



*Department of Psychology
Gargi College*

NEWSLETTER

2020



*An ode to
Kindness*



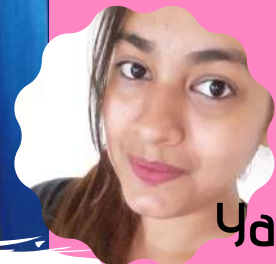
ISHITA SRIVASTAVA



The light that disperses, pale, is the frozen sun even if it does exist as the obscured moon does, where may the end of waiting be if there's a beginning, hold on, hold on, hold on



Tanvi
Pawar



Yashika
Kapasiya

This painting is a 3 piece artwork on A2 size canvas. This painting depicts two trees and birds. The love is clearly shown between the birds. The small white flowers on trees give the idea of the spring season which refreshes everyone's heart. The scenery is showing the combination of purple and blue colour in the context of sunset.



Rea Kwatra

Rose



Poorvi
Sethi

Life offers you a rose
But your sanity impales itself on the
thorns
Tell yourself it's okay
Implore your mind to understand the
pain
It's okay if it seems like the whole
world is against you
You'll always have support in the form
of your chosen few
It's okay if it feels like your pieces are
being cleaved apart
You are allowed to scream and cry and
call them back from far and wide, till
they eventually fall back together
Be as kind to yourself as you are to
others
Your body is a temple and your mind
its treasure
So the next time life offers a rose to
you
Appreciate its beauty like it's
something priceless and new.



Compassion and College

College is a place where we get to reinvent ourselves in ways we want, as first year students, we enter this space with hopes and ideas about how the rest of our lives will pan out if we can just find the right things, i.e. the right course, right friends, right boyfriend/girlfriend etc., we enter this time with a lot of plans and with that comes a lot of nerves and pressure.

Even though there is no lack of advice out there about how to “flourish” in college, the truth of failure all boil down to the same basic idea of how to deal with it and move on. Today we have reached a stage where practicality surpass compassion and honestly sometimes I appreciate this “modern era” of advice where we actually believe that those six slides on Instagram can fix our problems and seeing a few likes on the post can help us feel not-so-alone. But like most things there is another side to this where we start associating likes to compassion and validation. For example, is posting a picture of a hurt puppy enough to convey my deep compassion for causes like animal cruelty? But more importantly should it be?

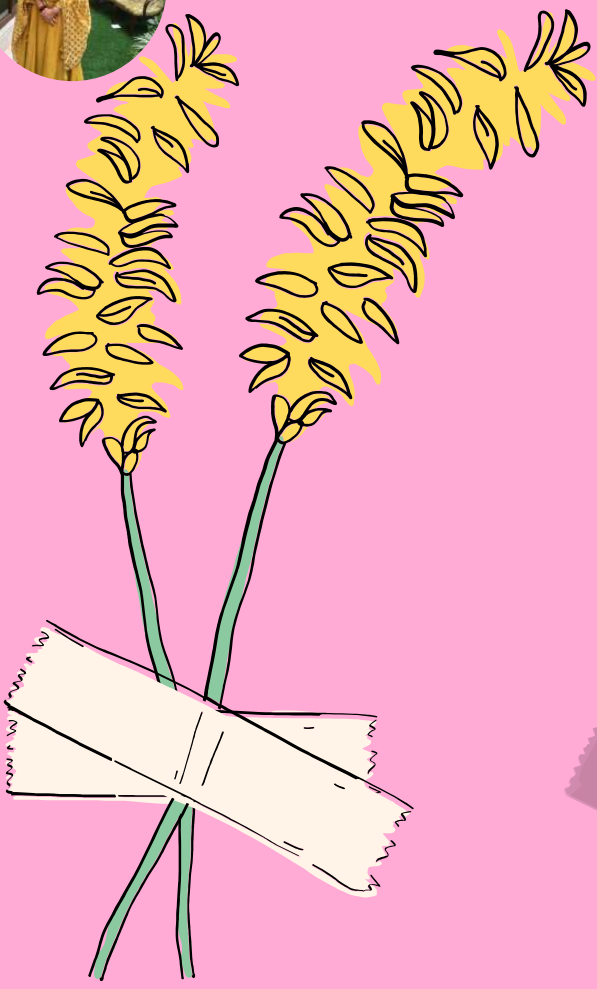
One thing college really helped me with was how to reflect on myself and people in general, A lot of people I have met or seen over the years have started seeing compassion in very individualistic terms like, I feel bad for you but I can't help you.

To an extent I understand this point of view, everyone has their issues and its wrong for us to expect someone to be there unconditionally. This leads to my confusion with the word Compassion. Today I am forced to see compassion as an economic investment, i.e. evaluate if it's worth my time and effort and then match that to future projection of gains, meaning, it feels like its highly dependent on the returns.

And yes, this may sound cold and lonely but like I said, practicality surpasses compassion and this way of life is actually the one thing that binds most of us together. In the end, the word compassion always brings me back to something My mom used to tell me, she used to say that compassion wasn't something she could teach me, if I went out in the world and didn't see the need for it myself then understanding it would always be hard. She told me it was a feeling that should be inherent to me, something I had to protect.



Mallika Aggarwal



Anoushka Ahuja

"The light never goes out"

바라다 (Hope)

I ask myself

How do I not lose hope

Scrolling through my feed everyday

How do I not lose hope

When the fire is burning somewhere else

But I see my own home burning

How do I not lose hope

When the same colour I used, to draw the sun at the corner of the page as a child

Has discoloured the pages of history

I remind myself

I do not lose hope

Because I see a "let's talk about mental health" on my feed

I do not lose hope

Because I see memes turned into posters on the streets

I do not lose hope

Because my neighbour tells me they are going to celebrate a green

Diwali

I do not lose hope

Because a cab driver who doesn't know me greets me with a "have a good day beti"

So, I tell myself

It's okay to turn off the switch sometimes

It's okay to look for the light inside

But I must remember that there is light inside

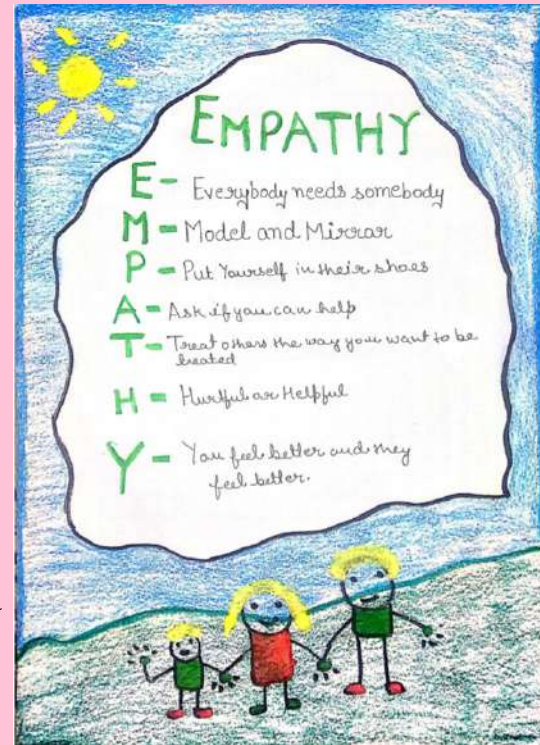
And I must remember

there is hope in life

Tanvi Pawar



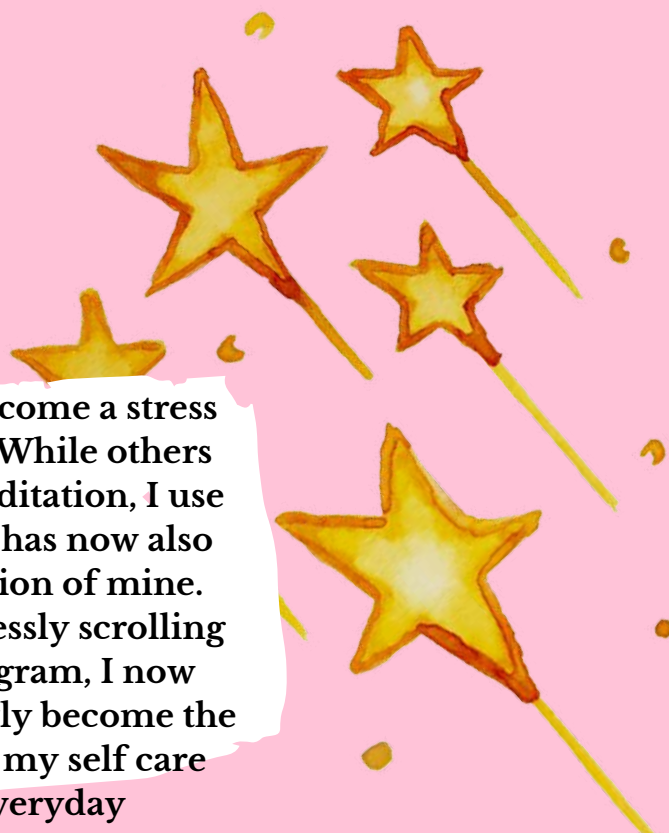
Shreya



Stiching has become a stress buster for me. While others use sleep or meditation, I use embroidery. It has now also become a passion of mine. Instead of aimlessly scrolling through Instagram, I now stitch. It has slowly become the biggest part of my self care routine everyday



Simonil
Jassawala



LOCATE YOUR COMPASSION

We asked you two questions, here are your answers

What is one way by which you've been kind to others?

Started giving others more reassurance of things - "it's okay you made this choice," "it's okay if you feel this way," "your feelings are all valid and real," etc

I think that I've tried to be kind to others by always listening to what they think no matter what. I have often assured people how it is completely okay to keep themselves first in certain situations. I have and still try to help out anyone, even my parents in whatever way I can, like I try to run errands for my parents whenever possible. Compassion for me is more than just a feeling, it's not about sympathising but about actually helping out people in need.

I personally try and buy tea and biscuits for an old lady that sits on the stairs of the metro station that I travel from every day. I also teach my house helper's children on weekends. But other than these, I try being aware of the people around me, and being considerate of their emotions and feelings as much as I can, I listen to them whenever they need an ear, and hug them whenever they need one, or 10. Also, I compliment strangers if I like something about them

Being kind to others should not be a matter of option or choice. It's something that should be kept in mind. I strongly believe in this. I mostly try to be kind to others by allowing them to speak their minds, their opinions and getting to know them and their stories before judging them or reaching conclusions as to how they are as a person! I feel everybody should be careful in judging others too soon.

I think about others and how they feel in situations.

Complimenting people and seeing the glow that follows soon after

I have tried to remain compassionate towards people by being a non-judgmental human being. When I see someone taking particular decisions in different situations, I try to understand why they must be doing so. And I think, just that space given to someone to make/defend/change/improve their own decisions over time is extremely liberating and provides a comfortable and supportive environment for growth.

When others are in genuine trouble, I try my best to help them.

Treating others how I would like to be treated by them.

reminding them that I'll be there for them.

By being there to listen when words are over burdening, and forgiving me/them after they act out in aggression. For understanding and saying it's okay.

I try to buy roses from poor children and present it to them as a gift. I love to see them smile as they receive it

Expressing my gratitude towards everyone without discrimination.

I have started to stop jumping to conclusions about people and have started to give them the benefit of doubt

I let people go before me in the queue at the metro, I hold the door open for open for them. This is in context for strangers. And for the people that I know, I try and be there for them whenever they need me to and be there with a non-judgmental attitude.

LOCATE YOUR COMPASSION

What is one way by which you've been kind to yourself?

By allowing myself time to heal and grow at my own pace. I have been kind by treating myself with food and movie (alone) time breaks.

Giving myself enough time for myself, writing and doing my art

Although I am still on the path of learning how to be kind to myself, I think one way in which I've shown compassion to myself is by talking to myself in a more positive way and not using self-depreciating self-talk. I have been trying to believe more in what I am capable of doing instead of thinking that 'I am useless'.

I have recently introduced yoga in my routine

When I make mistakes unintentionally I pardon myself

I believe that I am kind to myself every day. When I don't hate myself for my body, when I allow myself the space to make mistakes and to say that I don't know.

By accepting who I am, with all what I have, by cherishing myself and improving for my betterment.

There are few situations when I have been kind to myself by thinking positively and taking decisions by keeping myself in the first place

Slowly allowing myself to have fun without feeling guilty of "not being productive

That's something that doesn't come that easily, with me . But I've been trying to do that by reminding myself of my existence and it's purpose. I often calm myself down when sometimes my emotions feel too accelerated or like at the brim. I often indulge in self therapy when some days I feel too anxious or unsure about myself and my feelings!

Sleeping for long hours during on weekends.

I am starting to accept myself as i am and stopped being overly critical of what i do.

I've made an effort to accept myself for exactly who I am. My skills, my shortcomings, my happiness, and my frustrations. I follow every random, upsetting thought with "and I am okay with that" accepting it as a part of what makes me human, and loving myself for it. I try not to hold my emotions back anymore, I say what I feel, when I feel it, realising that the people who love me, will love me more for being me, and those who don't, don't matter anyway. In short, I've stopped holding myself back, I'm freeing myself, and it has just made me realise that giving someone the freedom to be truly themselves is the kindest thing that you can do for them, it's even better if the person who start with is you

Some ways by which i have been kind to myself are, by taking time off whenever I need, pampering myself with my favourite dessert and taking a walk.

I started going to therapy

Eating good food

I stopped underestimating myself.

Loving my own body

I try not to be too harsh on myself for my setbacks, failures, etc. The concept of self-love or self-compassion that was taught to us in class really helped me navigate through tough situations. This idea suggests that we all should treat and talk to ourselves in the same way in which we might talk to or console our friends if they went through the same situation.



For When You Feel Sad



For when you feel sad;
 There is nothing better than calling a friend,
 Knowing he will be there for you to lean on.

For when you feel sad;
 Write a letter to yourself,
 And let your emotions flow.

For when you feel sad;
 put on your favorite lipstick,
 And deal with it.

For when you feel sad;
 Treat yourself,
 And make the best memories around the table.

For when you feel sad;
 Light a candle and,
 put on a pretty dress.

For when you feel sad;
 Learn to love yourself,
 Eventually everything will be better.

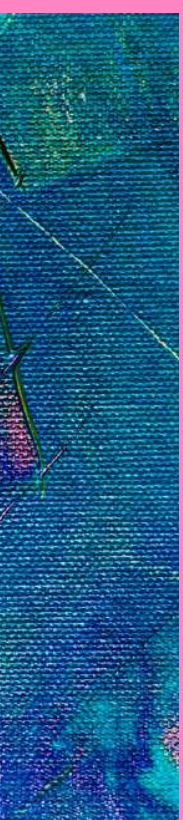


Tanishqa Sadana



Stumbling Upon Hope
Alisha Nevatia

The sky is dark and it's a windy day. It's been raining, but not a happy rain rather a gloomy one. Sitting at home, fiddling through channels, a song grabs my attention. It was "Heal the World" by Michael Jackson. Listening to the song and you rush through various emotions and thoughts. Initially, you think about all your sufferings but as the song proceeds you slowly start thinking about the bad around you, in this world, with other human beings. You think about yourself and the world and all of this puts you down. The song finishes and you cry because you feel overwhelmed, you feel free because you are finally able to cry over all the people who left you. You cry for others who are going through miserable times and then you feel light in your chest but you look forward to make things right. This ray of hope that 'everything will be okay', it comes from different sources. You feel healed and comforted. It can be because of someone who understands you and helped you through it like a friend, family member, therapist or sometimes even strangers. It can be a song like the fight song or a movie like "Kal Ho Naa Ho" with characters like Aman showing us to be happy and hopeful even in the face of adversity for the good is right around the corner. It's heartwarming to see Leigh Anne from "The Blind Side" understanding Michael's pain and discomfort and helping him at every step showing that you don't need to be race or religion specific to be compassionate. Bob Graham wrote, How to Heal a Broken Wing, describing the empathetic nature of a child who feels the pain of the bird and tries to fix its wing, showing that a bird can not fly with a broken wing and humans can't love without healing, urging us to accept that in order to feel more love for others, to be more hopeful and kind, we need to be more compassionate and we need to heal from our long time wounds to become a better person for self and others. Feel everything, feel every thought and emotion, whether it's joy or pain, but feel it so that you understand the wound and look forward to heal it with a better medicine or any art form...



Kyra

"I'll be back in five minutes I forgot something in the car"
"Okay mumma"

I placed all the groceries on the table and walked into my room. As I looked through the window I realised that it has been quite sometime since I last met Kyra.

Kyra and I have been around each other ever since we were born and she was my first real friend in this world. I remember how we used to chat and play happily with all those toys. It was a time when we had nothing to worry about. Things have changed since then. We haven't been able to talk and catch up on a lot of things owing to all these exams and deadlines for assignments to complete. There were times when I struggled to sleep and times when I slept too much. I was running here and there, running so much that I forgot what I was running to and what I was running from. I forgot someone who is the most important to me, I forgot her.

"Where did you put the tomatoes beta?" my mother peeked through the door of my room and asked
"They are on the table mumma"
"Oho, I asked you to keep them in the fridge, Kyra"
"Sorry maa. I'll keep them, do you want me to to cook the chicken curry?"
"You... want to cook..?"
"Yes maa, like I always did before."

I took one last look at the girl staring back at me from the reflection in the window. She was Kyra and she was finally here.



Anshika
Dhar

Dear Self,

For the longest time you have been a sucker for pain. Now after nineteen bruises of the body, eight inflammations of the heart and countless blizzards of the mind, you are finally learning to heal, making scars bloom, bearing pain to get better instead of feeding off of it to spiral down the burrow of loathe. Sure you feel right at home buried deep down underneath the chaos and conundrum of broken dreams, places and people, but what matters is that you always find your way out creeping, crawling, climbing up a string of hope. It gets darker and you fall, you fall apart like Post Malone does but you remember to rise from the ashes drenched in my tears because Dumbledore said "Happiness can be found, even in the darkest of times, if one only remembers to turn on the light". You remember that you are light.



Tejaswini

How do you practice kindness?

I tend to drink directly out of the bottle rather than use plastic cups



Kirti Wadhawa





Ananya



Aparajita Raj

Why is Compassion important?

Compassion is what makes us human. It helps us rise above our basic instincts. In this day and age, compassion is a necessity. It is not a virtue meant to be possessed by a generous few but a lesson to be taught to every child. Compassion not only enables us to feel for others, it also drives us to act and work for others' needs. A little kindness everyday, makes the world a better place.



Aayushi Sharma

What is your favourite book?

The Gene by Siddharth Mukherjee



Simran



This picture was taken a week after my grandfather passed. I thought I always had to be strong for my family so that I can help them heal... But in the process, I left myself out. Like I was there for my family, my family here in college for there for me. Each teacher allowed me the space and comfort to cry, the strength to smile and the courage to face my life head on. My friends always stuck by me, helping me see that anything was possible with them by my side. I experienced the compassion, the love and the support in every smile thrown my way, every gaze, every offer of laddoos and love, every time I walked into this department of Psychology. I now have the courage to smile in times of hardships, for myself and others- to treat myself as equal and to love myself.

Varunika Gupta

Touch

I have been bleeding through this forest
Running away from my past and it's demons
The thorns have pierced my skin
The night's wailing has deafened my ears
And my eyes are tired of woes

I have moved my arms frantically too often
Mistaking branches and vines for claws and
clutches
I haven't stopped once
For I feared the haunting was approaching fast
I have looked back countless times
And haven't found them

Some tiny moments of breathlessness have flashed
afrent some faces
and

I have often felt like gauging my eyes out
I have burdened and cursed myself
Every passing second and step
Redoing and Undoing so much
In my now sore and heavy head

However,
The forest now seems to lighten a little
The thick air is shifting delicate
The trees are moving away
And possibly there is the
sun

It's light and warmth comforts me
So I slow down to the edge of the woods
It ends and leads to shore
And my feet step on to soft baked grains

The fear I had, is rested from this change
And I sit down at the brimming blue
My fingers reach its reflectory surface
And as they touch, the ocean pulls out of me
all my weight

The wetness travels my tips, knuckles and
wrists
And I watch my hand slow dancing in the
shallow
Then I lovingly caress my arm with this
water
Feeling myself, breathing and alive
As I smooth my hair and watch my face and
the sky together
The reflection relieves me

There,
After having escaped everything including
myself
A compassionate touch of my skin on my
skin
Makes me enough for
me



Afreen Zehra



Three minutes of healing and compassion

As I went scrolling through my picture gallery to submit something for the newsletter I saw this picture which I had taken sometime during the summer of Delhi ; a picture of a father with his very young son, sleeping on a foot path , It was night-time and the son was crying , it was the father's job to put him to sleep I was inside my car just witnessing the entire moment. The father pulled up his baby son onto his lap and asked him to look up at the night sky, he said " look up , lets count how many dots are shining in the night sky (pointing at the stars)" , pretty soon the loud cry turned into soft sobs and the father said "Son lets count fast before morning arrives" and soon I saw the baby curl inside the father's arms smiling and giggling staring widely at every direction his father pointed As humans I think we all find some kind of familiarity in pain and suffering we all at some point in our life have experienced our highest highs and lowest lows and when we see Someone go through a tough time there is a certain grace and love that arises within us knowing that , the person will persevere through faith and diligence. That short yet sweet moment was so healing and filled me up with compassion and gratitude towards my own life. Seeing the father and son sleeping under the night sky on a road side while playing along so joyously with each other made me realize that you don't need a roof above your head to make someone smile or spread love . That scene left a certain kind of mark on my heart that to this day reminds me how lovely it is to hold someone and make them feel loved. There is a line from Shep Walkers line in the Divine Secrets Of The YA-YA Sisterhood . When he was asked "Did you get enough love?" he answered "What's enough".

When I saw the picture in December, the first thing I wondered was how and where they must be sleeping right now, we all know Delhi winters are brutal and relentless. Looking at the picture now and seeing the barely clad son all I could think was how he must be sleeping in these cold winter days, and hoping both of them are somehow warm and resting peacefully. Is this compassion? Can I call it that? Well I don't know. I just hope they are warm and laughing and counting the shiny dots in the night sky.



Kajum Gamlin

What is a place in Delhi that is be your happy place?

According to me a happy place is where you get peace, the place which makes you forget everything and you are at peace both mentally and emotionally. My happy place would be Bangla Sahib Gurudwara.

This is the one place which I personally visit the most and I can never get tired of going to that place. The environment there is so soothing. So my go to place would surely be this.



Vidhi Bajaj

What are some simple things in life that give you joy?

Stable comforting social support and a supporting family are some of the things that bring me joy in life. Another thing that's very important to me is the ability to take out some 'me time' so that I can declutter my mind.

Vasudha Singh

Hope versus Despair

Hey people, this is the first time that I am expressing my thoughts on such a platform. The only thought that motivated me to share my feelings is that being a part of such a wonderful department we all see things or at least try to see things from a non-judgmental perspective and respect other people's perspective. We try to be in that person's shoe. So here I am, expressing my views on life and my struggle to become a hopeful person.

According to Erik Erikson, the 8th stage of psychosocial development is ego integrity vs. despair, but at present, I feel I am revolving around the stage of hope v/s despair. Being positive, having a positive outlook, or being hopeful, all these concepts seem very vague and difficult to me. Sometimes I feel that the field of 'positive psychology' is just impractical. These 'sugary concepts' are great to read, but in real life it seems to be too realistic to achieve. Everyone is fighting his/her own struggle, people have hundreds of problems, but they push themselves to go ahead, there is a hope in them that everything will be alright.

I am struggling to be hopeful in my life. For me, life seems to be meaningless. I think that 'there is no point in living', everything seems so materialistic to me, and people are too busy in this rats' race. People have aims and goals to achieve, so they feel motivated to live and work towards the goal. But I think in a totally opposite way. I feel that we are alive, therefore in order to sustain we have to have some so-called aims/goals/dreams. My question is, why is it necessary to live? In positive psychology, there is a term known as 'self-satisfaction'. According to the scholars, people should thrive for self-satisfaction in order to live a happy life. But what if the person finds self-satisfaction in leaving this materialistic world? If a person actually feels pressurized to live or feel suffocated in being alive, then he/she must be set free in order to experience satisfaction, right? How is suicide a cowardly act? How is it selfish? We cannot always and always live for others' happiness. Why do we have to forcefully decide upon an aim in our life, and then live for it? I have so many questions regarding my existence that it's difficult for me to even express it. I don't know how many of you are able to understand my perspective, but this is actually what I feel. And hence, I can be given the tag of being 'hopeless'. My psychologist asked me, "Anjana, give me one reason to die" and I asked her "Ma'am give me one reason to live". Some of the 'reasons to live' that people say, are "you are doing your graduation, then you have to concentrate on your post-graduation, then maybe further studies, or getting a job, there are a lot of opportunities waiting for you, you have so much to do in life", but honestly, none of the above mentioned things drives/motivates me to live. All these are fixed by the society. People have made it their way of living. For me, these are not my aim/goal. It's all rubbish for me. Getting a job, being financially stable and then getting married makes you 'stable/settled' in life. It is very difficult for me to live according to these criteria. If a person wants to die, people will pressurize that person to live, they might even ask him to consult a mental health professional. But, isn't that wrong? I mean, Why is there a need to be hopeful towards life?

Having no willingness to live directly lands you up with medications so that you feel motivated to live (hence, mental health professionals declare that you are suffering from 'depression'). That's how the world sees it. The funny part is, I am also trapped in this web of medicines and therapies so that I can have a positive outlook towards my life, and develop a willingness to live. The only reason I am living is because of the thought that - 'I didn't come to this world on my own, therefore I have no right to end my life on my own.' And my struggle continues...



Anjana

Compassion Checklist

WERE YOU COMPASSIONATE TODAY?

You smiled at your own reflection in the mirror
(Because you look amazing!)

You meditated and reserved a little time from yourself, despite the busy schedule
(Because there's only one thing we say to negative thoughts - not today)

You appreciated your personal quirks
(Without having "Main aisi kyu hoon" moment)

You tried to understand a hard situation
(Even though you have never experienced it before)

You helped someone in their time of crisis
(Dobby has heard of your greatness, but of your goodness, Dobby never knew)

You hugged your friend and complimented them
(She's your lobster!)

You spent quality time with your family and your pet(s)
(Families are like fudge - mostly sweet with a few nuts)

You kept your cool even though someone made an ignorant comment
(You know where they come from; and you chose to educate not hate!)

You forgave someone and let go of a grudge
(That someone may also be yourself!)

You said no to something because you felt like it
(You must choose yourself sometimes and saying "no" is your right)

You ate without counting calories
(You deserve that slice of chocolate cake... and that pizza... and that shake)

You expressed gratitude

You seeked out help when you realised it was getting too heavy for your (albeit strong!) shoulders

You had a bath when it felt hard to even get out of bed

You smiled at a stranger when they looked at you



The Voice



Mallika

Dear you,
 Yes you.
 Just hang in there, friend.
 I'll just take a couple of your dear minutes.
 Sit down. Trust me on this. Breathe.
 Sip up your favourite coffee, if you must.
 I hope you find this at your ease,
 In a world of chaos, unravelled.
 Let me remind you of something
 You left, astray.
 You.
 The you; perfectly flawed.
 Uncompromisingly cherish-able.
 A magnificent indestructible hurricane.
 You, love, behold elusive utopian
 Within the walls of your rib cage,
 A world of peace in conflicts;
 Of strength in weaknesses;
 Of love in apathy.
 You, have the power to command,
 And domain over the cosmos, all alone.
 You, have the gleam of sun within you.
 Don't ever let that go.
 Your innocence is worth divine.
 You, are everything that's pure.
 Believe in yourself. Embrace yourself.
 Even when the nothing seems right,
 You'll always have you. Always.



You're not alone

Even if I witness how we're all drowning in the same boat only during tests,
 I know I'm not alone
 Sitting beside strangers on my first day, sensing, anxious breaths left and right
 I knew I wasn't alone
 Struggling and living my life to the fullest simultaneously, I know even in that
 I'm not alone; but with millions of lives struggling beside me, with me, for me,
 because of me, I still feel alone, for I forget to acknowledge my existence while
 celebrating that of others
 But oh! how wonderful it is to have me
 when only night and I are awake, I have me
 hugging myself, acknowledging myself
 trying to reason my life, and remembering
 to be kind during it
 I try to smile, not for others but me
 I remember to celebrate myself,
 I try to shower all the love I have
 collected on the one me
 When night sleeps and I do not, I remind myself to not be hard on me
 am thankful for those who cheer me up, but that's in vain if I'm not one of them
 Oh how the lovers want to fathom me, want to share my growth but
 Sometimes I forget to be one of them for me
 But oh how wonderful it is for me to have me
 We are a funny species, trying to be definitive as well as subjective
 reciting folklore from the beginning of time ending with teachings of compassion
 But silly me, forgetting to treat myself with that in the loop of this carousel- life,
 looking in the mirror when the day bids goodbye, pat yourself for living it,
 for breathing, for laughing, for loving others and yourself,
 Dance it out, cry it out, tear it out, experiment and know yourself, the kinda
 books you like, even the kinds of eggs you like, and love yourself
 after all charity begins at home.

What food has special significance in your life?

Street food. Honestly I love to taste new and all varieties of food but nothing can beat street food! An experiment once proved "good food leads to good mood" which is very true for me too. It surely has a special significance in my life because it reminds me of a pack loaded memories. One of them being late night gol gappes with friends during exam preparations!



Kamyia Jain

What's the first word that comes to your mind when you hear the word love?

Family, and I see all the faces of people I love.



Disha Chinal



Vanshika Sharma

What kind of clothing makes you feel powerful?

There is no particular kind of clothing that makes me feel powerful. When I am able to wear anything that I want to without thinking about what people would think that is when I feel powerful. When I can wear clothes according to my choice without thinking about what the world will think is what makes me powerful.



Kashish Puri

A Merry Night

The sky is glowing but the road is dark.
There are shouts in the air, as I pass by,
but the night hides those tired, small sighs.

There are eyes high on happiness while others fight to survive.
While some live in tatters, others shimmer in ditzy lights.
The words of some are slurs, while it's just a never-ending blur for others.

I look up and see a strange sight something so unusual in this bitter night.
I follow the light and later realise, it has brought me to a beautiful site.

The people are huddled around the fire
as the melody fills the air
I sit in the corner and admire from afar.
It felt like the city's heart.

Over a meal of soup and laughter accompanied with stories of the past.
They celebrated and rejoiced over the cacophony of noise.

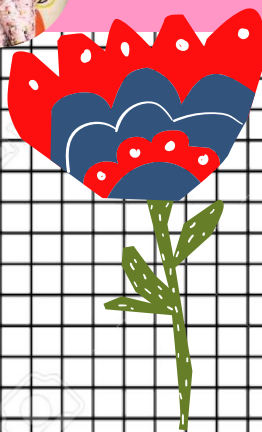
It wasn't a lavish or fancy affair.
Filled with warmth as I walked back alone,
it felt like I had come home.



Nisha



Soumya Sethi



"Lambi hai gam
ki shaam,
lekin shaam hi
toh hai na"
Faiz Ahmad Faiz



Smita Chatterjee

Dear Friend,

I'm not going to ask you how you're feeling, because I never have an authentic answer for that question myself. It's hard to encapsulate all of our thoughts and emotions into a few words and respond to this seemingly light and harmless question which in reality, has the potential to send someone down an existential spiral, oh well. So, I'm going to write this for everyone.

Maybe you're having the best day, week, month or year of your life, this may be a time of smooth sailing for you because you've finally found your groove and you are truly happy (in that case, please share your secrets and thank you). Or, things may be difficult and you feel like everything is falling apart. Your brain may be very efficiently reminding you that the goals that you'd set for yourself at different points in your life are a little behind schedule.

Maybe you think you don't have anyone who would listen, so you prefer to keep all of it in. But the point is, you feel. You may feel a little blue, see red or be bright and sunny all in a span of a day. But you need to know that that's okay. You need to know that you don't have to justify your emotions to others, because you feel what you feel. But while I essentially preach about going through the motions of life naturally, I feel like it is also my responsibility to give you a sense of hope, a little bit of faith. To let you know that this is your life, so comparing it to the one that the person sitting next to you leads may be a disservice to yourself. It's important to remember different lives have different journeys. Perhaps your trail had a few bumps, many detours and some pit stops, but that doesn't mean that you're not moving forward. Over the years, I've come to realise that I'm not very good at this genre of "motivational advice"... for the lack of a better term. But I am writing this with the hope that you find something to fall back on ; that when the time comes- you have the courage to remind yourself of all the good things in life. And finally, I hope that you remember that everyone will have a place under the sun, forever.



Self Compassion

Since ages, being compassionate towards others has always been a part of our moral syllabus. We strive to put our best foot forward, but what we fail to arrive at is self-compassion. A recent event in my life rendered a sense of realization about the same, leading me to discover several reasons, the primary one being social rejection, followed by overthinking, low self esteem, negative self concept and susceptibility to building blind trust.

Humans despise rejection because it adversely affects their notion of self. It all started in high school, when I faced rejection in the context of a romantic relationship. The gravity of the situation being intense, led me to cut off contact with men, except the ones I'd befriended. As I ended up in Gargi, I was relatively pleased with not being in a coed college than being part of a prestigious college. However, my fears returned when I, as a member of the college's Indian dance society, would go for inter college competitions. The odds of coming across people of the opposite gender were high, however, they were equally low in the context of interaction. The latter happened and I faced rejection again. The fact that both my relationships in school were unsuccessful, added on to the already existing misery. The period before I fell for this person encompassed mere two weeks of time, wherein I was already moving on from another rejection, making it the third one in place. I told myself that I won't be able to bear their brunt in a row, and the very lack of self-confidence made me susceptible to feeling pessimistic.

Months later, acting out on the advice of a friend because of my inability to move on, I began using a dating app, where I developed feelings for a person who belonged to the same ethnic group as the previous one. Being preoccupied with the group was eminent, and as I began trying moving on, it seemed impossible. I was in a dire need of giving my own self some personal space, which eventually turned out to be self-love. I finally learned about the harshness that I have had been imposing on self and my subconscious efforts to seek validation from men I developed feelings for, all of which was being imparted by my well-wisher. Amidst all of this realization, it dawned upon me how ignorant I had become to people who genuinely felt for me. While I tread on to mend my friendships, my inner voice spoke to me, telling me how vulnerable I had made myself in the pursuit of men, for whom I wasn't significant at all. Dwelling on all the memories worth cherishing, I finally came to terms with the absence of self compassion. To all those who taught me to generate self compassion, this is my gesture of gratitude towards each one of them, apart from the endless 'thank you' and 'I love you.'



Shrawasti
Lavanya

Dear stranger,

I know how you feel. I have been there. We all have been there or we all will be there at a certain point in our lives. In life people will always come and go. There will be times when people for whom you have always been there won't be there for you. There will be times when people whom you have supported won't be there to support you. And I know that there will be people who will tell you different things. Some would even say that one day you will definitely find that one person, that certain someone(not necessarily a life partner) who will always be there for you, who will always stand by you, love you for who you are, blah blah blah. But I want you to know that you don't need to wait for that certain someone, you can be your own certain someone.

Sometimes people you care about won't care about you. People whose love and support you need the most, who you want to be there for you, simply won't support you and be there for you. That's why you need to support yourself, love yourself, be there for yourself. Be you own biggest supporter. That way even on days when you are alone, you feel like it's you against the world. You can say "it's okay if you don't believe in me, if you don't support me because I BELIEVE IN ME and I am enough for myself."

You will be amazed to see what you can achieve and what you deserve when you BELIEVE in yourself. Be a pillar of support in your lives. Don't ever settle for anything less than what you deserve because of what other people think. Don't settle for toxic relationships. Don't settle for anything which is less than what you think you deserve and what you deserve. You know yourself and you know what you need. Don't self doubt yourself. Don't think about whether something is right or wrong or what will people say. Just begin and you will be amazed to see what happens next. You are never alone, you have yourself- your biggest supporter.



Your new beginning awaits
Sending you love and light
From someone who has been
there(who is maybe still there)
This is for you and for me



Aswaki
Rana

Bus Ticket

Dashak ho chuka tha, aur ab driver sahib ki bus, unki tarah boodhi.
Ticket di jaati thi, par badle mein uske, kahani.
Ab bhैया iss bus mein safar karna hai, toh paise ho na ho, kahani zaroor honi chahoye.
Yeh bus sunna pasand karti hai.
Zindagi beet gayi unhe yeh bus chalte hue aur saal ho gaye rehyaaz karte hue ki dekha aur parkha ki driver sahib ko toh unn sab kahanio par vishvaas hone laga hai. Aur shayad yahi alag baat thi unki.
Sunne ki aadat.
Aur vishvaas karne ka vehem.

Ab aisa samay aya ki kahania khatam hui, par sahib ruke nahi.
Seatein khaali hui par bus chalti rahi.
Aakhir, saari seatein khaali hui, aur khaamoshi ne un sabki jagah churai.
Maasum hai umar aur nadaan hai akelapan.
Chalte gaye, chalte gaye use, maan kar ki khaamoshi ai hai raahi banker-toh kahani toh sath laayi hogi, yeh hi toh ticket hai.
Par jab shuruat hi nahi kari, toh janaab ne socha ki shayad engine ki kharr se pehle main hi bol deta hun. Toh ab pehli daffa, sahib ne moo khola aur intezaar kia apne hi labzon ke izhaar ka. Dua mein ki izhaar nahi toh sunni hui kahania dohra sakun.
Ussi stop par khaamoshi utri, aur janaab ne parkha ki- driver ki toh ticket hi nahi hoti, ek bus toh apne raahion par zinda rehti hai.

Hummein bachpan se bataya jata hai ki kya sahi hai aur kya galat hai ki sunne ki daud mein hum poochna bhul jaate hai ki kyun sahi ai aur kyun galat. Yeh raasta humari zindagi hai aur uss bus ke driver hum. As creators, as artists, there comes a time jab hum apne raahion ki kahanian sunne mein reh jaate hai bas. To see if it's 'good enough' or 'will be liked' or not. It's good, it really actually is a good thing par uss dard mein hum shayad apna basic reason pof expression bhul jaate hai, apne expression ke platform ka, khud ka, vajood bhul jaate hai.



Janhvi
Duggal

यह ज़िंदगी, ना मुझ पर, ना मेरे कल पर, ना मेरे आज पर निर्भर है;
ना किसी वक्त पर, ना किसी शख्स पर, ना किसी के अक्स पर निर्भर है;
ना किसी के होने पर, ना किसी के खोने पर, ना किसी की आस पर निर्भर है।

इसे उस जज़्बात का सहारा है,
जो दिल टूटने के बाद भी प्यार चाहता है,
जो हर हार के बाद भी जीत चाहता है,
जो सौ दफ़ा गिर कर भी उठना चाहता है,
जो पीछे हटना नहीं, कोशिश करना चाहता है,
जो रोना नहीं खुल कर हसन चाहता है,
जो यु ही चाहते रहने कि चाहत रखता है,
वही जज़्बात कुच यु है, कि कुछ ना होने पर भी वो साथ है, मानों, मैंने खुद थमा हुआ हाँथ है।

जैसे मेरे कानों में मेरी रूह पुकारती हो,
मेरे हार जाने की सोच को नकारती हो,
मेरे सच्च को, मेरे झूठ को, मेरे आज को, मेरे कल को स्वीकारती हो,
और कहती हो मुझे उम्मिद है, तेरा गिर के उठना ही तेरी जीत है,
तू कोशिश कर, तू लायक है!
उम्मिद पर ही दुनिया कायम है।

Yeh zindagi na mujh par, na mere kal par, na mere aaj par nirbhar hai ;
Na kisi wakt par, na kisi shaks par, na kisi ke aks par nirbhar hai ;
Na kisi ke hone par, na kisi ke khone par, na kisi ki aas par nirbhar hai.

Ise us jazbaat ka shara hai,
Jo dil tutne ke baad bhi pyaar chahta hai,
Jo har haar ke baad bhi jeet chahta hai,
Jo saw dafa gir kar bhi uthna chahta hai,
Jo peche hatna nahi koshish karna chahta hai,
Jo rona nahi khulkar hasna chahta hai,
Jo yunhi chahte rehne ki chah chahta hai.

Vih jazbaat kuch yun hai, ke kuch na hone par bhi voh sath hai, manon
mere tute hue manobal ka
maine khud thama hua hath hai.
Jaise mere kaano me meri rooh pukarti ho,
Mere haar jane ki soch ko nakarti ho,
Mere sach ko mere jhooth ko mere kal or aaj ko swikarti ho.
Aur kehti ho mujhe umeed hai, tera gir ke uthna hi teri jeet hai,
Tu koshish kar, tu layak hai !
Umeed par hi duniya kayam hai.

दशक हो चुका था, और अब ड्राइवर साहब की बस, उनकी तरह बूढ़ी।
टिकट दी जाती थी, पर बदले में उसके, कहानी।
अब भैया इस बस में सफ़र करना है, तो पैसे हो न हो, कहानी ज़रूर होनी चाहिए। ये बस सुन्ना पसंद करती है।
ज़िन्दगी बीत गयी उन्हें ये बस चलाते हुए, और साल हो गए रियाज़ करते हुए की देखा और परखा की ड्राइवर साहब को तो उन सब कहानियों पर विश्वास होने लगा है।
और शायद यही अलग बात थी उनकी।
सुनने की आदत और विश्वास करने का वहमा।

अब ऐसा समय आया की कहानियां खतम हुईं, पर साहब रुके नहीं।
सीटें खाली हुईं पर बस चलती रही।
आखिर, सारी सीटें खाली हुईं, और खामोशी ने उन सब की जगह चुराई।
मासूम है उम्र और नादान है अकेलापन।
चलते गए, चलाते गए उसे, मानकर की खामोशी आई है राही बनकर तो कहानी तो लायी होगी, यही तो टिकट है।
पर जब शुरुआत ही नहीं की, तो जनाब ने सोचा की इंजन के खर से पहले मैं ही बोल देता हूँ। तो अब पहली बार साहब ने मुँह खोला और इंतज़ार किया अपने ही लब्ज़ों के इज़हार का। दुआ में की इज़हार नहीं तो सुनी हुई कहानियाँ दोहरा सकूँ।
उसी स्टॉप पर खामोशी उतरी, और जनाब ने परखा कि ड्राइवर की तो टिकट ही नहीं होती, एक बस तो अपने राहियों पर ज़िंदा रहती है।

हमें बताया जाता है की क्या सही है और क्या गलत, ये सुनने की दौड़ में हम ये पूछना भूल जाते है की क्यों सही है और क्यों गलत। ये रास्ता हमारी ज़िन्दगी हम हैं और उस बस के ड्राइवर हम।



Priya
Sahu

Umeed

Wildflower

As soon as we are born
We're judged by the size of our bodies
We are told to fit in
So we may as well settle in
But self-doubt is like a declaration of war
Once we adhere to society's norms
Within our own flesh
Self-doubt creeps in
And strangles self-love in its sleep
There is turmoil beneath my skin
I no longer want a touch of hatred
Upon my flawed skin
I want to love myself
Without feeling delusional
I want to be like wildflowers
They don't care where they grow
And the flowers that I know
In the fields where I grew
Were content to be lost in the crowd
I intend to grow
With or without water
And bloom
With or without sunlight
And raise above cracks of the earth in a sunbeam
I will flourish In the way I've always supposed to
The wildflower is a figment of my own imagination
I wish I could say that
I am to become one
To have the ability
To grow
Even under the harshest of conditions
Leaving my old self behind
Blooming out of nowhere In a land far from the
madding crowd
But it is never that simple
This is a war I intend on winning
I will not let self-doubt
Limit my potential
And get away with destroying all that I cherish
I will change and so the parts of me
That I lose
Will always find a way to grow back
I may bend and break
But we don't always heal
Healing requires time, and time is fickle
Pieces of me that were once dismantled
Begins to unite themselves Inside my skeleton
My failures haunt me from dusk till dawn
Yet I fend them off as often as I can
I can't allow my past to swallow me whole



Meena
Nezami

HOPE PLAYLIST

- Feelin Good - Nina Simone
- Don't Stop Believing - Journey
- Tiger Child - The Young Romans
- Fight Song - Rachel Platten
- Oh Ms. Believer - 21 Pilots
- Hass Nachle - Shahid Mallya
- Set Fire - Adele
- Pocket full of Sunshine - Natasha
- Chiquitita - ABBA
- Roar - Katy Perry
- Ready Aim fire - Imagine Dragons
- Khoj - When Chai met Toast
- Don't upset the rythem - Noisettes
- Stronger - Kelly Clarkson
- Ekta Golpo - Tajdar Junaid
- Rise Up - Yves Larock
- Itti si hasi - Shreya Ghoshal
- Love you zindagi - Jasleen Royal
- Aaftab - The local train
- Hai Junoon - KK
- Kho Gaye Hum Kaha - Prateek
Kuhad, Jasleen Royal
- What a wonderful world - Louis
Armstrong
- Love - Lana Del Ray
- Blackbird - The Beatles
- Kabira - Agnee
- The Show - Lenka
- Hilary - Brendan James
- Dogs Days are Over - Florence
and the machine
- I have confidence - Julie Andrews
- Jambalya (On the Bayou) -
Carpenters
- Black or White - Michael Jackson
- Cotten Eyed Joe - Rednex

The Moon and You

You look at the moonlit sky
Over your shoulder, through the window pane.
You look at the moonlight
As pale as some empty pages lying in vain.
Those pages, they wait for you to pour yourself on them
Each letter, each word, as precious as a gem.
The moon, meanwhile, sits comfortably on the lap of the
dark night sky
While you struggle to find comfort as your thoughts go by.
They seem like parts of a painting, you think,
The moon, the sky, the stars
A painting through the lens of an artist who found solace
in the kind moonlight.
You search for that peace
So you watch the night sky
You watch the stars
You watch the moon
You watch the moon and it is watching you.

You battle with your thoughts
As you sit with yourself everyday
You find new ways to move further and further away.
You scare yourself with the thoughts of failure and regret
So you bundle yourself up and you forget.
You forget to be kind to your own self first
Before you get beat up for not helping others.
You forget it is a choice, not an obligation
You forget that empathy is not just a lesson.

They taught you to feel for others, you think
They taught to keep your hopes within
They never taught you about the struggle building inside
A struggle it is, to find your own voice
There is a battle inside of you
To shut down the noise.

You sit across the window
Watching the moon emerge through the clouds
You watch, as the dusty clouds
Rein over the moon again.
You know even behind those gloomy vapors,
The light will always remain.

As you sit with yourself now
To yourself, you think
The kindness breeding deep within you
Is as strong as the moonlight.
Through the darkest clouds of peril
It will still shine and shine so bright.



Golden, soft and still
secure in my presence
a rarity-
I rest my head on hers,
a heavy sigh,
we both stay silent.



Shubhda Sharma

Heal



Ananya Sharma

/hi:l/

verb

cause (a wound, injury, or person) to become
sound or healthy again.

We are all wounded in our own ways
pondering over what goes and what stays
cuts and stitches are a part of life yet
we all want to heal
We all want to thrive

Sometimes I wonder, just
Wonder.
If life was all smiles?
How would it be if everyone
just loved?
And not hate for a while.

How would it be
If kindness was all around?
Empathy was absolute,
and compassion knew no bounds?

But then I realise
What would we heal?
If there wasn't any pain?
Will we ever see a rainbow,
without a little rain?

We need to see
the calm within the rage,
serene amid the storm and
Courage, within the
fear's cage.

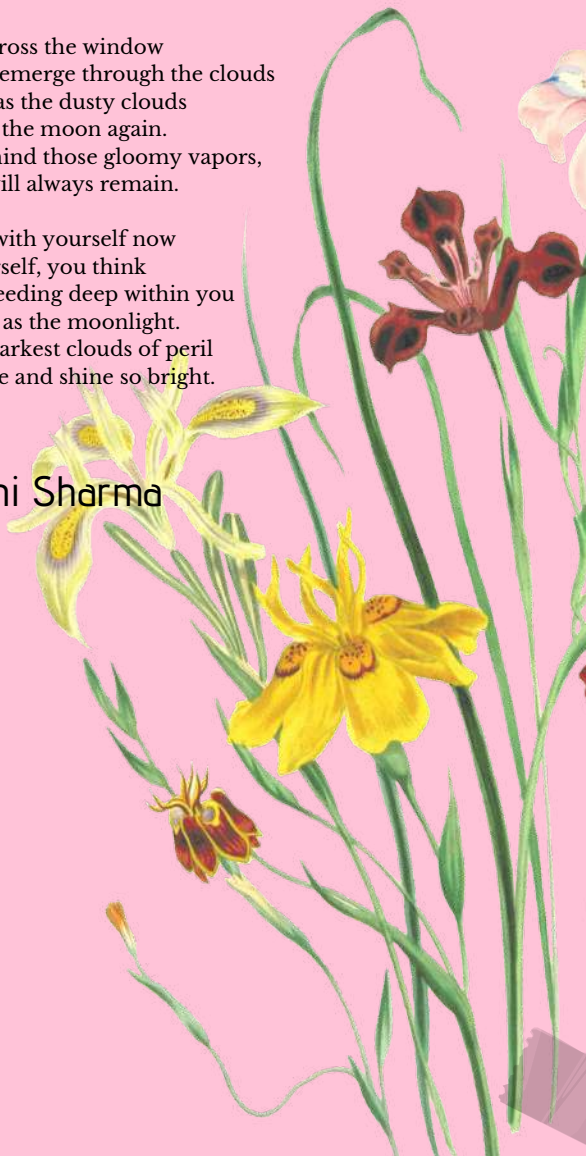
What we need
Is to find the good
amidst the bad.
The happy amidst
the sad.
It is to find colors,
in the blacks and whites
and to await the sunrise,
after a dark night.

Our open wounds,
we must now cure
A utopian life,
let's not assure.

Let's just all have
a deal,
Let's heal to hope
and hope to heal.



Aayushi Sharma



2020: May it be the year where we learn to be kinder, more tolerant of differences and empower ourselves by empowering others. A year of taking a step back, thinking of consequences and using lesser and lesser plastic by the day!

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