

## **Going There Episode 5: Scholars and Schedules**

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A Lake Superior College podcast exploring campus mindfulness, equity, and community hosted with Tara McCoy, Steve Dalager, and Dan Riihiluoma.

In this episode, we check in with LSC students Cheyanne Warner (E1) and Dan Riihiluoma (E2) to see how they're surviving the campus transition to alternative course delivery during the Covid-19 campus closure. This is the second in our special Covid-19 series.

Dan Riihiluoma: We have nothing to fear but fear itself.

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Cheyanne Warner: It's just like constant Friday. Friday, Friday, Friday, Friday, Friday again.

Dan: But rubrics are super important for any sort of paper or even just large projects.

Cheyanne: I do have a strong faith in humanity as a whole when it comes to the coronavirus.

Tara McCoy: I'm Tara McCoy, and can we please stop talking about the coronavirus already?

Steve Dalager: I'm Steve Dalager, and the answer is, NO.

Dan: Nah, shoot, I'm Dan Riihiluoma, and since coronavirus is all anyone talks about anymore, we are Going there.

Steve: Going there

Tara: Going there. Well, dangit, that didn't work out so well.

Steve: In episode four, we heard from Jarvis Hunt in Florida and Paisley Forsell in West Duluth. Dan: In this episode, we check in on our old friend Cheyanne Warner, who you might remember from episode one.

Tara: And we'll also hear from some other guy, what's his name again?

Dan: It's Dan.

Tara: Dan...

Dan: Yeah, me, Dan Riihiluoma.

Steve: That's right, Dan. There once was a guy named Riihiluoma who broke down one night in Winona. But the guy fixing his scooter, used an infected computer, and now Dan's expecting a coma.

Tara: Really Steve? Okay, let's listen to Dan and Cheyanne.

(lighthearted music)

Steve: We've got Cheyanne Warner and Dan Riihiluoma here along with Tara and Steve. Anyway, Tara, what's going on?

Tara: Yep. Uh, nothing much. Hanging in there, how's everybody doing?

Dan: Bored.

Cheyanne: Yeah, (giggles), totally same. Right now I'm just, like, on my laptop, on Spotify, checking my emails and also working on an assignment, that was supposed to be due, this week? Yeah. (giggles) It's not gonna be due until a month from now actually, I guess. (chuckles)

Dan: Yeah, right?

Tara: Hey, talk about the extension of a lifetime.

Dan: Yeah, but, it's just, it's not the extension I would've picked.

Tara: I know, I feel like as an instructor we just can't win.

(lighthearted music)

Tara: So, Cheyanne, what was your reaction when you first found out that Lake Superior College was extending their spring break?

Cheyenne: I was shocked, I just, I wanted to go back to school.(laughs) I don't know at what point in my life I became this scholar, of some sorts, where I'm just really upset that I can't go straight back to school. I thought the week that we did have for our spring break would be enough for me to catch up or do whatever I needed to do, like, speak to my teachers. But when I was told that it would be extended for two weeks, I was like "Okay, fine, I don't know what I'm gonna do". But then it was extended again! Another week, and I was like "Oh, this is great." (giggles)

Steve: Cheyanne,

Cheyenne: Yeah.

Steve: Where were you and how did you find out?

Cheyenne: I found out the news when I was at my job, my manager told me, she was like "They extended another week." And I was like, "No. No way!" And she said, "Yes way, you check their website." And I was like, "Oh, Okay great, okay" I was really looking forward to my core training class, which is one of my favorite classes.

Steve: Are you still training your core?

Cheyenne: Yes, in fact I am, I'm doing my best, and when you don't have exact instructions, it gets hard to keep it up, but I do have my booklet. I'm pretty sure that's why he gave it to us, just so he can make sure we have something to train, in these loose times.

Steve: Okay, Cheyanne. How has your daily routine changed?

Cheyenne: I actually am a homebody, so it hasn't changed too much.I think the fact that I am a homebody is why I don't wanna extend how much I stay home. I have actually woken up later which is okay, I guess. To sleep in feels pretty nice. Instead of going out to school, I am actually staying home. I have really social distanced myself just about as much as I can. And everything's going day-by-day for me so, there's really not much of a change it

just feels like a Friday to me. 'Cause I usually have Fridays off from school and work, just feels like constant Friday. Friday, Friday, Friday, Friday, Friday again.

Tara: Cheyanne, you're mentioning that you're a homebody, but what has been the most difficult part about social distancing for you?

Cheyenne: Last Thursday was my birthday.That was the last time I went out to Walmart, and I got a cake with my grandmother. I was with my family, just enjoying the day. The hard thing about it has been just my birthday going by and feeling as if I can't socially interact with anybody.

Tara: Well, Happy Birthday. And,

Cheyenne: Thank you!

Steve: Hey, can we sing happy birthday to Cheyanne, right now, really fast?

Cheyenne: No, no you cannot. I don't (laughs).

Steve: Ready?

Steve, Tara and Dan together: Happy Birthday to you, Happy birthday to you (laughing)

Dan: You guys are doing a great job. A sick thing going on there.

Cheyenne: Thank you! I am bowing, I am bowing. I am bowing, I am bowing. In my chair, In my chair. Yeah, so that was pretty hard. Another thing that was hard was realizing that people are not taking this as a joke, at all. They are actually very serious about quarantining themselves because some of our main stores are selling out of certain food products like prawns or vegetables and seems like everybody's taking a lot of things that can perish soon? I don't know.

Dan: (laughing)

Cheyenne: I'm just saying, if you're gonna take all the food, wouldn't you take all the noodles and, like, cans of soup that most of the produce and

vegetables are going away, and then we have packs of nuts. It looked weird to see the isles empty—you can see the bottom, and the styrofoam at the bottom is like, "Okay, seriously? You guys have to take all the food?"

Steve: Cheyanne, are you doing anything that you don't normally do to cope with the current situation? Are you bingeing on Netflix, in other words?

Cheyanne: No. I find myself trying my best to even out how much I'm on social media and the internet because I've heard that a lot of people are on the internet, and that the Netflix and television series will start to get a little fuzzy. I've just basically been reading and writing, typing a lot on my laptop, it doesn't make sense.

Steve: I would say you're in the minority doing that, but—

Cheyanne: Yeah, I have been binge-watching on Netflix a couple of times already so maybe I'm just coming up for air, I guess.

Dan: (laughing)

Tara: So, are there things you are doing to cope with this current situation?

Cheyanne: This current situation, yes. I am actually just paying attention to my assignments through D2L. I have been keeping myself busy by thinking about them, so that I don't lag behind, because I did have a record of procrastination. I have been keeping up with my assignments and doing them just so I don't have to think about them.

Steve: So, studying as a coping mechanism, I like that.

Cheyanne: Yeah. Which is also something new if I'm being honest. That is something new that I've never studied as a coping mechanism. I've actually tried my best to go around studying to cope with studying.

Dan: (laughing) That's where I'm at.

Steve: Cheyanne, have there been any unexpected positive outcomes from social distancing or quarantining?

Cheyanne: Yeah actually, since I have been social distanced from my job too, for these past two weeks, last week and this week coming up, I'm not going to work, but I actually am going to be getting paid which is okay. I was a bit nervous about that but my boss did tell me that corporate would be able to at least give me 75% of my pay. That is a positive for me because I would think that since workers are not in at all we wouldn't be able to get compensated. Also, my mother, she's been coming home earlier so, we actually get to spend more time with each other. Since I do live with my mom, we do dodge each other every morning. I would usually be going to school really early or she would already be at work really early. And then when I came back home, she was too tired to even interact with me. But then she's coming home earlier in this time, we have been connecting a little bit more. I've been spending more time with her and we do watch Netflix, I'm always watching it with her. Spending more time with my mom.

Tara: I love that.

Cheyanne: Yeah.

Tara: Have you taken an online class before?

Cheyanne: Yes, I have, and they are not my favorite (giggles). The classes that I have right now, it's switched to online now. My teacher did just give us couple shout outs, and she said we will be online. It is a literature class, so I have found that anything pertaining to writing I can do online, perfectly fine. My first semester, I tanked about two classes that were online, so I'm still recovering from that. So, every time anyone asks me whether I would prefer online or in-person, I always say in-person. I tend to do a lot better when I go on campus. My core training class, it's obviously a class that I would not want to do online. I just really don't hope he says, "Okay, we're gonna switch everything to online." And also I do want to add that that ends up being something that I really miss too. It was something

of a switch this semester that I've never had a class to go to in the morning where I can exercise a bit, relax, and do yoga. I found it really refreshing.

Steve: Awesome, well, actually kind of sad. Do you have any words of encouragement for your fellow students at Lake Superior College?

Cheyenne: Yes. We're gonna get through this. I believe that there are plenty of scholars in Lake Superior College. Ones that know exactly what to do in time like this. I know that we are okay when we are alone too. So when it comes to studying and interacting with others we have plenty of ways to do that. Instead of actually, physical contact. We have many social media sites that we can go through. We have a phone. We should take this time to just relax and maybe give a little more phone calls than we usually would. I do have a strong faith in humanity as a whole when it comes to the Corona Virus and any pandemics that might happen to us in this world. I'm not really worried at all. I think that we are smart enough to get through a time like this.

(lighthearted music)

Steve: Alright. Let's pivot to Dan then.

Tara: Yeah, so Dan, what was your reaction when you first found out that LSC was extending their spring break?

Dan: I thought it was a joke, at first. I saw it on Facebook, and then I checked the email because I figured better safe than sorry, and then I felt exasperated and annoyed.

Tara: Why?

Dan: Just not what I wanted to see happen.

Steve: Are you also a scholar?

Cheyenne: (giggling)

Dan: I guess, but more importantly was I had a routine built up, and like a schedule and a plan and it felt really good. 'Cause it was the first time in my

life I've really had a steady stable routine and schedule and all that. And it all gets thrown out the window and it's just really aggravating.

Tara: So, how has your daily routine changed over the past few weeks then?

Dan: I mean personally I've been sleeping a lot more, go to bed late, wake up late. And then I've been doing a lot more cooking and baking too so that's been positive, I guess. I'm interacting with my parents more and just, I mean, I've been doing a lot of things more, but none of them are exactly what I want to be doing.

Steve: What is the most difficult part about the social distancing for you?

Dan: The most difficult part for me is that my parents don't seem to understand it. They invite people over and they'll go and deliver food to people and it's like, "Yes, that's great but don't do that." And then the other day they invited both my grandparents over. I mean, the two who are around and available. And my grandfather is sitting at the table wheezing and coughing, and my grandmother is doing the same thing, and it's just like, "Oh my God, this is terrible." And it's been stressful too, just not being able to be around people really. I've always been an introvert and a homebody and all that, but I still enjoy people and still enjoy talking to and being around people and I haven't been able to for weeks. And, it's not fun.

Tara: Are there things you're doing to cope with the current situation?

Dan: Nothing healthy. Lots of video games and bingeing TV shows and eating. None of the positives. I'm not really working on my homework, I'm not staying abreast my studies, I'm not doing like yoga or exercise and I really should be doing all of that but I'm not.

Steve: You think, come March 30th, when things officially begin again, you will change?

Dan: I sure as hell hope so. (laughs) 'Cause it's either that or it's gonna be a terrible semester for me. So, yeah, this week is basically the week I'm gonna smack myself upside the head and then get back into actually doing things.

Steve: That sounds depressing. Are there any positive, unexpected outcomes?

Dan: I've been reaching out to people more. You know, strangers basically. Just trying to have more conversations and more connections.

Steve: Via social media?

Dan: Yeah, social media.

Tara: So, you have taken online classes, but how do you feel about the rest of this semester being primarily online?

Dan: Oh, I'm not a fan, not a fan at all. I have a hard time focusing on things if they're not directly physically in front of me and when it's online it's so easy for me to forget about it and I'm freaking out. Then I have to stay really on top of it, not to miss an assignment here and there or forget a paper is due at this time. And then one of my classes is a yoga class, it's very much be-there-in-person to practice the poses and it's about so much of the atmosphere is important and you can't get that at home. And so, I'm gonna be missing that and it's not fun. Cheyanne: Yeah. It definitely was a sudden thing, right?

Dan: Yeah. I just came out of left field and it came fast.

Cheyanne: Yeah, it did. It just came fast. It feels like we were just on winter break, right?

Dan: Like January, February and then March, boom! No school in March.

Cheyanne: I mean, I knew we were gonna be gone for the week, but it was just like, okay? Dan: Right.

Cheyanne: We got another the week coming on. I was like, "Okay, maybe I'm going a little stir crazy

for the extra week." Then, no we need another week.

(laughing drowns out speaker)

Dan: It was so much. I mean, I understand why, and the teachers, if we're going to be switching to online courses the teachers need that time to just to prepare. 'Cause it's a huge shift for so many of them. But it's also a huge shift for all of us, and the longer it takes the worse it gets.

Cheyanne: Yeah, if they've been doing this for the majority of their lives, I'm pretty sure they're the ones that are a little bit more... (sighs loudly) Steve, how are you Steve?

(laughing)

Dan: Yeah, how are you guys handling it?

Steve: Well, I can't speak for Tara. I've taught online before so I think I have it probably a lot easier than some of my colleagues. I am learning to use Zoom, which is what most people use today. So that's been a little bit of a learning curve, and I'm learning to make more video content. But otherwise, for me to move to online was a fairly easy shift. But I will miss the interactions with students 'cause that's really where the joy of teaching is for me and although we still have interactions, but they're different online than they are in person. I'll let Terra speak for herself here.

Tara: Yeah, the hardest part about transitioning online for me, and I have taught online and basically all my classes can be taught online, but is that I have to not expect myself to get things to go perfectly or smoothly. Like I have an expectation about how this semester is gonna to go and I usually have more time to prepare, and so I can foresee where some kinks are gonna be. But I'm really feel I'm going into this part blind because even though I've taught these classes online before, my students did not sign up for these classes to be online. So I'm trying to execute them in a totally different way, and it's like "Okay we're gonna see how this goes." and I'm really hoping

that I've built enough of a rapport with my students. So that this can be a give and take, like, "Okay week one of online has commenced, "what do you think? "how do you feel? "Is there things that I should do or change?" It's gonna feel jerky and I hate knowing that it's gonna feel jerky, but, it's what we gotta do.

Dan: I guess, thinking about it, it's not gonna be an easy transition for anyone 'cause who know how long this whole, self-isolation thing is going? I mean, the semester is basically a wash out, it's all gonna be online for the rest of the semester. But what about after that? How much longer can this continue, potentially months, right?

Tara: Yeah. And Dan and Cheyanne, are there things, you both have expressed the fact that you're not thrilled with online classes for different reasons, but maybe you can use this as an opportunity to maybe share with Steve and I, with me and Steve, pardon my grammar, to maybe share some tips, or what you'd like to see with these in-person classes moving to online, to help you guys learn?

Steve: Yeah, what's the tip for teachers? Do you like when they post videos of things? (mumbles)

Dan: I don't know.

Cheyanne: I've found that any classes that I have, when I had a really horrible online class, one thing that really irked me was that, the information that I would see on D2L, content would be slightly different from any of the information that we've been told in class. Just make sure that everything that you have presented in class, goes directly to D2L. Also, if any of the rubrics, I really like rubrics, as a whole, like if you have certain assignments that you want your students to do, in a rubric with a score of how you want that paper to be done, with also an attached example would be really great too. Sometimes I would get rubrics without any examples, which was like, "I don't know how this paper "is supposed to look."

Dan: For me, the most important thing would probably be a consistency thing. Like make sure that you have all of your dates set, have a schedule set out, like a calendar, so students know ahead of time, how much time they have, and what they're supposed to be working on, and that would help me a lot personally, 'cause I tend to focus on what's happening now, instead of what's happening in the future, (laughs) and that can be detrimental, if I get too focused on what's now, and I forget what's coming and I don't prepare for it. But yeah, rubrics, super important for any paper or even just a large project. Because the student will obviously read the assignment, and they might not read it that carefully, but if you make a nice, simple, point-based rubric they will go through that with a fine-toothed comb.

Steve: Rubrics, and examples. I'm taking the lesson; I'm taking it to heart.

Tara: Alright Dan, last question then, do you have any word of encouragement for your peers? Dan: Don't panic, don't freak out. The worst thing that can happen to you, is if you get afraid of life. Just carry on, do the best you can and if things don't work out as well as you'd hope, don't worry about it.

Tara: Very, Harry Potter esque, Dan. It's like when Harry Potter was scared of the Dementors, and Professor werewolf-guy was like, "Very smart Harry, you are most afraid of fear itself."

Steve: I believe that was Professor Lupin.

Cheyanne: You're right.

Dan: We have nothing to fear, but fear itself.

Steve: Okay, well, it's been great talking to you both, and we will be in touch.

(lighthearted music)

And that was Dan Riihiluoma and Cheyanne Warner, who you may remember from previous

episodes. Anyway, what are some takeaways that you get from that Tara?

Tara: Well, I wanna ask Dan, my man, without a fan, how he felt being back in the hot seat. See, Steve? You're not the only one who can rhyme.

Dan: Oh God! That rhyme though. No, it was fine, I wish we could get more people, or more opinions on that, but I'm more than happy to come back in, and give mine again. This whole situation is insane, and changing times changed the vibes and everything.

Steve: One thing that also strikes me, which is, I think, heartening, is how much both Dan and Cheyanne, miss being in school.

Tara: Right.

Steve: You know, physically in school.

Tara: I mean, Cheyanne described herself as a scholar, which I love that word.

Steve: Which is how she's gonna survive this thing.' Cause she's gonna do it, she's a scholar. Tara: Yep. She said her coping mechanism was focusing on school.

Steve: But still, the fact that the social part of school, and the way a real classroom can function, is still not replicated.

Dan: Yeah, I would never describe myself as a scholar, but I really miss just the routine and the community.

Tara: I think it's important to highlight that students who are shifting to online classes seem to be appreciative of the fact they can still do their work, but it's certainly a big shift in the way that they're doing school, which is gonna add to the stress of this whole situation.

Steve: And it's a situation that is going to continue for an indefinite period, so we're in this for the long haul, people.

Tara: Absolutely.

Steve: Anyway, I think that about wraps up episode 5. We will see you the next time, when maybe we'll here from Joe Busig.

Tara: Are we gonna try that three-part harmony again to say goodbye?

Steve: Should we do it with goodbye?

Tara: Yeah.

Steve: Okay, ready? Goodbye!

Dan: Goodbye!

Tara: Goodbye!

Steve: We're not gonna make anyone's choir anytime soon.

(laughing)

Steve: Alright, adios!

Tara: Bye!

Steve: You've been listening to episode 5 of Going There, Special COVID-19 edition. On behalf of my co hosts, Terra McCoy, and Dan Riihiluoma, I wanna thank you for tuning in. If you have questions about Going There, please email me at [Steven.dalager@LSC.edu](mailto:Steven.dalager@LSC.edu) that's D-A-L-A-G-E-R mic drop.