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Self-isolation or day as usual for an introvert?

No matter where you live, surely you have seen the mayhem, chaos, and fear a microscopic entity called Covid-19 (aka Corona Virus) has brought upon this world. Not specific to a region or country, this little bug is taking over the world, while we scour the streets for soap, hand sanitizer, and toilet paper. Humans are a curious bunch...

I hear pollution (air, water) has decreased since this pandemic first started. I guess that's good news for the planet. Maybe Mother Nature has finally gotten sick of what we are doing to her and is taking action... (The Happening anyone?).

Businesses are having to close due to the enforced (or strongly suggested) self-isolation for everyone. People are losing their income from no work. Eldery are unable to get basic supplies due to people buying more supplies than they need, and hoarding them.

Hospitals are running out of medical supplies, especially N95 masks which are supposed to be efficient at filtering out the Covid-19 virus, especially considering it can survive in the air for 3-4 hours, let alone on surfaces and clothing for much longer. My sister is a nurse at a hospital short on supplies, and are now using masks that are ineffective at protection, yet she keeps working. Bless those that continue to be on the front lines

Schools in our area are now going into week 2 of being closed (as of the date of this blog posting). Our two kids, grades 3 and kindergarten, are usually dropped off at daycare in the mornings. The daycare buses them to school, picks them up once school is over, and we are then able to pick them up from daycare after we get off work. The daycare is still open and operating (although not sure how that is possible), but we elected not to send our kids to daycare. It feels like that's essentially the same environment as the schools, and they were shut down for a reason. I can see the need for daycares to remain open, especially for kids whose parents work in the medical or law enforcement fields during this time. Luckily my wife has been able to work from home since the schools were shutdown. I work in the IT field, but my job is still currently open, so I go into the office 5 days a week until told otherwise.

In any case, all over social media you'll see hastags #isolation, #selfisolation, #coronavirus, etc. Those people around the world who actually have been taking this seriously, and trying to stay indoors and self-isolated are going a bit stir crazy. You feel captive in your own house. You can of course go take a walk outside, enjoy the flowering plants and trees as Spring creeps in amongst the chaos. I was walking my dog Saturday, mid-afternoon. During this time, you'll see people working outside, kids playing in the streets, etc. It looked like the neighborhood was abandoned. Not a single person was out and about. I walk a few blocks around the neighborhood to give my dog a bit of afternoon exercise. Aside from other dogs, there wasn't a single soul. Squirrels were out foraging, birds were chirping and fluttering about. It was actually peaceful and serene. Calm before the storm?

My parents are 70 and 80 years old. Despite the constant reminders from myself, as well as my siblings, they still continue to venture out, looking for groceries and household items. I've been doing what I can, picking things up here and there and dropping them off at their house (well, their front door rather. Any groceries or items I get for

them, I spray down with disinfectant spray first)... and yes... I have disinfectant spray, disinfectant wipes, toilet paper, and even hand sanitizer. That stuff is like gold nowdays. We shop at Sam's Club on a regular basis, and as luck would have it, we had just recently restocked on those items right before all of this crap happened.

Finding things to do, to entertain, to keep you busy, can be challenging when you are stuck at home. My kids and wife, they seem to be perfectly fine with Netflix, Amazon, Hulu, Disney+. The kids do have some schoolwork they were sent home with, but it's getting finished quickly. We'll have to find resources online with worksheets for them to do before too long.

I've mentioned it a few times... I think it's on my profile here on my website, and on my Instagram profile. I'm a bit of an introvert, a homebody. People out there are going batty about being at home, and I'm as content as can be. Is self-isolation really a prison sentence for those that do it on the regular? So far it hasn't bothered me. Will it a week from now? A month? Who knows. I tend to be pretty resilient and go with the flow of things. No sense in worrying what you can't control. Right now, we can't control this virus, but we can control the spread of it, or rather slow down the spread of it until our world brainiacs can figure out how to best fight back against this pandemic.

I see some photographers still venturing out with models for shoots. Eh, best of luck to them. I figured I didn't have a lot of selfies, so it was about time for a new one. What better theme for a selfie than the Corona Virus? I wanted to make an image that draws out the emotion of isolation, fear, and loneliness.

My kitchen was my studio... or rather, a very small piece of my kitchen. I took a couple of light stands with clamps, and used them to hold up a piece of plexiglass to serve as my window. As you can see, I was literally sitting right next to a real window... but I didn't want my camera equipment outside.

I used a shutter speed of 1/500 to kill off a lot of that ambient. The picture makes it look brighter than it actually was outside. The light source for this shot was an AD200 with the AD-S7 modifier. It's essentially an 18-19" octabox. I used this with a grid to help control light spill onto the plexiglass.

a piece of black foamcore served as a fake wall for the photo. The real wall behind it was white, and I didn't want light reflecting back.



Taking a selfie with a phone camera is easy. Taking a selfie with an actual camera? that can be a bit tricky. Luckily Fuji has a smartphone app that connects to your Fuji camera via bluetooth/wifi. You can see a live preview, make camera setting adjustments, and take photos. I took around 2 dozen photos before I came out with one I was happy with. Trying to nail focus through plexiglass has its moments... And yes, my l-bracket is not being used the way it should be. I was constantly reaching around/under the plexiglass to adjust it (which would constantly make the plexiglass fall between takes), and that's how the camera position came to be in the end. As long as the end result works right? :)

makeup and wardrobe consisted of a medical mask, a black hoodie, and contact lens drops. The drops were for my eyes to get them a little wet. Perhaps sweat from a fever? Maybe wept tears from isolation? Fear?

Depression? You decide what feeling is invoked.

Camera settings for those who care are as follows:
Fuji XT-3
Fuji XF 23mm f/1.4 at f/2.8
ISO 160
1/500 shutter speed
AD200 at 1/8 power

Finished image:



Stay safe. Stay healthy. Stay inside, unless it's to see the beauty of nature.