

## Re-opening - Is it soon enough?

By BRIAN LOCKHART

The province has moved into Step one of the of its 're-opening' plan.

This doesn't mean you can throw a wild party, or live like Hugh Hefner with martinis and hula skirts around your backyard pool. Far from it.

As the summer approaches, should the re-opening switch into high gear?

There was a news story out of New York this past week which was rather disheartening.

A young mother tossed her infant out of their apartment window, then followed up by tossing her three year-old daughter out after her.

The woman then jumped out of the window as well.

Fortunately, the apartment was on the second floor so none of them were seriously injured.

The woman later said she could 'no longer take the isolation and loneliness' of being cooped up indoors due to the COVID situation.

Whether COVID was really the cause of this or whether the woman had other mental issues and being isolated just made the situation worse, is not known.

It could have been a lot worse. I don't know the truth about the woman's issues, but had she lived on tenth floor of this building the results could have been a lot different.

After 15 months of wearing masks, staying at home, and being afraid to stand too close, I think we all deserve a break.

There is talk of the 'new normal.' One high-ranking doctor suggested that from now on, everyone should wear a mask in public, because the incidence of flu and other communicable diseases has gone way down since we started in living in this bubble wrap society.

Germs and bacteria have always been here and are swarming over your body right now.

I don't want to live in a society where people are scared to death of each other.

There is a woman that works as a cashier in my local grocery store. We are very friendly and have a nice chat every time I'm in there. She tells me what's going on in her life, and I do the same.

It occurred to me one day that even though I've known her for about a year, I really have no idea what she looks like. I know she has pretty eyes and nice hair, but I've never seen her without a mask.

I'm sure there are many people out there that have been suffering greatly due to this current situation.

Imagine being lonely, desperate, and already having mental health issues, then being told to stay home 'alone - with no one to talk to.

I've tried to look into the statistics to see how the suicide rate in Ontario is reflecting difficult times.

Apparently it takes a couple of years for those stats to be compiled because of procedures in determining a cause of death. I'm pretty sure the figures will be alarming when they are finally released.

The provincial government recently announced they were going to allow professional athletes and elite amateurs resume playing their sports.

That's great, for someone who makes several million dollars a year; however, what about the million or so youth that play sports for fun, exercise, and competition?

The warm weather is here ? it's time to throw off the shackles of restrictions and get on with life.

Unless you go around kissing strangers in public, the risk of transmission by standing next to someone in a grocery store is pretty small.

Yes, we may have to remain vigilant for a while and exercise a degree of caution, but trying to turn this current situation into a ?new normal? is just trying to tell people to go against their natural instinct of having personal relationships and social contact.

People are meant to be social.

The good weather is here, and we've isolated for long enough.

You can't avoid the rest of society forever.

Other jurisdiction have already relaxed social distancing and mask rules and have not had a problem.

If we're going to ?re-open? Ontario, lets get it done. There's a lot of business people who need to open their doors, make some money, and get our economy moving.