

EKO – Youth Exchange Participants' Report



COVID-19 effects on our planet: A perspective of the Greek team of young people

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What lessons can we learn from corona that apply to climate change?

Collective effort can work miracles

We have the ability to make drastic changes very quickly. The corona virus outburst has shown us that as a unified force we have the power to alter conditions that seem impossible to deal with. Throughout this crisis, from health professionals to workers at our local supermarkets, we have shown that collective solidarity is the answer to any crisis we face on a global level.

Changing small habits can have a tremendous impact

The COVID-19 crisis imposes a threat to each one of us, and some of the measures we had to take to minimize its impact on our society are hard to deal with. However, during these hard times, we have come to realize in a more tangible way that sometimes part of the solution to our problems may not have to completely change the way we live. Even small changes in our lifestyles can save lives. Thus, sometimes it is not the inability but the denial to change part of our habits and step out of our comfort zone that wards us off taking action. Amongst the crisis, we can come to terms with giving up some of our comforts to stay empowered and feel good about it.

Global challenges do not care about national borders

It is not uncommon whenever we learn about a tragedy or a disaster, for example, a wildfire across the world, to feel genuinely sorry about the ones implicated, but at the same time feel like this is far away from our own reality and be complacent that we do not need to take action as it doesn't pose an immediate threat to us. However, now more than ever, it is clear that global challenges affect us all and like climate change, they don't halt on borders.

How we treat our natural surroundings affects our well-being

The loss of habitat and biodiversity creates conditions for lethal new viruses and diseases like COVID-19 to spill into human communities. The more we keep on depleting our natural resources, polluting the atmosphere with emissions, damaging our agricultural systems and so on, the more vulnerable we become to new threats.

The sooner we act the best the results

Part of the reason why we are dealing with this pandemic with effectiveness lays on the fact that we took immediate action as soon as the virus came to our attention. Climate change is too a matter of significant importance and is high time we started implementing strategies monitoring their results along the way. Urgent action needed to keep ahead of the corona virus curve and similarly drastic action on climate change could reduce food and water shortages, natural disasters and sea-level rise, protecting countless individuals and communities, which comes to the next lesson corona virus teaches us.

Prevention is better than the alternative

Although climate change is already happening, doing whatever we can to eliminate its effects and prevent more natural disasters from happening is a better strategy than “curing” them. This gives us more control over adverse events, saves time, energy and resources and can help us prevent the trauma catastrophic events cause.

Staying positive can keep us moving

However harsh the circumstances are, staying positive, caring for one another and being there for each other makes us stronger. Having a mutual vision of an inclusive and sustainable world can make us realize what’s more important in our lives, motivate us and help us focus on the positive aspects of our world while trying to ameliorate the rest. The last lesson this crisis teaches us is to stay positive, do our best and we can overcome anything.





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