

Meme Project



**Image Description:** On the very left is a guy who goes by the name of Jeffree Star. He is lying in a hospital bed while wearing a neck brace. In the middle of the image is a kpop idol named Jungwon who is holding up a peace sign and smiling. On the right sits Jeffree Star's friend with a hospital gown on. Jeffree is an influencer who has been involved in multiple scandals. When he got into a severe car accident people used it as an opportunity to make fun of him. People would edit images of themselves having fun in front of Jeffree to “mock” his misfortune. In this case, kpop fans edited Jungwon into the picture although he has absolutely no association with Jeffree. Jungwon has a positive reputation as someone with a bubbly personality which makes this a rather ironic meme.

**Reflection:** This meme was chosen because it describes the multiple emotions felt throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. One reason for thinking that this was a suitable meme was the fact that the original image (without Jungwon) was taken at a hospital. Although those who were infected didn't *all* end up in the hospital, there were millions who had severe experiences with the virus and ended up hospitalized for weeks or even months. Jeffree lying down in the hospital bed

represents the way I felt when I was infected with COVID-19. For me, most of the painful symptoms like body aches and fevers went away after a day or two, but those two days felt like I was preparing myself for my deathbed. Jeffrey's friend is another example of how I felt throughout my experience with COVID-19. In the context of the image, the friend was also injured in the car accident that Jeffrey was in. You could say that he was sitting by Jeffrey's side because they support each other in all situations, as a true friend does. In my case with the pandemic, I got infected with the virus in my own house. I live with 7 other people who could at any time contain the virus unknowingly. At the time my mom was not aware of her infection and our entire household ultimately ended up positive for COVID-19. Of course, since we couldn't do much about it, we were all there to support each other and be sick as a family. Oddly enough, all my cousins and their families got COVID-19 at the same time as us. We didn't have severe symptoms so we made fun of the fact that we all got infected. It was just another way of strengthening our family bond since we were all suffering together. Additionally, the friend in the meme seems to be in deep thought. This can be associated with the way in which the pandemic has given me plenty of time to do personal reflections. There have been days during the pandemic where all I do is overthink my future or overanalyze where I'm currently at in life. I believe that the pandemic has had a great impact on my perspective of the world. It has taught me to take advantage of my health and youth. Although every now and then I'd get anxious to finally leave my house (during isolation), I didn't always mind staying indoors for long periods of time. Quarantining provided me with the chance to work on myself and self-reflect in areas that I didn't have time to focus on beforehand. The last reason why this meme describes my pandemic experience is because of Jungwon. He symbolizes how I kept myself busy and socialized over the past 2 years. At the beginning of the pandemic, everyone thought that it'd end

in a few weeks, but unfortunately, that was not the case. As time and regulations were added onto the pandemic isolation, I grew closer to my sisters since we were in a shared living space for multiple days at a time. My youngest sister became a fan of BTS at the end of 2019. Ultimately, I also became a fan since I spent so much time with her during the pandemic. Jungwon is a part of a Korean boy band called Enhypen; They along with multiple other kpop groups have become one of my greatest interests. With all entertainment/amusement being shut down, we'd spend most of our time watching new music videos and learning the choreography at home. The way Jungwon randomly appears in an image where he doesn't belong is how kpop randomly presented itself into my life and how the pandemic was an unexpected occurrence for the entire world.