Dear Diary,

I’m realizing that sometimes I’m too hard on myself.

Sometimes I set such high expectations for myself that I forget to take a step back and appreciate how far I’ve come.

I’ve been spending the last week and a half being **very** consistent. I’ve meditated for 12 days in a row with the Calm app. Not including my meditations during yoga, which I do almost every day in one way or another. I do some sort of physical activity or workout (be it yoga or dancing or walking in the park) every day. I think I might have missed one day or two since coming to Bogota. I’ve been so consistent with Intermittent Fasting, the only days I’ve messed up have been when others have offered things to me, never because I couldn’t stick to it. I have been practicing spanish every day on Duolingo, and often even more outside of that. (Not including the immersion of practicing Spanish while living in Colombia). I’ve been going to bed between 10 and 10:30 pm basically every night. I’ve been waking up at 6 - 6:30 am every morning - usually without an alarm to wake me up. I’ve been preparing lessons for the kids classes and extracurriculars, and I can feel myself growing significantly as a teacher. I am feeling more confident in myself and putting myself out there - both with friendships and romantically. I’m making an effort to stay connected with my friends and family as much as I can. I’m trying to learn more about the culture here from locals and to not just be a tourist. I’m trying to be ***very*** conscious about my spending habits, I’ve written down **every single** transaction that I’ve made in Colombia here. I’m editing and uploading youtube videos consistently. I’m writing Medium articles. I’m working on a Data Science course online finally to brush up on my skills. I’m organizing my to-do’s and I’m knocking them out of the park. I’m eating healthy (for the most part, minus the chocolate cravings that I’m trying to curb). I’m practicing self love and mindfulness in every way that I can. I’m smiling at myself in the mirror. I’m dancing naked in my room. I’m not smoking weed. When I drink, with the exception of the bar crawl, I only have one drink. I don’t want to have more. I want to feel healthy and to treat my body well. I want to finish the things that I set out to do. I want to push myself in positive ways. And I am.

I am so fucking proud of how far I’ve come.

It’s days like today where I really should drive that home. I found a Netflix show that I really enjoy watching (“Easy”) and I watched the whole first season tonight. It’s 10:53 pm right now and usually I’m already asleep at this time. I was initially feeling a bit anxious about this… but then I realized, *fuck.* It is totally okay! I even worked out during two of the episodes! I successfully intermittent fasted today and didn’t feel like I overate during my eating period. I did my spanish for the day, I did my meditation for the day, I didn’t get to my data science course today, but I unexpectedly chaperoned the field trip at the school today so I think that is a good excuse since my morning was filled with children instead. It’s okay to relax and rest every once in a while.

Even though I’m in Colombia and I’m “traveling”, it’s okay to take time to myself! I think that is one of the most beautiful parts of solo traveling for me:

*For the first time ever in my life, I can truly, unequivocally make only the decisions that I want to make, and it won’t impact anyone else.*

If I want to spend the night in, it’s *okay*. If I want to watch a season of a series on Netflix one evening, it’s *okay*. If I want to sleep with someone on Tinder and choose to not see them again, it’s *okay*. If I spend my morning and evening catching up on personal projects instead of doing something social, it’s *okay*.

I realize that this is something that I can take back to the states with me, the idea that I’m in control of my life and every decision is okay. But I do think it’s a bit harder there. In Utah, I don’t want to disappoint my parents. Although I don’t think my actions would disappoint them, it’s hard to say no to opportunities they give me or to want to do things for them and go to events with them. When I’m in California, I’m always visiting friends now, so there isn’t any part of my visit that allows me to only be on my personal schedule.

Maybe in Boulder I’ll be able to feel the way that I do now. Though I won’t be living alone and I’ll be wanting to make a long-term home there so I’ll feel more compelled to really go all-in on the social scene whenever I can.

This is really a great time for me to get some much needed, cathartic rest and tranquility charged in my body and my brain. I don’t think there is anything wrong with taking the time that I have here to get what I want to get out of this.

In all honesty…. I’ve already done everything that I set out to do here in South America. I think that might be part of the reason why I feel very relaxed in my planning of what I do every day. At this point, every experience that I have is just a bonus; like the cherry on top of the cake.

I really don’t know where I want to go next. I feel like it makes the most sense for me to go to Cali and persue (or at least meet) the people who are in the tech and data science field there. But for some reason Medellín has been calling my name!

I’ll need to put a bit of thought into it. I think I’m going to try to meet up with Betti this weekend and see what she has to say about Medellín in hopes that it will help guide my decision.

I am so lucky and fortunate to have the opportunity to be making these kinds of decisions right now.

My travels will be coming to a close soon.

It’s hard to believe it’s already June 6th. It feels like the last five months have gone by in the blink of an eye. But it also feels like I’ve been living abroad for many lifetimes. I have experienced a new me over and over again. I’ve been to the highest of peaks and I’ve dug myself to the deepest of lows… and I’ve done those same things in different ways, in different places, surrounded by different people and things for months.

I’m so happy for where I’ve landed.

I’m so grateful to be volunteering in this school. I am so proud of myself. I am so grateful for this life. I am so grateful for my luck and opportunity that I was born into. I am so grateful for myself for actually pursuing the opportunities presented to me and seeking out the ones I always dreamt of. I am so proud of my ability to manifest what I want in life.

*Santosha.*

Pure, utter contentment.

Jess

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