

Don't take anything for granted

 By [Nicci Botha](#)

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In our #SurvivorStories series, we put a face to Covid-19 by sharing the stories of people who have fought the virus and come out the other side. Bizcommunity's very own, Clarina de Freitas, talks us through her journey in this first installment.



Clarina de Freitas

■ ***Do you know how and when you contracted Covid-19?***

I contracted Covid on 1 May 2020, I had a friend over as we had some business-related matters to discuss. I remember that she sneezed and we didn't have our masks on as we both assumed that we were safe to be around. She went to her dentist a day before she visited me and that is where she might have been infected. She called me the Monday after the visit on Friday to tell me that she was feeling sick and went to the doctor. She was tested for Covid and the result came back positive. I had some chest issues as I suffer from seasonal asthma. This meant my immune system was compromised when I got infected and I remembered coughing a bit more than usual that week. I went to the doctor and she told me that I had a very bad sinus infection and a lot of phlegm on my chest. I was given a stronger antibiotic as she ruled out Covid-19. By that very evening I got a call from my friend to say that she tested positive and that I needed to call the doctor. I did and was sent for a test immediately.

■ ***Describe the journey of your illness?***

Covid really comes in stages and it doesn't attack the body all at once. It was a very scary experience as every day was different for me. This is over a period of 10 days. I had a severe headache which didn't feel like a usual headache, my ears started feeling that they wanted to pop and were extremely sore. A day later, I lost my sense of taste and smell. Two days later, I suffered from severe diarrhoea which lasted a while and I felt like vomiting most days. My throat was extremely sore, I coughed a lot and would bring up a lot phlegm. My chest got worse as I struggled to breathe due to low oxygen levels. This was the stage I thought I was going to die and I eventually ended up in hospital, but fortunately enough I did not have to stay there but took the nebuliser home to help with the breathing. My urine was dark brown and I also suffered from extreme lower back pain. I struggled to walk as well.

■ ***How are you feeling now?***

I'm almost 100%, healing does take time as I still get tired if I walk. But other than that, I am really great! Your mental state

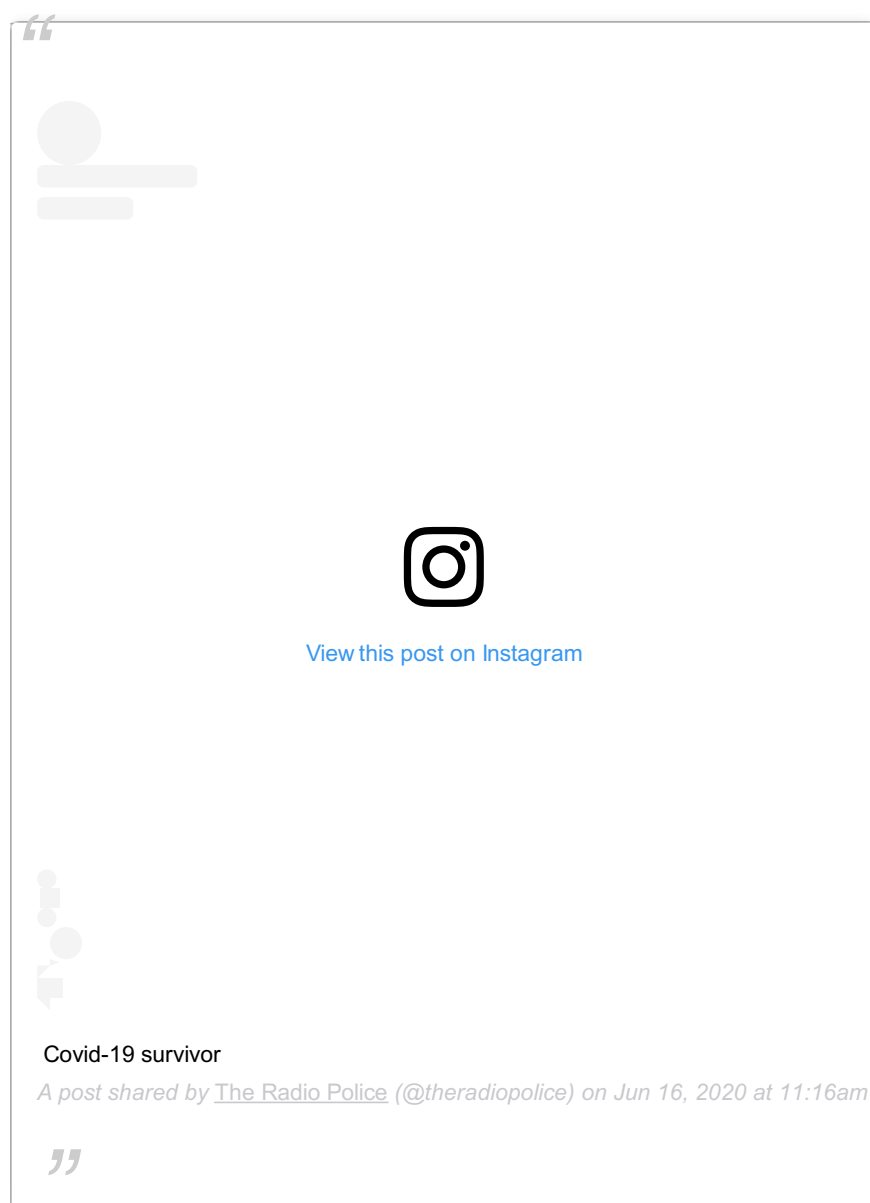
is the most important thing and you have to keep your mind focused on good things.

▣ **What have you learnt from your experience?**

The importance of my loved ones, family, spiritual family, friends, my colleagues. They are the glue that holds everything together and the ones that will pray for you. Keep your spiritual life in order and take time to show gratitude to God, to others and for the smallest things. The importance of life itself and really not to take anything for granted, to love to be kind, knowing now that your breath is the space between heaven and earth. That we won't use our breath on meaningless things, but for us to speak and breathe love! Love, kindness and compassion.

▣ **What message would you like to send to people out there?**

Please be considerate of those who might not be as fortunate as you are, take precautions, wash your hands, keep your distance and keep your mask on. To all the asymptomatic Covid patients, please stay home as your irresponsible behaviour might cost someone else their life. To all families, colleagues and friends of Covid patients, check up on them, even if you don't say anything to them send a heart and let them know that they are loved.



ABOUT NICCI BOTHA

Nicci Botha has been wordsmithing for more than 20 years, covering just about every subject under the sun and then some. She's strung together words on sustainable development, maritime matters, mining, marketing, medical, lifestyle... and that elixir of life - chocolate. Nicci has worked for local and international media houses including Primedia, Caxton, Lloyd's and Reuters. Her new passion is digital media.

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