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History 15H

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How I Have Been Economically Affected By The Coronavirus

I am very grateful my quarantine experience has been quite positive and enjoyable, and a lot of that is due to little to no financial stress. Almost everyone has been affected by the coronavirus financially, whether positively or negatively. My mom was denied unemployment because she could not take out her vacation and sick pay, which is a prerequisite for unemployment under North Carolina state law, where she lives. She also did not get a stimulus check due to my stepdad owing child support for his thirty-year-old daughter. She was just barely getting herself out of debt, seeing the light at the end of the tunnel, when she was furloughed and began falling farther and farther behind due to all the loss in money. My best friend rents a chair in a salon and is still being charged rent for her chair although she can't work and make any money. She also didn't get any unemployment or the stimulus check.

My sister will walk out of quarantine with a nice savings account. She is always stressing about money, but due to the extra \$600 per week on top of her regular unemployment that was part of the stimulus package, she is making more money staying at home than she would going to work. Not to mention the stimulus check. I have benefitted greatly financially also. I work for Starbucks who paid their employees fully until May 4, 2020. Once May 4 hit, we had the option to go back to work or use our sick and vacation pay. So I stayed home from March 19th – May 18th fully paid, all I missed was tips. I also was one of the lucky ones who got a stimulus check, and Sacramento State refunded me over eight-hundred dollars thanks to the bill providing funding to universities that they have to give half of to students. Being a Pell Grant student, I was

top priority. I was really hurting before the coronavirus, but now I am comfortably walking out of quarantine with over two-thousand dollars in savings.

My experience has also been enjoyable due to an increase in spare time. Many have gotten this luxury but can't enjoy it due to lack-of-work and financial stress. I have been able to genuinely enjoy my time off work, focusing on my school work and spending lots of time on FaceTime with my family. I also extended my workout time to one hour instead of only half an hour. My normal weekly meal prep I do every Sunday looks very different, with me just cooking large amounts of my proteins and healthy carbs and throwing them in a large container rather than putting individual servings in separate containers and packaging everything like I normally do.

I have also learned tons of new card games, such as Canasta, Pinochle, Gin Rummy, and Cribbage. Thanks to these games I have grown much closer to my grandma, who I live with, and my great aunt Sharrel. We play card games together all the time which is great because we are becoming closer and entertaining each other during this time. I am also much closer to my sister Stacey. Before the quarantine we hardly had time to Facetime and talk much, but now that we are both home bored we have had these super long marathons of being on Facetime together for hours just talking about random crap. I honestly don't think we have ever been closer.

I have been taking advantage of this time to slow down and "smell the roses." I am a working college student, which inherently means I am hardly ever home, and when I am my face is in my laptop writing an essay. This virus has given me a chance to slow down and re-establish my priorities and make more time for myself and my family.

When quarantine first began, I had this big idea of this long extravagant morning routine. I was going to do yoga every morning, journal and read for an hour, do an hour long workout, make a healthy breakfast, and more. It lasted for about the first half of the quarantine but

eventually I had to make my routine more manageable. Now, I wake up at 6 am, make my healthy superfood shake, read, and journal while my pre-workout kicks in, start my workout around 7 am, shower, do some chores, and eat my next meal around 9 am.

All in all, this quarantine has been very enjoyable for me, but I know it wasn't for all. As much as I would like to say it's about our mindset and what we do to occupy our time, I know it has a lot to do with our stressors, which are different for everybody. So no matter what, I hope everyone's stressors are manageable and that we can all see past the ugliness of this situation and see the gifts that lie beneath.