

**Family Growth and Development After Covid-19**

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**Abstract**

The following statement is a personal overview of the Covid-19 pandemic. I will discuss the changes I had to embrace in order to keep a healthy mentality, the ways in which God surprised me, and how social media helped me stay connected with my family.

The pandemic was and continues to be an event that changed the way we perceive life forever. Personally, I enjoyed being home during the quarantine months; due to what I do for a living I am not able to spend much time at home. The quarantine months made me realize that I used to take many things for granted such as a warm place to live, being healthy, having my family and friends, church, and the list could go on. I also experienced God's provisions in ways that I did not expect or imagined. On July of 2019, I decided to start a career as realtor in which the salary was 100% commission based. Just like in any other careers, the first few years were the most challenging. During the year 2020, I only sold one home and closed on a couple of rentals. Since we were not considered essential workers, we had to close the office, but God never left me. Every time I think of that, my eyes filled with tears of gratitude because He is faithful. Even though I was not working, He provided abundantly during that year. Romans 8:28 became a reality in my life when it says that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

Every New Year's Eve, we receive a directional word at church for the year to come. The word for the year 2020 was "Seeing through God's eyes." I do not think what I would have done without that direction in my life during that year. It was a confusing and difficult year, seeing people die all over the world and probably thinking who could be next. However, God's timing is perfect, and He knew we needed to learn to see through him to survive and believe that deliverance was coming.

During the pandemic I used to hear many people complain about being bored at home, and all I could think of was how grateful I was to be home and healthy. I knew I did not want to be part of the statistics of people saying that all they were doing was eating and watching Netflix. Therefore, I decided to change my mindset and started working out consistently. Before the pandemic I used to go to the gym probably once or twice a week but realizing that I was going to be home seven days a week, 24 hours a day I knew I had to do something to improve myself, and YouTube became my best friend. I found good routines that until today I do them.

There were not many changes within my family, and I am grateful that everyone who contracted Covid-19, overcame it. I was one of the first people in my family to get the virus; that Monday when the country went into quarantine, I started having body aches. Two days later I had all the symptoms, except for two extra symptoms that the Center for Disease Control and

Prevention (CDC) had not yet listed as part of Covid-19. I went to Urgent Care and the doctor told me it was allergies what I had but knowing my body I knew there was something else. Though this virus was supposed to be something bad, I experienced one of the many miracles God did with me and my family during the pandemic. For about two weeks I lost the senses of taste and smell, something that had never happened to me before. One day I was feeling horrible because everything I ate tasted the same, I remember crying and praying to get my senses back. Not even ten minutes had passed when I went to eat a banana and tasted the flavor of it, it was the best feeling ever.

About a week later my brother tested positive for Covid-19. His son was only two years old at that time, and he asked me if I could baby sit him, I happily agreed; that little one is one of the greatest blessings God has given us. I was supposed to babysit him for two weeks, but everyone at my brother's house started to get the virus, and those two weeks turned into a month and a half. It was a beautiful experience but exhausting at the same time. Since I only lived with my mother and her job only closed for two weeks, I was the only one in charge of my nephew. Through that experience I learned all the hard work single mothers do, and I believe this will help me when treating dysfunctional families.

Social media played an important role during the pandemic, it helped me stayed connected with family and friends; that connection ameliorated the sense of loneliness we were all experiencing. My church started to do online services; everyone came together, and we were able to interact with one another. FaceTime also helped me keep in touch with my loved ones and connected me to people that I had not talked to in a while. Through this difficult situation I learned that God made us so perfect that we can easily adapt to change. We needed to keep an open mind to embrace change with a grateful heart.

Along with the pandemic, new ideas flourished. I started a personalized cups and mugs business. That business was a blessing and it all started with a magic mug I received as a gift. My aunt brought it from Honduras, and I loved it so much and posted it on Instagram. People started to ask me if I made it and they wanted to place orders. Being the businesswoman that I am, I started investigating on how to make them and what were the tools needed. After collecting all the information and tools, about a month later I was selling personalized mugs and cups. This business came in at a perfect timing, during the holiday season. My family, friends and strangers started to support me, but this one day I was happily surprised. I received an order of about 120

personalized mugs, I could not believe it; once again God was providing in ways I never thought or imagined. Finally, the pandemic was part of what we are going to be living in the final days. We just need to be prepared and trust that the Lord's timing is perfect, and nothing happens without his consent.