

Brooklyn: My name is Brooklyn Wyman, I'm a first year and I'm a psychology major.

So I remember, it was eighth grade, right before spring break, so like the end of February, early March. And a lot of people were talking about it saying like "Oh I hope school gets shut down." And as a whole, we didn't take it that serious. But I remember I had gotten home from cheer practice, I believe, and it was one of our last cheer practices and my mom got a phone call from the school that they were going to let school out for about two weeks, then see how covid is, and we'll come back to school. So I thought I was just getting a longer spring break, like a month at that point. We ended up getting a very long spring break, if you want to call it that, it was like all the way through halfway through freshman year.

But I was really excited, I didn't think it was that serious. I thought we'd go back to school and everything would be fine. But once I started seeing the death rate and how many people were dying, it started to scare me a little bit. About my own health, my family, the people around me, especially the older people, because it was hitting them a lot more hard than younger people. I was also scared for the future, because we could go out but we had to wear like masks or gloves and take extra precautions. And I didn't know if my life was going to be like that for forever, and that kind of scared me. Would we ever have a "normal" again? Luckily we did, but for a long time we didn't know what our future looked like. Because you know we had the n-95 masks, the big masks, like surgical masks but I didn't know what the future would look like in those ways either.

When we first started Covid they wouldn't set up Zoom calls. So they would find like YouTube videos that fit the topic that we were supposed to be learning about and we would take notes of that and have an assignment. But we didn't have Zoom, so they pretty much just stuck us out in the cold and didn't help us for many months until Zoom became a thing. So I would say in subjects like Math and Spanish, I struggled a lot because those are subjects you really need interaction with. Like asking questions and being able to interact with the teacher. So I would say around my sophomore year I really struggled with Math a lot because I was in Algebra 1 in eighth grade so I missed a whole semester. So when I went to Algebra 2 I didn't really know what was going on. When I didn't really know what was going on in Math I would resort to things like phonomath. Because I really wasn't taking school that serious. I would definitely say I struggled in things like Math or Spanish but in things like English and History, those were a lot more easy to get by with.

I would say I'm a very active person. I've done gymnastics my whole life. I was a cheerleader for a couple years. When everything went on lockdown, since everything was closed, I couldn't really lift, do gymnastics, cheer, any of that. So I had fears in my head, they kind of sound silly like, "Oh what if I lose all my muscle, or lose all my progress I made

in this sport.” So I resorted to things like, there’s an app called Fit One, it’s like giving you at-home workouts. So I did a bunch of at-home workouts. I had some dumbbells, I did things like that to get by. Like milk jugs, I would do anything to stay active and fit. And then for gymnastics, I had a beam and bars at home, so I could do basic things just to try to keep my strength and physical activity in that way. Also I remember our cheer coaches would send us videos of cheers to practice virtually. So we had virtual cheer practice, which was interesting.

I would say family, it brought us closer, because when covid wasn’t a thing we all had our own lives and we were not always together. Like we were together to eat dinner and do the family things, but covid made it where you didn’t have a second apart. We did things like play games, bonding activities, we were always together. It really brought the family dynamic together. But when it comes to close friends, I would say our relationships remained the same as before covid, because there was things like social media and facetime and all those things to stay connected. But when it came to my friends that were like acquaintances, or school friends, we kind of grew apart and didn’t really talk and I just got new friends when I went to high school to socialize again.

I think it taught me to go with the flow, especially academically, because we went completely virtual and then when we went to high school like the first year we were hybrid so we were online one day and in person the next. So, I think it was like three days a week we were at school, two days a week virtually. Or something like that, so it was very crazy. And then we got put back completely virtually. So academically it was like just go with the flow, things can always change. And also to not take things for granted, like going to stores or being able to see people and interact. It taught me not to take those things for granted, and have gratitude for the little things in life. Because those things can be taken away from you very easily, a lot of family members got very sick and you didn’t know if that would be your last time seeing them. So it taught me to not take for granted relationships and connections but also taught me not to take for granted the little things like being able to go to the grocery store and things like that.

You’re welcome, thank you.