

#WELL-BEING

When Stressed Out, Hope Beats Mindfulness

It's important to be hopeful and forward looking.



A recent study finds that hope appears to be more beneficial than mindfulness at helping people manage stress and stay professionally engaged during periods of prolonged stress at work.

The study underscores the importance of looking ahead, rather than living 'in the moment' during hard times. Mindfulness refers to the ability of an individual to focus attention on the present, in a way that is open, curious, and not judgmental. Essentially, the ability to be fully in the moment.

"There's a lot of discussion about the benefits of mindfulness, but it poses two challenges when you're going through periods of stress," says Tom Zagenczyk, professor of Management in North Carolina State University's Poole College of Management.

"First, it's hard to be mindful when you're experiencing stress. Second, if it's a truly difficult time, you don't necessarily want to dwell too much on the experience that you're going through."

"Because hope is inherently forward looking, while mindfulness is about appreciating your current circumstances, we wanted to see how each of these two mindsets influenced people's well-being and professional attitudes during difficult times," Zagenczyk says.

"The COVID pandemic presented us with an unfortunate, but useful, opportunity to explore this topic. And we chose to focus on the performing arts since that sector was particularly hard hit by the pandemic."

For the study, researchers recruited 247 professional musicians from the organization, MusiCares, to take two surveys, one month apart. The first survey was given in September 2021. In addition to collecting broad demographic data, study participants were asked about their thoughts and experiences at the beginning of the pandemic, March to August 2020. They were also asked questions aimed at capturing how hopeful and mindful they were from September 2020 through March 2021.

The second survey was given in October 2021 and asked study participants questions aimed at capturing work engagement, work tensions, how positive their emotions

Spread your Tail so we can know Beauty



Peacocks are very symbolic in the Buddhist religion. Because they display their feathers by opening their tails, they are associated with openness and purity, and their feathers are even used in Buddhist purification rituals. They also consume poisonous plants, which some people believe to be symbolic of the Buddhist concept of accepting and overcoming suffering. In the Buddhist tradition, it is believed that the peacock got his beautiful plumage through the sacrifice of the princess, Miao Shan, or Kwan Yin.



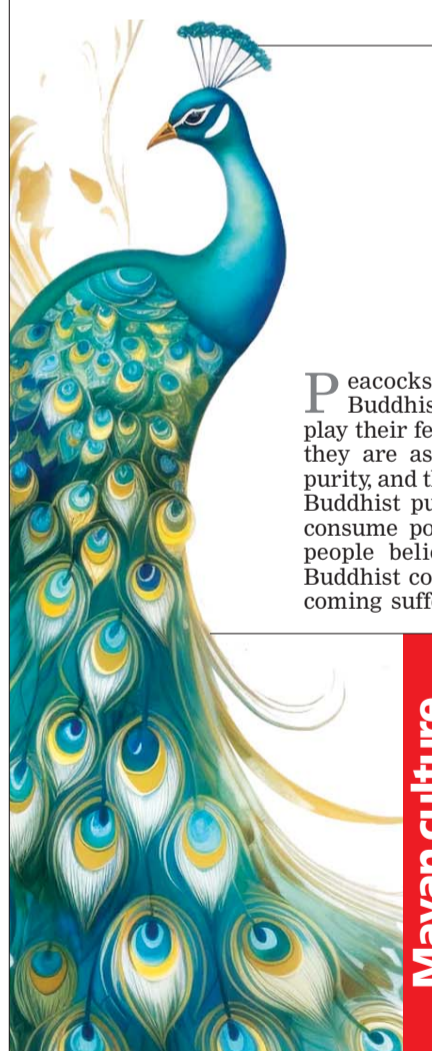
Anjali Sharma
Senior Journalist &
Wildlife Enthusiast

For some days now, we have been reblessed with a peacock visiting our garden. I'm saying reblessed, because twenty years ago, our morning tea was shared by couple of families of peacocks. A morning worth waking up to M. I. road has grown in these twenty years, and the peacocks left for the periphery of Jaipur. He is alone yet, but I pray for a companion for him. Maybe, it will please him to stay on. I now cherish my visits to the garden. His beauty is something that has to be shared in all fairness, with everyone. In India, we have lived with this bird closely for generations, and miss him. But what about the rest of the world? There are stories, I am told about this majestic beauty, believe me. Here are a couple of tales!

"Fundamentally, our findings tell us that hope was associated with people being happy, and mindfulness was not," says Kristin Scott, study coauthor and a professor of Management at Clemson University. "And when people are hopeful, and happy, they experience less distress, are more engaged with their work, and feel less tension related to their professional lives."

"Being mindful can be tremendously valuable, there are certainly advantages to living in the moment," says Sharon Sheridan, study coauthor and an assistant professor of Management at Clemson. "But it's important to maintain a hopeful outlook, particularly during periods of prolonged stress. People should be hopeful while being mindful. Hold on to the idea that there's a light at the end of the tunnel."

While the study focused on musicians during an extreme set of circumstances, the researchers think there is a takeaway message that is relevant across industry sectors. "Whenever we have high levels of job stress, it's important to be hopeful and forward looking," says Emily Ferrise, study coauthor and a PhD student at Clemson. "And to the extent possible, there is real value for any organization to incorporate hope and forward thinking into their corporate culture, through job conditions, organizational communications, etc."



Mayan culture

#MORE-LORE

There are many stories about the peacock's tail feathers and their resemblance to eyes.

In mythology, Greek goddess *Hera* knew that her husband *Zeus* was a bit of a cad, she sent her hundred-eyed giant *Argus* to ensure that *Zeus* couldn't meet with his lover. *Zeus* lured *Argus* to sleep and cut off his head. *Hera* took his eyes and placed them into the peacock's tail. Early Christianity believed the 'eyes' were a reminder that God watches over us. They were considered so sacred that only priests and holy men were allowed to touch the birds. In *Hinduism*, Lord *Krishna* wears the feathers in his hair as a present of wisdom given to him by the peacocks themselves. Depending on the cultural viewpoints, it's been

#MORE-LORE

considered either very good luck or very bad luck (the 'evil eye') to keep peacock feathers in your home. Gods, in every major religion, have had associations with the birds. *Malek Taus* is a powerful central figure in the religion of *Yazidi*. He was an archangel, who fell from grace, but redeemed himself. Ancient Egyptians believed that *Apep* was an evil snake god, who battled the sun god *Ra* by hypnotizing him. The three sisters are childhood versions of the *Fates*, also known as the *Moirai*. Generally depicted as ancient crones, I liked the idea of them being young in an Eden-like garden.

asked his eldest. "How would you help this creature?" The girl considered all she had heard before answering. "My sisters' wishes are kind and good, but without wisdom, beauty and strength easily become vanity and tyranny. Because you watch over your children always, into his feathers, I would set a hundred shimmering eyes to remind everyone that under your gaze, we should all strive to be as noble as this bird, ready to sacrifice everything for

those we love." Pleased, the Father said to *Malek Taus*, "Rise, and accept the blessings that my daughters have bestowed upon you. Go forth as my beacon, to remind people that they are stronger and braver than they know, more beautiful than they realize, and are ever protected under my watch."

And so the peacock and his mate awoke, no longer a drab brown, but bluer than the bluest sky, and brighter than the most brilliant rainbow. Although, the

#MORE-LORE

world moved on and forgot the story, the girls' gifts endure. Peacocks are still brave and loyal, used throughout the world as guardians, somehow thriving on a diet of poisonous snakes. They have been considered sacred messengers of the Divine by every major religion in the last 3,000 years. To this day, the gift of a peacock feather offers peace, love, and joy. We couldn't be happier that you are sharing these blessings with us today.

mountains, and when they went to her, she was happy to sacrifice her own eye to end the suffering of another person. When the king recovered, he went to thank the woman and was shocked to discover that it was his own daughter who had helped him even after all his cruelty. In front of the king, *Miao Shan* was transformed into the beautiful *Bodhisattva Kwan Yin*, and was given the gift of immortality and 100 eyes.

She chose to remain on earth to continue to spread kindness and end suffering but realized that she could not see the suffering of the whole world, so instead, she took her hundred eyes and attached them to the feathers of the peacock so that he could fly above the earth and report back to her the suffering that needed to be healed. This is how the peacock got his beautiful eye-like tail feathers.

forming herself into a peacock, began to fly toward the heavens. As she climbed higher, the sun began to burn her, but she kept going and finally reached *Olodumare*, with her skin burnt and what few feathers remained charred to a crisp. *Olodumare* was so moved by her compassion, determination, and persistence that he not only granted her wish to bring back the rains but also healed her burns and restored her feathers, making them even more beautiful than before. He also assigned her the honour of being his personal messenger to the other *Orishas*, and since then, the peacock has been associated by the Yoruba people with holiness and the gods.

How the Peacock got his Feathers

THE COLOURFUL BLUE AND GREEN PLUMAGE AND GRACEFUL ELEGANCE OF THE PEACOCK MEAN THAT IT IS OFTEN CONSIDERED TO BE ONE OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL ANIMALS ON EARTH. BUT DO YOU KNOW HOW THE PEACOCK CAME TO HAVE THESE BEAUTIFUL FEATHERS? PEACOCKS ARE NATIVE TO INDIA, BUT OVER TIME, THEIR POPULATIONS HAVE SPREAD THROUGHOUT ASIA, AFRICA, EUROPE, AND AUSTRALIA. THEY ARE REVERED AND EVEN WORSHIPPED IN MANY CULTURES AND RELIGIONS, AND THE LEGENDS SURROUNDING THEIR ORIGINS AND SYMBOLIC MEANING VARY BETWEEN THESE TRADITIONS. DISCOVER HOW DIFFERENT GROUPS BELIEVE THAT THE PEACOCK GOT HIS STUNNING FEATHERS.

Buddhism

Peacocks are very symbolic in the Buddhist religion. Because they display their feathers by opening their tails, they are associated with openness and purity, and their feathers are even used in Buddhist purification rituals. They also consume poisonous plants, which some people believe to be symbolic of the Buddhist concept of accepting and overcoming suffering. In the Buddhist tradition, it is believed that the peacock got his beautiful plumage through the sacrifice of the princess *Miao Shan*, or *Kwan Yin*. The story tells that long ago, *Miao Shan* was a Chinese princess, the youngest child of a cruel king. The king wanted *Miao Shan* to marry, but she wanted to pursue a life of religious study, and after enduring many punishments, she escaped into the mountains where she

studied for nine years. During this time, the king fell very ill from all the bad *Karma* that he had acquired and was told by the monks that the only way to cure him was to drink a tonic made from 'the eye of one who is without anger.' His men had heard of a spiritual woman in the

West African culture

For the *Yoruba* people of West Africa, the peacock is a sacred bird and is considered to be the messenger between the people of Africa and the supreme god *Olodumare*. The tale of the peacock tells that long ago, the *Orishas* (gods) became tired of following the rules of *Olodumare*, so they began to plot to overthrow him. In response, the supreme god stopped the rains from falling, and the earth was plunged into a long and cruel drought. Feeling the effects of the drought, the *Orishas* decided to beg for *Olodumare's* forgiveness, but he was too far away in the heavens for them to reach him. Eventually, the *Orisha Oshun* volunteered to fly to him and beg on their behalf. The other *Orishas* didn't believe that she would be able to make it, but *Oshun* persisted, and, trans-

Lung Cancer Awareness Month



Breathing, every day, all day and night, is what keeps humans alive. By bringing oxygen through the lungs and supplying it to the cells in our bodies, every breath is life giving. But when the lungs are compromised by disease, they are unable to supply the needed oxygen and, over the long term, the body is unable to thrive or even survive. Lung Cancer Awareness Month is here to educate and empower individuals and families about lung cancer prevention and early detection, so that everyone can breathe easier with healthy and happy lungs!

#RESEARCH

Plan to get rid of plastic pollution by 2050

If policy makers implemented just four policies acting across the plastic lifecycle (from production to use and disposal), we could reduce plastic pollution by 91%.

Researchers estimate that without intervention, plastic pollution is on track to double by 2050. But in a new study, they report that this all can be avoided. Global leaders have the ability to nearly put an end to plastic pollution by 2050 through a United Nations (UN) international treaty, set to be completed at a final meeting in Busan, Republic of Korea, taking place from November 25 to December 1.

If policy makers implemented just four policies acting across the plastic lifecycle (from production to use and disposal), according to the researchers, we could reduce plastic pollution by 91%.

"This study demonstrates how far we have come in not just quantifying the manifold problems surrounding plastics, but also in identifying and evaluating potential solutions," says Industrial Ecologist, Roland Geyer, a professor at the University of California, Santa Barbara's Bren School of Environmental Science and Management, and co-author of the study.

"I am very proud of what our team was able to achieve in time for the final round of negotiations for the global plastics treaty."

"One of the most exciting discoveries in this research was seeing that it is actually possible to nearly end plastic pollution with this treaty," says fellow co-author, Douglas McCauley, a professor of Marine Ecology at UCSB, and direc-



tor of the campus's Benioff Ocean Science Laboratory (BOSL).

"The problem has grown so large, I wasn't sure when we broke ground on this research and whether any kind of treaty could make a dent."

According to the UN, "The high and rapidly increasing levels of plastic pollution represent a serious environmental problem at a global scale, negatively impacting the environmental, social, and economic dimensions of sustainable development." Plastic pollution is also associated with diverse human health impacts (such as cancers, cardiovascular disease, and reproductive health problems) and has created significant environmental justice issues for the globe's most vulnerable communities.

In 2021 alone, humankind mismanaged 68 million metric tons of plastic waste. By continuing with a business-as-usual approach, the world would generate enough litter between 2010 and 2050 to cover Manhattan in a pile of plastic 10 times the height of the Empire State Building. There is now an opportunity to fix this, when 190 delegates meet in Busan to finalize the historic international legally binding treaty on plastic pollution.

A bleak future for people and the planet can be rewritten, the researchers say, if negotiators adopt some of the more effective solutions, brought to light in the paper. The four high impact policies that surfaced in this study include, requiring that new products be made with 40% post-consumer recycled plastic, capping new plastic production at 2020 levels, investing



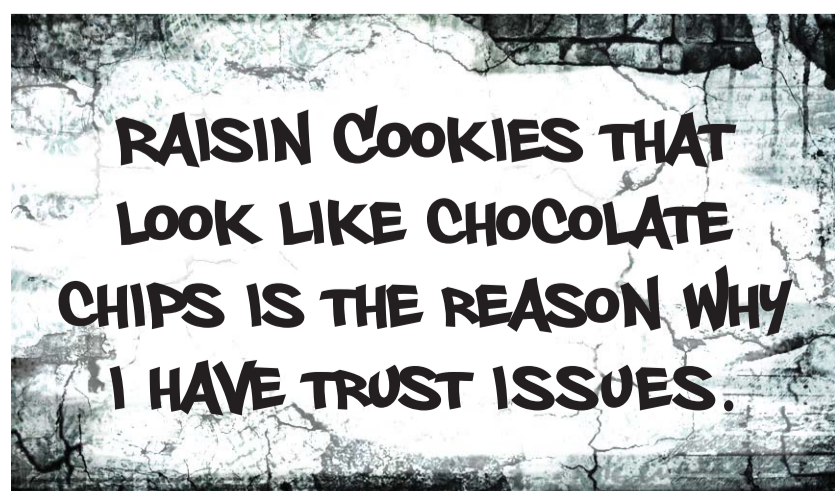
significantly in expanding waste management infrastructure, especially in lower-income parts of the world, and implementing a small fee on plastic packaging.

"The new paper is an evolution of the team's ongoing efforts to provide the resources needed to finalize an ambitious treaty at these negotiations. The research is linked with an online, open-source, AI-powered dashboard (the Global Plastic Policy Tool) that allows treaty negotiators to build their own forecasts, based on ground-breaking regionalized data. The tool lets decision-makers mix and match potential interventions, and even customize and change the structure of specific policies, to see what impact they have on plastic pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. "The science, powering this study, is really exciting. I wouldn't have dreamed it possible that artificial intelligence and data science would have advanced to the point where we can now forecast the outcomes of dozens of different potential treaty options live for negotiators," McCauley says.

"This is a novel tool that is not prescriptive to policy makers, and they can combine various policies as they see fit," adds Nivedita Biyani, a researcher on global plastic modeling in BOSL. A significant co-benefit, illuminated by this research, is the win-win opportunity in the upcoming global plastics treaty to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and fight climate change while also meeting the primary goal of reducing plastic pollution.



THE WALL



BABY BLUES



By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

ZITS



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman

