

# **Transcript of Interview with Juliana Marston and Sydney Champagne by Each Other**

**Interviewee/Interviewer:** Juliana Marston

**Interviewee/Interviewer:** Sydney Champagne

**Date:** 09/19/2021

**Location (Interviewee/Interviewer):**

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**Transcriber:** Lily Crigler

## **Abstract:**

Juliana Marston and Sydney Champagne both experienced the pandemic while finishing their senior year of high school in 2020. They interview each other covering topics as their initial feelings when the first lockdown in March 2020 started, how the shutdown of schools affected them, how quarantine and social distancing changed their lives and how they managed the challenges of keeping in touch with family and friends during these times. At last, they talk about their new hobbies and habits they attained during the pandemic and how it was to finish the senior years of high school remote.

**Juliana Marston 0:03**

My name is Juliana Marston, and I'm interviewing Sydney Champagne on her experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. Do you consent to the interview?

**Sydney Champagne 0:12**

Yes, I do.

**Juliana Marston 0:14**

Can you please state the date and time for me?

**Sydney Champagne 0:16**

It's September 19, 2021. And it is 12pm.

**Juliana Marston 0:20**

Perfect.

**Sydney Champagne 0:22**

I am Sydney Champagne, and I'm interviewing Juliana Marston about her experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. Do you consent to this interview?

**Juliana Marston 0:30**

Yes, I do.

**Sydney Champagne 0:31**

Please state the date and time.

**Juliana Marston 0:33**

It is September 19, 2021 at 12pm. Starting off with my questions for you, Sydney, do you remember what you were doing when you got the announcement about the first lockdown March 13, 2020? How did you feel initially?

**Sydney Champagne 0:51**

I remember the exact moment that I heard about the announcement of the COVID-19 shutdown. I knew nothing of what was going on really. And I barely knew what COVID even was, no one did. So I was thrilled to hear about the shutdown. I had a test the next day that I and everyone else in my class was absolutely dreading. And we heard of the school shutdowns all around us, so we were praying that we were the next school. I remember I was working out in the school gym with my friends and I got a call from my mom telling me about the two week shutdown at our school. I was so excited. And I told my friends and we all hugged and realized that the test is going to be pushed. When I got back from school that day, my dad sat me down and he was telling me how concerned he was and how bad the situation really was. But I just thought he was overreacting like he always did. So I continued to believe that the shutdown was only gonna last two weeks, and then everything was going to be back to normal. But little did I know.

As for you Juliana, my question is: When did you realize that quarantine was going to last much longer than everyone first expected? How did you react to this realization.

**Juliana Marston 2:04**

So when quarantine was first announced my English teacher, who is a wonderful older woman my junior year, she hadn't even heard the news about lockdown in the morning. She thought we were joking when me and my classmates asked her what our work during the supposed to be quarantine was going to be. In essence, none of my peers or my teachers thought that quarantine would last longer than a few weeks, I was also under this impression. Originally, I was relieved. Lockdown for the end of the 2020 school year meant asynchronous virtual learning in my school district. So I got to sleep in, do work at my own pace, etc. However, as those two weeks became two months and now, here today, I realized quarantine and the fight against COVID-19 would undoubtedly continue. It was disappointing to come to terms with not getting a real junior or senior year, all the events like my junior prom that I've been looking forward to are suddenly gone. I also felt very isolated, like I'm sure many others did. I'm a very extroverted person. And though I still talk to my friends using social media, and text during quarantine, I really miss getting to physically be around my peers.

So as another question for you, Sydney, how did you stay in contact with your friends, family, etc during the pandemic?

**Sydney Champagne 3:19**

To be honest, I thought it was really hard to stay in contact with my friends and family during this pandemic. I had tried to like orchestrate my online get togethers with my extended family like late night game nights or anything like that. But we all found it very hard to coordinate times with all my cousins being in different states and everything. My cousins and my family had always had Easter together at my house every year, and we would have traditional foods that we would make together and everything. So during Easter, during the pandemic, we decided to make all the foods we usually would and we would have a dinner together. Only this would be overdue. We set up a table and decorated my house. And we sat in front of the computer and had conversations with the screen. It is very interesting to say the least. As for my friends, it was hard in the beginning to stay connected. We would FaceTime and text but I really didn't feel that we were connecting. So it was really hard for me in the beginning. But it improved when we were able to see each other outside in person.

As for you Juliana, how did you stay connected with your friends and family during the quarantine? Did you find it challenging?

**Juliana Marston 4:40**

So with my friends, we held virtual game nights every week. We'd play Pictionary, online Cards Against Humanity and more. The all just stayed in touch and check in on each other during

quarantine. Later on in the summer we did socially distanced hikes around our town and walks, which were very fun. I've never been super into hiking but, I don't know, it was very fun to do it with my friends during the summer especially because there wasn't much else we could do. And my town didn't have a lot of stuff and how do you mean like parks or anything outdoors, it was a very small town. But you know, hikes and walks we did. And again, it was a good way for us to like just stay in touch and like communicate with each other. With my extended family. However, most of my relatives were a lot less tech savvy. My poor grandparents, they couldn't figure out how to work Zoom for the life of them. They didn't know how to turn on the camera or how to unmute themselves, it was rough for a few weeks. However, we still managed to set up Zoom calls for like all our holidays and birthdays to stay connected. Sometimes it was really challenging to stay in touch. I often felt very emotionally drained due to lockdown and the stress of maintaining my grades despite virtual learning. This made me hesitate to reach out to my friends and family on some days. However, I made it a habit to talk to my friends and my extended family every day, even if it was just a quick text message. This helped me to feel more connected to those I care about, and I'm happy to say that it's still a habit I've continued today. The other night, I actually called my grandma we did a FaceTime because she really wanted to see my dorm room, and I'd finished like officially like setting it up and everything. So I mean a lot of my older relatives are immunocompromised, her included. So even if it's not the same as seeing each other in person, at least Facetiming and the tech that we have today does allow us to stay in touch. And I'm very thankful for that.

**Sydney Champagne** 6:29

That's great.

**Juliana Marston** 6:31

Yeah. I've been meaning to ask, what are some of those Easter foods that you were talking about? Do you make like easter egg bread?

**Sydney Champagne** 6:39

We make um, like, carrot cake from scratch and like, homemade bread and everything.

**Juliana Marston** 6:45

Okay, for Easter, my family makes these little like egg like, breads. It's like, literal like loaves of bread within like, hard boiled eggs.

**Sydney Champagne** 6:54

Oh, I've never heard of that.

**Juliana Marston** 6:55

It's very strange, it's just pastries like though, so I just was meaning to ask because who knows?

**Sydney Champagne** 7:00

Yeah.

**Juliana Marston** 7:01

Getting back to our questions. My last question for you, Sydney, is could you develop any new hobbies or habits during the pandemic and what inspired you to do so?

**Sydney Champagne** 7:11

I was actually very productive during this quarantine. I found many hobbies to pass the time, and I was able to try new things that I had always wanted to do, but never had the time for. I began to eat very healthily. I meal prepped and learned a lot about the science behind nutrition and calories and

everything. I also began to take my fitness very seriously, I got into very good shape with my daily workouts. And I feel that I learned a lot about healthy habits. I got into building things as well, I became very sick of my room design being in my room constantly. So I decided I designed a bed frame and presented it to my parents. They allowed me to get in, get the materials and cut the wood and everything. So I was able to learn a new skill and build a bed frame for myself that I still use to this day.

**Juliana Marston** 8:04

So cool.

**Sydney Champagne** 8:05

Thank you.

**Juliana Marston** 8:06

Sorry to interrupt, that's just so cool.

**Sydney Champagne** 8:08

Thank you.

**Juliana Marston** 8:09

Yeah.

**Sydney Champagne** 8:09

I was really happy with the outcome.

**Juliana Marston** 8:12

Good for you, good for you.

**Sydney Champagne** 8:13

Thank you. And back to the questions. What was your experience like having your senior year of high school remote?

**Juliana Marston** 8:23

So my senior year of high school was hybrid, half in person and half virtual. I learned better in person, so adjusting my study habits to account for virtual learning was a little difficult in the first few months. I was also dealing with college applications, as many other seniors were, which added to my stress levels briefly. Despite these challenges, I still tried to stay involved in my school and my community. As part of my school student council executive board, I helped organize an outdoor and socially distance homecoming ceremony last fall. Students nominated the homecoming court through a survey online in the week before homecoming. And then at the actual homecoming football game students voted on their homecoming king and queen through a QR code and link that we sent out. So it took a lot of planning. I and the rest of the student council felt it was really important to hold the event as a way to improve school spirit and give the senior class who were graduating with in like the virtual realm, like really weren't having a real senior year. Giving them something to remember. I also worked as part of my school's newspaper to publish monthly issues discussing relevant topics to the student body. Yes, COVID-19 but also different political, social, and school events at the time. These things helped me to feel like a part of my community while also allowing me to give back to my school and my peers. Even though I wish we had been able to go back to school fully in person my senior year, I still feel that I made the most of my last year of high school do these activities and more. So I think that's it for our questions. Thank you so much for sharing your experiences Sydney. I find the positive habits that you developed during the lockdown to be very inspiring.

**Sydney Champagne** 9:57

Thank you for sharing as well. I really enjoyed hearing about it how you made the best of your senior year remotely.

**Juliana Marston** 10:02

Thank you. So this has been Juliana Marston.

**Sydney Champagne** 10:06

And Sydney Champagne.