

## My Prison Covid Experience

March 21, 21

As I sit here listening to one of my favorite groups, Breaking Benjamin, (song is Ashes to Eden), I remember my covid experience. I contracted covid in late January after being forced to live in a cell with a guy who was positive for covid but I was negative, for 8 days. I had 2 choices, live with him or go to the hole & throw away everything that I have been working for. So for 8 days I lived with 2 masks on, I slept with 1 on. I was finally moved but too late, I now was sick. I was locked in quarantine & only allowed out of cell for a 10 minute shower & a 15 min phone call once per day. I asked to be tested for covid as my only symptom was the worst cough I have ever had in my life. I was denied a test. I has a cellmate who was NOT sick. This baffled me. I asked to see medical, I was struggling to breathe, I was told if medical wants to see you they will. Request denied. So I emailed my friend who is a Senator, Nikil Saval. Nikil immediately called the prison & spoke to the prisons Superintendent (or warden), within 1 hour I was tested. The instant test was positive. Within 15 mins my cellmate was moved so he wouldn't get sick (he never did). I was given vitamin d3 & zinc. Neither did anything for me. I lost my sense of smell but that didn't concern me, I couldn't stop coughing, I couldn't take a breath. I coughed so much I was coughing up blood. Thanks to Nikils intervention I was taken to medical where they spent 30 minutes running tests on me & giving me oxygen. My oxygen levels were brought back up so I was sent back to my cell. I was denied anything for my severe cough. 2 months later I was prescribed Prednisone, a steroid in pill form. My lungs are about 90% recovered. I was in fear of dying every day as I have watched friend die of covid, many hundreds of people on the news die or ones who lived tell their stories. I was in fear of my life for 2 weeks. In Pa, state prisoners have been pushed to the end of the line by our governor, Tom Wolf, a man who lies & claims to care but he has proven that he doesn't care if we die of covid. The family & friends of lifer Bruce Norris know this. Bruce received commutation but contracted covid due to prison staff negligence & Bruce died before Governor Wolf had the desire to sign his paperwork releasing him from prison to his family after decades in prison. Rest in Peace Mr. Bruce Norris.

I want to end this with, just because we're in prison doesn't mean we are the worst people on earth. So many have grown & changed but we are shown on those prison tv shows as the most violent people on earth. Thats simply not the case. I want to ask readers to reach out to 3 organizations that I show love & support for. Project S.A.V.E., a Philadelphia org. that helps women who have been abused by men. VOICES, an org. in Philly for survivors of sexual assault & last, Right 2 Redemption. An org. of prisoners & free citizens who believe in change & 2nd chances. R2R is amazing. [right2redemption.com](http://right2redemption.com)

I also want to issue a public apology to Tanya Corsner. I'm sorry. I sent you a letter & I hope you receive it. If not, I retained a copy & will post it on my blog before mothers day. My next post will be either tanya's letter or my mothers day post in memory of my amazing mom, Beverly Jean Pezzeca, who died August 2017. Covid is real. Take care & stay safe. Rob