"Reality, Distance, Learning, Priorities"

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Reality, Distance, Learning, Priorities

By Maria G. Guerrero

Work, school, school, and work.
March 13th was the usual Friday,
My New job was set to start the following Monday,
Except it didn’t.
Saturday the 14th,
Panic shopping, growing fear of others,
Life changed in the matter of days.
Work, school, school, and work.
Now all that was left was “school, school”,
Right?
Stressful thoughts followed by relief,
Extra time for the “school, school” portion.
“School, school” now virtual.
Professors now students,
Learning to teach again,
Students learning to learn again.
I myself, learning with my own students.
How do I support them from behind a screen?
The feeling of not knowing became overwhelming.
What am I doing?
But wait there’s more,
Caring for family, for friends, for myself.
I became worrisome of everyone’s health.
Weeks go by and I am back to work,
Sort of.
Working back on site, but not provided with technology,
How do I do my job?
I don’t have a camera, I don’t have a work area,
Why can’t I work from home?
You can work from home, you can work from home,
And you can work from home,
But NOT instructional aides.
Instructional aides won’t be getting laptops,
So figure it out.
Now it is work, school, school, and work again.
“School, school” picks back up,
Bringing loads and loads of work along with it.
Relearning how to learn,
Relearning how to work.
Distance learning is the new word on the street,
Runner up to Social Distancing.
Learning from afar,
Working from afar,
Socializing from afar.
Soon, everyone starts to adapt
And life picks back up.
New responsibilities at home,
New responsibilities at work,
New overwhelming emotions.
Work, school, school, and work
They no longer flow with ease.
I begin selecting what is most important,
Deciding what can wait and what cannot.
I have to work more to make ends meet,
I have to do homework so I can graduate in the winter,
I also have family to care for.
Overwhelmed becomes a normal feeling,
Followed by guilt.
I felt like I could not feel bad for myself,
Afterall I am not alone,
Things could be worse, right?
We were expected to remain quarantined over summer,
We’re in October now.
March through September are now a blur,
I am just now catching my breath.
I have the time to reflect on the effects of the virus,
Both good and bad.
I pushed myself harder, suppressing fear
Leading to my biggest accomplishments thus far.
I made unlikely friends that I would not have met otherwise.
I question what my reality is,
Things are changing daily,
I take it day by day and hope for the best.
For now, things have settled a bit,
Work, school, school, and work…
Until tomorrow at least.