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The Last Word

HumanKind – Be Both

We Are Strong and Will Get Through this by Working Together

Three simple words – ‘Humankind – Be both’ - I saw this on a t-shirt recently and thought how impactful such a short statement can be, especially when we continue to be mentally taxed by the covid-19 pandemic, subsequent shut-downs and shorter days as we head toward the end of a gloomy winter season.

As the first anniversary of the original shut down is upon us and we’re now in the midst of the second state of emergency throughout Ontario, we are being challenged in unforeseen ways – mostly mentally. From the condominium manager’s perspective, being deemed an essential service keeps us employed and for this, we are grateful. The flip side is the impact of isolation and working from home and dealing with those same impacts being projected from residents as well. Online meetings are not as engaging or satisfying as in person and I’m looking forward to reuniting with friends, family, co-workers and clients.

Managers are typically a resilient lot - you have to be when the majority of your role is delivering excellent customer service. Thinking back over the many decades of my career, we’ve dealt with serious conditions and big events such as union strikes and delays in project and construction completions, Y2K (uneventful, but scary

at the time), floods and storms causing the unexpected rise in Lake Ontario and the water consequences throughout the GTA, the big blackout of 2003 and multiple amendments of the Condo Act, which get trickier and more complicated with



each update and also manager licensing. This is compounded by the intermittent smaller hot topic items such as bed bugs, falling glass, kitec, EV stations, short term rentals, new building inspectors, insurance pricing, etc.

In this unique business we are dealing with people on a personal level since it involves their home or business. This

special relationship means we get to see how people are dealing with isolation and physical distancing in addition to having more people at home and facing the nuisances that weren’t there when they worked offsite. These include the sounds and smells and unsolicited interactions with neighbours and translate into requests such as ‘tell whoever is bouncing to stop it’ to ‘I can hear a baby crying/dog barking’ and ‘I smell someone’s lunch and it’s gross’. Lastly, we understand the urgency of other maintenance requests that seem to take forever to complete with supply chain impacts and guidelines preventing people from entering suites so we can’t always provide a satisfactory answer to the ‘what’s taking so long?’ question and we don’t like it any more than you do. We are a ‘get it done’ group of helpers. Telling us to do our job or else is not kind or effective.

Compassion during covid – this is my ask from all reading this. We are strong and will get through this by working together to achieve success while avoiding unnecessary conflict. Be kind.

The last word – Humankind. A gentle reminder of who we are on this planet.

As always, be excellent to each other!

ILLUSTRATION BY JAMIE BENNETT