Differing Actions

Amid the scientific and medical components of the pandemic lies a social one—the request for Americans to stay home, away from school, away from work, and away from each other. With no end in sight just yet, the Center for Disease Control or CDC has urged for a limit to social interaction for the time being to combat the outbreak. For many Americans, however, these stay-at-home orders haven’t been easy.

“Some people prove the most people have a love of dying from this virus unless you have an underlying condition or are over a certain age. This is why we are still going out. Some people also just live their life on the edge and simply don’t care if they get sick because they know they can light it off,” Macomber Balter, senior, said.

COVIT-19 mainly spreads from people being in close proximity to one another. The more people that are together in a group, the likelihood of contracting the virus becomes higher. Simply put, as we stay away from each other, we lessen the change of both spreading the disease and contracting it ourselves. Both government officials and medical professionals have asked Americans to ‘social distance’ and flatten the curve. These phrases refer to actions that should be taken to limit the spread of the disease. The ‘curve’ that is being discussed is the amount of cases we will face with social distancing guidelines and without social distancing guidelines. A flatter curve should mean less stress on our already overburdened medical facilities. The curve will begin to flatten by individuals taking the actions that have been outlined by the Center of Disease Control (CDC) and other health professionals to social distance.

“Although the actions as a society are stay home if we don’t need to go out. Also, if we do need to go out then we should be socially distancing ourselves from other people. Lastly, we should be wearing gloves and masks and washing our hands frequently so this outbreak can end,” Hailena Rasah, sophomore, said.

These seeming simple guidelines, however, are not being followed by all Americans. Raising questions that are both moral and medical. College ‘spring breakers’ openly flaunted the stay at home orders, continuing to gather and party even as the country braced itself for the growing pandemic. In places like Miami, New Orleans, and even New York City, young adults continued to go out during the early stages of the pandemic. The most common reason stated was ‘We’re young, what could go wrong?’ Video flooded the media of college students refusing to leave their spring break resorts while others continued to board airplanes en route to their destinations defying ‘essential travel’ orders.

“I would say to the spring breakers that it is selfish to continue normal activities like spring break. There are Americans being asked to sacrifice major life events like weddings and proms and are doing so to ensure the safety of loved ones. There will be time to go out and celebrate once this virus is under control but until then we should be doing our part in containing it. They may not realize it but everyone is at risk whether it is the virus itself or spreading it to someone who is more susceptible,” Kalley MacDonald, history teacher, said.

Regardless of reasoning, however, the threat that exists from a lack of social distancing is real. While young people may not experience the most severe symptoms of the virus [though many have], they still possess the ability to spread the disease to those that night—raising the question, why do many young people still think it is acceptable to risk the lives of others.

Dr. Brian Aitney, Senior Advisor to WHO Director General stated that, “One of the things that terrifies me now is, as this is spread in the West is, there is this sense of invincibility. The virus can have it without feeling any symptoms before showing any signs, meaning one is asymptomatic. This puts others at risk for contracting the disease and leads to infecting hundreds of more people, increasing the number of cases and potentially the mortality rate. By only going out when it is essential and keeping a distance from others, the spread will slow down making it a return to normalcy sooner than later. This phenomenon has impacted young people who fail to recognize that their behavior can have a tremendous impact on those around them, even if they are feeling good.”

“It’s unfortunate that some of the younger population did not follow the social restrictions in place. Although the virus appears to have a higher mortality in the older population, the younger population is facing similar infection rates. UnFortunately, they possibly pass the virus onto their parents, grandparents, or aunts and uncles, all of which likely have a higher chance of death if infected,” Michael Koll, APN, said.

That sentiment is not lost on all of the younger generation, however.

“Social distancing goes a long way. It will help us because if we’re less contact outside, and it wouldn’t put ourselves at risk along with others. That’s why it’s best to stay home throughout this pandemic because, in the end, we will get through this together. We have to keep taking appropriate precautions,” Nicholas Preturosa, senior, said.

Others agree.

“The only businesses that should be open are those that provide the necessities for us to get by at this time which are grocery stores, home stores, fast foods, ETC. I believe there shouldn’t be any sort of interaction between customers and employees, only with the reception of gloves and masks used. Maybe, we can start to adapt to placing orders on our phones/computers/tables so that way we can pick up our items in person to make a quick and easy purchase. It would involve less time being used up and less interactions, which can lead to a quicker recovery and/or a flattening of the curve,” Angela Nascimento, freshman, said.

The virus may most notably be cycled by older individuals, but if one of these rising amounts of cases have taught us, it is that science and this virus do not discriminate.

“The coronavirus has resolved in things that no one could have imagined. It has closed all schools, leaving many kids wondering when they will get the opportunity to go back. However, there have been ways given to us by the CDC to help end what is happening. If we all do what we need to, even if it is not what we want to do, our lives will go back to normal,” Natalia Cahnrest, sophomore, said.