A reflection on writing my 2020-2021 performance evaluation by Anonymous

I couldn't write about my furlough or the time I took off between fall and spring because both were triggering for me to think about. I felt such a profound sense of loss during those times, and an absolute desperation for relief when none came. I found them terrifying for that reason, like nothing would ever recharge me again and I would live the rest of my life this hollow shell of my former self, the "virtual" me replacing the "regular" me.

Is this what being a STEM academic in a capitalist society means? Feeling guilty for being unable to accomplish an impossible task? Feeling shame for experiencing emotion, for experiencing suffering? And then being asked to evaluate that guilt and shame? How can I explain manifestations of global suffering in my work and in my body in several long entry questions in an HR user interface? Why must I attempt to capture my value as a productive employee when all I feel is despair?

My chest hurts. My heart hurts. I want to scream that I am still alive and that is more than enough of an accomplishment in this moment.

An evaluation of my performance: I am more than enough, and I will try to remember that.

An evaluation of your performance: You are more than enough, and this message is a reminder of that.