

Kayleen Amaro

29 March 2021

Never in my life did I think a virus that would infect over 125 million people and kill over 2 million people would be possible nor did I imagine the impact it would have on my own personal life. My sophomore year of college, March 2020, took a dramatic halt when this mysterious virus was infecting and killing thousands in China. I did not think that it would ever spread to the United States and cause everyone's life to change dramatically. Covid-19 entered America so quickly and before I could even blink there was a country wide shut down in which we all had to quarantine and stay in our homes because of this deadly virus. We had to switch everything to remote learning, and it was a very hard transition. I started struggling with school, something that had never happened to me, I could not seem to get use to online studying as I am a person who prefers being in person. Along with this, I had to stop working in fear of contracting this virus. On top of all of this, my grandma was fighting cancer and going through chemotherapy, so we had to protect her at all costs since she was even more susceptible to contracting anything. I was fearful of giving my grandma anything, so I stopped working. For many months we lived in fear, not knowing what could happen if we dared stepped outside too long, we did not know for sure how we could contract the virus. We wore masks 24/7 if we were to step outside, little by little we started to step out for groceries and necessities. However, we took off our clothes as soon as we stepped inside, showered, and threw the "outside" clothes in the washer. Everything was sprayed with disinfectant and all things bought inside the house were wiped down with disinfectant wipes. The normality of our lives no longer existed; we had switched our whole lifestyle.

We were starting to go crazy being stuck at home not being able to do anything. Finally, around June, I returned to work but taking many precautions, as did everyone else in the household. As the months passed, it seemed like this would be a never-ending thing, with more and more deaths on a daily. Life started to go back to normal in a way, we went about our daily lives, but we took precautions in everything we did. That summer was not as enjoyable, but I made the best of it, even if it meant just being with close family at our houses and that was it. Junior year rolled around, and we were still remote, I did not look forward to it at all, but I knew it was the best option. Little did I know my life would change in September 2020; my dad was working everyday as he always had taking the necessary measures. Someone at his job had contracted the virus but he thought he would be fine as he had no contact with that person or anyone around him. He still got tested, however the next day he started to feel a little under the weather, but he did not think it was the virus as he suffers of allergies and asthma. It got worse and he decided to quarantine himself in the basement until his results came back. A few days later, the doctor called, and he tested positive for Covid-19. He stayed in the basement and I thought I was in the clear. I still decided to get tested just to make sure, but I was sure I was okay since I was experiencing no symptoms. September 28th came, and I was not feeling to well, the doctor called me and confirmed I had tested positive. I remember crying and just hoping it would not hit me as badly and that I would survive. The days continued and I felt worse every day, my symptoms progressed, and I felt like I was nearly dying. I could not stop coughing and the pain I felt in my throat was like strep throat times 100. I could not even swallow my own spit, with that being said, eating was almost entirely out the picture. One morning I woke up and it was so hard to breathe so I had to drive myself to the hospital, where they did lots of scans to make sure my lungs were clear, and my heart was okay. Hearing the doctor say that there is no medicine or

anything they can do to help me, scared me a lot. I really had to let my body fight off the virus and hope that my immune system was strong enough to do so. At this point I had lost all sense of taste and smell so whatever food I put into my mouth I could not taste. Finally, after a week and a half, which felt like a year I started to get better.

Having the virus was the scariest thing I have ever had to experience, thinking that I was not going to survive was beyond scary. I am so grateful that I survived and was able to beat the virus. Covid-19 is something I wish no one ever has to experience because it is honestly horrible. It attacks your respiratory system and eats at you immensely, I lost 10 pounds in a week of having covid. Contracting the virus really opened my eyes to what so many people had to endure and what so many people lost the fight too. Although I had the opportunity to quarantine, and I was taking all precautions I still contacted the virus which goes to show how easily it can really spread. I think about those who live in lower socioeconomic communities in which they cannot take off of work because they live paycheck to paycheck and cannot afford to take off. This means they cannot quarantine and protect themselves to their best abilities. These communities are also usually overcrowded which means the virus could spread so much easier and these individuals do not have the ability to protect themselves correctly. I will continue to take all precautions necessary for as long as I have to just to protect my loved ones because I could not imagine losing someone close to me to this virus. I am beyond happy that my family has kept healthy and that those who did contract the virus were able to fight it off. I hope that with the finding of these vaccines that it really slows down the spread of Covid and we may stop losing millions of people and individuals can stop losing their loved ones. I can only pray for better times and hope that soon in the future we may return to a normal life in which we do not have to fear every time we walk outside.

