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## A Heads Up with Sam Harris

With Covid-19 lockdowns worldwide and health authorities urging people to self-isolate and practice social distancing on a massive scale as part of an enormous effort to #FlattenTheCurve of this global pandemic ... we are reaching out to industry friends, colleagues, associates, partners, etc., and asking them to share their #StayAtHome and #QuarantineAndChill activities with us during this extraordinary time.

Sam was part of the NRG (Next Robe Generation) programme whilst studying at the University South Wales and enjoys going back to NRG networking socials whenever possible since graduating last year. He now works for an AV company based in South West London, normally focusing on corporate and expo theatres, which can range from video systems to sound and lighting along with networking-based technologies including streaming systems.

Robe: Where are you right now?

Sam: Locked down in Kingston-Upon-Thames in south west London, UK.

Robe: What are you doing to fill the time whilst isolating / on lockdown?

Sam: I have a passion for music, so I have been picking up my bass, learning new songs and going over my skills.

I am also looking into expanding my knowledge of lighting desk pc software. There is a hurdle as the cost to buy the hardware and some visualisation software is getting in the way of getting the best experience ... but I am doing my best to learn what I can.

Robe: What's the most creative thing you're able to do in isolation?

Sam: Music, it is easy to just put headphones on, and start to create music.

Robe: Are you looking after anyone else during the Covid-19 crisis?

Sam: I live with my family, so if someone needs help, we all team up and look after one another, minimising the number of times people leave the house and return. If someone can do multiple things in one outing, that minimises the risk involved and exposure to the outside world.

Robe: Has anyone inspired you since this started?

Sam: Yes, those putting their lives and their health on the line to get this nation and the world through this hard and strange time.

What has also been on my mind are all the freelance, self-employed people, and their will to get by - they are so strong. These are hard times but more so for the self-employed. So, I'd like to say: You are doing amazing. Hang in there!

Robe: Favourite book / movie / Netflix series / viral video

Sam: I have been trying to avoid TV during the day. I'm trying to stay creative and productive with every day that goes by. Music has been the main thing getting me through things - with the occasional game.

In normal times I like reading factual books, the most recent one I have read is London's 100 Strangest Places by David Long (off the beaten path and under the skin of the hidden city that is modern-day London) ... so I've been reading some of that too.

The music I have been listening to includes (American rockers) Fever 333, (some of the UK's finest) from Enter Shikari, (British metalcore) from Architects, (American hardcore punk) by Beartooth, (attitudinal indie rock) from Nightlives ... plus many, many more.

Robe: What's the first thing you'd like to do when we are through it?

Sam: To get back to working on events. I am a person who doesn't like to stay still much and I love travelling around to all the different events on which I'm working.

I would like to increase my overall knowledge base and in doing that to be a better person. It would be nice to move on up, change roles, see something different. Basically, not to stay in one place, not to get complacent. Try new things see how I can better help the industry and be there for my colleagues.

Robe: Own question / answer / message of solidarity or something you'd like to say?

Sam: With this time we have, I believe we can make the most of it. We should all be getting good rest and be full of energy. It may feel like cabin fever. We all need to help each other out and push through this. We have the time to try new things, learn new skills, so, when this passes, we can say that it was time well spent and time for us to be better people at the end. Rather than look back and think we wasted this time we have had.

There are people to talk to. No matter what you are going through, send a message out to someone, we are all going through the same thing. When you make what is inside your head out, it is out. There is less built up tension inside of you.

Knowing your own mental state is a key to happiness.

Releasing any pressure you may feel by talking to someone, you discover there are others who have been through or are going through the same thing. The moment you start this is the moment you will start to get better. If you are all good – then see if someone needs help, give them a message as some people are shy. You might learn something about yourself. At the end of the day we all need to do something that makes us happy, we are all different, so let's not start to judge people.

Will you be able to look back at each day and say you are happy you did something that made you happy?

