

Critically Ill and Alone

We Took Care of My Mother with Delivery Apps

Angela Vallejo Nogales

BEFORE YOU READ:

1. What is an *app*? Have you used a *delivery app*? What was it like?
2. What does it mean to do something *remotely* vs. in person? Since the pandemic, are there activities that you do remotely?

I was in a different city, a long way away from my mother when she got very sick. The pandemic had just started. We were in quarantine. I could not get a flight to see my mother. The roads were closed. We felt so much fear.

My mother had a bad case of Covid. She got the worst symptoms: fever, cough, bone pain, fatigue, and difficulty breathing. She spent days very sick and alone. No one could take care of her.

I thought about what I could do to take care of her *remotely*. I decided to use my cellphone to download a number of *apps* that I could use to send her food and medicine. I used Uber Eats to send her soups and warm food. Healthy food is important for physical and mental health. Receiving food at home helped her recover.

I also used a popular *delivery app* to send her electrolyte drinks and vitamin C gummies. Later, with the help of my husband, we found an *app* specifically for delivering medicines. With this *app* I could send her cough syrup, Tylenol, and other medicines for the cold and flu. The delivery person left the products at my mother's front door. All she needed to do was pick them up and take them inside. This helped my mom. It allowed her to focus on getting better without having to figure out how to get to the pharmacy.

My mother needed almost four weeks to fully recover. The situation was very stressful for our family. Thankfully, once the medicine started working, she was able to take care of herself.



We did not use *delivery apps* too much before the pandemic. We are grateful to the pharmacies and convenience stores that adopted this technology. Now my mother uses these *apps* on her cell phone without problem. I can envision a future where technology allows us to send help to everyone who needs it.

AFTER YOU READ: Turn to a partner and tell a story of when you helped take care of someone. Share whether you used any digital tools in the process. Your partner should take notes on what you say. Then switch roles.

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