



Week 5

5 big insights from this week's 'Life on Lockdown'

*This week, we wonder if we've made
any progress at all*

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Stasis anxiety



- We're 6 weeks into lockdown now and it's **concerning how little progress has been made**.
- Perhaps the **'curve' is flattening** (who knows anymore?) but the **global picture continues to be grim**, there's no good news emerging in terms of treatments (despite Trump's bright ideas), numbers of cases and fatalities keep on climbing.
- When we first locked-down, we didn't think that in **six weeks we'd still be in this position**.
- The **novelty of lockdown** has well and truly **worn off now**. The slightly bizarre 'holiday' mood, the digital socialising, the DIY projects have all lost their lustre. If we never do another zoom quiz in our lives it will be too soon.
- With little to look forward to on the horizon, we're having to **dig very deep** to keep ourselves motivated and on track.
- We're clinging to the 5th May like a **life raft**, but increasingly apprehensive that it won't offer us the respite we're hoping for. But even a small lifting of restrictions will help the mood, **'more of the same'** feels like too much to psychologically bear.

Adult to adult



- While the **authoritative stance of government** was comforting at the start of this crisis, it's also wearing thin.
- Initially the **parent/child dynamic** of the relationship was effective, and we were happy enough to 'do as we were told' and 'stay home'.
- But as the **goal posts keep moving**, the teenager within us starts to rebel.
- As lockdown continues, we're watching businesses crumble, job prospects collapse, mental health deteriorate and the isolated and vulnerable struggle.
- There's a need for a **more grown up dialogue** between the population and the government, to understand how this fiendishly difficult situation will be managed.
- A much **clearer vision and road map** of what the future months will look like would help enormously. As New Zealand moves from Level 4 to Level 3 'lockdown' we crave the **kind of clarity** an approach like this would give us.

Feeling like failures



- The Covid Crisis has radically **changed the rules of the game** for everyone.
- We've been thrust from our well-ordered societies, high functioning offices, favourable business environments to a world where we're **working from home with clapped out laptops** on the spare room bed, trying to keep businesses afloat in the most challenging consumer environment since the 1920s, **home schooling our children** with no training, resources or natural aptitude (shout out to RTÉ school hub though, much appreciated). **Often all at the same time.**
- And even though we know, logically, that we're faced with an **impossible task**, it doesn't stop us **feeling like failures**. We're still holding ourselves to the **standards of February 2020**.
- On top of our anxiety and grief about the disease itself, we're worried about our inability to deliver good customer service, our quarter two targets, our children falling behind at school, the long term consequences of spending most of our waking hours on screens.
- Many of us also feel bad that we're not contributing on the front line of the crisis.
- We need **permission to give ourselves a break** and shift the focus to the incredible job we're all doing in the circumstances.

Divided we fall



- At the start of this crisis there was a strong sense that **we're all in this together**. And that sense of unity (not always a given in times of national crisis) was one of the **few positives** we could take from the situation.
- But as anger and frustration grows, the **divisions start to emerge**
- The **'us and them'** dynamic is starting to raise its head
 - Between those obeying the guidelines and those breaking the rules
 - Between key workers risking their lives everyday and those able to work from home in safety
 - Between private sector workers losing jobs and taking paycuts and public sector workers who aren't.
- Obviously, **none of this is helpful for national morale**, but it's worth considering that while the fallout from this crisis will affect us all, certain jobs require much greater risk than others and certain sectors of the economy are set to suffer much more significantly than others.
- For the sake of national unity, there will need to be some readdressing of the balance. Eventually.

Distraction and escapism



- To keep ourselves sane, we're clinging to the **small things** to distract and entertain us.
- Some of our coping strategies are **unambiguously virtuous**; yoga, meditation, wellbeing practices, exercise, creative hobbies, getting lost in a good book. And we hope we'll keep these practices up as our lives return to 'normal' (whenever that might be).
- Others are **more problematic**; comfort eating, more gaming, increased drinking at home - sales are soaring
- While some of us are **worried about the impact** of these more addictive behaviours, others are sanguine. They're helping us right now, so we'll worry about it later, when the crisis retreats
- **Tik Tok videos** are emerging as the perfect channel for our suppressed creativity and the ultimate media for mindless distraction. We're particularly impressed at the contribution our older generation are making to this up and coming artform!



Implications for brands

- In the absence of the clear roadmap, there are opportunities for brands (particularly in more challenging sectors like leisure and hospitality) **to lead the way** in demonstrating how they'll return to **delivering service**, while also **prioritising customer safety**. Countries like Germany, Denmark, even France, who are slightly further along this path than us, can help provide inspiration.
- While there have been great initiatives in honouring frontline workers in healthcare and similar, **all workers could do with a bit of a lift right now** and a challenge to their internal assessment that they're 'failing every day'.
- The **spirit of unity** is badly needed at the minute and fostering this within the brand community is one way of drawing people together.
- **Distraction and escapism** are very important to people at the minute. However, while there's appetite for content that engages and entertains fleetingly, there might be even more value in projects that **harness people's creativity** and set them a **challenge to get stuck into**.



About B&A

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- Specialist sectors include: Retail & Shopper, Technology & Telecoms, Media, Financial, Political & Social, Automotive, Healthcare and Public Sector & Utilities.

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Virtual depth interviews

In depth interviews with research participants, conducted in the comfort of own homes. We use a variety of platforms such as Skype, Zoom, Teams to talk to participants easily, watch their non verbal response, show stimulus and interact on a personal level.



For further information contact any of our senior research team:

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