

The first few weeks in quarantine, like for many, were pretty difficult for me. I would have good days and bad days. I would go through waves of sadness here and there and get depressed thinking of all the things I was unable to do or accomplish, and all the opportunities I had missed and would seemingly never get back. This was supposed to be the time of internships, widening my professional network, shadowing professionals, and preparing for my professional future. How was I supposed to prepare for my impending future trapped inside my home wearing pajamas all day? I felt like the whole world was put on pause, but my life was still passing me by. After two weeks of self-pity and baking an extensive amount of bread (stress baking anyone?), I realized I was in desperate need of a new perspective. How can I benefit from this situation? What can I do with this time to prepare for my future that I wouldn't have the opportunity to do otherwise? I had a quarantine awakening.

I decided that this time at home would not go wasted. I put together goals for the year 2020 that I could achieve from the comfort of my home. I realized that there was, in fact, a lot I could do to prepare for my future that didn't involve other people. I began to research online workshops that I could complete and add to my resume, I began reading articles and books that related to my career that I never had the time to read, and I set aside time to practice the things I used to love, like photoshop and web design. I gave myself the opportunity to self reflect and really dissect the life choices that had brought me to this point in my life, and decide if the path I was on was still the one I wanted to pursue.

My time in quarantine has helped me realize that the best way I could help my future self was not by networking or interning for a big company in the city, but was by focusing on me. I needed time away from the productive life the world told me I was supposed to be living to decide if all that productivity was really taking me where I wanted to go in the first place. Where do I want to go? Finding out what I like, what I don't like, figuring out what my skills are and focusing on how to apply them, deciding what kind of future I wanted and setting goals to get there were all things I'd sidelined before the quarantine. I realized how lucky I was to have this time to be allowed to focus on me. Quarantine has gifted me with a new perspective on life and has shown me how capable I truly am.