David and Goliath

“This virus is nothing! It's just like the flu!”

“The virus will leave eventually, there's nothing to worry about.”

The Coronavirus continues to loom, and I'm still waiting for its demise. Even though the outlook has seemed to improve, I don't know when this will all end. Months in and our country has yet to see the light at the end of the tunnel. Because of this pandemic, my family and I were catapulted into the deep-sea abyss that is sorrow, anger, and frustration. This prevalent disease became a brick wall that faced me, a brick wall that required me to swim out of the abyss and climb my way over.

It was March thirteenth; my family and I lounged in the living room, going about our usual day. That's when we got the phone call saying that Champion Local Schools will shut down immediately, effective until April third. At first, I was semi-excited because I wouldn't need to show up to school (like any student would). However, I soon realized that this occurrence wasn't as great as I previously thought.

The school called again, a week before their first return-to-school date—April third—and stated that school's will continue remote learning until May. My family was aggravated, to both the school and to the people who have an extreme fear of the virus, keeping us from experiencing our lives as we should. Our stance on the pandemic was simple: it's just like the flu, it only affects older people with underlying conditions, and it must run its course through society in order to disappear from our society. This whole idea made sense, being that I trust the science that states how it needs to go through everyone so they build an immunity against it. However, the virus seemed to plague our country (and world), according to the news media.

The case and death count increased throughout the days of isolation. The school notified us once more, saying that schools are remaining all remote for the rest of the school year. In addition, the Ohio Governor, Mike DeWine, mandated that the entire state wear masks in public areas, social distance, and have a curfew that restricted outside travel past a certain time. This news made me extremely upset, knowing I couldn't go outside without social distancing and wearing a mask, or having people continue to be outwardly hysterical about the Coronavirus outbreak. As a result, I spent most of what remained of my school year in my house. Day after day, completing the same routine; the same chores; the same schoolwork. Doing the same tasks every day amidst a global pandemic kept a feeling of being trapped in a prison in the back of my mind. Isolation caused a domino-effect among my family. Mom, a cheerful and funny role model, now showing physical and mental pain and agony while keeping on a plastered smile to hide her agony. Dad, loud and hilarious (sometimes zany), now the counterpart to Mom's suffering. Parker, my brother, stressed with schoolwork and football, even more intensely pressured by balancing sports and academics. Me, used to be easy-going and content, now filled with anger and frustration at our world.

In my lifetime, I have faced challenges and obstacles—some I didn't believe I could overcome; but the half of my normal life because of the outbreak has faced me like Goliath facing David in the book of Samuel from the Bible. To face this challenge, I awoke every morning and put a smile on my face, ready for the day. Making sure I had a positive attitude, I went through the hours of quarantine with hope and faith that our past lives will be restored. The Coronavirus shined a spotlight on one of the worst versions of me. This persona was filled with enough fire to burn the world, enough tears to put out that fire, and enough hatred to explode like a million supernovas in the universe. The devil on my shoulders controlled this aspect of me, but there was a light in its opposition—an angel. Why, this directed the spotlight to my better self. The hopeful, kind, and optimistic Kaden. Ultimately, the fires extinguished, and the water turned to drought because the angel had triumphed over the evil. Yes, this "best" side to me has come out on top. Although the state of our society has crumbled because of the pandemic, I still hold hope for the future. I continue to push myself forward through looking for the light in every day. Whether this is a simple conversation between my friends and I, a nice family dinner, or a moment for self-reflection, I pushed myself one step at a time in this troubling and unknown period we live in. As Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. had said, “If you can't fly, run; if you can't run, walk; if you can't walk, crawl; but by all means keep moving.” Looking the virus in the eye, I gathered my stone and my slingshot, hurled it into Goliath’s head, and kept moving.

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