

# MURRIETA PIVOTS

All businesses in the City of Murrieta have felt the effects of COVID-19 and the stay-at-home orders. Murrieta Pivots offers a question and answer to discuss how they have met the challenges that the pandemic has presented to their businesses.



Pinnacle Counseling and Testing Center offers the testing and treatment of anxiety, trauma, OCD, and depression to help individuals reach the peak of their mental health performance. Dr. Clarissa Gosney recently shared their experiences in dealing with the COVID-19 health crisis and how it has changed their business.

**How deeply has the COVID-19 pandemic affected your business?**

At the start of the COVID-19 Pandemic, our business dropped over 60%.

**Have you applied for and/ or received funding from any of the Federal or State programs such as the SBA's Payroll Protection Program (PPP) or Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL)?**

Yes.

**What changes or improvements have you made to your business model since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic?**

At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, we had to switch from all in-person services to solely providing counseling and psychological testing services (where applicable) via telehealth. Now that restrictions are easing up a bit, we are offering outdoor therapy, where we provide our counseling services while on walks or hikes with our clients. So far, it has been wonderful not only for being able to see our clients face to face again, but for helping them to incorporate physical activity into their wellness protocol. While we always encourage physical activity and healthy eating for our counseling clients, many struggle to make this a reality. With our outdoor therapy, we accomplish two tasks in one. Pinnacle Counseling and Testing Center also holds anxiety camps twice a year for youth with selective mutism. This summer, we are limiting our numbers for camp and we will be incorporating both in person and virtual aspects of camp, keeping along with any changes that arise regarding in-person regulations. Lastly, we have begun holding anxiety telehealth groups.

**Do you anticipate that these changes will make it easier to do business with the public going forward?**

I definitely believe that the changes required during this pandemic has made us all a bit more flexible to change. Initially, we were very resistant to tele-therapy. However, we know that there is a population we were missing an opportunity to work with because of our stance on in-person treatment. Moving forward, we do believe that we and others will be more open to virtual services when desired or deemed appropriate.

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**What investments will you need to make going forward to ensure the survival and growth of your business?**

To ensure the survival and growth of our business moving forward, we will need to invest in an advanced HIPPA-compliant tele-communication platform that can accommodate multiple hosts and attendees. We will also need to invest in facemasks that have a clear shield so that we can see our client's mouths and they can see ours, as some of our clients are so anxious that they only whisper. We are also looking to invest in a larger office space to accommodate for social distancing during our therapy groups and anxiety camps.

**Briefly, describe the immediate impact that the COVID-19 pandemic had on your business?**

The COVID-19 pandemic had a huge impact on our ability to meet with our clients due to the discomfort of many with engaging in such a vulnerable dialogue via telehealth. Others instantly found themselves without a job, while others struggle to work from home while homeschooling children. As a mother of 3 myself, I can attest to that challenge! These issues caused those with anxiety to feel like they had nowhere to turn during such a stressful time. While we are not yet seeing the same number of clients we were seeing with in-person services, many people have become accustomed to engaging in counseling via tele-health. As with many businesses, we continue to pay rent and all other operating expenses while our offices sit vacant. That combined, with a lower number of clientele, has had a financial impact on our practice. Thankfully, the PPP and EIDL resources were available to ensure that our clinicians could still get paid (for a certain period of time) what they were making prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, despite their lower client rate.

**What is the most important way the citizens of Murrieta and Southwest Riverside County can support your business?**

As we start to move back to some in-person sessions, we would love the support of anyone who knows how to make clear face masks for our clients who struggle with speaking outside of their home environment. This will be particularly important for our Selective Mutism camps this summer, which we will host in July and August. Also, if you (or someone you know) have found yourself wrestling with anxiety, depression, OCD, or even trauma responses during this time, please know that there are well-trained Psychologists and Psychological Assistants here at Pinnacle to help guide you through these challenges so that you can reach the peak of optimal mental health. We truly enjoy the work that we do and cannot wait to meet more people in our community! Climb on.

To contact Pinnacle Counseling and Testing Center, call (951) 396-5701 or visit their website [here](#).

