

# Routines, breaks and heritages of confinement due to the COVID-19 pandemic in Chile

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## Abstract

The preventive confinement during the COVID-19 pandemic can be conceived as a break that transformed the regular routines of the population from forced permanence in the home and the virtualization of daily life. The study's objective sought to characterize regular routines, pandemic breaks, and re-established routines recognized by the population as heritages of the COVID-19 lockdown period. Exploratory qualitative descriptive research was carried out using focused interviews and photographic images, which provided the information required for a qualitative analysis process by category. The results indicate that regular routines were gradually adapted to the home confinement by shaping the pandemic routines necessary to face the unprecedented break in daily life for health reasons and providing relative safety ranges amid uncertainty. It is concluded that the COVID-19 health emergency was constituted in a break capable of dividing the biographies into cardinal points corresponding to before, during, and after the pandemic, references that lie at the base of regular routines, pandemic routines, and reinstatement of regular routines/ post-pandemic routines, which constitute a sequence in whose deployment the inherited learning from an uncertain and threatening vital period are evident.

**Keywords:** COVID-19 Pandemic; Lockdown; Regular routines; Pandemic breaks; Regular routines restored; Post-pandemic routines; Pandemic Heritages.

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# Rutinas, rupturas y herencias del confinamiento por pandemia COVID-19 en Chile

## Resumen

El confinamiento preventivo por la pandemia COVID-19 puede ser concebido como una ruptura que transformó las rutinas regulares de la población a partir de la permanencia forzada en el hogar y la virtualización de la vida diaria. El objetivo del estudio buscó caracterizar las rutinas regulares, las rupturas pandémicas y las rutinas regulares restablecidas, reconocidas por la población como herencias del período de confinamiento por COVID-19. Se realizó una investigación cualitativa de carácter descriptivo exploratorio con aplicación de entrevistas focalizadas y captura de imágenes fotográficas, que aportaron la información requerida para realizar un proceso de análisis cualitativo categorial. Los resultados indican que las rutinas regulares se adecuaron progresivamente a la situación de confinamiento en el hogar, conformando las rutinas pandémicas necesarias para enfrentar la inédita ruptura en la que se enmarcaba la vida diaria por razones sanitarias y aportando rangos relativos de seguridad en medio de la incertidumbre. Se concluye que la emergencia sanitaria por COVID-19 se constituyó en una ruptura capaz de dividir las biografías en los puntos cardinales correspondientes a antes, durante y después de la pandemia, referencias que se encuentran a la base de las rutinas regulares, rutinas pandémicas y rutinas regulares restablecidas/ rutinas postpandémicas, las que constituyen una secuencia en cuyo despliegue se evidencian los aprendizajes heredados desde un período vital incierto y amenazante.

**Palabras clave:** Pandemia COVID-19; Confinamiento; Rutinas regulares; Rupturas pandémicas; Rutinas regulares restablecidas; Rutinas post pandémicas; Herencias pandémicas.

**Summary:** 1. Introduction, 2. Methodology, 3. Findings, 3.1 Bad news from Wuhan. The real threat of COVID-19. 3.2 Learning to live in the middle of a COVID-19 thread. Regular routines, Pandemic breaks, and pandemic routines, 3.3 Restored regular routines after the COVID-19 confinement. Heritages from pandemic breaks, 4. Conclusions, 5. Bibliographic references.



## 1. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic represented a sanitary challenge on a global scale, which obliged rigorous preventive measures to avoid the propagation of the disease. In Chile, the Ministerio de Salud [Health Ministry] (MINSAL Chile, 2020; 2022) ordered a sanitary emergency for all the national territory, which resulted in the suspension of face-to-face educational, work, commercial, sports, and social activities, shifting to a virtual mode. At the same time, essential restrictive face-to-face operation of the essential activities related to health, supply, basic services, transportation, emergency, communications, safety, and work tasks non-transferable into a digital format had to be regulated. Informative campaigns were oriented to spread the main required preventive behaviors to avoid contagions, which corresponded to frequent hand washing, alcohol gel use, surface disinfection, and isolation between people; underlining sanitary universal masks use as the main symbol of personal protection against the virus (Castañeda-Meneses, 2023). In the case of reaching critical statistics reports of a high number of infections or deaths due to COVID-19, a quarantine was ordered in the affected territories, a measure involving the mandatory confinement of the population, to try to stop the disease progression. Burrone *et al.* (2020) characterize confinement as a public health measure that aims to control generalized outbreaks of infectious diseases. It affects the population's daily life and significantly impacts living conditions, social ties, community environment, and family health. Consequently, the defined measures to face the sanitary emergency directly affected people's routine, which had to be adapted immediately and forced into a new pandemic reality.

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Researchers can characterize routines as repetitive and stable activities that satisfy socially defined biological rhythms and human needs, according to the space, time, and available material dimensions for their realization (Martín-Romera, 2021). The American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA, 2008) defines routine in the following terms:

Behavior patterns that are fixed or regular, repetitive and observable and provide a structure for daily life. These can be gratifying, encouraging, or harmful. Routines require involvement in momentary time, and they are integrated into cultural and ecological contexts. (p. 28)

The regular realization of routines contributes to strengthening the emotional equilibrium, since they provide an efficient organization of the short-term activities and increase long-term self-confidence and safety (Ullón-Segovia *et al.*, 2024).

In hindsight, the preventive confinement of the population caused by the COVID-19 pandemic can be conceived as a break that transformed regular routines, from the forced stay at home and the daily life virtualization, mainly expressed through educational, work, and social activities that had to be adapted to this format (Alzaga & Bang, 2024).



Consequently, the pandemic break demanded adjustments to the livability conditions and the digital resources in every home, being the space and time criterion those who occupied the central place in the redefinition of the confinement routines, requiring testing the individual and familiar adaptative abilities oriented to solve the unusual situations (Labos *et al.*, 2021; Velázquez-Aquino, 2021). The conditions under the pandemic break of the regular routines that occurred can be standardized to the catastrophic change concept outlined by Kielhofner (2004), which means that sudden changes associated with external and internal circumstances occur with no choice; they drastically disrupt vital situations and require a fundamental reorganization of daily life. Even so, the disruption of regular routines during the Pandemic appears to be unavoidable due to the mandatory changes that governments should have implemented. Governments enrolled these measures in designated global efforts to reduce the direct impact of disease progression across the planet's diverse regions.

However, the pandemic break of the regular routines is unavoidable, since governments implemented mandatory measures and included them in global initiatives designed to reduce the direct impact of disease progression across the planet's diverse regions (Velázquez-Aquino, 2021).

4 For Hijós and Blanco-Esmoris (2020), the forced preventive stay redefined the home concept in a pendular form, redefining it from the positive assessments as a refuge and rest place to negative referents of uncertainty, hostility and saturation; given the times superposition and concentration and work, educational, personal care, free time and family spaces inside the physical borders of home in an uncertain context of sanitary emergency. Papez (2022a) highlighted the difficulty separating productive and leisure routines as a central issue since people performed in the same physical space. This situation generated vague borders and hyperactivity, with materialities such as computers, cellphones, books, musical instruments, or objects for handicrafts, which contributed symbolic limits between routines, replacing the separation of traditional activities by spaces with this function. In the same sense, the Red Iberoamericana de Investigación en Trabajo, Género y Vida Cotidiana (TRAGEVIC, 2020) surveyed fourteen countries of the region to identify daily routine changes of work and study generated by the confinement measures related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Their main results verified the confirmation of new domestic routines linked to a flexible schedule in the development of diverse activities (25,9%), less concern for clothing (21,6%), and time increase with the family (18,1%). As a counterpart, researchers found negative assessments due to the loss of daily contact between peers (22,2%), more extended periods of interruption in work activities (21,9%), and increased investment of time in housework and usual care (19,1%).

Based on the massive vaccination that contributed to the sanitary control of the COVID-19 pandemic and made possible the cautious progressive return to attendance since mid-2021, the regular routines sought to reestablish from the time, space, and materiality dimensions that previously defined them. However, given the extraordinary conditions that the pandemic life

experience created, some characteristics of confinement period routines have persisted over time, forming legacies that people have integrated into their reestablished daily routines. Nevertheless, to date, vague information is available regarding the characteristics that these post-pandemic reestablishment processes have assumed and their effects on regular routines because they constitute a prioritized and recently emerging study field in the daily life area (Alaminos & Alaminos-Fernández, 2024; Papez, 2022a; 2022b; Valero *et al.*, 2024). At present, the available information indicates that research on the effects of the Pandemic on human activities has mainly focused on education and mental health, as researchers have prioritized these areas due to their importance and urgency for the well-being of specific population groups. (Alonso-Jiménez, 2024; Bravo-Pereira *et al.*, 2024; Estrada-Araoz, 2023; Contreras-Roa *et al.*, 2023; Gómez-Delgado & Ramírez-Mireles, 2023; Hidalgo-Guillén, 2022; Ortiz-Barrero *et al.*, 2023; Orrego, 2024; Palma-Troncoso *et al.*, 2024; Sánchez-Uribe *et al.*, 2024; Véliz-Burgos & Soto-Salcedo, 2022). In this framework, this article presents the results of research that had the objective of characterizing the regular routines, pandemic break, and reestablished regular routines, recognized by the population as legacies of the COVID-19 confinement period. The aim is to contribute information regarding the durability of the adaptations made in daily life since the vital experiences during the pandemic years and to check its validity in a context of social life return that has thoroughly recovered its options of personal mobility in free decision conditions. The study's limitations are related to the fact that its results are preferentially applicable to the adult and older population of urban areas, not including specific results for child, adolescent, or youth populations, and not even considering the distinctive features of confinement in rural areas.

## 2. Methodology

The research used a qualitative approach with an exploratory character, since it seeks to characterize people's subjective experiences in the context of COVID-19 pandemic confinement in Chile (Valles, 2000). This research focuses on people living in the country's central zone, which concentrates around 60% of the national population and contains the highest number of high-complexity health services (Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas [INE], 2018). The inclusion criterion corresponds to people over 18 who remained at home during confinement and were willing to participate in the study freely and voluntarily. Additionally, an ethical criterion was considered where the study participants who have not been personally or familiarly affected by positive COVID-19 diagnosis and/or had suffered losses of significant people by the same diagnosis, to avoid re-victimization situations. Researchers contacted sixty-eight informants using the contact or *snowball* sampling technique, which they applied based on convenience and opportunity criteria.

Researchers collected the data using focused interviews, focusing on the details of people's subjective experiences and allowing counter-questions by the research team to analyze the key subjects of the study that emerge in the application process technique (Valles, 2007). Since the researchers conducted the study during the final stage of the sanitary emergency in the country

and at the beginning of the complete return to everyday daily life (year 2022 and first half of year 2023), the researchers complemented the interviews with photographic images that illustrate the routines of the participants during the restrictive period. The process was in charge of the responsible researcher, with support from the advanced course students of Social Work in the Valparaíso University, who were specially trained for the task, in the pedagogic strategy frame of the Research-Based Learning RBL (Almeida-Monge *et al.*, 2020). The researchers organized the thematic script around open questions about people's evaluations of the COVID-19 pandemic, the regular routines performed before the Pandemic, the adjustments made in the regular routines during the mandatory confinement period, and the current routines that are related to the attendance return process after confinement. The interviews had an average of 60 minutes and were audio recorded and extensively transcribed for qualitative analysis. The analysis process assigned to each transcribed interview a correlative number order for codification purposes, information anonymization, and publication citations of scientific divulgation generated for the study.

The data was interpreted by categorical analysis, from the following categories: regular routines, pandemic break, pandemic routines, and reestablished regular routines. The researchers expanded the analysis to include related subcategories directly from the collected subjective experiences. Representative fragments were selected for illustrative purposes of the study results for each examined category, reaching a relevant fragment combination that contributes backup and density to the analysis. The stringency criterion that guarantees validity and reliability to the research corresponds to abundant data collection with theoretical saturation and permanent reflection exercise purposes. The ethical aspects of the research previously related to the format and application conditions of the informed consent to the interview and photographic images, together with the protection guarantee of the willingness, anonymity, and confidentiality in the data management requirements, were evaluated by the Ethical Committee of the Social Science Department of the Valparaíso University.

### 3. Findings

#### 3.1 Bad news from Wuhan. The actual threat of COVID-19

The previous months before the formal declaration of the Pandemic by the sanitary authorities of the country (MINSAL Chile, 2020; 2022), the research participants recall it as a potential threat that progressively approached their lives, as the illustrative fragments confirm.

The information about COVID-19 started to spread on television, specifically its most common symptoms, since citizens from different parts of the world who travelled to China were infected, and it spread. So, with each passing day, the number of infected people increased uncontrollably. (Subject 62, personal communication, April 4, 2023)

Participants said that the virus outbreak was extreme. People were frightened, and there was widespread fear about what was happening. The news, radio, and other media would not

stop covering the subject, spreading fear and concern everywhere. (Subject 37, personal communication, June 6, 2022).

It frightened us too much, because we only knew that people died from that disease. Then it was terrible. We felt fear and began taking precautions that quickly spread among us. (Subject 10, personal communication, May 3, 2022)

Through television, the Health Minister announced that masks would be mandatory from that day on, along with social distancing and capacity restrictions. I did not know what it was, so I had to investigate. (Subject 24, personal communication, June 9, 2022)

Thus, and in line with the approaches of Kielhofner (2004), the pandemic reality was traumatically installed in the population's daily life, which demanded the realization of structural changes unavoidably required to face the uncertain and threatening future. Next, the researchers present fragments that evoke the traumatic arrival of the Pandemic in people's daily lives.

I have horrible memories of when I saw people for the first-time using masks on the street. It looked like an apocalypse or catastrophic event. COVID-19 is an event of that magnitude, but I never thought I would experience something of this dimension. (Subject 68, personal communication, May 9, 2023).

It was traumatic because when they said there were COVID-19-infected people, acquaintances, I had to say, "Ok, we are not going out, we are not going to meet with those people, we are not having contact, we are staying at home". In other words, "we are not getting out from here and we are going to die."

It was a strong and traumatic reaction at that moment. Here with my family, we did not visit anyone when we found out about the virus, we did not want anyone to come to our house either, nor did we want to meet anyone who had had contact with other people" Here in my family we did not go out to visit anyone when we knew about the virus, we did not want to come home either, nor did we want to see anyone who had had contact with other (Subject 44, personal communication, August 10, 2022).

Many aspects of my life have changed. I imagine that everybody's life changed. At least to me, it was terrible, because everything changed, everything. In the past, we used to go out in the street and do everyday activities calmly. I used to arrive home, then go to the supermarket and buy groceries, and we did not have to sanitize or worry about anything. I was free everywhere. (Subject 7, personal communication, April 5, 2022).

I remember we were in mandatory quarantine during the first year of the Pandemic. Moreover, they said in the news that the vaccines tested in laboratories did not work out. Hearing that was terrible, because you didn't know how long we could hold ourselves in those conditions. Everything was very uncertain, and the future seemed dark, very dark. (Subject 13, personal communication, May 12, 2022).

The first time I went out with a mask on was when I had to do the household shopping. I remember moments of anguish; there was always the fear of getting infected. It made me feel anxious seeing all the people with masks, keeping social distancing, and no one could get close to another person. (Subject 42, personal communication, August 9, 2022).

In this context, researchers highlight the mandatory use of sanitary masks, which became a symbolic image of the confinement period and part of the personal protection measures people had to implement (Castañeda-Meneses, 2023).

**Figure 1. Mandatory use of sanitary masks.**



Source: Image database from the research project.

The authorities activated mandatory home confinement measures during critical periods of rising infections and hospitalizations as a preventive response to the health emergency, which tested adaptive abilities of the people oriented to deal with everyday situations infrequently (Labos *et al.*, 2021). Individuals developed these adaptive responses using their regular routines as a foundation, which had to circulate from the free disposition in time, space, and materiality dimensions towards restrictive conditions that redefined daily life from a wide range of insecurity, risk, and uncertainty.

### **3.2 Learning to live in the middle of a COVID-19 threat. Regular routines, pandemic break, and pandemic routines**

The preventive care defined by the sanitary authorities caused a break in the regular routines. It made a forced redefinition since the home permanence and daily life virtualization, declared conditions by Alzaga and Bang (2024), and people expressed them through the limited materials available at home. Next, pandemic breaks were affected by the regular routines in a confinement context and their respective illustrative fragments.

**Table 1. Pandemic breaks regular routines due to confinement.**

<b>Regular routines</b>	<b>Pandemic Break</b>	<b>Illustrative Fragments</b>
On-site student routine	From on-site to online classes.	"A normal day at home with COVID was different from when we lived without COVID. In the morning, I used to accompany my little boy in the living room while having an online class. He was in first grade, and I was attentive to be with him because they were teaching him how to read. On the other hand, my oldest daughters also had online classes. It was hard to make them peacefully study, without interrupting each other, and they had enough space to do their tasks" (Subject 09, personal communication, April 28, 2022).
On-site work routine	From on-site work activity to telework.	"I was at home, and I used to work there. I felt there were no differences when I was working and when I was resting. Because it was the same place. Moreover, I used it for both activities. Then, at any moment, I could be working. Because if I had a task from work, I had to answer that I was available. Always with the computer connected. Because we all had to be available to work" (Subject 53, personal communication, November 9, 2023).
Face-to-face purchasing routine and household supply	From face-to-face shopping to online shopping.	"In my house, when quarantine began, we started to buy things from applications. The person would deliver the order at the door entrance when it arrived. Then we picked it up when the deliveryman left. After, we sanitize all the products we bought with alcohol, chlorine, or quaternary ammonium to prevent contagion" (Subject 18, personal communication, May 31, 2022).
Face-to-face leisure and free time routine	From leisure and free time out of home to free time at home.	"Before the Pandemic, what we did most as a family in our free time was go on walks with the girls, to the beach, to the countryside, to the swimming pool. With COVID-19, we had to start doing other things, such as handicrafts, cooking, board games, dancing, etc. We had to invent activities for distraction without going out" (Subject 13, personal communication, May 12, 2022).
On-site care routine	From direct care of the sick person to isolation of the sick person.	"When one had a cold, it felt like the uncertainty of the possibility of getting the virus. Moreover, one had to wait for the exam results. So, as a preventive method, one would isolate oneself in one of the house rooms, to not infect other family members" (Subject 25, personal communication, June 14, 2022).
Face-to-face social routine	From face-to-face social relations to online social relations.	"In the Pandemic, you realized who your real friends were. Because we did not see each other, the only things we had to connect were cellphones, a computer, or a phone call to be in contact with them. Then, you realized who cared about you. Finally, a phone call and say: "Hi, how are you?". My friends and I would talk every day on WhatsApp. "How is the quarantine going? Once a week, we would videocall by Meet or Zoom and spend hours talking, playing online games, or talking on the same application. Generally, our daily communication was by WhatsApp; we would talk every day with the friends' groups I had." (Subject 16, personal communication, May 17, 2022).

Face-to-face food preparation of the meal plans	From face-to-face food preparation of the meal plans to face-to-face food preparation of special meal plans.	"To not leave the house, we started to prepare some things. For example, we did not buy bread because we made it at home. We started to prepare desserts, cakes, and special food, which we watched in tutorials on social media. We learned a lot and ate a lot (laughter)". (Subject 8, personal communication, April 19, 2022).
Face-to-face occasional handicrafts routine	From face-to-face occasional routine to face-to-face intensive handicrafts routine.	"I started to knit again. I used to knit as a child, but time passed, and I gave it up because I never had time to knit. However, with the Pandemic, there was enough time. So, it worked for me to do something useful, to be entertained and learn new stitches" (Subject 45, personal communication, August 25, 2022).

**Source:** own elaboration based on the research results.

Participants demonstrated the diversity of pandemic disruptions through how they adapted their spaces, time, and materiality dimensions, which demanded exceptional adaptation abilities in the face of unprecedented alteration represented by confinement and its transversal effects in all aspects of daily life. The following is a photographic illustration of online classes at the basic school level carried out in confinement, which reflects the adaptation efforts required for their execution.

**Figure 2. Online classes at a basic level in confinement.**



**Source:** Image database from the research project.

In the same way, the search for proposition answers in the face of the ruptures dynamized the personal and social learning processes in technology, innovation, and creativity fields, contributing diverse strategies and way-out routes facing adversity. The following photographic illustration is a family recreational activity during lockdown associated with board games during the free periods of family sharing.

**Figure 3. Family Recreational Activity in Pandemic.**



Source: Image database from the research project.

The routines that contemplated unavoidably partial permanence outside home due to the fulfillment of hybrid work modalities or shift work; added to the opportunities on which it was necessary to attend public services, commercial spaces or community centers that did not have virtual options, they had a direct impact in the confinement condition, since these measures required people to stay home after completing any activities that necessitated leaving the house. People considered these routines exceptional in their execution, and the ruptures had to strictly adjust to the physical distance conditions and personal protection measures proposed by sanitary authorities (MINSAL Chile, 2020).

**Figure 4. On-site work in essential activities.**



Source: Image database from the research project.

The study participants, who faced the Pandemic while partially remaining outside their homes, describe the consequences of these pandemic disruptions to their regular routines through the following illustrative fragments.

**Table 2. Staying partially outside the home during confinement disrupts regular routines.**

Regular routines	Pandemic break	Illustrative fragments
On-site work routine	Application of exceptional sanitary measures in the face-to-face work activity.	"We had to work in groups of 3 people, every two weeks on-site and two on telework. When leaving work, I went straight home. I left everything at the patio: purse, clothes, bags, shoes, lunch bag, and I got straight to the shower. My daughter knew she could not hug me at that moment. Meanwhile, my husband would sanitize every item and put the clothes in the washing machine" (Subject 32, personal communication, June 29, 2022).
Face-to-face shopping routine and household supplies	Application of exceptional sanitary measures in purchasing and household supply.	"In the Pandemic, if we had to go out, it was for justified reasons. Purchasing, going to the drugstore. Mandatory things. We had to put our masks out quickly wherever we had to go, and returning home, we took our masks off, threw them away, and washed our faces well. After that, we disinfected the items we bought. Afterwards, I always had a hand sanitizer bottle and stuff like that" (Subject 55, personal communication, March 21, 2023).
Community face-to-face routine	Application of exceptional sanitary measures in community activities.	"In my community, being a closed passage, every neighbor shared a common space that was a small square for children to play, which should have been closed. Because if there were too many children, the possibility of being infected would be higher. Besides, when the neighbors started to catch the virus, healthcare teams would visit them. Neighbors told the WhatsApp group to sanitize the main gate so the contagion would not spread" (Subject 48, personal communication, October 26, 2022).

**Source:** own elaboration based on the research results.

Even so, the forced permanence at home in the confinement conditions confirmed the superposition of the constitutive dimensions of the routines proposed by Papez (2022a), as shown in the following illustrative fragments:

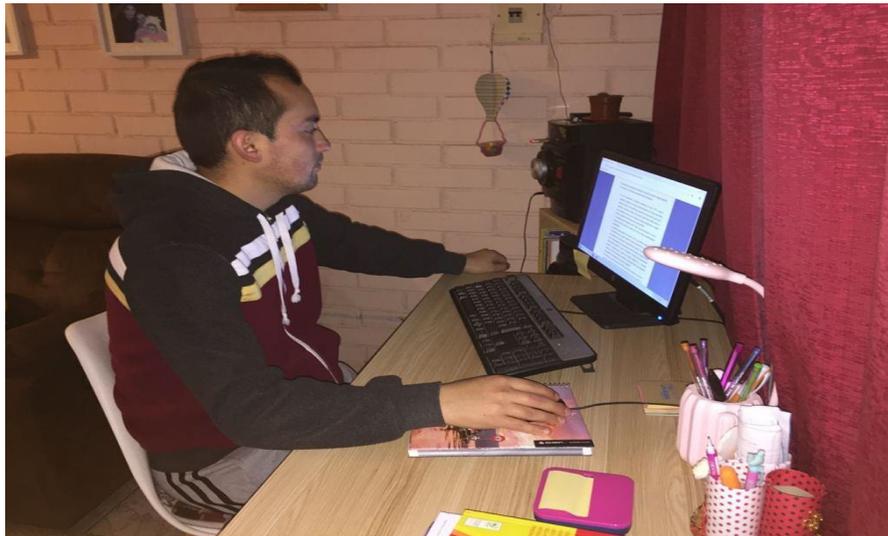
People prepare to wake up early, shower, have breakfast, go out, and get to the office. They arrive at this physical place with their minds focused and ready to do their jobs. Because I am at home, I do not have absolute concentration on work. There are too many distractions. Moreover, I never stopped working. I constantly checked emails because people called me at any hour. There was no entrance or exit hour. One was all day in the same space in the house. (Subject 4, personal communication, March 30, 2022)

It was hard to set limits, schedules for working, and schedules to be at home. Because when you leave work at 5.30 p.m., the workday is over. You forget about it and distract yourself in any way. During the Pandemic, it was 5 p.m. and 7 p.m., and you continued working on the

computer. You would never disconnect from work. (Subject 60, personal communication, March 21, 2023)

The following is a photographic illustration of the forced adjustment of a common family space, prioritizing teleworking during confinement.

**Figure 5. Telework.**



Source: Image database from the research project.

The superposition of space, time, and materiality dimensions specially affected the people in charge of the routines associated with family, childhood, or older people, because the restrictions associated with confinement limited the possibilities of counting the shift systems and external support, reducing flexibility of care tasks. Additionally, it added stress to personal relations by overloading daily routines due to the high frequency of interactions inside the house.

Together with the concern of contagion prevention, I had to take care of my mother-in-law. She was 90 years old and bedridden. It was part of the vulnerable population facing COVID-19, and we had to protect her. (Subject 39, personal communication August 9, 2022).

When we were in the worst of the Pandemic and unable to leave the house, I remember running all day. As a teacher, I had to prepare my classes and assist my students *online*. At the same time, I would accompany my little daughters with *online* classes, and I was worried that they had to do their homework. Also, I had to pay attention to what we needed in the house. My husband would go shopping, but I had to check that nothing was left and plan what to cook daily. Also, I would take turns with my sister to check that our parents were ok. They live alone and are both older adults; they cannot leave the house. Etc. Many things happened. My husband would help me, but many times I felt distressed. I felt overwhelmed with many responsibilities, without moving out of the house. (Subject 28, personal communication, June 27, 2022)

Being so close to the same person or people daily makes you feel tired. Relationships can generate tiredness. In my case, there was friction within my family, arguments, and shouting. We never got to physical fights, but there were challenging moments. It was all the accumulated tension, the uncertainty. I do not know how long we would have to live in lockdown—having to share the spaces within all of us and having to respond at school and work. Relationship problems arose, and we had to face them as we could, trying not to complicate them. (Subject 20, personal communication, June 8, 2022).

In this way, regular routines adapted to the confinement situation at home, forming the necessary pandemic routines to face the unprecedented rupture in which sanitary reasons delimited daily life. This analyzed process from the concept of AOTA (2008) confirms that pandemic routines contributed to safety relative ranges in the middle of uncertainty, from the behavior pattern definitions that initially introduced both ranges test/error and exploration; and they became stable through repetition and modelling.

**Figure 6. Online classes for higher education in confinement.**



Source: Image database from the research project.

Also, researchers infer that pandemic routines were defined from the beginning as transitory, since people expected to reverse or eliminate them once the confinement that created them ended. Nevertheless, the traumatic character of the pandemic event directly affected the routines' dimensions, setting their permanence in time, in space, and materiality through the learning in trauma context, which allows for projecting the time routines, beyond the sanitary emergency that gave rise to them.

### 3.3 Regular routines reestablished post confinement by COVID-19. Heritage from the Pandemic breaks.

Since the vaccination processes and the improvement of sanitary indicators of new contagion and deaths by COVID-19, people have begun to reestablish their regular routines as governments gradually lifted the severe restrictions during the pandemic years. (MINSAL Chile, 2022). However, the results of the study reveal that the traumatic conditions associated with the forced modifications that affected the confinement routines persist over time (Kielhofner, 2004), leaving traces in the biological rhythm and socially defined human needs that form the basis of daily life (Martín-Romera, 2021). The following table is the main heritage identified in the reestablished regular routines and their corresponding illustrative fragments (see table 3).

**Table 3. Reestablishment of the regular routines post-confinement pandemic heritages.**

Regular routines	Pandemic heritages	Illustrative fragments
Personal routine	Relativization of time	"Before the Pandemic, on weekends, I would go out. However, in the Pandemic, there were so many months of confinement that suddenly I would ask What day is today? I lost track between weekdays, from Monday to Friday, and the weekends. Since people did everything from home, they could not differentiate the days. Then it was all the same; I lived every day the same. It did the same thing every day, like an endless straight line. Moreover, it made no sense: why would I go to bed and take my clothes off if I had to get up and get dressed again the next day? It is funny, but even now, I ask myself the same question. (Subject 11, personal communication, May 4, 2022).
Work routine	Relativization of space	Teleworking: A Legacy of the Pandemic. During the Pandemic, people did telework because we were in an emergency. However, time showed that it was possible to do telework and keep functioning without significant difficulties. Because in most cases, people did their work anyway, did well, and fulfilled their responsibilities. We may have considered a teleworking law if it had not been for the Pandemic! (Subject 38, personal communication, August 9, 2022).
Formal personal presentation routine	Relativization of formality	"I think that after the Pandemic, things have relaxed. For example, the way that you dress. Of course, one cares about being clean and neat. However, there is no longer a problem with wearing sneakers and sportswear. It does not matter how you dress. The important thing is to fulfill your commitments" (Subject 52, personal communication, October 27, 2022).
Domestic routine	Reevaluation of the home	"You also adapt; you get used to it. It is like "I do not want to go out because it is cold". Moreover, before, I used to go out with this cold. Returning to activities outside the house has been hard because I got used to being inside. I think somewhere I read something that spoke about cabin fever. I think that is. After the Pandemic, we could go out again. However, I do not want to go out, because I have gotten used to this space. Moreover, now this is my world. I do not need anything outside. I do not need to be out. Because I learned to feel Good at my

		home, with my things. Everything is very comfortable. Every time I go out of the house, the only thing I want is to go back soon." (Subject 27, personal communication, June 22, 2022).
Sanitary care routine	Revaluation of sanitary protection exclusively in health centers	Today, it has become normal to see people wearing masks. Before the Pandemic, I would have been shocked to see someone wearing a mask outside a hospital. Now, the person wears it for protection, and it is ok for them to do so. (Subject 66, personal communication, April 18, 2023).

**Source:** own elaboration based on the research results.

The expected restitution of the regular routines after the sanitary emergency shows the presence of inherited modifications of the pandemic break that extend to the present to, confirming the effects of the traumatic change that remain in time and redefine daily life, according the learning of relativization of time, space and formality; together with the revaluation staying at home and health protection; these conditions show vital evidence of the years spent in confinement. Thus, the restitution of the regular routines after the sanitary emergency proves that the presence of the inherited modifications from the pandemic break persists over time, verifying that traumatic change effects have redefined daily life, according to the relativization learnings and revaluation by the participants of the study. Researchers expect them to gain renewed stability in the coming post-pandemic years.

#### 4. Conclusions

The research results prove that post-pandemic years, characterized by severe sanitary restrictions and extended confinement conditions, have left a profound trace in the population's routines. Researchers confirm that Pandemic breaks disrupted the behavior patterns that traditionally provide structure to daily life, affecting the space, time, and materiality dimensions, together with contributing to the imprint of instability and uncertainty in the short term and disrupt the safety models required for projecting life in a long term (AOTA, 2008; Ullón-Segovia *et al.*, 2024). Additionally, according to Alzaga and Bang (2024), population confinement creates the rupture conditions between regular and pandemic routines. Based on the restrictive material conditions, preferably defined from home, people incorporated digital technology into work with unprecedented massiveness and intensity. Educational and social activities developed during the period.

Within this framework, people's lives in confinement annulled the conditions of presence and free circulation that had sustained regular routines until the sanitary emergency, forming a catastrophic change that fully complied with the conceptual characteristics proposed by Kielhofner (2004) as follows:

**Table 4. COVID-19 Pandemic as a catastrophic change.**

Conceptual characteristics of catastrophic change Kielhofner (2004)	Pandemic characteristics of catastrophic change
Abrupt change.	Threatens human life by SARS-CoV-2.
External circumstances.	Pandemic COVID-19.
Change imposition.	Confinement for sanitary reasons.
Alteration of the vital situation.	Forced to stay at home.
	Isolation due to risk of contagion.
	Extensive suspension of face-to-face activities.
	Restrictive operation of essential face-to-face activities.
Fundamental reorganization of daily life.	Universal application of sanitary personal protection measures.
	Restrictive measures of personal mobility.
	Intensive incorporation of technology in labor, educational, and social activities.
	Superposition of time and space in daily activities.
	Diversity and adaptability of activities at home.

**Source:** own elaboration based on the research results.

Researchers confirm that the COVID-19 pandemic, as a catastrophic change, directly disrupted regular routines through confinement, inevitably disrupting daily life, given the magnitude of the modifications that had to be implemented in households to adjust to the sanitary protection measures demanded by the emergency. Likewise, the study's results suggest that people can redefine restored regular routines as post-pandemic routines, since they project their core dimensions over time as renewed behavior patterns that add new meanings and significance to the structures of daily life in the coming years. The following is the summary of the routine, pandemic routine, and restored routine/post-pandemic routine, organized from the identity dimensions of the routines.

**Table 5. Routine dimensions. Routine. Pandemic break, post-pandemic routine.**

Routine dimensions	Routine	Pandemic break	Restored routine/post-pandemic routine
Time	Temporary cycle. Weekdays/ Weekend days.	Temporary Indistinct consecutive days	Continuum. days and cycle/time continuum.
	Home as a personal and family space in conditions of free disposal.	Home is a personal, family, work, educational, and social space in forced and overlapping conditions.	Home as a multipurpose space in free disposal conditions.
	People recognize the home as a traditional space for daily life.	Governments imposed that staying at home was the only option for daily life.	Home chosen as a preferred space for daily life.

Space	Development of work and educational activities under conditions of formal compliance.	Development of virtual work and educational activities under forced conditions.	Development of teleworking and online education in formal or optional conditions.
Materiality	Daily life activities regulate demand for digital resources.	Intensive digitization of daily life activities	Coexistence Face-to-face/virtual daily life
	Acquisition of objects to satisfy the needs and requirements of daily life.	Universal procurement and disinfection of objects to meet the needs and requirements of daily life in pandemics.	Selective acquisition and disinfection of objects to satisfy daily needs and requirements.
	Mask as a sanitary exception.	Mask as a universal prevention of contagion of COVID-19.	People use masks as sanitary protection in justified cases.

Source: own elaboration based on the research results.

Undoubtedly, the COVID-19 pandemic has been a global experience that disrupted each person and produced structural reorganizations in the regular routines of the population. People recognize its main effects as pandemic legacies, which they express through persistent ruptures in the dimensions of time, space, and material conditions, which have advanced from a contingency situation that demanded adaptations for sanitary protection at home, towards restituted/post-pandemic routines that have permanently integrated the learning of pandemic daily life. The following is a conceptual summary that organizes the main results obtained in the research.

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**Table 6. Conceptual summary of results.**

Pandemic time	Routine/Rupture sequence	Summary concepts	Characteristics
Before the Pandemic	Regular routines	Stable structures of daily life	Daily routines in conditions of presence and personal mobility in free decision.
During the Pandemic	Pandemic break	Destructuring of daily life	Catastrophic change. Forced confinement to the home and virtualization of daily life.
	Pandemic routines	Restructuring of daily life	People adapt their daily routines to their home living conditions and the digital resources they have available.
After the Pandemic	Regular routines/restored post-pandemic routines	Resignification of daily life	Relativization of time/space. Resignification of materiality.

Source: own elaboration based on the research results.



From the conceptual summary of results, it is concluded that the COVID-19 health emergency constituted a rupture capable of dividing biographies in the cardinal points corresponding to before, during and after the Pandemic, references that are at the base of regular routines, pandemic routines and reestablished regular routines/post-pandemic routines, which constitute a sequence in whose deployment the inherited learning from an uncertain and threatening vital period evidenced. Thus, the Pandemic revealed the enormous capacity of human beings to adapt to conditions of imminent vital risk and updated the collective commitment to guarantee everyday survival and provide preferential protection to those more fragile in the face of adversity.

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## Author contribution

Patricia Castañeda-Meneses: conceptualization, data curation, formal analysis, investigation, methodology, writing (original draft), writing (draft review and revision and revision/correction).

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## Conflict de interest

The author declares that she has no conflict of interest in the writing or publication of this article.

## Ethical implications

The author has no ethical implications to declare in the writing and publication of this article.

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