

Jain Digest

October 2020
Volume 15



A Publication by the Federation of Jain Associations in North America



Ahimsa & Compassion are helping me because non - violence between me and my siblings is better and when somebody gets hurt, I have more compassion with them soon.

Age: 10-13

*Canada

*Niagara Falls

Ontario

We joined "North Orange County Face Masks for First Responders" . I and my wife made more than 1200 fabric face masks for the group in the last four months. Our Group has donated more than 70000 masks so far. One member of our group drove from California to Utah to deliver 650 masks to Indian Nation. He did not have proper address for this Indian Tribe. He stopped at a 7-11 store and the store took the responsibility to reach out to the right people. He got a thank you note from the tribe later.

- * Brea, CA - Age: 65+

I heard several stories of people helping others in this pandemic. One story which touched me is about the Indian actor Sonu Sood who helped thousands of migrant who were stuck in Maharashtra and elsewhere in India get back to their native place safely. He and his team selflessly transported several thousand of them to their home town without looking at their background, fed them and provided them shelter. His philanthropic work is exemplary.

*Farmington Hills, MI
Age: 19-65*

Some fun and creative activities for me mostly includes music related ventures. Me and my brother have been trying to figure out and compose multiple songs and more. It's a great experience and something I would definitely recommend.

*Novi, MI
Age: 14-18*

JAIN DIGEST

A Publication of the
Federation of Jain Associations in North America (JAINA)
email: jaindigestpublication@gmail.com

JAINA Headquarters email: jainahq@gmail.com, Website: www.jaina.org

JAINA Executive Committee

President Mahesh Wadher
mahesh.wadher@gmail.com

First VP: Haresh Shah
harryshah2000@hotmail.com

Secretary: Hemant Shah
hemantil@yahoo.com

Treasurer: Ashok Savla
ashoksavla630@yahoo.com

VP Northeast: Sagar Khona
sagar.k.khona@gmail.com

VP Mideast: Paurav Vora
HelloVora@yahoo.com

VP Southeast: Bindesh Shah
shah.bindesh@gmail.com

VP Midwest: Rahul Dedhia
rahul.dedhia@gmail.com

VP Southwest: Ketan Sheth
ketanksheth@gmail.com

VP West: Dr. Jasvant Modi
jnmodi@hotmail.com

VP Canada Dr. Mahendra Jain
drjainkmc@gmail.com

Past President: Guntant Shah
guntant.shah@jaina.org

YJA Chair: Parshva Vakharia
parshva.vakharia@yja.org

YJA Chair: Vatsal Gandhi
Vatsal.gandhi@yja.org

YJP Co-Chair: Arpit Mehta
arpit.mehta@yjp.jaina.org

YJP Co-Chair: Avani Shah
avani.shah@yjp.jaina.org

JAIN DIGEST Editorial Team

310-721-5947
email: jaindigestpublication@gmail.com

**Jain Digest Committee Chairman
and Editor-in-Chief**

Dilip Parekh

Section Editors

Compassion: Jayana Shah
Devotion: Dilip Parekh
Education: Raj Kumar Jain
Information: Giriraj Jain
Inspiration: Reena Shah
Transformation: Ramesh Khandhar
Young Generation: Sanjay Bhandari
Conversations: Dilip Parekh

Art and Design

Jayana Shah

Advisors

Dilip V Shah
Anop Vora
Ramesh Khandhar
Dr. Hema Pokharna

On the Cover:**Life During Pandemic: Experiences of Jain
Community**

During the summer this year, we conducted a survey of the Jain community to find out how they are handling the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. One sample response from each age group is shown on the front cover.

Disclosure

The Editorial Team endeavors to publish all the materials that are submitted but reserves the right to reduce, revise, reject, or edit any article, letter, or abstract for clarity, space, or policy reasons. The views expressed in the articles are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Editorial Team. These articles are published with the authors names. The articles written or published by the Editorial Team are published as a joint contribution of the entire Editorial Team, and not necessarily represent the views of JAINA

CONTENTS

Jain Digest Editor's Note.....	4
Jaina President's Message	5
Community Responses (10 to 13 year)	8
Positive Lessons Emerging from COVID-19 Relating to Jainism.....	17
by Rishabh Jain	
Inspiring Story of a Brave 15-year-old Girl: Joyti Kumari.....	18
by Rajkumar Jain	
Community Responses (14 to 18 year)	19
Watsi's Medical Programs Helping Patients During COVID-19	24
By Mackinnon Engen	
A Surgen's Experiences with COVID-19	25
By Dr. Somnath Chattopadhyay	
Community Responses (19 to 65 year) - Part 1.....	27
My Reflections on COVID-19	37
By Anop Vora	
Community Responses (19 to 65 year) - Part 2.....	39
How Preventive Measures of Coronavirus apply to the Karma Virus.....	44
By Ramesh Khandhar	
Community Responses (65+ year).....	46
Spiritually Navigating the Current COVID-19 Pandemic.....	56
From Jainism Blog	
Coronavirus in the Global Village.....	60
By Sulekh Jain	
Acivities, Web Links and Games	63
By Sanjay Bhandari	



Editor's Note

Om Shri Veetragay Namah

Jai Jinendra,

I am pleased to let you know that with blessings of Bhagwan and support from all of you, our Editorial Team completes 5 years of service to the Jain community. I thank all our team members and writers for their commitment and hard work. I am grateful of our advisors and JAINA officials for their support and guidance. And I am humbled that you, the readers, encourage us and spend your valuable time in reading the magazine, Thanks!

The theme of this October 2020 issue of Jain Digest is COVID-19. Unfortunately, the pandemic is still with us with no end in sight. Our Editorial Team wanted to find out how the Jain community in North America and India has responded to this crisis. Hence, in late July and August, over a period of three weeks we conducted a survey. In the survey we asked one set of questions to those from 10 to 18 and another set of questions for those 19+above.

The questions for those 18 and under were:

- 1) *Share what fun and creative activities you are doing and new things you are learning during this lockdown time.*
- 2) *It must have been hard to stay home and not be able to go to school and see your friends. Share how you managed this challenge.*
- 3) *Many of you were attending online classes and remotely connecting with friends and family. What did you most enjoy about this experience and anything that you wished was different?*
- 4) *Many of you have been attending pathshala to learn about Jain religion. Tell us which Jain teachings & values (Ahimsa, Compassion, Self-Control, Faith, etc.) & practices (Darshan, Prayer, etc.) are helping you in dealing with the challenges of the lockdown & how?*

The questions for those 19 and above were:

- 1) *From front-line workers to ordinary people of all ages, many have shown extraordinary bravery and compassion to help others. Share a story that you have read or heard that you found most inspirational.*
- 2) *Many things in our daily life have changed significantly. Tell us about how things have changed for you at home and at your workplace.*
- 3) *Many people are using some of the extra time they have to be creative, have fun and learn new things. Share some of the things you are doing to use this time in a constructive way.*
- 4) *In a crisis like this, many of us turn to religion and spirituality to find hope, meaning and peace. Which Jain teachings & values (Ahimsa, Anekantvad, Compassion, Self-Control, Equanimity, Faith, etc.) and practices (Darshan, Prayer, Satsang, Samayik, etc.) are helping you in dealing with the challenges of lockdown and how?*

The 5th question for all was to share anything else that was not covered in the other questions. We received responses from about 110 people. These responses are included in this magazine in four age groups – 10 to 13 years, 14 to 18 years, 19 to 65 years, and 65+. We hope you enjoy reading these responses. Except for correcting grammar and rewording some of the answers, we have not modified most answers. My sincere thanks to our editors Sanjay Bhandari and Giriraj Jain for their hard work in compiling and editing. Their enthusiasm and positivity has made this possible. Many thanks to Jayanaben Shah for her wonderful artwork that makes reading the responses a pleasant experience. She has worked many late nights to do the painstaking work of putting together the pages of this magazine. Thanks to Reena Shah and Rajkumar Jain for their help in proofreading. In addition, we also have articles related to Jainism & COVID-19 from the Jainism Blog, Dr. Sulekh Jain, Anop Vora, Ramesh Khandhar, and a young 13-year-old Rishabh Jain. Dr. Somnath Chattopadhyay from Mumbai shares his experience of working in hospital and Mackinnon Engen, from Watsi, a charitable organization, tells us about the challenges faced in providing medical help to the needy. Also read about Jyoti Kumari's 1200km bike ride in India!

Hope you enjoy reading all articles in this issue. Stay safe. Stay healthy.

In Seva,
Dilip Parekh

JAINA President's Message

Jai Jinendra!

I hope you and your family observed Paryushan and Das Lakshan Parva with a lot of devotion even though the events were virtual due to COVID-19. JAINA had set up daily virtual lectures in Hindi, Gujrati, and English. Samvantsari Pratikramans for all the sects and Anumodana Bhakti was also setup virtually for the community to take laabh. JAINA is grateful for all the positive feedback received.



Hope everyone is doing well during these unprecedented times of our life. It is so hard to truly understand the level of devastation and sufferings happening due to this deadly coronavirus pandemic and seeing growing predicament globally that is characterized by hunger, homelessness and destitution. Now more than ever we all need to come together to join hands and help each other.

In this issue of Jain Digest, we bring you various perspectives about the COVID-19 pandemic. The responses to JAINA survey about how the Jain community has dealt with the challenges and other interesting articles on the pandemic from the Jain perspective are presented in this issue. We hope that you will find it interesting to learn about what actions our community members are taking for their mental and physical well-being, how they are supporting each other in difficult times, and even thriving by learning new things.

Here are some of the JAINA activities and achievements in the past four months.

June 2020

COVID-19 JAINA Surveys

JAINA conducted a brief survey to find out the incidences of COVID-19 in Jains. This survey helped us understand if the vegetarians are affected less than the people who are non-vegetarians.

JAINA also did another survey "COVID-19 Jain Mental Health", to analyze the mental health of the Jain community in North America.

JAINA BOD Meeting 2020

JAINA had its first Board of Directors meeting of the year 2020 virtually. During the meeting, JAINA added two new Committees effective September 2020.



Vegetarian Symbol Committee: Mr. Yogesh Bapna of CA was appointed to explore the possibility of having federal regulation of word 'vegetarian' or 'vegan' and equivalent symbols on packaged foods in the United States.

The Endowment & Planned Giving Committee: Mr. Siddarth Jain of NY was named as chairperson of The Endowment & Planned Giving Committee. This committee aims to provide legal and financial guidelines for planned giving activities. The committee will offer tax-advantaged opportunities to the American Jain community to help fund specific JAINA committees to expand their activities.



JAINA Calendar 2021: JAINA Calendar committee prepared a form asking for basic details of community members to streamline the records. The activity will enable us to place the appropriate print order and make sure JAINA Calendar 2021 reaches you on time. This helps to update the records to avoid duplication and get address change information which saves printing and mailing cost.

July 2020



Peaceful Resolution of Religious Pratimas and “Respect Religion” video: JAINA and various other Hindu and interfaith organizations wrote protestation letters to nightclubs for disrespectful treatment to Jain and Hindu Pratimas. To which, LiveNation apologized and committed to rectifying the situation. JAINA created a video ‘Respect Religion’ to create an awareness to respect every religion.

Watch the video here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ygLT0eBMLM8&feature=youtu.be>

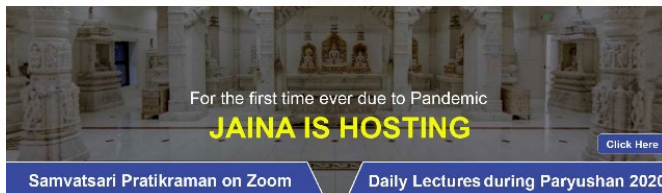
JAINA Virtual Convention 2021: Taking into account various issues arising due to COVID-19 challenges and with recommendations from JAINA Ombudsman Council, Board of Directors, JAINA EC has decided to cancel In-person Convention (Orlando, Florida) for July 2021; instead, JAINA decided to hold Virtual Convention in July 2021. This will be a new experience for all of us with new challenges, but it will also present us with an opportunity to take the JAINA Convention Globally! JAINA Virtual Convention 2021 team is working hard. Stay tuned for more updates.



August 2020

Paryushan/Das Lakshana 2020

Special Newsletters: JAINA published 18 Newsletters during Paryushan and Das Lakshan Parv 2020 which was highly appreciated by community members.



Daily Virtual Lectures & Samvatsari Pratikramans: JAINA hosted daily virtual Paryushan 2020 lectures in Gujarati by Dr. Kumarpal Desai, in Hindi by Dr. Jitendra Shah, and in English by Dr. Bipin Doshi as well as Samvatsari Pratikramans in English, Deravasi Pratikraman, Sthanakvasi Aloyana, and Pratikraman,

and Achal Gach Pratikraman with different time zones.

“Jain Study Group” and “India has Talent” presented a Global Bhakti which was powered by JAINA, JITO Ladies Wing and Jain Jagruti Centers. The virtual event aim was to unite Jains from around the world with Bhakti by singers from 10 different countries.

JAINA Education Committee: To support home school Pathshalas, JAINA Education Committee reduced the price of the Pathshala books by 50% for the USA and Canadian customers till September 30, 2020.

JAINA INDIA FOUNDATION: JIF launched a monthly online magazine called JAIN AVENUE with a mission of being a “Voice of the Practitioners of Jain Dharma”. You can read the magazine on www.jainavenue.org

September 2020



Tapasvi Recognition: To express Anumodna to all 2020 Paryushan & Das Lakshana Tapasvis, JAINA prepared a Tapasvi Recognition video.

Please watch it here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jFCupygQH2E&feature=youtu.be>



JAINA Sadharmik Bhakti Committee: A new committee headed by Dr. Jayesh Shah of CA – Sadharmik Bhakti Committee was formed in response to many requests for help on behalf of many Jain families going through hardship due to Corona Virus Pandemic. The Committee is hoping to raise as much funds as possible this year to support the most disadvantaged Jain families in India and is looking forward to your generous donation. The Committee goal is to raise \$250,000 for this cause that will allow us to deliver Rs 5,000 to one thousand families for 4 months. The committee is planning a mega fund raising event early in November.

Please support the committee generously to help the needy and the underprivileged Jain families (one of five duties of a shravak) by donating to Sadharmik Bhakti Fund.

Major Youth Updates

YJA



On July 11, 2020, Young Jains of America, in partnership with the Jain Society of North Texas and the Jain Center of New Jersey, hosted a full-day, virtual event called "YJA Day 2020". The event was very successful with over 1100 attendees. Maulik Pancholy, an award-winning actor, author, and activist, was the Keynote Speaker.

Watch the recordings of the various sessions here: <https://virtual.yja.org/videos>

YJP



Young Jain Professionals are organizing its 4th annual National conference to be held virtually, this month. The conference has been designed to be delivered in a 4-session series, to be held on 4th, 11th, 18th, and 25th of October from 2 PM to 5 PM EST.

More details are here. https://issuu.com/yjprofessionals/docs/2020_fall_newsletter

Let us pray for the infected and facing quarantine.

Let us pray for those who are no longer with us – may their souls rest in peace.

Let us pray for this pandemic to stop spreading. Let us pray for the entire world to be safe.

Take care, stay home and be safe.

Wishing you Peace, Love & Happiness,

Mahesh Wadher

As part of scouts, we hand-stitched and donated over 400 face masks. We also decided to do a fundraiser, we took orders online and hand-stitched masks. We donated 20% of the funds to UNICEF. From this experience, I learned how to stitch and I learned how important masks are to the community during these times. Another fun activity I did was holding online virtual classes. I taught 2 classes, math and card tricks and origami, to kids over zoom. I donated 50% of these funds to Saint Jude's hospital.

Aashi
Shah-CA

More movies with family, learning more math and taking online classes such as writing.

*Fremont

*CA

I am doing fun art projects with my mom & playing outside, going on bike rides.

*Niagra Falls

Ontario

Canada

Playing outside, painting, reading, online classes, swimming, playing tennis

Shanaya
Pokharana

Memphis,

Tennese

Me and my brother make and do performances for our parents. I learned to enjoy with the things that I have.

Krita D
Shah

Parsippany

NJ

Question: Share what fun and creative activities you are doing and new things you are learning during this lockdown time.

Age 10-13



Some fun activities that I have been doing during quarantine are going outside more often, doing art, and learning coding.

Saanvi D.

CA

Shah

La Palma

Some activities I have been doing in lock down are art with my sister, doing JUST DANCE, and I have learnt many new dance skills. I really enjoy them and hope I can do it more school starts.

Shraya D.
Shah

La Palma

CA

I bike on trails near my house with my dad. I also know how to rollerblade.

Arham
ShahMaple
Grove,

MN

As countries from all around the world immersed deeper into quarantine, people were trapped in their homes. Gradually, everyone needed to find something to occupy themselves, including me. I learned how to make scrumptious meals from my mom, and from videos online. I also played outside to improve my tennis skills.

keval D.
ShahFarmington
Hills, MI

This lockdown has allowed me to do things I usually wouldn't have the time for. I have found that I am passionate with other activities other than the ones I am currently in. Over this time I have started to read, draw, paint, and learn a new language. These are activities I hadn't done before however I have also took this time to improve on other activities such as dancing, math, Guitar, Public speaking, and religious activities. Instead of thinking of this time we have as a curse this is truly a blessing.

Banhi
Shah,Macomb,
MI

* Annonymus

Although it is a challenge I find ways to fill that void. Whenever I have some free time I like to talk to my friends and FaceTime them. It's as if I was meeting them just a little different. No one is used to all this but we have now become pros. I can see my friends on FaceTime or in a class zoom call. I even meet them from temple zoom classes whether it be study class or Hindi class or even evening prayers. As tempting as it might be to meet up with them we have to do as much as we can to stop the spreading of COVID-19.

Macomb, MI

Banhi Shah

I've been face timing my friends a lot and biking with the ones who live close to me.

Memphis, TN

Shanaya

Pokharna

I played with my brother and sister and made some friends in the neighborhood (but still taking precautions about Covid-19)

Canada

*Niagra Falls

Ontario

I have been educating myself with the help of the internet and calling my friends almost every day.

*Fremont

CA

It is definitely hard to stay home all day and not be able to meet any of my friends. I managed this challenge by making sure I stay in touch with all my friends and calling them regularly.

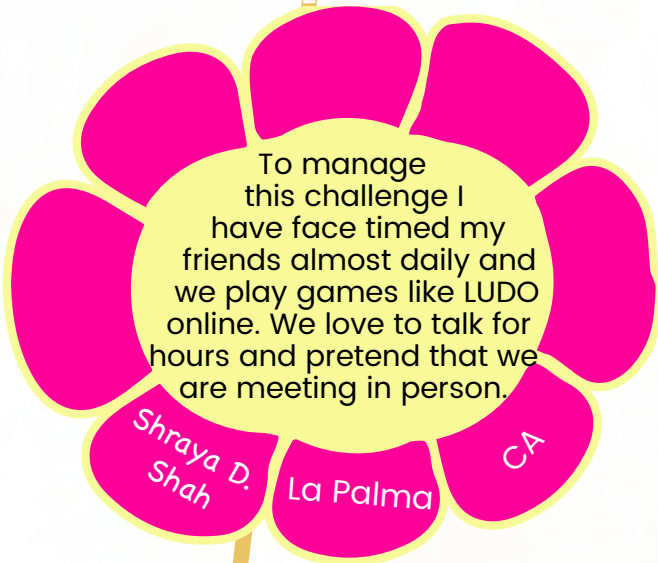
CA

Aashi Shah

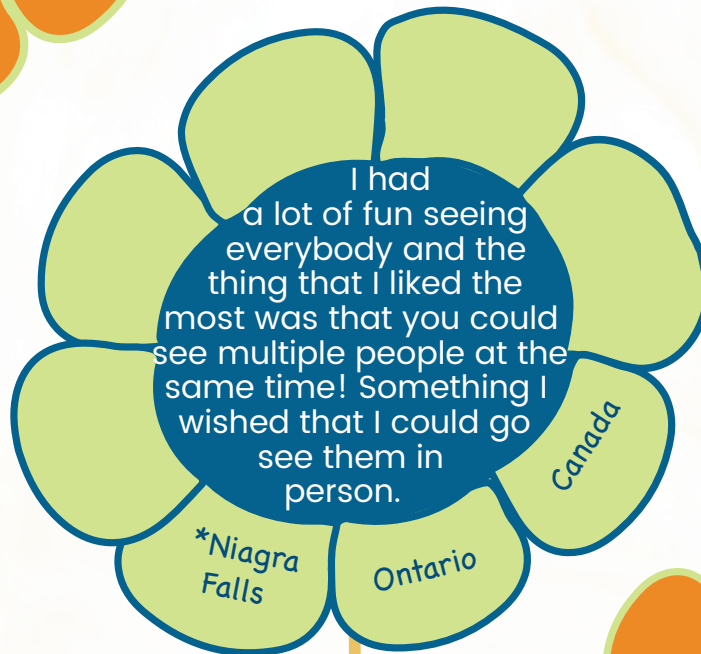
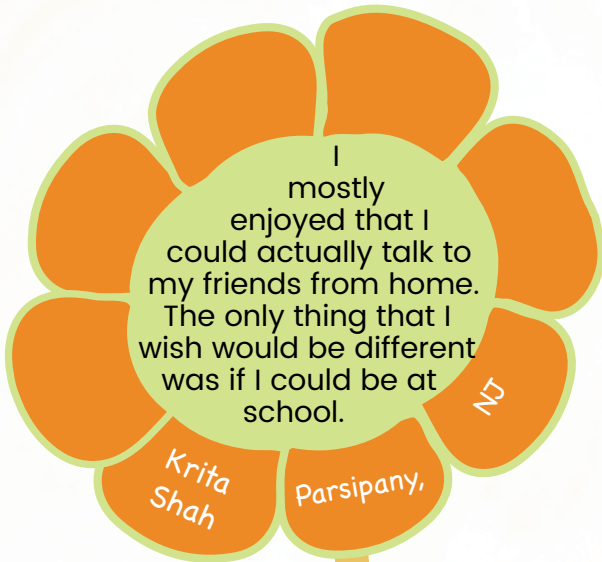
Fremont

Question: It must have been hard to stay home and not be able to go to school and see your friends. Share how you managed this challenge.

Age 10-13



* Annonymus



Question: Many of you were attending online classes and remotely connecting with friends and family. What did you most enjoy about this experience and anything that you wished was different? **Age 10-13**

I am really elated that I was able to learn about how to use different applications such as zoom and google meets. If we were not in this situation, I don't think would ever have learned how to use them. I really wish we had more clarification in the beginning because it was really confusing

Saanvi D. Shah
CA
La Palma

I enjoyed the procedure of online learning, even though it gradually became boring as quarantine progressed. At the end of school, I was wistful that I didn't get to see my friends for the last time, but I still enjoyed learning. I also liked the process of e-classes, such as Piano, Math, Robotics and Coding.

Keval D. Shah
Farmington Hills, MI

I enjoyed learning about different applications such as zoom. However, I did not like when the zoom meeting was glitching. It was super annoying because we couldn't hear each other properly.

Shraya D. Shah
CA
La Palma

Before this we were all doing our own thing. It was surprising how fast everything changed. Although this is a terrifying experience, one of the things I enjoyed the most was how much time I got to spend with my family. We have so much time for each other now and we have all realized how less time we usually spent together. One thing however that I wish was different is online learning. Although it is one of the only solutions to learning I myself am not a fan of it. I had one class this year that was 4 hours long and sitting in front of the screen for that long obviously can't be healthy. Though this is something we are going to have to deal with as we are going to have to continue this process in the future.

Banhi Shah,
Macomb, MI

* Annonymus

I have been practicing self control. This is helping me because I can practice being alone because usually I am with everybody.

Krita Shah Parsipany, NJ

Ahimsa & Compassion are helping me because non - violence between me and my siblings is better and when somebody gets hurt, I have more compassion with them soon.

*Naigara Falls Ontario *Canada

It has been very helpful to me for about 5 months now.

*Fremont *CA

Yes, I do samayik once a month.

Arham Shah Maple Grove, MN

This experience has taught me to be grateful for the little things in life. I also recited navkaar mantra everyday.

Shanaya Pokharana Memphis, TN

I have been attending Shrimad Shala. Self-Control is a teaching that has been helping me during lockdown. Self- control means controlling oneself, in particular one's emotions and desires or the expression of them in one's behavior, especially in difficult situations.

Aashi Shah Freemont CA

Question: Many of you have been attending pathshala to learn about Jain religion. Tell us which Jain teachings & values (Ahimsa, Compassion, Self-Control, Faith, etc.) & practices (Darshan, Prayer, etc.) are helping you in dealing with the challenges of the lockdown & how? **Age 10-13**

I have learned the values of Ahimsa through my thoughts because I realized that in this times you cannot judge their situation because you have to understand that anything can be going on in their life. I do Darshan Regularly, I learnt a lot of new stutis & I do pachkan every morning.

CA

Saanvi D. Shah

La Palma

Self-Control is beneficial, because this teaches me not to be acquisitive and only use what you need, so I eat less unhealthy foods, and to do Chauvihar & Navkarsi The prayers I have learned over the years is beneficial because I can prevent the spread of Coronavirus by praying to Bhagwan for the Atmas of the people who passed away from Coronavirus.

keval D. Shah

Farmington Hills

MI

To practice Ahimsa, I stayed calm instead of becoming angry and became more self confident by not getting mad. I also take Porsi Pachkan every morning.

Shraya D. Shah

La Palma

CA

I have learned so much in pathshala and this is one of those times where all of us are tested on how much we know. During this time me and family pray and hope all this goes away as fast as it can. By praying we are given hope and belief of the end of COVID-19. Our study classes still continue on zoom classes even during this time and I have now been given so much time to think about our religion and it's principles. I believe that all this will end soon. Everything happened for a reason.

Banhi Shah,

Macomb, MI

* Annonymus

I also went to a Shibir when we learnt about Religion. I learnt that you should have to be clean (without Karma) to go to Moksha.

CA

Shraya, Shah

La Palma,

I am really happy about how I had one of the most amazing opportunities ever. I was able to attend a shibir where I was able to learn more about Jainism, make a replica of Palitana, and even do puja at home.

CA

Saanvi Shah

La Palma

These past months have been so different but I have connected with family so much more. It is really awesome that you now have so much time to do whatever you want to

Canada

*Niagra Falls

Ontario

I have a lot of baby frogs in my backyard and I have tried to hold them and even my friends have held them right in my backyard.

MN

Arham Shah

Maple Grove,

My dad is an Infectious Disease physician and he is treating COVID-19 patients everyday. My mom was also tested positive for COVID-19 when the pandemic started.

CA

Shanaya Pokharana

Memphis, TN

All this hit us by surprise and I have learned so much from it. I have become so much more aware of everything around us. This has given me the chance to become more involved in the things around me. I'm not young like I was before and it was time for me to understand. My dad is a doctor and it's scary because he goes to work everyday. He comes back home and goes straight to the shower to avoid getting COVID-19. We always take many precautions and I now understand the importance of small things like this.

CA

Aashi Shah

Freemont

* Annonymus

Question: We would enjoy learning from your experiences; so please share any other comments you have. **Age 10-13**

Positive Lessons Emerging from COVID-19 Relating to Jainism

By Rishab Jain, Age 13, Clarksville, Maryland



In times of misery and peril, when not just a couple individuals are suffering but rather entire countries, we often overlook the silver lining in the situation. In reality, this experience has been tough for everyone around the world, though there have also been many lessons we have learned during this sorrowful time. We have had many opportunities to learn and do good, and this is why this experience, even though it is an extremely rough one, has brought good to not just a couple individuals but rather people all around the world.

One of the many great things happening even in this time of peril is financial support. All around the world, billions of dollars are being donated to relief funds, hospitals, and many more worthy organizations. These donations are absolutely necessary to our recovering society. In Jainism, we believe that one should keep only what they need, and be content with all they have. This belief fits right into the billions of dollars being donated all around the world. Many people in this world have much more than they need and others have much less. This is why donations are key. This assists those who may not have the money to visit a hospital even if they have this virus, and helps them with their financial needs. Donations have been necessary not just during this pandemic but throughout all of time. Donations are key to other's success and wellbeing. Just a couple of dollars, while it may not seem like much to you, could save someone's life.

Another great thing coming out of this pandemic is that people have more time to reflect, think, and have conversations about religious topics. Prior to this pandemic we all had extremely packed schedules. The only time we had to reflect on our religious values was pathshala. Now that we have much more time on our hands, lots of people are starting to ask their parents, or even talk to friends about topics in Jainism they have a hard time understanding or just find interesting. We had many conversations in virtual pathshala about how Jainism will play a huge role in our future. The conversation topics ranged from simple ones such as splitting a bill with someone who is not vegetarian, or the ethics of vegan meat, to serious ones such as alcohol, drugs, and whether Jains should enlist in the military. Having these in-depth conversations helped me clear up how Jainism says to approach these topics. These conversations also sparked new ones with my parents and sister in which we talked about our personal opinions about these topics. Thinking, and talking about Jain topics is a great way to learn other's perspectives, and at the same time advance on the Jain path of life. These conversations are very interesting and it is nice to hear other's opinions on how to approach different topics in our world today. Conversations are a key to knowing how to handle situations with a Jain perspective.

Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, temples all over the US have been closed, and we have all been prevented from doing Darshan. We all have felt this burden in our own ways, however, many of us have taken the time to make our own homes our temples. Prior to this time, some may not have had a spot in their homes to do darshan, but now, they have created one. Having a place to do darshan in your home is a great way to make up for lost time at the temple, and to commit to doing daily darshan. Having a place every morning and night to do darshan, not just in these times of a global pandemic, but all the time, brings peace, prosperity, and happiness. Recently Chaumasi Chaudas also rolled around - typically, many would go to the temple to celebrate the beginning of this highly religious 4 month period. However, many also would not have time to visit the temple on days they may have been in school or working. This year, although we couldn't visit the temple, many of us did what we would typically do at the temple at home. This is an astonishing accomplishment as we became more religious than we may have been in the past because of the free time we had. If we think about all the times that we went to the temple and did samayak or pratikraman in a typical year, or even went to the temple just to count beads on a rosary, we would be able to count that number with our fingers. However, since we have been home, many of us have started setting goals for ourselves such as doing samayak at least once a week or counting beads on a

rosary once a day. All over the world, during this small period of time, it seems everyone's homes have become their own temples.

Lastly, another improvement throughout this pandemic has been some outstanding technological advancements. Our usage of technology has skyrocketed over these 4 months, whether it be for school, work, or to hang out with family and friends. Either way, technology is accelerating at a greater speed than ever before. Many video meeting services such as Zoom, Google Meet, or Webex, have been used more and more to host meetings and webinars all over the world. Webinars range from gardening to learning about some of the most complicated topics in today's world. They educate many individuals all over the world, about things they may not have had the time to learn about before. Jainism encourages us to learn new things and see them from other perspectives, and webinars offer us a chance to do so without leaving our homes. Many webinars were also about Jain topics and were used to help individuals understand Jainism's standpoint about matters all over the world, even during this global pandemic. Advancement in technology over this period of time did not just stop there. Many doctors have also been doing visits online with their patients. This method of performing doctor appointments has saved time, money, and the environment. Another marvelous event that has been happening every single day for about 4 months straight is our temple's (JSMW) prayer program to restore peace all over the world. Anytime before this pandemic, if we were to start this prayer program, no one would have been able to attend as we all had many things going on in our lives. However, now that everyone is home and free we can execute something like this and pray for a countless number of jiv around the world. These advancements have been a magnificent way to continue praying, learning, and teaching even during this tumultuous time.

Conclusively, this pandemic, though it has brought much suffering to many people around the world, has brought moral benefit in ways you may have overlooked. In times of peril like these, good is still around the corner waiting to be found. The only way we will win this battle is with strength and courage. A countless number of individuals pray, and mourn, but the only way we can win against this dreadful virus and restore peace and prosperity is with a maximal amount of morality in the world.

Inspiring Story of a Brave 15-year-old Girl: Joyti Kumari

By Rajkumar Jain, Section Editor, Jain Digest

We all have heard stories after stories of how thousands of people were on the road in India, trying to reach their homes in villages that were hundreds of kilometers away from their workplaces amid this COVID-19 pandemic. But even in such heart-wrenching situations, we can find inspirational acts of bravery and love. One such story is of a brave, determined 15-year-old girl named Joyti, who pedaled her injured father a whopping 1,200 kilometers on a bicycle from Gurugram, Delhi to Dharbhanga, Bihar.

Jyoti Kumari had gone to Gurugram with her mother and brother-in-law in January to look after her father, Mohan Paswan, who had broken his leg in an accident while driving his rickshaw. Joyti's mother and brother-in-law had returned home earlier before the lock down, but Joyti who attends class 8th stayed back to look after her father. During these tough times of lock down having no income and resources, their landlord asked them to vacate their room. With whatever little funds they could scarp together, they bought a used bicycle. Determined to take her injured father home, Joyati started her journey on the bicycle. They managed to hitch ride on tractors and trucks along the way through Uttar Pradesh. Jyoti cycled for long hours on their 7day journey to reach home. WOW! My hats off to her for her bravery, stamina and determination.

Ivanka Trump twitted the story and called it, a beautiful feat of endurance and love. The Cycling Federation of India offered Jyoti to appear for a trial to be a part of the cycling team.

(Sources: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zyro-E_awdq and *The Hindu*)



During lockdown i've started to read more books, and bike more outside.

Romaa jain - MI

Learned how to cook, make a mask and started reading more.

Bhaani Pretap Jain, Farmington Hills, MI

Calligraphy, skateboarding, coding,

- * *Cupertino, CA*

As a Southern California

resident, I have created an online social needs resource database to serve individuals who have been disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. As communities are struggling with the social and economic effects of lockdown, I created California Social Resource Database (caliresources.org) to help provide comprehensive information on food banks, community health clinics, emergency shelters, educational opportunities, employment services, and much more for every county in California. Our team has been featured in various news organizations that can benefit from this database and our website has hit over 9500 users.

- *Jay Doshi, Cerritos, CA*

Sign language, graphic design, cooking. - *Nikki D Sisodia, Fremont, CA*

Drawing and painting.

- * *San Jose, CA*

Some fun and creative activities for me mostly includes music related ventures. Me and my brother have been trying to figure out and compose multiple songs and more. It's a great experience and something I would definitely recommend.

Dhairya Kamlesh Shah, Novi, MI

* *Anonymus*

Question: Share what fun and creative activities you are doing and new things you are learning during this lockdown time. **Age 14-18**

FaceTime and lots of TV. - *Nikki D Sisodia, Fremont, CA*

Yeah it definitely was, but online video chats such as zoom and FaceTime allowed us to stay in touch as much as possible. Sure, it didn't feel the same, but we managed to stay in touch and preserve our relationships, which was important.

Dhairya Kamlesh Shah, Novi, MI

I use to text my friend and we played online games and also had Zoom calls.

- Bhaani Pretap Jain, Farmington Hills, MI

FaceTime and talking to my family more. -

** San Jose, CA*

Video chatting with friends, going on walks.

*- * Cupertino, CA*

When I wanted to talk to my friends, I just facetime them because it's important that i didn't go and hang out with them. -

Romaa Jain, Farmington Hills, MI

*** Annonymus**

Question: It must have been hard to stay home and not be able to go to school and see your friends. Share how you managed this challenge. **Age 14-18**

I liked how I could do everything at my own pace and finish when I wanted too, I wish that the teachers talked to us more rather than just assigning us videos to watch. -

*Romaa Jain,
Farmington Hills,
MI*

I wished we could have in person discussions for classes, but I enjoyed being on my own schedule with the online format.

*- * Cupertino,
CA*

I could replay lectures whenever I wanted and did not have to rush to take notes. -

*Nikki D Sisodia,
Fremont, CA*

More time to do less Homework. *

San Jose, CA

I enjoyed getting to see my friends and having fun with them online, but the only difficult part was doing all the assignments. -

*Bhaaniu Pretap Jain,
Farmington Hills,
MI*

The fact that we received education from the comfort of our homes was definitely one of the best parts. We managed to have as close of a learning experience at school as possible, which was great for us. Something I'd like to change and want different was definitely being able to meet my family and friends in person. It was definitely not a fun experience and made me learn the importance of in person social activity.

*- Dhairya Kamlesh
Shah,
Novi, MI*

* Annonymus

Question: Many of you were attending online classes and remotely connecting with friends and family. What did you most enjoy about this experience and anything that you wished was different? **Age 14-18**

I would say I've practiced compassion because even when I've felt that lockdown has been difficult for me, I've been aware of how hard life is for other people (ex. People losing their jobs, people in difficult home situations.)

- * *Cupertino, CA*

Mostly empathy and self control have been helping me get through the lockdown. - *Bhaaniu Pretap Jain, Farmington Hills, MI*

Self control and faith. - *Nikki D Sisodia, Fremont, CA*

I've been using a lot of the Jain practices to help me not go crazy, like self control with what I'm eating, and with all this time I've been able to pray more and longer. - *Ramaa Jain, Farmington Hills, MI*

I learned about Anekantvad and compassion during this pandemic. We live in a society with diverse individuals, some who have lost their loved ones, businesses, housing, etc. I learned that it is important to never judge anyone and help out as much as possible because we are not sure what the other person is going through, especially during this time. -

Jay Doshi, Cerritos, CA

* **Annonymus**

Question: Many of you have been attending pathshala to learn about Jain religion. Tell us which Jain teachings & values (Ahimsa, Compassion, Self-Control, Faith, etc.) & practices (Darshan, Prayer, etc.) are helping you in dealing with the challenges of the lockdown & how? **Age 14-18**

Definitely faith for it's hard sometimes to maintain it when we are not allowed to visit the place of worship. However, I managed to maintain my Jain faith and values due to my family. We made sure to darshan everyday in the morning and maintain Jain festivals and such during this period of time. Paryushan is coming up soon and we plan to carry it out the same as we would have in regular time. Faith keeps us connected to our religion and helps us believe that one day all will be better. -

*Dhairya
Kamlesh Shah,
Novi, MI*

Compassion.

- * San Jose, CA

Because of Covid-19, I had a lot of free time that I was able to use to learn a lot of new things.

- *Romaa Jain, Farmington Hills, MI*

My best experience is that I am able to help seniors get their groceries and chat with them. -

*Bhaaniu Pretap Jain,
Farmington Hills,
MI*

* Annonymus

Question: We would enjoy learning from your experiences; so please share any other comments you have. **Age 14-18**



Watsi's Medical Programs Helping Patients During COVID-19

By Mackinnon Engen



Mackinnon Engen is Executive Director of Watsi. As a global health and humanitarian professional, her experience spans the UN, international and local NGOs, and academic sectors. Mackinnon has lived and worked across Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Americas. She is passionate about bringing people together to ensure patients can access essential, life-changing healthcare.

Watsi is an international medical nonprofit that funds essential surgical care for patients facing extreme poverty across the Global South. Anyone anywhere can directly fund treatment for a patient in need and 100% of the donation supports healthcare.

Our patients, local partner hospitals, and the communities we serve have been deeply impacted by COVID-19. Watsi is working tirelessly to be part of a global effort to ensure that patients in low and middle-income countries have access to the safe, high-quality, and patient-centered care that they need. A full profile on Watsi will be featured in the next issue of Jain Digest. To meet a patient who needs support now, please visit:

<https://watsi.org/crowdfunding/donate>

Here are some stories of patient whose life has been impacted by COVID-19.



Kyaw is a 37-year-old man who lives with his wife in a village in Tak Province, Thailand. He also has two daughters who live with their maternal aunt in Burma. His wife is an agricultural day laborer while Kyaw has been a homemaker for the past two years.

In 2013, Kyaw was injured in a car accident that took his brother's life. His doctors implanted a steel rod to repair his fractured left leg. He was told that he would need to have the steel removed in three to six years.

So, when Kyaw started experiencing pain in his left leg again. He traveled to Mae Sot Hospital to have the steel removed so that his leg could finish healing properly. In partnership with Burma Children Medical Fund, Watsi supporters have been funding the cost of his surgery. With proper physical therapy, Kyaw will finally be alleviated of pain and be able to walk once again.

Due to his injury, Kyaw had been unable to work prior to the surgery and his wife is also recently unemployed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Even when she was working, the income she earned was not enough to cover their basic necessities and sometimes they would have to purchase basic items on credit. Watsi supporters have been instrumental in helping Kyaw receive the safe, high-quality surgical care that he so urgently needed.

Before surgery, Kyaw shared, *"I am very upset about my leg. I want to work like other people but because of my condition no one will offer me a job. I'm also worried about my wife and daughters' future. As a father I want to fulfill their needs which I can't at present. Instead I rely on my wife's income. If the surgery doesn't help to improve my*

condition, I'm worried that my leg will be amputated. My wife is also worried that my condition will worsen, but she urges me to be strong and accept our fate."



Abdulkirim, a young boy from Ethiopia, loves to play with other children and with his mom. He recently underwent a colostomy, in which the end of the colon is brought through an opening in the abdominal wall.

This surgery is often performed to bypass bowel malformations, but colostomies are usually temporary and may call for closure. In Abdulkirim's case, his colostomy requires closure in order to restore bowel function and prevent future complications.

Prior to the surgery, Abdulkirim's family sold all of their animals and asked for financial assistance from their community twice.

They shared that paying for the hotel near the hospital was very difficult. Then, when COVID-19 crisis struck Ethiopia, they were asked to leave the government hospital where Abdulkirim was scheduled to receive care and return home. Fortunately, Abdulkirim and his family were able to schedule a colostomy closure procedure with the help of Watsi's medical partner, African Mission Healthcare, and Watsi donors are helping to fund the treatment for his family.

Abdulkarim's mom shared, "I am so happy for this final operation. We are thankful that you stand with us in our time of need. It has been a very difficult time and we were losing hope when we were told to go home from a government hospital, because of the COVID- 19 crisis. We find it so surprising that we were able to schedule his surgery in a very short period of time with tremendous quality service. The doctors and nurses provide excellent care. Now it is my hope that he grows up healthy and receives a good education."

Meet a Watsi patient today at: <https://watsi.org/crowdfunding/donate>

A Surgeon's Experiences with COVID-19

By Dr. Somnath Chattopadhyay



Dr. Somnath is Head of Department, Hepato-pancreato-biliary Surgery and Liver Transplantation at Kokilaben Dhirubhai Ambani Hospital in Mumbai. He has more than 11 years of experience in complex surgeries of liver, pancreas and bile duct cancers and Liver Transplantation. Recently he was featured as one of the Top Doctors in Mumbai by the India Today magazine.

Surgeons are always trained to trust themselves more than anyone else. It helps to make decisions of life and death at crucial times. In the beginning of this pandemic, I decided, that I am going to keep treating my patients in the same way as before. There was, perhaps, a misplaced sense that this is not going to affect me or my patients.

The realization came as one evening, one of my patients whom I had transplanted more than a year back called saying that he had fever. Both he and his wife, who was a frontline worker, tested positive for COVID-19. His wife survived but my patient passed away after 17 days of hospitalization during which he continued to text me optimistically till the time he could. This sudden and unnecessary death shook me to the core and that's probably when it hit me that it can affect all of us.

All around me I could see doctors and nurses of all age groups working hard in the wards, in the intensive care units and in the operating rooms. We joked about catching the virus, but I think it was a defense mechanism for

us to hide our fear. We felt anxious and sad whenever we heard of a healthcare worker succumbing to the disease, but we continued working. I was amazed to see how the nurses were taking this in their stride. I saw a very strong sense of duty in them.

The beginning of the pandemic was very depressing as we were not aware of how the virus worked and kept trying out different treatment plans without much success. Gradually, we started winning many of the battles and saving sick patients. I continued to perform liver transplants and cancer surgeries and our patients got better and went home. I was feeling pretty good about myself and the sense of invincibility was coming back.

One Sunday morning, I woke up with a fever and severe body ache. As the fever continued, I went for the COVID test at my hospital. The next day the results came positive and I decided to remain in home quarantine.

Solitude can be very peaceful and very scary at the same time. The first few days, I was anxious about my health and worried about my family. I kept thinking about the worst-case scenarios. Then gradually hope started edging the fear away. For the first time in many years I was completely alone. I could hear myself breathing. I thought about my perceived priorities, my busy life and things that actually give me happiness. Technology helped me connect with my wife, my daughter and my friends and family, who all supported me. I was grateful that no one else in my family contracted the disease.

After eleven days, I woke up without fever or pain. My appetite was coming back, and I could taste food and smell normally. After a few days of rest, I went back to my hospital. All my colleagues and team members were really happy to see me. I think, seeing someone survive gives everyone hope that they can do it too.

Another enriching experience was when one of my patients, a young man, whose cancer surgery was postponed twice, first when he contracted COVID and again when I contracted the virus, came to see me after I joined back. His first concern was about my health instead of being worried about his. As he went home after his surgery, I kept thinking about his trust and compassion even in the face of so much adversity. This pandemic has changed the way we live our lives. We will have to work collectively and consciously to come out of it. To defeat this virus, only medical science will not be enough, we will have to change our behavior completely.

The last few months have taught me a lot. I have saved lives, seen patients and health care workers succumb to this disease and gone through the disease myself and survived. It is humbling to think that you have so little control over anything. All, perhaps, we can do is continue doing our job to the best of our ability. It has also taught me, that you don't need much to live in peace. Things which I thought were important turned out to be something I could very easily live without. This virus is here to stay for the near future. If we, as a society, can keep our guard on and don't forget the basic rules that we have learnt, I think humanity will be able to survive and flourish.



Image by Queven from Pixabay

Humanitarian service being offered as Sewa Yagna by covid warriors in India.
- * *Ambala City, India*

My family physician tirelessly answering distress calls 24/7. With senior doctor's parent detected Covid positive and admitted to hospital, my family phisician help them back home bfit and fine. He himself was later being diagnosed Covid positive and Quarantined but still available on phone for consultation with a positive mindset. - * *Pune, India*

I heard several stories of people helping others in this pandemic. One story which touched me is about the Indian actor Sonu Sood who helped thousands of migrant who were stuck in Maharashtra and elsewhere in India get back to their native place safely. He and his team selflessly transported several thousand of them to their home town without looking at their background, fed them and provided them shelter. His philanthropic work is exemplary.
- *Savita jain, Farmington Hills, MI*

My father, brother and I run an NGO providing aid to students who are intelligent, but unable to meet financial needs, and in these times, we're trying to provide dry ration packets to those in need (distributed 1500 packets till date), along with an animal welfare project of treating injured stray animals (around 5-7 cases per day) with a team of doctors/volunteers. - * *Indore, India*

JSOT had food seva program for nursing homes. Helping Jain community with career guidance and job search.
- *Apurva Talsania, Toronto, ON*

Covid Yodha, Read more about it at:

<https://drguddi.wordpress.com/2020/05/03/covid-yoddha/>
- *Dr Suruchi Desai, Mumbai, India*

I read a story of frontline worker that took a difficult decision for the safety of her family. She packed bags of her kids and husband and send them to her friends house a day before she learned that she will be working with COVID-19 patients. She shared what will be her cleaning and sanitizing schedule every night as she came back from hospital. It was very emotional .
- * *Ranchocucamonga, CA*

In this tough time of COVID-19, though everyone tried their best to help affected people in any way. Me and my few friends also contributed to one labor group in our area providing groceries Kit to families impacted. Also, on 11th May, we saw how Indian actor Sonu Sood came ahead and arranged multiple bus services for stranded migrant workers from Thane, Maharashtra to Gulbarga, Karnataka. He personally visited the bus terminals to say goodbye to the workers. He also arranged food, water and sanitizers to ensure they have a safe and comfortable trip back home. This really a good step of social service to help these labors to meet their family during this tough time.

- *Arvind Bhandari, Bangalore, India*

Vikas Khanna, a Michelin-starred chef, has turned his focus to India's hungry, providing millions of meals to poor Indians who have suffered greatly under the coronavirus lockdown.

Inner Engineering program online by sudhguru free for front line workers. Simha kriya for everyone should do to improve your lung capacity. InnerEngineering.com/webinars This site you might find free online courses will help everyone one. - *Harsha M Shah, Long Beach, CA*

I have been front line worker and have been treating COVID-19 patients daily. We face lot of challenges and I wish people would cooperate more and wear masks and follow guidelines to keep them as well as others safe and that way reduce mortality and morbidity. DO NOT FEEL ASHAMED TO WEAR MASK. - *Mahendra Maru, Owensboro, KY*

Read more at:
<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/magazines/panache/michelin-star-chef-vikas-khanna-turns-saviour-will-help-indias-street-vendors-impacted-by-covid-19/articleshow/77347002.cms>
- *Divya Jain, Pune, India*

Question: From front-line workers to ordinary people of all ages, many have shown extraordinary bravery and compassion to help others. Share a story that you have read or heard that you found most inspirational.

Age 19-65

With the lockdown, what inspired me most is the knee jerk reactions of the younger to reach out to the seniors with pick, delivery and any other needs. When we formed a sub-committee of volunteers, in 2 days we had 60 volunteers.

- *Manish Jain, Northville, MI*

How all nonprofit organizations getting together to help those in need without any bias. - * *Temple City, CA*

Sharing Kubler Ross Model to transform COVID PANDEMIC to a Positive Experience. This model is inspirational for me since it is a problem solving practice we can all incorporate in our life. The five stages of the model are 1. Denial 2. Anger 3. Bargain 4. Depression 5. Acceptance

- *Nidhi Shah, Riverside, CA*

I know one Boy, age 7, who used \$600 of savings to make coronavirus care packages for seniors, feed 90 students <https://www.foxnews.com/us/coronavirus-maryland-boy-carepackages-seniors-feed-students>

- *Rishi Shah, San Francisco, CA*

Local Government in our area were really determined to keep our locality clean so that residential area stay safe from disease. Cleanliness and awareness were and still are the top priority of our people. - *Soumya Jain, Indore, India.*

Everyone to contribute 100% to stop Corona virus, and also to encourage people for fight against Covid -19. People are brave when your mind is strong & powerful.

- *Prince Jain, Nagpur, India*

The Front-Line Workers/Nurses, who have resorted to wearing garbage bags as protective gear, the doctors banished to the basement for fear of infecting their spouses and children, the nurses who has not seen their kids for weeks and months to serve the world — are at once maddening, heartbreaking and inspiring.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2020/03/27/nurses-doctors-are-heroes-this-moment>

- *Abha Nnadawat, Plantation, FL*

A patient of mine cared for and is still caring for his neighbor, who had covid symptoms but didn't develop any respiratory distress & was patiently waiting while her symptoms eventually diminished. Her own kids, all well settled in different parts of the country couldn't make it to take care of their mom and the dogs. So, the neighbor took it upon himself to move in with his neighbor temporarily to take care of her and her dogs. She's doing good now. Thanks to people like her neighbor, there are still some good in people out there.

- *Amit Shah, South Lyon, MI*

I am a front-line worker, primary care physician. It's been tough, but we have been lucky to serve with few major problems. The team work between health care professionals is amazing.

- *Kumar S Gandhi, Mission Viejo, CA*

Everyone is doing their duties but what I found very inspirational was a good human being (Actor "Sonu Sood") in India came down on street to send thousands of people to their home from different state within India and also from different countries to their home in India. He reached out to many officials like transport management, government, for permission and helped the people without any expectations. Still helping to people to get jobs. Hats off!

- *Kaushal J Gandhi, Allentown, PA*

Story about a labourer taking his mother from some South Indian city to Bihar on cycle

- *Suyash Jain, Indore, India-*

The most inspirational story was for a New York Nurse who left her 3 kids home and the youngest one was only 6 Months

- *Richa P jain, Farmington Hills, MI*

As an essential worker, I have my own personal story in this period of pandemic time... I work as teacher for summer camp for kids and every day is challenging and new. We have to distance ourselves with utmost care while ensuring the education and care of our students with the utmost degree.

In addition, we ensure they are well educated about the current situation and practicing distancing themselves.

I personally work with the special education kids at the camp and make sure that they all work well and learn the same way safely. I believe that everyone who is a Frontline hero and I respect them with all my heart. Every story is amazing and no story is the best.

Everyone truly is a superhero.

- *Sarita kamlesh Shah, Novi, MI*

I have many friends who are front-line workers and they are selflessly working day and night to serve the society and still maintaining a proper work and life balance. - * *Northville, MI*

Hope Huddles in New York Hospitals -- all staff members gather together to spread positivity talking about all the positive experiences they have had . - *Naveen Kr Jain, Farmington Hills, MI*

I've seen a lot of health workers sacrificing their personal lives to care for patients and I think that's truly remarkable. It teaches us to play our part. - *Rajvi A Ranka, Cupertino, CA*

My spouse is a Physical Therapist specialist for Specialneed kids. Being essential worker, they have to go to the clinic every day. Physicaltherapy involves continuous physical efforts and wearing a double mask makes it aherculean task. Shortness of breath, dizziness, weakness, sweating are mostcommon symptoms throughout the day and the evenings at home are best describedas efforts to regain energy back after a few hours of rest to start all overagain the next day. Mental pressure is continuous and unrelenting. Difficult to see& meet family members to avoid unnecessary exposure for them. It ischallenging to balance socio-family, community and professional life in thesechallenging times thinking we are all in this together. - * *Weston, FL.*

Twelve weeks ago, about 25 jain families in New Jersey started with the noble thought of helping those in need. There are not enough words to describe how amazed and grateful we are for the dedication, compassion and generosity of all the families that came together to help the community. Here are some of the activities that we carried:

Anukampa Daan: We served about 600 Jain cooked meals, donated groceries and toiletries to over 12 food banks, mini pantries and local families.
Sadharmik Vatsalya: Raised over \$6500 to help our fellow jain families in India
Jivdaya: Raised over \$1500 for jeev daya and sent to Panjarapole in India
- *Jignya Shah, Raritan, NJ*

In every day world news, we hear stories of survival and encouragement from the medical field. We also hear stories about discouragement and not being there when the loved ones leave the world without families around them. Let's cherish each day of our lives and count our blessings.

- *Swati P. Shah, E. Greenwich, RI*

A lot of good stories around the world where people went above and beyond to help each other. One particular thing I would like to call out is how Jain Center volunteers managed the labharthies and visitors to the temple during limited opening of the Derasar.

- * *Cupertino, CA*

I have been inspired by the CaronaSeKaruna campaign which is being run in rural parts of Maharashtra. They have helped and continue to provide groceries and meals for entire families whose livelihood is impacted by the pandemic. Please check this video and link below:

<https://fundraisers.giveindia.org/projects/sanitization-and-immunization-of-100-villages-from-covid-19>

- *Divyesh Shah, Fremont, CA*

I work at CCRC, and the frontline workers that work in our community created history every day. I am in awe to see their hard work. - *Kushant shah, Canton, MI*

I supported my brother and bhabhi without fear when they got coronavirus. Making timely decisions with a stable mind is always helpful to come out of any situation. - *Rina Girish Mehta, Ahmedabad, India*

I was amazed by the acts of kindness shown by people as a mechanism to cope up with pandemic including calling old friends and distance relatives to bringing food and groceries to people.

One story which struck me is story of Chef Vikas Khanna from New York who used his tweeter account to feed over 10 million people including migrant workers in India.

Here is the link
<https://scroll.in/video/965900/watch-my-sense-of-hunger-came-from-new-york-says-michelin-star-chef-vikas-khanna-on-bbc>
Loved the story
- *Hemesh Shah, Novi, MI*

My travel is totally stopped.
Can't mingle with the friends.
- *Vipin Bhavsar, Clive, IA*

I am working harder and longer hours than ever before, like many others. I try to meditate, go for walks and try to connect with family and friends to encourage them to remain strong and safe. I let them know that that if they need help, they can count of me. -
Swati P. Shah, E. Greenwich, RI

We all are sailing in the same boat, I have got an opportunity to help my mom with the household chorus and to decorate my room with more time and space. Basically it's a time to dedicate to ourselves and our family. I am a college student so instead of switching classes from floor to floor, it happens on a click now. - *Soumya Jain, Indore, India,*

No junk food , cleanliness and immunity booster supplements at home Social distance at work place and mask wearing
- *Rina Girish Mehta, Ahmedabad, India.*

Staying home was tough initially but now it is becoming a new norm. Overall surprised to see how quickly world has adopted the new norm and have learned to extract the positivity out of Pandemic times. - * *Cupertino, CA*

Nothing changed much, have been working and studying from home, in fact working more than before along with completing my college projects and freelance projects!
- * *Indore, India*

Never worked from home so working from home is unique experience for me. I see more time to do stuff I want to do. About the office work, I see that we have more meetings since all communication has to be through formal meetings. But people have adapted great.
- *Hemesh Shah, Novi, MI*

At home, it is getting more time with kids, having breakfast lunch and dinner together with kids. Getting used with everything online and also having kids around all day. No 880 traffic is a big change and a topic I don't have to worry about atleast for rest of year :)
- *Divyesh Shah, Fremont, CA*

No more restaurants, no more meeting with friends in person, no working in an office. Now everything is virtual (friends, work).
- * *MI*

Never expected to see such a life changing episode - Not beable to go out at will, enjoy outdoors, catch a movie, nice dinner at restaurant, checkout mall; etc. Professional work has shifted online. Workplace area athome is competing with family space, additional computer screens are poppingup! Family life has new meaning, never expected college bounds kids to be homemore than a few weeks. Family Dinner time has become a new fun ritual again. Nomore on the fly grocery or Indian store run, but meticulous planning for two-weekgrocery lists, logistically planning shopping routes and post shopping clean upritual. Personally, I enjoy having a full family close together. - * *Weston, FL*

Personally, for me it is relaxing, no hurries for work and household work. Scared to go out initially in April and May. Kind of enjoying the no rush life.
- * *Ranchocucamonga, CA*

I used to drive more than 50 miles daily to work and back. With work from home in this situation has saved not only driving time but also allowed me to spend more time with family. It has also helped in checking overspending on things which are not needed (self control). - *Savita jain, Farmington Hills, MI*

* **Annonymus**

Question: Many things in our daily life have changed significantly. Tell us about how things have changed for you at home and at your workplace. **Age 19-65**



Even before Covid or after Covid life have changed significantly by doing Yoga Kriya and Meditation. By doing this things I do not have fear, stress. I gain courage, and confidence. - *Harsha M Shah, Long Beach, CA*

We don't have much change in our life style since we are retired people for some time. We are staying home safe. We have not stepped inside a store for more than four months, even for groceries. We get curbside pickup or deliveries. - * *Brea, CA*

The most significant change has been social distancing and decreased socialization - *Suyash Jain, Indore*

More Family time. More appreciation of household members for what they do . - * *Temple City, CA*

I find that people have become more humble and have found deeper meanings and reasons in life. I have definitely got more closer to the near and dear ones, with better work-life management. - *Manish Jain, Northville, MI*

The most important thing at work which is a huge change for me is all face to face meetings have been shifted to zoom meeting. That takes the mingling opportunity away. At home, the biggest change is - not being able to go to friends house as we wish. - *Kushant shah, Canton, MI*

After wearing an apron in kitchen, whipping up food for family and then donning a PPE and treating COVID patient's and non COVID, life's come a full circle. - *Dr Suruchi Desai, Mumbai, India*

Can't deny that it feels blue to let go trips to parents, vacations, weekend parties etc. But brighter side, me and my husband now spends a lot of time together. Home has rather become our new workplace. We realized that we could actually manage home without house-helps and go hard with office work too. We coordinate with almost everything. One can cook & clean while other has day long meetings. We binge-watch and sleep endlessly on weekends. In all, we started loving being at home, as much as we loved wandering around. - *Divya Jain, Pune, India*

Yes definitely there is big change in our daily routine life due to this COVID-19 and first impact was that our Indian Prime Minister had to force to announced for complete locked down of India from 25-Mar-2020 for people safety concern, but I feel that it has both positive and negative (in terms of limitations) outcomes. Positive outcome can be that in my all 22 years of service, first time got chance to spent good amount of time with my family and specially kids in home during work time. Though workload will still be there but able to managed time with both work and personal life together. Feel very free environment in our home only during work and good thing is the everyone including kids contribute in whatever way in house work like cleaning but at the same time, there were some cons in all aspects in our day to day routine. At times there were no shops, no online services were available and only essential services was available and later needs to depend on online service only for every small thing required. This was tough time when most people including us was not ready to face this challenge but since it was really necessary for safety part. For our kids studies also, final year exam impacted and after summer vacations, schools had to force to start online study to avoid loss of studies. At work, many time I feel that there is need to face to face interactions with team but we had to managed through online interaction though video conference available but when we have large team, it was tough to manage work life balance. In office, we can communicate easily with team face to face even for small work and now we have to schedule call and need to depend on everyone availability and most of time spent time in meetings and calls and finally it impacts the work and timelines. There is no fixed time work and personal time but anyhow we are managing as a precaution measure for this corona virus.

- *Arvind Bhandari, Bangalore, India*

I have been front line worker Morning and evening have changed drastically, earlier our morning/ evening were ours but not ours. Now, as we know its ours we are able to implement our long due wishlist's: yoga, exercise, healthy breakfast in the morning, lunch at home, timely dinner and long walk in the evening, compulsory movies over the weekend and long talks with friends and relatives. - *Babita Jain, Indore, India*

For my answer to this question, I want to address that COVID-19 has caused significant changes to many people - physically, mentally, and emotionally. The quarantine and its residual effects have no doubt impacted me, but I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the incredibly challenging situations marginalized black and brown communities are being put in. From limited access to health education to higher rates of asthma due to increased pollution in low-income, high-needs region. In summary, my home, my social life, and my mental health has certainly been impacted and I am doing my best to be mindful of the circumstances that are causing others to suffer more than me. - *Mika Jain, Los Angeles, CA*

My mother passed away just as COVID 19 started ramping up in India and US. I was in India with her in late February 2020/Early March because she was unwell. She was better and back home with my brother, when I returned to the US, But she peacefully passed away on March 24, 2020. I was not able to travel again so that was difficult but consoles myself that I did get to spend time with her just a few days before and the whole world was trying to Control the spread so it was okay to postpone her memorial activities till the things got better. It's been almost 5 months now and we still do not see the spread of COVID in control- it has been difficult and hopefully things improve soon so we can continue with as normal a life as possible.

One thing that helped tremendously was continuing online and to be a part of Jain study class and Swadhyay and having discussions with the students in study class as well as listening to spiritual and scholarly lectures from other Jain leaders.

- *Jitendra R. Sanghvi, Northville, MI*

I am working in Information technology, so working from home is not a big change for me personally. Avoided travelling which is not required, went away from materialistic happiness, spent a good quality time with family and learnt many household things at home.

- *Kaushal J Gandhi, Allentown, PA*

Yes, initially I felt that I was not able to meet friends/family, no shopping, movies, and travel but I was glad that we were able to spend more time with my kids who were away from us for many years. Was able to get more connected with the family and friends online. - *Manisha Bhandari, Northville, MI*

Yes, its true because everyone take precautions, before covid 19, people were careless and no one care about oneself but business or job. but now people also take ayurvedic kada and also do yoga for fit and hit. - *Prince Jain, Nagpur, India*

Nothing is normal now and awaiting the new normal -

* *Pune, India*

I have been able to connect with all my students and staff online and could helped to facilitate the communication in more better way. - *Sangeeta Jain, Indore, India*

As far as I am concern I did not feel any huge change in my life. Only I was expected to spend my day inside the four walls of my house.

Remaining was routine.

- *Jitendra Ved, Indore, India*

I have been staying in quarantine at home mostly and stay in different room and at work we are following all guidelines while seeing patients, and spending more on PPE to protect staff and patients. - *Mahendra Maru, Owensboro, KY*

* **Annonymus**

I am working Remote only, and I have 3 hours in my day extra. I have been trying to catch up on my reading and also have been praying more for this pandemic to end. -

Naveen Kr Jain, Farmington Hills, MI

Everyday, I take special precautions at home, my work place for deep cleaning and taking special provision that where ever I go everyone will be happy & healthy, I try specially to understand peoples and try to help them from going out of way. Specially try to do more meditation, yoga and lots of exercise for superior physical and mental health. -

Sarita kamlesh Shah, Novi, MI

We have definitely become more closer as a family because of these circumstances and try to go on walks almost everyday.

- Rajvi A Ranka, Cupertino, CA

Interestingly things become more comfortable without driving a lot, business was normal, swadhyay increased due to zoom meetings, started to do samayik every day, our temple started daily prayers online for 15 minutes to 30 Minutes which was blessing as in past it was in person only on Sunday. -

Abha Nnadawat, Plantation, FL

I am working from Home, I get to spend quality time with my kids & family. I have time to read and go for walks also, there is a sense of fear that I have since this pandemic doesn't seem to end. -

Richa P jain, Farmington Hills, MI

I work from home from initially and I did not like it but eventually accepted it after 3 months of pandemic. I am doing more daily outdoor walking almost everyday. Watching the sunset from my home after having early Jain dinner. Eating more healthy food and I have lost some weight. Learning how to take Business Management classes on Zoom, understanding more features of Blackboard and Canvas.

- Nidhi Shah, Riverside, CA

I am spending more time now with the online technology at home itself. - *

Ambala City, India

I have spent more time walking in natural areas to get the fresh air - such as along the beach or through my neighborhood. -

Kumar S Gandhi, Mission Viejo, CA

It is big change for us, but we are accepting new norms - *

Grand Blanc, MI

Work from home now and the kids are not going to school. -

Rishi Shah, San Francisco, CA

I'm a dentist, right at the frontline, risking my health & my family's everyday when I come into work to help patients get out of pain. I feel very comfortable coming into work because I feel very safe and that's what I tell every patient. My workplace has seen a dramatic upgrade in the sense that we've invested in everything possible to enable patients get treatment in the safest possible environment amidst this covid nonsense. We've air purifiers with double hepa filters in every room, external suction units, makeshift negative pressure operatories, UV-C sterilization room for our instruments, PPE, etc, portable UV-C lights that can be moved from room to room to sanitize in between patient appointments. At home, nothing's really changed except that we had to stock up on some essentials in the beginning when COVID-19 hit our area. -

Amit Shah, South Lyon, MI

There are many positives coming from this. I used to meet friends often and had a virtual time with the kids as they were away from home, but now I am having virtual time with friends and in person time with the family. I am working from home, so I am more productive now as I save time on my commute to work. There are certain things I miss, like going out for movies, travel, recreation, shopping, and social meetings.

*- * Northville, MI*

I have used extra time to get in touch with the friends and family. Tried new cooking, painting house, tried luck in singing.

- *Savita jain, Farmington Hills, MI*

My brother is a musician and I've started working as a Lyricist, Graphic Designer and Animator, and we made a song as a tribute to all Corona frontline warriors, 'KHAUF KO TODTA HAI', which was released on YouTube. And another song is going to be released in mid August on all streaming platforms. - ** Indore, India*

Developed some new hobbies. Sewed at least 80 masks for homeless. Spending more time to the personal fitness. Learning Sanskrit and remembering shlokas of religion.

Spending more time in meditation and religious practices. Motivating my friends and family to dancercise with me in zoom. Gardening; grew lots of veggies in my backyard.

- ** Ranhocucamonga, CA*

Listening to the Jain philosophy principle always interested but missed earlier on Webex, Zoom etc from experts like Pravin Shah, Jitendra Shah[Ahmedabad] etc and many ancient Archeological wonder talks and presentations.

- ** Pune, India.*

I worked through. We are busy at home care agency at home, great bondage with 15 years & 20 years old girls & husband

- ** Grand Blanc, MI*

We went through the each and every room and got rid of lots of things that are not needed. General cleaning and make it more organized.

- ** Farmington Hills, MI*

Women in the community have started weekly Social virtual meetings in which experts share their knowledge and wisdom in subjects such as yoga, meditation, new food recipes, home facial therapy, Canvas drawing and having fun.-

* *Weston, FL*

During this COVID-19, I feel that there is big change in communication and social culture and everyone in family got chance to get close each other's. There are family and friends video conferencing and various games played, singing competitions also happened through different channels like WhatsApp, zoom call, duo Team etc. We got to know the talent of everyone in our own families.

In my family, my mother, brothers and sisters, we have created group for singing movie songs. This really created a good platform to show our talent and we have entertainment too.

- *Arvind Bhandari, Bangalore, India*

I am developing my kitchen garden, my kids and husband have learned all household activities in the absence of maid. Now everyone at the home can cook food and we all do cooking together, its fun.

- *Babita Jain, Indore, India*

Twice a Day walk with our Dog. It is very helpful in keeping me healthy and fit. Working from home help indirectly helping in reduction of pollution and increase in air quality.

- ** Temple City, CA*

Yes, I learnt how to volunteer more and reach out to people who need help. Learn new digital skills to the help people in need.

- *Apurva Talsania, Toronto, ON*

Spent more time on the hobbies and also spent more time with friends (virtually) and family (in person).

- ** MI*

Question: Many people are using some of the extra time they have to be creative, have fun and learn new things. Share some of the things you are doing to use this time in a constructive way. **Age 19-65**

Grooming myself technically, which is helping me in my professional life. Reading more books, cooking all my favorite food at home, practicing yoga and investing a lot of time in designing my future new home.

- *Divya Jain, Pune, India*

Tried my hands on gardening and tried to understand the share market.

- *Suyash Jain, Indore, India*

Since having an engineering background, I always tried doing little handy man Chores at home. I took few tutorials and was able to do some upgrades in my house .

- *Naveen Kr Jain, Farmington Hills, MI*

Started biking and spending more time exercising. More time with family.

- *Kushant shah, Canton, MI*

I have learnt Warli Drawing/ Painting online. It has been a lot of fun spending time re-discovering old hobbies.

- *Divyesh Shah, Fremont, CA*

Honing my culinary skills - *Dr Suruchi Desai, Mumbai, India*

I undertook a project of digitizing all my old family videos on VHS and Camcorder tapes and sharing digital videos with family and friends all over the world as web links. Some of the videos were 30 plus years old!!!

- *Prince Jain, Nagpur, India.*

I do one samayik every day and I started speaking to parents and family and asking for good health on day to day basis.

- *Abha Nnadawat, Plantation, FL.*

Being a bibliophile, I spent my time in my library, read as much as possible. It was the period of self isolation rather to say incarceration . So I accepted the decision of Almighty and managed in my own way.

- *Jitendra Ved, Indore, India.*

I was able to spend more time on exercise, reading good literature, explore better TV shows and movies, house cleanup/ decoration, and creating new puzzle games for the families and friends to play on zoom calls.

- *Manisha Bhandari, Northville, MI*

We have increased our exercise routine, experimented with several good recipes, undertook few projects at our Temple while there is no traffic.

- *Manish Jain, Northville, MI*

Cooking Vegan recipe, Learning to meditate and some Yoga.

- *Richa P jain, Farmington Hillss, MI*

I am learning music - the saxophone

- *Kumar S Gandhi, Mission Viejo, CA.*

I am spending more time in hospital and office and do not have extra family and personal time.

- *Mahendra Maru, Owensboro, KY*

My sister and I try to do bhangra practice every night to keep ourselves occupied and fit.

- *Rajvi A Ranka, Cupertino, CA*

Helped spouse in kitchen, learnt to grow vegetables at home, could spend time on religious reading, could get time to involve daughters in religious things at home.

- *Kaushal J Gandhi, Allentown, PA*

We do yoga, asana ,pranayama and meditation.

- *Harsha M Shah, Long Beach, CA*

To learn pratikaman. I also tried to get the knowledge of jain dharam

- *Bhavesh Bipinchandra Shah, Ahmedabad, India.*

I am learning Sanskrit and Spanish languages.

- *Vipin Bhavsar, Clive, IA*

Yes, I have been reading "The Untethered Soul: The Journey Beyond Yourself " with my family and it has helped me learn about Ego.

- *Rishi Shah, San Francisco, CA*

Being creative and designing new courses with UCR faculty team designed for new online MBA programs commencing from 2021. Cooking new food items and sharing with others. Connecting more with family, friends and professionals through whatsapp, zoom, phone etc. Did personal branding certification course and doing Resilience in uncertain times from Coursera. Using time in a constructive way by sharing hand made poem with Jain Community.

Hand Made Poem - Created: Nidhi Shah Riverside, CA

Reinventing self in pandemic is my vision,
 Making a positive impact and being the best version of myself is my mission.
 Failure and fear will not stop me from learning and growing.
 Success in overcoming problems and confidence will keep me moving each day,
 Work with positive affirmations, put effort and have right intentions is my goal everyday.
 Faith and Belief in myself and others is progress and part of celebration,
 Motivating others to work with passion, integrity, and compassion.
 Taking care of family members and University students and developing better relationships is the way I will fulfill my dreams.
 Working together and achieving results in committed teams
 Adding value to myself and others is my mission,
 Being distinct, creative, and proactive by reinventing my authentic self is my vision.

- *Nidhi Shah, Riverside, CA*

I have been trying my hands on new recipes that I never tried before and also working on my singing skills. I got a platform where I can express myself through my favourite songs.

- *Sangeeta Jain, Indore, India*

In this pandemic time, I try to be more constructive by doing singing, dancing, reading, painting, cooking writing & lots of other things...

Try to understand peoples & help them.. because nothing is permanent & we are super strong by doing all this constructive things

- *Sarita kamlesh Shah, Novi, MI*

We as a family have been playing more board games, taking longer hikes, trying to stay active as much as possible because it's very easy to put on weight than lose.

- *Amit Shah, South Lyon, MI*

I am able to work more time on my old passions with singing and music and I am now able to participate in many online concerts and Jain Stavan online programs. We have created so many games to be played online with various groups and so spending more quality time with my relatives and friends. I was able to spend more time on working out at my house gym

- ** Northville, MI-*

I have completed some international certification courses through coursera which taught me a lot about how things and system works across the globe. I got a very good time to be patience with my artistic skills and tried some new ways to make my painting and sketching look more real so that i could feel them. - *Soumya Jain, Indore, India*

I have written the article on Covid and minerals ,vitamin roles on dental tissue and do new food learning at home - *Rina Girish Mehta, Ahmedabad, India.*

I am using my time to re-read past issues of Jain Digest and try to implement in my teaching and personal experiences. I meditate, read and go for walks. I am also trying to get ready for the next school year by navigating new apps and websites.

- *Swati P. Shah, E. Greenwich, RI*

I started walking regularly. Also family calls with India are fun too.

- *Hemesh Shah, Novi, MI*

I spent time expanding my cooking skills by learning many more dishes and perfecting few others that I was not good at. Also learned few new technologies. I was also motivated to learn more about online collaboration tools specially Zoom, Webex and Microsoft Meeting that I was able to use for community meetings.

- ** Cupertino, CA*

*** Annonymus**

My Reflections on Covid-19

By Anop R Vora, Rochester, NY



Anop Vora is involved in Community services and Promotion of Professional Education in the Jain Community. His current interests include: Listening to the Spiritual Discourses, Meditation, Reading and Writing on the religious topics. e-mail: vora5000@yahoo.com

As we all know that Covid-19 came out of blue and shocked the entire world. Initially many people mistakenly thought that it was like another kind of flu and would just blow away as the weather warmed up. In reality to everyone's surprise, a totally unexpected situation developed that has engulfed the majority of the nations and caused a lot of suffering, pain, and many deaths. One can never imagine that an invisible virus, microscopic in size, can bring down the entire humankind down to its knees so fast. It has turned out to be more powerful than the most powerful armies in the world, armaments and even nuclear weapons! No one knows for sure when this enemy will be defeated. It has indeed been a humbling experience for all.

Many Jain scholars have analyzed this virus and its vicious impact on human beings from the philosophical viewpoint. For those who would like to comprehend it from this perspective, a good starting point would be to read the article by Dr. Sulekh Jain and the article from Jainism blog included in this magazine.

In this article I would like to discuss how Jain values and life style have proved to be a huge blessing for Jains in managing this virus and what we can learn from it. Most of us have grown up with thrifty and financially responsible life style. Very few of us live beyond our means and typically have a good bank balance. This has been a part of our cultural upbringing. No matter how wealthy we become, our way of life normally does not change substantially. This life style has enabled most Jains to weather such crisis very well financially, compared to the vast majority of the natives in the western world. Many of them live hand-to-mouth and once the source of income dries up, it becomes a big source of pain, anger, anxiety and frustration. This is a huge plus for our community that we need to recognize and be proud of. Looking ahead, let us hope that our way of living will rub off on our children at least in some aspects so that they can continue to enjoy worry free financial life.

Another important blessing we need to be cognizant of is our way of responding to an adverse situation. Most of us are highly intelligent professionals and our response to this crisis has so far been based upon our receptivity to scientific information and quickly adopting our behavior accordingly. We have stayed open-minded and have not argued and fought against science and accepted the recommendations made by the scientific community. We have maintained our equanimity even when the external situation has turned out to be much worse than anyone could have ever expected. It is because of these ingrained virtues in our character, vast majority of the fellow Jains have remained unscathed from the virus so far. These important qualities have come from our cultural heritage. We need to feel very fortunate about this rich heritage especially when we see so many others around us are reacting poorly in the name of democracy (a great example of ignorance and MITHYATVA-wrong beliefs), but we as a community remain grounded and peaceful.

Other noteworthy aspect of the Jain community is the resourcefulness with which it has chosen to spend time constructively during lockdowns and partial shutdowns; although our temples are closed and our community gatherings have disappeared. Instead of getting frustrated with the situation, its members calmly accepted the situation as it is and created many tools based upon the internet and online meeting technology. This has enabled us all to keep connected with our families, friends, scholars and saints from far-away places and kept us productive. To strengthen us spiritually, we have also used our time efficiently by studying religion, worshipping, doing rituals, meditating and volunteering. To maintain tranquility in the trying circumstances and doing whatever is within in our control is something that is natural for us. It is in our blood. It defines who we are.

It is a common knowledge that Jains are affluent and used to spend a good portion of their wealth in building temples in the past. Now the attitude is shifting. Quite a few Jains scholars and saints have started encouraging

us to support social and humanitarian causes as well. Many in our community have embraced this shift and COVID became a NIMITTA to bring out the best from us. It brought forth our innate virtue of compassion which found an outlet to exhibit it. It is a matter of pride for us to know that many Jains have stepped forward and helped thousands of COVID affected poor and needy people all across the globe.

What can we learn from this crisis? It brings home the importance of ANITYA, EKATVA AND ASHARAN BHAVANAS (Reflections) among others. Lord Mahavir taught us through these important Bhavanas that everything is impermanent and changing. We should not be taking anything for granted and need to use every moment to advance ourselves spiritually. As we can see rather vividly that COVID can strike any of us at any time and take us away from our family, relatives, and friends within no time, leaving behind our wealth, power, and fame that we have spent decades in acquiring. Everything could go out the chimney literally overnight! When this happens, none of our loved ones can help. They cannot even attend our funeral! There is no shelter available except what is provided by Panch Parmeshti. So far, these bhavanas were just concepts in our mind and we did not pay much attention, thinking that they were meant for someone else, not for me. COVID has shown us these bhavanas in-action for the last 4 months right in front of our eyes. It has made us humble and helpless paving the way for a real change in our perspective and behavior, going forward.

We are finally realizing that we are all the members of the global village and need to support each other to survive and thrive. We also need to help animals, birds and preserve vegetation. We are truly interdependent. There is no place for silos. We are all in it together. COVID has taken out the boundaries between nations, races, genders, cultures, rich, and poor and has really given us a wonderful opportunity to do our part to live by “SHIV MASTU SARVA JAGATHA...” that we recite quite often. If and when the virus disappears from life, let us hope that we can continue to remember the message of “SHIV MASTU..” and help not only our fellow Jains but all the members of the human family and other beings to the best of our ability. This is the most important lesson we can learn from the COVID experience.



Spending time in prayers every morning and evening. Helped stuck Indian college student with food. -
Savita jain, Farmington Hills, MI

I am practicing most of the mechanisms with utmost unwavering devotion and find myself refreshingly energized and creative.

- * *Ambala City, India*

We have learned self-control during locked-down. Vegetables and other necessary things were not easily available and we learned how to run house with limited resources. - *Babita Jain, Indore, India*

When we talk about mediation, all our Jain values plays a vital role and we have to follow them in our routine practices to make our own and family members life easy and smooth. We could follow many values by default, like by staying at home, avoiding unproductive, useless talks with people in office during tea time, and stranger, in travelling, avoided useless thoughts during different time of day. we are used to have "Mukhkosh" during Puja so we avoid harming ekindriy jeev in air, we started following that practice when we leave home now.isnt it great? - *Kaushal J Gandhi, Allentown, PA*

Have been listening to pravachan by P.P. Ratnasunderji, P.P. Pranam Sagarji to maintain the track of the righteousness and be mentally balanced in all times and situations. Also, been reading Jain granthas, history and theory of our religion to gain apt knowledge in detail.

- * *Indore, India*

Meditation and Samayik has given me the peace of mind. - *Suyash Jain, Indore, India*

We are doing evening prayer in virtual environment. I have attended quite a few meetings. - *
Farmington Hills, MI

More time for listening spiritual discourses and applying zest of discourse to daily life. Increased compassion thereby offering more Seva to others.

- * *Temple City, CA*

When person have crisis then they are looking for solution like religion and spirituality. But every one is prepared all the time with crisis or without crisis how to manage circumstances then you do not have any problems in life. So all the time you should practice compassion and equanimity. -

Harsha M Shah, Long Beach, CA

I always follow jainism & self discipline.. I eat before 6 pm for past 30 years & no food after that for my own discipline, I have temple in my home so prayers are every day no matter what as a part of routine in my 50 years of life so far.

- * *Grand Blanc, MI*

There are two books I have read in the past few months that have brought me a sense of calm, a connection to Jainism, and everyday mindful strategies. The first is Breath by James Nestor, and the second is An Introduction to Jain Philosophy by Parveen Jain. Both are giving me the strategies to connect with my mind body & spirit in ways that are manageable right now. For example, stretching accompanied by deep breathing is a goal of mine. Parveen's writing are a reminder to not get attached to a particular ego-based goal, but rather to do the practice with consistency.

Everything in moderation.

- *Mika Jain, Los Angeles, CA*

The basic principles of Ahimsa, Anekantwad and Aparigraha have helped me stay strong and the blessings and Satsang of a Live Guru. - * *Pune, India*

Since the Temple lockdown, we initiated daily virtual evening prayers for the members. There were around 150 participants from several states. As a host, one of the take away for me was from the 5 minutes of socializing. Through their voices I could hear that they were doing well, staying connected and were not in any desperate need.

- *Manish Jain, Northville, MI*

Question: In a crisis like this, many of us turn to religion and spirituality to find hope, meaning and peace. Which Jain teachings & values (Ahimsa, Anekantvad, Compassion, Self-Control, Equanimity, Faith, etc.) and practices (Darshan, Prayer, Satsang, Samayik, etc.) are helping you in dealing with the challenges of the lockdown and how? **Age 19-65**

The frustrations built up during the lockdown due to inability to go to work, socialize with friends & family, limit our movements out of the house for everything else besides the core necessities - were dealt best with the prayers, meditation, self-control and biggest of all, faith.... Faith that everything will get back to normal one day.... And that's what we've been doing everyday. This lockdown period has helped me look deeper within myself and I've come out a more rounded person practicing the above mentioned modalities to the best of my abilities.

- *Amit Shah, South Lyon, MI*

I am an avid Jain Digest reader. I am constantly sharing the relevance of compassion, empathy, devotion, peace, faith in our daily lives and become a better person. I read the past and current issues of Jain Digest and emails that I receive from other Jain sources. I am more of a spiritual person than religious and offer prayers, meditate and share positive affirmations to everyone.

- *Swati P. Shah, E. Greenwich, RI*

Yes, many people believe in Jain religion, God Mahaveer said "Jiyo Aur Jine Do". Ye ek hee nara pure vishw ko bacha sakta he. Isliye app bhi is nare ko age badhaiye.

- *Prince Jain, Nagpur, India*

Faith - that everything will soon return to normal, Self-Discipline - to maintain a good work-life balance. Yoga and meditation are really helpful in finding mind and body composure.

- *Divya Jain, Pune, India*

In my family we do swadhyay on daily basis and have been spending every extra minute to learn and study Jain Principles. My respect for our religion has increased tremendously in this COVID-19 times.

- *Mahendra Maru, Owensboro, KY*

Self-Control and Anekantvad were among two of the main principles I saw most effect on. While on shelter in place, keeping oneself healthy and motivated was managed by adding more exercise, yoga and extended walks. Shelter In Place, also put many people on the edge and practicing Anekantvad help to deal and resolve some of those situations.

- * *Cupertino, CA*

Self-control, satisfied with what we have, Faith in God and other Jain principle have helped me to have belief in the life that God has given to us.

- *Manisha Bhandari, Northville, MI*

In this difficult time, I believe faith is top most thing that we always need to have always faith on God, people with whom we are connected & our own self.

I do special prayer in my mind every day for everyone, nobody will get affected badly in this difficult time. We just need to be more strong & understanding towards each others.

- *Sarita kamlesh Shah, Novi, MI*

Meditation and self control is a way though which I try to maintain my health instead of visiting doctors during pandemic situation. It really helped.

- *Sangeeta Jain, Indore, India*

Due to work busy Schedule, I did not get chance to participate in Jain religious activities but definitely if I get time, would like to participate in religious activities.

- *Arvind Bhandari, Bangalore, India*

Equanimity and faith are two Jain teachings that have helped me a lot during this pandemic. We have an option here in Detroit to do the virtual darshan daily -- while praying I do darshan -- which is very healing.

- *Naveen Kr Jain, Farmington Hills, MI*

Compassion, kindness empathy for all human beings is what I am practicing and made it a part of my life. Just starting to learn and integrate in my life being physically alert, having mental clarity, self control over negative emotions, and spiritually connecting with Lord Mahavir.

- *Nidhi Shah, Riverside, CA*

Yes, some of the Jain principles and habits such as self-control, faith, satisfaction, inner happiness, vegetarian diet, contentment, and many more have really helped in this crisis time.

Due to my research on some Jain bhajans and stavans for singing, I was able to spend some good time on Jainism articles/videos.

- * *Northville, MI*

* **Annonymus**

I really enjoyed the daily prayer followed by Laghu Shanti by JSJD prayer group. It brought lot of peace and positivity after listening to negative news. - *Hemesh Shah, Novi, MI*

Our Religion teaches us to be compassionate and have self control and this helps us to control our vivid thoughts and help us to be relaxed and calm. Following a daily ritual like Samayik has also been very helpful. - *Richa P Jain, Farmington Hills, MI*

Meditation, Samayik, learning Logassa and Bhaktambar with my family. Staying busy in creative things and not watching news everyday. - * *Ranchocucamonga, CA*

Self-control and willpower is definitely important during this time - we have to put safety ahead of enjoyment. - * *MI*

Prayer has been the most self calming practice. - *Kushant shah, Canton, MI*

Self control by controlling my food habits. - *Rajvi A Ranka, Cupertino, CA*

We have weekly swadhyay sessions and so definitely would say that spirituality has given us meaning and peace and love. - *Divyesh Shah, Fremont, CA*

Yes we signed up for Jain Samayik, Darshan at home and Helping people. - *Apurva Talsania, Toronto, ON*

Home place darshan, prayer, samayik - * *Nainwa, Bundi, India*

I am an ardent Hatha Yoga practitioner, and also believe in Satsang and Ahimsa. - *Kumar S Gandhi, Mission Viejo, CA*

Swadhyay - *Jitendra R. Sanghvi, Northville, MI*

As mentioned above all are helpful to me. - *Bhavesh Shah, Ahmedabad, India*

Yes, I do a samayik and anupurvi every day and it makes my day satisfactory. - *Abha Nnadawat, Plantation, FL*

Trying to stay in the present and enjoying the time with my young kids. - *Rishi Shah, San Francisco, CA*

Yes, I practiced all the topics you have listed and attained peace of mind and went near my soul. - *Vipin Bhavsar, Clive, IA*

Mediation and prayer helped me to keep the hope and patience. Lockdown effect prevailed in India for a really long time that means no going out and complete isolation from our environment and when something changes without being agreed to, it may lead to frustration and anxiety. - *Soumya Jain, Indore, India*

During the pandemic, our South Florida Jain Community has come together and started virtual prayers each evening to spread positive vibrations. We celebrated Mahavir JanmKalyank virtually with adult and children's programs and Dhawja changecelebration with live virtual guidance from Narendra Bhai Nandu from India and harmonious Stavans by Megh. We continued Satsang practices through weekly lecture series with renowned guests. Children completed Pathshala lessons and had a virtual graduation in May. - *South Florida Sangh*

Yes, yoga meditation with the mantra jaap creates one aura surrounding self protect with majority of enemies like health and gossips from known persons - *Rina Girish Mehta, Ahmedabad, India*

Learned to be in touch with friends and families as much as possible.
Savita jain, Farmington Hills, MI

Developing a new and creative hobby which feeds your mind and body is very helpful in coping with this type of crisis.
** Ranchocucamonga, CA*

Satsang is of prime importance and learned scholars from the community and outside expert spiritual practitioners exposure to the community is essential for upliftment along with the Patshalas.
** Pune, India**

Drastic change in kids, they have learned the value of things which were available to them very easily. They realized what it takes to run a house without any external help. They were not aware of difference between Jira and Rai and now they are a good cook. Now when they demand for any food, they have realization what efforts it takes to prepare that.
**Babita Jain, Indore, India*

Every crisis brings stress and opportunities. We have to learn to manage stress and look for opportunities to grow.
- Hemesh Shah, Novi, MI

Plant based vegetarian probiotics drinks as immunity boosters.
*- * Ambala City, India*

“Apki Bhi Koshish
 He Log Aware Rahe App
 Bhi Bhot Acha Kaam
 Kar Rahe Jise Jaisa Jamta
 He Waisa Kam Kar
 Raha Isliye Apko Bhi
 Jayjinendra Aur Apki
 Ye Muhim Ghar Ghar
 Tak Pahuchna Chahiye”
- Prince Jain, Nagpur, India

My family was happy to assist people with career guidance and job search that resulted in helping over 300 people within 3 months.
- Apurva Talsania, Toronto, ON

There are so many yoga Kriya and guided meditations on ‘YouInner tube.’ every one should do this at your home. You can not go out in this Covid-19, so it will help staying home. - *Harsha M Shah, Long Beach, CA*

Please stay home. Keep distance and wear mask. - *
Nainwa (Bundi), India

This time has bought a lot of self-realizations. There is always a lot to learn and plenty of things to cheer if we look around us. It wasn't any year in past and neither will be in future that we will get such time to relish and invest time for ourselves. Make use of this precious time, Pandemic will be over soon but this these experiences will always be with us. - *Divya Jain, Pune, India*

Not to be a pessimist but being a doctor I am worried that people have stopped fearing Corona which I feel may prove dangerous in the coming months, coz now the number of cases are increasing at the fastest pace ever. - *Suyash Jain, Indore, India*

Gratitude for food on my plate and roof on my head. - *Dr Suruchi Desai, Mumbai, India*

We must continue to serve the community and help best we can! - *Kumar S Gandhi, Mission Viejo, CA*

I think this is a great initiative. Thank you.
-Kushant shah, Canton, MI

Being calm during this time is the best prerogative to follow. - *Jitendra R. Sanghvi, Northville, MI*

Everyone needs to believe in ourselves & God. - *Sarita Shah, Novi, MI*

Life is Karma Theory and COVID may be something to do with some bad things happen in past by knowingly or unknowingly, we should accept it in Sam Bhav and it will help in our Karm Nirjara. - *Abha Nnadawat, Plantation, FL*

Learn to live a life with full internal happiness with feeling of a part of nature.
- Rina Girish Mehta, Ahmedabad, India

Question: We would enjoy learning from your experiences; so please share anything else that is not covered in the above questions. **Age 19-65**

Reading any issues of Jain Digest is like meditating, samayik, darshan or satsang. Please take this time to read this free online resourceful information. Just spending 10 minutes will do wonders in your everyday life. For example, I invite you all to read Sept-Oct 2013 issue about Paryushana Parva and Pratikraman and April 2016 issue about Compassion and prepare a Kindness Tree. I was amazed how these significant terms were explained so well in simplest terms for all ages.

- Swati P. Shah, E. Greenwich, RI

Overall it was really tough time but we tried our best to face this situation and trying all precautionary measure and finally accept the criticality of situation and considering safety concern and able to managed till now but not sure for futures how it goes. - Arvind Bhandari, Bangalore, India

During pandemic I got chance to connect with school friends and batchmates whom I have not seen since school days. It's overwhelming to see them through zoom and other video conferencing apps: reopen all those golden moments

- Sangeeta Jain, Indore, India

I have learnt that we can be more productive with lots of learning things online than meeting in person and realized that inner pleasure and not materialistic things can provide as a happy and satisfied life - Manisha Bhandari, Northville, MI

Being away from our friends and our environment was kind of a big deal but on a bright side I have explored that I have potential to tap on new skills and to work on them. It was just like preparing ourselves for a whole new world after this pandemic. It also taught me that life works on law of marginal utility where we value things more when we lack them. We all had to work with limited resources. - Soumya Jain, Indore, India

Please be cool & calm. We must accept the situation and pray shubh bhavan for whole world - Bhavesh Bipinchandra Shah, Ahmedabad, india.

While Shelter In Place was restrictive to begin with, it gave us a lot of learnings. I learned more about maintaining relations, spoke to many of friends and relatives that I did not in past many years. Surprised to see how much we can learn and practice Aparigraha and happy to see the positive outcome on the environment. Thank you.

- * Cupertino, CA

I have learnt during this time that certain activities such as meetings, training, educations, social meetings, consultation, classes and many such things can be now done over the video calls rather than meeting in person or travelling, thus saving time, environment, traffic, and money. We have explored the options of grocery delivery, which creates the job for other people and is good for traffic control and environment too.

- * Northville, MI

Please be very careful going out, travelling and avoid going into crowds and please follow guideline laid by our healthcare workers. BE SAFE. - Mahendra Maru, Owensboro, KY

Living the Simple way with only the stuff that is needed is something that I have learned through this Pandemic.

- Richa P Jain, Farmington Hills, MI

The virtual experience has been prolific offering many things. - William D Glover, Elko, NV

I wish that all should continue doing the good work. Every one should stay safe and healthy - Naveen Kr Jain, Farmington Hills, MI

Sharing this with the Jain Community: The Best Analysis

- The people are unreasonable, self-centered, forgive them anyway.
- If you are honest, you may be cheated, but you be honest anyway.
- What you build in years of building, someone destroys it, but build the best anyway.
- The good you do today, people will forget tomorrow, but do good anyway.
- What you will see in the best analysis it is between you and God, not between you and them.

Whatever happens in life a pandemic or any negative news always remember God's words, be the best anyway opening pathway to success. - Nidhi Shah, Riverside, CA

How Preventive Measures of Coronavirus apply to the Karma Virus

By Ramesh K Khandhar



Ramesh Khandhar is a former secretary of executive board and a past Pathshala teacher at Jain Center of Southern California. His current activities include conducting Swadhyay on various Jain scriptures, reading and contemplating spiritual scriptures, listening to spiritual discourses and visiting religious ashrams in India for 3 to 4 months every year. e-mail: ramesh.khandhar@gmail.com

For the last several months coronavirus has created havoc against human beings. It is thought to spread from person to person, mainly through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It can be prevented by maintaining a minimum six feet distance from other people, covering our mouth and nose by mask, frequently washing our hands with soap or hand sanitizer, clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces daily, and avoiding facial contacts by hands. The virus is so contagious, and the worst part is two to three weeks of incubation period before some symptoms start showing up.

As deadly as the Coronavirus is to our health, there is even a deadlier virus that we need to worry about – the Karma Virus. Whereas the Coronavirus can ruin our current life, the Karma Virus can affect many of our lifetimes. We are born with the karma we have done in past lives and we all should do whatever sadhana, tap, we can to reduce or get rid of those karma. Similarly, there are preventive measures we can take so that we do not accumulate new karma. It is interesting to note that the measures we take to avoid getting Coronavirus can be applied to the Karma Virus also – using the same terminology; but a different interpretation and course of action. Let us explore some of these measures to see how we can improve our spiritual life.

Social Distancing

We try to maintain a minimum of six feet distance from the other person so that any virus coming out of breathing or sneezing from any of us will not impact the other person. The virus will settle down before it reaches your body.

How can we apply this principle of social distancing to our spiritual progress? We must avoid making psychic bonds with other living and non-living entities. The psychic bond of 'me or mine' is our contact with another entity. This invariably converts harmless karmic particles into karmic virus and sticks to our soul. These karmic viruses defile and/or obstruct our cognitive ability to perceive the things as they are. If we avoid any psychic bond, that is, 'me, mine, doership attitude' in our inner thought process, then karmic particles will not be transformed into karmic virus. Our perception will not be deformed which will help subdue or considerably reduce our passion. This detachment attitude can be seen as 'Social Distancing'.

Wearing a Mask

In case some of the micro bubbles reach out to the other person, then a mask will prevent the virus from entering the body through breathing. With a mask one can probably lower the six feet distance standard.

How does this relate to our spiritual progress? In case someone reacts to the situation and gives rise to passion such as anger, we should become aware of that person's deviation from the center and negate the passion as not his/her innate nature. This process will keep us calm, equanimous and prevent any adverse reaction on our part thus protecting us from being affected by the karmic virus. This awareness, arising from deep within, acts as a firewall between the event and our response. The discretionary judgement in the inner thought process shields virus spread.

Washing Hands

Since the Coronavirus is very contagious and we inadvertently may come in contact with it by touching affected objects or surfaces, washing hands with disinfecting soap is recommended.

Similarly, due to our unawareness about our actions of body, speech and mind, the karmic virus may affect us. This must be cleansed through the process of repentance (ભાવ આલોચના), inner commitment to return to the center (પ્રતિક્રમણ) and firm decision not to repeat the same mistake in future (પ્રત્યાખ્યાન). We should perform these steps many times during daily routine work or at least once a day before going to bed. The introspection (ભાવ આલોચના) will erase all or most of the karmic virus that were collected during daily activities.

Isolation

The isolation will prevent the spread of coronavirus. Anyone infected by the virus, should get medical treatment and isolate himself/herself to prevent its spread.

Similarly, we should isolate ourselves for some time and ponder over inner thought activities. The purpose of contemplation is to realize how strongly we are attached to our outside material world activities. This process helps reduce considerably the intensity and duration of the karmic virus that will remain attached to us. Intense contemplation will help us get ready for meditation which will shed many karmic viruses.

Conclusion

It is interesting to see such a parallel between coronavirus prevention and karmic virus prevention and annihilation. One should realize that the coronavirus takes only the present life and cannot come with us during transmigration. However, the karmic viruses come with us during transmigration, stay with us for many lives and make us go through endless cycles of misery and suffering.

Let us be as much cognizant of karmic viruses as we have been terribly concerned and worried about coronavirus. The spiritual aspirant will worry about not just this life but many future lives of misery and suffering. The awareness and conscious effort to stay away from coronavirus is also important so that we can carry out the spiritual goal with ease and comfort.

LINKS TO A FEW COVID-19 RELATED ARTICLES

Yoga and Meditation, Sensory Health, and COVID-19

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/sensorium/202007/yoga-and-meditation-sensory-health-and-covid-19>

Meditation and Yoga Practices as Potential Adjunctive Treatment of SARS-CoV-2 Infection and COVID-19: A Brief Overview of Key Subjects

<https://www.liebertpub.com/doi/10.1089/acm.2020.0177>

How Five Teens Are Making Meaning Out of the Pandemic

<https://berkeley.us14.list-manage.com/track/click?u=a8079f1782122a9da1dec00db&id=57144b67b5&e=c2021ee9d2>

In the time of Covid-19: Living in harmony within our ecosystem

<https://www.americanbazaaronline.com/2020/04/22/covid-infectious-diseases-living-in-harmony-within-our-ecosystem-440839/>

One of our friend who was down with COVID was rushed to the hospital. We all prayed our Navakar Mantra everyday. The workers at the hospital were extremely co-operative in spite of their own health being in danger. Our friend came home after about 10 days and was very appreciative of the fact that there are people who are ready to help regardless of any situation. Sometimes it makes you wonder as to how and what have we contributed to the society compared to those devoted people.

- **Ashok K. Shah, Bloomfield Hills, MI**

There are so many that to cite just one is impossible as so many are demonstrating such stunning acts of selfless service in so many ways.

- **Patrick Barnes, Ogden, UT**

Doctors and nurses are doing great job in serving patients in the hospitals, rehabs and other treatment facilities.

- * **Silver Spring, MD**

(1) Our good friend Hina Dhami (MBA) worked as VP in Union Bank and quit to serve the community, e.g. visit and help in Hospice & nursing homes, provide Yoga training, small cheer-up gifts, financial support, etc. During Covid-19 lock down she would continue to serve with physical visits without any fear, even endangering her own health. We appreciate and admire her.

(2) Our son Dr. Suketu Khandhar (MD) works as chief neurologist at Kaiser Medical Group in Sacramento. He lives in Walnut Creek, 70 miles from Sacramento. In the early days of Covid-19 (April-May) when Sacramento was Covid-19 epicenter, although not required, Suketu would still drive 150 miles round trip and go to Sacramento and help the Corona patients, risking his own health. We appreciate and admire his sense of duty to humanity.

- **Mahendra K Khandhar, Cypress, CA**

There are many inspirational stories from all parts of the world. What is very heartwarming is many drawings and writings I have seen on the sidewalks of suburban areas in California.

- * **Los Angeles, CA**

Question: From front-line workers to ordinary people of all ages, many have shown extraordinary bravery and compassion to help others. Share a story that you have read or heard that you found most inspirational.

Age 65+

My daughter working with COVID-19 ICU patients for over 5 months. Her experience states, stay away from any gathering/bigger crowds. Always wear mask when you go out, keep distance, sanitize items as necessary, wash hands more frequently (as stated by CDC guidelines). No socialization in your home especially around elderly people or high risk people. Unless enough room to keep distance, wearing mask is must.

- Mahendra and Bharati Shah, Bloomington, IL

I. Education - Realizing underprivileged children's need of devices for online learning, Anekant Community Center (ACC - Anekant.net) partnered with Sarva Mangal Family Trust (SMFT - SarvaMangalTrust.org) to distribute 500 Chromebooks to 4 schools. Then now they are partnering with JAINA and many other Organizations & Individuals in North America for the same. Goal is to donate over 5000 Chromebooks.

II. Food - Joy of Sharing Foundation (JOSF.org) opened the doors of Sanatan Dharma Temple to serve Groceries to 400 families and making and serving 1500 meals every Sunday to underprivileged population from End of April & will continue till need is perceived.

- Nitin Shah, La Mirada, CA

Los Angeles Raj Parivar in connection with Shikh Community have worked together to provide food for many community members who may be having difficulty due to the shut down of many businesses and job losses.

- * Rancho P V, CA

The Heartbreaking Last Texts of a ... - The New York Times
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/15/nyregion/coronavirus-woodhull-madhvi-aya-dead.html>

- Arvind Vora, Kings Park, NY

We salute all first responders, hospital workers, police and fire department.

- * Skokie, IL

*** Annonymus**

It has given respite from hectic life of community work that I have been doing for 40 years. Work hasn't been reduced just that it gave time to catch up with many projects. Fortunately simple and basic life style has kept our family thankfully lucky without any problems associated with COVID-19

- **Arvind Vora, Kings Park, NY**

Coronavirus pandemic has changed my active life in many ways. I am very active in our Jain temple and a registered volunteer since last 17/18 years. I am also a volunteer of Vitalant(formerly Life Source) for which I am supposed to go to the places wherever and whenever there is a blood drive. All these activities has come to an end for now. And this is not good for physical and mental health.

- **Girish B. Shah, Streamwood, IL**

I am retired, so workplace issues are not a factor. I am single and am very socially isolated (for about the last 20 years) so that has not changed

- **Patrick Barnes, Ogden, UT**

Staying home is a way of life now.

- *** Carmel, IN**

Not able to go to temple. Not able to visit family. However we performed daily Samayika, Daily Swadhayay, Online Swadhayay, Puja at home and reading.

- **Pradip K Shah, Elgin, IL**

Since I cannot drive as a result of stroke I suffered in May 2020 I was not able to attend weekly rotary club meetings in downtown Dayton but as a result of Covid-19 and exulting lockdown the club initiated zoom meeting every Monday which I have been enjoying. One Monday there was a speaker from Delhi rotary club who spoke virtually. For the first time I attended a virtual rotary International convention held in Taipei. I also attended virtual YJA convention.

- **Surendra Singhvi, Dayton, OH**

We are retired seniors. Come Covid-19, and the following changes took place in our life and at our home :

(1) no pleasure travel, (2) no social visits, (3) got the essential groceries delivered, (4) carefully wiped and washed the groceries, (5) wiped everything that came into our house, including mails, (6) when outside, used face mask & hand gloves, kept social distance and carefully washed hands on return, (7) to cleanse our body system, drank a glass of warm water with turmeric in morning, (8) to boost immunity, drank Ukalo (Kavo with ginger, mint, cloves, etc) every other day, (9) did salted warm water gargling in the morning, (10) did nasal steam breathing in the evening, (11) cleaned the house and washed clothes, more frequently, (12) stayed up-to-date about Kovid-19 news, (13) followed the guidelines of CDC, Calif Gov and local health agencies, (14) had faith in destiny without any fear, (15) kept positive thinking with enthusiastic attitude, (16) avoided negativity and gossips about pandemic, spread and stats, (17) kept ourself busy, doing what we had always wanted to do but no time, (18) maintained hopeful outlook with the prayers.

- **Mahendra K Khandhar, Cypress, CA**

Retired and no changes except that not going out or meeting others.

- *** Toronto, ON**

School closing, shopping, vacation trips, visiting friends, working from home, virtual schooling, stuck at home, pre-k kids had new laptops, no summer camps and too much news to watch.

- **Kaushik Kothary, Somerset, CA**

Social gatherings, Gym workout, travel to see family etc.

- *** Houston, TX**

Question: Many things in our daily life have changed significantly. Tell us about how things have changed for you at home and at your workplace.

Age 65+



We are at home from last 4 months, doing lots of prayers for world to save them from suffering from pandemic.

- * **Skokie, IL**

I stay at home usually, so not much has been changed. I wear the mask when I go out.

- * **Silver Spring, MD**

I used to volunteer at a hospital and at YMCA. Due to the Recent changes and due to my age, I had to give up those activities and cut down on family gatherings and social activities. This leads loneliness, when you are living alone.

- * **Rancho P V, CA**

I am able to do more Spiritual Activities. -
Mahendra B Shah,
Miami-Dade, Elgin, IL

I am retired. My wife and I spent some time to clean Jain society files, photographs and information of last 40 years.

- **Arvind R.Shah,Troy, MI**

During and now we are more regimented and no outside food which may have been contaminated, cooked fresh food everyday, vegetables were delivered by friends or by delivery service, we washed those with hot water and were eating more healthier food. We regularly joined the Jain Temple prayers by WebEx and saw many friends. Normally visiting is not so easy but in these tough times, it was easy to see friends without traveling. Workplace we wear the mask and keep social distancing.

- **Ashok K. Shah, Bloomfield Hills, MI**

We spend time in exercise, meditation and walking. New type of cooking etc. No problem spending time with extra management in organizing our house. Cleaning and getting rid off old things not needed in the house. Change our old analog collection to digital. This includes old memorable family photos or album, Old VHS tapes and 8mm Video tapes. Donate the good unnecessary items to charitable organizations.

- **Mahendra & Bharati Shah, Bloomington, IL**

Spending more time playing games virtually with friends and family.

- * **Rochester, NY**

I. Being a Physician we had to adjust to new way of doing service to our patients. It was quite busy for first two weeks or so more with learning new tools and methods to handle COVID-19 patients and then with patients as they came in. II. At home front, it has been a challenge about what to do with the time? After few days started involving in Charity work and now I am short of time! Our involvement has been in multiple ways A. Daily meals for several weeks B. Donating Chromebooks all over North America C. Serving groceries at 3 places over the weekend and serving Sunday meals D. Realizing that I will not be able to travel to International missions, have arranged missions in Ghana and Zambia with support from here without traveling. Local resources are mobilized to do the work.

- **Nitin Shah, La Mirada, CA**

At home, Have more time for exercise and religious pursuit. -
Meeta M Shah,
Houston, TX

Ability to do office work remotely has enabled us to be with our daughter's family and have fun with grand-kids.

- * **Los Angeles, CA**

Life is little boring sitting all time at home, but I am connected with my family and friends through zoom and whatsapp and spend more time at home with my kids and grand kids.

- **Kalawati Bhandari, Bangalore, India**

* **Annonymus**

Reading more and more books. - * **Carmel, IN**

Watching satsang videos, listening to spiritual audio books, have zoom calls with the family members in US and India. I am amazed at the creativity shown by the younger children during these calls. - * **Los Angeles, CA**

I chat with my friends and help them in the best way possible. - * **Mumbai, India.**

We joined "North Orange County Face Masks for First Responders" . I and my wife made more than 1200 fabric face masks for the group in the last four months. Our Group has donated more than 70000 masks so far. One member of our group drove from California to Utah to deliver 650 masks to Indian Nation. He did not have proper address for this Indian Tribe. He stopped at a 7-11 store and the store took the responsibility to reach out to the right people. He got a thank you note from the tribe later. - * **Brea, CA**

Try to do self study, Self control, samayik and listen to different Aacharya's lectures - * **Houston, TX**

I help to organize Satsang on conference call. - **Mahendra B Shah, Miami-Dade, FL**

We do samayik and pritikraman every day for the world's well being. - * **Skokie, IL**

Attending Satsang meetings virtually. Attended Mindfulness yoga classes through Zoom meetings. - * **Rochester, NY**
* **Brea, CA**

More face time with grandchildren and more Zoom meetings. It is great because you meet for short time, see everyone, have updates from all, and back to your daily routine without going out. - **Ashok K Shah, Bloomfield Hills, MI**

I have increased some of the online activities, religious and mental challenging activities like bridge and daily long walks to maintain mental and physical health. - * **Rancho P V, CA**

Learn or listen to music, read interesting topics of your own. Any hobby that you have desired for. - **Mahendra and Bharati Shah, Bloomington, IL**

Watching satsang videos, listening to spiritual audio books, have zoom calls with the family members in US and India. I am amazed at the creativity shown by the younger children during these calls. - * **Los Angeles, CA**

Question: Many people are using some of the extra time they have to be creative, have fun and learn new things. Share some of the things you are doing to use this time in a constructive way. **Age 65+**

Writing my autobiography, performing samayik, swadhyaand, pranayam and meditation taught by saman Shrut Pragyaji using his tape. Reading Jain digest and jinvani during swadhyay a, inspecting all books, files and possessions and donated to temple or goodwill. We pray for the well being of all living being. We call friends and family to find out their well-being and offering our services. Watched on Netflix Lord Buddha serial produced by Mr BK Modi. it was very inspiring and thought came by that Jaina or some one in Jain community should produce something on Lord Mahavir. Something for Jaina or JITO to think about. -

Surendrasi Ghsinghvi, Dayton, OH

I have been spending most of my time studying the path that leads to the "Christ" within so that I may always manifest the utmost in Love and Wisdom, in perfect balance, towards each and every sentient being I may encounter on my path through life. - **Patrick Barnes, Ogden, UT**

I. Humanitarian work II. Started practicing Yoga III. Playing Cards with wife and grand children IV. Playing Carom board again after several decades of gap! - **Nitin Shah, La Mirada, CA**

I do more exercise and walk few miles at home only. Learned and spend good time on the Jain Bhakti and Bollywood songs, play new cards games with the kids, try various new Antakshari games and online games. - **Kalawati Bhandari, Banglore, India**

I do lot of Reading.
- * **Silver Spring, MD**

Since we came from India, my health was not in good shape. I had to cancel 99 yatra because of Covid-19. I was busy sending cancellation letter to all members.

- **Arvind R Shah, Troy, MI**

(1) cleaned the cabinets, closets, wardrobes and drawers, throwing away old/useless things, (2) cleaned and organized the garage, getting rid of never used/ junk/forgotten things, (4) organized the 50+ family albums of photos, while enjoying and re-living the pleasant past, (5) cooked variety of tasty dishes and enjoyed the meals, (7) called family, friends and relatives, in India-USA-UK-Dubai for their well being and to renew loving touch, (8) avoided regular maid service, but still paid her full to help, (9) watched old movies, listened to old movie songs, (10) took half-hour car drive for change, (11) walked in the back yard for 30 minutes, (12) lay-down in sleeping bags and relaxed in the terrace (our sun deck) under open sky with stars and moon, in late evening, (13) played many general & Jain games thru Whats-App groups. -

Mahendra K Khandhar, Cypress, CA

* **Annonymus**

As Education Secretary at JSMC Pathashala, managed online pathashala for 450 students since March 15th, very high attendance, managed virtual pathashala cultural program during virtual anniversary program. - **Pradip K Shah, Elgin, IL**

Talking to friends , cleaning up files and homes, play board games, learn new dishes to cook, played with grandkids. - **Kaushik Kothary, Somerset, CA**

Meeting all the devoted people of Jain religion on the WebEx meeting and listening to the Aarti and Mangal Divo was regular which did not happen for me in regular routine life. Especially the children reciting the prayers was just amazing. The beauty is that starting from 3 years old to teenagers were reciting prayers so fluently and so distinctly that it just blows you away. - **Ashok K Shah, Bloomfield Hills, MI**

Doing meditation alone is good for me.
- * **Carmel, IN**

Jain teachings and values of Ahimsa, Compassion and faith keeps me focused. Online prayers and Satsang gives me peace.
- * **Rancho P V, CA**

Yes people are fearful OF DYING AND that is moving them towards SPIRITUALITY. - **Mahendra B Shah, Miami-Dade, FL**

Listening to Sadguru's Satsangs and other messages. Prayers are recited daily. - * **Toronto, ON**

Doing Samayik, attending Gita and Vedanta Satsang meetings virtually.
- * **Rochester, NY**

Compassion - supported Long Island, New York health care workers with Indian food from a reputable high end Indian restaurant during epidemic. Made donation to local Jain Centers and American Red Cross. Our family raised decent amount of funds for SRMD for India. - **Arvind Vora, Kings Park, NY**

Jain society of greater Detroit has plan to do the Navkar jaap every day, that we used to join. - **Arvind R Shah, Troy, MI**

More Satsang via streaming service.
- **Meeta M Shah, Houston, TX**

Try to do self study, Self control, samayik and listen to different Aacharya's lectures
- * **Houston, TX**

Question: In a crisis like this, many of us turn to religion and spirituality to find hope, meaning and peace. Which Jain teachings & values (Ahimsa, Anekantvad, Compassion, Equanimity, Faith, etc.) and practices (Darshan, Prayer, Satsang, Samayik, etc.) are helping you in dealing with the challenges of the lockdown and how? **Age 65+**

Jain Principles, Self control, faith in God (that everything will go well), and Satsang fills new energy in me and bring more hope towards life and for what almighty God has given to us.

- **Kalawati Bhandari, Banglore, India**

Compassion, Self-Control , Humanitarian Faith, Equanimity. Understanding JAIN teachings that our existence is not eternal . It teaches us to be thankful for all we have rather than complaint. - **Pradip K Shah, Elgin, IL**

Having faith is helping with managing fear. Compassion for those who are suffering, is motivating me to help others and be grateful. -

* **Los Angeles, CA**

We have been using Zoom meeting for Jain Bhavana and Jain Aarti and using U-tube for religious activities. - **Mahendra and Bharati Shah, Bloomington, IL**

(1) we listened to many regular Swadhyays on various subjects, (2) watched several special video swadhyays during this trying Corona Virus situation, (3) did on line live Darshan, prayers and Satsang, (4) performed many religious practices of Samayik, Pratikraman, Pooja, rosary, meditation, etc, (5) caught up with spiritual reading backlog, followed by contemplation, (6) wrote many religious articles for publication, (7) followed and contemplated about Jain teachings of faith, self-control, equanimity, compassion and non-violence. - **Mahendra K Khandhar, Cypress, CA**

I am following all of these as they are shown in the teachings of the Inner Light and they are postulated in so many of the true teachings emanating from the divine Center of the Universe. - **Patrick Barnes, Ogden, UT**

Yes, kids went to virtual pathshala classes. Faith helped overcoming difficulties. Navkar Mantra helps too.

- **Kaushik Kothary, Somerset, CA**

Values - Compassion, Self-Control, Anekantvad, and Faith. Practices - Darshan & Prayers. - **Nitin Shah, La Mirada, CA**

* **Annonymus**

The Best is turn to spirituality.
Mahendra B Shah, Miami-Dade, FL

Unfortunately bad news are part of life for those of us who came in late 1960's and involved in community work. Two great community workers died after heroic battle for 6 to 8 weeks on ventilator- Dr. Rama Murthy volunteered for Shanti Fund and Ramesh Patel a pillar for India day Parade in New York Dhirajlal Pandit and Peter(Chhotalal) Bheddah passed away of natural causes. Panditji was picked up by me and stayed at our home the very first time he came to USA. Peter, I met him 1969. Donated sizable sums here and in India. Obituaries of all four were in local papers that I contributed.
- Arvind Vora, Kings Park, NY

Thanks to the technology - it has provided me the ability to keep in touch with family and friends near and far, to reduce loneliness.
- * Rancho P V, CA

Spend time with wife which could be sometimes challenging but also enjoyable. Watch the channel your wife likes and you will avoid conflict. Catch up on cleaning home for donations, and learn to live with minimum necessities, play games with grand kids on face time, and last but not least, learn to respect the circumstances and challenges of life regardless of financial situation.
Ashok K Shah, Bloomfield Hills, MI

Our Jain temple is, like others everywhere, is closed, but now during weekends it is open for in-person darshan only-no abhishek, puja, bell ringing etc. And my wife and I take an opportunity to go for darshan as per time slot chosen by us. Temple management has made all arrangement in such a way that there is no safety issue. My hats off for all EC/BOT members to spend lot of time to put signs, markings, blue tapes etc.
Girish B Shah, Streamwood, IL

Spent some time trying new recipes, which I didn't find time to try before. Entertained friends on our deck Wearing masks and keeping social distancing.
- * Rochester, NY

I am glad to note that Jaina has decided to organize next convention virtually. This may require some training and education for senior Jains but it should be a great experience, our center has been conducting English pratikraman and now I noticed that Jaina will be conducting English pratikraman on line on August 22. Jaina education committee has English pratikraman which can be downloaded by any one and any Jain can make a copy for future reading. **- Surendrasi Ghsinghvi, Dayton, OH**

I am delighted that so much is coming to a "head" as a result of this virus, and I am thankful that these events are happening so that we can have a world with more loving kindness and compassion. **- Patrick Barnes, Ogden, UT**

*** Annonymus**

Question: We would enjoy learning from your experiences; so please share anything else that is not covered in the above questions. Age 65+

Missed the trips for shopping and meeting people and same for going to Derasar or other halls to see friends or relatives. No proper information given out by Government or leaders was a problem and I am not sure if we learnt anything from the 1918 pandemic. Zoom songs and bhajans helped the bored people. Too much news was not helping anyone. Working from home and virtual schools may become a part of life in the future. Also maybe a ghar derasar works for all and we should be getting used to these as we are global and a virus can come any time with so much travelling. I thought we should have continued the schooling during vacation time. Cover up the time lost.

- Kaushik Kothary, Somerset, CA

People became kind and spending more time with family.

*** Leander, TX**

We have also join Navkar parivar program where people join from all over the world to chant 999999999 Navkar. This was most successful event organized by Jain community. - **Arvind R Shah, Troy, MI**

I have learnt that we don't have to meet someone in person but with all means of modern communication, we can stay in touch with the family and relatives. Having positive attitude in mind gives us all the power and energy to cope up with any situation similar to this.

- Kalawati Bhandari, Banglore, India

During Calif Gov imposed Covid-19 (Corona Virus) lock down, we adapted, learned, spiritually progressed, enjoyed and relaxed. We felt like in spiritual solitude (Ekant Sadhana). Even after official lock down was lifted, we continued with self-imposed lock down ! We helped the poor & needy in many ways (in US & India). May Mahavir Swami bless all. May all living beings be happy and pain-free. Jai Jinendra.

- Mahendra K Khandhar, Cypress, CA

It has been fun to be involved in humanitarian activities where I had an excellent opportunity to mentor many young volunteers and see the growth in them from the guidance. I am fortunate that I am able to work with high school students to college students and others. Learning how to do things Virtually is another big plus. It has been a phenomenal and very satisfying time for me personally and have enjoyed giving services! I have been fortunate to help organize virtual celebrations of multiple Jain positions in Universities. Looking forward to fruits of our labor with youth and missions abroad without traveling! Thank you very much for this opportunity to express myself.

- Nitin Shah, La Mirada, CA

I have successfully used slices of fresh turmeric as throat lozenges as a preventive for Covid-19. Its active ingredient curcumin is known to make any virus ineffective. During the current Covid-19 pandemic, I did some simple experiments on solubility and found that curcumin in fresh turmeric forms a soluble complex with saliva. Since end of March 2020, I was stranded in India with my wife due to the lockdown. Although seniors were advised to stay at home, I had to venture out for some essentials as we lived alone in Mumbai. Whenever I went out, I placed a piece of fresh turmeric in my mouth for protection against the virus. The virus is known to attack throat first and then lungs and other parts of the body. Since turmeric or curcumin is not soluble in water, almost all commercial curcumin supplements are in capsule form which are ineffective.

During our 20-hour journey back to the US at June end, both of us used several slices to keep us safe. In a post in my Facebook account in April, I had suggested to concerned authorities to do a clinical evaluation of fresh turmeric as a preventive/cure for the novel virus.

- Manilal J Savla, Manalapan, NJ

Spiritually Navigating the Current COVID-19 Pandemic

(Source: <https://jainism-says.blogspot.com/2020/05/spirituality-navigating-covid-19.html>)

Q18. What is the Jain philosophy regarding such events? What can we do in the present moment? What can we learn that will help us now and in future?

The worldwide coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has had substantial impact on every aspect of our lives. There are a lot of questions on everyone's mind with the current situation. The intent of this blog is to provide the Jain philosophy to enable us to spiritually navigate this situation. We will discuss about the five *samavāya*, what we can do now and spiritual learning for our way forward.

Many of us might feel various emotions like stress, fear, anger, anxiety during these times of uncertainty. But we don't want to stay there too long because it reduces our spirituality and the power to do the right thing. We want to raise our spirituality and inner strength by leveraging our religious understanding, faith, and values to move to more positive emotions like compassion, peace, hope, optimism.

There are various theories that have been propounded to explain the occurrence of events. According to Jain philosophy, a situation develops, or an event happens because of five reasons operating simultaneously known as Five *Samavāya*.

Five *Samavāya*

Samavāya is the name of the group of five causes that are associated with every situation or event that occur in the universe or in our life. It gives the connection between action and causes. Without a cause, no action can take place. These five causes have a deep connection for all events that takes place in the universe. The events may be positive or negative. The five *Samavāya* are:

- 1) Time (*Kal*)
- 2) Intrinsic nature (*Swabhav*)
- 3) Predestination (*Niyati, Bhavitavyata* or *Honahar*)
- 4) Instrumental cause (*Nimitta*)
 - a. External *Nimitta* – External Cause or Circumstances
 - b. Internal *Nimitta* – Internal Cause, which is maturing our previously acquired Karma
- 5) Determination, Self-Effort or Freewill (*Purushartha*)

The Jain philosophy views and reveals the importance of each *Samavāya* and this group of causes are always present when an event happens in the universe or in our life. Next, let's understand each *Samavāya* in detail before looking into these factors for this COVID-19 situation.

1 - Time (*Kal*)

Time gives the sequence to whatever happens in universe. Time is a controlling principle and it plays an important role for all events/situations. The results of our work, consequences of our karma, situations or events do not occur before their due time. And when the time has occurred, we cannot stop the situations or events from happening.

If we sow seeds today, they do not give fruits right away. The seed cannot neglect the temporal limitation set out by time for its transformation into a tree. The Karma that are bound to the soul due to activities may not immediately manifest their fruits as soon as they are bound. The fruits of Karma appear at a specific time depending on the nature of the Karma itself.

When we understand the time factor, we learn to be patient, optimistic and hopeful.

2 - Intrinsic nature (Swabhav)

Every substance has its own intrinsic nature and that defines its characteristics, potential limitations, or potential effects. And the nature of substance is not to be confused with behavior or character traits of individuals.

Let's look at few examples to understand the intrinsic nature - only females can get pregnant and not males, apple seeds grow apples and not oranges, certain seeds don't sprout no matter what, humans can meditate, not animals. In matters like these, individual inherent nature plays in important role and it cannot be overlooked.

When we understand the nature factor, we have acceptance towards the effects or limitations based on intrinsic nature.

3 - Predestination (Niyati, Bhavitavyata or Honahar)

There are many words used for this concept, such as *niyati*, destiny, and fate. Predestination means that there are certain things that are predetermined and unalterable in this world. In these situations, whatever has been destined will take place. Whatever must happen keeps happening. In this process, change cannot be made despite our best efforts.

For example, even if we make all possible efforts, we cannot prevent the aging process or may not be able to save someone's life.

When we understand the predestination factor, we gracefully and peacefully accept things that are out of our control.

4 - Instrumental cause (Nimitta)

For *Nimitta*, there are external and internal causes and they always go together. External *nimitta* could be living beings, objects, situations, or events and they act as a catalyst. And internal *nimitta* is the fruit or consequence of our previously acquired Karma.

Let's look at an example of an individual winning a lottery to understand the *nimitta* concept from both perspectives, internal and external. The lottery ticket being sold at a store is an external *nimitta* or a catalyst and winning a lottery is an internal *nimitta* or fruit of previous karma.

When we understand the external and internal *nimitta* causes, we know that our karmas have consequences. And external causes are just catalyst for our karma to come into action and not be blamed.

5 - Determination, Self-Effort or Freewill (Purushartha)

Purushartha or freewill is our power to choose our response in any given situation. We have a choice, no matter the situation. In that choice and self-effort, lies our opportunity to progress spiritually, improve and learn from the situation. A classic example of *Purushartha* is Gandhiji's efforts towards getting independence for India.

When we understand the importance of self-effort and freewill, we can face any situation with courage, growth mindset and focus on things that we can control. Our spirituality is our response to what happens in life.

The Jain philosophy does not look at these five causes from a single point of view, nor does it consider any one cause as the right one. It considers the collective effect as valid and whole truth. All the five causes are functioning simultaneously when any event happens in the universe or in our life.

Now, let's look at these five *Samavayas* for COVID-19 situation:

- 1) **Time (Kal)**: The pandemic was to happen at this time worldwide.
- 2) **Intrinsic nature (Swabhav)**: It is intrinsic nature of a human body that it can get infected by such virus.
- 3) **Predestination (Niyati)**: It was meant to happen. It was in destiny for such pandemic to occur.
- 4) **Instrumental cause (Nimitta)**: External causes like being in proximity with someone with the virus, can act as a catalyst for our karma to come into action. And what happens to us will be based on the maturity of our previous Karma.
- 5) **Determination, Self-Effort or Freewill (Purushartha)**: Our Purushartha is our power to choose our response to this situation and that's the only thing in our control right now. Our present efforts should be focused on what can we do now? How can we eliminate the virus? How can we come out of this stronger? How can we help those who are affected? How can we respond with compassion and kindness towards self and others?

This pandemic is due to all the five causes, not any single cause. There are many common misconceptions about considering karma as the only cause for pandemic situation and overlooking the other *samavayas*. There is also a widespread notion about group karma; however, there is no mention of group karma in Jain literature. The concept of group karma cannot exist in Jainism because individuals acquire karma based on his/her intentions (*bhav*), the acquired karma comes into action for those individuals, and the individual karma is self-contained and has no effect on others.

It is useful to know and understand these five causes, but from a spiritual point of view, *purushartha*, what we do in the present moment is of utmost importance.

**Spirituality teaches that life is our response to what happens to us.
Life is not what happens to us.**

Our *purushartha* / religion / dharma right now is to raise our spirituality such that:

- No *kashayas* (anger, ego, greed, deceit) arises within us
- We can face the situation with strength and peace
- We don't blame anyone
- We continue to show compassion towards ourselves, others living beings and the environment. We have been neglecting to protect and preserve our fellow living beings, environment, and natural resources. Let us change our lifestyle such that we use minimum natural resources for our healthy survival.
- We have the power and courage to do the right thing
- We conduct rituals or practices with spiritual understanding
- We trust in our inner strength and not follow anything blindly. Power and strength are within us and nowhere outside

We must not violate any guidance from CDC and government authorities to prevent spreading this virus and help ourselves and others by maintaining social distancing. We want to be part of the solution and look for opportunities to help others.

We should also focus on learning the spiritual lessons that this situation is trying to teach us in a meaningful and encouraging way.

Inner Resiliency: Along with keeping our body healthy, we also need to pay equal attention, if not more, to our mind. We need to make our minds strong and resilient. Our thoughts manifest into our physical health. Our thoughts also affect our emotional health, our relationships with others and our overall well-being. Our inner world has a direct impact into what's happening outside.

Soul Consciousness: In today's world when majority of our time and efforts are focused on activities oriented toward body, we need to have constant realization and awareness of who we really are. If our orientation is only body focused, and not soul focused, then it is difficult to gain persistent inner resiliency. It is important to ground ourselves to our true nature.

Impermanence: Good times and trying times are both temporary. Nothing is permanent. This situation shall pass too but the question is how and what do we want to be during this time? We want to face the situation in a way that we come out of it wiser and more spiritual than what we are today.

Happiness is Within: Eliminate / reduce our dependencies for happiness on other people, things, various experience by our sensory organs. Have meaningful connection, where we can learn and grow together. We want to find happiness and joy within and not be in the mad race of do more, acquire more, become more, travel more. We don't want our lifestyle based purely on monetary and material standards. We want to introspect the purpose and way of our life.

Our Moral Responsibility: As human race, we share this planet with other living beings, we don't own it. We must protect our environment and natural resources. We should go back to basics - compassion for all living beings, not hoarding more than what we need and not wasting, abusing, or overusing our natural resources.

Gratitude: There is so much that we can be grateful for. Human beings often have a negative bias and we get fixated on problems/threats and overlook the good things. We should let go of greed and desires and be content, appreciate and share what we have with others.

This is a difficult and trying time for all of us. We are all faced with fear of uncertainty and grief of loss. There is so much suffering but also an opportunity to grow spiritually in unprecedented ways. Our inner transformation leads to peaceful families, communities, and overall society.



Coronavirus in the Global Village

Dr. Sulekh C. Jain



*Dr. Sulekh C. Jain is the Past Secretary and President of the Federation of Jain Associations in North America (JAINA). Dr. Jain also authored a book *An Ahimsa Crisis: You Decide*, which can be accessed as an eBook free of charge at www.isjs.in Email: scjain@earthlink.net*

(This article is an abridged version of a longer article on the same subject by Dr. Shugan Jain and Dr. Sulekh C. Jain, published in April-June 2020 issue of "ISJS – Transactions" journal.)

During the last 200 years, due to the advances in technology, travel, internet and instant communication, the world had already become flat and truly a Global village. In a Global village people, care and share with each other and live happily. The recent Coronavirus has brought us even closer.

The Covid-19 Pandemic does not see race, religion, color, caste, creed, language or geographical border before striking and everyone is affected equally. It spares no one. It is a great equalizer amongst rich and poor, weak or mighty and ordinary or VVIPs.

PM of U.K, Prince Charles, Hollywood and Bollywood Stars (Tom Hanks, his wife, Amitabh Bachchan and his family), famous Sports players, TV newscasters (to name just a few) and so many known and unknown people have been affected. It exacts a very heavy death toll too.

This Coronavirus outbreak continues to sow tragedy on countless scale. Many lives have been lost, the economies world over have been turned upside down and life as we have known has been dramatically altered.

How has the world changed?

In spite of the many untold and unimaginable tragedies and sufferings (which still continue), there are some silver lining; some temporary and many permanent. A new world and paradigm are emerging. Generally all news stories are about the hardships, sufferings and tragedies; but there a few upcoming positive changes too. Let me share just a few.

- In these times of stay-at-home orders and social distancing, politicians are using digital and social media for campaigning to get their message out to the voters. Right now, big rallies, shaking hands and holding – let alone kissing – babies around are out.
- Drug trafficking has fallen significantly amid virus disruption. Along the 2000 mile U.S Mexico border through which the majority of illegal drugs cross, the normally bustling vehicle traffic that smugglers use for cover has slowed down to a trickle. Bars, nightclubs and motels across the country that are the ordinarily fertile marketplace for drug dealers have shuttered. There are no takers for the drugs.
- There is a significant decrease in money laundering and on line drug sales. The godfathers of the cartels are panicked.
- Once illegal, telemedicine has taken off during this crisis. The shift is advantageous in many ways. Telemedicine in many cases offers a viable and sometimes cheaper alternative. It can also help control potential shortages of hospital resources by giving patients options beyond the hospital and the emergency room, while also providing more choices for residents of rural and sparsely populated areas where access to doctors can be problematic. The virus crisis is rapidly accelerating the transition to telemedicine.

- As educational campuses closed, many also moved on line. Online learning can also breakdown barriers for many who want to go to college but cannot afford it or live in remote locations. It can also level the playing field for students from all backgrounds and for those with disabilities.
- In India, many sweet (mithai) shops are closed and huge mega wedding celebrations are out or down. Artificially adulterated milk market has come down significantly and so is the market for many other adulterated food items too.
- There is a sea change how people are spending their time and coping with this pandemic. In spite of the fear of the epidemic and economic hardships, tension, stress and worries, people are spending more quality time together with families, doing more creative cooking, eating at home, doing more yoga, exercise, meditation, prayers, Poojas, swadhayayas, study, contemplation, watching several old TV Serial of Ramayana and Mahabharata, and calling near and dear ones on phone, social media such as WhatsApp, Facetime etc.
- Thousands of people have taken to webinars and conferences online and discussing myriads of topics of life and other subjects.
- Since this pandemic is a worldwide disaster, millions of people world over are engaged in "People Helping People". Many, truly feel compassion and empathy to their fellow human beings. They are providing hot meals, medical help, clothing, transportation, care and love to those in need. Many corporations are doing their best too in taking care of their employees and communities in which they live.
- The world right now seems to be a much calmer and quieter place. The number and intensity of wars, terrorism and strifes have come down significantly. Enemies are cooperating with each other.
- The incidents of arson, theft, shooting, car accidents etc. are down significantly.
- Since people are not going to shopping malls, they are realizing that life can be enjoyed nicely with fewer wants.
- Suddenly air, water and earth are cleaner. In India, Ganges and Yamuna look much much cleaner.
- The sounds of birds chirping and singing are much more audible.
- According to some scientific measurement, there are less vibrations in the planet earth too.
- People appear to be much friendlier as everyone recognizes that we all are in this together and not alone.
- The Covid-19 crisis will change us. Many will work remotely from home more often, will travel less.
- The scientists world over are working in collaboration to find cure/cures for this virus as soon as possible.

Parasparopagraho jīvānām - A unique Jain concept comes into play now

Several thousand years ago, Jainism preached the concept of **Parasparopagraho Jivaanaam** (from Jain scripture *Tattvārtha Sūtra*). What it means is that none of us can live the journey of life alone. It teaches us the philosophy of reciprocity, mutual care and share, universal love and compassion, empathy, fellowship and participation. The Jain motto of **Live and Help others live is just that**. For the first time, due to the threat from this common enemy, there is a realization that we all are inter-dependent, interconnected; in fact entangled with each and have co-existence with each other, Truly, we are inseparable and that we support each other. Our very survival is dependent on each other and on the rest of the world.

Dr. Ela R. Bhatt, Chancellor of Gujarat Vidyapeeth recently said; “Let us remind ourselves of the lessons the pandemic is teaching us. When one member of the family gets sick and the entire family is affected and soon the nation is affected and then other communities in other nations are affected. The wellbeing of one individual has an impact on people on the other side of the globe. This is true of every action of ours. What we eat, what we buy, what we think and what we do have reverberations and repercussions on all life on earth. It is this *anubandh*, this interconnectedness that sustains all life on earth. We are all in this together whether we choose to see it or not”.

How do we put “Live and Help others live” in practice? By being compassionate and empathetic. By developing the attitude of Seva, Service to mankind. By putting the vows of Ahimsa, Aparigraha and Asteya in practice. Here are some ways we can accomplish that:

- Have we not known that our poor and working poor have hardly any effective and adequate safety net? We must organize to support now by providing them food, water, shelter and other basic necessities for survival.
- Now is the time to be active and proactive. Our medical doctors should be in the front line to volunteer to serve and provide the best care particularly in villages where there is hardly any access to good medical care.
- Also we should call and connect with your domestic help, factory and office workers and ask what we can do to help them.
- Jains are dominant players in trading and retailing of many essential items of daily use such as food grocery items and medicines. One must avoid the temptation to hoard, price gouging, excessive profits and adulteration during this pandemic; thus practicing the vows of Aprigraha and Asteya.
- Remember that this virus now and many others before came from humans eating meat of animals and insects. The ever increasing population of humans on this planet cannot survive on meat based diet. To save humanity from the scourges of such viruses, therefore practice, preach and actively promote vegetarian and vegan based diet and put the vow of Ahimsa in practice.

Be patient and kind. There is no better time to strengthen our bonds, to stand together, to help one another through this storm, and to come out together on the other side, stronger and peaceful.

These are unprecedented times for all of us. We must act now to support each other. Ask yourself, if not now than when and if not me then who?

Unlike previous moments in history, when countries or societies faced off against each other, today we are together facing common challenge. Hopefully, the future will be about togetherness and resilience.

Tsai Ing- Wen, the President of Taiwan said “now more than ever, every link in this global network must be accounted for. We must set aside our differences and work together for the benefit of humankind. The fight against Covid-19 will require the collective efforts of people around the world.”

Hopefully, the future will be about togetherness, resilience, compassion, empathy, care and share, harmony, understanding, respect and brotherliness to and for each other. This is what Jainism is all about.

For centuries Indian sages preached **Vasu Dhaiva Kutumbhakum** meaning the whole world is one family. This coronavirus seems to have moved the world to this famous aphorism.

Creative/Fun Activities

List of all creative activities sent by you that might be useful during this Covid-19 lock-down time:

- Working on a noble cause of creating hand-stitched masks and collecting food/clothes to help the community during this tough time
- Doing fun art/craft projects, reading, writing new articles/auto-biography, learning Cooking, Drawing, Graphics Design, Calligraphy, Religious activities, Gardening, Painting, Converting old video tapes to digital medium, Online/innovative certifications and courses.
- Learned Dancing, Yoga, Meditation, signed/spoken/software languages, making music/video albums, writing lyrics, working on new physical fitness techniques, Animation, Singing, Acting, playing the musical instruments and many more
- Learning new outdoor activities such as Swimming, Photography, Tennis, Rollerblade, skateboarding and many more while practicing necessary precautions
- Re-organizing, Re-modeling and decorating the home ourselves. Doing some handyman and household activities in absence of the house-maids (especially in India) have helped gain self-independence, confidence and has saved the money
- Exploring various Cell phone apps/games, getting more connected to the family and friends through the video calls, public speaking, online competition, concerts, games, creativities/fun/games on Zoom and other mediums of audio/video communications

Web Links to the COVID-19 Stories from the Survey Responses

Vikas Khanna, a Michelin-starred chef, has turned his focus to India's hungry, providing millions of meals to poor Indians who have suffered greatly under the coronavirus lockdown

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/magazines/panache/michelin-star-chef-vikas-khanna-turns-saviour-will-help-indias-street-vendors-impacted-by-covid-19/articleshow/77347002.cms>

<https://scroll.in/video/965900/watch-my-sense-of-hunger-came-from-new-york-says-michelin-star-chef-vikas-khanna-on-bbc>

Covid Yodha: <https://drguddi.wordpress.com/2020/05/03/covid-yoddha/>

Inspiring story from the front-line workers/nurses

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2020/03/27/nurses-doctors-are-heroes-this-moment>

Inspirational story of a 7 years old boy helping the community

<https://www.foxnews.com/us/coronavirus-maryland-boy-carepackages-seniors-feed-students>

CaronaSeKaruna campaign run in rural parts of Maharashtra

<https://fundraisers.giveindia.org/projects/sanitization-and-immunization-of-100-villages-from-covid-19>

The Heartbreaking Last Texts of a Hospital Worker - The New York Times

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/15/nyregion/coronavirus-woodhull-madhvi-aya-dead.html>

Interesting Online games/Puzzles

Cricket: <http://www.cricketgames.me/>

Good puzzle on Cricket: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uiw7TAslemc>

Top 500 General Knowledge questions about India: <https://www.examsbook.com/top-500-gk-questions-2019>

Scattcategory: <https://swellgarfo.com/scattergories/>

Pictionary: <https://skribbl.io/>

Online escape rooms based on themes

https://www.vaasl.org/ccboard/1004622938_7184f9ab917ccb1955674ced2dcb81ab.pdf

Cellphone Apps: covidpoly.io, cardgames.io, codewordsgame.com, spendee.mattle.online, hanabi.cards.io

JAINA
4099 Shady Ridge Circle,
Corona, CA-92881

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
San Bernardino, CA
Permit #3515

