



The Cloud Emotions of Covid

**Story by: Anna Lehman, P.A.-C.
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It's not hard for any of us to rattle the ways in which COVID-19 has affected our lives; it has not spared anyone. There are too many ways to count in which I have been frustrated, scared, angry and annoyed at COVID-19. But there have also been silver linings, and I'm choosing to focus on those for my reflections. I am happily married to Erick. We have four kids (ages 11, 9, 6, & 3), and we enjoy running a busy lifestyle. We love participating in a wide variety of activities, and our calendars were often a puzzle.

Obviously, the calendar was wiped clean in March 2020. Early in the pandemic, during spring and summer, my kids bonded with our older neighborhood kids in ways they would have never done without COVID-19. Watching these relationships bloom and form has been heartwarming; these adolescents are incredible role models, and I am thankful for them in my kids' lives. This summer, with most activities canceled, we splurged on a boat we'd been keeping our eyes on for a few years. We made hundreds of hours of memories on the water. We were able to spend almost a week with my brother and his family in Montana and Wyoming this summer, planned because of our open calendar. We made memories I will cherish forever. This fall, with cases on the rise, we formed a quarantine bubble with other close friends and families. Spending time with this group has been gratifying and filled with laughs and memories. We enjoyed our first 'Friendsgiving' over Thanksgiving. This Christmas, we were able to wake up on Christmas morning in our own home for the first time and enjoy the season in a much more relaxed way. This winter, our family has spent more time skating, skiing, and sledding than the previous years put together. I am as anxious to go back to our "old life" as anyone, but we all know that we will never fully go back to the life we had before, and for that, I am grateful.

**Artist Riley Lehman
Menomonie, WI**

Riley is nine years old and in 3rd grade at Oaklawn Elementary in Menomonie, WI. She lives with her Dad Erick, Mom Anna, and three brothers Kellen, Zander, & Brekken. She loves dance, gymnastics, art, piano, softball, basketball, soccer, skiing, and swimming.

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