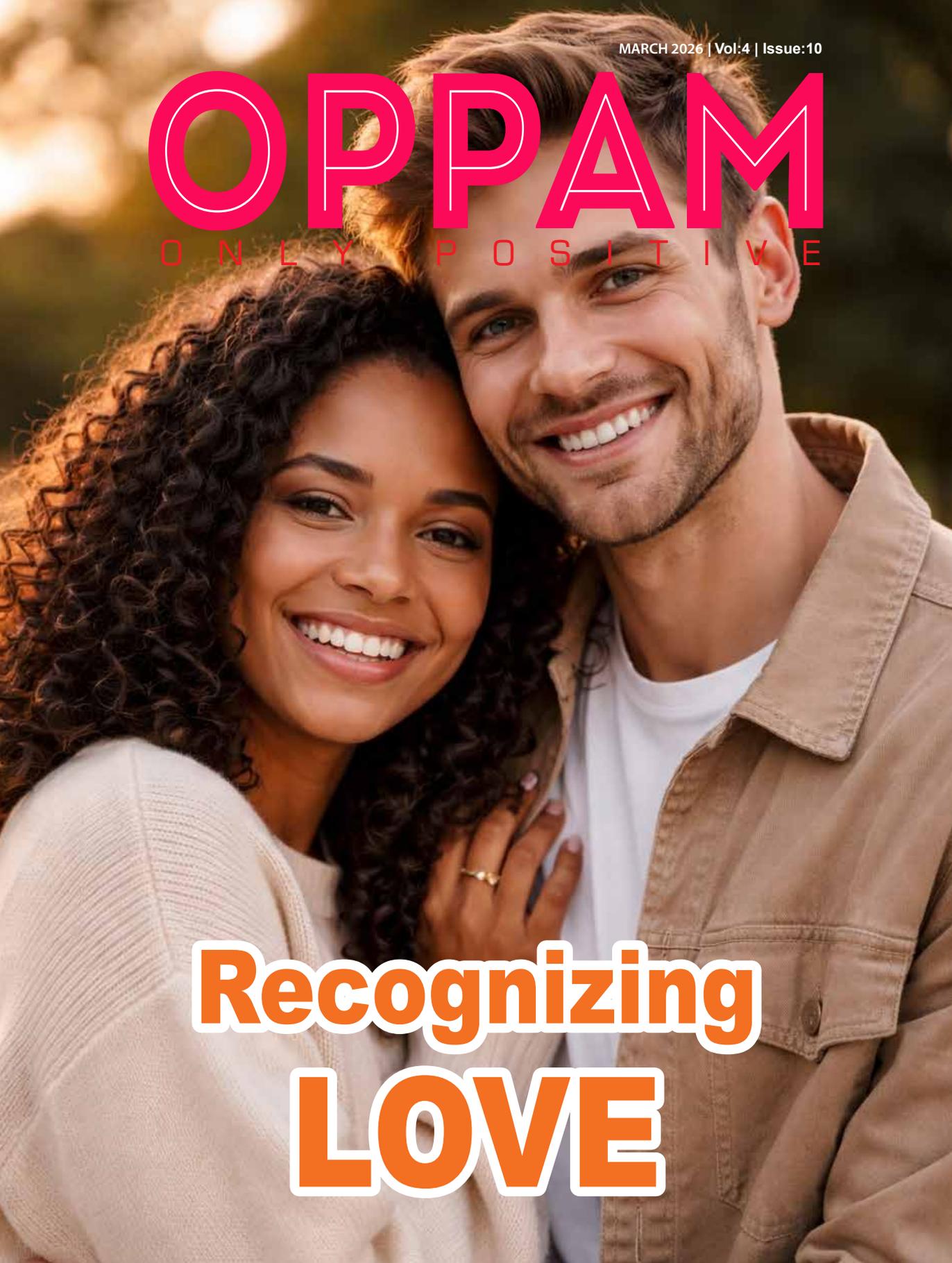
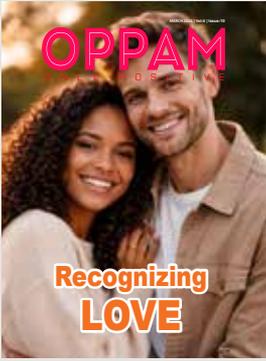


# OPPAM

ONLY POSITIVE

A close-up photograph of a young man and woman smiling warmly at the camera. The woman has voluminous curly hair and is wearing a light-colored sweater. The man has short brown hair and a light beard, wearing a tan jacket over a white t-shirt. They are outdoors, with a soft, golden light in the background.

## Recognizing LOVE



# OPPAM

ONLY POSITIVE

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## Editorial

PROF ANTONY P JOSEPH  
Managing Director

# Save money

That villager had a very strong desire to invite the Chief Minister of his state to his daughter's wedding. He could easily imagine how much respect and social prestige he would gain if people could say that a Chief Minister had attended his daughter's marriage. With this in mind, he managed to meet the Chief Minister in person and invite him to the wedding. But when he extended the invitation, the Chief Minister's reply was this: "I will not come to the wedding."

Hearing this, the villager returned deeply disappointed. He felt anger and hatred toward the Chief Minister. He even passed a judgment that the Chief Minister was someone who attended only the weddings of the rich and never those of ordinary or poor people. Finally, the wedding day arrived. On that day, to the villager's astonishment, the Chief Minister walked into the wedding ceremony. The villager was amazed. Then the Chief Minister said to him, "I deliberately told you that I would not come to the wedding. Because if I had said I would come, you would have borrowed money and put on a grand show. You would have spent money unnecessarily. I said that only to prevent that." That Chief Minister was Kamaraj, who once ruled the state of Tamil Nadu in India.

Celebrations are good, no doubt. But we must think about what emotion should drive them. Today, people have become those who search for reasons to celebrate. From birthdays to funerals, everything has become part of a celebration. Very often, we show off excessively just to impress others. If a function happens in the neighboring house, most of us feel compelled to make the next function in our own house even grander than that. For this, we try to introduce 'uniqueness.' We spend money for the sake of being different. All this ends up pushing some people into debt. What is condemnable is that the money spent on celebrations is often not money we earned or saved, but money taken on loan.

Even if we have enough money, do we really need to chase so many celebrations? Disrespect for money is the reason behind its wastage. Money should be saved and used like water. Even if a tank is full of water, if you keep the tap open, the water will flow out within hours and the tank will become empty. The same thing happens with money.

The abundance seen in some people is due to money obtained undeservedly. Those who acquire large amounts of money through corruption, violence or smuggling will have no hesitation in wasting it, because they did not work for it or sweat for it. The difference is like that between a student who passes an exam by cheating and one who passes by studying hard.

There are news reports that rulers in many parts of the country lead luxurious lives even while the entire nation burns and that their generations accumulate wealth in foreign countries. On the other side, a large section of people struggles in poverty and price rise. There is a famous saying by Mahatma Gandhi: in this world, there is enough to meet everyone's needs, but it is all held in the grip of a small minority. That is why one section lives in extravagance while the other is forced to live in poverty.

In every coin that we spend unnecessarily, someone else's name is written. Just as our name is written on the grain of wheat we receive, there are rightful claimants to the wealth we have acquired undeservedly. Forgetting this is what turns us into spend-thrifts.

Let me say one more thing. We think that if we have money, we have everything. We believe money is everything. Yet even a man with assets worth fifteen thousand crores commits suicide. We heard such news last month and were shocked. So there is something that stands beyond money, extravagance and celebration. Perhaps that is what gives meaning and peace to our lives. Think about the ways to discover it.

It is often said that without money there is hardship. But a human being is not just money. A human being is something more, something that stands beyond it.

Regards  
Prof Antony P Joseph

A romantic scene of a man and a woman embracing from behind, looking out at the ocean during a sunset. The sky is filled with golden light and scattered clouds. The man is wearing a white t-shirt, and the woman has long dark hair. The overall mood is peaceful and intimate.

# Recognizing LOVE

**L**ove is sometimes more of an awareness than an experience. It is when awareness arises that love turns into an experience. It is when I become aware that you love me that I am able to feel peace and calm when I think about you. There arises the realization of love- that you are there to love me and that I am there for you to love.

It is because I do not have enough knowledge or awareness about your love that I keep complaining about it all the time, that I become restless, unable to find satisfaction in your love. To recognize love, you do not even have to be physically present with me. We need not see each other or even hear each other. Even when we are in some distant land, separated by two walls, the ability of hearts to grow close enough to love comes from a mutual recognition of love. Yes, recognizing love is what matters.

For some people, the ones they love must always be by their side, must call all the time, give gifts and behave exactly as they wish. Only then do they believe that such love truly exists. One cannot judge whether this is right or wrong, because each person's way of loving is different. The ways of expressing love are also different. At the final moment of life, Socrates consoles his wife, saying that even your outbursts, complaints and grievances were love itself.

Whether near or far, know love. Recognize love even in grievances and complaints. Just as one recognizes the experience of God present in fog and rain, in pillars and in rust, recognize love too.

What we can do is create an atmosphere of love- whether at home or in workplaces. Human beings are meant to be connected through love. The absence of love disconnects people. Today, the reason relationships between us do not grow or even well-grown relationships wither away, is that the connections of love between us have been severed.





# Habits That Kill Slowly

Many things in our lives do not happen the way we expect. Illness and accidents are things that can disrupt and even destroy our lives very suddenly. But there are certain habits that destroy our lives slowly, little by little. Often, we do not even realize that they are harming our lives. When this is mentioned, many people immediately think of drinking alcohol and smoking. But those alone are not the habits that slowly kill our lives.

Some people lack the ability to ac-

cept reality. They live in dreams or in a state of carelessness. Reality is reality. No matter how much one tries to run away from it or cover it up, it remains. Death, the breakdown of love, business failure, failure in examinations- all these are realities. If one does not mentally accept and absorb these realities and move forward, life will come to a dead end. It is the reluctance to accept the consequences of realities that prevents such people from accepting reality itself.



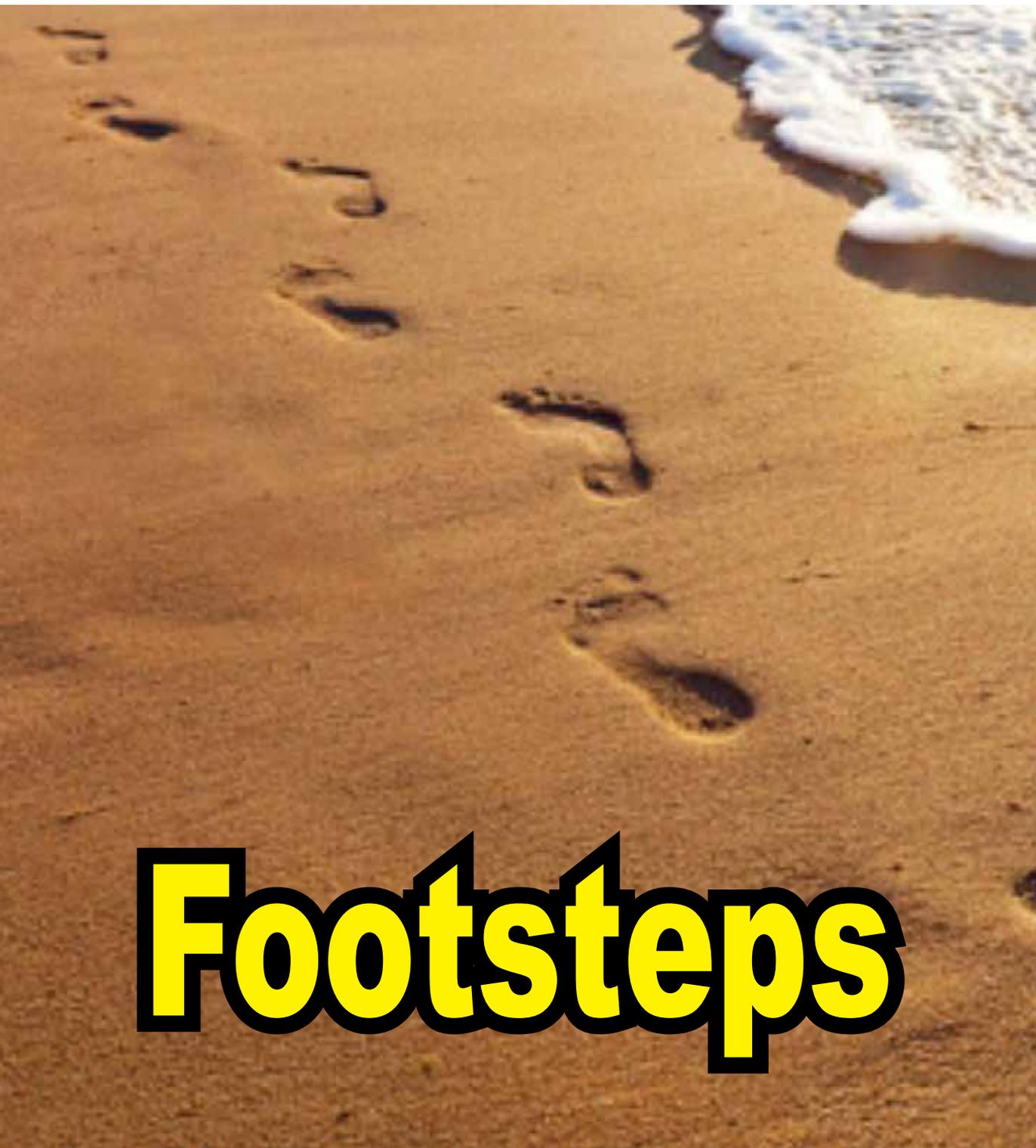
Lack of financial discipline is another reason. Spending more than one earns, accumulating unnecessary purchases, spending a major part of one's wealth to please others and to gain their affection- when a person loses financial control in such ways, they cannot succeed or rise in life. One should be able to set aside at least a portion of income as savings. Those who do not make conscious efforts to control expenses, build savings and increase income will gradually become poor and their lives will deteriorate.

Lack of patience and the inability to wait also harm some lives. There is a saying that rivers reveal themselves if one waits. But such people cannot wait. Likewise, they have not even a trace of tolerance. These two traits in one's

personality have a very large negative impact on success in life.

Some people break bridges and build walls. This destroys our lives. Mutual bridges are essential for growth, for give-and-take, for everything. But when bridges are destroyed, relationships disappear and opportunities for growth are lost. Many possibilities open up for us through relationships. By destroying relationships, possibilities too are destroyed. Those who do not pay attention to health matters and do not undergo regular medical checkups are also slowly destroying their lives. Exercise and regular medical checkups are necessary for everyone. Many people remain unhealthy and some are forced to end their lives halfway through, simply because of the absence of these.



A photograph of a sandy beach with several footprints leading towards the water. The waves are visible in the upper right corner. The word "Footsteps" is overlaid in large, bold, yellow letters with a black outline.

# Footsteps



Many may have heard of a detective who identifies and catches criminals based on footprints left in a courtyard and grains of sand clinging to their shoes...Sherlock Holmes. Although this is considered a special feature of his investigative method, it also makes something else clear: our footsteps mark the journeys we have travelled. When we walk along a muddy path, mud sticks to our footwear. When we walk along a beach and return, sugary sand clings to it. All these are also marks of the life we have lived.

Where we travel, how we travel and through what we travel - all these are important. It is true that wherever we go, certain traces remain. What kind of traces those are is what gives meaning to our journeys. I have seen some people, having reached the evening of their lives, grumbling and grieving with a heavy heart - "it should not have been so," "it was not right" - these are their laments. That means their footsteps went wrong somewhere. It also means they stumbled somewhere along the way.

No matter how much we try to hide or forget, time will leave behind certain traces. Those traces later become the basis on which we are judged in the name of the paths we took. May each of our footsteps be such that they do not leave behind traces of guilt or self-condemnation. If so, we will never have to carry the burden of the paths we have already walked.

# Success

Traditionally, the formula we have been taught is that our success lies in another person's failure. For me to succeed, you must fail. For me to come ahead, I must leave you behind. That is why we conduct competitions and identify and declare winners.

Money, fame, beauty, health, a job- these are the things we usually identify as the signs of successful people. There is no argument that all these are necessary in life. But the person who possesses all these does not necessarily become a winner. A person who is able to adopt a positive attitude and approach even while living through negative experiences and circumstances is the real winner.

If, in situations where anyone could mentally break down, a person is still able to radiate rays of optimism, that person is successful. If one has the strength to rise again even after falling many times and being trampled upon by many, that person is successful.

If a person is able to believe in themselves and feel respect for their own abilities, that person is successful. The one who realizes that there is still more to be gained than what has been lost is successful. Success is everyone's right. It is just that society does not consider everyone a winner.

Awards, certificates and cash prizes alone are not the signs of success in life. Successes are relative. This is where Punyalan's question from the Malayalam film 'Pranchiyettan' should come into our memory: "Were all those who were thought to be successful truly successful?"





**Hungry + Angry  
= Hangry**



**Hangry is not a human weakness; it is the combined result of body structure, hormones, mind, sleep and eating habits- this is what we need to recognize.**

“When I am hungry, I get angry” - this is something some people often say. Others say, “When I am hungry, I just can’t see straight.” What this means is that hunger makes them extremely restless. Hunger and anger are common to all living beings. But becoming angry specifically because of hunger is not that common. The state in which hunger and anger are experienced together is called 'hangry'. This word is used to describe becoming angry or irritated as a result of hunger.

Though all of us feel hunger and anger, this complex phenomenon- where hunger leads to anger- was recognized by combining the words hunger and anger and the term 'hangry' was added to the Oxford English Dictionary in 2018. Not only humans, but animals too can be hangry. One creature we can easily understand in this context is the rat. Haven't we seen rats running around or biting things that are not even edible for them? That too is a condition similar to hangry seen in humans.

Why do humans become hangry? It has been found that there are several biological and psychological reasons behind it. A sudden drop in blood sugar is one such reason. When glucose levels fall, the energy required by the brain reduces. Concentration and self-control decrease, while anger, intolerance and restlessness increase.

Hormonal influence is another factor. An increase in the hunger-stimulating hormone ghrelin and the stress hormone cortisol makes such people more restless. Those who are naturally quick to anger, those who lack the ability to handle stress or problems and those who find it difficult to control their emotions often become angry when

they are hungry. This happens because personality and mental makeup are closely related.

Lack of sleep is another reason. In people who do not get adequate sleep, hormonal balance gets disturbed. Control over hunger weakens. They show strong irritation even over small matters. Such people become hangry very quickly. Eating habits and lifestyle are another reason. Those who eat at irregular times, those whose diet lacks protein and fiber and those who consume excessive caffeine tend to show stronger reactions to hunger.

When one is hungry, the part of the brain responsible for emotional regulation (the prefrontal cortex) func-

tions less effectively. As a result, impulsive reactions- anger and negative thoughts-become stronger.

The next thing we need to look at is what can be done to avoid becoming hangry. One way is to eat nutritious food at small, regular intervals. Consume foods rich in protein and fiber. Get enough sleep and drink plenty of water- these are some of the remedies.

More important than all this is recognizing the connection between hunger and anger and understanding how harmful it can be. Hangry is not a human weakness; it is the combined result of body structure, hormones, mind, sleep and eating habits- this is what we need to recognize.



# Is Consciousness Exclusive to Humans?

“We need awareness, man-awareness!” This is a line most of us would have said to someone at least once in our lives. We have long believed that consciousness is the most important quality that makes a human being human and that consciousness belongs only to humans. However, new theories are emerging that question

everything we have known so far about the mind. Our old beliefs- that thinking, self-awareness and consciously experiencing sensations are exclusive to humans- are now being challenged.

These theories suggest that consciousness is not limited to humans alone; animals too possess it. So what is consciousness?



Consciousness is not merely thought or intelligence. It is the experience of 'I exist.' It is the inner experience of emotions like pain, happiness, fear and the meaningful perception of the external world. Science refers to this as 'subjective experience'. Recent experiments have revealed that dogs, cats, monkeys, dolphins, elephants and birds (especially crows and parrots) possess emotions, memories and the ability to make decisions. In other words, smaller forms of human-like consciousness are expressed in them as well.

The traditional view was that consciousness arises simply from brain activity. But according to newer theories, consciousness is not about the number of neurons alone; it depends on how information is integrated. The depth with which a system integrates information may determine the level of its consciousness. Humans have a higher level of consciousness, animals a lower level and very small organisms an even lower level.

This raises the question of whether

consciousness is a fundamental property. Some philosophical-scientific ideas suggest that consciousness is a basic feature of nature, like time and space.

A pressing question of the modern age is whether artificial intelligence (AI) can have consciousness. This question has become one of the most unsettling issues of the future. According to new theories, AI can think. Some researchers argue that if information integration reaches a sufficient level, machines too may possess a form of consciousness. This leads us more toward ethical questions than scientific ones. It may even frighten us at times, because the feeling that humans are no longer 'special' will alter moral responsibilities. The way we view animals and the way we treat machines will change.

New studies suggest that the walls declaring consciousness to be exclusive to humans are beginning to crumble. Still, rather than seeing this as an established science, it may be better understood as a revolution in thought that questions humanity's place itself.





# Strength Training Is Essential After Menopause

After menopause, major changes occur in the body and therefore it becomes essential for women to exercise more than before. Changes in hormone levels especially the reduction of estrogen negatively affect muscle mass, bone strength and metabolism. For this very reason, strength training becomes crucial at this stage. Let us look at why the body changes after menopause. As age increases, muscles naturally decrease. After menopause, this process accelerates. The reduction in estrogen increases the risk of osteoporosis. There is also a higher chance of fat accumulating around the abdomen. Strength training is the solution to all these issues. It is the most effective way to address all three together.

To begin with, light dumbbells should be used. Trying to lift heavier weights in the initial enthusiasm can cause harm. Increase weights gradually according to training and capacity. Weights should be increased only through consistent practice. Such exercises should be done at least three days a week. They can be divided into upper body, lower body, and core workouts. Squats, leg exercises, deadlifts and situps are all beneficial for bone health. A ten-minute warm-up and stretching after the workout are essential.

There is a common belief that exercise is effective only if the body aches. That is not true. Mild muscle soreness is normal, but severe pain and joint pain need attention. There are also simple and safe strength-training exercises that can be done at home without going to health clubs. Walking, swimming and yoga should be practiced along with strength training.

One important thing women should

pay attention to after menopause is protein. After this stage, the body requires more protein. Pulses, eggs, fish, dairy products, nuts and supplements as advised by a doctor should be included in the diet. Menopause is not a phase in which the body must become weak; it is a phase to maintain physical fitness wisely. It is not a fight against age, but a transitional phase toward an independent and active life.

*Source: Internet*

## Main Benefits of Strength Training

- Maintains and strengthens muscles
- Increases bone density
- Improves metabolism
- Enhances balance and stability
- Helps prevent falls and fractures
- Improves self-confidence and mental health





# The Many Meanings of a Kiss

Every kiss is a different kind of love. Every love, in itself, is different. That is why what is revealed through a kiss is love. How many kisses awaken care, affection, reverence, concern and respect. A kiss is the most intimate act of love that expresses intense emotion. Every kiss says many things about the relationship between two people.

A kiss on the cheek signifies closeness and fondness between two individuals. Such kisses exist in all cultures and are often considered equivalent to saying hello. A kiss placed on the cheek has the power to comfort someone who is distressed. A kiss on the forehead conveys the feeling, 'I feel safe with you.' It is one of the most important gestures that

increase intimacy and trust between two people. Some people kiss this way at the beginning of certain relationships.

Another is a kiss on the hand. This kind of kiss originated in European culture and is regarded as a sign of respect. A kiss where the lips meet the lips is a sign of the most intense and deeply profound bond between two people.

Kissing the ears and the neck is meant to awaken emotional and sensual love. These are more closely connected with sexuality. A kiss on the nose is a pure form of love, devotion and affectionate admiration that touches deeply.

Is there anyone in life who has never received a kiss? Is there anyone who has never wished, at least once, "If only you had kissed me," about someone?



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