

LIFE AS IT IS

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Life post-pandemic

The day the World Health Organization officially declared COVID-19 a pandemic, the world as we knew it changed in the bat of an eye. We do not know when this pandemic will be over, so we have more or less accepted the situation. However, this new normal will significantly impact the way human lives are going to be post-pandemic.

TELECOMMUTING

This pandemic has taught us that in the age of technology, working from home is not an unachievable reality. Yes, the work-from-home model comes with its unique and inherent challenges, but it is also saving us our commute time and cost. There is also no need to dress for work and we can also create our own custom environment at home.

As more and more people and companies accept and adopt this model of work, the offices of the future might occupy smaller spaces, because a significant percentage of the future workforce could be working remotely. The competition for prime office spaces in urban commercial centres is expected to drop.

PEOPLE FLEEING CITIES

In the U.S., people are leaving big cities and moving to suburban areas because when you telecommute, there is no more the need to live closer to your place of work. People are choosing cheaper places to live as they continue to telecommute. Also, people who have lost jobs in this economic downturn no longer see the reason to live in a metropolis. Rental prices in big cities across the world have already started to decline.

GETTING USED TO GOOD HYGIENE

The COVID-19 pandemic has taught us that washing hands is extremely, extremely important and useful when it comes to containing the spread of infectious diseases. We also learned that we must cover our coughs and sneezes all the time. Most of us have also turned to germaphobes, leading to careful cleaning and disinfecting of houses, personal belongings, and workplaces on a daily basis. It is likely that wearing masks, washing hands for 20 seconds, etc. will continue into the future. We will also continue to practice some degree of social distancing, and be careful when we meet and visit our elderly and vulnerable family members.

SPENDING LESS

This pandemic has educated us on the need to identify the things that are most valuable to us — our friends and families,



our health and happiness. Globally, consumers are spending less because their priorities have changed, incomes dropped, and working conditions altered. There is so much uncertainty around the future, too. In the US, clothing retailers have seen a massive plunge of 79 percent in sales. This is a global trend. According to McKinsey & Company, an American management consulting firm, consumers across the globe are not very optimistic about the future, resulting in a shift in consumer spending largely to essentials, such as grocery and household items.

TRAVELLING LESS

Even though economies are opening up,

people everywhere are worried about the COVID-19 crisis and their future employment. In the US, the world's largest economy, the current unemployment rate remains historically high. Travelling is therefore not on most people's priority list.

People will be travelling less in the near future because of health and safety concerns. Countries are also considering setting up "immunity passports" to only allow people, who have recovered from the coronavirus and tested positive for antibodies, into their countries. If this measure is really put into place, travelling abroad will become more challenging in the coming days.

LEARNING ONLINE

Although online classrooms already existed, we did not see them at school levels and on a mass scale at college levels. Face-to-face instruction was the most widely accepted method. In a post-pandemic world, our colleges and universities could be offering more and more online courses. One could now carry their college on their laptop! Learning experience could look very different in the days ahead.

INCREASED VIRTUAL PARTICIPATION

We could see more virtual group events, from religious congregations, business conferences to graduation and birthday parties. We will also likely see a boom in telemedicine and Zoom-enabled workout, yoga sessions and much more!

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the world as we knew it and perhaps, the world will never again be the way it used to be. Many of the aspects of our daily lives have most likely changed forever.

Model: Niki