

1. Where were you on 9/11, and how did you find out about the incident?

I worked at the Social Security Administration in 2001 and was at work that morning when the jets hit the Twin Towers. There was no announcement at work or no indication that anything was wrong. The first I knew of the tragedy was when a co-worker who had stayed home on sick leave called me to let me know a plane had crashed into the Twin Towers in New York. I thought she meant a small single engine plane and she said no, it was an American Airlines jet. She said that she called me because she knew I would remain calm. However, I was very concerned because my sister, Karon, is a flight attendant for American Airlines.

I immediately went into the conference room and turned on the television to see what was going on. The event was on all of the TV channels. After I watched the news for a while and determined what was happening, the second jet hit the second Tower. Then the jet hit the Pentagon. There was also talk of a jet heading for the White House.

At this point, my only thoughts were, "Oh my God, we're at war." My searing fear was that my son (who was 17 at the time) would be drafted (by emergency legislation) and sent to fight a war in the Middle East. My good friend Anna had two sons who were in their twenties and of draft age. She burst into tears because she too was afraid that both her sons would be drafted and sent to war.

2. How did 9/11 affect the way you personally live today?

I grew up in an era where the United States was never physically or geographically affected by world events. I grew up with a security that the citizens of the U.S. would always be safe in their own environments and homes. War was something that happened in other places, not here at home.

I no longer have that confidence and security. I feel more vulnerable because I realize now that anything can happen at any time. I find myself more wary of unusual incidents that occur – packages left in public places and unmarked trucks and vans in public places. I try to avoid large public events where security would be a problem.

Also I do not travel by air as much as I used to because it is much more difficult now. I have significantly changed my travel plans/vacations due to the events of 9/11. I travel more by car than public transportation because I feel I have more control over my ability to get to a secure place.

3. Did you support the war in Afghanistan, and in retrospect, how did it affect America as a whole?

My concern was finding Osama Bin Laden. I think the Bush Administration wasted a lot of American soldiers' lives by not taking specific action against Bin Laden. I believe the Bush Administration was misguided in invading Iraq when it should have been specifically pursuing and finding Bin Laden. The war in Iraq created the horrible debt the country now carries.

President Obama took the exact right course of action in the way that he directed the capture and execution of Bin Laden.

4. Do you believe that 9/11 contributed to a downturn in the economy? If so, how did it personally affect you?

Absolutely. The destruction of the Twin Towers totally obliterated the operations of hundreds of companies located in New York and operating throughout the United States. The cost of rebuilding these companies, the loss of jobs, the time and cost of replacing the lost records, the loss of police and fire fighters and astronomical insurance payments and costs. Also the downturn in the stock market was caused by 9/11. The list goes on forever. New York is the major financial/commercial city in the U.S. and the impact was felt throughout the U.S. The cost of living has increased since 9/11 and I feel it everywhere – at the grocery store, clothing stores, etc.

5. Do you know of anyone who was a survivor of 9/11, or was physically involved with the event?

A lady that I worked with at Social Security Administration lost her son-in-law at the Pentagon on 9/11. He worked there and was killed by the crash. My sister is a flight attendant with American Airlines. She knew the entire crew that was lost in the Pentagon crash.

6. How do you feel about the increased security and defense measures that the government has taken? Do you agree or disagree with them?

I feel that security measures are necessary to ensure the safety of passengers on flights; however, the current system is not cost effective or efficient. I think the number of air marshals on flights should be increased and the TSA security check points should be decreased.

Please write any comments about the social, economic or political impact that you personally think 9/11 had on America.

I think 9/11 proved to America that it was not prepared for an internal attack on our country. We lived with the security that America could not be affected because we had the physical separation of oceans from the strife of the world. As a result of 9/11, the mentality of the American public has completely changed. A change in which our lives that will never be the same – we are less secure. A change in which we are trying to find our “new normal” that deals with these insecurities and doubt.

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