

My goodness! We have reached the end of another year, and what a year it has been! 2020 was to be the year of clear vision, and I'll be the first to say that even with perfect vision, one can still be blindsided. I mean honestly, was anyone expecting that by March of this year life as we knew it would change dramatically in an instant and on such a large scale? I mean a worldwide kind of scale? Did anyone see that coming? For me, things still seem very surreal.



It's hard to believe that at this time last year, I was in Thailand preparing to bring in a new year- a new decade. So much excitement. So much anticipation. I had worked hard the last quarter of 2019, and I was ready to roll out my vision for expanding my travel business by launching a new travel product. The plans for 2020 were in the works. This was going to be that year!

But then Covid. And like a flick of a switch- just like that- life came to a screeching halt- literally. It took me a minute (like a 30-day long minute) to even process exactly what was happening. And so now, nine (9) months later here I am (with most of the rest of the world) having experienced a wide range of everything imaginable all mixed in together.



Everything from shock, fear, faith, hurt, healing, loss, frustration, peace, grief, acceptance, isolation, to new ways to connect.

From feelings of fatigue, feeling energized, feeling overwhelmed, feeling strengthened, feeling hesitant, to being determined, empathetic, apathetic, dejected, inspired, hopeless, hopeful, and empowered.

Not to mention the highs, lows, ups, downs, ins, and outs. **Whew!**

Yet, despite all that has taken place, these 366 days of 2020 have gone by surprisingly quick. Time just like swooped in- shook up everything- and kept moving. Now we're at the end of December about to enter a new year, and you can probably join me in saying that 2020 has taught us many, many things about life, about others, and especially about ourselves.

There's a saying that "Our past offers us two choices- live IN it or live FROM it.

On the December 29, 2020 episode of the Traveltude Podcast, I had several guests answer this question: As we move into 2021, if you look into the rearview mirror of 2020, what do you see about your future? Here is an excerpt of what three of the guests had to say:



Elijah Turner Jr.
Student Athlete Football
Junior Year at Davidson College

I see opportunity to grow even more. This year was about self-reflection and using the free time to figure out what I want to do with my life. How I can get better and grow some skills and habits that will benefit me in the future. I want to take those skills, habits and the things I have learned about myself to help down the road.



Yvonne Clark
Wife, Mother, Director of Insurance
Credentialing, and Amateur Female Body Builder

In 2019 I set a goal to compete in a body building competition in 2020. I had no idea that a pandemic was coming forth and it would change how I prepared. I learned something interesting about myself. I learned that I prefer black beans over pinto beans. Let me explain what that means. During the pandemic some grocery stores didn't have everything that you would normally buy. I needed beans for my diet. I would normally buy pinto beans, but I had to try black beans. I learned to be flexible. I also learned to be adaptable, and I had to be willing to try something new. My attitude had to have a major adjustment in 2020 which is going to help me in my future. Because I can be adaptable and flexible, my attitude towards thing coming to me had to change in a positive light so I could stay creative. In doing all of this in early 2020, when I competed in October, I won first place in the 50+ Division of a natural body building competition.



Jeffrey Fuller
Husband, Father, Baltimore Polytechnic
Institute Alum, and COVID-19 Survivor

I see my future as being pretty bright. 2020 has dealt me some serious blows. This whole COVID pandemic has hit me to the core. It cost me my job early on, and then later on I was infected with COVID. I was in the hospital for two months of which I was unconscious for a full month. A lot of changes and a lot of medicine. By the grace of God, I am alive and well and still have my family. That's been the change. I had to revamp. I had to get things back together. After coming out of rehab, it brought me to a realization that I have to treasure every moment that I have right now. I have to make this a valuable portion of my life right now. I can't waste time. If there was something that I wanted to pursue, some dream I had 20-30 years ago, now I have to pursue it. I don't see any reason that's going to stop me. At 50+ years old, I can go back and pursue my dreams. So that's my intention. My major in college was Radio and Television Broadcasting. Everyone says I have a radio sounding voice so I'm going to use that voice. I'm going to tell my story about COVID. I'm going to give my testimony. I'm going to do a Podcast to get my story out there just to let people know how serious it is, but to also make sure my voice is a beacon for mental health. I want to let people know that yes, this was a bad year, but the blessing of it was I am committed more to my family to be a better man, a better father, a better leader in the household, but most important a better person. I think God has given me the leeway to do it this time.

You can hear Elijah, Yvonne, and Jeffrey's complete stories, as well as the stories of others, on the Traveltude podcast found on your favorite streaming services and on my website www.Farmoooretravels.com/podcasts

As tough as 2020 was for many, extremely tough in a lot of cases, I hope that as you reflect on your own story, something shared here connects with your experiences and encourages and inspires you to live FROM this past year and move into 2021 with more faith, resilience, purpose and determination than ever before. Happy New Year!