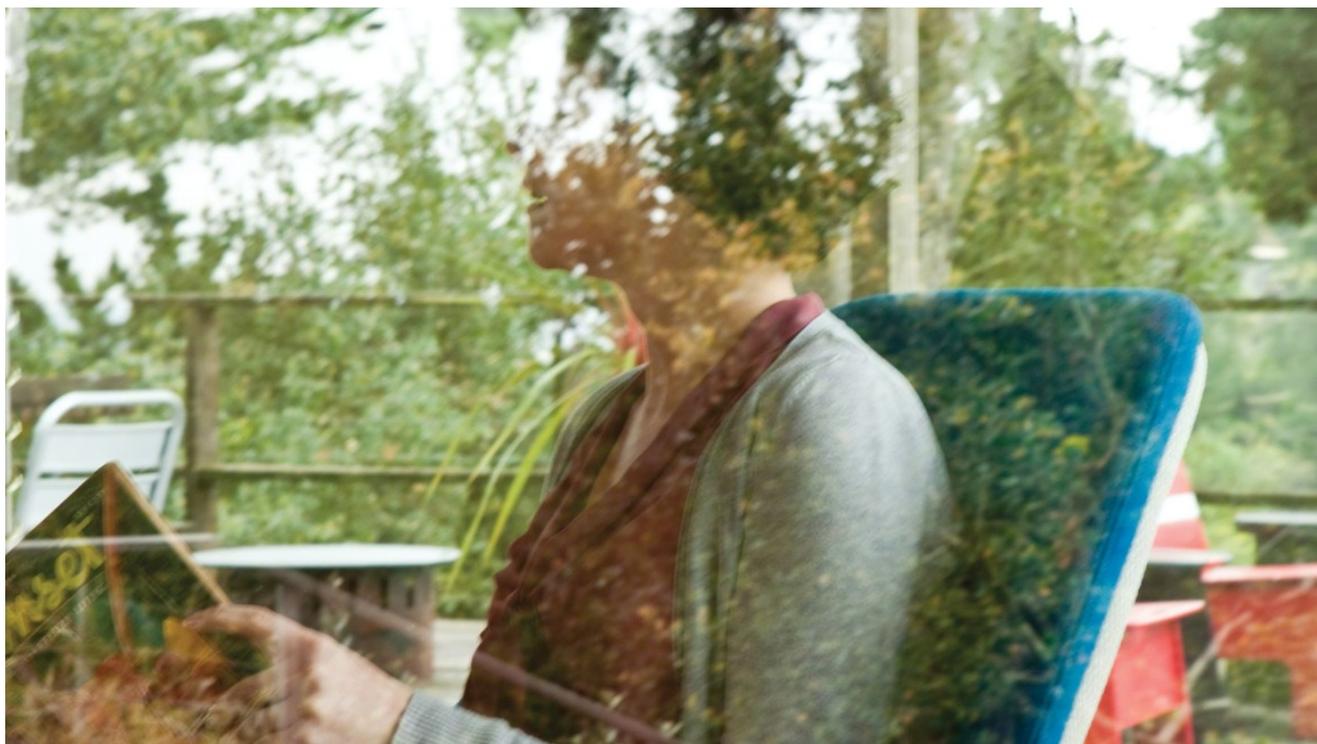


Avocado Toast and Focus



“Avocado Toast.”

That’s what the bakery chalkboard advertised on my walk back to my hotel after a run in Central Park. It sounded good, and indeed it was incredibly delicious. So much so that I had to concoct my own version back at home in Virginia.

I could not help but wonder if I would have paid attention to a similar advertisement on the sidewalk where I live. I’d like to think I would have noticed. But even if I had, would I have been compelled to try it?

I travel quite a bit these days. With the lines heavily blurred between work and non-work time, I’m fortunate that the benefits of travel afford me experiences where I learn about many unexpected yet welcome things. Despite all the reasons I love being home, there’s a freedom that comes with leaving that behind. While on the road, the “distractions” of home are tucked away. And in a way, I have less to think about so I can think better.

Ellen Langer, an award-winning social psychologist, argues that “our physical environment primes our feelings and behavior, although we are typically oblivious to its influence.”

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Some places have the ability to minimize distractions and help you imagine, reflect, and process. When I find myself in a place that inspires, I want to stay there and follow through on the thought or idea in my head, right then and there.

It is possible for our workplaces to impact our ability to think better and create similar experiences and feelings. Harnessing the attributes that reflect what naturally exists outside of the office is hard work, but once such a space is created, we will be able to allow our minds to focus, reflect and ultimately think better.

Here's the delicious recipe inspired by my New York trip:

LAURIE'S AVOCADO TOAST

½ avocado

Lemon

Kale

1 slice of sourdough bread

Salt

Ground black pepper

- Mash up the avocado. Add freshly ground black pepper, a dash of salt and a spritz of lemon juice.
- Lightly toast the slice of sourdough bread.
- Spread the avocado mixture on top and add more freshly ground black pepper.
- Tear up the kale and add on top of the mixture.
- Spritz some more lemon juice on top.

And for a really beautiful plate, slice up a hard-boiled egg and serve on the side.

What places inspire you and allow you to focus at work? Read the Think Better issue of 360 Magazine to learn more about how the workplace can impact your cognitive wellbeing.

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