

The Talking Bird

A fellow lived alone and went to a pet store to buy a parrot. He thought the bird might keep him company in his lonely hours. However, the very next day, he went back to complain that the bird didn't talk.

The store owner asked if he had a mirror in its cage, and the man replied that he didn't. The store owner said that parrots love mirrors. When he will see his reflection in the mirror, he'll start talking. So, he sold him a birdcage mirror.

The bird owner came back the next day to complain that the parrot still hadn't said a word. "That's peculiar", said the pet expert. He suggested that the bird owner should have a swing as birds really love little swings, and a happy parrot is a talkative parrot. So, the man bought a swing and installed it in the cage.

However, he was back the next day with the same complaint. The salesman asked whether he has a ladder in the cage. He suggested that once he has a ladder, he'll probably start talking. So, the man bought a ladder.

The man went back at the pet store the next day. The owner knew something was wrong and immediately asked, "Didn't your parrot like the ladder?" The bird owner said, "The parrot died".

"I'm so sorry", the store owner said. "Did he say anything?"

"Well, yes. He finally talked just before he died. In a weak little voice, he asked me, "Don't they sell any bird seed at that pet store?"

Some of us mistakenly believe that happiness lies in lining our cages with toys, gadgets, and other expensive stuff. Excessive consumption has become the hallmark of our life. Whoever has the most toys wins seems to be the rule. But is it actually so?

The spiritual hunger in the human heart that can't be satisfied by seeing one's own image reflected back in vanity mirrors, playing with our grown-up toys or climbing the corporate ladder. Our hearts yearn for real nourishment. The love of family and friends, relationships over the pursuit of more things, personal integrity, a secure connection to God are the things that feed the soul.

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C-reactive Protein Shows Nonsignificant Rise

COVID-19 increases C-reactive protein (CRP). This seems to follow with disease severity and prognosis. In patients with severe respiratory failure with a normal CRP level, an alternative diagnosis should be sought.

[Source: *International Pulmonologist's Consensus on COVID-19: Dr Tinku Joseph (India), Dr Mohammed Ashkan Moslehi (Iran)*]

Social Distancing cannot be Intermittent

A new study by the Harvard School of Public Health researchers has suggested that staggered intervals of social distancing could save more lives than the one-time social distancing guidelines as currently issued by the United States government. Federal authorities have extended the advisory, which was issued March 16, until April 30. The team proposed practicing intermittent social distancing, wherein distancing is enforced when cases rise above a set threshold and then measures can be alleviated when cases drop below a set threshold.

Digital Mass Surveillance does not Help

Most of us have a smart watch of some kind. It has already been shown that the heart rate from that data can help identify a flu outbreak before it actually happens. There is a report on just using body temperature with a smart thermometer. With digital tracking at scale, it could be possible to detect the outbreak before it happens, because if we get it at the earliest possible time, precise isolation can be done and we can prevent exponential growth in the community.