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In Sickness and in Health in South Texas: Narratives of COVID's Impact

11-28-2022

COVID-19's impact on the individual

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Recommended Citation

Mathew, Grace, "COVID-19's impact on the individual" (2022). *In Sickness and in Health in South Texas: Narratives of COVID's Impact*. 8.
https://athenaeum.uiw.edu/sickness_health_narratives/8

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COVID-19's Impact on the Individual

The COVID-19 pandemic has been a profound experience from people all around the world. Having lived through a pandemic, I can definitely say I have learned so many lessons and will always remember them. The two most important factors that impacted me during the pandemic would have to be occupational wellness and physical health.

I started working a nursing assistant job at a pediatric unit during the peak time of the pandemic. This was also the first job that I had ever worked in my life. Stepping into a medical role in the middle of the pandemic was something that I would consider as an accomplishment. I had to learn about how a hospital functions as well as how it operates under a pandemic. There were so many stressful situations in which I had to be floated to different floors despite being a beginner to my own floor. During this time, I learned how to be quick on my feet and to think of solutions when a problem arises. Even though I learned so many things from this job, it was very difficult to always keep a positive attitude and come to work everyday. Due to the pandemic and certain protocols, the working conditions were very stressful and sometimes I would forget that I was performing a service and helping people. Looking back, I am proud to say that I worked for almost a year and I do not regret this experience in anyway.

The next area that I struggled with was maintaining my physical health and wellbeing. Prior to the pandemic, I enjoyed going on outdoor walks with my neighbors as well as going to the gym. I wasn't someone who kept up a strict or constant routine but the outdoor walks was a past time that I used to de-stress. During the initial stages of the pandemic, no matter how close family friends or neighbors were, we weren't allowed to see each other and our walks abruptly ended. Not being able to go on walks and not having access to a gym anymore disrupted the only forms of exercise I had. Therefore, I stopped maintaining my physical wellbeing because I wasn't able to do the things I was used to. I also picked up unhealthier habits as I ate more during the night and baked more during the day. I wish that I would have picked up healthier habits to maintain my physical health and done some exercises at home. This would have enabled me to keep my stress levels down and gave me other ways to keep myself occupied.