If you are sick with the flu or cold, stay home

Flu season is upon us.

It seems like I get the flu every other year and I can usually pinpoint my infection day to someone constantly coughing and sniffling near me in a public space. When I do get sick, I take it as my responsibility to stay home as not to spread the flu. I consider it a serious public responsibility and the best way to get well. Unfortunately, too many selfish people feel it is their responsibility to spread the flu to as many people as possible.

I was recently in a coffee shop and had the unfortunate experience of sitting near a man that hacked up his lung for an hour. The idea of getting out of the house to get a coffee was more important than possibly infecting hundreds of people with the flu. A selfish man to say the least.

According to the CDC, 3,000 to 56,000 people die from the flu each year in the United States. For example, 56,000 people died during the 2012-2013 flu season. That’s a lot of people considering flu season generally lasts only a few months. The people with the highest risk of dying from the flu are elderly, babies and people with suppressed immune systems like cancer patients going through treatment.

According to **MassLive.com**, the CDC has called this flu season the worst in 10 years, and attributed 53 pediatric deaths to it. The number of year-to-date laboratory confirmed cases of flu in the state now states at 5,708, a rise of 1,655 over the week ending Jan. 26.

I can’t help but feel hundreds if not thousands of people needlessly die from the flu every year because so many selfish people decide to go into crowded public places while

contagious. If you are sick with the flu, or a terrible cold, do us all a favor and stay home, especially if you are just bored and need to get out of the house. Lives depend on it.

Here are the CDC’s recommended ways to prevent the flu: **https://www.cdc.gov/flu/consumer/prevention.htm**