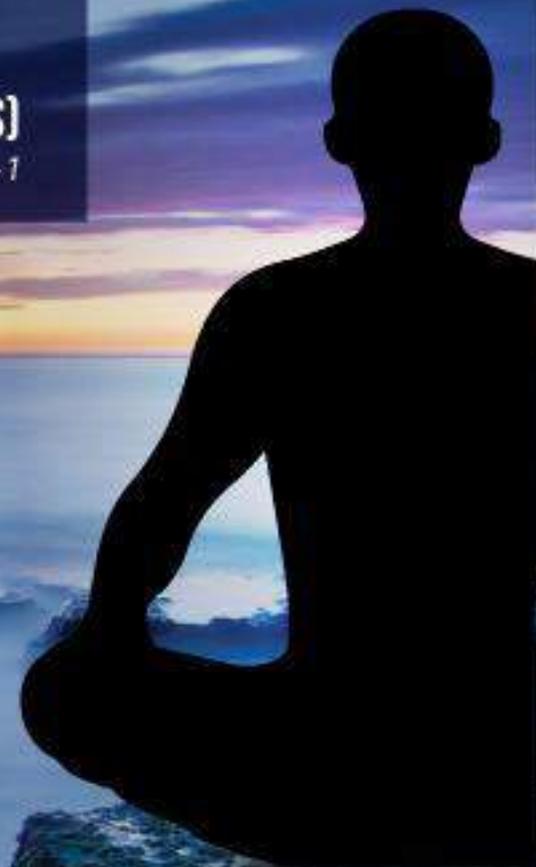


# STRESS MANAGEMENT IN TURBULENT TIMES

(COMPILATION OF PERSPECTIVES FROM ICSI MEMBERS)

Vol. - 1



**THE INSTITUTE OF  
Company Secretaries of India**

**भारतीय कम्पनी सचिव संस्थान**

IN PURSUIT OF PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE  
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Released by Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar and CS Ashish Garg, President, ICSI at the webinar on 'Balancing of Mind, Body and Soul' held on 29th April, 2020.

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## Message from Honorable President

*"The greatest weapon against stress is our ability to choose one thought over another."*

*~ William James*

Being a professional and portraying professionalism is an aspect which calls for a conduct which of excellence, one which is not just restricted to the work arena but extends to the personal front as well. The ongoing situation, the spread of the global pandemic, and the imposed lockdown, has presented before us unprecedented situations. And these situations have in turn created hurdles and issues and impacted the normalcy of our personal and professional lives.

A genius once said and I quote, that stress occurs in a scenario when the situations at hand are not according to our expectations and we can do only so much to change them. While the existing scenario is pointing towards exactly similar situations, the need of the hour is to portray an extreme sense of professionalism and deal with not just the situation but the stress arising out of in a manner which not only curtails the negativities of the likes of stress and anxiety.

While understanding the need of the hour and our responsibility towards the nation, the ICSI and its members have rendered their support towards their fellow citizens by way of contributions to the PM Care Fund, we also understand the issues facing our stakeholders especially our members and students.

In an attempt to showcase the silver linings amongst these moments of cloudiness, the ICSI-CCGRT has developed a unique publication under the aegis of '**Stress Management in Turbulent Times**' to provide the much-needed encouragement and motivation to our members.

I appreciate the efforts undertaken by the team ICSI-CCGRT under the guidance of CS Devendra V. Deshpande in bringing out this publication. I would also like place my acknowledgements towards the members who have contributed their articles highlighting various aspects of this contemporary topic. I am sure that their works, shall provide you with the much-needed vibes of positivity and energy to deal with this difficult situation.

**सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः। सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु, मा कश्चित् दुःखभाग् भवेत्।।**

**(May all sentient beings be at peace, may no one suffer from illness.**

**May all see what is auspicious, may no one suffer.)**

CS Ashish Garg

President

The Institute of Company Secretaries of India

## Forward

The real taste of life is in its trying times. But the stress, the anxiety and the fear is something which has become an integral part of our professional and personal life. The stress and anxiety are there with every one of us may it be professional, student, employer, employee, state and the entire environment around us.

At present times, the entire universe is praying for the health and well – being of the people, yet we understand, it is not easy to stay away from the impact of this virus indirectly also. The changes in our routine, the concern for the health and anxiety of what's next are leading to extreme level of stress for many of us.

Looking at the current scenario, we at ICSI-CCGRT made an attempt to provide an opportunity to the members to express themselves as well as those who are looking for some answer to these issues related to stress and anxiety.

We appealed the members from our fraternity to introspect and share their perspective on stress management. We are happy to receive an overwhelming response for the same in terms of articles and write-ups highlighting various aspects of stress management. In this present publication, we have collated the selected papers highlighting these perspectives. This compilation of the papers will guide and motivate others to think in positive direction and to find the solutions.

Based on the inputs and feedback from you all readers, ICSI-CCGRT will be coming out with a series of write-ups that deals with Yoga, Self-management and various other aspects of stress management.

I take this opportunity to present this first volume of e-publication and appreciate all of the members, who sent the Articles to ICSI CCGRT as well as screening committee of researchers who selected the Articles for e publication. My sincere appreciation to Dr. Trupti Karkhanis and Rakesh Goyal and team CCGRT for bringing up this series must adaptable to the present times. I also must thank the CS. Ashish Garg, President ICSI and CS. Nagaendra Rao, Vice President ICSI as well as Managing Committee Members of ICSI – CCGRT for their support and guidance.

As rightly said by Lynn Austin, 'Smooth seas don't produce skilful sailors', these turbulent times will shape each one of us as better human beings!

Stay Safe and Stay Home!

Sincerely

CS Devendra V. Deshpande

Chairman, CCGRT ICSI

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## **A Walk From: Ignorance to Truth; Darkness to Light; Death to Immortality**

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In life, there are good times, there are bad times and sometimes there are normal times. This is not a normal time. Across the globe, the cycle had stopped rotating normally as corporate are shutting their doors, customers are staying home, employees cannot work efficiently, the economy is going down as pandemic rages. After all, this is first and foremost a public health crisis hovering all over the world. This all gives you some thoughts:

- You are not alone in what you're going through.
- These entire situations are beyond your control.
- The things will automatically get in control over time and with the joint efforts.

So, in the face of adversity, we have a choice. We can be bitter, or we can be better.

During this pandemic situation, everywhere, every second person is under stress it can be of business, job, financial, emotional, loneliness, health, etc... But Stop, wait a minute and re-think "Are we really under stress?" Just flashback and remember a time when you feel you have no time to relax, know that this is the moment you most need to make time to relax".

I believe it's not the load that breaks you down, it's the way you carry it. Stress is just a state of mind. When you could not deeply accept, adopt the change happening around you and figure out the positive aspect rather start to cover yourself with negativities of the movement, it disturbs your state of mind and you then call yourself under stress, under pressure. So, the real cause of your stress is not only the outside world, the situation around you but your own way of perception, adoption and inept to figure out the things positively.

Sometimes, we are tested not to show our weakness but to discover our strength. And this is the best time we can ever get into our lifetime to discover ourselves, our strength, to differentiate between human being and being human, to understand the core human values. This is the time when we can flush out the toxins within us. This

time teaches us that even the darkest and most depressing times also contain the seeds of new learning and possibility.

Just reboot yourself. This is a time when you can make a better version of yourself. And if you could not come up with something better in yourself this time, then never blame that you don't have ample time to live a life of your choice rather it's your habit not to live.

“The secret of change is to focus all of your energy, not on fighting the old, but on building the new.” Socrates

So, I urge you all to utilize the time to the best you can, live a life of your choice, build something new in you, sow seeds of new learning, find new possibilities, develop a routine, learn new skills, go within yourself deep inside and find out the core values of being a human.

Here are certain tips and tricks which might help you to rediscover yourself:

**Some Do's:**

1. Spend a portion of your day towards your physical fitness, do exercise, yoga, pranayama. This will give you physical and mental stability;
2. Meditate daily as this will help you find your strength;
3. Pray, learn new prayers, shloka, mantra, ritual facts and stories, read your holy books;
4. Read other good Books, Magazine. Now a day's audio books are trending a lot;
5. Listen to good music, songs, dance, write what you feel;
6. Watch good movies, web-series. Many good ones are available on Netflix, Amazon Prime, Zee5, Mx Players, Hotstar...etc.
7. Try something new cooking, knitting, painting, etc. anything of your choice;
8. Connect yourself with the world of the Internet. The Internet is like an ocean find pearl of your choice. Explore, learn new facts about the world. Learn new skills, improvise yourself;
9. Attach yourself with nature, try your hand on gardening, spend time in the open sky, terrace, balcony and free the flowing air;
10. Complete your wish list in the best available way;

11. Resurrect your old relations; give a call to your friends, relatives, acquaintance;
12. Try to adjust and learn the art of let-go things;
13. Help the poor section of society if you can, appreciate the frontline workers.
14. Learn to live a life simply, learn to adjust in small available resources, control your unnecessary wants, don't waste things and always remember:
15. Money may be yours but the resources are of the world at large.
16. You are not the owner of the earth; you are sharing it.
17. The cost of living is minimal; the expensive is your lifestyle.

### **Some Don't**

1. Avoid indulging in unnecessary arguments. At least a half an hour time especially the early morning, don't speak with anyone. Keep quiet and clam.
2. Say No to newspaper reading, no media channel, at least in the morning, nowadays media are full of negative news, agree they are useful to some extent but not necessary in the morning.
3. No more discussion about pandemic situation, this attracts negative vibes.
4. No worry about economic growth.
5. Stop cruising administration, criticizing the government, its officials, policies, etc. rather support them.

In addition, I request to follow the instructions issued by the government, support authorities, help poor people abiding by government instructions, donate if you can, stay at home and help to overcome this pandemic situation.

Further, in this most difficult phase, I would like to express my most sincere condolences and deep sympathy to all victims, their families, and dear ones, and show heartfelt gratitude and respect to all health workers and all people those fighting on the frontline.

Stay home; Stay safe; Discover yourself; Reboot your life system; Have faith and believe the life soon will bloom.....

## Is Managing Stress is a Challenge?

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“**Stress**” we know it, experience it and sometimes, put up with it. Stress is a natural feeling of not being able to deal with specific situation. However, stress can become a repetitive condition if a person does not develop skills to cope with the situations. Stress is everywhere in today’s world, but how it is handled can make all the differences. Stress isn’t always bad. A little bit of stress can help you stay focused, energetic and able to meet new challenges in the life.

Today, we are living in scary time due to COVID -19 and it is important that we let our faith win over fear.

A very beautiful story wanted to share with everyone.

Once Krishna and Balram were walking through a dense forest. It was a scary forest full of fierce animals and demons. Suddenly a demon came before them. Balram was petrified seeing a demon and asked fearfully, " Who are you?" The demon answered, "I am a demon the size of your fear." Hearing this Balram was even more scared and the demon grew bigger. The bigger he grew the more scared Balram was. Seeing him grow Balram fainted. Then demon turned his attention to Krishna. He said, " I am demon the size of your fear."

Krishna looked at him nonchalantly and started playing his flute. The demon grew smaller and smaller and he disappeared. When Balram got up he was surprised to see this, and he realized his mistake.

It’s time to let our faith win over fear. It’s not stress that kills us; it is our reaction to it.

We should always remember that *‘Nothing is Permanent in this World, not even our Troubles.’*

To de-stress yourself it important to know the cause of Stress like loss of jobs, divorce, increase in financial obligations, illness / injury or the death of a relative or friend are the most common causes of stress.

### **Managing Stress**

We generally don’t give priority to self-care, It is only when things become serious we look into it. The first step for stress management is understanding yourself

better – how you react in different situations, what causes you stress, and how you behave when you feel stressed and then take appropriate steps.

The stress management plan will be different from person to person depend on nature of stress. Some of the common stress management tools are:

1. **Eat healthy food:** The effects of stress can be reduced to a certain extent by just adding the right foods in your diet. Have well-balanced, nutritious meal. Some of the foods which can help to bust stress are:
  - **Oranges** – It has vitamin C which helps to curb the stress hormones and keep the stress away, while simultaneously strengthening the immune system.
  - **Green leafy veggies** – Veggies like spinach and broccoli are good sources of vitamins that help to fight stress and anxiety.
  - **Oats** – It is a source of various minerals that makes it a good mood boosting food. Oats help to reduce your cholesterol levels and keep your heart healthy.
  - **Milk** – The calcium present in milk is known to reduce depression and eases anxiety and mood swings.
  - **Tea** – Green tea help to boost brain and enhance mental performance. Black tea helps to lower the levels of stress hormone.

2. **Live happy lifestyle:** Listen to good music, dance or do whatever that makes you happy remember there is world beyond COVID 19.

LIFE is to Enjoy with whatever you have with You, Keep Smiling...!

Give yourself A Break. Enjoy Some Ice cream / Chocolates/ Candy/ Cake...Why...?

Because: STRESSED backwards spelling is DESSERTS...!!

Very Beautiful lines we all should always remember

*ONE Good FRIEND is equal to ONE Good Medicine...!*

*Likewise, ONE Good Group of friends is equal to ONE Full medical store...!!*

3. **Meditation and Exercise:** Meditation helps to settle the mind so you can think calmly throughout the day. Meditation helps to control our thoughts which help to be present in the moment and to observe your thought process. There is no point in starting to meditate unless you intend to make it a habit.

Initially meditate for 10 to 15 minutes once or twice a day. Increase this to 20 minutes not more than twice a day.

It is suggested to choose a place to do meditation where there is no disturbance.

Exercise regularly. Physical activity plays a key role in reducing and preventing the effects of stress. Make time for at least 30 minutes for exercise every day.

- 4. Yoga:** Yoga has been in our tradition since a very long time and has helped many people to live life happily. "Yoga" is not just a form of exercise but is a lifestyle for those who are immersing and expressing the principles of yoga in their day-to-day life.

Yoga help us to improve our health:

- It helps to de-stress, and fight negativity
- It helps to rejuvenate and feel energetic
- The breathing techniques help to improve lungs health
- Daily Yoga practice give stability, to have better control over our core and muscles
- It also helps to heal chronic pain (for eg: back pain, shoulder pain, leg pain etc)
- It helps regularize your digestive system
- It helps stabilize blood pressure.

- 5. Learn to accept change:** Nothing stay the same for a long time. Believe in yourself and your potential. Trust on your own abilities, capabilities, judgments and belief that you can successfully face the day to day challenges. During a difficult time, sharing our thoughts and feelings with a trustworthy person can give us a sense of relief. Develop a support system of friends and relatives you can talk to when needed. If you feel overwhelmed, talk to a health worker or counselor. Have a plan, where to go to and how to seek help for physical and mental health needs if required.

## **Conclusion**

There is no possibility to live life without stress. But we have the power to deal with it and develop skills to cope with the situations. By learning to cope up with stress we'll be better prepared to help not only our self, but also friends, relatives and colleagues.

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## Call of Time; Think Positive

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Before some years we knew about the term stress in school only. In Physics, the formula of stress is

$$\text{STRESS} = \text{PRESSURE} / \text{RESILIENCE}$$

But now every time we USE the term stress like it is in fashion. School children also say I am stress, retired person say I am stress, people doing nothing say I am stress. What we repeat again and again we become.

The dimension of pressure is not within our control and in current scenario the pressure factor is increasing rapidly.

But the denominator (resilience) is in our control we can increase it so that numerator does not overpower us.

The current scenario of COVID- 19 is worldwide issue and we cannot control it. Government and Health department is working hard to overcome this situation. But seeing the positive side of COVID-19. It has taught us: Everything is unpredictable so accept the situation.

**'Use it or lose it, Time'**: Now we have time to see within ourselves we have innate potential and we can increase it more by listening or reading positive video or books. For e.g. we have talent of cooking, painting, dancing and etc. But from many years if we are not doing it or forgotten then we can focus and bring that quality within us. Now we can do exercise so that our body is fit.

**Solve Issue**: Now if in any relationship or with any friend issue is there we can again tie up or have conversation with them so that we can resolve that issue. If with any friend we are not in touch we can get in touch with them.

**Radiate Positivity**: But the need of hour is to think positive now we cannot afford to think negative. If we really want to help to our country then monetary help which majority people are doing, second help **think positive no matter what** so that we can create powerful vibration in our home, colony and radiate positivity to the universe. This time will also pass it has come to teach us so many things stay with family, eat homemade food, spend time with family, take out time for yourself, respect the nature, keep cleanliness in house and in society.

**Create Peaceful Environment:** Now we are with our family if we are in tension, we are radiating the same to our loved ones. If we really love them, for them think positive and create a positive and create a peace environment in the house.

**Present Is Pleasant:** If we are thinking negative or we are worried about future then we are not enjoying our present then latter on we will regret. Present is gift we can enjoy so much with our family. In every part of the world everyone is facing monetary issue, but by thinking negative and wasting energy we cannot resolve this issue. Now it is time to strengthen our bond with family members.

**Watch and Listen positive:** If we turn up to any news channel only one news about COVID-19 is coming. We have gathered enough information required about this virus, we are only discussing about this issue in phone or in social-media and thinking about it and creating fear and tension. Just think positive and create thought this issue will be resolved soon and our job is certain. God's blessing is with us.

**This Will Go:** Black clouds come and go similarly this situation will also go. Lock comes with key. Similarly, problem comes with solution. Just this issue has come to unite us with our family, take care of self, spend time with family and nothing else.

Now we can update all the recent circular or revise the act and many more.

**Prison or Heaven Is in Our Thought:** If you create thought that I am caught in prison and I cannot go anywhere then we will feel sad. Just be thankful to god after so many years I can spend time with my family & can do all my favorite activity & I am fortune I am getting food. Now we can recall all our good memories spend time with our family, friends and colleagues our college time, school time, childhood memories & etc.

**Social Work:** Now there is great opportunity to do social work we can help needy people and earn blessing. We can do service selflessly but without expectation of name, fame & show off. More over social work will be cover under CSR.

**Innate Nature:** This time will also pass but we have to keep patience after dark night, morning also come. Don't lose hope; just remember my innate nature is peace, power & happiness.

**Have Gratitude in Your Attitude:** We are so much fortune still we are connected with outside world, because of technology we are in touch with our friends and relatives. We are getting necessary things. We are able to fulfil our daily needs. With the help of technology, we are updated about the entire current event going. We have got time for selves. We can sleep “how much we want”. This COVID-19 has taught to eat homemade healthy food otherwise we have got the habit of drinking or eating unhealthy food & damage our immunity system. We are so much thankful to COVID-19 it has taught us adjustment and reduce our needs during the current scenario. We are thankful to policeman, doctors, nurses & government who are working day & night for the safety of society.

**Meditation:** Now the call of time is to go inside and take charge of self. Like in mobile we do charge every day and without charging it does not work a day, similarly the battery the energy which is running our body we need to charge it & connect with Supreme Soul & take power from Supreme Soul to face any problem of life.

## **In order to achieve something, we have to think different, act different**

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Hello Everyone! I hope you all are safe at your home. As we all are quarantine in our homes for so many days and will be for many more to come. As most of us will be stressed for one or other thing which may have bad impact so let's join hands together to be stress free and live a healthy life. Easier said than done? No not at all. Here we go with some full proof life mantras: -

Beginning we the most basic yet the classic one Yoga/Exercise. Since we have been acting very lazily these days, indulging self in some physical activity would release some dopamine and thereby making us fit and enthusiastic.

Along with Physical fitness a 10 Min. Meditation bring calmness and peace to mind. It also generates Positive thoughts which generate positive feelings and attract positive life experiences. Not only will these it helps us to increase our concentration power.

This unprecedented can be taken as wonderful opportunity to learn new things and cultivate good habits like Reading informative articles, books etc. As it is said the **"Knowledge gained by us will never goes to vain"**. Say for an Example Professionals working as a practice try to inculcate different areas of work not performed by them before during the lockdown. So, it increases their scope of work area when lockdown open.

Many of us are working to just both ends meet. This is the time you do the work of your passion rather than sitting.

In normal days we may not be able to give/ take time to/ for our family members and friends due to stuck in work. So, let's make the best use of time by spending with them. Help them in their household work. Give your children time, teach them, share your good or bad experiences with them and try to bring best from them. Listen what they thought and help in setting their goals for future.

At last above all I request you all to help the needy person according to your capacity. Together we can and we will fight against this COVID.

**"The brightest stars shine in the darkest of night. Let's become that Star."**

**Be Strong! Be Happy!**

## **The Relaxation of Reiki**

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In today's times, when things seem so uncertain, everyone is beset with a multitude of thoughts and emotions – fear, anxiety, panic, indecisiveness etc. We are constantly second-guessing ourselves and our decisions, and in doing so, losing our focus, balance, and decision-making abilities. Stresses are not new to our lives, but the current situation has brought up everything in sharp perspective – fear of death/incapacity, fear of losing loved ones, uncertainties related to life conditions and a drastic change in work and industry scenarios. These are acute stresses, felt by most people. Added to these are the lesser but no less real stresses of boredom, lack of focus, directionless drifting and trying to juggle all fronts while inwardly fearing that at any moment, life might turn out to be significantly different than we thought. While all these feelings and mental stresses are quite natural, none of them are conducive to good health and immunity. Carried over a longer period, these fears and stresses may develop into debilitating depression, eating away at our very motivations for life and life-affirmative decisions. These stresses affect our physical, mental, and emotional health, thereby bringing down the overall immunity of the individual. What we need instead, is to focus on enhancing our peace, our aliveness, our joy, vitality, and immunity. How?

One of the simplest and most beautiful ways of doing so is through REIKI – a hands-on technique of natural healing. Reiki heals by enhancing the flow of natural energy into our bodies, thereby gently releasing all blockages and toxins and gradually, with practice, improving physical health and overall immunity. From the very first session, one can feel a deep peace and well-being.

So, what exactly is Reiki? The word itself has Japanese origins, although the technique has always been there in all the cultures. The word 'Reiki' translates to 'Universal Life Force/Energy'. It is the very energy which is a vital life force in our bodies; a lessening of this energy may lead to imbalances at the physical/gross level, i.e. at the body level, resulting in physical issues, hormonal imbalances, low vitality, and auto-immune issues.

As a practice, Reiki involves the gentle laying of one's hands over various parts of the body, in order to channelize and transmit this healing energy that is present around us in the cosmos in unlimited quantities. Essentially, twenty-four positions have been identified for this purpose; these cover all the major and minor organs. By giving Reiki on these positions regularly the imbalances are gradually corrected and vitality restored. This then, results in physical, mental and emotional wellness, automatically leading to spiritual development.

Once we learn Reiki, we can practise it not only on our own bodies, but also on others. Thus, we can help create balance and bring peace into the lives of others around us as well, be it at the familial or organisational level. This practice, once it becomes a part of our daily lives, brings a fundamental shift in the very quality of life. After all, even if we have all the material comforts, we can garner, but are not healthy and peaceful, how do we enjoy our richness?

[I would also like to bring to fore two basic tenets or principles of Reiki that have become all the more important in the turbulent times of today – the Principle of Gratitude and the Principle of Love and Respect.

The Principle of Gratitude is at the very root of all Reiki practice. According to it, it is essential to recognise and give thanks for all the blessings life has given us – be it material comfort, a good, healthy body, the comfort of loving families or anything and everything we can be thankful for. This not only shifts our focus from the limitations of the current situation, but also reinforces a life-affirming notion – We are already blessed with so much. As soon as we come into this awareness and state of thankfulness, automatically the stresses and anxieties take a backseat and stop dominating our thoughts and day-to-day actions. We become calmer, more inventive and accommodating. Moreover, this creates an aura of acceptance, for it is very essential in the times of today to deal with each day as it comes with an open heart and an open mind.

The second one, the Principle of Love and Respect is also a core tenet of all humanity. Are we not questioning our humanity and its basic beliefs each and every day now? It has become a common factor in our lives, regardless of country, race and creed. When we practise this principle, automatically we start appreciating

people and their efforts more – the home delivery people who are putting their own well-being at stake to cater to our needs, the employer who still continues to employ our services, the house help who did so much for us that we could not notice earlier, but is now evident when we are doing everything ourselves... So many people at the forefront and in the background working for the well-being and safety of all humanity.... The least we can do is show deep love and respect for all those whom we shall not be able to thank personally or even acknowledge first-hand.

These two principles cause a turnaround in our attitudes and relax us deeply. As our perspectives alter, so does the energy field around us, resulting in a different reality. For as we think, we create. Is it not then better to be in an thankful and loving state of mind and create a better world – for ourselves and others?

P.S. I learnt Reiki from Cosmic Rhythm in the year 2000, from my Reiki Master Shri Akhilesh Joshi, who is a world-renowned Reiki Master. Working with him and Cosmic Rhythm has taught me so much about inner alchemy – how to bring joy, peace, and compassion to my life. The lessons I learn from the Reiki and other transformation workshops have made me more grounded as an individual and as a professional. I wish to share this pure practice with all my colleagues.

For more information and for any queries –

Visit - [www.cosmicrhythm.org](http://www.cosmicrhythm.org) for detailed information on the benefits of Reiki, how one can learn and for information on other transformational workshops.

## Investment of time in Self - Development

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The world has never thought about coronavirus disease which is an infectious disease caused by a new virus. The whole world are continuously monitoring and responding to this major outbreak. Various advisories are already in placed & issued on time to time by WHO & our Indian government for the safety & welfare of society at large.

Our Prime Minister Narendra Modi has declared a nationwide lockdown 21 days & further extended for a period of 19 days.

As we know that during the lockdown period, we cannot go outside but there is no limitation to go inside. This is right time to invest in yourself & to inculcate new habits / hobbies.

Present time can be invested / utilised for the betterment of yourself and family. Further, it can be maintained thereafter in future.

Mr Maxwell Maltz had introduced the theory for developing a new habit in 21 days. According to various other researches, a life can be transformed after development of strong & new habit. The list of new habit is endless. I am trying to mention few important habits, which can be developed during this time and very easy to maintain thereafter.

1) **To get up in *amritvela*:** *Amrit vela* means the "ambrosial period". Its starts two and half hours before sun rises. The importance & benefits of amrit vela are countless. This is the best time to get energised yourself and fill up with high energy for your body and soul. Therefore, you can get up in early morning. You may go for Meditation or mantra jaap, if you do not know about the meditation, you can go for guided meditation, which is easily available on YouTube channel or you can learn from a spiritual guru or yoga teacher.

I have read many books and few autobiographies of great personalities and found that all greater personalities were early riser.

2) **To write your goals & target:** You should write your short- & long-term goals of your life. You should make also road map / action plan to achieve it. You must *visualize* each of those goals as *already achieved* at least for 10 minutes every day in the

morning. This is one of the techniques to attract things in your life by law of attraction.

3) To **decide about Purpose of life**: It is very important aspect of human life to decide the purpose of life because life has no meaning without purpose in life. According to spiritual knowledge, the life should a purpose. If you decide the purpose of life, you will find that your whole thinking will be changed towards to the life.

It is not very easy to decide all these things in short time but it will take some time, but when you decide this, you will find rejuvenate as well as satisfaction (peace of mind) in yourself.

According to Anand Movie of 1970 featured by Rajesh Khanna,  
....**Babumoshai, zindagi lambi nahi badi honi chahiye....**

**(Life need not be long it should be big)**

4) To **Read books**: You must read best business books, books on personality development / Motivation, self-help books, autobiographies of great personalities.

I am mentioning the name of best books to read for overall developments.

- i. The Power of Now by Eckhart Tolle
- ii. *The Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho
- iii. The Power of your subconscious mind by Joseph Murphy
- iv. The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People by Stephen Covey
- v. Think & Grow Rich by Napoleon Hill
- vi. Unlimited Power by Anthony Robbins
- vii. The Magic of Thinking Big by David J. Schwartz
- viii. Change Your Thoughts - Change Your Life by Wayne Dyer
- ix. You can Heal Your Life by Louise L. Hay
- x. You can Win by Shiv Khera

These are illustrative books not exhaustive. You can read many more books of your choice.

5) To **listen Motivational videos and positive affirmations**: You can plan to listen motivational videos and positive affirmations at least 15 minutes every day. It will have positive effect in your life& eliminate negative thought, that is for sure.

6) **To develop writing skills:** This is best time to develop writing skills for interest of your areas. This will give higher dividend in future.

7) **To enrich / sharing of professional knowledge:** You can enrich your professional knowledge through reading of books, latest amendments, joining of webinar as well as you can also share your knowledge through various platform.

8) **Yoga, exercise, Pranayama etc.:** You can make plan for yoga exercise, moderate running, brisk walking, pranayama, Om Chanting & *yognidra*.

You can read book on light on yoga by Bks Iyengar for advanced knowledge.

You can also follow guidelines of Ayush Mantralaya of our Indian Government. This Mantralaya has also issued various other guidelines for Yoga exercise / pranayama on time to time.

You can become member of yoga class, running club / Gym / sports club etc in future for physical fitness.

9) **Healthy & Nutritional diet plan:** You must plan healthy & Nutritional diet for better life style. You can also follow ayurvedic eating principles. You can also read a book the IKIGAI - The Japanese Secret to a Long & Happy life.

In the last, I would like to say that the above habits are not exhaustive only illustrative& it is just for your reference, you can establish new other good habits as per your need. I am sure that new habits will transform your life during and after the lockdown. You can also pursue with new habits for betterment of your life, family /friends in future. I firmly believe that the past will never come back but future can give you back your lost things if we do practice of new habits on continuously basis.

## Stress management in turbulent times

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The world today is grappling with a tremendous uncertainty. We are dealing with a real and persistent threat. It is not only a threat to businesses, but also a threat to economy, to world markets, to wellbeing and to survival. Almost every other economy is under total or partial lockdown. The businesses are shut except essentials. This is an uncertainty like none other that we have experienced. But that said, isn't life uncertain? As the paradox goes - *"The only thing certain about life is that it is uncertain"*

We deal with the uncertainties of life. No one can predict how will life be like, or even what would happen the next instant. Yet, we're not stressed every moment about life. We try to give certainty to life through our actions, deeds and our work. However, the current turbulent times are exceptional and therefore, they are causing a lot of stress and anxiety - stress about the pandemic, stress about health and wellbeing of ourselves and our families, stress about finances, stress about standard of living and sustainability, stress about work and so on. While the world is chalking out paths to restore activity and businesses, this is leading to further anxiety. What would happen, once normalcy is restored? How would the world be then?

Thoughts, especially negative thoughts then begin clouding our mind and intellect and we begin to get fearful and overwhelmed by our situations and circumstances. We're not just fearful of the current circumstance, which we feel is real, but we also begin to be fearful of the future reality, which we have created by our thoughts. But we forget that whatever situation we feel is real, or what we're anticipating in future is in fact created by our thoughts and interpretations. Our thoughts shape our reality.

The biggest example of our thoughts shaping our reality is in the epic Mahabharata. During the great war of Kurukshetra, Arjun asked Lord Krishna, who was captaining his chariot to take the chariot to the middle of the two teams, the Pandavas and the Kauravas, who were standing opposite each other, ready to begin the Great War. On seeing his brothers, his Guru Dronacharya, Bhishma and his family in front of him, he began doubting his decision of going to war against his

own family. He almost forgot that the war was being fought for Dharma, righteousness and reality. He said the following in verses 45 and 46 of Chapter 1:

अहोबतमहत्यापंकर्तुर्व्यवसितावयम् ।  
यद्राज्यसुखलोभेनहन्तुंस्वजनमुद्यताः ॥  
यदिमामप्रतीकारमशस्त्रंशस्त्रपाणयः ।  
धार्तराष्ट्रारणेहन्युस्तन्मेक्षेमतरंभवेत् ॥

Translated to English, it means:

*Alas! How strange it is that we have set our mind to perform this great sin. Driven by the desire for kingly pleasures, we are intent on killing our own kinsmen. It will be better if, with weapons in hand, the sons of Dhritarashtra kill me unarmed and unresisting on the battlefield.*

Saying this, Arjun dropped his weapons and sat on the chariot, dejected and lost. Thereafter, what followed is the entire conversation of the Bhagavad Gita. Later in the Gita, Lord Krishna tells Arjuna in Chapter 18 Verse 7:

नियतस्यतुसन्न्यासः कर्मणोनोपपद्यते ।  
मोहात्तस्यपरित्यागस्तामसः परिकीर्तितः

Translated to English, it means:

*Prescribed duties should never be renounced. Such deluded renunciation is said to be in the mode of ignorance.*

For Arjuna, his prescribed duty was to fight the war of Kurukshetra. Hence, Lord gave direction to Arjun to rise powerfully and to fulfil his prescribed duty. He also termed renunciation of prescribed duty as ignorance.

Extrapolating this instance in the current scenario, just like Arjun, we get engulfed in thoughts about the current scenario and circumstances. These thoughts lead to stress and anxiety and as a result, we lose our mental battle and almost give up, like Arjun, who put down his weapons in the middle of the battlefield. The message in the Gita during these times is to keep doing the *prescribed duties*, which can be interpreted as to remain in action, instead of giving importance to thoughts.

These turbulent times are not the times to stand and stare. Instead of letting our thoughts overpower us, we can use the time productively by being in action. Once

the tide settles down, we can then see in retrospect what happened and how could we have reacted differently.

For professional Company Secretaries, some points of action in these turbulent times can include the following:

- Update our scheduler and calendars with the present situation and have a set new routine to follow. This will help us set the new schedule and we can always refer it if we start getting back to our thoughts.
- Organize the files, papers and documents, whether physical or digital files;
- Sharpening the skill sets and enhancing knowledge base of Corporate Laws and areas of professional experience;
- Writing articles or preparing digital content, PPTs, video files, audio files, images or documents dealing with professionally relevant contents and sharing the same with the professional community;
- Pursue online courses including certification courses relevant to our area of expertise;
- Hold discussions on relevant topics on different online mediums and also participate in webinars;
- Update the social media profile and business profile;
- Complete the assignments requiring desk work including drafting assignments;
- This is also a good time to connect with other professionals, associates, business partners and colleagues with whom we couldn't probably connect owing to our busy schedules in our routines.
- This is also a good time to chalk out the future plan and pathway for a new venture or a new business / association or for a growth in existing venture by way of expansion or diversification.

While the above action points were relevant for the professionals, the below mentioned list can be followed on a personal level to deal with stress and anxiety, not specific to the current turbulent times:

- As aforesaid, the stress, anxiety and uncertainty are largely attributed to thoughts which come during the turbulent times. While controlling or

restricting thoughts is easier said than done, there are some practically doable activities which can be done. The first thing to do when one is engulfed in negative thoughts or feeling in stress or anxiety is to *stop* in the tracks!! Yes, Stop. Stop the activity and acknowledge and accept the fact that yes there is stress and anxiety. Also acknowledge that one is having negative thoughts, which is adding to the stress. The reality may not be the same as the thoughts we're having. It is important to stop and acknowledge this. Then, one can continue with some other activity as a change.

- It is also preferable to have a set schedule especially in these turbulent times where there is a lockdown. Care should be taken to have time for spirituality, for hobby, for family time along with time for profession.
- To restrict the flow of negative thoughts, even if for a few moments, one can practice spirituality and follow some daily practices, as per individual beliefs. This can include listening to some discourses online or read some spiritual material.
- One can also have a few minutes in a day for meditation. This would really help in calming the flow of thoughts and slow down the mind so that it can think clearly. Some soothing music also helps in this.
- One can pursue some hobby or area of interest, something which interests and which probably could not be pursued till now due to other professional pre occupations. This is a good means to distract the mind to other areas and thereafter making a fresh start. Hobbies can vary from person to person and include many things.
- One can also catch up on some movies or series online on different platforms. These days, there are plenty of live concerts being telecast online on different channels, which can be viewed. This would also help to take a break from routines.
- It is also a great opportunity to spend quality time with family, relatives, friends and loved ones. In our daily routines, we don't get much time off for our families. This is a good time to reconnect with them. Owing to lockdown,

we may not be able to meet them currently. But we can establish contact using different video call and online mediums / platforms.

To conclude, the aforesaid point of negative thoughts overtaking the mind is nicely explained in verse 56 of Chapter 2 of Bhagavad Gita:

दुःखेष्वनुद्विग्नमनाः सुखेषु विगतस्पृहः ।  
वीतरागभयक्रोधः स्थितधीर्मुनिरुच्यते ॥

Translated to English:

*One whose mind remains undisturbed amidst misery, who does not crave for pleasure, and who is free from attachment, fear, and anger, is called a sage of steady wisdom.*

This can be interpreted that more than the present pain itself, it is the memories of past pain and apprehensions of future pain that torment the mind. But when the mind drops these two and has to simply grope with the present sensation, the pain surprisingly shrinks to a manageable (within the limits of tolerance) size.

The translations of the verses of Bhagavad Gita are adopted from the link <https://www.holy-bhagavad-gita.org/>.

## Can technology help reduce stress?

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There is a well-known quote: “At first we shape our tools; and then our tools shape us.” In the same way we first shape technology and then technology shapes us. Technology will impact deeply, the way we work, the way we entertain ourselves and others, and the way we interact socially.

### **A. The Interface between technology and stress:**

- 1. Ubiquity:** The Internet and Internet based technologies like Cloud, Social Media, Big Data, Analytics, Internet of Things, 5G, Unmanned Aerial Vehicles, Financial Technologies, Block Chain, Artificial Intelligence, Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality pervade many aspects of our lives to some extent or the other. We are often not aware how these work in the background while we play, entertain ourselves, work and interact socially. This has led to the “Death of Distance” making it possible for humans to work from almost anywhere. To some extent, especially for bank transactions and other screen-based work like meetings, such technologies have enabled businesses to keep working despite the Covid pandemic related lockdown. This will contribute to preventing businesses from closing down entirely. More importantly, these technologies will help businesses bounce back when the Covid pandemic ends. And that could happen via new business models that should help India recover rapidly, thereby restoring economic growth. **This will reduce unemployment, loss of pay and other disruptions and the consequent stress there from.**
- 2. Velocity:** Automation efforts will get accelerated. So, the velocity of transactions will go up multifold. Automated systems will be able to handle thousands of transactions per minute- many more than large teams of humans. This will enable businesses to process transactions with little or no human contact. This may become necessary in a post-Covid world where the risks of infection may otherwise hamper business. **This is another way in which technology can reduce stress by making infections less likely**

**3. Vulnerability:** However, every technology has limitations. And each technology opens up new scope for those who wish to engage in crime or anti-social behavior. While that will remain a cause of stress for most people, it will also open up huge opportunities for information security jobs and services. This will be in addition to jobs for those who develop, implement, maintain and monitor applications of such new technologies. The scope for employment growth is significant. The challenge will be re-skilling or up-skilling people for new jobs. **This will be both a source of stress as well as a source of solutions for the stresses of relocation, employment changes and alike.**

**B. How will humans handle the 3 major impacts of technology - ubiquity, velocity and vulnerability? Will these lead to more stress or less?**

1. The ability to cope with new ways of working, interacting socially and engaging in entertainment will vary from person to person. And from community to community. Age too is an important factor. Luckily Indians have shown a remarkable ability to engage with new technologies. We can see this is the pervasive use of smart phones by painters, cobblers, hawkers and tradesmen.
2. Demographics too will benefit India. India has the largest and most youthful work force in the world - and perhaps in human history. Young people will adapt more easily to new technologies. They will engage easily and naturally in new ways of working and social interaction. We can see it happening even now with the use of mobiles and new communication applications.
3. Will ancient Indian wisdom help? It certainly will. The lockdown all over India has demonstrated this beyond doubt. Consider how the air has become cleaner, rivers are self-rejuvenating and nature is getting a chance to recover from the depredations of humankind. Entire families are spending time together; they are eating home cooked food, not using cars or planes and generally have more time for yoga, meditation, family conversations and relaxation.

### **C. The bottom-line? Will technology help reduce stress? Or will it increase stress?**

The answer to this crucial question is not binary. It cannot be answered with a mere “Yes” or “No”

Here is an attempt to answer this question:

1. Every technology advance has led to minor or major disruptions of society. The Industrial Revolution in England wiped out many guilds of craftsmen and made thousands of self-employed-people engage in drudgery as employees of mills and factories. Famous writers have written about the social implications of this upheaval in social life. One famous writer wrote as follows: “ill fares a land, to hastening ills a prey; where wealth accumulates and men decay” I understand that about half or more of our people in India are self-employed. Can we apply our intellects and wisdom to choose new technologies and applications of technologies that will help these self-employed people remain sturdily independent? I believe that is possible. But for that we will, as a nation, have to make careful choices - not succumbing to the temptation of widespread, indiscriminate and thoughtless adoption of technology without regard for the social, economic and environmental implications. How else can we make such choices without a multi-disciplinary approach and participation of thought leaders from technology, law, policy studies, information security, defense and social sciences?
2. New technologies like Artificial Intelligence will challenge humans in various occupations and surpass human capabilities. One of the biggest concerns in this respect is not just the loss of jobs but also the potential for atrophying of human capabilities. It is well known that that if we do not use certain muscles they will atrophy and become weak and useless  
A similar thing can happen to our mental capabilities and work capabilities if we become dependent on machines and do not develop human capabilities as well. Do we want to have intelligent machines and not-so-intelligent humans? That would be tragic!

3. Wise people in India have been telling us from time immemorial that “self-restraint” and “external constraints” are fundamental to human development and to an orderly and civilized society. For example, to become a doctor or a lawyer or a company secretary, takes years of study and self-discipline. Our sages have also been advising that physical activity and mental calmness are best for human health and well-being. What we are now doing is quite to the contrary. The indiscriminate use of technology is leading to agitated minds and sedentary habits in terms of physical activity. This leads to life-style diseases of which stress is both the cause and an effect
4. Finally, technology will provide us with newer and innumerable options that our ancestors did not even imagine. Will we choose wisely? Just picture for yourself a buffet dinner at a wedding with over 40 dishes to choose from. Is it wise to eat a bit of everything? Or should we chose what we like best [and what is good and suitable for us] and exercise restraint and discipline? It appears to me that our ability to choose wisely will determine how stressful or how stress-free our lives will be. Perhaps we should add “ancient wisdom” lessons to all our academic and professional courses? The Institute should seriously consider this!

### **What is Stress?**

Before diving into the concept of stress management, we should first discuss stress because if you don't know the problem then how you are going to manage it. "*Stress is a feeling of emotional or mental tension due to any external or internal problem.*" We deal with stress daily due to some physical or emotional issues, work pressure, studies, etc. and all these are normal because such issues come and get resolved but the problem starts when stress becomes constant and never-ending. Stress is bifurcated into two parts:

1. **Acute Stress:** The stress that comes and gets resolved timely is called acute stress. For example; exam stress, result stress, fight with friends, project deadline stress, etc. All this stress starts an episode and ends with the end of the same episode.
2. **Chronic Stress:** Stress that becomes constant and sometimes never-ending are chronic stress. For example; unhappy work-life, constant family issues, negative thoughts, etc. The lifestyle with constant negativity and unhappy thoughts lead to chronic stress.

### **Effect of Stress on Health**

Acute stress does not affect human health but chronic stress can partially or fully destroy the health of a person. Some of the common effects of stress are headache, fatigue, sleep problem, lack of motivation, anger issues, anxiety or depression, physical inactivity, no social life, substance abuse, etc. If someone's dealing with any such symptoms regularly for a long period then it's time to see a doctor.

### **How to Manage Stress?**

Managing stress is very personal and everyone needs a different treatment to get over with stress and its side-effects. Currently, we are going through a lot of stress

due to COVID-19 and everyone around the globe is mentally as well as physically exhausted. Let's talk about some of the stress-busting activities on a personal level that can help to heal stress.

- Writing: Pen down all the thoughts that drive you crazy and give negativity that ends up in stress. Experts say writing is one of the most therapeutic activity which can heal all kind of stress.
- Music: We have been hearing this theory that music can heal everything, We don't know about everything but it can relax your mind and give it all the required time to heal the scars of stress.
- Dance: If you are someone who loves to dance, then you have one of the strongest medicines that can help you in relieving stress. Dance out your emotions, making it a daily thing and soon you'll be the best version of yourself, "The stress-free version."
- Reading: If you are a book worm and love the smell of books then you are sorted. Take out a few hours from your schedule and read something you love, do it daily and you can fight stress and defeat it.

Above are some of the basic activities that can help you as a stress buster. The main aim is to defeat stress and live a happy life and for this everyone should take their hobbies seriously and make that hobby a part of their lives, so that one can dive into something they love by the end of every stressful situation and come out like a new person who's ready to fight and deal with everything.

### Devil's Workshop

Our busy lives keep our mind occupied throughout. We seldom, therefore, have time for our anxieties and fear. The very first impact of the nationwide lockdown amidst COVID-19 was a sudden shift in our daily life from juggling between our career and home to being at home 24x7. We never imagined that overnight something would change the way we live our lives. From reading articles about how hectic lifestyle and junk food is affecting our health adversely to not remembering what we even spoke about before COVID-19 was really a very short duration.

An old proverb rightly says *an empty mind is a devil's workshop*. When we have nothing to do, it is very easy to turn to negative thoughts. The fear of the disease and the anxiety of the uncertain future is a perfect recipe for stress. An empty mind is a cherry on the cake! While we take care of our body (physical health) by following the advisories issued by the Government and Health authorities from time to time, it is very important to take care of our mind (mental health).

The maximum time that someone spends with us is undoubtedly we, ourselves. And therefore, it is very important that we are kind to us. Our mind processes every input. It is very important to feed the mind with thoughts that will boost our positivity and productivity. In these trying times, it is little difficult to be constantly motivated. But what if we take small steps every day and turn it into a habit? You would say *Hey buddy, easier said than done!* Honestly yes, it is easier said than done but worth converting these trying times into a **blessing in disguise**.

### The Circle

The very inevitable and constant thing in this world is 'change'. COVID-19 undoubtedly changed the very concept of how we think or do things. While we have always been comfortable in our zone, today we are stuck in a time frame which can only make us hope and believe that this too shall pass.

In the future, I see recovery with a series of challenges ahead, which will keep us on our toes and this circle will continue till we achieve the so-called *normal state* which we are used to.

The economic slow-down owing to the lockdown has its impact on each aspect of the society. Let it be the predicted recession, to markets collapsing, to creating artificial shortage, to increase in inflation, to employers taking desperate measures, to unemployment. It's like a cascading effect, for which we need to be ready to tackle. The only positive thing is that we all are in this together.

### **A Blessing in Disguise**

While life was busy meeting deadlines, I am sure we all had some projects in our mind that didn't get much of our time and attention. Let's term it as the *half-done projects*. They may include learning new skills, implementing some new systems in your office, getting done with your TBR (to be read) list, working on your health, and each and everything for which we said *I don't have time*.

By mere reading motivational posts, you cannot conquer your mind. Like Rabindranath Tagore rightly said *You cannot cross the ocean by just standing and staring at it*. A stressed mind cannot help you take efforts to work on your projects. A combination of healthy body and healthy mind is all it takes. Your body and mind work in consensus of each other.

Our mind is strange. When we don't have the stress of meeting deadlines or juggling between work and home expectations, it wonderfully manages to get stressed about something new. Isn't the current lockdown something that we have imagined at least once? Not in the literal sense, but certainly like having some time for us to work on things other than the routine. Yes, we have. We now have the time to work on the half-done projects, our health, our priorities, to introspect, to figure out how things at work can be done differently and so on.

Why I say this lockdown is a blessing in disguise is because it gave us this beautiful gift called 'time'. Time to get done with our half-done projects and rework on our health. Most of us may have heard of this '21/90 Rule'. The rule says it takes 21 days to build a habit and 90 days to build a lifestyle. Once we build the habit, it won't take

many efforts to build a lifestyle. Work on your mind by practicing good physical habits like your favourite workout and healthy food. Work on your mind by feeding it with positivity. Although your favourite music can help you relax, the best thing to do when you are stressed is getting 'it' done. 'It' here is the cause of your stress. Nothing relieves you more.

### **Pause | Resume**

We did not predict a lockdown, a lockdown of this scale. It certainly affected the way our work life functions. A lesson that is learnt amidst this nationwide lockdown is that one we cannot take things for granted and the second that each day we should be prepared for tomorrow. There can be no room for procrastination.

Having said that, a re-engineering of our work culture is our prime responsibility currently. A re-engineering which specifically focuses on business continuity by putting in place robust plans and measures which can handle all contingencies.

Think of the day when we resume to normal life. There are two possibilities, you either resume the way it was when we paused, or you resume with a strategy on a ready to implement stage. I am sure we all would choose the second possibility.

Let the resume day be like Monday- positive, full of energy which makes you feel you have an entire week at your disposal to execute your plans.

### **The Show Must Go On**

On a concluding note, I would like to tell you about *Sankhya Yoga* in Chapter Two of the Holy Bhagvad Gita. *Shloka* (verse) 54 and 56 are worth the mention here.

Reproducing the same below:

Verse 54: अर्जुनउवाच |

*स्थितप्रज्ञस्यकाभाषासमाधिस्थस्यकेशव |*

*स्थितधीः किंप्रभाषेतकिमासीतव्रजेतकिम् ॥54 ॥*

*Meaning: Arjuna said, what is the mode of speech, O Krishna, of the one with steady wisdom? What will the one of steady wisdom say? How does he sit? How does he move?*

Verse 56:

दुःखेष्वनुद्विग्नमनाः सुखेषु विगतस्पृहः ।  
वीतरागभयक्रोधः स्थितधीर्मुनिरुच्यते ॥56 ॥

*Meaning: (The Lord said) Amidst miseries one whose mind is undisturbed, he has no craving for pleasure, who is free from attachment, fear and anger, is the one with steady wisdom (Stith Pradnya).*

We tend to be happy to see things through, when the going is great. Trying times are the one where the happiness seems to disappear. It is here when we require equilibrium (*Stith Pradnyata*). It is here that the balance plays a very important role. When everything is lost, the future remains. The basic theory of mankind is that tomorrow will be better. Optimism coupled with *Stith Pradnyata* is the key because **the show must go on!**

## Stress management in turbulent times

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Home Quarantine and lockdown due to COVID-19 has become an individual battle, since every person is stressed out finding his own way to cope up with the home quarantine. The way this global pandemic has taken its toll, it is impossible for us to turn a blind eye to what is happening around in the world. It's unprecedented and disturbing for all of us. In such ambiguous and stressful time, it is really important to take care of your mental wellness and manage stress and anxiety. But how?

The answer lies in our ancient scripture "The Bhagwad Geeta" which meticulously describes all the human worries, dilemma and how should these be tackled. The Bhagwad Geeta is the key to all the worries and anxieties which was narrated by Shri Krishna in the battleground of Mahabharata. It is well known that The Bhagwad Geeta is the comprehensive guide to the stressors and apprehensions of the human life.

I am trying to elaborate a few ways to rejoice and keep ourselves busy during this difficult and boring time.

### **Meditation**

There is an old saying, "You should meditate for twenty minutes everyday, unless you're too busy to meditate for an hour." It will help your senses come fully alive and develop a deep feeling of the fullness of the present moment.

While the thought of beginning your day with a more focused mind of course sound appealing but putting a meditation routine in your schedule might be challenging at first. Start with 'baby steps'. Start out with five minutes and work your way up from there. Make your practice a habit, set aside the time for meditation it will only make it easier with less effort. It does require a little discipline but don't give up. Most importantly, add a touch of self-kindness. Even if you miss a day, remember the rule to be kind, self-deprecating inner dialogue won't solve anything.

Building a regular practice of meditation is much more like going to the gym for your brain. Over the time it will build up the strength and ability to recognize and better manage the stress and anxiety.

**बन्धुरात्मात्मनस्तस्ययेनात्मैवात्मनाजितः ।**

**अनात्मनस्तुशत्रुत्वेवर्तेतात्मैवशत्रुवत् ।।**

*“Few minutes of Prayers & Meditation daily, go a long way in building up reserves of Peace and happiness within.”*

### **Yoga**

Yoga in The Bhagwad Geeta is a rich, complex and colourful experience engaging so much of life and human existence. It is a clear, discerning, totally voluntary, dynamic participation in one’s life. Yoga deals with all levels of your being. It includes your relationship with the world and with yourself. It deals with the senses, body, breath, all the levels of mind, and that which is beyond your mind, often called spirit, soul, consciousness, or Self. There are many forms of yoga. Yoga teaches you a series of stationary and moving poses called asanas and a form of breath control known as pranayama, as well as concentration techniques. Yoga is the spiritual path through which one will have to tread to reach one’s destination. And, to reach that goal, one should be dedicated to follow the road signs.

Yoga is an alternative route where your mind can be filled with calm and tranquillity and be stress-free!

**नास्ति बुद्धिरयुक्तस्यनचायुक्तस्यभावना ।**

**नचाभावयतः शान्तिरशान्तस्यकुतः सुखम् ।।**

*“Harmonise the head, the heart and the hands to be happy. Be an integrated personality.*

*Disintegration causes stress. Integration gives tremendous satisfaction.”*

### **Creative Therapies**

Creative therapies are a group of therapies that are expressive and creative in nature. It helps you find a form of expression beyond words in a creative manner. It also promotes personal growth. Art therapy, Music Therapy, Aromatherapy are some of

its types which are extremely easy and effective to relieve you from stress and anxiety. As these makes use of our senses and release you from the worries.

### **Be Your Authentic Self**

Start with making a list that you've always wanted to do but never got time to. A list of your long-lost hobbies. Set aside a time for this activity which I personally like to call it a me-time. Doing things which you love gives you a sense of pleasure and completeness and thereby reducing the levels of stress and anxiety.

### **Journalizing**

We are so indulged in focusing on all the negative things around us that we often end up neglecting the positive sides. Start appreciating even the tiniest of positive thing of the day. Start maintaining a journal and write down the positive side, express gratitude and so on, use it to relax as well. Be mindful of the blessings that you've already experienced. Sit back and be content. Be kind and gentle to yourself.

### **Visualization**

It is another powerful technique to unwind and relieve stress. It uses your imagination to achieve a more relaxed state of mind. Visualization is a means to use the placebo effect to your advantage. Find a calm space and make yourself comfortable. Take a few slow and deep breaths to focus your attention and calm yourself. Close yourself and visualize yourself in a calm, serene and a lovable picture where everything is as you would perfectly have it. While visualizing your scene, think about what you are experiencing through all your senses. When you feel ready to leave the scene, slowly and gradually open your eyes. It is soothing and revitalizing.

***“Within you, there is a stillness and a sanctuary to which you can retreat at any time and be yourself.” –Hermann Hesse***

We just need to put our phones down, close our eyes and take a few deep breaths. When the mind is busy with positive thoughts and action, it becomes easy to keep the hues of pandemic spread at bay subsequently decreasing anxiety, fear of isolation, depression and loneliness. Let's keep our spirits high to overcome this

battle of mankind. Stay positive and root for others, so that the universe may root for you.

## Managing stress and anxiety

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*Accepting every situation means moving beyond waste questions and focussing on how to transform it!*

*-BK Sister Shivani*

Being stable in difficult times – Life in today's times is a roller coaster ride, whether we live in the extreme scenario of Pandemic of Covid, economy crisis or even otherwise as life has become very uncertain and unpredictable. The unfamiliar virus has created increased anxiety and stress. COVID 19, now of Global Concern, after being declared a Public Health Emergency, is perhaps the rarest crisis which has hit the world at the same time thereby affecting every mind.

The energy around is fearful, negative, chaotic, stressed, anxious and depressed. This energy influences each individual which in-turn creates more negativity in the society reaching the entire universe.

It is a fact that we have no option but to face the pandemic not only physically, but more importantly mentally and emotionally. Simultaneously there are two major co-related things the world is fighting against –

1. Infodemic (Excessive amount of information concerning a problem such that the solution is made more difficult)
2. Fear. More than Covid, presently it's the 'Fear' which seems to be real epidemic due to constant consumption of negative information through different means.

Meanwhile, 'Crisis' is composed of two characters: danger and opportunity. In the state of panic, we must not overlook the opportunity this crisis may have created before us.

How do we stay stable in such challenging times of life is all what we need to learn and sustain with? Physically we are isolated and under a complete lockdown. How far are we able to deal the above mentally and emotionally? Having known the fact that there are already many existing mental health issues; corona virus anxiety adds on to it terribly. Social distancing won't help managing mental and emotional health.

At first the mind is impacted by any fearful or stressful incident and then takes over the body and outer reactions on situations depends there upon. The vibrations of stress and anxiety spreads to everyone around like another form of unnoticed virus.

We are in the generation where every emotion of anxiety, fear, stress etc. has become normal which affects our mental and emotional state of being, there by impacting our body. If you are sad, stressed, depressed, anxious, helpless, hopeless, panicky, or feel out of control, every cell in your body gets that message. Therefore, at a young age we have increase in health issues. With such stressed minds already, suddenly one day if we come across a crisis out of control (Covid 19); how are we to deal with it?

Let us learn a small meditation technique. To begin with we must consciously create positive thoughts/ affirmations to finish the negative thoughts zone that we are encircled with in the current /any stressed scenario. Secondly, visualising whatever we want so as to make it a reality already is the power of Visualisation\* Eg – We must say and visualise that I have a perfectly healthy body, I am powerful and courageous to fight any odds. This should be repeated. Healing is a mind-body process. Therefore, do everything you can to send the opposite message. Meditation can restore mind-body balance. But you also need to be vigilant on two other fronts: sleep and stress. Some affirmations like – I am a fearless soul, I am perfectly healthy, I am a happy soul, I am a powerful and peaceful soul, my job/ business is secure, Gods energy is around me. Integrate these thoughts like prayer / meditation collectively before sleeping, after getting up and during the day; because thoughts create our world. Let the equation be “Our Mind is not dependent on situations” i.e. our thoughts/ feelings are not dependent on situations. The response is with us. Let us not have a victim way of living and blaming on outer world but be a master of a healthy living.(emotionally and mentally) which is the need of the hour today.

This is for emotional protection in any stressful / negative situation which will help our mind to increase the IMMUNITY to fight! Let’s remember that while there is a crisis outside, we can be calm and stable inside because our thoughts and feelings are our creation. When we take charge of our emotional health, our vibrations empower our family and our team to remain resilient.

Since a lot of deadlines have been extended by the regulatory authorities viz. Ministry, SEBI, RBI, etc professional Members must take time out and update themselves, update their learning's, write articles, share knowledge with young members etc. When one is not left with options, creative utilisation of time also acts as a stress buster.

Some simple and healthy strategies to help you manage this worry or stress that you may be feeling by focusing on what you can control.

1. Maintain your day-to-day activities and routine
2. Acknowledge your feelings/ emotions
3. Talk to your long-lost friends/ video call – You are Socially Distant but Emotionally Closer
4. Putting things in perspective – Organise your impending list
5. Imp - Set limits around news and social media
6. Seek Extra Help / Support
7. Carry house work-outs to physically take care – Stay Active!
8. Showcase some culinary skills
9. Wake up the artist in you!

During times of crisis, we naturally take time to appreciate what we have and place greater priority on what is most important to us. The question is how to carry this on after the crisis of Covid-19 passes. Instead of focusing on how big the pressure is, we must focus on increasing Resilience (Inner Power) because that is in our control. A powerful soul creates only powerful thoughts which manifest into reality. Life will be more meaningful if we contribute to meaningful solutions that reach far, far beyond the rampage of this virus. Everything, including being in control and being a healer, is wrapped up in that. Let's manage uncertainty by staying in the present – take each day as it comes.

*Don't Stress the could haves,  
If it should have, It would have!*

Today, while we all are quarantined due to the COVID19 outbreak as a pandemic across India and world, I sit and recollect whether any day or rather any moment did I think that something like this will come around which might standstill the current life cycle and eventually may change the rest of my life.

While many of us are trying to kill each day to complete 21 days of lock down period, are we extending our thoughts to the life after this COVID19. Well, going by the rules, everything which has started must end at someday. But what after that, what kind of life do we want to lead after this pandemic is over. Covid may take many lives but will leave many as well along with the lessons of life.

BASICS – well in these days, I have come back and narrowed down my thoughts to basics which we are calling as essentials of life. In short, in three words, ROTI (ghar ka khana), KAPDA (comfy clothes) aur MAKAAAN (Home sweet Home). We all are well sufficiently living with these essentials. So, let's reflect on the ones who are struggling for the same.

One question before we take our thoughts forward, why are we sitting locked down?

Is that because our PM and then our family said to do so?

Is that because we don't want to get infected with Covid?

Is that because our offices or educational institutions are closed down?

Is that because most of the population is doing so OR

Is that because of the FEAR of losing our life??

The answer may be 'all of the above' or given a thought for a while, many other reasons may cross our mind.....

Despite the fact, forget who you are right now and where you are and think that you are in the shoes of the following persons in this current live situation –

If you were in China for some official purpose and locked down there with some local people and think about your survival?

If you were the President of Italy or Spain then think of the next decision you owe to take to save your country?

If you were a daily paid wage labourer and probably have no earnings for the next two months?

If you were on some international airport and restricted to fly back to your own hometown?

If you were on some vacation and got the news of lock down with no transportation running from next day?

If you were a businessman with no sales turnover for another 4 months and 100 odd employees waiting to get credit of their salary on every month end?

Yes, we are currently from none of the situations but may be some people are facing above situations or may be worst then that. Here, without judging good or bad about anyone I believe it's time we need to broaden our horizon.

I wonder how many times we were taught to practically deal with such situations earlier? Earlier, our country or other parts of the world has faced, tsunamis, earthquakes, terrorist attacks. But most of the times it was a part of the world affected and the other part of the world would run in its flow along with aiding the affected part in its best possible way. Every time, once situation was in control, following the human nature, we would move on with the thoughts that THE SHOW MUST GO ON. Will the same happen after this crisis?

Now, once this pandemic is over, we wish to start over with the back to normal life with our routines of offices, education, vacations. In short in the same old way of living a work-life balance. But this time clearly it will all be very different post-COVID. The "invisible" organisms (viruses, bacteria, etc. in body, soil, air, water) have definitely taught us the importance of intangibles (love, compassion, empathy, emotional intelligence, etc.) in our life.

Here I want to understand the WHAT is the WHY of our life. Do we start our routine life back as earlier, or will there be some transformation in us post COVID? Let us try to visualise on what will change permanently and what will return to normal. Do we want to lead a better life then our earlier and existing living? We definitely deserve to give something better to our future as a gift of our survival. Now, how are we supposed to do that?

Here I would like each one of us to introspect and learn from this live crisis atleast one lesson which we may carry forward for the rest of our life.

Your thoughts are welcome...!!!!

Year 2020.

STAY HOME # STAY SAFE

## Time to Sanitize our Hands and our Thoughts

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I believe we are the luckiest people right now. We are given the chance of showing our love towards our Mother India. We must be thankful that we are bestowed with the opportunity of taking care and protecting our own nation. And the best part of this is that we have to do nothing. We don't have to do satyagrah or run with a rifle in the battle-field. All we have to do is sit on our sofa and watch our favourite shows and movies with good meal in one hand and phone in another.

Right now, the whole world is suffering from Covid-19, an enemy which we cannot even see through our naked eyes. There are no vaccines or medicine available. These are very challenging times. During this medical emergency we not only need to take care of our body but also of our mind. I believe Covid-19 is doing more of mental harm than the physical harm. We need to make sure that we are in right mental state. A company cannot function properly if it doesn't have right people on the Board. The same applies to our body. If we don't have the right thought in our mind then we won't be able to function properly. So, we need to take utmost care of our mental food. We need to be very vigilant with our thoughts. We are Due Diligence experts so it is easier for us to do Due Diligence of our Thoughts!

First of all, we must understand from which thought we are getting anxious, worried, tensed? Is it really the virus or our future uncertainties or our past regrets? This is the best time to know the roots of our worries, stress, anger...! Understand yourself, talk with yourself! When you understand your roots, you will also find ways to remove them. All the answers lie within ourselves just talk with yourself and give time.

One best way to remove stress is to show gratitude. Be thankful for everything you have. Count your blessings. Be thankful that you are getting a chance to save nation just by sitting at home with your loved ones. Be thankful that you don't have to worry about how to obtain my next meal. Be thankful that you have a roof to cover you from the heat of the soaring Sun! When you start counting your blessings you will realise that there is someone who is taking care of you. You will realise that the

supreme power is with you and protecting you! So, when you have the supreme power with you WHY TO WORRY!?

During the challenging times, we often get negative with the things happening around us. And then we just start seeing everything negatively. We get depressed when we don't get the job we dreamed of or the clients. And then we start complaining that nothing happens in my favour! All the bad happens to me only! Bla..bla...! During such times we should always try to think positively! If we didn't get the job, we had dreamed of that may be because we were made for some other organisation or we might not have the career exposure in that dream organisation! The reasons can be numerous. So always pick a positive one! Always believe that whatever happens, happens for a good reason. Due to lockdown, economy of the country is severely affected. We think that India has lost thousands and crores of business due to lockdown. The GDP of the country has fallen. There is no money circulation in the economy. Blabla! By this thinking we are going to get stressed. But we can also think other way around. Currently the cases of Covid-19 are below 12,000. Had there been no lockdown the cases must have reached the count of 10,00,000 or more. We can take one more example from this lockdown. This lockdown has given us time to connect with our near and dear-ones. It has given us a very important message of sustainable development. Nature has reminded us through Corona that we are guest on Earth. We don't have any right to utilise her resources for our selfish motives. And she won't hesitate to throw us out of her home if we continue to do the same! When you get stuck with thoughts of worry, anger try to divert your thoughts. Take deep breaths! Think positive thoughts or try the technique of grounding. Grounding technique uses our five senses i.e. touch, taste, sound, sight and smell. Identify 5 things around you, 4 different sounds, 3 things that you can smell! This brings your mind back into the present.

Another way to remove stress is engage more in real world rather than the virtual world. Don't just stay active on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, stay active as a mother, as a father, as a citizen, as a CS! Involve yourself in some activity. Pursue

your hobby! Give 30-60 minutes a day to anything that makes you happy! Play guitar, draw a sketch, dance, sing!

One of the best remedies is to communicate your feelings! Talk with your near and dear one! Talk to your best friend! Tell what you feel! Tell them your worries! The best way to remove a thought is to get it out from your head!

Always use affirmations! Affirmations are so powerful! And also believe in your affirmation! At this stage we can use affirmations like - This pandemic is ending. Life is returning to normalcy. In our normal life we can use other affirmations like I am Happy, I am strong, etc. If you feel sad, affirm that I am Happy! If you feel sick affirm that I am healthy! Repeat the affirmations as much as you can. Louis Hay the author of *You can heal your Life* tells to repeat the affirmations 300-400 times a day. At the beginning you may feel this is so absurd, but after you practice it your faith and belief in the affirmations will increase. Two best affirmations I have come across is "God is the ruling and sustaining power of my life. I place everything that concerns me into His care and keeping." and "Om Anandam"(From 'Way to self realisation and to be happy' by Nihal Chand Kansil)

Prayer is a powerful spiritual tool. Prayer is not only repeating the Mantra or performing the pooja, it is your communion or feeling of unity with God. In prayers don't trade with God. He very well knows what you need and which people you need to play your role on Earth. Prayers for the safety of people whom we don't know are always answered first! In prayer just ask God to stay with you during the times of happiness and sadness. Pray that you receive the power to pass through the challenging times. And remember no father can see his child suffering!

Last but not the least is to watch Sunrise and Sunset. The vibrations of this hour are magical! When you watch sunrise and sunset you are living in the moment! Watch Sunrise or Sunsets, if possible, both, daily. The act is same but the colours are always different! You will realize that Nature is a wonderful painter, painting its sky with shades of yellow, red, pink, orange, black for its beautiful spectators.

Always remember an hour before the dawn is the darkest! Without darkness we will never know the value of light. Even the moon loses its glory during the daytime. In

the end I pray that everyone of us is protected from this pandemic and affirm that life is returning to normalcy.

Stay home! Stay safe! Stay positive!

### Stress Management in turbulent times

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COVID 19 pandemic and its implications affecting the whole world and our community adversely. As a result of which people are experiencing a wide range of negative thoughts, stressed feelings, anxiety, worry, fear, sadness, frustration, uncertainty, irritability or anger. Feeling helpless, restlessness and agitation are common symptoms. Stress cause a large amount of damage to your mental or emotional balance and also affect your physical health adversely such as increased heart rate, stomach upset, fatigue or other uncomfortable sensations. It havocs your ability to think clearly, function effectively. For healthy, Happy and productive life one needs to learn how to manage a stress.

### Strategy to cope with Stress

#### 1. Take care of physical health

- 1.1 Follow routing by going to bed and waking up at the same time daily – Implement the same practices as you would on any other day (before covid19 crisis).
- 1.2 Avoid exercise and other stimulating activities late in the day.
- 1.3 Eat healthy, well-balanced meals – Boost your immunity.
- 1.4 Exercise at home
- 1.5 Move away from negative thoughts and focus to positive ones.
- 1.6 Take a deep breath in and out at least four times a day.
- 1.7 Create a separate workspace to improve productivity.
- 1.8 Read a book – keep learning and maintaining your study
- 1.9 Try to a new hobby or skill like cook a new recipe, painting, play an instrument, learn how to sew, gardening etc.

**Stay connected& maintains a social network-** we can use technology to stay connected. Support and care from others have a powerful effect to cope with

such challenges. Show your care and concern towards family and friends it can foster a sense of hope, purpose and meaning.



## 2. Socialize Virtually

2.1 Watch a movie with friends virtually.

2.2 Choose a book to read.

2.3 Set a specific time in a day or week to openly talk about disagreements or frustrations.

2.4 For children set a regular routine or schedule including learning and fun activities.

2.5 Talk to family, friends, supervisors and teammates about feelings and experiences.

During this time, it is important to not let the fear control your life. One way to lessen worry is to ground yourself in the present moment through mindfulness. Mindfulness is a great technique that can help reduce stress during this challenging time. Practice mindfulness by sitting quietly and focusing on your breathing and senses will help in reducing stress and worry. **Practice self-affirmation**, sometimes it helps convincing yourself that you are not stressed. Taking care of yourself, your friends, and your family can help you cope with stress. Helping others cope with their stress can also make your community stronger.

## 3. Unhealthy ways of coping with stress

These coping strategies may temporarily reduce stress but they cause more damage in the long run.

1. Smoking
2. Drinking alcohol too much
3. Overeating
4. Zoning out for hours in front of TV or Computer
5. Withdrawing from friends and family
6. Using pills
7. Taking out your stress on others (Ex. Angry outburst)

#### **4. Law of attraction and stress management**

The law of attraction and stress management can help you breaking the cycle of negative and have positive impact both emotionally and physically. Stress management techniques help you lower your stress levels and develop a positive outlook on life. There are many techniques as suggested above of stress management. But most techniques are subjective, because what works for one person may not work for another. However, the law of attraction and stress reduction is a technique that can work for almost anyone. The power of positive thinking can be a powerful option. Law of attraction is using your thoughts and feelings to attract what you want. This technique is also known as visualization and it uses both conscious and sub-conscious thoughts. It's a technique to use the power of mind to gain a certain outcome. Four steps of law of attraction:

1. Focus on what you want
2. Ask the universe for it
3. Feel, behave and act as if what you asked is already yours, visualize it.
4. Let go of your preconceptions and be open to receive what you want.

The law of attraction and stress relief options can often be used in conjunction with each other in order to gain the desired outcome. Positive thoughts and actions build on each other, creating more positive energy. People who use the law of attraction successfully are aware of the power of positive thinking.

## Stress management in turbulent times

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*“Saying YES to Happiness means learning to say NO to the things and people that stress you out.” - Thema Davis*

No one has ever imagined situation called ‘PANDEMIC’ in the form of a virus named COVID-19 popularly known as CORONA which will actually be witnessed by this world, where everything and everyone will be quarantined and the entire world will face a lockdown. Social distancing will become a new trend over the social media platforms and humans will realize the luxury of doing work from home will become a forced measure.

However, such a situation makes us realize that the ultimate truth is within ourselves and not in the outside world. In spite of such an adverse situation everything is possible if you work for it. I have come across many people over social media platforms complaining and whining about the situation of lockdown as unable to enjoy the beauty of the world and move outside to meet their friends and relatives. However, if we look at the wider picture and the positive side of the situation, it’s not a condition but an opportunity to evaluate your inner sole and give yourself that time which you have been delaying from a very long time.

We often heard people complaining about their scarcity of time to do some things which they wanted to always do. Well folks! That isn’t the time which is in scared but a lack of management and a channel of proper organization of life to keep it functioning with a cool head and right decision. Once this sense of management which is the creator of stress being achieved every situation of life will give you the solution which helps you to bring strength and happiness.

### **The Concept of IKIGAI**

IKIGAI is a Japanese concept that means “a reason for being”. As cool as the name sounds coolest is its impact and purpose. This concept solves all your existential crises which we often face when the things get tough.



This concept summarized all the things a human need not only just to survive but to make the best of it. This concept helps transforming your life a mess to an organized person who knows the importance of time, people and things.

This concept talks about creating a balance where your passion meets your talent and converges with the requirement of the worlds need and is willing to pay for its exhibit. This concept if adopt will always give you a boost to get out of the bed and conquer the world at your own terms.

In order to transform your life using this concept you need to answer only four questions:

- What do you love?
- What are you good at?
- What does the world need?
- What can you get paid for?

And that's it once you are honest in your thoughts and answer this concept will change your life as it will help you achieve a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction merely by following your passion and using your talent to earn access to all the happiness and wealth.

You have to act on two things. The first is, love what you have to do. We all have to pay bills, maintain our lifestyle and work in the jobs we are already in. For most people, the work they are occupied in is not where their soul is and they are either doing it disinteresting or are not passionate about, this part where we don't like our work comprised of around 70-75% of our life. Therefore, we might as well start

accepting it as our fate or destiny or we gulped ourselves so much that we feel that we are pretty much absorbed in it that we don't want to risk it for anything else. Therefore, you need to realize which all part and duties of your job you love the most and are very enthusiast about? Focus on those core areas. And there you are ultimately finding the solution for most of your problems.

It might be tough at the first, might be exhausting and confusing but always remember, if you don't keep rising daily, you'll get stuck in your life, for the rest of your life.

### **It All Begins Within You**

Shri Shri Ravi Shankar a famous monk in its book fearless soul has beautifully said "If you can win over your mind, you can win over the whole world." In order to control your mind, we are being blessed to born in India a place of yogis blessed with different forms of YOGAS not only helping to calm our mind and control it but to take care of the entire body functioning.

An uncontrolled mind works the same way as an unorganized box of information which has everything in it but is not segregated on the account of relevant and irrelevant information as a result of which: low efficiency, low productivity, lack of concentration and unutilized skills.

Thus, it is necessary to have something to help shut down the chattering of mind and increase the productivity. As a result of which we are blessed to have various forms of Yoga postures (asanas), Breathing exercises (pranayams) Sudarshan kriya and meditation to bring back the clarity and alertness to brain.

### **Yoga Postures**

Yoga postures aren't only meant to get you physically fit but also helps you to provide a healthy lifestyle after all your body is the biggest investment which will fetch its profit at the old age and will accompany you till you close your eyes. The postures like Surya namaskar helps keeping the whole-body functioning and fit.

### **Watch Your Breath**

Breathing a fresh air is a bliss thus in order to have it, we travelled all the way to Himalayas on our account of holidays to have those fresh air in our lungs which we often left behind in our silicon jungles. Thus, in order to have same relaxing feeling

which we feel at the mountains is possible by breathing exercises popularly known as Pranayam such as Kapalbhati, Bhastrika or Nadi Shodhanpranyam. Once you start using this yoga art you will be surprised with the result and will be glad to have it in your lifestyle. It not only helps to eliminate the unnecessary thoughts but once again help you focus on the necessary things with more clarity.

### **Glide in The World of Meditation**

Acknowledging the power of your subconscious mind meditation helps in channelizing all your abilities and skills into the right direction of achievement which will not only be left unused but also be helpful for developing the new skills and abilities. This is a magic potion for the brain which not only makes the mind quieter and unperturbed but helps you control your mind like never before.

All these blessings if combined together will make you travel in altogether a different world of solicitation and tranquillity where a new sense of self proclamation will be achieved and realized. All these are not only a luxury part of life but a necessity to adopt in order to meet the situation like this and inspire people around us to become a best version of them.

**STRESS can be defined as**

1. **S – Strain, T- Tension, R- Resistant, E-Exasperation, S-Strenuous, S- Sadden**

**Or it can be considered as**

2. **S –Stress free, T- Time with family, R- Relaxation and recreation, E- Enlighten and enjoyment, S- Survive, S- Stay at home**

It is upto the individual whether we are coming out in this lockdown period as stress 1 owner or stress 2 owner.

Yes, it is correct that it is very easy to speak but difficult to practice. This article will give you some of the ways that can be practiced to become part of Stress 2 family.

*I want to share a small story of a school going child. He has a fix routine. As he awake, he has to get ready for school. After spending almost half of his day in school, he comes back and then enjoys rest of the day in his own way with his family, friends and his hobbies without being tensed much for his homework.*

*These school days gone as the time passed away. The child is a adult now working in office. He again has a fix routine. As he awake, he has to get ready for office now. After spending full of his day in office, he comes back and then..... he don't get time to enjoys rest of the evening in his own way with his family, friends or his hobbies as he is very much tensed about his next day.*

This story belongs to all of us. This is a common phenomenon in our life. When we get a chance to think about our childhood days a sparkle appears in our eye. Why??

Yes we have many things now to take care of, yes we have many things now to worry about, yes we have many things are there which is our responsibility now. But we are working on a customary basis since the day we entered this commercial world. We give excuses to ourselves that since we are stuck in our profession so not able to enjoy ourselves.

*If this is reality why are we unhappy when we are getting enough time to enjoy with family, friends, and our hobbies!!!*

Yes definitely we are going to suffer from financial crises for some time, our economy will take its own time to move on full motion again, and yes we are

spending our savings right now as no source of income is there. Yes all these fears cannot be denied. But these worries can be given a chance as we resume our normal routine. So question is what is to be done right now. Here is a tentative to do list out of that you can choose any or at least get an idea to what to do:

1. Spend more time with family specially your children
2. Learn something new from your child
3. Teach them a new art
4. Practice some household work as much as possible for you
5. Give some time in study of topics that are hurdles in your job
6. Sharpen your work skills
7. Apart from studying your professional topics give some time in general reading
8. Focus on your physical and mental health
9. Practice your hobby and share the same with next generation
10. Try something you were willing since long but were not able to do due to lack of time

Now the question arises how to manage the whole day in a fruitful manner.

**“A person of active and sharp intellect gets bored faster than one with a dull intellect. In fact, you should get bored with everything mundane! Then, you are enlightened.” Sri Sri Ravi Shankar**

Yes this is the answer. I am sure all of us are already enlightened species. We just need to awaken ourselves.

For this we need to follow following steps as major course of action:

1. Avoid news and televisions that spread the negativity and boredom, just follow instructions from government bodies as they are there for our safety
2. Use social media only to the nominal extent (obviously we cannot leave it at all)
3. Make a routine of physical exercise or yoga
4. Make a routine of mental exercise like meditation
5. Keep your routine fix
6. Give at least one hour daily to your hobby
7. Make a target to learn every day and make sure that you achieve it by the end of the day

8. Whatever practice you start, try to give it at least half an hour after the lockdown is over and we set back to our normal life.

Remember life has given us a chance to redevelop ourselves and do all the things we left in the name of busy schedule. Utilize it to the maximum to emerge as a better version of yourself. This rejuvenate version shall not be limited to us only; it shall be spread to all the people in our surrounding.

Last but not the least; this is opportunity to help not only the needy, the society, our helpers but to help the whole nation and the whole world. So be responsible, try to help in whatsoever manner we can to the others, be careful and stay at home.

## Stress Management Traits

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When ICSI took the initiative to guide members on how to cope up with stress and anxiety during the current pandemics, I took nearly two days self-evaluate that:

- *Am I the right person to take part in this initiative...?*
- *Am I not stressed with the global crisis...?*
- *And most importantly after all the things that going around how am I going to make people believe that I'm not stressed...??*

All these questions were disturbing, and yes I agree the entire situation is disturbing, Also for a moment I thought to quit writing about it, But that was the time it hit me and I realized that I'm a Company Secretary, We are not the kind of people who quit this easy. Do we?? For a moment just remember the time when we *kept trying to clear our attempts!* That requires a hell lot of patience, calm and most importantly self-discipline.

***Whether it's a global crisis like covid-19 or our examinations the common problem to deal is STRESS.***

We are aware of the fact that stress is the biggest problem of current times, But to remind that each and every problem is born to be solved. Yes it's not that easy as it sounds, but to deal with stress especially during lockdowns is very easy. Don't you all think it is Easy? Well it is, For instance,

- *We don't have to stress about all the traffic! (Specially in Metro's)*
- *We don't have to stress about reaching offices on time. (Most of us who can't)*
- *No space for parking stress!!*
- *No pollution!*
- *No routine health/skin issues (As hopefully we are consuming home cooked meal)*
- *No panic and stressful meetings...!*
- *All the creative/family time you ever wanted!*
- *No negative environment/bullying (all thanks to social distancing)*

The major factors of stress in our regular life are already eliminated. Then what are we stressed about???

- *No daily wages to workers?*
- *No production in factories??*
- *No court?*
- *Down fall in the economy?*
- *Unemployment caused due to economic crisis*

To answer a simple question, are all this problem under our control?

Sadly but No, they are not. Does it make any sense to worry about things that we cannot control? Coming back to how to deal with stress during the lockdown phase, first and foremost

- ❖ Stop worrying about things you can't control, let go of control let life happen. Self-evaluation and self-discipline is the demand of situation.
- ❖ Most important, never feel bored about being alone or doing nothing (*Trust me it's the best feeling and a peaceful stage of life*)
- ❖ Find an old-time hobby that you just gave up years before to become this corporate professional. (It can be writing, painting, dancing, singing, gardening or cooking) *anything that keeps the child inside you alive.*
- ❖ Keep yourself always updated and aware about your **PROFESSION** (*after all it's your bread and butter, and lockdown will end but competition wont*)
- ❖ Don't indulge too much of your time in digital media, specifically debatable/unsourced news (*it's never ending, four people can sit n talk about an issue with no solution in hand*) be aware but not an addict.

- ❖ Try to give up one thing that you always wanted to quit. (It can be drinking, smoking or anything that effects your health) *believe it or not but it's the best time to focus on your health.*
- ❖ *Dancing and music always help:* how hard it is to just listen to your old collection of songs...? Or just letting yourself swing on your favorite songs.
- ❖ Indulge in some sought of physical activity, *be it exercises, yoga, gardening, dancing, cleaning the house anything that makes you be you. It allows getting the toxic out of your system.*
- ❖ Good food plays an important role, *remember we are, what we eat.* Try avoiding dead food, junk food. A good diets control 70 percentage of our system. Eat whatever is available and home cooked.
- ❖ Last but not the least; *positivity is the only thing that makes the difference.* A person who can smile and is positive can make himself happy and the people around him. Do not seek for happiness outside or from people, it's within you. Go and have it.

Concluding with the above, I would say these were the most amazing days of my life where I stopped functioning like a robot and pleased the world.

So, to all the members of my fraternity, I would say we are team of strong headed people who have handled worse and tragic situations either during examinations or in our working environment. There is no need for stress while we are in our homes, spending quality time with our self and our family.

*So never let your fear stop you from growing, Good Luck and stay safe.*

## Self-Management a key to Stress Management

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In the wake of COVID19, the whole country has been put under a lockdown. Some of us are sitting and sulking about how much we had planned to enjoy this summer being outside or utilise this time to your own benefit. But by staying indoors and practicing self-isolation, we can prevent the spread of this disease and pray that the Lockdown will be over sooner.

Home is often a refuge from the stress we get from work. But when you are being asked to stay at home, then after few days staying at home can itself become a source of stress. Well then how do you seek solace and manage this stress? The major sources of stress are the anxiety of lockdown, lack of routine, financial stress, too much family time, etc.

Small amount of stress is actually good for your health and can help you get your stuff done but high levels of stress can have a serious impact on one's mental and physical health and thus it is important to manage stress. Chronic stress has been linked in multiple research studies to a higher risk of heart disease, increased depression, weight gain, memory loss and even a lower immune system.

Here are some stress management tips for professionals like Company Secretaries, Chartered Accountants, Lawyers, etc during the period of Lockdown.

1. **Keep the house clean-** Ensure that your abode is neat and tidy all the time. You can share the household chores amongst the family members such as washing dishes, sweeping, washing machine, dusting, etc. and ensure that the house is kept tidy at all times for a pleasant environment. Most of us have avoided these tasks till date but you'll be surprised at how therapeutic it is. Sometimes there is a persistent feeling of stress, anxiety and negativity inside us and in our environment. These negative energies can influence and pervade throughout the body and the aura you live in. Burning camphor during your morning rituals is very effective. The fumes generated by camphor significantly releases all the blocks accumulated within us and in our environment by banishing timidity, fearfulness and negative energies and it enhances the flow of positive peaceful energies.

2. **Get organised and plan in advance** – The most important challenge when you are inside the home all the time is to be organised. Make sure that your plans are flexible too, otherwise, one can get stressed when things do not go according to your plan. There are certain things which cannot be anticipated and thus if things do not go as per your wish, learn to discern whether it is something worth getting stressed about and learn not to make a fuss over small stuff. Apply the 80:20 rule and focus on the big picture.
3. **Pursue your hobbies-** It might be years some of us may not have got the time to pursue our old hobbies. Those who like to paint, can play with their brush. Those who like to sing can record new songs and enjoy this period. Hence, this is the right time for leisure activities like dancing, photography, gardening, cooking, reading books, listening to music, singing, painting, etc. You can even pursue a completely new hobby to build your self-esteem and express yourself thereby leading to reduction of stress.
4. **Restrict Social Media exposure** – In March'20 the social media activity in the Country grew 50x and thus it is but obvious many of us might get addicted to social Media during this time. Please restrict your time to not more than an hour daily. Social media should be used more for posting your achievements and advice rather than watching or reading some fake or misleading articles or news. Please refrain yourself from posting/ sharing/ forwarding any message, video, photograph, content or comment which may create social disharmony or may have social/ racial/ communal/political implications and may provoke reactionary sentiments amongst general public and may be detrimental for maintenance of peace, social harmony and security of the Nation and avoid violation of any laws including laws relating to obscenity, intellectual property rights, privacy, criminal intimidation, defamation, etc. as per advisory of the Institute of Company Secretaries of India.
5. **Restrict TV Time** – If you love watching TV, you should prefer watching comedy or something funny or a nature documentary instead of action or sad dramas/ movies. Laughter is the best medicine and it relieves physical tension and increases immunity. Though many of us might feel that binge-watching

or being glued to the TV can be a great stress-buster, actually it can lead to stress. The coronavirus pandemic led to a sharp increase in binge viewing: HBO, for example, saw a 65% jump in subscribers watching three or more episodes at once starting on March 14, 2020, around the time when many states implemented stay-at-home measures to slow the spread of COVID-19<sup>1</sup>. A study of University of Texas found that binge watchers were more likely to be depressed, lonely and have less self-control.<sup>2</sup> One of the authors of this study, Yoon Hi Sung, PhD even stated: “when binge-watching becomes rampant, viewers may start to neglect their work and their relationships with others.<sup>3</sup> Remember after the Lockdown is over, you have to get back to work and this habit of excessive TV time can cause a different type of stress later so please restrict your TV time to evenings so that when Lockdown is over and you get back from work in the evening, you can continue with this routine.

6. **Spend less and enjoy simplicity** – Most FMCGs capitalise our spend in response to stress and low self-esteem. Having lots of things can actually add to stress and give negative feelings so before you do any impulsive buying, take a pause and ask yourself do I really need it now? Living a simple life is actually a key to many problems. Mindfulness can significantly reduce anxiety. Many expenses have automatically been curtailed like movie watching, Mall shopping due to Lockdown. Apart from your fixed expenses like your housing, car or personal loan EMI, the variable expenses can be divided into necessary and voluntary variable expenses. Necessary variable expenses are those who you cannot live without such as electricity bill, mobile bills and groceries but voluntary variable expenses such as entertainment cost like paid YouTube movies can be definitely avoided. Ensure that you have a six months liquidity in your bank account as an emergency fund and avoid all wasteful expenditures and monitor your budget prudently.

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<sup>1</sup>Cheryl Idell, "HBO NOW Streaming Data in Wake of COVID-19," medium.com, Mar. 24, 2020

<sup>2</sup>Anna Daugherty, "UT Study Links Binge-Watching, Depression," alcalde.texasexes.org, Feb. 16, 2015

<sup>3</sup>Lily Feinn, "Binge-Watching Television May Make Us Depressed, According to New Study," bustle.com, Mar. 7, 2016

7. **Sleep time and nap-** The 24 by7 stay at home during lockdown has an impact on our natural circadian rhythm which is an essential internal “clock” that plays a key role in regulating our sleep pattern. Some of us might be sleeping more than usual and some of us might be sleeping less than usual. Please ensure that we should have a 7-8 hours peaceful sleep every night. You can also opt for a 15 minutes afternoon power nap which effectively reduce stress, improve your mood and increase alertness. Whilst stress can interfere with sleeping, sleeping actually helps in relieving stress. Dripping some lavender oil on your bed at night can help you relax for a peaceful night’s sleep. Please ensure that the laptops, phones can increase our stress levels so ensure that you switch them off an hour or two before bed for a good night sleep. Reading a book before bedtime can also lead to a good sleep.
8. **Practice Visualization & express gratitude-** Your mind is a powerful tool. Please use your mind for visualising success, visit to a happy place or your long-desired trip. This technique will help alleviate anxiety and sadness as we go creative in our head. Write a gratitude list because having a sense of appreciation for the people and things in your life can really help you gain perspective, feel more positive and enable you to handle stress.
9. **Time Management** – We all know that time is a non-replaceable commodity. We have suddenly got this new normal, where zero commutation, no distractions is actually causing a lot of stress. Most of us will agree that we aren’t able to enjoy our hobbies; finding difficulty in spending quality time with Children and least happy being at home. Some of us are even putting up the Poker face pretending to work effectively from home and faking productivity. Stop Multi-tasking because not only multi-tasking is totally inefficient but it’s also linked to the increased production of stress hormones (cortisol and adrenaline) that can send your body into panic mode. Even beyond Lockdown, time management is a life skill worth cultivating. Please get up early at a fixed time and sleep on time. The age-old secret of all successful personalities is that most of them are early risers and are very good time managers.

10. **Prioritise your work and make a to do list** – Procrastination is a big hinderance in achieving personal and professional goals. Thus, it is very important to declutter our life by prioritising the tasks. Beyond achieving your everyday chores, a to-do-list helps you in managing more long-term projects and plan ahead of future. Please decide the three most important tasks for the day at least a day in advance and prioritize your work accordingly.
11. **Anxiety Management** – While the globe is still clueless of the expiry date of this pandemic, it is but obvious that most of us are worried about our career stability in case of Company Secretaries in Employment or about business in case of Company Secretaries in Practice. We all must agree that this is a global depression and will hit us too to some extent but worrying or being anxious is not the solution. It's okay to stay away from webinars and zoom meetings because too much of screen conversations can be really causing more anxiety and stress. It may sound weird to plan to worry but doctors recommend that you pick a time to think about your fears on purpose. Take 30 minutes to identify what's bothering you and what you can do about it. You can plan this "worry session" at the same time every day. Practice positive thinking and stay away from negative people. Stop comparing yourself with others.
12. **Diet**- Plan your menu for the week and do your shopping accordingly. Don't cook too much and avoid wastage of food. Eat warm food and avoid refrigerated items. Having at least three healthy meals is important. Start your day with honey, lemon and warm water to get rid your body of toxins. Have a good breakfast to get your daily proteins and fibers. Ensure that you have a balanced diet containing all essential nutrients such as good carbs, good fats and good quality protein. Eat lot of seasonal fruits and green vegetables. Take small breaks with nuts and seeds like almonds, walnuts, flax seeds, pumpkin seeds, etc. Avoid overeating and sugary foods. Restrict Junk food to once a week. Ease up on caffeine and alcohol because they both can make anxiety kick into overdrive. Most important is to stay hydrated. Drinking plenty of water helps you keep away from unhealthy snacking and is good for

digestion and skin. If you don't like plain water, you can try herbal tea and fruit juices.

13. **Home schooling** - Though most private schools have started online classes for the students, but it's equally important that you mark extra study time for the Children. Teaching their own children is perceived as a worst nightmare by most parents and the children are equally nervous being tutored by their own parents. Involve your child in making the time-table and the methodology. Don't compare intelligence amongst siblings because each child is unique. Please make a time table for them and spend 10 minutes daily in checking whether they are following the schedule because some children are masters in pretending that they are studying. Ensure that the Children also have fixed playtime because all work and no play will make jack a dull boy.
14. **Meditation and Exercise**- Please ensure that Meditation is an essential activity every day. Please don't make meditation or exercise a weekly task. It's essentially a daily task. Meditation and exercise can even lead to healthier appetite and weight management. Meditation involves sitting in a relaxed position and clearing your mind, or focusing your mind on one thought and clearing it of all others. You may focus on a sound, like "OM," or on your own breathing, counting, a mantra, or nothing at all. The practice of learning to refocus your thoughts can also help you redirect yourself when you fall into negative thinking patterns, which in itself can help relieve stress. You can create a space in your room where you can meditate by lighting candles and incense, play calming music. Similarly doing Yoga or regular exercise can improve your muscle strength and boost your endurance. Exercise benefits every part of body including the mind and is a good stress buster. Try to breathe in fresh air by visiting the balcony. If you are lucky to have a small garden space, get into the nature even with your laptop.
15. **Anger Management**- Staying full time with energetic kids can be really tiring. In midst of life pressures, health and financial worries, when our children fight amongst themselves or get naughty, parenting can actually become a challenge and in a fit of our anger we lose our temper. Failure to control anger

can lead to guilt and frustration later leading to stress. Here anger management is very important. Avoid hitting, name calling or yelling at your child. Calm yourself down before you take any action. Take 10 deep breaths and wait before disciplining but surely lay down limits and reason out your disapproval for such acts to your child after giving a patient listening to the sequence of events. Anger management also calls for monitoring the tone of your voice and choice of your words and please avoid threats to the child and consider effective ways to discipline that will encourage your child for better behaviour.

**16. Indulge in therapies on weekends-** Since the weekends will appear same as weekday during Lockdown, you can indulge in Aromatherapies or oil baths on the weekends to soothe your body and mind. You can use simple fragrant oils in hot water or even mix simple rock-salt and feel rejuvenated. Cutting nails, deep body cleansing like scrubbing can also be done on the weekends. Personal Hygiene is very important especially during the sweaty summer and one must not ignore this important activity.

**A typical day could be spent as follows:**

- If you are a person who has very good body clock then you may not use the alarm. Otherwise with the help of your mobile alarm clock, please ensure that you still get up early in the Morning in the manner you used to get up while there was no lockdown.
- Express gratitude that you and your family is safe. Please fold the sheets and arrange the pillows. Brush your teeth.
- Do meditation do some breathing exercises to start your day and ensure that no one steals this sacrosanct time of yours. If you were not a Yoga person, this is the right time to start doing it. 11 Surya Namaskars can act as good a warm up. Those who are having home Gym, please continue making more use of it and in-fact involve your spouse and children also in this exercise regime to stay fit.
- Prepare a nutritious breakfast or if it is your spouse's turn to prepare breakfast, eat the breakfast on time.

- Since during Lockdown Maids aren't visiting us, it is better that we clean the breakfast plates and coffee mugs immediately so that the Kitchen remains clean. Please extend your whole hearted contribution in cleaning the House.
- Take a good bath and get ready as if you were going to office. Do your Pooja, if you are a religious person. Even if you are not a religious person, it is advisable to burn camphor early morning. You can wear your home clothes too but by getting ready means you should feel the mood and energy to work.
- Usually after getting ready, we would have left for work. Similarly, get in front of your laptop and start your work, if you have any; because most of you might be still be working from home. Those who are lucky with no urgent assignments in hand, can use this time for studying Companies Act 2013 and other relevant Acts again, reading latest case laws, etc. Please take a 5 minutes break after every one hour. Please note that if you have school or college going Kids, you all will be busy in studies during the Morning Hours.
- Around 12 noon, you can take a break to help your spouse for Lunch Preparation and enjoy the Mid-day Meal with your family.
- After the Lunch is over, if your lunch was really heavy you can take a 10-15 minutes power Nap. After a quick Nap, its desirable that you get fresh and spend time back on work or in pursuing some hobby. If you are working on the laptop, please remember to take the 5 minutes break to move around. You can have a tea/ Coffee or fruit break around 4 PM. You can continue working or do the hobby activities till around 6 PM in the evening. Ensure that you complete most of the tasks you had planned in the Morning by the end of the day.
- Remember you are saving all your travel time during this Lockdown and this saved time can be spent in having a good time with your children or spouse or your pet by way of indulging in meaningful conversation or activities so that they enjoy your presence at home. The evenings can be spent in acts of togetherness or even making Phone calls to your relatives and friends to check on their well-being and sharing motivation.
- Light the lamps and do your prayers if you are a religious person and around 7 PM, you can start preparing dinner so that you can have the dinner by 8.30 P.M.

Once the dinner is done, clear the dining table and clean up the utensils immediately. Brush your teeth and you can even have a quick shower to feel fresh since its summer time.

- You can have leisure time watching TV or enjoying your favourite music. Please do not indulge in binge-watching except on weekends. Sleep on time and before sleeping, please make a to-do-list for the next day so that you have a plan for the next day. Thank God and express your gratitude to God before you go to sleep.

To conclude please note that as and when the lockdowns will be eased, we will have to adapt to the post-coronavirus environment by behaving responsibly and accepting some limitations and it will take few months before we will be able to have a fair bit of normalcy. On the other hand, if we try to live just as before, we may find the virus making a comeback, with more stricter government regulations right behind it. Please note positive thinking and a right attitude are the keys to Stress Management. May you use all the above tips of self-management and enjoy a happy and stress-free stay at home

**Stress is a normal reaction the body has when changes occur. It can respond to these changes physically, mentally, or emotionally.**

Stress is the body's reaction to any change that requires an adjustment or response. The body reacts to these changes with physical, mental, and emotional responses. Stress is a normal part of life. We can experience stress from surrounding environment which affects our body, and our thoughts. Every positive / negative event in life changes such as a promotion, a mortgage, or the birth of a child produce stress has positive / negative effects respectively on us as human beings.

**How does stress affect health? -**

The human body is designed to experience stress and react to it. Stress can be positive, keeping us alert, motivated, and ready to avoid danger. Stress becomes negative when a person faces continuous challenges without relief or relaxation between stressors. As a result, the person becomes overworked, and stress-related tension builds. The body's autonomic nervous system has a built-in stress response that causes physiological changes to allow the body to combat stressful situations. This stress response, also known as the "fight or flight response", is activated in case of an emergency. However, this response can become chronically activated during prolonged periods of stress. Prolonged activation of the stress response causes wear and tear on the body - both physical and emotional.

Stress that continues without relief can lead to a condition called distress - a negative stress reaction. Distress can disturb the body's internal balance or equilibrium, leading to physical symptoms such as headaches, an upset stomach, elevated blood pressure, chest pain, sexual dysfunction, and problems sleeping. Emotional problems can also result from distress. These problems include depression, panic attacks, or other forms of anxiety and worry. Research suggests that stress also can bring on or worsen certain symptoms or diseases. Stress is linked to 6 of the leading causes of death: heart disease, cancer, lung ailments, accidents, cirrhosis of the liver, and suicide.

**Present Scenario in India & in World: -**

Presently we are facing acute problem of overcoming the virus of COVID-19 which has caused a very horrible situation in most of the parts of the World be this in the continents Europe, America, Australia, New Zealand, Asia, and Africa.

Almost every country of these continents is facing this Virus, causing lots of deaths as well as seriously spreading this virus to the citizens of the various countries of these continents which prompted the Governments of those countries to lock down their economies as well as businesses and thus pushed the citizens to get themselves locked down into their homes. The lock-down period differs from country to country but it will definitely affect the overall economy of those countries in future.

This has seriously caused anxiety & depression among citizens as well as uncertainties of the future as they are facing at present the situations of - losing their livelihood, shortage of foods& medical facilities and other problems and it may continue in future period.

As stated, earlier paragraphs, Stress is caused due to the uncertainties lying in front of the individuals & thus the situation caused at present in every part of the world due to COVID-19, definitely has turned into Stress in the minds of citizens of those countries.

Governments of all those countries have come out with substantial measures to cope-with and overcome the effects of COVID-19. But the efforts of the Governments are not enough & every citizen is required to fight against this virus by promptly responding to the call of the Governments by following their rules & regulations as declared from time to time.

Following measures may be found useful in the stress management to all of us in our maintaining health (physically & mentally) in this period of anxiety & stress caused due to COVID-19.

**Stress Management: -**

People can learn to manage stress and lead happier, healthier lives. Here are some tips to help you keep stress at bay.

One is required to -

Keep a positive attitude. **(We are professional and so one should not lose of hopes of better future for us, for society, for every citizen of India & our Country as whole)**

Accept that there are events that you cannot control. **(Only need of the hour in fighting with the COVID-19 situation is to follow the instructions from Government scrupulously by every citizen of India)**

Be assertive instead of aggressive. Assert your feelings, opinions, or beliefs instead of becoming angry, defensive, or passive.

Eat healthy, well-balanced meals. Assert your feelings, opinions, or beliefs instead of becoming angry, defensive, or passive.

Learn and practice relaxation techniques; try meditation, yoga, or tai-chi (a part of reducing stress and anxiety by carrying out gentle exercise & it involves a series of movements performed in a slow focused manner and accomplished by deep breathing) for stress management.

Exercise regularly. Your body can fight stress better when it is fit.

Learn to manage your time more effectively. **(Upgrade your knowledge & skill which we have used while clearing through the Professional Exam. Help others to educate them about present situation and hone pupil's skill towards betterment of the human beings.)**

Set limits appropriately and learn to say no to requests that would create excessive stress in your life.

Make time for hobbies, interests, and relaxation.

Get enough rest and sleep. Your body needs time to recover from stressful events.

Don't rely on alcohol, drugs, or compulsive behaviours to reduce stress.

Seek out social support. Spend enough time with those you enjoy.

Seek treatment with a psychologist or other mental health professional trained in stress management or biofeedback techniques to learn healthy ways of dealing with the stress in your life.

Apart from above, following Relaxation Techniques will help to reduce the Stress  
Fast:-

Relax. We deserve it, it's good for us, and it takes less time than we think. We don't need a spa weekend or a retreat. Each of these stress-relieving tips can get us from OMG (Oh My God) to "OM" in less than 15 minutes.

We as human being generally express our feelings in the form of "Oh My God" after any incidence takes place in our personal life, indicating sometimes anxiety, depression, sorrow, and very rarely in showing happiness.

We can overcome such a situation, by performing Yoga regularly. In Yoga performance, there is one Yogakriya starting from pronouncing OM by our leaps with inhaling deep breathing and giving-up gently, and finally relaxing.

### **1. Meditate: -**

A few minutes of practice per day can help ease anxiety. Psychologist Robbie Maller Hartman, PhD, a Chicago Health and Wellness Coach says **"Research suggests that daily meditation may alter the brain's neural pathways, making you more resilient to stress,"**

It's simple. Sit up straight with both feet on the floor. Close your eyes. Focus your attention on reciting -- out loud or silently -- a positive mantra such as "I feel at peace" or "I love myself." Place one hand on your belly to sync the mantra with your breaths. Let any distracting thoughts float by like clouds.

### **2. Breathe Deeply: -**

Take a 5-minute break and focus on your breathing. Sit up straight, eyes closed, with a hand on your belly. Slowly inhale through your nose, feeling the breath start in your abdomen and work its way to the top of your head. Reverse the process as you exhale through your mouth.

Psychologist Judith Tutin, PhD, She's a certified life coach in Rome, says **"Deep breathing counters the effects of stress by slowing the heart rate and lowering blood pressure,"**

### **3. Be Present: -**

Slow down. Tutin further says **"Take 5 minutes and focus on only one behavior with awareness"**. Notice how the air feels on your face when you're walking and how your feet feel hitting the ground. Enjoy the texture and taste of each bite of food.

When you spend time in the moment and focus on your senses, you should feel less tense.

#### **4. Reach Out: -**

Our social network is one of our best tools for handling stress. Talk to others -- preferably face to face, or at least on the phone. Share what's going on. You can get a fresh perspective while keeping your connection strong.

Even though this technique is not possibly to be used now (as there is a policy of social distancing to be followed by everyone in this COVID-19 period), we can remain in touch with each other through Internets, phones, exchanging our thoughts, ideas, etc. as to how we can work out our responsibility in re-building the confidence among society, business community, etc. once this COVID-19 period is over.

#### **5. Tune in to Your Body: -**

Mentally scan our body to get a sense of how stress affects it each day. Lie on our back, or sit with our feet on the floor. Start at our toes and work our way up to our scalp, noticing how our body feels.

“Simply be aware of places you feel tight or loose without trying to change anything,” Tutin says. For 1 to 2 minutes, imagine each deep breath flowing to that body part. Repeat this process as you move your focus up your body, paying close attention to sensations you feel in each body part.

#### **6. Decompress: -**

This is a relaxation technique of our mind. In this technique, we have to place a warm heat wrap around our neck and shoulders for 10 minutes& close eyes and relax face, neck, upper chest, and back muscle, and then after 10 minutes, we have to remove the wrap, and use a tennis ball or foam roller to massage away tension.

Then place the ball between one’s back and the wall, lean into the ball, and hold gentle pressure for up to 15 seconds. Then move the ball to another spot, and apply pressure,”

#### **7. Laugh Out Loud: -**

A good belly laugh doesn’t just lighten the load mentally. It lowers cortisol, our body’s stress hormone, and boosts brain chemicals called endorphins, which help

our mood. We are required to lighten up by tuning in to our favorite sitcom or video, reading the comics, or chatting with someone who makes us smile.

#### **8. Listen to the Tunes of Music or Song: -**

Research shows that listening to soothing music can lower blood pressure, heart rate, and anxiety. "Create a playlist of songs or nature sounds (the ocean, a bubbling brook, birds chirping), and allow one's mind to focus on the different melodies, instruments, or singers in the piece," Benninger says. One also can blow off steam by rocking out to more upbeat tunes -- or singing at the top of his / her lungs.

#### **9. Get Moving: -**

We are not required to have to run in order to get a runner's high. All forms of exercise, including yoga and walking, can ease depression and anxiety by helping the brain release feel-good chemicals and by giving your body a chance to practice dealing with stress. We can go for a quick walk around the block, take the stairs up and down a few flights, or do some stretching exercises like head rolls and shoulder shrugs.

#### **10. Be Grateful: -**

We are required to keep Gratitude Diaries to help us remember all the things that are good happened in our earlier life. This will help us to cancel out our negative thoughts.

**Joni Emmerling, a Wellness Coach in Greenville, North Carolina, USA, has observed that "Being grateful for your blessings cancels out negative thoughts and worries".**

We have to use these diaries (containing good incidences which we have experienced in our earlier life) to savor good experiences like a child's smile, a sunshine-filled day, and good health. We are not required to forget to celebrate accomplishments like mastering a new task at work or a new hobby.

When we start feeling stressed, we have to spend a few minutes looking through our notes that are recorded into those Diaries to remind ourselves what really matters.

## Stress Management in turbulent times

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Stress in Moderate level is good... Yes! You read it right. Just like good cholesterol and bad cholesterol, there is good stress and bad stress. A certain amount of positive stress which is known as 'eustress' is vital to enhance our positive energy. On the other hand, the negative stress which we call 'distress' is responsible for all kinds of physical, mental and behavioral problems. Examples of Good Stress includes learning new things or having set goals for business and achieving it versus bad stress which results in anxiety, headaches, lot more pressure and reduced physical and mental health. If we start to live with a high level of stress, not only we detract from a healthy lifestyle but also hampers our productivity level.

In the current situation of COVID-19 where industries are locked down, we are forced to work from home , it is natural to feel the heat of the time and tension about your job, your business, your future plans, about your children's education and many more but it is important to reduce this pressure and be positive of the way forward and manage it in a way that it does not become a bad stress taking control of you; as, once that happens, trust me you will not be able to complete your everyday tasks as well.

Know that the ultimate purpose of our life is to enjoy a balanced life with timely work, healthy relationships, relaxation, and fun. That is why, effective stress management is essential to handle our stress level efficiently when it occurs, that we can think clearly, perform our professional role productively and relish healthy life. So, managing stress is important not just in this lockdown situation but also in other times. I have tried to jot down some of the techniques that are helpful in stress management which are as follows:

**Exercise:** Exercise is very important as physically fit bodies can handle the stress better. Also, the exercise will give you the energy for the day so you can work twice of what you could do earlier. Exercise helps our body to reduce tensions and relax muscles. Readers, if you are not exercising, this is the time to get into that mode. Today because we are locked down, you have the option of doing the exercise at any

time of the day. After 21 days it will be a routine for your body and it will tell you to exercise.

**Balanced Diet:** Eating right keep your blood sugar levels even, keeping your emotions in check and making you more resilient to stress. Suggestion is to Eat nutritious food, carry nutritious snacks at the workplace are the things that will help you to keep your stress level in check

**Meditation:** Use the techniques of deep breathing, breathing exercise, yoga, yogic sleep, meditation to control our physical and mental being. Meditation helps to calm down our body and mind to awaken our inner power and gives you positive energy required to reduce the stress level

**Good Sleep:** Along-with the Regular exercise and balanced diet, it is important to have a good sound sleep. Sleeping hours differ from person to person ranging from 6hrs to 8hr. It is helpful to boost our immune power, mental alertness, memory, and concentration. It is important so that our body can recover itself and be ready for tomorrow's challenge. You can try putting on sleep music for that purpose

**Making Time for Hobbies, Interests and Relaxation:** It is very important to have the 'ME' time. I have realized that the Me time is not the leisure but a necessity. If you like music, put on headphone and listen to a good music or move your body on it if you want to or you can do some art / craft or if reading interests, you, read the book, do the gardening. Sometimes washing utensils / cleaning your vehicle/ playing with your pet also relaxes and refreshes your body and mind. If you do not want to do anything, lay back, don't think about anything and relax it is just okay. Do not feel guilty for that. Connect socially, go on vacations with your family, friends, take a planned break from work, do everything that relaxes your body and soul.

**Introspect:** Moving to more critical aspect is introspecting own-self. Introspect requires your time for yourself, honest answers, self- analysis. Introspection is important to know the cause/s of your stress. The actual cause of stress varies from person to person; a situation may be stressful for an individual but for others, it may consider as challenging. So, it is important to self-talk and know the answer, as nothing can be worked on if you don't know what exactly is bothering you. There

may be more than one cause of stress, do not panic from where to start. Take out time and prioritize. Fix the cause one at a time otherwise all causes would remain as they are and you will be more stressed for not having solved any of the problems.

**Time Management:** Time constraint now -a-days is one of the causes of stress I believe. Work schedules sometimes become overloaded which causes some individuals in distress. In order to manage this kind of situation, one can make a plan of priorities to do the work accordingly. For e.g. start from setting day -to-day plan, prioritize tasks in preference of Urgent & Important. Urgent but not so Important, Important but not so urgent and less important and not urgent. This plan should be flexible to adjust for event beyond your control. This will help to reduce the stress and have a manageable schedule which can be completed within the time frame. Also learn to say 'No' to unimportant matters which not only give you time to focus on what truly matter but also will help in reducing unnecessary burden of doing it reducing stress level

**Self-limitations:** Everybody has their own set of limitations. It is good to know your limitation so that you perform and can plan accordingly alleviating the unnecessary stress. Creating your own boundaries is essential for healthy stress-free living. Boundaries mean we create some internal rules for ourselves to take care of our well-being.

**Self-Management/ Self-control:** It is the ability to regulate your emotions, thoughts and behavior effectively in different situations. It is how you behave with your colleagues/co-workers/employer at work and to everybody around you in difficult situation. self-control implies changing behavior through sheer willpower. Assert your feelings, opinions, or beliefs instead of becoming angry, defensive, or passive.

**4 A's Technique:** **Avoid** unnecessary stress like traffic jams while going home by leaving early from work or taking longer route or if stuck in traffic listen to music, saying no to unnecessary matters which would require your time and energy and short of it right now as you have your deadlines to complete. Avoid people who bother you. **Alter** the situation by communicating the same openly to the other person e.g. if you did not like the behavior of Mr. A, go to Mr. A and ask him respectfully to change his behavior, put forward your viewpoint. **Adapt/ Adjust**

your standards to suit the situation. Try to look at the same situation from different angle. **Accept** the situations as they are which are beyond your control. However, be positive in these cases, learn from your mistakes, have someone to talk to.

All the above shall help you reducing the stress and you can be benefitted from the following:

- Increased concentration & productivity
- Improvement in your immunity and overall health (due to this reduction stress.)
- Better understanding of what motivates you because you're taking time to try different things
- Increased positive thinking and gratitude for what you have in life.
- Enhanced self-esteem due to the fact that you get to focus on your core values and your why.
- Better physical health because you'll have more time to spend building positive exercise habits.
- Better mental health allowing you to be happy

We all can make most of this and use lockdown as opportunity to manage stress, manage self and be a better person to handle the future situations more gracefully

Wish you all with the healthy and moderately stressed life.

## The greatest wealth is your mental health

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It is normal to feel sad, stressed, confused, scared or angry during a crisis. It's a scary time. We're in the midst of a worldwide pandemic, with cities and even entire countries shutting down. And we are all watching the headlines and wondering, "what is going to happen next?"

For many people, the uncertainty surrounding coronavirus is the hardest thing to handle. We don't know how exactly we'll be impacted or how bad things might get. And that makes it all too easy to catastrophize and spiral out into overwhelming dread and panic. But there are many things we can do—even in the face of this unique crisis—to manage our anxiety and fears.

### **Why is it so important to manage stress?**

If you're living with high levels of stress, you're putting your entire well-being at risk. Stress wreaks havoc on your emotional health, as well as on physical health. It narrows your ability to think clearly, function effectively, and enjoy life. It may seem like there's nothing you can do about stress but you might have a lot more control than you think.

Effective stress management helps you break the hold, stress has on your life, so you can be happier, healthier, and more productive. But stress management is not a one-size-fits-all phenomenon. That's why it's important to experiment and find out what works best for you. The following stress management tips can help you do that.

- ✓ ***Maintain a routine as best you can*** Maintaining a daily schedule will go a long way in reducing your stress. If you have children at home, it becomes doubly important. Set a daily wake-up time, and specific time for work/school, meals, exercise, household chores and leisure. And establish a regular bed-time. A consistent routine will go a long way to keep your stress at bay.
- ✓ **Stay informed—but don't obsessively check the news** This can be tough for some people because scrolling through social media is often seen as a way of

relaxation. But the constant exposure to the worries over covid-19 can be harmful.

Put a limit on how long you will spend on social media and how much of the news you'll watch each day. Consider doing the same thing for your children.

- ✓ **Get moving to manage stress** Exercise in almost any form can act as a stress reliever. Being active can boost your feel-good endorphins and distract you from daily worries. You know that exercise does a lot of good to the body, but you're too busy and stressed to fit it into your daily routine. This lockdowns giving you a big opportunity to add exercise, yoga, dance or whatever you like in your daily routine. So, this quarantine time is perfect to make regular physical activity part of your lifestyle.
- ✓ **Create fun, new ways to interact with friends and family** Stay connected with your love ones even when you are physically isolated. There are many online platform (like Whatsapp®, Facebook®, Instagram®, Skype® etc.) which provide video feature to help you feel more connected to your loved ones. When you're looking for a simpler solution, a quick phone call can also help lift spirits.
- ✓ **Focus on what you can control** Make a list of the things that are under your control, like taking recommended health precautions (frequent hand-washing, sneezing/coughing into our elbow fold or tissue, respecting the six-foot distance rule etc.) And work on maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Focus on healthy eating, daily activity and a good night's sleep are all double-duty positives that both support a healthy immune system and reduce stress therefore try to focus on the more positive moments throughout your day.
- ✓ **Listen to music:** Music is perfect stress buster. Musical preference varies widely between individuals, so only you can decide what you like and what is suitable for each of your moods. Make a list of your favorite songs and dancing along with singing can act as reliever of tension. You'll know it better than anyone that which songs in your favorites make you smile and happy. Whether it's a funny song or the track takes you back to a time that you can associate with a fond memory. There's a track for every occasion.

- ✓ **Spending time in nature** Nature has a solution for almost everything. Researchers have found that as little as 10 minutes in natural setting can help one feel happier and lessen the effects of both physical and mental stress. In fact, **“i am personally experiencing from last few days by just setting up the alarm for watching the sunrise of each day and believe me it's really a wonderful feeling to start your day with such positivity.”** Yes, we can't go outside but we can spend our time in our porches, balconies by reading books, playing with our kids, watering the plants and many more ways just silently cherishing the treasure of nature.
- ✓ **Practice gratitude** Change how you respond to difficult situations, focusing on the positive, not the negative. Expressing gratitude to others can also boost your level of feeling good about life and reduce stressful thought. Cherish opportunities to spend time with those who matter the most despite the coronavirus craziness, we should see the positives in what has become the new normal.
- ✓ **Washing dishes and organized and clean house** Is a really great stress reliever, science says. Washing dishes can significantly lower your stress level—if you do it mindfully according to study and personal experience too. A beautiful and clean home — can be a **great stress reliever**, the act of cleaning your house can be a stress management technique in itself. If you incorporate mindfulness into your cleaning, the work can actually be a form of meditation, leaving you more relaxed after you finish.

Finding the best stress relief strategies may take some experimenting and some strategies may take practice too.

But it's important to keep looking for the tools that will help you manage life's inevitable ups and downs in a healthy way. Keeping stress at a manageable level is important for your overall well-being that you can do during the corona virus pandemic.



## Manage Stress, Manage Life

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Not everyone is satisfied with what life has bestowed upon them and not everyone is blessed with a tension free life. There are certain situations where one has no control over what is happening or what is going to happen. The right way to face those situations is to accept it like the way it is, face it, using grit and will power, and come out of it as a strong individual.

### **The Psychology behind Stress**

Stress, nowadays, is a part and parcel of our lives. The prevalent scenario is full of uncertain, unwanted and unsuspected events which are likely to affect people, both emotionally and psychologically.

As per the psychological studies, a stressful event, whether an external phenomenon like the sudden appearance of a snake on the path or an internal response, such as fear of losing one's job, triggers a cascade of hormones, including adrenaline and cortisol, that surge through the entire body.

One can determine the dimensions of stress by a close study of the relationship between the central nervous system and the immune system.

### **Controlling Emotions**

When it comes to the behavioural pattern of stress, the aspect of our emotions comes into the picture. Our emotions often regulate the way we behave and the way we act upon any circumstance. And such emotions keep on changing as we experience different situations from time to time. A movie with a tragic start might make us feel dejected at once, but if that movie ends on a happy note, we're bound to feel delighted.

In order to overcome stress, we must understand that controlling our emotions and being controlled by our emotions are two opposite factors. The former is what we require in order to regulate stress, and to maintain a high level of emotional quotient.

### **Work-Life Balance**

Be it a 9am to 5pm job, a late-night shift, or indefinite working hours, we're all occupied with a lot of work in our respective fields. In the race against time, we're

naturally more focusing on money, for this is one of the biggest motivations behind spending tireless days and nights at work.

Seldom we give priority to our family, not because we don't have time for our personal life, but because we live in a society where flaunting a logo of broken apple in front of peers is more valued than having a dozen apples with family.

By working out on a systematic plan for balancing professional as well as personal life, one can manage stress in a better way.

At workplace, maintain cordial relationship with colleagues, help juniors by giving fruitful advice, listen to what the boss wants to convey, make use of two-way communication channel, and oversee the problems as underlying opportunities. At home, spend quality time with family, plan out picnics, short trips or any other recreational activities, share thoughts openly, give an ear to the one in need, and do whatever it takes to be a good son/daughter, a good parent, or a good sibling.

So, once we strike a work-life balance, we would feel that our tension, rather our stress is an ongoing part in our lives, and it's possible to deal with it, at office or at home, it doesn't make much difference.

### **Does Perception Matter?**

Our perception determines the way we look at our problems, and it's the same perception that can examine how much stressed we're and how stressful the situation actually is. It's all about embracing the change and perceiving it the right way.

For instance, if you're unable to finish an assignment on time- you can just relax since the deadline is not yet over, or, if you miss a scheduled train- you can be rest assured because another train is scheduled to arrive soon. It's not a rocket science, but a way to find solutions to unsolved problems and to get the work done, hassle free.

### **The Power of Optimism**

A number of people, scholars and internet articles would list 'n' number of activities one can do for stress management. From meditation, to performing yoga and breathing exercises, spending leisure time; each of these activities would help in relieving stress.

Among others, the simplest and the easiest way to overcome stress is to undergo happiness and that needs no practice in itself.

Whether you're having trouble at work or with someone from family, you just need to ignore the negative elements and hold on to the positive ones. And, the best way to ignore a problem is to ignore it. Think twice! Being optimistic can perform wonders in a subtle manner.

### **Concluding Thoughts**

In the turbulent times, when stress inevitably becomes a matter of concern, one should focus on the inner-self, control emotional responses, perceive it as a test of time, and adopt an optimistic approach to overcome stress. This way, our own abilities would be sufficient to cope with troublesome events. At the same time, it would act as a learning experience. And, once we're contented with what we've transformed into, the world would certainly be a better place to live.

*"One who has control over the mind  
Is tranquil in heat and cold,  
In pleasure and pain, and in honor and dishonor;  
And is ever steadfast with the Supreme Self."- Bhagavat Geeta.*

The above quote from Bhagavat Geeta gives us glimpse of instances where we, the humans, face issues regarding self-doubt, restlessness, fear, constant feeling of denial and uncertainty making us loose our calm and be deprived of making sensible decisions.

According to a lot of experts and their studies in the field of stress management, observations were made and it was established that "The body and mind are deeply intertwined", which brings to my question, what exactly is stress and stress management? why do we need it? and how do we do it?

Stress is a form of our body's reaction to any change that requires us to make certain adjustments or response. Our body reacts to these changes with physical, mental and emotional response. We as humans are capable, rather, designed in such a way that we have an inbuilt system to experience and react to stress. Stress becomes harmful, not only physically but also emotionally when there is no break in between the stress cycle. It leads to over exhausting self and deterioration of the mind and body. If this continues further, it turns into "**distress**". This is when our body and mind starts playing different instrumental the same time leading to symptoms like headaches, blood pressure issues, anxiety, depression, etc.

The need arises to manage stress so that we can take control over our mood, become more stable and neutral to the conditions and circumstances, get our thoughts clear, to improve relationships and most of all, our health risk diminishes.

Now, **how do we do it?** So, for that, there are certain defined alternatives that can help us manage our stress levels, some of which are listed below.

1. **Keep a positive Attitude:** Everybody says that, right?! How to do that is the question we ask ourselves. For that, let me spill a secret. All we have to do is

just breathe and concentrate on our breathing cycle. It will let you have a passage/ break from your negative thoughts that have clouded you.

2. **Acknowledgment:** Oh boy! This is the most important. We need to first and foremost accept that whatever is happening isn't in our control and we are doing our best to cope up.
3. **Assertive over Aggressive:** We need to stand up for what we feel, our opinions and beliefs rather than becoming angry, defensive or passive.
4. **Time Management:** We have a lot of time because of this lockdown and I am sure, all of us have been enjoying at first but this repeated increase in the number of days is frustrating. We did enjoy all the freedom at once and now we think we have nothing to do or why should we do anything at all. Here, management of your time comes into a role, wherein you divide stuff in a manner that it takes up your 24 hours and leave zero space for negative thoughts.
5. **Eat Healthy:** As they say you are what you eat. This is true in every sense. Have a good and healthy meal.
6. **Exercise:** As we are stuck at our home, we have no place to go and burn our calories, we shall practice some in-house exercise to keep our body functioning and to exhaust ourselves in a good way to get some proper sleep.
7. **Practice to Relax:** Relaxation/ healing can come to us in different forms. We can either practice yoga, meditation or maybe soulful music therapy.
8. **Sleep:** Get some good sleep. A good sleep has nothing to do with the number of hours. It is when you wake up and feel fresh as a blooming flower.

9. **Make time for your Hobbies and Interest:** We are not getting this time back, make the most out of it. Get back the old hobbies and interests that made you feel alive.

10. **Most of All spend some quality time with family:** There is no support as that of a family. They have been our spine since ever. Now is our time to reciprocate our love and give them a thank filled support. It also helps them in reliving their stress.

*The key is to be happy and feel free mentally and emotionally.*

## Minimalist Approach to Stress Management

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**What we have been avoiding since a long time, is now official and mandatory.**

Living in our homes, facing ourselves, giving ourselves our own company or quarantine, as they call it, is taking a toll on us. But why? Yes, the world is facing a pandemic, something, we have been reading and hearing about, and something we never thought we would be a part of. The world wasn't prepared, so weren't we.

The world economy is crashing, there are global crises, people are dying and everything from our businesses to our lives, have come to a halt. A brutal bigger picture, isn't it? But what if we don't mull over it and take a look at a smaller and closer picture instead. Well, this is the time when each one of us is making an impact. **What a time, to not do anything and still do everything.**

Some of us are feeling suffocated and enslaved, just trying to make it to the finishing line every day while some of us, craving social life, dreaming about getting back to work and if not enough, fantasizing about everything that we anyway never did, even when given a chance. What are we running from?

We are stressed, because we don't have escapes anymore. We are meeting ourselves after a long busy interval, which we called our lives. We have been resorting to, friends, to escape from office stress; work, to escape from family issues; family, to escape from social anxiety and our hobbies, to escape from ourselves. We don't have escapes now and precisely, it feels like a place and state we have never been in.

### **The common yet ignored stress generators**

We have been adept at stressing about things since childhood and it is just the degree which has subsequently hit the high. From a work as petty as cleaning to the work as important as an office presentation or important decision, a mental space is reserved for everything that our mind knows. The problem is with the basis of the percentage distribution of our mental space.

We have our own ways of worrying. We are now realizing how stress is not good for us and therefore we have started stressing about how to avoid stress, which is in turn adding to it, an irony indeed.

The less the importance of work, the less we worry about it, the more we procrastinate it. So half of our brain is cluttered with stress of the not so important things that we **procrastinate**, adding to the stress of the important things we have to deal with.

The more indulging it is to know about all the external causes, the more surprising it is to know about internal causes. **We are stressful for ourselves** and who in the world, can fix it, if not us.

We, no matter how much we claim to not care, are and have always been affected by the judgments that all the varied minds around us carry against us, including our own. While we pretend to get affected by the judgments of people around us more, it is us **judging ourselves** that is toiling us. **You say, they are the problem, I say, you are the solution.** The only way out is acceptance which is also paramount for improvement.

While we are stressing over everything around us, we are ignoring every signal that our mind and body is giving, asking for attention. We have time for work, family, networking, partying and even recreation, but not for ourselves. Yes, I would like to **separate recreation from self-attention** because the concept of recreation is now evolved and is promoted to being an escape from addressing ourselves and our issues.

This is just a glimpse of the various eradicable causes which should be on our radar right now. With all the time that we have, we can train our mind to start walking on a path, if not achieve the goal today.

There are so many idealistic solutions about how to know ourselves and explore our personalities while change and develop ourselves in general but does it really help? Don't worry, don't procrastinate, don't stress about it, don't be everything you shouldn't be, nothing but yet another series of easier said than done statements. Let us cut this journey short, exactly how we draw missions for our visions.

### **Twisted angle of the ideal solutions - The beginning**

We are bombarded with the stress controlling and management tips and there is nothing that we all don't know about. Instead of focusing on the mainstream idealistic solutions, let us look into how to get on the path and begin the process.

1. ~~Don't Procrastinate~~ **Make Procrastination worth it:** Delaying work, that is important and consumes our time and energy, is understandable but we tend to avoid and delay work and things that are easy to do and doesn't require much time and attention and

that clutters our mind the most. To begin with doing every little thing as and when we come across it reduces strain on our mind and frees our mental space. Proper management of the not so important work gives us a sense of accomplishment which apparently fuels our mind to plan and work on important tasks and events.

2. ~~Don't worry~~ **Worry wisely:** The stage when we will not worry at all is a far-fetched idea but choosing what to worry about and how to deal with it, is our immediate concern. Whenever we worry about something, it either is about our past or our future most of the times. So the next time we find ourselves worrying about something, let us play a personalized rapid fire round with ourselves. It will create awareness, bring us to the present moment, and therefore give more control over our mind.

**Sample rapid fire round**

What state am I in?

Why am I worried?

Is it something that I can change?

Is the worry really worth compromising the present?

Is it really a thing to worry about or is it my mind cooking up scenarios?

3. ~~Ignore the negative~~ **Know, Accept and then reject:** We have been always told to ignore the judgments and not pay heed to everything that disturbs our peace which is absolutely the right thing to do but is blatant ignorance really helpful? Not knowing what triggers and bothers us and ignoring the situation as and when it stings, is a form of defense mechanism that we have built, suppression of our thoughts and feelings, being an intermittent part of it. So, the next time something will make us uncomfortable, we will understand it, no matter how trivial, accept that it affects us and then make a decision to ignore and let go of it, instead of making ignorance, our immediate reaction. Our body is mere representation of the state of our mind. Whenever we are worrying too much, not paying proper attention to our physical and emotional needs, over working or under working our potential, our body will tell us, we have to listen to it. Avoidance isn't a solution, acceptance is. **Don't look for escapes, be one.** When we free ourselves from these controllable and eradicable causes, much of

our stress is marginalized, and we have the space and time to look out for the important and complicated matters in life. Let us do this so the next time we stress about stressing, we know that we are stressing and can wisely get through it.

They say, what you don't change, you accept and I say, what you accept, you change.

**We are the wands and our life is magic, let us create a show worth witnessing.**

**“We Should not give up and we should not allow the problem to defeat us.”**

**(Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam)**

### **Introduction**

Novel Coronavirus i.e. COVID-19 has spread like a storm. In a very short span of time, this pandemic has given a hard hit to more than 180 countries in the world. This has changed the life of more than 7 billion people over the Globe. Even developed countries like USA, Germany, China and Switzerland appear to be struggling. Scientists worldwide are leaving no stone unturned to find cure for this lethal disease.

Infected or suspected people are being quarantined and almost all countries in the world have observed complete or partial lockdown. Many countries are appreciating India for anticipating disaster of threatening pandemic and taking courageous step to declare complete and biggest lockdown of the world, well in advance. Unfortunately, in spite of precautionary measures, the number of COVID-19 cases are increasing.

### **Every Coin has Two Sides**

One can remember the pithy phrase, ‘Every coin has two Sides’. There are certainly two sides of this gloomy stage of life. On one side there is fear, anxiety and sadness everywhere. Businesses are getting closed; unemployment is increasing and people below the poverty line are suffering the most. In the news, we can just see the increasing count of infected and dead people.

On the other hand, if we take optimistic view, there is a positive side of this stage too. Pollution has drastically reduced, clean air, clean rivers, natural habitat to animals and birds, possibility of working from home is explored, virtual meetings are saving time and cost and increasing efficiency, one can spend time with family.

### **Company Secretary (CS) Profession and COVID-19**

Realizing the need of situation, ICSI and its members have acted upon the mantra “Together We Can Together We Will” and have shown support to those who have been adversely affected by COVID-19. Contribution made by ICSI and its members, towards humanity, has been acknowledged and appreciated by the Prime Minister of India Shri. Narendra Modi.

Support of ICSI and its members does not stop here. Rather it should be a continuous act and Company Secretaries have bigger responsibilities on their shoulders and role to play in restoration and rebuilding Indian economy in the coming years.

This article gives an insight as to how CS can manage life during this COVID-19 phase and overcome the negativity. How CS can, by own conduct and effective utilization of time and resources, live positively and take care of Health, Work, Finance and Society, which will ultimately prosper the CS profession.

### **Health Management**

It is said that he who has health, has hope and he who has hope has everything. CS can take care of situation around, only when he himself is healthy. In the current scenario, saving ourselves from COVID-19 can only be possible, by not getting infected. Presently social distancing and staying at home is the best solution to fight against COVID-19. Following are some tips for taking care of health during lock down period.

### **Proper lifestyle**

Good habits are difficult to form but simple to live with. Similarly, bad habits are easy to form but difficult to live with. Proper lifestyle is the basis of good health. One should prepare a suitable timetable of daily activities and follow a regular routine. Starting the day early morning and sticking to same routine keeps motivated, full of energy and improves concentration at work.

### **Sufficient Sleep**

Research suggests that adults require minimum 7 and maximum 9 hours sleep in daily routine. Lack of sleep adversely affects health and may cause lifestyle related diseases. Sufficient amount of sleep gives rest to brain and body which increases focus and productivity in work.

### **Balanced Diet**

Restaurants and snacks centres are closed due to lockdown. So, the best part is, eating outside fatty, oily and unhygienic junk food has stopped. Homemade food is always good for health. However, care must be taken that due to change in lifestyle and ample idle time, one may tend to eat more, even if not hungry. Stress and depression may cause emotional eating which is unhealthy. Eating normal healthy and homemade food should form part of diet which should be balanced as per need. Crash diets for weight gain / loss should be avoided. One should drink plenty of water in order to remain healthy. Further, it is recommended to have warm water which has multiple health benefits. The recommended intake of water is approx. four litres per day for an adult male, and approx. three litres for an adult female.

### **Indoor Exercise / Games, Meditation & Yoga**

Lock down / work from home has reduced the level of activities which may cause weight gain and lethargy. Those who regularly workout or do physical activities must be restless right now.

In order to maintain proper health, it is advisable to do indoor exercises like Sun Salutation (Surya Namaskar), Yoga, skipping, spot running, dips, planks, sit ups, dancing or such other physical activities. Further, wherever possible one can play indoor games like table tennis, carrom, chess, etc.

Meditation and yoga are essential for good mental health. Regular meditation and yoga decrease stress and anxiety, gives emotional stability, increases creativity, relaxes mind and gives better memory and retention.

### **Maintaining cleanliness around**

Cleanliness prevents us from diseases and infections. It keeps us away from illness and allergies. Further, it also boosts mental health. Cleaning home regularly also involves physical activity which helps us stay fit.

### **Limited / Selective access to Media**

News channels or social media now a days are very fast and give excessive data about things happening around us. Almost every news is shown as 'Breaking News.' Some people are eager to have every update on COVID-19. While for others, this excessive bombarding of possible negative news may be disturbing and cause depression. Therefore, it is advisable to watch the news channels on selective basis. One can watch news after intervals of 1 - 2 days or focus on other events happening around the world which may divert mind, away from negative news.

### **Work / Business Management by Company Secretaries**

It is interesting to note that in spite of COVID-19, more than 5500 new Companies and more than 2300 new LLPs are registered in the month of March 2020 which indicates that work has not stopped and people have future business plans. (*Source: MCA website*). This also indicates the positive mindset of people. They believe that although there are obstacles in life, the show must go on. Following are some tips as regards managing work and business in COVID-19 era:

### **Awareness amongst Clients / Companies about work from home**

Company Secretaries are fortunate that, barring few assignments, almost all the work can be done from remote location. CS need not be personally present at office in order to complete the work. Whether it may be maintenance of registers, or submission of returns, preparation of documents or conducting meetings, all can be done without physically going to office. Now there is statutory recognition for virtual meetings of Directors and shareholders. Even the urgent matters before NCLT Benches shall be heard through video conferencing, till the lockdown ends.

Some companies and company secretaries' firms in India have already adopted work from home policy even before arrival of COVID-19. Especially during maternity leaves or relocation of employees, rather than changing the employee, companies and firms prefer to give flexible working hours or in some cases, complete work from home.

Therefore, Company Secretaries may convince their management / clients that work from home or online meetings are possible and the productivity does not get affected even if person is not physically present.

### **Online monitoring / meetings with staff / team**

There are number of audio-visual software like Skype, Google Hangout, Facebook, YouTube, etc. through which online meetings can be conducted. With efficient use of technology, one can discuss and take forward, the work and still maintain social distance. Further, there are software which can monitor working hours and track the tasks completed by employees, while they work from home. Employers may think of having a separate work from home policy for its employees. Following is brief code of conduct which employer and employee may observe in order to make work from home successful:

### **Do's for Employers and Employees**

<b>Code of Conduct for Employers</b>	<b>Code of Conduct for Employees</b>
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<p>Trusting the employees and considering them as assets rather than expense or liability.</p>	<p>Communication is backbone of work from home and thus being in touch, being quick in response, keeping the team informed is necessary.</p>
<p>Developing infrastructure and communication facilities which will enable 'work from home'.</p>	<p>Maintaining daily reporting sheets for tasks completed indicating time required for completion and sending them to employer.</p>
<p>Keeping lenient view about employees and providing flexibility.</p>	<p>Working with same sincerity and spirit as if he / she is working in office and remembering that he / she will grow only if organization grows.</p>
<p>Avoid termination of employees and avoid their pay cuts during COVID-19 period. They are dependent on you and have family to feed.</p>	<p>Not taking undue advantage of situation by delaying work, giving excuses for non-completion of tasks, not communicating or providing false information.</p>
<p>Develop proper task monitoring systems, work tracking sheets, reporting mechanism by which performance of employees can be assessed.</p>	<p>Not taking undue advantage of situation by delaying work, giving excuses for non-completion of tasks, not communicating or providing false information.</p>

### **Promoting Online Transactions**

After demonetization, people are comfortable with online transactions. There are still some companies which prefer issuing cheques or some promoters prefer cash transactions. Through various modes / applications like GPay, PayTM, Bharat Pe, NEFT, RTGS, etc, one can successfully receive or make payments. Henceforth, whether it may be receipts or payments, one can plan to go for online transactions, fully.

## **Funds Management**

Following are some important tips for funds management during this period:

### ➤ **Enhancing Revenue and exploring new sources**

Whole world is suffering from economic slowdown and thus are we. There are no revenues or huge delay in generation of revenues. Thus, there is a need to search alternate source of revenue along with existing. One may think of writing online blogs, creating educational videos on social media, conducting online lectures, writing books, getting work outsourced on assignment basis, etc. which may add to your revenue.

### ➤ **Invoicing & Settlement of old pending accounts**

PCS firms may focus on billing. Sending invoices on regular basis to retainership clients will certainly help. They may propose client companies to change the billing cycle from Annual to Quarterly or monthly basis so that liquidity is maintained. It will also help companies, as they don't have to make single big payment at once.

Further, this time can be utilized for clearing and settlement of long pending accounts. Reimbursement of payments made on behalf of clients can be claimed. Old pending accounts can be settled with client. It may not happen that payment will be released immediately. But at least balances can be confirmed. Further, in order to maintain sufficient working capital in business, one may take advance from clients for payment of statutory fees involved in any assignment.

### ➤ **Avoiding unnecessary costs**

Nobody knows till when this economic slowdown will remain. From current scenario one can infer that it the restoration may take longer time. Some people are facing a situation where revenues have totally stopped but expenses are fixed. In this situation, to minimize the financial crunch, one should identify the unnecessary costs and cut them down wherever possible. Possibility of deferring payments may also be checked. For example – Full credit period of payment may be utilized. Only necessary expenses should be made. It may happen that with the fear of shortage of

supply of some goods, one may end up buying more than required and storing it, which will block the funds. So, correct assessment of needs should be made.

➤ **Avoiding capital expenditure in near future**

COVID-19 will have long term impact on market and commercial transactions. Several Banks have already reduced the rate of interest on home loans or car loans. Any expenditure of capital nature or luxury like buying new car, acquiring new property or land should be avoided. Use of credit cards or any kind of borrowing must also be avoided as far as possible. Liquidity must be maintained for the expenses required for taking care of our health which has first priority over any luxurious expense. Current value of investments previously made, is very low right now. In case of cash crunch, one will be forced to realize those investments at loss or lower value. Therefore, one should plan to maintain liquidity for longer term by avoiding unnecessary expenditure.

➤ **Gradual investments with professional guidance**

Prices of many blue-chip stocks are down by almost 30% - 40% and one may get attracted to buy those stocks with a view to gain huge profits in future. But one must be extra cautious while making new investments in Stocks or Mutual Funds. Investments must be made gradually and with the proper expert's guidance as market is unpredictable. There will be considerable volatility in stock prices in the coming days. Therefore, investment decisions are to be carefully taken keeping in view the liquidity position and with the help of professional guidance.

### **Self-Development**

COVID-19 has given plenty of idle time to all. Many people are bored of this unwanted compulsory long leave. One should remember that this is temporary phase of life. Once this phase passes, they will be back to routine hectic work schedule. Instead of getting bored, it is advisable to be patient and effectively utilise this time for doing the things which, one could not do due to time constraint. Following is illustrative list:

1. Spending time with family, helping each other in daily work.

2. Learning new skills like cooking, appearing for online exams, reading online blogs, watching educational videos, downloading and reading online study materials, etc.
3. Extensive reading in areas of interest, carrying out research, writing Articles / Blogs for various publications or online forums.
4. Conducting Online Lectures for students, creating and circulating knowledge sharing videos.
5. Pursuing Hobbies like singing, dancing, drawing, tree plantation, craft and art work, etc.

### **Social Responsibility**

Last, but the most important, is understanding and acting upon our social responsibility in this difficult time faced by nation. There are poor and needy people outside who work on daily wages. People below poverty line, are suffering the most because of COVID-19. They have more fear of starvation than COVID-19. Following is illustrative list of activities in which we can engage ourselves.

1. Volunteer or give financial contribution to various funds created by Government of India which will be utilized to fight against COVID-19.
2. Guiding Companies / Organizations as to how they can volunteer or contribute to the Government of India to fight against COVID-19.
3. Avoiding wastage of food. Giving food to poor, hungry and needy people.
4. Feeding the Animals and Birds.
5. Spreading social awareness about COVID-19.
6. Appreciating and wherever possible, helping those who are actively fighting against COVID-19, like Doctors, Nurses, Police officers, garbage carriers, shopkeepers, etc.
7. While engaging into any of the above activities, care must be taken that he / she is not breaking any of the norms / guidelines prescribed by Government for COVID-19 or not infringing the Lock-down rules.

## **ICSI and its future outlook**

- ICSI has always been proactive in capacity building of its members. Looking at the need of the hour, ICSI can consider following in order to align with COVID-19 guidelines:
- Extending benefit of CSBF to the members who are affected due to COVID-19.
- Providing guidelines to its members & students for “work from home” as regards secretarial training, if lockdown & social distancing remains for longer period of time.
- Implementing Online Oral Tuition Coaching (OTC) for students at all chapters, throughout the year, on regular basis. This should not be through recorded videos. Rather it shall be, live online teaching by faculties as interactive session. By matching schedule of lectures at 2 or more chapters, coaching can be given to students at remote places (even falling under different chapters) through which many students can be benefited without travelling to classes. For Example: For the Online teaching (OTC) of Pune Chapter, students from say Kolhapur or Ratnagiri can also participate. With this, chapters not having OTC facility due to shortage of faculties or a smaller number of students can also impart training. Student from various locations can attend the lecture without personally travelling to classes at Chapter office.
- Conducting online programs or professional development courses throughout the year, across India, by which Program Credit Hours can be earned without physical attendance of members / students.

## **Conclusion**

COVID-19 has changed the perception of human beings about life. One needs to revisit and assess the entire thought process which has been developed over the years. Science and Technology is believed to have achieved enormous success; Man has marked his footsteps on moon; However, COVID-19 is making us realize that human being and his achievements are too small in front of these uncontrollable forces. One has to keep in mind that this will have long-term impact and a new way

of life will have to be adopted henceforth. Nevertheless, the situation will change and there will be a dawn of positive ray, soon.

## **Make this world a beautiful place to live**

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Certainly the world is evidencing the phase which I could compare it with few mythological stories in Lord Shiv Puran or Lord Vishnu Puran. Demons were killing humans and destroying earth like anything and then God's incarnation killed the demon. We could guess how people in those mythological stories must have managed stress...by Tapasharya or Bhakti. In today's world "Tapashcharya" or "Bhakti" can be compared with dedication and commitment. I could also quote one more example of Tapashcharya or Bhakti... Shri. Vinayak Damodar Savarkar ji..., the great freedom fighter. I have read his book "Mazi Janmathep". Savarkar ji was sentenced to two life terms of imprisonment totalling fifty years and was moved to the Cellular Jail in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. He was not allowed to read or write during his jail. How he must have managed it? For whom he suffered all agonies? Sheer commitment and dedication to get freedom for India...Bhakti towards India and tapashcharya for India. Great level of spirit to fight against British Rulers. Ultimate level of commitment towards the Nation. Salute to such personalities who fought for nation and didn't complain a single word.

As compared to all those freedom fighters, we are in much better situation. They fought for freedom of India without even thinking of their lives. In our case, we need to save our life and life of others too. Corona has taught us a great lesson of respecting nature and all living and non-living things on earth.

Certainly, due to lockdown and threat of Corona, stress levels have gone up. Routine life has changed drastically. The working men and women have to do home chores plus office work both. They have to also take care of elders in home plus kids too. In all such engagements they need to keep themselves balanced. This has become a challenge.

Some are happy that their travelling time is reduced but some may feel that it was better than working at home doing home chores plus office work. Lot of possibilities and feelings. Those who are happy due to lockdown, need not worry and continue

their happiness. Those who are worried or stressed out needs to channelize their thinking and engagements during a day.

There are lot of tools and techniques available on internet to manage stress. But the problem is how to select, when to do, how to change the habits?

Stress is nothing but anger or sadness or fear. Stress can be due to work, at home or due to social media.

Stress starts when you have lot of anxiety about office work or home chores. It is very essential to plan your day and week to come out of anxiety.

You can set some ground rules for working from home. Following are some examples of ground rules: -

1. Set time of getting up and sleeping at night.
2. Bifurcate home chores between members at home.
3. Allocate home chores to children too so that they can learn it and share responsibility.
4. Be in office attire while working for office or attending calls
5. Select proper place for working where you get fresh air and proper sun light
6. Plan your day before starting it in your diary as you used to do when you were at office.
7. Select some good music to play in between breaks.
8. Select some good games to play if you have kids at home or otherwise too.
9. You can play games like Antakshari, Cards, Snake and Ladder, Business apart from cricket and football. Lot of one minute's games available on internet which you can plan in breaks with your family members.
10. Allocate time for social media
11. Follow discipline at home while working.

You can allocate appropriate time for following activities during day: -

1. Exercise
2. Home chores

3. Office work
4. Time to take rest
5. Time to discuss with Family members or play with kids
6. Time to take lunch break and dinner
7. Time to write diary following – before going to sleep
  - a. Happiness Index
  - b. Good work done Index
  - c. Gratitude Index

To come out of stress, we need to change our thinking quickly. Changing thinking when upset, when angry, when fearful is very important. When you have anger, just remember which things you love, laugh at the anger and come out of it. When you are upset, just hear some good music, play with kids, do something which you love to do and come out of your sadness. When you have fear in mind, discuss with your spouse or colleague you trust most or imagine that you have conquered it. Imagination is first step towards achieving your objectives. You must have experienced it in life. If you start thinking every problem is opportunity, you will start enjoying it. In life nothing happens without cause. There is a cause for every incidence in our life. God has some good things for us. We have read so many stories of Saints, Leaders, great personalities. We need to learn from those stories and implement it in our life.

Jot down what motivates you and hear or read that whenever you are feeling down. Some may like to hear motivational songs or music or stories. Keep a collection of all those handy.

You can use time to create some beautiful things during lockdown. Some may have hobby to cook, make some crafts, things, articles, sing, draw, paint, write poems, stories, blogs, articles, play some instruments, dance, watch movies or research on some new topics etc... Encourage those hobbies during lock down. Develop those hobbies and learn more about it.

Do such things which makes you happy and keep motivated. For living happy life, we don't need more money, we need more peace and inner satisfaction. Try to

change your habits, others will automatically start behaving good. Inner happiness can be achieved if we help someone, do some good work and do things which we like.

It is very precious time, where your kids are with you for 24\*7.... Such a golden time to teach them all values and principles of life which will last long. If you tell them stories about great persons, saints, kings of India, they will learn lot of things about behaviour, values and principles. We can have such interaction which will motivate them to contribute to the nation.

Lastly, it is very important to write down your index before going to sleep: -

1. Happiness Index- How many times you felt very happy during a day
2. Good work Index- Which work you did today which you felt was really good
3. Gratitude index- Express gratitude towards persons or things without whom you cannot live. Increase the list day by day.

Being happy can be the habit... Enjoy wherever you are .... if we all are happy this world will be happy...it will be a beautiful place to live..... God Bless All!

## Living a Conscious and Positive Life- Covid 19 and Beyond

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Managing Stress and Living a Happy, Healthy life is every ones' need specially in Covid-19 scenario. One may have attended sessions on Stress Management but real test is how one reacts or responds to the situation of stress/crisis when it arises. The person who practices and lives by the principles of yoga/pranayama/ meditation can remain "Jalkamalvat" and not be affected by external situation / forces.

Rishi Patanjali introduced Yoga/Pranayama as "Patanjali Yoga Sutra and this knowledge was passed down through "Guru-Shishya tradition".

The changing needs and habits of people has led to a shift in the way these practices are taught today. The yam, niyam, asana, pranayam have been made into easily digestible nuggets of daily practices, short duration programs of 3-6 days, supported by audio, video talks and meditation practices by the Spiritual Gurus. These practices of Patanjali Yoga Sutra, include the breathing technique, the kriya and meditation.

People who follow one or more of these practices seem to manage stress well, live happier and healthier:

1. Sudarshan Kriya by SriSri Ravi Shankar, Founder of Art of living, <https://www.artofliving.org/>
2. Shambhavi kriya by Sadguru, Foundaer of Ishayoga, <http://www.ishayoga.org/>
3. Raj yoga path by Brahmakumaris, <https://www.brahmakumaris.org/>
4. Pranic healing by Late Grand Master ChoaKoK Sui, <https://pranichealing.com/>
5. "Conscious Living" - by Shivoham Foundation through raising awareness, healing and purification of Body, Mind, and Heart, <http://shivohamfoundation.co.in/>

Some popular forms of fitness and well-being programs with the young generation today are:

1. Traditional yoga
2. Ashtanga yoga
3. Power yoga
4. Gym
5. Kickboxing
6. Zumba or any other dance form
7. Any form of sports

## 8. Any other hobby

### **Impact of COVID-19 and Way Forward:**

COVID situation has dawned upon us a new reality. This unprecedented event is bringing a shift in the consciousness of humanity at a deeper level. The world post COVID will see huge positive transformations for those who focus to focus on inner reflection and growth of self spiritually, work upon themselves and benefit from the practices taught by enlightened masters today. The people who have not yet learnt these practices can make the best utilization of time and learn the same if inclined from any master they feel inclined to or any path they like to choose. The paths may be different, goal is ultimately same. Managing Stress and attending calmness in all situations through the regular practice of your choice.

### **Pre COVID:**

Millions of people were just focusing in rat race of money, power and position which surely increased their stress and they created stressful situation for others too. There were luckily few millions who followed spiritual practices for their health and happiness as guided by Spiritual Masters however their success has been partial as the calm, they could face during seated hour of meditation could not be faced in offices or dealing with family members. In short, they got affected by other people and outside situations. Some were still working to control their anger, irritation, anxiety levels even though it may have reduced. So, the principle rule is Constant practice every day to erase old sanskara's like we brush our teeth every day.

### **During COVID:**

The lockdown has shifted the paradigm of "Life and Living" overnight. Certain consciousness is coming about in all aspects of life:

1. Daily travelling/ commuting to office has completely stopped (saving 2-3 hours)
2. Quality time with family, where family members have started contributing in the household chores. The woman of the house - "The Homemaker" is the leader of today.
3. Technology has helped to define Work from Home in a new way and connecting each other digitally.
4. Connecting with clients over Video call.
5. Knowledge sessions through Webinar is the most welcomed initiative by ICSI and all other e-initiative by ICSI for members and students are very well appreciated.

6. Instead of Gym or any outside activity for recreation, people are finding alternative solutions at home.
7. People with spiritual consciousness continue their practices and meditation at home. More fortunate ones are connected and guided by their spiritual masters directly in these times.
8. Million more new comers are joining guided meditations from Spiritual masters online and feeling a shift within.

All of the above have surely reduced the stress for those who are in spiritual practice however stress and uncertainty remains due to the economic slowdown which world is facing and it's impact on CS either as practicing CS or CS in employment.

In these difficult times, I appreciate the presence and actions of all the living master's towards healing of the world.

They have galvanised large number of people into self-healing and meditation practices and are doing huge service towards humanity.

1. Gurudev Shivam from Shivoam Foundation was first to start the online “World Healing Prayers” in most critical time from 18th March to 25th March followed by Shakti Sadhna, Ram Navmi meditation on FB live, Satsang and for all disciples meditation on Zoom and WhatsApp.
2. Art of living Foundation also started initiative of World Meditates with Gurudev Sri Sri RaviShankar where more than million followers meditate with Gurudev at 12 pm and 7.30 pm IST on FB live, Insta live. Art of living teachers are taking online Happiness programs and Advance course.
3. Brahmakumaris also offered free 7 days Raj yoga session.
4. [PranicHealing Foundation](#) also is conducting FB online and Zoom for heart meditation and full moon meditation

#### **Post COVID:**

This collective effort of all living masters has helped to bring greater positivity, bring more people to experience spirituality and happiness.

It is certainly helping us to manage negative emotions like Anger, Jealousy, Greed, Fear and imbibe positive emotions like Love, Joy, Gratitude, Happiness, thus helping our nation and world to come out of this situation.

Our contribution is to remain positive, pick up one practice of your liking to manage stress either involving a spiritual practice or other physical / recreational activities, make it a daily routine post COVID.

Like the taste of pudding is in eating, the benefit of learning is in continuous practice.

ICSI has contributed materially towards PM Cares fund to fight against this pandemic, now let's take a vow to change our life style.

Imbibe one breathing technique/ Pranayama or one physical / recreational activity which helps us to reduce our Stress and spread happiness and joy around.

As our program starts with ICSI Motto song, I humbly appeal that

1. Our program ends with guided positive affirmation / short meditation not more than 10 minutes
2. We encourage our student community to attend a special session on "Positive thinking / Stress Management" with special focus on dealing with Exam related stress

Let's Live Life post COVID

**C**reate

**O**pportunities

**V**isualise

**I**nfinite potential

**D**o things differently