

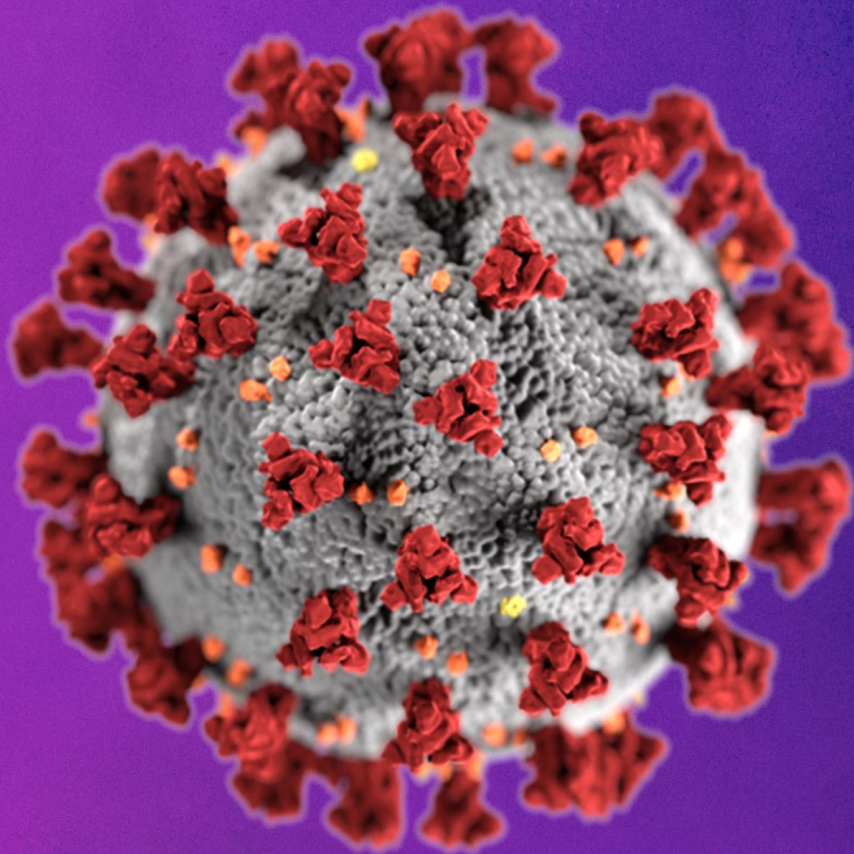
# COVID-19

report 16: **THE HUMAN CONDITION**

5.1.20







As much as the Coronavirus pandemic is a major story about economics, public health, or politics, it's also a human story. Weeks of quarantines and isolation stretched into months, presenting a whole range of emotions that Americans had to deal with. Now that states are trying to reopen many of their “non-essential” businesses in a scattershot fashion, consumers' feelings once again run the gamut from fear to excitement to uncertainty.

Many people have come to realize how much they took for granted in their normal, pre-COVID lives, including how important it is to gather with other people — and to have a place to do that gathering, like a local restaurant.

At this point in time, where do consumers fall when their anxieties over the health of their families and communities run into real economic concerns felt throughout the country? Often their feelings are informed by their view on how the public-health crisis compares in importance the economic one, but restaurants can still find ways to address that tension through service and outreach that stresses community building.

Here are highlights from Datassential's latest wave of Coronavirus research, fielded April 24 with 1,000 US consumers.





## KEY EVENTS SINCE THE LAST FIELDING ON APRIL 24

**April 24**

FDA approves first at-home COVID-19 test kit  
Vice President Pence says more than 5 million Americans have received a Coronavirus test

**April 25**

No evidence that people who had Coronavirus are immune from second infection, WHO warns  
US should double its testing over next several weeks, Fauci says  
FDA authorizes three more Coronavirus antibody tests

**April 26**

Pentagon focusing on most vital personnel for virus testing  
367 people die from Coronavirus in New York over 24-hour period  
Birx says the US needs "breakthrough" in testing to help screen large numbers of people

**April 27**

President Trump announces new Coronavirus testing and guidance on reopening states  
More than 985,000 Coronavirus cases reported in the US  
New York state cancels its presidential primary election  
Meat shortage and China deals send Beyond Meat's stock spiking  
More than 3 million Coronavirus cases reported worldwide

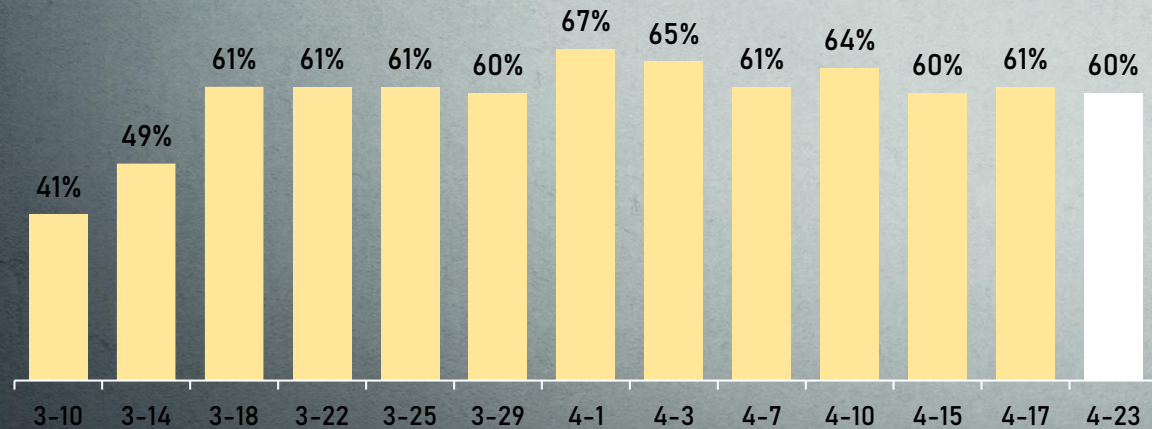


# Coronavirus concern has plateaued.

With cases still growing in some places and no big breakthroughs on the testing front, almost two-thirds of Americans are very worried about their own personal health.

## very concerned with Coronavirus

	3-10	3-14	3-18	3-22	3-25	3-29	4-1	4-3	4-7	4-10	4-15	4-17	4-23
Very concerned	41%	49%	61%	61%	61%	60%	67%	65%	61%	64%	60%	61%	60%
Somewhat concerned	49%	42%	34%	35%	34%	33%	28%	28%	34%	31%	35%	33%	34%
Not concerned	10%	8%	5%	4%	5%	7%	5%	7%	6%	5%	5%	6%	6%

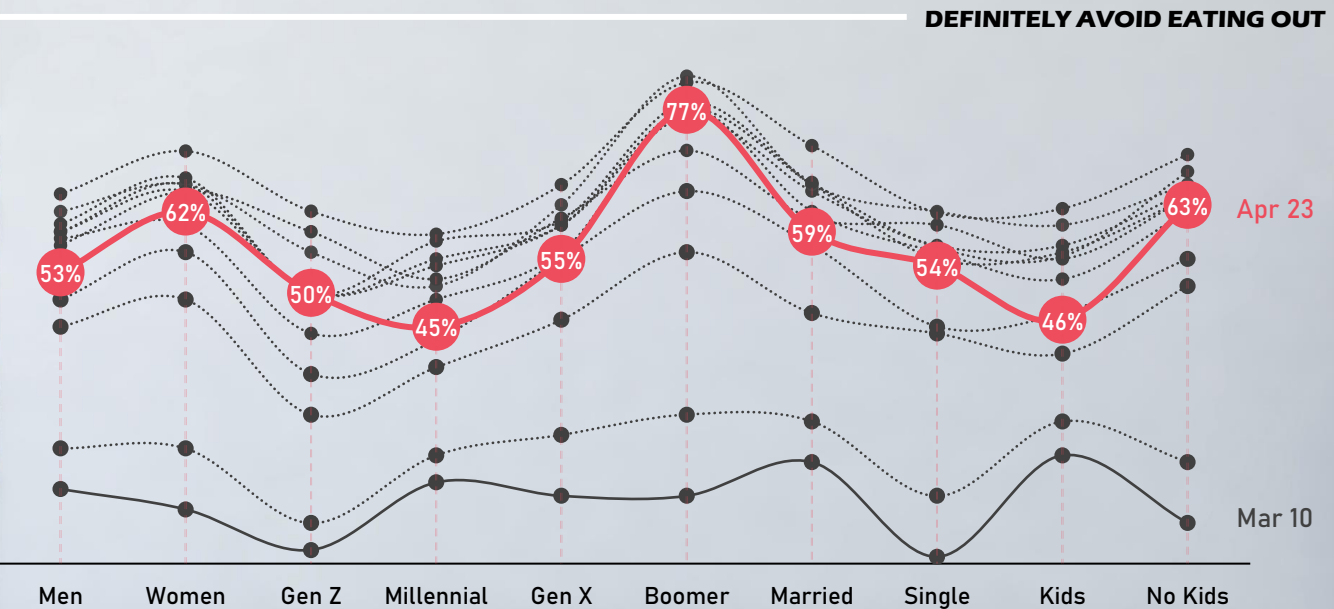






## Avoidance of eating out is steady but starting to soften.

As a few states start to reopen restaurants for dining in, avoidance is beginning to show signs of decreasing. While overall numbers have been steady for the past week, many consumer segments are showing significant dips, including younger generations, singles and households with kids. Boomers are the only group trending up in avoidance, likely fearful of greater spread as restaurants reopen.

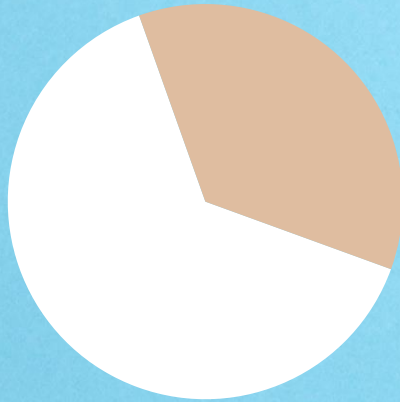




# Efforts to jump-start the economy ignite greater health concerns among consumers.

COVID cases continue to grow, and the health crisis remains Americans' top concern. While the economy is still a major issue, as some states slowly begin to reopen, worries over public health have risen four points in the past five days. This is consistent with recent Datassential study results in which Americans felt May 1 was too soon to start "reopening" the economy.

**36%**  
ECONOMIC CRISIS  
-4% since April 22



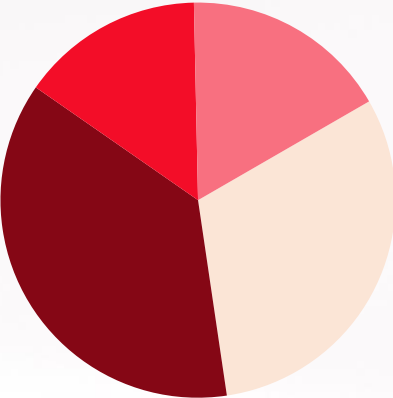
**64%**  
PUBLIC-HEALTH CRISIS  
+4% since April 22

which are you more concerned about?



# Most Americans are still stuck at home.

**15%**  
STILL GOING TO  
SCHOOL/WORK AS NORMAL



**17%**  
LAID OFF /  
FURLOUGHED

**37%**  
WORKING OR ATTENDING  
SCHOOL REMOTELY

**31%**  
NOT WORKING  
OVERALL

which of the following best describes your current situation?

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## COVID has created a struggle between self-preservation and the need for community.

Normal actions we took for granted, like gathering with other people, now have the potential to be fatal. While it has been scary to deal with from the safety of our homes, as the country slowly reopens, anxiety still grows. At the same time, we long to be socially connected to our communities again after months of isolation. As we navigate these new waters, we'll be driven by the excitement to celebrate a return to everyday life, tempered by a deep-seated need to stay safe.

Restaurants can help ease this tension for diners in several ways. This could mean providing a safe, yet fun socially-distanced meal. Or on a more emotional, human level, it could be letting diners know that their patronage ultimately helps others, as restaurants assist their communities, whether through supporting staff, feeding first responders, or generally restarting the local economy.

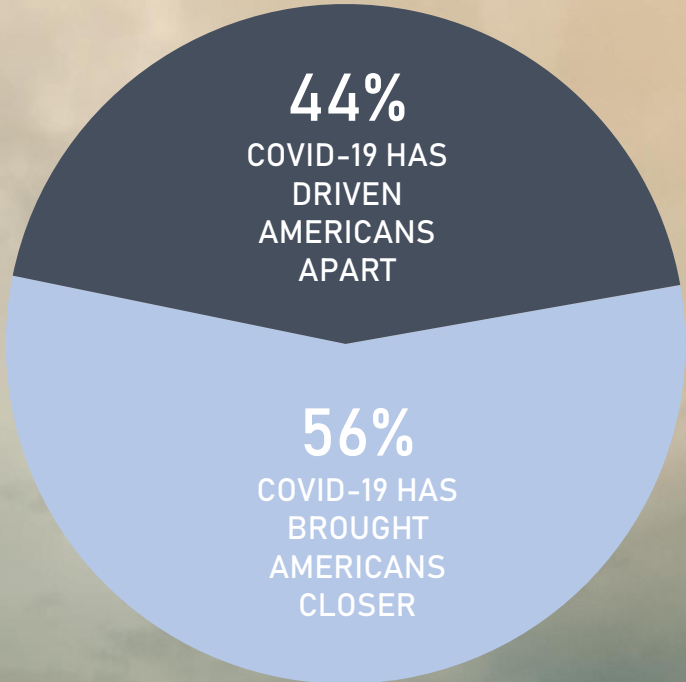






# COVID-19 is a human moment that has brought some Americans closer to one another.

Despite the political divide, with a shared national emergency, some people feel we have become more united as a country. This sentiment grew from the lowest levels for Gen Z to the highest for Boomers, about two-thirds of whom say the Coronavirus pandemic has brought us closer together as a nation.



which statement do you agree with more?



# Slowly venturing out, but at a safe distance.

While most Americans are apprehensive about the reopening of non-essential businesses, they favor people visiting open-air locations like parks and beaches, where they can keep social distance. As you might expect, people who are currently more concerned about the economic crisis are much more accepting of visits to all types of venues than those more concerned about public-health implications. Having guidelines in place for reopening and familiarity with grocery store precautions have likely also paved the way for other retailers. One-third of Americans are OK with visits to places like shopping malls, hair salons, and restaurant dining rooms.

<b>how do you feel about Americans going to the following "non-essential" places right away?</b>		<i>among those more concerned with...</i>	
<i>% who agree visiting such places is APPROPRIATE</i>	Total	The HEALTH CRISIS	The ECONOMIC CRISIS
Public parks/playgrounds/libraries/beaches	51%	42%	67%
Retail stores/shopping malls	42%	32%	59%
Hair and nail salons	37%	26%	56%
Hotels/hotel restaurants and bars	35%	24%	55%
Restaurant dining rooms	34%	22%	55%
Cafeterias	34%	26%	48%
Food courts/food halls	27%	18%	43%
Gyms/fitness centers	26%	17%	44%
Movie theaters/stadiums/concert halls	18%	11%	32%
Bars/nightclubs/lounges	16%	10%	28%





## Dining in ties people back to pre-COVID life.

People miss dining in restaurants, not just for the food, but also for the psychological benefits. When dining rooms reopen, there will be a heightened appreciation for them and the sense of normalcy they evoke. Americans associate dining in with better pre-COVID times and happy “milestone” celebrations. Restaurants will also provide an opportunity for people to do their part and reconnect with their communities.

Agree

Eating at restaurants reminds me of better times	71%
Eating at restaurants will help me feel normal again	70%
Dining in will feel more special once restaurants reopen	70%
Dining out lets me to do my part in helping the community	63%
Celebrations at home haven't been the same	62%
Dining out will make me feel connected to community again	60%
Local restaurants feel like part of my home/community	53%
It is a big part of how I socialize	51%
Ordering from restaurants is an escape/treat during COVID	50%
I have missed dining in restaurants more than other things	50%



# COVID will leave some more grateful and introspective.

It's hard to go through a crisis like COVID and not be impacted on a personal level. People will change, not so much in how they treat others, but more in how they view the world. Some will be more grateful for the "little things," others would prepare for a second wave of COVID. A minority do see themselves becoming more empathetic toward others, whether that comes in the form of a "thank you" to restaurant staff or being more supportive of "the mom and pop" local eateries.



which of the following do you see yourself doing more of as a result of the coronavirus crisis?



# Yet many of us are in self-preservation mode.

The COVID crisis affects all aspects of life, but people are most consumed with issues that directly impact their well-being. With staying healthy and stopping the spread still top-of-mind, consumers are most apprehensive around issues related to reopening non-essential businesses too soon. While still important, COVID's impacts on other issues like data protection, civil liberties, and the environment take a backseat to health-related fears. Americans that prioritize the economic crisis, however, show significantly less concern over severity of the virus and risks to public health.

<i>% of consumers who agree</i>	Total	More concerned with HEALTH CRISIS	More concerned with ECONOMIC CRISIS
I don't trust others to act safely once businesses reopen	72%	78%	60%
I wish we had a unified national response to COVID	62%	68%	50%
People should refrain from non-essential services, even once they open	60%	66%	47%
I'm concerned about privacy, data protection, and civil liberties	52%	46%	64%
I'm concerned about damage to the environment from COVID	51%	52%	50%
I worry more about infecting others than getting infected myself	44%	44%	45%
I feel guilty using delivery services because it puts others in danger	39%	39%	37%
Reopening the economy is worth the public health risk	38%	26%	59%
COVID has been blown out of proportion	29%	18%	47%
I believe I have already had COVID	21%	20%	24%

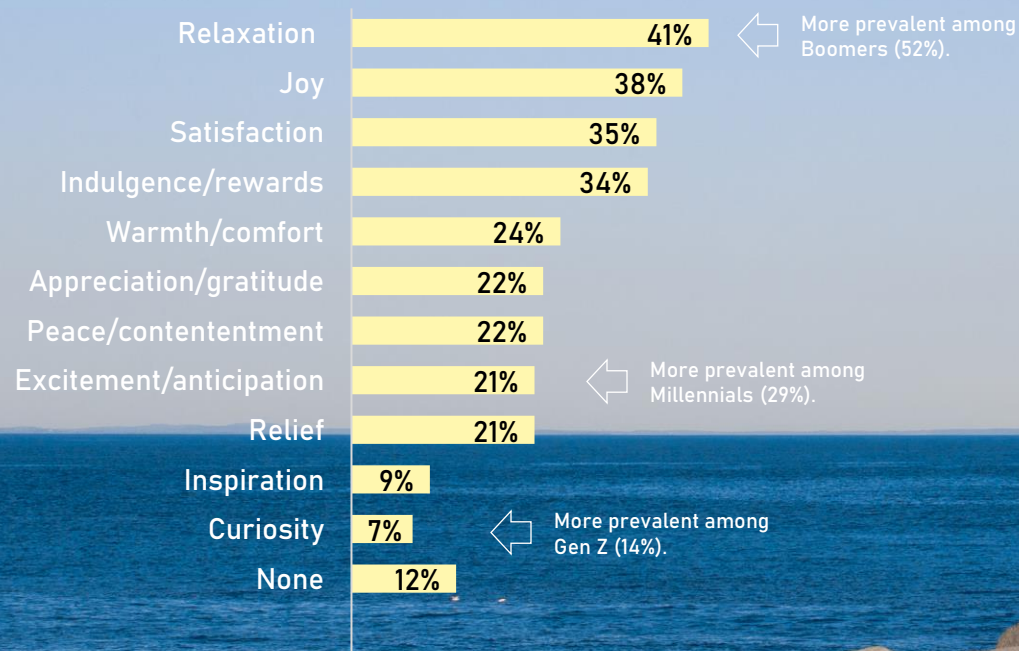


**Thinking about how COVID has shaped how you feel, do you agree or disagree with the following?**



# Restaurants will be a light in the darkness.

Familiar comforts will help consumers unwind when they return to their favorite establishments. For many, dining out will provide a well-needed boost once things move more toward a state of normalcy, so operators and their team members can focus service on eliciting relaxation, joy, satisfaction, and a sense of indulgence — all while maintaining cues about the safety of the environment in the dining room.



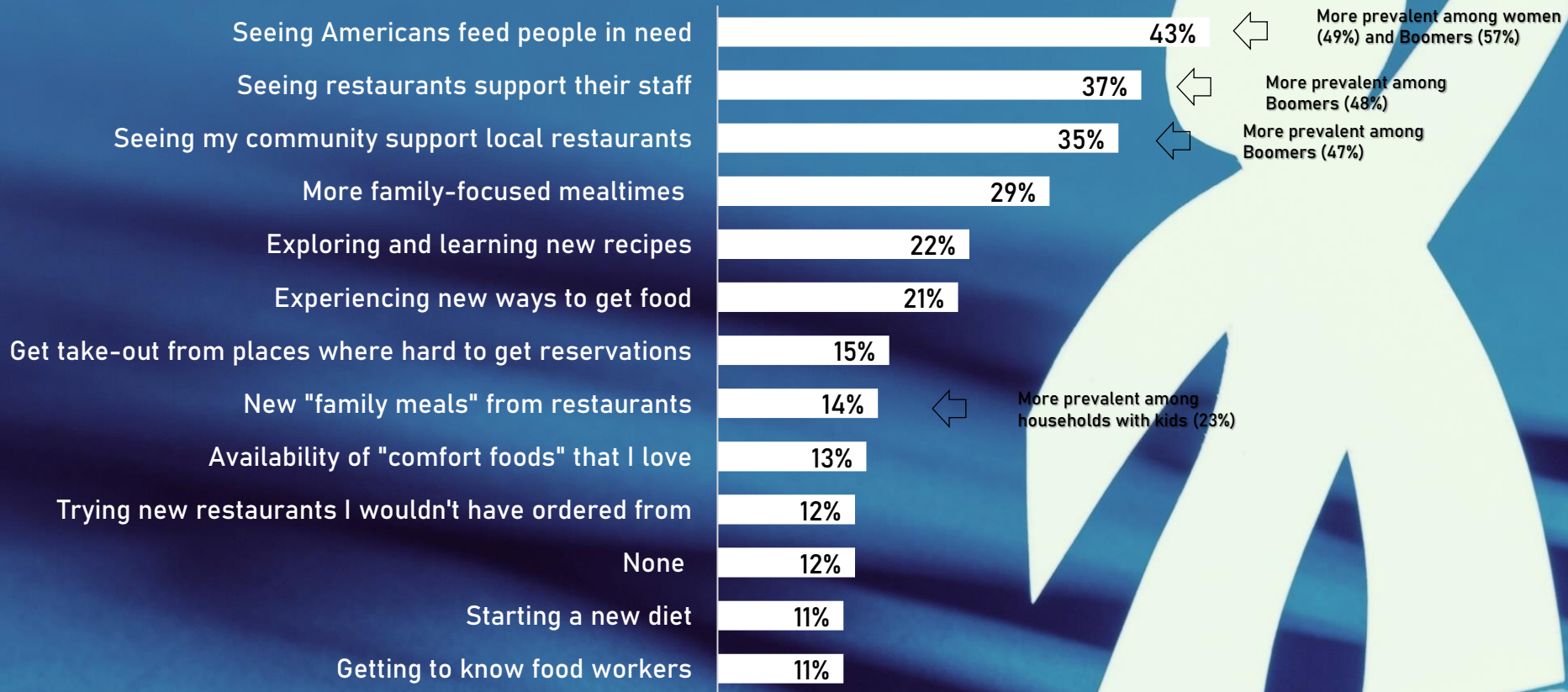
which are you most looking forward to regarding the emotional benefit you get from eating at restaurants?





# Charitable acts are the silver lining.

They say there's always some good that can come from a bad situation, and the Coronavirus crisis is no exception. When it comes to food, America is most moved by charitable efforts to feed the hungry and those that support restaurants and their staff.



which three of the following are the most positive food relate outcomes to come from COVID-19 and social distancing?



# WHICH BRANDS OR COMPANIES ARE “BEST EXAMPLES” OF HOW COMPANIES SHOULD STEP UP IN RESPONSE TO COVID?

“Shake Shack giving back their 10 million loan.”  
-a 31-year-old man in Houston, TX

“Apple making face shields and donating masks and money.”  
-a 36-year-old male in Oak Lawn, IL

“US manufacturers who immediately turned their factories into places that are making PPE, gloves, gowns and ventilators like GE, Ford and Tesla.”  
-a 64-year-old woman in Fernandina Beach, FL

“Local brewery quit making beer to make hand sanitizer for both of our local hospitals.”  
-a 60-year-old woman in Meridian, ID

“Auto insurance companies are lowering premiums because people aren’t driving.”  
-a 74-year-old woman in Del Ray Beach, FL

“My local bread bakery (Great Harvest) has started a program where people can pay the bakery to make food which is donated to the local food shelter.”  
-a 24-year-old man in Warrenton, VA

“Target and Walmart have donated supplies to families affected by a job loss.”  
-a 63-year-old woman in Eastern, TX

“Albertson's, Walmart, Smith's, and Whole Foods for changing their operating hours for cleaning, sanitizing, and restocking. Also allowing special hours for seniors most at risk.”  
- a 76-year-old man in Hillsboro, OR

“Publix buying directly from farmers and donating it to food banks. The Restaurant Relief Fund awarding \$500 grants to restaurant workers who have lost their jobs.”  
-a 42-year-old woman in Decatur, GA







## HOTSHOT REPORT

Visit Datassential's Coronavirus Resource Library at [datassential.com/Coronavirus](https://datassential.com/Coronavirus), your one-stop shop for all COVID-19 research reports, video interviews, restaurant closure maps, and Traffic Briefings, all updated daily as new data come out of the field.





# Help us help you.

As the Coronavirus situation continues to evolve rapidly, just tell us what you want to know. If it's something that benefits the food industry, we'll do our best to incorporate it into an upcoming report and provide the results to everyone for free.

And if you have a need that's specific to your company or brand, we would love to design a custom research solution for you.

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