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WELCOME

Welcome back to our Human Futures series, where we bring you into the lives of people around the world during Covid19.

In April we began with the UK and Sweden, two countries where the mood in the early days of lockdown could scarcely have been much different. Our UK participants were deeply worried but had shown some interesting improvisation to adapt to lockdown life, from synchronised shopping to backyard snowboard ramps. Swedish contributors, on the other hand, were intensely relaxed about what at the time had been a minor inconvenience and minimal disruption, with many embracing the opportunity for outdoor leisure. What had bound both countries together, at that stage, was a sense of unity and the strongest sense that 'everyone's in this together' in a generation or more. A question this raised was whether that could be sustained, and early indications from our second contact with everybody was that for reasons varying from fatigue to crisis, the strain is beginning to tell.

One reason we've been keen to produce this series from the outset has been to make a statement of community. The demonstration of collaboration between One Minute to Midnight and our agency partners across the world is, for us, one of the most important practices that we can continue to support. In addition to Beyond, returning to give the Swedish update, this month we also have MindsLab in China, Lighthouse of Italy, and MultiFocus from Brazil who will all be contributing fresh international perspectives from some intriguing flashpoints of this pandemic.

We'd like to take the opportunity to thank Acumen Fieldwork who have supported this project here in the UK, and warmly recommend their recruitment services.

As before, we're organised along 3 simple lines: PAST – reflections on life before; PRESENT – experiences defining everyday life now; and FUTURE – what people around the world are looking ahead to. In this issue, you'll also find a look at how prevailing moods are developing, as well as a short, related exercise for comms. and product development against this backdrop.

And once again, if you'd like to know more about any of the contributing agency partners, or are curious about how we might be able to help you, please contact weallarrived@oneminutetomidnight.life



CONFIDENCE & COHESION?

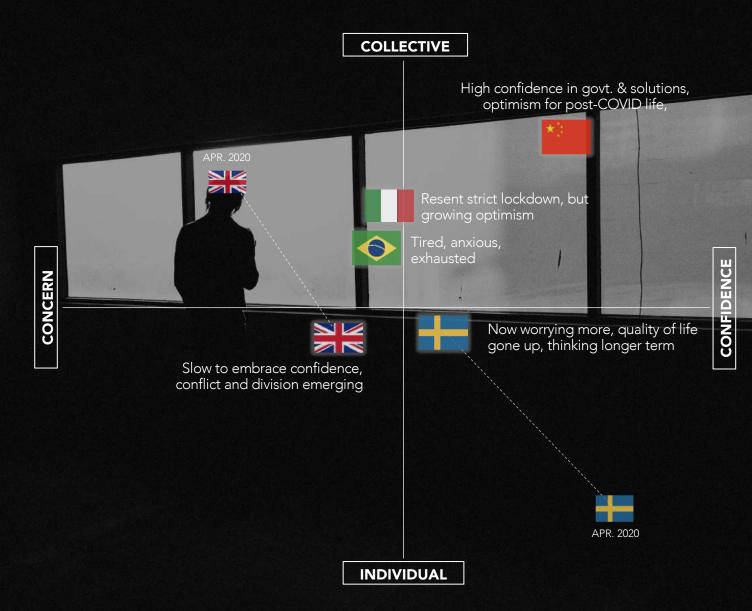
This month, we've charted the relative moods to help contextualise the stories you will hear.

Some of the most interesting comparisons that can be made between these countries at the moment relate to their cohesion and confidence.

For markets where we have longitudinal input (the UK and Sweden) we detect a convergence – albeit on very different trajectories.

Human Futures will return to these dynamics in Issue 3.

Please see p.26 to plot your brand, product, service, or idea against this model.



"THEY SAID 'WE'RE IN THE SAME BOAT'... IT GOT ME ANGRY"

Lidia, 29, UK

"Someone said something to me that made me feel really down. They said, 'don't worry we're all in the same boat'... it got me feeling angry. Yes we're all dealing with this situation but we're dealing with it in very different ways. I thought about it for days after."

"I'm nervous and scared about going back to work [as a hairdresser], I mean my career has always been a big part of my life but I am nervous. I hope my colleagues follow the rules, I know I'm going to but I dunno about the others... back then [before lockdown] even though I was scared I was slightly in denial, I thought by the time we go back to work it would be gone. Very naively thought it would be done."



Joana, 48, UK

"I hate the Zooms when they have more than one person. Everyone is cutting over everyone or not speaking. I end up being really quiet and not speaking. I can't be bothered. There's no benefit and it makes me feel more detached rather than more connected. I met up with a friend for a dog walk and it felt so good. It makes you realise how important that human proximity is. I can't wait to be in a pub beer garden with my girlfriends so we can put the world to rights."

Trevor, 38, UK

"There's an industrial estate and I go and walk around there and I see no-one, but at least I go out and get some fresh air... it's social conscience... it's taking social distancing to a new level – it's respect for everyone."

"I hadn't seen any of my friends since we started isolating and then I actually met up for a socially distanced walk. It felt amazing to speak to them and showed how much I missed face to face contact. We were socially distancing over 2m and were all on Zoom with our earphones in walking around Manchester. To have that human connection with someone... before I hadn't really left the apartment... it's a complete realisation that I miss human contact."

"THE MOOD'S CHANGED... **EVERYONE'S TAKING SIDES NOW"** Tristan, 27, UK "The beach became absolutely full within a week, you're having to dodge people to just walk around here. The mood's changed I guess. It seems to be a battle now between those who're following the rules and those breaking them. There's this animosity between people, everyone's taking sides. I'm looking back to the first few weeks and realising I'm a lot more anxious now because of it. It's a bit selfish of people."

ONE MINUTE TO MIDNIGHT





Here are a selection of stories from our global Human Futures partners, ranging from those first impacted by COVID-19 through to places where the full impact is only now beginning to hit.

MindsLab – you can reach them at Boni.liu@mindslab.cn
Light House – you can reach them at federica.santucci@light-house.it
Beyond – you can reach them at info@beyondresearch.se
MultiFocus – you can reach them at multifocus@multifocus.com.br

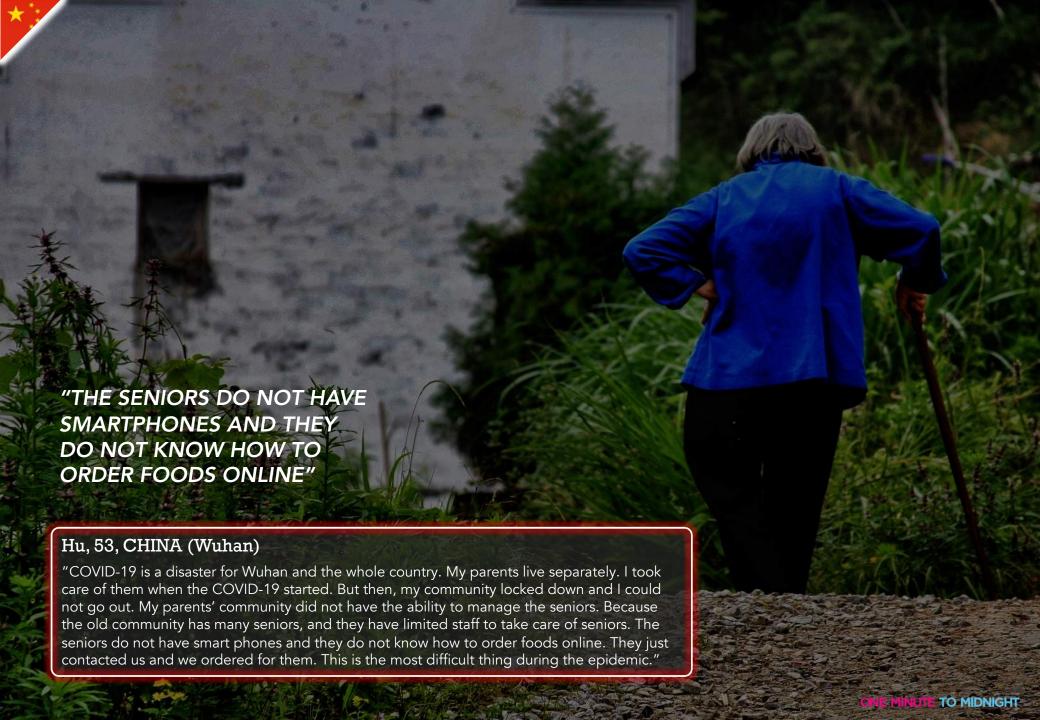


PAST "I JUST FELT THERE

WAS A WAY OUT"

Qi, 26, CHINA (Wuhan)

"When the virus just broke out and the city was just locked down, I was really terrified, especially in the first 10 days, I was worried about getting infected. Then I saw loads of negative comments online, blaming on Wuhan and Hubei for the spread of the virus, and that really broke my heart: we were already in a difficult situation, and there are still people criticising us. I couldn't help crying every time I saw the related news, I was really stressed. On one hand I was worried about my family, on the other hand, I feel discriminated as a Wuhaner. This sombre feeling lasted for about a week, until the PLA came and saved Wuhan. I could see Wuhan getting better and better since then, and I started feeling less frightened. When I saw them on the news - soldiers in their uniforms joining the rescue work and the local workers, I just felt there was a way out."





"WE HAVE MORE TIME TO TALK TO EACH OTHER"



Zhang, 47, CHINA (ZHOUSHAN)

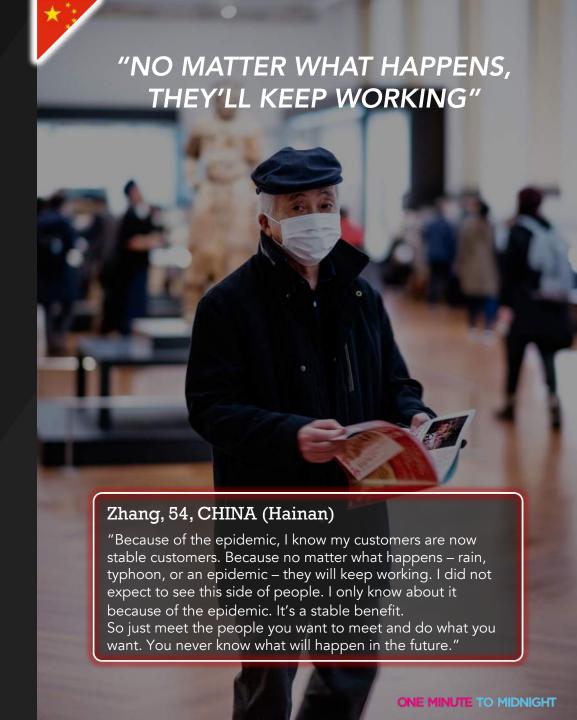
"My husband is a fisherman. He is on the sea all year around. But recently, due to the influence of the epidemic, he stays at home a couple of months. I think it's good. The life is slower. We have more time to talk to each other."

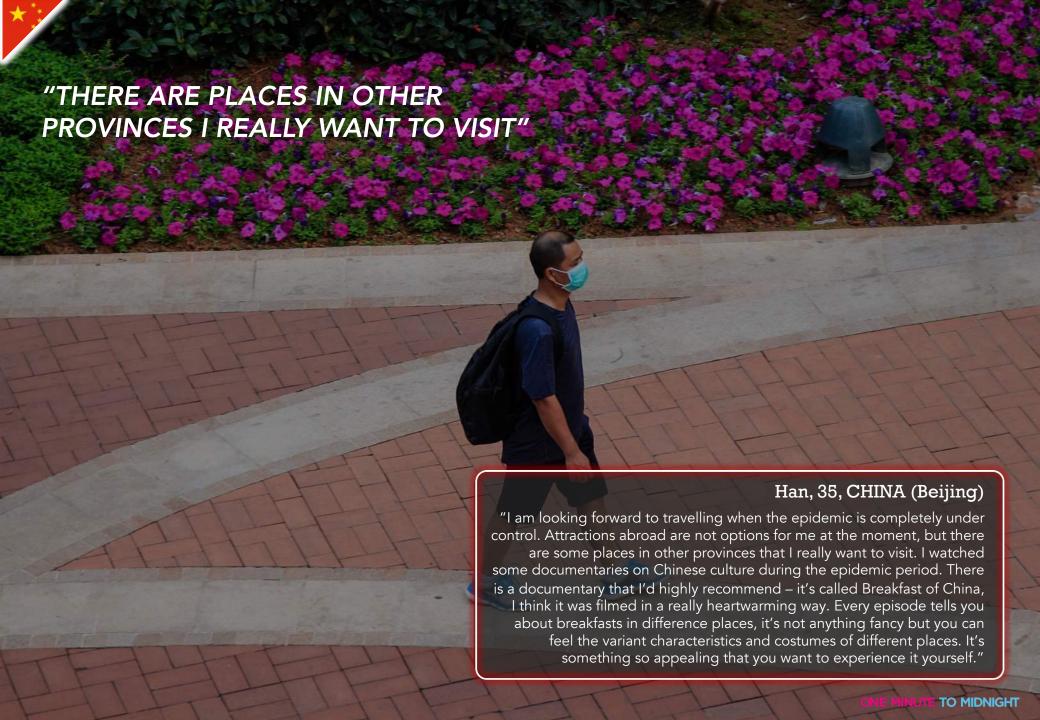


Zhou, 29, CHNA (Guangzhou)

"Now we have some asymptomatic carriers in Guangzhou, so I am still trying to stay in as much as possible and stay cautious about it. I know the possibility of getting infected is not as high as before, but if I can reduce some burden to the government by staying at home, I will just keep staying at home. And now I mainly communicate with my friends through WeChat or calls. We barely go out for food together, maybe once a month, instead of 2 to 3 times a month like before. And before the epidemic, we would go for films together when there's new films getting released, but now we don't do that anymore.

I used to distain wearing facemasks in public space pre-epidemic. I just couldn't understand why some people like wearing facemasks when they are on the subway, trains and planes; why would they wear a facemask every time they go out... But now I wear a facemask as long as I'm in public space. There's no harm in being cautious, no matter it's a serious illness or just a cold. At least I'm trying to protect myself."





PAST

Marco, 56, ITALY

"Life before the lockdown - so I have 3 kids, twins aged 8 and an elder aged 11 and a half. So my life before lockdown was completely dominated by my job. I'm an architect so I'm out for work the whole day. I never had enough time for things, I had to do everything overlapping. Family was in the time left from my job, my children went to school then had after school activities so we didn't spend much time together apart from on the weekends. I already thought this was a lifestyle that was not good especially because I was working hard and not having time to live my life. I have in fact very few social relationships because I'm always busy, always in a hurry and not much time in the evening, I'm always tired. So I don't miss the time before lockdown because I think it's a lifestyle I should have changed."

Marco, 15, ITALY

"So my life beforehand was normal, I went to school then I was eating out with friends then in the afternoon I was seeing friends or doing schoolwork or practicing guitar. I was starting adolescence... I've got feelings of nostalgia I hope it will go back. I'm very sad to be in lockdown it's very difficult for a teenager to be so much at home, I really miss the contact from the classroom and even the Prof. and friends and going out freely without fear and the mask and needing to be distant from the others. I had projects for the summer, I was supposed to go the UK but of course this has been cancelled."

PRESENT

"OUR RELATIONSHIP HAS BECOME COLDER – IT'S THE SAME BUT FEELS MORE DISTANT"

Michele, 35, ITALY

"When my daughter was born I promised her a beautiful life without limitation, but instead now I have to force her to give up things she loves and have to explain to her why and that is difficult. That is very, very sad. One thing I am very sad about is that I won't be able to be in the same room as my wife when she will give birth. This has been forbidden because of safety so I will not see the birth of my second child and I'm really, really worried that this might have an impact on that relationship with my child because I remember with my first daughter there was an instinctive empathy with her, an immediate connection because I saw her coming out from her mother and I'm really anxious that this non possibility might have an impact on our relationship."



Vincenzo, 26, ITALY

"I spend my days looking for jobs and I've been cleaning all the computers in the house and updating them, I run and play video games or video call my friends. I have lots of spare time, too much honestly. I preferred my life being much more dynamic and active. I'm also an referee so every weekend I used to go out, I liked the idea of preparing mentally and physically for the match. I also miss the training and the contact with others, I also miss playing football with friends. Our relationship has become colder – it's the same but feels more distant."

FUTURE

"I'VE REALISED THE IMPORTANCE OF HAVING TIME TO MYSELF"

Vincenzo, 26, ITALY

"I've seen a lot of solidarity which is good. I don't want as much free time as I have now but I've realised the importance of having time to myself, more time to relax and think or even just watch TV. My life was really full and I was always on the go so I've realised I want more time to relax in the future."

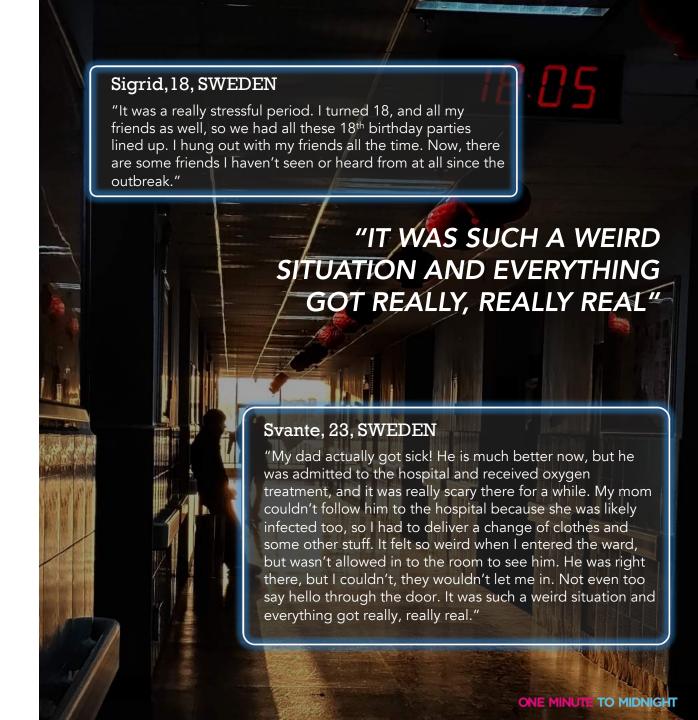
Bianca, 36, ITALY

"The most positive experience from this has been cooking and reading and having time for myself and getting more skilled for what will come next. I've got much more time for myself and these are all things I want to carry with me for when things go back to normal: more time for myself, less always being in a rush – I sleep more and better."

Marco, 15, ITALY

"The emotions I feel now is really sadness.
Before-hand we had lots of freedom but now we are really without freedom and the technology helps a bit but we still miss so many things compared to before. I really look forward to going out with friends to eat at McDonald's, hang out or even to just go out by myself but freely. I really feel psychologically in prison, I don't like it. My hope is we go back to normality quite soon. I think afterwards we will slowly go back to normality slowly, but eventually completely and I'm very happy about that.."

PAST





Stefan, 45, SWEDEN

"Not much have happened since the last time we spoke, but I think I see all this in a longer perspective now. When my work decided that everyone should work from home in the middle of March, I thought that this is only for a short period of time. But now, I have shifted from feeling that it would be a couple of weeks, to that we'll be back after the summer, to slowly entertaining the possibility that this might stretch for the rest of the year."

Asa, 57, SWEDEN

"I am filled with this sense of duty, right now. If the government says no, don't do this or don't do that, then you listen. We have some friends who went travelling cross country last weekend, and I don't blame them, they can do whatever they feel is right, but on the other hand... it just feels wrong. I wouldn't have made the same decision myself."

Jimmy, 39, SWEDEN

"It's a challenge to keep the kids' spirits up. They are so worried about everything. Everything from climate change, to this situation. They feel that their future is so uncertain. My oldest asked me the other day; 'What is the point? No matter what we do, the world is doomed.'. What do you answer to that?"

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"WE DON'T HAVE THE STAMINA"

Matilda, 30, SWEDEN

"We haven't even talked about vacation plans yet. It almost feels like we shouldn't take any. What's the point? It doesn't feel special or important anymore."

Sigrid, 18, SWEDEN

"I have this feeling that we are right now experiencing things that will go straight into the history books. It's not a war or anything, but I think that it will be good for Sweden to experience something like this. We are not used to it, and you never know what the future will bring."

Åsa, 57, SWEDEN

"I long for my family, and to be able to host large dinners with the kids and their spouses and partners. Right now, it honestly feels pretty 'meh'. I look forward to feel that we are living. That we are alive."

Peter, 54, SWEDEN

"People are relaxing, and getting more risk averse. I think that we will go back to normal long before its really safe. We don't have the stamina. And that complicates things for me personally. Because it was easy to take the bus when I was the only one doing it. Now its starting to get crowded."

FUTURE

"IT WAS MORE PEACEFUL, WITHOUT THE WORRY THAT SOMETHING COULD HAPPEN" Dieric, 30, BRAZIL "I was very quiet, without friction; everyone was close, it was more peaceful, without the worry that something could happen. I lived without a pressure of something that could happen at any time with anyone you know, with someone close or someone you like. Someone turning ill or needing medical care and having to go out and get infected on the way or inside a hospital; that kind of concern that I didn't have before. Before I was not as concerned with health as I am today." **ONE MINUTE TO MIDNIGHT**

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Augusto, 28, BRAZIL

"Tired, exhausted. As we do not leave the house and the most I do is to go out to the market, bakery, so the environment does not change. This causes exhaustion and I also spend 24 hours with my partner. There are days when I can't stand myself nor the other person. Exhaustion is more emotional. Physical would be more because of the chair, because I work on the couch, it also is harmful. The company even made it available to get the ergonomic chair from the office, but it doesn't fit here at home so I didn't even take it."

Renata, 37, BRAZIL

"The main change is the fear of uncertainty, we wake up in the morning and are not sure of anything, neither of health or physical issues, nor of work, nor of the economy, of politics. This for me is what is making me more unstable, this sequence of uncertainties. The family is fine, they are all isolated, I have my parents who are at their house, I am at mine and I have a sister here in Brazil who is in the health area, so she is on the front committee to fight Covid, she has been away from us. And I have a second sister who lives in Portugal, she has been lockdowned for three months."

"THERE ARE
DAYS WHEN I
CAN'T STAND
MYSELF NOR
THE OTHER
PERSON."

Dieric, 30, BRAZIL

"In general, I was much less concerned about health, much less concerned with what I might find out when I went out and now the concern is what dominates me. I think the negative aspect of that is non freedom. The no possibility of going out because of the fear that directly influences life or death of another person."

"MY MAIN HOPE IS THIS: THAT OUR POPULATION, AS A SOCIETY, SEES ITSELF MORE UNITED AND THAT IT VALUES THE THINGS THAT ARE REALLY IMPORTANT"

FUTURE

Renata, 37, BRAZIL

"I think people will come out of this moment much more resilient, we are in a daily resilience practice, each day is new, each day we need to adapt and change and etc... so adaptation and resilience is what that we will need for the future."

Dieric, 30, BRAZIL

"At that point I could have a utopian hope because my hope is that the general population will be more aware of the role of good science, the role of good politics. A behavioural change in terms of the common good. Leaving aside the individualism that for me is what is most harmful to our society. Individual thinking excels over collective thinking. And the negativist thinking, compared to scientific thinking. I would very much like us to change this aspect and mainly, I believe that this will happen pace by pace and it will happen mainly now. My main hope is this: that our population, as a society, sees itself more united and that it values the things that are really important."

MAPPING EXERCISE

AUDIENCE

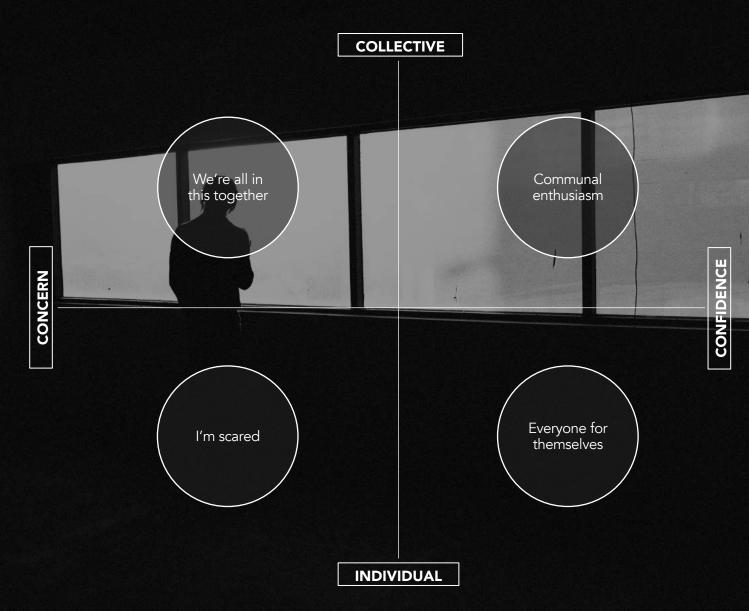
- Which zone is your key audience in today?
- o In what direction are they moving?

ASSESSMENT

- What zone does your campaign, product, service, or idea thrive in?
- What risk does the current zone pose to its success?

ACTION

o If the relevant market moves to another zone, what's your best option for your current plans: delay, change, or continue?







Scan me with your camera to be taken to Issue 1

HUMAN FUTURES

Issue #2 - Human Stories of Covid19 from the UK, Sweden, Italy, Brazil, and China

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