

Our names: Lewis Taranto and Kyle Jdali.

Our town: Geelong

Our COVID19 experience

Year 12 is always a stressful year, but it has been especially stressful throughout the pandemic. We, as Year 12 students, had many moments throughout the year where we wondered how we would get through it. Well we did it, and we couldn't have done it alone. Kindness from friends, family and teachers are all so important for Year 12 students, and this year we think we relied on that even more than usual.

Our families were so accommodating to us throughout the year, and our friends made sure to create tight support systems for each other. We all knew how much we would need it, and we all stepped up to support our peers.

Our teachers (on the most part) were incredible. They were understanding when we didn't hand in work on time, or when we slept in during online class. They adapted their usual teaching in consideration of remote learning, and they were patient with us. Our teachers made sure to never put us down, but to instead treat us with kindness. It is this kindness that not only got us through the year, but allowed us to thrive. We think most students would agree that kindness has made this year so much bearable.

Even on a personal level for us, our teachers understood when we wanted to focus on our mental health brand, 'Atman', instead of school. We got amazing support with Atman from our parents, and we've had overwhelming support from everyone who follows what we do. Without that support and kindness, we don't think we'd be quite as driven as we are to help people.

Despite how tough this year has been, we think there can be some things to take from it. The most important one is that kindness is necessary. It isn't something we should think about, it is something we must do.

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Story shared for the [kindnesspandemic.org/hopecalendar](https://www.kindnesspandemic.org/hopecalendar)