**Half Masked Faces**

I never realized how much communication is lost when half your face is covered by a mask! Have you realized this too? I’ve found myself walking right by long time friends and members because I don’t even recognize them from the eyes up. Walking around in the essential places that I frequent I also discovered that the recognizing, good-morning smile has also been lost when I pass someone. Your eyes simply don’t communicate the same things by themselves.

We’ve all developed our own unique ways of communicating with the world. You know your friends who talk with gestures and their hands, others who wiggle and fidget as they communicate and those who hardly make eye contact. The gestures of your mouth and entire face are part of your communication package. Personally, I’m a smiler and don’t feel the need to always speak to someone when a simple smile says the ‘hello’ or ‘what’s up’ that I want to communicate.

I’m finding myself, during this craziness, missing the bottom halves of faces.

It’s a strange, temporary world we are living in with regards to masks and personal protection gear. There is so much uncertainty in what’s going on right now, that many people are running on emotions instead of facts and logic.

The truth is that masks, unless they are perfectly fitted and filtered, don’t protect you from anything. Even these beautiful handmade masks that everyone is coming up with. They’re fun and wonderful, but they don’t protect you.

You’ve been told that wearing a mask is for you not to infect someone else. That is somewhat true, because of the awareness is instills. When I see someone wearing a mask, I immediately think that that person might be sick and encourages me to stay farther away. If you are sick, you wear a mask. If you are sick, then you shouldn’t be out in public period, mask or no mask.

You wearing that mask, doesn’t mean that you still won’t infect someone because of the exact reasons I mentioned before. They are ill-fitting and germs have their nasty ways of getting in and around anything and everything you wear if the environment is right and there is a mode of transportation for those little virus’. How many of you get an itchy nose or face as soon as you put that mask on? What about shortness of breath? What about sweaty upper lip? What about sore ears? What about drinking that coffee? What about anything that makes you adjust, move, touch, wiggle or take off that mask?

The most important thing you can do to prevent the spread from you to me or from me to you, is to wash your hands well and not touch your face or your mask for any reason whatsoever. Then you must also make sure that you are properly sanitizing that mask for your own health!

You’ve been told that you must wear a mask everywhere. Not true. There is no safer to be right now, than outside breathing clean, fresh, cool air. When I see people outside with their masks on, I shake my head. You are literally re-breathing your own sweat, saliva, breath. A perfect little breeding ground; warm, moist, contaminated and miserable to wear!

Where do you think a virus or bacteria would rather thrive? Inside a nice, warm, closed up house, close to other family members, on surfaces often touched but not cleaned equally as often? Or outside in fresh, clean, cool air, with no surfaces or persons to touch? Movement, breeze, wind and sunshine are also present outside keeping those virus’ at bay. I’m no scientist but I’ll choose being outside and without that mask returning all my bad breath back into my lungs!

Again, I’m no scientist but consider myself an intelligent, thoughtful, non-emotional, fact driven person who writes these articles according to personal experiences, simple facts and common sense.

This virus will pass, and truths will come out. When they do, I’m confident that the old, original preventative measures will hold true. Wash your hands, don’t touch your face, stay healthy and don’t go out if you are sick. It’s that simple.