**Musings in lockdown**

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When Hollywood made movies about it, we went to the theatre, grabbed popcorn, had a good time and wondered ‘what if it actually happened in real life?’ Little did we know what we were in for a mere few years later.

Over the past year, the world has been living in the dire reality of a worldwide pandemic. What started in China (or according to some researchers, in Europe), has spread all across the world, taking lives left, right and centre.

Some of us may have successfully evaded the virus up until now, but it would be irrational to disregard the toll this new reality has taken over our mental health. A day doesn’t go by where I don’t come across an obituary or an article stating how someone from some part of the world chose to end their life because of the growing fear of the virus, added work-related stress and the inability to adapt to the changing environment of the world (I think psychologists call it the adjustment disorder).

[2 doses of Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine provide 95% protection: study](https://nation.com.pk/06-May-2021/2-doses-of-pfizer-biontech-vaccine-provide-95-percent-protection-study)

A few months before Covid-19 reared in its ugly head, I lived a life similar to that of Truman Burbank’s (not exactly, but close enough). I was kicked around like a stray and life was dictated to me by people around me on how I should live, almost as if I was a pawn that everyone used to get ahead in their life. I was not stupid. I knew full well this current life that I was living was me falling in the wormhole of sadness, going deeper and deeper.

I knew I had mental health issues, but I was just too much of a coward to open that can of worms. I just wanted to be left alone. However, on the insistence of a friend, I decided to see a psychiatrist. Needless to say, I was prescribed heavy doses of antidepressants, antipsychotics and mood stabilisers for a period of six to eight months. I was officially declared a clinically-depressed man. Over the next couple of months, I kept up with my prescriptions and doctor appointments consistently, trying to find a beacon of hope in life. Until one day it finally hit me, I needed to actually address my issues head on rather than letting some four tablets a day take care of them for me. I was going to try and find happiness, no matter how. I was going to find beauty somewhere, everywhere. It was going to be my tryst with destiny.

[Global food insecurity at 5-year high amid COVID, conflict, UN warns](https://nation.com.pk/05-May-2021/global-food-insecurity-at-5-year-high-amid-covid-conflict-un-warns)

Doesn’t life have a way to kick you down when you really don’t want it to? On my trek to Mount Self-Actualisation, an avalanche by the name of Covid-19 hit and buried me under a huge pile of snow which is known as the ‘lockdown’. Speaking from my personal perspective, for 25 years I have sworn, preached and lived by the idea of introversion. Whether it had something to do with the way I was raised or the people I surrounded myself with, I love to be identified as a recluse with my two dogs by my side. One would assume for someone like me, the idea of being in a lockdown would be heaven, right? Wrong.

At first, I found being lodged inside my personal space to be quite soothing. I could read books that had piled up in my bookshelf for a long time, I did not have to be a part of awkward family gatherings and most importantly, I could stay safe from the world outside whilst being completely content with life inside. However, with the virus rampant all around the world in ‘waves’, it also simultaneously introduced the new waves of reality. Will things ever be the same again? Will I ever be out in public without a face mask on? Will I even be alive by this time next year?

[Hundreds of farmers head to Delhi to protest Farm Laws despite COVID restrictions](https://nation.com.pk/05-May-2021/hundreds-of-farmers-head-to-delhi-to-protest-farm-laws-despite-covid-restrictions)

From sea to shining sea, our world has become one big liminal space, because of ‘reality’ being so offset; with our brains struggling to rely on an ambiance to make sense of this new world. It almost creates an unwanted panic and discomfort, which can only be erased by nothing but hope of overcoming these times someday, somehow.

I’ve known this feeling of anxiety all my life, but I have felt it in a different way. For someone suffering from severe mental health issues, this unforgiving world is truly a nightmare that never seems to end.