NUTS ABOUT PEANUTS

Aid for Birds & Beasts

DELITTER THE WORLD

PAPER VS PLASTIC PACKAGING

TEENS SHOW THE WAY
**Children’s Community Foundation** is a not-for-profit organisation that is developing a platform to bring together children, parents, teachers, schools and childcare professionals under one umbrella.

It is supported by a team of internationally renowned professionals and parents with significant knowledge and expertise in the field of children and their families.

The Foundation will act as an independent voice on the national and international stage for child protection, child development, research, education and parenting support.

CCF and its members will work together as a community towards a future where children have the best start in life and even better prospects for their future.

CCF will tenaciously pursue its mission without fear, favour or compromise and to continually ensure that the best interests, human rights and protection of the child are placed before all other considerations. We achieve our mission by combining the power of education, campaigning and developing innovative projects and services, to create change from top-down and bottom-up.

Together, we’ll share, learn and utilise our expertise to create better citizens for tomorrow.

Our portal (www.childrenscommunity.in) is packed with information, practical advice and loads of fun stuff! It is going to be a premier resource guide relevant to children, parents, schools, teachers and childcare professionals.

**Teen Community** is a publication of Children’s Community Foundation trust. Charity registration no: 1839.
EDITOR’S NOTE

"My goal is not to be better than anyone else, but to be better than I used to be"

DR WAYNE W. DYER

Dear Teens,

THANK YOU for your overwhelming love and support, which keeps us motivated to do better. Our team is thankful for all your messages and words of encouragement. We do try our best to reply to each one of them.

We are, for sure, living in troubled times, but it is essential to understand that nothing lasts forever. We can control what is in our hands, and it is only a matter of time before the Virus goes away. Till then, remember to have fun because it is a golden opportunity to spend as much time with your family as possible.

So, what’s inside our latest issue?

Keeping in mind your interests and the encouraging feedback you share with us, we have a host of stories that offer a lot of takeaways.

The centrepiece of this edition is earmarked to World Cleanup Day. It is terrifying to realise that we are ‘the first generation that knows we are destroying the world and could be the last that can do anything about it,’ as the WWF puts it. Small acts in our daily life can have a big impact on the planet. Go forth and begin the good fight to nurture our Mother Earth and save the planet! Add to your knowledge by reading some funky facts on ‘Paper Vs. Plastic Packaging.’ Moreover, this issue also shares helpful tips that will make you care for your four-legged friends in a better way.

Mental health continues to remain a serious concern. Often, self-defeating or negative thoughts crowd our mind. At the same time, we do wish for better days to return. Well, they certainly will! Flip through the pages to find out how ‘Positive affirmations Really Work’. We celebrate the fifth day of this month, applauding the invaluable contribution of those people in our lives whom we call teachers. Yes, we’re talking about Teachers’ Day, and in these times when remote learning has become the norm, our teachers have become society’s pillars in a new way. We at Teen Community pay an ode to all the teachers in the world.

The magazine is packed with action and surprise, so read on to find out more!

I hope the September issue inspires you as much as it has inspired me — to envision a better world and a brighter future for us all.

Till then, stay safe and spread love.

Warmly

Shilpa Anand
Editor-in-Chief

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EVER WISHED FOR A MAGIC SPELL THAT COULD CHANGE YOUR LIFE FOR BETTER?
SUMAIYA SHUAIBDEEN SHARES A SIMPLE SOLUTION.

WORDS ARE powerful. They help us communicate what we are thinking. They also have the power to bring a change. As New York Times, Wall Street Journal, and USA Today bestselling author Michael Hyatt said, “Our words have power. They impact others. But they also impact us.” Enter, positive affirmations, simple sentences that challenge negative thoughts.

Positive self-talk helps us to protect ourselves from threats by strengthening our ability to bounce back after something unpleasant happens. It can alter how you think, both consciously or willingly, and in your subconscious mind --- the part of the mind of which we are not fully aware even though it influences our feelings and actions. This can direct what you do with your mind without your awareness.

A study led by doctoral candidate Christopher Cascio and Associate Professor Emily Falk found that self-affirmation gets reward areas in the brain ticking. These are the same reward spots that respond to, say, a compliment from your friend. “Many studies have confirmed that these circuits can minimise pain and help us maintain balance in the face of threats,” writes Cascio.

Here is how positive affirmations improve your life.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING
I am enough

I am going to be kind to myself and to everyone around me

I will drink at least a gallon of water a day

I am going to believe in myself no matter what

I learn from my mistakes

I will enjoy to the fullest

I got this

I never give up

I am loved

I choose how my day goes

I am my only competition

If there is a will, there is a way

I never give up

It’s okay to rest, my body needs it

I’m only human

I am my only competition

Social Emotional Learning

Some Positive Affirmation That You Can Start Practicing
Here are many reasons to feel stressed, like fear of failing. Dr Deepika Chopra, a Los Angeles-based optimism doctor, happiness researcher and founder of Things Are Looking Up, says that fear can be harmful when it starts to control you. Fear can put you in a situation that is called, fight-or-flight. This can disrupt your immune system and make you stressed. Now, some stress may be alright, but most stress affects your body.

As Dr Chopra says, stress can interrupt your endocrine system that produces growth hormones, the health of your tissues, moods and sleep. Stress can play havoc with other systems as well, like your heart and blood vessels. It can act the villain with the gastrointestinal tract or everything to do with the intake and digestion of food and the output of waste. “It’s also connected to accelerated ageing and premature death,” verifies Dr Chopra. By regularly reciting positive words, you combat the thoughts that cause stress.

Be realistic so that you don’t add unnecessary stress. Let’s say you have a presentation coming up, and you’re next in line to present it. But, you haven’t prepped enough. Telling yourself that you will do your best is more likely to bring the most out of you rather than saying, “I’m going to get full marks,” which you know may not be possible.

According to the World Health Organization, mental health conditions account for 16 percent of the disease and injury in people aged 10 to 19 years. Nivendra Uduman, a psychologist in Sri Lanka, suggests that those diagnosed with mental illnesses like depression, practice positive affirmations. He further added, positive affirmations boost motivation by instilling positive thoughts in our minds.

Affirmations help you to feel peaceful, confident, and happy, but that alone isn’t sufficient for a better life. If you’re telling yourself that you’re going to study for an exam, study! Otherwise, affirmations are just empty promises.

The final note? Turn affirmations into a habit. According to a study published in the European Journal of Social Psychology, it takes more than two months before a new behaviour becomes a habit. Get started!
AARGH... WHERE’S MY PERSONAL SPACE?

HAS A SIB TAKEN OVER YOUR ROOM BECAUSE A PARENT HAS TAKEN OVER HER ROOM BECAUSE THAT HAS BECOME THE HOME-OFFICE?

DR. SRIVIDYA UNDERSTANDS

What a struggle in these lockdown days,
Where’s my personal freedom?
Where’s my personal space?
To meet my friends and hangout
Is what my heart really craves!
Endless hours of monotonous classes,
Anti-glare glasses, and an internet connection that crashes!
As a teen, where do I go?

Life has suddenly turned into such a bore!
Parents have an endless list of home-chores,
What happened? They used to pamper me before!
I would be in school or college for half the day,
Now, am cooped in my room with tab and phone,
And the news is filling my home with overwhelming gloom.
My parent’s eyes are always on me,
And all I really want is to break free!
If the poem mirrors, or is somewhat close to what you are feeling as a teen at home, read on.

As teenagers, what we really need are peers, friends and time to chat and form deep bonds. We want to experiment with something "new" and "have fun." Also, prior to the lockdown, our lives danced to a different rhythm of school, friends, home and family. And all this changed overnight! Home was where we were locked in. We couldn’t see or hug our friends. That friendly banter, those little tricks, how we could fool around and play some pranks --- it all stopped. Life came to a standstill! We were living it and yet we couldn’t actually believe it.

Our parents often referred to the days as "crazy" times. Suddenly at home, with no help, just essential services and a family that was together confined within the four walls like never before. You could see them staring at the news endlessly, get on to frantic calls and webinars, working endlessly and tirelessly as they fought the situation in their hearts and heads.

It has been months now and we don’t see the end in sight. And now starts the real struggle, the definition and development of the "new normal." Some aspects teens struggle with:
- How do I as a teen grow to have a supportive bunch of peers during lockdown?
- How do I get back my personal freedom and privacy staying home much of the time?
- What do I do with my life in terms of college or career? So much is changing! I am confused!

Some aspects parents struggle with:
- How do I, as a parent, suddenly learn to discipline like a structured school or hostel?
- How do I cook like a culinary expert?
- How do I clean like a housekeeping diva?
- How do I suddenly turn my home into offices and classrooms?
- How do I maintain our lifestyle?

In these uncertain times, where all our norms of daily life have been discarded, it becomes even more imperative to reflect and communicate with your family. As a teen, ask yourself:
- Can I sit down, take a deep breath and have that peaceful chat with my folks and tell them how I feel?
- Can I be mindful of my screen time and also follow the cyber safety guidelines so we all feel assured?
- Can I just pick one chore and do it without a reminder so my parents feel supported?
- Can I sit with them and understand them as people going through a personal struggle and not just as parents who need to care for me all the time? Can I dare to talk and change my paradigms?
- Communication that is honest and compassionate to both is at the heart of finding peace and creating a new normal for children and parents working and studying from home. Yes, these are "different" times and the truth is you are stronger than you think you are. Your parents have more compassion than you could have ever imagined. What works for you will be different from what works for another family. Just draw the courage to have a chat, to agree on what is reasonable, and flex the personal responsibility muscle.

These different times will give you exceptional life skills. Just sit down and communicate! You will grow, and with that you will find greater personal freedom and space.

--Dr. Srividya is a Psychologist, Counsellor and Educator. You can reach her at dr.srividya@hotmail.com

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING
This September, you and I are going to celebrate nuts, giving our beloved peanut the leading role.

If you live in India, a peanut vendor sitting on the road is not something unusual. Of course, the peanut butter has become a fan favourite of many and peanuts are present in Thai cuisine. I love my peanuts plain, roasted, salted or boiled. In my opinion, they are the yummiest when they are slightly warm to touch.

Not only are they scrumptious but also great for health. I have to tell you that the humble peanut contains good quality fat, one of the most important nutrients to make your brain function optimally as well as supporting Vitamin A and E absorption, which makes your hair, skin and eyes glow! Let us not forget Vitamin A and E are powerful antioxidants that boost your heart health and immunity!

I love the peanuts as they are a storehouse of other vitamins and minerals, such as Vitamin B and magnesium, which ensure good digestive health, optimum energy and speedy brain function, thus elevating overall mood (Indian Food Composition Table by ICML).

In a world where meeting your protein requirements is a task for many, peanuts provide a plant-based, cost-effective alternative (verified by research by P. Anderson, et al. upon nutritional profiling of peanuts.)

Waiting in the Wings

Life is all about variation and although we have established that our favourite nut is the peanut, let’s shed some light on the other nuts as well. We are all familiar with almonds, cashews, pistachios, walnuts, etc. Like peanuts, they are rich in good fats, protein, and a host of vitamins, minerals and antioxidants.

Let’s board the peanut train. It is my favourite go-to food. I toss it in my salads, exchange the butter on toast with peanut butter, sprinkle on my chaats, accompany my khakhra with spicy peanut chutney, or just have it by itself as snack. So many of my Indian foods have peanut whether in rice or daals or poha and many use its cold-pressed oil in food preparations. Even in our poojas, the peanut plays a significant role in the prasad!

So, enjoy this tiny nut in your meals or as a snack or even dessert! Check out my recipes below.

Naini Setalvad is an obesity, lifestyle and disease consultant.


---

1. Peanuts are amazing but sometimes you need to be cautious. Peanuts can get stuck in your teeth especially if you wear braces.
2. Over-consumption of peanuts can cause flatulence and impair absorption of iron and calcium due to the presence of phytic acid.
3. People will nut allergies should be careful in avoiding all nuts and their products like oils or milks.
Multi-purpose Peanut Sauce

**Ingredients:**
- 5 tbsp peanut butter
- 4 tbsp water
- ¾ tsp red chilli flakes
- ½ tsp red chilli powder
- 1 tbsp jaggery (optional)

**Method:**
- Add water, chilli flakes and red chilli powder to the peanut butter.
- Optional: add jaggery to this mixture and mix well.
- Put this mixture in a wok and cook it on a high flame.
- Take it off the flame once it becomes a thick paste.
- Serve over salad as a dressing, use as a dip with veggie sticks, toss into rice with veggies to make Vietnamese Gado–Gado rice.

Date, Peanut, Cocoa Treats

**Ingredients:**
- ½ cup unsalted peanuts
- ½ cup pitted dates
- ½ tsp unsweetened cocoa powder for taste
- sea salt

**Method:**
- To a mixer-grinder, add unsalted peanuts and grind till the texture is crumbly but not a buttery texture. Place crumbled peanuts into a bowl and keep aside.
- Add pitted dates and mix-grind again.
- To the dates in the mixer, add peanuts, cocoa powder and sea salt to taste. Blend together.
- Once the mixture turns into a sticky batter, remove into a plate and roll into balls.
- Leave overnight in the fridge to set.
- Enjoy!
7 REAL REASONS TO GO OUT MASKED

I’M REALISTIC. There is a very contagious virus around.

1

LITTLE FEAR NEVER HURT. After all, this virus has killed about 848,000 people around the world in a matter of months. Shouldn’t that make me just a little afraid of it? Just enough to wear a mask in public?

2

THE MASK HAS A LANGUAGE OF ITS OWN. Without speaking, it tells everyone else, I’m mature, responsible and I believe in scientific evidence.

3

SCIENTISTS AND DOCTORS SAY, MASKS ARE ONE MAJOR WAY SOLUTION TO THE VIRUS PROBLEM. If I have to take sides, I’d rather be a part of the solution, not the problem. Scientists and doctors say, masks are one major way solution to the virus problem. If I have to take sides, I’d rather be a part of the solution, not the problem.

4

SO WHAT IF I’M ASYMPTOMATIC? I’ve read up enough to know, I could still pass it to you.

5

DID YOU SAY, I am just a drop in the ocean? Maybe, but I know, I’m an important drop!

6

SCIENTISTS AND DOCTORS ADVISE US TO WEAR MASKS OUTDOORS. I trust them.

7

–Compiled by Benita Sen
WHAT IS THE SMALLEST KNOWN STAR IN THE UNIVERSE?
When you want to think about the smallest star there is, it always helps to think of the largest star known.

Let’s start with a football. Take that to be the comparative size of the Earth. Now, start comparing. Our friendly local star – the Sun – would be about 22 metres wide, about the height of a seven-storey building.

Things are already getting a bit too big to comprehend. The biggest known star is called UY Scuti. It’s a red supergiant, and if placed next to our humble little football Earth, it would be four times the height of Mount Everest. We ran out of imagination there.

It is thought there could be even larger monsters lurking in space, but for now, we’ll give UY Scuti that medal until we find a bigger star. Zipping back down to the smaller scale of our planets. Look at the football Earth in your hands again. Sit down on the couch. That’s how big Saturn and Jupiter would be – the two biggest planets in our solar system. The size of your couch.

The smallest star discovered is about the size of Saturn. It has the catchy name of EBLM J0555-57Ab. Big name for such a little object!

Compared to the size of four Mount Everests, it’s a tiny star indeed. The dim ball of gas, about 600 light years away, was found by a planet-finding experiment called SuperWASP. Instead of a planet, the astronauts found this tiny star orbiting a bigger star.

A star is only big enough to fuse hydrogen into helium. This process is known as nuclear fusion, and powers most stars. If our tiny stars were any smaller, it would be known as a brown dwarf – a curious class of objects in between planets and stars.

Although small and cool, the star still has immense gravity – you’d weigh about 300 times more on them than you do on Earth. Heavy going, indeed!

-Vicky Duncalf
Space sector specialist
OUR LIVES have become increasingly digital. From shopping to fitness, from socialising to entertainment, from healthcare to education – everything happens in the digital realm. Yet, when it comes to building good habits around technology, we are still bound by old-school approaches like maintaining timetables, guesswork and paper reminders.

A smarter way to solve this problem is to analyse your presence in the digital world with technology. From smartphone to gaming, this can be done with the right tools and software. Tracking is the first step to curtailing overuse. It also gives you a clearer picture of the problems you face and areas you can ace with little effort.
HERE WAS a time when you had to install apps to analyse usage habits on your smartphone. However, leading smartphone operating systems now carry their own features that allow you to track how you spend your time on them.

For Android, try Digital Wellbeing. It shows you upfront the overall time spent on your phone and how it was divided among your most-used apps, and number of unlocks and notifications. Similarly, iOS users get access to Screen Time, which generates similar reports categorised into areas such as Social Media, Productivity and more. Both allow you to set limits for apps and categories, helping you keep tabs on yourself.
**Track PC Usage**

Many of us spend a lot of time on our PCs for work, assignments and entertainment. RescueTime is a great tool to analyse all of that. Supported on Windows, macOS, Chrome OS and even smartphones, RescueTime automatically tracks the amount of time you spend on various websites, apps and even particular documents – no manual entry required whatsoever.

With this data, it generates detailed reports of how you’re leading your digital life, how much of it is productive work and more. The FocusTime feature also helps you get stuff done, while apps and websites labelled as distractions are blocked. There’s a 14-day free trial period, after which you can sign up for a paid plan.

**Track Digital Expenses**

Money management is a skill that, once developed, remains useful throughout your life. Developed in India, Walnut is an app that does a great job of helping you manage your finances. The app auto-detects expenses from transaction SMS messages. It categorises them into food, shopping, bills, etc. If you don’t have a bank account or credit card, you might not see its usefulness upfront. However, Walnut lets you add and classify expenses manually. Most importantly, it can generate detailed reports of your spending habits, based on category, time and more. This helps optimise how you’re spending your pocket money and other earnings.
TRACK GAMING

IF YOU’RE a gamer, you know the importance of statistics and performance, especially if you’ve played anything remotely competitive. While there’s no single solution to track all stats across all games, Overwolf is an option that satisfies this need the best.

Popularly known as a tool for in-game apps and overlays, Overwolf itself tracks some pretty neat stats. While certain stats like playtime are common to all games, supported games like CS: GO show you additional numbers like most used keystrokes, mouse clicks and more. Additionally, using apps like Lolwiz, a popular choice for League of Legends (LoL), adds game-specific features like tracking your opponents, their LoL champions and recommends in-game choices for you. It’s almost like having your own virtual esports coach.

TRACK SOCIAL MEDIA

If you’re a teen influencer on social media, you’re probably already familiar with the basic in-built analytics tools that come with business profiles and pages. These include tools that show you reports covering areas like how many people saw your posts, which post reached more people, which group of people are liking your page, etc. Using third-party tools, similar features can be unlocked for regular (non-influencer) accounts as well. Followerwonk for Twitter is one such tool. The free tier offers tools to analyse your followers, compare your account to other accounts and generates helpful reports such as the most active time for your followers and their locations. However, if you want to use a single tool to analyse (and control) your accounts across multiple platforms and don’t need more than a day’s worth of data analysed, Crowdfire is the better tool for you. Its free tier also allows you to schedule posts and recommends posts for you to share.
WHAT LIES BEHIND THAT SMILE? EVER GIVEN IT A THOUGHT? YOU PROBABLY WILL IF YOU READ ON. FOUR TEACHERS SHARE THEIR MEMORIES AS WE CELEBRATE THEIR DAY ON 5 SEPTEMBER
FEATURE STORY

THE ROLE of a teacher in the modern educational system is not merely for imparting knowledge but as an architect of a new generation, responsible for building the personalities of citizens.

Great, dedicated teachers possess several characteristics, which contribute to their greatness. All such teachers are rooted in their passion for teaching. Teachers have the power to inspire, through their attitudes, actions, lessons and activities. A dedicated teacher has good time management skills and encourages students to value the importance of time.

Teachers need to build trusting relationships with students in order to create a safe, positive and productive learning environment. They must take the lead and inspire. As our scriptures say:

*Guru Brahma, Guru Vishnu, Guru devo Maheshwara*

*Guru sakshat, param Brahma, tasmai shri guravay namah*

Saveera Dugal Bahl

A CAREER AND BEHAVIOURAL COUNSELLOR EMPANELLED WITH THE NCERT. SHE HAS BEEN A TEACHER OF ENGLISH FOR 20 YEARS, TEACHING VARIOUS LEVELS OF MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL.

THE FIRST time I walked into a classroom at the American School in New Delhi was to teach Nursery children. I was a trainee teacher, 24 years of age, filling in for their regular teacher who had fallen sick. Seeing me at the blackboard (not sitting between them furiously taking down notes like I had the previous day) and their own teacher missing, the children simply froze.

I stood still. These children were from various countries and different ethnicities. I pondered my next step. Then a Korean boy, who had been identified as super intelligent (IQ really high), stepped forward, took my side and guided me. He explained how his Peggy Ma'am would take the class. Because he accepted me as the teacher, all the others followed suit. He showed me where the workbooks were, which lesson had to be taught, helped me distribute the books and asked his classmates to help me, too. The kindness and acceptance of these tiny humans was so beautiful that I could seamlessly conduct their classes. The teacher was completely stunned on her return and remarked, "They must really like you!"

That first brush with teaching and the empathy of those 5-to-6-year-olds have always helped me in a profession that is equally tough as it is rewarding. Some days, I love being a teacher and others, I am frustrated and pull my hair out. But never am I unemotional or regretful that I have chosen this noble and fulfilling profession.

Amit Bhalla

TEACHES ECONOMICS AT GD GOENKA SCHOOL, VASANT KUNJ. FOR OVER TWO DECADES, HE HAS MENTORED STUDENTS AND GUIDED THEM TO EXCELLENCE.
WHAT IS it like to be a teacher? Turbulent or tough? Both, would be my immediate response, with frenetic activity on some days, and steady, quiet work on others; moments of heartbreak on some tempered with pure joy on others. No two days are alike, making teaching one of the most thrilling professions to be in.

A teacher is inextricably linked with every achievement and disappointment, every triumph and disaster, every milestone and setback of her student. Of course, it is not evident. You see a stern-faced, lynx-eyed martinet descending on you as you speedily scatter, or a pleasant, easy-going avuncular sort, with whom you can get your way. The two figures, stereotypical as they are, have only your welfare at heart. They suffer and rejoice with you all the way which is why you remember them, or a few of them, long after you have left school.

The bonds we share with our students go beyond the classroom and course of study. We follow your chosen path in life and every success or failure of yours touches us. If you keep in touch, we treasure every text, call or mail we receive from you and that’s what being a teacher is all about.

Of course The Virus has changed the way we think and there has been a total shift in perspective. Alas! Enter online teaching, exit personal interaction. Despite the disconnect, however, new and exciting challenges have been thrown our way. We are changing with the times and adapting to them according to the age-old law of the universe. And indeed, in a contradiction of sorts, modern technology with its instant means of communication has brought us all together like never before!

One day in the year has been set aside but 5 September should not only be a day on which teachers are appreciated but also one on which the entire community of students is recognised. We are, because you are!

CREATIVITY IS the greatest gift we are blessed with and educators have the wondrous opportunity to discover and catalyse creativity in young people. Each child takes the academic journey, bearing a unique gift. As aspirations sparkle through to the teacher by way of a poem, an essay, a painting, or a song – miraculously does the mentor in her surface. Then, with steady doses of honesty and encouragement; preparation and performance, the true creative is honed. And stars are born. Yes, the education spectrum extends far beyond the curricular realm!

The stars, they do speak. And young voices matter. Be it new ideas, views or rationalisation, we elders want to hear you. New challenges require novel solutions. The world’s greats have paid heed when, at national and international fora, young people have spoken. Lovingly groomed by their teachers. Here, the true symbiotic of the dynamic student-teacher relationship emerges. With listening and learning that works both ways – for the teacher, as for the student. To learn with each other, you truly listen to each other. And that is the challenge of this digital age.

Screens and sound bytes; keyboards and kindles have morphed our methods of education. Adept at adapting, the educator has gained rapid fluency in digital ways. The laptop wielding, app-savvy teacher you view on your screen is an almost-corporate creature now! The teacher surfs the World Wide Web for you, navigating it with the compass of the values embedded in the book of life. For through all the lessons on coding and curricula, we need you to find your creativity and nurture it. This is the space a teacher seeks to help you gain stillness and patience to discover the nuggets of gold you were gifted with. For the world needs those who speak the language of the heart.

FROM BEYOND OUR SHORES

SHE IS A TEACHER OF ENGLISH LITERATURE. IN A CAREER SPANNING THREE DECADES, SHE TAUGHT AT THE HIGH-SCHOOL LEVEL BEFORE LEAVING INDIA TO SETTLE IN THE US. SHE IS PART OF A LIFE-LONG LEARNING PROGRAMME CONDUCTED BY RUTGERS UNIVERSITY, NJ

Vandana L. Walia

Vandana Grover

ENJOYS TEACHING, LOVES ANIMALS, POETRY, BOOKS AND SCRABBLE

THE TEACHER REBOOT... VERSION 2.0?

September 2020 | teencommunity
COME, September!

And so, we’re on to the ninth month of the Gregorian calendar. September gets its name from the word septem which means, seven. Puzzling? Not quite, for readers who have been following Teen Community over the months!

Here comes the third month that has 30 days. In fact, there are only four months in the current calendar that have 30 days and September has inspired the song, “30 days hath September...” In fact, the word September features in several English songs!

In the northern hemisphere, September heralds the turn in the weather as days get shorter and cooler. Goodbye, summer. In the southern hemisphere, September is about the equivalent of March up north. In the northern hemisphere, the first day of Autumn or Fall is around 22 September or the day of the second annual equinox. It’s the day when the daylight hours are about equal to the night hours.

Somewhere along the years, the calendar we follow got a filip from the earlier Roman calendar. Two months — January and February — were added later. This pushed September on to number nine in the list of months. But the name stuck! Now, if that isn’t quaint!

Talking of names, September has the longest name of any month on our calendar. A full nine letters. Quick! Draw up a list of the others. Which comes next? Which is the shortest?

Months often get names from associations or activities they are linked to. The Anglo Saxons called it Gerst or Barley Month because — yup, you guessed right — the barley crop ripened and was just ready to be harvested in this month.

Harvesting can be both a happy occasion and a tiring one. So, in September, as harvesting ended in Britain, farmers held a ceremony that they called, Calling the Mare. The farmers who finished harvesting would make some of the harvested crops into a shape that resembled a mare, and send it to laggard farmers!

In North America, the Old Farmer’s Almanac or a reference guide for planting schedules, weather forecasts and even recipes, has traditionally been published in September every year since 1792! Yes, this is the oldest periodical that is still being published.

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The hardy Polygala myrtifolia, naturally abundant in South Africa, flowers through the year. Its delicate pea-flower-like blooms close after dusk. Guess what it is popularly called? September bush. That is because it seems to celebrate the month by producing the most flowers!

—compiled by Benita Sen
September celebrates the gathering of harvests all over the country, which began with Onam and its Ladakhi counterpart. We will be worshipping our daily dishes all the way into October, till the Nongkrem dancers in Meghalaya and the Chinese mooncake festival round it off. What better way to be self-reliant this September than harvesting your own pots, finds out Manidipa Mandal.
EVER NOTICED how readily the garlic in the kitchen grows shoots, potatoes sprout eyes and turnips and radish let leaves emerge? Vegetables with roots want to eat — sunlight. So they readily put out their green tongues with the least bit of hydration.

To take advantage of their appetite, start with something easy — something already green and leafy.

If you have a lettuce head you were eating, as you get near the centre, save the stump and place it in half an inch of water in a small bowl. Avoid metal as it will heat up too fast in most of India much of the year. Top up the water as it evaporates. But don’t get too generous or it can rot. The centre will generally yield some tasty yellowish new leaves. However, you can also pot it in readily draining soil. The growth won’t be much in summer, but you should get a leaf or two to liven up a weekly sandwich snack.

Got a juicy-ish garlic bulb? Place in shallow water until it develops roots, then gently separate the bulb into pods to let the roots lengthen without tangling. As the shoots grow, you can cut back a few at a time for chives—excellent on eggs or in salad.

Is your family about to throw away some wilting spring onions? Rescue the bulb and root it out. Plant it, wait for fresh shoots for a garnish on your ramen, at the least! Be careful not to overwater the onion family or they tend to rot. They like well-draining soil.

Got a head of pok choy waiting to be cooked? Request the root end off. Pop it in a shallow dish of water and wait for the leaves to regrow, roots to sprout.

Is the family celebrating salads with a clump of celery? Take the bottom two inches off. Stand it upright in a shallow bowl with about an inch of water, topping up as needed. As new growth establishes, plant out into soil in about a week or two. This should give you a few stalks through the hot months in a shadier corner of the balcony.

Basil stems about four inches long are a good start to develop roots from scratch. Look carefully to find leaf buds in the nodes (elbows of existing leaves). Keep the topmost crown and strip away leaves from the lower three-quarters of the stem. Place them in a glass, like flowers in a vase, in a bright but not too hot corner of the kitchen. Change the water every other day, and roots should gradually emerge. You might want to separate them into other glasses once the roots are visible. Once the roots are a couple of inches long, it’s time to pot them. Get them gradually closer to the sun as they grow, and keep giving the pot a quarter turn every week for balanced growth.
Now you know growing things can, in fact, grow. If you have the patience to wait for a proper harvest, start something directly in soil, bypassing the mollycoddling in a glass.

Take sprouting potatoes or onions that still have some roots clinging on. Slice them off and leave the cut surface on the rooted end to callous for a day or two. Then put them in soil, sprout-side up for the potato, root-side down for the onion. Nestle them gently in loose soil, and then scatter over an inch or two more. Water with a spray bottle at first.

Ginger, turmeric and sweet potato can just be popped into damp soil to develop in similar ways.

In a glass, from scraps
- Amaranth, Malabar spinach and water spinach, just like basil
- Lettuce, celery and other similar greens like pok choy, cabbage
- Carrot and turnip tops, radish and beet greens (these make excellent sabzi and are good in parathas and dosas too!)
- Spring onions and leeks
- Coriander
- Mint

From seeds
- Chillies and capsicum
- Pumpkin (try planting them under mulch like peanut shells, packaging straw or coconut husk, or even just dry leaves to protect the tender seedlings)
- Bitter gourd
- Fenugreek
- Fennel
- Coriander

Summer Sunshade!
Rig up some mosquito net or an old dupatta/scarf to shade your plants from the worst of the afternoon heat. They mostly just need 3–4 hours of sunlight in these sunny climes.

Where’s the planter?
If you’re out of pots, look about for trash to treasure:
- Milk bags for mushrooms
- Old fruit and veg trays
- Egg trays for sprouts and seedlings
- Tetrapaks
- Cans from coconut milk or baked beans
- Takeaway/delivery meal trays
I'M SURE you have coriander seeds in the kitchen. Get a well-drained pot, something flat rather than deep, and put in coriander seeds about an inch apart. Cover with half an inch of cocoa peat or loose soil. Keep spritzing with a spray bottle and you should see pale white sprouts in a week or so. Once they appear, consider borrowing a small basket to provide partial shade until they are sturdy and strong enough to take more sun. Harvest your leaves in small bunches, starting when the plants are about six inches tall!

Fenugreek seeds are hardier, so you want to soak them overnight before starting them to sprout in a tray like you would sprout Bengal gram or moong dal. You won’t exactly grow enough for methi saag in the summer, but you will find enough grows in a shadier balcony to add flavour to a dal or a dish of kadhai paneer. Ajwain and mustard microgreens can be grown this way as well, and the leaves are yummy in parathas and pakodas (or drop them in a bowl of kadhi or a raita).

Wash mature seeds from a pumpkin or karela. Dry on a kitchen towel before scattering under a layer of mulch (straw, dry leaves, shredded paper, shells of nuts and the papery leavings from peanuts). Use lots—not all will sprout. You can do the same thing with chilli seeds! Just choose the ripe (red/orange) fruits — you did know these are fruits, right?

Try germinating some beans like lobia and chana, or grains like whole wheat and barley, and you should be able to plant them if you have the space for propping up a climber. There’s your box of microgreens-to-go.

Pro tip: If you have an RO at home, collect the discarded mineral-rich water. That’s awesome food for your plants starting out in water, your own cheap hydroponic solution.
AND THEY SAID

HERE ARE SOME PRICELESS NUGGETS FROM PEOPLE BORN IN JUNE.

MICHELANGELO MERISI DA CARAVAGGIO
Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio was born on 29 September 1571. One of the best known Italian painters of his generation, his work made a difference to the Baroque style even though he lived a short life, dying on 18 July 1610.

David Herbert Richards Lawrence
These words are from one of the writings of English novelist, playwright, poet and painter David Herbert Richards Lawrence, born on 11 September 1885. DH Lawrence is perhaps best known for his writing on industrialisation and on human relationships. He died on 2 March 1930.

James Scott
Born on 2 September 1952, James Scott-Jimmy-Connors smashed his way into the annals of tennis legends. A former World No. 1 tennis player, he wore the crown with panache for about 268 weeks, spanning his illustrious career.

Roald Dahl
Born on 13 September 1916, most of us don’t remember that Roald Dahl, far better known as an author and especially, as a children’s author, was a British fighter pilot.

I am always learning

Use it or lose it

Be a good animal, true to your instincts

If you have good thoughts, they will shine out of your face like sunbeams and you will always look lovely!

I am always learning

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I am always learning

Use it or lose it

Be a good animal, true to your instincts

If you have good thoughts, they will shine out of your face like sunbeams and you will always look lovely!
PIYA, PIKU & POOCHE

HAS HE DROPPED SOMETHING?

ALL WELL?

YES, I'M STUDYING COVID GEOGRAPHY.

COVID GEOGRAPHY?

WELL, HANDSHAKES ARE OUT NOW, I'M REHEARSING NON-TOUCH GREETINGS AROUND THE WORLD.

HUh? IS IT ON THE FLOOR?

THAT BOW YOU SAW ME DOING, WAS FROM JAPAN, THIS IS THE THAI WAI.

NAMASTE!
IN ZAMBIA, I’LL SAY, "MULIBWANJI!"

AND I’D CLAP LIKE I’M IN ZIMBABWE!

AND I’LL BARK, WOOF-HI-WOOF!

REMEMBER THE SAMBURU DANCE WE LEARNT IN KENYA?

PHOO! THAT WAS TIRING!

I’M OUT OF BREATH!

JUST WAG YOUR TAIL! BEST GREETING IN MY WORLD!

OOF! WOOF!
COVER STORY

DO YOUR BIT FOR THE WORLD THIS 19 SEPTEMBER, WORLD CLEANUP DAY, AND EVERY DAY THEREAFTER, INVITES MANIDIPA MANDAL
Two years ago, in 2018, 18 million people across the Earth took to the streets of their neighbourhoods in an epic 36-hour cleaning marathon that covered 157 countries and territories for the first World Cleanup Day.

This year, we acknowledge the pandemic makes the community activism and team efforts a little more challenging, so we’ll start you off with some hope and inspiration from three neighbourhood drives in our own corner of the world.

**Exhibit A: The Trash-y Workout—with Plogman Ripu Damu Bevli**

The 31-year-old marathoner in Delhi has long made a habit of cleaning up litter and binning it as he goes about his training runs. His own inspiration was Mahatma Gandhi, who said, “Everyone needs to be their own scavenger.” And then, in 2017, Bevli made a nationwide movement of it: He started the social media group My City, My Responsibility and started posting before/after pictures of venues he’d cleaned up. Hearteningly, people took up his call and responded, until ‘run and clean up’ became the cool-down routine for running groups in cities across India. The Ploggers of India were born. Bevli developed a full-body #TrashWorkout replete with squats, bends, lunges. With schools, he started the #PlasticUpvaas challenge where people give up one single item of plastic in their lives—be it straws, or polythene bags, or plastic cutlery...

Bevli’s mission statement—“Make cleaning up other people’s litter the coolest thing to do in India”—is an unqualified success. Today, he is recognised as an ambassador of the Fit India as well as the Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan movements.

- What Bevli does is called plogging—a portmanteau of plocka upp (Swedish for “pick up”) and jogging—and has been a worldwide fitness trend born in Sweden in 2016.
- For bonus points, a lot of the runs he has organised have closed the waste circle, joining hands with recycling brands such as R|Elan, so some of the trash collected is recovered, remade and reused instead of being simply binned, buried or burnt.

His message to all: “The ragpickers and sanitation workers on the streets are not kachrawalas, as they are called, but safaiwalas. If anyone is a kachrawala, it is you and I, who litter.”
COVER STORY

PLOGMAN RIPU DAMAN BEVLI

started the social media group My City, My Responsibility and began posting before/after pictures of venues he’d cleaned up.
EXHIBIT B: TOP-DOWN MOUNTAIN MOP-UP—DLR PRERNA/ZERO WASTE HIMALAYA

Roshan Rai of Darjeeling grew up in the Himalayas, lucky man. But as a denizen of Darj hill station, he has also had a ringside view of the litter that tourists leave behind as they ‘conquer’ the mountains as well as the trash the citizens of the mountains produce. So, it didn’t take much for him to join DLR Prerna in 1996 and then, eight years ago, sign up for the Zero Waste Himalaya initiative.

At home, Rai grew up hearing his parents talk of the Clean Darjeeling programme from the 1970s. Working with a small farmer community, Mineral Springs, on an organic farming effort, Rai and his cohorts quickly realised that waste flowing into the small river passing the farms would nullify all their efforts—unless they got the town to clean up its act. In the past years, notes Rai, there has been a dramatic increase in waste—so the team roped in NGOs, educational institutions, community groups, government departments and municipalities, for what was both an intensely individual problem (and solution!) and a whole-community issue.

Looking up from their work, Rai and others soon realised the single-use plastics were piling up not only on their doorstep but even the remotest crannies of the Himalayas. This led them to join hands under the umbrella of Zero Waste Himalaya. The Darjeeling and Sikkim chapters have been training peer educators and campaigning for the #PlasticFreedom Challenge where individuals give up plastic in the week of Independence Day.

• In 2018, when India hosted World Environment Day, they organised a workshop in Gangtok where the 12 mountain states came together for the Himalayan Cleanup, with 15,000 volunteers backed up by 200-plus organisations across 200 plus sites in the Indian Himalayan Region. What they found, from Pangong to Gurudongmar lakes, was that nearly 63 percent of the waste was multilayered plastic, a non-recyclable material, closely followed by single-use plastic utensils, also not recyclable.

• The Himalayan Cleanup was paused for 2020 due to the pandemic, but continued online workshops and peer educator training.

Rai’s message to all: “Don’t be taken in by the myth of recycling. Only nine per cent of all plastic ever created till 2015 has been recycled. Today, 50 percent of all plastic produced is single-use, instant trash. Brooms, dustbins, recycling cannot sweep the plastic crisis away the basis of waste management should be not producing waste in the first place is the need of the hour. Cleanups are a great place to begin but a bad place to stop. Aim for a zero-waste lifestyle.”

How you can scrub the earth and your environs clean too

☐ In the Covid-19 context: use a cloth mask, not a disposable one, unless your work mandates it; in addition, eschew gloves and choose hand hygiene.

☐ Go pick up your nukkad ka kabaad—yes, we know, pandemic in progress... but social distancing is easy when you are dealing with sweat and stink anyway, and gloves and masks are part of the preferred dress code already. Even the stairwell in your building or the spit-stained elevator is a great start.

☐ While you pick up the trash, note which brands you encounter most—and inundate with letters from your friends, family, parents to close the gap and take back the trash they create. (The Top 15 for the Himalayan Cleanup included Hindustan Coca Cola, PepsiCo, Britannia, ITC, Hindustan Unilever, Nestle, Amul, Perfetti Van
EXHIBIT C: THE ANONYMOUS EFFORT— THE UGLY INDIAN MOVEMENT

The toughest-talking of the bunch, the Ugly Indian wants you to get talking to the young man/woman/child in the mirror (usefully, since this pill is bitter, your parents might relate to this particular song too!). This anonymous citizens’ group grants no media interviews, seeks no sponsorship—it only asks that you admit you are part of the Indian filth problem, and you go on to fix it.

One key aspect of the Ugly Indian attitude is one of ‘jugaad’, the flip side of, “We are like this only, no?” Instead of waiting for the municipality to deal with public urination, manhole covers, street-corner garbage dumps, paan stains and unusable pavements, the not-so-ugly Indians collect and clean up, and go on to beautify the spaces with potted plants and literal whitewash.

Rumour has it they were born in Bangaluru, but there’s no reason people from Hyderabad, Haryana or wherever cannot plaster their (clean) Facebook wall with pictures of them and their friends practising #SAFESpotfixing even now in the pandemic. Citizens of 50 cities already have. Their/your/our motto: “Kaam chalu mooh bandh. Stop Talking, Start Doing.”

- Want more ideas? Talk to the War on Litter Institute: http://theuglyindian.com/War
- The Ugly Indian urges folks to “Adopt a Street” and go on a #TrashUreHunt—the idea is that 200m to 800m of clean, beautified space where you don’t hesitate to park your own butt on the street creates enough of a ripple effect to transform whole neighbourhoods.

Their message to all: No lectures, no moralising, no activism, no self-righteous anger, no confrontations, no debates, no pamphlets, and above all, no cynicism—just aim for a self-sustaining solution that stands up on its own in a public street for at least 90 days, costs nothing or little, and changes habits and hearts.

Ready to sweep the debris of yesteryears away for a clean new world for your generation? Sign up at https://www.worldcleanupday.org/contact, choose India, and get to work with Pradeep Kumar Singh and Pankaj Choudhury. Don’t forget to follow and share the relevant Facebook and Instagram accounts and hashtags, which lets you network with likeminded youngsters around the country. Take heart from each other’s examples, and stay swachh!

Afroz Shah

Afroz Shah, a lawyer, is the man who changed Versova beach in Mumbai. He’s made it his mission to work weekends outdoors to clean up his city. After beaches, his team of volunteers and he have made a difference to Mitthi river. He has inspired people like you and me to leave the comfort of our homes and think of doing our bit. He gets queries from the inspired for tips on how to start in different cities.

Recognised as United Nations Champion of Earth, he has won several other accolades. The statistics? 259 weeks on the trot!

SOURCE: LINKEDIN AND OTHERS

Say no to purchasing for yourself: products with microbeads, plastic straws and utensils, bottled water, snacks and drinks in multilayered plastic.
As floods across cities are blamed on plastic packaging, MANIDIPA MANDAL takes a look at the history and reality of the two bags. The choice is clear. The choice is yours.
1957 saw the invention of the first plastic bag—a sandwich packet! By 1969, New York City began the terrible trend of collecting garbage in plastic bags. It wasn't till the late-1970s that plastic bags became the final carrier of choice in shops. In India, waxed paper was still the common packaging for bread and biscuits in the 1980s; vegetables and eggs were sold loose, while chocolates and toffees came in foil and paper—not the multi-layered packaging we're used to today.

Dairies started switching over from milk bottles to plastic packets in the 1980s. Close-woven cotton remained the best choice for flours and grains. Until the 1990s, people still commonly went shopping with their own best cloth bags and allowing them to do so and offering their own plastic bags to be sealed by the multilayered plastic far outnumbered paper packages.
Even before the 21st century, the landfills and clogged drains were giving us clues enough—plastic was not your friend.

In the 1980s, in the US especially, paper-bag manufacturers were already trying to highlight the infinite possibilities of paper bags over plastic for crafting activities!

In India, paper bags in small shops were still mostly recycled newsprint, and not as much was virgin brown paper.

By the 1990s, even as plastic became more common in India, the countermovement was surging. With real-time global telecommunications, more aware consumers were already urging stores to return to paper.

By the 2000s, 80 per cent of grocery packaging was plastic, not paper. However, in 2017, one report stated that Americans had used 10 billion paper bags every year (though inside, there would be maybe plastic sandwich bags and juice boxes and candies in tiny plastic squares, individually ‘fun’-packed). So paper was down, but not out.

The Kraft bag, made from 40 per cent to 100 per cent recycled material, started to ‘take’, versus the pristine virgin brown-paper bag.

In the 21st century, both experts and public administrative bodies were trying to push back against plastic.

Whole cities — San Francisco, likely the first—have banned plastic bags.

In India, local governments started to promote recycling programmes for milk bags and oil packets (the thickest sort of plastic packet) and banned the thinnest plastic bags.

Interestingly, from the 1990s, more premium brands were reverting to paper over plastic—precisely because plastic was cheaper and considered ‘mass market’, not exclusive enough. From Levi’s to the leading perfume and fashion brands of Italy and France, the paper bag was the carrier of choice for the aware and aspirational customer.

And so, we have come full circle—but as we’re learning, the Bring Your Own Bag (BYOB) idea is as old as shopping. So, we at TC carry a reusable cloth one!
CONTRIBUTION OF TECHNOLOGY IN EDUCATION

Technology will not replace good teachers but technology in hands of great teachers will surely be transformational

GEORGE COUROS

THE ABOVE quote clearly supports the fact that many people around the world like to rely on traditional methods of teaching out of the fear of teachers being replaced but the possibilities that ajar when technology is introduced in a classroom are peerless.

The inclusion of technology in the classrooms resonate really well with the innovative young minds as they look for efficiency - the very foundation of technology - in every other task they execute. Technology promotes a more systematic approach towards education by enhancing class interaction and encouraging collaboration of different learning styles. Technology has made it achievable for people from all walks of life to be exposed to the radiant light of knowledge and pursue their ambitions by accessing enlightenment from various parts of the world in just one click. Technology’s introduction to schooling has surely striked out the word ‘Impossible’ from our dictionary by acting as a one stop shop leading to innumerable paths to attain our goals. It has re-defined education with an all new meaning by enabling new features such as online education, distance learning, and access to up-to-date information, all of which were unknown before its incorporation. Technology not only makes the class more entertaining by developing more creative and innovative lessons but also gives a student the freedom to keep up with a course with his own pace.

The present scenario of the world suffering from the COVID-19 pandemic has brought in light the fact that when everything had stopped it was Technology which ‘ruled’, specially in our education system by transforming our houses into our classrooms and enabling students to cope with their course in the best possible way.

By Divij Jain
Grade-12, The Modern School
Barakhamba Road, New Delhi

“WE ARE CHANGING THE WORLD WITH TECHNOLOGY”

GEORGE COUROS
Technology has turned what we believed to be magical into reality
Sometimes, our careless actions play havoc with other lives. Can we become more thoughtful, wonders BENITA SEN.
WHO, PEANUT?

PEANUT is the most famous red-eared slider turtle (Trachemys scripta elegans). The reason for her fame may startle you.

In the 1980s, when she was still young, this turtle got caught in one of the plastic rings that was a part of a six-pack can holder. When it slipped around her waist, she was young enough to fit into it. Sadly, as she grew, she outgrew the diameter of the plastic ring, but it would just not let go of her. So, the tough plastic tightened around her middle even as the rest of her carapace grew to its potential. It must have been painful and uncomfortable. The result was a turtle that resembled a peanut.

Peanut was found in 1993 in Missouri, United States of America. Her unnatural hourglass shape meant that she lacked the aerodynamic qualities that a turtle’s shape has. That made Peanut vulnerable to predator attacks. She had to be rescued!

Peanut lived on for decades at the Missouri Department of Conservation. Soon, Peanut became the face of Missouri’s annual No More Trash! Bash that goes on through April, encouraging residents to clean trash from rivers, parks, roadsides. As we celebrate World Cleanup Day on 19 September, we need to remember Peanut. She proves that every piece of litter that leaves your home can and does affect some form of life.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

1. Before you junk it, cut open any plastic or cardboard can or bottle holder. Six pack yokes are not the only holders you need to watch out for, though. Some burger or fast food joints may hand over a single glass holder or a double glass holder. Never mind the number of receptacles, just snip the rings open.

2. Does the milk come to your home in a plastic pack? Do not snip a corner off to open the packet. That little stray plastic piece can be swallowed by some form of wildlife. Cut the packet open neatly along the top joint.

3. After you have poured out or emptied the contents of a plastic packet, cut three sides open so that you have a sheet of plastic. Wash it clean with soap and water so that no bird, fish or other animal tries to eat it. Thousands of animals choke and die trying to eat plastic food packaging.

4. Cutting open a tetra pack? No ears to be snipped off, please. Try a clean cut along the seam. Wash the pack clean after you have poured the contents out.

5. Throwing out a plastic bottle after you’ve polished off the milkshake? You know what to do with the bottle, don’t you? Wash it out thoroughly so that no food remains inside it.
AID FOR BIRDS AND
The 2020 Covid-19 crisis created unprecedented challenges for both animals on the streets and people who care for them. Shops closed, restaurants and hotels shut or did minimal business, there was limited transportation of food and frugality all round.

For example, those who regularly feed stray/street animals may not have had access to meat, fish, eggs or dairy products in some areas; packaged pet foods ran short. In sealed hotspots, going out several times a day to offer food and water became unfeasible. Grocers and food carts that allowed birds and animals to forage through their leftovers and discards went off the streets.

The crisis has made us think. How can each of us help in a crisis? After all, hungry and diseased animals (or worse, carcasses) will not be helping public health either, right? That is a good argument for neighbours or relatives who might not be as enthusiastic about aiding animals. If your parents do not want you going out to help animals, respect their decision. You can instead lend a hand (or fund) to those already on the job in your area.

**Caution!**
Do not leave food in plastic packets, please, especially for cattle.
URBAN ENVIRONMENT

MOST IMPORTANT INTERVENTION: WATER!

BE it bird or beasts, everyone needs without fresh, clean water, through the year. “Birds especially need extra water, as their food has less water content in it and the natural sources are also scarce,” says Mohammed Dilawar, president of the Nature Forever Society, which does sterling work in returning the humble, dwindling sparrow to its rightful numbers and habitats.

Keep out bowls of water, sturdy cement or heavy pottery that is not easily overturned. If you can, ensure they are refilled twice a day; rinse out with plain water and a scrubber.

CARING FOR CANINES

WHILE most people have no issues with you feeding a bird in your balcony, neighbours can have reservations about homeless dogs and cats. If your parents are unhappy, shelve the battle for now and try to support NGOs and regular feeders. “It is important to avoid any sort of conflict with neighbours when feeding animals. They may turn obstructive or

FRIENDING FEATHERED FOLKS

BIRDS ARE THE EASIEST TO HELP FROM HOME

- Leave smaller grains and broken grains in sturdy bowls daily on your balcony, on the terrace or outside a window with a broad sill. Bajra (pearl millet), proso and other millets like kang (foxtail); broken rice or dalia; broken peanuts for grain-eaters such as pigeons, sparrows and parakeets will do. Offer under-shade so they are not drenched in storms. Also, be sure the food is not stale or oily.
- For frugivores like mynahs, bulbuls, parakeets, offer leftovers from the family’s fruit table. Papaya, banana, guava, melons are good options; limit citrus fruits as they can be too acidic for many birds. Many fruit-eaters also eat seeds, so you can leave out melon, watermelon or pumpkin seeds, for example, and the rinds of melons for birds with
URBAN ENVIRONMENT

Crows will appreciate leftover rice, or pieces of roti. Avoid bread. Some birds will also accept leafy vegetables (even carrot tops, discards of cabbage or cauliflower) and gourds, cucumbers and even the odd piece of carrot, corn or peas. Some will eat soaked beans or Bengal gram, or sprouts. Parakeets may like a chilli or pea pods. You can use coconut halves as bowls as well as a tasty treat in itself!

Do not offer any salted food, as birds have no sweat glands and cannot excrete it readily, plus inadequate water will make matters worse in humid weather. Be patient, as birds forage far distances to find food; it can take some as many as 8-10 days to turn up.

It may be helpful to offer shallow pots, even upturned bin lids as water trays. Float a stick or place a pebble in deeper bowls for insects to perch on.

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Try not to leave food out. Fresh/cooked food can spoil in the heat, or attract ants, flies, rats, or annoy neighbours. Dogs generally get used to turning up if they know food always comes to a particular place at a specific time. Left unsupervised, however, may make dogs fight amongst themselves, and the ones most in need of sustenance may go without. If you absolutely must just leave out, use packaged dry food (kibble).

Till the Covid-19 crisis blows over, and even in general, most folks who care may be unable to offer a fully carnivorous diet to neighbourhood dogs. However, even cooking grains like rice or dalia or noodles in meat stock or with a large meat bone, or chicken bone, will make it more nutritious. Be absolutely sure to remove all bony bits before feeding. If left in the food, these can prove dangerous for the animal’s health.

Do not offer any salted food, as birds have no sweat glands and cannot excrete it readily, plus inadequate water will make matters worse in humid weather. Be patient, as birds forage far distances to find food; it can take some as many as 8-10 days to turn up.

It may be helpful to offer shallow pots, even upturned bin lids as water trays. Float a stick or place a pebble in deeper bowls for insects to perch on.
Avoid straight milk, even for puppies and old dogs; water it down half and half. Plain curd is a better bet, as it breaks down the lactose in milk and is probiotic.

While plain biscuits and breads, such as rusk, Marie biscuits, bread or chapati can be given, it is best not to make this the mainstay of their diet, if possible.

Keep food on the drier side if you can, to wrap in newspaper, or serve on sheets of paper; do not serve directly on the ground.

Water bowls should be left outside at all times, allotting about two litres per animal. Heavy, sturdy bowls, such as cement, are best.

Feeding areas should be away from gates, doorways and thoroughfares; shelter them near an unused section of wall instead as dogs also tend to settle and nap near food and water.

Make sure to feed and leave water a good distance from the road so that eager animals are not run over, especially because quieter roads foster a false sense of security.

**Emergency Eatables**

These are not for every day since they may be nutrient-deficient, but they will stave off starvation till the current situation blows over. If you have someone going out to feed animals and short of supplies, your family could help the feeder by giving some of the daily food. Try these rather simple, practical recipes from welfarist Amritika Phool, head resident advisor at For Pet’s Sake:

- **Dry dog food** boiled with rice into an unusual khichdi
- **Boiled rice**, with eggs broken in and scrambled up while hot
- **Rice boiled** with soya chunks
- **Rice** and milk
- **Beaten rice** or poha/chiwra soaked in warm milk
- **Bread softened** with diluted milk (undiluted milk can upset the stomach)
- **Rice and dal** khichdi without salt, oil or spices
- **Rice, dal** and paneer mashed together
- **Dal roasted** and pressure-cooked with vegetables and dals and turmeric

Avoid straight milk, even for puppies and old dogs; water it down half and half. Plain curd is a better bet, as it breaks down the lactose in milk and is probiotic.

While most cats will turn up their nose at anything but chicken and fish, and are more independent hunters than dogs, it is best not to give bones directly, especially for kittens and older cats, as they can harm the animal’s delicate insides. Yes, we consulted a veterinary doctor.

If no meats are available, dry cat food is your best bet, though not a long-term solution.

If the neighbourhood alley cats accept rice, cook it really soft with maybe some orange veggies (carrot, pumpkin, etc); if they accept bread with a little diluted milk, also good.

As with doggie dinners, avoid salt and onion (and its relatives, like garlic).

Unlike with dogs, avoid liver for cats.

Do not forget the water bowl!

**Cattle on the hoof**

Thankfully, the cow, ox and buffalo are much less choosy than cats, even if not quite as omnivorous as goats. Place vegetables whole — cauliflower leaves, bundles of leafy veg, peelings and scraps—or even roti.

**Treating Tigger's Tiny Cousins**

DOROTHY GHOSH, founder of the Kalyani Animal Welfare Foundation in Delhi, is not alone in noting that cats really need fresh meat, fish or at least cooked eggs. Unlike dogs, cats are obligate carnivores.

While most cats will turn up their nose at anything but chicken and fish, and are more independent hunters than dogs, it is best not to give bones directly, especially for kittens and older cats, as they can harm the animal’s delicate insides. Yes, we consulted a veterinary doctor.

If no meats are available, dry cat food is your best bet, though not a long-term solution.
Once upon a time in Benares, lived a girl named Lajo. She was the daughter of a poor farmer whose name was Shobo Ji. He was formerly the zamindar or landlord of Benares, but his step-brother Tantya Ji took over his lands and threw him out of his home. He disguised himself as Shiva and started living a labourer’s life. Lajo’s mother died when she was only six months old.

Lajo was kind, soft-hearted and god-fearing. One night, when her father wasn’t home, she was sitting outside on a cot and was looking at the beautiful dark sky full of stars. She saw a shooting star and started following it. It was blue in colour. All of a sudden, it landed on the ground like a thunderbolt and formed a hollow hole in the ground. It looked like a gold block.

She thought it was a gold bar. She touched it and got engulfed in its gold brightness and got converted into a warrior goddess with all the powers and teachings that are required by a warrior goddess. It was a full-moon night. One of the King’s ministers passing by saw her in her new avatar and caught her. She wanted to escape but could not.

In that region, it was believed that on a full moon night, God will choose a person to be the supreme protector who will save the country from the attack of evil Bhim, who was half-insect and half-human.

The minister took her to the King. The King got enchanted by her beauty and wanted her to live with him. He told her if she lived in his palace, he and his family and ministers would take good care of her. She accepted his offer. Her only condition was, she would stay in the palace only till the next full-moon night.

After some days, Bhim and his army came disguised as traders for the annual grand trade festival. When everybody was busy listening to the King’s speech, Bhim and his men entered the palace and kidnapped the baby prince Ayu. They wanted to take control of the royal sword, which only a member of the royal family could touch to gain superpowers.

Before any of Bhim’s men could touch the sword, the sword rose up in the air and landed in Lajo’s hand. No one could beat the person holding the royal sword except the goddess herself. The warrior goddess killed the evil Bhim and all his men. She also rescued the baby prince. Days passed. The full-moon night arrived. As promised, the King set the warrior goddess free.

Jiya Tyagi
Class 8, Apeejay School, Noida
Party Time!

Partying? In the times of C-19? Why not? We asked the event organiser to share their thoughts. Here’s what they came up with.

MY PARENTS’ WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

While the pandemic rages, an anniversary celebration needs to strike the perfect balance between being executable yet special. Maximise the EQ. Add a personal touch to every part of the celebration. Make it truly meaningful for your parents!

INVITATION CARD

E-cards are static! Experiment with GIFs with personal photographs for an invitation that’s not too wordy. Like:

20 YEARS OF LOVE | MEHER & AARAV | MAY 29, 2020

7,305 days | 6 Different addresses | 3 Different countries | 2 Ridiculously annoying children | 3 Dogs | 2 cats | & countless memories...

Make the party virtual as well. There are bound to be people who can’t be there in person!
FUN & GAMES

FOCUS
Decide what you wish to focus on. Games? Watch a film? Cook? Eat? Once that is out of the way, the picture will be clear.

DÉCOR
Keep a theme in mind.
Fairy lights are your best friend for any kind of budget-friendly indoor lighting.
Personal photographs from the old photo album can create a photo wall.
Empty space? Grab a plant from your balcony garden. Feeling creative? Grab a paint brush or doodle your wishes onto a personal painting and wrap it up with clear wrap from the kitchen. Slip it into a hard paper photo frame.
A colour printer at home would be your weapon to print out anything under the sun and personalise it.

GAMES
Keep it simple. Focus on fun rather than the peripherals. Too long a set-up time can gut everyone’s excitement, making the whole point of playing the game null and void. Games need to be simple to play virtually as well as physically.

AGELESS IDEAS
Charades: All your guests would know it
Pictionary: With a simple paper and pen (or go virtual, share the Paint screen!), everyone can play it
Build a story: One word per person, per turn... Build a story involving everyone! See if your story can be about your parents!

MENU
Be smart. A 10-minute cook off game over a video call will not just achieve your menu goals but will also double up as a game! Not happening? Stick to simple bite-sized snackable recipes that can be enjoyed with off-the-shelf drinks.
Add your favourite to our list of bhel, aloo tikki, aloo chat, spicy paneer sandwich, spaghetti and vegetable pasta. Utterly bored? Whip up a smoothie.

MUSIC
Music makes or breaks a party. That said, this is where your knowledge of your parents’ musical tastes is put to test.
Instrumentals: For ambience music during other activities
Vocal: When you hope for people to dance
Anniversary vibe:
Elvis Presley - Can’t Help Falling In Love
Shania Twain - Forever and For Always
Michael Jackson – Butterflies
Reba McEntire - I Keep On Lovin’ You

Don’t go hard on yourself to cook up a 7-course meal.

HINT
Choosing your parents’ “Us song” will work magic. It will flush in memories. What’s an anniversary that doesn’t get your parents misty-eyed?

Join us as we celebrate the 20th Anniversary of their eternal flame of love!
RSVP: Karan
+91 9897969xyz
Can’t join us physically? No problem!
Join us virtually on: zoom / sk / 

By Swathi Shetty & Akshay Shetty
Once Upon A Time Weddings
+91 99160 20147 https://www.ouatweddings.com/
HERE ARE SOME QUESTIONS RICHA DWIVEDI SAKLANI IS ASKED BY TEENAGERS
HOW DO I CHOOSE WHAT COURSE TO APPLY TO IN COLLEGE?

Now this is the question. Any decent college has almost a hundred course combinations, if not more. Good news is that many roads lead to Rome and hence we don’t have to have a full career plan in place to choose a course.

If you have a rough idea of what direction you are headed towards, choose a course that will allow you to access several work options in the area. Some other undergraduate courses that open many paths include Economics, Psychology, Data Analytics, Design and, of course, Computer Science. Try to avoid over-specialised courses at the undergraduate level.

I ENJOY DEBATING. DO YOU THINK A CAREER AS A LAWYER IS SUITED TO ME?

Great public speaking skills can be leveraged across several careers including Business Consulting, Leadership Training, Marketing, Journalism and Education. And, of course, Law. Litigation will demand great public speaking skills, but also a lot more. Setting up a litigation practice demands entrepreneurial skills, risk-taking, networking skills and in-depth academic research skills. The first few years of a lawyer’s career demand a lot of patience and persistence to really establish your reputation.

Corporate Law, on the other hand, demands more negotiation skills and academic research and less public speaking. This is a fast-paced, high-paying and fairly competitive career, often demanding long hours of detailed research and drafting work.

A career choice is best explored through a mapping of one’s strengths, interests and personality onto viable career environments. A structured career counselling process with psychometric testing could help you evaluate if Law is truly suited to you and what other options you can explore.

WILL THE POST-COVID WORLD OFFER US NEW CAREER CHOICES? HOW SHOULD I PREPARE FOR THESE?

Everything is online and that itself changes a lot of things. The cost of setting up a new business, for instance, and the value of chatbots and online programmes. New people are connecting with each other and new ideas are springing up everywhere.

Of course, the world will go back to normal but it will certainly be a new normal. We cannot predict with any certainty even when this normal will take shape or what shape it will take. But here are some ideas to hit the ground running when the world opens up fully again:

1. Think cashflow along with calling: Uncertain times and recovering economies demand that you think tactically. Follow your calling, but also uncover skills that give you jobs in the area you are passionate about. Are you a musician? Learn music production as well. An artist? Build graphic design skills. A writer? Explore blogging and journalism.

2. Tank up on tech skills: Online is everything and technology is fast becoming akin to basic literacy. So, if you are a writer, think Wattpad, flash fiction and micro stories. Studying Finance? Think, Blockchain, Fintech and Cryptocurrencies. Are you a designer? Think, crowdsourcing platforms, augmented reality and 3D printing.

3. Build entrepreneurship skills: This pandemic has shown us that the world rewards the self-starter, someone who is quick to change, a risk-taker. Give your entrepreneurship muscle some practice. Got an idea for a school show? Try it. Think you can sell something online within your small community? Try it. Fail fast, they say, in entrepreneurship lingo, so you learn to know a real opportunity when it strikes.

4. Go forth and network: If you have to choose one thing, let it be this. In a seamless world where you can co-create a film with a child sitting in Peru, the world belongs to the person who can open many doors. So, step out of your shell. And most importantly, shed your prejudices.

Richa Dwivedi Saklani runs Inomi Learning, a self-discovery-based career and college guidance firm. For more, check www.inomi.in
EXPLORING CAREERS

A STITCH IN TIME!

IN SOME PARTS OF THE WORLD, SEPTEMBER IS CELEBRATED AS SEWING MONTH. IPSHITA MITRA FINDS OUT IF EMBROIDERING TAPESTRIES CAN MAKE AN ATTRACTIVE PROFESSION.

HISTORICAL ROOTS

OFTEN misunderstood as either a wall hanging or a decor item, tapestry is a form of textile art which has a distinct appeal. Traditionally woven by hand on a loom, there’s tremendous amount of hard work, endless hours and precision involved to create a masterpiece. Unlike cloth weaving where the threads are visible, in a tapestry, all the threads are hidden in the finished work.

Apparently used in English in 1467, the word ‘tapestry’ comes from Old French tapisserie, that loosely translates to ‘to cover with heavy fabric’. Swiss-French architect Le Corbusier, one of the stalwarts of modern architecture, called tapestries ‘nomadic murals’. Kings could roll up and carry tapestries from one place to another. Draped on the castle walls to protect from cold winters, intricate tapestries served beyond the purpose of an ornamental display.

Now, not all tapestries are woven. Some take the art further and embroider them!

WARMTH OF THREAD AND YARN

TAPESTRIES HAVE a language of warmth. For Puja Bhakoo, a tapestry artist and an award-winning poet, “Fibre is warm, both literally and figuratively. Thread, yarns, and textiles create an aura of love and belonging, which cold acrylic paints cannot.”

WORLD FAMOUS TAPESTRIES

1 The Apocalypse Tapestry, 1377–1382
2 The Lady with the Unicorn, late 15th Century
3 We Are Living on a Star, 1958
4 The Devonshire Hunting Tapestries, circa 1440–50
5 The Rape of Helen, early 17th Century

SOURCE: BBC CULTURE
Paintings are usually admired from a distance, but tapestries draw people to touch them, feel them. A beautiful painting touches your heart but a beautiful tapestry touches your soul,” she says and explains the difference between paintings and tapestries. “In a painting, any creative error can be removed by a simple brush stroke, but in a tapestry, it is very tedious to unpick a design.”

A handcrafted tapestry is an uncommon art form, which has evolved in terms of technique and style. Bhakoo, who did her BSc in Home Science where clothing and textile was part of the syllabus, adds, “Tapestries moved beyond looms to needlepoint embroidery on fabric has gained popularity. “Many of the intricate tapestries gracing the world’s great museums are not woven on looms but made of needlepoint stitches,” says Bhakoo. Ask her about India’s approach to tapestry weaving and she says the handloom sector is languishing. “India is finding it difficult to compete even with much smaller players such as Bangladesh and Vietnam. High raw material cost, time-consuming creative technique, and competition from new and efficient power loom have put the future of the Indian handloom sector at risk.”

India’s premium home furnishing stores.”

For more information on Puja Bhakoo’s tapestries, visit pujabhakoo.com. She can be contacted at pujabhakoo1@gmail.com and her Instagram handle is https://www.instagram.com/pujabhakoo

Do you want to know more about a career? Email your suggestions to editor@teencommunity.in and we will try to find out for you!

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**PUJA BHAKOO**

**NEEDLEPOINT TAPESTRY**

OVER THE YEARS, needlepoint hand embroidery on fabric has gained popularity. “Many of the intricate tapestries gracing the world’s great museums are not woven on looms but made of needlepoint stitches,” says Bhakoo. Ask her about India’s approach to tapestry weaving and she says the handloom sector is languishing. “India is finding it difficult to compete even with much smaller players such as Bangladesh and Vietnam. High raw material cost, time-consuming creative technique, and competition from new and efficient power loom have put the future of the Indian handloom sector at risk.” Currently working on her anthology of her poems and life experiences, Bhakoo has held many solo exhibitions and believes that over the years, “environmentally sustainable tapestries have started enjoying a global audience and are showcased at some of India’s premium home furnishing stores.”

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**MEET INDIA’S NEEDLEMAN**

Arun Kumar Bajaj, India’s ‘Needle Man’ does embroidered tapestries with a sewing machine! Not very long ago, he gifted Union Minister Smt Smriti Irani a 4×2 feet painting of Sikh Ruler Maharaja Ranjit Singh. This masterpiece had over 2000 human figures and it took him almost a year to make it! Bajaj has also presented a thread painting to Indian Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi.

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**ASPIRING TAPESTRY ARTISTS, LISTEN UP**

ADVICE FOR aspirants? “You cannot turn it into a profession unless you have an authentic and organic passion for it. Otherwise, the size and scale of a project can overwhelm you and you may end up abandoning it midway,” advises Bhakoo. The key? Patience and perseverance.

**TAPESTRY: THERAPY?**

TAPESTRY is not just art; it also has a healing quality. It works like therapy. The physical and psychological benefits are many. “Creating an intricate design, stitch by single stitch, and watching a pattern evolve from the abstraction, can induce a calm state similar to yoga or meditation,” says Bhakoo. Tapestry, she says has the following health benefits:

- Educational exercise in mindfulness
- Teaches you to focus on your breath
- Perfects your body rhythm
- Overcomes depression
- Lowers the stress-causing hormone cortisol in the body
- Enhances the production of dopamine and serotonin – the happiness hormones.
Peers help shape one’s identity while offering a sense of acceptance and belonging. When one is a teenager, there’s almost nothing more important than peer pressure and friendship.

In Mistaken Measures, the protagonist, 15-year-old Kalyani, battles just this. A bright student otherwise, she fails to stand up against the jibes hurled at her plus size. Names like Fatty, fatso, baby elephant, sweaty sloth, overweight nerd, accompanied by cruel snickering and cackling laughter, make her feel humiliated and wish she could either drown or run away somewhere. She does neither, yet so loud are the hoots and verbal jeers that she finds it tough not to succumb.

Somehow, she restrains herself. With her dear friend, Simi by her side, she feels somewhat confident. Simi is also a plus size, but contrary to her, she is not bothered about what others say, rather she carries her weight like a trophy believing in what her parents always emphasise: Looks do not matter. It is the intellect that one should focus on and conquer all challenges.

Things plod along till a day comes when Simi tells Kalyani she would be leaving the school.

Kalyani is distraught! To calm herself, she resorts to ‘emotional eating’. If the barbs at school are not enough, her parents nagging her over her binge-eating annoy her even more. Result: she gorges on more junk food.

Two months after Simi has left, Kalyani still has no friend. Even on the school bus, no one sits beside her. Then, one day, a tall, handsome ‘hunk’ boards the school bus and occupies the seat next to her!

Amit is the new student. Now, Kalyani is on cloud nine. And for the first time in years, she doesn’t think about food! Gradually, her hunger pangs give way to an excitement in the tummy. They sit together in the bus, they share their tiffin at recess, and wonder of wonders, he even chooses her as his buddy to help him cover what he has missed!

Thereafter, Kalyani is a changed person. She now looks in the mirror and all she sees is her weight. “I can be slim, too,” she tells herself and searches for a quick fix to her oversize issue. If she threw up all that she ate, maybe she could lose some inches, she thought. She had read that somewhere, had she not?

At home, she scans advertisements promoting quick slim tricks. She feels guilty for eating a heavy lunch on returning from school. She dashes into the bathroom, sticks two fingers down her throat and pukes. All the food rushes out of her throat. “This is great,” she tells herself, “Eat-puke...eat-puke...result, no weight!” Then she gets another idea. She sneaks into her Grandma’s room and steals her laxative pills. Kalyani is now on a path to disaster...and how!

Every act of craziness comes with its share of challenges. Will Kalyani overcome her mistaken measures? Mistaken Measures is a prized realistic fiction that throws up surprises as it explores the painful pitfalls of growing up years.

—Reviewed by Navin Menon, Editor Publications, Children’s Book Trust
Teens Show The Way

I am a 16-year-old from Potomac, Maryland, USA with a passion for serving the community. My mother is my inspiration. She is a physician working in a military hospital and treats veterans --- retired military personnel --- and active duty military personnel who serve our country. Since a young age, I have been going to the hospital with her in summers and after school, following her around while she sees patients. For the past two summers, I have been volunteering at the military hospital.

Since then, helping the elderly has been my purpose in life. Due to my research work in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) as well as
volunteering, I decided to combine technology and innovation along with empathy towards people to bring about a positive change in society.

For example, while volunteering, I noticed that some seniors with dementia --- a condition that causes memory loss, disrupts thought processes and interferes with the ability to do everyday tasks --- had the tendency to wander off and get lost. In the unfortunate event of this happening, it would cause undue stress to the family and of course, put the senior person in some danger. In order to help patients with dementia, I have developed a low cost technology 3D-printed tracking ring called K-ring. The K-ring is a ring that is worn on the finger of the patient. It allows the wearer to be tracked using a QR code and a passive near-field communication (NFC) sensor.

I am also involved in a project that spun out of a MIT Grand Hack in July of 2019, called Zebra Health Net (or ZHN), a network to connect patients, healthcare providers and researchers around a rare disease and allow direct connections between and among all three groups. We expect this to lead to better and higher clinical trial enrolment for patients with rare diseases, and better healthcare for those suffering from rare diseases but living far from tertiary referral centres.

Our thinking on this project is to do something meaningful for rare disease patients and clinical trials, what disruptive technologies like Uber (where the ride comes to you rather than you stand outside trying to hail a cab) and LinkedIn (where the job comes to you rather than you push your resume out to thousands of job providers) have done for their respective industries. In order to move these various socially-driven STEM initiatives forward, I have founded a non-profit organisation called STEMpathy.org.

On the volunteering front, for the past two years, I am also leading a non-profit organisation named Arts-n-STEM4Hearts founded by Amber Briscoe. We provide STEM teaching to children in underserved communities and provide art activity kits to patients in hospitals. In addition to this, during the pandemic, we have distributed over 1,000 bags of PPE and “bags of love” kits to healthcare workers, and delivered art activity kits to nursing home residents to help them deal...
In March, when COVID-19 was declared a pandemic, I noticed that my elderly grandparents and neighbours were scared to get out of the house to get medications and groceries. It struck me that if my family and neighbours were afraid, there were likely others in a similar situation, especially those who do not have family close by to help them.

That is when I founded the teen volunteer group effort called Teens Helping Seniors. We provide contactless delivery of essential items such as groceries and medications to seniors and vulnerable populations. I reached out to teachers and classmates to recruit volunteers and posted flyers, advertised through social media and coordinated with community organisations to notify people who were older or immuno-compromised of this service.

Today, Teens Helping Seniors includes approximately 700 volunteers in 32 chapters across 16 US states. We also have a chapter in Montreal, Canada and have made over 1,600 deliveries. Volunteers follow strict CDC guidelines while shopping and delivering groceries and medications, including wearing masks and gloves, and disinfecting the grocery bags that are placed at the recipients’ doorsteps. Our model is very simple and can be easily replicated in any state or country.

So, let me stop this account here as I need to go out to help another senior.

COULD IT BE YOU?

Any volunteer interested in volunteering with either of the above mentioned organisations or in starting a new chapter in the US or internationally, can check our websites: teenshelpingseniors.org, arts-n-stem4hearts.org, or STEMpathy.org, or reach out to me directly at dhruvpai@gmail.com

with social isolation and loneliness.
2020 IS PROVING TO BE A STRANGE YEAR, BUT SUMAIYA SHUAIBDEEN BELIEVES THAT THE BEST IS YET TO COME. HERE’S TO WELCOMING AN ACTION-PACKED MONTH!

Look at delving into the essence of slow living by doing the following:

- Take your time to have breakfast in the morning. According to the review, Healthy Eating and Depression written by Dr Lynn Harbottle, Consultant in Nutrition and Dietetics at the Health and Social Services Department in Guernsey, “missing meals, especially breakfast, leads to low blood sugar and this causes low mood, irritability, and fatigue.”

- Try not to rush through your conversation with your grandparents. The talk you have with them might not be the most exciting, but it’s going to mean the world to them. If it er… bores you, find ways to make your conversation interesting by learning to sew or cook together.

- Skip the wheels for a nice, long walk. You might end up being late for that tuition class or a birthday party, but this can get you into the habit of walking, which can bring various forms of benefits. According to a 2014 study in the Journal of Experimental Psychology, Learning, Memory, and Cognition, going for a walk can spark creativity.

SIMPLY IN SEP

Now that you’ve got going, remember, 11 September is Make Your Bed Day! Having a neat bed can be found to be almost unnecessary, but its benefits are mind-boggling, and this is what you need to know.

- Improves a healthy sleep routine. According to the National Sleep Foundation, making your bed can help improve your sleep by reducing restlessness, which in return, can contribute to your health. When have crumpled sheets invited you to a good night’s sleep? Almost never.

- Keeps you going! William H. McRaven, who authored the book Make Your Bed: Little Things Can Change Your Life...and Maybe the World, says that making the bed in the morning gives an immediate sense of achievement of doing something of the to-do list.

- An easy way to cover the mess made the night before. Whether you were midnight snacking or threw yourself a party with confetti all over, making your bed gets you to clean the remains. What’s a better way to leave your parents impressed?
Look around you and it turns out that this calendar month has more perks than you ever imagined!

To start with, you’ve got, Be Late for Something Day on 5 September. In the words of Les Waas, Procrastinators’ Club of America Founder, “Most people think they don’t have time to stop and smell the roses. This day tries to alleviate (highlight) that factor.”

And here’s an amusing one — Ask a Stupid Question Day! During the 1980s, a bunch of teachers realised that their students weren’t asking questions for fear of sounding stupid, and dedicated 30 September to asking stupid questions. I had this fear that if I ask the wrong question, my friends would laugh at me, but does it really matter for several reasons including the ones below?

**You are not alone.** If you think about it, you might not be the only person in the room or world thinking the same question; there could be at least five more people thinking like you!

**That could be a million-dollar question.** “What makes an apple fall down to the ground, rather than go up?” led to the discovery of gravity. “What if suitcases had wheels on them?” made travelling easier than ever. Life would not be the same for everyone if these questions weren’t asked.

**Helps to keep an open mind.** By being fearless, to explore the different views that come to your mind, you create a fresh perspective that pushes the bounds of your creativity.

**SO, GO ON, ENJOY SEPTEMBER!**
TAKE CARE OF YOUR CANINE

A P A R T   F R O M   B E I N G   C U T E ,   F U R R Y ,   A N D   L O V I N G ,
H E R E   I S   A   C O M P L E T E   G U I D E   T O   P R O T E C T   Y O U R
S H A R E S   W I T H   T E E N   C O M M U N I T Y

Teen Community (TC): What are the important vaccines for pets like dogs, cats, and hamsters?
Dr. Sanjeev Wadhwa: Most important vaccines for dogs are anti-rabies, distemper, parvo, and leptospirosis. For cats, a combination of calicivirus, feline distemper, rhinotracheitis and anti-rabies is important. No vaccine is required for hamsters, as of now.

TC: When and in what duration should these vaccines be given?
Dr. Sanjeev Wadhwa: Anti-rabies vaccine can be given first when your pet is three months old. It should then be given after a six-month gap. After this, it should be given annually. Other vaccines can be given at when your pet is 6–8 weeks old. These are to be repeated after a month and then to be given annually.

TC: How much do these vaccines cost?
Dr. Sanjeev Wadhwa: The anti-rabies vaccine should be available free of cost at government facilities. In private clinics and hospitals, each dose may cost around INR 350–500. Leptospirosis vaccine may cost around INR 200, and the rest come together in one vaccine by the name ‘6-in-1’ or ‘9-in-1’, which may cost around INR 600–900. An all-in-one vaccine comes for cats, which is by the name FVRCP. It covers all three, namely calicivirus, feline distemper, and rhinotracheitis. This vaccine should cost about INR 850 per dose.

And next time when you take your pet to the vet, you would know what vaccines should be given to them.

–Dr. Sanjeev Wadhwa is a veterinary doctor in Gurugram
We take it for granted that a submarine can surface and dive with ease. Sometimes, that does not happen. On 3 September 1920, the entire crew of 40 sailors was rescued from S-5, a submarine of the United States, when the vessel could not surface after it took a dive on 31 August just off the coast of Pennsylvania in the US.

Khái Dinh was the twelfth Emperor of the Nguyen dynasty of Vietnam. On 4 September 1920, work on his own tomb began just outside the city of Hue. He came to power in 1916. However, Khái Dinh, who was then 35 years old when work began, died five years later, before the tomb could be completed. In fact, the tomb was finished in 1931.

On 11 September, the first transcontinental mail relay ended at 1433 hours when pilot Edison Mouton landed at Marino Field in San Francisco. The mail relay had started on 8 September.

On 30 September, American inventor Thomas Alva Edison, credited with the light bulb, declared that he was devising a way to communicate with those who had died. We have strong reasons to believe this never happened.

The first Disarmament Day was held in Germany on 15 September. To respect the Treaty of Versailles, citizens surrendered weapons and ammunition to the Allied troops. Citizens had been asked, through posters and other means, to turn in their weapons.

On 17 September, the League of Nations (LON) was asked to decide or arbitrate on a disagreement between two countries, Lithuania and Poland. The conflict was a border dispute. The very next day, Sweden and Finland decided to refer their disagreement over Aland Islands to the LON. The LON had been founded on 10 January 1920 after the end of the First World War.

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IT'S BEEN A CENTURY SINCE THESE MOMENTOUS EVENTS, BUT SOME CORE ISSUES REMAIN RELEVANT.

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100 YEARS AGO

100 YEARS AGO

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5

6

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Compiled by Benita Sen
ALWAYS turn a negative situation into a positive situation. Adolescence is a vulnerable stage, when young people want to spend more time with their friends than their family, as they prepare for adult life. In this sensitive time, when major hormonal and biological changes occur in teenagers, their brain development, behaviour and mental health could suffer. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, has substantially reduced the opportunities for teenagers to interact face to face with their peers and that has hindered their developmental tasks of being empathetic and gaining a sense of identity. Disrupted routine and excess of screen time has also affected teenager’s health. In families where parents are themselves coping with the changed environment, there is a high risk of clashes and arguments with teenagers, or a decrease in overall communication. This can have a long-lasting effect on relationships and can further lead to neglect.

Surprisingly, teenagers are displaying a sense of resilience and even positivity during the pandemic, much of it being driven by the strength of family bonds and the strong support of parents during quarantine.

Some ways for teenagers to keep up with a positive outlook in uncertain situations are as follows:

1. Connecting virtually with friends is a good idea so they don’t feel alienated.
2. Fuel your body & mind by eating healthy, nutritious meals.
3. Keep your body fit by adding workout routine to your day like dance & yoga.
4. Practice guided meditation that will help you improve control over emotions.
5. Get sound sleep that will help to keep you active and energetic in day to day engagements.
6. Express your non verbal feelings, thoughts & emotions through art therapy.
7. Pay attention to at least 5 positive news about people being kind, supportive and helpful, in a day.
8. Spend productive time with family and go through the memory lanes by scanning albums.
9. Make a point to reach out to others who may be isolated or unsupported.
10. Limit your screen time - follow your routine religiously.

FROM THE PRINCIPAL’S DESK

Impact of the pandemic on teenagers
Dr Neeta Bali
DIRECTOR PRINCIPAL, G D GOENKA WORLD SCHOOL, GURGAON

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And here we are, with another issue of Teen Community. The accolades have come pouring in. That pat on the back feels good, but we have not let it deflect our attention from this issue. And so, we threw ourselves into it right away so that we could bring you a rainbow range of topics in different formats. Enjoy. Do. And don’t forget to write in to us with your inputs and original writing and drawings to: editor@teencommunity.in