

It was March 10th, and I was in my junior year of high school. Classes were getting difficult, and I needed to catch up on my work. There were rumors of an upcoming break due to a new virus: "COVID-19". A break is exactly what I needed, and everyone in the school was looking forward to it. Fortunately for me, it was announced that there would be no school for the next two weeks! My friends and I were ready to have fun and enjoy the next fourteen days of freedom. However, our two-week break quickly turned into much more. The entire country had declared a lockdown, and school was undecided on re-opening. Almost abruptly, the world flipped upside down. Families and friends were no longer allowed to see each other, and the spread of COVID-19 became the number one priority. The government established a mask mandate and urged the population to take safety precautions.

The Pandemic affected everything and everyone. Businesses required masks, offices were limited in number, and gatherings ceased. My brother's high school turned graduation into a car parade to minimize COVID-19 spread. Perhaps the most surprising fact of that Pandemic was its length. At first, we thought it was going to be over in weeks, but weeks turned to months and months to a year and a half. Still, there is no clear end in sight as the new "Delta" variant is three times more contagious than the original. These times have been difficult and uncertain, but it has made me appreciate my family and the preciousness of life. I spent priceless time with my family during the past year, which I would have otherwise not have had the chance to. If I learned one thing, it would be to cherish every day of life you have now because you never know when the world will be turned upside down next.