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COVID-19

In January of 2020, word reached the United States about a serious deadly virus killing Chinese citizens. In February, it reached Europe. Students were being abruptly sent home from studying abroad, and everyone thought schools were overreacting. March 13, 2020, I left campus for a two-week extended spring break. Little did I know I would spend the next three months in isolation, not leave the house, witness the world shut-down, and have no idea as to when I will be returning back to school. The Wednesday before spring break, Springfield decided to extend spring break another week to figure out how many precautions needed to be taken in order to ensure the safety of students. Seeing that I live in California, I was told to prepare for the worst case scenario. I had to pack up my entire room, and all of my belongings with a 24 hour notice, while in the middle of mid-term week. The next week, every sport, from high school, collegiate, to professional, had their entire season canceled. Sure enough, the worst-case scenario happened, and I still have half of my belongings (that I could not fly home with) sitting in my freshman year dorm room. Leaving campus, me and all my friends were hopeful this would be a short passing worry. Almost three months later, we are just hoping and praying we will be able to return to school in the fall.

These times have undoubtedly become unmatched to one of the most difficult things I have ever experienced. My life has changed very quickly in the past. I have moved across the country two times now with no more than a two-week notice, and have started a completely new life in a new place twice now. That was hard, but not like this. The most painful part of this experience for me has been accepting the fact that I lost crucial times I needed with my team and friends at school. I was having the best year of my life! I miss my friends and online school was tough! The fear of not knowing when the world will open again. The fear of if the world will ever become normal again. The fear everyday of the text I will wake up to saying that another person close to me has been affected by this virus. Within the hardships, I think in order to remain positive and present, it is crucial to see the bigger picture. We are saving lives. This time

is not about me and never will be. Everyone is spending time with their families that they could not "find the time for" pre-pandemic. I have become so thankful for having such an amazing team, community, and family. Another huge positive is everyone is getting puppies:)

My typical day in quarantine pretty must consist of me trying to stay as busy as possible. I do my absolute best to not read the news, because that never makes me feel better, and if there is a change I need to know, I am sure I will find out. I wake up pretty early to stay in routine and usually will read until I decide to workout and train for volleyball, and then will watch whatever netflix show I am binging, walk the dogs with my mom, or catch up with friends and teammates. My family eats dinner together every night, and we are all at the point where we are beginning to get annoyed with each other. There has been a lot of money spent on online shopping, and a lot of time spent watching tiktoks (haha). When I had school, my schedule looked a lot different. I was doing school work, or was in meetings for a majority of my day, and took breaks when I could to get some fresh air, or move my body. These boring days have me wishing for those days I was so busy I became overwhelmed, the team dinners, living with all of my best friends, and all of the small little moments in between. I think I am speaking for everyone when I say this time has taught me to never take those for granted ever again. I would give anything to eat subpar dining hall food or take a cold shower wearing flip flops right now!

I think one of the scariest things to think about during this time has been the fact that we are living through history. This pandemic will forever be studied in schools in the future. There will be countless conspiracy theories behind this. This has changed the entire world's population lives. Every single human being walking this earth has been affected one way or another. That is what blows my mind. One of the deepest fears is when emerging from this pandemic, that citizens will live in fear for the future. I am fearful that there will be wars sparked over this. I have huge hope that people take away some positive lessons from this experience. I hope people stop taking hugs, handshakes, and being able to smile at a stranger without a mask covering your face for granted. I hope people become more resilient. I hope that the fact that everyone experienced this pandemic, unites people, instead of growing gaps and hatred. I hope people remember how this time changed them.