

THE FUTURE REPORT

We will spend less, but make better choices, as we move towards more intelligent consumption patterns. It is time to re-examine our educational model, ensuring we teach our children about real values. The future is not somewhere people go, but something we create.

A LEADER ON THE FUTURE AND THE ROLE OF WOMEN, EL MUNDO



Q: HOW WILL THE CURRENT CRISIS TRANSFORM OUR SOCIETY?

Kjaer: In Europe we are seeing a return to traditional values. In Greece, for instance, people are going back to the countryside and farming the land. We place more value on the family, the familiar things. Consumers have also become accustomed to comparing prices, buying products at a discount and looking for opportunities. We will spend less, but make better choices, as we move towards more intelligent consumption patterns. I believe we will also have to re-examine our educational model, ensuring we teach children to appreciate the true value of money and how to be more frugal.

Q: WHY HAS PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS BECOME A MAJOR GOAL IN OUR LIVES?

Kjaer: We have realised that materialism hasn't brought a better quality of life, so people are looking elsewhere for wellbeing. They are wondering how they can get the very most out of their lives, and they want to be happy. It is a fact that happiness is 50% genetic, and so that means the other 50% can be influenced by our environment and patterns of behaviour.

Q: DO YOU HAVE CHILDREN AND, IF SO, WHAT KIND OF MOTHER ARE YOU?

Kjaer: Yes, I have one son and my husband has three kids – a sons and two daughters. I always say I am a woman foremost and then a mother, not the reverse.

In my professional life, I categorise people into four archetypes: Happy Bohemes, Global Sustainers, High Achievers and Karma Hunters. This doesn't mean that people are only one type, we can switch at different lifestages and moments in time. I tend to be a High Achiever, but I also lean towards being a Global Sustainer. And whenever I can, I try to set aside time for 'me' rather than 'we', and then I become a Karma Hunter. I believe that in order to take care of the family, first you need to take care of yourself – and, of course, good mothers have sticky floors, filthy ovens and happy kids!

Q: HOW DO YOU DEFINE YOURSELF PROFESSIONALLY?

Kjaer: I am someone who helps businesses by providing information that enables them to build future scenarios. I started out originally in the realm of fashion, where there is a strong need to anticipate trends and, from there, I developed the methodology Kjaer Global still use today working across all industry sectors. Now there are 14 of us in my company – architects, journalists, designers – and let me make it clear that the future isn't somewhere people go, but something we create ourselves.

Q: ON WHAT BASIS DO YOU WORK?

Kjaer: I use pragmatic data and insights, such as statistics, and from there I create future scenarios. But my primary source is people. I travel widely all around the world, and I meet a diverse range of individuals. This is my main source of information in order to create what I call a Trend Atlas.

Q: WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF WOMEN AND WILL THEIR ROLE BE INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT?

Kjaer: Look at what happened in Iceland. It seemed like the end of the world and then who came to clean up that mess and organise everything? It was Icelandic women – and they are finally turning things around. I see a lot of growth generated by women, and I think this will change the whole global mindset as well as improving GDP.

5 KEY TRENDS

*** I FEEL, THEREFORE I AM**

It used to be 'I think, therefore I am'. From there we moved to 'I consume, therefore I am', and now we have reached 'I feel, therefore I am'.

*** REDUCING WASTE & EXTRAVAGANCE**

The sustainability debate becomes central.

*** WOMENOMICS**

In the new global economy. The 'Female Factor' is increasingly important.

*** TRIPLE 'P' INDEX**

Companies will have to consider planet, people and then profit.

*** RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION**

Whether consuming objects or experiences, we look to make a difference by acting responsibly.

INTERVIEW

By Isabel Garcia-Zarza for El Mundo's Yo Dona Magazine 09_12 >>

INSPIRATIONAL SOURCES

*** A Feminine Response – Halla Tomasdottir >>**

*** In Greece, a Painful Return to Country Roots >>**

*** Happiness: Do we have a choice? >>**