

WOMEN SHINE

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Chef Alka Singh Tomar





CHIEF EDITOR'S LETTER

#SHINEON
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Hey lovely Readers,

As we step into February, the month of love and celebration, WomenShine embraces the spirit of empowerment, resilience, and unity. This month, we embark on a journey to celebrate the diverse achievements, talents, and contributions of women worldwide. In a world filled with challenges and uncertainties, it's essential to recognize the remarkable strength and courage of women who continue to inspire change and make a difference in their communities.

February is not only a time to celebrate romantic love but also an opportunity to celebrate self-love, friendship, and solidarity among women. It's a reminder to cherish the bonds that unite us and to uplift one another in times of need.

Through our content, events, and initiatives this month, WomenShine aims to amplify the voices of women, celebrate their accomplishments, and inspire others to strive for greatness.

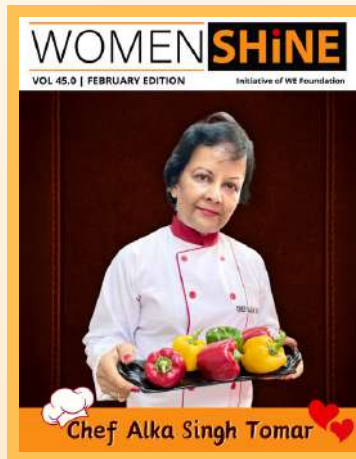
Join us as we shine a spotlight on the incredible women who lead, innovate, and uplift those around them. Let us come together to celebrate love, resilience, and the power of unity.

Together, we can create a world where every woman is empowered to shine brightly and fulfil her dreams. Here's to a month filled with love, inspiration, and empowerment. Let's shine brighter than ever before!

With gratitude and admiration,

Aparna Mishra
Founder Editor,
Womenshine-A global digital magazine
www.womenshine.in

WOMEN SHINE



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जून से ऊंचाइयों तक: एक महिला शेफ की प्रेरक यात्रा - अलका सिंह तोमर



WS: सबसे पहले तो आप अपने शेफ के सफ़र के बारे में बताइए? कब आपको एहसास हुआ कि आपको शेफ बनना है ? और अपने जीवन की यात्रा को लोगों के घरों में स्वाद पहुंचाकर आगे बढ़ाना है ?

AT: मुझे लगता है मेरा जन्म ही स्वाद और मसालों से खेलने के लिए हुआ है | मैं हर वक़्त खाने के बारे में ही सोचती हूँ, लगभग सात साल की थी तब से खाना बनाने से दोस्ती हो गई थी तब खुशी होती थी जब सब खाना की तारीफ करते थे | मेरी माँ बहुत शानदार खाना बनाती थी और मैंने भी स्वाद, रंग और सुगंध की समझ उन्हीं से पाई है |

मैं लॉ से स्नातक हूँ, उर्दू में बी.एड किया है, कविताएँ और कहानी भी लिखती हूँ लेकिन सारा ध्यान खाना पकाने की तरफ रहता है | जब बार बार मेरा मन इस तरफ जाने लगा तो मैंने इसे ही अपना लिया | खाने में नयापन लाना मेरी कोशिश रहती है | अभी मैंने बाजरा पर काम किया है | मैंने बाजरा के गुलाब जामुन, कबाब, खीर और रोल्स आदि बनाए जिसके लिए मुझे पुरस्कार भी मिले हैं | मैंने अपना करीब 40 वर्ष से भी अधिक का समय इस काम को दिया है |



WS: आपकी इस जर्नी में कई बार उतार चढ़ाव आए होंगे कई बार लगा होगा कि इस पेशे को छोड़ देना चाहिए ऐसे में वो कौन सी प्रेरणा थी जो आपको आगे बढ़ने के लिए कहती थी और इस जर्नी में किसने आगे बढ़ने में आपको मदद किया ?

AT: हाँ बिल्कुल, ऐसा कई बार हुआ | कुछ सामान नहीं मिल पाते थे तो बाहर से मंगाने पड़ते थे जो बहुत दिनों के बाद मुझ तक पहुंचते थे | ऐसे वक़्त में कई बार ये लगता था कि मैं अपने इस पैशन को छोड़ दूँ और ये काम करना ही छोड़ दूँ | लेकिन घर वालों की तरफ से सहयोग मिला उन्होंने अपने रूचि के हिसाब से काम करने में मदद की तो फिर कोई दिक्कत नहीं हुई | मेरा पढ़ा-लिखा परिवार है इस वजह से सभी को पढ़ाई की वैल्यू पता है और वो जानते हैं पढ़-लिखकर व्यक्ति कुछ भी कर सकता है | तो इसलिए कोई समस्या नहीं आती थी | हाँ कभी कभी लोग ये जरूर कहते थे कि इतनी इतर और कठिन चीज चुनने की आवश्यकता क्या है | लेकिन इसके अलावा कुछ नहीं उन्होंने हमेशा मुझे आगे बढ़ने में साथ दिया |

बचपन में हमारे घर में टेलीविजन नहीं था लेकिन मेरी आँखों के सामने ये चलता रहता था कि मैं लोगों को खाने के बारे में कुछ बता रही हूँ और उन्हें खाना पकाना सिखा रही हूँ और आज वो सपना सच हो गया और मैं इन सबके लिए अपनी माँ को श्रेय देती हूँ |

WS: जब रील्स की दुनिया में लोगों की च्वाइस हर पल बदलती रहती है! मैं समझती हूँ कि कुकिंग और शेफ का काम भी काफी क्रिएटिव होता है, ऐसे में कितना कठिन हो जाता है नए नए व्यंजन के बारे में सोचना और एक नई डिश तैयार करना

AT: आज कल रील्स से तो सभी प्रभावित होते हैं, आपकी बात बिल्कुल ठीक है | मुझे भी रोज नए स्वाद और नए तरीकों के बारे में सोचना पड़ता है | ऐसे में बहुत मजा भी आता है अपनी रचनात्मकता पर भी गर्व होता है | ऐसे में खाना बनाना, और उसे लोगों के सामने प्रस्तुत करना सब चीजों में निखार भी आता है |



WS: आज के इस दौर में जब स्त्रियों को घर में रहकर खाना बनाना एक पुरानी और पिछड़ी सोच लगती है ऐसे में शेफ जैसे पेशे में आने के बारे में आपने कैसे सोचा?

AT: कुछ लोग होंगे जो ऐसा सोचते हैं मुझे भी मालूम है, मैं उन लोगों से कहना चाहूंगी कि अपने परिवार को पौष्टिक और स्वादिष्ट भोजन कराने में मजा आना चाहिए, न कि खाना पकाना जैसे काम को अपमान की दृष्टि से देखना चाहिए | आप अपने परिवार के लिए न जाने क्या-क्या सोचते हैं उसमें परिवार को अच्छा खाना पकाकर देना बहुत छोटी सी चीज है | मुझे तो गर्व होता है कि पढ़े लिखे परिवार से आने के बावजूद मैंने इसे अपना करियर बनाया | मैं इसे एक रचनात्मक कार्य मानती हूँ और इसीलिए मैं इसकी ओर आकर्षित भी होती हूँ | मैं तो हर जन्म इसी काम को करना चाहूंगी |

WS: बहुत से लोग हैं जिनके आज के दौर में खाना बनाना नहीं आता है वो अगर सोशल मीडिया से सीखते भी हैं फिर भी उन्हें वो गाइडेंस नहीं मिल पाता है ऐसे में उनके लिए क्या रास्ता है?

AT: सोशल मीडिया पर आजकल बहुत से लोग हैं जो खाना बनाना सिखाते हैं लेकिन उन्हें खुद ये पता नहीं होता कि टीचिंग एक कला है जो उनमें नहीं है | खुद कुछ बना लेना और दूसरों को बनाना सिखाना इन दोनों में बहुत बड़ा अंतर होता है | लोग सोशल मीडिया पर देखते हैं लेकिन जब उन्हें खुद बनाना पड़ता है तो उनके लिए मुश्किल खड़ी हो जाती है | क्योंकि सोशल मीडिया पर सब कुछ जल्दी जल्दी होता है ऐसे में समझ पाना मुश्किल हो जाता है | लोगों को सीखने के लिए एक अच्छे इंस्टीट्यूट को ज्वाइन करना चाहिए |



WS: आजकल लोगों के पास वक़्त की कमी है सब कुछ 2 मिनट में होता है ऐसे में लोगों को खाना भी जल्द से जल्द चाहिए होता है तो इस बारे में आपके क्या विचार हैं और कुछ ऐसी डिश जो जल्द पक सके उस बारे में बताइए?

AT: आजकल लोगों के पास वक़्त की कमी है लेकिन खाना तो खाना ही है | ऐसे में मैं लोगों से यही कहूँगी कि वो अपना वक़्त कुछ अन्य जगहों पर खर्च करना कम करें और कुछ अच्छा खाएं क्योंकि यही उनकी सेहत को बनाए रखेगा | अगर आपको जल्दी से कुछ पकाना है तो इसके लिए आप पहले से सब्जियां काटकर रख लें | कुछ मसाले जो लम्बे चलते हैं उन्हें भी तैयार करके पहले से रख लें | पनीर, दही हमेशा अपने घर में रखें तो जल्दी ही आपका खाना भी बन जाएगा |

WS: खाना पकाना एक बोरिंग काम के रूप में देखा जाता है ऐसे में लोगों को ऐसा क्या करना चाहिए कि उन्हें खाने पकाने से प्यार हो जाए?

AT: खाना पकाना उबाऊ कभी नहीं होता है | आप जब अपनों और अपने आप से प्यार करने लग जाएंगे तो ये सब आसान हो जाएगा | अपनों से प्यार करना आपको खाना बनाने के करीब लाता है और कोई भी अपने परिवार को भूखा रखना पसंद नहीं करेगा |

WS: जो इस पेशे में आगे बढ़ना चाहते हैं उन्हें आप क्या दिशानिर्देश देना चाहेंगी और साथ ही साथ इस पेशे ने आपको क्या कुछ सम्मान दिया उसके बारे में कुछ बताइए?

AT: मैं आपको बताना चाहूँगी कि मुझे लोग प्यार और सम्मान की नजर से देखते हैं | कुछ लोग गले लगते हैं तो कुछ पाँव तक छूते हैं | कुछ लोग ये तक सोचते हैं कि मैं उनसे एक बार बात कर लूँ | मुझे इस काम के जारी ही राष्ट्रीय और अंतर्राष्ट्रीय पुरस्कार भी मिल चुके हैं | मैं जब भी लोगों के साथ जुड़ती हूँ तो उन्हें आखिरी मुकाम तक पहुंचाती हूँ जिसके वो हक़दार होते हैं | मेरे स्टूडेंट्स भी आज इस फील्ड में अच्छा कर रहे हैं | विदेश से लोग हमारे यहाँ आते हैं इसके अलावा यहाँ का सबसे महत्वपूर्ण विंग आर्मी मेडिकल से भी लोग हमारे यहाँ पाक कला को सीखने के लिए आते हैं |

WS: अंत में मैं जानना चाहूँगी आपके प्लेटफार्म के बारे में जहाँ पर लोग जाकर खाना पकाना और रसोई से सम्बन्धित अन्य कार्यों को सीख सकते हैं ?

AT: "अल्का मास्टर कुकिंग क्लासेस" नाम की मेरी एक अकाडमी है | जहाँ पर भोजन की हर विधा पर काम करते हैं और क्लासेस भी लेते हैं | ट्रेनिंग देकर उनका प्लेसमेंट, इंटरशिप भी करवाते हैं और जहाँ तक सम्भव होता है उनका साथ देते हैं | हर तरह के हमारे स्टूडेंट होते हैं कुछ डॉक्टर होते हैं कुछ सरकारी विभाग से होते हैं तो कुछ इंजीनियर भी होते हैं | ऐसे भी कई लोग हैं जो अपनी अच्छी नौकरी छोड़कर हमारे पास आते हैं और फिर इसमें आगे बढ़ते हैं बहुत से लोग इसमें अच्छा करियर बनाते हैं और कुछ लोग तो विदेश भी जाते हैं |

अंत में मैं बस इतना ही कहूँगी कि शेफ एक अच्छा करियर विकल्प है | जो इस क्षेत्र में आगे बढ़ना चाहते हैं वो मेरे इंस्टिट्यूट से जुड़ सकते हैं |

TEAM WS



BEYOND CHOCOLATES AND ROSES: *Discovering the Distinctive Valentine's Day Customs Around the Globe*

Let's set out on a worldwide journey of love this Valentine's Day instead of exchanging the traditional box of chocolates and a dozen red roses! February 14th blossoms into a kaleidoscope of diverse traditions across continents and cultures, each reflecting the distinctive ways societies express love and affection. Come along as we examine some intriguing Valentine's Day traditions that will warm your heart and change the way you think about love:

1. ITALY: THE PASSIONATE PAINTING OF THE NIGHT BY SERENADES:

Enter the realm of Romeo and Juliet, where Valentine's Day acquires a distinctly amorous vibe. "**Bigliettini d'amore**" are little love notes that are traditionally exchanged among Italians; they are frequently paired with chocolates or flowers.

Travel to places where men propose to their sweethearts under the stars, expressing their love with song and music, for a thrilling experience.





2. JAPAN: A DELIGHTFUL TAKE ON MUTUAL RESPECT:

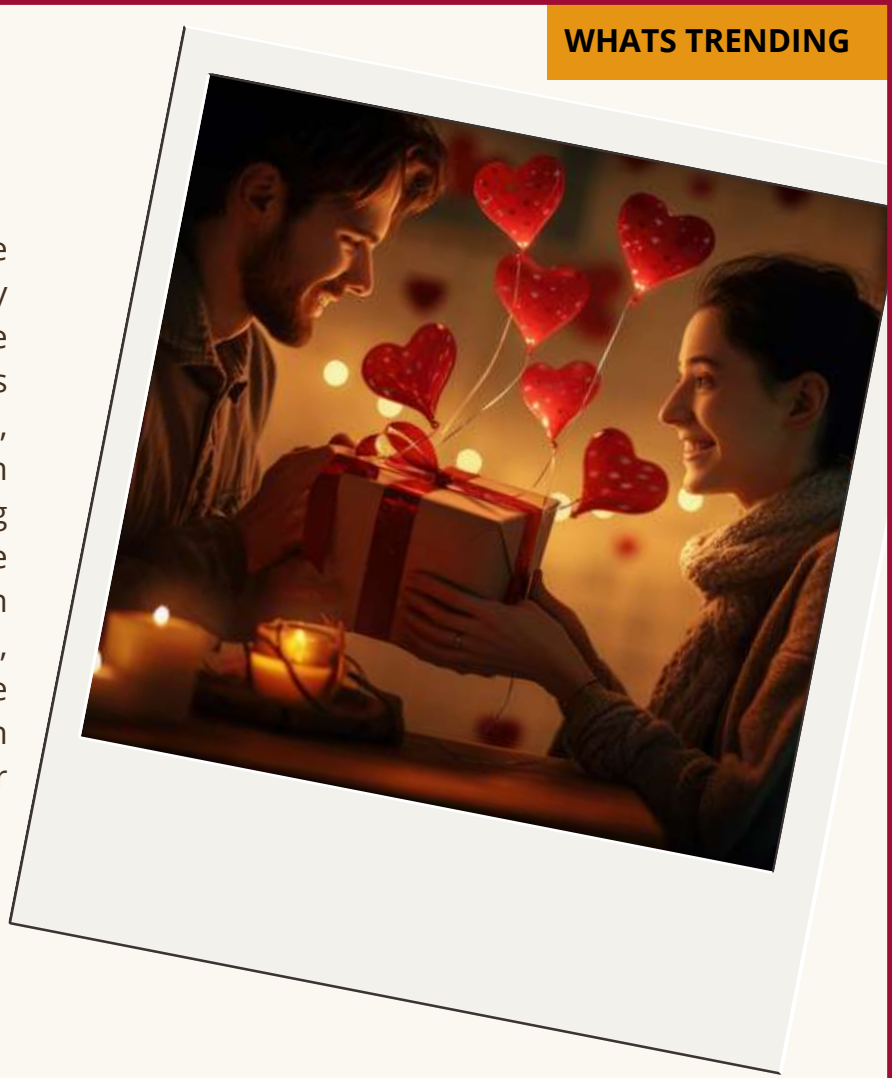
Forget elaborate displays of affection; in Japan, the main focus of Valentine's Day is "**giri choco**," or duty chocolate. Women give chocolate as a token of appreciation and respect to male friends, coworkers, and romantic interests on February 14. But there's still more! On "**White Day**," one month later, the roles are reversed. When women shower them with affection, men return the favour by giving them gifts, most frequently white chocolate or other sweets.

3. FINLAND: HONORING COMPANIONSHIP RATHER THAN JUST LOVE:

Lovebirds, get over here! February 14th becomes "**Ystävänpäivä**" (Friend's Day) in Finland. Finns exchange cards, small gifts, and warm words with friends and family to commemorate platonic love and appreciation. This endearing custom highlights the strength of strong bonds and serves as a gentle reminder to everyone that love is not limited to romantic relationships.

4. SOUTH KOREA:

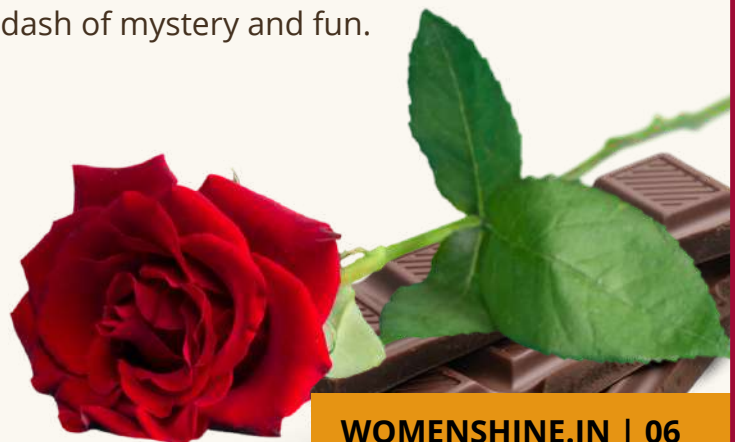
Couples Double Down, Singles Shine: The people there celebrate Valentine's Day twice! In honour of friendship, single women gift chocolate to their male friends on February 14. However, a month later, "**White Day**" is when the real action happens. Men playfully compete by giving gifts that are three or four times more valuable than what they received in return. On "**Black Day**" (April 14), however, singles who are still ungifted are given another chance by indulging in black noodles, a playful homage to their single status.



5. DENMARK: IMAGINATIVE CUSTOMS AND PRESSED FLOWERS:



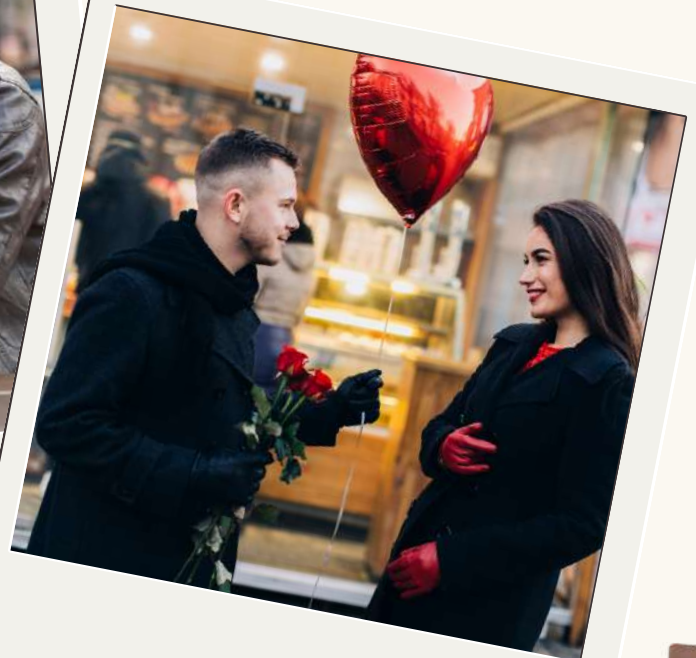
This country celebrates Valentine's Day with a playful twist known as "**gaekkebrev.**" Crafted from pressed white snowdrops, these anonymous "**teasing letters**" are adorned with romantic messages and clever rhymes. After correctly identifying the sender, the recipient is rewarded with a chocolate egg. This custom gives the day's events a dash of mystery and fun.



6. BRAZIL: A VIBRANT DECLARATIONS AND RAINBOW OF LOVE:

For "**Dia dos Namorados**" (Lovers' Day) on June 12th, Brazilians paint their love with vibrant hues instead of the traditional red. Couples enjoy romantic outings, dining out, and gift-exchanging. The colours, however, add a twist: pink represents new love, white represents purity, purple represents forbidden love, red represents passionate love, and yellow represents friendship.

This colourful palette gives their celebrations a special touch while reflecting the complexity of love.



7. BEYOND STEREOTYPES, A WORLD OF LOVE:

These represent only a small portion of the rich diversity of Valentine's Day customs observed worldwide. Every tradition, from teasing to passionate serenades, represents the distinct cultural prism through which various societies celebrate and understand love. This Valentine's Day, let's embrace the global kaleidoscope of love in its beautiful forms and let go of stereotypes.

Team WS

Love

IN THE ERA OF ALGORITHMS

How Contemporary Relationships are Being Shaped by Technology

In the digital age, our dating, connecting, and falling-in-love experiences have changed dramatically. The days of random meetings and handwritten love letters are long gone; in their place are endless online profiles, carefully constructed social media personas, and screen-swiping. Technology has certainly changed the way that people fall in love, but it also brings with it a unique set of opportunities and challenges for relationships in the modern era.



FROM COINCIDENCE MEETINGS TO PREDICTED PAIRS

In the past, love developed naturally and frequently resulted from social circles or shared experiences. In the modern world, where preferences and data points are used to select possible partners, some people question whether the spark of a true connection can endure in a world where likes and filters rule. Although online dating services are more convenient and provide access to a larger pool of possible partners, they also give rise to worries about superficiality and exaggerated expectations.



THE CONNECTION PARADOX

Even though people are more connected than ever, a lot of them say they struggle to make meaningful connections and feel alone. Authentic interactions can be hampered by the constant onslaught of carefully manicured online lives, which can lead to inflated expectations and encourage comparison. Although technology makes communication easier, it can also result in misunderstandings and misinterpretations because body language and subtle emotions are often mistranslated into digital form.

REDEFINING COMMUNICATION AND INTIMACY



The distinctions between digital and offline communication are becoming increasingly hazy, as digital communication frequently serves as the basis for contemporary relationships. As social media, video calls, and texts overtake other forms of communication as the main means of expression, new obstacles to closeness and efficient communication must be overcome. Couples must strike a careful balance between fostering real-world connections and emotional vulnerability and maintaining an online presence.

LOVE IN THE FUTURE: STRIKING A BALANCE IN THE DIGITAL ERA

The digital age's evolution of love necessitates a deliberate effort to maximize technology's advantages while preserving the fundamentals of authentic connection. To successfully navigate the complexities of contemporary relationships, it is imperative to practice mindfulness in online interactions, prioritize quality time offline, establish healthy boundaries, and maintain open communication.



Transforming Challenges into Opportunities in Remote Work



As a remote work veteran since 2011, I can confidently say it's a double-edged sword. While the allure of flexible schedules and ditching rush hour is undeniable, navigating the challenges that come with a home office requires intentionality and strategic adaptation.

But fear not, fellow remote warriors! Here I am going to discuss some challenges that I have faced in my career and have learned how to transform those hurdles into stepping stones for a thriving, balanced work-from-home experience.

Challenge #1: Distraction Demise

Let's face it, that pile of laundry beckoning from the corner or the siren song of the fridge can be hard to resist. Studies show a staggering 77% of remote workers struggle with distractions, impacting productivity and focus.

Solution: Designate a dedicated workspace, free from household clutter and visual temptations. Utilize tools like website blockers and white noise machines to create a focused environment. Communicate your work hours clearly to housemates and set boundaries – politely declining impromptu game nights might be necessary!



Challenge #2: Collaboration Conundrum

The lack of physical proximity can hinder team communication and collaboration. A Global Web Index report highlights that 51% of remote workers miss in-person interaction and brainstorming sessions.

Solution: Embrace technology! Utilize video conferencing tools for regular team meetings and informal check-ins. Encourage open communication channels like Slack or Microsoft Teams for quick questions and updates. Schedule virtual brainstorming sessions with collaborative tools like Miro or MURAL. Remember, clear communication is key – overcommunicate rather than risk assumptions.

Challenge #3: The Blurring of Boundaries

The line between work and personal life can easily become blurred when your office is also your home. This can lead to burnout and negatively impact overall well-being.



Solution: Establish clear work hours and stick to them religiously. Utilize time management techniques like the Pomodoro Technique to avoid burnout. Get dressed for work, even if it's just changing out of pajamas, to signal the shift to "**work mode.**" Take breaks to move your body, go for walks, and engage in activities outside of work. Remember, self-care is not optional; it's essential for sustainable remote work success.

Challenge #4: Feeling Isolated

Working remotely can sometimes feel isolating, leading to feelings of loneliness and disconnection.

Solution: Build virtual communities! Join online forums and groups for remote workers. Schedule virtual coffee breaks or lunch dates with colleagues. Utilize video calls for team meetings and social interactions. Don't underestimate the power of a quick chat or virtual water cooler moment to combat isolation.

Remote work is an ongoing journey of self-discovery and adaptation. By acknowledging these challenges and implementing these strategies, you can transform your home office into a springboard for productivity, well-being, and achieving the best of both worlds. After all, remote work isn't just about escaping the office; it's about designing a work environment that empowers you to thrive. So, embrace the flexibility, overcome the hurdles, and unlock the full potential of your remote work journey!

Written By: Shivalika Raj

DR. PRIYA GUPTA: A RENAISSANCE WOMAN AND THE HEART BEHIND ASTITVA FOUNDATION

Dr. Priya Gupta is a dynamic force of change, a trailblazer whose diverse roles as an academician, artist, animator, homemaker, and founder of Astitva Foundation reflect a profound commitment to women's empowerment, artistic development, and sustainability. Her remarkable

journey encompasses not only the realms of education and art but also extends to creating opportunities for women through innovative and sustainable ventures.

Her academic journey stands as a testament to her commitment to knowledge and creativity. With a background in academia, she has not only excelled in her field but has also contributed to the development of art and culture. Her passion for the

arts extends beyond theory, as she is an accomplished artist and animator, infusing life and vibrancy into her creations. Through her academic pursuits and artistic vision, Dr. Priya Gupta inspires others to embrace the limitless possibilities of education and creativity. At the heart of Dr. Priya Gupta's commitment to social change is the Astitva Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to women's empowerment, artistic development, and sustainability.





The foundation serves as a catalyst for positive change, providing women with the tools and opportunities to enhance their skills, pursue their passions, and contribute meaningfully to society. Through various programs and initiatives, Astitva Foundation is shaping a future where women can thrive in all aspects of life. Beyond her professional and philanthropic pursuits, Dr. Priya effortlessly embraces the roles of homemaker and mother. Balancing a thriving career, social initiatives, and the responsibilities of a household, she exemplifies the art of harmonizing various aspects of life. Her ability to nurture both her family and the Astitva Foundation reflects a profound dedication to creating a holistic and enriching environment.

Her story is not just one of personal achievement but also a narrative of impact and inspiration. Her legacy extends beyond degrees and accolades, reaching into the lives of those touched by the initiatives of Astitva Foundation. Through her relentless pursuit of empowerment, cultural development, and sustainability, Dr. Priya stands as a beacon for individuals aspiring to make a difference across diverse domains.

Lastly, Dr. Priya Gupta's journey is a tapestry woven with threads of passion, intellect, and compassion. As an academician, artist, animator, homemaker, and mother, she navigates the complexities of life with a grace that inspires. Through the Astitva Foundation, she has carved a path for positive change, embodying the spirit of empowerment, cultural enrichment, and sustainability. Dr. Priya Gupta's story is a testament to the transformative power of one individual's dedication to making the world a better place.

Mahila Bai transforming her tribe in Panna



Mahila Bai Pardhi, the first woman from her community to give up the traditional occupation of hunting, is encouraging Pardhi children to do the same. The community was classified as hereditary criminals by the now-repealed Criminal Tribes Act, of 1871.

Today, the Pardhis still contend with stigma. A harsh sun beats down on a dusty road—desolate even around 10 am, except for groups of cows snoozing in the middle—in Kunjvan, Panna district, Madhya Pradesh. They are as yet undisturbed by honking motorbikes and auto rickshaws, which will soon start speeding through. The silence is broken, however, by the squeals of children in Bahelia Chhatraavaas Bhavan, who are getting ready to go to school.

Just a few meters from the wrought-iron gate of this chhatraavaas, or girls' hostel, Mahila Bai Pardhi, 36, sits matronly and sanguine, in a bright purple sari on a cot outside her one-room quarter, where she lives with her husband Bottle Pardhi, 40, and four children. She has gone through the morning's routine—having woken up at 3.30 am—of readying the 65 young schoolgirls from the Pardhi community. She helps them bathe and dress, oils and combs their hair, ensures they are fed and encourages them to revise their lessons before classes begin. And now she is taking a breather in the shade.



This may seem like mundane rigmarole, but what Mahila Bai has achieved is no ordinary feat. The girls she has just sent to school are the first generation of Pardhis in Panna to receive an education. **"Jungle-jungle Bhoomi aur bachchon ko le kar aayi (I roamed the forests to bring them here),"** says Mahila Bai. **"Some children's fathers were in jail, some parents were very hesitant, but I explained to them that our future lies in their hands."**



It is owing to her efforts over the last 10 years that the community, branded criminal by a colonial-era law, has begun shifting from the traditional occupation of hunting and may be able to look forward to a future free of discrimination, routine harassment and ostracization.

This initiative, however, was born out of an entirely different concern. Between 2004-08, it was discovered that tigers had become locally extinct in Rajasthan's Sariska and Madhya Pradesh's Panna national parks, primarily due to poaching. The Pardhi community came under scrutiny, and in 2007, many of its members were caught in Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat for tiger and lion hunting.

"When I came into service, the Pardhis were being caught, beaten and sent to jail and kept there for two-three years," says Gola Krishnamoorthy, who was field director of the Panna Tiger Reserve from 2007-09. **"A special investigation team would come from Gujarat as well and the forest department here would round up the Pardhis and hand them over to the team."**



This is what eventually prompted Krishnamoorthy, in association with the government's Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) programme, World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and Last Wilderness Foundation (LWF), to initiate the process of rehabilitating and educating children from the tribe. But it would have been impossible without the support of the community, particularly Mahila Bai.



**- Written By :
Mandira Mitra**

Mental Health Insights from the Characters of Prabhu Ram



Mental health is a complex and nuanced aspect of human existence, and exploring its intricacies through the lens of literature can provide valuable insights. One such literary masterpiece that delves into the depths of human psychology is the epic Ramayana, where the characters, particularly Prabhu Ram, offer profound lessons about mental well-being. In this article, we will unravel the mental health insights that can be gleaned from the experiences and emotions of the characters in the timeless tale of Ramayana.

Resilience in Adversity

Prabhu Ram undergoes a myriad of challenges and hardships throughout his journey. From being exiled from his kingdom to facing the abduction of his beloved wife, Sita, he exhibits an unparalleled resilience. In the realm of mental health, this teaches us the importance of cultivating resilience in the face of adversity. The ability to bounce back from setbacks and maintain emotional well-being is a crucial aspect of mental health.

Embracing Emotional Vulnerability

Despite being a revered and divine figure, Prabhu Ram doesn't shy away from expressing his emotions openly. When Sita is kidnapped, he doesn't suppress his grief but allows himself to feel the pain and sorrow. This exemplifies the importance of acknowledging and embracing one's emotional vulnerability, a key element in maintaining mental health. Suppressing emotions can lead to long-term negative consequences, and Prabhu Ram serves as a reminder that even the strongest individuals are allowed to feel and express their emotions.

Balancing Duty and Personal Well-being

Prabhu Ram's unwavering commitment to dharma (duty) is a central theme in the Ramayana. However, the epic also highlights the internal conflicts he faces in adhering to his responsibilities while dealing with personal turmoil. This conveys a crucial lesson about finding a balance between fulfilling societal expectations and ensuring one's personal well-being. Mental health is not solely about external achievements but involves an internal harmony that must be preserved.



Seeking Support and Collaboration

Throughout his journey, Prabhu Ram is not alone. He seeks the support of allies such as Hanuman, Sugriva, and the Vanara army. This emphasizes the significance of seeking help and fostering a support system in times of need. Mental health is a communal effort, and reaching out to others for support is a sign of strength, not weakness.



Conclusion

The characters in the Ramayana, especially Prabhu Ram, offer profound insights into the intricate tapestry of mental health. From resilience and emotional vulnerability to the balance between duty and personal well-being, these timeless lessons continue to resonate across cultures and generations. By reflecting on these insights, we can gain a deeper understanding of our own mental health journeys and embark on a path towards greater well-being.



- Written By :
Dr. Ashutosh Srivastava



Promoting Healthy Eating Habits Among Children : A Vital Imperative

In India, where cultural diversity and culinary richness abound, fostering healthy eating habits among children is a crucial endeavour . With a burgeoning population and evolving lifestyle patterns, the importance of instilling nutritious dietary practices from an early age cannot be overstated. Healthy eating habits not only contribute to the physical well-being of children but also shape their long-term health outcomes and overall quality of life.

The Current Scenario:

India, like many countries, faces a dual challenge concerning children's nutrition. On one hand, there are pervasive issues of undernutrition and malnourishment, particularly in rural and marginalized communities. On the other hand, urbanization and changing dietary preferences have led to a rise in diet-related diseases such as obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular ailments among children.

Factors contributing to unhealthy eating habits among Indian children include:

Western Influence

The proliferation of fast food chains and the consumption of processed foods high in sugar, salt, and unhealthy fats have become increasingly common, partly due to the influence of Western dietary patterns.

Lack of Nutrition Education

Many children, especially in underserved areas, lack access to proper nutrition education. Consequently, they may not understand the importance of consuming a balanced diet comprising fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins.

Cultural Practices

While Indian cuisine boasts a rich tapestry of flavours and ingredients, certain traditional dishes may be high in calories and low in nutritional value. Balancing cultural heritage with health-conscious choices is essential.

Strategies for Promoting Healthy Eating Habits

Addressing the complex issue of children's nutrition requires a multi-faceted approach involving various stakeholders, including government bodies, educational institutions, healthcare professionals, parents, and the food industry. Here are some strategies that can be adopted to promote healthy eating habits among children in India:

Nutrition Education

Integrate comprehensive nutrition education into school curricula, covering topics such as the importance of diverse food groups, portion control, meal planning, and understanding food labels. Encouraging hands-on activities like school gardens can foster a deeper appreciation for fresh produce.



Community Outreach Program

Organize workshops, seminars, and community events to raise awareness about nutrition and healthy cooking practices among parents and caregivers. Collaborate with local health centers to provide counselling on infant and child feeding practices.

Promotion of Indigenous Crops

Highlight the nutritional benefits of indigenous crops and traditional recipes that are rich in vitamins, minerals, and dietary fiber. Encouraging the consumption of locally sourced, seasonal foods not only supports agricultural diversity but also fosters sustainable food practices.

Regulation of Food marketing

Implement stringent regulations on the advertising and marketing of unhealthy foods targeted at children. Promote responsible advertising practices that emphasize the nutritional value of food products rather than solely focusing on taste or brand appeal.

School Meal Programs

Enhance the quality and nutritional content of mid-day meal programs in schools, ensuring that they align with dietary guidelines. Emphasize the inclusion of fresh fruits, vegetables, and whole grains while limiting the use of added sugars and trans fats.

Parental Involvement

Empower parents and caregivers with the knowledge and skills needed to prepare nutritious meals at home. Offer cooking demonstrations, recipe cards, and online resources that promote healthy eating practices within the family setting.



Partnership with food industry

Engage with food manufacturers and retailers to reformulate products and develop healthier alternatives with reduced levels of salt, sugar, and saturated fats. Encourage transparent labelling and responsible marketing practices that cater to the nutritional needs of children.

The Way Forward

Promoting healthy eating habits among children in India is not merely a matter of personal choice but a collective responsibility that transcends individual interests. By fostering a supportive environment that prioritizes nutrition and well-being, we can empower future generations to make informed dietary choices and embrace healthier lifestyles.

Through collaborative efforts spanning education, policy advocacy, community engagement, and industry collaboration, we can pave the way for a healthier and happier future where every child in India has the opportunity to thrive, nourished by wholesome foods and a culture of wellness. As the adage goes, **"Healthy habits learned in childhood lay the foundation for a lifetime of good health."** It is time to sow the seeds of change and reap the dividends of a nourished nation.

Together, let us embark on this journey towards a brighter, healthier tomorrow for our children and generations to come.



- Written By :
Dt. Ranu Singh

"Usha's Cool Touch Electric Kettle – The Perfect Buy for the Chic 'n' Smart!"



The timeless charm of iconic pale pink never goes out of style and that's exactly the sentiment for all the diehard romantics the Usha Cool Touch Electric Kettle caters to. So, this Valentine's Day, if you are looking for something special that's a blend of chic and practical, it's this quaint pretty kettle that will tug at the right heartstrings. This delightfully beautiful kettle is sure to infuse a dash of quirk to any kitchen, making it an indulgence for yourself or loved ones.

This kettle makes for a perfect companion for swiftly and safely boiling water for coffee, tea, or any other hot beverage. Its exterior remains cool to the touch, even during operation, prioritizing user safety and eliminating the risk of accidental burns.

Featuring a sleek and modern design with an ergonomic handle and spout to facilitate effortless pouring, this kettle not only introduces fresh colour but also adds a contemporary quotient to your kitchen. Made using premium material, the 1.8L electric kettle is both durable and efficient. The stainless-steel build ensures longevity, and the rapid-boil technology guarantees minimal waiting time for your favourite hot beverages.

So, elevate your kitchen experience with Usha's Cool Touch Electric Kettle – a perfect blend of style and functionality. And you don't really need a Valentine's Day as an excuse to buy this, that's how pretty it is.



The kettle is priced at 2,490/- and it's available: at <https://www.ushacook.com/en> and available on all leading retail platforms- Amazon and Flipkart.

Valentine Gifting | Legend Amrapali, GAP, ECCO

1. LEGEND AMRAPALI



The Eternal Love Story: Legend Amrapali is a symbol of eternal love. Legend Amrapali jewellery transcends mere adornment; it is a symbol of profound love and devotion. Each piece tells a story of timeless romance and enduring commitment, from intricately detailed necklaces to delicately crafted rings.

Price: INR 25,700

Available at: www.legendamrapali.com/

Link to the high-res images: [Images](#)

2. GAP



Warm up for a cosy Valentine's Day Date Night. Love knows no boundaries, so warm up with GAP's Cable Knit Sweater as you spend a cosy night outdoors for your Valentine's Day Date Night. With a classic yet casual vibe, GAP's collection has something for everyone. From cosy hoodies to knitwear to casual shirts, find the perfect gift that speaks about your unique style.

Price on request

Available At: In-stores across the country and gap.ajio.com/

Link to hi-res images: [Images](#)

3. ECCO



Premium Danish footwear label with an illustrious 60-year-old legacy. This Valentine's Day, celebrate the journey of love with Ecco footwear, where comfort meets style. Whether you're embarking on a romantic adventure, or simply cherishing everyday moments with loved ones.

Price: INR 18,999

Available At: in.ecco.com/ & store (Ambience Mall Gurgaon & Pavilion Mall Pune)

Link to hi-res images: [Images](#)

Wanderlust Well-being: Women's Travel Preferences in 2024

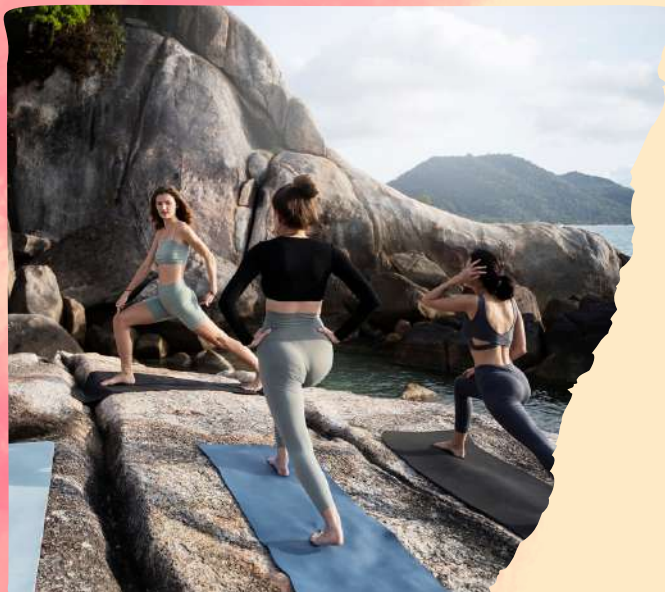


It is the call of the world, and women are responding. 2024 is looking to be a huge year for travel after years of constraints and reflection, especially for women looking for experiences that feed their bodies, minds, and souls. This is about life-changing experiences that put wellbeing first and leave enduring memories—not just about sightseeing and trinkets.

Well-being Top Travel Trends for Modern Women Who Feel Wanderlust

1. Growing number of solitary experiences: The days of waiting for a travel partner are long gone. Solo travel offers a sense of freedom and self-discovery that more and more women are embracing. A world of opportunities awaits independent exploration, ranging from female-only guided adventures to empowering retreats.

2. Nature as therapy: Spending time in nature is a potent way to decompress from the stresses of modern life. Anticipate a rise in wellness retreats with activities like yoga hikes, forest bathing, and mindfulness walks that are tucked away in beautiful settings in 2024. Imagine being in complete bliss as you meditate next to a gushing waterfall or stargaze under a huge desert sky!



3. Intentional mobility and cultural absorption: Forget about your typical sightseeing experience! Through traditional dance classes, martial arts workshops, or community service, travelers are looking for deeper cultural connections. In addition to offering physical exercise, these encounters promote tolerance and respect for various lifestyles.

4. Locations for digital detoxification: Unplugging is becoming a luxury in this era of constant connectivity. Digital detox wellness resorts provide the ideal haven for unplugging and reestablishing a connection with the natural world. It would be a mind and soul reset to wake up to the sound of birdsong rather than your phone alarm.

5. Holistic healing spa havens: Spa getaways are becoming more holistic wellness experiences, incorporating everything from modern hydrotherapy to age-old Ayurvedic treatments. These retreats offer a comprehensive look at both physical and mental well-being, with an emphasis on individualized programs that cater to each person's needs.

Embracing the Journey: Travel Advice for Women in 2024



1. Put safety and comfort first:

Select travel locations and lodgings that accommodate women traveling alone. Examine the dress codes and customs of the area before packing. When in doubt, follow your instincts and don't be embarrassed to ask for assistance.

1. Put safety and comfort first: Select travel locations and lodgings that accommodate women traveling alone. Examine the dress codes and customs of the area before packing. When in doubt, follow your instincts and don't be embarrassed to ask for assistance.

2. Pack light, pack wisely: Give special attention to adaptable apparel and cozy shoes that can be used for a variety of activities. Invest in a lightweight, durable backpack or suitcase. Recall that when it comes to packing for a wellness journey, less is frequently more.

3. Welcome impromptu: Allow space for unforeseen excursions and side trips. Speak with locals, look for hidden treasures, and keep an open mind about any new experiences you may come across.

4. Make connections with other female travelers by engaging in group tours, joining online forums, or just striking up a discussion with other tourists. You can make enduring friendships and enhance your journey by connecting with people and sharing experiences.

5. Pay attention to the here and now: Take in the sights, sounds, and fragrances of your journey. Pay attention to your surroundings, turn off outside distractions, and give the experience your whole attention.

Always remember that the journey itself is the most significant part of traveling. Women travelers in 2024 can make memories that nourish their bodies, minds, and hearts by putting their well-being first and embracing new experiences. They can also return home with a sense of empowerment, inspiration, and readiness to take on the world.

So, gather your belongings, give in to your wanderlust, and set out on a journey of well-being that will change you forever. The world is calling, and the time has come to answer it!

The Land OF MIDNIGHT SUN: NORWAY

The land of the midnight sun, Norway, is the most scenic and prosperous of the Scandinavian countries.

Historically, Norway has been ruled by Swedes and Danes for a long. In 1905, the country became an independent, sovereign nation after the Swedes left. Norwegians are proud of their history.

The official name of Norway is –
"The Kingdom of Norway" -
Norge.

Norway has a rugged landscape of mountains, plateaus, and deep fjords. In the northern part of the country, which extends north of the Arctic Circle, the sun never sets at the peak of summer and never comes up in deep winter.

ARRIVAL IN NORWAY

We arrived in Norway's second-largest city, Bergen, by plane from Stockholm. The Arlanda Airport of Stockholm was chaotic, and uncertainty prevailed in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic. Luckily, our flight was on time. We landed at Bergen's cute little Flesland Airport, 20 km south of the city centre. The airport bus runs between the airport and downtown Bergen stopping at Radisson Blu Royal Hotel in Bryggen, the harbour-front area, and the bus station. The ticket costs about 140 Kr (INR 1400) per person and takes 40 minutes. Taxi costs more- 400 Kr (₹4000) and takes 20 minutes. Getting around in Bergen is comparatively easy. Most in-town sights can easily be reached by foot; only a few places are more than a 20-minute walk from the TI.





The main attraction in Bergen is the Hanseatic Quarter called Bryggen, an iconic fragile wooden old town. The long rows of warehouses' hide lanes seeped into history. While we think of Bergen as **"Norwegian,"** Bryggen was German- the testimony of Deutsch-speaking merchants and traders. Some of the houses in Bryggen date back to the early 1700s and are ramshackle now.

Bit by bit Bryggen is being restored using medieval techniques and materials. Strolling through the lanes of Bryggen, we felt swallowed up by history. The last Hanseatic merchant moved out centuries ago, but this is still a place of touristy commerce. There are artists' galleries, T-shirt boutiques, atmospheric restaurants, sweaters, trolls, and souvenirs. This Disney-cute gathering of about 50 homes and shops built between the 18th to 20th Centuries was founded in 1934 to save old buildings from destruction.

Bergen's Floibanen funicular climbs high above the city to the top of Mount Floyen for the best view of the town. The journey takes 6 minutes and is an experience; when you arrive at the top, a stunning view over Bergen awaits you. Besides, there are exquisite cafés and shops on top.

The return ticket to City center-Floyen costs 150 Kr (INR 1500) per person.

POINT TO REMEMBER: Norway is a cold country. The mean daily minimum temperature in summer is 7-11 C, and the maximum is 14-18 C.



Norway's most significant claims to scenic fame are her deep, lush fjords. An ice age made this land inhabitable as Greenland's centre three million years ago. As the glaciers advanced and cut their way to the sea, they gauged out long grooves- today's fjords.

The entire west coast of Norway is slashed by stunning fjords. The longest & deepest Sognefjord tops the list. The seductive Sognefjord has tough ferries, towering canyons, and tiny villages marinated amid countless waterfalls. Our next destination in Norway was Flam (pronounced Flom). The boat and Flamsbana train meet here at the head of Aurlands fjord.

The 20 km spur line leaves the Oslo-Bergen line at Myrdal, a scenic high-altitude train junction with a decent cafeteria. The Flamsbana train winds down to Flam through 20 tunnels in 55 minutes; on the way stop for photos at the best waterfall Kjøfossen. According to a Norwegian legend, a temptress lives behind the falls and tries to lure men to the rocks with her singing.



FLAM-GUDVANGEN FJORD CRUISE

Flam is a scenic, functional transit hub at the far end of Aurlands Fjord. We hopped on the Fjord 1 sightseeing boat that took us to Gudvangen, which is at the apex of the Naeroyfjord.

The fjord cruise is an experience challenging to express accurately in words; one has to go and experience it.

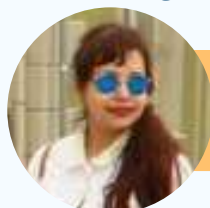
Next, we boarded a bus for the final leg of Norway in a Nutshell tour to arrive at Vestlia Resort in Geilo (pronounced Yai-lo), a famous ski resort village in southern Norway. Vegan food that suits Indians' taste buds is difficult to find in this part of the world, but fresh fruits and bread are excellent alternatives to our spicy food. We wanted to see the northern lights in the far north corner of Norway, but summer is not the season for this adventure. Northern lights can best be viewed from October to March only.

It was time now to explore the capital city of Oslo. While Oslo is the smallest of the Scandinavian capitals, there are more sightseeing thrills than expected.

Situated at the head of a 96 km fjord, surrounded by forests and populated by more than 1.5 million, Oslo is Norway's cultural hub. For 300 years, the city was called Christiania, after Danish King Christian IV. With independence, it reverted to the old Norse name Oslo. The main street of Oslo is called Karl Johans (pronounced yohans) Gate. The grand boulevard leads directly from the train station to the Royal Palace.

A stroll down Karl Johans Gate is a must for anyone wanting to experience city life both day and night. The street is lined with cafés, street musicians, artists promoting their art, and all the big brands of Europe. At the end of this colourful stretch is the Parliament Building- Stortinget. Norway's Parliament meets in Stortinget, built in 1866; the building seems to counter the Royal Palace at the other end of Karl Johans Gate. If the flag is flying, Parliament is in session.

People-watching is excellent along Karl Johans Gate, but in summer, half of the original population is gone- Vacationing in Spain, and the city is filled mainly with visitors.



- Written By :
Ruchi Jain



Valentine STRAWBERRY TRUFFLE

INGREDIENTS

- 3 cups milk
- 4 tbsp Corn flour
- 5 tbsp sugar
- 1 cup fresh cream
- 1 packet of strawberry jelly
- 1 small tin strawberry
- 12 Marie biscuits
- ½ tsp Strawberry essence
- ½ tsp Vanilla essence
- A few drops of yellow & pink colour





1. Make a thick custard with milk, corn flour and sugar. Allow to cool. Prepare jelly according to the directions given at the back of the packet.
2. Whip the cream with 3 tbsp. castor sugar and a few drops of strawberry essence.
3. Take 1/3rd white custard, add pink colour and strawberry essence. Add yellow colour and vanilla essence to the remaining white custard. Take the transparent truffle bowl.
4. Spread pink custard at the bottom of the bowl and half of the set jelly on it.
5. Spread the biscuits over the jelly (Dip each biscuit into the syrup so that the biscuits become soft before arranging them over the jelly).
6. Cover the biscuits with strawberry pieces.
7. Then cover the strawberries with the remaining jelly and top with yellow custard.
8. Spread whipped cream on top and decorate with strawberry pieces or jelly hearts. Chill in the freezer for ½ hour and serve.



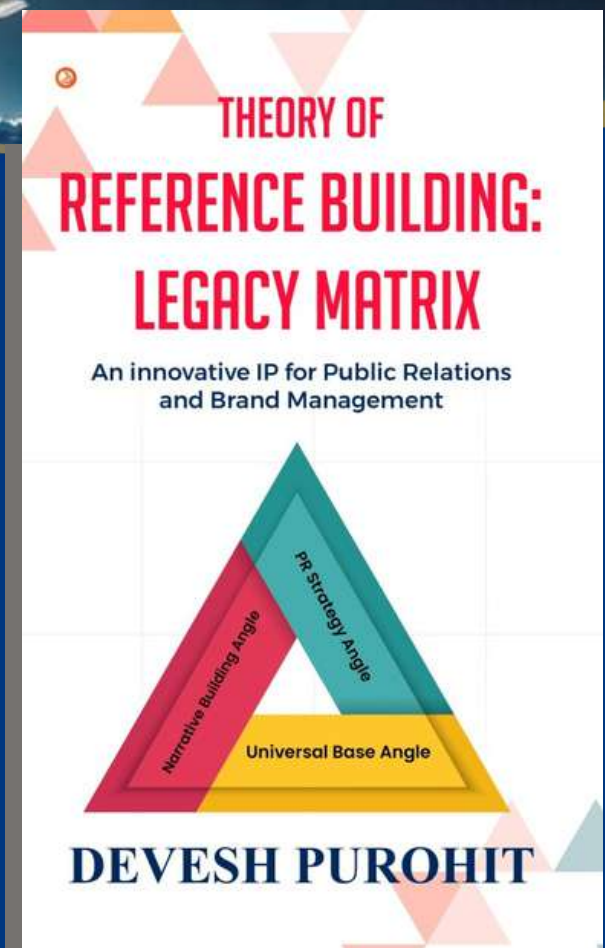
Written By: Chef Neelima Kapoor

A new innovative book for Entrepreneurs and Thought Leaders



Theory of Reference Building: Legacy Matrix authored by PR and Brand Consultant Devesh Purohit is an outcome of 12 years of qualitative research. It is a framework and concept for the legacy building of brands. The focused brand can be an individual, a product, a service or an organization.

The concept, framework, theories and matrix of the research are presented in a book format for planning the legacy of the brand focus by the decision maker. The universal and fundamental elements must be creatively planned and integrated based on the vision, goals, target audience, background and other factors.



Legacy Matrix is the brainchild of Devesh Purohit and he retains all the rights about it as a proprietor. Legacy Matrix as an intellectual property has business applications and the author Devesh Purohit has mentioned the potential revenue generation approaches in the Business Model chapter. Interested Entrepreneurs, Investors and Organizations can connect with Devesh to explore business synergies. Devesh has tactically used the book as a business asset to connect with relevant stakeholders.

The book has an innovation with original theories of the Circle of Legacy Building, Theory of Reference Building and Poetry as a PR Tool researched and developed by Devesh Purohit in the field of Public Relations. It is a treasure for artists, entrepreneurs and thought leaders who wish to craft a legacy and leave something behind remarkable beyond their human lifespan.

Devesh explains with his extensive research that the history of the world has been the history of a few people with great PR minds. The book concludes that Legacy is built in the culture and hence for any brand to become a legend or legacy they have to penetrate multiple cultures and create its own cultural identity.



Theory of Reference Building: Legacy Matrix is available on Amazon India, Flipkart and Google Play.

Amazon India: https://www.amazon.in/Theory-Reference-Building-Legacy-Matrix/dp/9356215561/ref=sr_1_1

Flipkart: <https://www.flipkart.com/theory-reference-building-legacy-matrix/p/itmecbcd53dc8f4c?pid=9789356215566&lid>

Google Playstore: <https://play.google.com/store/books/details?id=vTDyEAAAQBAJ>

OrangeBooks Publication BookStore Page: <https://wissenbookstore.com/product/theory-of-reference-building-legacy-matrix/>



**- Written By :
Devesh Purohit**

॥ वसंत ॥

हम आधुनिक हैं....
 न मन में उमंग
 न तन में तरंग
 न जीवन में उछंग
 कहीं खो गया है वसंत
 हम आधुनिक हैं
 आधुनिकताकी आपाधापी में
 भौतिकता की आंधी में
 कहीं खो गया है वसंत
 सरसों आज भी फूलती है
 अमराई में आज भी बौर लगते हैं
 फागुनी बयार आज भी मादक है
 बागों में आज भी कोयल कूकती है
 परंतु हमारी संवेदना मृतप्राय हो गई है
 न मन में उमंग
 न तन में तरंग
 न जीवन में उछंग
 कहीं खो गया है वसंत
 हम आधुनिक हैं
 इक्कीसवीं सदी में हैं
 निरंतर दौड़ रहे हैं
 अनवरत् भाग रहे हैं
 देश में , विदेश में
 गली में , मोहल्ले में
 प्रकृति से दूर
 कंक्रीट के जंगलों में
 सुख सुविधा की खोज में
 कुछ खोया है ... तो कुछ पाया है
 न मन में उमंग
 न तन में तरंग
 न जीवन में उछंग
 कहीं खो गया है वसंत
 हम आधुनिक हैं



किसको फुर्सत है
 देखने की - आम में बौर आ गये
 या सरसों फूल रही है
 अब तो बारहों महीने
 फ्रूटी - माजा हमारे हाथों में है
 ए. सी . कूलर के आगे
 भूल गई फागुनी बयार
 मोबाइल , लैपटॉप , आईपॉड के नशे में
 कोयल की कुहू कुहू का क्या है अर्थ...
 न मन में उमंग
 न तन में तरंग
 न जीवन में उछंग
 कहीं खो गया है वसंत
 हम आधुनिक हैं
 वसंत ने भी अपना चोला बदल लिया है
 अब वह वैलेन्टाइन डे बन गया है
 यदि हम वसंत मनायेंगे
 तो पुरातन पंथी कहलायेंगे
 किसको याद है



कि मां सरस्वती का पूजन करना है
 अब तो मात्र खाना पूर्ति करना है ..
 कहीं खो गया है वसंत
 न मन में उमंग
 न तन में तरंग
 न जीवन में उछंग
 हम आधुनिक हैं
 वसंत मनाते हैं भी तो
 किटी पार्टियों में या
 सभा सोसायटियों में
 क्या होगा पीले कपड़ों से
 मदनोत्सव तो हम मनायेंगे ही
 लेकिन नाम होगा वैलिंटाइन डे
 न मन में उमंग
 न तन में तरंग
 न जीवन में उछंग
 कहीं खो गया है वसंत
 हम आधुनिक हैं



पद्मा अग्रवाल

हैपी वैलेंटाइन डे

सॉरी आई एम लेट

लगभग 50 वर्षीय सुंदर स्मार्ट महिला जिसने पिंक साड़ी के साथ मैचिंग ड्रमके पहने हुई थीं . अपनेपर्स को टेबिल पर रखते हुए बोलीं

तुम आ गई , मेरे लिये , इसलिये आई एम थैंकफुल . वैसे सच कहूँ तुम पूरे 30 मिनिट्स लेट हो ...

वह कुछ बोलना चाहती थी , तभी मलय बोल पड़े , रहने दो मन्नो बस आज तुम मुझे तुम्हारे चेहरे को नजर भर कर देख लेने दो .

वह असहज हो उठी . और बात बदलते हुए बोली , अब कॉफी मँगाओगो कि यूँ ही बातें बनाते रहोगे ...

अपनी दोस्ती के पूरे 5 साल हो गये . तुम जानते हो कि मुझे यहाँ की कॉफी बहुत पसंद है

कैसी दोस्त हो ये नहीं कह सकतीं कि तुम्हारे साथ बैठ कर कॉफी पीना पसंद है .

दुम समझते क्यों नहीं मेरा परिवार है... हमें एक मर्यादा में रह कर दोस्ती निभाना है .

उफ यार क्या मर्यादा केवल महिलाओं के लिये ही होती हैं ...

मन्नो क्या हमारी पाक साफ दोस्ती भी समाज की नजर में गलत है ... हम दोस्त हैं लेकिन दिल से जुड़े हैं ...मैं तुमसे आई लव यू कहने को तो नहीं बोल रहा . केवल यह सुनना चाहता हूँ कि मलय मुझे तुम्हारे साथ अच्छा लगता है . जब तुम अपनी किसी सहेली से यही बात बार बार कह सकती हो तो तुम्हें मुझसे कहने में इतनी हिचक क्यों ...

बहस मत करो ... तुम जो सुनना चाहते हो वह मैं कभी नहीं कह सकती ...

ठीक है , तो फिर आज ही हम दोनों की दोस्ती का आखिरी दिन होगा .. मलय बोले ... मन्नो पिछले 5 सालों की दोस्ती में हम लोगों ने रिश्तों की मर्यादा नहीं तोड़ी ... बस हम दोनोंको लिखने पढने का शौक है , एक दूसरे से बात करना अच्छा लगता है .



अच्छा छोड़ो , कॉफी के साथ क्या लेना है .

कुछ भी नहीं ... किस तरह से मुश्किलों से कॉफी पीने आ पाई हूँ और तुम हो कि जब देखो तब लड़ने लगते हो ...

क्या कहा मन्नो ...

तुम्हारे साथ कॉफी पीने आई हूँ ...

ओहो थैंक गॉड ... तुम मेरी इच्छानुसार नहीं बोलोगी ... ये गलत है यार ...अपनी पॉकेट से गुलाब का फूल निकाल कर देते हुये बोला , हैपी वैलेंटाइन डे ... कहो कैसा लगा मेरा सरप्राइज ... यदि आज आप एक दोस्त बन कर मुझसे न मिलते तो मैं आपसे कभी बात ही नहीं करती ... मलय आई लव यू ..

माई डियर मालिनी ,तुम तो मेरी अर्धांगिनी हो .

उफ पापा आपने तो मेरे डॉयलॉग को गुड़गोबर कर दिया .

किशोर बच्चों को सामने देख एक पल को मालिनी सकुचा उठीं थीं .

पापा मुझे थैंक्स कहिये मम्मा को साड़ी में अच्छी तरह तैयार करके यहाँ भेजने के लिये ...

ओ.के. मम्मा पापा आप लोग अपने वैलेंटाइन गिफ्ट को शेयर कीजिये . आज नो ऑफिस ... नो घर के काम ...आज आप लोग पूरा दिन एक दूसरे के साथ बिताइये .

आज का डिनर मैं बनाऊँगी ...

अब डिनर पर मिलते हैं ...

हैपी वैलेंटाइन डे ..



पद्मा अग्रवाल



मैं एक चीज़ को एक ही बार कह सकती हूँ

मैं एक चीज़ को एक ही बार कह सकती हूँ,
हज़ार दफ़ा दुआ माँग सकती हूँ,
और सौ दफ़ा ख़्वाब में सपने सजा सकती हूँ!
यकीन है कि जब आप दिल में कोई बुनियाद बना लें,
हकीकत का बगीचा एक दिन जरूर बनेगा..

- शुऐब अनम

WOMEN **SHiNE**

See you in the next edition