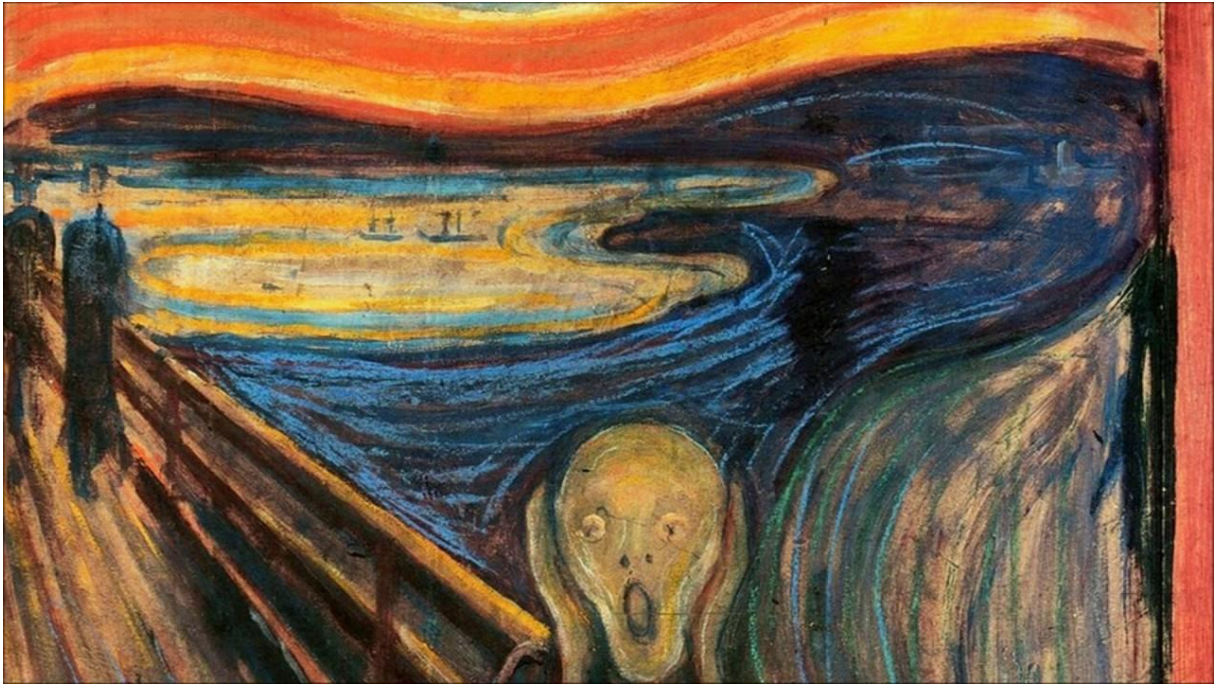




# Crowdband Solutions



Keep connected. Just not in person. For now

## Candid CoViD coverage

Published on March 22, 2020

If the current times have a silver lining, it may be an awakening to the interconnectedness of the world and our place in it. The call for altruism seems ever stronger. Tens of millions are reaching out, yet some will still fall through the cracks. A pride in doing for others can be taken at face value, or as a thinly gilded act of self-aggrandisement, if not simply as an act to brush our own stresses under the carpet.

In some ways, the questions as to how we react in these unfamiliar times, and why, are academic. There is immediate crisis, with over twenty million medical professionals on the frontline globally dealing with sick patients from this virus and all the traditional illnesses that have been largely planned for. That's a health workforce over half the size of the entire population of Tokyo, the same size as Sao Paulo, or Mexico City, Mumbai or Beijing and double the size of the entire population of Greater London, New York City or Paris. The suffering is public and getting louder.

And yet, the suffering is also deeply personal and increasingly unspoken. We have all exchanged with family and friends, colleagues and shop-owners in

recent days and felt a range of reactions from concerned awareness to blank indifference. Some awaken to the morning with purpose, others looking for distraction. Some calm, some showing signs of hysteria, seduced by the conspiratorial tones of news feeds and alternative agenda. There's no judgment in noting the variations as some are overwhelmed and some underwhelmed by the changes. Some are dependent on others to get them physical or mental support, some put themselves out there for others and some are independent of it all on their islands, literal and metaphorical.

There's a form of guilt that shadows this time. As we hear in the media or personal exchanges of those losing parents, partners, children, friends and colleagues, we may be tempted to silence our own worries in isolation, our loneliness, the fading hugs and warmth of those we love remotely. Do we have the right to complain, to cry, to reach out? We shouldn't be so shy. Giving voice to fears and worries is to endorse the efforts of those on the front line. And it's a letting of steam, a lancing of boils, an osteopathic crack for the locked down self, a Munchian scream into the valley.

There's an uneasy feeling too, perhaps, for those who are finding time to relax away from work, to write articles into the ether, to till the soil, to enjoy country homes and gardens, to engage in hobbies, learn new skills and complete back-burner projects. Those who are missing coffee mornings, hair appointments, parties, the playground, the gym, the orthodontist, book clubs, football matches, mosque, church, synagogue, bar, or other place of worship, may think twice of their relative hardships. Some may hesitate to ask what we can do until the lights of offices, restaurants, bars and other venues are turned back on. We do need plans. As individuals, as families, communities, societies and nations. Plans for a stronger future as part and parcel of today's effort. Plans to establish and protect better critical national infrastructure everywhere. If you are feeling the pinch in a developed nation, then be sure that many, many more will feel heavy blows of this virus, confinement measures and secondary effects in less developed nations.

How will the future fabric of society shift and wrap around these challenges and fill the voids they create in both developed and developing nations? How can we be better prepared for seasonal outbreaks of this disease and future global challenges? How do we level the playing field for children and adults everywhere who get informed about this and other news days after anyone reading here? From keyboards across the connected world, we will each have answers to share. If you're interested in collaborating remotely on initiatives that help address the challenges of coronavirus through new ICT policies, infrastructure investments or application development, then please reach out.

Nurses, doctors, emergency services and other critical workers are taking extra shifts, stepping out of retirement and putting themselves in harm's way because they believe we will come out of this stronger. There's no shame in sharing frustrations and successes all the while. And taking time to do that as a regular practice.

Be wary, stick to the facts (<https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/>) and correct for cynicism, fear-mongering and conspiracy theories. Talk. Smile. Keep safe. Take care. Of others. Of yourself.

Keep connecting. Just not in person. For now.