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WORK-IT MAMA

Traveling Milk Truck Monthly Newsletter

To kick off November,

I grabbed coffee with friends I hadn't seen in a few months. We sat shivering at 7:30 a.m. outside the bougie cafe, trying to absorb some heat from the steaming cups while waiting impatiently for the sun to thaw us from the outside in. Our conversation was thought-provoking, challenging and hopeful. From these friends, I wouldn't expect anything less.

The most important thing is, I no longer want to hear how terrible 2020 has been. Deep down, I don't think anyone else does, either. So, let's all stop the doomscrolling and quarantine-snacking-sadness. Let's turn our focus toward new possibilities. COVID won't be going away anytime soon and our personal power doesn't have to exit, either. We have the capacity within ourselves to end this year with appreciation—as we would any other year.

This month, I'm diving into perspectives on women's rights, my forgotten wedding anniversary and some general parenting madness! Turn the page and join me.

Karlee Vincent



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I forgot my anniversary last month...

Well, sort of. I knew we were approaching the approximate date. But as we drove up the hill towards my in-law's house, I looked at Ryan and felt a tad guilty. "Do you want to go out on Tuesday to celebrate?" He had already planned a date for that Friday, he said. It would be our first official outing since quarantine.

In the kitchen making dinner with my mother-in-law, I mentioned that Ryan and I should do something big in 2021 to mark year ten of our marriage.

She and Ryan erupted in laughter. I had been slicing onions and stood with a knife in one hand at the kitchen island. "We've only been married eight years," my husband said.

I tried to laugh with them but my face flushed with embarrassment. I'd forgotten.

Does it matter? Not in the big picture. What matters is the love we have for each other and the laughter that binds us smoothing the way through joy and challenges.





I'm Speaking.

Throughout my childhood, I always felt that I was on equal footing with any classmate, regardless of gender. I was taught that whatever opportunity I wanted to pursue was mine for the taking (I call this the perpetual pursuit of the Millennials).

I have a bachelors degree. I have an amazing career. My goals and dreams have always been in reach. I also recognize that because I am white, privilege has made my life easier.

It wasn't until my husband and I decided to have children that a major shift happened for me. I began to pay closer attention to the ways in which women are treated.

In 2014, after my first daughter was born, I began paying childcare. It cost 75 cents of every dollar I made. It would have been cheaper for me to stay home, but I wanted a career. My husband and I incurred nearly \$30,000 in debt, just so I could keep my job.

I stopped contributing to my 401k and effectively added years on to my working life—a choice that will take years to recover from. Childcare isn't affordable for moms like me with privilege and that isn't right, nor fair for moms who struggle with less support than I have. Plus, returning to work after maternity leave is more difficult than it should be for any woman.

In 2017 my second daughter was born pre-term. My husband and I were hopeful that she would survive (and she did). I was induced to save my life, while the outcome for her was unknown at the time —anything could have happened. What risks are waiting for moms in the same situation but who are without good healthcare?

The unexpected trauma I experienced trying to save my life during childbirth brought the continual Pro-life vs. Pro-choice debates home for me. We need a smarter, kinder approach to healthcare for women, one that takes into consideration, the real life challenges women face during childbirth.

"Census Bureau data from 2018, women of all races earned, on average, just 82 cents for every \$1 earned by men of all races.³ This calculation is the ratio of median annual earnings for women working full time, year round to those of their male counterparts, and it translates to a gender wage gap of 18 cents. When talking about the wage gap for women, it is important to highlight that there are significant differences by race and ethnicity. The wage gap is larger for most women of color." —Robin Bleiweis, <https://www.americanprogress.org/>

When conversations about women's maternal health are decided by courts, and not by women in consultation with their doctors, women are being subtly told that they are second class citizens. It's utterly infuriating.

We have to share our stories—as I've just done—so each of us begins to understand the actual life experiences of real women. These firestarter questions can help:

1. When did you feel most in charge of your maternal health?
2. What is disempowering about the healthcare system?
3. How do you separate politics from healthcare to ensure you get the services you need?

#BoobItUp



Breast Cancer awareness month was in October, but the conversation needs to continue. Breasts are vital for both men and women. They are a life force for babies. We have to keep supporting, educating and empowering women about their breasts. So, it's important to arm yourself with the knowledge you need to kick cancer in the butt before it even has a chance to say hello.

There are also significant racial disparities within the healthcare system that need to be addressed. For example, the CDC shares that, "Black women and white women get breast cancer at about the same rate, but black women die from breast cancer at a higher rate than white women."

That's not acceptable. And that is also why this conversation is so important. What accounts for such a disparity? According to the Breast Cancer Research Foundation, "Social, economic, and behavioral factors may partially account for the disparity. Black women are more likely to have diabetes, heart disease, and obesity, and are less likely to breastfeed after childbirth—all of which are risk factors for breast cancer. They are also more likely than white women to have inadequate health insurance or access to health care facilities, which may affect access to screening, follow-up care, and completion of therapy."

Having this knowledge can help us change the conversation and take action to close such disparities. It starts with you.

Here are a few actionable steps that you can take:

1. Feel your breasts. That's the first step to finding a lump.
2. See your Doctor for regular check-ups and screenings.
3. Ask questions.
4. Shared information is a necessity. Becoming educated about breast cancer, who it affects and how to advocate for yourself in the healthcare system are extremely valuable.
5. Take care of yourself. Eat foods that are good for your body and exercise frequently.

Here are some great resources and additional discussion:

- [Breastcancer.org](https://www.breastcancer.org)
- [Essence Wellness Check](#)
- [Breast Cancer Research Foundation](https://www.bcrf.org)

Kiddo Product Shoutout! Diono Carseat



I am a big fan of buying a product one time that can last you throughout infancy and well into those toddler years. The Diono carseat does just that. It has a 10-year warranty and it holds children up to 120lbs. Its thin design was created in mind for small cars — three can easily fit in a row in the back of a car, or comfortably be installed on an airplane. This carseat is a win for everyone.

Check out their website here: <https://www.diono.com/us/>

VIRTUAL FRIENDSGIVING

This marks the 12th year that the Vincent Family has been hosting Friendsgiving. It's been a great tradition which has kept all of our friends together especially as each of our lives have transformed.

2020 marks the first time that we will host Friendsgiving virtually. Because of the unusual circumstances of this year, we thought it would be fitting to host a Happy Hour on Friday the 13th. Fitting, right?

With zoom fatigue in mind, I am going to keep things simple. I plan on keeping a flexible time and play some fun (but optional games).

Are you planning anything fun with your friends this year? I would love to hear what you did for your virtual event! Send an email to karlee@travelingmilktruck.com.



LIFE LESSONS FROM A SIX-YEAR-OLD

"There is always a real person inside of the walking dinosaurs."



WHEN YOU'VE GOT TWO SECONDS TO WIPE



**BEFORE EVERYONE IN STARBUCKS SEES
YOU WITH YOUR PANTS DOWN**

MEME OF THE MONTH

There is nothing more terrifying than having to plead with your toddler in a public restroom to:

1. not touch anything in the bathroom while you're peeing and
2. not open the bathroom door in the middle of you doing your business.

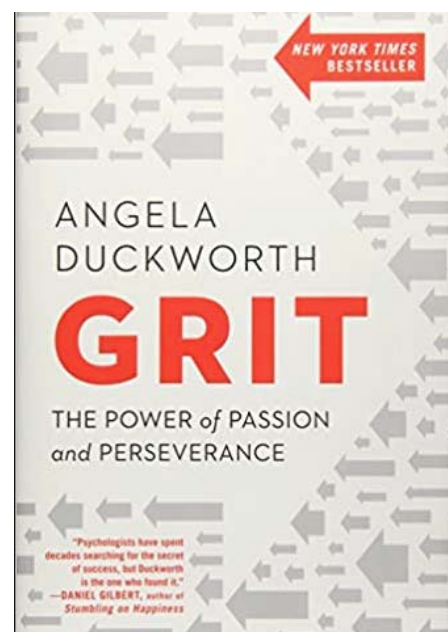
My toddler even once decided to visit the person in the stall next to us. That was a fun conversation.

BOOK OF THE MONTH

"Grit," by Angela Duckworth discusses the importance of reaching your potential through continual improvement and personal growth.

You do not have to be a naturally gifted person to be successful. You just have to be willing to keep getting back up in the midst of failure. Angela discusses the power of passion and perseverance.

I will be the first to admit, I am not the most talented writer in the room. I've always struggled with spelling and my stories could always use more detail. "Grit," has inspired me to keep picking up the pen because perseverance will continue to help me improve my writing as an author.



Hey Friends,

Have a children's book you love? A parenting hack you want others to know? Care to share how you have made your workplace more parent-friendly? Shoot me an email. I would love to feature your story in a future newsletter.

And follow me on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) for updates and progress on my book.

I look forward to sharing with you next month!

XO

-Mama Kar

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