

# CULTIVATING POSITIVITY

UNDERSTANDING AND MANAGING VICES

### 13-year-old mobile addict plotted to kill mom who took away her phone

3-Fold Rise In Phone, SM Addiction In Kids Post-Covid: Abhayam

Times of India | 19 June 2023

### 'Sugar turns into fat in liver, can affect kids as young as 9'

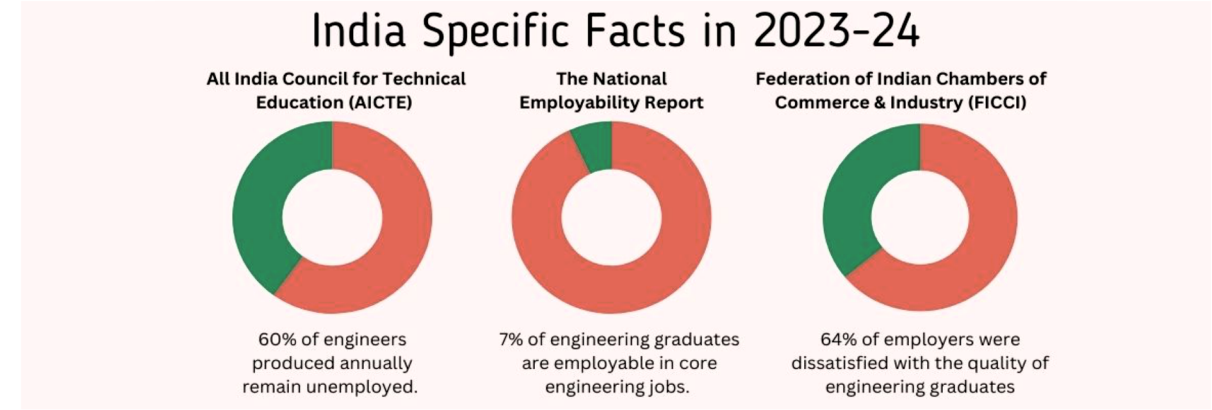
Times of India | 28 April 2024


### Girl's suicide exposes dire need of effective counselling in colleges

Time of India | 15 November 2019

### Beware... 800 online financial frauds a day

Time of India | 25 June 2024






**Digital Addiction:** Overuse of Smartphones and Social Media, Technoference




**Consumerism:** Materialism, Throwaway Culture




**Workaholism:** Glorifying Overwork, Neglect of Work-Life Balance




**Hyper-Competitiveness:** Cutthroat Mindsets, Toxic Achievement Culture




**Superficial Relationships:** Lack of Depth in Social Interactions, Ghosting Culture




**Information Overload:** Misinformation and Fake News, Paralysis by Analysis




**Normalisation of Stress:** Stress as a Badge of Honor, Neglecting Mental Health



**Silent Environmental Harm:** Neglect of Climate Responsibility, Invisible Pollutants




**Silent Corruption:** Normalising Small-Scale Dishonesty, Turning a Blind Eye to Exploitation



**Decline in Empathy:** Desensitization to Suffering, Self-Centred Priorities



**Subtle Discrimination:** Implicit Biases, Cultural Elitism



**Addiction to Validation:** External Approval

This year's planner reflects the invisible vices in modern society, impacting individuals at different levels. The direct indirect impact of these can cause physical, emotional or behavioural challenges. Addressing these invisible vices requires awareness, introspection, and a collective effort to challenge societal norms that perpetuate them. Only through sustained efforts we can create a healthier, more equitable society for future generations.

## PERSONAL PROFILE

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Office Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_ WhatsApp: \_\_\_\_\_

Email (Work): \_\_\_\_\_ Email (Personal): \_\_\_\_\_

Residence Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

Blood Group: \_\_\_\_\_

### IMPORTANT DATES

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### EMERGENCY NUMBERS

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### CREDITS

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# Introduction



Hidden vices refer to unethical, immoral, or otherwise undesirable behaviours or habits an individual keeps hidden from others. These can be actions or tendencies that are considered socially unacceptable or damaging to one's reputation, relationships, or integrity if they were to be revealed.

These include substance abuse, gambling, infidelity, dishonesty, addictions, unethical behaviour, mental health issues, anger issues, and more. These can be largely divided into Physical, Mental, Financial, Learning and Environmental vices.

Hidden vices can create a complex web of negative effects, impacting various aspects of life and leading to a cycle of secrecy and negative consequences. The planner aims to understand and classify them so the readers can learn to address and confront these vices with professional help (if needed), as they are crucial for improving one's quality of life and overall well-being.

Know Your Present Lifestyle and Habits

1. You have been sitting at your desk for hours and feel stiffness in your muscles. What do you do?
A) Take a break and go for a walk outside
B) Stand up and stretch for a few minutes
C) Adjust your posture but keep working
D) Drink a cup of coffee to push through the discomfort
E) Continue sitting without any breaks
2. You are in a rush, and it is time for breakfast. What do you eat?
A) A smoothie or oatmeal with fruit
B) Whole-grain toast with peanut butter
C) Dried fruits, nuts, seeds and coffee
D) A sugary cereal
E) Skip breakfast altogether
3. You are in bed, but you cannot sleep. What is your next move?
A) Get out of bed and read a book for 10 minutes
B) Meditate or do some deep breathing exercises
C) Watch TV or a YouTube video to fall asleep
D) Scroll through social media on your phone
E) Lie in bed trying to fall asleep, but keep tossing and turning
4. You realise you have been scrolling through social media for 3 hours. What do you do?
A) Stop immediately and exit the application for the day
B) Set a timer to limit your future usage
C) Scroll for a little longer before exiting the application
D) Switch to playing a mobile game or browsing another app for a change of pace
E) Continue scrolling without thinking twice
5. You have been receiving marketing emails from unknown sources. What do you do?
A) Use an email filter or tool to block such emails automatically and unsubscribe where needed
B) Report them as spam and adjust your email settings to reduce unwanted emails
C) Check if the emails are from legitimate companies before deciding
D) Ignore the emails and let them accumulate in your inbox
E) Open the emails and sign up

6. You have noticed that you are gaining weight due to lack of exercise. What do you do?
A) Create a workout plan and stick to it
B) Start small, taking short daily walks
C) Reduce your calorie intake but remain sedentary
D) Decide to make changes later and continue with your current habits
E) Ignore the issue completely and carelessly
7. You are buying groceries online. What is in your cart?
A) Mostly fresh fruits, vegetables, and whole grains
B) A variety of nutritious snacks with some occasional indulgent options
C) A balance of whole foods with a few processed items for convenience
D) Mostly pre-packaged and processed meals
E) All processed food and ready-to-eat meals
8. You are at a restaurant and looking over the menu. What do you order?
A) A salad with lean protein and vegetables
B) A balanced meal with grilled options and light sides
C) A sandwich with fries or a high-calorie side
D) A large, fried meal with soda
E) Multiple courses of high-calorie, fried food and desserts
9. You see a promotion for an energy-efficient appliance like a DC fan or LED light. What is your reaction?
A) You decide to purchase the appliance
B) Consider it but wait until your current appliance breaks down
C) Feel interested but decide not to buy
D) Ignore it because you're not worried about sustainability
E) Prefer a cheaper, less efficient alternative
10. You have received your electricity bill, and it is unusually high. How do you respond?
A) Pay the bill and promise to be more mindful in the future
B) Reduce electricity usage and switch to energy-efficient devices
C) Unplug unused devices and monitor usage
D) Ignore the high bill and continue your current habits
E) Blame it on external factors and make no changes



# Decoding Your Results

For each question, assign the following scores based on the choices:

- **A = 5 points** (Healthiest/most proactive behaviour)
- **B = 4 points** (Good behaviour with some room for improvement)
- **C = 3 points** (Neutral or average behaviour)
- **D = 2 points** (Unhealthy behaviour with negative consequences)
- **E = 1 point** (Most unhealthy/least proactive behaviour)

Now, total your score across all 10 questions.

## Interpreting Your Score

### 40-50 points (Proactive & Healthy Lifestyle)

- You prioritise physical health, balanced nutrition, sustainability, and mindful use of technology. Your approach to a sedentary lifestyle reflects strong self-discipline, awareness, and an active effort to maintain a balanced, healthy routine. Keep up the great work!

### 30-40 points (Moderately Healthy with Room for Improvement)

- You show awareness of the negative effects of a sedentary lifestyle and make efforts to combat them, but there is still room for improvement. Focus on reducing screen time, incorporating more physical activity, and making healthier food choices.

### 20-30 points (Neutral/Mixed Behaviour)

- You have some healthy habits, but often fall into sedentary or unhealthy routines. Try to focus on regular breaks from sitting, engage more with physical activities, and be more mindful of your screen and social media time.

### 10-20 points (Sedentary & Unhealthy Habits)

- People with sedentary and unhealthy lifestyles often experience weight gain, fatigue, poor posture, and increased risk of chronic illnesses like heart disease or diabetes. They may also have low energy, poor mental health, and limited physical social interactions. It is time to change.

# Physical Vices

Physical vices are harmful habits or behaviours that negatively affect an individual's physical health and well-being. These vices typically involve actions or indulgences that can lead to physical deterioration, health problems, or a decline in overall fitness. These can range from food, substance abuse to lifestyle choices that undermine well-being. Here are some common physical vices:

## Poor Dietary Habits

A poor diet or unhealthy eating habits are considered a physical vice because they can lead to a wide range of negative health outcomes that affect the body both in the short term and long term. While many people are drawn to food primarily for its taste, the essential purpose of eating is to provide our body with energy and nutrients to function properly. Though food gives us joy, comfort, and sustenance, some foods hide surprising vices. Eating unhealthy food or processed food regularly can significantly harm your health, leading to weight gain, increased risk of chronic diseases like heart disease, diabetes, and hypertension. These foods are often high in unhealthy fats, sugars, and sodium, which can contribute to poor nutrition, energy crashes and long-term health issues. The lack of essential nutrients in junk/unhealthy food can weaken the immune system and impair overall well-being.

'Wholesome food' refers to food that is considered pure and natural. These foods are believed to promote physical health and mental clarity. Some examples of wholesome foods include fruits and vegetables, whole grains like rice, quinoa, and oats, legumes and lentils, nuts and seeds, dairy products (if sourced ethically and consumed in moderation), natural sweeteners, herbal teas, etc. Improving eating habits and enjoying more meals also involves being present mentally while eating, as mindless eating may have negative impacts on health. Here are some of the key characteristics of wholesome food:

- **Fresh and Seasonal:** The emphasis is on consuming fresh, seasonal produce that is grown locally and organically.
- **Minimally Processed:** Food that is minimally processed and avoids artificial ingredients, preservatives, and additives.
- **Lightly Cooked or Raw:** Cooking which involves gentle methods like steaming or lightly sautéing to preserve the natural nutrients of the food, is preferred. Raw foods like fruits, vegetables, and nuts are also encouraged.
- **Easy to Digest:** Food which is easy to digest should be preferred, to avoid burdening the digestive system.





Mindless Eating

Mindless eating is another vice that often leads to unhealthy eating behaviours such as overeating, choosing poor-quality foods, or eating at irregular times. When individuals eat mindlessly out of habit, boredom, or emotional reasons, they may consume more calories than needed or choose foods that are convenient rather than nutritious. This lack of awareness disconnects people from their body's hunger and fullness signals, leading to patterns that negatively impact both physical and mental health. Mindless eating often leads to weight gain, an increased risk of chronic health problems. Additionally, it can encourage emotional eating, where food is used as a coping mechanism for stress or boredom, further perpetuating unhealthy habits.

Mindful eating involves all five senses. Conscious, mindful eating means being fully aware and present while you eat to stimulate the food's taste, texture, smell, and appearance, as well as understanding our bodily hunger and fullness cues. The practice incorporates principles of mindfulness with eating habits, promoting a healthier relationship with food, example - chewing slowly and savouring each bite, paying attention to the flavours, textures, and how your body feels with each mouthful. Listen to your body's signals, stopping when you feel satisfied, not overly full.

Mindful eating can also help manage and reduce sugar intake by promoting a more intentional and conscious approach to eating. Why is sugar a vice? Sugar triggers the nervous system by releasing dopamine, the ‘feel-good’ chemical. This makes sugar addictive, similar to how nicotine or drugs work. Eating sugar causes a spike in blood sugar followed by a drop, creating a cycle of craving for more sugar and carbohydrates like a rollercoaster for your body. The human body does not require added sugar to survive, but it does need glucose, which is a type of sugar, to function properly. Foods like grains, fruits, vegetables, and legumes are broken down into glucose. Even if you do not eat refined sugars, your body will convert these carbohydrates into glucose. Hidden sugars can be found in many foods, including sauces, dressings, and flavoured drinks. Reduce sugar consumption for better health by choosing unsweetened or low-sugar options. The human body does not require any added sugar to function. We get all the necessary sugars from the natural carbohydrates present in fruits, vegetables, grains, and dairy products. Even if someone craves it or has a sweet tooth, sugar-free replacements are better options.

Sugar-Free Replacements

- The Appeal of Artificial Sweeteners**

Artificial sweeteners seem tempting because they offer the sweetness of sugar without the calories, but when consumed in moderation.
- Better Choices for Sweeteners**

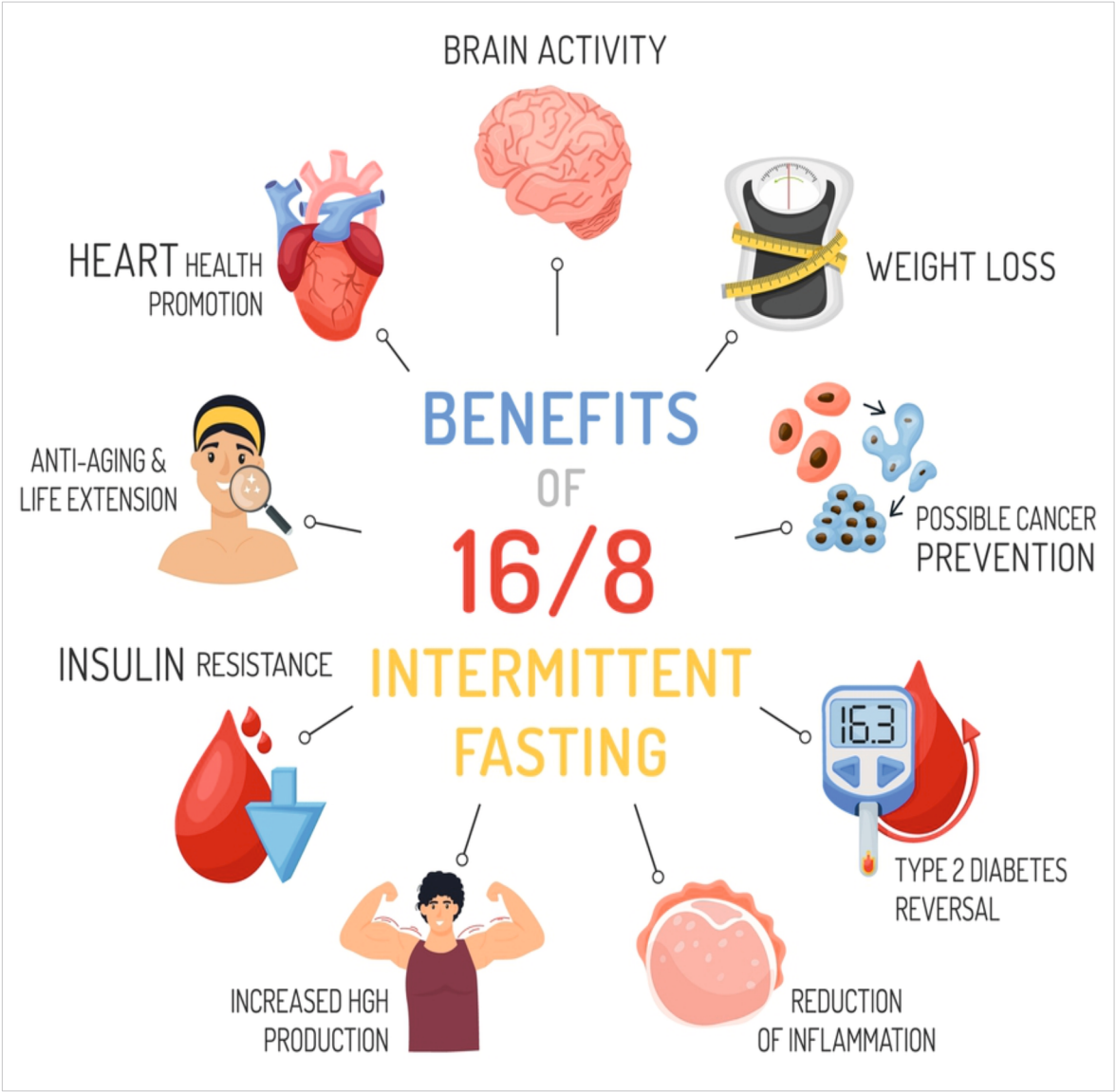
Instead of artificial sweeteners, try natural alternatives that carry fewer risks, such as:

Jaggery, dates, coconut sugar, stevia and honey (not for infants under 12 months due to botulism risk).

Along with having a wholesome diet and mindful eating, a balanced diet is equally important.


Improper Eating Practices	Mindful Eating
<p><b>Having Meals While Watching Movies/Web Series</b></p> <p>Binge eating, especially ultra processed foods, like chocolates, ice creams, packed chips, cookies, toasts, etc sounds fun; however, they lead to obesity and other lifestyle disorders, if done for a longer time.</p>	<p><b>Nutritious Meals While Watching Movies/Web Series</b></p> <p>Replace these ultra processed foods with healthy snacks, like Makhana, Pistachios, Raisins, Unsalted Roasted Chickpeas, Homemade Khakhra, Peanuts, Roasted Chana, Baked Millet, Homemade Chips, etc.</p>
<p><b>Eating Too Fast</b></p> <p>Eating quickly makes it difficult to know when you are full. This can lead to overeating, indigestion, heartburn or unwanted weight gain.</p>	<p><b>Slow Eating</b></p> <p>A simple yet powerful technique to improve one's overall health is by eating slowly and chewing more; this allows food to be mixed properly with the saliva, leading to better digestion, and greater satisfaction of each meal.</p>
<p><b>Night Time Noshing</b></p> <p>(To nosh, is to eat greedily, mainly in between the meals)</p> <p>It is considered bad for one's health, considering many reasons.</p> <p><b>Weight gain:</b> It is believed that eating immediately before bedtime causes weight gain due to slower metabolism during sleep, leading to calories being stored as fat, and increasing the chances of lifestyle diseases.</p> <p><b>Poor sleep:</b> Consuming heavy foods close to bedtime may disrupt sleep quality due to indigestion or acid reflux.</p>	<p><b>Sunrise Snacking</b></p> <p>Heavy breakfast in the morning is considered as one of the healthiest habits for an individual. The right way to start one's day is with healthier bowls of breakfast like a smoothie, bowl of oats, porridge, sprouts, etc. This helps in boosting metabolism and burning good calories throughout the day, while providing nutrition.</p> <p>Planning meals throughout the day reduces cravings for unhealthy snacks or overeating later in the day.</p>
<p><b>Having Energy Drinks</b></p> <p>Energy drinks may have high sugar or caffeine content; excessive consumption has been linked to irregular heartbeat and heart palpitation and even heart failure in rare cases.</p>	<p><b>Alternatives to Energy Drinks</b></p> <p>Replace energy drinks with unsweetened fresh fruit juices, coconut water, herbal tea, green gea, protein shakes, coffee, etc.</p>
<p><b>Mindlessly Drinking Water</b></p> <p>Plastic bottles exposed to heat (e.g. plastic bottle in a car) can cause chemicals like BPA and phthalates to leach into the water. It also causes plastic to break down, releasing microplastics into the water. The above may lead to increased risk of cancer, hormone and immune system disruption.</p>	<p><b>Mindful Ways of Drinking Water</b></p> <p>Make a healthy habit of drinking water from a steel or glass bottle.</p> <p>Drinking water from copper pots is beneficial as copper has natural antibacterial properties that can help kill harmful bacteria and microorganisms in the stomach, and in turn, improves digestion. It is recommended to drink water the next morning after keeping it overnight in copper vessels.</p>

A balanced diet is a diet that provides the body with the necessary nutrients, vitamins, minerals in appropriate proportions to maintain optimal health. A balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins is key to maintaining good health. Preparing these foods can significantly impact their nutritional value. Also to keep one's body hydrated, intake of approximately 2.5 to 3 litres of water is recommended for adults. The ideal time to complete eating for the day, or to have dinner is before sunset, or at least 3-4 hours before bedtime. Eating early allows for proper digestion, and prevents discomfort during sleep. Listen to one's body and adjust the time according to his/her needs. Ideally one should only eat when hungry and fill approximately 80% of the stomach.



Intermittent fasting means eating during specific hours and not eating for the rest of the day, for example, you eat from 10am to 6pm and fast from 6pm to 10am next day.

Per day Intake of Essential Nutrients	Protein	Fats	Fibres	Carbohydrates	Vitamins and Minerals
Normal Diet	(10-35%)	(20-35%)	(Micronutrient)	(45-65%)	(Micronutrient)
For Losing Weight	(40-50%)	(30-40%)	(Micronutrient)	(10-30%)	(Micronutrient)
Source	Lean meats, poultry, fish, eggs, beans, lentils, nuts, seeds, dairy products (or plant-based alternatives like soy milk and tofu).	Healthy fats like unsaturated fats found in avocados, nuts, seeds, olive oil, and fatty fish. Limit saturated and trans fats found in red meat, processed foods, and some dairy products.	Fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, nuts, seeds.	Focus on complex carbohydrates like whole grains (brown rice, quinoa, oats, whole wheat bread), fruits, vegetables, and legumes. Limit refined carbohydrates (white bread, sugary drinks, processed snacks).	Fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean protein, and dairy products (or plant-based alternatives) should provide most essential vitamins and minerals.
Recommended intake (per day)	About 0.8 grams of protein per kilogram of body weight. Example: A person weighing 70 kg should take 70 * 0.8 that is 56 grams of protein.	closer to 45 grams of fats	25-30 grams	225 to 325 grams	Total Vitamins (Approx.): 85.5 mg Total Minerals (Approx.): 7,735.4 mg

 **Pro Tip:**  
Balanced diet is also

- Limiting salt
- Limiting sugary drinks and foods
- Limiting saturated fats
- Limiting portion size



Preparing Food Across the Times




Modern cooking methods are another vices in the present time when both the partners are working and families these days are nuclear. To balance their busy schedules with healthier eating, Rahul and Rina can adopt several practical solutions. They can start by meal prepping on weekends, preparing and portioning meals in advance to streamline their week. Batch cooking staples like grains, beans, and proteins will make it easier to assemble nutritious meals quickly. Opting for healthier convenience foods and simplifying recipes will also help them save time while maintaining nutrition. Investing in efficient kitchen tools, such as slow cookers or pressure cookers, and planning weekly menus will further ease their cooking routine. Incorporating fresh ingredients and staying hydrated will complement these efforts, ensuring they enjoy balanced, wholesome meals even with their demanding lifestyles.

Aspect	Ancient Cooking Techniques	Pros (Ancient)	Cons (Ancient)	Modern Cooking Techniques	Pros (Modern)	Cons (Modern)
Ingredients	Fresh, whole, locally sourced; minimal processing	High nutritional value and freshness	Limited availability, seasonal constraints	Processed, pre-packaged, often with preservatives and refined sugars	Convenient, accessible year-round	Can be low in nutrients, high in preservatives and sugars
Cooking Methods	Slow techniques (e.g., simmering, roasting, braising)	Preserves flavours, nutrients, and enhances depth of dishes	Time-consuming, requires planning	Fast techniques (e.g., microwaving, pressure cooking, air frying)	Saves time, fits busy lifestyles	Can overcook the food and lead to reduced nutrients, may alter flavour and texture
Cookware	Earthen pots, cast iron, brass, and bronze cookware	Natural materials, adds minerals to food	Heavy, requires more efforts to clean	Microwave vessels, aluminium pressure cookers, non-stick pans	Lightweight, easy to clean, quick to heat	Potential health risks (e.g., aluminium leaching, coating breakdown)
Nutrient Retention	High; slow cooking preserves nutrients and enhances flavours	Maximises nutrient retention and depth of flavour	Lengthy cooking time can reduce some nutrients like Vitamin C	Variable; fast cooking can degrade nutrients, especially heat-sensitive ones	Preserves heat-sensitive nutrients, when cooked with proper methods	Risk of nutrient loss due to quick and high heat or processing
Health Impact	Supports long-term health; natural fats and minerals	Promotes overall health and well-being	Some ancient fats may be high in cholesterol (especially for people with sedentary lifestyle)	Potential risks with excessive use; processed foods and chemicals may cause inflammation, hormonal imbalance, and toxicity	Convenient, may fit specific diets (e.g., low-fat)	Processed foods are linked to health issues. due to unhealthy ingredients like added sugar, unhealthy fats sodium and artificial additives



Aspect	Ancient Cooking Techniques	Pros (Ancient)	Cons (Ancient)	Modern Cooking Techniques	Pros (Modern)	Cons (Modern)
Fats/emulsions Used	Natural fats like ghee, butter, and oils from seeds	Healthier fats, fewer additives	High in saturated fats (e.g., ghee, butter)	Refined oils, artificial sweeteners, mayonnaise and low-fat substitutes	Lower in saturated fats	High in trans fats (more harmful than saturated fats), chemical additives
Additives & Preservatives	Natural techniques used such as drying, salting, sugaring, fermentation, pickling, oiling and sealing	No artificial chemicals were used	Shorter shelf life, needs careful storage	Chemical preservatives like antimicrobials and antioxidants are commonly used	Longer shelf life, reduced spoilage	Prolonged usage of artificial additives may lead to health risks
Dietary Benefits	Balanced diet with emphasis on natural, whole foods	Rich in essential nutrients, benefitted from seasonal intake and supports balanced nutrition	Limited food diversity due to seasonality	Convenience-focused diet, sometimes lacking in essential nutrients	Convenient, accessible, caters to modern dietary and taste preferences	Can lack nutrients, may contribute to poor health outcomes
Edible Oil	Cold pressed oils (Coconut oil, Sesame oil, Groundnut oil, Badam oil, Sunflower oil, Mustard oil, Olive oil)	Less processing, means fewer opportunities for contamination, made without heat or chemicals, Low calories	Comparatively shorter shelf life	Refined oils (Refined coconut oil, Corn oil, Soybean oil, Refined sunflower oil, Cottonseed oil, Canola oil)	Longer shelf life	More processing steps increase the risk of high intake of calories and contamination



**Pro Tip:** Pressure cooking of high-starch leads to formation of a chemical, acrylamide which has been linked to potential health risks like cancer, infertility and neurological problems.

Read Labels Carefully

Not reading food labels can lead to unknowingly consuming high levels of unhealthy ingredients like added sugars, unhealthy fats, and sodium. This can contribute to weight gain, chronic diseases like heart disease and diabetes, and nutrient deficiencies. Additionally, it can result in poor food choices that do not align with health goals or dietary needs, ultimately impacting overall well-being. When reading food labels, it is also crucial to look out for ingredients that may cause allergies or intolerances. For example, if you are sensitive to gluten or have celiac disease, you will need to be particularly vigilant.

**General Guide to Decoding A Label:** The ingredient list is written in descending order of quantities. The first 3-4 ingredients on the list pretty much sums up what the product is made up of.

**Start with the Serving Size:** Check the serving size and the number of servings per container. All nutritional information on the label is based on this amount.

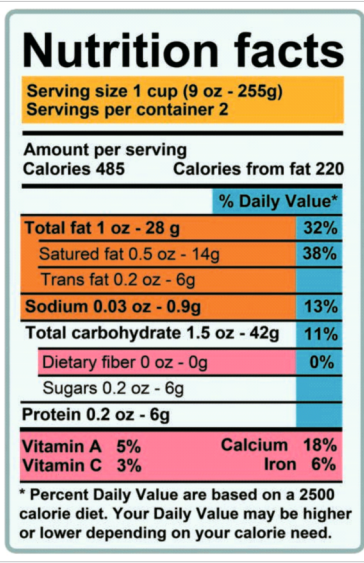
- Check Calories:** Note the number of calories per serving to manage your energy intake. Multiply the calories by the number of servings if you plan to eat more than one serving.
- Look at the Macronutrients:**
  - Total Fat:** Includes saturated fat and trans fat. Aim for low saturated fat and zero trans fat.
  - Cholesterol and Sodium:** Keep these low to reduce the risk of heart disease.
  - Total Carbohydrates:** Includes dietary fibre and sugars. Choose foods high in fibre and low in added sugars.
  - Protein:** Important for building and repairing tissues. Check protein content based on your dietary needs.
- Focus on Vitamins and Minerals:** Aim for foods high in essential vitamins and minerals like Vitamin D, Calcium, Iron, and Potassium.
- % Daily Value (%DV):** Shows how much a nutrient in one serving contributes to a daily diet. 5% DV or less is low; 20% DV or more is high. Use this to gauge the nutrient density of the food.
- Ingredients List:** Listed in descending order by weight. Look for whole, recognizable ingredients. Avoid foods with long lists of artificial additives, sugars, or unhealthy fats.

**Watch out for Added Sugars:** Check for added sugars under different names like high-fructose corn syrup, cane sugar, or honey.

**Check for Allergens:** Look for any allergens listed, especially if you have food allergies or intolerances.

Limit these nutrients

Get enough of these nutrients



**Nutrition facts**  
Serving size 1 cup (9 oz - 255g)  
Servings per container 2

Amount per serving  
Calories 485    Calories from fat 220

% Daily Value\*

Total fat 1 oz - 28 g	32%
Saturated fat 0.5 oz - 14g	38%
Trans fat 0.2 oz - 6g	
Sodium 0.03 oz - 0.9g	13%
Total carbohydrate 1.5 oz - 42g	11%
Dietary fiber 0 oz - 0g	0%
Sugars 0.2 oz - 6g	
Protein 0.2 oz - 6g	
Vitamin A 5%	Calcium 18%
Vitamin C 3%	Iron 6%

\* Percent Daily Value are based on a 2500 calorie diet. Your Daily Value may be higher or lower depending on your calorie need.

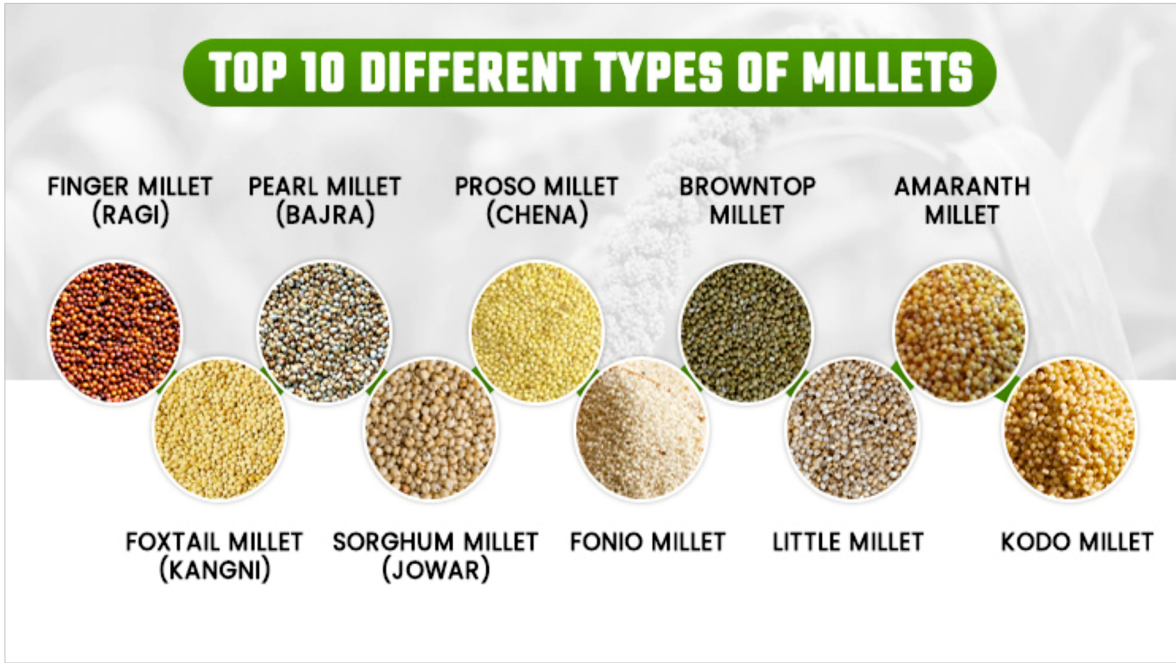
Quick Guide to % Daily Value:

5% or less is low

20% or more is high

**UNDERSTANDING GLUTEN - A PROTEIN:** The hybrid wheat variety which originated in the 1960s and 1970s to feed the poor hungry countries like Mexico, India and African countries is the main reason for the gluten intolerance problem existing in the society today. Apart from being a major contributor for sugar leading to diabetes, gluten, a protein formed from the above wheat variety is not broken down by the acid in the stomach and it passes to the small intestine where it damages the villi, thereby causing digestive problems, weight loss and many other health issues. Gluten intolerance is estimated to affect approximately 1% of the Indian population, but 90% of these individuals are not aware, as detection is only possible through a biopsy or a DNA test and not reliable through blood or urine test. Changing the lifestyle from wheat flour based products to millets/rice flour based products can permanently solve the gluten problem. Other benefits of eating millets is that they provide many health benefits like being nutrient rich, high fibre, heart friendly, antioxidants and good source of protein, over and above being environment friendly (consumes significantly less water).

**Popular types of Millets**



**Vegetarianism/Veganism:** Excessive intake of non vegetarian foods especially red meats and processed meats can cause health risk due to high cholesterol and saturated fats. In recent years, vegetarianism and veganism have emerged as popular choices for those seeking a healthier lifestyle and/or concern for the environment/other living beings. A key benefit of these diets is the emphasis on fresh, uncooked, high-fibre foods, which are known for their positive impact on overall well-being. Veganism, a subset of vegetarianism, goes a step further by refraining from all animal products, including dairy, in response to concerns about animal cruelty and environmental sustainability. However, while these diets offer significant health and ethical benefits, there are potential minor drawbacks, such as nutritional deficiencies of Vitamin B12, Omega-3 fatty acids, Calcium, Vitamin D, Iron, Zinc, and at times, reduced protein consumption, which may require careful dietary planning/supplements to address.

**Substance Abuse/Addictions**

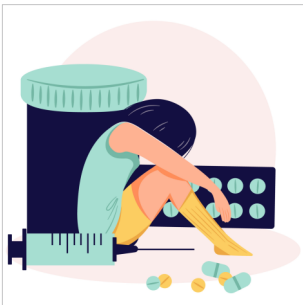
In India, drug use among students and youth is a growing concern. The most commonly used substances include:

**Alcohol:** Alcohol is widely consumed by youth in India, particularly in social settings. It is often the first substance that young people experiment with due to its legal status and availability. We all know alcohol is not good for our health but to 'fit in' with peers, people often start drinking without realising this is a major vice. Also, some adults feel this is a way to deal with emotions, which is a myth.



**Tobacco (Smoking and Chewing):** Tobacco use, both smoking and chewing (gutka, khaini), is highly prevalent among young people in India. Vaping, and hookah (also known as shisha) are commonly mistaken as a sign of 'adulging.' Unfortunately, they harm our bodies and soon turn into addiction.

**Drug addiction:** Cannabis is the most commonly used illegal drug among youth in India. It is often consumed in the form of 'bhang,' 'ganja,' or 'charas.' Regular use can lead to mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, and impaired memory and concentration. Youths often start drugs with friends to 'try something new' without realising this would be a serious addiction. Parents need to pay more attention if they see a change in the behaviour of their children, such as withdrawal from friends and family, change in friendships or problems with friends, a sudden drop in grades or attendance at school, signs of sadness, depression, agitation or hostility or an increase in borrowing money. Parents should speak to their child when they are as young as twelve years old to educate them on this issue.



**Inhalants:** Inhalants, such as glue, paint thinners, and other volatile substances, are used by some young people, especially in marginalised communities, due to their easy availability and low cost. Also known as 'Sasta Nasha', these severely damage the brain, lungs, liver, and kidneys and can lead to sudden death. Although they may be fun initially, the consequences are very serious.



# Around 20 students of B-school in Telangana identified as buyers of drugs: TGANB

Parents of the students will be notified to ensure their children receive appropriate de-addiction treatment: TGANB director

Updated - July 04, 2024 11:52 am IST Published - July 04, 2024 11:25 am IST - HYDERABAD

THE HINDU BUREAU



**Porn Addiction:** The widespread availability of cheap data and smartphones has made access to pornography easier than ever before. As a result, a significant number of people, including teenagers and young adults, are increasingly exposed to explicit content online. Porn addiction can cause considerable strain in relationships. Partners may feel betrayed or inadequate, leading to trust issues, conflicts, and even breakups or divorces. There is a growing need for awareness campaigns and education about the risks of porn addiction, particularly in schools and colleges. Educating young people about healthy sexual behaviour and the potential harms of pornography is crucial. As a parent, speak to children as soon as they hit puberty about sex education, as most schools are failing to provide this. It is

also important to teach them 'good and bad' touches at a very early age, especially after so many cases going around relating to rapes and molestations.

## Top 30 Most Porn Watching Countries in the World in 2023: India Ranks 3rd

India is one of the most porn watching countries in the world in 2023. Pornography in India is shown to be harmful, as it often features sexual assault.

7 Dec 2023



**Pro Tip:** As a parent, if you find your child is involved in any of the above activities, it is crucial you first maintain your calm and handle the situation well. Of course, discovering that your child is taking drugs or viewing pornography can be alarming and distressing. However, panicking, lecturing, beating, or such acts just makes the situation worse. Handling such sensitive issues requires patience, understanding, and a proactive approach. By maintaining open communication, providing support, and seeking professional help if necessary, you can guide your child toward healthier choices and help them overcome these challenges.

## Altering Your Physical Appearance



While making changes to enhance physical appearance is not inherently negative, it becomes a vice when unhealthy motivations drive it, leading to obsessive behaviours, or having detrimental effects on mental and physical health. Striking a balance between self-care and acceptance of one's natural appearance is key to avoiding the potential pitfalls of altering physical appearance.

When one opens social media and sees someone so close to perfect and then wonders how he/she cannot be like them. It causes significant emotional distress and impacts daily functioning. Obsessive behaviours, such as repeatedly seeking cosmetic procedures or seeing oneself hundred times in the mirror can signal an unhealthy relationship with one's body i.e. prioritising appearance over mental and emotional well-being.

There is a huge increase in the number of gyms across our country. Although exercise is the best thing one can do for himself, it becomes dangerous when overdone. If one is spending a lot of time in the gym, taking steroids, or consuming excessive protein shakes to look bulky and heavy, it might eventually lead to poor mental health, including anxiety, depression, and low self-worth. The belief that one is never 'good enough' can be mentally exhausting and damaging.

If one wishes to pick cosmetic surgery, it is very important to go through the long-term effects and learn about it. Also, select a board-certified plastic surgeon to ensure one is in safe hands.

Summing up, get rid of unwanted diets, cosmetic surgeries or over-exercise just to 'look' good - you need to 'feel' good!!!

The Indian Express

## Hyderabad man dies during cosmetic procedure to enhance smile ahead of wedding

Laxmi Narayan Vinjan died at a hospital in Jubilee Hills on February 16 after he was brought in unconscious following a cosmetic dental procedure at a private...

20 Feb 2024



# Mental Vices

Mental vices including some moral vices are harmful thought patterns or attitudes that can negatively impact one's mental health, decision-making, and overall well-being. They often lead to unproductive or destructive behaviours. Here are some common mental vices seen in society nowadays.



## Violence

Violence is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against another person that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, or psychological harm; these include physical and sexual violence, emotional or psychological violence, socio-economic violence and domestic violence.

## Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is a painful reality, mostly happening in the case of women. It happens in traditional as well as in modern society as some men believe they have the right to ill-treat women; this can include both physical violence and emotional violence. Emotional violence might not leave visible marks, but it is equally harmful; it includes insults, yelling, using hurtful or abusive words to make a woman feel small and worthless.

Generally, women stay silent and do not talk publicly about the abuse faced because they are afraid of being blamed and judged; the pressure to maintain family honour and the stigma and shame associated with domestic violence refrains the women from speaking out. This keeps them trapped in pain, both physically and emotionally.

**Impact:** Every insult or cruel word takes away one's confidence and happiness as it slowly breaks a person down, making them feel weak and helpless. Such abuse causes internal damage. Many times, being insulted in front of relatives, friends, or even strangers can later be seen as if it is acceptable, and is a part of the social norm.

**Solution:** Physical or emotional abuse is never justified. It is important to create a world where women feel safe to talk, get support, and live without fear. It is good to talk about such vices from a young age that this should never be tolerated. It is the responsibility of the parents to educate daughters well and make them independent before marriage. It is also necessary to teach sons the values such as respecting women.

If anyone finds themselves trapped in a situation of physical or emotional violence, they should leave or distance themselves from that person as soon as possible. Over time, such individuals can focus on self-care, set boundaries, and become confident and independent.

# Narcissism

A narcissist is an individual who is excessively self-centred and prioritises his/her needs above all else. This behaviour can negatively impact his/her relationships and hinder his/her personal growth. Despite appearing confident and successful, narcissists may ultimately feel isolated and disconnected from others.

Gaslighting is a manipulative tactic used by narcissists to make their victims question their own memories and perceptions of reality. This can involve lying, withholding information, or denying the truth. Gaslighting is emotionally damaging and can have a profound impact on the victim's well-being.

Alec constantly talks about his achievements, expecting admiration from everyone around him. When someone else shares their success or story, Alec quickly dismisses it or redirects the conversation back to himself. He believes he is more important, smarter, and more talented than others, and often looks down on those he perceives as inferior. In his relationships, Alec lacks genuine empathy. If a friend is going through a tough time, Alec might show initial concerns but quickly change the subject to something related to his own life. He views people primarily as tools to boost his own ego, and if someone no longer serves that purpose, he easily discards them. Alec's narcissism might also manifest in his need for constant validation and admiration. He may post frequently on social media, carefully curating his image to ensure he looks perfect and successful, and he may become upset if his posts do not receive the expected level of likes or comments.

**Impact:** Prevents one from forming deep, meaningful connections, as his self-centeredness overshadows any genuine interactions.

**Solution:** Addressing narcissistic behaviour is challenging but possible with dedication and the right support. By developing empathy, seeking therapy, practising humility, and committing to ongoing self-improvement, individuals can move away from narcissism towards healthier and more fulfilling relationships.

## Examples of Gaslighting Phrases



"You're crazy"

"I did it because I love you"

"Other people think you're crazy too"

"I'm sorry you think that"

"You don't make any sense"

"You're too sensitive"

"That's not what happened"

"You're overreacting"

"You're being paranoid"

"You're making things up"

"That's your fault"

"Why are you always bringing up the past?"

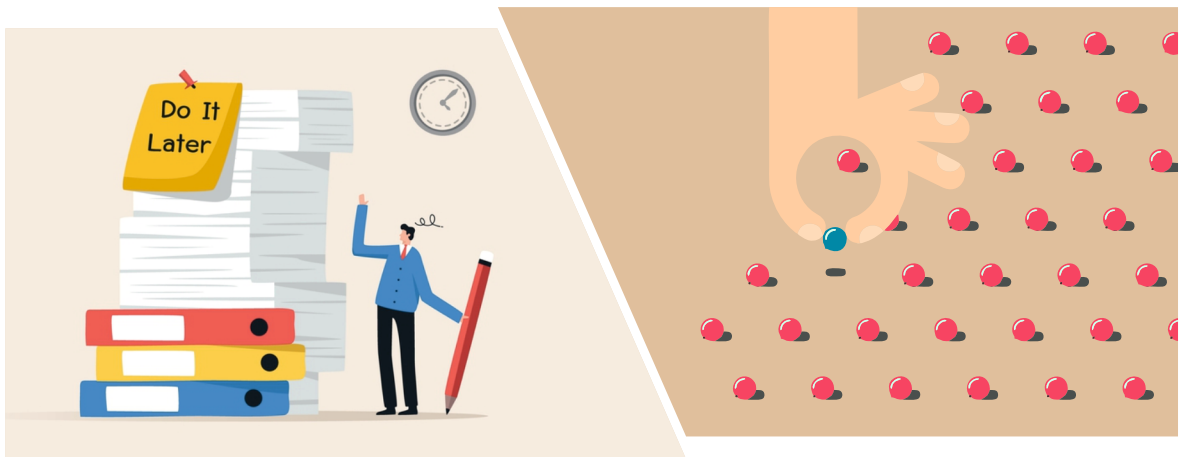
### Perfectionism

Perfectionism in a person is a complex personality trait characterised by a relentless pursuit of extremely high standards and a critical self-evaluation.

Sarah wanted her painting to be flawless, so she spent hours worrying over every tiny detail. Days turned into weeks, and she still was not satisfied, finding imperfections no one else could see. Her friends admired her unfinished work, but Sarah only saw its flaws. Eventually, she realised that her pursuit of perfection was stopping her from enjoying her passion, and she decided to embrace the beauty of imperfection.

**Impact:** Perfectionism is often regarded as a mental vice as it drives individuals towards great achievements, but also carries significant psychological drawbacks. These include unrealistic standards, low self-esteem, fear of failure, and strained relationships.

**Solution:** Embrace a growth mindset, practice self compassion, set realistic goals, and time limits.



### Procrastination

Procrastination is the act of delaying or postponing tasks, often to the point where it negatively impacts productivity and well-being. Procrastination is often viewed as a mental vice because it involves a voluntary delay of actions despite knowing that this delay will likely have negative consequences.

Rohit had a big project deadline in a week, but he convinced himself there was plenty of time. Each day, he found new distractions: a TV show, cleaning his room, chatting with friends. The night before the deadline, panic set in, and he worked frantically, barely finishing on time. Exhausted and stressed, Rohit vowed to start earlier next time, knowing deep down it was a promise he might not keep.

**Impact:** Leads to missed opportunities, increased stress, and decreased productivity.

**Solution:** Prioritising tasks, breaking tasks into smaller steps, and updating them, improving time management by minimising distractions, setting realistic goals and identifying gaps for the non-compliances.

### Social Media Addiction

Social media addiction refers to the excessive and compulsive use of social media platforms, leading to significant disruption in daily life. Social media addiction is considered a mental vice because it negatively impacts an individual's psychological well-being and quality of life.

Amita woke up and immediately reached for her phone, scrolling through social media for hours. She compared her life to others, feeling inadequate and unhappy. Despite the negative feelings, she couldn't stop checking for updates and notifications. One day, she decided to take a break, discovering the joy of living in the real world, reconnecting with herself, her loved ones and the simple beauty of the present moment.

**Impact:** Excessive social media consumption can lead to unrealistic expectations, escapism, and reduced productivity. It reduces real-life interactions, can impact mental health, cause eye strain, sleep disturbances, and decreased physical activity. Social media, while beneficial in many ways, can create significant challenges in relationships if not managed properly. In a marital relationship, it can lead to reduced intimacy, trust issues and emotional disconnection, all of which can contribute to growing distance between spouses.

**Solutions:** Balance entertainment with productive activities, and be selective about content (make individuals understand the difference between reel and real life). Engage in offline activities, and practice mindfulness, use screen blue light filters (night light), set screen time limits, and take regular breaks.

**Reality Check:** Influencers, actors, cricketers, and popular figures can be seen as a hidden vice in society due to the unrealistic expectations and commercial pressures they often promote. Their influence can create unhealthy comparisons, distort values, and drive consumerism. They project images of perfection, leading to distorted body image, success expectations, and lifestyle goals, especially among young people. Many influencers endorse products they do not use or believe in, such as health supplements, 'miracle' skincare routines, or even fake promises like earning money through online betting apps. These promotions are often part of marketing strategies and gimmicks designed to manipulate consumers. Users should be aware that everything they promote is sponsored, and their images are often modified to look perfect, further misleading their followers.





People-Pleasing/Avoiding Conflict/Lying



People-pleasing and avoiding conflict can prevent individuals from developing true self-awareness and assertiveness; lying further aggravates these issues by eroding trust and distorting reality. Together, these vices can trap individuals in cycles of anxiety, low self-esteem, and unfulfilling relationships, making it difficult to lead a balanced, authentic life.

Ila always said yes, fearing that saying no would disappoint others. She constantly juggled tasks and favours, feeling overwhelmed and exhausted. At times, she even lied to ‘fit in’. Despite her efforts, she rarely felt appreciated, and her own needs went unmet. One day, after an incident she learned the power of setting boundaries, discovering that true friends respected her limits and valued her for who she was, not just what she could do for them. Henceforth, she did not have to lie to avoid conflict, or to please people. She learnt that she can be herself, and yet be loved and embraced.

**Impact:** Leads to stress, resentment, and loss of self-identity.

**Solution:** Learn to say ‘NO’, practising assertiveness, and setting healthy boundaries in order to prioritise one’s needs.

Family Dynamics

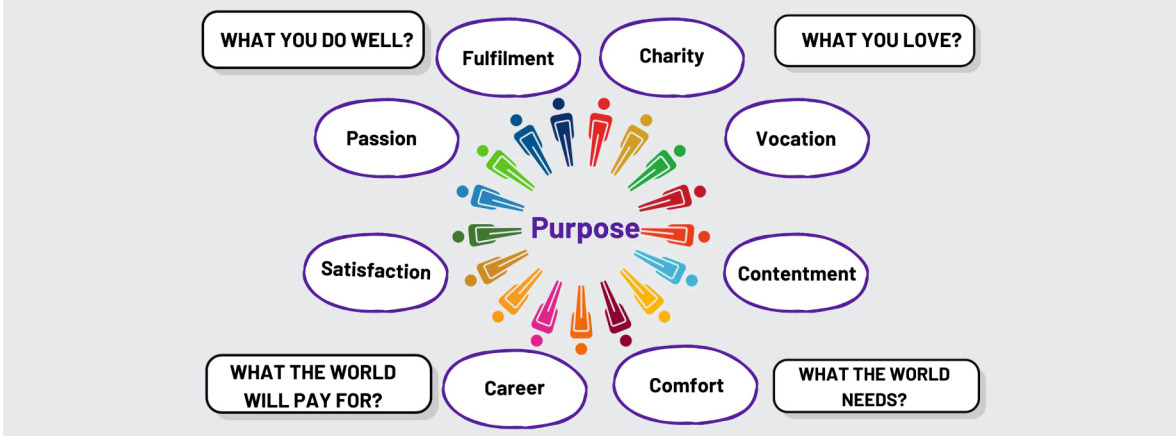
Family dynamics refers to the patterns of interaction and relationships among family members. When family dynamics become a mental vice, they can create a toxic environment that hinders emotional well-being and personal development.

Aarti had always struggled in the relationship with her parents, feeling misunderstood and distant compared to her younger sibling. As she grew older, she decided to approach them with openness and empathy, seeking to understand their perspectives and share her own feelings honestly. Gradually, they found common ground, strengthening their bond. Through patience, empathy and communication, Aarti discovered that building a meaningful relationship with her parents was a journey worth taking.

**Impact:** Traditional views may clash with modern perspectives, causing tension and unresolved trauma.

**Solution:** Foster open communication with continuous dialogue, understand each other’s viewpoints and find common ground.

Lack of higher purpose in life



Anjali lived a carefree life, with her husband’s high-paying job allowing her to indulge in endless kitty parties and maintain a strong social media presence. Her days were filled with attracting likes, flaunting her lifestyle online, and enjoying the fleeting influence she held in her social circles. However, everything changed when a close friend pointed out how disconnected and empty Anjali’s life had become. This unexpected moment of reflection shook her, forcing Anjali to confront the truth she had been long avoiding i.e. she was chasing superficial validation, and her life lacked real meaning.

**Impact:** Through self-realisation, she saw the emptiness behind her social media posts and extravagant lifestyle. Determined to change, Anjali shifted her focus from external appearances to inner growth. She began to invest her time in activities that brought her joy and purpose - helping others, building deeper connections, and making a positive impact in her community. Her life transformed from shallow to meaningful, as she finally understood what truly mattered.

Vasu had always followed the expected path - studying hard, landing a stable job, and living a comfortable life. But deep inside, he felt something was missing. One day, while volunteering at a local NGO, he discovered a sense of fulfilment he had never felt before. Helping others gave him a higher sense of purpose, far beyond personal success. Vasu realised that true happiness comes not from material achievements, but from making a meaningful difference in the lives of others. With this newfound purpose, his life transformed into deeper significance and joy.

**Impact:** Without a clear direction or sense of meaning, one may experience emotional distress and struggle to find satisfaction in daily activities. Individuals may feel disconnected from themselves and others, often struggling with mental health issues like a sense of hopelessness. This can result in poor decision-making, unfulfilling routines, and a sense of emptiness despite external success.

**Solution:** To find higher purpose in life, find a more fulfilling life beyond social media and superficial activities, start by reflecting on what truly matters to you. Set goals that align with your passions and values. Focus on personal growth or helping others. Get involved in meaningful work or causes that matter. This approach will shift one’s focus from seeking approval to finding real joy and purpose in life. Practice mindfulness and gratitude.



Mastermind behind all the feelings, emotions and moods - Hormones

Hormones are chemical messengers produced by glands in the endocrine system that regulate various functions in the body. They travel through the bloodstream to tissues and organs, influencing processes such as growth, metabolism, reproduction, mood, and more.

Search for happiness

How to be happy? It is one of the most searched questions on the internet, showing that many people are searching about finding happiness in life. They look for quick happiness on social media or by buying things they don't need, travelling to be happy, actually leaving them tired and unhappy.

But does genuine happiness come from such temporary pleasures?

Technically, real happiness and satisfaction truly come from balancing four key happiness hormones - dopamine, serotonin, oxytocin, and endorphins. To achieve this balance, you need a healthy lifestyle and good habits to keep these hormones from being suppressed:


Happiness Hormones	Reasons for Suppression	Ways of Balancing
Dopamine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Chronic stress</li><li>Lack of sleep</li><li>Poor diet</li><li>Substance abuse</li><li>Sedentary lifestyle</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Engage in regular physical exercise</li><li>Get adequate sleep</li><li>Eat a balanced diet rich in proteins</li><li>Set and achieve small goals</li><li>Practice mindfulness and meditation</li></ul>
Serotonin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Chronic stress</li><li>Poor diet essentially amino acids</li><li>Lack of sunlight exposure</li><li>Lack of physical exercise</li><li>Social isolation</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Spend time in sunlight</li><li>Eat foods rich in tryptophan (e.g., eggs, salmon, nuts)</li><li>Exercise regularly</li><li>Practice gratitude and positive thinking</li><li>Engage in social activities</li></ul>
Oxytocin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Social isolation</li><li>Lack of physical touch, emotional connections</li><li>Chronic stress</li><li>Negative social interactions or relationships</li><li>Trauma or emotional distress</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Spend quality time with loved ones</li><li>Engage in physical touch (hugs, holding hands, massage)</li><li>Practice kindness and generosity</li><li>Foster trust and strong relationships</li><li>Interact positively with pets</li></ul>
Endorphins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Chronic stress</li><li>Lack of physical activity</li><li>Poor diet</li><li>Lack of laughter or positive social interactions</li><li>Chronic pain or illness</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Exercise regularly, especially aerobic exercises</li><li>Laugh and engage in fun activities</li><li>Eat dark chocolate and spicy foods</li><li>Practice relaxation techniques like yoga or meditation</li><li>Participate in creative activities (e.g., art, music)</li></ul>

Like happy hormones, there are stress hormones that are created as part of the body's natural response to perceived threats or challenges. This response is essential for survival and is often referred to as the 'fight-or-flight' response. Balancing stress hormones involves adopting various lifestyle changes and techniques that promote overall well-being and reduce chronic stress. Neurotransmitters are chemical messengers that transmit signals between nerve cells, muscles and glands.

Stress Hormones / Neurotransmitters	Reasons for Activation	Ways of Balancing
Cortisol and adrenaline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Injury, illness, and surgery</li><li>During situations of acute stress or danger</li><li>Perceptions of threat or fear trigger</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Stress Management</li><li>Regular Exercise</li><li>Adequate Sleep</li><li>Healthy Diet</li><li>Social Support</li></ul>
GABA and GLUTAMATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>During stressful situations</li><li>In response to stressful situations</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Mindfulness and Relaxation</li><li>Limit Stimulants</li><li>Nutritional Support</li><li>Supplements</li></ul>
Estrogen and progesterone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>During menstrual cycle</li><li>During pregnancy</li><li>In response to emotional stress</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Balanced Diet</li><li>Healthy Fats</li></ul>
Thyroid hormones (T3 & T4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>To regulate metabolism</li><li>In response to cold exposure</li><li>Influenced by stress</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Iodine-Rich Foods</li><li>Selenium-Rich Foods</li><li>Stress Reduction</li><li>Medical Advice and Treatment</li></ul>

Positive impacts of stress hormones:

While these responses are beneficial in short-term, acute situations, chronic activation of the stress response can lead to negative health consequences and weakened immune function. While these responses are helpful in short-term, intense situations, long-term stress can harm your health. It can cause anxiety, depression, and heart disease. Hormonal imbalances can occur at various stages throughout a person's life, often associated with significant physiological changes. Recognizing and addressing hormonal imbalances with appropriate medical care, lifestyle changes, and possibly hormone replacement therapy can help manage the symptoms and improve quality of life.



**Pro Tip:** Manage stress with mindfulness or meditation to support hormonal health. Consult a healthcare professional for personalized guidance and necessary tests. Small lifestyle changes, like regular exercise and nutrient - dense diet, can make a big difference.

Cheating in relationships

There are many factors that can contribute to the rise in extra-marital affairs, and it can vary from one individual or relationship to another. With the rise of social media and dating apps, it is easier than ever to connect with others outside of a committed relationship. The society is now ready to openly discuss and even accept issues. Often people seek out affairs when they feel their life is missing a spark. This is fueled by lack of communication, and media portrayals of infidelity that normalise or glamorise it, influencing people's perceptions and behaviours.

However, are these worth the time, effort and chaos?

Dheeraj and Nidhi have been married for 20 years and have one child. Dheeraj accidentally reconnects with his old school girlfriend, Soma. They started messaging each other on social media, sharing updates about their lives and reminiscing about the past. Their conversations became more frequent and intimate, and they eventually arranged to meet in person, leading to both physical and emotional dependence on each other. Nidhi noticed Dheeraj was distancing himself and acting strangely toward her. She was shocked to discover Dheeraj's affair. Dheeraj felt guilty for betraying Nidhi emotionally by lying and cheating. He also realised he was drawn to the excitement and newness in his life. Dheeraj made every effort to save his marriage with Nidhi. Soma continued with her family life and work in the same manner as it was earlier. Over time, Dheeraj and Nidhi both recommitted to their relationship and marriage but Nidhi at times suffers from the emotions such as insecurity, mistrust, insult, unlove, self doubt, fear of being left alone, anxious, comparisons, lack of confidence, etc. Such vices are incorrigible to deal with. Physical or virtual relationships, particularly in the context of extramarital affairs, are a complex and increasingly relevant issue in modern society.

The betrayed partner often experiences intense emotional pain, including feelings of anger, sadness, and betrayal. Cheating severely damages trust between partners, making it difficult to rebuild. Infidelity can significantly decrease the self-esteem of the person who was cheated on. The partner who cheated may experience guilt and shame, affecting their mental health and self-image. Many relationships do not survive infidelity, leading to separation or divorce. The one who was hurt may struggle with depression, anxiety, and difficulty trusting others in future relationships. They might question their self-worth and attractiveness, while the cheater may feel constant remorse and self-loathing. Worrying about the relationship's future or potential public exposure of the infidelity adds to the stress.

Invisible vices from media and societal influences can deeply affect mental health and relationships. To heal from infidelity, both partners must be fully committed. The one who cheated must take responsibility and work to rebuild trust. Professional therapy can guide them through the betrayal and communication issues. Honest dialogue, transparency, and setting boundaries are crucial. Forgiveness involves letting go of anger, not excusing the behaviour, and takes time. Rebuilding emotional connection is essential, with shared activities and open communication. Healing is a slow process, and rushing it can lead to unresolved issues.

Sometimes, after working through the betrayal, couples decide that staying together may not be the best option for their well-being. This is a decision that should be made thoughtfully and with professional help if needed. What matters most is that both partners are willing to work together to move past the betrayal and reestablish a strong, healthy relationship. By recognizing and addressing these invisible vices, one can lead more fulfilling and balanced lives, ultimately enhancing our overall well-being and relationships.

One may find his spark lost somewhere. This does not mean he looks outside for his needs. There are multiple ways to get the life back in a relationship - if one genuinely wishes to do so.

Financial Vices

Financial vices refer to detrimental money habits, behaviours, or patterns that harm an individual's financial health. These vices often arise from emotional responses, a lack of financial discipline, or simply poor money management skills. Financial vices lead to overspending, debt accumulation, reduced savings, and overall financial instability. They can impact both the short-term and long-term financial well-being of individuals and families, leading to stress, anxiety, and difficulty achieving financial goals.

Impulse Buying

Buying clothes, gadgets, souvenirs or home decor during a sale, vacation or because of an emotional impulse, even though one do not need them.

Kripa went to the mall to buy a new phone charger but ended up leaving with three dresses, two pairs of shoes, and a designer handbag. The excitement of seasonal sale and discounts pulled her in, and she convinced herself she deserved the splurge. However, when she checked her bank account later, she realised she had overspent her budget substantially. The high from her purchases quickly faded, replaced by anxiety over how she would cover her bills. Now, stuck with buyer's remorse (deep regret), Kripa regretted her impulsive decisions. She vowed to start planning her purchases more carefully in the future.

Impact

**Financial Impact:** Leads to unplanned expenses that can strain one's budget and reduce one's ability to save for important financial goals.

**Psychological Impact:** The short-term satisfaction of impulse buying can be followed by regret or guilt, leading to more stress.

Solution

**Create a shopping list:** Stick to a pre-planned shopping list and avoid unnecessary purchases.

**Apply a Waiting Period:** If tempted to buy something, wait 24 hours before making the purchase to see if it is truly necessary.

Living Beyond One's Means

Spending more money than one earns, often by using credit cards or loans to finance a lifestyle, you cannot afford.

Dev always loved the finer things in life, even though his paycheck did not quite match his tastes. He bought a luxury car on loan, dined at expensive restaurants, and kept upgrading his gadgets to stay ahead of the trend. But every month, his credit card spendings kept getting higher, and his savings account stayed empty. One day, an unexpected car repair bill of a high amount made Dev realise that he did not have any savings to cover it. With his debt piling up, the pressure became overwhelming. Dev finally understood that living beyond his means had caught up with him, forcing him to reevaluate his spending habits.

Impact

**Financial Impact:** Leads to growing debt, high interest payments, and difficulty paying off credit cards or loans.

**Psychological Impact:** Can cause long-term stress and anxiety due to the constant pressure of debt and the inability to save.

Solution

**Budgeting:** Create a realistic budget based on income and stick to it.

**Living Below One's Means:** Focus on living within or below one's means, and prioritise saving over luxury purchases.



### Neglecting to Save for the Future

Failing to set aside money for future financial needs, such as retirement, emergencies, or big purchases, due to a focus on immediate consumption.

Esha always told herself she would start saving next month, but each month came and went without a single deposit into her savings account. Instead, she spent her paycheck on nights out, new clothes, and weekend getaways, enjoying the present while ignoring the future. Years passed, and an unexpected medical emergency left her with a hefty bill she could not afford. With no savings to fall back on, Esha was forced to rely on credit cards, sinking deeper into debt. She regretted not saving sooner, realising too late how much easier life could have been if she had acted earlier and saved for rainy days.

**Impact**

**Financial Impact:** Leads to a lack of preparedness for financial emergencies, missed opportunities for investment growth, and financial insecurity in retirement.

**Psychological Impact:** Can cause anxiety and fear about the future due to a lack of financial safety nets.

**Solution**

**Automate Savings:** Set up automatic transfers to savings or retirement accounts each month.

**Create Financial Goals:** Set specific savings goals for both short-term and long-term needs to motivate consistent saving habits.

### Gambling

Betting money on games of chance, such as casinos, sports betting, or lottery tickets, with the hope of winning big, but often leading to significant losses.

Vikram was convinced that one big win would change everything. Every weekend, he visited the casino, certain that his luck would finally turn around. After losing another paycheck on the roulette wheel, he told himself that next time would be different. But as his losses mounted, so did his debt, and soon he was borrowing money just to gamble more. The thrill that once excited him was now overshadowed by the dread of unpaid bills and growing desperation. Vikram realised too late that gambling had become an addiction, not a solution, and it was costing him more than just money.

**Impact**

**Financial Impact:** Gambling often results in more losses than gains, leading to financial hardship, debt, and in extreme cases, bankruptcy.

**Psychological Impact:** Gambling addiction can lead to compulsive behaviour, damaged relationships, and a cycle of loss and desperation.

**Solution**

**Set Strict Limits:** Establish a clear budget for gambling and stick to it, treating it as entertainment rather than an income source.

**Seek Help:** If gambling becomes a compulsion, seek professional counselling.

### Subscription Overload

Subscribing to multiple services (e.g., streaming, magazines, meal kits, etc.) that one does not regularly use or need, which can add significant recurring expenses.

Jay loved trying out new services and signed up for every streaming platform and shopping subscriptions for the sake of convenience/discounts. Each subscription seemed small on its own, but the combined monthly charges began to add up. Months later, Jay reviewed his bank statement and was shocked to see how much he was spending on subscriptions he rarely used. Feeling overwhelmed by the constant drain on his finances, he realised that he had been paying for convenience at the expense of his budget. He decided to cancel most of his subscriptions and rethink his spending habits.

**Impact**

**Financial Impact:** Small monthly charges for subscriptions can add up to thousands of rupees per year, draining disposable income without adding value to one’s life.

**Psychological Impact:** The invisibility of automatic payments can lead to financial ‘leaks’ that are hard to notice until they accumulate into larger problems.

**Solution**

**Audit Your Subscriptions:** Review your monthly subscriptions and cancel the ones you do not use regularly.

**Consolidate Services:** Combine services or opt for cheaper alternatives where possible.



## Online Frauds



It refers to illegal activities conducted over the internet, where criminals deceive individuals or businesses to gain financial or personal information. Common forms include phishing, identity theft, and credit card fraud.

Sakina, a freelance graphic designer, received an email that appeared to be from a reputable design agency offering a lucrative contract. The email instructed her to provide her bank account details (password/OTP) to receive an advance payment. Eager for the opportunity, Sakina complied, only to find that her bank account was soon emptied by fraudulent transactions.

**Impact:** Sakina faced significant financial losses, including unauthorised withdrawals that depleted her savings. Additionally, she experienced emotional distress from the betrayal and the stress of resolving the fraud. Her credit score was negatively affected, and she struggled to secure new contracts due to financial instability.

**Solution:** Verify the authenticity of unsolicited offers or requests for sensitive information. Opt for secure and traceable payment methods. Implement cybersecurity measures, such as using strong passwords, enabling two-factor authentication, and maintaining up-to-date antivirus software to protect against online threats. Staying updated about the various types of cyber crimes can pre-empt such incidents.

Financial vices, when left unchecked, can significantly impact both your financial health and overall well-being. Recognizing and addressing these habits can help you regain control of your finances, reduce stress, and build a more secure financial future.



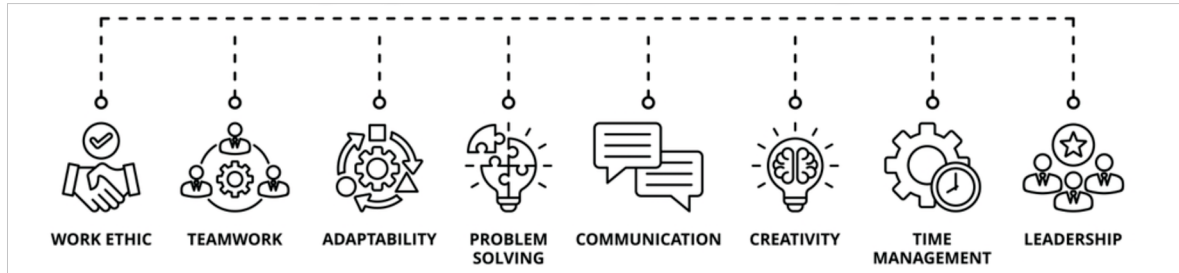
**Pro Tip:** With growing inflation, having multiple sources of income is necessary. Start a SIP (Systematic Investment Plan) when you are young or have goals such as setting a rental income by your 30s. Having multiple sources of income needs planning from a very young age. Never invest everything in one go, and invest a fixed surplus amount every month. Talk to experts, join good channels, learn from your friends, and, most importantly, ask people before blindly investing.

Talk to your children about your approach and give them an idea about your monthly expenditure to teach them how the real-life world works. Share the electricity bills with them without taunting them. They just need to know how the house runs.

## Learning Vices

Learning vices are patterns or behaviours that hinder one's ability to reason, learn, or understand the world effectively. In India, certain learning vices are prevalent due to educational, cultural, or societal factors. In the Indian education system, habits such as rote learning (memorization) and over reliance on parents, teachers and elders for decision making often overshadow the development of students. Most of the students do not focus on understanding concepts, which limits their critical thinking. Also, many university graduates and post graduates are not directly employable as the purpose of education is not completely fulfilled.

### Lack of Soft Skills



Lack of basic soft skills like communication, manners and etiquettes, understanding of right behaviour affects student's ability to express themselves clearly and engage in meaningful conversations. Students who struggle with confidence, and have poor communication skills can face difficulties in their personal and professional lives. Developing good communication and etiquettes early is essential for building strong relationships and succeeding in the workplace. These skills help students grow and become more effective in their future careers. Lack of communication also causes a lot of gaps at the workplace.

Anil, a shy Indian boy, struggled to speak up in class and shied away from greeting his teachers and peers. He often avoided eye contact and failed to offer polite gestures. One day, his teacher noticed and gently encouraged him to practise speaking in front of the class and reminded him of the importance of simple courtesies. With time, Anil learned to greet others warmly, express his ideas clearly, and show respect through small acts of politeness. As his confidence grew, he realised that soft skills, including good manners and effective communication, could open new doors and build strong relationships, both in school and beyond.

**Impact:** Such students struggle to build meaningful relationships with peers and teachers, leading to feelings of isolation and misunderstanding. Without proper communication, they may find it difficult to express their ideas clearly, ask for help, or participate in class discussions, which can negatively impact their academic performance. The absence of basic courtesies can cause others to perceive them as rude or indifferent, further hindering social connections. Over time, this can affect their self-esteem and limit opportunities for personal and academic growth.

**Some practical solutions:** Start with small, actionable steps. Anil can begin by greeting teachers and peers with a simple 'hello' each day, gradually building his comfort in social interactions. Practising polite phrases like 'please,' 'Thank you,' and 'Excuse me' in everyday conversations will help improve his etiquette. His teacher can provide opportunities for him to speak in class, starting with short answers or participating in group discussions to build his confidence. Role-playing scenarios with friends or family can help him practise common social situations, such as asking for help or expressing opinions politely. Additionally, positive reinforcement (feedback) from teachers and family when he uses good manners and communicates clearly will encourage further growth.



### Lack Of Fundamentals Due To Rote Learning

Rote learning often leads students to memorise information without understanding underlying concepts. This approach can result in a superficial grasp of subjects, where fundamental principles are overlooked. Consequently, students may struggle to apply their knowledge effectively in real-world situations.

Riya, a 12th grader, spent sleepless nights cramming for her exams, chasing the highest marks. Her focus was always on memorising formulas and facts, but she struggled to grasp the concepts behind them. During the exams, her teachers had twisted the questions slightly, testing the students' true understanding of the material rather than their ability to recall memorised information. When Riya's mid-term results came back lower than expected, she panicked. Her teacher pulled her aside and said, 'Riya, understanding the basics will take you farther than chasing marks.'

That night, Riya opened her books again - not to memorise, but to truly learn. For the first time, the subjects began to make sense, and she realised that deep understanding was more valuable than short-term memorization."

**Solutions to help students shift from rote memorization to focusing on understanding concepts:** To help students like Riya shift from rote memorization to understanding concepts, they can engage in active learning by summarising material in their own words, teaching others, or discussing topics with peers to deepen their comprehension (understanding). Visual learning tools like diagrams, mind maps, and flowcharts can simplify complex topics. Joining study groups can provide new perspectives and allow them to reinforce understanding through dialogue. Using the teach-back method, where they explain concepts to others, will strengthen their grasp of the material.

### Lack of Social Environment

In education, social environments can either motivate students to succeed or place undue pressure on them to conform to certain career paths or societal standards. Societal influences and cultural norms affect students' attitudes and behaviours. This includes peer groups, family expectations, community values, and societal pressures.

Aryan, a 16-year-old boy, was always told by his family and friends that becoming a doctor was the only path to success. While his heart was in art, the pressure to excel in science grew with every passing day. His classmates constantly bragged about their marks, and Aryan felt trapped in a competition he didn't want to be part of. Even at home, his parents reminded him of the prestige and stability that come with a medical degree. Aryan spent sleepless nights, trying to memorise textbooks, but his passion for art never left. One day, he finally broke down and told his parents, "I can't do this anymore." It was the first step toward choosing his own path.

**Impact:** The impact of peer pressure can adversely affect an individual at home, school, college and at work too; setting clear boundaries and staying true to oneself can help an individual steer away from the negative impacts of peer pressure.

**Solution:** To help students like Aryan overcome peer and societal pressure, open communication between students, parents, and teachers is the key. Career counselling can guide them toward options that align with their interests. Encouraging students to balance academics with personal passions helps reduce stress, and showcasing diverse success stories from various fields shows that success is not limited to traditional career paths.

Often people change their mundane career where they are not enjoying work or not finding it satisfying to something they always wished to pursue, but were held back due to societal/parental pressure; for example M S Dhoni leaving his railways job to pursue cricket full time (shift from the head to the heart). In this fast changing world, there are chances that a fresher might not enjoy his chosen job (based on degree and domain studies); alternatively it is often seen that if one pursues his interest areas with passion and hardwork, eventually finds his fit and succeeds in the selected career.

### Underestimating Vocational Education

Vocational training can play a crucial role in mitigating learning vices by fostering practical skills, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities that are directly applicable to real-world situations.

Due to less attention, investment, upgradation, and industry linkage, the appeal of white collar jobs (office) over blue collar vocational jobs (shopfloor) has increased over time, leading to a perception that vocational education and training (VET) is somehow inferior to mainstream academic professional education.

Rahul grew up in a small town, fascinated by how things worked, especially anything related to electricity. After high school, as he was not inclined to theory, instead of following the academic path, he enrolled in a vocational course for electricians at a local technical school. Over two years, he learned about electrical systems, wiring, and safety, gaining hands-on experience through internships.

After completing the course, Rahul worked as an apprentice and quickly built a reputation for being reliable and skilled. He was not academically inclined, but with strong entrepreneurial skills, so he decided to start his own electrical shop, investing his savings into equipment and a small space.

Today, Rahul owns 'Electrical Services,' leading a team of 8 electricians and serving both residential and commercial clients. He focuses on quality, customer satisfaction, and regularly trains his team to stay updated. Rahul's success shows how vocational training and entrepreneurial drive can lead to a thriving business.

VET prepares individuals for the workforce, promotes economic development with increasing recognition and investment in practical skills and technical expertise. One should choose vocational education if they are better at hands-on work and find theory-based learning difficult. It focuses on practical skills, making it a good option for those who prefer learning by doing rather than through books and lectures. Also vocational courses are often shorter and more affordable than traditional degrees, making them accessible to a wider range of students.

There will be more job opportunities in the future for vocational technicians as industries continue to grow and technology advances. Skilled technicians will be in demand in various fields in the coming times.

### From Campus to Career: A Comparative Analysis with Probable Solutions

The gap between university outputs and market demands refers to the disconnect between the skills and knowledge students acquire in higher education and the actual needs of employers in the job market. This discrepancy can impact students' employability and the effectiveness of their education.



Aspects	Market Demands	Gaps	Output of Universities	Potential solutions
Technical Skills	Proficiency in specific tools, technologies, and methodologies (e.g. coding languages, data analysis, engineering principles).	Lack of practical application and real-life project experience.	Focuses majorly on theoretical concepts and principles but very less real-life applications.	Integrate practical training and projects into the curriculum, partnerships with industry for hands-on experience.
Soft Skills	21st century skills like critical thinking, communication, teamwork, problem-solving, positive attitude etc.	Most of the students are not aware of the importance of proficiency in these skills.	Most of the university graduates falter in real life and may learn these skills only through mistakes or bad experiences.	Incorporate soft skills training into the curriculum, workshops, and extracurricular activities; weak skills on an individual level can be identified and worked upon.
Practical Experience	Hands-on experience through internships or real-world projects.	Internships are not done seriously by many students and students are often not given hands-on experience due to safety, security or lack of thorough knowledge.	Often limited to lab work and simulations rather than real-world applications.	Increase opportunities and impact of internships and more industry academia joint projects/research.
Industry-Specific Knowledge	Understanding of industry standards, regulations, and practices.	Curriculum not keeping pace with current industry standards and practices.	Focus on research and academic excellence with little emphasis on present day challenges and their possible solutions.	Develop industry partnerships for guest lectures, industry visits, and case studies; align curriculum with industry needs. Encourage students to pursue relevant online courses for knowledge enhancement.



**Pro Tip:** Stay curious and open-minded; view every experience as an opportunity to grow. Practice active listening and ask questions to deepen understanding. Surround yourself with diverse perspectives to inspire continuous learning.

Aspects	Market Demands	Gaps	Output of Universities	Potential solutions
Continuous Learning	Commitment to continuous learning and skills development.	Mindset to study for securing degrees and jobs and not for upgradation of the self/society.	Most of the university UG/PGs consider the degree as a prerequisite for the job, which is no longer true in this fast changing world.	Encourage students to be lifelong learners through different mediums such as books, journals, electronic media, and other sources, with the realisation that life is a continuous learning process.

### Several topics could be incorporated into the school and college curriculum to foster the betterment of the nation:

Some skills need to be integrated into education, so that the students can become well-rounded, responsible citizens who contribute positively to their communities and the nation.

- Making students understand financial concepts like budgeting, saving, investing, and avoiding debt traps.
- Developing coping mechanisms for stress, anxiety, and other challenges. The schools and colleges need to have counselling compulsory and trained teachers for special children having learning disabilities.
- Sensitising children on environment, climate change, adopting sustainable practices like waste reduction, recycling, and energy conservation; this can be done through practical activities and projects through clubs and competitions.
- Patriotism and citizenship values should be instilled from a young age in everyday life through family, school, and community initiatives.
- Identifying misinformation, disinformation, propaganda and understanding the impact of media on public opinion and behaviour.
- Teaching road rules to children at an early age helps inculcate a sense of responsibility/awareness.
- Schools should include more activity clubs like construction club, reading club, cooking classes, financial club, etc. to foster skill development and encourage exploration along with personal growth.
- Sex education must be made mandatory in schools. Age appropriate content delivered by trained educators in an interacting and engaging method will remove the myths and taboos connected with the subject. At a very young age (3 years onwards), relevant explanations of good or bad touch should be imparted to make the children aware of these vices existing in the society.

By incorporating these topics into the school and college curriculum, students can develop the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to become responsible, informed, and engaged citizens who contribute positively to the nation's development.



# Environmental Vices



Behaviours, habits or practices that degrade and cause harm to our environment are called environmental vices. Human greed has tipped the scales to an unprecedented disturbance in the delicate balance of nature causing a serious imbalance. Unlike other species, humans overexploit resources, causing serious harm. Around the world, profit, convenience, and consumerism drive many of these problems. Some of the most pressing environmental vices are:

## Climate Crisis

An increasing reliance on fossil fuels, industrialization, and overconsumption have caused a climate crisis. In metropolitan cities, the rapid rise in car ownership due to personal convenience and status symbol has contributed massively to air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

People prefer personal cars over public transportation, worsening traffic congestion and carbon emissions. India's energy sector is presently heavily reliant on coal because it is a cheap source of electricity. Despite the environmental impact, coal-fired power plants continue to operate because they are cheap. There are coal belts where air pollution and land degradation is severe.

### Solutions:

- Opt for public transportation, carpooling, biking, cycling or walking whenever possible. If driving is necessary, consider hybrid or electric vehicles to lower emissions.
- Make energy-saving improvements at home, such as using energy-efficient appliances, LED lighting, and brushless direct current fans.
- Install solar panels or other renewable energy systems at home/society.

## Pollution

In daily life, single-use plastics are widely used, from plastic bags to packaging. Despite bans in some states, plastic waste continues to accumulate due to consumer preference for cheap, convenient options. Markets and street vendors in many cities still distribute plastic bags, contributing to clogged drainage systems and marine pollution.

Thermocol contributes to plastic pollution. It is commonly used in packaging and disposable products, and it is not biodegradable. When discarded, thermocol can break into smaller pieces, leading to microplastic pollution in landfills and waterways. This pollution can harm wildlife, as animals may ingest or become entangled in the plastic, and can disrupt ecosystems.

One of the reasons for this type of pollution is sanitary pads. Sanitary pads often contain non-biodegradable materials such as plastics and synthetic fibres, which can persist in landfills for many years. Additionally, when improperly disposed of, they can contribute to litter and pollution in waterways and natural environments, impacting wildlife and ecosystems.

### Solutions:

- Opt for reusable alternatives instead of single-use plastics, such as cloth bags, stainless steel bottles, and glass containers. Avoid products with excessive plastic packaging.
- Dispose of plastic waste properly and use recycling facilities to ensure plastics are processed correctly.
- Practise the 3 Rs in daily life by reducing the consumption of disposable items (plastic bags, packaging, etc.), reusing items, and recycling products wherever possible, particularly electronics, plastics, and metals.
- To combat thermocol pollution, switch to biodegradable or recyclable alternatives, enhance specialised recycling programs, and support regulations that limit single-use plastics. Promote reusable products.
- Consider using biodegradable options like pads made from organic cotton or menstrual cups. Many brands offer environmentally friendly pads that break down more easily than conventional products.

By implementing these solutions at various levels, we can make significant progress in reducing pollution, improving waste management, and protecting our environment for future generations.



### Ocean Acidification

Carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) released while burning fossil fuels gets absorbed by the ocean, making it more acidic- this is known as Ocean acidification.

CO<sub>2</sub> reacts with water to form carbonic acid, thus lowering the pH of ocean water. This acidic ocean water harms marine life, especially organisms with calcium carbonate shells or skeletons, such as corals and shellfish, adversely affecting humans depending on them for their livelihood.

**Solutions:**

- Reduce the use of household chemicals that can end up as runoff in waterways. Opt for eco-friendly plant-based, herbal, natural cleaning products, and use fertilisers responsibly.
- Protect mangroves and seagrass, and ensure that treated effluents are properly managed before being released into water bodies.

The extinction of coral reefs is a vice resulting from unsustainable human behaviours. However, through proactive solutions such as reducing emissions, regulating fishing, managing pollution, restoring damaged reefs, and fostering stronger environmental governance, it is possible to reverse or mitigate the damage.

By addressing ocean acidification through these actions at different levels, we can work towards mitigating its effects and preserving the health of oceans and marine life.

### Resource Depletion

Depletion refers to the reduction or exhaustion of a resource. It occurs when resources are used faster than they can be renewed, leading to a decrease in the amount of resources available on Earth. Resources that lead to depletion are fossil fuels, water, trees, minerals, soil, and ecosystems.

Excessive water extraction for agriculture is being done, especially for water-intensive and/or cash crops. Further government subsidies on electricity to farmers and unregulated borewell usage also depletes the ground water level, threatening future water security. In riverbeds across India, illegal sand mining for construction, driven by the booming real estate sector, depletes natural resources and alters river ecosystems.

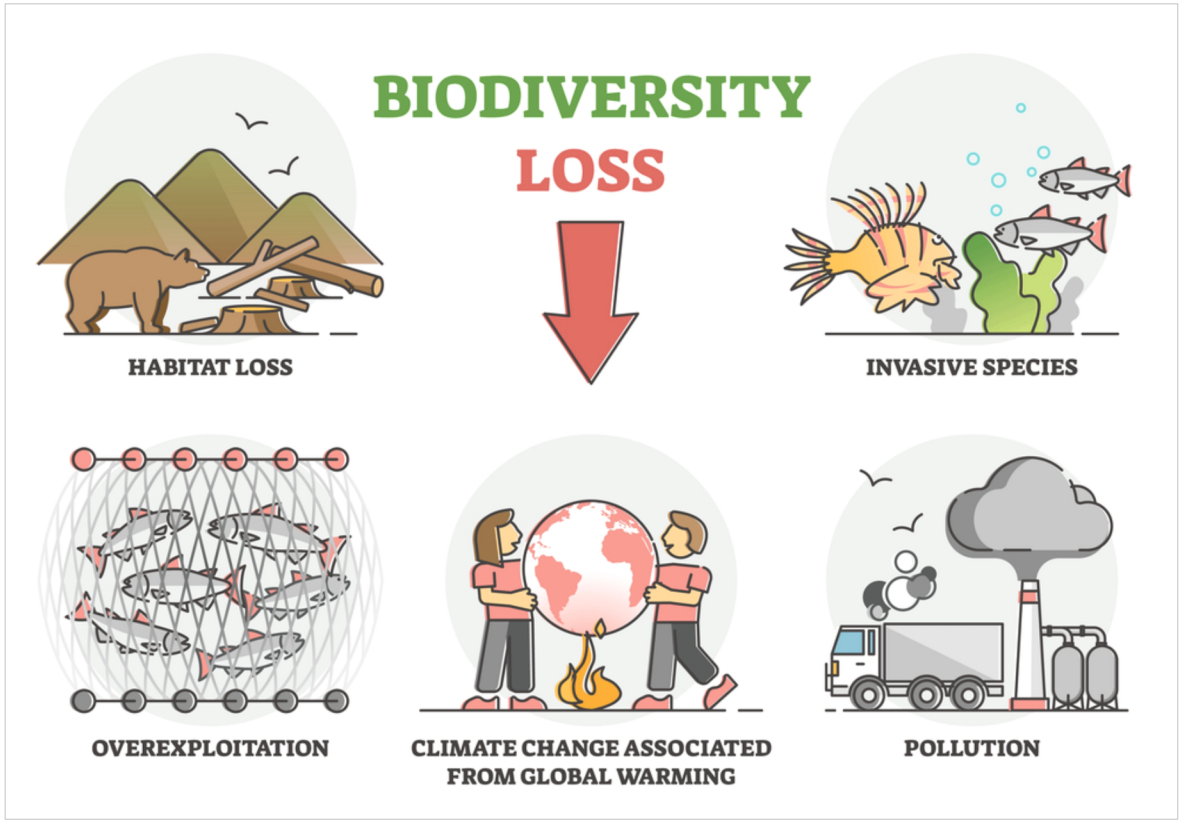
Industrial waste, untreated sewage, and religious offerings often end up in rivers, turning them into highly polluted water bodies. Despite efforts to clean these rivers, industries and individuals continue to discharge waste due to cost-cutting and cultural practices. Solid waste pollution is caused by the improper disposal of various types of waste generated by households, industries, agriculture, and other human activities.

**Solutions**

- Save water by fixing leaks, using efficient fixtures, and collecting rainwater. Avoid over-watering lawns and cars, and use smart irrigation for gardens.
- Choose eco-friendly building materials and avoid excessive use of river sand by opting for alternatives or recycled materials.
- Reduce river pollution by cutting industrial and farm runoff, using eco-friendly fertilisers, and improving wastewater treatment. Support community clean-ups and prevent illegal dumping.

Taking these steps helps conserve natural resources for future generations

### Mass Extinction and Biodiversity Loss



Mass extinction refers to a widespread and rapid decrease in the number of species on Earth and biodiversity, short for biological diversity, refers to the variety of life forms on Earth.

Forests are cleared for urban development and mining. Several cities face deforestation for some or the other developmental project. The loss of green cover in such projects threatens the habitat of species, pushing them towards extinction.

**Solutions**

- Make eco-friendly choices by reducing products that harm habitats and opting for sustainably sourced or certified items.
- Use sustainable urban planning, eco-friendly construction, and wildlife corridors to combat habitat destruction from infrastructure.
- Restore damaged ecosystems, enforce environmental regulations, engage communities, and use tech like GIS for monitoring.
- Illegal wildlife trade, such as tiger skins and ivory, threatens endangered species like Bengal tigers and pangolins.
- When visiting wildlife areas, follow eco-guidelines and support responsible tour operators that protect nature.

By implementing these strategies across various levels, we can address the root causes of biodiversity loss and work towards preserving the planet's rich and diverse ecosystems for future generations.



## Deforestation



Greed for land, timber, and agricultural expansion drives deforestation affecting biodiversity and contributing to climate change.

States like Assam and Nagaland have seen forests cleared for jhum (slash-and-burn) cultivation, driven by the need for agricultural land. While this is a traditional practice, population pressures and modern agricultural demands have made it unsustainable, leading to deforestation.

Human-animal conflict arises when wildlife and people compete for resources like land, food, and water, often due to habitat loss and human encroachment. This leads to negative encounters, such as animals damaging crops or attacking livestock, and humans retaliating by harming or killing wildlife. Balancing conservation efforts with human needs is key to mitigating these conflicts and promoting coexistence.

### Solutions

- Reduce human-animal conflict by creating wildlife corridors, using barriers like electric fences, compensating farmers for losses, promoting conservation education, and encouraging eco-tourism.
- Strengthen forest patrols with drones, satellite monitoring, and local community involvement, while enforcing stricter penalties.
- Reduce paper and wood consumption by minimising waste, recycling, and choosing digital alternatives.

Through these measures, it is possible to balance the demand for land, timber, and agricultural productivity while conserving forests and biodiversity.

## Overconsumption and Waste

The demand for cheap products and a throwaway culture contribute to environmental degradation and waste accumulation.

With the growing demand for electronics, India has become one of the largest producers of e-waste. Consumers frequently upgrade their gadgets, but improper disposal leads to hazardous waste. Bangalore and Delhi are major centres where discarded electronics pile up, often being improperly recycled in informal sectors, harming both the environment and workers.

### Solution for e-waste

- The government can formalise the informal e-waste sector by providing training and resources to workers, improving working conditions and environmental standards. Additionally, implementing e-waste buyback schemes can encourage consumers to dispose of electronics responsibly.
- Avoid upgrading gadgets unnecessarily and opt for durable, high-quality electronics. When replacing devices, donate or sell old ones for reuse. Use certified e-waste recycling centres to ensure proper disposal.

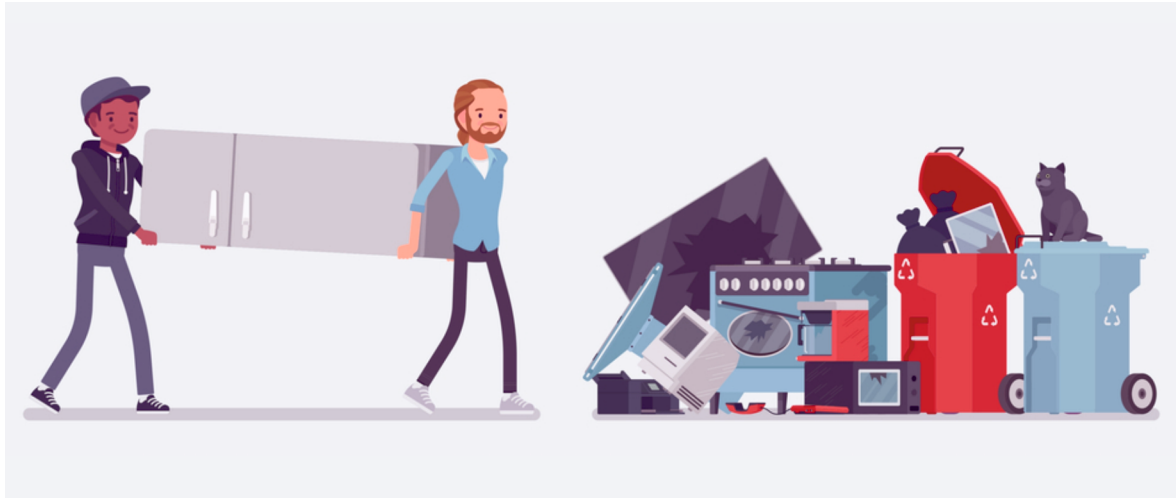
In urban areas, food wastage is very common, particularly in restaurants and households. The cultural practice of hosting lavish weddings and events with excessive food, much of which goes to waste, is driven by social status. This not only wastes resources but also adds to methane emissions from rotting food in landfills.

### Solution for other waste

- Plan meals carefully, purchase only what is needed, and use leftovers creatively to minimise food waste. When hosting events, ensure that portions are manageable, or consider donating surplus food to local shelters or food banks.

From pollution to deforestation and resource depletion, the pursuit of short-term gain without regard for environmental consequences is causing long-term harm. Solutions require shifting individual behaviours, corporate responsibility, and government policies towards sustainability and environmental management.

Some environmental problems that can only be addressed at the state level because they are too big to solve on an individual basis are overfishing and ocean acidification.





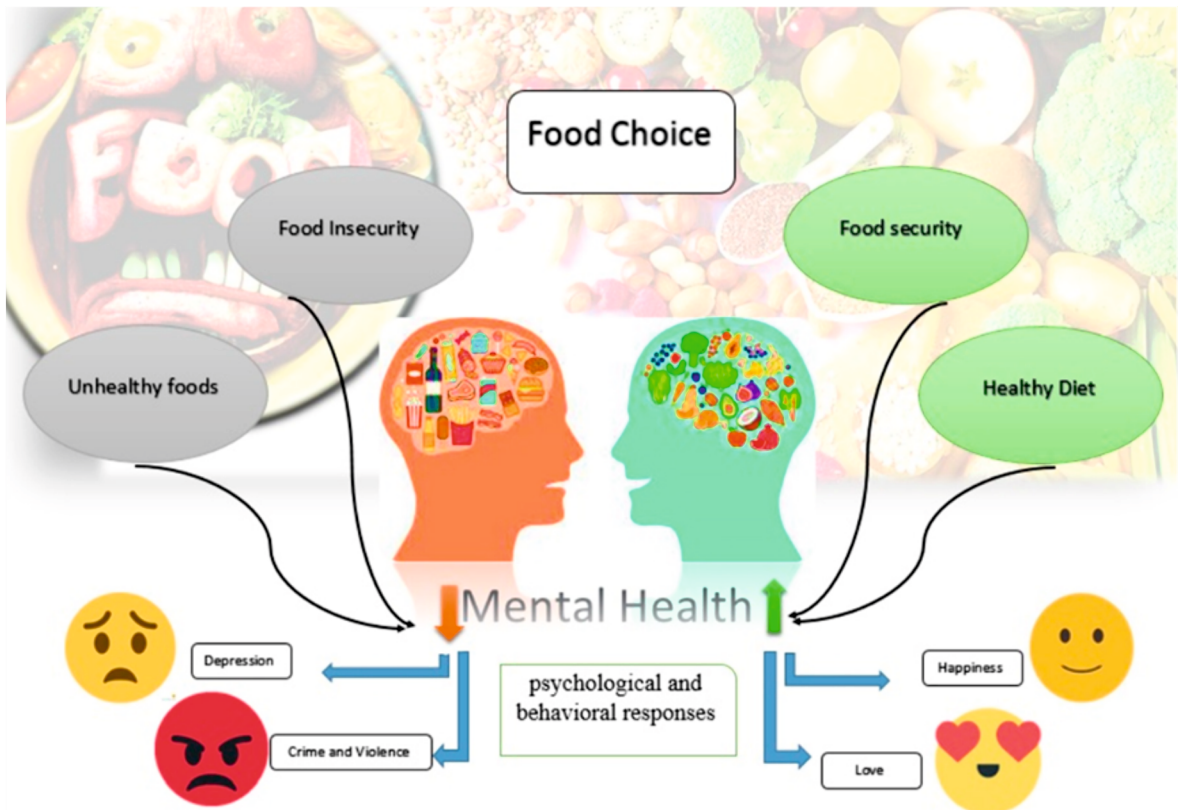
# Conclusion

In conclusion, it is essential to recognize, understand, and manage the vices that can subtly influence our daily lives. These vices, often intertwined with our habits around food, sleep, technology, learning, integrity, relationships, and the environment, can hinder our well-being and prevent us from reaching our full potential.

In today's fast-paced world, it's easy to lose sight of these essential aspects of life. Overindulgence in food or neglecting proper nutrition can lead to health issues, while insufficient sleep can drain our energy and impair our cognitive function. Technology, while offering incredible benefits, can also become a source of distraction and disconnection. Similarly, neglecting continuous learning or compromising our integrity can limit personal and professional growth. Relationships require nurturing and honesty; neglecting these can erode trust and weaken vital bonds. Finally, our impact on the environment reflects our responsibility towards the planet and future generations.

The key to managing these vices lies in cultivating awareness and balance. Recognizing their presence in our lives is the first step, followed by understanding their deeper impact. By making conscious choices - practising mindful eating, prioritising rest, setting healthy boundaries with technology, embracing lifelong learning, fostering honesty in our relationships, and adopting eco-friendly practices - we can restore equilibrium and live more fulfilling lives.

As we move forward, let us commit to addressing these vices with intention and compassion. By striving for a healthier, more harmonious existence, we nurture our well-being and strengthen our connection with ourselves, others, and the world around us. This journey of self-improvement leads to personal growth, fulfilment, and lasting positive change. As the saying goes, the first step toward change is awareness, the second step is acceptance.



# Resources

## Books

- In Defense of Food: An Eater's Manifesto by Michael Pollan
- How Not to Die: Discover the Foods Scientifically Proven to Prevent and Reverse Disease by Dr. Michael Greger
- Why We Sleep: Unlocking the Power of Sleep and Dreams by Matthew Walker
- The Sleep Solution: Why Your Sleep is Broken and How to Fix It by W. Chris Winter
- Digital Minimalism: Choosing a Focused Life in a Noisy World by Cal Newport
- Irresistible: The Rise of Addictive Technology and the Business of Keeping Us Hooked by Adam Alter
- The Happiness Trap: How to Stop Struggling and Start Living by Russ Harris
- Thinking, Fast and Slow by Daniel Kahneman
- The Uninhabitable Earth: Life After Warming by David Wallace-Wells
- Silent Spring by Rachel Carson
- Your Money or Your Life by Vicki Robin and Joe Dominguez
- The Total Money Makeover: A Proven Plan for Financial Fitness by Dave Ramsey
- Will Teach You to Be Rich by Ramit Sethi
- In the Realm of Hungry Ghosts: Close Encounters with Addiction by Gabor Maté
- The Recovery Book: Answers to All Your Questions About Addiction and Alcoholism and Finding Health and Happiness in Sobriety by Al J. Mooney, M.D., and Catherine Dold
- Clean: Overcoming Addiction and Ending America's Greatest Tragedy by David Sheff
- The Gifts of Imperfection: Let Go of Who You Think You're Supposed to Be and Embrace Who You Are by Brené Brown
- Radical Acceptance: Embracing Your Life with the Heart of a Buddha by Tara Brach

## Websites

- NutritionFacts.org
- The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
- EatingWell
- The National Sleep Foundation
- Sleep.org
- Sleep Health Foundation
- Common Sense Media
- The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)
- Tech-Free Life
- Mind
- Psychology Today
- National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)
- Mint
- NerdWallet
- The Balance
- National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)
- SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration)
- Addiction Center
- The Self-Love Experiment
- Tiny Buddha
- Psychology Today – Self-Esteem & Self-Love



Apps

- MyFitnessPal
  - Fooducate
  - Yummly
  - Calm
  - Sleep Cycle
- Pzizz
  - Moment
  - Forest
  - Headspace
  - BetterHelp
- Sanvello
  - Mint
  - YNAB (You Need A Budget)
  - PocketGuard
  - Sober Grid
- I Am Sober
  - Rethink Drinking
  - Insight Timer
  - Gratitude Journal
  - Calm Harm

Podcasts

- The Nutrition Diva’s Quick and Dirty Tips for Eating Well and Feeling Fabulous
  - The Model Health Show
  - The Rich Roll Podcast
  - Sleepy Time
  - The Digital Wellbeing Podcast
  - Time Well Spent
  - The Focused and Fearless Podcast
  - The Anxiety Coaches Podcast
  - Therapy Chat
- The Dave Ramsey Show
  - The Stacking Benjamins Show
  - Afford Anything
  - The Recovery Revolution
  - Sober Cast
  - The SHAIR Recovery Podcast
  - The Self Love Fix
  - Unbreakable You
  - The Love, Happiness, and Success Podcast

Influencers

- Rujuta Diwekar
  - Shilpa Shetty Kundra
  - Vandana Puri
  - Arianna Huffington
  - Dr. Shyam Bhat
- Dr. M.S. Venkatesh
  - Jay Shetty
  - Ramit Sethi
  - Dave Ramsey
  - Shreya Joshi
  - Brene Brown

TED Talks

- What’s Wrong with What We Eat by Mark Bittman
  - How Food Shapes Our Identity by Simran Sethi
  - Why We Sleep by Matthew Walker
  - Sleep is Your Superpower by Arianna Huffington
  - How to Disconnect from Your Phone by Tanya Goodin
  - The Power of Time-Off by Stefan Sagmeister
  - The Power of Vulnerability by Brené Brown
- How to Make Stress Your Friend by Kelly McGonigal
  - The Power of Personal Finance by Alexa von Tobel
  - How to Get Your Finances in Order by Jim Sweeney
  - Addiction: The Silent Killer by Johann Hari
  - The Power of Choice in Recovery by Andrew Huberman
  - The Art of Being Yourself by Caroline McHugh
  - Love Yourself Like Your Life Depends on It by Kamal Ravikant

Precious Device

Our body is a precious device.  
That can help us achieve whatever we choose.  
But to keep it fit, we need to be wise  
And thoughtful of what we consume and use.

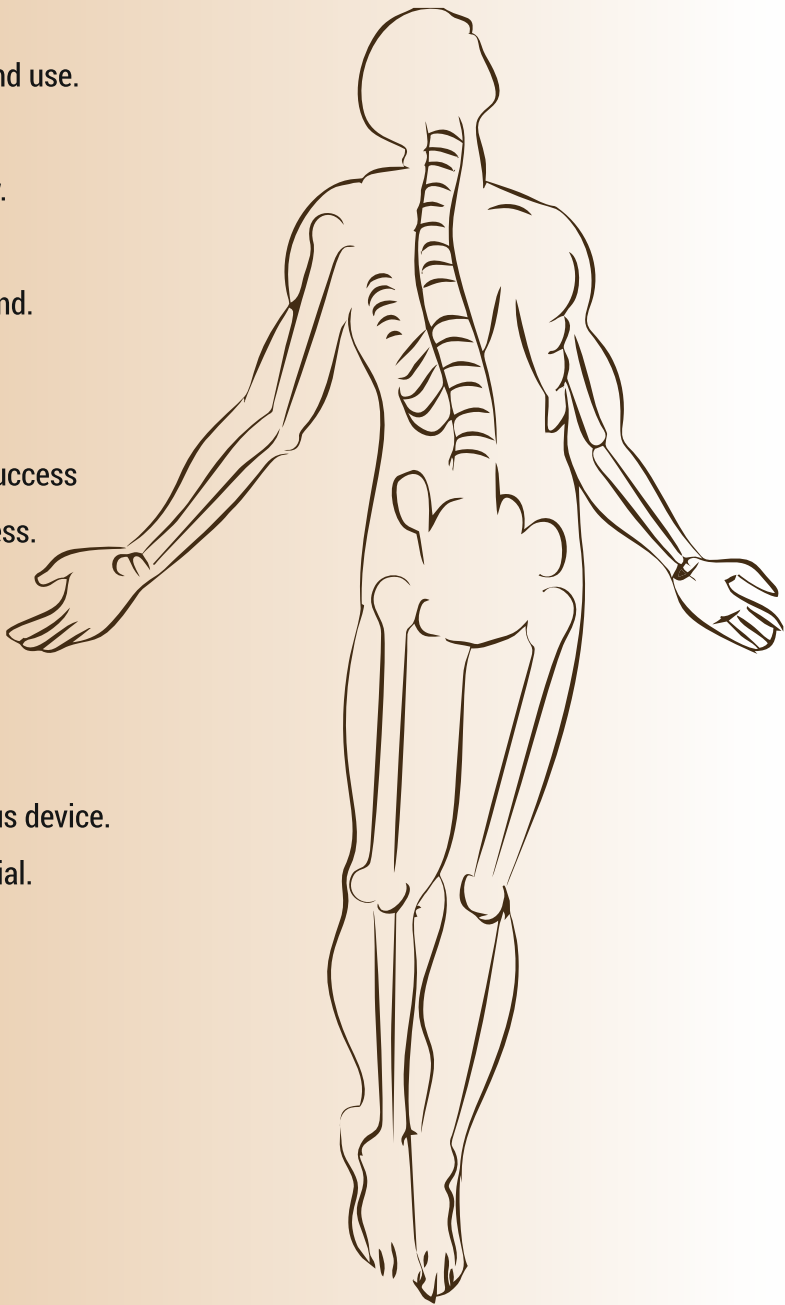
Some decades ago our needs were few.  
Life was simple, joyful and true.  
But today with so much exposure around.  
Wisdom is losing its hold and ground.

Fast cars, fast food and shortcuts to success  
Is triggering our anxiety and restlessness.  
Who is paying the price for this pace.  
Life is losing its lustre and grace.

It's time to pause & self analyse  
The impact of pleasures on our precious device.  
Physical, Emotional, Social and Financial.  
Beware of every invisible vice.

\*\*\*ami...ras\*\*\*

~ Written by Dr. Amisha Mehta



WEEK						
1	“Good food brings people together on many different levels. It's nourishment of the soul and body; it's truly love.”					SUN 05
2	MON 06	TUE 07	WED 08	THR 09	FRI 10	SUN 12
3	MON 13	TUE 14 Makar Sankranti	WED 15 Pongal	THR 16	FRI 17	SUN 19
4	MON 20	TUE 21	WED 22	THR 23	FRI 24	Republic Day SUN 26
5	MON 27	TUE 28	WED 29	THR 30	FRI 31	



WEEK						SAT 01	SUN
5	“Sleep is the ultimate recharge station for our body.”						02
6	MON 03	TUE 04	WED 05	THR 06	FRI 07	SAT 08	SUN 09
7	MON 10	TUE 11	WED 12	THR 13	FRI 14	SAT 15	SUN 16
8	MON 17	TUE 18	WED 19	THR 20	FRI 21	SAT 22	SUN 23
9	MON 24	TUE 25	WED 26 Maha Shivratri	THR 27	FRI 28		

WEEK						
9	MON 31 Eid-UI-Fitr	“The whole purpose of learning is to turn mirrors into windows.”				SUN 01
						02
10	MON 03	TUE 04	WED 05	THR 06	FRI 07	SUN 08
						09
11	MON 10	TUE 11	WED 12	THR 13	FRI 14 Holi (Dhuleti)	SUN 15
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12	MON 17	TUE 18	WED 19	THR 20	FRI 21	SUN 22
						23
13	MON 24	TUE 25	WED 26	THR 27	FRI 28	SUN 29
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WEEK  14		TUE 01	WED 02	THR 03	FRI 04	SAT 05	SUN 06 Ramnavmi
15	MON 07	TUE 08	WED 09	THR 10 Mahaveer Jayanti	FRI 11	SAT 12	SUN 13
16	MON 14 Dr. Ambedkar Jayanti	TUE 15	WED 16	THR 17	FRI 18 Good Friday	SAT 19	SUN 20 Easter Day
17	MON 21	TUE 22	WED 23	THR 24	FRI 25	SAT 26	SUN 27
18	MON 28	TUE 29	WED 30	“Accept yourself, love yourself, and keep moving forward.”			

WEEK

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"An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, wellness encompasses a healthy body, a sound mind, and a tranquil spirit. Enjoy the journey as you strive for wellness."

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MON 30

"Going green is not just a trend, it's a way of life."

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WEEK		TUE 01	WED 02	THR 03	FRI 04	SAT 05	SUN 06
27							Muharram
28	MON 07	TUE 08	WED 09	THR 10 Guru Purnima	FRI 11	SAT 12	SUN 13
29	MON 14	TUE 15	WED 16	THR 17	FRI 18	SAT 19	SUN 20
30	MON 21	TUE 22	WED 23	THR 24	FRI 25	SAT 26	SUN 27
31	MON 28	TUE 29	WED 30	THR 31	"To live is the rarest thing in the world. Most people exist, that is all Your life is your message to the world. Make sure it's inspiring."		

WEEK						FRI 01	SAT 02	SUN
31	"Don't let the illusion of perfection on social media distort your reality."							03
32	MON 04	TUE 05	WED 06	THR 07	FRI 08	SAT 09 Rakshabandhan		SUN 10
33	MON 11	TUE 12	WED 13	THR 14	FRI 15 Independence Day	SAT 16 Janmashtami / Parsi New Year		SUN 17
34	MON 18	TUE 19	WED 20	THR 21	FRI 22	SAT 23		SUN 24
35	MON 25	TUE 26	WED 27 Ganesh Chaturthi	THR 28	FRI 29	SAT 30		SUN 31



WEEK	MON 01	TUE 02	WED 03	THR 04	FRI 05	SAT 06	SUN
36					Onam	Eid-UI-Milad	07
37	MON 08	TUE 09	WED 10	THR 11	FRI 12	SAT 13	SUN 14
38	MON 15	TUE 16	WED 17	THR 18	FRI 19	SAT 20	SUN 21
39	MON 22	TUE 23	WED 24	THR 25	FRI 26	SAT 27	SUN 28
40	MON 29	TUE 30	"Technology without ethics is a ticking time bomb."				

WEEK						
40	"Existence is coexistence."					SUN 05
41	MON 06	TUE 07	WED 08	THR 09	FRI 10	SUN 12
42	MON 13	TUE 14	WED 15	THR 16	FRI 17	SUN 19
43	MON 20 Diwali	TUE 21	WED 22 Hindi New Year	THR 23 Bhai Dooj	FRI 24	SUN 26
44	MON 27	TUE 28	WED 29	THR 30	FRI 31 Sardar Patel Jayanti	

WEEK

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"Beware of little expenses; a small leak will sink a great ship."

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Guru Nanak Jayanti

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WEEK  49	MON 01	TUE 02	WED 03	THR 04	FRI 05	SAT 06	SUN 07
	MON 08	TUE 09	WED 10	THR 11	FRI 12	SAT 13	SUN 14
	MON 15	TUE 16	WED 17	THR 18	FRI 19	SAT 20	SUN 21
	MON 22	TUE 23	WED 24	THR 25 Christmas	FRI 26	SAT 27	SUN 28
	MON 29	TUE 30	WED 31	"Radiate positivity and watch your world transform, positivity is a choice."			

# Final Words

As we approach the end of the year, let us reflect on the changes it brought. It is essential to recognize the interconnectedness of all aspects of our lives—food, sleep, technology, learning, relationships, and the environment. Managing these areas intentionally leads to a more balanced and fulfilling life.

The food we consume affects our energy levels, mental clarity, and emotional well-being, influencing our sleep patterns. Proper rest restores both body and mind, allowing us to make better decisions and stay mindful of our technology use. Technology, when used wisely, enhances our lives by providing tools for personal growth, learning, and connection. However, we must strive for balance to avoid distractions that hinder engagement with our surroundings and loved ones.

Learning plays a vital role, not only in expanding our knowledge but in shaping our understanding of how our actions affect our relationships and the world. A commitment to continuous growth helps us make informed, thoughtful choices. This is reflected in how we pursue personal goals, how we handle dishonesty in our relationships, and how we honour the trust and bonds we share.

In this holistic view, everything is interconnected—our food choices influence our sleep, sleep restores our mental clarity and focus, enabling us to engage with technology more mindfully, technology shapes how we learn, learning informs our actions with integrity, integrity strengthens our relationships, and relationships remind us of our responsibility to the environment. When these elements align, they foster balance, inner peace, and personal growth.



Maa Foundation is a unique Indian NGO that understands the problems and hurdles faced by the Indian education system. The not-for-profit organisation is promoted by Bilakhia Group, which has created global scale printing inks and crop protection chemical industries. It has had partnerships with two international giants; the group has also entered the emerging field of life sciences - Meril Life Sciences ([www.merillife.com](http://www.merillife.com)) and biotech - Micro CRISPR. Our dedicated team of Maa Foundation works tirelessly at the grass root level, in order to induce large scale reform in quality of education imparted in the schools. Maa Foundation strives to create a working role model in Valsad district, which can be replicated by other like-minded organisations. We have started with one district in one state, but we are building a model that is scalable, replicable, sustainable, process-driven and result oriented.

In all its endeavours, Bilakhia group stays committed to its people, the community and planet at large.



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projects



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on YouTube



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