

WELCOME BACK

The vast expanse of space has long been a realm of mystery, curiosity, and adventure. Only a select few have had the privilege of leaving Earth's atmosphere to explore the cosmos. Among them, Sunita Williams, an inspiration to millions, has returned home once again after spending over 300 days in space. Her journey, filled with scientific discoveries, technological advancements, and personal endurance, marks another milestone in human space exploration.

As we welcome her back, we not only celebrate her achievements but also acknowledge the dedication, courage, and perseverance required to venture into the unknown. Sunita's return is not just a homecoming; it is a moment of global pride, scientific progress, and renewed hope for the future of space travel.

Re-entering Earth's atmosphere is one of the most challenging and dangerous phases of any space mission. The spacecraft, traveling at thousands of kilometers per hour, faces extreme heat and pressure as it descends. Parachutes slow down the capsule before a controlled landing brings astronauts back to solid ground. For Sunita Williams, this marked the end of another extraordinary journey, proving once again her resilience and commitment to advancing space exploration.

During her time aboard the International Space Station (ISS), Sunita Williams carried out numerous scientific experiments, ranging from studying the effects of microgravity on human physiology to testing new space technologies. Astronauts live in a world unlike any other, where everyday activities—eating, sleeping, and exercising—require special adjustments.

She also continued her passion for running while in space, famously completing a marathon on a treadmill aboard the ISS during an earlier mission. Space travel is not just a test of physical endurance but also of mental strength. Astronauts spend months away from family, confined to a limited space, with only video calls and messages to stay connected to loved ones. The isolation and high-pressure environment demand immense psychological resilience.

Sunita Williams has always embraced these challenges with grace. Her ability to stay focused and motivated in space serves as an inspiration to aspiring astronauts and individuals across the world.

Sunita Williams has often spoken about this transformative perspective, emphasizing the importance of unity, sustainability, and environmental responsibility. Her message is clear: We must protect our planet and work together as one global family.

With her return, Sunita Williams once again reinforces the limitless potential of human space exploration. As India and other nations prepare for future missions, including the ambitious Gaganyaan program and deep-space ventures like Chandrayaan-4, her journey serves as a beacon of inspiration.

As we welcome Sunita Williams back from space, we celebrate more than just a successful mission. We celebrate human resilience, scientific discovery, and the ever-growing spirit of exploration. Her journey reminds us that no challenge is too great, no dream too distant, and no boundary too unbreakable.

Welcome back, Sunita Williams—your journey has inspired the world, and your legacy will continue to ignite the dreams of future space explorers!

The Science of Happiness: Feel-Good Hormones

DR SUNITA KUMARI & DR JEEVITHA

Happiness is recognized fundamental human goal. Being happy is being Human. International Day of Happiness is celebrated on 20th March every year. This special day was first observed in 2013 by the United Nations General Assembly to recognize the importance of happiness and well-being as universal goals and aspirations for people around the world. The official theme for International Day of Happiness 2025 is "Caring & Sharing". The theme indicates that lasting happiness comes from caring for each other, feeling connected to others and being part of something bigger. The purpose of writing this article is to foster a culture of happiness and well-being, promoting sustainable development and human flourishing, encouraging people and government to prioritize happiness and well-being in their policies and actions.

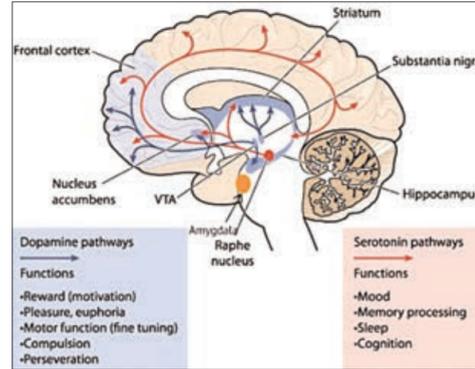
Imagine tiny sparklers in your brain, lighting up with every pleasure, every delight, and every achievement. These tiny sparklers are Dopamine, Oxytocin, Serotonin, and Endorphins, collectively called as happiness chemicals, each one of which has a specific effect and when any one of these chemicals is being released in the brain, we feel good. By understanding how these sparklers work, we can unlock their power to boost our mood, drive our passions, and

Dopamine: The Spark of Motivation

Dopamine, the neurotransmitter of motivation, reward and pleasure, helps nerve cells to send messages to each other. Dopamine is the chemical that derives us to achieve goals and feel proficient. It gives you the willpower to accomplish goals, desires and needs. It is the whisper in your ears that says, "you got it" when you crush a challenge or accomplish something. It is the thrill that comes with trying something new, and the warmth that spreads through your chest when you are with your loved ones. It's part of the brain's reward system, making us feel good when we complete tasks, no matter how small. Once you achieve your desired goals, dopamine gives a flow of supporting pleasures. Having right amount of dopamine is important both for our body and brain. However, overstimulation of dopamine can be problematic as it is closely linked to developing addictions. The fleeting effects of dopamine creates a cycle of craving that leaves a person desiring more. But dopamine is more than just a feel-good chemical, it also a key player in learning, memory and movement. Dopamine plays a key role in learning and memory by modulating the processing and consolidation of new information. Dopamine facilitates strengthening of neural connections which is essential for learning and memory.

Oxytocin: The Warm Embrace of Connection

Oxytocin is often called the "love hormone" or "cuddle hormone" as it encourages to develop warm associations. This hormone surges in response to physical touch, whether it's a warm hug, a gentle handhold or playing with a pet. Engaging in acts of kindness, such as volunteering or small gestures of thoughtfulness can elevate oxytocin levels. This hormone develops in us the desire to remain around those we trust which creates a feeling of comfort and safety. Oxytocin, the



hormone of devotion, is the masterful conductor of our emotional symphony. As we fall deeply in love, oxytocin's crescendo of affection orchestrates a grand ballet of emotions. It choreographs the tender moments of intimacy, the joyful laughter of shared experiences, and the quiet comfort of warm embraces. With oxytocin as our guide, we embark on a wondrous journey of trust, attachment, bonding, and belonging. It supports our body to adjust to different emotions and also boosts our immune system. Oxytocin's symphony extends far beyond the realm of romantic love. It harmonizes the bonds of friendship, the nurturing instincts of parenthood, and

the compassionate connections of community. It reminds us that love is not just a feeling, but a choice, a choice to nurture, to care, and to cherish.

Serotonin: The Soft Glow of Serenity

Serotonin, the hormone of harmony, plays a noteworthy role in regulating sleep, stabilizing mood, and controlling appetite. Serotonin prizes us with an upright feeling and we feel noteworthy or significant. It is the pleasure we get when we experience social power, loyalty, or status. It results from finding opportunities to assert or prevail. This is a calm form of confidence that helps accepting our self within the people around us. Serotonin is what motivates a leader to excel and grow. With serotonin as our guide, we embark on a journey of self-discovery, navigating the twists and turns of our emotions with greater

But serotonin's symphony extends far beyond the realm of individual harmony. It orchestrates the rhythms of social connection, facilitating the beautiful dance of communication, empathy, and understanding. It reminds us that we are not alone in our struggles, but are instead part of a grand tapestry of human experience, interconnected and interdependent.

Brain Reward System that Enhances the Feeling of Happiness

Source of Image: National Science Foundation

Endorphins: The Rush of Euphoria

Endorphins are body's natural pain killers. They produce a brief euphoria, mas pain and infuse our lives with joy, ere-

ativity and wonder. As we engage in the creativity, whether through art, music, laughter, or love, endorphins spring into action. They mix and match their colours, blending the pigments of pleasure and pain, adding texture and depth to our experiences, making every moment a masterpiece of sensation. With this we realize that happiness is not just a destination, but a process, process of creating, expressing, and connecting. Life itself is the ultimate masterpiece, waiting to be crafted, shaped, and celebrated.

The happiness quartet: A Symphony of Joy

Imagine a grand symphony, where four majestic instruments- dopamine, oxytocin, serotonin and endorphins come together to create a masterpiece of happiness. Each instrument has its unique melody, harmony, and rhythm but together they create a beautiful symphony that fills our hearts and minds with joy. It would be great if they all surged all the time. However, it does not work like this. The chemical turns off after it has done its job, leaving a person with a desire for more.

How to maintain continuous surge of feel-good hormones?

Listen to music: Listening to music activates brain's reward system that increases the release of feel-good chemicals. Enjoying soothing music before going to bed promotes sleep. Listening to music with others, especially our loved ones, can stimulate the release of oxytocin.

Exercise: One of the most powerful tools for influencing our brain chemistry and overall well-being. Regular exercise, (especially aerobic) can increase the release of all four happiness chemicals.

Yoga & Meditation: We can naturally increase serotonin production by practicing yoga and mindful meditation.

Role of diet: Diet rich in whole grains, fruits and vegetables can support dopamine production. Omega-3 rich fatty acids rich foods, such as walnuts increase serotonin production.

Get enough sleep: sleep plays a crucial role in regulating feel-good hormones. During sleep, the brain regulates hormone balance, clears toxins, and consolidates memories. Lack of sleep can disrupt this balance, leading to mood disturbances, decreased motivation and increased stress.

Practice gratitude: Reflecting on things we're grateful for increases serotonin, dopamine and endorphins release leading to feeling of joy and contentment. By incorporating gratitude practices, such as journaling or sharing appreciation with others, we can rewire our brains to focus on positive, leading to a happier, healthier life.

Social connections: Building and maintaining social connections can support oxytocin levels.

Conclusion: Happiness chemicals act as our natural defence against stress, anxiety, and boredom, keeping us energized and fulfilled. When their levels drop, negativity, stress, depression, and distraction-gains control. By adopting evidence-based strategies, we can strengthen this "happiness quartet," fostering balance, resilience, and lasting joy.

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Sufism, the spiritual dimension of Islam, is a path that emphasizes love, compassion, service to humanity, and inner purification. The great Sufi saints of India such as Hazrat Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti (Rz), Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya (R.A.) and many others dedicated their lives to spreading the universal message of peace (Aman), tolerance, and unity among all communities. Their teachings transcended caste, creed, and religion, fostering a culture of insanियat (humanity) and spiritual enlightenment.

The Khanqahs and Dargahs established by these Awliya-e-Kiram became centers of spiritual guidance, charity, education, and social welfare-places where the hungry were fed, the sick were healed, and the hearts of

seekers were illuminated. Sufism, the mystical branch of Islam, has played a crucial role in shaping India's religious, social, and cultural landscape. Over centuries, Sufi saints and their spiritual teachings have attracted large followings, transcending religious and caste boundaries. Alongside their spiritual influence, Sufis also contributed to the development of institutions like waqf, a form of charitable endowment under Islamic law. Waqf has been instrumental in sustaining the infrastructure of Sufi shrines, known as dargahs, which serve as significant centers of spirituality, social welfare, and cultural heritage.

Sufism and waqf are two sides of a coin. On the one side, Sufis dedicate themselves to the service of Allah and on the other side they dedicate their entire possessions including their properties in the interest and social well-being of people irrespective of religion, caste, and creed.

I wish to share a brief reflection on the remarkable legacy of Waqf, which

has played a pivotal role in the upliftment of society since the time of our Prophet Hazrat Mohammed Mustafa (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), an institution deeply rooted in Islamic history and spirituality. One of the earliest and most profound examples of Waqf was established by Hazrat Usman e Ghani (Razi Allahu Ta'ala Anhu) in Madina Munawwara. During a time of water scarcity, he purchased the Bir-e-Ruma well and dedicated it as Waqf, making its water freely available to the people of Madina. His selfless act of generosity marked one of the first Waqf contributions in Islam.

What is even more inspiring is that the Waqf of Hazrat Usman e Ghani (Rz) is still active today, more than fourteen centuries later. The land surrounding Bir-e-Ruma was declared as Waqf, and it generates income through modern means, including date farms. The revenue from this Waqf continues to be used for charitable causes in Madina, including support for orphans, widows, and pilgrims. It stands as a living example of

Sadaqah Jariyah (ongoing charity), benefiting generations long after the initial waqf.

Following this divine example, the Sufi saints of India dedicated vast lands and properties as Waqf, intending to serve humanity and uplift society. These Waqf endowments were instrumental in establishing Khanqahs and Dargahs, offering spiritual guidance and hospitality, running Langars (community kitchens) to feed the poor, regardless of religion or background, founding educational institutions to provide free education to the underprivileged, setting up hospitals and dispensaries, offering medical treatment to the sick and needy, and providing support for orphans, widows, and scholarships for students. These initiatives reflect the core values of Sufism-service, generosity, and compassion-and helped create a harmonious and inclusive society throughout Indian history.

Unfortunately, in the present time, many Waqf properties in India are not being utilized according to the

Mansha-e-Waqif (the original intent of the donor). Widespread mismanagement, corruption, and lack of accountability within many State Waqf Boards have resulted in the neglect, misuse, and illegal occupation of valuable Waqf lands and institutions. This has deprived countless people of the services and support these waqf properties were meant to provide.

Despite their vast contributions, waqf properties and dargahs face several challenges in modern India. Many waqf lands have been illegally occupied or misused due to poor governance and corruption within waqf boards. There have been allegations of financial mismanagement in waqf administration, leading to loss of revenue. Many people are unaware of the significance of waqf and its potential role in community welfare, leading to underutilization of waqf resources. Several waqf properties are entangled in legal disputes over ownership, delaying their effective use for public benefit.

To strengthen waqf institutions and

enhance their role in community welfare, certain measures can be considered. Implementing digital records for waqf properties to prevent encroachments and ensure transparency, establishing independent regulatory bodies to oversee waqf administration and prevent financial mismanagement, encouraging collaboration between waqf institutions and private entities for better management of educational and healthcare services, raising awareness about waqf contributions and involving local communities in decision-making processes, and speeding up legal processes to resolve waqf-related disputes efficiently are some of the steps that could be taken.

It is our collective responsibility to honour the legacy of Waqf and the teachings of Sufism, ensuring that these sacred trusts continue to benefit society and uphold the values of peace, love, and service to humanity.

(The Author is Successor of Hereditary Sajjadanashin of Dargah Hazrat Khwaja Moinuddin Hasan Chishty (R.A) & Chairman of AISSC)

India's Textile Revolution: The Story of Rising Consumer Powerhouse A Decade of Transformation-The Rise of Prosperous Bharat

GIRIRAJ SINGH



A decade ago, India's population stood at around 125 crore, and consumer spending was largely driven by necessity rather than desire. Shopping habits were predictable - new clothes for festivals, carefully planned expenses, and a focus on savings over splurging. Luxury brands were admired from a distance, and high-end fashion remained confined to the elite. But today, with a population of 142 crore and a booming middle class, that same family confidently steps into premium stores, shops online with ease, and celebrates life's milestones with grandeur. India is no longer just growing, it is thriving.

This shift is powered by three key pillars-rising purchasing power, an evolving consumer mind-set, and last-mile digital connectivity. The economic transformation has been remarkable, fuelled by rising incomes, government-backed manufacturing initiatives, and a digitally empowered Bharat. The 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' vision, launched in 2020, laid the foundation for self-sufficiency, further strengthened by the Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme and PM MITRA textile parks. As manufacturing boomed, job creation followed, and with it, an increase in disposable incomes that reshaped how Indians spend.

Consumption is now the backbone of India's growth story, set to propel the textile sector into a golden era.

An Empowered Bharat - Confident, Bold and Aspirational

For years, aspirations outpaced reality. People worked hard, dreamed big, yet opportunities felt just out of reach. Then, a decade of policy-driven change turned ambition into achievement. Infrastructure expanded, digital India took shape, and economic reforms became tangible growth drivers. The impact? A nation of confident consumers ready to embrace quality, style, and convenience.

Incomes have soared. Per capita income has jumped from ₹72,805 in 2014-15 to ₹1.88 lakh in 2023-24 and is projected to reach ₹3.5 lakh by 2030. Today, six crore Indians earn over ₹8.3 lakh annually - more than double the number in 2015. This rising affluence is fuelling an unprecedented demand for fashion, textiles, and lifestyle products. By 2027, India will be the fourth-largest consumer durable market, driven not just by affordability but by aspirations.

The consumer behaviour shift post-COVID has been a game-changer. Digital access surged, online retail flourished, and UPI transactions skyrocketed - from 220 crore in FY 2013-14 to an astounding 18,592 crore in FY 2023-24. This digital transformation has bridged the urban-rural divide, ensuring that whether in a metro city or a small town, Indians now have seamless access to global and local fashion trends.

Bharat's Fashion Revolution - Where

Tradition Meets Ambition

Once a Western concept, fast fashion is now a way of life for young Indians. What was once exclusive is now within reach, thanks to brands like Zudio, Reliance Trends, and Shein fuelling a \$10 billion industry poised to touch \$50 billion by 2030. But this shift isn't just about affordability - luxury and heritage textiles are thriving alongside fast fashion. As aspirational households cross the 100-million mark by 2027, handcrafted fabrics, silk sarees, and high-end designer wear are witnessing a resurgence.

This revolution is not a coincidence, it is a direct outcome of government-driven initiatives. By cutting out middlemen, digitizing artisan platforms, and enabling direct customer-to-artisan connections, Digital India has transformed how fashion is bought and sold.

A Paithani from Maharashtra, a Pashmina from Kashmir - now accessible at the click of a button. This democratization of fashion is empowering artisans, reviving heritage crafts, and bringing India's textile legacy to the forefront of the global stage.

Luxury & Heritage - Now More Accessible Than Ever Indian weddings have always been grand, but today, they are a multi-billion-dollar economic force. The \$45 billion wedding industry is breathing new life into traditional weaving clusters, with families choosing artistry over mass production. Luxury is no longer about labels, it's about legacy. Brides and grooms are opting for exclusivity, selecting handwoven Banarasi

silks, intricate Kanjeevarams, and bespoke designs that celebrate India's rich textile heritage.

But the transformation isn't limited to attire. As India's economy soars, so does its appetite for elegance. Real estate prices surged by 30% between FY19-23, and with bigger, more refined homes comes a demand for handcrafted furnishings, designer upholstery, and heritage décor. Modern homes are now showcases of Indian craftsmanship, driving demand for handmade textiles beyond fashion into interiors and luxury living.

The Dawn of India's Global Fashion Leadership Bharat's textile industry is no longer just about production - it is about innovation, design, and global influence. Under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership, 'Make in India' has evolved into 'Design in India,' where Indian creativity shapes international fashion.

The government's focus on R&D and fostering a thriving start up ecosystem has paved the way for unparalleled economic growth. Working on the Three Ts - Textile, Tourism, and Technology - India is laying the foundation for a Viksit Bharat.

With the recent budget prioritizing textiles, the \$136 billion domestic industry is set to surpass \$250 billion well before 2030, reaffirming India's position as a global leader. Private consumption has surged from ₹87 lakh crore in 2013 to ₹183 lakh crore in 2024. The GDP is projected to touch ₹635 lakh crore by 2030 and private consumption will account for nearly

60% of GDP. This shift will make India a global consumption powerhouse, surpassing even developed nations like the U.S., China, and Germany.

But India's rise is not just about how much is being consumed - it's about what is being valued. The Indian textile industry, once seen as a production hub, is now setting global fashion trends. The world looks to India not just for its craftsmanship but for its vision, elegance, and ability to blend heritage with modernity.

This is New Bharat - Fearless, Self-made, and Unstoppable But this is just the beginning. New Bharat doesn't wait for opportunities, it creates them. Fashion is no longer just a passion, it's a career.

Young Indians aren't just following trends, they're setting them. They're launching brands, building businesses, and shaping the economy.

To the youth of Bharat - Be job creators, not job seekers. Your style, your ambition, your ideas - this is the future of India's economy. And it doesn't stop at attire. As India's economy soars, so does its appetite for elegance. With rising incomes, increased digital access, and a booming population, Bharat is not just participating in the global fashion industry - it is leading it. From the bottom of the pyramid to the top, aspirations are growing, choices are expanding, and a New Bharat is being defined not by limitations, but by possibilities.

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