I never really realized my role in my family, my role with friends and the views I had of myself. It wasn’t until this first major lockdown in March/April, the rollercoaster was taking off and I barely strapped my seatbelt on.

 I am the youngest in my family, significantly younger. I live with my grandmother of nearly 90 years old, my baby-boomer generation mother and my 30-year old sister. Here I am at 20 years old, in college, thinking my timing is perfect. But in those months, my mother left her job and school went online. I felt like I lost my outlet, my space. No trips could be planned over summer because of all travel restrictions and deep down in our subconscious, we all are concerned for the well-being of my grandmother. She is still with us as I write this, and I am so grateful for that.

 I have always thought of myself as a homebody and introvert and never really felt that until now. When leaving my house to see some friends in a safe manner, in the back of my head I couldn’t help but think about how nice it would feel to finally come home, make dinner, read a book, meditate and not have to speak.

 This pandemic surely did not attack me or my family in the worst of ways but it has been a mental battle. Lots of family tension still continues to rise and it is difficult because I can see how it is a test. A test to see how much I have grown and to see if I am able to challenge any hardships and stand up for myself. Although the conflicts that occur in a household full of women are strenuous, I have come to appreciate my family and upbringing so much more.

 I was beginning to lose sight of who I was in familiar terms and spending much more time and energy repairing our bubble has pushed me into the next stage of my development as a young adult. I now have goals and ambitions that I feel perfectly align with what I want to achieve. My growth as a person has gone beyond the physical and mental but also into a spiritual awareness.

 I view this pandemic as a global reset and shift into a new era. In my personal relations, I have a grown sympathy for many but not overexerted with empathy. I can feel for the world, but as an individual I have learned to make myself a priority despite any external matters. This year has helped me appreciate it all, my education, my health, my family, my job, and all lessons that I know will serve me and my future.

 My heart goes out to those who have experienced much more pain. I know I am being protected and that each person is as well, in their own ways. We can all come together and unite but have to remind ourselves that no one knows us best than ourselves, proceeding through life from now on requires an awareness of truth and use of our resilient nature.