

I think I have figured out why the isolation of this past year and a half hasn't bothered me. The sickness and death that have occurred and the disruption in work and education for so many have been disastrous, but the isolation itself has been of no concern for me. Then, I remembered what happened when I started kindergarten.

At first, I was excited about starting school. On my sixth birthday, hair braided and probably with braids turned up and tied with ribbons, wearing the new dress Aunt Constance had made, I went with my brother and sister to the end of the lane to meet the school bus.

Kindergartners had just half a day of school at that time, and we did not eat lunch at school, so it was probably no more than eleven a.m. when we got back on the school bus and came home.

There were lots of books at school, other children to play with at recess, and a very nice teacher. But, it wasn't long before I began to resist getting on the school bus in the mornings.

At the time the reasons for my reluctance were not something I even thought about. I just knew I did not want to go to school. Now, though, I understand perfectly—that it was being away from home that was the problem.

It still is, though I no longer wrap my arms around the chair legs and cry because I need to go somewhere. When I think back, knowing how hard it has always been to imagine life anywhere but here on Coe Creek, it amazes me that took a trip to Europe alone, riding the trains on my Eurail pass. Even then, though, I was homesick.

I am not sure this is necessarily a bad thing. Perhaps, there are those who have itchy feet and others who are homebodies through and through. Both types of folks undoubtedly make their contributions to the societies of this planet.

But, during this past year and a half, life has probably been a lot easier for those of us who prefer to be at home. People who need a lot of outside stimulation have had a difficult time keeping to themselves. But, my anxiety only surfaces when I think about going back to a more social existence, though that was always very limited according to most people's estimation.

So, pandemic or not, home is still the place I like most of all.

The best quote I have recently read is this, attributed to Eustace Conway: "Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle are good ideas, but those three concepts should only be the last resort. What you really need to focus on are the other words that begin with R—Reconsider and Refuse. Before you even acquire a disposable good, ask yourself why you need this consumer product. And then turn it down. Refuse it. You can."