

**Interviewer: Cristiano Favazza**

**Interviewee: The Bulgarian (Bulgarian friend who choose to be anonymous)**

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**Abstract:** In this interview the interviewee wished to be anonymous. In the interview we will be interviews a gentleman from Bulgaria in Eastern Europe. He works in a for a tech company and had to move into the city to find the job away from his small hometown. He tells us what it like in the city and why he would rather be in his hometown. As well he talks how COVID-19 has affected his job and family life and life around the city. In addition, he gives on interesting perspective on how the Bulgarian government is handling the pandemic. As well as what many people in Bulgaria think of the virus such as conspiracy theories and protests not things he personally believes but what citizens around him think at times.

**CF:** All right, today we are recording for the Chippewa Valley museum archive and journal of the plague year. Today it is November 25. And the time is 10:30am. In the United States. Today, we are interviewing someone in Eastern Europe. A In the United States, the current total cases are 12.7million and 260,000 deaths. So, would you like to tell us a little bit about yourself, the date and time where you are? And then again, the COVID statistics.

**TB:** Present it is also the 25th of November and is 18:37 or 6pm? In US time, your standards of pronouncing that. As for statistics that is at this point? 86,028 active cases? And 3226 deaths.

**CF:** All right, where are you if you'd like to say in your ethnicity, age and gender?

**TB:** I'm from Bulgaria, male. 26.

**CF:** All right. So, I guess what have you been doing with your day-to-day life since COVID? started?

**TB:** Well, same as before just working, but as of recently from home, because they change jobs, and they allow that.

**CF:** All right. Um, what is, uh, what's COVID like in your town?

**TB:** Well, we my hometown, when I was until several months ago, it wasn't that intense, there wasn't that many cases, things are mostly normal. I'm the capital right now, which is Sofia, in Bulgaria. And it's worse here, because well, half the population is concentrated. Of the population of the entire country is concentrated in one city. And of course, that increases the inflexibility in the cases.

**CF:** Uh, what did you first learn about COVID? And what were your thoughts on it?

**TB:** Oh, I think when, you know, just the first news about Wuhan China. And I didn't think too much about it, they thought, you know, keep an eye out before that they worked in around animal farming in a trading company. So it pandemics or epidemics rather, were pretty important, because, you know, with the swine flu, the avian influenza and so on. And I've been keeping track of these things, because of business reasons. So I also kept an eye out for this.

**CF:** Alright, what issues concerning the most of COVID?

**TB:** oh? Well, personally, I think the impact of the small business is the most concerning part, because some people may never recover from that.

**CF:** Yeah. We've seen a lot of there's...

**TB:** concerns,

**CF:** oh of course,

**TB:** I think the worst impact we've had is just a lot of small businesses going out and being unable to restore themselves.

**CF:** Well, you said, that next section where we targeted employment, you said you recently switched jobs?

**TB:** Yes

**CF:** Ah, did you have to quit your job? Because of COVID?

**TB:** No.

**CF:** Okay. Um, and then, yeah, you said you work from home now. So that's how covids affected your job. Do you have any concerns about your employment in COVID? Or the economy?

**TB:** No

**CF:** Alright.

**TB:** The sector that I work in this very secure, though.

**CF:** Oh, perfect. All right. Um, is COVID affect the employment of anybody? You know?

**TB:** Oh, definitely. I've got several friends, those jobs, some have families, some have infants, and it's very unfortunate.

**CF:** Alright. Would you elaborate on that at all?

**TB:** Yes, because for example, one guy, he's a security guard to the casino, as the wife has a child of one year. And when they close them the casinos, you know, they just throw them out the door half the employees.

**CF:** Oh, that's terrible. Um, yeah, that's not a good way to handle things. Ah, well, moving on to your family and household. Has COVID affected your family in any way.

**TB:** Thankfully, not yet.

**CF:** Good, good.

**TB:** And I hope it will remain like that.

**CF:** I do too. Um, how are you managing like day-to-day activities at home?

**TB:** Well I'm use to working out at home? So I'm not really getting out of shape or anything. It's unfortunate that I can go up one but stuff just because of the city because it's, it's a capital city. It's dirty its nasty It's not pleasant to go out.... But I'm managing.

**CF:** Okay, then let's see. Uh, his COVID has...a you know.. Do anyone at all? He's been infected with COVID?

**TB:** Not directly, but Oh, at work. We have quite a few people for my new job who are affected.

**CF:** Alright,

**TB:** but personally No. person.

**CF:** Alright.

**TB:** I guess that's still personally.

**CF:** What are the biggest challenges you've faced during the outbreak so far?

**TB:** Finding a new job, actually. Because when I started looking for a new job, the hiring just tanked for the bottom. And it took quite a while. Five or six months of job searching to be able to switch.

**CF:** What did what did you actually eventually get into if you don't mind saying

**TB:** it's for a tech company, a corporation. Technical Support Specialist in the position.

**CF:** Okay, nice. Um, what have you been doing for fun, like leisure are you playing, you know, any video games, watching movies, reading books?

**TB:** all sorts of stuff. I have. Like, for example, I like to cook so I've been cooking more. I do my workouts. That's a bit of a hobby as well. And watch stuff read stuff. That's pretty much what I'm doing these days.

Both [\_\_\_\_\_]?

**CF:** What have you been cooking?

**TB:** Oh, for example, I finally managed to get a traditional clay pot that we use in Goodman, Bulgaria.

**CF:** Okay,

**TB:** and I've been excited to test it out. Make some stuff.

**CF:** Nice.

**TB:** For example, we have a dish that is different meats layered with different spices in what's the word in English? marinated.

**CF:** Oh, okay. Yeah,

**TB:** it's a very slow cook. It's a clay pot. You put it in the oven, you cook it for like, four or five hours. And it's very nice.

**CF:** It's out actually sounds really good... Um, all right. Uh, so I guess, you said that the city's been pretty closed down. And just overcrowded. So how is COVID affected the community you live in?

**TB:** A, some people think it's a hoax. until they get it. Some people think it's real, but it's some kind of scheme or conspiracy. Some people think, you know, it's just a normal pandemic. Some people think it's not that bad. It's like every single group you can think of, they seem to be better people from it. And it's living as a part of that. Actually, I did a dance about the in the news that because of the big divide that's going on, there's actually an increase in reported domestic violence.

**CF:** Oh?

**TB:** On disagreements on how things are, which is very unfortunate.

**CF:** All right, um, what else is it like in the city itself? Just kind of compared to America, you know? What's it like? [\_\_]? In a Bulgaria? I guess?

**CF:** I've never been to America, but I've heard stories. I've seen photos. I suppose like, any city gets way too big for itself. It's overcrowded. A lot of traffic, a lot of pollution. Just all sorts of people and not in a good way. Because you know, there's people who just can't get it to make a quick buck but have other people. If you catch my drift.

**CF:** Yeah. A...

**TB:** It wasn't for the job. It would not live here.

**CF:** Okay, where would you want to go?

**TB:** Back home

**CF:** Oh, yeah. back your city

**TB:** Yep.

**CF:** Let's see....a... Do you do you participate in any like form of community activities like a school clubs, a church?

**TB:** No, not really. I only participate in we have these like, volunteer lives because, like planting trees cleaning up and so on, but there haven't been any in recent months because of the infection.

**CF:** Of course. Yeah. Makes sense. Um, how how are these people in the city itself, reacting... you said a lot of them have a lot of opinions. But are they people wearing masks? are they following protocol of any kind?

**TB:** Most are most of the wearing masks. Some are wearing masks, but point is like over the mouth and not the nose. Okay, it all goes in the lungs and the lungs. So not much point there.

**CF:** Yeah,

**TB:** but they don't go militantly against it. Like I've seen in America, for example.

Both: (Talking over each other not very understandable)

**CF:** we got a lot of Yeah... we got a lot of stuff going on. Ah, well, have you seen people around you change their opinions? Or just change it all because of the virus in their personality or mood?

**TB:** Oh, yeah, definitely. As I mentioned, I have colleagues that were saying that it doesn't exist, there's no such thing. And we go on the corporate meeting, and they say, "Wow, it's like real I can't taste anything I can't smell anything. I feel terrible. It's unlike anything I've ever had before." There's people who are gotten very paranoid, like, to the point where it's unhealthy. Some health paranoia, is okay, you know, in daily life, but they're just going way over the top

**CF:** How so?

**TB:** For example, just being so stressed out about it, that it's actually going to affect them in a negative way, health wise, losing sleep over it, being constantly anxious. That's bound to lead to some disease stress.

**CF:** Oh, yeah.

**TB:** Its a big factor.

**CF:** That's interesting. Um, well, you said you're you're at home and working from home. So are you doing self-isolation intentionally or just because you have to?

**TB:** It's a circumstantial

**CF:** Okay?

**TB:** I go out shopping so on when they need to. But there's just not much due out here. So just stay at home.

**CF:** Make sense.

**TB:** And it's also very cold.



**CF:** what is the temperature right now?

**TB:** Oh, it's in the negatives. (Celsius)

**CF:** Okay. (long pause) So you say you haven't known anyone personally, who's gotten sick? Have you said your corporate office was talking about? So I guess tell us a little bit about that. Or a little bit more about that.

**TB:** We were working from the office at first. But when we started getting cases, in other departments, the closes down, sent us home. And in a week or two, the month following, we found out just how many people were infected. But they didn't reach our division. So we're still fine.

**CF:** That's good. Um?

**TB:** offices pretty much closed down at this point. Even at the tech support for the tech support, even they're pretty much closed down.

**CF:** Hah oh dang Okay. Well, let's continue on to some other questions. We do have record for about 40 minutes, and we are at 11.

**TB:** haha Alright.

**CF:** So let's keep going on but what was your primary what's your primary source of news during the pandemic?

**TB:** Oh, I like to diversify my new sources when possible or use the we have a national Bulgarian there's a radio there's a television channel which has a website in there mostly unbiased in the news. I like to hear what's going on from other people. But you know, with a grain of salt. I see what's on the international news. Just everywhere. I can hear anything. And piece together What's going on?

**CF:** All right, um, do you use any internet sources or look at sources for other countries?

**TB:** Yeah, like sometimes a what else... All the big ones you know, Guardian, CNN, BBC, whatever you know the big ones.

**CF:** Well, have any of your sources changed during the pandemic? Have you lost trusted any sources that you used to follow?

**TB:** I've mostly been sticking to the Bulgarian national one. And still it's going pretty well. Like they say things as they are short and simple. Like for example, we had what do you call it? Yeah, we have This a team, if you can call it... that Handles, the pandemic,

**CF:** okay,

**TB:** and they gather and talk and make decisions and ask the public and so on. And the reports on their, you know, meetings and decisions are actually pretty well written. Like If they're planning to do something if they're considering, if they're actually doing, because Bulgarian media has just a lot of like a... I hate to use the word because it used to discredit new sources before but it's literally [\_\_\_\_]? kind of news like, are they shutting down the entire country? And it's like, no, they're just considering, you know, closing down malls.

**CF:** Okay.

**TB:** And yeah, there's still doing a pretty good job. Even you have political unrest going on and so on.

**CF:** Of course, do you have any idea what the name of the team is?

**TB:** A.... I'm not exactly sure. The changing like, it's just exclusively the committee of [\_\_\_\_]? we have a general, a military general head, the team during the first day that pandemic now it's more, it's just a combination of people who know different things about the situation,

**CF:** Ok

**TB:** we have like doctors, we have people in the businesses, we have a general who can go to the NATO and such it's a pretty good deal.

**CF:** A yeah no that actually sounds really interesting. do you think there's any issues media? Well, Honestly, it sounds like your, your national news sources really good? Ah, because the next question is, do you think there are any important issues that the media is just refusing to recover? Like refusing to go over or just ignoring?

**TB:** Oh, definitely. But they're not related to the virus? It's mostly our political stuff.

**CF:** Of course,

**TB:** That's a good jump to get in the grave?

**CF:** Yeah [laughs], well, the next questions will work for that, because they're all about government.

**TB:** Oh boy [laughs]

**CF:** Ah, well, let's start small. Do you think local leaders maybe let's go back to your hometown, for this one at first. You think how do they How do you think they were handling pandemic back when you were there?

**TB:** We've never handled a pandemic before. So it was at first pretty chaotic. This was the main problem with the team that was assembled that they would make a decision then reverse it just stumble a lot in the beginning. And this was the case for local leadership for national leadership. Everyone just didn't know how to react, how bad it was going to be. It's an unprecedented situation. I mean, we haven't had a pandemic here. Pretty much ever, like during the wars, we have few outbreaks of cholera and so on, but nothing on this scale like, global.

**CF:** Yeah. Yeah. So actually, you, you know what Bulgaria's situation was back. When we had the 1919 pandemic.

**TB:** I think we were not impacted that badly, but I can't be sure. I haven't really done much research into it.

**CF:** That's okay.

**TB:** But because we didn't have that much traffic with the western side of the world. And guessing, it wasn't that bad.

**CF:** All right. Make sense

**TB:** Or if it was it went unreported Because we were still setting up back as a country?

**CF:** Mm hmm. Yeah. I guess because you don't have states. Do you think? How do you think that the federal government has been handling COVID? Other than news source? Because seems like your government is actually pretty... giving they have a military general within the national news. We don't have anything like that. So

**TB:** Not the news the team that's handling them.

**CF:** Okay. Yeah, the team Sorry,... the news is covering that. Ah, well, I guess how else is the federal government handling things?

**TB:** The federal government as in [\_\_\_\_\_]?

**CF:** Or, your government, your national government?

**TB:** A... Well, they're trying.... I suppose, but we're very fragile country at this point in time. And there's no really good decision to be made. It's lose lose most of the time.

**CF:** All right.

**TB:** It's like they don't really commit to a plan of action. or any strategy? They seem to go back and forth a lot?

**CF:** sure, I guess Could you tell us more about why? why things are so fragile over there?

**TB:** Oh, because we're a very small state on a very important location with history with the West and the east. You know how that goes?

**CF:** Oh, yeah. Um, I guess why why is it a important look at strategic? Are there resources there?

**TB:** It's a very observed trade route. like all the [\_\_\_\_]? Pass from here for here into Turkey, from Turkey to hear the [\_\_\_\_]? nearby, we have access to the Black Sea, which is close to Crimea, you know, that we're the first wave with Greece that sort of separates the Arabian nations from Europe, um, you know, the refugee crisis that we are the route we Greece, and Europe you know Italy, given all that, and so on. Yep.

**CF:** Ah, I guess has the refugee crisis. How has that been affected by Covid?

**TB:** We actually don't have a refugee crisis. We had a very short one when they arrived here. The so that it's, we don't have enough money to support the own people let alone them so they left for Western Europe. So we never really had a big crisis we had a few incidents, but they were handled, like within a day or week

**CF:** Okay. Um, well, you mentioned.... One sec let me check something. (momentary pause) Yeah, I guess how would you think the European Union is handling things then?

**TB:** I haven't really cared much to read about how the Western European countries are doing things. But I know England's not doing too hot.

**CF:** Nope.

**TB:** Italy was a bit late on the jump, maybe the first wave. And the rest? Well, I know there is a protest in Berlin about the...a..... measures they're taking for the virus. So yes, they're not doing too great. If the numbers keep increasing. And if there are protests and such

**CF:** Of course lets see So how much...(gets cut off)

**BT:** At least

**CF:** Oh, go on, please.

**BT:** I said at least the businesses that are probably more taken care of, than over here. Like I don't think France or Germany are going to just drop off the businesses like we are doing.

**CF:** A What do you mean by just drop off, like the public in general or the government

**TB:** the government, there is a system to support the payment, but it's only like 40 or 60% or something like that. And it's only for certain companies, like the smallest owners who don't have employees, just they own the business. They can't receive the pay, the pay, anyone has received, they need to pay themselves a salary. Because, okay, what's the profit?

**CF:** What are the requirements, then?

**TB:** I'm not sure I'm not a business owner. So I haven't really looked into it. But I do know that a lot of small building. It's not like in not some other places where it's mostly big businesses. There is a lot of small businesses in Bulgaria, it's, it's a very large part of the economic sphere, we have Tiny Corner shops, we have small hair salons, we have just a cobblers. We have all sorts of stuff like small hardware shops over stands that make, you know, living selling newspapers or nuts or, sunflower seeds or whatever. And those people are not handling the pandemic very well, especially the cafes and such.

**CF:** All right, yeah, that's, I wish the governor would be doing more than, um, I guess linked to that. How badly is the economy been affected as a whole?

**TB:** We're gonna get to the top because it's always been on the brink. But I know that the coffers are going empty. Like we have a free blood test every year as part of our healthcare and I went to get it September, I think, yeah, September, I went to get mine. And they just said, we don't have the money for it. We can't pay the lab. We're sorry. Oh. So we're going pretty deep in the coffers, and we're negative on the account. It's not going well.

**CF:** Alright, I guess would you tell it like to tell us a little bit more about the health care system over there? You said, you get the free blood test. I guess what else is it like?

**TB:** Oh, it's....hmm it includes a lot of stuff like dental care, I think you have like two teeth, you can get worked. But you're even like expensive scans and such. If you follow we have what's called a medical path. Like, for example, you take the scan, but you also have to stay in the hospital for three days. I had a head injury last year, construction incidents, and nothing serious. You know, I still got to get a test. I go there. I, you know, sign all the papers. I follow the path. I go, I get this. I get sent to a room. I stay there for monitoring three days. And pay like, like, 40 Lev or something tops instead of several Hundred it gets the cost. Like a lot. Yeah, actually affordable.

**CF:** Unlike the United States.

**TB:** Oh, yeah, I've heard about that. Yeah, we don't band aids that cost. \$60. Yeah.

**CF:** [laughs] Yeah. Um, let's see what else we could do ask you about....(pause) do you know anyone who has... a you said, you know, somebody with some theories about the virus. Would you like to tell us about those?

**TB:** Oh, boy, like, I've heard it all at this point. Bill Gates is trying to kill the human race. What else? There's, you know, the standard big one was the government wants to chip us and track us like you don't already have a cell phone? What Oh, yeah. The, the masks oh boy why the masks, like supposedly wearing a mask is going to shorten your lifespan, kill you, etc. debilitate you in

some way. the Japanese could have been wearing masks during every sort of sickness or, you know, allergy or whatever for decades, and they still live way longer than you're gonna live.

**CF:** All right, I like that. [laughs] Mmm hmm.

**TB:** It's just really out there.

**CF:** Yeah. I actually hadn't heard the Bill Gates one. That's a that's an interesting one. Uh huh. Hmm. Well, has anyone has there ever been any protests in the Capitol or anything at all with the public being unhappy with the government due to the virus?

**TB:** [laughs] Well, take your there's a protest every day. There's several protests every day. People have been protesting for like, how many I don't know, like 200 days now for different reasons. We had 168 day protest against the government, I think, but nothing came out of it, of course, because people don't know how to protest. They just stand with signs. There's protests for the masks, protests for this for that. cab drivers are protesting because apparently, you know carpooling is evil is killing their business. Yet we managed to drive out Uber and all that.

**CF:** Yeah?

**TB:** A few years ago. This year, there was a protest by mothers of disabled children because of the system and how it works. I don't even know what's going on there. There's, there's a, there's a protest about everything at this point.

**CF:** What do you mean with the system with mothers of disabled children is the guy

**TB:** As I said don't really know what's going on there. We do have a big problem with handling disabilities, especially mental ones. Like we don't have any facilities to take care of these people. I have friends who are in the police force, and it's a standard story of someone gets, you know, rowdy, they get coddled. They go in and it's a mentally ill person. And they take them to the only local mental wards and they say we're full we can take them. They take them back. They hold them for like, a few hours or a day and you let them go, because they're mentally ill, they're [\_\_\_\_\_]? every time.



**CF:** That's a that's really interesting. Um, but also not great. Ah.... lets See? Mmm hmm. Well, uh, do you think do you think the country is going to change because of pandemic like, do you think, be some form of transformation within the nation after the virus is over? When it ends....

**TB:** Probably there is going to be the same [\_\_\_\_]?. We see everywhere that businesses, larger ones, sometimes buyouts, the failing small ones, that's going to happen. There's going to be people who profit from the pandemic, of course, there is [\_\_\_\_] in everything. That's how business works. Yeah. But other than that, well, of course, a lot of people are going to be out of a job, and they're going to leave the country, but they already leaving the country like 150 people per day, leave country

**CF:** Oh really?

**TB:** Which is a lot. We were like 6.5 million left. So they're probably.... like, I moved out. I have been trying to not move out my hometown for years. But the job opportunities are so bad. I just got the to move. And a lot people just want to leave the country as a whole.

**CF:** Do you, where throughout the Europe, do they tend to go?

**TB:** anywhere? This is the poorest country of the continent that anywhere is better than this.

**CF:** A, is it Actually?

**TB:** it's one of the poorest. I think we were on par with Albanian. I don't know. Kosovo, maybe? Macedonia. Sorry, not in Northan Macedonia now. And such, mostly go to Germany, England. Well used to go to England where they were still in the European Union. Not so much now[laughs]. But mostly Germany, UK, France sometimes. Alright.

**CF:** You know, anyone who's left?

**TB:** Oh, yeah, plenty of people.

**CF:** Okay.

**TB:** Plenty of people just didn't even bother trying to stay in the Capitol or anything. It just left. People with friends. We got someone in Australia, who started the window cleaning business, and it's actually doing pretty good for himself.

**CF:** Hmm All right,

**TB:** so all sorts of,

**CF:** um, are people leaving less because of COVID? Because the lot like, does your country have a lockdown? Are you allowed to leave?

**TB:** We used to Have on the first way, when we still didn't know how bad is going to be. We did lock down all major cities and you had to have a valid reason or a document. To enter, leave. We had Cordons

**CF:** Oh, wow

**TB:** that's really helped, because we had slightly bring up the statistics here. Up until where's the active cases for months? cases only, like, up until September, we had 4000 cases in the country. Active.

**CF:** Alright.

**TB:** But you know, after that, just like everyone else just got up. That's what we didn't manage to survive the first months with barely 1000.

**CF:** cases or deaths?

**TB:** Cases alone.

**CF:** what was it like, when the cities were like locked down? Or is that a common thing?

No, no, it's not a common thing. This is the first time it's happened. Since I'm alive. It wasn't that bad. Because, you know, if you really have a valid reason to go somewhere, yeah, it's fine. Like, for example, my parents moved out to the countryside, until you know, things are settled. And that will bring them medicine, food, clothes, etc. And I go to the Cordon, I opened the trunk. Yes, there is food. There is medicine. I have my document that my parents live, wherever they live. And they passed me through, I go there, I bring the stuff. I get back, no problem or, for example, leaving the city for work. If I have the company or the company documents, yes, it's fine. It's works, I go do my job. I go back. It's mostly people who wanted to go out and get drunk in the woods or something. Or just, you know, get drunk at home. We have problems with the city lockdown, but people have valid reasons to go somewhere. Not a problem.

**CF:** Uh huh, well, how are actually since you just mentioned, how are your parents doing?

**TB:** their doing well, my mom and I just retired like few months ago. And she's just staying at home. She's fine. My father's it's still fine. They have serious enough measures of work. (Not sure what this means)

**CF:** All right. And they seem to be healthy with the with the virus and all that no one's infected.

**TB:** Yeah, they're fine.

**CF:** Perfect. Um, sure, anything interesting, like, you just like to tell us what, Bulgaria as a whole and how I mean, you covered a lot of topics, we just try to think of anything else to do with the virus that you might want to mention. You're getting close to the end here. But yeah.

**TB:** Well, this not really much to say, we don't have anything, too out of the ordinary here is mostly quiet. It's the people who are discontent, don't go around burning radio signal towers, like in some other places. Yeah, but apparently, people are just going around the burning cell phone towers.

**CF:** Yeah, that was that was a thing briefly. Um, I remember hearing about I don't remember if it was the United States,

**TB:** UK Actully

**CF:** UK? Yeah I remember They thought 5g was causing COVID.

**TB:** Oh Yeah, we have that as well.

**CF:** Oh you five G or you have people thinking five G's causing it?

**TB:** people thinking five G's causing that. we have all sorts of things like that. We have a lot of bloggers and sila doctors. Like there was someone saying, you know, it's better to use a What do you call it in English? It's one of these small key three units, but just plug and they blow hot air

**CF:** space heaters

**TB:** Yeah, space Heater. That that was fine. But air conditioners will kill you. Even though it's disabled. It's basically...

**CF:** why will it kill you? [laughs]

**TB:** Because they need the clicks, (the bloggers need views) man. They need the clicks. [laughs] There's this screenshot I saw of the Daily Mail.

**CF:** Oh god [Laughs]

**TB:** And it was like a year apart. One article is that eating eggs give you diabetes and a year later that eating eggs will reduce the chance of diabetes. It's the same here. We just have these sources. latch on to anything in the write, insane stuff. And people believe them for some reason.

**CF:** [Laughs] Fair enough

**TB:** that's, we have just washed-up historians and Scientists and such who aren't actually doing anything with their lives, or participating in any researches or anything. Just go out of the woodwork. Right dumb stuff. And stir it up.

**CF:** Yeah. So this sounds interesting. (pauses) A yeah, actually, yeah, let's I. There's one question we kind of mentioned earlier. You said you said that you think COVID is definitely affecting people's mental health, outside of what the virus would do. Do you think it's also affecting physical health? Or would you like to talk more about the mental health?

**TB:** Well, the mental health is really the basis of everything. Like if your mental isn't stable, everything else is gonna fall. Like, I fully believe that it is indeed mind over matter, but not in the mystic way that some people think it is. It's that matter of fallows, the mind if you don't have you know, the energy to do all the stuff you need to do, you know, cook clean, work, exercise, take care of your relationships, children, whatever, then yeah, it's going to be the physical effect of that. If you get burnt out and stress Yeah, definitely gonna show

**CF:** Uh huh all right.

**TB:** It's one thing to be cautious, but

**CF:** fair enough. Yeah. knowing everything that's going on now with the virus and whenever it's going to be cured if it's going to be cured. (clears throat) how do you think individuals, your community in the government should move forward?

**TB:** I think people should just hmmm What's a good way to sum it up? Just follow the basic self etiquette. In these situations, I can really like the fact that I mentioned Asian countries before Korea, Japan, they have a lot of cases, even though they have, for example, Tokyo or Seoul which are super cramped, because that's just what they do. They wear the mask and they contain their microbes, and people don't get sick, they don't have the influenza. pandemics we have here each year. Like we have a lot of sick people every year, because people would just go out, sneeze, not put their hands in front of their mouth or elbow or whatever. And people should really look to them for that. It is keeping clean in general. Wash your hands. This isn't about the

pandemic just like basic caging that should follow. If there's one good thing about masks is that again, still people still don't have to worry about bad breath on the bus or Metro.

**CF:** [Laughs] Jeez. How I guess I asked that one. Um, all right. What was I gonna ask?... Again, you said like pandemic like, how often is there like, uh, even if it's not major, how often is there gets like the flu season in Bulgaria.

**TB:** Every year we get just pretty much everyone's sick of flu, because no one's keeping safe. And people are getting more and more unhealthy. And that affects you know, we have the standards of 21st century we have obesity, we have alcoholism, which is traditional for our part of the world. And all of that combined. It makes susceptible to this. People just get the flu every year. And of course, old people sick people, people with compromised immune systems, they pay the price.

**CF:** Mm hmm. Um, all right. I think you know, that wraps it up. So thank you very much for doing this. You will again, remain anonymous, but we do really appreciate you giving us input from another part of the world.

**TB:** Of course.

**CF:** So that you very much

**TB:** Alright, stay safe out there.

**CF:** Thank you. You to