

In Search of a Mind

by **Meredith Friedman** - March 21, 2023

Tuesday is normally the day George publishes his weekly analysis, but that will not be happening this week. After three years of managing to avoid COVID-19, George came down the week before last with what we thought was the flu, but a few days later he tested positive for COVID-19. On March 11, after several days of fever and not eating, he agreed to go to the local ER. After an afternoon of tests, they admitted him and kept him for a couple of nights for monitoring.

The symptoms that worried me were signs of confusion and delirium, where he thought he was a best-selling author and geopolitical forecaster ... oh, that part may be true, but there were other parts that were not. He was not sure where he was, why he was there or who had put him there. Paranoia is part of every Eastern European's heritage, but in this case escaping from the hospital became George's main obsession. It did not help that I tested positive for COVID-19 as well and was not allowed to visit him even though I had very minor symptoms.

He'd also lost his cellphone somewhere in the transfer between the ER and the hospital room, so I couldn't call him or vice versa, and going through the hospital operator and then the nurse's station to his room phone was something I haven't done in more than 20 years. He couldn't remember my phone number, and when I finally reached him and told him to write it down he tried to get out of bed to find a pen, setting off all sorts of alarms from the monitors hooked up to him and creating minor chaos among the nursing staff in his hospital wing.

Our great team of analysts has been writing and publishing as normal, and we have appreciated their support in filling in for George. He has been home for almost a week and is recovering nicely. He was eager to write an article for today. I realized he was no longer suffering from confusion and is back in touch with reality when he said, "This is really bad. Let me start over." However, by then he was very tired, so I suggested he wait a little longer to begin writing again and made him rest. Unfortunately, George has never been good at taking orders, and I've had to hide his laptop.

He will be back soon.

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