

Transcript of Interview with Brittni Smith by Alisha Downs

Interviewee: Brittni Smith

Interviewer: Alisha Downs

Date: 04/03/2021

Location (Interviewee): Independence, KS

Location (Interviewer): Augusta, KS

Transcriber: This transcript has been provided by Zoom, edited by Alisha Downs.

Abstract: Brittni Smith works for Enterprise Rent-A-Car. She talks about being furloughed from her job, and what it was like for her mental and physical health during lock down. Brittni talks about how her she ate better since she had to cook at home, and how she experienced some self-discovery while off work. Brittni talks about what the COVID test was like. Brittni's in-laws were hospitalized during the summer of 2020, and she tells the interviewer what navigating the health system was like during a pandemic. The worst part was just not being able to be there for her loved ones due to visitation restrictions.

Alisha Downs 0:04

[background noise] Hello, we are here with Brittni Smith, and my name is Alisha Downs, and we are going to start our interview. First, is it okay that I record this interview?

Brittni Smith 0:15

Yes, it is.

Alisha Downs 0:17

Alright, we are going to be talking about, just mostly how you have experienced the COVID-19 pandemic. So, to start off with, where do you work, and what do you do there?

Brittni Smith 0:32

I work for Enterprise Rent-A-Car, and I am a customer service representative. So, I basically, do all the customer interactions [background noise] there at the store.

Alisha Downs 0:47

All right, did you stop working at any point because of the pandemic?

Brittni Smith 0:54

I did. My company took it pretty seriously from the get-go. There was a little bit of confusion in the beginning, of course, but my company pretty much furloughed most of the part time and... Well, basically anybody who wasn't a, a manager was put on furlough, or anybody who was willing to, to do the job which I decided to take the time.

Alisha Downs 1:27

Mhm. What was that like for you, just, not working?

Brittini Smith 1:31

Really different than, I mean because you know, working full time and then like stopping all together, and trying to figure out like how you're going to make, pay bills and do groceries and take care of things, it was really different.

Alisha Downs 1:50

I bet. How has your self-care changed, if any, during the pandemic? Especially during that time, where your life was uprooted with not being at work.

Brittini Smith 2:06

Uhm, I would say it's half better, it got half better and half worse, maybe. like that, well, I mean like on one hand, I was making meals at home, every day, I didn't go out to eat at all. So I was taking better care of myself physically on a, like a food basis, but I would say, like you know when you're at home, all the time, sometimes we'll skip a shower here or, you know you just kind of play some video games for quite a while. You know, you just kind of forget about the rest of the world, because you don't really want to interact anybody, so you kind of stay inside.

Alisha Downs 2:46

That makes sense. Have there been any, been any changes to your health this past year, mentally or physically?

Brittini Smith 2:56

I think mentally, I feel like I might have gotten better. There has been a lot of like self-discovery and self-exploration because I've had the time to do so. I've taken probably, well I don't know, maybe not, yeah besides that was kind of hard to say.

Alisha Downs 3:22

Okay. Have you received any COVID tests?

Brittini Smith 3:25

One, one.

Alisha Downs 3:27

You did?

Brittni Smith 3:28

Yeah.

Alisha Downs 3:28

Was it difficult to do like, the process of getting in to get the test, was that hard?

Brittni Smith 3:35

Well, I got mine done when I was like having a few symptoms, and I was kind of worried about it, so I went in and they gave me one. So I didn't have to stand in line or anything, but it was awful yeah, it was gross. [laughs]

Alisha Downs 3:49

Was it, did it go all the way down?

Brittni Smith 3:52

Yeah!

Alisha Downs 3:54

Yeah?

Brittni Smith 3:55

Yeah, all the way, and then they had to like spin it, and they have to do the other side, I think, and then they spin it, like ugh.

Alisha Downs 4:03

How long did it take you to get that test back?

Brittni Smith 4:07

They said they were going to have it back within like a few days, but then I didn't hear anything from anybody for like two weeks, and then I call them, and then that's what they told me no, I didn't have COVID.

Alisha Downs 4:18

Oh wow. Is there anything else, that you would like to talk about in regards to health during this pandemic?

Brittni Smith 4:28

I think that it was easily, I think that more people are taking into considerations how big of a joke the health care system is, and how much you can take into your health into own hands because obviously, it kind of seems like you're the only person who's going to, because they don't really care all that much, because they have a lot on their plate I guess.

Alisha Downs 4:53

Mhm, that's true. Do you have health insurance?

Brittni Smith 4:57

I do.

Alisha Downs 4:58

You do. Okay, I know that your in-laws, who you currently live with, have had some major health issues this year. Can you explain what it was like to navigate the health care industry during this pandemic?

Brittni Smith 5:18

It was really, uhm, annoying, I guess, because you had to [sigh] there was, even if you were, you know, if you were in the same room. Well, it was like ,you had to wear a mask all the time. There was a very specific visitation, where like only one person could go back. And so it was really hard, because you know, you know you care and you want to make sure that that person is making, you know, you want to make them feel loved and so it's really hard to kind of convey that I think it.

Alisha Downs 5:51

Did it, did it seem hard for them as well, the people who are actually sick.

Brittni Smith 5:57

I think so, because they didn't, you know they weren't able to have the full support that they could have and should have had.

Alisha Downs 6:05

Did, did either of your in-laws push off getting care because of COVID?

Brittni Smith 6:16

Well, I guess unfortunately, for the things that happened to my in-laws, they didn't really have a choice. They had to immediately go to the hospital. So we couldn't really push off the, the care.

So I would say no. You know, we, we still got the care, even though you know, not all of us can be there with them.

Alisha Downs 6:38

Okay, well that is all the questions that I have for you today. I really appreciate you answering my questions. Is there anything else that you would like to add?

Brittni Smith 6:54

[laughs] no

Alisha Downs 6:56

Alright, well thank you, I hope you have a good day.

Brittni Smith 5:59

You too.

Alisha Downs 7:00

Thanks. Okay.