

A Personal Reflection on the Pandemic

A personal account #REL101

In early March of 2020, it was business as usual. I had a full schedule that included a 50 hour a week job, classes at Arizona State University, friends to socialize with, and of course, my family.

As the next fifty-five days (and counting) marched on, everything changed.

First, my workstation, a nice area with two large monitors, printer, and scanner was reduced to my kitchen table. There I had the luxury of no commute, but I was relegated to a small ten-inch laptop and none of the other accoutrements of my office. I realized that my breaks, often taken outside, had been taken for granted all these years. More importantly, I missed the social engagement of my colleagues and supervisor.

School work was the least impacted by the pandemic. I was already working on my curriculum online so there was little impact. I did miss having the option to study in a public forum, as all public areas become vacant.

I think the biggest change and challenge from the current two-month quarantine revolves around my family and friends. My husband and I use weekends and vacations to go to the lake, ride motorcycles, and meet friends for dinner. Birthdays and Easter rolled by without the usual gatherings and celebrations. Churches gathered online for services; a major shift from thousands of years establishing a place for worship. Social media played a larger part in my life, but there really is not a substitute for human interaction. There is an emotional gap that is lost when the interaction is two dimensional on the phone or computer via FaceTime and Zoom Meetings.

I believe that much will change once things return to “normal”. It will be commonplace to see people wearing medical masks. Social distancing (staying six feet apart) will be marked in supermarkets and malls going forward. People, homes, cars, and offices will be cleaner on a daily basis. The most positive change, hopefully, will be the inclusion and follow up on our elderly friends, family, and neighbors. Many will have similar difficulties getting out, even after the quarantine is lifted. Our newfound awareness should impact all mankind, as we work harder to take care of one another.