

“Appreciate” by Jared Pagan

In this modern age, the world can be a cold place. The only thing worth value is to be appreciative. Many people fall victim to disappointment, because they fail to find appreciation within themselves. Many don't think about what they like about themselves, but instead they see what others like about them, or worry too much about what they find in others. What I believe is that to truly understand the concept of appreciation, you must first find appreciation within yourself.

From a young age, I was always insecure, so lost within my bubble of negative thoughts and energy. It was probably because I was always bigger than everyone around me. I always got called “big” or “fat” whether it was from a friend or family member, so growing up I thought I could never trust a soul besides my mother to tell me I wasn't ugly. As I matured, I kept realizing how different I started to look and all was going smoothly until what I would call the darkest time of my life; Covid 19.

The Covid Virus outbreak will forever be a period of nothing but rage and anxiety in my life; something unforgettable. The pandemic left me in a dark state of depression, insecurity, worry, and I became cautious of the world around me. But with this alone time, a time of darkness and despair, I found a golden characteristic that made me the person I am today. I learned to love myself.

Being once insecure, I often wondered what people said about me behind closed doors. However, my experience of loneliness during Covid built character and helped me to realize that knowing my self-worth and valuing the kind person I am is significant.

Many people left Covid feeling stressed and isolated. On the contrary, I spent that time in reflection, which gained me confidence. My new found confidence allows me to connect with people and make friends much easier than I used to. Becoming less timid gave me the courage to use my voice. Thus, I hope to be able to help others to realize that moments of reflection can be moments of thanksgiving. Appreciating one's self is the greatest gift of all!