

Amidst a crisis, I found a means for self-improvement. Rather than hanging my head and complaining about what I could be doing if I wasn't quarantined, I have decided to appreciate all that I am still capable of accomplishing. I have taken a time of hardship to change myself both personally and holistically within my family dynamic.

In making a better and more productive version of myself, I first have made it a daily habit to tackle my household obligations as soon as I wake up. Having grown up with a stay-at-home mother, I have often been able to rely on her to complete the everyday chores, typically on my behalf. Now that I am home with more free time, I have taken over my mother's to-do's as well as my own. To be more specific, my mornings now entail immediately unloading/loading the dishwasher, finishing the laundry, cleaning my room, and proceeding to ask my mom how else I can help her. By being as helpful as possible, I have made our lives at home less stressful and created more time for enjoyable activities.

After I accomplish my daily household tasks, I immediately workout. May I add, prior to quarantine, I worked out less than five times a month. However, just in the past week, I have worked out for six days. For working out, I have found my newest obsession and love through Peloton. Their program includes every type of workout, but I definitely enjoy their spin classes the most. The feeling after accomplishing a workout makes me want to tackle the day and be as productive as possible. Because I am working out, I feel more compelled to have a healthier and more balanced lifestyle, which involves my eating habits. I have also become very interested in cooking for myself. Pinterest and Youtube are my two favorite avenues for finding easy, quick, and especially healthy recipes. I do however frequently splurge and make desserts for my family and me to enjoy. Some of the desserts I have recently made include banana bread, peanut butter

chocolate chip cookies, and rice krispie treats. I have found a change in my overall attitude and outlook on just the remainder of the day because of my new eating habits and working out.

In addition to 40-60 minutes of physical activity, I also take a nightly 25-minute walk with my Australian Labradoodle, named Cowboy. He is currently four months old and he has the sweetest personality of any dog I know. I typically go on walks with my mom but if my dad and brother get home early enough from work, they often join. Leisure walks give my family time to catch up and be free of any technological distractions.

After our walks, we have dinner as a family. Contrary to many families, prior to isolation my family rarely sat down for dinner at the table together; rather, we sat wherever we wanted typically in front of a television. Now, we sit together every night and pray before our meals. We make sure to thank God for bringing us together and asking for protection over those who are not as fortunate. Dinners entail no phones, discussing our personal "highs and lows" of the day, and discussing whatever else we find interesting that day. Many more dinners are spent at home these days rather than out at a restaurant given the circumstances. My family does, however, do take out of local restaurants so we can provide our support to these businesses. I am grateful my family can provide any means of help to other local small businesses.

My parents are responsible for the grocery shopping, I myself haven't even entered a grocery store, let alone any public place since quarantine started. Our local grocery store doesn't even allow customers to enter without a mask on now. The highlight of my day now includes drives to the drive-thru post office, and coffee drive-thrus as well, besides that I am either inside my house or out for exercise purposes.

In regards to school, I currently have less than 2 weeks left of online courses. The transfer from regular school to online was difficult for given classes of mine, but I adjusted with the help of my professors as best as possible. With all things, the adjustment has been at the forefront of making it through this crisis.

More importantly, I have found to appreciate the simpler things. Going through drive-thrus with my mom was a regular daily occurrence prior to quarantine, but now when we go I am a little more aware of the fortunate circumstances I still live in. For many college students such as myself, their parents either are still working or are both perhaps unemployed. My dad owns a family business metal manufacturing company and works alongside my brother. The two of them are gone from home for the majority of the day. Thankfully, my mom works for my dad as well and can work from home so that she can be home with me. Without my mom, I would be home with just my dog, which I imagine might feel lonesome. I sympathize with the many complaints about isolating from my own friends and family, but I strongly encourage everyone to still find the positives in their own lives.