

#REL101

What a year, I think we can all say that, this year has been the most life changing for me and a large portion was due to the coronavirus. Covid affected my work at Starbucks, I did not self-quarantine, I was considered an essential worker. I worked over forty hours a week, every store in our district was shut down except my home store. We muddled employees from other stores into our own and I was told that if I chose to stay at home, our store would close. The decision to stay at work was difficult, I was considering the employees that would be exposed, was it necessary? How can I support my team in this time of anguish? It was business as usual, until masks became a requirement although there was a shortage of masks around the world. I was shown how to make masks with coffee filters, and it felt apocalyptic and overwhelming. Not because I was concerned for myself, it was the look on my employees faces as they saw us making masks out of coffee filters and saran wrap. Customers were either overly grateful that we were open or rude and cussing out employees daily.

The world was in chaos and I could not slow down and breathe so I just kept moving. When I found a new routine months later, anxiety, which I had never experienced in my life, came up in a horrid panic attack, breakdown inducing way. I am still struggling with this today and am seeking help to learn how to cope. In a world that tries to maintain normalcy in an abnormal situation, it is even more difficult to stop, breathe and acknowledge all we have been through. Multiple covid scares, not knowing when I will see my family out of state again and knowing that I need to be cautious of who I am around since I work with the public. I just want to breathe, figuratively and literally, mask on eight hours a day and already hard to breathe.