

## Healthy food improves concentration

When you're faced with a pile of revision, feeding your body as well as your brain may be the last thing on your mind. But can you give yourself an advantage simply by eating certain foods? And does drinking plenty of water really increase your chances of getting good grades? Whether you're a student or the parent of a child sitting school exams, there are quick and easy food tips to help maintain those all-important energy levels and improve concentration and memory.

Research shows that pupils and students who eat breakfast perform better in exams. For the best breakfast, include slow-release carbohydrates, such as whole rolled porridge oats, whole grain bread or low-sugar muesli, as they provide slow-release energy. Add a protein food, such as milk, yoghurt or eggs, to keep you feeling full for longer. On exam day aim to include a portion of a food rich in long-chain Omega-3 fats, such as smoked mackerel, as they are believed to have brain-boosting properties. One of the best ways to maximise your focus is to stay hydrated. Even mild dehydration can lead to tiredness, headaches, reduced alertness and diminished concentration. Take a bottle of water into the exam if you're allowed to; a study of university students found that those who brought drinks, especially water, with them into the exam performed on average 5 per cent better than those who didn't.

Start the day with a big glass of water or fruit tea. Tea and coffee count too, but are high in caffeine. It's best to avoid sweet fizzy and energy drinks, which are high in sugar, as they'll lead to energy peaks and troughs.

Which foods will help you focus? Eating a balanced diet can help you focus and avoid illness. No single food is nutritionally complete, so you need variety. Try not to skip meals or your blood-sugar level will drop.

In the West people eat far too much Omega-6, found in vegetable and seed oils, and too little Omega-3 (which is important for brain power), found in oil-rich fish and seafood. It is important to limit your Omega-6 consumption. This means limiting products made from these oils, such as some margarine, as well as the oils themselves. Vegetables contain fibre, which slows down digestion, causing energy in food to be released more slowly and so helping you to avoid energy peaks and troughs. Good sources of fibre include carrots and broccoli. Iron is particularly key during exam time, as a deficiency (identified in over 40 per cent of teenage girls) leads to tiredness and lack of focus; dark leafy-greens are a source.

Fibre slows down digestion and so causes energy in food to be released into the body more slowly; apples, pears, raspberries and bananas are good sources. Try sprinkling frozen berries or dried fruit on to porridge. Vitamin C is needed for your immune system, and is found in fruit and vegetables; oranges and kiwi fruit are particularly good sources.

Oil-rich fish and seafood are important for brain health and concentration, thanks to their 'long-chain Omega-3'. About 8 percent of the brain is comprised of Omega-3 fats, and we should eat a portion of Omega-3-rich foods at least 2 days a week. It's condensed in salmon, sardines, fresh tuna (not canned), trout and mackerel; even fish fingers contain some. Supplements may be considered, especially in exam periods. Short-chain Omega-3s, found in nuts and seeds, are less effective as we can struggle to convert them into long-chain ones. Young women may benefit from boosting their iron with red meat.

Slow-release carbohydrates such as whole grain bread, wholemeal pasta, brown rice and porridge help keep your blood-sugar level stable, averting dips in concentration and brain power. Research indicates only 17 per cent of adults and 6 per cent of children are eating enough whole grains. Eating three slices of whole grain bread or one bowl of whole grain cereal with one slice of the bread per day will provide all the whole grains you need. Some whole grains, including wheat, are a good source of zinc, and zinc deficiency in children is associated with hyperactivity.

Not getting enough sleep may negatively affect your memory and slow your responses. Experts believe memory neurons that are responsible for converting short-term memories into long-term ones work most effectively when we are asleep. There's evidence that students who sleep for seven hours a night do on average 10% better than those who get less sleep. But what should you eat and drink at bedtime to promote sleep?

A heavy meal too close to bedtime can interfere with sleep, so try to have your last meal at least three hours before you go to bed. Then have a small snack such as a bowl of high-fibre cereal like porridge just before bedtime. If you need sweetener with cereal, go for dried fruit rather than sugar. Avoid foods and drinks that contain caffeine, such as tea, coffee, cola and chocolate, for least four hours before going to bed. Some people who are very sensitive to caffeine can still feel the effects 12 hours later. A warm glass of milk at bedtime can help you sleep better.

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Plato's cave allegory

Plato, the Greek philosopher, writes about perceptions of reality. He imagines a cave and prisoners seated on its floor, facing the cave's wall, since their childhood. Shackled, they cannot move or turn their heads back toward the entrance of the cave. A fire burns between the cave entrance and the people. Between the fire and the prisoners, some people pass by, casting shadows on the wall of the cave, in front of the shackled people. To the prisoners, the shadows on the wall is their reality.

Plato imagines that one prisoner is unshackled and led toward the cave entrance. Accustomed only to darkness, he is blinded by the fire. Gradually, he sees the people passing by. But the fire itself is so painful to behold that he returns to his seat - preferring the shadows on the

wall.

But suppose one prisoner is led up to the mouth of the cave. He is dazzled by the sunlight; it takes considerable time till he is able to see the beautiful real world outside. He feels sorry for the other prisoners. If this prisoner were to return and narrate his experience, the other prisoners would ridicule him, staunchly defending their own perception of shadows on the wall. They would dread the world outside their cave.

The message in Plato's allegory is similar to the concept of Maya, which says that the whole observable world is an illusion, whose evanescence shrouds the only Truth in the world, that is Brahmn. When a true seeker does find the way, he treads a lonely path - others are contented in their comfort zones.

Prithwis Datta

## Gandhi's contributions as a journalist

■ ER PRABHAT KISHORE

Mohan Das Karamchand Gandhi was a great journalist & media crusader, not only because he was great in so many ways and his greatness was total, but because he had a great journalist's gift of expression and communication. Journalism is not scholarship; it is literature or history written in a hurry. In part it is action too. A journalist must have the capacity to understand, to reach, and to communicate; and for a half a century Gandhiji was the greatest one-man medium of mass communication.

Gandhi was the most fearless of journalists. His life was an epic of struggle for freedom and equality, though national freedom came in the last year of his life. He had been carelessly expressing his freedom before it came, fighting so many restrictions imposed by the British regime from time to time. He also fought for the freedom of press. Although this might seem natural, he was the most independent journalist possible, independent of the government business and party in the usual external and internal pressure of the press. Gandhiji not only edited his papers, but wrote for them incessantly. They were small papers, inevitably weekly papers. But they were the greatest weekly papers that have ever been published. Gandhi's advent into journalism, as in many other things, was accidental. In 1904, he was asked to take over a printing press which was at work in Durban (South Africa) under the direction of Shree Madanjeet Vyavharik, a Mumbai ex-school teacher and Gandhi's political co-worker. Gandhi had contributed a large portion of its cost. Indian opinion published weekly in Hindi, Gujarati, Tamil and English and was printed at this press with Mansukhlal Hiralal Nagar as its Editor. All the editions except one had large circulations compared to other weeklies. It was through Indian opinion that Gandhi arrived at the word 'Satyagraha'. 1914 was the year of his farewell to South Africa and his association with the paper ended. 'Young India' was established in a more spacious atmosphere and a far greater vogue. Like Indian Opinion, it was also ready for Gandhi to take over. He was keen on conducting a paper in Gujarati also and he was offered 'Navjeevan' a monthly, which was converted into a weekly. Under his full control, Navjeevan appeared on October 7, 1919 and a day later 'Young India' appeared; both from Ahmedabad. Gandhi was the editor of both the papers and Mahadev Desai was the publisher. Both journals were priced one Anna each and circulation of each at one stage rose to the neighbourhood of forty thousand. All Indian newspapers reproduced Gandhi's articles. Interestingly, he did not accept any advertisement.

Before taking up 'Navjeevan' and 'Young India', Gandhi had edited for a short-time an unregistered weekly 'Satyagrah', priced one paise, in April 1919 to protest against the discriminatory and biased policies of the British Government. This newspaper was the weapon of civil disobedience. Actually, the idea was to publish in every centre a written newspaper without registering it, occupying not more than one side of half a full scape.

On February 11, 1933, the first issue of weekly 'Harijan', priced one Anna, appeared from Pune. It was published for and

by the Servants of the untouchable society (Harijan Sevak Sangh) and contained a poem by Tagore 'The Cleaner'. Its ten thousand copies were published. 'Harijan' was not a name of Gandhi's choice. Some untouchable correspondents had suggested it. He also published 'Harijan Bandhu' in Gujarati and 'Harijan Sewak' in Hindi. All three papers focused on India's and the world's social as well as economic problems.

Fight against Censorship: 'Bharat Chhodo' movement meant a change. It was the 'Karo Movement' and Gandhi did not want any newspaper to be published after the severest possible restrictions on publication of news of the 'Bharat Chhodo' movement. At the historic AICC session of August 1942, Gandhi said that he had asked the fellow journalists to realise their responsibilities. He wanted them not to become partners with the government with censorship and pre-censorship. When he along with Sardar Patel and other leaders were arrested, all old fights of 'Harijan' and 'Navjeevan' were hampered.

After a lapse of three and half years, 'Harijan' was revived in Feb. 1946. Gandhi was again immersed in harijan welfare work. It had to rename the weekly and wanted to call it 'Bhangi'. After Gandhi's death on January 30, 1948, an attempt was made to carry on with the 'Harijan' in his memory. There were hectic debates & arguments on this issue, but controversy arose among his followers and finally, the historic 'Harijan' was shut down forever.

In the 'Gandhian era' of journalism, many newspapers were published to give voice to the freedom movement. 'Swarajya' (1920), 'Karmaveer' (1920), 'Desh' (1920), 'Aaj' (1920), 'Arjun' (1923) were some famous newspapers published at that time. In 1920, Ramrikh Pal Sahgal started publishing journals (on economic subjects) named 'Chand' and 'Gyan Mandal' from Prayag and 'Swarth' from Kashii, Varanasi. Monthly journals like 'Sudha', 'Madhuri', 'Hans' and 'Vishal Bharat' and daily journals like 'Hindustan', 'Nav Bharat Times', 'Veer Arjun' (all from Indraprastha, Delhi) and 'Aaj' were well known to all. Many daily journals had their weekly edition. Research papers like 'Rajasthan Bharatiya', 'Maru Bharati', 'Hindusthani', 'Nagari Pracharani Patrika' etc. were published in this era. Gandhiji was a natural writer in Gujarati, but had a place as a writer in the English language too. He had the power of Rajas and Avatars. Three objects of journalism were propagated by Gandhi in Hind Swaraj (1921). First object is to understand the popular feelings & thoughts of the people and to express it; second is to arouse national, historical & spiritual feelings among the people; and the third object is to write down the faults fearlessly.

Gandhi's newspapers suggest that his purpose of journalism was to serve the society in all respects and inspire the masses for a greater cause. He talked to the people in their own language and succeeded in communicating the messages concerned. Gandhi's practice of journalism set high ethical and moral standards by practicing mass oriented and value-based journalism, which will always be a benchmark for the print media world.

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## Market & Society of Education

■ VIJAY GARG

There is a close relationship between research and development. The policies for development work are made on the basis of the results of the research departments. Therefore, research done in academic institutions is important from the point of view of overall development of the country. While discussing the science policy, once Professor Jayant Vishnu Nalaukar said that the Government of India and various other Governments have established many research institutes to give direction to science and other research, so that a scientist can become a scientist with freedom of thought and action and able to operate in an autonomous environment. But the administratization of these institutions, the decline of research jobs for young scientists, the neglect of science and social science subjects in universities and the comparatively low prestige of experts working in these areas are some of the aspects that are facing the development of India's knowledge economy resulting in a serious challenge.

The quality of research done in academic institutions has been questioned for the past few years. Also none of our universities has been able to achieve high rank in the global ranking. In such a situation, it is natural to ask whether the condition of research in higher educational institutions and universities is really so bad that it lacks elements like innovation, innovation, validity? If so, why? Is this something to think about? In 2020, there has been an unprecedented increase in the number of scientific researches in the era of COVID. If seen, more than one lakh research articles were published in various scientific journals. But what is worrying is that the multi-level intellectual review of these scientific articles has now come to an end, leading to an increase in academic fraud and unethical practices. Therefore, as the number of scientific research articles increased, the quality also declined. If seen, it is a matter of serious concern not only for the educational world but also for the development of society and nation. There is no doubt that scientific research, which should be developed with a definite result, is no longer happening. It seems that the current research, especially in the field of science, is engaged in providing only information that benefits the market. Whereas scientific information should be free from biases and personal values and reliable, not market centric. During the epidemic, the news of the side effects of some medicines or death of a patient due to a vaccine or a complete recovery from COVID from a certain drug was in the headlines. Then later their refutations or explanations also kept coming out. Such information can come into existence only when an exploit article is published without review by a group of experts concerned. Such information left no stone unturned to create fear and confusion among the people in the society. As a result, such incidents also came to the fore, in which people gave their lives only because of fear and confusion even before coming under the grip of COVID. Shouldn't it be called academic dishonesty to make such misleading and false information public? No exploit or information, whether related to the

field of medicine or political, religious, social or economic, should be made public without any intellectual review. It is the ethical responsibility of the researcher and the informant. Otherwise, who will be responsible for the disorder and fear spreading in the society? This is a matter of consideration.

In this era, the number of online national, international seminars-conferences has also increased rapidly. Not only has there been a decrease in the discussion and analysis of subject experts but also the discussions and discussions on the subjects as a general public are increasing. Another challenge that has come to the fore is that it has become easy to get a certificate without attending the webinar, simply by paying the fee, or by simply filling the informational form. Because the API score depends on how many certificates of participation you have in academic programs, not on how many research articles you have submitted, their quality and current relevance. In the age of online webinars, everyone is busy collecting more and more certificates. Therefore, should it be assumed that this period of epidemic is a period of accidents of research and theoretical discussion? And if it is indeed a period of accidents, it is not difficult to predict what will be the state of research in the post-pandemic period. The market of goods has changed little in the market of information, it is not known. It is a matter of concern that this market of information without any truth and proof has dominated the society through newspapers and magazines and social media. Social media in particular has come to the fore as a weapon on which everyone is engaged in disseminating information through invisible or visible means, regardless of whether there is any basis for its veracity or not. And people also do not fail to transmit such information further and further. Similar situations arise when democratic institutions start to fail in a society and teachers, intellectuals become slaves of power or whose thinking is limited only to their own benefit. Without theoretical, ideological and empirical research, any article is like a public discussion. In such research, all those aspects which have been essential from the scientific point of view are ignored and doing so cannot be said to be suitable for the development of any subject.

Surveying and research, logical analysis of knowledge and information, ideological participation and relentless writing, which are counted among the important characteristics of academic intellectuals, are seen on the margins in the present era, because the complete knowledge of the subject for research work or writing work, logical ability and commitment are essential. But in this age of the internet everything is easily available without much effort. The reality is also that now the purpose of research is not just to acquire knowledge but to get a degree. The major reason for this is also that without a degree, promotion in educational institutions has become impossible. When education deviates from its original purpose, how harmful its consequences can be, it can be understood in the present times of crisis. It is relevant to argue that the consumer society has produced cosmopolitan warlords who develop ideas for the market for the goods produced and, as a result, marginalize questions of social concern.

towards your goals with the time and resources available. Being focused in the present moment means that you are solely focused on the one activity that you are trying to complete. Anything else is unimportant so you shut out all distractions and give your full and undivided attention to the task at hand. It's difficult for people to remain focused on one task for a variety of reasons. For one, we live in a world where we are constantly bombarded with TV, radio, cell phones, Internet social media, as well as a much larger population that lives closer together than ever before. Also, the modern economy is almost entirely dependent on consumerism. Governments, companies and credit institutions need us to keep spending so that they can keep raising money through taxes, sales and lending. This means that there are more and more disruptive ways (text messages, emails, phone calls, mail, billboards, neon signs etc.) to push advertising and marketing messages in front of us. It is difficult to even go for a quiet stroll or sit quietly in a park without having something advertised to

## Relevance of Gandhian philosophy in present era

■ SHYAM SUDAN

On 2nd of October, we are going to celebrate the birth anniversary of Father of Nation, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi. He was a great philosopher and freedom fighter of the era whose contributions towards the nation can't be explained in words.

He has devoted his entire life for the welfare of the general public and weaker sections of our society. He was the great exponent of the philosophy of truth and non-violence.

He practiced these tools his entire life and achieved success. But the big question is that, is this philosophy of truth and non-violence is still relevant in this modern world or is it now an obsolete one? Some people believe that these tools have no importance in the modern world. Many people believe that these are the tools of cowardly people and mostly those people adopt such tools in their life who are very weak in their vision.

But the reality is that these are the most powerful tools which are still relevant in our society.

At present, we are facing the crisis of global terrorism and other conflicts among different nations of the world. In this materialistic run every nation is trying to attain his dominance over others.

It seems that every nation is resting on a heap of explosives.

No doubt we have developed a lot of powerful weapons and made a lot of technological innovations, but everyone is feeling insecure and isolated in this modern world. Everyone is giving priority to his own interests ignoring the concerns of others. Non-violence is the only tool at present time which can change the mindset of people in this direction.

If we adopt this philosophy of non-violence in the present world, we can achieve real peace in our life. In order to practice non-violence in one's life there is need of great courage and patience. Only bold and strong nations or people can adopt this philosophy in their life. Gandhi also believed in the concept of decentralization of power.

According to him, by adopting the strategy of decentralization we can make democracy strong. In the current time every democratic nation is giving priority to this concept. Now, in our nation we are focussing on strengthening the Panchayati Raj at grass root level.

This is testimony of the fact that still we are following the vision of Gandhi in our democratic set-up. Gandhi was also in favour of women empowerment and always stood against the discrimination in society.

At present, we have seen that our girls are excelling in every walk of life. Recently, the government has decided to induct women in the NDA exam, which proves the commitment and visionary design of our democratic set up. No doubt, ours is the only nation in the world where there is a great percentage of people of every religion.

We are living in a multilingual and multi religious country. Here caste system is still prevalent in our society but now gradually we are giving priority to every section of society irrespective of their caste and religion.

Even in our constitution it has been guaranteed that no one can discriminate with others on the basis of their caste, colour and creed.

Gandhi was also a great believer of cleanliness. According to him, cleanliness is next to godliness. Now at present, the government is giving more priority to this concept.

The dream vision of Swachh Bharat Abhiyan is the testimony of this fact and now gradually people are adopting this concept in their life. Even the younger generation is more aware about such things.

Prime Minister Narinder Modi has launched this concept and people are following the same in their lives in a more energetic way. Every year on the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, a mega cleanliness drive is launched in the entire country. At present, we have seen a rapid degradation of values and norms from our society.

If we follow all the philosophies of our great visionary people then we can change our society. There is an urgent need to educate the young generation about such things.

Birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi and such days are the time when we can give knowledge and experience of such great personalities to our young generation.

It is needed to give place and add the teaching and learning of such great thinkers in our curriculum, so that the young generation get acquainted with their teaching and philosophical ideas.

Gandhi's 'My experiment with truth' is a great piece of writing.

We can introduce such pieces of writing in the curriculum. At present we have seen that sources of knowledge are many but only knowledge orientated courses can't change the mindset of our young generation. Role of moral values is very pivotal in the personality development of an individual.

According to Gandhi, the real meaning of education can only be achieved if we draw the best from the child. And this is only possible if we adopt his philosophy in a real sense.

The dream of an educated and modern society will only be fulfilled if we adopt the philosophies of our great thinkers.

Gandhi also defended political pluralism and religious tolerance throughout his life.

And undoubtedly these two virtues are needed at present time. Gandhi stood against the mighty British empire unarmed on the basis of his philosophy of truth and non-violence. On his birth anniversary, let's take a pledge that we should follow the path shown by him.

Don't make the occasion just a photo-shoot opportunity but pay real tributes to the leader by following his teachings in a real sense.

Sonakshi Jamwal, Kali Janni.

