

Monday, November 23, 2020

Journal #1

As you will soon see, my first day of journaling could become my craziest journaling story as today was extremely emotionally and physically stressful for me. Earlier today I learned that I had been exposed to a person who was in direct contact with a Covid-19 positive person. Over the past couple of weeks, my close friends and I have tried to avoid Covid-19 as much as possible while still being able to be together safely. The way that I was exposed to Covid-19 was through my close friend who's brother tested positive only a few days before I had seen him. As soon as my friend texted me earlier today with the news I felt immense stress and was so scared because Covid-19 was now affecting me on a personal level. I spent the rest of the day today calling testing centers in my area desperately trying to schedule a test as soon as possible. Unfortunately, almost every testing center was booked until next week when I called so tomorrow I will go on an adventure to find any testing site that will take me. Today was an extremely emotional day for me and my family and adding schoolwork to my already busy agenda has made my day even worse. I simply cannot stop thinking about the worst-case scenario if I do have Covid-19 and how my family will react. I feel selfish and inconsiderate about the fact that I put myself in a situation where I could possibly harm anyone in my family or friends.

Tuesday, November 24, 2020

Journal #2

Today was the most eye-opening Covid-19 experience that I have ever had. I started my day at 7 am and left my house to drive 45 minutes to a walk-in testing site that I found online. I was met at the door by a worker of the office and learned that they had maxed out on Covid-19 tests for the day. I remember hearing about the recent surge of Covid-19 cases on the news but never knew how severe it had really gotten. The worker told me that people began lining up for tests at around 530 am and they maxed out before 8 am. At this point in my day, I felt extremely defeated and wasn't sure how I would find a place to get tested for Covid-19. Eventually, after asking several friends and family members, I found a testing site another 30 minutes from where I was. As I pulled into the parking lot of this office my jaw literally dropped when I saw a line of about 25 people wrapping around the backside of the building. Obviously, I was not happy to wait in line for several hours but I knew that to ensure the safety of my family it was necessary. After almost 2 hours of waiting outside, I finally got my test and was able to return home for the day. Today was so eye-opening to me because I would always hear about the difficulty of getting tested on the news and disregard it because it didn't directly affect me.

Wednesday, November 25, 2020

Journal #3

Today was the first day out of the past few days that felt somewhat ordinary. I have accepted the fact that I have done everything in my power to protect myself and my family and I just need to wait and see my test results. Luckily my results came back very fast and I am glad to say that I don't have Covid-19. Even though I don't have Covid-19 and didn't give it to anyone in my family I still think that I learned a great lesson. Ever since the pandemic started no one in my close family was affected by Covid-19 so it was easy for me to underestimate the extreme hardships that others are currently facing. Although today was a very happy day for me because I got my test results back I am still feeling very lucky and this situation will forever change the way I look at this pandemic. Thanksgiving is tomorrow and I'm glad to be able to see my brother who has been away at school for the whole semester, without worrying that I could be transmitting Covid-19 to him. Tomorrow is not going to be an ordinary Thanksgiving, which was not ideal, but i'm glad that my family has decided to postpone our Thanksgiving plans and celebrate with our immediate families only. I'm hoping that by next Thanksgiving we are able to have our normal Thanksgiving celebration and I can see each and every one of my cousins, aunts, uncles, and grandparents.

Thursday, November 26, 2020

Journal #4

Today is Thanksgiving but it just hasn't felt the same without seeing my extended family. Even though I am fully aware of how dangerous and inconsiderate it would be to have a large gathering, I am still feeling upset that a great holiday like Thanksgiving had to be cancelled. On the other hand, for Thanksgiving with only my parents and my brother, today has been a very fun and great day. We all went out of our way to make it feel like a regular Thanksgiving meal so my mom cooked all of her regular food like turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes, and corn casserole. All of this food brought great comfort to my family and I in such a stressful period of time. The one activity that made today feel somewhat normal was having a Zoom meeting with my extended family after dinner. We all took turns telling everyone our favorite parts of the day and our favorite Thanksgiving foods. Zoom meetings have become so normal to me because of online classes but I could tell my family was somewhat shocked at how useful it can be. Even though we were not able to see each other in person, we used a great video call resource and were able to tell each other stories that we would normally tell around the Thanksgiving table. I hope that we are able to return to a normal Thanksgiving next year but i'm glad that my family did the right thing and had a socially distant family holiday from our own homes.

Friday, November 27, 2020

Journal #5

Black Friday shopping is one of my favorite holiday activities and sadly wasn't able to happen this year. I like Black Friday so much because I would meet up with all of my friends that go to different colleges for the first time since the beginning of the semester. Normally we would start our night out at our local mall and make our way to different malls further away with more stores. Black Friday is normally the one day of every year that people are happy to stand in line at midnight looking for the best deals in store. Although some of the malls near me are open to the public, I knew that being around thousands of random people has the potential to become a Covid-19 superspreader event. So today I chose to start my cyber monday shopping early and look for deals online in my own home. Another reason why Black Friday is not quite the same this year is because I was not able to see all of my friends that were home from college. Especially after my personal Covid-19 scare I had over the past week, I was not ready to go out and possibly contract Covid-19. I know that a lot of my friends were not making good decisions at school and not socially distancing so for my family and my own safety I have decided to stay home for the next couple weeks until a vaccine is available. Hopefully there is a safe vaccine available in the near future as I am ready to return back to normal life with my friends and family.

Monday, November 30, 2020

Journal #6

After a busy week last week I am happy to report that today was a lot less stressful. I don't have any classes on Monday so I spent most of today preparing for my final exams which start next week. I'm happy that the semester is almost over but I am somewhat nervous about next semester. Next semester will be my first semester of clinicals for nursing school which I'm excited about but I'm not sure how well online learning will convert to in-person clinical sites. I'm very confident in the information I learned this semester to prepare me for clinicals but with all classes being online I was unable to experience in-person labs that would further help prepare me. Normally nursing students at TCNJ are able to spend hours practicing on mannequins before practicing on actual people but due to Covid-19 that was not possible. On the other hand, I am very happy to finally return to campus next semester and live in a dormitory so I can finally see my college friends again and get my full college experience. I think that online classes have been a great experience so far and I'm very impressed by how hard my professors are working to prepare us even though it can be extremely difficult to teach a class without any in-person interaction. I really hope that I'm successful on my final exams next week and that I do my best to prepare myself for them in the next couple days.

Tuesday, December 1, 2020

Journal #7

Wow I can't believe it's already December. It feels like just yesterday I was watching kids trick or treating in my neighborhood and now it's time to help my parents put up the Christmas decorations. The month of November felt like it was over in a week and I'm honestly not too sad about it. Christmas is my favorite holiday and not only because I get presents from my family. My favorite christmas activity is driving around looking at christmas lights all around my town. I'm glad that is one activity that has not been affected by Covid-19 and I'll still be able to do it. Although it's only December 1st and I might be getting ahead of myself, I already feel extra happy and thankful just because of the holiday season. I was hoping to be able to see my friends this week but a few of my friends' close relatives have Covid-19 so im trying to play it safe and stay home until it's safer. I'm really not too worried about my own health if I caught Covid-19 but both of my parents are older and in the age group that Covid-19 most affects. I am glad to hear in the news that a Covid-19 vaccine could come sooner than we all predicted and I really hope that does happen. I am also glad to still be eating Thanksgiving leftovers on December 1st!

Wednesday, December 2, 2020

Journal #8

Today has been a great day so far and i'm so happy to hear all the optimism on the news about the new Covid-19 vaccine. It's hard to believe that it's been almost a year since the pandemic started and we are just now on the brink of having a vaccine. I had no schoolwork to do today so I took a good majority of the day to do research and think about whether or not I should receive the vaccine. I think that even though there are many sources that say the vaccine has potential to have long term side effects it is more important for me to get the vaccine so I can protect my family and my future patients. I'm most likely going to have clinical classes in the next few months and without assurance that I'm not bringing my patients a deadly virus I would not feel safe doing my job in the hospital. I think it is important for everyone to reflect on how different the past year has been due to the virus and think about how this vaccine could bring us all back to normal life. Personally I trust the scientists and pharmaceutical companies that have put months of work into this vaccine and I think I will get it as soon as I can. Hopefully because I am a nursing student I will have the opportunity to get the vaccine before most people and help prove to my friends and family that it is safe. Another important reason I am excited about this vaccine is that my mother works as a nurse and a good vaccine will help me not worry about her contracting the virus while helping her patients.



Thursday, December 3, 2020

Journal #9

Today was a somewhat uneventful day so I decided for my journal I would talk about my families biggest challenge during Covid-19. If I had to pinpoint one challenge that has taken a major toll on my physical and mental health it is the inability to go to public gyms. I've struggled with my health for my entire life and 2019 was a great year for me because I was able to stick to a regimented workout plan for the whole year. When Covid-19 started and all public gyms closed I thought that it would only be a short time before they would reopen but obviously that did not happen. Personally I gained weight and established a very unhealthy lifestyle during quarantine during the pandemic. Today was a great step in the right direction for me because I took the first step back to a healthy lifestyle by starting to workout again. The public gyms in my area are notorious for being a Covid-19 superspreader so I decided to workout at my house to ensure my safety. I would like to get back into a public gym soon but with the large increase in Covid-19 cases over the past couple weeks I think it is safer to stay home. Some people may think that working out is not an essential part of life and it is unimportant but to me working out is a way to relieve stress and help my mental and physical health.

Friday, December 4, 2020

Journal #10

Today was another stressful day for me. Earlier today I met with one of my professors for a patient assessment review. This session was meant to help us gauge our knowledge for how much we would need to study for our upcoming assessment. Normally we would have hours to practice on mannequins but due to Covid-19 we are stuck practicing through Zoom. Even though my professor told me that I was making great progress I can't help but feel nervous for the future. How will I assess a real live human being in a few weeks when I've only practiced on video calls? I really hope my upcoming professors help us to feel comfortable with our skills in person before we are introduced to the hospital.

Today was my last day of journaling and without a doubt I can say that journaling was an extremely positive experience for me. I've never been the type of person to display my emotions and writing down my thoughts and feelings has really helped me to cope with the stress related to Covid-19. Even though I normally hate writing, journaling feels different to me as I'm able to control what I write. I would recommend that any person struggling with stress or mental health issues related to Covid-19 to start journaling because it can help you to stay positive and reflect on the challenges and obstacles that you have come across and how you coped with them.