Lockdown Anxiety Diaries. Episode 3

Mornings bring a fresh set of positive vibes with them. Our elders have always taught us to wake up early. It is for a reason. The energy, the vibes, the aura that an early morning brings with it is just something to be experienced on our own . I woke up at 6am. And that was a sudden first for me, as I have always been a night owl, a person who sleeps late and has so much trouble waking up. I wake up with like four alarms sounding harshly one after another. That’s me.

Now this new me was born. The first thought that came to me was, my parents would be delighted to know I woke up without an alarm at 6am. That is so wow. Then another thought followed. What now ? There was absolutely nothing to do. So I just lay in my bed quietly, thinking I will sleep some more. But if course as you all know, sleep has it’s own weird rules or concept. When you really want to fall asleep, it will run further away from you and when you know you have to stay awake, it will creep up so silently on you. So after tossing and turning for about an hour, I finally gave in and got out of bed at 7.

I woke up with a lot of positive energy. I will exercise, make breakfast, then shower for half an hour as I never had the luxury to do all the things in my own time. So suddenly all this time sounded very precious. After taking my time and having done almost all of it in a few hours, I was free by 10 am.

I sat with my laptop for a while and started thinking what should I do ? How can I make positive use of this lockdown ? Firstly let me read the news. What is going on around the world? (As if I was invisible woman and had the power to change it all). Nevertheless, knowledge is power they say. But in this case, it was quite the opposite actually. The more you read about the condition of the world, about all the deaths happening, about how we were failing to save ourselves and how nothing was in our control. All this knowledge wasn’t power. Infact it was demoralizing and completely depressing.

Music, let’s play some music and cheer up. I turned on my favourite tunes for a while and it helped me distract. I thought hard about how can I make a difference in this world? How can I a small person with medium amount of intelligence reach out and help people? I need to think about ideas. I need to then find solutions. There were many thoughts which were crossing my mind then. Some about my career and my future, others about those who were underprivileged and depended on daily wages to feed their families. Some about what will happen to the world now and others about how will people survive, if they do.

Reading calms my anxiety down a lot. It is the one distraction that has worked wonders for me. When I lose myself into a book, I completely forget where I am and I tend to travel to places which are somehow now, not within my reach. It helps my brain think of new world and new opportunities and keeps depression at Bay. Reading good books brings such a solace to heart. I love reading Rumi.

“Forty Rules of Love” by Elif Shafak is my favorite book of all time. I must have read it multiple times and each time the emotion, the feeling, the excitement and the aura of that book increases. It helps with giving clarity and vision about the real things that matter in life. The soul. That is the only thing that matters, what you feel matters and not what you are gaining professionally or materialistically. The book has made such a huge impact on my heart and mind that it lives with me. It talks about the love that Rumi and Shams of Tabriz shared and how one gave power to another to blossom. Rumi was a scholar anyway and Shams of Tabriz was a mere dervish in search of something that destiny had written for him. The incidents and the moral drawn from it is so relatable in any given space and time. It lives on for generations. By the time I finished reading the third chapter, it was lunchtime. My phone on silent had rung 6 times. Somehow I was in this state of trance where nothing mattered. I read a few messages and prioritized and came to the conclusion that lunch was more important right now. The pressing need of the hour.

After making some noodles and salad, I sat down to eat in peace. The phone rang again. It was some number I didn’t recognize hence ignored. I turned on my Netflix and started watching FRIENDS. My favorite series of all time. You can watch it from any episode and it will guarantee a laughter riot. I love watching things that make me laugh. Another form of therapy. Watching comedy lightens your mind and the happiness you feel within will bring energy and positivity. I have experienced that myself. Just like every person has an aura. An energy vibration that is created inside the body by small atoms and molecules coming together to bring in vibrations, and these vibrations create an aura of positive energy, a vibe as some people say. Negative people have low amount of vibrations in their body and that is evident from the kind of aura that they carry. My thoughts stray to different topics in a day. An idle mind is a devil’s workshop they say. But this time I will prove it wrong and I became so determined again to make something out of myself. To do something creative, logically which will make an impact to improve lives of others.

An idea struck in my head when I was reading news about migrants being stuck everywhere around the country amidst the sudden lockdown. Pushing all my anxious thoughts aside I passionately got a pen and paper and started scribbling my thoughts in. I knew I can do this. I was so excited and happy on my own that I had come up with something that could actually help people. I wanted to raise funds to feed the homeless people right outside my road. There were 5 families there and then a lot more a few feet away from them. I prepared a heartwarming speech for my neighborhood and by the time I finished writing it I was so confident that I can raise enough money to feed around 50 families at the least. I made a list of essential items needed for them to survive and then went to a local store downstairs and asked the shopkeeper if we could make such food packets and will he help deliver them to the needy people. He was more than happy to help. The police also showed cooperation. Everyone was ready to help. Now I only needed to convince the society people to donate money and then we could all make the packets ready.

I have noticed something with my anxiety. It subsides down greatly whenever I am involved in helping other people. It’s like I don’t need any help if someone else needs it more than me. The anxiety kind of vanishes for the time being. My grit is strong too. I am a determined person and I have good convincing skills, negotiating skills and communication skills. I was sure the way it has all helped me professionally so far, this will all help me with this project too.

Feeling satisfied and moderately happy with my new idea, at 8pm I started making dinner. The phone rang again, and it was the same no which had rung like multiple times in the day. Finally I gave in and answered. It was a wrong number. At least the person now knew he had to try somewhere else. I turned on the news and there was as usual nothing new but more and more information about how bad this virus is and how much destruction it has already caused. Every time I heard the news, my fears about it started to grow and slowly the anxiety would rise too. Pushing all the thoughts aside, I just laid my food on the plate and sat down for dinner.

The phone rang and it was my sister. She finally decided to tell me she was fine and the US although not in lockdown, they had been asked to work from home now. My sigh of relief lasted a few seconds, we exchanged some stories and asked each other to be careful. Finally I had my meal.

I am a dessert person. I love my sweets. This lockdown had rained badly on cravings and left me with no choice but to make something myself if I wanted it. Today a chocolate would suffice, I thought.

I am so going to gain weight. No running, no walking in the park and not much movement around, that’s not going to be much helpful to reduce the fat. Instagram was full of ideas on how to survive the lockdown, how to be productive, how to exercise everyday and how to make the most of this to look after yourself. I thought all these ideas are great but I have to take one day at a time. And I knew I have to travel far and have to think of million ways to keep myself occupied and sane.

Silence is not always a good companion. The eerie silence that comes with the nights is not always very romantic or enjoyable. I hate the darkness. And hate the silence. As I loitered around in my balcony staring at the Moon, my thoughts wandered off to my past. Have I made the right choices? Could I have done anything differently? What sort of person has it made me ? All these thoughts that revolved around myself. My life and my choices.

Your life is defined by the choices you make. Right or wrong doesn’t matter, the consequences are yours alone to bear. With that thought the night took me in her arms and shushed my thoughts to sleep.

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