



Dear Counselling Corner:

I really want to be there for my kids this holiday season, but I feel like I am falling into a mild depressed state. How can I not with all the restrictions and Covid cases? I am desperate for something positive so that I can start feeling a bit happier again in time for the holiday season. Can you tell me something POSITIVE that is going on right now? I really need to shift gears for my family and for me! Thank you.

Feeling Down Mom

Dear Mom

It is certainly different and strange times right now. We keep hearing all about Covid and Climate Change news and many of us are experiencing Covid fatigue. Good for you for searching for something positive. And there ARE lots of positives, in fact I found **fourteen**, and there are probably more. Here are some ideas from Vipin Thomas, Director of Revenue Operations.

1. More quality time with our loved ones. Do you remember before Covid how we were busy living the 'life'? So many of us were so run off our feet driving kids to activities, tied to frantic schedules, and rushing across town to meetings that we neglected to give time to what is most important – our families. For many of us, the Covid era has encouraged us to slow down a bit and has given us opportunities to reconnecting with our families.
2. Covid has taught us to improve our personal hygiene. My family has rarely been sick these past 21 months and I am hoping that this trend will continue well past Covid!
3. Covid has encouraged our skills to be more electronically savvy. In the past I have spent enormous amounts of time rushing to meetings and presentations all over the community and to different parts of BC. Now that we are slowly becoming 'Virtual Meeting Masters', we have also been given the gift of time as we can attend meetings easily and immediately. We can dress up and meet (and still wear pajama bottoms!).
4. Covid is teaching us to be creative thinkers and to think 'outside the box'. We are living in a different world right now and we are needing to do things differently and in unique ways. Fortunately, many of us also have the time to do this. I know that I am changing and improving the way in which I do things in both my personal and professional life. Take a moment and think about this – you may surprise yourself.

5. Education is starting to transform the education system and it is becoming more digitized and affordable. Thanks to technology, educational institutions have overcome these new challenges to continue to provide education.
6. Ronald Riggio Ph.D adds even more positives associated with Covid which are listed below. He says: Staying home means fewer expenses as we are spending less on transportation, entertainment and eating out. Riggio also believes that we are probably also eating a bit healthier as we are likely not eating as much fast food.
7. You may find yourself catching up on reading and Netflix. Check out some great books and movies which you can read and watch together as a family.
8. Improve your cooking and baking skills. Finally, you may have the time to crack open that recipe book you were given years ago and had never found time to use. I have the challenge of being on a gluten-free diet and have tried out lots of exciting new recipes.
9. Your pets are probably thrilled to see more of you if you are working from home. I spoke to workers at an animal shelter who said that far more pets are now being adopted than in the past.
10. You may have much more time (and desire!) now in making your house look pretty. I decided to give my home a bit of a 'mini makeover' by rearranging furniture, repainting the odd wall and putting up a new picture. It ended up being really rewarding and feels like a whole new space.
11. We are helping the environment by not driving and polluting it as much.
12. If your life is slower paced right now, you may be getting a snapshot of what retirement may look for you one day. This may be helpful for planning your retirement for the future.
13. Exercise. You may find that you have more time now to get in shape. As a family, I don't think that we have ever gone for so many walks and explored new areas.
14. Think about what is truly important to you. You may wish to meditate, reflect, or have virtual or phone meetings with loved ones.

Harriette Chang, School Counsellor

Please contact me at hchang@sd43.bc.ca if you have any social or emotional questions regarding your child's learning.

We are all in this together and together, we will get through all of this.