

Commentary

Surviving Confinement

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I am confined in my house due to a serious car accident. Being an active and free-spirited person, it's harsh and annoying to say the least. I wonder how the great leaders like Nelson Mandela and Jawahar Lal Nehru spent their time in prison. Nehru, a freedom fighter and the first prime minister of India spent nearly a decade behind bars on various charges, often as a result of his involvement with the civil disobedience campaigns of political ally Mahatma Gandhi, who also spent years in prison. Nelson Mandela was sent to the notorious Robben Island penitentiary, where his 27 years behind bars left him the most

recognizable face of opposition to apartheid and a rallying figure in the international campaign to isolate Pretoria's white minority government.

Nehru spent his time in jail constructively by writing his famous book, "Discovery of India". The Discovery of India has acquired the status of a classic since it was first published in 1946.

Mandela drafted his memoirs while jailed in the notorious maximum-security prison of Robben Island, where, from 1964, he spent 18 of the 27 years he was jailed by the Nationalist Party for his part in fighting for racial equality and the eradication of apartheid. Besides that, there were musical

activities in the prison that brought relief to the daily hard labor.

I can't compare myself to great men like Mandela and Nehru but I try to learn from their lives. I find the following very useful to keep my mind on track and not be anxious and depressed:

Reading and writing: Both reading and writing are great cure to loneliness. I write poems (in Hindi and Urdu) to express myself. I have also joined online poetry clubs where I publish my poems and interact with other poets. I also try to write at least one article every week for TheThinkClub magazine.

I keep moving by walking and doing light exercises every day. Reaching out to others is a great cure for boredom. I make sure to keep in touch with my loved ones and like minded friends. I also stick to routine like reading online newspapers, preparing breakfast and lunch and watching a few select TV programs daily.

After all that I feel occupied and connected, the two essential ingredients to keep loneliness away. Maybe you have some other ideas. If you do, feel free to share with us.