

# The Pandemic Journals

(Day 216: Return of Lockdown)

This particular entry is short, but much is going on here. I've kept a basic journal during the COVID-19 pandemic, to review later as days, weeks, months or even years go by. Let's start this entry, again, it's not very long, but I'll add more to it later.

October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020: Day 216, and we're back on lockdown. At about 9:45am, we went on lockdown, because apparently there's a positive case of COVID-19 here. From what I heard, they're going to test again, to see if it was a false read or not. Gosh, and me with no food, or money. That stimulus would have been great.

Well, here we are at 6:27pm, listening to "The Purge: The First Purge". It's not the very first Purge, it's a movie to show the beginning of the Purge. Well, I wanted time away from everyone, we need to use the time wisely (End of entry).

OK, here's what happened: We went on a full lockdown Wednesday morning, because an inmate in another dorm tested positive for the virus. Associate Warden Segal shuts down all inmate operations, including commissary, and blocks us from calling our loved ones. His reason is that an inmate in general population tested positive.

But hold on... how did he contract it? Segal implied that it's an inmate to blame; I strongly disagree. Since we've been on this pandemic, inmate movement has been reduced to near zero. It's not like county jails, where people come and go. Almost nobody has arrived to USP Tucson in months, and the few that did were isolated for 2 weeks before being moved to general population.

So, how did an inmate catch the virus, to test positive? The only way he could, is through a staff member. Consider: there are many men and women working here at USP Tucson, maybe as many as 100 per shift, especially during weekdays. Dorm Officers, Case Managers, Unit Managers, Compound officers, Education, Psychology and Recreation Departments, Chapel, Laundry, Commissary and Cafeteria - not to mention the Administration.

It's far more likely that one of these staff members here could bring the virus into the prison, since they leave here daily, and go to town, where the virus is. It's less likely for an inmate to "just happen" to catch it. On an average weekday, I've seen up to 30 →

different staff members walk in the dorm. How many of them were properly tested? Yet, Segal doesn't imply that; to him, it's the inmate's fault, so we're all being punished like lepers. Did I mention Segal, the Associate Warden, doesn't wear his face mask as often as he should, much like the staff here.

I've seen Segal put a man in the SHU (Special Housing Unit) for wearing a make-shift face mask, after his paper-issued mask got wet. Yet, during that incident, HE was not wearing his face mask at all. Go figure.

I mentioned something about a stimulus; not sure if you know about this, but in early October (2020), there was a ruling that opened the door for inmates who qualify to file a 1040 or 1040 SR, to receive up to a \$1200 stimulus, the IRS informed the prisons, and everybody here filed for it. It's no joke, we can apparently file for it. As I write this (Oct 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020) we're inside 2 weeks, but since we're now going to be on lockdown until at least November 9<sup>th</sup>, we won't be able to hear anything about it for awhile.

I also mentioned the movie, "The Purge". Since we're on lockdown, I have to watch TV from the window of my cell. With 7 TVs, I can see 4 of them, and watch the horror movies they have on during October (I love horror movies). So, I was watching "The Purge: The First Purge", which was ok. As I said in the entry, that's not the first Purge, in fact I think that's the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> movie, in sequence. I won't confuse you here, you can look it up online, since I can't.

The lockdown is frustrating for several reasons, one being that Segal has never been compassionate to inmate needs. I can list many reasons, but I don't think you want to read through another 50 pages.

(Think I'm kidding... try me 😊)

But what I don't like is how he's blocked all forms of communication. We can't call our loved ones, and most don't have stamps. With as many stamps that USP Tucson has (illegally) confiscated, it wouldn't hurt to give every inmate one stamp and one envelope a week to write to our loved ones, so they'll know we're (reasonably) ok.

There's much more to add, but this was just Day 216... wait'll you hear about Day 217...

Until next time =