

This Fourth of July was a very unique one for all of us here in America. This day truly emphasizes our independence as a country, and it is a very important day for all of us living in the U.S. This year, however, was different. Maybe this is just my perspective, but with all the racial oppression, riots, a pandemic, rules/regulations, and much more being slammed down our throats by the media we are all consumed by, there is no doubt that this day to celebrate our unique separation from Europe didn't have much of a fulfilling experience like in the past. With that said, my family and I tried to make the best of it by coming together amidst the chaos to block out all of the mayhem and enjoy each other's company, and to say the least, I think we had a great time despite it all.

As the night came to a close, one of my cousins disclosed that she wasn't feeling to great, but she has a lot of food allergies, so we all thought maybe she had gluten/dairy without knowing considering there was plenty of options for accidental consumption at our gathering. Unfortunately, sleeping it off wasn't an antidote, and we soon found her getting tested for COVID-19 at our local emergency care. It didn't take long for us to discover that she had in fact tested positive for COVID-19. This is especially a big deal considering that as of July my small town here in Oregon had barely even 100 cases of a population of almost 40,000, so it felt surreal hitting so close to home. In a panic, all of my family that was there at the house the night before got tested, and we came to find that both her mom and sister tested positive as well. This was a big scare considering we were all together in very close contact without masks just the night before. Fortunately, the other 11 of us that were there tested negative, but that has no power over giving you a get out of quarantine free card. All of us soon found ourselves out of work at the snap of a finger for at least the next two weeks; even though, we tested negative and showed no symptoms because we still had contact.

Now, we all found these two weeks to follow to be very interesting in our own ways. Some of us in the family had jobs that were still paying us, and some didn't. Fortunately, I was still getting paid, but money is half the battle. Two weeks, in theory, off from work sounds amazing to anyone, but that same time just in your house with no contact with anyone else is something else. I know I am not the only one in the world to have experienced this of course, and I know for many in the nation and even the world have had it a lot worse than my family and I did; however, I am just explaining the experience, so don't take it as I am undermining other peoples' very real stories. Long story short, this pandemic is nothing to joke around about. Fortunately, my family came out of this thing healthy, and they didn't get into any extreme symptoms, but that isn't the same for everybody. With that said, being safe, wearing a mask, avoiding large gatherings, and things of the like are super important to keep in mind as we navigate these traverse waters that Coronavirus has set before us. I have seen it firsthand, in a place no one ever thought would come in contact with the virus, and it can be very scary and provide a lot of uncertainty. Just be careful my friends and keep your head up when things get tough because time will pass, and things do get better!