

Leanings and Learnings of Fifty-Eight Weeks

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The year that has gone by qualifies, more than any other, for the epithet 'Annus Horribilis' used by Queen Elizabeth of England for another set of 365 days two decades ago. Even as one muses upon and mourns the downsides of life as we have lived it since March 2020, the indomitable resilience within each of us allows us to take a cheeky, audacious look at events that can, if allowed, smother our very beings. Which exactly is how I thought back and listed the learnings and leanings of my fifty-eight weeks. In essence, this is what I did:

1. Binge watched over the top web series on OTT platforms. Panned them because their content was too staid, too explicit, too predictable, too twisted, too farfetched, too realistic. Binge watched them anyway.
2. Perforce weaned myself off abject dependence on domestic help. Smugly congratulated myself on being willing and able to sweep, dust, cook, clean, scour, and wash. Gladly restituted abject dependence on domestic help.
3. Bought dozens of books because the reviews were great/the cover looked interesting/ it promised to be soul-nourishing (boring!!)/ the author could win a Booker/FOMO.
4. Gave the unfinished books a decent burial. Ashamed, promised myself I would shun acquisitiveness and avarice. Bought some more.
5. Spring cleaned shelves. Threw out redundant stuff when the husband wasn't looking. Threw out the yellowed newspaper linings from 2016 and put in fresh ones from April 2021. When next I change them, will likely feel less embarrassed than if they were from March 2021.
6. Laughed at the insecurity displayed by lockdown-fearing folk who stock up on groceries. Didn't laugh too long or too hard. Only when I wasn't placing grocery orders online.
7. Upgraded my internal face recognition system to log as almost-friends the delivery-guys who arrived at the door with disconcerting regularity bringing parcels the offspring ordered online.

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8. **Learnt how to stay scruffy and dishevelled below the diaphragm while looking fairly presentable above it in Zoom calls. Gave myself an A+ in sleepwalking through dull online meetings while managing to look enthralled.**
9. **Pontificated as often as anyone would listen about positivity, hopefulness, and gratitude being the essence of living.**
10. **Ranted to the better half about the inadequacies and injustices of life. Did not give up though better half looked distracted and disinterested. Felt energized playing the victim card. Made a mental note to make point 10 the new normal. Will keep promise.**

The pandemic rages on, but so must our positivity and our will to surmount all challenges. What better way than to laugh at oneself to put things in perspective? Do you have any funny moments that you can think of? Now's the time to list them and treat yourself to a hearty laugh.

