

## Community Feedback / Professional Testimony

### 1. How has COVID-19 negatively impacted your mental health as a professional?

- The lack of social interaction over time has been a challenge. I can go days or weeks or even months without interacting directly with any other people directly, other than my husband. It can feel like you've been abandoned.
- Being isolated at home and not being able to take vacation "breaks", has made it difficult to escape work and home pressures.
- It has been difficult to maintain work relationships because of the lack of social interaction. There are no visual cues in texts or emails
- It has been frustrating reading the news or social media and seeing people not taking Covid serious, while working at a hospital, and seeing the consequences and impact on people's lives.
- Not being able to read people's lips has made communication difficult when trying to understand people wearing masks, as I am hearing impaired. It is very frustrating trying to understand what people are saying as people's voices are muted by their masks.
- There is stress not knowing whether my job will be eliminated.

### 2. How did you realize your mental health was being affected? Was there a defining moment or did it happen over time?

- I noticed I was sleeping more than usual.
- I stopped showering as frequently, doing my hair and nails and got dressed later and later in the day.
- I didn't have as much patience with my husband, my pet and friends.
- I didn't have as much energy as usual.
- For me, it happened slowly over time, like a battery slowly being drained.

### 3. What coping techniques, methods of recharging, and/or resources did you find helpful in dealing with the added stressors the COVID-19 pandemic has caused you as a professional?

- Using Zoom at work for meetings has helped improve work relationships because I can see my peers' expressions.
- Taking mini-breaks during the day to take the dog for a walk has helped with de-stressing.
- Making a daily list of things I am thankful for, before bed, helps me appreciate what I do have (positives) and not what I don't have or can't do right now (negatives).
- I gave away my plants as a random act of kindness. I had several people tell me what bad days or weeks they were having and the plants made their whole day (which in turn made my day).
- Going on min-weekend Covid-safe weekend trips to disengage from the news, social media, work and home pressures.
- Making plans for the post Covid future allows me to look forward to a time when this will all be behind us and life will be "back to normal".
- Helping others less fortunate puts things in perspective and makes me feel good.
- Reading social media and seeing we are all facing many of the same Covid challenges. It can make me feel a little more "connected".
- Reading inspirational quotes and getting t-shirts with inspirational quotes helps me keep things in perspective and remain more positive.

### 4. Reflecting on your personal experience, is there a message of hope you'd like to share with your fellow community members?

- If we all do something, we can accomplish anything. Whether it is wearing a mask, helping someone unemployed, donating, being patient with coworkers, just take positive action and we will collectively get through Covid together, stronger than before.