

Scribbles

Bringing colour to your lives

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From the Editor's desk...

Dear colleagues,

Hobby is something that one likes to do in one's spare time. The Oxford Dictionary defines hobby as a favourite activity that a person does for pleasure and not as his or her regular business. In short, hobby is one's favourite pastime.

Given the pandemic situation, with educational institutions resorting to on-line classes, people adapting to work from home, it seemed quite appropriate that we look at Hobbies. That's the background to this issue.

When I look back at my life, through the early stages to now, I have adopted to different hobbies at different times. Very few have sustained over the years, i.e. from childhood to now. Many interests have been dropped along the way. Some interests are lying dormant, waiting to be re-kindled at an appropriate time.

The contributions in this edition have been interestingly grouped – into hobbies that are creativity drivers, skill builders, fitness enhancers, life changers and stress busters.

I agree with the writers that having a hobby is important. It helps to broaden our skills. It shapes our personality. It provides avenues to channelise our thoughts, creativity etc. It acts as a stress buster. It opens our minds to look at things differently. Some hobbies help to socialise. Sports and fitness related hobbies are resorted to by many today.

The choice of a hobby is based on our expectations, objectives, time required, expenditure and ease of learning and sustaining. Whatever be it, it is important to have hobbies and spend adequate time on it and develop oneself.

So, if some of you don't have one, please start looking at options today. The Internet has a long list of interesting hobbies! So your search could end there! For those who already pursue hobbies, please don't give them up. Based on the quality of the inputs we've received in this issue, I'm tempted to say that we could run another one, in which we will expect new contributors and that's your chance to share with us.

So until the next issue,

Stay Healthy. Stay Safe.

Take all precautions required and encourage everyone around you to do so.

Sanada Jagan

**Hobbies
Special**



Hobbies maketh a man

Let me start with an advice, find 2 hobbies that will do the following:

1. Bring out your creativity
2. Build your skills

Life without a hobby is like food without salt. There are two parts in everyone's existence: life and living. The things we do in our life outside work tell about our performance at work.

Back to my advice, bring out your creativity. It could be playing a musical instrument, painting, sketching, etc. This makes you realise that you are much more than what you do as part of your everyday routine. Also, this acts as stress-buster. After a tiring week, when you finally do some artwork attaching yourself completely to it, you chill your mind to such an extent that it could be compared to that of having a cold shower after toiling in a desert for hours. These also help you socialise with like minded people.

My next advice, hobbies build skills. This could be

coding, reading, doing online courses, etc. This helps you realise how less you know in your domain and keeps your mind focused. People nowadays just focus on keeping their body in shape but less often think about exercising

their brain and being informed about the things happening around them. These kinds of hobbies differentiate you from an average person. This also makes you more confident as being dexterous at something builds your confidence.

So, find those activities that you love to do and they will make you a better and more successful person.

T Sudarshan, BS&B Field Sales & Service, Chennai.

Let's express ourselves

To be creative is just allowing your brain to do its bit

DNA and fingerprint are two things that are regarded as the most unique trait that a human being can possess. But what gets overlooked is the "Thought Process" or perhaps the way a person thinks. Imagine having a servant who never tires out and instead becomes more efficient with every single piece of work that he/she performs. Our brain is one such extraordinary servant and our thought process is its "piece of work". And from differing thought processes arise, what modern day pundits call '**CREATIVITY**'. To be called creative is the best privilege of all. And to be creative is just allowing your brain to do its bit.

Most of us are stuck in our unavoidable routines. This is why hobbies matter the most to unleash our creative side. Writing or blogging is the most adopted route to unleash this creative side. It is a simple exercise of perception and expression. The only pre-requisite to take writing as a hobby would be the willingness to express with creativity. It could start with something as small as a snippet or a poem. When you express various day to day events in your own creative ways, the engine inside your head opens up a brand new dimension.

Eventually, when this becomes a habit, you automatically use this creative dimension in every challenge you face. When you develop the art of describing something with your creative writing, you unconsciously widen your perception which allows you to come up with creative solutions to a difficult problem.

Investing our time in doing something creative will save us from the traps of depression and boredom. Hence I urge everybody to spend some time to unleash their creative side, be it through writing or in any form. As said, to be called creative is a privilege, one that we all deserve.

S Ashwin, AGC Field Sales & Service, Chennai.



A distraction from routine

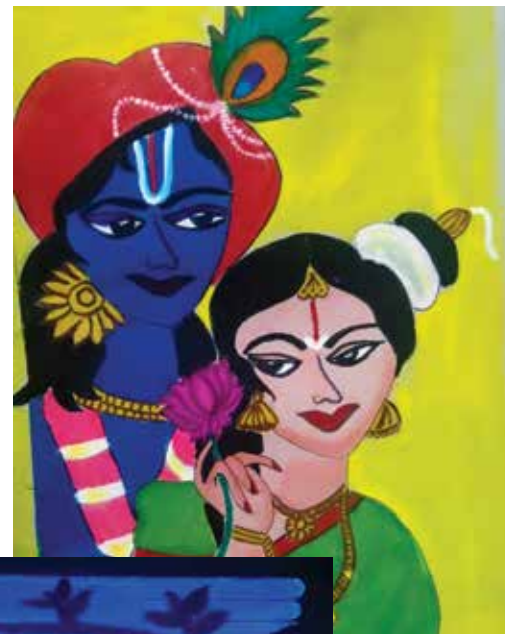


It's no wonder that creative hobbies are generally good for one's mental health and more importantly, they provide a welcome distraction from the everyday routine of life. The pleasure of doing something on our

own has its own value and satisfaction which when gifted to our loved ones doubles the happiness for sure.

I still remember, when I was 6 years old, I gifted my parents, on their wedding anniversary, a handmade greeting card. I made it out of a Hamam soap wrapper. I drew a rose, which I copied from my mom's favourite saree, coloured it, and wrote a few lines wishing them. My mother was surprised looking at it, as I did it all without her knowledge. It was her encouragement that drove me towards making more pop up cards, hand-written greetings and gradually, it became my hobby.

When my brother used to go out to play cricket, I sat back at home and collected cricket snippets from the newspapers made it into a collage and gifted him. Those were days when, we neither had Internet nor cable connection to grasp ideas. All we had was our own creative spark. I simply followed the ideas given in *Siruvar Malar*, a Tamil weekly, and taught myself the art of making paper crafts, hand embroidery, best out of waste, DIY decors, painting, mehendi, rangoli and much more.



Painted on wooden ice cream sticks.

*“Minimal the materials,
greater the happiness”*

All I needed to spend my leisure time were colouring pens, paper, scissors and glue. From making hand-made greeting cards to decorating our home with my hand-made crafts to helping kids with their craft projects to designing my clothes with hand-made embroidery, my interest for handmade things has come a long way. “Minimal the materials, greater the happiness” has been my motto which has also led me to making art out of waste.

This hobby of playing with papers and scissors, decorating my place with handmade crafts helps me improve my focus, creativity, patience and escape from stress and anxiety. Needless to say it helps me lead a life of contentment and mindfulness.

J Saranya, Human Resources, Corporate, Head Office.

A treasure trove of joy



A hobby is something that you do in your free time. But make sure that your hobby gives you peace of mind and takes out all your stress. It is better that all of us develop a hobby. Even if you don't have any till date, develop one now for stress relief or to maintain good health.

Let's start cultivating a good hobby and soak in the happiness of inner peace.

- A hobby is like a jewel. It is a treasure which brings utmost joy and show a new side of you to those around you.
- Life is a trail of unexplored wisdom that can be realised only through one's passion and interest.

I write poems when I feel stressed. As I pen my thoughts, the mind gets relieved of the stress and becomes peaceful. It also builds confidence and fuels the passion to keep writing more. I choose concepts like nature, mother, father, teacher or even motivation. When you feel something interesting and challenging to write, it keeps you fresh and helps face any hurdle that comes up. As a person who loves to explore and passionate to learn new skills, I also developed the hobby of pencil sketching and sketching portraits. These hobbies not only make me self-confident but also give ample opportunity to become unique.

Let us all take up an interesting hobby - be it painting, writing, learning new languages, physical work-out, etc., and keep boosting our confidence and building our skill-sets.

S Srivatsen, FSL Finance, Karapakkam.

Kindle the creator in you

*"You have one pop, I have one pop,
That is lollipop"*

This was my first ever display of creative writing, at the age of 10. My father, who was a Tamil writer, by hobby and a civil servant by profession, realised my talent and encouraged me to write more. He gifted me a diary and asked me to pen, whatever I liked in it. Lucky enough those days, we didn't have 100 TV channels or addictive web series to watch, nor were there social media or Whatsapp or cell phones to distract. My father encouraged every piece of writing that I attempted. Today I am happy that I am the author of few books and a blog.

Many a time, I wonder was it the passion for writing, which made me write or my gene. If there is someone who can vouch it to be gene, I can bet they are 100% wrong. Writing is an art; it's a penance, it's something which would not be easy for many to achieve etc., I don't believe in all this it's just lies, to discourage budding writers.

There is creativity in each one of us. Sometimes this creativity is displayed as a delicious recipe, sometimes



a piece of art or pottery or even a movie. There are many creative geniuses whom I know who just shy away

and fail to bloom as they feel shy or fear that they would be criticised. It is this wall that they build around them that they need to destroy, to have a successful hobby. I was lucky enough that my father didn't laugh at my first poem and shoo me away from writing.

Start writing as a stress buster, just pen anything you like, after all we have our beloved Google baba to help us with spellings or our dear faithful MS Word to autocorrect all our errors like a patient teacher. So think about bursting that wall, that bubble that you have created around you, and bring out your talents.

Leena Bose, Corporate Services, Corporate, Head Office.



Opportunity to learn new skills

A hobby is an activity or an endeavour we engage ourselves in for pleasure or relaxation. A hobby that we enjoy enriches our lives. It gives us an opportunity to learn new skills. We are very fortunate to have so many different options out there today. The best way to cultivate a new hobby is to try

something new. The world is full of wonderful, exciting activities that we can explore and adopt on our own. Of course, all of us are unique and therefore, our interests and hobbies vary. But once we find a hobby that we truly enjoy and are passionate about, we become hooked. It becomes part of our lives and captivates us in a very personal way.

Having a hobby makes us more interesting, people who have hobbies have experiences and stories that they can share with others. They also have specialised knowledge that they can teach anyone who also has a similar interest. The hobbies we pick up help us become more patient. In order to develop a new hobby, we have to learn how to do something that is new to us.

We need to be patient in order to build our skills. Engaging in a hobby is challenging at times. When we pick a new hobby, we are involved in activities that are novel and challenging. It increases our confidence and self-esteem. When we really enjoy an activity, we become pretty good at it. Any activity that we can excel in is an opportunity for us to build our confidence and develop pride in our accomplishments.

People who have hobbies have experiences and stories



Some hobbies inspire us tap in our creative side. This can be helpful for people who have no creative outlets in their work. Engaging in a hobby such as calligraphy or knitting can help train your brain to be more creative. Hobbies are often thought of as activities for people who lead quiet, relaxed lives. However, people who are busy, and stressed may need hobbies more than the average person. It is beneficial to cultivate a hobby.

Hobbies are essential for a good life. Saving some time for you to enjoy a hobby offers physical, mental, emotional, and creative benefit that make life more meaningful, relaxing, and fun.

N Satheesh Kumar, *Products Common Marketing, Flowserve Sanmar Private Limited, Chennai.*

Did you know?

In the 13th century, the word hobby referred to a small horse or a pony. It later came to describe a toy horse — a hobbyhorse. It's from the hobbyhorse that the word's modern sense of "favourite pastime" evolved.



Photography my passion

My interest in photography developed back in my college days, when we used film cameras. I did not have any expensive camera then.

Later with work pressure and mounting responsibilities, I could not pursue my hobby for many years. By that time film cameras became obsolete and DSLR came into being. My photophile entity was rekindled around 7 years back, when I started watching photographs posted in social media platforms and I pursued it again. It was then that I bought my first DSLR. I didn't have any experience using a DSLR.

Since I wanted to improve and learn more, I started observing photos shot by maestros, learnt camera settings from Google and YouTube channels. I learnt image processing using Adobe Photoshop, through online videos. Even during lockdown I had attended many online workshops to improve my skills.

I love to click wildlife, street photos, candid moments and travelogues. I prefer to travel with my family or photography groups to reserve forests to enjoy nature and capture the lovely moments.



My Prize winning Photography.

I share my photos in social media regularly and accept critique views to improve myself. I have participated in many Indian photography competitions and few of my works have won awards, and were published in photography magazines.

One of my photos titled **Lockdown Blues**, which was clicked at home during the lockdown, was submitted for a competition organised by Camarena Academy and has been awarded.

Bhaskar Nandi, AGC Field Sales & Service, Kolkata.

Lockdown - A blessing in disguise

This lockdown has brought out all the hidden talents of my children. They involved themselves in various social media activities. With the help of their music teacher they came up with a video 'Thamizhin Priyargal' about the great Indian saints, this was edited and later posted in YouTube. My elder son's hobby is drawing and photography, made excellent use of this time, he drew some portraits and shot few wonderful pictures and posted in Instagram, which received good response and appreciation. They also made a short film, which was posted in YouTube.

S Ramaprakash, Central Accounting, Corporate, Head Office.



A gift from the Gods

Reading habit, so boring, I would open my book, only if, I wanted to fall asleep. I don't want to become an intellectual and I don't want to become a bookworm. All those who didn't have formal education are only successful in their life (immediate reference petrol bunk Ambani). I don't want to be called as a head strong person. These may be some of the immediate reactions, when you ask about reading habit from those who don't read.

But the truth is **anyone who wants to break the mediocre life and go up, needs a ladder, which is "reading habit"**. They can reach any height in their life with the help of this ladder. It is 100 % true, that those who stopped reading have put a full stop to their growth. You may see so many living examples.

To me this reading hobby is a gift from God, imbibed from my headmistress mother. **You cannot find any leader in the world, who doesn't read.** It opens up a new world for us. It shapes our future, our lives. This hobby is a friend to me. I never felt alone when I have a book on my hand.

Particularly, I am fond of reading biographies and I have invited most of the world leaders to my house and had tea with them, some time dinner or a lengthy discussion – from Vivekananda to Albert Einstein, from Saddam Hussein to Ramanujar, from Hitler to Gandhi and so on. It seems, Napoleon Bonaparte used to have a world map on his hand always and he used to touch the countries in the map and feel the result of which we all know. Each of these leaders taught me so much that they have become a part of my life.

Books not only play a significant role in enhancing our knowledge, but also teach us how to face life during failures. Books transform our lives.

S Chandrasekar, *VML Administration, Sanmar Matrix Metals Limited, Viralmimalai.*



Capturing moments



Hobby – It is nothing but a mood changer/stress buster; this is how I define it.

Whenever I become sad or stressed I used to surf the Internet. One day while doing so, I saw some portraits, landscapes, wild life and astronomical images. That made me feel lighter. For a moment I thought how beautiful Mother Nature is. It always astonishes me how real these are and how it has been well captured through those lenses and cameras.

And that's how I fell in love with photography. For a good photo it always needs a right moment to

capture. That was the right moment for me to buy a decent DSLR.

Later I got a chance to visit a famous zoo in Kanpur. I started capturing the wildlife and their fantastic expressions. I don't even remember how their expressions were. But, after few days, while going through those images that I shot, I felt the same feeling which I had before, when I first saw while surfing.

My friends and family members always encouraged me. This instilled more interest to learn to shoot good photos. I started learning to use my camera in a better way. My long term wish is to capture our "Milky way galaxy".

Now I am just a beginner, and I am sure that some day, I will be a pro in photography and will **capture our galaxy**.

*Never underestimate you,
Turn your failures into learnings,
Fulfill your dreams with your hobby.*

K Ezhilarasan, *Cabot Production, Mettur.*

Hobby to habit

During lockdown my family had shifted to my native place, and so I had to stay alone. It was quite stressful without seeing my family for so many days. Only during these days I thought about how to engage my time effectively and at the same time usefully. I had two plans.

Writing a book

Using my 12 years of work experience, I started writing a book on '**R&D chemistry hand book**'. Brief points about the book: Basic Organic chemistry, type of reactions and mechanism, type of solvents, type of reagents, type of equipment type of spectroscopy, type of analysis, type of literature search, type of identification of products, type of isolation of the product, etc.

I was sure to use my free time effectively and also recollecting my knowledge. I dedicated 45 minutes to 2 hours for writing my book, and now almost 60% of the book is completed. I am sure to complete my book by the end of December 2020.

I have plans to publish the book before March 2021. And so, writing a book and recollecting knowledge has become my routine in my life.



Cooking

Cooking is one more way to relax. Due to the pandemic I did not want to buy food, and so I started cooking. I started learning to cook all types of cuisines. Now cooking is my favourite hobby. Slowly, I have become an expert in cooking as well.

Poluboyina Prasad, SSC Research & Development,
Chemplast Sanmar Limited, Berigai.

'Nala Bagam'

Born as a girl child in the Indian subcontinent means that by default she should learn to cook.



Of course this rule doesn't apply to Indian men. So being born in an orthodox Brahmin family I was forced to learn cooking at the age of 12. As a child with no choice I learnt the basic skills of cooking from my mother, but as I cooked and everybody started appreciating my cooking as '*nala bagam*' and my interest in cooking increased. And I started exploring different varieties of cooking. My specialty was sweets and the presence of my grandparents in my house, gave me more exposure to medicinal cooking, that is making *kashayams*. Of course our Indian culture also says the same, '*unave marundhu*'. Even today most of my colleagues and friends ask me for herbal remedies for their ailments.

Everything can be cooked in our house, and we have the wherewithal for it.

In today's scenario, my own daughter, and this generation the gen Z, love to eat outsourced food. Be it street food or Swiggy delivered food; I personally feel that it is not healthy. Everything can be cooked in our house, and we have the wherewithal for it. Be it Diwali or any festival, I don't buy sweets, from shops, I make my own sweets, and many a time experiment different varieties. This interest of mine has been passed on to my daughter, who helps me now-a-days with YouTube videos, for new dishes. **We make a great team.** So cooking which was initially forced on me later became a way of life and a passion. I feel everybody can cook, given modern gadgets and equipments coupled with technology, all of us can be good cooks. Hope you all will try at least one dish at home after reading this.

R Kiruthika, Central Accounting, Head office.



Colourful world of hobbies

An activity that brings happiness while doing it, is a hobby. When I think about this, a lot of activities come to my mind: gardening, reading, writing, drawing, housekeeping, and maintaining my aquarium. Here, I would like to share about our experiences during the lockdown which led to my son developing his wonderful hobby.

When the lockdown started, we insisted our son to draw one picture every day. At first he showed little interest. One day his drawing master shared a link to participate in a drawing competition. My son was interested and so he uploaded one of his drawings in his WhatsApp group. The drawing master in return posted his drawing in the group, which rekindled the interest of children to draw and post in the group, which was otherwise dormant.

The response from the students was not forced, nor for a competition. They only demonstrated their passion and love for art. The quality of the work improved day by day.

Having drawing as a hobby results in the following:

Positive emotions - Creating these paintings and drawings reduces the negative emotions within an individual and replaces them with positive thoughts and feelings.

Increase of emotional intelligence – As emotions flow through art, one can develop a better grasp of their varying feelings.

Better mobility - The need to use a brush or pencil to create the art makes one's motor skills more efficient. Through the improvement of one's brain activities, signals can be effectively sent from the brain to the motor neurons that would deliver the specific action that must be performed. As a result, motor skills are enhanced.

L John Anand Antony, *CSL KKL Production EDC, Karaikal.*



Culinary delights

Hobbies are the phases of experiment that we do for refreshment and spend time enjoying and understanding the science and logic behind it. However, it may vary with time. My hobbies were little different, they kept changing with time and I had the curiosity to experiment.

My hobbies over the years

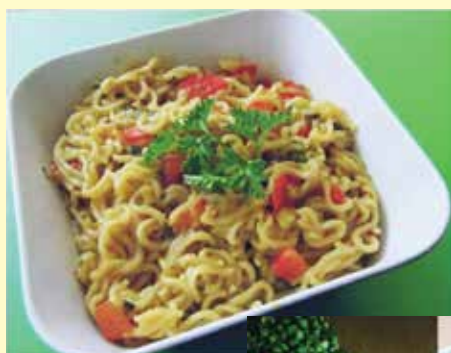
- Childhood: A gully cricket player
- Teenage: PC gamer
- Adulthood: Dramatics
- Adulthood with money in pocket: Travelling

Pre-lockdown, I was travelling to different places for vacations and even as a part of my job as a sales engineer.

Lockdown: Transformation from traveller to baker

As the pandemic hit the whole world and India went on a lockdown mode from March 2020, I remember I rushed to all the stores for collecting ration and basic commodities. The biggest challenge during lockdown was cooking as I used to order food from outside every day. Though I had all the ingredients, I had very little experience in cooking food. I can describe my journey into culinary in various phases which started as a necessity but now it's a hobby:

Phase 1: Baby-steps with Maggie and Tea



Phase 2: Trial and Error (YouTube Tutorials) in cooking curry and cutting vegetables

Phase 3: Experiments and Testing with Samosa



Phase 4: Understanding limitations and learning new ways



Phase 5: Enjoying cooking and learning different dishes



The New Normal

Even after the offices have resumed, I still try to cook every day. For those lazy days, I cook *Dal-Chawal* or *Kichadi* but, in the weekends I try out new dishes. Sometimes it tastes good and sometimes it is just learning. The most important part of this cooking journey is the appreciation from my flatmates that kept me motivated to cook and try something new.

Munish Harinkhede, XSL Field Sales & Service Delhi.



A horizontal row of ten stylized illustrations of people engaged in various physical activities. From left to right: a man on a stationary bike, a woman lifting a barbell, a man in a lunge, a woman performing a high kick, a man running, a woman with a dumbbell, a man lifting a barbell, a woman on a red exercise ball with dumbbells, a man with a barbell, and a woman with dumbbells.

Fitting regular exercise into our daily schedule may seem difficult in the beginning. But you can start

Balance exercises can make it easier to walk on uneven surfaces and help improve our balance.

S Gunasekaran, *CSL Plant 4 Production, Mettur.*

- Blogging
- Photo editing
- Oil pastel drawing
- Dog sitting
- Bullet journaling
- Learning a foreign language
- Trekking
- Photography
- Baking
- Nail art
- DIY activities
- Gardening
- Calligraphy



It's family time

The lockdown period proved to be useful for my daughters, Mathubala and Sathiya Priya. They started making paper crafts, out of which, the Taj Mahal **paper craft**, was simply marvellous. They also indulge themselves in painting different types of natural sceneries and it is quite a stress buster.

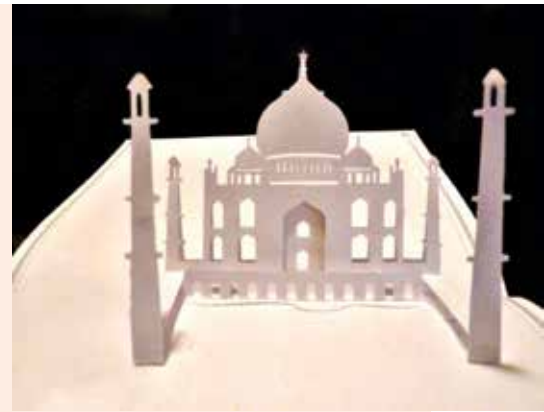
To add on to the host of our family hobbies, we have an **aquarium**. Maintaining this aquarium is our favourite pastime. As they say, watching fish swim is a great stress reliever.

Gardening is one of my favourite hobbies and in my garden there are different types of hibiscus and rose plants. We use these at our home pooja. I also have a money plant, which I believe purifies the environment.

We have a good **rain water harvesting** system in our house. The household water that we use daily, as well as the used water from our kitchen is used for gardening. In this way we save a lot of water. Gardening is one of the best hobbies that I like doing.

All these hobbies help us spend more time together, as a family.

R Ramesh, CCVL Boiler, Cuddalore.



Personal development

Having a hobby is not just a way to pass time; it can also improve the quality of your life. Here is a list of hobbies to do at home.

Home DIY

When you've got loads of time, it's easy to spot those things around your home or garden that need a lick of paint or a spruce up. You could even re-design the fabric and up-cycle old furniture pieces to bring a new lease of life into the living room. You could use the Internet. It's full of ideas for home decors.

Start writing a book

They say everyone has one book in them, so if you've been keeping your inner wordsmith in the wings, it's time to get your thoughts onto paper. It doesn't have to be a Booker Prize-winning manuscript, but jotting down ideas in a journal will help you hone your skills and help develop your own voice.

Try out some yoga

Yoga is one of the most popular exercise practices in the world and makes it to many people's list of hobbies, with millions of people using the downward dog to improve their heart health, relieve anxiety and decrease stress. With so many tutorials online, yoga is a hobby that you can get started with very easily.



Relax with some embroidery

One of our favourite hobbies to do at home is embroidery. It's easy and surprisingly therapeutic. All you need is some fabric, an embroidery hoop, needles and thread. You might like to embroider a name, or a floral design. Simply draw on your cloth with a pencil and stitch on top. Adding buttons and sequins is an easy win. And if you're a confident artist, try doing a portrait in stitch. The great thing about embroidery is you can pick up a piece of work for as little as 10 minutes or do some while you're watching TV.

Hobbies can add excitement, diversity and enjoyment to our daily life. Hobbies can bring people together. You can meet new people, discover things about yourself, develop new skills and get better as a person. Hobbies can bring fun and adventure to life, and helps in personal development.

J Murugesan, SSC Maintenance Mechanical, Chemplast Sanmar Limited, Berigai.



Play to stay fit

A hobby is something which you do in your free time. But we have to ensure that our hobby gives us peace of mind and takes out all our stress. I had the opportunity to play volleyball every Friday evening along with my team when I worked with Caterpillar. This was a fantastic stress buster and all of us in the team felt very refreshing after a game.

Even today, I have the opportunity of playing cricket over weekends (League cricket with cricket ball) with my team which helps me stay fit and stay cool despite all the professional and personal stress accumulated throughout the week.

So, my recommendation is to take any outdoor sport as a hobby. It can be cricket, shuttle, volleyball, football etc. Just go out with your friends/kids – sweat it out for a few hours during the weekends. You will feel the difference and have great energy to start the week fresh.

Refrain from watching television, playing mobile games etc., as these are things which will only add to our stress levels and not help in our fitness. So, take up a good hobby and stay fit.

K S Ravindran, *Products Strategic Purchase, Flowserve Sanmar Private Limited, Karapakkam.*



Kickboxing - a distinct hobby

My hobby is kickboxing. Well for many, physically fighting is basically an entertainment but, for me it's about self-esteem and gratification. According to me physical fight becomes a necessity at times, if words did have the strength to achieve victory then, there wouldn't have been wars, or a necessity for military forces. My interest towards kickboxing began from this very moment of realisation.



It was year 2016 when I finally began my kickboxing classes from an institute named 360 Degree Sports, Kolkata. I was guided by Coach Parthasarathi Sarkar. My heart pounded in excitement but honestly, the first four months of my training was extremely tough. Days were tougher, as I prepared for appearing in the State Championship for the first time. After a strong hustling practice finally I appeared for the State Championship in the year 2016. Unfortunately, it brought disappointment as I stood last and was awarded a bronze medal. But, this disappointment didn't weaken me instead it made me so strong, dedicated and focused, that I consistently won Gold medals the next three consecutive years.

In 2019, I participated in Eastern India's Biggest Fitness Programme (FITEXPO-2019) and won the Silver Medal. I can say this hobby of mine has had a positive impact in my life. It taught me dedication, how to focus and concentrate and of course it keeps me physically fit and active enough to carry out my work loads easily. Most importantly it taught me failure is the key to open the door of success. **No doubt kickboxing came in my life as a hobby but now it's a part of me and my life.**

Ronit Manjhi, *FSL Field Sales & Service, Kolkata.*

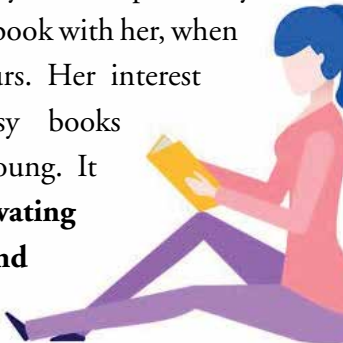
Dance to the tunes

In today's modern world, most of us lead a stressful life and a solution for it is to indulge ourselves in some leisure activities. **A hobby often provides a creative outlet and enhances our personality too.**

A vibrant illustration of a woman in a red and yellow sari dancing. She is barefoot and has her arms raised in a graceful pose. Surrounding her are three musical instruments: a mridangam (drum) to her left, a veena (stringed instrument) to her right, and a tabla (small drum) at her feet. The background is a light green with faint floral patterns.

I would like to write about my daughter's interesting hobbies. My daughter's hobbies are dancing and reading books. Doing some dance moves to the beats of music brings her immense joy. It is her natural talent. Dancing helps her to be **fit, strong and healthy**. She has participated in many stage performances and is also part of her college dance team. She learns various dance forms in her leisure time. In fact, she is not a trained dancer but a keen observer when it comes to learning dance steps and she has a flexible body as she practices dance every day.

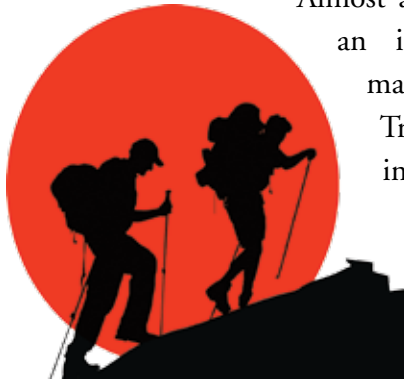
We can read a book at any time or place. My daughter always carries a book with her, when she travels for long hours. Her interest towards reading fantasy books started when she was young. It plays a major role in **activating her imagination and concentration**. Reading is a fun activity and enriches her sentence construction to a great level. She reads a book every day at night, to improve her sleep pattern. On the whole, these hobbies have been a stress reliever and helps her connect with others.



V Sivakumar, *FSL Maintenance, Karapakkam.*



Trekking my way of life



Almost a decade ago, I got an innocuous looking mail from Chennai Trekking Club, inviting participants for a social trek. For a guy who was feeling suffocated in the concrete jungle,

this felt like a whiff of fresh air. Pronto! I signed-up and there began my next adventurous hobby and I call myself a trekker now.

Trekking has numerous benefits for all types of people regardless of their age. Reasons why I persevered this hobby, besides the obvious health benefits are it helps de-stress completely, aids social networking, helps imbibe social responsibilities, teaches team work and to trust your team.

Trekking helped me look at life with a different angle as also fellow humans. Most of the people you meet at any trekking event will be strangers. You will be tired after a strenuous hike, but still will get the energy and the will to help a fellow trekker. The meaning of “Chain is as strong as the weakest link” is most visible in treks, where you need to perform coherently as a team. Trekking is team building exercise at its best.

Another salient feature in trekking in India is, in most places, there will not be any mobile signals. No outside disturbances, will be surrounded by like minded people, be with peaceful nature, greenery all-around. A perfect recipe for a full recharge over the weekend and report back to work on Monday with full gusto.

Despite the numerous benefits, it is one of the most under-developed sport activities in India (esp. in the south). As most of us talk only about the dangers involved – high chances of injury and also sometimes fatal accidents, yet, it continues to remain a treasured hobby of mine. I would defiantly, recommend, others to give it a shot.

D Gurumurthy, *Treasury, Corporate, Head Office.*

Badminton to relieve stress



Having a hobby is a great way to relax and unwind after a stressful day at work. There is no rule which can qualify a hobby. It can be anything like painting, cooking, reading books, playing sports and even travelling. Hobbies play an important role in mitigating some of the unavoidable stress. Hobbies bring a sense of fun and freedom to life that help minimise the impact of chronic stress. I play badminton after my office hours. By playing badminton every day I live a stressfree life.

S Rajesh, *BS&B Quality Control, Karapakkam.*

‘ *Whatever you like to do,
make it a hobby
and
whatever the world
likes to do,
make it a business.*

-Warren Buffett **’**

Edible garden for emotional well being

There is a saying that an individual's true nature is identified by what he is doing, when he is idle. Hobbies are the simple way to make us think good and creative when we are idle also during our leisure time.

Having a hobby that we enjoy brings us joy and enriches our lives. It affords us the opportunity to learn out new skill in our leisure time. The best way to cultivate a new hobby is to try something new. The world is full of wonderful, exciting activities that we can explore and adopt as our own. But once we find a hobby that we truly enjoy and are passionate about, we get hooked. It becomes part of our lives and captivates us in a very personal way.

There are many hobbies like reading, writing poems, gardening, cooking, painting, riding, trekking etc.

I love to cook during my leisure time and write poems too. But, recently I tried gardening, and now it's my favorite hobby.

I started growing my first edible garden few months ago in order to complement my love for cooking. Not only did my garden provide me with herbs and vegetables that I could use in my favorite dishes, it also provides me with a healthy and totally organic food. I love to know exactly what has gone into growing that plant, which I eat along with my family.

Additionally, I have learned a lot about what plants grow best in my place, what are the best seasons to grow each of them, and also how much water and Sun they needed. My edible garden not only nourishes my body, but it teaches me a lot as well. Also the flowering plants around my house like Rose, Hibiscus, *Mayil Manikam*, *Mullai*, *Nandiavattam* gives us a warm and pleasant feeling for us and our visitors.

My house became a role model for my neighbours and they also tried their hand in gardening. The



Picture of my garden.

vegetables and herbs harvested from our garden for cooking gives good aroma while we cook it and tastes better.

There are many benefits from hobbies, the physical work, increase both our heart rate, brain function, weight loss, building muscle, strengthening bones, and an overall increase in energy. It improves our mental health and overall emotional well-being. It decreases the stress level by relaxing.

Engaging in a creative hobby can train our brain to be more innovative in other areas of our life too.

Saving some time for you to enjoy a hobby can provide physical, mental, emotional, and creative benefits that make life more meaningful, relaxing, and fun. Regardless of which hobby you choose, the benefits of engaging in that hobby will surprise you.

R Karthikeyan, *CSL Plant 2 Head Office, Mettur.*



*To beat the age,
keep the hobbies alive.*



- Dhruv Sahni



Art - the key to serenity and tranquility

'Looking beyond the circle of life, through the world of Mandalas'

Mandala in Sanskrit means, "Circle", Mandalas are said to signify our inner chakra and inner peace. My journey into the world of Mandalas began back in 2017, I have always been into Indian patterns and designs like in Mehendi but, Mandalas are more organised. Drawing a Mandala made me peaceful, relaxed and I felt like things in my life were more organised and in order.

This endeavour of mine couldn't really be improved during my hectic engineering life. But this lockdown, due to the pandemic, helped me focus and build upon my skills. My creativity expanded and I really went for it. I began a page on Instagram called chakras to keep me on my toes. I thought having a public forum to showcase my work, would fetch me feedback and motivation. It did all that and more, the page made me realise just how much talent is out there and that inspired me to perfect the talent.

One of the wonderful things I learnt was to incorporate themes into my Mandalas, I drew Mandalas for Krishna Jayanthi, Independence day and I learnt to encompass painting into the Mandala work. This lockdown opened my eyes of creativity to various ideas and I simply enjoyed making them.

My parents and friends have been my critics and supporters pushing me to try new things. They came up with so many ideas and tell me to try to incorporate that into my Mandalas. Mandala has become an integral part of my life and I am glad that this lockdown has given me the opportunity to invest more time and effort into my artwork. Mandalas to this day remain my key to serenity and tranquility and I can't wait to grow and improve. As we know, there is ALWAYS something new to learn.

Gayathri Subramanian, d/o V Subramanian,
Central Accounting, Corporate, Head Office.



Pranic healing

I learnt Pranic Healing (PH) 5 years ago and it has been life transforming. PH is an alternative non-touch therapy for our well being. It is believed that Bodhidharma (5th Century) who had his roots from Kanchipuram, moved to the far-east, healed many people in his life time, and taught this science.

PH has its tenets which are common to all religions. The basic principle is to use Prana or Chi that is available in the nature to heal ourselves/others. Any living being is knit with different bodies as we call it, of which only physical body is visible to a normal eye, the very next layer is called as Aura (Pranamaya kosha) which has several Minor and Major chakras (Energy Vortex). This Energy body (visible to clairvoyants) constantly takes in good energy from nature and pushes out the bad ones similar to the functioning of our Heart. The Chi absorbed self-heals/rejuvenates the self, for a sick person, the energy body is not functioning properly leading to psychosomatic disorders.

The chakras respond to stimuli (external/internal) impacting the way Chi is handled. When we meet a person with negative thoughts our aura is affected as well making us feel low, likewise visiting certain people/places effortlessly makes us feel good. When we are in a bad mood (angry, fear, etc.), the energy body shrinks thereby decreasing the absorption of Chi hampering the healing process. So our actions and feelings impact our aura there by influencing the environment that is the reason why every religion has laid emphasis on righteous way of living and thinking. The healer is able to feel the energy body of his own self/others and heals them. This hobby of mine has been very helpful in healing myself of different ailments.



S Saiteja, IT - Applications, Corporate, Karapakkam.

Sky gazing



*"Take my love, take my land
Take me where I cannot stand
I don't care; I'll still be free
You can't take the sky from me"*

Sky is the one true permanent entity in our lives that we often take for granted. It holds endless mysteries. Sky gazing means peering into the sky and trying to grasp the beauty of it. You don't always need a telescope to find its underlying elegance. All you need is a set of curious eyes and a warm heart.

Sky gazing is a hobby that has been practiced from time immemorial. It is no doubt that sky gazing laid the foundation for modern space exploration. When we were young, we all have looked up the sky and found shapes in the clouds that our mind imagined. This instilled creativity in our minds. We all have tried to count the billions of stars and always wondered why we couldn't complete it. This instilled curiosity in our minds.

Sky gazing is not merely a hobby. It can bring a lot of positive effects to your mental health. If you are feeling crushed by the weight of your daily problems, gazing at the countless stars will make you realise how tiny we are in this grand universe and how minuscule our problems are. Sky gazing will make you realise that there is no room for negativity and hatred in our ephemeral lives.

**A Emayavaramban, Products Trainee - GET Ops,
Flowerserve Sanmar Private Limited, Karapakkam.**



Leading a contented life

As the proverb goes, “An idle mind is a devil’s workshop”. People who don’t spend their leisure time usefully can end up doing something bad or develop negative attitudes. The idleness can be avoided by developing good hobbies.

Hobbies are activities that we do as per our own intuition or interest for pleasure or passion.

Advantages of having hobbies:

1. Reduces our stressful life.
2. Improves our social skills and helps make new friends.
3. To bring out our inborn talents.
4. Changes our perspective in life.
5. Explore the outside world.
6. Get new different experiences.
7. To improve our mental well being and be healthier.

During lockdown, many would have developed new hobbies. I noticed children involved in artworks such as drawing, colouring, painting, craft works like clay models, making models out of waste materials and even took part in online art competitions. Few children started learning music and dance taking up online classes. This can sure become hobbies in future.

Hobbies are the activities we do on our own intuition or interest

One of my siblings had a hobby to run marathons in the weekends before the pandemic but now, he changed his hobby to doing exercise at home every day, for maintaining his fitness and posts the same in social network.

One of my relatives started a new YouTube channel during this lockdown period and regularly posts her talents like mehendi design, pot painting etc. One of my friends developed digital photography as his hobby. I also read about a person, who taught Silambattam to kids in his village, as a hobby. This pandemic lockdown made people develop new hobbies to bring out their new talents.

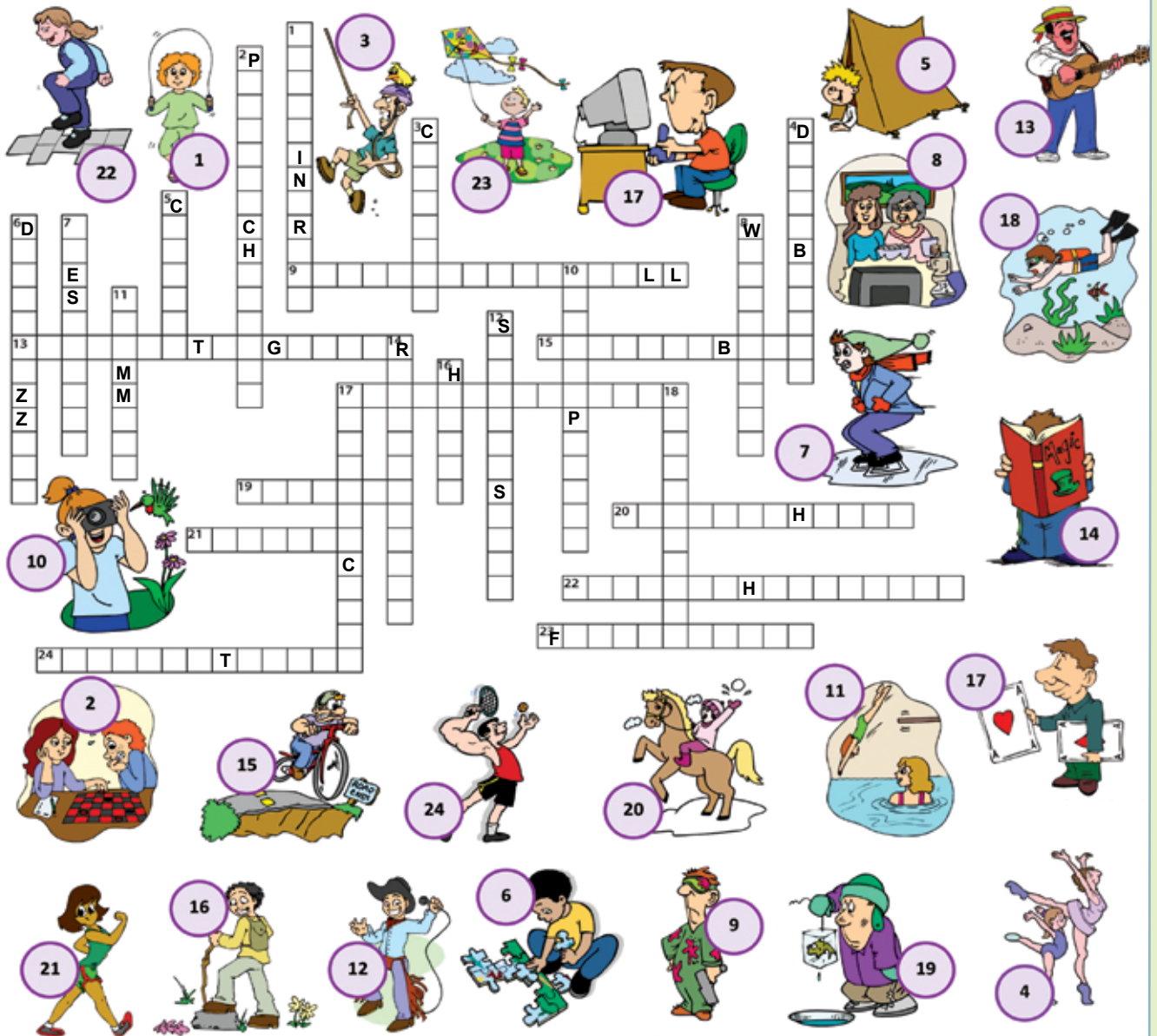
Hobbies help in gaining knowledge thereby improving our self esteem. By developing good hobbies we can lead an interesting, self satisfactory and stress-free life.

S Ganesh, *CSL Plant 2 Production Polymer, Mettur.*



Crossword - Hobbies and Interests

LOOK AT THE NUMBERS ON THE PICTURES AND WRITE THE HOBBIES IN THE CROSSWORD PUZZLE



Guess who?!

Wilhelm Steinitz is the first undisputed World Champion in the history of chess from 1886 to 1894. He studied math in Vienna, but dropped out of college to play chess professionally. After winning the Vienna Championship in 1861, he moved to London and participated in the international tournament in London, 1862, where he finished 6th and won the tournament's brilliancy prize. In 1883, Steinitz immigrated to the USA, where, in 1886, he played the first official World Championship match against Johannes Zukertort. Steinitz became a U.S. citizen in 1888, and lived there until his death in August, 1900.



- Across
9. playing paintball
13. playing the guitar
15. riding a bike
17. playing games
19. fishing
20. riding a horse
21. walking
22. playing hopscotch
23. flying a kite
24. playing tennis
- Down
1. skipping rope
2. playing checkers
3. climbing
4. doing ballet
5. camping
6. doing puzzles
7. ice skating
8. watching TV
10. taking photos
11. swimming
12. singing
14. reading books
16. hiking
17. playing cards
18. scuba diving

ANSWER

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