

GETTING THINGS DONE

The increased monotony of quarantine has prompted the reinvigoration of productivity for some and the disintegration of others

Every day Paly junior Eva Salvatierra starts her day as the sun barely peaks over the mountains. She gets up at 6:00, drinks her coffee, does a core workout and wraps up with a hearty breakfast just before the clock strikes 7:00. Half an hour later after eating, she ties her shoes and embarks on a second workout of either running, biking, or strength training. By 9:00, she is showered, dressed and ready to start a long day of Zoom school. On days with an extra 40 minutes in the morning, Salvatierra takes extra time to water her plants, scroll through social media or even meditate before online school begins.

Now, not all of us wake up and do our mornings exactly like Salvatierra. Some of us may be like Paly freshman Harrison Dike. He gets up five minutes before his class, a lar m

clock blaring and rolls straight out of bed and onto the computer. For his first class of the day, he dons an all too common online school outfit consisting of PJs, under eye bags and messy tangled hair. On a lucky day, he might have enough time to shove an lukewarm Eggo waffle in his mouth.

As distance learning and quarantine still have no end in sight, these trying times have prompted striking changes in our productivity levels.

Some have seen surges in productivity: waking up early and getting work done efficiently and consistently—whether it be for our educational, physical or mental goals.

Others have seen online school and quarantine to be straightforward; with no

body and no work ethic to push them, students have started to fall behind. The mindless scrolling on Tik Tok, the out-of-whack sleep schedules and the feeling that you've somehow done nothing all day yet haven't relaxed at all are just a few norms seeping into the daily lives of many.

While adjusting to online school, it became a tempting option for students to take all classes on the couch. With the opportunity to do school with the least amount of

movement and effort, taking advantage of this is not at all uncommon yet harmful all the same. The lack of socializing has been damaging, and students see classwork and attending class all day on computers to be worse than its in-person counterpart.

"From being at my house all day and sitting in Zooms makes me so bored," Dike said. "It's like my motivation has completely gone down all around."

The motivation issue may very well be the source of hundreds of students' struggling grades. What

once were simple tasks have now become agonizing ones.

In physical school, students eat with friends, they enjoy free time and appreciate it, especially since many are preoccupied by sports and other extracurriculars. However, stuck at home, we often see ourselves neglect the time given for

"Start your day by moving your body and getting fresh air."

Eva Salvatierra, junior



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productivity tips

"I try to take 30 minute breaks per assignment, which helps me get through them all."

Harrison Dike, freshman

"My biggest tip, to anybody out there, is to set a schedule."

Alex Gao, sophomore

"It's helpful to read before going to bed rather than falling asleep on a computer screen. I wake up in such a good mood, and I'm definitely more ready to begin the day."

Eva Salvatierra, junior

these activities. Before quarantine, Paly senior Claire Shimazaki used to pass the time with her acoustic guitar and drawing to help her destress and to feel a sense of tranquility in times of commotion.

"I just haven't been playing the guitar that much, I feel [online school] kind of screwed my other interests. I haven't done any drawing, music or anything recently really except for working and school," Shimazaki said.

With poor productivity comes poorer quality of work. "One day I forgot about an assignment, and then that led to two days, and then one more day. And then it all fell apart," Dike said. "It just made it tougher. I just can't work during online school."

Even though many students have found it hard to work with the transition to online learning and the daunting presence of COVID-19, there are still some stu-

dents who have been able to thrive. Paly junior Eva Salvatierra and sophomore Alex Gao are prime examples of this type of student. Salvatierra and Gao have not only been able to stay productive, but increase their productivity by maintaining a good mindset and schedule.

Gao has found that working toward a good headspace is an excellent way to improve productivity, even if the path to get there is different from the average high schooler.

"Sometimes when I run I think about math

problems, but most of the other times I just don't think about anything at all," Gao said. "That helps me because your mind gets a rest and you feel fresh after you run."

For many students, the hard part of increasing productivity is finding the motivation to make the most efficient use of

time. But with a full day of online learning and extra-curricular activities, exhaustion creeps in right as that clock hits 3:05p.m.

Gao has been able to fix this by utilizing the few breaks he gets throughout the day for a full 30 minutes to an hour of meditation to relax. "On Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, I have a prep period so I can run then," Gao said. "By the time school is dismissed, I have done my exercise for the day."

If waking up before the sun rises to run seems like a death wish, but you're looking to increase productivity so you can get to bed before three in the morning, there is still hope. Even with low motivation, Dike found when he set small goals, he was able to do his classwork and manage his extracurriculars just by having clear intentions. "There were a few weeks where I wanted to be really productive and it went really well," Dike said.

As the dilemma of online school continues on, it is worth noting that it is normal to not be as productive compared to life pre-pandemic. The world has drastically changed and impacted us in different ways. Productivity affects us all in one way or another, and what's important is that you carry on.