

Interviewee: Kenneth Moran and Wendy Moran
Interviewer: Samuel Moran
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Abstract:

Kenneth Moran and Wendy Moran live in McHenry, Illinois. Kenneth Moran is a quality assurance manager while Wendy Moran is a phlebotomist with Northwestern medicine. In this interview they discuss how the pandemic has affected their lives through their work and family. They discuss how the pandemic has affected the McHenry county area through businesses and the loss of life. The topics of lockdowns, business, and government are discussed. Personal feelings are also discussed such as anger and acceptance. They also provide insight to what they have done during the pandemic such as board games and home improvement projects.

SM: Hello there, today's date is November 10, 2020. The time is 6:05 pm. I am Samuel Moran and I am an undergraduate student at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. This is an oral history interview to be submitted to the COVID-19 historical archives. I'm here with my parents Kenneth and Wendy Moran. For our first question, can you please provide some information about yourself such as your age, we live in your current occupations?

KM: My name is Kenneth Moran. I am 53 years old. We live in McHenry, Illinois. And I'm a quality assurance manager.

WM: I am Wendy Moran. I am 44. I'm a client office phlebotomist with Northwestern medicine.

SM: Okay. First, we will discuss your occupations. How has COVID-19 impacted your professions?

WM: Well, for me, being in a client phlebotomy me- I, our office was actually shut down, or I want to say two months. So I was off work for three weeks, until I got rerouted to another office that was open. So a lot of our client offices got shut down because they were afraid of COVID-19.

KM: I worked for a central company where we were manufacturing ventilator parts, and we shipped over and produced over 300,000 pieces in the first couple months of COVID. Since then, we've been making, we've still been working. So nothing's really affected us.

WM: Well overtime got cut for a little bit.

KM: We, well, okay. Yeah, our overtime did get reduced from 55 plus hours to almost a straight forty. So it did affect us quite a bit. Sales have gone from we're shipping over a million dollars a week to we're lucky to be shipping. As a couple times around, 670, so.

SM: Okay.

WM: 670,000.

KM: 670,000 yeah.

WM: A lot.

SM: So, what exactly has changed at your workplaces due to the current pandemic?

WM: Well, I ended up switching jobs completely, because my client office that I was at, never really resumed up to the full five days a week. And it would be one day a week. And then a little bit later, they'd increase it a day. And then again, another day. So when I asked, When will it come back to, you know, five days a week. They said, probably not for a long time. And that was at four days a week? Well, I went ahead and switched from labcorp to Northwestern medicine, so that I can go back to 40 hours, at least a week. Being in healthcare, you don't think your job would be at risk because you're an essential employee. And the whole time I've always worked at hospitals. So I've never been off work, especially during a health crisis. So it's very, very strange to even be offered those three weeks, and not be in the middle of the pandemic.

KM: For me, what's changed is, you know, we take the chance. We've had a couple people have COVID we've shut down for a day to do a deep cleaning. One of the things we're constantly doing now is wearing masks. We're staying six feet away from everybody. And when we do, we brought in with my people there in, underneath me, we made sure that they were cleaning all the general used machinery and stuff because of the fact that COVID, it just affects everybody. So that's pretty much how it's really changed us.

SM: Going off that point. Do you think that COVID has affected your workplace significantly?

KM: Yes. For us, we have, we have some employees that have underlying conditions. So they just, I had one employee who had his, he's 65 his mother lives with them. And he took a month off because of COVID. And he was a supervisor. And we have other people that just don't show up for work, you know, or

WM: And you have temperature checks everyday.

KM: Temperature checks yes, yes. The other thing we have done. For CBC we've done temperature checks every day. We have masks everywhere, and try to stay there trying to clean everything. So.

WM: My work, at my new client office phlebotomy job, is they're pretty lenient. Unfortunately, but not all of the patients wear masks, but it's because they have underlying conditions. Um, but I make sure to remind the workers where there's, and they've asked, I've had patients say, Do you want me to put my mask on, and then I go, it's okay, I have mine on to protect you. Because it's more about them than it is for me. But with that, in the sense that I'm not going to make them

wear the mask, because I believe in COVID, I know it's real. But at the same time, it affects them to wear it. So I just made sure mine is on.

SM: So my next question that we're going to move on to is have any of your coworkers or even yourself come in contact with COVID-19?

WM: Uh, yeah, I was in an office not long ago. And they were doing all testing for all the COVID all the patients that came in, if they suspected they had COVID, I would draw blood for the COVID antibody test, the doctor would do the nasal swabs. And we were able to at that place, get a machine called Sophia two, and it did a rapid COVID testing, within 15 minutes, we would have a result. And then they would do the swab that would be sent out. That one takes about three days to get back. But you would not believe how many patients came out positive on that rapid 15 minute test. And almost every single time that would come out positive, we would all guess. So it was just shocking to be able to see it that fast. And, anyway, and I would draw their blood. So I was with COVID patients a lot. Um, and then my cousin, her husband had it. And two of her sons had it. One son had it in March, and her husband and her other son are actually just coming out of quarantine right now. So they were quarantined for two weeks, the whole family. And that's really hard for a family of five to not be able to go to the grocery store and just get the daily essential things that you need, and then depend on neighbors to do that for you. So I do I actually know a lot of people who have had or currently do have COVID, So.

KM: And we have had, I have not been around anyone that I know has had it, but we have had people at work, test, and then prove positive. I did have a employee when this started. We were having a meeting discussing the covid and you know what we had to do and she decided to tell us that her mother had COVID and she was seeing her daily. So we had to send her home and she had to self quarantine for 14 days to make sure you know and then we had to clean her work area and everything that she touched. And that's key when when somebody gets it we, ownership and management we have cleaned the facility they spray down everything and so that's how it's affecting us.

WM: Wipe it all down,

KM: Yep.

SM: Okay, what would you say is the biggest change challenge that you faced during the pandemic, when it came to your occupation so far.

WM: For me, it was probably being off work for the three weeks, I felt helpless. I felt like we may never ever go back to work again at my office. Um, and even though I was getting paid, it wasn't the point for me, it was more. I'm used to being right there, frontline. So to be home, and stuck in my house, um, instead of actually working. And being on the front line was very, very tough for me. I have worked through Ebola, Zika, you name it. I've worked through all of it. I've been doing my job since you were nine months old. So, what is that almost 20 years. And I have never not worked during a health care crisis. So that was probably the hardest part for me, was not being there.

KM: The hardest part for me was basically having to cut all my employees hours.

WM: Oh yeah.

KM: We had a lot of people who, you know.

WM: Just bought vehicles.

KM: Bought cars, bought homes, were in the process of doing something. And then they went from working fifty, fifty-five hours a week

WM: Right.

KM: To working, forty.

WM: Yes.

KM: The shift differential that we offered at work, they lost. So you had a lot of people who weren't happy. We even had people walk out because they were like, well, i'm not working. And we basically said, okay, you know, and that's that's on you. That was really the hardest part. The other hard part was dealing with making sure I was not bringing anything home to my family. Because I was working.

WM: Yeah.

KM: During the initial you know, coming home and

WM: Stripping in the garage.

KM: Stripping down in the garage, spraying down all our groceries, bringing them into our house to protect my sons and my wife. You know, I was already out in it. So I would why I was, doing shopping because I felt you know, besides that we were shopping for.

WM: My mom.

KM: My in laws. Yeah. And dropping the things off at the door ringing their doorbell and walking away. And that was hard. Then the second hardest was trying to find the Clorox or something to wipe down or clean, clean stuff with.

WM: And the toilet paper.

KM: Well, toilet paper. Yes, was.

WM: Yeah, that was fun. Anyway.

KM: Spent \$40 on six rolls of toilet paper. So that was a hard thing.

WM: Yeah we did.

KM: I went to, I went to Ace Hardware and had to buy toilet paper.

WM: Yep.

KM: And they had it amazingly. But I don't think a lot of people thought to go to Ace Hardware and that was our sixth store going to?

WM: Yeah, yup.

SM: Okay. I remember that. So let us shift a little. How is COVID-19 affected your community or area, such as just McHenry County.

WM: I think that restaurants, and I'll say massage parlors and even haircut places, just businesses in general, have really taken a really big hit financially. And a lot of places are talking about closing down if the governor does another shut down. So everyone is worried about that. It's all over social media, how they can't afford to keep their doors open. I think that's, but then on the other hand, you see a lot of good things come of it too. So, restaurants helping each other if their shipment doesn't come in for flour. I read this today actually there was no flour and another restaurant actually brought flour to them so that they could stay open. So there's a lot of curbside dining or curbside pickup, and outdoor dining with tents. And, everyone's just trying to do what they need to do to survive. So not sure if it's anywhere close to over. They didn't say that a vaccine is coming out, it's in phase three. But we don't know for sure if it's going to work or not. So as a community, I think a lot of people have come together. And on the other end, a lot of people have very short fuses. We went to a movie theater the other night with my parents, and I thought someone was gonna beat up my dad because he said something about the popcorn on the floor. And, he was just kidding. But that guy was very serious. And it got a little bit heated, but I made a joke out of it. And then peepaw just kept walking. I don't think he heard him. So. But people have very short fuses. With everything going on in the world. So.

KM: One of the things I've noticed is that you drive by a lot of the stores, strip malls.

WM: They're closed.

KM: They're closed.

WM: Yeah.

KM: Drive by the bowling alley, I drive by a bowling alley every day to go to work it has a restaurant attached. It's closed completely. And those are things, you know that I think it does affect us. And it affects the people because, you know, we went out for breakfast for the first time in eight months.

WM: Yeah.

KM: And.

WM: Right before they close the restaurants again, was that last week before anyway, right before they close the restaurants again, for indoor dining, your dad and I went for breakfast, it was wonderful. And.

KM: I gave, I was, because I'm working, I was actually able to give the lady a larger tip and give her a tip, the same size as our bill.

WM: So, it's tip the bill, that's what we call that. And I'm sure a lot of people do that. But in these times where what we were maybe one couple.

KM: There was only three couples in the place.

WM: In the whole restaurant. So she showed up for work. And we went ahead and tipped her the bill because we knew the next day they were going to be shut down. So it's things like that that's you try to do good. In a bad situation for the community for the people around you. So.

KM: We're trying to, you try to support your fellow man.

WM: Yep.

KM: It's not. And it's hard sometimes. Because sometimes people don't make it easy. And I know I don't make it easy. But I feel if I can help somebody I will, you know.

WM: Just a little.

KM: Just a little. I mean, yes, it's a, big change for us. You know, we've had food delivered to our, our porch. And it's left out on a little table ya know.

WM: Yeah.

KM: At least it was over the summer, because now it's going to get a little bit more interesting when it's 50 degrees below or something, so.

WM: Yeah.

KM: We'll see how that goes.

SM: So speaking more about speaking more about businesses. How would you say that, like the government or the state of Illinois, has handled lockdown? Do you approve of the actions that the government has taken? or What is your opinion on the matter?

WM: Well, my opinion is I do not agree with the governor. I don't think they believe that restaurants and bars is what is causing our numbers to increase. And I don't think that's true. I had the TV on the other day and all I saw, for college football was packed stands of people, some

with masks, some without mask. Now, if people can go to the grocery store, and you're basically jam packed in the grocery store, unless you go with a weird hour, and people can sit in stands for the sporting events, then there's no reason why someone cannot sit in a restaurant. For me it needs to be all or nothing. You can't do a partial shutdown. Why just the bars and the restaurants? Well, the movie theaters still open. Even though they're spacing the seats out, it's still open, you still, and then some districts in the area, they're still going to school. They're doing a hybrid schedule, where our high school district never even went back. Once they shut down in March, they never went back at all. They've been doing e-learning, which is fine. But why should some school districts get to stay open, whether they're private or public, it's really not fair to the children, even though I understand they're under different entities and they can do as they please. I just think it should be all or nothing. And I don't think they should basically, reprimand almost one industry versus another, um, even churches, you have to sign up at our church in order to go to a service. You have to sign up, it's like a sign up session so that only so many people can go to church on that day. Otherwise, you watch it online. So like I said, I believe and I believe in the separation of church and state, but it's either all or nothing. And with COVID. Because it does not discriminate. It should be all until it's all gone. And I mean, no one goes to work, which sounds insane. Because obviously people need to, we need policemen, we need firemen, we need those things. But if they want it to go away, we should all quarantine for 14 days, stay home, don't schedule surgeries, don't schedule things. Stay home, then maybe it'll take care of itself. And then we can all go back out. And it's poof, gone. Maybe that's not the answer. But I really don't think that the governor is being fair in how he picks and chooses what he can have open or not. And as far as the federal government, they just pretend to have answers. People say follow the science. And honestly, the science doesn't even know what the science is. And that's how I feel. So if they have a vaccine, that's great. But it doesn't mean it's going to work. So we still need to be cautious. No matter if you get the shot, you don't end as a healthcare worker. I'm going to have to get the shot first. It's mandatory. So all I can hope is that I don't grow two heads, or a third arm or something like that, because we're like the guinea pigs. And we'll see. But what do you think about the government or Illinois? Only for COVID?

KM: Well, COVID.

WM: Have they done a good job?

KM: I don't know if they've done a good job. And, you know, I guess you could say they did a good job if there was no COVID. So the fact that they're COVID, has gotten worse, I think the last week, we've gone from, I think 1000 to about 12,000 a day getting COVID.

WM: We doubled our numbers yeah.

KM: And that's with restaurants and everything being closed. So you know, I don't know how well, the government did. But I think it came down to the people, and right now. I think everybody is done. I mean.

WM: Well this has been months.

KM: Well, you know, you don't want to wear a mask. You don't you know, you keep hearing people freaking out because they have to wear a mask. It's normal right now. You have to wear a, you know, so you just deal with it. I mean, you just, but I don't think the government did the best job. Because I think at some points, you know, it really did shut down the economy. And it hurt everybody. You know, people that worked in hotels, restaurants, there's a bunch of those people are still not working.

WM: The entertainment. Yeah.

KM: Entertainment.

WM: Hospitality.

KM: All that, so.

WM: Yeah.

KM: I understand why they did it. But when it dragged down for so long. I think that's where it started to go wrong.

WM: So yeah, it's been eight months. And it's, there's no end in sight. So you can only be positive. But I was worried, you know, financially, I was worried. And they gave us the stimulus check. And I said, Okay, we're going to tuck that away, because.

KM: Well it wasn't Pritzker.

WM: No, but the federal government, they, they did it, they sent us money. And I put it away, because I didn't know what was going to happen. And, you know, what if I ended up not going back to work and not getting paid, because I had college to cash flow, and I have a lot of things to pay for, by people that depend on me, right? I have a mortgage to pay. And so I was probably more concerned with the financial aspect of it. But I was glad to get that money and be able to just put it in the savings. A lot of people got that money, and they had to use it right away because they had rent to pay or mortgage or food to buy, and they weren't working, they didn't have unemployment. That's scary. When you don't know where or when your next meal is going to come from that's very scary or losing your home? Or? I don't know.

SM: So, what kind of measures do you think the government either at the state level, or the federal level should enact? Like, do you support a masked mandate, or further restrictions?

WM: Well I already said, I think if you're going to do shut downs of things, it needs to be everything. And that sounds horrible. But it's the only way for people not to interact with each other. So if I couldn't see my parents for months to protect them, that's what we did. And it was horrible not to be able to, you're waving at each other through a glass door, and dropping their groceries off on the ground outside. But I really think that they should just go ahead and shut everything down. Not forever, but at least for two weeks, get the cases under control. And then we evaluate. And that's the only way, if people aren't around each other. Even for the holidays

this year. I was gonna have Thanksgiving at my house. I told mom to have them at her house, to have the holiday at her house. And my dad was talking about inviting his sister from Ohio, and my uncle from Harwood heights. And I said, Dad, we need to keep it very small, because the only way to control it is to control our group, we can only control ourselves. Now as far as the federal government goes, I really don't think they should have a say on what each state does. But I do feel that the governors should come together and issue a stay at home order for at least two weeks for everyone. And to say we won't need a police officer in those two weeks. I know that sounds insane. But they could stay home. They don't have to run the streets if no one is out. And people can stock up for two weeks on supplies. It's not that long to get toilet paper and food for two weeks. And if there's a real emergency, then they could be on a call and just one officer go to whatever scene or just one group of fire people stay at the Firehouse and then go to the fire and keep with your same group-it-does that make sense? Just to stay with your own, whoever you're with. That's who you're with the most. And that's it.

KM: I think, you know, one of the things that they have done at least in Illinois, is that they've made it mandatory that you wear a mask. If you're going.

WM: Yeah.

KM: Inside of business. Everybody at work is wearing a mask. You go into a store everybody's wearing a mask. I think that, it helps in I think it it's not a cure, but I think it helps. And I think that was probably one of the best things that our governor did. was making the mask mandatory.

WM: Yeah.

KM: Now, I also understand people don't want to wear I don't want to wear I mean he after You know, trying to breathe through those things every day and you get a headache or it just

WM: Yeah.

KM: Tiring.

WM: Yeah

KM: So, but and and closing of the businesses. That's the hard thing.

WM: Yeah.

KM: Ya know people have bills to pay. Do I think, I think it's hard. You got paid bills. I know when Wendy was off for those three weeks, they basically gave pader. But she was like 72 hours in the whole vacation time. So.

WM: Oh, yeah.

KM: Yeah, I mean that, It's hard. You know, and we have a really good jobs and, you know, work really hard. But I also know there are people out there that don't have really good jobs, and a lot of people that don't work. And I think that's, you know, the governments got, in a way to

figure out and come together. And each state has to step up and say, Okay, this is what we need to do. The states need to get together.

WM: Yeah, well, and even in McHenry County, they basically published an article, and it was saying that our numbers are lower. Let's say I go for a covid test, and I test positive. And then before I go back to work, I have to have another test, right? So you go, you get another test. And if you still test positive, now you count as two cases, not one. So every time you go for a test, even if it's the same person, and it tests positive, that counts as a case. So to me, that's falsifying the numbers. And to me, I think our governor did that to get more federal funding. But that's just my conspiracy theory. But that's pretty much what Chicago was doing, was counting No matter if you're the same person, if you have five tests, they would count that as five cases. Well, that's not real math. And to me, they just couldn't add. So it must be that common core math. But that's not right. And I really think they should base it on per person, not how many tests that one person had that were positive. So that was not right. And so that's part of why our numbers went really high, is because McHenry County then had to go to what they were doing, which automatically increased the number of cases. So they were probably not true cases.

SM: Okay, moving on from government. How has COVID impacted your life personally, and what challenges or hardships Have you faced on a personal level, or as a family?

WM: Probably just having to undress in the garage, leave our shoes outside when it was cold. And then afraid for someone to leave the house and then come back, like your dad to go to work, and then come back. And I thought, Oh, I hope you didn't bring COVID home. But it's a chance we had to take and then you're trying to protect the kids. And they didn't leave the house for weeks, or wasn't?

KM: Months.

WM: Yeah, months. And, but I was okay with that. So I would rather have them home and save. So I think you just worry more about your family. And then my mom would sneak out of the house and leave her phone at home. Even though she wasn't supposed to go to the store. She didn't like being cooped up in the house. So she would literally sneak out. And then my niece would call me to tell on her. And so you just worry about your family and my dad has some underlying condition so I really worried about him. Luckily, they're retired. So they didn't have to go out a lot. But Nana can't stay home. So she would go a lot. And not tell me, but you just worry. And then his mom, my mother in law's by herself, and she lives, probably a good hour away from us. So that was hard to not have her near. And then someone else was bringing her groceries. And it was just hard not to see each other and do things. Easter, we were all alone. It was just the four of us here in the house and couldn't spend it with anybody couldn't go to church. And now Thanksgiving is going to be very, very small. But at least we won't be all alone. So it'll be a little bit better than Easter was. But even Christmas, this year, Christmas Eve is going to be canceled on your dad's side. So, it's just going to be us and our small group of, but no cousins, no aunts. No, none of that is going to happen this year. So COVID has really taken a toll on social life in general, you couldn't go to the movies, you couldn't do things that you normally would do. Um, you find yourself just cooped up in the house because there's really

nowhere to go. And nothing to do literally. So you go to work. Come home, and hope you don't catch it. And that's your day. It's like groundhog day every day, so.

KM: I think that's been the hardest.

WM: You get bored.

KM: Well you get bored. I, you feel you know, it's bad enough when we have bad snowstorms and stuff like that you get the blues. Now you feel like you have those blues year long.

WM: Been eight months yeah.

KM: So, you know I watch my youngest son, Zachary. He's, he's losing his high school years. I mean,

WM: Yeah.

KM: He's, you know, we, we had family members that graduated high school last year that lost their senior prom, they lost their graduate walking down the aisle.

WM: We have a wedding this year, we can't go to, I mean, we've had a lot of social things just, that can't happen. On vacation could not happen. And we've literally gone nowhere, so.

KM: We go to the store. And that's adventure sometimes.

WM: Yep.

KM: So, I mean, that's about it.

WM: Yeah.

KM: I mean.

WM: No vacation.

KM: Or the doctor's office, which is another adventure, because.

WM: Yeah.

KM: You know, you're sitting in your car, your calling in and wait for them to tell you to come in.

WM: Yeah.

KM: And because there's no social,

WM: If you go.

KM: Interaction.

WM: If you go to the doctor or the dentist or anything, you have to phone them while you stay in your car, answer 15 COVID questions, and then they tell you, okay, you can come in now. And then you're in the waiting room by yourself for only a few minutes, and then they bring you directly into a room. So it's almost like we're living in a foreign country. And when Corona first was on the news in January, February, really for us, that's when we paid attention. And I like to think was, wow, this is serious, and I would wake up and I was like, Is this a dream? Because the first couple weeks, it was a really hard pill to swallow, knowing that you could catch something and die that easily and they didn't know how it was transmitted at that time. So it was super scary. And for a little bit we were wearing all PPE, the gowns, the gloves. I was covered from head to toe face shield, mask, just to draw blood. Everybody was treated like they were just a big Coronavirus. So it was, been very very difficult very different.

KM: So I think that is the hardest for us.

WM: Yeah.

SM: How has COVID affected personal relationships with family? What are some of those hardships I know you mentioned Nana and peepaw but could you elaborate on that?

WM: Well, like we usually do a girls weekend with my sister-in-law at her house and we all get together, and we play games and we drink wine, and we just have a good time. And we have not got to do barbecue, or pretty much anything, whatsoever so. When I say I get home on Friday from work and we are pretty much in the house, until Sunday to go grocery shopping, and then we come home, and that's our whole weekend. We don't get to do any kind of socialization, we used to stop at his mom's house or stop by.

KM: Well I think you know.

WM: Yeah.

KM: We've only seen my mother twice in eight months.

WM: Yep, that's it, usually we will go up North or they'll, the boys will go up North at least and spend time at the Lake House, but no one even went and did that so the whole family thing.

KM: And if it, if they did go, it was a very small group.

WM: Yeah.

KM: And.

WM: Yeah.

KM: You don't want everybody to go 'cause that's the scary thing and then, ou know, I think that's the hardest. Now that being said, I, you know you don't see. You don't get to spend enough time with the people you love and luckily we haven't lost anyone to COVID It's just, I think that would be hard. Today I was, we, I went to a company and on the way there, there was a funeral and I was watching the cars follow.

WM: Yeah.

KM: And all you could think is you know we had a guy at work today last week. His sister in law, his sister in law passed away by herself in the hospital. From a heart attack, because no one could go in and see her. And she had a heart attack while she was eating dinner and no one knew.

WM: So no one was with her.

KM: Right so she, you know, that's the hard part, and luckily, you know, that's.

WM: And the hospitals are filling up now, so that is very scary. But that's what's on the news. Is that a lot of the hospitals are getting overwhelmed and not just with covid patients. But there's a lot of other diseases out there, but no one can visit them and knowing can see them and if one of my family members ended up in the hospital. They are literally by themselves and it doesn't matter what the disease is, so that is a very scary thought and.

KM: Well you have people with cancer.

WM: Yes.

KM: Some people are not getting diagnosed 'cause they are not able to go.

WM: Patients are afraid to go to the doctors and they have afib. They have cancer. They have a lot of various serious conditions and they're not going to the doctor because they're afraid to get COVID-19. but what they need to go to the doctor for is going to kill them, probably before COVID-19 will. So the longer they put it off the worse it is for them and that's where I think the government should really step in. And I don't know, encourage people to go to the doctor, they need to keep going to the doctor for their illnesses, so.

SM: Ok, what have, what have your personal emotions spent towards Covid 19 the pandemic? How you felt over the past couple of months? What are your thoughts, been?

WM: At first it was probably shock and then fear. Not just for myself, but probably more for my family, I was afraid for a lot of people and then I got a little angry and, I don't want to say resentful, but at first I was thinking ok enough of this already. And forget the whole thing, 'cause I didn't know anyone with it until the end of March when my cousin's son got it. But even for him it was just like, the like, getting a cold and he couldn't taste or smell anything. But other people got it and my cousin's husband's brother ended up in the hospital and he actually almost died. So that was when I was like. Ok, now it hits home right when someone you know is in the

hospital and he was all alone. He had the whole thing, the ventilator, the whole thing, and he lived. But it was scary and then, now I'm ok. I just wish we could fast forward where the vaccine works and everybody's going to be ok and we can kind of go back to normal because the holidays are coming and I really don't want them ruined so you gotta make the most of what it is and I guess I'm at the accepted. I'm accepting what it is, so I'm not angry anymore. I'm just kind of over it and tired of it but eventually it'll go away.

KM: Well, I think you know that's the key. You know you, you've got, at first it was, why can't I get to stay home for three weeks? Why do I get to go to work?

WM: Yeah, you said that didn't you. He was jealous of me at home for three weeks.

KM: Why can't I get a two week vacation in that you know one of the things that we've done to try to and we've always done this is try to make that light of it. But laugh at things because there are certain things in life that you cannot control so by making a little joke about something where we were able to laugh and you know, keep moving and keep going.

WM: If one of us coughs, we'd say you got that rona so it was just you have to joke. You have to laugh and yeah.

KM: And I think that's where we're at more now, anger and stuff, it's, it doesn't do anybody any good, so.

WM: No.

KM: I think, right, you know the worryness and all that still there, but we do try to make, not light, but laugh at the matter because there are certain things in life you cannot control.

WM: We cannot control this.

KM: Can't control this and can't control taxes.

WM: We can only control ourselves and how we treat others so gotta laugh at stuff if you don't. Life's too short so you may as well laugh.

KM: Okay.

SM: What are some of the important things that you have learned or what have you seen over the course of the pandemic? Like important lessons or just things you've learned about yourself or maybe others?

KM: I've learned that I need a hobby.

WM: Isn't that the truth.

KM: And it, its just, because sometimes you just feel like you're not doing anything. I've got more projects done around the house but you know, you always feel like you should be doing something and you're not because you can't really do anything. Besides that.

WM: Oh We've played board games and.

KM: Some, but you know, I'm just, you know.

WM: Yeah.

KM: There's only so many in eight months.

WM: Yeah.

KM: You can only play so many board games without.

WM: Flipping the board. No, im just kidding.

KM: Yeah, flipping the board you know, that being said there, there's a lot of things that you know, one thing I learned was stockpiled toilet paper.

WM: Yeah who knew.

KM: Who knew my father in law was right all these years? You know, he always had a garage full of toilet paper and.

WM: He came in quite handy.

KM: He came in handy when we couldn't find it. You know we've always just bought what we needed. You know, that's just the way it's been now. If we're walking through, if we have to go to the store for something and they have toilet paper and I know I have some, i'll still buy a package of toilet paper.

WM: Just in case.

KM: Just because I could only buy one, so I'll buy one.

WM: Yeah, that's right. The limits they have limits on everything in the store.

KM: Soap.

WM: Everything.

KM: Toilet paper.

WM: Hand sanitizer.

KM: Meat.

WM: Soap.

KM: Some, some of the meat and stuff, yeah and stuff.

WM: Yeah, and those are the things that you know, before you could just grab 10 packages of ground meat. If you wanted now they'll put signs on their limit two, limit three, limit one, a lot of things are one, so can't go to the store in stock up on food really for a month you can't do that anymore. Now two weeks you could make that skimp, but you can't really, really.

KM: So it's changed how we do things.

WM: Yeah.

KM: I mean it has because you know, we've never really liked to go to the store.

WM: Yeah.

KM: Because you know we'd rather be doing something but now it's almost exciting because you may see something that you haven't seen in awhile. I mean.

WM: Yeah.

KM: Because you don't get to see people or anything.

WM: Well and even just getting pedicures, I miss those. So over the summer I think I had one.

KM: Two.

WM: One.

KM: Two.

WM: Anyway.

KM: Took Jordan.

WM: I didn't, yeah so. But normally I go more, so I miss, I miss going out and just doing anything and I don't know. Even just a haircut is a huge.

KM: Ordeal.

WM: Thing, Yeah, so I've had one haircut for the whole year and.

KM: I haven't had a haircut in 20 years, so hey.

WM: Oh my gosh Ken, ok so anyway, just doing normal things and I found out I need a hobby too because he's boring and I'm boring and together we're just very boring and if there's not enough games to play or shows to binge on Netflix or Hulu. And I even splurged and got good cable because I was tired of the Wi-Fi dying and we are home so much now that I actually got cable and not just he streaming services, so we have everything now. Anything to make your house more comfortable. A lot of people did home improvement projects and they ran out of lumber. They ran outta lumber at all of the stores. So people were trying to do their decks when it got nice outside to give him something to do at home. No longer could be found anywhere, so there was no home improvements in that area. But that's pretty much what your dad did was just things around the house. Probably things we've put off that we needed to do anyway. But if we could have gone somewhere like away for the weekend or even up North for that weekend, we wouldn't have done those projects. We would have been up North. We would be on the go, but you can't necessarily do a road trip, and it's hard to stop places now and.

KM: Our only vacation was taking you to college, so.

WM: True, Yeah,

KM: I mean.

WM: That's true.

KM: We got out of the house. I mean.

WM: Yeah.

KM: I, I get a month of vacation a year and I think at the most I've used one day. Maybe a couple of times I've taken one day off but when we went to college I took a day off when I took, went camping with your brother. That was a day.

WM: Yeah.

KM: Doctor's appointments a day, you know so.

WM: Yeah.

KM: Getting away from, you know it's been tough on us and it's tough on everybody. It's not just, you know, and everybody handles it different and that's the thing that I think people have to respect. I think a lot of times lately I've been noticing more and more people are angrier or driving like total maniacs, you know.

WM: Yeah.

KM: They'll just get over thinking that they have the right. And it's like, Oh ok, yeah so yeah, I think that's the, you know.

WM: People are very short fused, very short fuse.

KM: Because the constant wearing a mask and the constantly.

WM: They're probably bored too. That's my guess is that people are just bored

KM: And if you just watch any TV at all ya know that's all they talk about on the news is how you the rates have gone up. So.

WM: Yeah.

KM: I think that gets a little overwhelming and can be, but, you know. All said we're doing pretty good you know.

WM: I'm looking forward to the vaccine coming out and that's what I'm going to keep my sights on. Is that coming out and everything will be ok because that's how you have to think, positively, The only way you get through anything.

SM: Ok, I would like to thank both of you for your time and I will end the interview now.