

APRIL 2020

ON A PERSONAL NOTE

Dear colleagues and friends,

I hope you are all healthy during this uncertain time. I for one would've never imagined writing this newsletter amidst a global pandemic that has disrupted lives all over the world. I even considered suspending my newsletters in the face of the severity of the circumstances. But, more than ever, this a vital time to reach out and make contact.

It's been more than a week since I started writing this letter to you. Information has been changing daily. It's difficult to have a calm state of mind as we navigate uncharted territory. But making the effort to reach out to you have gave me pause to contemplate and shift perspective. Self-isolation, remote working, the stress of a changing landscape can leave us feeling isolated, detached and worried. So, I hope that even in the smallest way, this newsletter returns the favour. Know that I am thinking of each and every one of you and wishing you both physical and mental health.

As life continues to slow or be disrupted, I have noticed a willingness to see this as an opportunity for a reset.

This is the time to re-evaluate what is honestly important. The interruption of our regular comings and goings, offers an amazing opportunity to strip out the extraneous attachments and focus on what is most meaningful. Maybe a good time to live those values we pondered in January ☐. (I've be happy to send you a digital copy of the values and 12 week plan template; just send me an email at michelle@khoradesign.ca with the subject heading Values).

As our hair grows longer (and wilder in my case), we settle into a comfort level of who we are without the trappings our outward appearances and physical interactions to validate our existence. An introspective attitude becomes easier if we allow a calm and simplicity to take root.

I realize that I don't know what the other side of this looks like. But I have made my peace with it. I try to keep my family and my colleagues safe by my thoughtful and compassionate actions. I can plan for a future in the short term. I seek out a little bit of joy every day. But that's it. Pondering what the world will look like at the end of this seems futile because I just don't have all the information. None of us do.

In a way, its freeing. But I wanted to share one added benefit of facing the unknown.

In this sobering time, I have challenged myself to be grateful every day. To focus my attention on the beauty of the present moment. I am heartened by how connected we all are as we navigate these uncertain times together and the kindness of mere strangers to each other.

Perhaps at the end of all this, living in the (illusiv) present moment will be the single most important practice I develop.

Be well. And I look forward to physically connecting with you soon.



Tips for coping with the new norm – WFH (Working From Home)



Put some pants on every workday (they can be your comfy pants). This

was key for me when I started the business from my dining room many years ago. Helps to inform the mind that you're still at work and not on a staycation.



Connect more with people you love. Because your time is flexible, you can

reach out to friends, colleagues and family (especially your mom) more. Schedule time for virtual happy hour or after dinner hang outs with friends.



To those of you with kids; I really can't imagine the added challenge of also

providing childcare. Set office hours that are realistic for your family situation – this may be 2 hours of work one day and 4 the next. The rest of us will just need to appreciate that you are doing two or more full time jobs at the same time and deal with it.



Rearrange your furniture to suit your current circumstances.

Let's face it, we're probably gonna be working from home for a bit, so having a space dedicated to work will help you focus. Add some sparks of joy here and there.



Get moving. Working from home and not being able to walk, bike or go to the gym

can contribute to negative mental energy and a few extra pounds. Take those hours you've gained from not commuting and do 30 minutes of yoga or exercise daily.



Have news black outs. Mental distancing is just as important as

physical distancing. Use the news for information, and forgo the impulse to get caught up in the pandemic panic.



Connect with your team daily via video. Social distancing can

mean that we can go for days without making that human connection with our colleagues. It doesn't have to be a long meeting. Just a 10 – 15 minute check in with colleagues can add enthusiasm and much needed connection to your work and the new norm of WFH. Share a joke, or be open with your colleagues as to what you and they are struggling with. This is the time to support each other.



Give yourself a break. Working from home is difficult. It takes discipline and practice.

Make small changes and don't beat yourself up if you get distracted. Observe what makes you distracted and make small tweaks to your routine.



Take mindful breaks. Remember that if your home office isn't set

up for 8 hour day working, your body will feel the brunt of it. Get up often, stretch. Open the window to get some fresh air. Walk around your home and do it mindfully.



Realize that we are resilient and have already made great adaptations to the

situation. We will survive this. And there is opportunity to build a more resilient connected team and business as a result of having to be creative in the unknown.



Appreciate and be grateful that you have the opportunity to

work from home. Many don't have this luxury.



Speaking of mindful; now could be a great time to develop that daily meditation

practice you've been putting off.



Appreciate the small things in life. And the fact that we really don't need

as much as we thought we did. Make the simple but meaningful things count now. And hold onto these when we return to whatever normalcy awaits us as the end of this.