



Lessons Learned from Covid-19

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In the midst of Covid-19, I reached out to members of the Beyond Insurance Global Network (BIGN) to get their take on lessons learned in the midst of Covid-19. Below are their thoughts.

Beyond Insurance would appreciate your perspective on the lessons that you have learned during the pandemic. Please email saddis@beyondinsurance.com.

Lesson 1 -- Anxiety & Stress

Stress is a temporary emotional response to a perceived threat. Our natural stress reaction usually originates from an identifiable source that fades away once the threat passes. Anxiety is the residual effect of chronic stress; unlike the initial stress response, anxiety hangs around long after the problem is solved. Anxiety can leave you feeling on-edge, nervous, out of control, apprehensive and paralyzed -- all at the same time. Covid-19 has created unprecedented levels of stress. Experts have suggested that the residual trauma - in the form of anxiety - will be seared into public consciousness long after the virus disappears. It is imperative that you recognize the symptoms of stress and anxiety and take action so that they do not negatively impact your life. You may wish to refer to the six tips on combating anxiety and stress as outlined in the February 2020 article in Rough Notes on this subject.

Lesson 2 -- Resilience

Have you perceived a "lack of control" over the outcomes of your actions amid Covid-19? Are there times that you have felt helpless? If so, you must practice strengthening your resilience --

the skill that enables you to recover quickly from challenges and difficulties. Resilient people rely upon a support system of family, friends, and colleagues. And resilient people have not built their lives or careers on dominoes -- when one thing tumbles, the rest should not follow suit.

Lesson 3 -- Resourcefulness

In the midst of the pandemic, have you been able to achieve maximal results using minimal resources? Have you found clever ways to deal with the issues of Covid-19? If so, you are resourceful...a special talent that requires innovation and imagination. You can fortify your resourcefulness despite the fact that your daily work routine, support systems, and environment have been altered.

Lesson 4 -- Attitude of Gratitude

Gratitude is an internally generated capability that empowers you to create and discover unlimited meaning and value in every situation and relationship in life. Simply put, gratitude shifts your mindset from scarcity to abundance, causing you to focus on what you *already* have, instead of what you are missing. An attitude of gratitude makes you more resilient, improves your health, reduces stress, and strengthens relationships.

Lesson 5 -- Mental Toughness

An essential ingredient in handling the daily grind of Covid-19 is mental toughness...your ability to focus on a task and not let negative thoughts intrude. A key strategy to confront mental toughness is your ability to handle pressure. Pressure can be both a positive and negative force. Confronted with the issues of Covid-19, you have been forced to weigh the benefits of success as well as the pains of failure at the same time. Mentally tough people know how to stay focused and use their inner strength to move ahead even in the most difficult of times.

Lesson 6 -- Empathy

Empathy represents your ability to consciously understand and experience the thoughts and action of another person. In today's unsettled environment, there may not be a more important attribute than empathy. While your clients and prospects are expecting you to demonstrate technical knowledge and risk management solutions, they also are starving for you to understand their diversity of perspectives, pains, and struggles. Henry Ford once said, "If there is any great secret of success in life, it lies in the ability to put yourself in another person's place and see things from his or her point of view."

Lesson 7 -- Less is More

The term less is more means that doing less can have more impact than doing a lot. Since the Covid-19 outbreak, you have had significantly less social interactions, travel, opportunities to shop, dine, and more. While disappointing, did you find a silver lining...perhaps a meaning to life

that may not have existed before Covid-19? If so, you have learned that less is more, and that working smarter -- not harder -- is more efficient in the long run.

Lesson 8 -- Optimism

Optimism is the armor required to withstand turmoil and hardship. Optimistic people see Covid-19 as a learning experience. Rather than allowing negative thoughts to creep into your mind, you will be wise to think positively and visualize the world that will exist post Covid-19. Your optimism will empower you to remind yourself that Covid-19 is a temporary setback -- and that your future is bright.

Lesson 9 -- Servant Leadership

Servant leaders serve the people they lead. Their style represents a selfless approach to leadership, one that prioritizes the needs of others. In the midst of Covid-19, they are all around us, though they may be hard to spot because they are so focused on their mission -- selflessly serving others. It is the doctor or nurse who goes beyond the call of duty to care for patients. It is the schoolteacher who delivers wisdom while sacrificing his or her health. And it is you who goes above and beyond to serve your clients and community.

Lesson 10 -- Growth Mindset

Your mindset is a set of assumptions, methods, beliefs, and attitudes that you hold. It is so powerful that it orients the way you think, act, feel and handle situations. Covid-19 is an external force that has caused you to re-think priorities ranging from family to work to health. Although the pandemic offers a unique set of challenges, it is imperative that you keep a growth mindset as it will lead you to your ultimate potential.

Lesson 11 -- The WHY of Your Professional Existence

In the book, *Start with WHY*, Simon Sinek suggests that your personal integrity and source(s) of inspiration are the motivation behind your actions -- at work and in life. Prior to Covid-19, you may have thought that your professional WHY was centered on the breadth, efficiency, or competitiveness of the insurance transaction. Today, you know that your WHY has taken on more meaning. In the midst of Covid-19, is your WHY helping your clients deal with risk and uncertainties, supported by solutions to deal with them? As you continue to discover your WHY, you will gain enhanced clarity, purpose, and passion.

Lesson 12 -- Work/Life Balance

The term work/life balance first appeared in the 1970s. The expression means having equilibrium amongst all the priorities in your life. It is interesting to note that the state of balance differs from person to person. However, if there is little to no balance over an extended period of time, the vast majority of people experience stress and, eventually, burnout. Persistent stress results in fatigue, sleep deprivation, aggravation, and irritability with colleagues, family,

and friends. A silver lining to Covid-19 is that, for many, it has forced us to slow down and re-evaluate priorities such as nutrition and exercise, relationships, hobbies, sleep, and time management.

About the Author

Scott Addis, CPCU, CRA, CBWA is the CEO of Beyond Insurance and is recognized as an industry leader having been named a Philadelphia finalist for *Inc. Magazine's* "Entrepreneur of the Year" award as well as one of the "25 Most Innovative Agents in America." Beyond Insurance is a consulting firm that offers leadership training, cultural transformation, and talent and tactical development for enlightened professionals who are looking to take their practice to the next level. Since 2007, the proven and repeatable processes of Beyond Insurance have transformed individuals and organizations as measured by enhanced organic growth, productivity, profitability, and value in the marketplace.