

# RETURN TO NORMAL?

## COVID DIARIES FROM LOCAL YOUTH

OTTER TAIL COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM

### "New Normal"

Slower..... deeper.....connected.....

I don't think "normal" exist anymore.

I think that's a good thing.

COVID exposed those cracks in our society; laid bare by our flaws and oppression, we cannot unlearn what we saw and we can only move forward in the new ways trying to be better.

Trying to practice vulnerability and humility, to build true relationships prior to COVID to help cross divides.

Normal now is a new focus on that work because the divisions from the past are just a stark as before.

No more COVID line.

Not filling days with zoom calls/meetings and making time for a real lunch, and a break with work.

Not having to watch CDC infection rates for staff and PPE levels.

Being able to go out in my small rural community.....without feeling ostracized because I work in public health.

Connecting with family and friends without worrying of getting them sick.

Not pretending the "old normal" should be our "new normal".

We cannot unlearn what we saw and we can only move forward in the "new way" .....trying to be better together.

~ Words by Public Healthcare workers at the 2022 LPHA Fall conference & composed by Artist, Naomi RaMona Schliesman



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### "Healing"

Working in public health we promote wellness this can take many forms education outreach and vaccines.

Phone calls from restaurant owners. Tears flowing as they were about to lose their business.....if they couldn't get one more table.

Hopeless. I had to learn that people have the right to make the wrong decision or what I felt was a wrong decision, not masking, not vaccinating politicizing a fact, it made me feel unheard and unvalued.

I quickly realized that this could be our finest hour, or our worst.

It was hard for me to understand how others could not and would not get on board with the restrictions and vaccinations.  
Our only way out of this.

There was so much unknown and change, but what was consistent was feeling love for the health and safety of my family.

Hopeful..... The time I had with my immediate family was such a gift.

As a public health nurse for 25 years. It was hard to see friends and family divided .....even my own.

I still struggle today with the comments from the “unbelievers”. It feels insulting for all that has poured into this and hoping for brighter days ahead.

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