

It is extremely difficult to summarize life during the COVID-19 pandemic into one story. A novel virus isolated my family of six and altered our lifestyles drastically. I remember coming home from spring break thinking it was an exaggeration when the president of my school advised us to pack with the possibility of no return. Little did I know I would never return to the University of Miami ever again. I was the first home, but my younger sister quickly went from being an only child to having all of her siblings home in just a few short weeks. My house started to get progressively dirtier and my poor mother was cooking significantly larger meals. The pandemic cancelled sports, television shows, and every other form of technological entertainment one could think of. My family was forced to be creative and come up with unique ways to pass the time. We were all developing deeper connections with each other without even noticing.

I remember realizing the severity of the pandemic when you could no longer grocery shop without a mask. Initially, I was extremely “anti-mask” but quickly noticed I did not have a choice. Slowly, all non-essential businesses were forced to close and the only time I left my house was for my daily walks with my family members. April came around and I thought there was no way my birthday, on May 31, would be in quarantine considering it was practically two months away. Easter was another memorable day for me. A holiday where I was usually surrounded by family and friends I found myself live streaming church on Youtube and eating dinner with just five other people. My house felt so empty, but my heart felt so full of love from my parents and siblings. My birthday was celebrated at home and my candles were blown out with the help of a fan. The days seemed to be endless in the moment, but when the stay at home order was lifted, it felt as if the past four months had flown by. The common line when it

came time to return to school included thoughts of disbelief about the amount of time we actually spent at home. From my spring break to my return at a different school I had been home almost six months.