

Edgar: Right. Hello, my name is Edgar Farias and today is March 7, 2021. Um, today we will be discussing the experiences of people during the COVID-19 pandemic. Umm, today we are in San Antonio, Texas, and I am interviewing:

Angel: Angel Cruz

Edgar: Okay, and Angel where were you born?

Angel: I was born here in San Antonio.

Edgar: Okay. And when were you born?

Angel: When?

Edgar: Yes.

Angel: Uh May 3rd, 1995.

Edgar: And what is your occupation?

Angel: Currently, I'm a special education teacher at Jefferson High School.

Edgar: Good, okay, and when did you hear...when did you first hear about the virus?

Angel: Oh, I think I first heard about the virus back in (exhales) I think it was like December of 2019, when it was making headlines about, umm, it was like causing issues in China, um, and how it's becoming a big thing over there, but I really didn't...that's when I first heard about it

Edgar: Did you think it was gonna be as big as it did? Or what did you think about it?

Angel: No, actually, I actually never even thought about it. Like I would see the headlines, but since it didn't affect us, you know, like, in a selfish way, I'm like, I kind of just brushed it off. I'm like, oh, that sucks (laughs) You know, that's happening over there. But really, that was it. It wasn't until...it got to San Antonio where it became a little bit more serious.

Edgar: Mhm, When did you first realize that it was serious? or when did you start worrying about it more seriously?

Angel: Well, I started worrying about it a little bit. When...I think it, I think it got to like New York, um, and I've read somewhere saying that in New York, if something were to ever, like go down as far as like a, like a pandemic in general, I think they said New York would be like a hotspot for it, because so many people from literally all over the world go through there. So it was when they got to New York, and it started getting some cases. But then it really got serious, um, when there was like a patient zero here in San Antonio that they released from like quarantine, and then they released it into the into North Star. So that was I think that was back back in February of 2020. So they released that patient. And me and my wife were actually there that day that that patient was there just a couple hours after. So that's when we were like, oh crap like this is? This is it's a big deal right now.

Edgar: Right, and can you explain how the virus affect you, your family? Or your friends?

Angel: Yeah um. So as far as my family, so I do have, I do have a nine month old, he was born...um...backin June of 2020. So as far as our family, you know, we have taking extra precautions, especially since he'san infant, child, we...we don't come in contact with many people, just people that we actually trust. So that being like, obviously like our parents, our siblings, our close relatives, like, like you, my cousin. Umm, people like that. And then as far as like other friends, we've been very limited on that as well. Considering that we do have some friends that don't really take it that serious. So we kind of just stayaway from them. We'll see them here and there, but not not as often.

Edgar : Right, and can you explain how the virus affected your daily routine? For example, shopping ongroceries or just spending time with your family? I know you just said that you hang out with them.

Angel: Yeah umm. So as far as like our daily routine, like doing just daily activities at first...so everything shut down...once things started opening up, we really just did a lot of curbside pickup, as far as food andrestaurants, things like that. Umm, and...what was the other part? Oh! spending time with our family.

Edgar: Mhm

Angel: Yeah, like I had just mentioned that. But um, as far as like getting together with our family, we used to do that every Sunday. And it was like a large group of us. But then once the pandemic hit um for a while we just didn't hang out at all. And then now...we're, we've got we've gotten back into it, butwe're very limited, right? So it's a smaller circle.

Edgar: Exactly. Sounds good. And um...well you're an educator so how was it working from home anddid you have to work from home or how's that experience?

Angel: When, when everything first went down like when we shut down obviously like all the schools just shut down completely right? Nobody could go to work. But at first we were able to work from homeso I worked from home from March, like the end of March, to...and then summer happened, to the beginning of the school year this year. So up until Labor Day weekend actually is when I worked from home. Um and then now obviously, we're, we're physically in on campus.

Edgar: Okay um. Do you know anyone that has been infected with the virus?

Angel: Yeah! Myself, you my other cousin, Sebastian, he was also infected by it. But yeah, it was not, it was not fun. It's thankfully, like, for myself, I didn't get hit as hard. But like my wife, she got hit a little harder than me. And the person we were most obviously worried about was my son. But umm she wasbreastfeeding at the time. So it did. It did help them a lot. Like he created antibodies. That's also that's what I've heard. But he seemed fine. We have some other friends also that that have been affected by the virus that have had to quarantine my sister. Umm and that's, I think that's pretty much it. Yeah, we've had, we've had a lot of close encounters with the virus.

Edgar : And just going back to the work, to your work, rather how has adapting to the virus affected your work responsibilities.

Angel: So this is actually my first full year teaching. I started teaching last year in December of 2019. Right, so I taught for three months. And then we stopped, right we we went into lockdown, and I haven't had a what's the word I'm looking for? A normal experience, if you may have teaching, right? This is all I know, like zoom, getting kids off to zoom creating assignments online. But in a way I think this has I haven't really been really brought down by it. I think it's been helpful to me as an educator, right. So all these new things that we're doing, of course, zoom, and just creating things online for our kids, especially those that are not physically here with us. I think all of that can play into a factor later on. Once we do get back to normal. I think that's going to be really helpful for me, right? So I know things look down right now. But the way I see it, it can't get any worse, hopefully, right? So from here on out all these new strategies that I've been doing and responsibilities of like keeping up with calling parents and things like that. That's something that I'm going to just keep using moving forward. Right? So that's going to help me become a better educator in the future.

Edgar : Yeah, I can imagine that being hard for me, being a student for the first time in a while, and coming back, and everything's online and having to adapt to zoom, so I can imagine yourself your first year, fully, um working out of school, and you have to learn from this side through zoom working from home and stuff like that.

Angel: Yeah, so in a way, I am a student of all of this as well even experienced teachers, right, we've noticed that the more older experienced teachers are actually struggling the most with this setting, right? I know people that have like been close to retiring, and they get hit with this right? So it's been a terrible experience. Overall, I think but um, you know, we're all learning here where it's a it's hard for both teachers and students. I feel like sometimes the teachers do get overseen right, so... I have two siblings still in school too. And, you know, they complain about the teachers and stuff like that and and I have to remind them, right that their older brother is an educator, so you know, just kind of feel for us...it's it's

Edgar: Show some compassion.

Angel: Yeah, show some compassion. Exactly. And I think that's the same way it goes for, you know, not just my family, but everyone you know, I tried to...I try not to get mean with people but I just want to let others know like, hey, there's there's two parties here, right teachers there they don't have all the answers all the time, right? They're learning students of course they uh it's hard for them. We would rather have them in person but hopefully this goes all this goes away soon.

Edgar: Hopefully. Right and wrapping up here. We just had the February snowstorm winter storm herein Texas, when that happened when that happened. Did you think about the virus at all?

Angel: Quite frankly, no. I didn't really think about it. Um, it felt like the beginning of the virus

again, we were just on lockdown, right? We couldn't drive anywhere. We were just at home. Everything was closed. So if it did feel like it, but I I didn't really think about the virus, right? Because I know I had so many. I knew a lot of people that were out with power without power without water. So I was thinking about them first.

Edgar: Yeah.

Angel: And it's funny that you asked this question because our grandma actually had has a video that says I can't...or it's a saying that says, can't wait for all this snow to be over so we can go back to the tranquility of the pandemic that we were in before. So it's like, yeah, it was forgotten. Right? It was like snow.

Edgar: Yeah.

Angel: Never seen that before. I never thought I'd see something like that. But you know...

Edgar: So many, so many inches of snow.

Angel: Yeah yeah.

Edgar: 2 days also.

Angel: Yeah. Like, yeah, I stepped down. I was like, up to my ankles.

Edgar: Yeah.

Angel: It was crazy.

Edgar: Yeah. Were you affected by the winter storm?

Angel: No, no, not at all. No, we kept power. We had plumbing. None of our...we had water. None of our we didn't have any plumbing issues. So we were you were blessed in that aspect. Right? We just tried to conserve energy because we were afraid of getting shut down or electricity shut down. But no, nothing happened. No one on our street actually got affected by it.

Edgar: That's good. And you have pets? Correct?

Angel: Yeah, yeah. two dogs. Peaches and Lonnie. So they were they were good, too.

Edgar: What did they think about the snowstorm?

Angel: I'm think they really? Well, it was hard taking them to the restroom. Right?

Edgar: Yeah.

Angel: They didn't want to, they don't want to step out in the snow. half...my weenie dog Lonnie, he, he was filled up to his stomach. So I didn't think he really liked that. So it was hard to get them out. So we had to create a pathway actually for for them to go. The only thing we did do is just move them from we usually have them in the laundry room, but the air circulation is not

good in there. So it's really cold in there. So we moved them into our room where it was warmer. But other than that, I think they were they just saw it as normal.

Edgar: Yeah. And then just one more question to finish up here. What would you like to tell future generations about the pandemic?

Angel: About the pandemic? I'm just kind of, well, I'm gonna get a little political here, but just take into consideration that the leaders that we've had during this time, right, such as our former President Trump, our current governor, like Abbott, Senator like Ted Cruz, you know, just take into consideration how they have treated their citizens during a time like this, and use it as fuel to either become a better leader for this state and country. Or do your research right and, and vote for the better person, right? Because at this point, I don't consider myself a Democrat or Republican. You know, I call it how it is right? If a democrat is doing something that I think is bad, I, I'm going to call them out on it. Right? Especially...and the Republicans, I tend to call them out a lot. Because I do notice a lot of inhumane things that they do, right? They don't take us into consideration the stuff that they say things like that. But at this point is more about, it's more about being human than it is political, right. So don't side with a political party, just because that's how you were raised. Right, just just take others into consideration, because that's one thing that has bothered me, and I think that has caused a division between our citizens, you know, because yeah, like the anti anti maskers, or even anti vaxxers, and things like that. They like to talk down on science and stuff like that. So just do your research on...on everything. Don't, don't go based off rash decisions or opinions and just learn from it. Just take all of this, learn from it, and just don't let it happen again.

Edgar: All right. Well, thank you, Angel, for your insight on this, it's been very helpful.

Angel: All right. Thank you!

Edgar: Thank you.