**COLUMN NAME: THERE’S ALWAYS A SILVER LINING…**

**TITLE: LIFE IN LOCKDOWN**

2020 has proven to be quite a leap year. The presidential decision to self-isolate, to socially distant yourself and then to remain under lockdown has been drastic, however, a necessary one for the safety and care of the individual, the nation and its country.

The thought of 21 days at home was daunting. What are we if not social butterflies? Social connection has always been the cornerstone of everything we do. Communication forms the basis of understanding, happiness and relationships. Social distancing has stunted our social lives for sure. In order to remain socially active we will need to be flexible and creative using the various platforms of technology on offer, bearing in mind we are not helpless.

One can argue though that the concept of social distancing is not entirely unknown to us, as growing up we were exposed to it through the light hearted reference of “stay away from those naughty kids”. However, today it is a more serious reference towards the protection of one’s health. In this case the culprit is COVID-19, the life threatening and contagious disease best described as the pandemic which compares only to World War 2 in its devastation and statistics. We must appreciate the decision that ‘Prevention is better than cure’- it is easier to stop something bad from happening than to deal with a situation once it has already happened.

This lockdown has proven to be exactly that which we ourselves have manifested in our thoughts and projected out to the Universe. Remember the moments you complained “there’s just no time” or “I’ll see to it when I have the time”. This has now been realized as our very reality and has been presented to us on a golden platter.

It is now safe to say that we have time in abundance and leaves us with the question of “how do we then spend this time?” Let us firstly allow the novelty of free-time to wear off. We can then focus our attention to filling this gifted time. Contrary to the belief that ‘time flies’, I am sure each day being at home all day seems never ending and therefore cultivating a new routine is vital for our sanity.

A routine will add structure which then creates safety and comfort. It also teaches us to understand the concept of time management. Using the time constructively will ensure a well-balanced, fulfilling and equally rewarding lockdown, not just for the individual but also the family unit.

By improving daily habits and creating this routine we are then counteracting anxiety, fear and stress. You can now take control of your helplessness and become productive and purposeful. The involuntary decision to stay home can be frustrating but when viewed as a bigger picture we make the present a place of living and thriving and not just existing and waiting.

Change is the only constant in life. It is inevitable and as a result contributes to self-growth and evolvement. Instead of resisting it, embrace it. Use this as an opportunity to regroup, plan and seek purpose into how we are going to conduct our lives going forward after this ‘once in a lifetime’ experience. I am sure that you too have come to the realization that we are indeed blessed with everything we have being everything we will need.

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