

# Lee Foster Oral History, 2020/08/04

**Interviewee:** Lee Foster

**Interviewer:** Hope Gresser

**Date:** 08/04/2020

**Location (Interviewee):** Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

**Location (Interviewer):** Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

**Transcriber:** Sally Velez

**Abstract:** Oral History in which Lee Foster discusses how one teaches shop (Industrial Arts) through online learning, what it is like teaching your students at the same time as your own children, and having a spouse working in a hospital during the pandemic. He also discusses the changes, or lack thereof, in family dynamics during a pandemic all with his easy-going positivity and sense of gratitude for his situation.

**Hope Gresser 00:01**

Okay, so my name is Hope Gresser. I am a master's student in the program of public history at the University of Western Ontario. Today's date is August the 4th. And if you could, oh, and I am in Ottawa, Ontario, and if you could say who you are and where you are.

**Lee Foster 00:18**

I am Lee Foster, and I am in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

**Hope Gresser 00:21**

Great. So did you just want to give a quick introduction as to who you are?

**Lee Foster 00:26**

I mean, I'm 34 year old male living in Winnipeg. I'm a school teacher, my wife's a nurse. I have two boys, I have a five year old and a three year old. And I mean, here I am, Winnipeg.

**Hope Gresser 00:44**

And our relationship because I have state that is that we are cousins.

**Lee Foster 00:47**

We are cousins, yes. It's accurate.

**Hope Gresser 00:48**

So you have known me for 23 years. And I know this because my mom recently said that apparently you met me when I was a week old. So- We have known each other for 23 years. Alright, so first, just start us off. We try to go as chronological as possible. But if at any point, you're like, oh, this thing, jump right in. So what do you recall about the start of all of this? Do you remember when you first heard about the virus? And what did you think about it immediately?

**Lee Foster 01:20**

Well, I remember hearing in I want to say January of this year, or maybe December last year, but it was you hear it on the news. It was something that that China was going through. It was just something you heard about, right? And then I read- my, so my birthday is March the 5th and I remember being out, celebrating with my friends. And then we were talking about that. I mean, it was on our minds and March the 5th. And we were talking about, you know, what, what, what things might look like how it's going to impact us. There wasn't, I wouldn't say it was really scary, but you know, everyone was aware of it. And then I guess the 13th of March is when you know, schools and things shut down. So it was it was kind of a you know, the week later, almost, it was quite, a quite a jump from, you know, you're out at out at a pub with your friends to... Oh, my goodness, we're, we're shutting down.

**Hope Gresser 02:22**

Right. So then when they shut down did, because Alex was in school, right?

**Lee Foster 02:30**

Yeah.

**Hope Gresser 02:31**

Did they shut down the same time you did? Or like, are you in the same board? Or (inaudible)?

**Lee Foster 02:35**

Yeah, we're in, we are in the same, we call, we call them school divisions. So we're in the same division. There was, there- it was the week before our spring break. And so there was a I guess, I mean, so I was working in the schools. And I noticed that parents were not sending their students like my classes-

**Hope Gresser 02:59**

Hmm.

**Lee Foster 03:00**

Were just kind of dwindling to, to almost nothing. There was a day I had one student, like it- just the, the class, like people just kept their kids home. And so that was kind of the- that, you know, a notice was sent home to all the parents. And it was, you know, we understand if you want to keep your child home, but we're still open until we're formally shut down. And so I think on the Monday or the Tuesday, we, we decided that it was best that we keep Alex home from school. And I still kept in contact with his teacher. And she said, yeah, there was, you know, at most three kids in the class, every, every, everyone stayed home.

**Hope Gresser 03:00**

Mhm.

**Lee Foster 03:08**

So there wasn't a whole lot of learning happening anyways. And so we were, we were okay with keeping him home. And that was just the safety thing. I was still going to work and my classes had, you

know, as I say, if there was just there, you know, one or two kids, you know, just what do you do with that, right?

**Hope Gresser 04:02**

So then, you are a shop teacher?

**Lee Foster 04:05**

Yes, yes.

**Hope Gresser 04:06**

So how does one teach shop, distance learning?

**Lee Foster 04:10**

Oh, distance learning? Well, I have to say, so my division, they focused heavily on the safety of everybody. And I really do appreciate that. I mean, students, their health was important. All the staff their health was important. And so we didn't rush in at anything, no other divisions in our city they might have, they might have been a little bit more lacks, but our, our division was really quite strict. So what, what I ended up doing was I, I basically hunkered in the basement of my house, and I designed a variety of kind of hands on activities that you could do at home. So it might be as simple as going outside and measuring the board footage that you would find if you were to cut down a tree in your backyard. So you measure the tree. How much lumber can you get from this tree? There was one example where we made, I had a little an activity where students would make a, a, a little card that was powered by a balloon out of recycled materials, photography that you could do with your cell phone. I mean, making water filters out of pop bottles and sand and just, you know, things you could collect around the house. So on one hand, it was, you know, you wanted to do something that was hands on and engaging, and also met, you know, curricular, you know, meant objectives. But you couldn't use tools you couldn't use, you know, you couldn't, you couldn't assume that everybody had-

**Hope Gresser 05:45**

Mhm.

**Lee Foster 05:45**

You know, a piece of wood at home or something like that, you just can't do that. So, I assumed that people had water bottles and balloons and things like that. And, and sure enough, most people did. And then I got the odd 'Oh, I don't have any balloons at home, what do I do?' So then you adapt. Right? But I think the message that I got from the Division was that the priority was numeracy and literacy, right. So that was what, that's what the kids needed to know. But the division also recognize that not all, that there are a lot of students that are hands on learners. And so we tried to focus on adding some literacy and adding some numeracy in kind of hands on activities.

**Hope Gresser 06:26**

Mhm.

**Lee Foster 06:26**

And the feedback we got from parents was, you know, a lot of, you know, this is, this is a great alternative to the pen and paper stuff that we've been doing with our kids. You know, it's a nice break from, you know, these, these, like math equations or whatever. So it, it was pretty well received, which was neat. But, you know, being a shop teacher working with my hands personally, working with students, like I like, I like building and doing things with other people. And so I guess I found that a bit difficult in that now, my job of, of teaching students with actual tools and doing hands on, on, on activities, was now me typing on a computer, right? And so you know, that, you know, as I went through university, I, I typed, like, I've done this, right? But it's just not my favorite thing to do. So, you know, that was a bit of an adjustment. But, you know, you, we do it right, you survive it.

**Hope Gresser 07:08**

Mhm. Yeah. So what are you? Like, how did the kids react to it? Cause you said the parents and like, it was relatively positive. But did you get any reactions out of the kids? And what were they? And what has been the reaction of other staff? And how they have been handling it? And is it different for you, or the same to you? Being specialized...

**Lee Foster 07:45**

Yeah, I would say. So, the students, either they enjoyed it, and they told me about that, or they just didn't do it. The priority was numeracy and literacy. And, and, and there was a I don't know if it was an underlying message or what it was, but there was a message that that's what you're going to be- that's the focus. So I know the other specialists phys ed, music, they were having troubles engaging students too. So the students that I, that I, that I did, you know, remain in contact with or for the most part, they're, they're quite happy to receive my stuff. They were, their shops kids they want, they just want to be building stuff. They want to do stuff with their hands. And then other students, they just kind of other than the audit email that said, Hey, Mr. Foster, how are you? Like, you know, like, the personal, that personal touch, otherwise, they just didn't do it. And that, that was okay, too. That was part of the message was focus on numeracy and literacy. Let's see what we can get from them and grade them as we can. My colleagues, the homeroom teachers, it's funny, because, like, I mean, here I am as a, as a, as a teacher, but I'm also seeing it from a parent.

**Hope Gresser 08:57**

Yeah.

**Lee Foster 08:58**

And so, you know, on the, the teaching side of things, you know, we, we certainly wanted to provide them with meaningful work, right? The students needed it to be meaningful and engaging work. There were some parents that said, keep sending it, we want, we want more, we want more. And there were some parents that were, that were overwhelmed by that. And, and I can understand that. I mean, I have one case where there was a, a family of mom and dad with four kids. Dad was working from home, mom was laid off. And there was one computer in the house and dad needed to, to work remotely. And so, you know, that was there was some difficulties and just the logistics of, okay, it's great to work from home, but do we need internet? Do we need- how do we get them pen and paper packages if we're doing things like that? How do we do that safely? remaining in contact? So what I found was that a lot of teachers were working beyond that, you know, they're working in the evenings because you know, in

this case, dad had the computer during the day. So all the teachers that I talked to, I would say, well, they all, they all worked harder, if, if that makes, you know, I won't say harder, they worked longer days than if they were in the classroom. The other big part of it, too, is that if you, you know, so when I, when I plan a lesson, my lesson plan often has just talking points. And, and if someone else looks at it, you know, they can understand it, but, but I have my way of doing things, right. So I have my talking points. But then when a teacher is to send something home, you don't have those talking points. So you know, you're literally typing out what you would say. And so because of that, a lot of these, these, these packages going home were long winded almost, if that makes sense?

**Hope Gresser 10:53**

Mhm.

**Lee Foster 10:53**

And so that was also kind of stressful for, for people that whether it's parents or students that, that see this big, thick package, when really, that would have been half an hour of actual me teaching you that. But I have to type it all out. And here's this giant package, right? So that's, that could also be overwhelming too. So I mean, you know, students, parents, and staff, a teaching staff all did the best they can. We have wonderful educational assistants EA's. And I mean, a big part of it, too, is students with additional needs and, and students that normally have helped from an EA, you know, not having that help, right? Or, you know, a lot of one on one time from it with a teacher and student no longer having that. But then the worst case is where I have student, I have a student who is a selective mute and, and chooses not to talk to adults. And but on this online presence. I mean, we're chatting back and forth. And you know, she was talking to me, with my camera off, she didn't want to see my face. But, but her camera was on and we're talking back and forth. And so it was I mean, it was the first time I heard her voice, it was incredible! It was really pretty cool. So, so I mean, the, the, I can see using some of these elements of technology, going down the line using it in the, in the, you know, in the classroom once things open up again.

**Hope Gresser 12:21**

Cool.

**Lee Foster 12:22**

Yeah, it was neat.

**Hope Gresser 12:24**

Yeah, you mentioned that you're also a parent doing this. So how, how is that having a very small child who was in kindergarten and doing that kind of at home education now?

**Lee Foster 12:37**

Yeah, well, I think, you know, thi-this being his first year in school, I think next year is going to be the real shocker where, where now because he because he was in halftime- Halftime kindergarten, so he'll be going full time for grade one. And it doesn't end in March, right? So, so I think that's going to be a bit of a shocker. But I mean, September is going to be a shock for everybody. You know, when, when we all go back to, to work in school. So it is what it is that way. The you know, it was this- now luckily my

wife's a nurse, right, S\so she works shift work. So the days that she was off during the day, she would take, you know, primary teaching role of my, my son, and then I would, I did, I did, you know, any of these activities or things that would then carry on, I would work with them after, after I was done working on line with my students. So I think you know, having her home, doing most of the, the schoolwork was a great thing. I think if I was a teacher working from home, and I had a student, like, like, my son was a student, it would be really quite difficult because I wouldn't be able to give him the attention he would need until you know, 3:30 or whenever I was done with my students, but then again, because, you know, I was having meetings with students at different times of the day. You know, maybe at 10 o'clock, I, I was free so I would do a quick meeting with or I would do a quick activity with my son. But then at 5:30 I would do, I would be online with my students. So it's this back and forth. You know, but you know, everyone, everyone adjusted their schedule to so it all worked out that way. I think, it, if you had a parent working like I was a parent working from home and then Tanya was working shift work away from the home. If both of us were working from home or I was a single parent working from home and homeschooling would have been would would not have worked. It was you know, the timing and you just can't, you, you can't do it right, right? In my mind at least.

**Hope Gresser 12:49**

Okay. Right. So you mentioned going back, what are the plans there?

**Lee Foster 15:07**

Well, so our division has come up with, with kind of three levels of-

**Hope Gresser 15:14**

Mhm.

**Lee Foster 15:14**

I don't even know if danger or whatever, three, three levels. And then our province has given us the okay to go with level one. And so, level one is basically as near to a regular September as you could get, there might be more hand washing the desks might be a little bit spread apart. But it's pretty well status quo. With the odd, you know, staggered in the hallways, maybe situation where there's just less people, you, you adjust the schedule says less people. Level two would be what they called cohorting, which is basically many small groups of students. So then, you know, there would be a class of, let's say, 10, or 15. I don't know how big a cohort would be. But then they would all be together. So you'd have you know, they would, they would have a different lunchtime, they were at a different recess time. So instead of mixing large groups of students, you have the small cohorts kind of stuck together. And then level three would be the, you know, the remote learning, which was the online you know, using technology to do things online. I think our high schools are doing they have some, some kind of homeschooling option, but I don't know too much about what, what they're doing exactly. So yeah, we're going to head as far as I know, as of today, we're going ahead with level one opening of schools in September.

**Hope Gresser 16:52**

So you... A little birdie told me you were making face shields. So do you want to talk a little bit about that?

**Lee Foster 17:03**

Sure. So the industrial Arts Department, and I guess some of our suppliers, we have 3D printers. And so the Industrial Arts Department and you know, the division was on board, they supported us with and the supplier supported us with some with some materials to take 3D printers home. And so I set up a 3D printer in my basement in my little workshop here and 3D printed these, these face shields. That was basically it went around the back of the head and in the front. And then there would be a clear piece of plastic that would be put on leader. So there's just the mount went around the back of the head around the ears and over in and then you know, the, the clear plastic would go in the front. And so that was a bit of an organized thing through the division. And then we also made we nicknamed them ear savers. I'm not sure if there's a formal name, but these little hooks that go in the back of your, they hold instead of the masks holding around the ears they clip in the back. So it just prot- keeps your ears from getting pulled all day. So we made a ton of those and then ship those off too.

**Hope Gresser 18:14**

Where did they go to where did they get shipped off to? Do you know?

**Lee Foster 18:17**

The face shields, I don't know. The division collected them. And then it was part of the sponsorship with the supplier. I don't I don't I don't know the exact you know, place that got them. But the ear savers I sent with my wife to Health Science Center in Winnipeg, and then so she just basically, you know, we bagged them up so that they were kind of you know, known to be clean. And then she put a little sign on the on the staff room table that said take one and and sure enough, you know, by the time she went for lunch, it would, they would be all gone. So that was good. I know some some people donated them to nursing homes and some other teachers gave them to you know, just, you know, clin- like pers- like, like small clinics like family doctors offices and things. There was one, one fellow that donated a few to 7/11 There was a clerk that he was kind of just chums with that was having difficulties with the face with the masks and it fitting around his turban. So it worked out to have these these clips that kind of, you know, kind of kept them out of his... You know, give them some relief there. Hm. So that the the ear savers were kind of you know, you, you you, you know you're on your own basically for that, but the face shields were more organized. You know, they went to some location and they were divvied out or whatever I don't know.

**Hope Gresser 19:46**

So how is Tanya? How is working in healthcare, right now?

**Lee Foster 19:51**

What does that look like? Well, you know what she said, you know, all the protocols in place and things like that. She said she's more likely to get COVID going grocery shopping, then she would be at the hospital. So at the beginning, it was a little scary. Everyone, I mean, everyone was on edge, it's just it was a new thing. It was scary. No one knew what to do. Supplies were kind of short, there was rumors that supplies were going to be shorted. You know, it was, you know, being strategic with with producing waste. So, you know, gloves and masks and things like that they were, they were a hot commodity. So, you know, you know, you just have to be smart with how you use them and and try to reduce waste.

And so now it's it's, you know, it's basically the new normal, right? All of you know, as far as all patients are assumed to have COVID, even if they don't, if they go in for a sprained toe, they're assumed to have COVID. So it's just, you know, in the hospitals, there's no there's no guests allowed. It's just the patient's. Originally, all of the hospital and all the different wards were shut down except for, they're only open to for inpatients. But for outpatients, we had cancer care and dialysis. And so she's a dialysis nurse. So she was seeing patients from, you know, all walks of life, and then it coming and going, right. And so that was a bit that had some elements of stress to it, whereas the other departments, they, you know, you were, if you were an inpatient, you were there and like, you live there, right. So, you didn't have that other, and there was no guests. So, you know, so there wasn't that kind of that heightened fear of having people coming and going. But yeah, now it's just the new normal. And, you know, you just, you just, there's like, a self screening thing that she does before she goes to work. You know, if you just, you know, this is the new normal, right? Yeah, she's, she's full blown face shield mask. Here, you know, her, she has a, like a beanie that goes over her hat or over her hair, you know, the gowns and the whole bit, it's so it's, you know, you're almost donning a spacesuit to go to work.

**Hope Gresser 20:26**

So when she comes, like, does she take it off at the hospital? Or does she take it off when she gets home? And...

**Lee Foster 22:29**

Yeah, so you know, she has caps and stuff that she wears, she has her scrubs that she wears the face shields and masks, they stay at work. And then she has like, in her car, she has this little, you know, this little box of like her shoes and, and some other things that she just would prefer to not bring into the house, right? So so she has a little bit in her box that she kind of keeps as a you know, little mini quarantine.

**Hope Gresser 22:56**

So you're in a bit of a unique situation in that your whole extended family, your sister and your parents live on the same street as you. So and and your mom, my aunt has a respiratory condition. So if you want to talk a little bit about, you know, you guys seeing each other 24/7. Before and how that's changed, if at all?

**Lee Foster 23:23**

Yeah, well, I think I mean, so yeah, I know, some so my, my, my mom and dad were our, our primary daycare for for both my boys. And my mom said that with her respiratory issues, she has COPD, right. So with her respiratory problem, she doesn't feel that having our kids around is the safest thing. Because, you know, my son's in, you know, would be in schools, I would be in schools, and my wife's a nurse. So she's in the hospital, right? So you think of like, we're all in these different germ factories that, you know, that could that could get to her. And you know, and, you know, I with with COVID being, you know, having respiratory concerns, it's it is everyone is worried about that, right? So, that's impacted us in that they're no longer available for childcare. But, you know, it's not a, I don't want to say it's a bad thing. We, we understand that, you know, like, health first safety first, right? And so and then with me working from home that worked out and Tanya was able to pick up a lot more night shifts, so that we were able to arrange our schedules around for, for childcare. So that it worked out. But just for like,



seeing are seeing us socially, it actually is probably pretty good because we live so close. You know, we have to keep our six feet, right? So just as to you know, I'm in the backyard and I see my sister and my brother in law walk past. And we just say hi. And we, you know, we make small talk over the fence. It's not, you know, it's no different than it was before. Now that it's summer, you know, we're lucky that my parents have a pool. So, you know, we basically go to my parents backyard every day, they stay six feet away, we stay six feet away from each other, you know, they're on the deck sitting, you know, in a lawn chair, and we're in the water swimming. So, you know, I really, when it was wintertime, and COVID was new, and everyone was hunkered down. I could see that being, that was difficult, right? I mean, Mother's Day was over you know, Skype, right? And so, this, like, here, we are two houses down from each other, and you can't see, you know, you can't see your mom on Mother's Day. But so we're doing the Skype thing, you know, for two houses away from each other, right? So I think, you know, with, you know, life now, in the summer, people are kind of like, you know, people are going for walks, and they're out and about and things like that. So everyone's keeping their distance, but you're still outside. And I think that's the thing we, you know, we kind of all agreed that we're no one sharing food. No one is, you know, you keep your distance we don't we don't go in each other's houses. So if you have to use the bathroom, then you we walk home, and we use the bathroom that our own house. So I guess we are pretty lucky that way that we live so close that, you know, instead of going to the bathroom of my parents house, I just walk home, it's no big deal. So, you know, so that's pretty good.

**Hope Gresser 26:33**

So what's gonna happen childcare wise, with your younger son when everyone's back at school and work?

**Lee Foster 26:41**

Yeah, well, that's still kind of up in the air. I think, you know, I don't know what my assignment is next year. So I don't know if I know that the schools are open and I know- but but I don't know if it's just a priority, again, as numeracy and literacy. So I'm not sure where the industrialized teachers are going to be. I also my mother in law, she has volunteered to watch the kids a couple of days a week. And then with Tanya working shift work, I think it all should work out because, you know, I'll come home, she'll leave for work. If there's any overlap then my mother in law might fill in, fill in the void there. So, but again, there's just a lot up in the air right now, right? So no one really knows what September is gonna look like.

**Hope Gresser 27:34**

Shifting gears a little bit.

**Lee Foster 27:36**

Mhm.

**Hope Gresser 27:36**

What does a typical day look like right now? And how is it different from before? We've touched it on it, but sure.

**Lee Foster 27:44**

I'm on holidays right now, right? So you know, just, you know, I guess if you were to compare my summer holidays now versus my summer holidays last year, you know, our, our trips are more local, like we're going camping locally, right? As opposed to abroad. You know, I, it's funny, because we don't, we don't go to restaurants anymore. We used to do that a fair bit. And things like, I know with my kids, it's, you know, they're asking questions like, Well, why can't we go get a Slurpee at 7/11. And, you know, things like that. But, you know, it, that's they're just, it's now their new normal that we just don't do that anymore. But last year, we would go for slurpees or we would, you know, go for ice cream or things like that. So that's kind of, you know, we don't do that as much anymore. When I was at work, or like, you know, a few months back when school is still on, it was a big adjustment, because my day used to be, you know, going to a woodshop and preparing you know, materials for students, and then greeting students and teaching lessons and all that good stuff, marking and you know, everything in the school building, and then the, and then, and then it turned into remote learning, which was, you know, just the just me clocking away on a computer, which is a lot less fun than building stuff with kids, right? So well, it's different, I shouldn't say is less fun, but it's just, you know, so that was a, that was a fairly big adjustment. There's also the, the kind of, there, there's this like this. This, this kind of, like, random stress in the air, if that makes sense?

**Hope Gresser 27:45**

Mhm.

**Lee Foster 27:51**

Where, you know, and sometimes you don't even remember it, like, you just you don't you just think oh, this is my life. And then all of a sudden, you see somebody wearing a mask or something like that. And you're thinking oh, man, you're right. Oh, yes, that's what's happening. Or you know, you know, just like waiting in line for something. And the line is wrapped up around the store because everyone has to keep their six feet you know, and you drive past a grocery store or something. You're like, Oh, my goodness, there's you know, there's this line that's through the parking lot what's happening here? But then oh yeah, that's right, we got to keep our distance. So you know, sometimes you forget about it and sometimes you know, then you get you just get these. These Oh, yeah moments, right? I remember this one time. It was right around. I think it was actually the Friday before school closed. And I was listening to CBC News on the radio as I was driving to the school. And it was just doom and gloom, right? I mean, it was, you know, it wasn't very good. So I changed the radio station. And I put it to a rock station that we had. And sure enough, it was there, they're spouting doom and gloom too. So I was like, oh, this is a bummer. So I changed the radio station to another channel that had like classic rock or whatever it was hoping that I'd hear some music now. And sure enough, it was doom and gloom. So I turned the radio off. And I was like, okay, well, I'm gonna be honest, I'm feeling kind of bummed out, the radios off, I stopped at a red light. And I look over and I see these, these three construction workers they were they were repairing the roadway. And they're, you know, helmet and all that. So one construction worker bent over to pick something up that he had dropped. And another guy jumped on his back and started giving it like forcing a piggyback on him. And so I thought to myself, You know what, this is exactly what I need right now, as you're watching these knuckleheads piggyback around. So it's kind of you know, so on one hand, you hear the you have these, like, you know, this kind of like underlying stress, doom and gloom. But then on the other hand, all of a sudden, you have these weird, wonderful things that happen and you're like, oh, yeah, you know, this is, this-

**Hope Gresser 31:32**

We're gonna be okay, for a little bit.

**Lee Foster 31:33**

It's gonna be okay. Yeah, like your, you know, my aunt, your mom, you know, she made some nice masks and sent them to to my family. Like, how thoughtful is that? Right? And so like, all of a sudden, you have these, like, you know, doom and gloom on the radio, but then, Oh, damn, this is okay. There's a lot of a lot of bad, but a lot of good comes from it, too. You know?

**Hope Gresser 31:52**

You and your family sent out a very nice card.

**Lee Foster 31:55**

Yes, yes. yeah, yeah. Well, you know what?

**Hope Gresser 31:57**

That's like a holiday card, but for COVID.

**Lee Foster 32:00**

Like a COVID holiday card? Yeah, with the pictures and so on it. Yeah, yeah. Well, you know, it's, it's all yeah, it's all. What do you do? Right? It's all part of it. So.

**Hope Gresser 32:11**

You mentioned shopping. So who's doing the shopping right now? And how often do you guys go? And has that changed at all? Or is it stayed pretty constant?

**Lee Foster 32:20**

Well, originally, grocery shopping was, like Tanya did 95% of the grocery shopping. And then when COVID first kind of came into play, we switched to like, like a car delivery servi-like, you know, like the, the bringing our to your car, right? And we because we live so close to my parents and sister, we kind of coordinated that too. So we would do, you know, like, oh, yeah, I'm going to Walmart and I'm getting it delivered, what do you want to add on the grocery list? Right? And so we did that. And then, you know, things kind of got more and more lax. And then we just kind of just regularly go grocery shopping. I think. I guess a big difference is that we're kind of more mindful of if we always went to Costco, but now we're buying, like, we're just buying more toilet paper, and we're buying more bigger ba-you know, bigger bags of flour, and like, you know, things like that, where we're just kind of, you know, more mindful of the, the bulk and and why that, you know, it's nice to have a bit of a pantry stocked and, and kind of things like that, right? So I think. Yeah, I mean, Tanya still does the majority of the grocery shopping. And it, it's partly because of her being a shift worker. So you know, she could go she goes at nine o'clock at night.

**Hope Gresser 33:47**

Mhm.

**Lee Foster 33:48**

And, you know, it's usually quiet, and stuff like that, right? So that works out well, too. And then, you know, I go grocery shopping whenever we need to, and I'm not saying I don't go but she does majority of the shopping, yeah. Yeah, so I think I mean, and also too, I've noticed that it's funny, because we have, like we have you know, our, we have an idea of how much we spend on entertainment. And then we have an idea on how much we spend on groceries. And so our grocery, our entertainment budget has gone down. But our grocery budget has gone up and they've also they basically kind of equal each other out. So I think our you know, we're having more fun cooking at home, right? Like, you know, we might have, you know what, like, a really like a fancy steak dinner on a Tuesday or just see what I mean? Like, like so we're able to kind of, you know, our meals have stepped up quite a bit, which is nice. I mean, but what would have been at a restaurant or something like that is now you know, a nice meal at home that way. And it's also funny too, because now now restaurants and places are kind of opening up and you know, we're kind of like scoffing at the idea of paying premium. You know, well, I can make a better meal for way less just at home. So. So, you know, it's kind of a funny thing that's come around that way too.

**Hope Gresser 35:17**

If you were writing a history book, or making an exhibit about this era in time, what would you include?

**Lee Foster 35:26**

Oh. You know? That's a good question. I think, you know, a part of me alwa-whenver, whenever I, I think of exhibits, or I think of museums or whatever, I often think of the extremes, right? I think of, you know, the extreme, wonderful things that happen, or the extreme, awful things that happen. But, you know, I kind of feel like I'm living this kind of, like, I don't really have any extremes. I mean, I, you know, like, I haven't had any, you know, knock on wood, I haven't had any deaths. close to me, and, you know, I haven't, I haven't won 649, you know on the other end, right? So, so I don't really see the extremes. But so, I think like, if you were to have a true museum exhibit, it would be the average everyday life of a person, right? And, you know, we were joking, before the average everyday life of my life now, is getting excited about the neighbor having a garage sale, right? So, so these little, you know, these little successes where, you know, like, my, you know, my, my, my grass in my yard has never looked this good. My garden has never been this tended, you know, my kids play in the backyard more than going out and doing the, you know, the big, you know, like, they're not signed up for swimming lessons, and they're not signed up for, you know, all of these, you know, these big high dollar things, right? We're kind of just playing in the backyard, and we're swimming in my parents pool. And, you know, we're gardening and we're doing these kind of, I want to see more wholesome things, right? And so it's kind of, you know, I don't know how you would it, I almost feel like we've, we've kind of like, taken a few steps back. And that should be celebrated. And I don't know if it would be because I think we like that's not, you know, that's not the sexy piece of the museum exhibit with me with my nice lawn and my neighbor having a garage sale, right? Like people want, you know, you want that. You know

**Hope Gresser 37:35**

Death and gore or-

**Lee Foster 37:36**

Exactly, yeah that death toll or whatever.

**Hope Gresser 37:38**

Someone standing up for.

**Lee Foster 37:39**

Yeah, yeah. And I mean, as I say, you know, like, on paper, my wife's a nurse, right? So your frontline, frontline worker and things like that. And there's no doubt that they're not working extra hard. There's no doubt that they're not stressed out and, and things like that, but, but as Tanya said, you know, she's now feeling like, she wouldn't, she's more likely to get COVID to go to the grocery store than she would at work. I think, you know, this underlying stress, she said it best, she said that her and her colleagues were going through what they called, she called it PreTSD. So it's like, you know, it's not, you have the symptoms of post traumatic stress. But it hasn't happened yet. Because everyone's worried about this, like flooding of hospitals, and, and all these terrible things that could happen in a hospital. But it hasn't happened yet, right? And it has happened in other cities and things like that. I mean, don't get me wrong, but we're lucky we haven't experienced those things. So, but, but everyone's aware of it, and everyone is just high stress. And she said, You know, there's times where she sees a colleague just staring off at a wall, like just, you know, just it's, it's sad, like, they're, you know, they're just high levels of stress that way, right? So, you know, the, the level of stress in the air is certainly something to, to put for the history books. There's also how different countries and different governments are dealing with it. You know, as Canadians, we're always, we're always comparing ourselves to Americans, right? And I think we did a wonderful job, if you compare it to the Americans this time. I know. You know, Trudeau whether you like him or not, or whatever, whatever your political beliefs are, he stuck, you know, he had a clear definition of what he wants to do. And that was that all Canadians are going to, you know, basically be as safe or as healthy as they can be, and that they shouldn't worry about losing their job. And, and that's like that was that's the line in the sand. There's no ifs, ands, or buts about or buts about it, right? So I think, you know, that would be an interesting thing to add to the history books on what politicians and things would do differently or what you know how they handled it. Yeah, I mean, you know, what's my everyday life right? I think, I think I keep thinking back to like World War Two, where you hear, you know, and this is, you know, clearly, you know, you know much smaller scale, right? Obviously, but I keep hearing I think of like, you know, like the the women's auxiliary unit of sewing or knitting socks to send overseas or, or, you know, they're donating pots and pans for, for the war effort or something like that. And it's funny, because you- I'm all you know, everyone's doing their part, right? Everyone's kind of chipping in and you're doing your archiving it, I mean, this, it's all pretty incredible stuff, right? And so it's neat that, you know, everyone in their own unique way is coming up with these different ways to kind of, you know, you know say fight COVID, if you want to call it that, but, you know, it also gives people a sense of purpose and belonging, and, and, you know, a reason to wake up in the morning. And, you know, I remember when this all first happened, you know, it'd be three or four days, and I haven't shaved, and I'm like, you know, what, I'm gonna start my day off, right. So, you know, I think a big part of it, too, is just you have those routines, right? And, and, you know, there's a lot to say, for having a purpose to get out of bed every morning. And that's important, right?

**Hope Gresser 41:11**

For the record, my brother has still not shaved since all this began.

**Lee Foster 41:15**

What's his beard like?

**Hope Gresser 41:16**

It's probably (inaudible )about yours at this point.

**Lee Foster 41:20**

Oh, okay!

**Hope Gresser 41:20**

It's not, it's not you know.

**Lee Foster 41:23**

He's full Santa Claus, or something.

**Hope Gresser 41:27**

I know!

**Lee Foster 41:27**

That's funny, yup. Yeah, I mean, you know, everyone's

**Hope Gresser 41:32**

Yeah.

**Lee Foster 41:32**

Doing their thing, right? Yeah.

**Hope Gresser 41:34**

So anything else you wanted to have on the record?

**Lee Foster 41:39**

Um, I think I, you know, I think that they- it's interesting that I, what I noticed is that, you know, people with there's people that have strong beliefs and things, right? And I think what people don't like, is that they're being kind of told what to do. Like, they're told that they can't go to church, they're told that they can't go to school, that they can't go to work, they can't do this, they can't do that. And that, I've noticed this, put a lot of people on edge. And there are a lot of people that are fighting that and there's and its just as amped up this kind of, like, underlying stress that I was talking about. And I think it's, that's a real shame. And I get it, it's I mean, there's, there's, you know, people feel the way they feel, right? But it's almost like, there's this, us versus them, right? There's the people that are okay with wearing a mask in public. And then there's the people that are dead set against it, they want nothing to do with that. And I think that that, that division of people I don't think is cool. I, I think that that's kind of a sad thing that's come of this. But if you have the outlook, you know, like I think of all just how blessed I am, right? I

mean, I got, you know, an extra five months at home with my kids, right? I've, you know, my lawn has never looked so good. My garden has never looked so good. My you know, like, my meals are better. I'm saving money. You know, like, I think I spent a total of \$130 in gas in my car in the last five months. Like, it's just like, you know, there's less pollution. I'm riding my bike more. You know, it ju- but so these are all wonderful things. But then there's these kind of like, random nitpicky things that happen in the background where it's like, you know, oh, yeah, I have to stand outside for a little while, you know, for this lineup, right? They kind of like remind you again, right? Or the news comes on, you're like, oh, yeah, this is kind of a bummer, you know? So it's funny because, but you have to look at you have to keep keep on the bright side life, right? And just look at all the wonderful things and that's why we sent you know, a nice smiley face card, right? I mean, that was it. You know, it's not all bad. It is but it is. Que sera sera.

**Hope Gresser 44:01**

All right.