

Boredom during lockdown, sleep dysregulation during lockdown

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ABSTRACT

In a global level, people across the country forced to stay indoors in a bid to stop the spread of COVID-19. At such time, people can be seen as the most anguish as they have no daily routine work. Fix schedule and life style, and it is obvious they feel bored even after being occupied by electronic gadgets and personal space. This research paper throws a life in the scenario that boredom & Sleep dysregulation is actually an opportunity for people to improve their life in some as other way. Especially in this pandemic period the hash tag “can’t sleep” has been trending, with tales of people struggling to get their heads down for the night. Good sleep quality is important right now as it helps to maintain a positive mood, contributes to the energy and stamina needed throughout the day and supports the overall ability to sustain a lockdown life.

Keywords: *Boredom, lockdown, sleep dysregulation*

The world is following Social-distancing and Self-isolation following a corona virus outbreak across the world triggering a pandemic situation. In the wake of keeping highly contagious virus, Corona virus at bay, authorities and international bodies are requesting people to stay home and try to keep ourselves lockdown for a few days.

Amidst such an outbreak, everyone is home arrest and is working from home staying at home and doing nothing except sleeping and eating is really boring these can make even more inactive and lethargic. Also, sleeping all day can make we feel bored Infect, college going students and those who have no office work can get trapped in boredom. So, have us thought about any productive ideas to utilize our boredom during this lockdown.

Millions of people suffered from sleep dysregulation before the corona virus, and unfortunately, the pandemic creates a host of new challenges even for people who previously had no sleeping problems. Losing ourselves in our favorite activities without any urge to sleep, or falling asleep during lockdown. As humans, we often defy sleepiness and stay awake when attention is necessary, but also experience an inescapable desire to sleep in boring situation. The brain mechanisms governing the regulation of sleep by cognitive and emotional factors are not well understood.

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Boredom during lockdown

The state of feeling disinterested in one's surroundings having nothing to do or feeling that life is dull. Boredom is unpleasant. It can make you angry and frustrated. It can also influence our behavior in negative ways. Bored people are prone to overeat.

Boredom causes the brain and mental illness

Scientists do know something about brain activity in high risk, boredom-prone people. When we experience joy and excitement in a new situation, a chemical messenger or neurotransmitter, called dopamine triggers that response in our brains but these boredom bands. Aids soon failed. He notes the boredom, aside from being intrinsically stressful, is associated with a perceived lack of direction or meaning- a risk factor for mental health issues. "Mental disorders such as depression are associated with a lack of energy and motivation, which can in tum promote boredom, he says.

Five different types of boredoms

- 1. Indifferent boredom-** This one doesn't sound so bad. "The indifferently bored feel relaxed and fatigued but-cheerful. They are generally indifferent to the world and want to withdraw," explains the research release.
- 2. Calibrating boredom-** This second type of boredom will no doubt sound familiar, "people in this state want to do something, but they don't know what their thoughts may wander, but they aren't actively searching for alternatives to the dullness".
- 3. Searching boredom-** This is what happens when we start to get really fed up with being bored. It's marked by much more active looking for something to do. People experiencing searching boredom are more emotionally aroused and feel more negative than the first two types. They feel restless and think specifically of hobbies or activities they'd prefer to be doing.
- 4. Reactant boredom-** Is caused by feeling trapped within a situation. People who are bored in this way are motivated strongly to abandon the situation and avert away from the people causing it. People who have this feel restless and aggressive.
- 5. Apathetic boredom-** It seems to be the sort of unpleasant buzz of experiencing apathetic boredom reported few positive emotions, but also few negative emotions, unlike reactant boredom. That's not to say the participants enjoyed being apathetically bored. Apathetic boredom was more like depression in that participants felt flat and incapable of emotion." Again, this type was commonly felt in settings, like the office, where people have relatively little control over their own situation.

It's easy for life in lockdown to feel stifling. Our lives were once full of variety, but now the days go by in an endless cycle of home working, home schooling, cooking, washing up, cleaning, and somehow cooking and washing up again. The nineteenth century German philosopher **Freidrich Nietzsche** once asked: "Is life not a thousand times too short for us to bore ourselves?"

That's a question million around the world, with the privilege of self-isolating themselves amid the corona virus pandemic, now find themselves forced to confront. Many developed stats have either ordered mandatory curfews or strongly advised people to stay at home for all but essential tips. In some cases, people are not starting their week at home with the possibility that they could be stuck there for months more. For many of those under lockdown, there may be remote working obligations, child care responsibilities, zoom hangouts, exercise or a newly found penchant for cleaning or cooking to provide a break from the tedium. Nevertheless, the spectre of boredom lurks, appearing most frequently after

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a long and successful travel of offerings on Netflix or when a book or mobile can no longer hold the attention. A pang of ache in the wrist while refreshing a Twitter feed can give way to the most dreaded of questions, “so what now?”

Why do we get bored?

The consequences of boredom are not trivial. Psychologists have long documented its link to the development of harmful habits, such as binge eating and substance abuse. People who bored are also at heightened risk of developing depression anxiety but at the same time, philosophers and scientists have had a hard time defining what boredom actually is and why we feel it.

A 2012 paper by psychologist **John D Eastwood** summarizes boredom as “the aversive experience of wanting but being unable, to engage in satisfying activity.”

Eastwood based the definition on the synthesis of four rival theories for the phenomenon. These are the arousal, existential, psychodynamic, and cognitive theories of boredom. For the sake of brevity and relevance, let’s single out two of those. The first the arousal theory seems most relevant to boredom induced by the lockdown. Eastwood’s paper defines it as the “non-optimal arousal that ensues when there is a mismatch between an individual’s needed arousal and the availability of environmental stimulation”. Put simply we feel the urge to be stimulated but our environment is not able to satisfy that need.

Corona virus related lockdowns have restricted our stimulatory environments to our homes and social media. Whereas before the pandemic, there were cafes, nightclubs, and football stadiums now we have only the contents and members of our homes as well as those we can reach virtually through technology. The second the existential theory has a more boredom explanation on the phenomenon of boredom but can perhaps provide a way out of our current tedious impasse we will allow Eastwood to provide his definition before going our own way.

The York University academic explains: “Existential theories argue that boredom is caused by a lack of life meaning or purpose, boredom ensues when an individual gives up on or fails to articulate and participate in activities that are consistent with his values”. He further describes existential boredom as; “a sense of emptiness, meaninglessness and paralysis of agency the bored individual is unable to find impetus for action.”

Boredom and the meaning of life

It seems like a dramatic jump to go from discussing the boredom felt while trying to find something good to watch on Netflix to talking about the meaning of life but the two are intertwined, at least according to the existentialists. Explaining philosophical ideas is hard at the best of times, let alone explaining their relevance to why we feel bored during an ongoing pandemic so bear with us. The starting point of existential thought is that all attempts at understanding the meaning of life start with the individual and not an all governing cosmic order. Human beings must reconcile the urge to find purpose in their existence, with the seeming indifference of the world around them. The inherent contradiction is the cause of anxiety, which philosophers have described as angst or dread. Not many people are thinking about the purpose of their lives during their morning commute, shopping trip, or coffee date. Normal life provides plenty of distraction from the feeling of existential anxiety.

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For some, the corona virus pandemic will have created an upheaval of that sense of normality, exposing its construction on chaotic underpinnings, and forcing them to recognize the fundamental randomness of their environment.

This confrontation between individual purpose and chaotic reality can lead to an inertia from which boredom with everyday life is a byproduct ordinary activity lose their stimulatory appeal, as we can no longer find meaning in them.

Boredom and Creativity

It is important to make clear that existential anxiety is not tied to specific temporary situations like the corona virus lockdown but understanding it can provide a way out of the boredom some of us may currently feel. That's because for existentialist thinkers like **Nietzsche and Danish theologian Soren Kierkegaard**, boredom was not just a weight dragging down humans into the pits of despair, but could also be the impetus for dramatic individual change and transformation. Nietzsche described boredom as the "unpleasant clam that precedes creative acts." While for Kierkegaard, it was our abhorrence of boredom that provided the impulse for creativity. "Boredom is the root of all evil. It is very curious that boredom, which itself has such a clam and sedate nature, can have such a capacity to initiate motion. The effect that boredom brings about is absolutely magical, but this effect is one not of attraction but of repulsion," He wrote.

A 2012 Study by Sandi Mann, an occupational psychologist at the University of Central Lancashire, suggested that participating in boring activities led to better performance in certain subsequent creative activities. Interestingly, Mann's research provides a possible mechanism for this link, suggesting that day dreaming may prove to be an important vector in turning boredom into creativity. At the risk of oversimplifying, Mann's explanation is summarized as follows: Boredom forces people to seek out forms of stimulation. Unable to find it externally, the focus shifts to internal thoughts and feelings, which manifests as daydreaming. That inner stimulation gained by day dreaming compensates for the external lack of stimulation. This leads to more creative problem solving. With fewer external distractions due to the pandemic; it could be that many more of us start looking internally rather than externally for our sources of stimulation.

Recent article by the Washington Post and The Atlantic have described how Isaac Newton and William Shakespeare wrote some of their greatest works during times of pandemic. It may well have been that a series of daydreams brought on by boredom gave the world calculus and Macbeth.

Sleep dysregulation

Delayed sleep phase disorder (DSPD), more often known as delayed sleep phase syndrome and also as delayed sleep-wake phase disorder, is a chronic dysregulation of a person's circadian rhythm (biological clock) compared to those of the general population and societal norm. The disorder affects the timing of sleep, peak period of alertness, the core body temperature rhythm, and hormonal and other daily cycles. People with DSPD generally fall asleep some hours often midnight and have difficulty waking up in the morning. People with DSPD probably have a circadian period significantly longer than 24 hours. Depending on the severity, the symptoms can be managed to a greater or lesser degree, but no cure is known, and research suggests a genetic origin for the disorder. The corona virus pandemic is causing increased anxiety and stress among Brits. These worries are harassing us particularly at night when it is time to get a good night's sleep. If our peaceful slumbers are

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interrupted by frightening nightmares, or we can't get to sleep in the first place, it's probably because we are stewing on concerns about the COVID-19 crisis. These thoughts will interrupt our sleep cycle and affect our quality of sleep, leaving you exhausted the next day. Sleep keeps our bodies healthy and functioning, and if we don't get enough sleep this will weaken our immune system causes mood swings among other things. Here's how you can fix our sleep cycle. Anxiety and worry may often affect sleeping patterns. In the current lockdown situation, people might find it hard to get a good night's sleep due to the fear or contracting the virus. Lack of sleep could lead to other health issues, without proper sleep, one would feel lethargic throughout the day.

Lockdown is changing how we spend every waking hour: from the way we socialize, to how we exercise, work, dress and eat. While many of us, by now, will have started to adapt our daily routines accordingly, being restricted to the confines of our own home because of a rapidly escalating global health crisis is the kind of thing that can play havoc with our sleeping pattern. We might have noticed our normal sleep pattern has changed. Some of us may be sleeping more, and some of us may be sleeping less. Life has changed dramatically for many of us, with our usual daily routine-including commutes, meal times, and the amount of time we spend outside being altered because of self-isolation. All of these changes impact our natural circadian rhythm, which is an essential internal "clock" that plays a key role in regulating our sleep pattern. It controls body temperature and hormones are order to make us feel alert during the day and tired at night.

Exposure to natural light and regular mealtimes are two of the most powerful forces in aligning our circadian rhythms, but for many of us, quarantine has changed the amount of time we spend outside, and we might be eating at different times than normal. While some of us are reconnecting with our natural circadian rhythm, others might have trouble falling asleep, or maybe waking up multiple times during the night. This is also a normal experience, as uncertainty can increase stress levels and stress hormones (such as cortisol, which help regulate our sleep-wake cycle. Cortisol normally drops in the evening, reaching its lowest level at midnight. But if levels are too high before bedtimes it could disrupt sleep. Some of s might also be sleeping more, catching up on lost hours. Many of us have so-called, "Sleep debt" which is the cumulative effect of not getting enough sleep, and may lead to mental and physical fatigue. As we juggle our daily tasks, we often run out of hours in the day to get things done-so many of us choose to sleep less to do more. Sleep debt (also known as sleep deprivation) is associated with declines in performance memory and our immunity.

If we are sleeping longer than normal, we may be repaying some of that sleep debt acquired in life. Doesn't panic here- let our body catch up and erase some of that debt we have subconsciously been carrying around. Sleep loss studies that have allowed recovery sleeps of then hours. Have demonstrated restoration of performance when the participants are awake, suggesting this is a fixable problem.

The Solution

- 1. Less use of phone-** Several studies have shown that the blue light of phones or tablets disrupts melatonin levels, the hormone responsible for sleep/wake cycle. So, doctors advise that we should not use the phone before going to bed. Instead try reading a book before sleeping.
- 2. Coffee consumption-** Caffeine is a widely used stimulant across the world. It produces an alerting affect by improving the release of some brain chemicals

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reducing fatigue. The consumption of caffeine in excess amount may cause sleep disruptions.

3. **Don't eat just before going to bed-** It is advised that we should not have food within three hours to bed time to avoid indigestion and acid reflux. Eating just before sleeping may upset the sleep cycle.
4. **Warm shower-** Some studies have revealed that taking a warm shower before going to bed increases the chances of a sound sleep. Hot water is said to dilate our blood vessels and skin's ability to lose excess heat.
5. **Avoid alcohol-** Some people take wine or whiskey before going to sleep. This habit may affect our sleeping pattern as alcohol blocks tryptophan an amino acid that helps us sleep from reaching the brain.
6. **Establish a new routine-** We may have been furloughed or be working from home for the first time. Routine is very important for the body right now. This will be the starting block for enjoying with our natural circadian rhythm not the one our job normally sets. Start by focusing on our sleep-wake cycle, go to bed when we feel tired and try to wake up without an alarm. We may sleep a little more than normal at the beginning, but within a week or two, we will return to our natural duration. Though everyone is different, we should aim for 7-9 hours a night. Not only is routine good for our sleep cycle, but it's also beneficial to our mental health.
7. **Don't use our bedroom as our office (if possible)-** When it's time for bed, remove electronic devices and make the room cool, dark and quiet. It's important to associate our bedroom as the place we go to sleep, not the place we work or watch TV. This will help us to relax and prepare for sleep. Electronic devices also emit artificial light that can influence our sleep cycle. Artificial light can trick our circadian clock into thinking daylight has been extended and alter our quality of sleep. If we need electronic devices nearby, place them in night mode.
8. **Avoid napping-** As we try to establish our new routine, it's important to engage with our natural circadian rhythm- and napping could potentially night's sleep was poor we may feel more tired after lunch. Short naps- less than 20 minutes can help to restore cognitive function and may make we feel less sleepy.
9. **Exercise-** Both aerobic and resistance exercise has been shown to have positive effects on sleep. However, timing is important. It's best to avoid vigorous exercise one hour before bedtime as this may reduce our sleep duration, quality and make it more difficult to fall asleep in the first place.
10. **Get outside-** Exposure to both natural light and dark during this time will help us keep our circadian rhythms in balance, and make us tired.
11. **Change our bed time routine-** At least an hour before bed stop work, reduce screen time, meditate, or read. These techniques allow us to relax and help our circadian rhythm take control by releasing hormones that will promote sleep and reduce alertness. Though it's still uncertain what life will look like after lockdown has ended, one thing for certain is that if we look after our sleep pattern during this time, we may leave lockdown feeling less fatigued and may be a little more productive.

Remedial steps in regards with boredom and sleep dysregulation during lockdown

1. **Relax our mind with meditation-** Meditating will surely help we relax our mind during the period of lockdown and help us become stress free.
2. **Spend more time with our family-** Since we all have been directed to stay at home during the lockdown phase, it is the perfect time to have fun with our family.
3. **Learn a new skill-** During the lockdown phase we have staying at home; we should utilize the internet for learning a new skill online.

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- 4. Develop a new hobby-** Since all of us are at home during the lockdown phase, it is the perfect time to nurture our interest. Many of us might be interested in poetry or painting or even cooking and singing or dancing etc. So why not replace the boring moments of quarantine by doing something creative.
- 5. Eat something healthy-** While many of us today are staying home, it is important to maintain nutrition in the body. We need to take a proper and healthy diet. And, it's also true that while working from home, we can't be efficient with an empty stomach. We need to keep our body energized and hydrated all the time.
- 6. Do some cardio at home-** People now-a-days in the current COVID-19 Scenario can't venture out for a walk and also lockdown phase, find it hard to find a gym around. But we need maintain our health while staying at home too.

CONCLUSION

This lockdown was essential and wasting it is totally our choice. But if we do something productive, we will feel happy later. This is a great time to spend quality time with our family. We should not waste these days just sleeping the whole day. We can something productive to get rid of our boredom.

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Conflict of Interest

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