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Q4 2020

To the donors of Second Spoon Inc.:

Keck

It may seem poetry isn't particularly relevant to day-to-day life. However, just a few months ago I found myself in a hospital bed, dejected and upset. The restless night before surgery, I came across 'If' by Rudyard Kipling. Here's one of my favorite excerpts from it:

If you can make one heap of all your winnings
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
And lose, and start again at your beginnings
And never breathe a word about your loss;
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
To serve your turn long after they are gone,
And so hold on when there is nothing in you
Except the Will which says to them: 'Hold on!'

Kipling tackles a major philosophical problem, the problem of "triumph and disaster." The trouble is balancing between complacency when things are going well and loss of faith when they aren't. In any case, the two "imposters" should be treated the same. Never too high, never too low. This appears to be particularly relevant after tearing my ACL a few days ago (and just a few minutes after throwing a touchdown). But we can also find similarities in Second Spoon as it prepares for a post-covid environment.

It's been, not to mince words about it, a crazy year. It seems like everyone's plans took a turn for the worst at some point. Mine certainly did. And if your brain is a little more like mine and less like Kipling's, it's hard to "lose, and start again at your beginnings."

This is a short memo on how the Second Spoon team is tackling this.

Buttface

<This is not a summary of my previous letters, so I'll skip the scenes of our earlier pivots (Q1-Q3)>

Annual reviews are useful exercises for forcing ourselves to look at points of improvement, and perhaps more importantly, tenets of aspiration moving forward. Last year, I likened the process to Buffett's annual shareholders meeting where he detailed Berkshire's relative shortcomings.

But this year, let's think about our decisions in the same way Phil Knight thought about Nike during his annual retreats. What Knight and his band of corporate confidants understood, in their endless combinations of goofing and shouting matches, was that the company ethos could be summed up by the thought that "no idea was too sacred to be mocked, and no person was too important to be ridiculed" – so much so, that the event (and its participants) was captured by Knight in one word: buttface.

So which of our pre-existing beliefs have been challenged throughout the past year?

1. We *must* partner with universities and dining halls
2. Food is the *only* good we can deliver

A David Perrell tweet reminded me of this Jeff Bezos quote: "Anybody who doesn't change their mind a lot is dramatically underestimating the complexity of the world we live in." If there were a silver lining to Covid, I would say that we were forced to re-consider alternative alliances and solutions.

- In *Los Angeles*, we've partnered with WaterDropLA to bring hundreds of meals, masks, articles of clothing, shoes, and water throughout Skid Row.
- In *Nashville*, we're working closely with Mayor Cooper and his 'Food Saver Challenge' team to distribute surplus foods from local restaurants.
- In *Miami*, it took the shape of participating in the #FeedOurHeroes Challenge. Providing aid to local businesses and simultaneously feeding first responders.
- And in *Baton Rouge*, we're anticipating a Summer 2021 launch. The food truck and volunteers are ready to roll.

The military has a famous saying: "Be hard to kill" (and I am using the word "kill" in all of its meanings). Whether it be overcoming an ACL tear or navigating Second Spoon through a pandemic, it's going to take a lot more to slow us down.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'DPH', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.