TELLING OUR STORIES IN THE AGE OF COVID-19

Janis Whitlock
WHY?
Wednesday, March 18: When research is used to shape and sell


Supplemental readings:


Monday, March 23: Debates
Readings assigned by groups

Wednesday, March 25: Debates
Readings assigned by groups

Week of March 30: Spring Break
**TELLING OUR COVID STORY TIMELINE**

1. **March 2**
   - Cornell announces closure to take effect after spring break (early April)

2. **March 10**
   - First covid conversation with class

3. **March 12 &**
   - Students meet to plan study & Cornell announces imminent closing

4. **March 16 - 23**
   - IRB submitted, reviewed & approved; Survey platform configured

5. **March 24**
   - Public study launched!
BEFORE I GO ON, AN IMPORTANT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: THANK YOU JULIA!
FIRST, A LITTLE HISTORY

• Journaling dates back to advent of handwriting and were mostly kept as public records. The modern diary has its origins in fifteenth-century Italy where diaries were used for accounting.

• Gradually, the focus of diaries shifted to be suited to personal use. Leonardo da Vinci filled 5,000 pages of journals with inventions ideas and observations.

• Diary as autobiography began in 1660: with Samuel Pepys in England who recorded details of London life.

• Many famous writers used journals later published as books (largely female!)
Therapeutic use of journaling arose in 1960s, when Dr. Ira Progoff, a psychologist in New York City, began offering workshops in the **Intensive Journal method**

Dialogue and response journals became common as a 1980s teaching tool as a way to allow teachers to follow and respond to student reasoning & perspectives

Psychologist James Pennebaker, launched the first set of studies linking personal disclosure with reduction of trauma salience and mental health challenges

Since then, research has linked journaling with (see Pennebaker, 2018 for review).

- Improvements in mental health and reduced trauma-related distress
- Improvements in physical health
- Coping skills
- Relationships

A brief search reveals 17 different forms of contemporary journaling!
• Basic demographics
• Covid status
  • Self and family risk and current status
  • Impacts (health, financial, employment)
    • Experience if covid +
  • Community covid response (restrictions / loosening of restrictions)
• Journal prompt
• News highlights prompt
• Silver lining prompt
• Social media questions & prompt
• The Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS)
• Art / video / image submission portals
PARTICIPANTS
(9/8/20)

• 728 unique respondents
• 5,438 submissions
• Ages 18-92; Mean 44.6
• 87.8% female, 10.3% male, remaining: transgender, non-binary, other
• Nearly 3 dozen countries represented
• Nearly all of the continental US
SUBMISSION SNAPSHOT
2020
I feel like when I tune out the news I can live in a happy bubble with my family. My husband and I have a good schedule that lets us take turns being with our daughter and helping her with distance learning. And our 7-year-old daughter is in high spirits - I think she likes the extra time with us and our dog.

But then when I read the news or check social media it's easy to get scared. I am scared of something happening to my 70-something parents, and of it being a really long time before I can be with them again. I'm scared of one of us getting sick because a friend of a friend has the virus and it sounds like a living hell. I can't imagine one of us having to quarantine and the other having to parent and manage the household alone, let alone do paid work.
there is something i haven't said that haven't shared there is nothing i haven't cared to tell you here this night

To Sharden. Grease along.
Make a fold half the amount.
Transfer all tissue markings to
moving pattern. Markings need
of fabric should be thread trac-

this warmth our blo-

things our fears-

that worm their way.

or where indicated on pattern. If si

initial length addit.
Shoes abandoned now
Tired of my slipper socks
Longing for a heel

Out of hair product
The frizz is taking over
Is that MORE white hair?!  

Here we are in the middle of a crisis and there is no cheesecake
The political situation continues to be disturbing, at the very least. A right wing, gun toting teen ager (Rittenhouse) accused of murdering two protesters. And a Black man shot in the back 7 times by police. Trump is taking advantage of this situation to sow further discord and gain support. Also trying to take the country's attention away from the coronavirus before the election (which adds to my discontent).

A 21 year old daughter of a Covid victim who lived in our town has come out with her story about her dad dying from the virus. She reported that people have accused her of lying to her face (that he died of the virus) and that it's all a hoax. Even now after all this time... what is wrong with people?
LEAVING THE CIRCLE

into our notsaid words
I feel emotionally raw. There’s no filter on my feelings right now. On the way to work today I was bouncing around to an upbeat Bruce Springsteen song, feeling like “yes, I got this, its all gonna be ok”. 3 minutes later (literally; I’m only 5 miles from my work), I’m crying, listening to a Donna Summer song.
Computers galore
In our little basement home.
They dance the TikTok.

My kids scream and shout
Who left these dishes all about
May God calm my soul

Kid out of diapers
My house is covered with pee
And I can’t escape

I have never been
A worse employee or mom
Love and pay endures

Being with family
I know them all better now
Grateful beyond words

My kids scream and shout
Who left these dishes all about
May God calm my soul

Puppy destroys yard
Teenager stays in his room
Quarantine is hard

MORE HAIKU
POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE AFFECT SCORES

5. Exploring PANAS Data
(* indicates same value)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most Intense Emotions</th>
<th>Least Intense Emotions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attentive</td>
<td>Hostile</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nervous</td>
<td>Upset</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alert*</td>
<td>Guilty</td>
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<tr>
<td>Determined*</td>
<td>Shame*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scared</td>
<td>Inspired*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Theme I. Housing Stress
SOCIAL MEDIA USE
Being home and being able to catch up. I have finally found someone I have been trying to find for a long time. I found her on the internet. I never have the time normally to sit on the computer and do what I want, I have too much office work to do.

I am grateful for my neighbours - my friendship with one woman is close and we are closer because we have shared this experience. I have got to know the woman over the road a lot more and in fact I have hired her as a driver for us. I hope she continues after this all ends. Either way, I think we are building an important friendship together.
My students. In spite of being taught by a teacher with a mask on and social distancing, my kindergarteners are adapting. You’d be amazed how much fun kindergarteners can have with a clear, table top partition between them. Early childhood educators all over Facebook worried about how this would impact the children. Children find a way. They have adjusted to the new normal much better than most adults I know. So, my silver lining is my kiddos who have learned to wash their hands and try not touch their face but who refuse to social distance when they need a hug.
We're coming together to take care of each other more. We're trying to check in more. Researchers were incredibly quick to act on this opportunity.
WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- We wait…
- We stay responsive and current
- We start working with data
- We give back
- We create and educate

- Feel free to join us and/or to share the link 😊: https://www.covid-stories.com/
RESOURCES FOR PARENTS

New York State:
- https://www.nysparenting.org/coronavirus-resources-parents

Child Mind Institute:
- https://childmind.org/coping-during-covid-19-resources-for-parents/

PBS for Parents:
- https://www.pbs.org/parents/coronavirus-resources-for-parents

JED:
- https://www.gotostage.com/channel/29b45a503f764804a843e22cbba5ccd1/recording/60f4bead07434d0086b85c1156431477/watch?source=CHANNEL
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S1iD3LZIp98&ab_channel=DarknesstoLight