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SURVEY ANALYSIS

EXPERIENCE AND PERSPECTIVE FROM THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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Survey Findings: Experience and Perspective from the COVID-19 Pandemic

Introduction:

Carol Ryan, RN, MPH, President of Health Promotion Strategies LLC in the Mid-Hudson Valley of New York State, conducted a survey to learn about the human experience of living during the early days of COVID-19. The survey was created and released in April 2020 at a very high point of the New York State outbreak and kept open for responses until responses petered out in mid-June 2020. The survey was created and conducted as a contribution to the variety of efforts being made by community organizations and individuals and to give people the opportunity to express themselves. The survey link was shared, along with an explanation, through individual e-mail invitations, local organizational e-mail lists, Facebook, Health Promotion Strategies' website (www.healthpromotionstrategies.org), and LinkedIn interest groups. In total, 166 responses were received. The results cannot be assumed to be generalizable to all people in the region or to the US as a whole. Respondents were self-selected and voluntary, no one was paid to respond and the number of responses is not high enough to claim statistical significance. That being said, the information is nevertheless an interesting snapshot, and the narrative answers are at least as interesting as the statistics. A brief summary later on explores some of the take-aways that the author learned from this exercise.

Geographic origin of responses:

All respondents but one lived in the US, with the majority from the Mid-Atlantic region. The author's assumption is that most from the Mid-Atlantic region were from Sullivan County in New York State because of the solicitations and sharing by others that focused mainly in this area. The breakdown of responses by region (as defined in the US Census regional divisions and rounded to avoid decimals) was:

- New England (Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut): 6 (4%)
- **Mid Atlantic (New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania): 131 (79%)**
- East North Central (Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin): 5 (3%)
- West North Central (Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota): 6 (4%)
- South Atlantic (Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Washington D.C.): 9 (5%)
- East South Central (Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, Tennessee): 1 (<1%)
- West South Central (Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas): 1 (<1%)
- Mountain (Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming): 1 (<1%)
- Pacific (Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon, Washington): 6 (4%)
- Outside of US: 1 (<1%) someone answered from the Netherlands

Working or volunteering outside the home: *Are you working or volunteering outside the home during this time?"*, which was followed by a request to categorize the setting.

This question was asked to get a sense of the proportion of people not sheltering at home and to ascertain in what type of setting they worked/volunteered. Overall, 56% of respondents worked or volunteered outside of the home in the midst of the pandemic. For the Mid-Atlantic region alone (the highest percentage of respondents), this percentage jumped to 62%. The three most frequent settings for work/volunteering in all regions were health and public health settings, food-service related, and social and community service agencies.

Stress: *“On a scale of 1-10, “1” being coping quite well all the way to “10” being extremely stressed , how has this pandemic been affecting you?” (Mental health support sites and phone numbers followed the question for those needing support)*

The median of the stress level was 5, the mean: 5.04. Slightly more respondents (52%) reported lower levels of stress (between 1 and 5) than reported a higher level (between 6 and 10) (48%). Surprisingly to the author, there was no clear correlation between either working/volunteering outside the home and the stress levels being experienced. Similarly, there was no correlation between having lost someone to COVID and perceived stress.

The breakdown by level of stress of the 162 responses to this question is:

Stress Level	# of respondents	% (rounded)
1	19	11%
2	19	11%
3	16	10%
4	13	8%
5	17	10%
6	22	13%
7	23	14%
8	22	13%
9	5	3%
10	6	4%

Table 1: Level of stress self-reported (1: “coping quite well”, 10: “extremely stressed”)



Chart 1: Level of Stress, from lowest (1) to highest (10)

Deaths of family or friends: *“Have you lost any friends or relatives to COVID-19?”*

Overall, 28% answered “yes”. The number for the Mid-Atlantic region alone (New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania) was higher at 32% which makes sense as New York had such a high number of cases at that time, and of course the number of respondents in this area was markedly higher than for all other geographic areas.

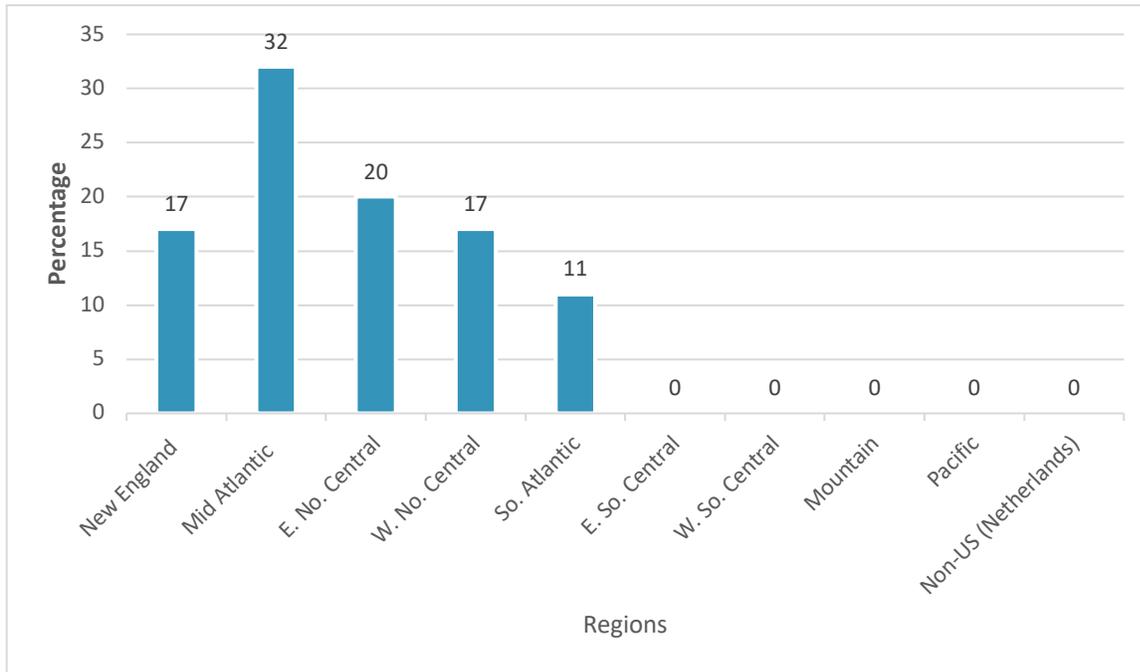


Chart 2: Percentage of respondents who reported losing a family member or friend to COVID-19

Life after the pandemic: “When this pandemic is over, will you be satisfied to go back and live life in exactly the same way?”

Sixty-four percent (64%) of the 163 respondents who answered this question would not be satisfied to go back to living life in the same way as before once the pandemic is over (chart 3).

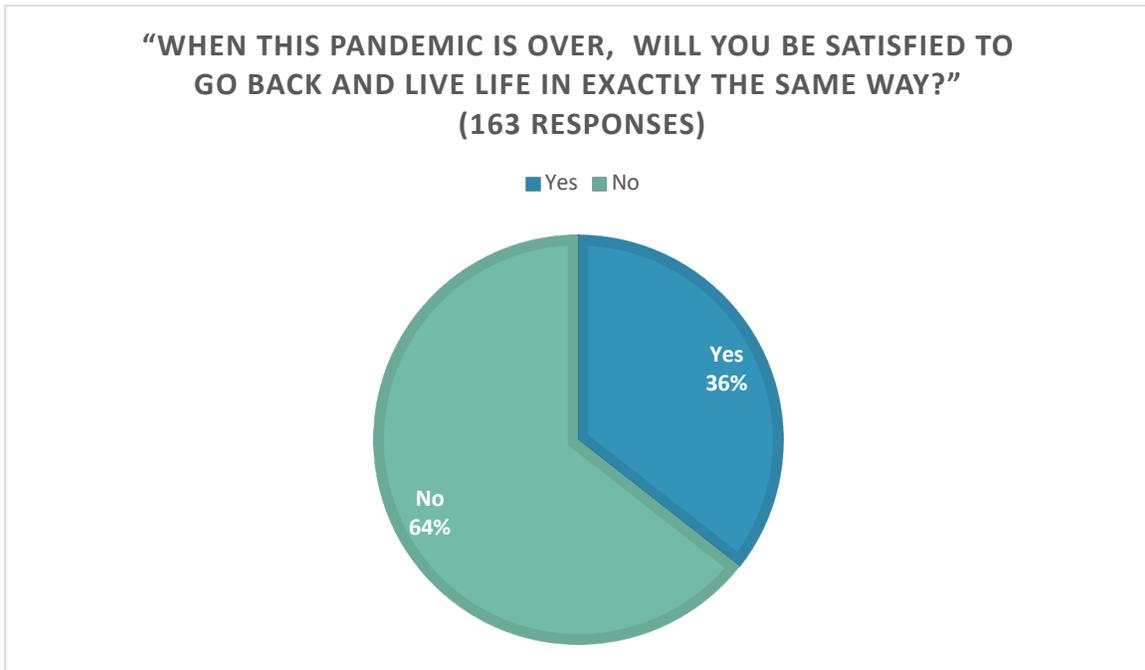


Chart 3: Percentage of respondents who were satisfied to return to life as before the pandemic

The question included an optional text box and 77 respondents commented. Comments describing changes respondents intended to make fell into four predominant themes, listed next and seen in Chart 4, in order of frequency of response. Obviously, there is some degree of overlap between these themes.

1. Being more careful about hygiene and contact with others from now on (39%).
2. Balance in life: slowing down more, appreciation of family, re-evaluation of what is important in their lives (30%)
3. Changes related to work: more or continued telecommuting, career change, a work schedule with fewer or more flexible hours (16%)
4. Making more of a social contribution: helping feed the hungry, working to ensure people have healthcare, protecting the environment, becoming involved with political reform. (12%)

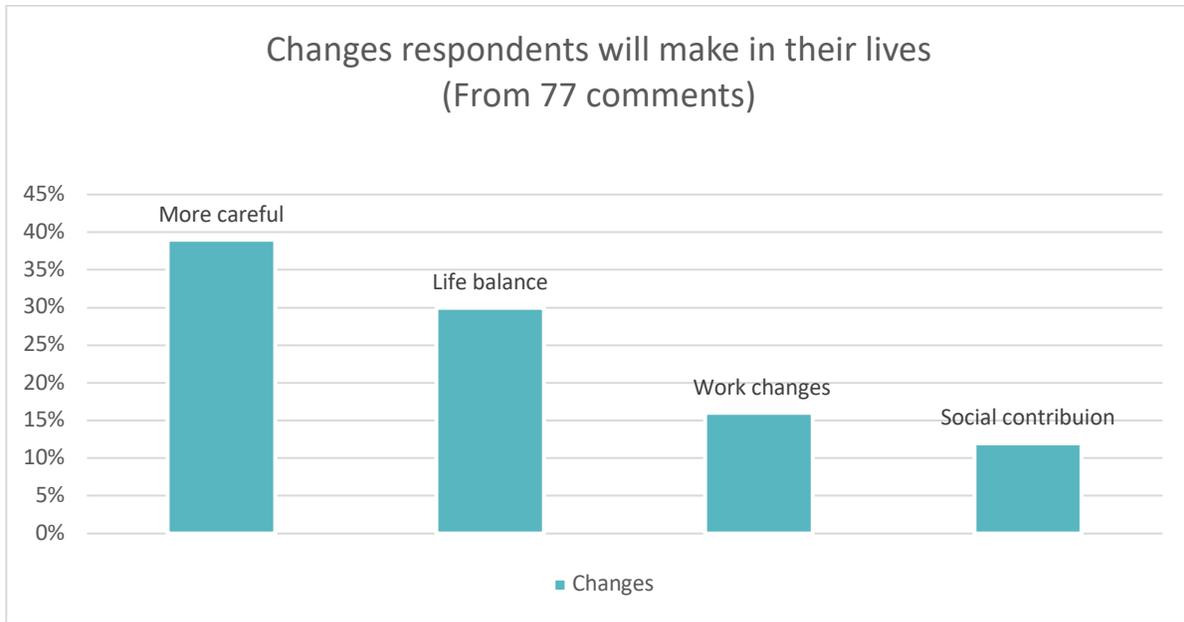


Chart 4: By theme, changes people would like to make in their life post-pandemic

Recommended societal changes: *“When this pandemic is over, will you recommend any organizational, governmental or societal changes that should be instituted, whether directly relating to a future pandemic or as a result of more general observations from this time?”*

Seventy-seven percent (77%) of the 166 respondents who answered this question reported that they would recommend changes.

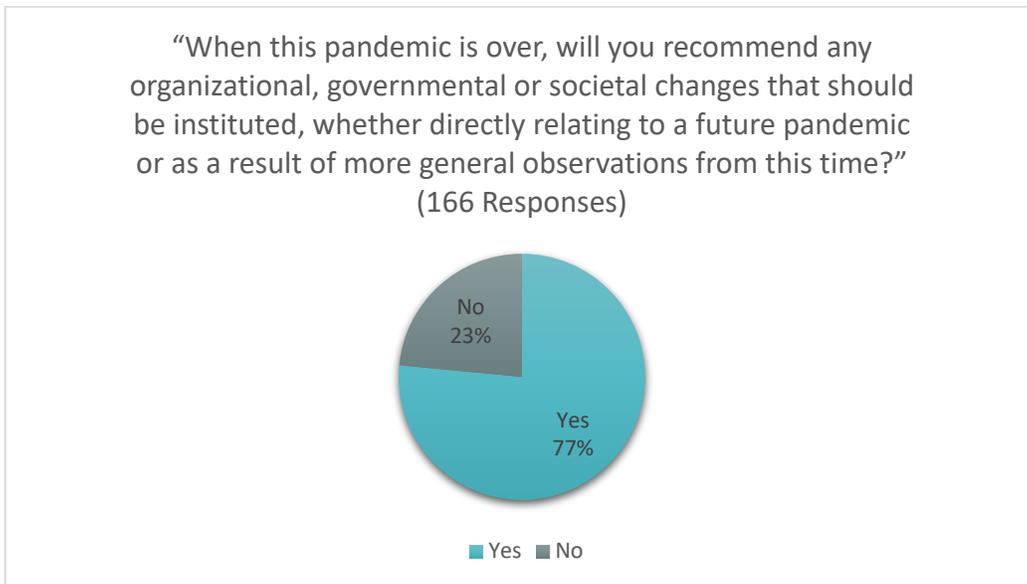


Chart 5: Percentage of respondents recommending societal changes for the future

Among the recommended societal changes from respondents, from 127 comments containing 143 recommendations, the most common theme, in order, were :

1. Changes in governance at the federal level, including increases in public health funding, transparency in information given to the public, restoring policy based on science, need for government reform and strengthening local governmental decision making and public health funding. (25%)
2. Improvements in preparedness at federal and local levels, including restoring the national pandemic planning team, drills and emergency planning, improvements in emergency supply chain including more PPE and better testing capacity, materials made in US and not dependent on foreign government, aggressive testing and tracking (24%)
3. A significant number of comments focused on the recognition of the need to improve health equity, to provide a social safety net for all that includes food, shelter, healthcare, and of the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on minority populations. There were several comments addressing the need to recognize the impact of racism overall. Medicare for all was mentioned as well. (21%)
4. Recommendations were made for changes for employment and/or student settings to include more flexibility toward telework and/or learning from home, as well as more flexibility in work schedules themselves. There were comments about needed better health protections for workers, for changes to employer sick time policies, and for improvement in technology to allow better and more work-home or school-home interaction online. (20%)
5. The rest of the comments covered a variety of topics, including 3 comments expressing various levels of science denial as well as conspiracy theories (“There is NO vaccine needed.”) and more general responses (10%)

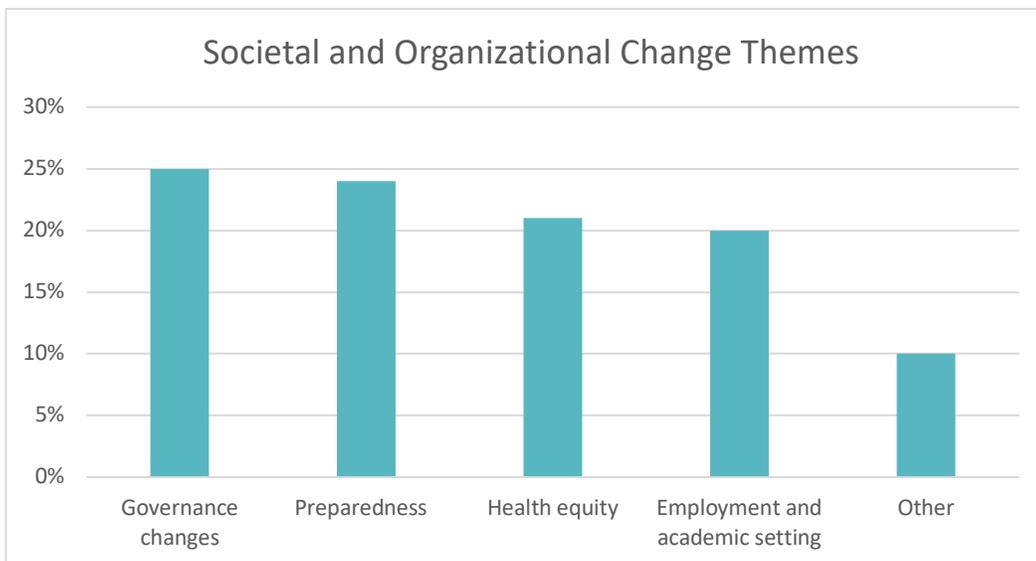


Chart 6: Organizational/ societal change themes from 143 recommendations

Other insights or perspectives: *“If you like, please share any other insights or perspectives that you have gained so far from your experience during this pandemic.”*

This question gave the respondents the opportunity to more freely and creatively express their personal and often quite powerful insights. Eighty-six, or slightly more than half (52%) of the survey respondents took the opportunity to weigh in. Rather than try to identify themes, the author is electing to quote some of the more impactful responses that convey respondents’ lived experience and perspectives.

“I am still trying to cope with marked anxiety and somewhat unrealistic fears that the next touch of a public space will infect me. ... I feel I have a much better understanding of high anxiety now that I have experienced it personally.”

“Too many people acting petty insofar as insisting that they be 'allowed' to; get their hair/nails done, go to the beach, etc. Too many people trusting social media skeptics who question the veracity of scientific data.”

“I think it's been an opportunity for all us to slow down and consider that which matters to each of us.”

“The disparity between the have and have nots in the world is unacceptable. Legislation is needed to make societal changes. There are some short term fixes but there has to be cultural change.”

“Everyone is scared ,scared of dying, or losing someone. Will the new normal be better. It is so awful not to see or touch friends you love. I have a brand new niece can't go see her or of course hold her. I think the politics is awful.”

“Finally, we all need to recognize we have a role in recovery. There is a reason for science and it is not irrelevant to our lives, whether it be health, climate or environment. Pretending science does not have a place in our everyday lives is like the Emperor who had no clothes. It continues to shape our lives whether we like it or not.”

“Racism was exacerbated in the pandemic.”

“Change is scary. Change is necessary. The way things are going right now hurt so many people. We have to change.”

“We need the arts, we need to strengthen communities and bring everyone together, and we need to realign our priorities.”

“The anti-science rhetoric that we have seen from politicians and citizens alike has been appalling and is leading to greater loss of life than necessary as well as further financial damage.”

“I have not changed a thing, went and did and saw the same people and things as before, it is a virus no different than the flu, a bunch of crap over nothing, government control, destroying the country is all this was about.”

“Too many people are focused only on themselves, their needs, wants, desires. We need to return to the common good, to inclusion, to helping others.”

“Did you hear about the store signs “no masks allowed in store”? I think the pandemic deniers are the same people (or their offspring) as the holocaust deniers. Please let’s hear a consistent message from the credentialed experts when it comes to communicable disease!”

“It’s scary how this has affect[ed] my mental health and ability to cope with everyday stress. I’m sure others feel the same. I didn’t realize how much I rely on being with others and out and about to fill my cup”.

“It’s a time for personal and global re-set. We need to spend time envisioning a better world for all of us.”

“We are still struggling with understanding each other. We are a divided country that will remain divided if we continue to ignore each other and talk over each other. Nothing will change until we can begin to communicate effectively.”

“People's true colors will emerge Silencing science is terrifying So many of our systems are tenuous or broken Nature matters Ignorance is rampant, contagious, and impossible to cure”

“How much we need human connection”

“I've learned to enjoy the silence”

“Most people want to do the right thing. A handful of vocal idiots are going to do as they please and not isolate. This country has got to stop worrying about corporations making money and concentrate on the people staying safe, educated and healthy.”

“We live on one earth. Any virus is a plane or cruise trip away. Global health surveillance needs to be established and shared by all countries. Resources need to be compiled and distributed equitably. Insufficient attention was paid to mounting deaths and funeral practices. Focus on cleaning the NYC subway system omits via black hole vision that access via the elevators at subway stops are NOT working for most of the stations that they exist.”

“As a nurse, I always knew that our health care system was deeply flawed, but the covid-19 pandemic has revealed to me just how completely dysfunctional our medical system really is.”

“It’s so important people continue to have a sense of worth, regardless of their ability to be financially productive.”

Summary and take-aways:

- While it was quite interesting to receive and read responses from different parts of the country (and world), the survey would have had more strength if the geographic range had been narrowed more, as in targeting one or several contiguous counties.
 - It may have been helpful to ask questions about age, income, race and ethnicity to get better information about the disproportionate impact of the pandemic. This is recommended for any follow up surveys.
 - The majority of respondents experienced significant and often transformational changes in their personal lives as a result of living in the pandemic environment. Many had new awareness and fears about contagious diseases. A great many of the realizations, however, were also positive, leading to a better appreciation of many aspects of their lives.
 - The majority of respondents often saw a need for major changes in societal structure, particularly as it related to government, work settings, fairness, racial equity and social justice.
 - A very small minority of respondents had doubts that there even was a pandemic, and expressed that wearing masks and having a “lockdown” were unnecessary infringements to their freedom and unnecessarily damaging to the economy.
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APPENDIX 1

**All comments from survey follow.
Misspellings and typos are left as-is**

APPENDIX 1: ALL COMMENTS

Comments from survey (all) follow. *Misspellings and typos are left as-is.*

Optional comment box: “Changes I want to make after the pandemic” following the question “When this pandemic is over, will you be satisfied to go back and live life in exactly the same way”?

Comments were:

1. More time working from home and use of telehealth, Zoom meetings etc.
2. I will want to remain vigilant of contamination and protect myself from communicable diseases. I will probably use more local merchants and restaurants to contribute more to my community.
3. Working toward comprehensive health care for the poor.
4. Not take life as it granted. I am extremely excited that thru my FE and was able to overcome. Be grateful for every minute of life.
5. Avoid mass gatherings until either a vaccine is available or the number of new positives is drastically reduced.
6. more awareness of germs, closeness, testing procedures
7. The pandemic has made me re-think what I want to be doing with the rest of my life. It may lead to a change in work.
8. More sanitizing. Less personal contact with those not close to me.
9. I think it is important that everyone take a look at their day to day lifestyle and habits and consider sanitizing/cleaning more often so as to lesson the spread of the common cold, viruses and flu.
10. More hand washing and knowing my surroundings
11. more play time outdoors more reading
12. Being more mindful
13. I believe I will make more time for relaxation and also time to increase my knowledge of areas of technology and economics I have not had an opportunity to work with before.
14. Relax more.
15. 6 feet apart

16. Less hand shaking and hugging.
17. More quiet time and always vigilant.
18. Things will not be the same changes will have to be made but they are yet to be determined
19. Less driving, commuting
20. I realized that the 9-5 life isn't for me and that a lot of structures that exist in our culture don't work. "Work" should not run our lives, we should run our lives so we can create good, meaningful work. I also want to work to make healthcare way more accessible.
21. Priorities need to shift- essential workers need the respect they deserve and pay to match in order to strengthen our society.
22. More time for creativity. Go back to a job in healthcare.
23. Even during the pandemic I am making changes to support better health for myself and use this time as a catalyst for change in whatever ways I am able. I do not intend to wait to accomplish things I want to in life. This is also in part because I lost my father unexpectedly just before the pandemic. But I'm done procrastinating. I am also going to push hard for social justice reforms and political reform to help prevent us being in the situation we are currently in as a country. I believe in Medicare for all and science holding an important place guiding decisions in our government when it comes to health.
24. Continue safe distancing (6ft.) until a vaccine is provided.
25. I will be hesitant to ever listen to the medical and scientific community again after they closed down the economy based on unverified models.
26. More time with family and friends. Less stuff. More experiences. Voting Democrat for 1st time.
27. No more handshaking or hugging all the time.
28. infection control
29. Live healthier lifestyle. Adopt a clearer vision of how I can contribute to this world.
30. I think just this experience with pandemic is going to make huge permanent changes in who works where when they return, what jobs/businesses will be permanently damaged or just gone when this is over. I think economic recovery will be very long in coming, and in some areas/people will never recover. For myself I will work harder to help the environment keep some of the improvements that occurred when the world's fossil fuel industries were severely curtailed. It has been too hard a sacrifice to get this far and we can't just let it all vanish as it will if we just go back to the old myopic ways of doing things.

31. Nothing can every be "exactly" the same way. Your question is worded poorly
32. More time for me
33. I would like to reduce the amount of travel I was doing on a daily basis. I would also like to have less commitments for myself and my children. Although it has been trying at times, I have been grateful for this time at home with my children.
34. I will be more aware of the dangers around me and the possiblities of serious illness that lurks around. Being more careful of the sanitary practices. washing hands etc.
35. Take more time for self care and to actually connect with friends and relatives
36. Changes in the way communities collaborate
37. Preparing more for pandemic Exercise
38. Go to a less is more lifestyle.
39. I don't want to live life always being afraid, but I will now be prepared in case anything like this happens again in the future (financially and emotionally).
40. I will be much more conscious of crowds and will practice social distancing of people that I do not know personally.
41. I will continue to wear a mask and social distance.
42. reduce commute. flexible schedule. take time off!
43. Because I have been working from home while homeschooling my kids, we have found much more time to get outside and be more active, I would like that to continue.
44. I want to keep taking precautions against the transmission of COVID-19 and keep spending more time with my family, less with outside distractions.
45. Now that I've been accepted into a MPH program, I hope to find work in the PH sector.
46. make sure I'm more active in the removal of tyrannical maniacs.
47. I don't want to schedule too many appointments and prioritise time for myself.
48. Increased commitment to self care including greater boundaries for news and information, enhanced understanding of importance to maintaining connection and better action on that in the day to day, continue using/needng/having less "stuff".
49. On the personal and community levels, the pandemic is not changing my values which I structure my commitments and behaviors upon anyway. However my inclination to be of service to others is strengthened. On the country level I would like to help create change that includes a

different President. Social safety net that includes healthcare and a universal basic income or low and middle wage earners and better access to education Internet for all.

50. I am not much of a consumer, am pretty much a home body, so my lifestyle has not changed much. I would like our society, and local organizations, to balance tourism with a lens of equity and possibility for all. We were well on the way to gentrification -- encouraging it actually. That's got to change.
51. Never vote for another republican ever
52. Retire as soon as possible to devote more time to things I increasingly feel are important: creativity, meditation, hiking, promoting green practices and tech, gardening, volunteering [e.g. Sullivan Renaissance], photography, appreciating and spending time with friends. I think there's much more that I haven't actually thought of yet.
53. Taking more precautions to protect myself and those I love. Taking precautions in groups of people. Slowly re-entering the public with fear of a resurgence of the virus or second wave.
54. I want to see some systematic changes to the way our governmental systems see and treat the people. Changes in my everyday life will include increased awareness of how my family and I could be spreading germs to vulnerable populations (like my kids grandparents) and to appreciate time with extended family and friends more.
55. I will be much more aware of hand washing and trying to avoid very crowded places
56. Life as we have known it is pretty much past tense, we will have to embrace a new normal. What that new normal is remains to be seen.
57. I think I would want to change jobs, I really didn't get a lot of support
58. better work life balance. work at home part time , office other times.
59. In my work life, I hope to do more telehealth work.
60. Be better prepared for food and supply shortages.
61. I will wear a mask, social distance and Avoid crowds
62. Be more cognizant of my surroundings. Carry hand sanitizer with me.
63. I would want to continue being hyper cautious, making more time to enjoy the outdoors (which have been sanity saving), dedicate more time to my child, in essence shift the work/life balance to life/work balance. Making the priority life.
64. Continue to social distance
65. Slow down, spend more time with family

66. I would like to be more wary of possible contamination of objects and people.
67. More time at home
68. I will think twice about what I am touching and who I am hugging
69. I will forever be more mindful of hand washing and occasional distancing.
70. I think I will be much more careful About germs and be more aware of contingents around me.
71. There will be no returning to life as it was before. Many things about everyday life will be different. The key is to accept that. Also question 1 is poorly written. I am still working full time in a government job, but have been working from home. So I am working, just not outside my home.
72. Will be more careful about hand-washing and pay more attention to my own health. Spend more time with my family.
73. Stay working from home. It has helped me realize I need less and deepen the relationship with my family.
74. Advocate for the ability to work from home more freely.
75. Be more conscious of personal distancing and hand washing.
76. Stay more laid back.
77. Less driving More time with family Less consumption of goods

When this pandemic is over, will you recommend any organizational, governmental or societal changes that should be instituted, whether directly relating to a future pandemic or as a result of more general observations from this time?

1. Medical care for all- more care for the infrastructure/safety net (food, shelter, health)- institutionalize changes such as telepractice- ensuring that young people and poor families have access to technology
2. Just that people use more local merchants to build and rebuild their communities
3. We need to get out of WHO and rely on our own doctors and more trustworthy nations
4. Better prepared with supplies, testing capabilities, hospital equipment & capacity to deal with future pandemics
5. More flexibility towards employees working at home.
6. more for PPE, masks, testing, vaccine, resources for protected selves and clients in the workplace
7. I think parks should have been open to have a place to go. Masks could have been required and social distancing could have been suggested.
8. More understanding of "awareness and acceptance BEFORE action." So many people are moving quickly before we really understand what is happening, both in the pandemic and the protest & riots.
9. More preparation for any future crisis. Better health care for all.
10. We need to be fully funded and prepared at the federal level which we clearly were not due to the ineptitude of this current federal administration, starting with the incompetent president! We need to change our healthcare system, housing system, and others to make sure POC are not affected more than others in our country. We need to address systemic racism which has shown its ugly head clearly during this pandemic.
11. More working from home and other distancing practices in the workplace for serving the public. We do not need to be in person for as much as we thought.
12. How we distribute food and hold our programs in the agency
13. DUMP TRUMP Medicare for all, rejoin WHO, funding for pandemic response and health departments,
14. Preparedness
15. First, it is time we as a country acknowledge, own and seriously address racism and prejudice. It is not enough to speak the words and study this pervasive disease, we need to make a

concerted effort to work on and find solutions so that we cease having a class and caste system in this country. The divisions and anger racism creates and fuels has gotten to an epidemic level just as much as the COVID 19 pandemic. It is making recovery and return to some semblance of normal exponentially more difficult. This public health emergency has emphasized the urgency for government, NGOs, philanthropic organizations to clarify what role each has in day to day and emergencies, coordinate efforts and make necessary resources at all levels and institute effective and operational communication and service provision networks. We have been experiencing so much miscommunication, jockeying for first place and total disregard of what we as citizens need on a regular basis and in this public health emergency. We must build a public health system and network that enables us as a nation to meet the needs of all residents of the country. You notice I do not use the word "citizens" because ignoring people who do not fit that definition puts use all at risk.

16. Be more proactive with testing and PPE supplies
17. More focus on health equity and health-in-all policies approaches.
18. vote for a more competent president, one with qualities of NYS governor Cuomo
19. Not really sure, as there always seems to be conflicting information out in the social media world. Never really know who to believe. ie - masks for everyone vs masks if you near someone sick, etc.
20. Clear communication related to testing from the beginning. Masks were said at that beginning to be ineffective. Mask have been well documented in medical journals to be effective.
21. Local governments must show an immediate presence and offer effective communication with all residents, and in multiple languages. Public Health should ALWAYS be ready for a pandemic.
22. Better health care for minorities.
23. More honesty and transparency, felt that no one truly new how to handle this matter so much information given was contradicted and changed - not leaving much faith in leadership. One positive as with many crisis it brought people together to defeat a common goal
24. Universal Health Coverage for people in the USA Protections and improved wages for workers
25. Changes to employer policies around sick time, universal basic income, etc
26. Make it impossible for petty tyrants in government to infringe on our constitutional RIGHTS, and hold accountable all who have done so during this farce.
27. Better preparedness for such a pandemic.
28. The focus at the CDC needs to go back to infectious disease instead of life stages.

29. Strengthening the foundation of essential workers- pay, education, respect. Also, standardized testing needs to go.
30. Changes in emergency supply chain. Changes that support healthcare workers and not the bottom line of hospital network industries.
31. As stated above, Medicare for all and we honestly need some sweeping political reform.
32. Social Distancing and how to do that while getting back to work and out of the house.
33. Less government
34. Quit the fear mongering!! With proper wisdom about supplements that BOOST and STRENGTHEN the immune system, this could have been handled MUCH better. I am considered high risk, but because of the supplements I take on a daily basis, I didn't become sick one iota!! There is NO need for a vaccine, there is NO need to lock everyone up, just use some common sense supplements. Vitamin D, vitamin C, zinc, selenium, and talk to a naturopath. That is ALL that is needed!
35. Buy PPE from American companies and always have enough.
36. That the government never lock down healthy people. The lockdown has done more damage than the virus.
37. Act more quickly. Vote for competent politicians who believe in science.
38. Universal health care. Higher minimum wage. Cheaper college. More money for education. Tax cuts for lower income people, higher taxes for companies and higher income people.
39. NEVER DO A SHUT DOWN LIKE THIS AGAIN!! The shut down is causing more stress on my patients than the virus ever has!! People are bullying those who cannot wear masks and they are making judgements on people in very hurtful ways. This is NOT ACCEPTABLE.
40. I don't want anyone's opinion on covid, especially politicians. Everyone thinks they are expert. Would like to hear more from CDC, less from moronic dictators
41. There needs to be something to do to protect jobs in major companies. And help not just students but those who graduated within the year. Because they are struggling just as much. Many had internships canceled or were so low on the totem pole we were the first to lose our jobs
42. Pay attention to the warning signs and take them seriously instead of sting on them.
43. Emergency planning
44. Science is priority for the world's health. Work together - globally as well

45. More robust public health infrastructure. Reparations for AA folks. Stronger social support network for all. Fewer stupid people holding public office.
46. restore and veto-proof the National Health services and confirm the independence of scientific facts to base health decisions and plans on. Constitutional amendment if necessary to restore the balance of power between Executive and Legislative branches of government. Have to come up with national health Medicare for all health coverage, and some kind of financial safety net that allows people to survive job loss and/or financial meltdown.
47. Leadership to be pro-active rather than reactive. Having groups set up to be mobilized and ready to obtain and distribute supplies to people in need during a crisis without politicizing the response.
48. more supports for mental health services
49. Health care for all. Work from home if desired. Living wage for all. Release from all school debts.
50. To focus on what is really important - healing, recovery, relationships. We focus too much on results. We need to slow down, take a step back and re-evaluate.
51. hand washing stations more prevalent, for public use.
52. remove China as a source for all of our medical supplies. Bring everything back to the US... manufacturing, prescription meds, aspirin, everything.
53. more planning committees
54. Project Resilience in all counties Helping immigrants Dentist are part of health and should never have closed, to many people affected by that. Mental Health Providers huge need during this time, and should never be ones to be laid off.
55. disbanding the global pandemic team was a huge mistake along with many others made by the current administration. People need to get out and vote to make a change.
56. Changes to the way the federal government is handling everything. Impose termson elected official - no more life longpolitician, change the campain funding so the big business has less hold on politicians, push out the big rx and insurance companies, helath insurance and coverage for all, bring back the sciences as part of all health environemtnal and agricultural decisions.
57. If we know our Latino and African American communities are going to be affected more than others, let's be prepared and have some preventative measures!
58. Local and state health departments should have a more aggressive tracking and case management system in place so that if and when problems do arise communities will be more prepared to handle them.
59. That accurate and timely information is provided to the general public as soon as possible so there is more time to prepare.

60. Flexibility for family time. Continued support of local food systems.
61. Universal healthcare, and a robust and coordinated national, state and local public health system based on science.
62. More help for parent working during pandemic from teachers and healthcare system. Make sure everyone gets paid that got sick no matter how many days they are out sick
63. More liberties to work from home for all employees able to do so, and more remote office work with consumers, to decrease potential exposures to infections and save use of fossil fuels
64. More bandwidth to allow interaction. Also more free exercise info / channels . Now only available on YouTube
65. Government needs to be proactive! People need to be more selfless. Science needs to “trump” politics. Honesty needs to prevail!
66. reduce commute. flexible schedule. take time off!
67. We now know how many meetings can be held virtually and that work from home can often times be much more productive. I would like to see this happening more regularly. Among the many benefits, our planet could be much healthier.
68. Broadband, option for attending school or home schooling, work from home options for those who dont need to be in a office setting
69. More teleworking opportunities for employees and mental health support including other telehealth opportunities
70. remove tyrants and satanic pedophiles from public offices and places of influence
71. Let people work from home more often. It reduces the amount of traffic and chemical particles in the air. I hope that people become more tolerant and appreciate each other’s perspectives at bit more.
72. More manageable expectations from the work environment, and continued expanse of family time, increased focus on education addressing emotional needs and taking the foot off the gas on academics beyond the capacity of an individual or a social circumstance...
73. See the previous answer [in Question 5].
74. Examine inequity in the county. Examine lack of equal potential. Encourage innovation and entrepreneurship that everyone can participate in. Develop micro-loan programs. Cease to give most grants to the larger entities because they have access to their own matching grants.
75. Never vote Dc a republican

76. I'm already recommending and have been for years, but feel clearer about the urgency and want to find ways to work toward concretely. Too many to even begin to mention here, and they all begin with us as individuals looking at our own attitudes and actions and finding effective ways to adjust them. We need transparency in government and business; help for small and local businesses and local/green agriculture and energy projects; participatory citizenship at all levels; social and economic and eco-justice; affordable housing, intelligently designed to promote community; community gardening; strong progressivism in politics; something like the CCC, Vista, domestic Peace Corps; federal \$\$\$ going into peaceful projects and support of humans and the planet, not business; repeal of Citizens United. You get the drift. I could go on and on and on and on. we must NOT go back to "normal," for that was not working well for many.
77. More precautionary measures. The unsanitary way we operate only contributed to this virus. Taking more precautions when it comes to personal space. Continuing the practices of supporting the community and focusing on community success
78. I would like to see changes to our school systems, recognition that they are not just institutes of learning but for many kids it is their source of food, safety and security. I would also like to see changes to our healthcare system, increased use of telemedicine and coverage by insurance. There also needs to be systematic changes to how much health care costs. This includes premiums cost, copays, coinsurance and deductibles. The average person in my region has experienced soaring healthcare costs that are put on them by the system.
79. Local Authorities should be fully prepared with medical equipment, masks, testing, for preparation of another pandemic.
80. More balance of power in our federal government; more flexible work options; restore & grow our environmental & health programs at every level;
81. Public health and safety MUST be depoliticized. Current elected officials MUST be held accountable for their actions or inactions that have resulted in sickness and death.
82. Better leadership on the national level. Better cooperation and coordination between local government and local non profits.
83. More restrictive controls on the governors of the states
84. Every needs to be better prepared.
85. Senior shopping hours to protect them, limiting the number of people at certain areas so open space can be enjoyed more and not so over crowded.
86. ongoing emergency planning for future events. services for all of us with PTSD. specific services for behavioral health providers and others who are busy caring for others, and don't take steps to really care for ourselves.

87. Affordable health insurance for all with (among other things) expanded telehealth coverage; and stockpiling necessary supplies and equipment for future pandemics.
88. I'm not sure yet. I think our government has been lax on cleaning public areas. I think we all need to be cleaner and avoid germs as much as possible. It always bothered me when my coworkers would come to work sick. This has to stop.
89. Stable, safe housing for the poor
90. make sure public areas are as sanitary as possible, for example, clean busses, taxis playgrounds regularly to disinfect. Pick up garbage from public areas more routinely. Put out more garbage receptacles when there is a large event and/or more people congregate in an area depending on the season.
91. Educational reform, Public Health Reform, Increased wages for ALL essential workers (we need to change the narrative of what it means to work in "unexpected essential businesses like grocery stores, etc), More focus on marginalized and vulnerable populations
92. We need to rally around hunger in our county. 2. I believe the foundation of a good life starts in our hearts and minds. To reach outside of stereotypes and rote patterns we will need: meditation, art/creative thinking and physical space.
93. Seems Cuomo kept his head, while the federal government presented a clown show. Beef up the CDC, put more money into pandemic prep. Believe that NYS should legalize pot to get the much needed tax revenue, end career politicians, limit terms, make the politician's benefits and salaries more in line with the average citizen, stop the campaign funding by big business. make the government worry about the people not the big corporations. Universal health insurance and affordable college education.
94. Remotely working should be more of an option
95. United States needs to be more prepared. They need to have enough PPE, ventilators, staff, schools need to have a plan for school at home, computers and internet access.
96. strengthen the public health system. Health insurance and prevention coverage for all. Tax corporations and wealthy persons proportionately. Overturn Citizens United. Restore environmental protections. Ensure water, air and food safety
97. Unsure at this time. But feel strongly that local governments should have more power to make decisions that protect the health, well-being of their residents and the local economy. It would be great to see a change in Sullivan County government where it isn't reliant on the legislature to make a group decision. It holds up progress on so many levels.
98. Spend more time at home for adults and especially children.
99. Require the leaders to look to scientists for facts before they speak on issues of public health. Impeach Trump for endangering Americans, again !

100. If this is germ warfare, better background checks should be instituted in our science and research labs. And for that matter, power should be divided more evenly between the rich and poor. Nobody should be allowed to be millions times richer than another.
101. Our government needs to pay more attention to what's going on in the world. The problem is that the current administration doesn't give a damn!
102. GeOust the current President!
103. Preparing for various shortages, such as PPE, toilet paper and ventilators
104. More disinfectant in public areas and surfaces.
105. Decrease the power of the presidency.
106. Better signage at every public place insisting on masks and gloves for everyone's safety.
107. Be more aware of illnesses that can easily be spread.
108. I suggest we stop electing self serving career politicians and incompetent morons to Congress and the White House.
109. Remote working with more flexible work week and hours. This pandemic has spotlighted how under-representative our health care and government sectors are with minorities and bilingual workers.
110. Decreased open store hours. More online meetings. Less in office all equal less travel and less pollution.
111. Codify into law (a mandate) that a permanent, non-partisan, panel of experts on infectious diseases is created to prepare for the next pandemic- with oversights on testing and labs, medical supplies and the National coordination responding to the event within the CDC (& that can't be dismissed/unseated by the President).
112. Environmental awareness. Take better care of nature and the ocean.
113. Elect a new President Set up a Pandemic Alert team Fully fund CDC , WHO and NIH
114. Stronger social safety net, complete re-thinking of our medical system

If you like, please share any other insights or perspectives that you have gained so far from your experience during this pandemic.

1. There are so many people in the helping professions who can- and do- rise to the occasion when there is a crisis- come up with creative solutions, find ways to serve regardless of barriers- and flexibly respond to community needs. On the other hand, there are those who, when separated from a routine and/or faced with a crisis, don't know what to do- and therefore do nothing. I actually had a staff person (one in authority) tell me that he was "bored" by "no work"- when there is not one minute of the day that I (and others) are not working or figuring out what we can do to help.
2. I am still trying to cope with marked anxiety and somewhat unrealistic fears that the next touch of a public space will infect me. I have been very conscious of self-care measures and people around me and their wellness or lack thereof. I feel I have a much better understanding of high anxiety now that I have experienced it personally.
3. Being safe means following the guidelines prescribed by the CDC. We are all in this together!
4. We weren't told the truth from Whuan and it's their fault that so many people in the world had to die. We were aware AFTER it spread
5. Too many people acting petty insofar as insisting that they be 'allowed' to; get their hair/nails done, go to the beach, etc. Too many people trusting social media skeptics who question the veracity of scientific data.
6. n/a
7. This virus was so new that everyone was learning on their feet. It became more confusing at times but most had our best interests at heart.
8. I think it's been an opportunity for all us to slow down and consider that which matters to each of us.
9. The disparity between the have and have nots in the world is unacceptable. Legislation is needed to make societal changes. There are some short term fixes but there has to be cultural change.
10. There are many ignorant people that do not trust the expert of the scientists....very frustrating and dangerous because they spread their unsubstantiated theories on social media and the lies spread like wildfire!
11. The reactive and not proactive way the government dealt with the crisis.
12. 35% of Americans are ignorant about history and science.
13. Everyone is scared ,scared of dying,or losing someone. Will the new normal be better. It is so awful not to see or touch friends you love. I have a brand new niece can't go see her or of course hold her. I think the politics is awful.

14. Finally, we all need to recognize we have a role in recovery. There is a reason for science and it is not irrelevant to our lives, whether it be health, climate or environment. Pretending science does not have a place in our everyday lives is like the Emperor who had no clothes. It continues to shape our lives whether we like it or not.
15. I have enjoyed working from home very much. I used to have to drive a lot for my job.
16. Both my husband and I had mild cases. The healthcare system was great and checked on us regularly. Yes, people are very ill and some die. Most had other medical issues including obesity and that led to their outcome. More emphasis should be put on people taking responsibility for the way they choose to live. Obesity is not a result of poverty. It is a choice and the correlation to this (and other) virus must be exposed. There has to be more personal responsibility for staying healthy including weight management.
17. Science debunks ignorance. Know the facts and act accordingly.
18. Racism was exacerbated in the pandemic.
19. Change is scary. Change is necessary. The way things are going right now hurt so many people. We have to change.
20. The government isn't actually here to help you, the media lies and promotes hysteria and panic, and the world is populated with sheeple.
21. I feel there is a wide divide between young and older Americans. Some divide is fueled by a president that divides by political party and for political gain.
22. We need the arts, we need to strengthen communities and bring everyone together, and we need to realign our priorities.
23. The anti-science rhetoric that we have seen from politicians and citizens alike has been appalling and is leading to greater loss of life than necessary as well as further financial damage.
24. stop pushing panic, this is comparable to the flu and most deaths are people over 80
25. i have not changed a thing, went and did and saw the the same people and things as before, it is a virus no different than the flu, a bunch of crap over nothing, government control, destroying the country is all this was about
26. There is NO need to lock anyone up!
27. While this is a global pandemic, and I have worked with Covid patients, I am extremely disappointed in Ohio's government in choices of opening back up, people putting politics and government before science, cutting school funding, and the fear I see people instilling into children instead of teaching them properly.
28. This makes me now question these climate change scientific models.

29. We have learned who the tyrants are. They disregarded for the US Constitution. Leaders have also scared people for no reason.
30. Too many people are focused only on themselves, their needs, wants, desires. We need to return to the common good, to inclusion, to helping others.
31. There are ways to have taken this cautiously without causing so much undue hardship and fear. "The experts" keep changing their minds as well as the rules. Yes a lot was "unknown" but we flattened the curve now we MUST REOPEN!!
32. Did you hear about the store signs "no masks allowed in store"? I think the pandemic deniers are the same people (or their offspring) as the holocaust deniers. Please let's hear a consistent message from the credentialed experts when it comes to communicable disease!
33. I interned for a company that provided housing. When they were shut down they told me to stay at the housing because I was going to get training and work whenever they reopened. I was told multiple times over multiple days to stay. Within one hour of starting training I was told by government order we could no longer stay in our housing so I was loosing my housing and job. It's crazy that the government is the reason I lost my job but they can't make the company bring me back.
34. Our current President caused a lot of unnecessary death. Shame on him
35. Communication, information sharing, collaboration, and true leadership are seriously lacking at our national level. General public does not understand how government is supposed to work-our education system must not be consistently educating people. We have to work together not against each other.
36. I realized how lucky I was to be retired with a confirmed income, Medicare and State health insurance that is there whether or not I have a job, and that I was paid a better than living wage that allowed me to put aside money to support my good lifestyle even in times of economic stress
37. I have been reminded of the importance and value of all the businesses I rely on to make my life enjoyable such as restaurants, hair dressers, cleaners etc. I also miss seeing friends and family in person so terribly. Weddings, graduations, social gatherings are a huge part of our lives, never to be taken for granted again. My daughter got married to her boyfriend of nine years last December, he is living abroad and they planned to be together this spring but now they are apart for an unknown amount of time. Who could ever have predicted that the world would come to a stop and not know when it will be safe to travel again? This pandemic has affected every single living person in the world in some way.
38. It's scary how this has affect my mental health and ability to cope with everyday stress. I'm sure others feel the same. I didn't realize how much I rely on being with others and out and about to fill my cup.

39. It's a time for personal and global re-set. We need to spend time envisioning a better world for all of us.
40. We are still struggling with understanding each other. We are a divided country that will remain divided if we continue to ignore each other and talk over each other. Nothing will change until we can begin to communicate effectively.
41. There are dangerous germs everywhere, we need to protect ourselves. Especially when traveling.
42. Communities should be able to communicate on an ongoing basis to avoid alienation
43. Grateful to still have my job. Family is important. Socializing with friends, co-workers, human interaction is extremely important. Not being able to hug someone, or religiously shake someone's hands say God Bless You. It takes a lot to say I can't. Like losing your best friends.
44. It seems the federal government is more interested in Big business surviving instead of the small business. Any business that made a profit of over \$250,000 should not receive a bail out. If the CEO and board of Directors are making more than six figures- no bail outs. Bring back the Pandemic task force- fund the CDC, fund WHO and get back into preserving the planet and its people
45. I commend our Public Health Director. She's doing an amazing job. Our county officials need to follow her lead more. She's the expert!
46. Collaboration between government, and health departments is key, city, county and state. It would be even better if the federal government played a leadership role so that all of the country was on the same page, taking in individual characteristics relevant to location, and other attributes. The leaders need to be as transparent as possible. I am a New Yorker and live in Onondaga county, our governor and our county executive, our NYS Commissioner of Health and our local Commissioner of health were phenomenal leaders throughout this pandemic. The collaboration, the respect for each other's knowledge, the transparency with the public and their leadership was an example for all to follow, going forward, this should be best practice that should lay the ground work for potential future challenges.
47. The uncertainty about health status, job security, and the duration of altering life styles is stressful for everyone.
48. Our community is resilient and amazing! Once again Sullivan County has demonstrated how we band together when there is a need. I think there will be a rush of people moving here and that may cause some additional stresses
49. Making do is fine. Family and friends are treasures, not to be taken for granted. Remember to find and savor the beauty in everyday experiences. We are all so resourceful under pressure, like this situation. Let's be more like that even when not under pressure.

50. Inequities exposed among programs, wrt some program staff permitted to work from home and other program staff not permitted, and communication from the top directors, downward insufficient. Learned more from the news about my employer than from my supervisor

APPENDIX 2

SURVEY INSTRUMENT



Experience and Perspective From the COVID-19 Pandemic COVID-19 Survey

This is a survey conducted so that we can learn how the COVID-19 pandemic is affecting people and may be changing perspectives. We hope it will also result in some constructive recommendations. We would be so grateful if you would answer these 10 questions which will take about 3 -4 minutes of your time. Your name will not be asked.

*** 1. Are you working or volunteering outside the home during this time?**

Yes

No

2. If you answered "yes" to Question 1, in what setting are you working or volunteering (pick the best answer)?

- Food/ Agriculture
- Health Care Provider other than Public Health Department
- Public Health
- Bus/Train/Transit drivers and workers
- Banking
- Pharmacy/ Marijuana Dispensary
- Gas Station/ Auto Repair
- Waste Management/Sanitation
- Highway Department
- Law Enforcement / Courts
- Social Service Agency
- Governmental not cited in other choices
- UPS/ Post Office/ Delivery Service
- Other (please specify)

3. On a scale of 1-10, "1" being coping quite well all the way to "10" being extremely stressed , how has this pandemic been affecting you?

(IMPORTANT: If you feel stressed, there is help. CDC: [Coping with COVID related stress - CDC](#), NAMI: [Coping during COVID](#). For New Yorkers: [New York State Department of Health](#) or call the COVID-19 Emotional Support Hotline at 1-844-863-9314.)

1 5 10

*** 4. Have you lost any friends or relatives to COVID-19?**

Yes

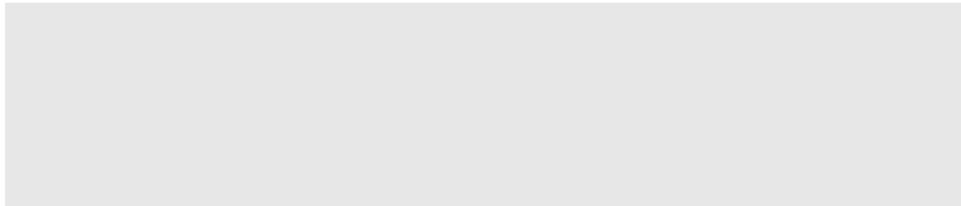
No

5. When this pandemic is over, will you be satisfied to go back and live life in exactly the same way?

I will be very happy to resume my life just as before

I want to change some things in my life (optional: explain in comment field)

Changes I want to make after the Pandemic

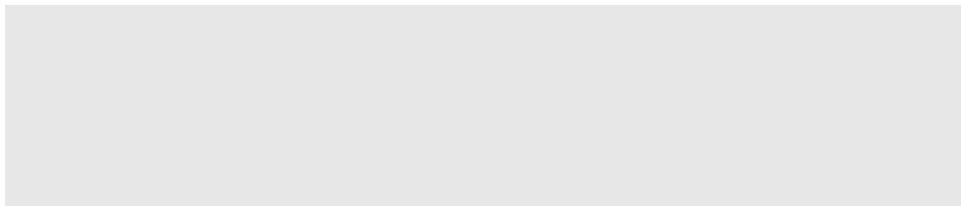


*** 6. When this pandemic is over, will you recommend any organizational, governmental or societal changes that should be instituted, whether directly relating to a future pandemic or as a result of more general observations from this time?**

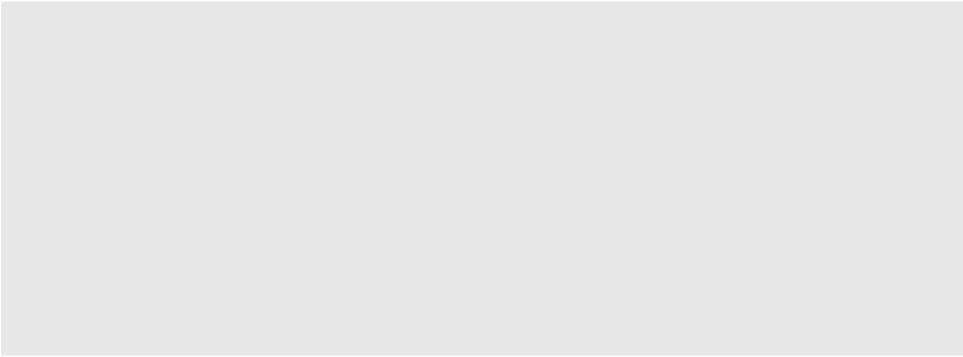
Yes

No

If yes, what changes will you suggest?



7. If you like, please share any other insights or perspectives that you have gained so far from your experience during this pandemic.



*** 8. I live in the United States**

Yes

No

*** 9. If you answered that you live in the United States, in which region of the United States do you live?**

- 1. New England (Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut)
- 2. Middle Atlantic (New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania)
- 3. East North Central (Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin)
- 4. West North Central (Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas)
- 5. South Atlantic (Delaware, Maryland, District of Columbia, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida)
- 6. East South Central (Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi)
- 7. West South Central (Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas)
- 8. Mountain (Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Nevada)
- 9. Pacific (Washington, Oregon, California, Alaska, Hawaii)
- 10. I do not live in the US

10. If you answered that you do not live in the United States, what country do you live in?