

Spindler (Lempke), Laura Oral History 04/13/2022

Interviewee: Laura Spindler (Lempke)
Interviewer: Leeah Mahon & Nancy Yerian
Date: 04/13/2020
Location (Interviewee): Indianapolis, IN
Location (Interviewer): Indianapolis, IN
Transcriber: Sally Velez

Abstract: Oral history interview with Laura Spindler who lives and works in Indianapolis, Indiana. She shares she just got married, bought a house, and a puppy. She works as a biologist at Eli Lilly and while she hasn't worked on the virus, she has assembled test kits. As an extrovert she is really missing time with family and friends but between walks with her new puppy and time spent playing games via Zoom she is managing. She also credits virtual therapy appointments with maintaining her mental health. She also discusses her mother who is alone and her grandparents who were wintering in Texas but drove back to Indiana anyway.

Leeah Mahon 00:01

Okay, that ones on.

Laura Spindler Lempke 00:02

I see the recording.

Leeah Mahon 00:04

And theres my phone one. All right. So today is Monday, April 13 2020. My name is Leeah Mahon, master's student in public history at Indiana University, Purdue University Indianapolis. Also present is Nancy Urian, master's student in public history and Library Science at Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis.

Nancy Yerian 00:23

This is Nancy.

Leeah Mahon 00:26

Today we have the privilege of interviewing Laura Lemke. This interview is taking place via Zoom. This interview was a part of the COVID-19 Oral History Project, which is a rapid response moral history focused on archiving the lived experience of the COVID 19 pandemic. It is based at IUPUI. And as a result of the collective efforts of graduate students in the IUPUI, public history and American Studies programs, the COVID-19 Oral History Project is housed at the IUPUI Arts and Humanities Institute. So before we begin the interview, I just want to ask your permission to do the same things that you already agreed to in writing with the informed consent just in case any paperwork were to get lost over the years. So I'm asking your permission to do the following. Record this interview, prepare a verbatim transcript of the interview and deposit the interview and the verbatim transcript on GitHub and in the

IUPUI Special Collections and Archives? All interviews, a part of this project will be open and available to the public under a Creative Commons license. Do I have your permission to do these things?

Laura Spindler Lempke 01:26

Yes.

Leeah Mahon 01:27

Alrighty, let's begin Nancy's gonna start us off with a few questions.

Laura Spindler Lempke 01:31

Awesome.

Nancy Yerian 01:32

Alright. So we're gonna start with really easy background questions. So first for us, can you just tell us your name and the primary things that you do on a day to day basis? So your job? Recreational activities, anything like that.

Laura Spindler Lempke 01:47

Yeah, so my name is Laura Spindler. It was Laura Lempke, just got married. So it's Laura's Spindler now.

Nancy Yerian 01:52

Congratulations.

Laura Spindler Lempke 01:53

Yeah, thank you. And I currently work at Eli Lilly as a biologist in one of the experimental labs. At the corporate center downtown. I do a lot of late fees work. So I look at how compounds affect the human body, like immune responses, fever, if it develops antibody reaction, all that jazz. So and I, we my husband, and I just bought a house and just bought a puppy and it. Oh, God, puppy, Golden Retriever. And yeah, we're just enjoying, enjoying, settle under new house and Yeah.

Nancy Yerian 02:37

Wonderful. So where do you live? And what is it like to live there?

Laura Spindler Lempke 02:42

Actually, we got a house. It's kind of, Binford and 465, around 71st area and the Downshire neighborhood. We love how close it is to- my husband also works downtown to an AT&T. So it's really nice to be able to live close to where we work, but also be able to be close to like malls and restaurants and Broad Ripple and all that jazz. So yeah.

Nancy Yerian 02:51

Okay, it's now we start getting into more of the topical stuff.

Laura Spindler Lempke 03:09

Mhm.

Nancy Yerian 03:09

So can you remember and tell us about when you first learned about COVID-19 and what your thoughts are? what your thoughts were then and perhaps how they've changed since then.

Laura Spindler Lempke 03:21

Yeah, funny, you should ask my boss is very into, I guess world news. And he had heard about it at the beginning of December. And I hadn't heard about you know, COVID-19 I heard about it a couple of times, but my boss said 'yeah, I really read into it' and we're like 'okay, yeah, it's not gonna be that big a deal and it's just a cold and it's not you know, it's not gonna affect anything.' He said 'oh it's going to come to the US and it's going to be huge deal.' It broke my coworker and I are kind of pushing off big idea guy and we're like, 'Yeah, okay.' Well, turns out it's I'm work you know, quite scared now. And I have a lot of, my mother in law actually has one lung so that kind of changed things perspective and she is healthy now. But we're very, very cautious now compared to how we were in December where I thought it was a silly cold. And now it's completely turned into you know, we're really following the stay at home orders. Getting Kroger pickup, not going into the grocery store. We are very careful about staying and if you were to ask me that this would turn into this in a couple of months you I would you know, wouldn't believe you so.

Nancy Yerian 04:40

So what, what are some of the issues that have concerned you most about all of this and the COVID 19 pandemic?

Laura Spindler Lempke 04:48

I think it is one the accessibility to not get tested. I think that a lot of us have it and have been exposed to it but just don't know it. And I think that that's kind of gonna be, you know, getting a vaccine, being able to get a treatment is to be able to be able to test a lot of people. And that's where work kind of comes in and how I've been so honored to work with Lilly, because they've been able to, you know, provide some of these tests, which has been awesome. But it's, it's been a crazy ride, that's for sure. So.

Leeah Mahon 05:24

So, talking more about your job, then we're gonna move on to employment, you said, you're a biologist at Eli Lilly-

Laura Spindler Lempke 05:30

Uh huh.

Leeah Mahon 05:30

down in Indianapolis. So how or has COVID-19 affected your job and in what ways?

Laura Spindler Lempke 05:38

So it's affecting my job quite a lot. I am very much in the lab in my regular day to day job, I am in the lab at least five to six hours a day. And with Lilly putting a work from home order, I had to finish my lab work about a week after that. So I went in, in the morning to finish my lab work, then come home. And then they put in the very, very strict work from home rules where I couldn't work in the lab at all. So all lab work was halted. And I've been working from home, it's been really tough because I am in the lab a lot. So I've been reading a lot of papers, scientific papers, and trying to you know, keep up with when we go back. My boss has been really great about keeping things busy and data analysis and everything. But still, it's been quite a change.

Leeah Mahon 06:29

Definitely, so has COVID-19 change the status of your employment at all? Aside from you work-?

Laura Spindler Lempke 06:37

I've been very, very lucky

Leeah Mahon 06:38

You're still a biologist.

Laura Spindler Lempke 06:39

Yes, I've been very lucky and have been able to keep my everything is just the same, which working from home.

Leeah Mahon 06:48

So what concerns do you have about the effects of COVID-19 on your employment and the economy broadly, if any?

Laura Spindler Lempke 06:57

Um, I think I mean, all of us are worried. Just in the sense that it will we aren't in the lab doing experimental things, we're not finding new things. I mean, yes, we can read it up. But it's one thing to read about it, and then nothing do it.

Leeah Mahon 07:13

Right.

Laura Spindler Lempke 07:13

So it's, I think it's in the back a lot of a lot of my friends that are in the lab as well. And it's just in the back of our mind that it might not be instant. But you know, a few years from now that it could have a lot, it will have a lasting effect. It's not if but when and you know, it's tough to think about but this is nothing like we've ever seen before. So I think about it, but I'm currently I'm very lucky to have in the position that I'm in now. So.

Leeah Mahon 07:42

Right.

Laura Spindler Lempke 07:43

Yeah.

Leeah Mahon 07:43

So, like you said, you are thankful that your job you're working at home, so you still have you're still employed. Has the pandemic affected the employment of people that you know, and in what ways?

Laura Spindler Lempke 07:57

Um, actually no, and that's been very, very nice. A lot of my friends in our friend group have and not at Lilly just around like I'm, we, both my husband and I went to Butler. So a lot of our friends are around Indianapolis, and a lot of us had been lucky. My husband actually too, his job could easily work from home in general. So he nothing has changed for him either, which is lovely. It's really nice to have that same income. But I know a lot of families are not in that situation. And yeah, I guess that might even my friends have been really lucky to that I I've heard about it, and definitely am aware of a lot of people that aren't as lucky. But in my I guess my small little world hasn't affected that much. But thinking about all those other people that aren't so lucky. So.

Leeah Mahon 08:45

Yeah. definitely. I'm going to bounce back to Nancy now and she's going to talk to you about your family.

Nancy Yerian 08:53

Yeah, so thinking about you know, other people in your world and you're saying, you know, following the strict at home order. So how has COVID-19 affected you and or your family's day to day activities?

Laura Spindler Lempke 09:07

I am a very very extroverted person very, it's, it's really hit me hard. I understand. I, the only thing that's keeping me at home is knowing the effects that this is going to have like I, I know I need to stay home. And I know that and being a biologist too like knowing viruses and knowing what this can do. Everybody needs to stay home. But like I said, being an extrovert, we, my husband and I, three times a week we'd go out with friends. We'd go see our families all the time. My grandparents live about 40 minutes from here. My mom lives about a half an hour from here. We're really close with all of them. And it's that's probably been the biggest impact is not being able to go see people because we're very, very, so it's been tough, but.

Nancy Yerian 09:54

So through all of that, how are you sort of managing day to day activities? Since most of them have moved inside your household.

Laura Spindler Lempke 10:02

Right, the puppy has really kept us sane. We've really been taking him on a lot of walks, I know getting outside is really, really important. And getting a lot of exercise, exercise does wonders for me. I'm kind of anxious anyway, and you know, it helps a lot. But cleaning, just doing something, you can't be sitting all the time, and you're not sitting at work all the time, either that's the thing, like, you know, you're not

expecting to be sitting. I'm not sitting at my desk all day. Anyway, I'm in the lab a lot. So I'm used to being up and around. So I think that's been helping is, you know, force myself to get up and do things and either sweeping or even just going out for a quick walk getting the mail, so.

Nancy Yerian 10:45

Yeah, and you mentioned you are very extroverted and went out a lot. So how has the COVID 19 outbreak affected how you associate and communicate with friends and family, and in what ways?

Laura Spindler Lempke 10:58

For sure, one of the biggest things is that we have a zoom game night on Friday nights instead of Mondays, we usually got together on Mondays for game night, or the group of like nine of us. And those same nine people have the Zoom meeting and we play Jackbox and play a lot of games on there. And I face-I have a nephew, and sister and brother in law out in New York state New York, they're about an hour outside of New York City, and FaceTime them a lot FaceTime my mom. Yeah, so do a lot of FaceTiming.

Nancy Yerian 11:37

Yeah, so what have, what have been some of the biggest challenges? You mentioned, again, all of these changes. What are some of the biggest challenges that you faced during the COVID 19 outbreak?

Laura Spindler Lempke 11:51

I think one of the biggest ones is the waves of, I guess it's kind of up and down of, it's not that big a deal to- it's, you know, we're all gonna get it and it's bad. Then we're up again. And then you watch the news, and you're down again. And then you, you know, it's, it's been kind of a roller coaster. I know, for a lot of people too. It's just a lot to process. And I love my husband to death, but also getting out on your own and not being so and being closed down with him has been trying too, but I've loved spending time there. I'm glad so I just spend time with but it's just kind of been. And he's not going on high and he's low. He's some you know, we're opposite. And so that's been kind of tough, too. But it's, it's been a learning experience and being able to kind of flatten it. Of you know, everything's gonna be fine in the end. And we just got to get through this rough patch.

Leeah Mahon 12:49

Definitely,

Nancy Yerian 12:49

Yeah, definitely. That's I think something a lot of people are going through.

Laura Spindler Lempke 12:55

Mhm, sure.

Nancy Yerian 12:56

So you talked a little bit about Jackbox and exercise and things like that. So what else have you and your family and your friends been doing for recreation during COVID-19?

Laura Spindler Lempke 13:09

Well, Netflix is a lot of, a lot of it. And trying to think because we've been so isolated my sister actually Facetimes me and does- my sister does little activities with my nephew that I always try to go in and you know watch him do it as he does it like we colored, like they colored eggs and, the for Easter. And that's been tough, I think to Easter was one of my favorites is one of my favorite holidays. And that's been tough kind of seeing, you know, not be able to see everybody. But yeah, it's been, it's been tough. We a lot of outside time in my yard. I'd love to go get flowers. I've heard that one of the grocery stores is doing flower pickup, which just blows my mind that we have to you know, it's still like, I can't even like walk into Lowe's or walking Home Depot. And like get flowers or it's just crazy to me like 'oh, yeah, no problem' I used, I'm a big shopper. So I love to go and get stuff and I'm like, 'Oh, I'll go get it.' Oh, no, I can't. And that's been kind of interesting, too. And it's, yeah, I'd love to get flowers and plant some flowers and get some spring feeling so I might do that. But yeah, it's been, it's been difficult to find new activities, but we're trying, so, and reading to reading a lot. Yeah.

Leeah Mahon 14:30

They're definitely good activities to try to keep your mind busy though.

Nancy Yerian 14:32

Mhm.

Leeah Mahon 14:33

It's good that, it's nice to have a backyard though.

Laura Spindler Lempke 14:36

For sure. Yes, yes. Yes.

Leeah Mahon 14:39

Sit, even you know?

Laura Spindler Lempke 14:41

Yeah, for sure.

Leeah Mahon 14:44

So more about the community that you live in or, and whatever you would define as your community. So this could be where you live or a club a church, whatever. You're welcome to interpret it whatever way you wish. So how has COVID-19 affected your community? However you want to think of it.

Laura Spindler Lempke 15:06

Oh, funny you say church, we're big in the I'm Presbyterian, my husband's Catholic. And every week, my church has been doing an online service. And it's been really awesome. I really like it, that we've been able to, you know, get together and also the game night community, like being able to Zoom with them and see them every week, that's been really, really helpful. Just keeping in contact has been the biggest thing, like being able to call them, I call my grandma, probably, I call my mom at least twice a

day, she probably, but it's nice to be able to just pick up the phone and call her more so than when I was busy at work. And calling my grandma and calling my sister and it's just keeping in contact is the biggest thing. And that's been the big change is not being able to just go and be with them. So you have to find better ways to be with them. And not- every every sense of community I've had that's been the problem is being able to still feel like you're with them.

Leeah Mahon 16:09

Yeah, definitely. So how are the other people around you? So you've mentioned your family a lot. So this could be family friends, or just people that you know, how have they been responding to COVID-19?

Laura Spindler Lempke 16:24

I think that my mom is a- my dad passed away two years ago from Multiple Myeloma, cancer. So she was back, we live in Pennsylvania, and then she moved back to Indiana, to be closer to family and us, which has been great, but I really worry about her because I rely on my husband, Matt so much during these past few weeks, and I, I think a lot about my mom about how she's been, you know, acting and trying to, you know, call her a lot and trying to you know, she has a dog and a couple cats, which would keep, kept her busy. But it's, I've just kind of been more aware of, you know, she's alone. And she's much she's a lot like I am like, probably not as extroverted but just like, likes to get out and likes to go do things. And you know, and she did work, actually, she did work at a vet vet clinic, where we kind of grew up, and they furloughed her till the time being I kind of forgot about that, because she was part time and she wasn't relying on the income. But it was definitely something nice for her to go do and be social. And she liked that a lot. But she'll definitely be back. Hopefully, I mean, they they say she will be so she's kind of worried about it, but I think she'll be fine. And just Yeah, being able to talk to her. And so yeah.

Leeah Mahon 17:51

Definitely.

Laura Spindler Lempke 17:52

Mhm.

Leeah Mahon 17:53

Have you seen the people around you change their opinions or their day to day activities in response to the pandemic?

Laura Spindler Lempke 18:02

Yes, one of my friends in the game night was very nonchalant about the whole thing. Just very, 'yeah. Like, I'm gonna stay home, you know, I get it big deal, blah, blah.' Well, her husband works at a building where two of them tested positive that weren't in the same on the same floor, but in the same building. She panicked, I mean, absolutely panicked. And I said, you know, Casey, like this is, this is what everybody's been, like, dealing with, like this is it like I work at Lily, that was one of the first cases in Indiana, it was the first case study and I think, and my boss went home with a fever. Like, it's, it's just everywhere. And it was it was interesting to see her kind of process it, you know, differently for what I

was processing it. But she's, she's come around, she's better. So it was just, you know, interesting to see how she took it, so.

Leeah Mahon 19:03

Definitely different when it hits close to home, even if it-

Laura Spindler Lempke 19:05

For sure for sure.

Leeah Mahon 19:07

Building. I mean-

Laura Spindler Lempke 19:08

Yeah, oh yeah.

Leeah Mahon 19:09

You hear about somebody across the city has it and then it's a lot different when they're a few feet away from you or floors away from you.

Laura Spindler Lempke 19:16

Exactly, exactly.

Leeah Mahon 19:19

So two key ideas that have emerged out or during the pandemic are self isolation and flattening the curve. We hear these all the time on the news. So how have you your family, friends or community responded to requests to self isolate and flatten the curve?

Laura Spindler Lempke 19:40

Staying in just it's just so so easy to spread the virus, my grandparents, we've had a hard time with them. They winter down in Texas and they were in Texas when all this started. And they just completely had, you know, no financial obligations to come back could easily stay down there. But they just they drove back and stayed in hotel went to gas stations. It was really hard on me because they they're not. I think they're just ignorant about the situation. They don't. They're taking it seriously. They know it's a big deal, but they don't think it'll happen to them. And my grandpa would be hit hard with it like it would it would affect him and, edge. It's just me being a biologist, knowing the viral components, you know, knowing how it'll spread it, it really, you know, hit but they're home now in Indiana, and they're safe. But kind of understanding how they interpret it and how, you know, I even like us, even our age, how we interpret it. I think that's kind of been a real eye opener for everybody that the older generation thinks that oh, it's, you know, it's not that big a deal. But we're sitting here saying that, you know, we're inside, we're not leaving, like, I don't even go, I don't even go get carry-out. I have it delivered here and like, wipe down all the boxes before I eat. Like, I'm probably taking it to an extreme, but I just I wouldn't, I wouldn't like it. So that's, yeah, been tough, seeing how they interpret it and react to it. I don't know if that answered the question, but just trying to teach them how to flatten the curve and self isolate, because we're trying, like all of us are trying really hard to be able to do that to keep them healthy. Like,

it's, you know, it's not that I told my- (cut out) Because we're trying really hard, you know, to keep you guys healthy. And then they don't, you know, self isolate. So they're doing a lot better. But I think that that's so so important. Just just don't go out right now. Like, there will be a time where you'll be able to go out it will be well, it'll be a couple of years where we have concerts. But I think I real- truly think our lives, our lives, personal lives will be a little back to normal in a few months.

Leeah Mahon 21:59

Yeah.

Laura Spindler Lempke 21:59

But it's just hard for people see that I get it like having a stir crazy, but you just gotta be able to see the light at the end of the tunnel, so.

Leeah Mahon 22:07

I really don't think you're alone in practicing these things, but also having people in your life that you're trying-

Laura Spindler Lempke 22:13

Exactly.

Leeah Mahon 22:14

To convince that it, serious as you're taking it,

Laura Spindler Lempke 22:19

Right.

Leeah Mahon 22:19

Definitely not alone in that aspect.

Laura Spindler Lempke 22:21

Right, I um. Actually, one of my arguments is that this is so silly. But Lily is doing a lot of COVID testing.

Leeah Mahon 22:28

Mhm.

Laura Spindler Lempke 22:30

And our lab. There's so many volunteers, I haven't gone back in a while. But a couple weeks ago, I assembled a lot of the kits,

Leeah Mahon 22:42

Mhm.

Laura Spindler Lempke 22:42

And they're still doing it. And it's an awesome, awesome opportunity. But part of my job was to put everything in the bag to seal and to go to the testing center. Well, the swab is huge, and it has to go back into your nose and you have to scrape in the back. And it's extremely, extremely painful. So I've been telling everybody you do not want that test. Like there's no reason for you to get it. They have to put two Kleenex in the bags that when they pull it out, like your eyes, eyes water, and your nose runs because it's so painful. Like they don't want that. You know, I guess that's been my excuse. It's looks painful, so.

Leeah Mahon 23:22

You have not had the test then?

Laura Spindler Lempke 23:24

I have not. I have not. I've just seen it.

Leeah Mahon 23:28

So I think you kind of answered this, but I'll ask you anyway, if you feel there was anything else you could add has COVID 19 changed your relationships with your family, friends and community?

Laura Spindler Lempke 23:40

I don't think so I think what I had a very close knit community to begin with. So I think that we're really good about meeting and you know, communicating. But that little incident with my grandparents, you know, it's we've come around and they've learned like, we had to sit them down and talk about it. But then there's still tendency to be like, Oh, we can go to the store like no, you can't go to the store, you know, like get a pickup. It's very easy. But that's they've come a long way in a few weeks. Because I think they just you know, understand the gravity of it.

Leeah Mahon 24:14

Right.

Laura Spindler Lempke 24:14

But yeah, my my husband and I are fine. It's I mean, we do get tired of each other I guess we have big enough house where you can get away and like I can go for a walk, take the dog for a walk. It's just being able to have that balance of finding when you're getting you know annoyed with each other. But it's difficult to find but once you find it, it's easier to manage.

Leeah Mahon 24:38

Yes, I think unprecedented in a lot of ways is this pandemic. So-

Laura Spindler Lempke 24:44

Yeah.

Leeah Mahon 24:44

obviously on a health scale, but also on a personal and relationship

Laura Spindler Lempke 24:48

Exactly.

Leeah Mahon 24:49

Different aspects of your life.

Laura Spindler Lempke 24:50

Exactly.

Leeah Mahon 24:55

So I'm gonna let Nancy talk to you about health now.

Laura Spindler Lempke 24:59

Okay.

Nancy Yerian 25:00

Yeah. So have you or anybody that you know, gotten sick during the night, the outbreak and what's been your experience their experience sort of responding to that? I know you're, you mentioned your boss going home with a fever. So gotten sick doesn't necessarily have to mean like tested positive for Covid.

Laura Spindler Lempke 25:21

Right, right. Um, that was kind of the first scary moment was the first week of March, I believe. My boss went to Chicago for the Biogen conference. And he came back. And it was that next week where they said, Lily sent an email saying, if you know, all lab work, still resumes, but if you can work from home, please work from home. So that's when I started working labs in the morning, and then going home in the afternoon. Well, that Monday, I came in and wasn't there. And I'm like, oh, okay, well come to find out the person that tested positive in Indiana was the Biogen conference and was exposed, potentially, like, they don't know if they ever like were in the same room or anything, but he was at the same conference. And we kind of were like, Okay, that's kind of a long shot that he might get it. But you know, we'll, we'll keep doing our work. Keep coming in no big deal. Well, a few days later, my coworker said, 'Hey, did you hear daughter has a fever?' And like, no, what do we do? Like I don't, and turns out, he really truly think they didn't ever get tested. But he truly thinks it was the flu. Like they, it was definite symptoms of flu, but still a little scary, you know, to think that, you know, possibly, we were definitely exposed because I was he shares a cubicle next to mine. Like, it's, we were very, very close and personal. And that's when it hit home to me. My, my husband actually had, he had met a lot of times worked with passed away from COVID 19.

Nancy Yerian 26:59

Wow.

Laura Spindler Lempke 26:59

And that was about a week ago, two weeks ago, maybe. So and by no means they were they super close, but they definitely were acquaintances knew each other. So that was kind of an aha moment for

him too. But luckily, I haven't known a lot of people that have physically tested positive for it. And I think that's why a lot of like, my grandparents, for example, don't really know the gravity of it, because they don't know someone's so personal. It's sad that that has to happen for them to you know, realize, but, you know, it's yeah, it's around. And yeah, a lot of people are dying, but like, do you know someone that and it's, it's sad to think of it like that, like, it's sad to think that, you know, you need to know someone to make it real in a sense. But I think that definitely having someone close to home, like your boss, have, you know, have a fever is kind of scary, but it, it just proves that, you know, and we'll all get through this. And I'll get, you know, at the light at the end of the tunnel. I keep saying everybody, so.

Nancy Yerian 27:07

Yeah. Right, yeah, got to keep some hope during all of this.

Laura Spindler Lempke 28:06

For sure, for sure.

Nancy Yerian 28:07

And that really connects well. to In what ways do you think that COVID-19 is affecting people's mental health or physical health?

Laura Spindler Lempke 28:18

Yes. I'm in loving all the weight gain memes. I think that's awesome. But the COVID-19 as in 19 pounds gained over the quarantine has been great. But um, I for sure have, you know, because I'm not, I'm sedentary, I'm not moving as much like- Some days, I get on the couch very in the morning and do all my emails on the couch and then take a walk and then come back and sit at my desk. So it's been, you know, definitely interesting. But I think the mental illness, I suffered, I have bad anxiety. I've had a couple panic, panic attacks before, especially when my dad passed away, which makes sense, a lot of stress.

Nancy Yerian 28:38

Mhm. Absolutely.

Laura Spindler Lempke 29:02

But the stress, you know, I think I definitely talked to a therapist. It has been a huge, awesome research- resource for me. I think it's so important. And there's such this is a whole different subject. But there's such a stigma behind going to a therapist, it has just completely changed my like, outlook on how I view things and how I get through these things. And I haven't seen her in a few weeks, and I feel great. Like I feel if you'd have asked me that a year ago, I had to see her every week and had to go every week.

Nancy Yerian 29:32

Mhm.

Laura Spindler Lempke 29:33

But I think that if someone weren't, you know, it who struggles with anxiety and depression and it would be so so difficult. Because it's just crippling around you like it's just that's all you hear about whenever you turn the TV on. Wherever you on Facebook. Wherever you on Instagram, it's just there.

Nancy Yerian 29:50

Mhm.

Laura Spindler Lempke 29:51

And there's no way to get out. You can't go for a walk and it be gone and come back. You know, like it's not, you can't get away from it.

Nancy Yerian 29:58

Mhm.

Laura Spindler Lempke 29:58

So I think that that's how I have to be hard on a lot of people. And it's hard on me like I am tired of reading about it like it's it sucks. It just sucks. But we need to know and need to be informed. But still, it's just this whole whole thing sucks.

Nancy Yerian 30:01

Mhm. Absolutely. But so the the therapy and treatments you've gotten over the past few years, you feel like I've really helped you get through-

Laura Spindler Lempke 30:21

Absolutely.

Nancy Yerian 30:22

These few months?

Laura Spindler Lempke 30:23

Absolutely. 100%. Yep.

Leeah Mahon 30:26

What think that because I mean, people have talked, I think a new thing, even before the outbreak was being able to see a therapist virtually-

Laura Spindler Lempke 30:36

Mhm.

Leeah Mahon 30:36

Or text messaging they have different services like that. Do you think that we're at the point where for somebody that had never seen the therapist before would be able to do that during COVID-19?

Laura Spindler Lempke 30:49

That's tough because it's a lot there's a lot there when you see him in person and getting a relationship-

Leeah Mahon 30:54

Mhm.

Laura Spindler Lempke 30:54

With him. Or her and yeah, that's tough. I'm very lucky to be established with one and know and I'm easily can virtually suit Zoom her. Like they were going-

Leeah Mahon 31:05

Hm.

Laura Spindler Lempke 31:05

To in May. That's a really good point. I I don't know. Like it's, it would be tough, but I it was just so worth it for me. But I also met her in person, you know.

Leeah Mahon 31:16

Mhm.

Laura Spindler Lempke 31:16

It's, it's a fine line. I It's, but it's it's so helpful though. I really got a lot out of it so.

Leeah Mahon 31:24

So you talked about the news and information and-

Laura Spindler Lempke 31:28

Mmm.

Leeah Mahon 31:29

That which is kind of our next topic.

Laura Spindler Lempke 31:32

Mhm.

Leeah Mahon 31:32

What have been your primary sources of news during the pandemic?

Laura Spindler Lempke 31:38

So a lot of mornings I I actually every work morning I turn on Good Morning America try to, my husband always has the stock channel is to see the CSNBC or something. And the stock channel. I can't watch that because I just see it plummet and then dips. I don't like to watch it. I don't know much about it anyway, but that's his deal. Mostly Good Morning, America. But like my age, everyone my age, I'm on Facebook, I'm on Instagram. You know, a lot. I try to limit how much I do a day the iPhone has a cool app where you see how much screen time you use. I'm trying to keep it like a limit. But and I, I take

face- a lot of Facebook things with a grain of salt, you know, you have to. So I think my grandparents, they read Facebook, and they think everything is true. And that's that's for sure a generational gap thing. But, and I look on MSN a lot. Just that's kind of my web-

Leeah Mahon 32:42

Mhm.

Laura Spindler Lempke 32:43

Go to look at things. But I'd say Good. Good morning. America is my major, probably news source in the morning.

Leeah Mahon 32:50

Right. So have your news sources changed at all during the pandemic? Are you pretty much looking at news the same way you did like you watch the news in the morning, and that's kinda di-?

Laura Spindler Lempke 33:01

I didn't. This is all new. I kind of like it. I kind of like the refresh. We know what's the gist. I never watched Good Morning America I always did in high school before I went to school, but never since I started my job. And I enjoy it. I like it in the mornings where I can relax, and.

Nancy Yerian 33:03

Yeah.

Leeah Mahon 33:20

Right. Sorry, you froze for a second wanted to make sure that you could hear me.

Laura Spindler Lempke 33:27

No that's okay. Yeah, sorry.

Leeah Mahon 33:29

Um, so what do you think are important issues that the medium may or may not be covering as far as the pandemic goes?

Laura Spindler Lempke 33:39

Ooh. I think that they and I understand why they're not, but just emphasizing that you can recover.

Leeah Mahon 33:50

Mhm.

Laura Spindler Lempke 33:50

It's, it's very important to know that like, 90% of the people that have passed away had a pre existing condition, now, let alone we all have a lot of us have pre existing conditions, like I mean, you know, but at the same time, like, a lot of people are recovering. And yes, you will be sick, but it's just, again, light

at the end of the tunnel being able to see that, oh, I could have, like oh, some of my friends think that if they get it, they're gonna die.

Leeah Mahon 33:53

Mhm

Nancy Yerian 33:56

Hm.

Laura Spindler Lempke 33:57

And that's just not that's just not the ca-. Like they're just showing the extreme extreme, because that's good news to cover. And, you know, it's dramatic. (Inaudible). To know, you, you can recover if you're healthy - it it it, you know, in general, have a good immune system. You're, we're young, you know, like a lot of our friends that we talk to. And yeah, I think that's one thing that I kind of would like to hear more is, you know, you hear all these and I, I keep telling everyone that we probably a lot of us are probably already immune because we are young and that's what we have on our side.

Leeah Mahon 34:58

Mhm.

Laura Spindler Lempke 34:59

Is being able, you know, to get out and be active, active helps a lot getting out and going for walks, that's a huge deal for viruses. They don't, you know, if you're sedentary, they all more reason to cook inside your body. And being able to get and move around and doing things and you know, being able to stay healthy. So that's on our side.

Leeah Mahon 35:21

Really.

Nancy Yerian 35:27

So, sorry Leeah.

Leeah Mahon 35:30

Okay.

Nancy Yerian 35:33

So going on from sort of news and information, we have a couple of questions about government responses. So how do you feel municipal leaders and government officials in your community again, community meaning whatever feels right to you have responded to the outbreak?

Laura Spindler Lempke 35:55

I think that actually was talking to Matt about this the other day, Governor, Governor Holcomb-

Nancy Yerian 36:01

Mhm.

Laura Spindler Lempke 36:01

Has done a really nice job of keeping us updated, like he was having day to day, I think he still might be having day to day updates on you know, what, what's next. I think he's done a fantastic job. All politics aside, just as a human being I think he's been really keeping us updated, and trying to have us understand what's going on. I'm trying to think that's who I think of when I think of a leader-

Nancy Yerian 36:30

Yeah.

Laura Spindler Lempke 36:30

In my community that for sure that I think that he's really been trying to help with the situation. He knows what's going on. He knows it's a big deal. Like he's keeping us all informed.

Nancy Yerian 36:45

So that's, it, it's interesting, sort of the the state level person is the person that your comes to mind first, and that you're most identifying with thinking about the community. Do you have any thoughts on how local versus state versus federal reason federal leaders are responding differently to the crisis?

Laura Spindler Lempke 37:08

Hmm. I don't, tough question, because I haven't heard Mayor Hogsett, I just I'm not hugely in the news. So like, I I can't say a lot about all this. But um, I just know about Holcomb, because I have the WTHR app, and it alerts me when he talks and I really liked that. But also when Trump that, like federal level.

Nancy Yerian 37:36

Mhm.

Laura Spindler Lempke 37:36

Does President Trump, I think that Trump is ,there's good and bad of both. Like he's letting the states take care of it, which I think is good, because I think Holcomb knows more about Indiana and the governor's know better about each state. I get that. That him saying that we'll be back. You know, we were going to be back by Easter. But yet, here we are. And now we're gonna be back when the first of May. And I truly don't think that that's going to be right. But I do. I do think that we'll be back around June or July.

Nancy Yerian 38:09

Mhm.

Laura Spindler Lempke 38:09

There might be another surge later. But that's just my personal opinion. But I think that, I don't know, like, I think I just keep thinking that Holcomb doing a great job. And I, I like said, I haven't heard Hogsett the mayor talked much about it. I don't think that's his job. To You know, I think that's Holcomb's job to

be able to do that. And he's done a great job. So I don't, I don't know if I answered your question or not. But that's-

Nancy Yerian 38:31

No, that's-

Leeah Mahon 38:31

Yeah.

Nancy Yerian 38:32

A great answer. Because, because it sort of tells us what you're able to hear. Right?

Laura Spindler Lempke 38:37

Yeah. Yeah.

Leeah Mahon 38:38

Whatever your personal experiences is.

Nancy Yerian 38:40

Mh, right. Yeah, there's no wrong answers here.

Leeah Mahon 38:45

So we're kind of getting towards the end of the interview now. So I'm gonna talk to you a little bit about the future, which I think is giving us all hope right now. Just thinking about the future the summertime, you know? So has your experience transformed how you think about your family and friends and community? And in what ways?

Laura Spindler Lempke 39:06

Oh, yes, for sure. Like, I'll be down at my mom's a lot. Not that I wouldn't be before but you just keep seeing all this stuff on Instagram and Facebook, how you take stuff for granted. It's so cliché, but it's so true. Like you forced to be inside not going to see them and like I said, I'm a huge extrovert anyway, and love to be with family and love to be with friends. Like I cannot wait to be able to see them so much that I'm tired of them you know what I mean, like I I'm to that point where I'm just like, I want to have that interaction and to be with them constantly. And also just I hate you know, being sappy, but like my dad passing away like that was a huge realization and this has also been huge realization that, you know, being with people being able to spend time with them. And face to face has been, I've been missing a lot, and I'm excited to get back to that.

Leeah Mahon 39:58

Yeah, absolutely.

Laura Spindler Lempke 40:00

Hmm.

Leeah Mahon 40:00

And knowing what you know now what we, as a world know now.

Laura Spindler Lempke 40:07

Mhm.

Leeah Mahon 40:07

What do you think that individuals communities or governments need to keep in mind for the future?

Laura Spindler Lempke 40:14

I think this is really important that one of my co workers and I were talking about this the other day is that the virus will never go away. It will always be here. It will keep people I see a lot say like, we have to kill a virus, well, the virus will never die, the virus will never get killed. That's, you know, how viruses are. People will always get it, just like the flu.

Leeah Mahon 40:46

Mhm.

Laura Spindler Lempke 40:46

But it will always be there. And I think that a lot of people don't realize that that 'oh, this will poof it'll all be gone.' No, like our lives will be back to normal a little bit.

Leeah Mahon 40:56

Mhm.

Laura Spindler Lempke 40:56

But we'll always have the subject of, you know, COVID-19 and Coronavirus, and just how viruses are like, it's something we can control, we can try to flatten the curve. But I think that that's what a lot people need to realize that it's not going to just poof, go away. Like I, I feel like a lot of federal leaders have led us to believe that and even state leaders sometimes have led us to believe that that's going to happen. And that's not basic biology.

Leeah Mahon 41:23

Right.

Laura Spindler Lempke 41:23

Like basic biology is you can't eradicate a virus like you can't completely take it out.

Leeah Mahon 41:30

Mhm.

Laura Spindler Lempke 41:30

So yeah, I think that's important to keep in mind as we move forward and get get used to this new, I don't think the new normal is going to be totally different from what our old normal was, I really don't, I

think will for sure be back to normal in a year. I know, that's a lot to say, but like a long time, but I think that we'll be able to get to grocery stores and you know, stores pretty soon. But I think that the new normal is that COVID will always be here. COVID-19 will be here, so.

Leeah Mahon 41:59

You think that this will change at all, the way that we live our daily lives, knowing that a virus can kind of come out of seemingly nowhere, and in effect our lives the way it has?

Laura Spindler Lempke 42:10

I hope that people are more aware.

Leeah Mahon 42:12

Mhm.

Laura Spindler Lempke 42:13

I hope that this makes them more aware of like in the lab, I have to bleach everything, I have to wipe down everything with ethanol, I have to wear gloves, I'm not dealing with viruses every day, you know, like I deal with blood a lot and do a lot of blo- cell isolations from human blood, which could be infected, you know, with all kinds of viruses like hepatitis C, hepatitis B, everything.

Leeah Mahon 42:36

Mhm.

Laura Spindler Lempke 42:37

So and then I have to bleach everything, white gloves were everything. So it's just making people more aware, if anything good comes out of this, just making people more aware of what's around them and washing your hands. Like just, it's going to be there.

Leeah Mahon 42:52

Yeah.

Laura Spindler Lempke 42:53

And, you know, we may get sick, but if we're healthy, you know, we'll be able to conquer it, so.

Leeah Mahon 43:01

Right. So is there anything that we haven't asked you about your experience with COVID-19 that you would want to mention?

Laura Spindler Lempke 43:07

I don't think so. I think it's just been really, really beneficial to make those test kits. I really have felt the impact, like I'm making an impact even if it is stuffing a bag full of swabs and media Kleenex, you know, it-

Leeah Mahon 43:23

Yeah.

Laura Spindler Lempke 43:24

I feel like I'm on that front line. And by no means like a nurse or a doctor like they are the ultimate, you know, every first respond- like all that they're they're the main the main hope and all this they.

Leeah Mahon 43:38

So sorry.

Laura Spindler Lempke 43:40

That's fine. It's fine. Um, but you know, being able to contribute has really, really affected me in a good way, so.

Nancy Yerian 43:51

Yeah, yeah.

Laura Spindler Lempke 43:53

Been good.

Leeah Mahon 43:55

I didn't want her to keep barking.

Laura Spindler Lempke 43:57

No, it's fine. You're good, you're good.

Leeah Mahon 44:00

I knew She'd sneak her way into the interview somehow. Um, is there, Nancy, do you have any more questions for Laura before we wrap up?

Nancy Yerian 44:09

I don't think so. Thank you for, for sharing your time with us for (inaudible) sharing your experiences.

Laura Spindler Lempke 44:16

Yeah.

Leeah Mahon 44:17

Thank you. I'm gonna stop right here.