parikh Scam,

Global Financial Crisis and not to mention numerous other floods and droughts to round up ! In the chronology of life events, this one is absolutely unique.

What seems to stand out though is that while nature destroys and yet regains its balance after every cycle, humans tend to be very poor learners from their follies. The eternal optimism underpinning our approach to life, while affirmative in many ways, also tends to create a cavalier attitude towards certain privileges granted to us. When those privileges get taken away, by nature or man-made incidents, we end up sulking in the short term, but hardly ever transform ourselves in the long run.

Let this one be truly different. Let this one seed the resolve for transformative action at a very individual level. There are many ways we can do that. Committing to protect our environment and taking pollution head-on, being more caring and kind and gentle, valuing the privileges afforded to us by doing more for the under-privileged, recognizing that people completely unknown to you have taken enormous personal risks to keep you safe, and demonstrating gratitude for some by paying-it-forward are some of the ways. It is said that a person is sum total of his or her life experiences. In the end, every person will come out of this particular experience with their own set of take-aways. I hope and pray that the choices people make truly reflects the unique nature of this interlude in their lives.

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