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MENTAL HEALTH

How are you staying positive during Covid-19? There are many positive things still happening in the world. Taking the time to identify them and be grateful for them is important.

What silver lining has come out of your organization's Covid-19 experience? We have learned that we can maintain a closeness from afar. Kids had their parents at home. We have learned the importance of community and supporting each other as much as possible.

How does compassion play a role in a health care hero? It is compassion for others accompanied by a drive and determination to support them in their time of need that plays the most significant role for those in the health care profession. Health care professionals have chosen to perform work each day that requires an understanding that others come first before themselves and during Covid-19. During 2020, individuals who work in health care have had their compassion for others and their own resilience put to the test in unthinkable ways. Without that relentless focus on compassion and putting others first, our communities would deeply feel the absence of health care professionals, who always show up for us at most unexpected and most challenging times in our lives.

What inspired you to choose health care as a career? I have always believed in the underdog, and those faced with unthink-



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Yvette Jackson, who has a doctorate degree in behavioral health, meditates, exercises and keeps a routine to reduce stress.

able traumas, but were able to overcome them. As a child and young adult, I was inspired by the stories of individuals who were able to change the trajectory of their lives because a person, or team of individuals, offered them support. In my late teenage years, my mother was diagnosed with cancer. The compassion and dedication of the doctors and social workers was inspiring. In the same year that my mother died, I enrolled in my master of social

work graduate program.

What are the three main ingredients for a successful health care career? You must be dedicated to putting people first. You must be resilient and optimistic at the same time. You must engage in practices of self-care.

What's the biggest lesson you learned early in your career that helped put you on track? We can have a significant impact in the lives of others. While there are many challenges and setbacks in health care, each time a life is changed for the better it makes every setback and challenge worth it.

What motivates you in your work? I know that we have the privilege to assist others by supporting them in changing the trajectory of their life. I know that compassion, acceptance and empathy can make a significant difference in the lives of others. And, even though we may not always see the positive impacts of our work, we do have a positive impact.

What's the best part, and the worst part, of your job? When a family member or individual contacts us to share how well they are doing. Recently, we received an email from a mother whose child was going through a very challenging time. His mother sent us a letter and a picture of the child who had won a variety of awards in school. His big smile and renewed self-esteem due to the amazing work of our staff. That's the best part.