

Navigating a quarantine life of an ordinary

Life has been hard without social interaction due to the outbreak of COVID-19, as most of the state governments announced a lock down. Everyone has their own way of navigating through this dreadful situation of self-quarantine. Some may have lost their jobs. Others may have close relatives who have been infected. And yet more are saving lives in local hospitals. During this difficult time, everyone is together... yet at the same time, very apart.

After a few days, several might have wondered, “How is everyone else doing?” Dawid Kluszczynski, an ordinary 20-year-old college student who is currently back home with his family in New Jersey, shares his story of family members going through all of the situations described above.

This interview has been edited for brevity and clarity.

Bora: What were you up to just before this call?

Dawid: I was watching Netflix.

Bora: Are you in self-quarantine right now?

Dawid: Less of a self-quarantine, although I had symptoms recently. I have been asymptomatic for three days now, so I am safe allegedly.

Bora: How is that going so far for you?

Dawid: In terms of getting better, yeah, I feel one hundred percent better. It was rough! My everything ached. I was feeling nauseous and I really didn't have appetite at all for an entire week. Quarantine lost me five pounds! All is well!

Bora: Have you gotten tested then?

Dawid: I have not, mostly because there are not many tests available right now. I am a first responder so if I really felt I needed to be tested, I could without a doubt get tested. However, the resources could instead be better used for other people who are worse than myself and do need possible treatment.

Bora: What does your quarantine life routine look like?

Dawid: The major differences are that I am back in New Jersey, which is a whole new set of circumstances. I currently work for Caterpillar and everything is remote. I wake up at 9 am, take a shower, get to work, and I have class that I no longer attend. Then I finish work and I consider eating food once in a while but who knows when that happens. At night I watch Netflix and I

am running out of series to watch so we are coming to a problem. Quarantine needs to end now.

Bora: Has anyone in your family lost their job because of COVID-19?

Dawid: My mom is a nurse at a hospital in an ICU, so she is one hundred percent an essential worker. But my dad is a manager at a company, so he decided to shut his company of 200 plus employees down because he just couldn't bear the thought of someone coming into work and then getting others sick. Because they are doing a lot of international business, who know what and who is coming into contact with whom. It was just for the best. My sister had to take some time off from her work because her boyfriend, even though he tested negative, definitely had it and she also had it, so she wasn't allowed to return to work until she got cleared by a doctor. She just started working again yesterday.

Bora: You mentioned that your mother is working at an ICU, so it's clear that she is more exposed to danger of COVID-19. How is she handling this in order to keep her family safe?

Dawid: At work, they have implemented a whole bunch of new things. One, everyone now changes into scrubs at the hospital before entering. Before they came in with the own scrubs and left with the same pair of scrubs. So, the clothes that she wears to and from the hospital are not the clothes that she wears in the hospital. Everyone is fully gowned up when entering infected patients' rooms, which is 97% of the rooms. Not exaggerating either. Whenever my mom comes back home, my dad brings a plastic bag. She then strips her clothes and puts them into the plastic bag and that goes outside until it is washed