

It's often said that those living through historic events, rarely recognise their magnitude at the time. Perhaps this is why the 2019/2020 COVID-19 outbreak presents such an amazing opportunity for reassessment of lifestyle.

Life might never be the same again, and we might be better for it!

The closure of gyms seems to have encouraged people to reconnect with nature. The Lane Cove river is filled with people boating and kayaking, and the banks show a steady stream of walkers and runners, getting altogether too much wholesome fresh air and sunshine. I cannot remember seeing the parklands around the area so populated by families. People say "hello" as they pass. We have jettisoned the TV for enjoying our outdoor spaces again and if ever there was a silver lining to the COVID-19 cloud it is this.

The air is cleaner, the sky seems bluer and the main smells that are encountered exercising are not those from cars, but from slowing cooking and baking from so many finding relaxation in these simple things. While panic buying may have categorised the first few weeks in lock down, eating and drinking is categorising the next phase. The sounds of birds have largely replaced the overhead aircraft noise. I am woken by kookaburras rather than 5:55 from Melbourne and during the day there is a wonderful quiet. In general, the pace of life has slowed.

I too have found my new operating rhythm and now dread going back to the old one.

My mornings start with waking up with the sun, rather than the alarm. I go for a walk, have a shower and then breakfast on my little balcony with my partner, rather than throwing down a coffee, running out the door and trying to make the bus. Working life seems more relaxed and balanced and yet I start working about the same time, get through more work. Switching off is hardest as there is no physical barrier between work and "life", and sometimes sleep is hard to come by.

I am extremely lucky to be able to take my work with me. Many are not so fortunate and while my experience is better, life for so many is much worse. Face to face service industries are struggling, closed or adapting. Online shopping is the new normal and I can't help but think of it as a modern version of the mail order catalogue. I have been inspired by the restaurants in the area offering a mix of take away, deliveries and prepared cook at home versions of their favourite dishes. Necessity is truly the mother of invention.

Yes, there are restrictions. One of the saddest is seeing the childrens play equipment in my local park taped up; the chains on the swing set cut, but life goes on. People find a way.

We live in interesting times.





