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Dear Diary

LIFE IN LOCKDOWN

Sofia Khoth De Oliveira

Dear Diary,

I wake up every day thinking it's a really long holiday. Then I face reality and realise the cause is this pandemic. Although it's tough. I think people have it worse if you live in a small flat with siblings. I like to look on the bright side. I live in a house with a garden and a brother to entertain me.

I have dance resources and space to practice my dance routines and food. So I think it's not that bad. The hardest part of this pandemic however is trying to keep up with schoolwork because sometimes it's easy to get carried away with games and TV when you're at home. With that being said, at the end of the day I always get it done and that's what counts.

I also feel really sorry for those people who have lost family members and let's hope that in the future there won't be a pandemic as serious as this.

Summer Staple

Dear Diary,

It's weird working from home without a teacher. I feel like I can't concentrate properly because there's too much here to distract me. Mum said we have to have some exercise every day so I've been waking up at between 7:30-8:00am every morning.

I go out with mum early for a run before the streets get busy or do a work out with my sister in the garden before doing my homework. I stop at about 4pm and chill out for the rest of the day.

**I'm not that worried about Coronavirus
because we stay at home and away from
everyone.**

I am getting fed up of being at home all of the time though and wish this can all just stop now and get back to the way things were before.

I miss seeing my friends and visiting my Nan and Grandad. I feel sorry for all of the NHS staff that are getting the virus. They are just doing their job, saving people's lives. It's not fair. My big sister Charlie and her boyfriend Nathan both work for the NHS. I'm so proud of them.

Lawrence Bennett

Dear Diary,

I'm here to persuade you to stay home in this tough time right now. No one is used to this; this is a first for everyone to be in a situation like this. No one knows when it will end but we need to stay home to try and reduce the likeliness of the virus spreading to a stage where we can't stop it.

There are innocent people in the world suffering from the virus because people aren't listening and breaking the social distancing rules and this is affecting people who are at risk of getting it. Many people are dying.

**I know we are all struggling but if we obey
the rules we might be able to get through
this and go back to our normal lives.**

Kingsley

To my family & friends,

I am writing this letter to inform you why staying at home is important during this pandemic. I believe we should stay home because there is less risk of spreading the virus when you could prevent the disease by just staying indoors.

The NHS is on the front line fighting to keep us safe. By going outside, we are creating more risk of catching the disease, which prohibits the NHS workers from curing patients quickly, and protecting themselves. As more and more people are exposed to COVID-19 so is the NHS. Statistics have shown that 'the staffing crisis in the NHS is deepening so fast that the service could be short of 350,000 key personnel by 2030'.

Coronavirus is having a serious impact on the ambulance service, phone calls are soaring in from all over the UK and there's not enough ambulances and helicopters to retrieve and send sick patients to the hospital. As well as the ambulances not being able to take the sickly to the hospital, there might not be enough beds in the hospital.

Going outside is important. We all need fresh air and sunlight to stay healthy, without it we could become seriously unwell. However, going outside for exceeding amounts of time and using it as a time to socialise is not making the situation better. Social distancing was put in place to help decrease the spread of the virus especially for when we hit the peak. So why are you being selfish unnecessarily going outside?

All of these points I've made are to warn you that small actions that you make in your daily life can impact yourself and others.

**Next time you think of going outside,
consider the consequences.**

Tom Sayer

Dear Diary,

I woke up, sunlight streaming through my curtains. Typical! Another beautiful sunny day – why is the weather so nice when we're all locked up with nowhere to go? I check my phone: 10.30am. Another late morning. It's hard to get up when you don't actually have to be physically in school.

Today's different though, I run upstairs and wish my mum a happy birthday. We all sit on her bed whilst she opens her presents. Shopping was hard but me and my sister had managed to get some beauty products from one of the few shops open.

**It was strange queuing to get in
but at least we got out of our house.**

After lunch I did a bit of schoolwork but to be honest I wasn't that focused as we wanted to have a nice day. We played a bit of table tennis and then took the dog for a walk. In some ways everything looks the same outside but there are some differences: the birds seem to be singing more loudly for one. Seeing big queues outside supermarkets reminds of what we learned about rationing in World War 2. Some are wearing face masks – do they work? Or are they a bit like the flower posies that people had during the Great Plague, ie, totally useless? I can hear ambulance sirens pretty much all day.

In the evening we had a Chinese takeaway which was really good. Then we all watched a tense thriller on TV which was really good, especially as it was good to focus on something other than the terrible disease happening outside in the world.

Rasharn G

Dear Diary,

This week is the third week of completing work at home .It was a challenging start, but now I have got used to it and feel more comfortable in the situation that we are in.

The question in my head is when will all of this end? If it does end will life go back to the way it was? COVID-19 has changed my life and I will remember what is happening now forever.

During this time, my family has played more games together and I have called more friends and family on FaceTime to regularly check up on them. What scares me the most is that the virus has spread everywhere and nowhere appears to be safe.

**Deaths seem to be rising and people are in
fear of the future.**

I feel sorry for those people who cannot see their family members because they are vulnerable. I just try to think of the positives and that my family are bonding and getting stronger and together we will get out of it and see another day.

Jasper Pattison

To my family and friends,

Please, PLEASE practise social distancing and staying home during this pandemic. A great deal of stress has been put on the NHS in this time, and you will only help them more if you follow the rules that the government has been giving out. Helping them by reducing their work hours, reducing their emotional stress and saving the lives of innocent people, who haven't done anything to deserve this. Remember it's not only people who are vulnerable to the virus that you will be saving the lives of.

So please, friends and family, stay at home during these times, only go out for walking and exercising once a day and necessary shopping trips.

I used to have speech and language therapy sessions once a week, and that was destined to carry over to a Zoom call during quarantine. These, unfortunately, had to come to an abrupt end. Why? Because even staff who only knew very little about medical science and who work in the NHS had to carry their career over to try and stop the spread of the virus. Not only does it affect them, but it affects me, as I don't have any help with my stammering.

Thanks.

Jonathan Morgan

Dear Diary,

I'm praying for this horrible virus to pass very soon. I just can't imagine me sitting indoors for 4 months just doing everything over and over again. I have been playing on my Xbox and PC most of the time. That i could get used to. But it's annoying because I cannot see my brother as much as I would have done.

Working from home is a very new experience for me and at first I thought it would have been fun because it might have been easier. But no it isn't, I have to keep looking every 1 hour on google classroom just to see if i have anymore work. I cannot relax!

I mean it isn't just all boring stuff. My family has started to play Monopoly together on a Sunday. My mum and my dad nearly went bankrupt because I put a hotel on each of the light blue/grey streets. I got a lot of money.

Anyway apart from the amount of homework and everything else to do i'm actually enjoying lockdown.

**Luckily I'm not going crazy
like I know some people are.**

Rico De-Duca Roberts

Dear Diary,

The anticipation. The constant thoughts filling my head. The patience. All to see my friends and family...

It has been over 2 months since I have properly seen the outside world and socialised with more than just my mum and my mirror. I have dealt with many struggles including: confusion, anger, tears and homework, lots and lots and lots of homework. Unfortunately, none of these feelings have disappeared. They do vanish at times but soon come back when you least expect them and that is when you fear they will return again. Hope is one of the things that have kept me positive. It is a word that everyone must fully understand now, a word that everyone should feel at this point...hopefully.

During this tough time, I have been trying to keep myself occupied and even though homework can be something I struggle with, especially working from home, it has been keeping me busy. I have caught up on lots of TV, eating, sleeping, dancing, baking and talking to my friends and family on facetime (or zoom). Although I do get to virtually

interact with my family members, it doesn't exactly feel the same and I do miss many people that are close to me.

To me, I personally feel coronavirus has been eagerly waiting to escape and take over the world for ages and I don't think that it will ever disappear completely, it might become safer for us to leave our houses and go outside but it has kind of just become a characteristic of our Earth.

Being in lockdown has made me discover a new appreciation for places and people (like schools, NHS, parents and games etc). So I do appreciate how it really has made me think about what is going on. However, I would like things to go back to normal. This pandemic almost seems like a one big question that will never get a real answer and we will all have to deal with uncertainty.

See you when this is all over and I can talk about something interesting.

Nathan

Dear friends & family,

I hope you are all doing well in this time of panic and struggle. I know how hard this lockdown is, as even I am craving the outside. Nevertheless, I know that as a citizen of the UK I must stay at home to flatten the curve. It has been just over two months since the beginning of the lockdown, don't let yourself down now; we are reaching the light at the end of the tunnel. In this letter I aim to persuade you to stay at home and breaking the lockdown rules would be a colossal mistake.

Firstly, leaving your house without a valid reason will have consequences; the authorities will issue a £150 fine. In this time of struggle and no income I don't think that will help any of your issues. With no source of income and you are already struggling to pay your bills, how does this seem like a good idea? By going outside you are spending unnecessary money. This can all be avoided if you follow the lockdown protocols. If you want to survive this lockdown I strongly suggest that you stay inside.

Another reason why you should stay inside is because this deadly virus isn't visible. The virus cannot be seen on surfaces, which is a key reason as to why it is killing a large amount of people. Why does this stop you from going outside? I would imagine that not one of you would like to be struck with coronavirus, the devastating effects it has on you is not worth you gallivanting. Furthermore, you may be healthy enough that the virus does not affect you badly but think about all the vulnerable people you could spread it to. Those with underlying health issues and people above 35 are most at risk and you don't know who you are going to come in contact with. Therefore the safest option is to stay at home.

**So please think about not only
yourself but also the entire
nation.**

I understand that this lockdown may have delayed or even ruined some of your plans but it has affected all of us. Yes there are some things you can't do in your house that you would be able to do outside however that doesn't mean you cannot get creative at home. No matter what you planned on doing I guarantee you can find a way to recreate it to the best of your ability. For example, I had training and a massive tour that could see me going pro and now it is cancelled. Instead of going outside and risking my health and others around me I decided to train in my house making sure when the opportunity comes again I will be ready. Make the most out of a horrible situation. Instead of reminiscing about the things you could've done try finding an alternative.

In conclusion, it is obvious to see that there is no real reason to go outside. By staying inside you are: helping yourself financially; staying healthy and clear from the virus; and being productive inside. By doing this I assure you that all of this will come to pass very soon. I hope you take my advice, think twice and stay at home.

Yours sincerely,
Nathan

Grace

Dear Boris Johnson,

I am writing this letter to address the topics, and rules you made and spoke about in your speech on Sunday. You made very important points on the pandemic we are currently facing and the rules enforced due to it. With all due respect, honestly, your speech gave no clarification about the situation we are in other than the fact we are now allowed to have unlimited exercise. But even then, that doesn't give much clarification at all. In your speech you spoke about how well the UK has been following the social distancing rules, self-isolation rules and even the limited travelling rules. In theory the rules you had put in place should have kept the people in the UK safe and although these rules were enforced it was only to a certain extent. Many people were confused and found them very unclear, leaving them unsure with what to do.

Many people wondered if their work was soon opening up, people like retail and name branches (McDonalds, Costa, Pret a manger etc.) are left wondering if their work was counted in your speech or not. Another topic you forgot to mention was furlough. Thankfully, many people have been receiving 80% of their pay meaning they are able to keep up with bills and essentials, but many people are wondering how long it will go on for, as it may be unsustainable for certain companies and businesses.

Many people also have a fear that if you relax the rules now then a second wave of covid-19 will hit and it will be worse than the first. If a second wave

of coronavirus hits, there are fears that it would be worse than the first and could result in much more casualties. This will also have a major strain on the NHS as they are already overworked and underpaid. This leads to my next point; the NHS is underpaid. This was a major issue before the pandemic that was always overlooked by the government. NHS workers work tirelessly every day to save lives of mostly grateful but some not so much and yet get little to no recognition. Yes, clapping every Thursday at 8pm for the NHS and essential workers is nice but does nothing. A clap won't give them energy to get up for work the next day and stay 2 hours extra without pay, yet they still do despite the fact they won't get the money they deserve for it. And yes, seeing posters made by the citizens and children of the UK is nice but again it isn't really doing much for them.

In conclusion,

Your speech gave little clarification to what we are now actually allowed to do.

It has not helped people isolating, due to them testing positive for the virus. Your speech didn't help TFL who have lost billions and it hasn't helped the millions of children who are out of education or who are unable to sit their GCSE's and A-Levels.

Regards, Grace.

Lola Richards

Dear Diary,

So it's Monday the 29th of April. Wait, is it Wednesday or Thursday? I don't even know the date anymore. Anyway, it's day 37 in quarantine and I haven't exactly got time on my hands as I thought I would do.

My normal online school day starts at 7:00 every morning. I have to wake up and walk my brother to school. Yes, I know school's are shut but having your parents both be key workers means my brother doesn't need to spend his days stuck at home and I don't need to home-school him. I have to stay at home because somebody needs to pick and drop my brother off at school, plus because of my age, I can handle the online work. Surprisingly my brother enjoys going back to school, even though there are just a few of the Year 5 pupils there. I think it's because they don't do that much actual schoolwork, he comes home and tells us they only do labour work such as fixing the pond by adding fish and more plants and then playing with the school chickens. When he can stay at home his day is usually less fun, it's more about catching up with the work he's missed out on. In the "key-worker kids" club there are around 15-20 children who attend it regularly there, ranging from reception to year 6. My brother tells us about the small reception children who find it very confusing and can get a bit emotional.

After dropping him off I log on at 9:00 and prepare myself for the 15 million emails to harass my computer. I usually get emails from most of my classes, so these include

my History, English, Maths, Drama, Spanish, Art, PE and Dance teachers. I continue to work all day with breaks until 3:20, and then I sometimes have to retire from my desk and pick my brother up. My mum is a physiotherapist who works in St George's Hospital, thankfully my mum didn't need to get deployed, and my dad is a police officer who works in safeguarding in Charing Cross Police Station. You would think that crime has decreased but because people are stuck at home with their families arguments start and some people get into fights with their family members.

Depending on the day, I can have a lot of homework and some days I would have time to do other outer school commitments like my swim team and Scouts. I have an online Scout meeting every Friday and I try to get out every day and do some exercise of some sort to keep up my fitness for after we get out this weird time. I love my parents being key workers and helping people get better and I think it was essential to maintain some sort of schedule and order if both my parents did the same shifts as normal and my brother remained in school.

The other day my friend who is in my swim team went out to the shops to buy some food, while in the queue an old married couple were having a very loud conversation about no-one personally addressed but it was very obvious they were targeting her. They didn't approve of

my friend going to the shops to buy some food and said very loudly that "she should be at home doing her school work."

Little did they know, both her parents are key workers,

working from 8:00-6:00 almost every day and they didn't have time to shop.

We have all got fears for the vulnerable and elderly living in care homes or alone, the families that cannot see their parents and relatives when they need them the most and the parents who are struggling in debt from this huge setback. I miss school very much, I can't wait to get back into my normal and planned routine, see my friends in person rather than through my phone and get taught in person in a classroom rather than a computer screen. There is talk that we have already reached our peak but I fear that this illness isn't going to disappear for a very long time. I thank everyone for doing their bit. That includes the teachers, nurses, carers, parents, emergency service workers, everyone who is respecting the governments' instructions and the people clapping every Thursday night at 20:00 for the NHS.

I guess that's it.

Elodie Fifield

Dear Diary,

I woke up at 8:30 and lay in bed until 9:30; I'm not good at getting out of bed. But when I did I got changed and brushed my teeth. I went downstairs and made a coffee, with hazelnut milk because it's far superior, and some toast with apricot jam and butter. 9/10 for breakfast.

I got the laptop from my mum's bedroom and started working, I did most of my work yesterday and I saved all of my English for one day so I could be in the right kind of mind-set for the subject. I usually sit in the garden to do my work so I took a chair out and sat in shade. There have been some days where I can't seem to get any work done and I sit at my computer like a zombie with my brain thinking of everything except the method of how to find the circumference of a circle and write the answer in terms of PI. But then there are some days where I get everything done and I feel like the living embodiment of some productivity magazine where they tell you how to juggle three kids, a messy husband and a draining job by making a spinach and apple smoothie and doing a cucumber face mask.

Quarantine gives you a lot of time to think and an over thinker like me will sit on my bed thinking of every single mistake I've ever made and about how when I was four I accidentally walked into a sauna full of half naked old men in Bath and then cried for a week after. But the things keeping me sane are:

Baking: I've made so much bread and so many pastries it's unreal. It's very therapeutic and I get a break from my phone too. When the bread is proofing I usually go and water the plants in the garden or just lie down on my sofa.

Films: I've been watching so many films. My favourite film of all time is The Grand Budapest Hotel - Directed by Wes Anderson and the music composed by Alexandre Desplat.

(who has done most Wes Anderson films and he did Little Women directed by Greta Gerwig and both of them are my favourite directors and ugh I LOVE FILMS.

I love the film because of how stylised it is. It takes you to a world you could believe was your own because it has all the makings of our world but everything is symmetrical and whimsical giving you just the right amount of escape. I want to direct and write films when I'm older so I am constantly visualising every time I hear something or see something interesting, like right now I'm looking at some yellow roses in my garden and the hang over the a small pond I made last year. The reflection is so perfect because the water is so still and I just see it as shot on screen while the main characters are being introduced. I have playlists and photo albums for every type of film that I want to make.

Music: Music is perfection and it's universal. I have songs that I always play in the background, songs to pretend to be in a movie to, songs to dance to, songs to cry to, songs to just listen in awe to. I can't really put into words how much I love music.

Those are the things keeping me happy and sane this quarantine. It's not perfect but I find ways to help. Like knowing that we have to do this to keep the vulnerable safe and to protect our NHS workers. I'm writing this on a Thursday which is...

my favourite day because walking onto my street and seeing people clapping and laughing makes me so happy.

and gives me so much hope for the future.

Bea Sturgeon

Dear Diary.

As days go by the virus is getting worse but the government does not agree, they believe that the situation is getting better and that the lockdown restrictions can be relaxed. The virus has killed so many people and everyone has worked so hard in making sure that it does not increase but now the government is willing to risk it all, why? Those are just one of the many questions I wish I could ask but at this point, we have got to trust them.

Online school is a lot harder than I expected as you have no one to explain it to you. As much as I want to see my friends, I also really want to go back to school and learn there instead of at home. Working from home shows you how much school does for you and how much they help you. If you told me a year ago that I was going to have to work from home and not see my friends because there was a virus outbreak, I would not believe you, you could not make this up.

It is a hard situation for many people and I hate knowing that there are people dying around us. A couple days ago my dad showed my mum an online death map, which showed you if anyone around you had died of the coronavirus and there was someone not far from us. My biggest fear is that someone I know can get it and die. I hate knowing that my nan is at her house alone and won't tell anyone if she is feeling lonely or not.

As much as this is a hard time for everyone, you have to find the positives in things so here are some positives that have come out of this pandemic: there is less air pollution as cars are being used less, it has brought the UK together and has brought my best friend and I together. Most importantly, it has shown us how much the NHS does for us, they are risking their lives for our safety. I think that the situation that we are in now will show everyone around the world that the only way that we can get through this, is if we work together. I know it sounds cheesy but we have to communicate with one another to be able to stop it.

I hope that in the future, after the coronavirus is over, the UK will still be supportive and clapping for everyone. I hope that I will be able to go back to school and learn. I hope that we can go back to normal but at the same time take extra care.

**Everyone should remember that there is always
someone worse off than you and to be grateful for
what you have.**

Tom Sayer

A Family Interview:

I decided to interview my grandmother to find out her thoughts about coronavirus.

Tom: How are you today?

Granny: I am fine thank you, just a little bit tired.

Tom: How have you felt about not being able to socialise with friends and family at the moment.

Granny: Well it makes me very sad and I miss everyone especially my family.

Tom: Have you ever experienced a national crisis like this before?

Granny: No... I haven't. The Second World War was the last big crisis in my lifetime but I was only a baby at the time.

Tom: How different do you think this would have been for society if this had happened 50 years ago?

Granny: I think people would have felt much the same about being locked down but I do think it's probably easier today as most people have access to

the internet and we can see our friends via skype etc. However, I'm not sure the virus would have spread in the same way 50 years ago as people didn't travel and fly around the world so much.

Tom: Do you think there are any positives to being in lock down?

Granny: Yes, there are a few. I've learned how to use technology more, for example using Houseparty and Facetime. I've spent lots of time in the garden and have learned some new skills. I've also had time to chat to lots of old friends that I might not have spoken to before.

Tom: What age group do you feel the most sympathy for? For example, do you think younger or older people are having the hardest time?

Granny: It's young people that I feel most sorry for because they are missing out on so much, particularly school and seeing friends and having fun.

But I do feel a little bit sorry for elderly people as we haven't got much time left for fun!

Tom: What would you say to people who are struggling?

Granny: I would tell them to try and stay positive because this will end at some point and we'll all get to see each other again.

Tom: As someone over the age of 70, do you feel patronised or protected by the government advice?

Granny: I don't feel patronised but I also don't feel that old! I accept that the government has to set guidelines.

Tom: Last question. What are you most looking forward to when this is all over?

Granny: (Voice wobbling/ crying) A BIG FAMILY PARTY!

Tom: Thank you for answering all my questions!

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TO BE
Continued