

The Placement Diaries: Week 38 - Neither Here Nor There

3rd June 2022

This feels like waking up before your alarm is due to go off, and now, it feels too early to wake up, but too late to go back to sleep, and actually have a decent sleep. At this moment in time, it feels like I'm waiting for the alarm to go off, for this year to end, so that I can become 21 years old, and to be able to move on with my life, since this year has felt a lot like putting my life on hold for a year, to the point where I've barely processed the fact that I've ever been 20 years old, simply due to the fact that I didn't really do much, almost as though I've skipped my 20th year on this planet.

Additionally, this placement year could have easily finished a month ago, because at this point, it's just dragging on, and I'm starting to get annoyed. Why do I have to wait and put my life on hold to just do some presentation that's barely going to last an hour, in person as well, because the tech has gradually started getting wonkier by the day, mainly by age? Can't I just be done with this already, so that I can move on to the next stage of my life? I know that practice makes perfect, but presentations downright give me anxiety. I just want to blink and I want this to be over with. I've become disillusioned with this placement year, like I haven't already become disillusioned with it, and I want to go as far away from this extroverted and entrepreneurial world as possible, whilst still having some of the perks. In short, I want to be able to have the stability of a job as well as having a regular income, but I also want the freedom to at least develop my ideas within that job.

I don't want to talk myself out of this, since that's what I tend to do best, but it's just the last hurdle now, and this will become nothing but a strange dream. My pitch and my business plan are just filled with empty words, in order to appease something or the other, in order to get some arbitrary mark which won't even count towards my final degree outcome for the most part.

At this moment in time, I'm just anxiously waiting for my alarm to go off, whilst also dreading it, since I know that once I get up, I'll have to deal with the day, and in this case, straight after this placement year is done, I'll celebrate my 21st birthday in eleven days' time, only to then deal with a summer of uncertainty just after that, probably picking up extra shifts at work since that seems to be my only option, and making the most of my days off, just exactly how I did it last year.

Despite taking a year out to work on my business idea, it genuinely feels like I've wasted that year, mainly by putting my life on hold for no reason instead. I could have been

graduating by now, but no, I had to put it off for a year, and now I'm kicking myself because of it. Nothing's changed, but with that said, my research interests, curiosity, and creativity have dissipated because of this, simply trading my wonderful and nuanced ideas for convenience in order to satisfy dissatisfied customers who couldn't care less about what I'd have to offer anyway.

There's not enough time for me to get another job (full time or part time), but there's also too much time on my hands, again, another feature which was a part of this year, to the point where it actually became harmful. I had all the time in the world, yet I didn't really do anything meaningful with it, and now I'm thoroughly annoyed, specifically annoyed at the fact that my friends have graduated without me, leaving me in the dust, now playing a form of self-inflicted catch up.

I could ramble on about this all day, but I guess for now, I'll have to accept the fact that this has happened, and that I can no longer change what has been done. Maybe it was for better or worse, but who knows? What's done is done, and now I can only move forwards, learning from the experiences which I've experienced over the course of this ironically introspective year.

I guess, in a way, it's better that I've experienced everything that comes with self employment and freelancing now, than to attempt it after I graduated, dealing with that uncertainty as well as that disappointment and frustration on my own, and I guess that it felt good to be able to have some form of support instead of having to go through it alone, paired with getting advice along the way.

However, with that said, this could have easily been an extracurricular activity instead of a full blown placement year where there were barely any tangible outcomes, but again, I can't change it, though if I could go back in time to last year, I'd say to myself to just skip this placement year altogether since it'd just put my life on hold, deferring my graduation for another year for no reason.

I'm anxiously waiting for the alarm to go off, and it feels like an eternity, just staring up at the ceiling, the day starting to break and peek through my blinds, with the birds singing at the top of their lungs, making sure that I find it hard to go back to sleep, but at the same time, going into my final year will feel a lot like trying to fall asleep again after being rudely woken up in the middle of the night, and being forced to stay awake for a whole hour, only to get back into the rhythm of sleeping again, knowing that you'll have to get up a few hours later. This is what this placement year has felt like. An unnecessary disturbance in the middle of the night.