

# Books to inspire in uncertain times

As the lockdown and self-isolation continues, here is a selection of books that you could be reading. They will inspire and entertain and give great lessons to help you grow your business and yourself. On top of that, they will give you things to talk about in the world outside of your startup.

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## **The Circle by Dave Eggers**

Fast, thrilling, compulsively addictive – The Circle is Dave Eggers’s timely novel about our obsession with the internet.

When Mae is hired to work for the Circle, one of the most powerful internet companies, she feels she’s been given the opportunity of a lifetime. Run out of a sprawling California campus, the Circle links users’ personal emails, social media, and finances with their universal operating system, resulting in one online identity and a new age of transparency. Mae can’t believe her great fortune to work for them – even as life beyond the campus grows distant, even as a strange encounter with a colleague leaves her shaken, even as her role at the Circle becomes increasingly public.

[Buy The Circle](#)

## **All Good Things: A Treasury of Images to Uplift the Spirits and Reawaken Wonder, compiled by Stephen Ellcock**

Designed to stimulate and inspire, *All Good Things* is an exciting, eclectic collection of over 200 images from world-leading museums as well as lesser-known collections. In a finely calibrated procession of image, quote and myth, Stephen Ellcock leads us through the Realms of Creation – from the Stars to the Seas, the Natural to the Supernatural – to give us his extraordinary world vision. A treasure trove of 3,000 years of artistic creation, scientific enquiry and pan-global magical, philosophical and religious traditions.

*Buy All Good Things*

## **Fall, or Dodge in Hell by Neal Stephenson**

One beautiful autumn day, while he undergoes a routine medical procedure, something goes irrevocably wrong. Dodge is pronounced brain dead and put on life support, leaving his stunned family and close friends with difficult decisions. Long ago, when a much younger Dodge drew up his will, he directed that his body be given to a cryonics company now owned by enigmatic tech entrepreneur Elmo Shepherd. Legally bound to follow the directive despite their misgivings, Dodge's family has his brain scanned and its data structures uploaded and stored in the cloud, until it can eventually be revived.

In the coming years, technology allows Dodge's brain to be turned back on. It is an achievement that is nothing less than the disruption of death itself. An eternal afterlife—the Bitworld—is created, in which humans continue to exist as digital souls.

But this brave new immortal world is not the Utopia it might first seem . . .

*Fall, or Dodge in Hell* is pure, unadulterated fun: a grand drama of analog and digital, man and machine, angels and demons, gods and followers, the finite and the eternal. In this exhilarating epic, Neal Stephenson raises profound existential questions and touches on the revolutionary breakthroughs that are transforming our future. Combining the technological, philosophical, and spiritual in one grand myth, he delivers a mind-blowing speculative literary saga for the modern age.

## **Digital Minimalism: Choosing a Focused Life in a Noisy World by Cal Newport**

In this timely and enlightening book, the bestselling author of *Deep Work* introduces a philosophy for technology use that has already improved countless lives. Digital minimalists are all around us. They're the calm, happy people who can hold long conversations without furtive glances at their phones. They can have fun without feeling the obsessive urge to document the experience. They stay informed about the news of the day but don't feel overwhelmed by it. They don't experience 'fear of missing out' because they already know which activities provide them with meaning and satisfaction.

Now, Newport gives us a name for this quiet movement, and makes a persuasive case for its urgency in our tech-saturated world. Turning off notifications and observing a digital Sabbath doesn't go far enough in helping us take back control, and attempts to unplug completely are complicated by the demands of family, friends and work. What we need is a thoughtful method to decide what tools to use, for what purposes and under what conditions.

Drawing on a diverse array of real-life examples, Newport identifies the common practices of digital minimalists and shows how they are rethinking their relationship to social media, rediscovering the pleasures of the offline world and reconnecting with their selves through regular periods of solitude. He then shares strategies for integrating these practices into your life, starting with a thirty-day 'digital declutter' process that has already helped thousands of people feel less overwhelmed and more in control.

Technology is neither intrinsically good nor bad. The key is using it to support your goals and values, rather than letting it use you. This book shows the way.

*Buy Digital Minimalism*

## **Non-bullshit Innovation: Radical Ideas from the World's Smartest Minds by David Rowan**

David Rowan travels the globe in search of the most exciting and pioneering startups building the future. He's got to know the founders of WhatsApp, LinkedIn, Google, Spotify, Xiaomi, Didi, Nest, Twitter and countless other ambitious entrepreneurs disrupting businesses in almost every sector. And yet

too often the companies they're disrupting don't get it. They think they can innovate through jargon: with talk of change agents and co-creation gurus, ideas portals and webinars, make-a-thons and hackfests, paradigm shifts and pilgrimages to Silicon Valley. It's mostly pointless innovation theatre — corporate nonsense that has little to do with delivering real change. But during this quest he's also discovered some genuinely exciting and transformative approaches to innovation, often in places you might least expect.

Get ready for:

- The airline that rewards passengers for walking their dog
- The bank that performs surgery
- The country that's an app store

And many more.

Packed full of tips for anyone looking for radical ways to adapt and thrive in the digital age, this carefully curated selection of stories will reveal ideas for creating genuine innovation from some of the world's most inspiring leaders.

*Buy Non-Bullshit Innovation*

## **Design Your Life by Vince Frost**

This book will not solve your problems. You have to do that yourself. But this book will inspire you to work better at living better.

Design plays an essential role in our daily lives. You don't have to be a designer to design your life. But it doesn't hurt to have some professional help. It took designer Vince Frost more than 25 years as a professional to appreciate the power of the design process as a means for improving his life. 'If my design process brings value to me, perhaps it can bring value to others. Or, more radically, bring others to recognise their own value.' This book will not solve your problems. You have to do that yourself. But this book will inspire you to work better at living better.

*Buy Design your life*

## **Alchemy: The Surprising Power of Ideas That Don't Make Sense by Rory Sutherland**

To be brilliant, you have to be irrational. *Why is Red Bull so popular - even*

*though everyone hates the taste? Why do countdown boards on platforms take away the pain of train delays? And why do we prefer stripy toothpaste?*

We think we are rational creatures. Economics and business rely on the assumption that we make logical decisions based on evidence. But we aren't, and we don't.

[Buy Alchemy](#)

## **100 year life by Lynda Gratton and Andrew Scott**

In *The 100-Year Life - Living and Working in an Age of Longevity*, published June 2nd 2016 by Bloomsbury Publishing, Lynda Gratton and Andrew J Scott outline the challenges and intelligent choices that all of us, of any age, need to make in order to turn greater life expectancy into a gift and not a curse. This is not an issue for when we are old but an urgent and imminent one. Extremely well received by critics and readers alike, the book has received extensive coverage around the world.

Uniquely drawing on the authors' expertise in economics, psychology and sociology, Gratton and Scott offer a broad-ranging analysis and a raft of solutions covering what to do with your finances, your education, your career and your relationships to succeed in creating a fulfilling 100-year life. This book provides insights into what individuals, politicians, firms and governments need to do and demonstrates that the 100-year life can be a wonderful one.

[Buy the 100 Year Life](#)

## **TO:KY:OO by Liam Wong**

Liam Wong's debut monograph, a cyberpunk-inspired exploration of nocturnal Tokyo from Thames & Hudson

Wong grew up in Edinburgh, playing video games before studying his art at Abertay University in Dundee, where he made his first video game in 2009 with some friends.

Some years later, while working on the game Far Cry 4 at the software house Ubisoft, he developed an interest in photography as he travelled to different events.

“It took on a different persona. It was like being inside the worlds created by Syd Mead and Ridley Scott in Blade Runner or Gaspar Noe in Enter the Void.”

*Buy TO:KY:OO*

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