

PSYCHO CHALLENGES IN LOCKDOWN

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PSYCHO CHALLENGES IN LOCKDOWN

The world is going through the most challenging times in the recorded history. **For the first time, the very existence of human race is in danger.** Half of the world is locked down today. **It's totally unprecedented.** India, a country of 130 crore people, has gone into 21 days lockdown. **UNIMAGINABLE!!** But then, **unprecedented situations have to be dealt by innovative measures.** The world which was, till other day, talking about seamless trade and cultural exchanges beyond man made boundaries, and world, as one humanity, is now locked down in individual homes.

It is not the fatality or deadliness of the disease but the fear of the unknown which has created much of panic (wild, uncontrollable fear) and anxiety. It's the anxiety about fears of pandemic spread, non

availability of authentic cure, absence of vaccines to arrest the infection and scary pictures of unknown mortality, which has created the most dreaded fear amongst all. **People, confined to homes are experiencing feelings of helplessness or even hopelessness as they watch scary news coverage (24x7) of the increasing spread of illness and disease.**

The pains of the lockdown are clearly known to everybody. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi also agreed that economically, it will take us back by many years, yet with a heavy heart; we have to do it, since there is no other choice. **Fortunately, today India has leadership that is proactive in approach, capable of taking tough decisions in national interest and above all, has the perseverance to implement their decisions over 130 crore Indians.** I am pleasantly surprised to see that translated into reality. It's probably a miracle to enforce such strict lockdown over largely, undisciplined Indians. That's our strengths, as India -

"WHEN WE WANT TO DO IT, WE CAN DO THE IMPOSSIBLE ALSO."

God has unimaginable methods of answering our prayers. Some students prayed **"God, please give us holidays to play whole day."** Others said **"Why not cancel exams and get us promoted without exams."** Overworked babus, young entrepreneurs and globe trotting CEOs wished **"I wish, I could get 20 days of paid leave to enjoy with my family."** Workers, house helps and daily wagers also secretly desired **"God, give me a break but don't cut my pay."** Old parents asked for some more time from their busy children, while least demanding **housewife** simply prayed **"Give us some family time."** **God only smiled and said "TATHASTU (So be it)".** God created Corona to fulfill all these wishes but with a price to pay.

At God's command, Corona brings **paradigm changes in the lifestyle** on planet earth. **Rich and Poor, Master and Servants, Old and Young, Daily Wagers and CEOs are all- confined to home without any differentiation.** Some near and dear ones who went out for a day or so, have got stuck there indefinitely. All dressed up and nowhere to go, with helplessness written on their faces. Children now want KFC, McDonalds, Barbeque Nation, hangouts and malls. Senior citizens are missing out on pilgrimage, temples and prayer places. **The housewife is getting double the husband and kids with no maids to help. Add to that the**

challenge of innovative menu of homemade recipes with limited supplies. It's only a few days into battle against corona, HE (No work) and SHE (Over worked) are already taking out their frustration and angst on each other. **Every fifth Indian already suffers from an anxiety disorder.** Corona lockdown will further enhance the symptoms of depression and anxiety. **As the world braces itself for a long haul of lockdowns, my worry is about resultant psychological challenges like stress-related syndrome, depression, marital discord, domestic violence, sibling rivalries, property disputes, mob violence, clashes over limited resources and suicides.** Other routine life activities like academics, healthcare, business, travel, administration, legal system, social and cultural events also can't be pended forever. Purely out of frustration of watching everything collapse, from windows of locked down homes, people will try to come out, albeit at a heavy cost. **The world will have to find alternative to lockdowns and medicines for corona, very soon.**

The biggest economic disaster that will follow the corona storm will add to the woes of survivors, in form of **challenges like unemployment, currency devaluation, bankruptcy, lockouts, layoffs and closure of fledgling new enterprises etc.** Psychological challenges emanating from economic side effects of corona will be battled for many years. **However, those who survive will have to stand up, raise their willpower to next level to fight this battle of higher intensity** and live to tell their tales to next generation.

I am an eternally positive person. **I'm certain that God will not be so unkind to wipe out it's best creation but leave it with a little punishment.** How severe and long will that be, is to be seen. **Certainly, with calm mind, we will tide over this pandemic and then with greater resilience, build it again, brick by brick, into a stronger and more prosperous world.**

From the desk of –

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