



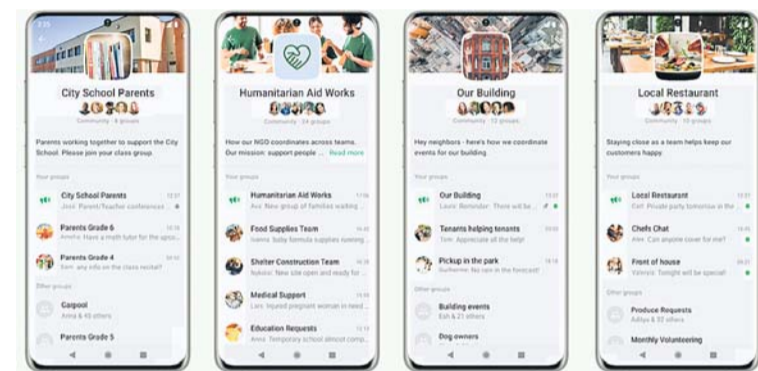
World Lion Day

World Lion Day aims to raise awareness of the majestic hunter, the ultimate feline, the king of the jungle, the big fluffy kitty of the Serengeti... Him, we should have left it at 'king of the jungle'! August 10th is a day for people to come together from across the world to pay tribute to the mighty lion in as many ways as possible. Though, a day and exciting occasion for all, its foundations are based in a very serious matter, lion numbers have dramatically declined to the point where the species needs to be placed on the endangered list, just like its larger cousin, the tiger.

#SOCIALISING

How to Be a Group Chat Pro

It's hard to get away from group chats but you can make them easier to manage



As a wise person once wrote, "There has never been a good six-way conversation in all of civilized human history," and yet, here we are, all trapped in multiple group chats, that are all somehow necessary and variously distracting, annoying, and off-

topic. From old friends to upcoming road trips, from the clubs that our kids attend to extended family chats, group chats are almost impossible to avoid at this point. However, if just a few simple rules were followed, group chat life would be better for everyone. Here we'd like to propose a few basics.

Think before you post

Remember, your post could be going to dozens of people. Do they all need to know about the one memory you shared with that one person? Probably not. Sometimes, you can send a direct message, even if it's related to the group chat. There are times when everyone needs to be involved in the discussion and times when they don't.

Read and reply

Group chats can be difficult to track, but read what's come before, to avoid needless repetition. If you reply to a message some way back in the conversation, make sure that you respond to it directly so that everyone knows what you're referring to. On WhatsApp, long-press on a message, then tap the reply arrow that appears.

Lock down your groups

If you're in-charge of a group chat, there are various ways to make life easier for everyone. One is to restrict entry to the group. On WhatsApp, tap the top of a chat and pick group permissions to find the relevant settings. You can ensure that you have approval for any new members and block the group chat participants from inviting anyone new. That gives you (and the other admins) more control over who's involved. There's also a toggle switch for Send messages. If you turn this on, only admins can post to the group, saving a lot of unnecessary chatter in certain groups. You can also turn this option on and off as you go, so, it doesn't always have to be on or off.

Use mute sparingly

Muting group chats are often necessary to maintain your sanity during specific conversations. Almost all messaging apps will let you do this. On WhatsApp, you can long-press on a conversation in the chat list, then tap the bell icon (Android) or choose Mute (iOS) to silence alerts for the next eight hours, and the next week, or indefinitely.

Stay on topic

You would think this goes without saying, but it doesn't. Now some groups are put together for general banter and breeze shooting, but for those that aren't like family events, school outings, quiz nights, try and keep everything reasonably relevant. In other words, this might not be the place to ask for DIY tips or share a trending meme on Reddit.

Quit when you need to

You're not under any obligation to stay in a group chat you don't want to be in. If the relevant event has long since passed, or you haven't seen the rest of the participants for several years, you're well within your rights to quit with no hard feelings. With some group conversations, the rest of the people involved might not even notice that you're gone.



Two Luminaries A Gold And A Silver

Growing up in a small village in Pakistan, 27-year old Nadeem did not have the institutional support that many athletes around the world benefit from. His love for javelin was ignited in challenging circumstances, where resources were scarce. According to his father, Muhammad Ashraf, the local community played a crucial role in his early training. "People have no idea how Arshad got to this place, today. His fellow villagers and relatives used to donate money so that he could travel to other cities for his training and events in his early days," Ashraf revealed. The collective effort of his community was a lifeline that enabled Nadeem to pursue his dreams. Earlier this year, he made a public appeal for a new javelin to aid his training. His Indian counterpart, Neeraj Chopra, a fellow javelin thrower, responded with unwavering support on social media, showcasing the camaraderie and sportsmanship between the two athletes. This gesture underscored the respect and friendship that transcends national boundaries in the world of sports.



Prakash Bhandari
The writer is a senior journalist

India and Pakistan have been arch-rivals in cricket, and more. The heated rivalry has been well-noted by all bystanders. This time, both India and Pakistan were hopeful of a good outcome at the stadium. India, because of previous experience, and Pakistan, too, because of good record of their athletes. Shockingly for India, Arshad Nadeem of Pakistan and defending champion, Neeraj Chopra, of India finished 1-2 at the Paris Olympics on Thursday. Stade de France was packed with fans from the subcontinent. Back in Pakistan, people missed sleep and it was worth it. They stayed up to celebrate Pakistan's first ever gold, apart from hockey. A pity that the Pakistan hockey team, which had once won the Olympic gold in hockey, failed to qualify for the Olympics, this time. Arshad Nadeem emerged as the 'Sitaru-E-Pakistan'. "There's no doubt about the cricket rivalry. Now, this javelin is also there," Nadeem said through a translator. "People back home in Pakistan, and even in India, were eager to see us both throwing the javelin and beating each other. I'm

happy to see Chopra earning silver." Nadeem set a new Olympic record with a throw of 92.97 meters (305 feet) in his second attempt, smashing the old mark of 90.57, set by Andreas Thorkildsen of Norway in 2008. Nadeem was Pakistan's flagbearer during the opening ceremony in Paris. He played age-group cricket at the state level until he took up throwing sports, starting with shot put and discus.

Chopra took silver at 89.45 meters, a season best, and Anderson Peters of Grenada took the bronze at 88.54. Once a promising cricketer, he abandoned the sport after taking up the javelin, describing the decision as 'the best thing that happened to me'. "I wouldn't be in the Olympics otherwise," he said before the Games. "I know I have a natural talent for athletics and I'm grateful, but being a non-cricketer athlete in Pakistan has challenges, like not getting the required resources and facilities." Nadeem has spoken before about his difficult journey to the Olympics, saying that he had reached the top of the sport with no access to state-of-art grounds or training facilities. He has also used his platform to call for more funding for track and field athletes in Pakistan, saying, "In this day and age, you have to provide world-class facilities to develop athletes as the competition is getting tougher and tougher. You can't produce another Arshad without giving them those facilities." "When I threw the javelin, I got the feel of it leaving my hand, and sensed that it could be an Olympic record,

#OLYMPICS

Here's a list of Neeraj Chopra's Best Throws to date

Rank	Throw	Competition	Date
1	89.94m	Stockholm Diamond League 2022	June 30, 2022
2	89.45m	Paris 2024 Olympics - F	August 6, 2024
3	89.34m	Paris 2024 Olympics - Q	August 6, 2024
4	89.30m	Paavo Nurmi Games (Turku)	June 14, 2022
5	89.08m	Lausanne Diamond League 2022	August 26, 2022
6	88.88m	Asian Games 2023 (Hangzhou)	October 4, 2023
7	88.77m	World Athletics Championships 2023 (Budapest) - Q	August 25, 2023
8	88.67m	Doha Diamond League 2023	May 5, 2023
9	88.44m	Zurich Diamond League Final 2022	September 8, 2022
10	88.38m	World Athletics Championships 2022 (Oregon) - Q	July 21, 2022
11	88.36m	Doha Diamond League 2024	May 10, 2024
12	88.17m	World Athletics Championships 2023 (Budapest) - F	August 27, 2023
13	88.13m	World Athletics Championships 2022 (Oregon) - F	July 23, 2022
14	88.07m	Indian Grand Prix 3 (Patiala)	March 5, 2021
15	88.06m	Asian Games 2018 (Jakarta)	August 27, 2018
16	88.00m	Zurich Diamond League Final 2022	September 8, 2022
17	87.96m	ACAW League Meeting 1 (Potschefstroom)	January 28, 2020
18	87.90m	Federation Cup (Patiala)	March 17, 2021
19	87.73m	World Athletics Championships 2023 (Budapest) - F	August 27, 2023
20	87.66m	Lausanne Diamond League 2023	August 7, 2023
21	87.58m	Tokyo 2020 Olympics - F	August 30, 2021
22	87.46m	Stockholm Diamond League 2022	June 30, 2022
23	87.43m	Doha Diamond League 2018	May 4, 2018
24	87.02m	Tokyo 2020 Olympics - F	August 7, 2021
25	87.00m	Zurich Diamond League Final 2022	September 8, 2022
26	86.92m	Paavo Nurmi Games (Turku)	June 14, 2022
27	86.84m	Stockholm Diamond League 2022	June 30, 2022
28	86.78m	Kuortane Games 2021	June 26, 2021
29	86.68m	Kuortane Games 2022	June 18, 2022
30	86.67m	Stockholm Diamond League 2022	June 30, 2022
31	86.65m	Tokyo 2020 Olympics - Q	August 4, 2021
32	86.52m	Doha Diamond League 2023	May 5, 2023
33	86.48m	World U20 Championships 2016 (Bydgoszcz)	July 23, 2016
34	86.47m	Commonwealth Games 2018 (Gold Coast)	April 14, 2018

inshallah (God willing)," Nadeem said. "God, indeed, made it an Olympic record."

Pakistan can, along with India, contend for gold in cricket, four years from now, when that sport joins the Olympic program in Los Angeles. Chopra fouled on all five of his other throws and said that he's been in a funk, the last few years. "I'm always injured," said Chopra, who has been slowed by a groin injury. "Nadeem threw really well. Congratulations to him and his country."

Chopra became a superstar in India when he won India's first ever gold medal in track and field,

three years ago. But there were no fans in Tokyo because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Arshad Nadeem's journey to becoming Pakistan's first Olympic medalist in 32 years is as awe-inspiring as his record-breaking meter throw. His story is not just one of personal triumphs but also a testament to resilience in the face of adversity. He may have entered this competition as the underdog, perhaps, with a little less awe with which Neeraj would have been viewed, but Nadeem wrote his name in the stars in the Stade de France. The record of 90.57, held by Norway's Andreas Thorkildsen since Beijing 2008,

receded into the rear-view mirror as Nadeem put body and soul into his second throw, shocked delight rising from the stands, when the distance came up: 92.97. Nadeem threw his arms up in celebration and near disbelief when the record flashed up on the board, confirming that it was the longest throw in the world, this year. Growing up in a small village in Pakistan, 27-year old Nadeem did not have the institutional support that many athletes around the world benefit from. His love for javelin was ignited in challenging circumstances, where resources were scarce. According to his father, Muhammad Ashraf, the local community played a crucial role in his early training. "People have no idea how Arshad got to this place, today. His fellow villagers and relatives used to donate money so that he could travel to other cities for his training and events in his early days," Ashraf revealed. The collective effort of his community was a lifeline that enabled Nadeem to pursue his dreams. Earlier this year, he made a public appeal for a new javelin to aid his training. His Indian counterpart, Neeraj Chopra, a fellow javelin thrower, responded with unwavering support on social media, showcasing the camaraderie and sportsmanship between the two athletes. This gesture underscored the respect and friendship that transcends national boundaries in the world of sports.

In addition to financial struggles, Nadeem has battled physical setbacks, including elbow, knee, and back injuries, which required knee surgery last year. Despite these obstacles, he has persevered and continued to excel, shifting some of Pakistan's sports focus from cricket to athletics. His story is a powerful reminder that talent and determination, when combined with community support, can overcome even the most daunting challenges. His success not only brings pride to Pakistan but also inspires future generations to pursue their dreams, regardless of the obstacles that they may face.

Every time Neeraj Chopra picks up a javelin, the whole of India holds its breath. The Indian

javelin throw ace, too, seldom disappoints, winning medals and setting new records with staggering consistency. One of the highlights of Neeraj Chopra's eventful career, so far, has been his gold medal win at Tokyo 2020. With a best throw of 87.58m in the finals, Neeraj Chopra, in his early twenties, became the first Indian track and field athlete to win Olympic gold and only the second Indian, after shooter Abhinav Bindra, to win an individual gold medal at the Summer Games. Even Neeraj Chopra's second-best throw of 87.03m at the Japan National Stadium, during the Tokyo 2020 men's javelin throw finals would have been enough for the top podium finish. Czech Republic's Jakub Vadlejch won the silver with a throw of 86.67m.

Interestingly, the 87.58m Olympic gold-winning throw, as significant as it may have been, isn't Neeraj Chopra's personal best. In fact, it doesn't even make the top 10. Neeraj Chopra's best throw is 89.94m, achieved at the Stockholm Diamond League in Sweden on June 30, 2022. The mark stands as the men's national record in India and Neeraj Chopra's personal best. His two next best throws of 89.45m and 89.34m came during the javelin throw final and qualification event, respectively, at the Paris 2024 Olympics. His throw in the final fetched him a silver, making him the most successful individual Indian Olympian.

The previous three national records - 89.30m at the Paavo Nurmi Games 2022, 88.07m at the 2021 Indian Grand Prix 3 in Patiala

Jubilation in Pakistan

President Asif Ali Zardari said, "Arshad Nadeem! You are the pride of the entire nation." The triumph of Nadeem is the victory of the entire nation." Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said, "History made." The armed forces of Pakistan, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (JCSC) and services' chiefs congratulated the nation over the great achievement of Nadeem.

and 88.06m at the 2018 Asian Games in Jakarta, also belonged to Neeraj Chopra.

Neeraj Chopra's best at the World Athletics Championships came during the qualification round at Budapest 2023, where he threw an 88.77m. His effort in the 2022 final measured 88.13m, which earned India historic silver at the 2023 world championships. Neeraj Chopra threw the javelin 88.17m to win another historic medal, this time a gold, for India.

Neeraj Chopra won the gold medal at the IAAF World U20 Championships 2016 in Bydgoszcz, Poland. This effort, which helped Chopra grab world attention, came on the back of an 86.48m attempt, an under-20 world record!

The Indian ace's gold-medal winning effort at the Commonwealth Games 2018, meanwhile, measured slightly shorter at 86.47m.

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By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

BABY BLUES

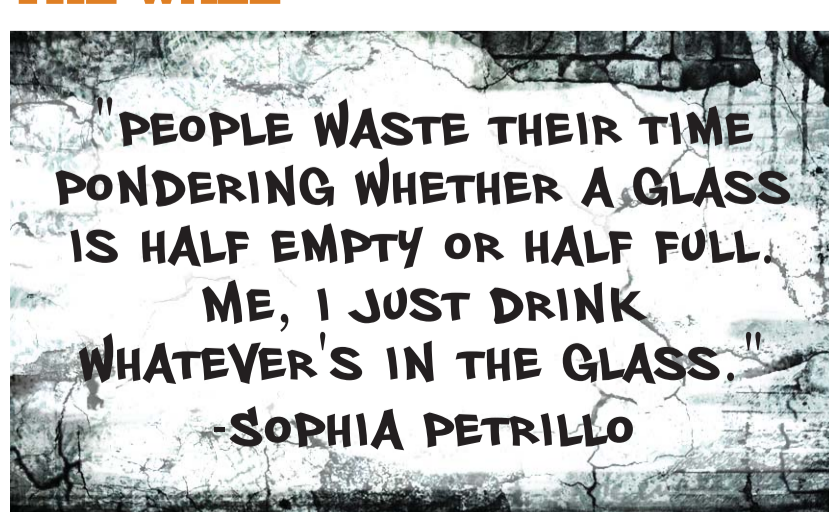


ZITS



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman

THE WALL



#EVOLUTION

Natural Selection

A new finding shows that natural selection could lead to similarities as well as differences

Natural selection is usually understood in the context of change. When organisms deviate from the norm, they may gain advantages that let their lineages outlast those of their less-adaptable relatives. But the new research suggests that natural selection also has the power to keep things the same.

"We always talk about the vast diversity of life and we should. It's incredible. Natural selection has given us a lot of that, probably most of that diversity," says Jeff Conner, a professor with Michigan State University's College of Natural Science and the W.K. Kellogg Biological Station, or KBS. "But natural selection can also cause similarities."

Conner and his team have published a new report that expands science's understanding of natural selection in the face of another evolutionary mechanism called genetic constraint.

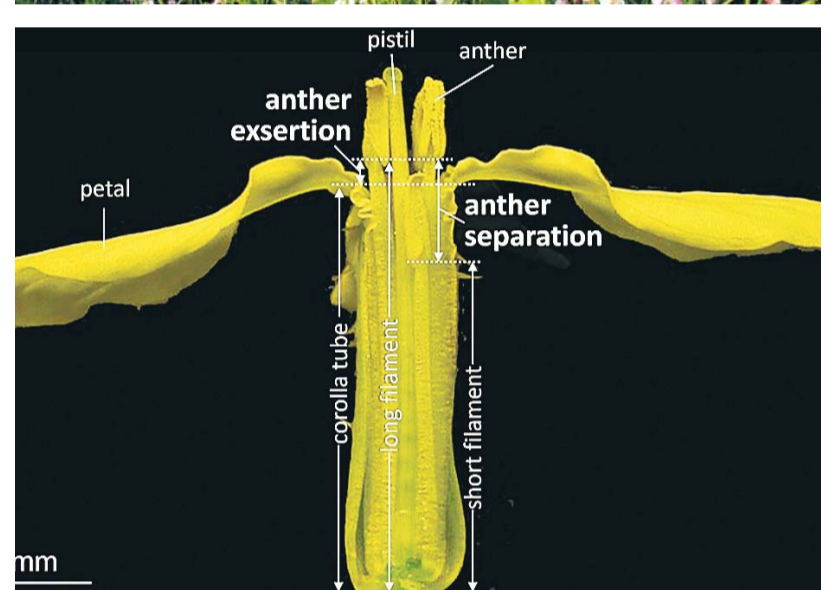
The idea behind constraint is that, as species evolve, they can lose genetic flexibility in certain areas. This drives specific traits to stabilize and persist through generations.

Roughly speaking, then, it's tempting to think of natural selection as the accelerator of evolution, driving different or divergent traits and constraint as the brakes, maintaining or conserving similarities.

"Our work flips the script on that a little bit," Conner says. "We're suggesting that selection can also slow things down, that it can cause similarities as well as differences."

During the peer-review process, the work was described as a fascinating project that challenged long-standing assumptions. This new paper builds on another report from Conner's group, earlier this year, led by graduate student Robin Waterman. That work was published in the journal *Evolution* and first hinted that selection could be responsible for conserving traits.

But the researchers still needed to rule out contributions from constraint. In both studies, the researchers relied on wild radish as a model organism, but the plant is also a highly damaging weed in agriculture, especially in wheat fields in Australia and the southeastern United States. In both publications, the researchers studied a defining feature of wild radish, which is the length of its stamens, or pollen-producing parts. Two of



its six stamens are short and four are long. This trait or feature is also shared widely across wild radish's nearly 4,000 relatives in the mustard family. That includes *Arabidopsis thaliana*, another important model organism, garlic mustard, an invasive species in the United States, and many crops such as kale, cauliflower, and Brussels sprouts.

So, although the researchers were focused on fundamental biology in these two reports, their work also could inspire future studies to benefit scientists and farmers across the globe.

To evaluate the influence of selection and constraint on this family's distinctive stamen trait, the team turned to what's called *artificial selection*. That is, they selectively bred wild radishes whose sta-

mens were closer to the same length to try and change that characteristic. "Perhaps, the best method to test for short-term constraints is artificial selection because if a trait responds to artificial selection, it clearly can evolve," the team writes. "But if the trait does not respond, there is a constraint caused by a lack of genetic variation."

The trait responded, and it did so very quickly. The team reduced the stamen length difference by more than 30% during its experiments. "This family of plants has maintained this four-long, two-short trait over 50 million years, and we can get rid of a third of the difference in five generations, which would be five years," Conner says. "My guess is if we kept going, we would get back to six stamens of equal length." The ancestors of this family had stamens of equal length and a few species within the family have reverted to equal lengths over the intervening time. But wild radish and the majority of its relatives have evolved, and kept the four-long, two-short motif likely, thanks to natural selection.

Researchers believe that the stamen of different lengths gives the species an advantage when it comes to how pollinators interact with the plant, but they aren't sure exactly what that advantage is. Waterman and Conner have designed experiments to look into that.

So, wild radish still holds some mysteries, but it's provided a potent reminder of the power of natural selection. "Natural selection is very important," Conner says. "A lot of things people have thought selection couldn't do, we're learning selection can do."

