

TIPS

5 things to help your mind in trying times

The Covid-19 pandemic is changing the world as we know it, and every day is becoming more difficult than the last one. The uncertainty and the change ensuing from it have simply crept up in a short amount of time, and are truly too much to take on for anyone.

Staying well in terms of both body and mind has now become a challenge that very few are capable of without having some kind of fallout. Tips and advice on keeping the body fit with well-balanced meals and lifestyle changes are abundant, but it is equally important to look out for one's own mind and soul.

EXERCISING

Physical activities come with the double benefit of keeping the body in good shape and give the mind a chance to destress. Being confined at home may limit one's range of exercises, but it does not mean that they have to be skipped altogether.

Scientists and doctors have repeatedly emphasised on the many benefits of exercising and its direct impact on mental wellbeing. It is more important than ever to build up a strengthened immune system, and that can only happen when the mind too is at its best.

MEDITATING

Simple and effective — these are the two attributes that come with meditation. The typical mind has a tendency to flutter like a restless bird; one minute it perches on a branch of past memories, the next second it takes a nose dive into overthinking the future — it hardly sits in the present. This is where mediation can help the most — to be in the present in a stable and calm state.

One of the easiest mediation methods to follow in this context would be the Mindfulness Meditation. This particular method can help one to stabilise in the present without wandering.

FAMILY TIME

While it is an everyday longing for most to spend more time than ever with their families, the current situation however is backfiring for many. Being stuck in the same confines without any external relaxation, fights and arguments inevitably break out for even the simplest things. It is

becoming even more difficult to balance work responsibilities from home alongside everyday housework.

The children in the family too are being affected negatively due to the absence of their regular routine. Sadly, there is not exactly any one-size-fits-all solution to this particular predicament. However, it should help to have more conversations.

Some boundaries have to be maintained and some have to be redefined in cases. Quality family time needs to be in everyone's focus as this is one situation where everyone's wellbeing is affected.

CONNECTING MORE

It should be everyone's priority during these times to call up on near and dear ones.

Calling up one person a day is neither time consuming nor is it a wasted effort. They can be anyone — family members, colleagues, distant relatives, acquaintances and anyone you can think of from home and abroad.

Speaking to near and dear ones creates a sense of connectedness which the mind needs. Simple acts like these ensure that the mind is not overwhelmed by being on its own.

PRACTICING SELF-CARE

When the word self-care comes up, many have the tendency to associate 'selfishness' with it. That should never be the case, particularly in times like these. Self-care is necessary to make sure the mind has a chance to unwind. Practicing self-care within bounds should be a priority now. If your mind is at its best, it will help you to care for others. After all, taking care of your mind should not be a chore or burden, but a positive step towards the better, not only for you, but those around as well.

By Iris Farina

These tips have been adapted from advice given by psychologist, Dr Mehtab Khanam. Watch the full video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kkU0JTswuSM>

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LS REMINDER

A Ramadan like no other: sensible pre-planning

The holy month of Ramadan, the biggest and most anticipated month for Muslims around the world, is only a handful of days away. However, Ramadan this year is possibly unlike any that most have faced. With the ongoing viral pandemic, what we call normal life has skidded to a halt. So, it should come as no surprise that adjustments are inevitable for those who are prepping for the month-long fasting and eventual celebrations. To ease the planning, particularly for a summer Ramadan, which will probably have some restrictions for public safety, a different approach is necessary.

PRODUCTIVITY WITH A PURPOSE

Every week, opt for something productive. Ramadan does not mean that one can lounge around or 'take it easy' while fasting. It is particularly in this time that not only the daily tasks, but extra effort should be put in for optimum efficiency throughout the day, both for work and home.

BEING THOUGHTFUL

Over the last few months, the world has observed so many valiant efforts from people of every sphere of life. This Ramadan, everyone's priority should be on being kind and considerate to those who are in a less fortunate position than them. Going the extra mile without being superficial is one of the imbued teachings of Ramadan, and this should be observed to the utmost this year.

THE WEEKLY CHECKPOINT

Disruptions in every shape and size are expected this year. Take some time to align yourself and those around you and see where you stand. Instead of going to full-time fact checks and imposing up on others, take small steps and ensure you are applying common sense. At the same time, do not forget to take the season into account for preparations.

CHANGE FOR GOOD

For many, Ramadan with its rules and discipline open up a path for curbing bad habits and behaviours. Sadly, these changes hardly keep pace beyond the second week of Eid-ul-Fitr. Take the time to truly understand what made the bad habits start in the first place, and put them out for good.

CHILDREN AND RAMADAN

For a lot of children, this year may be their first time fasting. This is also the perfect time to get the youngsters into a pace of routine and self-control after interruptions from the month. Children can also learn to think for themselves on what Ramadan truly means.



By Iris Farina

Throughout the month of Ramadan, Star Lifestyle will be touching up on these aspects to provide our readers and followers with a flexible weekly guideline for a well-prepared month of observations and insights.

RELAXING AND TAKING PERSONAL TIME

Amidst all the preparation and daily activities, at least one day of the week needs to be for some time-off. Light, fun activities with the family, some quiet time for oneself etc. are all much needed to keep up the pace throughout the month without having a burnout.