

Interview Questions:

1. What was your initial reaction when COVID-19 had first become a topic of discussion?
2. Do you remember what you were doing on March 13, 2020, when lockdown went into effect?
3. How has the pandemic affected you personally?
4. What was the hardest part about living through the pandemic?
5. Is there anything you would change if you could go back?
6. What did your day consist of during the pandemic?
7. Did your day-to-day life change after? (hobbies, study methods, etc.)

Transcript:

Taylor: Hi, My name is Taylor Hamman. I am a Freshman at Butler University studying Psychology and Neuroscience.

Brianna: And My name is Brianna Quintero-Mora and I am a Freshman also at Butler University and I am studying Neuroscience.

Taylor: Ok and today we're going to be interviewing each other over the COVID Oral History getting a little bit of insight on each other's personal experiences through questions.

Brianna: Yeah! So our first questions, What was your initial reaction to when COVID-19 first became a topic of discussion

Taylor: My first reaction when COVID was even first brought up on the news was definitely laid back. I thought like this isn't really going to affect me as a person or you know it's just gonna pass on. I didn't really think that I was gonna get as expanded and deep as it did.

Brianna: Yeah I definitely feel the same. I was so young I can't remember how old, I think 13? It was like middle school through highschool. Which is a very very rough transition so yeah I was more focused on how my personal life would be changing instead of you know the lives of other people around me. So COVID just became something that's like, oh it's only happening in, what was the first states it started happening in?

Taylor: it originated, I remember I would watch it on CNN at school like in eighth grade every Friday we would put on CNN and they made it to where it was only seeming like where it was very close gated in China.

Brianna: In China, yes.

Taylor: And it wasn't spreading and then patient was like, I think in some surrounding states in the US, I can't remember exactly which one. Then that's when it started to get real.

Brianna: Do you remember what you were doing? I think March 13 is when it started, When lockdown went into effect.

Taylor: So on March 13 I was personally heading to a cheer competition. I remember, school got out early that day. Not early. We were just informed that we might be going like two weeks on break. And then I was supposed to be heading to cheer competition in Kentucky and as soon as we got there is when the competition got canceled due to the new pandemic.

Brianna: That's quite unfortunate.

Taylor: Yeah. What about you?

Brianna: You know, I have such a hard time remembering that far back. But I honestly think it was just a school night before, is when they started talking about lockdown being like an actual serious thing, it was something that was talked about and thought of as a possibility if it wasn't gotten under control. So it was the night before a school night, I remember dreading doing homework, didn't wanna go to school at all. And then all of a sudden I hear on the news or my mom, I can't remember which one either or, telling me you're not going to school we're going on lockdown. Actually now that I'm thinking about it. We went on lockdown and I think for a good week or two my school stayed in operation.

Speaker 1: Really?

Brianna: Yeah and then that's when they saw cases starting to appear in our school and that's when they said OK now we're going on virtual now we can't do much. That was in terms of school. But in terms of stores being open, we weren't really too affected by it because we didn't attend many malls at the time. It was like a busy time. So, we didn't really change our daily lives in that kind of way, but school definitely was when it started hitting, oh this is an actual thing. so how did it affect you personally, COVID, the lockdown and everything?

Taylor: Personally, I had a little bit of a greater impact mentally more than anything. I think I really struggled with the concept of not being able to just go to school every day, or you know see friends of mine that I'd see every day. I felt very lonely, and for me mental health is like a really big thing. Depression runs really deep in my family. So that was my biggest worry, was

getting to a point where I was really depressed, which that did occur. It definitely had a great impact on my mental health. I'm now on medications to help balance my mental health. Stuff like that. Definitely greater impact.

Brianna: I definitely had a similar experience, maybe not that level sorry you had to go through that

Taylor: No, its okay.

Speaker 2:, but definitely when it came to being locked into your own house, sometimes as children we saw that as a, "oh yeah we don't have to go to school", We don't have to deal with the people we were usually annoyed with or teachers or anything like that. Usually in the first week or two it's all happiness. Like,yay I don't have to go to school! But like, as time went on I found myself wondering like am I ever gonna be able to talk with my friends face-to-face again or when am I gonna be able to get out of the house and go do things because everyone was so worried about contracting Covid, because there was no care for it at the time, I had to stay inside. Not that I had many hobbies outside of the house to begin with, it still felt like I had an option back then to go out and do things. But as Covid you know, ramped up, it was staying inside, only being able to do a couple of things, which like you know our household didn't have that many things because we also...I don't know it was also when social media started going up too. We were always stuck on our phones, watching the news, obsessed with what's happening. And then you know that's when TikTok started coming up, that was a big focus as well. I would also say mental health like mentally I probably wasn't very, I wouldn't say I was very sad, but I wasn't there, like I wasn't present in the moment. That's why I see so many people with similar experiences those years that we were in lockdown, It became a blank. No one can remember what they were doing, or it was so repetitive that days seem different. Everything felt the same constantly.

Taylor: Yeah,it was like the same day being repeated over and over.

Brianna: Yes, yes.

Taylor: And a lot of people like that didn't really go through it as much as kids who were going through puberty at this time or shifting from, like us, from middle school to high school, not really understanding like that experience within itself, it wasn't a fun time. You know we're going going out of school for two weeks. It wasn't just an extended spring break. You didn't know when you were gonna be able to go back to school.

Brianna: Yeah

Taylor: it was kind of like, am I gonna be able to do this or what does the future look like

Brianna: Yeah, now that you bring it up socially you can see so many kids coming out of high school, or now adults, who not only still think of themselves of you know maybe that age that they left off of in terms of, oh their life stopped at that moment when Covid started, but you also see them becoming more socially anxious. I personally became a lot more socially anxious, cause I was always alone. I didn't know like how other people were thinking or what they were doing. So I always felt, you know, I guess separated from a group when in reality I think a lot of people went through that. Especially middle school to high school because it's just so important those first couple of years of high school, freshman maybe even sophomore year, where you start getting a groove of, oh this is a new type of system we're learning, of you know we're getting closer to college so we have to start not needing as much help from other people. So it was just very different like I can't even register how.

Taylor: Yeah, and even talking about it now like it still feels recent almost because you feel like that much time hasn't really passed. Where it wasn't talked about every day or where it hasn't impacted another person or two.

Brianna: So, I know we just discussed how it was hard but, how would you say like personally, like what was the hardest part about it?

Taylor: I would say, definitely the hardest part of getting through the pandemic was kind of feeling closeted or kind of feeling you know, there was no place for me to go. Even going to the store was a luxury at that time or being able to actually hang out with your friends without having to get quarantined for five days or, just little things like that was definitely the hardest part was like keeping track with friends while also communicating and getting outside and being outside. What about you?

Brianna: I would say the hardest, yeah school and everything was really hard, but I would say towards the end when lockdown was starting to become, oh we could probably stop doing that now. It was towards the end when I've had people personally affected, my grandparents. They developed Covid and passed away due to it. It was like, I would say that's the hardest part worrying about the people around you like contracting Covid and just always being scared and seeing everything on TV being like wash your hands, or wear a mask for this amount of time, or if you're around somebody for this long and see symptoms like Blah blah blah. I think that was the hardest part. It felt like something was always in the back of your mind, something worrying for you.

Taylor: Yeah, I mean, even now too, coughing in public is a big thing because of everything that has impacted everyone during COVID.

Brianna: Going back to COVID, what your day look like during COVID and the lockdown?

Taylor: It was probably the most boring day you could imagine. Get up, watch TikTok, eat, go back to sleep. There was sometimes for the first couple of weeks, cause I know school ended up getting out early, We just stop doing our schoolwork at a point we're no longer doing online, I think we like school in April that year. And when I wasn't doing schoolwork, I was just sleeping.

Brianna: I had a very similar experience to that as well. It was such a, it was so devoid of anything stimulating for your mind that I also went through, like social media was a big outlet, that's where I got most of my stimulation. I think I wasted so many hours just scrolling in bed or like you know also like what you said there was very limited assignments because everyone was just figuring out how to adapt to the new life of Covid and being on lockdown. So that was when zoom and Google meet weren't quite established yet, so it was just always emails of what you should do, at least for me, emails of what you should do, what you should read, and just really simple stuff until they can figure out, ok how are we gonna make this work. So it was waking up, maybe a couple of assignments in the morning, then you know earring, scrolling, stuff like that. It was never anything new.

Brianna: How did day-to-day life change after?

Taylor: A lot of, a lot more productivity since then. Being able to go back to school, I ended up switching schools that year after the pandemic and everything. I joined a different cheer team. I got myself out there, I actually started enjoying going out in public and being able to hang out with my friends. But the day-to-day life during had such an impact because ever since then I definitely struggled a lot more mentally with having a social battery or only being in the public for a certain amount of time before I feel overstimulated or just constantly needing that alone time I feel like.

Brianna: Yeah, I would say personally day to day life, I guess I don't wanna say I used to be more active before Covid, but I was definitely doing a lot more. I was like actually more interested in my hobbies and so after the pandemic hit, I found myself at the end when everything was done, and not over completely, but everything was back to some type of normal. I found myself you know still almost being so absorbed into social media. I've developed a habit of immediately going on my phone or sleeping right after school when everything got back up. So I stopped hobbies like art. I used to paint and draw a lot before and I don't know why I didn't turn to that during Covid but I stopped gradually and now at the end, I found myself you know never thinking about maybe I should relax and you know paint something or do something like that. I guess day-to-day life after was not much different honestly because of how laid-back, I don't wanna say laid-back, but that's the only way I can think of it, that I became more laid-back after in that I just stopped doing a majority of what I was doing before. So I lost all of that but

honestly, it wasn't too bad of an impact. I do say it like it was really bad, but I learned some new things. I lost some thing because of the pandemic, but it's not something that you know I regret going through like one of the questions we have down here is could we change anything if we could go back but I don't think there was anything I could change to the point where it would affect me differently because it was just such a special situation.

Taylor: I feel like It also taught us a lot more than we think that it did. Its like even talking about it now with you it brought back a lot of memories from that time for me. And being able to relive that and realize like I learned a lot from that time compared to what I thought that was going on, now when I look at it, I'm like OK these were a bunch of lessons that I had to learn and I actually made it through this.

Brianna: I would say a big lesson I guess was you know probably washing my hands now. You know just the [rubbing hands]. Just the rub before but now its the you know.

Speaker 1:The ABC's, 20 seconds...

Brianna: Yeah, but just to end this off on a more comical note. But, Thats it!

Taylor: It was nice getting to hear your story.

Brianna: It was nice hearing yours too! Its kind of crazy how similar, similar different but mostly similar our lives were during that time.

Taylor: Yeah it's really good to learn about other people's experiences too because you based COVID off of your own personal experience or what you went through and what you saw. But being able to like learn through other people what happened to them during that process is like, wow like this was a hard time for everyone.

Brianna: Yeah, it wasn't localized to you. What you went through during that time wasnt just you, a lot of other people went through it as well and can understand and relate to you.

Taylor: Well, thank you for listening

Brianna: Yeah, thank you!

Reflections:

Taylor Hamman

The process of creating this oral history was easy, as it comes from a time that it still considered recent. The pandemic has created an impact on so many, and being able to share that as well as learn more about Bri's experience was truly astonishing. Together, we collected a different range of questions to ask each other and explained in depth what we went through personally. We then met on Wednesday, January 29, to conduct our interview. This was a great way to not only share our personal experiences with those around us but also learn about other possible impacts it has brought on other people.

Bri Quintero Mora:

While making this oral history, I realized just how big of an impact it had on my life. Socially, physically, and even mentally, all my ways of life changed after the pandemic. Not only did I realize the impact on my life, but also Taylor's was extraordinary. We shared similar experiences and emotions that came with being put on lockdown. Though COVID was a scary time, being able to recount the events that happened is something I'm grateful for. I was able to grow close with family and learn more about myself. I enjoyed talking with Taylor and it made me feel as though I wasn't alone through the pandemic!

Consent Forms:

[Bri Quintero Consent Form](#)

[Taylor Hamman Consent Form](#)