

I Work in a Dangerous Place

Kyra Fuentes

BEFORE YOU READ:

1. “Cocky” means proud or over-confident. It comes from the word cock – a male chicken.
2. What are some of the more dangerous jobs during the pandemic? What makes them dangerous?

A Roller Coaster for Me

The pandemic has been a roller coaster for me. If I made a graph of my emotions, it would show an erratic pattern. One steady presence in my life has been my husband. I should nominate him to be “husband of the year.” (Please, do not tell my husband I said that because he will become cocky.) You might be wondering: What is so great about my husband? I will tell you: He has supported me while I work in a dangerous place!

Did I mention that I work in a supermarket?

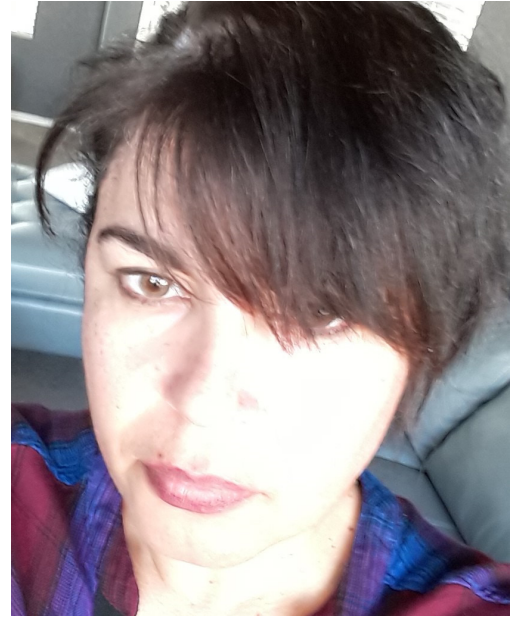
Trying to Stay Safe at Work

A supermarket is a place where many different people come together. During the first couple of weeks of the shutdown, I felt very scared about everything. How was I going to be safe in an enclosed space with so many people?

Every day, I plan how I should do things at my job. After I clock in, I wash my hands and my ID, and then I put on my mask and gloves. As I work, I regularly check to see if my gloves are tearing. I check that the customers are not too close to me. Even if I put baskets or barriers around me while I am working, they just move them so they can get what they want. It seems like they do not care if they – or I – get sick!

I Cannot Rest

The whole day consists of running away from customers and washing my hands many times. During my lunch break, I cannot rest. I wash my hands, and then all the surfaces in the break room – handles of the refrigerator, microwave,



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my table, etc. Yes, I clean the kitchen at my job! During my lunch break! Before clocking out, I wash my hands again and with my soapy hands, I clean my walkie-talkie and my PDT. (A PDT is a portable data terminal that we use to scan items in the store.) You should see my co-workers’ faces! I do not want to get sick or make my husband or anyone sick! I know, I know! This is too much, but at the end of the day, I believe it is better to be safe than sorry.

AFTER YOU READ:

1. According to the author, what makes working in a supermarket dangerous?
2. Make a graph of your emotions. What would you put on the x axis? And the y axis?
3. How do you respect people’s different needs around staying safe?