

I had been sitting in my bedroom, with the door closed and all lights shut off burying my face in my hands feeling the darkness surrounding me. I was feeling something I hadn't felt so strong anytime in my life: boredom. I felt my head spinning from the countless hours I had spent staring at my phone screen, watching TikTok. I was used to living a busy life of going to school, doing sports, and activities, and having fun with my friends. I was used to being surrounded by people. But that day, it was just me. I looked down at my cell phone every 5 minutes hoping to see that a friend was calling. But I just saw the same thing: no new notifications. I started wondering if my friends even remembered me, and if I would even have any friends left coming out of the pandemic. I felt as if I was losing myself. It was the loneliest I had ever felt in my life.

Naturally, I found myself going back to my phone, and opening up Youtube, where a video on the suggestions page caught my attention. The video description read "Find Yourself With Meditation". While I was familiar with meditation and had tried it a few times before, I had never viewed it as anything important. But with nothing better to do, I figured that there was no harm in giving it a try. As I sat down on the floor and crossed my legs a thought flashed through my mind: *What if someone were to know that I was doing this? Wouldn't I be made fun of?* Yet, I continued. The instructor of the video explained the benefits of meditation and that the true point of it was to embrace ourselves in our natural form. It was for one to focus on themselves, with no attention toward the outside world or anybody else. Before I knew it, I found myself meditating peacefully, feeling more mentally refreshed than I had ever felt before. My head had stopped aching, my spirits were high, and I felt rejuvenated of joy. I continued doing this every day for another two weeks, and I found my insecurities to slowly fade away. It was at that point that I had experienced the true beauty of meditation. I realized that it didn't matter what anybody else thought about meditation, and that it was something I could use for myself. I learned the power of embracing myself. Though previously I viewed being in isolation to be something that no good could come out of, I realized that isolation is what it took for me to love myself. Covid-19 gave me the best opportunity I had in my life.

As the pandemic continued most people's stress levels increased, including my own. I was worried about the elderly family I had around the world who would be in danger. Hearing countless stories of people who became violently ill, and lost their jobs, or fortunes in investments made my state of mind far worse. However, whenever I felt this way I was able to resort to meditation. While meditation did not make me forget about these issues, it allowed me to keep a calm mind when considering them from new perspectives. I was able to react to all of the constant grim news rationally. The new level of self-awareness that I gained from mediation helped me understand that this was just temporary and that there were plenty of things I could do to carry on with life. I did not let myself get lost in the stress of the situation. Also I stopped feeling so irritable at the fact that I could not leave my house and whenever I did feel the need to ground myself, I could always meditate.

Though today the spread of Covid- 19 has immensely slowed down and the quarantine has long ended, meditation is still a principal skill in my life. Today my circumstances are different and I am back into my busy and social life, however, at times, all my responsibilities can feel overwhelming. Other times, I feel like my life is ungrounded and as if I am just putting on a show. Throughout all of these daily struggles, meditation always comes in handy. Though Covid-19 was one of the worst events that humanity has ever faced, I would never give up the skills that I learned from it.