



ग्राहक सेवा सुरक्षा संतोष

Keemat

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Multi-stakeholders' Consultation on "Single-use Plastics"

Plastics have become ubiquitous in our lives. These are versatile, affordable, offer unprecedented user convenience and are used in diverse applications in agriculture, food processing, healthcare, industry, infrastructure and household as goods. Packaging is the largest segment of use of plastics.

Government of India has pledged phasing out of "Single-use Plastics" by 2022. However, there is lack of clarity on what constitutes Single-use Plastics. Representatives from civil society, regulators, policy makers, FMCG companies and plastic industry joined in in the deliberations.

The objectives of the consultation process are:

- Clarity on what constitutes "Single-use Plastics."
- Impact of phasing out on stakeholders: brand owners, retailers, consumers and industry.
- Technical feasibility, environmental footprints and economic viability of alternatives to "Single-use Plastics."
- Role of stakeholders in addressing growing plastic waste challenge.



Shri A. K. Jain, IAS, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Government of India inaugurated the event. While acknowledging the benefits of plastic products he highlighted the impact of plastic waste on the flora and fauna and reiterated GOI's resolve to implement the pledge and undertake required policy initiatives; finalizing the Extended Producers' Responsibility (EPR) frame work and necessary amendments to Plastic Waste Management Rules.

Most of the speakers were of the view that plastic products offer benefits to consumers. However, it is necessary to manage post-use plastic products more responsibility. There is no denying that there are problems with plastic waste and consumers should be discouraged using avoidable plastic products. Imposing bans is no solution to plastic litter problem.



The panelist (L-R): Mr. Ankit Gupta, Manager Sustainability, ITC India Ltd., Mr. Ashish Jain, Director, Pollution Control Association of India, Dr. N. C. Saha, Director, Indian Institute of Packaging (Chairman of the Panel), Mr. M. K. Banerjee, Director, Essel Propack, Dr. M. S. Kamath, Gen. Secretary, Consumer Guidance Society of India and Mr. Chandramohan Gupta, Director, Coca Cola India Pvt. Ltd (not in the picture)

Dr. M. S. Kamath, Gen. Secretary, Consumer Guidance Society of India was one of the panelists. He opined that Consumers' voice nowadays plays a very important role in deciding on various options for selection. Issues arise if the policy makers do not consider these views before taking any decision. He further opined that consumers are more than happy using plastic products. Manufacturers are also happy that they are able to supply the products and make some profit. However, regulatory authorities are imposing bans for using the products. It is realised that there is a problem of waste management, but without striking the problem at its root, authorities are banning the product itself. It is like 'throwing the baby along with the bath water'. It is important that users are taught how to become a responsible consumer, how to behave after they use the product. Instead of doing this, authorities are banning the product itself, which is undesirable. Plastics are wonderful materials. Consumer education is required to achieve the goal of proper waste management.



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Knowledge is the highest beauty in man and it is the secret wealth. Success comes to all those who have knowledge to really enjoy and make merry. Knowledge is the highest perceptor itself. When one is in a foreign land, knowledge is the closest friend and supreme guide. Knowledge and not wealth, is respected and revered by the rulers. One without knowledge is only like an animal.

SAYING 'YES, I CAN' BEST WAY TO BOOST MOTIVATION

Which motivational techniques really work is a topic of endless debate — but one trick may eclipse the rest, report researcher in Frontiers of Psychology. Motivational "self-talk" reigned supreme in an expansive new study that evaluated three popular techniques, including self-talk,



imagery and 'if-then' planning. An example of self-talk is someone telling themselves, "I'm ready for this." Using imagery is visualising how they'll win. Results from 44,000 people showed that those using self-talk performed best.

Good neighborliness

Ms. Jamna Vardhachary, Hon Editor



A recent phenomenon. How well do you know your neighbors? For many of us, the answer is – not very well. We meet occasionally, mostly by accident. We smile at each other but the greetings are perfunctory because we are all busy and perhaps because we are not sure of their names. Everyone is your Facebook friend or your WhatsApp groupmate, but interactions are getting digital and less face-to-face and personal. This not necessarily bad but it is simply the way the world is changing. Maybe we need to make a conscious effort to interact more with our neighbors.

Your neighbor can be your policeman, baby sitter. If you run out of milk at 9 PM., you should be able to knock on the next door and ask for some. If neighbors know each other well, they will notice strangers loitering near your home. A neighborhood watch is a well-known concept abroad. Crimes can be prevented. In a close-knit building society, you can leave children alone at home with complete peace of mind. If there is a medical emergency, anyone in the family, even your young child will instinctively run to the neighbor's house. Of course, any neighbor will always help; but is the relationship, close enough that we can seek help without hesitation? I know of many cases where this neighborliness saved lives. Neighbors often step in when someone undergoes surgery and needs a person to stay with them, accompany them for major medical tests.

These days families are nuclear, all the more reason that we should be close to the neighbors. In the absence of support from a joint family, it will be a pillar of support. Senior neighbors can be like the absent grandparents. Seniors can help a young family with help and advice and they in turn get help by way of chores done which they cannot due to their age. It is a win-win situation. Retired seniors have time and skills. They can help kids with homework, teach them a hobby, may be music, art, chess. Collect the kids and enact plays on important days like Independence Day. It helps bonding. These days all kids are going to various classes, so time is a constraint. It needs to be conscious decision to make time for other activities.

I know of a senior whose story sessions are a great hit with the young children in their society. This kind of relationship does not happen overnight – it has to be built. The starting point could be something as simple as a Navratri garba or a society picnic. There are a million ways to make friends, we all know and use these ways, but friendship building seems to focus more and more on “outside” relationships rather than neighbors. Of course, it is important to build professional or work-based relationships. It is also rewarding to spend time with those who share your hobby, whether classical music or bike racing but it is equally important to get to know your neighbors. In an ideal world, you should know each other's children – which school, which class. You should be close enough that you can send your child to your neighbor for a weekend when you are away. This is especially useful for single parents of which there are many. Young couples can get many tips from senior in running a house, even in these days of YouTube. Experience counts you see.

Why have we become a minimal-interaction society? There are many reasons. First, most urban people are busier than their parents were. We work longer hours; we strive to meet more difficult targets and whether you call it greed or progress, our needs are greater, so we have to work harder to meet them. This leaves less time for what we perceive as non-essential relationships. We focus on family and a few old friends, and manage other relationships via smartphone. Second, more women are working nowadays. Previously, women were the social glue, but now they

have to juggle home and career and are often busier than their husbands are! Then there is technology, which allows us to “meet” more people more often, without actually meeting them. Finally, there is geographic dispersal. Old buildings are replaced by multi-storey apartments, with new neighbors. Young people are buying homes in new areas. In some parts of Mumbai, entire neighborhoods have vanished. However, dispersal is an excuse, not a reason for poor neighborliness, because even in the newest apartments, once a family moves in, it usually stays for decades.

One generation ago – and even today, in some areas – neighbors were almost like family. Today they are simply people who stay nearby, but rather than lamenting a lost tradition, look at it positively. Neighborliness is not a long-forgotten culture. We had it a few years ago and we can bring it back very quickly if we try. In a society I know, men go for a morning walk on holidays and then go on to eat a breakfast together. Bonding. Senior ladies sit on the lawns in the evenings just catching up. These sessions brings you closer.

Is this just wishful thinking? Will it work in practice in today's world? Facebook and WhatsApp have made interactions less personal, but remember that the “I” in IT stands for Information. Digital platforms allow us to share information about our likes and dislikes, our whereabouts, even our political opinions. Why not use this information as a starting point for building personal relationships? If online platforms can lead to marriages, surely they can create bonds between neighbors!

A close-knit community is something intangible, but the benefits are enormous – for you, your family, even for society at large. No matter how busy you are, you can spare a couple of hours per week. Spend time with your neighbors. Even if they are unfriendly at first, they will thaw. The next time you meet that woman from No. 7, do not just say hello – make friends, it will pay handsome dividends.

FIND THE QUOTE

"Those who persevere resolutely will triumph over fate, even without the aid of God because perseverance will surely pay the wages for one's efforts" Thirukkural Chapter 62; Verses 619 & 620.

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Letters to the Editor / CGSI

Judicial Backlogs Can Become History

We have been hearing that the Indian Judiciary would need decades to clear its backlog. The judicial system has become irrelevant for the common citizens, and this is responsible for many ills plaguing our Nation, like disrespect for laws and corruption. The ease of doing business also suffers and the rule of law cannot really prevail. The poor and marginalized are hit most in this state of affairs. Supreme Court judge Justice A M Khanwilkar acknowledges that at least 90 percent people give up their claim to justice. He added that there was only 10 to 15 percent citizens who have access to the justice system in India.

A common belief is that we should have three to four times the number of judges. Some people believe that this can change only if there are major judicial reforms, or judges do not give adjournments or forgo their vacations. Some advocate the drafting of better laws. These would require changing the attitudes of judges, lawyers and MPs and there is no sign of it happening. It would be very good if all this happens, but so far, there is no sign of it. Former Chief Justice Thakur said that unless the sanctioned number of judges was increased by over three times, - 70000 judges, - justice could not be delivered. It appears to have been accepted that a judicial system, which can deliver time bound justice, is unlikely, and the fundamental right to Speedy Justice will be a mirage for India. It is a common argument that UN standards suggest 50 judges per million population, whereas India has less about 20. In 2017 if we assume a population of 1250 million the sanctioned judges were 19.1 judges per million.

I decided to try to evaluate how many extra judges would be required to start reducing judicial backlogs. The 20th Law Commission in its report no. 245 submitted in July 2014, after examining the issue from different perspectives concluded that the 'Rate of Disposal' per judge per year is the right method for evaluating this. In simple terms, it assumes that if 10 judges are disposing 10000 cases, 12 judges will dispose 12000 cases. This may not be correct but is likely to be the correct position with a margin of error no more than 10%. I took the data reported by the Law Commission in its report no. 245, and did a proper analysis of its data for 2002 to 2012 of fourteen states for the subordinate courts it had taken. A careful analysis shows that if it had been ensured that all sanctioned positions of judges were filled there would have been no backlog by 2007. This would mean the queues disappear and it would have been possible to devote adequate time to all cases without having to wait. In most cases, it may be possible to dispose cases in less than 3 to 6 months. In Australia, over 70% of the cases in the Magistrate's courts are decided within 13 weeks. The Law Commission analysis assumed that the complete backlog must be finished in 3 years and did not consider the vacant judicial positions. Hence, it came to the erroneous conclusion that the strength of the judiciary needs to be doubled.

I decided to take a look at this issue by analyzing data on Supreme Court's website, <http://www.supremecourt.gov.in/publication> in Courtnews for a twelve year period from 2006 to 2017 (both years included) which has a quarterly report for all the courts. This analysis has been done by adopting the same 'Rate of Disposal' method accepted by the Law Commission. The summary of this analysis shows that the number of sanctioned judges is adequate and if all the sanctioned judges were appointed mounting pendency and huge delays would be history. The number of judges sanctioned in the three levels on 31 December 2017 was 31 in Supreme Court, 1079 in High Courts and 22704 in the Subordinate Courts. The actual number of judges appointed was 25, 676 and 17028 in the three levels. Thus, the total number of sanctioned posts was 23814 whereas the working judges were only 17739! Filling about 6000 vacant positions can make the judicial system deliver efficiently.

Another way of looking at this data for the twelve-year period from 2006 to 2017: The increase in pendency in twelve years was about 56 lac cases whereas the disposal missed due to not filling all sanctioned posts was nearly 661 lacs! The increase in cases each year is less than 2.5 % of the average number of cases instituted each year, whereas the average vacancy is about 21%! I also assumed that an average vacancy up to 5% would have to be accepted in view of the overall inefficiency. If there were no vacancy, the three levels would have a no backlogs in 2014, 2012 and 2012 respectively. With 5% vacancy, the backlogs would have been eliminated by 2017, 2014 and 2014. There can be no excuse for keeping judicial positions vacant while the nation suffers because of this neglect. The retirement date of judges is well known. It would be possible to factor in vacancies due to resignations, promotions and deaths by studying the past data. The increase of sanctioned positions can also be forecast early.

The number of registered advocates is about 1.3 million and over 60 thousand graduates emerge each year from our law schools. Even if infrastructure were inadequate, it would need to be augmented by only about 20%. Even if we assume that there would be a capital cost of setting up courtrooms this would not exceed about 3 crores per courthouse, which would mean about 18000 crores only. This is a simple solution and can be implemented very easily. This does not assume any change in the way judges and lawyers function. It only assumes that the extra judges who fill the vacancies will also dispose matters at the same rate as those who are already in the system. While the sanctioned judicial positions are about 19.1 judges per million the actual working strength is only 13.9 judges per million population. Surely, it can be ensured that this process can always be started six to twelve months earlier and the Collegium recommendations are sent to the government three months before the vacancy occurs. There should be a similar approach for subordinate judges, of ensuring that the selection process is finished in advance.

For the sake of the nation, all those responsible must ensure that all judicial appointments are made in a timely manner. An easy solution is available. This analysis suggests that if a simple process of estimating vacancies and ensuring zero vacancy is followed, the sanctioned strength is adequate to dispose the inflow of cases and some backlog. Even if we assume that there would be upto 5% vacancies, the backlogs would go down dramatically. If this simple solution is implemented the problem will move towards a resolution. This is a simple mechanical solution. If the queue of cases does not keep getting longer, most delays would be reduced considerably. If the queue is very small, there is not much scope for delays. If a policy decision were taken to ensure zero vacancy in the judicial positions, it appears that the backlogs would become history and the fundamental right to speedy justice would be actually implemented in our courts. The policy decision could also be made a law with accountability fixed for who is responsible to ensure its implementation.

Acknowledgment: My friend Arun Joshi in the calculations and analysis has given me great help. Detailed workings are available for perusal at <https://www.livelaw.in/columns/judicial-backlogs-can-become-history-143978>

Note: There are some differences in the closing balance of pending cases between my working and that of the website. I have taken the arithmetical balance whereas the balances in the website are not matching completely. There is a significant difference in the High Court balance and a small difference in the Subordinate Court's balance. However, the overall results would not vary significantly.

Shailesh Gandhi,
Ex. Central Information Commissioner

Homebuyers' complaints under Consumer Protection Act maintainable during Insolvency proceedings, Supreme Court

Shruti Mahajan

The Supreme Court has upheld the judgment of the National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission (NCDRC) against Jaiprakash Associate Limited (JAL) on the issue of maintainability of consumer complaints before NCDRC. The NCDRC had held that consumer complaints filed by the aggrieved homebuyers against JAL could be proceeded with before the NCDRC. These proceedings can continue during the pendency of Insolvency proceedings against Jaypee Infratech Limited (Jaypee), the Commission had held. Jaypee is a special purpose vehicle created by its holding company, Jaiprakash Associates Limited (JAL).

The Commission thus placed as many as 300 matters involving over 14500 aggrieved homebuyers before it. This decision was challenged before the Supreme Court by JAL. It was contended by JAL that the Commission's decision is likely to denude it from pursuing its plea against the claims set up by the complainants, the homebuyers. The Supreme Court Bench of Justices A. M. Khanwilkar and Ajay Rastogi held that the NCDRC's judgment was restricted to the point of maintainability of the claim of the complainants before NCDRC.

The Court said, "[T]he position that the observations in the impugned judgment are for the limited purpose of deciding the preliminary objection taken by the appellant regarding the maintainability of the complaint before the Commission, in particular, against the appellant JAL." The Court further stressed that the NCDRC's judgment has only considered the preliminary objection and is not an opinion on the merits of the pleas of any of the parties. All the contentions available to the Respondents will have to be considered on their own merits, the Court made clear.

"[A]ll contentions available to the respondent(s) in the complaint including on the relief of possession and refund against JAL will have to be adjudicated by the Commission on its own merits in accordance with law uninfluenced by the observations made in the impugned judgment." The NCDRC's judgment does not give any directions to the Respondents with respect to their claims and the Commission may do so in its final judgment. This final judgment, however, will be subject to the outcome of the insolvency proceedings against JAL and Jaypee

Expiry of warranty no defense if product has inherent defect: Consumer forum (PTI)

Expiry of the warranty period of a product will not absolve its manufacturer or seller from their liability if it has an inherent manufacturing defect, a consumer forum here has said. "Merely because warranty period has expired, would not absolve the opposite parties, manufacturer or seller of the goods, from the liability if it (product) suffered from an inherent manufacturing defect," North District Consumer Disputes Redressal Forum said. The observation was made by the forum while directing LG Electronics to pay Rs 56,000 to a customer who was sold a defective LCD TV which started switching off on its own within a few days of purchase and despite being repaired several times the problem kept recurring. "In the present case, after a short duration of purchase of the LCD the switching off problem occurred in it. Though it was rectified yet again, the same problem crept up.

When the same problem crept up again and again, we are of the view that LCD had some manufacturing defect not capable of being removed and the same was not in a marketable condition," a bench presided by Babu Lal said. The bench also said that in such a situation, the company was duty bound to either replace the product or refund its cost and directed LG to return the LCD TV's cost, Rs 54,000, to Delhi resident Ashima Markandeya and to pay her Rs 2,000 as cost of litigation. Ashima in her complaint had alleged that the LCD TV she had bought from an authorized dealer of LG started switching off on its own a few days after its purchase and despite being taken to the service center several times, the problem kept recurring.

Despite the switching off problem persisting in the LCD TV even after several repair attempts, LG did not replace it nor refund its cost, she had said. LG in its defense had contended that during the warranty period, the LCD TV was repaired and once the warranty was over it was not under obligation to repair or replace the TV.

before the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT), the Court clarified. This judgment comes in the wake of the Supreme Court's decision in the Chitra Sharma case wherein the Court had sent the matter back to the NCLT for adjudicating on the issue under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) leaving the aggrieved homebuyers in a lurch.

The decision of the NCDRC, which has now been upheld by the Supreme Court, validates the maintainability of consumer claims of homebuyers against Jaypee for refunds and damages on account of delayed possession. The homebuyers were represented by Senior Advocate Anand Grover briefed by a team from P&A Law Offices comprising advocates Partner Amit K. Mishra, Principal Associate AOR Shashank Manish & Associate Shivam Pandey with Advocate Aditya Parolia. Senior Advocates Abhishek Manu Singhvi and Krishnan Venugopal represented Jaypee.



Consuming green leafy vegetables may be a novel way to reduce stress and lower the risk of experiencing a stroke, as per a recent study. People who ate more green leafy vegetables had 64% lower risk of experiencing a stroke. Researchers studied 682 patients (average age 53.7 years) who experienced brain bleeds.

A stroke occurs when the blood supply to part of the brain is interrupted or severely reduced, depriving brain tissue of oxygen and nutrients. Within minutes, brain cells begin to die. Prompt treatment is crucial. Early action can minimise brain damage and potential complications. The acronym FAST can be used to recognise the warning signs of stroke: Face drooping, Arm weakness, Speech difficulty and Time to emergency. The disabilities caused due to a stroke can be temporary or permanent, depending on how long the brain lacks blood flow and which part is affected. All cases of strokes must reach a stroke centre within 24 hours.

Stroke is preventable. About 90 of strokes are associated with 10 risks factors that are modifiable. Some tips to prevent stroke.

- Control high blood pressure
 - Do moderate exercise 5 times a week
 - Eat fruits & vegetables
 - Reduce your cholesterol
 - Maintain a healthy BMI or waist to hip ratio
 - Stop smoking and avoid second hand exposure
 - Reduce alcohol intake
 - Identify and treat atrial fibrillation
 - Reduce your risk from diabetes
- Get educated about stroke

— Courtesy Indian Medical Association

5 bad reasons to take loan

WHEN YOU HAVE EMERGENCY NEEDS, IT IS ACCEPTABLE TO OPT FOR A PERSONAL LOAN. BUT TAKING LOAN TO FULFIL LIFESTYLE RELATED AND ASPIRATIONAL NEEDS ARE TOTALLY WRONG

Did you know that personal loans are one of the most expensive loans? Usually interest rate on personal loan ranges between 12% and 20% per annum. Considering it is an unsecured loan, where you do not need to provide collateral, the interest rate will be higher compared with a secured loan such as home loans. When you have emergency needs such as medical cost and do not have any other options, it is acceptable to opt for a personal loan. However, taking loan to fulfil lifestyle related and aspirational needs are totally wrong reasons. Here are some reasons for which you should not take a loan.

TO FULFIL YOU 80C INVESTMENT NEEDS

If you are taking a loan to invest in 80C instruments because you do not have the lump sum amount required at the end of the financial year, you need to stop doing it. "In January, February and March there is always high demand (for loans). Ideally, a person should be saving every month to fulfil their 80C requirement. But most people do it last minute. When HR starts asking for investment proofs, people end up planning to invest. Most don't have a lump sum and hence take loan to invest in 80C for tax benefits from our platform," said Gaurav Chopra, founder, IndiaLends.com, a leading fitech company. To void getting into this cycle, start investing from the beginning of the financial year itself.

TO GO ON VACATION OR TO FUND YOUR WEDDING

Travel continues to top the list of things to do for most individuals. Now, holidays are expensive and can be planned. However, if you are taking a loan for holidays, your overall cost will also go up. "The problem with a personal loan is the loan must be serviced, no

matter what, thereby making your overall finances less flexible to handle sudden changes in your financial situation. Also, because these are often not bound by assets such as collateral, they are expensive. Even the government doesn't think personal loan is a good idea, so they give you no tax break on the interest costs, unlike a housing loan," said Shyam Sunder, managing director of PeakAlpha Investment Services Pvt. Ltd. Similarly, if planning your wedding, you need to save for it instead of opting for a loan.

TO MAINTAIN AN EXPENSIVE LIFESTYLE

Do you like to have expensive gadgets, high-end phones and regularly dine at expensive restaurants? If you can't afford it and end up buying expensive things on loans, that is not the right financial approach. "These are aspirational and non-essential expenses that can be done when a person has the money for the same. People end up spending on these lifestyle expenses due to peer pressure and easy availability of personal loans. You need to be careful of these loans as they are unsecured and hence negatively impact one's credit score," said Mrin Agarwal founder of Finsafe India Pvt. Ltd. "The worst reason is to take a loan for meeting an expense that you should never be incurring anyway. You should not take loans for extravagant spends, which are discretionary in nature," said Sunder.

TO PAY OFF EXISTING LOANS

If you have a loan and are not able to pay it off, you should not take another one. This behavior can get you into a debt trap. "Ideally if you have a decent emergency fund, the need for personal loan can be reduced to a greater extent. But if you get into a trap such as credit card rollover, then you can use personal loan to get out of the trap," said Melvin Joseph, founder of Mumbai-based Finvin Financial Planners. Hence, there is an exception in this case. If you have an expensive loan and get the option to convert it into a loan with cheaper interest rate only then you should go for it.

Heart diseases steadily rising in India

SWAPNIL MISHRA
Mumbai

According to the study published in the Lancet Global Health, deaths due to cardiovascular diseases are on the rise in India, causing more than one quarter of all deaths in the country and affecting rural populations and young adults the most. A senior doctor said the urban population is three times more likely to have heart attacks than those living in rural areas. The reason for this can be attributed to stress, aberrant lifestyle, and hectic schedules that leave very little or no time for physical activity.

What is alarming in the finding is that even though most deaths were among people with previously known cardiac disease, at least half were not taking any regular medications for the condition. In India, most deaths occur at home and without

The urban population is three times more likely to have heart attacks than those living in rural areas. Almost 80 per cent to 90 per cent of premature deaths that occur due to these NCDs in the country are preventable through regular screening, timely medical intervention, and proper disease management.

medical attention.

Deaths due to both stroke and heart attack need research and action in order to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal of reducing cardiovascular mortality by 2030. To make progress at the global level, there is a need to first address this leading cause of mortality in India.

Dr K K Aggarwal, President, HCFI, said that the cardiac diseases include coronary artery disease, heart attack, arrhythmias, heart fail-

ure, heart valve disease, congenital heart disease and cardiomyopathy, which are most common. Heart disease and other non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as diabetes, hypertension, cancer, and stroke are steadily on the rise and will soon take epidemic proportions.

"The urban population is three times more likely to have heart attacks than those living in rural areas. The reason for this can be attributed to stress, aberrant lifestyle, and hectic schedules that

leave very little or no time for physical activity. In recent times, healthy looking adults present with cases of cardiac arrest, stroke and hypertension or were at risk of developing any of these disease at any point in their lives," added Dr Aggarwal.

Almost 80 per cent to 90 per cent of premature deaths that occur due to these NCDs in the country are preventable through regular screening, timely medical intervention, and proper disease management. Women, especially, need extra attention as the symptoms they present maybe entirely different to that of men.

Dr Aggarwal added that there is a very small percentage of participant with favorable factors for not getting heart problems. This reiterates the need to adopt and maintain a healthy lifestyle to have a healthy heart and this should begin early on in life.

Risks of Re-frying!

Dr. Sitaram Dixit, Chairman – Consumer Guidance Society of India, CGSI

Indian cooking is synonymous with the use of vegetable oils and ghee since ancient times for enhancing flavour and taste. Indian's broadly cook food with oil either by pan-frying, shallow frying or by deep-frying. In pan-frying, we cook food in a heated pan having a light coating of oil whereas in shallow frying, the oil reaches up to half the level of food in the pan with both the food and oil in unison with the bottom of the pan. In deep-frying, cooking happens in a pan having oil deep enough for the food to float in oil. During deep-frying the oil under use, endures a series of complex reactions like hydrolysis, isomerization, oxidation and polymerization that positively influence the quality of the fried food preparation in terms of flavour, texture, nutrient composition and shelf life even though these very reactions albeit also adversely result in the formation of toxic by-products both in the fried food and oil.

Scientific studies prove that these chemical reactions depend on various factors like quality of oil, anti-oxidants content present in the oil, the quantum of oxygen available during the frying process, the frying conditions (time, temperature, etc.), type of food fried and intermittent replenishment of frying oil by fresh oil. High frying temperatures, increase in the number of times of frying, polyvalent metals in the frying equipment/vessel, presence of free and unsaturated fatty acid content in the oil all contribute in decreasing the frying oil's oxidative stability and thereby, the flavour and long-time keeping quality. Antioxidants like tocopherols, oryzanol, tocotrienols, sesamol, ascorbic acids, etc., naturally present in the vegetable oil along with added synthetics like propyl gallate, tertiary butyl hydroquinone (TBHQ), 1ppm silicone oil, etc., do help in reducing the rate of oxidation; however, its effectiveness diminishes with increasing frying temperature and repeated number of frying.

In pan-frying, the food prepared consumes most of the cooking oil and in shallow frying residual oil present is small. However, in case of deep-frying, the fried food absorbs only a portion of the frying oil leaving behind a substantial amount, enabling us largely for economic considerations to reuse the same cooking oil later. Reheating the cooking oil for deep-frying food, creates free radicals and on eating such fried foods, the free radicals present in the food, attaches itself to healthy body cells leading to potential health risks like throat irritation, hyper-acidity, heart ailment, atherosclerosis, cancer, Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, etc.

We define the temperature at which an oil breaks down and begins to smoke as "smoke point." Generally, vegetable oils have higher smoke point than animal fat also refined oils have it higher than unrefined oils and every time one re-heats the oil for frying, the smoke point drops. **Deep-frying takes place at around 190° C and therefore vegetable oils selected for deep-frying should ideally have their smoke point above 190° C.** Cooking oils like ghee, refined groundnut oil, coconut oil, palm oil, soybean oil, sunflower oil, mustard oil, safflower oil, rice barn oil, olive oil, etc., all have different smoke points. We are aware that cooking oils consists of saturated and unsaturated fatty acids. An

oil with high polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFA) content on heating degrades more rapidly. Foods fried in oils with low PUFA content are tastier. **Ghee, having a high smoke point and low PUFA content is therefore the best frying oil**, although the high cost is restrictive for regular use. **Vanaspati or hydrogenated vegetable oil with a high smoke point is no doubt a cheaper alternative to ghee; however, it is best to avoid it**, due to the obvious presence of toxic trans-fats that negatively affects human health leading to atherosclerosis.

Cooking oils with low PUFA content and high smoke point is ideal for deep-frying. Peanut oil, palm oil, sesame oil, rice barn oil, mustard oil, etc., are suitable and PUFA rich oils like safflower oil, sunflower oil, soybean oil, are unsuitable for deep-frying food. **Many scientific studies find that reheating PUFA rich oils like soybean, sunflower, safflower, etc., for use produces a toxic chemical 4-hydroxy-trans-2-nonenal (HNE).** Ingestion of HNE leads to increased risks of cardiovascular diseases, stroke, various types of liver disorders, cancer, Alzheimer's disease, Huntington's disease, Parkinson's disease, etc. HNE reacts with human deoxyribose nucleic acid (DNA), ribose nucleic acid (RNA) and proteins affecting basic human cellular processes.

Simple signs to identify deteriorated cooking oil after use and precautions to take for storage and use.

1. Darkening of oil colour due to burning of food fried.
2. Increase in viscosity (thickness) due to the formation of toxic polymeric compounds.
3. Increase in sedimentation of absorbent fried food particles.
4. Decrease in smoke point during reuse.
5. The oil smells rancid or unpleasant.

Even though it is true that we should not re-heat cooking oils for use, economic concerns, shortage, etc., do not easily permit us this. Therefore, following necessary precautions becomes imperative.

- Strain the used oil free from food particles and store it in a glass jar (polyvalent metals present in metal containers tend to oxidise oil and deteriorate it) in a cool dark place.
- Refrigerating it could prevent rancidity and the formation of anaerobic clostridium botulinum bacteria that causes botulism a potentially fatal food poisoning.
- Ensure to avoid frying food above 190° C or exposing cooking oil to higher temperatures as it leads to the formation of HNE and accumulation of the same in oil and food fried.
- Strictly avoid replenishing the cooking oil in the frying vessel to prevent formation of toxic chemicals.
- Avoid iron or copper frying vessels, as these metals inherently tend to accelerate rancidity of oil.
- **Do not mix fresh and used cooking oil.**

Disposal of Used Cooking Oil

Proper disposal of deteriorated used cooking oil waste is also very important. However easy it is, one should never pour it in the drain as it can clog drainage pipes posing a safety health hazard by forming a thin layer on water bodies and reservoirs, as oil is lighter than water thereby hindering oxygenation. Experts affirm that even one litre of oil could contaminate one million litres of water. Recycling and re-using the used cooking oil for non-edible use is the ideal way of disposal. Some examples will include, using it in oil lamps and heaters, as lubricating oils and greases, as cutting oil in lathe machines or commercially converting it into biodiesel by alcoholysis that would not only improve our economy but also provide employment/entrepreneurial job opportunities. However, for commercial usage of used cooking oil it is important to develop an organised collection system from large users like food industry, hotels, etc., even homes, so that there is an uninterrupted supply of raw material for the biodiesel manufacturer to succeed in this sector. Any takers?

STANDARD COMPOSITION OF POPULAR OILS USED IN INDIA	SMOKE POINT (°C) ~ approx.	SATURATED FATTY ACID (SFA) %	MONO UNSATURATED FATTY ACID (MUFA) %	POLY UNSATURATED FATTY ACID (PUFA) %
Butter	176	~ 60.0	~ 19.0	~ 4.0
Coconut	176	81.0 - 107.3	5.0 - 10.2	1.0 - 2.7
Ghee	232	~ 56.0	~ 21.0	~ 11.0
Mustard	260	1.2 - 12.0	35.5 - 89.0	16.0 - 44.0
Palm	232	43.3 - 57.4	36.0 - 45.0	9.0 - 12.5
Peanut	232	12.0 - 27.8	35.7 - 71.6	12.0 - 43.3
Rice Barn	260	15.3 - 27.8	38.0 - 47.0	33.2 - 42.9
Safflower	232	7.4 - 12.8	8.5 - 23.9	67.8 - 83.3
Sesame	210	12.7 - 17.1	34.4 - 46.1	37.1 - 48.9
Soybean	232	10.1 - 17.1	17.0 - 31.1	52.5 - 70.1
Sunflower	232	8.1 - 17.1	14.0 - 40.4	48.3 - 74.6
Virgin Olive	160	8.0 - 17.1	55.0 - 84.6	3.5 - 22.5
Vanaspati	250	28.0 - 48.0	4.0 - 38.0	1.0 - 41.0
	Values may vary as per sample, origin, oil blend, brand, etc.			

The Useless Concept of ‘Calories’

Dr. Jason Fung – Nephrologist. Special interest in type 2 diabetes reversal, Founder of Intensive Dietary Management Program.

Currency (money) is useful because it represents a mutually agreed-upon means of measurement and exchange. That is, if we all accept American dollars as our currency of exchange, then items as disparate as a bus or an onion can be all measured in the same units. The bus is expensive and costs more dollars. The onion is cheaper and costs less dollars but everything is measured in dollars and both parties accept dollars as the currency of exchange. If one party decides to deal in dollars and the other accepts seashells (used historically in some primitive cultures) or salt, then it is impossible to deal. There is no common currency. The buyer wants to use dollars and the seller wants seashells. No deal. That is the value of a common currency, whether it is dollars, seashells, Bitcoins or gold. There is only power as long as the two parties agree.

It is just like a common language. English is particularly useful because many people speak it. Therefore, in the United States, it is very likely that you can speak English and somebody understands you. In China, Mandarin is more useful than English, again because both people are able to speak it. Microsoft dominated the software wars because it was the most popular, which automatically made it the most useful. It sure was not the blue screen of death, or Microsoft Bob that made it useful. Man, I hated that stupid paperclip. Made me want to poke my own eyes out, but Microsoft was the common standard, which made it useful. So, what is the common currency of weight gain? Many ‘experts’ claim that ‘calories’ fulfills this role of common currency. Sugar contains a certain number of calories and lettuce has less calories. We imagine, therefore that these calorically ‘expensive’ and ‘cheap’ foods can be measured on the same currency of calories, and the more calories you eat, the more fat you will gain.

Often the ‘First Law of Thermodynamics’ is cited which states that energy is neither created or destroyed. This is completely fallacious because if we eat an extra 500 calories, our body may either burn it for body heat or store it as fat. Both situations follow the First Law of Thermodynamics but have drastically different effects on body fatness. There are other ways, of course to measure different foods. You could simply weigh them. So 1/2 a pound of sugar is the same as 1/2 a pound of lettuce. This is simply a different currency. You could make the same “First Law of Thermodynamics argument” for weight as for calories. If you eat 1/2 pound of food, whether sugar or lettuce, you must gain 1/2 pound of weight. After all, how can your body gain more weight? Does weight come from thin air? How can it gain less weight? The weight of food simply disappears? Thermodynamics is a law, not a general suggestion.

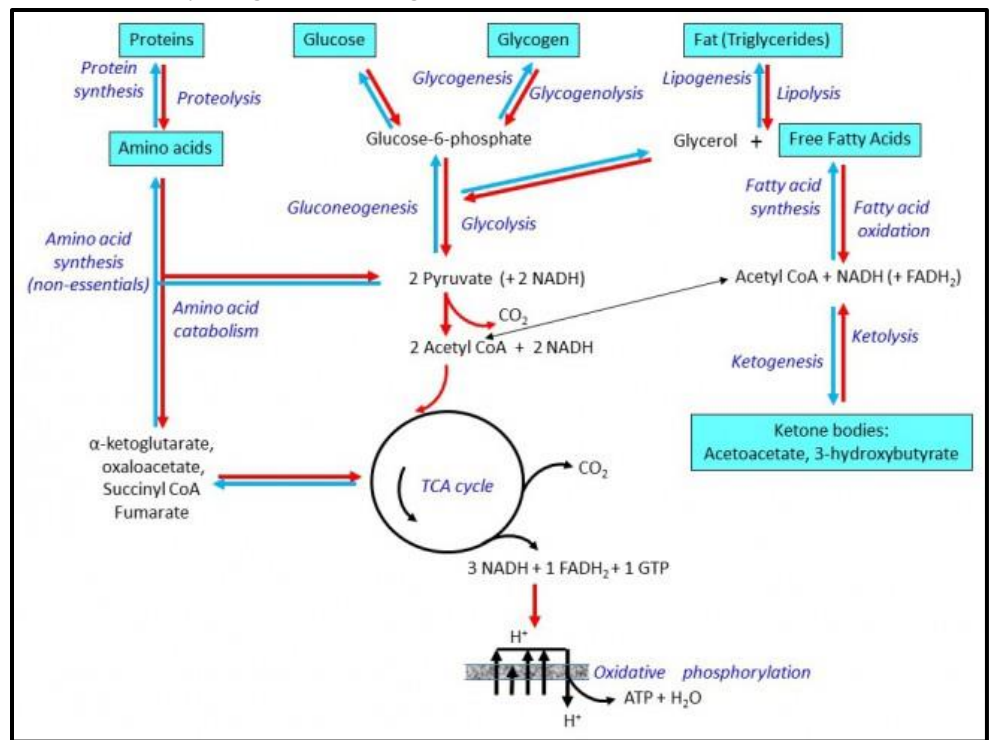
In both cases (weight and calories), the confusion arises because of an assumption that basal metabolic rate stays stable under all conditions, which is known to be false for the last, oh, hundred years. Metabolic rate may increase or decrease by up to 40%. What is crucially important, though, is to see if the body ‘cares’ about calories. Is it calories, or weight of food that serves as the common currency, or common language of weight gain? Does the body have some mechanism to count calories? Does the body have sensors to detect calories? Do we have an internal bomb calorimeter to measure calories and change behavior/ metabolism based on calories? No, no and no. Your body does not give a hoot about calories. Calories are not an accepted currency in our body. It does not count calories so why

should you? A calorie is a calorie. So what? Who cares? Certainly not your body. Consider two foods of equal caloric value. On the one hand, you have a bit of sugary soda, and on the other is a plate of lettuce. Calories are identical. OK. So what? When you eat those two foods, does your body somehow measure these calories? No.



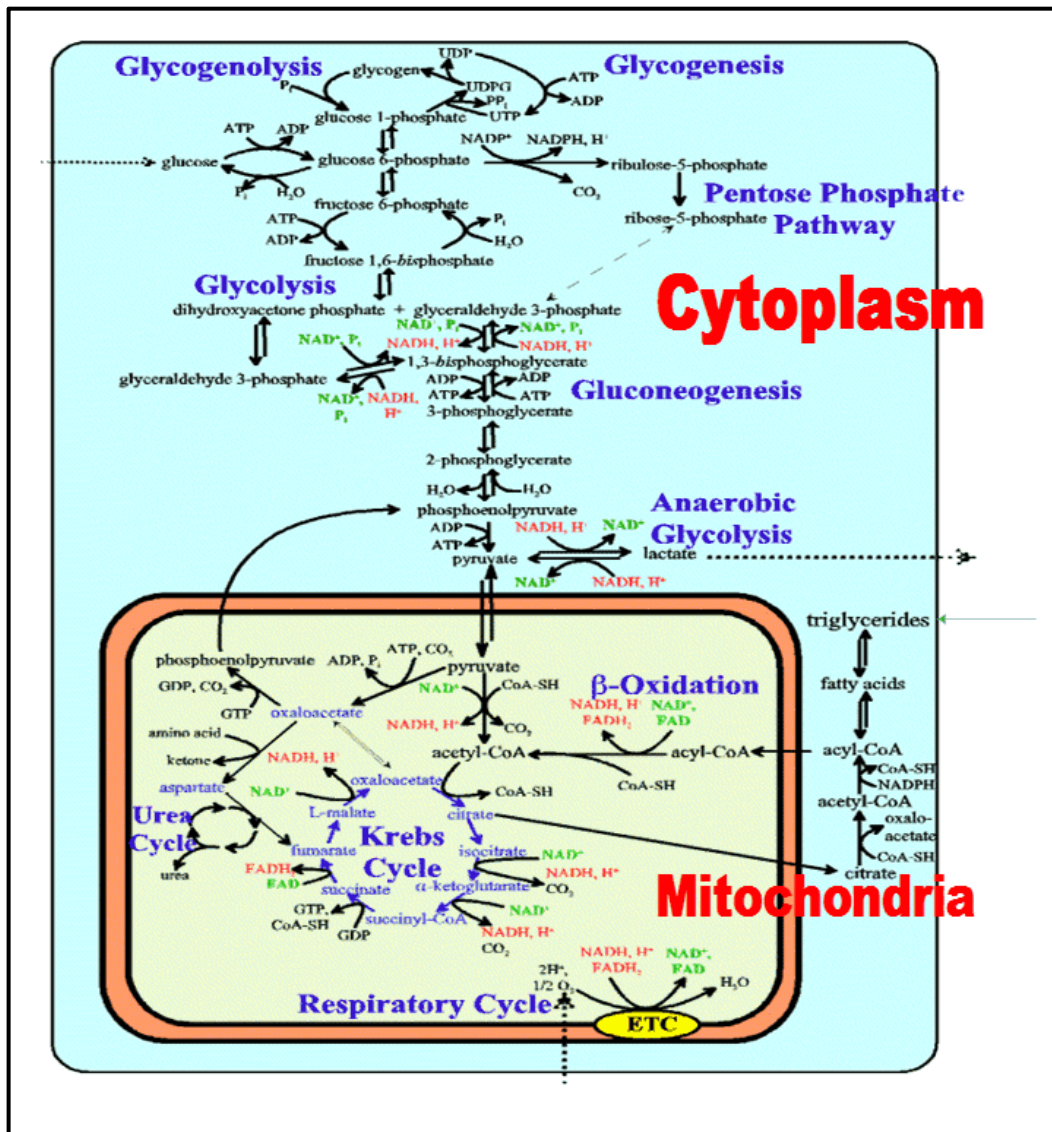
200 Calories

The metabolic effect of those two foods is completely and utterly different. Sugar will stimulate insulin. It will not activate any of the other satiety hormone. It does not activate stretch receptors in the stomach (satiety signal). It does not activate peptide YY, cholecystokinin (satiety hormones). A piece of steak, on the other hand, will do all those things. Therefore, you feel full after eating the steak, but not sated at all with the soda. So, why do we pretend that all calories are equal? There is nothing equal about them. Calories are not the common currency of the body. It is like we are walking around with a bunch of seashells in our pockets and trying to buy a hamburger in Philadelphia. Everybody wants dollars and we want to pay in seashells. The burger guys do not care about seashells. Our body does not care about calories. Consider the following metabolic pathway for the digestion of food, or look more closely at metabolic pathway for glucose. (See figure below)



There are even more detailed pathways for protein and fat. (See figure next Page)

My question is this: Do you see “Calories” mentioned on any part of these simplified pathways? We have spent the last hundred years detailing the intricacies of human metabolism, and nowhere in all of this work do you see the word “Calories.” Your body just does not give two flying f***s about calories. It is not the common currency. Here is the bottom line truth. ‘Calories’ is NOT a physiologic concept, just as ‘weight of food’ is not a physiologic concept. Both are unit borrowed from physics. Longing for mathematical precision, obesity experts have severe ‘physics envy’, and try to shoehorn the useless physiologic concept of calories into a human biology that does not accept it. The same applies to the weight of food, or the volume of food. Your body does not weigh the food coming in, and does not care. Eating a pound

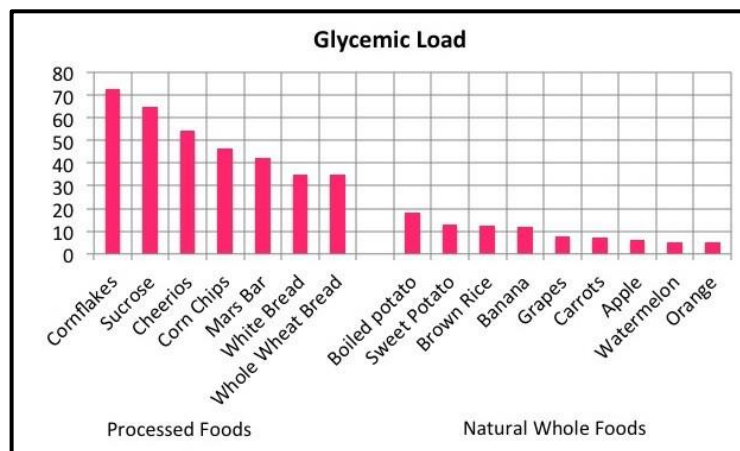


stimulus to weight gains, so food that stimulate insulin are typically more fattening (cookies). Those that do not (kale) are typically not fattening at all. If the body cares about insulin (and other hormones too, but mostly insulin), then we need to use the common currency, speak the common language of the body. Insulin. Instead we use 'calories' and do not understand why we cannot lose weight. Our body does not comply because it has no idea what we are telling it. Imagine a tourist asks you for directions in a language you do not understand. You tell him to go to the subway, but he does not understand and instead goes to the coffee shop, so you speak slower and louder, but he still does not understand and goes to the restaurant. Our body understands language of 'hormones' and we are speaking 'calories'.

Since our body is not likely to learn the language of 'calories', we need to learn the language of 'insulin', by translating foods into insulin effect instead of calories. You can estimate a foods insulin effect based on net carbs (carbs- fiber) + 0.54 protein. Even then, this formula only accounts for about 50% of the known insulin effect, so there is still much more we need to learn. The least insulinogenic diet is low carb, high fiber, moderate protein, high in natural fats. In other words, a real food, LCHF diet. The same goes for counting carbohydrates. Your body certainly responds to carbohydrates, but it does not count them. Some carbohydrates will

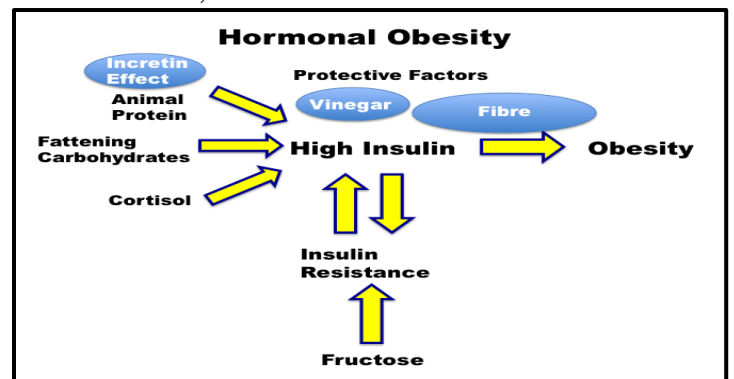
of lettuce and a pound of sugar produce completely different metabolic responses. In one case, the body may burn off that energy, and the other case, it may decide to store that fat. Weight is not the common currency. Remember that a common currency only has power if both parties agree to its use. To understand weight loss, we need to understand what our body 'cares' about. The answer is clearly not 'calories as seen clearly on the detailed charts above. The answer is 'hormones', predominantly, but not only insulin. Hormones run everything in our bodies.

Our body gains or loses fat according to detailed hormonal instructions from our brain. The rise and fall of insulin is the main



stimulate insulin and others will not meaning that not all carbohydrates are equal. Highly processed carbohydrates are very stimulating to glucose and insulin. Minimally processed carbohydrates have very little glucose or insulin effect. So remember, the common currency of the body is not calories, but neither is it dietary fat, protein or carbohydrates. It is not fiber. It is not ketones. The only currency the body really cares about is insulin.

If you want to lose weight, reduce insulin. If you want to gain weight, increase insulin. That is the common currency. Since our body only cares about insulin, we had better learn the insulin effect of foods.



For more details look in my book, The Obesity Code or listen to my talk <http://www.theobesitycodepodcast.com> – Dr. Jason Fung

Start with putting your cash flow in order – Nisreen Mamaji, Certified financial planner and founder of MoneyWorks Financial Advisors

To put cash flow in order you need to collect details of your income, track overall expenses in detail, also have money to set aside for savings. Effective cash flow management could either mean heading out to a fancy restaurant for your anniversary or rustling up an exotic meal at home. Cash flow refers to the in and out motion of money. Simply earning income and paying bills does not qualify as cash flow management that is survival. Cash flow management involves understanding the components that make up where the money comes from, where it goes, and what choices are appropriate in creating a life of greater satisfaction. It is an active process. There are four components to it.

INCOME: Income can be derived from salary, bonus, hourly, self-employed, rental or investment sources. In some cases, you can control your income—working longer hours or a second job or choosing investments that provide higher levels of income. In most cases, control is limited.

FIXED EXPENSES: It is foundational costs over which you have little control. For e.g., rent, EMIs, salaries, transport, school fees, electricity and mobile bills, food and grocery. These come every month and while you might move to a slightly cheaper apartment, this category is pretty locked in. A structural change might mean, moving to an area where property costs are less or moving into a smaller home.

DISCRETIONARY EXPENSES: Here you make choices and more control can be exerted. For e.g., you can shop online or at premium name brand stores that feature the allure along with higher price tags.

SAVINGS: Do you save regularly and systematically or do you save, when there is something left over? Savings is our opportunity to capture and secure our wealth. The better choices you make, the more wealth and security can be derived. To put cash flow in order you need to first collect details of all your income, then track your overall expenses in details and have money to set aside for savings. If you find yourself unable to save, you can start by transferring a small amount every month in another account as soon as you get your salary. Once you have understood your cash flow, you can start your investment plans. Remember that a proper cash flow management is the foundation for building a strong financial plan.



In the wonderland of investment
A N SHANBHAG

Over a year back, we had written about investing in equity without taking any risk whatsoever. Now once again we revisit this topic as the markets are getting overheated. Analysts, prone as they are towards a herd mentality, have all started singing the same tune – that a steep correction is round the corner. Never mind the fact that these so called analysts have almost always been caught wrong footed.

But today's piece is not about stock market gurus and other story tellers. It's about the age old dilemma that an investor faces – while the markets are high and pose a certain degree of increased risk, fixed income avenues offer no succour.

Fixed deposit rates at around 7 per cent - 7.5 per cent per annum, do not even cover the actual inflation rate (here we do not mean the published inflation data but the real inflation that the man on the street is facing). So what is

an investor supposed to do? How can one ensure safety of one's money and yet earn an attractive return? How do you have your cake and eat it too? Or in the context of today's article, can you invest in the stock market without undertaking any risk whatsoever? Perhaps you can, if you structure your investment in a specific manner.

But first a little background on the profile of the investor we are considering. You are the typical 45+ investor. While you would like a healthy return on your investments, your life situation in terms of family responsibilities, EMI payments, possible medical expenses in the future etc. don't allow you to undertake much risk. So while on the one hand, fixed income investing doesn't leave much in hand after tax, at the same time, you are not too thrilled with the risk and volatility associated with potentially higher earning equities. So what do you do? How do you

come out of this Catch-22 situation?

We shall consider for the purposes of this discussion an investible amount of Rs 5 lakh. Here we would like to impress upon readers that the exact amount doesn't matter; it might as well have been Rs 5,000 or Rs 50 lakh – the principle will not change. In other words, the figures used are not important, the concept is. If your investment amount is different, invest proportionately.

So, let's assume that you have Rs 5 lakh. You want to invest it well, preferably in equity, but with minimal or no capital risk. We like the sound of the words "with no capital risk" more than "with minimal risk". So let's devise a strategy of investing a lump sum in equity with no risk.

Here's what you do. Out of Rs 5,00,000, invest around Rs 3,50,000 in any five-year bank fixed deposit (FD). Nowadays, FDs are offering around 7.25 per cent per annum for a five year deposit – give or take. We have left

out the tax angle here for ease of understanding.

Therefore, over five years, Rs 3,50,000 (Rs 3,52,357 to be precise, but we have rounded off for convenience) would grow to Rs 5 lakh at the interest rate of 7.25 per cent per annum. So no matter what happens, five years later, you will receive Rs 5 lakh. Now you have a lump sum of Rs 1,50,000 left over (Rs 5 lakh - Rs 3.50 lakh). Invest this Rs 1.50 lakh in an equity-based mutual fund. Now, realise that no matter what happens to the money invested in the mutual fund, at the end of five years, the capital invested in the FD is going to net you Rs 5,00,000 which you originally started. The market value of the Rs 1.50 lakh invested in equity is just additional icing on the cake.

To see how this strategy can actually work out, here are some numbers. Say you purchased the FD in August 2013. The balance amount was invested in Birla Sun Life Equity Advantage

Fund on a lump sum basis. Based on the NAV of this fund five years back and the NAV now, the Rs 1,50,000 invested in August 2013 would have grown to around Rs 4,70,000!! Add to it the FD of Rs 5 lakh and the total investment would net a cool Rs 9.70 lakh – without an iota of risk. Not only have you protected your capital but benefited from the long-term benefit of equity.

One caveat. For a moment do not assume that we are implying that such returns would be repeated in the future. It is possible and at the same time it is not. However, you will appreciate that there is no way of trying to judge the future except by the past performance. All we are saying is that such a structure ensures that no matter what happens to the equity investment, the base capital that you had begun with stays intact.

Also, the choice of the mutual fund scheme is random - all we done is chosen a mutual fund scheme that has stood the test of time.

Invest in equity without any risk

there are several more such funds that will qualify based on this parameter.

By the way, do note that the capital protection funds that get launched nowadays use a similar mechanism. However, note that none of the fund houses actually guarantee (they aren't allowed to do so by Sebi) that the capital is protected. The offer document may at best contain a mention that the schemes are oriented towards capital protection with a high degree of certainty but they don't actually guarantee it.

Note that the structure explained in the article, if adopted by the investor himself, essentially guarantees his capital. There are no 'degrees' of certainty involved, just plain old pure certainty. We have said it in the past and will do so again – a steady job and a mutual fund is still the best defence against spiralling inflation.

Continued – page 11

At the time of writing this, the BSE Sensex is 38,275 points. At almost 28X earnings, the market is not cheap. Also there is a fair bit of uncertainty built in. The US political situation continues to be a major red flag. The geo-political risk looms large and if the West were to fall back into recession, the liquidity supply which is so essential to maintain this rally may suddenly dry up.

So under the circumstances, what does the retail investor do? On the one hand, the temptation to ride this boom is tremendous. On the other, the risk is greater than ever before. Is there a way that you can benefit from this market surge and at the same time limit the attendant risk?

Last week we had seen one of the ways to do that. The idea was simple yet effective. Invest a major part of your capital into a bank fixed deposit such that over five years the money grows back to the original amount you started out with. Thus having the security that your base capital will remain intact, the balance can be invested into a diversified equity mutual fund scheme with a five

invest Rs 8,000 per quarter for five years. At the end of five years, you would receive the market value of your mutual fund investment and also the capital amount of Rs 5 lakh invested in the bank FD.

Consequently, while you have kept your capital intact, you still have taken on equity exposure with all its associated risk. To put it differently, no matter what happens to the market — even if it shuts down, your Rs 5 lakh is safe with you.

We ran some numbers to see how this strategy would have worked out had it actually been implemented five years ago. Say you received your first interest in September 2013 (five years back). The quarterly interest was invested in Birla Sunlife Frontline Equity Fund on a quarterly SIP basis. By adopting this simple structure, at the end of five years, the investor would have received around Rs 2.32 lakh just on account of the mutual fund investment! The effective rate of return works out at an astounding 14.32 per cent p.a. Add to it the capital amount of Rs 5 lakh of the Bank FD and the total investment

would net a whopping Rs 7.32 lakh, done and dusted — without an iota of risk!

Some points to chew on

Now before you start looking for your cheque book, consider the following.

First and foremost, the above analysis, of course gives us only an idea about what would have happened had this strategy been implemented through the past five years. But who knows the future? Perhaps you would earn less or perhaps you would earn so much that the Rs 7.32 lakh may seem a pittance. But whatever happens, be rest assured that your base capital of Rs. 5 lakh would remain protected.

Which brings us to the second aspect of this exercise. It is only your base capital of Rs 5 lakh in our example, which remains protected. But it does not cover inflation. Obviously the value of Rs 5 lakh five years later would not be the same as it is today. But hey, with no downside and only upside, it's a deal worth considering, isn't it?

Some readers may point out the analysis will change as per the in-

terest rate assumed. True — one can do the same exercise incorporating the relevant interest rate for each year. But that would just compromise simplicity for accuracy. The point of this article is not the precision of the numbers i.e., not how much exactly your capital would grow to — but the fact that adopting this strategy allows you to enjoy pure unadulterated equity pleasure with the guarantee of not losing your base capital.

Similarly, the scheme selected (Birla Sunlife Frontline Equity) is one of the many well performing equity diversified schemes available. The specific scheme doesn't matter, you will find similar results from other well to do diversified mutual fund schemes.

Last but not the least, here we have assumed a quarterly SIP for simplicity and ease of understanding. Some MFs may offer quarterly SIP. However, an investor can very well adopt the same strategy with a monthly SIP — only take care to invest in a bank FD with monthly interest.

So who's afraid of equity now?

The authors may be contacted at wonderlandconsultants@yahoo.com

Do not shy away from money talk - Vivina Vishwanathan (Courtesy: Hindustan Times)

Last week, my friend disclosed that she has been taking her salary in advance almost every month for the past one year considering that she could not meet her regular expense. I know she does not splurge on unnecessary things, yet she has been struggling to make ends meet. Usually we discuss everything — from where to get the best Sushi in Mumbai to Priyanka Chopras Instagram profile, but for some reason she never talks about money. Whenever I have tried, bringing it up, the money chat has always faded away within seconds. It is not just her, almost 95% of the time people do not want to discuss money. Why do we shy away from talking about money management? For many people money is a sensitive topic to discuss with friends, family, colleagues and strangers. Money for some reason has a negative connotation. Hence, often when there is money related discussion, it ends with comments such as “He is rich. He must be doing something evil” or “love is more important than money” or “you should never count how much you have else you will lose.”

The primary reason for the majority of the individuals to shy away from the money conversation is that they do not know the basics of money management. We have never been taught in school concepts such as building an emergency fund, buying insurance for protection, investing for long-term and short-term need and taking a goal based approach, so you may be comfortable talking about electro migration or astrophysics, but finance gives you cold feet. In fact, many celebrities fumble when they have to talk about money to an audience. Another reason most individuals do not want to chat about finance is that they find it boring. Since the day you earn, money is the constant in your life. You know that you will need money to buy a phone, eat a good meal, fly across the globe and dress for the occasion. Hence, you will get a fully researched list on the best restaurants in town, the most recently upgraded phones, a listicle on countries that are visa on arrival and quick guide on the shops in the mall that are having a sale, but never on how to plan your finance to do all of these things.

To be able to hold a conversation about money management and financial planning you need to know how to handle it in the first place. If you are already building a retirement kitty, have enough money to survive one year without a job, protection for your health and life, a moneybox for your children's education and enough to spend on things such as vacations and lifestyle needs, you are in a good place. If you have none of these, it is time to have a chat with a professional financial planner who can help you streamline your finance and bring in the confidence of handling your own finances. Alternatively, you can also do your research. Once you are confident about your money life, you will be able to empower others too.

Night owls at high risk of heart disease, diabetes

London: Night owls — people who prefer staying up late — may have a higher risk of suffering from heart disease and type 2 diabetes than early risers, a study has found.

It was the first-ever international review of studies analysing whether being an early riser or a night owl can influence your health.

Through it, researchers have uncovered a growing body of evidence indicating an increased risk of ill health in people with an evening preference as they have more erratic eating patterns and consume more unhealthy foods.

The human body runs on a 24-hour cycle which is regulated by our internal clock,

BAJRA: This tiny little millet variety is high on fat, rich in protein and fiber. The high iron content plays a vital role in curing anemia. If consumed on a regular basis, millet can help to strengthen your bones. Millet is very powerful in controlling diabetes. Because of its high fibre content, it tends to digest slowly and release glucose at a slower rate as compared to other foods. This helps in maintaining healthy blood sugar levels for a long period of time. It takes a longer time for the grain to move from the stomach to the intestines. This way, bajra curbs hunger for a long span of time. It contains phyto chemical, which is called phytic acid believed to increase cholesterol metabolism. It also stabilises the level of cholesterol in the body. Bajra is rich in insoluble fibre that aids digestion. It also reduces secretion of bile acids and is linked to a lowered risk of gallstone formation. A study showed that regular intake of bajra protects pre-menopausal women from developing breast cancer.



which is known as a circadian rhythm, or chronotype.

This internal clock regulates many physical functions, such as telling you when to eat, sleep and wake.

EATING LATE TOO?

■ Eating late in the day was also found to be linked to an increased risk of type 2 diabetes.

■ This is because the circadian rhythm influences the way glucose is metabolised in the body.

■ But night owls often eat shortly before bed

People who go to bed later tend to have unhealthier diets, consuming more alcohol, sugars, caffeinated drinks and fast food than early risers. They consistently report more erratic eating patterns as they miss breakfast and eat later in the day. Their diet contains less grains, rye and vegetables and they eat fewer, but larger, meals.

They also report higher levels of consumption of caffeinated beverages, sugar and snacks, than those with a morning preference, who eat slightly more fruit and vegetables per day. This explains why night owls have a higher risk of suffering from chronic disease. —PTI

ies linking conditions such as heart disease and type 2 diabetes to people with the evening chronotype -- a natural preference for evenings.

How Your Microwave Could Be Harming You (Courtesy: Health & Lifestyle)

If you're trying to eat well and live a healthy lifestyle, then it's not enough to just watch what you're putting in your mouth and to exercise regularly. In fact, it turns out that we should start to pay closer attention to chemicals instead of merely calories. According to Dr. Leonardo Trasande, director of the Division of Environmental Paediatrics at New York University School of Medicine, "it's not simply calories in, calories out." In fact, he says "that used to be a convenient framework for thinking about obesity, but now we know that synthetic chemicals disrupt how calories are processed and ultimately converted into protein vs. sugar vs. fat." The latest research shows that in addition to focusing on the types of food we ingesting, we should also consider how safely our food has been processed and prepared. Of course, it goes without saying that this is even more important when it comes to our children. "Pound for pound, children eat more food and therefore have a higher level of exposure compared to us adults," according to Dr. Leonardo Trasande, director of the Division of Environmental Paediatrics at New York University School of Medicine. "In addition, their developing organ systems are uniquely vulnerable...there can be fundamental disruptions in various endocrine functions that can manifest not only in early childhood but potentially in later life as a result of prenatal or infant exposure." Nitrates, bisphenols, and phthalates are some of the chemicals that Trasande is worried about. In fact, it's very concerning that they're still allowed to be used in packaging materials, along with loads of other chemicals that could potentially cause harm to our health.

Researchers are of the opinion that such chemicals could interfere with thyroid hormones and endocrines, and that they might even affect brain development, weight levels in children and adults, and even birth weight. The American Chemistry Council is currently trying to make this framework more up to date due to the new research that has become available. According to Dr. Maida P. Galvez, an associate professor in the Department of Preventive Medicine and Paediatrics at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, "chemicals used in everyday products need to be rigorously evaluated for their full potential of human health impacts before they are made widely available in the marketplace." One of the most effective ways to prevent chemicals from plastic seeping into your food is to avoid microwaving food in plastic containers. While we know not to microwave aluminium due to the risk of fire, most people typically think twice about putting plastic in there. What's more, other chemicals found in coatings and adhesives used in packaging may have an indirect adverse effect on your food, which is especially dangerous for a developing child's health. Make sure to share this health warning with all of your loved ones.

'First put your emergency fund in order'

Vivina Vishwanathan vivina.v@htlive.com

The time when you are withdrawing the money in an emergency from an equity investment, you might take a loss. Then you are forever convinced that equity is not the right way. Did you have an urge to withdraw the mutual fund when markets turned red? Mutual funds need to be looked through long and short-term goals, emergency funds and tax savers, says Scripbox founder Sanjiv Singhal and chief operating officer. He says it is very common to panic withdraw money from mutual funds but it is not the right approach. "If you are opting for equity investment without setting up emergency fund, you are likely to withdraw investments midway," said Singhal.

Investors tend to withdraw money from mutual funds when the equity markets fall. Why do they not stay invested and what should they do in a bad market cycle? It is a common thing that people withdraw money. People tend to look at investments in blocks and not as something that can serve the overall need. We have also seen that happen. Investors will come and say they have to withdraw money from equity which they have invested for two years. The important thing about equity is that you should go into it only if you do not need the money for a short term. If you are opting for equity investment without setting up emergency fund, you are likely to withdraw investments midway. The time when you are withdrawing the money in an emergency from an equity investment, you might take a loss. Then you are forever convinced that equity is not the right way. There is a graduated approach to

investing. First, you should create an emergency fund, which could be even in a savings account or FDs. We recommend liquid mutual funds for emergency funds. Once you have your emergency fund in place, you should then opt for equity-related investments. In that case, what is the right time to withdraw your money from equity mutual funds ensuring that the impact of the market conditions is lower? Say your money is in debt fund, which is designed to be withdrawn at any point of time, whether you have to pay tax on it, or not, if you need the money and it is meant for the purpose you should use it.

In case of equity investment, which is for your long-term, needs, two-three years before you reach your goal, start moving your money into debt fund. Is there a strategy for beginners on how to pick the right mutual fund from the 36 categories and 1000s of schemes available? You have to look at mutual funds through generic objects such as long-term goals, short-term goals, emergency fund and tax saver. Aligned to those objectives you should invest in different kinds of mutual funds. The workflow is objective, asset allocation, category of funds and funds and not the other way round. If you are looking at long-term goal, it has to beat inflation. Hence, you cannot do fixed income unless you are saving say over 60% of your income. If you know which fund to invest, you can go directly to the AMC and invest provided you are able to manage the life cycle of the investment. Knowing which fund to buy is only 15-20% of the decision.

Emergency fund: Time to build it as of yesterday

Deepali Sen - Certified financial planner, founder partner of Srujan Financial Advisers LLP and author of Why Greed Is Great

Emergency funds should ideally be parked in liquid or ultra-short debt funds, so that one can get the money instantly or in a working day. Most of us do not have a crystal ball to peep into the future, so it is imperative that we set aside four-six months' expenses to tide over circumstances, which may happen outside our plan or expectations, and, it has to be done when things look normal. We have seen ants collect extra food for the rainy days when they may not be able to step out to fetch food.

Emergency funds are alternatively referred to as 'contingency funds' or 'rainy day money'. It is that money which prevents our goal-based planning from getting derailed or defaulted on EMIs or not being able to honour my investment instalments, or not being able to meet my routine expenses. It works towards ensuring that you do not need to borrow money from friends or parents or take a personal loan. It could be a sudden loss of job or getting bed-ridden owing to some illness, accident or personal issues in the family and not being able to bring-in new clients, thereby restricting regular inflows. Emergency funds should strictly be used for needs, which are unplanned, for a disaster, which struck suddenly; not for expense overruns or for budgeting gone haywire or for magnifying one's targeted goal amount when the goal actually comes knocking.

The money that we use in our life has two key features, liquidity and returns. Liquidity means being able to use the money when need emerges and returns refers to the self-sufficient nature of one's investments. It has to stay ahead of the two robbers of money (inflation and taxes) by a few notches. Regarding contingency

funds, the priority is very clearly liquidity, returns can wait. That having said, one must aim for at least risk-free returns on this money.

Emergency funds should ideally be parked in liquid or ultra-short debt funds, so that one can get the money instantly or in one working day. Investing emergency funds in fixed deposits may compromise on returns (if broken prematurely) Also, it may be tax inefficient if and when the need does not emerge until three years. This is because long-term capital gains on debt mutual funds (taxable at 20% after indexation) benefits do not apply to fixed deposits. Emergency funds can either be built by investing lump sum funds in liquid or ultra-short MFs or by doing an SIP (when one-time funds are not available). These funds are the core of financial planning, they make the foundation stone. While planning for goals prepares one for the responsibilities, building an emergency fund helps to tide over any such situation, which may not be in our normal sight of vision. It is as important as having a life cover for one's dependents.

As we cross over to a brand-new year, it is high time we resolve to build one and unlike most other resolutions, let us target to honour this one. Stephen King has rightly said, "There's no harm in hoping for the best as long as you are prepared for the worst." The ultimate aim of a financial plan is to cut down on negative surprises. The plan works towards minimising our anxiety on money. Emergency funds help us on both these counts. We feel more adequate and comfortable in facing the unknown lying ahead.

Two women were conversing on the porch of a large white-pillared mansion. The first woman said, "When my first child was born, my husband built this beautiful mansion for me." The second woman commented, "Well, isn't that nice?" The first woman continued, "When my second child was born, my husband bought me that fine Cadillac automobile you see parked in the drive." Again, the second woman commented, "Well, isn't that nice?" The first woman boasted, "Then when my third child was born, my husband bought me this exquisite diamond bracelet." Yet again, the second woman commented, "Well, isn't that nice?" The first woman then asked her companion, "What did your husband buy for you when you had your first child?" The second woman replied, "My husband sent me to charm school." "Charm school!" the first woman cried. "Land sakes, child, what on Earth for?" The second woman replied, "So that instead of saying, "Who gives a crap," I learned to say, "Well, isn't that nice?"



Achilles Tendon Partial Tear Treatment

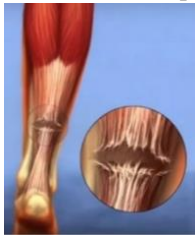
A Patient Perspective & Experience by Dr. K. S. Murthy

A wise doctor advocates his elderly patients – Two keys to normal happy life of which one is – Do not fall, and the other – Stay away from doctors. Yet another doctor quipped that you go in as a person and come out as patient.

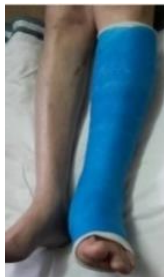
Alluding to the legend of Achilles, the invincible Greek warrior, whose only vulnerability was his heel, which led to his downfall, the term 'Achilles heel' has come to mean a point of weakness, especially in someone or something with an otherwise strong constitution. The Achilles tendon is also named after him. Anyone can experience injury to the Achilles tendon located on the back of the lower leg where it attaches the calf muscle to the heel bone, whether you are an athlete, dance enthusiast or just going about your everyday life. Depression made by the internal tear can be felt through the skin. Ends of the tendon can be reattached with surgery or through non-operative conventional treatment in 12-16 weeks with about 80% strength with 2 cast changes and heel lift for a certain period after removal of the casts. Chances for rupture are less unless there is a jerk.



Unfortunately, while returning home late evening on 14 December 2018 in the shadow of a parked vehicle nearer home, I accidentally slipped and fell into the steep depression of a gutter bay injuring my right leg as it hit the surrounding stone wall causing swelling. Lips and chin were bruised with cuts. A couple of good Samaritans – drivers who were around, helped me up. Unable to stand, somehow I walked and reached my apartment climbing two flights of stairs despite severe heel and muscle pain. After my wife attended to my wounds, I slept exhausted. The next morning, we visited our orthopedic to check for any internal injury to my leg.



Orthopedic surgeon performed Thompson Test as I lay flat on the table with feet hanging over the edge lying prone and supine followed by squeeze on the calf muscle, which flexed the toes downward. The test was positive for an Achilles tendon rupture. First aid was crepe bandage and application of ice packs. MRI confirmed his diagnosis and showed partial tear of the Achilles tendon for a length of 5.2 cm with discontinuity of its medial fibers and surrounding fluid. The partial tear was seen approximately 3.8 cm from its insertion with resultant waviness and laxity of proximal tendon fibers. Orthopedic suggested surgery for optimal healing but when informed about my bypass surgery in 2011, he consulted my cardiologist for fitness who strictly forbade surgery, as I was a high-risk candidate



for spinal anesthesia in view of positive stress test, aortic stenosis and advancing age. Therefore, he opted for non-operative conventional treatment and put on a below-knee cast from lateral to medial covering in and around ankle with fiberglass resin on knitted polyester/cotton in double layers, dipping in water with moderate squeeze over the under cast padding stockinet that instantly dried up, became hard layer on surface extending from below the knee down to the toes. He advised rest of immobilized skeletal muscle tissue for 6 weeks.



Medication: Vitamin C, T-heal, Phellan, Lasilactone. I also used some homeopathy medicines besides healing touch of REIKI universal energy and crystal treatment with Azurite. Foot was kept elevated besides play of the toes pointing down and up. The cast was kept dry and protected from water even during bathing. Cast became loose in around 30 days. At night experienced piercing pain of the ankle extending to leg muscle and tapering off after a while disturbing sleep for which a quarter of the tablet Nortipan was prescribed. I was also advised to use non-weight bearing walker for movement with injured foot off the ground.

Cast or brace (immobilization) removal: Due to itchiness and heaviness causing disturbed sleep, it was opened after 38 days using huge cutting pliers as also scissors for the stockinet padding underneath. Elastic crepe adhesive bandage was applied on the injured area for 2 weeks followed by cotton crepe bandage for another 2 weeks and walker with partial weight bearing on the leg - walking with only toes and ball of the foot on the ground without jerk and heel still off the ground until end of February 2019 for full foot (without pressure) on the ground. Hot water fomentation of the foot with Magnesium sulphate twice a day for 10 minutes besides Dynapar QPS spray on the tendon and massage with Voveron Emulgel on calf muscle to take care of stiffness and pain. Positive Thomson Test and play of toe fingers, indicated gap is filling up and may take another 4 weeks to become normal.



After a month orthopedic checked the condition of foot and observed that the chord is coming back to its normalcy unlike earlier depression, and advised ankle exercise, toes up and down, lift the leg straight up in the air, calf muscle stretches with support of wall, contrast fomentation for 10 times in hot water containing Epsom salt (2 min) and cold (1 min) for flexibility. Crepe bandage and 1/8th inch heel raise under surface on sole of footwear for the tendon to relax besides massage with oil or ointment. Walker and stick (with four pillars) support gradually weaned off for normal walk with marginal difference and by and large resume normal activity from 12 April 2019.

The views expressed in 'Keemat' do not necessarily reflect those of CGSI, but rather are personal opinions of the author(s) concerned.



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ADVERTISEMENTS – HORN OK PLEASE

N. G. Wagle, Past President CGSI (2004-2006) & Past Member CCC (ASCI) (1995-2005)

Story of the Codfish

The codfish lays ten thousand eggs, the homely hen lays one; the codfish never cackles, to tell you what she's done. And so we scorn the codfish, while the homely hen we prize; which only goes to show you, that it pays to advertise (Anon.). Fifty years ago, the Royal Bank of Canada in their Monthly Letter dealt with the subject of "What Use is Advertising?" As the writer says, so cogently: "There are many things we buy because we must have them to live - food, clothes and shelter, for example. Within this area advertisements help us to make sensible choices." ('Yogakshema' LIC magazine, February 1969).

The logo 'OK' painted on the back of trucks is meant to signal those vehicles wanting to overtake. 'OK' was actually a detergent brand launched by TOMCO of the Tata group, also a truck manufacturer. In common parlance, it meant ta-ta or goodbye. That's basic advertisement in a simple form getting great exposure on Indian highways. One may term this as "blowing one's own trumpet (or horn)" to talk proudly about one's skills and achievements.

Advertisements primarily target audience, which are a group of potential buyers of their goods and services. Ads allow them to reach people by placing their existing, or introducing new, products into the market, expand sales and meet competition by enhancing goodwill and educating consumers by direct approach without middlemen (except perhaps by 'brand ambassadors'). In fact, advertising acts in tandem with sales promotion stimulating people to purchase their brands with confidence of quality and performance. An ad guru hypothesised that the "consumer's right to choose" is related to the "manufacturer's right to compete." However, "the consumer is not an idiot, she may be your wife," another guru adds.

Several decades ago, a multicolour advertisement in a soaps and toiletries technical journal, portrayed a comely damsel reclining in an opulent bathtub in which her curvaceous body was caressed by copious lather. The copy matter went on to titillate "If it weren't for our foam stabiliser, this picture would have been censored." The advertiser was selling foam (bubbles) without substance. Nowadays, such 'aerated' ads are quite common on TV commercials. After all, to sell a 'luxuriant beauty soap' fortified by pseudo-science and aided by ancient knowledge of herbal/ayurvedic ingredients along with the fragrance of lily jasmine (mogra) flowers or carpet of rose petals, the shapely bikini clad model has to be under a waterfall, below a shower or inside a cute 'bath-basin' tub (outdoor posing for a 'sexy pic') and surrounded by greenery.

Around that time, an Indian brand of cigarettes colourfully displayed a buxom brunette lying provocatively beside a bare-chested smoker having "an exclusive affair" obliquely identifying smoking with virility. Similar "performance enhancer" claims are in realm of (surrogate) promotion of alcoholic drinks. As cigarette and liquor advertisements are banned in India, an indigenous aphrodisiac - paan masala is replacing them. Sometimes, the model is frolicking all over the bed with a lover a la a soft porn condom ad. The consumer is thus baited and hooked, line, and sinker from the bathroom to the bedroom.

Film and cricket heroes may be engaged in cola wars or driving speeding Formula 1 type cars. A scroller in tiny font does warn the viewer not to imitate the trained stunts-man. Contemporary ad films are shot in foreign tourist locations or wildlife jungles from Europe to South East Asia to add a spicy flavour to the viewer's thrill.

Why Advertise?

"Advertising is news in a motivating form." That's how Hans Weidenmuller, the founder of "advertising theory" in Germany, defined it some 90 years ago. It is an effort "to persuade consumers to prefer a product" but fails to fully inform them about its value in terms of utility, performance and safety. The English writer Dr. Samuel Johnson's famous quote "Promise, large promise is the soul of an advertisement" (1759). He also said that an advertiser is "One who gives information." However, the customer has an obligation too; an advertisement does not relieve him/her of all responsibility. It is axiomatic that "the simple believeth every word, the prudent looketh well to his going" Look beyond the advocacy as would a judge in court before deciding a case before him. Ads should improve, not dictate his shopping, leading towards a wise judgement and (informed) choice as would an intelligent consumer.

There is no altruistic motive behind an ad campaign, the primal motive is profits. Consequently, exploitation of the consumer through various degrees of misinformation (or half-truths) must be taken for granted. That's where regulation (self or imposed) is required. It is propounded that advertisements spread the idea of cleanliness (soaps), dental care (toothpastes) and female hygiene (pads). The conscientious advertiser of today must avoid deception by using superlatives as "no. 1 brand," "best in the market" or "world leader." The media explain that they accept advertisers' statements as true in good faith. The Council for Fair Business Practices (CFBP) founded in 1966 (almost at the same time as CGSI) is in a way similar to the U.S. Better Business Bureau (BBB) for self-regulation of "unfair trade practices" which include misinformation in advertisements.

Ad Splurge

Advertising expenditure is expected to rise from Rs. 69,347 crores in 2018 to Rs. 79,165 crores this year, sports and elections will drive television advertising upward by nearly Rs. 10,000 crores. The percentage share of TV, radio, newspaper and internet will be 48.8, 4.2, 25.4 and 21.6 respectively (GroupM report 'This year, Next year', June 23, 2018). Market research helps in identifying choice of media, for instance Indian Premier League (IPL), 2019 season between March - May, forecasts return on investment (ROI) of 0.43% per lakh ('Velocity MR' Report cited by LinkedIn February 27, 2019). Further, ad spending to soar 46% by 2021 (Zenith report cited in 'livemint' December 4, 2018). Fast moving consumer goods (FMCGs), automobile and e-commerce are the most advertised industries in India. Now, mobile and smartphone advertisements are moving northward, expected to make up 62% of digital ad spend by 2021.

Ad Regulation

The Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) was established in 1985, its Consumer Complaints Council (CCC) constituted a year later. ASCI claim that it provides "an efficient and effective redressal machinery ... for stoppage of misleading, untruthful, indecent or unfair advertisements." It is a self-regulatory body and has been effective in its objectives of 'managing' (not necessarily 'controlling') objectionable ads. "Big brands & their celebs were in the bad ad list having flouted norms" (ASCI in NEWS, March 1, 2019). ASCI adds further, "The advertisers did not provide any evidence that the celebrities did due diligence prior to filming the ads". ASCI has evolved a 'Code for Self-regulation in Advertising', a peer pressure measure aimed at maintaining credibility relying on honesty, legality, decency and fairness to consumers and competitors alike.

What is the responsibility of the celebrity 'marketing agents' to the gullible consumer who is, more often than not, the fall guy led up the garden path by the dream merchants? On what basis do they lend their faces and names in the advertisements? Do they examine the product or service thoroughly before signing the contract or performing in front of the camera? The concerned authorities including ASCI are tightening up 'advertising audit'. "Corrective Action" is a post-mortem procedure, which may take months, long enough to mislead the consumer several times over. The common viewer/reader does not learn in the public domain of the media that the advertiser said "sorry" that s/he was so far conned. The damage is already done shaking consumer confidence in ads.

The questions asked are, Should there be restrictions on child models in advertisements? The opinion is that children and adolescents may be used in products meant for them, e.g., diapers and sanitary napkins, toys, baby care products and baby food. Yet, children model for: body massage oil, dentifrices, cereal foods and health tonics, body talc and cream, germicidal bath soap, mosquito repellent, 'swachh bharat' campaign, and even of shopping malls. Many products and services not of specific interest to children, e.g., cars and two-wheelers, health tonics, disinfectants and detergents, white goods, life insurance?

The Union ministry of Information and Broadcasting has issued an advisory to all TV broadcasters directing them to run a scroller stating "Objectionable ads? Complain to ASCI on 7710012345 or"ascionline.org" (ASCI news January 2019)". During October-November 2018, 389 ASCI investigated 389 complaints, 277 were evaluated and 232 upheld (112 advertisers ensured corrective action). The impugned ads were in education, healthcare, food, beverages and personal care sectors. Disclaimers "T&C apply" (undefined) may be superimposed over the message, so other marketing communications too, which are not in clear readable print and the short duration makes it almost invisible even to a viewer with normal vision.

Conning Thru Icons

Nowadays, the concept of "brand ambassador" is becoming popular. From hair oil, petroleum products and shampoo to decorative paint and ornamental diamonds, there is a star twinkling on the horizon. Here, the age-old pun applies: "An ambassador is a person who lies abroad for his country." A brand ambassador lies in the media for the agency, which employs him. Do celebrities really use a product or service to justify ad endorsements? Kaun banega karodpati? (Who will be a millionaire?). The celluloid and sports icons, of course. A film actor "certifies" a particular type of edible oil as containing "cholesterol lowering ingredient" (see 'Objectionable Cooking Oil Advertisements', Keemat, October 2003). A superstar "guarantees" the purity of a brand of gold jewellery. "Take loan from a finance company, invest in the yellow metal, and in case you cannot repay the loan, massage your head with a 'thanda, thanda' (cool, cool) hair oil for tension-free composure", that's the message.

A celebrity in newsworthy that makes him/her also ad-worthy. However, does that make the person socially a worthy citizen? Superstars, which include the Khans and Kumars, are cash wealthy but not conscience worthy. Stealth (or sneak) advertisements through a film, reality show or serial script are a subtle way of endorsements in recent times. Ads for consumer goods and services in Tic's fall in two categories - testimonials and endorsements. The former are portrayed as spontaneous situations in average consumer's routine where the subject is not a professional model but maybe an ordinary housewife, working man or woman, or a student. (Seen the fabric detergent ads or those of bathroom/toilet cleaners?) With election fever temperature rising, some Bollywood people are willing to promote political parties for a fat fee, brazenly demanding upfront payment,

preferably in cash. (Business Insider India, February 20, 2019). This is apart from social messages for health, sanitation and hygiene - worthy causes in themselves. Personal branding of products by celebs used by commercial advertisers for endorsements is a growth industry in India. Marketing strategists define it as "the process that takes celebrity skills, individuality and unique characteristics, and packages them into a powerful identity that lifts the product above the crowd of anonymous competitors". The celebrity's personality merges with the brand, but too many brands' exposure is counter-productive and hence injurious to the credibility of the celebrity.

Refuse to Accept the Unacceptable

Ralph Nader is regarded as father of the consumer movement particularly in the western world. He called Gandhi as the "greatest consumer advocate the world has seen" in the light of the 1930 salt satyagraha protesting against taxing a basic necessity like common salt gifted by the sea. The question whether the right to "satisfaction" is as important as the right to "choose" is pertinent in the Indian context. While we Indians enjoy the latter, we don't do anything about the former. Is it lethargy or the sheer indifferent (chalta hai) attitude towards one's own right as a consumer?

The Consumers Union of USA was founded in 1936 exactly 30 years prior to CGSI, the first consumer organisation in India. CGSI has been educating people about their basic rights as a consumer and helping them settle their grievances (Keemat, June 2017). To spread awareness, the Society conducts talks, practical demonstrations and exhibitions regularly. Keemat is a vital link amongst its members. Competitive or comparative advertising has compelled producers to find out what is acceptable to the consuming public but competitive ads should not be denigratory, false or exaggerative. Wars were fought even in law courts between manufacturers of soft drink and fruit juice, ice cream and frozen dessert, fabric washing detergent and toothpaste. About 15% of ASCI complaints are intra-industry, ('Daily Hunt', Feb 7, 2019)

Some consumer reactions

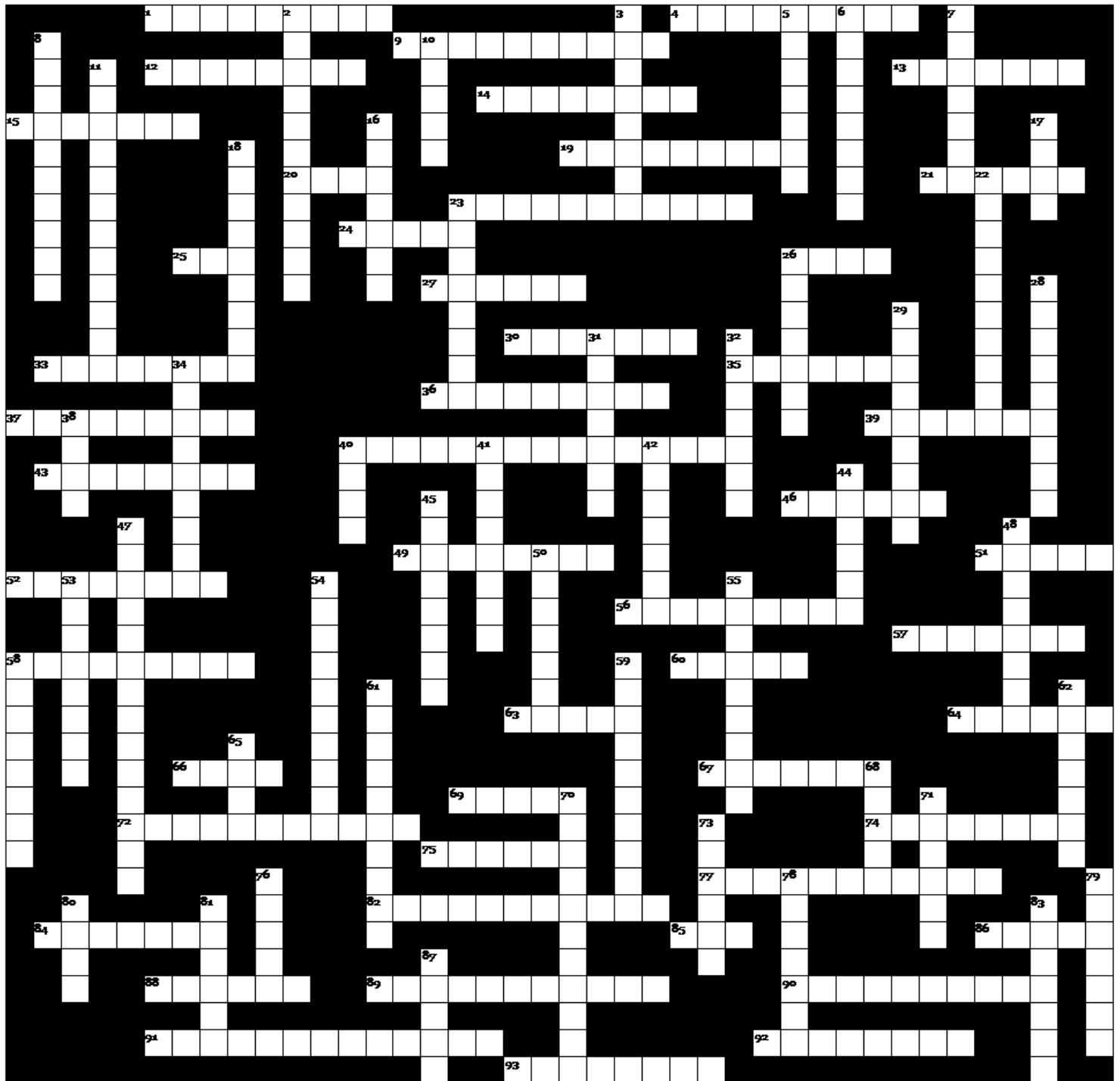
TV commercials fill 25 to 30 per cent of an entertainment or news programme, many of them repeated ad nauseam (in HD channels it is a continuous 5-6 minute ad break). TV ads are too noisy, many decibels above the set programme volume. TVCs seldom state the price of a product, or its limitation in a readable font. The social impact of ads might encourage overspending and over-consumption by creating artificial needs. Moreover, often, if not always, such over-consumption is unsustainable in the long run. Satisfaction of wants - current and future, must be within one's resources.

How do parents react to pester power? Competition in consumer goods has become so fierce that marketing strategists have started targeting schools. From selling noodles, wafers, pencils and crayons, they have invaded the campus for promoting sale of a variety of other products. In some hi-fi schools, - even co-educational, sanitary napkins were freely distributed to girls. Catch them young is the motto. Perhaps, the day is not far off when contraceptives would be given gratis under the guise of sex education, avoiding unwanted pregnancies, or preventing spread of sexually transmitted disease.

Do ads highlight complexes in an individual such as lack of a sexy figure, weak physique, dark complexion, baldness or economic disparity? The advertising fraternity protests that due credit is not given to its contribution in "the overall advancement of our level of living." Advertising benefits everyone in the country it is averred. It helps to stabilise industry by providing continuing markets and thus more employment. Ads indirectly invest in "sabka vikas" the new slogan in emerging India.

Consumer's Crossword!

(Answers to the clues are present interspersed in the current Keemat itself)



ACROSS

- | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| 1. Due to resignation. (9) | 37. Unknown. (9) | 77. Increase virility. (11) | 16. It lays 10,000 eggs. (7) | 53. Abnormal. (8) |
| 4. Avoid cooking with it. (9) | 39. Hurt. (7) | 82. Present in oils. (11) | 17. Best frying oil. (4) | 54. Vital. (10) |
| 9. Ever-present (10) | 40. Hormone. (15) | 84. Flower. (7) | 18. Follow-up always. (9) | 55. Avoid in microwave (9) |
| 12. An antioxidant. (8) | 43. A versatile product (8) | 85. Makes a cackle sound. (3) | 22. Helpful persons. (10) | 58. Plan of action. (8) |
| 13. Important. (7) | 46. Unpleasant smell? (6) | 86. Fume. (5) | 23. Lawyer (8) | 59. It may be required for taking loans. (10) |
| 14. Food poisoning type. (8) | 49. Studying. (8) | 89. Bajra stabilizes it. (11) | 26. Gland. (7) | 61. Lawyer. (10) |
| 15. Baby product. (7) | 51. Millet (5) | 90. Noble. (10) | 28. Necessary in savings. (9) | 62. Dream (7) |
| 19. Friend in need? (9) | 52. Shamelessly. (8) | 91. Stimulates insulin? (13) | 29. Name of a Country. (9) | 65. Is it a final solution? (4) |
| 20. Precious metal. (4) | 56. Highest teacher. (9) | 92. Laziness. (8) | 31. Precious stone. (7) | 68. Food item? (5) |
| 21. Annoy. (6) | 57. Currency. (7) | 93. Money. (8) | 32. Short form. (7) | 70. It measures calories. (11) |
| 23. A chemical process. (11) | 58. Proxy (9) | DOWN | 34. Fuel. (9) | 71. Shapely costume? (6) |
| 24. Expenses not in control (5) | 60. Need of extra attention (5) | 2. Emergency (11) | 38. Nocturnal bird. (4) | 73. Surprised (6) |
| 25. Toxic chemical. (3) | 63. Not a lord? (5) | 3. Sadly irrelevant system for people in India? (8) | 40. Brace (4) | 76. Alternative treatment. (5) |
| 26. An antioxidant. (4) | 64. Basic (6) | 5. Old aged persons. (7) | 41. Car brand. (8) | 78. Change. (7) |
| 27. Eating place? (6) | 66. Borrowings. (4) | 6. A Greek warrior. (8) | 42. Hormone. (7) | 79. Sly (7) |
| 30. Heart. (7) | 67. Foam (7) | 7. Sweetener. (7) | 44. Salary. (6) | 80. Girl. (4) |
| 33. Innocent (8) | 69. Consumer's Judge. (5) | 8. An amphibian. (10) | 45. Language. (8) | 81. Rectify. (6) |
| 35. Fattening? (7) | 72. Savings. (11) | 10. Curvy - rounded. (5) | 47. Law in physics. (14) | 83. Idea. (7) |
| 36. It boosts motivation. (9) | 74. Spur. (8) | 11. Needless expenses? (12) | 48. Hindu celebration. (8) | 87. Saying. (5) |
| | 75. Woman. (6) | | 50. Lavish spending. (7) | |

Jokes are meant for amusement! It employs comedic vehicles like parody, satire and other material referencing, true people, organizations, regions, etc., making fun of them in ways that are obviously not true. Our intent is not to offend anyone! If you believe that jokes could offend you, please do not read them! Despite this warning, if on reading you find, the jokes not to your liking, ignore and move on! Please be aware that they are simply just **JOKES!**



LAUGHTER THE BEST MEDICINE



On the outskirts of a small town, there was a big, old pecan tree just inside the cemetery fence. One day, two boys filled up a bucketful of nuts and sat down by the tree, out of sight, and began dividing the nuts. "One for you, one for me, one for you, one for me," said one boy. Several dropped and rolled down toward the fence. Another boy came riding along the road on his bicycle. As he passed, he thought he heard voices from inside the cemetery. He slowed down to investigate. Sure enough, he heard, "One for you, one for me, one for you, one for me" He just knew what it was. He jumped back on his bike and rode off. Just around the bend, he met an old man with a cane, hobbling along. "Come here quick," said the boy, "you won't believe what I heard! The Devil and the Lord are down at the cemetery dividing up the souls!" The man said, "Beat it, kid, can't you see it's hard for me to walk." When the boy insisted though, the man hobbled slowly to the cemetery. Standing by the fence they heard, "One for you, one for me. One for you, one for me...." The old man whispered, "Boy, you've been telling me the truth. Let's see if we can see the Lord...?" Shaking with fear, they peered through the fence, yet were still unable to see anything. The old man and the boy gripped the wrought iron bars of the fence tighter and tighter as they tried to get a glimpse of the Lord. At last, they heard, "One for you, one for me. That is all. Now let's go get those nuts by the fence and we'll be done." The old man beat the boy to the gate.

Pilot Santa is landing at an unfamiliar airport. The control tower gives them a runway assignment, and they start their approach. Santa says, "Does that runway look kind of short to you?"

Co-pilot Banta says, "It sure does."

"I thought it was supposed to be longer than that" "Me too"
"Better set full flaps." "Full flaps set."

"I want thrust reversers the minute we touch."

"Standing by on the thrust reversers" "Roger that."
"And full power once thrust reversers are set" "Roger that."

"I'm going to try to catch the very end of the runway and stand on the brakes. Stand by to reverse thrust." "Roger that."

They touch down, blast the thrust reversers, stomp the brakes and manage to get the plane stopped before it runs off into the grass.

Santa, "Damn that was a short runway."

Banta says, "Yeah, but look how wide it is."

A nun gets into a cab and notices that the VERY handsome cab driver will not stop staring at her. She asks him why he is staring. He says, "I have a question to ask but I don't want to offend you." She answers, "My son, you cannot offend me. When you are as old as I am and have been a nun as long as I have, you get a chance to see and hear just about everything. I'm sure that there's nothing you could say or ask that I would find offensive."

"Well, I've always had a fantasy to have a nun kiss me."

She responds, "Well, let's see what we can do about that:

#1, you have to be single and #2, you must be Catholic."

Cab driver is very excited and says, "Yes, I'm single and Catholic!"

"OK," the nun says. "Pull in to the next alley."

The nun fulfills his fantasy, with a kiss that would make a hooker blush, but when they get back on road, the cab driver starts crying.

"My dear child," says the nun, "why are you crying?"

"Forgive me, I've sinned. I must confess, I am married and a Jew."

The nun says, "That is OK. My name is Kevin and I am going to a fancy dress party."

Scottish lad and lass were sitting silently for a while on Heathery highlands, when the lass said, "A penny for your thoughts."

The lad a bit abashed, finally said, "Well, I was thinking" how nice it would be if you would give me a wee bit of a kiss." So, she did so. But he again lapsed into a pensive mood which lasted long enough for the lass to ask him, "What are you thinking now?" to which the lad replied, "Well, I was hoping" you did not forget the penny!"

A Christian man dies and goes to hell. Once there, he finds that there is a different hell for each country, so he tries to seek out the least painful one. At the door to German Hell, he is told, "First they put you in an electric chair for an hour. Then they lay you on a bed of nails for another hour. Then the German devil comes in and whips you for the rest of the day."

He does not like the sound of that, so he checks out American Hell, Russian Hell and many more. They are all similarly gruesome.

However, at the Italian Hell long lines of people are waiting to get in. Amazed, he asks, "What do they do here?"

They tell, "First they put you in an electric chair for an hour. Then they lay you on a bed of nails for another hour. Then the Italian devil comes in and whips you for the rest of the day."

"But that is the same as the others," says the man. "Why are so many people waiting to get in?"

"Because of the power cuts, the electric chair does not work. The nails were paid for but never supplied, so the bed is comfortable and the Italian devil used to be a civil servant, so he comes in, signs his time sheet and goes back home for private business."

Ron, an elderly man in Australia, owned a large farm for several years. He had a large pond at the back with proper shape for swimming so he fixed it up nice with picnic tables, horseshoe courts, and some orange and lime trees.

One evening the old farmer decided to go down to the pond, as he had not been there for a while look it over. He grabbed a five-gallon bucket to bring back some fruit. As he neared the pond, he heard voices shouting and laughing with glee, coming closer, he saw it was a bunch of young women skinny-dipping in his pond. He made the women aware of his presence and they all went to the deep end. One woman shouted, "We are not coming out until you leave!"

Ron frowned and holding the bucket up, he said, "I did not come down here to watch you women swim naked or make you get out of the pond naked, I'm here to feed the alligators."

A college student wanted to sit next to one of his teachers at lunch. However, the teacher looked at the student with an arrogant face and said, "A swan shan't be friends with a pig."

"Then I shall fly on," answered the student with a smile.

The teacher was clearly vexed by the cheeky reply and decided to make sure to do everything in his power to fail the student.

At the oral exam, he gave the student the hardest questions, but the student had amazing answers for everything. Therefore, hoping he could still fail his victim, the teacher asked him a trickier question, "You're walking on a road and you find two bags. One contains gold, the other cleverness. Which bag do you choose?"

"The gold" says the student.

"Unfortunately, I don't agree. I'd choose cleverness because that is more important than money."

"Everyone would choose what they don't have," says the student.

The teacher turns red and he is so angry he writes "ass" on the student's paper. The student leaves without looking at the paper. However, he returns shortly, gives back his paper and says, "Excuse me sir, you signed my paper but you forgot to give me my grade!"

A man lies on his deathbed, surrounded by his weeping wife and four children. Three of the children are tall, good-looking and athletic, but the fourth and youngest is an ugly runt. "Darling wife," the husband whispers, "assure me that the youngest child really is mine. I want to know the truth before I die; I will forgive you if ..."

The wife gently interrupts him. "Yes, my dearest, absolutely, no question, I swear on my mother's grave that you are his father."

The man then dies, happy. The wife mutters under her breath, "Thank God he didn't ask about the other three."

Johnny's, English teacher wrote this sentence: "I ain't had no fun in months!" and asked the class, "How can I correct this?"

"Get a new boyfriend!" Little Johnny yelled.

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