

## The One Number

***Coronavirus headlines constantly scream from TVs and newspapers, 'Hunker down! Death lurks around the corner!' - And their numbers flow like the Niagara Falls. But they confuse rather than educate...***

by Brian Woolf (May 29, 2020)

Only one number is needed. It's 33,000. Why? Because that number is one one-hundredth of 1% of the US population of 330 million. It is an insignificant percentage. But it records the path of CV19 deaths. A few months ago, we reached our first one-hundredth of 1%. This week, year-to-date CV19 deaths reached 99,000, or three one-hundredths of 1% of our population. Still a relatively insignificant number. Obviously, it will grow through the year.

Each time a new CV19 death total is announced, simply divide it by 33,000 (or if your mind is like mine and prefers simple calculations, by 30,000 and you will be approximately right.) For example, if/when the CV19 death toll hits 165,000, divide that by 33,000 (or 30,000) and the answer is 5 (or 5 plus). The 5 tells you that 165,000 CV19 deaths is five (5) one-hundredths of 1% of the population.

(To calculate one one-hundredth of 1% of any country's population, simply divide the population by 10,000.)

As citizens, each must decide how many hundredths of 1% start becoming significant-Ten? (which would mean one tenth of 1% and occurs if we reach 330,000 deaths.)

Now you are probably getting ready to jump out of your chair to yell at me: "You idiot! All lives are important! Any CV19 deaths is tragic!" I agree. But so, too, are deaths caused by the flu, cancer, cardiovascular disease, opioids, hospital-acquired infections, and road deaths.

Now before you decide what number or percentage of CV19 deaths is significant, why don't you first ask the same question about these other major causes of death listed above? And then ask what action would you recommend be taken to reduce them? Lockdown? Mandatory diet changes? Eliminating opioids as a pain killer? Or, in the case of road deaths, mandating that no vehicle can go faster than 10mph (a sort of vehicle lockdown)?

The first step we can take in eliminating our nation's fear of CV19 is to stop the flood of numbers flying around with passion but without meaning. Start using just one number: 33,000.

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## **About the author...**

Besides a full business life in retailing, and later, loyalty marketing, the other part of Brian Woolf's life has been filled with diverse interests: particularly speaking (including Toastmasters), travel (including all seven continents), and reading (including history). And he has written seven books sharing what he has learned along the journey.

Ask him, two favorite trips? Antarctica and the Nile. Ask him, two favorite books? *The Lessons of History* (Will & Ariel Durant) and *Over the Edge of the World* (Laurence Bergreen).

He loves learning and sharing.

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