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Making Something More – A Quarantine Hobby

This year, we have all been faced with a challenge. We are stuck in our homes, away from school, unable to go eat at a restaurant or even hang out with our friends. But we have been given an opportunity. A lot of us have things that we have always wanted to do, but never had the time. Now we have the time. So we have a choice: sulk in the sadness of our situation, or make something more out of the moments. I choose to make something more.

As the semester reached its end, I realized that I was not going to have much to do. Still recovering from surgery on my foot, going for runs was out of the question, so I needed to think of a less active way to stay busy. With my birthday coming up, I asked my parents for a guitar. I sing and play piano, which I still do in quarantine, but I wanted to try something new. I have always seen people play guitar and wished that I could, too, but I never took the time to learn. So for my birthday – well a few weeks before because it arrived early – I got a guitar and began to learn.

Now, it has been around three weeks since I began playing, and I have already improved so much. I started by learning the chords and playing them to songs I know. At first, I played slow and choppy, needing a few seconds to switch chords and play the right ones. But now, there are songs that I can play without even looking at the strings. I spend hours in my room, on my deck, in the basement, or anywhere else I may feel like going to play my guitar. I learn to play songs I grew up listening to, old classic songs from bands like the Beatles and Queen, and new music on the radio today. I am mastering the chords and can feel the strumming patterns like I was born to play. It has not even been a month and I already love my new skill!

However, I will not stop here. I may be getting better at chords, but my next challenge is to learn the chords that I am struggling with. There are a few that I have not been able to master, due to the complexity of them. Once I can play those, I will begin the process of learning fingerpicking - which is much more difficult than strumming.

But for now, I will keep playing, learning, and finding joy in the circumstances. I won't say that it fixes everything, because it doesn't, but it does help me escape a little. The time I spend playing allows me to forget about everything else and just focus on the music. So while it is still tough living through this pandemic at home, spending my time learning this new skill and escaping into the world of music brings me happiness in these times. I can also Zoom with my friends and play for them as I would have done if I was back at Springfield. What I have learned most from learning this skill is how important it is to find the joy in the little things, and to make the most of the tough situations that life throws at us all.