

### **Day #1-Thursday**

I'm here. I can't believe that I'm finally here. To be honest, I was in a teensy bit of denial leading up to drop-off day, but right now I'm in my dorm, and I'm stuck here. I can't leave. Due to covid restrictions everyone must stay on campus and though it's just a 30 minute drive to my house it couldn't feel further away.

My mind keeps constantly reminding me that I'm missing out on things while I'm gone. My brain keeps rushing to evaluate if the activity I'm doing at boarding school is more fun than what I'd be doing at home. It makes me constantly rethink my choice to board at Andover. I wonder, if I simply accept that I will be stuck here for the next 5 weeks will I be able to enjoy my time more?

### **Day #2 -Friday**

Today I attended a mandatory volleyball practice. I found that I have some natural talent which made me happy, but it was just nice to have an easy space to be social. I've realized that friends are linked pretty closely to my mental health. As I meet more people I become happier and more comfortable in this space. I'm hoping to find friends in that class even though I nearly decapitated a few people with my serving.

### **Day #3- Sunday**

The first weekend has passed. I didn't write anything on Saturday and I wish it was because I was so busy, but the truth is that there was very little to do. I felt comfortable during the week when I had things to do and places to be. In a way it helped me feel like I belonged. Quarantine is frustrating because it limited the weekend activities that were available which

made me feel lost about how to spend my time. While quarantining sometimes it feels like your only options are all or nothing. I feel discouraged if I'm sitting alone in my dorm so I'll walk down to the common room. But then there's no limit to who from my dorm can be there and it can sometimes feel overwhelming and crowded. I feel like if I'm living with these people then we should at least be friends but since dorm bonding is limited I haven't been able to meet many people yet. I know this is wishful thinking but I just want covid to be over and for everyone to be friends.

#### **Day #4- Monday**

In my first few days I would describe thinking of home almost as being a sharp pain, but today thinking of home just felt like a warm memory and I feel like that's progress. Almost like, "Living at home was fun and I'm looking forward to doing it again, but just not right now." I think that's because with classes on the schedule again it provided structured interactions which helped me make connections and start to create a family here.

#### **Day #5- Tuesday**

My dorm room has become the place that makes me feel fully comfortable on campus. I spent the afternoon decorating: hanging posters of my favorite shows and movies, pictures of my friends, and pieces of art that make me happy. I suppose all it takes to make your dorm great is a giant poster of the Breakfast Club. However, something that still makes me uneasy about boarding is having to wear a mask in every other part of my dorm. At home wearing a mask meant that I was about to head out into the public. Since I have to wear a mask when I leave my room, it makes the whole rest of the dorm feel like it's not my home. This definitely adds to the

difficulty of getting used to a new space. Because I'm not fully comfortable in the dorm I almost never feel like I can relax. I'm always trying to be quiet, leave spaces in perfect condition, and not talk to myself because I worry about what other people will think of me. I find that I'm so often thinking about how my dorm mates perceive me that I'm not really being myself.

### **Day #6 -Wednesday**

Today is the final day of quarantine. The entries feel complete since the quarantine will be lifted soon, but I also feel emotionally ready to finish the entries. My first few entries are important to me because they reflect just how anxious I was to be at boarding school. Yet, as I'm writing this I feel more hopeful than anxious about the rest of the month. I'm hoping that with the quarantine lifted I'll have more scheduled activities, meet more people, and have more independence. Now with the end of quarantine approaching it simply feels like a good place to end.