

## Isolation and Opportunity

**Marika Daphne I. Amaro**  
*3<sup>rd</sup> year BA Anthropology, CSSP*

During March and April, I was in denial and uncertain about what will happen next.

I have read numerous articles and announcements about the virus and kept track of the number of cases added each day. I also felt that compared to other people, I am still safe in the comforts of our home, without thinking about the finances. However, every time I go out for necessities, I felt pity for the street dwellers and for people who lost their jobs. I wanted to help them by at least donating little things like groceries and face masks.

Months later, I thought that keeping track of the cases is not, in any way, good for my mental health anymore. I felt that every day was a routine, and the things that I have always done to distract me from overthinking, such as Judo training or eating out with friends, are now prohibited.

I tried new hobbies that I have always wanted to do but had no time. I also tried to be fit by doing daily workouts to achieve my ideal weight. I continued my

knitting hobby and started a new one called rhinestone painting. I also tried to cook but failed, so I settled for just boiling vegetables for my little Dachshunds. I joined the plantita squad as well, tending plants that my grandparents and relatives sent me from our province upon learning that I wanted to try taking care of plants. Having my furry friends, my family and new plants in our home during these trying times helped me a lot.

With the start of the new academic year through remote learning, I'm trying to adjust again to new schedules. From having so much time in my hands to suddenly barely having time to eat and sleep is really difficult. But I'll get through this. We will all get through this, and I'm still hoping and praying for the time that all will be safe, and we can get back to our old ways with improved health care facilities and benefits.





During this Community Quarantine, I always make myself busy by doing household chores because I often wake up early, and I must help my parents clean the house.



## Coby Camento

*3<sup>rd</sup> year B Sports Science, CHK*

Sometimes I do gardening, like trimming grasses, watering the plants and picking dried leaves.

Last May, my father and I helped each other build a cage for our dog because the old one was now too small for him. It was awesome because I learned how to weld metals and techniques on how to bond them.

I also play online games every time I feel socially isolated because I often experience psychological distress. I talk with my friends when we are playing to tell them some of my feelings. We also discovered some apps that you can use to watch while you are on a video call and allow you to watch with your friends and see each other's experiences or reactions while watching.

I also gained 4 kilograms because I took a pause with my workouts and had some rest. However, I realized that I need to lose weight and get back in shape. As a student-athlete, I need to stay fit and be ready for instances that our team might assemble online training.

I thought that this community quarantine would only last three months, but until now, we are still on General Community Quarantine. I hope that next year the vaccine will be provided and distributed so that we can move freely, our economy can rise again, and the people who lost their jobs can get back on their feet. We should stay healthy and strong during this period, stay home with our loved ones to avoid being infected by the virus, and be able to enjoy our beautiful world once the pandemic is over.







**The year 2020 is the worst year of my entire life.**

**Nickolo Perez**

*MS Marine Science, MSI*

**T**he worst year in anyone's life, really. Not being able to go out freely, being told to stay home, and the uncertainty of everything still haunt us. This global pandemic has changed our lives forever, in so many ways. When news first broke out about the outbreak, quarantine guidelines were enforced. Our area was fortunately blessed to have fewer cases, but we still have to follow guidelines. Work was virtually paused, as my work revolved around a laboratory, and for months, we had no access to it. Eventually a work-from-home arrangement was put into place by the university administration, and it's still the preferred mode of work for non-essential work. For someone working in a laboratory, it's

inconvenient having no full access, and some analyses are still not feasible in the current set-up. We are still discouraged from regularly coming into office, and a strict scheduling system was imposed to limit contact. For me, reporting to work adds problems since I would be coming from Manila, and commute options are still severely limited and non-existent for some routes. Being restricted to staying at home also brings its share of issues. The constant anxiety because of the pandemic, the new "online life" and the feelings of isolation and not being able to hang out with friends mean the emotional and mental states are being compromised. I sincerely hope for everyone to pull through this crisis, and hopefully it ends soon.



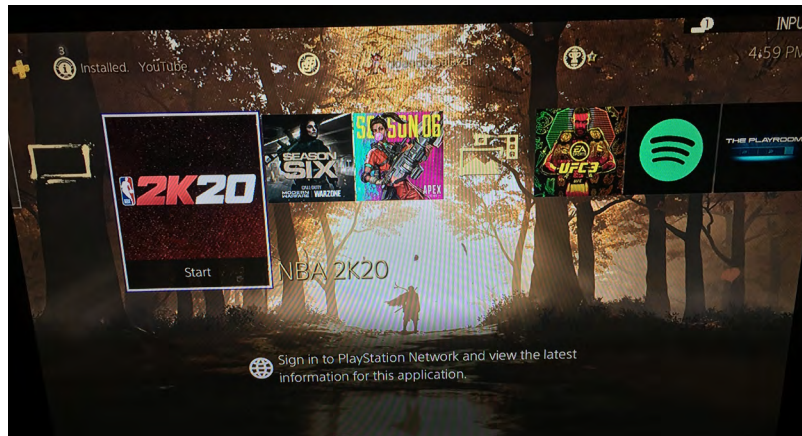


## Paolo Salazar

3rd year BS Tourism, AIT

I would wake up, play video games, take a shower, exercise, eat, pray the rosary, watch Netflix then sleep again. That went on for three weeks until my mom asked me to drive her to the supermarket. I was happy because that was the first time I'll go out, and I would finally be able to leave the house. The roads were empty, unlike the usual heavy traffic in EDSA. When we got to the mall, the

At the start of the community quarantine, my daily routine was repetitive.

The Netflix logo is displayed in its characteristic red, bold, sans-serif font against a solid black background.

lines to the grocery were so long that it reached the parking lot. I waited for my mom inside the car and watched Netflix. After a few hours, she texted me to pick her up so we could go home already. I picked her up where I left her, and on the way home, at a traffic light, there were a lot of people begging for money or food, and I saw a lot of people walking because there were no other modes of transportation except having your own vehicle due to the total lockdown.

Immediately, a lot of thoughts in my head changed. The boy who once loved the lockdown, because he wanted to rest and thought it would only last a week or two, suddenly despised it and wanted it to end. After witnessing the struggles of other people on the way

home from that trip to the grocery, the ugly truth of reality enlightened me. I wanted this COVID-19 virus to end as soon as possible. Our family might not be struggling, but others are because of this pandemic – laid off from work, huge debts, mental problems, hunger and business closures.

It made me appreciate the hard work that my parents are doing in their respective jobs to provide for the family and made me more thankful to them. I keep telling myself that our country will rise from this. This pandemic also made me realize that the only way one can say they made it in life is when one shares their blessings and helps others rise from adversity.



## Lexandra Abdon

University Extension Associate I,  
UP College of Engineering Library

**Admittedly, the past months of the community quarantine have not been easy.**

I find myself living in limbo.

Since I associate my home with rest and relaxation and the office with work, learning how to deal with working from home (WFH) was tougher than I expected. I also had to start a new semester in graduate school last September, which was another hurdle in itself.

On top of that, I was also dealing with mental health problems.

Lately, I've been dealing with the community quarantine a lot better compared to when it started. My mother, also in a WFH setup, created a workspace in my room, making it a little easier for me to establish some semblance of an "office" for my WFH situation. I also started creating cross stitching projects, which helped me redirect my energy into a positive and creative outlet.

Ironically, staying at home has also helped keep me sane, with our dog and cat keeping me company.

Our current work setup, two days of physical reporting in the office (following the safety protocols) and the other days for WFH, also helped me regain that motivation to be productive at work. Additionally, I found myself more comfortable conducting presentations through webinars than physically presenting pre-pandemic due to my stage fright.

I also learned to accept that given the current situation, we are not required to be productive all the time. After all, small victories are still victories.



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1<sup>st</sup> Semester 2020-2021



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Mining, Metallurgical, and Materials Engineering





## Lucky E. Dela Rosa

*CAL-BA Philippine Studies June 2020 graduate  
and former Ipil Residence Hall dormer*

### Ang dormitoryo ng totoong buhay



ala-Pinoy Big Brother (PBB)

Quarantine Edition ang naging buhay namin sa loob ng tatlong buwan sa Ipil Residence Hall (IRH). Kung sa PBB ay pili lang ang nakakapasok sa

loob ng bahay ni Kuya, pili lang din ang mga dormer na stranded buhat ng Enhanced Community Quarantine sa Metro Manila. Karamihan sa amin ay taga-probinsya na hindi nakauwi dahil sa problemang pinansyal sapagkat apektado rin ng COVID-19 ang hanapbuhay ng aming mga magulang.

Hamon sa bawat isa ang pang-araw-araw na kaligtasan: ang kasiguraduhan sa pagkain at sa “safety health measures.” Nagkaroon kami ng mga inisyatiba tulad ng pagsasaing at pagluluto ng ulam. Hindi man ito naging madali noong una dahil wala kaming sapat na pera, may mga tao namang nag-abot ng tulong. Kung dati’y laptop, selpon at libro ang araw-araw naming hawak, naging kaldero, rice cooker, kutsilyo at sangkalan na ito ngayon.

Naibsan ang bigat nang makatanggap kami ng araw-araw na pagkain sa loob ng isa’t kalahating buwan. Galing ang donasyon sa pribadong sektor at sa tulong ng alumni ng UP. Ang University Food Service ang nagluluto at naghahatid ng pagkain sa mga dormitoryo.

Bukod dito, hindi rin nakakapasok ang mga tagapangalaga ng IRH kaya’t kami na rin ang naglilinis. Sa personal kong obserbasyon, maliban na ito ay responsibilidad, naging kalaban namin ang katamarang hindi rin naiiwasan. May mga hindi sanay maglinis ng basura na may pinagtapunang tirang pagkain dahil sa malansang amoy nito. Subalit natutunan ng lahat mamuhay nang simple, walang kaartehan at walang naghahari dahil lahat ay pantay-pantay.

Ganito ang naging buhay namin habang naka-lockdown. Pansamantalang iniwanan ang labas at pumasok sa ideyal na buhay. Nag-uusap ang lahat upang maayos ang mga pagkukulang at pagkakamali. Nagkaroon ng diskusyon sa bawat inisyatibang pinaplano. Ngunit, pansamantala lang ito dahil habang tumatagal, umuuwi na rin ang iba sa kanilang tahanan sa tulong ng programang balik-probinsya.



## Marissa Rullan

Staff, College of Fine Arts

**Naranasan mo na bang mag-register sa mga prepaid mobile data load?**



Nais ko ring ibahagi ang nangyari sa akin kamakailan lang. Pasado alas-singko, pagkalabas na pagkalabas ko ng bakuran ng kolehiyo ay may nakasalubong akong isang lalaking naka-bike at nagsabi ng “hi.” Napalingon ako sa kaniya at kinilala ngunit hindi ko siya kilala kaya binalewala ko lamang. Inakala ko na ganoon din siya.

Habang naglalakad ako sa Lakandula Street, sa tapat ng lumang NIMBB (ASP na ngayon), ay nagulat ako sa lalaking iyon na sinundan pala ako at kinakausap, nagpilit na sabayan akong maglakad. Sa totoo, nag-alala ako, may kaunting takot dahil walang tao halos sa daan, maging sasakyang dumadaan ay madalang. Tinanong ko kung sino siya dahil baka hindi ko lamang siya nakilala dahil naka-face mask. Taga-CMO daw siya. Dahil kinabahan ako sa pagmumukha ng lalaki ay nagkunwari akong may kausap sa telepono at naglakad pabalik sa CFA.

Tila na-trauma ako sa karanasang iyon sapagkat sumasagi sa isip ko ang nangyari dahil alam ko na dadaan at dadaan pa rin ako sa mga daanang iyon papasok ng opisina at pauwi ng bahay.

Sa tingin ko, marapat na makaabot ito sa nakararami upang mapigilan ang may masasamang balak at maging aware ang mga empleyado, residente o bisita ng pamantasan, gayundin ay mahuli at matigil na ang mga gawaing kagaya nito.



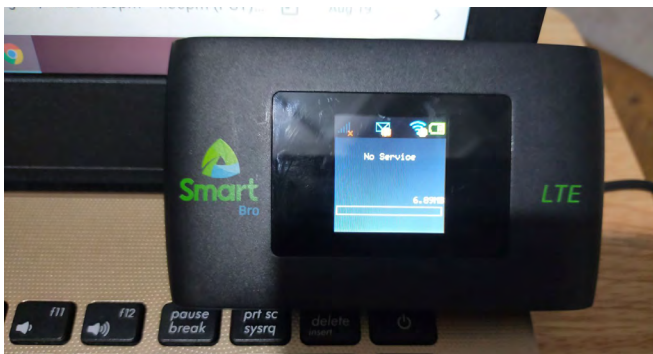
maghabol sa iyong prepaid data registration expiration? Naranasan mo na bang matensiyon at baka mawala ka sa loop ng mga ka-meeting mo o kaya ay hindi mo abutin ang deadline

na ibinigay sa iyo ng iyong superior? O iyong habang nasa Zoom meeting ay biglang bumuhos ang malakas na ulan at may kaunting tubig ulan sa paligid mo? Healthy pa bang nagtatrabaho ka hanggang madaling araw? Makatarungan bang magamit ang iyong personal account para sagutin ang mga pagtatanong, at personal gadgets para sa official duties?

Work from home ngunit wala ng dibisyon ang official tasks sa other tasks dahil sa availability ng iyong signal, kahit pa abutin ng alas-kuwatro ng madaling araw sa paghihintay na magload ang server mo dahil bukas expired na ang load mo o deadline na ng isang trabaho.

Isa rin akong ina, ama, kapatid, kaibigan, mamimili, kapitbahay, estudyante, tagapagsubaybay sa radio at telebisyon, community volunteer, kasamahan sa trabaho at empleyado. Iyan ang gender roles na aking ginagampanan.

Tunay na hindi malilimutan ang 2020. Hanggang kailan ka nga ba sa Pinas, COVID-19?



## Fatima Sapno

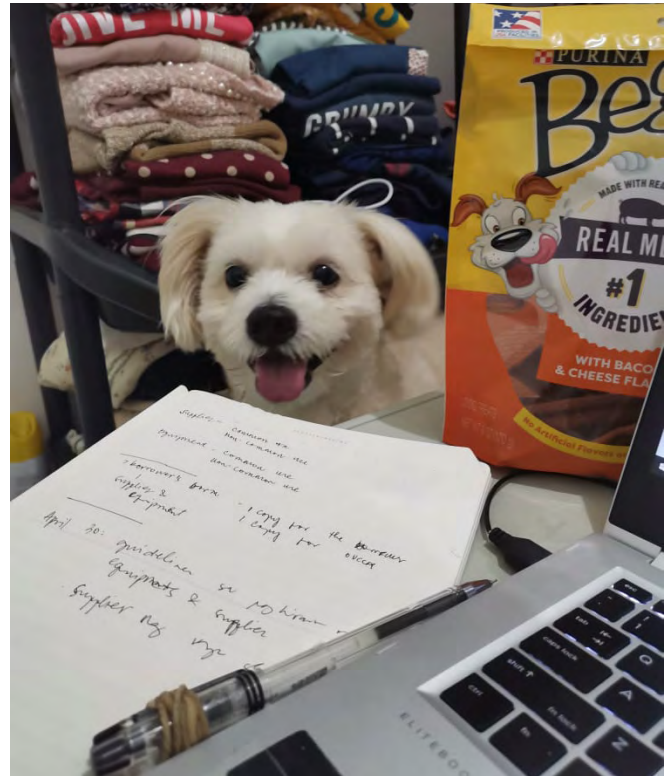
Office of the Vice Chancellor  
for Community Affairs

The community quarantine can be as difficult for our furry friends as it is for us workers from home.

On social media, other fur parents are creating ways to keep their pets preoccupied to avoid stress and boredom. For my pet dog, Casper, it's the other way around. Entertainment can be easily defined as spending time with his "hooman," even if it means just sitting down and work.

For some weird reasons, ever since I started working from home, Casper stayed near me as if he is a guard dog. He loves sitting near places where I work, he even sits in front of my laptop whenever I take a break. Most of the time, he would paw me so he can sit on my lap while I am working. He neither wriggles nor taps on the keyboard, instead, he just stares at the screen, watches what I do and waits for me to finish. There was this one time when he already fell asleep while I was working late. Would you believe he does not like watching other animals on YouTube? (Yes, I tried it twice, he jumped off my lap). Those are just some of the many little "quaranthings" with my furry friend.

As I cope with the separation from my workmates, Casper played a tremendous role in keeping me at ease with his loyalty and companionship. More than the amusement that Casper brought to me and my family, he has become a reliable companion for us undergoing anxiety brought by the pandemic.







As a Filipino and “Iskolar ng Bayan,” I am blessed that I have been groomed and trained to become flexible, adaptable, resilient and pliant like a bamboo.

## Neil Patrick S. Ferrer, MSC, CSCS

*Senior Lecturer, UP College of Human Kinetics*

**N**ow more than ever, our flexibility, adaptability and resiliency are being pushed to the limit and have been put to the test by COVID-19 along with its effects and consequences in our daily lives.

The shift to remote learning and work from home (WFH) has its perks, advantages and benefits. However, it also has a lot of drawbacks, pitfalls and downsides. For instance, I no longer have to endure the traffic of going to and from work, but I now have to juggle work with household chores, academic tasks and responsibilities at home. I’ve even experienced attending meetings and webinars while driving, washing the dishes or doing the laundry.

While remote learning and WFH provide safety and security from the risk of COVID-19, they also have taken a toll on the physical, mental, psychological,

emotional, social and overall health of people. As an educator, I have to spend countless hours sitting in front of the computer which is bad for my eyes and back. Thankfully, I teach Physical Education and Sports Science so I am well equipped to walk the talk and practice what I preach to my students by exercising regularly, eating healthy, sleeping adequately and dedicating time for rest, recreation and leisure.

The COVID-19 pandemic, the community quarantines, and the shift to remote learning and WFH have been very challenging, without any exaggeration. Hence, we should all do our part and our very best to make the most out of this situation, turn it into something positive, use it to our full advantage, and continuously strive and work towards a better world and a brighter future!

Padayon, UP!