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Age 17

Grade 12

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What were your thoughts when the first COVID-19 cases were being diagnosed in China? Did you expect it to spread to the US?

I was too swarmed with the college process and senior work that I did not give much thought about COVID. However, I knew that this would turn into a pandemic because of people traveling. I knew that countries would have a late response, increasing the infection rate.

How have things changed for you and/or your family since the outbreak?

My parents are working extra hard at work since they are healthcare workers. Whenever they come home from work, they want me to stay in my room so that I don't go near them. I don't go outside anymore unless I practice driving with my dad. I'm just grateful that my parents still have a job to keep us going.

For you, what is the worst thing about this?

For me, the worst thing about this is how it affects my financial situation for college and college experience. My parents' savings have dropped a lot and many fear that student orientation, maybe even the fall semester, would be online and that's honestly disappointing. I've already given up on Senior year and I want to look past it. What's also one of the worst is AP exams. My entire school year effort to get college credit is based on 2 questions and my internet connection. I'm still happy that they still continued this opportunity for us, but I fear that I may not be able to answer the questions they give us. Online school is not preparing us for this; it's all self study.

In your experience so far, what, if anything, has been positive about this?

The positive thing about this is extra free time. Daily burden and stress is decreased. I have more time to break, to workout, to enjoy self-care, to hang out more with my little brother, etc. I also like how people are now being more thoughtful and nice to each other with the pandemic; it's a wake up for manyAdr people since they know that they should have been nice and thoughtful with a pandemic or not.

Tell us about a moment or experience during this time that you will never forget.

I will never forget Government Cuomo's daily press conference and him talking about family.

Pretend it is the year 2050 and another pandemic is looming--what would you tell someone who has just asked what it was like to live through the 2020 pandemic?

Stay inside. Don't be stupid and wear a mask and maintain distance. Don't get lazy at home; maintain your health. Get more sleep. Learn something new at home like a new skill or read more books. Pray (or hope if you're not religious) because hope is what keeps us going. Prepare with supplies (but don't hoard) and your emergency fund. I don't if your pandemic is better or worse than ours, but just be patient and take it one day at a time.