

Q. 3 Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions that follow.

(20)

In barely one generation, we've moved from exulting in the time-saving devices that have so expanded our lives, to trying to get away from them- often, in order to make more time. The more ways we have to connect, the more many of us seem desperate to unplug. Like a teenager, we appear to have gone from knowing nothing about the world to knowing too much, all but overnight.

The average person spends at least eight and a half hours a day in front of the screen. The average teenager spends or receives 75 text messages a day. Since luxury, as any economist will tell you, is a function of scarcity, the children of tomorrow will crave nothing more than freedom, if only for a short while, from all the blinking machines, streaming videos and scrolling headlines that leave them feeling empty, and too full all at once. The urgency of slowing down - to find the time and space to think - is nothing new, of course, and wiser souls have always reminded us that the more attention we pay to the moment, the less time and energy we have to place it in some larger context. Even half a century ago, Marshall McLuhan warned, "When things come at you very fast, naturally you lose touch with yourself."

Yet few of those voices can be heard these days, precisely because 'breaking news' is coming through perpetually on the news channels, and Meena is posting images of her summer vacation and the phone is ringing. We barely have enough time to see how little time we have. And the more that floods in on us, the less of ourselves we have to give to every snippet.

We have more and more ways to communicate, as Thoreau noted, but less and less to say. Partly because we are so busy communicating. And - as he might also have said - we are rushing to meet so many deadlines that we hardly register that what we need most are lifelines. So what to do? The central paradox of the machines that have made our lives so much brighter, quicker, longer and healthier is that they cannot teach us how to make the best use of them; the information revolution came without an instruction manual. All the data in the world cannot teach us how to sift through data; images don't show us how to process images. The only way to do justice to our onscreen lives is by summoning exactly the emotional and moral clarity that cannot be found on any screen.

Maybe that is why more and more people, even if they have no religious commitment, seem to be turning to yoga or meditation, or tai chi; these are not New Age fads so much as ways to connect with what could be called the wisdom of old age. A series of tests in recent years has shown that after spending time in a quiet rural setting, subjects "exhibit greater attentiveness, stronger memory and generally improved cognition. Their brains become both calmer and sharper." More than that, empathy, as well as deep thought, depends on neural processes that are "inherently slow". The very ones our high-speed lives have little time for.

QUESTIONS:

- (1) According to the author, what is likely to become a scarcity in the future?
- (2) What ability have people lost thanks to the constant inflow of data?
- (3) Why does the author say, "We have more and more ways to communicate, but less and less to say"?
- (4) Why are people taking an active interest in old-age fads?
- (5) Why is modern man unable to empathise with others?

Comprehension

Q1)

The author considers "luxury" to become a scarcity in the future. Here, the word "luxury" denotes "freedom" from all sorts of communicating devices that keep us hooked for hours. The author says that as the people lose connectivity with themselves, the next generation will probably ^{needs} ~~wants~~ a break from all sort of news videos and snippets. Thus it is the "freedom to unplug communicating devices" that is more likely to become a scarcity in the future.

Q2)

Due to the constant inflow of data, the people have lost the ability to give time to each and every snippet. The author says that data is transferred on communicating devices in more rapidly. So, the time available to the people is not enough to watch each and everything available on the screens. In this way, such rapid influx of data have enabled the people to unplug communicating devices for a brief period of time. This is the ability which the author thanks to ^{the} constant inflow of data.

Q3)

"We have more and more ways to communicate, but less and less to say," signifies that although people are equipped with modern communicating devices, they are unable to stay connected with others. This elucidates the fact that it is the information available on these devices that keep us glued to the screens for indefinite period. We paid a little attention to make best use of these devices. Amidst all of this, we have

lost the connectivity with ourselves also. We are more concerned to meeting up our deadlines rather taking time out for ourselves.

Q04)

People are taking interests in long-old-age fads for building a spiritual connection with themselves. The author says that the communicating devices are unable to provide a framework for mental and spiritual connectivity. To revitalize it, old-age fads helps in spiritual catharsis, that can enhance their cognitive skills. It soothes and calms their nerves, hence enhances their overall mental well-being.

Q05)

Modern man unable to empathise with others. To empathise with others requires having an emotional bond with the other. The author says that ^{due to} the modern devices, have kept people find a little time to develop such a compassion for the other. As people are technologically connected, but spiritually and mentally they are not. For this reason, modern man unable to empathize with others.