

Interviewee: Sarah Benthein

Interviewer: Dan Benthein

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Sarah Benthein was born and raised in Appleton, Wisconsin, and currently resides in San Diego, California working as a travel nurse. Being that she has been working as a nurse, Sarah has been able to see firsthand how the health system has been affected, and changed by the pandemic, and her perspective will give individuals a first hand account of many of these changes. Throughout much of this interview, Sarah discusses many of the different ways in which Covid 19, including such things as travel, working, and recreational activities. She shares how restrictions in San Diego have been taken much more seriously than in Wisconsin, and because of that, her life has changed dramatically from what it was prior to Covid 19 occurring. Sarah also reflects on how drastically travel changed in regards to Covid, especially owing to how far from home she lives.

Dan Benthein (0.02)

Okay, so today's date is December 3rd 2021. The time is currently 2:02pm, 2:03 pm . Currently in the United States, there are 48,628,787 confirmed COVID 19 cases, and the deaths are at 781,963. In Wisconsin, the total confirmed case on a seven day average is 3548. And deaths are at 9128. And for vaccines, currently in the United States we are at 58% vaccinated rate. Today, so today, I will be interviewing my sister Sarah Benthein. Would you mind sharing some demographics? Oh, boy. Oops, it's fine. We can keep going. I gotta, I didn't memorize these. So would you mind sharing your name and demographic information such as race, ethnicity, age, gender.

Sarah Benthein (1:17):

Okay, my name. My name is Sarah Benthein . I am a 28 year old female. I am Caucasian. And I currently live in San Diego, California.

Dan Benthein: (1.39)

Okay, so my next question. What are some of the primary things you do on a day to day basis such as your job, extra curricular activities, etc.

SB. (1.50)

So I work as a travel nurse, and I work in an outpatient Cancer Clinic doing chemo infusions. And so I take care of roughly six to eight patients a day. And I do that four days a week. And then my free time I like to spend time outside, running and biking. And I like to watch football and go to breweries.

DB: (2.25)

So I got it, nice. So yeah, I know, you mentioned you live in San Diego, California, like, what is it like to live there? Kind of like?

SB: (2.33)

Yeah, it is very sunny. It is very nice out all the time.

DB: (2.37)

Unlike here?[Wisconsin]

SB: (2.40)

there are a lot of people who live here, too, have moved here from like, all over the country. So I meet a good amount of people from like, from the Midwest from Wisconsin. Lots of people have relocated out here from the East Coast. And so it's a very, I find this a very, like friendly place.

DB: (3.06)

I'm guessing the weather has a big impact as to why people move out there. So when you first learned about COVID-19, what were your thoughts about it?

Sarah B:(3.17)

Let's see. So I was still working. I was working in the hospital in Minneapolis when COVID first came to be. And at first I feel like I thought it people were overreacting almost.

DB: (3.33)

I think that was a pretty common belief.

SB: (3.37)

Yeah, and like when things started shutting down, I was like, what, this is crazy. And like going to the grocery store, and like there was no one out and about. And at work, you know, at first we had like the supply shortage. So we were reusing masks, and like, actually not even allowed to wear masks. Yeah, because they didn't want to like scare people and make it seem like it was a bigger deal than it was and we also like didn't have enough masks

DB: (4.16) Yeah. I think I remember reading about that on the news, too. Yes. shortages.

SB: (4.22)

Yeah. So that's all kind of crazy to think about now because now it's like, go anywhere without a mask. Yeah. But yeah, I think I thought you know, at first before we really knew how big of a deal it actually was, I think even I thought like it was being blown out of proportion with things shutting down and stuff.

DB: (4.45)

Yeah, I think that was a pretty common belief. I just think no one knew what was happening was just, uncertainty and stuff. So off of that, how has your thoughts on that changed since then, since we've been living in a pandemic for like a year, year and a half?

SB: (4.59)

Ha. So my thoughts have definitely changed. Obviously, I mean, you know, I feel like people are on a completely different spectrum with COVID. Like, there are the people who still don't think we should be doing anything, you know, not not going out and doing things. And then there are the people who think it's like, not a big deal at all. And I, you know, I think to some extent, I've like, loosened up a bit from the initial, like, shut down. You know, I'm doing things with friends and family. Obviously, still, like being careful. And I mean, I think, um, you know, I obviously, they feel like people should be vaccinated. And a lot of that comes from the patient population that I work with, too, because they're, like, really immunocompromised. And you know, I feel like we have to protect people like that. I mean, I'm young and healthy. And, you know, it's one thing if I'm like, Oh, I don't think I would get very sick.

DB: (6.20)

But yeah, like you said, you're also working with people who are very much immunocompromised?

SB: (6.27)

Yeah. So I mean, I do have some patients who, you know, they complain the whole time that they have to wear a mask and are all like, oh, that, you know, it's not a big deal. I mean, I get mad about stuff like that. Obviously, it is a big deal. And why can't everyone just, you know, follow medical advice?

DB: (6.48)

Maybe? Yeah. I mean, it's yeah,

SB:(6.52)

Probably should have thought of this sooner but..

DB: (6.54)

I agree. It's just crazy to me. Yeah. So I guess you kind of, yeah, so then my next question on this is, like, how did COVID-19 affect your job? And like, in what ways? Because I know, you switched jobs from Minneapolis [Minnesota], and like, just how do you change things?

SB: (7.15)

Yeah. So, it, you know, in a way, I feel like my life may be altered less than a lot of people's because I still kept going to work like usual. I mean, I was still working the same hours working the same type of job, whereas, you know, other people went from going to work or going to school every day to working from home, and, you know, taking classes and stuff all online from home. I mean, as a nurse, I never had a choice. I just, you know, we just kept working, the stress levels are so much higher now. And I, you know, I had been working in the hospital. And then I stopped that, and I started travel nursing again, and I've just been working in clinics. And the stress of that is not, you know, not quite as high. I mean, I've never so to speak, been, like on the front lines. I mean, every healthcare worker is to some extent, but I'm not, you know, working in ICU taking care of these patients every day. But I mean, every nursing job that I've had, we've been short, you know, short staffed, every hospital, every clinic you go to, is short staffed. And I feel like even patients are just like, going off their rockers, like people get mad about the smallest things. And then that, you know, are waiting too long, waiting too long for their care. And I

mean, we're, we're busier than ever, and then they get mad, and then that gets, you know, taken out on the nurses also. So I feel like, in that way, it's changed a lot. It's just a lot, it's a lot busier, it's a lot more stressful. I feel like even if people aren't getting sick with COVID there, You know, maybe they didn't go to the doctor preventatively when they should have. And so I think people are just sicker with a lot of other things now, too. So yeah, it's, you know, definitely has not changed in a good way.

DB: (9.42)

Yeah. So yeah, sorry. Yeah.

SB (9.46)

No, go ahead.

DB (9,47)

No, you keep going.

SB (9.48)

No, no, no.

DB: (9.50)

Okay. So I know a lot of health health care workers and I guess, workers overall were, like, told to go home or like lost their jobs during the pandemic. I don't remember what the exact wording was had that like ever happened to you? Or?

SB: (10.04)

I'm like, called off. You mean kinda? Yeah, it happened right at the beginning, when I was still working in the hospital, essentially, because they, you know, they cancelled all elective surgeries. And initially, they were trying to keep as many beds empty for the COVID surge . And they were trying to save money. And so I did get called off quite a bit then. Now that I've been travel nursing I'm working, you know, hospital systems only hire travel nurses when they need extra help. So the places that I've been working, they actually really have needed me to work but I think it just depends on where, where you're working, what your specialty is that so.

DB: (11.02)

yeah, I guess another question I have based on you traveling is like throughout the cities, you've gone and like, I guess you've talked about how you've seen the changes differentiate in the cities you've gone to?

SB: (11.14)

Definitely. I think, in general, I feel like California takes it Like, more, I don't want to say more seriously, but I definitely noticed, I have noticed a difference, say between California and Wisconsin. Like, last year especially. Nothing was open out here. And then restaurants reopened, but it was only for outdoor. And you could only be sitting at your table. And then I came home to Wisconsin, and there's like, bars and stuff are just Open. So and I think, you know, in general, California is much more liberal, democratic state. And that, not that I mean, I don't think it should have ever been a political thing. But it definitely turned into a political thing.

DB: (12.20)

I mean, it turned pretty quickly. Yeah.

SB: (12.22)

Yeah. So I think, you know, there's, that could contribute to the differences too. But yeah, I think in general, the cities I've worked in in California have had stricter, definitely had stricter, COVID rules than back home.

DB: (12.42)

So yeah, I guess you're talking about like, kind of, I'm just kind of curious about ways in which, like California or that region kind of enforced this or like, what they did stop the spread.

SB: (12.56)

So, you know, last year, LA, the LA area got really bad. Like, they really started surging. And so I think that freaked a lot of people out. And that's when they really, like started cracking down on the rules. How they actually enforced that. I, like, honestly don't know, from the time that I've been, like, when I moved out here, say, you know, you would go to Target in Wisconsin, and there will be signs up that would say, you know, masks enforced, you have to wear a mask, but maybe only like half the people were wearing a mask. And then you come out to California. The first time I went to Target out here, I didn't see a single person without a mask on. Like everyone just followed it. And I don't know, you know, I don't know how they got to that point. But it just like wasn't even an option. Like if I would have gone into Target without a mask on people would have looked at me like I was insane. But I don't really know like, you know, what they did differently to make that happen? Yeah. Versus like what Wisconsin?

DB: (14.27)

I think it just depends on the state. I think like you said California's more liberal more. Yeah, yeah. Because I know in like Madison and Milwaukee, there were a lot more followed to and those are both much more liberal cities overall. So I think just again, it just became so politicized. So I guess again, like kind of overall, how have you seen the community respond around you to pandemic or have you seen? I guess? Yeah, it's kinda like that.

SB: (15.07)

You know, I think it either made people more like it either made people be like, a better human, or some people have made them like, into completely worse. Yeah. So I think in a lot of ways people, a lot of people try harder to help each other out now. Like, even trying to keep, you know, smaller businesses afloat and things like that, and what, you know, what I think is cool, it's like, especially healthcare workers, I mean, nurses, and particularly, you know, there's, especially in a city like San Diego, where you have so many health systems, there's so many nurses out here, and it's like, you see another person in scrubs, like in the grocery store or something, and you just always like smile or wave, like, it's like a, you know, like a bond between us now. And even just the way people would do like zoom calls with their groups of friends and their family and finding ways to stay connected like that, I think that is really cool. Yeah, it also, I mean, I see it even in my friend groups, you know, it's also caused some tension, because people obviously have different beliefs. And you know, I just try to respect everyone, and just not you know, not get into arguments and such, but other people are a lot more outspoken than I am. And so it it definitely has caused some tension to families and just in the community.

DB: (17:13)

Yeah. So have you, have you, like, seen people kind of change how they live their lives? Or have you like, have you seen kind of this whole process in action at all? Have you seen how quickly it just changed? Because...

SB: (17:29)

Yeah, definitely, I mean, I think back to how we were living before, you know, before COVID Not having to worry about any of this stuff. And then in a split second, it just completely changed. Even like, you know, I used to go to the grocery store, or target whatever, like, multiple times a week, because I could, you know, I didn't even think about it. And then it was like, Oh, we're going to order stuff online. And you really shouldn't be going to the grocery store and coming into contact with all these people. And, you know, having to think about things like that a lot more. I had, I remember, I had a trip planned home to visit mom and dad and I ended up canceling that because I didn't want to risk getting them sick after I'd been working in the hospital. Things like that. I mean, not being able to go out on a Friday night, like, you know, it just sounds and then as as things started opening again, I feel like people you know, we really didn't take that stuff for granted then, like it felt so, I mean, think about the first time you sat like in a restaurant again. Yeah. Like, this feels so weird. And you're like, that used to be just what we did all the time.

DB: (19.17)

So my only next questions are kind of what I want to... actually hold up. So have you known anyone who's, Have you or anyone you know, gotten sick during the pandemic or like gotten COVID tested positive or like, or even just gotten had to go to the hospital? Have you known anyone who's gotten like really sick due to COVID?

SB: (19.38)

So I actually, a lot of my friends had COVID at some point. Some had been before we had the vaccines and some, you know, unfortunately did get sick after as well. Quite a few of people my age, my friends didn't, you know, didn't get super sick, just kind of felt really crappy for a week or so. But I do have a few friends who did get really, really ill and even months later, are still having side affects, like one of my friends used to be a big runner and he said he still could hardly even run a mile because his lungs just felt so crappy.

DB: (20: 36)

Like how long ago had he had COVID?

SB: (20.38)

It had been like three months ago.

DB: (20.40)

That's, that's just crazy.

SB: (20:42)

Yeah, no one that I know, personally, Had to be in the hospital for it. Which is good. Yeah, I mean, it definitely has taken its toll on people, even young people.

DB: (21.02)

Yeah, I think even if you yourself don't get sick, you I think every almost every person has been impacted by in some way.

SB: (21.09)

Yeah definitely. And I never knew that I had it. But I had gotten the antibody test, And that was, this was still before we had vaccines and stuff, too. And I got the antibody test. That was positive. So it was like, Well, I didn't really even know when I had had it. But you know, thinking back, I could have thought of a few. Times that I hadn't been feeling super great. So yeah,

DB: (21.39)

I would guess I've probably had to this fall, but I never got tested. But so has COVID kind of changed your relationships with like family, friends and others around you.

SB: (21.56)

Yeah, I think. Fortunately, our family, my family, I think we all have kind of similar views of it. And there hasn't been any of like the politics involved. Some of my friends, their families are like, you know, they're hardly on speaking terms with people in their families, because especially with the holidays, if people aren't, are refusing to get the vaccine. Now that's making a lot of people really mad and really uncomfortable. And then they're not getting together and whatnot. Which is really sad to see that that's what it's coming to. And I mean, even friends, too. Yeah, I mean, at first we, you know, we hardly were seeing our friends. And so that has its implications at the time, like you don't feel as close to people maybe. Because even if you're talking over the phone or on video, FaceTime, whatever, it's not the same as actually seeing someone in person. So I think that has, you know, maybe made some friendships stronger, but also cause you to just kind of drift away from some people, too. Yeah. I got a lot closer to my roommates during the time and things like that. Just because that's like the only people that we were seeing, see?

DB: (23.36)

Yeah, and it's just, we're doing everything over zoom or Yeah, virtually. And I think like, especially with our family being that you and Joe are both in California, we're in Wisconsin, it just made it difficult for us to kind of

SB: (23.53)

Yeah, for sure. For sure.

DB: (24.00)

So my next question is In what ways have you seen COVID-19 affect people's like mental physical health? Because I think in both ways, this is something that's had an affect.

SB: (24.11)

Definitely, I think a lot of people probably, you know, definitely negatively affected their mental health. I mean, I see that me personally, just the stress levels and like, what all I mean, thinking about things when all these people were dying, and you know, you're just sitting at home and I think that was hard for a lot of people not being able to be out doing things and then you're probably just, you know, overthinking everything. And like, well, you know, what is our world coming to sort of thing and worrying about it and like Are we ever going to go back to normal?

Those sorts of things? Again, fortunately, I never had anyone close to me who, you know, was in the hospital or who passed away. But I think that obviously,

DB: (25.16)

has a huge negative impact.

SB: (25.19)

for sure. So yeah, I think mental health wise that is, has become much more apparent and much more of a struggle for Yeah, a lot of people,

DB: (25.33)

because like you said, We're all just stuck inside.

SB: (25.35)

Right? Yeah. With that being said, too, I think for some people, their physical health, I'm sure declined, as well, just from not being as active and, you know, if your mental health isn't good, then you might not be like, as physically healthy either, you know, ordering out from restaurants, not moving as much, you know, just sitting at home on the couch working versus going into work every day. In that sense, I was fortunate that I was still like, again, going to work and moving around and seeing my coworkers every day. Um, but I think it definitely had an impact and, like, again, with them canceling all these elective surgeries and such. Even like, cancer screenings all got canceled, because that is considered elective. And so people weren't going in for their yearly checkups or going in to have these screenings done that they needed, you know, or having their joint replacement surgeries that maybe would have allowed them to eventually be more active, those sorts of things. So in that sense, I think it really impacted physical health as well. Yeah.

DB: (27.03)

So this is kind of back to what we were talking about earlier. But yeah, like I remember reading that San Diego had like, closed the beaches and trails for a while. That actually happened?

SB: (27.13)

Yes, everything was closed, the beaches, the trails, the boardwalks. So that's huge, because that's like, a huge part of the draw of living here. I love to be outside. And I mean, you couldn't like do anything?

DB:(27.31)

Yeah. Because everything was closed you couldn't go to a beach. I mean, I again, like you mentioned before, that's a huge, that's just hurts people's mental health being stuck inside in a room. I mean, I felt that; online classes and in my bedroom back at home just was not easy.

SB: (27.49)

Right? I know. Yeah. It's crazy.

DB:(27.59)

So yeah, I guess my next question on this is like, Have you been kind of following along with the news during the pandemic, kind of about what's going on?

SB: (28.09)

I mean, I see the news, you know, on Instagram, I follow, especially like some news stations from back in Minneapolis. So I mostly honestly see the news like from Minneapolis. But the news also, I feel like just makes me like kind of angry. I don't really like it. So I really don't pay that much attention to it for that reason. You know, whether that's right or wrong. I don't know. But I mean, if it makes you angry it's worth it. You know, people I hear people talking about things at work, but I've never really been a big news person and I don't think that really changed during the past.

DB (29.00)

Yeah. So, so I guess sorry. I'm trying to think of questions. So have you met anyone who's like either unvaccinated or had like concerns about the vaccine or for whatever reason, just struggles with the vaccine, I guess.

SB:(29.30)

Yeah. I actually know quite a few people who would either... So I mean, especially in California, a lot of workplaces are requiring it now. To be a nurse in California you need the vaccine now. And I know a lot of you know health systems have you know, people are saying they're gonna strike and whatnot because it just should be their free will and yada, yada. And I do know, some of my friends feel that way too. Most of those friends are, either work for like the government or are in the military. And so they have also had to get the vaccine because it's not an option for them. So they did get it, but they were not happy about it, which, you know, I just kind of bite my tongue versus speaking. Yeah. You know?. It's not worth it to me to potentially alter a friendship with someone. But yeah, I know a few people who still don't have it. And I, you know, I just think it's crazy. Yeah. And it's always, oh, well, we wish they can't tell us what to do. And it's like, is that your only reasoning? Because that were me, I'd be a little bit more worried about my health, then trying to defy, you know, yeah. What medical professionals in the government are saying, Ah, but obviously everyone has their opinion.

DB: (31.21)

Yeah. So, obviously, you live in San Diego, which is a big city, have you seen any, like, protests against the measures being taken against the COVID? Against like, the shutdowns, especially last year, or? I mean, has that not really happened in San Diego.

SB: (31.40)

I personally didn't really see it. But I know that it happened, for sure. And now again, like I was kind of saying what more so is happening is, you know, health systems are potentially going to strike because they are saying, you know, we should still be able to have a job, even if we don't want to get the vaccine, you shouldn't be able to just fire us. Yeah, that's more what I've seen. And part of that is because probably because I don't really watch the news. And so what I hear about at work is, you know, other medical field related things. But yeah,

DB:(32.30)

Yeah. I mean, I haven't really seen it. I mean, I don't live in a big city . So it was just, I'm guessing it happened. But like, yeah,

SB: (32.40)

Yeah I'm Sure I'm sure, yeah.

DB: (32.47)

So do you think what, like the government did in regards to pandemic response Was. did they do a good job do you think? Or could they have done better? Or do you agree with what they did? Just kind of?

SB: (33:00)

Yeah. I mean, I think that's a tough question. Because in hindsight, I definitely think yeah, they could have done better. But it was such an unknown. I mean,

DB (33:11)

yeah, nobody knew what was happening.

SB (33.13)

No one knew what to do, or what the right answer was, I mean, people were just, you know, doing their best. So I think it's easy to look back now and say, oh, yeah, we could have done this differently. But at the time, there was so much unknown, that it's hard to say it was it was, you know, hard to know, at the time. Oh, what is the right thing? To do?

DB: (33.42)

Yeah, I mean, just nobody really knew.

SB: (33.44)

Right? I mean, we still like, don't really know so much about it. Which I think, you know, scares a lot of people too and then they probably just get mad about it easier.

DB: (34.00)

Yeah. I was gonna ask, so I guess I have you seen the news about, like, what's kind response to the news about the, like, the new variants that are occurring? I know, they just announced a new one. Just they just had a new one. Like, what's your thought process on that?

SB: (34.20)

you know, that I mean, that's tough too, this other variant, this last variant I think the concern was, is the vaccine going to protect against it and whatnot. And I guess, I mean, I don't even know, but it seems that people who are vaccinated have at least been if they have been getting sick. It's been a lot less serious than people who are not vaccinated. And so I would hope that with the variance that that continues to be true, I mean, It's like, pretty common knowledge, anyone who works in the hospital, you talk to them. And it's primarily non vaccinated individuals who are taking up the hospital beds. And here again, I think, like, people, why not just, you know, get the vaccine? Because then at least hopefully, if you do get sick, you know, you end up with a milder version versus on a ventilator.

DB:(35.30)

Yeah, because I mean, I think there's already enough results that really shows that the vaccine works.

SB: (35.35)

Yeah. And I think, again, with the vaccine, you know, people are oh, there was one person who got a blood clot or one person who had affected our baby or, you know, yada, yada [etc.] obviously, more than one person, but, and then they're choosing to not get the vaccine because of this minimal minimal percentage of people who have had, obviously, these tragic side effects. I don't want to downplay that, but it's like, okay, but is getting sick and dying from COVID Better than that? like, that's what, you know, I just don't understand.

DB: (36.13)

Yeah, and I think there are people who also make the argument that, like, they're still getting COVID still testing positive with the vaccine, but that's not really the goal of the vaccine. It's more so to prevent serious illness, which it is doing.

SB: (36.29)

Right, Right

DB:(36.31)

So I know you're... you got the vaccine, have you gotten the booster?

SB: (36.35)

I actually have not gotten the booster yet. My primary reasoning for that is I do, it seems that people that I know who have gotten the booster have had more side... have had more side effects with the booster, they've felt crappier after the booster. So I have not gotten it, because I've been working a lot And I haven't wanted to have to call out of work for a shift. But I am planning on getting it now When I'm home for Christmas, when I have a few days that I don't need to do a whole lot in case I don't feel super great. Yeah. You know, I think I feel less strongly about the booster as I do getting the initial vaccine, but I mean, they're, you know, the the people, the health professionals are recommending the booster, and so therefore, like, I'm going to get it. It just hasn't been quite as much a priority For me as getting, you know, the initial, Vaccines, which could be wrong of me.

DB:(38.00)

But yeah, so like your clinic hasn't like made the booster mandatory yet?

SB:(38.08)

I'm required to get the booster by the end of the year.

DB:(38.10)

oh, by the end of the year. Okay. So they have and like, do you know if most hospitals in the area have?

SB: (38.17)

it's hard for me to say I don't know if it's, so I work... technically I work for an agency, and then the agency. My contract is with my agency. And then the agency also has the contract for me with the hospitals. So I don't know if it's my agency saying I need to get the booster. My next contract that I'll be starting right at the beginning of the new year is with the UCSD [University of California San Diego] health system. So I don't I don't know if it's my agency saying I need to get the booster. Or if it's UCSD saying I need to get the booster. That sort of thing. But yeah, it'll

be interesting to see if a lot of workplaces do start requiring the booster. Yeah, not sure how that's gonna go.

DB: (39.11)

Yeah, it'll be interesting to see. So like, during the pandemic, before you went to work, did you like ever have to get like tested just like routinely or?

SB:(39.21)

So? no, they, there were times when there were like travel guidelines and such. When they were they were saying if you had traveled, you shouldn't be coming to work for 14 days after you traveled or you need to have a negative COVID test after you travel to come back. But I never traveled during any of those times. And at the clinic that I was I the clinics I've been working at, We've required patients to get tested within 72 hours prior to coming into the clinic. But it wasn't Never a requirement for staff to get tested, Which I do find kind of interesting. Yeah. But yeah, for a while, we were requiring patients to have a negative COVID test prior to being admitted to the hospital, or even prior to coming into clinic. And some of these patients come into clinic every single week for chemo. And so they were having to go, you know, the day or two before their chemo every week to get COVID tested. But I mean, that was all just in an attempt to keep everyone else there safe.

DB: (40.39)

Yeah, I just find that really fascinating that they have the patients get tests and not the staff.

SB:(40.47)

So we do, though, you know, every day when we came in, we would basically have to attest to the fact that we were not having any symptoms, and we hadn't been around anyone, we hadn't been exposed to COVID. So it was a thing. You know, it would say it when we punched in for our shift, like, you are verbally attesting that you hadn't been exposed to anyone and you're not having any symptoms.

DB: (41.15)

But again, that was kind of just on your honor. Basically. No way they could have proved anything.

SB: (41.27)

Right. Right.

DB: (41.34)

So I guess living in California and being so far from like, home, how did you see like travel impacted? Or how did you think about travel differently?

SB: (41.46)

I mean, it definitely made it tougher. Even at first, when I was still in Minneapolis (Minnesota), I, like didn't drive home as often. Because especially before the vaccines, it's like, I'm the one who was working in the hospital or in the clinic, being, you know, exposed to all of these patients and people every single day. And then, like mom and dad, and you and Tom [Dan's brother], were all home. And like, none of you were leaving the house. So the last thing I wanted to do was come home when I knew that I was like, you know, amidst all of this on multiple

occasions, I know I was exposed to COVID at work. So I didn't want to get anyone else sick, and then living out here. You know, just being mindful with flying. For example, last year, you know, Joe [Dan's brother] and I both flew home for Thanksgiving. But then things started kind of getting worse. And we both decided that we weren't, we're not going to fly home for Christmas. And so we just stayed out here and got together just the two of us for Christmas. But yeah, it's definitely made things more difficult and made you think about it a lot more.

DB: (43.17)

Yeah. Because I also know that like airlines, which you flew a lot when you came home changed and like airports change a lot of things like I know, it's like, did you choose what you flew based off of kind of what their requirements?

SB: (43.35)

I would during the pandemic, and I would only fly Delta because they were one of the last airlines to keep the middle seat open. And I remember the first time I flew them, that they didn't do that I was still like expecting them to do that. It was on a tiny plane. I had a connection flight in Minneapolis and then my tiny plane from Minneapolis to Appleton. I was right next to someone and I was like, a little bit uneasy because it had been so long since I had like, just sat next to a stranger like that. And now I don't think any of the airlines are doing that still. But I still will really only like to fly Delta now because I just feel like I liked the way that they handled things better than some of the other airlines.

DB: (44.36)

Yeah, I completely agree with you. I'm kind of on board that I really will only fly Delta.

SB (44.41):

Yep

DB: (44.45)

Other than that, no real reason, but.

DB: (44.51)

Yeah, I think that really answers most of the questions I want to ask.

SB: (44.53)

Cool.

DB: (44.55)

So I really appreciate you taking this time to yeah of course with this and answer questions, I really found it fascinating and interesting.

SB: (45.11)

Happy to help.

DB: (45.14)

Right. So first of all, I'm gonna end recording

DB: (45.17)

Thanks Sarah.