ONCE A TEACHER, ALWAYS A TEACHER

by:
Shiela S. Orfrecio
Teacher II-Samal National High School

March 2020 is a remarkable month not only for myself, but to the whole country – Philippines. it is the month when the whole country was under Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ), in which the normal-physical classes of S.Y 2019-2020 was suspended following the protocol of Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) (Madarang, 2020). This period changes the normal cycle of the education system that greatly affect not only the typical activities of the teachers but also their mental stability. All of us are not ready in this sudden changes because, supposedly, the month of March is the preparation period of the teachers for the computation of students’ final grades, that soon to lead in such activities like recognition day, moving-up and graduation ceremonies. But, all of these aforementioned memorable events for the students abruptly cancelled as the Department of Education (DepEd) ordered all the schools to follow the protocol of IATF.

This unexpected occurrence significantly affect not only the students but also the teachers that leads to stress and anxiety. Many teachers, not only myself, experience struggles in dealing in the new normal education – dealing in some personal problems at home on top of our professional struggles. I believed that as a teacher we must be the role model for our students, thus, oftentimes, we tend to hide our emotions and set aside our own problem just to present ourselves confidently and enthusiastically in the eyes of our students and their parents and/or guardian. They believed and expected that as a teacher we must act strong because their children and our community depends on us. COVID-19 pandemic drastically changed our daily routine from personal to professional matters.
According to Dela Rosa (2020), Anxiety is a normal emotion that result in a certain situation, having or experiencing a small level of anxiety in particular circumstances can be considered as a normal effect of our brain. Congruently, based on our experiences during the new normal education few teachers can experience Academic Anxiety which refers to a type of anxiety that is related in academic performance and/or academic tasks. Teachers and students may suffer from this kind of anxiety due to sudden deviation of practice - traditional teaching and learning scenarios.

In line with this kind of situation that several teachers are experiencing during this pandemic, many researchers conducted various studies that may help teachers on how to cope academic anxiety. Talindong and Toquero (2020) said that Filipino teachers can cope their anxiety through spending some quality time to their family members, seeking spiritual guidance to the people whom they are trusted, expanding and utilizing their time through talking to their friends online. For instance, catching up and sharing their routine and new found hobbies. We as teachers practically know how to maximize our time efficiently. We have practiced time management most of time. Many educational institutions spearheading virtual trainings that help teachers deal in the new normal education. in addition, through these virtual educational projects and/or events help lessen the boredom and negative thoughts, as a result these virtual events help us maximize our time while developing our knowledge and expanding our skills. This current situation brings us a lot of uncertainties that may affect our mental health, but always remember that we must move forward because whatever happens once you are a teacher, you are always be a teacher.
References:

Dela Rosa, R. 2020. Academic Anxiety: Coping Strategies of Teachers and Students During the COVID-19 Pandemic. Academia
https://www.psychreg.org/academic-anxiety/

Madarang, C. 2020. From ECQ to modified ECQ and modified GCQ, what do these phases mean?.
https://interaksyon.philstar.com/politics-issues/2020/05/14/168523/from-ecq-to-modified-ecq-and-modified-gcq-what-do-these-phases-mean/