

Blog Post

I can't help but think of the book *Hats for Sale* when I think of motherhood during the pandemic. I know the story very well since, it's my five-year-old's favorite book. I know the book is about a man trying to sell hats, but I really see myself when I think of him. He seems to



have it all together with his hats all neatly stacked and color coordinated up top his head but it must be so hard to balance, not to mention the stress of knowing he's supposed to sell them and no one seems to notice him. As a mother, wife, student, and intern, I see myself with hats on my head. My hats are not color coordinated or neatly stacked, they cause me to worry and are heavy on my head. My biggest struggle amidst COVID is that I am no longer able to wear just one hat at a time, my "mom" hat sits on top of my "student hat" which is on top of my "intern" hat, which sits on top of my "wife" hat. With COVID I am now forced to wear these all the time confined to the four walls of my home. I have not yet found a balance, I cry a lot and I doubt myself, I feel alone and misunderstood.

*Caps for Sale* by Esphyr Slobodkina,  
Ann Marie Mulhearn Sayer  
Illustrated by Esphyr Slobodkina

My biggest hope for the *Motherhood* collection housed in the Journal of a Plague Year is that it be inclusive and transparent. Many items in the collection highlight the good, bad and ugly of motherhood. Since mothers are coping with this pandemic in different ways, this collection touches on experiences of mothers of all backgrounds. The wonderful thing about motherhood, despite COVID, is the support we are able to give one another through the understanding of the love we have for our children.

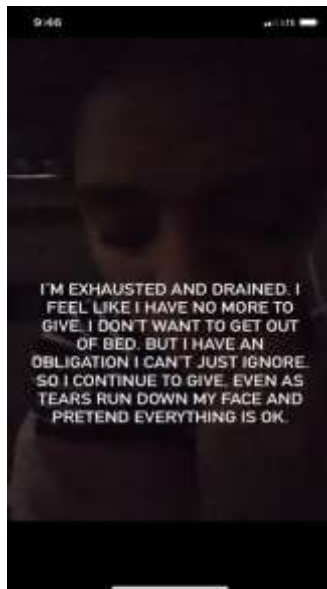
**Mothers are not super heroes; we are a group of women who adapt to uncertainty and do what needs to be done for the love and sake of our family.**

This item from the collection shows Chicago mom, Kristen Krahl, breastfeeding and pumping for her newborn while taking care of twin toddlers and working from home. Many would use this as an example of the super hero status of motherhood but, thankfully Krahl was quick to vocalize that she filmed this video of herself to remind moms everywhere that they are not alone. Mothers have not been granted any sort of super power, motherhood is tough, some of us are struggling more than others but Krahl shows that we are here to support and uplift one another. In an interview Krahl said she wanted to show that during COVID, mothers doing the “impossible” is something that we are all doing, “we just didn’t know we would all connect on this level.” Her message of strength, especially on those tough days, is one that resonates with all mothers during the pandemic.



<https://covid-19archive.org/admin/item/27812>

**The notion that some moms have it worse than others, is a lie.**



In this item titled *Everything is NOT ok*, this mom of two preschool aged children (youngest is not even one) shares that she was feeling exhausted and drained. For her, COVID means no park, no zoo, and no museums for her kids. It means her oldest can't go to daycare and she can't catch a break. She shares her raw feelings that are scarcely talked about, those feelings all moms go through. Stay at home moms do not have it any easier than any other mom. Motherhood is universally hard, COVID has made it harder. No hat is heavier or more important than another, just different. No matter what the backstory, mothers are carrying an emotional burden of feeling inadequate and unsupported by society for all the expectations that are put on us. We are described as superheroes, but the truth is that we're human being and were struggling.

Tags: motherhood, COVID, struggle

<https://covid-19archive.org/admin/item/30468>