

One does not have to live only for oneself if one wants to progress.

Petar Danov

Friends,

In the summer and early fall I had the good fortune to meet live with seventy-seven clubs, or 85% of all clubs in our district of Bulgaria. Obsessed with the entirely positive impressions of these cordial encounters, inspired by the moments of empathy and shared views of our Rotary, I sit down to write and share my thoughts.

The year is 1917, and the world's most sanguinary war in human history is raging. The desire to conquer the foreign and appropriate it, the boundless ego of politicians detached from reality, the unbridled and self-intoxicating populism of others in their desire to take the place of the former; the hitherto unseen party and civilizational engineering lead whole nations to famine and hopelessness; the casualties on the battlefields and by the non-combatant population (nearly 20 million people) have been unparalleled so far.

The year is 1918, the world is facing the largest global pandemic known so far, the Spanish flu pandemic. According to various sources, between 50 and 100 million people lost their lives as a result.

The year is 1917. Some other people, with different missions and professing other values and wanting to change the world, as early as 1905 have already created a new charity organization based on friendship and humanity—Rotary. The established movement of spirit and prosperity quickly strengthens and develops successfully, it is recognized by more and more people around the world and expands its positive influence in new communities, organizations and countries. The pioneers who founded Rotary took the next decisive step to help their charity: they founded a donation fund that grew into the Rotary Foundation. From as far back as 1917, with the help of their foundation, Rotarians have done countless good deeds around the world, regardless of race, religion, or gender of the communities they help civilizationaly or at everyday level.

By 1979, the Spanish flu pandemic had been forgotten, but the polio epidemic was among us. It cripples and changes destinies and lives not for the good. Many Rotary districts are launching an immunization campaign in their and other countries at risk of the epidemic. Since 1985, the elimination of polio through immunization has become Rotary's global project. The restored Bulgarian Rotarianism was the basis of the mass immunization campaign in Bulgaria. We felt Rotary's power and friendly help. Strengthening as a Rotarian community in the years that followed, we helped and are helping with our donations to make the insidious disease almost completely disappear from the face of the earth.

We live in 2021, and because the curve of human evolution is sinusoidal, I will allow myself to share something personal.

From November 15 to 25, 2020 I pulled through COVID-19 with bilateral bronchopneumonia. And in early January 2021, as well as on April 30, 2021 I had five times more antibodies than the reference norm. On May 1 and 21, 2021 I was vaccinated. This was my informed choice.

I will end with a thought of Dalai Lama:

Follow the rules: respect for yourself, respect for others, responsibility for all actions.

*Borislav Kadrekov
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