

sobre tudo

GUSTAVO'S MEMOIRS

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RESUMO: Com o início de 2020 e a descoberta do novo vírus conhecido como "Covid 19", grande parte da população mundial teve que iniciar o chamado "isolamento social" que afetou totalmente a vida das pessoas. "AUTORE's memoirs" é um texto que mostra como o isolamento influenciou a vida de um jovem de 17 anos que aprendeu a se reinventar ao longo do último ano.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Quarentena; Inteligência Emocional; Aprendizagem

ABSTRACT: With the beginning of 2020, and the discovery of the new virus known as "covid 19", a large part of the world population had to start the so-called "social isolation" that totally affected people's lives. "AUTORE's memoirs" is a text that shows how it has influenced the life of a 17-year-old young man who learned how to reinvent himself throughout the last year.

KEYWORDS: Quarantine; Emotional Intelligence; Learning

Throughout life you grow up and realize that you have to become better to conquer new opportunities. I knew that, even though I did not know how to do it, I thought I was good at performing tasks. In spite of that, when you decide to leave your “comfort zone” you see how much you have to do to keep growing, and maybe you are very far from where you want to go. So, it’s time to let go of your ego and hear who has already gotten there. That’s why I started studying about how to improve myself as soon as the quarantine began.

Six months later, my teacher and I started writing a text about the new experiences I had been having on quarantine. But we stopped it when the summer vacation began. When we came back to resume the writing, I realized that I had changed a lot during this break. For this reason, we decided to organize the text in two parts: in the first, when everything started in the beginning of 2020; and in the second, one year later in quarantine.

Here, it is me telling the story in the middle of 2020

I thought that it would be the year of my life: I would learn a lot of things, meet so many people... On the other hand, on the second day of January, we almost had the “third world war” when Trump killed the general Qassim Suleimani (the second strongest person in Iran).

... There, I figured the year would be very hard. To make things worse, it was discovered a disease called *covid-19*. It started killing people from Wuhan, China. Over time, the virus was brought to Brazil by people that were infected, and more or less 1 month later, in March, the quarantine began.

I confess, I really liked to stay home for 2 weeks because I could play my games during this time, and sleep all I wanted. My parents were back to work after two weeks, and now they are wearing masks. We have to use alcohol to clean the goods we buy. Also, all the places

started asking people to wash their hands or use hand sanitizer, and wear masks. And I was still staying in my house, just playing my games. However, if you do the same thing all the time, it becomes boring. My school classes haven't resumed yet, hence I did not have a routine, and I was getting crazy. When I lost a match I was playing, I'd get really angry, and I had to stop. My mother recommended me to leave the house at least to get some sun, since it was the only thing I could do. And, the quarantine has been extended until further notice.

So, it was in those moments when I was under the sun that I started to think about stuff I had never thought about before. Things that should be normal at my age, and I was not doing - like having more responsibility or understanding the consequences of my actions.

By Searching on how to improve myself, I found out a lot of new things, such as new topics to study that I did not know I liked. One of the first things I did was meditation, it helped me to clear the ideas and become more focused and less anxious. At that time, I came across the topic of "body language" as well. By studying it, I've learned a lot of things about it, and improved some social skills. But I knew I was forgetting something, then, talking with my friend from school, I realized that the missing topic was "Emotional Intelligence".

Basically, emotional intelligence is the capacity/ability to recognize your own emotions, you can't control them, yet you can learn how to deal with them. It means learning how to deal with the stimuli. Along with those things/learnings, I started meeting my English teacher online to have conversations in English.

She told me that when she realized the classes wouldn't resume anytime soon, she decided she needed to do something because she didn't like to stay away from the classroom. Then, she got in contact with students (including me) so we could talk for a certain amount of time about what was going on in our lives. We would meet once a week. During that time, the teacher and I could practice English. That

experience was really important to her, because her students and her could keep practicing English and discuss some aspects that were relevant to each student in the particular context.

Six months later...

A lot of changes happened in the last six months.

Let's start by the beginning. The pandemic has not finished yet, and we keep staying in the house. However, I'm always trying to keep learning other things since we have more time. The way I thought of the pandemic before has changed a lot. Now, I know how it impacts my life.

On the first line of the text I said "I thought that it would be the year of my life", and maybe it was. I wouldn't exchange anything for what I've learned. I've managed to see that this year could provide me the time to learn more complex things. Also, I could share that knowledge with my English teacher and explain more about it during the meetings with her throughout the year. I was most interested in reading and learning new things.

In addition to the daily life things, we would talk about my new findings. For this reason, we made a deal: I would read as much as I could and then, I would report to her the news things I would have found out every week. Every day that I talked with her, I had to study more things, and try to explain them in English. So, it was a big challenge to study in Portuguese and report in English.

When I was researching about personal development, I found a concept called *Emotional Intelligence* (Daniel Goleman, 2020). The main idea is to deal with our own emotions. It has some tenets, such self-awareness, self-management and empathy, for example.

Empathy (which means understanding another person's feelings) is a concept really easy to grasp. Nevertheless, it is hard to put into practice. The concept is more complex than just "feeling the other

person's feelings", it also involves having a conversation without judgment³⁷, for example.

I thought that I could not practice empathy because I'm on quarantine, which means I can not meet other people. But talking with my teacher, she made me think about it: Can't I develop empathy just because I'm on quarantine? Well, I didn't understand what she was trying to say at first. Thus, I started thinking of an easy example to help it make sense, then I came across my school.

For example: My teachers from some subjects wouldn't like to know if I muted their classes³⁸ to go do something else. At least, I wouldn't want that to happen to me. What can I do to practice empathy in this context? I think it's a good idea to unmute my microphone, to send messages on the public chat and maybe turn on the camera.

Discussing emotional intelligence is a very enriching topic. And when I started telling her about empathy, she remembered that one of her groups of students was having some issues regarding this topic as they had been disrespectful to some teachers and colleagues.

Based on what I told her about what I knew on the topic, she talked with her colleague (the other English teacher teaching at the same grade) and they decided to develop a small project on identifying the differences between the concepts of sympathy and empathy in order to challenge their behavior.

She said that that experience was quite meaningful because by meeting me (and the other students) every week, she could have the

³⁷ For further information check <https://youtu.be/1Ewvgu369Jw> to learn more about the concepts of sympathy and empathy, for example. Accessed on April 28th, 2021.

³⁸ We have been having online classes since July 2020. On these classes (synchronous activity), we participate in a webconference with the teacher and can interact with them by typing on the public chat, private chat, using the microphone and even turning on our cameras.

opportunity to exchange knowledge and learn from each other. That kind of knowledge would contribute to both her daily life and in her professional life as well.

Final thoughts

Those weekly meetings were really important for me because I had a friend to talk to. Even though we were a few kilometers away, by using my cellphone and doing a video call, it helped me keep going, and keep happy with my own me. And of course, It helped me practice my English.

Maybe, it's funny to think that I was 16 years old, just a boy living my life, and overnight everything is changed. I haven't seen my friends for over 1 year now. I can not leave my house because I can be infected, but I'm still here.

I haven't given up, I will not give up. This quarantine has shown me that the more difficult things get, the more I have to grow and keep going. And if I stop, probably no one is gonna do something for me.

Here is something I've learned over that last year: I'm just in the beginning of the journey and that is nice, because the more I learn, the smarter I get.

References

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