



THE TIMES OF INDIA

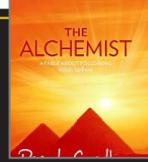
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TODAY'S EDITION

➤ From increasing attention span to promoting social skills, experts tell us the health benefits of playing outdoors
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➤ A young reviewer tells us how Paulo Coelho's 'The Alchemist' inspires us to get what we dream of achieving
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➤ Premier League: Ronaldo, Fernandes lift Manchester United into top four
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STUDENT EDITION
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2022

OBITUARY

ALVIDA Bappi Da...



Veteran singer-music director Bappi Lahiri – who wielded the baton at the age of 17 – passed away in Mumbai in the early hours of Wednesday, an official said. He was 69. Born Aloke Lahiri in Jalpaiguri, West Bengal in 1952 into a family of musicians, Lahiri's inclination towards music started when he was just three and started learning the tabla. Iconic singer Kishore Kumar, who sang popular songs for him like 'Pag Ghunghroo' and 'Chalte Chalte', was his maternal uncle. Lahiri is credited as a pioneer of synthesised disco music in Indian cinema during 70s to 90s with songs such as 'I am a disco dancer', 'Intehan ho gayi', and 'Laal dupatte wali'. He was also known for his love of gold chains, which he often wore around his neck for luck. President Ram Nath Kovind, PM Narendra Modi and several celebrities from the film industry mourned the death of the legendary music composer.

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Students to get only 2 chances, not 4, to crack JEE-M this year



Education

Engineering course aspirants will get two instead of four attempts to appear for the Joint Entrance Examination (JEE-Main) this year, as the National Testing Agency (NTA) has decided to conduct the entrance test only in April and May. Last year, the Agency conducted four sessions of JEE Main exam and the ministry of education had decided to increase the number of attempts to four from 2021 onwards.

Around 26 lakh engineering, medical and allied programme aspirants took these tests in 2021. The number of attempts allowed to a student was

JEE (Main), the multi-session computer-based test, is taken by students for getting admission in top engineering institutions as well as securing eligibility to appear for the JEE (Advanced), the entrance test for the Indian Institutes of Technology

increased from one to two in 2019 and to four from 2021. Some of the results show how aspirants significantly benefited from taking multiple shots at a high-pressure exam. The best of the four attempts was considered the candidate's final score in 2021. TNN

WHY THIS MOVE BY NTA

1 According to officials, the primary reason for offering four attempts last year was due to Covid-19. "Situation was different due to the second wave. However, things have improved and based on the current situation, it has been decided that two attempts would be as beneficial," they added. The registration will start by the end of this month

2 Another reason, sources said, is that due to the delay in most exams, including the class XII Board exams, the window for entrance has shrunk, if admissions are to be conducted on time this year. The CBSE class XII exams are to commence from April 26, while the Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations will conduct exams from the last week of April.

Pollution causing more deaths than Covid: UN

Pollution by states and companies is contributing to more deaths globally than Covid-19, a UN environmental report said, calling for "immediate and ambitious action" to ban some toxic chemicals. The report said pollution from pesticides, plastics and electronic waste is causing widespread human rights violations as well as at least nine million premature deaths a year, and that the issue is largely being overlooked.

Call for action



Environment

The coronavirus pandemic has caused close to 5.9 million deaths, according to data aggregator Worldometer

■ The UN report urges a ban on polyfluoroalkyl and perfluoroalkyl, man-made substances used in household products, such as non-stick cookware that have been linked to cancer and dubbed "forever chemicals" as they don't break down

■ It also recommends the clean-up of polluted sites and, in extreme cases, the possible relocations of affected communities – many of them poor, marginalised and indigenous – from so-called "sacrifice zones"

■ Sacrifice zones, originally used to describe nuclear test zones, was expanded in the report to include any heavily-contaminated site or place rendered uninhabitable by climate change

Ukraine marks 'Day of Unity' as Russia says end of military drills

Ukrainians raised national flags and played the country's anthem on Wednesday to show unity against fears of a Russian invasion that Western powers have said could be imminent. The yellow and blue banner fluttered outside schools, hospitals and many shops to mark 'Unity Day', a holiday President Volodymyr Zelenskyy created this week after Russia massed troops near borders.

Meanwhile, Russia announced an end of Crimea military drills, as troops were seen leaving units of the southern military district. Troops are moving to their permanent deployment points, after completing their participation in tactical exercises, Moscow's defence ministry said in a statement

■ On Tuesday, there were hopes for a breakthrough as President Vladimir Putin met Germany's Chancellor Olaf Scholz to explore a route to a negotiated solution and Moscow said it had begun to pull back some forces

■ But US President Joe Biden, who has ordered Washington's embassy in Kyiv closed and urged Americans to leave Ukraine, demanded that Russia prove its good intentions with a verifiable withdrawal

■ Hours after Moscow's announcement of a withdrawal, Ukraine said defence ministry online networks and two banks were



overwhelmed by a cyber attack

■ Western leaders have accused Moscow of positioning the troops in advance of a possible invasion of pro-Western Ukraine, warning that any attack would be met with severe economic sanctions

Instagram update lets users like Stories without sending DM

Meta-owned photo-sharing platform Instagram has announced a new feature called 'Private Story Likes' that will change how users interact with other people's Stories. Users who receive the update will be able to like someone's Stories without sending a DM. The news was announced by Instagram head Adam Mosseri on Twitter, reports 9To5Mac.

HOW IT WILL WORK

■ While currently any interactions through Instagram Stories are sent by direct messages to the user's inbox, the new likes system will work independently

■ As demonstrated in a video shared by Mosseri, the new interface will show a heart icon when you are viewing Stories in the Instagram app, the report said

■ Once you tap it, the other person will get a regular notification, not a private message, it added

■ Instagram's head said the system is built to be "private" and will not provide counting of likes. This, of course, is expected to differentiate Stories from regular Instagram posts, which will continue to have public counts of likes.



■ As for the feature, it will make it easier and more fun for users to show support and appreciation for content shared on Instagram Stories

■ The report said that the idea here is make sure that people can express more support for each other, but also to clean up DMs a little bit

Amy Schumer, Wanda Sykes and Regina Hall ALL SET TO HOST OSCARS 2022



Wanda Sykes, Amy Schumer and Regina Hall will host the 94th edition of the Academy Awards. The Oscars are returning to an emcee format for the first time since 2018, reported Deadline. Last year's telecast ceremony was the lowest-rated ever, hampered by pandemic con-

straints and held with reduced capacity at Los Angeles' Union Station instead of its normal home at the Dolby Theatre. This time, the Oscars return to full capacity at the Dolby as the latest Omicron variant continues to subside. Last week, it was confirmed that the Academy will not be requiring shots, just a recent negative test, to attend.



Jane Champion's Western 'The Power of the Dog', a psychological drama set in the director's native New Zealand, is leading the race to the 2022 Oscars with 12 nominations, followed by Denis Villeneuve's adaptation of 'Dune' with 10



Facebook renames its News Feed to Just 'Feed'

Meta has renamed the Facebook News Feed to just 'Feed'. The brand is making the change because the mention of 'news' in 'News Feed' was apparently confusing for some. The 'news' label has led some to believe that there are only news stories in the mainstream. "Starting from Feb 16, our News Feed will now be known as 'Feed'," announced the company on Twitter. "Happy scrolling!" it added.



The 'News Feed' name had been in place since the feature was first introduced more than 15 years ago



COVID "MAY NEVER GO AWAY", WILL LIKELY TRIGGER NEW WAVES: SCIENTISTS

As a virus-weary world limps through the third year of the outbreak, experts are sending out a warning signal: Don't expect omicron to be the last variant we have to contend with, and don't let your guard down yet. In the midst of a vast wave of milder infections, countries around the world are dialing back restrictions and softening their messaging. Many people are starting to assume they've had their run-in with Covid-19 and that the pandemic is tailing off. That's not necessarily the case.

➤ Omicron may appear to cause less severe disease than previous strains, but it is wildly infectious, pushing new case counts to once unimaginable records ➤ There's also no guarantee that the next mutation, and there will be more, won't be an offshoot of a more dangerous variant such as delta

COLUMN

BUILDING SELF-CONFIDENCE ACTIVELY



What parents do in infancy and early childhood have a direct correlation to how much self-confidence children grow up with and the self-confidence they have when they grow up to be adults. The more secure and loved a child feels, especially in infancy and early childhood, the more confident they grow up to be. For infants, this translates into a lot of hugs and cuddles from parents. The more warmly embraced, patted or cuddled a baby, the less stress levels they have and the more confident they grow up to be. The same is applicable in early childhood.

As children grow up, a secure household builds self-confidence. This also means parents who are in harmony and treat each other with respect. A child who grows up in a household full of strife is less likely to be self-confident than in a household where parents respect each other and even respect their differences.

The respect parents show children for their individuality is another factor for building self-confidence.



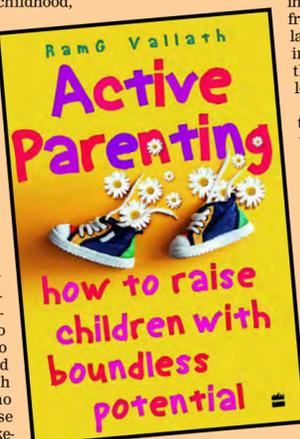
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Do not expect them to be replicas of yourself. Encourage them when they have a different opinion from yours by listening to their point of view and understanding their rationale.

Do not criticise children for their shortcomings. Instead, praise their achievements and praise the effort that went into the achievement. When confronted with failure, discuss the lack of effort or preparedness instead of making them feel that inherently they are losers.

You need to repeatedly tell children that you love them unconditionally, even when they make mistakes or when they come short in any field. In fact, this should be reinforced by your actions by being kind, and encouraging instead of judging and punishing when confronted with mistakes or shortfalls. Make sure you never make them feel you are disappointed in them, even if you are disappointed with their actions.

Never label your child as lazy, useless, stupid, ugly, skinny, fat, shy, weak or any other such negative label. Either by telling or implying this to them or by saying this to others in front of them.



POSITIVE PARENTING

Why you should avoid giving 'MAYBE' answers to kids

WITH TENTATIVE ANSWERS, YOU DISTRACT THE CHILD'S MIND FROM THE REAL QUESTION JUST FOR A MOMENT



"Can I go outside and play with friends?"
"Maybe. If you complete memorising the multiplication table of 2, then you can go"
(after completing the multiplication table)

"Can I go now?"

"It's too late, you can't go now"

With these tentative answers, you may have distracted the child's mind from the real question for a moment, but in reality you did not realise what impression this interaction has created on the child's mind.

You might have felt good that instead of saying no directly you succeeded in evading the request by putting another

condition which is unattainable. While you heave a sigh of relief with the win, you should contemplate on what wrong you have done with this approximate answer.

Most parents resort to tentative 'maybe' answers when the child insists on knowing about certain things or makes repeated requests for something they want.



YOU ARE YOUR CHILD'S ROLE MODEL

Kids consider their parents and elders as role models. For even an iota of doubt they look up to the elders for an answer. A mind as inquisitive as a child's always needs the exact answer. Nothing works in approximation or tentative for a kid.

At times this could trigger an emotional breakdown. When the child comes to you and tells you that the multiplication table has been memorised he or she should be allowed to play. It is wrong to dodge the child with another seemingly unattainable condition.

WHY IS IT BAD TO GIVE YOUR CHILD UNCERTAIN ANSWERS?

This is because how you deal with the child largely shapes the personality of the child. If he/she is used to living with uncertain conditions, it is likely that he or she will stop having faith in people all around or may develop an anticipation of the outcomes.

Kids who are always given tentative answers are left with uncertainty. The curious mind of the child tries to engage itself with whatever condition is put forward by the parents without having their own will power.

A 2019 research study published in the journal 'Frontiers in Psychology', suggests that when presented with uncertain situations people build mental simulations anticipating the outcome. "Most of the time, these imagined outcomes are biased towards negativity," the study says.

When parents try to conveniently evade the requests of a child with 'maybe', the child may stop trusting the parents.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

A straight 'yes' or a straight 'no' as an answer will make more sense than any explanation. Depending on how adamant the child is about the request and the nature of the request, give an affirmation but with a less stringent condition. The condition should not tire out the child, and it should not make the child do rigorous work. If you have constraints in fulfilling the demand of the child, explain it to the child properly and in a minimal way. Bring in the child to your discussion. Make him/her understand why certain demands are not being met on time. This will develop a friendly bond with your child and will also encourage the child to talk to you about his or her problems without any hesitation.



ASK THE EXPERT

My daughter is a people pleaser

QUERY: My daughter takes a lot of time to open up. And even when she opens up, she is always trying to please people. Even in her friend's group, she always agrees with what others say even if she doesn't feel that way. How can I help her be her own person?



Response by psychologist: It is understandable that as a parent you would want your daughter to grow up to become a person with her own mind, who can judge situations and make her own choices without any outside influence. However, children go through phases where they find themselves closer to their friends and peers rather than their parents. They also believe their friends to understand them more and hence trust their decisions and choices. In other cases, children feel pressured to accept and go with their friends' choices in order to fit in.

While this is not uncommon, it is important to make sure your daughter is able to speak for herself, and this can only happen when you talk to her, not as a parent but as a friend.

Making her understand that she as an individ-

ual is unique, valued and loved and that her choices matter will make her more confident in going after what she wants, even if it is against her friends' wishes.

People often tend to care about others' happiness over their own, when they do not feel confident in themselves. While confidence comes with time, make sure you groom your daughter in ways that helps her shine and feel stronger. This can happen by helping her pursue hobbies and tasks she is passionate about. People often tend to be most confident when they enjoy what they are doing and are good at it.

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FIVE HEALTH BENEFITS OF PLAYING OUTSIDE

FITNESS FUNDAS

These days children have few open spaces to play. However, even your building compound as an outdoor play area may suffice since there are quite a few scientific benefits to playing outside. Read on...



Improves Vision

A study has found that children who spend time outside have better distance vision than those who primarily play indoors.

Increases Attention Span

Studies have shown that green outdoor settings can reduce ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder) symptoms in children. Exposure to natural settings through after-school and weekend activities may be widely effective in reducing attention deficit symptoms in children. Also, the fact that kids want to investigate things helps them in being more self directed.

Reduces Stress

Spending time outside playing is a huge outlet for stress. It is relaxing and healing. There is even research showing that seeing green spaces can help reduce kids' stress levels.

Promotes Social Skills

Experts believe that getting kids outside promotes a wide range of skills. On a playground not everyone gets to go down the slide first. The fact that kids negotiate among themselves promotes social skills, executive functions and behavioural learning.

Provides Vitamin D

Many kids suffer from vitamin D deficiency. This vitamin has several health benefits, including preventing kids from future bone problems, diabetes and even heart disease. The sun is a great source of the essential vitamin. So, have your kids play outside for a few minutes without sunscreen - around 20 minutes - and then you can apply a sunblock. TNN

