

Reflections on Reflections...

Geriatric Services Conference, Stuck on Pause

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Ageing white female, now trained in bread making, soufflé production and Telehealth encounters

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Perpetual reflections fascinate me. I mean the ones that result from opposing mirrors and intentional angles, seen in elevators of fancy skyscrapers, or large elegant washrooms in public performance places and locations catering to large sized groups all descending on the washrooms at one time. Best viewed when said venues are empty.

And lots of venues have been empty. Very empty. All the better to actually see the mirroring mirrors do their mirroring.

But after day one hundred, it feels a bit like the light is trapped inside the reflections and never gets out. All the brilliant insights, themes, innovative methods for communicating and coping have been taken. The class in being human like everyone else is drawing to a close.

Then another human foible raises its messy, historical unresolved conflict laden head and the pressure cooker of isolation mixed with free floating anxiety, social injustice and the energy that comes of surviving threatens to explode. Glass all over the place. World order wobbles vertiginously as the levelling reality of all being in this together, of cleaners and grocery clerks being essential and yeast and toilet paper being treasures, opens everyone to the interconnectedness, vulnerability, and dependence we have as individuals. Even leveraged up as small groupings - family, workmates, club members - we are still interconnected, vulnerable, and dependent. Our precious autonomy and independence are bought with the efforts and sometimes disadvantage of others.

Opening back up does not feel like running the scenario in reverse. Ironically it feels like entering more uncertainty and variability, yet more vulnerability, from which being all trussed up in PPE with everyone else in lockdown protected us. Our preoccupations are becoming more diversified, less survival oriented. And the reflections are diffusing. The crystal sharp focus that COVID-19 danger produced is fading. We need to cling to insights, reflect on reflections, and act while the insight and motivation both exist, and before the new normal lulls us into new complacency. A novel social contract where every life matters and everyone understands, evaluates and takes into account their own butterfly effect on their fellow humans awaits. The ripple reflections would be simply amazing.