

HERE AND NOW

HERE AND NOW

Quarterly Newsletter – Apr-Jun 2021

INDIAN SOCIETY FOR APPLIED BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE

SPECIAL ISSUE ON
RESILIENCE-2020-21





I am delighted to release this special issue of Here & Now with Resilience as the theme. Not only is this issue current in terms of its relevance , but it is a significant one for us in many ways. This issue is the first issue of Here & Now for this Board, it is the first issue for me in my role as Dean,Research and Publications and it also symbolically holds a special place for all of us in the Here &Now team, because working towards bringing it out was itself an act of Resilience for us.

I wish to share my heart-felt appreciation towards my entire team - Raji, VLK, Mukta, Siddharth, Sanjyot and Aishwarya. Some of us have had personal challenges, loss of dear ones and some of our friends were in critical condition due to Covid, but despite these challenges each one of us took time to get this special issue out . I have observed high levels of commitment from the team over the last few weeks- for instance, one of our team members was in a queue for vaccination, and they rushed back for the meeting immediately after the jab to be with other members for our Here & Now meeting.

We have had our differences too when we brought in different perspectives; after all we were working together as a group for the first time. But all in all, the best in us prevailed and we could accomplish the task at hand.

Equally, I applaud the spirit of the contributors who could take time off and give expression to their thoughts which again is a sign of Resilience. Thus, even during these tough times, we could manage to focus and bring out this issue of H&N.

I appreciate all the contributors and team Here & Now without whose contribution and efforts, this special issue would not have been possible.

I do hope that you will get in touch with your own resilience while reading this.

Stay safe.

Please feel free to reach out to us with your feedback and suggestions, if any, on isabs.hnn@gmail.com

Warm Regards,

Kantha Rao, V.N.

Dean Research and Publications

ISABS

FOCUS



As we traverse our journeys through these difficult times we have gathered experiences of various kinds. During this period we have learnt much, internalized many thoughts and expressed ourselves in various ways. We have seen many parts of ourselves and have had time to reflect as we live in the Here and Now. In this issue we decided to focus on our Resilience and our many experiences during this unforgettable period that we witnessed and continue witnessing. We collect here a bunch of expressions in the form of articles and papers , reflections and interviews, reviews of literature and films, art, and poetry. We also share some updates with our readers.

You see a lot of grey in our design this time – it represents the various greys of muddled emotions and perspectives we saw during this period. The seasons and flowers that you see here are the seasons that rolled during this year, flowers bloomed during the seasons as usual but they were so different for each one of us – they had many meanings as we experienced this year. The color splashes emerging from the black and white images represent the human spirit and its undying hope. Here and Now is back after some time and we thought we should be back with a splash of color that is intended to spur joie de vivre and instill care and hope in all of us as we endure these times



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EDITORIAL



Sanjyot

I am very excited to be part of the team working towards bringing out Here and Now for 2021 and even more happy talking to contributors, ISABS role holders and having some hot, warm, and cold conversation with each other as the H and N team. Last year as well this year has required resilience of all of us and the contributions will reflect the lenses through which different people have seen the theme. Hope the warm wishes of each one of us reach you through this volume

VLK Sarma

Being in this group is a homecoming for me, where I can be myself. What if it's virtual, still a platform to reach out, see, hear, and be heard without being judged. Despite the pandemic curbs, an opportunity to read, understand diverse perspectives and connect with the person behind the writing. Resilience at work in this togetherness greatly strengthens us as a collective. Happy to be associated with this group and its task of bringing out this H&N edition."

Raji

My Resilient Self in me brought the need to reconnect, rejuvenate and replenish. Be in the 'Here and Now'. Something unfinished perhaps finding a purpose in togetherness.



EDITORIAL



The H and N team - From top left to right - VLK Sarma , Mukta Kamplikar , Sanjyot Pethe

From Bottom right to left – Kantha Rao, Siddharth Shah , Rajeshwari Lakshmanan

Kantha

In these testing times it is quite depressing all around . I must say that the Real testimony of Resilience is the H&N team ,in spite of personal challenges everyone had kept the lamp of resilient spirit glowing . H and N work has become medium not only for creative expression but means of Hope and Inspiration for all of us .

Special kudos for the team for making it happen !



Siddharth

Frontline workers, Social distancing, PPE, Quarantine'. I didn't know that new vocabulary will also bring New Normal! During these tough times, I wish every reader the best of resilience and strength.

Mukta

This year has been a long journey only to realize how much resilience there is in human nature. Let any unprecedented cause , no matter what, even death, and we still bounce back to first principles of hope and vitality.

It has been delightful working with the H&N team to bring out this issue. I feel so alive in the “Here and Now” and I wish to share my hope and joy with every reader.

ARTICLES AND PAPERS

Spring



This section includes research and concept articles and papers contributed by the members of the ISABS community . This section consists of -

1	ISABS Golden Jubilee celebrations	Satyakki , Ruchi, Anisha and Vikram
2	Beyond Resilience	Sankarasubramanyam Ramamoorthy
3	Corona Virus and Me	Amol Pawar
4	On Resiliency	V.M Ramlingam
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11	ISABS Western region learning initiative	Krushna R Sawant
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ISABS Golden Jubilee Celebrations



Years of Individual and
Organisation Development

Satyakki Bhattacharjee, Anisha Pandya, Ruchi Tiwari & Vikram Bhatt,

With C.N Kumar & Abad Ahmed

On Celebrations – The Process View

Celebrations unite! Celebrations ignite! Celebrations have united and ignited human communities for long in diverse ways in honoring momentous journeys, glorious accomplishments, institutional memories, and many more socio-humanistic climaxes. Furthermore, celebrating as a group bestows a sense of belonging, something fundamental to human fulfillment. With affiliation as our value, need we ISABSians to be told more! From birthdays to funerals, there is no end to our daily celebrations of achievements, additions, gratitude, gratefulness, and so on.

ISABS – Golden Jubilee Celebrations

Yet, some celebrations are unique in the way that they are peerless and occur only once in a lifetime! Or comes like Hailey's comet for the institution. The 2021 Golden Jubilee Celebration Year of our beloved institution is a shining milestone of glory and accomplishments. A moment to celebrate, to remember, and be grateful to time. To take a pause and be grateful to the legendary giants who conceived and reared what we are enjoying today. As we say, at all levels – 'individual, interpersonal, group and systemic level' - let us explore where we came from, what we've done, what we revere, and even who or what we've lost as people and opportunities. A time for looking back in reminiscent and making that a basis for looking and working future-forward. Celebrations reinforce the "institutional immune system" (Emmons. R, 2013).

Especially, when a minimalist institution like ours stands the test of time remaining committed to its purpose, adhering to its values. Of an organization that is built on the voluntary commitment of its members to achieve its super-ordinate goals.

Celebrations – The Spirit

“Over the past fifty years, ISABS has grown primarily by the spirit of voluntarism and is an iconic institution. Throughout the year, we shall especially honor the legacy of the values and the spirit of voluntarism that built this institution. (Joy.S, 2021)

The Golden Jubilee is also a moment to pay attention to how we want ISABS to be remembered. More importantly, how the next generation of members will evaluate us as flag-bearers of the legacy that we inherited. The size of our inheritance is huge. Nonetheless, our legacy will be mostly evaluated by the level of clarity we exhibit through our true values practices, and how well our membership-life reflects those values on a daily basis. We will be evaluated less by our personal achievements in the institution and more by the selfless voluntarism engraved in accountability. The spirit of the celebration is to examine these.

We will celebrate our wide-open embrace of inclusion of diversity of all types. We will celebrate what we accomplished in the field of applied behavioral science so that it comes to us aloud what we have to do for the future. We will celebrate our rich inheritance through our forefathers and through the celebrations, remind ourselves of our obligatory duties. We will celebrate our insatiable hunger for learning. We will celebrate friendship, affiliation, have fun. Covid-19 forcefully punctuates our celebration, yet, we will have fun – really or *zoom-barabar-zoom*. Hopefully, the best-dressed award will go to two of you at the Gala Night Party that we will have.

Celebrations – The Agenda

The Golden Jubilee Group alias *Aniruviksa50* (Anisha, Ruchi, Vikram, Satyakki) conceived that three fundamental objectives would guide the anything and everything that is a golden jubilee activity – Engage, Entertain, Enthuse & Inform.

Each professional member will be our touchpoint. We shall reach out to you and include you to join us and other aboard the golden jubilee voyage.

Action begins soon with Podcasts & You-Tube videos. Followed by wide-spread social media visibility. Collaborations with Digi Team is the way forward.

Jubilee are marked by publications. We shall have a yearbook and shall soon constitute an editorial team and call for papers.

You will laugh at the spectrum of souvenir suggestions that have cropped up in our team meets but be assured finally when you get it, you will love to display it.

The brand building of ISABS Golden Jubilee Year is on. All our digital stationaries are carrying the shining Golden Jubilee logo. All event brochures carry it. It is matter of pride that in our emails we must display it wherever we can. Feel free to ask for digital file of it, should you need.

To engage all of us and to have fun, we will have story-telling sessions by PMs over zoom. Listening to thought provoking stories and anecdotes, the difficult terrains our colleagues and seniors have traversed could help us learn something. Don't forget there are many untold *navigational 'treasure'* stories that besides tickling the jugular vein - raise a brow, pop the eyes, burst you to laugh and breath lighter – 'Really!! OMG'.

Celebrations – Expectations from You

Spread this far and wide! Let people know '*its Golden Jubilee of ISABS*'. Drop it here and there. 'Each One, Tell One'. Create a word of mouth and spread the legacy. Let the world know, it's our 50th Birthday. Cascade it to our PDP colleagues. Do the legacy talk about our history, where we came from, what we've done, what we value, what we never do as an ISABSIan and that we will always do as an ISABSIan.

Associate personally. Think. 50th year of ISABS will only happen once in history – personally as well as institutionally. So, participate. Really participate. The Golden Jubilee Group - *Aniruviksa50* is an experiment in itself. Join Us! Ideate and Implement. Welcome onboard!



Anisha Pandya, Ruchi Tiwari, Vikram Bhatt and Satyakki Bhattacharjee are Professional Members of ISABS .

Beyond Resilience

Sankarasubramanyam Ramamoorthy

Introduction to Resilience: Resilience has become a very prominent topic in these days of the pandemic. There are hundreds of online sessions offering to help us become more resilient. The American Psychological Association (2012) defined Resilience as “a process of adapting well in the face of trauma or tragedy, threats or other significant sources of stress” (<https://www.apa.org/topics/resilience#>).

This definition indicates that resilience is a behavioral response to a stressful situation in a way that the impact of the stress is minimized. Most Psychologists then prescribe positive thinking, relationships, being mindful, purposeful, and so on to cultivate and strengthen resilience. Many workshops on resilience offer these methods.

However, I want to look deeper into the perception of threat, alluded in the APA definition.

Imagine you are swimming in the ocean and a five-foot wave comes in. If you are like me, you will quickly get back to shore, sensing a threat. But if you are a surfer, you will move further into the ocean to catch the next wave. A threat to one is an opportunity for another! It is also very much possible that I, who don't know surfing, develop a false sense of excitement about the wave, go deeper and get into trouble and the experienced surfer who knows his limits, returns to shore.

It is clear from this example that the threat perception is based on our self -belief (real or otherwise) in the moment of experience. Before we proceed further into this aspect, let us take a detour and explore the concept of polarities.

Concept of Polarities: Polarities are extremes of a phenomenon that we construct by assigning positive and negative poles. One is constantly dealing with polarities every day. Be it work and rest, project and family, action and reflection, fear, and elation and many more. The two biggest polarities that we hold are : a) attractive me and repulsive me and b) attractive world and repulsive world. There are many parts of self that lie in these two extremes and similarly for the world/ others as well. The parts that lie in the attractive side of the pole are accepted and hence exist in our aware self and the parts that lie in the repulsive side are disowned and exist in our unaware self (or shadow side).

Connecting polarities with resilience, it will now be clear to us that our perception of a threat in the moment will be based on whether that experience invokes the attractive or repulsive side of our polarity both at the self and world dimensions. An experience that impacts the attractive side of our personality will energize us, whereas the opposite will make us guarded. In most situations, the attraction or repulsion are not very extreme and hence we have an intelligent response to that situation. In extreme cases, we react by jumping in or running away without thinking.

Let us take a situation where you have been tested positive for COVID. In the moment of experiencing that, certain fears are generated and certain thoughts about your state of health and your body's capability of handling the virus onslaught. Some of us will have a balance of both these and will gather ourselves to face with the situation. Some others will either get into a "I'm going to die" or "I'm perfectly Ok" reaction. Both can be detrimental to our resilience in the situation.

Hence the best way to deal with the world will be to center oneself and experience the moment without any attraction or repulsion. This is the aim of yoga and many other spiritual disciplines, the highest level of resilience. Another way to do that will be to develop the eye for exploring the opposite when experiencing a phenomenon.

Let me use the example of vulnerability which is an opposite pole of resilience. When we experience a threat in the moment, we feel vulnerable. However, the world tells us that being vulnerable is not strength and hence we have kept vulnerability away at the far extreme of repulsion. So we disown that feeling and try and swing towards resilience in order to "adapt well".

The provocation that I want to offer is that we will discover our resilience only when we embrace our vulnerability! We say that "courage is not the absence of fear but to accept and work with the fear". Similarly, we can build our resilience only when we are willing to recognize and accept our fears in this moment. In the absence of that, being resilient will become more a "technique" rather than emerging from the core of one's being.

Let us go back to the example of you being tested positive for COVID. You will feel vulnerable and fearful about what the future will unfold. Once we experience this within us, we then have choices on how we want to respond to these feelings. There are many more choices between the two extremes of "I'm going to die" and "I'm perfectly OK" mentioned above. Only when we are aware of these poles, we can then rationally choose a stance that will be useful to us in the long run. Once we reach this point of action, we may need help by building some skills on how to act effectively.

However, if we get into building the skills of resilience before this exploration into our vulnerability in the moment, we are building a tower without foundations!

Application in a T-Group setting: The biggest struggle that one faces as a participant is the volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) world of the T-group. This generates stress, anxiety, and fear. In the beginning of a T-Group, the participant thinks that while the world around her is VUCA, she herself is stable, certain, clear, and unambiguous as a person. This notion gets challenged very quickly as the group develops and the penny drops when the participant himself recognizes that one's own inner world is also very much VUCA!



This is a critical moment for the participant. The participant can experience this process by owning up to her own VUCA world and develop choices about how she wants to respond to it. This choiceful response helps the participant to grow and discover more of himself. On the other hand, the participant can be overwhelmed by this experience and quickly condemn it as a negative / unacceptable part of self and withdraw oneself to safety. This limits the potential growth of the participant.

To conclude, resilience is a choiceful response to a situation of perceived threat based on acceptance of one's vulnerability in the moment.

Sankar is a Professional member of ISABS. He is an organization development consultant and a founder of ChangeWorks and an international director on the board of NTL institute. Self-awareness has been a preoccupation for the past 40 years for Sankar. Sankar lives in Mumbai and Goa . Sankar can be reached at rsankara@yahoo.com.



Corona Virus and Me

Amol Pawar

Since Thursday 19th March evening I am confined to my house. And now with an official lockdown announced by Prime Minister of India for 21 days, this seems like a house arrest. Here are my reflections from this time. Everyone around the world has been hit by these circumstances and I hope our stories help each other tide over these times.

Where is the Virus?

The virus is in the infected person. It is also in our perspective. The virus in our perspective is more dangerous than the virus inside an infected person. I find it funny when I read stories of people cursing the Chinese or airline staff or even our Northeast states for the spread of the virus. The most surprising aspect for me is the stigma attached to this virus. It is a flu that spreads extremely fast. So, in fact we should be more accepting if we get it and inform authorities rather than hiding it and running away from the quarantine setups. I have not figured out why this is happening but am saddened by these behaviours more than the spread of the virus itself.

What Is the Virus Doing?

Apart from all the loss of human life, productivity and economic output, the virus is also testing our patience. It is a time when we are all confined to our homes or spaces that are familiar or unfamiliar both outside and within ourselves. In this time, we are forced to relook at our schedules and fill up the commute time with meaningful tasks or activities. Being in a customer facing role, I realized how much time I used to get during commute which I do not know what to do with now. In times of social distancing, we are thinking of people whom we care about and ensuring we video call them. This has made us realize how intimate this space really is. While I have hundreds of contacts in my phone there are just a handful of people whom I have thought about in this first week and have reached out to check on them.

This one has told me to *maintain the social distance from most others while focusing on the distance between the intimate few.*

What the Virus is Not Doing?

In these times in a country like India, we are not really becoming cautious and conscious of our choices. The behaviour of hoarding and fighting for survival is very natural to most of us and I have personally experienced its ugly face in last few days. I am personally struggling to be more disciplined in these times. When you do not have to really go anywhere outside your house, it is exceedingly difficult for you to follow a routine. I am wondering how this physical boundary is held in my mind. I am attempting to work on this aspect during these 21 days.

If these 21 days grow into 42 or 63 days how would I cope? What routine or habits I need to build or strengthen to ensure I survive and thrive in this phase? While I have this thought or idea, the expectation that “normalcy” will return is forcing me to not do anything about it. So, the virus is not really *forcing me to re-think fundamentally how I want to live and work post this period*. Or wait is it?

Who is the Virus?

I am the virus. You are the virus. Aren’t we all the virus?

Is this an external manifestation of our greed and our desire to be everything and everywhere?

Does the virus remind us of how quickly we can grow and how quickly it can all decline?

Are we reminded of how little we need and how much more we already have?

With nature and wildlife claiming some of the empty spaces around the world, what are we most reminded of?

Corona = Ko Rona

If I break the word like above and convert into our national language, then it means Rona (to cry). Having learnt to cry in recent past I know the importance of the ability to cry. It is the most under rated and gender biased ability in our societies.

In this situation some of the existential questions that I have been dealing with are – Who will I cry for? Who will cry for me?

Asking these questions to myself has been an important revelation and discovery about my patterns and actions. Individuals who have been deeply hurt by me are still part of this list. Similarly, individuals who deeply hurt me are also part of this list. Interestingly, the most joyous moments of my life are also shared with the same set of individuals. The most memorable happy moments are with these individuals.



If I made you laugh, I am likely to make you cry someday.

With that logic, I am hoping for this virus, which is making us cry today, may make us laugh tomorrow. Until then stay safe, stay healthy, stay indoors, and stay happy.

Amol had written this article in 2020 , it still resonates. Amol is currently working with Peoplestrong an HR tech firm. He is interested in OD, HR tech and everything in between. He lives and divides his time between Pune and Mumbai. Amol can be reached at amolpawar@nuest.co.in



On Resilience

V.M.Ramalingam (Ram)



For me, resilience is the process of “personal growth”, not just growth. Every living system grows. Individuals grow if they eat and sleep. Personal Growth occurs when intentional learning takes place in successive experiences. Every intentional learning takes place when it happens through efforts. Experience is how do we respond to what happens to us from an environmental event.

“Basic human problems are not solvable and can only be overcome” – Carl Jung. Every time we overcome a challenge or solve a problem, we use our life-giving-force: positive attitude, generative energy, and ability to excel. Thus, we improve our resilience.

Psychological resilience may be defined as an individual’s capability to properly adapt to be able to handle stress and adversity. Resilience is an ability. It is seen in the average individual and it is usually learned and developed by anyone. Resilience can be considered as an attitude-based process ability, rather than a trait. Resilience is restoring back to the pre-state after a set-back. The subtle unconscious learning is to become better to handle similar situations with ease.

A paragon of example for resilience is Viktor Frankl, the logo-therapist, Eminent Psychiatrist, Holocaust survivor and author of “Man’s Search for meaning”. He says, “The last of human freedoms is one’s ability to choose one’s attitude in a given set of circumstances”. His set of circumstance was the hanging threat of Nazi’s gas-chambers for 3 years in different concentration camps. His mother and brother were gassed in the chamber. All his family members were lost. He survived by working hard in the concentration camps to yield benefits to Nazis in the face of his health setbacks with a strong will to survive. He could stand with his temerity of an attitude to survive and make a great life until 1997, until his own nineties.

Martin Seligman says: "Psychological resilience is the capacity to respond quickly and constructively to crises..... After the onset of adversity, they shift from cause-oriented thinking to response-oriented thinking, and their focus is strictly forward".

Stress and adversity happen when expected things are not happening, resources are insufficient, not available, or not accessible. Stress and adversity will come in the form of family or connection problems, health problems, or workplace in addition to financial worries, and failures.

Seed of resilience is embedded in every person's natural potential, in fact, for survival itself, we need to restore ourselves frequently. Our unconscious mind and our nature of the organic system want to maintain equilibrium (our psycho-physical balance) by "homeostasis"- want to maintain 'status quo'. The human system wants to avoid change, uncertainty, adversity so as to protect and preserve energy.

The paradox is that improving, increasing, or strengthening resilience happens when people learn from the failures or willingly confront the adversity and challenging situations. The opportunity to learn and acquire resiliency happens when we fail to solve a problem, unable to get what we want to get, an adversity hits strongly, go through a trauma on account of a personal catastrophe, or a materialistic loss. Also, the reinforcement of resilience happens when such adverse situations are overcome by stretching oneself in body-mind-spirit. Then the resilience becomes one's habit. Such a habit enhances character. In this context, the following quote is relevant. "Do not judge me by my success, judge me by how many times I fell down and got back up again." - Nelson Mandela

Rather than the achievement of a goal, the effort of stretching only strengthens the muscle of body and mind. Thus, a person's personality, efficiency, effectiveness, and worth are enhanced. This is the perspective of "personal growth". Endurance, perseverance and stretching are the path to learning resilience. Then innovation converts resilience into one's ability.

When people learn from their difficulties, adversities and challenges through their experience and also decide their future approach, they build the unconscious tendency of resilience. Thus, resilience becomes an automatic response to failures and readily flowing ability.

Learning resiliency

In my experiential learning about "self" since 1987, through the human process laboratories in Indian Society for Applied Behavioral Science (ISABS), the greatest gain for me is improvement of my resilience in my living. It is enduring and overcoming ambiguous, tensive and adverse situations. It is also reviving and restoring energy for future efforts after failure or loss. I am talking about the resilience of mind or psychological resilience. We deal with the impact and challenges through the events of a human process laboratory (lab).

The lab works through the process of the non-directive learning in the ‘here and now’. Ambiguity due to unexpected happenings generates stress, anger, and disappointments. The stressful beginning culminates ultimately in euphoric insights about self, relationship, and bonding. The members focus on the events of the group in the here-and-now through expression of feelings. Thus, the members sail towards a comfortable state as a member of the group. The process of self-growth, through here-and-now, non-directive, sensitivity experience, instils resilience in the mind and behavior of the members in tune with their risk-taking intensity and frequency of participation.

The experience of catharsis that happens in a lab, whether grief or rage, is a rejuvenating experience of relief from stressful impact of situations. Fritz Perls calls every catharsis as a psychological rebirth. I have experienced it and observed it happening in other members as well, particularly on relationship struggles.

Similar experiences are generated in Tavistock model GRCs (Group Relations Conference) also. The stress is created through denial of usual or traditional role of the leader (teacher). The conventional expectations from the boundaries of task and role are not fulfilled to the participants by design. Time and Space boundaries as related to the primary task of the GRC are strictly enforced. Thus, stress happens among the participants. The emerging responses of coping by the members lead to generative behavior of adaptation among the participating members. The process of coping and adaptation enable resilience. The process of exercising power to overcome the challenge is decision-making and decisiveness.

In NLP (Neuro Linguistic Programming) methodology, coaching and hypnosis sessions focus on the Relaxation-Response-Resiliency model. In an altered state of consciousness (hypnosis), the client visualizes, the positive ‘outcome state’ of having overcome a psychological challenge. The client gains power and resiliency to overcome the difficulty.

I got the following points from “How to bounce back from Adversity”, an article by Joshua D. Margolis and Paul G. Stoltz (HBR).

To get out of depressive mood:

- (i) Connect with people you are comfortable with.
- (ii) Share your feelings.
- (iii) Talk about your problem and the need to solve it.
- (iv) Engage in pleasurable activities.

I personally consider that the potential qualities that can be availed to overcome adversity and distress are Flexibility; Endurance; Connections; Owning, not blaming; Positive-thinking; Optimism; Hope; Self-confidence; Creativity; Decisiveness.

From my auto-suggestion:

“Don’t blame bad-luck each time you lose.

And hide with sickness, drugs and booze”.

Go ahead

“To want it now, to dream it now,

To plan it now, and do it now:

Close your eyes and clearly see.

That person you’d most like to be”.

You will be the winner.

Ram is a professional member of ISABS associated with ISABS since 1987. He is a master practitioner and trainer of NLP . Ram has a passion for human process facilitation for individual and large system effectiveness. Ram can be reached at ramlingin@gmail.com



Once upon a time!

Gauri Nigudkar and Anupama Sharma

All stories begin like that and so does ISABS story of remaining relevant and being resilient. Once upon a time all of us at ISABS were convinced that the work that we do can be conducted only in-person and can never be done using the virtual medium. Especially the T-groups. We believed that to build sensitivity human touch, proximity and physically being with each other was critical. Little did we know that our closely held beliefs will be challenged by a global pandemic very early in the year gone by! Around the 3rd week of Feb 2020, we were certain that the much awaited summer event is not likely to happen in our favorite destination, Goa! It was too risky to hold an in-person event for over 200 people per week for 2 weeks.

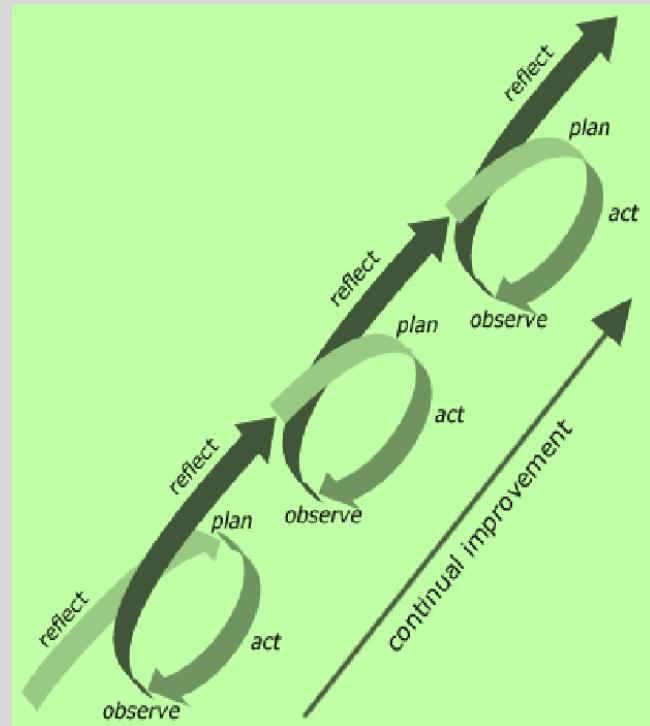
The Executive Board (EB) was deliberating the strategic direction of how ISABS should respond to the changing circumstances. We had not imagined anything like what was unfolding in the world. There were two thoughts on our mind – 1) remaining relevant even in these uncertain and demanding times 2) reaching out to the world with our core expertise to support as many as we could. The question was how?

"It is the quality of one's conviction that determines success, not the number of followers" said Remus Lupin in the darkest hour just before the last battle ensued with Voldemort and his dark forces in the epic Harry Potter saga. In retrospect, it must be acknowledged that the unanimous go ahead to experiment with offering T-groups using virtual medium from the EB as well as many Professional Members significantly increased the quality of our conviction. We put our heads together to give it a go to shape the signature offering of ISABS i.e. T-group labs, using the virtual platform. Once the idea had taken root in our thoughts there was no time to waste and the core team started planning with full enthusiasm.

As far as we know, ISABS is the only institution that has conducted 52 T-group labs touching 375 participants since last year till date. We have pioneered the experiment and set up benchmarks for others to follow. It was a pleasure for us to share knowledge that we gathered from our experiments as well as the best practices with NTL Institute, USA and OGGO, Austria. It helped them in planning their events and institutional interventions, respectively.

We adopted an action-research approach for this experiment.

- ✓ **Our Concern:** Staying relevant in challenging times, reaching out to the world as always, Global Situation, pandemic, lockdown, traditional ways of doing things not possible anymore.
- ✓ **Idea for Change:** use online / virtual medium to offer T-group and offer short duration sessions to build resilience as well as offer empathy to each other in the trying times.
- ✓ **Initial Plan:** Develop a prototype and test feasibility and efficacy.
- ✓ **1st Action plan:** Appoint a Core Team, develop a detailed plan and roll out
- ✓ **Observation:** Core team observes the process at each step. Information collected from multiple sources feedback from participants and facilitators
- ✓ **Reflection:** participatory approach, analyze all available information, meaning making and drawing conclusions
- ✓ **Revised Plan for new action,** observation, and further reflection.
- ✓ **Action research spiral continued through the next steps.**



Our action-research was heavily dependent of feedback from the participating members i.e. the facilitators as well as the participants. We drew our information from multiple sources at every stage of the experiment. We collected data from as many internal and external stakeholders as we could. This helped us make the offering robust.

The internal competence building process was very exciting and thrilling. The professional members went through a T-group themselves to experience how it unfolds in the virtual medium. It was important to do this so that all of us who facilitate the T-groups became aware of the nuances of virtual medium. This helped us learn how to bridge the gaps between an in-person lab and a virtual lab. These gaps were sometimes real and sometimes perceived. We assumed that the labs would take off from the word go simply because the participants and facilitators were subject matter experts. Therefore, it was amusing as well as humbling to see the awkward silence in these labs, too!

The faith and trust shown by our client system during the prototyping phase, energized us no end and we launched the 1st public event of T-group labs using virtual medium in September 2020. The response was overwhelming and we had to close registrations within 20 days of announcing the event because we did not have the capacity to accommodate more than 20 labs at a time. Two things facilitated the trust building process. 1) We were willing to have as many

conversations as would be needed, with our clients and sponsoring organizations to help them understand how it will work in virtual medium and patiently answer their queries. 2) In the in-person labs we create a learning island at the venue (the lab room) which gives a feeling of oneness and/or safety through physical setting to the participants. In the virtual medium, we created a psychological learning island and sense of security by engaging the participants and facilitators in a 30 minute orientation call before the actual event started. This set the tone for the learning process because people felt that they were all in the same learning environment even if the physical settings were different.

Our impact surveys tell us that the virtual medium is here to stay and therefore T-group labs using virtual medium are also here to stay. Virtual medium has especially worked for the people who are keen to do this work with ISABS but are unable to do so for various reasons. For instance, international participants who cannot travel to India for this program alone, homemakers who cannot leave homes for various reasons etc.

Now ISABS has more to offer and we are happy!

So begins the story of resilience in action with responsibility at its core! We believe that the happily ever after is just round the corner because the transformational change has been set in motion.



*She changed,
but not overnight like in
books you read....
Over the years. Slowly.
Painfully. Sometimes
brutally. But she did.
~ Anonymous*



Gauri and Anupama are Professional members of ISABS and currently hold the role of Joint Dean Programs. Gauri is an ABS and AI practitioner, an OD consultant and coach. Gauri enjoys bringing her knowledge of theatre and photography to her work. Anupama is a trustee of Hanknunn institute. Her passion is to conserve and save and develop. They can be reached at dean.programmes@isabs.org.



Stress, Options and Resilience

Shakti Sharan Roy

In a Stress Management program I heard one of my ISABS colleagues share the definition of stress as - 'Stress happens when one concludes that nothing can be done.' I must add here that it is just the essence that I picked up and not necessarily the exact wording she used. However, I cannot thank her enough for this because my way of dealing with tough times in life has entirely changed after that.

Life has its own ways of throwing problems at me; things that would have earlier stressed me no ends. But now it is different. My mind starts thinking, 'Is there nothing that can be done about it? What can I do about it?' And lo and behold, the mind is on to some planning or some action; and the stress is gone. It has become so much a part of my psyche now that it happens almost instantly, unknowingly, and automatically – and I hardly feel any stress.

I can sense some of you squirming or frowning, 'Ah. Yet another concept. Better said than done', and then asking, 'but how to put it into practice?'

I know it sounds too utopian, does it not? I sensed it too. So as I was writing it, my mind started to think of instances that I could quote as an illustration. Let me share.

What could be more tragic for one than to lose one's parents? It was a huge loss for me. I had very deep and loving relationships with my father and my mother – relationships that were strengthened immensely following my training in T-group. During their illnesses in the last days, and also after their passing away, I saw the other family members that really loved them, into deep grief, not knowing how to deal with the loss. But quite surprisingly, I was quite calm and composed, though I missed them a lot, may be even more than some of the others. I instead got into creating and sharing the memoirs of my parents, their contribution to me and for the society, etc. It kept me busy and away from the spiraling trap of sorrow. It is not as if I had to think of it at that time, like asking myself – 'what can I do?' No, it happened by itself. It is now only while writing this piece that it comes back to my mind as an example. I realize that my mind at that time started to look for options about what else could be done.

Yes, 'Creating Options' is the key that I found. But that is just a concept and it takes a lot of practice to actually put into action. So how did I get to practice on that? Now I am sure that many of you would answer, 'Through T-group off course.' It is so obvious, isn't it?

For those of you who are familiar with T-group, you must have noticed what happens when any participant seems stuck on something. It could be a past experience or an apprehension for future. Logically, conceptually, we all know that we just cannot undo the past, nor can we predict about what will happen in future. So worrying about the past or future doesn't get us anywhere.

Yet, there are so many occasions when one gets stuck either in past, or in future. The result is stress. How to deal with it?

There are some other usual methods, some ‘fast-food’ techniques professed by many ‘healers’ – ‘Divert the mind to some activity’, ‘do meditation’, ‘do chanting’, ‘get an image of that person and seek forgiveness,’ ‘share your story with a tree/river/picture’, ‘create a positive picture’, etc.’ and so on. I don’t say that these are totally useless; these might help some for some time. But I have not yet come across a person who could get a long-lasting solution through such methods.

In comparison, what does a T-group facilitator do at such times? The most common intervention is to make the person talk about how that is affecting him/her (in the present), and what can he/she do about it (in the present).

What it amounts to really is creating doable options for the affected person. Once the mind is on to this, it automatically shifts to some action rather than worrying about past or future. The stress is converted into energy for planning or doing.

As I look back at my journey in ISABS, I find that I must have faced such situations in labs a few hundred times, if not more, both as a participant-facilitator and as a facilitator-participant, both roles being interwoven all the time. And through the process of doing it over and over again, I guess it has become a part of me as an ‘unconscious-competence’, things that one does automatically, instinctively, intuitively, unknowingly, without having to think about it – finding options in the here and now instead of crying about past or worrying about future.

Now coming to our main topic – Resilience, I got the following meanings/synonyms and antonyms/opposites of the word ‘Resilience’ from dictionary/thesaurus and . . . who else but GB – Google Babaji.

Synonyms - Flexibility pliability plasticity elasticity suppleness springiness buoyancy ductility malleability

Opposites - Rigidity fragility vulnerability weakness

The essence is – Resilience means the ability to come back after being struck down. It is like pressing a spring. A resilient spring will continue to try to come back to its original shape and would do so as soon the pressure is released. Some highly resilient spring might even wriggle out of your hold. It is as if the spring believes that there is a way out of this pressure, and it continues to try and find that way. But a spring of non-resilient, non-elastic material will buckle under pressure and remain in that shape even after the pressure is released. It has apparently resigned itself to the fact that nothing can be done and it has to remain forever in that deformed shape only. This is fragility, vulnerability, weakness. It can even be termed as rigidity if one interprets it as thinking of only one way things could happen. Any other way, and phut – it breaks. But if one

is flexible, believes that it is not the end of the world, looks for other ways of treating this fall, takes learning from it, looks for options, tries and keeps trying – then one is Resilient.



But concepts apart, I have experienced how this simple yet effective method helped me through the lock-down period of Covid. While I heard from others of so much cribbing, stress, depression and what not about the testing times, I merrily waded through, trying one thing after the other and mostly feeling short of time rather than having to think of 'how to kill time'. Wasn't it a big boon? For me it surely was. But yes, it is not as easy as it might appear. It has taken continuous reflection, practice, taking feedback and guidance, and intensive trials over a long period. I am immensely grateful to ISABS, and everyone associated in my journey for helping me cover this distance that has made me what I am today.

There were conditions for creating stress, my mind looked for options, got busy in planning or trying those options, the stress did not happen. Does it mean that I came out resilient? I leave it to you to decide.

**Shakti comes from engineering background and made a shift to behavioral science after attending the T-group basic lab of ISABS in 1997. Shakti likes to link life experiences to theories and create his own theories too based on life experiences. Shakti is a professional member of ISABS and can be reached at shaktiroy55@gmail.com.*



Will you be there for me when things go right?

As a child we I was surrounded with multiple friends, siblings, classmates, and relatives. I shared great bonds with some, played together, spent time with them, divulged our secrets, had each other's back. Obviously, some connections seemed inseparable. However, Today when I look back after more than 2 decades, I see most of us distant and formal. We all grew up to become different people and therefore it's not the same anymore. It never is.

But what about bonds which we develop as adults, are they... happily ever after? Hence the question is, what makes relationships resilient? An abundance of research has shown that one should be supportive towards others in times of difficulty and stress for a better relationship (work and home both) but a recent hypothesis challenges this perception, it says that the responsiveness in the positive event discussion would be a better predictor of relationship well-being than types of response in the negative event occurrence.

There are so many of us who don't know how to respond to the person who is scaling new heights of success, and this reaction determines the quality of our relationship with them further. As a social being, when we experience success, we desire to celebrate it with everyone who matters to us. If I get a grade hike or a new job, a new contract, passed a difficult exam, wouldn't I want to pick up the phone and tell this to someone who I love and am close to. Imagine if the response on the other side is cold and distant, how would one feel? If I feel my friend or relative is not happy in my success and growth, I wonder why? and I start examining them suspiciously. I want my near and dear ones to be happy for me and celebrate my success.

A person who climbs the success ladder goes through the storm and rise above the difficulties, their resilience and commitment to growth has kept him/ her going. In almost all cases, this resilience is provided by someone close to him and this chemistry makes their bond very strong.

However, it is not unheard that when the summit is reached, these bonds break. Reason- maybe the cushion is not needed anymore and hence the supporters back off.

The support providers feel disconnected now because their role is over and they are unsure of how to conduct themselves now. One could also feel left behind due to their own insecurities, low self-worth, low self-esteem or even lack of appreciation or acknowledgement. The courage and resilience that they provided to their mate once, is not available to them when they need it the most and now this relationship, which was once resilient and symbiotic stands scattered and cold today. The bedrock of this arrangement has lost its reason.

But we can never blame anyone party for the drift. Multiple factors, multiple emotions, multiple situations play their part and therefore the outcome in every case is different. The strength of the bond between both the individuals makes the relationship resilient meaning : staying with you, whether you grow or not and vice versa is important to make a relationship work for life.

But the litmus test lies in the times when I grow, are you happy for me? If yes, we shall be together always.

I take a moment now, to reflect on my past and the people I left behind when I was on my success journey. I miss them sometimes, our conversations, I wonder what they feel about me today, was it my fault? I still meet them talk to them, but the chemistry is long lost, my bonds were not resilient and strong, couldn't stand the test of success. But I would have loved to have them around me, now I understand the meaning of the statement- "*Its lonely up there*"

The ambitious individual needs to know from their mate - will you be there for me when things go right? Because this will make our relationship strong and resilient!



Jolly Priya is an Executive coach and Corporate trainer by profession. She is a visiting faculty at IIM Lucknow and a POSH Consultant. Jolly has done her BHLP- Udaan 2020, ECHO 1 at ISABS. She can be reached at jollypriyain@gmail.com

Taking Form

Linda Baptista



Figure 1 Cycle by Vasant

When you get a call from a random stranger telling you that your husband has collapsed during his 200 km cycle ride, one does not know what to make of it. I rushed right into action and have remained in action mode for the next year and a half that has gone by, after his stroke.

We do not know how many more days, weeks, months, or years of recovery lie ahead of us. It helps to have family, friends with you in the journey. I feel gratitude

to the remarkable doctors, nurses, attendants, and therapists we've met and worked with. Some of whom, continue to guide us along the way.

What has also helped us, is whatever doodles and artwork we can manage to create. He, for his hand movements and me for my expression of self.

Vasant has been an inspiration to me and our families too. He has been braving through his recovery even during a pandemic and lockdown. While I've had my own strength as a caregiver, I often wonder if I would find the grit that he has, had I been in his cycling shoes.

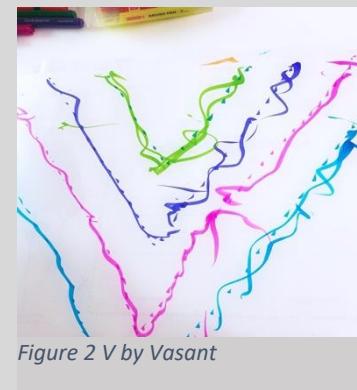


Figure 2 V by Vasant



Figure 4 Mother & Child by Linda



Figure 5 Inner peace by Linda



Figure 3 pattern by Vasant



Figure 6 Colours by Linda



Figure 7 Hope by Linda



Linda is in her PDP journey at ISABS. She is a potter at heart and an OD consultant. She is a volunteer in the Digital Transformation team at ISABS. She can be reached at linda_baptista@yahoo.com

Resilience

Sharad Sakorkar

“But why did you allow yourself to get tempted to write an article on Resilience? For goodness’s sake! You already are engrossed in the other project!” Thus starts my inner self-talk. “You know, this means some ‘decent’ time spent on research!” Just google the term resilience, a command. I follow the instruction. About 23,30,00,000 results (0.66 seconds). Ah! Now. What is ‘decent?’ My inner friend chides me again. “Look ‘decent’ for me is governed by the deadline given and the length of the article expected, I respond angrily. “You haven’t written a word, since 2014!” Another attack on my resolve to try to write the article. “Come on, ignore that cautious and critical voice in your head, I tell myself.” So, here I am, writing a ‘think piece’ (my words) on Resilience for the “Here n’ Now!”

Structure of the article:

I divide this article into two parts (1) I share my discoveries in the research effort I mounted. (2) I share my take on the subject of resilience.

1. Research outcome:

Resilience. My first thought is that resilience is a trait or personality characteristic and not a competency. I refer to a dictionary for a definition. I find the following.

(a) The power or ability of a material to return to its original form after being bent, compressed, or stretched, elasticity. (b) The ability to adjust to or recover readily from illness, adversity, major life changes, etc., buoyancy. (c) The ability of a system or organization to respond to or recover readily from a crisis. For example: cities can build resilience to climate change by investing in infrastructure. It reports some other words for resilience: ‘perseverance’, ‘grit’ and ‘sturdiness.’¹

These seem to confirm that resilience is a trait, I muse. Let me now refer to my two acclaimed books on competencies, I move further.

I refer to a source I trust.² I feel vindicated. It doesn’t report a competency named ‘Resilience.’ Competency closest to resilience is ‘Composure.’ The behavioural descriptors fit my understanding of what a resilient person would look like. My next source³ reports two competencies ‘self-control’ (SCT) and ‘flexibility’ (FLX). Both are under the ‘Personal effectiveness cluster.’ Again, closest to resilience. But no competency called ‘resilience’.

Personality characteristic “demonstrates a particular way of relating to the external environment.”⁴ Resilience is largely seen as a personality characteristic or a trait. But there is “a

¹ <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/resilience>

² Lombardo, Eichinger, (1996-2009), p.61

³ Spencer, S. Spencer, (1993), Pp.78-85

⁴ Lucia, Lepsinger, (1999), p. 6

growing body of opinion that says that even traits that might seem to be innate “can be modified and developed.” Zemke and Kramlinger, (1982), p.29.⁵ I think so too. The idea is to describe particular behaviors underlying any trait, in this case ‘resilience’. So that one can assess herself or himself against those, build and act on a development plan.

I now turn to the internet. Let me see what’s reported under resilience.

So, what lies beneath ‘resilience?’ What causes low resilience. What are some suggestions made to improve resilience? I find some interesting results when I take this line of enquiry. I give a few of my discoveries.

- Resilience is trending a lot due to pandemic, and other political, social, and economic uncertainties. I am amused. I see a report on the third Democratic debate in Houston, Texas, September 12, 2019. A session on “the quality of resilience.”⁶ Ten Democratic candidates go on to define the term resilience. Finally, they zero in on “bouncing back.”
- Beth Payne, ex-US Diplomat stationed in Iraq during troubled times. Now, resilience coach describes nine common characteristics of low resilience. They are mostly negative emotional states experienced ranging from ‘irritability and anger to ‘lack of hope.’⁷
- American Psychological Association (APA), 2012, gives tips on ‘Building your resilience.’⁸
- HBR article⁹ The dark side of resilience identifies the disadvantages of being too resilient. Overused strengths becoming a liability. Overly resilient, remain longer in situations fit for quitting. Overestimate their strengths. Take on assignments with impossible deadlines. Push juniors to their limit. Have little reality orientation etc.
- The disaster management perspective¹⁰ lays emphasis on anticipating risk, preparedness, being prepared to adjust, shared learning, integrating various sectors, and including the most vulnerable. It further says: “Because risk and systems are dynamic, resilience should be thought of as a process rather than simply an outcome, involving learning, adaptation, anticipation and improvement in basic structures, actors, and functions.”

⁵ ibid

⁶ www.dictionary.com/e/resilience-trending

⁷ thewellnessuniverse.com

⁸ www.apa.org/topics/resilience

⁹ <https://hbr.org/2017/08/the-dark-side-of-resilience>

¹⁰ <https://www.preventionweb.net/disaster-risk/concepts/resilience/>

- I find a particular article and some thoughts presented by the European Journal of Psychotraumatology quite valuable.¹¹ (1) For e.g., “resilience is a complex construct that may have specific meaning for a particular individual, family, organization, society, and culture.” (2) Also, that “individuals may be more resilient in some domains of their life than others, and during some phases of their life compared with other phases.”

There are as many definitions as authors, researchers, journals, consulting organizations, web sites dedicated to the subject of resilience. Most of them tend to identify resilience as a personality characteristic or personality trait. They suggest numerous ways to build one's resilience. Beneath all the improvement ideas, enhancing self-awareness, emotional self-control, lifestyle changes, physical wellbeing, connect with and social contacts to seek and offer support and, learning from the experience stood out for me.

2. My own experiences:

Personally, I divide resilience into three categories. Personal, Interpersonal and, Task-role resilience. Personal Resilience: I have improved on this one over a period. I got a chance to test this one. Two life-threatening health issues in the nineties and thereafter. I saw myself responding calmly on hearing the news. Not depressed at all. Surprise obvious for those around me including my physicians. A few things helped me. (1) I am no longer a worrier. (2) I go by the fact that the past is unalterable, and the future is unpredictable. (3) Being decisive and initiating required actions. (4) Trusting the system: People representing it. Surrendering to the reality unfolding without complaints. (5) I continued to pursue my passion in any which way I could all along. Interpersonal resilience: My biggest nemesis was seeking harmony in relations. Stifled my style. Stopped me from taking interpersonal risks. I nursed associated debilitating issues. Happy now, I have moved on. Redefined or dropped some relationships totally. I have gotten

¹¹ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4185134/>



out of the ‘guilt and regret’ trap much earlier. Tasks and roles resilience: Understanding my limitations helped me. In my organizational roles I performed post-mid-nineties, I learned a lot about my limitations. This helped me to steer clear of the roles that would suck.



I decided to perform only those roles which use my ‘gifts.’ Now I state the obvious. Self-awareness, ongoing reflection, and action is the key. I employ whatever means I find to enhance my self-awareness. For e.g., Psychometric instruments are a favourite means. I have come to believe that there are at the most 5-7 personal dispositions or traits (not easily amenable to change but modifiable, definitely). On resilience: I have got help from the ‘Big-5’ instrument. Insight from ‘learning agility’ has been useful too.¹². I believe in consulting friends. I have three close buddies in ISABS: Sharad, (I watch myself closely, playing the required role. Hence the mention). I choose to talk to Sankar on the task and strategy dimensions. On the other two I consult Dilip. Both have been with me and continue to be with me. I remain eternally grateful to them.

Another point, my resilience improved as I moved from early youth to middle age. So far so good. I still am, a work-in-progress, on all the three, above.

Sharad is a professional member of ISABS since 1990. He is a Director at ChangeWorks and on the panel of Center for Creative Leadership. Sharad is also a coach and an ardent student of Personality psychology. He also has a passion for music. Sharad can be reached at sharad.sakorkar@gmail.com.

¹² Eichinger, Lombardo, Ulrich, (2004)

Shaadi on my mind?

Kunal Shinde



Right from the time I thought I was straight; I always imagined a married life for myself. As I started to near marriageable age, everyone would ask, "When are you getting married?". By then, I had also come to terms with my orientation. So I would respond saying that marriage is not a choice for me. And it became such a routine that I started believing it.

During the one year of lockdown when people had to postpone their wedding plans, I attended four weddings in just two months. Two of them were close friends. How desperate, right?

These experiences triggered many things for me and within me. I am 33 years old now and my partner of five years is 36. We want to have what they had — a typical Indian wedding in the presence of loved ones, close friends and few selected relatives and be surrounded with gifts.

Though, can we? The two people who love each other immensely, who have invested to make a relationship work, can we have a quaint wedding without it becoming a court case or a sensational news topic, gossip? Can we have a wedding without receiving secondary treatment? Humor me and imagine this. If you were to marry a person of your own gender can you imagine the looks you would get from your vendors every time you discuss the requirements for two grooms or two brides only? And how do you plan on sharing the invitation with the relatives who you're not out to yet? Can you even find a pandit who believes in marriage of two souls to marry you? And once you've sorted all that out, during the wedding when you know that all eyes are on you two, would you not wonder what they must be thinking?

Why should those with other orientations be deprived of basic rights such as marriage, adoption, owning property, name on partner's insurance, inheritance, or something as basic as acknowledgement of our existence, acceptance, and respect, which all heterosexual people enjoy without even realizing it's a privilege?

The LGBTQAI+ community is as real as your brother, sister, cousin, daughter, son, grandchild, or uncle; you just don't see us for who we are. It's not your fault, though. We don't have visibility beyond private online streaming channels or western movies and soaps.

I remain hopeful and determined. It doesn't take much to create change. It can be as simple as me writing this article, you reading it and probably starting a conversation about it in your circles. It takes allies like you to create some visibility for the invisible. Who knows, you might even get invited to my wedding. ;)

With love,

Kunal Shinde



Kunal is a Pharma grad., ODCP, CPFP and Culture-CODE alumnus from Mumbai who enjoys individual activism by transforming everyday activities into progressive acts for social change. He enjoys cooking vegan meals, dancing, and cycling. Kunal can be reached at shindekunal87@gmail.com



ISABS Western Region learning sessions- An Initiative

Krushna R Sawant

It was a pleasant evening of September 2019, we were at Devlali, Nashik for ISABS regional event and I was co-facilitating a BLHP with Gauri Nigudkar (then the Regional Coordinator). We had just finished our group cliniking and were unwinding after an effective day's work in the lab over the cup of hot piping tea and a plateful of mixed pakoras on the long veranda of the Victorian Bungalow, that was facing lush green well-tended garden with its vibrant and colourful Flora and Fauna. We were discussing about opportunities and scope available to further continue the work outside of the lab and in the larger system.

It was merely my wish that I happened to express to Gauri Nigudkar, for initiating such learning sessions for Mumbai ISABS members and she supported the idea without doubting my capabilities to do so! We decided to have monthly Learning Session on last Saturday of each month, and Bang On! we rolled out our first of its series on 28th December 2019 and the topic was, "My ISABS Musings" exploratory and reflective session, in person at Vanamali Hall, Dadar.



Figure 8 The First Learning Session of ISABS Western Region on, "My ISABS Musings" conducted on 28th December 2019 at Vanmali Hall, Dadar.

This was well attended and was met with interest and appreciation for taking this initiative! The response and support shown by the members in Mumbai further triggered our enthusiasm and confidence to keep the good work going!



Figure 9, The Third Learning Session on, "Values & I" facilitated by Rajesh Deshmukh on 22nd February 2020 at Vanmali Hall, Dadar.

In January 2020 and February 2020, we had in person Learning Sessions at Vanmali Hall, Dadar, till the Pandemic happened and forced us to explore new way of learning.

In March 2020, due to Pandemic, we smoothly transited from in person to online Zoom Learning Sessions and also became ISABS Western Region Learning Group from Mumbai Learning Group. Online Zoom Learning Sessions were made possible by Sonali Kelkar, (Present Regional Coordinator) who supported this transition and also equipped me to handle Zoom learning sessions by giving me support and access in using Zoom for Western Region Learning sessions.

Pandemic forced us to explore new way of Virtual Learning, as it connected members as well as our Faculty from all across the country as well as out of country, who effectively attended and

delivered Western Region Learning Sessions and continues to do so from the comfort of their home and office! From March 2020 onwards we started conducting online Learning Sessions through Zoom. Thanks to Virtual Platform that, we did not keep to the norm of having Learning Session once in the month but on an average had it twice and sometimes, thrice a month!

On 28th March 2020, “Vulnerability, what is it”! by Sushma Sharma, was our first online Learning Session through Zoom (Photos were not clicked).

After this first online Learning Session there was no stopping, I went ahead organizing integrating and scheduling Faculty and their learning sessions for Western Region.



Figure 10, Learning Session on, "Authority And I" was facilitated by Krushna R Sawant on 28th June 2020 through Zoom Virtual Learning platform.

My intention was to create a learning space for the ISABS members in their various stages in their journey and thereby make space available to all of us, besides our regular regional and national events and thus come together and nurture and cherish the community feeling as well as give support and learn from each other.

The effects of the Western Region Learning Sessions, shared in form of feedback and comment with me are worth mentioning:

- ✓ Members were energised with a new vigour to revive their ISABS journey.
- ✓ Though diverse, a sense of belongingness and community feeling was experienced and exhibited.
- ✓ Members who had lost track or touch with ISABS joined in under one umbrella of ISABS Western Region Learning session through WhatsApp group, upon knowing our Western Region Learning initiative.
- ✓ Laudable support, enthusiasm, and availability from ISABS Faculty and Interns to conduct learning sessions were displayed.
- ✓ We Were able to look at and explore themes often experienced in the Human Process Lab, thereby could further work with it in the large system with awareness.
- ✓ In these learning sessions each member quenched his/her thirst from these learning sessions based on their location in their journey and were thus able to work further on their processes outside of the Lab.
- ✓ I enjoyed myself and my work, experienced my being in Role as well as in Person!

- ✓ Last but not least it brought ISABS community members together, kept them busy exploring, experiencing, and experimenting as well as made them learn and reflect on their processes and also kept them proactively engaged with their inner processes work willingly and constructively especially in COVID-19 period.

For the Western Region Learning Sessions, I had

- ✓ Basically, followed my intuition in approaching ISABS Faculty based on my lab experience and interaction with them.
- ✓ I had approached Faculty keeping in mind their uniqueness and specialization in their offerings.
- ✓ My focus was to explore themes that usually are experienced in the labs in various phases of ISABS Journey and therefore it is also the person's process.
- ✓ I have kept with the flow of the group's momentum of diversity in the learning sessions rather than trying to follow a continuous theme in the preceding learning sessions.

Our Plans for future:

- ✓ Encourage Interns and PDP members to deliver learning sessions.
- ✓ Approach Faculty keeping their uniqueness and specialization in mind for the learning session.
- ✓ Encourage Western Region Learning sessions in regional languages to support regional labs and their participants.



I want to express my gratitude towards all ISABS members and Professional Members who supported this initiative by contributing in a magnanimous manner by virtue of attending and participating in the learning sessions or by delivering a learning session and all of us for sharing our knowledge, experience and wisdom and becoming a resource to each other in this process of learning.

A seed that was sown twelve months ago, has become a robust plant by virtue of unconditional support, encouragement, feedback, and commitment by all of us! I am happy for birthing this Plant and joyous to give it in the tender care of a person, holding this space come 2021.

Krushna R Sawant

Krushna R Sawant is an intern at ISABS. She is a management consultant, a B-school faculty , counsellor, and yoga therapist. She is passionate about Cross Country Driving and Languages. She is Shayara and her Sher o Shayari in Urdu & Farsi have been published in various publications. Krushna R Sawant can be reached at krushnarsawant@gmail.com



Facilitator Resilience in the Face of Zoom Fatigue

Harish Raichandani

“Confronted with life’s hardships, some people snap, and others snap back,” proclaimed the HBR paper ‘*How Resilience Works?*’ In this short article, I draw upon the past years’ experience to offer reflections on the resilience-building dispensations. Propositions presented here provide us tips and tools to make facilitators more resilient in Covid triggered *new normal* and add joy to newly discovered vicissitudes.

Before connecting the dots, must state two assumptions about the readership of *Here and Now*. We, the readers, are someone (a) committed to living a more wholesome life and (b) whose interventions are uplifting – in the lives of significant others, to the teams they belong to, and for the organizations, they passionately serve, drawing upon the *applied behavioural science* and exposure to ISABS way in upholding human values.

The *facilitators'* profession grew over the past seven decades through stalwarts such as Kurt Lewin's experiments in the 1940s and Carl Roger's contributions after that. As facilitators, most of us have found a vocation in *helping relationships* wherein people “helped” enhance their intimacy with life. We know that significant relationships in life come embedded with inadequacy, possessiveness, jealousy, misunderstanding, et al. From growing up as a teenager to surviving marriage to becoming a parent requires one to adjust to the polarizing priorities, clash of values, and resolving the dharma sankatas (making of a choice between two rights). The range of feelings one encounters in an organizational team or a sporting team is no less complex.

To support the “helped” with their turbulent realities, we as facilitators often nudge them to find a larger purpose and the ability to cope. Building buoyancy has been one of the notable contributions that facilitators have made to the lives of those facilitated. A good professional while supporting learning & growth displays acute sensing of people's internal dynamics and catalyses them to become resilient in the face of friction in life. *Resilience* - one quality that is a sine qua non for facilitators themselves; facilitators require resilience to deal with tricky situations arising in course of their work, and often their resilience role models sustainable growth for those *helped*.

The Covid-19 year has strained individuals, families, community, and organizations' well-being and proven to be the highest magnitude disruption of our generation. Increasing the socio-psychological distance, caregiving burden, financial insecurity, and confinement stress have proved everyone's testing time. Many of us had never considered video conferencing as a possibility to do work in our professional *Gharana*. Barring the last few years, which gave rise to an occasional online coaching conversation, most human process facilitations have involved face-to-face dialogue. Within a year, the new normal is to zoom in through laptops or phones, even.

for a primary human connection – from celebrating birthdays to blessing newlyweds to offering condolences to grieving with the significant others.

Our community of practitioners derived a wholesome (पूर्ण) understanding of a human thru live eye contact, the experience of bodily warmth, exchange of gestures, unconscious mannerisms, and the oscillating energy of the moment. However, that was up until the bc era, i.e., the period before corona. The year 2020 pulled the rug from under facilitators' feet by removing the scaffolding that supported their craft's practice. The mechanism that enabled both the helping *professionals* and the "helped" has disappeared, testing their resilience to cope with the ac (*after corona*) era.

The helping profession's nuances are changing, and the most prolific among us display resilience on four dimensions viz. the personal outlook, use of hardware, soft power, and immersive tools. The impactful facilitators demonstrate their ease along these dimensions, cutting across their field of practice - be it in 1-to-1 coaching, unstructured human labs, semi-structured growth workshops, or structured programs involving tens to hundreds of participants. These dimensions are the differentiators in this 'new now' virtual age.

When writing this (11th April), the second Covid wave creates a new havoc record every day. Yesterday 10 pairs of our extended family, along with our grown-up children, acknowledged the siblings' day. First time in life, spread across time zones Tumkur to Toronto, we were together from our homes' comforts. Neither conceived feasible earlier nor likely to give up in future, this mechanism is here to stay. A two-year-old's emotional bond with her grandparents built through phone/ computer screens indicates that we facilitators must embrace the toddler's *dispensation* wholeheartedly. Zig Ziglar said. "It is your attitude, not your aptitude, that will determine your altitude." Our aptitude for seeing people in flesh & blood, sensing their thoughts, and noticing body language, is not adequate. Transcending the past habits entrenched in physical space, each of us must cultivate an ability to listen deeply, tune into emotions, and pick the unsaid even without proximity offered by physical space. The resistive attitudes like 'do not enjoy a book on kindle in the absence of flipping pages' signal that we may lose our craft's edge.

The second emergent dimension of good facilitation is the hardware and infrastructure. Many of us continue to use a small screen laptop or, worse, a phone screen adequate for facilitation. Besides causing fatigue, it destroys the essential eye connection; we miss out on the facial expressions et al. Poor lighting and virtual background use alienate us even further. A modest investment to install lights, an external camera and a large screen monitor alters the facilitators and participants' experience by bringing them closer, connecting deeper, and adding more value. A participant quipped, "it never felt like we were not in the same room." A brightly lit room without the source of light directly hitting one's face or creating a halo behind raises the liveliness quotient. Adding a height-adjustable table helps maintain ergonomics and helps alternate between standing and sitting without much effort.



The hardware described above becomes a scaffold to leverage soft power – the third dimension of good facilitation. Facilitators do not carry potions of cookie-cutter knowledge, participant dispensation altering magic wand, or solution-kit to resolve participant dilemmas. Even in demanding and ambiguous situations grappled by participants, we trust the process. The elements of soft power include honouring the emergent *here and now*, humility, authenticity, and spontaneity.

Telepresence is only a medium, and to let the medium dictate the practice of craft would imply a significant compromise. A consciousness of the facilitation norms and values makes it easy to accept the wholesomeness of other people. By agreeing to participate from their homes, a much larger part of a participant's world comes alive in the facilitation room. The hesitation of a 5-year-old to switch on the camera or someone hiding their modest 1BHK by using a fictitious background indicate the norms deployed during facilitation. A good facilitator can spot the explicit & implicit norms operating and ensure that they uphold the underlying values. The norms we deploy during web presence must be the same as those in a physical setting, which leads us to the fourth dimension of this article.

Dealing with the demanding situations faced by facilitators requires soft power, as explained above. However, the bc era presented multiple options to encourage spontaneity, invite/confront a participant, and recognize the marginalized voice to make it centre stage. How does one achieve these while facilitating through the web? One needs familiarity with tools – those embedded in the platforms such as zoom/ MS Teams and those which ride on top of it. Using a set of custom-designed exercises, one can achieve open space methodologies, instant polls, gamification, sub-group tasks, individual reflections shared anonymously, and the instant collation of emergent themes. Familiarity and mastery of these tools help one deliver as immersive and experiential programs as possible in a physical setting.

We conclude by arguing that every facilitator must embrace these four dimensions to build the resilience required to practice their occupation as effectively as they did before the world changed last year and what appears to be a habit transforming change.

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How To Develop Resilience By Integrating Our Paradoxical Abilities?

Kartik Rajesh Shah

The upheavals caused in recent years by regional conflicts, climate change and technological advancement got amplified last year when the coronavirus pandemic abruptly reminded us just how volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous or “VUCA” the world is and will inevitably continue to be. At such times knowing how to masterfully navigate change, gracefully thrive under pressure and quickly bounce back from setbacks can be immensely advantageous. We can neither overcome trauma, adversity, and other stresses by being overly optimistic nor by being terribly pessimistic. Sometimes in order to overcome difficulties we need to fly solo and trust our own agency while at other times we need to band together with other people and seek support. Developing resilience essentially requires us to integrate our paradoxical abilities. How do we do that? One framework that can help us is Existential Universe Mapper or EUM©

The Existential Universe Mapper or EUM© is research-based, non-reductionist framework to understand individuals (EUM©-I) and organizations (EUM©-O) in a holonic way. It is authored by Dr. Ashok Malhotra and has been inspired by Clare Grave’s Open Systems Theory of Values and Levels of Existence. In this article we will limit our discussion to developing resilience in individuals through the EUM©-I lens.

According to EUM© Individual or EUM©-I there are six ‘universes’ that reside in all human beings. Here is a short summary on the nature of each universe taken from Dr. Ashok Malhotra’s book, ‘Indian Managers & Organizations’ published in 2018 by Routledge:

1. Universe of Belonging & Protection (UBP): It is that part of us that wishes to belong to a safe haven where we feel secure and protected. Its primary orientation is towards familiarity, predictability, harmony and strong bonding/ identification with our own kith and kin.
2. Universe of Strengths & Desire (USD): It is that part of us that believes that we are the center of this universe and it is up to us to get what we want through our own strength and efforts. Its primary orientation is towards curiosity, assertion, adventure, aliveness, excitement, and competitiveness.
3. Universe of Roles & Boundaries (URB): It is that part of us which wishes to relate with the world in an orderly fashion so that we know what to expect from others and what is expected of us. Its primary orientation is towards balance, clarity, conformance to agreed rules, norms and systems, adjustment, and appropriateness.
4. Universe of Purpose & Achievement (UPA): It is that part of us which continually strives towards higher level of achievement and recognizes that this is possible only through forging mutually beneficial links with others. Its primary orientation is towards purposiveness, goal-directed action, enlightened self-interest, and resourcefulness.

5. Universe of Meaningfulness & Intimacy (UMI): It is that part of us that wishes for and works towards a utopian world where everyone can live in peace and harmony. Its primary orientation is towards meaningfulness, intimacy, compassion, etc.
6. Universe of Duality & Simultaneity (UDS): There are several parts of us that are often at play simultaneously. While they may blend in harmony at times, at other times they may also pull us in different directions. Its primary orientation is towards being in the “here and now”.

It is pertinent to note that no universe is more or less desirable than another. Each universe can offer unique learning in a crisis or difficult situation that can be essential to our development. Below is my take on some lessons that we can learn from each EUMian universe.

Lessons from UBP

This universe teaches us to accept adversity and stay within the givens, huddle together with one's kith and kin, ask for or offer help, make sacrifices for the larger good when necessary, mobilize sources of faith/hope rooted in tradition (e.g. prayers, charity), better accept our or the context's limitations.

Lessons from USD

This universe teaches us to challenge status quo, take risks and expand one's limits, trust our own agency rather than relying on outside help, be action-oriented in finding solutions to problems and not be afraid of dealing with conflict, chaos, and aggression.

Lessons from URB

This universe teaches us to rely on established rules to restore order and stability, tackle difficulty through discipline, rigor, and efficiency, formulate Dos and Don'ts to mitigate future crises and hold ourselves and others accountable to our/their roles.

Lessons from UPA

This universe teaches us to look at the silver lining in the dark cloud, take charge, not make excuses, have a focused ‘can do’ attitude, take help of others to emerge out of the crisis together. Furthermore, this universe can also push us to acquire new knowledge, develop scientific temperament, present evidence based analysis etc.

Lessons from UMI

This universe teaches us to look at adversity as a moment for reflection and restoration, awaken virtues like sensitivity, empathy, compassion, care etc. in us, dream and envision a better world for ourselves and others.

Lessons from UDS

This universe teaches us to look at the adversity from all perspectives, instead of getting pulled in any one direction, suspend judgement, and stay in the ‘here and now’, appropriately engage with uncertainty and ambiguity that is inherent to a crisis and pivot from time to time (i.e. flow) instead of getting stuck in fighting, feigning, or taking flight.

While each universe can offer precious lessons in how to cope with a crisis, we must be equally mindful of the implications of being entrenched in a universe. Here is a table with some examples that illustrates how entrenchment in a universe can become disappointingly counterproductive to our efforts to develop greater resiliency:

Universe	What happens when we are entrenched in this universe?
Universe of Belonging & Protection	<p>An individual's unflinching faith in the wisdom of elders or a divine power may cause him/her to become superstitious (e.g. believing that a sacrifice will bring rain) or turn fatalist (e.g. saying things like “<i>jitni chaabi bhari Ram ne, utna chale khilona</i>”)</p> <p>Persons having unbridled optimism tend to vehemently resist change, thus either becoming victims of ‘boiling frog’ syndrome or feeling overwhelmed by change when it arrives. For example, many teachers who had long resisted technology had to seek voluntary retirement from service or adapt to virtual classrooms almost overnight.</p>
Universe of Strengths & Desire	<p>People who are over engaged in this universe can have difficulty in accepting reality ('what is'), in giving up control, in surrendering or taking help from others. Not knowing when to call it quits or reach out and seek help can ultimately lead to fatigue, feeling lonely or becoming mindlessly destructive. Harshad Mehta's character in the movie The Big Bull is an apt example of this phenomenon.</p>
Universe of Roles & Boundaries	<p>Individuals who are entrenched in this universe may feel out of sync with the dynamicity of their context and fail to tap into their subjectivity or spontaneity to deal with chaos. For</p>

	example, few heads of government aped their western counterparts and imposed crippling lockdowns instead of contextually and creatively responding to the situation.
Universe of Purpose & Achievements	Individuals over engaged with this universe are concerned with 'raising the bar'. In this pursuit, the individual can become so obsessed with continuous improvement and tangible goal achievement that they can seem insensitive and machine-like to others. He/she may also feel exhausted and at a loss as to how to seek nourishment from (or offer to) others than by constantly doing something. As an example, several people turned the lockdown into a 'self-transformation' project by signing up for webinars, learning new skills, making new fitness goals, finishing pending home improvements, etc. instead of just slowing down and reflecting.
Universe of Meaningfulness & Intimacy	When we become entrenched in this universe, we tend to romanticize utopia, wish away strife, become obsessed with big picture thinking, judgmental of others, unwilling to see the challenges of those in power. For instance, several people ranted on social media about how 'inhuman' it was for employers to furlough their employees but did not offer any constructive solution as to what businesses should do instead in times of unprecedented economic collapse.
Universe of Duality and Simultaneity	When we are excessively engaged in this universe, it is easy to get caught in ambivalence (e.g. "It's a tough call. What do you/the others think?" not experience other parts of ourselves in their full intensity and not empathize with people who may be entrenched in earlier Universes (e.g. "I don't understand why she is getting so upset about it? What is the big deal?") etc. Moreover, such persons may justify complexity as the reason for avoiding personal responsibility.

Thus, by adequately cultivating and integrating our various paradoxical abilities such as having faith and belonging (UBP); discovering our own potency (USD), interfacing in an orderly manner with others (URB), or joining our resources with others (UPA), valuing others (UMI), and living with opposite pulls of life (UDS), we can develop the resilience to bounce back from whatever life throws at us. The key lies in neither denying a universe nor excessively engaging with it, instead fostering it in us just right.



How is each EUM universe configured in you? Which universe(s) are you denying to yourself or are excessively engaged with? What price are you paying for this? Which universe(s) have you suitably fostered in you? What gifts have you gained by doing so that have helped you develop resiliency and cope with adversity? These are some questions that can kickstart your journey into developing greater resilience through the EUM© lens.

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The sunrise is in which direction? The answer is not as simple as you think

Siddharth Shah



Ask this question: "The sun rises in which direction?" to any six years old and you will get a very predictable reply. Even most adults would give the same one-word 'objective' reply considering that it is an absolute truth.

Think only a little deep and we find the logical fallacy in the answer. And the fallacy is profound.

Does the sun rise from the east everywhere? No. The axis of rotation on Venus is opposite to that of the earth, so technically, the sun rises in the west on Venus. At the international space station, the sun doesn't rise or set. Now we know for the fact that there is not even 'The' sun. It is 'a' sun in 'a' universe. The rising of the sun is understood as the morning. Is the understanding of the morning the same for everyone? Ask the question to a Japanese and a person in the Arctic and they have a hugely different understanding of the phenomenon of the morning.

So, what is the point I am making?

Sun doesn't have any need to rise! It is the humans who have a need for meaning and consistency. To make sense of the world, we named the direction in which the Sun rises as East! It is also this need for meaning which Viktor Frankl said is the bedrock of resilience. This dynamic of meaning making is, most researchers agree, the way resilient people build bridges from present-day hardships to a fuller, better constructed future. Viktor helped his clients find their personal meaning through his 'meaning therapy'. During these very uncertain Covid times, it is our personal meaning that will help us adapt and face this challenge.

The recent discourse in social science and philosophy predominantly states that nature is on its course. There is no distinction in 'nature's mind' about planets, sun, moon, morning, etc. There is no 'separate' phenomenon happening in the nature of 'the sun rising'. However, humans have a deep need for meaning and to satisfy that need we attribute characteristics to things we

observe. Yes, the attribute is consistent. Doesn't mean that the attribute is a complete reality! (Sun is consistent in rising from a direction every day. This doesn't mean that the Sun is doing the act of rising from the East!)

There is an acknowledgment of this even in physics with the theory of relativity. The experience that we have, measurements that we make, even our experience of time and space are relative. However, this relativity and subjectivity become even starker when we are trying to understand 'non-physical' phenomenon — The phenomenon in which we are a direct part. Especially in these difficult times. There are a lot of subjective phenomena going in each one of us.

Phenomenon around our feelings, thoughts, ethics, our impact on others etc. Here the meaning each one of us gives' to our thoughts/feelings is different and thus our experienced realities are also different.

Relating from a personal example. Last year, I went through very painful Gallstone attacks. Gallbladder is a vestigial organ in our digestive system just like Appendix. It's function is to only store Bile. Our life, well-being and digestion are perfectly fine without it. So when people develop Gallstones, allopathy has only one treatment - remove it. People are better without it rather than tolerating the pain! Also, the surgery is not open and is done through laparoscopy and thus there are very limited risks in removal.

However, I was disgusted by the ruthless 'pro-surgery' treatment of all allopathic doctors. Irrespective of the size of stones, their nature, age of patient, their diet, type of pain etc. the only treatment for gallbladder stones from Bangalore to Boston is removal through surgery! There is a major online movement against this group think or myopic way of treatment for capitalistic agenda. I am still part of it at <https://www.gallbladderattack.com/>

Being a believer in traditional and alternative medicines, I didn't want to go for surgery. At least not without giving a fair chance to other methods. I researched extensively in Ayurveda and Chinese medicine. I contacted various experts and finally started my alternative treatment. It was progressing very well. Subsequent ultrasounds showed reduction in stones by 50-70%.

However there is no remedy for pain in alternative medicines. When a gallbladder attack would come, I would have to tolerate it. Whenever the Gallstones would pass from gallbladder to stomach through Bile duct there would be a gallbladder attack. It is impossible to describe the pain. Just to give an idea, a normal pain killer is 100 mg and I was taking 650 mg painkillers and they would make no difference to my pain. Eventually I was rushed to hospital to get painkiller injections of 2000 mg as they are not given outside supervision. I went on such an emergency visits seven times during the course of my treatment. This is apart from tolerating many such episodes of pain at home where pain would last anytime in between 15 min to 4 hours. I would weep uncontrollably during these gallbladder attacks. My mother was worried about other side effects and was not able to see me in pain.

What made me tolerate so much pain when a much easier option was in hand? Was it blind-faith? Everyone can have their own judgements which are very easy to make.

For me, I think it was the meaning I gave to my pain. Being a follower of Vipassana. I would try and observe the sensations of my pain. Pain was a given but suffering and mental agony were optional. I was aware and educated about the nature and type of pain so it was a familiar territory after a couple of times. I was very sure of not taking any risk with my body. I was also constantly connected to all my doctors. This made me more confident in separating pain from suffering. Of course, I would not succeed every time and nor do I suggest this to others. And yes, after two months I had to give in and I did finally go for the surgery.

Whether what I did was correct or wrong is again up for judgement. However, after 10+ months of surgery, I believe that this experience of excruciating pain has immensely shaped my spiritual inclination and identity. I had been through other experiences of pain as well (not of so much degree). However, this experience stays with me because of the meaning I have chosen to give to it.

I have also spoken to various people who have got their gallbladder removed and even forgotten about it! For them, the experience had no meaning. I know patients who want to get their gallbladder removed even for asymptomatic stones. They don't want to risk any pain. I also know people who recall their gall-bladder pain with agony and disgust.

The same thing happens with us in all subjective experiences. The importance of 'subjective meaning making' gets stronger for experiences that have physical manifestation on our body and this is where they influence resilience. Resilient people and companies face reality with staunchness, make a different meaning of hardship instead of crying out in despair, and improvise solutions from thin air.

Apart from resilience, this line of thinking of subjective meaning making has tremendous application in helping us understand our relationships, conflicts, education, etc. much better.

At a larger level, I am also not making a point about empathy or seeing things from other perspectives when talking about subjective realities. That is a subset of what I am telling. My main point is that reality just exists and meaning making is a core human need.

To fulfill this need, we take a small part of reality and make it a separate phenomenon. We assign attributes to this phenomenon. However, the attributes we assign are limited to our experience. They are not the same for others. And most importantly they don't capture reality entirely.

Applying this mindset to understand the world requires deliberation and slowing down in our mundane life. In the rush, I want to consider my reality as 'The' reality, my opinion as 'The Best' opinion and my experience as 'The Only' experience.



I wish for everyone to embrace their own personal reality and make their own meaning. Through this article, I wish the next time you are feeling weak, struggling to understand something, or just ruminating over 'Why me', you take a pause and ask, "in which direction did the Sun rise today?!"

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What are we trying to do in the Research team at ISABS?

Kantha Rao

When I took the role , I felt we need fresh perspectives . Actually, being away for almost 15-20 years helped to see things differently and also bring in a fresh perspective. And that cannot be done without actually testing, validating, and demonstrating an idea. That is when I decided to realize Lewin's premise , 'Group is target and means of change'. The idea of creating the learning space was to build a group that actually believes, experiences, learns , questions and inquiries into themselves (Self). And we needed some tools and methods to do that. That way I found Phenomenology and Dialogism truly relevant and I had personally applied these in my own learning and experiences. That is how the idea of HPI was born, in the process of creating a learning platform for PDP---thanks to Monsoon and Altaf for having faith in my proposal , or this new project.

We are a group of people who have got together and found learning space deeply enriching during the last 14 months, meeting for two hours once a week. We called this HPI study group. HPI stands for 'Human Process Inquiry'. The idea is to inquire into our practices and process and gain insights into our assumptions and theories that govern us. To guide us in this endeavor, we focused on two constructs which we believe shall alter the way we think, teach, research and practice T group, more importantly the 'being' of a facilitator. They are Phenomenology and Dialogism and related philosophies. Initially it was not easy as it challenged all our existing premises and assumptions, especially the way we look at an experience.

Instead of adopting the known and familiar way of learning, we started to learn by experiencing ourselves, examining our experiences through the filter of these constructs, which later evolved into an embodied & reflexive process. We wanted to work on ourselves, silently without making much noise. We started working on ourselves, through a process of embodied learning and validate the learnings for ourselves before we make any claims. In that sense it is a modest experiment on ourselves, as learners of these constructs. These constructs help not only T group experiences providing a fresh lens and angles but also our own lives and the way we live each moment . We believe it is the latter that is solid ground for any professional practice.

These are essentially lens and angles of Phenomenology & Dialogism which together provide us a frame to look at an 'Experience' differently---- in a way that bridges the Inner & Outer aspects of our being. This has an especially important implication in a T group. According to this construct, whatever is happening within me is an analogue of what is happening in the society or in the group around me and vice- versa and that the distinction is dissolved.

This is a very bold statement to make, especially when over the last 75 years, two branches of social sciences have actually built their edifice as two different disciplines:- Psychology (dealing with individuals) and Sociology (dealing with groups & society).

This has many implications for T group practice and the task of facilitation in a T group. In our experience, we realize learning and practicing these constructs had actually given depth and a practical way to experience Self as an instrument of learning & change. This way we bring back the focus on Self in everything we do in our lives and in particular and practice of T Group.

We experienced, learning these two constructs has helped us to reframe our own way of learning and perceiving. And also given us access to the lens (method) of looking at an experience and an access (conceptual & methodological devices) to understand the intra person activity. In our experience, this had altered our angle of looking at our own inner space of intra & inter subjective dialogic activity. And this we have seen has an incredibly significant implication for the way we process an experience (even lab experience) through the filters of Dialogism. We discovered that these learning attempts in tandem enriched our own Reflexive capacity, meta awareness, of being and recognizing the subject and object layers of our experience .

Put another way, over the last 12 months , I believe we are working towards building a group who can usher in a fresh perspective in their practice of T group (much more to go) . We all believe it is by actually learning & doing that we communicate persuasively, better. While we were engaged in this learning – learning itself is resilience.

Some team members shared the following reflections with Here and Now -

Preparing for phenomenological interviews had made me aware of and deepen the quality of my listening. I'm able to see how filtered and conditioned my listening and meaning making process is and this seeing has resulted in shedding many of my presumptions and prejudices.

Veda Srinivasan, PM, ISABS and Research Team

Shift of lens from WHY (is it happening) to WHAT (is happening) and HOW (is it happening). I could see the immediate effect it was having in the conversations that I have with people. It opened the window of exploration with people, especially my kids. Every time I asked my daughter – why did u do this? It made her angry and we fought. When I asked her how you did this- she was happy and wanted to tell me all about it.

This journey is helping me at being open to other people's perspectives, thoughts, thinking processes and emotions.

Tina Ratra, PDP, Research learning group member

As part of Research Team, I am getting to learn “ Dialogic Self Theory ” . This helps me to listen to multiple voices within me and explore deeper where each voice is coming from and what it says. I can see myself becoming more available to active listening not just to voices within me but also to others. Being part of research team helps me to slow down and develop unique ability to see the micro processes more clearly.

Jyotsna Cheruvu, PDP, and research team member

This enriching space has given me an opportunity to be myself ,available to the processes going around and available to others

It is a cocreated synergy helps to exercise freedom, without being judged and unbiased.

This space made me realize the simplicity of being empathetically available ,which manifested in enhancing my listening to the emotions of others.

Kiran mai yanamala, Research learning group member

Dialogic self theory (DST) and its practice helped me to listen to various voices within. There are many voices which are unheard and one may not notice them. Practicing DST along with the research team helped to notice the unnoticed and the weaker section of the voices within self. This challenges the commonly held beliefs because many of them have come from social voices or the voices of others. Even the little practice of DST is helping me to notice various choices and supporting the decision making process.

Rahul Thapar, PDP intern, Research learning group member

Journey of working and learning with research team helped me
1)To increase my awareness to observe and understand self and others by learning concept of phenomenology. 2) The DST (dialogic self theory) which helped how to understand different dialogues with self and with others. Personally, it helped me to deal and change meaningfully when me and my family went through Covid experience.

Kiran Lalsangi, Intern PDP, and research team member

Being in HPI meetings,

- 1 Helped me reflect on witness consciousness
- 2 I could unpack some layers of phenomenon and to experience and articulate it more fully
- 3 - We created an atmosphere where learning can happen which I am now inquiring - how did we do it !

Chandan Shamnani - Intern , PDP, and research learning group member

Phenomenology is the study of experience and how we experience. It studies structures of conscious experience as experienced from a subjective or first-person point of view. Some concepts that I learnt as a member of this group helped me immensely during my cofacilitation. For instance I could relate to filters, lenses, angles, 'epoche', phenomenological reduction etc. while I was reflecting on my T Group facilitation experiences. I am also more aware of my inner dialogue and am more observant of many voices within as I learnt about the Dialogic self theory here with the research group.

Mukta Kamplikar – Intern PDP and research learning group member



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INTERVIEWS AND REFLECTIONS

Summer



This section includes interviews and reflections contributed by members of the ISABS community . This section consist of

1	Interview with President , ISABS – Joy Srinivasan
2	Interview with Dean Outreach – Vikram Bhatt

Interview with Joy Srinivasan, President ISABS

What is your role and how has been this year for you in this role?

My association with ISABS from 1987 by holding different roles eventually becoming President certainly was a defining moment in my life. I took up this role with much hope and excitement. As I always strongly believe that shared vision leads to best way of building institutions, so we as a new Board met early Feb'2020 to formulate a vision for the term 2020-2022 as a team.

It was such a welcome change to witness that each and every member of the Board was keen to make a difference to ISABS growth. Especially, considering ISABS's legacy, the question was how do we leverage it to the maximum going forward to stay relevant as an institution?

I also believe, it is critical and important for various role holders to collaborate and become collective thinkers to achieve the goal of the institution. So, we are attempting to ensure open conversation/communication amongst role holders and across PM community to collaborate and build an inclusive process within the Board and with the member community.

Apart from upholding the core purpose, culture, value of ISABS, I do see my role also involves developing shared vision, create new strategies, identify gaps, develop, and formulate new directions to fix the gaps. Support each and every role holder both in spirit and guidance to achieve the overall shared vision for ISABS. To be in touch and involve the PM community to take ideas and suggestions to better our goals.

At the same time review existing policies, what is working and not working, what kind of newer policies need to be developed to strengthen the system and processes for better management of the institution.

The Board's Feb'2020 meet at Hyderabad left all of us absolutely excited with a new hope and high aspiration for ISABS. But the pandemic in March was a new twist that came our way, this was no deterrent to the role holders. Each one of them rose to the occasion and did things differently to address the new normal that the whole world was witnessing. Ideas like offering exclusive online T-Group strategy emerged and became an excellent experimenting methodology for all forms of program offer.

Zoom meets literally shrunk the differences of geographical distances, it became an excellent platform to connect and collaborate. The attitude of the role holders were, we will go ahead and experiment, take risk and this is the time for us to redefine what/how we do. It took an extraordinarily strong root in the system.

Shifting from in-person to going online was not an easy transition, but it was an important milestone for ISABS to get out of its comfort zone. The transition was a welcome phase, as I

experienced we were willing to move from a stance of limiting mind-set towards a new system that was progressive and positive thinking in nature.

What are some of the challenges you faced?

The dilemma of transition from in-person events to online platform certainly was a challenge. Although, we heard from PMs/participants that the online T-Group experience was not that far off compared to in-person, but there is online fatigue. Not every participant is well equipped with technology that is needed for online events, therefore, it is a challenge to attract many organisations or individuals for online events. We also found that participants working in remote locations, especially in the social development work, found it difficult to access uninterrupted internet to fully participate.

Online presence is demanding, creates fatigue, it is not going to be easy, but not impossible. To dive deep, be in the unknown area which perhaps as a system we were never there before!

What kind of changes is ISABS looking at going forward?

Based on my understanding and experience, ISABS is an organically grown institution. I am proud about the fact that ISABS has survived for the last 50 years and has been built with care and commitment by various presidents, Deans, RCs, Directors and PMs. At the same time, it is also a concern that ISABS has not been able to leverage its legacy fully to achieve its potential expanded growth.

I am afraid, we rely very much on a PUSH model with an assumption that ISABS is a sought after institution by clients. The change I wish to see is that ISABS should move towards PULL Model, wherein we truly become a sought after name in the market. To achieve this, we are striving to build quality driven program, processes, and brand building through digital platforms. Expansion is to popularise through applied behavioural science platform, like ABS Summits & OD conferences. Expanding ISABS footprint beyond India is another milestone that I wish to see.

Message for the community

I agree that ISABS's uniqueness is that every member has special love for this institution. Imbibing the process work has made a huge difference in our lives. I do value it is a space that takes care of our affiliative needs, professional colleagueship & personal relationship.

My aim is if we can capitalise on this collective love and affiliation to make it a more system oriented professional institution.

I feel it is critical that we listen and pay attention to what clients are saying/thinking about ISABS and service them accordingly.

As a Board, we are attempting new ways of working by experimenting with new ideas, drop old ways/ideas that may not be so relevant in today's context. The pandemic had to push us to try new ways of working. One way is to go with the flow, make small incremental changes, but for me how we bring strong solution towards a mega shift will be the focus. I would want members to believe and support that this is achievable.



Joy Srinivasan is a professional member and the current President of ISABS. She is a leadership development consultant. She loves to travel, read, and cook yummy food. She can be reached at president@isabs.org



Interview with Vikram Bhatt, Dean Outreach

Vikram: It is my pleasure to interact with you. I am managing Diversity-Outreach and Partnering. Till last year, this was a combined role with Social development. Dean social development and I were closely working together to look at various Outreach initiatives. However, since both are very important to ISABS and basis feedback received from professional members, we created separate tracks for each of these roles. This is a new role that the board has conceptualized in the current tenure and I see this role as an Inside-Out role. Within this role we are responsible for creating various Applied Behavioral Science offerings and taking it to the ISABS communities and institutions. We are also developing different partnerships which will be of value add to ISABS in the times to come.

Team H&N : Can you share something about existing and upcoming partnerships?

Vikram: Yes, we are working with various institutions. We are working on doing offerings for IMT Nagpur, we are working with a Malaysian organization to offer Behavioral Science programs in Malaysia and we are working with Gestalt Institute, Cleveland to develop a joint program that we will offer to our communities. Also, we have developed some prototypes around offering more Applied Behavioral Science programs and any of our Professional Members can offer a relevant program through this platform.

Team H&N: Oh, that is very interesting! Let's switch gears a little bit. The theme for this Here and Now is Resilience. How do you see that within ISABS and in these tough times?

Vikram: I believe ISABS is a very resilient organization. Not many organizations survive for 50 years. We have done a lot of innovation in the past year - we are the first one in the world to offer T-group online. There is innovation within the ODCP course, and currently we are developing offerings other than T-group and in other technologies in applied behavior science. ISABS has personally impacted so many of us and thus we all volunteer to serve this organization. My wish for ISABS is to be more agile along with being resilient. We need more fresh thinking and new ways of doing things at ISABS.

Team H&N: What are your views on the golden jubilee celebration at ISABS?

Vikram: I think this is a very good time to reflect as well as do new things. The golden jubilee committee has planned many new things. I am especially looking forward to working on the Podcast. If we are able to create that and share I think it will be a major boost for ISABS in its Outreach initiatives.

Team H&N: What support would you want from the larger community for your role?

Vikram: Oh, that is a very good question. Well, firstly I want to encourage members to please participate in all these events and discussions. Your participation really motivates role holders like me to do more. More participation also brings more energy and vitality. Secondly, I want to encourage members to share all these offerings in the wider world. Spreading the word. Thirdly, if you know of any organization or institution that will benefit from a potential partnership, please reach out and feel free to connect them with us. You can reach out to me on Vikram Dean Diversity-outreach & Partnership dean.dop@isabs.org



Vikram Bhatt is a professional member of ISABS and currently holding the role of Dean- Outreach. He is an OD consultant , coach, and founder of Integriti consulting and LTW India. He has passion for music. He can be reached at dean.dop@isabs.org



MOVIE AND BOOK REVIEWS

Monsoon



This section includes book and movie reviews contributed by the members of the ISABS community . This section consists of

1	Book Review – Getting our Bodies Back	Sanjyot Pethe
2	Movie Review - Room	Mukta Kamplikar

Book Review - Christine Caldwell (1996) Getting Our Bodies Back

Shambala Publications: Boston

Sanjyot Pethe

We are embodied beings and yet the culture that has focused so much on giving importance to the rational intelligence, has ignored the very system it inhabits. Ancient Indian texts such as Yoga sutras and western psychologists in past 60 years recognize the intelligence inherent in the body which is different from the rational intelligence. As Liz Koch, a body informed practitioner states – We need to change the language from treating body as object to body as a process. What does this mean? Well, that is what the book is about.

The body informed work is based on the premise that the unprocessed emotions and experiences impact the nervous system and therefore the whole body. The clues to release and complete these processes are also in the body if we pay enough attention to language of the body. The body “speaks” through sensations, feelings, breath, and movement and if we pay attention, are observant, we do not need to know the event, we can release this stuck energy in the body. The book takes this as a basic premise and builds on the following principles

1. Any event that occurs impacts our whole being – The pandemic last year and the continuing this year illustrates this factor. So many people have told me how their level of anxiety, the palpitation in the chest area, stomach upsets, forgetfulness have gone up even when no one in their close circles are affected or even when their jobs or money is not at stake. The whole being includes the body and body reflects the process that we may not even be aware of in our mind.
2. Our bodies love to move and must move. If the movement is held back and flow is impeded, we become sick. When the movement is too fast, we become sick. How much attention do we give to the kind of movements our body wants to make. And in this new normal, that has also become a big challenge. While speaking to some of my clients, it has helped to pay attention to the movement their body wants to make (By paying attention to their hands and legs) and also how much do I want to move
3. The body is a symbol of all experiences. This is the central premise for all body based approaches in therapy as well as in coaching

The first few chapters of the book describe these principles. With simple, everyday example the author explains the phenomena of body, energy, and health. Health is not just physical ailments, but mental imbalances, addiction, and behavioral patterns

Recovering our bodies mean finding that connection to its language – Sensations, feelings, and movement. Paying attention to the sensations allow us to recognize if something is changing in the body. Hunger, thirst, pain are prominent sensation but emotions may produce very subtle sensations. Understanding feelings and following them in the body helps us to hold them in a

way that is effective for us. Movements are clear indications of what needs to be done and through experience I know that they are effective ways of freeing our patterns. For example, when we are feeling anxious, what happens to the body. The body prepares to run, we may feel discomfort in our stomach, palpitation in our chest, the mouth may go dry, we may perspire and so on. If we pay attention the body and slow down these symptoms the excess energy will be released and we will be able to think clearly.

So how do we recover our bodies? By becoming aware of different sensations, feelings movements when experiencing an event. Then Owning responsibility for our own feelings in the event. This is not about taking the blame but taking only the responsibility for our own states and giving the responsibility where appropriate. The clear differentiation between owning and blame & burden makes the learning from the book practical. Third stage is acceptance of the situation and accepting the state of the body and the last is taking small actions.

For the current times, the following insights from the book are useful

1. The moments when the chaos around us is too much, too much bad news, too much anxiety, too much grief, the book provides direction to find solace in our bodies
2. It provides a language to express our needs and complaints in a way that serves the context
3. Establishing physical and cognitive boundaries is another important learning from this book. It particularly helps when the demands become excessive. Working from home has merged the boundary between workplace and home and learning to establish clear boundaries has been a challenge for me as well. Through simple process the author communicates how we can create a grid that maximizes ours as well as others happiness
4. The book establishes the knowledge base needed to understand this relationship between body and our mental, physical, and emotional health

The book is written in a coherent, easy style. I found this book to be one of the simplest books written for mind body connection and its relationship to addiction. Though the word addiction means alcohol, drugs etc., but the author also regards any excessive intake of sensory pleasure as addiction, so includes eating chocolates and watching tv as addictions. The author also gives suggestions in applying these learning in building relationships, giving feedback and communication.

The book has information that could be used for answering the following questions what is the impact of pandemic on your experience of living? What are predominant feelings you are experiencing – Anger, sadness, fear, anxiety, grief? Do you feel exhaustion and restlessness? How would you transform these feelings so that they do not constitute a survival energy locked up in the body? I highly recommend this book for the current times for both the information and its presentation



Sanjyot is pursuing her Phase B (ISABS PDP journey). She is a leadership development specialist, coach, and somatic experiencing practitioner. Sanjyot loves reading and has a flair for writing and storytelling. She can be reached at sanjyot@joyousleadership.com.



Movie Review - Room (2010)

Mukta Kamplikar

I could deeply relate to **Room** as I felt forcibly locked up and confined during the lockdown. I watched this film around the same time last year. I felt stifled, anxious, uncertain, confused, pained, alone, rebellious, disillusioned, disappointed, and fearful - all at the same time. This was a complex set of mixed feelings and one of the usual escape routes was Netflix. The title and the description of **Room** instantly appealed to me given the space that I was in cognitively and emotionally. I write about this film because a part of me is still affected by the second wave, I still feel locked down albeit partially and I stay inspired by the film's subtleties, its way of dealing with complex emotion and some resolutions that free up something in me.

"Room", is an intense cinematic experience. After being abducted seven years ago, a young woman (Ma) is held captive in a sparsely furnished and cramped suburban garden shed along with her now-kindergarten-aged son (Jack). Repeatedly raped and without access to the outside



world save for a rickety TV with spotty reception, she plots their escape from the monster who has imprisoned them.

The 11-by-11 box of a living space that Ma and Jack share has only a small skylight that allows some semblance of nature to enter. Somehow, Ma has made this living hell a fairytale, telling Jack tales of

Wonderland and the Count of Monte Cristo, and singing him to sleep. For Jack, "there's Room, there's outer space, then all the TV planets, and then some heaven he believes in". Thanks to Ma's unwavering efforts, Jack is a bright, energetic, healthy bundle of happiness, well-versed in at least some literature—Jack knows who Jack the Giant Killer is as well as Samson, a hero he relates to since his own hair hangs below his shoulders. He is an avid watcher of animated adventures. But to him, the room represents reality in its totality while TV is just make-believe. As for Ma, her whole focus is on Jack's well-being and rarely her own. Ma is endlessly resourceful, turning cardboard toilet paper rolls and eggshells connected by string into playthings. For her, Jack is her anchor and her reason to live and carry on.

How else could she withstand the regular visits from her prisoner, (dubbed Old Nick), most likely because he comes at night and sometimes brings the much-needed supplies. In return, Old



Nick forces himself upon Ma regularly as Jack holes up in a wardrobe, supposedly asleep but usually awake during these noisy episodes. That we share Jack's limited perspective in the film, makes the encounters all the more unnerving.

While Jack seems like an utterly normal five-year-

old, it dawns on Ma that he is becoming increasingly more curious. Old Nick is becoming more dangerous, and what might be best for both of them is if she hatches a plan to get out of the room before it is too late.

They escape but the aftermath proves to be an ordeal for Ma, whose actual name is Joy Newsome. Being free is one thing, actually feeling free is another. While she has trouble keeping her psychological bearings as she struggles to re-adapt to her past life, Jack readily embraces the rush of this expanded universe. He blooms as his experiences widen while she regresses into the role of a needy and even a petulant child. I find kids' optimism incredibly moving . Despite parallels with appalling real-life news stories, *Room* is neither a horror movie nor a film about crime and/or captivity. **Instead, it focuses on how the human spirit may transcend physical boundaries, and the disparity between external and internal freedom.**

This intimate film manages to raise some big questions like - What defines us as a person? What do we really need to live? What do we live for? What meanings do we make from our environment? How do we survive pain and even atrocities? What does freedom mean to us? What makes kids so astonishingly resilient when under duress? What happens when all your troubles disappear yet contentment persists in being an illusion? And what does a parent do when their child begins to outgrow their need for them?

To sob during a film was cathartic and lovely in its own beautiful way, but to be on the verge of tears for an entire movie and not be able to understand exactly why is penetrating. I was Ma and I was Jack multiple times during the course of the film and I took time to absorb and even feel every complex emotion as I took those roles. I was Ma's as she distorts the truth to protect her son from the reality of their situation -because danger and tragedy are so present, the need for mother and son to fill every inch of that room with love becomes so imperative.

I was Jack in his tantrums and flares and tone followed by the infantile regret and crawling into Ma's lap to apologize. I was Jack in his steady focus as he plays those games while engaging his imagination during captivity under maternal guidance and tolerance.

And as an observer I question- What really makes a person happy when stripped of access to most things? What would I have done if I were in her situation? Does anybody love me as profoundly as these two love each other? Do I love anybody that profoundly? What Room have I enclosed around my life for the sake of survival?

I am Jack when he is curious and growing up and wants to know who the magic man is that brings them supplies and a brand new toy car for his birthday only to get thrashed and discouraged. I am Jack in his confusions about what's real in their world and what's not real, and that there are two sides to everything like there are two sides to *that* wall in the room.

I am Ma when she meticulously plans the escape. To see a boy wincing because he's never in his life encountered so much light before as he escapes is extraordinary. To see a small, determined boy run on the grass who has never run any distance before because he's been confined to a shed his entire life gave me a lump in my throat for many layered reasons.

I am Ma when after the escape with comfort in their new home, feels insecure about Jack's love and I am Jack in feeling overwhelmed when so many people want to love him after being accustomed to one person for being a source of happiness, entertainment, and comfort.

Jack's act of generosity by cutting his hair off and offering it to Ma (his hair represents continuity and strength and survival and links him to his mother's long hair) when Jack comforts Ma on the bed, crystallizing their new roles in each other's lives. This is the moment when their relationship evolves to a less desperate and deeper level and you see a role reversal between "the caretaker" and the "cared for". Where loving each other becomes less of a crutch and more of a path toward. For me, growth happens when you let go of the fear of the past's pain, and you forgive yourself for holding on to that fear for so long.

The last scene where Ma and Jack revisit their prison shed. Room, now neglected and invaded by the police's collection of evidence, still exists. Room still awaits them. Ma asks Jack if he wants to return to Room. For us, the answer would be "Hell No!" But for Jack and Ma, there is a significant hesitation before concluding no. There was comfort in that shed, a familiarity, some naivety. There was the kind of pristine clarity that only happens when the choices are few – and this forced me to re-evaluate what I cared for in my world. But Ma and Jack can no longer really return to Room any more than Jack can remain four years old forever. And nor can I to a safe haven. Nor can we ever.

On one hand, I absolutely loved the truth of the hesitation these two had before they departed the shed - adult hand in child hand - for the last time. On the other hand, my heart ached excruciatingly because of how much I sympathized with that hesitation in the face of knowing

how many years they endured such horrifying circumstances. There is no richer experience, whether in a novel, a movie, or in life, than to be asked to embrace two opposing emotions and notions at once and feel more soulful and spiritual for trying.

I was Ma and Jack in their “letting go”. Letting go with love - Goodbye Chair. Goodbye Sink. Goodbye Wardrobe. Goodbye Room.

Something in me feels like it got resolved, like a knot opening up – I feel free.



Mukta is an intern at ISABS. She is the founder and chief consultant at MUKTA – Liberating Human Potential (a Human Capital Development Consulting firm) and a partner at CEEI. Mukta paints and writes with passion and has published 4 poetry books. Mukta also dabbles in theatre and uses many art forms in her work.

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ART AND POETRY

Autumn



This section includes poetry and art contributed by the members of the ISABS community . This issue consists of

1	In my walk	Sushma Sharma
2	And I spoke my mind	Sushma Sharma
3	Hai Kyun Pasheman	Kumud Kalia Issar
4	Chimes and Whispers	Rajeshwari L.
5	What ISABS means to me	T Srinath
6	Empty Streets (poem and painting)	Mukta Kamplikar
7	To the one in the mirror(poem and painting)	Mukta Kamplikar
8	There is a silent wish to fly (poem and painting)	Mukta Kamplikar
9	What I have learnt this year(poem)	Mukta Kamplikar
10	Poems of Hope	Ameet Mattoo , Payal Gupta along with Participants of Outreach programs

In my walk

Sushma Sharma

As the sun started embracing me

Initially it was nice

Soon it was oppressive

I started to perspire

Wanted the cool breeze

Away from the heat

Isn't that's what happens

In intimacy

Too close, too much heat

Envy the birds who keep flying in the open sky

Space in intimacy

That intangible feeling

Of breathing without being aware

Like the fragrance of innocent flowers sense of
being. . .

Just being there



Sush

And I spoke my mind

Sushma Sharma

Layers and layers of hidden emotions

Started tumbling out

Like clothes falling out from

An overcrowded cupboard

Unfolding and landing in a heap

Incoherent and messy

I had no idea about the beginning ,middle and ending

They came like uninvited guests and spread themselves unevenly all over

Almost like water gushing out when a dam breaks down

They created their own pathways ,little streams

Gushing like truant children

Gleefully playing with no thought

Right in the middle of it

Yet standing at an edge

I am the witness and creator of this chaos

I give up the struggle and

Join the frenzy of the moment.

Sushma is a professional member of ISABS and a co-creator of Resonate Consulting which specializes in OD and Change. She flirts with life and is passionate about possibilities of change.

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हैं क्यूँ पशेमाँ

Kumud Kalia Issar



ख्वाब, ख्वाहिशों कभी नहीं मरते। कभी, कभी वह दब ज़रूर जाते हैं। सही माहौल मिलने पर वह अपना मुकाम पा ही लेते हैं। जैसे मैंने पाया। देर से ही सही, पर मैंने अपना मुकाम पाया। चलना, बढ़ना नहीं छोड़ा। चाल धीमी ज़रूर रही, पर बंद नहीं हुई। ख्वाब देखे थे, ख्वाब देखेंगे तो पूरे भी होंगे ज़रूर। ख्वाब, हक्कीकत से पहले की जुर्रत है, ख्वाब इब्तदा है और उनका हक्कीकत में बदलना एक मुकाम है, एक मंज़िल है।

हम ख्वाब देखने से डरते हैं, अपने ख्वाबों को किसी से साँझा करने में डरते हैं कि लोग हँसी उड़ाएँगे। हम उन्हे तामीर नहीं कर पाएँगे। ख्वाब होंगे तभी तो ख्वाबों की तामीर होगी।

हैं क्यूँ पशेमाँ अपनी हसरत से,
हैं क्यूँ बेकरार अपनी हस्ती से,
हैं क्यूँ बेचैन तन्हाई के आलम से,
हैं क्यूँ निराश अपने पस्त हौसले से।
यह वक्त नहीं पीछे तकने का,
नाहक कश्म-ऐ-कश में उलझने का,
हैं यह वक्त खुद को बनाए रखने का,



धुँधलाती सलाहियतों को निखारने का।

माना, चंद ख्वाबों की तामीर न की हमने,
ख्वाब बुनने की हरीं जुरत तो की हमने,
मेरी इमारत की बुलंदी को ना तूँ परख,
गिर, गिर कर उठने के हौसले को देख।

वह ख्वाब जो देखे थे कभी,
कुम्हलाये ज़रूर, ज़िन्दा है अभी,
इन्हें न रौंद पाए ज़माने के दस्तूर भी,
इन्हें न बुझा पाए, ज़िंदगी के तूफान भी।

यह है ठूँठ, नहीं है खंडहर,
नया जीवन है इनके अन्दर,
आने दे बहार हो उठेंगे जीवित,
नन्ही कोंपले होंगी पल्लवित।



Kumud is a professional member of ISABS and is the Regional coordinator for ISABS Northern region. Poetry and ISABS just happened in Kumud Tanhai's life. Her passion for nature and natural phenomena catapulted her zeal for life and learning. Kumud can be reached at kumudkalia@gmail.com

Chimes and Whispers

Rajeshwari L.

What are the desires I seek within
 When I seek out it is the din
 Need to unlock the thoughts within
 What is the fear lurking
 Where are my thoughts drifting
 What is it that needs uplifting
 I feel a sense of nothingness at times
 The music the sound of bells and chimes
 The calm mind asks me to be grateful
 What is there that I need to fulfill
 The resilient self awakens
 The morning sun beckons
 Nature teaches me lessons
 Whispers how untouched I Blossom



Raji is a Professional member at ISABS. She is a Consultant and a Relationship Coach. Raji is passionate about getting to know people and learning through experiencing. These days music occupies her and she believes in mindful living.

Raji can be reached at raaji212@yahoo.com

What ISABS means to me

TT Srinath

For over 26 years ISABS has been part of my life,
In moments of joy and also in strife.
It has been a space that I have voluntarily visited,
held back sometimes yet not often desisted.
In gentle ways I have learnt to face my mirror,
helped me realize so being to self I become dearer.
My warts I have learned to embrace,
not shy of showing nor feeling disgraced.
Yet to be so ISABS authenticity asks,
only for my growth not as a task.
And when I have been able to so be,
I have honestly found the real ME.

Have loved my journey with ISABS, thankful to all who have embellished my life, I have grown as a person and human being. Mere THANK YOU limits the depth of my gratitude.



TT Srinath has done extensive work in Gestalt psychodrama and sociodrama. He facilitates human interaction processes in corporate and non-corporate sectors. He is an active member of the oldest theatre company in India – The Madras players. He can be reached at ttsrinath@gmail.com

Poems and Paintings

Mukta Kamplikar

Empty streets

They make you think
They allow you to look carefully
To find small things
like that tiny sign in that corner
you had never noticed..
Empty streets make you hum
for a change
and talk to yourself
They invite you to walk
within your own dream
And then how much ever you
want to go
to that other place where your
mind takes you

Empty streets drag you back
They captivate you
and make you question life itself



To the One in the Mirror

Mukta Kamplikar

We have been through so much

You and I

I have seen you

-grow , endure

-quite often be very unsure

and yet put up a brave face

I have seen you

-Try to fit in

-Make innumerable mistakes

-Search for ways to be accepted

and loved truly , despite being so unapologetically
you

I have seen you

-Race hard in a way that just nothing could stop
you

-and trip and get bruised while jumping over hoops

- feel those suicidal failures at times

I have seen you

- Swear like a sailor

- Thank like a saint

- Laugh heartily with friends

- And love with all of your being

There have been times when I have hated you as well!

Here's is a note to tell you that I love you even when I hate you

Because you are the only one who has always stayed true to me !



There is a Silent Wish to Fly

Mukta Kamplikar

There is a silent wish to fly
 Anywhere -through the walls
 Or right through the window
 Over these plants that are on fire in April
 Far away from good books read by good people
 Far from systematic arrangements -
 even of flowers
 There is a silent wish to fly
 Over empty streets at night
 and over chairs and tables without
 people on them
 Over "shoulds" and "should nots"
 Over beliefs ...judgements and
 boundaries
 Over to the expanse
 ...to the limitlessness of it all
 There is a silent wish to fly ...



Mukta is an intern at ISABS. She is the founder and chief consultant at MUKTA – Liberating Human Potential (a Human Capital Development Consulting firm) and a partner at CEEI. Mukta paints and writes with passion and has published 4 poetry books. Mukta also dabbles in theatre and uses many art forms in her work.

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What I have learnt this year !

Mukta Kamplikar

I have learnt that I won't ever be ready for anything that life throws at me

I may almost never have the right words for when they matter



I won't often know what to choose and I will make wrong choices

I don't always need the perfect guy around

I've learnt that I can go on waiting sustained by hope

and I can also put stuff aside and shrug my shoulders

I must boldly accept that I can't keep my heart safe

and that I can't stop love from making me feel terrible

I have learnt to say no this year, clearly and audibly so

and to live as authentically as I know how

I have learnt to not be sure if I have another year ahead ... or another shot at life

And that if I have a new chance , I must try to get it right this time around

and not be disappointed with myself if I don't !

Poems of Hope

Acceptance to Possibilities is a part of the Outreach sessions launched by ISABS in response to the current Pandemic situation. Towards the end of each session, we asked participants to write their Poems of HOPE ... we are sharing these poems here - *Payal Gupta & Ameet Mattoo*

The sessions started with acknowledging the current situation

These are dark times, there is sadness & gloom looming all around

there is Anxiety - what may happen

Fear – I may be next

Not just our bodies...

our minds and souls also

seemed to be locked-down, Isolated

There is uncertainty - “how long”

No one seems to know anything,

future seems so uncertain

In all this, how do I remain SANE

How do I deal with this ...

never before experienced CRISIS

How do I find HOPE.



Ameet Mattoo

... and then move from acknowledgement, acceptance to possibilities of exploring Hope.



Poems of Hope

In my own way, with my own resources , I made it

In my own way, with all my quirkiness, I made it

In my own way, I came close to myself, each day

Whatever be the result, I made it.

I made it and that is all that matters.

Mandeep Chawla

The first ray of the sun

The soft gentle drop of rain

The cool lilting breeze

Sweeping across the beautiful

Fringe of hair on my face

Reminds me of all the

Beautiful Emotions that

Fill my heart Every Morning

Reminding me of all the

Beautiful riches nature has

Bestowed upon

Giving me a reason

To smile and Glow

Whenever I feel

LOST AND LOW.

Chetana Jain

Life is short and precious
To experience, go and smell death
Come back with a big bang!
Make it big anyway!
Because now I know life is Short and Precious!

Rajamohan Varambally

Be that as it may,
you would still be strong,
No matter what happens
You will still walk,
As and when the storm settles down,
You would fly far and wide,
with Contentment around you.

G. Jayaraman

Payal Gupta and Ameet Mattoo are Professional members of ISABS. Ameet Mattoo also holds the role of Dean – Digital Transformation for ISABS. Mahesh N, G Jayaraman, Rajamohan Varambally, Chetna Jain and Mandeep Chawla participated in the outreach program- Acceptances and Possibilities organized by ISABS



ISABS UPDATES

Winter



This section includes any updates contributed by various role holders of ISABS community . This section consists of

1	Regional Updates
2	Obituaries

Eastern Region : Khirod Pattnaik

In all there were 7 Regional meetings between June and December 2020. Each of the meetings featured 30 minutes of social time and an hour long presentation by a Professional Member from the Region on an ABS theme.

The themes and presenters were -

1. "Moving from Fear/Anxiety to Hope - Role of self and others" – Kakoli Saha
2. "Playing Safe to Flying High" – Khirod Pattnaik
3. Home Schooling my children – Ruchi Tiwari
4. The Holocaust – Bhanumurthi Kota
5. "Bias, Prejudice and Othering" – Snigdha Pattnaik
6. There was one meeting and presentation by Sukhvinder Sircar in January 2021.

Attendance was between 15 and 20 people in each of the meetings.

There were two outreach programs on "Empathy Circle" in June and July, facilitated by Manisha, Gauri, Vikram and Khirod.

Another on "Art & Science of Helping", facilitated by Gauri Nigudkar.

The Region also helped in marketing both UDAAN events in September 2020 and January/February 2021. Around 18 participants from the Region attended UDAAN 2020.

Plans The Region plans to restart in person T-group events as & when the COVID-19 situation improves.

Northern Region : Kumud Kalia Issar

Learning events

NR organized Learning Event CHANGES 2020 from 3rd to 7th March 2020. There were three BLHPs and one ALHP. Faculty Members checked in a day before the event. Parth Sarathy conducted the Learning Session and Ethics Statement was discussed through a case study by the Regional Coordinator Ashu Issar Kumud.

The second event SABRANG couldn't be held due to Covid. However, the RC supported the Deans Program in planning and marketing of Udaan 2020 and Udaan 2021.

CHANGES 2021 was held in one format of six days spread over two weeks. The response was not very encouraging, only seven participants registered. There was only one ECHO 1 lab.

Monthly meetings

Despite Covid we continued with Monthly Meetings on specific topics. The highlight was the monthly meeting facilitated by Dr. Abad Ahmad on Organization Development through the case

study of BHEL . It was made available to all regions. The response was overwhelming. More than 50 people participated in the meeting. It certainly was a great learning experience.

Dr Somnath Chattopadhaya Memorial Seminar

A seminar of four sessions was organized in memory of Dr. Somnath Chattopadhaya and it was available across the regions. More than 60 people participated in each session. Dr. NP Singh, Dr. Deepankar Roy, Ramesh Galohda, Anupama Sharma along with RC planned and designed the seminar. Panel Members were from across the regions. It was an overwhelming experience to hear the history of ISABS from the PMs who had worked with the founder members on whose shoulders we are standing. It brought a cross section of generations of ISABS on the same platform.

PDP Participants in NR

We have been supporting PDP aspirants through weekend learning sessions. This year we could hold only two weekend labs. The first one was on The art of Giving and Taking Feedback by Sudhir Kumar Aggarwal. The second one was on Defense Mechanism by Satyakki Bhattacharjee. Still our representation in Phase A, Phase B and Observation was not up to the expectations.

The most significant achievement is that Covid provided an opportunity to work with almost all Deans and other RCs. It was this Collaborative process that helped us emerge victorious from an unprecedented adversity by turning it into an opportunity.

Learning sessions for professional members

A weekend lab on BEING A PERSON was facilitated by Dr NP Singh. 10 PMs participated in the lab. It was open to other regions as well. Ullhas and Rashmi attended it. A rich learning experience.

The Northern Region organized a lab for PMs to get orientation of a Digital Lab. Four PMs from NR three from ER and one from SR participated in the lab.

A one day learning session on Art and Science of Helping facilitated by Gauri Nigudkar was held in February,2021.

Strengthen PDP through Learning Sessions and mentoring.

Continue meaningful monthly meetings for all members as well as participants.

Hold learning sessions for PMs with the objective of continuous learning.

Hold consensus development/election for new RC in July,2021 as the tenure of current RC will be over on 31st December,2022.

South Region - Hema Sekhar

Sangam Event was offered in the month of February 2020 at Mamalla Resorts, Chennai. 2 BLHPs & 1 ALHP – 17 participants.

Meetings: Covid conversation by Chitra Puranik Memories of Zeb - a meeting organized PDP committees meeting with the members

Learning Events:

Conducting “Understanding Shadow Concept” to PDP members for five days.

ECHO lab for PMs 8 participants - 5 from SR, 1 from western , 2 from north. Veena was an event-buddy. Facilitated Sankar and Rajeshwari

Change of Role: Chitra Puranik resigned from the role of RC, Hema was unanimously elected by the southern region

Monthly meetings activated in 2021 year after a break

We had a one hour interactive session on “Understanding Self - using Jungian psychology” anchored by Dr Anuradha Prasad in February

Last month we also did some brainstorming on low level of participation in the region

Western Region - Sonali Kelkar

The Western region held Basant in Feb 2020 at Dr. Modi’s Resort, Karjat. We held 4 BLHPs and 1 ALHP and engaged with 45 participants and 10 faculty members. Due to the pandemic, we were unable to hold Barkha, our monsoon event. However, we were glad to be able to support and experiment with the online ECHO labs anchored by Dean Programs.

Monthly meetings and Learning sessions: We had monthly meetings in person in January and February 2020. However with the pandemic, we shifted to the online medium and were glad to see an enthusiastic response to the learning sessions. Monthly Learning sessions were held for the WR as a whole. Additionally, the Pune chapter held monthly online learning sessions under the mentorship of Aroon Joshi and Mukul Joshi. Hence the WR has been conducting a minimum of 2 learning sessions per month. Here are some of the topics that were part of the learning sessions. These sessions are anchored by Krushna R Sawant

- The power of ‘and’
- Values and I
- Vulnerability – what is it
- Exploring personal shadow in a T-Group
- Shame in T-groups
- Your mindfulness mantra
- Authority and I
- Hierarchies within me – part 1 & part 2
- Toxic emotions and how to manage them
- Job and role of the facilitator
- Scapegoating in process labs
- Exploring our individual and collective response to diversity of Sexuality – part 1 & part 2
- Body as an instrument to understanding the Self • Anxiety in Human Process Labs

- In defense of defense mechanisms
- Diversity & democracy in T-groups

Wisdom Circles – for PMs

These sessions were anchored by Sankar

In addition to the learning sessions that are open to all members – AMs and PMs of the Western region, we have also been conducting ‘Wisdom Circles’ - learning sessions for PMs across ISABS. These sessions have been conducted by PMs from the WR as well as other regions

- “Relax, Rejuvenate and Renew” using the principles of Yoga and Mindfulness
- Transactional Analysis
- Caste and class dynamics in ISABS
- Understanding mind and behavior through Yoga philosophy - Patanjali Yoga Sutras

PDP Participants in WR

We have made efforts to connect with every PDP member from the region that we have information about - whether active or not, to understand their needs and encourage them to complete their PDP journey. We currently have 22 participants from WR who are actively engaged in their PDP journeys. We have been in communication with many more to bring them back on to the PDP fold.

We are hopeful of conducting an in person event in August 2021

Accounts -The accounts for the region were duly audited and submitted to the National office.



Obituaries

IN LOVING MEMORY OF - Dr. Zeb O. Waturuocha - 26 DECEMBER 1956 ~ 25 JULY 2020



ISABS fraternity mourns the sudden demise of our beloved Professional Member, Dr. Zeb O Waturuocha, on the 25th of July 2020. His journey in ISABS as a Professional Member for 17 years is incredibly special and enriching for all those who interacted and engaged with him. Zeb's love for people and zest for life was infectious. We ISABSIans feel the loss of a soul who made the world a better place. We are filled with gratitude for the gift of Zeb in our lives. Let us celebrate Zeb's inspiring life. He lives on, in our memory and the legacy he leaves behind.

We miss you, dear Zeb.

IN LOVING MEMORY OF – Dr Somnath Chattopadhyay 6 APRIL 1936 ~ 10 AUGUST 2020



ISABS fraternity mourns the sudden demise of our beloved legendary Professional Member, Dr. Somnath Chattopadhyay, on the 10th August 2020. He was one of the founding members of ISABS and also one of the first practitioners of OD in India. He was a stalwart and a visionary leader and has contributed immensely to ISABS and its members. His untiring work in Applied Behavioural Science, over 49 years, has left an indelible mark in the world. ISABS fraternity salutes and holds great respect for his immense mentorship, guidance and friendship. He was a gentleman of compassion and humility. It is with heavy hearts that we honour his memory and say goodbye.

Our heartfelt condolences to his family and friends. His selfless leadership continues to inspire.

**President, Executive Board Members and Professional Members of ISABS
IN LOVING MEMORY OF - Professor Prayag Mehta - 1927-2021**



On behalf of the ISABS fraternity, I express our gratitude to Professor Prayag Mehta, for his contributions in the field of Applied Behavioural Sciences and Achievement Motivation. Professor Prayag Mehta along with Professors Udai Pareek and J.M. Ojha were considered, fittingly, as the Trinity of Psychology in India. His path-breaking approaches challenge the notions of psychology that is elitist and undermines the representation of the poor. His commitment to develop future behavioural scientists in India is yet another reason why ISABS is deeply indebted to him. ISABS has lost yet another Stalwart. His work will remain an inspiration for all behavioural scientists in India. Our heartfelt condolences to his family and friends.

IN LOVING MEMORY OF - Dr. Prerana Rane - 1955 – 2021



On behalf of the entire ISABS fraternity, I am deeply saddened to announce the sudden demise of our beloved Professional Colleague, Dr. Prerana Rane. It is with heavy hearts, that we bid her farewell. We remain in gratitude towards dear Dr. Prerana Rane, for her commitment and accountability towards the ISABS purpose. We fondly remember Prerana for her immense contribution to ISABS in various forums, committees, and roles. She always believed in giving her best and achieving her goals with diligence and commitment. Her sensitivity towards social inequities and commitment to working with the disadvantaged section of society was an admirable quality

that we will always cherish about her. Her enthusiasm to experiment came alive in her passion for travel. She also inspired many by sharing her experiences. She exhibited a fierce ability to be upright. In her passion for justice, she confronted issues and stood her ground. She was also soft spoken, humble, and affectionate. For us, the ISABS fraternity, today is a dark day. We have lost our beloved member colleague. It will certainly remain as a vacuum in our institution. We will miss your presence in ISABS our dear Prerana Rane. May your soul rest in Peace.

Letters to the Editor and Feedback on the Issue:

Please send your feedback and suggestions to isabs.hnn@gmail.com



I am the way life unfolds and blooms

I am the way seasons roll

I am wait

I am longing

I am love

I am the way spring always finds a way to return

I am joy

I am here

I am now

I am this moment

Mukta

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