

DIANE HARKEY



On the Bright Side

Lock Down Lessons Learned: 1.) suburbs are good – they come with yards; 2.) just in-time-inventory , especially with food can be a problem; 3.) the teacher may be right, your kid is not an angel; 4.) Giada is wrong - cooking is not fun; 5.) what used to be rude is now social distancing; 6.) Hairdressers and manicurists are definitely essential services; 7.) it's 5'oclock somewhere has taken on new meaning.

The Twilight Zone Redeux?

When viewing the empty streets of New York City, Los Angeles, other normally bustling urban centers and our own hometown, one can't help but engender reminiscences of the 1959 series, "The Twilight Zone." Life in the Twilight Zone

leaves a lot of time for reflection. For instance, I was texting with my cousin who lives in Illinois who I grew up with for the first 10 years of my life, along with numerous other cousins, aunts and uncles. Our families had weekly Sunday dinners at Grandma's house; Grandma was young, vibrant and happy and we loved going to her house. We held birthday parties and other celebrations at Grandma's or we rotated family backyards for BBQ and major holidays.

We rolled down hills, stalked through mini neighborhood forests, knew how to look both ways before crossing the street, avoid snakes, bad people. We generally banded together in groups for winter sleigh rides down steep hills with our individual Radio Flyers, which sometimes were double loaded. We dug caves in the vacant fields (underground forts) that the boys grouped in, and girls were only allowed to view from the outside. (Some like me, with a wonderful big brother, did sneak in from time to time.) And yes, we suffered a few crashes, cuts, bruises and spankings for pursuing dangerous behavior that we had been warned to avoid.

We all knew to obey the teacher and the police, and to show respect for adults or we would face punishment at home. Yes, there were racial tensions and segregation that has thankfully been eroded; I got beat up a few times for being in the wrong color in, the wrong place at the wrong time. We also drank from the garden hose, suffered though measles, mumps and chicken pox, and for some reason, we seem to be the strong ones, carrying our families through this pandemic without illness, yet.

While life as we know it has changed, I thank God for the way I was raised. We became very self-sufficient at a young age because we were poor, but didn't know it, and just did what we had to do to live well, follow our dreams and stay connected to those we loved.

I hope you are remaining strong, putting the extra time you may have to good use, and staying connected to those you love, and even those you don't. Know that this too will pass, we are finding treatments, and we will find a cure, life will go on, and the sooner the better for all of us I'm sure.

Good News on the Medical Horizon - Biotech to the rescue

Mass distribution of Antibody tests will become available soon, as discussed in the White House briefing on 4-6-20. With this test, we will know who has had the virus and has antibodies or immunity going forward. A pinprick to the finger will inform the medical professionals who at this time really need a tool so that people may return to somewhat normal activities until a vaccine or other deterrent can be found.

If you aren't already aware, Gilead Sciences ([NASDAQ:GILD](https://www.nasdaq.com/markets/stocks/quote/NASDAQ:GILD)) has made **remdesivir** available to over 1,700 patients and will be expanding that

number to over 140,000 through compassionate-use and expanded-access programs. This is where the private market is invaluable, conducting research, development and taking a risk that there will be a need and ramping up production quickly – meaning spending a lot of capital (money) and taking huge risks, knowing that if you are not right, you could lose it all. Government cannot and should not do that.

What exactly does remdesivir do? It is a neuraminidase inhibitor, or in other words, if it works as expected, it will stop the virus from multiplying. Other flu-related antivirals currently approved are oseltamivir (Tamiflu) or zanamivir (Relenza). Clinical trials were allowed to proceed quickly because the drug was used for Ebola, and while it was found not an effective treatment, it also was found to do no harm. Let's keep our fingers crossed that in this case it works as a treatment.

In addition, the **Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation** has begun funding in partnership with public and private enterprises, factories and other processes for 7 promising vaccines to enable the R&D to proceed swiftly. Gates has stated that the billion spent will be well worth it compared to the billions being lost around the world due to the pandemic. I think we can all agree that any amount of self-interest will be hugely offset by world-wide benefit. We should all be thankful for the contribution of a family that made billions from technology we all use for expediting the path forward for all of us.

Officially Approved for use: As you know, FDA has approved hydroxychloroquine for treatment of COVID-19. Doctors on the ground are prescribing it to hospitalized patients because it seems to work in many cases, and often severely ill patients recover rapidly. In a recent interview on ABC-7 doctor Anthony Cardillo in Los Angeles, has seen “significant success” in providing the drug when combined with zinc . See:

<https://abc7.com/health/la-doctor-seeing-success-with-hydroxychloroquine-to-treat-covid-19/6079864/>

It's also been reported that the New York health and hospitals system are prescribing the drug liberally to patients arriving with COVID-19 symptoms. While seemingly controversial, for technical efficacy reasons, doctors, sources and other countries are beginning to report the empirical results of great success with the drug in combination with a z-pak or azithromycin. China has also provided a recent study showing that the treatment has a high success rate. Let's not lose sight of the fact that hydroxychloroquine has been on the market for years, the negative effects are well-known and are probably better weighed by the attending physicians.

Your Health and Weight Really Matter

From the CDC website: People of all ages with underlying medical conditions are at higher risk for severe illness, particularly if the underlying medical

conditions are not well controlled. This includes people with:

- Chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
- Serious heart conditions
- Conditions that can cause a person to be immune-compromised, including cancer treatment, smoking, bone marrow or organ transplantation, immune deficiencies, poorly controlled HIV or AIDS, and prolonged use of corticosteroids and other immune weakening medications.
- Severe obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 40 or higher)
- Diabetes
- Chronic kidney disease and who are undergoing dialysis
- Liver disease

Read the articles below regarding obesity (with or without diabetes) and the impacts on mortality:

<https://www.endocrineweb.com/conditions/obesity/covid-19-obesity>

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-new-orleans/why-is-new-orleans-coronavirus-death-rate-seven-times-new-yorks-obesity-is-a-factor-idUSKBN21K1B0>

Perspective Matters

Is the glass half full or half-empty? I've always been a half-full kind of person, but I'm very pragmatic and like to look at data. Our Governor has released 500 ventilators to help other states...that's a good thing. As for the data -

Understand there could very well be a backlog in reporting skewing the totals and we do expect the mortality rate will increase. The County of Orange website has statistics updated daily that may be found here:

<https://occovid19.ochalthinfo.com/coronavirus-in-oc> . As of the date of this writing 4-6-20, we had less than 0.028% cases per our population, 14 people have died or a 1.6% death rate for all reported cases.

Los Angeles County had more cases at 5,940 with 132 deaths or a 2.2% mortality rate but with a population of approximately 10.16 million people that is an overall infection rate of 0.06%. The state of California and its nearly 40 million people is at a .033% infection rate.

But while expecting an increase over the next couple of weeks, the counts are lower than we would have expected by now due to measures we have taken: staying at home as much as possible, hand washing, social distancing, and patience through this troubled time.

So, while we know the virus will spread, and the more testing the more cases, let's flatten this curve, remain vigilant and keep up the good hygiene habits so we can all get back to living and working as soon as possible. By that I mean

remembering how bad this virus is and sticking with the protocols so it doesn't recur, but returning to work, enjoying our parks and beaches while keeping our distance and mingling in perhaps smaller groups once more.

The more we know the better off we are...Once again, thanks for staying involved.

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