

Below is courtesy of Rachel Chamberlain, a former scholar-athlete who graduated from Greenwich High School in Connecticut in 2016. Rachel then attended UCLA after being awarded an Army ROTC scholarship and throughout her matriculation, she earned the admiration of her teachers, the respect of her contemporaries and fellow ROTC cadets, and this past spring, Rachel was one of a select number of individuals to be personally recognized by Secretary of Defense Mark Esper for her research proposal and participation in a national conference. The following thoughts were penned by Rachel whilst being 'confined to quarters' in accordance with COVID-19 guidelines along with her parents and siblings. Rachel's dad is Dean Chamberlain, SDV, the CEO of diversity-certified investment bank Mischler Financial Group and a graduate of the US Military Academy at West Point.



Over the past couple of weeks, like many other people in the world, I have been reflecting on life as it was before the global pandemic, and thinking forward to what life will be like in the next couple of months. I have, like many others, felt confused, fearful, desolate, and out of control. Classes have been moved online, meaning that I won't get to finish off my senior year at UCLA how I expected to. I'm concerned for the people that I know who are currently fighting "on the front lines" against this pandemic. I was looking forward to finishing off the year with the cadets, students, officers, professors, and coworkers that I had gotten to know during my four years at UCLA, and now I don't know the next time I'll see any of them. On June 13th I was supposed to go to the UCLA class of 2020 commencement ceremony, and the following day was set to be the UCLA Army ROTC commissioning ceremony. I recently found out that the commissioning ceremony will now be online, and the status of the commencement ceremony has not been confirmed yet.

These changes and ambiguities are jarring.

Despite the negatives, I have been increasingly grateful as the days go by, and to explain the way I've been feeling, I've turned to my favorite "romcom".



"Lane Walker Chamberlain" aka  
Training Exercise Instructor to  
Underclassmen

One of the best movies that I have seen is *About Time* (2013), and not just because I got to see my dad cry at the end. During the movie (don't worry, I won't spoil too much) the audience follows the life of a young man named Tim who finds out that the men in his family can time travel. We get to see a lifetime of Tim's human struggle and success through the lens of his fictional ability to travel through time and change the past.

For the majority of the movie, Tim attempts to control his outcomes, but eventually comes to realize that when he tries to control his own life it is both emotionally draining and only temporarily conducive. Near the end of the movie, Tim's dad reveals his own secret to optimizing time-travel: "And so he told me his secret formula for happiness. Part one of the two part plan was that I should just get on with ordinary life, living it

day by day, like anyone else... But then came part two of Dad's plan. He told me to live every day again almost exactly the same. The first time with all the tensions and worries that stop us noticing how sweet the world can be, but the second time noticing." Tim tries this method, and learns to appreciate the details of his life more deeply, although he takes his father's method a step further and finds his own secret to time-travel: "The truth is, I now don't travel back at all. Not even for the day. I just try to live every day as if I've deliberately come back to this one day to enjoy it as if it was the full final day of my extraordinary, ordinary life. We're all travelling through time together every day of our lives. All we can do is do our best to relish this remarkable ride."



*US Army ROTC Advanced Camp, Summer '2019*

Both the movie *About Time* and this global pandemic have reminded me that although control provides a temporary sense of comfort, it is often deceiving and impossible to maintain. Before, I felt that I knew and could control my future; it's been uncomfortable to realize that I really don't have as much control as I thought, however now that we've all been reminded that we all have less power over the future than we thought, it's been easier to

discover the false controls and false sources of happiness in my life. Rather than destructive, this reminder has been constructive. Although my sense of control had temporarily erased anxieties and felt fulfilling, I have recently come to find deeper fulfillment in something else: to appreciate my current situation; I've come to appreciate my life now even more than the "perfectly" orchestrated life that I was living three weeks ago.

Despite the negatives of the global pandemic, I am grateful. I feel fortunate that all of my family and friends have been medically safe thus far, and that I have more time to spend with my family. I feel relieved that I have some extra time to read books that I've been wanting to read and create paintings that I'd been meaning to paint. Instead of dwelling on the fact that I might not have the commissioning that I've been looking forward to, I've decided to focus on being grateful that I have a job after college in which I get to challenge myself and serve others. Instead of thinking about how I won't have the senior year that I initially wanted, I'm focused on cherishing the experiences that I've had the opportunity to experience and the wonderful people that I've gotten to know. Instead of trying to control my future, I'm re-learning to appreciate the details of my reality. Life cannot be controlled. Life is a blessing.

*-Rachel Chamberlain, UCLA Class of 2020; UCLA Army ROTC Class of 2020*