

# ZEITGEIST

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY, LSR

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# FROM THE FACULTY'S DESK

BY DR PRITI DHAWAN



"Sometimes the worst place you can be at is in your own head." Yes. It's true. It gives me immense pleasure to embark upon a journey of writing for our very own Zeitgeist! With time, LSR has evolved and matured into a beacon of hope for the women of India- it represents the image of what our society could be if the talents, aspirations and skills of women are nurtured. And department of Psychology has always played a pivotal role by kick-starting deliberations, initiating a process of conversation, of sharing of inner thoughts around myriad of themes. I propose to submit the "psychological immune system," to all of you. It is a feedback loop between how we think and how we feel. If we think more optimistically, we tend to feel better, which in turn makes us think more optimistically. So, we churn a cycle of positive optimistic thinking patterns. Each one of us has this device present within us. We were born with it, but we sparingly use it. Here, today onwards, I urge all of you to take a dip into it! Research has proven innumerable times that individuals with a brighter positive outlook to the same experience are happy and live a healthy life with lower risks of illnesses, whether it is heart attacks or acidity or migraine or just a bad immune system. We need to put in effort. We all are living in uncertain times and Anxiety about uncertainty is unnerving. When will we get rid of this pandemic? Are we ever going to start living the way we used to? We all are exhausted and all these questions are of relevance at this time. But, what is imperative to learn at this juncture of our lives is, how do we construct this anxiety? In all cases, optimism serves as a shield, allowing us to see the world in a light that is more conducive to our own mental and physical well-being. Optimism is a gold mine! You know, today's times are a real voyage of discovery. We don't have to seek new landscapes but need to have new eyes.

Uncertainty has given rise to a loss of control which is disempowering us- an inherent weakness within us. With speculations running amok, I think our vulnerabilities have been targeted.

So, let us take charge of ourselves and create a radical and fearless redefinition of the present times.

Let's Start a Revolution (LSR), which attempts to infuse our space with the values of courage, civic engagement, and the notion of giving back to society as a necessary concomitant to the privileges of quality education.

# EDITORS' NOTE

Colorless foam  
Dripping down the brown  
New life arising  
Shaking  
Blooming  
Thriving  
In hope

Bottomless black  
Staring back at you  
Now morphs-  
Face to face  
Hand in hand  
Together  
In hope.



Welcoming the much awaited offline college  
with the third issue of our Zeitgeist!

With love,  
Neha

Dear Zeitgeist,

We're already in 2022. One month has gone by and I'm still filling my dates wrong. I'll make plans, I'll work hard tomorrow I'll have a cheat day the following week, I'll be tempted to give it up. Maybe I will end up giving it up.



It's a cycle and it's not a shameful one. Liberty is allowing yourself to be human and not trading the grind for that cost. Go on and go for it. It comes easier to say, I know, only if the numbers complied the way words do. I recall things that left me ineluctably embarrassed two years back now visits me in the guise of lessons. It was realizing that it had more to do with what I gained than what I had failed to.

To the lovely readers of these pages, I hope you paint your tomorrow happy and blue or red or neon green if that invites you. Your strokes, your power.

As Bob Ross mentioned while painting his happy little trees, "we don't make mistakes, just happy little accidents."

Sincerely yours,  
Anushka

# A tête-à-tête

*with Ms Priyanka Padhy* 



Anushka - Good evening ma'am, we shall be commencing with the first question that we have for you, how would you describe your college and school life?

Oh! That is a very interesting question you are asking me. You know, one thing that I am realizing is that, as I am growing older, the golden glow of nostalgia is enveloping my growing up years more and more. So, when I look back at my school days and college days, everything looks so beautiful and everything seems to be as if there were no hiccups in the way and everything was peachy perfect which I am sure was not the case. I was very much a student like you guys are, cribbing about assignments and complaining about different kinds of exams and this and that and the other. All the stresses of student life were certainly there but you know when you look back you think you have learned so much from all those experiences and you have grown so much from all experiences. Now incidentally in my case when I started working in the University, I was only 24 years. So, I was pretty close in age to my final-year students. Now that gap is widening, now I can feel I have been in the university for 12 years and so the age gap between me and my final year students is becoming bigger and bigger. So, when I think back to my college years, I have also started getting a feeling that my experiences feel a little jaded by now. They feel a little jaded and a little faded, but like I said awash in the golden glow of nostalgia.

Anushka - How lovely, the next thing we'd like to know is what was the reason that you think was behind choosing Psychology as your career path?

I think I have to give the credit for, sort of, identifying that to my parents. I was very hell-bent on taking science and studying basically for medical entrances and taking biology but somehow my parents were convinced that humanities were the way to go for me and they kept on saying that we can see the right kind of aptitude in it for you and you will do well if you pursue this field. At that time, I was not very convinced because we were still growing up in a time where there were fallacious notions that good students take science and mediocre students take other streams and so on. So, I was not very keen on it but thankfully somehow, good sense prevailed and I listened to what my parents had to say. I felt secretly happy that they thought I was talented in something and I should pursue it.

So, I decided to go ahead with psychology. I had psychology in class 12th and I was greatly interested in that. I was very interested in sociology too, but somehow psychology won over and the rest, as they say, is history.

Anushka- I think that notion still persists somehow as I was encouraged to opt for science innumerable times.

Neha- Ma'am in that way you are an outlier because this is such a unique experience to have!

Anushka - Definitely!

Shagun- That is great to hear ma'am! So, the third question is, apart from psychology do you have non-psychology-related interests or activities that you engage in?

You know one of the things that I bemoan is that my parents were able to see this particular aptitude in, they should have also spotted another. I wish somebody at that time had told me that I could be a veterinarian. I am extremely fond of animals and I, sort of, do engage in a lot of animal welfare work in my way but I wish that was something that I had pursued. I read the books of James Herriot. I don't know if you have read this particular series, called 'All Things Bright and Beautiful, All Creatures Great and Small.' There are several books written by this veterinary surgeon, somewhere in the UK. They are so beautiful and when I read that I imagine myself having that life. I think I would have been very happy and very content to be surrounded by animals. So, I wish I had done that, that's one thing that I wish for.

Shagun - I closely relate to what you are saying. In fact, I also had something apart from Psychology that I wanted to pursue but let's just say circumstantial factors can change our course.

So, the fourth question is since you teach a paper on psychological research, how did you develop an interest in research in the first place?

So, like many changes and developments in life, I think this was also a very organic one. So, those of you who know a little bit of my background, after I finished my Master's, I started working at a school as a school counsellor. That made me interested in school psychology and progressive education. That steered me towards the education department. In fact, during my first seven years as a professor at the University, I was teaching in the Education Department. I was teaching psychology courses but in the education department.

And, I think, that was my first introduction to real research in the real world with real people, where you come down from the fairly lofty perspective that Psychology generally has towards human behavior and the human condition. In terms of what I observed, education is far more real. So, that was the first time I got oriented with action research and fieldwork. It would include things like going to school and collecting data, meeting school administrators, looking at the condition of municipal schools, looking at the condition of municipal hospitals, and so on. Gradually, this developed my interest in research. Also, my engagement with different illness groups has been a very important interest in my life, because I am interested in health psychology and the applications of positive psychology in the field of health psychology. So, I think that is where I really found my footing and my true calling in research.

**Neha – Very interesting. So, the next question is that you have been the association in charge for quite a few years now, Ma'am. How have you seen the department change through that designation?**

Oh, that's something I haven't actively thought about! So, you know, the most obvious shift would be that we have shifted from an in-person mode of functioning in the college to having an online mode of functioning, where all the events are conducted online. This is a completely different landscape. So, that's one shift that has definitely happened. But I should also highlight the positive side of that – we are now able to have many more events, invite people to attend these events from across the world, have a much more diverse audience. The connectivity and reach of our events now are much higher.

But the other shift that I also want to talk about - not to take away from the initiatives of my students in the earlier years – is that now, students have almost become proper event managers. Like, when I look at you guys and the way you organize your events and teams, I feel like I am working with professional event managers because you people work with such clear-mindedness and focus. This wasn't really the case earlier. The students were definitely self-regulated and very proactive, but I think we are getting stronger and stronger as we progress. So, I think we have very exciting times ahead and I look forward to it!

**Neha - Indeed Ma'am. You have been so involved in the department functions. How do you manage such a hectic routine and what is your advice for students who are facing such a routine for the first time?**

You know, they say that when you look at a duck sitting on the water, it looks very serene and the duck is sort of gliding along the surface of the water. But what you need to know about the movement of the duck is the frantic thrashing movements that are happening below the surface. So, I am glad that I am being able to pull off the impression that I am doing several things and managing them

reasonably well, but it requires a whole lot of frantic shuffling around in the background. You witnessed an example of that just now when I had completely lost track of time and got occupied in some college work, and forgot that I had this interview with you. But thankfully everybody in the department is very adaptive and sweet. My students and colleagues are all very supportive and I think this supportive environment helps me manage everything. And I think, that's my advice to the students as well. Build a community of care and support around you, and you will never find yourselves alone.

Neha - Ma'am, it is wonderful to know about how you have a support system that helps you work. Thank you so much for taking out time for us. It was an absolute joy to get to know you! We shall wrap up the interview with that.

Anushka: It was lovely knowing you ma'am, thank you so much for your time.

Shagun: Thank you, ma'am!

Thank you for keeping the interview so succinct and sweet. I think it was really lovely to be able to talk to you guys.

# ON THE PEN'S END

*Themed entries: Picture prompts*





# Prompt I



# All we have is fiction

-Ananya Mukesh, 1st Year

All we have is fiction. Everything we feel is shameful. Mom yelled at you today? Don't talk about it. It's not right. You shouldn't say things like that about the woman who gave birth to you. She gave you so much, and what did you give her in return? Nothing. Worse, there's all this negativity you surround yourself with. You're rude, ungrateful, snarky. It's a burden to be around you.

You want to scream. You need to speak, you need to talk about it, but you have absolutely nobody. Who are you going to tell? Your "friends"? Your mom can hear you through the wall. Therapist, you say? Genius, man, wonder why I hadn't thought of it. Oh wait. Paying for mental health is a burden. I'm already burdening them enough. Besides, I'm not insane. Whatever, she's the one who needs therapy.

Look, I have a point. All we have is fiction. We're so ashamed of feeling what we feel, and so afraid of letting people know about all the ways they hurt us, because then they'll leave us. And whoever liked a happy ending? You don't want your tormentors to leave, they're family. Blood is thicker than water and all that. I mean, sure it's a misquoted, but why did the wrong version become so popular and stay in the memories of people and get passed down through the ages, if absolutely nobody agreed with it? It must have some value.

All we have is fiction. We are all born with pain, with suffering, and we escape it in different ways, because we cannot talk about it. Talking about it only causes more pain, and God knows we have more than enough to deal with right now. So what do we do? We decorate our pain, we divide it into neat little characters, in neat little worlds. They will all say the same hurtful things you've heard growing up, and they will all hurt each other. So much pain. But it's not yours anymore. You've given it away. (It stays, but you want to

tell yourself you've given it away.)

You know what it is? We create fictional demons and convince ourselves we've rid ourselves of the real ones. That's what we like to believe, it makes us feel better. Because all we have is fiction. If we can convince ourselves that we've fooled the whole world into believing that the pain you've "created" isn't something that belongs to you, maybe you can fool yourself into believing it too. Someday.

All we have is fiction. We cling onto it, because we love to lie. Ah, lying. Makes us all feel so good inside. Hurts the conscience a little, brings that nice old rush of pain right back. Yes, nice. Because if everything is fine for a while, then something's wrong. There's so much more pain in a lack of pain than in its presence. Sometimes it's like there's no escape at all, if I'm being completely honest.

But anyway, forget about all that. I'm being negative. You have to listen to me. All we have is fiction. If you don't want pain, all you have is fiction. So drown yourself in your sorrow: you'll forget all about it. That, or you'll lie. Either way, it's better than whatever state you're in now.

All you have is fiction. Don't forget that.

## **Take your time to understand everything,**

Even if it requires you to be unvarying.

Everyone has their own pace and time,

And to take yours is no crime.

People nowadays are in a rat race,

unsure of where they will go or what they might face.

For they say the less aware one is of the goal,

The faster he tries to cover the road.

Thus take in the essence of every moment,

So that at last you have nothing to lament!

Ananya Kansal, 1st year

## Prompt II



# I lay on my bed like the ocean supine watching the sky above,

But the sky isn't blue,  
Sky doesn't have clouds,  
Just the dull ceiling I'm trying to look through.  
Eyes tracing the path of the vintage fan rotating, round and  
round.  
Where it began,  
Where it started  
It's yet to be found.  
Half burnt candles with my half burnt words melt down.  
I lost myself somewhere in the wilderness.  
A game where it's crucial to play with tenderness.

1 2 3  
My demons count,

3 2 1  
I shut them down.

But I'm chained to this dull parade,  
Painted my face happy for this masquerade.

– Anushka Singh, 2nd year

## Look within yourself,

No matter how horrible it gets.  
 Maybe threatening thoughts surface up,  
 Making you feel that it's too much.  
 But believe me you are not alone,  
 For every human has the same if shown.  
 However, don't overlook your good side,  
 For it is really the moonlight.  
 And don't worry you will overcome the devil too,  
 For you had the power to look into!

-Ananya Kansal, 1st year

## Screaming.

The air is rent apart by screams, the piercing, incessant howls full of hurt.

They scream and scream, eyes brimming with a pain that pools and consumes and trickles down in gentle ebbs and flows. A pain that only grows and expands with each shuddering breath. (It's a pain that lingers)

They scream, body wracked with sobs, as their last shred of hope turns into falling sand, into snowflakes melting at fingertips, into fish shyly darting away from curious hands, into chapped lips pressed fleetingly against theirs; an uncanny imitation of things that just won't stay. (Things that won't wait around, just watch you reaching for them with desperate, hopeless fingers, before slipping from your grasp forever.)

They scream, their breath stuttering as the shadows in the corners come alive, and they wonder what happens if they do give in, if they let the grief finally pull them under. They wonder what happens when it all ends, when the monster under the bed finally

catches the child. (They know what happens, they sometimes hear the child weeping at night, laced with pain and agony and heartache.)

They scream and scream, and the room is filled with their anguished cries, the empty spaces overflowing with sorrow and desperation.

They scream, but their lips are sealed shut, and they curl upwards in the poor impression of a smile, cracked at the edges. They scream, and their eyes are dry, as they sit and talk and laugh and cheer, as they pretend that it's all okay, as they pretend their chest hasn't caved inwards with the weight of what could have been, as they pretend their heart isn't striking up a hollow melody inside, a mere shadow of what it once was. (It's not easy to pretend you're alive)

They scream, and the room is quiet and they've now learnt to hide it. They hide it under blooming smiles, they lock it between their lips like a treasured secret, they put it away gently under measured breaths, they safely tuck them in beside broken hearts. (They don't have to hide, the room has always been empty)

They scream, and the air is rent apart by it. (there's a ringing silence).

-Chhavi Gupta, 1st year

## *Open Theme Entries*

### **Let's put it to fire**

-Saloni Jaitly, 1st Year

This burning flame, I put your letters to blame.  
The love you promised, the commitment you didn't  
Let's put it to fire, shall we?

The long walks and the hand holding  
I miss your crisp envelopes and your truth  
unfolding  
Your memories and your lies  
Let's put it to fire, shall we?

Weeks and months roll away but I omit forgetting  
you.  
My tears freeze, my body is numb. Is it just me or  
do you feel it too?  
Your omni-presence and its illusion  
Let's put it to fire, shall we?

The first time we met, the universe paused  
When I gazed through your hazel eyes it was like  
we were star crossed  
This aching heart, these shivering hands  
Let's put it to fire shall we?

The forever after we promised under candles  
The rumors of your cheating and all your scandals  
They ring me to anxiety and breathless sleep  
Let's put it to fire, shall we?

The ending we were put to, the always we couldn't  
handle.  
Let's put it to fire, shall we?

Let's put your letters to fire, shall we?





## WIN YOUR VICES

-Ananya Kansal, 1st Year

All of us have vices within us,  
but it is up to us to finish this fuss.

Like a monster it lurks over our head,  
making us feel as if now we are dead.

Its saliva all dripping down,  
making us still with fear in our gown.

But don't worry we have to just cut it off,  
because we know that we are the boss.

The power to do this we'll get from  
the supreme soul,  
As being his children we have the hero role!



## A Flickering Light Bulb

-Chhavi Gupta, 1st Year

a lonely, winding path.

a flickering light bulb overhead.

the street's shrouded in complete darkness, with little  
illumination to boast of, save for the tiny  
pinpricks of light from the occasional firefly, the bulb  
providing no such help.

there's just the two of us here, just you and me.

you draw your hood low against the cold droughts of wind  
as we walk, and i do the same, not



from fear of the cold, but from the ache of possibly seeing a downward curve to your lips, disapproval curling at the edges, and it is this that i cannot allow. all of a sudden, you let out a small gasp and clutch my hand tighter, your steps skittering on the asphalt, and it's almost in tandem with the loud chorus of howls starting up somewhere, unseen and terrifying. gripping my cold, bloodless fingers, you pull me to a stop, asking in hushed whispers, "did you hear that?" and of course i do, but how could i possibly tell you that, without betraying my shaky voice, without letting slip a sliver of the fear that's curling through my veins, rendering me immobile? so i just gently stroke my thumb along yours, hoping beyond hope that it gives you a shadow of the comfort i yearn to, and pull you forward, alongside me in the plunging, encompassing darkness. and with trembling steps, you come along, reluctance emanating from every pore, and if i could, i'd laugh at the mildly disgruntled faces i know you must be pulling, the very thought of your nose wrinkled in displeasure sending me to the edges of hysteria. (if i could, i'd simply get you out of here, where we knew nobody and no one called out our name.) (if i could, i'd give you the whole world to do with as you so wished.) but i can't, so i just walk alongside you in a deep, deep silence. we walk and walk and keep walking, till we do not know why we're doing this, till we do not remember our destinations or our names, till we know nothing but the shape of the other's breath. (but then again, does anything else even come close?) we walk and that's when, at long last we see it, the path ahead lit by the warm glow of a lightbulb, only this one does not flicker. and it's here that we almost reach our first disagreement, because i wish to walk to it slowly,

completely drink it in with our eyes, to see, to check that it's real,  
 that it's there, that it won't melt  
 away at the barest touch, the way dreams often do.  
 but you're you and you wish to rush into it headlong with shining  
 eyes and that mad laugh of  
 yours. you're you and i'm me and when have i ever been able to  
 deny the smallest whisper from  
 your lips? and so we hold each other tighter and run towards it,  
 towards everything, our faces  
 split in identical grins.  
 and surprising me in the way only you ever can, the first thing you  
 do after we reach is throw  
 your arms around me, and i curl mine around you, hiding my smile  
 in your hair as i feel relief as  
 i've never known before, course through me.  
 "i can't believe we did it,", you whisper contently, before quietly  
 adding "weren't you scared?"  
 and of course i was, but how could i possibly tell you that if it  
 hadn't been for your steady  
 heartbeat against my palms, that if it hadn't for you, i wouldn't be  
 here right now?

a luminescent light bulb overheard.  
 there's just the two of us here, just you and me (and I would never  
 have it any other way)

## The Stigma

-Shreya Chandra, 1st Year

I don't know for how long  
 this stigma will continue  
 And that you'll be warned  
 To not speak up  
 To shut it in  
 When something's wrong  
 To drown it in



They'll say that they're just thoughts  
Just thoughts and you're just overthinking  
Because they are far from the shore  
They don't know that you're sinking  
Thinking.  
Re-thinking..  
Overthinking...  
You're sinking....  
They'll raise sign boards that'll read  
"Don't hold on to your sadness"  
"Don't panic. Don't panic."  
"Breathe"  
"Breathe"  
Now I tell you what? STOP! STOP THEM.  
Because venting out your pain won't make you weak  
Your feelings aren't just clouds that'll disappear with the wind in  
some weeks  
So don't bottle them up because  
They'll rot deep down and that ache inside will reek  
So listen here, you must speak  
Speak up when you're low and nothing seems right  
When you cry all alone and even the darkness appears too bright  
When the sadness holds you hostage for months every day, every  
night  
And your courage, a sinking ship is unable to fight  
But here's where you remind yourself that  
you were born a warrior, you were born to FIGHT  
It's okay  
CRY,  
SHOUT,  
SCREAM,  
But SHARE and SPEAK up  
Just try  
Because your heart is  
Just the size of your fist  
and you've burried in so many fears that might not even fit in its  
list.  
So don't weep in silence wetting pillows before you sleep

Have faith in yourself and take that leap  
 Because Anxiety, PTSD, Depression, Bipolar or OCD ain't no  
 character flaw  
 I know that mental health is way too stigmatized by the society and  
 it's prejudice  
 But trust me  
 Being ashamed of your own pieces should not be your Life's only  
 Law  
 so it's okay no matter how the thoughts make you feel just know  
 that one fine day

YOU WILL HEAL.

## The Dilemma: Economy v/s Human Rights



- Saniya, 1st year

Health is wealth they said, but today that the basic health facilities cost a fortune, is that not enough for us to realize the seriousness of this crisis?

A reasonable solution to this would be to look onto our previous experiences with such situations. But how this renders futile lies in the abstractness and uncertainty of the current state of affairs.

How the Great Depression of 1929 or the World Economic Crisis of 2007-08 aided this, was they originated due to lack of supply of the production sector, and not precisely the demand chain.

The reasoning that “demand creates its own supply” hence renders impractical. This calls for looking into the source and the unfolding of COVID-19 to draft appropriate policies. Intensification of focus on demand might lead to inflation and large scale rationing of goods. But for countries with prominent poverty, this could lead to a lack of food security and hence death due to starvation.

A way to effectively deal is to prioritise the supply chain. Direct attention on increasing supplement of essential goods sector, keeping in mind the health and sanitization of the workers employed. This can be done in the manufacture of personal protection equipment (PPE), testing kits, sanitation devices, soaps, cleaning and sanitation industry. With the low amount of testing kits available, it is certain that we are not taking into consideration a large chunk of infected people. This should be kept in mind while spreading awareness on social distancing and the need for opening shopping

complexes/public places amidst the pandemic in view of reviving the economy. In need of growth, we cannot risk the health of our citizens, especially the more vulnerable sections of it.

To increase awareness regarding social distancing, distribution channels should be made at ground levels, such as mohalla adhyaksh/ ground workers of political associations and NGOs, in order to help flatten the curve and reduce stress on the medical system.

At the same time, governments should refrain from opening territories vulnerable to infections, and issue to the organizations to ask the physical presence of only the employees of essential services, with an effective check on it.

We cannot let the need for economic growth blind us towards the urgency to safeguard the precious lives of our citizens.

There is no correct answer or solution to this problem; different countries form subjective opinions regarding prioritizing health or economy in view of their own monetary capabilities and reserves. There is little the government can do by its own to recover from this loss. Hence we need to come together, look after ourselves and those in need, and strive towards sustainable growth along with health security.

# A Tribute to the Nature of Love

- Vandya, 1st year

Cold.

Not the gentle, pleasant breeze that puts the mind at ease, but the cold that sets in the bones of those unprepared to face it.

Mysterious.

Something lurking behind the foliage that could pounce at you; unknown, unconquerable. Some creature with eyes like topaz, which seem ruby to those who fear him.

Dark.

The sun had turned away from the trees once more, angry that its light could not reach the deepest recesses of the thick forest. It would only return after half a year, slowly, almost shy and then all at once.

Cold, dark, mysterious. Pretty much the nightmare, isn't it?

But beautiful as well. After all, the moon had decided to grace the dry ground with her shine, lighting up the yellowed leaves that still dared to cover up the cracks in the earth. And in this desolate end of the earth, you might ask, what am I doing, talking about the nature of love?

The wolf paced the dry ground restlessly, listening to the leaves crunch beneath his paws, probably instigating fear in the mind of any traveller who dared to come near the infamous frozen lake, known to be the reckoning of hundreds. But prey was his last thought at this crucial hour. It was almost midnight and his heart was racing, not with the usual excitement to see his other half but with apprehension.

What if she didn't accept him anymore? What if his calls of longing were ignored?

As if sensing his disconcert, he felt the moonlight touching his black fur, making the devil light up like an angel. But it did not bring him solace this time. He ran his eyes through the length of the lake, looking at her reflection on the frozen water before gazing up with dubious, fearful eyes. The only thing that could give him peace, could also steal her love from him but he was in too deep to think of returning now. And so he called out to her and narrated to her how he had dug his fangs into the flesh of helpless

prey who died with beauty in their mind, equivalent to her own. He told her how he had killed for sport and perhaps the only reason he did not anymore was his depreciating strength. He told her how her love could never change him because it was in his nature to be ruthless.

The moon only listened in silence, her light being blocked by an unusual number of clouds that plagued the sky today. Every time a cloud obstructed her, she would feel the tremor in the other's voice and the doubt which would be suppressed when the shadows passed. She only asked him one question, "How could I ever hate you for who you are?"

When the prolonged silence became too unbearable, she told him how it was her light which revealed his prey to him, how she had more than once deliberately thrown travellers off the right path just to see anguish and fear. She told him how lovers had often looked at her and she made them feel each other's presence even when one of them had gone beyond the reach of the earthly world.

"We're both creatures of the darkness, each burdened by evil. While you are considered the embodiment of the devil, I am the dark side of Nature itself. I was never foreign to your true self. It never deterred me then, and it cannot deter me now."

And this time when the clouds covered her light, the wolf didn't feel fear but rather assurance that the moonlight would shine on him again and one day, whichever day God chose, just one day, he could be reunited with the one he was separated from.

"The devil was a fallen angel after all." The winds whispered to the crooked remnants of the once green denizens of the forest. And then the blinding white snow descended from the blue skies, fatal to the lone wolf who stayed behind to remain alive. And soon, the melancholy psithurism of dried leaves turned into a raging tempest, ready to vanquish those who stood in its way.

And what happened then, was not melancholic or unfortunate. It was, in every sense of the term, tragic.

When the wolf turned away from the lake at dawn, having bid his lover adieu, he was chilled to the bone. The clouds that had earlier only blocked the moonlight



now darkened the entire sky so the azure was never seen. It was a veil through which not even a crack of sunlight dared to filter through. The forest was the same; cold, dark, mysterious but something weighed down on its spirit like the clouds weighed on the sky. The wolf who had not felt the slightest discomfort while with his lover could now feel the bitter cold which seemed to penetrate his thick fur and reach for his bones with unseen hands. The snow was falling down intensely, with a sudden desperation that seemed unnerving. Flakes that were generally a sight for sore eyes now restricted his visibility. The topaz in his eyes blazed like fire against the blinding white as he cautiously moved on shifting ground. His movements were, for the second time in his life, hesitant and perhaps even a bit afraid. But elated with the triumph of his love over his ruthlessness, he still made his way, quite proudly so, towards the shelter he had found in the cave nearby.

The blizzard never settled as the winds swirled and told secrets for the world to hear, if only one could understand them. Or at least try.

Wanting to find comfort and warmth in the cold cave, the wolf shifted and waited till the forest was once again moulded in black. His path was a blur and his hearing reduced to ghostly voices as he made his way towards the lake where he would meet his beloved. His mind hazy from the excitement of seeing her or perhaps from the unusual cold, he moved drunkenly to the lake and snuggled into the chilly pillow, waiting for the curtains of clouds to part and reveal the queen of the night.

The moon shared the wolf's agony in waiting for the sky to clear and for her to look at her lover after the soulful conversation they had shared the night before. However, some spirit seemed to only fasten the dark pall around her eyes and the moon was, with all the light she had, blinded.

It was only some time before dawn that the clouds parted just a little to let her glimpse the lake. It was frozen, sharply reflecting her light like a knife unlike the rippling reflections she loved to see when the weather was not so harsh. But when the moon's gaze finally fell on the edge of the lake, she could not see her beloved. What she saw was a blanket of white which seemed to level the ground. Not even the huge, crooked trees were visible.

The trees". She whispered as realization dawned on her. It seemed that the tempest, which had finally calmed now, had buried the forest in icy sheets. Her translucent vision finally cleared when the last of the clouds moved and then the tops of the trees were visible like little specs of dirt on top of the snow. They resembled the moon's face which was also littered by dark hollows and spots. When the moonlight finally fell onto the ground beside the lake, it seemed to shine like the moon itself. She saw herself on the ground where her lover had to be and even though she hoped, against all odds that better sense had prevailed in him and that he had decided not to visit her, she knew that in the likeness of her face was where he was buried.

Love never comes easy. And deliverance? It is a dream of the fools.

It was the sun's fault, some say. After all, celestial bodies were also envious of each other. Why should the moon have a lover when it only reflected light and did not generate it? Why should the darkness be loved? Darkness that threatened of monsters lurking in the shadows, of omens in the clouds, of nightmares in sleep. And why, of all creatures, should the wolf, a beast, a cruel mistake of nature be allowed to feel what is meant for the angels? So the sun refused to shine and thaw the forest because his own heart was frozen.

"The devil was a fallen angel after all." The wind still whispers in ghostly rebellion, as the moon continues to shine on the place by the edge of the lake. The trees have returned and so have the packs. The seasons have come and gone, the forest has turned green and dark and then green again but the lone wolf is lost. Somewhere in the depths of the ground, he is lost.

Intangible, incorruptible, perished. But the moon still waits for her lover. She might have lost hope but she dreams of the time they shared and she still shines her light, night after night after night.

Cursed with life, she laments the mischief of death. She shines, but somewhere in the ground, the moon has lost her glow.

# The Tale of the Lifeless Lark

- Akriti Maurya, 1st Year

While shedding its yellow leaves,  
 A tree lets everyone know about it.  
 When the cloud is filled up till the brim,  
 It saturates, precipitates and heaves.  
 The morose dog doesn't find it unethical to moan in pain,  
 Neither does the vagrant bird shies to remain silent in rain.  
 Even a housefly buzzes and makes noise when upturned,  
 And a mischievous lad whines when thrashed with a cane.

Then why,  
 Then why do humans crave to find isolation when afflicted mentally?  
 Why do they then walk into the woods of secrecy?  
 The woods of secrecy where -  
 Pain starts begetting pain and sufferings multiply,  
 Mental peace is lost and they carp, clamour and cry.  
 'An act of cowardice' as friends tag it.  
 'An act of shame' as parents label it.  
 And here comes an angel to invalidate those labels,  
 To shatter the state of seclusions and hereby present one of the fables :  
 "Long time ago as they say it,  
 Dwelled a cheerful seventh-grade urchin  
 As happy as a lark he used to be,  
 Adorned with a melting soothing grin.  
 But soon arrived a tragic day,  
 He lost his parents in an accident on their way.  
 Daylight became a droopy night,  
 Grief snatched all his might.  
 Inconsolable, forlorn and dejected.  
 All he had was nothing to say.  
 Bleakness was now the new joy,  
 For the little woeful boy.  
 Years passed and his sorrows amplified,  
 With no reason to live and myriad reasons to hide.

One fine day he met a spirited gentleman,  
An angel in disguise as he called him later,  
The 'angel' asked him to exude out all his worries,  
To ooze out all the gloomy paintings hidden in the secrecy.  
The lifeless lark sighed and agreed,  
The man said, "okay, now I will take the lead".  
From the days that followed, things recovered gradually,  
Discharging out the pain was a really fine remedy.  
And soon the lifeless lark was full of life again,  
Hopping, singing and dancing in the rain.  
And here are the lines which he had now to quote:  
'Its okay to be not okay and;  
Talk therapy is the best possible antidote'."



# Intimacy of togetherness

-Tanya Kumar, 1st Year



# All falls down

Artwork by Saloni Jaitly, 1st year



Artwork by Rukmini Saha, 2nd year





Photograph by Anurati Srivastava, 1st Year



*Volunteers' Space*

# Mental Health In College

~ By Harman Kaur, First year

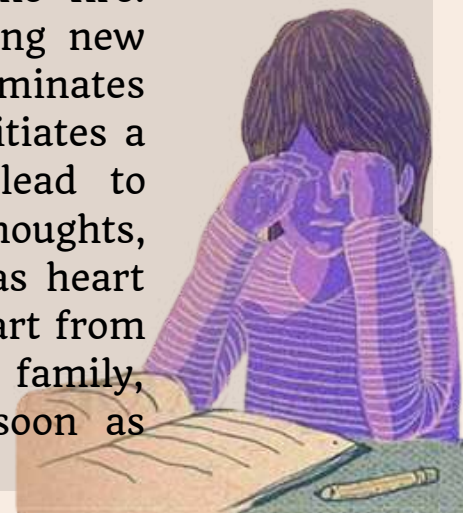


[Trigger Warning: Mention of suicide, substance abuse and eating disorders.]

*“What mental health needs is more sunlight, more condor and more unashamed conversations”.*

Mental health refers to cognitive, behavioral and emotional well being. For any individual to be productive the footing of good mental health and physical health is decisive. The term productive comes into play significantly as student invades in their college life. Fountain of college appears with enormous responsibilities and freedom, transforming us from young adults to mature adults. They are exposed to the treasure containing sparkling coins of new friends, adventurous activities, new and improved skills, interactions, diverse societies which can only be cherished with the key of good mental health. They are steadily targeted by society and are taxed by expectations that pave a path to the room of mental health issues. These concerns can range from addiction to depression. One of the major issues amongst all is the matter of stress.

Firstly not getting admission into the desired college leads to demotivation, the pressure to accommodate in an extremely new ambiance. Adding to it crave of being distinct and attract attention acts as fuel in the fire. Students are squeezed with the burden of making new friends as they enter into the college life which culminates to anxiety. Meticulous curricular of the college initiates a huge amount of stress on them. This may lead to disturbed sleeping patterns, depression, suicidal thoughts, mood disturbances, various other ailments such as heart diseases, high blood pressure and many more. Apart from that anguish regarding career, separation from family, burden to achieve economic independence as soon as possible aggravates the situation.



Next challenge is substance abuse. High level of anxiety and stress waves in the form of enslavement towards various drugs and alcohol as coping mechanism. Such addictions are going to impact the students physically and mentally carrying them into the river emotional instability. With wrong peer group their health is surely to go downhill. In the current scenario where most of the colleges are administering through online mode, the sense of isolation is rising with a feeling of massive sadness.

Viewing self video during online classes has resulted in facial appearance dissatisfaction among students. The inability to make new friends and accustom themselves into a new environment arouses the feeling of self doubt and self disgust. Social media is acting as a bar of comparison between them and others in terms of physical appearance, availability of facilities, quantity of things that we possess and many other standards further intensifies the chaos in mind. Persistence of such thoughts and feelings may carry you on a path leading to suicidal thoughts. In position to get by such thoughts students may start binge eating. The effects of a high fat diet combined with unhealthy stress and anxiety lands them up in a situation where mental stability appears as a cliché. Binge eating approaches with detrimental effects such as unhealthy weight gain and stringent diseases

The students are at the periphery of experiencing entirely new things altogether as they step into college. They are in one of the most crucial phases of their life at a tender age with the will to explore as much as possible. On that account, careful navigation at this stage is paramount as most students stay quiet due to insecurities and always consider it as normal. Bringing in the need of open and clear discussions on mental issues is going to aid the entire process and increase the accessibility to campus mental health services. Encouraging the students to talk to people in their surroundings especially their loved ones and share the resentment and problems with them. Assisting them in forming new peer groups by keeping the pressure to make friends at bay will solve the major problem. Fabricate the classrooms with a healthy climate where open dialogue regarding mental issues needs to be prioritized. Inculcate the concept of flexibility and perseverance into the curriculum. Government has to step in by initiating the awareness programs regarding mental health

and erase the taboo or stigma that is attached to it. Most of the college students are armed with social media which can be used as a powerful source to boost the outreach of mental health issues that are extensively faced by the students. In addition to that, strengthening to ask for a professional if required.

As a society we must put our earnest efforts to boost mental health well being and relief from constant suffering. Students are the youth of the nation hence, the smallest symptom of any kind of mental disorder should remain noticed under any circumstance.

# PSY-HUB

## Fresher's for the batch of '24

~ Anushka Singh, Second Year

On January 12, the Department of Psychology hosted its Fresher's event for the newly welcomed class of 2024. The theme of the event was Pop- Culture wherein the dress code was to embrace the look of your favourite fictional character or meme. Even the professors chimed in with their chosen looks. Several movie quizzes were also played to which everyone responded with complete enthusiasm. Navreet and Shatakshi from the third year provided the Batch with a virtual campus tour of LSR tying all people present together. Rukmini and Anoushka from second-year sang a sweet song for the students and the event ended on a sweet note of hope of getting to see the dream college life in person, as soon as possible.

## 'Neurodivergence Session'

~ Shagun, First Year

On 19th January 2022, the Department of Psychology in collaboration with REACH-The Equal Opportunity Cell organised an insightful and enriching session on 'Neurodivergence', as presented by Ms. Amalina Kohli Dave, a mental health activist, user-survivor, active advocator for queer/crip approaches within mental health and queer spaces.

Ms. AK Dave got the ball rolling by giving a picture of her background and admitting to having a certain amount of privilege in terms of resources, education, field access to mental health institutions and peer groups, while speaking on the topic of neurodivergence from her experiences. She analyzed neurodivergence in the context of mental health activism, feminism, disability movements and queer movements. Briefing over the history of the concept, she journeyed the audience through the 1990s era, a period revolving around catastrophizing people with autism which gave rise to the Autistic Rights Movement under the disability rights movement. Moreover, she credited Judy Singer, an autistic sociologist for coining the term 'neurodiversity'. In the contemporary times, with expansion of knowledge neurodiversity or neurodivergence has become an umbrella term for disorders such as OCD, ADHD, Autism, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia etc.

The speaker engaged the listeners in her discovery of neurodivergence through her life story, put forward by her in a linear narrative. Describing her earliest memories of dissociative feelings, non directional fear, intense guilts, along with physiological symptoms to auditory hallucinations, shaking, frequent dissociative episodes to ultimately being diagnosed at the age of eighteen. She highlighted her struggles of appearing to be a 'normal' person by making conscious efforts to hide her sexual orientations through engaging in typical behaviour that were socially acceptable.

She brought to foreground her approach of pro-de-institutionalisation of psychiatry, perceiving from the lens of a humanistic approach rather than a top-down one. Simultaneously, she went on to critique mental health from the positionality of neurodivergent while shunning the idea of fixing a person with neurodisability via treatment and aiming to produce an end result which is a neurotypical individual.

Lastly, the audience and the speaker engaged in a Question-Answer round creating a noteworthy environment of learning filled with inquisitiveness and unique thinking pattern.

## **'Ripping of the Wallpaper: A Discussion of The Yellow Wallpaper by Charlotte Perkins Gilman'**

~ Aratrika Datta, First Year

The Books, Documentaries, and Media (BDM) Team of the Psychology Department in collaboration with The English Literary Association of LSR organized a session 'Ripping off the Wallpaper: A Discussion of The Yellow Wallpaper by Charlotte Perkins Gilman' on 28th January 2022. It was a student-led discussion and analysis of the short story 'The Yellow Wallpaper' by Charlotte Perkins Gilman. The speakers of the session were members of the BDM Team and the English Literary Association. It started with the speakers providing a brief background of the story, why the author wrote it, discussing its plot, and how the story is a compelling piece of feminist literature that talks about the mental health of women, and their repression in society, during the Victorian Era. The session further involved informative discussions by the speakers about the limited nature of psychological diagnosis in the 19th century, where mental illnesses like hysteria were primarily considered something that occurs mostly amongst women ('ailment of the uterus') and how physicians always attributed mental illnesses to physiological causes. Further discussions were done about self-expression in the Victorian era and the symptoms of postpartum depression and psychosis, both of which the narrator was likely suffering from, as is evident from multiple parts in the short story, although it has not been directly referred to in the text.

This was followed by an interactive and insightful discussion by the attendees and the speakers on what the yellow wallpaper in the story and its color and texture signified to them. The speakers presented their views on how the narrator in the story has been infantilized by her husband in various instances, and the focus on the intersection of society and person in psychological issues in recent times. The speakers also stated that as a feminist piece of literature, 'The Yellow Wallpaper' received severe backlash from society, and requested the attendees of the session to express their views on why they think anything feminist always receives backlash. Finally, a padlet link was shared by one of the speakers, Ananya Rao, to receive feedback on the session from the attendees. A group snapshot was taken of everyone present and the insightful session was concluded with a vote of thanks by the Books, Documentaries, and Media Team of the Psychology Dept. and the English Literary Association.

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# NEWSROOM



Happenings in the world of psychology!

## Zoom Fatigue Is Worse When You Don't Like Your Face

Both anecdotal data and scientific research have documented a phenomenon informally named “Zoom fatigue,” which refers to the feeling of exhaustion one has after video conferencing. This study found that face dissatisfaction leads to exhaustion after video conferencing. Overall, the researchers found that virtual meeting fatigue was significantly higher in women than men.

*The constant mirror: Self-view and attitudes to virtual meetings, Computers in Human Behavior, Volume 128, 2022, 107110, ISSN 0747-5632, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2021.10711>*

## Most People Ditch Their New Year's Resolutions by February

Research suggests many people will ditch their resolutions by February. To persist, people should focus on the fun aspects of a goal even if the goal is more important than fun. Enjoyment is critical because humans respond more strongly to immediate outcomes.

*Woolley K, Fishbach A. Immediate Rewards Predict Adherence to Long-Term Goals. Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin. January 26, 2022.*

## People With Social Anxiety Not Only Avoid Looking At Strangers But Also Their Surroundings

Social anxiety is characterized by increased avoidance, rather than hypervigilance, during social situations. The naturalistic study tracked participants' eye gazes as a stranger entered the room and found that participants with higher social anxiety showed a shorter



initial fixation to the stranger and lower visual exploration of the environment.

*Konovalova I, Antolin JV, Bolderston H, Gregory NJ (2021) Adults with higher social anxiety show avoidant gaze behaviour in a real-world social setting: A mobile eye tracking study. PLoS ONE 16(10): e0259007. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0259007>*

## If winter gets you down, you may have a form of depression called SAD.

SAD is short for seasonal affective disorder, which brings on mood changes during fall and winter, when there is less sunlight, and symptoms typically ease up in the spring. But the American Psychiatric Association says SAD goes beyond the "winter blues." Its symptoms can range from mild to severe and interfere with everyday life. The good news is there are several treatments for SAD, including antidepressant medications, talk therapy and light therapy.

*Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). (n.d.). Web Starter Kit. January 23,2022 Retrieved from <https://www.psychiatry.org/patients-families/depression/seasonal-affective-disorder>*

## Remembering Faces And Names Can Be Improved During Sleep

The effect reactivating memory during sleep has on face-name learning. The researchers found that people's name recall improved significantly when memories of newly learned face-name associations were reactivated while they were napping. Key to this improvement was uninterrupted deep sleep.

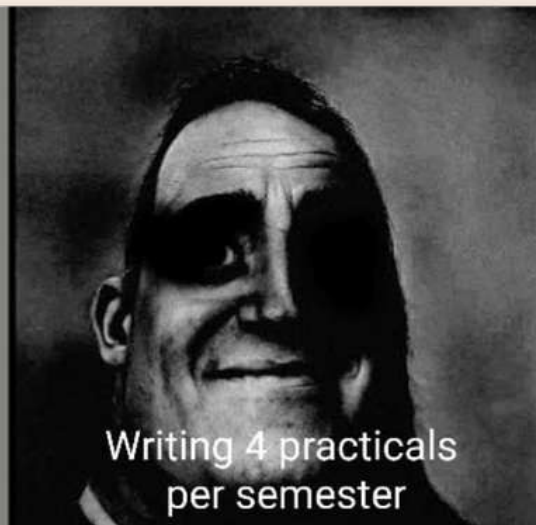
*Nathan W. Whitmore, Adrianna M. Bassard, Ken A. Paller. Targeted memory reactivation of face-name learning depends on ample and undisturbed slow-wave sleep. npj Science of Learning, 2022; 7 (1) DOI: 10.1038/s41539-021-00119-2*

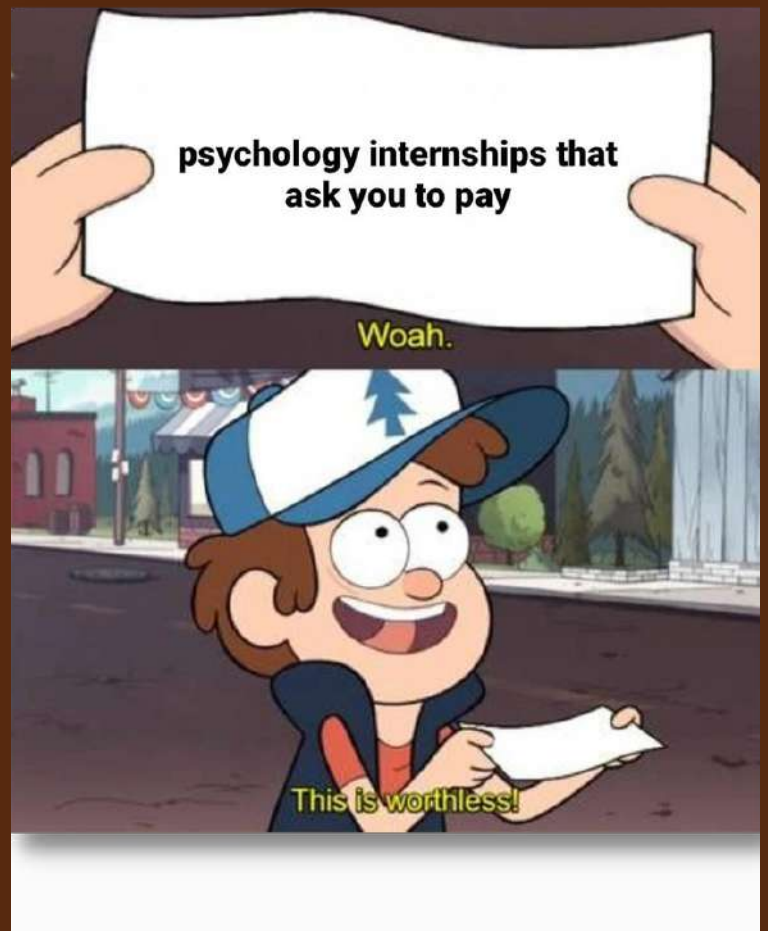
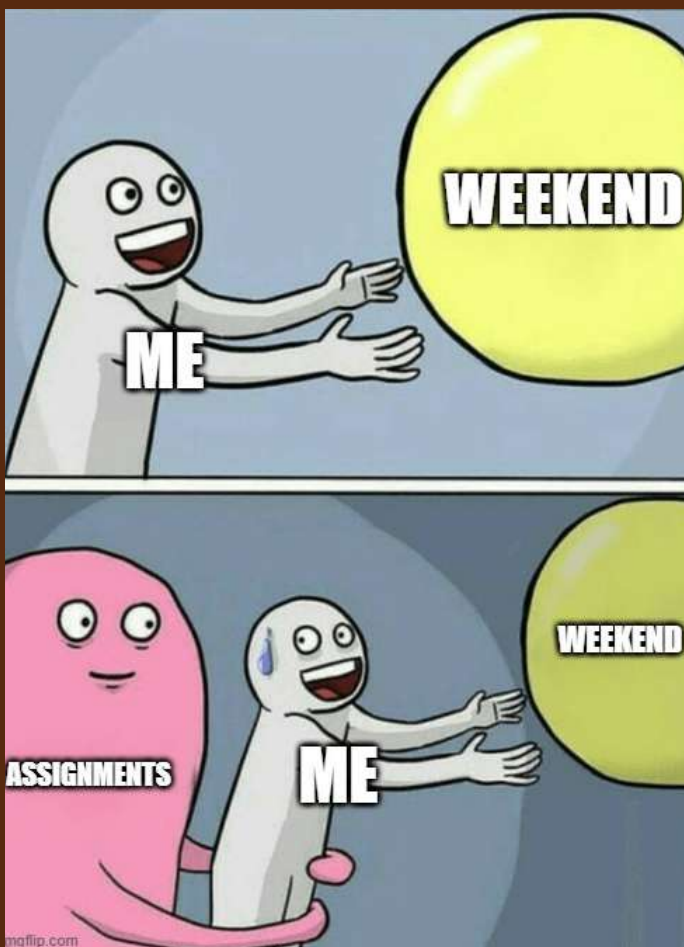
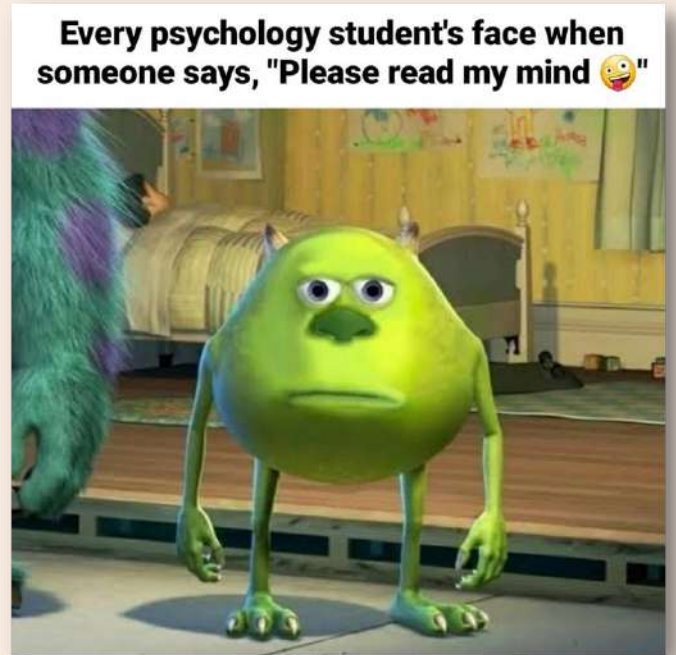
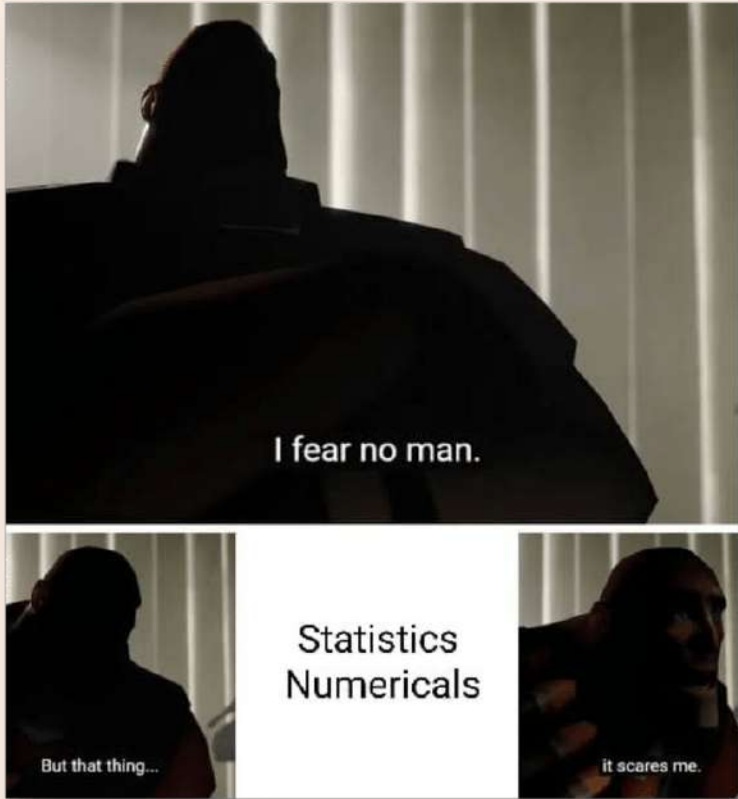
## Vaccine 'Nocebo': If You Expect Side Effects, They May Come

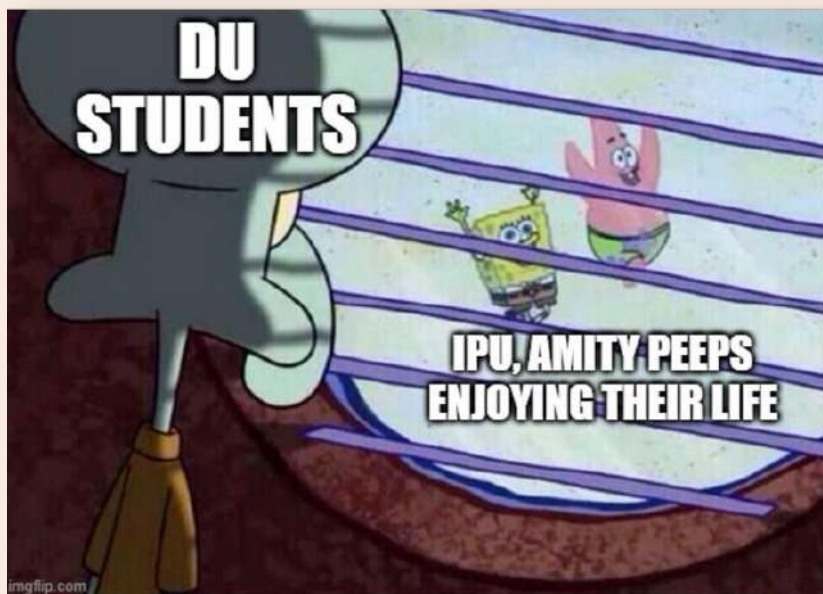
Before getting their first dose of a COVID vaccine, many Americans were nervous about how they would react to the shot, but new research shows that fears of side effects may actually make side effects more likely. "Medicine is based on trust," Kaptchuk said. Letting the public know that the nocebo effect might play a role in any vaccine side effect "could help reduce worries about COVID-19 vaccination, which might decrease vaccination hesitancy," he believes.

*US News (2022, January 18). US News. Retrieved January 27, 2022, from <https://www.usnews.com/news/health-news/articles/2022-01-18/vaccine-nocebo-if-you-expect-sideeffects-they-may-com>*

# FREUDIAN SLURPS!









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