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In 1624 John Donne wrote, "Send not to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee." How ironic something that was said in the 17th century still so aptly applies to the modernized and fast pacing world of the 21st century. The above-mentioned lines mean that- don't ask for whom the funeral bells toll because it also tolls for you. Being part of larger social setting, when a person dies, there is a part of us that also gets lost in the darkness. Fast forward to the 21st century, this tolling is breast cancer, and every toll, every bell announces that somewhere in the world a woman is being diagnosed with breast cancer. 2 million women a year, one woman every 15 seconds, 40 as I write this article, a mother, a daughter, a sister, an aunt, as young as 25 and as old as you can imagine, every culture, every ethnicity- in today's time every person is at risk of getting diagnosed with this disease and still not everyone knows about it.

October is the time of pink capes to mark Breast Awareness Month throughout the world, to increase the knowledge of the disease and instil information about the precautionary measures of the same. When facts throughout every link on Google say that one in eight women in a room has breast cancer or runs the risk of developing this deadly disease, it becomes highly imperative for us to instil the importance of early detection of this disease to people around us. Breast Cancer medically speaking is resulted when breast cells begin to grow abnormally. These cells in comparison to healthy cells divide more rapidly and continue to accumulate forming a lump or sometimes even a mass. In some cases, these cells might spread to other parts of the body and can develop lumps there. But when this happens, it's not just your physical body that is affected, instead everything from your psychology, mental health, social relationships, financial condition-everything suffers a setback. One of the most deadly diseases affecting women across the world in ways one can't even fathom and still, the disease remains one of the less explored topics of all times with people having bare minimum or no knowledge about it. For someone who is a Harry Potter fan, I believe breast cancer is synonymous with "Voldemort". Throughout the series, everyone speaks of him as "the one who shall not be named" without realizing that the fear of the name only increases the fear of the thing itself. The first step in fighting the battle against breast cancer is to openly talk about breast cancer and discard the stigma attached to it. Communication is the only way to deal with this stigma. "Don't tell anybody about this" this thought process is the biggest mistake women often tend to follow. The only way to discard the stigma is to propagate your message. Everything one needs to fight this battle against breast cancer is within them. At the risk of drawing references with stars, it is a known fact that when stars shine, a million atoms clash within a star producing light bright enough to make a star shine. Keeping this in mind, I believe the same applies to us as well. The voice of the change that is needed is our voice itself. For people who fight this battle at the front it is their courage, hope that matters and for the people who not directly affected by it, the only way to fight this battle is to talk about the battle. It is only by communication we can build awareness about breast cancer. Keeping in view the medical terminology, we mustn't forget that early detection is one of the ways through which the survival rates of the person can increase. Thanks to the fast-pacing technology that now one can detect breast cancer in simple ways by sitting at their homes and can have a starting point in this early detection journey. Having a healthy lifestyle that revolves around healthy eating habits, physical activities, keeping family history in check, a lot less alcoholism are other few ways to reduce the risks of getting a breast cancer diagnosis.

No one goes through this fight alone. Breast cancer is a disease that takes a toll on you and your loved ones. But breast cancer is a chapter and not the whole story in one's life. The very utterance of the word "cancer" only brings nerve-racking horror in our minds, but despite the haunt that appears to be associated with the word many individuals survived cancer due to their willpower and courage. And many more lives can be prevented in the future just by creating awareness about breast cancer. Let's not forget 'Awareness is Power'.