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FEMINA

Be unstoppable



MIND OVER MATTER

INVEST IN YOUR WELLBEING

- ART THERAPY TO CALM YOUR NERVES
- DANCE TO COPE WITH ANXIETY
- YOGA FOR MENTAL HEALTH

MODERN FAMILY

Here's how to spend quality time with your loved ones

SOUTHERN COMFORT

Flavours from God's own country

BANK ON IT

Be wise with your money and save for a rainy day

MANSI GANDHI ADVOCATES THE PRACTICE OF ASANAS TO KEEP YOU MENTALLY SOUND

FOREWORD

Caring for our minds and bodies means we can put the best versions of ourselves forward.

So what does wellness mean for us? Is it finding ways to de-stress and declutter our lives? Is it making a lifestyle change with the goal to get fit and healthy? In this current scenario, wellness is much more than a trending hashtag or keyword; how we take care of ourselves has become an indispensable part of daily life in 2020.

Before the lockdown was enforced, most of us tried to balance our work and life, ensure a healthy lifestyle (as much as possible), perhaps even carve out time for exercise (if we ever managed to tear ourselves away from our laptops or devices). How often were we successful?

WELLNESS IS MUCH MORE THAN A TRENDING HASHTAG OR KEYWORD; HOW WE TAKE CARE OF OURSELVES HAS BECOME AN INDISPENSABLE PART OF DAILY LIFE IN 2020

Today, positivity seems to be a virtue. An attempt to maintain a positive outlook, no matter how bleak or sombre things may seem, is the beginning of your journey towards wellness. The lockdown has urged the world to take stock of things that really matter. The air we're breathing today is far cleaner than mere months ago. The earth is slowly healing, and it took a deadly pandemic to make us pay heed.

Our May 10 – 24th digital issue will urge you to refocus that energy and make time for things that you put off for later. Later is here. So read that book, write that novel, paint that masterpiece, stretch in those yoga pants, or reconnect with that long-lost friend. The time is now, and the priority is your well-being. After all, when you tune out the noise, you get to listen to what's important.

Sincerely,
Team Femina



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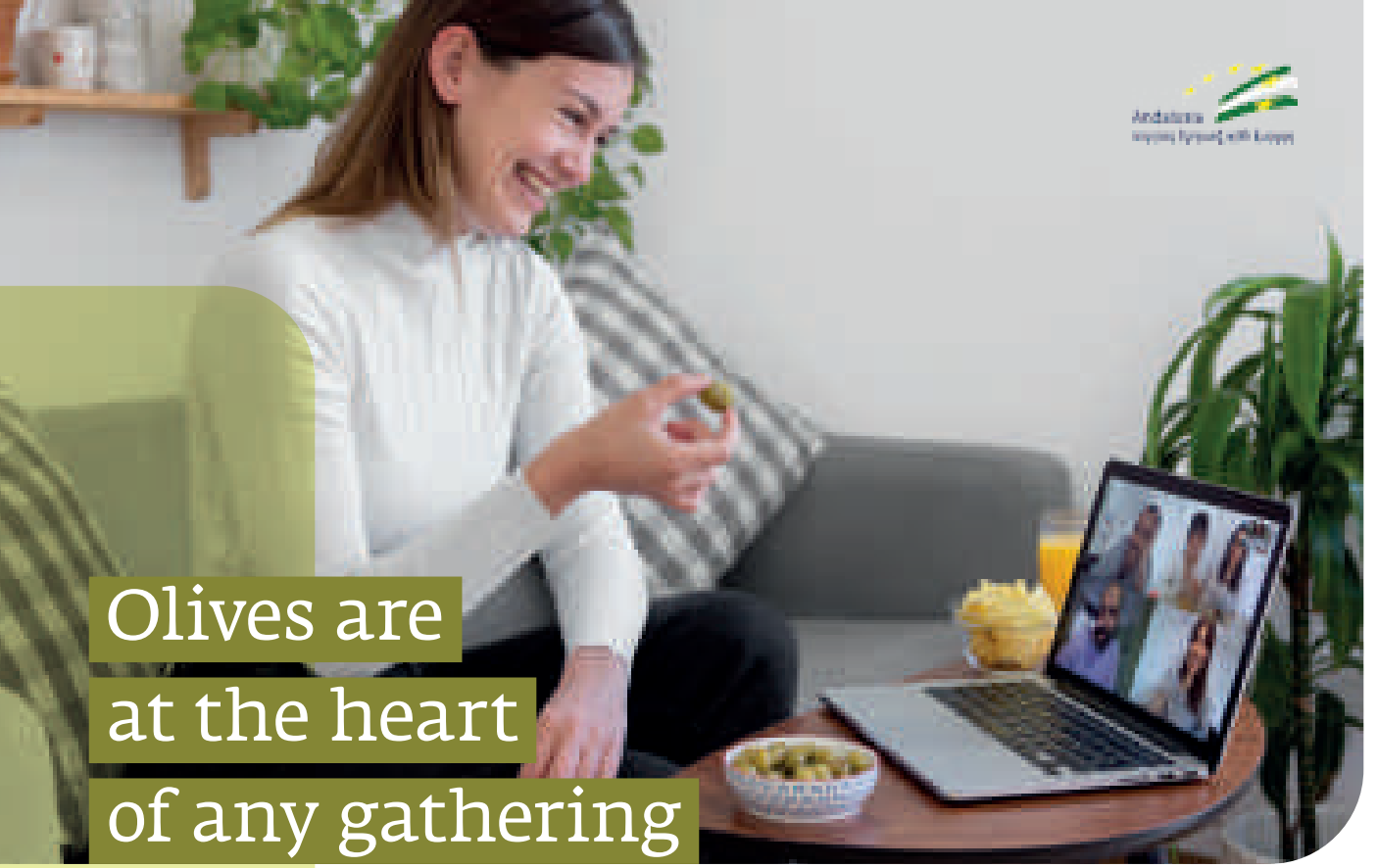
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Olives are at the heart of any gathering in Spain

Spending quality time with friends and family, for Spaniards, always includes olives!

Even in times of lockdown, olives continue to liven up the conversation in video calls. In fact, **so much so that they have consistently been in the top 3 food items sold in moments of confinement.**

And this is because olives are a delicacy deeply rooted in the culture of Spain. Spaniards love them because of their tangy, unique flavor that perfectly combines with refreshing drinks and other salty snacks.

Prepare this tasty and healthy olive treat to add even more enjoyment to your next gathering with loved ones!

SPANISH GREEN OLIVES SEASONED WITH CORIANDER AND CUMIN

~ Ingredients:

- 120 gr green olives (half jar)
- 3-4 tbsp fresh coriander
- 40 ml Extra virgin Olive Oil
- 2 pcs Garlic cloves, peeled
- Cumin seeds
- 1/2 tbsp Balsamic vinegar (or apple cider vinegar)
- Salt to taste

~ Instructions:

Mix the coriander, oil, garlic, cumin seeds, and vinegar and pulse-blend using a standing or stick blender, avoiding a very fine mixture.

Add the drained green olives and set aside to marinate in the fridge for at least 15 minutes.



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THE STATE OF BEING EQUAL

Dr Aneel Kashi Murarka, industrialist and philanthropist, and founder of Ample Missiion, is someone who believes that equality is not a complicated notion. Here's what he has to say



DR ANEEL KASHI MURARKA



DR ANEEL KASHI MURARKA AND SIDHAANT MURARKA

I believe that women are the ones who make men feel like every day is International Men's Day. Incidentally, International Men's Day falls on November 19, but not a lot of people know that. I constantly get asked why men aren't celebrated on the global front. The fact remains, men are recognised far more than women are, despite the fact that women work that much harder, are probably far more diligent, and can deliver the same, if not better results," says industrialist and philanthropist Dr Aneel Kashi Murarka, founder of Ample Missiion, and a man who always speaks his mind.

For over three decades, Dr Murarka has dedicated his life towards uplifting the underprivileged and bettering society through his social enterprise Ample Missiion. He is a strong supporter of women empowerment, gender equality, and educating the girl child, and is actively involved in numerous social and environmental initiatives, humanitarian work, youth welfare, and education.

Dr Murarka and his team at Ample Missiion, have been working to create equal opportunities for marginalised communities like cancer survivors, acid attack survivors, transgenders, and the differently-abled. In fact, his work with the transgender community in 2018 for the Kerala Floods relief work was noticed by the Times Group, leading to an opportunity which allowed Dr Murarka to curate the show which saw trans models walk the ramp at the Bombay Times Fashion Week in 2019.



Among the models who graced the stage, Miss Transqueen India winner Navya Singh, and transgender activist Laxmi Narayan Tripathi were the showstoppers.

This format was replicated in 2020 when he teamed up with designer Rohit Verma for the show Sindoor Khela, a concept inspired by the TOI campaign, #NoConditionsApply. The collection displayed aimed to empower women to challenge norms that lead to unfair traditions imposed on them. Miss India-Universe and Actress Urvashi Rautela was the showstopper. The other models were acid survivor, single mothers, widows, and trans persons. "The collection truly brings out the power that rests within; we witnessed that on the ramp. Society can progress when we learn to accept our differences and start looking past them. Everyone deserves equal rights and opportunities, and it is our duty as citizens to support this equality," commented Dr Murarka.

This then led to his foray into films, as he turned producer. Since then, he has been at the helm of many impactful women-centric awareness short films that went viral. Some of them include Detect To Defeat films on breast cancer awareness featuring many well-known celebrities. Cup Revolution, a menstrual cup awareness film. Pad Maang, a film on how men and women should not shy away from buying sanitary napkins, and Beti, a film on empowering the girl child.

"All you need is the belief in the power of story to inspire social change," he says. He has never looked for recognition for deeds, but is humbled by the thanks he continues to receive, and was even facilitated by the Late President Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, Vice President Shri Venkaiah Naidu, and Industrialists like Shri Kumaramangalam Birla, and Shri Gautam Singhania.

"Everyone should find a little time to help make someone else's life a little better," he signs off. F

Finding Your Calm

AMIDST THE COVID-19 CHAOS

Have you been snapping lately, or finding yourself in a constant state of anxiety, fuelled by an addled brain? Or do you find yourself oscillating between a gamut of emotions—a bit too overwhelming to be processed easily? Fret not, as what you might be experiencing is perfectly normal, at least in a life altered by the coronavirus outbreak. Ever since the pandemic has forced people to practice social distancing and self-quarantine to flatten the curve, it has also set stress levels shooting through the roof as each one of us struggles to find our feet during the lockdown. And, it's imperative that one guards their mental well-being along with physical fitness to wade through it. Let's meet our experts who are helping people preserve their sanity during this hour, when it matters the most

The Art of Healing

Are you stressed out or anxious because of the lockdown? Pune-based artist Rasika Tanmay Mehta explains how art therapy can help you find inner peace amidst this crisis, says **Radhika Sathe-Patwardhan**

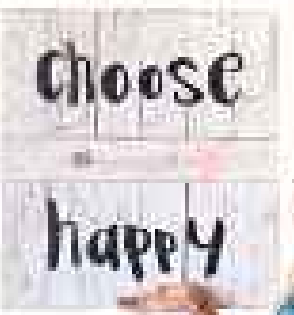
The stress levels induced by the COVID-19 lockdown can reach staggering heights as you might find it tough to adjust to a new routine. This includes balancing personal (household chores, cooking, and handling kids), and professional (work from home) responsibilities. What you need is some downtime where you can get away from it all, and bust that stress. A 2016 study on 'Reduction of Cortisol Levels and Participants' Responses Following Art Making', published in the *Journal of the American Art Therapy Association* by Girija Kaimal, Kendra Ray and Juan Muniz found that just 45 minutes of creative activity can reduce your stress, regardless of artistic experience or talent. Those who participated in this study were given a few questions, and their responses showed that the 'art-making' session was enjoyable, relaxing, and helped them learn new aspects about themselves.

Pune-based Rasika Tanmay Mehta, artist and founder, Ekattha– The Art Factory, is helping people by giving them the opportunity to de-stress through art therapy. "Art teaches people to live life and gives a purpose. It brings happiness, positivity, helps in staying focused, and most importantly, brings out the creativity in people. Tough times make people tougher, and, today, art is keeping many physically and mentally active," says Mehta. "One can work on simple art forms like doodling, sketching, painting or even calligraphy, or can indulge in craft ideas such as origami, paper marbling, and match box art along with other family members," she explains.



"ONE CAN WORK ON SIMPLE ART FORMS LIKE DOODLING, SKETCHING, PAINTING OR EVEN CALLIGRAPHY TO BEAT THE STRESS."









The 29-year-old founded Ekattha four years back with the sole purpose of connecting people and artists together on a common platform. The brand is helping over 2,500 people annually through their studio and on-campus activities for individuals, professionals, corporate teams, and students. "Taking online art classes was an additional service that we had been evaluating since long. But with the increase in corporate activities and projects, we put the virtual classroom idea on hold. The lockdown had the idea resurface, and we took no time to embrace the virtual space, and commenced the online classes," Mehta informs.

Every week, Ekattha conducts two classes of art forms that are attended by more than 80 to 90 participants. The lockdown has brought special attention towards art for kids, and this led to a daily one-hour class for kids. These classes are conducted by the group's network of 70+ artists. Mehta is also working with a few corporates, and conducting online art-based team bonding activities for them. "These classes help employees work together with the same energy as they would in the office, which helps keep up the motivation and productivity," she explains. "The online classes are designed considering the immediate availability of material, and focus on using simple techniques, nothing complex. This ensures increased participation that helps our mission of spreading happiness through art," she adds.

Apart from art therapy, Mehta is also doing her bit to help the needy. "This is not the time to earn, but to learn and grow. We have tied up with Akshaya Patra Foundation and other charities across the country, to help daily wage workers with essentials and food supplies. At least 50 per cent of the revenue from the online classes is donated towards this cause," she signs off. ›

CLICK HERE TO READ MORE

The Pilates Effect

Keeping oneself sane and alert during the lockdown is easier said than done. Holistic wellness guru, Vesna Jacob offers just what you need for this, says **Anindita Ghosh**

The humdrum of the lockdown has been hard on all of us. But for many, mental well-being has particularly taken a hard hit. In such cases, it becomes it's important to tune out, focus on yourself, and find newer things for motivation. Delhi-based Pilates expert and holistic wellness guru, Vesna Persevic Jacob, tells you how.

"Mental wellness has a lot to do with being present in the moment. It is about changing your perspective and finding some purpose. You need to be aligned in intention, thoughts, words, and actions. It also takes you out of wallowing in self-pity and keeps you more connected to what's happening around, giving you more clarity. This is extremely important in uncontrollable situations, just like the one we're currently dealing with," says the Bosnia-born Jacob, who runs Vesna's Altacelo Fitness Studio that caters to several socialites, politicians, and sportspersons.

Jacob's has had a difficult life. From a debilitating knee injury while playing professional basketball that left her with a limp that doctors said would never go, to living through the brutal Bosnian war, she has had her fair share of tribulations. For her, keeping Zen is vital. While she is primarily a Pilates expert, over the years, she has started incorporating various aspects of other disciplines to make hers a more holistic practice. "While the physical body is my focus, I use movement as medium for my students and clients to achieve results. At the same time, I use intention setting, mindfulness, meditation, and breathing along with the physical exercise to promote a balance between different aspects of self."

For Jacob, protecting oneself against the physical and mental fallouts of the pandemic is not just about exercise and eating right, but also about other factors like reducing stress, getting good quality sleep, and focusing on the breath to energise the body. "Breathing exercises like pranayama have been shown to calm and decrease stress. It's the same with meditation that has restorative powers."

Jacob also advocates mindful exercise for improved mental wellness. "During a pandemic, anxiety and stress are higher than usual. Let's not forget that the structure of routine is missing from our work lives, with deadlines, schedules, and even the time we log off from work, blurring into each other. Our environment and the way we do things have changed, and we need to evolve the way we deal with stress, stay healthy, and keeping one's immunity high. Mindful exercising is the perfect way to de-stress, realign, reset, and work with the whole system," says Jacob. According to her, Pilates being a low-impact exercising system invigorates the body by focusing attention on quality over quantity. This along with breathing patterns focuses the mind on the task at hand. This focus on breathing eases stress, lowers cortisone levels and releases endorphins in the same way that meditation does, only there are the added benefits of physical activity. "This is what I call meditation through movement. Mindful exercising means having a deeper focus on the way your body moves and feels. Focus on your breath, be fully present in the moments in the activity you are doing," she says.

Jacob recommends that you start your exercise routine with intention setting, which is basically reaffirming what you want from your session and your commitment to being in the moment. "Focus on how you are ›



PILATES BEING A LOW-IMPACT EXERCISING SYSTEM INVIGORATES THE BODY BY FOCUSING ATTENTION ON QUALITY OVER QUANTITY.



JACOB SUGGESTS THAT YOUR BREATHING SHOULD FOCUS ON RELEASING THE STRESS AND NEGATIVITY OUT OF THE BODY.

feeling at the moment and your energy levels. Channelising your thoughts will make your exercise session more productive and keep your mind away from stress and other disturbing thoughts," she says.

Jacob insists that your breathing should focus on releasing the stress and negativity out of the body, and becoming aware of itself. "As you start breathing, start by observing your breath—the way it moves through the nostrils, the way it fills the lungs, the pause between the exhalation and inhalation. In the same way, observe how it leaves the body, the way rib cage collapses and the way it feels as it leaves then body. After a few breaths, in the same way start observing and noticing your body, the way it feels, the way you sit, if there is any tension and/or pain," she explains. "Movement should start by slowly mobilising the body, improving the posture, and working on core muscles while keeping the energy, focus, and intention on the present moment."

Try it! Jacob's method may just give you the mental balance and calm that you are seeking. ›

PHOTOGRAPHS:VISHNU SOMADULA

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MOM'S THERAPY



Mom's Therapy", a grandmother's recipe followed by the daughters since generations is an Indian brand launched by Palasa Body Solutions Pvt. Ltd in 2016 in Mumbai. It manufactures and sells 100% natural and herbal products. The company is the brainchild of Ms. Krishna Tamalia Vora, who is a firm believer in Ayurveda and aims to promote through her body and skincare products. All the products are made from the goodness of the rich First Cold Pressed Black Sesame Oil - an elixir for lush hair and supple skin. The concoction of the first cold press black sesame oil, Indian herbs, and floral extracts is actually An age-old recipe that has been handed down from many generations in the Tamalia family and finally bottled together for the benefit of the masses. "Mom's Therapy" has proven its mettle by winning prestigious awards. The last one being a top finalist at TimeSheUnIt Award 2019. All our products are very much available at online platforms like nykaa.com, 25o2official, aplava.com,organicshop.in and also with our own website.



PAMELA 'PUJA' KIRPALANI

Pamela 'Puja' Kirpalani, the Founder and CEO of Inner High Living, is a well-known NLP Trainer and Coach based out of Singapore and India. A young mother and a distinguished thought leader in the world of behavioural psychology and neuro-behaviour. Her vision materialised as she started coaching individuals, couples and parents on achieving their goals using Neuro-linguistic programming as a modality.

A Kings College London Graduate has fifteen years in the corporate world, having worked a number of years with Ernst & Young. Moving to Singapore in 2012 further prompted her passion for the human mind and behavioural psychology- leading to exploring new avenues in neuroscience. Before she knew it, she was certified as a Master NLP Practitioner with an esteemed organisation based out of Australia and conducted workshops for various organisation such as Changi Airport, Ministry of Manpower, Jockey India, World Presidents Organisation, Embassy Group India, American Association of Women Singapore and more.

Dance. Meditate. Repeat.

Bengaluru-based artiste Banani Das Dhar is teaching dance meditation to help people cope with anxiety and stress during the lockdown, finds **Radhika Sathe-Patwardhan**

The coronavirus pandemic and resulting lockdown has led to high stress levels, increased anxiety, and in some cases, even the onset of depression. Experts believe meditation can help in such cases. It helps ease stress, anxiety, chronic pain; boost mood and immunity; improve heart health; and resolve issues during pregnancy. There are various ways of meditating, some may prefer chanting Om, others may look towards meditative art, while yet others may use dance meditation. If you're wondering what dance meditation, is, all you need to do is ask Banani Das Dhar. An entrepreneur, blogger, author, ex-clinical data analyst, and dance meditation teacher, she is the founder of Banani Vista, a Bengaluru-based media house that supports, promotes, and curates sustainable opportunities for talents and entrepreneurs through community-driven events.

The 31-year-old informs, "Dance meditation is a form of dance that takes your body to a meditative state. It involves letting your body flow freely, starting from the upper body, moving to the middle body, and finally, lower body. It simultaneously helps in balancing your chakras as well." Dance meditation also accounts for breathing as an essential element. While the music used varies from slow-paced to high-intensity to ending with medium-speed to cool your body. The best part? This form of meditation can be practised by people of all ages—as young as 10 till 60!

Das Dhar came about practising dance meditation post the delivery of her child in 2018. "At that time, I was struggling with post-partum depression, and tried various techniques to come out of it, but all in vain," she narrates. The trained Bharatnatyam dancer and a dance lover, one fine day, started moving her body to a tune when her baby was napping. It changed her life. "I found it meditative. Gradually, I started researching various forms of dance and body movements that have the capability to heal the mind and body," she elaborates.

"DANCE MEDITATION TAKES YOUR BODY TO A MEDITATIVE STATE, AND HELPS IN BALANCING YOUR CHAKRAS AS WELL."



Having put in the effort of researching and trying it all out, Das Dhar started teaching the dance form in 2019 among gated communities and to her friends and family. Over the months, she has received some extremely positive feedback on this de-stressing technique. This year she is also planning to reach out to the masses, as she feels it is a technique that everyone needs, especially in the current situation, for positive energy to fight the catastrophe. Those interested, can join her online classes being conducted during the period or watch her video. She shares a quick tip for those interested: "Wear comfortable clothes, shoes are not compulsory. It's all about enjoying the music, immersing yourself in it, and moving your body to the rhythm."

Das Dhar started her campaign, 'Chronicles Inspired from Corona' with an aim to build positivity and hope. Being in lockdown, and "locked" within your home can lead to negativity stemming from stress and anxiety. "To alleviate this, the campaign has shared videos that highlight positive, inspiring stories by different people," she infoms, and aims to share stories of people across different fields—storytellers, comedians, marketing executives, theatre artistes, among others. Besides looking at dance and positive stories, Banani Vista has shifted focus to the virtual world for all its events by bringing the creative community together for the online audience. It started with a virtual poetry open mic, wherein people from across the country and across borders came together. It also organised a musical evening, 'Hope For Positivity'. Next on the agenda is a mental health series. ›

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Inhale peace, Exhale stress!

Chennai-based yoga instructor Mansi Gandhi advocates the practice of certain asanas and breathing techniques to keep mental health in check during the pandemic, says **Neeti Jaychander**

"In times like this, where feelings of uncertainty, stress and fear are high, yoga brings a certain sense of balance and positivity into your life," says Chennai-based yoga teacher Mansi Gandhi. Her initial reaction to the coronavirus outbreak, just like everyone else, was of disbelief. "I shut my studio mid-March 2020. Things were starting to heat up and 'social distancing' became the new buzzword". However, to make sure her clients didn't miss out on their practice, Gandhi started taking online yoga classes.

Along with asanas, she added the practice of pranayama and meditation to the regimen as well. In addition to her clientele, she also decided to offer free yoga sessions to those who cannot afford to pay a teacher but need to focus on their physical and mental wellness, particularly at this time.

"Yoga means union of the self with the universe, and there are several ways to achieve this. Hatha yoga (the physical practise with asanas and pranayama) is one branch of it, and the other is karma yoga (selfless service). There are so many people out there who are losing their jobs and don't know where their next pay cheque is coming from. This is the least I can do to help." Studies show that yoga actually enhances the production of serotonin (the happy hormone) in the body.



"YOGA HELPS BRING HORMONES LIKE CORTISOL (THE STRESS HORMONE) DOWN, REDUCING ANXIETY AND STRESS."

Gandhi also believes that yoga is more of a mental practice than merely a physical one. "It's called moving meditation where breathing is the most important aspect, and you move the body along with the rhythm. For this, your mind has to be fully present in the now, and when you focus on the now, you are practising mindfulness," she explains.

Ask for specific asanas for mental health, and she says that everyone is different. In fact she goes so far as to say that we are different people on different days, and therefore need to tweak our practice accordingly! "However, if you observe the yoga practice, you will notice that some asanas take you inwards (forward bends), and some open you outwards (back bends). Back bends are great at improving the mood and I would recommend it to be a part of your everyday practice."

About *pranayama*, Gandhi says that people have always used the breath to control one's emotions. "What do you tell someone who is angry? Count to ten and breathe. Why? Because there is a direct connection between the breath and the emotional state. When your breathing is fast, you are in an emotionally-heightened state. You have no control as your emotions take over. When you begin to breathe slowly, your mind, too, slows down, your body stops being in a fight-or-flight state and sends powerful signals to the body saying that all is well. This helps bring hormones like cortisol (the stress hormone) down, reducing anxiety and stress. So you respond, instead of reacting, and this is an important tool in mental health."

Gandhi's classes are exceedingly popular, but she admits that there are a few challenges. "Online sessions are working out a lot better than I ever imagined. However, sometimes the Internet connection is slow, and the audio doesn't go through, or the video pixelates. Also, as a teacher, I cannot correct my students physically. So, it can get a bit frustrating at times. But other than that, you cannot beat the convenience of an online class. No commute. You save so much time," she concludes. ›

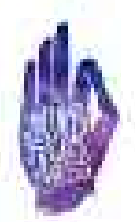
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The Stress Whisperer

Counsellor Vrinda Walimbe, based in Pune is ensuring people's mental well-being through tele-counselling, finds **Radhika Sathe-Patwardhan**

The COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting lockdown has been a cause of major upheaval in people's lives. People are getting fearful of the future with respect to health, job security, economic setbacks, and a plethora of other aspects. Additionally, some have to deal with all kinds of problems when staying alone at home, or with someone who's working on the frontline against the pandemic. What these people need is someone to listen to their problems, and help them cope with it all.

Enter Vrinda Walimbe, a Pune-based practicing counsellor and psychotherapist. Having done her MA and MS, and also trained in 'Rational-Emotive and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy' and 'Bernian Transactional Analysis', this 62-year-old is associated with two prestigious research institutes and a management institute in the city. She is the founder and facilitator of Happy Minds counselling and life skills coaching services. She was also part of the team for preparing a module for UNICEF's 'Back to School' programme for out-of-school children.



"THE INABILITY TO SHARE YOUR ANXIETIES WITH FAMILY MEMBERS FOR FEAR OF STRESSING THEM OUT ADDS TO THE BURDEN."



"In the current scenario, where there is a fear of the unknown, and one is unable to see the end in sight, uncertainty can give rise to feelings of helplessness and anxiety," says Walimbe. Parents are taking care of children 'trapped' inside the four walls, keeping them occupied with home schooling or ensuring the online classes take place alongside doing their own office work from home as well as managing household chores. To say the least, this can be stressful. The elderly are also feeling overwhelmed over the inability to move and go out and socialise. "This can take a huge toll on mental health. The inability to share your anxieties with family members for fear of stressing them out adds to the burden," she says. It is for this reason that Walimbe put herself out there to talk to those in need. She does it over calls, chats and email.

Sharing the thoughts of those she speaks with, Walimbe says the main concern is 'how many days will this last'? That's followed by 'What will happen if I or my near and dear ones are afflicted by this disease'? "Senior citizens whose children are away in other cities or countries have double dose of anxiety. There is also anxiety over the future economic ramifications of the pandemic. There are few who are as it is suffering from hypochondria (a condition in which a person is excessively and unduly worried about having a serious illness), which can get aggravated during such a situation," she elaborates. Walimbe is getting two or three new calls daily over and above her routine follow-up sessions. These calls are from students who have left academics midway and gone home; senior citizens and housewives; mothers whose family members are working as healthcare professionals; among others. She has also received a few calls from the economically challenged.

And when the going gets tough, Walimbe reminds us of the beautiful words of Charlie Chaplin, "Nothing is permanent in this wicked world. Not even trouble."›

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Culture to the Rescue

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, Chennai-based Akhila Krishnamurthy has used her platform to add a cultural dimension to people's lives, helping them cope emotionally, says **Neeti Jaychander**

If you're struggling to handle your emotions and mental health during the lockdown, a coping mechanism is on hand with stimulating cultural content in the form of music, dance, interactions with artistes and more, thanks to Akhila Krishnamurthy. The 40-year-old is the founder of Aalaap, a boutique arts management company in Chennai that collaborates with classical artistes from across the world. She is providing carefully curated online content, which is free and interactive. "In the current context, we've shifted gears to more video-based, performance-oriented content that helps people immerse in the arts," she informs.

Krishnamurthy's Un-Distancing Project is one such initiative, where she is bringing people together on social media without the barriers of distance. "The project is a series of podcasts with artistes from across the world, shedding light on how they are dealing with the pandemic. We have featured Sophia Salingaros, a dancer from New York, dancer and choreographer Mythili Prakash from Los Angeles, and dancer Rama Vaidyanathan from New Delhi."



"WE'VE SHIFTED GEARS TO MORE VIDEO-BASED, PERFORMANCE-ORIENTED CONTENT THAT HELPS PEOPLE IMMERSE IN THE PERFORMING ARTS."

An ex-journalist who began Aalaap after a 13-year stint in the field, Krishnamurthy is reassured by the appreciation for her endeavours. "The arts, by nature, have been designed to nourish the soul. The performing arts come alive in the company of music and poetry. As a result, the overall experience has a calming effect. It's almost like yoga where you become deeply aware of your own self, and disconnect with the world around."

Krishnamurthy believes that by enabling events and experiences that allow people engagement and enrichment on a continuous basis, can help them to deal with stress. "When we listen to a piece of music, we feel a sense of calm, right? If we listen to the music of our childhood, we feel a certain emotion, right? It's the same principle. Even though we primarily work in the classical performing arts space, we have tried to offer an eclectic mix with our events, therefore reaching out to a wide range of audience that seeks a combination of enrichment, engagement, entertainment and enlightenment. For instance, our Mix Tape music series has touched upon ideas like nostalgia, the *Ramayana*, the music of Lata Mangeshkar, the inherent power of mystic poets, and so on. We also had a series called Calm Together, in which dancers shared with us their take on the idea of stillness in dance. It was a meditative process, almost like breathing, to help people forget a bit about the anxiety lurking around."

While the audiences certainly benefit from these, the artistes, too, are reaping benefits since the pandemic has shut down live performances for a while. "Dressing up a little and engaging with a large audience, doing what they do best has been uplifting for them as well. One doesn't really know how things are going to pan out on the cultural front; there is ambiguity and confusion; the best way to tackle that is to come out and share your artistic skills, and when you realise there is an audience waiting to lap it up on a new medium, it is reassuring and that is bound to elevate the body, the mind, and the soul," she concludes. F

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ALL ABOUT YOU

WHAT PORTION OF THEIR INCOME DO MILLENNIALS SAVE EVERY MONTH?

52.8%	27%	9.2%	6.5%	4.5%
Save 0-10 per cent	Save 10-20 per cent	Save 20-30 per cent	Save more than 30 per cent	Prefer not to divulge



PHOTOGRAPH: 123RF
* SOURCE: YOUGOV-MINT MILLENNIAL SURVEY CONDUCTED IN SEP-OCT 2019 BASED ON ANSWERS FROM 5010 RESPONDENTS

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TAKING THE WORLD BY STORM

Shannon K, daughter of Kumar Sanu, is a popular name in the music industry. She shares her journey to the spotlight



As the daughter of Bollywood singer, Kumar Sanu, Shannon K was surrounded by melodies through childhood. Eager to make a mark in the field of music, she enrolled herself at The Royal School of London. All of 18, Shannon has already worked with the likes of Jason Boyd, Ed Westwick and Kyle Townsend. Over to the her.

At 18, you are well-known in the International and Indian music industry. What inspired you to take up music professionally?

My father was the first to inspire me, and make me realise that I do hold the talent. That's when I got serious about music and started focusing on polishing my skills. I worked on song writing, and wrote some with my sister, Annabelle. Besides my dad, I was also influenced by Whitney Houston, Céline Dion, Mariah Carey.

Did your father Kumar Sanu, influence your art?

There are many colours of my father's singing, but I am inspired by his expressions and emotions in singing. Knowing his stories, experiences and struggles have taught me to stay focused and motivated for my craft. I remember going to his recording sessions and dreaming of becoming just like him.

How was the experience of working with Jason (Poo Bear) Boyd who has also collaborated with the likes of Justin Bieber, Drake, Pink for your first single, *A Long Time*?

It was truly an honour working with Poo Bear at 16. It was a great learning experience. He tested me on my ability as I had no idea on what I would sing.

Although you were born in India, you were raised in UK and now reside in LA. Have these countries influenced your music? If so, how?



Absolutely. I've moved to Dubai when I was 6, relocated to London to learn music, and now I'm based in LA. I do believe that living in different corners of the world and their cultures have influenced my music. The environment and lifestyle has reflected in my song writing many times.

Gaining popularity at a young age can be daunting. How do you handle it without letting it affect you?

Being a young artist, and a daughter of a legendary singer in itself poses a great pressure. Add to that, the pressures of social media. I remember trying to fit in with the rest, and worrying about being judged by the society. I did, however, take some time to learn to deal with it. The disgraceful comments were getting to me, and I went through a phase of depression which led me to self-harm. Luckily, my family had my back and pulled me out of the black hole. Now, all I do is ignore.

How is creating music in Bollywood different from International music?

In Bollywood, it is a two-way street—understanding your composer's vision, and delivering with your creative inputs. As for writing in the West, it's usually based on my personal experiences or surroundings that have inspired me.

What are you currently working on?

I recently worked on three songs for a web series for The Casino. I also have a new single *Knock Knock* which will hopefully come out this year. I'm excited to see my fans' reaction.

Who are your idols in the Hindi music industry and your favourite Hindi song?

I love listening to Sonu Nigam, Alka Yagnik, Sunidhi Chauhan, Shreya Ghoshal, Shaan and Arijit Singh. My favourite Hindi song is *Jab Koi Baat Bigad Jaye*. I fell in love with the melody and the way my father sang. F



GET SET, SAVE

With the current pandemic, an approaching economic slump is inevitable. **Aishwarya Acharya** brings you expert tips on how to get cracking on your financial planning in this period

The sudden lockdown is placing significant pressure on the global economy, rendering many people jobless, causing small time industries to shut shop, and leaving daily wage workers and employers with no choice but to pull the shutters down. In this time of crisis, one needs to plan, invest, and spend equivalent to one's earning. It's time to dust our finance survival kits. Recent reports from a leading financial daily suggest that sectors such as tourism, aviation, hospitality, and trade are facing the first brunt of the severe travel, assembly, and activity curbs imposed by the governments across the world. In contrast, sectors such as consumer durables, automobiles, and pharmaceuticals will feel the brunt of supply constraints. During this time, evaluating your financial standing and working on a plan to smoothen it out until the situation goes back to normal is paramount. ›

In this light, we bring you expert tips on how to plan and manage your funds in the advent of approaching a potential economic slump.

Prioritise and plan

The six steps of financial planning come in handy at a time like this. Determining your current situation, developing your business goals, identifying alternative courses of action, evaluating alternatives, creating and implementing the action plan, and finally re-evaluating and revising the plan helps you in the long run. Bengaluru-based CS Sudheer, founder and CEO of IndianMoney.com, shares, "A crisis of this kind will hit an individual in three ways—income, liabilities, and aspirations, and all these are interconnected." Once your income goes down, you will not be able to service your liabilities which then will not allow you to meet your aspirations. He suggests having an emergency fund equal to your 12-month expenses, including EMI payments. "Further, it may so happen that you may not be able to honour your systematic investment plans (SIPs) and insurance premiums. You will have to prioritise. First, check if you have enough money to survive if the situation continues for another six months. If yes, you can then go ahead with paying your EMIs and SIPs," he adds.



"HAVE AN EMERGENCY FUND EQUAL TO YOUR 12-MONTH EXPENSES."

BESIDES LONG-TERM SAVING OPTIONS, FOLLOW THESE QUICK TIPS TO BOOST YOUR IMMEDIATE SAVINGS POST THE LOCKDOWN

- **Avoid having take-outs or restaurant meals daily, instead pack your own lunch.**
- **Master the 30-day rule. Wait for a month before you purchase an expensive item. This will eliminate impulse-shopping.**
- **Instead of driving your own vehicle, utilise public transport. This will bring down your fuel costs.**
- **Opt for DIY beauty products instead of buying them.**
- **Separate funds according to wants v/s needs and focus pointedly on the needs.**
- **Cut down your utility usage by using energy-efficient bulbs and switching them off when not in use.**
- **Mend your clothes as opposed to tossing them or buying new ones.**
- **Buy clothes from thrift stores or swap clothing with friends and family for special occasions.**



Assess your invesments and risks carefully

Create an emergency corpus

It's best to prepare for choppy waters while the seas remain calm. Since an emergency fund cannot be built overnight, you need to plan and manage expenses accordingly. The financial situation right now seems slim and might stay the way for quite some time, hence building the emergency corpus makes the most sense. Mumbai-based chartered accountant Ronak Gouthi believes, the sooner you start, the better. "Create a corpus for at least six months. This should include important parameters like family size, family earnings, and family expenses for arriving at the optimum size of the corpus," he says.

Dial back your risks

Assess your income and your modes of investments and risks accordingly. During times of uncertainty, investors tend to flock to the ›



Allocate funds for high priority payments like housing loans and medical emergencies

safety of gold. Experts maintain that people looking to invest should keep around 10-15 per cent of their investment portfolio in gold. This will help cushion them in times of a slump. "Start moving into lesser volatile assets or low-risk investments such as short-term bonds, certificates of deposit and cash, money market securities, or treasury bonds. The potential losses are much lower compared to higher risk-bearing assets such as cryptocurrencies, high yield bonds and commodities. Therefore, it's wise to invest in liquid assets which can be converted to cash easily," advises Gouthi. It is ideal to defer your plans on buying property and other capital assets until everything stabilises and you have a steady mode of income.

"AT SUCH A TIME, IT'S WISE TO INVEST IN LIQUID ASSETS WHICH CAN BE CONVERTED TO CASH EASILY."

Clear high interest debts

In unforeseen times like getting laid off or reduced pay, seeing your debt grow can be frustrating. In such circumstances, paying down your high-interest liabilities while you are getting paid will take the pressure off you and will leave you with enough liquidity to survive in future. Gouthi corroborates, "The real culprits are the high-interest debts like credit cards, which bear a considerably high rate of interest of up to 36 per cent. Try clearing them off as early as you can and avoid excessive usage of cards to avoid the scenario of funds crunch in future."



Continue health insurance

The pandemic brought along not just an economic crisis but also a health crisis, hence honouring the payments of the premiums is very critical. Rohan Bashaboina, a digital marketing consultant from Mumbai, says he considers health insurance as the utmost priority apart from saving and cutting down on unnecessary expenses. "Investing in healthcare is never a bad idea. Making sure your family is covered and backed up with an emergency medical plan shouldn't be neglected from your budget cuts especially at this time," he adds.

Having an active health plan strikes off the burden and risk of having large funds in cash to pay for the medical expenses. With a health insurance coverage, you can avail benefits of cashless treatments or can file for a refund after presenting the insurance company with medical bills. F

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PHOTOGRAPHS: 123RF





With Nora Fatehi



With Karisma Kapoor

DIAL R FOR LAUGHTER

Making people laugh is no joking matter, and **Rohit Gupta** does it with such ease and aplomb!

Laughter is the best medicine, and during these stressful times, laughter is something that can help make things better. Rohit Gupta has been injecting the lives of his audience with just the right dose through his YouTube videos, and people can't seem to get enough!

Gupta is a YouTube star who mimics Bollywood celebrities by using his ability to prank unsuspected strangers, as well as other celebrities. His talent at mimicry has seen many easily fall prey to his pranks easily, garnering many laughs, and social media followers. His first video came out in 2016, "It was an instant hit. It got almost a million views on the same day I posted it!" he says, proud that many directors in Bollywood have praised his work.

Gupta who holds an MBA, has managed to adpat those marketing skills to make his career in comedy a success. "There are so many subjects that were covered during my graduation, and I used that knowledge to my advantage in my videos," he grins. After all, he's well aware that in today's day and age, one must know how to market their brand of comedy. Bit, what made him make the shift to comedy? "It was very fascinating that I could fool people through my impressions. I could tell them I was Sanjay Dutt or Shah Rukh Khan, and the reaction I would get made me feel like a celebrity. That is what got me interested," he says. "I just wanted to showcase my talent. I chose to prank people, and when I started showing it to my family and friends, I realised that the response was amazing." His work has found many people taking note of his talent. In fact, he is the first Indian YouTuber to be interviewed by BBC Radio, something he considers one of his biggest achievements. "I thought I would be nervous but when I entered the studio, they were as excited as I was, and they loved my work."

"TO MAKE SOMEONE LAUGH, YOU REALLY NEED TO BE INTELLIGENT AND WITTY."

According to gupta, the biggest challenge, is to keep his audience interested by coming come up with fun new indeas in with every video. "To make someone laugh, you really need to be intelligent and witty. I'm constantly in search of new and relevant topics to keep people entertained." His most successful prank till date is when he called an RJ and mimicked Sanjay Dutt. Gupta got 11 million views for that video.

Just mimicking voices is not the only talent he possesses. He can do impresseions in different accents, too. "Being born and raised in a part of Mumbai where I was surrounded by multi-lingual people has helped me hones my skills. I had Sindhis, South Indians, Gujaratis, and Maharashtrians around me. I could observe them and imitate how they spoke. That's how I can mimic in different accents."

Though he is already a popular face in the digital world, his ultimate goal is to greta his big break in films. Speaking of the current lockdown, he notes, "At this crucial time where there is fear and varied emotions, I am being inundated with calls for some laughter. I am glad I can contribute in some small way for some respite, and wish we overcome this adversity unoted in the same cause."

THERE WILL BE LIGHT

The current economic crisis may have hit some couples harder than others. **Aishwarya Acharya** tells you how to navigate these tumultuous times



The coronavirus pandemic has brought the world to a standstill, literally. With the nationwide lockdown affecting almost all businesses, many have suffered a pay cut or lost their jobs. As part of a study on the effect of economic slowdown on employment in India, a survey conducted by the Labour Bureau and Ministry of Labour and Employment in 2008, showed around five lakh jobs were lost from October to December in the same year. While losing a job is tough, especially during an economic slump, surviving the aftermath is tougher. It significantly strains the financial and emotional condition of the household. In case your partner is being laid off or suffering a pay cut, it is paramount to be a pillar of support to him/her and steer the situation, taking charge and working around it. The onus of stepping up and handling it delicately is on you, so that your relationship doesn't take a beating. So, no matter how dark the situation gets or however long the tunnel seems, believe that no crisis is bigger than your relationship.

Read on to know how you can navigate this crisis together.

LET HIM/HER ARTICULATE THOUGHTS

A dwindling economy has a ripple effect in many areas of our lives, especially on relationships. A person who has just lost a job or is suffering from a pay cut goes through a series of emotions like mental and physical stress, anxiety, and a feeling of constant looming uncertainty. You need to be accommodating of the situation, be considerate towards your partner. Instead of directly jumping into discussions about how to go ahead with finances, hear him/her out. Emotional cushioning at this juncture is crucial, otherwise your partner will be fraught with guilt. Experts say that emotional support is necessary with words like "It's okay, we will find a solution together", "We can tide over this" or "Things will be normal soon". At such times, anxiety, insecurity, disagreements, and arguments are inevitable between partners. Weigh your words before you speak, you will regret them later. "My husband was the sole breadwinner of our family, and when the news of his unemployment came, it sent us all in ›

a frenzy. At times, we quarrel about the expenses that we cannot afford. I know that he is as frustrated and worried as I am about the situation. So at most times, I let him vent his heart out. Once the concerns are openly addressed, we calm down, perhaps even laugh it off. That's the best we can do now," narrates Renuka Bagalkot, a homemaker from Sirsi, Karnataka.

COMMUNICATING IS KEY

Your partner is bound to feel feel low, but there are also chances of him/her feeling unproductive. This can affect your partner's mental peace and cause them to curl up. Experts say, that in addition to feeling unproductive and insecure, individuals are often scared their partners might leave them due to the financial pressures of being the sole provider. In such a scenario, it is essential for your partner to understand that his/her presence in your life, with or without a job, surpasses every other obstacle. "A couple facing financial challenges needs to work as a team. Any financial loss is due to external circumstances, and should not be personalised. Couples need to acknowledge that with loss, it is normal to experience denial, anxiety, fear, sadness, and vulnerability. During such times, it is important that they be supportive, have an open and honest conversation about their fears and concerns, keep an empathetic approach," advises Mimansa Singh Tanwar, clinical psychologist, Fortis Healthcare.

ASSESS FINANCIAL STANDING

At such a stressful time, it is essential you understand your financial position also. Analyse your expenditure graph, draw a list of crucial payments like EMIs, SIPs, home or car loans, and compute your savings and investments. A special recognition and list is needed for frivolous spending patterns. Armed with this data, you will be able to look for ways to cut down. "Look for cheaper or free alternatives to luxury items, create a spending tracker, avoid unnecessary splurges. Make use of unemployment benefits by the government, if any," advises Mumbai-based chartered accountant Ronak Gouthi. In times of emergencies, you can always resort to your joint savings. Liquidating short-term mutual funds or stocks can also help keep you afloat without having to break your long-term deposits.



Stay positive and support each other

BE SUPPORTIVE

- Acknowledge every tiny effort or initiative by your partner.
- Do not hesitate to consult a counsellor if need be.
- Keep reminding your partner about his/her importance in your life.
- Participate in activities that keep your mind off the stress.
- If you can't get through to your SO verbally, write notes about how you feel.
- Talk to family members regularly.
- Encourage your SO to stay hopeful and ensure this is just a phase that will pass.
- Send out resumes together.

"ANY FINANCIAL LOSS IS DUE TO EXTERNAL CIRCUMSTANCES, AND SHOULD NOT BE PERSONALISED."

CREATE A GAME PLAN

With a plan in place, you will feel the burden ease off. Apart from ways to reduce expenses, you and your SO will have to budget your limited income in a way that you are still able to save and take care of essential expenses for the future. Understand the economy well, and ask your partner to check if there are any other opportunities that come up. Keep a constant check on the progress of the job market. Ryan Matthew, a Mysuru-based corporate lawyer suggests, "You need to keep networking with your former and current colleagues for any openings they know of. Speak to your kin if they can help you get in touch with people a for when an opportunity arises."

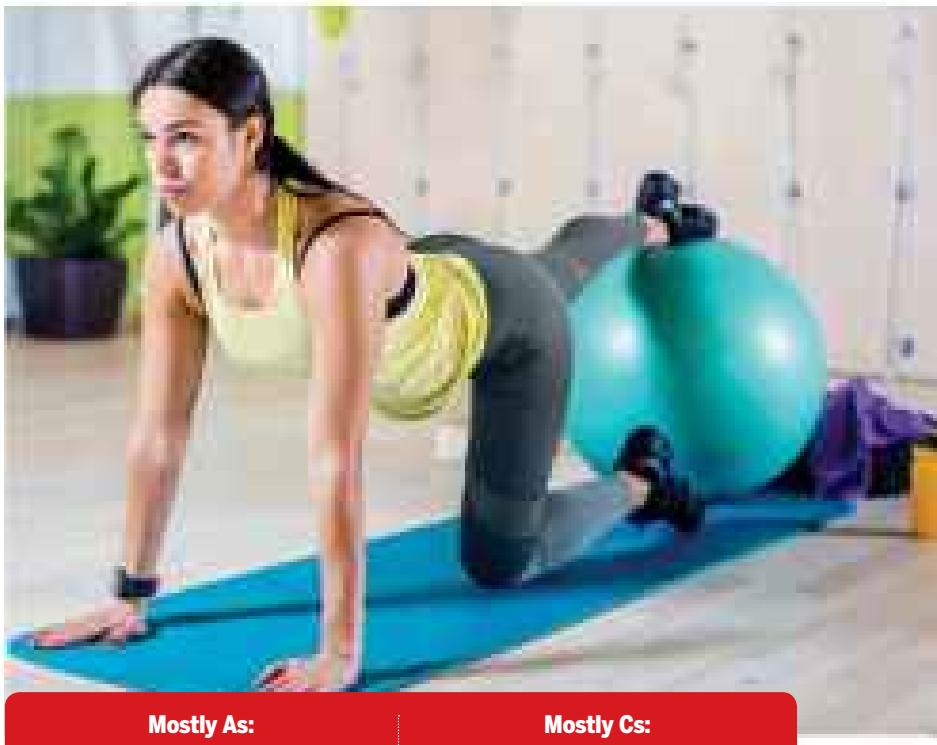
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FITNESS GOALS

Your personality is reflected through the various activities you undertake, including the kind of exercise routine you decide to follow. **Radhika Sathe-Patwardhan** helps you find out about your fitness personality.

Whether it is practising yoga for holistic development, pilates to flex those muscles, or you simply engage in a fun Zumba session with your friends, there's a match for everyone. Take this quiz to find out which workout suits your personality and the kind of individual you are, based on your fitness preferences.



Q What type of workout do you like?
A] Running or hiking.
B] Pilates with a friend.
C] Hula-hooping.
D] Dancing to my favourite songs.

Q What are you most likely to do on a weekend?
A] Netflix and chill.
B] Go for a jog with my friends.
C] Curled up in my room, reading a book.
D] Clubbing all night.

Q What keeps you motivated during your workout?
A] The release of happy endorphins I experience post workout.
B] My workout partner.
C] The sheer satisfaction while working out.
D] Posting my workout selfies or videos.

Q Your friends and colleagues know you as?
A] The laid-back one who likes to mind my own business.
B] The co-operative one, who's always trying to help someone.
C] The independent one, I don't need anybody's support.
D] The social butterfly.

Q On a tough day, what would cheer you up the most?
A] Indulging in a bowl of salad and watching my favourite show.
B] Attending a yoga class with my BFF.
C] Reflecting upon what went wrong and figuring out a solution for it.
D] Dancing and putting it up on social media.

Q How would you describe your fitness philosophy?
A] Meditating to escape the humdrum.
B] Focusing on a healthy mind, body, and soul.
C] Seting workout goals with my gym partner.
D] Always looking out for new workout forms. F

Mostly As:
LONER
You're the one who is reserved and interact only when needed. You find solace in working out on your own and enjoy that the most.

Mostly Bs:
TEAM PLAYER
You're a team player. You prefer working out with friends and motivating them, which in turn motivates you to workout more.

Mostly Cs:
HOLISTIC
You like working on your physical as well as mental health. It uplifts your spirits and brings your optimistic side to the forefront.

Mostly Ds:
FUN SEEKER
You're a social butterfly. You are energetic, and like working out and posting it on social media to motivate others.

PHOTOGRAPHS: 123RF





THE SIMPLE LIFE

ACTOR MEEZAAN LETS US IN ON HIS WFH STYLE, AND HOW HE'S STAYING PRODUCTIVE IN LOCKDOWN

As self-quarantine has become a reality around the world, millions of people have had to rethink the hows and whys of getting dressed every morning. And even under a global lockdown, it's possible for us to still get out of bed each morning, open up our closets, and give it our best shot. Just ask Bollywood star Meezaan, who has starred in Sanjay Leela Bhansali's Malaal, and will be seen in veteran filmmaker Priyadarshan's next, Hungama 2. The actor's been quarantining with friends at a farmhouse near Mumbai, and while he's using this time to work towards his fitness goals, farming and learning to play the guitar, he let us in on his homebound style. Like most of us, Meezaan has adjusted to a new reality in sweatpants, but is also taking advantage of the pure joy and solace clothing can provide.

GRAZIA: What's your work from home style quotient?
MEEZAAN: I haven't worn a pair of jeans or trousers since quarantine started. I'm the cliché that puts on a Tee for Zoom meetings with directors and producers, but is only wearing shorts with it. It's a far cry from my work or event attire, but not too dissimilar to my gym or weekend at home vibe. I really underrated how good comfort was before.

G: What's the one piece of clothing from your wardrobe you can't wait to wear again, post lockdown?
M: I'd have to say my navy blue check shirt. As a side note: I can't wait to put on sneakers again.

G: Are you a big fan of the basics? What's your go-to look?
M: I always like to keep things fuss-free, so my go-to look would comprise: My Air Jordan 1 sneakers, jeans and a check shirt. I've also accepted that I'm bound to have a few new hairstyles en route. So, if my hair is grown out, I usually tie it up or tuck it under a cap. But, if my hair is at a manageable length, I'll style it.

G: Are you also hopping onto the pandemic beard bandwagon? What are your three basic quarantine grooming tips?
M: Well, not intentionally, but my beard has grown out in lockdown; and, I've let my hair grow out, too. But, the minute I return home, it's all going to go because I still have a few days of shooting left for Hungama 2. So yes, my post pandemic look will comprise short hair and a stubble. I think maintaining basic hygiene during this period is important. I make it a point to trim the bottom half of my beard, the nape of my neck and sidelocks, once every few days.

G: Pre-lockdown, what was your idea of relaxed formalwear?
M: My idea of relaxed formalwear would include straight-cut pants (nothing too tight though) with a plain shirt tucked in. The balance looks great. Personally, a mainstay for me would have to be boots over trainers when I'm wearing formals. F



FAMILIAL CONNECT

There's nothing more important than the time spent in bonding with our loved ones, says **Aishwarya Acharya**

Stay home, they said. Don't venture out, they said. But how do we deal with this enormous quarantine time at home without losing our sanity? The good news is, most of us have our families to help us through this time. You can judiciously utilise this time to reconnect with your family to strengthen the existing bonds and create new ones. While the coronavirus outbreak has masked the world, it is also invariably reinforcing people to grow personally, and as a family. Mimansa Singh Tanwar, a clinical psychologist with Fortis Healthcare, who is working remotely from the US, believes that a sudden transition is not easy, and can trigger an overwhelming emotional state. This is due to the lack of preparedness to make the required adjustments in this situation. During such times, to find stability and grounding, it is crucial to change your approach.

> THE GOOD NEWS IS, MOST OF US HAVE OUR FAMILIES TO HELP US THROUGH THIS TIME.

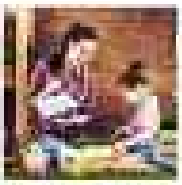
Read on to know how to you can use your time effectively and change your approach to reconnect with your family during this crisis.

BLAST FROM THE PAST



Since you have time at hand, involve everyone in activities that you may not have prioritised previously. Sit down with your family and discuss childhood memories and instances, and watch how everyone opens up. Don't hesitate in bringing out childhood photographs or your parents' wedding albums. They will make for great conversations over evening tea and snacks, confirms Singh Tanwar. "Younger members of the family should proactively support and engage with their elderly parents or grandparents. Take them down memory lane and encourage them to share anecdotes from the past. Reminiscing over stories from earlier times would provide emotional comfort and security to them," she says. ›

THE ROUND TABLE



Engage your parents or your children by getting them off their sedentary routine. Plan an activity and ensure everyone takes part. Be it a game of cards, board games, dumb charades, or karaoke, push each family member to bring out their best. Shruti Pednekar, Melbourne-based human resource management student, shares how she likes to spend her family time at home. "All of us love old songs and use the this time to listen to our favourite numbers together in the evening and sing along. It is soothing and therapeutic in a way. Discussing news, politics, education, current affairs, books, and each other's careers keeps us occupied and updated while we learn something new. Besides singing and discussions, we work on an activity that we can engage in together, like planting seeds or tending to the plants in our house. It turns out to be a great family event and has brought us much closer," she says.

SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES



Children often look at responsibilities as a task for the grown-ups. It is, however, imperative to have children be responsible for their own duties. If need be, teach them how to carry out tasks by themselves. Supervising them while you delegate tasks and keeping control with humour and encouragement is a fun way to look at it. This develops a relationship replete with intimacy and trust. Bengaluru-based software engineer, Alankrita Shetty*, believes in keeping her children busy while she carries out her household chores or when she works from home. "I make it a point to give them a specific task to work on every day. My younger daughter is obsessed with puzzles which is why I set her up with Sudoku or a jigsaw. I give her a time limit to finish it in, which allows me uninterrupted time to work and look after the house."

Mumbai-based homemaker Chitra Acharya suggests involving your children in household activities and leading them by example.



Involve your children in cooking and other activities

PLAN AN ACTIVITY AND ENSURE EVERYONE TAKES PART.

"Ask them to place utensils back in the rack after you have cleaned them, let them help you dry washed clothes, explain to them the procedures of cooking. This will build their knowledge and teach them life lessons such as independence, self-worth and being responsible for themselves," adds Acharya.

DISTANCE? NO PROBLEM



While some of us live with families, some live away from their parents or siblings in nuclear families or due to work commitments. This leaves them with no choice but to be connected through virtual modes. Bengaluru-based Radhika Mehta*, a financial analyst, says it's difficult to live away from family especially during the lockdown. "My parents live in Dharwad while I work in Bengaluru. My family is more stressed about my wellbeing as I live all by myself and away from them. To alleviate that, I speak to my parents at least twice a day and update them about my day and my work. We also schedule a video call when all of us are available or play online group games. This way, they rest assured that I am doing fine," says Mehta.

CLICK HERE TO READ MORE

PHOTOGRAPHS: 123RF

THE HEAT IS ON

Classic wardrobe staples such as denims, tops, and athleisure, available in smart combinations are the rage this season for maximum comfort



RARA AVIS

EMPORIO ARMANI

LOEWE

SHAHIN MANNAN

AJIO

IKAI

Embroidered eyelet shirt, price on request, **Polo Ralph Lauren**

Sunglasses, ₹8,490, **Michael Kors**

Sierra Studs, ₹16,200, **Misho**

Taupe bag, ₹14,500, **Ted Baker**

Denim mom shorts, ₹3,499, **American Eagle**

PHOTOGRAPHS: IMAXTREE.COM



THE ART *of style*

Transcending cultures, Akshi Jogani's demi-couture label is tailor-made for the modern Indian woman

Akshi Jogani is a modern-day contemporary label, perfect for the women of today. The designer started this eponymous label soon after she graduated, as she always envisioned having her own brand instead of working for one. Although the label was founded in Europe, it is heavily influenced by the designer's Indian roots. The brand has a seamless blend between ethnic and western ensembles, creating an interesting array of fusion wear. The design aesthetic seamlessly amalgamates western culture and Indian heritage.

The brand believes in creating collections that cater to the international market but offering it to them with a hint of traditionalism. When it comes to the construction of the garments, comfort and practicality play a pivotal role. The line has many











The pieces from Akshi Jogani are versatile, and can be worn for various occasions. It bridges between formal and semi-formal, and can be styled in multiple ways.

delectable options comprising well-tailored kurtas and calf-length pants, off-shoulder gowns detailed with a sweeping train, and well-fitted trousers, tone-on-tone separates with embellished jackets, straight fit kurtas with voluminous palazzos, and ruffle-detailed lehengas with stylised blouses. The piece de resistance of this collection is a multi-layered, pink ruffled skirt inspired by Daisy Duck.

The colour palette offers a wide range of subtle Victorian shades, ranging from salmon pink, ice blue, ivory, blush, beige, butter yellow, and lavender. The fabrics incorporated portray a mix of luxe-grandeur, giving the outfits a demi-couture feel. The surface ornamentation display minimalism, balanced with distinctive textures and patterns. Intricate floral embroidery, ruffle layers, thread work, mirror work, and beaded embellishments are some of the signature techniques infused in the collections.

The pieces from Akshi Jogani are versatile, and can be worn for various occasions. It bridges between formal and semi-formal, and can be styled in multiple ways. The kurta and palazzo set can be worn to work as well as low-key traditional gathering. The colour-coordinated separates and jacket can be deconstructed and worn as two different outfits. The multi-purpose, yet classic ensembles, will rightly cater to metropolitan women attending several events in a day. F



Cropped crochet top, ₹4,999, **H&M Studio**



Sunglasses, ₹1,499, **Vero Moda**



Haalesa collection backpack, ₹9,999, **Aldo**



Water-resistant mask, ₹1,900, **Wolford Care**



GIAMBATTISTA VALLI

CLICK HERE TO READ MORE



Relaxed denim shorts, ₹2,490, **UNIQLO U**

SUMMER REIMAGINED

The fashion world is adapting to the new normal, where face masks have become a symbol of self-expression

OLD IS THE NEW

Crochet is getting a cool update. A skill passed down through generations is making its way into our closets with a modern touch.



IK-AI

Wide jersey trousers, ₹1,299, **H&M**





Gold-plated necklace, price on request, **Laura Lombardi**



Cutwork embroidery top, ₹3,990, **Zara**



Satin embellished clutch, ₹7,999, **Charles and Keith**

CUTTING EDGE

Seek comfort in cutwork. If one goes by trends on the runway, this artsy embroidery is the best way to get through this summer.



Breathable skin friendly protection mask, ₹800, **Manish Tripathi** ›



Acid-wash denim jumpsuit, price on request, **Ulla Johnson**



Taupe solid white tote bag, ₹23,000, **Ted Baker**



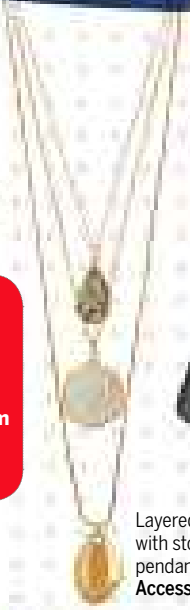
V-cut Mary Jane mules, ₹5,499, **Charles & Keith**

TAKE IT EASY

Throw on that denim jumpsuit for maximum comfort, minimum effort and still look ridiculously good!



Denim face mask, price on request, **Mother**



Layered necklace with stone pendants, ₹2,050, **Accessorize**



CLICK HERE TO READ MORE

PANKAJ & NIDHI



SHRUTI SANCHETI

CLICK HERE TO READ MORE



Pearly drop earrings, ₹750, **Accessorize**



Pleated georgette midi dress, price on request, **Ganni**

Beaded crossbody bag, ₹1,999, **American Eagle**



Front tie slingback pumps, ₹5,499, **Charles and Keith**

CLASSIC CREASE

A simple yet luxe-looking trend, pleating can upgrade any outfit, without compromising on the feminine details.



Water marble pocket face mask, ₹1,100, **Etsy.com** ›



Braided front flap bag, ₹7,999, **Charles & Keith**

Cloth mask, ₹300, **Shruti Sancheti**

Bite asymmetric ruffled cotton dress, price on request, **Simone Rocha**

CLICK HERE TO READ MORE

HOUSE OF THREE

Overlap tan sandals, ₹1,199, **The CAI Store**

FRILL SEEKERS

There is a romantic allure of the ruffles trend in dressmaking that harks back to its deep-seated historical roots.

Coin bracelet, ₹9,890, **Swarovski**



Button down shirt, ₹2,490, **UNIQLO U**

Vogmask tan organic double valve, ₹2,500, **Nirvana Being**

Brown Toe Loop Sandals, ₹999, **The CAI store**

Culottes, ₹2,490, **Zara**

TONAL ACT

Take your cues from the runways and street style, and try dressing head-to-toe in one solid colour this summer.

So cool pin ring, ₹6,590, **Swarovski**

RAARA AVIS

Laser-cut top handle bag, ₹5,499, **Charles & Keith** F

PASSION PROJECT

A journey of turning your dreams into reality is a long yet fruitful one, and Shona Sharma is a true testament to the fact that hard work does indeed pay off



What is it that we love about achievers? Is it their struggle on their road to success or is it their 'Never Back Down' spirit that inspires us to dream big and follow our hearts? With Shona Sharma, it has been both.

Sharma was a Gujarat-based model when she decided to move to Maximum City, in 2013, in the hopes of becoming an actor and singer. Back then, she couldn't tell her family of her dreams. Instead, she told them she was moving to interview for the post of a flight attendant. "It would have been wonderful to be a hostess. However, that is not who I am. I knew that there was only one thing that would truly make me happy—pursuing a profession in the creative fields. For as long as I can remember, I have been singing. Whether it was as part of my school choirs, or in my bathroom. Naturally, the creative field was something I had to be in," she laughs, as she opens up about her ambitions.

The journey, however, wasn't easy. "Yes, it was difficult. I spent the first two years figuring out how things worked in the industry. The third year I spent settling into this still very new space. I am really thankful for the slow yet amazingly substantial progress I've made here, even though I started out 'late' on this journey towards stardom."

Acknowledging people who were her pillars of strength and support on her journey toward becoming a performer, she says, "I am blessed to have friends and mentors who pushed me in the right direction and gave me the opportunity to work with labels like T-Series and ALTBalaji. I've had the opportunity to do work that I never imagined would come my way: I have been on the frontline with legends like Lesle Lewis, and have brushed shoulders with people I've grown up idolising. I even fulfilled my Broadway dreams by performing in various musical productions at big-name auditoriums that I would frequently visit as the audience, and silently promise myself that I would one day command centre stage." You may remember her as one of the protagonist in Wizcraft's musical production Balle Balle or a Soprano in Raell Padamsee's My Fair Lady.





I KNEW THAT THERE WAS ONLY ONE THING THAT WOULD TRULY MAKE ME HAPPY—PURSUING A PROFESSION IN THE CREATIVE FIELDS.

Humbled by the laurels and recognition she's been receiving, Sharma feels lucky to have parents who poured their heart and soul to help her grow and thrive as an artist. But gratitude follows this star everywhere, and she believes that she's come a long way from that naïve young girl, and she still has much to learn in this ever-changing world of music. F

A greater purpose

With the pandemic affecting the economy, designers are joining forces to come together for a cause beyond the industry, finds **Ruman Baig**

Besides the health crisis unleashed by COVID-19 all over the world, the pandemic has also broken the economic spine of many nations. With people quarantined at home, the working wheels across the globe have been jammed. From large corporations to small businesses, every sector is bearing the brunt of it. The upper and the middle class are managing to stay afloat—anxiety-ridden but getting by nonetheless. But it's the underprivileged who are getting the short end of the stick. Not knowing where they'll be getting their next meal from is an unfathomable feeling. In a bid to do their bit to help the less fortunate during the lockdown, the fashion industry, too, is coming out in large numbers to shield their own. Designers may be the face of their brands, but it's the artisans, skilled labourers and craftsmen who run the show.

From shutting down stores to restraining production at factories, fashion designers had to pull the plug on business processes, even prior to the lockdown. And with the chaos that followed soon after the government enforced the 21-day nationwide curfew, daily wage earners (across sectors) had to make their way back home. As the situation remains unpredictable, they need financial reassurance from their employers, considering these are 'unprecedented ›



ANAMIKA KHANNA

During these uncertain times, it is very important that we look after everyone we possibly can, especially the people who work with us. We closed down all our factories a few days ago and we will be continuing to support all our karigars, helpers and other staff who depend on us for as long as it takes.



SABYASACHI

A lot has changed in the last few days. Our interactions. Our work. Our relationships. All lived dreams upheavals. Upheavals that can include unforeseen medical emergencies in the coming days.

Among the people who are likely to be most affected by these changes are the retail vendors and self-employed artisans who contribute to the work you love and admire. Considering the ramifications of the crisis, we recognise that not many of them will have resources available to cover a potential medical emergency.

It is for this reason that the Anita Dongre Foundation has decided to set up a dedicated fund of INR 15 Million, to support any medical treatments arising during these troubling times.

ANITA DONGRE





times'. Designers and fashion organisations have come forward to pledge huge sums of money to fight this virus, while also promising their workers financial stability during these fluctuant months.

The first to initiate for the cause was the czarina of Indian fashion, Anita Dongre. Her foundation has promised to donate ₹15 million for the COVID-19 relief fund. The designer is known for the work she does at the grass-root level and the changes she's bringing in the working conditions of the clusters. Dongre has shown what leading by example looks like.

The nation's leading bridal wear couturier Sabyasachi Mukherjee pledged a sum of ₹10 million towards Prime Minister's National Relief Fund (PMNRF) and ₹5 million towards Chief Minister's Relief Fund in West Bengal. The fashion community, especially the artists who bring his vision to life are an integral part of Sabyasachi's legacy, and he certainly didn't hold back from showing his support when it counted the most.

Anamika Khanna and Abu Jani Sandeep Khosla have also committed to looking after their workers, irrespective of the duration of their physical absence. Besides undertaking the responsibility of her work tribe, designer Ridhi Mehra has affiliated with five NGOs to help, and has requested her consumers to donate generously, even if it's a sum of ₹500.

Label Ekaya Banaras has vouched for taking on responsibility of its entire workforce at the grass-root level, for as long as it takes. In an official statement, Payal Singhal has requested the fashion fraternity to come out in support of their own, and she insisted that each brand should take the financial responsibility of their workers during this time.

After assessing the financial brunt that is caused by the virus, label Karleo, by designer duo Karan Berry and Leon Vaz, has taken the initiative to produce protective masks for BMC service providers. But instead of manufacturing all the masks in their units, they are offering an opportunity to women/men who can work from home and create the required number of masks. Through this inventive approach, the designers have not only provided the much-needed help, but they have also generated an employment opportunity for those in need.

In light of the current scenario, India's two most respected fashion organisations—Fashion Design Council of India (FDCI) and Lakme Fashion Week (LFW)—have joined forces to fight this battle. They have created a fund with the help of sponsors that will aid budding designers and small business to keep their companies afloat. F

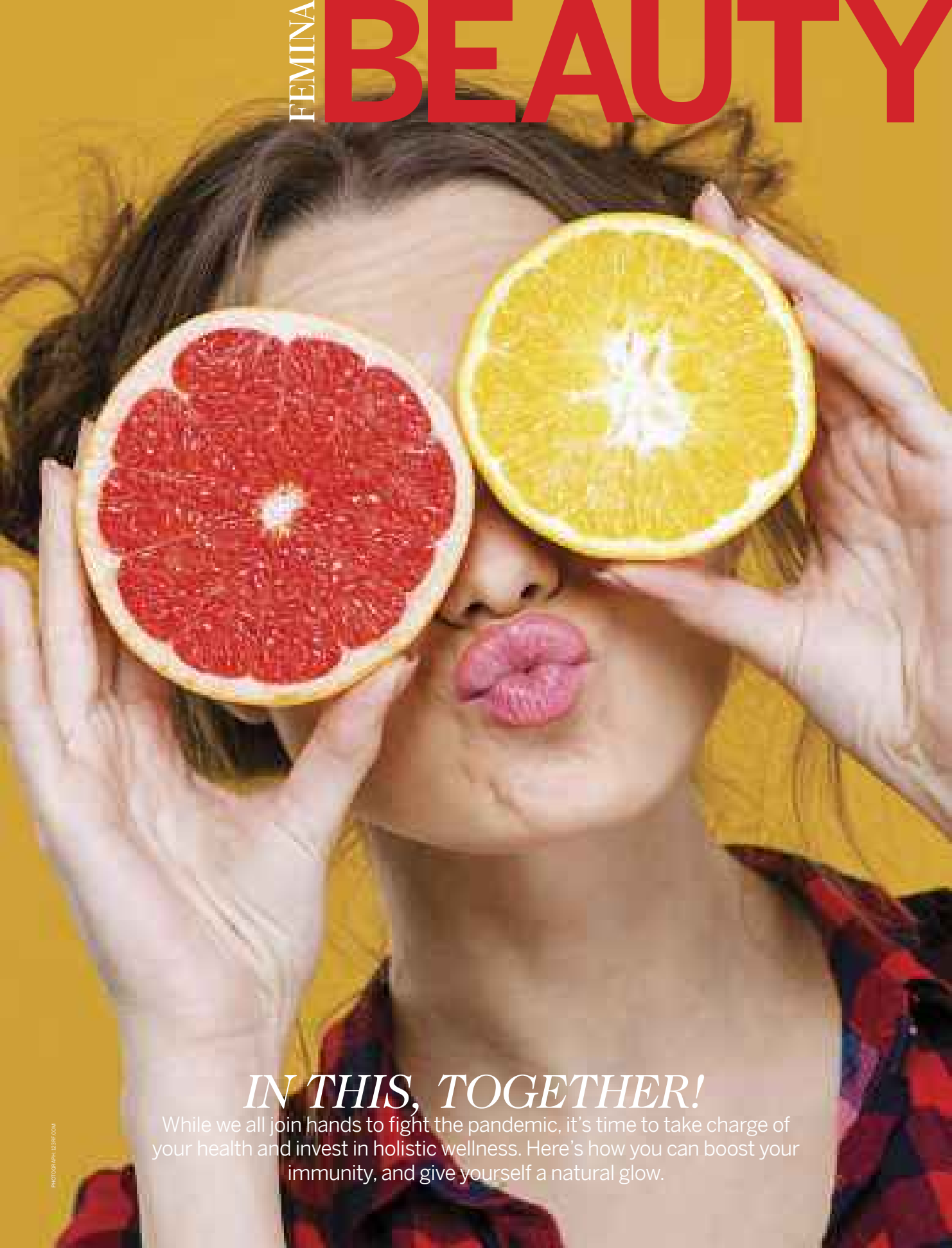






FEMINA

BEAUTY



IN THIS, TOGETHER!

While we all join hands to fight the pandemic, it's time to take charge of your health and invest in holistic wellness. Here's how you can boost your immunity, and give yourself a natural glow.

PHOTOGRAPH: 123RF.COM

REACH FOR THE STARS —SAACHI BHASIN DAGA

Beauty and Fashion influencer, Saachi Bhasin Daga, talks about her journey, passion for all things makeup, and projects in the pipeline

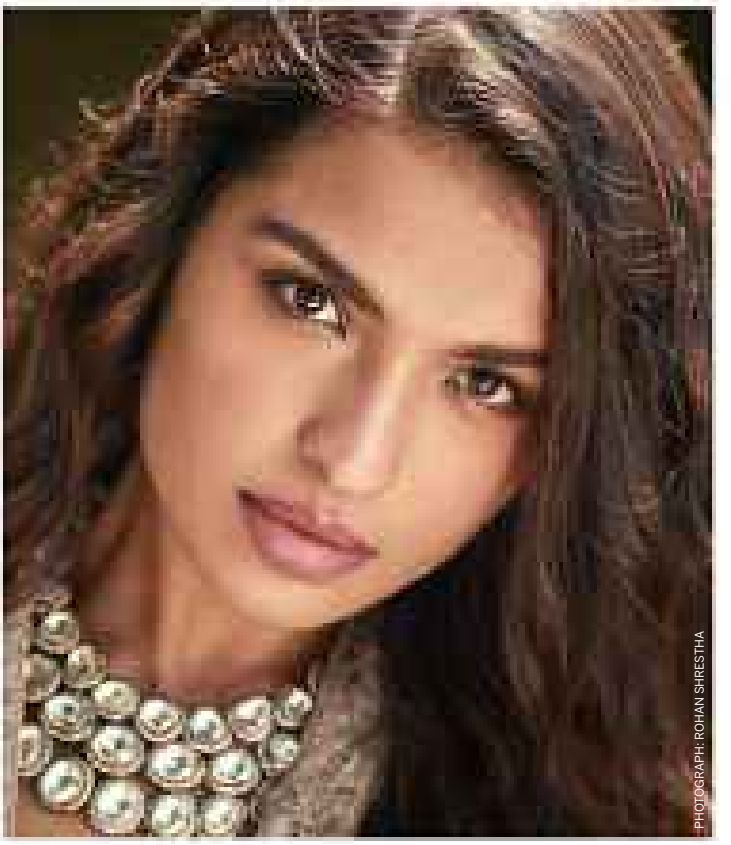




A social media influencer with a passion for fashion and beauty, Saachi Bhasin Daga, has created a niche for herself in the influencer market. She loves being in front of the camera to show off her creativity. Despite collaborating with big-name brands, Daga is also taking to social media to stay connected with her audience.

Tell us about your journey so far as a part of the beauty and fashion industry.

The last six years have been absolutely remarkable. I've been so blessed to have the support of my family, especially my mother, Shalini Bhasin, who's been with me every step of the way. Being a fashion and beauty influencer, I have gotten to associate with many international and national fashion brands like Amrapali, Masaba Gupta, Gaurav Gupta, Tarun Tahiliani, and H&M; I've even worked with some of my favourite beauty brands like Kay by Katrina, Éstee Lauder, L'Oréal, and many more. I've also recently been featured in one ad with MS Dhoni, and in a short film with Vikrant Massey on Hotstar.



PHOTOGRAPH: ROHAN SHRESTHA

How different it is to create content sitting at home? Did you have to rethink your strategy to keep your followers engaged?

I've been active on my social media, focussing on engaging with my followers by conducting makeup tutorials, live session collaborations with beauty brands, and Singer Nikhita Gandhi. I also did a national debate on the beauty industry and the lockdown with veterans like Dr Jamuna Pai, Javed Habib, and others on a news channel.

What's keeping you motivated and engaged during the lockdown?

Make up has always been a passion and I've always wanted to start something of my own. I was motivated to make this shift when I received feedback from my followers to do a detailed makeup course for beginners during the lockdown. I've been doing multiple batches since then for my seven-day Makeup 101 course, and it covers all aspects of achieving the perfect base, contouring, smokey eye, blush, the perfect plump lip, eyebrows, and mascara, with a final recap on the seventh day. I'm proud to say that I've just finished my fourth batch!

Who do you look up to as fashion and beauty icon and why?

Katrina Kaif has always been a fashion icon, imbibing comfort and elegance in the most beautiful way. But when I attended the launch of Kay by Katrina last year and met her in person, I saw her effort and passion for the brand, and that's when she became my personal beauty icon. That's exactly what I want for myself one day—my own beauty line with a powerful message.

Tell us about some projects that are in the pipeline.

I'm very excited for what's to come. I'm definitely taking beauty to the forefront with many collaborations on the way. I'm looking to explore my makeup classes on a larger scale. I also have my fashion collaborations in pipeline post the lockdown. Stay tuned to my feed on Instagram @saachi.bhasin for all the updates. F



SELF-CARE IN TESTING TIMES

While beauty may seem only skin-deep, conscientious enthusiasts are well aware that a passion for all things personal care is way more than looking good. It is about treating your body right and taking care of it to feel beautiful inside and out, finds **Shruti Shukla**. Read on for feel-good beauty practices, the role of diet in promoting holistic wellness, and testimonies from team Femina ›



These are strange times. We began the year raging into a new decade with an untameable pace, and a huge amount of stress. Three months into 2020 and we found ourselves cooped up inside our homes, again, with elevated levels of stress. The fact remains that one's mental wellness directly impacts one's physical being. As a result, this mental unrest is bound to take a toll on your overall health. While pale skin, outbreaks, and hair fall are some of the first and most visible signs you may come across, the problem goes much deeper.



Taking care of yourself at this time can significantly shape how you feel. Cosmetic dermatologist Dr Simal Soin, founder of Aayna Clinic, says, "Under these exceptional circumstances, it is easy to slip into despair and depression due to a lack of routine. Remaining healthy is of topmost priority, and this is the time to develop a self-care regime. Maintaining a good skin and haircare routine can boost your self-confidence, and help productively utilising your time."

How Anxiety Affects Your Looks

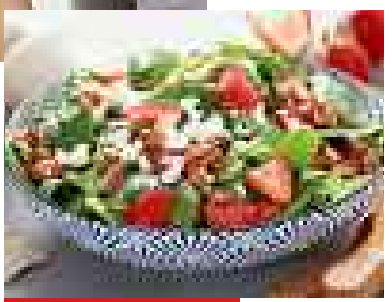
Acne and oily skin are the most common side effects of stress. "When our body is stressed, it releases cortisol—the stress hormone. It weakens the skin's immune system, leading to oxidative (free radicals) stress. This manifests itself as wrinkles, fine lines, and lack-lustre skin. It also increases inflammation in the body and conditions like eczema, rosacea, and psoriasis can flare up," explains Dr Geetanjali Shetty, consultant dermatologist and cosmetologist at Cetaphil India.

Just as feelings of distress quickly reflect in the way you look, investing in beautifying yourself can have a therapeutic effect, thereby promoting positive feelings.

The Role Of Proper Diet

They say, you are what you eat. Poor dietary choices significantly affect how you look and feel. If your body isn't getting ample nourishment, topical treatments will only bring temporary happiness.

Fruits play a vital role in keeping the skin healthy as they are rich in antioxidants and vitamins.



Dr Shetty warns, "The lockdown can result in redundancy, as your physical activity will be down by notches. This can cause your digestive system to slow down, leading to skin issues. It is recommended to stay away from fried and spicy foods. Instead, load up on vitamin E—the superfood for skin and hair. Almonds, corn oil, cod-liver oil, hazelnuts, peanut butter, salmon steak, and sunflower seeds are some rich sources of vitamin E."

In addition, fruits play a vital role in keeping the skin healthy as they are rich in antioxidants and vitamins. Berries, flax seeds, beetroot, and sweet potato are other beautifying foods that you can include in your daily diet for that au naturel glow.

HEALTH CHECK

Anxiety doesn't affect your appearance alone. It can wreak havoc on your overall health, if left untreated. Dr Shefali Trasi Nerurkar, MD skin, Dr. Trasi's Clinic, tells, "Stress results in a spike in hormonal levels, resulting in an elevated heart rate, poor digestion, tightened muscles, and irritability. Prolonged feelings of anxiety could lead to various diseases, such as hypertension, diabetes, and skin ailments like psoriasis and alopecia, among others. On the contrary, self-care practices act as a relaxing mechanism."

FEEL-GOOD BEAUTY PRACTICES

Listing ways how you can use the path of beauty to fight feelings of anxiety.

Tidy Your Beauty Drawer

Ever heard of the phrase, if you want to tidy up your mind, start with your room? Take this as an impetus to rearrange your products in an orderly way. Consider this as a meditative process that ›

FROM THE TEAM

Team Femina *shares how levelling up their beauty game has helped them stay sane in the times of COVID-19.*

As they say, humans are social animals. Naturally then, we don't do very well without our clan. If you are experiencing sudden pangs of panic in this challenging time, it's perfectly fine to keep the worldly worries aside for a moment and think about yourself, and what truly makes you feel beautiful.

As women who strive to explore every aspect of our lives, to find the pieces that make us whole, we, at *Femina*, don't hesitate to give beauty all the love, effort and thought that it requires (and deserves!).

We all know that beauty is beyond skin-deep; it goes way deeper until it touches the soul and heals one's mind. It is much more than how we look, significantly impacts the way we feel, and plays an essential role in how we make others feel. Here's how we are drawing our silver linings and you should too:

One must utilise this time to form a beauty regimen at home.
~ Aishwarya Sati, Assistant Editor, Femina

"Since there is a pall of gloom around this uncertain period, people must take good care of their mental and physical well-being during this lockdown. While nothing beats a healthy diet, one must utilise this time to form a beauty regimen at home, which had taken a backseat in our routines, thanks to the convenience of salon visits. I am oiling my hair more regularly now since nothing is more relaxing than a hot oil massage. It also helps me deal with anxiety. Besides, this is a good time to raid the kitchen for trying out all those homemade mask recipes that one found too tedious otherwise!"

My quarantine self-care routine is mostly about home remedies.
~ Sukriti Shahi, Assistant Beauty Editor, Femina

"Now that I am at home, I am indulging in natural remedies, specially curated by my grandmother, to treat several skin and scalp issues that I have been facing—like acne, dry skin, dandruff, and hair fall. These days, I am applying a paste made with besan (gram flour), curd and a pinch of turmeric to treat acne and clean pores. Also, aloe vera mixed with three to four drops of lemon works well for acne and gives me brighter skin."

I indulge in sheet masks or detox facemasks twice a week.
~ Charlene Flanagan, Senior Production Editor, Femina

"Since I've been cooped up at home, it's been easier to detox my skin and stay away from pollution. I've noticed a difference in my skin despite a very basic routine. On most days, I cleanse and moisturise well. I avoid toner as my skin tends to feel drier. Apart from that, I indulge in sheet masks or detox facemasks twice a week."

I indulge in a hot oil head massage twice a week.
~ Shraddha Kamdar, Production Editor, Femina

"I indulge in a hot oil head massage twice a week. It is quite rejuvenating, and at the same time keeps my hair nourished and manageable. I use coconut oil and add curry leaves to it after heating it. This lends a lovely fragrance to the oil."

I am finally keeping up with my water intake!
~ Radhika Sathe-Patwardhan, Features Editor, Femina

"Maintaining a good skincare routine is less about the products you use and more about the water you drink in a day. I am finally keeping up with my water intake! This lockdown period has made me sit back and think about why I am unable to do something that basic and easy."

will offer you some me-time as you go through your beauty essentials. As you organise, you will also feel your mind declutter. This will not only have a healing effect now but will also simplify your life in the days to come.

Give Away What You Are Not Using

It's easy to overlook the effect that rummaging through a hundred beauty products can have on you. For your sanity, single out the products that serve you well and separate the ones that are only adding to the clutter.

Decide On A Beauty-Budget (And Stick To It!)

Impulsive buying has long been glorified as an effective way to deal with the blues. But here's when you need to put a hard stop and let go off this toxic habit for long-term wellness. Besides, overspending is ›



likely to be followed by intense feelings of guilt, lack of financial security, and wastage of resources. Decide on a beauty budget, make every penny count, and see your beauty buys transform both, your looks and your mood.

Get To Know Your Skin And Hair

Educate yourself about the beauty ingredients and pay heed to your skin and hair type to know what suits you the best. With the rise of bespoke beauty, the industry is offering you ample information and a vast product range to help you meet your exclusive needs.

Take Expert Guidance

The consciousness towards all things self-care is emphasising the significance of expert help, even if one is not suffering from a significant skin or hair concern. A dermatologist can help one prep for every age while minimising the damage that ageing or external aggressors can have on one's body. In addition, expert-help minimises the chances of trial and error. In times like these, resort to online consultation for guidance.

Keep Up With The Trends

If you are a beauty enthusiast, you know the joy that comes with keeping up with what's raging. To get the most out of any trend, improvise the trends to make them your own. Pick your perfect shade of red, go for a subtle brown smoky eye if black doesn't portray your persona well, and experiment with different angled liners till you get it right. Play the field!

Get Creative With Your Makeup Products

When it comes to getting creative with makeup, it isn't limited to trends. Multitasking with your products is a whole new arena. Here you can work your way through a limited set and still create head-turners. Use your lip tint for your cheeks, apply eye shadow as a highlighter, double-up your lipstick as eye shadow… the possibilities are endless. ›



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Products applied before going to bed get ample amount of time to work their way into your skin without any interruption from external aggressors.





PRACTICE CLEAN BEAUTY TO FOR YOURSELF AND YOUR PLANET

With the global wave of wellness, clean beauty has started making a significant space in our lives. Natural, green, vegan, cruelty-free, toxin-free and organic are some of the buzzwords when it comes to this beauty movement. It encourages people to buy safe beauty products that are made with precise formulations and sustainable resources.

HERE'S HOW TO GET STARTED:

- Do an ingredient check
- Pay heed to the packaging
- Scan for the cruelty-free sign
- Choose fragrance-free and dye-free products
- Resort to DIY care

Never Skip Your Nighttime Routine

While the daytime beauty regime helps enhance and make you look your beautiful best, night care is when all the healing happens.

Products applied before going to bed get ample amount of time to work their way into your skin without any interruption from external aggressors. As your body is at complete rest, it promotes the absorption of the products and replenishes from deep within. When it comes to holistic beauty, this step tops the list and is not skippable.

What's more? Get your basics right! Stay strict with your personal care routine, if not elaborate. Daily showers, regular head baths, following your CTM ritual religiously, and drinking ample amounts of water make for a regime that's as simple as it is essential.



Restore RESISTANCE

The rest of 2020 calls for a healthy immune system! **Eden Noronha** helps you take the right measures to boost its functions in order to stay safe through the pandemic

If 2020 has taught us anything so far, it is that your immunity needs your undivided attention. Ignoring your overall health may have been a subconscious error on your part, but it is now time for a reckoning. As you're well aware, those infected with COVID-19 have a compromised immune system in some form or another. With this in mind, ensuring you take care of yourself and build your immunity is of the highest importance. After all, a strong immune system is what will keep you healthy and safe from deadly viruses and diseases. In order to ensure your immune system is functioning optimally, you need to take a closer look at your lifestyle, and make a few simple, yet essential alterations.

If you're wondering how, given the current lockdown, all you have to do is follow these simple rules.

Food is medicine

Consuming the right kind of foods will go a long way in helping to boost your immunity. Your body needs its daily dose of essential vitamins and minerals that may or not be present in the meals you eat. The best way to ensure you are getting the necessary nourishment is to avoid processed and sugary foods, and opt for a balanced diet. With each serving, fill half of your plate with fresh fruits and vegetables, and let the other half ›

be divided into one-third carbs, two-thirds proteins. Incorporate different kinds of coloured veggies in your diet; this is an easy way to ensure you are armed with all the nutrients. Women also need a daily dose of calcium and vitamin C, so treat yourself to citrus fruits and dairy.

Fitness expert and founder of MagicRise, Rakhee Mehta, says, "Drink warm water whenever you can through the day, and also opt for herbal tea. Add probiotics to your diet through foods like yoghurt, fibrous fruits and vegetables, omega fatty acids, and rich nuts and oils. The one fruit that we swear by is tomatoes. Apart from containing lycopene, a powerful cancer fighter, tomatoes are rich in vitamin C, which helps boost immunity. It is recommend you eat everything, but with portion control. The urge to binge will be heightened during these times. Consumption of vitamin C through lemons, oranges, sweet limes, ginger, etc is highly encouraged."

Rest is recovery

Getting a good night's sleep will reboot your immune system, so ensure your body gets the proper rest it needs. Sleep deprivation causes your body to produce stress hormones like cortisol which keeps you awake and alert, but a spike in these hormones compromises your immune system. A minimum of seven hours of rest is vital to help build your immunity and rejuvenate yourself.

Exercise is vital

Stay active, always. Don't slip into a sedentary lifestyle owing to the time spent at home during the lockdown; your physical well-being hinges on the right balance between rest and exercise. This doesn't mean you put yourself through rigorous







SLEEP DEPRIVATION CAUSES YOUR BODY TO PRODUCE STRESS HORMONES LIKE CORTISOL WHICH KEEPS YOU AWAKE AND ALERT, BUT A SPIKE IN THESE HORMONES COMPROMISES YOUR IMMUNE SYSTEM.



OPT FOR YOGA OR A BRISK WALK TO PROMOTE THE SMOOTH FUNCTIONING OF YOUR IMMUNE SYSTEM.

training sessions; too much exercise can also weaken your immune system. Moderate intensity exercises are all you need to boost your immunity. Research shows that this increases the production of white blood cells, all responsible for fighting off infections. Opt for yoga or a brisk walk to promote the smooth functioning of your immune system.

"Our body is akin to a systematic machine, which if left dormant, will start rusting. One of the best things to do for your body the minute you wake up is to stretch. Stretching boosts the supply of oxygen-rich blood to your sore muscles, and helps strengthen them and keep them flexible and healthy. So, make sure to breathe and stretch deeply each morning, holding the stretch for about 25 seconds. Try practicing yoga, or take an online dance class. Even cleaning your house is a great form of exercise," says Mehta.

Level with stress

Chronic stress or anxiety can have a terrible impact on your immunity. When your mind undergoes stress,





We teamed up with experts to present you with three nutritious and immunity-boosting recipes that will keep you in prime health without compromising on taste.

Classic Tom Kha With Veggies

A spicy broth flavoured with Thai herbs and coconut cream, this classic soup will keep you energised through the day. It's rich in vitamin C, as lemon is used for preparing the broth. Coconut milk provides essential fats required to maintain smooth functioning of vital internal organs. Veggies like broccoli provide antioxidants that prevent you from catching infections.

INGREDIENTS

● 1 tbsp Thai red chilli paste ● 200 ml coconut milk ● 1-2 kaffir lime leaves ● 2-3 Thai bird's eye chillies ● 20-30 gm galangal ● 4-5 cloves garlic ● Salt, to taste, ● Pepper, to taste, ● Water, as required, ● 1 lemon ● Veg stock seasoning, to taste ● 2 baby corns, diced ● 3-4 broccoli florets ● 1 carrot, diced

PREPARATION

1. Bring the water, red chilli paste, galangal, garlic, bird's eye chillies, and lime leaves to a boil. Once it starts boiling vigorously, simmer and let it cooking until the desired flavour is achieved. 2. Add broccoli florets, carrots, and baby corn and simmer till veggies are cooked. 3. Add coconut milk and simmer over low heat. Season with salt, pepper and veg seasoning. Serve hot.

Recipe courtesy: Chef Karma Tenpa of Yazu: Pan Asian Supper Club



Herby, Berry, Nutty, Cheesy Keto Salad

A survey found that 54% of Indian women have some form of anaemia (mild to severe). This Keto salad is replete with iron from leafy greens like kale, spinach, and rocket leaves to keep anaemia at bay. You also get vitamin A from pumpkins and antioxidants from blueberries.

INGREDIENTS

For the base:

● 1 cup kale ● ½ cup spinach ● ½ cup rocket leaves ● 10 pieces red bell pepper ● 2 tbsp onion, chopped ● 2 tbsp roasted ● Pumpkin, cubed ● 2 tbsp squash, cubed ● 1 tbsp fresh basil

For the toppings:

● 2 tbsp blueberries ● 2 tbsp dried cranberries ● 2 tbsp feta cheese ● 1 tbsp coconut flakes ● 1 tbsp roasted almonds ● 1 tbsp pumpkin seeds

For the creamy mustard dressing:

● 1 tbsp Dijon mustard ● 1 tbsp tahini ● 2 tbsp Greek yoghurt ● 1/4 tsp salt ● 2 tsp lemon juice ● 1 tbsp cream ● 1 tbsp water ● 1 tbsp olive oil ●1 tsp honey

PREPARATION

1. Finely chop the leafy greens and place them in a big salad bowl. 2. Mix in the onions, bell pepper, roasted pumpkin, squash, and basil. 3. Add the berries, cheese, and seed toppings to the mix. 4. For the dressing, mix water and Greek yoghurt together in a mixing bowl, until smooth. Add the remaining ingredients and whisk again till smooth 5. Serve immediately.

Recipe courtesy: Nutritionist Gurmeet Arora, Founder of Flax, Healthy Living



Turmeric Latte

A perfect substitute for your morning cup of coffee, this turmeric latte is rich in curcumin, a compound that can help moderate the immune response with its powerful anti-inflammatory effects. What's more, this recipe's secret ingredient—black pepper—boosts the absorption of turmeric in the body.

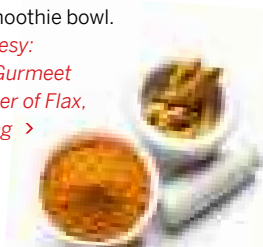
INGREDIENTS

● 1 tbsp turmeric powder ● 1 espresso shot (30 ml) ● 1 tbsp honey ● 1 cup milk of choice ● 1 pinch cinnamon powder ● 1 pinch black pepper powder

PREPARATION

1. Blend the turmeric powder and espresso shot with milk in a mixer. 2. Pour it into a mug and add the honey and the pepper powder, and stir. 3. Top with a pinch of cinnamon. 4. You can add whole grain oats and a banana to this latte to turn it into a wholesome breakfast smoothie bowl.

Recipe courtesy: Nutritionist Gurmeet Arora, Founder of Flax, Healthy Living ›





ZINC PLAYS AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE DEVELOPMENT AND FUNCTIONING OF IMMUNITY CELLS. A ZINC DEFICIENCY CAN REDUCE YOUR SENSE OF TASTE AND SMELL.

your body produces hormones that damage your immune system. Research suggests that people who experience high levels of mental stress are less likely to maintain healthy habits. Whether it's eating right and getting adequate sleep, any stress or discomfort will affect immunity. The best way to counter stress is to indulge in hobbies, connect with close friends or family members, or keep your mind engaged by learning new skills or even watching movies.

"According to existing studies, there are multiple things you can do to strengthen and preserve your brain circuits and keep yourself mentally agile. This works to lower age-related mental disorders. Create games for yourself and your loved ones. Build something with scraps available at home, try DIY beauty masks and hair oils, paint, or simply indulge in board games," Mehta adds.





While you may be eating healthy, taking your multivitamins, and ensuring you live a healthy lifestyle, it's important to take a closer look at the necessary vitamins and minerals your immune system needs.

Zinc

Zinc is an essential nutrient that aids many processes in the body. It is necessary to ensure smooth functioning of metabolism, digestion, nerve function, protein synthesis, growth, and development, among other things. It plays an important role in the development and functioning of immunity cells. What's more, a zinc deficiency can reduce your sense of taste and smell. "Zinc is available in cells throughout the body. It helps the immune system counter invading bacteria and viruses," says Wellness coach, nutritionist, and founder of Nutri Activania, Avni Kaul.

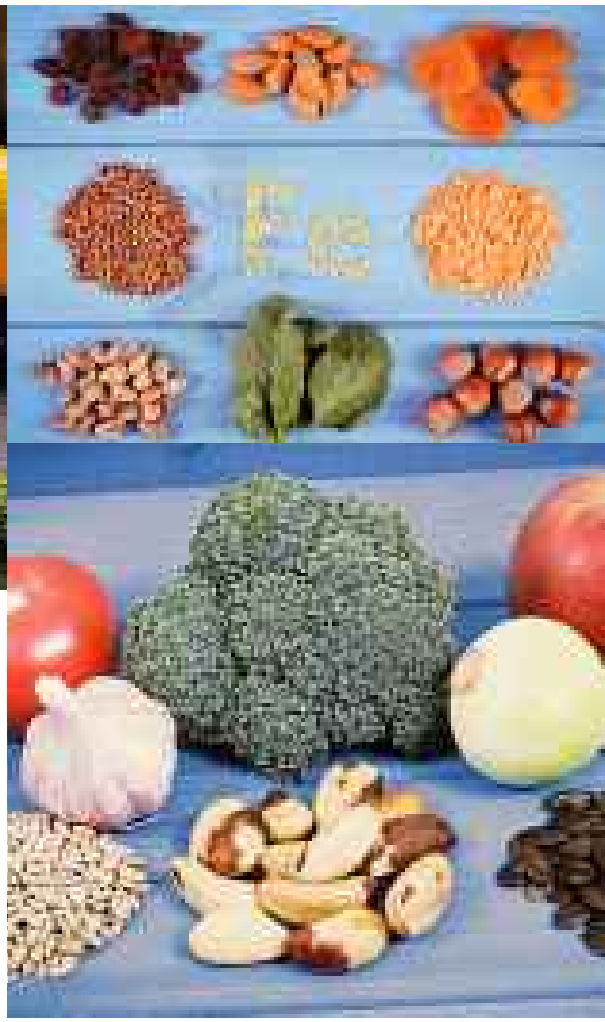
Foods that are rich in zinc include chickpeas, lentils, beans, pumpkin seeds, sesame seeds, peanuts, cashews, almonds, cheese, milk, eggs, whole grains, red meat, shellfish, and dark chocolate.

Vitamin C

Vitamin C helps prevent you from getting sick. It is considered to be one of the best immunity-boosting vitamins, and can help fight colds, and reduce its duration. Research confirms that people who have high levels of ›







SELENIUM MAY HELP REDUCE SYMPTOMS OF ASTHMA AND RISKS OF DEVELOPING CERTAIN CANCERS.

vitamin C in their bloodstream are considered to have a strong immunity. However, the body does not produce or store this vitamin, thus it is necessary to include it in your daily diet.

Kaul says, "Vitamin C contributes towards your immune protection by supporting several cellular tasks of both the innate and the adaptive immune system. Vitamin C accumulates in phagocytic cells like the neutrophils, and can boost chemotaxis, phagocytosis, the formation of reactive oxygen species, and eventually microbial killing."

Foods that are a rich source of vitamin C include oranges, grapefruits, strawberries, bell peppers, spinach, kale, and broccoli.

Selenium

This mineral keeps your immune system's defenses strong by boosting the function of white blood cells that help prevent bacterial infections and viruses. It aids metabolism and boosts the production of glucose, and regulates the function of the thyroid glands. It may even help reduce symptoms of asthma and risks of developing certain cancers. "Selenium may help reduce oxidative stress in your body, and reduce inflammation," explains Kaul.

Foods rich in selenium are milk, yogurt, pork, beef, turkey, chicken, fish, shellfish, eggs, whole wheat breads, oatmeal, and baked beans.

Iron

Iron is an essential mineral that you need in your body. It aids the proper functioning of haemoglobin, which helps transport oxygen all over the body. It is important to maintain a strong immune system, boost energy levels, and regulate body temperature. An iron deficiency leads to a drop in red blood cells which hinders oxygen supply to the muscles and tissues resulting in weakness and fatigue. Kaul explains, "Iron improves the growth and virulence of pathogens. It is also vital for the activation and proliferation of immune cells. Thus, an iron deficiency negatively impacts the pathogens and the host, especially when it concerns immunity."

To increase your iron intake, opt for foods such as dark leafy vegetables, beans, lentils, baked potatoes, chicken, turkey, cashew nuts, whole grain breads, apples, bananas, and pomegranates.

CONNECT THE DOC

Mental health expert Dr Prakriti Poddar is leading an initiative to tackle mental health issues during the COVID-19 crisis, reports **Anindita Ghosh**

As the coronavirus crisis plagues the world, the focus has naturally been on the immediate physical fallout of the disease—the symptoms, prognosis, treatment, and mortality rates. However, in comparison, there hasn't been enough emphasis on patients' mental health; or that of those in quarantine and isolation; or the millions of us in lockdown, grappling with a bleak reality that is unlike anything we have experienced before.

Fortunately, in India, there is a collective of concerned mental health professionals called Wellbeing Volunteers United, who are offering their services for the purpose. The services are available through a free helpline to those who are suffering from any form of mental health disorder, like anxiety and depression. The collective is an initiative of Dr Prakriti Poddar, a Mumbai-based mental health expert and managing trustee of The Poddar Foundation. The 1800-121-0980 helpline is backed by the Goa State Government; the Maharashtra State Commission for Women (MSCW); Maharashtra Human Rights Commission (MHRC); The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI); PD Hinduja Hospital, Mumbai, and other healthcare and mental wellness organisations.



"COVID-19 is not only a physiological disease, but also affects one's mental well-being. People are facing anxiety, loneliness, helplessness, boredom, uncertainty, and obsessive-compulsive behaviour."

According to Dr Poddar, the role of the Wellbeing Volunteers in the coronavirus crisis is to attend to people in distress. "COVID-19 is not only a physiological disease, but also affects one's mental well-being. People are facing anxiety, loneliness, helplessness, boredom, uncertainty, obsessive-compulsive behaviour like repetitive washing of hands, hoarding, depression, mood swings, and anger outbursts," she elaborates.

A free helpline is particularly helpful in times like these when access to physical consultations with medical practitioners have become difficult due to the lockdown. Dr Poddar says that numbers of calls to the helpline are rising every day. "Recently, we got a call from a homemaker who was disturbed because her husband was distressed. She wanted to help him but didn't know how. We started by positively encouraging her and being empathetic. We assured her that we understood her problem. We then helped her devise a plan to maintain positivity in the house by making her husband participate in games and watch his favourite shows instead of news that could be further distressing for him," the expert says.

In India, financial insecurity, work-related stress and relationship issues are major triggers of mental illnesses. What makes it worse is that culturally rooted stigmas prevent people from seeking help. "According to the National Mental Health Survey 2015-16, at least 10 million 13- to 17-year olds have mental health problems and 9.8 million adolescents need active intervention to treat their illnesses. In addition, 47 per cent of the elderly go through mental health challenges. This is an epidemic and it needs to be curbed. Unfortunately, a large number of people with mental health issues fail to find medical help. Our aim is to look into the unaddressed disease burden," she concludes.



MAKING IT COUNT

In a freewheeling chat with **Nikshubha Garg**, Neerja Birla talks about the ongoing crisis, and the importance of mental health

Neerja Birla describes herself as an "educationist, mental health activist, explorer, seeker, fitness freak, and always a mum". The philanthropist, married to Kumar Mangalam Birla, helms several projects—Mpower (founder and chairperson), The Aditya Birla World Academy (chairperson), The Aditya Birla Integrated School (chairperson), Pratham and Make-a-Wish Foundation (board member)—aimed at improving lives. Over to her.



Neerja Birla

You are committed to the cause of helping citizens live an enriched life. What keeps you motivated?

The very notion of reaching out to people and attempting to help them live enriched lives is motivation in itself. When we receive positive feedback on our efforts, it doubles our resolve. I'm a big believer in the Japanese concept of Ikigai, which is about having 'a reason for being' or 'a direction, meaning or purpose in life'. In many ways, our little efforts have become my Ikigai.

With Mpower, you target mental health. Why did you make this your focus?

As an educationist, I've been involved with the running of two schools and have had the first-hand experience of seeing students face a spectrum of mental health concerns—bullying-related trauma, oppositional defiant disorder, academics-related anxiety, and depression arising from a variety of issues.

> "(When it comes to mental health) We've come a long way in these last few years, **but we still have a longer way to go."**

Moreover, parents are often in denial about what is happening to their children. At the same time, those who are willing to seek help don't know where to go, as mental health help is not widely spoken about in India. The desire to put in place a bridging effort in the mental health arena had been bouncing around in my mind for a few years. My daughter Ananya finally made me realise how passionately I felt about it and pushed me into it.

Do you think India has come a long way in addressing the importance of mental well-being? If yes, what has made a difference?

Four years ago, when we started Mpower, mental health was a taboo topic. Even the highly educated weren't willing to talk about or acknowledge issues and preferred to sweep them under the carpet. However, slowly but surely, people are coming forward and accepting that: It is OKAY to not be OKAY, but it is NOT OKAY to NOT seek help. However, until we do not create awareness and alleviate the stigma around mental health until we are not able to provide help to every person who needs it, we, ›

as a nation, cannot take it easy. We've come a long way in these last few years, but we still have an even longer way to go. This journey has only begun.

What activities are you indulging in during quarantine?

I've made it a point to stick to my structured routine as much as possible. I work from home, set deadlines, and try to get as much done within that time. I'm spending loads of time with my family. We play games, watch positive movies that lighten the mood, and indulge in banter and conversations. I video-call my friends and colleagues on a regular basis to catch up. I'm also sticking to my fitness routine and working out just the way I was before the lockdown. I'm pursuing my spiritual studies as I did earlier. And I also find myself cleaning up the clutter that tends to accumulate in the house over the years.

Do you think social media has a detrimental effect on one's mental health during these times or is it the opposite?

Social media is the lifeline for people today, especially the youth. But it can be a boon as well as a curse. On one hand, it allows people to connect with like-minded people and friends, exchange information and ideas, and create rapid awareness for things. Importantly, it also has the power to be the voice of the people. On the other hand, it can also be grossly misused. For example, right now, people are using it to pander fake information, paranoia, rumours, superstitions, and blame games. In my opinion, however, the pros far outweigh the cons. Thanks to social media, we're able to remain constantly updated with what's happening in the world right now. It is helping us fight the negatives of isolation and stay in touch with people. We're using social media to raise awareness about the impact of the COVID-19 contagion on the mental health of people and effective coping strategies to counter the same.



Neerja Birla believes that one must always be open to change

In the current scenario, how important is the role of bigwigs/ corporates to unite?

In today's day and age, companies cannot just be business or industrial houses. Besides aiming for financial success and sustainability, they have to acknowledge their social responsibilities. With the crisis that we're facing, it is vital that all corporates and people who are more privileged, step up.



> "With the crisis that we're facing, it is vital that all corporates **and people who are more privileged, step up.**"

What steps has Aditya Birla Education Trust taken to help its employees tide over these trying times?

Since everyone is going through a tough time, we've relaxed deadlines wherever possible and are making as many exceptions as we can, while everyone works from home. Counselling services with video content is available to our employees for emotional support. We've also set up WhatsApp groups that are allowing everyone to stay connected. These groups have become platforms for light-hearted chit-chat, sharing of jokes and videos, and amusing personal experiences during this lockdown. Lastly, we're ensuring that all salaries are paid on time. That's the least that we can do.

What has been the biggest learning from your professional journey?

Always try and be 'open to change'. We all start out with certain ideas about life and certain goals in mind. But as we move forward, we learn and evolve. The other thing I've learned is that people are your strength. In your personal life, it is your family, friends and well-wishers. Even an organisation depends upon its people to define its culture and work ethics. F

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"DON'T PERFORM IVF DURING THE PANDEMIC"

Noted gynaecologist Dr Firuza Parikh talks to **Nikshubha Garg** about the Covid-19 crisis, and its impact on in vitro fertilisation (IVF) treatments



Dr Firuza Parikh, director of Assisted Reproduction and Genetics at Jaslok Hospital and Research Centre in Mumbai (the youngest person in the history of the hospital to hold the title when she was appointed in her 30s), set up the first IVF centre at Jaslok Hospital in 1989. In her three-decade-long career, she has helped hundreds of couples battling infertility, owing to her expertise in in vitro fertilisation (IVF). The doctor is also the author of *The Complete Guide To Becoming Pregnant*. In a chat, she talks about the ongoing crisis, ways to tackle this time, safety of IVF currently, and her fulfilling career.

In the middle of the ongoing crisis, what's the most common question that you get asked?

Being a fertility specialist, the most common question my pregnant patients ask me is what precautions they should follow. I tell them to practice social distancing, wash their hands when needed, and refrain from touching their faces. My new patients want to know how soon they can start their treatment. I advise them to wait until I myself know for sure.

Panic is a big issue during this time. How can one keep that in check?

When information is adulterated with misinformation, it is bound to cause panic. One way to manage it is to follow only official websites of the government, the Indian Council Of Medical Research (ICMR), WHO, and other municipal bodies. Another important way to avoid panic is to share your fears with your family. Have meals together and thank God for life itself. Exercise, meditation, and yoga also help.

"Share your fears with your family. Have meals together and **thank God for life itself during this time."**

How safe are IVF and other assisted fertility processes at this point in time?

It is important to take a step back, and not perform any optional IVF procedures during the pandemic, due to a few crucial reasons. One, we are using up important resources in terms of disposables, personal protective equipment (PPE), and medicines that could be used to tackle the major problem at hand (coronavirus). Second, currently, there is not enough data to allow women to conceive. A doctor's duty is to do no harm to the patient.

Which are some of the common myths about infertility that you would want to bust?

The most common is that women's problems contribute more to infertility as compared to men. In reality, both male and female issues contribute equally. The other worrisome myth is that a 40-year-old healthy woman will continue ›



to produce good quality eggs. In reality, a woman's biological clock slows down by 36, and egg freezing makes sense only for younger women.

Take us through the changing trends surrounding parenthood.

One perturbing trend is delaying parenthood. This happens because both partners are working, and most families are moving towards the nuclear model. Another trend that we observe in recent times is that an increasing number of single women are coming in to freeze their eggs, and some are even opting for single parenthood.

What challenges are doctors facing currently?

Many. The first is to stay calm and look after themselves. Most of them are working long hours, being deprived of sleep and food. Next, is the lack of supplies and PPE. Another important deterrent is the lack of safety that the doctors are facing, along with hostility instead of gratitude. This needs to be addressed at all levels.

"I couldn't have been more fortunate. Not everyone gets the opportunity to serve, **and turn their hobby into their profession."**

Take us through your childhood. At what point did you know you wanted to become a doctor?

I was curious, restless, and naughty in school. My science teacher in school, Mrs Talpade was the reason behind me falling in love with Biology. Every time I answered the difficult questions she posed in class or topped the science exams she would call me Dr Firuza. My fate was clear even before I graduated from school.

Tell us about your first day at work.

My first day as a resident doctor turned out to be a 20-hour workday. It started with morning rounds followed by outpatients, surgery, obstetric admissions, six normal deliveries, two caesarean sections, and an obstetric emergency. It was baptism by fire. I hadn't eaten or drank water the whole day, and when I did grab some Glucose biscuits for dinner, I left them half-eaten to run for another emergency.

How difficult is it to keep a cool head and move forward in difficult situations?

Knowledge and passion empower us. I remember many senior professors would be listening to music and cracking jokes when operating on a critical patient. I would be amazed by their calm resolve. I try to follow the same principle. The more intricate the problem, the calmer I become.

Have trying times given you sleepless nights? How have you dealt with them?

God has blessed me with what I call instant sleep! The moment my head touches the pillow, I am off to sleep. Sometimes, I fall asleep during the 15-minute drive from work to home. Rajesh (Parikh, her husband) loves to regale friends with stories of how I have fallen asleep standing in an elevator while going to the 12th floor (laughs).

You have spent three decades giving back. Does life seem fulfilled?

I couldn't have been more fortunate. Not everyone gets the opportunity to serve, and turn their hobby into their profession. At this stage of my life, I am blessed to see my team of 50 ready to serve our patients independently with smiling faces. I look forward to spending some of my time in research, writing papers, and working for social causes, and for the education of those challenged by the lack of it.

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PRESENTS

D/code 2020

A Times Group Initiative

CURATED BY KRUPA ZUBIN & ZUBIN ZAINUDDIN OF Z Z ARCHITECTS

PARTNER plusch

An initiative by Home & Design TRENDS magazine, D/code is India's first curated luxury living show presented by the Times Group. Redefining the way we experience the luxe life, D/code brings together the best of design under one roof to create a platform that celebrates and recognises creative thought.

D/code 2020, presented by Classic Marble Company, with Plusch as partners was once again curated by Krupa Zubin and Zubin Zainuddin of ZZ Architects. In its third edition, D/code showcased over 50 luxury design brands, specially curated events and power talk sessions. Here, we give you a glimpse of D/code 2020 held at Dome NSCI, Worli.

1. Amit Shah of Classic Marble Company, Editor in Chief Ronitaa Italia, Subodh Shah of Classic Marble Company, Sunil Wuthoo, Business Director, Worldwide Media 2. Sukriti Sharma of Plusch Living, Architect Krupa Zubin, Rati Sharma of Plusch Living, Architect Zubin Zainuddin, Rupal Maru of Plusch Living 3. Editor In Chief Ronitaa Italia, Amit Shah of CMC, MasterChef Sarah Todd, Architect Xerxes Talati 4. Yogesh Chaudhary of Jaipur Rugs 5. Miti Jhunjhunwala of MJ Label 6. Sunil Wuthoo, Business Director, Worldwide Media, Kekin Shah of C. Bhogilal West-End, Sanjay Arora of D'Décor 7. Chef Pallavi Nigam 8. Hazel Wolf, Editor in Chief Ronitaa Italia, Sonal Das, Project Head, D/code, Jurgen Wolf, Managing Director, Häfele 9. Guest with Falgun Shroff of Sources Unlimited, Architect Krishna Murthy, Aamir Fruitwala of AK International 10. Artist Radhika Rawat Chopra, Khanakh Sharma, Jai Sharma, Abhimanyu Chopra 11. Architect Ahmad Furniturewala, Architect Noshir Talati, Architect Xerxes Talati 12. Mandeep Singh of Emery Studio with guests 13. Architect Rooshad Shroff, Designer Ravi Vazirani, Architect Rajiv Parekh, Architect Annkur Khosla, Designer Iram Sultan, Editor in Chief Ronitaa Italia 14. Guest, Dhruv Chandra of The Carpet Cellar, Purav Mehta of Sources Unlimited, Subodh Shah of CMC 15. Architect Zubin Zainuddin, Kekin Shah of C. Bhogilal West-End, Architect Krupa Zubin with guests 16. Iram Habib, Designer Aakif Habib, Sonal Das, Project Head, D/code 17. Sanjay Arora of D'Décor 18. Hamendra Sharma of Plusch Living, Editor in Chief Ronitaa Italia 19. Designer Monica Chawla, Falgun Shroff, Sources Unlimited, Kekin Shah 20. Guests at the VIP lounge



















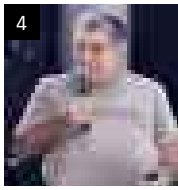


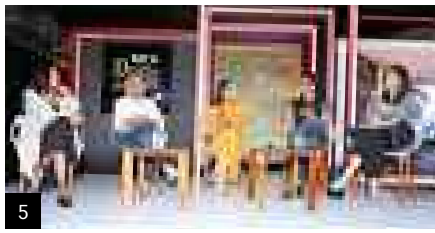


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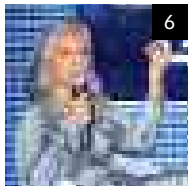

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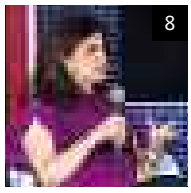

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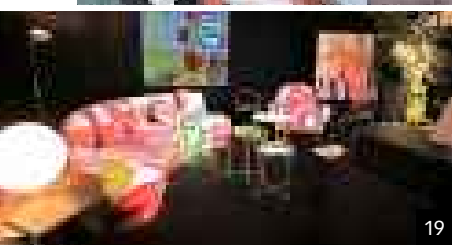

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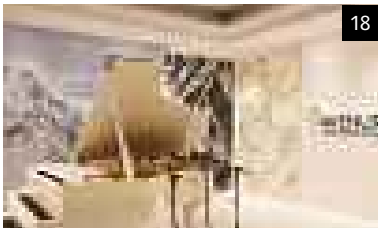

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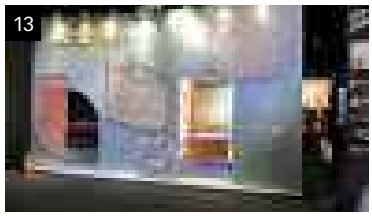
1. Sunil Wuthoo, Business Director, Worldwide Media, Editor In Chief Ronitaa Italia, Designer Shantanu Garg 2. Guests at Trends Excellence Awards 3. Designer Iram Sultan, Architect Rajeev Thakker, Artist Arzan Khambatta, Architect Anand Menon 4. Architect Nozer Wadia 5. Architect Husna Rahaman, Architect Zubin Master, Architect Annkur Khosla, Architect Rajeev Parekh, Designer Iram Sultan 6. Architect Shimul Javeri Kadri 7. Architect Abha Narain Lambah 8. Architect Seema Puri 9. Architect Zarir Mullan 10. Designer Shabnam Gupta 11. Architect Nandini Somaya Sampat 12. The Design Corridor curated by Home & Design TRENDS 13. Jaipur Rugs 14. D'Décor Blinds 15. Valcucine 16. C Bhogilal West-End 17. Sources Unlimited 18. Title Sponsor Classic Marble Company 19. The Souk of Emotions, curated by Designer Shantanu Garg in collaboration with six branding partners – Tejas, S&B Designs, Orvi Surfaces, Credo Planters, Chopra's, Attitudes Deco. 20. Amit Shah of CMC, Falgun Shroff of Sources Unlimited, Kunj Shah of Sources Unlimited 21. Sameer Wadekar, Architect Zaki Sheikh, Designer Jannat Vasi, Meghna Jain of Orvi Surfaces, Designer Shantanu Garg, guest, Designer Fenny Ganatra, guest, Designer Neesha Alwani 22. Designer Shantanu Garg, Designer Iram Sultan, Kunal Maniar 23. Title Sponsor Classic Marble Company 24. Partners Plusch Living

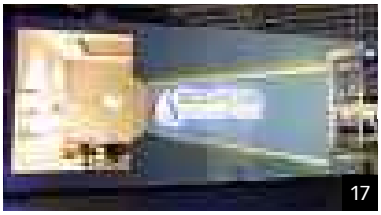

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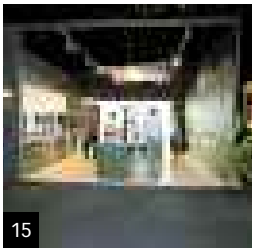

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RED HOT!

A North African hot chilli pepper paste, harissa is now enjoying its second round of popularity after about five years. Adding it to your meal guarantees a quick burst of spice. It can be used to punch up vegetables, eggs, and even roasted potatoes. While it is traditionally made with Baklouti peppers, you can make your version with any spicy dry red chillies you have at hand.

Faux Harissa

Ingredients

100 g dried red chillies
1 tsp shahi jeera, toasted
1 tsp coriander seeds, toasted
1 tsp cumin seeds, toasted
3 to 4 cloves garlic, peeled
1 tsp salt, or to taste
2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
+ extra for storing

Method

1. Soak the chillies in boiling water for 30 minutes.
2. Grind the spices to a powder.
3. Drain the chillies, reserving the soaking liquid. Remove and discard the stems and seeds from the chillies.
4. Grind together the chillies, ground spices, garlic, and salt in a mixer, or with a mortar and pestle. While the processor is running, drizzle in the olive oil, and grind to form a smooth, thick paste. Add a little reserved soaking liquid to reach the consistency you like. Season to taste.
5. Transfer the harissa to a glass jar and cover the surface with a layer of olive oil. It will keep refrigerated for a month.

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A taste of KERALA

Bring the flavour of God's own country into your home with these recipes from **Chef Regi Mathew**, culinary director and co-owner at Kappa Chakka Kandhari, Bengaluru and Chennai

VAZHAPPOO CUTLETS

(Banana Flower Cutlets)



- 100 g vazhapoo (banana flowers), cleaned well and finely chopped
- 15 ml coconut oil
- 25 g onion, chopped
- 15 g ginger, chopped
- 15 g garlic, chopped
- 10 g green chillies, chopped
- 1 sprig curry leaves
- 5 g turmeric powder
- 10 g pepper powder
- 10 g garam masala powder
- 50 g potato, boiled and mashed to a fine paste
- 30 g maida for batter
- Water, as required
- 50 g breadcrumbs
- Salt, to taste
- 400 ml oil, for frying

Calorie count: 720 calories (per serving)

SERVES: 2 > **PREP TIME:** 40 minutes > **COOKING TIME:** 15 minutes

1. Bring the water to a boil over a medium-high flame, and boil the banana flower until soft. Drain, and set aside.
2. Heat the coconut oil in a pan over a medium-high flame, add the onion, ginger, garlic, green chillies, and curry leaves, and sauté well for five minutes.
3. Add the turmeric powder and the boiled banana flower, and sauté until the mixture dries up.
4. Add the pepper and garam masala powders and salt to this mixture, and mix well.
5. Add the mashed potato, and mix well.
6. Shape the mixture into small cutlets.
7. Make a thin batter with the maida and water. Dip the cutlets into the batter to coat, and then into the breadcrumbs.
8. Shallow fry the cutlets on both sides until golden brown. Drain on kitchen paper, and serve hot. >

TIP: OIL YOUR HANDS THOROUGHLY BEFORE CLEANING THE BANANA FLOWER TO AVOID STAINING.

MURINGAKKA **CURRY**

(Drumstick Curry)



150 g muringakka (drumsticks), cut into three-inch long pieces

200 ml water

1 tomato, quartered

Salt, to taste

To be ground to a fine paste:

100 g grated coconut

15 g cumin seeds

10 g turmeric powder

2 green chillies

10 g garlic

Salt, to taste

For the tempering:

20 ml coconut oil

3 g mustard seeds

15 g sliced shallots

2 dried red chillies

1 sprig curry leaves

Calorie count: 376 calories (per serving)

SERVES: 2 > **PREP TIME:** 30 minutes > **COOKING TIME:** 20 minutes

1. Heat a pan of water on a medium-high flame, and boil the drumstick pieces with salt until slightly soft. Remove from the flame, and drain.

2. Return the boiled drumsticks to the pan over a medium flame. Add the water and the grated coconut paste, and cook for eight to 10 minutes.

3. Add the tomato, and continue cooking for 10 minutes.

4. Add salt to taste.

5. To temper, heat the coconut oil on a low-medium flame. Splutter the mustard seeds, and add the shallots and dried red chillies. When the shallots turn brown, add the curry leaves. Remove from the flame, and mix into the drumstick curry. >

TIP: **THIS CURRY TASTES GREAT WITH IDIYAPPAMS.**

VEGETABLE **STEW**

40 g carrot, peeled and cubed small

70 g potato, peeled and cubed small

30 g beans, cut into small pieces

500 ml water

1 sprig curry leaves

3 cardamom pods



2 cloves

1 stick cinnamon

Salt, to taste

5 g crushed black peppercorns

1 tsp coconut oil

For the coconut milk:

150 g grated coconut

2 cups warm water (divided usage)

Calorie count: 344 calories (per serving)

SERVES: 2 > **PREP TIME:** 20 minutes > **COOKING TIME:** 20 minutes

1. To make the coconut milk, pour one cup of warm water over the grated coconut, and squeeze in a fine strainer or muslin cloth over a bowl to get 1⅓ cups of thick coconut milk. Pour the second cup of warm water over the grated coconut to get thin coconut milk. Set aside.

2. Heat the water in a pan over a medium-high flame, and boil the carrot, potato, and beans with the curry leaves, cardamom pods, cloves, and cinnamon, the thin coconut milk and salt until soft.

3. Add the thick coconut milk, and allow to heat through again.

4. Add the crushed peppercorns and salt, and remove from the flame.

5. Drizzle the coconut oil over the stew. F

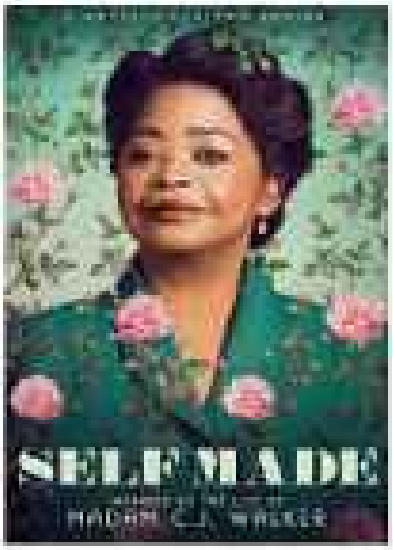
TIP: THIS VEGETABLE STEW GOES WELL WITH APPAMS.

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY KAPPA CHAKKA
KANDHARICALORIE COUNTS ARE APPROXIMATE

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BINGE WATCH THESE SHOWS!

Wondering what will have you cliking away for more when watching web series during the lockdown? We pick our favourites



SELF MADE:
INSPIRED BY THE LIFE OF MADAM CJ WALKER

Inspired by the life of Sarah Walker, the first African-American and the first woman to become a self-made millionaire, this series is full of drama, intrigue, and the rags to riches story that dreams are made of. Set at the turn of the 20th century, this fictionalised depiction of her life shows her journey from a poor washerwoman, to founder-owner of one of the biggest cosmetics and haircare products for African-American women, who were marginalised until then.

WHERE: NETFLIX



FOUR MORE SHOTS PLEASE!

The second season of *Four More Shots Please!* unfurls this month, taking off from where the first season left off. Four best friends essayed by Sayani Gupta, Kriti Kulhari, Bani J, and Maanvi Gagroo play individualistic women, who live life unapologetically and on their own terms, defying norms set for them by society. Supporting roles by Lisa Ray, Pratiek Babbar, Milind Soman, and Neil Bhoopalam make this a must-watch.

WHERE: AMAZON PRIME



INSECURE

***Insecure* has just released its fourth season, which promises to make lockdown worthwhile! The Golden Globe-winning series is about two women and their lives, careers, and romantic dalliances. This slice-of-life series is utterly relatable to most modern-day women, and stands out for its stellar performances, wit, and humour.**



UNORTHODOX

This series shows the dark side of living in New York's Hasidic community. Esty aka Esther is part of an orthodox Jewish setup, and tries to stifle her spunk and ambition to settle into a domesticated way of life. In just a year though, she breaks free from her unhappy marriage, and although pregnant, decides to flee to Berlin to start a new life. Each episode unravels fragments of her past, as well as the present. The powerful feminist storyline, coupled with the gripping narrative, makes this a must-watch. F

WHERE: NETFLIX

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