KAT VELLOS

katvellos.com

TW @katvellos

IG @katvellos_author

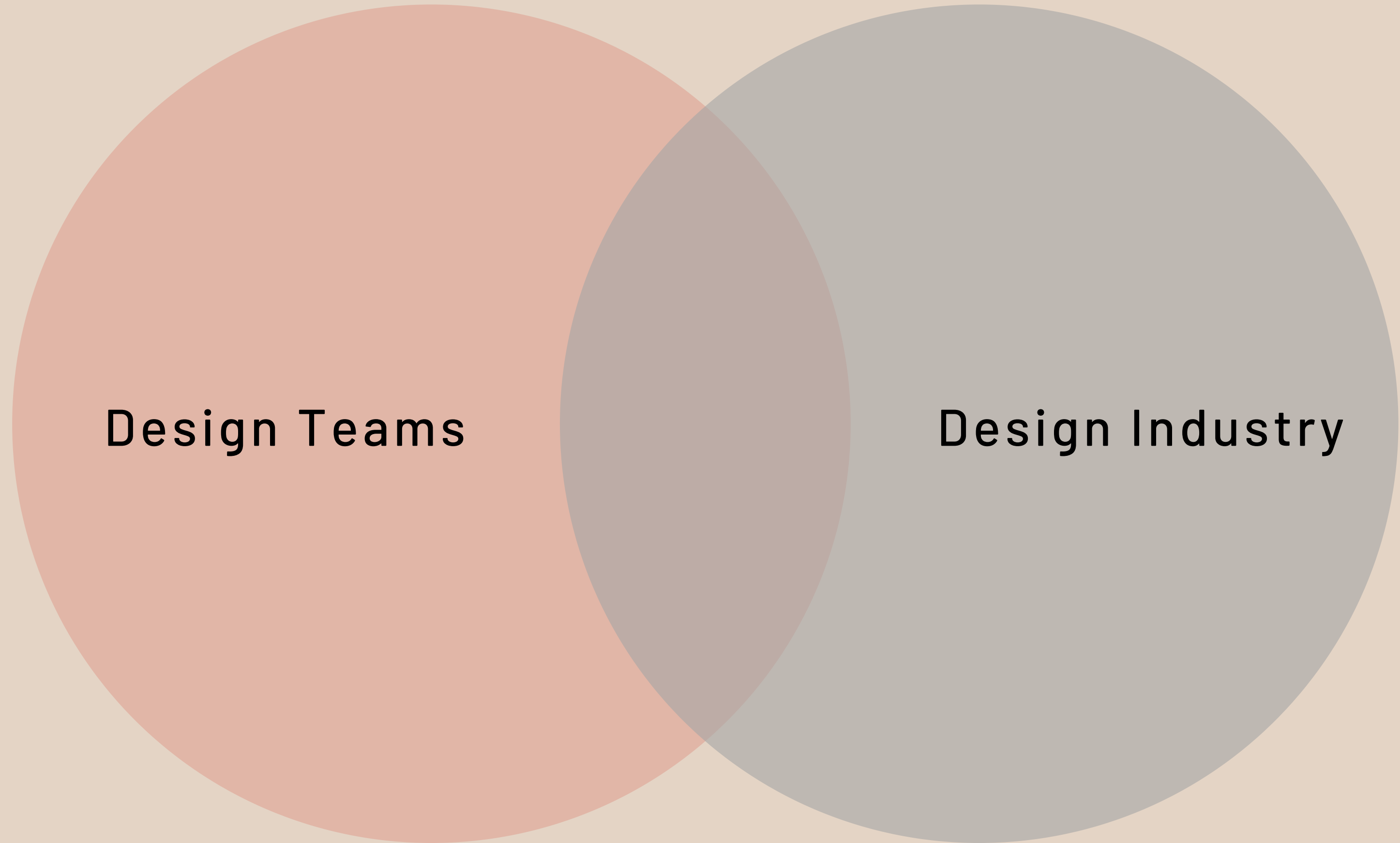# THE OTHER L WORD

$1,000,000,000

"Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced."

James Baldwin

Design Teams

Design Industry

Nina

(not her real name, obvs)

photo: wocintechchat

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Loneliness at Work

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40% of women of color feel like "the only" on their team

Lonely workers think about quitting **2X** more frequently than non-lonely workers

Replacing an employee can cost anywhere from 50% to

200%

of that person's annual salary

Source: Gallup
https://www.gallup.com/workplace/247391/fixable-problem-costs-businesses-trillion.aspx#:~:text=The%20annual%20overall%20turnover%20rate,and%20that's%20a%20conservative%20estimate.

photo: wocintechchat

I'm thinking of quitting my job. I always wonder, "is it just me? Am I the only one who feels this way?"

I've never felt connected or emotionally supported as a professional designer. I'm out of ideas after 20 years.

Hello, this person has been working in tech longer than you. Why this resistance to working with older people?

I suggested we hire women since there were none in the team. But they said "that doesn't matter." When a company doesn't look like real society, it makes me wonder if the company wants to belong to the future.

No matter what I propose — because I'm from an underrepresented group, they don't trust my abilities.

I feel most lonely in meetings with the whole design team. I feel like I'm invisible or would have to change myself in order to be present in a meeting.

Our clients expect pixel perfect work, and they expect perfect people.

Our VP of Design was promoting a Diversity & Inclusion initiative that ended up going no where. I couldn't speak out because she was higher than me in the hierarchy.

I often feel like I'm the only one who struggles emotionally on my team and that makes me feel disconnected more than anything.

I'm from a working class background and feel lonely and alienated in design because I didn't come from the burbs or go to the same schools.

I was mentoring junior designers but I didn't have someone to mentor me.

As a researcher, my contribution is hardly acknowledged. When they list the people on a successful launch, they don't even include my name.

Big, company-sponsored "fun" doesn't work for me. It makes me feel like an outsider.

We create our culture.

We design the system.

Connection at Work

photo: wocintechchat

Source: https://hbr.org/2019/12/the-value-of-belonging-at-work
https://officevibe.com/blog/infographic-friends-at-work
 https://www.inc.com/laura-montini/survey-why-employees-with-friends-more-engaged.html • https://www.gallup.com/workplace/237530/item-best-friend-work.aspx

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35% higher commitment to producing quality work

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300% more likely to say that they love the company

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Designing Connection

1

Foster psychological safety.

photo: wocintechchat

2

Liberate each other from the crushing pressure of perfectionism.

photo: wocintechchat

3

Right skills at the right time.

photo: affecttheverb.com/disabledandhere/

4

Make room for more kinds of people in design.

photo: affecttheverb.com/disabledandhere/

5

Don't tolerate or contribute to oppression.

photo: affecttheverb.com/disabledandhere/

6

Replace forced fun with authentic connection.

photo: affecttheverb.com/disabledandhere/

7

Mentorship
for everyone.

photo: wocintechchat

8

Elevate elders.

photo: affecttheverb.com/disabledandhere/

9

See each other as more than your job title.

photo: wocintechchat

10

Reward courage and candor, not assimilation.

photo: wocintechchat

Nurture your people.

Thank you

TW: @katvellos

IG: @katvellos_author

Work: katvellos.com

Books and events: weshouldgettogether.com