

## EDITORIAL

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### WE ARE STRONGER AND BETTER TOGETHER

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*“Since I am imperfect and need the tolerance and kindness of others, I also have to tolerate the world’s defects until I can find the secret that allows me to remedy them.” – Mahatma Gandhi*

I learned during twenty years in RECOOP HST Association that sharing ideas, plans and actions make a human network naturally productive. Also, I believed throughout these years that honesty is a key component of a healthy relationship. Not only because honesty helps us avoid harmful breaches of trust, but because it allows us to build creative collaborative research organizations.

Nonetheless, in the last two years, we were challenged with a vast scale of crises. First, the COVID-19 pandemic and second, beginning February 24, 2022, the brutal Russian aggression against Ukraine have impacted everybody’s life causing significant concern and insecurity across the globe. Economic instability, disturbed work routines and disrupted family lives have caused higher risks of physical and mental disorders [1, 2].

Socially isolated people often feel lonely or depressed. Constantly lonely people have higher blood pressure, are more vulnerable to infection and are more likely to develop Alzheimer’s disease and dementia. Loneliness also interferes with an entire range of everyday functions such as sleep patterns, attention and logical and verbal reasoning [3-6].

At the time the pandemic calmed, the Russian barbaric aggression and bombardment of civilian targets exposed large populations to physical aggression, which grants more damage over time as many Ukrainians are losing human condition. Are we losing humanity also?

Humans are good or bad, or predators also capable of great kindness. Humanity symbolizes human love and sympathy toward each other. Human qualities include honesty, integrity, courage, self-awareness and dedication. These qualities define who we are as human beings. In this troubled time, we must look for the good in people and strengthen the care for others.

Gandhi taught us, “The power of humanity is the strength of individual commitment and the force of collective action.” When RECOOP HST Association does something to help in Ukraine, all of us gain a sense of being valuable, helpful and worthwhile. Gandhi’s words remind us, “The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.”

The human misery caused by Russia’s attacks only strengthen Ukrainians’ extraordinary spirit and their dedication to protect their family, culture and homeland. Putin is scrambled by the strength of Ukraine and getting more aggressive. His actions prove, like Gandhi wrote, “The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong.” And we are stronger and better together.

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