

Are you taking things personally?

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As I casually scrolled through my Facebook newsfeed, a status from a close friend of mine caught my attention: *It feels awful to be left out.*

My thoughts immediately centred on his exclusion from our presentation group, which was actually done by the course teacher to ensure random grouping of members. Thinking that his post was directed towards us, I promptly texted him explaining the whole scenario. But he was offline. As I anxiously awaited his response, I kept checking my inbox frequently and this went on for quite some time until finally I decided to call him to clear the misunderstanding. To be honest, I felt relieved and a bit idiotic after hearing that the post was directed towards his cousins who went on a trip without him.

I realized that I got worked up for nothing regarding a post that had nothing to do with me.

As human beings, we have little control over how other people view us, instead we are in full control of how we view ourselves and how we respond to their views. In social media, we tend to judge and react to issues which don't concern us in the first place. As we start taking these personally, we feel offended, anxious, ignored or even hurt, which affects our mental peace and makes us unhappy.

WHY DO WE TAKE THINGS PERSONALLY?

Instead of thinking of things rationally, we tend to focus on what serves our ego.

In psychology, the term is personalisation, - an irrational way of thinking in which an individual believes that what others say or do is directed towards them. When this hap-



ILLUSTRATION: NOOR US SAFA ANIK

pens, our focus shifts from "we" to "me". We view ourselves as the centre of the world, and, therefore, responsible for how an event went down, especially if it was a negative

one. This leads to self-blaming, even though we weren't responsible for the event in question. Personalisation may also lead to viewing oneself as unworthy and may result in inducing an inferiority complex.

THEN, HOW DO WE STOP?

Shifting the focus from "me" to "we" gives us the window to think rationally. And when we gain a clear perspective of both sides of a story, we can stop feeling offended or responsible regarding how an event went down. This also precludes the possibility of self-blaming.

Ask yourself the question, "Is it really about me?" If the answer is no, we should stop meddling with the matter immediately. If the answer is yes, then we have to speak up and state clearly how we feel. This will prompt the other person to consider our feelings and take action accordingly.

We can also counter the cognitive distortion by acknowledging the fact that we can't control what other people think about us. After all, we are not the centre of everyone's world.

References

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The author has utmost admiration for anime villains. Mail him about your favourite ones at rainakghanreal@gmail.com

Making it easier. *Period.*

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Periods are, for most of us, a tough business. Almost everyone has their own ways of dealing with this monthly predicament. The ways may vary, but are usually highly adaptable.

One of the most common indulgences that helps many with the lingering discomfort is gorging on comfort foods. The sense of familiarity and warmth that one gets from their favourite food is undeniable. However, most comfort foods are junks, and contain high amounts of sugar or fat.

Whilst sugar intake definitely causes momentary bliss, giving into such cravings can cause imbalance in natural blood sugar levels. This disruption very often leads to mood swings and tension in our bodies. Whilst a high level of progesterone right before periods justify the cravings, a healthier diet has proved more efficient when it comes to providing the body the strength to cope with the continual hormonal imbalance (food rich in iron, water-rich fruits, green-leafy vegetables, ginger, dark chocolate).

Many have also reported needing space in order to cope with the discomfort. Usually during the earlier days of our menstrual cycle, our estrogen and progesterone levels are at their lowest, which equates to lower energy. Thus, many enjoy watching movies, especially those that



provide a dose of nostalgia, in solitary. Many have also expressed their tendency to sleep a tad more than usual during the earlier days of their menstrual cycle, therefore slightly compensating for the lack of energy. Thus, it's wrong for us to assume we are merely being lazy when we are actually operating on little energy.

The other very sought-out option is hot water-bags. During periods, prostaglandins help the shedding of uterus linings by contracting the uterus. Strong

contraction in combination with less blood flow causes a decrease in oxygen supply to the muscle tissue. Heating pads help ease the muscle tension and open up the blood vessels, promoting blood flow and eventually remedying the pain. Avoiding caffeine, carbonated drinks, and fried food sets a strong precedent against impending menstrual cramps or bodily discomforts.

Many resort to yoga to help ease the aforementioned uterine tensions. The

easiest exercise to do is the child's pose. With knees on the floor we fold forward, extending our arms and bending down as far as possible. Another one that is helpful is the reclined bound angle pose. We lie on our backs and draw our heels toward our pelvis, letting our knees fall to the sides as we press the soles of our feet together. We can place our hands either on our belly or alongside our body as our palms face above. We place a cushion or pillow behind our sacrum, before slowly lowering upon it.

These are a variety of ways one can help ease their menstrual distresses. All of these are healthy and entail no side-effects, thus can be tried out at one's convenience.

References

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Aysha thinks good things take time, at least a year and a half. Tell her all about how your good things took time, too, at zaheenaysha10@gmail.com