

**Date Submitted:** 04/23/2020

**Author:** Louella Silveira

**“While I appreciate the opportunity to slow down our lives and really be forced to enjoy the small, simple things in life, I hope and pray that we all get through this pandemic sooner rather than later.”**

I’m a single mother of three kids and they split their time between two households. Before the pandemic broke out, our lives were extremely busy with each child in between three and five extra curricular classes a week. I worked from home so that hasn’t changed, though for some reason, my job seems to have gotten even busier than before. But my evenings are so much more laidback. We get to spend quality time playing board games, going out for walks or cooking. My kids have even taken up baking cookies, fudge and brownies!

Homeschooling has been a bit of a challenge with my younger two, who need some assistance with learning the work assigned to them. With my busy work schedule, it’s been increasingly difficult to juggle that with helping them out.

Last night, my daughter was in tears and asked me when schools would reopen so she could get back to her usual in-class instruction, because learning on her own was proving to be very difficult. I knew I had to do something to help her. So I decided I’d change my kids schedules around a bit. Starting today, in the mornings, they will only read through all the work they’ve been assigned. Then in the evening, once I’m done work, we would take an hour or two where I would wear the teachers hat and have an “in-class” session. That seemed to help her calm down and she fell asleep. But I didn’t.

Now I was stressed that it took my child three weeks of anxiety for it to finally overflow to the point of tears and only then did I do something about it. Why hadn’t I noticed that she was stressed before? I know I shouldn’t beat myself up about this and just deal with it going forward, but I guess that’s moms in general, we’re always finding ways to beat ourselves up.

Physical distancing has also been difficult with our close knit family. We were used to visiting my parents at least once a week. Now it’s been over a month and they’ve been staying at my sister’s house since just before March break. The closest we’ve gotten to visiting them is driving up to the house and blowing each other kisses through the closed windows of our car. My parents cant wait for the day that they can hug their grandkids again and my kids miss hanging out with their grandparents as well. They don’t understand why we need to be separated if we are not sick and they’re not sick. I’ve explained to them that we could be asymptomatic and I would never forgive myself

if something happened to them. They understand. For now. They'll ask the same question again in a few weeks.

While I appreciate the opportunity to slow down our lives and really be forced to enjoy the small, simple things in life, I hope and pray that we all get through this pandemic sooner rather than later. It breaks my heart to see so many of our elders suffer a painful and lonely death. I hope at the end of this, we hold our loved ones close, appreciate how fragile life is, appreciate and empathize with our kids, savour family time and enjoy the simple things in life, let go of "things", because when it comes down to it, they provide no real joy or satisfaction, they don't fill that void that only relationships can.





