

### #HEALTHCARE

## End-of-life Care

Among the most troubling scenes from the COVID-19 era are the images of patients dying in isolation, unable to be with loved ones during their final moments.



Many countries have much room for improvement in end-of-life care, including some high-income countries, researchers report.

They ranked 81 countries on how well their health systems provide for the physical and mental well-being of patients at the end of life. Only six countries earned 'A' grades while 36 earned 'Ds' or 'Fs'.

Among the most troubling scenes from the COVID-19 era are the images of patients dying in isolation, unable to be with loved ones during their final moments. The new survey shows, however, that even before the pandemic, harrowing deaths were all too common in most parts of the world.

Society should also be judged on how well people die," says Eric Finkelstein, a professor and palliative care expert with Duke-NUS and the

among the countries surveyed, while the United States earned 'C' ranking 43rd.

At the bottom of the rankings were 20 countries earning failing grades, many of which are low or middle income countries with fewer health resources than the top rated countries.

"It's no coincidence that most of the survey's top scorers are wealthy countries with well-funded health systems, while low- and middle-income countries fared worse," says co-author Stephen Connor, executive director of the World-wide Hospice Palliative Care Alliance. "The overwhelming need for palliative care is in low and middle income countries, where less than a third of services exist."

But Connor and Finkelstein both point to the US' middling ranking as proof that money doesn't always guarantee attention on end-of-life care. In the US, resources are often invested in last-ditch efforts to extend life, rather than measures to ensure comfort and quality of life in a patient's final days.

"We spend billions trying to get people to live longer, but very little in comparison helping people die better," says Finkelstein, who is also the director of the Lien Centre for Palliative Care.

The harrowing stories of COVID-19 deaths, when nurses or healthcare workers were often the only people allowed to comfort the dying, should bring renewed focus on end-of-life care, Connor notes.

"Generally, people don't talk about death. COVID-19 has made it less taboo. We have an opportunity to continue this discussion and not just help COVID-19 patients, but to help everyone have a better end-of-life experience."

Finkelstein and colleagues hope the country rankings spur action from policymakers to improve conditions for dying patients, such as loosening restrictions on pain medications given to comfort those at the end of life.

But people don't need to wait for policy change to take steps to ensure a better end-of-life experience. He advises that people develop an advanced care plan or at least express their wishes to friends and family.

"Don't wait," Finkelstein urges. "By the time you fall ill, it may be too late and others may not know what you want."

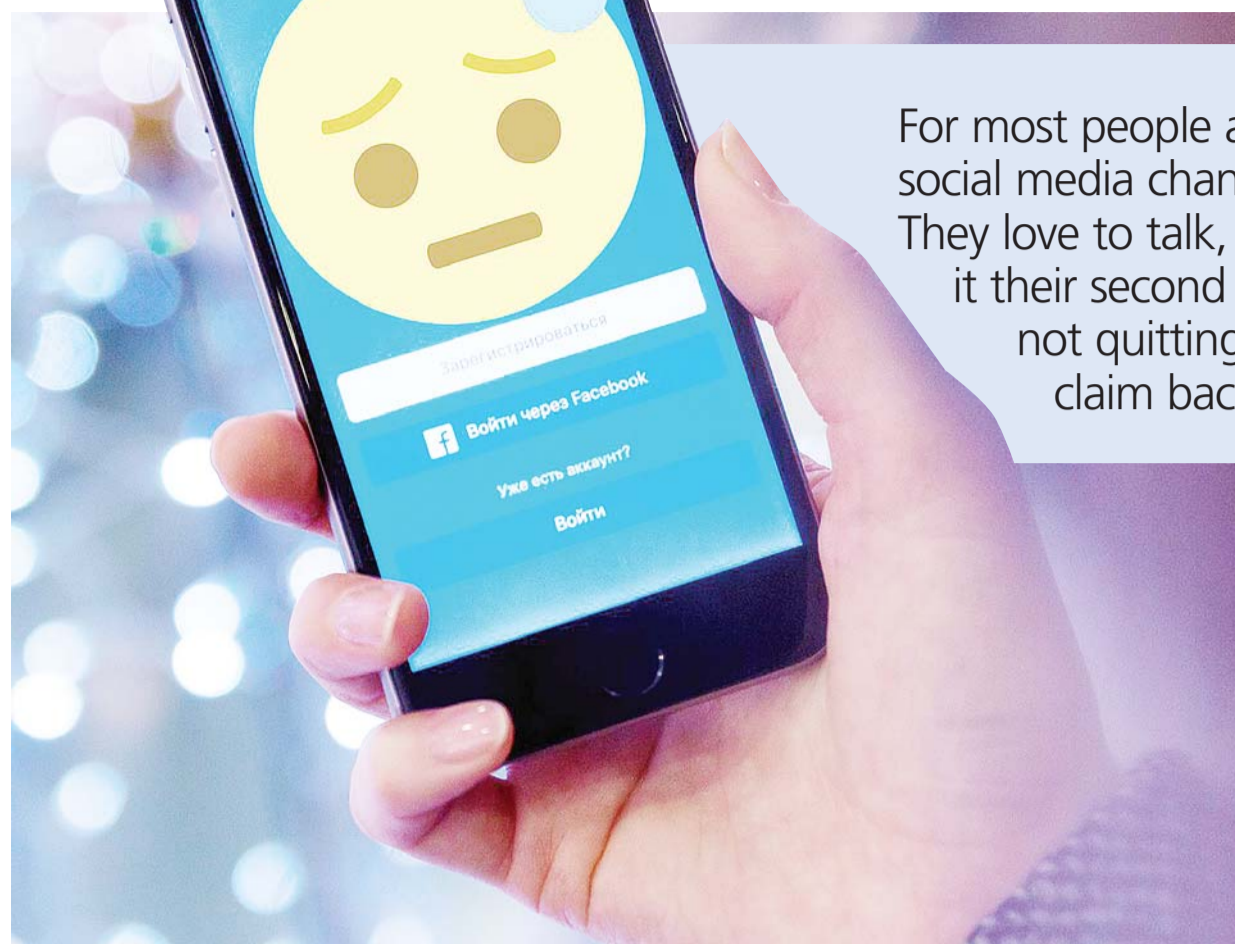
The research is outlined in three papers (paper 1, paper 2, paper 3) published in the Journal of Pain and Symptom Management. The Lien Foundation, a Singapore-based non-profit focused on improving quality of life, funded the work.



Duke Global Health Institute who led the study. "Many individuals in both the developed and developing world die very badly - not at their place of choice, without dignity, or compassion, with a limited understanding about their illness, after spending down much of their savings, and often with regret about their course of treatment. These experiences are very common, yet avoidable."

To compile the rankings, Finkelstein and colleagues surveyed more than 1,200 caregivers from several countries to identify what is most important to patients at the end of life. They then asked 181 palliative care experts across the globe to grade their countries' health systems on 13 weighted factors that people most often listed, including proper management of pain and comfort, having a clean and safe space, being treated kindly and treatments that address quality of life, rather than merely extending life.

The United Kingdom earned the highest ranking in the study, followed by Ireland, Taiwan, Australia, South Korea, and Costa Rica, which all earned 'A' grades. Singapore received 'B' ranking 23rd



For most people across the world, Facebook and other social media channels are the centre of their very existence. They love to talk, chat and collect likes on FB and consider it their second home. However, there are many who are not quitting FB for all kinds of reasons; specially to claim back their peace of mind.



## Why Do Some People Quit Facebook

Samar Kapoor

In July, more than a decade after joining Facebook, Mumbai-based professional Manish Soni decided to delete his account. It was a big move for the 35-year-old, because like most people in his generation, he got on to the social network bandwagon in his teens and spent a chunk of his life there, broadcasting his first love, his first job, breakup and several parties to a multitude of friends.

Over the last couple of years, however, Soni had been feeling overwhelmed by the way the network required his attention. He would log on multiple times a day, check notifications during most of his breaks, comment on most posts, engage with people, put down his thoughts at least twice a day. He felt obsessed, almost like the platform had taken over his life. He wanted to quit, but, each time, a notification would take him back, and he would end up scrolling endlessly. "Time flows differently in the virtual world," says

symptoms of excessive use of the social network. "The social network uses various behavioural techniques, like building up a need to validate through likes, fear of missing out, and making your status temporary - all this to create a need for you to return quickly to the network to keep engaging," says Venkatesh Babu, consultant psychiatrist, Fortis Hospital, Bengaluru. The result is that it's hard to quit, and, when you try to, you face withdrawal symptoms and often relapse into scrolling despite your decision. "If the network makes you anxious, irritable, or you miss out on your work or spending time with family, take it as a warning," says Dr Babu.

**The Fear of Missing Out (FOMO)**

A recent published survey by Tufts University, US, in journal PLOS ONE, found that Facebook users would require an average of more than \$1,000 (around Rs 70,000) as an incentive to deactivate their account for one year. That's the value decided by students who were interviewed.

Though it took him multiple failed attempts, Soni is glad he left the network. "I have more time in

my day and a much larger sense of peace as I control the amount of information that comes into my life," he says, adding that leaving the network has reduced the stress and anxiety in his life.

What Soni felt was echoed in a 2017 study that was published in The Journal Of Social Psychology. A lot of people find the endless supply of social information on the network taxing, and even a five-day break from Facebook can reduce stress levels, according to the researchers of the study. "We are driven by the fear of missing out," says Dr Babu, "forcing us to use Facebook to overcome our anxious states and creating pressure on us to respond quickly."

**Living Online**

Agrees Kapoor, "All those years, I felt like I am living someone else's life. It felt like all the time I was trying to please others and expecting others to make me happy. I had an illusion of having hundreds of friends who would bombard my posts with likes and great comments, and with each passing day I needed more and more to make myself feel better. I felt like a virtual vampire who needed feedback from others in the form of likes and comments to stay alive. Facebook was, in and will remain to be a trap, a sweet lie, an illusion of making

### #ONLINE

**Facebook was my sanctuary where I used to write my heart out, where I used to socialize, and where I made my existence felt. It was a place where I had some of my beautiful memories, met new and amazing people, shared joyful moments of my life.**

people believe that they are social and happy.

The urge to constantly update himself about others and being unable to control his reactions made Amit Kulkarni, a Delhi-based teacher, quit Facebook earlier in 2018. "Facebook is a tool for legalized voyeurism and I was just tired of reading what's happening in other people's lives. I didn't want my life dependent on others," says Suhassini, the 38-year-old, who followed her husband in quitting the social network owing to information overload. The other thing that worried her was the use of her personal information.

**No Longer Private Matters**

Over the last few years, Facebook has been in the news for the insidious ways - the latest being the 10-year photo challenge - it has been collecting personal information about users and sharing it with third-party advertisers, leading people to rethink the information they share with the social network. A survey published recently, conducted by Washington based Pew Research Centre, found that 54% people have adjusted their privacy settings recently, while 42% of the

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### Liechtenstein in less than a day

Exploring a city on a weekend once sounded like an enticing challenge, try walking across a country in a matter of hours. The small but beautiful country of Liechtenstein spans only 15 miles north to south and 2.5 east to west, so regardless of the direction you hike in, you can cross the country in a matter of hours. The only catch is that, being located in the heart of the Alps, you should expect to encounter some steep inclines along your journey.

### #DISNEY-WORLD

## Minnie Mouse's New Pantsuit

After 94 years, Minnie Mouse ditched dress for Stella McCartney pantsuit in fashion makeover

Even cartoon characters need a change of wardrobe and luckily for Minnie Mouse, she has Stella McCartney doing it for her. Born in 1928, the iconic Walt Disney character will, for the first time in history, ditch her red polka-dots dress and instead wear a blue designer pantsuit with black polka dots and a matching bow.

Celebrated designer Stella McCartney has made the dress which the famous mouse will temporarily wear to celebrate the 30th anniversary of Disneyland Paris.



It took to Twitter to make the official announcement - sharing a photo of Minnie Mouse and writing, "Stella McCartney has designed Minnie Mouse's very first pantsuit, and it's gorgeous #DisneylandParis30."

According to the designer, with this new outfit, Minnie will become a 'symbol of progress', and she will also be wearing it in 'honour of Women's History Month' in March. McCartney has said in a statement: "What I love about Minnie is the fact that she embodies happiness, self-expression, authenticity and that she inspires people of all ages around the world. Plus, she has such great style!"

She also revealed that Minnie has been given 'a blue tuxedo', for which they have used 'responsibly sourced fabrics'.



### #VALENTINESDAY

From outdoor activities to creative experiences, Arbit brings to you a curated list of interesting things to do in the Pink City on Valentine's Day.



#### Sip & Paint

Raising a toast to your love with a glass of wine in a candlelit setting of a high-end restaurant is passé. This Valentine's Day, why not sip some wine while painting and create a work of art together. Shyam Nagar based Art Studio and cafe, The Art Ghar, is organizing a 'Sip and Paint' event on 12 February, to mark Valentine's Day. "As a part of this Valentine's Day package, we are offering two glasses of wine, art material and a guided painting session for INR 2100 per person. Since February is the month of love, we have also introduced heart-shaped that will be available for people throughout the month to paint," tells Shradha Jain, the owner of The Art Ghar. "One can also come with their friend, parent or be their own date!" She adds.

## Sweep Your BAE Off Their Feet

Tusharika Singh  
Freelance writer  
and city blogger

With Valentine's Day just around the corner, it's the right time to start planning the perfect date for your partner to celebrate your love. If you're one of those who can't think beyond red roses, chocolates and a candlelight dinner, here are some ideas to create a unique and memorable Valentine's Day experience for your loved one in the Pink City. Not only these heart-warming ideas are going to put a smile on your partner's face but will also ensure a meaningful and enriching time together for the two of you.

#### Equestrian Escape



This Valentine's Day, let the beating of hearts meet the galloping of horses! Owing to the surge in Covid-19 cases and extreme cold weather, the annual polo season of Pink City, which is usually held in January, is taking place in the month of February this year. This gives all the lovebirds a chance to spend some quality time with each other while watching an exhilarating game of polo instead of the usual coffee or dinner dates. Entry to the polo matches is free and open for all.

Pro Tip: Add a romantic walk in Central Park to your itinerary with this plan.

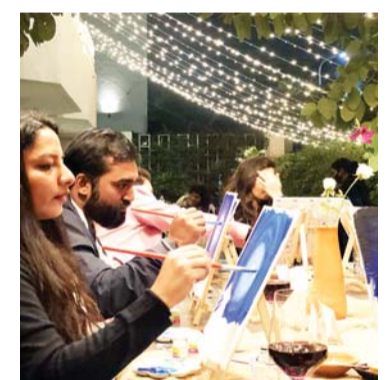
#### Unwind in the Lap of Nature



If you and your partner love to spend time outdoors, then this option is a no-brainer. On the foothills of Nahargarh, lies 'Kishan Bagh', a magnificent park with a natural desert landscape. Made using natural materials and resources found in Rajasthan, the 64-hectare desert park is replete with sand dunes and indigenous trees like Khejri, Rohida, Kumatiyo, Akada, Dhatura, among others. Located in Vidyadhar Nagar, this fascinating site is still an unexplored ter-

ritory when compared to the other spots in the city and should definitely not be given a miss. The entry to the park is priced at INR 50 per person.

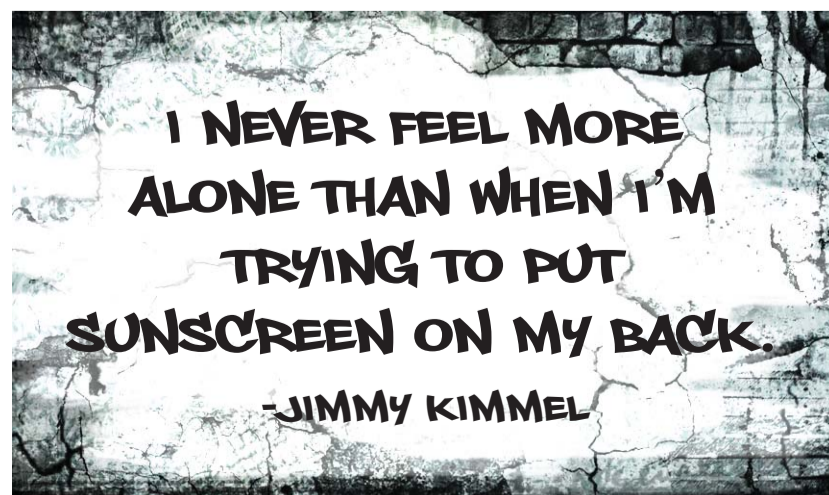
#### Shop From Local Entrepreneurs



If you and your partner believe in the tradition of buying gifts for each other on Valentine's Day, then why not support the local entrepreneurs and small-scale businesses of the city while doing so. World Trade Park is organizing a flea market especially centered around Valentine's Day on February 12, 2 pm onwards. A number of homegrown brands from the city will be participating in this market and showcasing their handcrafted products and gift hampers. In addition to this, there will also be activities for couples like tarot card reading, games etc.

No matter which option you choose, remember the most valued Valentine's Day gift is the time spent together.

### THE WALL



### BABY BLUES



By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

### ZITS



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman