

## Summer of 2020

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**S**ummer vacation has come much earlier than I could imagine. Due to the so-called backward telescoping effect, one year ago seems a century ago, especially now that the second half did pass so special. Online lectures from my living room, which I turned into amateur documentaries, with thanks to Vegas (movie app) and a lot of time (every 45 minute lecture took me about 12 hours to edit). In addition, there were many online meetings, which started slowly but steadily from March onwards. All of this caused a kind of fear of the unknown. Will we ever overcome this Corona crisis? Isn't it much worse than it is shown? Certainly it feels like after a nightmare. Unfortunately, I believe everyone knows someone who has succumbed to the virus or has been permanently damaged.

However, it certainly was also an interesting time. We could observe a diversity of coping strategies people (including myself) use to keep perspective. Denial, resignation, rebellion, accusation ... Actually it is fairly easy to recognize the 5 stages of grief model of Kübler-Ross: 1. denial, 2. anger, 3. bargaining, 4. depression and, finally, 5. acceptance. However, the sequence does not seem to correspond to this: we started with acceptance (Initially, we all went into lockdown with almost no protest, and we followed the rules quite intrinsically). Now the rules are being ignored by whole groups of people, and there are large groups of people who believe in conspiracy "theories". To quote the Beatles, "living is easy with eyes closed, misunderstanding all you see .." (*Strawberry Fields Forever*). Somehow it feels that this applies to all of us. After all, we, humanity, stack the burden of great diversity and environmental problems as comfortably as possible for posterity, who must have very powerful personalities and leadership to keep human life on Earth still possible in 200 years. Unfortunately, the opportunity to use the Corona crisis as a wake-up call to start "to make it better" (to quote another Beatles song) seems to have been missed... Thanks to politics and especially the media.

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It is also interesting to see how uncritically the Dutch media and press pretend that 'science' gets everything under control. What is hidden? What else is hidden? We are also much worse off in terms of sustainability / environment than is suggested. People who point this out are ignored unless they do criminal / nasty things like the Unabomber, or like the German Rambo now hiding in the forest. He is ridiculed in the media for showing his disbelief in technology in a manifesto. Can we still trust the media at all?

Nevertheless, I believe that we as humans are a special species. The crisis has shown that we can change quickly. The fact that politicians and the media lack momentum does not mean that we as human beings cannot or should not take our own responsibility towards a simpler life, with less technology, and belief in science and with much more belief in each other! Together we can face the future, we only have to accept that we must be much less uncritically in accepting new technological (scientific) disruptions. I wish you a very nice summer holiday, in which we can try to take our lives a bit easier, which is, in my opinion, a good direction to ensure our survival, now there is time to practice!