



TESTIMONIALS | INTERVIEW | SPOOF

gobar times

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A DOWN TO EARTH SUPPLEMENT FOR THE YOUNG AND CURIOUS



Rapunzel 2.0

Narratives of captive life

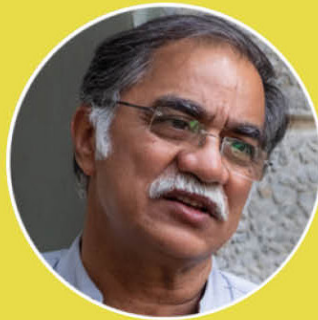




A YE MASTERCLASS

Tracking the TIGER

How are tigers counted in India?



With

Qamar Qureshi
Scientist

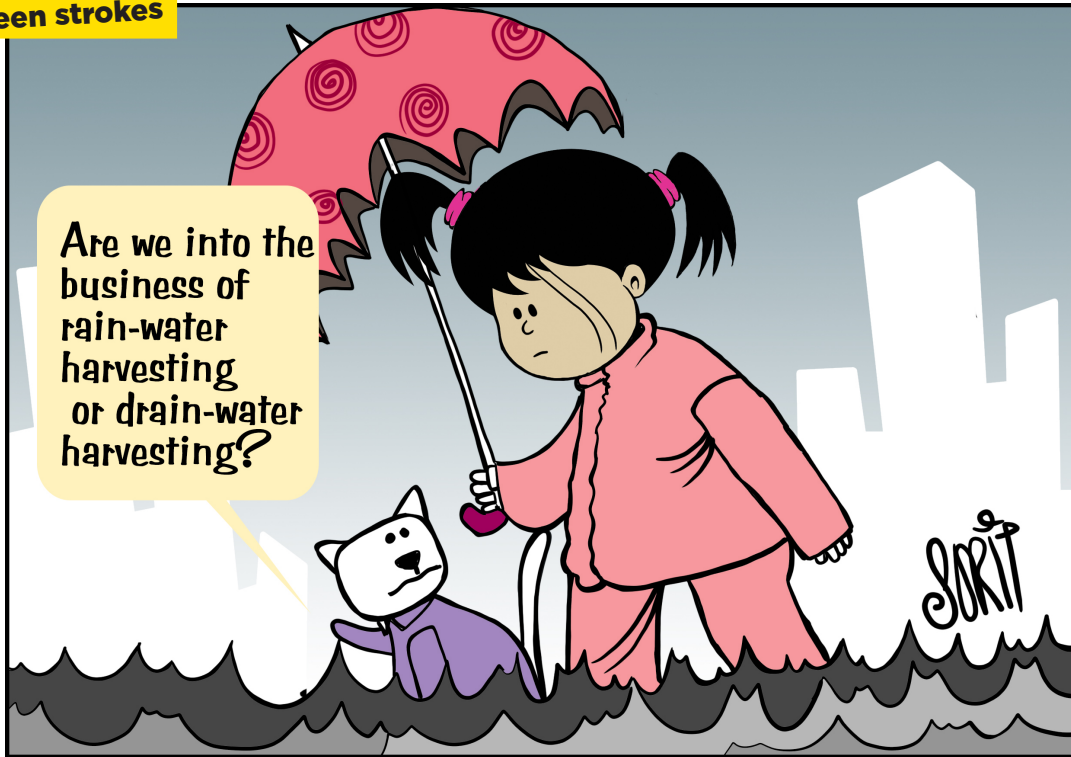
*Wildlife Institute of India
Dehradun*

Date: Saturday, July 3, 2021 | **Time:** 11 AM-12 Noon

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Green strokes



Rapunzel and the Lockdown!

Once there was a little girl, named Rapunzel. She was locked in a room at the top of a very high tower by a witch. The witch told her that the world was a very bad place. That was why she should not leave. Many a times Rapunzel complained, "There is nothing here for me to do! Why must I stay in this tower all the time?"

Then, the witch would yell, "How many times do I have to repeat myself? Don't listen to anything you see or hear out there. The world is far worse than you think! You are safe and secure in this tower. So, better get used to it!" Through her magic, she shut all the doors and fell all the stairs in the tower. So, now, there was no way for Rapunzel to escape!

Wait! Wait! Wait! This story is not just a Rapunzel fable. This is OUR story as well. Isn't it??

We are all locked inside our homes. We aren't allowed to play in the park or to go to our friends.

The schools too have been shut. And the worst is that we aren't allowed to go anywhere to enjoy our vacations!

Why? Because there is a witch named COVID-19. She has locked us inside our rooms and yells at us whenever we try to sneak out: "You are safe and secure inside your house! So, better get used to it!"

But as the saying goes, facts are stranger than fiction—we are in a worse condition than Rapunzel. At least, she was not supposed to attend the endless online classes and do the truckloads of homework!

Anyway, thank heavens! You still have something which even Rapunzel would have envied—the *Gobar Times*! Here you can express your frustrations at ease. Like every issue, this time again, we are all about stories by you, of you and for you!

Happy reading!!!



Science through Turmeric and Detergents

Dr Swati Kamlesh Bisht teaches in the Dr Rajendra Prasad Kendriya Vidyalaya, New Delhi.

One fine day, we woke up and found our city, country, whole wide world and everything else come to a standstill. Something absolutely unexpected, not even in the worst of our dreams, had happened. Then, suddenly, all the related challenges began hitting us.

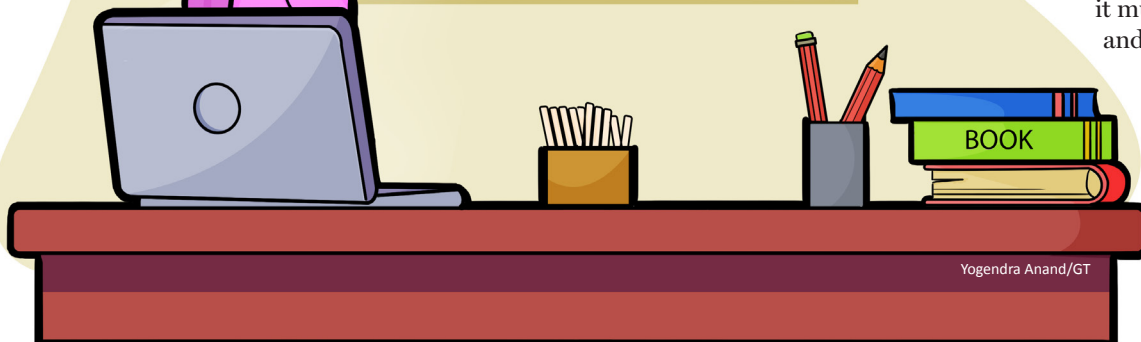
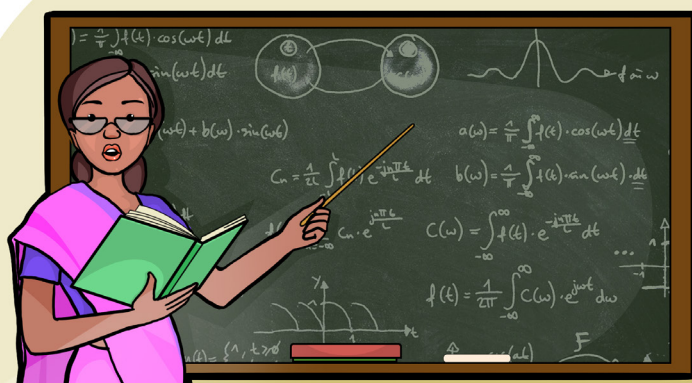
There came in the role of a teacher. I have been a person who is not so tech-savvy and struggles to overcome her anxiety about going online. In fact, just as me, there were many teachers, mostly at the verge of retirement, who were trying their best to connect with their students. We were aware that life shouldn't stop because of the lockdown and that the show must go on. Those of

us who are in their 50's and even those who were almost illiterate when it came to using new technologies, developed resilience and adapted to new platforms. Hence, in spite of the difficulties of online-teaching in the starting, slowly and steadily, we all learnt how to handle the situation. We tried everything from Zoom to Microsoft Teams, and Google Classroom to Google Meet.

Our biggest hurdle during this period was—how to make the online classes as lively, interesting and interactive as the physical classes used to be? How to help children believe that this is the 'new normal'?

As a Biology and a Science teacher, my problems were much greater. I had to ensure that my students understand all the concepts, including those which require a practical or an outdoor activity. That is when I took a moment and promised myself that as a teacher, I have to serve my students as dutifully as a warrior. Their innocent faces gave me the courage, strength, and inspiration to beat these obstructions and look for new ideas and practices to teach them online. Hence, I turned my simple drinking glass into a beaker and experimented with my baking soda in the kitchen. I used my turmeric, detergent, clay, paper coins, balloons and everything else possibly available at home as teaching aids for explaining them different topics.

By now, my students have not only maintained their interest in the subject but have also actively participated in my online classes. Things are gradually getting more streamlined. I believe that there is a ray of hope and light at the end of the tunnel—these tough times will end soon and we all will come out of it much strong and braver!





Once There was a School

Manoj Kashyap is a teacher at the Government High School based in Dangheel village, Solan District, Himachal Pradesh.

For a teacher to stay away from his students is an extremely painful experience. I remember when the central government imposed lockdown across the country, all the school curricular and extra-curricular activities had to be shut down. The lockdown imposed since March 2020 had to be extended month by month every time.

Attending a government school in a remote village, all my students required greater attention. They have a rural background and pursue farming apart from studies. In the beginning, I contacted three of my 8th-class students through video calls on WhatsApp. Pawan, Adarsh and Bhavesh almost broke down over the call when they saw me live after months. Then, I made several WhatsApp groups like 'Science 6th', 'Science 10th', etc. and contacted them daily.

Further, I instructed them with the help of the 'Har Ghar Pathshala' programme of the Himachal Pradesh education department. After 2-3 months, their parents felt relieved that their children's education was proceeding unhindered. In fact, we began conducting e-PTMs (Parent-Teacher's Meetings) to remain in touch with them.

I also took the help of the Vedantu and BYJU's app, and Navachar Siksha to take online classes and routinely offered them mock tests and

written assignments. In order to help them remain motivated, my school engaged them in several interesting activities, like painting, singing, weaving, puppet-making, etc. I felt that my children performed all these tasks with a lot of interest.

My school's headmistress and many of my colleagues helped me immensely. At the same time, all my students had also been very cooperative. Together we celebrated many events by staying at home, including the Women's Day, World Environment Day, National Science Day, and all other important days.

Around October 2020, when the lockdown was eased, I assembled my village students on the roadsides near their homes and taught them in small groups of 3-4. I distributed COVID notices and guidelines to them

and educated them about the precautions they needed to take. During this time, I upgraded to the Zoom and Google Meet apps and connected with more children.

In 2021, as the corona outrage spread once again, we went back to the online format. We also decided to conduct online exams for class 10th and prepared their results likewise. By now, we all had got used to this medium. As a Science teacher, I directed my students to conduct some experiments even while staying at home, like the carbohydrate test using iodine, the turmeric test, sprouting moong, collecting diverse leaves and flowers, and many more.

I also learnt a lot during this time. I would like to thank the education departments of the state of Himachal Pradesh and Solan district for all their cooperation and support.





The haunted word lockdown!

Shivansh Yadav is student of class 8 from the Delhi Public School, Rewari, Haryana.

Hello, Everyone!
I was excited to go to school as our new session was going to start soon. But, but, but... just two weeks before it was about to reopen, we were banned from going outside.

LOCKDOWN—Yes! This is the word which has a lot of power. Are you thinking that I am praising it? No, never. This innocent word locked us inside our homes for months and months and drove, we the students, online with no end in sight.

So, why should I praise it? How would poor kids like me understand these damn concepts?! Then, comes the problem of network. Due to poor network, I couldn't hear my teacher properly and hence most of my classes became pointless. Plus if you have any sibling then you better get two different internet connections—I know this may sound stupid but it's true.

Coming back to studies—what about exams? This lockdown made us give all the exams online. The students who couldn't even pass the exams earlier are passing with flying colors now, scoring—100/100! This is out of this world!

Then, comes the problem of extra classes. We are attending regular classes for 3-4 hours every day. But as if this was not enough, we are now compelled to stare these laptops even longer. However, I know, that this has happened to all of us.

Leaving all these issues aside, I miss the school not for all these problems but for the desks, playground, games room, my teachers, and most of all, my friends! (Now, you may call me a mood-swinger but so be it!) We are now chatting online as we can't give high-fives or shake hands anymore. But from all this hurdle, I also learnt a lot!

I spent a lot of time with my parents, spilling the beans of someone or the other. We saw TV news together but it was all boring as always. Only the parts on rising corona cases were not boring. However, otherwise, it was all very boring. I kept feeling as if I am locked in a zoo.

Before the online classes, I used to sleep a lot! I guess, we all did. But this lockdown burst all my plans. In fact, it spoilt everyone's plans. And if I still try to go out, you know what happens—the cops will stop us. Though, meeting my nearby relatives was very easy, we avoided doing this and met them online instead.

Before corona, if anyone sneezed, we'd say "God bless you!" But now if someone sneezes, we would get the hell out of there! Anyway, I have to tell you that this lockdown made me learn a lot. I admit it!



Yogendra Anand/GT



Munching Online Classes

Ushmīl Rīmjhā is 16 years old and is a student of the St Joseph's Convent School, Fetri, Nagpur.

I blinked in confusion, "Psychics, yet again!" As I kept jotting down notes in my copy, I started another episode of daydreams in my mind. My friend messaged me in between asking, "Hey, which page is Ma'am teaching?"

I frowned.

"Maybe 39 or 40,"

I replied.

I missed my friend because, in school, we never talked about which chapter we were being taught or what books we should bring. We talked about all fun things, like—whether we should play basketball or badminton, or whether our friends would offer us sandwiches or we'll have to hijack their lunchboxes! We wondered whether we should go

to the washroom to talk while the teacher taught us and so many other things! But now, we do not do any of those things. We just stare at the black screen, blankly.

Some nuggets I have to share here: I inhaled more the aroma of my Mom's tasty snacks than focused on my study table during this lockdown. I left my books and rushed inside the kitchen every time I smelled something delicious! Though, my Mom scolded me and ushered me back onto my desk. "After studies", she shouted. "Pay attention (on classes) now!"

First of all, there were a lot of distractions all around me. My Mom's food's smell was just one among them. Also, my brother was playing all day in the next room.

Of course, the school was meant for studies but was it just that? What about the library period where we were asked to keep quiet and read our books but we kept whispering to each other all the time, not talking in a discernible way? And what about the games period when we laughed and chased all our friends until we got tired—which, I promise, never happened. And what about the 'excellent' remarks on our copy, for example, of 'late submission'?

What about the art period when we tried to paint something but instead painted something entirely different? What about the bus ride to school? What about the feeling of hating to get up early and not wanting to go to school, and feeling excited on reaching there finally? Oh, those constant teasers and funny PJs, and how we cheered our hearts out during those sports competitions! What about our friends? ...We were all shut behind the four walls.

I sighed as I continued taking the notes. The black screen was now asking us to answer. I did not feel motivated enough so I did not unmute my mic.

I know things would be better. We will make them better. Our health workers are doing their best and I could not be more proud of them.

Oh, but the fun we had!...





Classroom in the time of PANDAmic!

Asmi Gupto is a student of class 10th, Bharti Public School, New Delhi.



Yogendra Anand/GT

We all like pandas, don't we? Those cute furry little creatures with big shiny eyes who do nothing all day but roll on the grass and munch on bamboos!

But unfortunately, pandas live mainly in temperate forests, high in the mountains of southwest China, or in the zoos in which your parents will never take you because they're six hours away from your house. I mean, why go to the zoo when you can solve 15 math problems from RD Sharma in those six hours and actually be 'productive' in that time!?

However, you need not worry! Because online classes have come to your rescue!

Are online classes going to show you live pandas?! No! Even better, they're going to turn you into one! Sounds fun, right? But guess what? It's not.

For example: I'm Asmi, a 10th grader. The 10th class, as all of you might know, is the easiest grade in your whole school life. There's no pressure at all! We're all absolutely stress-free all the time with no mental pressure. It can even be seen on our faces.

Like I, have huge dark circles due to an improper sleep schedule, and a hunched neck because I don't need to stay all day on my chair, attending the classes and doing 14537 assignments. I never had that loads of unnecessary fat, and I never wanted to roll on my bed and eat because I can't possibly get tired after my school routine, can I? And I kind-of got the fur too because who hasn't in the lockdown?!

You see, that's what online classes have done! They've turned students into pandas, and all this really don't make me feel like mixing naphthalene balls in my Hindi teacher's morning tea! Talking about teachers—it's not just us students undergoing a transformation, it's the teachers too! Because seriously, what can be better and more fun than carrying your own child in one hand, feeding her from the other, and ranting the same boring chapter to four different classes over and over again until one dumb student plays a vulgar song in your class for the sake of his own entertainment?!

Of course, the pandemic is not enough. What is life if you didn't get tortured mentally for a whole year, isn't it? But on the plus side, studies will become much more interesting! I mean, who wouldn't like a chubby, yawning panda teaching what will happen if we dip an iron nail in a copper sulphate solution? I wonder, how my teacher would get to know that I've been dipping iron nails in copper sulphate my whole life and have been trying to find out what happens if I do so! Because let's accept this—copper sulphate and zinc granules are as readily accessible as getting a packet of chips from any general store.

But seriously, I strongly believe that online classes have tremendously changed the direction of evolution of mankind. From apes to humans to pandas! I can't stop but imagine how immensely adorable my next generation will be, doing everything lethargically and in no hurry, taking their own sweet time. Well, who knows if Yuval Noah Harari actually ends up writing a book called the 'Slow-mo-sapiens' in the foreseen future!



My New Normal

Vihaan Sharma is a student of class 7th, S.B. Patil Public School, Pune.

'All's well that ends well.'

My lockdown experience is the exact opposite of this commonly used quote from the famous play by William Shakespeare.

My first reaction:

When I got to know about the lockdown in the entire country, I got excited thinking that I will get more time to spend with my family, more time for TV, and no more school! Most of my friends felt the same way.

The initial phase:

The initial excitement started to fade out after a couple of weeks. I was getting bored of being confined within my home. I was missing my cricket classes. I was also not comfortable with the online classes and started to miss

my school. This also took a toll on my behaviour and I began reacting in an agitated manner.

Getting used to the 'New Normal':

Slowly and steadily I got accustomed to this 'New Normal'. The online classes began making sense. I started developing a few hobbies, like painting and gardening. I also began playing video games and video-called my friends on birthdays or other functions. My cricket classes also became online—this was really

great as now I was asked to post my individual video drills to my coach.

However, I was still missing the freedom to roam around without the mask. I looked forward to seeing my friends and attending my family's social gatherings. I missed my cricket ground and my fun time at school.

My takeaways:

The biggest takeaways are to value the freedom which we were blessed with—my friends and family, and the importance of our health. From now on, I will never crib for gadgets and fancy clothing and will always be thankful to God for keeping me and my near and dear ones safe during these challenging times.





When A is for Anxiety and B is for Boredom...

Parul D. Mendiratta, gives her tips and tricks on how to deal with children during lockdown. She is a counselling psychologist and psychotherapist.

What is the effect of corona and the lockdown on the mental state of children?

This pandemic has been a rollercoaster ride for all those who have lived it. For children, this has been something that neither they nor their parents had ever known. All spheres of their lives are affected. The major pillar of scaffolds in a child's life include—

his/her parents (or caregivers), immediate environment, school, the self, and social sphere.

Major instability in each of these has taken a huge toll on our children's mental health. There are rising concerns of temper tantrums, anxiety, existential queries, confusion and hopelessness, rendering them unable to figure a way out. As they consider adults as guides,

they feel more disillusioned as even the adults are unable to offer them convincing answers in this lockdown-situation.

Hence, the child's self is pushed towards an extreme instability. The children are unable to make sense of the present. They can't even foresee a sure future, with regard to—what it would look like, how soon, and when, if at all. Their social growth



has varied immensely. This is directly aligned with the belief systems of their parents now. However, before the lockdown, their social growth was some what independent of their parent's beliefs.

A new kind of socialization has taken shape with the 'www' being the New Normal. The lack of personal connect, distance from peers, absence of physical teachers, disappearance of tangible schools, restricted spaces to play, etc.—are definitely going to create new mental schemas within children. Example:

- Sanitation = safety
- Open spaces ≠ safe spaces
- Home = confinement

How do we detect if a child is under stress?

Children's stress is displayed in very different ways as compared to that of adults. In most cases, because of improper language or behavioural repertoire (meaning a stock of something, here it means the kind of behaviour a child has developed till now) their stress translates into physiological symptoms. Some common indicators of their stress are as follows.

- Lack of or too much sleep for more than 15 days
- Appetite changes for 15 days–2 months
- Anhedonia (meaning, inability to feel pleasure about normally enjoyable activities)
- Lethargy for 10–15 days
- Irritability or crankiness
- Insistence for isolation
- Disturbed bowels
- Frequent headaches
- Gastritis (refers to stomach-related problems)
- Skin-related concerns

Needless to say, these are all broad categories. All children are different and may display symptoms as per their subjective temperamental composition.

How does the loss of a near and dear one disturb a child emotionally?

Unlike the common perception that children can't emotionally experience pain because they can't intelligently comprehend a situation, any grief and loss impacts them deeply. Their emotions are full of confusion, mostly because the real trail of events is concealed from them. So, their mind is unable to connect the dots.

Often, parents hide deaths from children. In such cases, they either come across the news accidentally or figure it out themselves. Thereafter, their suffering is heightened by confusion, anger, mistrust, blocking of emotional expression, etc. Even in cases where there is fair disclosure, the discussion around death remains mostly confidential. This again impacts children negatively.

Our childhood experiences set a bedrock for our emotional experiences throughout our lifetime. Research shows that when natural pain-related experiences of grief, sadness, loss, and hurt come to a child in a safe and open space, there is healthier acceptance of the event. They timely let-go of the incidence and move on by accepting the loss. However, when the pain does not approach them naturally, these life occurrences keep the grown-up self unsure of—what to do, how to cope, whom to talk to, what to feel—and other such internal interrogations.

According to you, how should we help children suffering from homesickness and too much house arrest?

The present times are extraordinarily challenging. Many of us resort to negative actions primarily because we don't know what else to do or

we don't have a choice! The pandemic has brought about a lot of hopelessness and helplessness, and the exhaustion of coping with hopes and uncertainty is driving us in various directions. All this is indeed impacting the children adversely.

Awareness is the foundation for introducing any improvement. We should first learn about our children's experiences by empathizing with them. This is possible if we avoid using preset labels for their behaviour. Such unlearning would open spaces and help the parents in perceiving them in a non-judgmental manner. Here, the kids can enjoy their freedom of expression and can also be permitted to 'no expression' if they don't feel like, without feeling any stress or suffocation. This will help in establishing an authentic connection with them.

Confinement is surely necessary given the current scenario but we can still provide freedom within lockdown to our children. This freedom and its execution should definitely include the child's say. Many times, the understanding of freedom for an adult and a child can be at variance. Children feel safe and free when,

- they are included in decision-making.
- they are trusted.
- their parents don't monitor them constantly and, of course, don't neglect them too.
- their demands and choices are honestly respected even if not completely fulfilled.

These parental actions can go a long way towards achieving their child's holistic wellbeing. If any parent feels that their child is displaying pathological or physiological issues then he/she must connect with a psychologist.

Miss you, School!

Ananya Piyush Sharma is a 5-year-old kindergarten student of the Sanjeevani World School, Mumbai.



Having Mumma around me all day—thanks to online school!



No swings, slides, and see-saws!

Finding Papa home all day—thanks to work-from-home!

Missing playing with friends in the garden.

Tasting new recipes and making new craftworks every day!

Missing the school and my classroom.

More time for playing with toys and also for watching cartoons!

No festivals or birthday parties anymore!





Life on Autopilot

Athiya Mahapatra is a student of class IX, ITL Public School, Delhi.

Attempt classes, study, eat, sleep, then rinse and repeat. Sounds peaceful, doesn't it? It sure did to me, at least in the first few weeks of lockdown.

Though now, instead of the noisy interruptions by many loud students, my classes are punctuated by silence. Instead of hugging my friends, I just video-call them once in a blue moon. Instead of seamlessly solving doubts with my teachers face-to-face, I wait to interact with them online. For the first time in my life, I can't meet my friends at school or in the park.

As a person who feels very anxious in large social gatherings and who can't express herself properly without being misunderstood, I felt relieved at the declining social interaction. It gave me time to recharge as I did not need to talk unnecessarily anymore and could choose who to talk to. Hence, I didn't miss anyone or feel sad in this crisis. Though, this wasn't so because I am 'strong' or 'resilient'. It was simply because I don't feel strong emotions anymore.

I preferred to bottle them up so that no one else in my close proximity has to worry. But, this caused them to burst out on occasions as if they were a bottle of champagne. Irritation, relief, anger, delight, resentment, satisfaction, desperation, joy, and a

mix of bittersweet feelings are still festering inside me.

The lingering issues of my 'carelessness' added further fuel to fire. My grades dropped significantly in class 8 for which I am still suffering. I am the only one to blame for failing to

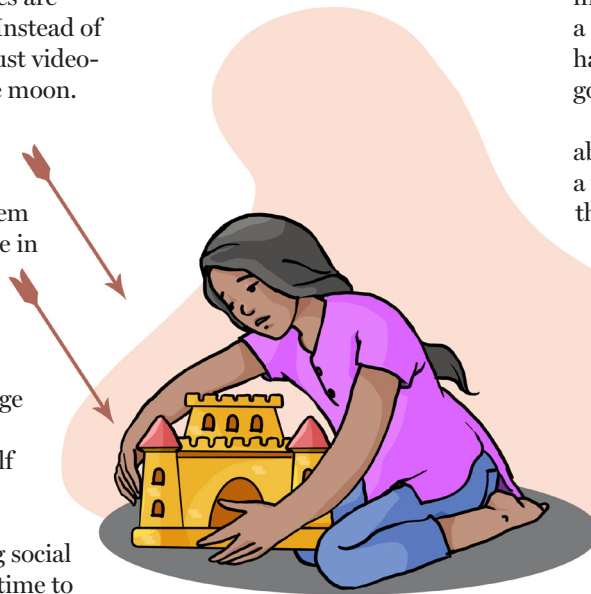
validation from anyone, which might have kept me going on this path of overachievement and excellence.

I know I don't deserve any encouragement. It is selfish of me to ask so much. But, in a time like this, it would have definitely made me feel better. In this pandemic, a students' feelings, emotions, hardships and mental state are going highly unacknowledged.

As for me, people complain about how I remain guarded as a fortress but, when I do express, they rain arrows into the fortress's vulnerable innards. So, instead of having just a moat of indifference protecting me, I subconsciously developed a wall of numbness too. As a result, I have dried up most of my reserves of passion, which are further destroyed by the stark and desolate

prospects of my future. These days, due to my supposed devotion to studies, I barely take part in any activity unrelated to academics.

I conclude that no matter how I feel or refuse to feel, the pandemic has affected our lives adversely. From the mental and physical health to the academic and social life—every aspect has been interfered with. I feel like I don't even have my hands on the steering wheel of my life. This time the vehicle is on autopilot and it is blindly heading towards a cliff side, doomed to plummet, yet again.



Yogendra Anand/GT

reach my expectations as well as those of others. But, I feel that if the pandemic hadn't occurred, I wouldn't have done so terribly.

Now, in the 9th class, I am facing an immense pressure. Pressure to do exceptionally well, pressure to reach my 'complete' potential, pressure to be perfect! Some argue that pressure and stress are necessary for success. However, this mantra cannot be applied to everyone. I am trying my best to improve but I am unable to find any positive



To be Caged

Bagmeeshree Tripathy is an 11-year-old student of class 6, Gaurisankar Residential English Medium School, Bhubaneswar.

When a free bird is trapped in a cage, it writhes in pain and pines. My uncle had a parrot who used to roam around the house even though it had a cage to live in. That parrot is the representation of our lives before the pandemic. We used to live in our houses just the same but we had freedom too. However, during these two years, it feels as if our gates are shut with a huge lock called 'Covid-19'. The parrot that represents us is slowly suffocating now.

Living in Odisha, we usually had months of summer vacations, gifted to us by the cruel but thankful, heatwaves. However, in the last two years, none of the students were under risk as we were all already caged inside. Hence, the worst happened. Our vacations, our only time of solace and joy, were cut-short to a meagre 10 days!

'Oh! What do you children do anyways that makes you need breaks?', 'Go and study!' In fact... 'There should be no breaks for students' became the go-to line of every adult when we complained.

Those ten, seemingly short, days were further stiffening and

torturous. Due to the lockdown, I couldn't visit my extended family or travel around Odisha! Because of the short span of holidays, our teachers didn't even hold any 'warming' sessions for us where we share our experiences. The silver



Yogendra Anand/GT

lining was that I got ample time to talk to my father and other family members at home.

But it felt as if I was sitting at the middle point of a see-saw whose seats were labelled as: 'Time with Friends' and 'Time with Family'. The seats were

constantly alternating positions, where neither of them could be on an equal footing. In fact, in these two years, the seat of 'Time with Friends' hadn't risen even once!

As expected, my physical health dropped like a stone in the ocean. There is nothing wrong with being chubby but I began gaining weight in an unhealthy fashion. This triggered concerns about obesity. In addition, my sleep cycle also suffered as due to the lack of any exercise and physical exertion, I had trouble falling asleep on time. Hence, I was waking up late.

As for online classes, I feel like they are the bane of my existence! Not only are they boring, they are also less effective than traditional classes. They have cut out all social interaction, which might affect one's confidence-level in a social gathering later.

As a compilation of my feelings: I miss the sense of normalcy, which I took for granted. I miss travelling, my extended family, and my friends. Although, I never imagined that I'd say this, but I miss school too. The feeling of missing someone or something is constantly looming over me now.



Lockdown Lores

Priyaasha Banerjee is a 15-year-old student of class 10th of the Delhi Public School, Indirapuram.

Last year, when the lockdown was announced nationwide, I felt very excited at the thought of not going to school anymore and getting a break from studies. I had thought that this would go on for a couple of days and once the situation becomes better, everything would be back to normal. But then, the days turned into months, and I never expected it to go on for a whole year!

As the days passed, I got bored of staying at home. I realised that I won't be able to see any of my friends nor go to the mall with them like I did earlier. Soon, I got to know that I'll be having online classes and that got me excited, maybe because we were about to do something new.

But within a week, I realised how tiring and frustrating they were. I missed being in school physically with my friends. Few weeks later, my screen-time increased tremendously. I had tuitions to attend after my regular school and after that, I had loads of homework to do, both of school and tuition.

Few months passed this way and, to be honest, it was getting depressing. Waking up every day, the first thing I'd hear would be the number of COVID cases either increasing or decreasing. That's when we decided to add a new member to our family.

In August, last year, we got a dog home. It, definitely, made things much better. The atmosphere in our house became

livelier. By September, it had become normal for all my family members and me to sit in front of our computers for hours and hours and do online classes and meetings.

Online classes are definitely harder. My teachers kept giving us projects and they slowly piled up because I didn't do them on time or kept procrastinating. The whole 2020 was spent like this. Being at home for a full year, definitely *wasn't* fun.

Well, it did have some plus points. Like, we spent more time with our families. I learnt a classical dance and improved further in western dance. I started editing pictures,

turning them into aesthetic wallpapers, etc.

We had hoped that 2021 would be better, but in my opinion, it is worse! To add to that, I had to give offline exams after studying online for a whole year. When I went back to school, I realised that throughout this lockdown, I turned into a much quieter and reserved person. I talked to only three of my friends, when I actually had many more.

This whole situation still gives me mixed feelings. I'm relieved that I'm with my family, but I'm also sad because I can't go out anymore.

But we don't really have a choice now, do we?



LIVE N

BE WISE

Ritika Bohra/GT

We are reminded repeatedly to wash hands, wear a mask, maintain distance, and improve immunity. But an important factor that can fight against corona is, the food we eat. Though, we experimented with our culinary skills during the lockdown—from cakes and *firangi* cuisines to Dalgona coffee—we need to 'Be Wise' and 'Choose Wise'.

Avoid white bread, maida, pasta, sweets, chocolates, processed and canned foods, carbonated drinks, canned juices, and fried food to keep your lungs healthy. Keep fighting corona!