Tackling frustrations with non-tech savvy parents

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"Dipa! Come here!"

"I can hear you from here, ammu."

"I told you to come here, so come."

"All right, what happened?"

"Why is the keyboard typing gibberish?"

"Because you kept the Bijoy Classic on. I told you how to change this a million times before."

"I am old, I can't remember all these things now."

"YouTube is a click away, ammu."

"Why would I need YouTube when I have you to teach me?"

If we are sure about one thing, it is that our parents are not early adopters. They are what American sociologist Everett Rogers calls the "late majority" or even "laggards". This simply means that we, the early majority, are expected to bear certain responsibilities in disseminating technology-related knowledge to them. This is noble and salient, but it often entails being frustrated when they do not retain the information well.

Numerous studies have shown that as people grow older, the brain requires more time to learn new facts. This is because the function of the brain responsible for receiving, processing, and relaying information becomes less effective due to ageing and decreased activity. Hence, when teaching your parents new technol-

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ogy, it is important to approach the task with patience and compassion.

Start with the basics and gradually introduce more advanced features. Make sure to explain things in simple terms and use examples they can relate to. Avoid using technical jargon and explain things in a comprehensible manner. Rather than simply telling them how to use the technology, demonstrate how to use it. Have them repeat the instructions and

practice. If necessary, go over the steps again. Above all, try not to get frustrated if your parents don't understand everything right away.

Encourage them to ask questions and practice using the technology on their own. Make yourself available to answer any questions they may have or to assist them in troubleshooting any issues that may arise. Additionally, it may be helpful to find online resources or tutorials that

they can refer to for additional help. Providing detailed written instruction may also be of great help, as it is sometimes easier to understand something when it's in written form.

Positive reinforcement can also help to boost their confidence when it comes to learning new technology. Remember when your mother kept getting angry when you didn't understand that one maths problem before a test and how pressured you felt? You wished for your mother to be gentler with you. So, in our position of being the teacher, we can work to become gentler with our parents.

Unlike us, our parents were not born into a world where extensive use of technology is almost like second-nature. Therefore, empathising with their struggles of trying to fit into this new world will take you a long way.

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Unpacking the layers of internalised racism

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We all know that one friend who is more in touch with the group of cultures we bundle together as the "West", than they are with their own. They won't try local delicacies like moglai porota, but call it a deep-fried egg quesadilla, and they are most likely to dig in. But, as their numbers grow in increasingly concerning ways, it poses one question. Could this be the symptom of a bigger problem?

ILLUSTRATION: **FATIMA JAHAN ENA**

Internalised racism. Big words, but bear with me. It's a phenomenon where someone regards their own race to be inferior compared to another race. This reverence for the "superior" race is usually rooted deep in our subconscious. In our case, the reverence is usually towards white people.

In this day and age, teenagers are chronically online, in cyberspaces dominated by white content creators. When we see that popular TikTok star in their penthouse suite or eating at a Michelin 3-star restaurant, our mind wants to connect their wealth to the colour of their skin. We may subconsciously begin to associate success with race and that's where internalised racism comes in.

People with internalised racism constantly measure themselves against Western cultures and standards. When your lifestyle does not resemble that of the famous people you see on the Internet, it makes you insecure. It makes you despise your own culture and surroundings. It's not something one would ever voice openly, but rather feel and quietly anguish in.

At worst, it could make someone insecure about what they could never change about themselves: their skin colour. You look at what your idol looks like, and you look at yourself in the mirror. When you see the two things contrasting all the time, it serves as a constant reminder that you'll never truly be like them.

The harms of this mental hurdle are innumerable. It's not just a desire to erase

your cultural identity, but it also gives rise to severe self-loathing. Since it's subconsciously developed, people don't realise why they're unhappy with their appearances. Their inability to pinpoint the problem further adds to their frustration, leading them to buy harmful products like fairness creams, or other skin "brightening" products. This insecurity sometimes even translates into not feeling beautiful no matter what you do to change your appearance.

Ultimately, trying to distance yourself from your own race creates a feeling of isolation, where you are unable to join the revered race due to inherent differences, and have trouble assimilating with your own group.

Not only is it a difficult problem to detect, it is a difficult topic to talk about. You can go to a friend screeching "INTERNALISED RACISM," but they're unlikely to understand or pay attention. We need to not only be aware of the problem ourselves, but spread awareness among our peers.

Instead of trying to be something we can never truly be, we should take pride in our own cultural identity. We should try to be more forgiving of our background, and embrace it. And instead of talking down to people, we can delicately bring it up. So, the next time you see that friend busting out cutlery to eat their *polao* and roast, instead of resorting to mockery, why not strike up a casual conversation about it?