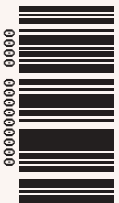


joy.

Harvard Graduate School of Education

no. 2. | 30 march 2020





Editor's Note

Moments of Elation |

Sometimes I find editorials particularly hard to write because I worry that I may inadvertently come across as an expert on a topic - I make no claim to be some kind of joy expert. In fact, as I sat down to write from my kitchen counter, I found myself googling 'define joy.' How can I possibly write about joy without knowing precisely what it is?

I soon realised that I could get very lost if I saw this as an intellectual activity. Confidently, I know what joy feels like without recourse to a dictionary definition.

For me, joy feels like a moment of elation. A giddy feeling in my stomach. A smile that is uncontrollably wide. A buzz in the heart. An energy through the veins.

My experience so far at HGSE has been full to the brim of joy; all the new friendships, new ideas and new experiences. Those pinch-me moments where I get to step back and remind myself that I made it to Harvard.

My morning walk to Appian Way was always a great source of joy. I live across the river at Soliders Field which means that every day I got to walk across the Charles River. I loved pausing to rest on the stone balustrade of Weekes Bridge to watch the geese fly in formation, sometimes there was a hidden heron stood serenely in the riverbank and occasionally, some ducks splashed around in the shallows. If I was early enough, I would catch the remaining orange hues of sunrise.

I'd cross Memorial Drive to walk up Plympton Street which is undoubtedly my favourite road in Cambridge. If you haven't been, Plympton Street is lined by undergraduate dorms with their house flags proudly adorning the brick facades. Since I arrived in the US, I like to imagine that my life is some kind of 90s rom-com. Each day I would walk up Plympton Street and pretend that I was on the set of Legally Blonde with a pop playlist playing in the background. I'd laugh at the wild turkey that usually hung out on the corner (who I named Brad) and I would enjoy stopping to peer through the windows of Harvard Book Store before I joined Mass Ave - a detour that I always found reason to justify.

I spent far too much on Tatte lattes along the way because I enjoy the smell of coffee and usually I would break into a jog to make the crossing (the novelty of the American crosswalk click sound still hasn't worn off). I'd help myself to free hand-cream from Aesop on Brattle Street feeling grateful for protection against the winter temperatures, before looking through the big, sunlit windows of Gutman to work out who I could procrastinate with first.

I no longer do this walk in the morning, but every evening I grab my coat and walk this route for my daily exercise. Yesterday, it was pouring with rain and I walked while singing Jack Johnson because the streets were empty. If you saw me, you would have thought I was crazy! For me, it felt like joy in all its glory.

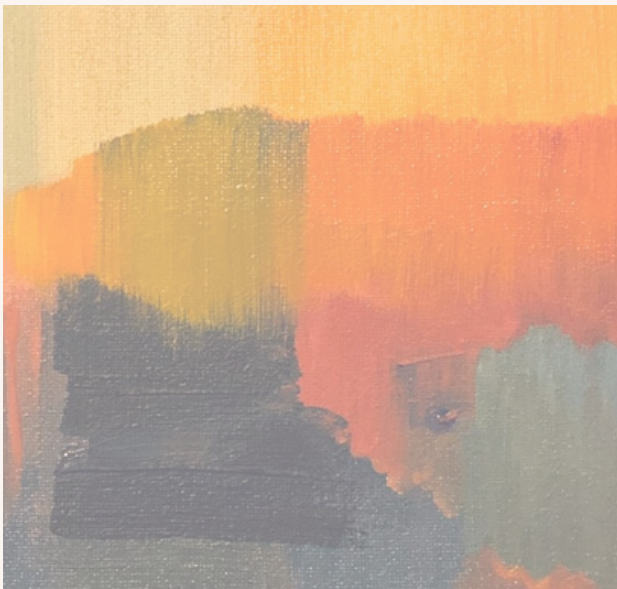
In writing this, I've realised that we can (and should!) all be experts in joy. We know when we feel it and we can make small adjustments to our daily lives to build a joy-filled existence. I admire all the writers who contributed to this Issue. I hope in these stories and images you are able to find a joy that resonates with you.

With love, Flic.

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If you want to react to any of the pieces featured, please email:

FELICITY_BURGESS@GSE.HARVARD.EDU

Letters will be added to next weeks edition.



ordinary. Exceptional

written by Kaitlin Moran | Education Policy and Management

morning meditation and the sound of om.

sunlight beaming through the windows.

lavender-scented showers.

strong, sweet, caramelly coffee with just-ripe banana.

legs pumping, body tilting into the final turn of your bike ride crisp air rushing across your face.

finally understanding logistic regression.

FaceTime with Mom, she's holding the camera way too close to her face.

Old trees with tangled roots.

black night skies studded with more stars than you thought possible.

snuggling with the cat, listening to her purr, savoring the seconds before she gets annoyed.

clean sheets.

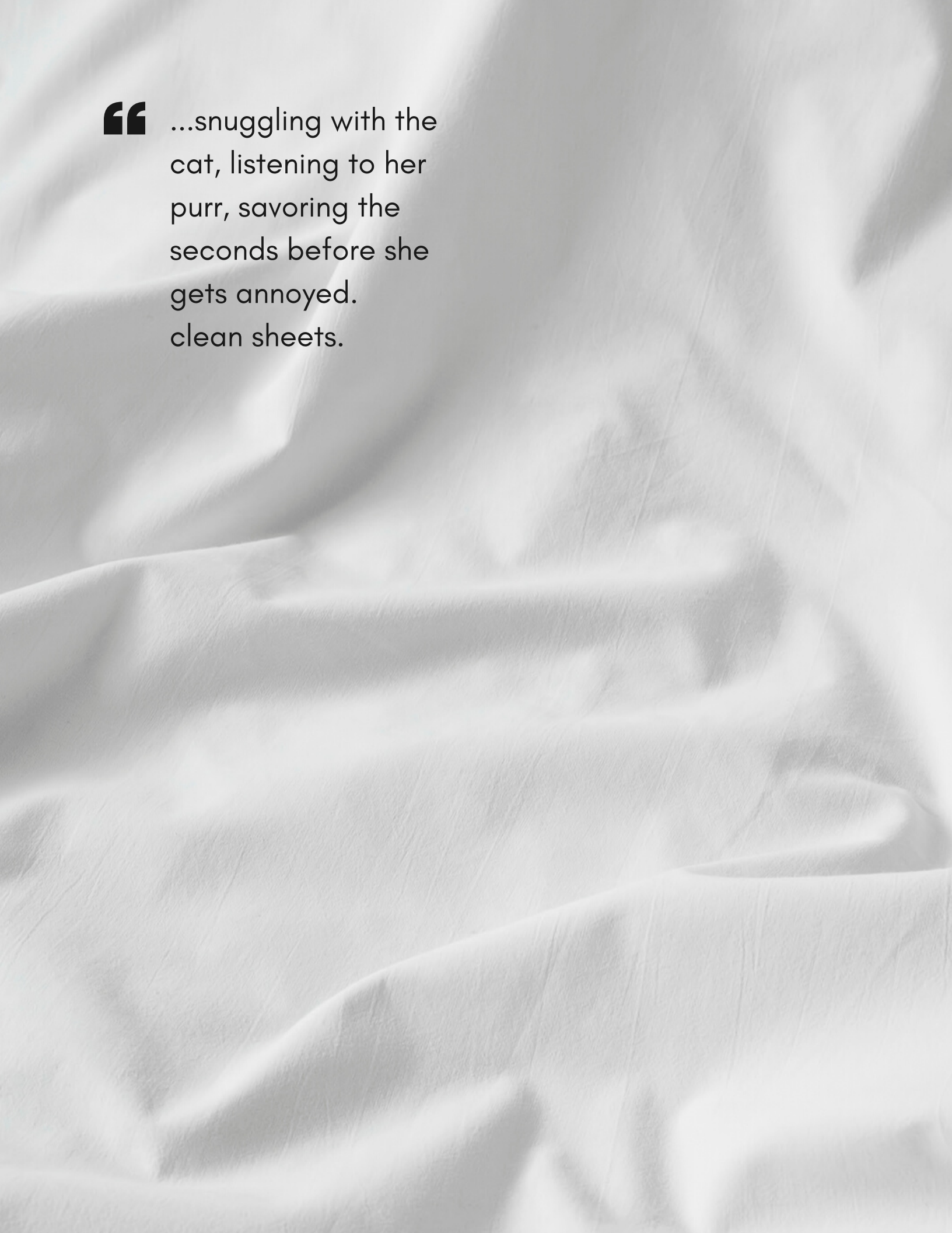
looking into his eyes, finding home, knowing love.

everyday.

mundane.

ordinary.

Exceptional.



“ ...snuggling with the cat, listening to her purr, savoring the seconds before she gets annoyed.
clean sheets.



“Happiness can be found, even in the darkest of times, if one only remembers to turn on the light.”
– J.K. Rowling

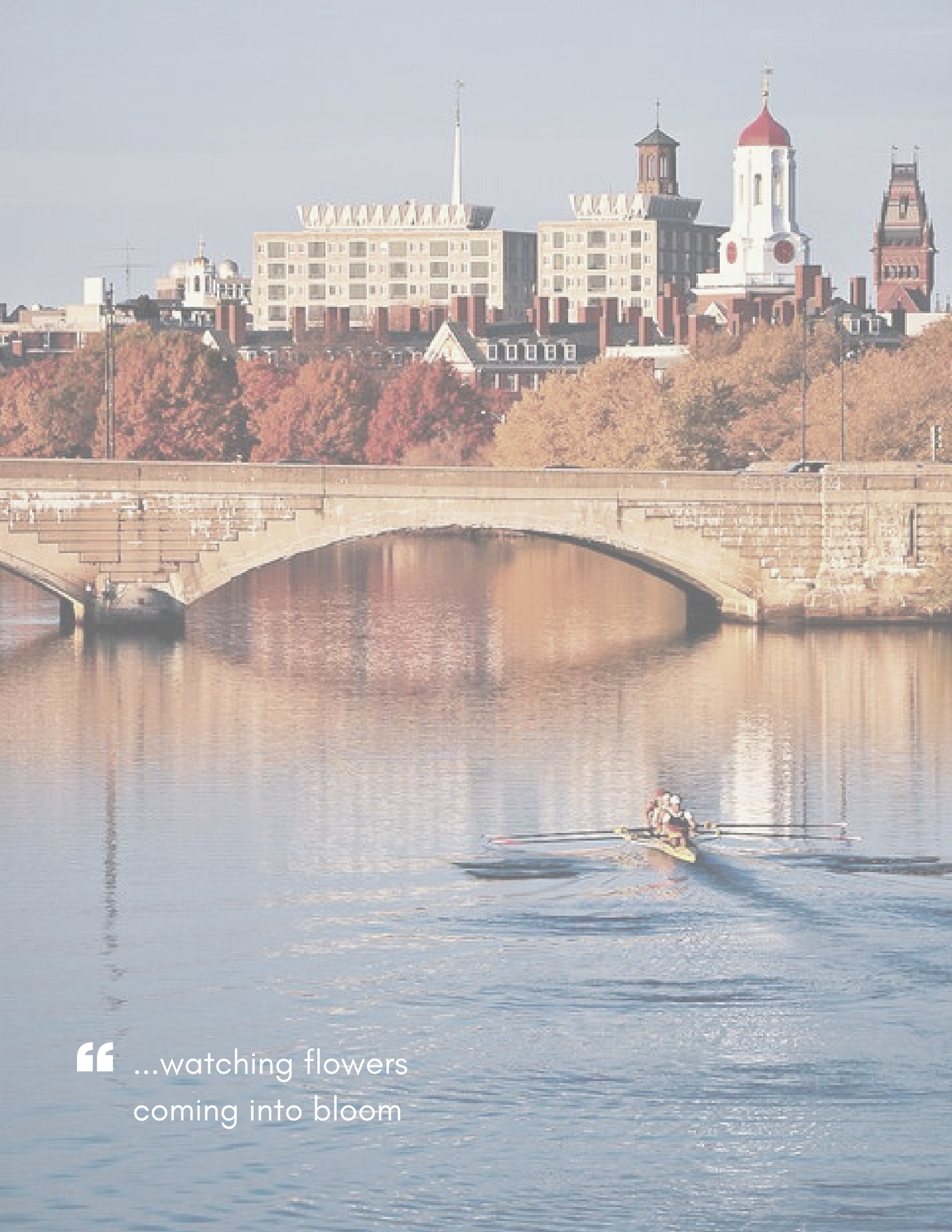
Unique Beauty

written by Jiezhen | Specialized Studies Program

Amidst everything that's happening, it becomes ever more important for our wellbeing to find joy in the little moments. Even if it's one small thing each day, looking for that light amidst the darkness can light up our worlds. For me, I have been finding joy in my daily walks along the Charles river (and putting on my fun faux fur coat just because its sooo soft and makes me smile and I have no where else to wear it ☺), in making my favourite carrot ginger soup, in watching flowers coming into bloom, in Facetime calls with the family, in making food that nourishes my body and my soul, in online calls with my communities who are across the world but in my heart, in finding ways to connect while practicing social distancing with friends, in the afternoon light, in virtual date nights with my one and only @jaredkonggg, and in the unique beauty of each sunset.

Where do you find joy and happiness? ☺♥☺

#loveinatimeofcorona #harvard #joy #happiness
[Original post from Instagram at @jiezhen]



“ ...watching flowers
coming into bloom



And sayest thou yet that exile is not death?

written by John-Henry Whapham | School Leadership Programme

"O Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou Romeo?
Deny thy father and refuse thy name.
Or if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love
And I'll no longer be a Capulet."

A story of tragic loss and forbidden love, Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet is a cautionary tale as to the way love can overcome us and make us act in ways that benefit neither us, nor the subjects of our affection. Yet, through choked back tears of the finale, I leave the theatre with a feeling of joyous wonder that a few thousand words in auld English can evoke such intense emotion.

My point, if there is indeed one at all, is be sensible with your love. Be grateful that technology allows you to engage with your vulnerable relatives in ways never previously available to us. Your love for Maw Maws and Paw Paws lives on through text, video call and Marco Polo (other messaging apps available).

We have not been exiled from Verona to Mantua awaiting a hastily penned letter from our nearest and dearest.

We are very much in contact one way or another.

Your love for Harvard classmates is not lost. Without prolonged bear hugs of goodbye and tear-jerking fist bumps, it may seem that friendships were not sent off to different corners of the US or the World in the correct manner. But fear not, for the mighty Mercutio has not been slain by the villainous Tybalt. Rather, they are awaiting a weekly/daily check in with news of how self-quarantine is treating you. Be there for your friends as they have been for you, regardless of the current situation.

Find joy in metaphor - this situation is wild, I concur, but as wild as the north wind? A broiling ocean? Be lyrical with your description and quick with your wit.

Reach out to cousins you only see once a year. Find time to thank your professors for their efforts. And allow the virtual love of your friendships into your home, as you would expect yours to be allowed into theirs. Cabin fever and loneliness will not become a curse on both yours and your friends' houses.

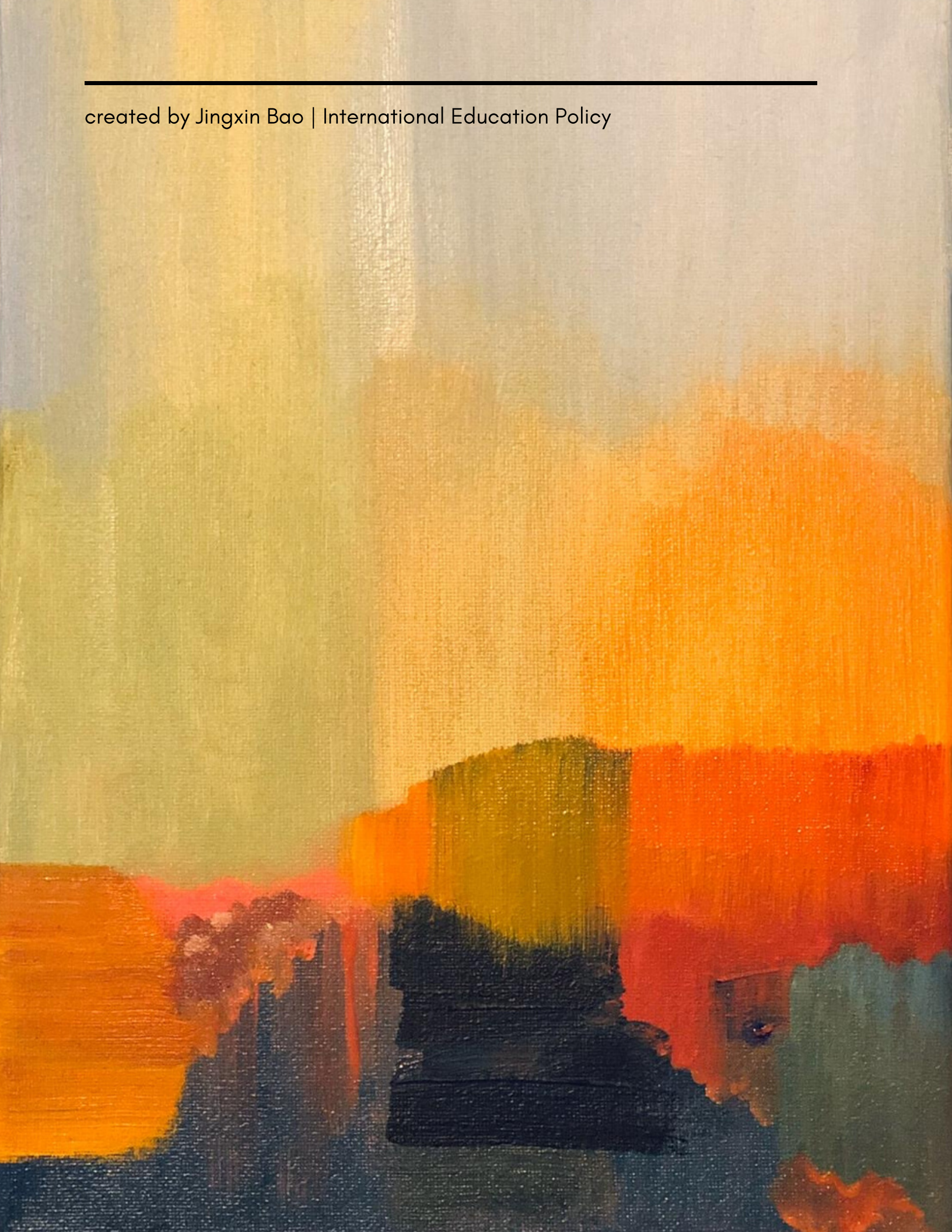
I myself will take joy from knowing that many of those reading this will think I have far too much time on my hands and should probably be tackling my mid-terms with greater commitment and gusto. You would be right, but I have already cheered myself up so was it worth it in the end?

Absolutely.



Be lyrical with your description and quick with your wit.

created by Jingxin Bao | International Education Policy





The Ultimate Relief

written by Shafira Indah Zata Dini | International Education Policy

Cooking is the ultimate stress reliever for me. It brings me joy, reduces negativity, and build confidence in me. During this quarantine, I have been cooking and baking a lot more which is really nice (except I ended up eating all of them at once). But cooking is a fun activity that can make me suddenly forgot about all the problems I have. You too can try using cooking therapy to let go of your frustration in the middle of this global pandemic!



Joy For

written by Prerna Munoth | Learning and Teaching

I am far away from my family, and haven't seen them in almost 8 months, and I really wish to be with them during this time, but safety first. In such times, I am finding it hard to be joyful about anything, and constantly trying to be more cheerful.

I decided I would start this process of finding happiness and joy by writing this small piece about my time quarantining with my boyfriend in Texas.

We never planned to co-habit or live together, and getting the chance to do so is in fact a blessing. I am certain I would be unable to get through this tough phase without his support, care, and love.

Joy for me is when he makes a warm cup of chai every morning without fail. I usually get up late, and I have been loving how he has been giving me bed-tea every morning.

Joy for me is reading the news together, following the stock market, discussing potential buys or sells! (though my knowledge is limited, he has always made me feel very included).

Joy for me is planning our days, and talking about our schedule and work with each other. It is such a warm feeling to know that you're tackling problems with someone together.

Joy for me is always having my tummy full with all the delicious meals we experiment in the kitchen. He tries his best to feed me mostly Indian dishes, so I miss home less. It's always fun to cook together, laugh at failed experiments, and relish the yummy Indian food.

“ to know that you're tackling problems with someone together.

Joy for me is going grocery shopping together, and always thinking of different things to try during this time. Food has bonded us so much in the past couple of weeks, and it is a memory I am always going to cherish.

Joy for me has always been in the little things- be it over fighting for the last slice of the pizza we made, deciding what to watch on Netflix, solving the New York times crossword together, to just silently laying on the bed and not doing anything.

Over the last days I have honestly struggled to keep myself happy, and writing this has made me realize how lucky and blessed I am to have a support system in my life.

Often times, I tend to focus on everything that is going wrong in my life, this is my first step to imbibe some positivity in my life. Being with boyfriend, and getting to spend quality time with him fills my heart with warmth and joy- and something I will remind myself everyday in the days to come.

“ ...black night skies
studded with more
stars than you
thought possible.





Find It

written by Cal Inguanti | Arts in Education

“Keep going! Come on!” I’m nine years old. My lungs feel like they’re about to explode. Tears of frustration stream down my pudgy cheeks. Here I am again—pumping my arms and legs, pounding my feet along the white chalk perimeter of my school’s soccer field. Last week, I failed the infamous mile run (did you even know that was possible?) As a kid with an appetite for little besides cheeseburgers and collecting Pokémon cards, gym class was not my forté. The voice I’m hearing is not my inner-monologue. It’s my dad, barking in my ear. Oh yes, when my dad heard I failed the mile, he stripped down to his Hanes undershirt, slid on his

supremely uncool calf-high socks, laced up his clunky white Reeboks and matching black shorts, then marched me up to the soccer field—leading me head-on into my own personal hell for the second time in two weeks. Clearly he didn’t know that failing the mile run was possible.

Why is he doing this? My temples throb and I wheeze, resisting the urge to tell my dad to get the hell out of my face. These ten minutes feel like an eternity. My body has never sustained this sort of anguish. I’m going to die—Dad, tell Mom I love her. I round the corner, in an attempt to gain some space from my dad and collapse in

a heap of arms and legs. My shirt slides up, revealing the bottom half of my stomach. The cool grass on my back comes as a much needed relief. It's over. Thank God it's over. I glare at my dad who is a few yards past.

“ He just wanted me to understand—to know that I *can*.

With his hands on his knees, he begins to catch his breath and turns to me. “See,” he pants, “I knew you could do it.” Wait...I guess I did do it. The muscles in my face relax and the anger descends to a simmer. At this moment, I realize my dad wasn't trying to punish me. He just wanted me to understand—to know that I can. To believe in myself.

This morning—nearly twenty years later —“damn” is my first thought of the day. The familiar tune of my iPhone blares my right ear. I blindly flail for the off button and eventually it stops. After rolling out of bed, I fold my black paper shade and clothespin it to the top of the window frame to let some light in. My 8:30am class starts in twenty minutes; just enough time to brew some coffee. I carefully select a grey button-down shirt from my closet and retrieve my sweatpants from their rightful place in my drawer—business on top, party on the bottom. Here we go.

I log into Zoom and class begins. This is just not the same. I miss my morning commute—peddling down Mass Ave past the perennial line at Bagelsaurus, gliding across the Cambridge Common, and braking to a halt on Appian Way. I miss being in the presence of my friends—stumbling into the lecture hall at precisely 8:29am without a moment to spare, jokingly questioning our life choice to take class at the crack of dawn. I miss my professors and the staff at Gutman—remembering which e-mails I need to respond to, seeing the people I want to meet, stumbling into the chance encounters that I could never imagine. This is just not the same.

Virtual class concludes after an hour-and-a-half of what I can't honestly characterize as my best effort to pay attention. I need to clear my head. And so, I shed my grey button-down and replace it with a purple hoodie, lace up my sneakers, and hit the streets of Somerville. 5K's are my usual—just enough distance to feel like you've done some work, but not so far that you feel depleted. If you told nine-year-old me that one day I would subject myself to multiple runs per week, he would insist you're lying. But, it's true—I love it.

“ I miss being in the presence of my friends — stumbling into the lecture hall

There's something about the way the breeze rushes past your face. The way your feet drum to the beat of the song in your headphones. The way your sweat first warms then cools your chest. The way your breath steadies as you propel yourself past all the people: parents steadying their children as they wobble forward on their bikes, couples sharing tender embraces, and groups of friends laughing as they walk (six feet of space between one another).

It's March 26, 2020 and I'm happy to be outside—I'm happy to be alive. I can't believe there once was a time that I didn't believe that I could do this.

If I can do this, you can certainly do this. It doesn't have to be running—that's my joy. Attempt that recipe you've been pondering for months, pick up a book, or simply sit on your front steps to enjoy the warmth of the sun.

Like me, you may be missing HGSE. We must acknowledge that this new reality is just not the same. But know that joy is still there for you—it's your responsibility to believe. It's your responsibility to find it.

“ I'm happy to be outside —
I'm happy to be alive.



Should I Tell You about the Hat?

written by Huajun Wu | Learning and Teaching

A December evening
cold and dark.
On Bus 83
from Central Square to Beacon Street.

You played with your beanie.
folded it into a triangle
like a pyramid
balanced it on your head
grinned and proudly announced that
you were a Mongolian
on a bumpy ride.

An idea struck.
Let's play a game buddy, I said.
Name ten things you can do with a hat.
Shaking your finger in front my nose
you said
Nope Nope Nope.

I had to summon my secret power of persuasion
the Jedi Mind Trick.
How about a donut?
Your eyes shone like a

lighthouse piercing through the dark
and immediately started counting.
I got it.
You will jump into a herd of killer whales
for a snack
without a second thought.

*Put your hands in.
It is a glove.*

*Put your foot in.
It is a sock.*

*Speaking of sock
when Santa Claus runs out of gift bags
he could use this hat.*

*When you are cold
you can burn it to keep warm.*

*When you need a quick nap
it is a soft pillow.*

*Pull the hat down to cover your eyes,
You could play hide-and-seek
or Robin Hood.*

*Wrap it around the wine bottle
you could travel without the fragile label.*

*Cut two holes
it is an underwear.*

Really?
But who would wear it?
Superheroes or savages?

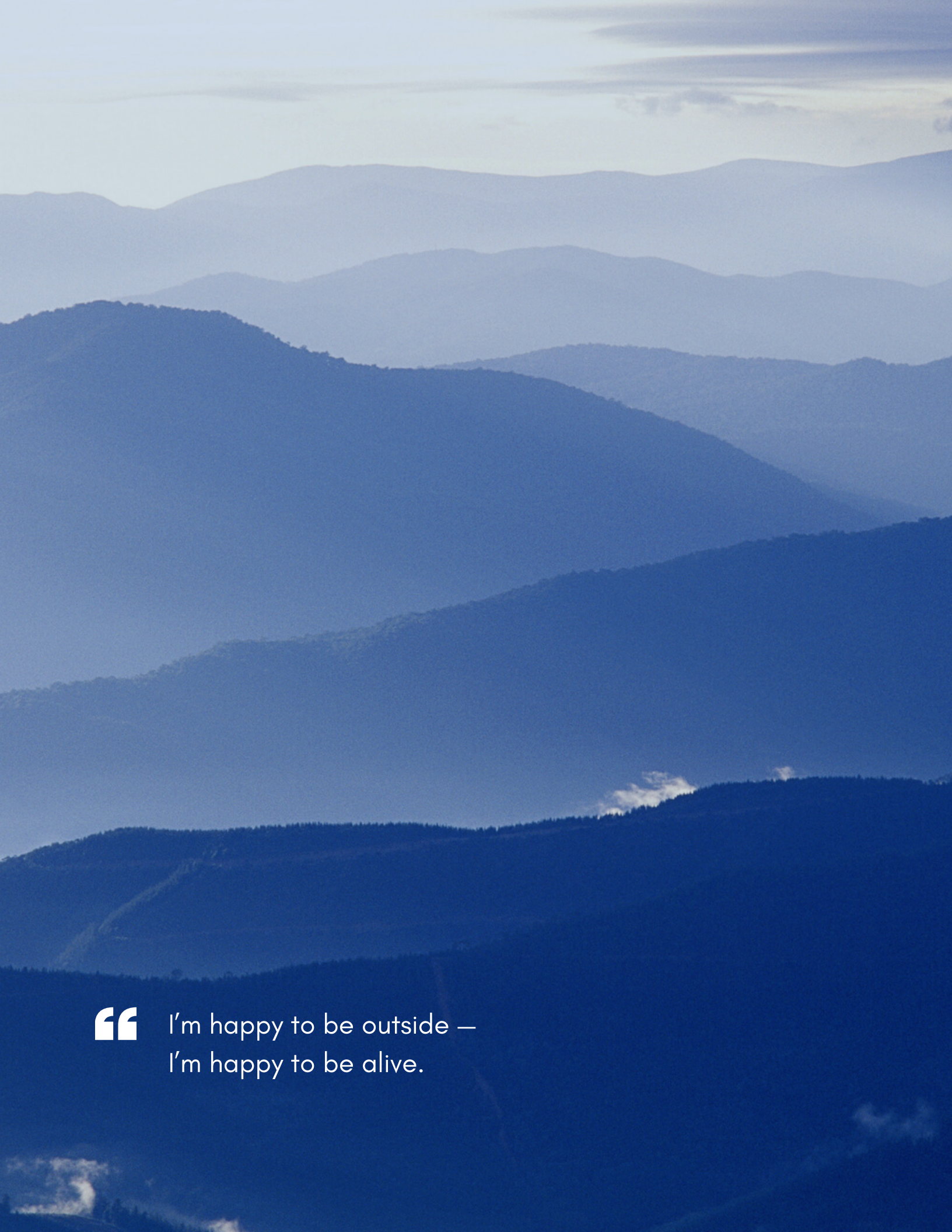
Finally you said
*if the hat is green
it could be folded into a Christmas tree.*

A Christmas tree.
What a brilliant idea!
Wait. what?
A green hat?

Should I tell you this is
the worst nightmare for your dad
and all men in China?
No offence to
fans of Boston Celtics
or other green-hat lovers.

But why haste?
You are still a boy.
Simplicity is your charm.
Innocence is your wisdom.
Some stories are better left untold
until the time is right.
Please keep on playing and dreaming
in your carefree Neverland.

*Wearing a green hat" is an expression
that Chinese use when a woman
cheats on her lover.



“

I'm happy to be outside —
I'm happy to be alive.

Act of Creation

written by Jayanti Bhatia | International Education Policy

Any act of creation is a pure joy! And one of those rare things that can keep us sane, especially during these challenging times because it aligns our head, heart and hands. Here is a collage of things I created in the last few days - art and craft, and some Indian comfort food.





What did you learn on Appian Way?

written by Jazmin Chì |

Since the year started, my life took a steep downturn, that when I thought I was recovering from something, the next “thing” came as a cold shower in the middle of a winter morning. The days went by, gloomy, in the midst of tears and my countenance constrained. Then the coronavirus hit and it shook the foundations that barely sprouted with the beginning of spring. Everything back to crumbles.

At some point, I imagined myself standing and just with a rictus looking at my surrounding: “this has just happened...”, “this is gonna take place...”, “that is gonna

change...” and I only said “yes” with eyes that were sharing the interior of my inner self.

Vulnerable. The tears went down as the raindrops fall from the sky. The face got wet and the eyes swollen. The makeup stopped to decorate the face. The hair color changed. The eyes became red. The smiles erased. The notes failed. The classes were missed. The hugs vanished in the air; the arms did not have any more strength. The heart shrunk and shrieked.

-Wasn't it the previous year the best year in your life? -Indeed it was.

-Then what happened now?
-I have no idea.

Perhaps -saying in my sarcastic Mexican black humor- life did not like that I smiled while walking and listening to the chirping birds, seeing the squirrels to play, the sunsets at Appian Way and by the fact of feeling extremely blessed by being here.

-Do you want to stop it?
-No. There is something I must learn and change. I still have no idea what, but I believe it is there. If I stop it, I will never learn and change, so let it flow; even it hurts, until the heart empties itself.

“ ...the sunsets at Appian Way and by the fact of feeling extremely blessed by being here.

Asking for help. “Guys, I’m going through a very difficult moment in my life... if you see me, please could you hug me? A smile, a thought, a prayer or whatever you believe in can help, would you please...?”

Help arrived. Ears that listened, arms that hugged, hands that dried the tears, human shields that wrapped me with strength knowing that I was too weak to even stand, eyes that looked without judgement and even in the distance, words and messages that encouraged the spirit to keep going.

- What did you learn on Appian Way?
-The power of love.
-Isn't Harvard a University?
-Yes, but beyond the academics, the hearts that you find there, are nothing to be compared.
[Person looking at me clearly confused.]
-I found myself again.

I knew I belonged to them. We are a family together. They gave me strength. They gave me love. They gave me hope. They gave me help when I needed it the most. They were there when my heart could not walk. They listened to me when the sobs were too many to even articulate a word. They offered themselves, their time, and their caring heart. They understood. Appian Way indeed teaches you about academics, but for me it went beyond. And that is what allowed again feeling in my heart, joy.

Note: In order for me to reconnect with myself, my heart needs to be in touch with nature, animals, “me time” and journaling. Friends, knowing this, were so extremely kind to invite me (softly pushed me in order to get out of that emotional hole) to places that otherwise I would not have gone. I took these pictures in Vermont. Appreciation and love to Chris Palermino, who was our “local tour guide”, knowing that my heart needed nature, to find again joy.

“ - What did you learn on Appian Way?
-The power of love.







“ ...knowing that my heart needed nature, to find again joy.



