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Initiative of WE Foundation

WOMENSHINE



+

MINDFUL EATING
NEW AGE LIFESTYLE
UNLEASHING THE
POWER OF PLEASURE

TRAVEL & TASTE
SPRING OF LOVE

BHUMIKA DESWAL



CHIEF EDITOR'S LETTER

#SHINEON

APARNA MISHRA

Founder , Women Shine

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*Let's reach for the sky
Let's win over the world
Let's change the story*

So we have actually changed the story. Month by month we have grown in leaps and bounds and are now geared to grow up in many folds.

We will be completing 3 years of **Womenshine** very soon...many congratulations to everyone, our readers, our associates, and our team members who believed in Women Shine every time.

Our **April edition** is dedicated to World Health Day.

So get ready to receive a dose of Inspiration and enjoy reading interesting articles.

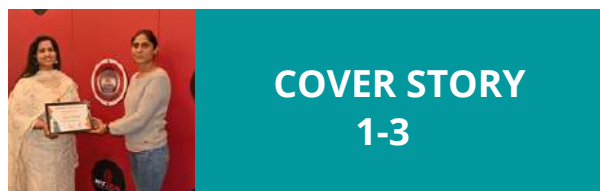
I am sure you will love this edition.

Keep sharing your thoughts, and suggestions at womenshinemag@gmail.com

Wishing you lots of love, light, and the best of happiness.

Aparna Mishra
Founder-Editor, Women Shine
#Shineonwomen

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BHUMIKA: AN EXPORTER OF SUSTAINABLE HAND-BLOCK FASHION

Bhumika, an exporter of Sustainable hand-block printed fashion, a motivational speaker and a serial entrepreneur is the proud owner of the clothing line "Deswal Sourcing Solutions." The company still serves a sizable international customer base that is dispersed across the USA, UK, and Philippines.

Even Hollywood has noticed how popular Deswal's made clothing is. She designs apparel that is worn by famous people like Penelope Kardashian, Sara Jessica Parker, Kyle Richards, and Oprah Winfrey.

Her professional life has been filled with experiences and showcases her victory over the impossibility. Deswal Sourcing Solutions, which was founded in 2016 with just five employees, currently employs a large staff and produces the highest-quality bespoke goods for retailers.



Aditi Gupta from Women shine got into a conversation with her, & this is what she had to say:

WS: What was your story of becoming a woman entrepreneur (please talk about your past work experiences, and career growth journey)?

BD: I graduated from NIFT Delhi. I was very much inclined to textile, fabric cutting, measuring tape etc. I used to steal my mother's sewing machine and sew old clothes and make them size. I also worked as a faculty in Pearl Fashion Institute, Bangladesh when my husband was placed there. Side by side I used to work solely at a very small level. When we came back to India, I started selling stuff from home in 2012 with a Facebook page. It was mainly for kids. I also sold stuff in exhibitions and during the evenings, I used to display the clothes made by me in our nearby park & I felt really happy doing that.

When my husband's job was again transferred to Bangladesh, I decided to stay back and utilize my energies towards my passion. It was challenging for me to manage our finances, with 2 kids alone. I also picked up a daycare job at Shri Ram School, but it never made me happy. I gave myself a break and thought about what I wanted to do.

I again started my business & selling stuff from home. I exported leather patches. Later on, I rented a place with 5 employees in 2016. There were a lot of mistakes made, and there were challenging situations to manage work & family, but I kept going without any excuse. My work grew so fast because of my dedication. We also expanded to a new commercial place to set up the factory as the team grew. I worked the whole day, & even during the night to ensure timely deliveries of my packages.

In 6 years, we are at 12 Cr turnover. My clothes have been worn by Kim Kardashian's kids, Oprah Winfrey etc. We have also received orders from the UK military combat jackets as well as from NSG.

WS: How Much Do You Love What You Do, And Why Is That Important To You As An Entrepreneur/Executive? Can you share your long-term vision for your business?

BD: After working for so many years, as a woman, I realise how much my life has changed after being independent. Earlier I used to take permission & get criticised, but now I get so much respect from them. This makes me so proud. I love to help people who genuinely wish to work without giving any excuses. It is not easy, but I had to take a call and it worked for me. My kids have supported me completely now that they have grown up. My husband also left his well-paid job for my business & it fills me with happiness & joy.

I am working with Looms of Ladakh, which is an ethical, herder-artisan-led brand that brings cutting-edge design to heritage crafts. This helped me with upskilling traditional artisans who came here to learn from me. And also in providing sustainable solutions to preserve our cultural legacies.



WS: Who Are Some Of The People Who Have Had The Most Influence On Your Career Path?

BD: My father. I never realised this till the time I started my own business. Whenever I had to make payments or make important decisions, I always got flashbacks of him. He always had a rule of giving payments to all his vendors before bringing any money home. He used to make proper lists of all the dues and clear them off immediately.

I also have the same habit, and this has led to everyone knowing that I am a reliable partner. All my workers have always helped me and I have also helped them back. Whatever I am earning, I am earning because of my workers, and I am always available for them. I have learned all this from my dad. He never left anything unattended and the same is for me.

After marriage, my mother-in-law has been an inspiration. She is a role model to everyone. When I got married, she was working as a nurse, but 4 years ago, she completed her PhD. All these years she has taken care of her household, worked, taught and studied for herself.





WS: What Is The Biggest Mistake That You Have Made In Your Career?

BD: Well, I would say, there were a lot of mistakes but I like to call them learning. Whenever I did something wrong, there was a lesson that I learnt from it. There have been thousands of learnings during my journey.

WS: According to you, what is the scope of the handcraft garment business in India and how will it shape in post covid times?

BD: The scope is immense. Or even if it is not, I find it is our responsibility to take it forward. Since hand-block prints and handcrafted garments are our Indian cultural heritage and a form of art. This is why I am very passionate about this. Me, as a woman entrepreneur, I would like to grow and expand it all across the world and dedicate my whole time to it, until my energies and body allow me to.

WS: What Keeps You Motivated Every Day?

BD: Every day, I want to do more. I always look forward to things that have to be done. 8:30 AM, I start my work, and I think whatever things that I am doing have so much creativity in it that it keeps me alive. I get my kick from the positive feedback that I receive from my buyers. It is always something that I love to come back to. My work is now imbibed in me and it automatically happens.

WS: What Advice Would You Give To An Aspiring Female Entrepreneur Just Starting?

BD: Just follow your passion and do not be afraid of anything. No work is small or big. Whatever we have learnt, we have learnt from here, after our birth, so don't be afraid of any judgement. Try your 100%, and put everything into your passion. Trust me, you won't ever regret it.



Written by : Aditi Gupta

World Health Day



Every time on 7 April, World Health Day(WHD) commemorates the World Health Organization's(WHO) foundation anniversary and focuses on a different public health issue. In addition to emphasizing the path towards attaining Health For All, this time's theme, 75 Times of perfecting Public Health, will be used to commemorate WHO's 75th anniversary.

Quote:

Gold is one of the most important essence used in jewellery creation. Pure gold is believed to relieve pressure and has been shown to quicken the mending of injuries and blisters. Moreover, gold has demonstrated benefits for controlling body temperature, and strengthening the immune system. Silver and Gold Vermeil necklaces, rings, and other accessories will help to prevent common diseases like the cold and flu since silver is an antibacterial agent.

Silver is well known for being a potent antibacterial agent that aids in preventing colds and flu and fighting infections. In addition, silver can support blood circulation and the regulation of body temperature. Copper jewellery is another kind of "healthy" jewellery to have in your collection. Since copper has been shown to have anti-inflammatory effects, wearing copper

jewellery can help to lessen discomfort and inflammation. Bracelets and bangles have a special capacity to promote blood circulation. In particular, gold and silver bangles have the power to control energy flow, bringing peace to the wearer. In general, wearing jewellery is not harmful to your health. But, you may have an allergy to the material used to make some jewellery, which can injure you if it comes into touch with your skin. Inexpensive metallic jewellery may contain significant amounts of nickel, cadmium, and lead, all of which are deadly, especially for young children.



Written by : Shefali Verma

ASMR- A Healthier Way to Fall Asleep and much more?

Autonomous sensory meridian response (better known as **ASMR**) is the new so-called “trend”, however, does it work?

Lots of sleep studies have been conducted leading scientists to look to experiment with different sounds, smells, and experiences to help people fall asleep. However, is ASMR the answer to most of our questions and the answer to our sleepless nights? Insomnia is one of the biggest health problems today's world is facing. More and more people are having trouble sleeping and therefore experiencing side effects of insomnia, tiredness, and exhaustion reported as the main ones. Scientists and everyday people have tried various amounts of different methods to help themselves and their family and friends sleep easier and better. A lot of the time, an answer to sleeping better is a sleeping pill. Although, what happens when some people don't respond to those methods either? What happens when you do not want to take medicine for it?



ASMR is a tingling sensation that usually begins on the scalp and moves down the back of the neck and upper spine. A pleasant form of paresthesia, it has been compared with auditory-tactile synesthesia and may overlap with frisson (as stated online). There are a lot of different forms of ASMR – starting from rainfall and fire crackling videos and audios, continuing to scalp massages, hair brushing, applying makeup; soft tapping noises with different triggers (some more popular are tapping nails onto surfaces such as plastic, wood, paper, metal, etc), turning a book's pages, listening to "crinkly" items such as paper, clothes, and other materials, typing on a keyboard and finishing sometimes with personal attention videos spoken in a soft quiet voice (where the ASMR artist performs tasks such as applying nail polish, makeup, giving a haircut, back massage, ear cleaning, etc onto a mannequin, which is supposed to be “you” or directly to the camera.

Most of those ASMR artists whisper in a low calming voice to help you fall asleep. A lot of the time there are even ASMR pet videos or audio of a cat purring or kneading close to a microphone. The content associated with the ASMR could be either just audio or videos accompanied by clear audio. The ASMR artists or creators usually have very professional equipment such as a high-tech microphone and/or a mannequin to work on. There are a lot of different ASMR artists out there but a few of the most popular are TingTing ASMR, RelaxCorner ASMR, Starling ASMR, Jojo's ASMR, GinaWhispers, Sensory by Sophie, ASMR Promo, Realdealpjc. Those creators and many more are very talented and they are proven to help people since more and more report being able to relax easier, getting less anxiety and panic attacks, being able to calm down after a stressful day, and also being able to fall asleep while listening or watching their videos.



ASMR is more than just the next “trend”. It is a form of art. It can help people with a lot of health issues and problems but it also manages to help people in their everyday lives relax and live a calmer and happier life and sleep better. It is proven that ASMR has helped people experiencing stress and anxiety issues relax and calm down and also fall asleep. Moreover, it has even helped people with depression, panic attacks, and insomnia calm down enough to fall asleep. People who sleep better lead happier lives and have a better life quality and ever better life expectancy. Better sleep helps people be happier and healthier, boosts their immune system, and helps them perform better in their personal life and also professional life. As it seems, ASMR has helped quite a lot of people and is doing nothing wrong, so why not try it?

Lastly, if you want a personal experience, I have tried watching and listening to ASMR videos myself and have never looked back. They have helped me with all the above and more. Since I lost my mum due to COVID back in 2021, I was experiencing Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), anxiety and panic attacks and fell into a deep depressive state. I was not able to fall asleep until at least 5 am and when I did fall asleep, I was constantly having nightmares. When a friend of mine suggested watching some ASMR videos, I never expected them to help. Contrary to my belief they managed to decrease my anxiety and slowly I started to fall asleep earlier than 5 am every night until one day I managed to go back to my normal sleep routine (which for me is midnight or 1 am). I now use ASMR on daily basis, it helps me not only fall asleep and sleep better, but it helps me decrease my anxiety and stress of everyday life. I recommend it.



Written by :
Moumita Chakraborty

NEW AGE LIFESTYLE FOR 2023

The year 2023 focuses on lifestyle trends and seems to be more holistic and sustainable solutions rooted more towards science. The experts of the wellness department run by Eva Longoria have predicted some future trends in lifestyle and well-being for the upcoming year in 2023.

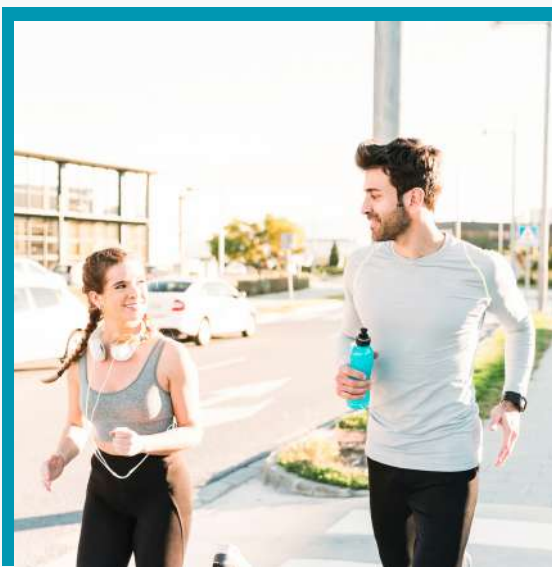
Some of these trends navigated have been stated below.

1. The AARP Special -

All those fans part of the wellness community for years have practised the daily habits of having dinner as early as 5 pm similar to the reserved retired folks till now. CEO Colette Dong stated that the company has started seeing people shifting dinner reservations for earlier timings across the hospitality industry and additional information on how people are more informed about the effects of a late dinner on their sleep, readiness and recovery. This is also because wellness gurus are advocating for meals getting plenty of time to digest if eaten earlier giving it plenty of time to digest if eaten earlier and also setting up a successful sleep routine.

2. Low-Intensity Workouts -

During the pandemic walking took to the centre point of attention and focus. People have finally realized that they could look good as well as work out without putting themselves through rigorous gym work on a daily basis. Lower-intensity workouts such as pilates and mobility exercises are working their way into daily fitness routines.

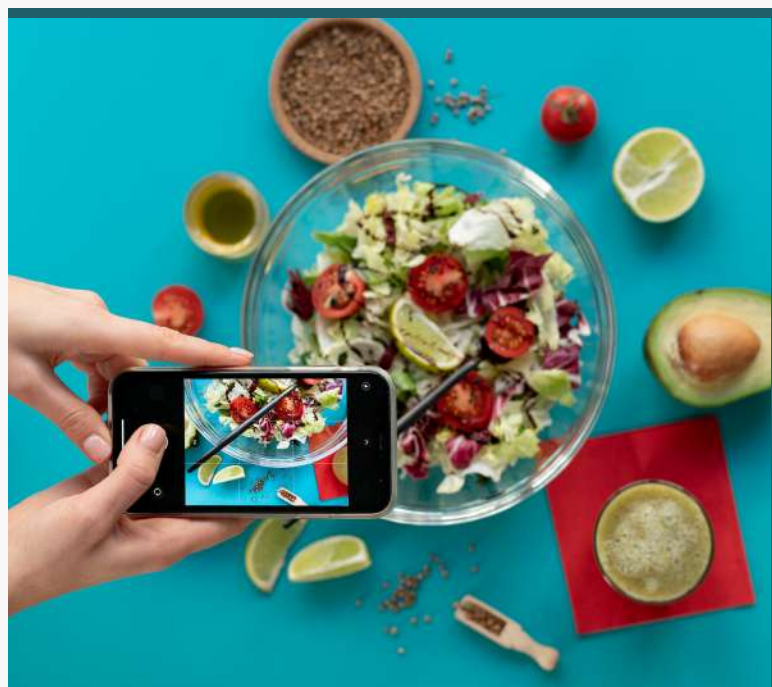


3. At-Home Beauty Treatments-

Companies such as FaceGym and products such as Droplette are being preferred more by consumers such companies offer online classes and Droplette is a product which is a misting micro infuser device that claims to deliver serums deeper into the skin than conventional skin care methods entering the market and allowing customers to take beauty into their own hands and creating a regimen for themselves. It has advantageous options of spa facilities at home and treatments at half the price.

4. Digital Detox -

People are beginning to realize that taking in more social media and getting attached to technology is increasing toxicity levels among individuals. In order to counteract this issue, setting aside phones and Ipads would lead to healthier boundaries in relationships as well as lead to spending more time in productive activities such as family time, hiking, cooking and attainable self-care such as meditation. Giamplo says, "simple practises like putting phones in do not disturb mode, muting social media notifications and reverting to traditional alarm clocks so phones can be tucked away at night are becoming increasingly popular".



5. Working Out With A Crowd -

Dong stated that a lot of people would return to see in-person workouts for motivation and a sense of community. A lot of platforms would be integrating live or dual camera functionality to further boost motivation, and competition and lead to a healthier vibe.



Written by : Aastha Vohra



#shiningwomen

MILLETS FOR A HEALTHIER FUTURE



Millets are small-seeded grains that have been cultivated for thousands of years across the world. The year 2023 has been declared by the United Nations as the International Year of the Millet, following a proposal by India.

The Indian government has been promoting millets as a healthy and sustainable food option, and various initiatives have been launched to increase the production and consumption of millets in India.

Millets are grown in different parts of India, including Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, and Rajasthan. They include a variety of species such as sorghum (jowar), finger millet (ragi), pearl millet (bajra), foxtail millet (kangni), little millet (kutki), and barnyard millet (sanwa).

One of the biggest advantages of millet is its high nutritional value. They are a rich source of protein, fibre, vitamins, and minerals. They are particularly high in calcium, iron, and magnesium, which are essential for healthy bones, blood, and muscles. For example- Bajra is a rich source of proteins,

minerals, and vitamins and is a good source of energy. It is also a good source of dietary fibre. Jowar is a nutritious grain that is high in fibre and protein. It is also a good source of vitamins and minerals, including iron and magnesium. Ragi grains are rich in minerals, dietary fibre, polyphenols, and proteins.

Millets are also rich in antioxidants, which help to prevent cell damage and reduce the risk of chronic diseases such as cancer and heart disease. Millets have a low glycaemic index, which means that they release glucose slowly into the bloodstream, helping to regulate blood sugar levels and reducing the risk of diabetes, making them an ideal food for people with diabetes.

Millets are also gluten-free, making them an excellent alternative for those with gluten intolerance or celiac disease. Millets are also easy to digest and do not cause digestive issues, making them an ideal food option for people with sensitive stomachs.

Millets are also an excellent food option for people seeking to lose or maintain a healthy weight. They are low in calories and high in fibre, which helps in keeping the stomach full for longer periods, reduces hunger pangs, and promote satiety. Millets are also rich in antioxidants, which help in reducing inflammation in the body and promoting overall health.

Apart from the health benefits, millets are also an excellent food option from a sustainability perspective. Millets are also highly resistant to pests and diseases, which means that they require fewer pesticides and herbicides than other crops.

One of the most significant advantages of millets is their ability to grow in harsh conditions with minimal water and fertilizers. They are, therefore, an ideal crop for regions with low rainfall and poor soil quality.

Millets can be cooked in a variety of ways & they are used in various traditional dishes, including rotis, dosas, idlis, and porridges. Millets are a powerhouse of nutrients, they are a highly nutritious, affordable, and environmentally friendly crop with numerous advantages. In conclusion, millets are bestowed with a wealth of nutrients and fibre that supports boost metabolism, augment heart health, control blood pressure and diabetes and promote weight loss. Thus, they are a healthy addition to the meal plan.



Written by : Dt. Ranu Singh



World Health Day

Every year on 7 April, World Health Day (WHD) commemorates the World Health Organization's (WHO) foundation anniversary and focuses on a different public health issue. In addition to emphasizing the path towards attaining Health For All, this year's theme, 75 Times of perfecting Public Health, will be used to commemorate WHO's 75th anniversary.

QUOTE:

You live longer and are happier if you lead a healthy life. One in four Indians is now in peril of dying from non-communicable conditions like diabetes, cardiovascular complaint, or cancer before they turn 70 due to the rising frequency of liver diseases in India. Bad habits like a poor diet, inactivity, erratic sleeping patterns, and abusing alcohol or tobacco exorbitantly could beget you to join the 38 million Americans who are constrained by one or further habitual health diseases. When you lead a healthy life, you set a better illustration for your family members, especially your children. Also, you will improve the atmosphere in which they can develop. You'll make improvements to their heartiness and enjoyment of life both now and in the future by encouraging them to lead healthy cultures.



Written by :
Sangeeta Sharma

World Health Day Special: The importance of mindful eating and how it can improve your health



You might have very frequently heard of this term 'mindful eating'. It is not a diet plan rather a lifestyle of mindfulness. Mindful eating is a psychological process in which you pay full attention to your meal ignoring any distractions and be fully aware of your experiences, cravings and physical cues while eating. Some things that need to be taken care of while eating mindfully are -

- The speed while eating food should be slow, food should be thoroughly chewed and break should be taken after every bite.
- While eating food, minimise the distractions from the external environment as far as possible such as mobile phones, computer, television etc. and keep focus on eating food.
- Don't eat by time rather eat when you are hungry and most importantly eat until you achieve a comfortable level of fullness. Neither overdo on eating nor eat lesser.
- Always listen to your body for the feelings of hunger or fullness.
- Choose the foods that are responsible for a good health and well being.
- Stay away from processed and packaged foods as far as possible.

Mindful eating has various health benefits such as -

- Great stress reliever -

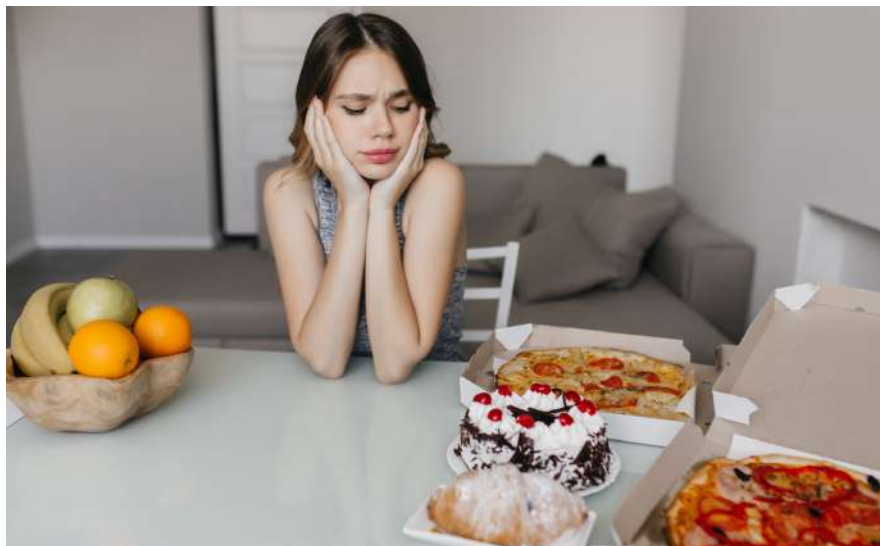
Whenever you eat mindfully, you will feel less anxious or stressed. Most people complain of stress eating and tend to eat more. But with mindful eating, when you pay heed towards the food eaten, while taking breaks in between bites, you focus on your feelings and try to catch the root of your stress. This way you can fight your problems.

- Gut friendly -

Whenever we eat mindfully, we start to chew the food in a better way while focusing more on it. Food's digestion also gets improved in this way and is well absorbed too.

- Helps deal with eating disorders -

There are various individuals who have eating problems such as anorexia nervosa in which people refuse taking food and some have bulimia nervosa in which a person eats excessively and then vomits out the food. But with mindful eating, these problems can be dealt with.



- Reduces food cravings -

There is a difference between actual hunger and food craving, which many of us fail to understand. By practicing mindful eating, we become aware of the food we eat and we also recognise that are we eating out of hunger or just taste.

- Aids in weight loss -

Paying close attention to the food we eat is a great aid in weight loss. We choose better when we eat consciously and also watch our portion size. Slow eating makes us eat less and actually how much is needed to our body.

Mindful eating is a conscious eating behaviour that can complement with any diet. It is something that aids in physical and psychological well-being and also helps to keep various diseases at bay.



**Written by : Dietitian
Garima Goyal**

UNLEASHING THE POWER OF PLEASURE



Why We Must Normalize Sexual Conversations

Normalizing conversations around sexual pleasure is an important step toward creating a more inclusive and healthy society. But, unfortunately, we exist in a world that is ashamed to talk about its own body and desires. I have had countless encounters where I realize how conversations around sexual topics and pleasure prefer to stay hidden inside the bedroom or, even worse, bottled up inside the heart and mind. Surprisingly, as the land that wrote Kamasutra, I see an urgent need for us to reclaim conversations around sexual topics and pleasure and foster a more open and inclusive culture around sexual pleasure.

Challenging societal attitudes

Let's begin by using proper terminology to refer to our own genitalia. Many terms like "pee-pee," "wee wee," "weenie," "peenie," "winkey," "giney," and "jay-jay" are commonly used in English to describe genitals.

Additionally, there are countless colloquial names in different regional languages.

While a young girl referring to her vagina as "coochie" may seem cute when she is three years old, it becomes problematic when she grows up to be an adult who feels embarrassed to talk about her body and its needs. Teenagers in India, in particular, often have numerous questions about puberty that they cannot address. This creates a vicious cycle of oppression that has been perpetuated for generations, affecting both men and women in terms of their bodily autonomy.

Making sexual conversations a dinner-table conversation

Secondly, it is critical to encourage positive behaviour and questions around these topics, especially in front of kids. Kids grasp behaviours and information at a wildfire's pace. They pay attention to every detail and imitate the same. If parents hesitate to discuss sexual issues, the kids will learn and replicate this behaviour. Parents should create a safe and vulnerable space to initiate conversations and allow children to ask questions without any shame or discomfort. They should initiate conversations about their bodies, boundaries, and consent without attaching any negative connotation to it. I firmly believe making sexual conversations a dinner-table conversation is the first step to creating a sex-positive environment- at home and in society.



Destigmatizing conversations around sexual desires and pleasure in the bedroom

Finally, as adults, we must break the cycle of stuttering, avoiding, or denying when discussing sex with our partners.



Being comfortable and open about it makes the other person comfortable and they are more likely to open up about the topic as well. This can enable better awareness and understanding of the importance of sexual pleasure in our lives. Partners need to be mindful and keen on understanding each other's sexual expectations and ensure to communicate their own too openly.

Concluding with final thoughts

I believe normalizing conversations around sexual pleasure is crucial at a societal and personal level. Certainly, it takes a concerted effort from individuals, families, and society as a whole to achieve this. By using the right terminology, encouraging positive behaviour around such topics, and breaking the cycle of discomfort and denial, we can progress toward creating a healthier and more inclusive society. Thus, we can build a world where sexual pleasure is celebrated and enjoyed by all.



Written by : Aastha Vohra

Myths About Uniquely Abled Children

1. Every unique child is the same as having an intellectual disability: Most children once diagnosed with any neurodevelopment illness are labelled under the umbrella term of “intellectual disability”.

2. Once a child is diagnosed with special needs, nothing much can be done: Most special needs caregivers are not aware of their rights by The government of India, neither they are aware of the reservations made for special needs children in schools, colleges, and jobs.

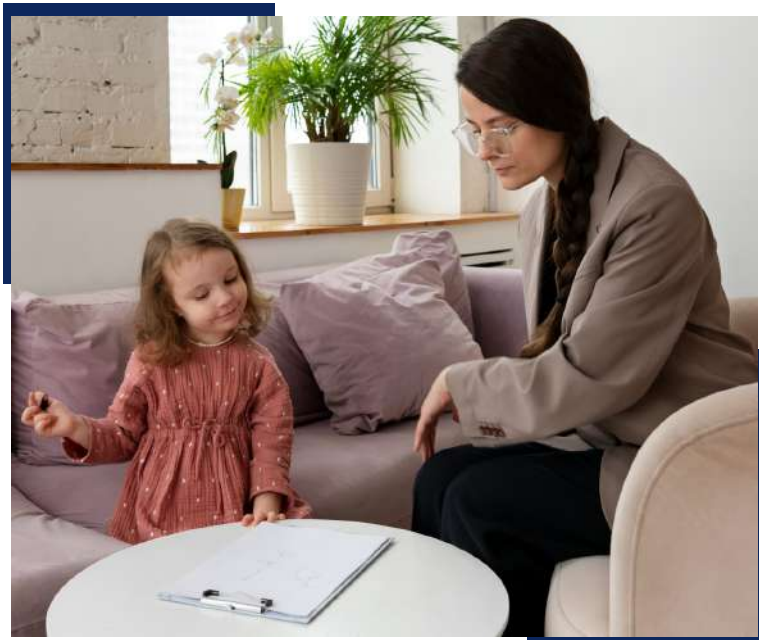


3. There is no treatment for uniquely abled children: There are many therapies which are designed scientifically for the different types of disabilities, which when used judiciously can help make the child better.

4. Autistic children cannot do anything in life: There are many examples in the world where children were diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder and are living a “normal” life as any other neurotypical person.

5. There are no means of communication in autism apart from verbal expression: There are alternative communication strategies for children who are not verbal in autism spectrum disorder.

6. All disabilities are visible: Many developmental disorder is not visible as a disability, but requires attention once the symptoms start. For eg, ADHD (Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder).



7. You should not disclose the diagnoses to the world: A lot of parents feel distressed about what others will think about their child's disability and so acceptance of the disability takes time thus preventing the advantage of early intervention.

8. Stem cell is a cure for autism: Stem cell is banned as a treatment the modality for autism in India.

9. Children with disabilities require only special schools: Special needs children can be put into inclusive schools based on their capacity.

10. Disability is a tragedy and just requires sympathy: Children with special needs encouragement to assimilate in the inclusive set-up.



Written by :
Dr Puja Kapoor


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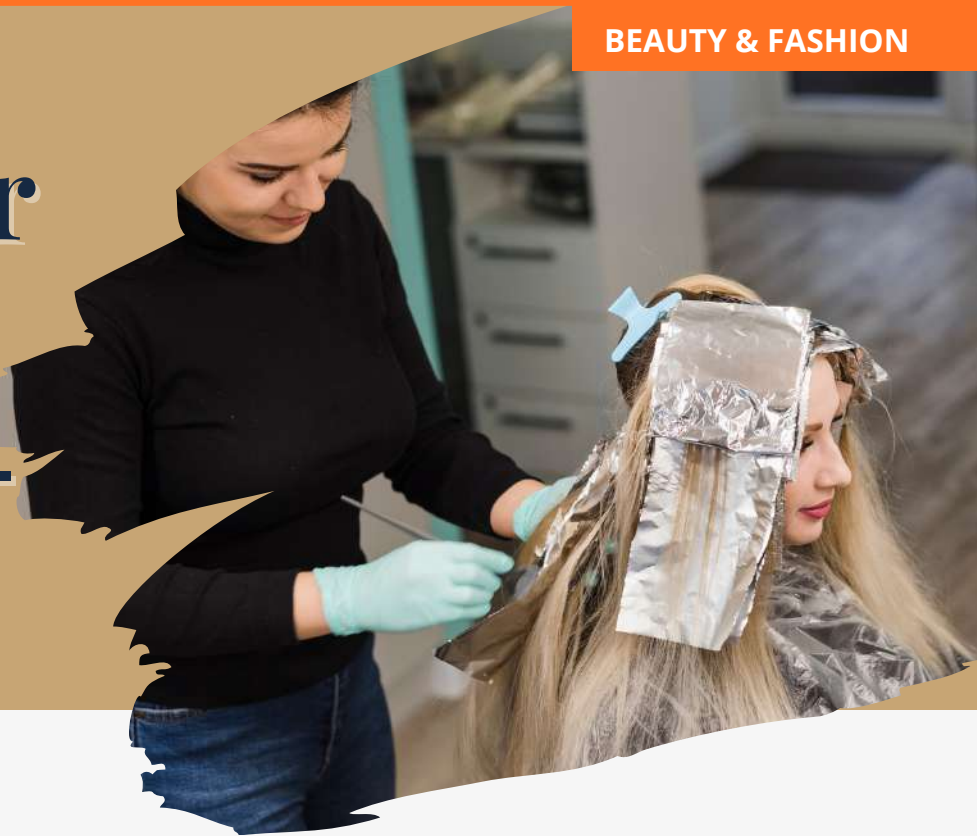
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Hair Colour Trends On the Bucket-List Today



Hair trends are always changing and evolving. To be updated and in touch with what is in and what is out, one needs to keep watching and reading to update the styles. But, if one is trying to outdo others in going about doing something different, unique and innovative, an informed decision is worth doing. 2023 holds for all the range from golden browns to smudged money pieces, without leaving anyone behind.

1. Golden Brown -

Gold browns are the trend for 2023, they are perfect for first-timers who are still figuring out subtly what to do with their hair. Golden browns shall add a touch of warmth, and depth and would not look too drastic. They can flatter all skin tones, warm, fair or cool. These colours are also very low maintenance. It provides a polished look with minimum effort. Booking an appointment beforehand will help stylists pick out the perfect tone for the hair kind and colour.



2. Smudged Money Pieces -

Smudged money pieces are a new hair trend for 2023 which is attractive and make everyone turn heads at once. The hairdresser uses a technique of highlighting called balayage to achieve the look. This process involves painting highlights onto the hair to achieve a natural, sun-kissed look. The result is a gorgeous, beachy wave result. This hair colour technique is cool for anyone who would want to add some dimension to their hair without an all-colour option and for those not wanting a root-touch-up.



3. All Shades of Red -

All shades of red trending for 2023 are - traditional reds, reddish-purple, burgundy red, copper shades, auburn, burgundy shades, etc.

Burgundy would add some deep, reddish-purple colour, Used for the addition of depth and dimension to the hair. Auburn was trending back in 2022 it is a reddish brown colour but is back for 2023 too. The colour is alright for those wanting to add some pizzazz to their hair

Copper is a reddish brown colour with a hint of orange. This too is going to be the latest hot trend mentioned next.



4. Copper Hair Craze -

This rich warm hue is perfect for the addition of dimension to the hair. If one is feeling adventurous enough to try it it can be done. This colour also looks good for the fall season and winter seasons respectively. Copper is an excellent shade for those with cooler skin tones. Better ways to style the copper tones would be asking the hairstylist to provide some highlights or lowlights in a light copper shade to get the perfect copper colour.

5. Subtle Curl Lights -

This is one of the most happening colours as of now in 2023. This colouring option involves light brown or blonde highlights to natural or curly hair. This provides an overall dimension to the hair without an overall colour. For those with cool skin tones, this trend is flattering and provides an amazing texture to all hair types. Requesting the stylist to add in some highlights or lowlights in a light brown or blonde shade to get the perfect subtle curl light.



Written by : Suhana Sridhar

SOUTH ASIAN WOMEN ON ANCIENT WELLNESS PRACTICES THAT HELP THEM CONNECT TO ROOTS



The very famous Hindi phrase, “Khush Raho”, is an all-time heard saying in all South East Asian households, especially that of India. It is a short blessing and a seemingly mundane expression that was used and said. Now the value of it since the pandemic has grown and self-care side by side as incorporated by older generations especially those focused on the daily aspect of life. Some of these practices include -

1. Grounding helps refocus and align both mind and body -



One of the core Indian wellness practices is that of grounding or earthing -which is standing barefoot on the soil in a bid to realign oneself with the present. It is a ritual said to encourage gratitude and an outdoor connection. This for 15 minutes in a day increases focus and reduces anxiety.

2. Hair Oiling encourages intimacy -



Hair oiling is a multi-generational practice upheld within the vast majority of traditional South Asian households, with benefits including stimulating hair follicles to keep it glossy and promoting hair growth and making it appear glossy. This divine and meditative routine begins by including home-based ingredients such as - a blend of amla (Indian gooseberry), coconut, castor and almond oil and then massaging it with your hands. This therapy when practised once or twice a week increases blood flow and keeps the brain active.

3. Opt for a natural approach to skincare -

Growing up, our grandparents and older generation family members would dislike the idea of using packaged skincare and haircare products and ask us to prepare the homemade version of it to have a chemical-free and more effective regime which is healthy. Turmeric is used for skin cleansing before a wedding or application of milk and curd to the face and body to remove tan and other acne marks and creating this as part of the beautification process was used.

Usage of Manuka honey for scar marks and burn as well as mashed papaya works wonders.



4. Scents are key to creating a relaxed environment -

Burning of incense sticks is a way to detox and remove negative energy and bring in positive energy and deepen our connection with spirits during meditation. These familiar scents bring back warm memories of childhood and loved ones too. Sandalwood, jasmine, mogra and lotus are some of them which cleanse the house within seven minutes of lighting them.



5. Preparation of Spiced Tea -

Crush spices such as cardamom, fennel, cinnamon in a mortar and grind them with a pestle and strain them into the usual milk tea prepared at home and it turns into masala tea. It is an instant mood booster as well as has dietary benefits and allows one to take a step back from computer and work and brings the family together despite busy schedules.



Written by : Suhana Sridhar

OFFBEAT PLACES TO VISIT IN SUMMERS



The summer is approaching. I am sure everyone has gone through the calendar and counted the long weekends to plan their perfect vacation. But which places are the best to travel to during this hot weather? It's a lot of research and sorting. Let me save you some time and help you. Here are some best places in India where you can cool yourselves this hot summer.

Khajjiar, Himachal Pradesh

Khajjiar has been nicknamed the 'Mini Switzerland' of India. And this hill station deserves the name. At an altitude of 6,500 feet, Khajjiar rests on a small plateau surrounded by dense pine and deodar forests, located in the Chamba district of Himachal Pradesh. Along with the mesmerizing Himalayan view, this place is famous for the Khajji Naga shrine which is dedicated to a serpent god. This shrine was built in the 12th century and its construction has a blend of both Hindu and Mughal styles of architecture. The best way to explore this hill station is by trekking. Other activities like Zorbing (rolling down the hill inside a plastic 'zorb') are also popular here.



Coonoor, Tamil Nadu



Located in the Nilgiris district of Tamil Nadu, Coonoor comes second in terms of covering the Nilgiri hills, after Ooty. It is blessed with the alluring beauty of waterfalls, lakes, gardens and tea estates, making it the second most popular tourist hill station in Tamil Nadu. This place is also an ideal base for trekking expeditions. One of the main tourist attractions of Coonoor is the famous botanical garden Sim's Park. Sim's Park is a natural botanical garden which covers 12 hectares of land and is partly developed in Japanese style. The other tourist attractions are the Dolphin's Nose, Lamb's Rock, and Droog Fort.

Harsil, Uttarakhand

Located on the banks of the Bhagirathi river, Harsil is a place filled with holistic serenity. It is a stunning valley which is situated on the way to visit Gangotri, a famous Hindu pilgrim spot on the Indo-Tibetan border. Harsil is covered with dense Oak and Deodar forests, making this a perfect location for trekking, biking, and other adventures. Tourists should definitely visit the tourist attraction in the place like Dharali, Sat Tal (cluster of seven natural lakes) and Mukhwas Village, which is home to Goddess Gangotri.



Port Blair, Andaman Islands



Water activities are a must in summer. So why not go to an island that offers adventures and fauna at the same time? Port Blair is the capital and an entry point to the serene nature of the Andaman Islands. It has extensive flora and fauna and rich marine life. You can relax on Corbyn's Cove beach, located about 8 kilometres from Port Blair, and go parasailing and boat riding too. The island also has other historical tourist attractions like Cellular Jail, Naval Marine Museum, Ross Island and Barren Island that tourists can visit.

Bhandardhara, Maharashtra



Bhandardhara is a small village near Igatpuri in Maharashtra. Tucked in the valleys of the Western Ghats, this place is home to the highest peak of Maharashtra, Mount Kalsubai. This makes the village famous for trekking and other activities. Ratangad fort and Harishchandragad fort are also famous among trekkers. Other famous tourist attraction in the place is the Arthur Lake and Wilson Dam. In short, Bhandardhara serves as the best place for a quiet getaway from your bustling life in cities like Mumbai, Pune and Nashik.

Thekkady, Kerala

Thekkady is an extremely famous tourist destination in Kerala. The name Thekkady is derived from the Malayalam word 'thecku' meaning teak. Located in the Idukki district of Kerala, Thekkady is like heaven for people who like wildlife and nature adventures. India's biggest wildlife sanctuary is located here. Tourists can take ferry boats and elephant rides to experience the wilderness and see animals in their natural habitat. Other than the National Park, other tourist attractions are Murikkady, ChellarKovil, Anakkara, and Mangala Temple.



It is said that "Adventures are the best way to learn". Travel makes us see the world differently. Each trip comes with a new story and a new experience. And it teaches us life lessons and shapes our life. So do not restrict yourself and take a trip to broaden your paradigm.



Written by :
Ashwathi Anoop Kumar

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Travel and Taste

Norwegian cuisine has a unique taste to it since the ingredients used to vary and the cuisine is still being explored in various parts of the world. This cuisine has fresh fish and forest animals that comprise most of the dishes. They are meat eaters since the region falls in a colder climate hemisphere. Some of the popular dishes are:

1. Farikal - It is literally translated as “mutton in cabbage”. It is the national dish of Norway. It is a typical lamb curry, where the mutton is cooked for hours till it is tender and succulent. It is then seasoned with salt and pepper. It is delicious, warm and simple. Eaten as a family meal or on special occasions, it is a must-have for non-veg lovers and is cooked when the temperature drops.

2. Lapskaus Stew - Lapskaus stew is a much-loved Norwegian dish that originated in Germany but has been enjoyed by Norwegians since the early 1800s. It is filled with vegetables and is eaten for dinner almost every day of the week throughout the year by most Norwegians. Traditional Lapskaus mostly comprises beef, potatoes, carrots, swede or leeks. The meat and vegetables are boiled until they are soft and tender. When the dish is ready, Lapskaus is eaten with flatbread and butter.

3. Raspbell - Potato Dumpling - Also called by various other names in various parts of the country and throughout Norway as raspbell, poteball, klubb, kompe and komle, the name varies from village to village. Flour is mixed with boiled potatoes and cooked on low heat. Popular side dishes cooked are - mashed swede, sausages and tender lamb. Most times traditional Norwegian methods of eating it are either with sugar or syrup or crispy bacon on the side. It is served only on Thursdays as part of Western tradition and customs.



Written by : Suhana Sridhar

UNDERRATED TRAVEL DESTINATIONS ACROSS THE WORLD

Ever wondered, what it would feel like to be in a place that nobody has been to or not yet discovered and you are the first one around there is still more exploring about that place that is yet to be done and it's breathtakingly beautiful and has charmed you easily with its beauty? It could be remote islands to unexplored deserts and jungles with wildlife on this glorious planet that we are living on. This article discusses new untapped destinations that have never had a foot set upon them....



1. Puglia, Italy -

The heel of Italy's stylish boot has this scenic allure stemming from its rural landscape and patchwork of Norman, Spanish, Greek and Byzantine influences. It is a huge competition to Tuscany, offering a glimpse into rich traditional Italian values and cultures.

This place consists of a bountiful coastline, replete with verdant landscapes and filled with olive groves and vineyards. The country is prestigiously known for producing the best quality wine and olive oils. Puglia is famously known for its cucina povera, an authentic Italian style of slow cooking focusing on simple and fresh ingredients as well as traditional cooking methods which are used.

2. Madagascar -

For those on an off-the-radar escape, Madagascar is the place to go. It is teeming with biodiversity and is truly a place for all adventurers and biodiversity enthusiasts. Almost close to 80% of the endemic life forms are here and are unique to this region and on earth. The scenic coastal beaches face the Indian ocean where tourists enjoy whale watching and lemurs on the shoreline. Miavana has 14 luxury cottages along the beach offering a private escapade. It is an eco-lodge and makes one feel like Robinson Crusoe.

3. Salta, Argentina -

Argentina's northwest seems to be proudly boasting of a strong Andean and spiritual heritage as a meeting point for South America's indigenous communities. This region is rocking such a beautiful and scenic landscape one could get lost in it easily. The spectacular scenery and richly coloured landscapes - think red rock valleys, multi-coloured and monochromatic hills and terra-cotta peaks set against stark blue skies. This region does not only stop here, there is a range of sporting activities for all enthusiasts against the beautiful backdrop such as trekking, horseback riding, rafting, and driving 4x4s. In terms of sightseeing, the region has rich colonial architecture, attractive plazas and the regional cuisine of Argentina making it seem like an off-beat gem. La Merced del Alto is a reflection of the actual surroundings in the heart of the Argentinian countryside.

4. Faroe Islands, Denmark -

Faroe islands are a retreat of sorts and are located between the chilly waters of Scotland and Iceland. The dramatic landscapes completely redefine the idea of an "untouched archipelago", giving tourists access to the better side of a Danish Kingdom. The coastline, completely rugged, was once long ago, home to Viking territory and the actual natural wonders could be explored through old fishing boats. The latest step towards modernization is the opening of the two-star Michelin restaurant called KOKS. Boutique Hotel, Hotel Havgrim Seaside Hotel located near the sea has been designed in a way with large glass windows and private balconies with mesmerizing views. The property in itself possesses that unique quality of wanting tourists to feel a palpable sense of peace of mind.

5. Guacalito De La Isla, Nicaragua -

The Guacalito De La Isla is a unique travel destination located on the Emerald Coast and is on the radar of Central American haven. The Mukul Resort, owned by the local entrepreneur Don Carlos Pellas, whose family has managed to well control and preserve the beauty of the region and share it with travellers, is a huge benchmark. Mayan means "secret", and it also lives up to its name and status as a hidden gem, consisting of fairy-tale beach villas and "bohós" nestled in the stunning, mile-long Manzanillo beach and glorious Pacific sunsets. There is astounding and extensive wildlife and forests, nature and bike paths, iguanas and tropical birds too!



Written by : Suhana Sridhar

Find Your Bliss

TOP DESTINATIONS TO VISIT IN INDIA DURING APRIL AND MAY

If you have been thinking about making some travel plans in the coming months, solo or with friends and family, we have shortlisted the best places for you in India to explore during April and May.

India is a country that is rich in cultural diversity, natural beauty, and history. India offers a diverse range of destinations and experiences for travellers all year round. The months of April and May offer an opportunity to witness India's diverse landscapes and rich cultural heritage. From the lofty Himalayas to the tranquil backwaters of Kerala, there are countless destinations to explore. Immerse yourself in the spiritual and cultural hub of Rishikesh, savour the tranquillity of the tea plantations in Ooty and Munnar, or indulge in the vibrant hues of Jaipur's palaces and forts or relax on the sandy beaches of Goa. Whatever your preference, India offers an experience that will leave you captivated and mesmerized.

From hill stations to beach destinations, here are some of the best places to visit in India during April and May:

1. Ladakh -

Ladakh is a high-altitude desert in the northernmost part of India, known for its rugged landscapes, unique culture, and Buddhist monasteries. April and May are the best months to visit Ladakh, as the weather is pleasant and the snow starts to melt, revealing the stunning landscapes.

2. Darjeeling -

Darjeeling is a hill station located in the northeastern part of India. It is known for stunning Himalayan views, beautiful tea plantations, and very vivid colonial architecture, and. April and May are the best months to visit Darjeeling, as the weather is mild and the flowers are in full bloom.

3. Goa -

Goa is a beach destination located on the western coast of India. It is known for its stunning beaches, nightlife, and Portuguese architecture. April and May are the best months to visit Goa, as the weather is warm and sunny, and the beaches are less crowded.

4. Ooty -

Ooty is a hill station located in the southern part of India, known for its tea plantations, scenic landscapes, and colonial architecture. April and May are the best months to visit Ooty, as the weather is pleasant and the flowers are in full bloom.



5. Rishikesh -

Rishikesh is a spiritual destination located in the northern part of India, known for its ashrams, yoga retreats, and adventure sports. April and May are the best months to visit Rishikesh, as the weather is mild and the Ganges river is perfect for white water rafting.

6. Munnar -

Munnar is a hill station located in the southern part of India, known for its tea plantations, scenic landscapes, and wildlife. April and May are the best months to visit Munnar, as the weather is pleasant and the tea gardens are in full bloom.



7. Jaipur -

Jaipur is a historical city located in the northern part of India, known for its palaces, forts, and vibrant culture. April and May are the best months to visit Jaipur, as the weather is mild and the city is less crowded.

Escape to India's hidden gems that we have covered above in the ultimate guide for spring travel. The blooming flora and fauna make this the perfect time to explore India's scenic beauty. Whether you're looking for a spiritual retreat, a beach vacation, or a scenic getaway, these places have something for everyone.

So pack your bags and get ready to explore the beauty and culture of India.

Shared by : Divvisha Bharti

6 HEALTHY FOOD EATING HABITS TO INCULCATE



A new year means new resolutions and also new eating habits, right? Well, either to look good or firm or to even stay healthy without losing or gaining much weight, some proper habits if inculcated into the routine may help one stay fit, fabulous and healthy! Some tips and habits mentioned below which one could follow step-by-step to help maintain shape and stay healthy are -

1. Inclusion of More Fruits and Veggies -

This is because fruits and veggies make one feel fuller

instead of the plain old bag of potato chips which makes one feel guilty after eating it whereas eating more spoons of fruits like watermelon, muskmelon, cucumber or papaya, does not make it feel too much or too less. After all, they are healthy substitutes.

Similarly, adding more greens and sprouts salads to your lunch and dinner would help the skin glow and provide digestion faster and cleaner.

2. Fibre and More Fibre -

Fibre and gut health go hand in hand. This is because the intake of fibres helps in numerous ways such as - digestion, and weight control and helps blood sugar to level itself out. One can reduce diabetes if this follows. Eating more fruits, legumes, whole grains and vegetables could help keep the fibre level in the body intact and healthy.

3. Eat Plant-Based -

Eating more plant-based is simply improving the environment and making your body healthier. This would help us switch consciously from eating animal-based meats and others to a greener and cleaner diet. It also helps us reduce our dependence on only eating meat. Vitamins and minerals like iron, zinc and vitamin B12 can all be derived from plant-based nutrition.

4. Make at Home -

Stock up on healthy snacks and fruits when sitting at home rather than ordering food from outside. Food from outside is unhealthy and not as fresh as what you would make in your kitchen and keep it fresh and tasty. Home-made is healthier, customisable and tastier compared to ordering from outside.

5. Hydration is Key -

Water, natural pressed juices, smoothies, herbal teas, protein-based drinks, milkshakes, etc are all the best to be taken in moderation. High sugary drinks are to be had once in a while, but for daily glowing skin and body, eight glasses of water are required to be had. The body needs water to flush out its toxins and keep the bodily fluids in moderation and stop the body from getting dehydrated.

6. No Junk -

Eating more junk food causes more trouble to the body and the overall system. This leads to an increase in heart diseases and other cardiovascular diseases. These days junk food has increased in various forms and causes real trouble with causing diabetes, cancer and all other such health and obesity disorders.



Written by : Suhana Sridhar

UNDERRATED DISHES IN INDIA

Indian cuisine is widespread and lavish and has so much variety, some dishes are overly hyped and others are not even discovered or rather require some amount of attention because they taste so good that they melt in the mouth as soon as it is consumed! This article discusses the most underrated dishes in India.

1. KOSHA MANGSHO -

This is a Bengali delicacy, which is typically slow-cooked mutton curry with a hint of spice. It is prepared with goat's meat and veggies and is eaten popularly on occasion in West Bengal. This is eaten either with luchi or pulao and is available in all Bengali restaurants.



2. DAL PITHI-

This is a traditional Bihari recipe. It is a flower-shaped dumpling in dal soup. Most times people add coriander to garnish and is eaten widely in the regions of Bihar, Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh. It is the best dish eaten by Biharis.



3. LAAPSI -

Eaten widely and is a popular sweet dish in Rajasthan and Gujarat. Made of ingredients such as - wheat, ghee, sugar and jaggery and is garnished with dry fruits. It is a widely consumed winter dish and is added as a natural sweetener.

4. SEYAL BHAJI -

This is a Sindhi delicacy. It comprises mixed vegetable curry and freshly available vegetables in winter. It is healthy and a winter-prepared dish and has semi-dry gravy. Sindhis love this curry.



5. BALUSHAHI -

It is the Indian version of a doughnut and originates in the eastern region of India and is consumed in parts of Jharkhand and Bihar. It is dipped in sugar, ghee and maple syrup.



6. PATHOLI -

Steamed rice roll made with crushed coconut and jaggery. It is a widely eaten dish in the western ghats and turmeric leaves are used to give it a crushed aroma and is prepared in the middle of the year



7. CHAMAN KALIYA -

This is a popular dish prepared by Kashmiri pandits. The main ingredients in this dish are paneer in a rich creamy sauce with cardamom and fennel scent. When it comes to vegetarian dishes Kashmiri people always prefer this. Saffron and garam masala are used for garnishing it.



Written by : Suhana Sridhar

CHOCOLATE CAKE INFUSED WITH BLUEBERRY AND GREEN APPLE

*Spring Of Love
(Chocolate Cake infused with
Blueberry and
Green Apple compote)*



Recipe By: Chef Tadiba Abid

INGREDIENTS

- BakerVilla Eggless Chocolate Cake Premix (500g)
- 100g unsalted butter
- 150ml Water
- 1tbsp. butter for greasing
- 1 Litre Whipping Cream
- 2 tbsp Walnuts (chopped)
- Food coloring (Pink, Yellow, Green)
- Honey
- Fresh Flowers
- Golden Balls (Edible)



METHOD

- Preheat oven to 180°C
- Grease and flour 8 inch baking pan
- Add melted butter
- Add Cake Mix
- Add water and butter and mix until batter becomes smooth without any lumps
- Pour batter in baking pan
- Bake for 30-35 minutes or until toothpick inserted in the centre comes out clean
- Add whipping cream to a bowl and beat until consistency is airy Or until cream is stiff and doesn't fall from a spoon
- Cut top layer of cake and keep it aside
- Cut cake from middle and keep it aside
- Spread some honey on the freshly cut side and add whipping cream
- Add Blueberry compote, Green Apple compote and walnuts
- Add the other half of the cake
- Add honey, walnuts and whipped cream on top
- Add Strawberry Compote, Blueberry Compote and walnuts on top
- Press lightly to join the cake
- Add a layer of whipping cream to the outside of the cake and smoothen it
- Add 1 drop of yellow and 2 drops of Green food coloring to a set of whipping cream
- Coat evenly on the cake
- Add pink food coloring in another set of whipping cream
- Take an icing spatula and create small streaks of pink pointing upwards
- Add fresh flowers on the cake
- Spread golden balls on top

YES, I LIED!



Yes, I lied!
 I would lie to the wind coming so gently
 When his hand had brushed against my cheek.
 I said, "Oh wind, I have love in plenty!"
 When grown of its absence, how very bleak!
 I would lie to the words I'd written in calamity
 When they'd bring to me the glory of someone's liking!
 I said, "Oh children, you are untrue, what tragedy!"
 When of only truth I'd meant their reeking!
 I would lie to the ocean, arising how very motherly
 When she alone did think me vindicated!
 I said, "Oh ocean, you give me but no remedy!"
 When I believed not the destined, but the fated!
 Alas, I lied to death as he took me by hand
 When his palm brushed against my fingers, numb!
 I said, "Oh death, on Earth alone I wish to stand!"
 He smiled, "To say so, you are the Only One!"



**Written by : Shubhasmi
Niranjan Mudholka**

अनुकरणीय भगवान् श्री राम

‘रमणे कणे कणे इति राम’



जो कण कण में बसे , वही राम है . श्री राम के विषय में सनातन धर्म में अनेक कथायें एवं गाथायें विद्यमान हैं .श्री राम जी के जीवन की अनुपम कथायें , महर्षि वाल्मीकि जी ने अत्यंत सुंदर शब्दों में रामायण मे प्रस्तुत किया है . इसके अतिरिक्त गोस्वामी तुलसीदास ने अवधी में रामचरितमानस की रचना करके उसे जन जन के हृदय तक पहुंचा दिया .

सर्वोच्च संरक्षक विष्णु के अवतार श्री राम सदा ही हिंदू देवताओं के बीच लोकप्रिय रहे . राम शिष्टाचार और सदाचार के प्रतीक हैं, जो मूल्यों और नैतिकता के उदाहरण हैं . श्री राम मर्यादा पुरुषोत्तम हैं , जिसका अर्थ है.. मर्यादा का पालन करने वाला ..उन्होंने सदा ही मर्यादा का पालन किया . वह सिद्ध पुरुष थे .. धार्मिक मान्यताओं के अनुसार श्री राम ने उस युग की राक्षसी वृत्तियों अथवा बुरी शक्तियों को नष्ट करने के लिये इस धरती पर जन्म लिया था .

देवता के रूप में भगवान् राम स्वामी विवेकानंद के शब्दों में सत्य का अवतार , नैतिकता का आदर्श पुत्र , आदर्श पति और सबसे बढ कर आदर्श राजा हैं , जिनके कर्म उन्हें ईश्वर की श्रेणी में खड़ा करते हैं .

वाल्मीकि द्वारा रचित रामायण एक महान् हिंदू महाकाव्य है . हिंदू धर्म की मान्यता के अनुसार राम का जन्म त्रेता युग में हुआ था . वाल्मीकि रचित रामायण संस्कृत भाषा में थी ...गोस्वामी तुलसीदास ने इसी कथा को अवधी भाषा में रामचरितमानस के नाम से रच कर जन जन के मानस तक पहुंचा दिया . इस अद्भुत रचना ने महान् हिंदू देवता के रूप में श्री राम को जनमानस पर प्रतिष्ठित कर दिया ...राम जी की लोकप्रियता को बहुत बढा दिया और विभिन्न भक्ति समूहों को जन्म दिया .



राम जी का चरित्र श्री राम सद्गुणों की खान थे . वह न केवल दयालु और स्नेही थे वरन् उदार और सहृदयी भी थे . भगवान् राम के पास एक अद्भुत शारीरिक और मनोरम शिष्टाचार था . श्री राम का व्यक्तित्व अतुल्य और भव्य था . वह अत्यंत महान्, उदार , शिष्ट और निडर थे . वे बहुत सरल स्वभाव के थे .

आदर्श उदाहरण.... भगवान् राम को दुनिया में एक आदर्श पुत्र के रूप जाना जाता है एवं अच्छे गुणों के प्रत्येक पहलू में वह श्रेष्ठ प्रतीत होते हैं . उन्होंने अपने पूरे जीवन में कभी झूठ नहीं बोला ... वह हमेशा विद्वानों और गुरुजनों के प्रति सम्मान की दृष्टि से पेश आते थे . लोग उनसे स्नेह करते थे और उन्होंने सभी लोगों को बहुत प्रेम और आदर दिया . उनका व्यक्तित्व पारलौकिक और उत्कृष्ट था . वे परिस्थितियों के अनुकूल स्वयं को समायोजित कर लेते थे . वह सर्वज्ञ होने के कारण प्रत्येक मनुष्य के हृदय की भावनाओं को जानते और समझते थे . वह राजा के पुत्र थे और उनके अंदर राजा के सभी बोधगम्य गुण थे और वह लोगों के दिलों में वास करते थे .

भगवान् राम अविश्वसनीय अलौकिक गुणों से संपन्न भगवान् राम अविश्वसनीय पारमार्थिक गुणों से संपन्न थे . वह गुणों की खान थे . उनमें अदम्य साहस और पराक्रम था . और वह सभी के लिये अप्रतिम भगवान् के रूप में थे . एक सफल जीवन जीने के लिये , श्री राम के जीवन का अनुकरण करना श्रेयस्कर उपाय है . श्री राम का जीवन एक पवित्र अनुपालन का जीवन , अद्भुत बेदाग चरित्र , अतुलनीय सादगी , प्रशंसनीय संतोष , सराहनीय आत्म बलिदान एवं उल्लेखनीय त्याग का जीवंत उदाहरण है



श्री राम हमारे धर्म ग्रंथों के अनुसार आदर्श पुरुषों में गिने जाते हैं , पुराणों में उन्हें श्रेष्ठ राजा कहा गया है . उन्हें मर्यादा पुरुषोत्तम कहा जाता है. वह मनुष्य रूप में जन्मे और ऋषि विश्वामित्र से विद्योपार्जन के उपरांत पृथ्वी पर अनेकानेक राक्षसों का संहार किया . सत्य , धर्म , दया और मर्यादा पर चलते हुये राज किया . उन्होंने जिस तरह राज किया , उसे आज भी रामराज्य कह कर याद किया जाता है . हमारी संस्कृति और सदाचार की जब भी बात होती है तो श्री राम का नाम लिया जाता है . आज भी बड़े बुजुर्ग के मुंह से सुनने को मिलता है कि बेटा हो तो राम जैसा राजा हो तो राम जैसा

“
कहानियां, कवितायें, कुछ
अच्छे पल, यादें ...
आमंत्रित हैं

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womenshinemag@gmail.com

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पद्मा अग्रवाल



#shiningwomen

नारी अपनी शक्ति को पहचानो

आजकल नवरात्रि का पर्व चल रहा है ... हम सब नौ दिनों तक मां के विभिन्न स्वरूपों की आराधना करते हैं , कन्या पूजन करके , उन्हें भेंट , उपहार देकर अपनी श्रद्धा प्रकट करते हैं । यह पर्व मां दुर्गा की शक्ति की आराधना का पर्व है सदियों से हम देवी दुर्गा और काली की पूजा करते आ रहे हैं क्योंकि व शक्ति स्वरूपा हैं और असुरों का विनाश करने वाली हैं ।

मैं सोचती हूँ कि यह तो उसी तरह से है जैसे आजकल हम सब वर्ष में एक बार मदर्स डे , डाटर्स डे आदि मनाते हैं और , एक रस्म निभाकर कर खुश हो लिया करते हैं फिर उनके महत्व और अपने कर्तव्यों को भूल कर अपनी दुनिया में व्यस्त हो जाया करते हैं । वास्तव में समाज में स्त्रियों की यही दशा है हम महिला सशक्तीकरण का चाहे कितना ढोल पीट लें हर महिला चाहे किसी जाति की हो , वर्ग की हो , अमीर हो या गरीब हो अपनी आधी जिंदगी अपने साथ होने वाले दुर्व्यवहार , भेदभाव , छेड़छाड़ आदि की कटुता से उबरने की मानसिक यंत्रणा से गुजरती है ।



वह मानसिक और शारीरिक शोषण को चुपचाप सहन करती है क्योंकि वह खौफ के साये में जीती है कि लोग क्या कहेंगे वह डरती है कि उसका परिवार टूट जायेगा और इस मानसिक वेदना में सहती हुई कई बार वह आंसू भी नहीं बहा पाती , अपनी कोई गलती न होते हुये भी परिवार की शांति के लिये चुप रह कर दूसरों के गुनाहों को अपने सिर पर ले लेती है..... नतीजा यह होता है कि गुनहगार जीत जाता है और भविष्य में उसके हौसले और भी बढ जाते हैं । आवश्यकता है कि हमारे मन से यह डर बाहर निकाला जाये जब तक हम डरते रहेंगे हमें दूसरे डराते रहेंगेआज आप आवाज उठाने के लिये अकेली हैं लेकिन जल्द ही दूसरे सभी आपके सुर में सुर मिलाने के लिये आगे आयेंगे आप अपने को दायम् और कमजोर समझना बंद करिये । स्त्री तो संसार की सर्वोत्कृष्ट रचना है वह सृजनकर्ता है ...वह पालनहार है ... अपनी शक्ति को पहचानियेआप किसी से कम नहीं हैं वरन् आप श्रेष्ठ हैं । अपने को पहचानने की जरूरत है आप जन्मदात्री हैं पालनहार हैं फिर भी समाज स्त्री को दायम् या हेय समझता है आज हर तरफ स्त्री के ऊपर अत्याचार के समाचार से अखबार रंगे होते हैं दिल दहल उठता है जब किसी मासूम अबोध बच्ची के साथ अनाचार की खबर पढती हूँ । हम सब हर वर्ष रावण बध कर खुश होते हैं परंतु रावण ने तो मर्यादा का पालन किया था ,उसने तो सीता जी को स्पर्श भी नहीं किया था परंतु फिर भी सीता जी को अग्नि परीक्षा से गुजरना पड़ा था ।



आखिर कब तक यह दुर्दांत ,कलुषित प्रवृत्ति के राक्षस स्त्री को मात्र देह और भोग की वस्तु समझते रहेंगे ... अब समय आ गया है कि हम अपनी बेटियों को आत्मरक्षा की ऐसी ट्रेनिंग दें कि वह सच में काली और दुर्गा जैसी शक्तिस्वरूपा बन कर इस तरह की आसुरी प्रवृत्ति का विनाश कर सकें ।

हमें अपने बेटों के मन में भी स्त्री के प्रति आदर सम्मान की भावना पैदा करना होगा । यह हमारी जिम्मेदारी है कि इस अभियान को अपने घरों से शुरू करें ...

आखिर कब तक हम सब निर्भया , हाथरस की बिटिया या इस तरह की अन्य घटनाओं पर मोमबत्ती जला कर अपनी श्रद्धंजलि देते रहेंगे

इसलिये हम सब मिल कर शपथ लें कि अन्याय के खिलाफ अपनी आवाज उठाने में जरा भी नहीं हिचकेगें और अन्यायी को उसकी सजा दिलाने के लिये जी जान लगा देंगे । तभी हमारा कन्या पूजन और नवरात्रि में माता का पूजन करना सार्थक होगा । हम सबको शक्ति स्वरूपा बनना होगा।



पद्मा अग्रवाल



प्यार हो तो ऐसा

रात के ग्यारह बजे थे शिशिर सोने की तैयारी कर रहा था , तभी उसका मोबाइल बज उठा थादीदी ने रुआंसी सी आवाज में कहा , 'शिशिर , इस बार दीपावली यहीं मना लो... '

'नहीं दी , आप जानती तो हो कि मैं आपके यहाँ आना नहीं चाहता ...'

वह नाराजगी भरे स्वर में बोलीं , " चाहे तेरी दी कितनी भी मुसीबत में हो "... और उन्होंने फोन कट कर बंद कर दिया ... उसकी आंखों की तो नींद ही उड़ गई थी ...

उसने ऑफिस में अपनी छुट्टी के लिये मेल लिखी और सुबह मुँह अंधेरे की ट्रेन से वह आगरा के लिये निकल पड़ा था ... वह डरा सहमा हुआ जब दी के घर पहुँचा तो सबसे पहले दीदी ही सामने पड़ी थीं ... वह तो बिल्कुल भली चंगी दिख रही थीं ...

"दी यह कैसा मजाक है ..."

" यदि मैं यह नाटक न करती तो तू भला आता क्या ..."

' हाँ यह बात तो सही है ...'

"अम्मा बाबूजी भी इस बार दीपावली पर यहीं आ रहे हैं ... इसलिये मैंने तुझे भी बुला भेजा ... तुझे यहाँ आये पूरे चार साल हो गये हैं "... वह चुप रहा था

दीदी ठीक कह रही हैं ...उसे यहाँ आने से डर लगता है ... वह डरता हैउन यादों से जो उसका आज तक पीछा नहीं छोड़ पा रही हैं.... वह डरता था... रूही की सपनीली मासूम सी आँखों की यादों से और उसकी खिलखिलाती हँसी से ...

रूही कश्यप दीदी के मकान के बगल में रहती थी ... चार साल पहले जब छुट्टियों में दी के घर गया था तब ही उससे मुलाकात हुई थी ... गोरा संगमरमरी रंग , बड़ी बड़ी काली आँखें ... मानों आँखों में पर्मानेंट काजल लगा रखा हो ... घने लंबे काले बाल और प्यारी सी निश्छल मुस्कान वाली प्यारी सी रूही वह तो उसको देखते ही उस पर लट्टू हो गया था ... वह सारी दोपहर दी के पास बैठ कर गप्पें मारती हुई समय बिताती और वह भी उसके आकर्षण में बँधा हुआ बिना कारण ही वहाँ बैठा रहता और उसे निहारता और बीच बीच में मुस्कुराता रहता और कई बार उसका मजाक भी बना देता ..., चिढ़ा भी देता..... लेकिन उसकी मासूम बातें उसे बहुत अच्छी लगतीं ... धीरे धीरे वह उससे भी खुलने लगी थी उसको हिंदी कम आती थी इसलिये वह अंग्रेजी मिश्रित टूटी फूटी हिंदी बोलती ... उसकी बातों में उसे बहुत मजा आता ... वह उसके आकर्षण में डूबता जा रहा था ... न जाने कैसे दीदी की अनुभवी आँखों ने मेरी कमजोरी भाँप ली थी ..." शिशिर , क्या तुम रूही को पसंद करते हो ?"

दीदी के अचानक पूछे गये सवाल से उसके चेहरे का रंग उड़ गया था ... उसकी चोरी पकड़ी गई थी

'नहीं दी , ऐसा कुछ नहीं है ...'

'नहीं हो... तभी अच्छा है ' 'पर क्यों दीदी ...'

'रूही की सगाई हो चुकी है और दिसंबर में उसकी शादी होने वाली है ...'

मेरे सपनों का महल हल्की हवा के झोंके से ही भरभरा कर ढह गया था ... मैं सोच ही नहीं पा रहा था कि अब क्या करूँ ... रूही मेरा पहला प्यार थी लेकिन वह तो किसी दूसरे की वाग्दत्ता थी

वह दी के पास रोज दोपहर में आया करती और मैं कोशिश करता कि उससे सामना न हो लेकिन वह किसी न किसी तरह उसके सामने आ ही जाती और बात करने की कोशिश भी करती लेकिन वह वहाँ से चुपचाप हट जाता ... हम दोनों के बीच ऐसे ही आँख मिचौली चल रही थी कि मैंने अपने जाने का टिकट करवा लिया क्यों कि मेरी जॉब के लिये कॉल आ गई थी ...

अगले दिन मुझे जाना था लेकिन चेहरे पर उदासी की पर्त छाई हुई थी क्योंकि रूही से अलग होना पड़ रहा था ... दिल कह रहा था .. शिशिर एक बार तो कह दे कि रूही मैं तुम्हें बहुत प्यार करता हूँलेकिन वह मन ही मन सोचने लगा कि हर इच्छा पूरी थोड़े ही होती है ... वह छत पर गमगीन खड़ा होकर उमड़ते घुमड़ते बादलों को टकटकी लगा कर देख रहा था , उसके मन में भी बादलों की तरह अनेक विचार उमड़ घुमड़ रहे थे तभी रूही चुपके से आई और बोली , " शिशिर कल तुम जा रहे हो .?"

‘हाँ... तुम तो खुश होगी , तुम्हें चिढ़ाने वाला जा रहा है ... तुमसे कोई झगड़ा नहीं करेगा ... तंग नहीं करेगा ... तुम्हारा मजाक नहीं बनायेगा’

‘हाँ... हाँ... मैं बहुत खुश हूँ ...’ कहते हुये उसकी आवाज भर्रा गई ... मैंने चौंक कर देखा तो वह रो रही थी ... मैं काँप उठा क्या रूही भी मुझसे अगले पल मैंने अपने को संभाला और उससे हँस कर कहा, “ यह खुशी के आँसू हैं ...” जब भी वह नाराज होती थी तो फ्रेंच में बोलने लगती थी ... वह न जाने क्या बोल रही थी उसके लिये. समझना संभव नहीं था

अगले दिन रूही की यादों के साथ मैं अपनी जॉब में व्यस्त हो गया था ...लेकिन बार बार रूही को भुलाने की कोशिश करने के बावजूद इसमें कामयाब नहीं हो सका था ... कुछ महीनों के बाद दीदी ने बताया कि रूही की शादी हो गई जो उम्मीद का दामन मैं अभी तक पकड़े हुये था वह भी छूट गया ..

उसके बाद वह अब तीन -चार सालों के बाद आया था लेकिन उसकी निगाहें आज भी घर के हर कोने में रूही को ढूँढ रही थीं ...

“कहाँ खोया है शिशिर .?”

“नहीं दीउस लड़ाकू रूही की याद आ गई थी ... अब तो वह पूरी अम्मा बन गई होगी ... गोलू मोलू कितने हैं ... यहाँ आती है कि नहीं ... “वह तो यहीं है ...” ‘ दीवाली मनाने आई है ...’

वह नाराजगी भरे स्वर में बोलीं , “ चाहे तेरी दी कितनी भी मुसीबत में हो “... और उन्होंने फोन कट कर बंद कर दिया ... उसकी आंखों की तो नींद ही उड़ गई थी ...

उसने ऑफिस में अपनी छुट्टी के लिये मेल लिखी और सुबह मुँह अंधेरे की ट्रेन से वह आगरा के लिये निकल पड़ा था ... वह डरा सहमा हुआ जब दी के घर पहुँचा तो सबसे पहले दीदी ही सामने पड़ीं थीं ... वह तो बिल्कुल भली चंगी दिख रही थीं ...

“दी यह कैसा मजाक है ...”

“ यदि मैं यह नाटक न करती तो तू भला आता क्या ...”

‘ हाँ यह बात तो सही है ...’

“अम्मा बाबूजी भी इस बार दीपावली पर यहीं आ रहे हैं ... इसलिये मैंने तुझे भी बुला भेजा ... तुझे यहाँ आये पूरे चार साल हो गये हैं “... वह चुप रहा था

वह दी के पास रोज दोपहर में आया करती और मैं कोशिश करता कि उससे सामना न हो लेकिन वह किसी न किसी तरह उसके सामने आ ही जाती और बात करने की कोशिश

भी करती लेकिन वह वहाँ से चुपचाप हट जाता ... हम दोनों के बीच ऐसे ही आँख मिचौली चल रही थी कि मैंने अपने जाने का टिकट करवा लिया क्यों कि मेरी जॉब के लिये कॉल आ गई थी ...

अगले दिन मुझे जाना था लेकिन चेहरे पर उदासी की पर्त छाई हुई थी क्योंकि रूही से अलग होना पड़ रहा था ... दिल कह रहा था .. शिशिर एक बार तो कह दे कि रूही मैं तुम्हें बहुत प्यार करता हूँलेकिन वह मन ही मन सोचने लगा कि हर इच्छा पूरी थोड़े ही होती है ... वह छत पर गमगीन खड़ा होकर उमड़ते घुमड़ते बादलों को टकटकी लगा कर देख रहा था , उसके मन में भी बादलों की तरह अनेक विचार उमड़ घुमड़ रहे थे तभी रूही चुपके से आई और बोली, “ शिशिर कल तुम जा रहे हो .?”

‘नहीं शिशिर उसके जीवन के तो सारे दिये ही बुझ चुके हैं’

‘दीदी मैं समझ नहीं पा रहा कि आप क्या कह रही हो’ वह अधीर हो कर बोला था ...

‘शादी के एक साल बाद ही एक हादसा उसके पति को निगल गया ...’

उनकी आवाज दर्द से भीग उठी थी...

उसने दी को पकड़ कर झकझोर दिया था ... ‘दी इतने दिन हो गये आपने मुझे कुछ बताया नहीं .. ’

‘क्या बताती बताने जैसा क्या था’

‘दीदी आप क्यों नहीं समझ पाई कि रूही को मेरी जरूरत थी और मैं उसकी दुःख की घड़ी में उसके साथ नहीं खड़ा हो पाया ..’

‘मैं जानती हूँ कि तुम रूही से प्यार करते हो लेकिन पहले तो वह दूसरी जाति फिर अब वह एक विधवा भी... ..अम्मा बाबूजी नहीं मानेंगे.....’

दी उसे वहाँ अकेला छोड़ कर चली गई थी ..वह रात भर विचारों की आँधी के झंझावात से जूझता रहा लड़ता रहा था ...सुबह होते ही वह रूही से मिलने उसके घर पहुँच गया था ... रूही सफेद सूट पहनी हुई उदास अपने वराण्डे में बैठी थी ...

“रूही ...” ‘उसकी आवाज सुनते ही वह चौंक कर एकटक उसे निहारने लगी थी ... उसकी बड़ी बड़ी आँखों से आंसू की बूँद टपक पड़ी थी.



माहौल को हल्का करने के लिये वह बोला, 'जब जा रहा था तब खुशी के आँसू बहा रहिं थीं आज मुझे फिर से देख कर दुखी हो गई क्या ...' रोते रोते वह मुस्कुरा उठी तभी अंदर से आंटी आ गई थी उसने उनके पैर छुए तो बोलीं, 'आज कितने दिनों के बाद इसके चेहरे पर मुस्कराहट दिखाई पड़ी है ..'



उसने फिर से उदासी की चादर ओढ़ ली थी .. वह समझ नहीं पा रहा था कि इस बोझिल वातावरण को कैसे सामान्य करे ... वह चुप रही थी ... आंटी बोलीं, 'बस दिन रात यूँ ही बैठी आँसू बहाती रहती है .. शिशिर इसे कुछ समझाओ ... जाने वाला चला गया .. वह तो अब लौट कर आने वाला नहीं....'

मैं चाह कर भी सांत्वना के दो शब्द नहीं कह पाया था ... मन में असंमंजस्य था ... क्या कहूँ ... क्या बोलूँ ... क्या मैं अपने प्यार को भूल पाया हूँ प्यार को भूलना क्या इतना आसान है अम्मा पापा दीवाली मनाने के लिये आये थे ... रूही से उनकी मुलाकात हुई ... दीदी मेरे और रूही के प्यार की बारे में जानती थीं... .. वह अक्सर रूही को जबर्दस्ती बुला लिया करतीं थीं . दीपावली की तैयारियों में रूही को मदद के लिये बुलातीं और इस तरह से अम्मा बाबूजी से उसका अच्छा परिचय हो गया था ... वह दोनों भी उसे पसंद करने लगे थे ... शाम के समय अक्सर सब साथ में चाय पिया करते ... एक दिन वह फोन पर बात करते हुए छत पर चला गया था तो अम्मा ने उसकी चाय लेकर रूही को ऊपर छत पर भेज दिया था वह शिशिर को अकेला पाकर कुछ देर तक मौन रही फिर पूछा, 'शिशिर तुमने अब तक अपनी शादी क्यों नहीं की'

'अरे शादी भी करना है क्या मैं तो भूल ही गया था'

मेरी बात और कहने के अंदाज पर वह खिलखिला कर हँस पड़ी थी ... जब से आया था, आज पहली बार उसको खुल कर हँसते हुए देखा था ... वह खुश हो गया था

'मजाक मत करो ... सच सच बताओ ...'

मैंने भी कहा, 'तुमने भी तो शादी नहीं की'

'तुम्हें मालूम नहीं कि मैं एक विधवा हूँ' कह कर वह रो पड़ी थी

'रूही तुम पढ़ी लिखी लड़की हो कर इस तरह की बात कर रही हो ... ये 21 वीं सदी है और तुम बातें कर रही हो 18वीं सदी की तुमने मात्र दो साल अपने पति के साथ शादीशुदा जिंदगी बिताई है फिर एक हादसे में वह नहीं रहे तो अब क्या सारी जिंदगी तुम उनके नाम पर ऐसे ही रोते हुए गुजारोगी रोते रोते जल्दी बूढ़ी हो जाओगी ... सुंदर आँखों पर चश्मा चढ़ जायेगा ... अभी तो आंटी अंकल हैं फिर अपना अकेलापन काटने के लिये क्या करोगी .. कुत्ता बिल्ली पालोगी ... रूही बस करो ... दूसरों के सामने अपने ऊपर तरस खाना और दया हासिल करना ... तुम रोती रहोगी लेकिन एक इंसान को अपना नहीं बना सकती दुनिया में तुम पहली नहीं हो, जिसके साथ यह हादसा हुआ है ... किसी के चले जाने के बाद जिंदगी रुकती नहीं ... न ही रुकेगी

'जब मैं तुम्हें यहाँ से छोड़ कर गया तो मुझे भी यही महसूस हुआ था कि मेरे लिये दुनिया खत्म हो गई है और कहीं भी कुछ बाकी नहीं रह गया है ... पर क्या ऐसा हुआ ... नहीं न.... मैं जी रहा हूँ.....कि नहीं ... इसी तरह तुम भी जी लोगी ...' वह उसकी बात सुन कर पल भर को ठिठक गई थी ... मैं नीचे चला आया फिर कुछ देर में वह भी लौट आई थी .. दोनों के बीच में मौन पसर गया था ... दीपावली का दिन था ... मैं दीदी के घर की छत पर दिया सजा रहा था, रूही भी अपनी मुंडेर पर पहले से ही दिया सजा रही थी ... हवा के तेज झोंके से दीपक बार बार बुझ जा रहा था उसके चेहरे पर मायूसी दिखाई पड़ रही थी तभी उसके दिल में मैंने अपने हाथों से ढक दिया और उसकी रोशनी में उसका चेहरा जगमगा उठा था' रूही वैसे तो मेरे पास बहुत सारी लड़कियों के ऑफर थे लेकिन मेरे दिल में तुम बसी हुई हो ...' 'क्या तुम मेरी जीवन संगिनी बनोगी ?....' रूही की आँखों से एक नन्हा सा खुशी का आँसू छलक उठा और चेहरे पर पुरानी वाली निश्छल मुस्कान छा गई थी ... वह खुशी से वल्लरी की भाँति शिशिर के सीने से लग गई थी ... उसने भी जल्दी से अपने पास आई खुशियों को अपनी बांहों के घेरे में समेट लिया था...

अचानक ही छत पर बिजलियाँ जगमगा उठी थी और अम्मा बाबू जी के साथ दीदी और सभी लोगों की तालियों की आवाज से वह दोनों चौंक पड़े थे दोनों ही शर्मा कर अम्मा बाबूजी के पैरों पर झुक गये थे



पद्मा अग्रवाल



See you in the next edition