

FROM PLACE TO SPACE
Encountering Design and Online Education

MOVING SPACES
My Lockdown experience with family and online education
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Leaving Ahmedabad for Surat, after the lockdown was announced was sudden. I sat in the car and began my small road trip to home with my friends. Car stuffed with almost all our belongings and stationery. I said my goodbyes to my friends and unknowing the known normal.

I reached my house. The strong scent of disinfectant in the elevator and faces hiding behind the mask amused me. All my family was relieved I was home. With markets shut and school closed my family used this time to ease and relax. I usually prefer to keep away from news channels. But the corona virus having a worldwide impact piqued my curiosity and felt requisite of the situation. Watching news as a family became a daily ritual. Everyone kept themselves updated about everything – from what kind of masks to wear to finding safest places to find the essentials.

Soon the news became a source of negativity for me and corona virus dominated the conversation everywhere. I started feeling the loss of momentum. From the fast-eventful college life to a monotonous lifestyle. I utilised my time to learn new softwares, polishing my drawing skills and rewatching shows. I tried to be in touch with all my friends from the start. The group video calls and chats were small ways to feel connected to the college life.

As lockdown extended, and the rules became more relaxed. My father went on with his work taking the necessary precautions and siblings were introduced to an online education platform. Everyone got on with their life while I was eagerly waiting for classes to start while keeping myself informed about the pandemic.

After a month of lockdown, online classes started. I was excited about the possibilities. From finding a quiet room to putting together a workspace there was a task. Being in a joint family, noises travel through the wall and no space is enough. Finding a place before classes started was a relief. I would wake up 8:30 in the morning and attend the classes from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. Then I would spend remaining day doing assignments while rewatching shows or listening to music playing in the background. Living at home meant being in a more comfortable and safe space. Staying at home also meant good and healthy lifestyle. Transitioning from a diet full of fast food with no scheduled time of eating or sleeping. I started feeling healthier and had more energy. My days became more scheduled like getting 8 hours of sleep. I was more relaxed and felt more motivated and the quality of my work was better.

The new form of online education required us to learn and adapt to online platforms like Zoom, Google Meet ; digitally submitting our assignment through Google drive and Concept board ; and so much more. Initially the assignment were more software and technique based. Soon the courses became more practical and material based. They required more exploration and visualisation. These courses over an online platform felt more challenging. Soon I moved from working on a desk to floor, bed or anything that felt comfortable.

As the semester progressed the amount of work increased and I would spend major part of the day working on my assignments. I would use various techniques and materials to make model. My family was fascinated by work. After every course all my work would end up on my desk. My grandfather would ask me questions and tell me his stories; my mother ask me about the class while serving me food; my sister and brother would sit around to observe

what I was working on. Answering their questions was me giving them a daily update about my assignment and courses. It was also assurance about how my studies were going on fine.

After 2 months of online classes, semester end jury was scheduled after a relaxed course – history of design. Jury was conducted online and jury has always caused nervousness and made me anxious. My jury was delayed by an hour that time helped me calm my nerves and perform well in jury.

After 2 months of attending classes and working on assignments I had unintentionally limited myself to a room. So I started sharing my room with my sister and spent more time interacting with my family. Watched movies with my father and Indian sitcoms with my mother. Helped out my sisters with projects and my little brother with studies

Overall lockdown was a time of learning, relaxing and reconnecting. I started appreciating the help and support of family. And severity of the pandemic helps putting a lot of things in perspective.