

## Looking Back at COVID-19

Resources Corner

by Debi Tyler-Newsom, OTR/L,  
PAC Client Relations Director

It's not like the stress of COVID-19 is behind us, but after several weeks of *social distancing* and isolation, there has been time to reflect on how this change in lifestyle has affected our family dynamics, our activities, and our plans for the future.

If you think about a challenge you have had in the past, what did you learn from that experience that can help you in our current time? If you were going through the same situation again, what are you proud of, and what would you change? When the scare and uncertainty of COVID-19 *really* is something we can think back on, what will be the prominent memories of your time at home, the changes with work, the way you took care of yourself and supported others? What about the way you balanced your time, in the areas of: time waiting, self-care, rest/reflection/quiet time, fun, and activities that provide purpose/meaning/value to your life?

Here are some personal thoughts and observations on each area.

- **Time waiting** - Yes, waiting for this to be over, waiting for things to be *normal* again, waiting for the *COVID fatalities curve* to go down, waiting for the stock-market to go up...waiting for our country to be united in how they deal with this pandemic and make sensible changes for the future to prevent a similar outbreak...waiting.
- **Self-care** - Taking care of me. Trying to keep my perspective positive, being more deliberate about taking a daily walk, and observing the blooms, birds, and chipmunks. The skill of deep breathing is valuable, as is shutting off the 24/7 news reports. Trying to keep the days from blurring together by changing routines, environments, and moving to a space with a different view for a fresh perspective.
- **Rest/Reflection/Quiet time** - So much has happened in the past few months that is new, uncertain, tragic, and unsettling. We've had major changes in a short period of time and some people handle change better than others. It takes discipline to keep getting regular hours of sleep. More important than ever is having quiet time or devotional time to reflect on the important things in life, connecting with family, encouraging others who are disheartened, and appreciating the huge sacrifice that others are making.
- **Fun** - What was that again? Oh, fun...finding activities that provide sheer enjoyment. Last week it was having a virtual *picnic* with my grandson as he sits in his highchair and shovels fistfuls of strawberries, mac 'n cheese, and chicken bits

into his mouth. Expressing creativity in the games we play with family members, learning something new, developing a hobby or skill there previously wasn't time for. Yesterday, my mom and I chose matching letters from her Scrabble board and my Bananagrams sac, and did a parallel activity by phone, forming words, and even making up new words which we had to pronounce, define, and use in a sentence. Not only that, but I have a great *streak* going with my French on Duo, and I am working at improving my drawing skills. Those activities help balance my thoughts and perspective.

- **Purposeful Activity** - Tasks that add meaning and value to your life, like work, even if hours, schedules, and duties have changed. What about finding tangible ways to help those who have physical, financial, or emotional needs? Or helping another person just to be helpful. A wonderful neighbor came over and mowed our front lawn last week *just because*.

We will always hope of a better future, and this experience will change our perspective forever. But creativity, purpose, and value with our COVID-tinted glasses on now requires us to think about that *new normal*. PAC has been industriously planning how our services, which have been so strongly based on training groups in the same physical space, can still be strong and full of value if done virtually. The verdict by our attendees is, **yes, they can!** Virtual Certifications, Virtual Champion Days, and Virtual Skills Days, all done with the finesse and skill of a team comfortable with virtual meetings and small break-out rooms for practice, while meeting the needs of our learners.

Together, we are moving to a space with a different view for a fresh perspective.

Check out our Virtual Services, [click here](#) or Contact me for more information, [click here](#).