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Journal #2

While researching about my capstone which is Animal Assisted Therapy, I recognized the impact of my experience of riding horses and the therapeutic ability to help me in managing the process of grief. I learned how to calm my mind, relax, and connect with the care and nurture of the horses which in return taught me that I have to be the same way with myself. What I also learned about myself throughout this capstone was that I noticed how not asking for help and having the mentality that if I struggle I'm able to deal with it on my own does to me mentally. I noticed that me actually reaching out for help worsened since I'm not in the school setting which now and the teacher is not with me physically, which taught me that sometimes you have no choice but to ask for help. I always was worried of asking a "dumb question" in front of my peers which made me more embarrassed of asking the question, so I didn't. Now as an online learner, I found it easier to ask questions when needed without the feeling of embarrassment.

Process has been gathering more data on the benefits of animal therapy, scheduling a meeting (Wednesday, October 21st) with Mrs Patricia Kelly of Ebony Horsewomen. On date, Mrs. Kelly agreed to be a mentor for my Capstone project, I discussed my ideas on how to emphasize the awareness of animal therapy specifically horses. Mrs. Kelly discussed the population of children in which Ebony Horsewomen service, the therapeutic benefits to the children, the challenges of being able to interview children due to HIPPA laws and some time restriction of visiting the facility due to COVID guidelines. If possible I also was thinking about having mental check-ins with the middle schoolers and give them a safe space about their mental state if needed, also teaching why it's important to address your mental health especially during an pandemic

What has been a big moment of realization is thinking of how to be creative in getting community service hours due to the increase of COVID and strict guidelines. Just realizing that the old is gone and the new way of doing things takes patience, being able to manage through changes and a new normal. As well COVID has impacted a great deal of services for children that are beneficial. COVID only allows a certain amount of children to participate in programs which means that many of the children are not being serviced

Thus far, having to initiate meetings is something different for me. This has taught me to make sure I am organized with an agenda for discussion. I pushed myself to make sure I was clear, precise, and organized in my thoughts as to what the focus of my capstone project entails and ways to raise awareness of animal therapy and it's benefit.