The Center for the Digital Future and Interactive Advertising Bureau

The Coronavirus Disruption Project: How We are Living and Coping during the Pandemic

May 2020
# Americans miss their routine and their freedom.
**Friends, dining out, and shopping top the list.**

To what extent do you miss these activities? (Miss a lot)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Miss a lot (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Going where I want and doing what I please</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting with relatives/friends I see regularly</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dining in restaurants</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting with relatives/friends I see occasionally</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close personal contact</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping in brick-and-mortar stores</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual personal contact</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having set routines in my life</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Going to work</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working out at a gym or outside the home</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching/listening to live sports</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attending live events</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Going to the movies</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drinking/socializing in bars</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hobbies, digital media, and family time fill the days.

**What do you enjoy during the pandemic?** (Enjoyed a lot)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enjoyment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No commute/traffic</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More time to catch up on TV/movies</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More time for sleep</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More time for family activities</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less pressure for social obligations</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More time to participate in hobbies/personal activities</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More time for reading</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More time to catch up on chores/responsibilities at home</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More time by myself at home</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More time for cooking</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More time for contact with family/friends online or by phone</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More time for sex/intimacy</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less pressure to visit relatives</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More time for spiritual/religious activities</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More time for job while telecommuting</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Many Americans will need a health “reset” when life returns to normal.

Since the pandemic began, how have these habits changed?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sleeping habits are changing...</th>
<th>...and indulging is increasing.</th>
<th>Of drinkers are drinking more</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>27% are sleeping more</td>
<td>41% are eating more</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>36% are exercising less</td>
<td>of drinkers are drinking more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>42% Of marijuana smokers are smoking more</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Many people are living in fear: fear of catching the virus, going to the store, overwhelming hospitals, having the pandemic drag on...

How much do you agree with these concerns? (Strongly/somewhat agree)

- I'm concerned I/people important to me will catch the virus: 73%
- I'm concerned going to store/running errands because of the virus: 66%
- Coronavirus pandemic will still be out of control in a few months: 54%
- I'm concerned local hospital doesn't have adequate facilities/supplies: 52%
- I'm concerned I won't be able to fight off virus if I get it: 37%

29% among those under 35, 50% among those 65+
Americans of all income levels are worried about money; this may have lasting effects on how we view debt, spending, and saving.

How much do you agree with these concerns?
(Strongly/somewhat agree)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concern</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>&lt;$50k</th>
<th>$50-99k</th>
<th>$100k+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I’ve had to <strong>spend extra money</strong> to adjust to new life circumstances</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am concerned my <strong>standard of living</strong> will <strong>decline</strong></td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will <strong>lose</strong> much of my <strong>savings</strong></td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My <strong>job may no longer exist</strong> if the pandemic continues (among those employed)</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Since the pandemic began, home life has become a children’s paradise.

Have rules regarding the children in your household been relaxed? (A lot/somewhat/a little)

- Bedtime: 84%
- Watching TV: 87%
- Digital Media: 82%
- Playing Video Games: 85%
The coronavirus pandemic has had a profound impact on America’s psyche that will be hard to shake.

37% are feeling lonelier than ever

This is especially true for those under 35, as almost half report increased loneliness (48%)

62% are feeling more anxious
Relationships at home have improved.

**Most improved is relationships with children**

45% say relationships with children in their homes are better

**Many say spouse/partner relationships are better; men agree more than women**

35% those with a partner/spouse say their relationship has gotten better; 40% men vs. 31% women
Hope for a post-pandemic world, and also a new sign of the times

New plans and goals....

56% plan to spend more time with family

42% hope to work from home more

39% buy more online

...and a possible shift in social conduct

37% plan to reduce face-to-face time with others
For many, working from home could be a permanent reality; more than one-quarter can adapt all of their job to work from home.

**How much of your job is adaptable to working from home online?**
(Those who have continued working during the pandemic)

- All: 26%
- Most: 22%
- Some: 17%
- A little: 9%
- None: 26%

Of those with a high school education, **51%** say “none”
The ins and outs of working from home

Adjusting to work from home

- ✓ I have a dedicated work space at home (29%)
- ✓ I have changed my dress or grooming (70%)
- ✓ I am more productive at my job working at home (17%)*
- ✓ I work more hours from home (15%)**
- ✓ There is interference from people at home (63%)

* I am less effective working from home 23%

**I work fewer hours from home 42%
For adults working from home, this sudden shift has been a mixed success - more flexibility and no commute, but less interaction and structure.

**Those working from home most enjoy…**
- No commute (65%)
- More flexibility (64%)
- Relaxed dress (61%)
- No irritating workmates (36%)
- Control of environment (59%)
- Fewer disruptions (34%)
- Avoiding work politics (38%)

**Those working from home most miss…**
- Being somewhere other than home (63%)
- Socializing/interacting with colleagues or customers (59%)
- Workplace structure (56%)
- Enjoyable aspects of commuting (39%)
Working from home - beyond the benefits, some new issues to consider.

Problems with working from home

- Distractions - children, pets, phone calls, neighbors (45%)
- Erosion of the boundary between work and home (31%)
- Overload of online calls and conferences (18%)
- Lack of privacy (16%)
For many, working from home works: half want it permanently incorporated.

“I will want to work from home more when the pandemic is over”
Those employed & working remotely

- Strongly/somewhat agree: 52%
- Neither agree nor disagree: 30%
- Strongly/somewhat disagree: 18%

Total: 100%
Before the coronavirus, **59% of students** were participating in **online learning**.

Now **85% of students** are attending classes **remotely**.

**College students miss the campus; remote classes mean working harder, learning less**

*How much do you agree with the following about remote learning? (Strongly/somewhat agree)*

- I have necessary equipment/technology: 75%
- My school is actively supporting online learning: 63%
- I prefer physical classroom environment: 63%
- I feel more isolated from learning community: 61%
- I have to work harder to learn: 56%
- I learn less online than in person: 54%
- It’s more difficult to ask questions and get...: 53%
- Teachers are good at adapting plans to...: 51%
- I enjoy it more than in-class learning: 34%
Content consumption is at an all time high.

How has your time doing the following been affected?
(Increased a lot/some)

Those **under 35** drive increased media consumption across all channels except reading.

- Streaming videos (e.g., Netflix): 47%
- Network/cable TV: 45%
- Social media: 44%
- Reading: 43%
- Audio content (e.g., podcasts): 28%
- Video games: 23%
Most Americans feel trips to the store are a risk and have experienced disruptions when going.

How much do you agree with these concerns?  
(Strongly/somewhat agree)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concern</th>
<th>Agreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Going to the grocery store may be dangerous because of contamination</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is a lack of food available at stores</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are long lines at my local grocery store</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An especially strong concern for those 65+
Many have turned to e-commerce as a solution.

Consumers are making new habits:

- **41%** bought products online they typically bought in local stores
- **36%** bought food to-go or delivered for the first time
- **19%** have bought groceries online for the first time
- **38%** have started using debit/credit cards more often instead of cash
Many are still adjusting to buying more online and less in brick-and-mortar stores. But interest is clear in a future with even more internet purchasing.

**How much do you agree with the following about online shopping?**

(Strongly/somewhat agree)

- I miss examining products in person before buying: 57%
- I miss the experience of in-person shopping: 53%
- I am frustrated with long delivery times: 45%
- It is easy to get my questions answered about the products: 30%

39% overall say they will want to shop online more after coronavirus.
Online grocery providers will have to provide faster deliveries and a more stable supply of products to keep the surge of new customers.

### How satisfied are you with these aspects of online grocery shopping?

Among online grocery shoppers (bases vary)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Dissatisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freshness</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivery time</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product availability</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### I will want to buy groceries online more often when the pandemic is over

- **Strongly/somewhat agree**: 31%
- **Neither agree nor disagree**: 30%
- **Strongly/somewhat disagree**: 39%

Total
Most relied on sources of info:

- Anthony Fauci: 45%
- Own state’s governor: 35%
- Gov’t online resources (e.g., CDC): 30%
- Other healthcare experts: 29%
- Int’l online resources (e.g., WHO): 21%
- Donald Trump: 20%
- Andrew Cuomo: 19%
- Own city’s mayor: 17%
- Deborah Birx: 16%

How would you rate the government response to the coronavirus pandemic?

- Excellent: 9%
- Good: 24%
- Fair: 28%
- Poor: 39%

33% excellent/good overall
Conservatives: 64%
Moderates: 31%
Liberals: 11%

54% excellent/good overall
Conservatives: 59%
Moderates: 51%
Liberals: 55%

As expected, though, there’s a strong ideological tint to views on federal response not seen on a statewide level.
Ten ways the coronavirus will shape the future

The coronavirus may have a lasting impact on America’s collective psyche

1. **The impact of the coronavirus isn’t just physical or financial – there is a significant emotional toll.** Americans report concerns about their lives as well as increased loneliness and anxiety since the outset of the coronavirus pandemic. Many people are living in fear – fear of catching the virus, going to the store, overwhelming hospitals, having the pandemic drag on and on.

2. **Americans of all income levels are worried about money;** this may have lasting effects on how we view debt, spending, and saving.

3. **The federal government let us down.** Many Americans feel the federal response has been poor. The President is not high on the list of people Americans rely on for information; they are looking to state officials and health care experts to guide their decisions.

4. **Many Americans miss their routine and their freedom.** Friends, dining out, and shopping top the list. Hobbies, digital media, and family time (including cooking) fill their days now.

5. **Virtual connections are here to stay.** Technology is creating new habits and will likely continue to play a role in helping people connect, even after the immediate pandemic crisis.

6. **Some people will need a health “reset” when life returns to normal.** Though most are trying to maintain balance while stuck at home, there are a considerable number who are giving in to less healthy behaviors in order to cope.

7. **The challenges of at-home learning may leave some children behind when they return to school.** Most kids are spending more time with parents or watching TV, but for one in four, schoolwork is lagging.

8. **Working from home has been a mixed success.** Many employees who can work from home want to permanently incorporate it. Although they miss the office, some workers now realize many jobs can be done just as effectively remotely.

9. **Most college students, on the other hand, don’t want to transition to online learning environments.**

10. **E-commerce businesses are gaining new customers, and many people are buying online for the first time.**
**Methodology**

This research was conducted by the Center for the Digital Future at USC Annenberg and Interactive Advertising Bureau to understand the impact of the coronavirus on the everyday lives of Americans.

**Online, 20-minute quantitative survey**

- Fielded April 8-10, 2020
- N=1,000 U.S. adults ages 18+

**More information**: info@digitalcenter.org

Many thanks to The Wonderful Company for putting together this presentation.