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Humboldt in the time of Covid : Youth's Mental Health with Paula Nedelcoff LMFT

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Transcription :

Noe :

So just as a general introduction, like I said my name is Noe Sanchez-Nino I'm a junior year student with the History Department working alongside Dr. Pasztor for the Humboldt time in Covid history project for the archive. We're all allowed to sort of select themes and topics that we want to discuss and that we want to go into and mine is mental health in our community with an emphasis on youth. It has the opportunity to expand into the sort of macro level, but that's sort of where I want to focus since that is where I'm at now in my life.

Paula :

Okay

Noe :

So I would like to ask you a few questions just about your perspective if that's okay. The first one just sort of to more information just to get some good background information. Before covid restrictions and this sort of pre-pandemic time, how could a student request your support? And would they meet with you in person or over the phone?

Paula :

So precovid, the way students got services at CAPS they were all in person classes, I mean sessions. They called the front office and requested an intake. At that point we do an intake and determine with the student what's the best course of action for them.

We're a group-focused, our focus is short term therapy and group work with the belief that you can serve more people with groups and then people can learn from one another. That is not always what people want when they think about coming to therapy. So, we're also a graduate training program for our graduate program here. So if a student comes in and they are low risk which means they are not at risk of hurting themselves or others there's not more intensive diagnosis, a history of suicides, attempts, that sort of stuff then we give them to work with a graduate student and those of us who are senior staff, we all supervise, you know we have 2-3 graduate students that we closely supervise but everything was done in person, the groups and individual. We each have our own offices and part of coming into therapy is about that, that space that isn't at home, it's not at a friend's it's this comfortable space. So, my couch for example rocks, there are pillows on it, there's things to look at in the room or to even maybe promote a question or thinking and I just sit in a chair across from them so it's a lot more what I thought would call personal and engaging, and so that changed when we couldn't see people live that anymore.

Noe :

Right, right,

It's a space and it's an opportunity to be available and vulnerable.

Paula :

Right, and I think that the space as a person who's been a therapist for many many years, like

the space that you do this work in, is important, like that it's comfortable and it feels like all part of the experience. Cause therapy is in your head and heart, but it's also experiential. What the room smells like, how those pillows feel, and as a therapist you're always observing all of that besides what someone's saying. So, I think that is pretty much it, and what's changed is that they still contact caps in all the same way but its on Zoom.

Noe :

And is it harder to establish that human connection on zoom, you know? Just as you spoke about how space is so important.

Paula :

I think it is, I think its working though. I see private clients now, I have a private practice also at night. I see some private people online, it's not my preference I think that there is. It's missing those things, you know? How the client carries themselves when they come in. You know, how they sit in the chair. How I sit in the chair, how I react, those kinds of things - there's less queues for lack of a better, that can happen online. The flip side is that you kind of learn to do it in a different way, so you learn what student, specifically keeping it to our Humboldt students, what students don't get out of bed to do this session? I've learned a lot about where the students are conducting and showing up, and it's sort in a different intimate way, where all of the sudden I'm in their space.

Noe :

So it still allows you to be personal.

Paula :

Yes...

Noe:

And to see their lives and where they feel safe and comfortable.

Paula :

Yes, Yes. And it, I also think that it depends on, you know, the individual that is doing the work. I'm a real engaging person and im very comfortable I still certainly still have pieces pieces of imposter syndrome but i'm sixty-seven years old, so I can have a way with the student that feels - I feel very grounded in who I am, and I've had the confidence now to go o now I can do this online because I was really scared, given that the only way I knew how to do any of this was in person so i've learned a lot...

Noe :

But that's really great I can imagine that as someone whose yourself whos had those years of experience doing those in person you develop your skill set and the job that you do sort of this this physical space and then having to translate what you know sort of on this online medium - i can imagine that has been very difficult.

Paula :

It's fine now, but ironically the first three months of this, if you remember we sort of shut down in 2019 about March, if I remember...

Noe :

Around December.

Paula :

And I cried because I was having such a hard time with technology. You know I'm old school, I went to graduate school with a typewriter. There was no computers, and so learning to do the technology so you would blow it and mess up a student's session, I've found like I didn't have the same stressor and anxieties as students did but I was experiencing a level of anxiety that I hadn't had because I had to get on this learning curve which I look back and I go "wow I kind of overreacted" but what a learning opportunity, because it's opened up a whole new world.

Noe :

It's a new form of connecting with people and it's very newage as well.

Paula :

Yep, I mean I really think so for "poo-pooing" it so much, there's like, I still think the ideal is in person, I think that the ideal would be for the doctors is in person, but this allows people to that don't have that ability to get services now and for us all to go this can work, so...

Noe :

And also I think I believe it allows you to connect with students that are not in the area and that are studying at home and I'm sure that's a very big help considering that mental health resources are - considering to get for people to get of varying financial circumstances and health insurance plays a big role as well - I'm glad people are able to connect with you in this sort of new way, but where there any trainings or any sort of classes that zoom offered, or that, I'm not sure which organization would be helping this circumstance but that helped learn zoom techniques and sort of that kind of connection.

Paula :

Not really anything about therapy on zoom but we all got trained on how to use zoom and how to make this work and then it was sort of a gap between trial and error and realizing which you all know cause you're so much younger, most of the time technology is going to work much like it says it's going to, you just have to trust it but do I think there was a big trust piece as a provider, like wait a minute how is this gonna? But no we didn't - we got as much as we could I think the school really jumped through when I struggled that I would talk to kids online instead of in zoom, for example, because we were working from home once I was able to bring in my full desktop from my office it was a lot easier for me than trying to adapt with a laptop so the first couple months I did more telephone sessions which some students really like since there are some really anxious individuals that come to counseling and they prefer not to be seen and so this was a new way for them, to speak to them though as a therapist and I've talked to other therapists, phone is not in my opinion the ideal because for any of us that are a little attention

deficit we can get, it's easy to get, to try to start to multitask...

Noe:

Yeah, to focus on a single sense.

Paula :

... and when your on the telephone no one can see you, and you can be present but its hard to give it the full extent like working with you right now, and even this its, you can get away, for lack of a better - that sounds kind of weird, but like when your in the room and present you are so there so, what I have found is that i've had to work hard on staying very present with who I'm with because I do have a tend to probably how i got through school and life and all of with challenges, like when your a multitasker, you multitask, and it's hard to go like no that can wait im here right now so that's been a learning curve, and I don't know people talk about that. It might be true for the students too, that they want to be in counseling let's say, and they are in session and all of sudden they are also seeing something else where if they were here in my office again, your in this bubble where its just all about you and the experience there and there aren't other kinds so I think it can allow you to go deeper.

Noe :

So I know that as a student just as someone whose studied before covid time and then during covid time, learning does feel distance, and I feel like I'm learning and it's the same material there is this physical distance that sort of spaces you between what your supposed to be doing and where you are now, so I can imagine that when it comes to your own life it's to be vulnerable, it's hard to vulnerable to a camera, I know its difficult to pinpoint how covid-19 and all of its in person social restrictions affecting socio-emotional development, I mean these are like really crucial times I feel like, as university students to develop and learn about boundaries and learn about different people and how to be tolerant of different ideas and people who come from all over the place and I wanted to know what kind of challenges we've seen in this aspect of life as sort of school has gone on line about our emotional development?

Paula :

I think two things, I think for students that I've worked with since I've been here that were highly socially anxious, they have done better since they have not had to go to school and be in person. Now that's for students that really knew they had social anxiety or struggled with routine and getting up being able to they could make that work for them but from a different perspective, kids and I'll talk about it younger than college too kids are missing out on this what was "the norm" and I don't want to call it the norm anymore since I don't know if it will be the norm anymore but there is a skill set and in socio-emotional development that we thought people needed, right. And that is now been removed and you know some kids students or younger they work better in groups and they need study partners and they need the actual tutoring that you can get from the learning center when its more in person, like they are hands on and this has been difficult for students who need that kind of engagement and because a lot of times when your online you are required to pull in your own discipline and that you know so you got taught that really early on by picking the highschool you went to, but there is a number of students who come to Humboldt their first or second years so were talking their under twenty-one that they haven't developed that inner discipline yet, you know they are coming to

college because they are lucky they got a college or they got recruited to come to college but they really don't know what they are doing and to have that kind of guidance all online or through written stuff it can be sometimes harder than having your person, you know help you navigate through if that makes sense.

Noe :

Yeah, it's sort of its own learning curve sort of in personal development as well. In just, you know just knowing time management, knowing you need to be - you know, all of that so I can imagine and yes I did learn that very early on, around 15 I believe is when I took my first college classes.

Paula :

Right, so you see if you hadn't learned that think about - if you don't have to be in class and that's your external locus of control and you can just look at this at 3:00 o'clock in the morning it can I think young adults sleep hygiene is off anyway as is students' but I think it throws off the sleep hygiene even more, as far as a routine and ritual and I do think that my own optimism is that as the students develop maturity and more self awareness they will get a hold of this, but we have seen I cant quotes numbers so I'm not gonna, but I'm thinking that there is late withdrawals and some extensions for papers things such as that, that is going to be more tied into one hand less pressure because the pressure of having to show up to class and physically turn in something maybe be just that external locus of control that was, what was needed, does that makes sense?

Noe :

That makes sense, I can imagine that; that kind of just personal development and academic development is being self lead now, you know. It's just one of those things that comes with trial and error unfortunately and it's even more trials you know and it's even more errors now that it's online you know, you don't have someone to sort of bounce off of for ideas and reference points and I understand.

Paula :

Right, right. Go ahead, next question.

Noe :

Thank you, do you think this has been worse for some groups of students or individuals and what I mean by that we spoke about sort of two kinds of students whose with social anxiety and those who would serve, or would be served better in sort of the physical setting, but for groups of students I mean sort different racial or ethnic backgrounds sort of compositionally speaking , minority students, do you believe these in person restrictions have served them in a way that is more difficulties to learn and balance a healthy mindset? Just for me I know that being underrepresented and underserved in a community with already little access to health care and mental health, I'm not sure how you've worked with that, with just students of different backgrounds.

Paula:

I think that for transplant students in particular that it's hard enough to come here from an urban area even in person because it feels different it's quiet it's rural it's whether it be something there is no food after eight o'clock at night in most places, your not conjugating with groups of people that have similarities so, I think it may have made connecting to this area more difficult feeling more isolated I think and again the ease of saying well I'm going home, why am I going to subject myself to this and it's uncomfortable and I do this work from home, and I think that separate from non-white students just the fact that if you are from an urban area and let's face we're serving more kids from out of the area than local kids, I think that it makes a lot of sense that if you really hate the weather and if you're used to all these things and your connected to your family which we know that for a lot of families that's true even if they are problematic families, it's like you go - you leave, so I do think it has made it harder, I know one of the things I really tried hard to do is when I'm working with students and I hear that isolation - finding out if they have a vehicle, find out how comfortable they are going to town making sure they know about some of weather it be Black Humboldt for students of color which is also very open for Latinx students, and different activities at different restaurants, different - you know, so people can start to see "oh you know maybe there is some stuff here that I can feel connected with"

Noe:

Right, feeling home away from home.

Paula:

Cause otherwise it can look like, and I've discussed this with my friends all the time it can look like this rural white area that unless your a surfer or kayaker or birder, what is there to do, because everything else is hidden, you know, if you were raised in Fortuna you know that like all you have to do - my grandkids are half Mexican half white - you go to a quinceanera, you know the first quincenera I went to I went Oh my god, wow. It's still more hidden. You know what I mean?

Noe :

Yes, I know what you mean and I've gone to make friends on zoom , which is challenging on its own, but for students who come from more urban settings like Los Angeles or those big cities they come here and they ask me oh you've grown up here, what can I do here? It's sort of similar to what I would do at home? So in a way I've seen that it's not that people don't feel welcomed here it's that they feel incompatible, which is-

Paula :

Well I agree if you're used to smells and loud noises and I'm thinking because I have family in LA - one of the things that I love is that I can get any kind of food I want at one o'clock in the morning, you know what I mean , and it's warmer and I like business. Whether or not I could live in that 24/7 and then have to commute is a whole different story. But kind of that loud chaos, the energy., its very quiet here and I kind of agree that sometimes and maybe this is really ignorant of me as a white woman, that race is an issue up here but it's also more of another demographic of rural vs urban, versus exposure to things that people were never exposed to. People in the city , some people that know have said " you know I'm not going to take a walk up in those woods, I don't know who's going to be out there" so and I've lived here a really long time, the

joke for years was black people didn't come up past - I have friend who grew up she's half black half white she grew up in Willits and she said o no my people don't come past willits because that bigfoot is up there. So yes I think that incompatibility and I think covid has made that worse. You can't go to the bars, not going to bars or getting drunk is what your supposed to be doing but people socialize at bars they socialise in restaurants and as things close down it took what was already limited even more so, away.

Noe :

Yes, and even now even if you do socialize you have that fear of covid, you have that fear of will this get me sick will it get my family sick will take it back home, it's something you want to do but you almost feel guilty for that kind of experience.

Paula :

And developmentally again I will say that for students that are not local you are also developmentally in an age that you "sex drugs and rock and roll" I mean you know this is the time of being very social, being sexually active, being and practicing dating, experimenting with a number of things and I mean all within norm, nothing crazy, and all of that was just like taken away and so I go just paying attention to students anxiety or depression really trying to tease out how much of this is there regardless of this Covid or how much now is this another environmental factor, that just made it even worse, it compounded it.

Noe :

Yeah, within the normal human realm of despair.

Paula :

Right, Right, and just being torn like to go to a club even though you really want to get out, like okay what is the risk? And am I going to be anxious the whole time I'm there you know those kinds of things?

Noe :

Right, there's been so much grief just for people who have lost family members or people who have experiences that sickness and sort anxieties and the state of depression that bring and deferred dreams too and the changes in people's lives that have resulted because of the covid shutdown and generally just from the pandemic at large, you know people had job opportunities that they wanted to pursue - they cant, anymore financial burdens that they wanted to go study somewhere and now they cant. How locally, here locally, how have we seen people respond to these change of plans.

Paula :

Well I think a generalized - well I'm thinking of 2-3 of my students who were planning of studying abroad and then having to cope with that. People not being able to go be with family members who have passed, not having closure, in Humboldt county what I will tell because i'm a business

owner also, thank God for those grants that our governor gave us no matter what anyone thinks of Governor Newsome, he took care of those that new how to get on this or how to access and help to get on these things and kept us all from closing.

Noe :

Yes, my mom had a child daycare, so if you hear children in the background that's what that is.

Paula :

I don't hear them, but yeah.

Noe :

And she's benefitted from those government relief assistance.

Paula :

And hes, I'm telling you if you were able to get in and this is the other thing since not everybody just because you get a business started means that they knew the ability and had the availability of a good computer or sitting and waiting, but the palace that I own with partners we had somebody who could do that and we were able to be closed and or stay open some part time without losing our shirt and ironically as real estate has also increased in humboldt county, not saying its due to the covid but its been very serendipitous our business now is probably worth more money than it was because you could if your numbers are bad for any business right now, selling you could also say that was covid related, so I think people have gotten a lot of locals and I've lived here since I was 18, we like to get out of the area and so we have felt more trapped, but for me and I shared this with students since there are so many resources, when some of those waves of being disillusioned about what was going to happen just bears stronger than I want to use, benign able to go to the marsh and see the birds and the ducks, and kind of go this isn't for ever look at these animals keep surviving this is like I was able to put it in a context of we need to just do what we need to do to get through this, we have never experienced anything like this in this country for years upon years and none of this living generation has experienced anything like this In this country for years upon years and none of this living generation has experienced anything like this and so kind of taking advantage of because there wasn't anything else you could do so you know learning to be more comfortable on the beach or in the the forest or on the marsh and you know what can you do?

Noe :

And that, I mean I don't want to say it is a silver lining but it's an opportunity for people to sort of recenter and you know look at life here and in the now and the present, and it's been helpful for me and I can't speak for everybody.

Paula :

I can't either but I think there has been a lot of silver linings I don't want to say I, I don't like the use of the word regret we who we are in this moment because of everything that has happened to us, positive and negative but I think if we cannot fight it as humans we can let it evolve and see what it is teaching us I see families maybe becoming a little more self reliant with each

other, people maybe not having as many friends, but getting more connected to like people establishing their village, but we also saw sick people flooding the emergency rooms. You know, i'm sure the doctor peoples have a whole different viewpoint because I know one of my comments was i'm not worried about dying from covid, im older, im worried that will I get in if I have a heart attack or a stroke, like it brought up other things like that our physicians here the student health center have been so good with the student working with them via email or zoom so I don't think that the students health care the lack just like counseling hasn't lacked its just been so different.

Noe :

Yes, I understand and i've actually read about you and I've read that you are an advocate for sexual assault victims and your experience of being a marriage family therapist what are some of the changes we are seeing in this field of advocacy sort of in this context of Covid- 19 and sort of what, I mean has this time provided different trigger or is it the environment that makes it harder for people to come to a healing place? A little bit more on that one.

Paula :

I think for anybody who does manage their stress levels well, so within the family I think that domestic violence is on the rise of feeling you know, more stuck. But I also think there is coincidences with that and the change of government the last "x" amount of years too, so I - that's a really difficult one, where we have behaviors that are displayed that say certain ways to treat each other is acceptable and then this covid comes, so if I was a researcher I would want to be teasing okay which came first the chicken or the egg in that, but when it comes to more sexual assault, I'm going to assume there's going to be less reporting because someone is going to be ashamed that they were out when they shouldn't have been out, because of what someone might think about them with covid, you know, so I think it's more layered than that, but I do think that drinking and eating, I mean - I don't know if DUI's are on the rise, because I just don't study all that but I think that people - I mean we know that grocery stores and liquor stores haven't lost any money during covid, and people have been also put weight on. In general in this country during Covid.

Noe :

Yeah, I know that one.

Paula :

Yeah, me too and we know that alcohol is never the cause for any assault or violence or poor judgement if you put yourself in a more dangerous situation, but what we do know is that alcohol clouds the management part of our brain which gives us clear thinking and so any of us might do something after we have three shots in that we might not do perfectly cold, I mean, I just never like to act too arrogant about that, how alcohol and drugs work is to slow down the management part of our brain so, if there is more drinking there is less locus of control. Weird behaviors can happen.

Noe :

And I can imagine that for people who are victims of physical, spiritual, and emotional abuse

really being at home with a family member or someone - relative, who is their abuser is really challenging and to be stuck in that kind of environment and not really having a way out, you know, since maybe they depend on them financially and it's a circumstantial relationship.

Paula :

Well it's hard enough, especially if there is physical abuse and control and then we have this new disease where we might not have availability in shelters, you know and we've got in Humboldt, we've had shelters at different times and then we haven't and we used to sometimes house people at a hotel or we would have safe houses but again Covid changed all of that, we can't have someone necessarily come into your house if you were a safe house, so all of that could definitely keep people more trapped in their homes.

Noe :

...and I know the family structure has changed, and I was reading an article by Branka Vuetla, she's from this legal aid website that was talking about divorces and she was explaining how now in 2021 there's this like rise in divorce cases for people who are older than fifty, so really like what would traditionally be the later off their marriages and considering that for people like me I'm age 20 and my parents are in that age group I know that a lot of parents wait for their kids to go to college to divorce but I was wondering if we're seen anything locally related to that rise in divorce and sort of change in the family dynamic and all that sort of

Paula :

I can't say that I've seen anything in and I do some expert witness stuff for high-conflict custody cases and I think you hit the nail on the head that the narrative is again your good parents if you stay together and stick it out for the kids, but there is another narrative that seems to be that people really we're at that unhappy but they got lost in their role as a parent and they lost who they were as a couple so one of those two things can happen in the later life divorces what I've seen in other divorce that's been more covid related is when the households have very different rules and mores about covid and about shots about protection about masks all of a sudden that makes custody and co-parenting far more difficult because you can't control what the other parent does but there is now can control the safety the other parent and the family and or members and so that can make things a lot more trying.

Noe :

... yes that one is just one here personally I've experienced and it's a challenging thing for everyone involved in the family just waiting for that point of I'm going to wait until my kids reach the age of being adults so that we can do that is for me just personally not ideal you know I've heard people say that the home or the family does better when each parent is happy in their own house and they can contribute actually to the like emotional-loving relationship to the child or the children.

Paula :

Right I agree, I agree 100% it's sometimes hard to make that kind of time for yourself and your partner and your children and if you have fiscal - so if you take a lower socio-economic family where you have to work your butt off in order to keep a roof over you and your kid's heads all of

a sudden you're too tired to take an interest in that spouse that you took an interest in when you were recording so it's so easy for that to happen and it also in a lot of people's marriages you're not supposed to be self-centered you're supposed to be all self-sacrificing like I tell a lot of people oh no there is no special chair for you and Heaven for being a martyr this is about how do you want your kid to grow up a martyr? How do you love your spouse and even show healthy conflict to the kids like you don't have to agree with your spouse but how do you do healthy conflict so they can learn how to do conflict when they grow up and not be kind of like paralyzed by the first time they have conflict with someone they care about because they don't know what it looks like or it only looks like this real severe kind of stuff

Noe :

Yeah, that one for me just That hit like a gong in my mind right there with the healthy conflict I hadn't heard about it that way no but it's true you need to be an example to how to navigate the situation which is difficult because the chances that our parents learn that from their parents going to further back in time before new age self-help ideas and like that...

Paula :

Right, right, I think that is each generation can break it just as an example you know you said your parents are recently divorced if your mom in her 50s can learn to be really happy she's breaking the pattern you know what I mean and so if each one of us and we all make mistakes but we keep showing those that we love "oh, I learned this now so now I'm going to do this differently and not blaming the other parent and letting people kind of figure out themselves because it is true three generations ago divorce wasn't an option you just stuck it out because it was really about survival it took two people to run the farm it took two people to like it's so different this old neighbor I had when I got divorced I got married really really young and got divorced and then the neighbor came down an old man bulky he said "I don't understand you people me and Edith didn't like each other that much but we didn't have any choice like you young people have too many choices" and that sticks with me so much because the more we evolve as humans the more choice we do have and intelligent and having choices can also cause depression and anxiety or sometimes a simple minded person they just kind of go along I mean and that can get to a whole lot more government stuff where they don't want us to get smart hahaha and again that's a nice refrain when your counseling with people being depressed and being anxious let's break that down today this is a sign of intelligence because you are stressing over these things that you have awareness about.

Noe :

That's what therapy is just like to me just here personally that's something I've participated in that's something I feel like if I were the ruler of the world what would I give everybody as an unalienable right is the right to a therapist it's a part I feel like you go to the dentist you go to these casual check-ups to make sure that you're living your life in a healthy way inside because what you believe about the world and what you believe about reality from the inside is going to completely change the way you experience it physically.

Paula :

I agree with you and I agree that if there was a model like that then it would be so less stigmatized if you know there's a lot of different layers of and it's on a pendulum some people

have some serious serious mental illness problems and they have to be triaged because medications are necessary and a number of things but many of us just need that neutral kind warm person that, that hour is all about them, like, and where they get that support and it could be check in person, so students that I see and a number of years here have now been long enough like seniors actually graduate student, who I started with an undergrad, I've been like his historian because I can remember where he was and these steps so I can help be the historian and also know how to point out things or question him with things that you know this is what you do when this kind of stuff when you get overloaded with this and so it's not so that there is anything magic but there's been a relationship established that you know I'm that person for them .

Noe :

Yeah, and i'm seeing that insurance Companies like Blue Shield Blue Cross are providing more money through the state for people to receive these kinds of mental health treatments and has this sort of and I don't want to call it - I don't want to make it a novelty but this, has this been the Golden Age of going to therapy or how has it been for this new awareness of maybe I need to see things differently now I have the time now I have the resources?

Paula :

I think that the last twenty years has really shown that it's not stigmatized to go to therapy, I think we're also crossing socioeconomic, to where other groups of people, because pretty much therapy has been a white world, and kind of a rich white man world if you think about it. That it's become more normalized and encouraged as a preventative I think we still have a long ways to go, but I think if you tied into covid if people had to much time that they were distracted then they may have reached out more since again we live in a capitalist western world, we distract in our culture, well eat for socialisation we shop for something to do rather than to just put clothes on our backs okay so we distract so when they got taken away and everything was shut down when shopping wasn't fun anymore and you had to wear a mask and wait in line because so many people are allowed in the store or it was an anxiety producing experience, you have more time to think about what can I do so I think there was more green light to go seek out services at that make sense.

Noe :

Yes that makes sense this sort of my final question for the interview here locally with students with people you've worked with during this pandemic shut down what have been some of the more common reaction that we've seen to Covid? Circumstances anxiety are we seeing depression are we seeing a mix of both I mean really it's a difficult time...

Paula :

I think that often one follows the other so how I explain it is depression is when stuck we are stuck on the past and anxiety is when were focused on the future and they both keep us away from the present in the here and now but here and now are often feels very uncomfortable it can be this stressful it can be unknown it can be confusing and so we can revert to one of those two, the depression or the anxiety versus sitting and just letting these feelings come and no they

are not going to annihilate you, so I kind of don't see one or the other but it's like a circular type thing but I am going to tell you, I think again this is separate from covid but covid makes it worse, were in times that there is more despair because of so much, first of all because of what's happening, our planet we worried about our planet, were worried about enough water, all these things and there's so much blasted at us about that, that is gonna attribute to people's shutting down if they feel overloaded with that and overwhelmed it can have despair. So you know, well why should I (explicit : freakin') worry about that the world is not going to be here anyway or why so, I think that again with covid that then tvs are going to be on more and news is going to be on more that we have to really really be careful that I think media has a big responsibility and and they don't deal you know it's all about money for them about what sells and that's even on my CNN you know like I love them in some ways in some ways they're no better it's like, put put put... is that too much pressure on you young people that want to make change and do things to start even wonder if you can and this is kind of not covid related but in this time, when I was twenty years old I thought I could change the world and I really believed I could and I didn't have this doomsday, I mean I was an activist from, when did we start Humboldt Women's shelter? Like, I was like twenty-one, young, we were young, we started a lot of the actual programs up here, but I worry about there's so much information that we get bombarded with and then its politicized, how is that get the way of despair for young people who, I'm counting on to passing the baton to keep this world going so my great grandkids have a world, your grandkids have a world, the human species survives. So, I think that there's an interesting time element in the last you know eight years also and that I don't want to through politics in but the backlash from Barack obama was so hideous with what happened to politics and it was probably already there it was just hidden more, but as we have so much information and we get too much even information about the covid, which way do we do it, are we supposed to get the booster or are we not supposed to get the booster? That were also filled with this anxiousness that - that's a bigger concern to me than how does covid affect this with learning but more of this permeated malaise and anxiety that just penetrates the world, does that make sense?

Noe :

Yeah, the news is sensationalized, and is not informative really if your trying to just , not at its surface level, but if you want to click an article you know, your going to get ads first of all which is one stimulus and then your going to get a paywall which is another stimulus, and then by the time you get to the bottom of your information you know, the world's over but now its back, you know?

Paula :

No, I agree with you and I actually find that pretty appalling. That's one of the things I don't like about how fast we are evolving because I don't know that we have developed, and I don't know if it's healthy for us to develop to be able to process all that so quickly. You know, if were meant to process that quickly, then maybe we all are are going be moving into a higher, like you know more incidence of hyper activity or attention deficit because were expected. You know I question this all the time, is this external or internal? You know, which is it. That's why its fascinating to hear your studying history but also with the science, I always said history and

psychology needs to go together because if we look at what was happening in the times then we look at what were the symptomologies of people who can help us you now kind of try to figure out things out.

Noe :

Yeah my sister is a sociology major and she shared with me, she's like there's no history without sociology and there's no sociology without history, she's like it's all intertwined. It's the human collective experience, its documented, its been narraterized but its filtered through, but it's there and its a reference point and that's why living history too like our grandparents, community elders, leaders that's why they're all so important, you know because they got to grow up in a time, I know that for now when everything gets sensationalized, if I grow up without any previous knowledge of you know maybe that's not the truth or maybe they're trying to sell me something, if I grow up impressioned that way you know, someone in the community a leader an advocate someone who wants to help you can tell you, sort of step back and this is what life is about, look at from that and focus on yourself, but it's all been definitely really interesting and growing up during this time...

Paula :

Well you know you know, your young enough to life, you always grew up with MTV, but something you just said and then i'm thinking about violence against women, back in the early 70s, when, it was a big deal I would go speak to the men's clubs because back then rotary was just men, there wasn't women in rotary, trying to get their buy-in about how bad domestic violence was within the homes and then we would do some education, we would call it the (wave-pam slide show) where we showed how women were so sexualized in advertiements, okay and we started to make some in-roads, and then MTV came out and again capitalist society, what sells? *Booty sells, Boobies sell*, You know pump-and-grind sells im not being crutagee but I'm saying we worked and we worked against not doing this and then this next thing took over and we took two steps back again, you know its always, and so and that's kind of what I think about Donald Trump, whether he did good things or didn't do good things, policies he spoke so poorly about people terribly, and like so, its like this, like what are the morares whats the leadership?

Noe :

It sets the national tone.

Paula :

Whether it be about women and children, whether it be - and it's all tied into that but it's also tied into economics and power. So, anyway I don't mean to divert but in a nutshell the students through CAPS get excellent services we have done groups online and we have done mediation groups online, we you know see people sometimes, I had a clear morning which was nice for you because we're wrapping up, sometimes I see seven people a day on the computer, and we are still taking students in, we will until finals, and you know, yes it has changed their experience but i think we've learned how to look at what we can offer in spite of that.

End.

- Due to technological difficulties, Paula Nedelcoff authorized the release of this interview via email, since the form was not accessible through email.