

The Dastur Essay Writing Competition - 2021

**Impact of COVID-19 on human behaviour, habits
and how one should tackle the problem.**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Sr. No.	Particulars	Page No.
1	Abstract	3
2	Introduction	4-6
3	Areas where the changed attitude of people has been observed	7-8
4	Positive changes in the habits of people	9-14
5	Negative changes in the habits of people	15-19
6	Solutions to tackle with the problems during the pandemic	20-21
7	Conclusion	22
8	Bibliography	23

Abstract

The infamous novel virus has brought about many changes in the thought process, lifestyle, habits, work life and the way of living of people, societies and communities at large. The “new normal” that the people now are compelled to adopt has completely changed the habits and behaviour of people. Human behaviour has been critical in the way the pandemic and the response to the same has shaped up over the past year. The pandemic has impacted every strata of the society, be it students, the young working professionals, the homemakers, the aged etc. An important aspect to note is that the change that has occurred is completely unexpected and if one measures the outcome of the impact, the change will probably be classified as the “*once in a lifetime change*”. Out of what is seen and heard around, it seems that the negatives around the pandemic overcome the positive around the pandemic in terms of absolute numbers. However, on understanding the facts and on understanding and comparing the outcome of various studies around the world, it can be comprehended that the impact on human habits and behaviour has had equal impact positively and negatively per se. It would be worthwhile to note that enumeration of the impact into positives and negatives helps to appreciate the positives out of the pandemic whereas it allows scope to improve wherever the impact has been negative. Well, definitely the pandemic is not something that any person in the best of his senses would appreciate as a situation. However, like every cloud has a silver lining, the pandemic surely has brought about some degree of positive change in the habits, attitudes and behaviours of the people.

The essay enumerates the change in the mindset of the people regarding various situations during the pandemic and also the changes in the habits of people observed during the pandemic. The positive and the negative changes in the habits of the people have been studied and explained in the essay. Further, the possible solutions to deal with the tough situations have also been suggested.

Impact of COVID-19 on human behaviour, habits and how one should tackle the problem.

Introduction

“We are, or will be, going through the most radical transformation the world has ever seen; people are justly terrified, excited, depressed, heartbroken and hopeful, all at once.”-Heather Marsh¹.

As it is rightly quoted, by Heather Marsh, in her book “The Creation of Me, Them and Us”, the human being may at some point of time in life experience too many different emotions at once. A plethora of emotions- terror, grief, excitement and depression, all have been experienced by humans at once during the time of the world pandemic of Covid-19. The novel virus, since the past year has not only affected or impacted our life but has become a part of our life. The “stay at home”, “work from home”, “study from home”, “play at home”, “learn at home” has had both positive and negative impact on the habits and behaviour of people. Earlier a person used to wait for the entire day to return to a place called “Home”. Home was considered as the sacred place where an individual used to find peace and happiness in the company of his loved ones. Today the home is a school, college, office, gym, theatre all in one place. The questions like “Where are you?” or “When would you be coming home?” and the excuses like “ I am not at home” or “ I am stuck in traffic” that were once part of the day to day conversations have practically become redundant to use. Since the common answer to all these questions is every individual, in the time of the pandemic is at home only.

Human behaviour refers to the capacity of human individuals to respond to internal and external stimuli ². The psychologists around the world have been studying the nature of human behaviour. While some theories suggest that understanding human behaviour is a real time learning experience since people with different personality types react to differently to different situations. This fundamental trait of human behaviour classifies it to be the most unexpected and unpredictable dynamic of human psychology. However, some theories further elaborate

¹ Heather Marsh, “The Creator of Me , Them and Us” (2020)

² Hemakumara, GPTS. and Rainis, R. 2018. Spatial behaviour modelling of unauthorised housing in Colombo, Sri Lanka. KEMANUSIAAN the Asian Journal of Humanities 25(2): 91–107

and explain that human behaviour in some situation can be the most predictable. For example, in a given situation, a person of a particular nature will react or respond in the most predictable manner.

Imagine, a person who classifies to be a pessimist in terms of what is defined in psychology will find and harp on the negative aspects only in any given situation. Such a person would only be able to see the traffic, the mud and the chaos created by a sudden rainfall. It would be highly irrational to expect such a person to appreciate the greenery, the smell of the mud, the excitement and the beautiful romantic weather that the sudden rainfall created.

However, it has been observed that the psychology of people has become really unpredictable at the time of the pandemic. A person who used to be an optimist and find the good in every situation seems to have fallen prey to the Covid-19 anxiety syndrome. He is the one who fears that moving out from the house to attend to urgent professional commitments may also lead to him being the reason of danger for his loved ones. The pandemic has infused terror and fear into the lives of people. On the contrary a person who may be pessimist became overly pessimist in this situation. The once upon a time, super busy professionals had their foot forward and were ready to help the aged neighbours, acquaintances and even unknown people with the groceries and medicines during the time of lockdown. Basically, there was no standard rule or pattern that could be identified in the reaction of different people in this situation.

The pandemic truly has proved the fact that the change in human behaviour has been a “once in a lifetime kind of change”. Normally, before the pandemic, a person would have had taken ages to adopt a new lifestyle. But the pandemic forced the people to adapt to the new normal very quickly and swiftly since the question was of survival and not choice.

“*Cleanliness is next to Godliness*” is not something that a person would be able to understand only if he was a learned and a highly educated person. It was something that was taught in the kindergarten. However, a considerably low percentage of population truly practiced the appropriate hygiene and sanitation practices. However, the importance of hygiene and sanitation was, in true sense taught by the pandemic. The pandemic taught the people a lesson that probably the kindergarten textbooks failed to propagate.

However, like every coin has two sides, it cannot be denied that the pandemic has brought in the sedentary lifestyle, the over usage of mobile phones and electronic devices, depression, fear and deteriorating mental health. Some studies and reports also suggest the increased use of alcohol and drugs, the high rate of domestic violence etc. during the lockdown.

Overall, there has been a major change in the mindset of people. The pandemic has brought with itself, positive as well as negative changes in the habits of people, society and community at large.

Areas where the changed attitude of people has been observed

The paradigm shift in the attitude and beliefs of people is enumerated and elaborated as under:

- **Proceed with Caution Attitude**

The human mind, in recent times, is pushed to be cautious in every action, every decision it takes. The cautious attitude, although very important to survive in today's times, the resultant consequence of the same is high level of mental stress. A man may decide to take all necessary precautions and go to his workplace. However, at the back of his mind he may be feeling extremely anxious of the fact that the virus may infect him if he ventures out in the dangerous situation.

- **Live like there is no tomorrow**

Although the said quote was always meant to be applicable in the most positive of situations where it was meant to motivate an individual to live in the present day without worrying about the past or future. However, in the time of this pandemic, the quote has taken the shape of literal reality. All of us are literally driven to believe the fact that there may not be a tomorrow to live in this world. Every morning listening to the news, reading the newspapers or even while talking to anybody, every human mind must have definitely had the thought that today is the last day of life.

- **Trust no one in this world**

Trust, a very basic foundation of human character is one of the most damaged virtues after the pandemic. The trust not only on fellow humans, but the entire humanity is lost. People have started questioning every action of every human around. In the initial phases of the pandemic, when somebody was infected with the virus, the people around would look down upon him and start assuming various stories on how the person would have contracted the virus. This would subsequently lead to not trusting the person anymore and staying as away from him as possible.

- **There seems to be no end to the dark tunnel**

Aristotle, the Greek philosopher quoted that “Man is a social animal”³. His basic nature is to move around, interact with fellow humans and to grow his treasure of knowledge, relations, material wealth etc. However, since the past year, the pandemic has forced the humans to stay indoors. Although, in the digital age, where everyone is connected through mobile phones, video conferencing facility etc. the human element or the human interaction is missing.

- **The internet is not the window to the world but the entire world**

It would not be an exaggeration if it is said that the entire world will come to a standstill if the internet is inaccessible even for a minute. Earlier internet was in support to the main activities that the human would be engaged in. Today, in the age of pandemic, the internet has become an indispensable part of the life. Without internet, probably even smallest of chores like buying groceries would become difficult for people.

- **Comfort is a myth**

Comfortable life that every person, once desired is now a reality. Interestingly, the earlier idea of comfortable life, when has turned into reality is causing discomfort to the people. It seems that people are not really comfortable in their very own earlier idea of comfort.

³ Aristotle -Greek Philosopher – 384-322BC

Positive Changes in the habits of people

The pandemic has led people to adopt many positive changes in their lifestyle. What to eat, how to eat, how to sanitize something as basic as vegetable to sanitisation of car, the pandemic has led people to create and define what is safe and what is not.

Some of the changes that can be perceived to be towards the better side of life are enumerated as under:

- **Health and fitness**

One of the greatest gifts that the pandemic has given the human race is the understanding the importance of health and fitness. Not only understanding and appreciating but also implementing the changes required to lead a healthy lifestyle have been done by the people. Most of the people, in this pandemic have realised the importance of health and fitness and have been able to begin the walk towards healthy lifestyle. The work from home model has to a great extent helped people to remove some dedicated time for fitness. Online yoga and online Zumba classes have further motivated the desire to be healthy and fit. Probably the time that was spent by an average individual in a metropolitan city towards travelling to the workplace and back to home now can be devoted and dedicated to a planned fitness activity like yoga, Zumba, aerobics, gymnastics or even brisk walking and cycling.

- **Importance of home - made food**

The normal Indian food ingredients have proven to boost immunity of people. The millennial generation, who was always attracted to the western form of culture is now depending upon the desi Kadha to boost their immunity. The rich benefits of “Haldi Wala Doodh” which was always a “Daadimaa Ka Nuskha” is now the new fad for the young generation. No more is the craze for a Domino’s pizza or a McDonalds Burger. The people now have a mini-McDonalds, Domino’s, Monginis all at home, right in their kitchen. The urge to have the instagram post with the hashtag “*Look what I made today*” is positively leading the teenagers back to believe the fact that there is no competition to the homemade food. The Italian, the Chinese, the Mexican cuisine have all got blended with the Indian flavour of the food. The young generation now has been

made to understand the cost benefit ratio of the homemade food. The benefit of the home-made food is much higher as compared to the cost involved in the same. The benefits are not only monetary but also healthy. Cooking has now, suddenly become the new therapeutic activity or a “long forgotten now remembered hobby” of many youngsters, working professionals as well as the middle aged.

- **Hygiene and Sanitization**

The world has progressed towards the path of hygienic lifestyle. The importance of hygiene has been given prime importance in today’s time. The extent of sensitisation towards this can be measured from the fact that every brand, every influencer, every TV show, even brand commercial reminds people to wash their hands regularly. Signboards on the city road mention “Wear a Mask”. Even the local “Kirane ka Dukkan” now has a sanitizer for its customers and follows social distancing norms. The “Wash your hands for at least 5 minutes after every hour” is a very good hygiene practice that has now been blended into the lifestyle of people. The face mask , the hand gloves, the face shields had entered into our lives as guest who were here for few days but overtime the same have now become the guests who refuse to go back from our lives.

- **Setting of a daily routine**

Since everyone is at home almost all the time, every individual has made an effort to set up a daily routine to accommodate fitness, health, family time, work, online gatherings etc. all in the twenty-four hours that are at hand. Once upon a time, people used to struggle with their work life balance. In metropolitan cities setting up a daily routine for any individual used to be a nightmare or a waste of time activity. Since, however perfect the routine might be, a sudden rainfall or a sudden traffic bottleneck or a delay in the local train might all ruin the perfect routine. How much ever an individual desired to manage everything in a day, there was something that was always left out. In most of the cases it was either the family time or the very precious but very rarely found “Me Time”. It cannot be said that the lockdown or the pandemic has eliminated all the factors that caused lag or interfered with the routine planning of

people. However, the pandemic has surely helped people set up a daily routine and to follow the same to the extent of at least 90 % if not 100%.

- **8-8-8 Rule**

The pandemic has helped everyone to understand the importance of family time. The millennial generation is now made to understand the 8-8-8 rule i.e. 8 hours of work, 8 hours of sleep and 8 hours of leisure time. Although a very difficult habit to inculcate staying in the metropolitan city, the fact that it is unsafe to venture out has made people to find activities to entertain themselves within the closed doors of their homes.

- **Aatmanirbharta**

“Aatmanirbhata”, today is the new buzz word. Every individual literally has become a home barber, a plumber, a home contractor, a chef, a maid all by themselves. Achieving this kind of **“I can do anything and everything”** attitude has helped people believe in themselves and has created a sense of freedom and confidence amongst them. Every household has had at least one home baked cake in the past one year. There is no more ranting about the maid not coming for a day. Everything has entered the **“I can manage”** zone after the pandemic. The people have seen the worst of times where they had to manage all by themselves. Now, since they experienced the toughest of times, everything seems to be manageable and solvable. The pandemic has taught people the very valuable virtue of **“Dignity of labour”**.

- **Sharing and caring**

Earlier, the stereotypes prevalent in the society characterised a man to be the bread earner while the woman to be the caretaker in the family. Not very long ago the stereotypes were broken and women entered the arena of being the bread earners of the society. Unfortunately, assuming the role of bread earners of the household did not absolve them of their duties towards the household. Although, it cannot be denied that men did contribute to the household duties, however the primary responsibility remained that of the women. The pandemic has made the men more understanding and

willing to share the household responsibilities. The division of work at home is no more a topic of quarrel but more of a bonding activity. The children are growing up to be responsible individuals who very well have understood the importance of sharing the responsibilities and caring for the loved ones.

- **Digital Payments**

The pandemic has driven people to use more of digital payment methods rather than cash. There is more awareness now regarding online modes of payment. The economy is slowly heading towards cashless economy. Although this has some pros and some cons. However, as of now the number of “pros” seems to override the number of “cons” in this case. Even the fruit vendor selling apples now prefers to take payment through “G-Pay” instead of cash. According to the National Payments of Corporation of India data, UPI transactions grew to 2.21 billion in November 2020 last compared to 1.22 billion in November 2019 while the total transactions processed amounted to Rs. 3,90,999 crore in November 2020 from Rs. 1,89,229 crore in November 2019⁴.

- **Importance of life and medical insurance**

One of the most fundamental truth of life realised by the humans is “Life is fragile and unpredictable”. This very thought has now enforced the idea of security of family members and provision for medical emergencies. A research in the area has found results that there is a substantial increase in terms of the number of people who have now taken life and medical insurance.

- **Importance of savings**

Human beings have now realised the importance of savings. An age-old thought that was prevalent was if a person earns Rs.100/-, he should save Rs.70/- and spend the rest Rs. 30/-. However, this trend seemed to evaporate when it came to the modern-day

⁴ <https://inc42.com/buzz/upi-transaction-grow-6-from-last-months-record-2-bn-mark/>

generation. However, the pandemic has forced people to think more about savings since they have now realised the fact that medical emergencies may arrive anytime.

- **Baby steps towards reduction in economic disparities**

The changing times have encouraged people to adopt progressive thinking. Marriages in India used to be considered a status symbol. The amount of expenditure incurred on a wedding used to be directly proportional to the social status that the family would have. Due to the restrictions imposed due to the pandemic, every wedding, irrespective of the rich or poor has to be a minimalistic with minimum number of guests and minimum number of functions. The amount of money that used to be spent towards the wedding can now be saved and used towards some better cause.

- **Indian culture being adopted worldwide**

The very humble “Namaste” of India has now become the global “Hello”. The traditional handshake is now replaced by the “Namaste”. Indian Yoga practices and spirituality has gained importance on the global platform.

- **The Work from Home culture**

Remote working has now become the new norm. Prior to Covid -19, working from home was a luxury available to only niche kind of senior employees or expecting women. Post Covid-19, remote working is no more the luxury of few but the essential for everybody.

- **Skill Development**

The most popular of the universities around the world welcomed the professionals, students, homemakers, possibly everybody to the era of online courses. Professional who never could find time to upgrade their knowledge and skills, now had the leisure to take up skill development and knowledge enhancement courses right in the comfort of their home. Homemakers, who had left their dream midway to sacrifice their time to

taking care of the family and upbringing of children, now had the time and facility to go back and chase their incomplete and unfinished dreams.

- **Change in consumer spending habits**

After the months spent by people in lockdown, the consumers have been forced to shop differently. They have been compelled to re-prioritize what is essential and what can wait. A very interesting study reported that, the demand for comfortable pyjamas and cotton t-shirts, during the lockdown had surpassed its all- time high demand at any time during the history for which the brands were in existence.

- **Family relations**

The pandemic has forced people to stay indoors. This has led to close bonds growing stronger between family members. The grandparents are now closer to their grandchildren. The morals and values are being passed on from generation to generation. Prior to the pandemic the young children in the family were left by the working parents in the hands of the maids and nannies. It is very unfair to deny the fact that maids and nannies are an integral part of the life of the working parents in a metropolitan city. However, by applying any maxim, it cannot be proved that nannies and maids will be able to inculcate culture and values into the new generation.

- **Investment in direct equities**

Considering the uncertainty around the regular sources of income of people like salary and rental income, people were forced to think of alternate sources of income. The fear of financial future forced people to learn new skills to improve financial health. Many people earned good amount of money and created wealth by investing in direct equity markets. There was an urge that was seen amongst the people to learn about the stock market and the craze to earn money from the fluctuating stock index.

Negative Impact on the human behaviour and habits of the people

While appreciating the positive changes in the habits of the people, the fact that there have it cannot be completely denied that the negative impact that the pandemic has had on various areas are enumerated below:

- **Mental Health Concerns**

People at large have been experiencing stressful and anxious situations. The anxiety relating to contracting the virus and the consequences of not being able to cope with it is a common mental concern these days. For many people, the fear of being the carrier of virus and causing harm to the family members is leading to stress. Another peculiar mental behaviour pattern observed by the mental health experts is related to Covid-19 anxiety syndrome. The syndrome is associated with the inability to leave the house because of the possible negative outcome of the action. A person who undergoes such a syndrome feels that going out of the house, even if with proper precautions will eventually lead him in contracting the virus.

- **Increased Alcohol and Drug Usage**

Many studies around the world have studied and concluded that the there has been a substantial increase in the adult consumption of alcohol. As per a study, the consumption of alcohol was increased by more than 50% in the United States for the week ending March 2020 as compared to the same period in the previous year⁵. Further, even locally, it was observed that there were large queues outside liquor shops even during a very strict lockdown period in the country. People did not mind taking a huge risk of contracting the virus while standing in those long queues for alcohol. In some parts of the country, there was even a form of protest that was staged by the locals on closure of liquor shops during the initial phases of the nationwide lockdown.

⁵ Pollard MS, Tucker JS, Green HD. Changes in Adult Alcohol Use and Consequences During the COVID-19 Pandemic in the US. *JAMA Netw Open*. 2020;3(9):e2022942. doi:10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2020.22942

- **Lack of physical activity**

Well, while mentioning the increased importance of fitness under the positive impact of the pandemic, it cannot be denied that due to the pandemic the people have been confined to the walls of their houses. Simple and routine activities like going to the market for buying vegetables m fruits and groceries have been shifted to the online platform. Due to the lockdown the people have been confined not only to the walls of their house but also to the window of their screens. Well, the alarming rate of obesity amongst the youth was anyways a cause of concern which has now multiplied due to the pandemic.

- **Depression and Anxiety**

One of most negative word heard around in the terminology of psychology, during the time of the pandemic was depression. Depression is a mood disorder that involves a low mood and loss of interest. It is categorically different from the mood fluctuations that people regularly experience as a part of their daily life. Anxiety, is defined as a feeling of worry, nervousness, or unease about something with an uncertain outcome. The feeling of depression and anxiety has become a daily part of the lives of people. Due to the lack of human interaction and the loss of loved ones and the alarming rate of increasing cases of the virus , there is a general state of gloom over the minds of the people. Depressing and anxious state of mind has become a common problem amongst the society at large.

- **Increased screen usage**

The world has come online. Work, play, shopping, entertainment, social gatherings everything in the lives of people have now been confined to the screens of mobile phones and laptops. An average individual in a metropolitan city spends around 13- 18 average hours per day in front of either their laptop or mobile phones. A typical day in the life of a student begins with attending online classes followed by online assignment followed by meeting friends online and ends with either playing online games or watching online web series or on social media. A day in the life of a young or a middle-aged professional begins with attending online fitness activity class or reading online news or doing online banking transactions. This is followed by online work from home

followed by online entertainment activities. The aged people have even been forced to attend to events like “Online Satsang” or “Online Community meeting”. The online platform surely has been a saviour for people during the tough times of the pandemic. However, the time spent in front of the blue screen has increased alarmingly. This probably could lead to disoriented behaviour, feelings of anger and anxiety, unusual mood swings, poor vision, obesity, increased cholesterol levels etc.

- **Increased instances of domestic violence**

In India, during the initial phases of lockdown, Indian women filed more domestic violence complaints than recorded in a similar period in the last 10 years. Further, the situation was perceived to be even worse since according to a general study, only 86 % of women who experienced domestic violence did not report or seek professional help.⁶The pandemic altered the family dynamics completely. The work from home culture has led that office frustration home. A difficult situation at work which otherwise would have been dealt with at the workplace now, in the work from home scenario has become a part of the household. The frustration amongst the working class due to the work pressure and the social pressure has contributed greatly to the increasing numbers of domestic violence cases.

- **Fear of Missing out and the fear of loneliness**

The Fear of Missing out (FOMO) refers to the feeling or perception that others are having fun, living better lives, or experiencing better things than you are. It very badly affects the self esteem of people. During the time of pandemic, self - isolation has forced the feeling of fear of missing out on important social interactions. Every individual during the pandemic, in the situation of lockdown has at one point of time thought that he is missing on interactions at the workplace, casual small talks with friends, social events like birthday parties, marriage ceremonies etc.

⁶ <https://www.thehindu.com/data/data-domestic-violence-complaints-at-a-10-year-high-during-covid-19-lockdown/article31885001.ece>

- **Lack of human element in social life**

Although, due to the availability of online video call and conferencing facilities, the people have been attending social events online and have even been meeting people online, the human element in the interactions is absent. The magic of the human touch and the warmth that the people experience while interacting with fellow individuals is somewhere lacking due to the pandemic. The lack of human element in the interactions has led to mental agony and to some extent the feeling of anxiety and depression.

- **Phobias**

Corona phobia is one of the latest terminologies used in the latest times. Corona phobia is the fear of contracting the corona virus. An individual is a victim of Corona phobia if he feels that he has contracted the virus even at the instance of a regular sneeze or cough. Another kind of fear that has been observed in the people who have been a victim of the virus is the fear of not being accepted by the society. The isolation and the quarantine observed by the patients make them experience the feeling of loneliness. Further patients who have been infected with the virus or have been suspected to be infected by the virus have been reported to have experienced fear, boredom, loneliness, anxiety, insomnia or anger.

- **Irregular sleep pattern amongst children**

Since the children are supposed to attend their school and classes online, there is no seriousness or the need of discipline to reach at a place on time. Every activity of the children is to be done at home. There is no requirement or the need to step out of the house. Well, this is indeed a very comfortable arrangement. However, this comfortable arrangement is hampering the feeling of discipline amongst the younger generation. Irregular sleep pattern has been experienced and reported in the case of the younger generation. Nowadays, it is a very common sight to see children fast asleep at 7.00 am and right in their online classroom at 7.15 am. This is not only amongst the school children but also amongst the teenage or college going children.

- **Consumer Habits**

The fear of the lockdown has led to the hoarding mentality of people. One small announcement regarding the change in the lockdown restriction leads to panic amongst the people. The feeling of panic leads to panic buying amongst the consumers and there is mass hoarding of goods. The people fail to understand the fact that there is no shortage of goods and start panic buying on the smallest hint of a lockdown.

Solutions to tackle with the problems during the pandemic

Some solutions that can be implemented to reduce the negative impact of the pandemic are as follows:

- **Analyse the problem using step - based approach.**

Begin by defining the problem. This should be immediately followed by thinking of as many solutions as possible. Analyse the pros and cons of the each solution and select the most workable solution. Prepare a plan of action and implement the solution. Review the impact of the solution and repeat the process in case of unsatisfactory results.

- **Maintain Social Connections**

Social Isolation is one of the major causes of mental health related problems. Hence maintaining social connections is the best way to maintain a decent level of mental health. All the available tools like phone calls, messaging application, video conferencing can be used for the purpose of staying connected with friends and family.

- **Divide your day and set up a daily routine**

Inculcate a structure into your daily chores. Divide your day and create blocks of time. Even if working from home, the office time should be clearly distinguished from the personal family time. Implement the 8-8-8 rule , wherein accommodate 8 hours of sleep, 8 hours of work and 8 hours of leisure into your daily routine.

- **Positive Outlook**

Maintain a positive outlook towards things. Though the situation around is gloomy, still try to find the good in every situation. Understand that every negative situation is a phase and like a phase this too shall pass. Have gratitude for the things you have rather than feel sad for the things that you don't.

- **Learn, innovate and update**

The pandemic has provided a very valuable gift to all the people. The gift is called “Time”. Every individual, in this pandemic has got some extra time out of his daily routine. Utilise this time to learn new skills or upgrade the existing skill set. All the resources are available at the fingertips. It is a very good opportunity to make use of.

- **Acceptance of the new normal**

Many fundamental changes have been forced into the lives of people. Rather than complaining about the changes, it is more effective and practical to embrace the changes and accept the new normal situation. A sense of acceptance eases out the stress related to the new changes.

- **Be sensitive towards the needs of others.**

It is important to be sensitive towards the needs of all those people who are around. Understand and keep a check on the needs of the house helps, workers, drivers etc. Understand and accept the fact that the times have been challenging not only for you as an individual but also everyone around. Talk to the people around regularly and be ready to help wherever possible. Helping others gives an immense sense of satisfaction to oneself which created positive hormones and contributes significantly towards mental health.

- **Take proper precautions and adopt hygiene practices**

Although taking precautions does not serve as a guarantee of not getting infected by the virus. However, it surely does reduce the risk of contracting the virus. Follow the sanitation guidelines prescribed by the health experts and take care of yourself and your family.

Conclusion

While the pandemic has definitely turned the world upside down, there is always something good also that has come out of it. The brotherly feeling towards fellow human beings, the love and compassion, the need to stay around loved ones etc are the good outcomes of the pandemic.

The times are tough for everybody but the one who manages to survive in the tough situation will surely be able to come out of it. There is always a ray of light at the end of the tunnel, however long the tunnel seems.

As Martin Luther King Jr. puts it,

“The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenges and controversy”

The time is testing the patience of every person in the current situation. Although it is very difficult to accept the forced changes into the lives of people, it is not impossible. When a person can't control what is happening around, it is the best to control the way he responds to what is happening around. It is important to remember and remind yourself that the pandemic too is just a phase which shall pass.

In the words of Morris Mandel,

“The darkest hour has only sixty minutes”

To conclude, to be able to survive and come out of the difficult situation, every person should remember the words of Olivia Benson,

“You're a fighter. Look at everything you've overcome. Don't give up now”

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