

Transcript of Interview with Jonathan Sinkwon Kim by Paul Kim

Interviewer: Paul Kim

Interviewee: Jonathan Sinkwon Kim

Date: 04/10/2020

Location (Interviewee):

Location (Interviewer):

Abstract: It appears that Appa (Dad) owns a nail salon because he's standing in front of rows of little nail polish bottles as they have in those salons. His son, Sinkwon "Johnathan" Kim asked him about wearing a mask and gloves in public, how he felt about that, and people's reactions to his protection gear. Appa said that at first people treated him differently. They wouldn't come near him and were curt with him. Before that, they were friendly and smiley and anxious to help him when he went to stores. Of course, at the time of the interview, personal protection was routine and almost everyone was wearing it. Appa wishes that the government had acted more quickly to the virus crisis and feels many people's lives would've been saved had that happened.

Paul Kim 0:00

Dad, you told me last time when you go to places like Walmart or the supermarket, you wear a mask and gloves for protection against the virus. I'm curious about your experience with people's experience with people's reactions to this decision. Can you explain more?

Jonathan Sinkwon Kim 0:19

When the pandemic occurred here, many people were already infected in South Korea. Because of this I had information: it's protect me, protect other people. So I wore a mask and some gloves wherever there was a lot of people, like a market, Walmart, buying supplies. At first when I wore a mask and gloves to buy supplies at the market everyone is like staring at me. When you ask an employee for something before they would be all bright and smiley and help you carry your things. But recently, when I ask where something is, people...their facial expressions are so serious. They don't come anywhere near me. From a noticeable distance they [pointing] say "go here" "go there" in a very curt manner. Before they would say "Follow me!" and serve as a guide. Also the customers who come to buy supplies when I wear a mask and gloves, they deliberately avoid me. So I felt that if you wear a mask and gloves, people will think, "This person has the Coronavirus." That's the feeling I got for me. In order to protect myself and to protect others, I wore a mask and gloves. But people, because I am Asian—well I don't know if that's the reason—but I was very uncomfortable. My feelings, also, this Coronavirus is very serious, but no one is wearing a mask or gloves. So I thought, we are not taking it seriously enough.

Paul Kim 2:43

So that was your experience when the Coronavirus first appeared, but how do people behave in those places now?

Jonathan Sinkwon Kim 2:56

Two days ago, I went to Walmart and Big Y supermarket. Two weeks ago, I was the only one, just only me wearing mask and gloves. Two, three weeks later, now almost 70% of people wear masks or some kind of protection. 30% wear gloves. When I saw that I thought a now people are thinking more seriously about this. However, it is a little regretful that the government, when the pandemic first occurred, there should have been a serious announcement or campaign. If people wore masks and gloves since the beginning three weeks ago, there would be less people infected and less deaths. That is what I think. But it is regretful how late we are.

Paul Kim 4:31

So since others are now wearing masks and gloves, and the government is taking this more seriously, what do you think the future will look like? Will this be over soon? Have you thought about when you will be able to reopen?

Jonathan Sinkwon Kim 4:50

I think the government is trying to “reopen” starting May 1st. We are starting to consider how safe it is when we are out and about. But when I watch the news, the number of infections and deaths keep going up. When I see this, what I want is for everything to return back to the way it was. But with all the negative news, I’m worried that we will have to deal with this at least until July. Right now, the government is working hard, but they need to be a little stronger in order to find a solution soon. In my eyes, I just don’t think they have been strong enough.

Paul Kim 6:26

With that, I think the interview is now over.

Jonathan Sinkwon Kim 6:30

Oh, okay.

Paul Kim 6:33

Thank you for the talk.

Jonathan Sinkwon Kim 6:36

You’re welcome.

Paul Kim 6:39

Bye.

Jonathan Sinkwon Kim 6:39

Bye-bye.