Covid-19 discussion time

I want a safe environment in which everyone can express their thoughts freely without being ridiculed by others.

THE RULES:

- ❖ **One person speaks at a time (!)**

- ❖ **Please remember, this is not a typical debate. Therefore, it is not necessary to try to convince another group/person of your viewpoint. You may of course respond to what another person says if that helps to form your argument.**

- ❖ **Do not laugh at others. That is very childish and disrespectful.**

Round 1:

Face masks are useless.

Round 2:

Our government fails completely in the battle against Covid-19.

Round 3:

People should get vaccinated even when the long-term side effects are unknown.

Round 4:

Attending illegal parties during a pandemic is not an issue.

Round 5:

Banning fireworks on New Years Eve because of Covid-19 is not an issue.

Each round will take approximately 8 minutes (will set a timer) in which a spokesperson on each side will get 2 minutes to express their views. Spokespersons in a group are allowed to take turns within those 2 minutes.

My role: moderator. I will ask questions from time to time.

Example:
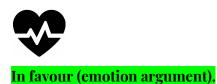
Statement: **Face masks are useless.**

In favour (rational argument).

I believe that face masks are useless, because numerous studies have shown that the Covid-19 aerosoles are much smaller than the filter in the masks most people use. Only FFP-3 masks could be useful in this case. And even those types of masks do not fully prevent people from contracting the virus, as studies have shown that they provide 98 % protection. Therefore, I believe that face masks are useless.

Against (rational argument).

In my opinion, face masks are useful, because even though they do not fully prevent Covid-19 aerosols from entering my nose and my mouth, they do so for the large part. In other words, I am better protected against the virus when I do wear a mask. Therefore, I believe face masks are useful.

In favour (emotion argument).

I feel as though they are useless because people still can get sick when they wear them. A friend of mine wears them all the time, but he still got sick. They don't even fully protect us, so what is the use? This is all one big hoax. The government is just testing us to see how far they can go in restricting our freedom. It makes me so angry! I mean, this is the Netherlands, not China right?

Against (emotion argument).

I get sad whenever I hear people dismiss the use of face masks. So many people all over the world have died from this virus. I mean, come on! We are in this together. Let's just wear face masks until this nightmare is over. Even if they do not protect us fully, they do for a little bit. And that is what counts. Wearing a mask will, therefore, help us to win the battle against Covid sooner.

Note:
Please make sure you read a couple of news articles/watch informative clips on the subjects to which you can refer. In other words, inform yourself to help you make well-founded arguments. Also, you should bring your arguments to class on paper.

Final note:

This assignment is made in light of my Master course at the VU (the course itself is called "Omgaan met maatschappelijke controverses in de klas). My teacher requested me to record the class discussion for my evaluation. The footage will be used for this purpose only. I promise. Kindly inform me if you have a problem against being filmed. In that case, I will provide you with an alternative assignment.