Assemble parts, check, work on the code, check. 3 more days to finish my solar powered power bank prototype and I wanted to make sure no time is wasted. I wanted to finish my prototype as fast as I could so that I can start moving on to another project. Avoiding the feeling of guilt when I'm not productive or doing something, I have a to-do list that helps me know what I need to do and do it efficiently. I always tried to fill in every time slot I had since my view was that I needed to be as efficient as productive as I could be.

Fast forward to 2022, My combined interest in exploring different parts of Indonesia and helping people brought me to join a non-profit organization called ‘DoctorShare’ to help people in a small island named Kei Island. It was a 2-week trip which I had made a set plan and schedule where I planned on making a plastic compressor to help reduce plastic waste there. But during my visit there, luck was not on my side. I got tested positive with the newly spread virus COVID-19 in which I could say the worst possible place and scenario. This tragedy made me frustrated because I couldn’t do what I had planned and had to miss a great opportunity in helping people. I felt very useless and unproductive since all I could do was to just sit inside and rest. This situation led me to try being more productive by working on my unfinished school thesis and homework. But after a day of finishing my work, I ran out of productive things to do and what's left for me was to observe citizens surrounding me from afar.

However, while I was watching them, I started to realize that I wasn't just merely looking at them. My mind started coming up with observations and reflections. One crucial observation was that the problems they had were different from what I had expected. At first, I thought their main problem was the lack of tools and utility to preserve health, income, and environment. But throughout my observations, I realized that their main problem was the lack of knowledge they had on said things. This newly found knowledge made me realize how the project could be improved to better suit them, through focusing on teaching and providing them with the knowledge they need to care about their own problems.  Although half of my trip was cut short due to Covid, I didn’t find this trip less meaningful. This trip made me realize that productivity and efficiency aren't just measured or merely based on doing all my to-do list. Taking time to observe, reflect, converse with people are also essential. They are meaningful experiences that are crucial to help develop projects and who I am as I can gain a different perspective that I might have missed if I didn't stop and pause for a while.

I went home from my 2 week trip and stumbled upon a to-do list I had made. “PS2 Prototype To-dos” written on the top of the paper with lines of tasks I had checked. For around 3 years, I have been working on a project named PS2 which stands for Powered Solar System where I intend to produce a solar powered power bank for daily usage. Learning from my trip to Kei Island, I allocated time for reflection and observation upon the project. I revisited each feature that I’ve designed or built. Looking at the precious prototype I had made, I reflect on the primary focus of making this product. At this moment, I realized that the product I’m making is needed more by people that lack electricity. I had made the best quality prototype I could have, but didn't think about the affordability to people who actually needs it. I finally decided to lower the material quality to compensate for lower pricing in order to sell to people who need it the most and provide a bigger impact in the society.

Throughout my journey in understanding efficiency and productivity, I realized that the core of a successful plan doesn’t only involve being the utmost efficient and fast. The quality and impact, found mainly by observation and reflection upon a plan, needs to be factored in alongside, which is why a balance between efficiency and observation is needed in order to create the best quality and result. Everything in this life needs a balanced and efficient learning, a tiny revelation may have a large impact on society and bringing those solutions is what I intend to do in the future. The possibilities of improving are endless, so is my passion and energy to do so.