



## Waking up to a pandemic

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Pandemonium

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Do we really need a pandemic to realise

that we are here on earth to support and not to exploit others;  
that the earth belongs to all species, not just to humans;  
that our whining of not having enough time for ourselves is a lie;  
that our family needs us more than anyone else?

Must we wait for the next pandemic before we learn

that hand washing videos are more important than computer games;  
that health education is needed more than costly smartphones;  
that we are the destroyers of nature in the garb of development;  
that it is possible to stop or to indefinitely postpone wars and conflicts?

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Will this pandemic help us to understand

that we can forgive past misgivings and move ahead with renewed trust;  
that we are here in this world for a very limited period;  
that we should actively contribute to peace and harmony  
that it's high time to collectively say no to chaos and conflict?

Do we really need a pandemic to realise who we are?

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**Poet's note:** The Corona virus (COVID 19) pandemic has brought the whole world to a grinding halt. It has caused unprecedented suffering due to the exponential increase in the number of cases in many countries such as China, Germany, Italy, United States of America, Iran, and others. India is also on the verge of phase-III - or community transmission - on the rising curve of the pandemic. The whole world has gone under lockdown. Social isolation, hand hygiene, and cough etiquettes are the only strategies to mitigate its effects. All those activities which at one time seemed indispensable to our progress have suddenly stopped and have made way for those that are capable of protecting our health.

The daily race against time, against Nature, which made so much sense and consumed our lives until yesterday, seem worthless today. All the conflicts have either been forgotten or are subdued or postponed indefinitely. It seems as if this pandemic - right in our faces - has come to punish and to serve as a stern reminder of how we humans have played against the rules of Nature and of harmony.

This poem highlights that we should have realized it much earlier and made peace with Nature. We did not need a pandemic to make us realize this; but alas, we have begun to understand our reality only now, when besieged.