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### A Change of Pace: Life During Quarantine

Adjusting to the life of social distancing has been quite the experience. Before the quarantine began, my life was very different. I was in my college apartment with my roommates, going to classes at my university, CSU Sacramento, almost everyday, and living a pretty average college student lifestyle. COVID-19 has changed the way I live my day to day life in many ways. My life has been confined to my home with my family, with a few outings for basic essentials. This quarantine has brought about many changes and I have had to adjust my life to these strange circumstances.

During the weekdays I try to maintain some sort of schedule, working around my classes, homework, and other activities to keep me busy. On a typical weekday, I try to start my days at 8am, although I have slept in a couple of times. I make myself a simple breakfast always accompanied by a warm chai latte. On most days, by 9am I am in my room on my laptop attending one of my classes over a Zoom video session. After my class, I usually work on my assignments and/or catch up on assigned readings. By noon, I make myself a sandwich or a salad and join my mom for lunch. Due to the circumstances, she is also working from home, so we keep each other company throughout our days. Once I am finished with my lunch, I like to go into my backyard and play fetch with my dogs while my mom returns to work. After an hour or so of playing, I go into my living room and watch a couple of episodes of “The Office” on Netflix or just scroll through social media on my phone. At 2:30pm I head back to my room and prepare for my next class that begins at 3:00pm. While I wait for my class to start I try to fit in

some more homework. Then, after my class at 4:30pm I head to the kitchen and help my mom prepare dinner for the evening while my dad gets home from his job. By 6pm we are all done with our dinner and afterwards we try to watch a movie or do something together. Although, sometimes I just go straight back into my room and work on more homework. Usually, I end my nights by doing either or but I tend to push myself to work on homework. My schedule hasn't been the best, but no matter how hard it has been with school, I have not lost sight of my commitment to pursuing a higher education. It has been difficult to maintain my motivation but nonetheless, I have been getting through it all.

The one thing that has changed immensely during the quarantine, is my level of motivation and the structure of my schedule. Back when I wasn't at home with my family and I was living in Sacramento, I was constantly at school working on my homework. This semester I felt especially confident about how things were going with my academics. I felt that I was able to maintain a steady schedule for myself outside of class time. I had balanced my school work and time with friends and family efficiently. Everything was going great, and I was doing really well about not procrastinating on my assignments. I looked forward to what the rest of the semester would be like. However, once the order for quarantine and social distancing was set in place, things changed completely. I decided to go home with my parents because I didn't know what COVID-19 would bring and I wanted to be close to my family. I knew things would be different with the transition to online schooling and everything else, but I never imagined how challenging the adjustment would be. The first two weeks of being in quarantine were by far the most difficult for me. For the first week, my classes were all suspended in order to give professors the chance to adjust all their syllabus. I found myself feeling really puzzled during this time and

slowly felt my motivation and the schedule I had created slipping away. By the time I got back into my classes in the second week, I was not as focused on my assignments and was watching way too many tv shows and movies on Netflix to distract myself from the anxiety I felt. Another thing that obviously changed, was my ability to see my friends and the rest of my family. I was used to seeing my friends almost everyday at school and my best friends and family on the weekends when I would come home to visit. Despite not being able to see my friends or other family members, we have been able to stay connected.

The one thing that has remained the same, regardless of the circumstances, has been my ability to stay in touch with my loved ones. Thanks to the internet, I have had numerous FaceTime calls, Zoom sessions, and Skype calls with various family members and friends. Being that I was away at college, most of my connection to my family and best friends was through my phone and laptop. Whether it was on social media or through a phone call I always made sure to keep in touch. By far I have felt this to be the most normal and constant thing during this time. With my college friends this has become our new normal but it doesn't feel too drastic to me. Although I do miss seeing everyone in person, staying connected and being there for each other has been easy to maintain.

In spite of all the changes that have occurred, I feel that we will all eventually come out of this stronger. The future is still uncertain as to how COVID-19 will continue to affect everyone's life but I am confident in what is to come when this is all over.