

Reflection on Life During The COVID-19 Pandemic

Life during the rise and constant fluctuation of COVID-19 was both unpredictable and frightening. At the start of the pandemic, cases of the virus were prevalent, but I did not expect it to affect my way of life in the dramatic fashion that it did. Since I was only a high school student at the time, it left me feeling powerless amidst the numerous government and public health suggestions on how to not contract the sickness. The memories I have from this time are ones that contain emotions of worry, panic, and insecurity. Not knowing if relatives would remain healthy became a primary concern. This is because the pandemic initiated a state of intense self-isolation for me and the rest of society. In the abruptness of the mandatory periods of lockdown I turned to my religious values and beliefs which I felt could support me when facing the unknown outcome of the pandemic. At home, all I could do was finish classes online and remain inside with my dad until my mom finished work at the hospital. Although things were unsteady my dad and I began to bond more closely because most of the day we had to stay home for both work and school. This created a deeper father-son relationship which helped me understand my dad's emotional response to distress. In his youth, it was common for men to suppress their emotions because it was a component of their masculine identity. However, the heightened level of vulnerability formed by COVID-19 allowed for conversations between my dad and me about how we were handling tasks while dealing with the stress of navigating life during a global health crisis. At the height of COVID-19 cases in July of 2020, I had developed a routine of reciting prayers at the end of each day for the well-being of my family, close friends, and myself. This began a personal ritual that I built on and continue to this day. With the large number of lives that were lost because of COVID-19, I gained immense gratitude for the health of my family and myself because it is the foundation for the quality of life we have.