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## Figuring out the pieces of the puzzle...of modern life's hustle and bustle!

*Soch with Coach is back for the week! This time it is all about the joys of simple living, and shunning the extravaganza. Thinking about how could you attain it? Our beloved Coach AB is ready with his set of advice for you*

Rapid urbanisation...killing our values? (EdexLive Desk)

Adarsh Benakappa Basavaraj

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lifestyle from "Plus to

The recent viral post by a Bengaluru techie most definitely has sparked introspection. While urban living promises luxury and ease, are we losing sight of resilience, gratitude, joy and other simple pleasures of life?

### **Need of the hour: Awareness about the dangers of materialism and overconsumption**

Though I have written about materialism in my past columns, all of it remains relevant to the very second you're reading this and will continue to stay relevant beyond it as well. It has been proven to correlate negatively with happiness and life satisfaction though one might argue that "money buys happiness", it's not the same.

Research indicates that individuals who prioritise material wealth often experience higher levels of anxiety, depression, and loneliness, especially in urban settings as the pressure to keep up with societal standards can lead to compulsive consumption behaviours. The peer pressure or rather the quest for attaining false status through possessions, turns almost every relationship into a "commodity" rather than a "connection".

Urban living has a strong bearing on our mental health in more ways than one can imagine. On one hand, cities definitely offer greater social opportunities, but on another, we are highly prone to feelings like isolation, loneliness and unhappiness.

### **The best medicine: Mindfulness!**

Before I deep dive into some tips, I would like to touch upon one of the most effective ways to counteract the negative impacts of modern urban living, and it is through "mindfulness".

Studies have shown that mindfulness practices can enhance subjective well-being and promote pro-environmental behaviours. The biggest advantage of cultivating awareness of our thoughts and feelings without judgement is that it leads to breaking the pattern of ANTS (Automated Negative Thoughts) and unconscious consumption patterns, thereby, helping us make more intentional choices.

## **1. Living luxe but still feeling less?**



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Is luxury unnecessary? (EdexLive Desk)

Though high-income lifestyles enable us to afford premium housing, gourmet meals, and help us outsource our chores, these lifestyles often distance us from the very basics of living. The techie's reflection underscores how detachment from traditional skills erodes resilience. In an age of getting almost anything delivered within minutes, we are not only becoming increasingly dependent but are also on the path of forgetting how to do simple tasks.

The mindful action: Try cooking one meal weekly, dedicating time to learning a hands-on skill, or even committing time to a book.

The added advantage: Financial reset.

This also makes us realise where we are spending unnecessarily and helps us track discretionary spending, thereby, giving us a clearer picture of where we can redirect funds towards meaningful experiences and joyful activities.

## 2. The abundance dilemma: Less is more

What sparks joy in you? (EdexLive Desk)

I'm sure many of you will resonate with my thoughts on how today's abundance dulls the excitement of simple joys once cherished in scarcity.

The best example is the abundance of OTT apps. We have so many choices at our fingertips and yet we remain indecisive about what to watch, whereas, there was a time when we'd be excited to catch an episode of our favourite show on TV.

Rare indulgences like weekly or monthly restaurant visits were once treasured moments, whereas, today, we tend to order food, switch on a show on Netflix and continue working, without giving our 100% focus to any of the tasks at hand. The joy and happiness factor? Physically present but mentally absent!

Recreate and relive: Recreate simpler joys — homemade meals, shared treats, low-cost outings or sessions with friends, with all ga  
switched off and delve into meaningful conversations.

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### 3. The divide we overlook

Increasing urban/rural divide (EdexLive Desk)

Maintaining an urban “good life” is increasingly inaccessible for many and we hardly realise how blessed we are. Average monthly costs have come close to Rs 1 lakh and high-income lifestyles are leading to an even wider societal divide. What can you do about it? Simple...

Become vocal and act local: Volunteer for community programmes, from skill-sharing workshops to local clean-ups. If you can't give the time, plan a monthly "spring cleaning", take out stuff that you don't need or don't use, and donate it to the less fortunate. The smile and joy that you bring is like the famous tagline of the Mastercard advertisement — priceless!

Bonus: It'll help you create awareness and support sustainability practices, especially when it comes to electronic waste as you're upcycling your gadgets rather than letting them rot and throwing them away later.

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### 4. Breathe in, tune out: The mindful escape

Tune in your mind. (EdexLive Desk)

In our chaotic city life, mindfulness offers relief but can only be understood when we take the time out and practice it. Just once is enough to get us hooked to it.

It's not just meditative breathing or sitting in a calm place — it's all about conscious disconnection and meaningful reconnection with what truly matters! Practice box breathing (inhale, hold, exhale, hold — four seconds each). Make it a "tech zero" time and ensure no auditory or visual notifications disturb you.

## 5. Let your inner child out: build your joy



Let your inner child out! (EdexLive Desk)

One most crucial aspects of our lives today is how we're either procrastinating or completely forgetting to indulge in those activities that make us jump with excitement and joy.

Engaging in creative activities can reconnect you with joy and purpose and one of the best ways to do it is to get back to Do It Yourself (DIY) projects. Dedicate time to hobbies like growing a small garden, painting or even trying to learn a new recipe.

The bonus: Studies show creating something tangible triggers dopamine, boosting happiness...that's what we're trying to achieve, isn't it?

### **Final thoughts: Fast lane or a gentle train?**

Living in Bengaluru or other metro cities doesn't necessarily mean surrendering joy for convenience, but by embracing mindfulness, simplicity, and connection, we can rediscover the sweetness in less, without missing out on what truly matters. Slow down, savour the journey, and find your balance in abundance.



With Regards,  
Adarsh Benakappa Basavaraj  
Your simple guide and happiness coach

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