

2nd of June – I started feeling ill, had a fever and diarrhea which ended by the evening.

3rd of June my chest started getting tight I then told my husband something wasn't right, I remember sitting down at the time saying I feel like there's a weight on my chest and it's pressing in choking me, I couldn't explain it any other way.

He then convinced me that we have been under a lot of stress, anxiety regarding finances and work and so maybe I am getting a flu combined with season change allergies causing my mild asthma to flare up.

4th June I remember crying telling my husband that this was not normal, that what I was feeling was definitely not normal flu nor asthma tightness. I self-medicated with Corenza C, my asthma pump, lemon water, my husband made turmeric, garlic and ginger shots to boost my immune system and I called my doctor.

5th June I felt worse, I could not breathe, I made an appointment at my doctor who I was in contact with from the 3rd already monitoring symptoms convincing myself that it wasn't Covid and avoiding going to doctor, but this time round I had to.

My doctor examined me and based on the symptoms I had together with loss of taste and was convinced I had the virus, he suggested testing but I knew that in this time every cent mattered so I thought ok I've been isolating since before the 2nd, so why not isolate for the two weeks anyway and not spend the R850 for the test to pathology that I didn't budget for, so I would just treat myself as though I am positive. My doctor accepted and urged me to please keep in contact should my symptoms get worse.

6th of June - My symptoms were much worse, through the night I remember going to our bathroom to steam myself, to rub on more vicks to try to open up my chest that was just closing more and more, I couldn't smell so I used more than half of the vicks tub, thinking it was not working but by then I realized wait I can't smell, I then opened bottles of savlon, bleach to try to smell and I couldn't smell a thing, I contacted my doctor again and he said come and get tested now.

I went immediately, drove myself and gasping for air I remember thinking this is bad, I felt I had to pull over and call my husband because I felt dizzy and very short of breath but I was halfway so I started praying just to get there safely and for my doctor to give me oxygen or something.

I got to the doctor, had to wear my mask of course which on top of not being able to breathe just made it worse, he then told me to take off my mask, jacket and checked my heart rate, temperature and breathing. He did the test (pathcare test kit) throat swab. I kept asking him if it would hurt or how long it would take and my brilliant doctor calmed me down and said it's just a bit uncomfortable, I would gag but it will be a few seconds.

A few seconds later it was over, I remember him saying 'woah this is a good sample' as my mucus was thick on the cotton part.

He then told me I'd get the result in 2 days and he would check in with me every day which he did from day one.

He said you will get an sms if you're negative and I will call you if you're positive.

7th of June I slept the entire day, felt weak, only woke up to take Corenza C, vitamins, have my turmeric drink and I ate whole garlic cloves no problem as I could not taste a thing.

This day was the worst day for me, struggling to breathe, coughing to clear the phlegm but nothing helped.

Again I went to my dr to check oxygen levels and he gave me prednisone for the tight chest.

8th June was the same, I would get up, bath, steam, pray, medicate and rest.

Tried going outside for some sun but got too weak and would land up back in bed.

9th June- I was just not getting better, I laid in bed watched my son play games and tried to sleep but coughed too much.

Then my phone rang, I knew by then that this was that call and it was.

I knew I was and treated myself as though I was but the call itself was just reality hitting and I just felt a wave of fear come over me as I stressed about my symptoms and did not want to land up in hospital away from my family.

10th June I'm trying to document but felt so bad today that I had very little strength to

11th June 20 I was too weak to even look at my phone to note anything

12th June I woke up feeling better, I got excited and told my husband, 'I feel better, I think I'm getting better' I tried to tidy up, I wanted to do something other than lay in bed so I took out the vacuum and started vacuuming the room, changing the bedding etc

Not long I felt like I was hit by a bus, had to sit down and rest. I then realized how deceiving this virus is, you feel better one minute and the next you're back in bed.

13th June 2020 I barley moved, slept a lot, cough was still bad, breathing still bad so I went to the dr again and he gave me Acc 200 prescribed a cough syrup and said I needed to keep him updated.

14th of June I was in no way feeling better didn't document much

15th of June 2020.

Today is the first day I feel better - like better better.

I can breathe easier, I can walk around without gasping for air, I'm not weak.

Yesterday, I also felt better, but the euphoria was short-lived, because not long after, I was back in bed feeling extremely weak. My chest hurt, I was struggling to breathe and unable to move my body. I also had the worst headache I've ever experienced.

What I've come to realise is that this virus is deceiving: you feel fine one minute and the next, you are flattened again. So it's important to rest even when you think you're feeling better. Just rest.

I remember saying a prayer and telling the Lord: If today's my last day, somehow tell me, because I don't want to be isolated from my family on my last day. I'd want to spend time with them, so please let me know.

Yes, I had such fatalistic thoughts and prayers. But today, things are different again... Joy most certainly comes in the morning.

16 June 2020

I woke up breathing easier, inhaling what felt like a different kind of air. I just knew that I was getting better. The pressure on my chest felt lighter. I could talk for longer without pausing as much.

I felt hopeful and excited.

Soon, I'll be able to hold my husband and my son in my arms without feeling contaminated. I'll be able to go into my kitchen and open my fridge. I miss seeing things. I miss having options.

I miss so much that has been taken away from me for the last two weeks, including my sense of smell and taste, which still hasn't returned.

Even that is something we take for granted. We just eat, chewing and swallowing without acknowledging every smell and every taste of goodness.

And here was my darling husband, cooking all my favourite meals for me, which is what you do for someone who is sick, I guess... and I was unable to taste any of it! Everything tasted like water.

I could only distinguish between hot and cold.

I remember asking him to tell me the smells of everything he gave me so that I could at least try and imagine it.

All I could feel were textures.

I never thought I'd miss smelling things; good and bad. Can you believe it? Being unable to smell whether you need to take a shower; being unable to smell the freshness after you've had a shower.

As tough as my experience of this virus has been, I must say it has taught me so much.

Time is valuable; precious.

The importance of being present when you are with your loved ones, because in a matter of just a day you could be faced with news that isolates you away from them.

The importance of connection is taken away by this virus and how it disconnects us from human contact. We must keep this in mind and hang in there when we have to isolate from our loved ones and others. We must keep our minds strong and know that this too shall pass. That we are built for this, to fight!

That your health is indeed your wealth.

You need to know your body. You need to know that you can handle a bash like this.

The importance of rest; your body needs it.

The importance of loving your loved ones every chance you get, because tomorrow is never guaranteed.

When you get told you have something there's no cure for, that your symptoms are of the severe kind and that many with it end up in ICU or worse... That there's nothing the doctor can do but walk you through it day by day. It's scary.

I'm not exaggerating this, many have no symptoms and many don't even know they have the virus. Others, like me, end up being quite affected.

I was careful, I was safe, I made sure I kept my distance, not only for myself but for my family's sake too. For my mom who is over 60; for my son who's had five operations in the five years that he has been alive and who may not have been strong enough to fight a virus like this. I didn't fear getting Covid-19, I feared losing a loved one to it.

Yet despite being cautious and adhering to all the safety measures, I still ended up getting the virus.

17 June 2020

Tomorrow is my final check-up.

I will hear if I'm okay to be out of isolation.

Today 18th June

No virus! My lungs took a knock, but I'm free of Covid-19!

Now I have to take a week longer to rest, heal, and shake off this persistent cough. But I can finally hold my husband and son again without worrying that I'll make them ill. I think that's the only fear I had the entire time, that I would be giving it to someone I love who may or may not be able to survive it.

But now all is well with me and my soul! And my body is getting there too!
Add in.

I have a week to go before I'm cleared for contact with others, my chest is still very tight so I need to monitor and allow for healing. I'm excited to get back to singing again, I need my lungs! So I will be resting and doing exactly what the Dr says.

I just want to thank God for carrying me through this. And my husband, oh my husband, my rock! You cooked all my favourite meals, even though I couldn't taste any of it. You made me smile every day and you gave me hope. To my son... gosh, my son was amazing! He closely monitored every change and asked me if I could smell and taste again which was his way of checking whether I was still sick. He also kept praying for me. Your prayers were clearly heard, my boy!

To my parents who I couldn't see for so long, thank you for doing what I was unable to do. My in-laws for encouraging me and cooking for us, to my brothers for checking up and praying, and to all of you who kept encouraging me, prayed for me and checked up on me every day... you know who you are!

I love you all! Thank you for your love and support.

Many have survived Covid-19, many have not, some of whom I knew.

Many have had it and were asymptomatic, many have had it and experienced only mild symptoms. Unfortunately I had the more severe symptoms and it was tough. There were moments where I really thought my time was up.

So I want to say this, take care of your mind, health and heart! Pray, believe and do not fear!

Remember that fear and caution is different. I was cautious, but I still got the virus. This doesn't mean that you shouldn't continue to be careful and protect yourself and your loved ones. But don't give in to fear.

Be blessed and take care! Cherish every moment with your loved ones and be present! As cliché as it sounds, value every breath you take. The virus taught me this the hard way! It was only when I struggled to breathe that I realised the value of it.

If anyone out there is alone or feeling alone during this strange and difficult time of self isolation, please contact me. I will make the time to walk you through it. But also know this: God has never left you. He is where you leave Him. Draw near to Him in your time of need.

Love hard and never lose hope!

God has you!

Lea veng

Last week 19th -25th

Recovery, taking it easy, self rehabilitaing, doing breathing exercises, skipping, boxing and catching up with my husband and son.
Being present, hugging them and breathing them in like never before.

I could not do this while in isolation even though they shared my space, I had to keep my distance.

Fathers day on the 21st I baked, and could only fry food as my taste and smell has still not returned so I cant taste certain things to risk cooking hearty meals as I normally would.

25th June last day of recovery.

I feel much much better, still coughing and I still have a bit of a gasp for air type of breathing but pretty much only when I talk fast or too much.

Feeling great overall and ready to start working on recording again but I know that I cant just yet which is stressfull as we need to start earning an income as soon as possible.

My album awaits! I am determined to continue working on new music writing while I cant record yet but we are still able to compose and plan ahead, nothing will stop me, not covid19, not the loss of income, we may have lost a lot due to this pandemic...but in my opinion I have gained more, a new outlook on life itself and what is truly important.

Thank you Covid but you have lost and I have overcome. (optional)