



*The following story is about Ashley, an adult client at Brighton Allston Mental Health Association. While most of Italian Home's clients are youth, we do work with adults through our services at BAMHA, and this story about telehealth was too important not to share.*

Ashley had been working with her clinician for about two years when COVID-19 forced a shut down, however she was still able to continue services thanks to telehealth practices. In April of 2020, Ashley contracted COVID-19 and was forced to quarantine in her basement as she battled the virus. Her quarantine lasted five and a half weeks and during this time she was not able to see her wife or her 4-year-old son. During Ashley's quarantine, Italian Home was still able to provide help via telehealth during a time when Ashley physically could not see anyone else.

When Ashley first began working with us, she dealt with suicide ideation and admitted that she felt her family would be better off without her. She was guarded when it came to working with her therapist. Over time, the two built trust, but it took a major event like COVID-19 and quarantining to break down some remaining walls. Ashley shared that she felt safe with telehealth and that with nothing else to do during quarantine, she began to really engage in her "therapy homework" (as she calls it). She started to feel that she was making real strides as a result of the work.



One of the biggest breakthroughs came with her family. During Ashley's 40-day quarantine, she got a first-hand look at what life would be like if she were not around. Her son cried at the door to the basement because he missed his mom. Her wife expressed her struggles to maintain routines and keep up with life. She missed her partner. It was excruciating for her to not be there for her family. This unfortunate situation gave Ashley a new appreciation for her life.

With this revelation, Ashley and her therapist worked together to help prioritize what matters most in Ashley's life. As she re-entered her household after quarantine, Ashley has worked on being as present as she can be. She understands what matters most. While there are still other matters she's working on, Ashley no longer has thoughts of suicide. She looks forward to watching her son grow up and growing old with her wife. She was grateful that telehealth was available, especially during her quarantine. Italian Home helped her process thoughts, emotions, and feelings in real time. We were there for her when she needed us most.