

## **COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus) Pandemic - No Going Back**

**June 13, 2020.** Today Florida reported a record number of new COVID-19 cases for the third day in a row. At the same time the state is continuing to relax restrictions and allowing more types of business to reopen. The combination of the economic strain and the populace tiring of the lifestyle now outweighs the fears of a second wave. And we are not going to get the type of political leadership that previously put lives before money. So it is apparent that there is no going back.

Three months ago the nation responded positively to shelter-in-place orders. Now the daily reports from around the country confirm that the measures, which have been proffered by medical experts, have worked. Infection rates in New York, once the highest, are now amongst the lowest. But the promise of a vaccine, while brighter, is still a year away and the kinks in strategy are becoming more apparent. As everyone grows more restless, it is predictable that we will begin to loosen our commitment and take more chances.

My wife and I have been part of the obedient citizenry that has strictly followed the rules and fortunately like most of friends and neighbors we have not experienced COVID-19 first-hand. My wife and I live in a community where no one has been infected and we don't know anyone has contracted the virus. That is good news but we also are likely acquiring a false sense of security while all the time growing restless.

This week the major sports leagues made announcements about restarting their seasons, and I sat with pleasure today watching the PGA Tour playing live but with an on-site audience. It felt in a small measure like a return to normalcy and like everyone else, I thirst for more.

Over the past week my wife flew for the first time since the outbreak; I'm still not ready to fly. We had lunch with a couple (in-laws) in our age group and elected to sit inside a restaurant for the first time. Our daughter and family drove down from Chicago and have rented a beach house this week in northern Florida; and we have elected to join them. In two weeks our son and family are coming to visit.

There is no going back. The onus is now squarely on us as individuals to maintain self-discipline; government regulations are not going to provide a protective shield. We will take precautions, knowing we are taking a risk.

What lives ahead.