

The COVID-19 pandemic was the most turbulent time of my life. Both my parents worked in New York City at the time, and nothing seemed certain. During the time of the world “stopping”, my grandmother was living with us to receive Pancreatic cancer treatment. This meant that any time anyone had any symptoms, our whole family was on high alert. It seemed that everyone in my family was contracting COVID left and right, and I was the only one spared. Every week from mid-March to late April, at least one member of my family was sick and quarantining. I often found myself locked in my bedroom for days at a time, fearing that I was asymptomatic and might infect my grandmother.

For some time, it seemed a cloud of anxiety hung over my family and most other New Yorkers. My parents called their parents daily, just to make sure they had not gotten sick. When someone we knew got sick, the world seemed to stop spinning. It was the most terrifying time of my life. For days we would sit by the phone, with an overwhelming sense of dread and helplessness looming. Thankfully, none of my friends or family died of COVID, although many, like my mother, were terribly ill.

Eventually, the mandates began to lift, and life began to return to normal. However, it felt like every time there was a light at the end of the tunnel, cases would surge, and life would come screeching to a halt. With the creation of the vaccine, everyone around me gained confidence that life would go back to normal. As time passed, life did slowly go back to normal. I was able to stop wearing a mask and stop fearing that I would get sick. Over the course of the last 3 years, I have gone from thinking that getting COVID is the end of the world, to treating COVID like the flu or the common cold.