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The Pandemic: A Young Adult Perspective

“We will see you all in two weeks,” the principal said as I walked out of the school for the unknown last time. The blur of excitement and confusion clouded my vision as I was swept up into lockdown with the rest of the world.

I sat in my childhood home as I watched dates of milestones pass by. Prom, the senior class party, and graduation replaced by animatronic smiles over zoom. Learning acceptance was my goal rather than my senior economics class. I cursed the world and cried to my mom out of utter disappointment.

Wishing I could just have one more day in that high school to say goodbye to the place I planted my roots. Instead, I received my high school diploma in the parking lot.

I was met with fear and anger upon having what I had worked for taken away. An 18-year-old from a small town whose whole upcoming world was memories of closure, pretty dresses, and celebrations. I regret my close-mindedness.

The transition of moving to college had become something of a colossal nightmare. I began finding control in smaller things to ease my mind, as the entire world had turned upside down in uncertainty.

Though many institutions were strictly all virtual with closed campuses, Roosevelt allowed students into the dorms with several covid guidelines:

Masks always unless in the dorm room, only six people in a dorm suite at a time, common spaces were closed, and the cafeteria ran a limited number of hours.

As the pandemic was still raging through the world, I was sitting in my dorm room on zoom. It felt as though we had a little bubble at Roosevelt, but I wondered if I would ever have a “normal” college experience.

Thanksgiving break arrived, and I was unable to go home due to Covid restrictions, so my friends and I had our own Thanksgiving in the dorms. We sat on the floor and warmed up leftovers brought by local parents, with one microwave. We were sure the microwave would die on us, but it prepared what was an obscure scene.

Five freshmen, all missing our families but thankful for each other. Three plates to share, and plastic cups that held sparkling fizz. One turkey, and several side dishes that would leave us rubbing our stomachs in delight.

One night over break, we all decided to get walkie talkies and play hide and seek in the auditorium building. Having never needed to learn the twists and turns of the building, we managed to discover those one cold November night.

Our giggles echoed through the empty halls as we dashed to our hiding places that would one day be places of studying. This we didn’t know. We never would have pictured a Roosevelt of events, and people flooding these halls.

Upon reflection, I am grateful for that uncertainty. I find myself able to accept the things I cannot change, while also keeping my motivation. I have experienced memories that would have never been if not for a virus.

Did the pandemic make for a unique college and young adult adventure? Absolutely. One that I would never trade, even for all the graduations and proms in the world.