



LEADERSHIP

IN THE TIME OF CORONAVIRUS

Part 1 of a 3 part series

Culture is your anchor.

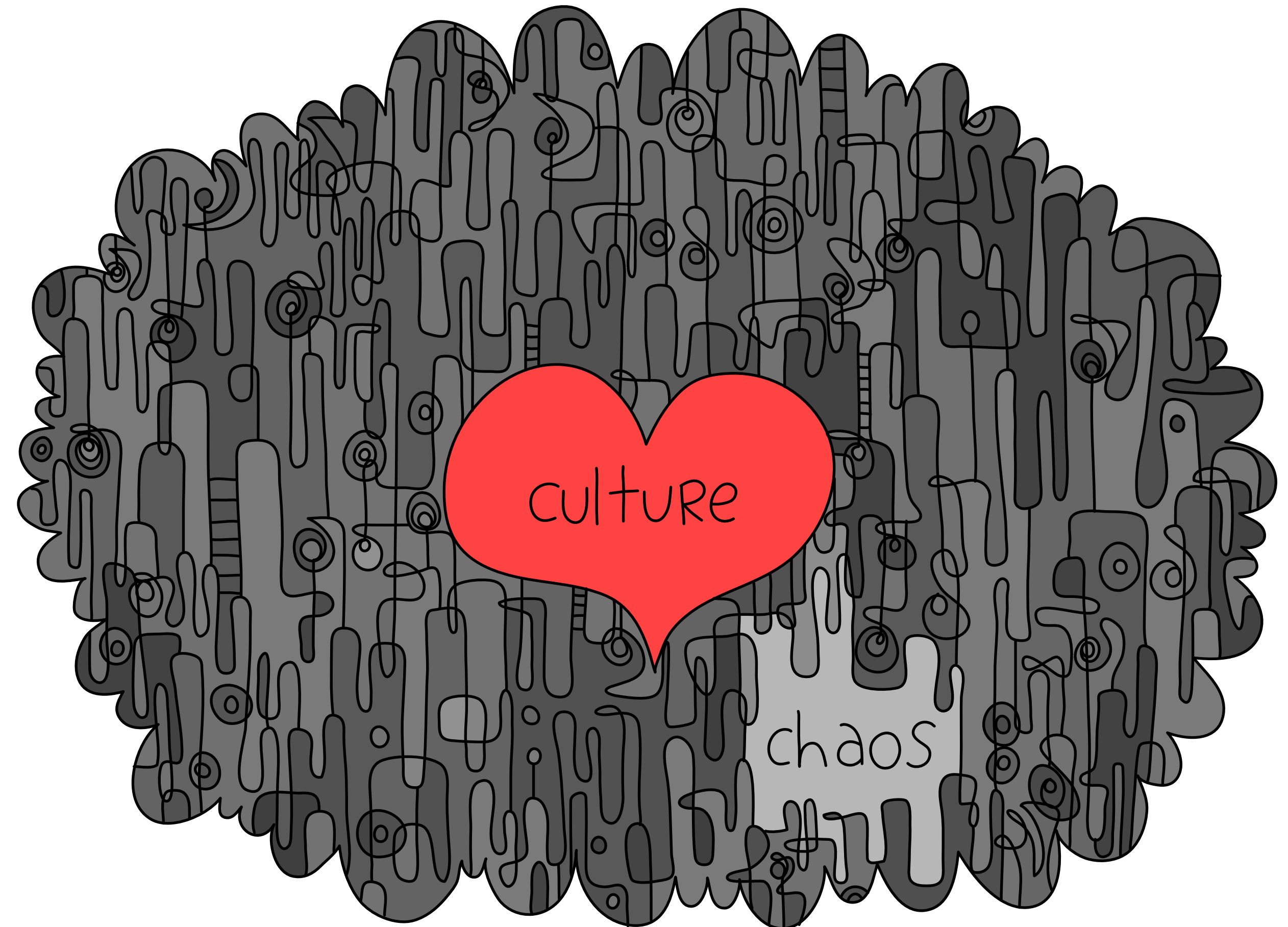
Culture was one of the '[most popular words](#)' of the decade according to Merriam-Webster. Even given that, the concept is really misunderstood.

Our definition of culture is "the beliefs, mindsets, mental models, principles, values, and more... that when taken together inform behaviors of a population."

Culture changes people and people change the culture. Culture is what provides meaning, purpose and direction. In a business sense, it is why we call it an operating system.

In a world of chaos, CULTURE is your anchor. It is how you help people make sense of things. It informs your behaviors, outlook, and mindsets.

This is a time to lead: your family, your business, your community. Design the culture you wish people to adopt and don't fall prey to the cultural norms of others.



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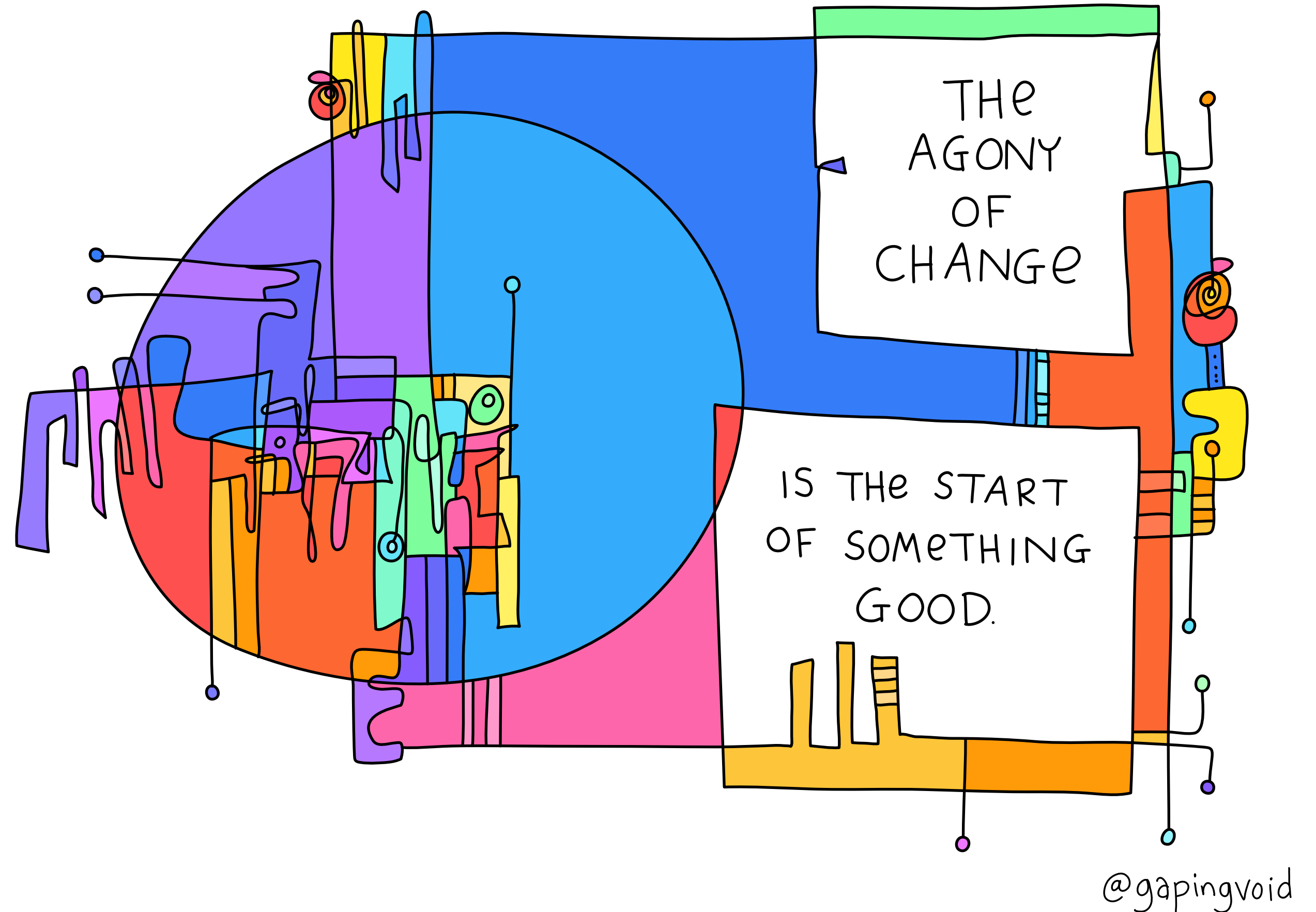
Change sucks, or does it?

A fundamental belief we have is that 'nothing changes in the absence of tension.'

Tension, that tinge of discomfort, even a pinch of panic, that moment of "argh!," is what we all dread, but it really is our friend.

It motivates us, gives us courage, and drives us toward our goals. The agony of change, the thing we all hate, is the grand master of creation.

And, it is a choice. We can hide. We can complain. We can be scared. But ultimately embracing uncertainty, dancing with the unknown, is what will drive us to a greater tomorrow.



Mindset is everything.

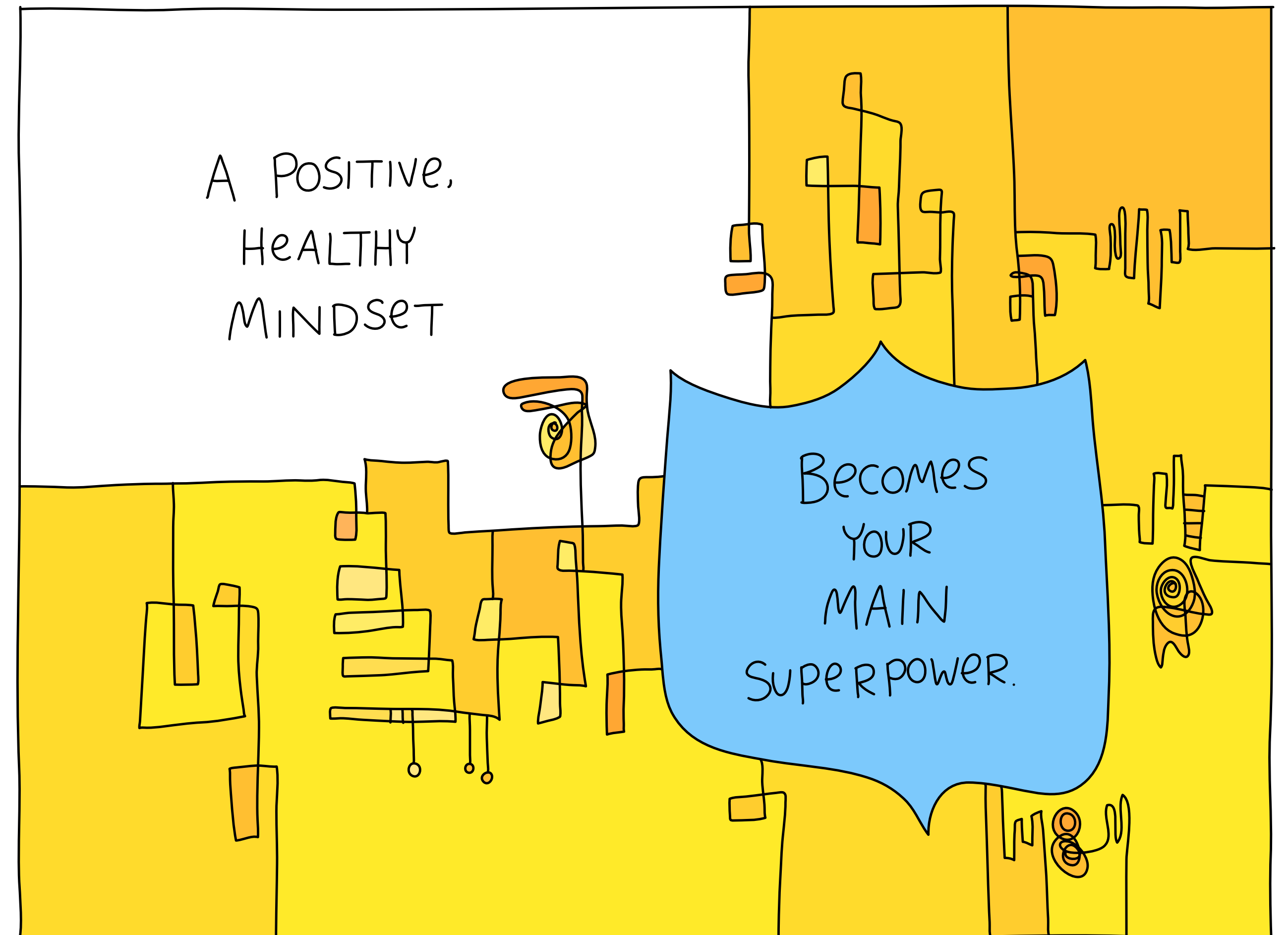
Until Carol Dweck came along nearly fifteen years ago with "*Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*," nobody gave much thought to the concept.

We now realize that mindset isn't everything, but it's attributable to a lot of what's right and wrong in this world.

Mindsets are a collection of ideas that inform how we view the world. They inform our fundamental behaviors, human interactions, and experience. Carol says mindset is the key to success: professional, monetary, and life.

Obviously, how you come out the other side of the current crisis will be very much informed by your mindset. While we are all responsible for our personal mindsets, leaders are accountable for your organization's mindset.

Please be sure to design the best, most productive and positive one for your organization.



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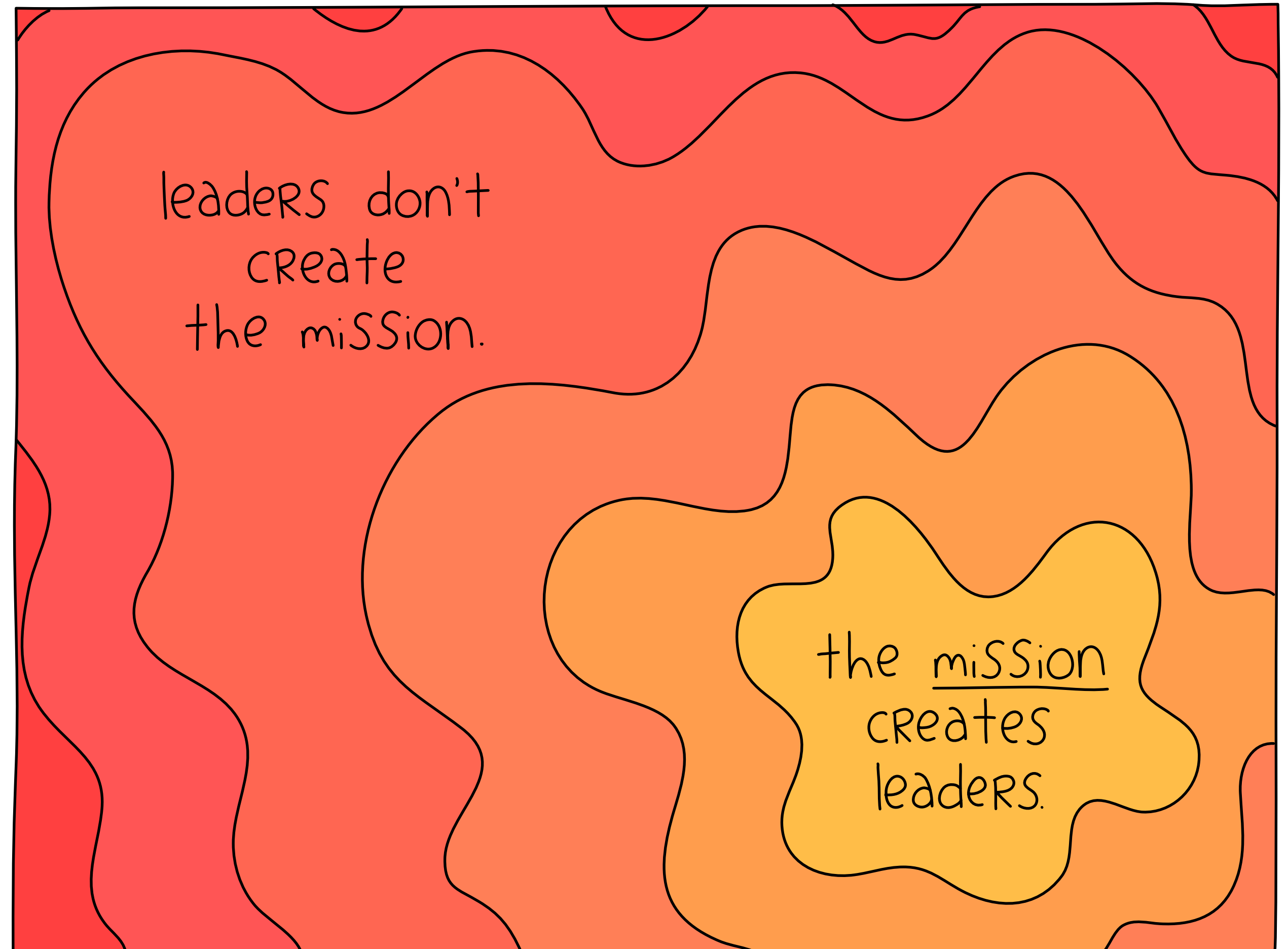
Leaders will emerge in a time of crisis.

This reminds me of Dr. Benjamin Hardy's insight:
"When the 'why' is strong enough, you figure out the 'how'."

The mission, the opportunity to make a difference and have impact, will always drive certain people (not everyone), to be leaders.

Leaders are those 'A' players who own their power to make change happen, who demonstrate a willingness to do the hard thing, and who don't need to be told. They anticipate, and by serving they elevate their influence.

Missions create the opportunity for leaders to lead.



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Dear CEOs,

Over the past few weeks, customers have been getting emails letting them know how your company plans to respond to the Covid-19 situation.

You explain that customer safety is your highest priority. Next, you stress the new rigorous cleaning procedures, and how you have instructed employees to frequently disinfect every surface.

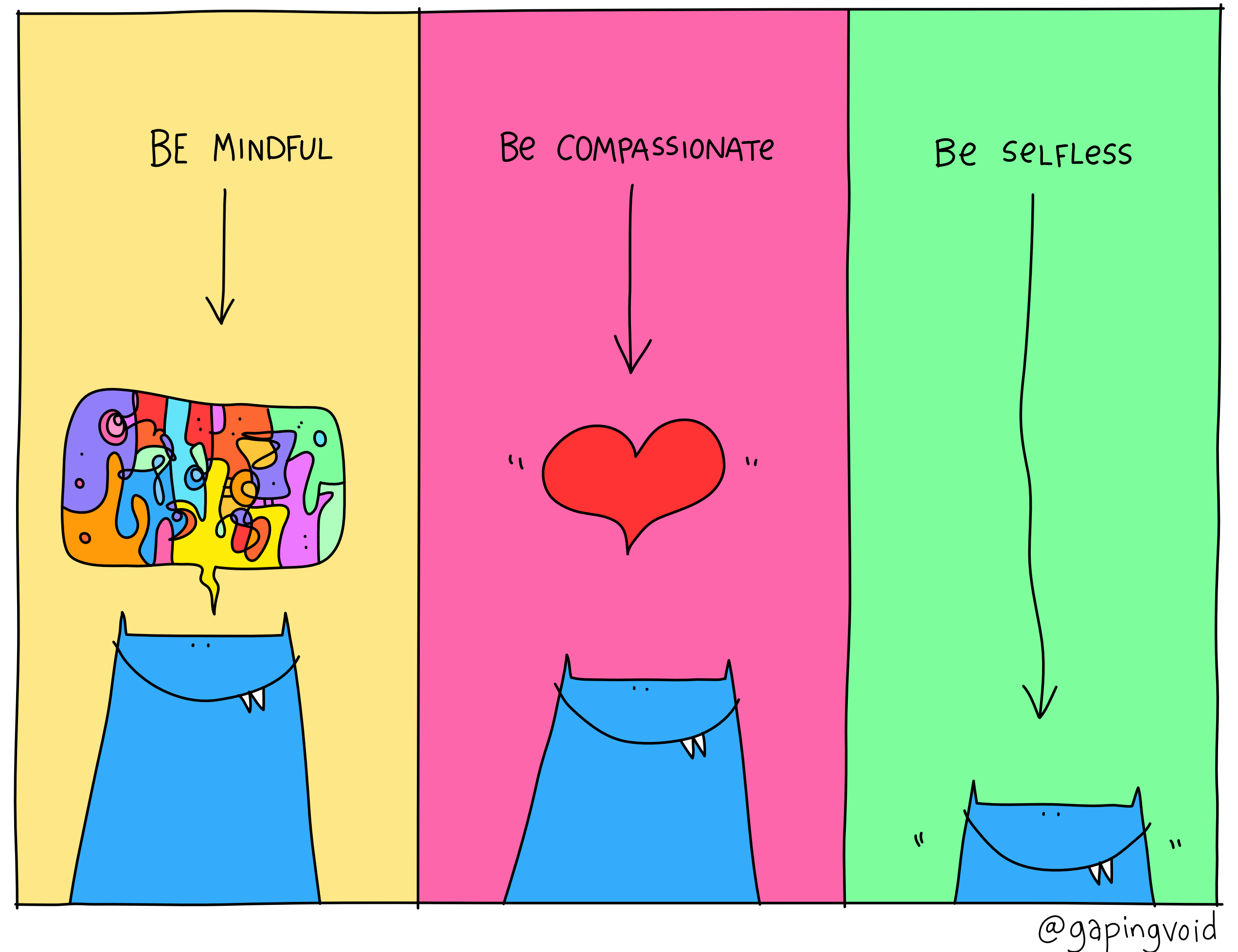
You then briefly mention how you have taken steps to protect your team members by holding fewer meetings or limiting travel and instructing any employee who is not feeling well to stay home, and we sure hope you mean that.

But this is the United States of America, there is no national requirement for companies to offer paid sick leave. And this is where it would be a great time to emphasize how you will provide the paid sick leave necessary so that no one on your team will have to decide between coming to work sick, losing their paycheck or even their job. [You might even get some good press from it.](#)

Your team members are the heart of your company, please take care of yourselves and each other.

Sincerely,

Your Customers



It's your chance to start a movement.

Another concept we think of is that the term 'employee' is outdated and not useful. We think about communities of people tasked with delivering some organizational outcome.

We win together, we lose together, we help each other in every way we can to achieve our goals. This construct is more important than ever now.

Community, connection, reaching out to colleagues that you may never ever speak to face to face, is the opportunity. Many of us are commuting less, spending less time doing unproductive office work. This is the time to build community, build your networks.

We can sit back and think 'poor us' or we can seize the opportunity to connect, to grow and do things you'd never ever be able to do if things were 'normal.'



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Agility is your friend.

If you were around then, you'll remember the 2008 crisis.

And you'll also remember how thousands and thousands of mid-tier marketing people were laid off to save money.

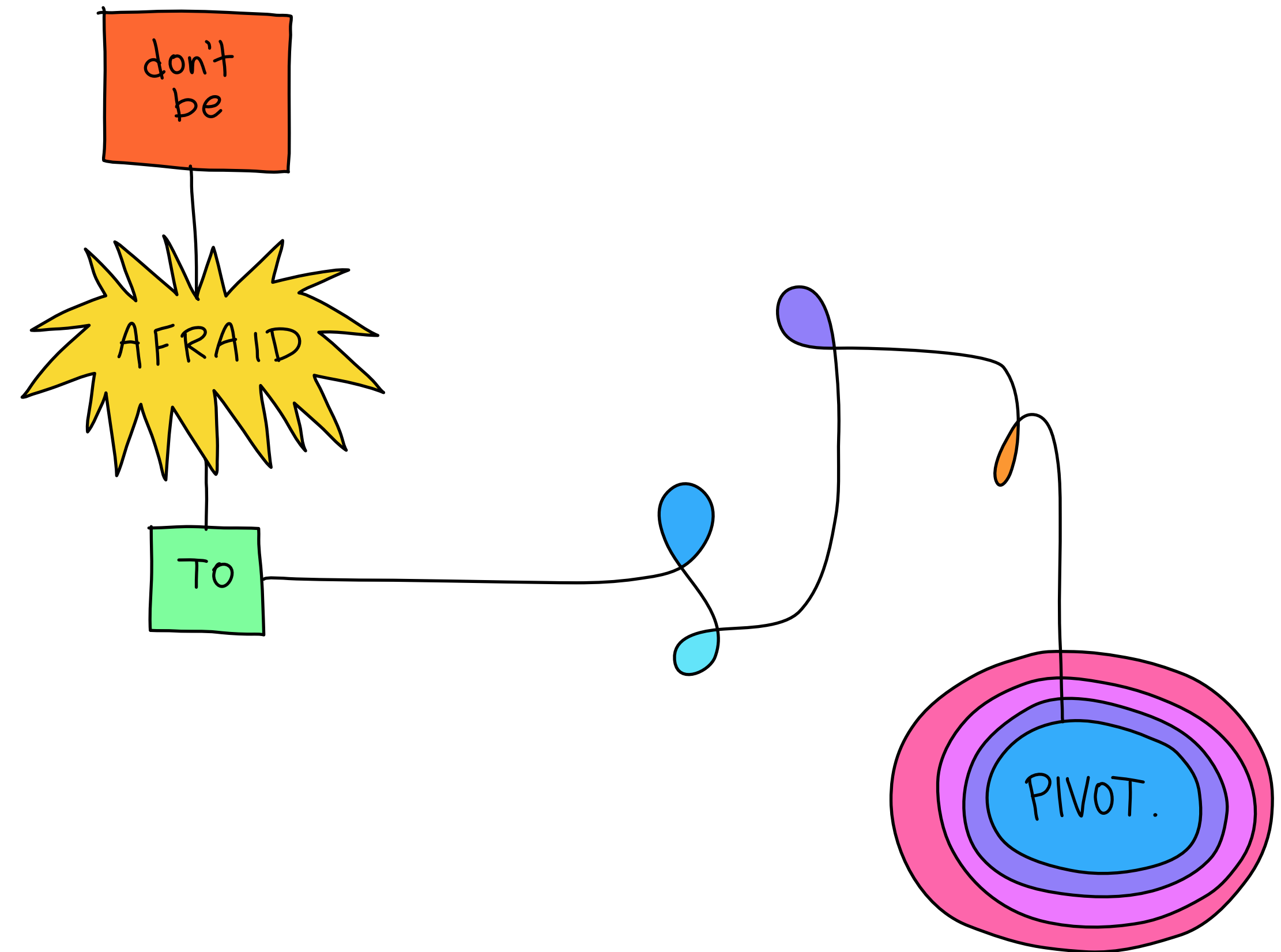
And you'll remember how a lot of those jobs never came back, as management found their companies worked just as well without them (especially with new digital solutions coming online).

Great crisis creates great social change.

So be it this time around. Though working remotely already existed before 2020, the Coronavirus will accelerate its growth to a whole new level. This will be a major cultural pivot. There will be losers, sure, but there will be a lot of winners as well. Will you be one of them?

Change is coming. Don't be afraid to pivot.

[h/t to [Bruce Lynn](#) for supplying the initial food for thought.]



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Help! Is this the new normal?

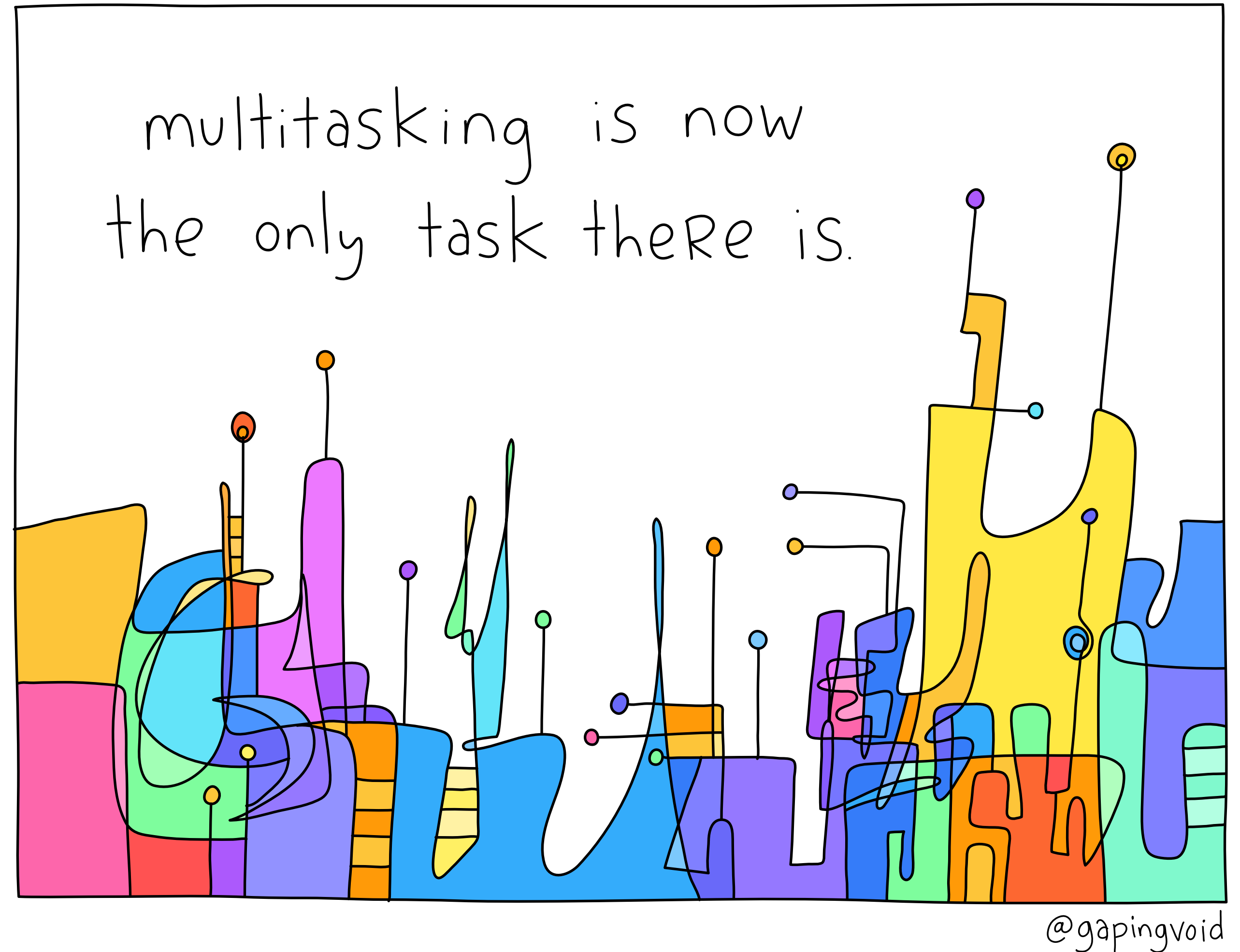
Welcome to the new way of doing things...at least for the time being!

Between trying to work remotely, learning to home school your kids, do the laundry, feed the dog and Lord knows what else...getting frazzled is going to be inevitable...no wonder [alcohol sales are through the roof!](#)

Now more than ever we are having to multitask and learn to be organized if we want to stay sane while we navigate uncertain times. Time-management is a skill we should all strive to be better at...right?

Here are some tips, which mostly tie to our new structure and boundaries:

- Be more thoughtful about your environment, as it impacts mindset and behavior. Reorder, and organize it to support your new realities.
- It's easy to sit down at nine, and work till five, with the day being a blur. Make lunch a must.
- Enhance focus by making detailed outlines of not just what to do, but what not to do.
- Set a hard stop time
- Plan your downtime to make the most of it.
- Oh, yes, turn cable news off.



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It's kinda obvious, but not to everyone.

Since we don't have that tactile, face-to-face connection, we are losing a lot of what connecting means to us. There is a ton of science on the subject.

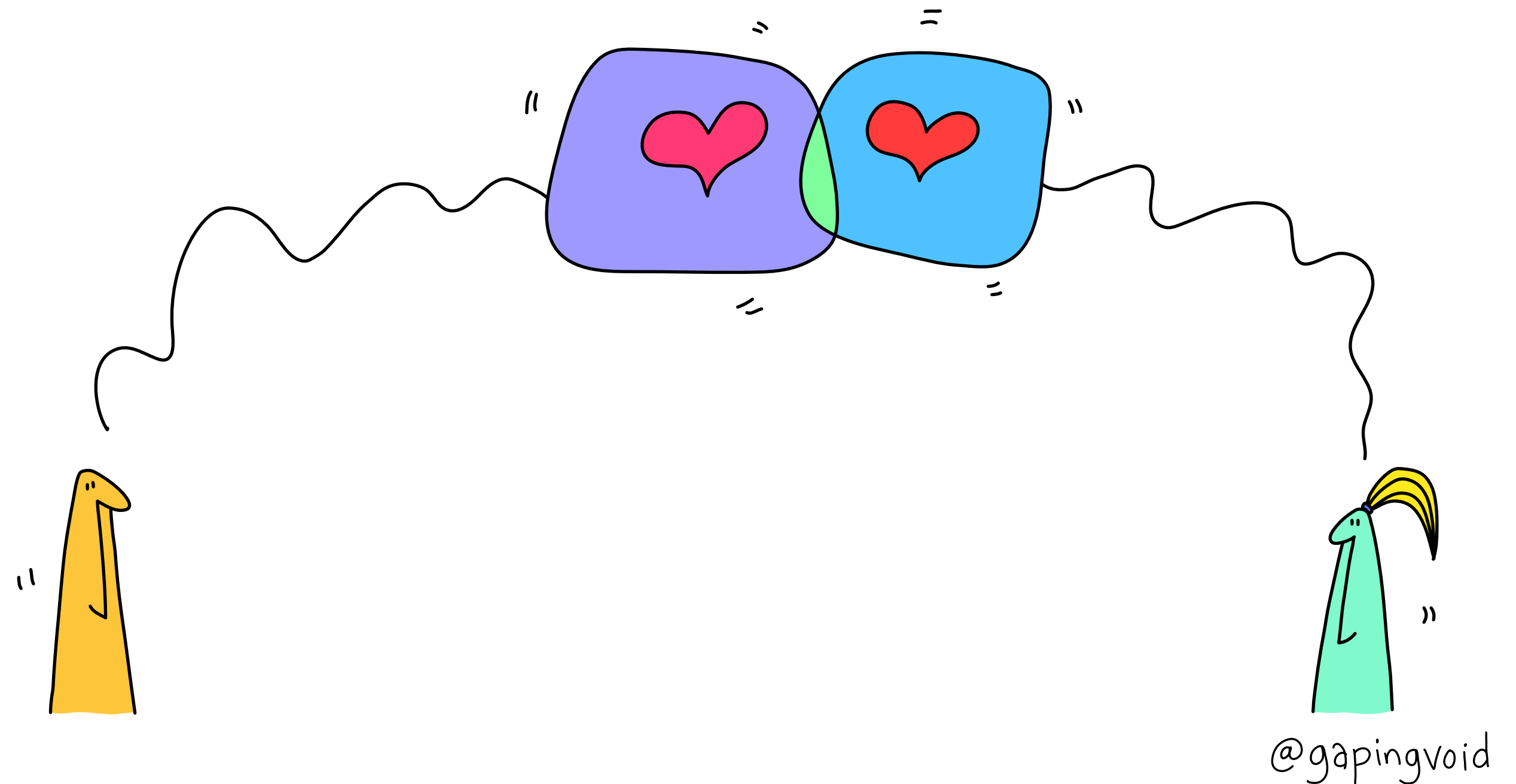
While we are losing the physical connection, we must compensate and double down on emotional connection.

This can be through all the tech we know so well, but let's think about expanding our language, the people we connect with, and be thoughtful about the depth of our conversations.

Be open. Be honest. Be clear. Don't be afraid to express how you feel. Do it more, harder and better than you normally do.

You'll be happy you did.

SOCIAL DISTANCING
SHOULD NOT BE
EMOTIONAL DISTANCING



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To the heros that walk among us.

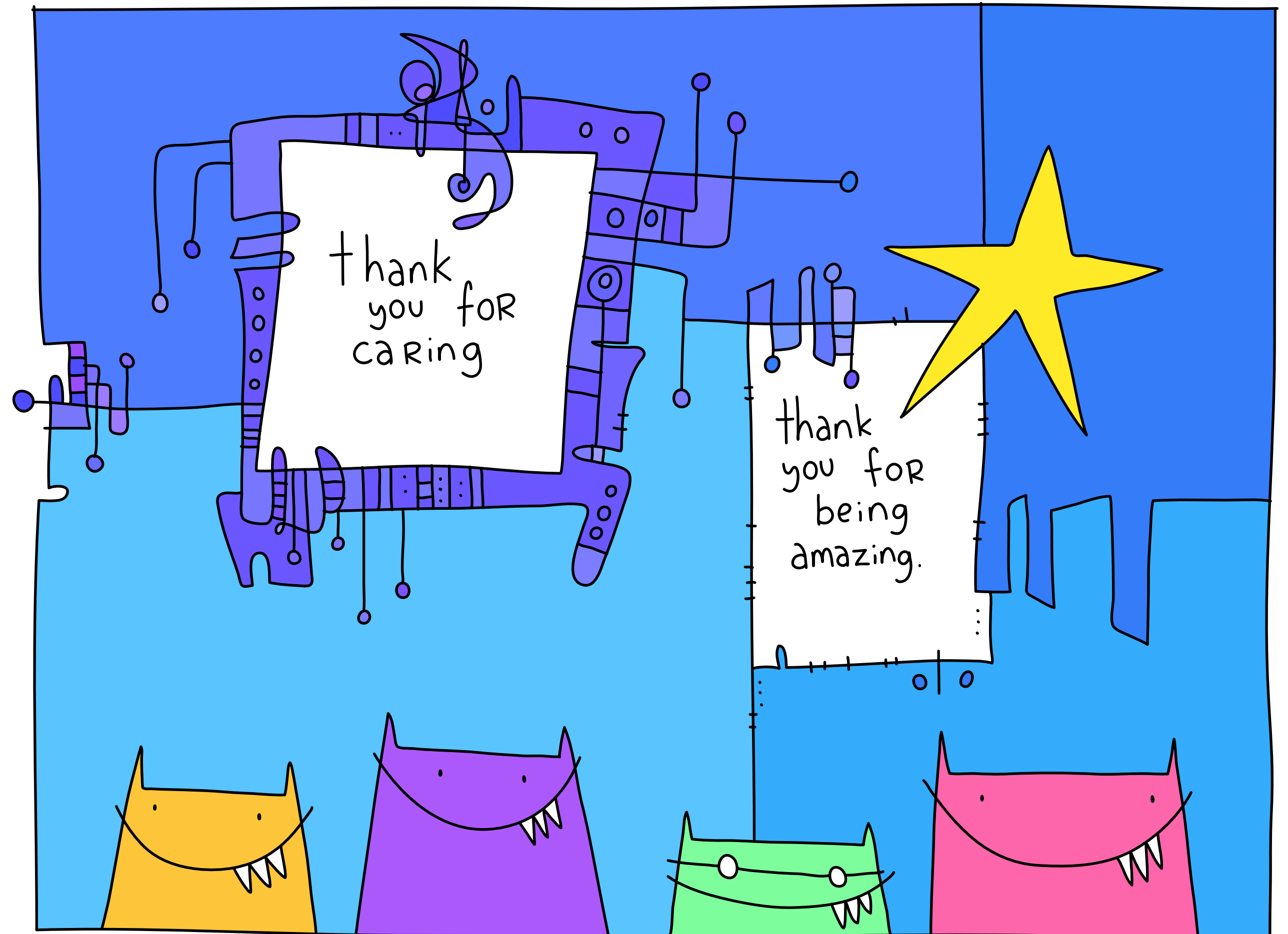
While many of us are ensconced in our homes, there is a whole bunch of people putting themselves at risk to help others.

We think about this a lot. What makes someone want to be a paramedic, a Navy Seal, an ER physician, a nurse in an acute care ward?

Some people are hard wired to make personal sacrifice for the benefit of others. We know who they are, and we feel the other kind of caregiver who is just showing up for the paycheck.

The crazy unknown about caring for patients in a lethal-communicable disease environment, is that these people are really risking their lives. It's not a job where one out of a million people are hurt. This is up close and intimate with something that might seriously harm you, day after day.

These people are real heroes. We need them now, let's not forget them later.



We turn organizations into purpose-driven communities.

Creators of Culture Science™, we combine research in the areas of behavioral science, social learning, and neuroscience, applying new tools and methodologies that **turn culture into a management system.**

We believe that every person can and must fall in love with their work. This is achieved by creating meaning and connection that both meets the needs of the individual and the organization. **This is a deliberately designable process.**

The power of culture, however, isn't simply about creating employees who are more engaged. **It is about the dramatic impact of culture** to deliver sustained operating results.

Over the last dozen years, Gapingvoid has served purpose driven organizations as diverse as Microsoft, Intel, VMWare, US Air Force, Departments of Defense, AT&T, MIT Sloan School, Yale University and Zappos.

We apply Culture Science™ to a broad set of solutions that include building cultures that support innovation, patient experience, digital transformation, and diverse & inclusive organizations. Our End-to-End Culture Design™ solutions address the holistic needs of the organization.

We work for purpose-driven organizations run by influential leaders looking to achieve greater connection and alignment to their goals.