

Panic Not a Good Survival Strategy

Here comes Coronavirus; the threat of the month.

How scared are you? How scared should I be? I'm not scared or even worried.

When Coronavirus hit the news I did some research on it at some reputable, non-sensationalist medical websites and decided it wasn't anything to hyperventilate over. In fact, they classified it not as influenza, but as a cold virus. A virus everyone will come down with at some point during our lives. This variety may be worse than the usual strains, but I'm not going to freak out.

I've been around long enough to see scare after scare come to nothing.

The Y2K thing fizzled, Ebola dropped from the news, and Hillary wasn't elected president. Life on planet Earth goes on pretty much the way it has — but with more robots, rockets, and batteries.

There are still looming shadows on the horizon: human-caused climate disaster, failure of the power grid, a robot apocalypse, and more. These are all things people can panic over. Then they can make foolish decisions because of the panic. Foolish decisions such as saying "There ought to be a law." Decisions that will have worse consequences for more people than the original threat — a threat that may be real or may be a figment of the imagination.

Someday a real pandemic or widespread disaster will happen ... and be worse than we were warned it would be. Won't I look silly, then? But so far, not allowing myself to be panicked has worked out well.

Do you really want to spend your life bouncing from one threat of disaster to the next, or are you willing to learn from the past?

Sure, there are occasional school shootings, impaired drivers, disease, and other human tragedies. That's life. But the track record of global doom and gloom scenarios should inspire optimism if you're paying attention.

It can be fun and exciting to prepare for the worst-case scenario. I do it, too — in ways more fun than frightening. Panic is not a good survival strategy, even if something bad is going to happen. A panicked person doesn't think straight or behave rationally. They are more likely to make fatal mistakes.

Don't let anyone cause you to panic ... unless panicking is what you want to do.

In that case, I won't try to stop you, but please don't allow your panic to affect my life, liberty, or property, or that of my friends and family.