



ESSENTIAL YET DISPOSABLE: FOOD, FLOWERS, AND FILTH IN THE PANDEMIC ERA

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The 3 Fs

Food

Flowers

Filth

“...Two other coworkers...are not working right now at this time, because of the virus. And I wished that I was one of those too. And then, when I was hearing, you know that they’re congratulating all the essential workers and that. And then I was like, “Okay, it’s not so bad after all.” Okay, well, we are getting recognized. And I wasn’t sure if the world was going to recognize us because, you know, I’ve been doing okay and we’re just grocery people. You know, we’re just the ones that helped keep you fed. And then, I, you know, there’s the doctors and the nurses but they get more credit. But... now I’m—yeah, now I’m quite okay. I like the title—the title of being an ‘essential worker’ or ‘hero’. [laughs] Like I say I wasn’t at first, but then I’m like well, okay.”

-Melissa, grocery store clerk

“That’s the only time to talk to people”

-John, grocery store clerk

“Technically that is harder for someone like me...But if somebody shows me what to do and all that kind of thing, I would do it. But I just need to be shown what to do.”

-Amanda, food service in assistive living



Teri Leiker

Photo Credit: Sebastian Harvey



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