

Combating the COVID Brain Health Crisis

Suffering from the misery of the pandemic is widespread. A new brain-based approach to restructuring of the economy can address the global health emergency.

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, USA, October 26, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The COVID pandemic is causing global misery. Social and physical distancing causes isolation and reduced social support. The crisis accelerates digitalisation threatening Jobs and livelihoods. Fragmented and inconsistent policy approaches exacerbates chronic stress and fear. Many have lost family and friends causing wide-spread bereavement. Those with existing brain health challenges, such as depression and anxiety, are having relapses. The COVID virus is causes direct damage to people's brains, causing emotional disturbances and brain fog. Health systems are struggling to keep up with overwhelming mental health care demands. Economic challenges have meant wide-spread job losses. The impact of this misery has likely caused trillions of dollars of economic productivity loss. Unfortunately, our current economic systems are not structured to deal with these manifold issues.

A September 16th Economic Outlook statement from the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) noted, "With the COVID-19 pandemic continuing to threaten jobs, businesses and the health and well-being of millions amid exceptional uncertainty, building confidence will be crucial to ensure that economies recover and adapt" . Unfortunately, this is a non sequitur and is not possible. In uncertain times, with a high brain health toll, how can people possibly be confident? Clearly traditional approaches to address the global economic and psychological misery and not working and will not work. An entirely new approach to building global resilience is needed and this must endure for future challenging decades. Enter Brain Capital, a new model for economic thinking developed by an inter-disciplinary team of 33 experts and published in Molecular Psychiatry, a prominent neuroscience journal.

"Brain Capital is a form of capital relevant to a complex, interconnected and fragile global economy which puts a premium on brain skills and brain health," noted Marion Leboyer MD PhD, CEO of Fondation FondaMental and co-author of the paper.

Brain health is essential to ensure that people have the brain skills to flourish in the modern fragile, globalised and digitalised economy. Brain skills include self-control, emotional intelligence, creativity, compassion, altruism, systems thinking, collective intelligence and cognitive flexibility. Brain health and brain skills are critical for resilience. Unfortunately, despite the critical role these skills play, we do not know enough about the impact of these brain health disorders on our workplaces, communities, economies and societies. How can we address this

and effectively provide a supportive policy environment, invest in solutions and track outcomes? Think Brain Capital.

“Brain Capital needs to be integral to a new narrative of growth and progress which puts people at the centre of our economic system – their well-being, their interaction with others and their psychological resilience to shocks,” suggested William Hynes, Senior Advisor to the Secretary General and Co-ordinator of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)’s New Approaches to Economic Challenges (NAEC) Unit and co-author of the paper.

“In this paper, we developed a Grand Strategy for Brain Capital,” mentioned Harris Eyre MD PhD, senior author and Co-Founder of the PRODEO Institute. “The Grand Strategy a multi-pronged effort to define and operationalise Brain Capital in public policy, underpinned by an investment plan and a Brain Capital Index.” Eyre went on to note the novel investment approaches for the enhancement of Brain Capital, “These include restructuring taxation, venture capital, social impact investing and philanthropy.”

In conclusion, William Hynes noted, “COVID will not be the last planetary emergency, further pandemics and natural disasters are predicted in the future with increasing frequency. So we need fundamental reform.”

Publication details

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