

Self-Improvement and Reflection While In Isolation

Besides a sickness that would infect millions of Americans and others around the world, COVID-19 brought along other baggage during its unwelcomed arrival to the States such as state shutdowns, unemployment, financial struggles, loss of interaction with others, isolation, and many other side effects. As a teenager who was approaching adulthood and trying my best to make the most of my upcoming senior year, a pandemic was something completely unexpected and left me in a phase of disbelief that the world could turn completely upside down in the matter of weeks. During the first week of quarantine, I found myself troubled when it came to coping with current happenings. Sooner or later, I was eventually able to develop a new perspective to this period of isolation where I saw this time as an opportunity rather than a disadvantage for myself. Specifically, an opportunity to better myself.

My youth is something I treasure and try my best to make the most out of considering most of one's life is spent in adulthood, but being a kid and a teenager is only a fraction. Despite this desire, I feel like my life before the pandemic was one where I spent too much time worrying about the future, and how little time I have left as a kid, and how I have these goals and aspirations that I haven't even attempted to try. I preoccupied myself with my future so much that I never gave myself the chance to live the way I wanted to. It was right when I realized this that I decided that I'm going to use quarantine to my advantage and spend some time focusing on myself.

During quarantine, I reignited some passions of mine that I had been neglecting such as fashion and video editing. I created two fashion-related Instagram accounts, one to display some of my favorite outfits and to track my style progression, and the other to show off my custom clothing creations. I also experimented with new clothing and was able to develop a better sense of what my style is. As for video editing, I achieved a goal of mine that I had been putting off ever since I thought of it back in 6th grade which was starting my own YouTube channel. Throughout this period of isolation, I created content and was able to instill a stronger sense of self-confidence within myself.

These are only a small portion of the things I achieved and worked towards during quarantine. The extensive amount of time spent alone was suffocating at times, but was also spent on self-reflection and rethinking how I wanted to carry on with my life after the pandemic. One thing that quarantine taught me, as well as many others, is the importance of not taking things for granted and to live in the present moment. Pre-pandemic, hangouts with my friends, going to school, being able to socialize with others were all things I would've never expected to be taken away from me. It wasn't until quarantine when I recognized how precious those interactions were. Like I mentioned earlier, I used to spend a lot of time stressing over my future and the fact that I had uneasy feelings towards my potential. Although I still am unsure about where my future will lead me, I've realized that all of this worrying is distracting me from the things that were happening in the present moment. Besides those realizations, I feel like I have a greater understanding of who I am. Even though self-improvement is something that I will

continue to work on for the rest of my life, I've noticed that I feel more comfortable and confident with who I am.