

2020: The Year of Revolutions

Venu Sharma, F.Y.B.A.

Many humanistic psychologists believe that humans have an inherent need for justice and social consistency. While this need is overlapped over time, it remains rudimentary to their nature waiting for the right reinforcement to make them leap.

Revolutions never stop. When wars settle or dance in upheaval, when economies rise or fall, when anger is suppressed or aroused under any circumstance, what cannot be stopped is a revolution. In this era of the great pandemic many might like to believe that social protests and political rebellion too would have come to a halt. However, they could not be more wrong. While we were confined within the walls of our home, we still managed to practice our function of justice.

The first biggest protest that sparked in 2020 was Black Lives Matter. For centuries, racial profiling had become an issue in USA. Targeting African-American individuals and police action on them has injured and killed

many. While it had begun in 2015, it was only in 2020 that it gained a global momentum. On February 23, Ahmaud Arbery, a young African American was shot while out jogging. In March, Breonna Taylor died when police fired multiple shots at her.

The movement came into full force after the death of George Floyd who died at the hands of a police officer, Derek Chauvin. A video surfaced of Chauvin kneeling on the neck of George and him repeatedly pleading, "I can't breathe" which later on became a popular Black Lives Matter slogan. By the end of May, protests came in full force, demanding to defund the police and justice for Floyd. By the end of August, there were more than 10,600 Black Lives Matter protests across the United States. The Black Lives Matter movement is evidence that when injustice surface-



es, existence becomes secondary and people are left with no choice but to breathe freely than to die enslaved in lawlessness.

In June, India witnessed a movement it had never experienced before. That was the month when for the first time mental health and psychological disorders were openly and actively discussed. Before this, the topic had only gained minimal focus. After the death of the famous actor, Sushant Singh Rajput credited to clinical depression, many young individuals took to the internet to express their concerns. For the first time parents asked their children about their mental situations, individuals openly accepted to suffering from mental issues and a situation of you are not alone was created in the country. Thanks to this, mental health has finally received the much needed public atten-

tion that was essential to deal with it.

During the end of July, another internet movement sparked in India, Dalit Lives Matter. The movement gained immense attention to the point that activists took to the streets even during a pandemic. The movement was sparked off after a twenty year old woman was raped, murdered and forcefully cremated in Uttar Pradesh. Popularly known as the Hathras Case, the protests were to bring attention to the systematic crimes committed against the Dalit community. This has led to immense anger against the government who is yet to punish the culprits of this heinous crime.

The movements of 2020 are thus a living symbol that the new generation is tired of waking up in the same world where they are forced to witness social injustices. They are not ready to witness another incident that will bring their country and the world to an ever low. They have sworn to change and while the change is slow, it is anything but stoppable.

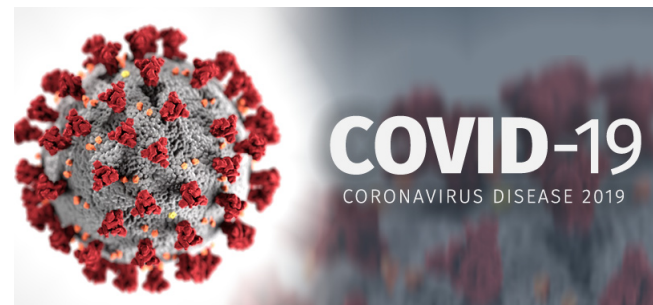
Covid 19: What The Mind Endured

Pranay Pramod Jagtap, F.Y.B.A.

COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown has brought about a sense of fear and anxiety around the globe. This phenomenon has led to short term as well as long term psychosocial and mental health implications for children and adolescents. The quality and magnitude of impact on minors is determined by many vulnerability factors like developmental age, educational status, pre-existing mental health condition, being economically underprivileged or being quarantined due to infection or fear of infection.

Stress starts showing its adverse effect on a child even before he or she is born. During stress, parents' particularly pregnant mothers are in a psychologically vulnerable state to experience anxiety and depression which is biologically linked to the wellbeing of the fetus. In young children and adolescents, the pandemic and lockdown have a greater impact on emotional and social development compared to that in the grown-ups. In one of the preliminary studies during the on-going pandemic, it was found younger children (3-6 years old) were more likely to manifest symptoms of clinginess and the fear of family members being infected than older

children (6-18 years old). Whereas, the older children were more likely to experience inattention and were persistently inquiring regarding COVID-19. Although,



severe psychological conditions of increased irritability, inattention and clinging behavior were revealed by all children irrespective of their age groups. Based on the questionnaires completed by the parents, findings reveal that children felt uncertain, fearful and isolated during current times. It was also shown that children experienced disturbed sleep, nightmares, poor appetite, agitation, inattention and separation related anxiety.

Globally, the pre-lockdown learning of children and adolescents predominantly involved one-to-one interaction with their mentors and peer groups. Unfortunately, the nationwide

closures of schools and colleges have negatively impacted over 91% of the world's student population. The home confinement of children and adolescents is associated with uncertainty and anxiety which is attributable to disruption in their education, physical activities and opportunities for socialization. Absence of structured setting of the school for a long duration result in

disruption in routine, boredom and lack of innovative ideas for engaging in various academic and extracurricular activities. Some children have expressed lower levels of affect for not being able to play outdoors, not meeting friends and not engaging in the in-person school activities. These children have become clingier, attention seeking and more dependent on their parents due to the long term shift in their routine. It is presumed that children might resist going to school after the lockdown gets over and may face difficulty in establishing rapport with their mentors after the schools reopen. Consequently, the constraint of movement imposed on

them can have a long term negative effect on their overall psychological wellbeing.

During times of paramount stress when the mental health of children and adolescents around the globe is directly or indirectly impacted, the role of mental health care workers, including clinical psychologists, psychiatrists, and psychiatric social workers is crucial keeping in mind their professional responsibilities and social challenges.

There is a pressing need for planning longitudinal and developmental studies, and implementing evidence based elaborative plan of action to cater to the psychosocial and mental health needs of the vulnerable children and adolescents during pandemic as well as post pandemic. There is a need to ameliorate children and adolescents' access to mental health support services geared towards providing measures for developing healthy coping mechanisms during the current crisis. For this innovative child and adolescent mental health policies with direct and digital collaborative networks of psychiatrists, psychologists, pediatricians, and community volunteers are deemed necessary.

Social Network - Discovery of the Decade

Aryan Yadav, F.Y.B.A.

Humans today are creating a century's worth of data every day. Future historians even after years and years of decadence will not face a problem in deciphering today's civilization. It might seem ambitious but today everything you are posting on a social media website is becoming an artifact of the future. Memes of today will be museums of tomorrow.

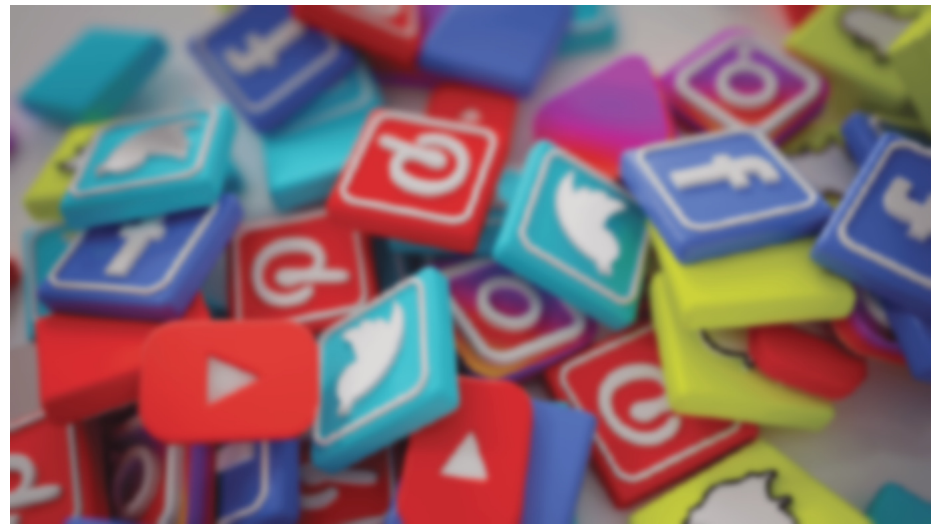
Today, more than half of the human population uses some form of social media. This new form of social networks came into popularity within this decade, with its user base ever increasing. These platforms were once created to make digital communication better. Today, they have more relevance than just that. Today their existence has raised questions that their makers never thought would be asked.

"Digital dependence", a term associated with the over use of social media, is one of the effects of using social platforms. Social media is designed to keep users active on the platform as long as possible. They curate a never

ending- continuous flow of posts and videos on users' feed to keep them engaged. Many social platforms are designed to replicate the basic interface of slot machines at casinos. Usage of both social media and slot machines results in release of dopamine or the pleasure hormone. That is the reason both gambling and social media are addictive. Notifications received while not using the application, also releases dopamine and prompts users to open the application. This dependence also causes attention deficiencies in users.

Right to Data Privacy has become a debatable issue since the advent of social media. Often mocked as "Rise of Robots", what corporations know and do not know about a user can be an eerie subject. Since these platforms are specifically designed to harness our attention these companies require user data to sell us relevant advertising. It makes it harder for users to maintain privacy; there are many security concerns with these platforms.

Today, education is not about learn-



ing information; it is about the ability to differentiate which information is false. Social media is also a great catalyst for fake news. The proof of what fake propaganda can do was very well evident in the Nazi chapter of world history. With the imminent use of social networks lies travel faster and wider than ever before. Considering that many users rely on their social media platforms for news, these lies can have and have damaging effects.

In the wake of COVID-19 lockdowns

and with the dynamics of education and works being shifted to virtual platforms, the usage of social media has also increased tremendously this year. Oscar Wilde, the famous writer propagated the idea that nothing was truly good or bad, things were always swinging between the two poles of these qualities. However, what one may miss is that some things are more black than white. It is impossible to remove social media from the lives of people, but the fact that responsible supervision is required is not debatable.

Ways to Develop a New 'YOU' during COVID-19

Ritika Jhakotiya, F.Y.B.A.

It is a common understanding that staying at home for long periods of time leads to laziness and inactivity. Corona Virus and lockdown changed that definition for us! As everything else in life, the happiness of staying at home didn't last long. Everyone enjoyed it for a few months by keeping themselves occupied with baking cakes, Dalgona coffee, watching movies and series, participating in tasks given by the Prime Minister of India, partying over zoom calls and much more. But soon, the boredom of lockdown set like concrete. Students got bored as schools and colleges were closed and they had nothing to do (phew, no studies and homework for months though!). The added stress of work from home for professionals where there was no work-life balance became tiring.

With ample time on hand, we now have a great opportunity to improve our skills. We can spend our leisure time by indulging in online courses related to our hobbies, be it writing, fine arts, photography, gardening etc. One can improve their extra-curricular skills and maybe even make it as a part time income. Others can take online classes related to their career field, be it students or job holders, to improve their skills and climb up the professional ladder.

There are thousands of certified courses on websites like Udemy, Skillshare, edX, Coursera, and many more. Many courses have a lifetime access and provide certification on completing the course. The courses cost between a few hundred rupees to a few thousand, depending upon the course. If we can pay a meagre

amount of Rs199 on Netflix and other entertainment platforms, we can surely pay for upgrading our skills which will last a lifetime and can become an additional qualification too. As we read the reviews of a movie or a series before purchasing its tickets, do read the reviews of the courses too before purchasing it, so you invest your time and money in the right place(s).

The courses vary from science, finance, visual and fine arts, and many other categories, giving us an ultra-wide variety of options to choose from. The courses we will learn or develop now under our cap would be highly beneficial to us. If you are confused about which course to take up, take a self-analysis and see where your interests lie, where your weaknesses are so you can work on them, what your strengths are which you can develop even more. It's a tech-savvy 21st century and if you are interested in technology, you can take up any courses related to technology too. Art - be it books, movies, music, etc., is one of the things which has helped us survive this lockdown and it has gained even more value. You can take up courses related to writing (read a lot of books too!), fine arts, visual arts or performing arts. Looking at the present situation and post corona times, technology and arts are going to have a lot of importance. You can take up numerous courses if your interest lies in technology or arts.

Language binds humanity from different walks of life and different regions. It is a known fact that many people will travel to various places

worldwide post pandemic. Learning a new language or building better command on a known language will help us a lot. There are even free mobile applications like Cake (for English) and Duolingo where one can improve their verbal and written communication in various languages. Maybe, the next time you meet people from a different region or country, the

problem of having a language barrier will be reduced.

We can invest our time and money in building skills along with entertainment. But do not push yourself too much in the process. Build your skills, take rest and have fun.

The Flipped Switch

Saksha, F.Y.B.A.

The Covid-19 pandemic has shaken the world no doubt! While every country across the globe is rushing to find a vaccine, people are trying to cope with the situation and take all the preventive measures to fight the virus. However, the recovery rate is now getting better. Many people are working from home while many people have lost their jobs. Students like us are attending online lectures while our grand-parents pray each day for the pandemic to end.

The fear to go to hospitals has set in. Many people lost their lives due to co-morbidities because they were too afraid visit hospitals and it was too late by the time they got themselves checked. It seems like ages ago when we had a different life. A year ago, human touch was normal, the switch flipped and now it has become the biggest curse. The virtual world came to the rescue. Education, jobs, businesses have now shifted themselves to online platforms. People are now attending meetings virtually and have started avoiding human contact. However, there are some professions which require physical meetings, so people

are taking the necessary precautions like social distancing, wearing masks and gloves while periodically sanitizing themselves to fight the virus. But now, the question arises... is this the new normal? Well, yes. We all know that Covid-19 is here to stay. It will take years to completely wipe out the virus, so we all have to start figuring out how to live with it. We have to manage the issue and learn to overcome it by taking proper precautions. We all know that the fear among people is gradually decreasing because they are getting used to it. However, this does not mean that we should become complacent. It is natural to feel sceptical about it or to be scared, we just have to take care and look out for each other in these difficult times. It is very common to feel uncomfortable about the situation because we all know most of us are not happy and are having difficulties to cope with this situation. We have to accept the fact that our present and future has drastically changed and change is always inevitable. All we can do is adjust to these changes and move forward. As the saying goes, "Change is the Law of Life".



CONTAGION: NOTHING SPREADS LIKE FEAR

Trishala Nair, S.Y.B.A.

Change is permanent. But God forbid, a change like this must never be permanent.

We all know that everything in life is temporary and that change is imminent. But it's safe to say that no one could have ever predicted or dreamt of a lifestyle change due to a pandemic. A movie like Contagion although released way back in 2011, shows the exact same scenario we are living in today. As the whole world is haunted by a fatal virus whose origins remain yet unknown, one could say the scenes are a replica of one another.

In the movie, we see Beth Emhoff (Gwyneth Paltrow) as the first person who gets infected by the virus (later to be named as MEV-1 Virus) as she returns home from her business trip to Honk Kong. Two days later in her house in Minneapolis, she suffers from a seizure. Her husband Mitch Emhoff (Matt Damon) rushes her to the hospital only to know later that she died of unknown causes. Returning home, he finds that his stepson Clark has also died finding him lying on the ground. Mitch is isolated from the public and is found to be immune to the infection naturally. After he is released from isolation, he keeps his teenage

daughter Jory (Anna Jacoby-Heron) safe and protected quarantined at their house. We see the same situation happening today when a person is found infected, the family living with him/her is quarantined and is observed for any symptoms. Nowadays, we find many people asymptomatic where no signs of being infected are seen. In the movie we hear a line uttered by Dr. Ellis Cheever (Laurence Fishbourne), "Right now, our best defence has been social distancing. No hand shaking, staying home when you're sick, washing your hands frequently." Even today, one can only hope to be safe and vigilant all the time about our surroundings. Keep sanitisation of objects and yourself as top priority.

Soon the virus has infected half the world and everyone is desperate to find a cure and the origin of the virus. The desperation leads governments to declaring orders for lockdown and that causes riots. In the midst of this chaos an ambitious blogger, Alan Krumwiede (Jude Law), trying



to chase fame by creating false news and allegations, goes to such lengths that include faking his own infection by the virus and claims that using a medicine called Forsythia will cure the infected person. The same way we see lots of people today trying to spread rumours and fake news about cures, ways to immunize oneself and alternatives to vaccines. We must be careful not to follow just anyone's suggestion

we see or hear about. After all the panic, anxiety and pain caused by the virus, finally a vaccine is found by Dr. Ally Hextall (Jennifer Ehle). Surprisingly, she finds it effective after testing it on herself and then visiting her infected father. Slowly the vaccine is mass produced and is given out to the public. In the last scene, it is shown that due to rainforest clearing in some part of China, some bats' natural habitat was disturbed. One bat finds shelter in a pig farm and drops a piece of infected banana which is eaten by a pig. The pig is then slaughtered and a dish prepared by a chef in a Macau casino, who infects Beth with the virus via a handshake.

While the common man may not know of the struggles of a scientist, they have their own problems to deal with. This movie is a clear depiction of different perspectives and varied struggles. However, in this entire scenario, survival is key. While some are able to manage, many are not able to. This movie brings a certain understanding and empathy towards different people in the society and is worth a watch in today's scenario.

CALIBRE CORNER



Chetna Bhalekar

Q. Please tell us something about yourself.

A. I am Chetna Bhalekar, a second year student, currently pursuing BA from S.K. Somaiya College of Arts, Science and Commerce. I am hoping to major in sociology in third year.

Q. Could you talk to us a bit about the work you did during lockdown?

A. Actually I started working for animal welfare before the lockdown and continued that work during the lockdown. I feed street dogs and cats, I also adopt and rescue them, and help them with medication. I even started a project of sterilisation, to reduce spread of diseases. Started putting reflective belts on them to prevent accidents and started an Anti-rabies vaccination drive.

Q. You are a member of PRCF, Can you tell us a bit more about this organisation?

A. PRCF stands for 'Puppy Rescue Crew Foundation'. It is a non-profit organization which is based in Assam and has several branches and one of it is in Mumbai. It aims at rescuing dogs, cats and several other animals. They also perform many rescue tasks for stray animals in need, and also perform any treatments if needed. I have been a part of this foundation since 8 months. I came across this foundation through a friend of mine who was an admin of the Mumbai based PRCF. The organization sometimes also provides me with a first aid kit and other amenities that I might require. Few months back, I was awarded with the Best Volunteer Award from PRCF Mumbai.

Q. What is your personal experience in volunteering for animal welfare?

A. In the beginning I used to just feed some dogs in and around my streets. When I used to go around to feed them I saw that many of these dogs required medical attention. One day as usual I was feeding these dogs and I saw a puppy who was infected with maggots on her leg. And wasn't eating and was in great pain. So I took her to a veterinarian, got her treatment done. She still

needed more time to fully recover so I adopted her and I still have her. I think this incident made me realise that even I can help these animals beyond just feeding them, since then I started volunteering to help and take care of them.

Q. What was your family's reaction to your initiative? And were they supportive of this?

A. Well my family is fond of animals. They have been the biggest support for me during this initiative. My dad and my sister help me with volunteering work and managing the rescued dogs. They also help me with the expenses for the treatment and other needs. Now some of my neighbours also help me with small amounts and contribute to this initiative.

Q. What would you say inspired you to do this this?

A. I can't definitely say what inspired me but I think about the time I visited one of my friend's home. There she had about 50 dogs that she had adopted and took care of, and she even had dogs with paralysis which she helped rescue. To see her do this

Tanvi Raithta, S.Y.B.A.

Aryan Yadav, F.Y.B.A.

wonderful job and how happy she was taking care of them, maybe that inspired me to start doing something similar myself and I started with feeding dogs and went further on.

Q. What was it like winning the 'best volunteer award'?

A. This is the first award I have received for working on animal welfare. For me this award was nothing extraordinary, though it was obviously an achievement for me but more than anything it became the force that drives me to work more for the betterment of these animals.

Q. Any message that you would like to convey?

A. Well I would just ask anyone who could help these animals, to try and help them personally or try informing NGOs nearby that can provide help for animals that require these help. And furthermore, If you cannot help them or can't do any of these things, please at the least don't harm or mistreat them.

Sonder

Pradnya Chawan, F.Y.B.A.

The clock strikes nine
And it's time to leave the den
It's time to run and earn
And make people sustain.
'What time is it?'
we are often asked
by strangers who're running late,
strangers who're masked
Masked behind their faces of pretence
impassive, devoid of emotions,
with a heart surrounded by
a picket fence.
The faces which forgot to smile
they're chasing green,
because that's what they were taught
since they were a teen.
A pile of responsibilities they have
they're aware of the fact.
So all they can do is
keep grinding and act.
Act that they're jovial,
act that they're living,
They can never be happy
they've stopped believing.
So sometimes, just sometimes
the only thing they need
is a smile from a stranger
to make them move and cede.

Embers

Mohit Vigya, S.Y.B.A.

Embers is what I saw,
When I gazed into their eyes,
Small, burning tempestuously,
I fret too, for those longing eyes,
So bitter in their resent,
So valiant, yet crude,
But defying,
Emotion.

The eyes of my passer-by,
Shrill, hasty and unmoving,
Their only volition,
To beg.

To beg, for nothing ever comes without cost,
With only those small gleaming blobs of hatred.

I see them, as I see them whole,
A family, moving.

Moving out into the abysmal state.
Resorted to beg,
with hands too broken,
Too tired to be hands;

An anger, unhinged,
As I saw them turn, facing me.

Searching for my eyes,
Reading.

Terror, blind terror,
As I look at them vacant.
For I had nothing,
Not a thing to satiate them.

And they left. Leaving me with the same hatred for
the times. And the times to come.

(Passing by a migrant worker family)

Rigel

Ariza Fatima Syed, F.Y.B.A.

You are so pretty!
Staring at you for the longest time
The silver reflecting in my eyes
Making it twitch every time you smile.
You are so far yet so close,
I can almost feel your warmth.
The comfort you provide in the darkness of the
night.
So stubborn yet so delicate,
Trying your hardest to seek my attention,
Helplessly hidden by the passing clouds.
You are so pretty my little star!



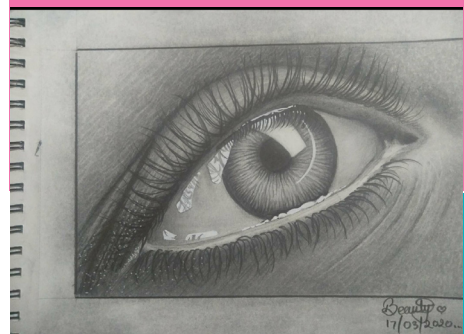
Bhumi Jain, F.Y.B.A.



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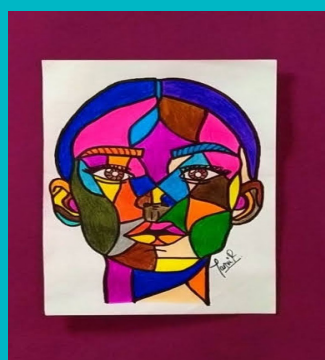
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