

# A Cabin Fever Shabbat

by Phyllis Chesler



Bravo! New York State Governor Cuomo has just shut down all non-essential businesses as of Sunday night and rightly so. Many people are still behaving recklessly, self-destructively, with no concern for themselves or for others whom they may unknowingly infect.

People are in a state of terror, feeling trapped, worried about finances, even more worried about symptoms—given that they cannot easily see a doctor or be tested for Wuhan virus.

Some people have begun to yell at each other and at their children. Others are more restrained, but are rather tightly wound, brittle, about to become undone. Cabin fever can do all this and more. Some people both under and over 70 are risking all on a shopping trip (necessary or unnecessary), a social dinner, or even a meeting.

One woman I know is on high active worry-duty; her son and daughter are both physicians and are at work in hospitals. Another woman has suffered countless phone calls from her very elderly mother who suffers from dementia and who does nothing but scream, holler, wail, and beg, and whose aide insists on trying to medicate her against her will.

"I can't risk going to see her, can I?"

No, she cannot. And it is killing her.

This may be the first Passover Seder in centuries that our gatherings will be cancelled—by a plague!

Stay safe, stay strong, stay sane.

And Shabbat Shalom.