

I hope you are all doing well during these tiresome times.

Janice, Andrek, and I have been calling our clients at every opportunity to touch base. While it is important to stay up to date, I have found it challenging to listen to the news constantly these days. With so much speculation, it is important to separate the noise and focus on what we can control. While so many of us are stuck at home, it is a welcome change to hear your friendly voices and share our experiences.

I found it refreshing to hear more uplifting news stories and your creative ways to pass the time indoors and thought I would share some of those ideas to inspire you. Whether you are home alone, getting to know your significant other's work personae in extremely close quarters, or juggling video conferencing while homeschooling your kids, I hope this list will make you smile or help you survive.

**Cook like crazy:** Whether you have been cooking all your life or you struggle with ramen noodles, there are always new recipes to try.

**Gardening:** Add a little colour to your neighbourhood. We can add flowers to compliment the chalk drawings of rainbows that cover the sidewalks.

**Learn something new:** Try learning Spanish on Duolingo or explore edX.org for free courses online. I have seen lots of people learning to bake bread and some have picked up knitting in their spare time.

**Workout:** My friends and I danced our way through an online Zumba class and my daughters keep yoga mats around the house for when they need a break.

**Meditate:** It is a great time for quiet reflection. Start with a guided meditation if you are not sure where to start.

**Write it out:** Our emotions can be all over the place and writing can be a great form of expression. It can help you organize your thoughts, or you can write letters to your friends and family as a way to connect. You can start a journal, practise calligraphy, or maybe you start a blog about all the books you have been reading while safe at home.

**Post-quarantine jam jar:** Every time you think of something you are excited about, write it down and put it in a jar. I miss our huge family dinners to celebrate the holidays. My daughter is dreaming about bottomless brunch. It seems every Canadian is excited to greet everyone once more with a big hug. Once our lives are back to normal and you aren't sure where to eat or where to go, you can pull inspiration right out of a jar.

**Interview your elders:** Take the time to chat with your family and record their stories. Ask them questions about their life and listen to their advice.

**Connect with your community:** While we are practicing social distancing, some of my clients shared they were volunteering at their local food bank or shopping for someone else who is at higher risk. Others had purchased gift cards from their local businesses to try and support their local economy. One client has pulled out their old sewing machine and has been working on cloth masks for others. There are online music lessons and painting classes to ensure you are socially distancing while connecting with

others that share your interests. My family has been video calling with our friends and family for dinner or a glass of wine to keep our spirits up.

**Bang your pots and pans:** This one you may have heard already on your street. Around the world, people are banging pots and pans in support of our health care workers. Referred to as “*cacerolazo*” in Spanish, this act of defiance has a rich history across the globe.

Thanks to everyone kind enough to share what they have been up to. We would love to hear your ideas to pass the time and find ways to connect with loved ones. What is your new daily routine and what new activities have you tried? We continue to work from home and we are available to discuss your financial and estate plans by phone or video chat. Our recent newsletter is enclosed and feel free to contact Janice or Andrek to schedule an appointment.

Kind regards,

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