

Dr. Bhavani's Diary (Working from Home during COVID-19) – Part 4

July 17, 2020 – August 28, 2020 (6 weeks)



This is a continuation of Dr. Bhavani's Diary series. Dr. Bhavani's Diary (Working from Home using COVID-19) – Part 1 was published on April 24, 2020 after working from home for six weeks. During the first part it was about getting used to working from home, establishing a routine/schedule, giving a keynote address at CyberW, starting the second half of the Spring semester and more importantly organizing the 2000-person virtual IEEE ICDE 2020 and also the WiDS Dallas Event. In the second part of Dr. Bhavani's diary I discussed my work during the next six weeks (April 24 to June 5) about the keynote talks, starting the YouTube videos and also completing the Spring Semester and starting the Summer Semester. The third segment of Dr. Bhavani's Diary Part 3 discussed mainly the continuation of my work and some details of my summer class and taking care of health. This is the fourth segment of Dr. Bhavani's Diary (Part 4). Here I discuss about the end of the summer session, start of the Fall classes and some other activities.

Today is August 28, 2020 and we have been staying home for five and a half months. While we are getting used to working from home, it is also quite frustrating as one day is just like the other. And COVID-10 is raging on with over 180,000 deaths and millions of cases in the US. While some consolation that it is improving in NYC, it's bad in Texas. Its so difficult going out as I wear not only the mask and gloves but also a plastic shield and a hat and goggles. It's very uncomfortable but better safe than sorry. My husband and I now go for drives and take walks, and I still walk on the balcony in our condo. So, my legs are quite strong, but my arms are getting weaker. We don't realize how much we moved our arms during the non-COVID days. We carry a handbag or lift boxes or books, drive the car and so we get constant exercise. I use my exercise bike almost daily but that does not help my shoulder and arms. So, during this time I have started doing some arm/shoulder exercises and stretching.

During phase 4, I also joined a group Sixty and Me, a website with lots of useful information for older people especially women over 60.

<https://sixtyandme.com/>

I have not written an article for them but have commented on a few – like what to do when one is lonely during COVID-19. Here is an excerpt of what I wrote recently and also linked it to my Facebook account.

"I am a Professor of Computer Science and recently joined Sixty and Me. Yes, at times it can get lonely especially during COVID-19. My husband is based in Boston and me in Dallas. He spends 2 weeks a month in Dallas. Fortunately for us, he was in Dallas late February and has stayed on. So, we are together. When I think of the fact that I have not seen my son and his family in NYC for 6 months I feel awful. However, when I feel like that, I do all the things I love, such as studying new areas in cyber security and data science, watching British comedies, reading self-help books and meditate. I also give motivational talks at outreach events. I feel really good after I do the things I love. We must have hope for the future. Main thing now is to keep busy and take care of our health."

Helping others helps me a lot. Occasionally I am on social media – Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, but try to limit it to no more than once a week. There is so much going on

in politics and try to watch one hour of TV a day. And looking forward to watching US Open tennis that starts on Monday.

I had a great Summer semester and taught the course on Analyzing and Securing Social Media. I believe the students enjoyed the class and I was very motivated. This Fall I am teaching the course on Big Data Security and Privacy and so far, we have had two lectures and it is going well. Although my Internet was down the last thirty minutes of the lecture on August 21 due to updates to One Cloud. So, I re-taped the last 30 mins of the lecture and posted it as an addendum to the lecture and disabled One Cloud,

I continued to give keynote addresses during this time; in fact, the first two weeks of August I gave four keynote/featured addresses at IEEE CSCloud, ACM CODASPY, IEEE ICKG and IEEE IRI. I have many more to give October – December. The videos can be found on my YouTube channel.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCdkdO2DUNqpgGLmeJjiXujA?>

I was also named top 100 women in cyber security by the Cyber Defense Magazine 2020.

<https://cyberdefenseawards.com/top-100-women-in-cybersecurity-for-2020/>

I participated in a STEM Podcast and that will be published early September. As I mentioned in my earlier diary entry, I enjoy making the videos and hope to continue with it while working from home. I also worked on some press releases including one on the awards and more to come in Part 5.

<https://cs.utdallas.edu/utdallas-cs-icde2020/>

<https://cs.utdallas.edu/utdallas-cybersecurity-team-csi-awards-ieee-2020/>

While I have been quite productive and work has gone quite well. I could do better with my studying, but my diet is still a frustration. I have done some cooking – mix lentils and spinach with some chicken. I try to cook 2-3 times a week, but the other days I eat frozen dinners which is not good. But my man problem is taking lots of half and held cream with my tea. I tried Almond milk but could not handle it, but I use it for my All Bran cereal so it helps a bit. I have improved on my meditation and sleep routine. So, the main focus for the next six weeks is again health.

Hope that we are all safe and well and will post Dr. Bhavani's Diary Part 5 on October 9, 2020. Let's continue to hope we get some encouraging news about the pandemic/vaccine at that time.