

## CALMONOMICS TO MANAGE UNCERTAINTIES BETTER

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### **Abstract:**

Today human beings are facing unprecedented crisis due to global pandemic. No such crisis in memorable past put people in this kind of ordeal. Great Depression, WWII, global recession of 2008 or debt crisis afterward didn't create such a stupendous mayhem. Healthcare workers are in fire-fighting mode to assist ailing people, but overwhelming number of cases is making them feel overburdened. Emergency service providers are fighting tooth and nail worldwide to help out people with basic necessities. Lockdown has put people in isolation but global pandemonium has made them panic-stricken. But all is not lost in this difficult time. There are ways and means such as being disciplined, practicing yoga, performing solo prayer, dieting, developing hobby; spending quality time with family members that can bring relief to jaded mind. Calmonomics is about maintaining mental peace and leading a balanced life in turbulent time so as to avoid unnecessary financial losses. It is vital to remember that nobody is immortal on earth, not even the so-called larger-than-life heroes or legends in different field of activities. Accepting ground reality and being rational in approach is need of the hour. Challenges are inevitable in life and expecting life without problem is a utopian idea. Accepting this vital truth and doing our best to handle the situation prudently will make the journey of life more pleasant and worth experiencing.

**Keywords:** Mental Status, Physical Health, Quarantine, Self-isolation, Mindfulness, Solitude, Instability, Future Uncertainty, Equanimity

### **Introduction**

From strongest species to reining dynasty, sophisticated technology to fashion trends, everything in the world is constantly changing. New things constantly outdate and replace the existing ones. But there is something which survives long such as universal truth. Life on earth doesn't go on a linear path and there are inevitable ups and downs in journey of our life.

Since time immemorial human beings have dealt with uncertainties and challenges like war, flood, draught, pestilence, nuclear bomb explosion, virus outbreak, terror strike and have emerged wiser and tougher. The strength of the civilization is reflected in its resilience power, ardent desire to bring back normalcy and making progress in the face of looming crisis, risk and uncertainty.

### **Objectives of the study**

The main objectives of the research paper are as follows.

- i. To highlight the concept of Calmonomics as an effective tool for controlling stressful emotions during crisis
- ii. To describe about significance of Calmonomics to lead a balanced life

### **Methodology**

The Descriptive and analytical methods were used in the current research. Since the concept of Calmonomics is so new in academic and social parlance, people are mostly not aware of it. Secondary data from sources like standard books, write up in business magazines, newspaper articles, reliable web publications were used to establish the validity of the new concept.

### **Literature Review**

In the article published in Sunday Times on March 29, 2020 named ‘Calm-o-nomics in the time of Corona’, author Nona Walia presented the gravity of present crisis. No country had ever imagined that a virus outbreak can be so devastating and life changing. In hyper connected world constant flow of information about stratospheric rise in infected cases and death tolls making it impossible to keep us sane and maintain a peaceful life. The author emphasized the importance of staying happy in the current situation as being done by the Europeans to drive out all negative emotions. Doing physical exercise, self care, meditation etc would soothe frayed nerves and assist in development of relaxed, positive frame of mind, which is important in this stress-ridden time.

In the book ‘The Happy Mind: A Simple Guide to Living a Happier Life Starting Today’ by KevinHorsley (2017), Louis Fourie, the myth about happiness is broken and importance of natural capacity and normal aptitude to perform something meaningful is emphasized. Authors explained that happiness is within the reach of everyone at all stages of life

irrespective of culture, religion and gender. They have guided about practical priorities to be followed in daily lives for attainment of happiness.

In the book 'Zen and the Art of Happiness', Chris Prentiss (2008), the author, professed about oneness with the universe and being aware of the energy that created it to be truly enlightened as the secret of happiness. Author emphasized the significance of simplistic approach, calmness in demeanour, and concentration of mind in performance of any task in attaining happiness.

### **The concept and spirit of calmonomics**

It is difficult to remain calm and maintain composure in the face of challenge. It is quite normal to get disturbed about reality which brings hazard to life, takes away roof over head, snatches away two square meal, and sometimes forces to flee the country to set out on journey towards uncertain future. It is VUCA ridden world we are living in. VUCA is acronym of volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity. Disruption volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity is common in every aspect of life. Life doesn't go in linear motion and character of a person is tested during trying times. It is said that God puts the trouble on the way to see the endurance of the people. Any challenge we confront, doesn't make us weak or insignificant, on the contrary we emerge stronger to face bigger challenges. Problem solving and decision making makes us smarter and more confident.

Calm-onomics is about the science of being calm as it has been rightly deciphered by psychology professor Jason Moser of Michigan State University. The central idea is to stay calm and composed in the middle of chaos and catastrophe. When there is enough reason to lose mind, getting caught in the whirlwind of news and information about loss of life and frightening details, it is highly required to take a pause, quarantine mind and retrospect on something positive. If peace of mind is lost, then defeat in the battle of life is obvious. Mental turbulence is more devastating than real ordeal. Calmonomics can't be treated as a latest fad. It is not a passing trend. It can be for everlasting peace, stability and harmony. It is for living a meaningful life which will not drive us toward mad chase of materialistic life. Materialistic life must have some positive aspect, as it brings in sense of security and enrichment. But there is downside risk of worrying about losing valuables in sudden stroke of misfortune.

### **The mechanism to stay steady, stable and strong during crisis**

At the time of unimaginable crisis, our minds are ruffled and it becomes impossible to be cool and composed under life threatening situations. In our unpredictable life, no matter how hard we try, there are some external forces that would go against us. But problem comes to make us smarter, tougher, and intelligent. Humanity over centuries used its cognitive power and problem solving skill to face the challenges head on and resolved the issue with realistic approach. Crisis comes to clear our paths, test our innovative prowess, discard archaic habits and set a new social order. Setbacks can help us to reflect on our process, system, practices, beliefs and daily habits and provide opportunities to build up new mechanism, transform existing cultures and practices and construct a new paradigm.

In a report it was found that India ranked 144 out of total 156 countries in World Happiness Report 2020 as it lacks social security measure and safety-net for majority of the populace. Most of the Indian population struggle hard to make both ends meet. New development due to arrival of contagious virus dealt a heavy blow to disadvantaged and deprived masses. There is no denial of the fact that COVID 19 crisis of 2020 is extraordinary as it posed a huge threat to lives on earth and caused immeasurable damage to families, societies and nations. Stock market nosedived, property price declined, loss of livelihood occurred in unimaginable scale. Lack of healthcare facility, dearth of infrastructure to tackle epidemic and scarcity of protective gears and medicine, inadequate sanitation, and congested localities in so many parts of Asia, Africa, Latin and Central America aggravated the crisis manifold. Situation was no better in so called developed nations in North America, Europe, Asia and Middle East. Humongous death toll and infected cases bear the evidence of pervasive non-discriminatory nature of COVID 19. Countries like the US, UK, Brazil, Russia that downplayed the virus, ignored its dreadful consequence and delayed action in implementation of lockdown and social distancing, suffered the most.

Unless vaccine is released in the market and it's made available to all at an affordable rate, there is no respite. Battle for India would be enormous due to scarcity of health care facility, poor hygiene and densely populated cities. As lockdown imposed on 25<sup>th</sup> May, 2020, people remained homebound. Barring essential services and shops, all other offices, businesses, and educational institutions were shut and mobility of people was restricted. Work from home and online classes became the new normal. The plight of the poor migrant labourers was miserable. As per 2011 census data, India had about 4 crore migrant workers which grew in successive years. As contract workers lost their livelihood and shelter to reside, they came out

on roads and crossed miles to reach their native places. There was gross mismanagement in sending them back to their home destinations. Finally from May 1, 2020 special Shramik special trains were run to take these ill-fated people to their place of origin. Visuals of the sufferings of poor migrants in news bulletin gave discomfort and uneasy feelings to homebound citizens. The blame-game and tussle between Centre and State Govt. delayed and dismayed these innocuous people. Funds were raised to mitigate some inconvenience to these unfortunate workers. Poor people suffered most and daily-bread earners remained worst affected as they lost source of earning overnight as lockdown declared. NGOs, Civil Society and National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) tried to provide food and shelter to poor people and migrant workers. Community Kitchens were run across the nation by NGOs, govt. agencies, trusts, celebrities, and affluent class to relieve the pain of marginalised people and address to their daily requirements. Extreme weather condition created disturbances in few parts of India like devastation by Amphan cyclone in Orissa and Bengal in May 2020, fury of Nisarga cyclone in Raigad district of Maharashtra in June 2020. Providing relief operation became tough and affected people had to put up with water and food scarcity. The vulnerability of human existence was exposed in fight against invisible sinister virus. Getting regular updates on effusive tragic cases and saga of human suffering became agonizing and incapacitating. It happened to be an uphill task for home bound people to turn focus on promising, positive and brighter side of life. But all were not lost in ominous time. The following practices worked well in several cases.

Lockdown and home quarantine has provided ample opportunity to people to cultivate new habits. People got the time to do things they always wanted to. Practices like yoga, exercising became very common. Learning new skills through online courses became the new norm to improve employability as job market demands constant upgradation of skills. Hobbies like learning a new language, webpage designing, photoshop experimentation, cooking, painting , playing musical instruments or dancing were persuaded with a new vigor in the lockdown period. This phase also gave human beings the chance of being useful to the needy and many people derived immense satisfaction in charity for sake of humanity. It also made possible for families to spend both quality as well as quantity of time together and strengthened their family bond. Interacting with pets and being emotionally connecting with them also became common. Finally this lockdown gave people the chance to get in touch with their long lost friends and revive old memories through various apps.

### **The positive outcome of calmonomics**

The beneficial impact of calmonomics can't be measured cardinally or expressed in words. It is need of the hour for balancing out life, restoration of peace and staying active and relevant in the wake of uncertainties. It has some resemblance with Japanese Zen philosophy. It's to bring a sense of purpose to life and not to lose out immense human potentiality. It brings focus of mind and discipline in regular activities rather than mindless wastage of precious time in insignificant trivialities. It allows us to let go of things which lie beyond our control. Unnecessary woes and feeling constantly worried about misery and suffering of people, would do no good. Having a rational optimistic view and practical approach can work wonder. Embracing impermanence is vital as it reduces anxiety to great extent. Practicing meditation and mindfulness can be viable solution to drive out tension and confusion about testing time. Being compassionate towards less-fortunate people, extend love and respect to all, helping others to get basic necessities and showing solidarity to medical professionals and emergency, essential service providers will be enriching experience.

### **Conclusion**

Difficult time doesn't defeat us but it teaches us to be resilient. Almighty doesn't put obstacles on our way, it nudges us to think differently and get past impediments with innovative way out. Calmonomics solidifies age old concept that we are architect of our destiny and captain of our ship in the journey of life. Calmness of mind helps to cut-out chaos, bring clarity on ground realities, taking stock of the situation and think through feasible solutions. It's economical because it reduces cost of mental distress and brings benefit of gainful positivity. It brings down mental, physical and emotional stress and invigorates people with rationalistic approach. Challenges could be multifaceted in today's volatile world. There could be global warming oriented disaster, economic slump, virus outbreak, social uprising and civil war, terror strike or external invasion out of blue and catch us unprepared. If we keep calm and try to demystify and deconstruct the magnitude of the problem without being disoriented, we can figure out plausible way out in turbulent time.

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