



# WHY I MASK

*A NashMask4Mask  
Series highlighting  
the still-COVIDing  
queer community of  
midTN*

meet Ali  
(they/he)

"I mask because I saw the way the Israeli occupational forces took COVID vaccines and hospital gear from Palestinians at the start of the pandemic. I understand that being able to unmask is an incredible privilege and one that stands in favor of white supremacy and eugenics.

I have masked and will continue to mask until we are ALL free from imperialism and colonization and until the world takes disability seriously, because I see how my individual actions can hurt not just those close to me but those homelands away."

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meet Jack  
(they/he)

"I mask because I know the risk that COVID infection can pose to me and everyone in my community, including effects of long-COVID. The limited research we have after \*just\* 3.5 years suggests an increased chance of cardiovascular and immune system complications as well chronic conditions like POTS after each COVID infection. COVID can also make other conditions worse. As of April 26, 2023, over 1.1 million Americans have died from COVID."



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meet Kathryn  
(she/they)

"I mask because the harm that we experience from COVID begins with one's unfiltered breath. While I unmasked briefly during the Great Unmasking of 2021, it soon became clear to me that the current vaccines aren't a silver bullet—we must adapt to our new reality so long as this virus maims and mutates.

Since then, I've had COVID twice, not because I wasn't masked, but because others around me were not. I didn't fully recover from my first infection for 6 months."