

Being Thankful in 2020



2020—this has been quite a year! I do not know about you, but I am thankful I have gotten this far in the year and that only the rest of this month remains. We have been bombarded by numerous events throughout this year, starting with the pandemic emergence in March. Depending on where you live, you may have been on stay-at-home orders from March through June, or longer.

You likely hunted for masks, gloves, paper products, disinfectants, specific types of food, and so on. This experience also reminded us of how much we rely on other people to simply make it through the day. Trash was picked up, grocery stores were open (even when they had minimal supplies), clinics stood at the ready (in diminished capacity in most places), gas stations were at the ready—although few of us purchased much gasoline because we had few places to go. And, because I live near a veterinary clinic, I learned that their emergency room was just as busy—if not busier—than the human emergency room immediately adjacent. For years, people shunned bread because it was high in carbohydrates, yet suddenly yeast and flour were about as rare as spray disinfectants and paper products. Many people apparently turned to making bread!

Did any local news start their broadcast with anything other than the statistics about new cases, recovering cases, deaths, total cases, and numbers in the hospitals? People who never thought much about nurses or other emergency and health care workers suddenly knew that these individuals were the frontline defense. Crimes, fires, births, and accidents proceeded to occur, and they were reported later in the news unless the event had some dramatic feature associated with it. The big news was the pandemic and how it was affecting our lives.

Children asked questions—lots of them. One of my favorite stories related to a child asking what it was like to live through the first 18 COVID events. COVID-19 makes sense to adults, but children are looking for the first 18. Many people tried to do something to help—made masks, delivered food, ran errands—others complained (often loudly) about being controlled by the government and having to wear masks.

Then we were faced with the tragic death of George Floyd. Sometimes we live with conditions for years and then one event pushes us to action. Mr. Floyd's death was a call to action, and the demonstrations for Black Lives Matter began. People of all skin colors engaged in demonstrations to call for equity. Some destruction occurred—mostly to statues and businesses—and some to the status quo. As a society, we seemed to tolerate the loss of life of various minority groups—Black, Native American, and Hispanic people—to COVID-19. But then the Black Lives Matter messages seemed to penetrate, and the inequity in health care became more visible to those who had never experienced poor or limited care.

Did any local or national news not cover the repercussions of this death? Some of the demonstrators and police were harmed in the process of the demonstrations; and once again, nurses were there to care—hopefully equally—for both groups.

More recently, we have experienced severe weather. We have had hurricanes, fires, earthquakes, flooding, and other nature experiences. Our vacations were often staycations, and the backyard became the gym, the swimming hole, the golf range, or the summer campground.

Meanwhile, we are questioning (a polite word in some cases) the return to school—without the input of school nurses. They stand ready to work with schools and they have the knowledge that would seem best suited for these discussions. Unfortunately, nurses are typically not part of the conversation.

None of what I mentioned seems to be the basis for being thankful—I agree. All the points I made are the reality

of the events. Yet, if we look at what progress we have made during these events, we can be thankful. For example, we have talked for years about being a cashless society. Well, here we are. It is not because we suddenly saw the light and decided to use alternative forms of payment. It is because of a shortage of coins in circulation because the mints had been closed. We talked about telehealth and tested it in some situations, for some patients, and for certain conditions. Suddenly, no one wanted to go to a clinic or hospital, and doing a telehealth conference became an acceptable form of care—and in some cases a preferred approach. Washing hands is second nature to those of us in health care—now it was highlighted for everyone. Parents have a new appreciation for teachers—it was a mixed blessing to have children home all day long. Families seemed to have the opportunity to spend more meaningful time together because they were not rushing off to some school or social event. In other words, our lives changed. In some cases, those were dramatic changes.

And within our discipline, educators in nursing became more flexible and creative and quickly converted critical in-

formation into learning modules. We found ways to remain connected to learners, to provide crucial feedback, and to modify learning options while maintaining the standards of expected outcomes. Somehow, each of us played some role in getting us to the end of the year. We all deserve to be thankful for ourselves and others!



Patricia S. Yoder-Wise, RN, EdD, NEA-BC, ANEF, FAONL, FAAN
Editor-in-Chief

psywrn@aol.com

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SEEKING MANUSCRIPTS ON EDUCATIONAL ADAPTATIONS AS A RESULT OF THE PANDEMIC

The Journal is interested in receiving manuscripts describing the adaptations for learning that occurred since March 2020. These manuscripts should focus on how the educational offerings were modified or, if they were canceled, what other strategies (if any) were used. Please include whether the intensity and frequency of your offerings has changed and whether you are relying more or less on internal resources. Authors are encouraged to identify what they perceive to be the most innovative approach used and provide enough detail for another organization to consider how to implement it in that organization. Data are welcomed! Manuscripts related to ethical dilemma with educational implications are also welcomed.