



(Dr Prajakta Patkar)

Surviving in the lockdown!!!

The Coronavirus Pandemic....It is a completely new experience that we are going through where we have been put under lockdown to keep ourselves safe. In the beginning the mere idea of staying at home and being allowed to do nothing was "oh so exciting"!!! Many of us probably always wondered what work from home would feel like! A few silently thanked this whole Pandemic situation, as it was finally time to just rest from our busy lives. Gradually we all are realizing that although it is an excellent way to ensure we don't suffer from the virus, it is unknowingly taking a toll on some of us mentally too. Apart from being scared, we are all feeling slightly helpless and annoyed because no matter what, let's accept it, we are clueless how to deal with this.

Considering this mentally and physically boggling down situation, these are few things which we can do that probably might help us in getting through this smoothly.

- 1) Accept it, stop acting like that defiant child who goes and does exactly the opposite of what's told.
- 2) We all are bound to overthink and probably panic too, listening to the magnitude of the situation no matter how much we try to control ourselves. Although it's ok for that to happen, try to control it. Distract yourself during such times maybe by listening to music, meditating, watching some light content on TV, or just about anything which will take your mind off of it.
- 3) Follow the news, but be careful of the source. Don't blindly become a student of the WhatsApp University. There have been and will continue to be many false news, beware of them as they will create unnecessary anxiety in us. Also avoid forwarding such information as it will generate panic and scare in the society.
- 4) Just enough of everything - Don't overcompensate boredom with anything - sleep, diet, screen time, exercise, sex or physical intimacy. Everything should be in just about adequate quantity.
Make a physical exercise routine, maybe start working out together at home. There are amazing applications online which can guide us do the same.
- 5) Make a mental timetable of the things you want to do everyday and try your best to stick to it. Finish that book you wanted to read or maybe reorganizing your home.
- 6) Talk with your family members, spend time with them, maybe a board or card game together everyday. Ration the TV time between each other, try to enjoy the

other person's show as well. If you don't like it, just switch to another room rather than mocking it.

7) Don't complain about each other's idiosyncrasies and habits. We have to stick together no matter what.

8) No compulsion - it is not necessary to talk with each other all the time just because you are in the same room or house for a long time. Enjoy the silence of each other's company and let the other person just be. For a few of us, constant presence of people around (even if they are family members) can lead to annoyance. It's okay to feel that, but try to keep that to yourself.

9) Call up the people in your life you usually don't find time to catch up with. (Remember how you wonder how that close friend, with whom you haven't spoken in months, is doing)

10) Help the women in your house with the daily chores - they need a holiday too. Maybe cook a new dish once in a while, do the utensils or laundry too.

11) It is normal to feel bored, annoyed, irritated, depressed, panicky, angry, pissed off and simply frustrated. All these are natural human responses in situations like these - don't get overwhelmed by them. Share it with each other and tolerate each other slightly more than you usually do.

Remember we have to survive this together. Our planet maybe needs a break for a while, but our sanity doesn't.

Last but not the least, if you need to talk, reach out - we mental health care workers are there for you!

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