

Day in My Life :Quarantine Mental Illness

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As of right now, most people across the world have been in quarantine for over a month. Many of us have one thing in common: mental illness. Although quarantine has shown to be effective in preventing the spread of COVID-19, it has caused debate and worry amongst people who are suffering from a mental illness. Not being able to see friends and family which usually raises the neuro-toxins within your brain to create happiness has been brought to a



standstill; I am one of those people. Before the COVID-19 crisis, I suffered from mild to extreme anxiety, but for the past month, it has gotten worse. I usually steer away from talking about my mental illness because I like to be an independent/private person. I don't like when people feel that they have a duty or a need to feel bad for me because, in reality, it is not their fault that I feel the way I do. Don't get me wrong, I am still a happy person and can function as any other individual does, but I just struggle with these daily tasks a little more. As for my lifestyle during quarantine, it has changed a bit. It is harder for me to rationalize certain events that happen in my life, in other words, to think logically about certain situations. I will lay in my bed for hours and just stare at the wall, wondering what I could've done

differently. But, I have developed a routine for when I am having these so-called "episodes" of anxiety.

The first thing that I try to do is call on a family member to help me out. I know there are some people who don't have that privilege of being able to talk to family members but there are certain call-lines and websites that are able to talk to you. I ask them for reassurance based on what exactly the situation is. I tell them what I am thinking and what my opinion is on the event that has occurred, and then ask if I am thinking logically. They help me through the thinking process (logical thinking), and I get an answer. I wish it was easy to say I forget about it and move on with my life, but it is certainly not. I try to distract myself from thinking and start to read. If you ask any of my peers, they know I am not one to read a book, but this quarantine has changed me in many ways. If I find a really good book, which I have, I can distract myself and stay away from technology, which is the main cause of the anxiety. I have been reading *A Walk to Remember* by Nicholas Sparks. Another good book that I truly enjoy is *The Outsiders*. Both books make you feel good and help you forget about the event you were worrying about, even if it's only for 30 minutes. That 30 minutes can do your brain and your soul some good so that you have some sort of relaxation. If you do not like books, you could always color and do some sort of artwork. I am probably the most non-artistic person that has ever lived, but I do enjoy putting my focus into something that doesn't involve me digging a bigger hole into my mind.

If you or a family member is struggling with a mental illness, I urge you to remember the one thing that will always help: time. Time is key when trying to defeat a mental illness. Getting over something that is stuck in your mind will not disappear overnight. Through my experience, I

have learned that getting over my anxiety is a waiting game and that it is not the end. If I wake up everyday, it is another chance to keep striving for what I am looking for and want. I know that if I open my eyes every morning, I have to keep going because my plans are not over. Again, time is your best friend when learning to get over any mental illness. Never forget to believe that you are important and have a purpose. Although quarantine is not easy, we all will come out stronger than we have before.