

To sum up, regardless of certain limitations, we on the STIBC board feel that this development represents an important step forward for our members since it increases job opportunities and helps enhance the fact that STIBC-Certified Translators are preferred suppliers to government and provincial agencies.

Stefano Gulmanelli, PhD. C.T.
Certified Translator, English to Italian
Director at Large, STIBC Board of Directors, 2018-2021

Five Strategies for Keeping Sane in Covid Times

By Silvia Xalabardé

1. Separate your personal and professional space.

You've probably made this resolution before but somehow it's surprisingly easy not to keep to it and slide back into a work-life mush that leaves you feeling exhausted. Now that Covid gives us an excuse, it's easy to sit on the couch and watch a movie while helping yourself to carrots and hummus with one hand and distractedly typing with the other. And come to think of it, what's the big deal if you answer a couple of quick work emails on your phone while having breakfast with your family and Zoom with a client from Europe last thing at night?

In the long-run, however, having no separation between work and leisure can result in low-productivity and a lingering feeling that your workday never really ends.

Having a designated workspace can be a sanity-saver and help you achieve more in less time. It's great if you can choose a room in your house where you do work and nothing else. If there are other people around and your work room has a door and a lock, I suggest you use them both! If not, try at least to find a little corner where you can work undisturbed, and make it a nice and inviting space where you can enjoy spending time.

2. Make an effort to attend some online events.

I get it: Zoom Christmas parties drinking bubbly by yourself in front of the screen and meditation meetings on Skype are rarely as much fun as their real-life counterparts. After a while, it's all too easy for you to let all optional get-togethers fall by the wayside and turn into a 24-hour pyjama monster with hair to match. However, making an effort to attend the maybe-not-so-awesome online choir practice or parent group (or translation workshop for that matter) can help you forget the cabin fever of your house and balcony and give you back a sense of connection that will help preserve your mental health.

3. Get out of the house.

It is B.C. and sometimes it rains (a lot!). Moreover, the whole social-distancing/masks/line-ups/fear can make even the thought of a small outing seem like an adventure trek that leaves us reaching for the comfort of the remote. However, now that spring is upon us and the days are getting longer, it's a great time to start enjoying the great outdoors (and I don't mean watching it on Netflix) and improving our physical and mental wellbeing in the process. Most of us are lucky enough to have access to amazing nature places. And on those inevitably rainy days, I find a walk around the neighbourhood with waterproof boots and an umbrella goes a long way towards making me feel more like a human and less like a translation robot.

4. Have someone to complain to.

Working as translators, we are all very familiar with impossible deadlines, formatting that looked great until we hit "Tab" and everything disappeared, and clients who complain about rates and say they could do it themselves if it weren't for that pesky stamp requirement.

To minimize the impact of stress and isolation, it's a good idea to try and find someone with whom you can share your work stories on a regular basis. Another translator is ideal, but failing that, any friend who works

from home will do. Arrange a call once or twice a day to tell them about the day's funny (and not so funny) incidents and stresses and laugh and commiserate about theirs. Translation does not always lend itself to teamwork, even at the best of times, so having a friend who empathizes with what you are going through can be a great outlet.

5. Do something you have always wanted to do.

After a year of Covid restrictions, many of us are left feeling that this time is all about resignation and making sacrifices for the good of all. This is why doing something you would not have done otherwise is a way of getting something back and making the best out of a bad situation. If there is one thin silver lining in this whole thing, it's having a bit more time for ourselves and the opportunity to use it well. Best not to think about this as an additional pressure (who else has writing the Great Canadian Novel on their to-do list?), but rather as a chance to break bad habits and try new things. Have you always wanted to read *War and Peace*, cook healthy meals, learn Italian, or play the guitar? Dive in! These things are not only good for the soul, but you can use them as incentives to stick-and-carrot your way through your daily word count. Activities like these can also be helpful for structuring otherwise amorphous days if you dedicate the same time period to them every day. Imagine if we all become Russian-novel-reading, guitar-playing, healthy Italophones: at least in this whole Covid mess we will have done something constructive!

Silvia Xalabardé, C.T.

Certified Translator, Spanish <> English, Italian>English

Vice-President, STIBC Board of Directors, 2020-2021

Farteischt un Farbessert: Art and Techniques of Enhanced Translation

By Jonathan Orr-Stav

Legend has it (and it's been retold so often, it's hard to know if there's any truth in it), that on the title page of a certain nineteenth-century translation of Shakespeare's writings into Yiddish, the translator (or publisher) added the subtitle, *Farteischt un Farbessert* ("Translated and Improved").

Of course, the idea that any translator, no matter how good, could "improve" on the Bard is a great example of Yiddish *chutzpah* (possibly related to the German quip about how Shakespeare's writings are better in the original German). But when it comes to the writings of lesser mortals, there is indeed usually room for improvement: just because someone is an expert in their own field, it doesn't mean that they know how to express themselves coherently and well in writing.

At the start of my career as a professional translator of academic texts, some fourteen years ago, I asked my mentor (a noted translator and editor in her own right) how she handled a text that needed improvement or a correction of wording—i.e., whether she translated it as is, or improved it.

"I improve it," she told me emphatically, without hesitation. "That's one of the reasons people come to me, instead of other translators."

I'm so glad she said that because otherwise, I would have the painful task of leaving as is, texts which, when translated straight from the original, would read like this:

Incidentally, despite the assurance in the objective reality presented in Wilder's films, and the avoidance of presenting such a reality in *Rashomon*, by presenting contradicting testimonies, still a similarity exists between *Rashomon* and films by Wilder [...] – they all deal with questions of moral responsibility. Therefore, the similarity and dissimilarity between *Rashomon* and Wilder's films lead to the conclusion that various filmic techniques may bring about similar thematic.