Twitter Thread by Irina Dumitrescu



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I just keep being surprised by how many people expect all business to run as usual despite the fact that we're into year two of a worldwide pandemic.

Like.... anyone notice how many people's jobs got a ton harder? Or how many people lost their jobs, or the prospect of even being in the running for employment?

Anyone notice how many people now have massively heavier care responsibilities -- for children, parents, elderly relatives and friends, you name it?

Anyone notice the massive, unceasing level of stress that comes from mixed messages coming from govts, bungled safety policies and vaccination plans, endless lockdowns?

Every now and then I see someone miffed that some inessential thing hasn't gone as quickly or as efficiently as they'd have like, and I have to wonder -- are we living on the same planet?

I don't judge a bit of frivolity in these circumstances. People need some distraction now and then. Staying with your eyes glued to the news will tank your psychological resilience. That's not what I'm talking about.

I'm more thinking about this expectation that the capitalist machine just keeps running running running, even when the labour is not necessary for the comfortable support of human life, even when the labour is *unpaid*.

And yes we should all do our jobs and our duties by each other, or try to. This pandemic will last for years, we have to hold on to some kind of normality. But if we can't be at least a bit forgiving of each other in a worldwide pandemic, when can we be?

Remember the think pieces last summer about how we'd finally get a chance to slow down?

Turns out we decided instead to cram even more work into everyone's lives, with even fewer pauses.

It's not a matter of when people start burning out. People are already burning out. And I mean more than medical workers or ppl in other essential services, whose lives have been on the line the longest. I think we will see huge rates of stress-related

conditions.

I realize I'm tilting at windmills when it comes to the larger societal structures that make no space for human bodies, human souls, human emotions, human limits.

Institutions don't do their math that way for the most part. They can always push people harder.

But... can't thoughtful individuals do better? Do we have to react with aggression when nonessentials aren't delivered right away? Can't we build in some understanding that others are dealing with pressures we might not even know about?

I'm super freaking privileged. But one of my closest family members was in the hospital three times last year, and another twice. During Covid. I've feared for both their lives, and I can't travel to see them. Only typing this can I even admit how hard it is. I just repress.

People in my circle are dealing with depression and massive anxiety. With job loss and broken up relationships. They are caring for relatives with terminal illnesses. They are handing older folks who are vulnerable and faltering.

Of course, people *always* go through difficult life circumstances that we don't always know about, so those of us who are adults probably should have learned to do that kind of empathetic accounting earlier.

But isn't it pretty darn simple now to assume that someone might, just might, be seeing some part of their life fall apart right now? Can we ask each other for what we need with gentleness and not scorn or rage?