

The Student Newspaper of Lincoln-Sudbury

May 10, 2020 · Volume XXVII · Number 6 · An Open Forum for Discussion

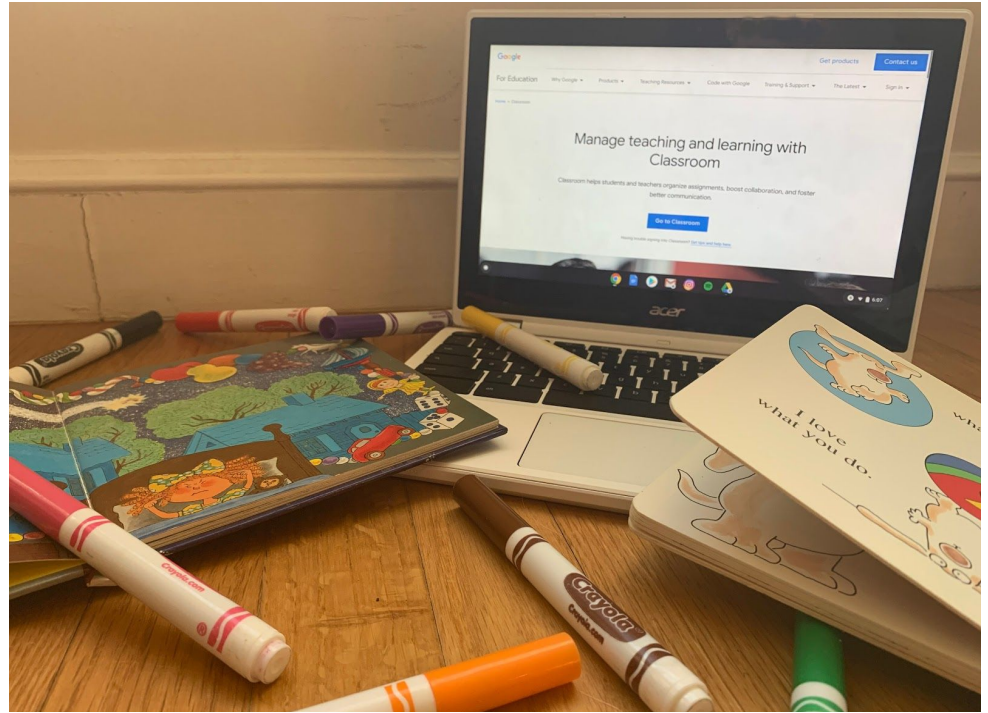
## Teaching Remotely, with Young Children Underfoot

By Josie Halporn  
Managing Editor

English teacher Katie Collamore is up with her baby at 6:00 a.m. It's not until 9:00 a.m., when Jamie is down for a nap, that Collamore can begin posting remote assignments for her Lincoln-Sudbury High School students on Google Classroom. Nap time is also her only window during the day to shower, exercise, and clean up.

When he's awake, Jamie likes to crawl across the whole house. He knocks down towers of stackable cups, plays with a wooden ball in his object permanence box, and follows the golden retriever around. Collamore reads books to him like *Things That Go* and *The Pout Pout Fish*. When it's time for breakfast, he enjoys prune purée on toast with Greek yogurt. The meal can sometimes get messy; Jamie loves to run his food-covered fingers through his hair. Collamore has gotten into the habit of eating her own breakfast standing up while Jamie finishes his meal.

Once Jamie is tucked into his sleep sack, Collamore has an hour to answer emails and post assignments before he's up again. This cycle of play and sleep repeats through the day. During Nap #2, Collamore tries to grade student work on Classroom and prep dinner as much as possible. Jamie is in bed by 6:30pm, although he only sleeps through the night about once



IT'S a balance. Photo courtesy of Josie Halporn. every four days. Collamore then answers more emails, grabs a few moments of TV, and writes in her journal. She passes out from sheer exhaustion at 9:15 p.m.

Katie Collamore is one of many teachers at L-S adjusting to remote teaching while also caring for young children at home. In the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, daycares are closed and parents are in charge of care. Both male and female teachers, whose work schedules can be more flexible than other jobs, often have to carry the childcare load. Although Collamore's spouse is also working from home, he has a more rigid schedule and cannot help much with Jamie on weekdays.

"I am basically 'on' for 95% of the day," says Collamore. "As much as I love my son, I wish we could get some help from either day care or one of his *very* eager grandparents as babysitters. I am beyond exhausted."

Caring for older children isn't easy either. L-S English teacher Becky Chen helps her two sons with online school while keeping up with her own work.

At 9:30 a.m. each morning, her family sits down at the dinner table for home school time. The kids usually get a Google Classroom dump on Monday mornings, and Chen helps them make their way through the assignments. The boys hold up their written work to a camera and take pictures for their

teachers. Chen's younger son isn't even old enough to know how to type yet.

"We try to do an hour, an hour and a half, of really solid work," explains Chen. "So I can't get any [of my own] work done then because I'm trying to do their stuff. I can send an email, maybe, and I'll get back to helping with [my sons'] math or science."

Chen says that her fifth-grader, who attends a daily Zoom call with his class, is very self-motivated. Her second-grader, on the other hand, needs coaxing to join his once-a-week Zoom. Sometimes Chen will finally get to her own remote classroom, only to realize her son isn't in front of the screen because he didn't want to go to class.

If the kids play outside in the afternoon, Chen has some more time to attend to her L-S students. She responds to a lot of emails: emails from students, emails from parents, emails from other teachers. Then she tries to grade essays and create materials to post online. She taught herself how to make a screencast.

Distinguishing the days can be difficult. Chen and her husband have instituted a 'No Screen Saturday' rule to differentiate weekday from weekend. The kids can still watch TV, but email is strictly forbidden for the parents.

"My husband and I can get where we're like just on our phones all the time checking emails, looking on our computer," Chen says. And there's never a break."

Ms. Collamore has found a break from the monotony in journaling. She's kept a journal for most of her life, but during this time she's made sure to write every day.

"Keeping a journal also helps me to keep my days straight since the rhythm and repetition is starting to

drive me a little crazy," she explains. "Just jotting down about what we ate for dinner is helping me to distinguish between the days."

---

## "The rhythm and repetition is starting to drive me a little crazy"

---

Despite the struggles of quarantining with young children, there are also treasured upsides. Collamore has a front seat as she watches her son progress developmentally.

"Just since we've been in quarantine, he has learned to crawl, started to stand up, began to more regularly say 'mama' and 'dada,' waved, eaten more solids, and transitioned from an infant car seat to a bigger-boy car seat," she details. Jamie's hair is getting long enough for his first haircut, though going to a hairdresser isn't a possibility. "He'll end up with a mop of hair by the time this is over," Collamore says.

Mrs. Chen's eight-year-old son finally learned how to ride a bike. He's had the wheels since he was six, but never felt compelled to learn until quarantine. While confined to his home, he felt like it was one of the only things he could do to get out and about, so he had to learn.

Chen has also enjoyed watching her boys connect as siblings. "They've had to learn to get along better, because they've had to spend so much time together, and because they're each other's only playmate," she explains. The family has gotten out games they haven't played in a long time. Chen is reading books out loud that the kids have said no to before.

There is still a lot to adjust to, especially with school closure extended

to the end of the school year. Chen's E9 and Heroes classes are both finishing books soon, and those are the only books they have.

The English department won't be able to distribute new novels to students at home. She'll have to come up with a new way to organize her classes.

"I'm trying to get better at keeping track of my kids' work and my work," explains Chen. "I just have all these random notebooks and lists. [I'm] trying to be better organized about remembering what day it is and what needs to happen."

Ms. Collamore is grateful that her students are working hard to analyze the books they're reading and are being patient with the speed of her feedback. With Jamie, she only lets herself worry about three things: play, reading, and conversation.

She says, "Given that this is a marathon and not a sprint, I'm trying to lower my expectations on what it means to be 'productive.'"

These next two months online will be a marathon for teachers emotionally too.

"I'm a people person and I'm an extrovert, and I really miss being at school," Chen says. "Most people become teachers because you don't like sitting in front of a computer and just sitting by yourself. I miss being with students."



**LINCOLN-SUDBURY** is closed for the rest of the year. Photo courtesy of DesignShare.



# The Forum



The Student Newspaper of Lincoln-Sudbury

May 10, 2020 · Volume XXVII · Number 6 · An Open Forum for Discussion

## Editorial Board and Disclaimer

### Editors-in-Chief

Ryan Beatty  
Esha Dudhwewala  
Justin Lewitus  
Dasha Trosteanetchi

### Managing Editors

Josie Halporn  
Elle Stevenson

### Staff Advisors

Paul Sarapas  
Jessica Sperandio

### News Editors

Alex Meal  
Elle Stevenson

### Opinion Editor

Lena Leavitt

### Features Editor

Josie Halporn

### Sports Editors

Alkinoos Armoundas  
Justin Lewitus

### Arts Editor

CJ Jacobs

### Assistant Editors

Sydney Ashkinos  
Jack Grosberg

### Photo Editors

Ryan Beatty  
Elle Stevenson

### Online Design

Justin Lewitus

*The Forum*, established in 1994, is the student newspaper of Lincoln-Sudbury. *The Forum* strives to cover all aspects of school and community life and current events. *The Forum* is an open forum newspaper and accepts articles from all members of the community.

The opinions expressed by writers are their own. The viewpoints expressed by the lead editorial reflect the opinions of the editorial board, which is comprised of the editors-in-chief and managing editors.

*The Forum* is distributed free to staff and students of the Lincoln-Sudbury Regional School District. Subscriptions can be purchased on *The Forum* website.

Letters to the editor may be sent to [forum@lsrhs.net](mailto:forum@lsrhs.net). *The Forum* office can be contacted at 978-443-9961 ext. 2203.



## Local Update on COVID-19 Pandemic

**By Elle Stevenson**

Managing Editor

Covid-19 has dramatically affected the lives of everyone in the country. In Sudbury and Lincoln, schools have been closed for the rest of the year, graduation may become a virtual ceremony, and the district has essentially shut down. On April 28, 2020, Sudbury released that there were 75 confirmed cases of Covid-19 in Sudbury. However Sudbury also stated, "Based on recent epidemiologic data, we know that 50-60% of all cases in communities remain unidentified, even though they are readily spreading COVID-19."

**"We conservatively estimate the number of COVID-19 cases... is larger"**

We conservatively estimate the number of COVID-19 positive cases is at least two or three times larger than what is identified." Due to this data, on May 4th, masks became required in every store as people hope these preventive measures will slow the spread of the virus and hopefully flatten the curve.

Massachusetts has also made some positive strides towards reopening as a state. Although Governor Charlie Baker still remains very cautious, some non-essential businesses have begun to reopen. As



**CHARLIE BAKER** giving a coronavirus update. *Photo courtesy of The Boston Globe.*

WBUR reported, businesses such as florists have reopened in time for Mother's Day. However, most shops

remain closed and there are still strict rules that are necessary to keep people protected.



**Fresh. Local  
Wood Grilled.**

**29**  
Curbside

**View The Menu & Order Curbside Pickup**

[rustic29.com](http://rustic29.com)

# What Happens if Kim Jong-un Dies?

**By Jade Konsler**  
Staff Writer

Rumors that North Korean leader, Kim Jong-un, is in grave danger were reported on Monday, April 27, but South Korean officials claim he is simply trying to avoid the coronavirus. Kim has made considerably few public appearances in the past few months, and for the first time since he gained power, he was not present at the birthday celebrations of his grandfather on April 15. This could possibly be due to the cardiovascular system procedure he was reported to have received on April 12. In a nationalist propaganda state such as North Korea, this lack of public exposure is concerning. But even if Kim is not ill, the fact that he has isolated himself from the public in an attempt to avoid the coronavirus contradicts the media narrative that North Korea is trying to present as having no cases of infection. If there were no coronavirus cases in North Korea, Kim would have no reason to isolate himself, but this is not the case.

There have been reports of coronavirus-related deaths since early March, and if these are true, Kim would have good reason to worry. North Korea is not equipped to deal with a coronavirus epidemic. With incredibly low global health security ratings, an already malnourished population more vulnerable to infection, and close-quartered environments such as gulag camps,

prisons, and military barracks, North Korea is already very susceptible to a coronavirus outbreak. With an obese, chain-smoking man as the leader of a country that is a potential hot-spot for the coronavirus, a question should be considered: what would happen if Kim Jong-un died?

The Kim family has managed to maintain control of North Korea for three generations through ruthless authoritarian leadership. Military, paramilitary, and the police are all prominent forces with similar levels of man-power, and similarly well-armed, and similarly cannot operate independently. For years, the Kim family has played these three forces against each other to ensure that no one force becomes too powerful.

---

**“The regime can ensure that there is no alternative to their leadership”**

---

Additionally, anyone who dissents the Kim leadership or becomes powerful enough to be a potential threat is executed. In this way, the regime can ensure that there is no alternative to their leadership.

However, if Kim Jong-un were to die, there would be no clear leader. Kim Jong-un's sister, Kim Yo-jong, could potentially fill the vacancy, but in a patriarchal society, this is unlikely to be sustainable. Kim Jong-un's uncle,



**KIM JONG-UN** speaks at a conference.  
*Photo courtesy of NBC news.*

Kim Pyong-il, is another alternative, but it is unlikely that he will have the support necessary. North Korea is a society in which nobody can seize power due to government censorship. Such a society is unstable and could potentially lead to civil war, and in North Korea's case, this would be a civil war with nuclear weapons.

In addition to wanting to avoid a civil war, most countries would probably prefer that Kim Jong-un stays in power to avoid a potential humanitarian crisis. Lack of stability in North Korea would likely lead to a mass exodus of people which would create a refugee crisis along the South Korean and Chinese borders. Additionally, even if there was a coronavirus-related humanitarian crisis in North Korea, if Kim was in power, other countries would be unable to help. But if there was no true leader in North Korea and the country was in a state of crisis, in order to maintain soft power, other countries including the US would likely have to get involved.

## No Plan A For a Global Pandemic

By **CJ Jacobs**  
Arts Editor

After watching how the US government reacted to the COVID-19 crisis, it is quite clear that we were not at all prepared for a global pandemic – a quite frankly inexcusable fact given the amount of diseases and viruses that have threatened humanity throughout history. While it is true that it is impossible to guess what kind of viral threat the US population will face at any given time, it is most definitely within reason to expect the government to be able to offer some sort of plan for the country.

As there was no set plan for what to do in the case of a nationwide outbreak, states have taken varying measures to protect their citizens against COVID-19. While waiting for the White House to scramble to put some semblance of a plan together and listening to mixed signals coming from the President and the nation's top doctors, many states ended up taking very different roads trying to halt the spread of COVID-19. Some states shut

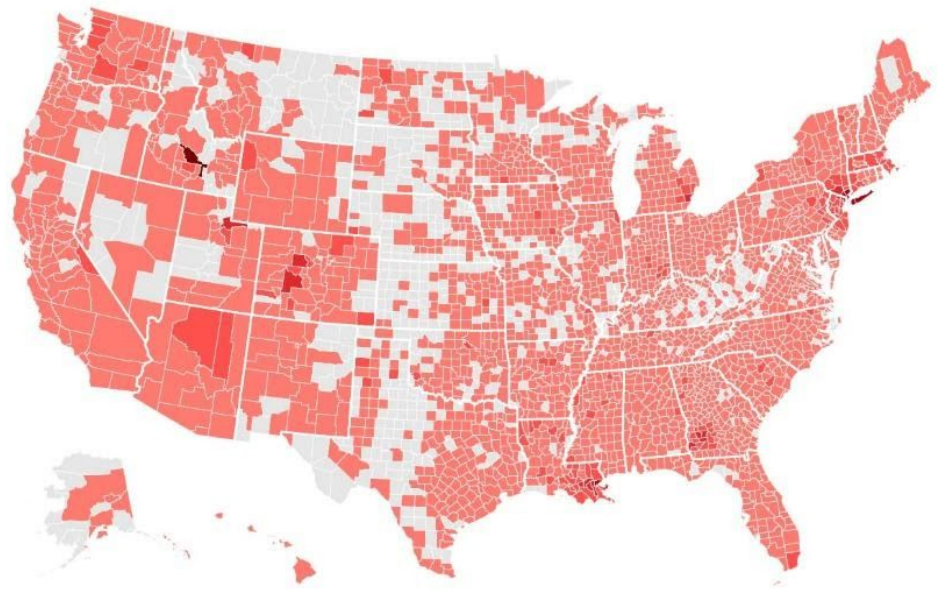
---

**“States have taken varying measures to protect their citizens against COVID-19”**

---

down immediately, while others continued as usual. Some places require masks to be worn at all times, while others are far more lenient. Had the

government had a plan in place for such an occasion, COVID-19 would not have managed to spread so quickly.



**THE UNITED STATES** is unprepared to handle COVID-19. *Photo courtesy of CNN International.*

Additionally, the repercussions of the virus itself have been disastrous and the government's attempts to help have proven less than ideal. Because of the stay at home order, the economy is struggling, with small businesses being hit worst of all. The government tried to help with stimulus checks for qualifying citizens but has hit snags along the road that could have been avoided had they begun planning for a viral emergency sooner.

Completing the triangle of pandemic-related doom is American education. At the moment education has been moved to some form of online

learning, the type of online lesson varying from school district to school district. This method proves annoying

at best to kids with good computers and internet access, and almost impossible for those without them. It

---

**“The economy is struggling, with small businesses hit worst of all”**

---

also places children attending private schools at a far higher advantage to those that don't as they are able to have full virtual classes. Had the government planned for COVID-19 before it hit, perhaps they would have found a way to ensure the best education for their students.

## America Needs a Three Party System

**By Jack Grosberg**  
Assistant Editor

Not since the fall of the Populist party has America been anywhere close to a three party system. Today the Democratic party and the Republican party occupy all but one seat in the House of Representatives and two seats in the Senate. Some argue that the far left and far right wings of the Democratic and Republican parties can sometimes present themselves as their own parties but they are not.

A third party system would help to better represent America, increase productivity and transparency and put American people before politics.

A third party would create a balance of power similar to that of the three branches of our federal government. When conflict between the executive and legislative branches leads to inaction, the two turn to the judicial branch to break the stalemate. However, the Democratic and Republican parties are constantly locked in stalemates which don't break until outside pressures from civilians or foreign countries cause politicians to risk losing re-election. In some cases, stalemates last beyond election cycles.

For example, between 2011 and 1968 there were 1.4 million deaths by firearm, yet our government has passed little to no significant gun control legislation. However, a third party system would allow for more views and ideas on the topic. A third party puts

pressure on the other two parties by affecting the actions of those parties.

A third party also allows for greater representation of the American people. Many voters don't agree with a lot of their party's views but stay anyway because the other party seems more wrong to them. A third party would provide a home for voters who don't feel their party represents them.

Looking at American politics today, we would probably find this party in the political center. The moderate wings of both of today's two dominant parties aren't that ideologically different. In states like Pennsylvania, Arizona and Wisconsin the majority of voters constantly swing between parties because they find certain opinions of both appealing. This trend stretches across all of America, as 39% of American voters are Independents.

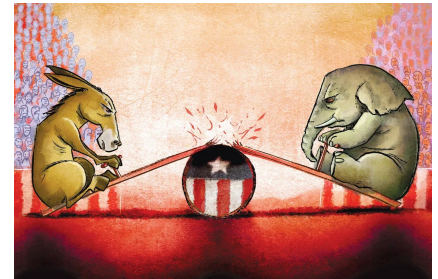
---

**"A third party system would allow for more views and ideas"**

---

Massachusetts is a further example of this lack of representation. The commonwealth had the highest percentage of voters identifying as Democrats in the US with 56% of voters being Democrats and 27% of voters being Republican in 2018. Despite this, Governor Charlie Baker, a moderate/liberal Republican, held the

title of America's most popular governor in 2019 with an approval rating of 72%, a pipe dream for most US politicians.



**A THIRD PARTY** would break stalemates.  
*Photo courtesy of The Kansas City Star.*

Finally, the introduction of a third party, one that occupies the center of the political spectrum, would increase the accountability of our government. Politicians would quickly realize that if they do not work their hardest to represent their constituents, then they would lose their seat to a member of a different party or even their own.

Americans don't have time to do hours of research on politicians of each party and see who they agree more with. A moderate party would help Americans find politicians who better represent them, and they would be joined by moderate politicians of both parties like Governor Baker (R), Governor Steve Bullock (D) of Montana, Governor Andy Beshear (D) of Kentucky, Minnesota Senator Amy Klobuchar (D), Senator Susan Collins (R) of Maine, Senator Mitt Romney (R) of Utah, Senator Angus King (I) of Maine and Former South Bend Indiana Mayor Pete Buttigieg (D).

## Coronavirus Is Not a Great Equalizer

**By Riya Misra**  
Staff Writer

“One thing about COVID-19 is that it doesn’t care about how rich you are, how famous you are, how funny you are, how smart you are, where you live, how old you are, what amazing stories you can tell. It’s the great equalizer,” Madonna proclaimed in a bizarre video a few weeks ago from her rose petal-filled bathtub. This belief isn’t unique to just the rich and wealthy — the notion that this virus doesn’t “discriminate” based on race, gender, creed, or socioeconomic status has incited a faux philosophical revelation in many. It’s poignant, it seems, to be stricken with a global pandemic that ignores all the bigotry and prejudice that have become so common. However, this is a blatant misconception. Coronavirus is not the great, or any type, of equalizer. It’s a great revealer, exposing the inequalities that lie at the core of our society.

The methods of prevention for COVID-19 are clear: stay six feet apart, wash your hands, maintain social distancing, stay home if you feel ill, and protect yourself with masks and sanitizers. It’s a very black-and-white set of rules for people who have the privilege of working from home and maintaining self-quarantine.

However, developing countries and slums such as those in New Delhi, Mumbai, Cape Town, Manila, Karachi, Rio de Janeiro, and Nairobi are

suffering. Safe and steady sanitation, housing, healthcare systems, and job positions are often unaffordable luxuries in poor countries. Slums are densely populated compared to the rest of the world. Families live in crowded one-room houses where social distancing is impossible. They are already susceptible to a multitude of health conditions caused by toxic living situations: air pollution, scarcity of clean water, and malnutrition. If one person gets infected by COVID-19, the disease can rip through the entire community like wildfire.

---

**“Coronavirus is not... any type of equalizer. It’s a great revealer”**

---

Additionally, people live hand-to-mouth, often with families to support. For laborers, going to work is a debate between risking COVID-19 and keeping food on the table for themselves and their families. They have no safety net for wages that could preserve some semblance of their livelihood.

Moreover, slums and developing areas are often overlooked in major healthcare networks. Although they have doctors, they are radically behind the rest of the world when it comes to equal access to healthcare resources. Intensive care units, ventilators, and COVID-19 tests— the most important

resource to track the virus— are in high demand, much higher than the physical supply. When it comes to manufacturing and distribution, these underdeveloped communities are merely an afterthought. One billion people across the world live in these conditions. This is not a small issue.

As if the virus isn’t wreaking havoc across the globe, there might be another pandemic right at its heels: a hunger pandemic, and it will devastate the poor. Daily wage workers are choosing to stay at home and protect themselves, resulting in a drastic loss in income and the basic needs that their income supports. It’s no secret that there’s a massive economic recession in our midst, but it will be felt hardest by those already low on food supply, whose health depends on their small livelihood.

To exacerbate the matter, the global food system is largely dependent on imports and exports. Immigrant migrant workers are at risk for the virus and many have even left their jobs to return home. Travel bans can threaten the import-export balance, leaving some countries vulnerable without their staple imports and leaving others with an excess harvest. Meanwhile, slum dwellers’ wages are still up in the air and they’re starving.

So no, COVID-19 is not an equalizer. It can infect anybody, but this virus ultimately flourishes in inequality.



## Being “Productive” During Quarantine

By Esha Dudhwewala

Editor-in-Chief

Pandemic. Global Crisis. Unemployment. Falling economy. Supply shortages. Dying. These are the sad words I saw every time I opened up my phone, laptop, or TV screen.

On the other side of the internet, I saw everyone that seemed to be using this time to do something “meaningful” and “productive” with their lives and constantly reminding us we can use the time at home to learn a new language or get killer abs, while I sat there crying in my pajamas on the fifth season of the Great British Baking Show.

struggling. You don’t need to “stay positive,” write a novel, take all the online courses, perfect the art of baking, go viral on TikTok, FaceTime everyone and work out every single day. You really do not.

We have this huge hustle mentality in our society where we feel like we need to use all our free time to do something beneficial, but all you need to be doing is what makes you happy. Even if that sounds like a simple statement, happiness is what most of our goals in life are as humans so don’t lose sight of that vision. If you’ve felt the pressure to fill your time with

itself), you are not alone! Do what you feel like, and don’t put stress on yourself during a time that is already stressful.

Regardless, with all of the emotions you may be feeling it can be hard to feel like you’re progressing on your goals during this new lifestyle and staying on top of all your school work

---

**“It is okay to not be okay, especially in a time when everyone’s life is on pause”**

---

from home even if you’re getting “less work.” I thought I would share with you what has been working for me as I try to maximize my growth and activity during this unusual time. Hopefully these strategies can give your life a little bit of clarity if you’ve found yourself lost and whiling the time away but have the desire to feel otherwise.

First, I find that for me it works best to start the day early around 5 AM, even if it may be tempting to sleep in since you don’t have to go anywhere. It sounds crazy I know, but there are a few reasons this helps.

For one, there is a different type of peace at this hour of the morning where no one else is awake which creates the perfect ambience for quiet meditation.

Secondly, it feels similar to my regular school routine to get into this habit and by waking up early, you feel



**INDIVIDUAL HOUSES** with housed individuals. *Photo courtesy of Vox.*

Well I am here to remind you something I slowly realized: that it really is okay to not be okay, especially in a time when everyone else’s life is on pause along with you and so many are

creative projects and complete tasks you’ve been putting off for months, but you have yet to cross anything off of your to-do list (other than making the to-do list of course, which is a feat in

more tired towards the end of the day which results in better sleep. A number of studies have linked waking up earlier to better job performance, greater career success, and higher wages. After a few days of following this routine, I noticed just how much time there really is in a 24-hour period.

Once you hear that alarm, force yourself awake like you have to get to school and start moving right away. The longer I lie in bed, the more lazy I feel which will result in the rest of the day following the same pattern.

As soon as you wake up, drinking lots of lemon water spikes your energy levels physically and mentally. It improves the nutrient absorption in your stomach if you drink it before you eat anything, giving you steady energy throughout the day. You should also remember to keep drinking water throughout the day, as the first step towards productivity is good health.

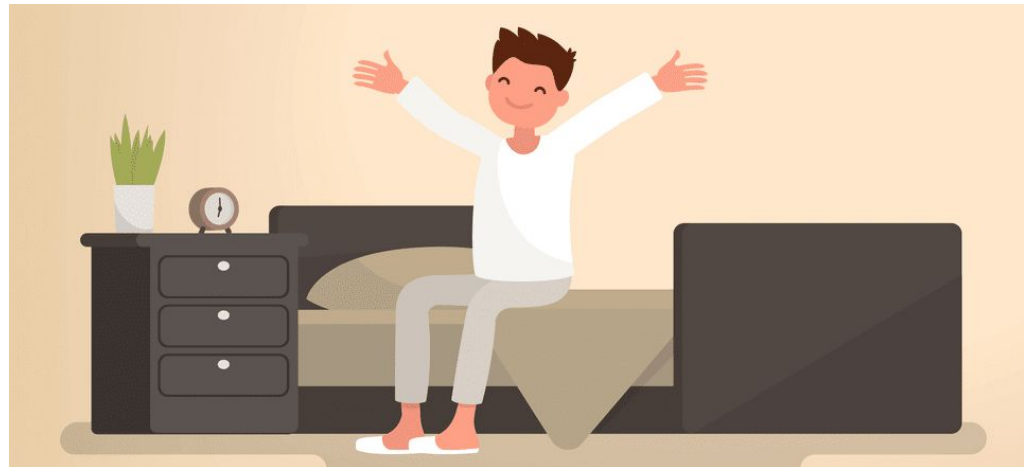
I find that it is also a lot less distracting, and makes my mind feel a lot clearer, to resist looking at my phone for the first hour I wake up. Use an app like Headspace or Calm to do some guided meditation, and have a quiet, peaceful morning instead.



**GETTING OUTSIDE** with family is a great way to stave off loneliness. *Photo courtesy of Smithsonian American Art Museum.*

Then it is helpful to use this time right after waking up to tackle a big task on your to-do list, or do something that requires a lot of brainpower. Therefore, it is out of the

way for the day so you don't need to procrastinate on it and you feel a sense of accomplishment. After that, getting ready for the day as if you're going to school and wearing something other than your pajamas can make a huge difference in feeling motivated and active.



**PEACE AND QUIET** in the early mornings. *Photo courtesy of elegantthemes.com.*

I then like to stretch a little and do some yoga, which makes me feel more focused and aware of my body and actions, improving my concentration throughout the day. It's a good way to warm up my body to exercise as well, which as we all know has many more benefits other than just improving focus. I enjoy running and biking outside before starting any of my school work since it puts me in a great mood. Doing this with a family member can keep you company and add in a fun element to your day. If you don't have someone willing to work out with you, calling a friend on your phone or listening to music or a podcast keeps me entertained and not so lonely. Also, don't forget to maintain your distance from other people if you decide to venture out of the house!

Another habit that can swing the door to productivity right open is to make sure you are having a healthy, nutrient-rich meal in the morning for breakfast to give you that boost of energy, because a lot of the time it is

much harder to focus when you feel hungry. A hearty breakfast also improves your short-term memory and helps you concentrate more intensely and for longer periods. As you work through the day as well, it helps to keep a non-processed snack around like fruit or nuts. While I eat in the morning, I

usually like to plan out my day by prioritizing what is most important to me and my goals.

Opening up Google Classroom as you plan out your day can help you prioritize based on what is due when, and in your planner or calendar you should write out the week's due dates so you can plan for working on those assignments in pieces and not procrastinate on them. Don't forget to add timings for all the online meetings you may have, as it is easy to forget when they happen.

When you write down what you need to do for the day, one big tip is to microschedule. Rather than writing "Finish Article" as one of my tasks, I instead write "Spend one hour on article" from 3 to 4 o'clock, or "Write Intro" and put it in a specific time slot. This helps me stay accountable and not get overwhelmed with a huge project. Google Calendar is a great tool to use for budgeting your time as it lets you drag around your tasks easily and even links to Classroom.

I also like to give myself fake deadlines. For example, if I write that I need to finish an essay two days before it is due, it usually ensures that I finish with less stress and I have time to edit and perfect my work. If you have a hard time holding yourself to it, tell one of your parents or siblings to assist you with accountability and make it harder to do something you want if you don't get your work done.



**CLEAR YOUR WORKSPACE** to avoid distractions. *Photo courtesy of The Daily Dot.*

Before you start working, make sure your workspace is distraction free! Go to an area of the house with a closed door where no one else is talking or working around you, and make sure the room around you is clutter free. A Princeton University study found that people who worked in a clean workspace out-performed those who worked in a cluttered one because clutter pulls your attention away from your work and makes your mind cluttered too.

Being distraction free while working is so important, because the biggest reason we end up falling into the deep vortex of procrastination is oftentimes just the little diversions. For most people I've talked to, these common distractions for us unsurprisingly include technology related temptations like our phones or

streaming services such as Netflix and YouTube. It is so easy to crave opening up an entertainment site while you should be working and this self-discipline is honestly one of the hardest parts about being productive.

Fortunately, there are many tactics you can use to make this easier for you, the most obvious being to turn off your phone and put it far away and out of sight so you're not tempted or

distracted by notifications. One simple tactic is to turn off your phone for a text message, and an hour later you can find yourself wondering where all the time disappeared. The harder part is controlling the time you spend on your laptop, since distractions can be so readily accessible there as you work. A good solution to this is StayFocusd, a chrome extension that blocks certain websites after you use them longer than a certain amount of minutes. I find that even music distracts me, but on the other hand, instrumental background music, lo-fi beats or white noise (such as from Noisli.com) improves my focus.

As you follow your microschedule, if you feel like you might lose track of the time it is taking you, set a timer. Giving yourself 20 minutes for progress on each task can allow you to make progress on lots of

different goals and ensure you aren't getting hyper-focused on one thing. Twenty minutes is actually a lot longer than it sounds. After each increment, it helps to take some deep breaths and give yourself a little treat, like one YouTube video for example, so you feel like your hard work is paying off.

Another important thing to keep in mind as you work is rather than seeing your assignments as something you just need to get done, think about it as something you really enjoy and then you might actually enjoy it and feel like doing it more. Think about what you're learning about and really get into it so you come out more knowledgeable and fulfilled instead of just doing the work to say you did it.

By focusing on your work too much though, you can forget to make time for the things that truly make you happy. This can result in a cycle of feeling down which will lower your mood and productivity even more. Even if you can't go out with friends, connect with people that make you feel good by using apps like Zoom and Houseparty. One of my favorites has been Netflix Party, where you can watch Netflix with your friends even if they aren't physically there with you. It helps to avoid watching shows or movies with depressing content, but rather happy themes.

Netflix and Hulu have tons of amazing documentaries and foreign films as well if you want to expand your knowledge and worldview so you feel like you are being productive with your binge watching. Some of my personal recommendations include Bollywood (Indian) cinema and the Netflix documentaries "Becoming," "Cowspiracy" and "Forks Over Knives." Remember you don't always have to force yourself to "get something" out of your free time though!

Other “productive” activities to consider include re-decorating your room, cleaning your house, or reading nonfiction. Even if you can’t go to the library, lots of online services are offering free trials of books, and you may be surprised what you can find even in your own house. To advance your education, use your time to research in depth topics you’ve always been curious about. For example, my latest project has been delving into the arguments for and against veganism so I can come to an educated conclusion about my own diet.

My favorite productive activity though, is making things. “Making things” is pretty vague, but it entails lots of different creative avenues that can help you feel so pleased with yourself. For example, if you like to write, you can do what I’m doing now and create articles, speeches, or short stories on your ideas and passions. You can create meals for your family and test out new recipes with items that you have in your house. If you’re into the arts, create a painting, a podcast, new outfits or clothing flips, dance routines, or songs. Online tutorials can be your new best friend as well if you want to get into something new. My

---

**“I find it less distracting to resist looking at my phone for the first hour I wake up”**

---

favorites include Skillshare, EDx, and Coursera, which offer a range of free classes from top universities, ranging from the science of happiness to electronic music production.

You can even create your own business if you want to gain some money with your time. Ways to do this include starting up a YouTube channel, selling clothing online, coding a

website, or even attempting to give virtual tutoring or lessons in the areas you excel at, whether it be school work, baking, or playing an instrument, etc.



**TAKE THE TIME** to do what makes you happy. *Photo courtesy of 123RF.com.*

Another way to feel like your time is resulting in something and not going “to waste” is volunteering it to others. By volunteering your time, you can feel happier and more accomplished with yourself since you know you assisted someone for the better. This can be something as simple as doing the dishes for your parents that may be struggling to work from home each day, or tutoring young children you know are adjusting to new virtual school life. During this tough time, there are also many people who are in need of different things, whether it be a person to talk to on the phone, a mask which you can sew, or funds which you can donate and raise awareness for. There are so many projects you can search for and dedicate yourself to.

When most of your plans have probably been cancelled or postponed, it is easy to spend time berating yourself for not feeling like you are moving forward, then judging yourself for feeling this way. You suddenly shifted from going to school all day and your regular routine to social distancing, staying home all day, and having few escapes to feel the anxiety, grief, and helplessness of this situation. Those emotions can make you feel unsettled, paralyzed, and unable to focus or be productive.

However, you have no control over the situation and have no choice but to accept it. The sooner you do that, the sooner you can create room in your mind to focus on other things. One of the most important steps to being productive is to accept the moment at hand and come to terms with the fact that it is stressful and scary and that is fine.

Planning ahead helps me cope with these emotions of not being able to move on in life. This includes anything from trip itineraries to college life to daily meal plans. While it is important to live in the moment, you may be thanking yourself a lot for making your future life easier.

Every night before sleeping, I find that it helps to journal and vent out your thoughts on paper. By being able to physically see your emotions, many times you gain clarity on them.

---

**“Self-discipline is honestly one of the hardest parts about being productive”**

---

Sometimes you realize your problems aren’t as big as you thought. It is like having a conversation with yourself and in my opinion is the best form of therapy. I write down all that I’m thankful for, what I am glad I accomplished throughout the day, and what my big goals to work toward are so I don’t lose sight of them and instead go to bed feeling happy and fulfilled.

Productivity certainly does not have to be your first priority in the midst of a pandemic, and you certainly don’t have the time to do everything, but you don’t have to give up on your dreams during this time and there are a vast number of ways you can continue to grow and make the most out of the switch in lifestyle.

## Speech and Debate Team Donates to Homeless Shelter Impacted by COVID-19

By Esha Dudhwewala  
Editor-in-Chief

Social distancing by staying at home is a privilege, one that thousands of the homeless all over the world and in the cities close to us do not have. Boston's homeless population, according to the Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program, is seeing a major increase in coronavirus cases. As of April 6th, about 200 people that are homeless have tested positive for the virus, out of 600 to 700 people tested. Pine Street Inn, the largest homeless services provider in New England, is continuing to operate 24 hours a day and seven hours a week. As of April 15th, of the 397 people tested there, 146 people tested positive who all surprisingly had no symptoms, a “stunning” statistic that the Center for Disease Control and Prevention has been investigating.

---

**“Of the 397 people tested there, 146 people tested positive”**

---

“Pine Street Inn serves 1,600 to 1,700 people a day through street outreach, shelter, and permanent supportive housing. Many people we serve have comorbid conditions like heart disease, diabetes, or substance



**PINE** Street Inn. *Photo Courtesy of Pine Street.* abuse, and this will bring another layer of risk,” Lyndia Downie, president and executive director of Pine Street Inn, told the *Boston Globe*. “In the shelter setting, social distancing is also a challenge. Our guests sleep in dorms and everyone eats together . . . we just don’t have space to separate people. That reality, combined with their medical and age vulnerability, puts homeless individuals at much higher risk for COVID-19 than other people.”

While unfortunate, this is an actuality as 74% of the homeless at Pine Street have one or more underlying disabilities, including respiratory disease, physical limitations, mental

health conditions, and substance use disorders that make them more vulnerable to coronavirus. The average age there is also notably 55 years old. At the same time, Pine Street is facing significant unbudgeted incremental costs to support staffing and expanded procedures, which currently exceed \$250,000 a week.

“There’s no question this is going to cost everybody a lot of money — for additional staffing, equipment, cleaning, supplies. If this lockdown lasts a couple of weeks, we’ll manage it, but it won’t be. It’ll be months,” Downie said.

Saddened by this situation, the Speech and Debate Team at

Lincoln-Sudbury has decided to start a movement to help out the struggling homeless service, including donating a large portion of their club's funding toward Pine Street Inn.

"We're working to utilize the resources we have to best help the community during the corona crisis, and we're lucky that we have lots of finances available to do this," Rhea Karty, a junior club captain, said. "We wanted to look at the communities being hit the hardest, as the homeless population don't have the resources to fall back on unlike we are privileged to have in Lincoln and Sudbury."

---

## **"The homeless population don't have the resources to fall back on"**

---

Jishnu Ghosh, a sophomore club captain who first suggested the initiative, further stated how "lots of charities have lots of funds, but we chose to help Pine Street Inn in particular because while all of us in Sudbury have the ability to shelter in place and avoid contact with anyone to limit our exposure to the virus, the people at the homeless shelter don't have a choice. If they have funds, they can place more protocols and measures to protect their staff and people to limit their exposure."

While the team is donating their own portion of \$1,000 upfront, they are also encouraging others in the community to pitch in and donate to Pine Street. Every person's donation will be matched by the club and donated by them as well, up to another \$1000. Therefore, if you donate ten dollars, L-S Speech and Debate will also donate ten dollars so your donation has twice the impact.

"This basically started because I was at home obviously and bored during quarantine, and felt like as a club there's a lot more we could be doing for the community around us, especially since we have access to contact so many people and could encourage them to help the community as much as they can during this pandemic, and provide a way for them to do so," Ghosh said.

In addition to donating money, other ways to help out this cause include sewing masks if you can or donating items from Pine Street's Amazon wishlist, which includes lots of common household items and food. In fact, even as restaurants across the state are forced to shutter, Boston's homeless continue to line up for breakfast and dinner at the Pine Street Inn. Executive chef Frank van Overbeeke serves roughly 350 men and 125 women each day. Pine Street also contracts with detox centers, criminal justice facilities, and other shelters to provide thousands of meals daily. Your small donations can therefore make a big difference in their ability to run and save lives. Other than donating physical items, you could also donate your services through the Coupon Collective.

"We started the coupon project because we know that the L-S community is full of talented people with varied passions, and oftentimes students don't have lots of money of their own, so they can then donate skills people can buy," Karty said. "For example if you're really good at baking, you can offer a coupon for a batch of fresh-baked cookies."

---

## **"The L-S community is full of talented people with varied passions"**

---

The website for the Coupon Collective, being started up by junior debate captain Joel George, is currently underway. According to George, students can offer the community anything they see as monetizable, from art, to music, to manual labor, and all of the funds made from the service would go to Pine Street Inn.

"You can make a coupon for anything you're good at, from 'I will mow your lawn, edit a video, or take pictures for you.' Any skills people have I would encourage them to offer," Ghosh said. "Even if you don't have an idea, reach out to us and we'll help you find something."

If you are not able to donate something yourself, even a simple gesture such as spreading the word could go a big way in attracting attention to this important cause and assisting the homeless.

"Social media is an awesome way to help get the word out, since everyone is spending a lot of time online right now," Sabrina Bensley, a junior club captain, said. "It's a great way for you to give if you aren't able to donate! You can make such a big impact by just sharing a link."

Unfortunately, this is not going to be a virus of equity. The people who have the least ability to respond are going to suffer the most. However, if you would like to assist the homeless service or are just looking to get more information, you're encouraged to visit [pinestreetinn.org](http://pinestreetinn.org) and email the Lincoln-Sudbury Speech and Debate Team at [lssd101@gmail.com](mailto:lssd101@gmail.com), and they will provide you with the resources to help out. If you would like to contribute to the Coupon Collective, you can sign up at this link: <https://bit.ly/2L1F2P8>, and email [couponsforcovid@gmail.com](mailto:couponsforcovid@gmail.com).

## Art in the Time of COVID-19

By **CJ Jacobs**

Arts Editor

Amid the global COVID-19 pandemic one wouldn't think there would be any room for art, but many artists are working hard to disprove that theory. All around the world, murals are popping up in the midst of the COVID-19 outbreak. Artists are taking to the streets to illustrate the struggles of living in a world locked down, honor those fighting to stop the outbreak, and educate the public on how to take the proper precautions to stop the spread.

Alpha Sy, an art student in Senegal, has decided to use his skills with paint to help fight the virus. In a country where many citizens cannot read, Sy and his group of artists, the Radikl Bomb Shot (RBS), have helped to spread awareness about how to defend against the virus with methods such as face masks and social distancing.

When they started making their murals, the President of Senegal had declared a national emergency and cases were already piling up. Still, many people believed that the virus was only relevant in Europe and China.

The first murals were put up on the campus of Dakar's Cheikh Anta Diop University where a large chunk of the public would be able to see them. Through their art, RBS has successfully conveyed their message to the public. It is their goal to continue to make sure

that everyone understands how to remain safe in this ever growing crisis.

The murals made by RBS focus on making the public aware of how they can stay safe and help stop the spread of COVID-19 by depicting people wearing face masks, using a tissue to cover their cough, cleaning their hands, and practicing other such methods that will help stop germs from spreading.

Around the world other murals have begun to pop up centering around COVID-19 as well. Some, like those made by Sy and RSB, aim to inform the public about important safety measures while others try to capture the reality of living in a world locked down. For example Emmalene Blake, an Irish artist, recreated the iconic Rosie the Riveter poster to be directed at healthcare workers fighting the pandemic. In the painting Rosie is shown wearing a face mask and scrubs.

An artist in Indonesia created a piece that depicted a girl wearing a face mask surrounded by multiple, painted,

closeup views of COVID-19. Under her are the words "Stay at Home".

In England Rachel List, a local artist, created a mural depicting a healthcare worker as an angel to honor the people fighting on the frontlines against COVID-19. The woman is shown with rainbow feathered wings, a halo, and her hands held in front of her to make a heart shape.

Beyond virus and other lockdown-related murals, art has still flourished in a world now dominated by COVID-19. Movies that would have otherwise been shown in theaters have been released to streaming platforms so that they may be enjoyed at home while artists are taking to the internet to perform from their living rooms and stream it to the public.

It is important to remember that art can be found anywhere, whether it's a movie released early, or an honorary mural. The arts still remain a very prominent part of our everyday lives, maybe even more so now than ever.



**ALPHA SY** COVID-19 mural. Photo courtesy of Alpha Sy.

# A COVID-19 Book Recommendation

**By Nicole Malinoski**  
Contributing Writer

One book that I have read over the school closure has been a novel called “The Girl King” by Mimi Yu, which is a young adult fantasy novel set in East Asia about two sisters.



**MIMI YU**, author of “The Girl King”. *Photo courtesy of Mimi Yu.*

The novel goes into darker themes than most YA novels and touches on some really controversial ideas, so if you are looking for a light read, this probably isn’t the book for you. The older sister, Princess Lu, has been raised her whole life to be the future emperor when her father dies, while her younger sister, Princess Min, has been raised to be obedient and sweet and to be a good wife to her future husband. But when their cousin

Set is named emperor instead and Lu is betrothed to him, everything changes. Lu challenges him for his position, but she is betrayed and is forced to flee, and her sister is to marry Set in her place, before finding out that she has powers that she never knew about.

The novel switches between the perspectives of Lu, Mei, and a man named Nokhai who Lu meets when she flees. While the sisters love one another and try to stay loyal to the other, they become enemies, each fighting for the throne.

The characters came off as more realistic than many book characters because while they were strong, they were also flawed and weren’t your standard Mary Sue characters. All three of the main characters grow and change throughout the book, and by the end of the book have become a very different version of themselves.

Lu, who lived a sheltered life beforehand, finds out what the world is like outside of her castle and learns that maybe everything that she thought she knew was wrong, and Min finds out secrets about her family that she almost wished she never knew while Nok discovers things about himself and his fate.

Min had been in the shadow of her older sister her entire life and had been looked down on as a child by everyone, something that she greatly resented. She is naive and wants to prove that she is a woman and not a

child to everyone. She is desperate for people to be proud of her and be seen as an equal to her sister, which is something that many teenagers can relate to, especially ones with siblings. As she learns about her powers and what she can do, she becomes less docile and more willing to speak her mind. Though the things that she fights for are wrong, she doesn’t recognize that they are wrong just yet as she is still very young during the novel, only becoming a ‘woman’ near the start of the book, but she still has more time to grow, as there is a second book coming out in May.



“THE GIRL KING” cover art. *Photo courtesy of Amazon.*