

Ethan - Age 16

March 23, 2020

### COVID-19 Reflection

From my personal experience, the COVID-19 virus kind of came to me as a shock. In the beginning, I heard little news about it and concluded that it was just a Chinese virus far from home that couldn't affect me. As time progressed I heard it was spreading to countries in Europe. I still remained fearless as I figured that Europe is close to China and there was no way it was going to enter the United States. When the first couple of cases started to come apparent in America I made more excuses for myself not to worry.

Once it came to California I began to understand that it was a big deal, yet still didn't worry about anyone I knew or myself getting infected. My only worries were about whether people would freak out and what affect the hysteria would have on people. Would my school close? Will I be able to go out with my friends? Can I still go to the gym? Are restaurants going to close? All these worries were going through my head and none of them had anything to do with the health of myself and the individuals I cared about.

With the news of cases at AIPAC, I realized how close to me COVID-19 has come. Students in my school came back with some of the virus's symptoms. I spoke with one particular student who went to AIPAC and came back with symptoms yet wasn't able to be tested. He was fully recovered which reinforced my thoughts about how it isn't deadly. Seeing it come so close to my community I began to look into it and see what my parents knew about it. Only then did I

understand the risk it posed to the elderly and immunocompromised. I began to worry about COVID-19 not for myself, but for my grandparents and others that are vulnerable. I stopped going to the gym and started working out at home instead. Whenever my friends came over I made sure they washed their hands before touching anything. I started to be more aware of touching my face and focused on not doing it. I began to wash my hands right when I got home and every time before I ate.

Then my relative (not immediate) got sick. I was optimistic that it wasn't COVID-19 but as his symptoms got worse my hope weakened. He went to get tested and just today the results came back. He tested positive. In contrast to my initial thoughts on the virus, I began to feel it threatening me. If it could reach someone living a mile away from me, what prevented it from reaching me or any of my loved ones? I began to understand the severity of COVID-19 and started agreeing with the "Safer at Home" order and those advising people to observe social distancing.

I have started to adapt to living stuck at home. I started going for walks around my neighborhood just to get out of the house. I re-created a gym routine for myself that I could do while confined to my house. I practiced driving, as during these times the streets are nearly empty. To supplement the social life I am missing I text and call friends as opposed to meeting them in person.

In terms of school, the main difference for me is not being able to see people and socialize. Online classes don't really affect my learning and I feel my school is handling it well. My only complaint is the amount of work that we are getting. Some of my teachers are assigning more homework than we used to get before we started online classes.

I also am learning a lot from a financial standpoint about COVID-19. Prior to the virus, the economy was very strong and thriving free of a recession for over a decade. At that time I read about a wall street analyst who predicted that there was going to be an unexpected global disaster (Black Swan) that caused the market to crash. I thought it was interesting and I am now amazed to see it happening in real life. COVID-19 acted as a Black Swan and has negatively impacted the market tremendously. I was too young to properly experience and understand the market crash of 2008. I don't see it unlikely that the COVID-19 outbreak will cause a recession. I certainly don't hope it does, but if there is a recession, it would be interesting to learn about it while experiencing it first hand.