

THE QUARANTINE



HANDBOOK

A POSITIVE, HUMOROUS AND LIFE CHANGING
APPROACH TO SELF-ISOLATION

GI GI O'BRIEN

**THE
QUARANTINE
HANDBOOK**

COVID-19

*A positive, humorous, and life
changing approach to self-isolation*

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www.thequarantinehandbook.com

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DEDICATION

*To my mother Hanna, father John, sister Asabi
and brother-in-law James;*

*Thank you for tolerating the noise I made while
singing over a
marathon of hours during this week of writing in
co-isolation. Being tone deaf I sincerely
appreciate you facilitating that 'unique' sound.*

*In a world that sometimes stifles extraordinary
ambition with an inability to encourage, you
have been there waiting at the finish line,
ensuring I would cross it.*

I could not have done this without you.

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INTRODUCTION

My father's hollow voice echoes in the background. "Can you get Dr. Batson to call me about the medication because I am in isolation?"

He nods with a smile that beautifully combines both frustration and not a worry in the world. I can't actually make out how he is feeling about everything, but find it ironic that his doctor's name is "Bat-son" considering how this whole Covid-19 situation may have originated from the consumption of bat soup. My mom quickly breaks the ice, laughing at the new joke of the day, "Wash your hands like you have been chopping chilies and are just about to go for a wank!"

To say the least, my living room right now is awkward, but it is also fun. My dad slips away from acknowledging the joke and puts on a YouTube clip from Martin Luther King. I am just impressed he knows how to get YouTube on the smart TV, but radical times like these encourage the elderly (sorry, older generation) to finally embrace the digitalization that has long dawned.

It's 19th March 2020 and the world has become drive-through churches, HIV has been cured for the

second time, but can't get a second in the spotlight and compassion is on the same trajectory as the sale of firearms; they are both on the rise. At the start of 2020 we were all ready for the year of our lives and someone somewhere in the world in the past week has used a coffee filter as toilet paper.

Historically the world has turned to humor in times of crisis, call it a coping mechanism or just call it a hall pass to be indecent as we grow accustomed to an apocalypse-adjacent life. Looting in the light of day and the baby boom forecast we anticipate, oh how the Coronials will have the wildest of names and hopefully no birth defects.

In the pages ahead I'll cover the things about hygiene most of you have not even thought of, why isolationism isn't actually as foreign as we feel it is and the quarantine routine that is as hot as a chilli wank; lit A F, slightly painful to get used to, but in the end quite the delicious daily delight. It wouldn't be a happy end without knowing we have something to look forward to so with humor I pair hope because even when life becomes a plot twist we know there is always a grand finale. Like the Phoenix we will rise from the ashes into life on the other side of Covid-19 and if you knew what was coming, you would not be so worried.

To change even the tiniest bit of humanity, is to change the world.

I hope that this book will provide relief in a time of grief, become a little paradise amongst the pandemic and in some small way I will have made your world a brighter place.

QUARANTINE HYGIENE

THIS IS NOT A DRILL

A calculated obstacle course awaits as I pull up to my house in Barbados, the sun is blazing in its glory, the temperature is a snug 28°C (82.4°F) with the perfect tropical breeze. I lower the radio to regain focus on the task at hand, in a matter of just seconds it will begin.

Trying to remember all the hidden hoops of this qualifying round, I realise that I have completely underestimated the challenge. I'm in Zone 1 (the parking area). There are so many points of potential contamination so for good measure I sanitise the steering wheel, spray the car with disinfectant closing the door with my elbow, almost forgetting the outside door handle. I remove my shoes and leave them to swim in a shallow filled basin of disinfectant, Zone 2 (the garage) will bear witness to clothes stripping and attempts to channel my inner Kobe, she shoots..... she scores. The clothes are beautifully dunked into the contamination bin (our newly used word for laundry basket) with commendable technique.

Wearing my nudity I realise I forgot critical steps, this game is less about speed and more about meticulous attention to detail. Acquisition of points are possible in the hidden hundred odd places where Covid-19 sticks to the surface, yes including your shoes for up to five days. Not a minute too soon I am greeted by my hypercondriac brother-in-law, James.

His diligence is intimidating and I just want to get out of level 2, skip forward and have my lunch already. The clock strikes a few minutes past 4:00pm. He is the self-quarantine referee of sorts and to my dismay he adjusts his death stare, now holding focus on my grocery bag. I return the look with hangry eyes.

“Oh my God, does this mean I have to clean all the grocery items?” I ask.

“I'll get a bucket with disinfectant,” he responds with satisfaction.

The Last Shop in and of itself was an overt planned operation and this was the finale, I guess they save the best for last. One deep exhale, and I accept that namaste is quickly becoming nama-stay-home.

I lay the items out on the ground because what the hell, I am about to wash the packages themselves so

it won't matter if they are on the once thought-to-be filthy floor.

Still in just my underwear, my half-naked body is a testament to my gross miscalculation of this zone when I speedily unclothed myself.

***I'll tell you this Pro Tip for free; wear things that don't flow around and can touch nearby surfaces.*

Exhilarated that I can move ahead, I am now in Zone 3 (the guest bathroom). All that's left to do is to have a piping hot shower, cream my skin with bleach, eat some garlic, gargle it down with Vodka and stay in the sun and I'll be good right? Kidding, none of those myths have merit. Zone 3 is just where we can shower and ironically change clothes, a minor detail that I had not been properly informed about. I made it this far, so to finish with outstanding excellence I do something I have never done before in my life, I sanitize my hands *after* I get out of the shower and rejoin my co-isos.

“Did you touch the outside of the shoe basin?”, James asks.

A potentially catastrophic misstep which I could not remember making. My smooth rebuttal, "Overruled: I sanitized my hands when I got out of the car before Zone 2."

Missteps were welcomed insights into how we could improve this process and almost immediately gloves were placed in various spots through the Zones.

Finally.

I enter my house. Everything looks different. Noticing things we had never before considered. My stomach is full with disappointment of not having been fed for so long. I know I wiped down the bag that my take away food came in, but as I open it with my so fresh and so clean hands, I realise that the containers could have been touched by someone with Corona. Paranoid much?

I slide my truffle fries onto a plate and with caution discard the take-away container, relieved that this whole experience is now over. I wash my hands, again.

Like a low quality infomercial that only ever gets screen time between midnight and three a.m. But wait, you guessed it, there's more!

I look to the bottom of the plastic bag only to see the ketchup and mayonnaise packets.

If I was going to take this 100% seriously, I guess this is what it comes down to. I turn the tap on and have my “she’s lost her marbles moment” as my sister Asabi and James watch me apply dishwashing soap onto the small packages of mayonnaise, oddly with immense gratitude for the durability of fast food condiment packaging.

I mean, I had not lost the plot, I didn't know who touched those items, and after coming this far, was I going to risk it? This could be the surface that spread this savagely sneaky thing we call Coronavirus. This is the trade off for galavanting in the ‘outside world’, but we needed to do that one last shop.

With the weight of all this new insight I sink into the sofa, but I am also light in my heart knowing I was a superhero today. I did everything in my power to protect the promised land that is our uninfected home. I did my part to flatten the curve and never, ever, have I been so content with not leaving the house again in the foreseeable future.

Of course by now my hunger had subsided, my food is cold, and I realise that things that seem so

tempting actually lose their appeal with delayed gratification.

These luxuries we grew accustomed to, when placed on the other side of this obstacle course became undesirable. The quickest way to lose interest in something was just to make it inconvenient to obtain. Oh how lazy we have become, or how little those things must have actually really mattered. Immediate pleasure has seduced us into reliance on things we actually have little desire for when placed in a different context, one where it takes effort instead of ease.

Nonetheless we had nailed the method and the madness, but when it is a life or death situation you are not really left with any other choice. My father's post-transplant medication suppresses his immune system so that his body won't reject the new kidney. With an immune system that weak, catching this virus is legitimately fatal.

That's a fact that every other person with a pre-existing medical condition can resonate with. It is a time to look out for those asthmatics, diabetics, people with heart disease and anyone who has undergone chemotherapy. It's time to put all things

aside and collectively do what is desperately in demand.

Take no prisoners.

If you are thinking I am being excessive, then consider this; the corona virus can survive outside the human body on different surfaces for days and in one infographic I was shocked to see that 1-5 micrometer droplets could stay on plastic for nine days and be airborne for up to three hours. Guess this is a good time to let you know airborne means airborne even in *still* air. The safe bet is that it will sustain itself on a surface from 24-72 hours. While we play survival of the fittest, it is playing spread the widest. Its higher substitution rate means that it is almost instantaneously opportunistic in even minimal contact situations.

I'm going to be straight up, this book is not a recount of the tragic details that instil fear, I myself opted out when I read that a genetic analysis shows the evolution of Covid-19 into S and L types with the newest mutation being more aggressive with higher transmission rates.

It's a no for me. It's a hard, hard pass.

My attention investment is now reserved for things I can actually control, so let's talk about health and well-being.

IMMUNITY

I've been in isolation for a decent stint already, long before Barbados started to report cases. My sister Asabi saw the wrath of what was coming before Italy even had their outbreak, and like I said, James is a hypochondriac. Family bonding had us peeling, boiling, blanching and freezing what felt like 100+ kilos of vegetables. We stocked up on the powdered green superfood mixes for almond milk smoothies, supplements, and appealing items that had a decent shelf life but did not only classify as 'junk food'.

Rooms have been tidied, all surfaces disinfected, we realised we had very limited snacks, discarded and replaced the expired pharmaceuticals and all in all, proactively got ready for armageddon. Online banking and bills payments are in full effect, never signed up for the layoff law 101 course I attended, but there was nothing casual about sitting in on meetings these days. The expansion of conscious considerations continues and we keep ticking off the to-do list. The house now has a back up medical kit, bath soaps, laundry detergent, dog food, maintenance supplies and love, as much love as there is toilet paper in a hoarders house.

I quickly realise that I need to focus on what I actually can control, which includes how I strengthen my immune system. The daily regime I am following includes;

MORNING ELIXIR

**** *Drink on an empty stomach***

1 cup of warm water

2 tablespoons Apple Cider Vinegar (*preferably organic, raw, unfiltered and unpasteurized*)

1 dash of cayenne pepper

½ lemon (optional to get bottled lemon juice to last the lock down)

Associated benefits include;

- Lower gut inflammation (the gut controls 70% of immune system)
- Alkalising blood cleanser
- Metabolism enhancer
- Weight management supporter
- Reducer of sugar cravings, blood pressure and cholesterol
- Skin detoxifier in some cases but not particularly in mine

SOUL SESSIONS WITH THE SUN

I still think time management is a good practice despite the abundance we now find ourselves with, so I've chosen to conduct my 10 minute meditations with a tanning session followed by a snooze in the sun as required. I will cover the meditation benefits in the section 'Quarantine Routine' but as for the sun, some of the Vitamin D benefits include;

- Facilitating the normal functions of the immune systems and improving resistance against certain diseases
- Regulating calcium which enables blood to clot, muscles contractions, and our hearts to beat. (*Bonus tip, calcium + Vitamin D could be related to weight loss due to appetite-suppression.*¹)
- Maintaining phosphorus levels in the blood which helps protein growth, maintenance, and the repair of cells and tissues, has a vital

¹ **Cambridge University, British Journal of Nutrition** Calcium plus vitamin D supplementation and fat mass loss in female very low-calcium consumers: potential link with a calcium-specific appetite control

[Geneviève C. Major](#) ^(a1), [Francine P. Alarie](#) ^(a1), [Jean Doré](#) ^(a1) and [Angelo Tremblay](#) ^(a1)

role in structuring nucleic acids and cell membranes and is involved in the body's energy production and use of carbohydrates and fats

- Mood maintenance and lowering symptoms of depression

People with a D-ficiency have also been found to get sick more often and suffer from fatigue so it's worth it to dose it, get in the sun!

ME, MY IMMUNITY AND I

A few other things you can do to up the anti include having garlic, broccoli, spinach and high doses of Vitamin C, B complex and Zinc. A decent multivitamin can easily be stocked up and stored with the uncertain length of the isolation ahead. It's worth mentioning that boosting yourself with the right foods is amazing, but, there is the harder part. Let the urgency of this potentially fatal situation give you the motivational kick to cut back on things you should not be consuming which includes sugar and meats that cause inflammatory issues with the gut that in turn weakens the immune system. While talking about where we should reduce our consumption, it goes without saying that smoking is a buzzkill. Say no to sparking up especially if you have those pre-existing medical conditions.

On the flip side you will be happy to hear that too much exercise actually isn't always good for the body, do a moderate workout, basic movement and do it daily. Focus on consistency rather than the extent of brutality in the physical activity you undertake.

The best I save for last, indulge in the legitimately rejuvenating act of sleeping, rest, and nourishing naps. Boris my dog naps several times a day, be like

Boris. Allow yourself to sleep as much as you need because you often get tired when your body is putting up a fight. If you are having trouble test out natural sedatives like Melatonin, Valerian Root, Passion Flower or even a YouTube sleep hypnosis soundtrack.

THE POWER OF THE PLACEBO

Have you heard of the hoax where a placebo, an inert treatment or substance like a sugar pill that has *no known effects*, miraculously delivers results that mirror actual medicine? So have I and after my own little mythbuster research with a sample size of one (yours truly), I am a firm believer in the placebo effect. For decades people have seen results during clinical trials only to be explained by the power of the mind-body connection and patients mere expectation of being healed.²

Psychoneuroimmunology explores the effect of the mind on health and resistance to disease. Your belief systems about what's happening with our world, your beliefs and expectations about the contagion of the virus and if you will contract it will become your reality.

The pessimists have a lot to say and are finding that life is unfolding to their predictions, of equal measure the optimists are shedding light on the livid and discovering the brightness.

² **The placebo effect: Amazing and real** POSTED NOVEMBER 02, 2015, 8:00 AM

If you are hopeful or hateful, you will continue to find what meets those expectations.

*If immunity cannot safeguard you from infection
may the placebo effect heal you from lasting harm.*

HOPE FOR THE BEST, PREPARE FOR THE WORST

Damn Becky, what did you know that we didn't? I recall a meme I saw that read "Some people are taking this panic buying to the next level." The accompanying image showed a platform trolley with an array of essential bulk items and a coffin.

We have just confirmed five cases of Covid-19 and for us in Barbados it is still early days. I am not qualified to give any medical advice but truth be told, I am not sure even the physicians knew how to advise the first cases, far less accurately predict the long term implications of having had the virus, it being dormant in the system, probability of recurrence and the diversity of surprises that this might have up its sleeve.

The time for waiting on scientific validation is not a turnaround that can be facilitated. It is the German autobahn of viruses, no speed limit, accelerated and bloody efficient in its infectious attributes. We have to learn as we go. Much like death and taxes it will likely be inevitable and unpleasant, but 80% of the world exposed will contract Covid-19 and they will get over it. I have found it quite interesting that few news sources are talking about actually fighting and recovering from the virus.

It targets the respiratory tract and we know that we do not want to spread it, so we await any sign of the concerning symptoms which include some or all of the the following; chills, fever, cough, shortness of breath, body aches diarrhea, vomiting and potentially pneumonia depending on the severity of the infection. Hell, sometimes the only symptoms nurses could identify was red eyes.

My question is, what do we actually do when we get it?

Some people are infected but are asymptomatic and don't show symptoms. Others are mildly ill for a few days and recover, then there are those that rapidly develop more severe symptoms. Covid-19 is not a one-size fits all outfit. Use of painkillers classified as nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, containing ingredients like ibuprofen, have been mentioned to make the virus worse, though this has not been confirmed. Ibuprofen traditionally was a medicine to reduce inflammation in the body that may be needed to fight an infection so it makes sense. I would look into Tylenol as it reduces fever and body aches but does not relieve inflammation, but do your homework and make that decision yourself.

With that sorted, I'm about as prepared as I can be right now so let's get familiar with the concept of isolationism and what to do so unlike Becky, you hopefully won't need a coffin.

THE IRONY OF ISOLATIONISM

Sunday 22nd March 2020

A glass of red wine in self-quarantine tastes so much better, I guess it's because I know it's in limited supply. I am saddened yet intrigued by the realisation that there is a fly drowning in my Malbec. My ordinary course of action might be to toss the wine, but these are desperate times of rationing so I opt for a more heroic approach. I grab a teaspoon and in just a few attempts rescue the little guy who just cannot keep his balance on the spoon, falling into the sink.

I try to get him to take hold again so that I can place him in the garden, but to my almost jealous onlooking, he appears to be drunk. My mom's phone blasts the lyrics for 'We Are The World' providing the perfect score to the scene that is unfolding. This is one of the most entertaining things that has happened in self-isolation in the past week and is turning into quite the fiasco.

It's like the universe is playing a game with me, a twisted totally unimpressive game of, how can you keep yourself fascinated. Plot twist, I really am having a ball.

Yes, I got him!

He is on the spoon and ready to be set free as I admire the glisten of shiny black and metallic green that is his body. I am pretty sure I may have broken one of his legs, lucky he has another five. As the Aussies would say "she'll be right!" My pause before release was a second too long for dramatic effect.

"Goodbye Henry", I whisper.

"Enjoy the ride and remember that getting drunk... well... it's just like borrowing happiness from tomorrow. Until next time."

The timing of return to my computer was just ideal, the first thing on my Facebook feed was how to determine your Quarantine nickname, the combination of how you are feeling right now + the last thing that you ate out of the cupboard.

Call me Heroic Hazelnut, thanks!

Isolationism, traditionally is know (by *dictionary.com*) as the policy or doctrine of isolating one's country from the affairs of other nations by declining to enter into alliances, foreign economic commitments, international agreements, etc., seeking to devote the entire efforts of one's country to its own advancement and remain at peace by avoiding foreign entanglements.

Isolation is simply devotion to one's own advancement and remaining at peace.

Time to put the "I" in isolation. Side benefits include but not limited to;

- less worry
- positivity
- pride in values
- more reliable motivation

- enhanced self-love
- confidence
- empowerment
- new perspectives
- skills development driven by inspiration
- focus and flow
- feelings more attractive
- healthier choices with greater ease
- deeper more meaningful relationships
- feeling abundant
- improved performance
- a prosperous worldview

The best offence is a good defence so a few things we need to look at are stress triggers, meeting your needs and the right way to go bat shit crazy.

STRESS SHIFTING

I can hear the neighbour screaming, “What the F\$#K are you doing?!”

Not long after a door slams and the painful echo rides the wind over to my balcony some 150 feet away.

Breathe Gi, just breath.

My skin is crawling with disapproval because I’ve been on this balcony for several days noticing the children playing in the pool so I know very well they have not been spared from this expression of anger, even worse I have a feeling it could be directed at them as I have only ever seen a man and two small girls around 5-years-old.

These times are testing, but we cannot succumb to the instinct to react in fiercely reptilian ways, only realising the damage that’s getting done after silence replaces the space where laughter used to be. It’s just not worth it.

Space violation is the new normal, annoying nuances are going to take residence and the ways in which we will begin to agitate one another are going to amplify the longer our self-isolation lasts.

Hi elephant, meet room, you guys will be getting well acquainted.

I have chosen to become more emotionally aware, accepting, tolerant, lighthearted in speaking my truth because without it how can we keep the solitude in what has become our sanctuary? Know what matters, speak with love when you need your space, and facilitate the comfort for anyone around you to do the same. Forget the nit-picking, we are in a pandemic, let the small stuff slide. If you are having trouble letting things go just remember that holding onto anger is like drinking poison and expecting the other person to die.

Whenever I caress my nerves, or play hopscotch with my buttons, I like to sub in for a game of "Trading Places", or "Would I Rather?", but give it whatever name you want to. The game goes like this, you take stress, fear, worry, anxiety, the award elephants in the room, the tongues being bitten and then you think of all the people whose shoes you don't have to fill by trading places with them. Ask yourself, 'Would I rather be the person deciding who gets to live or die in the face of a catastrophic shortage in ventilators?'

Would I rather be nine months pregnant without any partner or family able to support me in the delivery room when I give birth to my child?

Would I rather be the children being trafficked in the world when the flagship of conspiracy theories still gets more attention for celebrity attachment than action to mitigate these crimes, bet trading places with them gives you a bit of perspective. Sure Covid-19 has consumed us, but there are so many ways we have failed in how our world was being run.

Would I rather be the big black guy with the big black “member” who has become famous for all the wrong reasons? That guy is someone, and I know everyone doesn’t mind 15 minutes of fame but sweet jesus, I would not want to trade places with that guy. It’s a hard pass for me (*excuse the pun*).

Should I trade places with one of the husbands who successfully escaped housework using the much reliable response, “I’ll do it when I have time.” Well Bill, welcome to time and no, no I do not want to sub in on this particular occasion.

Suddenly you are metaphorically trading places with the contestants across the world in several countries who are participating in the Big Brother

reality tv-series. A bunch of strangers live in a house with absolutely zero contact to the outside world or any digital media.

Unlike the rest of the global population, these people had to hear in an unimaginable live television update about the current state of apocalypse affairs and the Covid-19 pandemic. The devastation we have been drip fed over a number of months has allowed us a psychological processing time frame that they got deprived of.

*One month in isolation is better than
one year in hell.*

By now most of us are part of the #stayhome movement so while we are in here let's make inspiration infectious and shift the stress. I would like to thereby reframe CORONA to remind us of our;

Creativity

Optimism

Resolution

Opportunity

Nourishment

Action

Remember, the meaning we give things is still within our control.

THE RIGHT KIND OF BAT SHIT CRAZY

And here goes Papa John again, “You bringing in de mail from de mailbox just so like that?!”

I exclaim a huge dramatic “Nooooo, don’t rest it on the dining table!” My mother stands like a deer in the spotlights. It was as if she was going to cut the red wire when the blue wire was the one that would keep the bomb from exploding. I could see the adorable nature of her childlike qualities sneaking through, the way a young child ceases to stillness when their full name is shouted by their parents. Our reactions were in proportion to this pandemic and it was quite theatrical that an envelope with paper in it could evoke that level of emotion. We had gone bat shit crazy, certifiably nuts and this was just the beginning.

In a scenario where one is stripped from their access to sex, drugs, rock & roll, self-esteem enhancers, cosmetics, cheat days and much anticipated competitive sports events, my inner Nostradamus is predicting all kinds of mayhem on the horizon. People left to be in the company of themselves with restricted means of escapism, what could possibly go wrong?

Not going to lie, I am looking forward to the highlight reel of a new humanity where memes are a tracking measure of psychological stability.

All jokes aside though, there is a constructive kind of bat shit crazy, it's called being prepared. Assess your life and figure out where you may experience withdrawals. The coming months will see postponements of elective surgeries, ego starvation, identity crises and the return to natural beauty. An all powerful reckoning of self-love so to speak. Personality and values step in the place where materialism once firmly stood as a reflection of self-worth. Means of pleasure will be at one's own hands as a significant percentage of the population who survived unprotected sex with strangers adopt masturbation so they dont die from unprotected hand shakes.

*Better to be safe than sinful,
but if you can be safe and sinful
it's better to be that.*

Don't be the statistic adding to the stigma, let's talk about sex and orgasms. Open dialogue around sex is positive for your relationship with yourself, your partner and society at large. It helps us to develop healthy attitudes and eradicate shame. Whether you are single, taken, engaged or married I am pretty sure we are in agreement; orgasms are welcomed in self-isolation. Use this time to build your knowledge on one of life's greatest pleasures, it is after all right there next to air, food, water and health in our basic physiological needs. Take advantage of the free porn for the pain of this pandemic, or just upping the curiosity on how to pleasure your partner, get curious and stay playful. And yes, there are health benefits if you need some added encouragement;

- Improves immune functioning by increasing cortisol levels
- Releases endorphins (*the happy hormone*) in the bloodstream
- Endorphins are influential in reducing depression
- Lowers risk of type-2 diabetes
- Reduces insomnia through hormonal and tension release

- Reduces risk of prostate cancer
- Cures Covid-19 (*just kidding, but the placebo is a powerful thing so if you believe it maybe just maybe it's the miracle medicine we've been waiting for*)

We must not just survive however, we must thrive.

OUR EVOLUTION

Make no mistake, we are fighting for life. Hospitals are over capacity as front line soldiers suited in insufficient armour go to war to fight an invisible enemy. Reactive coalitions, data distortion and the feeble functionality of a collapsing global ecosystem are all the new normal. Gone are the days when needs were met in abundance and the status quo was deciphered by the code of profit. The Covid-19 memorandum is a mosaic of Maslow's Hierarchy. Our most primal physiological needs for health and safety as a collective species are under attack. Our survival instinct for life sustenance is to defend those needs above all else. We can after all restore an economy, make money back, host new elections and the likes, but to my knowledge we cannot resurrect the dead.

Economical and political concerns should be navigated based on the fulfilment of such humanitarianism, however we know that this is not always the case. I allow myself for a brief moment to sit here and wonder about the tipping point, when those things will be one in the same. How extreme will the lock down get? The last drops of water will dry, we will watch pantries empty,

self-quarantine food shortages will rise and the economic relevance regarding provisions for those physiological needs will become deafening.

Distribution and consumption of certain luxuries will be jolting in their reform and all that is left to do is adapt. Or we can just go to the grocery store and risk being contaminated and we already know how I feel about that.

We need to let go of the illusion of control as we spiral into a new status quo. We were not in balance; with our economy, with our habits and mostly, with ourselves. Automation is the fabric of our evolution, life itself evolves in an ecosystem that grows and flourishes in perfect proportions most of the time all on its own. You do not instruct your body what to do during pregnancy much like fallen fruit deteriorates to seeds from which new life stems. A lot of surrender can be learned from the reproductive ecology of plants and these days I am all about finding the inspiration where I can get it.

The seeds of creation are planted in the garden of energy as thoughts and beliefs, that which you emotionally fertilise will grow.

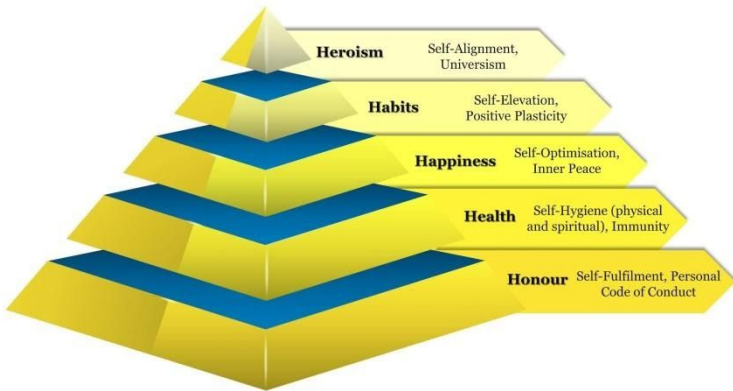
You are all the forces of life confined in a physical being, an embodiment that serves to separate energy into the internal and external worlds that become your existence. Life then is nothing but a series of transformations that affirm you are in balance, upheld by the ability of your outer world to change and mirror what you have mastered within.

Our needs as a species are relatively fixed, but our decisions are our choice. In the spirit of reform, it's time to take a look at how you are defining your individual needs in isolation and how you want to evolve in the face of the current situation.

My closet-nerd version of arts and crafts is creating psychological and philosophical concepts that help me navigate life. I find this oddly soothing. O'Brien's 5H Hierarchy of Self-Evolution is an approach to self-isolation and becoming the person you want to be when you come out of it, it's what I have been

using to take control of my life in these terrible times.

O'Brien's 5H Hierarchy for Self-Evolution



I will now briefly walk you through O'Brien's 5H Hierarchy for Self-Evolution and in the next section reveal the game changing Quarantine Routine.

HONOUR: SELF-FULFILMENT AND PERSONAL CODE OF CONDUCT

"He who has a good enough 'why' can deal with any 'how.'" — Nietzsche

Define what self-fulfilment means to you and establish your own honorable code of conduct to which you are accountable. No one is responsible for outlining the hopes and ambitions that stem from your deepest most authentic truth. You are here for a reason, don't you want to figure out your why?

Start to notice what beliefs you have adopted, your passions, your values, decide who you want to be in this world no matter how old you are because that's the competitive advantage you will have when we start to rebuild it. Also, it is never too late to realise what to do with your natural talent, if Papa John can get with the digital trends, you can do anything you put your mind to.

HEALTH: SELF-HYGIENE (PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL), IMMUNITY

“Watch your thoughts, they become your words. Watch your words, they become your actions. Watch your actions, they become your habits. Watch your habits, they become your character. Watch your character, it becomes your destiny.” — Lao Tzu

Spiritual hygiene is just as critical as physical hygiene. With the immense turmoil happening at shocking rates of change, the mind can go bonkers. Do not get stuck in the wrong rabbit hole. Clean your thoughts because a messy life is just a mirror of a dirty mind.

Spirituality will help you to focus on energy and intangibles rather than physical and material. Our soul essence is all connected and rooted in one Source; unconditional love. I could not think of a more critical time to use this Source as we shift toward a healthier human consciousness. To love without condition is to eradicate hate, remove judgement, it is turning to optimism and an ability to manifest miraculous outcomes. It relies on no circumstance for its ability to thrive, it is the ultimate means of taking control. What is done with

unconditional love is a mecca of joy as you progress towards the attainment of your self-fulfilment.

Utilise your mental immunity by developing the strength to protect the life you envision for yourself. Your mind, the psychological attitude you practice has implications for your body and the world you are creating is a reflection of that mind-body relationship. Heal your body, but heal your life at large while you are at it. If the placebo has proven anything, it is testament to the incredible power of belief systems. You are capable of the extraordinary if you believe it to be so.

Think, believe, say and do what supports your dreams.

HAPPINESS: SELF-OPTIMISATION, INNER PEACE

“Peace is a daily, a weekly, a monthly process, gradually changing opinions, slowly eroding old barriers, quietly building new structures.” — John F. Kennedy

There are two mutually exclusive modes of living, the energizing and the depleting, amplify the former and minimize the latter. I live life according to a Theory of Opposites; the inability to experience two opposite thoughts or emotions simultaneously. If I cannot understand what has me stressed then I place my attention on what I know helps me to relax. If I am struggling to overcome procrastination, I indulge in what gets me motivated. Self-optimization is learning about the things that fuel you, the things that help you get unstuck and the things that bring you back home to unconditional love and all powerful Source.

Two practices that have significantly optimized my life are;

- 1) Developing an autopilot appreciation mode, to perceive all things in terms of what I can appreciate about them.
- 2) Knowing how to forgive others, and myself.

Focusing on these emotional antidotes have been an unfailing formula for inner peace.

HABITS: SELF-ELEVATION, POSITIVE PLASTICITY

"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence then, is not an act, but a habit." — Aristotle

It is important that you address Happiness before Habits, because that which is rooted in joy is more sustainable.

The more consistently you practice self-optimization, the more you will elevate in inspiration, be driven to take inspired action and start to develop positive plasticity. Positive plasticity is the brain's ability to become more organized and efficient through repetition. The consistency of small habits, conditioned over time, becomes the enjoyable and effortless action that delivers extraordinary results in your life. Repeat small tasks daily and what was initially challenging will become easy. Eventually you will elevate in ability and that will be your new level of existence.

Your desire for self-fulfilment supported by a strong code of conduct viewed from the perspective of love and appreciation will create an approach to habits that's actually exciting to experience, because you can feel your sense of honor in achievement. I am not here to be better than

anyone, I am here to do my best and nothing feels better than outperforming myself.

HARMONY: SELF-ALIGNMENT, UNIVERISM

“He who lives in harmony with himself, lives in harmony with the universe.”

— *Marcus Aurelius*

Univerism is accomplishing the epitome of self-evolvment. It's Tuesday 24th March 2020 and I have already reached the tip of the isolation iceberg and embraced a whole new worldview. It's the most energizing feeling when you feel self-alignment, you are empowered in a way that makes you feel unstoppable.

The potential you house is burning inside of you from the fuel of your soul, mind and body existing in harmony. All kinds of coincidences prevail, your **Creativity** is unending and you just feel **Optimistic** about everything, the **Resolutions** you had for self-enhancement are now new habits and nothing in your way. **Opportunities** start circulating because you are able to **Nourish** the life force energy that sustains your ability to take necessary **Action**.

What a transformational blessing this CORONA self-isolation experience is. Yes, that is exactly the way I have experienced it and I wholeheartedly

believe that you can tap into this too following the Quarantine Routine we will discuss next.

THE UNIVERSE

Before we jump into the life changing approach for time on the inside, I want to share a tiny bit of info I think will give you a head start. Through a complex set of years attempting to understand the simplicity of the universe and manifesting, I can summarize it like this.

The Law of Attraction has to have a point of attraction to work, and that point of attraction is your state of emotion.

Emotions are simply *'energy in motion'* and they produce a vibrational frequency to which the universe responds. When you are vibrating on a high frequency, for example at 800Hz (gratitude), you are on one of the highest and most powerful wavelengths of attracting your desires. The moment you slip out of that into anger, guilt, regret or shame, you are on a wavelength that is attracting those things too. The universe will match and deliver all things in response to the emotions you are choosing to feel and amplify with continuous thought. Remember the seeds of creation are planted in the garden of energy as thoughts and

beliefs, that which you emotionally fertilise will grow.

My manifestations are most awe evoking when I am extremely specific about my intentions and apply positive emotions that *assume the feeling of the desire accomplished*. Every day I think of how I would feel when I finish writing this book, what it would be like to make it to the end of one treacherously delirious albeit entertaining and fulfilling week. I know time is of the essence and feel a sense of urgency to get it out into the world to help people sooner rather than later. I put all my attention on showing up with the feeling of how amazing it will be when it's published. My intention is simply to complete it, and let the universe do the rest. Every time I feel exhausted, I tap into the joy of reaching that milestone.

*Manifestation is not an exercise you practice,
it is a lifestyle of vibrational sustenance to remain in
alignment with the frequency of your dreams.*

I used to laugh and say, “the universe is my religion.” Now I realize how little of a joke it is because it is what transformed my life.. I accidentally became spiritual just by placing more focus on meaning, by getting addicted to feeling “in flow”. I’ve learned first hand the power that comes from synchronicity; when things fall into place and the magnitude of their relevance is just beyond what you could have ever imagined.

To clarify, here’s how I differentiate between the Self, the dope experience of self discovery, Source and Self-Alignment;

The Self

Intuition

Inspiration

Imagination

Excitement

Creativity

Truth

Love

Appreciation

Wholeness

Calm

Discovery

Present in the moment

Mindfulness

Meaning

Intention

Purpose

Connectivity

Source

Infinite Intelligence

Limitless possibility

Divine

Unity

Oneness

Acceptance

Non-judgment

Gratitude

Consciousness

Understanding

Clarity

A Self-Aligned Life

Surrender

Detachment

Flow

Synchronicity

Energized

Certainty

Grace

Trust

Faith

Ease

Freedom

I like to think of myself as more of a spiritual guinea pig than a spiritual guru. What I have learned about and been wowed by has been a direct result of making myself available to testing the universe. The journey of discovering our interconnectivity between the Self and Source is to find meaning and purpose.

The universe is not a mystery to be solved;

it is a mystery to become.

The essence of Enlightenment

The word enlightenment seems so unattainable, reserved for the highly spiritual and selfless; like Buddha. I explore how a person like me could get more in tune with its essence and to my delight, the reviews are in and it is totally something we can tap into. Here is a new take on it that will knock your socks off.

enlightenment

noun

the action of enlightening or the state of being enlightened.

synonyms: understanding, insight, education, learning, knowledge, awareness, information, erudition, wisdom, instruction, teaching; More

antonyms: ignorance, benightedness

the action or state of attaining or having attained spiritual knowledge or insight, in particular (in Buddhism) that awareness which frees a person from the cycle of rebirth.

Enlightenment (cont.)

noun

a European intellectual movement of the late 17th and 18th centuries **emphasizing reason and individualism rather than tradition**. It was heavily influenced by 17th-century philosophers such as Descartes, Locke, and Newton, and its prominent exponents include Kant, Goethe, Voltaire, Rousseau, and Adam Smith.

Don't you just love it when you look a word up and it gives you pretty much the same word to explain it? Well, you win some and you win some. I do resonate with the fact that its historical component hinged on emphasizing reason and individualism rather than tradition. As it turns out there is much more to explore in this feisty little era of Enlightenment that swept the 18th century away.

Perhaps it is the rebellion against tradition that I am attracted to, perhaps it's because I hold the belief that all change starts with understanding how to motivate an individual before you motivate a group of employees, political party, a significant other, an audience, a congregation or even a

country. It starts with an individual, and it is that deep understanding of Self that comes first.

The topicality of this era is defined by terms like “radical reorientation” and “questioned traditional authority”, and it is actually inspiring me. At the front and center of 18th Century Enlightenment was The Age of Reason, confronting ideals and courage toward change. What a time to be alive.

The period of Romanticism placed its emphasis on emotion with focus on “heroic” individualists and artists; icons whose work served to improve the quality of society by promoting individual creativity, imagination, unconstrained vision and freedom in creative expression. I entertain the idea that there could be a crucial authority that stood in opposition to traditional ways and existing structure.

Enter sublimity; the quality of greatness beyond all possibility of calculation, measurement or limitation. I mean this is my bread and butter, the limitless potential of the human being. Suddenly the extravagant imagination of my own life goals just seems understood, accepted, and even normal. I feel like we are in the midst of being thrown a

wildcard and for a time, anything is going to be possible.

Something strange happens as I venture down the rabbit hole and disappear for a number of hours. What surged through me in knowledge didn't come from me, it came from the universe through me onto my keyboard. It was a non-stop occurrence of divine intelligence just pouring out of my soul.

I crash into a 4 hour nap, a testament to the amount of energy and insight my body had channeled. Have you ever had an instant where your ability to express something just could not keep up with the lightening speed at which your understanding of something had transpired? It's like the solution to a problem is just downloaded, full form, straight into your mind and then you have to construct the pieces to communicate that to the outside world. I have no other word for it than to say I had been channeled. I received what felt like a trail of information that started in the 18th century right until the very moment sitting on my balcony writing this. Enlightenment is exhausting and I legit feel like I am having a spiritual come down.

So, to brain dump this as short and simply as I can, let's talk about aesthetic philosophy.

A majority of our lowest vibrational emotions, the roots of our problems tend to be associated with loss. If we however detach, as in release ourselves from the attachment from which suffering stems, that is basically enlightenment. In order to experience detachment, you could take on the role of an unbiased observer. This was essentially the core of aesthetics, the act of appreciating the beauty of art. Why not apply that to life itself? If life is a work of art, we could objectify it, we could create enough distance to find knowledge from the beautiful and ugly, the good and bad, the constructive and destructive, the pleasure and the pain. We would appreciate the art form for what it is, and learn from it as a means of knowing more about ourselves, our life, our relationships, career, environment and uproot our purpose in this pandemic.

Appreciation of our life aesthetically, is the ultimate antidote to allow pain, but not sustain suffering. This is a way to accept what is as it is and release any burden of it. Aesthetics in itself is an act of appreciation, and appreciation on the scale of emotions is one of the highest vibrational frequencies one can experience, even higher than enlightenment, soaring right up there with empowerment and gratitude. Could we simply

access our greatest vibrational power by learning to heighten our awareness of and appreciation for ALL that brushes a stroke on our life canvas. I am beginning to think life is less about proving who we are and just being, and what a compatible place self-isolation is to do just that. Without further ado, here's how I'm slaying it in Iso.

THE QUARANTINE ROUTINE

Wednesday 24th March 2020

3:11 am

The pains in my left calf are enough to wake me, my body aches. If these are the first symptoms of Covid-19, I won't wish it on anyone. I have a good pain threshold but these aches keep me quenched in unrelenting discomfort. With automation I revert to the matter of mindset, knowing what I know about psychoneuroimmunology I put on a guided sound healing meditation and turn to the power of thought energy, tuning in to the feeling of relief and even pleasure.

5:37 am

I can feel my teeth loosening. How am I able to wiggle my teeth back and forth? What's happening! One falls out, and just minutes later another six have joined it. All of a sudden a lion walks straight up to the end of my bed and roars "stay home".

Dreams are not what they used to be. I have no intention of going back to sleep after that experience. My mother, Hanna the humorous, has been telling me since I was a young girl that teeth falling out in your dreams is an omen.

For her the prophetic significance was the death of a loved one. I need to get out my head and out of this room into the fresh air. I am just happy that I have all my teeth, and my aches have subsided.

6:04am

My blood is boiling, and that actually seems an inadequate description of how I am feeling in this very moment. I feel compelled to write the Pulitzer Prize winning journalist Michael Hiltzik, a business columnist for the LA times

Hi Michael,

My name is Gi Gi and I was deeply thankful to be reminded of the importance of good journalism, something we might expect by default.

I just read your LA Times Column, *'Trump, Musk hyped a possible coronavirus treatment. Now a man has died'*. I sat with simultaneous outrage, sadness and relief because I just watched the negligent FOX news briefing from Gregory Rigano, realised it was tragically inaccurate and found relief that there was a source people could rely on that verified the facts (your article).

I really am grateful for your work.

Warmest Regards,

Gi Gi

I had been watching a friend's Instagram story, jotting notes frantically with more optimism than usual about how a combination of two generic drugs can be used to 100% cure, yes cure, Covid-19 in just six days. As you may have picked up on in my email to Michael, that was far from the case and someone using this suggested cure has died. This was a man who could have likely recovered from the virus like the majority do. If I learned anything during my Post-Grad at the London School of Journalism, I learned to verify the facts, so please do

the same. I was outraged at the news for endorsing this 'cure', what the F is the world coming to.

This morning is off to a peculiar start. A mosquito demonstrates admiral aggression in its repeated attempts to land on my face, getting close enough on several occasions to activate my childhood pet peeve of their high pitch sound. I already know that the coronavirus cannot be spread via a mosquito, but do I really need to worry about Dengue Fever now too. I've had it once and it's said to be fatal the second time you get it. So, I grab the repellent and start my spray down thinking that they must be on some kind of bender. Never in all my years have I seen mosquitos in the morning and today they have an uncanny sense of confidence.

My sister walks in biting her lower lip. Slow nodding her head with raised eyebrows, a tell tale that she is about to share news, and not the good kind.

"So did you hear about this new virus in China?", Asabi can't even bring herself to ask in her normal voice. She sounds like her spirit is lifting the load of 10,000 tons. The last few days we have been laying off staff and shutting down the family hotel and

restaurant because tourism is indefinitely non-existent.

By the time she sits down I've been online searching for this new virus. Skimming through headlines reporting the man who died from what they call 'Hantavirus'. Finally a single ray of sunshine beams through, a positive article that I start reading out loud to my sister and James who has also joined us.

Hantavirus is real, but it is also not new. It spreads through rodents and is common in rats, with a handful of rare cases being reported as having been spread from human to human. To get it a person would have had to have been in close contact with rodent urine, droppings or saliva and listen carefully in case you are distracted, that includes transmission by breathing in contaminated air. Symptoms throughout infection can progress as follows;

- Fatigue
- Fever
- Muscle aches
- Headaches

- Dizziness
- Chills
- Abdominal problems
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Fluid in the lungs
- Hemorrhagic fever with renal syndrome
- Blurred vision
- Acute kidney failure

“Not today Satan, not today,” I proclaim to myself, realising that both Asabi and James are nodding in agreement.

We haven't even turned on the news yet. I am in a stare-off with the black screen of the TV, wondering what was going to be on the other side of the ON button. So wrapped up in the unfulfilling obsession to stay updated, its russian roulette with the remote control. What will we be hit with today? The US usually prides itself on their armed forces, but even

their ammunition is rendered useless in this war. You cannot shoot an invisible enemy can you.

As the others watch on, I slide my deteriorated headphones over my ears in desperation and their noise cancelling quality seems to just suffice in drowning out CNN where the one and only Donald Trump is front and center. I enjoy a light giggle seeing now that his names merged would appropriately nickname him “Dump”. The small pleasantries amidst a world in panic.

That is the control you will always have, the choice of perception and an ability to choose your actions and reactions and just when to tap out of the toxicity. I needed to know where to put my energy, so from the 5H Hierarchy for Self-Evolution came a daily Quarantine Routine. Here are the techniques I've religiously turned to in these times of turmoil.

INTENTION

"Our intention creates our reality." — Wayne Dyer

To understand intention is to know the distillation of purpose, your 'why' for existing. When you do something on purpose you do it with intention and in turn purpose is what drives how we set those intentions. This is one of the biggest questions I think I ever asked myself, what is my purpose? Figuring that out was the first step I took toward living honorably in genuine self-fulfilment.

I have allowed that question to move with me over the years. You have to be open to consideration and embrace the process of elimination that eventually distils away all that you are not. It is how you figure out all that you are. It takes time, a willingness to keep searching and a desperate need to find the answer. I find that only when we surrender and let the intention simply be to let the answers come to us, that they actually do. But, you cannot get the right answers without first asking the right questions.

ATTENTION

“Abundance comes from within. It comes from a thought, intention, attention and expectation.” — Deepak Chopra

Again, this level of hygiene is a daily mind decluttering from the dirty distractions of the world. You don't clean your house just once. Hygiene both physical and spiritual is a matter of maintenance. Energy flows where attention goes. If you are not aware of your own thoughts, are you aware of how you are controlling them, or are they controlling you?

The immunization of distraction and the mastery of focus and flow, is to fuel yourself with the most powerful of all energy, it is to tap into Source. Attention guided by intention will put you in that state of flow, the psychological state where one is immersed fully in energized focus on the task at hand. Mastering this will minimize the time you need to do things and increase performance. Where there is force, there is no flow. Know how to greet resistance, the things that are holding you in hesitation are rooted in reason whether it be

laziness, fear or simply because you just do not have a strong enough 'why'.

GRATIFICATION

“The gratification comes in the doing, not the results.” — James Dean

Gratitude and appreciation are two of the most robust energy resources you can utilise. If you do not believe me, write down 10 things that you are grateful for, paying attention to the *feeling* of gratitude and why you appreciate those things, people, experiences, lessons, and even the initially perceived negatives in your life. See how you feel after, but I assume you will be riding the wave of a natural high. And I am serious when I say **write** them down, it's much more impactful than just thinking grateful thoughts.

I've enjoyed tapping into this emotion so much that I start my day by saying out loud things I am grateful for, from my bed, to the kitchen, I pointpoint all the things that I can appreciate when I kickstart my day. I then write down my blessings and expect good things to happen. I do not check notifications and emails until I have set my mindset mode to #grateful.

It has changed my life.

AFFIRMATION

“You owe yourself the love that you so freely give to other people.” — Alexandra Elle

It is worth it to differentiate between gratitude and affirmation, gratitude is an emotion that expresses what you are thankful for, affirmations on the other hand are declarative statements that infuse your mindset with confidence and capability. They are how you speak things into existence. The universe is listening and it loves the language of affirmation.

These success inducing statements usually start with “I am”. They are luciously self-loving, and not materialistic. Try them on to see if they fit. Say affirmations out loud and let your emotions guide you towards the feeling of empowerment. My strongest ones are based on skills, milestones, my values and abilities.

INSPIRATION

“Let your smile change the world, but don't let the world change your smile.”

— *Sri Sri Ravi Shankar*

Find what inspires you and let it kill you, not actually but kind of. There is no better feeling than to be so mind blown by the stimulation of an external source that tickles your deepest truth and sense of calling. Full disclosure, I am a few glasses of Malbec in, but I am also extremely serious. To know how to stay inspired, to train yourself to use that inspiration as a catalyst for action is basically how you fast track achievement. It is with constant inspiration that one sustains momentum. Motivation is a tease, it's there sometimes and gone in other moments and unlike FedEx it does not always deliver. You need to make your exposure to inspiration a daily occurrence otherwise that fire that got you started, it will fade. I will tease you with this though, meditation is always my go too when I need to tap into the intuitions that are almost extraertrial in their infinite intelligence. More on that in just a moment.

PREPARATION

“Failing to prepare is preparing to fail.” — John Wooden

Impact intervals.

That's it. The golden ticket to actualising on intention is understanding your impact intervals. I set brackets of time where I want to accomplish maximum impact, and I am not checking notifications during this time. I know through trial and error that I can go hard in 5 hour brackets broken down into 1.25hr impact intervals. So I work for 75 minutes and break for 15 minutes. Once you start paying attention to your vibration you will have more energy because you are tapping into the unlimited resource that is Source. Emotions with higher frequencies provide you with the energy you need to work with maximum impact. Approach your work with joy.

This is why alignment with the vibration of gratitude and appreciation is imperative before taking action. Set intentions for your intervals, apply attention as needed during those times, and

just use affirmations to strengthen your immunity
to distraction.

MEDITATION

"It takes nothing to join the crowd, it takes everything to stand alone."

— *Hans F. Hansen*

I feel like meditation is the most intense relationship I have ever been in, it's essentially stepping into the relationship I have with myself. It exposes me to the comfort of sitting in my raw unpolished truth and feeling that one thing we all want to feel, that we are enough. Our greatest treasure is this tragedy is to understand how to strip ourselves of all the things we are not, the trivial judgements and conditioning and the strenuous strife to please others. Meditation teaches you to release worry with love, to know a deep exhale of all toxicity and feel resurrected in simplicity. To know that the world can be at war and you can be unselfish in your indulgence of peace.

Before you say that you have tried meditation and it hasn't worked, how many types have you tried? Did you believe it would work when you made those attempts (i.e. placebo) or were you just dead set that you can't meditate? My tips for this are

approach it with nothingness, just sit breath and find silence.

Contrary to what you might think, it has nothing to do with trying to meditate but just not making effort towards any outcome at all. It is sitting in silence, taking long deep inhales pausing and long deep exhales and pausing. Breathe in as deep as you can, hold, and exhale for as long as you can, hold.

Sounds simple, but I know it's sometimes harder than that. This is why I often turn to guided meditations because my focus and surrender is easier when I am listening to someone's voice to guide me, especially when it includes visualisation practices for manifesting. I live for this part of my day now.

FYI: It is my intention to create a few free self-isolation meditations so be sure to check out the Resources section at the end of the book for more information on that.

PROCRASTINATION

“Only put off until tomorrow what you are willing to die having left undone”

— *Pablo Picasso*

There is wisdom to know where there is force there is no flow and nothing happens before its time. My book, not the one you are reading but the one I have been working on for many years, did not have the traction that this handbook had when it comes to sitting down and getting it done. For several reasons it had idled incomplete in months of what I wouldn't call procrastination. The genre of mental health being a more complex topic, the immense value that can only come from not rushing the brush only to spoil the paint and all the other stories I told myself.

There are times when you can't turn down the adrenaline and there are times when you can't afford to not turn it up, know the difference.

INNOVATION

"Creativity is thinking new things, innovation is doing new things." — Theodore Levitt

Innovation is an intention. You have to tap into all kinds of creativity, resilience, frustration, expansion and isolation because there is nothing more comforting than failure. Fail we shall, and fail we will. Lets just make sure we fail forward. Life is about to be a series of learning curves and we cannot predict what is coming but we know things will change. In the 2008 recession Whatsapp, AirBnb, Uber, Slack, Venmo, Square and Pinterest were founded. The tragedy of a potential revolution is to opt for restoration. Time to get to work and use our visionary skills to anticipate where we can provide solutions and use the gift of time to upgrade the antiquated.

Curiosity killed the cat, but I am more of a dog person anyways. I'm curious if bitcoin will find its place as the globally adopted store of value as we accept the collapse of fiat currency. How will we challenge the people in power with so much influence that are failing to lead? Voices of reason should rise as entire nations look through the fog of

fear, hoping and praying for more leaders to step up. Someone, somewhere is going to read this and know exactly what to do and it won't be the person that used a coffee filter as toilet paper. Social entrepreneurs where you at?

FRUSTRATION

"Sometimes it takes a good fall to really know where you stand." — Hayley Williams

Deficits, deficiencies and a whole lot of detriment. It's the broken record we can't stop listening to but what frustrates us also empowers us. There are segments that you arc up much more than others. Let your frustration be the spotlight of your passion, it's showing you what you deeply care about. What pushes your buttons, what would you fight for in this world, that's the kind of chutzpah you need and it's right up there with the glorified grit HR has grown fond of. The estimated 14 million projected unemployment numbers are 14 million newly dressed opportunities once we return to the symbiosis of constituencies.

Your frustration is all but a means of self-discovery so use your CORONA mindset to reframe it because capitalism will return.

EXPANSION

“If you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change.”

— *Wayne Dyer*

What is happening right now is undoubtedly historical which means everyone will have some type of bragging rights around their Covid-19 experience and the antibiotic signature that proves they survived it. Have you thought about what your story will be? When you reach the later parts of your days what legacy are you going to be remembered by, and I am no longer just talking about that time we nearly got wiped out by a bat virus.

Legacy is something I was forced to think about long before 2020. Well, not long before, but in May 2015 to be exact. I had to break my involuntary silence to read the eulogy I wrote for my grandfather. Writing such a powerful piece, a mere snapshot of a life summed up to a few pieces of paper, had a profound impact on my life. As I stepped from the podium back into my selective mutism, I felt the congregation was inspired.

My grandfather, John Nathaniel O'Brien, had left his mark on the world. I remember walking alongside his coffin with Frank Sinatra "I did it my way" blasting, as the pole bearers carried the casket to his grave.

That's all we get, right here and right now.

The life we live creates the legacy we leave so in case you were not sure what to do today, that's a good place to put your energy.

RELAXATION

"The purpose of our lives is to be happy." — The Dalia Lama

You can learn a lot about someone from their YouTube history, a scarily accurate expose on personality, and a whole lot of things that might be disturbing. I am not here to throw anyone under the bus, just needed to tell someone how fascinating this isolation discovery was. But hey, whatever you need to relax right. It's not something you should compromise on, don't keep up with obligations only to be out of alignment with your vibration. You need to serve your self-fulfilment, and from that place can you best serve others.

Friendly reminder that N, is for **Nourishment**. Do what makes you feel good, that's why we are here. The purpose of life, it's actually joy.

CELEBRATION

"It is not uncommon for people to spend their whole life waiting to start living."

— Eckhart Tolle

When life gives you lemons, pour a 21 year old Japanese single malt and induce laughter.

"If you really look at it we have staff with conditions, Shernelle with stomach gastric problems, Shanika always sick, Mitus got a bad cold, Rudolph & Karyn asthmatic, Daisy diabetic, and I got some kinda chronic sinusitis or something."

This was the message Asabi and I were inappropriately hysterical about at around 10:00pm. It was from Eleanor, our hotel manager and it was time to seriously consider a Covid-19 shutdown because you know, everything Mitus touched could turn to cold. Sometimes you have to celebrate the irrational, you have to find the silver lining and you have to reflect to find the perspective to persevere. And you don't have to explain your hysteria to anyone, cause no ones going to be around in the iso.

RESTORATION

“Life finds its purpose and fulfilment in the expansion of happiness.”

— *Maharishi Mahesh Yogi*

A good morning starts the night before so try to get to bed on time and I highly recommend doing a double dose and finishing your day with gratitude and setting intentions for the morning. It makes me so happy to reflect and tune into the day's highlights with appreciative eyes. It keeps me connected to my Self and Source and I swear it helps me sleep more deeply and wake more energised.

Also, I almost always put on a sleep hypnosis meditation or an affirmations abundance playlist on low volume as I dip into dreamland. Your subconscious mind is listening and reprogramming and your cells rejuvenating all the while you get some beauty sleep.

Rest up!

A WORD ON GRIEF

They say the numbers don't lie. I find myself wondering how many people who never got tested are out there dying and am hit with a chilling thought that the reported cases could be painting a much less devastating picture for onlookers.

I can no longer ignore what is on the news in the background. There are 15,000 too few ventilators in New York I think was what I heard. My skin gets goosebumps and my mouth starts to do that ugly thing, an expression that a woman only allows herself to embody when she can't stop herself from crying. I can no longer hold it back, people are dying. In this moment I feel a deep resonance to address grief. Much like failing, we are not taught much about grief in school, we are not taught compassion. Life taught me those lessons.

My deepest condolences to anyone who has lost, or will lose someone during this war.

Even if it is in this small way, consider this my moment of silence.

THE PHOENIX EFFECT

"Yesterday I was clever so I wanted to change the world. Today I am wise, so I am changing myself." - Rumi

Thursday 25th March 2020

None of us will truly know if Kobe Bryant was the glue that prevented the world from falling apart or if men will become the new midwives. I really have no idea if we are in a matrix where extraterrestrial aliens watch Earthlings 2020, and this is just the craziest season yet. We keep waiting for this year to be over but as seasons go on the desperation for drama, plot twists, payoffs and an obscene commitment to elicit shock with unpredictability becomes the benchmark. Maybe season 2022 will be when we finally beat corona only to realise the animal kingdom is in full force and we are the prey. The Elon Musks of the world would have relocated to a new planet, decorated their abode and attempt to find a way to tune in to whatever streaming service is broadcasting the series Earthlings.

A lizard with no tail crawls by me and I see him as a symbol of hope.

Everything right now is a delirious attempt at making sense out of these unfathomable circumstances.

Whatever it looks like, I hope life after Covid-19 will include a 20th century Woodstock and we shall call it 'The Phoenix Festival'. In the meantime the world carries on with wartime measures, aerospace and biochemical engineers bleed themselves to the bone, equipment manufacturers come to the table to find the right weapons and the fiscal fallout flaunts in budget shortfalls.

It is at this time I urge you to look within. There is a reason that intuition, inspiration, innovation and indulgence all start with IN.

There have been so many things that have triggered me to step boldly into my own ability, *now*, during this pandemic. This book is a small product of the power of that inspiration. My social media was lit with people inspired in isolation across so many continents. All you need is one beam of light to brighten a dark day.

Richie Harkham, entrepreneur meets philanthropist, launched the Return on Resilience

podcast while in isolation. It highlights a process designed to empower individuals and organisations to build and bank resilience daily to create a resource that provides a return when it matters most.

I am no stranger to Richie's ability to inspire. Meeting him on the hills of Bondi Beach while catching the sunrise and walking his dog Nala, I noticed he had injured his leg. The story that comes after was one that irrevocably imprinted my mindset, not because of his tragic motorbike accident, but because of how he chose to rise from the experience even when he was the victim. If he could face that and prevail, I was capable of a whole bunch of things I hadn't let myself attempt.

Shane Warne in a heartbeat converted his SEVEN ZERO EIGHT Gin distillery into a production facility to support the needs of Western Australian Hospitals. Dj's all over the world live stream sets that would normally cost a ticket to experience, albums are dropping left right and centre as nations amp up creative expression, intuitively tapping into their innovative ability and all in all we start to see the sediments of our societal strengths rise to the surface.

One week in iso and the world has been our oyster.

Fellow Bajan Rihanna, through her non-profit, donated \$5 million dollars to the fight against coronavirus and while the wealthy can distribute wealth, we have talent and can distribute value.

This is a time to look at yourself, tune in to your ability and to let the things that don't serve your evolution crash and burn with the world's bewilderment. The only thing you can control right now is you, your choice to evolve and become who you want to be.

To change the world is to change one person. If we all change ourselves, collectively we change the world. We are alone together, and together we can cause a global Phoenix Effect because crash and burn we may, but we will rise in resilience and enjoy the remarkable new world that awaits.

Right in the midst of my flow Asabi starts screaming across the house, "Dad! Dr.Batson is on the phone." I'm relieved that his prescriptions can be filled in advance with the lockdown approaching.

That relief detonates in his loaded question, “Gi, would you mind going and collecting my medication?”

I can’t remember the last time I left the house and am severely underprepared for my next round of Isolympics. For a moment I think ‘maybe my mom should have cut the red wire.’

“Of course dad. I’ll just need vodka, garlic, bleach, a mask and sunglasses.”

THANK YOU

*No longer divided, I am you and you are me,
we are united by common enemy,
Covid-19.*

*And so simple it was to eradicate hate,
just throw a global pandemic in the mix and all the "isms"
fade.*

*Racism, sexism, classism, ageism
as difference in religion
grows in irrelevance.*

*We fall more together in acts of compassion,
in tragedy we cling to universism.*

*May we be stronger together
than we have been apart,
and when it comes time to rebuild,
let's do it with heart.*

RESOURCES

I will be uploading my sources of inspiration, affirmations, free mediations and anything else I produce during this self-solation, on the dedicated website;

www.thequarantinehandbook.com

Last but not least, if you want to get in touch just drop me a line at the following email;
gigi@thequarantinehandbook.com

With unconditional love,

Gi Gi

The Quarantine Handbook

COVID-19