

## QUARANTINE THROUGH GENERATION Z

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From a young age, I have always thought that you do not need anyone other than yourself. However, there are always going to be the people that you want there with you, as you venture off into the world and grow up to be the person that you are meant to be. My perception of other people's roles in my life proved to be true these past few months. For someone who is my age, life has been completely turned around. The pandemic and the protests taking place in the world at the moment have created an unpleasant atmosphere for a teenager. Anticipation is growing and people are facing a sense of curiosity. What will come next? Will circumstances change? There are too many questions and not enough answers. These particular experiences have given both positive and negative outcomes, which have helped people my age grow and learn the brutal reality of our world.

Needless to say, we had abandoned our normal routines, and we essentially had to recreate our lives. We started to eat more or less, depending on who we are when we are stressed. We became less physically active, involuntarily participating in the destruction of our own health. We watched the news on a daily basis, unsure of what was coming our way. We thought that everything would get better, like it always does, but it did not. Instead, it got worse. We watched some of our loved ones get sick, and unfortunately, death stepped uninvited into our lives. With lost communication and days fading into one another, some of our relationships were demolished. We differentiated between our true friends and the ones that were temporary high school career companions. Personally, I came to terms with failed friendship in quarantine. I lost contact with a person that I had considered one of my closest friends. Cancelled trips, abandoned plans for college visits that were representations of our future, and neglected birthdays emptied our schedules and great expectations. The SAT and AP exams lost their importance, as our motivation escaped from our grasps. Our doubts and fears took advantage of us in this difficult time. We fought internal battles and made it through the worst. This, in turn, strengthened us.

We needed to remind ourselves of the positive aspects of these particular challenges, as we faced them. We started to dedicate more time to our families and learned more about the ones that we loved with all of the time on our hands. We gained knowledge about how to prioritize and make time for the important things in life. My friends and I became actively involved with the rest of the world, trying our best to help others despite the confinements of our young age. With this newfound growth and responsibility, we were pushed forward into adulthood. 2020 will be mentioned in history books, and be defined by the facts, but we will always remember this period as a time of extensive personal growth. Personally witnessing the troubles that medical field workers faced during this pandemic strengthened my aspirations of becoming a doctor. It was really the last push forward into a medical career. We must remember, as we move ahead that we did not falter in a time like this, but rather we made it through and persevered!

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