

"My mother works in the medical field, and my father is diabetic which means he's at risk if he were to contract the virus. My parents are both concerned about losing hours or even temporarily having to take a leave because of the virus. I myself have been asked to take a temporary leave from my current job working in food service. After starting a new job on the side that I was really excited about, the training for it is very extensive and very difficult to complete via online rather than in person, so training has been cancelled/put on hold as the company is attempting to figure out how to work around the virus. I am worried about affording summer classes. Everything in my life and in the lives of people close to me has been constantly changing, and having my classes being moved to online has definitely impacted my level of confidence with getting through the semester with good grades. I need a higher GPA in order to get into Psi Chi, and I'm worried that this new transition may make it harder to stay motivated with my courses. I also miss attending the in person meeting for the PSO club every other Tuesday. Life has really changed a lot due to COVID-19."

-- Natalie Herrera, Student, San Diego County (Calif.), 4/6/2020

"Although COVID-19 affected me in a few negative ways, I chose not to focus on those and instead chose to focus on my family. Working from home has given me the opportunity to witness my amazing wife in her element as an elementary school Principal. A CSUSM grad, my wife was able to navigate all the obstacles that administrators had to face when we pushed to online instruction. This was truly humbling to witness her lead from the front with no fear mainly due to the culture she's helped create at her school."

"Plus hanging out with my 3 year old son all day now is the best!!"

-- Evelio D'Leon, Student, San Diego County (Calif.), 4/13/2020

"COVID-19 has been a good and bad experience for me. I am in my final semester and I am majoring in Psychology. I am currently taking 7 classes(with a lecture/lab), which is around 22 units. To have all of my professors switch to remotely online has been extremely chaotic, but a good learning tool as well. It has been extremely difficult to have all of these classes no matter what and to attempt to pass. Another reason it has been difficult is that my boyfriend and I own a tiny room in a house and the room is the only room we are able to access. This has made studying and staying on top of things because I only have the floor and my bed. My boyfriend is an essential worker and has been working 40+ hour weeks, while also switching to online classes at Palomar. The positives that I have taken from this is that I realize how lucky I am compared to others. I have a couple of friends who are having to try and provide for their children, take classes online and are out of a job. I can't imagine how this would be right now. Another reason is that some of my fellow peers aren't as lucky to have the resources many of us have. Not many students have access to wifi, a nice laptop, a free space, or a phone that can help their work. The last reason I feel lucky is based on the people who have been diagnosed with COVID-19. I know many loved ones out in the world have been affected by this virus and I can't imagine how hard it is for them and the family as well. My heart hurts for the people that are affected by this virus and my love goes out to their families. As a former student-athlete at CSUSM I am sending love to the Spring student-athletes who had their seasons cut short. I am also sending love to my girls who had to stop doing what they love the most. I am lucky to have the people I have in my life, I am lucky for the

resources I have, but what I am really lucky for is being healthy and safe. Thank you for all that you do CSUSM, you are amazing!! We got this Cougs!!"

-- Madison Newcombe, Student, San Diego County (Calif.), 4/13/2020

"My husband and I are both over 70. He has underlying health conditions (many). We have stayed home since March 10 (other than his one doctor appt that he had to go to). Our wonderful neighbor (50) does our grocery shopping for us. I also use Amazon and Costco for items to be delivered and was just able to get a pickup time with Ralphs in Carlsbad (you shop on line and then go to parking lot and pick it up). First time we were in the car (except one doctor appt) was to pick up the groceries at Ralphs. What a thrill to get out and drive by the Carlsbad beach on the way to the store. We had been looking forward to our big outing for days. Funny how simple things that we once took for granted become a big deal-in our case we called it our adventure. We even stopped at El Pollo Loco drive thru after Ralphs to pick up dinner. We felt like we had part of our life back during that one outing. Hope we get to do it again."

"What we really miss is going to the pool at the gym. Since my husband is disabled , this is his main form of exercise. I can take short walks and do exercises at home, but he can't do that much. Without the pool, his ability to walk and move has been greatly diminished. We're concerned in another month what he will physically be like."

-- Anonymous, Retired, Carlsbad (Calif.), 4/23/2020

"Surprisingly, not that much has changed. I already was a homebody and have so far enjoyed working from home. I actually feel more productive because I have less coworkers popping in to catch up or socialize. I have however started a victory garden in response to the crisis. Gardening helps me relax, feel like I have some control of my environment, and it also helps me feel more food secure for the coming months."

-- Anonymous, Student, Escondido (Calif.), 5/01/2020

"I am definitely experiencing more stress and anxiety. I'm worried about my husband because he is still working outside our home. I remind my eldest son and his girlfriend to be safe and that this pandemic is serious. I miss my extended family, friends and co-workers and the social interaction with the [outside world]. On the flip side, I have spent more time with my youngest son as he is sheltering with me and my husband. We were already close but this time has provided us an opportunity to become closer. To slow down and talk and enjoy each other."

-- Anonymous, CSUSM administration/staff/faculty, San Diego County (Calif.), 5/04/2020

"Well... It moved classes online, to start. I suppose I had some expectations for things to get incrementally more challenging due to the online nature of things. That said, I was really blown away by

the widely-varying levels of compute literacy among the professors. It has made some subjects exponentially harder, and grades are not easily predicted anymore. I had a fair idea of my academic standing before COVID-19, but with the virus came the removal of a majority of labs/projects/participation. It's hard to feel like you've entirely lost your grasp on your academic performance... Additionally I'll probably have to start looking for other employment opportunities soon, which will be a strange endeavor in this environment. It's just a lot more uncertainty."

-- Anonymous, CSUSM student library assistant, Encinitas (Calif.), 5/05/2020

"Covid 19 has made me realize that we worry to [sic] much about the little things in life."

-- Anonymous, Student, Riverside County (Calif.), 5/07/2020

"COVID-19 has made my anxiety and depression rise. It has made school 10 times harder than it already is and I lost my job."

-- Anonymous, Student, Riverside County (Calif.), 5/07/2020

"COVID-19 has changed my life because it has taken time away from me. I was unable to live my freshman year to the fullest. My opportunity to continue my education has been taken away, I feel I am not able to optimize my learning when it is all online. I have had a difficult time learning and really focusing on my school work since the transition and being home."

-- Anonymous, Student, San Diego County (Calif.), 5/07/2020

"COVID-19 has had a major impact in my life. My kids go to school but they don't go anywhere. My husband is working full-time from home while his company is going through a reorg and he's stressed that he'll lose his job. He is the sole provider. I have the course load of a full-time student while also being the primary educator for my two elementary aged children. To say I am overwhelmed is an understatement."

-- Anonymous, Student and stay-at-home mom, San Marcos (Calif.), 5/07/2020

"Covid 19 had affected my life drastically. I could go on and on about how it's affected me. But school is the most important because I'm unable to learn. I live with my two grandparents and I'm asked to clean cook etc! Also I can't grasp the concept unless I'm taught in person!"

-- Anonymous, Student, San Diego (Calif.), 5/08/2020

"COVID-19 has changed my life because it took away half of my freshman year, the full experience of college as a freshman. It also changed my life from not seeing close family members."

-- Anonymous, Student, San Diego (Calif.), 5/09/2020

"It has completely cancelled my whole entire year. I am a dancer and for the year, I was going to travel to many places but due to the pandemic, everything got postponed, putting my dance career completely on hold. I also have a family member who has gotten COVID-19 and he has extremely poor health. In many ways COVID has brought a lot of pain but also my life before COVID was really hectic. I never stopped to take moments to let anything settle in, I was always on the go. This pandemic was a curse and a blessing."

--Anonymous, Student, Riverside County (Calif.), 5/09/2020

"At the beginning of the semester I feel like I was going through a lot personally and a few weeks before quarantine I felt like I was beginning to gain motivation and feel better about myself. I was starting to gain confidence in my self and was making use of the academic resources that the school provided. Once quarantine was made mandatory I fell back into my depression and behind on my school work."

-- Anonymous, Student, San Marcos (Calif.), 5/11/2020

"Living in a low income household where I have to share a single room for 2 other siblings has been tough. I haven't been able to focus as much as I needed to for class. I haven't been able to see my friends and some family members in weeks. I'm thankful however that nobody I know has been diagnosed with the virus. But it has changed the lives of people around me. My mother has lost her job, my friends have all been slowly laid off, and I've been unable to get a job to help around the home. I worry most about my girlfriend's elderly great grandmother. Her immune system isn't the best, and I fear she may contract the virus."

-- Anonymous, Student, Escondido (Calif.), 5/11/2020

"COVID-19 has changed my life in every sense of the word. All of my friends have moved back home, and I never see them anymore. I lost both of my beloved jobs and was forced to get a full-time position at a grocery store that is a thirty-minute drive from my new home, where I had to relocate after I could no longer afford to live in my apartment. I have fallen behind in school, not because I don't care, but because the transition is more difficult than anybody could imagine. I have gone from being social nearly every day to feeling isolated in a stranger's home. I have not seen my own family in twelve weeks."

-- Anonymous, Student and checker (Vons), San Marcos (Calif.), 5/11/2020

"Like many, my entire daily life has changed due to the pandemic. Instead of going to work at the applied social psychology research lab Mon-Thurs on campus, I am constantly communicating with my supervisor and peers through Zoom and email. Instead of attending classes, I have been attending weekly Zoom meetings for some, and watching recorded lectures for others. I have been elected PSO President for Fall 2020/Spring 2021, but as of yet I have no idea how that experience will be due to remaining uncertainty about the format of the upcoming academic year. Through my volunteer position at Alzheimer's San Diego, I went from previously visiting a client with dementia four hours per week, to now just calling to check in once weekly, and have taken on another client virtually through the new virtual companion volunteer program. I meet my new client over Zoom once per week for roughly one hour each time. In addition to all the changes to my academic and professional life, I am frequently stressed about the crisis, and worried about my family, as well as my boyfriend whom lives in another county and I cannot visit. On top of that, I myself have a preexisting condition to manage, which just adds to the fear about the virus."

-- Hayley Stevenson, Student and undergraduate research assistant, Escondido (Calif.), 5/11/2020

"Covid 19 has impacted my life in a significant way because everything has changed from what it usually was. My work hours have been cut significantly from what they previously were and school has been moved to online. I feel like life was going well before this all happened but now that it did it has brought unfortunate circumstances. For example I was offered a job but now that isn't available."

-- Anonymous, Student and restaurant worker, San Diego County (Calif.), 5/11/2020

"Due to COVID, I have lost my job, had to move back in with my parents and I am struggling to stay about [sic] water and stay in college and have the motivation to continue and do college."

-- Anonymous, Student, Temecula (Calif.), 5/12/2020

"COVID-19 has taught me to just "be". It has taught me balance. It has shown me value in day-to-day life which I used to take for granted."

"I have learned what life "slowed-down" looks like. I have realized that I can control what I can, and cannot control all that surrounds around me. It has taught me to perceive time in 3 dimensions - past, present, and future. I no longer rush through the present just to get to the future, whilst ignoring the past."

"It has taught me to answer the phone when my elderly mother calls, confused, asking the same question, not knowing what day it is. I practice patience. It has taught me to accept my kids as they are - to let go of willing their futures with expectations and judgement."

"It has taught me to embrace the diversity of my family, friends, and community - we all cope differently, and that is ok."

-- Julie Liu, Student, San Diego County (Calif.), 5/12/2020

"My Father would work every week day from around 4 in the morning til 9 at night. Sometimes even working 20 hours per day. He even commutes to work an hour away from home, so I would always be worried about my Dad driving to and from due to lack of sleep. He's fallen asleep on the wheel a few times before, and yet still went in to work, working as hard as he does for our family. Even though this covid-19 situation is affecting our world in negative ways, I am grateful to see my Dad around in the house with his family during the week. This is the most sleep he has gotten in years, and it makes me happy to see him take some time off."

-- Kau'I Miki-Han, Student, San Diego County (Calif.), 5/14/2020

"I lost my job and as a result I had to move back home. I've worked so hard all throughout college to maintain good grades and have been looking forward to commencement since I was a freshman. COVID-19 made me cancel my post-graduation plans, postponed commencement, and if the school chooses to switch the grading scale to Pass/No Pass, I fear that I won't be able to have the opportunity to graduate with honors. My fiancé was suppose to return home from deployment on April 7 and on March 16 the DoD announced the military travel ban until May. A few days ago, they announced that the military travel ban may be extended to August. If the travel ban is extended, this will be beyond the date that he is to separate from the Navy; his separation date is in June. As a result, his command is now involuntarily extending his enlistment for another 3-6 months and he doesn't know when he'll be able to come home."

-- Loren Park, Student, San Diego County (Calif.), 5/14/2020

"Close family members have been in the hospital for COVID-19 for weeks, and Ive been doing online courses in an out of the ER so it has affected me greatly to say the least. I hope things get better for everyone and people stay safe."

-- Shahed Hatefi, Student, San Diego County (Calif.), 5/14/2020

"My son and I went from having a calendar full of work, school, family and social events to staying home. The first few weeks was rough, we had to adjust to school and work from home, restructuring ourselves to have some sort of schedule and stay productive. My very large Mexican-American family did not comprehend the concept of Stay at Home, until the elders in our family reached out to everyone and told us to stay put and stop acting dumb, no sean pendejos por favor y hagan caso. Anxiety became very real, but reaching out to family and friends through social media and video calls has been a saving grace. Work from home is finally normalizing, homeschooling has reaffirmed my decision to not become a teacher and it has forced us to prioritize the people in our lives that truly matter."

-- Brenda Aguilar, Academic Advisor, TRIO Talent Search, Oceanside (Calif.), 5/18/2020

"From the beginning everything changed. My wife and I went from grocery shopping at the store regularly to shopping heavily once every 6-8 weeks. All of our other shopping is done online. The way we are thinking about the interaction with other people has completely changed. My wife and I are both very social people but we both have a history of respiratory issues. These circumstances make us think twice before we do any venturing outside of our neighborhood. When we do go out somewhere we have a checklist before we walk out the door. Do we have our masks, hand sanitizer, wipes for carts or whatever we may come into contact with. These are things we wouldn't have given a second thought too prior. When we are out in public we are acutely aware of who is wearing a mask and who isn't. The thought that no one really knows all the nuances of Covid-19 makes us really examine any social interaction we want to engage in. When I did finally venture out for a car gathering in which we only drove by a friend's house the initial meeting (even though outside and far apart) I still felt terribly uncomfortable. It was then I realized how much this whole situation has impacted me. Also the fact that I have been working remotely for the last 3 months when I have a community oriented job has been a severe adjustment as well. Some days I am glad to be home and other days I really wished I was back out in a "normal" community. Like everyone else, getting adjusted to a new normal isn't on my list of highlights for the day, it's stressful, but you learn to adapt, right?!"

-- Anonymous, Counselor, Oceanside (Calif.), 6/09/2020

"Here is journal entry from March 27, 2020, as a Teaching Associate for History 102 for Spring 2020: Friday March 27: I am taking advantage of Dr. Sepinwall's offer to write journal entries for History 102 for the rest of our virtual learning experience. This will create my own primary source, and I'm intrigued! I've been meaning to journal more as a way to capture my thoughts and feelings as the days go by, without putting in a lot of effort. So, I'm trying to write this in one short spurt. Since these are my thoughts, I guess I'm going to write a lot of "I" statements, but that's OK. I was fortunate to have an engaging online discussion with a intelligent group of History 102 section 16A students, using Microsoft Teams as our communication tool. About half the section contributed thoughts and ideas before our "class session" at 12:30. I need to emphasize the fact that students can now participate at any time, if they are not able to "attend" at 12:30. I thought the students had some very insightful responses and comments. Since this is public, I thank them. Moving onto a more typical and personable journal entry... I'm grateful I have a warm home and roof over my head, with good financial resources behind me. My wife, and son who normally lives in San Francisco, are working from home and using our internet bandwidth a lot. I will need to speed things up over the weekend. Since I live in a suburban neighborhood, it's been nice to see more neighbors out and about and we've had time to say hello, at a distance. We are sheltering-in-place and have stocked up. Got the toilet paper and the disinfecting wipes a few weeks ago, and feeling relieved. Trader Joe's had a calm line of 12 people waiting patiently to go in today. We have 12 cans of sardines. I like sardines, but I'm not sure how much I'll be able to eat. All for now."

-- Michael Yee, Teaching Associate, Poway (Calif.), 6/15/2020

"Since late March 2020, I have isolated myself from others, staying at home and avoiding social gatherings. I rarely see my children or grandchildren, and then only at a safe distance. I rarely go shopping, even for groceries. I no longer go to the gym where I used to enjoy dance classes and other group exercises. For exercise, I now go out on neighborhood walks each day with my husband, wearing a mask and avoiding close proximity to others. We have sometimes walked on the nearby beach when it has been open. We cancelled our highly anticipated plan to travel to Europe this summer. "

-- Virginia Gabrielle O'Flaherty, Retired artist, San Diego County (Calif.), 6/26/2020

"Confined to the house and learning from television coverage about what was happening outside, I started writing. I composed a series of poems about my own feelings and limited experiences during the pandemic. I wrote about the hardship and suffering and death that it was inflicting on people in our country and around the world. I wrote about the selfless acts of healthcare workers and others who were risking their own lives to save others and to provide for our essential needs. I also created an art piece as a tribute to these dedicated people, and as a record of the suffering that the pandemic was causing. It is in the form of a collage of photographs captured off the TV screen. I built a prototype in my studio from printouts of the photos, and now have a digital version that can be printed on various different substrates. Also, during these months, I am writing a fictional story for children about two unusual animal friends who come together during this pandemic. My husband is collaborating with me on this venture. "

-- Merlyn Cruz-Feliciano, Registered behavioral technician and student, San Diego County (Calif.), 7/10/2020

"COVID 19 has had a significant impact on everything around me. I was first laid off of my job as a server in March and since then, other establishments and regulations were put in place. The second semester of my senior year of high school was disappointing to say the least, with no prom , grad night, or graduation with my friends. Not to mention, my first semester of college being online has made it difficult to connect with others and meet new people going to my school. I've had many changes in the last 6 months or so, but I've been able to stay productive, learn new things, and make the best of it as everyone else is experience the same thing."

-- Anonymous, Student, San Bernadino County (Calif.), 10/25/2020

"Covid has made just about everything in life, just a little bit more difficult. I have had various times of up and downs feelings, of depression, anxiety and everything in between during these past several months. School has gotten exponentially harder. I absolutely hate doing classes online, at least all of them anyways. I feel as if some professors do not know how to gauge their work loads when they transitioned to online classes. I do not feel as if I ever truly have time off. Whenever I am not currently working on school, I am thinking about it and what needs to be done. I cannot wait until this is over, I need social interaction again."

-- Anonymous, Student and sales associate, Rancho Penasquitos (Calif.), 10/27/2020



"In all honesty, sitting down to write this brings tears to my eyes. Living through a pandemic feels like a recurring nightmare for me. Being asked to write about it feels like being asked to revisit trauma, almost. Maybe, that sounds dramatic or maybe it doesn't sound dramatic enough for a worldwide, 8-month-long pandemic. It took me a very long time to feel like I had found my place in the world and employment that I was happy with and passionate about. I was 20 years old with my own preschool classroom and a class of about 11 children; I was on top of the world. I was tutoring a foster child. I was so, so happy with my direction. Quickly and suddenly, that was all swept out from under me. I haven't really had the time to grieve that loss because I have been so concerned with the health and livelihood of so many around me. My mental health took a huge hit because of this loss, the depression due to isolation, the anxiety due to health concerns, and the low self-esteem from just being stuck at home in my pajamas without ever getting ready or having the chance to do much exercise. In addition to the direct effect that stay-at-home orders have had, they have also limited my access to many of the services and resources that I rely on for my mental health. It is heartbreaking to have your healing interrupted by something out of your control when you've worked so hard to get to where you are and to be completely unsure of when life will return to "normal." Something that will like [sic] never return to its pre-COVID state, however, is my relationship with my family. Unfortunately, I've watched the entirety of my family to treat the health and safety of others as a joke. They have not taken this pandemic seriously, in any sense of the word. It has been absolutely devastating to watch and I have lost almost all the respect I once had for some of the people closest to me. This time in lockdown has shown many, many people's true colors; not just because of COVID. I have to say that is the worst part of this pandemic, for me. "

-- Anonymous, Student and nanny, San Diego (Calif.), 11/20/2020