It's easy to lose one's mind these days. We can't help it. It's as if our dystopian future has been thrust into the skin of an eye. Our everyday lives have been so rudely interrupted, it's no surprise to the coronavirus disease 2019 or COVID-19 pandemic. On the local front, we have been limited to virtual interactions. We can only laugh with those tiny yellow smileys or hear up with crying emoticons. Our meetings are on Zoom and in that glass, we are too far apart, too far away from the outside world. But then again, the outside world has been changed so much, too. Nothing is the same but, a giant empty city. A world in the midst of an ending when this will end.

Bayanihan

But isolated and detached as we are, there is a way we can help and I am encouraged by the stories of people reaching out to others. The bayanihan spirit is very much alive these days. Derived from the Filipino word “bayan,” which means town or community, the term bayanihan refers to the spirit of communal unity to achieve a particular goal. It stems from the age-old practice of villagers working together to help a family in need by moving their entire banana leaf to another part of the village.

There’s no English word that captures bayanihan perfectly because I believe the custom itself is uniquely Filipino and I am happy to see it so strong nowadays as the country grapples with this pandemic.

I hear about stories of strangers helping each other and pooling resources to help frontliners. Indivuduals are raising funds to help health workers – and strangers are responding.

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Big Business

Conglomerates have come to the fore, leading the private sector’s response to the crisis.

Lucio Tan-owned LT Group Inc. and Ramon Ang-led San Miguel Corp., for instance, have repurposed their facilities to produce much-needed ethyl alcohol for our frontline health workers.

The Sy-owned SM Foundation has also donated P170 million worth of full protective suits and other equipment for frontliners.

In the cities of Pasig and Taguig through various community kitchens. In Bamban, Tarlac and Sta. Maria, Bulacan and frontliners in the passes of Baguio and Taguig through various community kitchens.

Bounty Fresh has also donated 1,200 Aldoos Con tena packs containing food and protection kits for displaced workers.

Some of these donations are for police frontliners in the provinces.

Miguel Corp., for instance, have repurposed their facilities to produce much-needed ethyl alcohol for our frontline health workers.

The company also pledged 45,000 kilograms of fresh, dressed chickens as support to its merchandisers across the country and helped its employees who are continuing to work.

Oil giant Pilipinas Shell is also doing its part to help, I was told when I asked about their response. It has already donated P4 million to the Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP) for the purchase of family packs containing food and protection kits for displaced workers.

In addition, it donated more than 10,000 face masks and complete PPE sets to the Department of Health and its PCU.

Miguel Corp.'s country chairman Cesar Romero said, “this is an unprecedented time that demands compassion, respect, and kindness from all of us.”

As Pilipinas-Shell country chairman Cesar Romero said, “this is an unprecedented time that demands compassion, respect, and kindness from all of us.”

Indeed, let’s all give our best and join the fight because as Pilipinas-Shell country chairman Cesar Romero said, “this is an unprecedented time that demands compassion, respect, and kindness from all of us.”

It’s the right thing to do. Respond to calls for help or think of ways to contribute.

An Army, led by LTG. Ben Madueno, has mobilized armed forces to help the bigger cục nations need to do when help is needed.

As one tycoon said to me, “this is not a battle, but a war.” It’s the time that we need our heroes. It’s the time we need our heroes.

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Our everyday lives have been so rudely interrupted, no thanks to the coronavirus disease 2019 or COVID-19 pandemic.

The health system has been disrupted, too. There is nothing out there. But then again, the outside world has been changed so much, too. Nothing is the same but, a giant empty city. A world in the midst of an ending when this will end.

EYES WIDE OPEN

Bayanihan

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