

For the couch potatoes



101 Guide On How To Avoid Answering 'What Are You Doing With Your Life?'

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Every time, it starts the same way. At a family get-together, you're peacefully enjoying the spicy aroma of *chole bhature* with its flavour dancing on your tongue. You're all set to demolish the entire plate, when a distant relative, looks directly into your eyes and asks "So, beta... what are you doing with your life?". Suddenly the lights go down, the music fades, the flavour of *chole bhature* disappears, your mouth becomes dry and even the spices forget their purpose in life. If only you had found this 101 guide earlier.

Step 1: The art of composed panic

The first rule is to not to blink. Act as if this is the 300th time you've been asked this (it probably is) and you've achieved inner peace about it. Maintain serene eye contact, nod thoughtfully. Pretend to recall a major life milestone that never happened. The goal is to be so calm that they question whether you've just discovered enlightenment.

Step 2: Calculated words

Now, time for verbal gymnastics. Throw in impressive, vague phrases that sound intellectual but mean abso-

lutely nothing. "I am currently aligning my interdisciplinary pursuits with the emerging global frameworks." Translation: I have no clue, but it sounds like I do.

Step 3: Create a 'noble' hobby

It's time to humanise the lie when they lean in, intrigued but wary. "I've recently started learning Japanese. Such an expressive language!" As a matter of fact, learning Japanese is so hard, you'll feel like you are trying to solve 3D Rubik's cube with

chopsticks. If they ask you to say something, sigh deeply and whisper, "It's not about translation... it's about connection." Boom! Instant mystery. Instant respect.

Step 4: Deflect with grace

It's time to escape now that you've dazzled them enough. Return the conversation quickly by saying, "But Uncle, you've to tell me about your new business venture, I heard it's doing wonders." Well done! The focus has changed (since nothing is per-

manent except change). Now, you can let out a breath as they start telling you a twenty-minute saga about their accountant.

Step 5: Deploy the 'Uno reverse'

Persistent questioners, on the other hand, are those who view curiosity as a moral obligation. For them you've to pull the philosophical card. Lower your voice, tilt your head slightly and say, "Well, what is anyone really doing with their life?" They will freeze. They will nod slowly, pretending to understand but in reality it questions everything from their career choices to their existence.

Step 6: Execute a clean exit

Use distraction if everything else fails. Glance at your phone dramatically and say "Oh no! I've to mist my plant right away because it is on a self-care schedule." Then walk away before they process the sentence.

Epilogue: The secret nobody tells

The truth is none of us fully know what we're doing with our lives. All of us are improvising - some with caffeine and others with confidence. So the next time someone asks you that dreaded question, don't panic. Just remember this fool-proof mantra: Sounding like you have it together counts almost as much as actually having it all together.

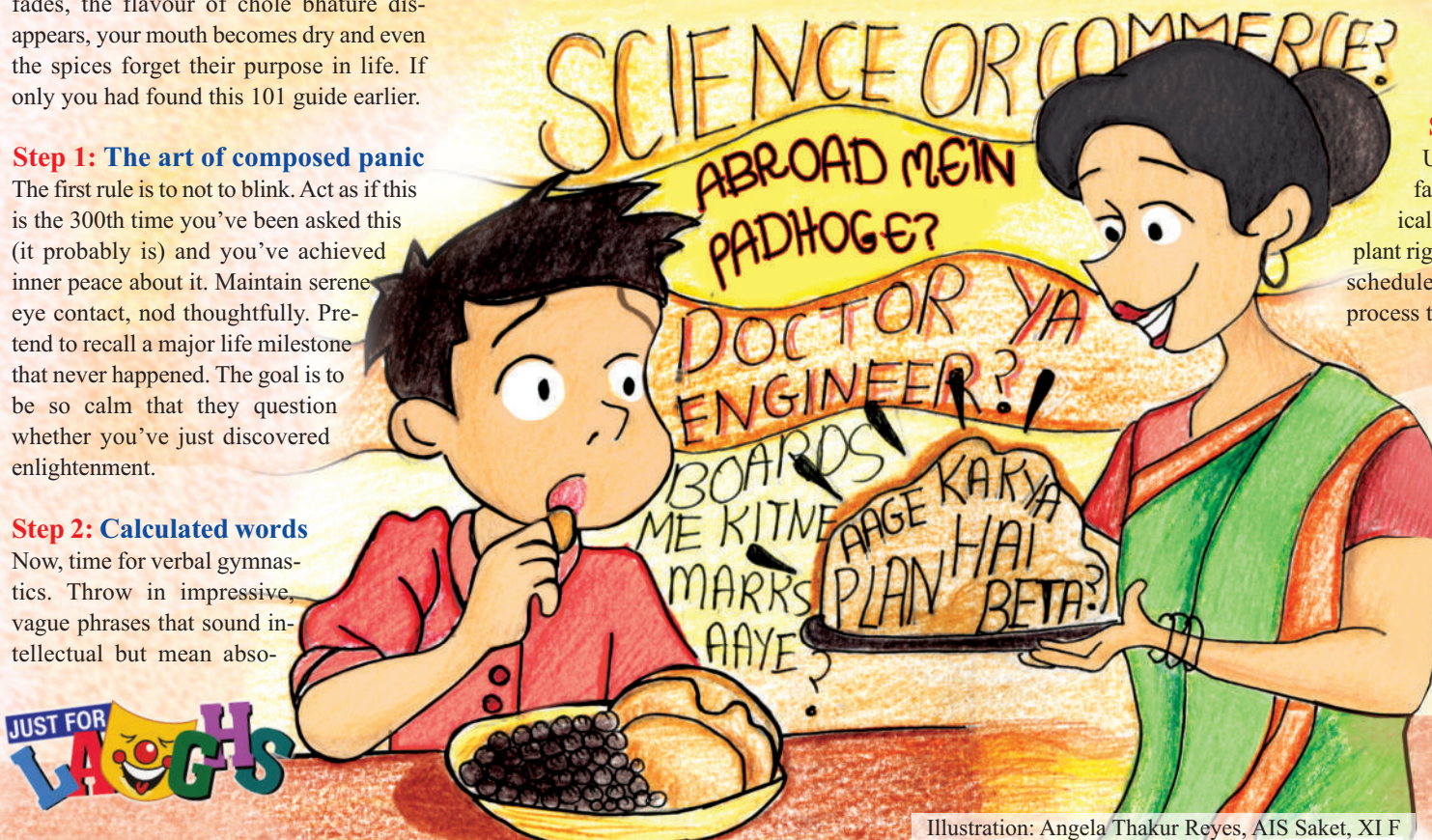


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