

## **A Cure for Covid 19**

After earning a PhD, I taught in the UWEC English department for many years ago until I retired quite a few years ago. When Covid 19 hit, I became a hermit and took refuge in TV, mystery novels and listening to popular songs of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This kept me safe and allowed me to escape the everyday sad news, but it came with a price. I became hooked on cozy romantic shows like *Firefly Lane*, and I developed a taste for Perry Como and Doris Day songs. After years of teaching close analysis of texts, whether they be literary works or films, I abandoned most of what I learned when sitting in an easy chair reading a detective novel, or watching movies on TV. This did help me avoid Covid 19, but it also filled me with doubts about myself and the price I was paying. Was I becoming just a superficial, sentimental person, or was I developing senile dementia?

After deciding that my mind was still working, I chose to give it a rest by staying put in my easy chair and completely giving in to TV, mystery novels, and all those nice old songs on Alexa.

Soon never-ending Netflix TV grabbed me with movies in which the death of a hero, or young lovers overcoming seemingly impossible obstacles left me gushy, even though the sleeping part of my brain would have known that those stories are standard patterns in such shows. I also started to live more in the past when watching a TV series like *Cobra Kai*, which brought me back to the good old days of the original *Karate Kid* and dreams of the old romantic struggles.

So, how did I finally manage this trade-off between escaping Covid 19 and surrendering to those old-fashioned emotions ?

The answer turned out to be easy. As time went on, and I got tired of life in an easy chair and ventured out to take my turn in the vaccination line. That got me moving and my mind woke up. Then I remembered what I had learned about living a thoughtful, active life, and I forgot

the temptation of that easy chair. If you experienced anything like what I did as an old-timer, hopefully you, as young-timers and middle-timers, will take your place in the vaccination lines, and then remember yourself and what you learned before Covid 19.

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