

Are Preppers Ready For The “New Normal”?

I’ve been hearing a lot lately about the “new normal” that the Coronavirus pandemic has created.

This isn’t a new concept for those of us who are preppers; we’ve used the term for years. The idea that a major disaster would cause changes in the way we live our lives is something we’ve all expected. But the “new” that we’re seeing doesn’t seem to match any news that I’ve seen anyone write about before.

Even SWAT Teams Are Helpless Against This

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Of course, the entire pandemic has run differently than any of us expected. We were thinking something more on the order of Ebola, which would cause runaway deaths, faster than our medical system could keep up with. Whether you believe we haven’t had that because the models were all wrong or because of the actions the government has undertaken to flatten the curve, we certainly haven’t seen the hospitals overrun with dying people.

That’s good news. The bad news is that the way that “new normal” is being used doesn’t appear to have anything to do with getting over the disease and everything to do with government control. Amazingly, what’s being referred to as the “new normal” refers to things happening in blue states, not red states.

Overall, states with Republican governors are working hard to open their states up for business as quickly as possible, while minimizing risk to their states’ populations. While

there is no perfect solution to that problem, each is doing what they believe is best for their state. Leaving aside how effective those measures are, it seems they are trying to respect the rights of their constituents, as well as protect them. Clearly it's a difficult balancing act.

The picture is considerably different in states with Democrat governors. Giving them the benefit of the doubt, that they are trying to protect their constituents as well, these governors' approach to reopening their states seems to be to drag it out as long as possible. Many have "moved the goalposts" saying that they won't open their states back up until a vaccine or cure for COVID-19 is developed and widely distributed.

CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAKS

WHAT IS CORONAVIRUS?

- Coronavirus is a large family of viruses that cause a variety of diseases including colds to serious illnesses such as SARS and MERS-CoV).
- Coronavirus is a new strain of the virus that has never been detected or detected in the human body.

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

Fever

Cough

Hard to breathe

HOW CAN I PROTECT MYSELF?

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick

While some actions to open up may be happening in these states, more than anything, the governors are cracking down on people whose lives are being destroyed and what to get back to some sense of normal. We've all seen the stories of people arrested for cutting hair and going to the beach alone. Each and every one of those happened either in a blue state or in a blue city within a red state.

There are those who are calling these actions tyranny, much like the tyranny of King George the 3rd of the British Empire. We fought a revolution to get out from under his thumb and I have to wonder how many of the people living in those states are thinking of that. I'm sure that those who lean to the left aren't, as they probably want the protection that a lockdown offers, as long as the government keeps handing them money. But even in those states, there are plenty of people who would rather be back at work, as shown by the demonstrations happening in their capitals.

Now, here's the scary part. It's this overreaching authoritarianism that the left stream media is calling the "new normal." They apparently think that it's perfectly normal to steal people's constitutional rights, in order to give them some sense of security. In this, they are fulfilling Benjamin Franklin's great quote: *"Those who would give up essential liberty, to purchase temporary safety, deserve neither liberty nor safety."*

Personally, I've been purposely trying to be slow to accept the words of those saying that "they" are trying to force us to accept that level of authoritarianism as normal. I don't want to be one to cry "Wolf!" and I don't want to accept conspiracy theories. But it's getting harder and harder to ignore.

Is There a “New Normal?”

While I’m not ready to accept the new normal that they’re trying to sell us, by any means, I will say that there is a new normal. It’s quite different than the new normal they’re trying to sell us though. My new normal isn’t about government control, but rather about the disease itself.

China has just had its second or perhaps third surge of COVID-19 cases, leading to the communist government mandating a lockdown of 108 million people. This new location is sufficiently far from the first outbreak of the disease, to make one wonder how it happened. But then, we’ve seen serious outbreaks of the pandemic in over 50 countries around the world.

Many of our own doctors have been warning us of additional surges in the disease this fall when the “flu season” begins and even into next year. But based on this new information coming out of China, which is rather sketchy, it may not take all that long.

The other big piece of information that is coming out of this new lockdown in China, is that the virus has mutated. That’s not uncommon for viruses, which tend to mutate all the time. In fact, a large part of how pandemics burn out is because of those mutations.

But the mutation they’re seeing in China isn’t one to bring us closer to the pandemic burning out, it’s the opposite. This mutation is making the virus harder to detect, prolonging the amount of time that people are infected and infectious, and making it take longer for people to heal. On the positive side, the new version of the virus doesn’t seem to attack the kidneys and liver, as the original did in some cases, just the lungs.

Potentially, this new outbreak could take the world back to

square one, eliminating all the progress that has been made against the virus. Studies that have been completed will have to be undertaken again, to establish the new parameters for the disease, and work on medications, including vaccines, which is reaching the point of clinical trials, may have to be redone if they are not effective against this new strain.

The other thing this new strain might mean is that the two years that medical professionals have been warning us about may have to start over. Considering how fast the virus has mutated, this might not be the only time when that clock is restarted. I can very easily see it restarting over and over again.

What this means is that the real new normal is one where COVID-19, in one form or another, is going to become part of our lives, just like the flu is. We might see the number of cases wax and wane as we go through the year, but it will probably never go away. Just like Pandora couldn't put all her troubles back in the box, we can't put this trouble back in ours. It has been let loose in the world, and it's unlikely to go away anytime soon.

Is there a possibility of a vaccine? Yes; but it might take considerable time. Can medical science come up with a cure? Maybe. In either case, it's going to take a considerable amount of time and effort. While there are pharmaceutical labs across the country working on this, I don't think any of us should be holding our breath.

Living in the New Normal



So if living in a world with the risk of catching a deadly disease is the new normal, we're going to have to live with it. In a sense, I have to say this new normal is probably what the old normal should have been. After all, we've lived in a world full of deadly disease longer than any of us have been around. With that being the case, why does it surprise us that we have to adapt to that world?

There are two different ways we can live in this new world:

- We can live as if COVID-19 is no more serious than the flu, taking our chances
- We can live as if COVID-19 is a real threat and take the appropriate precautions

Living Like COVID-19 is No More Serious than the Flu

We see this all the time; these are the people who are out in public without masks and not practicing social distancing. Chances are they aren't washing their hands or using waterless hand sanitizer either. While I would have to say that this is their right, I wouldn't call it wisdom. Even if they are young enough and healthy enough that there is little risk of them needing to be hospitalized if they get COVID-19, they are a risk to everyone else around them, especially the at-risk population.

Some of these people might think “My life, my choice.” But that’s actually a very self-centered point of view. Yes, it’s your life, in the sense that you might catch the disease and die. But what about everyone around you, who you might infect if you get it?

Granted, there’s always the possibility that someone can go through life and never catch COVID-19; probably about as much of a chance as going through life without catching the flu. I get it. In that case, they aren’t putting anyone at risk. They’ve rolled the dice and come up winners.

But how can anyone know that they fall into that small pool of people who just manage to avoid the disease? This disease is such that someone can be infectious for a couple of weeks, without ever knowing it. So unless someone is a hermit and never has any contact with others, there’s always the chance of them catching the disease and passing it on to others.

Living Like COVID-19 is a Real Threat



The rest of us fall into the category of those who see

COVID-19 as a real threat; maybe not an existential threat, but a threat nonetheless. We understand that the disease is here to stay and that it can kill people. We also understand that we can get infected by people who seem to be totally healthy and not even realize that we've infected ourselves.

I count myself amongst this group, and not only because I am old enough to be considered "at risk." Rather, I have friends and family that I wouldn't want to risk infecting, even if I manage to avoid becoming sick myself.

Because I see myself as part of this group and because there is no potential end to COVID-19 in sight, I am going to continue to take the necessary safety precautions, whether anyone else does so or not. That means I'm going to wear a mask, practice social distancing, wash my hands, and disinfect things before I bring them into my house. That's inconvenient; it's more expensive than living a "normal" life, it might keep me from doing some things I want to do; but it is safe.

Please note that I'm not doing this from fear. While fear is a very good motivator; it's also a very poor one. It's good, in that it gets us to do things that we might not otherwise do. But it's bad in that it's the wrong reason to do them. It can also keep us from doing things the way we should because we aren't thinking rationally. Fear keeps us from thinking as we should.

We need to get used to the idea that this isn't just a temporary measure. Those who have been pushing that idea need to upgrade their thinking. The idea that this disease is going away sometime soon is likely to be false. While we would all love to see Pandora put it back in her box, it's just not going to happen; and with the agility, this virus has shown in mutating to a more dangerous strain, there really is no evidence to point to, for any of us to get the idea that the world will get over this soon.

It's not zombies like some had hoped; but we're now living on the other side.



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