

LIVING

Coping With Change

by Fayza Haq

FROM the time a child is born, he comes across a world of changes. Changes come when we alter even in our life, willingly or unwillingly. It is essential to control our response to changes for our emotional well-being and health.

From the moment the child learns to toddle, walk and play with the other children, he has to learn to share his toys and not throw tantrums or he becomes disliked by the neighbouring children. As the child grows up and proceeds to school, he misses home, his mother, and must tackle the school schedule, whether he likes it or not. Abroad there are many pre-school centres where the child learns to adjust to other children and schedule.

By the time the child is five or six he has to sit for tests and have regular homework. Sometimes the parents think it is good to get the child transferred to another school. This creates a feeling of dislodgement in the child as he misses his old environment.

As the child becomes a teenager there are many hobbies that he develops and friends he makes. This may not be liked by his parents. They may object to his going to frequent parties, reading pop magazines such as on Madonna, Tina Turner and other stars, and watching too many VCR programmes. The child and the parents may have many frictions.

The teenaged girl might take to writing love letters or having crushes on her colleagues. This is not abnormal but will annoy the parents as they have their own plans for the child, and they do not welcome the child frittering away her time.

There is then the time the child goes to college and university. There is a whole new world opened for the youth. Sometimes he is sent abroad at a tender age and he finds this quite overwhelming. There are new rules, standards, new ways of life, and the youth will be far from his family and old friends. This may cause him to have problems coping with a different environment.

As the youth grows it is

time for him or her to take up a job or get married. Both are new situations that the young individual might find difficult to handle. The young person may not find the working situation all that congenial and yet he may not have no other alternatives. He may not care for many of his superiors and he may not have rapport with his colleagues. But yet he must struggle on as he must make a living and establish himself in life. He may have a dusty table and a rickety chair to work on and, a claustrophobic atmosphere when he might be pining to work in another establishment. But he may not have access to the job that his heart is longing after or he may be intimidated at the idea of getting a low salary elsewhere, or he may not have the gumption or opportunity to try his luck abroad.

As for the young woman, she often has a tremendous amount of adjustments to make as a wife. She may be expected to wear a "sari" when she may have been used to the "shalwar" and "kameez". She may have been used to speaking in English at home instead of Bangla, eating different diet, listening to different type of music, but she must comply with the ways of her in-laws. Her college and university friends may not be welcomed too frequently in her new home. She may have to combine her studies with her married life, and one has known many women to actually lose weight during this time, even when the new husband is understanding.

Caring for children adequately, providing for their school and comfort is another stage that a person must deal with, and this is not easy either.

There is then the time the children leave home and one has known mothers to be quite depressed and lonely when the children are no longer filling the house with their activities and gaiety. Middle age is not easy for

women any where in the world to cope with. Sometimes the husband and the wife have nothing in common except their children. They have been known to eat and sleep apart and have separate friends.

Retirement and old age is one of the most difficult for people in the east to handle.

daughter-in-law may not care to visit her in-laws. The grandparents get estranged even from the grandchildren.

There are then sad events like death in the family or a divorce or a separation. It is sometimes very difficult for the individual to face and accept the new situation.

yourself. Look at the areas of work, family and personal life and ask yourself, what are the things I value most. Determine objectively, your strengths and weaknesses so you can make choices in life that are best for you.

Next you need to set goals. Have both short-term and long-term goals. Make goals that affect your personal and professional life.

Almost every aspect of life involves a certain degree of change. Change can be initially looked upon as positive, such as the change brought on by a well-earned job promotion or the anticipated birth of a baby. However, all change involves a certain degree of loss, as you let go of the past and find strength to make new choices for the future.

When change does occur, there are things you can do to help you consciously and constructively deal with the challenges it can bring. Some positive ways of coping with change include:

Reflecting on your feelings. Admit to yourself what this particular change will mean to you. If change happens suddenly and unexpectedly, like the loss of a loved one, take the time needed to mourn your loss. Then realise you must adjust. Focus on what's good in your life and move on.

Listing the possible opportunities. Everything from the loss of a job to the hiring of a new boss can present new opportunities in life. Find those opportunities that can give the most pleasure, and make them part of your new goals.

Limiting the changes in your life. You can easily overdo it if you take on too many changes at once. For example, if you are relocating to a new city because of a job, try not to consume yourself with task like redecorating. Concentrate your energy on the important change at hand — adjusting to a new job and a new city. Once you're comfortable with that, then take on the other challenges.



The birth of a baby can be an exciting change. Taking time for yourself and realizing you can't do everything on your own will help.

They no longer have the official car or the phone, or the line of visitors, or the string of evenings out. Everyone cannot afford golf or tennis, and the people they meet for morning or evening walks, are all they have for company. The children are often posted abroad or outside the capital city. It may also happen that the

Controlling our response to change is essential to our emotional well-being and good health. Change can be acceptable, if we learn to develop a positive attitude toward the challenges it brings.

To cope with change effectively, you must first deal with what is going on inside of you. To do this, you need to know

Taking it one day at a time. Change, whether voluntary or involuntary requires time to adjust. Adjusting to such changes as juggling a family and career and trying to do your best with both, can leave you feeling inadequate and run-down. You must realise that there is only so much you can do. Slowing down and taking time for yourself can really help.

Seeking support. When change becomes too much, there is always help available, whether it comes from friends, family or medical professionals. Seeking help is not a sign of weakness, but rather a sign of strength. Knowing your limitations and living by them is the greatest gift you can give yourself, your family and your place of employment.

Diet, exercise and relaxation as a way to cope with change. Taking good care of yourself is not only good for your health, it will also give you the strength to better cope with the challenges of change.

Often when we are saddened by change, we don't eat, or we overeat. Neither is good. Eating balanced meals from the four major food groups and staying away from highly refined sugar and fatty foods will help give you the energy needed to face change.

Exercise is also important. Regular aerobic exercise improves blood circulation, makes the heart and other vital organs work more, and is a great way to reduce the stresses brought by change. Consult your doctor before beginning any such exercise such as a) brisk walking and jogging, b) bicycling, c) swimming, d) active sports such as tennis.

Don't let change control your life. Change is inevitable and unfortunately, many times it is unexpected. However, you can learn to cope with change so that it doesn't take hold of your life. Know yourself and your goals, develop a positive attitude and maintain a good diet and exercise programme, which includes periods of relaxation. In doing this, you will help to cope with changes and continue living a healthy, productive life.

Dhaka Dining

by Dominic Douse

Something New at D.I.T.2

A PART from the name, owner, a shuffle of waiters, and an unnecessary menu expansion, little has occurred to convert the "Curry Bazaar" into its present incarnation as the "Cafe Shan". The freshly painted light exterior is quite a contrast to the dim void within, in truth darker than the night outside. The dim lighting diminishes the decor to little more than a dull blur upon the walls, and actually prohibits visual contact with ones food.

The daunting menu boasts 150 choices of Arabian, Bengali, Chinese, Italian, Indian and Fish foods. Making one's order is quite a task: We did not recognise many of the dishes and, on asking for a description from our trio of waiters, were given the not so very helpful replies of "Indian", "Bengali" or "Arabian" food, created to confused quarrels as they decided, or entertained with further incomprehensible

answers. Many of the items were unavailable: it was not until my fourth attempt that I chose a dish that they actually had, finally deciding upon standard Bangali dishes, avoiding the odd, murky sounding dishes such as the rather risky crab cooked in a thick grey sauce.

Our solitary party was served swiftly. The meal proved pleasing to all — a variety of curries that was really as good as could be hoped for. Mid-meal, other customers arrived, relieving us of many over-keen hovering waiters. When we were completely satisfied they removed the empty plates which still carry the extinct "Curry Bazaar" logo.

The "Cafe Shan" is worth visiting for its fairly-priced curries, and perhaps it should limit itself to these. The present extensive menu is certainly a handicap to diners and can hardly make life easy for the staff.



Waiters aplenty at "Cafe Shan".

Health Aspects of Air Travel

by Dr Md Abdul Matin

COMMERCIAL aviation is known to be the safe and comfortable transport for hundreds of millions of passengers each year all over the world. Although most people can fly safely but planning and precautions are necessary for some persons having pre-existing physical problems, because potential medical stress are due to be imposed on such persons, by the air travel. However, absolute prohibitions on flying exists for very few conditions.

Pilots deserve attention first and need to be considered, particularly in general aviation. Of more than 4000 accidents those occur on an average every year in general aviation, the vast majority are reported to occur in recreational air-flights and more often related to the injudicious use of alcohol or other drugs. Certainly the military and commercial pilots are rigorously screened and accidents due to their illness or drug abuse are extremely rare.

So far as the passengers are concerned the air travel stresses influence human body in different ways. Actually major problems are originated due to high altitude positions although the crafts are designed in such a way that the sources of discomforts are supposed to be minimised. But still some amount of environmental disparity remains between the earth surface and craft-cabin. Any way, this may be ignored for healthy persons, but the situation won't be the same for all, rather it may affect the bio-physical aspects of those passengers who possess certain pre-existing factors within their bodies. However, the major problems on the travellers relate to the following—

1. Motion Sickness causing nausea and vomiting due to excessive stimulation to the vestibular apparatus in ears (which keeps body balanced) particularly during turbulences of the air crafts. Seat belts should be kept fastened at all times when seated and some medications with anti-emetics or mild sedatives may be useful in such cases.

2. Changes of air-pressure in the air-craft at high altitudes may induce certain health problems. We know that all modern air-crafts maintain cabin pressure equivalent to that of 5 to 8 thousand feet altitude — which initiates

some amount of expansion in free air that is contained in body cavities, the most harassing one is the obstruction of the minute eustachian tube (communicating tunnel between ear and throat). This is more common among the passengers having wild cold even, causing compressing discomforts in the ear and sinuses. Frequent closed nose-swallowing or yawning during discomfort may relieve a lot and children may be given oral feeding with fluids candy or chewing gums. However anti-histamines before and during flights will



help prevent the discomfort. Facial pain from pre-existing dental origin may be increased from air pressure. Based on such barometric changes inside the air-crafts, air travel is contraindicated for persons.

- having medical procedures involving air injection in any organ of the body, e.g. Pneumoencephalography.
- of pneumothorax (extra air in chest cavity).
- with large cavities in the lungs.
- having very recent (i.e. less than 10 days) abdominal surgery which makes air-traps after closure, naturally.

On board air expansion in such patients may create tremendous problems. Patients having colostomy (i.e. diverted anus) require large colostomy bags to receive extra amount of

angina pectoris (chest pain with impending heart attack), congestive heart failures, in-born heart diseases, anaemia etc. However all these cases may have a safe journey with artificial O₂ supply. Patients recovering from acute myocardial infarction (heart attack) may avail any air flight provided they are stable in vital signs which is not attainable earliest before 2 weeks.

4. Derangements in daily life-style ensue in rapid travellers particularly when it is across multiple time zones and thereby creates biological stress therefore after every long trip such passengers should have rest for 24-48 hours for adjustability in sleep, eating, evacuation of bowel doses patterns of medications if any (e.g. insulin for diabetes, anticonvulsants for epilepsy etc).

5. Psychological stress may be evoked from fear of flying, causing hypertension in susceptible persons on board. They need psychotherapy and moderate sedatives before on during flights.

6. Other considerations include—

a. **Smoking** can aggravate mild hypoxia (lack of O₂) and should be avoided, even if traveller is free from lung diseases.

b. **Fluid drinks** should be plenty and alcohol intake, should be avoided by the travellers to get rid of dehydration which is likely to occur because of low humidity in the cabin-air.

c. **Thrombophlebitis** i.e. inflammatory disease of blood vessels may be initiated during long trips sitting posture especially among pregnant ladies, obese and persons having previous venous diseases. They need to walk every one to two hourly inside the cabin and perform isometric exercises.

d. **Wired jaw** following maxillofacial injury is a contraindication for air travel, since air sickness may be started with vomiting and this wired fixation will enhance the entry of vomitus into the respiratory tract leading to pneumonia. However if the wire is fitted with a quick-release device, then the person can get on board reasonably.

e. **Contact lens** wearers require to instill artificial tears frequently to avoid corneal irritation resulting from low cabin humidity.

f. **Advanced or complicated pregnancy** needs special care during air travel even if permitted by her physician, in particular, to avoid thrombophlebitis due to long time sitting, and unwanted compression on abdomen by the seat belt (which may be fastened over thigh). Terminal pregnancies should avoid air travel to be free from unprecedented situation in the sky from a possible episode of labour pain and complicated pregnancies are not accepted for any air journey.

g. **Children aged under 7 days** are not accepted for air travel, since they are passing through a transitory period of environmental adaptation, after being out of the womb and deserve a natural world, not a mechanical air-craft cabin. Children of any age with any disease, susceptible to be endangered in low O₂ tension (as stated earlier) should be supplemented with O₂ or avoid any air journey.

h. **Elderly, handicapped and chronic sick** persons should have prior arrangements for air travel which may have to include wheel chair, fluid, respirator, medicines, physician, valuable medical records like ECG etc.

i. **Pace makers** of older models may trigger any security alarm because of their metallic contents implanted in human body, therefore one certificate from a physician should be carried along with, to avoid security difficulties.

j. **Communicable diseases** pose a threat to other passengers in the crowded air-craft — so, the persons infected with such diseases should not be allowed in air-travel. Adoption of current international immunisation schedule may help reducing such communicability in the air.

Now at the end, we must not ignore the non-traveller inhabitants of the nearby localities around the airports about their environmental health hazards in terms of urban noise and air pollutions, occasional large or small scale air disasters and toxic contamination of agricultural products. Patients residing near large airports get bodily deteriorated from continued high level noise and air pollutions.

Body Maintenance

LISTEN TO YOUR BODY

INDIFFERENT foods are what most people eat all the time, foods that are not bad but not good: stewed fruit that has been left in the refrigerator for a week, stale fruits, apples whose skin has gone crinkly, cheese left unwrapped in the refrigerator and so on.

FASTING

The average individuals like to fast only whenever the body feels the need.

"I don't think it is the natural process to fast say, once a month, or once a week, or once a year unless your body says, I don't feel like eating today", say dieticians.

"I have fasted for three days on watermelon because that is all I wanted to eat. I think, OK there is something in there that wants to be burnt out. If it is a watermelon that's got to be in the bromide area, and I can sense that my glands need to be rebalanced a bit. So I have gone on a watermelon mono diet."

"Forced fasting is worse than no fasting at all. Actually, for some people fasting can be dangerous. They've got so much rubbish inside that their body can go into a violent elimination and their skin goes green and they feel dreadful and their bowels come up. Their body has so much to change, a fast is too drastic, too sudden," they add.

BE CONSTRUCTIVE

You try to fast constructively. If you know you have a liver problem, drink nothing but tea, or coffee for three days and maybe a little carrot juice which is good normalizing stuff for the liver.

Or if the bowels are your problem, have an apple juice fast and eat boiled onions and a weekend away with absolutely no social contact what so ever! If you're going to fast you might as well get something constructive from the fast and not just burn off in general, so direct your fast to the area that needs cleaning out. If your skin is looking a bit grubby and sallow and you want to open the pores, fast on fenegreek tea and stay indoors because you will smell like a sultan's kitchen!

It will cleanse your skin at such a rate that you'll be socially dangerous all the time you are having the fast. You'll literally smell like a curry.

I often do that one in late autumn, when it is lovely and dry and the sun is hot and you can get out into a courtyard with flagstones. You take everything off and you lie there with the heat on your back from the stones and drink your fenegreek tea. Your skin will go "woosh" and clean out pools of dirt, oil. But you do really smell vile for a while.

If you have the problem of overloaded bowels and your skin is suffering because of it, you try and get toxins out whatever way you can. Sometimes the bowels can't handle it and sometimes the kidneys can't handle it either. So if these areas are clogged use your skin as a third elimination area and get rid of it that way. The skin is often called the third kidney.

Fast for as long as you feel happy doing it. I haven't fasted for a few months but this week I didn't want to eat anything except watermelon, so today I'm still not feeling like drinking herb teas. In another couple of days I'll have herb teas or some peppermint tea, perhaps, and ease back into my eating cycle.

Mineral water is a good basic source of food, too, instead of tea and coffee. Good weak tea is a good nutritional area, but eight strong cups of tea and milk isn't.

Just listen to what your body tells you. And remember, changing your diet is not just a fad, it can be the key to health.

(Concluded) GDH



Embroidery goes well with a simple "kameez"