

Transcript of Interview with Kristine Benusa by Brice Benusa

Interviewee: Kristine Benusa

Interviewer: Brice Benusa

Date: 11/12/2020

Location (Interviewee): Arcadia, Wisconsin

Location (Interviewer):

Abstract: Brice Benusa interviews Kristine Benusa about her personal experiences during COVID-19. Kristine discusses how COVID impacted her work in the healthcare and food industry due to the challenges it caused. Kristine also shares her personal perspective on how the media covered the pandemic and how the state and federal government handled the pandemic. She also talks about the positives that came from COVID-19 and shares her opinion about what the future will look like after a vaccine comes out.

Brice Benusa 00:05

The date is 11/12/2020, and it is 3:47pm. Could you go and tell us what your name is?

Kristine Benusa 00:14

Kristine Benusa.

Brice Benusa 00:15

And if you don't mind me asking, could you share some of your demographic information like your race, ethnicity, age and gender?

Kristine Benusa 00:30

Yes. So I just did Ancestry.com., and I found out I'm 98%, probably from the Poland area. So that would make me Polish. And I'm white. And let me see, I'm a female. What else did you need to know, my age? 52.

Brice Benusa 00:58

All right, and could you give me some insights on what your daily routine consists of like involving work and home life?

Kristine Benusa 01:05

Okay, well, outside of this week, because I'm home on a COVID restriction, I typically work Monday through Friday. I usually get myself to work by eight o'clock, and work until about 4:30.

Brice Benusa 01:25

And where do you live in Wisconsin?

Kristine Benusa 01:29

Western Wisconsin, county of Trempealeau. Town of Arcadia, state of Wisconsin.

Brice Benusa 01:37

What's it like living there?

Kristine Benusa 01:39

Well, I live in the country. So I'd say it's really nice, quiet peaceful.

Brice Benusa 01:45

And we're gonna go and start off with a really broad question here. What issues have concerned you most about the COVID-19 pandemic?

Kristine Benusa 01:54

Um, I just doubt, sometimes question the information we receive through the media. I'm not sure that it's always as accurate as I would like it to be. I also wonder sometimes at the statistics that they give because we don't really have comparison statistics. So I understand there are a lot of deaths with COVID. But how many deaths do we see a year, or in the same timeframe as what we're looking at COVID when it comes to suicide, when it comes to auto accidents, when it comes to people who die from cancer? I just think it would be nice to see some of those other statistics to help put COVID into better perspective. At least [unintelligible].

Brice Benusa 02:54

Okay. And how do you get your sources of news during the pandemic? And in general?

Kristine Benusa 03:03

I'm probably mostly from TV. So CBS, NBC, FOX. I watch the news in the morning and in the evening.

Brice Benusa 03:18

Mhm. And you started pretty opinionated on your input of the media. What do you think are the important issues that the media is not currently covering?

Kristine Benusa 03:31

Well, like I said, I just think that I would like them to, to also be as concerned about other things that happen outside of COVID, especially if they're focusing on, you know, the number of deaths from COVID, why aren't we focusing on the number of deaths from suicide? I would like to see like, you know, maybe more people talking about, you know, mental health issues. And the fact that insurance right now, you know, it can be medications that are needed that aren't, aren't covered by insurance, why isn't anybody looking into this? We have free birth control, why don't we have free medications for people that need them in order to just like function basically, and get by in life? And so, I mean, I just

think that there are a lot of other social issues out there that we- the media could be looking at. I just feel like it's always COVID and that's all we talk about and also too, when, when there are like good things that happen, it's like one blurb in the media. And that's it, and we don't talk about it anymore.

Brice Benusa 04:57

[audio cuts out, unintelligible]

Kristine Benusa 05:06

I think you're cutting out.

Brice Benusa 05:08

-needing towards there being, how do I put this, or fear being instilled in the people, rather than more good?

Kristine Benusa 05:17

Well, I definitely think there is a lot of fear out there, people kind of tend to think that COVID is a death sentence, when in all reality, a lot of people get COVID and are just fine. Like myself, I had COVID; I hardly knew I had it. I mean, I might have been a little more fatigued than normal, but that was about it. I know of a lot of people that have had COVID. And, you know, some describe it as a bad cold. You have those people out there that "Oh, I lost my sense of taste and smell for a bit or I had some muscle aches." You know, for the majority of people, I don't think COVID is awful. I think that COVID is Darwinian, in the sense that it seems to be for those who have underlying health conditions, who might be older as well, it seems to target those individuals, and they seem to have more of a reaction from getting COVID than what, say a normal healthy person, would have. And so because of that small percentage who are responding to COVID, obviously, with severe symptoms that land them in the hospital, the rest of us are being forced to have all these restrictions put on us, which I really don't agree to being restricted just because you had a potential exposure, that's not a guarantee you're even going to get COVID. I get it a little bit more when it comes to if you're actually diagnosed with COVID, but again, there's so many unknowns with this. I feel like people are just taking stabs in the dark at what they should or should not do, and they really don't know.

Brice Benusa 07:09

And so you mentioned that you saw that- that you noticed a lot of people that have had COVID. So how are they reacting to the COVID-19 pandemic? How are they responding to it?

Kristine Benusa 07:22

Well, a lot of the people that I know and work with, who have had it or like it's not a big deal, they just don't think it is. For people who are older, perhaps, I mean, I see a little bit more fear from them, you know, they tend to worry and panic more in thinking that oh my gosh, if they get it, it's going to be the end for them. But I've also seen elderly people in long term care get this, and they've been

asymptomatic, and they have come through just fine. So you know, I don't know COVID is- COVID is different.

Brice Benusa 08:06

And- [audio cuts out]

Kristine Benusa 08:16

I think you may have cut out, you were saying and, and what? [no response from Brice] So I'm just gonna keep talking, because I'm not really sure what questions you had. But I'm just gonna talk maybe a little bit about my experience in managing a department. I'm in a healthcare organization with COVID and the restrictions that are placed on people, especially when it comes to exposures, it really poses a challenge with- Are you still there?

Brice Benusa 09:01

Yes.

Kristine Benusa 09:02

Okay, because like your picture disappeared. So it really poses a challenge when you're trying to staff a department with minimal- the potential for very minimal staff to be available. You can't just throw anybody like, bring them in off the street and say, "Hey, we'll coach you with what to do." Because there- there are so many things you have to go through just to get somebody hired into the workplace, pretty much buy if I need to hire someone, it's going to take me for the time I know I have a need, it's going to take about six weeks before I get that person in the door. And then we have to realize a lot of people don't understand, but it's not like your home kitchen. Um, I happen to oversee food service and so a lot of training is involved with these individuals and they need to know what they're doing. There's a lot of sanitation that's involved, so that, you know, we're careful about the food that gets sent, we don't transmit anything. It's not, it's not your normal kitchen. Again, there's big equipment that needs to be used, you need training in how to use that equipments. So when you do run into having limited staffing, there's the potential that, you know, it's really going to cause a hardship in how you feed people. And we do have, you know, contingency plans. But even those best laid plans don't always happen the way you want them to. So you still got to have key people involved, you got to have people who know how to cook. And we've been busy preparing for COVID getting worse by doing more cross training with our staff, so that they can, you know, jump in, maybe work two shifts, you know, if they're cross trained to work a couple- we can, hopefully, we've got at least half our crew so that we can depend upon those people to cover for their co-workers, when they are not able to come to work. I basically had to tell staff, that yes, you may have asked for a vacation, you may have asked for days off, it may be your weekend off, but if we have COVID staffing issues, and we're in more of a crisis mode, then we're going to be calling able bodied people in to work maybe two weeks in a row, they might have to work a 14 day stretch. We will have to look at possibly changing from having two different shifts to one shift, tightening up our meals so that you know you're gonna get breakfast a little later, you're gonna get

supper a little earlier so that people don't have to work hopefully more than a 12 hour shift. And we've talked, you know, I've had meetings with staff to discuss how we would do this, we have menus that I have reviewed, and I call them my COVID menus. And so what that involves is minimal- minimizing that meal, so you know what, you're not going to get your five course meal. For a meal, you may just get potato, a meat, and a fruit or a vegetable, and then you're probably gonna just get like milk or juice for your beverage, coffee would need to be served on the floor as people requested. Water is available, of course, in people's rooms. And right now, pretty much everybody is eating in their rooms, because we have had to limit any social dining, that can happen. So it would mean a lot of changes. And it would be very disruptive to a lot of people's lives, obviously, to spat enough if you have to stay home because of actually having COVID, let alone not being able to come to work because you've had a potential exposure. Right now at work, we do test a staff, they're concerned direct care twice a week. And so that doesn't include the dietary staff. And, you know, we kind of just go from test to test to see what's going to happen, who's going to- who's going to test positive, how are we going to fill the schedule, and I give the- I give all the credit in the world to the staff that I work with, dedicated, dedicated staff, working in an industry, the food service industry, definitely not the best paid industry in the world. And these people are really, really pitching in to help where and when needed.

Brice Benusa 13:43

Okay, so since you work in like a healthcare study, and that's what you said, COVID-19 has undoubtedly affected you in the workplace, could you kind of tell me like how it was at the start of it, and then kind of work your way up to how it is now?

Kristine Benusa 13:57

It's, it's almost kind of interesting, because at the start, I almost felt like there was more of a panic, perhaps than there is even now. You know, clinic services, we weren't seeing people for a while, very limited with who could be seen for an appointment or who couldn't and, you know, and then it sort of- things seemed to kind of subside. We also had stopped our surgical procedures. And, you know, those have resumed. Now, just this week, those are, again, are being put on hold, but initially, all of this stuff was on hold, and COVID wasn't really in our community yet. But there was just like a huge, huge panic, I think initially going in with this. And then I think as things progressed, and we saw more and more COVID in the community, you know, people saw that it wasn't necessarily a death sentence. You know, we still continued to make changes. So for example, our cafeteria, we ended up going with only 50% capacity in the cafeteria. Now we're at about 25% capacity that we allow to dine at one time, we obviously allow no self service. So, so we definitely have, you know, seen changes with COVID, as COVID has progressed. So we had a lull, I would say, and now again, I feel like we're- we're seeing that our- the area we live in is- has become rather a, a hotbed for COVID. And we are seeing more admissions. So, so that too, has, has resulted in us making some changes, you know, overall in our facility with where patients are being housed. Since we aren't, you know, seeing the clinic side as much again, because of the surge in COVID, we have actually moved beds up there where we have and keep some patients in that area, and then keeping our COVID patients separate in a separate area.

Brice Benusa 16:25

All right, so you mentioned that COVID was impacting the employment of some of your- some of the people that worked for you in your industry, how else has COVID-19 impacted the employment of those you know?

Kristine Benusa 16:39

The most people like that, I know, I mean, especially in the hospital setting, long term care setting, obviously dietary staff have to report to work. So- and we need, we need the staff we have, so we haven't eliminated staff or anything from that standpoint. There was a certain time period where we didn't serve in the cafeteria. And then we did limits with staffing hours, but nothing significant. All staffing hours have, you know, returned to normal. Let's see, but when I look at the whole facility, I would have to say that we have obviously, there are some staff who were determined, were able to do their work remotely. So those individuals, rather than being on site at work, were able to use technology, and still continue to do the majority of their work from the home setting. So there's definitely been that change, um, too, for patients that need to be seen. We've offered to be able to do, provide services over video. So there's, there's that option for- for people that never used to exist, that is definitely out there now. And, you know, a lot of people really like that they don't have to drive in for an appointment, especially if it's something that, you know, doesn't require a lot of hands on. So yeah, I mean, I have to say that, you know, there have probably been some good things that have come from COVID and increased our technology, and our ability to, you know, be seen by a provider remotely.

Brice Benusa 18:28

So do you believe that COVID-19 has led towards your, your place of employment, having more of a better grasp on technology, utilizing better technology procedures,

Kristine Benusa 18:40

Um, I would definitely say there- that the technology has improved a lot. I mean, there's a lot, a lot more done, than there ever used to be. I mean, now, instead of going to a meeting in a room, you know, with a bunch of people sitting close together, we will usually have meetings from our office, and everybody just dials in, and, you know, we, we talk, and we meet virtually, basically so, um, that's definitely, you know, helped as far as care quality care goes. I do not think that this has in any way deterred from the quality of care. If you do it- if you see a patient in person or maybe on a Zoom- over Zoom or Skype or something, you're still able to talk to that patient, see that patient. Um, it all depends. I mean, not every visit is, is suitable for that. But you know, some are, and those aren't- are definitely not compromised. And I do think too, it actually is helpful to people because maybe they have difficulty driving in for an appointment. Um, so it does, you know, help provide them the ability to see a provider without having to go very far from their home. And the downside, there are people who don't have that kind of technology available to them in their homes, they don't have the connectivity, especially those living in the rural

areas, it's still struggle. And they just may not have the the tech savvy to do it in any way without help from someone else. So, you know, there's definitely drawbacks as well.

Brice Benusa 20:27

So from your personal standpoint, how do you think COVID-19 is affecting those and situations of being economically disadvantaged?

Kristine Benusa 20:39

Well, definitely people who are disadvantaged economically, might be those individuals who don't have a computer in their home. Um, you know, maybe not everybody even has a smartphone, you know. Those people, it's definitely going to be hard for. I really feel for parents of young children who need to learn virtually, and then they, if they don't have the capacity to do that, they don't have the technology in their home, or, you know, let's just face it, not every parent is prepared to, to be at home with their child, supervising them, making sure they're getting, you know, online when they need to in order to complete virtual learning. It's definitely a challenge, and I think too, the students are becoming socially isolated, and that's going to open up a whole new can of worms, where people are going to lose some of their their skill sets with how to socialize, how to be in a group setting when everything is being so done so remotely.

Brice Benusa 21:51

Alright, so I'm gonna have you go and actually talk more about how you feel like COVID-19 is affecting people's mindsets, their mental and their physical health, could you kind of give your input there for that?

Kristine Benusa 22:02

So I do believe that there is definitely a strong tie with emotional health and well being when it comes to COVID. Especially for people who, who now find themselves isolated, having to work remotely. You know, some of these people may live alone. I don't know, sometimes too much time with your family too, can, can be not good. You know, we're all used to our routines, and COVID has definitely impacted a lot of people's routines. I mean, if you have somebody who's had an exposure, and then you have to limit where are you, you know, basically places that you go for a couple of weeks, that's a problem. Also, just the fact that when you do go out, businesses have had to have so many limitations on, you know, them with capacity for serving how many people can sit next to each other. You know, you go to a place and it's like, you have to, have to remember, and of course, we're all getting better at this, but to wear your face mask when you walk in. Did you bring your face mask? I mean, it's like, it's like, forget-like forgetting your phone. I mean, if you get too far without your phone, you're like, "Oh my god, I forgot my phone." Well, now you're like, "Oh my god, I forgot my face mask." And you're like, "I can't go into this store, or I can't go into this restaurant without my face mask." So um, I guess, you know, obviously, we're all more aware and it's not fun. There's been restrictions. Certain other places, I know from the physical aspect, people that work out at gyms, that's been a hardship and then for a while the

gyms were closed. And these people are you know, they developed good routines. And it's like now, you know, it's so difficult; they don't know is your gym gonna stay open, is their gym gonna close? So physically, I think that, you know, for people, it's also something that's impacting, but probably more so the mental health issues that people are facing, because they can't get together with their friends and groups, and there's so many limitations out there. It's just, you know, and for college students, too, it's so hard. Your classes aren't always in person. And, you know, let's face it, not all instructors out there, were prepared to deal with teaching virtually; they're not, and some of them, quite frankly, are not doing a very good job at it. This is new, I get it, but the same time, these college students are paying a lot for their education, and they deserve to be taught and taught well. And when you have certain instructors that just basically, maybe they're just not able to, to do this. I mean, they haven't had training, right? So some obviously are better at it than others, but definitely not good.

Brice Benusa 25:24

So going back on to how COVID-19 is affecting people, I'm interested to hear what do you think- what do you think is happening during COVID-19 with people's diets?

Kristine Benusa 25:35

Well, I think that probably more people are eating at home, because they're afraid to go to restaurants, and because of the limited capacity for seating and such, um, so you know, maybe people are cooking more at home and making healthier food choices, because of it. I mean, I can hope so. I- you know, you've got more free time on your hands because you got run around here, there and everywhere else. So hopefully people are, you know, trying to have some fun in the kitchen, this is what I do. You know, try new recipes, try to focus on, you know, having some fun while you- while you're in the kitchen. Of course, I imagine there's some people out there who think, "Oh, I have no cooking skills," and so they're going to eat a lot of processed foods. Hopefully, there is less of that because also, when it comes to COVID, it seems like the healthier the individual, the better the outcome. And I would hope that perhaps would also have influenced some people to maybe change the way they eat and work towards a healthier meal pattern. You know, people who are overweight, they, they definitely are more at risk, now is a great time, a great time to try to, you know, focus on healthy eating. And, you know, just doing that alone could, could help a person lose some weight.

Brice Benusa 26:59

Alright, so diverging away from this topic. Um, I'm going to ask you, how do you feel like government officials around the state, federal level, etc, have responded to this outbreak?

Kristine Benusa 27:12

Well, you know, I think they've responded a lot with, you know, restricting crowd size, mandating mask usage in certain areas. You know, they're, they're following the lead of those above them, obviously. I mean, I don't think they're, I mean, there's only so much that they can do. So, other than, you know, basically, the restrictions. That's kind of the main focus, you know, and, and asking people to, you

know, be careful in the group settings, even like, for the upcoming holidays, for Thanksgiving, Christmas limiting, you know, your, your get together size to immediate family. Um, you know, they're offering encouragement to people, but you know, there's not a lot they can really do.

Brice Benusa 28:10

Do you feel like there's an area of improvement that the state that the government really should have taken towards COVID, that wasn't taken?

Kristine Benusa 28:20

Not really. I mean, I think they did the best they could, knowing what they knew.

Brice Benusa 28:26

All right, and uilding onto there, do you feel like the outbreak could have been handled in any way, shape or form differently?

Kristine Benusa 28:33

Not really. No, I mean, COVID will run its course the best we thing we can probably do is hope for a vaccine. Other than that, I think even with wearing the face masks, avoiding the large get togethers, you're still seeing what's happening with the spread of COVID. Honestly, I don't think it's making a big difference. So until we get that vaccine out, I think this, this is our new norm.

Brice Benusa 29:05

And going from that, do you feel- well, why do you- why do you feel like, personally, that the COVID numbers, even though we're doing all of this, all the safety proce- procedures and stuff, why do you feel like it's not making that much of an impact?

Kristine Benusa 29:19

Because I don't really think that anything we do is going to stop the spread. I think it's going to have to run its course. People are gonna have to get it, they're gonna have to deal with it. So, you know, for most people will be fine. Yes, there's gonna be that percentage out there who won't be; there's going to be the outliers who should be and won't be. But there's, you know, it's just the way it is. I don't think we could have done anything differently. I- it's in the air. I don't think that the masks we're wearing are preventing all of- all of the, the airborne particles from entering or from exiting our, our masks. So, you know, unless we were to have complete PPE, I mean, face guards and, N-95's, and I- people just can't- all people can't walk around wearing that stuff. We can't live in a bubble. And that's basically what we'd have to do in order to really, really avoid.

Brice Benusa 30:27

So the- it sounds like you had some problems with the masks, um, could you go on explain what some potential side effects of using the masks might be or downfalls to them?

Kristine Benusa 30:37

I wouldn't say I had any problems with wearing the mask. Who likes to wear the mask, I don't know, maybe if you have bad teeth, but I definitely, you know, just feel like it's a restriction. It does, it does impair your breathing. You definitely do not feel like you're getting the air, or the quality of air that you get when you're not wearing a mask. It's really hard to wear a mask when you also have to wear glasses. And then you have to deal with your glasses getting fogged up. And I do believe that wearing a mask does cause difficulty with people hearing what you have to say. So you know, you have people who are hearing impaired, and then they're trying to listen to somebody talking through their masks when they have may have been taught to be a lip reader. So now you've taken that ability away from people who already have a disability, because everyone has to wear these masks. And then you think about people with dementia, and they can't remember from, you know, one minute to the next. They don't know why on earth you people are wearing masks, it probably frightens them every single time they see you. You know, no one can see your, your smile. I mean, social communication is really difficult when you're wearing a mask. I mean, I can only imagine how difficult it would be in a time like this to to be single and dating. I mean, oh my gosh, it's like impossible. So there's lots of reasons why these masks, in my mind, are just not, not doing enough to be worth the efforts. Of course, I know there's a lot of people that think differently. But I know a lot of people who wear their masks all the time, and they still get COVID.

Brice Benusa 32:41

Okay, and tying together what what with what you're saying that it makes it difficult for people to communicate, tying that into also people being isolated, people being self-isolated, do you see any long term impacts that this could have, at maybe the college level, the personal level?

Kristine Benusa 33:02

Hopefully not long term impacts. I mean, I think it'll help us better appreciate when our lives were a lot less restricted. I mean, sometimes you don't realize how good you had it until you've had to go through a hardship in life. And this is a hardship for a lot of people. We have taken many things for granted that we now realize, you know, hey, you just can't. I mean, so many things have been taken for us, from us. So, so I guess it's gonna give us a different perspective when this is over. I think we're going to have a lot more appreciation for you know, our freedom to not wear a mask, when and if that comes here, hopefully sooner than later. And just the freedom to go places and to be able to attend group activities without fear of getting sick.

Brice Benusa 34:03

Okay, and then also, I wanted to bring the conversation back to some of the earlier points that we made in terms of the government and politics. And one of the questions that I wanted to ask you was, Do you feel like COVID-19 had a significant impact on the- on the whole- on the whole presidential election this year?

Kristine Benusa 34:24

Oh, yeah, I mean, it was obviously a focal point. I mean, for whatever reason, you know, they argued that the Democrats could have done better than the Republicans. I really don't see how. All I know is, is when Trump was trying to, you know, shut, shut down things with China, he was being called a xenophobe. And so obviously, Democrats weren't on board with him doing it at that time, but then later on, it was like, "Oh, you should have done that sooner. We would have done it sooner." So you know, it's kind of crazy. But, you know, they're, they're- each side thinks they could have done better. I honestly don't think either side could have done better than the other.

Brice Benusa 35:10

Okay, so you, so you feel like in general though that COVID definitely had a lot of impacts on the elections on the- on the political climate of the U.S.?

Kristine Benusa 35:19

Yes, it did. Although I believe it was unfounded, even though they tried to use it to their advantage.

Brice Benusa 35:32

Okay, and now for our last question. So COVID- so you said that COVID has affected people that you know. Could you give an example of how it's affected the family life for you, how it's maybe changed some of your family members routines, what they usually do, that sort of deal?

Kristine Benusa 35:51

Well, um, I guess I couldn't look at my daughter who still lives with me. And she had been, you know, she also works in the health care facility, had been working just CNA, but had been working the activity department regular hours, like eight o'clock to four o'clock or something. Well, her hours got changed, she got pulled out of that to be a CNA again. Her hours are- they vary a lot. So she could go in for a 6:30am shift and work, she could go in for a 2:00pm shift and work. You know, sometimes she doesn't know when you know, it's not set in stone, nothing is set in stone anymore, you kind of- you know, you might have to work more than one weekend in a row. Um, so pretty much don't have a very set schedule. So and as a health care worker, I think that's kind of what a lot of healthcare workers are experiencing. As they have staff shortages, they need to pull more and more people in. She actually already had COVID once, and I understand you can perhaps get it a second time. But for that reason, she also was pulled to work into the unit with COVID people because they're like she already had it. So um, you know, it's- when you're employed by your employer, you pretty much got to do as your employer says, right? For my daughter, my other daughter, who's a school- who actually is a high school English teacher, she, of course, is teaching her classes virtually. She happens to be pretty tech savvy. So I believe she's given that you know, good effort and is doing a great job. But, you know, she's not, not in the classroom with a bunch of her students. She still has to, I think, go into the school maybe once or twice a week, but that's about it. And then, um, as far as my husband goes, it hasn't really impacted his

work. He's self employed. So that's been fine. And as far as my work goes, it hasn't, to this point, impacted a great deal, other than the fact that I have a lot more headaches, with all of the constant change that's coming with COVID.

Brice Benusa 38:18

And what about your extended family members? Has it caused any drastic changes for them in their life? Anything on those sorts of lines?

Brice Benusa 38:27

Um, not really I mean. It seems like most of my extended family are still able to do what they always did. They have limited, you know, social gatherings. So there's not as much as that, you know, you'd have a family reunion, well, this summer, we didn't do that. You just don't have those, those big family get togethers that you once had. And then of course, there was the initial fear period, where, you know, grandparents, or like, my parents didn't want me to come visit for a while. So of course, I stayed away. Well, then, you know, of course, things calmed down, and then all of a sudden, you know, we're back, we're back to being paranoid again because of all of the the COVID surge. And, you know, having had COVID recently and been to visit my mother, she panics, she- and so she ran in three days later to get a test. She is fine, but she could still become symptomatic and get it or not. So you know, it's just, it's hard because people are, you know, they want to be with you, but yet they're afraid to be with you.

Brice Benusa 39:42

Do you feel like that this paranoia that's coming from it, do you feel like for older people that it's more of just a general fear of their own health or is it possibly influenced by the way that COVID is being presented to us by the media?

Kristine Benusa 39:57

Well, I think it's both. I mean, obviously the media that has instilled fear, because they highlight all of the outlier cases where somebody young got COVID and didn't do fine. They very seldom will talk about the numbers of people who had COVID and were asymptomatic or had very minimal symptoms. I mean, that's not what they talk about. You know, news, what makes the news is the stuff that is bad. So we want to, they tend to focus on the negative aspects. And of course, by doing that, that instills fear into people because instead of seeing it as 1% of the population, because that's all the media focuses on, is they see it as the majority of the population that that's the impact COVID is having on the majority, not, not the small 1 or 2% of individuals out there. And so there's definitely fear from the media that then feeds their own personal fear, maybe because they they know they're older, they maybe have some underlying health issues, they know they're probably a few pounds overweight, and all of those things, I'm sure are scary to think that this, you know, could possibly be the end for them.

Brice Benusa 41:17

Okay, and then we're gonna be looking towards the future here, actually. I just wanted to go and extend this for a little bit longer. So for the future of how things will look, I'm gonna, I'm just going to ask you, how do you think things will look a year from now, regardless if COVID stays or if it's gone?

Kristine Benusa 41:34

Well, I think everyone's gonna probably have access to the vaccine. So I think people are gonna get vaccinated and whether they want to or not, for some, so I think a lot of people will want that vaccine, and will get vaccinated. I think it'll become one of those vaccines that, you know, is sort of state required and everything kind of like, you know, a lot of the other vaccinations out there that your child has to have before entering school, I feel it's going to be one of those kinds of vaccines. And so pretty much everyone's going to probably need to get vaccinated, and of course, you're going to have a few people out there who, who refuse to vaccinate. Now, I'm not sure how you know, that's gonna go for them.

Brice Benusa 42:26

How do you think people are going to reply to those people who don't go and get the vaccines, in terms of, of thinking the mo- as a person or thinking them as potential danger probably to other people?

Kristine Benusa 42:40

Well, I would think if you're vaccinated, you should be relatively safe. I would think that, you know, from getting it, I would think, though, that those people who choose not to get it because they don't, you know, vaccinate for anything. Otherwise, they're just, they're going to be more at risk themselves. So the risk, I feel will be more for them, and the other people they come in contact with who are not vaccinated.

Brice Benusa 43:11

And overall, what do you feel like the most positive effects of COVID on our day to day lives, the way our society works, what do you- what do you feel like it is?

Kristine Benusa 43:21

The positive aspects of it?

Brice Benusa 43:24

Yes.

Kristine Benusa 43:26

Improved, um, probably everyone's improved some of their technological skills sets. So I feel that's been a positive. I feel it's positive that, you know, some organizations have discovered that they actually can have their employees work from home. And for some employees, this is really great. I mean, they maybe have an hour commute one way, they no longer have that. So now they have extra free time that

they didn't have before, because they don't have that commute. Some people may just find that they're more efficient working in that home setting because they can go into a room shut the door and not be bothered. They might be able to get their work done in five or six hours instead of eight hours. You know, and they'll have more time to work out and cook meals. And so I really think that the the aspect of people being able to work from home and it's not obviously everyone's not suitable to for all to do this by any means. But for those who can, that's great, it's a great COVID advantage.

Brice Benusa 44:41

All right. Well, we're gonna be ending this video then at 4:32pm. And thank you for your time.

Kristine Benusa 44:48

Yep, thank you. I hope you learned something.