THE NEW STUDENT

THE FIRST EDITION

WHAT'S INSIDE

MESSAGE
From The
EDITOR

Aditya Dubey
Editor in Chief

Mental health deals with the emotional, psychological, and social well-being of an individual, influencing his/her feeling, thinking, and interaction with others. This state of being is very critical for teenagers since adolescence encompasses an enormous amount of physical-changing, emotional, and social-developmental changes. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), 50% of all mental disorders start by age 14, but most are undetected and untreated. Various causes of mental ill-health among youth include pressure from academics, exposure to media, peer pressure, and family pressure. Ignoring poor mental health can lead to further problems, such as anxiety, depression, drug abuse, and suicidal ideation. Signs such as withdrawal from society, mood swings, and decline in academic performance should act as red flags leading to seeking early intervention. Making mental health a topic of open communication, building competence in mental health in schools, and providing the youth with access to professional help can work miracles for their mental well-being and for building healthy and productive lives.

It is speculated by the research conducted by National Mental Health Survey which states that "150 million" people in India suffer from mental health issues." The issue is made worse by the fact that eight out of ten students frequently do not receive care. We foresee this disease burden to double by the year 2040 unless efforts aimed at mental health promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation are initiated. Since mental health depends on a range of biological, genetic, environmental, psychological, and social factors, enhancing the well-being of all will require a systems-level solution.

Mental health disorders are a common health concern among college students in India. Untreated generalized anxiety disorder (GAD) is associated with significant distress, reduced quality of life, increased prevalence of medical problems, increased costs of healthcare, and higher rates of comorbid mental health issues such college students are particularly vulnerable since GAD usually develops in early adulthood. The primary reasons for mental health problems among Indian students are academic and parental stress. In addition, Indian college students hardly ever receive traditional counselling, and when they do, they mention stigma and confidentiality concerns as barriers. In order to bridge such a wide treatment gap, a focus on alternative treatment modalities has been proposed.

It should be noted that mental health issues are more prevalent among young adults, particularly because university studies are more challenging than elementary school. While negotiating with challenges, students strive to adapt to campus life during university years. They also aspire to be economically and emotionally self-sufficient person. According to recent research by Hemant Das, a research scholar in IIT Kanpur, says that "the occurrence of depressive symptoms in college students across the world is increasing fast and now outpaces that in the general populace." In a study by National Institutes of Health "30% of undergraduate students reported heightened psychological stress, with depression levels much exceeding the average population." Anxiety disorders rank as the most common mental illness among university students, affecting around 11.9% of them. It has been shown that students who hold unfavorable opinions about statistics and perceive the subject as dangerous are ultimately more likely to experience anxiety. According to a 2020 Insight Network survey across 10 universities, 'nearly half of respondents had experienced a severe emotional concern for which they felt they needed an expert help', with'one in five learners having a current mental illness diagnosis'—an increase from 1 in 3 reported in the same survey conducted in 2023.

Psychosocial problems are prevalent among university students. These problems include a broad spectrum of mental health conditions that affect students' emotions, behaviors, and cognitive functions. The study named "Relationship Between Self Esteem and Loneliness Among College Hostel Students" by "Indian Journal of Indian Psychology" revealed that "university students are encountered with psychosocial problems such as loneliness, low self-esteem, and adjustment issues. A study by "Nguyen et al" found that university students' poorer quality of life is linked to lower self-esteem. In their first year of university, students face adjustment problems because they feel less supported by their families and have less access to emotional support Findings are in mirror with previous studies. Academic stress undermines motivation and makes academic achievement harder to accomplish and adversely impacts youngsters' mental health.

The horrible consequences of constant stress at home and in school are referred to as distress. Students at the university level face distress from changes in lifestyle, workload, extra responsibilities, and interpersonal relationships. The depressive symptoms are persistent sadness and a lack of interest in pleasurable activities. Eating disorder behaviors, such as restrictive eating, bingeing, and concern with body weight, are very common among Indian university students. Academic stress caused by peer pressure, a toxic learning setting, financial concerns, and needing to get a good job upon graduation are some examples of academic stress. When students area abruptly confronted with new surroundings, social settings, and strong academic demands, they encounter anxiety, severe social anxiety which further results in suicidal ideation. Internet addiction refers to a harmful act that interferes with and exhausts one's academic and personal life. It is common in university students and leads to sleeping disorders among the youth as well as drug dependence. Studies conducted by Mayo Clinic revealed psychological issues and psycho-logical distress are closely linked to reports of suicidal thoughts and attempts. Due to changes in peer connections and the reality of a new life that needs adjustments to personal and aca-demic goals, starting university may be a hard transition for many students. The likelihood of eating disorders increased in a sample of more than 26,000 undergraduate students from 15% in 2013 to 28% in 2021–2021.60 Internet addiction is cor-related with smoking, alcohol drinking, and drug abuse.

MENTAL HEALTH
A silent Pandemic

We begin our 1st january , with multiple resolutions and promises to inculcate several great habits so to improve our overall productivity, efficiency, physical health ,outlook and personality.
 But rarely the issue of mental health or psychological problems take centre stage in discussion regarding self enhancement or future outlook, since in this rapidly developing era, the students and working professional are the most vulnerable community prone to stress, psychological problems, anxiety, and depression, due to excessive work load, deadlines to conclude the projects and pressure to outpace and out perform others in various fields and equip oneself with several technical skills and experiences.

But neither the government nor simultaneous institutions are eager to address this issue, which is the reason for the decline in productivity among half of India's majority population I. e. Youth. Here, especially the students studying in various colleges and higher educational institutions are facing an acute crisis of mental health and its related major disorders, which is turning into a deep epidemic. According to the government statistics and report in 2017, 197.3 million people in India had mental disorders. The prevalence of mental disorders in India ranges from 9.5 to 370 per 1000 people. The most common mental disorders are depression and anxiety disorders. Suicide rates have skyrocketed to 11.6 per 100,000 people in 2022
.
Hereby the students now not only feel lonely because of their inability to interact and express their emotional aspect with the their fellow mates but also due to the constant hustle to prove themselves in this extremely competitive world and achieve an effective balance between their long term goals and short-term hunger and pursuit of gaining meaningful and relevant industry-ready skills and competence.

due to this constant war of thoughts and struggle
 to balance and simplify this complex life pushes the student in deep pothole of regular mental health breakdown , and a feeling of psychological burnout
 is experienced on a daily basis.
Let's say, Sidhart a student of prestigious hindu college (delhi university) is pursuing sociology honors and is currently enrolled in his first semester & he is engulfed in deep stress, not only to finish his assignments and projects within the fixed timeline, but also regarding which society to join that can help in gaining professional competence and improving the existing skill set and improve the overall personality outlook and expand personalized relationship with others and how to manage your day , so to finish day to daily task in accomplish long term aspirations and goals, in between this hustle and bustle , our existing broken education system which was supposed to be revolutionized understand new education policy (NEP) , only adds upon our pressure because of unnecessary attendance criteria, irrelevant and outdated syllabus and teaching methodology along with uninterested and egoistic Sarkari professors makes the matter worse.

In this matter of extreme psychological stress & anxiety, it's always better to consult an adult or someone who is a bit seasoned in this field, because our previous generation adults, ranging from parents
 to professors and administrative staff, refute these problems as unnecessary or an excuse for underperformance, whereas the tech billionaires
 like Infosys founder and Ceo narayan Murthy as
 well as the L&T chief advocating for 70 to 90-hour work schedule to allegedly work for India's development, so that these billionaires can stockpile property & wealth for their generation, whereas these advices only add to the mental health issues of the general population & at last proves to be fatal.

It's OKAY *to ask for* **help!**

The Cost of Mental Health in LGBTQIA+ Community

Mental Health is one of the most stigmatized topics. Despite its omnipresent and ubiquitous impact, open discussions around it are often avoided. If such is the condition of the overly-normalized neo-liberal heterosexual world, imagine the height of challenges faced by the so-called considerably westernized and unjustly vilified community of LGBTQIA+ folks. The cost of mental health for the LGBTQIA+ world is substantial, directly correlated to their decision to come out. Their level of stress increases with the number of people they disclose their identity to.

This highlights the profound emotional and psychological burden they have to endure even in today's ostensibly named modernized world. What exactly is responsible for this emotional burden on these folks? Why does the majority, i.e. the heterosexual population not have to go through this? Has the self-proclaimed progressive society of the 21st century changed or is it just a rejuvenating delusion that we are living in?

This article does not purport to provide any definitive answer to these questions, as the society itself must engage in self-introspection and evoke its accountability to the marginalized and often abhorred community of LGBTQIA+ people.

DISCRIMINATION AND SOCIAL REJECTION

The paradox of visibility plays a huge role in the process of coming out. While the decision of coming out might be liberating, consequently it also increases one's vulnerability to discrimination, social isolation, violence, and stigmatization. Social Rejection often leads to mental health challenges, increasing stress levels which deters and declines one's productivity. This, as a consequence, heightens the risk of isolation and causes psychological and emotional distress. More importantly, the all-encompassing cloud of misconceptions and myths surrounding mental health leads to trivialization and total dismissal or avoidance of this issue as it gets treated as a mere and insignificant subject of humour. All of the above issues combined together lead to a degradation in the lifestyle and way of life of the people from the LGBTQIA+ community. Workplace harassment and discrimination, conversion therapies, family's behaviour and reaction also contribute to mental health issues.

Suicide Rate

40% of transgender adults have attempted suicide, compared to less than 5% of the general population (Trevor Project, 2022)

School Bullying

1 in 3 LGBTQIA+ youth faces bullying at school, leading to severe emotional distress (GLSEN, 2023)

Mental Health Disparity

LGBTQIA+ individuals are 2.5 times more likely to experience depression and anxiety than heterosexuals (APA, 2023)

Depression Rates

Nearly 50% of LGBTQIA+ individuals have experienced depression (mentalhealth.org.uk)

Healthcare Discrimination

8% of LGBTQIA+ individuals and 27% of transgender individuals have been denied mental health care (MHA)

These databases can go on an on, since the case is serious and it should be dealt with, seriously! The data points above clearly mention denial of access to mental health care programs and point towards significant rate of suicidal tendencies in the LGBTQIA+ community. The society needs to ponder upon the aforesaid factors and reconsider and reframe its stance on this community. Many therapists and psychologists even lack basic community specific affirmative training, which leads to misdiagnoses and inadequate assistance. This strongly indicates the lack of education among today's highly 'educated' population of our enhanced and advanced society which claims to have revolutionized itself after Renaissance. Furthermore, the cost of therapy and lack of access to, perhaps even lack of availability of gender-affirming care only deepens mental health disparities and greater societal conundrums.

INTERSECTIONALITY CASTEISM AND INJUSTICE

The Struggles of Dalit Trans Activists

Mental Health struggles worsen for LGBTQIA+ people who get marginalized because they hail from some particular community, race, caste, gender, etc. Their socioeconomic status and country's socio-political situation also decide the path of their future. The way how intersectionality defines the lives of people can be effectively demonstrated and understood with the help of this case

Just 5 days after the National Commission of Scheduled Castes sent a notice to Uttar Pradesh Govt. to take action against Devika Mangalmukhi of UP's Transgender Welfare Board for hurling casteist abuses against Yashika, a Dalit Trans Woman – Lucknow Police – filed an First Information Report (FIR) against Dalit and Trans Rights activists Ritwik Das, Jane Kaushik, Grace Banu, and Yashika based on the false allegations made by Devika; which constituted of robbery, rape threats, and acid attack threats. When Devika was subsequently contacted by the police for further proceedings in regards with her FIR, she clearly denied having any knowledge about the same.

She even said that the audio clip in which she could be clearly heard using casteist slurs against Yashika, was fake. This particular case accentuates the casteism that prevails even within the folds of the LGBTQIA+ community. It also emphasizes on the misuse of political and administrative powers against Dalit Trans Activists who are at the forefront while fighting the devil of the burden of intersectionality in the community.

The altercation between Devika and Yashika began when Yashika raised a demand for horizontal reservations for trans persons in educational sector and jobs, and Devika, an upper caste person, opposed the same. This particular case highlights how casteism and discrimination prevails even inside the sphere of the community.

The above issue must have taken a toll on the activists who were wrongly accused by Devika. The administrative system also spared no effort in "legally" harassing the activists, despite the availability of adequate evidences against Devika who engaged in the unconstitutional practice of casteism and violated their fundamental and basic human rights.

Policy Formulation

The battle of access to appropriate mental health care system is long for LGBTQIA+ community, and it shall be fought till eternity if not provided with. However, the stepping stone towards the achievement of this seemingly utopian goal shall be the formulation of anti-discrimination laws and overall mental health care system reforms in our nation.

The stigma can only be fought with the legal weapons, if not in the court, then in the public squares. Enactment of these laws should also be accompanied with inclusion of some more sections in Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and Bhartiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS); advocating stringent punishments for the offenders.

Removal of Section 377 after the enactment of the refined version of Indian Penal Code (IPC) in form of BNS was shockingly disappointing. However, the community expects the Government to make decent and satisfactory amendments in the BNS, recognizing the presence of the LGBTQIA+ community. Educational institutions must absolutely be dragged into organizing workshops and seminars on mental health and the LGBTQIA+ community – because, presumably, expecting the upcoming generations to see fellow humans as anything other than otherworldly irregularities or alien peculiarities is too much to ask. All things considered, what better way to prove one's 'education' than by simply acknowledging and accepting reality and normalcy, as it is?

Conclusion

Taking everything into account, the fact that can be significantly procured from the above discussion is that Mental Health is not a Privilege; it is a Right. Delay is no longer an option for our superficially pronounced modern society, though evidently unverified in assertion; to move beyond its fragile limit or threshold of tolerance to accept, acknowledge and recognize the existence of the LGBTQIA+ community and the basic necessity of competent and capable mental health care system.

Most commonly heard narrative is that it would take longer for the society to accept the concept of LGBTQIA+ individuals. I ask, how much longer? They ask, how much longer? Do we even see a positive ray of light in the form of a definite answer? In all probability, no. The actions shall be taken to withstand this false, pointless and unmerited argument that denies these people their basic rights, which further affects their mental health. What a marvelously advanced society we are – regularly, uncontrollably boasting about being progressive, while simultaneously failing in recognizing the basic concept of treating fellow human beings with dignity and respect. Apparently, if this is the pinnacle of civilization that this planet has ever seen, one is forced to wonder what actually differentiates us from the so-labelled intellectually antiquated of the past, aside from cell towers and the bubble of hypocrisy.

DEPRESSION & MELANCHOLIA

An Vicarious Understanding

Life is full of factors that can contribute to a sense of loss and pain. Grief is an innate human emotion that we all experience at some point in our lives. However, when this emotion starts dominating our minds and disrupting our daily lives, it becomes a matter of concern. The state of great sadness often turns into a mental disorder called depression. According to the American Psychological Association, depression is characterized by extreme sadness or despair that lasts more than a few days. People with depression may experience a range of symptoms, including an inability to concentrate, feelings of worthlessness or excessive guilt, and recurrent thoughts of death or suicide. Depression is the most common mental disorder, and it demands attention and medical consultation. Fortunately, depression is treatable with the help of a mental health professional, such as a psychiatrist, psychologist, or therapist. Antidepressant medication can be effective in ensuring recovery. Additionally, patients are highly advised to make lifestyle changes that contribute to their depression.

It's essential to note that the symptoms of depression can vary from person to person. While some common characteristics may be present, the manifestation of depression can differ significantly from one individual to another. For instance, some people may experience hyperactivity, while others may be extremely inactive. Sleep patterns can also be affected, with some individuals sleeping excessively and others struggling with insomnia.

My first glimpse into the world of depression came when I met a middle-aged lady, my neighbour, who had been diagnosed. She would often become irrationally irritated by minor inconveniences, responding with anger and raised voices that could be heard from my room. For a few months, I viewed it as a Desi-drama, but as time passed, I became curious about her condition. One day, while conversing with her, she revealed that she had struggled with depression in the past. Although she had received medical treatment and was now well, I noticed that she still carries a subtle scar of depression, as a symbol of the struggles she had gone through in her twenties.

Her anger was not demanded to be extinguished but accepted as her natural response. This trait, although not debilitating, was still recognizable as a tendency developed during her struggles with depression. Her family had embraced this behaviour as a part of her personality. This experience taught me that even after medical treatment,

In some cases, depression can leave an indelible mark on a person's personality.

Therefore, it is essential to acknowledge and empathize with the underlying scars. As a family member, friend, or neighbour, we need to recognize that depression is a complex issue that can have long-lasting effects on individuals. Even after treatment, people may carry subtle reminders of their struggles. It is crucial for us to be understanding, empathetic, and supportive of those who have faced depression. By embracing their scars and acknowledging their experiences, we can create smoother relationships and a more supportive environment to heal and grow at their own pace. This encounter was an eye-opening experience that changed my whole perspective about them. It taught me the importance of empathy and acceptance when dealing with individuals who have struggled with depression. We must humble ourselves and try to understand their thought processes.

MELANCHOLIA

THE EARTH IS EVIL
NOBODY WILL MISS IT
WE DON'T NEED TO GRIEVE FOR IT

There is a movie Melancholia (2011), written and directed by Lars von Trier. It is considered one of the finest movies on depression. The film's title, Melancholia, refers to a state of intense sadness. The very theme is represented throughout the narrative, exploring the complexities of depression, anxiety, and the human psyche.

The film has two parts, presenting two distinct personalities, Justine and Claire. Justine's depression is contrasted with Claire's anxiety, highlighting the different ways individuals cope with catastrophe. The story revolves around the two sisters' lives. In the first part, Justine grabs our attention; her character is often seen as a representation of a person dealing with depression. She gets easily exhausted by big parties. She is seen as a person who is forced to celebrate her own wedding. Her sister Claire notices her distress and confronts her about her behaviour, but Justine denies making a scene. Feeling overwhelmed, Justine escapes the party to take a solitary walk in the garden, gazing at the dark sky and twinkling stars. This moment symbolizes her disconnection from the world and highlights her struggle to cope with her emotions.

In the second part, the story mainly revolves around Claire. She is a practical, responsible, and caring personality. Yet, she becomes highly anxious when the rogue planet, Melancholia, is believed to bring about the end of the world. Here, Melancholia serves as a metaphor for the catastrophe and existential crises that the characters face. Her anxiety is depicted as a response to the impending doom of the planet, symbolizing the fear of loss and the desire for control. Claire seeks to find an escape from the inevitable end. Justine plays a significant role during this difficult time. She consoles her sister, remarking that since Claire is totally sane, her reaction is genuine; her anxiety and fear of loss are absolutely normal. In this context, Justine's acceptance of the planet's impending impact can be seen as a symbol of her emotional surrender. Her melancholy has prepared her for the worst, allowing her to find a sense of peace and acceptance in the face of catastrophe—Death.

The film gives us insights and poignantly portrays the struggles of living with depression. It mirrors what it feels like to be depressed, exhausted, and anxious. Notably, Justine's family—especially her sister—acknowledges and accepts her depression, recognizing the debilitating impact it has on her life. At the same time, Claire's anxiety is addressed by Justine, who gives her the strength to face Melancholia, the destroyer of the world. The recognition is a crucial first step towards recovery, one that is often denied in India, where mental health issues are frequently stigmatized, dismissed, or regarded as a myth that doesn't require medical attention. The reluctance to acknowledge depression as a legitimate health concern stems from a lack of understanding, perpetuating the silence and stigma surrounding mental illness.

"THE EARTH IS EVIL, WE DON'T NEED TO GRIEVE FOR IT. NOBODY WILL MISS IT."

AM I Really Depressed

Every life deserves a certain amount of dignity, no matter how poor or damaged the shell that carries it. The girl in this image is not a skilled basketball player; rather, she is the daughter of a laborer who works at the construction site at a university.

My motive to capture this image was to showcase her dedication, not to achieve any goal, but to enjoy the moment she was playing with the ball.

This image depicts that every individual's life, their hobbies, and happiness matter irrespective of the way of living of the person.

Let it be a wealthy person living in an urban area with luxury facilities or a poor guy living with the least requirements.

"A moment of joy, however simple, can carry more meaning than any goal achieved."

"Even in the simplest of moments, the spirit of dedication and joy can inspire the world."

I also saw the place she lives and communicated with her regarding her studies. I got to know she goes to school and loves to study, but she innocently said, "Mujhe basketball khelne mein maja aati, abhi choti hun to goal nahi kar pati par koshish puri karti hun par mujhe nahi lagta main kabhi sabki tarah khel paungi bade hokar." I realized there is still a section of society that is deprived of basic facilities. Maybe this was the reason she's lacking confidence about whether she'll be able to play and do her best in the future.

And the best part is, she wasn't playing in the main basketball court; she was playing at the back side of the court. When I asked her why so, why don't you play in the main court, she said, "Mai udhar kaise khel sakti hun, mere papa yahan kaam karte hain, mai padhti nahi hum idhar." But I don't see her as a child of a laborer; I see her as a young mind that has the ability to shape her family's life if she dares to follow her passion.

I noticed her playing so well and enjoying the sport, was so overwhelmed that I couldn't stop myself from connecting this image to the art of storytelling through photography, which can say messages without saying a single word.

~ Soumya Mishra

Student Mental Health CRISIS

-Veena kapoor

Mental health has become an increasingly important topic in today's fast-paced academic environment. However, numerous myths and misconceptions still cloud our understanding of this critical issue. It's time to debunk these myths, provide tools for mental health first aid, and emphasize the importance of resilience in students' lives.

As a psychology student, one common myth that I noticed is that students who excel academically are not susceptible to mental health issues. "Brilliant" students are generally stereotyped as having it all sorted in their lives. This is far from the truth. High achievers may experience immense pressure to maintain their performance, leading to anxiety, depression, and burnout. Mental health challenges do not discriminate based on academic success; they can affect anyone, regardless of their grades or achievements.

Another myth is that seeking help for mental health issues is a sign of weakness. In reality, acknowledging the need for help and reaching out is a sign of strength and self-awareness.
Unfortunately, the stigma surrounding mental health might prevent students from seeking the support they need. It's essential to normalize conversations about mental health and encourage students to seek help when needed.
Sometimes, the concept of mental health is exaggerated. Not every emotional or psychological struggle is a sign of a mental health disorder. For instance, experiencing burnout due to overwork is not the same as having depression or anxiety. 'Burnout' is a state of physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion caused by prolonged stress, and while it requires attention and self-care, it doesn't necessarily indicate a mental illness. It's important to distinguish between temporary stressors and more severe mental health conditions to ensure appropriate support and intervention. However, burnout should not be ignored either.

Some believe that mental health issues are always visible and easily identifiable. However, mental health struggles are often internal and invisible to others. Students may appear fine on the outside while battling significant internal turmoil. It's crucial to create a conducive environment where students feel comfortable discussing their mental health without fear of judgment.

Talking about solutions now, we must provide students with a mental health "first aid toolkit." This toolkit includes coping strategies and resources to help manage mental health challenges. One key component is self-awareness—encouraging students to recognize their emotions and understand their triggers. Self-care practices such as lifestyle changes that include regular physical activity, healthy eating, and sufficient sleep are also vital for maintaining mental well-being.

Mindfulness techniques, such as meditation and deep breathing exercises, can help students manage stress and anxiety. Additionally, fostering a strong support network of friends, family, and mentors can provide emotional stability. Access to professional mental health resources, such as counselling and therapy, is also essential. Educational institutions should prioritize making these resources readily available to students. Awareness regarding the insurance covering mental health issues should be raised!

Resilience, the ability to adapt and bounce back from adversity, is a crucial trait for students to develop. Resilience helps students navigate the ups and downs of academic life and equips them to handle future challenges. Building resilience involves developing a growth mindset—viewing challenges as opportunities for growth and learning rather than insurmountable obstacles.

Encouraging students to set realistic and short-term goals and celebrate their achievements, no matter how small, can boost their confidence and motivation. Teaching effective time management skills can also reduce stress. Resilience is not an inherent trait; it can be acquired through practice, determination and support.

Educational institutions play an essential role in promoting mental health and resilience. Schools and universities must create an environment that prioritizes mental well-being. This includes incorporating mental health education into the curriculum, providing access to mental health resources, and fostering a culture of empathy and understanding in students regardless of their disciplinary background. Educators and administrators should be trained to recognize signs of mental distress and provide appropriate support.

In **conclusion**, addressing student mental health requires a holistic approach that involves debunking myths, providing practical tools for mental health first aid, and emphasizing the importance of resilience. It is all about cognition, acceptance, fight, and resilience! By creating a supportive environment and promoting open conversations about mental health, we can help students thrive both academically and emotionally. It's time to move beyond the stigma and ensure that students have the resources and aid they need to be satisfied in all aspects of their lives.

ALTERNATIVE
or
DEVASTING
alternative?

Toxic Tides, Suffocating Earth, Poison in the Air—these phrases have become all too familiar as we face an escalating pollution crisis. It's time for us to wake up and confront this problem. Many are turning to alternatives in hopes of reducing pollution, but too often, we don't consider the environmental impact of producing these alternatives. We fail to ask ourselves, "Is this truly an alternative or a devasting alternative?" Take, for example, electric vehicles (EVs), hailed as an alternative to gasoline-powered cars. While EVs have lower emissions on the road, the carbon footprint of battery production remains a significant source of pollution. The shift from plastic to paper bags, often touted as an eco-friendly solution, comes with its own set of environmental challenges.

The global push to reduce plastic usage has led to campaigns advocating for the ban of plastic bags. As a result, paper bags have emerged as a widely used alternative. In 2023, global paper & paperboard production reached approximately 400 million metric tons, a sharp increase from about 230 million metric tons in 1990. India's paper industry, for example, has grown by over 130% in the past two decades. While paper bags are often perceived as a cleaner alternative, there are significant issues that are often overlooked. Despite being marketed as environmentally friendly, the massive
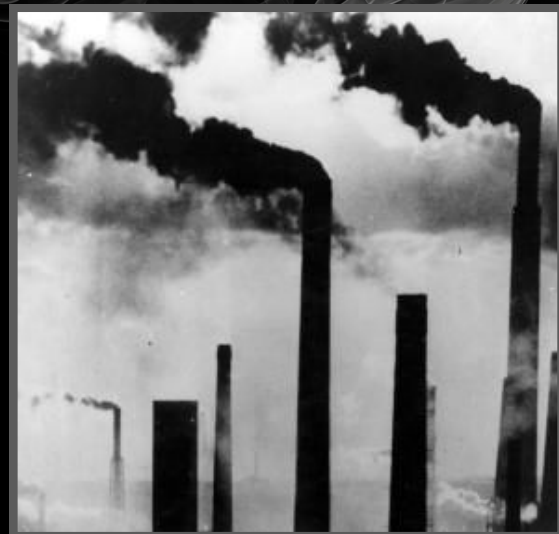
increase in paper production has led to serious consequences. As mentioned, global paper production reached 400 million metric tons in 2023. This immense demand, coupled with insufficient attention to its environmental impacts, is already causing dangerous problems for our planet. One of the major issues is deforestation. According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the U.S. alone consumes around 10 million trees per year to produce paper products, contributing to the loss of forest cover and threatening wildlife habitats.

Moreover, the environmental cost of producing paper bags can be even greater than that of plastic bags. The UK Environment Agency found that producing a single paper bag generates about four times more CO2 emissions than producing a plastic bag. So, the question remains: Is there a way to mitigate the damage caused by paper production? The answer is not to stop producing paper bags altogether, but rather to focus on increasing recycling rates, implementing policies to control deforestation, and supporting afforestation efforts.

Some countries have already set an example of how to balance paper production with environmental preservation. Sweden, which produces over 11 million metric tons of paper annually, has adopted a sustainable approach to forestry.

More than 70% of Sweden's forests are certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), which ensures that trees are replanted after harvesting. Additionally, Sweden has a recycling rate of over 80% for paper products, reducing the need for virgin pulp. Similarly, Finland, which produces around 10 million metric tons of paper each year, has implemented policies focused on tree replanting and recycling to maintain a positive environmental impact. By adopting sustainable practices & focusing on reforestation and afforestation, we can reduce the harm caused by paper production and move towards a more environmentally friendly future. It is possible to achieve a balance where we meet the demand for paper products while also protecting the planet. So, the question is: What kind of world do we want to live in? A world suffocating in pollution, plastic, and smoke, or a world full of greenery, fresh air, and happiness? The choice is ours. So , "Think By Yourself"

-Abhinav Bajpai

WOMEN
RESERVATION:

A historic step towards women's empowerment, yet bound by the chains of political deadlock.

Masterstroke or a POLITICAL Gimmick

New Delhi : From the past few days the "Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam" Or women reservation bill has dominated the media coverage and circles of political debates in the nation. This bill introduced as the 128th constitutional amendment, now known as 106th amendment finally got the President's assent n 29th September after being passed by two houses of the newly constructed temple of democracy i.e. Parliament.

This bill seeks to reserve at least 33% seats in the Lok Sabha and respective state assemblies for women and even provides a quato within this for marginalized women from schedule class and schedule tribes, this ultimately ensures enhancement in the representation of women in politics and decision making process at the top most level. This bill is hailed by several intellectuals, politicians, bureaucrats and feminists organization as the step forward in ensuring equal opportunities are provided to women in every sphere of life, as the current percentage of women parliamentarians is around 14% in both the houses and less than 15% in national average of all the state assemblies ; which is lower in comparison to the international average of 26.5%. The successful passage of this constitutional amendment is claimed by all the political parties. For instance this bill was halted several times since its introduction in the Parliament in 1996 by then National front government led by H.D Deve Gowda.

But the underlying conditions mentioned in this historical amendment for its implementation haven't got the due attention it deserved , for instance this bill clearly states this reservation will be only implemented after the delimitation exercise is carried out on the basis of recently conducted census. (delimitation- is the exercise of fixing the limits or boundaries of territorial constituencies for the process of elections)

This further delays the execution of this bill as the 2021 census will be conducted in late 2024 due to the earlier covid crises and restrictions and the controversial delimitation exercise is frozen until 2026 by a constitutional amendment. The delimitation exercise is carried out after a certain interval to ensure the political boundaries are redrawn, so to provide equal representation in respect to the proportion of population, Already this delimitation exercise is subject to heated debates and politically controversial statements especially from the southern politicians and representatives.

As of today's political landscape, the seats in the national parliament are fixed on the basis of the 1971 population census. If the delimitation exercise (which is severally opposed by southern politicians and parties) is conducted on the basis of 2011 census to ensure fair share of representation according to population share, then it's estimated that alone Uttar Pradesh and Bihar will get additional 21 seats, simultaneously their counterparts from South like Kerala and Tamil Nadu will lose almost 16 seats.

Empowerment etched in law, yet paused by the politics of division.

Many politicians and political parties of South like DMK and CPI have criticized this exercise as their representation, political importance and financial autonomy will be negatively effected and even alleged that they have been penalized for population control measures and better developmental standards achieved by them as a result of good governance in contrast to their northern peers. Unless and until the central authority reaches an agreement with the southern administration regarding this contentious yet controversial topic, the execution of this amendment or bill will be stuck in a political deadlock between the establishments of North and South. Which will eventually turn this historical development into a gimmick and way of extracting short term political gains and benefits.

HOW is PRODUCTIVITY CULTURE

Breaking TODAY'S STUDENTS?

The Price of Perfectionism

-Alankrita Pandey

Productivity Culture, or Hustle Culture, In recent times, has nearly permeated all social media platforms, with study influencers and academic high-achievers flaunting their intense study routines and exhausting cycles of nonstop work through Instagram Reels and YouTube Shorts titled 'Come Study With Me' or 'A Productive Day In My Life'. While this is widely seen as a motivating force, fueling students with a surge of encouragement and dedication, the negative aspects of it still remain untouched.

Behind closed doors, youngsters grapple with an overwhelming sense of unworthiness, carrying the weight of guilt with every moment not spent 'hustling'. They live with a debilitating paradox – their minds and bodies yearning for rest, yet the mere thought of it triggers waves of self-doubt.

Caught in this constant chase of perfectionism, we have blurred the essence of what learning truly means. When we start measuring student's worth through grades and completion rates, we prioritize quick wins over deep understanding. Our constant focus on QUANTITY over QUALITY sows seeds of deep-rooted problems, creating an environment where true struggles go unnoticed.

The myth of the perfect student schedule- waking in the wee hours, studying 12-14 hours a day, and still somehow managing to complete every task that is penned down on the 'To-do lists' has indeed created unsustainable standards. Today, students meticulously track all their activities through a plethora of applications available. Social media too bombards them with photos/videos of other students who somehow always seem to be doing more, achieving more. This constant comparison along with the pressure to maintain one's "productive image" is posing a mental

health crisis that can no longer be ignored.

At present, what we as a community need to desperately understand is what "Productivity" really stands for. It means to acknowledge that taking a break isn't laziness, that asking for help isn't a weakness, and most importantly -that an individual's growth isn't a one-size-fits-all journey.

Why do we set unrealistic goals that hinder our well-being rather than enhancing our performance? Why is there a pressure to conform to someone else's definition of success and productivity? Early morning study sessions are not everyone's cup of tea.

Some students enjoy studying early morning, while others are most productive and at their best thinking late at night. Some need frequent breaks to freshen their minds and focus well, while others can indulge themselves in deep study for hours. There should be no rigid system to blindly label what should be or what not to be. Instead, we must learn to embrace the beautiful diversity of human learning and adaptability that cannot be standardized by one-dimensional productivity metrics.

It's high time we break free and adopt a healthier approach by redefining productivity and understanding that physical and mental well-being too are inevitable components of success. Simply put, productivity matters, but not at the cost of one's physical, mental and emotional well-being. Over-working and under-sleeping are not achievements to be glorified. True success isn't about how many hours we can grind, but about finding a balance that allows us to grow, learn, and most importantly, take care of ourselves.

It's time we redefine what it means to be productive, putting our mental and emotional health at the center of that definition.

Cost of LEARNING in INDIA

-Alankrita Pandey

The landscape of education ing and has indeed trans-grandparents' time, where like the sacred Ganga. But over their calculators, al loans, while their chil-threads of EMIs. The esca-India, with each center various competitive exam-tion into a commodity right. Education, which necessity now leaves fami-colossal debts. "Over the price inflation [CPI] has inflation in education has around 11-12%. This could double every six to from Times Now. As per Indian Express, "Between mary education in India in-graduate and postgraduate cent and 13.19 percent sharp young minds being ies midway due to financial common display. Even sec-more than new ones did this, I can't help but evolving panorama of exor-what kind of future are we sculpting for our next generation

in India has been ever-evolv-formed dramatically from our knowledge flowed freely, just today, I see parents hunched adding zeros to the education-dren's dreams hang by lating coaching culture in promising assured success in inations, has gyrated educa-rather than a fundamental was once considered a basic lies with drained savings and last decade, while consumer been around 6%, the rate of been radically higher, at means that education costs seven years. " says a report the findings reported by The 2014 and 2018, the cost of pri-creased 30.7 percent, while courses saw hikes of 5.8 per-respectively." The sight of forced to abandon their stud-constraints has become a ond-hand books in shops cost years ago. Looking at all of wonder that in this rapidly bitant educational expenses, of dreamers and innovators?

---

a b c d e
f g h i j k
l m n ♡ p
q r s t u

you

Trust me when I say
I tried my best to hide YOU
I tried my best not to mention YOU
in my conversations
I tried my best to keep YOU as a
secret in my life
I tried to hide YOU in my actions
But why?
Because I am worried that I will be
Because people will use YOU against me to win an argument
Because whenever I shed a tear they will start mentioning YOU
as my weakness
YOU know what yesterday when I was sitting on the staircase
with my friends... someone there mentioned YOU, And trust me
the sympathy she got by using YOU was incredible. She was
appreciated for having YOU in her life and was told that
YOU don't define her.....
I really wish
I was brave enough to mention YOU
I could record YOU
I could accept that I have YOU in my life
But I am not
With time I have accepted that we both are conjoined twins and
YOU define me.....
Even here I am not able to mention YOU...
Your real name because of whom I am crying for hours and
aiting for YOU to leave me alone
forever!

"I tried to
hide YOU, but
in the end,
YOU define
me."

-Aarshita Gupta

THE POWER OF SAYING NO

By - Aarshita Gupta

Setting boundaries in student life

Have you ever said "yes" to something you didn't want to do, because you felt guilty? Maybe a friend asked for your notes when they never attended any classes, or when a senior of yours wanted you to complete their assignment at the last minute.

Saying "no" in these kinds of situations is not rude but it's necessary for yourself. As Students, we often feel pressured to please everyone, whether it be your friends, parents, family or teachers.

NOPE

WHY SAYING IS "NO" IMPORTANT

1 Builds self respect:- when you set boundaries, people start respecting you more. You show them that your time and energy matters to you.

2 Protects time and energy:- your time and energy is valuable. If you will start agreeing on everything and start taking up all the tasks then you won't have time and energy for yourself. Learning to say "no" helps you to focus on your priorities.

3 Reduction in stress and anxiety:- more number of tasks leads to stress and anxiety. Over committing can lead to exhaustion.

! At the end of the day you cannot pour from an empty cup. Prioritising yourself isn't "selfish" but it's necessary for your own mental health.

So the next time when you feel hesitant to say a "no", so please remind yourself- You are not responsible for making everyone happy at the cost of your own happiness.

IS THIS VICTORY?

On October 7th, 2023, In the center of the world, an organization announced Operation Al-Aqsa Flood at 6:30 AM (UTC +3). The irony begins here. The operation was named after Al-Aqsa, a place considered holy and where Prophet Muhammad ascended to heaven. It was supposed to be a symbol of destruction, affecting over 2 million people, making hell look like a vacation spot. In less than 12 hours of the mission starting, 1200 innocent lives were lost. The Prime Minister of Israel officially declared "WE ARE AT WAR"

But even after a year, the question remains: 'who is this war really against?' As Netanyahu proudly proclaims, Israel is only for the 'Victory'. Let's see if that's really a victory. After a year of this so-called victory, nearly 42,000 Palestinians have lost their lives, over 96,000 are wounded, and millions are suffering from displacement. But wait, there's more! The total strength of the Hamas group is only 41,000 and they're still kicking. So, 'Is this a victory?'

Israel's economy, once thriving, shrunk by 21% in 2023. The nation, ranked 5th safest in the world in 2022, now sits at a dismal 40th place. A nation that was once on the rise now finds itself embroiled in conflicts on seven fronts. Is this the price of victory against a terrorist group? Losing allies, business, trust from other nations, and even trust from its own citizens. 'Is this a victory?' Oh, how the mighty have fallen.

"Oh, how the mighty have fallen."
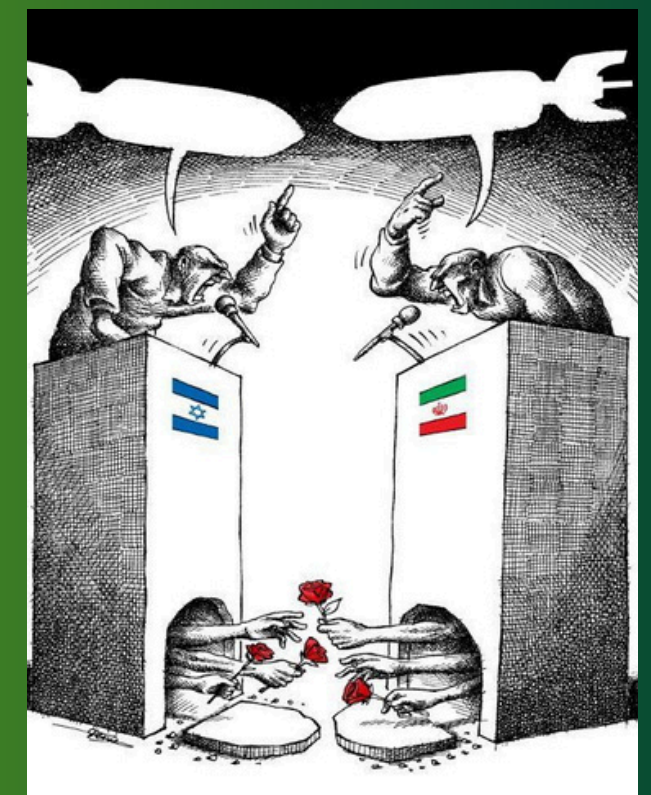
Sleep

REST for the MIND.

How sleep quality affects mental wellness

-Ankur Shekhar

Sleep is a fundamental biological function that affects every aspect of an individual's well-being, including emotional regulation, cognitive function, and overall psychological resilience. Everyone can experience it first-hand that lack of sleep or a bad sleep affects our mental state, that is why it is said that someone in a bad mood "woke up on the wrong side of the bed."

Broadly speaking, sleep quality consists of sleep continuity i.e. when a person goes to and actually falls asleep, for how much time is he in deep sleep and in light sleep, and the number of times a person awakens during the sleep and daytime impact i.e. the extent to which the person feels refreshed on waking up and throughout the day.

"Mental health isn't just about the hours you're awake but the peace you find in the hours you sleep."
Mental health is an important part of a person's general health since it involves our thoughts, feelings, and actions. It is the perception and attitude that tell us how to cope with stress, how to perform our work, and how to interact with our society. Mental health is important at every stage of life and can assist people in solving problems, performing their day-to-day tasks, and achieving balance in their lives.

In this fast paced, competitive world, sleeping problems like trouble falling asleep, staying asleep, or waking up early, leads to poor sleep quality are very much common in adolescents and young adults. In university students specially, nighttime sleep disturbances can lead to and have shown symptoms of depression, Obsessive-Compulsive behaviors, and psychological distress. Poor sleep has also been associated with post-traumatic stress, eating disorders and psychosis spectrum experiences such as delusions and hallucinations. Sleep deprivation increases the production of cortisol (the primary stress hormone), which can lead to heightened anxiety levels. Chronic stress, in turn, disrupts sleep, leading to a cyclical relationship between poor sleep and elevated stress responses. Over time, this cycle can contribute to the development or worsening of anxiety disorders. Mental health disorders have a significant impact on sleep quality. Depression and sleep disturbances frequently coexist, leading to insomnia, hypersomnia, and sleeping in bits patterns being common among individuals with depression.

Research is still going on in order to really know the bidirectional connection/relation between mental health and sleeping quality and its patterns. However, both mental health and sleep are complex issues affected by a multitude of factors, but, given their close association, it can naturally be said that there is a strong reason to believe that improving sleep can have a beneficial impact on mental health and can be a component of treating many psychiatric disorders.

Many studies, despite not providing enough evidence, have shown immediate effects and a connection between mental health and sleeping patterns. As most research on the association between sleep and mental health are observational in design, the reason behind this is because of the absence of time lag between the quality and quantity of sleep and mental health of the said person, it has been observed that the strongest effects of sleep on mental health are immediate and short lived and are typically limited to anxiety and depression during the observations.

A few lifestyle changes can be made to improve sleep quality, which can lead to better mental well-being. These lifestyle changes include establishing a consistent sleep routine (which means sleeping and waking up at the same time everyday) as it helps in regulating the body's internal clock. A good sleeping environment consists of a dark, quiet, and moderately cool room with a comfortable mattress. Reducing screen time and limiting the intake of stimulants like caffeine, nicotine, and alcohol, before bedtime can prevent sleep disturbances and improve sleep quality. . Practicing relaxation techniques such as mindfulness, meditation, deep breathing exercises, and progressive muscle relaxation can also help calm the mind and prepare the body for restful sleep, alleviating stress and promoting relaxation. If sleep disturbances persist despite lifestyle changes, seeking professional help is essential. Cognitive-behavioral therapy for insomnia (CBT-I) has been proven effective in treating sleep disorders associated with mental health conditions. Addressing sleep disturbances can significantly improve emotional well-being, cognitive function, and overall mental resilience. Recognizing the bidirectional nature of this connection enables individuals and healthcare providers to take proactive steps toward fostering both better sleep and mental health. The causes of internal health are inheritable or individual, which means that it's important to watch for it throughout one's continuance.

BEYOND THE PAIN

EMBRACING MENTAL STRENGTH IN CHRONIC HEALTH BATTLES

When we watch survival-based shows like Squid Game or Alice in Borderland, we marvel at the characters' ability to endure extreme conditions. We cheer for their resilience, and their will to survive against impossible odds. But what about the real survivors—the ones we fail to see? Those who battle chronic illnesses every single day, without recognition, without applause. While fictional struggles capture our attention, real-life endurance—against pain, fatigue, and relentless uncertainty — is often ignored.

> Chronic illness isn't just about enduring physical discomfort, it's about managing constant stress, fear, and self-doubt

Reality of Chronic Illness

Chronic diseases are lifelong battles that extend beyond physical pain. They make people feel vulnerable, hopeless, and invisible. Simple tasks like getting out of bed, taking a shower, or going to work — can feel like climbing a mountain, yet society often dismisses these struggles as inconveniences or personal weaknesses.

When someone says, "I have diabetes," or "I struggle with an autoimmune disorder," the common response is, "Oh, but you don't look sick." Though well-intended, this phrase is dismissive. Chronic illnesses are not always visible, but their impact is profound. The pain is real, the exhaustion is real, and so is the emotional toll.

The Hidden Psychological Struggles

Imagine waking up every day uncertain of how much pain you'll endure. Some days, your body cooperates. On other days, it feels like it's shutting down. Now, add societal judgment — the whispers that you're "lazy," the side-eyes when using disability accommodations, and the unsolicited advice urging you to "just think positively."
Anxiety: The unpredictability of symptoms and fear of flare-ups create constant worry. Depression: Pain and limitations can lead to withdrawal and loss of motivation.

Guilt: Many feel like a burden to loved ones, even when they aren't. Imposter Syndrome: Those with invisible illnesses often doubt their suffering's legitimacy because others don't take it seriously.
For example, a simple seasonal fever is enough for most to take a break. While their discomfort is valid, imagine experiencing similar pain daily without relief. Yet, those with chronic conditions are often labelled as "weak."

Society's Harmful Misconceptions

Chronic illnesses are misunderstood, leading to insensitive assumptions: "You just need to exercise more." (As if movement alone can cure genetic or autoimmune conditions.) "It's all in your head." (Mental and physical health are interconnected; dismissing one worsens the other.)

You don't look sick." (Pain and struggle don't need to be visible to be real.) "You're just being sensitive." (Minimizing someone's experience only isolates them further.)
These misconceptions suggest illness is a choice. But no one chooses pain. When it persists despite treatments, it deeply affects mental health.

The Psychological Burden on Adolescents

Children with chronic illnesses face even greater challenges. Research over 30 years shows they have a significantly higher risk of mental health issues. For example:
Type 1 Diabetes (T1D): Young people with T1D experience high rates of depression, anxiety, and eating disorders. The constant need for blood sugar management creates overwhelming stress, making self-care harder.
Type 2 Diabetes (T2D): Boys with T2D face increased risks of depression, hospitalizations, and binge eating due to the stress of managing their condition. The stigma around weight and lifestyle choices further isolates them, making self-care feel like an uphill battle.

Obesity: Obese children often struggle with self-esteem, social isolation, and bullying, leading to lifelong emotional struggles, making it difficult to break free from cycles of negative self-image and unhealthy coping mechanisms.
Asthma: The struggle for breath extends beyond the physical—poor sleep from asthma symptoms leads to chronic fatigue, increased anxiety, heightened stress, feeling tired during the day diminishing overall well-being, and quality of life.
These young fighters not only face physical challenges but also deep psychological scars that shape their futures.

Redefining Strength: The True Survivors

Society glorifies physical endurance—athletes pushing limits, warriors fighting battles. But strength isn't just about physical ability.
People with chronic pain, undiagnosed conditions, and invisible illnesses fight battles few understand. They are survivors and warriors too, not because they defeat their illness, but because they continue fighting despite it.

It's time to acknowledge those living with silent battles—not just those with diagnoses but anyone struggling with persistent pain. Let's change the narrative and recognize survival, in any form, as a sign of strength. We can support them by listening, educating ourselves, offering help without judgment, and challenging stereotypes. Let's honour their resilience and give them the respect they deserve.

CRIME

Crime—it's everywhere.
From the darkest alleys to the highest corporate offices, it has existed for centuries,evolving alongside society.
I think Crime is a constant, inevitable presence in every society, whether large or small, transcending time and place.
But have you ever wondered why crime persists despite strict laws, heavy policing, and harsh punishments?
its persistence highlights the critical need for scientific study and understanding.
Awareness of criminology is not just important but necessary to address its complexities & effects.

A NECESSARY EVIL

OR A

PREVENTABLE REALITY?

Criminology, the scientific study of crime and criminal behaviour, seeks to answer this question. Coined in 1889 by Frenchman Paul Topinard, the term criminology has since expanded to include everything from cybercrime to terrorism. Edwin Sutherland, a pioneer in the field, defined criminology as the study of crime as a social phenomenon—not just the act of law-breaking, also how laws are made & how society reacts to crime.One of the most influential thinkers, Émile Durkheim, believed that crime is not just inevitable but also necessary for society's progress. Sounds strange, right? How can something so destructive be useful? According to him, crime challenges outdated norms and forces legal and social change. But does that mean we should accept crime as an unavoidable reality? Or should we fight to prevent it, especially when it comes to our youth?

THE INNOCENCE WE CAN NO LONGER ASSUME

When you hear the word crime, what comes to mind? A hardened criminal? A gang member? A serial offender? Rarely do we picture children or teenagers behind these acts. Yet, juvenile crime is rising, and it's a growing global concern. For decades, children were seen as innocent and incapable of committing serious offences. But let's face it—the world is changing. The number of heinous crimes committed by minors is increasing, forcing us to rethink juvenile justice.
Did you know that while overall juvenile crime in India declined by 30% between 2013 and 2022, some states like Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra have reported over 50,000 juvenile crimes in the last decade? Even more shocking—crimes against children have skyrocketed by 81% in the same period! One disturbing case involved a 17-year-old from a wealthy family in Pune who was responsible for a fatal accident while driving under the influence. Instead of facing strict consequences, loopholes in the legal system allowed him to escape harsh punishment. This case is a chilling reminder that juvenile crime isn't just about troubled backgrounds—privilege and lack of accountability also play a role.
The rise in juvenile crime is not just a statistic—it's a warning. If we ignore it, we allow it to grow. If we take action now, we can change the future.
So, what can you do? Educate yourself. Raise awareness. Speak up for change. And if you want a deeper look into the realities of juvenile justice as our generation is into watching series, watch the K-drama "Juvenile Justice" (2022). It's an eye-opening portrayal of how the justice system handles young offenders, the struggles of victims, and the moral dilemmas surrounding crime and punishment, because prevention starts with understanding and change starts with you

WHY DO MINORS TURN TO CRIME?

Juvenile offenders aren't born criminals. They are shaped by their circumstances—family breakdowns, economic struggles, peer pressure, lack of education, and even exposure to violent media. The real question is: Are we failing our children before they fail society? Historically, juvenile offenders were treated like adults—punished rather than reformed. But modern criminology tells us that rehabilitation is more effective than harsh punishment. India's Juvenile Justice Act recognizes this and emphasizes reform over punishment, except in heinous crimes involving 16-18-year-olds. But is this enough? Are we doing everything we can to prevent juvenile crime in the first place?

LESSONS FROM THE WORLD

Some countries have successfully reduced juvenile crime. Japan, Norway, and Singapore have some of the lowest juvenile crime rates. Their secret is a strong societal values that discourage crime from an early age, strict but fair juvenile justice systems and effective rehabilitation programs that reintegrate offenders into society
In contrast, countries like India (1.2% juvenile crime rate) and South Africa struggle due to poverty, lack of education, and weak law enforcement. Even in the United States, where the juvenile crime rate is 9.9% (2022), issues like gang violence and broken homes continue to fuel delinquency. The difference is clear: Prevention works better than punishment.

WHAT TO DO?

Juvenile crime is a wake-up call. Instead of asking "How do we punish young offenders?", we should be asking :how do we prevent crime in the first place? How can we create a better environment for our youth? How do we ensure that justice is served while also offering a second chance? We need stronger education programs, community support systems, and mental health awareness to break the cycle of juvenile delinquency. Schools, parents, and society must work together to ensure that children don't stray toward crime in the first place.

A NEW DAWN

Charles did not realise it was dawn because his room was cloaked in darkness.

I could see dew drops condensed on the windowpane in the living room. There is something about this weather that gives me a sense of foreboding, a misery that hangs thick in the air. The smell of pine, roasted goose, and baking cakes must bring me joy. Christmas is right around the corner, but there is heaviness in Walton's Place.

It has been around a month since Charles, the master of the Walton House, resigned from his position as the senior surgeon at Healer's Hospital. It was a sudden and abrupt decision.

Since his work was his anchor. Exacerbating the pain, his beloved niece passed away from leukoma, in the very same operation room where Charles was performing the procedure, and his son, Jack, got kicked out of school because of brawling.

Charles acted like nothing had affected him, but deep down he was simply avoiding facing his emotions. Charles has always been a righteous person and an ethical man. He used to stay away from his house and family, spending long hours treating people in the hospital. Because of this, he neglected his family—not intentionally or willingly, but because of his morals. When he failed to save his niece, and when his son turned against him, it shattered him, making him question the very career he had dedicated his life to. He sequestered himself from his family after this event, isolating himself in a room.

Days passed by and his wife Lily, ever the caring wife, was deeply concerned about her husband. She watched him pretend like things were under his control but in reality, it was not the case.

Lily entered his room one afternoon, switching on the lights of the room making the dull and dark room bright. "Charles, wake up, it's afternoon," said Lily gently. "What will I do after waking up, Lily?" Charles replied in a fatigued tone. "Get out of this room, take a shower, grab breakfast and come with me to the garden. Help me sow some seeds."
"I have no hunger, Lily," he muttered.
"And you can sow the seeds on your own, it will only get ruined if I be a part of it." "Why do you say so?" Her eyes in search of the man she once knew before. "Everything blooms of which you are a part, whether you agree or disagree," she added. "I feel as though I am the reason for this compounded agony for our family. All the time away from the people I care about only to lose them when I finally come back," said Charles.
"You know you have no reason to blame yourself, you could not have done anything to better the situation. Poor Christine had always been sick, you did everything that was possible to save her," I said.

Lily, you have always been a pillar of support, I can always confide in you but being honest both of us know I was never present when our son grew up and maybe it is because of my absence and neglect, things have turned to be like this." Said Charles regretfully. "Oh dear, you did what you felt was right for our family.

You do not need to beat yourself up for it," said Lily, placing her arm on his chest. "I do not know, Lily. I do not know what to do or how to make amends. I feel like I have lost everything. Nothing makes me want to smile anymore. It feels like everything that's going wrong is happening because of me. You needed my help and support in raising Jack; I was never there for him. I let both of you down," said Charles.

"Charles, it has been weeks since you've locked yourself up in this room. You are not to blame for any of this. I think you need to seek help because this can't go on any longer than it already has. Please, for all of us."

"Lily, you have always been a pillar of support, I can always confide in you, but being honest, both of us know I was never present when our son grew up, and maybe it is because of my absence and neglect, things have turned out to be like this," said Charles regretfully.

"Oh dear, you did what you felt was right for our family. You do not need to beat yourself up for it," said Lily, placing her arm on his chest.

"I do not know, Lily, I do not know what to do or how to make amends. I feel like I have lost everything. Nothing makes me want to smile anymore. It feels everything that's going wrong is happening because of me. You needed my help and support in raising Jack, I was never there for him. I let both of you down," said Charles.

"Charles, it has been weeks since you've locked yourself up in this room. You are not to blame for any of this. I think you need to seek help because this can't go on any longer than it already has. Please, for all of us."

"I don't think I am ready to take help Lily." Said Charles with his eyes fixed on the floor with the heaviness of guilt. Lily strokes his face gently and leaves the room.

"I don't think someone can tell me anything else than what I already know." He thought to himself. "I have been a failure both in personal as well as professional life.

It will pass when it will, taking advices from others won't help me in anyway and I do not want to put my family in any more trouble so I think it's best if I keep myself isolated like this." But a doubt crept in his mind. "But on the other hand, is it even correct to dismiss my family every time they come to encourage me to seek help?

But how do I tell someone that I failed as a doctor, a father and even as a husband? How is my family supposed to depend on me if I myself get weak like this?"

The following morning, Lily walked into Charles's room again, this time with a folded piece of paper in her hand. "Charles, I know you're feeling trapped in your thoughts," she said gently, placing the paper on the side table. "But please read this. For me." After she left, Charles hesitated for a moment before unfolding the note. It contained an address for a nearby mental health clinic along with a brief message:

"You've dedicated your life to helping others heal. Now it's time for someone to help you.

We'll be with you every step of the way." Charles stared at the note for what felt like an eternity. A part of him resisted, still drowning in self-blame. But Lily's words echoed in his mind: "You are not to blame, but you need help. For all of us."

Later that evening, he found himself standing outside the clinic. It wasn't easy—each step felt like a struggle against the doubts swirling in his mind. But he walked in, clutching the note like a lifeline.

The counselor's office was warm and inviting, a stark contrast to the cold isolation of his room. The session began with simple questions—how he was feeling, why he was there.

Initially, Charles found it difficult to speak, but as the minutes passed, he began to open up about everything: the guilt, the grief, the overwhelming sense of failure.

The counselor listened patiently, offering reassurance without judgment. By the end of the session, Charles felt lighter, as if the weight he'd carried for weeks had started to lift.

Over the weeks, Charles attended regular therapy sessions. He learned to process his grief over his niece's death, to separate his son's mistakes from his own perceived failures, and to rebuild the confidence he had lost.

Slowly but surely, he began to reconnect with his family, sharing meals, tending the garden, and even playing chess with Jack.

One evening, as the family sat together by the fireplace, Charles turned to Lily and said, "You were right. Seeking help didn't make me weak—it reminded me that I could be strong. For myself, for you, and for Jack."

Lily smiled, her eyes filled with pride and relief. "Healing takes courage, Charles. And you've shown all of us what courage looks like."Lily smiled, her eyes shining.

The Walton House was no longer cloaked in darkness. The scent of pine and baking cakes returned, no longer tinged with foreboding, but with warmth and hope. Charles knew that the road to recovery was ongoing, but for the first time in months, he felt ready to walk it—with his family by his side and the support of professionals guiding the way. Because sometimes, the bravest thing you can do is ask for help.

साक्षरता :
शांति और समझ की राह

ज्ञान का दीप जलाओ, अंधियारा हटाओ,
शिक्षा की रोशनी से, दुनिया को सजाओ।

अक्षर-अक्षर से मिलते, दिलों के किनारे,
साक्षरता से मिटते, सारे दुख के धारे।

जहां हो शिक्षा, वहां अमन का बसेरा,
हर दिल में खिलता, प्रेम का सवेरा।

शब्दों से हो बात, नफरत को मिटाओ,
समझ की भाषा से, दिलों को मिलाओ।

न भाषा की दीवार, न मज़हब का बैर,
साक्षरता से बनेगा, प्रेम से भरा शहर।

समझ बढ़ेगी जब, हिंसा दूर भागे,
साक्षरता से जुड़ें, दिलों के नए धागे।

ज्ञान से हो रोशन, हर मन का दीप,
जहां हो साक्षरता, वहीं बहेगी प्रीति।

शिक्षा हो अधिकार, सबका एक समान,
हर दिल में बसता, प्रेम का गान।

बिन शिक्षा के जीवन, अधूरा सा लगता,
साक्षरता से ही तो, हर सपना सजता।

शांति की राह पर, साक्षरता का साथ,
नफरत और दूरी हों, पल में काफूर रात।

आओ हम सब मिलकर, ज्ञान का दीप जलाएं,
प्रेम और शांति से, दुनिया को महकाएं।

हर घर-आंगन हो, शिक्षा से उज्ज्वल,
साक्षरता से बनेगा, यह संसार निर्मल।

ज्ञान की चाबी से, खोलें हर द्वार,
साक्षरता से दुनिया हो, खुशियों का उपहार।

आओ मिलकर बांटें, शिक्षा का संदेश,
प्रेम और शांति से, हो दुनिया विशेष।

~आथर्व रोहित नागपाल

मेरा सन्देश रहे सदा अमर हर दिल को छू जाए यह असर

PROCRASTINATION

The silent struggle of students under

PRESSURE

~ Aadya Mittal

In the rich tapestry of a student's life, procrastination is a thread that tends to weave through daily routines, injecting deep shadows and problems into productivity and achievement. For students with academic, extracurricular, and social lives, procrastination can both comfort and destroy them. In an academic, high-stakes environment, with deadlines staring them in the face and expectations soaring high, procrastination is an almost ubiquitous reality for students. Not a mere bad habit, but a sophisticated behavior fuelled by a plethora of pressures and concerns that affect young minds, procrastination is a reality for students. With the intimidating shadow of impending exams, and social media's call, students face constant inner and outer battles that cause them to procrastinate, and in many cases, to their disadvantage, destroying them.

Studies consistently verify that a strong majority of students procrastinate to one level or another, with studies estimating between 80% and 95% of college students reporting procrastinating about academic work at least part of the time. It isn't a matter of procrastinating sometimes; a significant portion of students become mired in a state of chronic procrastination, with roughly 50% of college students included in that group. Those statistics paint a picture: procrastination isn't an idiosyncratic issue, but a ubiquitous one that reaches students at all academic levels and in all academic subjects. Whether procrastinating over an essay, putting off studying for an examination, or avoiding work on a group assignment, procrastination pervades the student life, impacting academic performance and overall wellness.

The Pressure Cooker: Root Causes of Procrastination

For many students, procrastination is a survival mechanism to flee overloads of work and a fear of failure. With a perpetual flood of assignments, exams, and deadlines, perfectionism sets in, in such a scenario. Students procrastinate in starting work, not necessarily for lack of will or skill, but out of a fear of not being able to meet one's, and even possibly everyone else's, high standards. That procrastination, ironically, creates even more tension, and a tension-and-avoidance circle takes over. With the onset of the digital age, a whole new variety of distractions have crept in, and procrastination is fueled even further. Social media, streaming, and gaming programs provide immediate pleasure, and it is easier to evade work and not face any discomfort in working through tedious tasks. With a fear of missing out (FOMO) at social events, students increasingly choose immediate pleasure over long-term goals.

## The Ripple Effect: How Procrastination Can Influence Mental Health

While procrastination can temporarily assuage tension, its long-term effect on mental well-being can have a profound impact. Cramming at the eleventh hour tends to produce shabby work, eroding a student's confidence and academic performance. The feelings of guilt and self-blame that follow procrastination then erode mental well-being, planting feelings of inadequacy and hopelessness in a student's mind. Long-term procrastination, moreover, is accompanied by increased anxiety and depression. Repeated procrastination, compounded with the added pressure of having to deliver, creates a mental burden that is unbearable. For students with other sources of tension, procrastination is an added strain, eroding their tolerance even further.

Breaking the Cycle: How to Overcome Procrastination?

Addressing procrastination entails a multi-faceted intervention that considers its root cause. Breaking down work into bite-sized, actionable chunks and developing realizable timelines can enable students to regain mastery over work. To-do lists, calendars, and productivity software can serve to organize and make students responsible for work, too. Perhaps most significant, though, is developing an environment in which students can admit to procrastinatory difficulty and receive a supportive, non-judgmental ear. Teachers, parents, and peers can all work together to develop an environment in which students can have an open discussion about mental wellness and about sources of pressure in school life. Acknowledging and praising small wins can serve to build motivation and confidence, too. Techniques such as deep breathing, yoga, and meditation can serve to build students' resilience to procrastination, and through them, students can learn to manage emotion &work in the present, overcoming procrastination, fear, and anxiety over a period of time.

A Call to Action

Procrastination is not a failure, but an act in reaction to university life's obstacles and pressures. By getting at its source and providing students with tools and guidance that they need, we can liberate them from procrastination and make them capable of achieving academic and life goals, and build a future generation with a preference for self forgiveness and adaptability over perfectionism. The journey towards overcoming procrastination is not an easy one, but with determination and patience, it is most assuredly a viable one. For, most importantly, starting to overcome procrastination begins with a start, no matter how insignificant it may appear to be.
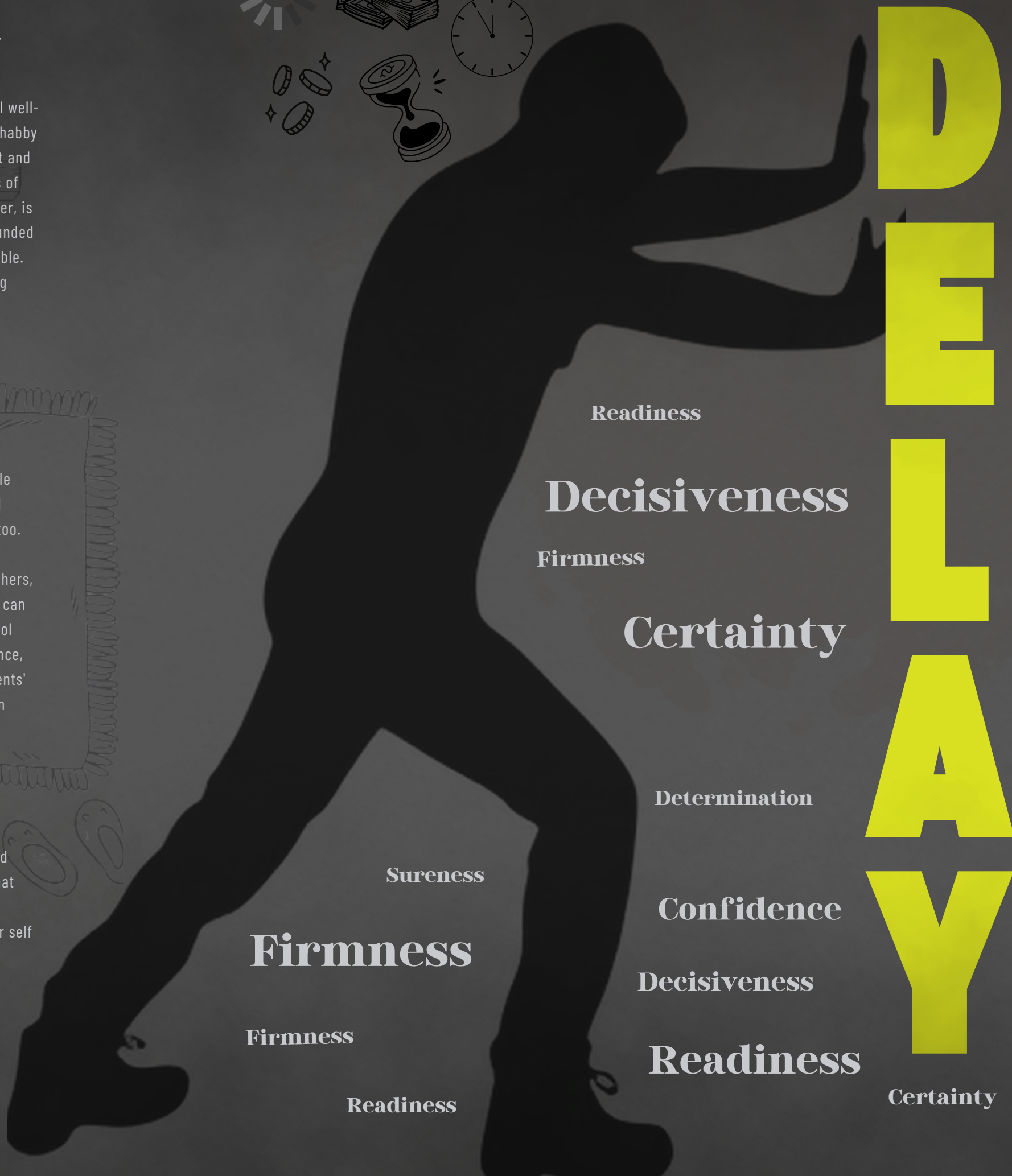
DELAY

Readiness

Decisiveness

Firmness

Certainty

Determination

Sureness

Confidence

Firmness

Decisiveness

Firmness

Readiness

Readiness

Certainty

The Simple Way of Living

~ Aadya Mittal

Simplicity

Simplicity is an age-old practice of living with purpose, clarity, and authenticity in a world overflowing with distractions and complexities. Simplicity is a conscious choice to value the most important things, and then discard that which holds no value and takes its toll on us in unnecessary weight. Simplicity is not about forswearing ambition and abundance, but about pruning our lives to assure that our time and energies go towards that which brings value and joy. In simplifying our living spaces, our calendars, and our minds, simplicity brings a path to peace and fulfillment. By living in simplicity, we become open to deeper relationships, meaningful experiences, and a life lived with purpose. In today's hectic world, simplicity slips through the cracks. There's a message always prevalent in society that more is best—more success, more possessions, more of everything. But what if the secret to a happier life isn't about adding more, but actually having less?

Simplicity isn't about cutting out all of your enjoyments and living like a monk, but about cutting through mental and physical clutter and focusing on what really matters. By living simply, we make room for the things that actually make life worth living, such as having a quiet moment to yourself, working on a hobby, or simply spending time with family and friends. Often, a simple life can start at home. have a look at your room, your living room—how many items sit idly, collecting dust? Perhaps it's that one pair of shoes that are present in your closet for a single use, that stack of magazines or novels on your reading shelf, unopened and untouched. Clearing out these unnecessary items not only creates room for new items, but also feels like a burden lifted off your shoulders. Having a tidy environment can have a direct impact on your mental health and make your mind a little less cluttered, allowing for a renewed prioritization of what's important.

But simplicity isn't simply about worldly goods – it's about mental disarray, too. In an age when we're glued to our technology and checking and rechecking our smartphones and social media, at times it seems like a flood of information and a depletion of brain and heart. This constant stream of information can be overwhelming and exhausting. By periodically unplugging from our socials, we can calm our minds and pay attention to whatever brings us peace, such as reading a book, taking a walk, or simply sitting and thinking. Simplicity also involves saying "no." It's easy to say "yes" to everything out of a fear of missing out (FOMO) and disappointing everyone, but when we say "yes" to everything, we overcommit and become stressed and overwhelmed. By saying "no" to things that don't align with our values and goals, we make room and have the energy for things that will.

Simplicity is not a concept, but a way of life that brings us back to the heart of who we are. It's about consciously deciding to prioritize quality over quantity. In simplifying, we make space for what enriches our lives: meaningful relationships, purposeful work, and quiet reflection. By simplifying, one is less stressed, lives in the present, and creates a life that feels rich and full. It helps us appreciate beauty in the ordinary, joy in simple pleasures, and freedom from the din of abundance. Simplicity is not about what we give up but about what we gain: a truer view, a lighter heart, and a life guided by values most cherished. It is an act of courage and intelligence, a reminder that happiness is not in possessing but in appreciating what one already has. Perhaps it's high time to stand back,

Let go of the unnecessary and enjoy beauty in simple things.

# BE-REAL IS FAKE TOO

THE PRESSURE OF ON-SCREEN REALISM

BeReal as it says, delivers its audience to 'be real'—snap a picture randomly, no filters, no edits, no shows and no fakes. Sounds like something great, right? But let's be honest: even this 'authentic' app comes with its sort of pressure.

Why "Being Real" Feels Fake

Faking Authenticity: On the random ringing of notifications, we still choose the best angle and best moment—always retaking the photo to be the best one.
Fear of Judgment: What if our BeReal isn't thrilling enough? No one wants to seem 'boring.'

The Validation Crisis: Though the motive of this app is to be raw and unfiltered, we still check who commented, who reacted, and who didn't.
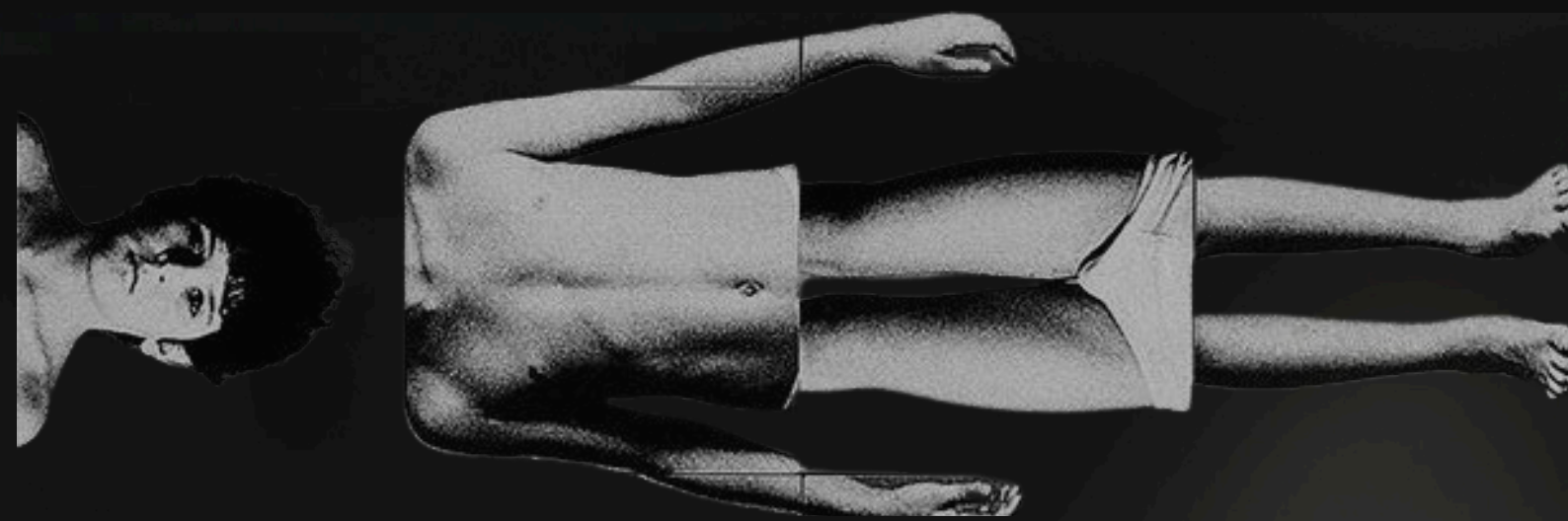
The Truth Beneath Social Media

No application and no camera can capture real life because real life is not just fascinating moments and celebrations. It's the awkward silences, the just-on-the-couch days, and the unfiltered views that one never posts. And that's okay indeed.

Liberating Oneself from this

Stop Performing – Live moments for yourself, not others.
Embrace the Raw Reality – You don't need an aesthetic life to have a meaningful one.

Detach from Online Validation – Don't let the number of likes and views be your definition.

Even the social media platforms said to be authentic are still curated. True authenticity isn't about proving —it's about being and accepting. So, next time you feel a hundred pounds on your shoulders to make your BeReal 'perfect,' remember: life isn't a highlight reel, and that's what makes it beautiful within itself.
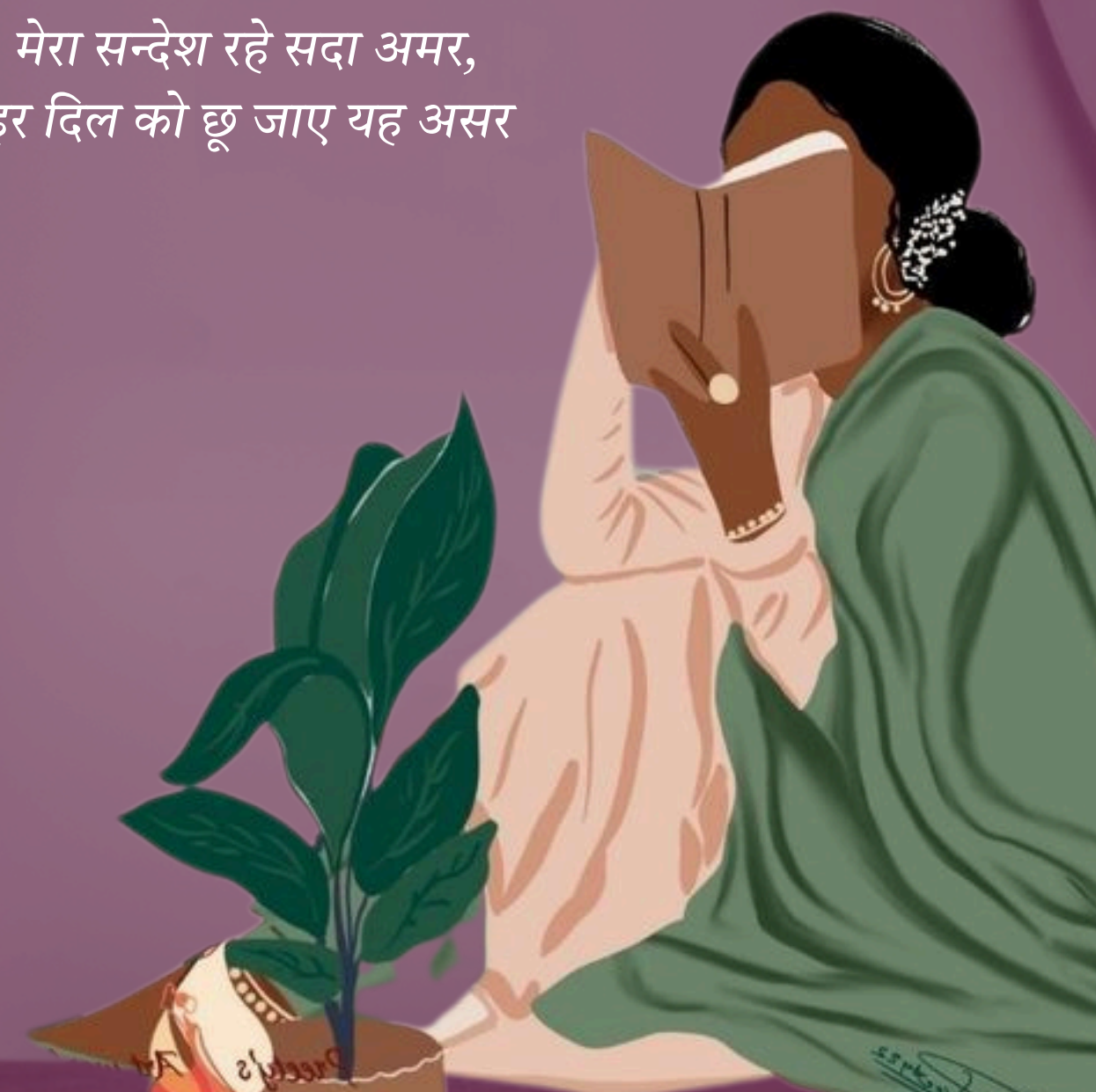
-Laranya Khairnar

किताबों की आवाज़

-आथर्व रोहित नागपाल

बंद अलमारी से आवाज़ आती है,
हमारे संस्कारों की नई महक आती है ।
हमारे अंतर्मन को छोड़ कर लैपटॉप पर ये चला
जमाना |
अच्छे दौर को छोड़कर नए दौर पर ये
चला जमाना |
हमने अंतर्मुख होकर ज़िंदगी में सीखा,
नए दौर का नए रीति रीवाज़ वाला जमाना ।

ज़िंदादिल हमें कम ही निकालते है,
पर जब निकालते हैं तो जमाने की
नियति ही बदल देते हैं ।
आज बच्चे हमें नहीं पढ़ पाते,
पर उनके उज्ज्वल भविष्य के सपने हम
में ही पलते हैं ।
हमने न कभी किसी को रुलाया,
बल्कि हमने सबका साथ निभाया
मेरा सन्देश रहे सदा अमर,
हर दिल को छू जाए यह असर

Colonization OF THE MIND

-V. Harshith Subramaniam

Capitalism's toll on Mental Health outcomes

In the last decade, there has been an increased recognition in the humanities and social sciences regarding the causative nature of social structure on the mental health outcomes of seemingly different individuals. In subjects like Social Epidemiology, Social Psychology and Medical Sociology, this has become pronounced.

However, the prevailing modus intellectus of mental health in the disciplines of Psychotherapy and Psychiatry is quite different. Psychotherapy deals with mental health as an individual problem. Psychiatry on the other hand, treats the issue as a biological problem that requires a mechanical solution; It tries to "cure" the problem by prescribing medication of various kinds.

I would like to argue that Capitalism as a mode of production – as a way of organizing society, has certain fundamental, latent outcomes, which can profoundly affect mental health outcomes of populations both in the aggregate and at the individual level. I would further argue that many of the "issues" that appear to us as individual problems caused by individual causes, often are a direct result of the inner workings of the capitalist system. Not some malfunction of the system, but just as it is perfectly intended to work.

Historically speaking, a transformation in the nature of mental health and our understanding came in the late 18th and early 19th centuries with the emergence of capitalism. To understand how it really changed people's mental health, it is important to look at what its emergence meant for society as a whole. Capitalism is primarily a system of social production. Then that begs the question – What is a 'System of Social Production'?

Human Beings, like all living animals, need various things to survive – food, water, shelter, clothing etc. However, unlike many other animals, they cannot consume it in the form in which we find it in nature. In order to extract what they need, from nature, they engage in the process of 'labour'. Labour is the process of expending energy and creative powers on raw materials extracted directly from nature, and transforming it into a form suitable for human consumption. This labour-process is also called 'Production'.

Since one human being cannot (by nature-imposed limits) satisfy all their needs by his/herself, they are forced to cooperate and organize into enter into different relations with each other. The totality of these constitutes the most fundamental relations in society – because without these relations, society would not survive. The different ways in which the process of labour is organized gives rise to different kinds of societies, which signify different epochs in world history – Slavery, Feudalism, Capitalism etc. Technically, each of these are different systems of social production.

Capitalism is based on three foundations – private property in the means of production, production oriented towards the realization of profits, a class of 'free' wage-labourers (free in the double sense that 1. They are free to dispose their labour-power as they see fit, and 2. Free from the possession of any means to produce their necessities by themselves).

The realization of profits is the most fundamental impulse of capitalism. As David Roderick, the chairman of US steel once famously said "US Steel is not in the business of making steel. It's in the business of making money". Capitalists produce steel not because steel is useful, but because steel is profitable. They wouldn't venture into combating climate change, because it is not profitable (at least so far).

In a system where the primary objective of production is to realise a profit, the consideration of 'efficiency' becomes paramount (optimizing profit-levels). Labour, the grease that moves capital into transforming input into output has to work constantly for the most efficient use of capital. Every moment that the means of production is not put to use, becomes wasteful. As Marx put it "Moments are the elements of profits". This struggle manifests most prominently in the struggle for the working day and working conditions. The best example one can give in the modern day is the abysmal work conditions in Amazon warehouses, or the temptation for capitalists to extend the working day as much as possible (take Mr. Narayana Murthy's 70 hrs/week rhetoric for example).

Whenever there is discourse about 'toxic work culture' in India, it is always discussed in terms of individuals. But what these discourses fail to see is the systemic nature of capitalism itself, where on the one side is the capitalist class (who own and manage the means of production) and the working class (who have nothing to sell other than their labour-power, and use the means of production to produce commodities which then by right of property belong to the capitalist who employs them). This fundamental struggle at the heart of this system produces all kinds of direct and indirect mental health issues. Work fatigue, alienation, depression from monotonous overwork are only the most visible consequences of this. But what's not visible is the social weight on the individual.

From the most elementary stages of education to the final stages of life, a person's choices in life are inevitably shaped by the market and the considerations of class struggle. A person's choice of education is not shaped by their wish realize their complete potential as human beings, but by "what the market demands" at that point in time. A person's status in society is inevitably shaped by the market's 'demand'.

Before the wave of globalization of the Indian market, a MBA graduate in India had a very different status in society from what they have today. This also means that people cannot pursue learning subjects that won't make a quick money, however passionate they may be about it. I'm sure every person can relate to this situation in life, and the kind of long term impacts it has on the psyche of the people.

Capitalism's class nature – where workers do not have the means to produce the necessities of life by themselves, are kept in check by the threat of firing. Loss of employment practically means a loss of the right to live. And employers know how to exploit this fear well enough. Food, Housing, Education, Healthcare – all of which depend on employment – can be snatched from a person the moment they lose a stable stream of income. This uncertainty of economic life acts as a crushing fear on the minds of many. Today, alcoholism is considered a huge mental health issue. But 'drunkardness', as Engels referred to it, remained one of the few sources of enjoyment available to the working class, many of whom indulged excessively to obscure the misery of existence.

But perhaps the most concerning consequence of organizing society around the whims of an impersonal, *laissez-faire* market is the breakdown of social interaction and bonds. Paul Baran and Sweezy highlighted the erosion of meaningful social relationships under capitalist societies. They observed that much of social interaction had become shallow, dominated by superficial pleasantries and small talk, rather than the emotional depth required for genuine bonds. While difficult to measure precisely, one of the most pervasive consequences of modern capitalism is loneliness, which has grown into a significant public-health issue.

This was starkly acknowledged in 2018 when the British government appointed a Minister for Loneliness, underscoring the profound societal impact of this crisis.

The biggest hurdle in solving this issue is the lack of acknowledgement of the social nature of this issue. Capitalism individualizes this problem and throws away the burden of suffering/solving it on individual workers. The important point to realise however is that solution to this issue is inevitably related with the liberation of the humanity from the whims and fancies of the market system, and the anarchy of economic uncertainty, which would imply the transition to a different mode of production, a different way to organize society – one of stability and fulfilling social needs, and not instability and the fetishism of commodities.

YOU'RE JUST LAZY

"Burnt out, not dropped out"

Introduction

Getting back home from school after a long day—lectures, projects, extracurriculars, and loads of notifications. You finally lay down, only to hear, "*Why're you being so lazy?*" Sounds familiar? Gen Z isn't lazy—we're **burnt out**. Between academic stress, social anxiety, digital overload and a constant desire to fit in, our mental energy is exhausted before anything else. Burnout isn't just being tired—it's emotional, physical, and mental exertion with nonstop stress. It makes even simple tasks feel impossible.

Many adults grew up without social media, 24/7 connectivity, or today's academic pressure. For them, hard work meant physical labour, strict routines, and on-point expectations. They don't see our version of "work"—mental strain, emotional fatigue, and the incapability to truly disconnect.

Bridging this Gap

Instead of feeling frustrated, we can help adults understand burnout by communicating effectively. Start by explaining it clearly—let them know it's not about a lack of care but rather mental exhaustion. Using relatable analogies, such as comparing burnout to working overtime without breaks, can make the concept easier for them to grasp. Setting boundaries is also crucial; prioritizing rest and saying, "I need a break so that I can focus later," reinforces the importance of recovery.

Additionally, engaging in open conversations about their own struggles as teenagers can foster mutual understanding. Lastly, it's essential to normalize rest by showing that self-care isn't laziness but a necessary part of maintaining well-being.

We're Not Lazy We're Overloaded

Burnout is a warning sign, not an excuse. The next time someone calls you lazy, break the truth to them. Because when we bridge this gap, we create a world where mental health is finally understood and respected.

LOVE

-Aarshita Gupta

I committed suicide
Not the way you think
Not with the help of poison
Not with the help of a rope
Not with the help of pills
Or by jumping from a height
I committed suicide by
Loosing myself daily
By killing myself every passing second
By skipping my meals
By not having enough sleep
Continuously thinking in a loop
By not having the feeling of
belongingness
Or by hoping to fit in
I died in the silence where,
No one could see me or
Hear me
Or can come to my rescue
It was all me All alone
And with a heart
Which stopped beating loop

-Aarshita Gupta

death.

Someone asked me what true
love means.
It's in a chilly night when my
father wraps his muffler
around me so I don't catch a
cold.
It's in my mother constantly
asking if I've eaten, even when
she herself hasn't had a meal.
It's in my brother sneaking into
my room late at night to check if
I'm running a fever.
It's in his silly jokes aimed at
making me smile, just because
he can't bear to see me sad.
It's in the rare yet heartfelt
compliment from my father that
lights up my world.
It's in my brother capturing a
candid picture of me, so quietly
that I don't even notice.
It's in my mother holding my
hand tightly while crossing the
road,
like she's shielding me from the
world.
True love isn't loud or showy—
it's soft, steady, and wrapped in
the little things that stay with
you forever.

The Mind's Garden

The mind, a restless garden wide,
Where fears and hopes live side by side.
Storms may rage, wild and bold,
Turning warmth to aching cold.

Anxieties creep like tangled vine,
Choking dreams that once did shine.
Yet beneath the chaos, soft and true,
Peace awaits with morning dew.

It blooms in breaths steady and slow,
In letting fragile feelings grow.
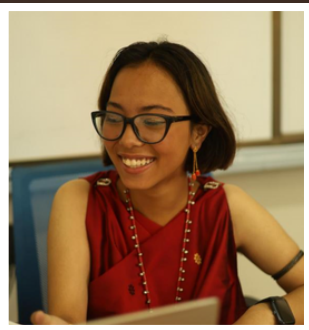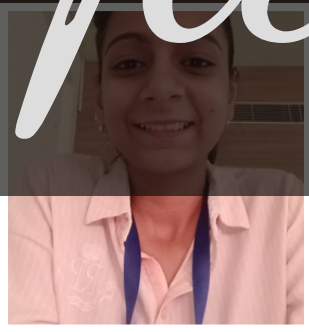Not in silence or perfect grace,
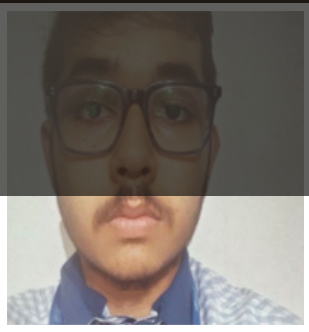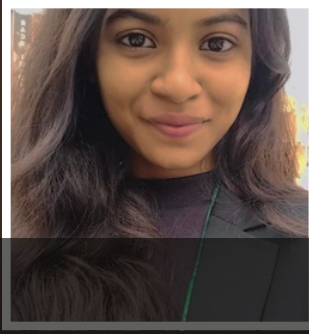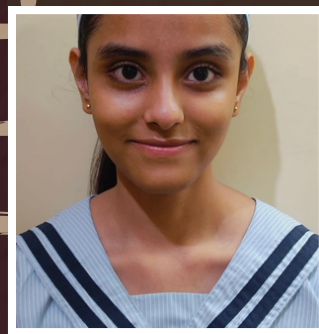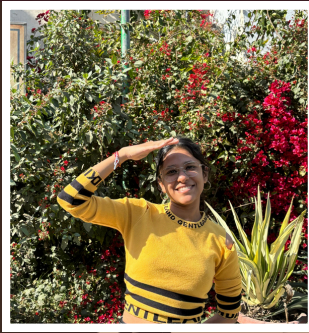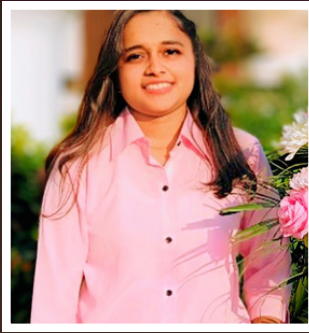But in finding light in every space.

Tend your garden, nurture the calm,
Heal with patience, like nature's balm.
For peace is a journey, slow but sure,
A quiet strength that will endure.

-Aatharv Rohit Naagpal

"Through calm and chaos, I've learned to rise"

THE STUDENT'S Family

GRAPHICS TEAM

Sarang Saikia

Radhika Gupta

Manish Kumar Baruah

Ananya Tripathi

Liked what you just read? Imagine being part of the team that made it.

This magazine isn't just a collection of articles.
It's a reflection of voices, dreams, efforts, and the silent power of students coming together for something bigger than themselves.
Each page has been crafted with sincerity, late-night edits, careful discussions and a shared sense of purpose.
But more than anything ,it's been built with heart.

We believe in the power of stories.
In bold opinions. In untold experiences. In raw honesty.
And if you're reading this and thinking, "Maybe I could contribute too..." then you already belong here.

Whether you're a writer, designer, photographer, or someone with an idea that won't let go, this platform is open to you.

WE ARE STUDENTS FOR STUDENTS, BY STUDENTS

The team may have put this edition together but the next one could have **you** in it!!

✉ Write to us at- thestudentvoice11@gmail.com

📷 Reach out on Instagram- @thenew.student

in Connect with us on LinkedIn — The New Student

The NEW STUDENT

THE FIRST EDITION