

I am a storyteller. I always have been, I always will be.

But four weeks into isolation in my home, I am struggling to find a story to tell.

I do work in creative production and brand strategy. This entire piece was inspired by a mock script I was writing for a video I'm trying to put together. However, I find myself falling into old memories, old videos, pictures, anything just to feel that way again. Why is the present becoming numbing? Is it that I'm feeling so much all at once and I can pinpoint that one emotion, so it casts a shadow over them all? Or is it numbness, possibly for self-preservation. But could it be self-destruction?

I found myself asking this question and, once again, feeling overwhelmed.

Another question, of course, right now I didn't have the answer to. Until I remembered I could choose.

In times of utter chaos and confusion, we must remember simplicity. Yes, I know what you're thinking, but even now it is possible to obtain within the grand scheme of it all. So let's break it down: what do we have control over right now? I'm almost certain you know the one thing, and you're right. It's yourself. And with yourself comes the ability to control your perspective. Your perspective right now could be far more critical than you think.

Now, I'm not really one to talk right this second if I'm being honest. I've been struggling...a lot with this quarantine. I want to go back to U of O. I want my friends, my second family. I want school. I want creative projects and the resources to execute them. I want the nights with my roommates. I want to get a goddamn taco from Pandita. I want the sunsets along the river. I want sports, my God, I want women's sports. Anything. Anything but keeping to myself in my room, distracted by the sound of my parents working and my dogs pacing, finally wondering why in the fuck their humans have been home this long.

But you know what, there was a point in my life my senior year of high school where I couldn't fathom leaving my childhood home, school, friends, leaving my family. And now I can't fathom being without the home I built with people I chose and who chose me. I went from the home of the first pure love I've ever found and I went and found and built and fought for my very own. How lucky am I that I have two places I never thought I could be without? And how lucky am I that I have grown over this time and found my true home? And how lucky am I that I get to spend time at this home and eventually make my way back to my one at school. Pretty fucking lucky, I'll tell ya. While that one may have my heart, this home was the one that taught me to love, and for that, may I be grateful. While I am struggling, every day I am choosing to try. And that is all I ask of you. Embrace the art of simply trying.

Sometimes we get stuck in a rut. But the best place about being in a rut is that you know exactly where you are. I have found myself there, and I've also carved out my path to success. It involves effort and attitude. It involves trying.

I have chosen to abandon the desire and expectation for outstanding, breathtaking, elaborate, jaw-dropping work and instead flee to simplicity. I am essentially going back to my roots. Pre-success. Pre-finding myself and my passions. Only now, I have direction. I can start again, even better than before.

I've created homemade videos just to bring a smile to someone's face. I've drawn shitty pictures on copy paper with crayons. I haven't fucking touched crayons since senior prom when we had them at the fancy Italian place and I was the only one drawing Ad slogans and sub-par jokes on the table* for when the staff had to clean up. (*Shocker! Primarily for those of you who know me).

I've sat myself down on my couch in my room criss-crossed for three weeks attempting to do school and homework until finally accepting I was stuck here and bought myself a desk to get my act together. Well you know what, I just assembled that fuckin desk *and* chair and I find myself spreading this little gospel like wildfire on this page of ours. Because it's true. Perspective is your choice. Everything is your choice. You can't control what's happening, but you sure as hell can control how you react to it.

While this is literally sucking the life out of my hug-deprived, human contact junkie, extrovert self, I stay eager for the day I can see my people again, but I remain grateful for the people I have in this home and for the roof over my head and this life I have chosen to live and live passionately. And I stay grateful that I have people in my life that can both make me hurt this bad when I am away and be so grateful at the same time. The harder the pain, the sweeter the sun, I suppose. And my life is so so bright, despite what feels to be a looming cloud overhead. Even now, there is color in this gray area. I'm choosing to add to it. You should too.

So embrace the art of simply trying. Anything you do is enough because you matter and what you make matters. Make cool shit with what you have. You don't need that podcast studio to say things that influence people. You don't need a camera to create a video that changes lives for the better. Find new ways to inspire and find that you've always had the tools in front of you the whole time. It doesn't need to be spectacular, depending on how you measure the word. I think it will be spectacular and extraordinary and any other good word because you have chosen to *do something*. Storytelling is limitless. Start acting like it.

Remember that while you're inside saving lives, you can change them too.

And yes, it's okay to take that deep breath. Please remember to tell your dog it's all good. Take a nap in your depression cave of a room. Take a walk around the block. But don't be afraid to challenge yourself when you're ready, willing and able to take it.

Your story goes so far beyond what's happening right now. And who knows...today you could be heard more than ever. Who wouldn't want to take that chance to say something that matters? Your platform has been in front of you the whole time. Are you going to choose to step up?

Long story short, today is still a gift, so enjoy the present.

And may you fill your walls with inspiration until we are ready to bring them back home.

I hope for you. I hope you are healthy, I hope you find happiness in the little things, I hope you find joy where you can, and I hope you choose the perspective that best suits you and those around you.

Embrace this moment, embrace simplicity, and embrace the art of simply trying.

Sincerely,
Reilly Wadsworth