

Episode 02:

The opposite is also true

Going deeper to explore customers' changing lives,
we discovered a world of internal conflict

The opposite is also true

As uncertainty takes hold, customers find themselves in a state of contradiction. It's there in the big stuff: people talk about the anxiety of an uncertain future and the boredom of a certain tomorrow (that's exactly the same as today). But that conflict is present in the little stuff too: a moment of elation at time spent with family, followed rapidly by a low.

Usually, opposites contradict but here, in the context of our new reality, we're seeing both sides present, nearly simultaneously both as real, albeit opposite realities. Remember, Jekyll and Hyde were both real.

What's next for brands?

At a time when opposing truths are creating tensions in how customers feel, brands have their own tensions to overcome, their own stories to tell and their own actions to take.



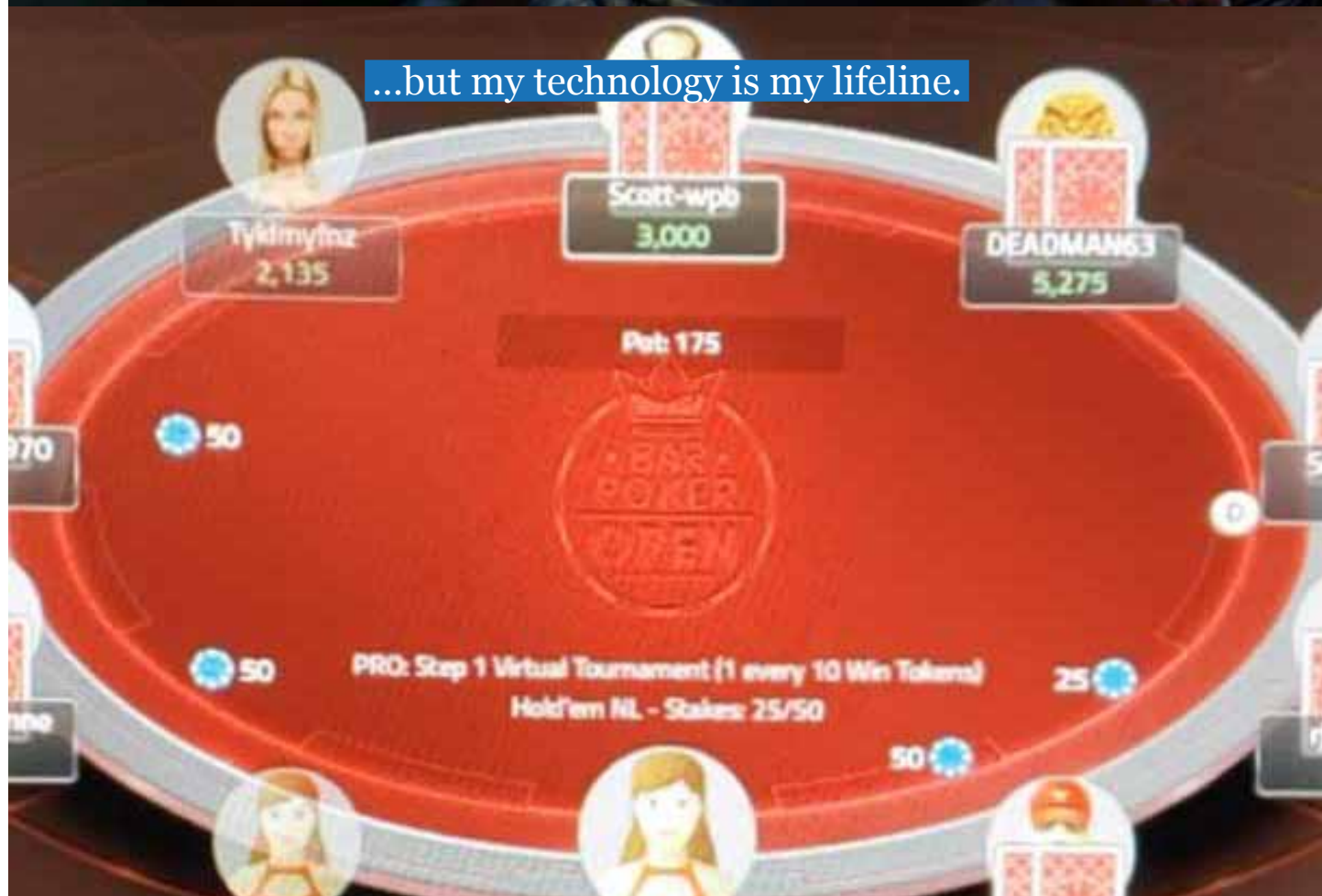
I long for human connection and physical touch...



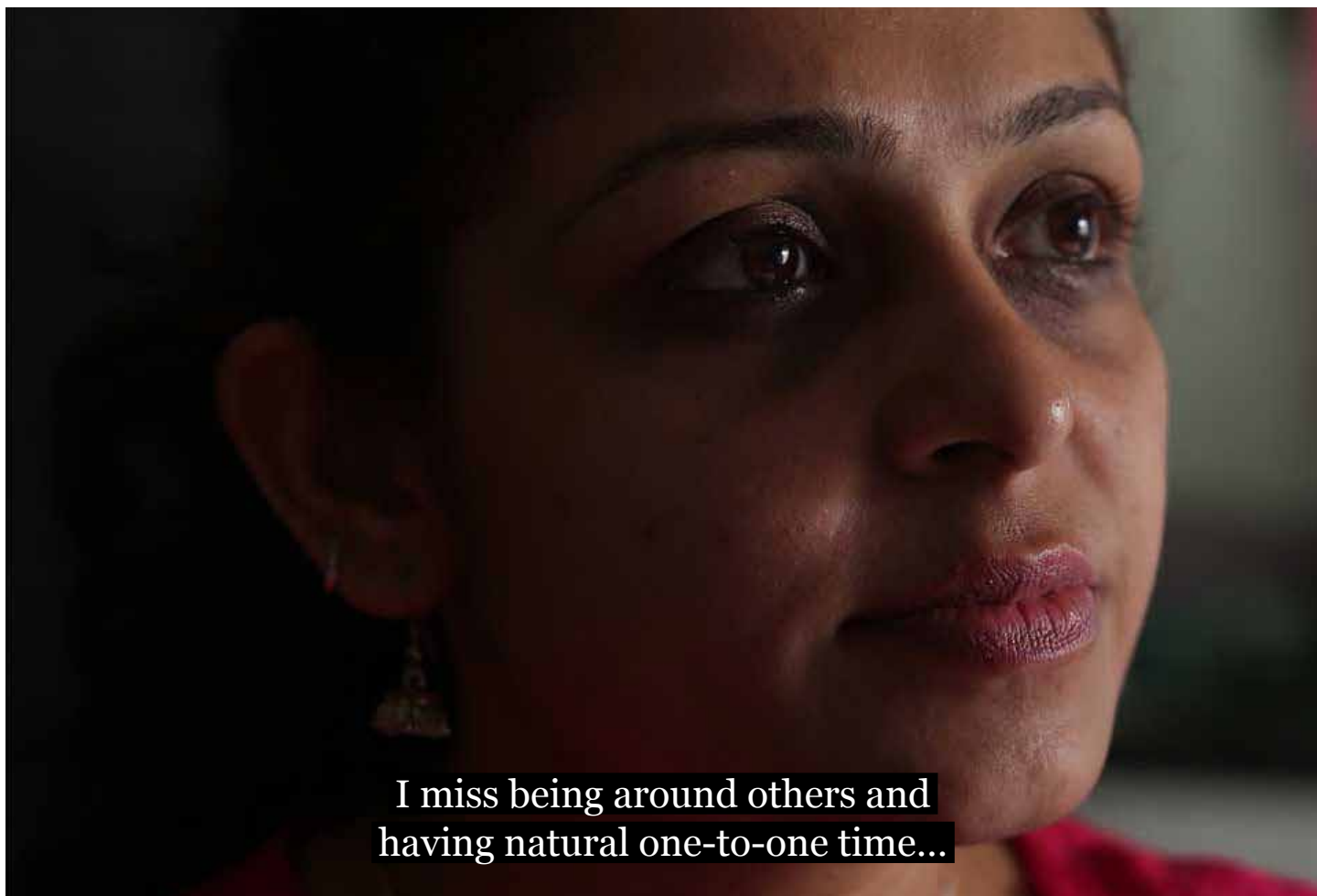
...but I love this alone time to just be me.



I feel guilty that I'm constantly absorbed by my phone or tablet or email...



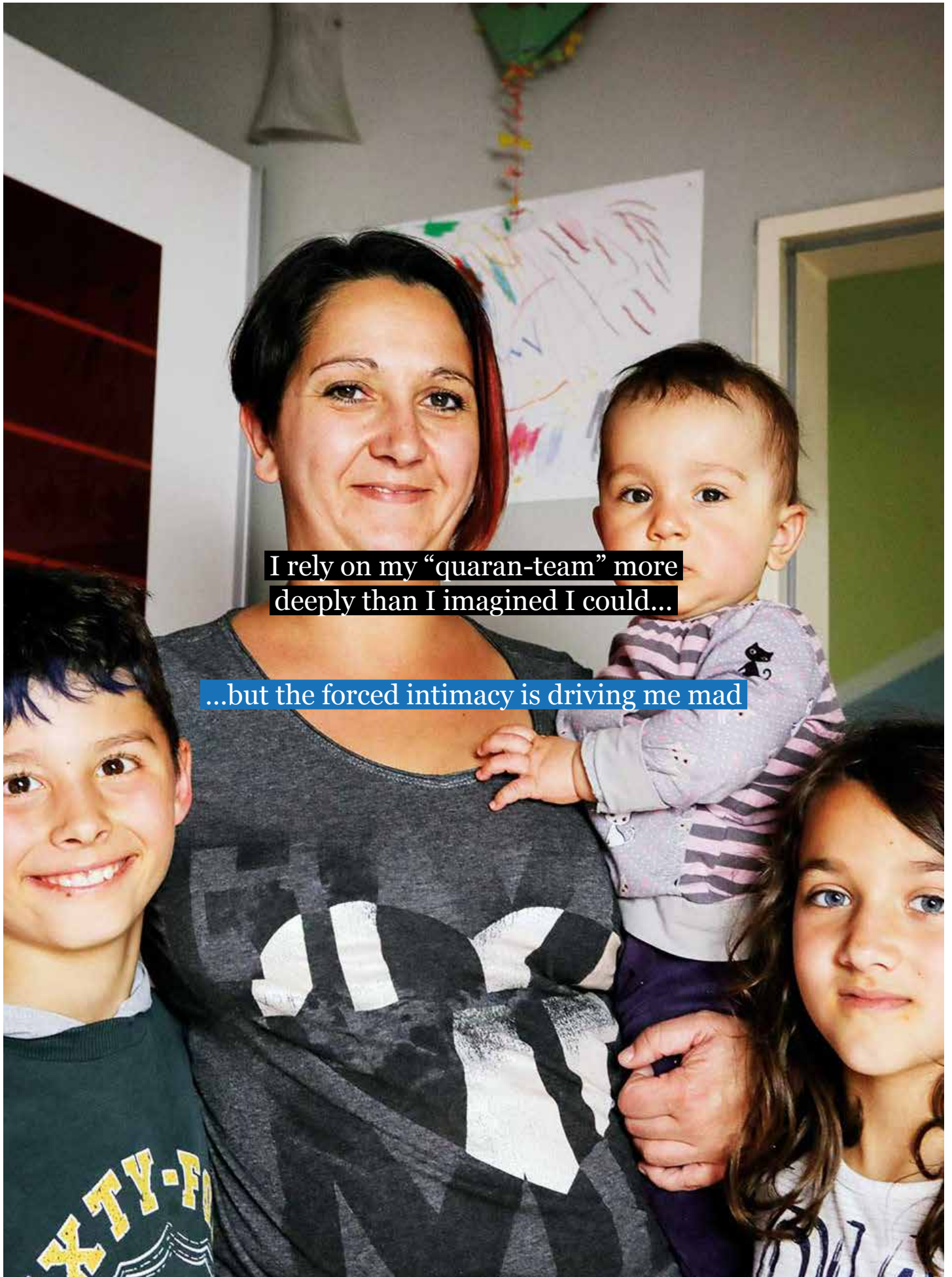
...but my technology is my lifeline.



I miss being around others and having natural one-to-one time...



...but I don't miss everyone; I'm learning to be more intentional about social time.

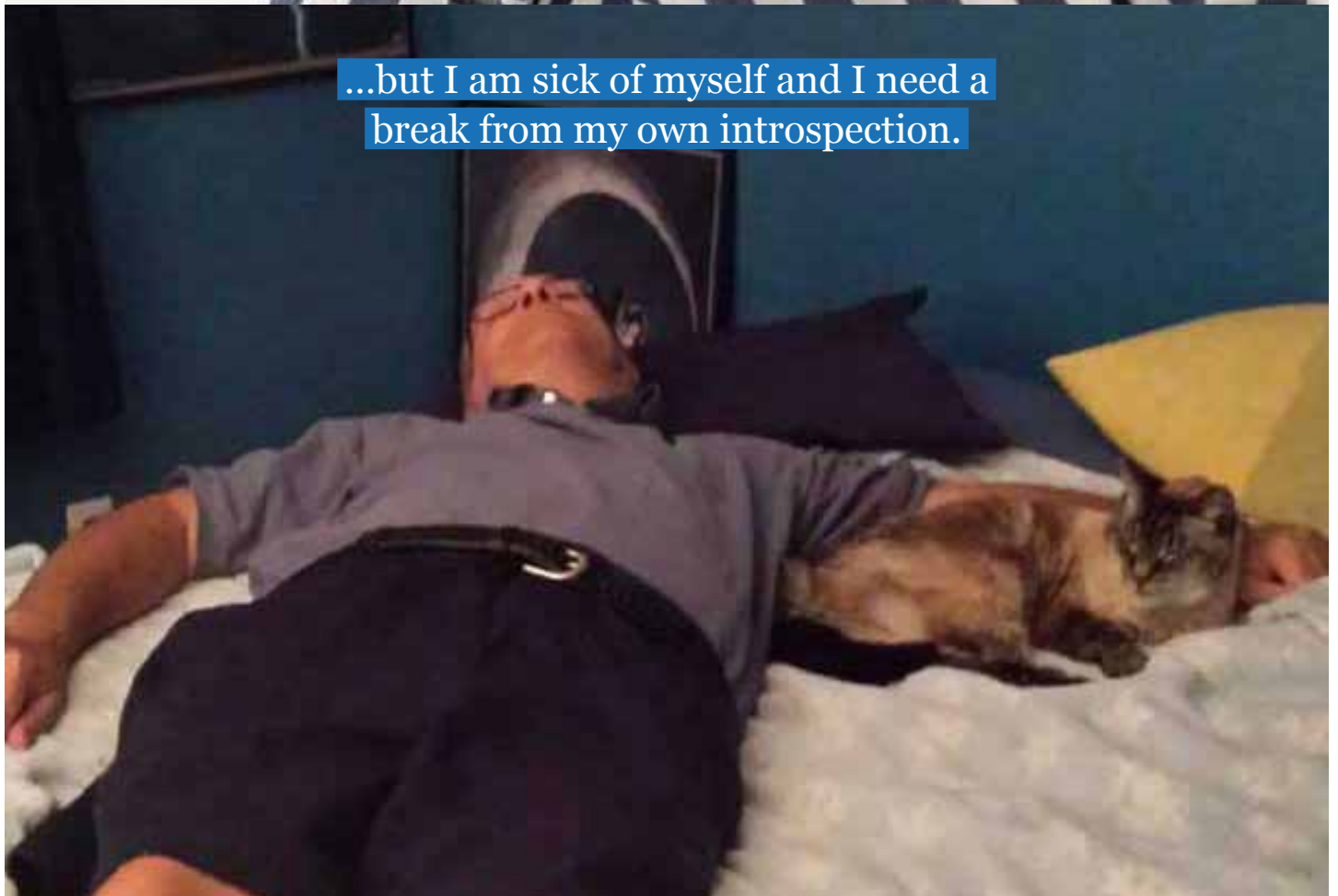


I rely on my “quaran-team” more deeply than I imagined I could...

...but the forced intimacy is driving me mad



Being forced to sit with myself has been a revelation...

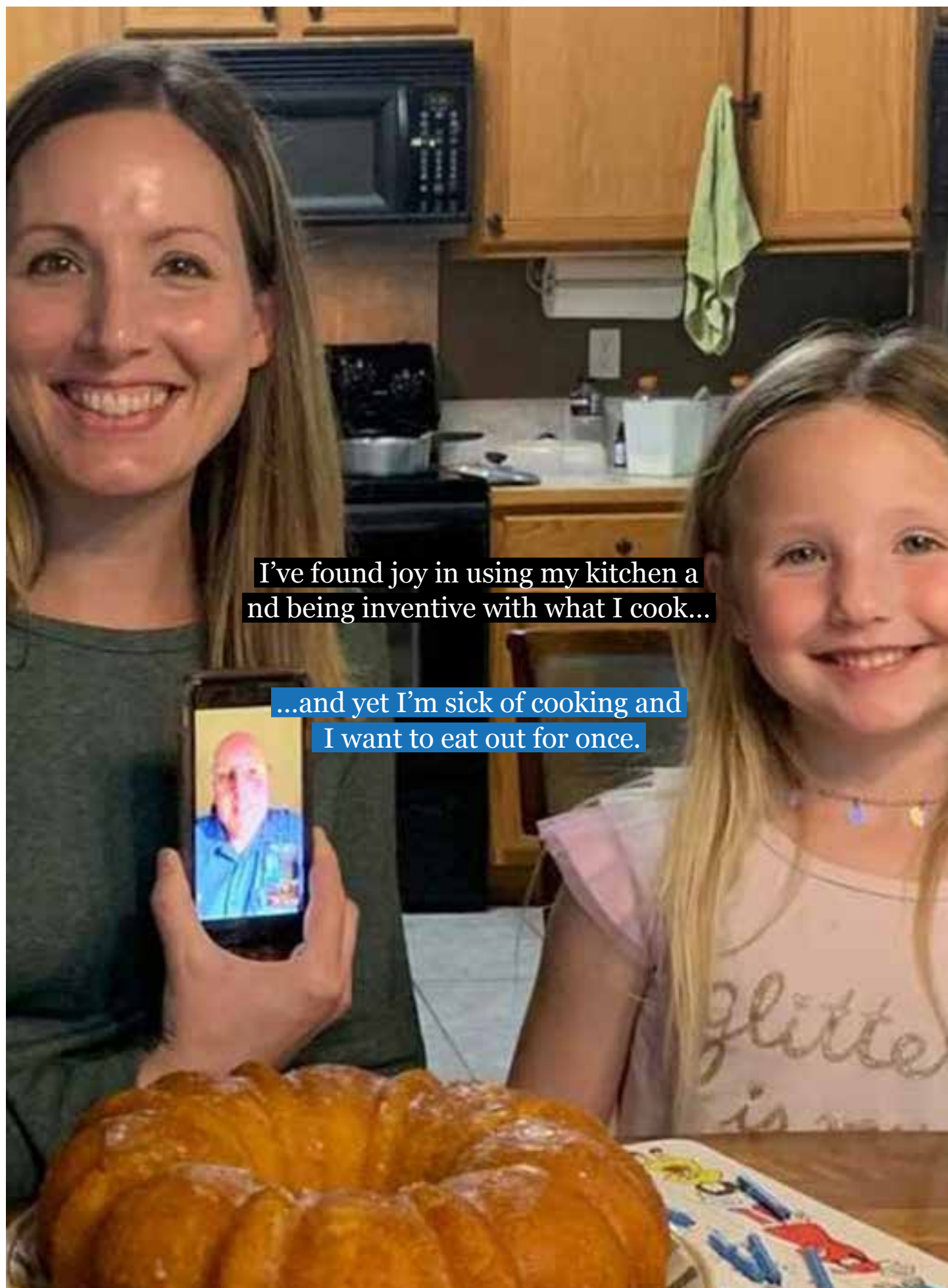


...but I am sick of myself and I need a break from my own introspection.



I'm excited by what was previously
mundane, like going to the store

...but those experiences now feel
scary which saddens me.



I've found joy in using my kitchen and being inventive with what I cook...

...and yet I'm sick of cooking and I want to eat out for once.






It feels great to go outside
and get some fresh air...



...but I am also nervous to leave
the house out of fear for catching the virus.

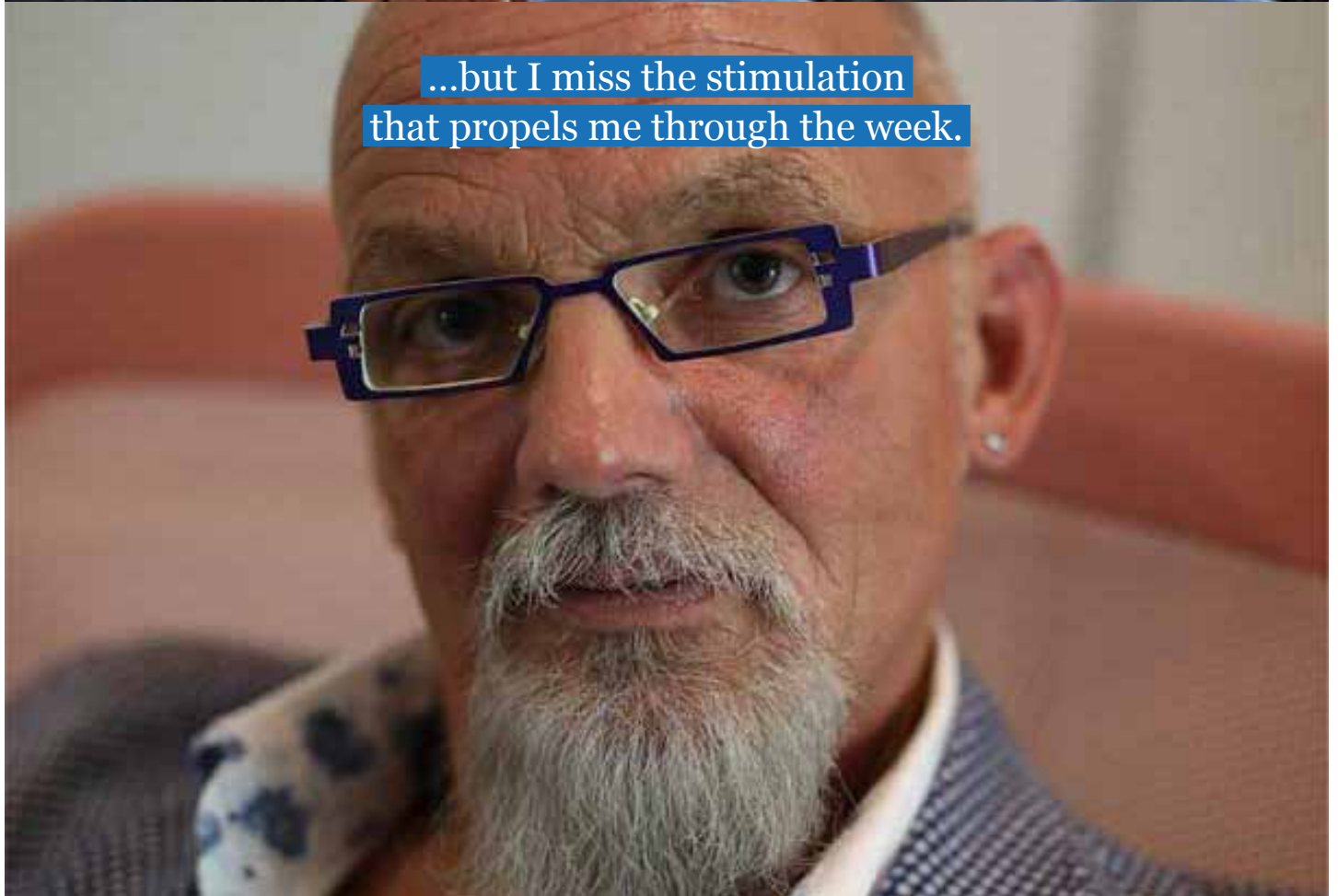


Pressing pause on life has bought
me some much needed space...

...but it comes at a high cost - people
are losing their jobs and even their lives.



I was craving a way to slow
down and I've got it...



...but I miss the stimulation
that propels me through the week.

Opposites and Contradictions: Commercial Implications for Brands

At a time when opposing truths are creating tensions in how customers feel about their worlds, brands have their own tensions to overcome, their own stories to tell and their own actions to take.

1

To do nothing

This seems like a safe option, but staying silent and hunkering down is not a viable long-term plan. It is most likely to end in creating more tension for the business, customers and employees. Without communication and clarity, people tend to assume the worst.

2

To admit defeat

Circumstances may look bad, but to cut all activities, shut down facilities and immediately give up all hope risks doing the wrong thing by the very people you are supposed to be trying to do right by.

3

To address the crisis

To confront those opposing truths, to try to meet more of people's needs, and to be the one who helps when people need it most – that is how brands can acquire real relevance and a reputation as a trusted ally.

There is opportunity for brands in this crisis – ‘being there’ for customers as their lives evolve dramatically around them has the potential to cement a lifelong relationship. Of course, having high degree of customer empathy is challenging, especially as people move rapidly between conflicting states.

The brands that are doing well right now are helping people to get comfortable with every side of themselves. They are addressing more of a person more holistically, acknowledging those opposing truths and letting them co-exist, through a spectrum of messaging from information through to inspiration.

Sure you might feel like a bad mom, but a brand with the power to make you feel like you're also doing a great job will stand out; so will a brand that can get you to see light when all you can see is dark.

“*I am missing my friends and colleagues and at other side equally spending time alone also gives the self-satisfaction, reading books, watching netflix or prime alone, cooking etc, it helps to know how I am capable of doing alone things, when I am alone at home it gives me confidence of self-independent.*”
- Swapna P

“*I feel guilty for basically having a vacation while people are dying.*”
- Stephanie B

“*I am cooking more and I like to cook, but I am getting tired of cooking and preparing food all the time.*”
- Ann Marie B