

**Interview with Eamon McGuigan**

**Anna Jones, Interviewer**

**May 2nd, 2021  
Macalester College  
St. Paul, via Zoom**

[00:01]

AJ: All right. So, to start—to start with can you just state your name, where you're from, pronouns and your age.

EM: My name is Eamon, I use he/him pronouns. I am 21 years old and a junior, and I'm from Madison, Wisconsin.

[00:29]

AJ: Great. And what are you doing right now? Like are you a student?

EM: Oh yes, I'm studying environmental studies at Macalester College.

[00:43]

AJ: Great. Awesome. So the first question I want to ask is, where have you been geographically from March till now?

EM: March of last year ?

AJ: March of last year, yes, sorry.

EM: Geographically, I've been in Madison, in Seattle, and in St. Paul.

AJ: Could you walk me through like the timeline.

EM: So, I was, I went home to Madison two weeks into March, when things started getting crazy during spring break, and then I was there until like the quarantine stay at home period was over for here and Minnesota and then I went to St. Paul for a week. It must have been a week into it when school was ending, and then, went to—drove to Seattle for a week. And then was in Madison for the rest of the summer, we went to Madeline Island in northern Wisconsin for a week towards the start of August. And then I've been in St. Paul for the majority of the time since, with like a couple weeks here and there being a Madison and then I was in Madison, for a few weeks over winter break.

Is that specific enough to—?

[2:45]

AJ: Yep. Yeah, that's great. Can you walk me through some—so the big sections are kind of Madison and then St. Paul, like some of your kind of daily routine type stuff that might look different now versus what it would have looked like pre-COVID.

EM: Sure. So, when I was in Madison up in the earlier stages of COVID—I mean, I also had Mono so I was like, there was a lot of just time spent in my room like resting or—. So, I would be on Zoom class for a lot of the day and I would take—I would do that in my room and then I would try to get out of the house once a day. And just what I would do is just go for a walk, there's a park at the end of my street like a few blocks away. And me and one of my parents would just walk there, walk around the park and walk back just so that I could get out of the house but there would—there would be like three days stretches of time when I just wouldn't leave the house and spend a lot of the day in my room. And just because like I still had so much school work and stuff and I was sick.

And this summer, I was able to work but I was only able to work like two days a week instead of like five days a week, which I would normally do. So yeah, those days I would, I would go to work and I'd be at work for most of the day, and then I tried to just pick up like habits that I could do to keep myself busy, so like I started picking up guitar and teaching myself guitar, and I think I played like every single day except for like five days in the summer. I played—and I set a goal for myself that if I played for 40 hours, I would find myself for guitar.

[5:19]

AJ: Did you do it?

EM: Yeah. So that was like a good—I'm really bad at sticking with goals normally, and like doing things regularly. So that was actually a super positive thing that came out of that and like it was cool to witness myself grow. Even in like just a short period of time like that because I was doing it every day. I'm trying to remember what else I was doing in the summer, just like, oh, and then I helped my dad build the patio. So there's a period of time when I was just working on that during the day.

And then, in St. Paul, first semester, I mean my schedule has changed with each mod, just depending on when my class times are. Yeah, so things that like we're different—just like spending so much more time in my room. In general, like living life out of my room. One thing that's been nice is working on campus still, so that I've been able to go to campus pretty regularly still but for like a couple hours at a time and I would just sit in the art department.

I think like I've—I've been more intentional about being active and exercising. Just because it feels more like I need to now than it used to because before I was moving around and doing stuff like in between class or whatever. And when you're like in the same place all day I'm like okay I need to—.

[7:18]

AJ: Totally, yeah. Do you feel like your room is still a space you enjoy or is it more of a complicated relationship?

EM: Yeah, yes to both of them probably. I really like my room but also I wish I didn't spend so much time—. Yeah, I mean it's become sort of normal but it's still like I think it still affects me even if I don't realize it.

[7:52]

AJ: Yeah, totally. Yeah, and then back to the sticking with goals thing with guitar. Do you feel that you—that you would have learned guitar, without COVID. Like, do you think—was it harder to stick to the goals through COVID, just because it was kind of a frustrating time, or was it having the time that made it possible?

EM: No, that for me made it easier. I think like—. Also, it wasn't just COVID, it was like an accumulation of things like going wrong, or like—. So, I started, the start of the summer, which is—I had the breakup and the George Floyd murder happened on the same day, and then with study abroad being cancelled and not like knowing what I was going to do for housing and everything I just sort of felt in limbo so I think that forced me to find something that I could sort of ground myself and just something that I could do. Because there were a lot of feelings and stuff and so it was nice to have a little bit of time where I didn't have to think about that and was doing something else, so I definitely credit that to the situation.

[9:39]

And also another thing is just like working on music. Like my own personal music has definitely—I would work on—started working on stuff like—. It's one of those things where I've

always wanted to but I was either too scared about what people would think, or—and to the point where I just wasn't even willing to try and get started doing stuff and I would just think about doing it, but I would never do it.

And so having so much time, that's actually how I spent a lot of my time when I wasn't working over the summer was working on music and that's something that I've—I've been consistently doing since then, even with a busy schedule like I still find time for that and so I'm actually super grateful for having the time and space to get started—or to build a regular like habit of doing that. And still recording now.

[10:44]

AJ: Yeah that's—that's super cool. The next question I have is what immediate changes that kind of happened right March were the most dramatic for you?

EM: Um, probably, like the biggest thing was probably my relationship. We said goodbye thinking that we are going to see each other in a week, and it was like three months or something like that. So, adjusting to like being in a “Zoom relationship” with someone, and also like trying to figure out if it was even worth it to do that. And if we are even going to see each other again and just like navigating all of that stuff was difficult, but I also like, I don't know, I think I handled it, as well as I could have.

[11:53]

AJ: Yeah, how did you guys stay in contact?

EM: Well, I mean, we would like to text every day but then we would—we would try and Zoom every night, or at least every other night. But I think I was like more okay with it then she was, or I don't know I felt like my needs were more met, I think. I think she had—she had been in more complicated, long distance relationships before and since I had never been in a long distance relationship I was kind of like you know what, I'm just gonna make it work, it's whatever. And I think she was like, I don't want to do it again.

AJ: Yeah.

EM: Yeah, just like that was something that we had to sort of navigate and just be in constant communication about and so yeah we would just Zoom, and we would watch shows like together online and stuff like that just try and find things that we can do together. Or have Zoom game nights with her friends or something.

And then spending so much time with my family was one thing. But I feel like we just tried to give each other as much space as possible, which was good because it's sort of like you just needed that like—. Yeah spending a bunch of time with my brother was something that hadn't been happening so much because we were supposed to be at school, where we wouldn't see each other or really talk that much.

And just finding stuff to do—like finding ways to stay entertained and, I mean, now's school seems so normal but at the time there was not so that was a huge adjustment.

[14:16]

AJ: Yeah, totally. Do you feel like your relationship with your brother has gotten better over spending those months together, or did it change at all?

EM: Yeah I think I got. Well, better is maybe not the right word just because like it wasn't bad. But we, I feel like when we were younger, we would spend a ton of time together but we would also always be fighting and would get really annoyed at each other because of it. And as we've grown up, we've—we don't really fight, ever. But we—but part of that is because we just give each other space. And so—but sometimes that means that we don't really talk or whatever or see each other for a while, so I think it was nice to like, I think it strengthened our friendship in that we were sort of like the friends that we had in real life, even if we were still communicating with other people, or if like from time to time we could see people that we were friends with who are at home. We were the only ones who we were spending quality time—with each other.

[15:39]

AJ: What kind of things would you guys do together?

EM: Um, well, when his girlfriend visited we all built a bonfire—or we built a fire pit in our backyard. And so, we would have bonfires together, and we would watch movies or play video games or—I don't know, sometimes we'd play games with our family. I don't know, and just spending more time talking and stuff like at dinner, or whenever our schedules would overlap.



[16:26]

AJ: Yeah, totally. Looking back on the year, what aspect of the year do you think would be most surprising or shocking to your former self, but maybe the former self who knew COVID was already happening.

EM: Yeah, the former self that was stress dancing in the lobby of our GDD dorm rooms with my housemates because I was so confused and terrified.

AJ: Yeah, exactly, like you knew COVID was happening but—. What would be most shocking to that person?

EM: Everything. Um, I'm trying to think—I can understand the answer but I'm trying to like think of how to word it.

[17:28]

AJ: Yeah, take your time.

EM: I would say like, I think before COVID started I was more attached to everything but in a negative way, like I was—I was much more attached to the outcome of things, and felt like my well being was dependent on the outcome of things. And so learning to—learning to be okay

when things aren't going—when it feels like nothing is going well, has been probably the biggest change and growth in general that I've experienced. And so—and I mean that comes from an accumulation of learning a lot of different things and different practices and stuff like that but I guess like if you would—if you had told me right away at COVID that like all of these really hard things would happen over the course of the year. In my mind, I would have been like, “Oh, this is going to be a terrible year, this is going to be—” I would have just been full of dread. I mean, to a greater extent than I probably was knowing that we were going to be spending probably a year in a global pandemic.

But like, if I actually, if, now in the future, looking back on my own well being I feel like I'm actually super grateful for everything that's happened. And I feel like it's allowed me to grow in ways that I couldn't have or would have taken a lot longer if that hadn't happened. And I also think that just because the situation was worse doesn't mean that how I was feeling throughout it was worse than last year even or like the year before when I had a lot more things that were going positively but I also maybe were—I was attached to them in a way that was negatively impacting me, or was making—meant that I was actually living with like fear of losing things that were good. Like when I was in a relationship, I spent the whole entire time worrying about what was going to happen when she graduated and like what if it ends and my happiness was like dependent on that. And so, I feel like, yeah, sorry, that was a really long and complicated answer to your question.

[20:47]

AJ: No it's, it's a very complicated question. But you sort of just mean if your form—if in March somebody came up to you and was like “Hey Eamon, study aways going to be cancelled, and you're going to break up this summer” and all this stuff you'd be like oh my god this is going to be the—this year is going to just completely suck.

EM: Be the worst, yeah.

AJ: And you're realizing now that you would have been shocked to see how well you worked through those things.

EM: And I didn't—I wouldn't have factored in the growth and change that would happen, that would—I would see everything that happened through my eyes at that time but I didn't—I wouldn't have known how I would have grown and would have experienced the same things differently.

AJ: Yeah, totally. That totally makes sense.

EM: And part of the growth is the things that happen, so it's like yeah.

[21:56]

AJ: Yeah, the next question I had, you really mostly answered, but it was what hobbies have you picked up or how have you been filling your time? So you said you know, music, guitar, is there anything else that you want to mention?

EM: Probably exercise, more regular exercise. When I was in—when I took drawing class I was drawing and painting regularly. Yeah, I guess some of the hobbies just depend on classes, like right now I've been designing sets, and building models and stuff like that.

AJ: Um, yeah do you feel like that's kind of been—I guess maybe an advantage of COVID it that some of your classes are like, time consuming but interesting?

[technical difficulties]

[23:04]

AJ: I just meant, do you think that it's an advantage that you have classes that are time consuming but in a way that's like fun to you? Do you know what I mean by that at all?

EM: I know what you mean. Sometimes I do feel like the classes that would be interesting to me though they're too time consuming. And that, A: makes it harder to enjoy them and B: probably makes me less likely to do good work, because it's—I'm sort of just rushing to finish something instead of like, I don't know, but sometimes yes.

AJ: Is that COVID related at all or is that how the classes would be, regardless?

EM: Kind of, yeah. It is COVID related in a way, just like, I mean Zoom fatigue is a real thing, and part of it being too much is just because it's like, I don't know, there's too much expectation for the—given the situation. But I think that's also always true in a way, if you're—if things are moving too fast, you're not gonna—you're not going to be able to put your full energy in and focus into it if you're just like, worried about trying to finish something.

[24:51]

AJ: Yeah, totally. And I guess you don't have the space to go on campus really as much anymore. To use that space as time to focus and stuff, like it's all happening in your room.

EM: Yeah.

AJ: Okay, what, if anything, are you anxious about as restrictions ease up? So that question is kind of confusing so like, what I mean is—are there any social interactions that you're kind of nervous to start up again, or, you know, just anything that's on your mind about life kind of returning (maybe) back to normal soon?

EM: I guess I've just been trying to not predict what it's going to be like because nothing is ever like I predicted to be like, I don't know, just because I feel I've been hearing a lot of people speculating about what things are going to be like and it's and sometimes I do that too but I guess

I really don't know so I don't necessarily have that much anxiety about it but it is true that social interactions or just—have been more draining in general. So, I think my hope is that I don't overdo it. Or like—.

[26:44]

AJ: Yeah, like getting so excited about being able to do more that all of a sudden you're draining yourself too much.

EM: Yeah I guess that's anxiety too—trying to think of how I—how I phrase this. I hope I don't swing too hard in the other direction where I've become so comfortable being alone and like spending time with myself, I hope that I don't get so excited by social interaction that I then become dependent on spending time with people and stuff like that I want to—I'm worried that it will just go like that. I mean, I want to be able to balance.

AJ: Yeah, you're like if we went through this hard year and I like learned some lessons during that time, I want to hold on to those lessons.

EM: Because I feel like some—when there is that protest that we want to for Line Three. That was like the first time that I had been around like a crowd of people in forever. And, I remember getting back from that and feeling like FOMO for the first time and so long, like, “Well what are people doing after that, like what are people doing right now, like it's a nice day are people

hanging out?” And you know, and I was like, no like everyone's probably—or they shouldn't be. But everyone is probably just at home like you. Yeah, so I don't want to just overdo anything.

[28:24]

AJ: Totally, yeah. Yeah, because when you're kind of in your routine it's easier to keep, you know, like the worries about keeping up with other people or whatever, out—out of your head, but once we're reintroduced to like being around tons of people time—.

EM: Yeah, like the little worries before can definitely— might now be a lot bigger just because I'm not used to having them.

[29:07]

AJ: Yeah, yeah. Um. Okay, so the next thing I wanted to ask about was relationships with family and friends during the pandemic. So are there people you've—you're surprised you're closer to, are there people that you've drifted away from, and just how are you feeling about those things?

EM: There's definitely people who have drifted away from.

AJ: Yeah, that's kind of inevitable right now.

EM: Yeah. I'm trying to think if there's anyone that I'm surprised I'm closer to. I mean there's like, there's new friends that I've made that might have been surprising if you had told my past self I was friends with them. But like, I guess Max, for instance, like our housemate who I didn't know before becoming housemates with him except for having a class with him, like, and now we're like super close. Feels like we're all best friends, so yeah like that kind of thing is, I guess surprising.

I'm trying to think with my family. I think it did bring us together, spending time together. And like, sorry, I just need to think.

[30:50]

AJ: No take your time.

EM: Yeah, I feel like I don't know, like, like any tough moment that you go through that's shared with other people it brings you closer together. So I guess with my family—with my immediate family I'd say that's true just like. And being that—sort of forces you to talk about things that you might not always talk about, like voluntarily. So yeah, but yeah it's also made me drift apart from a lot of friends at Macalester and probably even at home too.

AJ: Yeah. Is that like something you're sad about something you've kind of come to terms with, you know, is there any, you know—?

[31:55]



EM: Yeah, it makes me sad with a lot of people but then, like, I don't think it's bad or good because I also think it helped me make it like—form closer relationships with the people that I'm still close with. And it also in a way sort of weeds out who you really want to be friends with and who your close friends are and who your casual friends are.

And it does make me sad because it's like—I love having cas—like friends that even though we don't maybe spend quality time together like you'll run into and maybe you get together with— meeting new people is one of my favorite things in life, it just gives me a buzz, I don't even need to stay friends with you but like just the meeting new people are like, I enjoy that so much.

AJ: You're like, I don't care if they suck, just meeting them is fun.

EM: Well no—.

AJ: I'm kidding, I'm kidding.

EM: But it's more just the like, Hey, we might not become close friends after like this night that we just met but it's like, the fact that we didn't know each other before and we just spent some quality time with each other and now every time I see you like we'll have this memory like that makes me happy. So, I—that's something that I really miss and that's like saying I probably should be careful not to go overboard once everyone's vaccinated. Yeah but—but I do appreciate how close I've gotten with the people that I spend time with.

[33:54]

AJ: Yeah, totally. Um, what about extended family? Have you seen—are there any families you're close to? Have you seen them at all during COVID?

EM: I haven't seen my extended family as much, my extended family on my dad's side that lives in Minnesota—I don't think it was—partially haven't seen because of COVID but like there's also family members who I haven't seen in five years. Like, and so that obviously pre-dates COVID and it's just sort of the nature of things because—and that's sort of just been since like my grandma passed away and I haven't had immediate family, so it's all like my dad's aunts and uncles and cousins and stuff like that.

But my mom's family. We—holidays we would always get together and I've been able to go to my grandparents' assisted living home in Rockford a few times and stand outside of a glass window and talk to them through the window and like one time, my uncle came. And then we did a Zoom call on Christmas and stuff like that but so—much less in person, seeing them—. But I think like my mom and her brothers and my mom's parents would Zoom like every night for a while so, I think they saw each other much more.

[35:52]

AJ: You said they would Zoom nightly?

EM: Yeah, which I think drove my mom crazy.

AJ: Oh, she didn't want to be talking that much?

EM: No. Part of it was that my grandparents both got COVID so I think that's—that might have been what started the calls. So I think they just, yeah, it was like we don't know if they're going to make it through this let's spend as much quality time together as we can but, I think it was too much for my mom.

AJ: What do they do on the calls?

EM: I don't—I think they'd just talk. I have no idea.

AJ: And your grandparents are okay right?

EM: Yeah, it was a while ago. They both recovered. And they're both fully vaccinated now so, if I want to go see them, I can.

AJ: They're the ones in the nursing home—or the assisted living home?

EM: It's just, yeah, they don't—they don't have any helpers but it's like a situation where if they need to like—if stuff happens, they can easily be moved into a place where they can get care.

AJ: Like in that same building type thing?

EM: Yeah.

[37:09]

AJ: Yeah, yeah I get the vibe. Geez, they got it in the nursing home?

EM: Yeah, like a bunch of people did.

AJ: Was it really stressful for your family to go through that?

EM: Yeah, I think so.

AJ: But kind of removed from you?

EM: Yeah. I don't know, they've—they always have health scares, like, so it's not the first—wasn't the first rodeo.

[37:46]

AJ: Um, yes I guess since you already kind of mentioned holidays, how were your holidays different this year?

EM: Christmas normally we would go to mass like midnight—or not midnight mass but Christmas Eve mass. We just, I mean we didn't, and—but we tried to keep some of the same—like we always make fondue and watch a Christmas movie. So we did that. And then what we normally do is do Christmas Eve at our house and then drive down to Rockford on Christmas to see family, or to Chicago, to one of my relatives house. And so we didn't do that this year. We just spent it at home and Zoomed everyone.

And then like, yeah, I mean, we haven't really celebrated any other holiday this year.

AJ: Did you do anything for Thanksgiving or not this year?

EM: I'm trying to remember. I know we did. Yeah, um, I think it was just me and my brother and my parents at home. Normally we would spend it with family but—.

[39:21]

AJ: This is kind of an open—it's kind of a bad question. Like, because it's too open, but you've talked about, you know, some of the protest stuff that's happened this year. And so, like, have you been involved with that? Do you—maybe just some more of your open thoughts about that. Do you think that this stuff would have happened—?

EM: Do you mean—?

AJ: Like George Floyd related. I would say yeah, yeah or I mean also the pipeline protests as well, I feel like both of those things have been really prominent lately and, yeah, like do you think that's happening because of COVID? This is really open, so if it's hard to answer—.

EM: Yeah. I mean, I feel like it's—I can't really like, I have no way of knowing if the magnitude of those protests were due to everyone being cooped up inside like, I think that's a theory that makes sense, but like I don't feel like I really have no way of knowing.

AJ: Yeah, definitely.

EM: When those happened like I was still sort of recovering from being sick and was going through a lot of grief and my parents were being very strict about—well, they wanted me to quarantine because I had just been in Seattle and stuff, so most of the stuff that I was doing was from home and trying to donate and help organize stuff and—and just spread information and do what I could.

[41:15]

But I'm trying to think what the whole question was, there are many facets. I think like, yeah, I don't know if it's because of—. I also—part of it is me needing to collect my thoughts.

AJ: I was also asked a similar question when I was interviewed and I just felt like I couldn't come up with an answer on the spot. So—.

EM: Would you be able to like repeat the question?

AJ: Yeah, so I was—said like, have you been involved, you kind of answered and, what do you—what are your thoughts about this stuff happening at the same time as COVID or just thoughts about it happening in general, like, I don't know, why are white people, you know, responding now? You know, any, but it's, it's hard to answer so—.

EM: Yeah I mean it is like it's impossible to say for sure with those things, but I do think it's really interesting that this has become—that protest culture and the amount of involvement, or like the—how widespread the group of people involved, and like creating systemic change has been. And I do, I mean like, I think that one thing that we can say for pretty much for certain is that thanks to COVID and being in a global pandemic like the world collective consciousness has shifted in some way. And like, even if we can't pinpoint that everyone—the way that everyone thinks about and approaches the world and daily life is changing. So I think it's very possible that one of the ways in which that's changing is that people in general are starting to—or not, I mean now aren't starting to but, we're starting to reevaluate like, what, what is actually important in life and like what actually matters.

And we're also, I mean we're given more time and space to think and to process things in general. And because maybe like less things were happening, that like when something like George Floyd's murder, or like Breonna Taylor's murder happened, it—it had a mark that stood out more and it had a bigger impact. So, I don't know, it's impossible to say how, like strongly interconnected all that stuff is but, I'm sure it all is tied together in some way.

[44:39]

AJ: No, I think that's a really good point that, you know, so everything's changed. So, it's not like we can be like, well we're just kind of going about—we're too busy right now, we're just, this is the way it's always been. Everything is different, so then it gives space to be like, Okay, what else could be different, that could be better?

EM: That's not necessarily what I was saying but that's—I think that's super insightful and I like, I completely agree with that, and I think that I can stand behind that idea for sure. Like because—no, sorry—because, what's normal was completely destroyed and—and it was all like well it's never going to go back to normal, or like normal is new. Which is something that is always true, COVID did not invent that, but like it sort of was a slap in the face to people to make them realize that that's always been the case. And that like, what is normal is at the hands of everyone and their actions.

[45:57]

AJ: Another moment of the year that I want to bring up is the election and kind of stuff that followed. So, this year was the first year we could vote. So, did you vote? How did you vote? Just what are some thoughts that you have about, you know, voting in this year's presidential election.



EM: I voted. I voted mail-in ballot to Wisconsin because it's much more of a swing state as of late. I mean, by far the craziest election that I can remember. And like, I remember just the whole week, like I was stressed but I could—I could just see how it affected everyone around me, there's a lot of like collective stress, I think, and like our house and in the Macalester community especially. Speaking of new normal, like what's acceptable behavior for a President—.

[47:17]

AJ: Hopefully is not the new normal.

EM: Which I hope is not the new normal. Yeah, I mean pretty appalling stuff for sure.

AJ: Yeah, I mean, it's just crazy. Yeah, like I'm thinking, you've reminded me of that first night, and like falling asleep, not knowing was terrible.

EM: And then falling asleep the next few nights. Yeah, just constantly refreshing.

AJ: Or that one guy on TV who just literally didn't leave that screen I swear for like, yeah, five days.

EM: Yeah, I forgot about that, I think I just erased that week from my memory but, yeah, I think like, in what's been not—not normal, in air quotes, year, the election was perfectly fitting for the—just sort of like redefining what we are—everyone's expectations are. Like, realizing that

you just can't take things for granted and one of those things is decent human behavior and willingness to let go of presidency when you clearly don't win the popular vote. So, yeah.

[48:42]

AJ: Yeah I know it was crazy. Jesus, the fact that that happened this year too. Yeah. Alright this is sort of like—also kind of a probing question so answer as much as you want, or like, you know, whatever. But what has been maybe one of or like—the toughest days or kind of the worst days of this pandemic.

I don't know, if you don't want to talk about it that's fair as well.

EM: The worst day would have been May 30th, which was the—the George Floyd—and break up. And I had to fly home, like, after a tough break up. So, your boy was like on the socially—. I was so happy—I was so grateful for social distance like airplane seating because I was crying the whole flight home, and I didn't want the guy next to me to see me so I just had my hood over my eyes. That was one of them, or just that week after that sucked. Just feeling like grief from multiple things, and feeling like I don't know just, I had been feeling like just things where—all the big, good things were just getting taken away, which wasn't true. And, I don't know, I don't think I'm entitled to experience anything but—. But I also think that like a beautiful change came in like the following weeks after that so I would say like the, the worst than some of the best—or the worst created some of the best.

[50:50]

AJ: Sure, yeah.

EM: Yeah, sorry that sounded really deep and poetic.

AJ: That's what I'm looking for. Yeah. Yeah so then I guess, what if you could say, maybe you don't have a date as specific as your worst day. But what is one of the best days you've had during this pandemic?

EM: I'm trying to think of days where I was like that was a good day. Honestly, one thing that's changed about this year is that those good days don't really exist in the same way, because, the happiness and joy that I get from life is like, much more—I like to call it low status joy. So it's like small simple things that make me happy and that I enjoy.

And so there haven't been a ton of things this year that were like, wow big events that I feel so happy about. It's been more just like, different smaller things make me happy like playing basketball at the park with friends, or doing improv, putting on improv shows for people and, I don't know, just seeing my friends after a long time of not seeing them. I don't know if there are any days in particular where I can pinpoint and be like, that was a great day.

[52:33]

AJ: Yeah, I think that's a good perspective though to have gained over the year.

EM: I agree.

AJ: Another question I have is, have you had any interactions with people who don't really care about COVID or any conflicts in that way?

EM: Yeah, like when—when I was working at the zoo people—that just like wouldn't wear their masks. Going on walks, and just people aren't respect—don't respect the distance or mask wearing. I don't, I haven't had any huge confrontations, but, like, just smaller things where it's like seriously? I don't know, but it hasn't been a giant issue.

AJ: Most of the people you've lived with or come in contact with, you feel like you're on a similar page?

EM: Yeah.

AJ: So, it's more just like the randos.

EM: Yeah, it's more random interactions like the axe throwing instructor who isn't wearing a mask and is shaking your hand. If you know what I'm talking about.

AJ: Yeah, I'm trying to think if there's any—. I think that's—honestly I think we got to most of what I wanted to talk about. So sweet, thank you so much.

EM: Yeah.

[End of Interview, 54:38]