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In Sickness and in Health in South Texas: Narratives of COVID's Impact

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Growth Through COVID

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Seeing the bright side of as many situations as possible is one of the best ways to find comfort and growth when times may be troubling or harder than what we feel we can withstand. During COVID, I worked on a geropsychiatric floor which presented many challenges within itself such as working with patients with mental disabilities/ illnesses, dementia, and a general inability to properly care for their daily needs. Secondary to COVID, our patients were unable to have guests and this caused a heightened sense of loneliness in many patients. As humans, we need interactions with other individuals and typically feel more comfortable in our home environments. While working on this floor during COVID, I was able to grow in my emotional wellness for better and for worse. Some days, I was treated as if I was nothing more than a speck of dirt on the floor. These days truly helped me grow as an individual and to better understand that not every interaction with others should be taken personally. Not only were our patients taken from their normal daily routine but away from their families and everything familiar to them. Although these days may have felt long, I was fortunate to be able to reflect upon them and use these hard times as growth. On other days, I have never felt such happiness from helping someone put on their socks, watching someone's happiness upon completing a task on their own and being able to listen to others' life stories. Not only did working on this floor increase my self-emotional awareness, but it also helped me find personal fulfillment in any role that I hold. Seeing the impact I can make on an individual's life is forever rewarding and motivated me to continue pursuing my final degree. I did not intend to work on this floor and because of COVID, the opportunity arose. I cannot be more thankful for working on this floor as it gave me a better perspective on life.