

I was happy to be back in campus. I've always loved being surrounded by trees and chirping birds. I was relieved to see almost empty campus and mess. But the sudden change of place made me feel surreal. The cloudy weather reminded me of my home and had resurfaced traumatic childhood memories. If I sat at a place, I would get lost in thoughts, and it would be hours before I realized. I tried to keep up with my journaling and meditation practice. On day 4, my therapist cancelled the session I had scheduled with her next day, and all her appointments for the coming 10 days. I was disappointed. I would not be able to talk to her while I was quarantined. I tried reaching out to a friend and spoke about how I felt. To my utter dismay, I was asked to stop complaining and be happy. That day I missed my weekly meeting with my professor. I had lost track of days. I needed someone to talk to. That day, I spoke to my abusive mother after weeks. I felt worse. I was suicidal. I felt like life is a battle I hadn't signed up for. I wanted to give up. That day, I decided to lower my expectations of myself. I wrote to my professor and cancelled our next meeting. I was surviving my mental health issues and being quarantined during a pandemic. That was enough. I played music and danced till I felt better. A few days later, when a Bollywood actor committed suicide, internet and social media was flooded with the news. I was triggered. I was flashing back to the time I was trapped at home with my sexually abusive father. The next two days, I lied unconscious on my bed all day. Every time I tried waking up, the memories made me unconscious again. Sometimes, the nightmares woke me up from my sleep and I found myself shaking and crying. To me, the trauma isn't over yet. I'm haunted by the memories and body sensations of the trauma. In childhood, the defense mechanisms numbed me from feeling much pain. I now feel them with full intensity. Being quarantined has made it harder. But I have fought too hard to give up now. Today is my last day being quarantined and I'm excited. I can't wait to take long walks Gulmohar Marg!