

THORATHURU

by Sri Lanka Association of NSW Inc

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER

FIRST EDITION 2020

IMPACT OF COVID 19
PANDEMIC ON
HUMAN BEHAVIOUR


ALBERT EINSTEIN'S
OBSCURE VISIT TO
SRI LANKA IN 1922

WHY DO JAFFNA PEOPLE
SHAKE THEIR LEGS
IN SITTING POSITION?

THE HISTORY &
SIGNIFICANCE OF
POSON POYA



Sri Lankan pole fishermen in Midigama Credit: @woolgarz



Let us acknowledge the traditional owners of this land where we are across NSW and pay our respect to elders past and present. The land and their culture have over 65 thousand years' history and today with more than 270 multicultural nations enriching this land.

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EDITOR'S MESSAGE

DINESH RANASINGHE
EDITOR@SLANSW.ORG.AU

**"Life imposes things on you that you can't control,
but you still have
the choice of how you're going to
live through this."**

- Celine Dion

It is indeed a great honour to be the Editor for Thorathuru and it is an immense pleasure to launch this first edition for 2020.

In this issue, we will recount the various projects and activities in which SLANSW members were actively involved.

A huge thank you to all the people who contributed writing the wonderful and inspiring articles, without which there wouldn't have been this newsletter issue.

Last but not least, I would like to thank SLANSW President, Nalika Padmasena, and the committee members for their unfailing support throughout the creation of this edition.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Nalika Padmasena
president@slansw.org.au

On 8 December 2019 AGM we became the committee of Sri Lanka Association of NSW (SLA) with great aspirations for 2020. However, we witnessed the devastated bush fire and COVID-19 pandemic. We are still not over the COVID-19 pandemic and experiencing the evolving consequences for individuals and the government. These posed a huge challenge for us to think innovatively and creatively.

In line with SLA vision, rather than being reactive to these events, we were proactive in responding to these occurrences to build on strategic partnerships for broader and sustainable outcomes. We were able to increase member experience through achieving results and build social cohesion, innovation and sustainable administration for the future.

We propose to work with Blacktown City to implement Council to Council programs to support people and areas affected by 2019 unprecedented Bushfire that has displaced many people, destroyed or damaged a staggering number homes, businesses and properties in NSW and around Australia. These discussions are continuing even though the pandemic stops all our activities.



One of our most rewarding activities was the implementation of NSW Srilankan Support Network in collaboration with the Sinhalese Cultural Forum of NSW and Austra-Lanka Muslim Association to reach out to help many who affected due to COVID-19 pandemic in many ways. We were able to support 79 families with dry rations, rent and special medical needs, hot meals, jobs network, social and mental support and legal advocacy to get school fee relief, university fee relief and rental reliefs. The uniqueness of our employment network was that it has created a link between community members to provide enough work for affected people to manage their on-going expenses. I am proud to mention that some have gone into create their own small enterprises.

We are still hopeful for the launch of Sri Lanka Association Women's Network during this year. We encourage everyone to participate in "knit a square" initiative to provide warm blankets for women and children affected by domestic and family violence.

Despite the impediments, following are some of our achievements in the first half of the year.

- SLA members and the community witnessed the historical moment of raising our Sri Lankan National Flag in Blacktown City on 7 February 2020.
- The Seniors Luncheon and High Achievers event on 29 February 2020 with Katherine Greiner AO as our Keynote speaker and special guest.
- NSW Sri Lankan Support Network (NSSN) -
- Advocacy letter to Universities Australia and the Government in relation to number of proposed reliefs for International Students living in Australia
- Implementation of weekly online gathering for community members particularly for seniors in lieu for their regular monthly seniors open days at both Pennant Hills and Blacktown. We were the first community organisation to arrange such a virtual community gathering in response to COVID-19 lockdown considering the social and mental wellbeing of the community members.
- Execution of podcasts and webinars during COVID-19 lockdown – interviews with Michelle Rowland, Member for Greenway; Hon Phillip Ruddock, Mayor Hornsby Shire; Dr Michelle Byrne, Mayor Hills Shire; Senator Kristina Keneally; Peter Kuruvita and Tony Bleasdale, Mayor Blacktown City. A webinar with Dr Annemarie Christie.

We strived to be an inclusive organisation with the prime aim to provide a common meeting ground for all Sri Lankans living in NSW regardless of ethnic and religious differences. We can proudly say that the numerous strategic relationships we have built so far will benefit and enhance the future of SLA and its ambitions.

Nalika Padmasena
August 2020

Committee



2020

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President

SALIYA TENNEKOON

Vice President

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Committee Member

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Committee Member

AVANTHI JOTHIDAS

Committee Member

UNTIL FEB 2020

UNTIL MAY 2020

"If you ever live in a country run by a committee, be on THE COMMITTEE"

- William graham summer

BE FABULOUS

HIGHLIGHTS OF FIRST HALF OF YEAR ACTIVITIES

- **Friday 7 February 2020** – Inaugural Sri Lanka Flag raising ceremony at Blacktown Civic Centre. Sydney Consul General Mr Nimal Bandara, Consul Commercial Mr Abdul Raheem, Blacktown City Mayor Tony Bleasdale, Blacktown state Member Stephen Bali, Riverstone state Member Kevin Connolly, Councillor & chair of Blacktown Multicultural Advisory Committee Susai Benjamin, Sri Lanka Former Attorney Generals Mr Siva Pasupathy and Mr Sunil de Silva, Dr Don Wickrama OAM, and a large gathering of distinguished members of number of Srilankan community organisations were in presence. Cultural items from Bollyfit Dance Studio (Dr Yasothara Bharathy Singaraya and her group), Vidhunarthana Dancing School Vidusha Surige and her group), Ishi yoga Mahadurage, Abdurrahman Anwar Sadath, Saundarya Dance Academy (Amila Kumara with traditional drums) and Sam Trek Catering added colour to the event. We are looking forward to enhancing our future collaborations with this engagement.



We would like to extend our special appreciation to Blacktown City Sister Cities program.



- **Saturday 29 February 2020** - Annual "Sri Lanka Young Achievers' Award" to recognise, encourage and reward extraordinary achievements of young Australian of Sri Lankan descent or heritage, in education (best results in HSC), visual arts, music, literature, performing arts, sport and community service. Our objective is to encourage them to be role models for others in the community. Dr Dushmantha Thalankotuna was the guest speaker at this event.



- **Saturday 29th February 2020** – Annual Seniors Luncheon to celebrate and salute our senior members of the community as part of the senior's week celebration. Kathryn Greiner AO, Chair of NSW government's Ministerial Advisory Council on Ageing (MACA), and the state's first appointed Retirement Village Ambassador attended as the keynote speaker for this event.



- **Since March 2020** – Weekly virtual Gatherings from 10.30am to 1pm in lieu of both Pennant Hills and Blacktown Seniors Open Days. We are engaging a section of community members who are otherwise unable to engage with broader community during this pandemic. This is also helping to address isolation and related issues. We utilize this time to introduce important topics with guest speakers.
- In April we celebrated Sinhala & Tamil New Year on Monday 13 April 2020 with the guest appearance from Sahan Ranwala from Sri Lanka.
- We had a special program for Vesak Celebration and Poson Poya with Bhakthi Gree. Both events were addressed by our Lankarama Temple Chief Bhanthe Meegahakubure Dhammagavesi Thero from Sri Lanka.
- A special segment to celebrate Ramadhan.



- We were successful in getting a multicultural grant to bring all Sri Lankan ethnic and religious groups together to celebrate our New Year in April which was postponed due to the pandemic. We had number of planning meetings with the Sinhalese Cultural Forum of NSW re “Sun Fest” event, so that we can make it a much bigger multicultural event next year.
- Launch of Sri Lanka Association Women’s Network (SLAWN)– Our launch scheduled for May is postponed due to the pandemic and the possibility of rescheduling towards the end of the year is also appears diminishing due to the second wave of the virus. The objective of this is to increase women and young people participation and engage their creativity and innovativeness to address common social topics.

- The newest initiative of SLAWN is “Knit a Square” – we are requesting our community members to either knit or sew colourful squares that will be sewn together to provide warm blankets for women and families affected by domestic and family violence. Our target is to donate blankets on 25 November 2020, the day dedicated as International Day for Elimination of All Forms of Violence Against Women. In Australia this day is known as White Ribbon Day.

Time to Spare? Knit a Square!

Get creative and join us to knit or sew colourful squares that will be sewn together to provide warm blankets for women and families affected by DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

Guidelines

- Knitted squares OR
- Sewn fabric squares (with lining)
- Squares are to be 10"x10"
- Any colours or patterns
- Everyone from all skill levels are welcome!

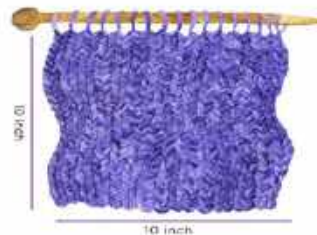
Collection Date

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25TH

Contact

Contact us to locate your nearest pickup and drop off points

Padmini 0412 304 621 | Nailika 0424 960 800 | womensnetwork@slansw.org.au



EVENTS

SRI LANKAN FLAG RAISING CEREMONY - BLACKTOWN CITY COUNCIL BY SUNIL DE SILVA

Sri Lanka Association President, Nalika Padmasena was able to persuade Mayor Tony Bleasdale OAM to honour Sri Lanka Independence Day by arranging a Flag Raising Ceremony on Friday 7 February 2020 at the Blacktown City Civic Centre.

The ceremony was a significant honour for the Sri Lankan community to have our Lion Flag proudly fluttering in the evening breeze.

The event commenced with the acknowledgement to the traditional owners by Greg MacCallum, Sister Cities Project Officer, the coordinator of the event. The lighting of the traditional oil lamp to the background of Kandyan drummers and monitored by Rizan Rizvi achieved the time-honoured tradition of dispelling gloom and bestowing favourable light on the gathering and was followed by the welcome speech by the Mayor.

The Sri Lankan Consul General Mr M.H.M.Nimal Bandara responded to the welcome and the honour conferred on our community and motherland by the Flag Raising Ceremony.

Nalika addressed the gathering on behalf of the Sri Lanka Association. She outlined the history of the flag and the subsequent changes that reflected the multi-ethnic, multi religious mix that we call Sri Lanka. Elaboration of the description Nalika brought to the notice of the mixed audience of Blacktown Councillors and the Sri Lankan audience and captured their attention must await another day.

The presentation of the Australian and Sri Lankan flags to the accompaniment of our respective national anthems was followed by cultural performances of music, dances and readings.

The event was graced by the dignitaries from the Sri Lanka Consulate and the Sri Lankan community and the Blacktown Councillors led by the Mayor Tony Bleasdale OAM, State MPs Stephen Bali, Kevin Connolly, Councillor Susai Benjamin Chair Blacktown City Multi-Cultural Advisory Committee and Councillor Dr Moninder Singh





The event which owed its success to the co-operation of the Sinhalese Cultural Forum, Austra-Lanka Muslim Association, the Sri Lanka Malay Association and the Sri Lanka Reconciliation Forum with the Committee of the Sri Lankan Association of New South Wales.

The evening was rounded off by a sumptuous spread .The guests then braved the inclement weather to honour the Sri Lankan Flag being raised at the podium overlooking the grounds of the Civic Centre.



OUR THANKS TO THE BLACKTOWN CITY COUNCIL FOR SPONSORING THIS GREAT HISTORICAL EVENT.



The memoir on raising Sri Lankan National Flag to celebrate Sri Lankan Independence, Blacktown City Council, Sydney on 7 th February 2020.

On behalf of the Consulate General of Sri Lanka in Sydney, I would like to jot down a memoir regarding the great event which conducted by Blacktown City Council, Sydney to respect and honor Sri Lankan people living in Blacktown Council area as well as all members of the Sri Lankan community in Australia in week's time starting from 07 th February 2020.

As a Diplomat for more than two decades, it was the first event which I participated in such a pride occasion to pay tribute to our National Flag in a foreign country. The National Flag is the symbol representing over three million Sri Lankan origin people living in overseas. Honouring our National Flag in a foreign land is an honour to our sovereign nation.

I wish to take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to the Hon. Mayor, Tony Bleasdale and other councillors of the Blacktown City Council as well as Mrs. Nalika Padmasena, President and the able team of Sri Lanka Association of NSW regarding excellent arrangements for the event.

**M.H.M.N. Bandara
Consul General of Sri Lanka in Sydney.**

இலங்கை சுதந்திரத்தை கொண்டாட இலங்கை தேசியக் கொடியை உயர்த்துவதற்கான நினைவுக் குறிப்பு, பிப்ரவரி 7, 2020 அன்று சிட்னியின் பிளாக்டவுன் நகர சபை.

சிட்னியில் உள்ள இலங்கை துணைத் தூதரகம் சார்பாக, சிட்னியின் பிளாக்டவுன் நகர சபை, பிளாக்டவுன் கவுன்சில் பகுதியில் வசிக்கும் இலங்கை மக்களையும், உறுப்பினர்களையும் கொரவிப்பதற்காகவும், நடத்தப்பட்ட மாபெரும் நிகழ்வு குறித்த ஒரு நினைவுக் குறிப்பை எழுத விரும்புகிறேன். ஆஸ்திரேலியாவில் உள்ள இலங்கை சமூகம் 2020 பிப்ரவரி 07 முதல் வாரத்தில் தொடங்குகிறது.

இரண்டு தசாப்தங்களுக்கும் மேலாக ஒரு இராஜதந்திரி என்ற முறையில், வெளிநாட்டிலுள்ள நமது தேசியக் கொடிக்கு அஞ்சலி செலுத்தும் இத்தகைய பெருமை சந்தர்ப்பத்தில் நான் பங்கேற்ற முதல் நிகழ்வு இது. தேசிய கொடி என்பது வெளிநாடுகளில் வாழும் மூன்று மில்லியனுக்கும் அதிகமான இலங்கை வம்சாவளியைக் குறிக்கும் சின்னமாகும். ஒரு வெளிநாட்டு தேசத்தில் நமது தேசியக் கொடியை மதிப்பது நமது இறையாண்மைக்கு ஒரு மரியாதை.

எங்கள் மனமார்ந்த நன்றியைத் தெரிவிக்க இந்த வாய்ப்பைப் பயன்படுத்த விரும்புகிறேன். மேயர், டோனி ப்ளீஸ்டேல் மற்றும் பிளாக்டவுன் நகர சபையின் பிற கவுன்சிலர்கள் மற்றும் நிகழ்விற்கான சிறந்த ஏற்பாடுகள் குறித்து திருமதி நளிகா பத்மசேனா, தலைவர் மற்றும் இலங்கை என்.எஸ்.டபிள்யூ சங்கத்தின் திறமையான குழு.

எம்.எச்.எம்.என். பண்டர
சிட்னியில் உள்ள இலங்கையின் தூதரகம்.



EVENTS

YOUNG ACHIEVER

Category 1 - 2019 High Achiever – Education

First place 99.50 KENUKA WIJAYATUNGA

- A student at Kings School who was recognised as an HSC All-rounder achieving Band 6/E4 (90+) in all his HSC subjects. Also recognised as one of the top 3 academics in his Year 12 cohort.
- He has received Premier's Award for All-round Excellence in HSC.
- He was a school prefect and the House Captain.
- In recognition of his academic ability he was awarded the King's Scholars Award for Tuition to the King's School.
- He has received the academic prize for Engineering studies in 2018 & 2019 along with Full Colours for academic proficiency in 2018 & 2019.
- He is a recipient of Gold Duke of Edinburgh
- His school activities include sport, music, clubs, Cadet under Officer in the Cadet Corps, NYSF and debating
- Kenuka believes in holistic development. He made a positive impact in the community by running after-school classes to help his mates with their studies.

99.00 THALHA OMAR

- He is a student of Alpha Omega Senior College
- He ranked in the top five for all his subjects
- He ranked the first place for Biology and scored highest HSC mark for Chemistry in his cohort.
- He was awarded with the most consistent award for Biology at the graduation ceremony

98.90 MEDANI ATHAUDA

- She is named in the 2019 All Rounders List
- She has successfully achieved the Associate Diploma in Professional Communication.
- During HSC she completed her AMEB Grade 8 Piano
- 2018-2019 Pymble Ladies College English Captain
- In 2018 she was recognised with University of Sydney Prize for Economics

98.65 MOHAMED ARHAM MOHAMED ZAKIR HUSSAIN

- He has obtained exceptional marks in Chemistry and Extension Maths and Science, ranking third in the State for Biology

96.65 TIVONEE KAPUGAMA

- She has received band 6 in Chemistry and Extension 1 Mathematics.
- She has excelled in wide range of activities including academic competitions, co-cultural activities, fundraising committees, leadership groups, peer support program, Student Representative Council and Premier Debating competition.
- She has also participated in a variety of academic competitions such as AMT Mathematics, ICAS writing & Science, Chemistry Quiz and Australian History & Australian Geography competitions.
- She was a Literacy Leader and tutored children
- She has submitted written work in the 2017-2019 "What Matters?" Writing competition where she was short listed in 2018.

96.50 MASLAMA MAHMOOD

- He has attended Al-Faisal College

95.15 ELIZABETH MARSH

- Has demonstrated all-rounder skills in all subjects

Category 2 - 2019 High Achiever – Community Service

Winner ELIZABETH MARSH

2018-2019 Elizabeth was the school captain of Turrumurra High School She demonstrated her passion to serve the community through array of volunteering activities. In 2018 she was selected as a Youth Observer for Ku-ring Gai Financial Services Ltd (the board that oversees the Turrumurra & Lindfield Branches of Bendigo Bank)With these involvements she demonstrated by initiating school's first ever International Women's Day that raised funds for a Women's Shelter and also organised various other fundraisers for Motor Neurone Decease NSW. She believes in positive change and real local change and continues to volunteer at Salvation Army activities

Runner-Up TIVONEE KAPUGAMA

She has received a Diamond Award from Department Education for her volunteering contributions to the community. Volunteering support and contribution to the Canterbury Bankstown Youth Week 2017 She made several contributions to the community cultural activities for many years

Runner-Up KENUKA WIJAYATUNGA

Kenuka has demonstrated full involvement in learning opportunities outside the classroom. He is Gold Duke of Edinburgh recipient - President of the Cartesian Academic Club in 2019. He worked as a Future Project junior intern Participated in many fund raising activities such as World's Greatest Shave

Category 3 - 2019 High Achiever – Music & Performing Arts

Winner MEDANI ATHAUDA

She has proven excellent results in Australian Music Examination Board by achieving Grade 8 Distinction in Piano in 2019. This was recognised by the tertiary institution by awarding extra bonus points for university selections.Her plan is to continue her music studies further and achieve a Diploma in Piano.

Category 4 - 2019 High Achiever – Visual Arts (Photography)

Winner WARSHA WARAKAPOLA

2017 Pixel Prize Competition held by the Australian Catholic University & National Arts School NSW. Warsha submitted three photographs in the theme “Empathy” and won the First Place under the ‘Most Original’ photograph category. 2018 Screenshot Awards Competition held by the NSW Art Gallery and she submitted three photographs in the theme “an artwork that evokes a sense of curiosity and wonder” and won 2nd Place for the intermediate category. You can view her work in NSW Art Gallery website. In 2019 she has won High Commended for Mercy Foundation’s Youth Award competition in the theme “Home”



GUEST SPEECH

BY DR DUSHMANTHA THALAKOTUNA



Dushantha Thalakatuna (Dush) is an electronic engineer by profession. He scored 5th in the country for HSC equivalent in Sri Lanka majoring in mathematics.

He did his undergraduate degree from University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka where he achieved 4.05 GPA out of 4.2 placing him third in his batch.

He completed his PhD in 2013 from Macquarie University specialising in Radio Frequency Engineering.

Since graduation he has worked in both commercial and defence industries in Australia in Senior Systems engineer and Systems lead roles.

In 2019, Dush joined Macquarie University as a lecturer and a researcher in the fields of microelectronics and antennas.

Dush holds three international patents and published his work in over 30 international journals and conferences.

Do you think some of the inspirational leaders such as Elon Musk, Mother Teresa, Jeff Bezos, Oprah Winfrey etc. knew that they are going to be legends in 10-20 years, when they were young and energetic like the bunch of young achievers we have here today? Perhaps not. In the same way, some of you may grow to be an inspiring leader in the future. You never know what your future holds.

However, I would like to say there are a few traits that always shape any leader's future to become who they are today, no matter what your field of expertise would be. So, if you want to become a future leader, you will also need to see if you have them within you. If not, its high time you make them part of your life: Vision, Attitude and Hard work.

Vision:

Each of them had a vision or a goal, perhaps not a clear one, but one that gives them enough drive to pursue their goals. Elon Musk has a vision to populate a city on Mars. The vision gives you a purpose. Have you really thought of what you want to achieve in 10-20 years? You won't come up with a vision overnight. It is something you build over time when you find your passion.

How do you build your Vision? You start reading many things, following the people that inspire you.

Perhaps if they are hard to reach initially follow them through social media through professional networking platforms such as LinkedIn. Try to get into their circles, communities, and get them as a mentor if possible. Ask for an internship or volunteer opportunity in an organisation you follow. Get a feeling on what it feels like to work with a leader in your field of interest. As you work with them, you will learn a lot and grow. Isn't it best to learn as early as you can?



He has also received many innovation and performance recognition awards for his contributions in the field of radio frequency engineering. Dush also serves as the Secretary for Institute of Electronics and Electrical Engineers (IEEE) NSW section at present and was the webmaster for Institute of Engineers Sri Lanka (IESL) NSW chapter during 2012-2015.

Apart from his passion for research he is also passionate about building online businesses. He started his first online business at the age of 27 during his PhD and built three online businesses since then.

You will also learn that they make mistakes as everyone else, but yet they recover and move.

Everyone has their own insecurities, but those who can come out of their mental bubble will thrive.

As you work with a group of people that inspires you, you will start to understand what you want to do in your life. If you'd not have a vision now, your vision is to have a vision in one year. As you grow, your vision will be clearer, and it will also start to evolve.



Attitude

The next significant quality is the attitude. Inclusive but not limited to is your attitude to failure, attitude towards solving problems, attitude towards going beyond your comfort zone, attitude towards listening to others, attitude towards giving back.

Most of you may have straight "A"s from your childhood. That is possibly why you are here today receiving awards. How many times have you failed an exam? Do you know what it feels to fail?

I would like to give you bad news and good news to these young achievers who have rarely failed an exam yet. The bad news is you will not have a curriculum for the rest of your life. If you did, at least you can study for it and pass with flying colours. Reality is you will not know what life will throw and guaranteed you will fail. The good news is you are smart enough to work your way around failure. It is all about how you face it.

How do you build your attitude? Try things out of your comfort zone. Learn things that are outside your interests. You may find areas you are really good at, you will not know until you try. Learn to embrace failure. When you are in your twenties, you got nothing to lose. No family, no kids and your parents will most likely back you up. That is the best time to take risks, try new challenges and follow your passion. Do something out of your comfort zone. Give back to the community, not only to Sri Lankan community but as a whole to your country and world. Do voluntary work. Teach someone for free. Motivate a younger brother or a sister to follow their passion. These are only a few things you could try. Be yourself and figure out what you want to do outside your comfort zone.

Hard work:

Does "27375 days" mean anything to you? This is about the number of days in a 75-year time period. It is reasonable to say that is about the lifespan of a human these days as well. Assuming you do not want to achieve your dreams at 65 years of age you have 23725 days left. Taking out 18 years from your life (which is about your age) you have about 17155 days left. Taking off your 8 hours of sleep every day you have 11437 days. Let us take off two days a week for the weekend for you to spend your time with family and friends. Then you are left with 8169 days.

"It seems the harder I work, the more luck I have"

THOMAS JEFFERSON



If you take in averages four hours a day to eat and commute you only have about 6807 days which is about 18 years. This is almost same as your age now. So, you only have almost as your age to work hard and achieve your dreams. Do you think that is along time? Ask your parents and they will tell how fast that will fly..So, you need to make sure you spend this time wisely. This is why your Vision and Attitude is critical.

How do you work hard during this time? Make sure every second count. Ask yourself, did I give my best shot? Avoid distractions. Filter out what is important and not important. Again, this is why your Vision is important.



It would be best if you also work smarter. How do you work smart? Is there a way you can increase these numbers? You might guess I will sleep less and work more on weekends. Yes, that might give you a few extra days, but most importantly work as a team. Find a good buddy who has similar interests. Cover more ground with them to learn new skills collectively that help both of you to grow together.

Last but not least, remember that you are always bounded by your own limits not others. So, if you cannot be who you want to be that is your own doing.

All the very best and congratulations on the awards today.

EVENTS

SENIOR LUNCHEON



ARTICLES

Disclaimer: Articles are intellectual properties & opinions of respective authors and not of SLANSW

Impact of Covid 19 Pandemic on Human Behaviour

by Abey Bandaranayaka (MAPS)/Consultant Psychologist

Australia's forced social isolation has psychological health experts concerned about an increase in loneliness and associated emotional and physical health issues, especially among older Australians.

According to research undertaken by the Australian Psychological Society (APS) and Swinburne University, one-in four-Australians experienced loneliness prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

A new survey released last week by Vox Pop Labs found the number of Australians reporting poor mental health has doubled in the last month and the number of Australians frequently feeling despair has more than tripled.

An earlier survey revealed that loneliness could be increasing nationally, with the majority (57 per cent) of Australians feeling lonely and isolated more often since the outbreak of COVID-19 (Source: MyGov, April 2020).

President of the APS Ms Ros Knight said these results were not surprising given many people were experiencing increased or new feelings of loneliness because of social distancing, quarantine and self-isolation.

"Loneliness is not itself a mental health problem and we are all vulnerable to experiencing some form of loneliness during our lifetime," Ms Knight said.



"But being lonely increases our chances of poor mental health and having a mental illness increases our chances of experiencing loneliness.

"We know that loneliness lowers the level of psychological health, with sufferers reporting higher levels of depression, anxiety, social difficulties and loss of confidence.

"This is exemplified in the latest data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) which found that one in three Australians (35 per cent) felt nervous at least some of the time, compared with 20 per cent during the same reporting period in 2017-18.

"We also know that people with higher loneliness levels report more physical health symptoms, including sleeping difficulties, headaches, stomach complaints, nausea, colds and infections.



Loneliness is a distressing feeling. It signals our need to reach out to others and prevent us from having to depend solely on our own resources to survive, thrive or flourish. COVID-19 is making loneliness worse by keeping people apart and cutting off these signals.

"Loneliness is usually temporary, although there is uncertainty about how long social distancing rules will be in place," she added.

Ms Knight said COVID-19 is leaving older Australians particularly vulnerable.

"Older Australians have been strongly encouraged to stay at home at this time and many are having reduced or no contact from family and friends," Ms Knight said.



“It is important to not make too many assumptions about their feelings and needs. It can be helpful to ask them what they think would be helpful, and if there is anything you can do.

“For example, talk to them about how they are feeling and how they are managing changes to their level of social contact, offer help to set up phone or video chats with family or friends or to write and send letters.

“You can even offer to help them get involved with hobbies and perhaps an online group for a particular hobby. Showing or sending them videos or photographs, letters or drawings is also a great way of staying connected,” she said.

Ms Knight said psychologists and other allied health professionals were seeking to alleviate loneliness by staying in regular contact with their clients and offering tele-health options where appropriate.

Last week more than 3,000 people from across Australia responded to an APS invitation to take part in an online forum to discuss ways to deal with loneliness, isolation and anxiety.

The forum covered a range of important and helpful topics, including:

- General understanding of what loneliness means
- Why it’s important to reduce loneliness
- Tips on managing loneliness
- What you can do to help yourself – if you are lonely
- What you can do to help others – if you are NOT lonely
- And current advice for some different groups within the population, including people who live alone, older people and children.



Psychology has a lot of advice to offer to Australians in regards to feelings of loneliness.

“While individuals can undertake other strategies such as keeping in touch with family members and other older people in their lives, Governments also looking at the impacts of loneliness on Australians during COVID-19 and building practical interventions into health policy.



“These could range from teaching Australians - particularly older Australians - how to use social interaction technologies like Zoom, to educating and training people on how to identify and manage feelings of loneliness in different life stages and settings,” Ms Knight said.

“More should be done to understand the impact of loneliness in our community.

“More can be done, like the APS public forum, to help people identify and manage their own feelings of loneliness and how to support others in the time of COVID-19,” Ms Knight said.

Tips for coping with coronavirus (COVID-19) anxiety

Maintaining your mental health during social isolation

The challenges associated with social distancing and isolation, including separation from loved ones, loss of freedom and reduced income, are leading some people to experience feelings of anxiety, boredom, frustration and fear. This information sheet outlines some useful strategies you can use to maintain good mental health during this unprecedented time of social distancing and isolation.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) anxiety and staying mentally healthy: Information for older adults

As the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic continues to develop, we all worry about how it is going to affect our own and our family's health, work and finances. This information sheet includes some useful tips to help older Australians keep stress and anxiety at bay during this challenging period.



"Visualize yourself not falling off the wall."

Psychological services via telehealth

Coronavirus has changed the way many psychological services are being delivered. In many cases, eligible Australians can now see their psychologist via telehealth (ie. videoconference or phone). This information sheet provides guidance on how to access your psychologist through telehealth and a range of helpful tips related to using telehealth services. An essential first step is to understand the likely implications of COVID-19 on human experience then start to respond, today.

We see five major human implications to expect from people's behaviour now and next which are likely to shape a New Human Experience

- An explicit message of COVID-19 is that other people/places can carry an invisible threat. Deciding on what to do—especially in relation to large decisions, such as holidays and where to live or work—is becoming a more anxious process. Many purchases are being postponed. All of this will make risk less tolerable and the familiar more valuable. The erosion of confidence will make trust way more important than ever before. This will necessitate a "trust multiplier"—action that, to be effective, rebuilds trust quickly and credibly. Focus will be on confidence-building through every channel. Justifiable optimism will sell well. All of this may change the nature of what we regard as premium products and services.

- The enforced shift during the worst of the pandemic to virtual working, consuming and socializing will fuel a massive and further shift to virtual activity for anything. It will affect ways of communicating across learning, working, transacting and consuming. This will impact everyone. Adoption of digital by those yet to do so will be accelerated and a reduction of the obstacles to going virtual for any sort of experience will be required. Winners will be those who test and explore all of the associated creative possibilities. Anything that can be done virtually will be.

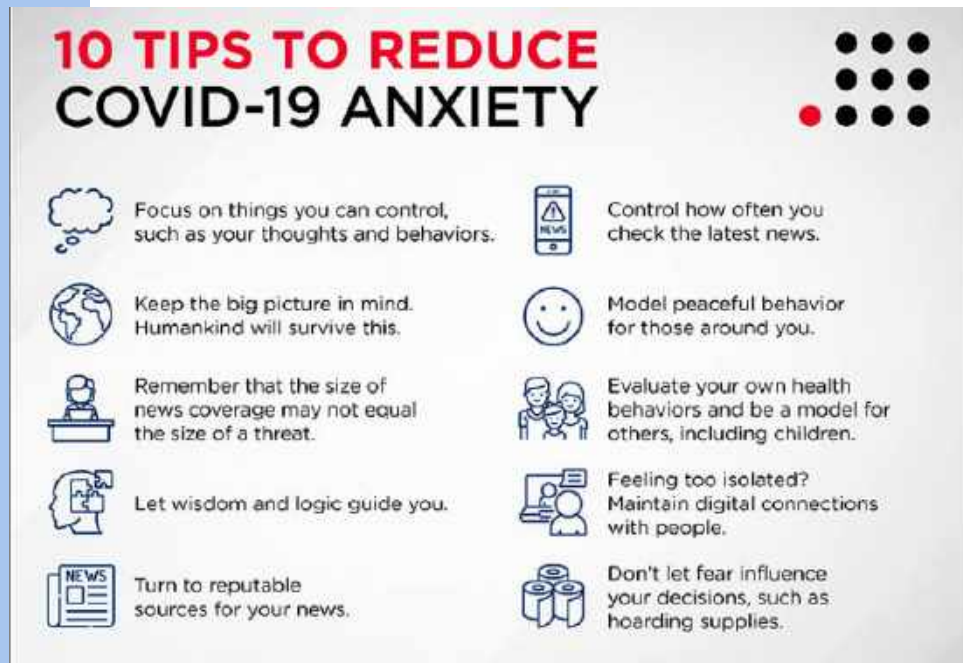


- People are concluding that they cannot rely on existing health structures but, nonetheless, want all the help they can get, in every aspect of their lives. Health experiences will be in demand and, vice versa, health should be considered in every experience. The concerns about health amplified during the crisis will not ebb after it is over. Rather, health will dominate. A health economy will emerge with opportunities for all to plug into. Every business will need to understand how it can be part of a new health ecosystem that will dominate citizen thinking.

- Everyone being told to self-isolate means a return en masse to home as the epicenter of life and experience. At the height of the crisis, many—workers, especially—are spending more time at home. After, this pattern will endure with meaningfulness and comfort carrying a price premium. There will be a rise in home spending—on the home and made at home as people will stay more local. Desire for cocooning, along with opportunities for those with creative strategies to enable it, will move center-stage. Winners will be those who zero their sights on the home.



- Dependence on experts and strong government recommendation—plus executive powers to start resolving the pandemic backed by citizen compliance—lends real weight to central authority, which in many markets has been eroded recently in popular culture. If governments get their handling of the crisis broadly right, expect top-down control to be back in fashion; if not, the reverse. A reinvention of authority is likely after the effect of travel limitations, self-isolation and lockdown officially mandated by many governments. Greater acceptance for the role of government and companies in society, and the importance of collective behavior, may occur.



Those strategies are recommended by Australian Psychological Society and it works well. In addition to those mentioned strategies positive thinking will enhance the well-being of our lives. You never should suppress your feelings and should let wisdom and logic guide you for such positive thinking.

ARTICLES

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Cow's Milk Considered a Holy Drink

by Dr Harold Gunatillake

Milk is considered a holy liquid according to Hindi traditions, used even to purify and freshen by bathing the golden statues of Gods and deities in the Kovils. In these religious practices, milk is a key ingredient used in poojas. The cow is revered by Hindus that provides milk for the farmers and the peasants and referred to as 'mother cow'. Those who have been to India would notice that cows make themselves comfortable on busy main roads, often with garlands or tilak/chandlos. This respect for the mother cow has a long history in Hinduism. Lord Krishna is famously known as Gopal, or the cow herd, and his love for the cow is apparent from the wealth of art based on these anecdotes and from anyone who has seen Mahabharata.



In the olden days the cow was taken from house to house, each morning, fresh raw milk was supplied directly from the cow's udder, a phenomenon that has disappeared with time due to industrialization and commercialization. How fortunate the people would have been then to drink fresh raw milk straight from the grass-fed cows.

In Sri Lanka our parents and the grands had their own cows in a close proximity shed specially constructed called "Pattie" where the cows are fed daily with grass, straw and poonac, and an old servant would bring the milk in a bucket each morning for home consumption and the balance would be sold to the neighbours. Those days and those memories are disappearing, and today we purchase our milk and milk products from the super-markets, more processed, more chemicals added.



**Do you know
cows have an
acute sense of
smell and can
detect
odors up to
six miles away
!!!!**

Whilst, milk being considered a holy nutritious drink, a new breed of people, calling themselves vegans, consider drinking of milk is exploitative of the cow, who should feed her young that milk. This vegetarian community don't seem to realise that the cow produce enough milk to feed the calves and provide sufficient to humans consumption, too. If the abundant milk is not extracted daily, the udders swell and may get infected, making the milk unsuitable for consumption. It is a basic phenomenon that the more milk extracted, the more will be secreted.

The colour of milk has been associated with good health, and milk was the main beverage consumed in most homes through the ages.

Popular sayings and slogans such as "Milk: it does a body good" and "Got Milk?" have brought milk into the mainstream media and further propelled the notion of milk being a healthful choice.

When we refer to milk, we do not strictly refer to cow's milk only, but for milk obtained from other animals, such as sheep, and goat. Milk products are also obtained from seeds like soy, almond and coconut.

One cup of fresh milk, considered as one serving, contains 32.5% of fat (8 grams), and 146 calories. 8 grams of carbohydrate and 8 grams of protein. Skimmed milk or non-fat milk contains no fat, 12 grams of carbohydrate and 8 grams of protein and 86 calories.

It is a nutritious beverage for those having diabetes, as the carbohydrate contained is even less than in most fruits.



For the development of teeth and bones kids need more calcium than adults. Milk is considered the easiest available and the best source of dietary calcium. Calcium also helps to maintain a normal blood pressure and help in clotting of the blood. Vitamin D seems to assist Calcium absorption in the intestines.

Milk has choline, an important nutrient to help with sleep. A glass of milk before retiring to bed may help those who find it difficult to sleep. Milk also has tryptophan (vitamin B6), too helpful to fall asleep. Eating too much of turkey during the festive season may help to sleep and the meat contains the same vitamin- tryptophan.

Milk has adequate potassium which is associated with a reduced risk of stroke, heart disease, high blood pressure. Potassium tends to help preservation of bone mineral density, and helps to maintain good muscle mass. It is refreshing to have a cold glass of milk after your gym workouts, much more healthy than energy drinks.

Lactose intolerance

Some people may lack an enzyme called 'lactase', important in digestion of lactose in milk. This condition is called, 'Lactose intolerance' one would experience abdominal bloating, diarrhoea, and discomfort when drinking milk. Drinking lactose-free milk, which has added enzymes to help with lactose digestion, may ease or eliminate these symptoms.

Milk allergy

Some kids may show symptoms of allergy to milk. This is different from lactose intolerance and refers to an abnormal immunological reaction in which the body immune system produces an allergy antibody (immune-globulin). Kids could get, wheezing, eczema and rhinitis, bleeding, and gastro-intestinal upsets and anaphylactic shocks.

Raw milk vs. Pasteurized Milk

Raw milk is not pasteurised or homogenised. Raw milk may not be safe due to the risk of pathogens outbreaks. According to the Centres for Disease Control (CDC) and the FDA, these outbreaks have been accounted for more than 1,000 illnesses, more than 100 hospitalised and two deaths between 1998 and 2005.

On the other hand raw milk proponents feel that it is safe and healthier. It is supposed to relieve asthma, autism and allergies. Also they believe that raw milk has more flavour, vitamins, minerals and beneficial proteins, enzymes and bacteria than milk that has been 'degraded' during pasteurization.

Fat content:

Low fat cow's milk contains less than 1% and hence suitable for those suffering or prevention of heart disease. Milk having 2% fat is not a low fat food. One cup of whole milk has 5 grams fat. Whole milk should be avoided by adults but suitable for growing kids to support their developing brains.



Milk fat is one of the most complex of all natural fats, containing about 400 different types of fatty acids !!!!



Pasteurization is a process in which milk is heated up to high temperatures for a short period. Such high temperatures destroy the pathogens, but may also destroy the beneficial bacteria in the milk. Nutrients seem to remain after such high heating.

Those who are allergic to milk, it appears they do not show any allergy to raw milk.

In homogenized milk, the fat gets broken and disperses the milk fat throughout the milk, by destroying the natural butter fat cells. These natural butter fat cells are found in raw milk. On boiling raw milk you would see the thick creamy fat cells on the surface, quite tasty and we look forward to that cream as kids. Butter and other products are made from the surface cream. On boiling raw milk, most of the pathogens get destroyed.

Pasteurised milk contains 150 calories in a cup, and calories from fat are 70.

Raw milk has 160 calories, and 80 calories from fat. Total carbohydrates in both raw and pasteurised milk are about the same.

Feel the difference.

a2 Milk™ is pure dairy milk, completely natural, permeate and additive free, which is why it tastes so refreshing. Most dairy milk today contains 2 main types of beta-casein protein, A2 and A1, while originally all dairy cows produced milk containing only the A2 type of beta-casein protein. a2 Milk™ comes from cows specially selected to produce A2 beta-casein protein rather than A1. Because a2 Milk™ is rich in A2 beta-casein protein, it may assist with your digestive wellbeing.



Both milks (raw and pasteurised), have the same amount of Tran's fat, cholesterol and total carbohydrates. Both milks have the same amount of Vitamin A, Calcium and Iron.

Almond Milk and Its Origins.

Almond milk is made by mixing ground almonds with water and straining it to remove almond skins and sediment. Almond milk has been used since the Middle Ages as a substitute for cow's milk. Because cow's milk doesn't keep very long without refrigeration, medieval people processed it into butter and cheese right away to preserve it. They used almond milk in cooking and baking, since it's easier to store.

In summing up it is safer to drink pasteurised milk. Almond milk is a good substitute when your kids are allergic to cow's milk.

Some reference to Medical News Today.

The very first meeting of Mahinda Thera and the King Devanampiyattissa took place in "Missaka Pauwa", today known as Mihintale considered as the cradle of Buddhism in Sri Lanka.

The King Devanampiyattisa was very fond of hunting. It was the time of a national carnival; The King Devanapiyatissa went on a hunting spree accompanied by his group. Enjoying the pleasure of the sport the King went deep into the wilderness alone, leaving his large group of companions behind, thinking that they would disturb the animals. Suddenly, the King saw a deer browsing among the trees not too far from him. Being a very skilful person for this sport, the King quickly snapped his bow at the deer. The deer darted off.

At the same time he heard someone calling his name "Tissa, Tissa". The King was alarmed than surprised and looked in that direction. He knew that there was none on the earth who would address him by his first name. To his utter amazement he saw an unfamiliar figure standing on the top of the rock, clad in yellow robes. Upon meeting the shaven-headed monks, Devanampiyatissa was taken aback by their appearance and asked who they were. The King was furious. He asked in rage "Who are you with shaven head and clad in tattered yellow robe, to call a King like me by his first name?" Mahinda Maha Thera, calmly replied, "We are recluses, Oh King the disciples of the Dhammaraja, and have come from Jambudeepa (India) with compassion towards you".

When the King heard those words he at once remembered the message he had received earlier from his unseen friend, the Indian Emperor Asoka about Buddhism. At once the King laid down his bow and arrow and exchanged greetings. Seeing the others standing behind the Mahinda Maha Thera, the King asked "when did they come?" And the reply was "with me" from Mahinda Maha Thera.



The Arahath Mahinda Thera put the King at ease and explained his mission. After asking the King Devanampiyatissa few questions, to test his knowledge and intelligence to ascertain whether he could understand the Dhamma, Arahath Mahinda realised that the King has the capacity of comprehending Buddhism. One of the intelligent questions is known as the Mango Quiz ('Amba Panaya')

The Mahinda Thera preached to the King the 'Chulaattipadupama Sutta'. At the end of the discourse the King and his followers of forty thousand people embraced the new faith. It is said that many gods gathered to grace this historical occasion.

Although the King invited the Arahath Mahinda thera to live in the 'Mahameuna' monastery with all the comforts, Arahath Mahinda thera preferred to stay in Mihinthale caves with his disciples as his love for nature and environment.

Queen Anula, King Tissa's sister-in-law and the consort of an uparaja (Sub-king), with 500 of her attendant ladies, having listened to the discourses, gained mental attainments 'Sotapana'. She requested Arahath Mahinda to grant them ordination. Venerable Arahath Mahinda helped in establishing the Order of the Nuns (Bhikhunisasana or Meheni Sasana) in Sri Lanka. The Mahinda Thera suggested to the King Tissa that his sister Sangamitta Therani in India, be invited to Sri Lanka to bestow ordination as a male monk was not permitted to ordain a female monk. Thus the Meheni Sasana was established in Sri Lanka.



The arrival of Arahath Mahinda created a new era in the country, a beginning of a new civilisation with its own identity. Arahath Mahinda brought not only pure Buddhism, but also unity and lasting socio-political and cultural revolution, changing the life and behaviour of the people for peace and tolerance. It was not only people, the animal kingdom also received peace as the king gave royal protection to all animals, since Arahath Mahinda emphasised to the King the sanctity of all living beings – same right to live as his citizens.

Arahat Mahinda Thera founded the Order of the Sangha in the country. Relics of the Buddha were obtained from Emperor Asoka and they were enshrined at the Thupārāma Dagaba, the first of its kind to be built in the sacred city of Anuradhapura. There was a vast development of agriculture, irrigation works, social welfare work, arts and crafts in Sri Lanka. The offering of the Mahā Meghavana, the royal park to the Sangha by the king, was an important event, for it was there that the 'Mahāvihāra', the leading monastery and the centre of Buddhist education was established. Arahath Mahinda is described as "the father of Sinhalese literature" since he had translated and written commentary for the Tripitaka in Sinhala, turning it into a literary language. He was also credited with introducing the culture of the Mauryan Empire with its arts, crafts and architecture to the Island, Arahath Mahinda is known as 'Anubudu'-The second Buddha by Buddhists for his contribution to Sri Lanka. Ven Mahinda propagated the Buddhism for 48 years. He passed away at the age of 80 in Mihintale.



Ven, Mahinda's bed in the Minindu cave : Ven.Sangamitta Thereniya and Queen Anula

Although Poson is celebrated throughout the island, the main centre of celebration is Mihintale, the ancient monastic complex where Mahinda preached the first sermon to the king Devanampiyatissa. Long lines of devotees dressed in white, climb the many steps (1840) to the top of the Mihintale rock. Mass religious activities such as Sil campaigns, Bodhi Poojas, Dansalas,- which are set up to giving away free food and beverage to people, Poson devotional songs("Bathi Gee"), Poson pandols ('thoran') a lanterns, pageants - Mihidu parahara - are organized on that day.



Since the introduction of Buddhism by Arahath Mahinda the Sinhala Kings governed the country based on ethics drawn from Buddhism ('Dasa Raja Dhamma' - The Ten Duties of Rulers) which includes non-violence, tolerance, respecting opinions of other persons that are essential for religious and ethnic harmony. Foreign invasions over the centuries failed to change the cultural and religious identity of the Sinhala Buddhist. Anyone who has embraced the Sri Lankan way of life would instinctively respect Buddhist values, regardless of ethnic or religious differences. It is through such an understanding that all communities in Sri Lanka can live in peace and harmony.

Theruwana Saranai

ARTICLES

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Heart Failure, Basil and Spinach

By Dr Harold Gunatillake

The topic of the subject is confusing, but as you read, you'll understand the significance.

What is heart failure and why should it occur?

Your heart start beating from your early foetal stage till you exhale your last breath. By the time you are 60, a healthy heart would have beaten continuously over two billion times. The efficient working and pumping blood from your heart can become weakened with age, but if you are aware of it, you can always adjust your lifestyle to prevent it. This decline in its efficiency is called "heart failure"

The first phase of heart failure is hypertrophy of the smooth muscles of the heart. This occurs when the heart has to work more strenuously to pump blood to all organs and tissues of the body. The heart muscles have the inherent power to contract and relax, but its rhythm and rate are controlled by nerve bundles.



Basil and Spinach from our balcony garden

The muscles in the upper two chambers of the heart (atrium) have thinner walls, because they are temporary reservoirs of the blood. The two lower chambers are composed of thick layers of involuntary muscles which takes the stresses and strain throughout life.

If the strain exceeds the normal limit the muscles compensates by becoming bigger (hypertrophy) and the brunt of that strain is more on the left lower chamber (ventricle) that has to pump blood every second during lifetime.

The commonest conditions that cause left ventricular hypertrophy are high blood pressure and leaking aortic valves.



This is well shown on a plain X ray of the chest revealing a 'boot shape' of the heart due to hypertrophy of the left ventricle.

If the strain on the heart increases more, then it is inevitable to weaken.

So, heart failure means that the heart's ability to deliver enough oxygenated blood to each and every part of the body's organs and tissues is lessened. If this state is unattended the next stage is fatal damage.



How do you know that your heart is failing?

The earliest sign or symptom would be breathlessness on exertion, and with further progressing, breathless at rest. The other term we use for breathlessness is 'dyspnoea'. The reason why this happens is due to congestion or 'back up' of blood in the pulmonary veins that returns blood from the lungs to the left chambers of the heart. Fluid from the blood leaks out and fills the lung tissue. The blood pressure in the pulmonary veins rise, and doctors refer to this as 'pulmonary hypertension'. Do not mix this situation with peripheral hypertension, which is more common.

Your doctor will put you on a diuretic for life which helps to reduce the fluid in the lungs.

Persistent coughing and wheezing will occur due to fluid build-up in the lungs. Sometimes, this state mimics an asthmatic attack, and the doctor calls it 'cardiac asthma'. Do not confuse this situation with bronchial asthma which is more related to allergies.

If you neglect the situation further, feet start swelling, then the legs, and abdomen. You gain weight due to water-logging.

Please do not go for any other type of para-medical or native treatment for this condition. You need to go to your family doctor, who'll do the necessary investigations and refer to a specialist. I am aware that in Sri Lanka many seek medication from the herbalists and native doctors in the rural areas and see a Western qualified doctor at the last stages, when the condition is irreversible

When the heart starts failing, the pulse rate becomes rapid (palpitations) and you feel like throbbing in your chest.

Feel your own radial pulse in your wrist and count regularly. If it is rapid and or irregular, you may have to see your doctor.

Importance of checking your potassium in blood

There are many conditions that predispose to heart failure, which includes, heart attacks, viral cardiomyopathies, diabetes and so on. But what we are discussing in this article is a simple situation that may lead to heart failure that you should be aware of.

Potassium is a mineral required for many bodily functions, including keeping control of the electrical conduction of your heart muscles, metabolism of carbs, building muscles, and so on.

Low potassium levels cause fatigue, irritability and increased blood pressure. Overdose of potassium from natural sources is not possible. Taking too much of potassium intake from potassium salts can also lead to nausea, vomiting and even cardiac arrest. Weakness of muscles, muscle cramps, constipation and abdominal pains can be caused due to low potassium in your blood.



Low potassium levels can cause damage to the electrical workings of the heart and heart beats may become irregular. Too much of potassium also will damage the heart muscles.

Also, the medications given by your doctor like the diuretics and others may also deplete your potassium in your blood. So, if you are in this predicament, you need to check your potassium level among other tests.

Your doctor will prescribe a tablet called 'Slow-K' to replace your potassium loss whilst on certain diuretics. Supplements may not be required if you increase the consumption of spinach, basil, bananas, potatoes, among others, daily

Fruits, including bananas and tomatoes have high potassium, but if you are a diabetic or has fructose intolerance you may need to restrict your fruits.



Two of the best veggies you could grow in your garden or balcony will provide sufficient potassium replacement. The 7 different types of basil have nutritional potassium from 2630 mg to 78 mg. per 100grams.

Baby spinach is easy to grow on your balcony or garden. Within 6 weeks of sewing you could plenty of leaves to supply your potassium requirement. One cup of 30-gram serving of raw baby spinach has 167 milligrams of potassium



The potassium your body obtains from baby spinach is needed not only for the efficient workings of the heart muscles, but also to promote growth and development of strong bones and trigger the activity of enzymes required for carbohydrate metabolism.

Other good sources of potassium include potatoes, oranges and grapefruit juices, avocados, broccoli, coconut, dried fruits, yams raisins, beans like Lima, or white beans, bacon, nuts, soy products among others.

Beef, eggs, fish, peanut butter, poultry and pork contain moderate amount of potassium

Low potassium fruits and veggies are blueberries, cauliflower, cucumbers, grapefruit, grapes, lettuce and strawberries.

Conclusions: Keep your heart checked to prevent failure, and also eating natural foods containing high potassium may help to keep an active healthy heart. It is beneficial to exercise daily and eating nutritious high fibre foods will keep yourself healthy and fit.

ARTICLES

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Albert Einstein's Obscure Visit to Sri Lanka in 1922

By Prof. Kirthi Tennakone

The Nobel Prize in Physics 1921 was awarded to Albert Einstein "for his services to Theoretical Physics, and especially for his discovery of the law of the photoelectric effect."

The most acclaimed scientific celebrity Albert Einstein had visited Sri Lanka in 1922 en route his journey to Japan. Archival information on the subject being scanty and it appears that his visit to Ceylon has not received publicity at that time or subsequently. The fact that Einstein and his wife Elsa were riding on rickshaws in Colombo October 28th 1922 will surprise everyone.

On invitation of Yamamoto Sanehiko, the Manager of a Publishing House in Tokyo, Albert Einstein and his second wife Elsa Lowenthal boarded the Japanese steamer Kitano Maru on October 8th 1922 at Marseilles in France to visit Japan. The ship was destined for stops in Port Said, Colombo, Singapore, Hong Kong and Shanghai before entering Japan at the Port of Kobe. Einstein's trip was meticulously planned and funded by the host Yamamoto and also sponsored by the Japanese government and the scientific community. The Ship Kitano Maru carrying Einstein and Elsa among the passengers sailed through Suez arriving in Colombo 28th October 1922. Notes Einstein scribbled during the trip describe in some detail how they were escorted to rickshaws and Einstein's candid impression of what he saw in Colombo.

Einstein says, moment he and Elsa stepped out of the deck, a fine-boned man with a proud look and brown saliva trickling from the mouth, hauled him away exclaiming "all-round two rupee" and sat him on a rickshaw.



Albert Einstein had a 1,427 pages long FBI file.



Albert Einstein
in Colombo and Negombo:
October 1922 and January 1923



Einstein and wife Elsa 1922



Einstein, pointing the finger to a near by ship's official, has protested vehemently as if it had been a fault of this officer, expressing his reluctance to get driven in a carriage pulled by a man. The official had told Einstein, what you said is true, but now you are in the Orient. In the meantime another rickshaw puller got Einstein's wife Elsa seated and began running. Einstein shouted "stop" and asked Elsa to get down. The official intervened again, once he explained the procedure, both got into the rickshaws and were driven to streets of the Colombo City.



A note in the Einstein's diary dated 28th October 1922 reads "We rode on small one man carriages drawn at trot by men of Herculean strength, yet of delicate built. I was bitterly ashamed to be a party to the abominable treatment accorded to fellow human beings, but the circumstance did not permit me avoiding it". However, Einstein's wife being naturally more practical had remarked "For these men to earn a living, they need our patronage".

In summing-up his experience with people he encountered in Japan, China, Sri Lanka and Palestine, Einstein attributes a characteristic quality to the people of each country. He says he saw nobility among Sri Lankans.

The word nobility has varying meanings "high inherited social status" or "pride of being possessed with righteous and virtuous qualities". What Einstein meant here is left to the readers for their interpretation. The records in the travel diary refer only to the conditions of impoverished in Colombo rather than affluent sector he must have definitely seen while going from Fort to Pettah. After leaving Colombo Einstein wrote in his diary "Ceylon is a plant's paradise, yet a stage of pathetic human existence".



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Why do Jaffna people shake their legs in sitting position?

By Dr. Harold Gunatillake

Fidgeting like shaking your legs can help you to lose weight- burn 350 cal. A day

Sitting for more than six hours greatly increases your risk of a clot forming in your calf veins. No matter how much you exercise, eat well, avoid smoking, excessive sitting will cause problems according to Tom Rath best-selling author of 'Eat Move Sleep' which is sold more than six million copies:

As soon as you sit down, electrical activity in your leg muscle shuts off! Enzyme production, which helps break down body fat, drops by 90 percent. After two hours of sitting, your good cholesterol drops by 20%. Continuous body motion, including fidgeting, is a healthy use of daily calories and keeps your weight down.



As soon as you sit down, electrical activity in your leg muscle shuts off! Enzyme production, which helps break down body fat, drops by 90 percent. After two hours of sitting, your good cholesterol drops by 20%. Continuous body motion, including fidgeting, is a healthy use of daily calories and keeps your weight down.

In the interesting new study in Australia, researchers recognized that excessive sitting time is associated with worse health. Shaking your legs whilst being seated, tend to improve your health. You are aware travelling for many hours in a plane you are reminded of rotating your ankles frequently to avoid deep vein thrombosis on flights.

Furthermore, there are positive associations between cancer risk and sedentary behaviour.

Shaking your lower limbs vertically or from side inwards keeps the leg muscles active and calories are lost. Some, especially women tend to shake their feet cross legged while reading a book in bed.

You may lose more calories sitting down and shaking your legs continuously and rhythmically than walking.



You can now buy electrical shaking machines to do the same job. One issue with such machines is that the rhythmic motion of the foot plate tends to shake the feet and legs and may not improve circulation such as sending venous blood more rapidly towards the heart. Shaking your legs rhythmically functions better than the machine, as far as movement of the blood flow

When you are in a nervous state you may unintentionally shake your legs, and that sends a message to everyone around you about your feelings of anxiety or irritation or being bored.

Shaking your legs isn't always a sign of boredom. Some people in the North of Sri Lanka, do it while they are concentrating on a task or problem. I have seen personally many Jaffna people shaking their legs unknowingly when engaged in serious auditing work.

Or for some people it is traditional to shake their legs -inwards and outwards whilst talking or just doing nothing. It is a perpetual habit, while some others do it subtle, situational tremor.

Most old people in Sinhalese homes in the rural areas while chewing beetle and relaxing on the reclining chair called the "Hansi putuwa" seem to shake their legs, like no other business, most relaxing and satisfying.

Shaking your legs is beneficial to your health, especially if your job is sitting down long hours, say at the computer.

Shaking your legs seems to increase blood flow significantly. So, if you are not a leg shaker, you should take a break, get up and walk every few hours.

In some cases, leg shaking goes beyond subconscious behaviour and may be a cause of underlying disease.

There is a condition called restless legs syndrome (RSL) which has no connection to the habit of shaking your legs. RSL, occurs more in bed when you sleep. It is a feeling to move your legs in order to alleviate crawling, itching, aching.

Leg tremors are different to leg shaking. A person with leg tremors may notice their leg shaking while a muscle or group of muscles pulses or spasm out of control. This situation is common in multiple sclerosis, stroke, traumatic brain injury.

When your liver or kidney failure may also cause tremors.

So, shaking the legs as in the Jaffna tradition is a healthy movement. It is not considered obnoxious and being involuntary may not be able to control.



Jaffna man has strong wiry legs and leg shaking gives good blood flow, better skin health, may be considered a factor for strong healthy legs for walking long distances.

Strong healthy legs are linked with healthier brain aging. Their brain health has influenced them to study well and become professionals.



Now you know why Jaffna man is wiser.

COMMUNITY

NEW SERVICES FOR CARERS

The Australian Government is rolling out a range of new early-intervention services and supports for carers. These new services have been designed based on evidence that shows the best way to help carers is to help them early in their caring role, increase their skills and reduce the strain of caring.

These new services can help you get the support you need before reaching crisis point.

New services to give you support and skills

Carers can now access new online services:

- Peer support to assist you to connect with and learn from other carers. This online community forum will help carers share their stories, knowledge and experience with others.
- Self-guided coaching to support and teach you skills useful to your caring situation. The coaching modules will cover a range of topics and can be completed at your own pace online.
- A new phone-based counselling service to provide short term emotional and psychological support.
- Practical skills courses to improve your general skills and knowledge are being gradually rolled out. You can e

New local service delivery

From April 2020, a new Australia-wide network of Carer Gateway service providers will give carers access to tailored services in their own right, no matter who they are caring for, including:

- Carer support planning – to help you identify what areas of support will best help you in your caring role and to develop a simple plan for ongoing support and service.
- Tailored financial packages – to give carers practical assistance. The packages will be arranged by your service providers and might be a:
 - one-off practical support in the form of equipment or an item to assist in your caring role
 - range of ongoing practical supports, such as respite or transport, provided over a twelve-month period.
- In-person counselling – for one-on-one support with a professional counselor if you feel stressed or overwhelmed.
- In-person peer support – where you can meet with people in similar caring situations and share your stories, knowledge and experience.
- Emergency respite care – to make sure the person you care for will be looked after if an urgent or unplanned event stops you from being there.

The new network of Carer Gateway service providers will use a mobile work force to bring services to carers in their local area and work with a range of local providers to provide services beneficial to carers.

What do I need to do now?

We encourage you to access the new online services through the Carer Gateway website: www.carergateway.gov.au.

Carers can continue to get support through their usual service providers and will be supported to access the new Carer Gateway service providers from April 2020.

Current services will be funded until 31 May 2020 to ensure continuity of support to carers during the important transition to the new Carer Gateway service providers.

The April 2020 to 31 May 2020 window will ensure carers and the sector have time to understand the changes and are supported to transition to the new service system.

These changes to carer services do not affect any state or territory carer services you may be receiving, young carer bursaries or other services delivered through My Aged Care or the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

Why are these services changing?

To improve support for carers, the government has undertaken research and engaged with stakeholders over 2 years to re-design services. This has resulted in the development of the Integrated Carer Support Service model.

Improvements includes the introduction of new early-intervention services and a new service deliver model that will provide carers with a support system that is easy to navigate and provides a consistent experience across the country.

More information

For more information about services for carers you can contact Carer Gateway on 1800 422 737 or visit the website (www.carergateway.gov.au). Carer Gateway provides a range of information that can help carers in their role, from practical advice and resources, to help finding support services.

ENTERTAINMENT

මව් සෙනෙහස

BY SRIYANI THENNEKOON



උපදින සෑම දරුවෙකුටම උරුමය
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BY SHASHIKA VASANA



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මගෙ මුණුපුරා

BY W. M. PADMASENA



මගෙ මුණුපුරා හරි හුරතල් පොඩි කාලේ
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BY SALIYA THENNEKOON

ලේ කිරි කර පොවා නුඹ දැඩි කල හන්දා
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නාය යෑම

BY SHASHIKA VASANA

කන්ද පාමුල ලැයිමේ ඉදලා
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දොරගුලු තුල සිතුවිලි

by
Sriyani



සුපුරුදු සේම ඉර පායයි
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නමුත් මිනිසාට පමණක්
දොරගුලු වැටී.....

ගංගා ගලයි ඊද්මයට
වලාකුලු පාවෙයි
හැඩ වෙව්
ගස්වල එළදුරයි
සතුන් ඒ එල විදියි
නමුත් ඒ සැම
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මිනිසා පමණක්
සාගතෙන් පෙලෙයි

සඳ එලියට කුමුදු පිපෙයි
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මරණ බියෙන් වෙලෙයි

රජ ගෙදරටත් - පැල්පතටත්
පාලකයාටත් - රට වැසියාටත්
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ART

Sasani Jayasinghe & Ishy Yogya



Ishy Yogya(right in the photo)One of the talented singers Sydney Lankan community.She won the award for the best solo singer female category representing Sri Lanka at the South Asian Film Arts and Literature Fest 2019.Held in Sydney. She is a member of the SLANSW.

Sasani Jayasinghe(left in the photo)one of the talented dancers Sri Lanka produced.She won the award for the best solo female dancer representing Sri Lanka at the South Asian Film Arts and Literature Fest 2019.Held in Sydney

Upeka Pasqual



Upeka participated in many dramas throughout with the Sydney Drama circle. Year 2019 gave an opportunity for her to show her talents with the well known veteran actors in SriLanka. At “Miyesi Rangana 2019”she performed with veteran actor Rodney Warnakula.In the “Ashawe Veedi Riya” produced by Champa Buddhipala she performed with prominent actors and actresses Thumindu Dodanthena,Saranga Dissasekera,Dinakshie Priyasad and Wasanthi Ranwala. At the Sydney “Short Drama Festival 2019” she performed in the drama”Uththara” which was rated as best.Upeka is a life member of the SLANSW.

Kavitha Jeyakumar

Kavitha Jeyakumar is a Sydney based visual artist , She is the director for KJS Brush N Canvas Visual art school . Kavitha runs art classes for all ages and KJS Brush n Canvas is NSW approved Creative Kids provider . Kavitha is born in Kandy, Sri Lanka and is a supporter of the community. Kavitha provides art therapy to ADHD, Autism kids and adults. Kavitha works with community organizations such as CMRC, Sydwest in art therapy , Community language schools as an illustrator for the student learning materials and books. Kavitha spends time with the seniors in retirement villages helping them regain their confidence and express their feelings in the form of colours . All the above achievements have earned her various awards. KJS Brush n Canvas is the finalist for 2019 and 2020 for its professional service.Kavitha is a member of the SLANSW



KALA SOORI DR.SHELTON PREMARATNA

Kala Soori Dr.Shelton Premaratna was honoured and presented with the SAFAL RECOGNITION AWARD for his contribution towards music in Sri Lanka and to the Australian Sri Lankan Community. He was recognised and honoured at the SOUTH ASIAN FILM ARTS AND LITERATURE FESTIVAL GALA AWARDS NIGHT by Jodi McKay the leader of the opposition in the Parliament Of New South Wales



Maestro Dr Shelton Premaratne is a legendary Sri Lankan composer, instrumentalist and music director. At a time when Sinhala music was directly emulating Hindi and Tamil music from India, Dr Premaratne was a pioneer in developing a music style that was original and unique to Sri Lanka. Masterful with various Eastern and Western instruments, Dr Premaratne has contributed greatly to Sinhala cinema, theatre and classical Sri Lankan music. Dr Premaratne was the music composer and director in over 30 stage productions, including Henry Jayasena's popular theatre production Hunuwataye Kathawa (The Caucasian Chalk Circle), and 21 Sinhala films including films such as Daskon, Romeo Juliet Kathawak and Hithaka Pipunu Mal. As a teacher and mentor, Dr Premaratne has cultivated the talents of many world-class musicians and created unforgettable melodies for the likes of Rukmani Devi, W.D Amaradeva, Latha Walpola, Sunil Shantha, Nanda Malini and Victor Ratnayake. Dr Premaratne's contribution to Sri Lankan arts and culture over a career spanning six decades as both teacher and practitioner makes him a true living treasure.

He recently celebrated his 89th Birthday in Sydney we wish him all the blessings and long life

The light at the end of
the tunnel is a train !!!

Cheers

Thanks for the all support. Please send your valuable feedback or articles
to editor@slansw.org.au for next edition.....

Photo Credit : Sujeewa