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Predrag Cicovacki, Natacha Salomé Lima

Our Common Post-Covid-19 Pandemic Future: A Return to "Normal" or a Creation of the New "Normal"?

Predrag Cicovacki – Professor of Philosophy, College of the Holy Cross. MA01610, 1 College Street, Worcester, PO Box 0029A, USA
ORCID: 0000-0001-8351-5680
e-mail: pcicovac@holycross.edu

Natacha Salomé Lima – Researcher, the National Scientific and Technical Research Council (CONICET) Argentina. Faculty of Psychology, University of Buenos Aires. Lavalle 2353 C1052AAA Buenos Aires City, Argentina
ORCID: 0000-0001-6728-961X
e-mail: nlima@psi.uba.ar

The goal of this paper is to reflect on our common post-Covid-19 future. To do so, we first examine our present pandemic situation in terms of the pairs of the correlated concepts: peace and war, and the normal and the abnormal. We then proceed to analyze the dual aspect of the concept of normal: its descriptive as well as its normative side. In doing so, we consider the ethical views of Immanuel Kant, Nicolai Hartmann, Fritz Jahr, and Paul Ricoeur; their views help but do not lead to the solution we find satisfactory. Upon further examination, we come to the realization that our problems with understanding our present and with anticipating our future seem to be ultimately related to our struggle to establish a ground on which both the descriptive and normative aspects of the concept of "normal" can be satisfactorily founded. Our suggestion is that this problem may be solved by understanding what is normal in terms of health, understood as balance and as finding a proper measure in everything we do. Our common post-Covid-19 future should be centered on our renewed commitment to the promotion of physical and mental, as well as individual, social, and environmental health. We thus set a stage for further development of an ethics of health.

Keywords: Covid-19 pandemic, normal, abnormal, normativity, health

Understanding the Pandemic as War

Perhaps the most recurring question during the first months of the Covid-19 pandemic was: *when* will we be able to return back to our normal lives? As the pandemic has dragged on and began to manifest itself in new forms and erupt at different geographical locations, our central question has shifted as well: *will* we ever be able to return back to our normal lives? But before attempting to answer these questions, we should first reflect on what we want to return to and what may prevent us from doing so.

One appealing way to understand the contrast between the pre-pandemic, pandemic, and post-pandemic periods is in terms of peace and war: peace is normal and we lived peacefully; then the pandemic created a war-like environment; the post-pandemic period would mark our return to the previous normal and peaceful way of life.

There may be good initial reasons to think of our usual ways of life in terms of peace and of the pandemic in terms of war. It is the war against the virus, Covid-19, that has suddenly "attacked" us; once the virus is defeated, or at least neutralized, we can return to our peaceful and normal lives.

The longer this pandemic unfolds, the clearer it becomes that, if we are indeed in the state of war, it is not clear who is in the war against whom? Yes, there is a spreading virus to fight against, but has not this virus been produced in one country and by the institutions of that country? Is not that country to blame and is not that same country to be asked to repair the damage that the pandemic caused in the rest of the world? But knowing the origin and blaming someone for the pandemic would not bring much to its resolution. The long months of waiting for the Covid-19 vaccine and the subsequent manipulations with these vaccines revealed once more that there may be another war going on: the war of the multinationals against each other. Or is it not the war of the multinationals against the population that was so desperately in need of their vaccines? And are those vaccines really the "vaccines" and not some new and more sinister ways of deception, manipulation, and control of the populace?

Once we come to these questions, we cannot stop but have to keep wondering, doubting, and connecting the dots which may not obviously link together. Are not the multinationals controlled and owned by the super-rich who have become even richer as a result of their successful manipulations of the pandemic? But, then, if our situation is really the war of the super-rich against the rest, it is not anything new. We have been aware of it for a long time, as could have been clearly witnessed during the recent "Occupy Wall Street" movement. The slogan of that time was: 1% against the rest of us, the 99%. If the pandemic changed anything, it may be the ratio of the super-rich and the rest of us. But what exactly is that ratio: 0.5% against the rest? 0.01% against the rest? Or is their number growing, and 1% is swelling into 2%? Or perhaps 5%?

There is something else of which the current pandemic has made us aware: it is the deteriorating mental health of our population and the increasing outbursts of violence. The situation is especially precarious for our children. The months of forced isolation, the lack of their social engagement, the inadequacy of online education have, in connection with the millions of Covid-19-infected, created a real social nightmare,

the full consequences of which we are yet to see. The domestic violence and the violence on our streets, the suicide rates, the abuse of alcohol and drugs, and the increase of anxieties and depression were already rampant even before the Covid-19 pandemic, and there is every indication that their numbers are spiraling out of control and beyond the possibility of any precise estimation – at least for now. Here again, the pandemic has not lead to a new phenomenon, in the sense that it turned peace into war; it simply escalated the crises that were carefully covered up even before the pandemic, and which became patently clear to anyone who is not obsessed with the economic loss but is willing and ready to focus on the human price being paid during the pandemic – and for years to come.

It appears, then, that we should not think of the sudden turnaround from the pre-pandemic to the pandemic period in terms of the times of peace and the times of war. The pandemic deepened and brought to everyone's attention many of the problems that existed before. Nor should we conclude that this escalation of the previous problems was all that happened with the pandemic. Somewhat surprisingly, there were certain positive outcomes as well. One of them was that the forced lockdowns created the time for the family members to be together. Another was that many of the jobs that involved commuting and spending long hours in the office could be as efficiently – if not more so – performed at home. Perhaps most importantly, the lockdowns enforced in many countries led to noticeable environmental improvements. Such improvements may be temporal and reversible, but it was clear that such reverses are quite possible. The satellite pictures and the data collected by scientists all over the world showed undeniably the positive effects of reduced traffic and industrial pollution on the environment. Those who are the wealthiest and who control the vast majority of the world media were alarmed by such reports and they soon vanished from the press.

What, then, is our future bringing? A quiet acceptance of the more or less continuous presence in our lives of the Covid-19 virus for years to come? A chance to overturn the abnormal state of affairs created by the pandemic and to return to the normal standards and ways of living we had before its outbreak? Or perhaps a possibility of something quite new?

The Normal and the Abnormal

To prepare ourselves for answering these questions, we may need to understand better some of the concepts related to what is normal and what should be treated as such. Let us first look at the broadly construed contrast between the normal and the abnormal. Any serious consideration of the idea of a *normal* state of affairs should also take into account its twin counterpart concept of a *pathological* state. Following the insights of Georges Canguilhem, we can say that the conceptualization of pathology is based on prior knowledge of the respective normal state. Yet, it also works the other way around: the study of pathological cases becomes the basis for understanding the laws of the normal. Such pathological states are often accounted for in terms of what is an anomaly and what is abnormal. The word "anomaly" comes from the Greek term *anomalia*, which means unevenness, roughness; its

opposite, the Greek word *omalos*, means even, plain, regular, or smooth, referring to the plateau. This etymology is rooted in the deeply ingrained belief of the ancient Greek civilization that the world – which they called *kosmos* – is a well-ordered organism, which has its own ways of balancing and reorganizing itself, and we can trust that, at the end of every turmoil, the *kosmos* will find a way to return to its even, regular, and smooth way of functioning.

In modern times, we have lost that trust in the self-regulating ability of the *kosmos*. We treat it not as a *kosmos* but as a universe; not as an organism but as a mechanism, which needs to be reset and reorganized by means of human intervention and engineering. That is why in our modern usage of the terms like anomaly and abnormal there is an interesting twist, as Canguilhem rightly points out:

> with all semantic rigor, *anomaly* refers to a fact, it is a descriptive word, whereas the *abnormal* refers to a value, it is an appreciative and normative word; but a grammatical *quid pro quo* led to a collusion of meanings between these two words. The abnormal has become a descriptive concept and 'anomaly' has become a normative concept [Canguilhem, 1991, 97].

Seen from this angle, the Covid-19 pandemic affects deeply our daily lives by turning them into an abnormal state that requires an institution of a set of new rules of social behavior which have to be urgently adopted. While new care practices are introduced: from the limitation of social and intimate contact, to home-schooling and home-working – if we are lucky enough to have a job – even after a year and a half since the beginning of the pandemic, it is still not possible to know the long-term consequences of these measures. What is already sufficiently clear, however, is that by reacting to the Covid-19 pandemic by introducing such restrictive rules of social behavior, the pandemic has challenged one of the principles that rule moral reasoning in liberal societies: the principle of individual *autonomy*. Under this abnormal state of affairs caused by the pandemic, our margins of autonomy have been reduced to primarily focusing on the protection against the exposure of contagion.

This "new reality" is a good example that can help us understand the reasoning of Paul Ricoeur when he explores the margins of the notion of autonomy [Ricoeur, 2007]. Ricoeur rightly emphasizes that there is a dialectic relationship between autonomy and vulnerability, and that the two notions restrain each other. Autonomy – just like freedom and normalcy – is a relational concept that cannot be restricted only to the application of normative considerations made on a general level. The idea of relational autonomy cannot be understood without considering a broader context, which includes taking into consideration our social networks and the relations that contribute to mitigating the biological and institutional threats that this pandemic has created. Our current limitation of autonomy has been enforced by the urgency brought about by the pandemic's challenge of our traditional care practices: How to care for our children in the current situation? How to care for the elderly? What is best for them and what is best for us? The pandemic has undermined our routine application of the principles of care and made us aware of the complexity of such issues – and of our choices as well.

While thinking about the complexity of our choices, we may come to realize that there is an even deeper reason that makes our decision-making more perplexing

than we would like it to be. Most of us are prone to think about our decisions in terms of an either – or reasoning. We want to choose good and avoid evil. As Nicolai Hartmann argues in his *Ethik*, the vast majority of our choices do not follow this structure [Hartmann, 2003, 45–49][1]. We actually hardly ever choose between good and evil. Rather, we choose between two goods, or two evils. Our deliberation has to help us decide which of the two goods is a greater one, or of more relevance in the present situation? And the other way around: which of the two evils among those we have to choose between is a lesser one, or less damaging under the present circumstances? Is it, for instance, more important for children to be together and play with other kids, or to keep them safely away from external contacts and locked inside for months? Is it better for the elderly to be isolated from their loved ones in order to prevent their infection, or is it more important to allow them occasional contact with those who mean the most to them? To choose always involves sacrificing something, or at least neglecting what is also important. Our choices are never guiltless.

The perspective of relational autonomy and the dimension of loss in any choice we make may lead us to become more aware that whatever proposal is recommended in terms of dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic, it should encompass non-human entities as well. Any serious deliberation about our common future must involve our reflection on the community at the global level, which cannot be limited to, nor reduced to, the exclusively human sphere. As Fritz Jahr realized when he used the term bioethics for the first time, it is all living – and even non-living – entities that we must take into account when we want to reexamine the ethics standing behind our choices and actions. If we take a closer look at Jahr's text "*Bio-Ethik: Eine Umschu über die ethischen Beziehungen des Menschen zu Tier und Pfianze*", we notice that his perspective stems from a *bioethical imperative* which modifies Kant's categorical imperative by giving way to a more comprehensive content which includes every form of life. As Jahr formulates it, "In principle, respect every living being as an end in itself and treat it, if possible, as such" [Jahr, 1927, 28][2].

Jahr's bioethical perspective acquires a renewed significance today, as we consider the environmental component of the Covid-19 pandemic. The contagion between species makes more evident the continuity and the inter-dependency that exists between living organisms. It also makes more obvious the need to look for a bioethical vision that involves the impact of life-sciences, biotechnological developments, and the protection of the environment and the biosphere. Following Jahr's insights, when we consider our common future, we must ask ourselves: How are we going to include the care dimension for all living beings, since such care so often involves blatant neglect of the non-human forms of life?

The complexity of these issues and the subtlety of the dialectical relations of some of the central concepts involved makes it possible now to fine-tune our approach to the whole issue of the pandemic and what our future may bring. The situation into which we are brought with the Covid-19 pandemic may not be best

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1 A similar point was made by Jacques Lacan (см.: [Lacan, 1964]).

2 Similar thoughts – in theory and practice – were advocated by Albert Schweitzer in the form of his ethics of reverence for all life [Schweitzer, 1987].

addressed in terms of the contrast between war and peace. Instead, we could approach it by relying on a useful conceptual framework developed by the Argentine historian Ignacio Lewkowicz. He defines three ways of conceptualizing the occurrence of a situation for which we were not (fully) prepared. The way our psychic and conceptual apparatus deals with the occurrence of any such situation can be assimilated in different terms depending on how we respond to the irruption of a "new reality": according to Lewkowicz, any such new dramatic situation can be dealt with as an *event*, as a *trauma*, or as a *catastrophe* [Lewkowicz, 2004]. Lewkowicz explains the differences between these notions by using the following example. Imagine that a tsunami is approaching the coast. If the waves are not too big for our protective walls, we can speak of an event that does not lead to any major disturbances and which could be handled by means of the already functioning social and psychological mechanisms. Although we may be unprepared for this tsunami in terms of the timing of its happening, we are prepared for it in terms of the measures organized in advance for such happenings. If, however, the waves of water arrive and break through the protective walls, such a situation takes us out of our ordinary system of reasoning and values that ruled before the flood.

From this moment on, at least two different strategies can be implemented in order to handle the newly emerged situation. The dramatic situation caused by the flood is experienced as trauma when it creates an excess for which the psychic apparatus and social mechanisms were not prepared, but which is also such that it could become a source for our cognitive and social adjustments and reorganization. Such trauma can lead us to prevent further escalation of damage and gradually to return to our "normal" functioning. Thus, as a response to a dramatic situation, a trauma is characterized by a needed modification of the reasoning that previously functioned successfully in sustaining the practices of everyday life. Unlike a trauma, a catastrophe introduces a more radical dynamic situation that dismantles the previous "logic" of functioning; there is a rupture, a disconnection that makes these previous schemes of behavior, reasoning, and evaluation unfeasible. In this sense, once the water withdraws and the damage is done, there is hardly anything to do. The catastrophe devastates the environment and dismantles the ordinary systems of operation that is supposed to handle our daily life. A catastrophe leaves us with a sense of defeat. Nevertheless, life must go on, and even a catastrophe becomes an opportunity for an invention of new schemes, new ways of reasoning, and new systems of values [Ibid.].

Instead of thinking about the Covid-19 pandemic in terms of war, Lewkowicz's conceptual apparatus enables us to think of it in a more precise way. The pandemic is not simply an event we did not expect, but for the handling of which we had the already prepared and used fully adequate means once we realized the nature and the extent of the pandemic. Nor, we believe, should we think of the pandemic as a completely abnormal happening that we should qualify as a catastrophe which has shown all of our mechanisms and value systems as inadequate and in need of complete reconstruction. Rather, the Covid-19 pandemic strikes us as what Lewkowicz characterizes as a trauma: our defensive mechanisms were clearly not adequately prepared for this pandemic, but, based on the existing resources, we are trying to reorganize our social and psychological structures to absorb

the damage and allow a transition toward the relatively normal ways of life. If this is so, it becomes imperative to get a better grasp of what is normal and what should be accepted as such.

The Normal and the Norm

There is a fruitful ambiguity hidden in the word "normal." The root of "normal" is the word "norm," and this may be the true source of our ambiguities – not just with what will happen with the Covid-19 pandemic, but with our sense of values in general. Let us clarify this on an example of an ill person. If the illness (like a Parkinson disease) has become a more or less permanent condition, it is in this sense "normal" for a person to be ill: the illness has established itself a condition that cannot be avoided and to which the person has to adjust many of her daily routines. Taken in this sense, "normal" refers to what is usually the case. That "usual" in turn can refer to the temporal dimension – as what is the case most of the time or all of the time – or to a spatial dimension – this is what is happening to the majority of people at a certain geographic location – as for instance when most of them suffer from the polluted air, dirty water, or some such element common to and relevant for their lives. The "normal," then, is what is habitual or prevailing, regardless of whether it is seen as desirable or not. This sense of "normal" is descriptive: it simply states the facts; it portrays the way things are, or have been for a considerable period of time and for a significant number of individuals at a certain location.

There is also a normative sense of "normal," and it is based on an evaluative judgment that serves as a ground for our orientation in reality. Even if the water has been dirty in one region, or the air polluted for a long time, it does not have to be that way. There were periods in the individual and collective history when it was not so, and there are places and people for whom it is not the case. Similarly, there was a time when the person we are talking about earlier was not ill, as there are many who are not now. Moreover, there is an expectation that everyone should be entitled to clean water and unpolluted air, just as all of us hope to be healthy: we are prone to think of them as our rights, not as our privileges: being healthy, having clean water, and unpolluted air – and not their opposites – is what is normal, however widespread or persistent such unfavorable conditions may be. What is now, or what has been the case in the past, does not and should not determine how things ought to be. It is just the other way around: the "ought" is prescriptive for the "is," regardless of whether that "ought" has ever been realized in practice.

There are two principled approaches to the puzzling "is" – "ought" relationship. In the Anglo-Saxon tradition, mostly under the influence of Thomas Hobbes and David Hume, the "is" is considered to be superior to the "ought." In this tradition, which customarily leans more toward realism than toward idealism, the real is treated as stronger than and dominant over the ideal. In the Continental tradition, under the influence of thinkers like Benedict de Spinoza and Jean Jacques Rousseau, the "ought" is given priority over the "is." The Continental tradition is usually more permeated by idealism than by realism, and in this tradition the ideal is taken as setting the norm for the real. For the vast majority of ordinary people,

however, the values we accept are a mixture of these two extreme approaches: in some situations we rely more on the past and our experience of it, at other times we give precedence to what has never been but which we could envision as a far more desirable state of affairs than our reality. For most of us and most of the time, the two senses of "normal" are simply mixed up.

Such confusions, which are also present in our current Covid-19 pandemic situation, must be expected to continue in the future. They contribute to our uncertainties about the sources of normativity: Who or what could and should determine what "ought" to be? The authority of religion has been undermined for a long time. The influence of science may look at our time as more significant than religion as a source of authority of the truths, and indirectly of values. But the strong and widespread voices opposing the Covid-19 vaccine make it sufficiently clear that the authority of science cannot be taken for granted either. There were just too many abuses of science in the relatively recent past, either for political or (even more frequently) for economic gains. Since we do not believe in God-given norms and values anymore, since science is challenged as not being value-neutral, and since our democratic-based institutions have also lost their sense of credibility, is not the only choice left for us to turn to our subjective preferences?

The view that every norm is subjective and relative undermines the very concept of normativity. Yes, some norms are indispensable for our common and healthy life. And if what we had before the Covid-19 pandemic has been exposed as unhealthy and as far from satisfying the expectations of fairness and equal opportunities, we are left in limbo: of course we would all like the pandemic to be over, we would like to socialize and move freely, without a risk of being infected, but do we want to live in a world that is so beset with personal, social, and environmental problems? Is not the time of a traumatic crisis, as the Covid-19 pandemic definitely is, precisely the right time to rethink our choices and values, our individual ways of life, and our social practices? Is not such a rampant exposure and escalation of the problems of the past the right opportunity to confront ourselves and establish much healthier parameters of what should be counted as acceptable, healthy, and normal? What should be our (new) normal? Where should our norms come from?

Perhaps all of these concerns could be summed up in one central question: Could this present crisis be used to create a new sense of normal that would satisfy both its descriptive and its normative sense?

Establishing a New "Normal"?

We believe that a short answer to this complex question is: potentially it could, but likely it would not.

That it is hard to resist a pessimistic outlook for our age is confirmed even by such a knowledgeable and for the most part optimistic man as the famous historian and philosopher Will Durant. With the assistance of his wife, Ariel, Durant wrote eleven voluminous books collectively entitled *The Story of Civilization*, for which he needed almost fifty years of his life. When this project was completed and just

before he died, he wrote a book that was posthumously published as *Fallen Leaves: Last Words on Life, Love, War, and God*. In the conclusion of this book, Durant expresses his conviction about just how serious is the crisis of our civilization:

As I think back upon this discourse, I fear that I have stressed too heavily the problems that face us and our children: the stifling of quality with quantity, the breakdown of marriage and the family, the racial disorder in our schools, the loosening of morals, the hopeless ghettos in our cities, the crime in our streets, the corruption in public office, the skepticism of democracy among radicals and reactionaries alike, the erosion of our moral fiber by the brutalities of war. But these are the stark realities that distort broadcast or printed news, that move our sons and daughters to revolt, and ourselves to wonder have we the strength and courage to meet these accumulated ills [Durant, 2014, 177].

Has much has our world improved since Durant wrote these words in 1981? Have we seen enough examples of strength and courage to reassure ourselves that in the post-Covid-19 period we would simply not sink back to the same problems, to the same prejudices and confusions, to the same ways of life in which harm ourselves, other human beings, and our environment as a whole?[3]

Nevertheless, as Durant realized while writing his voluminous books, the (hi)story of our civilization is not that of the continuous gloom; nor is it of the traumas and catastrophes that differ from one part of the world to another just in their local manifestations. In its most basic sense, history is about "man's rise from savagery to civilization" [Ibid., 157]. Although Durant is suspicious of big revolutionary movements, he believes in the possibility of genuine gradual improvements of humanity. The central pillar of his moderate optimism is his belief in the possibility and relevance of the welfare state. He is fully aware that this proposal is not without serious shortcomings, but he thinks that this may be our best chance nonetheless:

> Though there are many sluggards among the poor, and discouraging abuses in the administration of relief, we must recognize that the majority of the poor are victims of racial discrimination and environmental handicaps. We must tax ourselves to provide adequate education, and a minimum of food, clothing, contraceptives, and shelter for all, as a far less costly procedure than social and political disorder through minority violence and authoritarian force, crushing between them not only democracy but perhaps civilization itself [Ibid., 171].

It is hard to argue against the obvious humaneness of such a proposal, but it offers yet another self-limiting solution as our anti-Covid-19 measures do, and does so without any normative backing. What is "the ought" on the basis of which the governments of the world and their populations should be moved to accept it and tax themselves for the sake of the less privileged?

Durant finds its normative source neither in religion nor in science, despite its unfolding technological revolution. His own optimism is based on the idealistic appeal of the first sentence of America's Declaration of Independence: "We hold these

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[3] For an insightful criticism of where we as a civilization stand in our age, see the works of Tony Judt [Judt, 2010], and Robert Pogue Harrison [Harrison, 2014].

truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

That was written in 1776. If our recent history teaches us anything, it is that such an idealistic outlook is hardly sustainable and should be toned down. It is certainly not self-evident that all human beings are created equal when so many of them are disadvantaged from birth by various biological and social conditions. Nor do we much believe any longer that there is "the Creator" who endows us with some alleged "unalienable Rights," among which are those of "Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness."

And just as we have a hard time basing any normativity on the assumption that there is a benevolent Creator of the universe, we may reconsider whether the category of "rights" is also the sought-after foundation stone for our normativity. Many of us are fully aware that the lockdowns imposed by the governments infringe on our individual autonomy, both in terms of our liberty and our ability to pursue our own happiness. Unquestionably, such values are fundamentally important, but what do liberty and the pursuit of happiness mean – and what can they accomplish – when we are endangering ourselves and others, when people are getting sick and dying in the numbers that are pushing us to reconsider whether the Covid-19 pandemic should be reclassified as a catastrophe, rather than as a trauma?

Considering our present situation, both with regard to the Covid-19 pandemic, and the overall decay of civilization, should we not try to approach our future and what we consider as "normal" in a different way? Durant wisely says that "Every age reacts against its predecessors" [Durant, 2014, 167]. Since our civilization has been unhealthy for a long time, instead of talking about the ambitious triangle of "Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness," perhaps we should reconsider whether to focus on one simpler yet sufficiently rich and potentially more important category: health. We should take this word in a broad sense, to include both what the ancient Greeks meant by "*hygieia*" (cleanness and hygiene) and "*sophrosyne*" (being sound of mind and prudent). For the Greeks, being healthy involved both the physical and mental dimensions, just as it include the individual, social, and environmental dimensions, which are all intricately connected anyway. To be healthy included living with measure and balance, and being able to continue to search for that right measure and balance even in the situations like our present pandemic, which make it so difficult to live in a healthy way. To remind ourselves that the ancient Greeks were not the only ones who understood health and being healthy in that way, we should also remember the Old English word for health. It is "*hælth*," which derives from the old Germanic word "*hal*," which is the etymological root of the adjectives "whole," "well," and even "holy."

Taking health in this broader sense is close to what Durant means by the general concept of "welfare." It is just that we are not talking about a "welfare state," as he does. Instead of waiting for our institutions to bring about a different approach to health and welfare, we think that this should be the task of every individual and every community to do so, and that this approach to health can show that it could be used to create a new sense of normal – the normal that could satisfy both the descriptive and the normative sense of this concept.

Health is a fact of life and, in that sense, it can serve as a ground for the descriptive side of the concept of normal. But health is also our aspiration – something we esteem highly and pursue as such – and this is why it could provide the normative aspect of the concept of normal as well. Instead of talking about health as our right, one thing that we can learn from our present Covid-19 pandemic is that being healthy is more a privilege than a right. We are all glad to be healthy, and it is a joy, nor any entitlement, to be so. It is a privilege not simply granted or given to us, either by God or by the government. Rather, it is something that requires our steadfast commitment and active care, as well as a bit of luck. Should not, then, the goal of our post-Covid-19 pandemic and our new "normal" be to become more appreciative of health and more dedicated to it – our own, and everyone else's health as well? Just health, physical and mental as well the individual, social, and enviromental health, with all its demands and privileges?

Наше общее будущее после пандемии Covid-19: возвращение к «нормальному» или создание нового «нормального»?

Предраг Чичовачки – Профессор. Колледж Св. Креста (США). MA01610, 1 College Street, Worcester, PO Box 0029A, USA.
ORCID: 0000-0001-8351-5680
e-mail: pcicovac@holycross.edu

Наташа Саломе Лима – Исследователь. Национальный научно-технический и исследовательский совет (CONICET); Университет Буэнос-Айреса (Аргентина). Lavalle 2353 C1052AAA Buenos Aires City, Argentina.
ORCID: 0000-0001-6728-961X

В данной статье предлагается рефлексия о нашем общем будущем после Covid-19. Сначала наша нынешняя пандемическая ситуация рассматривается с точки зрения пар коррелирующих понятий: мир и война, нормальное и ненормальное. Затем мы переходим к анализу двойного аспекта понятия «норма»: его дескриптивной и нормативной стороны. Мы апеллируем в анализе к этическим взглядам Иммануила Канта, Николая Гартмана, Фрица Яра и Поля Рикёра. При том что их концепции эвристичны в данном контексте, они не ведут к решению, которое можно было бы считать удовлетворительным. Мы приходим к пониманию того, что наши проблемы с осознанием нашего настоящего и предвидением нашего будущего в конечном итоге связаны с нашим стремлением создать основу, опираясь на которую можно удовлетворительно обосновать как дескриптивный, так и нормативный аспекты понятия «нормальный». Мы предполагаем, что эта проблема может быть решена через понимание того, что такое норма в терминах здоровья, понимаемого как баланс и как нахождение должной меры во всем, что мы делаем. Наше общее будущее после Covid-19 должно быть сосредоточено на нашей по-новому осознаваемой приверженности укреплению физического и психического, а также индивидуального, социального и экологического здоровья. Таким образом, мы закладываем основу для дальнейшего развития этики здоровья.

Ключевые слова: пандемия Covid-19, нормальное, ненормальное, нормативность, здоровье

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