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"COVID-19: My Life, My Experience"

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COVID-19: My life, My Experience

The virus has been a tough time for most of the population. It started out as a virus in China and seemed to be something that wouldn't make it to the United States, at least it's what I thought. As we all know, the virus reached North America among many other parts of the world. This experience has been different for everyone, but I can only speak on my own personal life and struggles. With that being said, the following are a collection of my diary entries (word for word) dated back to February of 2020. There are several days, weeks, and months that I do not have an entry for. That is because I felt it to either be too personal and I decided to protect my privacy, or because I went through a tough depression and I found it extremely hard to pick up my diary and pen.

June-July, 2020 is missing due to my mental health issues. I have always struggled with my mental health, but this year it seemed like my mental health was so much to deal with. I hope that whoever comes across this collection will know that if they are or have been through similar issues, they are not alone. Mental health is so important to talk about and normalize, as well as knowing that there is hope. I hope that this year has shined a light on you and led you to the end of the tunnel. Thank you.

February 3, 2020

Dear Diary,

This is my first entry ever! I hear that writing your feeling and thoughts down helps with anxiety and depression, so I'm giving it a try. Yesterday was the Super Bowl. I was invited to a family friend's house with my boyfriend and his family to watch the game. I don't know much about football, but I sat and watched and barely ate. I was not in a good mood and the whole time I was there all I could think was, "why would I come here if I knew I wasn't going to have a good time?" I mean come on! I don't even like football and I guess I was just annoyed at everything. I should've stayed home. My depression has seemed to get worse and I can't figure out why. I keep letting my emotions get crazy and it causes me to push everyone away. I keep getting told I should see a therapist, but for some reason that upsets me more. I feel like I can handle it myself, but I also feel like I'm not capable of taking care of everything. I try to keep my mind on the things that make me feel hopeful. My birthday is coming up really soon and I'm looking forward to it! My twenty first birthday to be exact. It's the one I've been waiting for and I'm holding onto that to get me through these days that just kind of suck. I'm also looking forward to start school again. The first day is the day after my birthday and I'm just ready to get the last semester done so I could transfer to Cal State San Bernardino. Lately I've been feeling all the bitter sweet feelings of my experience in high school and all the senior activities I took part in. Silly, right? I graduated in 2017 and I'm still thinking about how I want a redo. I think that's why I'm excited to finish off the semester and participate in the graduation Victor Valley College is holding for the class of 2020. I'm getting two Associate's degrees and I'm looking forward to going to a new school. When I focus on that, it's when I feel most confident in thinking I'm able to handle my own personal issues alone. I have good days and suddenly I feel like I don't need to talk to a professional. Anyway, this year is going to be great! I'm determined to turn things around this year, I want to get better.
Bye!!!

February 12, 2020

Dear Diary,

I had a pretty decent day today. I didn't do much, but it was cool. I went to Costco and oh my goodness, I LOVE COSTCO! I also got my eyebrows done and I wanted to get a pedicure, but I figured I should wait closer to my birthday so it's fresh. Unfortunately, none of my friends and not even my boyfriend will be able to join me in my night out because they aren't twenty-one yet. My cousins and I decided to celebrate by dressing up and go bar hopping in Downtown Pasadena. After I went to Costco, I did a little online shopping for an outfit to wear on my birthday weekend. I can't wait! I'm a little bummed my boyfriend can't join, actually let me introduce him so I'm not just referring to him as my boyfriend every time, his name is Adrian. He doesn't turn twenty-one until the beginning of April, his birthday is going to be so fun. I think we may go on a Vegas trip with friends and family. I'm not sure, but it's going to be a great time! What I'm thinking now is that I need to find a job before then to save up a little for his birthday weekend. I quit my waitress job back in January. I couldn't work there anymore because I just had enough with the boss. I worked at a small family owned restaurant and it was so nice at first. I enjoyed my job and I actually looked forward to going to work, plus the tips were a big perk. I had been working there for a year and a half and in December I decided that I was going to quit, but I waited until after the holidays to officially let the boss know. What happened made me so angry! It was uncalled for, I think, but I just told myself that enough is enough and I deserve better. Back in November, before Thanksgiving the business was doing so well and I was just loving the tips and I was excited about the holidays, big parties, and reservations coming up. I was in the zone and by mid-November I was working extra hours since the fall semester was coming to an end and winter break was about to start. I took on extra hours also because we were short staffed and the boss needed me, I wasn't complaining. The boss is always a little stressed and all over the place! She is very back and forth on her word and what she says, her plans always fall through. She was always late paying me, but I kept it documented and made sure I got all of my earned money. I let everything slide because I felt bad and also because I understood the pressure, she was under with her business. I knew the holidays was going to push her to an extreme, it did the year before and man, I was even stressed just watching her. This time around seemed different though. There were times I would work 9-10 hours in a day with hardly any time to eat and use the bathroom. It was crazy busy and her constantly on everyone's back made it so much more stressful. A few times I would clock out and cry in my car because I was so tired and my feet and legs would kill me! Right before Christmas I had the weekend off and I started to feel sick and it turns out I had a urinary tract infection the morning of my shift. I couldn't go in to work so I called off and the boss was upset with me, I couldn't believe it! She told me that I sounded bad and I let her down so she said to not go in that day or the rest of the week. After I went to urgent care, I got a call from her saying that I didn't need to go in the rest of December! She told me to consider it my Christmas gift, but her tone was so sarcastic. In that moment is when I decided to quit because I had been working so hard since the day I was hired. I have never called off or asked for a day off and when I needed one or two days to feel better, she reacted like this. I was upset that I missed out on all the potential tips I could've made the rest of the month, but I couldn't be treated that way and I knew I could find something better. I kind of got side tracked a little... my whole point was that I need a new job, I miss making money. Hopefully I can get a call back soon.

Bye!!!

February 14, 2020

Dear Diary,

It's Valentine's Day! A lot of people hate this day, some are bitter about it. It not just about being in a relationship or having a significant other. I love it because I get to celebrate all of the people I love. Today I came home with flowers for my mom, sister, and a little toy for my little sister. Adrian worked tonight so we obviously couldn't spend it together, we'll celebrate this weekend. I guess Valentine's Day isn't all that, I mean it's no Christmas. I just think it's fun to just appreciate all the important people in my life, I'm trying to do that more often. I mean I do appreciate the people in my life and the little things, but I don't know... I just want to start being more optimistic. I think I might sign off my entries with a bible verse (my mom gifted me a daily verse calendar). That will probably get me thinking about the good things in my life when I'm feeling down. I've known this for a while, but I don't know how bad it is. There was a disease that broke out in China back in late December, early January. They named it "The Corona Virus" or I've heard it be called "COVID-19", anyway mid-January there was word that it came to the United States. I don't remember exactly where, but I think it was a different state then California. I'm not really worried about it. It's sad that it's killing people and that doesn't seem fair, I'm sure it will get under control soon. My state, my city/county are not worried about it at all. I don't think it will get crazy. I can't wait to start school and it's almost my birthday!!

For, "Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved"

Romans 10:13

February 16, 2020

Dear Diary,

Tomorrow is my birthday! I'm probably not going to do much because my family and Adrian work, they get out in the evening so we'll probably have a late dinner. Tonight, I'm getting prepared for the first day of school on Tuesday. I always get so nervous when I start a new semester, but I always end up okay so I'm not worried. I got this new backpack, I was due for a new one. The one I had I've been using since high school and well it was time to replace it. I'm looking forward to a great year, I have a good feeling for 2020! Last year was not great for me and I think that's why I feel so positively for this year. I had a set back literally ringing in the new year of 2019 because of work and other personal issues. I was supposed to get out early with enough time to get home, get ready and have Adrian pick me up to go celebrate with my entire family at my aunt's house. Long story short, my boss did not want to close early or let me off even though it was slow my entire shift. It was just me working the front and dining room and we had just one cook that night. She kept saying we needed to stay because the people leaving parties might be hungry and looking for a place to eat. I bit my tongue and didn't say anything because at the time I needed the money. By the time I got home, got ready, and left with Adrian, we got to my aunt's house at 11:30 pm I was so upset and stressed! I was trying so hard to not cry eating my food in front of everyone, I just felt so bad because I was supposed to be off by 6 pm and my night with my family was gone. I mean I guess that is the sacrifice of working during the holidays, but in this situation, I felt like it was completely unfair. I remember just thinking over and over that ringing in the new year feeling like this would mean that my entire year would be crap. My anxiety kicked in and Adrian had to try and comfort me. The next day I had off and

Adrian and I spent the whole day eating pizza, other junk food, and watched Christmas movies. It definitely made up for New Year's Eve. However, as the days went on my mood and mental state seemed to be getting out of control. Adrian struggled to help me because I just wouldn't listen and I pushed him away to the point that he just was so lost in how to approach me. He didn't know how to help me anymore and suddenly I found myself always fighting with him. We had rough days, even weeks and I was just miserable. Work was continuing to be so demanding and my relationships with my family and coworkers changed. I know it was me due to the fact that I wasn't happy within myself at all. I guess I felt like the only thing I could control was how to argue and making a choice to distant myself, because I could make that choice. It was tough and I was always so exhausted from my shifts. During this time, I remember balling my eyes out in my car almost every time after I got out of work. Then one day everything changed. It was a Sunday, January 13, 2019. Don't ask me how I remember this date, I just do. I had woken up in a bad mood and had a fight with my mom and Adrian! Not at the same time of course, but I was already so done with my day and guess what?? I had an 8-hour shift. I got off at 9:30 pm that night and I had the cook make me an extra saucy meatball sandwich (my favorite). I was starving and I couldn't wait to get home shower and eat my sandwich and watch true crime documentaries. I pulled out of the parking lot and didn't stop because I had the greenlight. The next thing I knew I was out of it on the side of the intersection. I heard a knock on my passenger side window and it was a man asking if I was okay and I just stared feeling like it was all a dream. I looked down and I realized that I had just been in a car accident. By the time my dad got there I was on the side walk with the paramedics, I was responsive so that was a good sign. Turns out that the car that hit my driver side door ran a red light trying to turn at the intersection I was passing through, she was under the influence and arrested at the scene. Thankfully nothing was broken, but I had extremely sore neck and back muscles. So, as you can imagine, I was sent into a spiral thinking that my start to the new year was indeed going to establish the rest of the year as CRAP. After that day I began to self-reflect and was able to get off of work for two weeks. I felt an incredible wave of gratefulness and slowly but surely my constant "downs" seemed to be less frequent. The rest of the year got worse though, but that's a story for another day. Crazy to be thinking back to all of this, but I'm ready to leave all that behind me and take on this year!!

Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance.

1 Corinthians 13:7

February 17, 2020

Dear Diary,

I'M TWENTY-ONE! This is so crazy! I obviously don't feel any different, but I have been looking forward to this! This year is my year, I have so much to look forward to and have so many things to accomplish. Today I spent the day relaxing, watching movies, receiving love, and preparing for my first day of school tomorrow. The real celebration will happen this weekend with friends and family. I was gifted a patron bottle today and I hated it! I definitely don't think I'll be a patron girl... nope! I went out to eat with my family tonight and was able to order my first legal drink, I got a margarita and it was delicious. I don't really have much less to say, just that I'm happy and blessed and looking forward to an amazing year! I can't wait to finish this last semester and go to my graduation because lately I have been missing high school. Crazy, I

know, why would I miss high school?? I just wish I can relive my graduation night; it was one of my best memories. I guess that's all for tonight I'll come back with updates.

By the grace of God, I am what I am.

February 21, 2020

Dear Diary,

So, I totally forgot to update, but my first day of school went well and I feel confident about my classes. Today was fun! I went out with my mom, cousin, and aunt for brunch and bottomless mimosas. I love mimosas, they have so many juices you could mix in and the presentation was just the cutest. After brunch I went home and got ready so my friend could pick me up. We met up with the rest of our friend group and had a late dinner, then we went to paint night! A cute little place in Ontario that teaches you step by step how to paint a beautiful picture. It was a lot of fun; I would definitely do it again! By the time I got home it was pretty late and I was so tired, but so excited because tomorrow my cousins are taking me bar hopping, that should be exciting. I'm not much of a drinker, so I don't plan on getting drunk. I guess I'll just test the waters, besides I'll have plenty of opportunities to go out drinking.

February 23, 2020

Dear Diary,

Well, that did NOT go as planned. I got so drunk it wasn't pretty at the end of the night. I'm so hungover today I don't even know how I got the motivation to starting writing, it's so laughable the condition I'm in right now. I'm not sure how this happened *laughing face*, crazy! I had a great time though; it was an experience that I guess every newly twenty-one-year-old needs to have. However, I don't think I'm drinking like this in a long time. I'm going to keep this short because I need a nap!

March 7, 2020

Dear Diary,

It's been a while; I just have been busy and I forget to pick up a pen and open you up. Today was an okay day, nothing special. It's my youngest sister's birthday, but we didn't go out. We had a cake and plan to take her to Disneyland soon, she'll love it. It's Saturday and that means I get to sleep in! I'm so glad because I'm starting to feel a little sick, I hate getting sick. I plan to just take it easy this weekend because I have a busy week ahead of me.

March 9, 2020

Dear Diary,

I'm definitely sick, annoying! I missed school today because there is lots of talk of this coronavirus going around. It hasn't reached my area and I don't think it will, but all my professors have been saying we should take precautions, so I decided to stay home. There has even been talk of closing the school just to be on the safe side, but I don't think they'll actually close the school, maybe for a day or two. My school and professors say were fine, but I guess everything on the news and in other places it's getting bad. I even heard that they are cancelling cruises and quarantining the passengers. It all sounds scary, but I doubt anything serious will happen. I have a bad cough with everything in the media circling around I hope that I don't get bad looks from others when I got back to school. It's just a cold, but people are getting scared. We'll see what happens.

March 15, 2020

Dear Diary,

I just got an email from my school saying they are closing the school and cancelling all classes campus wide as of tomorrow! I'm not sure how serious this is, but I'm guessing not too bad because it's just for one week, the next week is our spring break and we should be back on the thirtieth. I'm excited to get two whole weeks off instead of just one, that means more time to go to the gym! I'm going to enjoy this mini break off.

March 20, 2020

Dear Diary,

I don't have much to say I don't know what to write. I guess this is getting serious, there goes my plans of going to the gym because they closed down. There has been confirmed cases of people with this virus in my county and so many people are dying. The governor of California has set a statewide lockdown, or at least for the Los Angeles, San Bernardino, and surrounding counties back on Monday the sixteenth. So crazy, I'm not sure what the near future has in store, but at this point it doesn't sound good. Everyone is being required to wear masks in public at all times, and told not to leave their house unless it is essential. There has been a lot going on and today I got another school update and apparently the "break" is being extended past the thirtieth. We are going completely virtual as of that day for who knows how long. I totally ate my own words when I had mentioned that this virus wouldn't even reach my area and that school wouldn't shut down. I thought the whole time that there is no way, but I was so wrong.

May 29, 2020

Dear Diary,

I have given up hope on everything. I have given up on possibly going back to school in person and having my normal life back, I have given up on all the things that I was looking forward to this year. There will be no traditional graduation or other ceremonies this year, not for my school, high schools, or middle schools. Everything is closed down and cancelled, well the usual publically busy places. They did offer and put together a drive-up ceremony, but it's not the same. So many things have changed and I don't know how to handle it! I feel like it's probably time to talk to a therapist. I have so many things I need to let out and express, but I find it so difficult to do so. I have a great support system and they're amazing, but sometimes it is just easier to talk to a stranger. I'm finding it so hard to make it through my days without feeling so sad and so lost. I'm tired of feeling unhappy and bitter. I know there is light that will come my way and I know that I will be just fine, but right now I'm having a bad day... I've been having bad months. At least I'm done with the semester soon and I'll get a summer break. I can't wait to be in a place where I'm content with myself and life.

June 8, 2020

Dear Diary,

I have pushed off writing. It's just been so crazy in my personal life. I just keep having more bad days than good and I just don't have the motivation to do anything, much less write. On the bright side, it's finals week and I'm almost done. I'm looking forward to relax and sleep in, and to catch up on my Netflix shows. I need this break and I feel like I deserve it because it's been a struggle to get to this point. Online has been weird and a little difficult. I have never taken an online class because I just prefer in person instruction, I learn better that way. This new virtual

world has been crazy. There is still no word if my new school will be online, but I have a feeling it will be because of how things are going now. My drive-up graduation ceremony is this Saturday and I decided to go. My mom encouraged me and offered to take me; it is still a once in a lifetime experience. I found the motivation to enjoy it because I might regret it if I don't. It is just so upsetting! I wish things were different, COVID-19 has affected me so much. I try to remind myself that I'm not alone. The whole world is struggling and that makes it even worse for me to feel the way I do. How could I be so selfish and feel this bad when I don't have it as bad as other people suffering. I need a break; I need a hug.

August 23, 2020

Dear Diary,

It's been a while; I didn't feel like writing for weeks. Today I decided to pick it up again because tomorrow is the first day of the fall semester and I had a breakdown. I had an anxiety attack and cried for hours. Why? I'm not entirely sure, but it was rough and I finally talked to my parents in a while about my mental struggles. They were very supportive and my mom just held me. I suddenly felt at peace. We aren't much of a hugging family, not very affectionate. When my mom hugged me and told me everything was going to be okay, I became so calm. I think my trigger was starting school and having this crazy mindset that I'm running out of time. I want to start my life already, a family, I want to make money. I think I freaked out over the fact that my journey is taking forever! I have been feeling down and confused and thinking about dropping out and finding a job that can lead me to making money faster and supporting me faster. My parents were able to give me perspective and let me know that everything happens for a reason. I'm very self-aware and I know that all the advice they gave me is true, I just don't know why I feel this way. I decide to stay strong and finish this semester the best way that I can. I feel like everything has been way too much to handle. I pray that I can make progress and feel better about everything

August 24, 2020

Dear Diary,

First day of the semester is finished! It went well, but we'll see how it goes. My classes seem easy, but I do have a concern with not being able to keep up with all the work. I know it was just the first day, but I need to keep going. It all seems so hard to picture everything being better. I just know that I need to keep holding on and work on myself. I feel like if I work on myself my life, relationships, happiness, and self-love will flourish. Next week I'm going to make an appointment with a therapist and hold onto my hope. I had feels of possibly changing my major. Nothing crazy different from what I originally wanted to do. I want to teach and I still want to, but I have always wanted to teach young children. Preschool is my age group and I feel like I would love it. Changing my major to Child Development- Early Childhood Development would be a better fit for what I truly want to do. I'll have to talk to advisors and find out more information, but I do think that would be the best move for me.

October 16, 2020

Dear Diary,

Today was not a great day, but at the same time it was. How confusing! I woke up early today because I had a morning appointment, but as soon as I got out of bed, I felt so nauseous! I spent 20 minutes in the bathroom struggling to leave because I felt like I needed to throw up. Nothing came up and I finally just had to get out and I made myself tea and ate some saltine crackers. I

started to freak out because nowadays I never know if my symptoms are from possibly having COVID, if they are because of my period, or maybe I'm just getting the common cold. It's a weird time. After a couple hours I felt better, the nausea completely went away. After my appointment I ran some errands and came home to prepare for a small paint and sip night with my cousin, I was feeling great! To make a long story short I got into a fight with Adrian and it didn't end on the best of terms. If I'm being honest, our relationship has been struggling for a while. We've been together for a long time and been through different challenges together, and have had various rough patches. I know that every relationship has their ups and downs, but today I think it was a bit different. We didn't break up or anything, we aren't going to break up, but I do think we need a break. It's been extremely hard for me to be one hundred percent happy in this relationship because of my depression and anxiety and Adrian has nothing to do with that. I'm happy with him, the problem is within me... I think? Everyday I'm realizing more and more that the reason I'm not happy is because of something within me. My self-esteem has been destroyed this year; I mean it's never really been the best in the past but it has never been this bad. Since the virus hit my area and we were ordered to shut down and quarantine back in March, everything changed for me. I felt like all the work I had done to control my depression and anxiety kind of went down the toilet. It's been hard to maintain the life I once had. Today I realized that maybe the reason my relationship with Adrian is hurting so much in this time is because, possibly, I'm relying on him solely to maintain my happiness. That's a lot of pressure to put on the relationship and I'm starting to see the consequences. I feel like I've lost myself and I think Adrian and I need a break. Not a break up, not seeing other people, simply a pause. A moment to allow ourselves to focus on ourselves as individuals. We are both so tired of all the fighting and arguing, at this point I think everything is so muddled with all the "he said, she said" that we need a time out. I know we both love each other so much; we don't see our lives without one another and we are capable of working through this (we've done it before). I also know that we will be fine in the end! If we didn't want this relationship or each other we would've ended things a long time ago, but that's not the case. The issue at hand is figuring out a way to get through this and actually getting to the root and fixing this once and for all and guess what... the root is me not loving myself the way I should. I need to focus on my own personal happiness as well as focus on loving myself fully and completely, then our relationship will thrive. I can't give my all in any kind of relationship if I don't love myself first. As I mentioned before, I think I'm realizing that I'm relying on Adrian for myself happiness and that's not okay! I need to be able to have things of my own, happiness of my own, my own goals, my own dreams, etc. Adrian and I have goals, happiness, plans, love, a dream, a vision, etc. within our relationship, but we both need to be able to step out of the "relationship bubble" to be our own people in order for us to continue to be each other's person. The only thing I'm scared of is him not understanding exactly where I'm coming from. We've had conversations about breaks in a relationship and we have both agreed that it would be something we would never do because a break will mean giving up. The person I am now doesn't see it that way anymore, in fact I think it's the complete opposite of giving up. Giving up would be to just say we're done and to forget everything and move on, that's not what's happening here. We haven't lost that spark or interest so that's good, we just need to fight harder and I think that would consist of a brief hold for now. I don't really have anything else to say about this, but I guess now it's clear to why today was a weird day. The painting went well and it was nice to have that distraction from my emotions for a while. Bye for now.

The Lord bestows his blessing, even life forevermore.
Psalm 133:3 NIV

October 21, 2020

Dear Diary,

It's been a few days, I know... It's just been really hard to come face to face with my feelings lately. I have been shoving them down and not wanting to talk to anyone about it or even write it out. I decided to write today because it's my little sister's eighteenth birthday and I thought that I should try to come back on a happy note. I can't believe she's growing up so fast and already a freshman in college! My mom made her pozole and we're just going to have a lowkey Wednesday. Saturday is the day we are going to actually celebrate and by celebrate, I mean just us. The virus has cancelled all the events in our family, actually we just decided not to participate in a lot of things this year. It sucks, but we are taking every precaution in my household. It's hard because I haven't seen my friends and most of my family members since my birthday in February. Anyway, we are setting up a small dessert table and my dad is making tacos for us, it should be a nice time. At this point even something this small excites me and makes me feel relieved to take my mind off of all the craziness in the world. I guess I'll talk about what's going on, this pandemic has ruined everything! I pray every day that it just disappears, but I know it doesn't work like that. I just wish people wore their masks and practiced social distancing because maybe then the spread wouldn't be so bad. I know it's not ideal to wear masks, it's weird, and uncomfortable, BUT I do it to protect others. Some people like to make this whole mask situation political and it really isn't. Wearing a mask to reduce/stop the spread of germs and having a high chance of protecting yourself and others from the virus shouldn't be political, it's a matter of precaution and consideration. I've seen all over the news and social media of people acting extremely disrespectful towards store employees, people that are wearing masks, and to property of the stores. I just saw a video the other day of a women shopping at Target and seeing a rack of masks for sale, she completely lost it and destroyed the racks and shelves. She grabbed all the masks and threw them on the floor causing a scene like a child. A full-blown tantrum from an adult over Target selling masks. Just wear the mask and move on. There have been countless of videos I've seen, and I actually have witnessed this in person, of people being turned away from stores and public places because they don't have a mask on. Guess how they react? Livid and again, causing a scene talking about "I have rights! Making masks mandatory is infringing on my freedom of speech" Okay, this isn't that big of a deal just wear the mask and follow the rules or stay home, simple. Governor Newsom placed the lockdown and the mandatory mask rule at all public places and I know many do not like Newsom, but all of this is not a hoax like some like to believe. We can't ignore science. I'm done for today; I'm hoping for a better day tomorrow.

What I'm I grateful for today?

1. That I know where my next meal is coming from
2. That I don't have the coronavirus
3. That I recognize my privilege
4. That I'm able to get an education
5. That I'm not ignorant like all the anti-mask folk

November 10, 2020

Dear Diary,

I can't stop crying!!! I'm crying as I write this, I feel so alone. I'm so fed up with everything going on in this world and in my personal life. It's too much and I feel like I'm crawling to the finish line (the end of my semester). The semester is over December 4th and there is so much to do! I can't take all this school work/prepping for midterms and finals at the same time as dealing with being/feeling alone because of COVID-19. I'M SO STRESSED!! I'm overwhelmed and sad all the time. I miss going out with friends, with my boyfriend, and family. Adrian's family caught the virus and we haven't seen each other in weeks. This is also why I haven't written in a while. It turns out Adrian's mom brought the virus home from her work. Not her fault, it is what it is, she didn't catch the virus on purpose. I'm just worried especially because my three-month-old goddaughter lives with them. I just needed to get that off my chest and express that this pandemic is no joke! This had been a nationwide pandemic for about seven going on eight months and other countries have resumed to, well life! I know we are going to be fine; we aren't on our death beds like others unfortunately were or are, but not everyone has a strong immune system and that is why the simple task of wearing a mask and taking the most basic precautions goes a long way. I'll continue to pray. Besides all of my ugly feelings about this, I also feel so overwhelmed and stressed about school. Online school is harder than I expected it to be. Last semester was abruptly switched to an online format and that went better, still hard but better. I'm not sure why this time it feels harder and more stressful, and long! I'm glad I'm meeting with my therapist this week, she's so helpful! She has helped me so much. I still have bad days, but overall, I have seen self-improvement.

December 2, 2020

Dear Diary,

This year was filled with unimaginable loss, heartache, confusion, and just absolute craziness. This year I have dealt and struggled with my mental health more than I have ever struggled with it in my entire life. I turned twenty-one and three weeks later everything was shut down, I spent pretty much the whole year in sweats and buns, I was quickly thrown into the virtual education world to finish off my last semester at VVC, my graduation was cancelled, and I had to start my very first semester at a 4-year university completely online. My education is still completely online. At the start of things I wasn't able to see my friends and some of my family for six consecutive months and it all took a toll on me. I became so depressed and angry, bitter and dark. There were times that I couldn't comprehend why this year was just falling apart for all of us around the world. There were other times I just cried for days in secret, but I'll tell you something... I would do it all over again because this was the year I saw a real change in myself. My perspective on many different things have changed for the better, I have become closer in my relationships with my friends, family, my Adrian, and in my relationship with God. I have learned to appreciate and love all the little things that I would take for granted, never again will I take anything for granted. I have grown so much and it has been an incredible journey. Although 2020 was hard, it was extremely necessary for me and I'm sure for many others to go through. Now it's important for me to mention that I didn't do it alone, I have an amazing support system that has and still continues to help, love, and pick me back up when I fall. I wouldn't be me without them. Therapy has helped me tremendously and I'm so thankful for her. Although COVID-19 is still around and stronger than ever, number of cases keep rising and people are just getting sick and tired of taking precautions and following the rules, I will continue to do my part.

I want this to be over, it has been close to a year maybe even a year! I'm just grateful that I have made it through and have become a better version of myself. Also, the semester is ending! I made it through my first completely online semester at a four-year university. It's crazy to think back to the beginning of the semester and remember all the negative feels I was having. I made it and I'm so proud.

Today I'm grateful for...

1. My health
2. My progress on my mental health
3. Family
4. Finishing the semester
5. Waking up every morning