

Gustav Koch, Q2

English

### Life after (?) Covid-19

Since March this year the Corona virus pandemic has been the number one topic of conversation and has therefore, of course, led to extensive speculation about whether things will ever return to normality again or if we have to adapt to the so called "new normal". Will our future forever be marked by "The Outbreak of 2020"?

No.

(Or to stay argumentatively decent: I don't think so.)

This pandemic will be remembered for many years as a big challenge for society, for some people maybe as the biggest in their lifetime. After a while, however, face masks, disinfectant, social distancing and everything else that to us is a symbol of Corona will disappear from our day to day lives. Its effects will never fully go away, but they will not be as visible as public busses re-designed to have 1,5 meters between every seat. Instead, Covid will be condemned to a much less glorious afterlife as a bogeyman that can be reevoked whenever someone appeals for increased funding for hospitals or something similar.

Corona does provide a stage to some forms of innovation. But video conferences and home office are no invention of the lockdown. Instead, they have lingered in the corner of society's eye for several years before the need for distance launched them from a couple of niche start ups onto the global stage. If they proved useful for the time after the lockdown, which seems likely, this transition would have taken

place even without Corona, though the shift would have happened much slower.

Those theories which propose the failure of the current system on the one, or the establishment of a solidaritarian wonderland on the other end disregard the human ability to hold on to the traditions near and dear to our heart for millennia whether or not they prove useful or reasonable. Of course, we as a species are also able to adapt our behavior to fit our lifestyle as most prominent in movements like the woman's rights campaigns and the American Civil Rights movement. Both of these in many cases happens without any large external motivator while many crises like the German reunification of 1990 or the financial crisis of 2008 could happen with much fewer fundamental changes than most people at the time had anticipated.

In my opinion, Corona will not be the motor of change it is often made out to be. If anything, it is the fuel accelerating change that was bound to happen regardless.