



Seype

The EDIT VIII

A NOTE FROM MAGGIE

THE VIRTUAL REALITY ISSUE

Welcome to Semple Edit VIII that, at the start of 2020, we had not planned on publishing. This virtual edition is a response to how we pivoted our business around Covid 19. We thought creatively about how to continue work and reach out to our clients with virtual calls and social media. We reflected on world incidents that have affected our mindsets and we share how we have connected to new networks of women with our virtual events.

I think you will enjoy reading about the 5 things that Dulcie and I have learned during the last three months. We have stories from Jackie Taiwo and Helene Martin Gee about their virtual networking events and you will see an array of positive takeaways from our calls with clients. Dulcie also discusses how wearing face covers will be the new normal.

As ever, keep safe and well and we are always open to receiving your feedback.



July 2020



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FACE COVER STYLING

DULCIE PRYSLOPSKI

Since it has been announced that face covers will become the new mandatory accessory for wear in public, Dulcie thought to share some advice on how to wear your face covers so you can be safe and stylish.



You can still wear lipstick under face covers - just ensure they are matte based or dry before applying your cover over the top!



Coordinate your face covers to your outfit. Pick out colours from your top or nails to pair your face cover to.



Why not have some fun and play with colour blocking to liven up your face cover styling? Mix and match with opposite tones for a bold look.



Experiment with tying your hair up to alleviate the weight around your ears when wearing your face cover for long periods for more comfort.



You can still wear glasses and head accessories with our face covers - we just recommend you add them after your face cover is secured.



Play with prints to liven up your look. Change up between block colouring and patterns to alternate your looks.

SEMPLE FACE COVERS

www.maggiesemple.com/semplefacecovers/



WARM COLOUR PACK

RED
PINK
ORANGE
YELLOW
LIGHT GREEN

COOL COLOUR PACK

DARK GREEN
BLUE
PURPLE
LAVENDER
BLACK

NEUTRAL COLOUR PACK

SAND
LIGHT GREY
DARK GREY
BLUE
BLACK

MIXED COLOUR PACK

RED
LIGHT GREEN
PINK
LAVENDER
BLUE

CHOOSE YOUR COLOUR PACK
& ORDER ONLINE: 5 REUSABLE
FACE COVERS FOR £30.

At Semple, we are working on the premise that people are buying for their needs rather than their wants. Echoing government guidance, our face covers are not intended to protect wearers from getting sick from Covid-19 or any other virus but prevents the wearer from spreading their germs to others.

Semple face covers are sold in packs of 5 for £30.00 in the colour packs above. They have been designed to sit comfortably but securely for full protection with string ties at the sides to fasten around your ears. The fabric is pure cotton so the face covers can be washed at 60 degrees and will keep you cool during wear.

To place your order please visit our website.

SPLIT LIVING

KAREN MITCHELL

After an insightful zoom call with Karen, about 'the new normal' life post Covid19, we thought to share her helpful observations and tips that we think others may benefit from as she takes time off as a Transformation Director and to reflect and enjoy her sabbatical.

Over the last few weeks I have been chatting to friends, ex work colleagues and conversations in network groups about "going back to work" and what they are missing about working in an office vs working from home. One of the key things seems to be not actually the office itself, but the journey home. It allows time to switch off from the busy day and refocus the mind on home life.

It seems the move from the home office to home life is all a bit too "instant".

It made me reflect on how I did this when working both in a clients office or working from my home office in the past few years. Before I started my sabbatical, most days, I had a commute of 1 to 1.5 hrs sometimes longer if overseas or shorter if staying overnight in a hotel, but the same principles seemed to apply.

If I was travelling from the office to home, part of my journey was reading and replying to a few work emails and writing my to do list for the next day. As I moved from views of city skyscrapers to open fields I switched my mind to what was for dinner, then chat to family and friends online and generally put the office work to the back of my mind. I arrived at the station, my husband kindly listened to my account of the day as we drove home and then the phone was put to one side and I was in "home zone".

Being totally honest, I am not sure I always completely switched mindsets, it did depend on what I was working on and the deadlines

etc, but on the whole the journey home was my detox from the busy day of meetings, reports, projects etc.

Whilst working from home means less commuting time, it also means less time to "switch your mindset". Again, I did a bit of reflection of when I was working from my home office. What was my "virtual journey home" and how did I "switch from work to home mindset"? Here are a six things which formed part of my virtual journey home:

1. Just like leaving the physical office, where I made a call home to say I was leaving, I did the same, simply by saying to my husband I would be finished in 30 mins. This helped me as it was a commitment I wanted to keep to. I like to be on time. Why not try it? Message a family member to say you will be joining them in 30 mins, then start your virtual journey home.

2. I started to close down for the day by turning off the pc, clearing the desk and putting together the list for the next day- ok I do like to be organised.

If you're not keen on to do lists another thing to try is:

3. If you have a separate office, close the door so you can't see the laptop and paperwork and if you are working from the dining room table or bedroom, try to move your laptop and paperwork so it's not visible, it may help you mentally stop thinking about work.



4. Wherever possible move to another room in your house that you haven't been using as your office space that day, before you join the rest of your household. 15-30 mins of "you time" to do a few personal emails, watch a YouTube clip before you turn your mind to "home life". This helped me switch the mindset, just like I would do on the train home.

Simply getting up from your work area, walking down the stairs or into a room where home life begins never seemed a long enough break to switch off for me - that would be like switching your mind from work to home by the time you've gone down the stairs to the office front door.... not quite long enough for most of us

5. I personally didn't go a walk at the end of the day when working from home, but a walk for 30 mins to switch from work to home life I know helps as my walk to the train station in London often was a fab mind switching moment too, so might be worth a go if you have a place to walk near home.

6. I tended to leave my work phone in a room away from where I would be spending the rest of the eve. I know so many people only have

one phone, but if you are tempted to constantly look at work emails, having a separate work phone can help give you time to focus on home. All to often we convince ourselves emails and messages must be answered immediately, but how many messages are really that urgent?

We also need time to switch from home to the office the next day, I used my commute to do this by reversing most of the above. My commute started with a message to my parents to check they were ok, few online social catch ups and then time to check emails received overnight and get back into thinking about meetings and things which needs to be addressed that day and yes by the time I got off the train I was in the zone of work again.

When working from home this was quite similar. The family and social emails over breakfast. Check of the work diary. Time to gather thoughts whilst in the shower and then I was mentally ready for those first emails and meetings of the day.

For me, now it's time to leave the phone and iPad in the office and go for dinner.... it's home time after all!

A VIRTUAL LESSON

JACKIE TAIWO

We were approached just before isolation by Jackie Taiwo, Co-Founder and Chair of women's network Black Women in Asset Management about hosting a virtual event on how to manage your zoom presence. Here is her account of the event and what was learnt from it.

On 23 April, Semple hosted an evening event via Zoom entitled "Feeling and Looking Good While Zooming In" for Black Women in Asset Management (BWAM). This is a professional network that I co-founded in 2019 to advance and retain black women leaders who work in the asset management field across all investment strategies.

BWAM hosts networking events and training workshops providing women with tools and resources needed to thrive in the industry. With over 100 members, BWAM also exists to champion the positive impact that black women are making in investment.

The Covid-19 pandemic forced many of us to work from home and in new ways. Zoom became the primarily method for holding work meetings, calls, and check-ins. Although, the technology was easy to use, I recognized that Zoom was still a new way of communicating that presented new challenges especially for women. Our appearance, style and personal presentation are under constant scrutiny.

I asked Semple to deliver an event to provide members with guidance on how to maintain your personal brand and style in a virtual world. The workshop was centred around how to develop screen presence whilst working remotely, and included tips on positioning, camera placement, lighting and background. Attendees learned about the impact of enclothed cognition (i.e. the systematic influence clothes have on the wearer's

psychological processes and behaviour).

The event was attended by about 20 BWAM members, primarily women with mid-senior experience level. We asked everyone to join with their video on to create an interactive and engaging session.

As a result of the session, I learned many practical tips to improve my professional appearance through Zoom. For example, Maggie pointed out that women with darker skin tones should pay extra attention to lighting, to ensure your face is fully visible on screen. She pointed out that if the viewer cannot see your face, you limit your ability to communicate effectively. Now, I pay attention to lighting and ensure my face is well-lit for meetings.

Attendees thought Maggie and Dulcie did a great job presenting and provided helpful perspectives on how to make a good impression through video calls. It was wonderful that Maggie stayed online after the session ended to share more of her personal story and leadership experience. Many of the women started sharing their own stories of how they use the personal brand to stand out and have impact in male dominated spaces. It was an inspiring conversation.

We received lots of great, positive feedback too which evidently shows how much the event impacted our way of thinking.

“Brilliant! Really great balance of fashion, real tips for online presence, and networking with some great ladies”.

“It was insightful and helpful. I liked the fact that it was delivered in a manner that offered guidance but was not forceful - I think the hosts did a great job.” I appreciated the different perspectives which gave participants the opportunity to decide for themselves what they want.”

“The event with Semple made me think about my approach to zoom calls. I will be a lot less relaxed about them.”

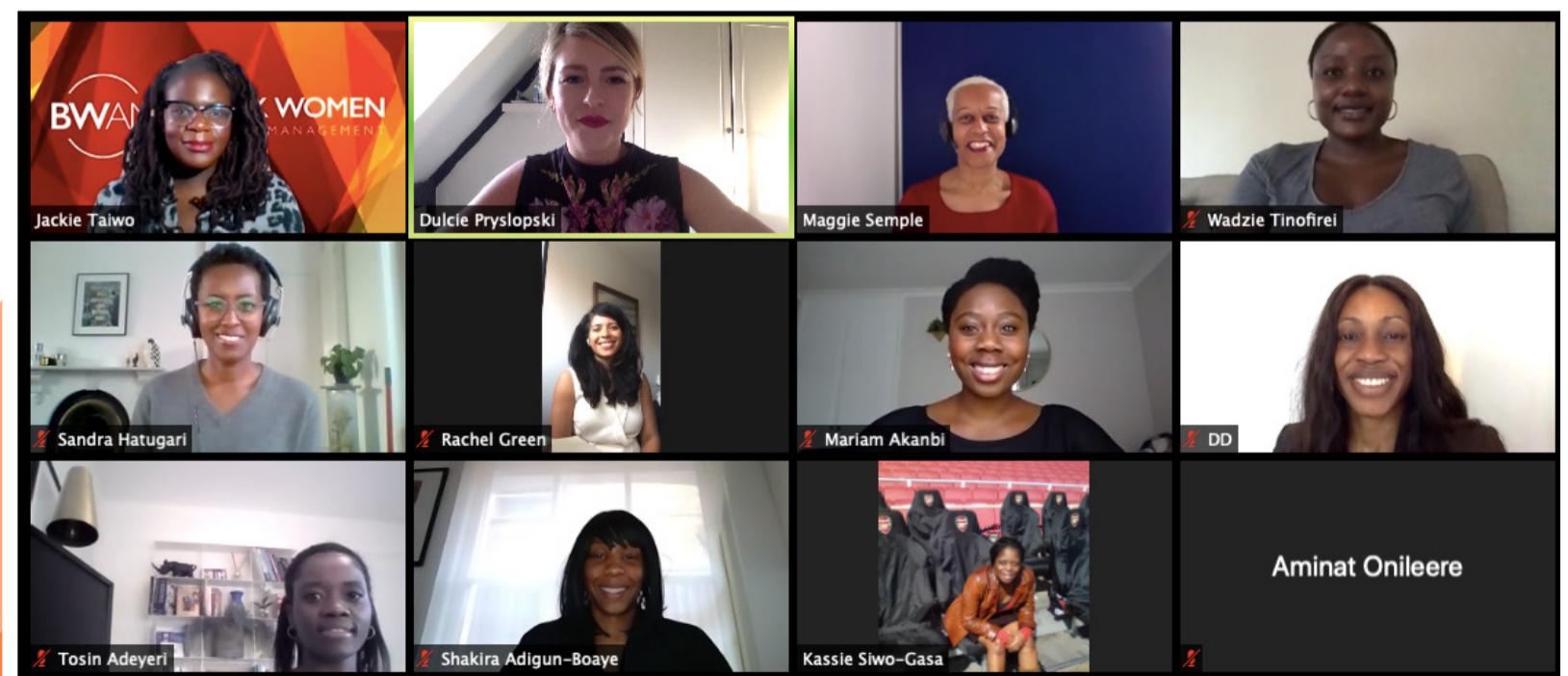


Image: Maggie and Dulcie with BWAM members.

ZOOMING IN

SEMPLÉ CLIENTS

Whilst going into self isolation has restricted us from opening the atelier doors to friends and clients, what it hasn't done is stopped us catching up virtually. Here's a glimpse at some of our conversations...



Jane Oremosu
Managing Director of
JK Sales Consultancy

Talking to Maggie and Dulcie got me really thinking about how I appear on camera. It made me more conscious about how much facial expressions can change - I'm now trying to smile more as it's a lot easier! You also don't realise how much of your background shows on camera and how distracting this can be.

Another thing is what you wear and how you wear it - the unspoken communication while doing video calls is so much louder than doing it in person. You really have to take into account the top half of your clothing on show, hence my love of bright tops on camera!

www.jksalesconsultancy.co.uk



Lucy Orhnia
Partner at Grant Thornton

It was lovely to catch up with Maggie and Dulcie - after getting some helpful tips on using my brand new face coverings, we discussed our thoughts on returning to the office and, most importantly, when we might see each other again! I also took away some excellent pointers on making an impact on video calls - really important given that they will be here to stay for the foreseeable future.



Linzi Parry
Change and transformation
consultant

It's always a pleasure to see Maggie and Dulcie - both radiate an infectious positivity, which is especially welcome at the moment. We exchanged ideas on how best to keep in touch with clients, without being too intrusive when we're unsure of their personal circumstances. We concluded it was a great opportunity to keep conversations informal and perhaps take the chance to connect beyond the usual business topics. This has lead to some lovely two way exchanges for me with clients who are perhaps shifting along the scale towards being friends! Thank you Dulcie and Maggie.



*Kerry Nicholls
International Dance Leader and
Director of Kerry Nicholls Dance*

As Maggie is Chair of our Advisory Board at Kerry Nicholls Dance (KND), our Zoom call was a check-in to discuss how both of our companies were responding to the current crisis in a trusting, brave space. I talked about KND's fresh approach to embracing the world of virtual when teaching and coaching, whilst Semple disclosed their clever Visage Collection idea. As always, my conversation with Maggie and Dulcie was energising and inspiring. Professional and slick, but with ease and humour, Maggie's foresight always propels me forwards. With a welcome sense of belonging, I left the call feeling courageous and buoyant, and with 3 sets of Face Coverings ordered, to look *Semple chic* around town!

www.kerrynicholls.com



*Louise Felstead
CEO of Mallards Wood Group*

Going into lockdown has been an interesting and different experience for me because we have been open working at my nursery the whole time. Where everyone else seems to be busy doing DIY, we have been on the frontline working. Time for creativity instead went to me reading government documents.

My call with Maggie and Dulcie got me thinking about the creative side of me and as a result I have ordered a new Semple cape! I've felt like I've been losing a part of me and our call reminded me to reward myself and give more time to self care. I've since increased my yoga sessions each week and thought about how I can manage my business after lockdown. It was great to hear about Semple's new ventures and discuss how to pivot business in the entrepreneur space, to help kickstart my creative thinking with my own business.

www.mallardswood.com



*Laura and Rachel Beattie
Founders of Careaux*

It was so lovely as always to catch up with the wonderful Dulcie after meeting at the We Are The City Awards last year and clicking instantly over our love for clothes. It was great to catch up about how we have all adjusted to working from home and share our box set recommendations and plans moving forward. So excited to catch up again very soon.

www.careaux.com



*Lucy Rogers
Professor/Inventor*

One of the benefits of having worked from home for the last twenty years is that I was pretty well prepared for "lockdown". I hadn't realised however, how much I relied on the occasional IRL (in real life) social interactions to make my relationships work and friendships stronger. Although Zoom calls are not quite as good and can be exhausting, for me they are important.

It was therefore a joy to catch up with Maggie and Dulcie, and, with no specific agenda other than to just "catch up". We could let our thoughts drift and head off in directions no-one would have planned. I learnt the story behind Dulcie's beautiful room decoration, and, for no real reason, they heard about my Gravity-Kart duck I made and raced a few years ago:

It is also great to see how others are reacting to the pandemic. There's a lot of "reaction". Above all it is just great to see a couple of faces from "the past life" light up my lab!

www.lucyrogers.com



*Anne Laforce
Business manager*

It is always great to catch up with Semple. Lockdown was not going to stop Maggie checking that her clients were ok and provide a company update. I had an excellent consultation via Zoom with Maggie and Dulcie. So much information was given in a brief time schedule, not being with them in person did not reduce their enthusiasm.



*Ruth Cooper Dickson
Founder of Champs Consulting*

It was wonderful to still experience the friendship bond I have with Maggie and Dulcie albeit virtually.

Our ending conversation subject - as always - was me becoming excited to plan and discuss the next garment I had my eye on. That in itself felt normal and real, in what can only be described as the opposite situation we all find ourselves in.

www.champsconsult.com

As video conferencing is topical, Maggie provided me with excellent advice. She reminded me to be aware of your background shot on view to others whilst on a professional video call. Maggie suggested, the preferable back drops to use at home, including the placement of company branding. In addition, to have a corporate photograph ready to be on display if the video link drops - 'who knew'?. Even though we may all be Zoomed out, video conferencing is going to be here to stay, so thank you ladies for the valuable advice.

FASHIONABLY VIRTUAL

Due to the limitations of COVID-19, we have thought creatively about how to host our events and are pleased to say we now offer virtual events for business networks globally. These also include virtual consultations and measuring sessions.



Se
mple

An example of a popular topic is:

*Looking & feeling good
while Zooming in*

1. Learn the impact of enclothed cognition.
2. Explore how a wardrobe colour can positively make you stand out.
3. Discover practical do's and don'ts for your next important virtual call.

We can also give you tips and advice on styling, wardrobe editing and repurposing garments.

If you would like to host your own virtual event please contact us for more information.

ON AIR WITH PINK SHOE

HELENE MARTIN GEE

Pink Shoe founder Helene Martin Gee shares her account of Semple's virtual event with her club members, educating them on the art of the perfect wardrobe edit.



Image: Helene Martin Gee.

Pink Shoe has as its maxim the life-long development of women. Since 2007 we've engaged with inspiring women leaders of every sector, background, and culture. It's vital to Pink Shoe that we blend business with conviviality, and that has never been more important than during lockdown.

So, rather than our usual live events, we've been hosting an eclectic range of online activities combining world class speakers with sparkling conversation. Pink Shoe 'On Air' uses an authentic BBC Radio 1 studio sign as a backdrop to these interactive occasions.

An absolute highlight of the On Air series was a session with Dulcie, Creative Director of the renowned Semple Atelier. Dulcie joined Pink

Shoe to give us her fashion insights focused on the Semple Wardrobe Edit, a way of curating our clothes to create a capsule collection that is perfectly tailored to our personal life and style. After a welcome from Pink Shoe's fabulous founder Helene Martin Gee, we heard a little about Semple itself, which members were quick to commend for its elegantly chic dresses and jackets.

Then over to an exquisitely dressed (of course) Dulcie, who first shared a video of stylishly satisfied client Jane, which gave each of us an insight into what can be achieved and how wonderful it is to have a wardrobe that actually works.

At this point we all asked ourselves, why, oh why, have I got so many clothes? And why are there so many pieces languishing in the back of my wardrobe unworn from month to month? or (more honestly) from year to year?

Now for the hard part. Dulcie outlined what we can each do to clear our clothing clutter. She advises take a good look at our wardrobe(s) putting aside clothes we haven't worn for two seasons. Pop them into a bag and if they're too hard to part with immediately, leave the bag in the boot of your car or a hall cupboard for a couple of weeks; then review the clothes. If you haven't missed the items it's off to the charity shop, knowing one can now bear to part with them. A great idea which makes the process far less painful! We vowed to get started the very next weekend.

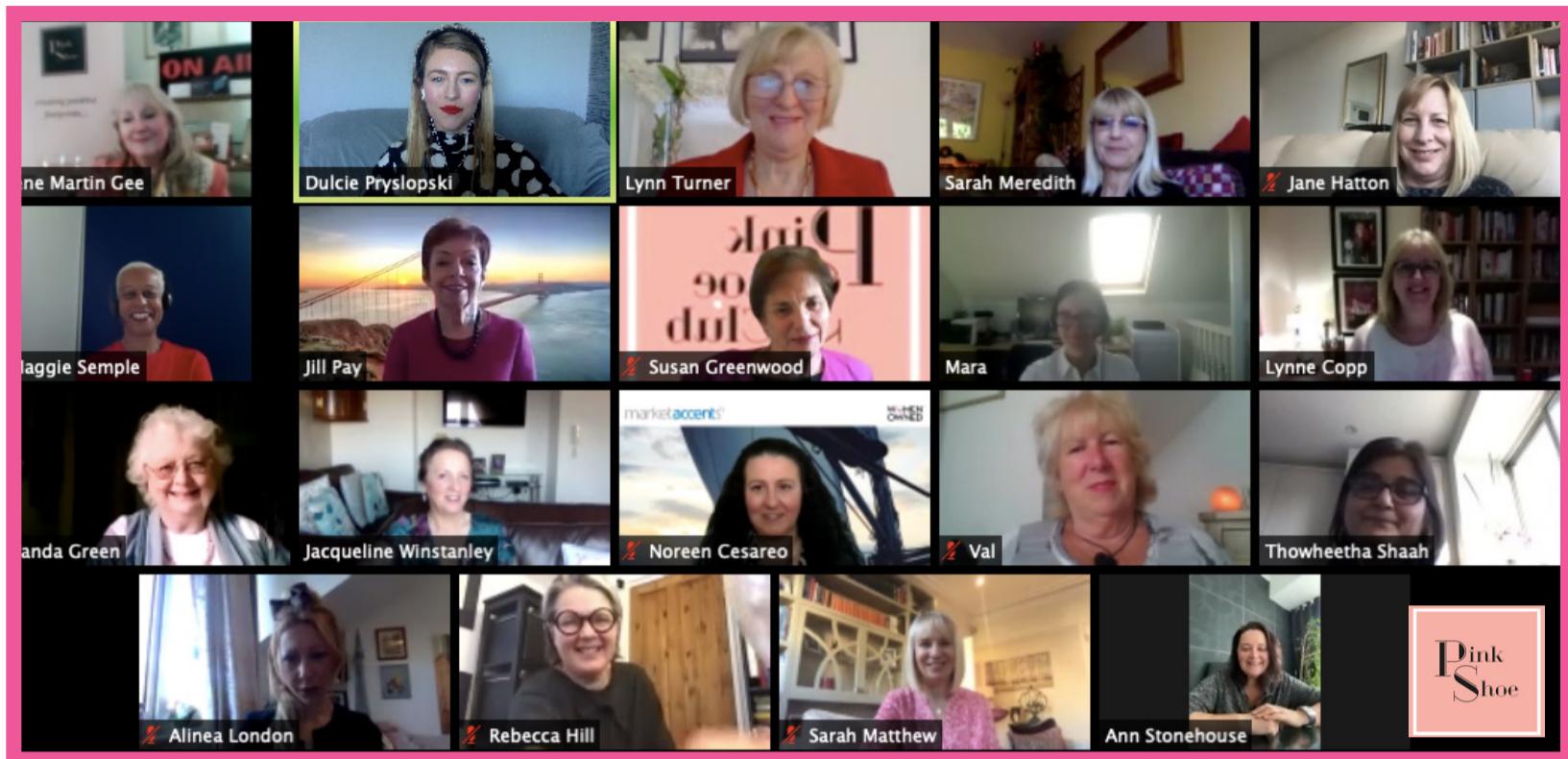


Image: Maggie and Dulcie with Pink Shoe members.

So, onto our personal style – taking a long look at our clothes and arranging them by occasion, and especially what goes with what. This builds a range of outfits we can rely on to always look good. Next, consider any gaps. despite having lots of items there may be something missing that can tie together a range of different looks. In the video, surprisingly the missing piece was a long black jacket. The difference this made to many different looks from day to evening, formal to weekend, truly demonstrated the magic of the right jacket.

Then, when buying anything new, its vital to work out how many of our existing pieces it would go with; thus avoiding the sale 'bargain' too good to miss but never coming out to play because it doesn't match anything else!

We heard that Dulcie can even do the Wardrobe Edit virtually, ideal in these times. And what a luxury that she provides us with our own personal style book - a guide to the many outfits we can create, showing us exactly what and how to wear. Not only that, but Semple can refresh clothes that just need updating, or even recreate a favourite but tired item. Who knew?

During the collaborative 'FizzTime' part of the evening, over a glass of something sparkling, Pink Shoe members had lots of questions, to which Dulcie enthusiastically responded. Here

are three of our favourite top tips she shared:

1. Resist buying things for the thrill of it. Try to only buy something new if it goes with at least three other items currently in your wardrobe.
2. Try not to limit yourself with wearing only a few of your go to colours. Incorporate tones you wouldn't normally go for into your wardrobe but team these up with colours you love on you for balance.
3. Don't hang onto clothes that no longer fit you. Instead, invest in having these amended to fit your body shape as it is now or let go of these and give these to a charity shop to allow someone else to enjoy the happy memories your clothes gave you.

Finally, Dulcie let us know about the new Semple Face Covers (see more on page 17); In packs of 5 with a rainbow of colours from which choose, we can be stylishly safe. Since our session the first orders have arrived and are highly recommended!

It was a real treat to be On Air with Dulcie, many of us are booking slots for our own (virtual) Semple Wardrobe Edit. Clearly Semple style is here to stay.

BAFTA & BEYOND

EMMA THOMAS

Just over a year ago, we met Script Supervisor/Continuity and BAFTA winner Emma Thomas at the atelier to design her awards dress for her. A year later, we are now in very different circumstances and thought to catch up with Emma to see what she is up to now.

For the first couple of weeks I enjoyed the rest and relaxation with time for myself. Then as the lockdown continued I quickly learned how to connect with family and friends virtually, without knowing when I would be able to meet them in person and receive that all important human connection of 'Hugging each other'. It goes without saying that these are challenging and unprecedented times for all of us around the world. My mindset became – Keep Calm and Stay the course. We will get through this and come out the other side.

I have kept busy during my time in self isolation. I have an ongoing project of sorting through my late brother's photographs. They had been stored in a loft for over 14 years. There are around 5000 negatives and over 200 prints. It is and continues to be a voyage of discovery. Who knew there is an app for looking at negatives via the mobile phone.

Workwise I've volunteered to be an online juror, so I have watched a lot of short films and documentaries. It has been amazing to see what the next generation of filmmakers around the world have produced, with little to no resources. A lot of them made during pre-Covid times. This lockdown will discover a lot of hidden talent in the film and tv industry.

I've watched various financial and business webinars and, like a lot of people, various Netflix content. "Becoming" documentary Michelle Obama. "Self Made" mini series with Octavia

Spencer. How I wished I worked on those programmes.

The lockdown has provided us all with a 'Life's pause button' whether we wanted to engage with it or not. I'm glad most of us have had time to talk (virtually) with family/friends/neighbours/strangers. It's been a great reminder of who the real key workers are in this country and around the world.

From my catchup zoom call with Maggie and Dulcie, I have learnt to always wear colourful lipstick on Zoom calls and construct an interesting background setting. It was wonderful to speak to both on the Zoom call. However more importantly I'm really glad we were able to meet up in person Pre-Covid lockdown to take the Bafta photos outside Semple HQ. I can't thank Semple enough for my Bespoke Bafta dress worn for the Craft awards last year.



Images: Emma Thomas with the Semple team and her BAFTA award.

RE-IMAGINING REALITY

MAGGIE & DULCIE

It's hard to imagine how life after Covid-19 will look but as rules and restrictions are lifted, we can get a small glimpse into our new future life. Maggie and Dulcie reflect on what working in self isolation has taught them and how new habits may drive them moving forward.

MAGGIE'S FINDINGS:

An appointment with history.

I like this phrase as it sums up what the world continues to experience. We are in the midst of a global pandemic and also the Black Lives Matter movement which has forced individuals and groups to examine their stance on humanity and racism. I hope that the next appointment with history is a positive one.

The 're' factor.

I was talking to a friend recently and we agreed that this is a good time to re-view, re-set and re-imagine the near future. If you haven't had the opportunity yet to do so, I encourage you to create your 're' list and then discuss it with a colleague. It's an uplifting experience.

Digital trust.

There is no doubt that more and more of us are learning how to engender digital trust. We are having to understand visual cues remotely via a screen. We are listening more intently and disciplined in our discussion as we raise our digital hand to make a point. I hope that when we meet face to face we remember this protocol.

New products.

If we hadn't been forced to work from home we probably would not have created two new products - our daily Zoom sessions with clients and making face covers. Both products came from client suggestions and we took an agile approach to creating, improving and producing a quality product. I know that this experience is now part of who we are.

The corner shop.

I champion independent shops and during the last few months I have seen the resurgence of the small shop becoming central to the well being of communities. The owners, usually a family, have shown that they know and care for us. I like to think that our clients say this of Semple.

DULCIE'S FINDINGS:

I do not dress for comfort.

My 'casual' attire normally consists of jeans and a t-shirt, something I soon learnt was not comfortable for sitting at a desk all day working from home. It never occurred to me before that I do not own any loungewear?! Needless to say I quickly rushed to order some leggings online for next day delivery! It's important to add however, that I still make a conscious effort to dress the top half of my body as people take note of this on Zoom calls. I wouldn't arrive at the atelier like I've just got out of bed and certainly wouldn't want people perceiving this virtually! A bright top, neat hair and slick of lippy soon fixes this.

How strong minded I am.

Ever since I was a little girl, I was extremely head strong. If I wanted to do something, I wouldn't stop until it's done. On the flip side, if I didn't want to do something then you would sure know about it too. Left to my own devices, I will work way past my set hours to complete a task if my mind is set on this. Commuting to work with set hours and travel links restricts this from happening and has allowed me to break away from this habit I have once again adopted. I have also learnt that if I'm not in the right mindset for written work, then I should accept defeat and try again tomorrow on a clearer head. Otherwise, I'll wind myself up and waste a day trying to create something equally as good to a couple of hours work on a good day, simply because I am stubborn and want to get the job ticked off my list!

How important self care is.

It sounds shallow but I really miss my 'me' time with beauty appointments and trips to the cinema. They allow me to switch off and reset and that's something I find hard to do unless I put myself in the hands of someone else. During isolation, I have replaced my commuting time with self

care. I now pamper myself, make calls with my friends and watch my favourite TV programmes during these hours to keep my routines in place and manage my wellbeing around work when enclosed in the same space.

How my health has improved.

I think everybody can admit to enjoying the simple life with less stress during lockdown - me included. What I have really noticed is how this has impacted my health. By no longer rushing between home and work and enduring lengthy travel delays, my anxiety levels are down and my body has been given time to heal and reconfigure. As a result, my skin feels like it's had a holiday refresh and I've even overcome some food intolerances which is music to my ears!

How much I value working around women.

I really have missed the face to face interaction during meetings with my girlfriends and clients. It has become apparent to me that there is a strong energy given off during these meetings which really helps to boost or stabilise my mood. Zoom and Facetime calls suffice to an extent in these circumstances but it's nothing on the physical hugs and hand gestures you witness in person. For this reason, I can't wait to get back into London and have a tea and catchup with my friends and colleagues.



STAY IN TOUCH

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