Daniel Cogley Oral History, 2020/04/01

**Narrator:** **Austin Hall**

**Interviewer:** **Daniel Cogley**

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**Abstract:**

Daniel Cogley discusses his experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. Daniel is a salesman for a sanitization company (Enviro-Master Services) that provides products and services to primarily restaurants and bars. Daniel was furloughed during the crisis and discusses his experiences with money, food, the response of government officials to the pandemic and his hopes that people will take the disease more seriously.

**Austin Hall**

Hello, Hey, how you doing? Hi Mr. Cogley. How are you doing?

**Daniel Cogley**

I'm well, thank you for asking.

**Austin Hall**

So, I just wanted to reiterate this. We're going to be going over and doing a public history interview specifically about the Coronavirus how it's affecting your life and the people around you. It is March 1 or March, April 1, 2020. So, as long as you are good to go, I am set up to record and I can just start asking the question if that's okay with you,

**Daniel Cogley**

good by me.

**Austin Hall**

All right. So, the first question that I have for you is what do you know about the Coronavirus? This can be, how it spreads, if it's mutated, how many people it's affected, particularly in the United States. So, what all do you know about it?

**Daniel Cogley**

Well, I know that a week ago, less than a week ago, we reached a milestone of 100 people dying. And as of today, we're at 1000 people so it only took, I think it only took three days to go from 100 to 1000 people who have passed away. Very sad situation-- could be Coronavirus-- again, I might know a little bit more than, than most folks about these types of viruses, because the field I work in. I work for a company by the name of Enviro-Master Services, we do restroom hygiene; we sanitize, germicide, disinfect restrooms. And I'm a salesman for that. I don't do the actual work, but I know exactly what takes place in there, so that I can explain it to people. And well, the restroom is one of the places where most of the germs hang out. But this, this germ is quite different. It can be passed on by touch, by sneezing; by you touching something somebody touched that-- you know, just transfers right over like that, especially from, from stainless steel. It has its longest life there. I think it's like two or three days. And I think it's a few hours on cardboard. So, it's, it's quite a strong virus and it really harms a lot of people. The-- to start out were a little bit in behind the eight ball in my opinion, because well, we didn't have all of the information at the very beginning to stop it. The people at the top of it didn't move fast enough because they really didn't believe it was anything that was going to be harmful to us. They thought it would go away, it would dissipate the day or two. Oh, here we are, four or five weeks into it since we were actually notified about it. It's been-- our government's been notified by since around the January 2, but they did nothing to start to move forward with getting any of the items that we need to combat this stuff. But I know that it makes people very ill, very quickly and 14 days is about the turnaround. From what I see on TV, you've either passed away or you're, you're over it for that stream of it. So, it's a very telling type of disease. It kills very rapidly and indiscriminately. Doesn't matter where you're at all across the United States. It just so happens it started in the hub of New York and from there, Detroit, Florida, Pennsylvania, and just the list goes on and on and on and on of the places. Washington, the state of Washington, their governor did fantastic with it. They were, were one of the places it was a quick epicenter, they thought. And they quelled it by putting people-- sequestering them very quickly and stopping it from spreading. They were very quick at it, very good. Same thing with California, they're having a great deal of success even though they've had a lot of deaths [\_\_\_?] it's like the second or third largest state in our country. So, the bound to have more deaths another place. Just like like New York leading the way, that's a hub. They're really close together there and it spreads like wildfire.

**Austin Hall**

It definitely, definitely does. So, you had mentioned that there-- what you have been hearing about it is that there is some government in action. That, this was viewed as a hoax, right? [that's right]In, in light of all of that, how have you been preparing? and how have you seen other people reacting to this? Either in the community, or even just on television?

**Daniel Cogley**

Well, I started preparing over a month ago. Well, well over-- Yeah, a little over a month, maybe a month and a half ago. I started stocking in food and stuff like that, so that I wasn't going to be in a position where I had to worry about getting that most valuable commodity toilet paper. I've got plenty of that. I got food-- I bought food for a month. t's gonna-- probably I'm gonna fall short of about two weeks and have to go back out because I've only bought enough for a month. That's how long they said we would be down and now it looks more like a month and a half before things are gonna start happening. But I've got, I've got enough food for a couple more weeks. I eat pretty good, I have breakfast, I have lunch, I have dinner. Every once in a while, I treat myself. Today went out for wings. There was nobody at the place when I went in. It's a small club that I tried to support because they have wings on Friday or on Wednesday, so I eat their wings and take care of giving them a little bit of money, but pretty good food. What was the other part of the question about how other people were reacting? Is that what you were asking?

**Austin Hall**

Yeah, what have you seen in the media with how other people are reacting, trying to fight this? And have you done anything special: like wearing gloves or? [Oh, Yeah] Okay.

**Daniel Cogley**

When I go out, I-- I put the big-- I have gloves in my car and stuff like that. I put the gloves on whenever I go out, anything I touch. Once I go into a place and come back out, I take the gloves off. I'm in-- right after I get out of the store and I throw them away or I take them with me if there's no place to deposit them. And I put clean gloves on when I get in my car-- I have a product from work that I kind of get lucky with it kills the corona viruses. It only lasts about three days has a three-day residual. When I go around and I spray my, my house when somebody happens to pop in that I don't really know, and I know they touch stuff like I go around and spray it. I spray my car after I get done using it. I do things like that. I have my mask on-- I've had my mask on because well I've been-- I don't breathe very well and stuff like that and there's been a lot of colds and flus. So, I had my mask on for that purpose where I was going and --I kind of take care of everything. I when I take my gloves off I, I know the proper way you take one glove off, you hold it in your fist, you take the other one off and it stays inside. You tie the glove off and throw it away so nobody else can get contaminated with the gloves that you're using because all the contaminated stuff is on the inside. If it may be contaminated. I do little things like that. But I'm, I'm prepared. I'm coming down to about two weeks to be able-- going to have to go, go out and do some shopping, which is not a fun time, but it's what I have to do, I think. But mostly stuck in the house, doing housework, doing things around the house to keep busy, making ensure that everything stays safe. Some of the things I noticed around me I've got, I've got people that live across the street from me that almost on a nightly basis, they have twenty, thirty people over there having a party drinking beer and enjoying themselves. Which is fine by me. It's just that I worry about other people getting sick also. Because that's how gets—you’re not supposed to have a lot of people around you. There's just not a, not a good way to do it. But that's-- those are some of the things that I see going on around me as we go.

**Austin Hall**

Well, that's certainly interesting, particularly with the different reactions of different governors from all 50 states. Since you actually are living in Pennsylvania right now, and I'm doing this interview from Ohio, I know that at least some of the things that Ohio is doing-- what was Pennsylvania's reaction to the Corona virus and how did that affect your preparation? How is that affected you in the past couple weeks?

**Daniel Cogley**

Well, our governor, he did a-- he didn't do a complete shutdown right away. He only, he only requested that you, you stay at home. We're on mandatory shutdown now but at the beginning it was do this you know, you got to do a shut down. That's about when I got laid off is whenever they said, "look, we're shutting all"--my mainstays bars and restaurants for work and they shut all those down. And when they shut them down-- well that means I'm out of work because I really have no place to go to sell my wares. There's other places that use it, but they're not as plentiful as bars and restaurants and stuff like that. So, it's, it's a lot easier whenever you have those and they're open. So that's probably going to affect me far into the future on what we do and how we do it, even if I do get called back. I believe I will, but it's-- you never know until it happens. But the things that that--I lost my train of thought I apologize.

**Austin Hall**

That's okay. I was just wondering, the reaction for I believe it's Governor Wolf. With-- he said that the lockdown has now happened. How long has that been going on?

**Daniel Cogley**

That, that's-- it's only been about a week, but a little less than a week but it's kind of like they went into a lockdown instead of the-- instead of asking to stay at home, they're telling you to stay at home. They want everybody to stay right there and not, not go out, not do anything. And you're only allowed to go out for necessities like food and stuff like that. You can go to-- the restaurants are on very short life. I think they like-- most of the restaurants are opening up at 11 and they're closing at six. So, if you aren't J"ohnny on the spot," you might not get any food if you eat out. Me, I've, i've secured enough food that I eat, I eat in and-- so, the-- our governor is doing all the things necessary trying to get the stockpile, specifically of ventilators and stuff like that. Our federal government who usually takes charge like they did at 911 and-- they would do everything and then distribute it to the states, so that they were doing bulk buys, and no one would outbid the United States for things, but they've-- it's kind of a cluster. All the states are trying to buy the exact same thing and all they're doing is running up the price. Whereas if the federal government stepped in and said, I'm going to buy everything, they couldn't run up the price because federal government would be buying for all 50 states. And there's nobody, I don't believe anybody in the world could compete with that. And that would actually bring the price down. But these folks think it's a good thing to have them emptying the coffers of the states by continuously raising the prices of stuff we need, like gas, or excuse me, not gas masks, but the, the 94 masks that they have a number for the masks it said 94 and it's the type they need for, for nurses and doctors when they're treating these patients. And they didn't have nearly enough. They're not producing any of them in the United States where-- we're at the hands of China. These ventilators-- a week ago they finally made some of the car manufacturers flip over and start making these ventilators that we need by the hundreds of thousands. And they just-- we don't have them. And I read today there's a-- the lady's name is Kay Ivey, Alabama governor who made the statement that "people with handicap or handicap will not get ventilators." So, she's already saying certain people will have to die because of any afflictions that they have. And not being political, but the republicans are the ones that they don't like abortion because it's killing people. I don't know-- I'm pretty sure this is gonna do the same thing. If they don't allow somebody that's handicapped to have a ventilator and they can't breathe, I'm pretty sure they're going to die. And that sounds like stuff of World War II Nazis used to do to people. Not just handicapped people, but all people. And that's what they're doing in Alabama. So, pretty unkind thing. But we don't have enough ventilators. We don't have enough gloves. We don't have enough of what they call PPE, which is personal protection equipment: face masks and stuff like that-- the suits that they put on that the viruses won't be able to penetrate, so that these people can continue-- the people on the front lines, the doctors and the nurses and stuff like that will be able to continue to perform their duties and saving lives and, and the things that they do. Because these people are the true heroes in this, this war against this. I seen someplace the other day that 61 doctors have already passed because of the coronavirus. I mean these folks are working through getting this stuff all because they don't have the proper equipment to protect themselves and those around them who are helping them; using the same mask for four or five days, staying in the same protective garments for three or four days-- it's just unbelievable. And then our president said they must be selling it out the back door. They're only supposed to use these things once per patient and then move on and put other ones on. They're no longer ready, because you can contaminate somebody who doesn't have Corona virus if you happen to walk up on them, because they create-- whenever somebody comes into the hospital, as they're saying on the television, some people-- these people are assumed to have Corona vi, Corona virus, unless proven otherwise. So, you could go in with a heart attack and they're still gonna think you have Coronavirus, first foremost and above everything and they're going to dress that way because they can't afford to take the chance that you have it. Even though you are having a heart attack; it could have caused the heart attack. But these are some of the things that they're trying to work on to, to get-- and I see that Strategic National Stockpile is nearly depleted. How can this happen? How can this happen? It's

**Austin Hall**

it's definitely an issue that everyone is facing at this point. One of the other issues that you had brought up actually was a shortage on toilet paper shortage on food. So one of the things that I am curious about is, since you were able to get roughly a month supply of food, what did you make?

**Daniel Cogley**

Oh, I got one of my favorite foods. I I only eat it once a year because of the amount of salt that's in it, but I love sauerkraut and Kiolbassa. I mean, I just, I just love it! And when I make it, I go to Sam's Club and they got these one-pound jars of-- I think, I think it's five pounds. Right, this huge jar of sauerkraut and I cook that up and-- well first I prep it I get as much salt out as I can. I, I rinse it and-- I rinse it three times and on the last time I, I kind of press it pretty hard--well next the last time, I press a pretty hard trying to get everything out but i i reinvigorate it again with the water and try and rinse more of it out. And I get a great deal of salt out. And I also soak the Kielbasa. I soak it so long that the casing actually comes off really easy. And that's another thing I like I get rid of the casing. It's just the meat that's in there. Because I'm hypoglycemic, I don't eat bread. Got to be careful about eating sugar. So, I don't eat bread, but I make this kielbasa and Kielbasa and sauerkraut, and I eat it-- usually it takes me about a week to eat all the Kielbasa and sauerkraut. It is-- when I get it all done, one of my things that I do-- I like spicy food and I get the cayenne pepper, jalapeno-- there's this other red sauce that I put on there, it has a Mexican on it. It's quite, it's quite a bit of heat in it. And I mix this stuff up and I usually end up eating that for about a week. And I have, I have enough for for lunch tomorrow and I'll have eaten all tha--t and by the way, I also put-- I get two-pound packages of Kielbasa. I buy five of those. So I ate-- in about five days I ate ten pounds of Kielbasa and a big jar of sauerkraut. I'm going to be starting in on some tuna noodle casserole. Probably starting tomorrow, I'll start make some of that. But I won't, I won't eat that every day. I'll eat that just once or twice and that's all I'll make that for a while because I just-- I like it but it isn't, it isn't like my sauerkraut and Kielbasa I, I kind of go overboard with that because I don't get it very much. Plus, it's good for you. Now the Kielbasa kind of cleans everything out and makes you squeaky.

**Austin Hall**

Oh, well thank you for that. I was always wondering like what people are deciding to cook particularly during a pandemic.

**Daniel Cogley**

I had. I also had like-- I have soup here. I've got chicken noodle soup, and I've got some clam chowder that I had for lunch and I-- there's a pizza place up around the corner. I eat a little bit of that every once in a while. Today, I had wings from, from a place down the roadside. So, I kind of get around a little bitty in different things-- I just don't pile up on it, but trust me when I eat sauerkraut and Kielbasa, I can eat that stuff until it comes out my ears.

**Austin Hall**

Oh, well. Thank you again. Um, one of the other questions that I have for you is a two-part question. So, the first part of it is, how do you think this pandemic will change society? And the second part of it is what will stay the same in the future?

**Daniel Cogley**

Well, it's already changed society. It's-- in our generation, our lifetime, I think the last time we were in a position to where we had to stay in our homes was The Spanish flu pandemic, I think it was 1815 or something like that-- 1915 somewhere around in there. But anyways, staying at home and not doing anything is kind of difficult to start to climb the walls and-- really, talking on the phone is nice with people, but I'm the kind of person I like to get a hug and give kisses sometimes because well, gotta show your love for your friends and the people you love. And I like talking to people, I'm a outgoing kind of person. I see somebody, stranger or not, I always like to say hello to them, ask them how their days go and stuff like that. Most of the time they, they give you a [uh huh] keep on moving or sometimes people actually tell you they're having a nice day or it's pretty tough day or whatever, they at least have something to say. And those are the kind of things that I, that I like about these types of things, it's the way it was back whenever-- in 911 I was around for that one there, and we were attacked by an outside entity. And well, it kind of brought everybody together, fighting for one common cause and this is kind of like doing the same thing. Because, this virus, and any virus doesn't know anything about borders or anything like that. It'll, it'll take you out. And our federal government didn't react real well to it. Usually-- they, they wanted to change and not become reactionary, I don't know. That's about the only thing I can think of. But they should have been out in front of this-- of buying stuff whenever they knew it was going to happen. [\_\_\_?] work and they got caught with their shorts down and it's just-- they made it 10 times worse than it should. I said here the other day, three or four days ago, we reached 100 people had passed away. A milestone. Today we reached 1000 people; three days later, we're at 1000 people dead, it's incredible. Three days from now, that means there'll be 2000 people dead or 3000 it's just-- maybe even 10,000. Just amazing! It's scary and--it's just not the way it's supposed to be. It's-- they're notreacting properly. I hope those things change. Things that are staying the same? Well, I live in a small community, I'm pretty sure we’ll stick together and do the things that we need to do and make sure as many people that are near and dear to us, come out of this this healthy. I don't know about the wealthy and wise because-- as I've seen on TV, they talked about back in the depression, the last time we were in a depression, the 30s. The stock market crashed, and they said it was like 10 to 12% of the country was out of work. Found out here today, unemployment puts it at approximately 23% unemployment. And it's only going to go up because more people every, every week are now getting laid off. It's just a trickle-down effect. People aren't buying stuff, which they're not because they can't go out. They can only go buy food. If you're only buying food and, and essentials, you're not keeping a whole lot of people in work; you're not buying gas, you're not or you're still buy a little bit of gas, but you're not, you're not going to the little convenience stores. You're not going to the bars or restaurants or anyplace else, in fact, and that kind of like is going to change a lot of things because, well, a lot of these places aren't going to be able to come back. And For some places, like in small towns like I live in, it could really be devastating to our business district. As small as it is, it could be devastating and take a lot of people out because-- just like any business, especially a small business, they don't make that enormous amount of money that the larger corporations do. They still have the same bills and everything else is-- everybody does. But they carry more of a burden. So, I just hope that nothing changes there, and all of our businesses come back. But if it doesn't, that would be particularly different, difficult for, for our city because well, it was bad enough before this, and it'll even be worse because of this. Those are some of the things that I see happening and some of the things staying the same.

**Austin Hall**

So one of the things I also want To ask you just to follow up with that is, what should Americans in particular take away from this situation that we are all in?

**Daniel Cogley**

Hopefully some of the things they'll take away is personal hygiene, make their personal hygiene better. Pay attention when somebody says something like this is coming your way; actually, go ahead and start preparing for it before it needs to happen. Take care of your loved ones, keep them close. And even people you don't care that much for, you got to care a little bit about them. But those things there I hope they get better at or we get better at. I should include everybody in that, because when ,ou have somebody close to you pass away. it's a very difficult thing-- My parents have passed away here, shortly-- so a while back ago and it's, it's a very difficult thing, very tough to go through. They've been there throughout your full life and then all of a sudden, they're gone. It's a very difficult thing. And there's-- right now there's 1000 people who their families are going through that exact same issue. They lost somebody who they counted on, somebody named loved or perhaps the breadwinner. And what are you gonna do then, when the person who's the head of your family is no longer there? Because they passed away? What do you do? A lot of people in America, I didn't realize they just-- they're paycheck to paycheck kind of people. And when they don't get that paycheck, things get very difficult. Some of the things that I learned a long time ago: I, I moved away from home. I don't know I was in my early 20s. And well for a while I can tell you there wasn't a lot of food coming my way and things like that there's a lot of things that you have to do whenever you don't have money coming in and you have to learn to adapt to your situation and sometimes there isn't a lot of food around. And it gets scary and gets you in shape rather quickly because you don't eat a whole lot of food and you lose a lot of weight and for all the wrong reasons. But when you make it through and you come out on the other end, it makes you a better person, you know, whatever things are going to get tough, you know, you're gonna make it through because you're battle tested. You're ready for what's taking place and you're gonna, you're gonna make it through. But this stuff here, this can kill you. It's very difficult. It’s scary because of that, but you just got to keep moving forward. With the grace of God and the things you do properly-- and don't make any mistakes because they won't forgive you. The stuff stays on, on metal for two, three days. It's on-- people touch, touch boxes and stuff like that it's there for a few hours. That's scary stuff, because in today's society we use plastic to, to put our food in, that comes wrapped up-- all the stuff they touch, put it in there, like taking your own life eating out. Taking your own life and your and other other people's hand so to speak. But those are changes, scary changes. Those are some of the things I've gone through.

**Austin Hall**

I want to touch on something you actually just said, because this has been something that's been In the media, and it sounds like you've been following this pretty closely. So, there have been reports of people just simply ignoring the stay at home notices. Different cities are not necessarily following the guidelines that have come out. What is your reaction to that?

**Daniel Cogley**

Well, this lesson isn't learned and given back to you to keep moving forward. We have mentioned some places-- Florida just went on lockdown, but they're a month into this and they just went into lockdown. Had Spring Break down there. Mardi Gras, New Orleans, that's one of the places where they had Mardi Gras. And it's now an epicenter because of-- it's a small-- it's a third or fourth class, major city. But they are now one of the places that has a great deal of this there. There are people who are extremely sick in that area, and there's a lot of them. All because they had Mardi Gras and they had people come in, they didn't heed the warnings. I have people across the street from where I live, they've been partying almost every night, drinking beer having a good time. And well, I can understand that. But I also, I don't know, getting together with my friends and having a beer isn't worth dying over, in my opinion. But those folks in Florida, they had spring break down there and it's just insane. How many people are going to get sick down or just because of that there's a lot of elderly that lives there. And when our elderly get this, they have no chance. They're just dead. And it's not a, it's not a nice thing. So, I don't like seeing people not adhering to when they say "don't do this." I know it's very difficult to have somebody tell you not to do something, especially in a free society as we are. But sometimes you just got to listen and do what they tell you, because the scientists know best. And those are the things that I see there. Did I cover your point?

**Austin Hall**

Yes, you did. Absolutely. You've touched on this a little bit-- basically, throughout the entire interview. But it is one of the questions and if you want to touch on it a little more, that would be great. The last question that I think I have for you is, what other crises have you experienced and how did they affect you?

**Daniel Cogley**

Well, 911 was very sobering. It-- in a moment it brought everybody in America together in one common cause, as if we could have decisively found the group that did it? I think we would have annihilated them as a people. But I remember on that day-- I remember exactly where I was what I was doing and everything when the first plane crashed, and I happen to be in Bellevue, which is a neighborhood near here. And I watched it in a municipality, the Raj, on a black and white TV, watched the planes run into the towers. And it was very sobering kind of thing and very scary because one of the planes happened to wreck or end up crashing-- the heroes on that plane didn't let them get to their main objective. They got up and they made moves to make that plane crash before it crashed into what they wanted to. It ended up in Shanksville. There's a memorial there for those folks right now. But it was one of the planes that was over our area whenever it did crash. And those are very sobering moments for that and it was something that brought together-- and also I remember something it just popped into my head. The-- they had on TV today-- they had a line of-- in our local area, right here, it was on national news, which we don't get on national news, because we don't do anything national here, we try to keep it low key. Anyways, there was almost a two or three-mile long line of cars. It was a food pantry that opened up and they were fixing food, giving food-- canned goods and stuff like that to people. This line was two or three miles long. I'm just handing out handing out food to people. If that isn't moving, nothing is. I mean that's, that's Americans being Americans and doing everything they can to to make life easier on everybody else. And, well, whenever I was younger in Florida, those are some personal trials and tribulations that I went through, not having enough food. God, bless! I had friends down there, I never had to sleep out underneath the stars because I did-- that I didn't want to. I did go camping and sleep out underneath the stars. But I never was in a position where I had to sleep outside because I had friends there that-- we took care of each other. And-- but there was more than one or two days that I went without food and it's okay. Life, Life is good. They're experiences that make you stronger. What, what don't kill you makes you stronger. And that's the same thing that holds what's true with this Coronavirus. If it happens again in our lifetime, I'm pretty sure that we won't, as a people-- maybe our government might? I hope not, but maybe, maybe they might learn a lesson too. But I know the people learned the lesson, because the last time we had one of these was over 100 years ago. So, you know, you kind of lose all the things you should do when it's 100 years because there's nobody-- there's very few people that are still around that would remember the Spanish flu. I just know by folks on TV talking about it. But those are some of the things I've, I've experienced.

**Austin Hall**

Well, thank you for everything and thank you for letting me interview you. I really appreciate your perspective on this. Like-- we can both agree on this is something that is definitely unprecedented in my lifetime. And I appreciate you taking the time to go through this with me, and that you're willing to add your voice to our history efforts here.

**Daniel Cogley**

Well, thank you for asking me. I appreciate that.

**Austin Hall**

All right. Well, you have a great rest of your day, and I hope you enjoyed the wings.

**Daniel Cogley**

I did. They were quite good. Thank you.

**Austin Hall**

All right. Well, you take care and stay safe.

**Daniel Cogley**

Yes, sir. By, now.

**Austin Hall**

Right, bye-bye