

Juliet - Age 16
April 3, 2020

One of the most shocking and unexpected events of 2019-2020, the Coronavirus has had a striking effect on everyday life all around the world. It started as a situation that seemed very far away and irrelevant to my life, as the virus was only in China at first. However, the situation quickly escalated and in the next few weeks both Israel and Italy had become overwhelmed with cases. More and more infected people were being identified every day and soon 20 cases were identified in Los Angeles County. Of course, the number has jumped dramatically since then, the virus being highly contagious. Schools close, businesses shut down, people fight over toilet paper rolls in the supermarket, it's absolute chaos. Mayor Garcetti comes out with a statement ordering everyone to stay inside, and I begin to get emergency Coronavirus alerts on my phone warning me not to leave the house. Still, the situation doesn't feel completely real to me, even with classes being moved online. Only once someone I know personally is diagnosed does the true severity of this pandemic really hit me. Specifically, in my community, Corona seems to be a greater threat because everyone attends the same schools, lives in the same neighborhoods, and goes to the same events (for example AIPAC which infected people).

The truly frightening part of the Coronavirus is the number of open-ended questions that it leaves behind. There is no known cure, no guarantee in terms of when it will end, and no idea how severe it will become. The entire situation is so unusual that no one really knows how to respond to/manage it. And while the circumstances seem so unfair and frankly kind of suck, it is important to recognize that there are many people who are currently in far worse positions than me. I am grateful for the security I have that others may not during this pandemic. Millions are losing jobs. People cannot get the supplies and medical care that they need.

While there are obviously many negative aspects of this situation, it is necessary to recognize the good. To say to yourself, my life has been put on pause and this break allows for more time to self-reflect, learn a new language, play a new instrument etc. Corona is also an opportunity for our world to heal. The natural environment seems to be thriving with less cars on the streets and no people polluting the beaches. For example, in Italy, because no boats have been on the canals, the water is clear and full of fish, and even dolphins have even been spotted swimming in them!