

Today is one of the days where it's just so hard to be a commuter in the Philippines. Yes, a Filipino commuter. In a pandemic.

After 2 and half months of quarantine, the government finally decided to loosen up travel restrictions by downgrading from ECQ to GCQ. They say it's not at all an indicator that the COVID-19 is already inexistent and we have flattened the curve, it's just the country's way of helping the economy.

I understand this, really, but I am not convinced of how the government is handling this. They say people can now go back to work but they have banned mass and public transportation. So, how am I gonna reach my workplace? Take me, for example. I don't have a motorcycle and even if you tell me I could just get a bicycle, I am scared of getting sandwiched by hasty drivers in the highways and main thoroughfares. If you are somebody from Cebu City, you'll know when I say some drivers don't understand the meaning of red and green lights, they don't respect lanes, for so long as they could reach their destination.

I am highly dependent on public transportation. It's the most cost-efficient way of going and moving around. I also realized that the countries I really look up to when it comes to efficiency are those whose mass transportations are dependable – Singapore, Taiwan, Hong Kong. So well-organized that people of all walks of life can be found inside the same tube.

Today was supposed to be the first day that I will be back to work. I woke up really early to try my luck, to no avail. No PUVs, PUJs, modern buses, taxis, TNVS, nor any government-operated vehicles were in sight. I informed my boss that I can't make it to the office today because of the situation and hoped for his consideration and understanding. After telling me if I have thought of biking and responding to him how I feel about biking, he finally said that I could just work from home until transportation is available. I thank God for his empathy, but this couldn't be for long, as my other boss would certainly require me to report as soon as possible. Which I also understand.

Within the 2 months that the whole country was put to a halt, I was really expecting that our officials have contemplated and devised a plan on how to go about the transportation scheme in the "New Normal". With everything that has transpired today, I could only hope and pray that things will get better.

This is one of those days that I felt I am just a mere employee who must find a way to go to work if I want to keep my job.

I know there are others who are in worse conditions than me and I can only empathize on what they are suffering from.

When they turned the brakes off, I hope they were thinking of people like me who are left with nothing on the road.