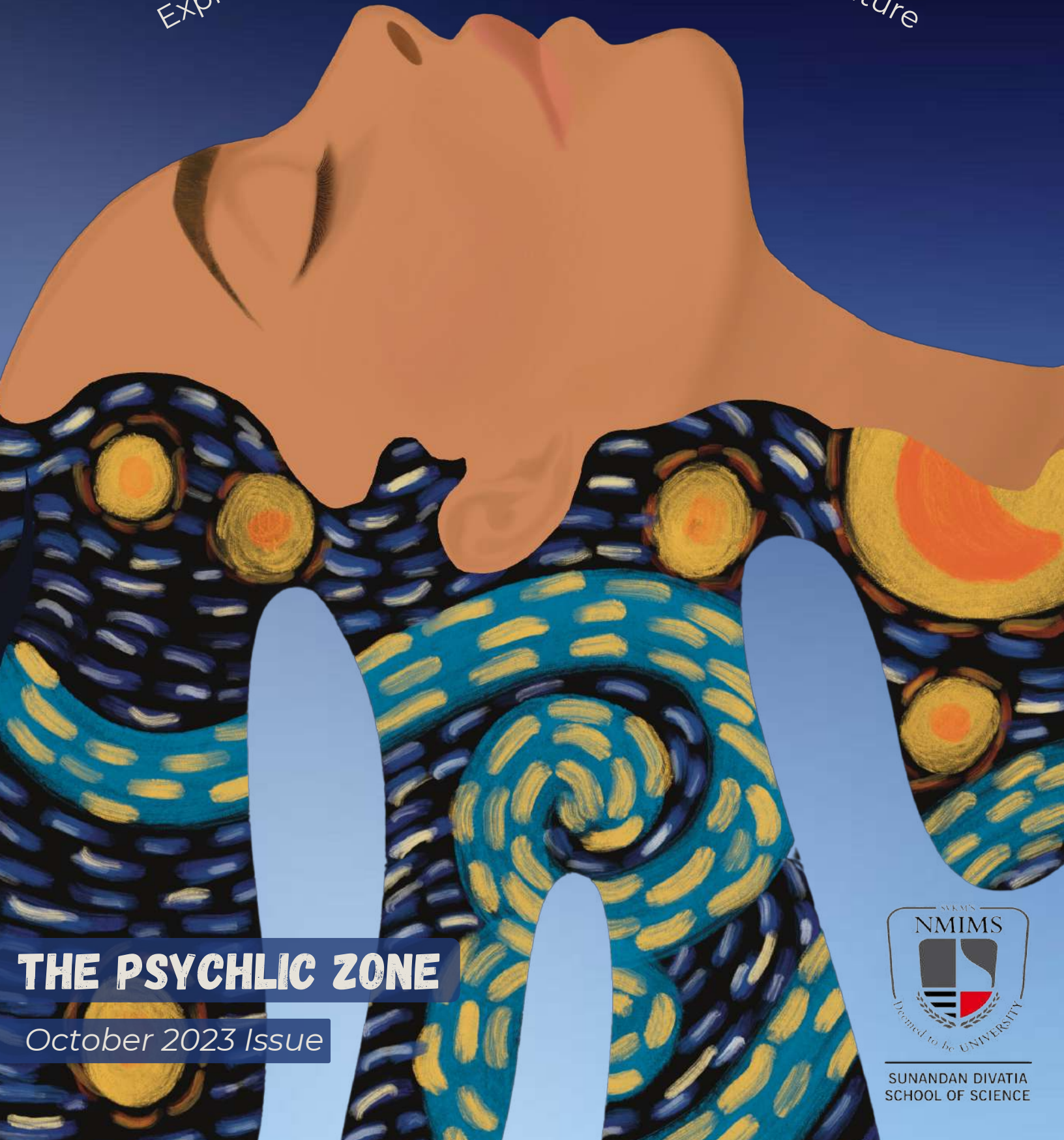


MINDS IN MOTION

Exploring Psychology Through Art, Media & Culture



THE PSYCHLIC ZONE

October 2023 Issue



SUNANDAN DIVATIA
SCHOOL OF SCIENCE



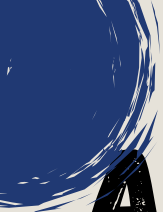
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ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

Inaugurated in the year 2007, the Sunandan Divatia School of Science was established with the singular objective of providing a distinctive and illustrious academic milieu to both undergraduate and postgraduate scholars. It was conceived within the ambit of the university's exceptional pedagogical framework, one that zealously upholds the twin pillars of academic excellence and a profound commitment to industry-driven training.

Central to this mission is the cultivation of an exceptional cadre of scientifically adept professionals, well-versed in the exigencies of both research institutions and the demands of the corporate realm. The Programs, designed with meticulous care and foresight, aim not only to ensure employability but also to proactively address the burgeoning global demands and contribute substantially to the betterment of the global community.

The Department of Psychology inaugurated in the year 2020 at Sunandan Divatia School of Science, is a dynamic center for the study of human behavior and cognition. Committed to excellence which is evident in cutting-edge research and tailored programs that prepare future psychology professionals. The esteemed faculty advances psychological knowledge, and state-of-the-art facilities foster experiential learning. Emphasizing interdisciplinary collaboration, equipping students for careers in clinical, industrial-organizational, or educational psychology, empowering them to make a global impact.



PREFACE

In the ever-evolving landscape of human thought and understanding, the Psychology department at Sunandan Divatia School of Science has embarked on a journey to explore the profound interplay between minds and the creative expressions that shape our world. With this year's theme, "Minds in Motion: Exploring Psychology in Art, Media, and Culture," we delve into the intricate tapestry of human experiences, unraveling the threads that connect psychology to the realms of artistic expression and cultural phenomena.

Vincent van Gogh, the luminary artist behind the iconic "Starry Night," stands as a striking testament to the complex relationship between mental health and creativity. His kaleidoscopic masterpiece, painted during a shattering period in his life, reflects the turbulence of his inner world while exuding a captivating luminance. Van Gogh's vibrant strokes are not only a testament to his artistic genius, but also serve as a vivid canvas onto which we can project the dynamics of his mental state.

This issue's cover art is a homage to van Gogh's "Starry Night" for its profound resonance with the theme. The swirling, cosmic tumult mirrored in the painting's skies symbolizes the ceaseless motion of human minds, forever in flux. It is a testament to the enduring power of art to capture the ineffable and provide a mirror to our own complexities.

As you embark on this literary and visual journey, may you find inspiration in the fusion of psychology, art, media, and culture that lies within these pages. Together, let us explore the depths of human experience and the boundless potential of the mind's creative endeavors.

***Warm Regards,
The Editors***





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The background of the entire page is an abstract pattern of numerous small, elongated, brushstroke-like shapes. These shapes are colored in two main tones: a muted blue and a mustard yellow. They are scattered across a light beige background, creating a textured, organic feel. The shapes are more densely packed in some areas and more sparse in others, with some overlapping.

RESEARCH

INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON SELF-ESTEEM

By Hitakshi Varma

Self-esteem is one of the fundamental human needs (Allport, 1955). Humans show a preference for having higher self-esteem, under most conditions (Swann, Griffin, Predmore, & Gaines, 1987). They prefer an increment in self-esteem over most pleasurable activities. Self-esteem is the evaluative aspect of the self-concept that corresponds to an overall view of the self as worthy or unworthy (Baumeister, 1998). This is embodied in Coopersmith's (1967) classic definition of self-esteem: The evaluation which the individual makes and customarily maintains with regard to himself: it expresses an attitude of approval and indicates the extent to which an individual believes himself to be capable, significant, successful and worthy. In short, self-esteem is a personal judgment of the worthiness that is expressed in the attitudes the individual holds towards himself.

A systematic review was conducted to investigate the literature on the relationship between social media use and self-esteem for adolescents (11- 18 years). The aim of the review was to gain a comprehensive understanding of the influence of social media use on self-esteem in today's generation. The study separately examined the self-esteem of boys and girls. Social media use was also further analyzed with reference to the frequency and investment of individuals. The review concluded; there is indeed a negative influence of social media use on self-esteem, especially for adolescent girls. The review will be useful for educational institutions, family settings, and even politics to implement and regulate healthy social media use and educate children about the effects of social media on self-esteem. Keywords: Self-esteem, social media, adolescents



TRANSGENDER RIGHTS IN DIFFERENT SECTORS OF INDIA: WORKPLACE, POLITICS AND HEALTH SECTOR

By Sakshi Rahul Shah

Every individual is unique in their own way. He/she own a distinctive kind of personality that makes them different from other individuals. When a person explores the society, they choose their own way of living, that might break the stereotypes and norms of the society that we live in. In the recent times, the ground-breaking rise of the third-gender or 'transgender' in India is breaking all of the barriers of culture, norms and stereotypes of our orthodox society.

I chose 'Transgender rights in different sectors of India' as my topic for this research paper because I have very little knowledge on this topic and wished to challenge myself to learn new things and broaden my horizon of knowledge. I was always intrigued by the transgender community, and when I got the opportunity to get the answers to my curiosity, I didn't want to lose it. I think that transgender rights are one of the major issues in the world, but especially in India. My topic of transgender rights is still significant in India since the change is still not seen in the society. The Indian judicial system has failed in making the trans community feel safe and stable.

Different aspects like discrimination against the community in each sector, the significance and implementation of law catering to this community, different laws working in the judicial system fighting the trans community, struggles faced by the community will holistically be closely reviewed.



RELIGIOSITY AND SOCIAL CONFORMITY: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

By Navya Charan

Individual religiosity prevails in almost all variations of culture throughout. As a social phenomenon, many theoretical bases of religion can be explained through an individual's tendency to conform in a community. There is prevalent evidence that individual religiosity and social conformity are cohabiting factors.

Almost every community throughout history has practiced some form of sacred divinity. Religiosity or an individual's religious affiliation plays a very important role in current cultures. From an evolutionary perspective, forms of spiritual guidance and norms have always been set up in the version of a deity, mainly to protect a community of their own (Jeffrey, 2011). Social conformity refers to an individual's need to be consistent with societal norms.

Social Consistency theory emphasizes that people tend to feel 'socially excluded' if there is a conflict between personal beliefs and society's beliefs. Social conformity, thus, is an individual's need to act or make decisions in accordance with a particular group. The 'threat of social exclusion' is experienced in the form of nonconformity in society. Thus, while conformity can be achieved by social, religious or political compliance, 'deviance' is a term often used to establish the contrary behavior. This helps analyze if individuals with dampened social conformity are more susceptible to follow religious norms or not. The concept of religion, worldwide, mainly focuses on the faith and helps individuals attain a form of hope, however, the regressive continuation of religion across generations needs to be studied and whether it is because of the need of a deity or one's tendency to conform to social groups.





POPULAR CULTURE IN PSYCHOLOGY



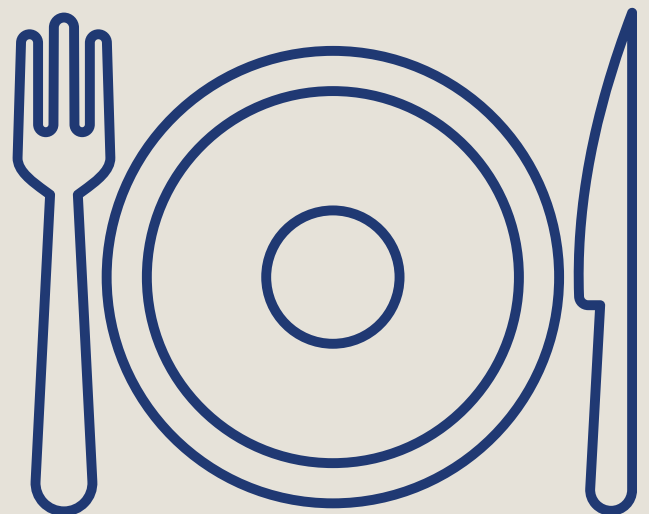
UNVEILING THE TROUBLING FACADE OF THE ‘GIRL DINNER’ TREND: A CLOSER LOOK AT ITS PROBLEMATIC IMPLICATIONS

By Yukta Gandhi

*“This is my meal and I call this girl dinner”
Cuts to disproportionately small amounts of food*

If you have been an Instagram or YouTube user long enough, you might be familiar with the ‘Girl Dinner’ trend. If not, let me sum it up for you: It started off as a nonchalant joke by tiktoker Olivia Maher as she shared a tiktok of her ‘girl dinner’: A glass of wine, cheese, olives and cornichons. Soon enough, other tiktokers hopped on the bandwagon- some of them arranged a full board of cheese, olives, meat and crackers; meanwhile, others proceeded with smaller proportions and low-calorie foods (if you can even call it that) like a bowl of ice and vitamins. The central theme of the trend remains the same, ‘Girl Dinner’ is an assemblage of no-cook snack items that are low-effort and sometimes startlingly low proportioned that they cannot be considered a full meal. Glamour calls it Gen Z’s disturbing new trend of having a can of Coke Zero or a few pickles and calling it dinner-disordered eating under a fancy new disguise..

At first glance, it sounds like another harmless trend that shows that it’s human to sometimes feel lazy and throw a low-effort meal together; it is relatable and lighthearted. But, like so many other controversial trends, this one has undertones of normalizing disordered eating. Let’s deconstruct this sentence.





Firstly, what is normalization? Experts define normalization as a social process through which ideas and actions come to be seen as normal or natural in everyday life. Furthermore, the norms thus set enforce themselves; those who follow the norms get accepted and even rewarded, and those who don't typically face backlash, especially in online communities. The Girl Dinner trend normalizes two things: (1) Eating nutrient-deprived junk food for dinner and (2) Eating very little or not eating at all.

The demographic of social media sites as such is young and impressionable, despite guidelines being in place, many audiences as young as 10 have access to them.

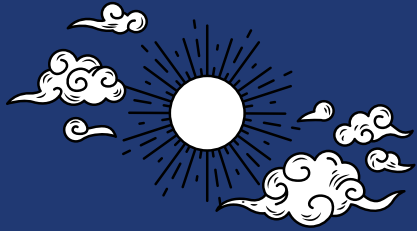
Essentially, they would create a construct wherein eating junk for dinner is normalized, or even essential, as one might feel pressured to conform. For them, girl dinner becomes a cute label for disordered eating. One would argue that the trend itself is satirical and meant to be taken as a joke; but believe it or not, many users have used the Girl Dinner filter which predicts what your Girl Dinner would be as a guide to plan their dinner.

Girl Dinner isn't the first trend that sparks controversy for policing the way women eat. From 'What I Eat in a Day' videos to promoting unhealthy diet cultures, social media does not fall short of examples portraying women having tiny and elegant meals. Cinematic history also gives us an insight into how disordered eating is heavily gendered. Women in leading roles are barely seen enjoying an adequate meal. They only do so when they are hitting a low point in their lives. Other women who enjoy food are used as comic relief. The Girl Dinner trend further contributes to this by suggesting and reinforcing that dainty meals and snacks are normal meal proportions.

We're all guilty of eating Maggi for dinner, the intention does not lie in shaming women for not eating the healthiest of meals or eating less, but to destigmatize eating well-proportioned meals and decrease the shame and guilt that women experience, internally and externally for taking delight in the thing that nourishes and fuels their bodies. Lastly, your Girl Dinner can be whatever you decide is best for you at that moment.

MASAAN

A Cinematic Triumph



A Movie Review
By Nidhi Shetty

"Masaan" directed by Neeraj Ghaywan, is a cinematic gem that weaves together the lives of several individuals in the ancient city of Varanasi, India. Beyond its breathtaking cinematography and evocative storytelling, the film subtly touches upon profound psychological themes that resonate deeply with viewers. Let's delve into the layers of human emotions, trauma, and resilience depicted in this remarkable piece of cinema.

Grief and Loss

At its core, "Masaan" explores the profound impact of loss on the human psyche. The characters grapple with the weight of grief, each in their unique way. Devastating incidents alter the course of their lives, and the film invites us to witness their struggle to come to terms with their losses. This portrayal offers a poignant insight into the complexities of

mourning and the resilience required to move forward.

Social Stigma and Identity

The film delves into the social stigma attached to certain professions and backgrounds, particularly those associated with death and cremation. This stigma affects the characters' self-perception and their interactions with society at large. Through their experiences, "Masaan" sheds light on the psychological toll of societal judgment and the search for self-worth and acceptance.

Love and Desire

"Masaan" beautifully portrays the complexities of love and desire, often in the face of societal expectations and norms. The characters' relationships are a nuanced exploration of passion, intimacy, and the challenges of navigating emotions within a conservative environment.

This theme highlights the psychological tensions that arise when personal desires conflict with societal conventions.

Resilience and Transformation

The characters in "Masaan" demonstrate remarkable resilience in the face of adversity. They navigate the complexities of their lives, finding ways to cope, heal, and ultimately transform. This resilience is a testament to the human capacity for growth and adaptation, even in the most trying circumstances.

To conclude "Masaan" is a cinematic triumph that resonates on a deeply human level. Its exploration of grief, identity, love, resilience, and redemption offers a rich tapestry of themes drawn from psychology.

Through its beautifully drawn characters and evocative storytelling, the film invites viewers to reflect on the complexities of the human experience. It stands as a testament to the enduring power of cinema to illuminate the depths of our hearts and minds.

Escape and Redemption

The desire for escape and the quest for redemption are powerful driving forces for the characters in "Masaan." Whether through literal or metaphorical means, they seek to break free from the constraints that bind them. This pursuit of liberation speaks to the universal human longing for a fresh start and a chance at redemption.



MARVEL'S MOON KNIGHT

By Tianaaz Irani

Spoilers Ahead.

Trigger warnings: Dissociation,
Child abuse, Grief, Death.

Often in media, Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID) is portrayed in a more negative light, as seen in movies like "Split". It's shown as so unsettling, it borders on horror. But Moon Knight took a different route, it decided to give its main character DID and showcased him as a hero.

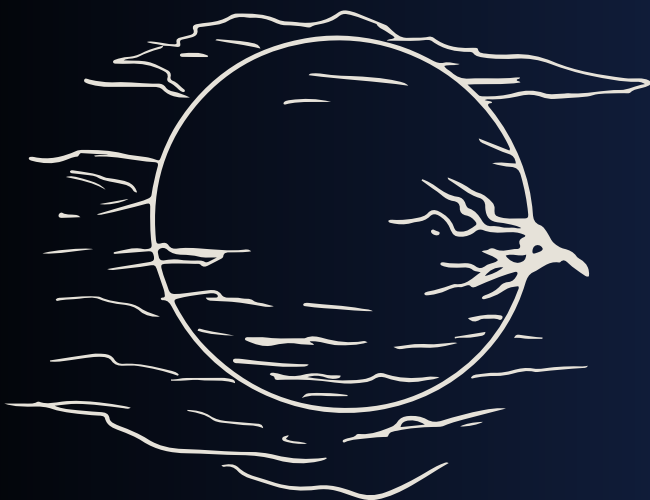
The mini-series begins with Steven Grant's daily life, and how it becomes disrupted when he gets mixed up with Egyptian Gods. He's shown often having blackouts and missing days, landing up in new places he never remembers going to; he believes it to be a terrible sleeping disorder.

As the plot carries on, it is revealed that when in dangerous situations, Steven takes on another alter*, someone who is physically capable of defending himself, Marc Spector. Marc seems to be aware of Steven's existence while the vice versa isn't true, Steven only comes to know of him when a threatening situation arises and Marc asks to take control of their body to save them. The two alters are shown to have completely different personalities- one is mild-mannered, while the other is quite literally a mercenary. A third even more violent alter is implied who seemingly has no morals, but neither of them seems to be aware of this alter.

A series of events leads to Steven and Marc's 'death', bringing them to the Duat (the journey towards the underworld, as per Egyptian mythology). This journey manifests as per the individual making it. For them, the Duat takes the form of a psychiatry ward. The 'therapist' (played by the villain) mentions organizing principles; about how we create safe places in our mind to protect ourselves from stressors that could majorly harm us; and it shows the amount of research put in, to portray a therapy setting accurately.

The therapist, himself, though a figment of Steven's imagination, is portrayed fairly well compared to most media therapists. His strategies, observations, and questions were very well done. He was patient and empathetic too. Directionally, these creative choices even caused the audience to question if the entire plot till this point is just Steven's imagination and if he is an in-patient in a psych ward.

Steven and Marc (who have separate bodies in the Duat) escape the 'psych ward'. They can communicate with one another directly, and while on their journey, it is revealed that it was Steven who was an alter created by Marc to cope with his trauma. Marc's brother died when they were very young and he felt responsible for it. His mother too blamed him. She consequently hated him and even physically abused him. Steven was an alter, based on a character in a TV show young Marc used to watch. The character was portrayed as someone in whose presence one needn't feel fear. Steven grew up believing his mother loved him and he had a happy childhood. Even grown-up when their mother died, to cope with his grief, Marc brought forth Steven once again.



The fact that Steven had emerged from Marc was an especially well-done revelation because all this time the narration was leading the audience to believe that Steven was the 'original', often causing Marc to be overlooked as not being a 'real person'. This plot twist helped us empathize with the character and gave us clarity on how each alter has their own identity and that they are real too.

When Steven comes to know about the traumatic experiences Marc has been through, shows compassion towards him and attempts to alleviate Marc's guilt and grief and comfort him. This scene leaves no doubt in the audience's mind that while Marc protects Steven physically, Steven has always protected Marc mentally, from his loneliness, and hopelessness, and through thick and thin; with his kindness, hope, and positivity. They learn from and influence each other; instead of feeling threatened by one another.

Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID) was approached with such sensitivity and portrayed beautifully. It was a very refreshing change. As someone who did not know about this disorder prior, it was an eye-opener to the difficulties faced by Systems**. It helped me realize that, for many of them, the goal isn't necessarily to eliminate alters but to create harmony among them.

Alter

A person's alternate personalities. Alters tend to be very different from one another. The identities might have different genders, ethnicities, interests, and ways of interacting with their environments.

Systems

A system is a collection of alters within one body.

REGINA GEORGE AND THE DYNAMICS OF REFERENT POWER: A PSYCHOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

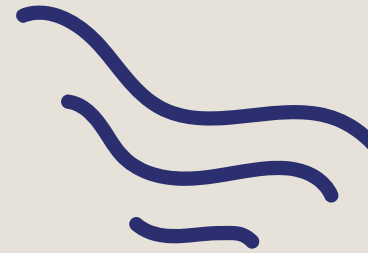
By Shreya Tandon

Introduction

Referent power, a fundamental concept in social psychology, pertains to the ability to influence and lead others by fostering a sense of identification and admiration [6]. Regina George, a central character in the movie "Mean Girls," serves as an apt example of referent power through her association with important reference groups, charismatic leadership, and her attractive and famous persona. This essay aims to delve into the dynamics of referent power as demonstrated by Regina George using psychological theories.

Referent power, a fundamental concept in social psychology, pertains to the ability to influence and lead others by fostering a sense of identification and admiration [6]. Regina George, a central character in the movie "Mean Girls," serves as an apt example of referent power through her association with important reference groups, charismatic leadership, and her attractive and famous persona. This essay aims to delve into the dynamics of referent power as demonstrated by Regina George using psychological theories.

Referent Power Defined



Referent power, as defined by social psychologists, is the capacity of an individual to shape the attitudes and behaviors of others based on their ability to evoke identification and admiration. In the context of the movie "Mean Girls," Regina George's referent power can be seen through her ability to influence and lead others by fostering a sense of identification and admiration.

Membership in an Important Reference Group

Regina George's position as the queen of the Plastics, a highly influential and popular group, aligns her with a critical reference group. This aligns with Tajfel and Turner's social identity theory, where individuals categorize themselves and others into various social groups. Regina's membership in the Plastics and her influential role within this group amplifies her referent power, as individuals within the high school community aspire to emulate her and identify with the values and behaviors associated with this reference group. She is the queen of the plastics and "always wins Spring Fling Queen," which would automatically make her the "head of the Student Activities Committee."

Charismatic and Persuasive Leadership

Regina George epitomizes charismatic and transformational leadership, fundamental concepts in leadership psychology. Charismatic leaders possess a compelling vision and can inspire and motivate followers through their dynamic and persuasive communication. Regina's dynamic personality, coupled with her persuasive communication skills, enables her to exert a profound influence over her peers, thus underscoring her referent power. The school as a whole reveres her ("Regina George is flawless."), and even her punching someone is claimed to be something to be proud of ("One time, she punched me in the face. It was awesome.")

Attractiveness and Fame:

Regina's exceptional physical attractiveness and rumored fame highlight the significance of the attractiveness stereotype theory, where physically attractive individuals are perceived more positively and associated with desirable traits. Regina's beauty and purported celebrity status enhance her referent power, as her peers strive to identify with these attractive attributes.

Regina is considered extremely attractive and famous, as seen in these lines especially, "I hear she does car commercials...in Japan." And "One time, she met John Stamos on a plane...And he told her she was pretty."

Conclusion:

Regina George's portrayal in "Mean Girls" offers a rich psychological understanding of referent power. By analyzing her membership in a crucial reference group, her charismatic leadership, and the influence of her attractiveness and fame through the lens of psychological theories, we gain insights into how referent power operates in social settings. This analysis aids in comprehending the impact of individuals like Regina George and their ability to shape attitudes and behaviors in their social environment.

SHUTTER ISLAND: WHERE REALITY AND DELUSION COLLIDE

By Anushka Banerjee

Martin Scorsese's 'Shutter Island' is a mind-blowing storytelling masterpiece and easily one of the greatest neo-noir, psychological thriller action movies ever made. It is truly a modern classic that invites viewers to question the nature and power of dreams and the human mind and is genuinely a mind-bender. It takes you through the levels of the subconscious. It will keep you on the edge of your seat and leave you questioning the difference between perception and reality. But it's not just the plot that makes it so unique. The movie's themes are powerful, like how we deal with mental illness, guilt, and the nature of reality. It is a highly complex thriller that must be watched several times to fully understand.

The critically acclaimed movie Shutter Island (2010) is the fourth collaboration between Scorsese and DiCaprio. Based on Dennis Lehane's 2003 'Shutter Island'.

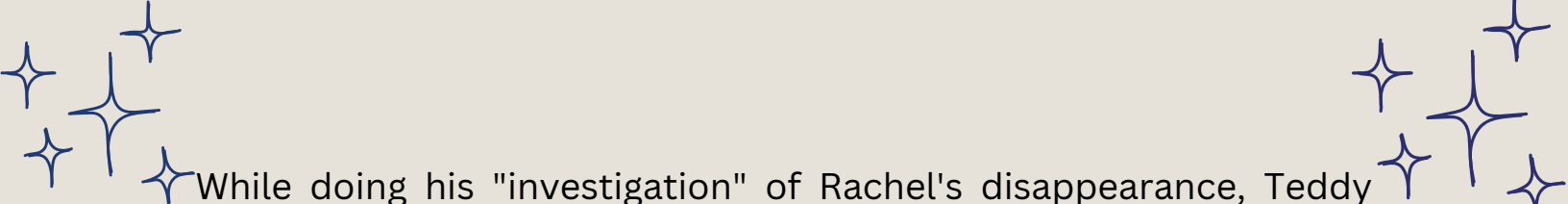
The film begins with a ferry ride to Shutter Island, which holds a mental facility for the criminally insane. Teddy (played by Leonardo DiCaprio) is a government marshal looking for a missing prisoner named Rachel Solando with the help of his accomplice Chuck. In reality, Ted is actually Andrew Laeddis, a war veteran exposed to the gruesome aspects of the already horrific war. It is later revealed that he had killed his wife, who had murdered their three kids. Whereas Chuck (played by Mark Ruffalo) is Andrews' therapist.

Both marshals meet Dr. John Cawley (played by Ben Kingsley), the facility's lead psychiatrist, who explains a bit about the psychiatry and facility. Dr Cawley says there is a war on the island regarding the techniques used to treat the patients , with one faction that believes in surgical techniques like lobotomies to treat patients. On the contrary, the other states that the new psychotropic drugs are the way to treat people.

Over time, Teddy begins to feel sick, accompanied by flashbacks and migraines from his experiences as a soldier and dreams of his dead wife and kids. Although PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) is not used, Andrew shows numerous symptoms. A series of dream sequences are diversified with reminiscence about Teddy's time in World-War II as a soldier. He often has conversations with himself in which his dead wife, Dolores (played by Michelle Williams), talks and advises him.

Andrew appears to have a conflict between his conscious, "Teddy, " and his unconscious, "Andrew." He knows that his wife killed their children and that he murdered her out of rage. However, his defence mechanism brings him back to square one; to his self-constructed reality. This is a perfect illustration of Freud's theory of 'Psychosis.'

Leo's Character, Teddy, also represents a super ego-personality, who always tries to act with good values and morals in all situations. From the moment he enters Shutter Island, his only motive is to find Rachel. Even though he keeps finding little to no evidence, he keeps trying harder to solve the mystery of the missing patient. This gives him a reason to live as Teddy Daniels and not confront or face his truth.

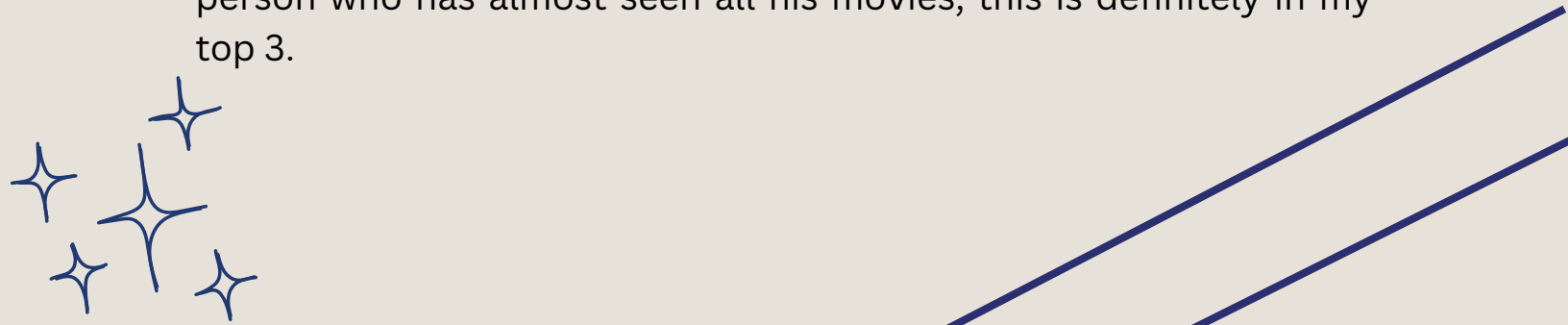


While doing his "investigation" of Rachel's disappearance, Teddy feels that the Federal facility's management is holding up his investigations as he cannot access the records of patients, workers and doctors. He wants to uncover what happens in the ward reserved for the most dangerous offenders. At one point, when both the marshals are seeking shelter from treacherous rain, Teddy tells Chuck about his wife's death and his theory on how Shutter Island is actually a place with dreadful mental experiments. As he starts to peel away the multiple layers of deceit, it becomes evident that not all is as it seems.

Towards the end of the movie, Dr. Cawley points out to Andrew that the past few days' events have been designed to break Andrew's conspiracy-driven insanity by allowing him to play the role of Teddy Daniels, a U.S Marshal. He also mentions that all the hospital employees are part of the test, including Lester Sheehan, who was playing the role of Chuck Aule and a nurse posing as Rachel Solando, the missing inmate. Whereas Andrew's migraines were just withdrawal symptoms from his medication.

In the last scene, when we see Teddy return to his senses, he remains in his alter-reality, unable to cope with the fact that he is a murderer. This is a clear instance where his superego is still in effect.

While it may not be a film for everyone due to its complexity and ambiguity, those who appreciate psychological mysteries and films that challenge their perceptions will find it to be an enthralling and thought-provoking experience. Martin Scorsese once again proves his mastery of the craft with this enigmatic and haunting tale. As a person who has almost seen all his movies, this is definitely in my top 3.





TAMASHA (2015)

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY IMTIAZ ALI

By Mayuri Shelar

My perspective on the realest movie about life and love

*“Ek baar, ek hero tha usne bohot mehnat se padhai,
engineering ki aur phir naukri ki.*

Phir vo yuhi naukri karte karte ek din marr gaya.

Kya hua?

Pasand nahi aayi ending? Koi baat nahi, badal denge.

Humari apni kahani hai.”

Over the years, all of us grew up watching many romantic Bollywood movies that portrayed similar stories. The story where a boy met a girl. They fell in love and then, they lived happily ever after. Seems very dreamy, doesn't it? To everyone's surprise, Imtiaz Ali chose to change the narrative. Tamasha is about a boy who met a girl. They fell in love and she helped him fall in love with himself. Doesn't it sound different from the rest of the movies we ever watched? That's how it took a realistic turn away from the cliché romance movies.

Synopsis of the movie Tamasha:

The movie revolves around Tara who meets Ved while they both are on a vacation in Corsica. They make an amusing verbal pact to keep their real identities a secret and pretend to be “Don” and “Mona Darling”. They explore the island together and promise to never meet each other again. Although when Tara starts to fall in love with Ved, she decides to leave Corsica and come back to India. After four years, Tara surprisingly meets Ved in Delhi and they reveal their original identities.



They get into a romantic relationship and on Ved's birthday, he proposes to Tara. She confronts him about being unhappy with the real-life Ved and mentions falling in love with the person she met in Corsica. She declines the proposal. Few days later, Ved breaks down and his residual mental condition is triggered. The storyline takes a shape as Ved explores his issues, tries to resolve them and Tara helps him out during his tough times

Psychological Perspective to the movie

The story portrays Carl Rogers' theory of congruence which states that there are two types of self-concept: Real self and Ideal self. The real self refers to one's perception of who they are, based on their actual experiences whereas the ideal self is one's perception of who they would like to be, based on their aspirations and goals. Psychological issues arise when there is a discrepancy between the real self and the ideal self. Ideal Ved was a free-spirited soul who was outgoing, carefree and adventure-loving while the real Ved was a corporate slave who was trapped in a monotonous lifestyle with no escape from his inevitable reality.

"andar se kuch aur hai hum, aur bahar se majboor"

This dialogue during a conversation between Ved and an auto-rickshaw driver reveals how everyone's lives are so occupied with familial responsibilities and societal expectations that they have to give up on their dreams. Ved's childhood journey displays his love for drama and theater but unfortunately, a mainstream career in engineering is imposed on him even when he struggles with his academics. It perfectly represents how a happy-go-lucky individual loses his sense of identity because he is thrown into a rat race to become an ideal son as a child and later, a competent employee as an adult.

“iss duniya ka dil uss duniya mein nahi chalta, Zora Bhai”

Ved's dialogue portrays the discrepancy in his ideal world and his real world. Ideal Ved tries to live up to the expectations which takes him far away from his real self. When Tara makes him aware about who he exactly is, Ved goes through emotional conflicts and has mental outbursts. Eventually, Ved moves towards self-discovery and personal growth through his experiences as well as Tara's love and acceptance towards him.

Deeper Understanding through its Music and Cinematography

The music album of this movie is a cherry on the cake that just enhances the beauty of its plot with melodious rhythms and heartfelt lyrics.

*“jise dhoonda zamaane mein, mujhi mein tha,
wo mere saare jawaabon ka, safarnama”*

Safarnama unfolds the crux of the movie in these lines describing Ved's journey from his whimsical childhood to the self-exploration in his adult life. Every song captures the emotions in an exquisite manner, right from the adrenaline rush in Matargashti, feelings of self-doubt and confusion in Tu Koi Aur Hai, Tara's loneliness in Heer toh badi sad hai to the strong feelings of heartbreak and separation in Agar Tum Sath Ho, making it a musical rollercoaster for the audience.

Shifting the spotlight to its cinematography, the camera shots in Tamasha constantly switch from the aesthetics of its locations to focusing on the emotional expressions of the protagonists.

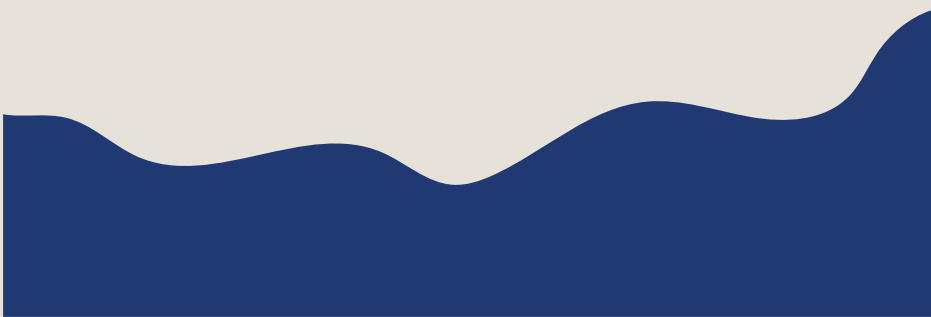


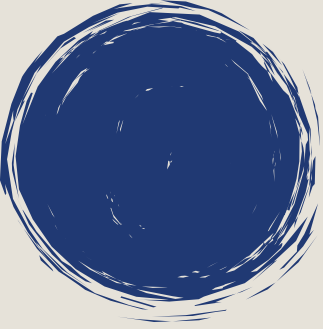
The scenes in Corsica include bright and warm colors which radiate the feelings of joy, passion, comfort, intimacy and positivity that Ved and Tara experienced during their vacation. Some shots of Delhi and Shimla display faded dark colors representing the passivity, isolation and monotony of life that Ved and Tara experienced in their fast-paced corporate lives. Few camera angles in the movie are quite character-specific, when Ved is searching for his true self looking into the mirror and on the other hand, Tara feels lonely in joyous social environments.

Personal note to this masterpiece

“Darta hai? Darr lagta hai? Apni kahani mujhse puchta hai, kaayar to kisse darta hai?
Bata, bol apni kahaani. Kya hai tere dil ke andar?”

These lines touched the bottom of my heart and struck me with the daunting reality. I feel that all of us are running in a directionless race where we forget to stop and ponder upon the essence of our existence. We hustle, we struggle, for achieving something that we probably do not even want. Watching the end of this movie always makes me realize that we are the writers of our own stories. Everyone has a chance to fight their own demons and channel their inner “Don”, the way Ved did. The only moment of truth here is to make a choice!





THE SOUL TREMBLES-

A VERY PERSONALIZED MINI REVIEW

BY ASMI DHANAK

Shiota Chiharu is known for her art which expresses the incorporeal: memories, anxiety, dreams, silence and more. Her work often makes observers question universal concepts such as identity, boundaries, and existence. “The soul trembles” is her latest art installation. It portrays the “presence in absence.” Observers go through a mini existential crisis and they begin to question the meaning of living and journey of life, and the inner workings of the soul.

Shiota uses red, black and white threads to conjure up an array of connections. Spider webs, veins, the red string of fate, the threads of Moirai. She uses these threads to create a dense web in which objects are cocooned or suspended. The red speaks of anger. Towards society and towards self. It speaks of uncharted, suppressed rage, and how quickly it can morph into grief. The black and white symbolize the passage of time and how helpless you are in front of it.

The art depicts the folly of the human condition and the fragility of our life experiences. It is enough to make one feel devoid of hope. The installations instill a sense of clinging on to something invisible, a phantom arm perhaps, grasping at the absolute shreds of what once was. The art speaks of silence and how deafening it can be. In one of the artworks in the installation, papers are suspended midair, held together by white strings. This is symbolic of lost voices, swallowing your words, biting your tongue. How many things have you left unsaid?



How many times did you refuse to speak when your entire body screamed at you to speak? A small fading remnant of a star. So close to the ground yet so far away.

Chiharu mentioned that this installation is about how loudly absence lingers. Growing up, moving on, letting go. Only embers remain of who you once were. How many people have you left behind? How many people have left you behind? How many memories have you forgotten? How many have you etched permanently in your brain?

The inexplicable intricacies of life, the tangible-ness of being. What does it mean to love? What does it mean to be loved?

Overall, the art is about fighting against oblivion. It forces you to look at it, it forces you to look at who you've become. It forces you to ask yourself, what have I forgotten? And while it invokes feelings of heaviness, it feels oddly therapeutic at the same time. Like when Sylvia Plath said, "it is comforting to know that I have fallen and can fall no further". It is comforting, albeit in a pessimistic way. We all are going to forget eventually, nothing will remain of us, of our legacies. So, I suppose the only option we have is to embrace the absurdity of it all. There is no meaning to life than what you give it.

The soul trembles, speaks of loneliness, persistent melancholy, lightness and hope. This is something everyone should see at least once. If you find yourself scrolling aimlessly through your phone, check this art installation out. Who knows, maybe you'll have an epiphany or an existential crisis.



PSYCHEYE





THE ASIATIC SOCIETY LIBRARY, *Mumbai*

WRITER,
Drishti Haldia

PHOTOGRAPHY BY,
Drishti Haldia

In this photo, we see a lone man casually strolling in front of the magnificent Asiatic Society Library in Mumbai.

The library's grand neoclassical presence stands tall and proud, making the passerby seem almost miniature in comparison. This photo captures Mumbai's essence where history meets the everyday. The library isn't just a backdrop; it's a symbol of the city's intellectual expertise, vibrant culture and rich history. It's the place where many writers and journalist have found inspiration. In this moment, it's as if the man in the foreground is taking a leisurely stroll through Mumbai's rich history and media legacy.

LIFE IS A DREAM

Through my artwork, Life is a Dream, I wanted to explain how we all build our lives on things that we hope and dream for. Every step of the way our goals and ambitions only get bigger and more complex and harder to achieve yet every morning when we rise and every night before bed that is always the first and last thing we can think of. The Ballet shoe and the Sneaker signifies one such dream of an individual who longs to be a part of a formal, petite dance like Ballet but at the same time explore her wild and enthusiastic side with street dancing. The dream catcher is meant to signify the people and opportunities in our life that urge us to keep trying to achieve the impossible and eventually reach our goals.

The Law Never Rests- This piece displays the multitasking ability that is expected of delegates who are handling important government bodies like the Parliament. The pin up boards shows their multiple responsibilities and deadlines and the woman and man represent the people who work day in and day out without much appreciation to make amends in the laws and help make the world a better place.



WRITER,

Zarah Martin

ART WORK BY,

Zarah Martin



WRITER,

Juhi Doshi

ART WORK BY,

Juhi Doshi

THE GIRL IS SUBMERGED UNDERWATER, WHICH CAN REPRESENT THE EXPLORATION OF DEEP EMOTIONS. THE FISHES REPRESENT DIFFERENT EMOTIONS, SWIMMING THROUGH THE DEPTH OF HER FEELINGS. BLUE IS ASSOCIATED WITH TRANQUILITY AND DEPTH. THIS TRANQUIL ENVIRONMENT ALLOWS THE GIRL TO EXPLORE HER DEEP EMOTIONS.

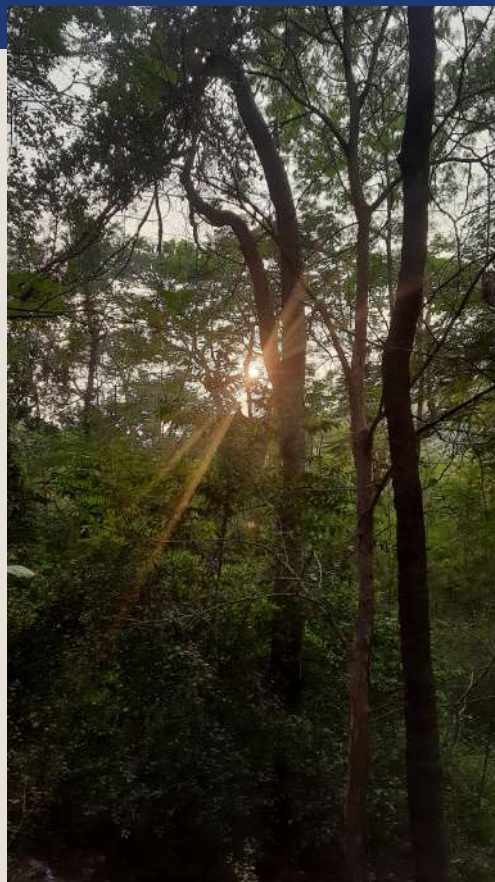
WRITER,

Gunika Sharma

PHOTOGRAPHY BY,

Gunika Sharma

TO LIVE EACH
DAY AS IT
COMES.
A NEW RAY
MEANS A NEW
DAY, LET'S NOT
LIVE BY
REGRETS.



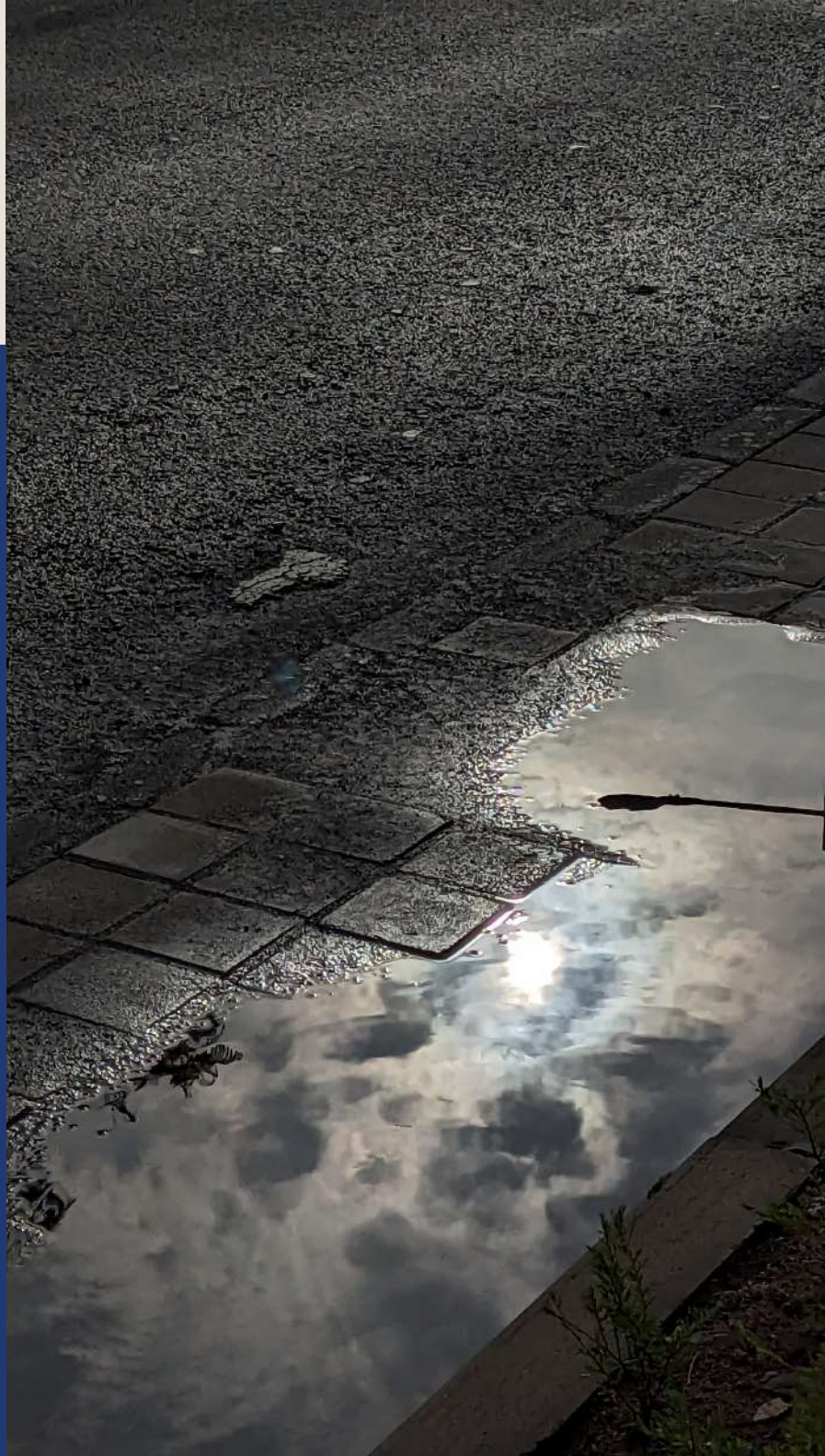
PHOTOGRAPHY BY,

Viranchi Lunvara

I FOUND MYSELF IN A PUDDLE,
I FELT LIKE MY LIFE WAS
REVOLVING AROUND HIM,
THINKING ABOUT MEETING HIM,
KNOTS IN MY STOMACH
TIGHTENING BUT THEN I LOOKED
IN THE MIRROR AND I WAS
REMINDING OF MYSELF, I SAW
SOMETHING MORE THAN WHAT I
THINK I AM, I CAN LOOK PAST THE
BODY, SOMETHING MORE THAN
THAT, IT MADE ME THINK, AS IF
IT'S NOW THE MIRROR'S TURN TO
ASK ME QUESTIONS.

NO MORE MIRROR MIRROR ON
THE WALL WHO'S THE PRETTIEST
OF THEM ALL.
YOU ANSWER ME NOW, WAS THAT
REALLY THE TRUTH? DOES YOUR
LIFE REALLY REVOLVE AROUND
HIM? IS THAT ALL THAT
OCCURRED TODAY? WERE THERE
NO GOOD EVENTS TO BE
APPRECIATED? DID YOU NOT
HAVE A GOOD WALK IN THE
AFTERNOON, RIGHT AFTER IT
RAINED? WHEN THE SUN DECIDED
TO PEEK IN AGAIN AND THE
WATER IN THE PUDDLE LOOKED
LIKE A TINY MIRROR USED BY THE
CLOUDS THEMSELVES.

MIRROR COULD BE AN INFINITE
NUMBER OF THINGS AND
SURFACES, IT COULD BE BROKEN,
SHATTERED, FOGGED, WATER,
REFLECTIVE GLASSES BUT THE
QUESTION IS;
WHAT IS BEING REFLECTED WHEN
YOU LOOK IN THE MIRROR? YOUR
SORROW? YOUR GRIEF? YOUR
PRIDE OR DISBELIEF? OR CLOUDS
AND SUN TAKING IN A PEEK?



WRITER,

Viranchi Lunvara

MY THOUGHTS
ENGULF ME OR ME
ENGULFED IN MY
THOUGHTS
....COLOURS AROUND
ME OR THE
BLANKNESS INSIDE
ME...SOMETIMES I
WANT TO HUG THE
DARKNESS AND
SOMETIMES HUG THE
LIGHT...
WISH THE VOICE
INSIDE WASN'T AS
CHANGING AS THE
COLOURS OUTSIDE...
THIS IS MY JOURNEY
AS I JOURNEY
THROUGH MY LIFE



WRITER,
Jiya Gupta

ART WORK BY,
Jiya Gupta

WRITER,
Shifa Bhakrani

ART WORK BY,
Shifa Bhakrani



AS A BUDDING PSYCHOLOGIST,
I AM STRONGLY INCLINED
TOWARDS CHARACTERS AND
PERSONALITIES THAT CREATE
AN IMPACT WITH A TOUCH OF
MYSTERY. EVEN THOUGH THE
JOKER WAS A NEGATIVE
PROTAGONIST IN THE BATMAN
SERIES, HIS ENIGMATIC
PORTRAYAL AND DARK
PROFILE IS SOMETHING
UNIQUE, CREATING A TIDAL
IMPACT ON THE MASSES. I
THINK HIS PERSONALITY IS
LIKE A PIECE OF ART,
UNFOLDING LAYERS AFTER
LAYERS, A DIFFERENT ANGLE
AND A DIFFERENT
PERSPECTIVE THROUGH OUR
LENS.

FIRST DAY ALONE, IN THIS CITY OF DREAMS BY MYSELF. WHERE EVERYONE DREAMS AND ASPIRE TO BE AT THE PINNACLE, RUNNING FROM OWN SELF, CONSTANTLY CHANGING, NEGLECTING THE PEACE TO BE AT PEACE, I FIND MYSELF HERE, ON THIS BEACH, WHICH REMAINS CONSTANT IN THIS CONSTANTLY CHANGING CITY.



WRITER,

Prithika Karwal

PHOTOGRAPHY BY,

Prithika Karwal

WRITER,

Millie Varma

ART WORK BY,

Millie Varma



ADORNED WITH THE ELEGANCE OF A FLOWER AND THE SOLEMNITY OF A SKULL, THE TWO CONTRASTING ELEMENTS TOGETHER WITHIN A SINGLE FRAME PORTRAY THE IMMORTALITY OF INNER BEAUTY. SOCIETY OFTEN UNFAIRLY JUDGES AND TREATS INDIVIDUALS BASED PRIMARILY ON THEIR PHYSICAL APPEARANCE, A SHALLOW AND SUPERFICIAL BASIS FOR EVALUATING A PERSON'S WORTH AND POTENTIAL. HOWEVER, IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER THAT OUTER BEAUTY WITHERS WITH TIME AS THE PERCEPTION OF WHAT IS CONSIDERED 'BEAUTIFUL' TENDS TO CHANGE. THE TRUE BEAUTY LIES WITHIN, UNSEEN BY THE EYE BUT FELT IN EVERY KIND GESTURE, IN THE WARMTH OF A GENUINE SMILE, AND IN THE KINDNESS THAT BLOOMS FROM A COMPASSIONATE HEART. IT TRANSCENDS TIME AND SPACE, CONNECTING US ACROSS GENERATIONS AND BEYOND PHYSICAL BOUNDARIES.

**(PAINTING INSPIRED FROM
PINTEREST)**

THE WAY WE LIVE OUR LIVES IS
FAR BEYOND WHERE WE REACH IN
THE END. THIS PAINTING GIVES
US AN INSIGHT INTO HOW
HUMANS ARE ABLE TO SURVIVE
EVEN IN HARD TIMES. AS THE
MOON SPREADS ITS SHINE TO
OVERCOME ALL THE CHALLENGES
OF LIFE, A SPRING OF HAPPINESS
COMES, BLOSSOMING EVERY
BRANCH AND GIVING PRIZES FOR
ALL HARD WORK AND PATIENCE.
SO EMBRACE LIFE AS IT COMES,
AS IT GETS BETTER WHEN WE
MOVE AHEAD, MAINTAINING THE
SAME COURAGE THAT ALWAYS
GIVES US AN ABUNDANCE OF
HAPPINESS LEADING TO AMAZING
SURPRISES.



WRITER,

Shweta Santlani

ART WORK BY,

Shweta Santlani

WHERE DO PEOPLE GO WITH THESE BROKEN DREAMS? I THOUGHT TO MYSELF. ARE ALL OF THEM LUCKY ENOUGH TO FIND A SAFE SPACE TO BE VULNERABLE? DO THE DREAMERS IN THAT SMALL JHOPDI REALIZE THAT THERE ARE PROFESSIONALS OUT THERE TO HELP THEM GET BACK UP AND KEEP DREAMING EVEN WHEN EVERYTHING SEEMS TO BE FALLING APART? EVEN IF THEY ARE AWARE, WILL THEY BE ABLE TO GET THE TREATMENT THEY REQUIRE? DO THE DREAMERS IN THOSE TALL BUILDINGS KNOW THAT ASKING FOR HELP ISN'T GOING TO DAMAGE THEIR REPUTATION? DOES EVERYONE HAVE ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE MENTAL HEALTH CARE?

MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES CAN AFFECT ANYONE, IRRESPECTIVE OF THEIR SOCIOECONOMIC BACKGROUND. OVERCOMING THE STIGMA OF MENTAL DISEASES AND GETTING ASSISTANCE HAS BECOME INCREASINGLY MAINSTREAM IN RECENT YEARS. ALTHOUGH ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH CARE AND ASSISTANCE SHOULD BE UNAFFECTED BY SOCIOECONOMIC STRATA, IN PRACTICE THIS IS NOT OFTEN THE CASE. TO ADDRESS THESE GAPS, EFFORTS MUST BE MADE TO MAKE MENTAL HEALTH CARE MORE ACCESSIBLE AND EGALITARIAN.



WRITER,
Drishti Juthani

PHOTOGRAPHY
BY,
Drishti Juthani

THE ABOVE IMAGE
ILLUSTRATES THE
GESTALT LAW OF
CONTINUANCE - THE
TILES ARE INDIVIDUAL
UNITS, YET
ARRANGED IN SUCH A
MANNER THAT IT IS
PERCEIVED AS A
SINGULAR PATH.



WRITER,
Sehej Kaur

PHOTOGRAPHY BY,
Sehej Kaur



A LATE, SUMMER EVENING,
WITH THE RESIDENTIAL AND
COMMERCIAL LIGHTS
LIGHTING UP THE FRAME; IT
REPRESENTS SEVERAL SOCIAL
LAYERS - FROM THE TALL,
HIGH-RISE URBAN TOWERS
TO THE GROUNDED, DENSE
SLUMS.
OVERALL, THE PICTURE IS
COOL ON THE EYE AND HAS A
CALMING EFFECT ON THE
MIND.

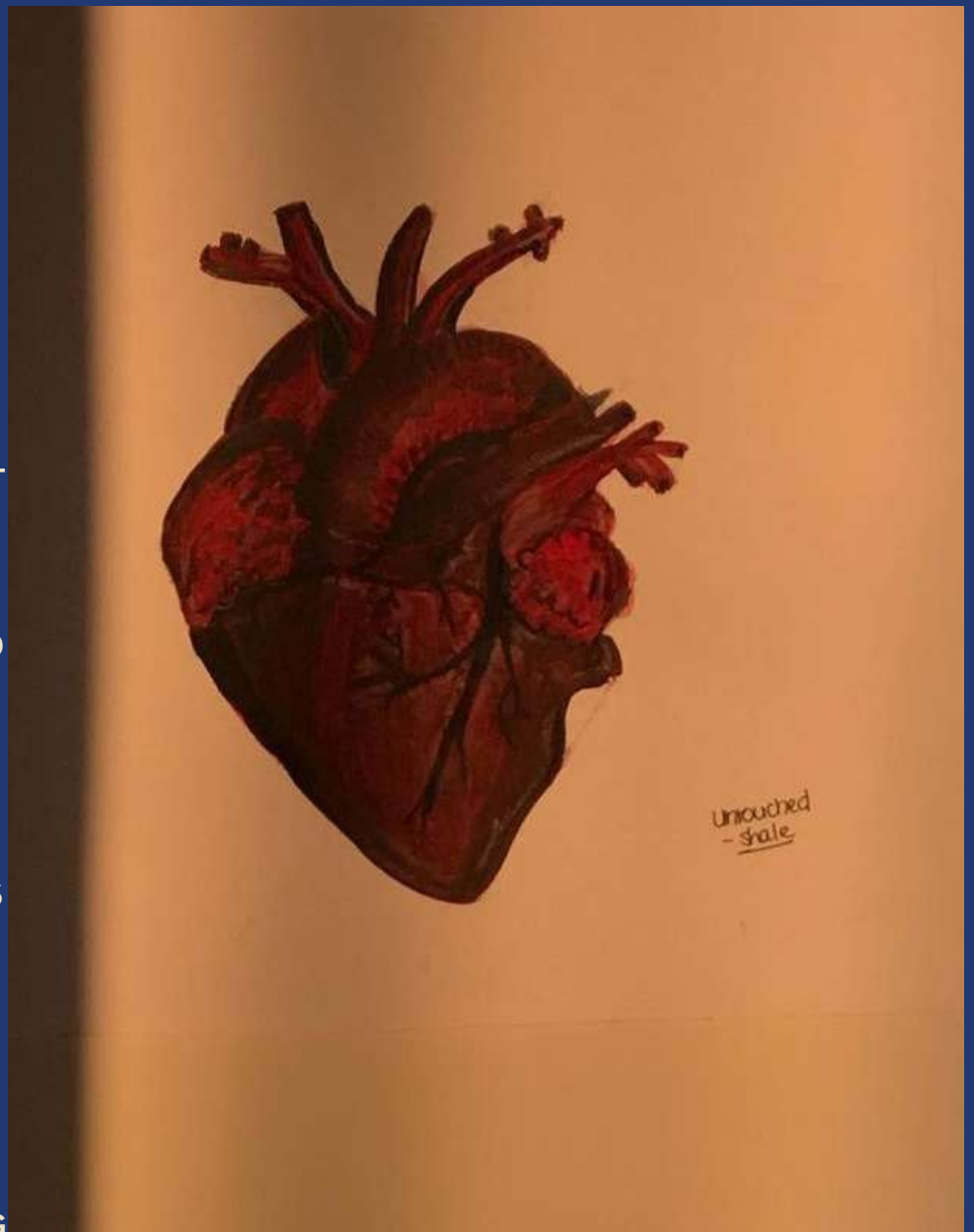


FOR ME, THIS IMAGE IS A METAPHOR ABOUT HOW ONE SHOULD CONQUER THE OBSTACLES AND CHALLENGES THEY FACE IN LIFE AND KEEP MOVING FORWARD STRONGER THAN EVER. THE RIVER HERE SYMBOLISES THE FLOW OF LIFE, AND IN GENERAL A PERSON'S EXISTENCE. THE ROCKS IN THE RIVER SYMBOLISE THE VARIOUS HURDLES OF LIFE, THAT CAN ALTER THE FLOW, AND IN A HEAVY QUANTITY, CAN MAKE THE SMOOTH FLOW OF THE RIVER VERY DIFFICULT. THE DOG IS PERSONIFIED AS A PERSON. JUST LIKE THE DOG IS STANDING ABOVE THE ROCK, AN OBSTACLE, WITH ITS HEAD HELD HIGH, WE SHOULD ALSO AIM FOR THE SAME. WE SHOULD TRY TO STAY STEADY IN THE FACE OF ANY ISSUES, AND OVERPOWER THE PROBLEM, RATHER THAN LETTING THE PROBLEM OVERPOWER US. THE FLOW OF THE WATER AT THE END AFTER THE ROCKS END IN THIS IMAGE IS WITH A LOT OF FORCE AND STRENGTH. SIMILARLY, ONCE WE HAVE PASSED THE TOUGH PHASE OF LIFE, WE SHOULD HAVE GROWN AND BECOME BETTER VERSIONS OF OURSELVES, THAT ARE MORE THAN READY TO TAKE OVER THE WORLD.

WRITER,
Mitanshi Mehta

PHOTOGRAPHY BY,
Mitanshi Mehta

IN MY PAINTING ENTITLED "UNTOUCHED," I SOUGHT TO CAPTURE THE PROFOUND ESSENCE OF AN UNTOUCHED HEART, SYMBOLIZING PURITY, RESILIENCE, AND THE UNTOUCHED POTENTIAL WITHIN US ALL. USING A RICH PALETTE OF DEEP CRIMSON AND VELVETY BLACK, I JUXTAPOSED THE DELICATE VULNERABILITY OF THE HEART WITH THE SURROUNDING DARKNESS, CREATING A VISUAL METAPHOR FOR LIFE'S INEVITABLE CHALLENGES AND THE STRENGTH WE FIND IN PRESERVING OUR CORE AUTHENTICITY. THE HEART, RENDERED IN METICULOUS DETAIL, REMAINS PRISTINE AND UNSCARRED, SERVING AS A REMINDER THAT EVEN IN THE FACE OF ADVERSITY, OUR INNERMOST SELVES CAN REMAIN UNTARNISHED. "UNTOUCHED" STANDS AS A TESTAMENT TO THE BEAUTY THAT LIES WITHIN OUR UNYIELDING HEARTS, WAITING TO BE REVEALED IN ALL ITS GLORY.



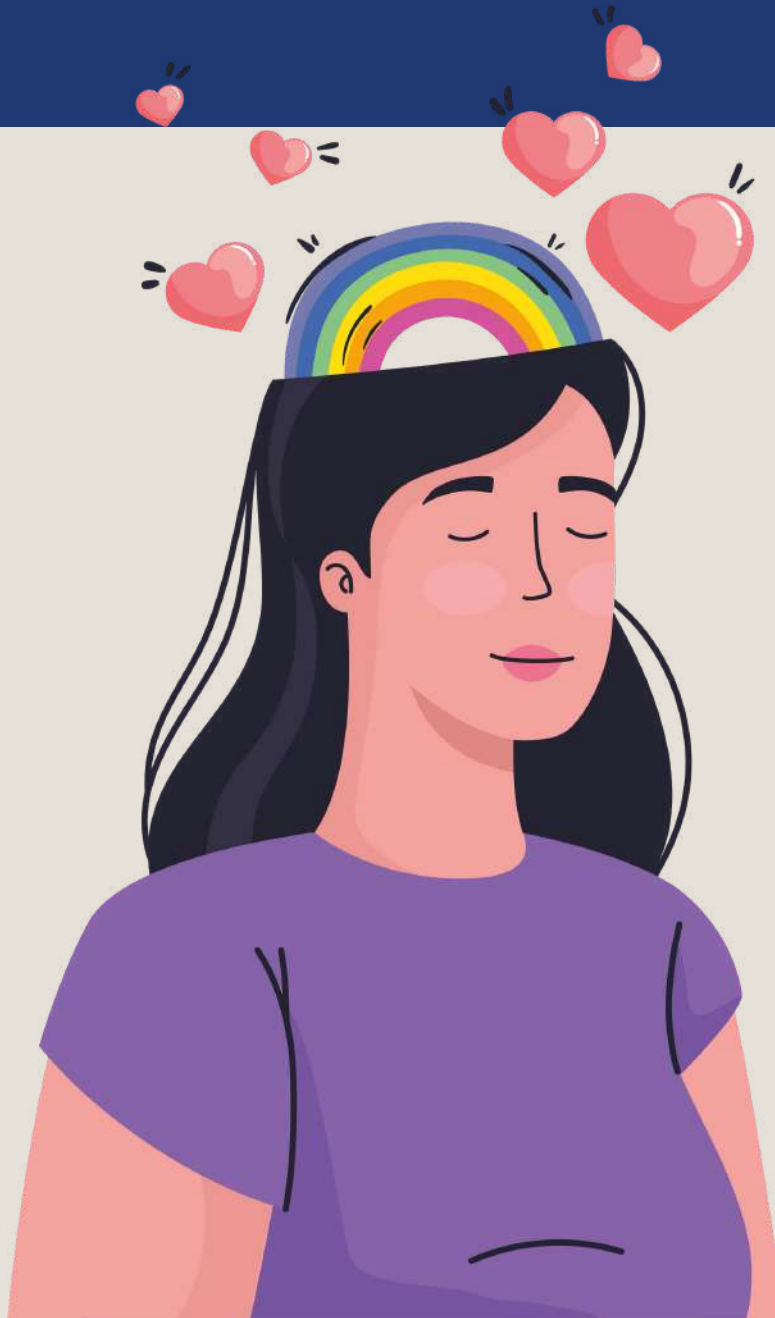
WRITER,

Shale Rodrigues

ART WORK BY,

Shale Rodrigues

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS



MENTAL HEALTH. STRUGGLES ARE NOT CLEAR TO SEE.BE KIND . ALWAYS.

-ABBY ROSE

ARTICLES, BLOGS & STORIES

GOALS GONE WILD: THE TRUTH BEHIND HUSTLE CULTURE

By Archita Narsaria

In a world driven by ambition and the relentless pursuit of success, a new phenomenon has taken center stage—Hustle Culture. It's a term that has become increasingly prevalent in recent years, symbolizing the glorification of overwork and the relentless push towards capitalist goals of wealth and success. But as we delve deeper into this culture, it becomes evident that there's a hidden cost to this relentless pursuit, a cost that encompasses our mental and physical well-being. In this article, we unravel the truth behind Hustle Culture and explore the psychological and physiological effects it can have on individuals.

What is Hustle Culture?

Hustle culture, as the name suggests, is all about hustling, grinding, and pushing yourself beyond your limits to achieve success. It's a culture that prioritizes productivity, jobs, and paychecks over mental health, healthy relationships, and happiness. It's the constant race to accomplish more, do more, and be more, often at the expense of our well-being.

In this current age, the glorification of hustle culture has reached unprecedented levels. People are working longer hours, sacrificing sleep, and neglecting their personal lives, all in the name of success. But what are the consequences of this relentless pursuit?

Psychological Effects

Long working hours have been associated with a multitude of psychological effects. The toll on mental health is undeniable, with depressive symptoms, worsened emotional well-being, anxiety, and even suicidal thoughts becoming more prevalent among those immersed in hustle culture. The relentless pursuit of success can take a heavy toll on one's mind, ultimately leading to a reduced quality of life.

Physiological Effects

Hustle culture doesn't just impact our mental well-being; it also wreaks havoc on our bodies. The physiological effects are alarming, including an increased risk of cardiovascular diseases, higher blood pressure, elevated heart rates, insulin resistance, and even a slower metabolism. Our bodies are not built to sustain constant stress and overwork, and these consequences are stark reminders of the price we pay for embracing hustle culture.

The Hard-Hitting Facts About Toxic Productivity

At the heart of hustle culture lies a dangerous concept—toxic productivity. It's the belief that we must always be "doing" something to be successful, leading to an unrelenting drive that leaves us feeling like failures if we're not constantly pushing ourselves. We judge ourselves daily for what we haven't done rather than appreciating everything we've accomplished.

Recognizing the signs of toxic productivity is crucial:

- Constant fatigue and exhaustion, even first thing in the morning.
- Replacing all free time with work-related activities or learning new skills.
- Prioritizing quantity over quality in your work.

How to Combat This

The path to escaping the clutches of hustle culture lies in setting boundaries and embracing self-care. Here's how to combat it:

- Establish Clear Boundaries: Separate your work life from your personal life and, most importantly, stick to those boundaries. It's essential to maintain a healthy work-life balance.
- Listen to Your Body: Pay attention to what your body needs. Rest when you're tired, take breaks when necessary, and don't neglect your physical and mental health.
- Schedule Relaxation: Set specific times during your day for relaxing activities. Whether it's a soothing bath, a leisurely walk, watching a movie, meditating, or simply enjoying some music, prioritize these moments for yourself.

Embrace a New Perspective

In the quest for success, we must destroy the idea that we have to constantly be working or grinding. Instead, we should embrace the concept that rest, recovery, and reflection are essential components of progress toward a successful and ultimately happy life. Success shouldn't be measured solely by material gains but by our overall well-being and fulfillment.

In conclusion, while the allure of hustle culture may seem tempting, it's vital to recognize the detrimental impact it can have on our lives. We should redefine success, placing our mental and physical health, happiness, and relationships at the forefront. The truth is, that the path to success need not be paved with exhaustion and stress. It's time to break free from the shackles of hustle culture and embrace a more balanced and fulfilling way of living.



LIFE WILL BE ALL LIKE “WHAAAT?”...

By Dr.Hafsa Shaikh

"When Life Gives You Lemonade, Make Lemons. Life Will Be All Like 'What?!' ".

No need to worry, you read it correctly. In fact, the saying goes like this: "When Life Gives You Lemonade, Make Lemons. Life Will Be All Like 'What?!' ". This is a philosophy coined by Phil Dunphy, a character from the TV show Modern Family, in his self-published hardbound book. In the episode "Schooling," he gives this book to his daughter Haley as she heads off to college.

At first glance, Phil's Life Philosophies or Phil's-osophies may not sound great or logical. However, upon closer inspection, they offer a different perspective that I find fascinating as a psychology student.

The book is filled with Phil's-osophies like "marry someone who looks sexy when disappointed" or "if you get pulled over for speeding, tell the policeman your spouse has diarrhea." It also includes advice such as "think inside the box" or "never be afraid to reach for the stars because even if you fall, you'll always be wearing a Parentchute™." My favorite is "when life gives you lemonade, make lemons. Life will be all like 'What?!'."

This quote stood out to me because it suggests that by simply reducing our expectations, the most incredible things can happen to us. Initially, this proverb may seem pessimistic, giving the impression that we are destined to settle for less and never truly be satisfied.

As an individual, I personally strive for excellence and have high expectations for myself. However, when considering the idea of lowering expectations, it's important to understand that it doesn't imply settling for less or embracing mediocrity. Instead, it's about finding contentment and happiness in the present moment, appreciating the small joys, and being open to unexpected possibilities.

Lowering expectations doesn't mean giving up on dreams or aspirations. Rather, it's about avoiding excessive attachment to specific outcomes and preventing disappointment when reality doesn't align perfectly with our expectations. It involves embracing the notion that life can surprise us in wonderful ways, even if they may not match our initial visions.

Let's look at Phil Dunphy's character in the "Game Changers" episode of Modern Family. He had high expectations for his birthday, he wanted an iPad as a gift with a family party and cake, but things didn't go as planned. While the comedic nature of the show allowed for a positive resolution, we should recognize that real life may not always work out that way. Phil's philosophy can be seen as a way of imparting life lessons to his daughter, highlighting the importance of finding contentment despite unexpected outcomes.

Phil's-osophy encourages his children to be open-minded, adaptable, and appreciative of what we have. It reminds them to find beauty and fulfillment in the journey itself, rather than solely focusing on the end result. However, Alex definitely missed the memo. The philosophy is there to help his children avoid unnecessary stress and disappointment by allowing them to appreciate the moments of joy and serendipity that come our way.

As someone who is nearing the completion of a master's degree in Psychology, I believe that my personal opinions hold significance in matters like Phil Dunphy's philosophy. However, I understand the importance of supporting opinions with scientific research. While scientific findings are valuable for understanding psychological concepts, it's essential to acknowledge that personal experiences and individual interpretations also influence our perspectives.

When it comes to personal comfort, contentment, and preference, opinions can vary from person to person. Scientific research provides insights and general patterns, but it may not fully capture the complexity of personal experiences and subjective interpretations. However, as a psychology student, it is in our nature to support our opinions with research.

So here goes nothing. A research study conducted by Headey and Wearing in 1989 found that individuals with lower expectations tended to report higher levels of happiness and life satisfaction. This suggests that having excessively high or unrealistic expectations can negatively impact happiness. Another research study on mindfulness, conducted by Brown and Ryan in 2003, suggests that being fully present in the moment and engaging in non-judgmental awareness can improve subjective well-being. By focusing on the present and letting go of excessive expectations, individuals may experience greater happiness and life satisfaction.

A research study by Lyubomirsky and colleagues (2005) also suggests that maintaining a positive mindset, being optimistic, and practicing gratitude can contribute to higher levels of happiness. By focusing on the positive aspects of life and cultivating an attitude of gratitude, individuals may experience greater overall satisfaction and well-being.

Now that I have allegedly proven Phil Dunphy's Phil's-osophy and my opinion with research findings, it's important to remember that individual experiences and psychological factors can influence how expectations affect one's happiness. We can all gain something from Phil's-osophy and strive to find more contentment in our present circumstances, leading to happiness in the future. But what may work for one person might not work for another. Ultimately, finding a balance between setting realistic expectations and maintaining a positive mindset can contribute to overall well-being and satisfaction with life.



STITCHING EXPERIENCES: THE INFLUENCE OF FASHION ON OUR LIVES

By Kanishka Agarwal

It's sort of comical how you think that you've made a choice that exempts you from the fashion industry when, in fact, you're wearing the sweater that was selected for you by the people in this room... from a pile of "stuff".

-Miranda Priestly in Devil Wears Prada Movie

Miranda said these pearls of insight to help her intern, Andy, understand how high fashion trickles down and influences everyday attire. However, for me, the essence of the quote is that we frequently overlook the significance of fashion, by categorising it solely as high fashion and deeming it unrelated to our daily lives. Fashion reflects our beliefs, actions, identity, desires, ambitions, social context, and much more.

Our clothing contributes to molding our self-concept, which subsequently impacts our behaviour. For instance, specific outfits have the ability to instill a sense of confidence within us. In an experiment, participants who wore a lab coat, a clothing often associated with attentiveness and precision, demonstrated enhanced performance in tasks that demanded close attention. However, once they were informed that the same coat was a painter's coat rather than a doctor's lab coat, the previously observed effects vanished. In essence, the behaviour was congruent with the symbolic meaning of the cloth (Adam & Galinsky, 2012).

We've explored how our clothes can influence our behaviour, but it's essential to remember that this is a two-way relationship. What we decide to wear often serves as a means of self-expression, reflecting our emotions, values, and moods. For instance, someone deeply committed to animal rights may opt for cruelty-free products. During times of low energy or motivation, we tend to gravitate toward attire that requires minimal effort and thought.

An excellent illustration of this dynamic is evident in the punk subculture, which emerged in response to the political and social climate of the 1970s. It was born out of a growing disillusionment with societal norms, government policies, and corporate influence, with an intense desire to rebel against these established forces. These counter-establishment values are reflected in their choice of clothing, characterized by dark attire, punk band T-shirts that often conveyed their values, a do-it-yourself (DIY) attitude that liberated them from reliance on the fashion industry, and a highly individualistic style that rejected mainstream fashion trends. The punk subculture in itself is rich with meaning and history, worthy of an in-depth essay in itself. This theme of rebellion is also seen with the rise of Barbie Core aesthetics, which reclaims femininity as a force of positivity and strength, challenging bimbo and mean girl stereotypes.

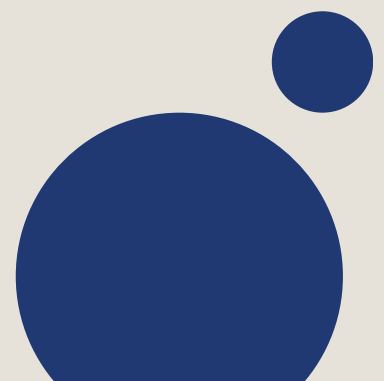
Clothes, accessories, and footwear frequently contribute to our initial impressions of individuals, shaping the assumptions we form about them. For instance, when women wear clothing deemed provocative, it tends to lead to perceptions of reduced competence. In a study, even minor alterations, such as the number of buttons left open or the presence of a camisole, had an impact on how these women were perceived in terms of their competence, power, and intelligence(Gurung et al., 2017).

We've primarily looked through an individual-level lens, so let's shift our focus to a broader, global perspective and explore how fashion trends reflect the social and political climate. Consider the example of the COVID-19 pandemic; the lockdown period ushered in a fashion era characterized by comfort and extravagance. The necessity for comfort found expression in fashion through the rise of athletic and athleisure wear, as well as loose-fitting, high-waisted clothing like parachute pants, baggy t-shirts, and cargo pants. Don't get me wrong, people have worn pajamas for centuries, it's just that they've never been so fashionable, just look at juicy couture.

Simultaneously, there was a surge in maximalism, the philosophy of "more is more." This excess was in terms of colours, layers, textures, size, loudness, etc. This manifested in the explosion of colours with neons gaining popularity, along with psychedelic patterns, cut-out tops, and chunky sneakers. In the realm of accessories, individuals began adorning themselves with chunky rings, layering multiple necklaces, and wearing bucket hats. Emerging from a period of darkness, gravitating towards vibrancy and boldness reflects our desire for heightened spirits.

With more time spent at home, people had ample opportunities to engage in do-it-yourself (DIY) fashion as both a cost-saving measure and a pastime. This trend also aligns with the increased focus on sustainability and environmental consciousness. Consequently, we witnessed a surge in crocheting, knitting, fabric painting, bleaching, thrifting and upcycling clothes(especially turning jeans into skirts).

In conclusion, we explored how clothes reflect our thoughts, beliefs, values, aspirations and sociopolitical context. We also saw its role in shaping our perceptions and behaviors. However, it's worth noting that our exploration has merely touched the surface, or should I say that we have just looked at a single garment and not the whole wardrobe.



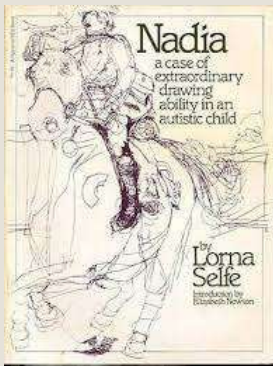
A TALE AS OLD AS TIME: ART AND AUTISM

By Akshata Devkar



When I came across an Instagram reel of an autistic child with exceptional spatial-visual perception being exceptionally good at gymnastics I thought to myself how little we are exposed to such positive portrayals of autism spectrum disorder. But I never expected it to take me down a rabbit hole. Then; there I was reading about how there might be a link between the evolution of language, palaeolithic art and autism sitting in my bed with my coffee (by then gone cold) at 3 in the morning. But before we get into whatever word vomit I am going to write about this; let's first better our understanding of what ASD is and how it works. ASD or autism spectrum disorder is a developmental disability that is characterised by core deficits in three domains, i.e., social interaction, communication, and repetitive or stereotypic behaviour. They may learn, interact, communicate and behave in different ways. And since it's a spectrum, the signs and symptoms lie on a scale of severity and consequently, their learning, thinking, and problem-solving abilities range from gifted to severely challenged.

Now the obvious question that would arise in your mind is, "How could a disorder characterised by a communication deficit be related to the evolution of language?" To answer this question, we first need to understand our past so, let's go look at some caves! Caves tell us a lot about our past and our ancestors. They're like snapshots of our history and evolution. The thing we assume about evolution is that it follows a particular path. That for us to go from A to Z we need to go through the rest of the alphabet. So naturally researchers were left baffled when they found exquisitely detailed and scarily accurate accounts of animal life and behaviour in the European Upper Palaeolithic Caves. Initially, they thought that these paintings must have had predecessors in the form of scribbles and doodles, so as to allow humans to evolve such a rich form of visual art. However, no such predecessors of these skills have been found.



In her book *“Nadia: A Case of Exceptional Drawing Abilities in an Autistic Child”* Lorna Selfe observes and notes a sudden development of exceptional skills in an autistic child comparable to that of our ancestors. This is not an isolated occurrence and is called savant syndrome (unusual skills in memory, art, music calculations etc. in the presence of disability in other areas.)

So what about language then?

A paper by Karen Howarth compiles evidence to support the argument that language arose from a “behaviour-to-biology” mechanism. Here, she says that first humans learnt how to use symbols to communicate and then some individuals started developing language. The widespread use of language only began after people realised its efficacy in communication and problem-solving. This evolution of behaviour is what eventually led to the evolution of a different brain structure that primarily relied upon language for expression and communication. Essentially, even though we cannot define the Upper Palaeolithic humans to have been autistic, since our normal is vastly different from what their normal was, we can definitively say that a brain similar to that of autistic individuals today led to the evolution of unbelievable art and thus to the evolution of language. As we discussed, an autistic child’s brain develops differently than the normal one. They have larger brains more anatomically comparable to those of our ancestors, with significantly larger visual systems that compromise areas associated with language, speech and communication in the brain. This causes important differences in cognition and social abilities. These larger visual systems allow them to take in huge amounts of raw information from the environment, hence, they literally see differently; much like how our ancestors did. Since our ancestors were not privy to “Apple” they had to rely on their life experiences with the subjects of their drawings and recall these while making the art. Thus, their visual perception and information systems as well as their memories must have been exceptionally sharp. Their art was compensating for the lack of language and speech. In the context of today’s autistic children, this “advantage” however, can quickly get overwhelming to deal with. This is where therapy comes in, and more specifically art therapy. Art allows something that is rarely found otherwise. There is a structure with a goal in mind, however, there is flexibility that comes with individual perception and understanding. This allows autistic children to focus their thoughts so as to not get overwhelmed and simultaneously have the required freedom to express themselves. Art becomes to these autistic children what it was for our ancestors; a way to express themselves.

Today, the world is designed to suit the needs of those who are “normal”. We often fail to consider the needs of those who lie outside of these bounds. As much of a struggle as autism can be, individuals with autism can be integrated into society such that their “weaknesses” can be refined into their strengths. But, for this to happen, we first need to better our understanding of these needs and them. As a society, let’s work towards a future with marvellous art and bright opportunities for everyone.

THE SUICIDE CONTAGION

By Ishita M. Patel



Courtesy of Nationwide Children's Hospital

"If I die, everyone in the world will read about it in the newspapers and see it on TV. Mom and Dad will stop fighting then." A counsellor's worst fears were coming true.

From the red carpet to enormous hoardings lining the streets, celebrity worship is everywhere. Even the most casual moviegoers might find themselves flipping through a slideshow of what Priyanka Chopra eats in a day. We imitate celebrities in everything they do, wear, and eat: so why not how they end their lives?

After a number of celebrity deaths, the likes of Robin Williams, Avicii, Pratyusha Banerjee, and Sushant Singh Rajput, Psychologists have grown wary of what effect these deaths have on regular people. It's believed that a constant flow of social media posts, television stories, and newspaper articles on suicide can act as a trigger for vulnerable patients with mental health issues.

According to Hovvi Bhagwagar, a Mumbai-based clinical psychologist, to the Economic Times, "It can be the tipping point, which gives them "permission" to act on what they had so far just been thinking about."

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, there was an approximate 10% increase in suicides among middle-aged men (1841 more than expected) in 2014, a year after Robin Williams passed away. According to Nelson Moses, founder of the Suicide Prevention India Foundation, this wasn't a new phenomenon as there was a 12% increase in suicide deaths after the overdose of Marilyn Monroe in 1962.

Widespread media coverage of a suicide is capable of triggering copycat suicides in the general public. The Sorrows of Young Man Werther, a novel in which the protagonist commits suicide as a result of a failed love affair, was prohibited in many European cities in 1774. It was blamed for imitative suicides in Italy, Leipzig, etc., among other places. Aptly named, the Werther Effect states that the most publicized suicides lead to an increase in suicides. Therefore, the onus is on the media to report such incidents responsibly.

Arey! " Sushant, apni hi film dekh lete! " (Sushant, you should've just watched your own movie!) This is how News24 reported the death of actor Sushant Singh Rajput, 34, who committed suicide in 2020. Following the actor's death, multiple tragic examples of admirers committing suicide due to excruciating grief and pain were reported. Days after learning of Sushant's death, a young teen from Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh, committed suicide. According to multiple sources, this tenth-grade student allegedly stated in a suicide letter, "If he can do it, why can't I?"

When it comes to celebrity suicides, the World Health Organization's standards for reporting on suicides advise the media to use additional caution when reporting on such cases. Avoiding conjecture and extensive descriptions, detailed information on the technique used, sensationalising language on suicide, and utilising photographs with caution are among the suggestions.

Rajput's Instagram posts were scrutinized for "insights" into his mental state. His Twitter account's banner image was analysed, and anchors speculated about his mood and whether he was having financial issues. "Phir kyun haargaye zindagi ki jung?" a Zee Hindustan anchor asked. (Why did you lose the battle of your life?)

DNA's story contained the details of the method used in the story's strapline, which was written about Rajput's last Instagram post mourning his late mother. "Sushant's body was found hanging from a fan,"

Zee Hindustan reported in English, and "In his Bandra home, he committed suicide by hanging himself." Times Now reported, strangely and inaccurately, that "Covid + Depression claimed life." On a basic level, most news organisations disregarded guidelines prohibiting reporting on the method used as it leads to copycat suicides.

Several key strategies should actively mitigate the population's impact of celebrity suicides. First, focus on implementing public awareness campaigns that educate the populace about detrimental consequences associated with sensationalized coverage and provide preventive information. Secondly, direct postvention efforts towards both close contacts of deceased celebrities as well vulnerable groups - particularly adolescents - via school-based programs. International reporting norms dictate that media outlets adhere to them: they must avoid explicit photographs and downplay suicide reports' prominence. The media, lastly, should refrain from overemphasizing the deceased's positive aspects ("she was a strong, independent woman"); such actions can inadvertently spur imitative suicidal behavior--particularly amongst individuals of identical gender. Collectively aiming to foster responsible reporting and mitigate contagion risk are these measures.

Sushant Singh Rajput's fans continue to hold vigils for him three years later, underscoring the profound impact of celebrity suicides on society. The tragic loss of a public figure must starkly emphasize our need for mental health awareness and support. Rather than sensationalizing such deaths, we ought to concentrate on fostering transparent dialogues about mental well-being; making resources easily available; and guaranteeing necessary aid reaches those grappling with difficulties. Together, we bear the collective responsibility to strive for a society in which fewer lives are lost to suicide.



MENTAL ILLNESS – NOT TABOO

By Dev Ranade

TW: mentions of panic attacks, depression, and heart diseases

The subject of mental illness has long been a stigmatized topic, slapped with the label of taboo and whispered in hushed tones like it's a brewing scandal. It's seen as something to be ashamed of, something to hide because it's a sign of weakness. No one ever feels chest pain and thinks, 'Oh no, I can't tell anyone I might be having a heart attack. What if they think I'm weak?' When we're making plans, we don't think twice before saying we have a doctor's appointment, 'Yeah, I've been having back pain for the last week, just getting it checked out. Gotta stay healthy, right?' But if that doctor is a psychologist, who would even dream of saying, 'Yeah, my panic attacks have been getting worse, I need to talk to someone about it.'? No, that's better kept under wraps. No one needs to know about your issues. Everyone and their mother knows about your heart problems, but not even your mother knows you're on anti-depressants. Isn't the brain a part of the body? Isn't it as much an organ as your liver? Why are its problems not real, then? Why are they 'made up' and 'asking for attention'?

Let's talk about 'asking for attention' for a minute. What's wrong with it? Why are people labeled 'attention-seekers', or 'drama queens' like it's the worst thing they could possibly be? We live in a society. It is the strongest of human instincts to call out for help when we need it. It is the strongest of human instincts to seek connection. Often, when people are exhibiting attention-seeking behaviors, they are asking for attention.

And it's sad that as a society we've established that that's a 'bad thing', because when people ask for attention, they're usually asking for help. But because there's such a widespread belief that giving attention to those who ask for it (read: helping those who need help), will, in fact, enable them (to do what, I'm not entirely sure), we refuse to look in their direction all together, leaving them to fend for themselves. Which does the opposite of help, might I add?

Another problem society as a whole faces when it comes to mental illness – and one that is, fortunately, being combatted day by day – is awareness. It's just easier to box people into labels than actually help them, isn't it? Depression is lazy, and everything else is crazy. Dust your hands off, it's no longer your problem.

And what this results in is people not being able to identify what's actually happening to them. Everyone knows when they have a cold or a fever, don't they? Sometimes, we even know we're going to get a cold before we get it. We're so aware of our physical symptoms, why aren't we taught about our brains?

The good news is, that the fight against ignorance is going strong, and people are being made aware not only of mental illnesses but also that it's okay to ask for help. It is so important to know that asking for help does not make you weak, and talking about it is not a bad thing. Humans crave connection for a reason, and it's not gossip. It's survival.

ROMANTICIZING TOXIC MEN

By Hrishika Jain

'Men will be men' – this is how most of us turn down the negative behaviour portrayed by some men around us or even while watching or reading something. A toxic man refers to a man who is dominating, inconsiderate of other's emotions, and believes in gaslighting people. Today's generation has a completely different idea about everything; including love, life, family, work, and even men. Abuse is mistaken as passion, interfering is mistaken as caring, and manipulation is mistaken as considerate. The main reason for this alternate thought process is the media. Teen T.V. has this perfect idea of showing a girl falling in love with an attractive 'bad boy' who gives her a hard time because he is in love with her. Another source that makes toxic men attractive is books. Recently, the American author Colleen Hoover has become very famous. She has been dominating 'Bookstagram' (the book community of Instagram). Currently, three of the top five titles of the New York Times combined print and e-book fiction list are Hoover's (Chakrabarti,2022). Usually, all the male leads in her books are emotionally toxic for the female character. Another author Stephenie Meyer who wrote the 'Twilight Saga'- a vampire stalking and falling in love with a 17-year-old girl, has also wrongly portrayed the concept of 'ideal men'.

Romanticising negative behaviour of men began at a very small age. If a boy has been teasing a girl or being rude to her, the girl's parents are more likely to say, "He is doing this because he wants your attention and he likes you." This sets a wrong picture that girls should be okay if a boy misbehaves with them. It is due to instances like these that young women mistake possessiveness and aggression as a sign of love. For example, there are so many posts and tweets about Kabir Singh being an 'amazing' boyfriend as compared to Kabir Singh being an 'abusive' boyfriend. Another prominent example of toxic behaviour is from a well-known series 'The Vampire Diaries' where the male protagonist Damon Salvatore- a vampire, kills people and proclaims that he is doing this for the love of his life. Despite these negative behaviours, both of these characters are highly appreciated on social media platforms. Some pages also justify their behaviours and blame the female protagonist. Some young girls think that my boyfriend should be a 'bad boy who is only good to me.' This thought shows how the media is successfully ruining the teenagers' idea of an appropriate man. Some so many women wish to fall in love with a villain. Pairing up an innocent girl with a bad boy has become very common in the television industry and media. They also portray the idea of 'fixing a bad boy.' This is also one of the reasons why girls tend to get attracted to toxic men. They believe that they can heal these men and have a 'perfect' love story. They do not realise though, that those bad boys were fixed in a fictional movie by a script.

Our brain releases dopamine in response to happy and positive moments like beautiful dates, flattery, and meaningful conversations. However, dopamine flows more when there is intermittent reinforcement. Toxic men or emotionally unavailable men are the masters of intermittent reinforcement, they behave according to their will. They may act very sweet and charming one day while they would end up giving silent treatment the next day. This constant hot and cold behaviour causes frustration- and attraction among the individuals. An individual who doesn't know when he/she receives positive behaviour from the opposite person becomes more alluring for them. This unpredictability makes people crave more and the moment they do get it, the brain releases more sweeter dopamine. Unfortunately, the higher the emotional unavailability of a partner, the more exciting he appears to us – at least, to the reward centre of our brains (Arabi, 2022).

Another factor that the media and books manage to sideline is domestic violence. For example, in Colleen Hoover's best-selling book, 'It Ends With Us'- Ryle pushes Lily down the staircase and later shows that his behaviour stemmed from a traumatic incident from his childhood. This makes Lily forgive him because according to her love must come with forgiveness, even if it is to forgive physical abuse. Even though, after another such instance Lily does end up leaving Ryle; it is not possible for a lot of women to do so. This is where the trauma bond comes into the picture. It is a psychological response to abuse. The victim forms an unhealthy bond with the abuser and mistakes it for safety or love. They start feeling sympathy and affection for their abuser. They turn to their abuser for survival and are completely dependent on them.

It is necessary to realise the difference between fictional and real life. These books and teen series are meant for entertainment purposes. However, it is not possible for young minds to not be influenced by something they watch or read daily. Media and books have the power to teach young minds about what is inappropriate and appropriate. Toxic men do increase the drama and capture attention but it also distracts the people from reality. These sources should instead be diverted to educate young minds about how a healthy relationship looks like or what real love feels like. For example- In the famous series 'Friends', Ross and Rachel's relationship is an example of a problematic and unhealthy relationship filled with a lack of communication and jealousy. Chandler and Monica's relationship is an example of a healthy and happy relationship. Relationships are not always about the happy moments, fights are normal. However, there is a need to draw a line between healthy fights and emotional exploitation. Maybe the unhappy and toxic relationships portrayed in the movie give the audience an adrenaline rush but in reality it only gives trauma.

EXTREME FAN BEHAVIOR

By Yami Verma

"OMG she should just stop making music" " ARMYs are so trash, such cringe children."
"Taylor's music cures my depression, it's therapy for me"

Comments like these are filled under every Instagram post or YouTube video or even under tweets. Art can be anything, It involves various forms of creativity like painting, music, literature, dance, architecture, or even nature. We'll be focusing specifically on music and people have such extreme emotions towards the artists and their art.

This extreme "fan behavior" is largely seen in adolescents and younger adults, and more so in this growing age of social media.

According to Erik Erikson's theory, we know that adolescence is the stage of 'identity vs role confusion'. Adolescents try to figure out who they are and who they want to be in the future. If they do not have a good role model in their lives, they tend to get attached to the artist and start looking at them as their role model, for their values and beliefs. And over time this grows into something very deep and they soon start defending and supporting everything done by their favorite artist or role model.

But why do fans hate on other artists? This can be attributed to the social categorization of in-group and out-group. Belonging to one fandom leads to support and favor everything in my fandom whereas anything another artist does or their fandom does is wrong. This tendency to favor one's own group over others is called in-group bias. Musical taste is thought to function as a social 'badge' of group membership, contributing to an individual's sense of social identity.

This suggests that those who share our musical taste are likely to be considered in-group members, and should be subject to in-group favoritism. This is one of the biggest causes of “fan wars”.

The growth and increased usage of media have only doubled this series of interactions and “fan wars”. People get to hide behind a screen, be anonymous, and support their favorite artists while spreading hate toward others. Some people just do it for fun. Making negative comments on social media can give people a sense of power and control. They may feel like they are exerting their influence over others and getting a reaction.

Loving art and its artists is nothing new but only in the past few years have we seen this immense growth of the display of this obsessive or hating fan behavior. Have these feelings just recently evolved in us humans or have these behaviors and feelings of in-groupism always been there and the media just provided us with a medium to express them freely?-

CULTURE- DIVIDING SOME WHILE UNITING SOME

By Nuvera Shaikh

Cultures, India has been known for its rich cultural diversity for ages- this is what I had always read about in history textbooks. But only after growing up did I learn about these cultures, India’s quintessence. On this one land, every corner, every street has its own way of going about with things. In India, culture diversifies boundlessly. One might think of each state to differ culturally, only to end up learning about ten different cultures within each state.

Growing up, I was always encouraged to learn more about the ways in which different traditions work- be it my own, or others’. As a child, I was first taught of my own cultural beliefs. “One should always wear new clothes on Eid, doesn't matter whether it's branded or cheap, but it must be new” my mom used to say while I argued to reuse my most glittering wedding outfits. Waking up to sheer-khurma, dressing up, and meeting all our relatives, was our way of celebrating Eid. As I grew older, the doors to other cultures started opening up. Every year during Navratri, my parents would take me out to watch people playing garba, a form of dance originating from Gujarat. During Diwali, we would go on long drives passing through lanes beautified with lights. During Christmas, we would again pass by churches decorated with lights, while they played Christmas carols inside. Be it any festival, my parents always made it a point to explain “This is how they celebrate it”, “This is what they eat”. As I grew even older, I was surrounded by people belonging to different states, each having their own way of living their life. To some, one God is more important than the other; to some, spirituality comes over religion, to some, there’s no power out there and everything they do is in their own hands. To some, one form of dance makes them unique; to some, their mother tongue is what they live by. Many individuals in one room- each having their own beliefs, their own dressing styles, their own food preferences.

Every culture has its own art form, its own architecture, its own language, its own way of clothing, also its own way of planning a wedding. One can learn so much from just one person belonging to a different culture from your own, it could be as simple as how they say “hello” or even how they eat. It is beautiful how culture brings people together, but also sets them apart from each other.

As a child, I was never quite impressed with the cultural differences as it made me wonder whether that is what divided humans. Today, I can't put into words how the different cultures in our country amaze me. It is simply beautiful how humans give their all in trying to follow certain beliefs. Culture also gives people a sense of belongingness, we know we always have something to fall back to. One could be in a world that is completely new to them, but when things go south, they know they can go back to their people, their place, or even their religion. It could be them simply having a conversation with their parents or friends, going back to a place called home, or praying to a power they believe in. Or maybe even eating their staple food, food that their mother has been cooking for years. For some, it could also mean going to their neighbors for help. A society where everyone brings something to the group, where everyone comes together as one. A society where we know there is something to hold on to for as long as we want to.

In a country filled with people belonging to different cultures, there is always something new to learn. Not to forget, these varied cultures and people make just one country, one land.



LEARNED LONELINESS: A CHAIN REACTION OF THE FRIENDSHIP RECESSION

By Raybbha Kapur

Survival and growth have always been the crux of this global community, from the French Revolution to the deadliest war between the Confederates and the Union, spawned by sectional differences and racial caste systems somehow managed to coalesce people not just during the combat but also during the healing. Scholars have accredited the process of recuperation as a common experience, the feeling of inclusion and belongingness that people feel as they work toward recovery and in regression to their former social lives. This is where COVID-19 begged to differ, the virtual lifestyle somewhere detached us from our social circles and conditioned us into this public-health crisis known as ‘Learned Loneliness’. The lockdown caused many people to reevaluate their connections, according to Dr. Robin Dunbar, who reviewed this study and underscored one of the major issues that friendships require which is a consistent time commitment, so if you can't see your friends as frequently as is necessary, the bond will inevitably fade. Several observations also conjectured that while internet interactions keep families close, they don't seem to keep friends together. For whatever reason, most friendships require in-person interaction to be strong.



COVID-19, in its social aspects, was the ultimate guide for socially anxious people to re-enter society but as much as it reared ease by avoiding face-to-face interactions, it somewhere set out a tone for this now normalised way of living which devised a work-from-home culture and made it punishing for people to return to their pre-pandemic activities.

To put it lucidly, a 'Friendship Recession' is described as an increase in the average amount of time spent alone, the number of friends one has, and the total amount of time spent on friendship. A survey by the Kaiser Family Foundation indicated that 59% of participants reported they had not yet completely resumed their pre-pandemic activities. But why is this so steep? A combination of increased use of technology, a decline in social activities, and the effects of COVID-19 are all somewhat to blame, according to economist Bryce Ward. "More of us are going shopping alone, working out alone, etc. Participation in rotary clubs, bowling leagues, and other hobbies had all plummeted. Less time is now spent with neighbours", says Ward.



Shedding light on the positive side of the lockdown, we can notice a realignment of priorities that made human interaction a bush league and also blurred the lines between solitude and loneliness which remained intact even when the barriers were lifted. What makes this whole experience true to its nature is the enduring mark it left on our psyche which revamped our whole perception of socialising and having strong circles. When studying support systems, proximity is one of the guiding tenets in forming interpersonal bonds which was the very paradox of the pandemic, social distancing rendered this sense of alertness along with skepticism about people who may appear infectious.

This suspicion, if projected in a broader light, forms the bed for social anxiety that has heightened ever since; according to the New York Times, "Insecurities, a dread of public places, and a reluctance to get out with friends are some of the symptoms some young people are struggling with once more. Experts claimed that as a result, the generation's social skills have deteriorated negatively, highlighting the pandemic's potential for long-lasting repercussions on the mental health of a generation." This supposition suddenly appeared in every daily newsletter and offered scientific backing after Dr. Leela Magavi, a psychiatrist at Newport Beach stated, "Many young individuals, generally those between the ages of 13 and 25, have trouble controlling their anxiety because their frontal lobes of the brain are not completely formed." As the wind of ambiguity, apocalypse, and mysterious deaths took place, it developed a COVID survivor's guilt and has stayed with people ever since, seeing how unvisited certain facets of mental health became during this time, more significance was given to the psycho-neurological arenas with the establishment of the Global Consortium to Study neurological dysfunction in COVID-19. Since most young adults resided with their families during the pandemic, the quarantine reported pressure to be independent which gradually exacerbated isolation, stripping them of their primary support systems in order to make a name for themselves in metropolitan cities.





Apart from the ongoing great resignation, the world also saw a great wedding boom. Eighty-two percent of 4,000 engaged couples surveyed by October Brides said that going through the pandemic had increased their desire to get married so they could face this and other storms together. The epidemic, according to 55% of respondents, impacted their expectations for marriage and made their relationship their first priority. According to Rebecca Haney, a certified professional clinical counselor in Cincinnati mentioned, “It's not shocking. You feel out of control when you're scared, anxious, or overwhelmed; your body and mind are going through feelings that you're not sure how to handle. Individuals then prefer to seek out different methods to feel in control as a result, which is why some individuals make significant adjustments or decisions when they are afraid.” A rush in matrimonies was anticipated, noticing the rise in uncertainty about the future, hence, there was a great yearning for stability and security which a legalised relationship can cater to.

More so, the sights of the loneliness epidemic were observed far more in men as 15% of young males reported having no close friends. That percentage in the 1990s was only 3%. As a result, the percentage of males who have no close friends has increased by a factor of five. When faced with a difficult situation, 45% of young males stated they would turn to a close buddy, according to a 1990 survey. However, it is presently just approximately 22%. In fact, more men—about 36% of them—say they would visit their parents. Since the pandemic was a pure assessment of our friendships, the gender gap is suggestive of male friendships requiring more frequent physical interaction than those with females, which may be why they bear the brunt of COVID-19's effects on those relationship networks.

In closing, the sweet irony of ‘we are lonely, together’ makes an explicit mark on the current needs of society, which Weissbourd and his team contend by emphasizing building a strong social infrastructure that is necessary to eradicate loneliness. They propose that schools may serve as crucial places of intervention where instructors can be educated to link parents with one another and to make sure that each youngster is connected to a school adult, while employers should inquire about employees' feelings of loneliness and offer them resources to support connection. Doctors should also appraise one's state of mind during annual physicals, helping patients who are struggling to connect with social support. These steps illustrate an image that equally offers a solution for the now-expanding communication deficit amidst generation Z. By understanding the impermanence of the pandemic and labeling the breakage of social thresholds as mere friendship chops, we can renew the lost art of making friends in a much healthier and anchored way.



THE INDIAN WAY OF THINKING

By Nidhi Panchal

An intriguing as well as one of the oldest inquiries for the development of psychology roots from philosophy in the Indian context. The great philosophical traditions of India, such as Vedanta, Samkhya, Yoga, and Buddhism, have had a profound influence on the development of psychological theories and processes. Indian philosophy and psychology encompass all aspects of life, including the personal, social, collective, religious, and transcendental. They seek a complete understanding of everything that one is and shall be. The objective of this article is to offer a distinctive perspective on how psychology has evolved through the theories put out by Indian scholars in the early centuries. There is a vast array of older Indian thought systems that aim to describe and explicate human experience and behaviour that is largely unknown to Western academic psychologists.

The following presented are some comparisons of the discovered principles of Western psychological concepts presented early in some form of text by Indian scholars. There is evidence that psychosomatic interactions were well-known in ancient India, as well as several academic studies that support this claim. Ashtangahridaya's opening line describes how emotions like desire cause both mental and physical illnesses. In ancient Indian scriptures, the concept of Nirvana, or self-realization, is highlighted. Abraham Maslow introduced his self-actualization and transcendental self-actualization theories in the 1960s. The most widely recognized Upanishad is the Bhagavad Gita. It outlines the four yogas—Karma, Bhakti, Raja, and Gyana—and provides a concise summary of Indian philosophy and way of life. Furthermore, the idea of Nishakama Karma described in the Gita is extremely identical to Maslow's theory of Meta-motivation. Shankar, an ancient Indian philosopher who lived in the eighth century AD, contributed to the development of the Advaita school of thought by writing on the various forms of yoga. His works are regarded as classics and are very influential on the psychology of consciousness and the pursuit of personal development.

The connection between philosophy and psychology is a rich and complex one. Philosophy can help us to understand the theoretical foundations of psychology, while psychology can provide empirical evidence to support philosophical theories.

Here are some interesting examples of how philosophy and psychology have influenced each other in the Indian context:

- The ancient Indian philosopher Patanjali developed the Yoga Sutras, which is a foundational text of Yoga psychology. The Yoga Sutras describe the eight limbs of yoga, which are a path to spiritual liberation.
- The Buddhist philosopher Vasubandhu developed the Abhidharma, which is a comprehensive system of Buddhist psychology. The Abhidharma describes the nature of the mind and its various states.

- Indian philosopher Swami Vivekananda introduced the concept of Raja Yoga to the West. Raja Yoga is a form of yoga that focuses on meditation and the development of mental concentration.

The connection between philosophy and psychology is not just a historical one. It is still relevant today. For example, many modern psychologists are using mindfulness meditation, which is a core practice of Yoga psychology, to treat a variety of mental health problems.

There is no doubt that the Western development of psychology is based on empirical research and a strong scientific foundation, but a few issues where Indian psychology goes unrecognized are presented further. Since it was written long ago and is presented in a religious or philosophical context, modern psychologists are not familiar with the terminology and arguments utilised. The original scriptures were written in ancient languages like Sanskrit and Pali, and translations are frequently unclear, which means that several academics may translate (and interpret) the same sentences in different ways. This presents another issue. If the Indian systems are viewed purely as religions that dictate what and what not to believe, then such an endeavor makes little sense. However, if the psychological material of these systems is viewed as empirically founded theories, there is nothing in principle that prevents such a comparison from being made. Indian and Western psychological notions have collided. One is open to following any of the directions based on one's knowledge and insight.

THINKING ABOUT YOU

By Heer Maru

Given today's world full of negative occurrences and pressure, it would be wrong not to emphasize the importance of passing on positivity and guidance. Mental health is an integral part of life, which if taken care of results in a happy existence and greater sense of wellness.

Light is found in positivity in the darkness. It might originate from the tiniest matters. It could simply be an expression of appreciation, such as words of affirmations, encouragements in the morning, smile from a stranger, giving up one's seat in the bus, etc. This attribute lifts up the spirit of ourselves and all people around us, and it is really amazing. The good vibes that we send forth add light to the lives of others within our neighborhood.

On direction during our lives struggles. It can arise from a parent, a therapist, a coach or even a self-realization process. Guidance enables us go through tough periods and offers ways of managing stressors. It feels powerful to know where to turn and what we can do in order to support ourselves better. This builds up mental strength in an individual.

Positive mental space is achieved through mindfulness which is simply attaining presence in the moment with no distractions. It is not only an individual achievement for a better mental space; it is also a collective achievement. Whenever I participate in some form of mindfulness or perform an act of compassion, I feel positively radiated as a person. Everybody should strive to listen to others in whatever ways possible and provide aid whenever it's needy so that we can all support a world where inquiring about mental well being is as essential as asking for physical health. Inner growth and well-being begin with self-compassion—the act of being gentle with oneself as one would be to a dear friend. Admitting our weaknesses with humbleness enables us to set up a favorable environment that is conducive for self-love. The self-compassionate outlook helps us handle difficult situations gracefully and confidently.

This journey toward healthy thinking means not forgetting that every person's journey towards a positive mental space is different. In turn, by accepting mindfulness, grace, self compassion, and the making of meaningful connections, we cultivate the seeds for an enriched within. Such practices equip us on how to sail through the highs and lows of life. By practicing with intention, care for self, we can change this room into a warm positive one filled with wisdom and limitless potential, all with our inner powers.



THE SELF-HELP PARADOX

By Pranjal Suthar

Do you aspire to enhance your life, alter your current circumstances, attain greater happiness, financial success, or gain approval from others? Do you aim to prove wrong those who doubt your potential? This is where it all begins! I used to believe that I had to experience a 'perfect' day to feel fulfilled by its end. But what exactly constitutes a 'perfect' day, you may wonder? Well, it's a day defined by the advice of self-help gurus, naturally.

1. Early Rise, A Victory in Itself: You must wake up at an ungodly hour to 'win the day.'
2. Embrace the Cold Shower: Toughen up, they say! A bracing cold shower is a must.
3. Pump Some Iron: Hitting the gym and lifting weights is essential for your physical prowess.
4. Meditate, Visualize, and Journal: Achieving spiritual enlightenment necessitates a morning ritual of meditation, visualization, and journaling.
5. Deep Work is King: Who cares about your mental state? You should be able to concentrate intensely for a solid four hours every day.
6. Social Media Detox: Social media platforms are the devil; steer clear of them, especially TikTok, as it's supposedly ruining the world!
7. Side Hustle After Hours: Regular jobs are for suckers; spend your evenings working on that side hustle. When will you break free from the 9-to-5 grind?
8. Read Voraciously: Of course, reading is a must. How else will you get smarter?
9. In Bed by 9 PM: Who needs a social life, anyway? Self-improvement should be your constant companion.

I once experienced a persistent sense of loneliness, always preoccupied with what others thought of me, and an unhealthy craving for universal approval. Eventually, I reached a breaking point, realizing that I despised how I felt. It was then that I decided to instigate change, leading me into the realm of self-help. Dissatisfaction with one's current situation is a significant catalyst for self-improvement. The desire to transform your life due to unhappiness wields immense power.

Vulnerability can be a stumbling block. When you're in a dark place, seeking self-improvement can expose you to certain pitfalls. Self-development presents an appealing allure: a community of individuals striving to become better versions of themselves, a realm where you regain control of your life decisions, and a space where you experience a sense of progress that sets you apart from the rest. You may find yourself thinking, "While everyone else is out partying and pursuing short-term pleasures, I'm investing in my personal growth." This shift in mindset can make you feel triumphant, as if you've escaped the darkness that once consumed you. You begin to trust this new inner voice, but it's during this phase that you become oblivious to the potential traps that lie in wait.

Engaging in self-help can feel like leveling up in a video game. After each self-help book you read or every self-help video you watch, a surge of dopamine floods your brain. The addictive nature of anything doesn't solely hinge on the thing itself; it's the impact it has on your brain. It's the rush of dopamine that hooks you on self-help. Falling into the trap of self-help addiction is remarkably easy.

Never thought I could accomplish this today.
Thank you to everyone who supported me
along the way.



Addictive Nature of Self-Help

The self-help industry can cast a powerful illusion. After reading that self-help book, attending a seminar, or watching a motivating video, you feel a sense of accomplishment. It's as if you've achieved something significant and been highly productive. This motivation lingers, pushing you to buy the next book, attend the next seminar, or watch the next video. It's only when you pause and reflect that you realize nothing substantial has changed.

MJ DeMarco, one of my favorite authors, introduces the concept of "action faking" in his book. It's the act of doing things that make you feel accomplished even though no real progress has occurred. It's the peculiar urge to clean your room when an important assignment is due or creating a schedule and considering your day's work done once it's completed. It's about reading extensively about business but never actually starting one or buying business cards instead of picking up the phone to make a sale. Action faking is a more insidious form of procrastination because it deceives you into thinking you're making genuine progress. Ultimately, it leads to an empty wallet, temporary motivation, and the unsettling realization that you haven't achieved anything; you've only become adept at convincing yourself that you have.

Behind this addiction to self-help lies something more sinister. While you constantly make purchases and chase motivation, someone else is profiting. The self-help industry is estimated to reach a worth of \$13.6 billion by 2022, with an average annual growth rate of 5.6 percent. To put it mildly, individuals are profiting immensely from self-development through book sales, seminars, online programs, podcasts, blogs, coaching, and live speaking events.

Does Not Apply To All

Expressions like "pull themselves up by their own bootstraps" are cringe-worthy when applied to individuals born into impoverished families in disadvantaged neighborhoods. For these individuals, merely surviving can be an accomplishment in itself, and expecting them to achieve financial success under such circumstances can be unrealistic. While it is true that there are exceptional cases of individuals who have risen from harrowing backgrounds to achieve remarkable success, these should be viewed as exceptions rather than the rule.

Another aspect that raises concerns about the "self-help" concept is its exploitation of people who may not possess the necessary knowledge to discern between genuine guidance and misleading information. While the motivation and positivity promoted by the "self-help" movement are crucial for personal success, it becomes problematic when it is portrayed as a one-size-fits-all solution for public policy.

We often harbor toxic internal narratives, replaying our most significant or embarrassing mistakes in our heads. "All I need is within me now. All the joy I need is within me now. All the love I need is within me now." These mantras may sound nice and poetic, but they often clash with reality. A proven alternative is to intercept self-talk and cultivate awareness of it. Inner demons prefer to remain unseen, and mindfulness forces them into the light. Mantras tend to be a superficial layer over the actual problem, representing a manufactured version of the self.



Conclusion

Many individuals turn to self-help content in pursuit of personal improvement, but they often find it ineffective or even harmful. Common concerns include feeling inferior due to excessive self-help consumption, constant shifts in mindset from different gurus, overspending on self-help events, and confusion about which self-help influencers to trust. When seeking help from a mental health practitioner, you receive personalized support tailored to your unique situation.

Self-help materials can be valuable tools for personal growth when used cautiously and critically. Be aware of the dangers of unregulated advice, quick fixes, and one-size-fits-all solutions in the self-help industry.

UNVEILING THE TROUBLING FACADE OF THE 'GIRL DINNER' TREND: A CLOSER LOOK AT ITS PROBLEMATIC IMPLICATIONS.

By Yukta Gandhi

*"This is my meal and I call this girl dinner"
Cuts to disproportionately small amounts of food*



If you have been an Instagram or YouTube user long enough, you might be familiar with the 'Girl Dinner' trend. If not, let me sum it up for you: It started off as a nonchalant joke by tiktoker Olivia Maher as she shared a tiktok of her 'girl dinner': A glass of wine, cheese, olives and cornichons. Soon enough, other tiktokers hopped on the bandwagon- some of them arranged a full board of cheese, olives, meat and crackers; meanwhile, others proceeded with smaller proportions and low-calorie foods (if you can even call it that) like a bowl of ice and vitamins. If you have been an Instagram or YouTube user long enough, you might be familiar with the 'Girl Dinner' trend. If not, let me sum it up for you:

It started off as a nonchalant joke by tiktoker Olivia Maher as she shared a tiktok of her 'girl dinner': A glass of wine, cheese, olives and cornichons. Soon enough, other tiktokers hopped on the bandwagon- some of them arranged a full board of cheese, olives, meat and crackers; meanwhile, others proceeded with smaller proportions and low-calorie foods (if you can even call it that) like a bowl of ice and vitamins. The central theme of the trend remains the same, 'Girl Dinner' is an assemblage of no-cook snack items that are low-effort and sometimes startlingly low proportioned that they cannot be considered a full meal. Glamour calls it Gen Z's disturbing new trend of having a can of Coke Zero or a few pickles and calling it dinner-disordered eating under a fancy new disguise.

At first glance, it sounds like another harmless trend that shows that it's human to sometimes feel lazy and throw a low-effort meal together; it is relatable and lighthearted. But, like so many other controversial trends, this one has undertones of normalizing disordered eating. Let's deconstruct this sentence. Firstly, what is normalization? Experts define normalization as a social process through which ideas and actions come to be seen as normal or natural in everyday life. Furthermore, the norms thus set enforce themselves; those who follow the norms get accepted and even rewarded, and those who don't typically face backlash, especially in online communities. The Girl Dinner trend normalizes two things: 1. Eating nutrient-deprived junk food for dinner and 2. Eating very little or not eating at all.

The demographic of social media sites as such is young and impressionable, despite guidelines being in place, many audiences as young as 10 have access to them. Essentially, they would create a construct wherein eating junk for dinner is normalized, or even essential, as one might feel pressured to conform. For them, girl dinner becomes a cute label for disordered eating. One would argue that the trend itself is satirical and meant to be taken as a joke; but believe it or not, many users have used the Girl Dinner filter which predicts what your Girl Dinner would be as a guide to plan their dinner.

Girl Dinner isn't the first trend that sparks controversy for policing the way women eat. From 'What I Eat in a Day' videos to promoting unhealthy diet cultures, social media does not fall short of examples portraying women having tiny and elegant meals. Cinematic history also gives us an insight into how disordered eating is heavily gendered. Women in leading roles are barely seen enjoying an adequate meal. They only do so when they are hitting a low point in their lives. Other women who enjoy food are used as comic relief. The Girl Dinner trend further contributes to this by suggesting and reinforcing that dainty meals and snacks are normal meal proportions.

We're all guilty of eating Maggi for dinner, the intention does not lie in shaming women for not eating the healthiest of meals or eating less, but to destigmatize eating well proportioned meals and decrease the shame and guilt that women experience, internally and externally for taking delight in the thing that nourishes and fuels their bodies. Lastly, your Girl Dinner can be whatever you decide is best for you at that moment.

PERFECTION – DOES READING FICTION HELP BUILD EMPATHY IN INDIVIDUALS?

By Jogita Jagasia

George Martin rightfully articulated, "A reader lives a thousand lives before he dies." One would think that this quote was designed to describe fiction readers. Fiction is kaleidoscopic. It allows one to see things through different lenses, in different colors and at different angles. Every day, one is exposed to countless sources of information, whether it's through newspapers, magazines, books and multiple other media outlets such as Instagram on the internet. But how much of what one reads, determines who they are, how they feel and what they do?



The world can feel very one-dimensional and so one's constantly in the search to seek ways to understand it. This is precisely where fiction steps in. Literary fiction ushers people into other worlds- other realities. On one hand, reading fiction shows humans how they are not alone- how their emotions, thoughts, reactions and lives as a whole are believable and there is someone, somewhere, out there who can relate to it. On the other, fiction also has the power to thrust mankind into dark and despondent places, places humans hope that never see the light of day. Death, war, poverty, heartbreak, and all those events which fill one with dread and despair- one can live and experience the pain through fiction stories. However, this aspect of fiction is pivotal for it makes humankind more vulnerable, more understanding, and more humane to other humans in this world. In simple words, literary fiction enables one to live another person's life and see it exactly through the eyes of those living it. This is how empathy starts to build. It allows humans to not only see other humans for who they are but also understand why they do what they do. It creates room for understanding and acceptance. This piece seeks to explore how fiction books as media outlets in specific helps build empathy.

Fiction and empathy, two elements that seem so unrelated and distant from each other, that one wonders why they are being spoken of simultaneously. Fiction is, well, unrealistic, and empathy is what real humans possess. Then how exactly are these two elements even remotely related? The answer lies in the reiteration of the fact that fiction creates room for sympathizing, understanding, and for seeing things in a light different from yours and mine. When reading fiction, the sympathetic reactions to fictional characters are integrated into broader response patterns in daily life and thus, empathetic skills are enhanced. Now, why is empathy so important? Recently, in 2020, the World Economic Forum released an article that listed the top ten job skills which will be in high demand by 2025. Empathy and other skills linked to emotional maturity such as creativity, social influence, and flexibility occupied some of the top places and were identified as some of the top ten skills in demand. These skills are relatively more cryptic to learn as compared to technical skills. Empathy- the highest form of emotional intelligence and better known as the human form of mind reading, how can it be cultivated? Research has identified that reading fiction helps build empathy.

It was argued that reading fiction may have profound effects on the skills of the reader. While reading a story, emotions are triggered such that an affective impression is elicited by the narrative. Fiction presents a simulation of real-world problems and therefore has real consequences for the readers. (Bal & Veltkamp, 2013). Empathy is the cognitive and intellectual ability to recognize the emotions of other people and emotionally respond to them. Zwann, R.A. in 2004 spoke about the Immersed Experiencer Framework. It consists of three steps. In the first step, when one reads texts, neural webs are formed. This is followed by mental simulation which leads to integration with existing mental models. Imaginative processes evoked by reading fiction help build empathy. When reading, the Immersed Experiencer Framework permits for the suppression of fictionality and helps the reader experience the emotions of the characters. "Readers can experience emotions without the need for self-protection." (Bal & Veltkamp, 2013) Exposure to a short fiction narrative led to increased cognitive empathy but had no effect on emotional or affective empathy. Cognitive empathy refers to the ability to understand what others are feeling or going through and affective empathy refers to the ability to feel what the other person is going through.





In cognitive empathy, one puts themselves in another person's shoes and in affective empathy one's emotional state is influenced due to what the other person is going through.

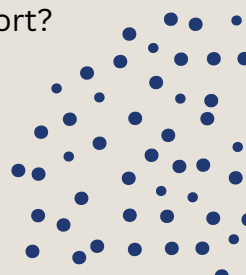
Harvard Business Publishing published a case where reading fiction was inculcated as part of the Masters of Strategic Communication (MSC) and Masters of Business Administration (MBA) programs at Westminster College and the University of South Florida respectively. The professors at these institutions wanted to develop empathy in their students to help them cultivate a broader skill set and become more efficient at work. Their efforts were successful as the students' discussions after reading the fiction pieces given to them were contingent on disparate perspectives. Since there were vastly diverse perspectives, it allowed them to absorb distinct point of views and take a wider spectrum of thought processes, emotions and reasons into consideration. It prompted in-depth conversations with empathy, social responsibility and leadership as the basis of their discussions.

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Several recent studies have identified reading fiction as strongly correlated with higher levels of emotional intelligence, including empathy, understanding of others, and deep thinking. Empathy as a tool is innate and can be built upon. One must seize the opportunity to refine this quality as the impact of this on the globe as a whole is multifold. Empathy and other skills linked to emotional maturity are going to boost productivity not just on professional levels but also on personal level. Emotional maturity is what makes humans more humane and will help save the world and make it a better place to live in, one undmankind is and there's no better learning to take away than to be gentler with those around us. erstanding gesture at a time. The recent coronavirus pandemic has shown the world how mankind is and there's no better learning to take away than to be gentler with those around us.

Although a lot of research and revision needs to be done in the processes that can be executed to build skills like empathy, reading fiction has proven to be a salient one by many studies. This method too, needs revision and refining but from whatever the world knows of this procedure till now, there's no harm in implying it. After all, how can we say no to living in a world built on the crux of immense understanding, social responsibility, and support?



BOLLYWOOD'S SEXIST TAKE ON MENTAL HEALTH

By Thea Shah

Mass media is often considered an accurate description of the thoughts, ideas and ideals of the society. They not only portray the popular beliefs of the society, but also influence the thoughts of the same society. From what I understand about the effect of mass media on people; Movie ideas are usually influenced by popular interests and thus, the ideas portrayed through mass media are often understood as the marrow of current thought, which because of conformity to the majority becomes the new popular belief. It is an unfaltering circle which gets influenced by and influences the same society.

Hysteria and Its Historical Stigma

Our history is tainted black due to misdiagnosis majorly caused by patriarchy. Hysteria was considered the umbrella term for any mental or physical illness endured by women. The humans without an uterus considered the female genitals as the driving cause behind women's "hysterical" behaviour. This trend changed with psychology gaining a scientific background and demanding empirical evidence for all psychological claims. However, the looking glass of society, the mass media did not seem to agree with this. Actresses carried the mantle of mental illness and till this day are burdened under the pressure of its representation in bollywood. Most movies which present a plot related to mental illness depict the actress as the person suffering from mental illness, while the male actor is shown as the supportive character who helps the actress. The trend of a woman awaiting a knight in shining armour to save the day continues, the difference being that he now only has to fight metaphorical dragons.

The Great Divide

Women continue to be depicted as emotionally vulnerable gender by limiting the cause for their mental discomfort to heartbreak and failure. Such protagonists are often portrayed as unmarried, who resort to all sorts of substance abuse and are overly ambitious. All of these portray women in a negative light and disregard the enumerable non gender specific causes of mental disorders.

However, men are portrayed in a completely different light. The causes behind their illness are usually political, economic, social or caused by a heartless woman. Bollywood has disregarded mental health amongst men as well, by limiting men as strong individuals who are great at uplifting others but are glorified for not facing their own emotions.



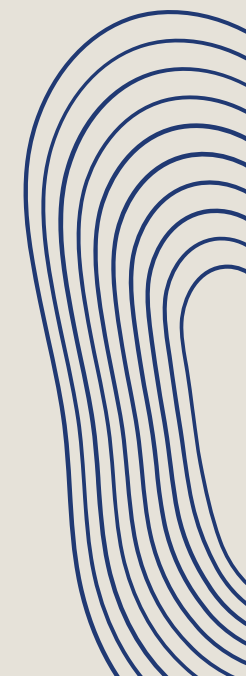
A New Beginning?

Bollywood has missed several opportunities to change the narrative regarding mental disorders. An eminent example is the narrative of the movie “fashion” which does not miss a beat to display the mental turmoil the female model (Kangana) goes through when she faces downfall, but does not portray the same for any male model who is struggling. The lack of display of acceptance for mental illness and display of either being completely cured or social isolation continues to paint mental health issues in a negative light. However, with the spread of awareness, Bollywood is slowly but surely awakening from its deep slumber. Movies like “Judgemental hai kya?” With its plot of accepting one's mental health issues and learning to manage them, so that one can start living in the society again is the first step to a bright future of Bollywood.



MEN ACT AND WOMEN APPEAR. MEN LOOK
AT WOMEN. WOMEN WATCH THEMSELVES
BEING LOOKED AT.

- JOHN BERGER -



RISE AND FALL

By Pranjal Suthar

Whatever happens, happens for good but you do not see the good in that moment. Is living by yourself better or with someone? When you love many people, you carry them together with your grief, that is unfair. Why can't I deal with my all my problems alone? Why can't we share only happy moments together? I cannot see you crying, I do not want to see me crying either. I do not fear losing anything, I already lost everything that I could call mine. If I do not blossom, I cannot even fall. It is strange how this 4-letter word describe those moments that remained only moments. 'Falling' for each other, smiling, crying, and admiring cherry blossoms 'fall', then...I 'fall' down from a building. I do not know if life gives everyone a second chance as it did to me. Why were we given a chance to come back together again when I decided to end it? While falling, I heard you shouting my name. You ran to grab my cold hand but even if you had grabbed it, I would have pushed you away. Would you understand how painful it was to keep on going? I am tired, I am tired, I am tired, let me sleep. I was flying, I could see my body swimming in a pool of blood, I saw you weeping and crying your eyes out. In that moment, I felt, "I was wrong", but before I realized it was too late.

I was declared dead, I crazily tried, pushed, waved myself countless times, forcing my soul into my body, "Let me in, I said let me in." I was freed but regret crumbled me. I was hopeless, heartless, and helpless. All I had now was the memories we created together. They chose to stay with me while I was being buried deeper and deeper within the soil. It was raining heavy. And you were drenching yourself with sorrow and regret just like I was. Your love was the only thing that protected me from this cruel world. We lose and find again. Have you moved on? Do you feel my absence? I am searching for my bits and pieces everywhere here. Where are they and where am I? Let me close this thing that causes this bleeding. If I seal my heart and lock it in a box which has no key, I fear when you wake up and find my heart, there will be no one to wipe your tears. I only had you and now I only have me. I guess I am going crazy. If I have come this far, let me turn into a beast after all no one cares what I do to myself, my life has turned into a big joke and everyone around seems to be mocking at me. And I do not care if I survive. If I was supposed to die tomorrow, all I would want to do is to find you and see your smile even from afar like my flying soul watched you

before. Nothing happens out of coincidence, you meet someone, you are in the same class as someone, you bump into someone, it is not fate, it is because you chose it. You wanted it. I chose you out of thousands of choices given to me, I have struggled through thousands of hurdles, I hate it but I chose you, not your happiness but I chose your pain, your surprises, your boredom, all with it. If on my death day, I cannot make the ends meet, I promise to see you in next life and then in another life and in another life. The road ahead is rough, I do not know the direction, I do not know anything and that is why I call my life a treasure hunt.

POETRY



What does your Mind look like ?

By Tanaya Kulkarni

What does your mind look like?

Mine's a spacious room
With pearly walls
And abundant sunlight.
With pretty couches
Little houseplants
And French windows
Of tinted glass.

Why would I ever step out
Or even look outside?
When I'm cozy in a blanket
With coffee by my side.

Until then one day
I felt a quake.
My ground shook,
All left astray.

My spacious room,
It was still.
With pearly walls
And sunlight on the window sill.
But it looked quite uninhabitable
With broken furniture
Broken spirit
And tinted rubble.

After days of cribbing
And loads of crying,
I did something I never thought,
I finally took my first step out.
I looked around
With fear and awe.

Those with different houses
Still looked strong.
It was only my perfect home
That had felt the quake,

The thought itself
Made me shake.

Our houses are made
of jello walls
And our furniture
can bounce around.

That way when an
earthquake hits
Our house can ride
its waves.

To deal with the quake
A way was found.
I had to change
To stay in this town.

I rebuilt my house
With joy and bounce
One that is capable of
Sustaining the bout.

That is when I realised
The quake was a blessing.
Because I learnt how to deal with
The change I was dreading.

It's okay to be not okay!

by Chinmayee Shinde

Love is Agape
Imagined through hearts
Losing its depths
is life's inherent part.

Ever since we grieve,
with mourn and belief,
Together the memories made
Isn't it too early to fade?

Denying the fact
which leads to loss of tract
Now and then truest feelings attached
However, in the end each detached.

The guilt and fear along
is where the bereavement belongs
To not be ashamed about
the past into doubt.

The distress of the mind
follow an action of a kind
It avails to near
with gradual venture.

Don't you worry Oh dear!
To find a way
you must vent through;
All the rage, misery and sorrow
will healingly fall into.

Right in the end
with no time constraint,
Inevitable is the change.
To the motive I portray,
It's okay to be not okay!

This poem captures the essence of the grieving process, emphasizing the acceptance of pain and the individuality of healing. It reminds us that there's no set timeframe for healing. Embracing our emotions is a crucial step towards finding peace. The message here is, it's alright to struggle and not be okay sometimes. It's a reassuring reminder for anyone facing loss or pain.

This poem explores the complex emotions and inner struggles of the speaker. It begins with the speaker confronting their insecurities, which lead to feelings of regret and vulnerability. The poem also delves into the internal battle between self-doubt and the need for courage and optimism. Ultimately, it portrays a journey of self-examination and resilience in the face of inner turmoil, where the speaker grapples with their own fragility and seeks to find strength and purpose amidst their vulnerabilities.

Random

By Srijita Chatterjee

I brushed my tangled insecurities with my hair today,
Regret bled an awful red,
Dyed the floor,
A bath in my vulnerability.

I felt out of breath, and dignity
a sudden lack of empathy,
I felt death crawl up my spine,
but then, I was okay again.

I ate my confidence for breakfast today;
Little crumbs are left:
I'm immobile, and tired,
Is that all I will have left?

I sat with my thoughts,
She looked straight at me:
She smirked the colour of hatred,
and burned with inevitable dread.

I felt my integrity breathe it's late,
with the dying breath of passion;
What's left is just a hollow, of flesh and bones;
of persistence, and recuperation.

I slathered the potion of courage into my cold palms,
it's necessity screamed with curious optimism,
I'm a product of my surroundings,
Alive; but not really.

Not the Real “You”

By Linn Dabre

What happened to the flames in your eyes,
What happened to the fire in your soul,
Is it lost into the pit of your own darkness?
Will I ever see it again?

What happened to the child in you,
What happened to the person I knew,
Is it lost into the shadow of your own grief?
Will I ever see it again?

What happened to the liveliness in you,
What happened to the brave girl I knew,
Did she sink too deep into her own grave?
Will I ever see her again?
Will I ever see her again?

I wrote this when I needed to motivate myself during times when I felt I could not handle a situation . I knew I was capable but just did not have the courage to do so. This poem helped me get through the difficult times. Hope it puts a smile on your face and helps you find a renewed hope and dedication too.

Her

By Sakshi Nair

I wish I could be the girl I see across the screen,
She who is full of life Young, wild and free...

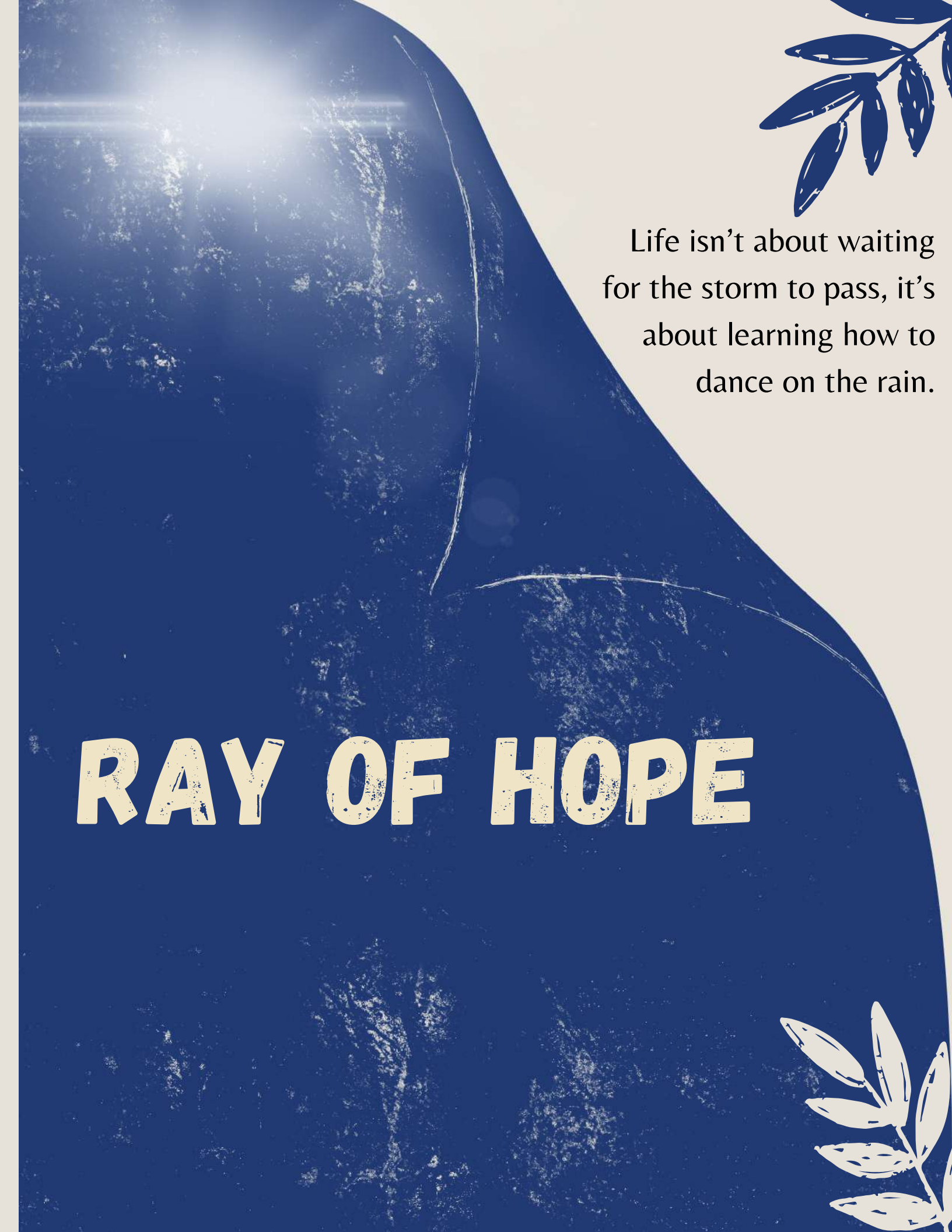
She smiles like a sunflower Wears her heart on her sleeve,
She dances to the tunes of life Always beaming with energy...

They call her a ray of sunshine But she's like a fleeting dream,
The waves of life push her over
But she's still as calm as the sea...

I wonder who she is looking for Who she really wants to be,
That's when I came to realise I could see her in me...

The poem is about how you see a character on screen that you fall in love with and wish to be like, only to realise that you already are that character of your own life.





Life isn't about waiting
for the storm to pass, it's
about learning how to
dance on the rain.

RAY OF HOPE



IT IS NOT “WHAT YOU DESERVE”

By Misba Tanwar

Once upon a time in a quaint little shop, there were two magnificent teddy bears. These teddies were the limited editions of the month, identical in size, price, quality, and colour. They sat side by side, awaiting their destinies.

One fateful day, a wealthy gentleman strolled into the store, his eyes catching sight of these precious bears. He purchased one of them with the intention of gifting it to his beloved son. This teddy was crafted with immense love and care, and it was presented to the boy with the same warmth by his father.

As the boy laid eyes on the teddy, his face lit up with joy. However, instead of expressing gratitude, he snatched the teddy from his father's hands and hurriedly retreated to his room. There, to the dismay of all, he began to tear the teddy apart, ripping it to shreds until it no longer resembled a teddy bear.

Meanwhile, in a different corner of the world, another father had a dream of gifting something special to his son on his 10th birthday. Although he wasn't as wealthy as the first man, he had saved diligently over time to afford something meaningful.

On the much-anticipated birthday, the father presented his son with the second teddy bear. The boy's eyes sparkled with happiness and delight at the sight of the gift. He dashed toward his father, embracing him tightly and expressing deep gratitude. He treated the teddy as if it were the most valuable treasure in the entire world, cradling it with love and care.

The moral of this tale is a timeless lesson. It's not about what you inherently deserve in life, but rather how the people and situations around you choose to treat you. Both teddies were equally precious, yet their worth was determined by the appreciation and love they received.

This story reminds us not to make ourselves too easily available to those who may not recognize our true worth. People who fail to value you may have knowledge but lack the wisdom that comes from life's struggles. They are the "literate dumbs" of the world, the unluckiest souls.

So, never doubt your worth or question yourself, for it's not about what you deserve; you are inherently precious and deserving of love. In the end, the most important person to love and appreciate you is yourself.

THE MONARCH BUTTERFLY

By Parisaa K Sethi

"A season of loneliness and isolation is when the caterpillar gets its wings. Remember that next time you feel alone."



Isn't it ironic how a tiny and delicate creature like the butterfly symbolizes some of life's greatest lessons? Where does it get its beauty from; the wings many would say, but what captivates me is its resilience, transformation, grace, and change. The real elegance.

The innocence of the caterpillar is overpowered by its struggle to break out of its chrysalis which causes it to change inevitably to an unimaginable extent. The caterpillar that once merely crawled on the ground now gains the capability to soar into the sky. Only when it begins to flutter around does the significance of the chrysalis occur to it? The period of desolation and seclusion only remodeled the caterpillar into its transcendent version, harrowing times dealt with by one's own self unaided will create the path to light. Had the caterpillar escaped the chrysalis before it was completely accustomed to it, it would have barely survived.

The Monarch is often said to be a metaphor for those with a mental illness, the chrysalis symbolizes the internal struggles of mental illness, and the progression into a beautiful winged butterfly signifies the hope for a better future. After its transformation it begins to migrate, signifying change and the healing process. With a lifespan of just 6-8 weeks, the butterfly demonstrates simplicity, struggle, and ultimately transformation. We're all tiny caterpillars waiting to break through our chrysalises, so if you're faced with afflictions, don't give up because, without struggle and a little transformation, the butterfly would just be a caterpillar with unfinished dreams to fly.

FORK

By Akshita Pancholi

The way we're so quick to throw up hands and sulk into a pile of utter gloom when things don't go our way.

Why do we forget that the reality we perceive isn't the only reality there is. We pick our favorite track but we forget that there exist other paths that lead to the same destination, or to an even better one. We crave open-mindedness and yet when it comes to life, we're so myopic that we reject anything that falls outside the purview of our ideals.

No wonder the people who desire control are usually the first ones to erupt when things go awry.



FACULTY

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DRUM CIRCLE THERAPY FOR EMPLOYEE WELLBEING

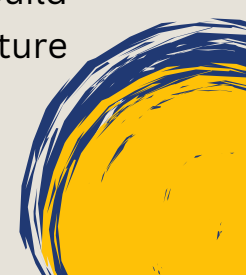
By Dr. Shambhavi Samir Alve (She/Her)



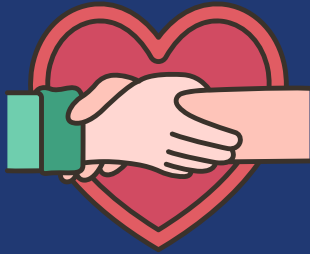
Drum circles have been part of healing rituals in many cultures throughout the world since ancient times. The concept of modern drum circles was first coined by percussionist Arthur Hull in the early 1970s. The essence of the concept was to bring the community closer together and work towards experiencing ‘feeling happy’ and also to introduce new and innovative stress-reducing activities. A drum circle generally represents a group of people coming together and creating music. Hull defines it as, ‘a fully participating group sharing a rhythmical and musical experience. This experience results in harmony, camaraderie, and a feeling of wellness amongst the participants.’

A Drum Circle occurs when a group of people seated in a circle play drums and percussion in a process of free improvisation with the support of a facilitator. Since the conception of the drum circle, the concept has evolved into stronger structured drum circles most commonly known as ‘facilitated drum circle’ that involves a facilitator guiding the group of participants into and out of rhythms. Group drumming is about tuning into the positive inspiration that is created by the rhythms created when drumming in a group. Drumming in a drum circle gets every participant connected on a deeper level with the person next to them. Participants feel each other’s joys & challenges. Drumming can be done by anyone and everyone irrespective of their age, gender, culture, and prior knowledge of instrument/music.

Growing awareness of the benefits of drum circles has resulted in the inclusion of drum circles into arts-based therapy and other contemporary healing modalities across the globe. Drum circle as a therapeutic intervention has a wide scope. These sessions can be used as a powerful organizational development intervention because they can help to build and foster teamwork, strengthen communication, and nurture collaboration among employees.



Some of the ways in which drum circles can be used in OD are as follows:

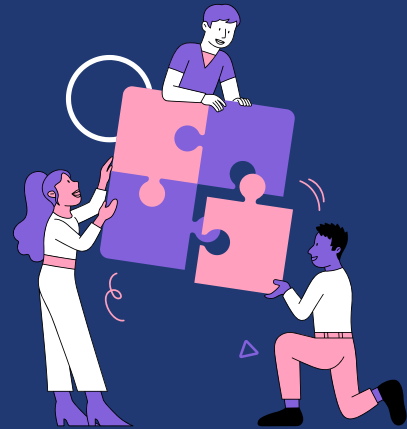


Stress Reduction

Drumming can be a great way to reduce stress and anxiety, which can improve employee well-being and productivity. Drum circles can create a sense of relaxation and flow, helping employees to feel more focused and energized.

Team Building

Drum circles can be used as a team-building activity to help employees develop trust, cooperation, and mutual support. By working together to create a rhythm, employees can learn to listen to each other, communicate effectively, and coordinate their efforts. Drumming with your Corporate Team in a facilitator-led Drumming Circle that contains a specific corporate message, creates a hardwired psychological connection between the brain, body, and soul of all the participants as a unified whole.



Creativity and Innovation

Drum circles can stimulate creativity and innovation by encouraging employees to think outside the box and experiment with different rhythms and patterns. By creating a safe and supportive environment for experimentation and risk-taking, drum circles can help employees develop new ideas and approaches.

Diversity and Inclusion

Drumming can bring together people from different backgrounds and cultures, providing a shared experience that transcends language and cultural barriers. By promoting diversity and inclusion, drum circles can help to build a more inclusive and collaborative workplace culture.



Group drumming in the workplace builds trust and confidence in one's innate abilities, where typically people have either been discouraged from trusting their judgment or have been given strict instruction not to act on their initiatives. It is in this latter regard that strict company structure can leave employees never learning to trust their judgment in leadership, problem-solving, or managerial duties. Not only is a drum circle good for productivity, but it's critical for stress relief and mental health.

Overall, drum circles can be a fun and engaging way to promote teamwork, communication, and creativity in the workplace. By incorporating them into organizational development interventions, companies can build stronger teams, improve employee well-being, and enhance their overall performance.



Of Sunsets....

By Sayli Gurav

As the sun sets, it leaves me with emotions I don't always understand, There is the reminiscence of the day(s) gone by,

There is the anticipation of tomorrow,

And there is a lingering of what could be and what couldn't.

Just like the colours in the sky merge, so do my emotions, No longer distinct yet profound.

My father taught me to appreciate nature and now that he is one with it, It makes me wonder the meaning of life, Because he gave me the meaning of life.

His absence took some of it away and made me a person I don't recognise anymore, for the good, for the bad and everything in between.

And just like he would tell me that every sunset is followed by the sunrise, I eagerly await - perhaps a new me and a new beginning.

In Between

By Dr. Heena Kamble

Where to look forward to?

To the greys above?
Waiting for the drops to
make us green?

Or to the whites below?
Waiting for the lights to
make us green?

Anyways
we shall come out to a
beautiful day.
Be it through the
hailstorm

or the sandstorm,
a new, bright day awaits
us,
anyways.

Meanwhile,
we pass through them
both...
through the greys and the
whites,
as we look at the deep
blue
in between.

We let them pass us as we
pass by them,
enjoying each other's
company,
without looking forward
to anything.



CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE, ONE NAME AT A TIME.



In this remarkable section, we triumphantly showcase individuals who marked their excellence in various fields. From outstanding athletes to visionary researchers and speakers, these extraordinary individuals have left an ineradicable mark on the world.

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AVANTIKA BHARAD

2nd PRIZE HOLDER

The Battle of Voices 2023, a national podcasting competition

ZEBA CHOGLA

3rd PRIZE HOLDER

Chan-Draw event





SWAPNIL MAHAJAN

Presented a paper titled
" Understanding Addiction and
its Challenges through a
Holistic Approach: A
Qualitative Study"

CPSICON-2023 of Clinical Psychology
Society of India (CPSI), NIHMANS,
Bangalore

FEONI MEHTA

Presented a paper titled
"Investigating the relationship
between existential nihilism,
Moral deficiency and Subjective
well being among college
students"

Bombay Psychological Association





SIDDHI DHAREWA

MEDAL OF
COMPLETION

Tata Mumbai Marathon, 2023
21km Run



SHREYA KARIA

MAN OF MATCH
IN FINALS

Vagad Football League



ANGEL FERNANDES

Semi Finalist

Shivaji park Gymkhana
Lawn Tennis tournament

KOMAL JAIN

Youngest Speaker at
Debut Event

LAJA TALKS



ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We wish to commence this acknowledgment by extending our profound appreciation to the distinguished Dean, Dr. Purvi Bhatt, for graciously providing us with an empowering platform that has served as the fertile ground for the cultivation of innovative ideas. Since the inception of this noble undertaking, our mission has remained steadfast: to establish a platform that not only acknowledges but also celebrates the exceptional talents within the Sunandan Divatia School of Science, with an exclusive emphasis on the distinguished Psychology Department.

Our heartfelt gratitude extends to the venerable Head of the department, Dr. Ruttuja Karkhanis More, whose unwavering support has proven instrumental at every juncture of this remarkable journey. We must also extend our deepest appreciation to our esteemed mentor, Dr. Deepti Puranik, whose sage guidance has provided invaluable insights throughout this endeavour. The steadfast trust and unwavering confidence of Dr. Heena Kamble, Dr. Rageshwari Munderia, and Ms. Sayli Gurav have significantly enriched our path to success. We are also deeply grateful to our esteemed visiting faculty, Dr. Shambhavi Alve whose enthusiastic contribution has left an indelible mark on this edition.

Last, but most assuredly not least, we extend our profound gratitude to each and every one of you. Your tireless contributions, both in the curation of the magazine and in the submission of student write-ups, have played an instrumental role in elevating this endeavour to the pinnacle of success.

ABOUT THE EDITORS

Hitakshi Varma: The Editor-In-Chief has been a dedicated student of Psychology for over six years. Her profound love for the subject has fueled her career and her passion for writing, which she has honed over three years of experience. Her leadership extends beyond her own writing, as she adeptly manages a team of writers, designers, and many more ensuring the magazine continues to offer insightful content to its readers.

Nidhi Shetty: Our dynamic Chief Editor, excels in the art of efficient work execution. She seamlessly combines her exceptional writing and design talents with a discerning creative eye, all this while upholding a polite and professional demeanor. Her extensive experience includes collaborating closely with numerous fashion bloggers and curating outstanding content for six years now. She is truly a force to be reckoned.

Swapnil Mahajan: Recovering from an addiction to studying human brains, our Executive Editor, Swapnil Mahajan. She exudes charm and confidence, blending a love for Psychology with a dash of creativity. Their sharp wit, honesty, and assertiveness enhance their natural gift for making connections. A professional classical Kathak dancer, Swapnil embodies curiosity and a research-oriented spirit, making her a dynamic and captivating editor.



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Back Cover Courtesy: **Rida Merchant**

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