



Expressions

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A 'KNOTTY' AFFAIR in pandemic times!

Indian wedding industry braces up to meet changing demands

Anjali Singh

Indian Wedding Industry, second in world after USA, was estimated to cross \$50 billion this year, but unfortunately it came to a halt. Due to Corona pandemic, the government banned large gatherings following which, many couples deferred their marriage plans for winter or next year.

With massive cancellations, the entire Indian wedding industry collapsed. Those associated with the business —wedding vendors, photographers, videographers, caterers, makeup artists, designers faced their worst nightmare. However, when the government allowed gatherings in limited numbers (50), many couples decided to take the plunge.

Unlock-1, which began from June 1, came as a boon for the wedding business although with major changes under the new guidelines. Strict precautions like thermal screening of the guests, sanitizing

**INDIAN WEDDING INDUSTRY,
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Matrimonial sites:

60%

**increase in the number
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times more than before**

ONLY

50

**people can attend
wedding
ceremonies**

USUAL USERS OF WEBSITE

tunnels, tweaking of the buffet style, seating arrangements, decoration of venues only two days before the functions have taken in the form of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) kits. Besides the criteria of couples opting for either bigger spaces where social distancing can

be followed or small venues that will accommodate family members only have all given new hope to the industry.

A retired government official in Bengaluru's Jayanagar recently...

Continued on P4

Editor's Desk

For the first time we returned to academic session 2020 without the usual 'hustle-bustle' and roar of students courtesy Covid-19, the biggest pandemic to hit the world. Yes! we conducted orientation of students silently 'Online'. We did not want the senior batches, who have passed through tough time in WFH conditions during the summers, to lose out on their studies. So, it was in this spirit that the editor's note for this edition is dedicated to students and their feelings about the new normal. Here are some quotes & observations from horses' mouths.

"I am missing the good-old days of campus but adapting to the new circumstances. Virtual orientation gave me the confidence to look forward to this new session in online mode", says Anjali. Another student Nitin Kumar too feels the same, "I first felt very uneasy being away from the campus and friends but interaction with faculty via PPTs, videos is keeping us busy in the new session".

On the other hand, Rahul Mahonto quips, "Everything looks so different and at times uncanny. I am looking forward to new digital learning extravaganza!" Final year student Sanjana Saxena concurs, "The unprecedented changes have introduced us to flip classrooms unlike the traditional ones and now we are glued to our laptop/mobile screens. Personal touch with friends and colleagues is the new craving".

Adeeba goes a bit nostalgic. "I always hated the rain on campus. Jumping over puddles, the hot humid weather looming over us as we moved from one class to another. I had always wished for no classes during monsoon. Alas monsoon is here but campus is off limit and I am really missing it", she says wistfully.

Her classmate Akarsh, however, is excited about virtual classes, "These classes are helping me stay energetic and positive as we are interacting with our faculty and friends once again."



Prof (Dr) Sanjay M Johri

AMITY ADVENTURES An affair to remember!

There are many things that determine who you are and how you will be and after your name the quintessential thing that defines one is the school and college they went to. It was the same for me.



Amity was never a choice, it happened by chance and I believe the best chance the universe could have given me. Three years at ASCO have been the most transformative years for me and perhaps for ASCO too and I am so glad to be a part of many firsts.

It all started with Prof. (Dr) Sanjay M Johri joining us as the Head of Department in 2009. He came with a vision to change and a mission to make ASCO one of the best media institutes in Lucknow. The first thing to go was the boring classroom education as our professor, a media veteran, knew the importance of practical knowledge and very seamlessly Sanjay sir with our faculty devised a way by balancing classroom teaching with field work/assignments and guest faculty interaction.

I was thrilled since as a media student you are always looking for movement, it helps the creative juices flow better. Few months into the system and ASCO was on a roll as

ALUMNI CORNER

it became a hub of activities from launching clubs, organizing events holding summits to a plethora of work that happened between 2009 to 2011. We were the flag-bearers and pioneers of clubs like 'Thought Café' & 'Drish-ti' the print and photography clubs respectively.

Our mentors Mr. Chander Mahadev, Mr. Tasker, Ms. Eram Qazi, Dr. Akansha Shukla, Mr Durgesh, Mohit Sir, Mr. Sanjiv Sabharwal, Mr. Santosh and Ms Shweta to name a few infused us with confidence thus enabling us to achieve great feats.

I remember that before our batch there use to be just 1 FCP for everyone and today I can see a proper infrastructure with 15 FCPs. During my term we made films, organised summits. ASCO was literally everywhere in Amity. This made me realize that you don't have to be big to achieve something or be something rather if you have the will and the vision then you can do it.

ASCO taught me that nothing is impossible. It taught me to be patient, have faith and believe in yourself and it will happen as is supposed to be. It is certainly an affair to remember where a chance encounter changed my life!

In the next issue of 'Expressions' I will share my experience about my professional foray into the entertainment industry.

(To be Continued in next issue)

Ambika Chandra batch of (2008-2011)

Time to do away with biased journalism, sensationalism

Sanjana Saxena

Did you read the news today? Be it a newspaper, television channel or any other medium, the latest happenings all around the world are brought to us by media-- the fourth pillar of a democracy. The fact that India is the largest democracy in the world underscores the important role of this 'pillar.'

Media is a watchdog playing an influential and responsible role of bringing truth to people. Our country has over 82,237 registered newspapers and around 700 TV news channels. Unfortunately, growth of the TRP, sensationalism, paid news and fake news keep hitting the credibility and ethics of journalism. Although under attack, journalism still plays a significant role in preserving democracy and granting a voice to the voiceless.

Media serves the purpose of disseminating information to the people. The editors and reporters carry out the factual and objective reporting of unbiased information. They help spread awareness and form people's opinions just by showcasing what is happening all around them. Many nationalist revolutions started by the impact of journalism. The struggle of our own country during the British rule, shows a notable role of journalism in fueling people by bringing transparency in all the ways possible.

Recently, in the nationwide lockdown during the COVID-19 pandemic, when the world of people got confined to the walls of their houses, media came to the rescue. All the important news, updates, number of COVID-19 cases, the dos and don'ts were disseminated by the media that proved very helpful. However, it is the bitter truth that



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over time, the quality of journalism has gone down exponentially. The way the news is presented, and the data collected is a very delicate job. When people in this field prioritize their petty gains over their responsibilities as a journalist, they wind up being the one dirty fish that contaminates the whole pond. From headlines like "What is the menu in Suresh Raina's wedding" to "Do aliens drink cow's milk" there have been moments that have made the people question the very foundation of journalism.

Poor prioritization of news, sensational reporting have become the

cornerstone of reporting these days or so it seems. The recent incident of Bollywood actor Sushant Singh Rajput's suicide notably showcased the inhumane reporting. The sensitive and heart-rending news of Sushant's suicide was presented under insensitive sensational headlines calling him "hit wicket" and "failure" left no respect for the departed soul. On top of that, some reporters shoved mics at his shocked family members even as they made way to pay their last respect to the departed soul. The privacy breach and lack of empathy left many people in disgust. There is a thin line between journalism and vulture journalism that was crossed, which turned out to be a new low for the media.

Yet again, there are still journalists who are well versed in their responsibilities. This 'degradation of journalism syndrome' is a threat to a democracy and we must fight back by choosing the right source of information as against the TRPs the news channels chase based on which they produce content. The job of the guardians of democracy is to provide impartial news based on facts and credible sources.

A 'knotty' affair in pandemic times!

Continued from P1

hosted his daughter's wedding at the family's two-storey residence with 26 people in attendance. "As soon as the lockdown was relaxed, we decided to go ahead with a small event. I had dreamed about this day for years; it's nothing like how I had imagined," he told a leading national daily.

Manisha Porwal Chouraria, a wedding planner at Color Palette Productions speaking to ANI said, "The old culture is back again as people who used to hold a big-fat

The new trend marked by wedding planners is maintaining health protocols with creativity as women and men matching masks with their outfits

wedding at lavish destinations are getting married in their lawns, farmhouses, terraces. People are spending small amounts on decoration." The new trend marked by wedding planners is maintaining health protocols with the help of creative ideas such as women and men matching masks with their outfits. The option of live streaming of weddings are also evolving with couples wanting to involve those guests who could not attend the occasion due to the guidelines.

The matrimonial sites are witnessing a 60% increase in the number of users which is three times more than before. Their concept Wedding From Home (WFH) has led them not to suffer this pandemic by providing a new platform as said by Adhish Zaveri, Director-Marketing, Shaadi.com.

The optimists believe that the wedding industry will bounce back when the pandemic ends and the roads will once again witness the 'Band, Baja, Baraat', in full glory.

FINDING MYSELF

Shifa Dutt

Being the elder daughter in my family, I always took too many responsibilities on my shoulders. I always felt like I had to set an example for my younger brother. I had to study hard and make my parents proud. Hence I was always in a rush and running away from home because I always thought progress meant flying away from my nest. The news of lockdown came like a nightmare. Who would dare to lock up this free bird in the confines of ghar ki 4 deewar? Huh, Jai Corona indeed.

But something unexpected happened to me during the lockdown. The time I thought would be unbearable, wasn't so bad after all. In the confines of my house I found something, which was right in front of my eyes the whole time. My mother who never had the time to sit with me and chat when I used to come back home, now was sitting with chai in her hand next to me, completely free. And it's not that it was the first time we were together like this, but it was now that I realized we weren't the same people we used to be, we had grown.

She heard all my deep secrets and laughed with me and advised. It is amazing how I never had the time to ask simple questions like; What is your favourite movie? or What is your favourite memory? It might not be a big deal to most people reading this article, some people may have been smart enough to be that close with their parents all along even before lockdown. I was a quintessential tubelight as they say, in this case. I've known my mother all my life, but not like I know her now. Now, she is not just my mom, but a woman who

has fears and fetishes, who loves Chinese because she was a little girl when she tasted chowmein for the first time and it blew her mind.

My father is like every other overprotective father. Driving me around and protecting me with his infrared vision looking through every male species that was in my vicinity. I never knew him as a simple man who loves films like I do and takes them that seriously too. Who loves tragic love stories and irreverent comedies exactly like me! I was surprised to learn that I was just a rip off of my father all along. I never knew I got so much from pitaji include innate laziness.

Having been confined to my house for more than 3 months

LOCKDOWN SILVER LINING

now, I don't really know what changed on the outside and after a point my mental health required a shut down from the news. But what changed for me was that I realized that people go around the world and spend years to FIND THEMSELVES but few realize that you won't find yourself running around the world.

You will find yourself when you get to know your parents. You will find out who you are and where that long nose comes from, where your unsymmetrical eyebrows come from. Why the little finger of your right feet is so small, you will find out the answers when you put your foot next to your father's. This is where you find yourself, in these small details. The new me after lockdown realized that progress is not flying away from your nest, it is finding your way back to your roots.

Social media: NEED TO DRAW A LINE BETWEEN REAL & VIRTUAL LIFE

Adeeba Lari

Amidst the changing dynamics of lockdown and then 'Unlock', what has perhaps remained constant is the everyday cooking fiesta of a certain classmate on Instagram. I for one know what she ate for breakfast, then her post workout lunch, her early dinner, and various cups of teas and coffees and between.

Pre-lockdown, slowly and steadily, generation Z was shifting to a virtual social lifestyle, one where the activity isn't accepted unless and until all your seven hundred online friends can participate in it. After

Social media gave a new voice to one's freedom of expression, everyone on the internet believes their opinion should be considered the final word

Instagram adopted Snapchat's 24-hour stories—we were already on the edge of creating a complete virtual social reality.

The pandemic house arrest only completed the transition, splitting our identity into who we are on social media and in real life.

With everyone confined to the four walls of their home, the urge to go virtual was never higher. From live concerts by our favourite artists to an unending sea of info-

From live concerts by our favourite artists to an unending sea of infotainment videos, the consumption of media has never been larger and more normalized

tainment videos, the consumption of media has never been larger and more normalized. Previously, we could afford to skip a day of Instagram scrolling due to a busy workday or just a simple outing with friends, but now, stuck in our homes we need to know what our friends are doing.

This has taken social media activism one notch higher, so much so, that it is now bordering on toxic communication. The recent cases of George Floyd and Safoora Zargar is known to all. While a set of people who posted the hashtag #blacklivesmatter and #talkaboutSafoora and the second set of people questioned their motives as to why are we talking about black lives matter when we hardly care about the thousand other cases around us?

All this has resulted in so

much mud-slinging and toxicity that even generation Z couldn't stay out of it. After all social media gave a new voice to one's freedom of expression and with this renewed power, everyone on the internet believes their opinion is one of oracle and should be considered the final word. Whether someone wants to hear it or not, is irrelevant!

One expects the generation Z to be more open-minded in terms of accepting opinions and different philosophies but with the validation that we seek online, it is making us more rigid. It forces a question in one's mind, does there need to be an education on how to think virtually, or should we stop and check our line of thoughts before we post anything online? It's time to decide.



UNLOCK & CAREFREE ATTITUDE

Unlock 1.0 and 2.0 came as a relief for millions of people who were under lockdown for almost three months, however, the respite was short lived. The carefree and brazen attitude of majority of the people who were seen on roads sans mask giving 'social distancing' norm a go-by, resulted in an unprecedented surge of Covid-19 cases.

Lucknow too witnessed similar scenes with people crowding outside shops ignoring the warnings of health experts. While the malls and big restaurants reported less footfalls, but many people could be seen eating at roadside shops where no social, health protocols were being followed. Hence it came as no surprise that the state capital was topping among the 75 districts in Uttar Pradesh with an average of 300 Covid-19 cases being reported every day.

When the curve in many countries has started to flatten, India seems to be on the surge with on an average 30,000 cases every day and cases soaring to over 12.50 lakh at the time of writing this report.

Though the re-opening of the economy is associated with an acceleration in the number of new daily infections and it may not be feasible for the government to go in for re-imposing lockdowns, however, respective states had to resort to weekend lockdown or sealing large areas as containment zones across the country.

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As restrictions are relaxed, everyone should cooperate and be careful but on the contrary people are seen violating the social and health protocols hence police had to go strict with challans

**Abhishek Prakash,
District Magistrate of Lucknow**



Lensman: Trilochan S Kalra

Lucknow showed a sharp rise in the COVID-19 cases forcing the authorities to go for weekend lockdown and increase in the containment zones. "As restrictions are relaxed, everyone should cooperate and be careful but on the contrary people are seen violating the social and health protocols hence police had to go strict with challans", says Abhishek Prakash, District Magistrate of Lucknow.

"We will not shy away from taking strict measures to control the spread of Coronavirus as this is in the interest of people", he reiterates.



World cinema faces bleak future as streaming platforms draw viewers



Nitin Kumar

The global film industry, with about \$ 38.6 billion market yearly, faces a significant setback due to the Covid pandemic. Film exhibitors are showing concern over the popularity of streaming platforms, whereas producers are worried about productions being delayed. China, India and USA, the biggest markets in both film revenue and ticket sold are hoping to resume shooting films soon.

The biggest roadblock for blockbuster films betting on big names with billions of dollars, for whom a theatrical release is the only goldmine, is the agonising wait for Covid pandemic to end and cinemas/multiplexes to open. In Hollywood, James Bond series 'No Time to Die'

postponed the release of the film to November while in Bollywood, the release of movies like Sooryavanshi, 83, Brahmastra have been deferred.

Many film festivals and events too were cancelled or postponed. The Academy Awards and Golden Globes Awards even altered their eligibility criteria for their 2021 editions, as they usually require that a film be screened theatrically for a minimum length of time. The Cannes Film Festival announced its 56 official selection titles through live streaming. In another move, 'We Are One: A Global Film Festival' goes online film screening on YouTube, in response to the cancellation of many traditional film festivals.

There are also some producers-directors who are making use of the situation and have opted for releasing their movie on streaming platforms.

Starting the trend, Amitabh Bachchan, Syushman Khurran starrer 'Gulabo Sitabo' became the first Indian film to be released on a streaming platform before theatrical release.

The producers of small budget films find the streaming services very lucrative with global reach. On January 22, Chinese blockbuster film 'Lost in Russia' cancelled its theatrical release and went to the streaming platform for free—a move to encourage people to stay at home and watch it.

The trend, however, has alarmed distributors and exhibitors. Bihar-based exhibitor Vishek Chauhan told PTI, "Cinema is a habit. If you break a habit for four-six months; then people would refrain from coming to cinema halls. It's a daunting scenario and we can only wait and watch."

Learning life's lessons in Corona time

Shruti Gupta

Who knew when 2020 began that a virus, which was wreaking havoc in China, would ensnare the entire world! And hence we learnt the first lesson: The butterfly effect is a fact wherein a happening in one part of the globe has a rippling effect on the other parts. A virus (Covid-19), man-made or natural that is still a topic of heated debates, rocked the entire world thus shattering economies, lives and making us look at the basic things that are so important to survive.

To start with, the best learning that we all have adopted in this period is cleanliness. Envi-

ronmentalists and experts from across the globe were shouting at the top of their lungs for years to make people realize the sufferings of mother nature and Earth. Luckily, this lockdown gave much needed respite to our planet with pollution levels dipping and wildlife getting a new lease of life.

Humans too did not stay behind in terms of healing and experimenting. The adventure had begun with workout videos and cooking diaries ranging from yoga asanas to homemade cake decorations. The Indian households had a mixed approach to these activities, as it was a kitchen course for the men and house cleaning course for bachelors of the house. The most obvious and known course that everyone did was on zoom where

almost everyone was spending hours with earphones plugged in and shirts tucked in pajamas attending webinars. Some of the key takeaways of the lockdown were: appreciating the sanctity of family, learning and some even perfecting culinary skills, helping each other in daily household chores and even adapting to online working/studying mode.

It is a hard time for the world but as correctly said by philosophers, "Be grateful for the hard times, as it teaches the valuable lessons of life and makes you appreciate the good times." It has left us with valuable lessons for lifetime and has made us realize the importance of happiness in life and the worthlessness of money and power against health.

The journey of COVID-19 masks: From boring to designer

Rushali Patel

As you scroll through social media these days, you will notice how face masks are evolving beyond being a necessity item into a style statement.

The trend of wearing masks started from Japan around the early 20th century following influenza pan-

Let's face it, masks are going to be with us for a long time so why not make it a fashion accessory. The rule by the core is wearing masks and protecting themselves from the Covid outbreak yet looking trendy, exquisite & classy

demic post World War I. With the outbreak of 2002 SARS and 2006 bird flu panic, the practice came to be adopted by Asian immigrants in the West too. In some of the cities it is also used to protect from high pollution.

Now, with coronavirus pandemic not just sanitizers but masks have become a necessity. In the early days of lockdown, the market faced an immense shortage of the N-95

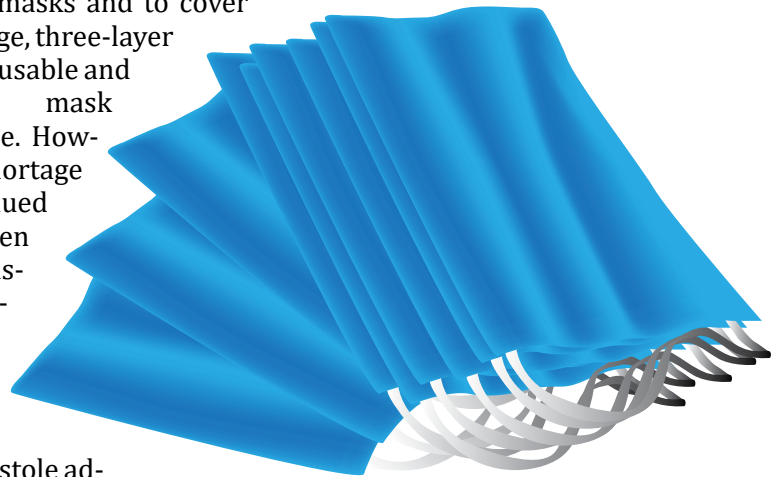
protective masks and to cover that shortage, three-layer stitched, reusable and disposable masks

came in use. However, the shortage still continued and when Prime Minister Narendra Modi wearing a home-made

mask-cum-stole addressed the nation during the lockdowns urging people to make masks at home, the trend started.

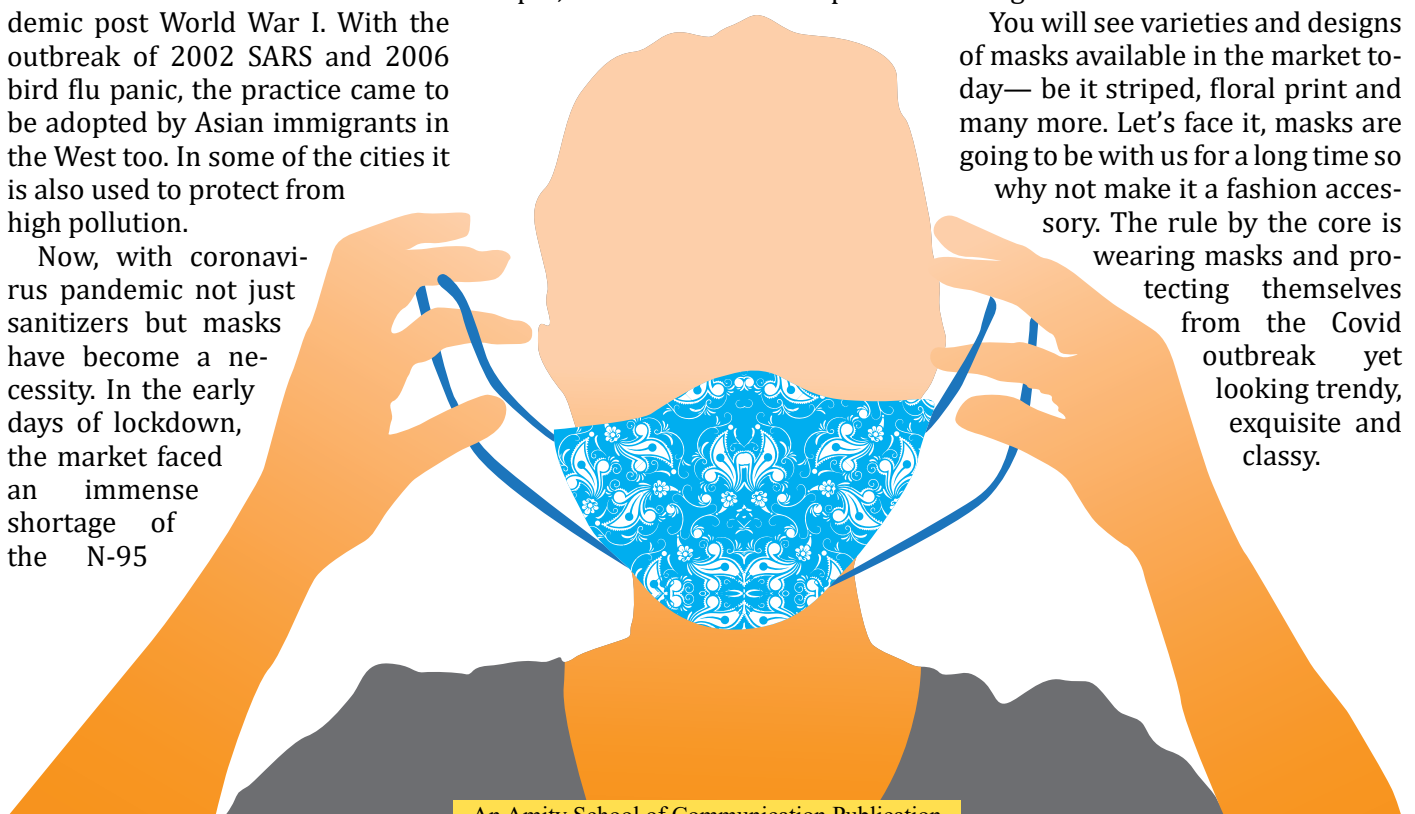
Not long thereafter, creativity came into play as people started making stylish masks at home and so they evolved from a spartan black/white avatar into stylish wear.

Many top leading companies like Louis Philippe, Roadster by Myntra, Wildcraft, designers like Masaba Gupta, Ritu Kumar also expanded



their business in this innovative field. Around February, fashion brand Marine Serre debuted a collection of designer face masks at Paris Fashion Week, describing her work as "future wear", reported Insider. Many small and big start-ups similar to an entrepreneur from Amity school of communication Shagun Verma, started their business by stepping in the race of providing innovative, designer masks.

You will see varieties and designs of masks available in the market today—be it striped, floral print and many more. Let's face it, masks are going to be with us for a long time so why not make it a fashion accessory. The rule by the core is wearing masks and protecting themselves from the Covid outbreak yet looking trendy, exquisite and classy.



THE 'NEW 'NORMAL'

IT'S TIME TO FOCUS ON ME



Pre-pandemic life composed of a tight routine. Getting up early morning, rushing to college, returning home by evening, doing assignments, self-study and going to sleep. I could spend time with my family only on the weekends. COVID-19 completely reversed that. Sanitisers, masks and social distancing are now an integral part of our lives. It was unpredictable and nobody was prepared for it but here we are. So instead of wallowing and mourning, I decided to turn things around. I took it as an opportunity to do what I could not do before, work on myself and utilise the time to become a more positive person. I do exercise, workout, yoga and even meditation. Now I try to learn something new and doing productive work. This change has been really good for me.

-Aditi Srivastava

Glimpses of our students' lockdown lives

Four months into a 'Corona-ridden' world and there are columns in magazines, newspapers devoted to 'surviving the quarantine' etc. This is exactly what we are doing.

Here is an account of the changed pre and post covid-19 lessons/lifestyle of students:

FINDING SILVER LINING IN DARK CORONA CLOUDS



Like everyone else, I was stuck within the four walls of my house. The initial days were full of stress and complications due to the sudden shift from physical interactions to zoom meetings and online set ups, but thankfully the clouds of fear and misunderstandings were soon cast aside by the government's instructions and help provided through simplified means. My most memorable days in quarantine were the days when we conveyed our respect for the Corona warriors through claps and candles. Each day during the lockdown was one full of experiments, happiness and family time, which was missing from our busy schedules and routine. I have realized the importance of self-love, care, and family in life. This quarantine was a vacation in disguise for me within my four walls of memories and happiness.

-Shruti Gupta

THE NEW STRESS OF NOT DOING ENOUGH



The thing I am feeling most strongly is certainly the mental pressure that I am facing by sitting idle at home during the quarantine. At the beginning of quarantine, I thought I will do new things like yoga, inculcate new hobbies. My personal experience is not so good during this lockdown because being the type of person who has a habit of working daily, it has been a huge struggle to sit idle. During the lockdown, I am doing what everyone is doing- adapting to a relaxed life while learning some ideas about cooking, starting to read, which is certainly the good parts of this. But still the stress of not doing enough still haunts me.

-Sristi Rai

While some have been able to cope up with this cooped up lifestyle while interacting in 'virtual space' courtesy work from home/study from home, others are still trying to come to grips with this 'new normal', even as the country enters Unlock mode.

FINDING MY WAY THROUGH PANDEMIC

Talking about life before the pandemic feels like walking down the memory lane of a time I can never get back. Then, the hardest part was reaching on time for the 9 am lecture and meeting deadlines of the assignments but now they feel nothing in front of what pandemic has unfolded. Yes, it is true that life has never been a piece of cake but back then, there was a pleasing certainty. I knew what I am going to do the next day and had my schedule planned well in advance. I could feel the fresh air on my face and now I am terrified at the mere thought of stepping out of my house.

However, the online classes have kept me connected with my friends, faculties besides the NTCC summer project that kept me occupied. Learning never stopped and that has been a huge relief. I made a blog to be productive and spent my time writing articles and hunting for internships. I also did an online course provided by Amity Future Academy. Being an active contributor of the monthly campus magazine helped me refine my skills and keep my head occupied with work and no toxic thoughts regarding the havoc unleashed by the lethal virus.

-Sanjana Saxena



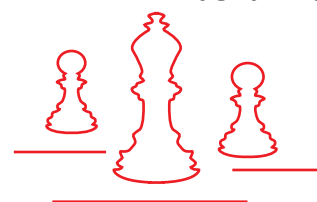
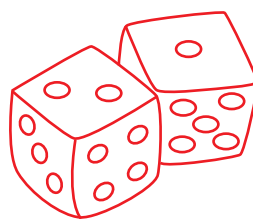
A HOSTELLER'S JOURNEY TO HOME

I was sent out of town for higher studies. I did my last 2 years of schooling from a reputed institution in Delhi. "These 2 years are the worst in my life" I used to say back then. Time went by and with scholarship I got admission in Amity University, Lucknow. I decided to make no friends and only focus on my studies to prove my capabilities, but Amity changed everything. Over time, I became a strong, independent and proud woman, managing everything on my own, from academics to social life.

My teachers supported me throughout and I made great friends. Just when things were going great, pandemic happened. I went back to my family who were surprised to see the positive changes in my personality. I am now helping my kin while keeping myself busy with multifarious activities.



-Rushali Patel



RECONNECTED WITH MY BROTHER

But that turned out to be a blessing in disguise. I would see movies like 'Hum saath saath hai' and wonder about the family bond they keep talking about. And now, I got the opportunity to reconnect with my brother. We had never had a chance to bond before but it's been four months already and we find happiness in our terrace cricket with self-made bat and ball, we listen to music, radio, we get to cook together and so many things more. The pandemic strengthened our bonds.

-Riddhi Bhargava



The day lockdown was announced like millions of people I too was clueless and confused as I stocked up my groceries, emergency medicines amidst all the chaos.

I never thought that of all the worries of getting a good job and assignments, the biggest question would be who is going to sweep the floor tomorrow. No one knew how long it would go on. My brother and I got stuck in Lucknow while my parents were in Mirzapur.



Beat moody blues with family & friends

Triyanshi Parihar

Even as the country is shifting into 'Unlock' mode, the 'work from home' scenario continues for many while 'study from home' is the new normal for students. Being confined to the four walls in initial days of lockdown seemed a welcome reprieve from the hectic pace of life, however, a few days into it and well... boredom set in for many! It is no wonder that the pandemic coupled with the gloomy economic scenario and job retrenchment. While we are taking all the precautions to take care of our physical well-being; it is equally important to take care of mental well-being.

"Indulging in hobbies to distract from general restlessness is a definitely a temporary fix. But if it is a recurring issue then it means the problem is something bigger. In that case, visit a psychologist without any shame. Also, social media just like anything else can be harmful if consumed in excess," says Dr Pragyan Dangwal, an eminent psychologist.

Rihaya, a student says, "a huge part of mental distress goes out to prioritizing glorified hollowness. Everything comes and goes in waves. Be it trends hopping from one meme to another or sudden surge of people posting about being kind to everyone after losing a famous actor in his prime age to suicide. Nonetheless, these same people will go back to being ignorant to many red flags around them. There is nothing wrong in spreading awareness on subjects like depression,"

So, the way out of this 'mental lockdown' is not letting the circumstances get to you rather go ahead and share your thoughts with family and friends rather than seeking validation on social media. Let's face it, Corona is here to stay at least for the next few months and so let's beat the virus not just physically but also with a positive mental frame.

Lockdowns strengthen FAMILY BONDS

Rahul Mohanto

Hi, how are you? Earlier our conversation with family was only limited to such Whatsapp messages. Life before the lockdown was no less than a roller coaster ride where every day used to be a race against time to meet social and professional engagements. Spending quality time with family members invariably took a backseat. However, COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns showed us otherwise.

With no social obligations to meet and no where to go during the lockdowns, our home and family became a safe refuge.

GOOD IN BAD TIMES

Spending quality time with core family members, helping each other in daily household chores gave some sort of a routine to the mundane existence. The best part is that gender roles set by patriarchal society seem to be modified in this lockdown where both males and females are doing the household works. Even the slogan 'Stay Home Stay Safe' itself fortifies the care, love, and security characteristics of the family.

Shekhar P. Seshadri, renowned psychiatrist, and professor of the Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences Hospital (NIMHANS), believes that in these uncertain times families play an important role in maintaining balance and structure to deal with rebound-madness post lockdown. "Families can act as a motivation drive to help each other stay calm and compassionate during these

times as most of us are depressed, having mood swings, suffering from the disturbed sleeping pattern, and so on and so forth."

To derive a real-time conclusion, a short survey consisting of 100 respondents was conducted that yielded the following results: It was concluded that 94% of responses shows that now people are spending more time with family members than before the lockdown. All the respondents agreed that now the whole family is involved in all activities together. It was found that most common activities were cooking (86%), and interestingly, washing and cleaning stand equal at 62% whereas miscellaneous activities like playing games, watching Netflix, doing exercise, making Tik Tok videos, and listening to music altogether stood at 20%. Other interesting revelations were that 92% of the respondents strongly concede that family bonds have strengthened in the lockdown and now they feel much closer and attached with their family than before whereas 94% of the respondents are of the opinion that they feel more secure and safe with family and 92% respondents think that this lockdown has made them realize the true importance of family in life. It was surprising to note that only 76% of respondents agreed that there will be a long-lasting positive impact on family relations post-Lockdown whereas the remaining 26% validates that things will again get back to normal with families as it was pre lockdown.

Hence, it is proven that lockdown has given a new perspective and proffered us with a new spectrum of growth, resilience besides reinforcing our love for family.