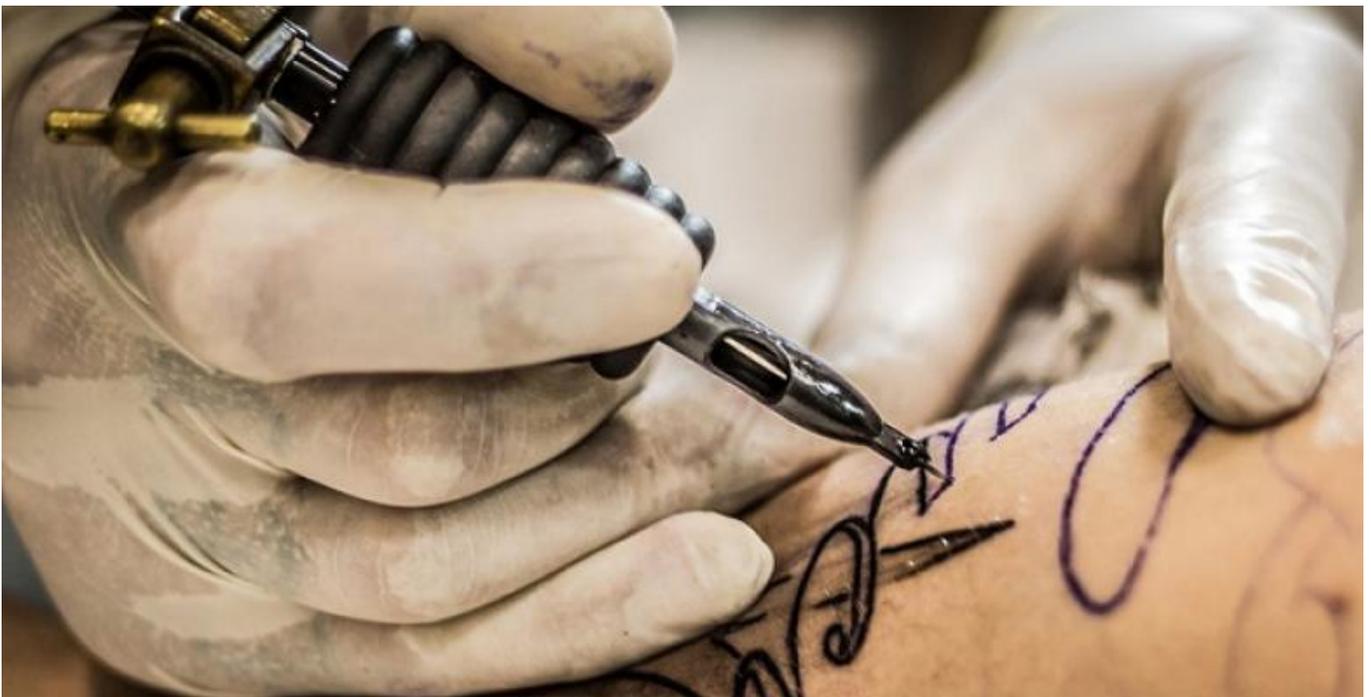


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A post-Covid-19 tattoo

By: Vladia Rubio / CubaSí  
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A friend of mine confessed to me: “I am going to get a tattoo once the pandemic is over.”

She is a 40+ years old lady, stick to moral standards. She is not the type of woman who wears casual clothing for work, or walks the streets in flip-flops, “it just does not look right,” she said categorically and absolutely convinced.

That is why it looked strange to me that my friend —I shall name her Aurora as I cannot reveal her true identity— actually made that decision.

Today, tattoos are normal. You can see them in arms, legs, backs, hands, necks, and even the face, all portraying drawings and remarks, ranging from the boring classics to the most originals. Some are

actually a work of art.

But thirty years ago, perhaps more, getting a tattoo was frowned upon at that time. I still remember my grandma pulling me away from a man who had a tattoo in his right arm just about to enter the aquarium.

I looked and questioned her with my gaze, and she hinted that she would explain to me later. Few minutes had passed when she told me: “people with tattoos are not good people. Either they are in prison or they belong to the underworld.” That’s what she told me and I never forgot that, in addition to pirates, “bad” people usually had a body mark as a sign they were actually so.

My friend and many others who were born in the 1960s-1970s decades were told the same; hence we were so naïve.

As learning and prejudice are not removed from memory in a jiffy, I was really stunned with Aurora’s decision. But she later told me more about it: “The fact is that I did not know, until now, how much I love my husband. If not for his company, his jokes, his tenderness...I do not know what I would have become without him. That is why I wanted to get a tattoo with the first letters of his name. So I can have him not only in my heart, but also on my skin.

I did not know what to say. Everyone’s choices shall be respected. Was it unnecessary, ridiculous, beautiful, touching? I would not tell.

With or without ink, some of us have found a lot of new things in times of Covid-19 or we just confirmed our presumptions. I, for instance, confirmed I love my other half: my husband. I have him on me like the best of tattoos as I love him day after day.

Anyway, I suggested Aurora: “I may go with you if you like.”

**Translated by Sergio A. Paneque Díaz / CubaSí Translated Staff**

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