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Presenting & Interpreting the Past SU21

My Pandemic: What I've Learned so Far

The COVID-19 virus was something that none of us expected, during the start of the year 2020 things were normal and my life was great. I was meeting a lot of new people as well as starting to work on collaborative projects with my new friends. When the virus reached America, we all panicked and some left the state or even the country. This became something really scary and sad, I didn't know if I was going to be back in Chicago or if I was ever going to see my friends again.

During lockdown I had a lot of free time and soon realized how unorganized I was, I stopped caring about my personal goals as well caring for how my room was. It was a mess, I did not like how I was so I had to change for the better. When I mainly started to organize myself was when I went back to Chicago for my sophomore year. Since it was my first time living in my own apartment it was like a fresh start. I started off keeping my room clean and especially the living room since it was the place where I spent most of my time since my room was so small. It was easy to maintain it clean at first but suddenly I realized how hard it was to live with roommates, especially when they are your friends and aren't as organized as you would like them to be. Soon enough I was fed up with them being so dirty. The semester I came back from winter vacation I organized and set up my room in a different manner so I could feel more comfortable in it without the annoyance of other people messing it up. I learned how to organize myself by seeing how people who didn't care looked like.

Something that I feel like everyone realized and learned how important it is, was communication and socializing as a whole. Before COVID we thought we had “freedom” for granted. Throughout the pandemic friend groups became smaller and I lost a lot of contact with a lot of people that I knew. Being bad with messages is also a negative, I’m not the best at replying or having full conversations through texting so this made it very difficult for me to keep in touch with people. I lost a lot of friends from the USA because of this. Some of the people I used to be really close to stopped being in my daily life and since no one texted the friendship basically just disappeared. In Chicago most of the people that I knew left the county so I became very lonely. My friends started meeting people through social media so I had to do the same in order to meet new people and work with other creatives. Even if I started getting used to texting more often I will always prefer to meet face to face with someone rather than just messaging back and forth. I learned that in order to be “happy” you will always need people with whom you can share this feeling or that they can make you feel it. In Chicago I started working on my messaging skills as well as being better with holding up friendships.

Even if it sounds contradictory, the last thing I learned was to enjoy the alone time I had as well as actually liking and reaping the benefits of my personal space. I have always been someone that likes to spend most of my time surrounded by other people. I think I never enjoyed my alone time until now because when I was a kid I used to be with my brother all the time and if I wasn't with him I was with my friends that were my neighbors. What made me finally realize that having your own time and personal space was living with three roommates. Being surrounded by someone 24/7 can get annoying to a certain extent especially when I don't enjoy

being in my room. One of my roommates always tried starting a conversation with me even when I wasn't in the mood and even sometimes they wake me up. When I started spending more time in my room was when I noticed how valuable was my personal space and having time for myself.

In conclusion I think I learnt on how to organize my life in general and actually know how to have a “healthy” relationship with myself and others around me.