

MONTHLY

YOUTH E-MAGAZINE

TEEN DIGEST



Festive Edition

Vol. 1, Issue 1

FOUNDER'S NOTES

As a teenager, I remember the days of designing a school magazine as part of our summer break project –the good old pre-digital days when paper cuttings and handwritten content filled the pages. As the editor, I spent hours piecing together articles and images, dreaming of how each issue would look in the hands of my peers.

Now, as I work on the first issue of Volume 1 of this digital magazine, I'm filled with nostalgia for those simpler times. But the excitement is the same–only now, we're bringing stories, creativity, and ideas to life in a whole new digital world.

Why write a youth magazine? Because this space belongs to you–the next generation. In an era of digital extravagance, I want this magazine to be a platform where you can explore, learn, and express yourselves freely. From navigating mental health to celebrating creativity, this magazine is your guide to what matters most.



And this is just the beginning! I can't wait to see where we'll take it together. Your ideas and creativity will shape future issues–so feel free to share your thoughts, submissions, and feedback to info.justbeingme.in@gmail.com

Let's light up this space with your voice!

Drachi
SACHDEV

Founder and Editor-In-Chief

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THIS MONTH'S FEATURE

In The Limelight:

Richa Kedia



In this edition, we feature Richa Kedia, a passionate wildlife illustrator who transformed her love for nature and art into a fulfilling career. From field sketching in Rajasthan to capturing animals' essence on canvas, she shares insights into the world of wildlife illustration and advice for aspiring artists.



How did you first become interested in wildlife illustration? Was there a specific moment that sparked your passion?

I have loved art and nature since childhood. We used to go hiking around Vasant Kunj (where I grew up) and the Himalayas, exploring caves, collecting mica, etc. I also loved painting and won many art competitions at school. So the passion was always there, so no specific moment when it sparked. But yes, the alarming rate at which we are losing nature made me value it even more and pursue it as a profession.

Could you tell us a little about your journey from learning to draw to becoming a professional illustrator? Were there any significant challenges or turning points?

We all draw as children. Being an introvert I was drawn to it even more. It was always my mode of expression.

The encouragement I received from my teachers and winning art competitions never made me leave art. I have been practicing and learning art throughout life and even today I continue to learn and grow.

It is quite different when you paint for yourself versus professionally for someone else as an illustrator. Clients can be very demanding and can outright reject your work. Also pricing your artwork, making a living from it, exerting your copyrights, etc are many challenges faced in professional work. But since I started painting professionally, I paint daily, instead of just the weekends like earlier; and thanks to the daily practice, my art has grown tremendously over the past couple of years. That makes me happy.

Why do you think it's important for art to play a role in addressing global environmental challenges?

Art is a powerful medium and has a universal language. Thus through art, so much can be conveyed in a second to a large audience, not restricted to any region or language. With the growth of social media and other online platforms, the reach of visual art will only increase.

Thus, art can be used in various ways to create awareness about environmental issues and also spring them to action. I use

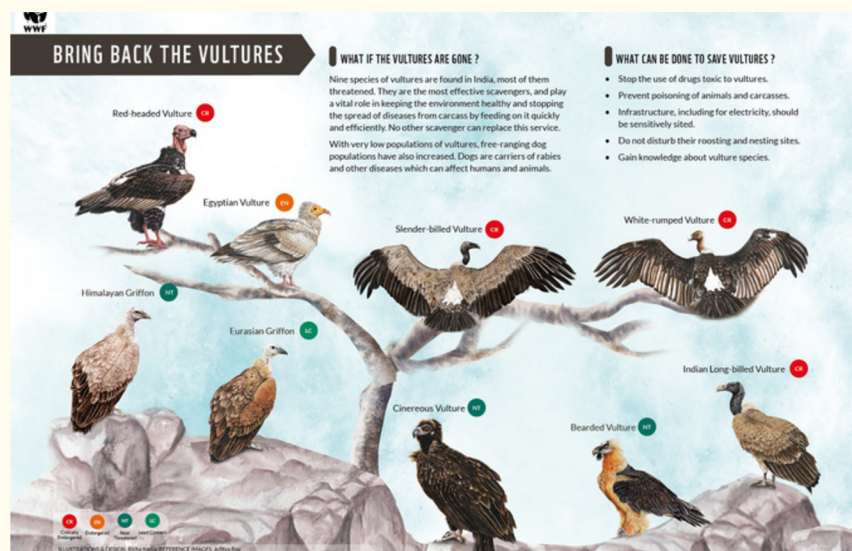
art to create awareness about nature and its fascinating forms and make people fall in love with nature. After all, one will not protect what you don't love! However, other artists use art differently to create awareness of environmental challenges, like Green Humour uses cartoons and humour.

Did you always know you wanted to pursue art professionally, or was there a different path you initially envisioned?

I come from a service class family and art was never considered as a profession. I am a Chemical Engineer by qualification and have worked in the corporate world for almost a decade when I decided to quit and pursue art professionally and not restrict it over the weekends. But I didn't know any artist personally and wasn't sure how one could make a living making art. I just decided to give it a shot and was initially amazed that someone would pay me to paint, an activity I could happily engage in all the time.

Could you walk us through your creative process? How do you go from the initial idea to the finished artwork?

Ideally, I like to spend time in the field observing the flora/fauna and its habitat and making field sketches. I would then combine the field sketches to make several thumbnails and then zero down on the



composition. Then finally execute the painting in the medium of my choice. I have attached the field sketches and the final painting of the demoiselle crane below. I spent a lot of time observing and sketching them at Khichan, Rajasthan before painting them.



Do you have any unique techniques or tools you use to capture the essence of the animals and nature you illustrate?

Science (anatomy), observation, and practice.

How do you stay motivated and continue to evolve as an artist?

Nature is very fascinating to me. Each time I spend time outdoors, I discover something new. For instance last time I was out birding at Sultanpur, I saw a snake catch a large fish in water. At first glance, we had mistaken the snake for a snake bird-darter. This was the first time I had witnessed something like that, but it was truly fascinating and least expected. Spending time in nature, rather than only inside my studio is the motivation I need.

I am never satisfied with my own art. So I am constantly trying to learn new techniques, the anatomy of different birds and animals, and study their movements. One continues to study and evolve throughout life in art.

What advice would you give to young people who want to pursue a career in art, particularly those interested in wildlife or



nature-focused illustration?

In the well-connected global world we live in today, it is not difficult to pursue a career in any field, including art. But please remain true to your passion and focus on learning and improving your art initially instead of focusing on immediate appreciation. If you are interested in nature-focused illustration, please do spend time outdoors observing wildlife and making field sketches, as then your learning curve will be very steep.

What skills or traits do you think are essential for aspiring artists?

Patience and practice.

No one can become an art maestro overnight. So keep learning and practicing but don't expect immediate returns and appreciation. Practice and perseverance will pay off at some point in life.



TRENDING NOW

WWW.JUSTBEINGME.IN

This Diwali, brands are tugging at heartstrings with emotional and relatable campaigns. A smartphone maker urges people to "Unite For" by putting their phones away and spending quality time with loved ones.

Nestle Alpino's campaign features Bollywood stars, positioning chocolates as the perfect Diwali gift.

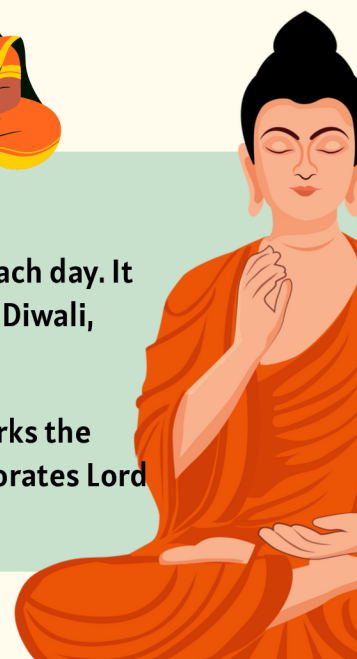
Coca-Cola celebrates sibling bonds, while Pepsi introduces festive packaging with regional languages, deepening its local connect. These campaigns emphasize family, love, and togetherness, striking a personal chord with viewers.


This is the perfect chance to put away your phones and connect with those closest to you. Like the campaigns from these well-known brands which highlight family bonds, you can create your own moments by sharing laughs, stories, or even helping out with the celebrations. The festive season is all about togetherness - make it count with your loved ones!



DIWALI FACTS

- Diwali is a five-day festival with unique traditions for each day. It includes Dhanteras, Naraka Chaturdashi (Choti Diwali), Diwali, Govardhana Puja and Bhai Dooj.
- Diwali is celebrated not only by Hindus. For Sikhs, it marks the release of Guru Hargobind Ji, and for Jains, it commemorates Lord Mahavira's attainment of Nirvana.





DID YOU KNOW?

UNIQUE DIWALI RITUALS FROM GUJARAT

- **Firecracker Showdown:** In Vejalpur village, Panchmahal, Gujarat, people follow the daring tradition of throwing firecrackers at each other in a thrilling display of festivity and energy. ⚡
- **Herbal Smoke for Health:** In the tribal regions of Narmada and Baruch, Diwali is celebrated as a symbol of good health. They burn herbal wood, and the smoke is believed to keep the community healthy, symbolizing the connection between hard work and well-being. 🌿

PRIORITIZE TASKS BEFORE FESTIVITIES

With Diwali and Bhai Dooj celebrations just around the corner, it's easy to get distracted from your studies. To avoid last-minute stress, let's get you sorted with these simple life hacks:

- Tackle difficult subjects first to avoid last-minute stress.
- Break larger topics into smaller, manageable chunks.
- Use techniques like the Pomodoro method (25 mins study, 5 mins break) for better focus.
- Set clear goals each day, prioritizing based on difficulty.

Completing tougher tasks early allows you to enjoy festivities guilt-free! Balance study with breaks for festive fun.

HACK YOUR LIFE



The Real World: Issues That Matter



Relatives Got Comments? We've Got You Covered

BY PRACHI SACHDEV

The festive season is filled with lights, laughter, and love – but let's be real, it can also bring out those relatives who feel the need to "comment" on your appearance. For teens and young adults, this can be an awkward and confidence-testing time. These seemingly "harmless" remarks on weight, skin, or looks can be hard to shake off, and even though they may come from a place of familiarity, they often leave us feeling self-conscious. But here's the good news: you don't have to let those comments define you.

If you find yourself facing these unwanted opinions, here's how to stay body-positive and keep the focus on what truly matters this festive season. Plus, we've got a few witty comebacks to keep your confidence high and your peace intact.

I. Remember: Your Worth Is Not Open for Discussion

Sometimes, people forget that our bodies aren't topics of conversation. So, if someone throws a comment your way, let it pass right over you. Remind yourself that your worth isn't tied to others' opinions—it's tied to your own self-love. Here are some confidence-boosting comebacks for those "harmless" comments:

- "Well, I'm all about that self-love journey, and I'm loving every step!"
- "I didn't realize my body was open for discussion! Let's talk about something that matters."

A Healthy Dose of Self-Love

"I didn't realize my body was open for discussion! Let's talk about something that matters."

"Comments like that say more about you than they do about me."

"I'm just here to enjoy the festival, not to fit anyone's standards."

"If my body bothers you, that's more of a 'you' problem!"

"Thanks, but I'm too busy celebrating to worry about my looks!"

"Oh, I'm way too busy being awesome to worry about that!"



These gentle but firm replies make it clear: your body isn't up for review. You're here to celebrate, not to cater to anyone else's idea of what you should look like.

2. Embrace Self-Compassion and Celebrate You

When it comes to body positivity, being kind to yourself is everything. Treat yourself the way you would a friend—encouraging, compassionate, and patient. If someone tries to poke at your appearance, use these gems to steer the conversation back to self-love:

- "Oh, I'm way too busy being awesome to worry about that!"
- "I'm happy as I am, but thanks for the unsolicited advice!"

These light-hearted comebacks are a reminder that your happiness and confidence come from within, not from others' judgments. Remember, you're celebrating who you are—not fitting into someone else's standards.

3. Confidence Is Key—Own It!

There's no better accessory this season than self-confidence. And if someone's comment has you feeling self-conscious, remember: those words don't define you. Instead, focus on what makes you feel good. When those conversations come up, respond with a little humor and a whole lot of confidence:

- "I'm just here to enjoy the festival, not to fit anyone's standards."
- "Confidence looks good on everyone! You should try it sometime."

By shifting the focus to confidence, you remind others (and yourself) that the best glow comes from within. You're here to be yourself, and that's more than enough.

memories, enjoying time with loved ones, and being kind to yourself. A few final comebacks to help you keep the peace:

- "Thanks, but I'm too busy celebrating to worry about my looks!"
- "Comments like that say more about you than they do about me."

Staying body positive isn't about ignoring your feelings but choosing to celebrate who you are, inside and out.

So, this festive season, let self-love be the loudest voice in the room. Shine bright, stay confident, and remember: you've got this.

4. Shift the Narrative

Sometimes, it helps to simply reframe these conversations. Festivities are meant to bring joy and connection, so don't let any negativity linger. With these responses, you can gracefully handle any comment and keep the mood positive:

- "If my body bothers you, that's more of a 'you' problem!"
- "I'm perfectly designed, just like the universe intended."

5. Let Self-Love Be Your Guide

At the end of the day, festive gatherings are about joy, togetherness, and gratitude. Shift your focus to what truly matters: creating





Be Kind To Your Mind

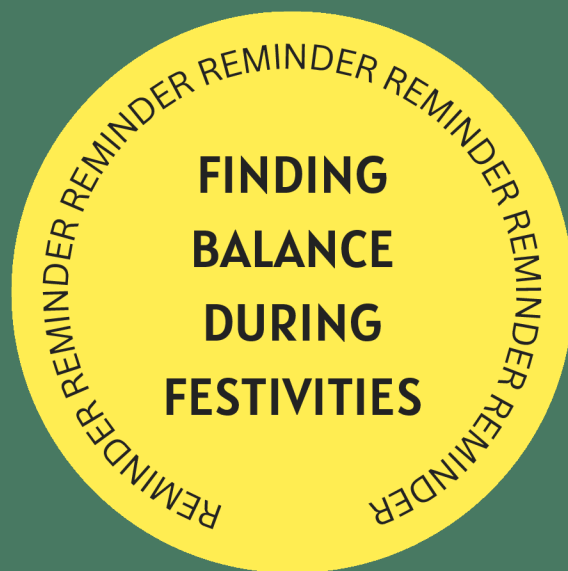
MIND MATTERS

Balance Expectations

With Diwali and family gatherings around the corner, social and family pressures can build up. So, how to manage these expectations?

Simply, by setting boundaries and prioritizing your own well-being.

Remember, it's okay to say "no" and take breaks when needed. Focus on what makes you comfortable and maintain a balance between fun and self-care.



Mindful Breaks

Between study sessions and festive events, try short meditation or breathing exercises to stay calm.

Just a few minutes of mindfulness can help you recharge and maintain focus without feeling overwhelmed.

DEALING WITH LONELINESS OR ANXIETY DURING DIWALI

BY RUPANSHI KALRA



COPING WITH LONELINESS OR SADNESS

Acknowledge Your Feelings: Take a moment to sit with your emotions. Journaling can be a helpful way to explore and understand why you might be feeling this way.

Reach Out: Connecting with friends or family members who understand can be incredibly comforting. Even if you don't feel like socializing, a simple text or call can help bridge that gap.

Engage in a Hobby: Redirecting your energy into something you enjoy—like painting, reading, or watching a favorite show—can provide a much-needed distraction and lift your spirits.

Practice Mindfulness: Techniques such as deep breathing, meditation, or yoga can help center your thoughts and reduce anxiety, allowing you to find peace amidst the chaos.

Diwali is often heralded as the festival of lights, a time for joy, celebration, and togetherness. However, it's important to recognize that not everyone feels this festive spirit. Many teens experience feelings of loneliness, anxiety, or sadness during this time, whether due to personal struggles, family issues, or the pressure to conform to societal expectations. If you find yourself feeling a bit off this Diwali, know that you're not alone and it's perfectly okay to feel this way.

Why It's Okay to Not Always Feel Happy

The societal expectation that we should be happy during celebrations can sometimes make us feel even more isolated. It's crucial to acknowledge that emotions are complex and can coexist. Just because the world is celebrating doesn't mean you have to force yourself to feel happy. Recognizing your feelings is the first step in normalizing them. It's okay to be in a place of reflection rather than jubilation.

Also, we are all individuals, and our responses to festivals may vary due to personal experiences and personalities. For instance, if I have social anxiety, Diwali—a social festival—might make me feel anxious at the thought of meeting and greeting people. Or, if I am living far from family, the thought of being alone during the festival might intensify feelings of loneliness.



SELF-CARE TIPS FOR FAMILY GATHERINGS

Set Boundaries: If family gatherings feel overwhelming, it's okay to set boundaries. Decide how long you'll stay and when you need a break.

Create an Exit Plan: If you find yourself feeling anxious, have a plan in place to step away for a few moments to collect your thoughts.



Focus on Small Moments: Instead of feeling pressured to enjoy every aspect of the gathering, focus on small, positive interactions—like a meaningful conversation with a relative or a moment of laughter with a sibling.

Have a Support Person: If possible, bring along a friend or a family member you feel comfortable with. Having someone who understands can make the experience more manageable.



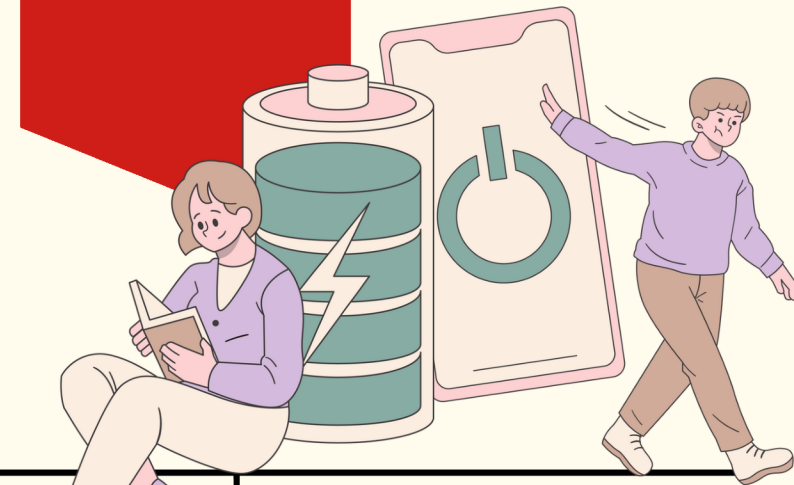
Diwali is a time of celebration, but it's also a time that can bring up difficult emotions for many. Remember, it's okay not to feel happy all the time, and your feelings are valid. By acknowledging and addressing these feelings, you can find your own way to navigate the festive season. Embrace self-care and seek support; you deserve to feel at peace, regardless of the celebrations around you.



PLUGGED IN: THE DIGITAL EDITION

Digital Detox: How to **Unplug and Recharge** After the Festive Season

After days of festive fun, nonstop updates, and scrolling through everyone's celebration posts, it's easy to feel a little screen-weary. With all the photos, messages, and notifications, our phones and social media can go from a source of connection to a source of burnout. So, if you're feeling drained, maybe it's time for a mini digital detox. Here are some practical ways to unplug, recharge, and regain balance—without feeling like you're missing out.



1. START SMALL: SET REALISTIC DIGITAL BOUNDARIES

Going cold turkey on your phone might sound good, but it's usually not practical. Instead, start with realistic boundaries. Begin by scheduling small tech-free periods during your day, like the first hour after you wake up or right before bed. Set "no-screen zones" around activities that relax you, like meals or a walk outside. These little breaks give your mind time to reset without the temptation to check your phone every few minutes.



2. TURN OFF NON-ESSENTIAL NOTIFICATIONS

One of the easiest ways to detox is to minimize distractions. Go into your settings and turn off notifications for non-essential apps like social media, shopping, or games. That way, you won't feel the urge to constantly check your phone. You can also use the "Do Not Disturb" mode for longer breaks. Not seeing those constant pop-ups is a simple but effective way to reduce digital clutter and give yourself a breather.

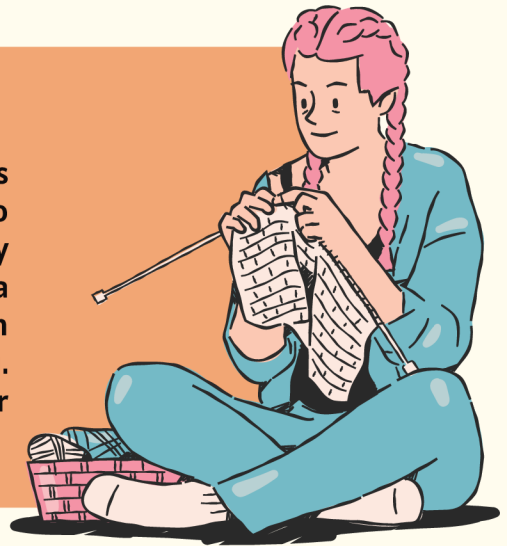
3. TRY SCREEN TIME-TRACKING APPS

Sometimes, we're on our phones more than we realize. Apps like Screen Time (for iPhone), Digital Wellbeing (for Android), and Moment help track the time you're spending on each app. These tools break down your screen time and give you a real look at where your hours are going. Set daily limits for apps that drain your time, like social media, and let the apps remind you when you're approaching your limit. Small reminders can be powerful motivators!



4. REDISCOVER "OFFLINE" HOBBIES

Part of the reason we end up on our phones so much is that we're bored! Use this detox as a chance to rediscover hobbies that don't involve screens. Try reading a book you've been putting off, going for a walk or bike ride, learning a new recipe, or even picking up a creative hobby like knitting or journaling. Filling your time with things that don't involve your phone can be surprisingly refreshing.



SET APP-FREE DAYS

Consider choosing one day a week to go completely app-free. Sundays are a great option for this. No social media, no endless scrolling—just a break for your brain. If that sounds too tough, start with a half-day break, and build up as you feel more comfortable. An app-free day can become something to look forward to, a mini-detox that resets your focus.

PRACTICE MINDFUL TECH USE

If a full detox isn't your thing, aim for mindful usage. Instead of jumping straight to Instagram or Snapchat when you're bored, ask yourself why you're reaching for your phone. Are you looking for a genuine connection, or are you just scrolling out of habit? Being aware of why and how you're using your device can make a big difference in curbing mindless use.



Remember, detoxing from screens isn't about perfection; it's about balance. Reducing screen time doesn't mean you can't enjoy the perks of tech—it just means being mindful. Celebrate the small steps, like spending one less hour online or enjoying a day with minimal notifications. Every bit of balance helps you recharge and reconnect with yourself.

A digital detox is all about giving yourself space to recharge after the festive season. By setting boundaries, tracking your usage, and adding screen-free hobbies to your routine, you'll find a digital balance that works for you. Unplugging isn't about missing out; it's about making room for what truly matters.

Unwind & Create

DIY RANGOLI

- Use rice flour or colored sand to make bright, intricate designs.
- Get creative with household items like stencils or make your own using cardboard.
- Add a unique touch by placing small flower petals or colored grains in the design.
- Try using chalk to outline your pattern first, then fill in the colors.



DIYA DECORATION

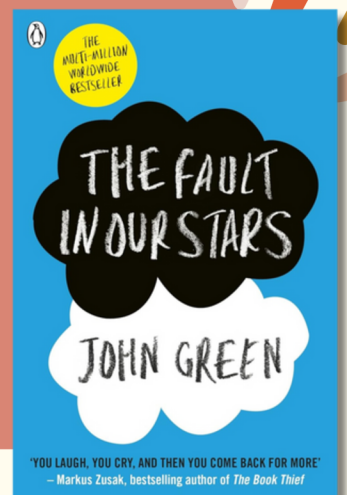
- Paint plain clay diya with vibrant colors using acrylic paints.
- Add sparkle by applying glitter to the wet paint or glue on tiny mirrors or sequins.
- Experiment with geometric designs, floral patterns, or even personalized initials.
- Finish with a coat of clear varnish to seal and add shine!

LIT READS; OUR TOP PICK

"The Fault in Our Stars" by John Green. It's a deeply emotional and relatable novel that explores love, loss, and the importance of living life to the fullest, even when faced with difficult challenges.

"While this book is a romance, it is very beautifully written. It is a page-turner and was a wonderful read. I highly recommend this book for teenagers ages 13-18."

— [Sourced from an online platform]





From Festivities to Freshness: Post-Diwali Cleanup Tips

BY SAMEERA SATIJA

Welcome to our guide on embracing a more sustainable lifestyle! Discover simple yet impactful changes that can make a big difference for our planet.

In the primary school days, you all have learned that Diwali is the festival of lights. It's a celebration of the victory of good over evil, light over darkness, and knowledge over ignorance. Diwali is the biggest festival of India, especially in North India, and it is celebrated across all communities.



JOIN US IN MAKING A DIFFERENCE!
Adopt these tips for a positive impact.

Post Diwali Arrangements

01 Rangoli Flowers and Puja Flowers: Flowers from Rangoli, other decorations and Diwali Puja samagri can be composted and the compost can be used in your house plants. Please be mindful and avoid immersing religious waste into the rivers or water bodies. It pollutes the water bodies and harm aquatic living beings. Marigold flowers can be put out in the earthen pots and within few days they will bloom out into flowers again. Composting tutorials are easily available on You tube.

02 Diyas and God idols: There are various ways to mindfully discard the Diyas and God idols after Diwali.

- (a) You may wash the diyas and keep them for next Diwali.
- (b) You may put the diyas at each corner under the planters to give them raised platform
- (c) You may crush them roughly and keep them to be put at the base for drainage while starting new pot.
- (d) You may crush them finely into powder and mix small quantity of this powder in soil of your house plants or in the garden soil.

Word 'Diwali' resonates with many rituals and activities like cleaning and decorating homes, lighting, rangolis, exchanging gifts and, of course, having fun time with family and friends.

But amid global warming, climate crises on global level and dangerous AQI at local level, we must acknowledge the effect of our life style choices and our festival's customs (firecrackers and their contribution to air pollution in this case) have on our planet. We must take smaller steps to reduce our individual carbon footprints and move into the new year with a resolution to adopt sustainable lifestyle.

Here, I put down few environment-conscious ways to take care of Pooja Samagri and other Post Diwali arrangements.

These tiny steps foster the true spirit of the festive season and strengthens the collective action to build a sustainable future.

Adopting a sustainable lifestyle involves taking a mindful approach to everything we do, eat, buy, and throw away. We must consider the 'how's' to reinvent our traditions and festivals to reduce the burden they put on our planet and change our ways to live mindfully not only during festivals, but every day of our existence on the earth.

OUR CONTRIBUTORS



AS A DEDICATED COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGIST, RUPANSHI SPECIALIZE IN FOSTERING THE EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHILDREN. WITH A STRONG BACKGROUND IN PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT AND INDIVIDUALIZED MULTIDISCIPLINARY METHODS, SHE WORK TO ADDRESS AND OVERCOME CHALLENGES THAT AFFECT CHILDREN'S WELL-BEING AND LEARNING. HER APPROACH INTEGRATES THERAPEUTIC TECHNIQUES WITH TAILORED STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT EACH CHILD'S UNIQUE NEEDS AND STRENGTHS. COMMITTED TO CREATING A NURTURING AND SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT, SHE AIMS TO EMPOWER CHILDREN TO BUILD RESILIENCE, CONFIDENCE, AND A LOVE FOR LEARNING. HER GOAL IS TO HELP EACH CHILD ACHIEVE THEIR FULLEST POTENTIAL AND THRIVE EMOTIONALLY AND MAKE THEM A HAPPIER INDIVIDUAL.



SAMEERA SATIJA IS A RESIDENT OF GURGAON AND HAS BEEN WORKING IN THE AREA OF WASTE MANAGEMENT, SUSTAINABLE AND CHEMICAL FREE LIFESTYLE AND ENVIRONMENT FOR THE PAST FEW YEARS. SHE IS AN EX-AUDITOR OF CENTRAL GOVT'S AUDIT DEPTT. SHE IS CERTIFIED SUSTAINABILITY COACH AND THE FOUNDER OF 'CROCKERY BANK FOR EVERYONE' INITIATIVE. HER INITIATIVE WAS ACKNOWLEDGED AND FELICITATED BY MINISTRY OF STEEL GOI UNDER THE THEME 'SUSTAINABILITY VISION 2030'. HER INITIATIVE ALSO BAGGED APPLAUSE FROM CELEBRITIES LIKE SONU SOOD, GAUTAM GAMBIR AND RICHA ANIRUDH. SHE ALSO RUNS TRASH ZERO WASTE CONSULTANCY SERVICES WITH THE MOTTO TO PROVIDE SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTS AND SOLUTION TO ALL THE SUSTAINABLE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY/INDIVIDUAL. SHE IS ASSOCIATED WITH A NON PROFIT ENTITY 'ASTITVA' WHICH IS MEANT TO PROMOTE REPURPOSING AND UPCYCLING FABRIC/TEXTILE WASTE, RECREATING EXISTING CLOTHES/FURNISHING AND PROVIDING SUSTAINABLE GIFTING OPTIONS TO CORPORATES AND COMMUNITY.

Thank You for Being Part of Our Journey!

To all our readers,

As we close the pages of this first issue, I want to extend a heartfelt thank you for taking the time to join us on this new adventure. Teen Digest was created with you in mind—to be a space of creativity, inspiration, and connection. Your support and interest in what we've created mean everything, and we're excited to keep bringing stories, ideas, and insights that speak to you.

Whether this magazine brought you a new perspective, a moment of reflection, or simply a spark of joy, know that you are at the heart of every page we create. And because Teen Digest is all about amplifying your voice, we'd love to feature your creative talents. If you'd like to share your artwork, digital art, poetry, or short stories, please send them to info.justbeingme.in@gmail.com for a chance to be featured in our December issue.

Thank you for being part of Teen Digest. Here's to many more issues filled with creativity, connection, and inspiration!

"Stay curious, stay inspired, and remember—the world is better with your creativity in it."

With endless gratitude,

Prachi
SACHDEV

Founder and Editor-In-Chief