

SRI SATHYA SAI VIDYA VIHAR

2ND EDITION



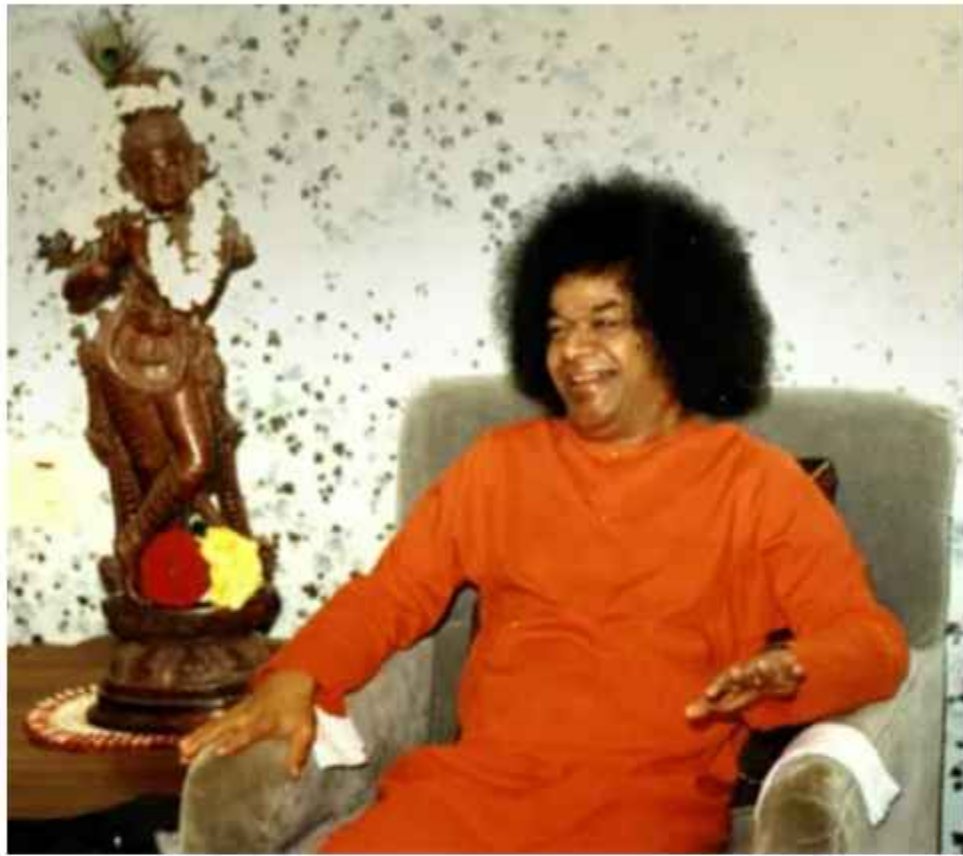
Mindscape

A JOURNEY THROUGH THE SCIENCE AND SOUL OF THE HUMAN PSYCHE.

Understanding
Parasocial
Relationships

Ashis Nandy and His
Theory on the Psychology
of Colonialism

Why Your Brain Thinks
555 Means You're the
Main Character



"PEACE IS WITHIN YOU. IT CANNOT
BE FOUND OUTSIDE. OUTSIDE,
THERE ARE ONLY PIECES.
SIMILARLY, HAPPINESS IS NOT
OUTSIDE."

FROM THE *Principal's* DESK



Dear Students,

I am thrilled to see the initiative taken by our students to publish a psychology magazine named 'Mindscape'. It brings me great joy to see young minds come together to explore, express and evolve through such a meaningful initiative. This endeavor shows your passion for psychology which is truly appreciable.

As students, you stand at a pivotal stage of life where awareness, empathy and resilience are essential tools, not just for academic success but for building a balanced and meaningful future. The magazine serves as a reminder that caring for our minds is just as important as striving for achievements.

I hope each one of you continue fostering a culture of compas, mindfulness and open dialogue.

Congratulations to the writers, the editorial team and all those who contributed for bringing this vision to life and I look forward to see the growth of Team Mindscape. May your compassion for the human psyche continue to grow and guide others towards a more healthy and understanding world. I wish you all the best in your academic pursuits and hope that this magazine becomes a platform to share you creative insights.

**Warm regards,
Dr. Anju Chopra
Principal**

LETTER *from the* TEAM

Dear Reader,

Guess what? We did it again.

That's right - Mindscape: Edition 2 is here, which means somehow, no one has stopped us yet. (We're starting to think this is enabling behavior, but we'll unpack that later.)

If you read our first edition, first of all, thank you. You witnessed our experimental phase: a chaotic, caffeine-fueled dive into psychology, pop culture, and existential 3AM thoughts.

And now? We're back, slightly wiser, marginally more organized, and still running purely on curiosity and denial.

This time, we wanted to push things a little further. Expect deeper dives, stranger questions, and a few "who let them write this?" moments because the brain didn't suddenly get less weird, and neither did we.

Here's what you'll find inside:

Fresh obsessions, more movie and book reviews and character analyses no one asked for, but you'll secretly love. New brain phenomena, weird psychological facts to make you feel smart (and mildly concerned).

More unhinged commentary - we call it "research," but it's really us oversharing with structure. And the solution to the crossword in the 1st Edition (I know you were waiting for it).

We said it last time and we'll say it again; we're here to make psychology fun, a little chaotic, and a lot more human.

Whether you're here to learn, procrastinate, or psychoanalyze your favorite fictional characters (again), welcome back to our collective brain dump.

Stay curious, stay weird, and if you haven't read the 1st Edition yet... we're not mad, just disappointed (but like, lovingly).

Love,
Team Mindscape

TABLE *of* CONTENTS

Understanding Parasocial Relationships 07

From fandom to obsession

What's on your plate, is on your on mind 09

You are what you eat

And Then There Were None 11

Book review

Why Time Seems to be Going Faster After 2020? 12

Time is an Illusion

Coping Mechanisms 14

Because Screaming Isn't Always Socially Acceptable

Ashis Nandy 16

Theory on the Psychology of Colonialism

Psychology Behind Dreams 18

Dreams are as complicated and as simple as the dreamer.

Winter Blues 20

How Seasons Affect Our Mood

The Perks of Being a Wallflower 21

Let's go be Psychos Together.

TABLE *of* CONTENTS

“Conformity Kills”	23
Charecter Analysis of Richard Cameron	
Why Your Brain Thinks 555 Means You’re the Main Charecter	27
How Angel Numbers Work.	
On Dying and Other Inconveniences	29
Grief is the last act of love.	
Crossword	32
Solutions for the one in 1 st Edition	
Mind Mail	33
Send it all in	
Thank You	34
(We got too sentimental)	
Minds behind Mindscape	35
That's the team	

UNDERSTANDING PARASOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS:

From fandom to obsession

Is there a celebrity or an influencer who you consider to be your online bestie, follow every update of theirs, and know every detail about their lives? If yes, then you are probably in a parasocial relationship.

A parasocial relationship is a one-sided socio-emotional connection a person develops with a media figure, like a celebrity or even a fictional character, who is not even aware of their existence.

The concept of parasocial relationships is not recent; it has existed even before social media was popularised. This term was coined by American sociologists Donald Horton and R. Richard Wohl to describe the one-sided bond people form with media personalities and characters with the rise of television. Their research aimed at explaining how the audience could feel connected with the figures on screen.

Parasocial relationships are established through continuous, one-sided exposure to a media persona, which leads to the creation of an illusion of intimacy and friendship in the viewer's mind towards the influencer, making them feel as though the influencer is present in their real life.

It would be incorrect to say that parasocial relationships only have negative impacts on people's minds. They can feel like a warm hug at times of loneliness, thus contributing to well-being and promoting emotional fulfilment by fostering a sense of closeness with the people they look up to (and in some cases even think of them as family). But these feelings are often short-lived and can quickly turn into social isolation, unrealistic expectations from influencers, and detachment from real-world relationships.

Obsession is a severe and surprisingly common element of parasocial relationships, especially between fans and celebrities. It builds over time as the emotional involvement of fans increases. The audience becomes engrossed in seeking constant updates, grows excessively loyal to the artist to the point of mindlessly defending them in every situation, and develops undue concern about their personal lives.

The instances of extreme fan behaviour are happening way too often to ignore. This is primarily due to the interactive



nature of the content related to these celebrities, and carefully crafted PR strategies, which make them seem just a click away. The delusion of fans also harms the public figures they idolize.

For example, singer Chappell Roan has revealed that the intense expectations of her fans following her rise to fame resulted in her being diagnosed with severe depression. In other cases, fans cross boundaries that seriously affect celebrities' lives. For instance, Jungkook, a member of the K-pop band BTS, has faced fans attempting to break into his home in several incidents. Such actions raise major security concerns and make celebrities uncomfortable around their own fans.

Parasocial obsession also fuels toxicity. Many fans resort to bullying and spreading hate against anyone who expresses differing opinions about the figures they stan, or when rival artists win awards instead of their favourites they tend to attack the artist who won. Such behaviour takes a heavy toll on the mental health of public figures, which is surely contrary to what true fans would want.

There is a huge difference between supporting a public figure or influencer and breaching their personal space and lives. It is completely natural to enjoy someone's work or be inspired by them, but the problem begins when you forget they are not a part of your reality. Always remember, true support and love is appreciation, not possession.

WHAT'S ON YOUR PLATE, *is on your mind*

Okay, let's be honest, how many of us have cooked two packets of Maggi at 2 AM, and called it "late night cravings," and then sat there wondering why we feel so guilty afterward?

Well, your brain isn't being dramatic; it's simply reacting to what you just fed it. Food is more than just fuel. It's comfort, it's celebration, it's a distraction from stress and, sometimes it's like therapy for a rough day.

Whether it's a bad grade, an argument, or just plain boredom, we often turn to food to cope. While emotional eating is completely normal and understandable, it can easily spiral into a cycle - eat junk food, feel bad about it, eat more to feel better, and end up feeling worse. This cycle doesn't just affect your body; it messes with your mind too.



Here's where the science kicks in. Your gut and brain are in constant communication through something called the gut-brain axis. It might sound intense, but basically it means, your gut and your brain are super connected with each other, kind of like the OG duo, chai and Parle-G.

Your gut is filled with good bacteria, known as your 'microbiome', which plays a huge role in producing mood regulating chemicals like serotonin. So, when your gut is healthy, your brain feels more balanced. But if your gut is overwhelmed with junk food, sugar and stress? That's when anxiety, mood swings, and low energy can sneak in.

Let's spill the tea. Some of our favorite comfort foods are lowkey messing with our heads. Temporarily comforting? Yes.

But, in the long term? Not so much.

Too much sugar is just mood swings in a cute wrapper, sugar might give you a quick energy spike, but they're usually followed by a crash that leaves you feeling sluggish and mentally



drained. Deep-fried snacks like samosas, pakoras and french fries may taste amazing, but they're often loaded with trans fats that can trigger inflammation and even increase stress levels. And let's not forget our beloved fizzy drinks, especially the so called "Diet" Coke dressed up as the healthier choice. One moment you're hyper energetic, and the next, you're completely wiped out. The truth is, while these

these foods may offer temporary comfort, they're not doing our brain or body any real favors when eaten regularly. No one's saying you have to quit your favorite foods forever, but just don't let them reach your plate every day.

Instead there are some foods that can calm you down and give you instant inner freshness and satisfaction such as curd, fruits & veggies, nuts (especially walnuts & almonds), and whole grains (brown rice, millets). These healthy choices when experimented with can be absolutely delicious because healthy does not always have to mean no fun.

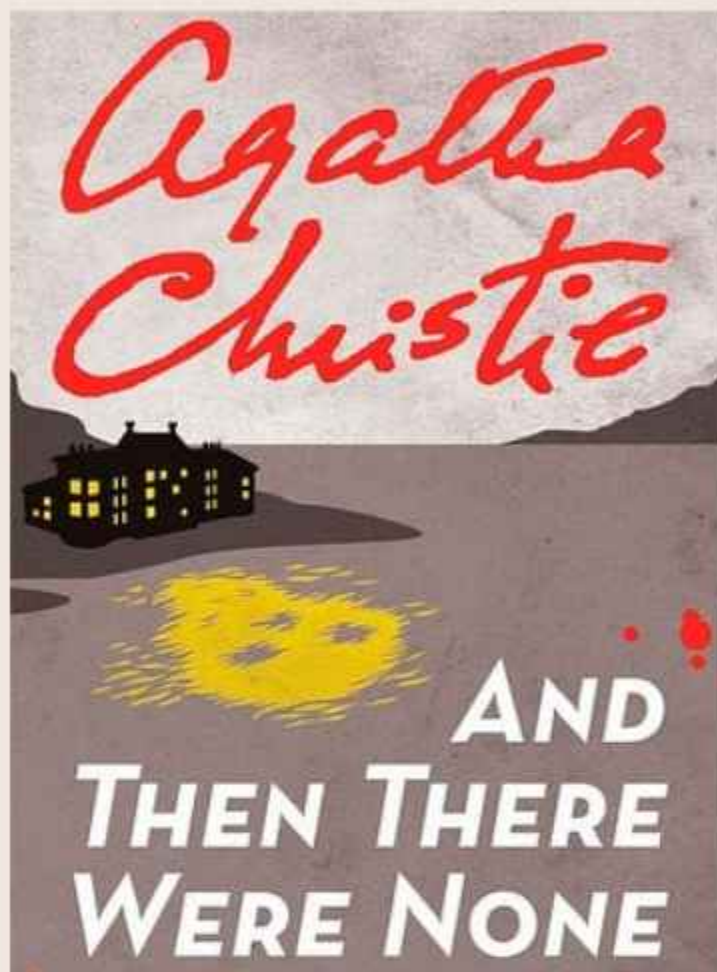
When you're stressed and exhausted between exams and deadlines it's totally normal to find yourself finishing an entire packet of 'Kurkure' without even realizing it. Emotional eating is real. And while it's okay once in a while, if it becomes your go to way of coping, it can actually make you feel worse in the long run.

Mental health isn't just about journaling, meditating, or listening to music. What you eat actually plays a major role too. Of course, we're not saying give up on your favorite snacks. But maybe balance it out. Pair your chips with some nimbu paani. Swap one Maggi night with a comforting bowl of khichdi. Instead of stress snacking on junk, try roasted makhana, peanuts, or even just drink some water. Sometimes, a quick nap or a walk does more for your mood than a whole tub of ice cream.

And if these little changes can give you ways to reduce the sheer amount of mental breakdowns in a month, then why not give them a try?

Book Review

AND THEN THERE WERE NONE



You have most probably heard of Agatha Christie - yes, the legend, one of the bestselling authors out there, the go-to author of beginners and masters alike.

This book is regarded as perhaps her best work to date, it is one of the most mentally stimulating, psychologically rich books of Agatha Christie, and it guarantees to keep the readers at the edge of their seats.

It revolves around ten people who have committed some kind of crime that cannot be legally proved, but are guilty of, and a judge, who takes it upon himself to punish them all and let justice prevail.

Some acquaintance invites each of these people to a remote island, where no means of travel and communication are available - ergo, there is no escaping the island, and metaphorically, their punishment.

But wait - why is everyone dying all of a sudden?

The people know that the killer is amongst them. Paranoia, mistrust, chaos and pure survival instinct takes over. They're no longer concerned about civil conduct, morality, and their core instincts take a hold of their minds. The story descends into an eerie fight for dominance and survival.

However, the most psychologically captivating detail that Agatha Christie has brought to light is the guilt that comes with the deaths and murders, the gnawing and churning in their guts, making them question their own humanity. Is survival worth murder?

The story explores the themes of guilt and manipulation, of crime and punishment, and the complex yet frail nature of the human mind under such conditions.

Does justice always prevail, even if it is in the most questionable and twisted form?

After all this, do I still need to insist you read this masterpiece?

WHY TIME SEEMS TO BE GOING FASTER SINCE 2020?



If you remember how the days seemed to drag endlessly during the pandemic, chances are you've noticed that time feels like it's been speeding up ever since 2020. In the years following COVID-19, people across all age groups and cultures have reported a subjective acceleration in the passage of time. While theories from neuroscience, sociology, and technology offer their own explanations, one of the most fascinating one lies in the realm of psychology.

Time perception is a key concept in psychology that explores how we experience or become aware of the passage of time. As we age, this perception changes with our experiences. Since each year makes up a smaller fraction of our total life, we tend to perceive time as moving faster the older we get. For example, a year when you were five made up one-fifth of your life, whereas at seventy, it makes up only one-seventieth - making it feel comparatively shorter.

Another explanation for why time feels accelerated now is the way the pandemic

reshaped our environments, behaviors, and habits. During lockdown, malls were closed, streets were empty, and people were confined indoors. This led to boredom - and as we intuitively know, time seems to pass slower when we're bored because we pay closer attention to it. Once everyone returned to school or work after the pandemic, that excessive boredom disappeared. With busy schedules and renewed activity, time began to feel like it was racing again.

The mental effort it takes to handle tasks at hand, also known as cognitive load, contributes largely to time perception. When our routines resumed post-lockdown, we started feeling the acceleration of time because we had much more to work on.

Additionally, Social connections are one of the most powerful factors shaping our sense of time. Since humans are inherently social beings, our perception of time often reflects the quality of our relationships. Studies have shown that people in isolation (like many were in 2020) tend to feel time moving slower than those with regular, healthy

social interactions. Meaningful conversations, shared laughter, and activities accelerate our experience of subjective time, and vice versa happens with a lack of it.

In the end, a day is still 24 hours, and an hour is still 60 minutes, but it's our experiences and awareness that changed. This transition from lockdown to fast-forward lives, illustrates how profoundly external events influence our internal perception of time. After the pandemic slowed life to a standstill, the lifting of it made life feel faster than ever. The real challenge now is to preserve our sense of presence, meaning, and balance in this rapidly moving world. By practicing mindfulness, living intentionally, and setting clear priorities, we can learn to slow down our perception of time. In doing so, we reclaim not only our awareness of time itself, but also our sense of self in an ever-changing world.



“Time is the most unknown of unknown things.” — Aristotle

By Maira K.B. Wala

WORD WINDOW · *alexithymia* ·

Meaning: A psychological phenomenon characterised by the inability to recognize or describe one's own emotions.

Usage: At university, she was diagnosed with Alexithymia.

COPING MECHANISMS

Because Screaming Isn't Always Socially Acceptable.



Being a human (and a student at that) in the 21st century is an Olympic-level emotional sport. Between academic pressure, tuitions, exam stress, endless social media comparisons, existential dread, and the drama-filled group chats, it's no wonder that we all might feel like screaming, "I JUST NEED A BREAK!"

That's where coping mechanisms come in, the psychological equivalent of bubble wrap for our soul. Coping mechanisms are those quirky little behaviors

we all tend to develop rather quickly, whether it is consciously or subconsciously to handle stress, anxiety, awkward situations and the terrifying concept of Mondays after Sundays. They're like emotional duct tape that kinda hold you together before everything unravels.

Well just like everything else in life, coping mechanisms come with their pros and cons, they can be helpful or harmful depending on whether they're adaptive

(healthy and constructive) or maladaptive (unhealthy and avoidant).

Escapism: The VIP Lounge of Avoidance

It's one of the most relatable coping mechanisms, the psychological equivalent of hitting "Airplane Mode" on your life and pretending your responsibilities, deadlines, and emotional baggage don't exist, and sometimes it's totally alright to imagine yourself in your favorite show, avoiding all the real-life stress and feeling like the main character. But the issue is when escapism becomes your default mode. When you start using fantasy to avoid all uncomfortable feelings then the reality gets blurrier. The key is awareness. Knowing when you're escaping vs. actually healing.

So, repeat after me:

"It's okay to escape, just remember to come back."

Popular Coping Mechanisms

We all cope in our own wonderfully weird little ways. Some of us laugh through the pain, turning trauma into stand-up comedy and calling it humor, while others live in full denial mode saying "I'm fine" while their life (metaphorically) burns in the background, much like the meme.

Then there's displacement, like when your mother yells at you because the housemaid isn't coming, even though you had nothing to do with it. Projection, where of course you are the one who's

anxious, but instead of just accepting that you imagine the whole world around you is anxious too. Whereas, on the slightly functional side, sublimation lets you turn your emotional chaos into art, journaling, or re-organizing your closet at 3 a.m. And of course, retail therapy is always there because girls and boys, nothing screams "glow-up era" quite like chopping off inches of hair after every miniscule heartbreak (we don't talk about the regret).

So... Which Coping Mechanisms Should I Use?

Here's the truth: you can't "cope" your problems away, but you can manage and understand them better. Aim for coping strategies that help you process rather than avoid your feelings, improve your well-being for the long term, not just give instant gratification.

At the end of the day, coping mechanisms aren't inherently good or bad, it's about the function they serve. If a behavior helps you engage with life, it's helpful. If it helps you avoid life, it may need adjustment and moderation. We should make sure we are not using it where actual therapy is required because growth starts when we recognize our habits and ask, "Is this really helping me in the long term, or just giving me momentary comfort?". So the next time life gets messy, remember: you're allowed to cope, just try to do it in a way that also helps you grow. And if not? Well... there's always your best friend ready to listen.

ASHIS NANDY AND HIS THEORY ON THE PSYCHOLOGY OF COLONIALISM

For the second edition of *Mindscape*, we have brought to you a theory deeply relevant to the Indian context: Ashis Nandy's Theory on the Psychology of Colonialism.

Ashis Nandy is an Indian social psychologist and cultural critic who was deeply inspired by Gandhian philosophy, Jung, Freud and Indian cultural thought. In his book, 'The Intimate Enemy', he has deeply explored the effects of colonialism. His work remains one of the most serious indigenization of Western psychology into the Indian context. The central question of his work is: "what happens to the minds of both the colonizer and the colonized under the system of colonialism?"

Ashis Nandy has argued that colonialism is not merely the conquest of one land by another land having superior armies, legal systems and political power. Colonialism is a complete sphere that requires both physical assets and psychological manipulation to achieve its goal - to leave the colonized country drained of its resources and talents. The colonizers come to view themselves as powerful leaders and role models for the colonized. They feel it is their duty to 'civilize' and improvise the colony, asserting their dominance and exerting their influence.

In turn, the colonized feel a strange sense of dependency on them, now viewing themselves as 'backward'. Their own culture appears 'irrational' or 'primitive' or 'orthodox' in comparison. This creates self-alienation; a deep crack, differences and confusion in identity between one's own cultural roots and the imposed colonial ideals. Thus, colonialism becomes an 'intimate enemy' - it resides within the mind, shaping identity and self-perception even after the colony attains political independence.

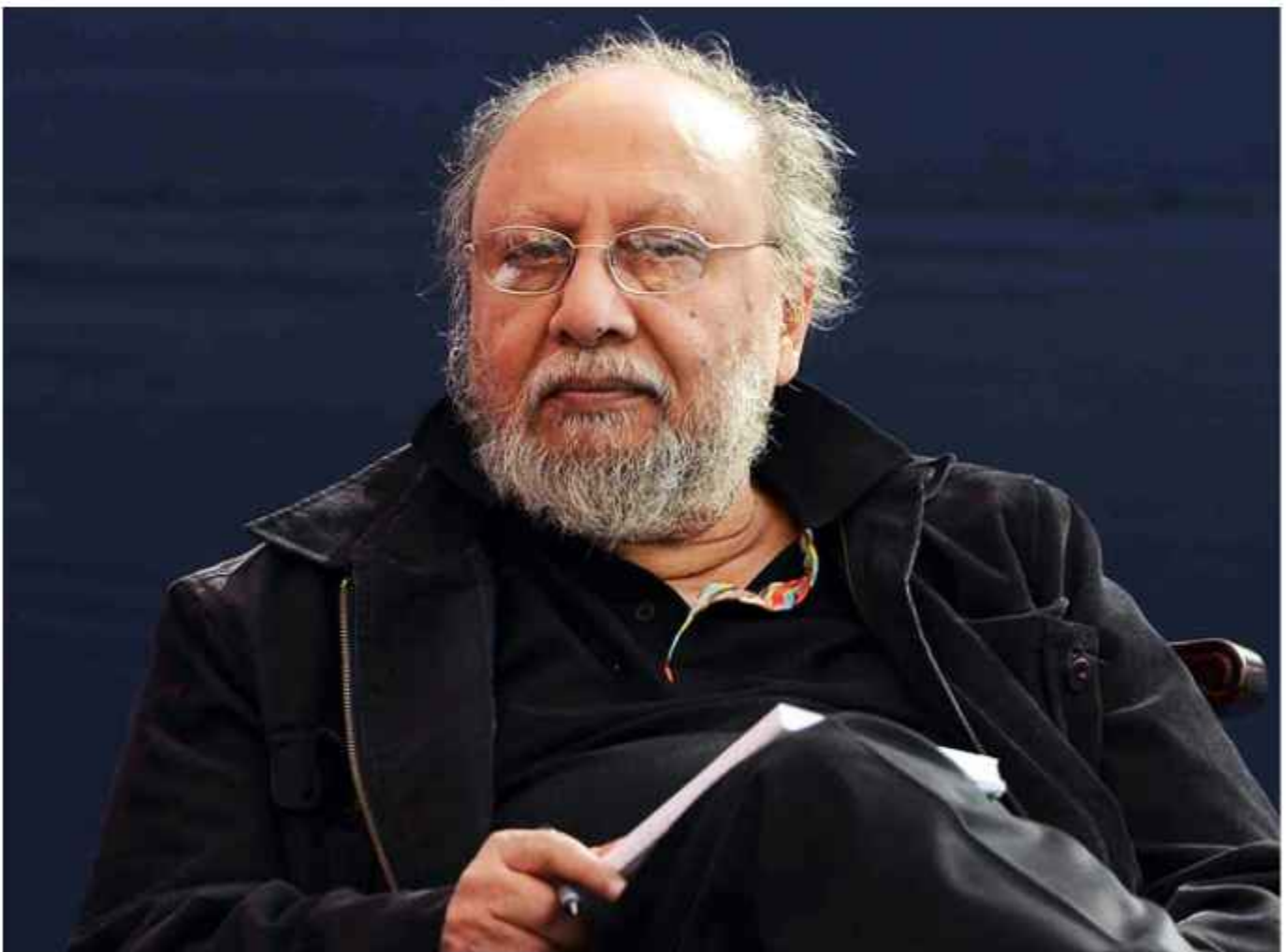
He has organized the effects of colonialism into two domains - the external or physical domain and the internal or psychological domain.

1.External/Physical domain- refers to the colonial control over the militant, social and economic spheres of the colony. Colonies often establish their control through their manpower or advanced weapons and agricultural inputs. This is the visible form of domination.

2.Internal/Psychological domain- refers to the colonial control over the beliefs and self-identity of the people. Colonies achieve this by making people feel inferior and alienated from their culture, which they label as 'backward'. This is the more hidden and dangerous form of domination.

One of Nandy's core contributions is his analysis of western masculinity and its impact on Indians. He portrayed that the Westerners asserted and promoted a kind of male identity that was aggressive, dominant, practical and hard-hearted. In contrast, Indian men were emotionally intelligent, gentle, wise and kind. This portrayal of masculinity affected them adversely, and created an identity crisis. They started to feel weak and inferior, and started imitating the aggressive national masculinity of their colonizers.

Nandy argued that true liberation doesn't only come with political freedom or the power to elect our representatives. One must also be psychologically decolonized - that is, be free from the doubts and inferiority regarding their culture planted in their minds. When we embrace our cultural and national identity, attain the light of knowledge to overpower the darkness of doubts, and understand our precedents and history, we will be free, in its truest sense. His work encourages nations to value indigenous knowledge, plural identities, and cultural self-respect.



THE PSYCHOLOGY BEHIND *dreams*

By Akshita Dwivedi

All dreams, in one way or another, reflect our thoughts, emotions, and experiences from real life. Have you ever been curious about the possible meaning of a particularly weird dream? Such queries can be answered through the fascinating technique of dream analysis.

Dream analysis is a part of Freudian Psychoanalysis, which involves interpreting dreams to reveal unconscious thoughts, desires, and hidden meanings. It is used to understand an individual's psyche.

Even ancient civilizations like the Greeks, Egyptians, and Mesopotamians practiced dream interpretation. They thought of dreams as divine messages from the god almighty, that needed to be carefully interpreted. Dreams were believed to have prophetic powers that could indicate the occurrence of significant events in the future.

The practice of dream incubation was common in many cultures. It involved certain rituals before sleeping to induce dreams about a specific topic. It often included sleeping in sacred temples to receive guidance, medical advice, or visions from gods. Dream analysis is quite different from ancient methods, providing a more practical and scientific method of interpretation.

Sigmund Freud viewed dreams as the "royal road to the unconscious," and suggested that they are a way through which our hidden wishes and desires are expressed. According to Freud, dreams have two parts: the manifest content, which refers to the literal, remembered story of the dream, and the latent content, which represents the hidden, symbolic meaning behind it. The connection between manifest and latent content is created through the process of dream-work, during which the mind transforms our hidden thoughts into the story-like form of the dream that we remember.

To understand this, picture a girl who dreams that she is late for an important exam before her actual examination. In this scenario, the manifest content is running through the school corridors in a panic, whereas the latent content could be her anxiousness for the exam or fear of failure.

To study such dreams, the method of free association is used, whereby the girl would talk or write freely whatever comes to her mind upon recalling certain elements of her dream. This process will allow her deeper emotions and desires to surface.

In a way, dream analysis helps to debunk popular myths about dreams, such as the notion that dreams seen in the early morning come true or that recurring dreams predict the future, by showing that dreams are symbolic representations of our internal thinking.

So, the next time a dream lingers in your mind, don't dismiss it. Instead, take a moment to explore what your mind may be trying to communicate.



Winter Blues:

HOW SEASONS AFFECT OUR MOODS

"Sunlight is not just a source of warmth, it's a cue to our brain, regulating hormones that make us feel alive and connected."

- Dr. Carmen Harra

It is a well-known fact that our emotions are largely dependent on the weather and seasons. A cloudy day can make you gloomy and unwilling to work, while a sunny day with clear skies can fill you with hopefulness and optimism.

The transition of seasons brings about shifts in the moods that most of us experience. The warm days of summer typically bring joy, hopefulness, and relaxation, even though intense heat can cause discomfort and annoyance. The rainy season that follows stirs emotions ranging from calmness and serenity to melancholy and nostalgia, influenced by the personal experiences and perceptions of different individuals. Procrastination, laziness, and the urge to stay indoors in warmth, sets in with the arrival of winter.

Sunlight is one of the most important environmental factors that affects these variations. It helps to regulate the body's internal biological clock and increases the production of serotonin, a neurotransmitter associated with happiness and emotional stability. Additionally, sunlight helps in releasing nitric oxide in the skin, which can lower blood pressure and reduce anxiety, while also stimulating the secretion of

vitamin-D, essential for regulating emotions.

Seasonal Affective Disorder, commonly known as "winter depression," is one of the most apparent effects of seasonal changes on mood. This kind of depression typically starts and ends around the same time each year. SAD symptoms include persistent sadness, lack of interest in activities, low energy, changes in appetite and sleep patterns, difficulty in concentration, feeling of worthlessness, and suicidal thoughts. Both biological and psychological factors cause seasonal depression. Reduced exposure to daylight in winter disrupts our internal biological clock and causes the serotonin levels to drop. The deficiency of vitamin-D and changes in melatonin (sleep hormone) production further contribute to feelings of lethargy. Seasonal Depression is often dismissed as mere winter blues, but it is essential to address it to maintain emotional well-being.

Seasonal changes also influence other aspects of mental health. They can trigger bipolar disorder, disrupt sleep patterns, and cause a shift in aesthetic preferences for colours as well as music (something we'll be getting to in the next edition) and behaviours like aggression and cooperation. Understanding the deep connection between our environment and emotions is the first step toward nurturing a healthier, more balanced state of mind throughout the year.

THE PERKS OF BEING *A* *Walflower*



SPOILER ALERT!

Ah, high school.

That magical place where your social status hinges on your lunch table, mental stability is a rare luxury, and you learn more from hallway drama than textbooks. Some days are full of glitter and inside jokes; others feel like a slow crawl through emotional quicksand.

Enter Charlie, our quiet, thoughtful freshman narrator who isn't just dealing with awkward small talk and scary upperclassmen, he's also carrying some serious emotional baggage. A recent stay in a psychiatric hospital, the suicide of a close friend, and the lingering shadow of his late Aunt Helen all follow him through those high school hallways like ghosts that won't leave.

At first, Charlie is painfully alone.

His only friend? His English teacher. (Which, while wholesome, is also a little tragic).

But everything shifts when he stumbles into a senior dubbed Nothing, named Patrick - chaos incarnate, in the unlikeliest of places: a freshman wood shop class.

Patrick immediately adopts Charlie into his group of wonderfully weird misfits: Sam (Patrick's magnetic, wildly cool step-sister), Alice (the kleptomaniac with main character energy), Mary Elizabeth (a punk Buddhist who definitely has opinions), and Bob... who is just Bob. This crew calls themselves the "Misfit Toys."

Each of them has their own personal struggle bubbling just beneath the surface; failed relationships, family dysfunction, mental health battles, identity crises,

homophobia, you name it. This isn't your average teen movie full of red solo cups and prom kings and queens.

It's a raw, unfiltered look at how many of us carry invisible wounds and how desperately we need connection to make sense of them.

But even in the safety of this new friend group, Charlie's mental health doesn't magically improve. His trauma shows up in waves, through flashbacks, emotional shutdowns, and moments of disassociation that feel all too real. The movie does a fantastic job of showing how trauma lives not just in memory, but in the body, in the silence, the outbursts, and the moments we wish we could forget.

While the film may go a little overboard with everyone being a walking therapy session, it still nails the core truth: healing requires support, patience, and love, often from places you least expect. Even the smallest gestures can make a life-changing impact.

So if you're looking for a movie that's not afraid to get its hands dirty with the hard stuff; grief, PTSD, friendship, first love, and self-forgiveness, *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* will hit you right in the chest. It's not always an easy watch, but it's a necessary one. And in the end, it reminds us that even when we feel broken or alone, we're never *truly* alone.

CHARACTER ANALYSIS



The Rule Follower Richard Cameron

By Nysa Akolkar

“Conformity Kills”

SPOILER ALERT:

This article contains more spoilers than Welton Academy has rules, so if you haven't watched *Dead Poets Society* yet, turn back now, tear out this page (metaphorically), and go watch it with a box of tissues and your soul wide open. Oh, and one last thing: stand on the desk before your heart breaks.

Welcome back, dear reader. If you're here after reading my breakdown of Dr. Gregory House - welcome back to the psych ward. If you're new - grab a seat, a candle, and maybe a copy of 'Five Centuries of Verse' you never actually finished reading.

This edition's psychological autopsy isn't a grizzled genius doctor with a limp and a God complex. Oh no. We're pivoting. This month's patient is (drum roll please)...

Richard Cameron, resident redhead, rule-follower, and the most hiss-worthy member of the Dead Poets Society (depending on who you ask).

The kid who snitched, the kid who didn't stand on his desk while the audience ugly-cried into their popcorn.

But here's the question we're asking today:

Is Richard Cameron really one of the villains?

Or is he just a scared kid in a deeply repressed, emotionally constipated academic system where nonconformity is punished harder than plagiarism?

WELCOME TO WELTON: Where all the poets and thinkers come to die!

First, some context, it's the 1950s, in Welton Academy, an elite prep school so suffocatingly rigid it makes a military boot camp look like a mental health and yoga retreat. The school lives by its four pillars: Tradition, Honor, Discipline, and, Excellence.

(Notice how 'Compassion' didn't make the cut.)

Enter: Mr. Keating. The English teacher who tells boys to rip out textbook pages, seize the day, and think for themselves. Scandalous, really; bound to get someone fired, or worse, inspired.

The boys fall for it like dominoes, including Cameron. The same Cameron who ends up folding like an

origami swan. He's there in the cave. He's quoting poetry. He's clapping at Neil's performance. He's scared - but he's in.

Until he's not...

A Cog in the Fun Machine (With Red Hair)

Let's get one thing out of the way: Richard Cameron is not evil.

He's not plotting in the shadows with a candle and a contract in blood.

He's not twisting his ring while dreaming up ways to ruin poetry and happiness.

What he is, though, is a very specific kind of person - the kind the Weltons system was designed to produce.

Perfect GPA, pressed blazer, spine made entirely of conformity.

This is a kid who likely grew up being told things like "rules exist for a reason" and "you can be anything you want, as long as it's a doctor or lawyer." His life path was probably charted out before he even learned to write in cursive. And when you place someone like that in a cave with a bunch of hormonal teenagers and tell them to

read Thoreau and Whitman under candlelight and defy centuries of institutional repression? Well. You get fear. You get panic. You get... *a snitch.*

But that's too easy, isn't it?

Cameron joined the Dead Poets Society, willingly.

He clapped for Neil's performance with genuine enthusiasm.

He didn't burn the poetry book or hide behind Nolan's desk - he showed up.

And that says something: that a part of him, even if buried deep beneath that starch-stiff collar, wanted the freedom offered by Keating (our beloved Captain).

But Keating's freedom comes at a cost in this retched system. The kind of cost you don't see in Shakespearean soliloquies but in expulsion letters, fired teachers, disappointed parents, futures derailed, and dead best friends.

So, when Neil dies, that dream, that maybe we can have both poetry and a Princeton admission letter, it crumbles, and it crumbles hard.

All Cameron sees is cause and effect.

Keating said "carpe diem," Neil carpe'd a little too hard,

and now there's a body and a casket too heavy to bear, and the heavy cloud of blame looking for somewhere to rain.

But then comes that moment, the scene where Cameron, cornered by his friends, still doubles down. "*You can't save Keating, but you can save yourselves,*" he says, voice flat like he's reading it off a handbook for crisis management.

It's the line that makes my jaw clench to this day. The line that once made me happy when Charlie decked him, not because he's wrong (technically), but because he says it like it's wisdom instead of fear.

That one sentence tells you everything. Cameron doesn't rebel because he can't see the point, it's because he has been brain washed into believing that Mr. Keating, their beloved Captain, truly is the reason for Neil's death.

Loyalty? That gets you expelled.

Grief? That gets buried under honor codes.

And Mr. Keating? *The reason his best friend is dead.*

It's not brave, it's bleak.

But it's all he knows.

And so, Cameron does what

he's always been taught to do in moments of chaos: pick the side that's least risky, that consists of the authority he's been forced to grow up with.

It's not noble. It's not brave. But it is understandable. Especially for a 16 or 17-year-old still figuring out who he is in a world that punishes wrong answers with terrifying efficiency.

The Villain You Boo Because It's Easier

Let's talk about why people hate Cameron.

It's not because he betrayed Mr. Keating (though that is a part of it). It's not even really because he got punched by Charlie, who got expelled for throwing that punch.

It's majorly because he didn't stand on the desk.

That final scene, the emotional climax of the film, is where we, as the audience, get to say "I would've stood. I am a Dead Poet."

And Cameron? He stays seated, calm, upright, and so unbearably alone.

And that hurts us.

Because we want redemption.

We want that little redhead to realize his mistake and rise - not just onto the desk, but into our hearts. But he *doesn't*.

And that absence of catharsis? Infuriating.

But maybe that's the point.

Grief is messy. People lash out. People freeze. People deflect blame onto the safest target. And people cope in the ways they've been taught.

Cameron didn't grow up being taught how to rebel, he was taught how to adapt. And adaptation, for him, meant blaming Keating.

What makes Cameron a tragic character (not a *villain*) is that he loses everything, too.

He loses Neil. He loses his friends. He gets punched in the face and alienated from the only people who ever dragged him into something real. And unlike Todd or Charlie, who grieve with poetry and rebellion, Cameron is left to grieve in silence, brandished as the traitor.

But here's the kicker: *he's not alone in what he did.*

Every single boy signed that paper (other than Charlie).

Meeks has literally said “nothing they didn’t already know.”

Even Todd, sweet, stuttering Todd, stayed quiet until the very end.

But Cameron? Cameron becomes the scapegoat, because he made it easier to focus our hurt on one neat little character in a blazer.

In reality, the true villain of Dead Poets Society isn’t Cameron. It’s Mr. Perry, Headmaster Nolan, the people who uphold the system, and the system itself, which demanded perfection, obedience, and silence - and punished joy, freedom, and expression.

Cameron just followed the blueprint.

In Conclusion: Drop the Desk, Take the Context

So, no. I don’t hate Richard Cameron anymore. I used to, I really did. I cheered when Charlie decked him. I scoffed when he didn’t stand. I probably called him things I wouldn’t (can’t) write in a school magazine.

But I’ve grown. And I’ve realized that a scared kid making a bad choice isn’t a villain, it’s a tragedy, it’s the marrow of life.

I’d like to believe that somewhere, years later, a grown-up Cameron looks back on Welton with fresh eyes.

That maybe he reads “*O Me! O Life!*” and finally gets it. That maybe, in his own quiet way, he stands on the desk when no one’s watching.

And if he doesn’t? Well.

Not everyone is meant to be a Dead Poet.

Some of us are just trying to survive our classes and this movie’s emotional damage.



WHY YOUR BRAIN THINKS 555 MEANS YOU'RE THE MAIN CHARACTER

By Shambhavi Kumari
Dubey

Have you ever seen people who start praying if their phone shows it's 11:11, get a 777 tattooed on their finger, use a particular number like 909 for their SUV number plates?

You surely have or you might just be one from the club yourself. In either case there is some serious psychology behind being attached to such numbers, having a personal fascination for them and seeing them all about.

The cold truth, sadly, is that these "angelic numbers" are neither divine nor proven good luck, and empirical studies rarely support the assumption that they are "sent by your guardian angels to guide you".

The **Baader-Meinhof phenomenon**, also known as the frequency illusion, provides a psychological basis for why people suddenly start noticing "angel numbers". The repeated appearances are not due to an increase in their actual occurrence, but rather a heightened awareness driven by a combination of selective attention and confirmation bias.

The initial stage for this event, where a person's brain becomes "primed" to recognize something new. For example, you might be told about angel numbers or read an article online. Once your brain registers the concept, it elevates the significance of these number sequences, filtering them from the constant stream of information you encounter daily.

The latter stage according to Terry Muller's concept is **Confirmation Bias**. After your attention is selectively focused, confirmation bias takes over. Your brain begins actively looking for and favoring information that confirms your new belief- in this case, that repeating numbers are meaningful and appear frequently. Thus, if you see 123 on a receipt you interpret it as a significant event, while all the non-repeating numbers you saw throughout the day are immediately forgotten.

Apophenia is the psychological concept of seeing meaningful patterns in random or meaningless data. Numbers are ubiquitous, and when you link a pattern to a specific belief, or personal event like a date, your brain will start to "find" those numbers everywhere. As for the reasoning behind why they occur consecutively, mostly thrice,

Swiss psychologist Carl Jung coined the term "synchronicity", describing how the human brain, and specifically its Reticular Activating System recognizes patterns. However, there's no scientific basis to prove "angel numbers" as portends of being on The Right Path™. Quantum Entanglements are one strand of interpretation, but research, nevertheless, is scant and inadequate for any conclusion; the atoms themselves are also bits of information, but we are not sure of how the universe is programmed to decipher any atomic arrangement just yet (sorry to disappoint you Interstellar fans).

It might appear like a giant hoax but this does not mean and never meant that we stop believing. If hope lies in screaming with utter joy when your board exam roll number ends with your favorite number or in the coincidence of seeing 10/10 as the date or the quiet, unapologetic pleasure of making a wish at 11:11, then one might perhaps live for the hope of it all.



ON DYING AND OTHER *inconveniences*

By Nysa Akolkar

There's the shock first. The moment someone says a word like "incurable" or "six months" or "aggressive," and your brain just... disconnects. Time goes weird. Your body is in the room, nodding politely. Your mind's, just, blank, but so loud at the same time.

Then comes the grief. Not just for your life, but for all the future versions of yourself you now don't get to meet. You grieve the summers you won't have. The person you might have become. The people you will never get to meet. The cats you won't adopt. And that grief? It doesn't wait for death. It moves in early, sets up its little air mattress, and stays for dinner.

From a psychological standpoint, your brain is doing its best with a terrible situation. It's trying to keep you safe. So maybe you dissociate. Maybe you get weirdly chill. Maybe you spiral into anxiety so intense you develop a strong emotional bond with your ratty old plush toy from 3rd grade of all things.

Some people cling to routines. Some plan their funerals on Pinterest. Others just... stop talking about it entirely, like if no one says the word "death," it'll forget it was invited. All of it is valid. There's no instruction manual for this. If there were, it would probably just say "???" on every page and then burst into flames.

But terminal illness doesn't just mess with the person who's sick. It sends emotional shrapnel flying into everyone nearby.

[Note: Before we go further, I'm not a trained psychologist. So this isn't professional advice, it's more like a messy love letter to the human brain when it's falling apart slowly.]

So, you're dying. Or someone you love is. Or maybe you're just spiraling in your room at 2 a.m. because you remembered we're all basically walking expiration dates with Spotify playlists.

Welcome.

Talking about terminal illness is weird. It's one of those things everyone knows exists, like tax fraud or the Mariana Trench, but no one really wants to make eye contact with.

It's uncomfortable. It's messy. And it's usually followed by someone saying something painfully unhelpful like, "Everything happens for a reason," or "Have you tried xyz?"

The reality of being terminally ill, or loving someone who is, is that it's not just about dying. It's about knowing you're dying. That knowledge hijacks your brain and takes your mental health on the worst road trip of your life, and the playlist is just your internal monologue screaming.

If you've ever loved someone who's dying, you know the guilt, the helplessness, the wild mental gymnastics of being sad for them, sad with them, and also mad at the universe, at God, at them- because how dare they leave you? How dare someone take them? Why?

You cry, then feel guilty for crying. You smile around them because you don't want to make it about you, and then cry in your car because it is, a little bit, about you.

That's anticipatory grief- and it's real. It's your brain's way of trying to pre-process the loss before it happens, like your emotions are sending out scouts ahead of schedule to check how bad it's going to hurt. And surprise: it still hurts. Even after all that early crying. Sometimes *anticipatory grief* shows up as anxiety, sometimes as numbness, sometimes it just makes everything feel fake, like you're living in a movie you don't remember auditioning for. It's grief without a funeral. And that limbo? Brutal.

Caregivers go through it, too. The burnout. The emotional fatigue. The unspoken fear that one day, your whole purpose might vanish the second they do. Nobody talks about that.

And the thing is, terminal illness doesn't magically make people wise or peaceful or poetic. Sometimes it just makes them tired, angry, and bored. They're still human. Being close to death doesn't make someone a sage. It just makes them someone who's really, really sick, and hurting. So what helps?

Not much, honestly. There's no fix. But there are small things, real things.

Therapy, actual therapy, not journaling alone at 3 a.m. (although, do that too). Saying things out loud before it's too late. Support groups. Dark humor. Ugly crying. Letting people bring you food even when you say you don't need anything. Saying "I love you" without making it a big deal.

Also, please don't say "they lost the battle." This isn't a Marvel movie. People don't die because they didn't try hard enough. They die because bodies are fragile and medicine is not magic.

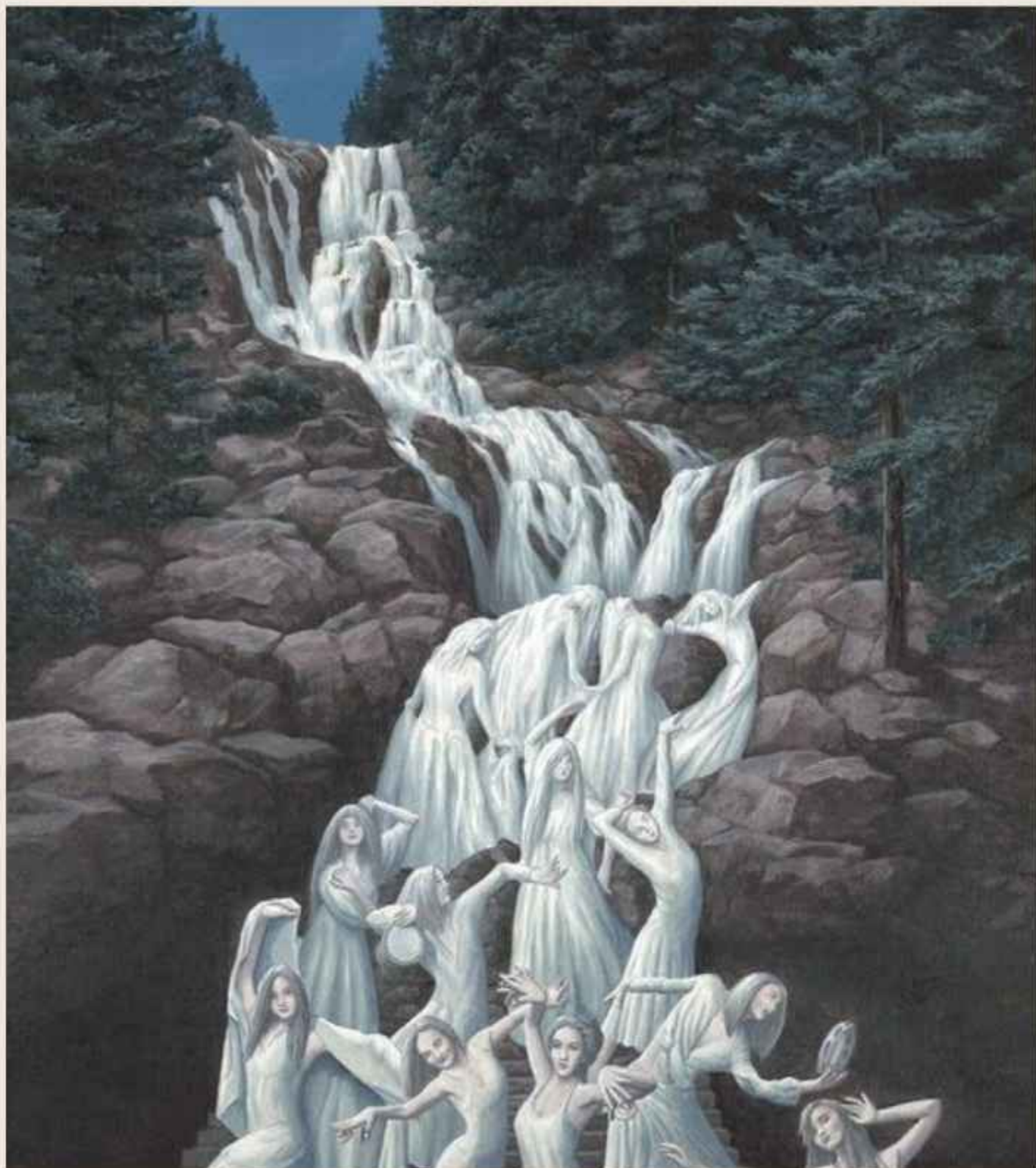
Death is inconvenient, emotionally, logistically, spiritually. It shows up, leaves a mess, and doesn't even say thank you or sorry. But in the weirdest way, it also clarifies things. You realize who matters. You say what you mean. You stop pretending you don't care.

And when it finally happens, when the waiting is over you are gone, you go hoping that somewhere, someone is better for having loved you through it.

And if you're the one who stays, if you're the one still waking up in the same world that's suddenly missing a person, you learn things too. You learn that love isn't just the joy of finding someone; it's the courage to lose them and keep going anyway. You learn that grief is just love's shadow, it lingers because it mattered. And you don't owe the dead your own disappearance. You carry them, sure, but you keep walking. Because the marks people leave on us aren't always wounds, sometimes they're proof that we were brave enough to love in the first place.

There's no moral here. No uplifting bow. Just this: If you are dying, you are still living.

If someone you love is dying, love them like hell. That's all any of us get to do, really. Everything else is just an inconvenience.



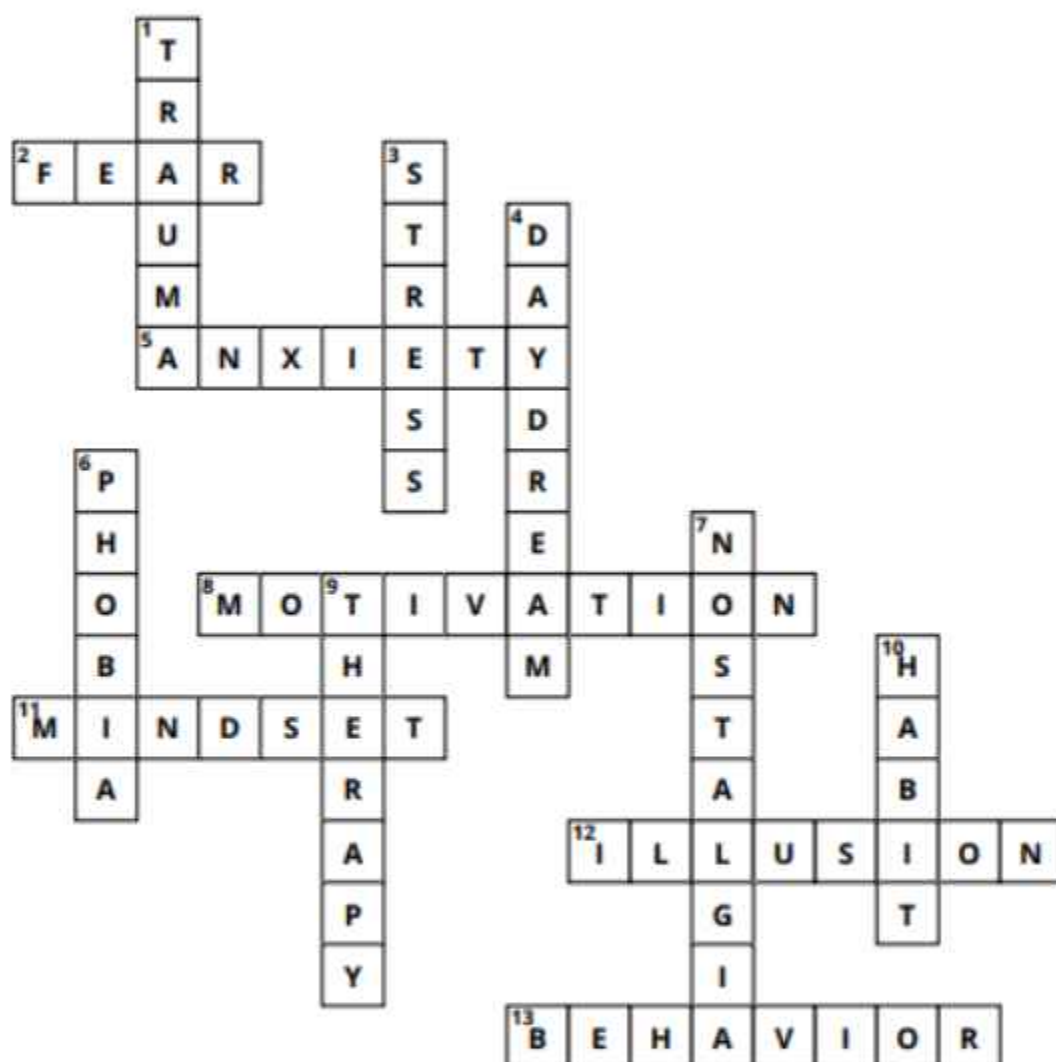
“You can love someone so much... but you can never love people as much as you can miss them.”

- John Green

CROSSWORD

Solution

By Maira K.B. Wala



The answers you've been loosing sleep over. And if you still haven't solved it, in which case... we're disappointed(lovingly) but go check it out in the first edition!

MIND MAIL

(You send the questions. I do the overthinking. Everyone wins.)

Hi again!

Nysa here, your editor-in-chief, and full-time chronic overthinker.

So... plot twist.

Instead of questions, most of you sent article requests last round, and honestly?

Iconic. Love that for you.

We loved your ideas so much, a couple made it into this very issue (go check, your influence is showing). Others didn't quite make the cut this time, but worry not, they're absolutely sitting in our "next edition, probably at 3 A.M." folder.

For everyone else: Mind Mail remains open for all your thoughts, theories, ideas, and psychological chaos.

Got a character you want psychoanalyzed? A random mental spiral you think deserves print space?

Send it. All of it. Right here.

Whether it turns into an article, a deep dive, or a mild identity crisis - we'll find out together.

Until next time keep your curiosity tin hats on, and the anxiety off.

So go ahead: overthink, I dare you.

With love (and too much coffee),

Nysa Akolkar

Editor-in-Chief, Mindscape

THANK YOU

(because somehow we did it again)

Well, look at that; you made it to the end of Edition Two.

Either you genuinely like us (in which case, wow, thank you), or you were procrastinating something important and ended up here by accident (also valid). Either way, we appreciate the emotional investment.

This edition came together with more late nights, more collective existential crises, and somehow an even more chaotic Google Doc situation than last time. Somehow, between caffeine, deadlines, and questionable playlist choices, we pulled through, and honestly? We're a little (lot) proud of that.

A massive thank you to our Principal, Dr. Anju Chopra, for letting us do this all over again (your continued faith in our unhinged enthusiasm means the world to us), and to our incredible Psychology teacher, Ms. Priyanka Tiwari, for always cheering us on and pretending our "creative process" isn't just aesthetically pleasing chaos.

To the Mindscape team!

Our writers, artists, editors, designers, and everyone who helped piece this issue together: you're the heartbeat of this magazine.

Thank you for the ideas, the energy, the memes, and for keeping the group chat semi-functional.

And finally- to you, our reader.

Thank you for coming back (or joining for the first time), for reading, and for making this weird little project worth every brain cell we've collectively lost along the way. We hope Edition Two made you laugh, think, spiral (in the healthiest degree of the word), and feel just a little more love to the beautiful mess that is psychology (if not that, then maybe us).

We'll be back soon with even more overthinking, odd ideas, and unapologetic enthusiasm in January, so stay tuned.

**With love and
(light academic distress),
Team Mindscape**

MINDS BEHIND *Mindscape*

Mrs. Priyanka Tiwari (Faculty Advisor)

She let us build this beautiful chaos again!

Always supportive, always trusting, and somehow never dragged into our group chat panic. Thank you for keeping us sane (mostly).

Nysa Akolkar (Grade 12)

Editor-in-Chief // Writer // Resident Chaos Manager

Held the vision, edited the vision, occasionally cried over the vision. Wrote, rewrote, deleted, and resurrected articles more times than she'll admit. Still somehow pulled it all together with the coolest, weirdest but still the most wonderful team.

Urvika Agrawal (Grade 12)

Head of Creative Design // Canva Overlord // Layout Sorceress

Turned a folder full of "so, um, we had this idea..." into an actual, coherent, aesthetically gorgeous magazine. Designed every page, saved us from font and size disasters, and made sure the chaos looked intentional. Still undefeated in Canva.

The Writers

They cried, they wrote, they survived (again).

Nysa Akolkar, Nikita Nawani- The senior wordsmiths. Brought the hot takes, deep dives, and the kind of emotionally charged writing that makes you question if we're okay (we're not, but that's our charm).

Akshita Dwivedi, Maira K.B. Wala, Maahi Sompurkar, Avani Soni, Shambhavie Kumari Dubey- The rising stars. Sharp ideas, clever insights, and all the future chaos leaders of Mindscape. Couldn't have done this without them.

The Designers

Making the chaos look cooler than it has any right to be (again).

Urvika Agrawal- Took the endless pages of words, spirals, and edits and turned them into something actually beautiful. Proof that design is psychology, because she's the reason our collective visual anxiety is at peace.

Jaya Koshti and Palak Kanal- The creative prodigies. Designed, illustrated, and basically made everything pop. Without this team, Mindscape would be a 30-page Google Doc in Comic Sans.

For the Psych Students (who helped brainstorm):

To every psych student who sat with us, tossed out wild ideas, and somehow made sense of our chaos, thank you for bearing with us. This magazine is as much yours as it is ours.