When I Get Scared

If you are able, now is time to help people living with HIV in Ukraine.

March 2, 2022 By Paul Kawata

When I get fearful or scared, my go-to response is usually anger. Right now, there are many scary things. As a result, I've spent a good portion of the last two years very angry. And just as we were about to stop wearing masks, Russia invades Ukraine. Any joy for this next phase of COVID was replaced by concern, helplessness, and astonishment.

The invasion is just the latest in a series of challenges that are outside of our control but directly impact feelings of safety. I worry and wonder about what matters. How do you know the right path when everything seems wrong? While I am strong, after COVID, Black Lives Matter, police killing of Black men, violence against Asians, particularly older Asian women, Jan. 6th, inflation, masks, vaccines, boosters, climate change, wildfires, killing of transgender women, Afghanistan, affirmative action, abortion, Supreme Court nominations, don't say gay, books being banned, and the constant battle for the soul of our country, I am also fearful, exhausted, and over it.

A news program showed people in Kyiv learning how to make Molotov cocktails while they randomly handed out guns so people can fight back. Could I be that brave? One month ago, the people of Ukraine had no idea of Putin's plans or how their world would be turned completely upside down. Thanks to cell phones and the internet, the revolution will all be broadcast in real time. These videos will shine a light on the atrocities of war. The whole world is watching.

I'm not a particularly religious man, but I find myself calling out to God. Help me to understand the lesson in all this suffering. What can I do right now to make it a little better? Sometimes it feels like we are just rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic. Then I remember the darkest days of the AIDS epidemic. There was a moment when we were heroes. There was a time when we had to make life or death decisions and learn to live with the consequences, no matter how painful. If you are able, now is time to help people living with HIV in Ukraine.

Naina Khanna posted this important message about how you can help:

Coalition PLUS is supporting its member in Ukraine, "CO 100% LIFE" (former Ukrainian network of people living with HIV/AIDS). We have been working with this organization for many years and they have been doing amazing work in the region and they have been preparing for this situation so they could act fast when it happens.

100% LIFE is currently trying to:

* ensure continuity of care and ARV supply,
* adapt their medical centers to care for war wounded, in particular in Podol and Oboloni districts of Kyiv,
* mobilize global partners, inform and alert to the risks of health system collapse. They have launched an appeal to the UN Security Council and you can endorse it by signing the following Google Form: Appeal to the UN Security Council.

You will find more information on their Facebook page that is regularly updated.

100% LIFE currently has huge needs for financial support. Coalition PLUS has sent a first donation of $20,000 and we wish to send more money. If you want to support them financially you can find their banking details below and this means of support should be prioritized to ensure quick transfers.

We know some organizations and people struggle to send money to Ukraine due to banking restrictions (which is intolerable) or would be more comfortable if the money is to transit through another organization. We have therefore offered 100% LIFE to help with the fundraising. Small donations by card/PayPal can be made on Coalition PLUS donation webpage (https://don.coalitionplus.org). And bigger donations can be sent to Coalition PLUS bank accounts and I can provide all the information you need to make a transfer. Coalition PLUS can arrange to send the money to 100% LIFE as soon as we have your commitment to give without waiting for the transfer to be made so we can act fast.

All funds will be targeted to this operation. There will be no admin fee taken by Coalition PLUS and we can provide all necessary documentation to reassure you on the traceability of funds and to demonstrate the money has been sent to 100% LIFE.

Finally, there will be many other needs, in particular for refugees at the Ukrainian border and in European countries that will need to be supported and supplied in ARVs. Therefore if you hear of any initiative, please let us know and we will try to see how to participate and support. It is in these moments of crisis that the importance of networks and community solidarity must be most strongly expressed.

Banking details: 100% LIFE bank account (official name: Charitable Organization Ukrainian network of PLWHA)

BANK OF BENEFICIARY
IBAN: UA 49 380805 00000000 26006609414
BIC/SWFT CODE: AVALUAUKXXX
Bank name: Raiffeisen Bank Joint Stock Company
Address of bank branch: Leskova str.9, Kyiv, 01011, Ukraine

CORRESPONDENT BANK

Account Number: 890-0260-688
Bank name: The Bank of New York Mellon, New York, USA
Currency: USD
SWIFTcode: IRVTUS3N

BENEFICIARY
Short name: CO «100 PERCENT LIFE»
Full name: CHARITABLE ORGANIZATION «ALL-UKRAINIAN NETWORK OF PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS»
Registration number: 21721459
Legal address: 87-A building V, Mezhyhirska St., Kyiv, Ukraine 04080
In details please indicate: “Charitable Aid”

I know these are tough times for everyone. Thank you for your consideration. Please know you are not alone.

Yours in the Struggle,
Paul Kawata

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