

COVID-19 has been an interesting time for me. I was on an accelerated life path, and it caused everything to go at a slower pace. I was working 60 hours a week and attending school full time while commuting 70 miles each way. With the schools shutting down, I have been able to stay home and work from distance, rather than doing my grueling commute.

I was working at a home care aid company as a CNA, and it was no longer feasible for me to work there. I live with my parents, and if I were to continue working, I would potentially bring the virus home and endanger my family. Instead, I opted to leave and take care of my parents, who are elderly (70 and 76 years old), with grocery shopping and tending to the house.

It took a while to convince them that the pandemic is serious and life-threatening. They were initially stubborn and wanted to live normal lives, but I argued to allow me to be placed in harm's way. I did not want anything to happen to them.

Despite sacrificing my work, my school life became much easier. No longer needing to spend most of my days in traffic, I was able to live life a little more leisurely. I was always on the go any longer. I was even able to spend time with my family. For the last year, my family only saw me for 2 hours a day during my school/work week. As a result, we all became closer.

Overall, my family adapted well to COVID-19. I managed to stockpile nonperishable goods, water, and other supplies in case it was no longer safe to venture outside for my family. We are all content, but of course we wish life would go back to normal so we would not be forced to stay indoors as much. Especially my father is starting to get antsy. He is not used to staying still, and he always wants to keep moving.

However, everything has not been positive. Recently, my family received news that not everything was going well for my relatives. My uncle died from COVID-19. That was hard for my father and his brothers. It reaffirmed that without proper precautions, we too be placed in the same circumstance and die. We could even spread the virus to each other put each other at risk if we make a bad decision.

It is a lot of responsibility to ensure the safety of my parents. However, I plan to continue this course of action and make certain we have ample supplies to refrain from constant shopping.

Besides previously mentioned things, I have been focusing on learning new skills, and making use of quarantine. I am learning/getting better at the guitar, which has been on my "to do" list for years. It is extremely satisfying. I am furthering my love of cooking by learning new skills and recipes, which my family loves. They get to reap the benefits of gourmet dinners and 3-5 course meals. Lastly, now that classes are over, I am dedicating my time to learning Spanish. It will feel rewarding to be able to talk to my family in their native tongue and understand them. Not to mention the desirability as an employee by becoming bilingual.

I plan on going camping and backpacking with my best friend/or by myself in California's national forests to embrace my love for nature. I am only trying to make the best use of quarantine and explore my interests, passions, and learning new skills.