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LIFESTYLE



Festive fitness

How to stay toned amidst celebrations

CELEBRATIONS CALL FOR never-ending sweets and if you want to watch your weight, it becomes difficult. Eat small portions and stay hydrated to avoid weight gain. Rupali 'Sim' Vaid, founder of Be Fitastic Fitness centre, shares tips on how to stay toned:

- Check your total calorie intake. Take a step back when you get closer to your maximum calorie intake value.
- Keep your hydration levels up. Low levels of hydration may encourage you to drink more of sweetened drinks when offered.
- Eat small portions as completely declining sweets or fried food can be difficult. Simply taste the sweets rather than eating to your heart's content.
- Keep a well thought out short and intense home workout handy for days you don't get enough physical activity or miss your gym schedule. Include movements such as push-ups, leg lifts, crunches and jumps.

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ALIGN YOUR LIFE

The Letter Of Joy

TODAY I RECEIVED a letter by post. Yes, it was not an email or a hello on Twitter. It was an actual letter that was mailed a few weeks ago. This one letter took me back to my childhood in an instant. I was very young when I was taught to write a letter. Those days were the days when there was no technology and to talk to my grandmother who lived in a tiny village, we had to book a call via an operator. I understood early on that the only way I could keep in touch with my family and friends was via writing letters. And so it became a ritual. Every Sunday I would write letters to my grandmother and my aunt. And my heart would fill up with joy when I would receive a reply.

I would hold the envelope for many hours, smelling the paper and feeling the handwriting. I would imagine how far and wide this letter had to travel to reach me. It flew over the ocean and climbed a mountain to deliver my grandmother's hug. The letter would be confirmation of the fact that I had people in my life that loved me besides my parents. It made me feel wanted in some strange way. Very soon I was introduced to the concept of pen pal and started exchanging letters with a girl my age in the USA. Though we never met or spoke on the phone, we became close friends within a few months sharing our lives and keeping secrets. For many years we wrote to one another until we lost touch.

What I remember the most from my childhood was how the habit of letter writing got me interested in reading books. I would read old classics and then quote things from the books in my letters. I would use new words, try and write something unique to make my grandmother laugh. Those days are long gone now.

These days anyone hardly uses letters or postcards. Everything is typed in simple fonts and emailed. There are no more envelopes to receive or scents to be smelled. If you want to make a point; you underline. You want to stress on something; you make it bold. You want to write elegant; you select italic. Everything is predictable.

And yet the best way to get children involved in reading and writing is by simply asking them to start writing letters. They can write to you or their friends. The purpose is to step away for a few moments from technology and feel something tangible. Open that dictionary and learn some new words and share them in a letter with someone. I am certain that in the next few years technology will be advanced and we might not even need to use our hands to type on the laptop. But the best way to retain the feeling of being alive is to start writing all over again; by hand and mail that letter to someone who is waiting for you to remember them.

Shivani Adalja is a Dubai-based well-being expert. She runs the Alignment Insitute which offers effective solutions that focus on stress management and overall wellbeing. Email align@shivaniadalja.com.



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