

The week of April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020 – April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2020 marked over 21 days of quarantine for myself. Here in Conway, South Carolina, it feels as though life has taken a hit, but not to the extension that you see in places such as California or New York. Whether it is people have been lucky here or just not enough testing to actually confirm the correct number is anybody's guess. You can still go into a store such as Wal-Mart and find an overwhelming amount of people at any given time. Even though Governor McMaster has put on a stay at home order for all non-essential workers, it just doesn't feel like daily life has slowed down for many. For myself, the only positive that has come from all of this are the low gas prices, as low as \$1.19 in some places! One of the biggest issues that I have seen is the mental aspect of the country. The panic, the worry, the fear. Granted it is unprecedented times, but instead of calm and trying to find positive in this, all over the TV and media is negativity. In my hometown of Adams, Massachusetts, this virus is destroying them, but yet when I talk to family members, the lack of action is mind – blowing to me. My mother works for a dentist office who continues to stay open, even after her boss recently came back from a cruise. Is it ignorance or greed? I have struggled with those two topics of this whole situation. It is clear now that the measures taken at the beginning of the outbreak were not enough. Now the government handing out money to people to try and keep them afloat is their way of trying to curb public opinion. What better way to prevent an outcry of the public than to give them free money to keep their opinions to themselves? For me in this situation, the real fear in this, is my mind. As someone who has struggled the majority of my life with addiction and alcoholism, it is a crippling time in the sober community. On April 15<sup>th</sup>, it will mark my one year anniversary of being sober. These last few weeks seem to have tested me more than ever. With the social gatherings limit, that means all of the meetings I was attending every week are no longer an option. Being laid off and not being able to go anywhere, you have restless legs and a restless mind. This past week I have done hours of yard work and home maintenance just to keep my mind busy and hopefully exhaust me to the point where I just go to sleep. I am one of the lucky ones, I guess. In the last ten days, I have had to watch three friends in sobriety, go back out, and lose their lives to the disease. I know the longer that this pandemic goes on, the more friends I will have to say goodbye to and you just pray that you stay afloat. There has been good in this though, there are pop up groups that have created online meetings where you can facetime in and get to have meetings with people from all over the world. I'm not sure what this next week holds in store, but just like everyday I pray we see the light at the end of the tunnel. P.S. I miss sports desperately (this was supposed to be the Master's tournament this weekend!).