

Dear past self, I am writing from the future, a future in which we barely think about the time of Covid, a time when it an etherial, ghostly memory for many of us, and an unimaginable reality for most — those who were born during of after the time of Covid and for whom that pandemic period was not part of their consciousness. For those who lived through it, the memory of the time of Covid brings back a mixture of sentiments: anxiety, panic, creativity, inspiration, solidarity, resilience and hope. So much hope for a better world to emerge from this time. During the time of Covid there was great hope for real impacts in support of human flourishing. With the recognition of the extreme value of service workers, people who often were overlooked and taken for granted, we had hope that people providing care to the elderly, to the sick, to the extremely vulnerable, that they would be given more job security, more respect in their work, more overall support. We hoped for similar to people working in grocery stores and in public transit and in waste collection. And we really, really hoped for long-lasting social supports for everyone to be able not only to live, but to thrive even while a crisis exists: a universal base income would do wonders to help here. We saw the critical importance of diplomacy: healthcare and global health diplomacy, cultural diplomacy (for resilience and solidarity). And the tremendous value of science and evidence in decision-making. The need to overcome partisanship and nationalism, also crucially important in times of crisis. And for building solidity and unity. Now that COVID is a distant memory or not even within the memory banks of the young today, it's heartening to know that we have developed a better, more caring, more equitable society. Take care, Future self