

Design Of The Times

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Every aspect of the design process has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The natural progression of person-to-person meetings, designing, resourcing, getting prices and site visiting has come to an abrupt halt. Fortunately, many of my clients are repeat clients, so they and I have faith that their projects will still happen but when in the future, we can't say – and they are understanding.

I've found that I'm now dedicating more time to speaking with clients on the phone – a communication skill that seems to have been lost since the advent of texting. Why? Because we now have the time. Take a daily schedule and eliminate commuting, deadlines, carpooling kids to school and activities, any kind of in-store shopping other than a trip to the grocery store, hair and nail appointments, socializing with family and friends, etc. and you get a whole lot of time. Most of my clients, including myself, didn't realize how hectic life was until it wasn't. Now we think, so this is what life is like – *off the freeway*. All my clients have said, 'I like this feeling.' Plus, they are reading print magazines and loving them. (Hello *Design NJ!*) Emails, texts, photos, etc. are necessary parts of the communicating process, but I find that speaking on the phone gives clients a sense of calm and importance because I'm giving them my undivided attention.

The design world is inherently hectic, full of details and deadlines. I'd like to think that I will try to maintain a less stressful business life going forward, but I don't know if that's realistic. What I can do is implement the good choices (my silver linings) that I have added to my life from the first day of quarantine – morning exercise, gratitude for all the wonderfulness in my life, a two-mile walk each evening and a few words in my daily journal. These should be a good antidote when the new normal starts to feel like *déjà vu*.