

## A Journal Entry of the Plague Year

The days grew duller and blander each day. Waking up in the afternoon, eating whatever I found in the cupboard to then stare at a screen waiting for the day to reset so I could repeat. That was the routine. I spent hours on the internet, and for the first time it seemed to have run out of things to show me. I watched videos of people organising and being productive in hopes of motivating myself to just do something. Just something, but it never worked. I felt as if my life had become one meaningless cycle.

Things happened that I could have never predicted. Baking became bigger than ever. This resulted in my mother and I making numerous trips to Costco, Coles, Woolworths and every other supermarket hoping that at least one of them would have just a bag of flour for us. For a while we were always disappointed. People began to watch things from the documentary Tiger King to shows like 90-day fiancé. It was then that I realised that I wasn't the only going through the same cycle of boredom.

One morning, I had a turning point. I woke up to the light shining right through my curtains. Nine o'clock, I wasn't supposed to be awake, not for another four hours. I buried my head into my pillow to fall back asleep, but the light wouldn't let me. Frustrated, I open the curtains. Light rushed into my room, as if a gust of wind. Everything looked unusually bright. The sky so blue, the trees so green, the bricks of my neighbour's house so red. Head empty, I sat there soaking up my surroundings and letting the sunshine warm my cheeks. I wasn't sure just how long I was there, but it was only when I noticed my neighbour looking at me strangely that prompted me to get up.

Something hit me that day. I had the sudden urge to get my life together. Everything I said I didn't have time for, all the goals I had set, all the tasks I left unfinished were to be done today. There was no excuse, I had all the time in the world. I pulled out the sewing machine and spent hours learning how to alter clothing. I exercised, as I said I would for weeks. And I started to cook and eat proper meals again.

As I was chopping up capsicum I began to appreciate where I was. During this pandemic, I had a place to stay, I had food to eat and I had my family around me. I began to realise how the hustle and bustle of my daily life occupied me and allowed me to take the simple pleasures in life for granted. I had never taken the time to be present but during this unprecedented and strange time I slowly learnt to.

I grew an appreciation for the structure school provided me with. Structure was what kept me from falling into a rut. Without school, I lacked structure. Before, I hated having to eat at a certain hour and learning particular subjects at a specific time, but I learnt that was what made sure I ate three meals a day and completed tasks for all my subjects. It was what kept me organised and my life in order.

Even though the situation is still uncertain, and we are all unsure when our world will return to its normal state when we do, I hope we will come back with more knowledge and a new appreciation for the things we take for granted.