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March 12, 2021

Dear Friends,

(Yes, I know you just got an “Orange Desk” on Tuesday, but that is because I forgot to send it last Friday [because I have COVID brain.](#))

*“Some periods of our growth are so confusing that we don’t even recognize that growth is happening. **We may feel hostile or angry or weepy and hysterical, or we may feel depressed.** It would never occur to us unless we stumbled on a book or a person who explained to us, that **we were in fact in the process of change...** Whenever we grow, we tend to feel it, as a young seed must feel the weight and inertia of the earth as it seeks to break out of its shell on its way to becoming a plant... Often the feeling is anything but pleasant. But what is most unpleasant is not knowing what is happening... **Those long periods when something inside ourselves seems to be waiting, holding its breath, unsure about what the next step should be, eventually become the periods we wait for,** for it is in those periods that we realize **we are being prepared for the next phase of our life** and that, in all probability, a new level of personality is about to be revealed.”*

How have you grown during the Pandemic? Or during the Panini, as a friend calls it.

As Alice Walker put it, what inside you seems to have been waiting, feeling the weight and inertia of the “earth” around you?

The Pandemic has helped me see that the next phase of my life involves much less travel, more time at home, a slower pace, less driving, more time outside, a simplification of almost everything in my life, a real paring down of activity. My frenetic pace was bound to end sometime, and this year helped expedite that slowing.

I have also realized how much of what we believed to be “normal” was (among other things) ableist and how much more my friends with chronic illnesses have been able to participate in “everyday” life now that it is largely online. And how much the digital divide really costs us when students and workers don’t have internet access or computers at home.

I remember coming back from living as an exchange student in Sri Lanka determined to not take things for granted anymore. I was 16 years old. Specifically, for some reason, I was ready to be thankful for green beans. And I don’t even like green beans all that much. But having lived in a developing country where ice cubes and air conditioning were out of reach for most families, including the one I lived with, I was determined to appreciate simple things. And I did, for a while. As a teenager in the U.S., I lost some of the intensity of that determination. But that understanding really never left me at my core.

I don’t want to leave the Panini and forget all these positive changes.

Also, this REALLY resonates with me:



Saeed Jones   
@theferocity



In some ways, this side of the pandemic is lonelier than the early months. I’m so anxious about the hopeful future. We went into hell together but now we’ve gotta find our various exits alone.

4:28 PM · 3/11/21 · [Twitter for iPhone](#)

## LINKS YOU MIGHT ENJOY

*By the way, I don’t ever use affiliate links. Ever.*

It is the anniversary of the Pandemic shutdowns, after all. [The year we lost touch](#).

One of my favorite new periodic emails comes from [Bookshop.org](#) to tell me about books I might like to read. And inevitably, I do want to read the books they suggest.

I've started using [Hey.com](#) for my email service and it is spectacular.

A Facebook friend's husband has started making [German cones](#) for family members that get vaccinated and I LOVE this idea. (I got my first vaccine shot yesterday!)

Here are [10 Black American women writers](#) you should know.

I've bought a few things during the pandemic that I am glad I got:

- After a terrible time of lens fog, I finally got a new pair of glasses and am diligently protecting the lenses [with these lens wipes](#). I might be a bit obsessive about it. Yes, in fact I know I am obsessive about it. My eyesight is so bad that my glasses are my life.
- [Two new baking sheets](#) and [this tool](#) have made all the difference during my and Feliks' Pandemic Baking Extravaganza. Also, [these](#) have made me very happy.
- I love [this](#) so much I am tempted to marry it.
- After cutting the tip of one of my little fingers off with a [new mandoline](#), [these](#) have saved my other digits.
- Frankly, I'm unsure how Feliks has lived without [Gochujang](#) for so long.
- I thought [this could come in handy](#) for my family should I succumb to COVID-19.
- We [installed this](#) to ensure the WiFi covered the whole house adequately.
- I eat almost everything out of [one of these bowls](#). With a spoon, if I can get away with it.
- [This saved my neck](#) when I had such a painful pinched nerve. Well, this plus acupuncture, a new pillow, a neck sling, some prednisone, and a few painkillers.

## FREE THINGS!

**FREE WRITING PROMPTS FOR 2021** - Do you want to get back to a consistent writing routine in the New Year? I am offering free writing prompts **every Monday-Friday** in 2021. If you'd like to receive them, you can do so in either of the following ways:

**By text:** Text "writing prompts" to me at 828-248-7513 to sign up for free. Your first prompt will arrive via text the day after you sign up (Monday - Friday).

**By email:** [Go here](#) to sign up for free. Your first prompt will arrive the day after you sign up (Monday - Friday). We added this method because some of you couldn't participate by text. I hope it is helpful!

Please be safe. Double mask. Stay home when you can, regardless of what the politicians are saying. We'll get through this together.

I'll see you next Friday from my Orange Desk!

Patti

Sent to: \_t.e.s.t\_@example.com

[Unsubscribe](#)

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