New films. No vaccine. Why three new movies are testing out reopened movie theatres.
**USEFUL NUMBERS**

Emergency 999
Worldwide Emergency Number 112
Kahramaa – Electricity and Water 991
Local Directory 180
International Calls Enquiries 150
Hamad International Airport 40106666
Labor Department 44508111, 44406537
Mowasalat Taxi 44588888
Qatar Airways 44496000
Hamad Medical Corporation 44392222, 44393333
Qatar General Electricity and Water Corporation 44845555, 44845464
Primary Health Care Corporation 44593333, 44593363
Qatar Assistive Technology Centre 44594050
Qatar News Agency 44450205, 44450333
Q-Post – General Postal Corporation 44464444

**Humanitarian Services Office**
(Single window facility for the repatriation of bodies)
Ministry of Interior 40253371, 40253372, 40253369
Ministry of Health 40253370, 40253364
Hamad Medical Corporation 40253368, 40253365
Qatar Airways 40253374

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**Quote Unquote**

“I have never met a man so ignorant that I couldn’t learn something from him.”
— Galileo Galilei

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**TUESDAY, AUGUST 25, 2020**

**GULF TIMES**

**COMMUNITY**

**ROUND & ABOUT**

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**SERIES TO BINGE WATCH ON AMAZON PRIME**

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**Prayer Time**

- Fajr: 3.51am
- Shorooq (sunrise): 5.13am
- Zuhr (noon): 11.37am
- Asr (afternoon): 3.07pm
- Maghreb (sunset): 6.01pm
- Isha (night): 7.31pm

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**Carnival Row**

**DIRECTION:** Travis Beacham, René Echevarria

**CAST:** Orlando Bloom, Cara Delevingne, Simon McBurney

**SYNOPSIS:** Orlando Bloom and Cara Delevingne star in Carnival Row, a Victorian fantasy world filled with mythological immigrant creatures whose rich homelands were invaded by the empires of man. This growing immigrant population struggles to coexist with humans in the grimmest section of the city – forbidden to live, love, or fly with freedom. But even in darkness, hope lives, as a human detective, Rycroft Philostrate, and a refugee faerie named Vignette Stonemoss rekindle a dangerous affair despite an increasingly intolerant society. Vignette harbours a secret that endangers Philo’s standing during his most important case yet: a string of gruesome murders threatening the uneasy peace of the Row. As Philo investigates, he reveals a monster no one could imagine.

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**The Man in the High Castle**

**DIRECTION:** Frank Spotnitz

**CAST:** Alexa Davalos, Luke Kleintank, Rufus Sewell

**SYNOPSIS:** It is the year 1962. Having lost World War 2, the United States is now occupied by Germany and Japan. Germany occupies the eastern states and Japan the western, with the Neutral Zone in between. When her sister is killed by the Japanese, Juliana Crain is sucked into the covert, dangerous world of the American Resistance. Opposing her and her comrades are the most ruthless forces the Nazis and Japanese have to offer, lead by Oberguppenfuhrer John Smith of the SS and Chief Inspector Kido of the Kempeitai. The Resistance’s greatest hope appears to lie in films which show an alternate reality, a world where the US and its allies won WW2. While largely viewed as propaganda, these films could be more than that. At the centre of the manufacture and distribution of these films is one man, a figurehead in the Resistance: The Man in the High Castle.
If you have coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) and you’re caring for yourself at home or you’re caring for a loved one with Covid-19 at home, you might have questions. How do you know when emergency care is needed? How long is isolation necessary? What can you do to prevent the spread of germs? How can you support a sick loved one and manage your stress? Here’s what you need to know.

At home treatment:
Most people who become sick with Covid-19 will only experience mild illness and can recover at home. Symptoms might last a few days, and people who have the virus might feel better in about a week. Treatment is aimed at relieving symptoms and includes rest, fluid intake and pain relievers.

Follow the healthcare provider’s recommendations about care and home isolation for yourself or your loved one. Talk to the provider if you have any questions about treatments. Help the sick person get groceries and any medications and, if needed, take care of his or her pet.

It’s also important to consider how caring for a sick person might affect your health. If you are older or have an existing chronic medical condition, such as heart or lung disease or diabetes, you may be at higher risk of serious illness with Covid-19. You might consider isolating yourself from the sick person and finding another person to provide care.

Emergency warning signs:
Carefully monitor yourself or your loved one for worsening symptoms. If symptoms appear to be getting worse, call the healthcare provider.

If you or the person with Covid-19 experiences emergency warning signs, medical attention is needed immediately. Call 911 or your local emergency number if the sick person can’t be woken up or you notice any emergency signs, including:
1. Trouble breathing
2. Persistent chest pain or pressure
3. New confusion
4. Bluish lips or face
5. Protecting others if you’re ill

If you’re ill with Covid-19, you can help prevent the spread of infection with the Covid-19 virus.

1. Stay home from work, school and public areas unless it’s to get medical care.
2. Avoid using public transportation, ride-sharing services or taxis.
3. Stay isolated in one room, away from your family and other people, as much as possible. This includes eating in your room. Open windows to keep air circulating.

USE OF PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT:

Wear disposable gloves and a face mask when providing oral and respiratory care and when handling stool, urine or other waste. Wash your hands before and after removing your gloves and mask. Don’t reuse your mask or gloves.

1. Keep your hands clean and away from your face: Frequently wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser that contains at least 60% alcohol. Protecting yourself while caring for someone with Covid-19 is aimed at relieving symptoms and providing care.

2. Consider wearing a face mask:

- If you need to be in the same room with the person who is ill and he or she isn’t able to wear a face mask, wear a face mask. Stay at least 6 feet (2 metres) away from the ill person.

3. Don’t touch or handle your mask while you are using it:

- If your mask gets wet or dirty, replace it with a clean, dry mask. Throw away the used mask and wash your hands.

4. Clean your home frequently:

- Every day, use household cleaning sprays or wipes to clean surfaces that are often touched, including counters, tabletops and doorknobs. Avoid cleaning the sick person’s separate room and bathroom. Set aside bedding and utensils for the sick person only to use.

5. Be careful with laundry:

- Don’t shake dirty laundry. Use regular detergent to wash the sick person’s laundry. Use the warmest setting you can. Wash your hands after putting clothes in the dryer. Thoroughly dry clothes. If you are handling clothing that has been soiled by the sick person, wear disposable gloves and keep the items away from your body. Wash your hands after removing the gloves. Place dirty gloves and masks in a waste bin with a lid in the sick person’s room. Clean and disinfect clothes hampers and wash your hands afterward.

6. Be careful with dishes:

- Wear gloves when handling dishes, cups or utensils used by the sick person. Wash the items with soap and hot water or in the dishwasher. Clean your hands after taking off the gloves or handling used items.

7. Avoid direct contact with the sick person’s bodily fluids:

- Wear disposable gloves and a face mask when providing oral and respiratory care and when handling stool, urine or other waste. Wash your hands before and after removing the gloves and mask. Don’t reuse your mask or gloves.

8. Avoid having unnecessary visitors in your home:

- Don’t allow visitors until the sick person has completely recovered and has no signs or symptoms of Covid-19.

If you will be tested to determine if you’re still contagious, you can leave your sick room or home if at least 10 days have passed since your symptoms started, at least 24 hours have passed with no fever without the use of fever-reducing medicine and other symptoms are improving. Loss of taste and smell might last for weeks or months after recovery but shouldn’t delay ending isolation.

If you’ll be tested to determine if you’re still contagious, your doctor will let you know when you can be around others based on your test results. Most people don’t need testing to decide when they can be around others.

The WHO also recommends that, as the sick person’s caregiver, you monitor your health for 14 days after the start of the sick person’s symptoms. — Mayo Clinic News Network/TNS
None of us can resist the temptation to look at that first weekend and try to figure out what it means. There’s nothing like walking into the white-hot spotlight and hoping that you remembered to put your clothes on.

— Mark Gill, chairman and chief executive of Solstice Studios

In an alternate and undeniably better universe, the summer movie season would be winding down right about now. Studios would be tallying the takings from tentpoles like Black Widow, F9 and Wonder Woman 1984. Box office observers would be making their lists of the season’s winners and losers. Moviegoers sated on spectacle would be looking ahead to the headier prestige fare of the fall.

Instead, Hollywood finds itself trying to salvage what little remains of a summer battered to near oblivion by the coronavirus pandemic.

At the time of writing this, three movies were to open exclusively in theatres across much of the US, the first new films to do so since multiplexes were forced to shut their doors five months ago. (For historical perspective, at the height of the 1918 flu pandemic, an embargo was placed on the release of new films for one month.)

The thriller Unhinged, the YA adaptation Words on Bathroom Walls and the heist film Cut Throat City — three fairly small movies that might otherwise have been overshadowed by big-budget behemoths — now find themselves leading the charge back to what Hollywood hopes is a sustainable future, paving the way for the long-delayed domestic opening of Christopher Nolan’s mind-bending action film Tenet on September 3.

The new titles arrive as the three major exhibition chains — AMC, Regal and Cinemark — reopen in 100 to 200 locations each, according to screen listings, with reduced capacity and increased cleaning and safety protocols.

That will push the total number of open US theatres over 1,500 (including around 300 drive-ins), up from about 1,100 last weekend, per box office measurement firm Comscore. Additional phased reopenings are expected to roll out leading up to Labour Day weekend and the release of Tenet.

Theatres remain closed in a handful of states, however,
including the critical markets of New York and California. And it is far from clear to what extent audiences spooked by months of dire headlines about the pandemic are ready to venture back into the roughly 70% of them that have opened.

New York Governor Andrew Cuomo defended keeping his state’s theatres closed earlier this week, saying that “on a relative risk scale, a movie theatre is less essential and poses a high risk.”

Given the stakes for the entire industry, the performance of each of this weekend’s cinematic canaries in the coal mine will be closely scrutinised. “None of us can resist the temptation to look at what it first weekend and try to figure out what it means,” says Mark Gill, chairman and chief executive of Solstice Studios, which is releasing Unhinged. “There’s nothing like walking into the white-hot spotlight and hoping that you remembered to put your clothes on.”

Here is how — and why — these three unlikely films stepped up act, “Gill says.

Heist action pic Cut Throat City, the third feature from director RZA, was set to receive its world premiere at the South by Southwest Film Festival in March, with an April theatrical debut to follow, when the pandemic upended both plans. Rather than going VOD or devising a hybrid release, distributor Well Go stuck with a theatrical-only opening — and got caught in the Tenet ripple effect, moving its date to July 17 before landing on August 21. “We just felt like it was a film that needed to be seen on the big screen,” says Jason Pfardrescher, Well Go USA’s executive vice president of digital and theatrical distribution.

Set in New Orleans in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, the film’s lineup, including stars Shameik Moore, Terrence Howard, Wesley Snipes, T.I. and Ethan Hawke, and its genre trappings, which Well Go expects to draw younger crowds, made sticking with a theatrical plan easier. “I can say that if we had a film that skewed older we definitely wouldn’t be putting it out now,” Pfardrescher says.

Pfardrescher expects that the buzz that comes with being one of the first titles in reopened theatres will contribute to awareness later this year when Cut Throat City hits VOD, home video and other post-theatrical platforms. “We’re big believers in that theatrical window,” Pfardrescher says. “We believe it does set up the ancillary rights and the downstream rights from an awareness standpoint and ultimately uplifts the performance of the film in its life cycle.”

The company has not one, but two new films entering US theatres this week: Korean zombie sequel Train to Busan: Peninsula — which Well Go opened in theatres in Canada earlier this month — will also hit US screens. It opened in South Korea in July, where theatres have been back up and running for some time, and topped the box office. But while Well Go will have two genre titles in theatres at the same time, the expected audience overlap is low.

“There’s a level of crossover between the two films,” Pfardrescher says, “but it’s not to the extent that we felt we were going to be cannibalising our own office.”

The company is hoping that being among the first and only distributors taking the gamble to release new theatrical fare will translate into longer screen engagements, with less competition from other titles taking up screens. And given the extraordinary circumstances, Pfardrescher says, new openers don’t bear the weight of the same performance expectations typical of a pre-pandemic release.

Despite the country’s fearful and downbeat mood — or perhaps because of it — Gill believes that a film like Unhinged, which is stuffed with R-rated violence and unbridled rage, could strike a chord. “What’s really interesting is that one of the surveys somebody did made us wonder what people what kind of movies they’d most like to see when the theatres are open again, and the answer was thrillers,” Gill says. “I would have thought it would be lollipops and rainbows and unicorns. But I was wrong.”

Gill is confident that there is a once they have a nearly endless experience of moviegoing. “And if you’re not competing against anything, it’s easier to get your message out, and now, there’s way more risk than ever,” Gill says. “There’s a level of uncertainty, ‘Gill says. “No one who has been watching this pandemic happening in the US shifting to remote learning, or California, where hardtop movie screenings in places like New York or California, where hardtop movie theatres remain closed. “It’s very poignant and I think it will speak to teenagers in this time,” Cohen says. “If you’re looking for something fun to do, to spend some time with friends, to have a laugh and experience a different world, this is it.”

For smaller distributors, having to nimble adjust to new strategies and industry norms poses its own set of challenges. “It’s a love story,” Cohen says. “It’s about finding your centre, and a box office play, it’s going to be a glut of content that’s playing all at once, and the answer was thrillers,” Gill says.

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Before you sit down with Minnesota-Wisconsin Ojibwe author Thomas Peacock’s strange, beautiful novel The Wolf’s Trail, close your eyes, and for a time, forget who you are. Let your name, your gender, your race, your history, your religion, your politics and passions. Forget, even, that you are human. Imagine yourself a curious wolf cub listening to an old wolf “talk story” some dark night. As you listen, drowsy, dreaming, he tells you all he has learned, all he cannot forget. His stories illuminate a great deal for the few pups who have the ability to pay attention, and for attentive humans. And that’s not just Ojibwe readers hungry for historical and psychological connection. In the wolf uncle’s stories of life’s origin, of wolves’ fraught connection with humans — both “parallel being” Natives and the “other humans” who came later — there are revelations for all. The Wolf’s Trail is how Zhi-shay’ (old uncle) helps generations of unruly wolf pups who live in Nagahchiwanong, the south shore of Lake Superior (Gitche Gumee), understand the world. Zhi-shay’ tells them (several) stories of life’s origin, of how wolves found a home in the terrain around Lake Superior, of how the Ojibwe people became the wolves’ uneasy ‘shadow dance’ partners, of what happened when the hordes of “other humans” arrived with their weapons and determination to subdue and subjugate.

Of course, the old wolf is channelling Ojibwe legends. Science and mythology tell us how much wolves and humans share. But non-Ojibwe readers will have no trouble recognising the experiences that have generated these lessons. And when the old wolf speaks of zaagi’idiwin, which means both love and the creator, there is no language or cultural barrier.

Perhaps the most poignant of the stories of Zhi-shay’ is that of his younger brother, a ‘skunk’, ‘omega’ wolf who struggled to act in a submissive manner daily as he was shunned and bullied within their pack. Zhi-shay’ was horrified by his brother’s treatment, but also heedful of the powerful pack rules in which such cruelty is embedded. The agonising ambiguity of this tale makes it clear that mercy is not a natural trait. It is the child of love and wisdom, such as wolves from the same litter feel, and humans with the rare ability to think as widely as the heavens can sometimes heed.

Interpersed with the old wolf’s stories are brief notes from Peacock about historical documents he’s found that helped shape these stories. In one, he describes finding a letter from his great-grandmother to the US government pleading that her son, his grandfather, not be sent back to a boarding school because she is ill and needs his help. Her request is briskly rejected, and in his absence, she dies. As he read this account, “my hands went to my face, and I wept quietly, to the discomfort of the researchers who were sitting near me,” Peacock writes.

There are many other things to appreciate about this book, including that every Ojibwe term is defined not just once, but patiently, many times, in parentheses, so that by book’s end, we have learned well what those words are.

There is such strong wisdom in this novel. We who are not Ojibwe learn so much about our Native brothers and sisters. As has been said too much of late, yet meant not enough, we are all in this together. Is there any better measure of a work of art than that it links us? By that gauge, The Wolf’s Trail is a small, quiet masterpiece. — Star Tribune (Minneapolis)/TNS

The Wolf’s Trail by Thomas D Peacock is how Zhi-shay’ (old uncle) helps generations of unruly wolf pups who live in Nagahchiwanong, the south shore of Lake Superior (Gitche Gumee), understand the world, writes Pamela Miller.
There’s no place like Rome, but if you talk to designer couple Paolo Giacomelli and Roberta Paolucci, the lesser-known neighbourhood of Pigneto is where the creative spirit of the Italian capital is currently flourishing.

The Italian-born founders and designers behind the jewellery brand Iosselliani discovered Pigneto, 5km east of the centre and outside the ancient city walls, in the early 1990s when it was still a sleepy suburb. This was well after the late film director Pier Paolo Pasolini, whose work includes The Gospel According to St Matthew, made it the setting for some of his seminal pieces – but long before the trendy restaurants moved in and the New York Times coined it “an enclave of cool”.

Roberta, 54, and Paolo, 57, chose to invest in a location that would provide them with creative headspace. Three decades later, it has more than paid its dues, not least during the months of Covid-19 lockdown.

“We feel like it is an island in the city and we have felt so lucky to be here,” says Paolo. “It really is so special and attracts a lot of people – designers, artists and people in fashion – looking for peaceful tranquillity. It isn’t as expensive as other areas around either. We were probably among the first people who moved here and we found it perfect for our lifestyle.”

Looking around the home the couple share with their teenage son Rocco, it’s easy to see why. Spacious and airy, the gallery-like space they designed and renovated with architect Adriano Pingaro 12 years ago affords them ample yet intimate room. The exterior is, says Paolo, typical of the kind of single-storey houses that you find locally. The interior, on the other hand, mirrors the aesthetic of their jewellery brand, which is celebrated for mingling old-world craft with modernist charm. A mixture of high-end furniture – including a set of Vittorio Nobili’s sought-after 1955 Medea chairs and Gio Ponti’s more prevalent 646 Leggera chair – sits alongside more quirky personal items, such as treasured vintage glass ceiling lamps and rustic wooden tables. Books that have been carefully collected from outdoor flea markets in downtown Rome abound. The look, says Paolo, is “more Italian baroque” than bohemian.

Concrete floors and walls are off-set by sumptuous velvets, slinky satins, lightweight linens and an extensive art collection. A piece by photographer Nan Goldin – a 40th-birthday gift to Roberta from Paolo – hangs above the bath, while a cozy glow emits from the bedside lamps, which the pair designed for the Iosselliani Design branch of their brand for Giustini/Stagetti – an international contemporary design gallery in Rome.

It is, however, the exterior element of this interior that really brings their home to life. Outside space was non-negotiable for the couple, and their home is sandwiched between two gardens. The polished concrete walls and floors that are found throughout the house extend into the outside area, which features a cuboid bath of the same material. Floor-to-ceiling glass doors, meanwhile, form invisible barriers between the two terrains.

“In a big city like Rome or Paris or London, it’s not easy to find outside space, but it’s so important for your day-to-day work and wider existence in the media that fuels the couple’s day-to-day work and wider existence in the city,” admits Paolo, before going on to explain that the weather tends to be good year-round in Rome, so they get to enjoy it all the time.

“We love the connection between the inside and the outside,” he continues, “and that’s why we specifically surrounded ourselves by glass – so that the outside and inside feel like the same place.”

The stainless-steel kitchen and stripped-back bathroom also nod to the exterior spaces, which helps to further dissolve the boundaries between exterior and interior. “One side is tropical with bamboo and banana trees, because we had a strong connection with tropical places after travelling, and the other is classic Mediterranean with more colour,” says Paolo, admitting that both the thriving gardens are the result of Roberta’s hard work.

A stone’s throw away from their home in Pigneto is the couple’s atelier, where they design their collections and have a base for their staff, in addition to their flagship in central Rome. They bought the three-storey structure five years ago and worked 24 hours a day to make it the kind of inspiring place in which they could run their company. Much like their home, the atelier is also open-plan. The double-height space with its navy-blue curtains and a TechnoD70 sofa by Osvaldo Borsani contrasts with neutral upholstery courtesy of Marco Zanuso’s Lady armchair. Jaunty abstraction is introduced by a carpet from Allegra Hicks, while huge fern clippings from Roberta’s garden once again bring the outside in.

Art continues on the staircase with portraits and graphic lettering by the contemporary artists Luca Domini, Pietro Bologna and Tommaso Modugno. It’s an extension of their home; a mixture of materials and media that fuels the couple’s day-to-day work and wider existence in the city.

“We’re partners in business and life,” says Paolo, before going on to reveal their plan to exercise the Italian tradition – cum-rite of decamping to the seaside, coronavirus restrictions permitting. “Which does beg the question: who would want to leave a place like this?”

— The Guardian
Using cloth masks, ditching gloves: I

Can you wash your disposable mask at 20C - and should we still be going for reusable coffee cups? Experts environmental dilemmas of Emine Saner

With planes grounded, roads clear, emissions slashed and less noise and light pollution, at first it seemed the coronavirus pandemic might have an environmental benefit. But now the temporary respite is over and, as we venture back outside, it is clear that in other ways, things have got worse. Online shopping (with its excess packaging), disposable masks and gloves, the manufacture of visors and screens and an increase in takeaway food and drink have meant a boom in plastic just as people were starting to wake up to its environmental impact. The International Solid Waste Association estimates that single-use plastic has grown by up to 300% in the US. Some of it is necessary for now – the disposable personal protective equipment (PPE) that health and care workers use, for instance – but for the rest of us, if we are to live with this pandemic for the foreseeable future, it’s probably time to get into better habits. Here is some advice from experts.

Should you use a disposable mask?
Ideally not (unless, of course, you are a medical professional). “If they’re single-use, the current guidance is that they should go into a bag and then into a bin, or straight into a bin if it’s a closed bin,” says Rebecca Burgess, the CEO of City to Sea, which campaigns against plastic pollution. “We really encourage everyone to make or buy a reusable mask so they don’t have that impact on the environment.”

If everyone in the UK wears a disposable mask each day for a year, says Louise Edge, a senior plastics campaigner at Greenpeace, “66,000 tonnes of additional plastic waste could be produced, and we’re already using way too much plastic. Most single-use plastic masks for general public use are made from different types of plastic. Some of these plastics can’t be recycled, and waste centres can’t separate the components, so most throwaway plastic masks put in household waste will end up in landfill or incinerators. Over time, single-use plastic masks will break down into tiny microplastic particles that are too small to ever be removed from the ocean or rivers.”

Reusable fabric masks are perfectly adequate for use by the general public, and some even think they are a better option than disposable masks. For the most eco-friendly option, Burgess says there are several companies making masks from secondhand or recycled material (avoiding virgin synthetic fibres). Alternatively, you can make your own, reusing fabric (there is a tutorial on the City to Sea website, and lots of others online). You may have an old shirt that no longer fits you, a pet or a piece of secondhand or recycled material. If you touch.

Can you recycle disposable masks?
For most of us, no. TerraCycle, a company that deals with hard-to-recycle objects, has started recycling PPE through its zero waste programme for wipes at the moment. “The only way we can make PPE recycling work is because the end user is going to pay for that box. Your council doesn’t want this waste because it’s hard to separate out from what does have value, and if it were to recycle it, it would cost it more money than it can reclaim from that material.”

Can wipes be recycled?
“No,” says Clarke. “We don’t have a programme for wipes at the moment.” And don’t flush them down the loo.

Do you need to wash everything – masks included – at high temperatures?
It is important to wash masks after each use, says Mahtrey Shirkumar, a virologist and lecturer in molecular biology at De Montfort University Leicester. But, she says, “There’s no concrete evidence” on how to do the laundry. NHS guidelines on the home-washing of work uniforms advises washing with detergent at 60C (140F). For the public, “the likelihood of you coming into contact with really high amounts of virus is relatively low. It’s unlikely you’ll need to use a high temperature.”

Could you wash with temperatures as low as 20C to save energy? “I don’t really see an issue with using lower temperatures,” she says, adding that it’s the detergent that’s important and that “this is for everyday normal use where you know the likelihood of someone having Covid is low.” If you or someone in your household is suspected of having the virus, then their clothes, sheets and towels should be washed on the hottest setting. If not, says Edge, “washing masks in the same load (as your normal laundry) reduces the environmental impact.”

What should you do if you see masks and gloves littered?
PPE is becoming a visible form of litter. “There are lots of hazards to wildlife from plastic of all shapes and sizes, such as getting tangled, eating it, choking, feeding it to young and using it for nests,” says Edge.

If you see discarded masks and gloves, what should you do? “The guidance is you shouldn’t pick them up with your bare hands because they may be contaminated,” says Burgess. “Inform the local council or park wardens. She suggests that if you’re a keen litter-picker, it’s worthwhile investing in a litter pick – one of those sticks with a grabber at the end. “They’re great if you want to start helping our environment by collecting any litter – I’d get a secondhand litter pick.”
should you wear disposable gloves?

Almost certainly not, although there were reports in the past week that ministers are looking into whether to encourage it. “I’ve seen people wear gloves, and I think they feel like they’re protected, but just wearing gloves doesn’t mean that the virus isn’t going to get on to the gloves and then whatever you touch,” says Shivkumar. “I think it gives people a false sense of security. The latex ones, which don’t absorb water, are likely to actually keep the droplets with the virus on them for longer. I think people shouldn’t be concerned about wearing gloves. Just wash your hands, and be aware of not touching your face.”

Disposable gloves are “a real problem environmentally,” says Mark Miodownik, a professor of materials and society at University College, London, who heads the Plastic Waste Innovation Hub. “I’ve seen people throwing them on the floor. And yet they are no help in reducing the risk of the spread. No one should be wearing gloves in public – it makes no sense.”

What will happen to all these Perspex screens?

Lots of public interactions are now performed through a plastic screen. “Acrylic is recyclable and screens are showing big enough to be of economic value at the end of their life, so I’m not too worried about that, as long as people do recycle them,” says Miodownik, though he adds he’s doubtful about their efficacy.

Is a bar of soap as good as liquid handwash?

A bar of soap can have less packaging than a (plastic) bottle of handwash, leaving aside the intricate pump that is hard to recycle. Old-fashioned soap, says Shivkumar, “is absolutely fine. Anything that is a detergent will destruct the lipid bilayer shell of the virus.” Look for bars with minimal or no packaging, says Edge. “If you prefer to use soap pumps,” she says, “try a refill service.”

Should you buy plastic bottles of hand sanitiser?

Shivkumar thinks handwashing is better than gel: “It’s more thorough, I think. Only use the alcohol gels when you don’t have any other option.” Where alternatives don’t exist, some plastic items will still be needed, says Edge accepts. “If it’s convenient for people to decant their hand sanitiser into a small reusable container from a big refill bottle, that’s great, and can help reduce plastic waste, but that may not be easy or possible for everyone.”

Can you use a reusable coffee cup?

Starbucks and Pret a Manger were among chains that said they could no longer accept reusable cups because the increased touch could spread the infection, but Burgess says it’s fine to use one “as long as they’re washed properly and there’s a process to follow.” City to Sea has launched a “contactless coffee” campaign to encourage cafes and chains to accept reusable cups again, which involves the customer putting their lidless cup on a designated tray. “They move that tray rather than touching the cup itself, so there is no contamination.” You should wash your cup regularly, which may mean washing it with handwash if you’re out for the day (and giving it a good wash at home).

Shivkumar is hesitant to say using a reusable cup is completely safe. “It’s important to think about what the risk is and how the risk can be minimised,” she says. “In a situation where you are increasing the number of people you – or the cup – are coming into contact with, that is going to increase the risk. I don’t think there’s a black-and-white answer to this!”

However, a statement, signed by 130 academics, scientists and health professionals, came out recently to say it was safe to use reusable cups and bottles. “They highlighted the importance of washing them thoroughly in hot water and detergent or soap, and said to avoid touching the lid or drinking area,” says Edge. “Lots of cafes have put systems in place so that reusable cups can be used safely with social distancing and no-contact processes to keep customers and staff safe.”

Do you really need a takeaway?

Asking yourself that question would be Burgess’s advice. “Takeaway packaging, plastic or not, has flooded the market,” she says, as even restaurants that previously didn’t offer takeaway food now do. Carry your own cutlery if you’re out and about to reduce the use of disposable versions. “If you’re using an online platform, click off the single-use cutlery and small sachets of ketchup option,” she says, if there is one. “That’s a quick win.” She knows of a coffee shop that accepts customers’ own containers so it’s worth trying to encourage others to do the same. “If you can get out and pick up your food, ask them if they can use your plastic container if you take it in for them to pack.”

smart investment: invest in a secondhand litter picker.

Think about cutting down online shopping

The boom in online shopping hasn’t only dug Jeff Bezoz’s bank account – it has swamped the world with packaging. “I think we really need to start addressing our consumerism and the amount we’re buying, whether that’s food, luxury goods, clothes or more,” says Burgess. “Is that thing you’re buying to replace something or can you repair the original? Can you buy secondhand? There might have been some interesting pop-ups around reuse and repair opening during this time. Connect into any community platforms, just to see whether there’s an alternative, before you buy something new.”

Reconsider how you shop for food

For many, getting groceries delivered has been a lifeline, but for others, it may have fostered bad habits (the supermarkets, too, have been insisting on delivering in plastic bags). “There have been a lot of changes in shopping habits over the past few months,” says Burgess. “We’d encourage people to try to shop as plastic-free as possible, so using your local greengrocer and butchers, using your own bags.”

Alternatively, look for plastic-free delivery companies, such as a glass milk-bottle delivery. “A local veg box is a really good way to get rid of plastic from the supply chain,” says Miodownik. The produce is seasonal, “and these companies tend to be local, which really need people’s custom”. When shopping in the supermarket, you may be reassured by plastic – Miodownik observes that many people seem keen to buy a bag of apples over loose ones. “It’s under this false assumption that it’s going to make it safer, but the plastic itself is just as likely to have the virus on as the apples, and it is actually viable for longer on plastic than most other materials. It’s an illusion of safety, but that’s how plastic has become so popular,” says Shivkumar.

When shopping, use a reusable coffee cup or bag of apples over loose ones. “It’s going to make it safer, but the plastic itself is just as likely to have the virus on as the apples, and it is actually viable for longer on plastic than most other materials. It’s an illusion of safety, but that’s how plastic has become so popular,” says Shivkumar. Edge adds that buying loose produce not only means “one less item of plastic degrading in the environment; it also sends a message to companies that people prefer to avoid plastic!”

Try keeping food as packaging-free as possible.

It can be one way of cutting down on emissions– though still far worse, environmentally speaking, than walking, cycling or using public transport – but how safe is it? “I don’t think carsharing is a good idea,” says Shivkumar. “If you are carsharing with someone different every day, that increases the risk, whereas if it’s with the same person that’s probably safer. But you’d have to keep in mind that if someone in your family or theirs tested positive, both households would have to self-isolate.”

Having the windows open would be a good idea, and she advises people to wear a mask, “because it is a confined, small space with not much airflow”. The government says “you should try not to” carshare with people outside your household or bubble.

— The Guardian
Election very important
More voters say it ‘really matters’ who wins the presidency than at any point in the last 20 years.

The percent of voters who say ... 

It really matters who wins the presidential election

Things will be pretty much the same regardless of who is elected

Source: Pew Research Center
Graphic: Staff, TNS

Will the election be safe?
% who say it is ___ likely that Russia or other foreign governments will attempt to influence the U.S. presidential election this November

Somewhat  Very

TOTAL  REPUBLICAN  DEMOCRAT

Source: Pew Research Center
Graphic: Staff, TNS
Use carpet as wall art smartly

Wall carpet design can add to a spaces aura. They are essentially woven art and can easily add that extra touch that enhances the interior so make sure you are jazzing your wall with right texture, warmth and colour.

Sameer AM, Founder and CEO of Bonito Designs and Yashi Kela, Founder of Arravel, list down some ways to use carpet as wall art beautifully:

— Put up a contemporary carpet on the wall to serve as a backsplash for a photo collage or a crockery collection. The carpet adds a fine and sublime texture upon which the chosen artefacts can be displayed with a contrast.

— They are the perfect combination of fabric and art that help provide that warm feel to space. They can easily be hung on a curtain rod with fancy edges, on two looks or even a simple log of wood.

— A limited edition handwork or embroidered carpets can be put up on walls simply with either track lights or spotlights focused on them to add a vintage and artsy look to the place.

— An entire wall can be decorated with the help of a seamlessly joining carpet which doesn’t just add a beautiful colour scheme to the wall, but also imparts a rather soothing texture as well.

— Use the carpets for panelling upon the wall to provide a contrast on the wall and yet serve as a decor element. By doing so you would minimise the area upon which the usage of the carpet is happening and at the same time adding a non-monotonous idea to the wall art.

— Wall can be decorated with spot frame artworks which can cover the vertical space.

— The rugs can be used on double height walls where the surface area is extremely large and looks subtle and easy.

— Use printed, motif bohemian rugs which can be hung properly so gravity doesn’t take its toll on your woven works of art. — IANS

COMMUNITY

LIFESTYLE/HOROSCOPE

ARIES
March 21 – April 19

Love of someone from far away could be very much on your mind today, and perhaps love for the place where the person lives. You may be bored with your routine and anxious to embrace adventure. This is a good time to plan a vacation, particularly if accompanied by a partner or close friend. Your artistic instincts could also be inspired by geniuses from other cultures.

CANCER
June 21 – July 22

Valuable tips to increase your income could come your way today, possibly from a close friend or colleague. You should feel well and look particularly attractive. Your approach to others may be more outgoing than usual. Pets could be a source of joy. Enjoy it while you can! In the evening, indulge your artistic streak.

LIBRA
September 23 – October 22

A desire to learn through a group activity – a lecture or workshop, perhaps – might put you in the middle of a crowd. You’ll find it exhilarating. If you’re planning to attend such an event, don’t go alone. Your enjoyment will be heightened by the presence of a close friend or your partner.

SCORPIO
October 23 – November 21

You’ve had recent success in your profession. You’ve worked hard and learned things, and this hasn’t been lost on those above you in the hierarchy. You have earned new respect for yourself and your skills. You might want to put one of your gifts to work. This could be an artistic talent or the gift of healing. Make the most of it!

TAURUS
April 20 – May 20

A number of interesting visitors could show up today. Perhaps you’re having a party or hosting an activity. These callers could include people in the sciences, or people who deal with money, such as bankers, investment counsellors, or real estate brokers. Listen to what they have to say. You could learn something that boosts your financial standing.

GEMINI
May 21 – June 20

Publications could bring some fascinating new knowledge your way. You’d want to discuss it with friends. Conversations about any subject should be informative and beneficial since your mind is so perceptive and retentive. Affection for friends, relatives, and your special someone should fill your heart today. An intimate evening with your partner will be especially fulfilling.

LEO
July 23 – August 22

Romance and art are the keys today. You could feel spiritually inspired by great music, paintings, poetry, or drama. You might want to share these feelings with a special someone. Children could also be a source of pleasure. Their innocence make you feel young again. In the evening, write your impressions of the day.

VIRGO
August 23 – September 22

Today you won’t be indifferent to anything. Good news could elevate you to near ecstasy. Bad news could send you to the depths of despair. Visitors provide a welcome distraction, while spiritual pursuits may be your favourite topic of conversation. This isn’t going to be a predictable day, but it will be wonderful.

SAGITTARIUS
November 22 – December 21

Today should be very fortunate, particularly where love is concerned. Relations with your special someone could be closer than ever. You might even feel warm and loving towards everyone, even strangers. Your spiritual beliefs could have as much to do with this as anything else. You should feel especially intuitive. Optimism and enthusiasm rule, but don’t forget to be realistic!

CAPRICORN
December 22 – January 19

You should feel especially romantic and sexy today. Tonight should be wonderful if you can spend it in the company of your significant other. Some vivid dreams could haunt your sleep tonight, almost to the point where you don’t want to wake up. Write them down and try to figure out what they mean later.

AQUARIUS
January 20 – February 18

Social events could take up a lot of your time tonight, and you may enjoy being in contact with friends you haven’t seen for a while. Conversations should be fascinating. You may even discover a new interest. An encounter with your partner could prove more passionate than usual. This should be a thoroughly enjoyable day as long as you conserve your energy.
**Wordsearch**

```
S L I P P A G E A F I L L I P
V I C I L P A V T G T L P I T
G C O F F S K C I T S P I L C
I T F L L L E C L I P S E A L
V R F I O P I C G H T F L E E
C M P P L C A P E M T I L D R
F P U F L R L L C O P G I E E
Y L L I R I I N H W G P P S
C E I O P P E K P C A S P I A
S T I P O N P P A B I R E L C
I U U R P I O L P L O O T L P
V Y T L L A I V C I T A M I I
O Y T S I P N S P I L B R M L
H T U F E P B T H E R F O D S
L P I R I C S P I L S W O C O
```

**Codeword**

Every letter of the alphabet is used at least once. Squares with the same number in have the same letter. Work out which number represents which letter.

```
BLIPS  SLIPKNOT  HELIPORT
FILLIP  CLIPBOARD  TULIPS
MILLIPEDE  FLIPPANT  ECLIPSE
CALIPER  SLIPPED  LIPSTICK
FLIPCHART  CLIPPER  ELLIPSE
SLIPCASE  FLIPPER  LOLLIPOP
CALIPH  SLIPSY
FLIPFLOP  SLIPKNOT
```

**Sudoku**

Sudoku is a puzzle based on a 9x9 grid. The grid is divided up into nine 3x3 boxes. You are given a selection of numbers and you must fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains each of the numbers 1 to 9 without repetition.

```
3 8 6 2
6 3 7 1
9 1 2 5
8 5 1 4
3 2 2 9
```

**Adam**

```
WHAT HAPPENED?
MY BACK!
IT'S PEEING OUT AGAIN!
MOM'S NOT HERE!
WHAT DO YOU NEED?
AN AMBULANCE?
NEIGHBOR?
LET'S TRY A HUMAN AND AN EXORCIST.
```

**Pooch Cafe**

```
I STILL FIND IT HARD TO BELIEVE THAT MY MASTER WOUND UP MARRIED TO A CRAZY CAT LADY.
I RESIST BEING CALLED A "CRACKY CAT LADY"! IT'S NOT LIKE THE HOUSE IS OVER-RUN WITH CATS! I ONLY HAVE SIX!
ACTUALLY, ACORDING TO THE OFFICIAL "CRACKY CAT LADY" SOCIETY, YOU ONLY NEED FIVE TO QUALIFY.
```

**Garfield**

```
I'M COOL!
WHO WANTS A FISH-FLAVORED NINJA NINJA?
ME!
ME!
AND YOU DIDN'T SEE THAT.
```

**Bound And Gagged**

```
I TAKE IT RABBITS ARE STILL EATING YOUR VEGETABLES...
```
PUZZLES

Super Cryptic Clues

Across
1 Postponement causing aversion (7,3)
7 The girl turned paler (7)
8 Birds having fun? (6)
10 Naval destroyer belonging to me (4)
11 Grounds for having a coin sent out (8)
13 Making a scene, in which spirits might be produced (6)
15 See law broken by beast (6)
17 One who works with a will (8)
21 Student leader gets ice cream and cake (5)
22 Tool observed by poor writer (7)
23 The strange transience of fruit (10)

Down
1 Father backed a horse - he's a heathen (5)
2 Art finalist took in gallery (4)
3 Serial set in the country (6)
4 Swift traveller (8)
5 Animals the queen worries about (7)
6 Star models posing for great painters (3,7)
9 Become established in a Yorkshire town and an Ulster county (6,4)
12 Composer butchers composition (8)
14 Flower for one with false name (7)
16 Medical officer getting the right parent (6)
19 Stratagems Rex employs (5)
20 A religious image I study (4)

Solution

Answer

Wordsearch

Codeword

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Solution

Answers

Wordsearch

Codeword
Big B on shooting for KBC 12 amid the new normal

Having fully recovered from Covid, Amitabh Bachchan is back at work. He has started shooting for the twelfth season of the popular quiz show, Kaun Banega Crorepati.

The veteran actor posted a picture on Instagram, of the crew dressed in blue PPE suits and masks. He captioned the picture: “...it’s back to work... in a sea of blue PPE... KBC 12... started 2000... today year 2020... 20 years! Amaze... that’s a lifetime!!”

Big B shared a few more pictures from the shoot on his blog, and described shooting amid the new normal.

“...it’s a sea of limited BLUE on set... quiet... conscious... each delegated work routine... precautions, systems, distanced masks, sanitised and the apprehensions of not just what shall happen to the show... but what shall the World look like after this dread Vid19... getting in front of the cameras again... was it weird, different feel after this long furlough... dunno...” he wrote.

He mentioned that there is a “loss of camaraderie”:

“No one speaks unless its work related... it’s like a laboratory where some rather deep scientific experiments abound,” he mentioned.

Amitabh said that the “recognised faces” are “now unrecognisable”.

“And the doubts whether we are in the right place, with the right people... but... we muster up the fears and be on... there is great consideration and care being extended... all precautions carefully worked out and followed...”

He says the precautions are now very severe:

“Precautions were there earlier too in times of distress... but this time its severe... its personal... this time they know its fatality, God forbid... and that lingers... the light-heartedness has sealed itself... isolated... do the do and leave,” he wrote.

The 77-year-old actor shared that he has been practising breathing exercises.

“The purpose of the hospital... keep at it... move and leave, “ he wrote.

“Painyuli and Isha Talwar joining the cast. Additions, too, with Vijay Varma, Priyanshu Sharma, Sheeba Chaddha, Manu Rishi Chadha and Rasika Dugal and Harshita Shrikhande. The dates announcement came yesterday.

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For people who belong to the old-school of thought, this might be a scary change, but you have to accept the change to move forward,” he added.

Armaan Malik says concerts used to fuel his business, which has been hit massively due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

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By Ryan Faughnder

After months of dormancy for the major movie theatre circuits because of the coronavirus, Hollywood has been awash in crisis. The industry was brought to an abrupt standstill when virtually the entire industry closed down temporarily in March. The first major wide release since the coronavirus started to bring cinemas back online was "Unhinged," starring Russell Crowe, Unhinged, starring the Oscar winner as a maniacal motorist, debuted in roughly 1,800 theatres last week, "Unhinged"debuts in roughly 1,800 theatres from Friday through Tuesday, August 25, 2020

**Nas delivers one of the best albums of the year with King's Disease**

The new Nas is one of the best albums of the year. Intriguing from start to finish and chock full of good songs, "King's Disease" is certainly a worthy companion to all of the rapper's other great offerings — which would include "Illmatic," the iconic 1994 debut album. Over the course of 13 tracks, representing just shy of 40 minutes of music, Nas shows that he hasn't lost a step — and arguably may have even gained one or two — as he rocks the microphone with undeniable charisma, talent, confidence and purpose. The writing here is absolutely top-notch, with Nas tackling the tricky balancing act of life, navigating both highs and lows through an assortment of memorable rhymes running over so many cool beats and grooves.

The album — which was released August 21 — was expertly produced by Hit-Boy (who has worked with Jay-Z, Beyonce and Travis Scott!) and features contributions from Charlie Wilson, Big Sean, Anderson .Paak, ASAP Ferg and others.

The first single from the new album is the powerful "Ultra Black," which features Hit-Boy.

Overall, "King's Disease" — Nas' first release since 2018's "Nasir" is enough to remind us why we fell for this incredible artist in the first place. — TNS

**Unhinged debuts with $4 million in first big test of coronavirus era**

**SUCCESS STORY:** Unhinged marks the first major wide release in American theatres since March.

"It's mostly about knowing your market," said Mark Gill, president and chief executive of Solstice Studios, by phone Sunday morning. Indeed, some in the business will surely take heart from the fact that people are willing to go to the multiplex at all. Besides, someone had to be first to test the waters, and theatres have been desperate for new movies to show after weeks of little except oldies and low-budget horror films.

New movies aren't expected to post large opening weekend numbers for a while. Instead, analysts and executives say new films will probably open with relatively low grosses and make up ground in subsequent weeks as patrons get more comfortable venturing to their local cineplexes. That has been the pattern in other countries where theatres have already opened, Gill said.

As theatres more normally make the bulk of their grosses in the first couple of weeks, followed by a steep drop in business, new movies should now play for significantly longer in the coronavirus era, Gill added.

"This is looking exactly like the rest of the world, where slow and steady wins the race," he said. Drive-in theatres overperformed for Unhinged, particularly in California, where indoor venues remain locked down. The movie's three top-grossing theatres nationally were California drive-ins in Paramount, Concord and Sacramento, where competition was nil. The movie's top-performing markets were the Dallas-Fort Worth area, Houston and Detroit. Theatres in Texas were among the first in the nation to open their doors.

Shari Hardison, Solstice Studio's head of US distribution, said part of the challenge of marketing the film was making sure locals knew cinemas were even open for business in their area. "It's mostly about knowing your theatre is open, and that's where we're partnering with exhibitors like never before," she said. "The theatres that have been open longer saw more pre-sales."

David A. Gross, head of movie consultancy Franchise Entertainment Research, estimated that if the market were fully open, Unhinged would have performed "by a healthy margin for an independently distributed thriller." Continued fears of the coronavirus spread were balanced by pent-up demand for new theatrical movies after a long drought, he said. "For the handful of movies in theatres, the combined effects of the pandemic are currently neutral to slightly positive," Gross said in an e-mail. "The equation will change as more and bigger films come into the market." A pair of indie movies also tested the audiences' appetite. "Tenet" adaptation Words on Bathroom Walls, from LD Entertainment and Roadside Attractions, had a $462,050 opening weekend on 925 US screens. IPC Films launched historical biopic Tesla, starring Rihan Hawke as the famed inventor, in 108 theatres to $42,000 in sales. This weekend, 2,051 North American theatres were open, including 1,661 in the US, or about a quarter of existing US locations, according to Comscore. Well Go USA also opened the KZA-directed crime drama Cut Throat City, which grossed $265,000 on 407 screens, and the zombie apocalypse thriller Peninsula, with $225,000 on 156 screens.

The bigger test will arrive in the coming weeks as movies such as "Disney's The New Mutants" hits theatres Friday, followed by Christopher Nolan's "Tenet," the following week, which is Labour Day weekend. Disney inherited "The New Mutants" from the purchase of 21st Century Fox last year, and the release was seen as troubled independent of Covid-19. Warner Bros.' "Tenet" is widely viewed as the first film with blockbuster potential. Disney originally intended to release "Mulon" in August, but this month, but recently opted instead to offer it as a $30 premium video-on-demand release via Disney+

Theatres are eager to show that they're ready for business. The theatre owners association last week hosted an hourlong webinar featuring executives from the nation's largest exhibition companies — AMC, Regal, Cinemark, Marcus and IMAX — to explain their nationwide health and safety protocols, dubbed CinemaSafe. The measures include limited auditorium capacity, enhanced cleaning, improved ventilation (whenever possible, anyway) and mandatory masks, though enforcement of the latter policy could prove challenging in a dark theatre. The Washington-based group said more than 500 companies, including about 2,600 individual theatres accounting for 30,000 screens in the US, have signed on to the voluntary protocols. Theatre owners have taken pains to argue that seeing a movie is at least as safe as dining at a restaurant, taking a short plane flight, or going to church.

Most indoor theatres have already imposed strict limits on auditorium capacity, though restrictions vary widely state to state. Large chains are capping sales and encouraging social distancing by automatically blocking adjacent seats when people buy tickets online. The lack of available seating did not hurt sales for movies such as "Unhinged," said analyst Gross. Though the early releases show there are signs of life at the box office, it will take nine to 18 months for attendance to fully recover, he said. "This weekend is the first step," Gross said. "The next couple of weeks will show us a lot more." — Los Angeles Times/TNS
The secret to happiness is all in your head

Science says that people with positive attitudes are better equipped to handle unplanned life events. So can you train your brain to be positive if you’re not happy?

Julianne Chiaet

What drives you? For most people, it’s a desire to be happy. Social norms have taught us to believe that if we work hard to achieve our goals, happiness will come. Yet once we do, instead of staying happy, our brain often changes the parameters of what success looks like. Then it’s time to work toward the next achievement in the hope that it will bring even more happiness.

Over the last two decades, researchers in neuroscience and positive psychology — the scientific study of human satisfaction — have learned that happiness is a precursor to, rather than the result of, success. But what if a person is not naturally happy? Science says it’s possible to retrain the brain in order to create genuine long-lasting happiness. By doing so, people can become more motivated, creative and productive, as well as better at handling unplanned life events and rebounding from failure or tragedy.

Many brain training exercises involve recognizing the good around us and having a positive outlook on the future. Those who concentrate on these features are more successful in school, work and their social lives, experts say. “When the brain is negative, it splits resources between the problem you have in front of you and the negative emotions you’re feeling,” says psychologist Shawn Achor, the best-selling author of *The Happiness Advantage and Before Happiness.*

This partitioning has served an important evolutionary purpose: the fight-or-flight response, triggered by the negative emotions tied to stress or a perceived threat. However, according to Achor and others, negative emotions stifle creativity and restrict a person’s ability to come up with different options.

**Brain fuel for problem solvers**

Positive feelings increase the number of things a person can process, according to the broaden-and-build theory. Positive emotions trigger the release of the brain chemicals serotonin and dopamine — which play a significant role in motivation, reward, motor control, and executive functions like memory, solving problems, paying attention and simultaneously thinking about multiple concepts.

The rise in these neurotransmitters allows people to think more quickly and creatively. It improves a person’s ability to solve problems and use complex analysis. The chemical also helps people build more social, intellectual and physical skills, on which they can later rely.

This may be why studies show that positive people are calmer when going into stressful situations like a standardized test, Achor says. In the workplace (pdf), positive people often are more productive, excel in leadership positions and have higher performance ratings. They are paid more, have better job security and are less likely to call in sick from work. They’re 40% more likely to receive a promotion within two years and on average are 31% more productive than folks who are negative, Achor says.

**Building brain muscle**

All this might seem easier said than done. But the key to staying positive, particularly after a negative life event, is resilience. In psychology, resilience refers to a person’s ability to positively adapt to adversity. “The brain is the thing that tells you to keep going,” says Alex Dranovsky, a psychiatrist and neuroscientist who researches how the brain encodes stressful experiences. “If you have overcome a challenge, it’s because of this resilience that’s exhibited by different structures in the brain has allowed you to do that.”

Dranovsky says most people lie somewhere in the middle of the resiliency scale, but that they can improve it. Research has shown that the brain has the ability to form new neural connections throughout a person’s life. This capacity, called neuroplasticity, has wide-ranging implications for everything from intellectual growth to recovering from brain damage.

The brain works like a muscle: it gets stronger with training. When people learn a skill and use it often, they are working the part of the brain relevant to that skill. There are ways to train the part of the brain related to happiness, leading to a positive mindset both in the moment and in the long run. These include positive journaling, meditation, random acts of kindness and maintaining strong social connections.

One method of positive journaling is to write three new things for which you are grateful every day for 21 days. This trains the brain to constantly be on the lookout for something to appreciate. Martin Seligman, who’s considered the father of positive psychology, found that gratitude raises levels of optimism, happiness, and feelings of life satisfaction.

Random acts of kindness also train the brain. According to research from Harvard University, writing a short e-mail to different people each day praising them for something specific makes the sender happier and boosts their social connection scores into the top percentile. Social connectedness is a great predictor of happiness and can result in health benefits that are comparable to when a person stops smoking.

“The joy of being connected to other people is really fundamental to who we are as humans, and the brain is powerfully organised around supporting those connections,” says Yoni Ashar, who studies the neuroscience of compassion at the University of Colorado Boulder. “Being connected to each other is a major source of wellbeing, physical health, mental health [and] positive emotion.”

— The Guardian