

Suffering the fall-out of these Covid times



These Covid times are crying out for deeper answers to that perennial and, to some, boring question. More than ever we feel like saying, whatever I think doesn't matter to anyone anyway. Whatever you think is the most important 'think' in the world. Most of the world's responses to every need today are answers to that question, only smart folk are trying to tunnel your think to their benefit: it's called two things – advertising and politics. Ay, and let me face it: religions.

Dare to find some way of entertaining, amusing, even uplifting, others

A good way is to encourage them quite specifically, not so much by reassuring them they will be ok (none of us is sure about that, so let's not be stupid), but by encouraging them to help others. To write to others. To phone, app, or otherwise contact others with something bright to say. Talk about cricket (Indian girls did a great job) or music (latest pop sensation?) or fashions or chef-stuff or anything. Your temptation will be to say "Forget it, whoever you are, forget it." I'm saying, fight that. The wording in the papers pisses me off, "Fight the Covid". No, you and I are layfolk. What we have to fight is allowing its negative emotions to swamp us. The way to do that most effectively is, yes, to dwell in cheerful situations, if possible, but more powerfully, to be yourself a 'cheerful situation' for somebody else. A very long time ago I had to stay a few days in a house where, every morning, the littlest girl of eight or nine would come tripping down the stairs singing "Keep the sunny side up, up!" In a place and time where the "Sunny side" seemed far away, that little tune sung by that little girl used to pick me up hugely. I am not going to list for you what magazines are doing on a daily basis, suggesting ways you can cheer up others and yourself. Good for them. But I am putting it to you, sidestep the temptation that is swamping many a household these times, plunging them into fighting and sexual byplay and violence among one another. The response, I am suggesting, is to dare to find some way of entertaining, amusing, even uplifting, others. Yes, your relationship with your God, whatever your religion, will surely help. But be sure it isn't exclusive. This is the worst possible response to Covid, to adopt any sort of exclusive position on your religious convictions. As I've said before, if it isn't love it simply isn't religion, it is plain wrong. So yes, pray, pray with, pray for, but include especially those who might feel left out. These are hard times, but maybe Covid has a treasure in there in the shape of love. God bless.

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