

It doesn't take a bad person to hurt someone. You don't even need the intention to hurt someone. All it takes is a selfish attitude and a momentary lapse in judgement. I know this because I'm serving a 4 year 9 month sentence for just that – for driving under the influence and endangering life. Negligently hurting several people, myself included.

I'm writing this from my cell tonight because despite how certain I am it will have little to no impact on the intended audience (16-28 y.o.), I feel compelled and obligated to plead to the better judgement in everyone during this pandemic. I have the ability to watch this crisis unfold from a third person perspective because while I am still being affected by it, I am not burdened by the responsibility of a regular member of society, given my circumstances.

So what does a nobody prisoner know about anything? Well, I know how easy it is to accidentally endanger the lives of many, without even knowing you are doing it. Going about your daily life as if the world isn't currently in a state of emergency is nothing short of recklessness and is the height of selfishness.

By taking simple measures such as social distancing, wearing a face mask, abiding by lockdown protocol and not trying to jump borders, you are ensuring that you are not going to be responsible for putting a stranger or even loved ones in ICU or a coffin.

I understand how hard isolation can be. It can at times be mentally tormenting and physically painful but I assure you it is only temporary. It's also a blessing in disguise if you allow it to be. You would not believe what you can accomplish in your own company.

In 12 months I've read countless books, become proficient at guitar, gained 30kgs of lean muscle, written a book, written and composed an album and learned to meditate, something I've never been able to sit still long enough to do. The point is isolation has not and will not kill me. But COVID-19 possibly could. Like I said, it's only temporary and if everyone does their part, it will be over sooner rather than later.

I know how important certain social issues are, such as #BLM rallies and other protests for different causes. But given the current crisis we are in, it is without discrimination, endangering everyone's lives to be gathering en masse for any reason whatsoever. We live in the age of technology where it is possible to change the world from your phone or computer.

You can be heard anywhere on earth in total isolation. What I'm saying is you can take your stand for what is right, seated in the security of your home, whilst simultaneously doing your part to ensure the health and wellbeing of everyone else. The road to hell is paved with good intentions...and lined with negligence and poor decisions.

Furthermore, I know how easy it is to think "*it will never happen to me*". I know how easy it is to genuinely believe your actions could never lead to other people getting hurt. But if you are potentially exposing yourself to the virus then you are potentially spreading it to countless people. And that's going to cause serious damage, whether or not you are aware of it.

If your actions have the potential to hurt or fatally harm someone then you are a criminal just like me. Whether you meant to or not is irrelevant. Actions have consequences and just because you didn't intend to commit a crime doesn't mean you aren't a criminal. Just because you don't intend to hurt someone does NOT mean you won't.

WAKE UP. LIVES ARE AT STAKE HERE.

Zac Jones

Upcoming Author

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