

01-06-2020



## Hi Pride

So here we are, Monday 1st of June signals the beginning of a new chapter. Lockdown level 3 has pretty much become the old level 2. From the draconian level 5 of “you can’t do anything, except what we tell you you can”, it’s pretty much “you can do most things, except for these naughty things and this is how you should do the allowed things”. So sort of a graduation from nursery school to senior primary.

It still isn’t perfect or, to my mind, even sensible, but it is progress. We should be opening everything, except for high density gatherings, with guidelines for safe practices. The government needs to take heed of what we have learnt through this roller coaster ride.

The original models were wrong. They vastly over-predicted the fatality rate. They were fire alarms. That’s what they are supposed to do, scare the hell out of you in case there are flames. But, usually, there isn’t a fire, or, if there is, it can be put out. It all depends on how you react. And that’s when things started to go wrong. Instead of taking granny out of the building in case there’s a problem, we called the national guard and arrested everyone. For their own safety.

The vulnerable sector of society is directly related to age and pre-existing conditions. A blanket approach on curtailing the the spread is not helpful. It may even be counterproductive. We have focused on counting the number of infections even though it is patently obvious that this is impossible. Most people will show no symptoms and for those that do, they will be minor, so even if we had the resources, which we don’t, you can’t keep track of the nasty virus. Tracking the number of “confirmed” cases is pretty much irrelevant and a waste of time, other than to fuel the sudden world-wide morbid fascination with statistics. We don’t survive influenza because it isn’t around or by hiding in the cupboard, we survive because we build up immunity.

I think there is a very high probability that over a million people have been infected in South Africa. And, as I said, other than on an academic level, it doesn’t matter, because only 500 people have died. It’s not how many it infects, it’s who it infects. I’m not saying that’s okay, it’s not- it’s sad. I don’t want my loved ones, some of whom are in the vulnerable category, to be harmed. But we seem to be approaching death as if it’s unnatural. A result to be avoided at all cost, a computer error. Last I looked, it seems to happen with or without a virus. People who have weakened immune systems are vulnerable to death. This is not news or even new. Instead of locking up the whole nation we should be protecting those at risk. And to do this we need someone to pay for it. And, yup, that’s the rest of us.

While I know that no politician can ever admit to a mistake, and we did need to heed the alarm, I do hope that our merry committee learn from the overwhelming information from around the world and take us rapidly through the next few phases. They can enthusiastically applaud themselves on how many lives they have saved all the way, but let’s get the wheels of industry turning. Sadly, they forget that this is what pays for everything, including them.

And wheels are turning elsewhere. The UK, Germany, Spain and much of Europe are emerging and packing their work lunches again. In all cases there has been a curve of fatality rates, rising to a peak and then slowing down. Whether there has been a lockdown or not, yes that’s you Sweden, you naughty rebel. How dare you not panic? Didn’t you hear the fire alarm? The good news is that this

will translate through to us. People will be hungry for adventure and thirsty for experience. Times of deprivation create lasting appetites. Demand will bounce back.

In South Africa we are coming out of lockdown before the peak, so it's going to be ugly. But us staying away from work, not drinking and not smoking is not going to help granny. We actually need to work harder, albeit with sanitized hands and a colorful mask, if only to show community spirit, to ensure that we can pay for the protection of the elderly now and to ensure that there is a future generation of grannies.

The wheels are starting to turn, let's hope we are given the freedom to accelerate out of this.

May your elbows carry abundant love, stay safe, stay positive and be kind.

All the best,

Kevin