

L

LIFESTYLE

# Love yourself

*Clear sense of self worth keeps mental disorders at bay*

**RESEARCHERS FROM THE** University of California - Berkeley in the US have linked inflated or deflated feelings of self-worth to afflictions such as bipolar disorder, narcissistic personality disorder, anxiety and depression.

In a study of more than 600 young men and women, the team found that one's perceived social status - or lack thereof - is at the heart of a wide range of mental illnesses. "People prone to depression or anxiety reported feeling little sense of pride in their accomplishments and little sense of power," said senior author Sheri Johnson, a UC psychologist.

In contrast, people at risk for mania tended to report high levels of pride and an emphasis on the pursuit of power despite interpersonal



costs, she added. Previous studies have established that feelings of powerlessness and helplessness weaken the immune system, making one more vulnerable to physical and mental ailments.

Conversely, an inflated sense of power is among behaviour associated with bi-

polar disorder and narcissistic personality disorder.

Recent studies have found that people living in developed countries with the highest levels of income inequality were three times more likely to develop depression or anxiety disorders than their more egalitarian counterparts.

The findings make a strong case for assessing traits like "ruthless ambition", "discomfort with leadership" and "hubristic pride" to understand psychopathologies. The paper was published in the journal *Psychology and Psychotherapy: Theory, Research and Practice*. IANS

## BOOST YOUR IMMUNITY



*Take vitamin C if exercise makes you cough*

**IF YOU SHOW** symptoms of respiratory disorders such as cough or sore throat after a session of vigorous exercise, increasing your vitamin C intake could offer relief, says a study. A meta-analysis of three studies found that vitamin C significantly reduced post-exercise airway (the tubes that carry air into and out of the lungs) obstruction in participants who suffered from exercise-induced bronchoconstriction, the constriction of the airways in the lungs due to the tightening of surrounding smooth muscle.

"It seems reasonable for physically active people to test whether vitamin C is beneficial on an individual basis, if they have documented exercise-induced bronchoconstriction or suffer from respiratory symptoms such as cough or sore throat after taking vigorous exercise," said Harri Hemila from the University of

Helsinki in Finland.

The researchers found that an intake of vitamin C led to a reduction in post-exercise large-airway obstruction and small-airway obstruction. Hemila carried out an analysis of a study which had 12 participants. The participants had asthma, were on average 26 years, and suffered from exercise-induced bronchoconstriction.

Five other studies examined subjects who were under short-term, heavy physical stress and a meta-analysis revealed that vitamin C halved the incidence of respiratory disorder symptoms.

Another trial reported that vitamin C halved the duration of the respiratory disorder symptoms in male adolescent competitive swimmers. The study appeared in the journal *Allergy, Asthma & Clinical Immunology*. IANS

## ALIGN YOUR LIFE

### Value Of Spirituality

**M**ANY SPIRITUAL PRACTITIONERS I meet have a dilemma. They feel they can't charge clients because financial dealings are not part of spirituality. Partly, this used to be true. Hundreds of years ago, life was different. The barter system prevailed all over the world. The way of life was simple and uncomplicated. In many societies the older generation automatically got involved in spiritual practices after a certain age, to make way for younger generations to take over. It was a smooth transition and society was structured around this concept. Materialistic needs were few and people were content with what they had. It was easy to be a monk and give up materialistic pleasures. The society was accepting of people who wanted to pursue higher goals and spiritual life. Food and basic necessities were provided by the society for those who had a different vision about their lives.

But the world as we know it, is different now than what it was. Our way of life is more complex. The structure of society itself has changed. Whether we like it or not, money is important to all of us at some level. Pursuing things that excite us is difficult sometimes, because we are limited due to financial commitments. Everything that we need costs money - food, clothes, car, petrol. And so whether we wish to help someone or not, charging them for services is the only option we have.

I once had a client who was appalled by the fact that I was expecting money in return for sharing my expertise. "How can you charge money? You are doing work in the field of spirituality. You should be ashamed of yourself!" he grumbled. My answer was simple enough to make him turn a shade of red, "I agree, I will not charge you. But when I go to the supermarket today, can I inform them that I guided you through a problem and that I am a wellbeing practitioner. So they can give me the grocery for free. How about writing to the petrol company about my good deeds; so they can give me free petrol!" Needless to say he never mentioned such an absurd idea again.

Over the years I have realised that people value your advice more if they are paying for it. It helps them to build faith and trust in your work. So the next time you want to attend a theta healing class or learn reiki or join a meditation session, don't hesitate to pay. Someone has taken years to master the field and the only way for you to benefit would be to get a glimpse into their pool of knowledge, thereby expanding your own consciousness.

**Shivani Adalja is a Dubai-based wellbeing expert. She runs the Alignment Insitute which offers effective solutions that focus on stress management and overall wellbeing. Email [align@shivaniadalja.com](mailto:align@shivaniadalja.com).**

