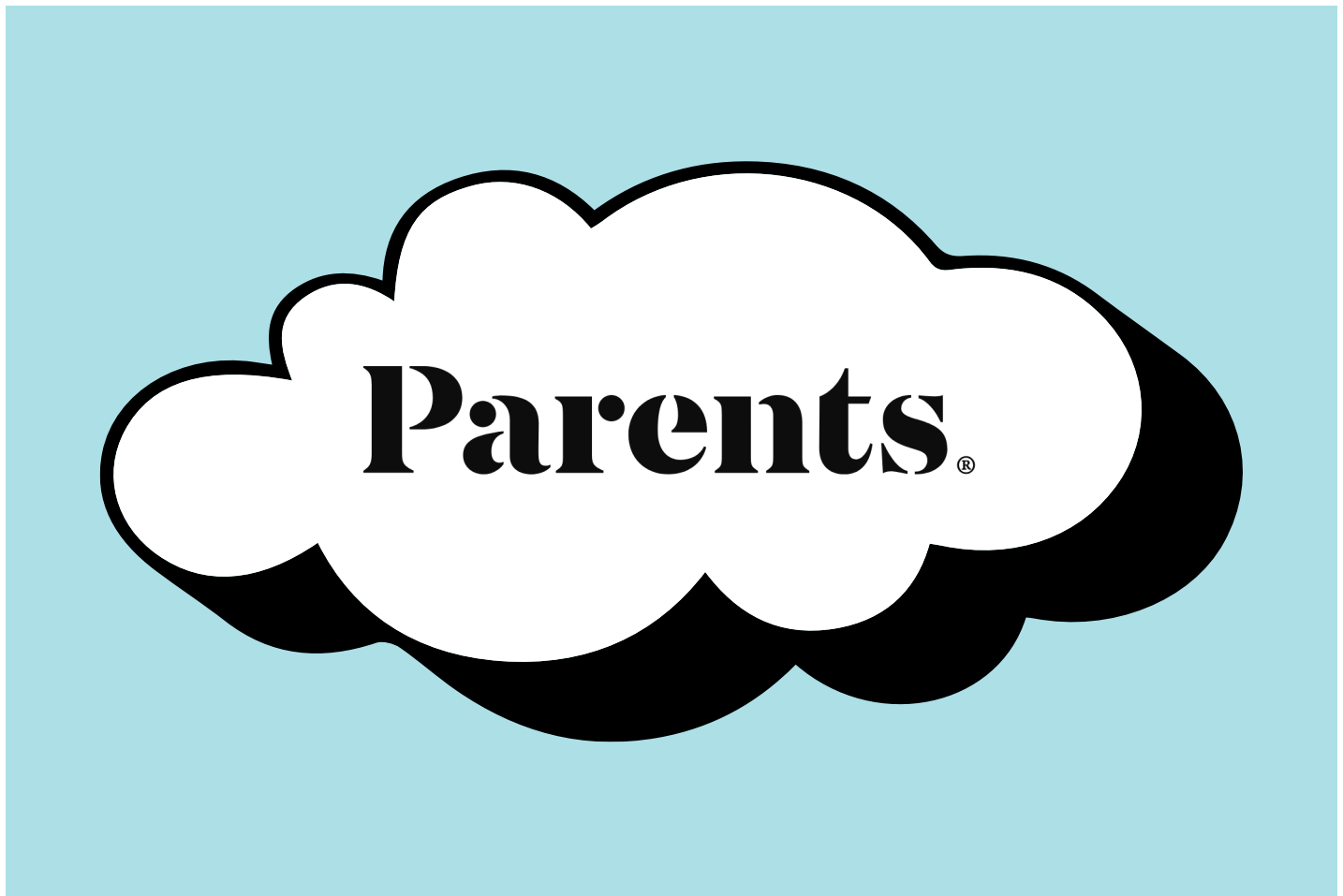


Why My Viral 'Cry January' Tweet Resonated With So Many Parents

Forget 'Dry January.' When this mom said it was 'Cry January,' people—especially parents—related.

By **Janine Annett**

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A few weeks ago, I had a rough Monday. It was cold, it was dark, Omicron was surging. I was trying to get some work done, but I kept getting distracted by everything, including keeping track of which of my kid's friends had just tested positive for COVID-19 and which activities were getting canceled. I couldn't concentrate. Feeling fed up and exhausted, I cried a little bit at my desk in the soft glow of my SAD lamp.

Later that night, I was brushing my teeth when a random thought came to me. "Forget 'Dry January' (when people give up alcohol for the month)," I thought, "this should be 'Cry January' instead." I tweeted: "Who's doing Cry January? You have to commit to crying at least a little bit every day during the month of January." I added three crying emojis at the end. It was part joke, part truth bomb.

And then my tweet went viral.

My "Cry January" tweet hit a nerve with people, garnering nearly 28,000 likes and nearly 3,000 retweets. It was shared widely on Twitter as well as Instagram and Facebook.

No one seemed to feel the sentiment more than parents, who are still trying to get through what seems like a never-ending pandemic and trying not to lose their minds. Some of us have young kids who can't be vaccinated yet, others have seen their kids get COVID-19 despite being vaccinated and being super-careful. Many parents are balancing work and child care (if it's even possible for them) or school (or dealing with kids being quarantined at home due to in-school exposure). Decisions that used to be simple—Should we carpool for soccer practice? Can my kid have a birthday party? Do I take my kid to the doctor for this sniffle?—are still full of what-ifs and risk calculations that were unfathomable before the pandemic.

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The responses to my Cry January tweet were almost as telling as the tweet itself. Stephanie King ([@stephstephking](#)), the mom of an 11-year-old daughter and 8-year-old son who lives in Philadelphia, responded, "I'm doing 'Try January.' Every day I try to make it through the month of January." She says she really felt the sentiment of

this tweet since "we're entering Year 3 of the pandemic and everyone is just tired and OVER IT. Plus January is such a hopeless month because it's all the bleakness of winter while spring and its hopefulness seem so far away. And January seems like the LAST time I'd want to give up drinking, for the reasons previously mentioned." Lucy Huber ([@clhubes](#)), a writer and editor who lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts, had her first baby during the pandemic. She retweeted my Cry January tweet and says it resonated with her "because we thought we'd been through the worst of COVID-19 as parents. Then, suddenly we were back at square one—except this time nobody cared anymore. So instead, we all wanted to cry while we sat in our houses and just waited for things to get better, watching 700 [episodes of Blippi](#). Which was a big reason for a lot of the crying on my part."

According to Miriam Korn, Psy.D., a clinical psychologist in New York City, "Your tweet gave people permission to express their anguish about how bleak things feel right now. The fact that so many people related to it speaks to the very real challenges we're living through and how many of us feel like we're at the end of our rope." She adds, "People with children feel this perhaps most acutely; the 'village' it takes to raise a child doesn't feel like a village anymore when we're scared that social support may come at the cost of our and our children's health."

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So how do we deal? Dr. Korn recommends allowing yourself to express negative feelings. "Think of it as an opportunity to teach your child about how to express and modulate emotion," she suggests. It also doesn't hurt to ask for help if you need it, she says, whether it's from a partner or someone else in your support system. And remember, things are always changing. "Whether it's a developmental phase your child is going through, the winter season, or this particular moment in history, our circumstances will not last forever," she says. "While advice like 'make the best of it' may not feel possible right now, it can be helpful to focus on just getting through this time and visualizing things in the future that you are looking forward to."

So if you feel like you've had a "Cry January" yourself, take solace in the fact that at least you're not alone. And maybe "Self-Care February" or "Vacation March" will be a thing. In the meantime, [at least there's Wordle!](#)