



Coping with the Corona Crisis-Mental Status and Beyond

Aditya Jayan¹ and Gaurav^{2*}

¹House Surgeon, NSVK Sri Venkateshwara Dental College and Hospital, Bangalore, Karnataka, India

²Consultant Oral Physician and Maxillofacial Radiologist, Assistant Professor, Department of Oral Medicine and Maxillofacial Radiology, NSVK Sri Venkateshwara Dental College and Hospital, Bangalore, Karnataka, India

***Corresponding Author:** Gaurav, Consultant Oral Physician and Maxillofacial Radiologist, Assistant Professor, Department of Oral Medicine and Maxillofacial Radiology, NSVK Sri Venkateshwara Dental College and Hospital, Bangalore, Karnataka, India.

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“Life” as Atharva Veda describes is not merely a sequence of events from birth to death, but also a culmination of various emotions, feelings and frames of mind where it ushers from the cuddling arms of the parents to the burning arms to the funeral pyre! “Lockdown” on the other hand if interpreted aptly is not an act of being imprisoned but a longer period of discipline and an act towards the Nation. Its a test of mindset wherein we are getting to serve our nation without actually doing anything being back at home! Its a persistence of the mindset that we will not go back to normal, normal never was! Our pre-corona existence was not normal other than we normalized greed, inequality, exhaustion, depletion, extraction, disconnection, confusion, rage, hoarding, hate and luck. We should not long to return because we are being given the opportunity to stitch a new garment; one that fills all of humanity and nature!

Understanding the changed dimensions

“Life in a Lockdown” is a stage in our lives which has taught us how fragile a life can be that a mere microbe can knock it off! Me, being a health care professional feel my collars raised seeing that the entire nation is acting as a healthcare system today. Life in a lockdown is a time to shift our temperament from professional to more of a personal arena thinking about ourselves, parents, family, hobbies, our health and allow these aspects to rejuvenate! One of the most renowned spiritual scholars, “Sadguru” of Isha foundation has brilliantly quoted that experience of oneself is the most beautiful experience one can have. Not what we have or we have become today, but what we actually are. An act of learning to be in “ease” and not in “disease”. He even mentions that our Lockdown life experience has so much to learn from Lord Rama’s exile. The most important reason that we worship him is not because he was a reincarnation of Lord Vishnu but because he has set an example

of maintaining an absolute balance within himself despite the external imbalances of his life. There are people today complaining of boredom and lethargy, should also learn from Rama that we haven’t been asked to fight a battle or stay in a forest! So why to bear the grunt in our hearts? If we suffer our own company so much, we should be compassionate about the world which suffers us everyday! The problem with this strata of society is not about a situation but about the mind. When we have no external pressures in the form of freaking and fretting demands of workload today, we need to learn to transform our inner selves.

Gaur Gopal Das, a former Hewlett Packard engineer turned Indian lifestyle coach in one of his testimonials on Lockdown once said that we are bestowed with two divine faculties us viz, Vivid sense of memory and a fantastic sense of imagination and also urged the humanity to not let suffer our memory and imagination. Living an exuberant life is possible only when we are able to dance upon the uncertainties of our lives. What life throws at us is not always our choice, but, what we do or make out of it is all in our hands. Its “this” choice, that we all should be exercising during these Lockdown days.

Trying to dwell into new circumstances

It was just a few days back that our respected Prime Minister summoned the nation to light diyas for nine minutes with a firm belief that with the richest nations of the world trembling under the onslaught of the virus, we need to come together as “one”, irrespective of religious beliefs and political ideologies. Scientifically documented, all lives on the planet are a result of fire of the Sun. Hence, Gautam Buddha said that “if you light a lamp for someone else, it will also brighten your path”. The United Nations too with the help of its tributaries has laid forward various tips as time spending op-

tions during the Lockdown. As per UNICEF, school shutdown is a chance to make better relationships with our children and teenagers. One on one time makes children feel more loved and secured and also show them that they are important. UNESCO on the other hand has come up with the ideology of Distance Learning Solutions and recommendations! In addition to these, WHO recommends one hundred and fifty minutes of moderate intensity and seventy five minutes of intense physical activities per week or a combination of both.

Restrain and resolve

This issue probably has become the fireball especially today after the lockdowns have extended to their fifth station. We agree that hardships are there with unprecedented pain for all of us undoubtedly but the dynamics of economics and geopolitical aspects would also change for the better. For the first time ever, we would have an opportunity to correct our dynamics in the next three to five years. Then the question arises as to how do we pick ourselves up? The phenomenal possibility existing that with the density of population which we have, price we will pay for the human life would be huge raising the choice between "National versus Geographically contained" lockdown! The first step needed is to keep aside anxiety and concern and work towards bringing out at least ten percent overall improvement in each human being which would set the country at an altogether different level. The parameters governing these critical improvements include physical, mental, emotional, work competence, efficiency and determination. this aspect of inner development comes under "Ishakriya" which would enhance our life but also of the nation in Toto. We do not always know how things are going to unfold and come to fruition, but we do not have to as well. When we let go of control and start believing unconditionally, the universe starts creating miracles for us. Hence for this to happen, we need to stay grateful, feel blessed, surrender and trust!

The anxiety that we talk and discuss about is often not always dangerous, as long as it is within its normal levels. 'Social distancing', which is the main armamentarium today against the existing pandemic clubbed with 'Lockdown' has been taken up by many as a form of imprisonment. This kind of distress turned anxiety leads to numerous uncertainties. The key is that we need to accept these uncertainties and reflect and respond only to what really matters to us (turning 'distress' into 'eustress'). It may be our family, friends, hobbies, passion etc. Organising our thought domains and sleep behaviours are probably the best noble ways to combat and manage anxiety related issues.

Personal aspects at a glance

My own personal experience these days is based on all the afore-said principles I came across along with the activities for which I once used to get scolded are not pouring vivid signs of pampering by my parents. I am managing to get much more organised, trying to get back to basics, perpetualise the ecstasy of being human grabbing the values of family and relationships better as well as praying for wellbeing and solidarity of ourselves and the nation. Besides this, our family has also made a small contribution to the "PM CARES Fund" for the needy and those who depend on daily wages. In fact that gives me the utmost pleasure of having served various families in the crisis situation.

Last but not the least, in my opinion situations like these wherein we are totally left to ourselves, the best act would be the act of kindness towards the poor and more importantly the animals. Secondly, understanding our duties towards one's own self, society and the nation! Such situations also allow us an open space for our mind and personality to grow and become more broad minded. Let all of us get the concept of microbiology very clear that with the shrinking existence of species in which Corona viruses were finding their habitat, its time for these viruses to find an alternate one for themselves. They live so virulently that they would definitely mutate into a mild version one day. this virus does not intend to harm us but unfortunately we are paying the price due to low immunity in certain age groups viz, infants and the geriatrics. Its probably the first time since Mahatma Gandhi's quest for independence that the entire nation has risen unitedly for one single cause- Eradication of the Viral Pandemic! It reminds me of "a letter from a Frenchman" that was recently published where he states that "every morning I wake up thinking how surreal the situation is! By the end of the day, I am telling my neighbour over a text message that I have gotten used to it, Its like the movie, The Groundhog Day, she types back!"

Lessons from the existing lockdown

Amidst all the hue and cry about the lockdown, analysing the given circumstances in depth we would realise that we have learnt three important lessons of life form this viral pandemic which would otherwise be an illusion in our lives. Firstly, 'expressing our appreciation' to the people for their valuable roles in our life and telling them what they mean to us. Appreciation is the only asset which never depreciates. So, do invest today! Secondly, helping our family 'in critical ways', viz, cleaning, cooking, learning or even sometimes not intruding much into their space which is one of 'the' most undervalued way of critically helping our dear ones around. Lastly, its the 'coming together' for at least something in a

day, could be watching a show, having a meal or even for a prayer. Of course while practicing proper social distancing, we learnt to feel the sense of bonding of hearts. Time has anyways pressed the pause button in our fast paced lives, lets all utilise this time to live our life now; uncomplained, pious, noncompetitively and without any means but with sheer satisfaction and sanctity! This probably is, in true sense, Coping "beyond" the Covid-19 Crisis.

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