



Maximize the Pause

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The Great Pause of 2020 has upended our personal and business worlds. Whether our associates and clients are working from home, coming into the office, or are out in the field, the current disruption is impacting all of our daily lives in unprecedented ways.

It's most definitely NOT business as usual!

We're all improvising – creating new and different ways to get work done together. Co-workers are no longer a cubicle away. Quick conversations take longer. People are more distracted than ever before with home and work lives overlapping – sometimes in the same spaces – and work hours flexing and/or shortened. On the plus side we get to see people's homes and pets on Zoom.

The Big Question: What are we doing RIGHT NOW to intentionally improve the quality of our team and client interactions? We have a unique opportunity to carve out time to connect and engage our teams in thinking about some big questions. Clients who might otherwise be too busy to talk may now welcome our calls. For example, one of our impossible-to-reach clients offered to meet for a virtual happy hour.

How we show up matters. In the world of [Emotional Intelligence](#) it comes down to endorphins versus stress hormones.

EQ & Brain Science, really? Our bodies react to fear and uncertainty in predictable ways. We may perceive "danger," in intense work pressure, dealing with uncertainty, rapidly changing schedules, and personal challenges (to name a few). In response, our brains release stress chemicals, adrenaline and cortisol, that course through our bodies and prepare us to fight, flee, or freeze. This classic response is known as an [amygdala hijack](#).

Most importantly, our logical brain takes a hike when we're in hijack. We have less emotional bandwidth to problem solve, to innovate, or to pivot to the needs of the

situation. To put it lightly, this highly adrenalized state isn't healthy or sustainable; emotional hijack and creativity rarely co-exist.

The Antidote to Hijack is emotional intelligence and human connection. Laughter. Kindness. Breathing. Playfulness. It's us, intentionally checking in on and with our team members, wherever they are, because when we create real space for fear to dissipate, we can then re-focus with others on what's possible and infuse our conversations with optimism and curiosity.

These connective conversations cause us to experience an increase in our sense of well-being, trust, and emotional bandwidth. Magically (and predictably), our brains generate endorphins (happiness hormones) for us and our conversation partners. We feel better about the world and can co-create our "new next" with positive focus and energy.

Maximize the Pause. Now is the time to create or recreate norms with our peers that will support the next reality in our workplaces. The window is closing on the immediate, unique opportunity to connect more deeply with our co-workers, our customers, and our business peers. Some of our most important relationships are one Zoom call away. We suggest that you see the opportunity in the pause and begin today.



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