

The Pandemic's Toll on America's Emotional State – The Quantified Impact

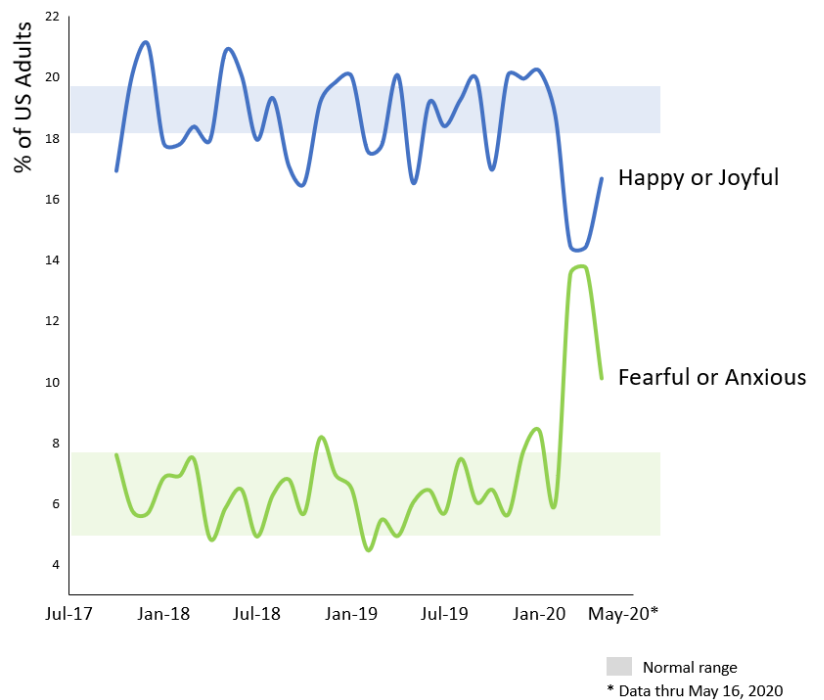
Aviants Insight & Strategy's multi-year tracking shows just how much less joy and more anxiety we are facing

SOMERVILLE, NJ, May 19, 2020 Aviants Insight & Strategy LLC has been tracking the basic emotional and needs state of Americans for since October 2017¹ and **their data demonstrate the fundamental emotional impact the pandemic is having on the whole population.** Jennifer Nelson, Managing Director of Aviants explains, "Looking at Americans as a whole, basic emotional states had been consistent within a narrow band – that is, until the pandemic struck. For example, **normally one in five Americans say they are happy or joyful on any given day. As of March, those numbers significantly dropped to 14%.**"

The biggest change is in the proportion of Americans saying they are feeling fearful or anxious. Nelson shares, "In over 2.5 years of tracking, we have never had a month where the percent of Americans that were fearful or anxious was higher than 8%, it's typically 6%.

In March 2020, those numbers more than doubled (February, 6%) reaching 14%. **In preliminary May data, the percent of Americans feeling fearful or anxious remains 50% above the multi-year norm."**

Nelson explains why they're sharing data they've been collecting for years, "We have seen a lot of coverage about the pandemic's effect on individuals' mental states. However, **we have seen little with a pre-pandemic baseline that could quantify this impact and is projectable to the whole US population.** Even if only a small sub-group of those now feeling anxious need professional mental health care, the sheer growth rate makes me wonder if we have the resources for those who need it."



Key findings in the data:

- In March and April, the **percent of Americans that were happy or joyful fell to a never-before-seen low of 14% (normal is 19-20%).** In the preliminary May data, the decline in happiness had lifted to be at statistical parity with pre-pandemic levels (17%), however, there are **significant differences between men and women:**
 - Normally 20% of men would describe themselves as happy. That dropped to 15% in March and remains at 14% in the first half of May.
 - Pre-pandemic, 19% of women indicated they were happy or joyful. In March 2020, it dropped down to 13%, but has rebounded in the first half of May (18%).

- **While feeling fearful or anxious has gone up among both women and men, the gains are more pronounced among women**
 - Women went from a pre-pandemic rate of 6% in February to 12% in March, climbing to 15% in April and hovering at 12% in the first half of May
 - Men went from 7% in February to 11% ever since
- Age groups respond differently:
 - **Seniors had the largest swings in fear and anxiety:** Americans age 65 and older tripled from a pre-pandemic rate of 5% being fearful/anxious to 14% March. However, preliminary data from May suggests they have recovered (7%).
 - **Those age 35-44 didn't initially rise** in their fearful/anxiety rate much -- going from a norm of 6% to 8% in March, then 10% in April. However, the first half of May is now at 13%, **more than double their baseline (and not trending back to pre-pandemic levels like others).**
- In May, there is a **highly significant increase among men saying they are currently angry or disgusted.** The annual average has been 5%, remained normal through April (6%), but data from **May shows it has doubled to 10% of men indicating they are angry or disgusted.**
- **More details and data tables may be provided to journalists, and Aviants' tracking continues every week**

About Aviants Insight & Strategy LLC

Aviants Insight & Strategy LLC is a health & beauty growth strategy consultancy based in Somerville, NJ. Since 2014, Aviants has been helping brands from Fortune 100 companies to pre-commercial start-ups develop the insight and data driven strategy that accelerates consumption-based sales and delights consumers.

For more information contact Jennifer Nelson at Jennifer@aviants.com

¹Continuous tracking in a survey among a nationally representative sample of US adults, base size ranges from 600 to 1052 per month, partial data for May 2020 N=504