

# APPERCEPTION '23

World Mental  
**HEALTH DAY**

**Mental  
Health**

IS A RIGHT  
NOT A  
PRIVILEGE

apiphobia OCD PSYCHOS  
sleep terror pyromania HERPETOPHOBIA  
relational disorder bibliomania  
insomnia HEDONOPHOBIA  
depression dysthemia  
zoophobia pathological gambling  
dissociative identity anorexia  
bipolar typanophobia  
panoromania ANOSOGNOSIA  
panic NEOPHOBIA persecutory delus  
hypersomnia stereotypic movement disorder  
mental disorder  
arachnophobia  
ALGOPHOBIA ophidiophobia mathematics disorder HAPHEPHOBIA  
somatization catatonia rumination syndrome  
catatonia trichotillomania  
dementia bulimia anterograde amnesia  
parasomnia panic disorder  
NECROPHOBIA triskaidekaphobia  
Stockholm syndrome anxiety  
misophonia RADIOPHOBIA  
narcissistic pseudologia fantastica  
addiction nyctophobia dyspraxia  
nightmare disorder  
eye of hysteria  
PDD-NOS PARTIALISM  
DENIAL depersonalization  
transient tick disorder avoidant personality  
ornithophobia mixed episode GLOBOPHOBIA  
kleptomania  
oneirophobia  
hallucinations






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# PREFACE

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With colossal pleasure, we present to you the second edition of our magazine, "Apperception". On the occasion of World Mental Health Day 2023, we pause to reflect on the theme 'Mental health is a universal human right'. It is a day to acknowledge the importance of mental health, to break down stigmas, and to promote understanding and support for those who may be struggling.

Mental health is an integral part of overall health. Recognizing it as a human right reflects a holistic approach to health. Mental health issues affect people all over the world, transcending borders and cultures. Recognizing mental health as a universal human right acknowledges that it is of global concern. It encourages international collaboration and support for mental health initiatives.

As we turn the pages of this magazine, let's celebrate the power of knowledge, creativity, and awareness. Thank you for joining us on this intellectual journey. We encourage you to delve into the ever-expanding horizons of psychology.

With warm regards,  
Editorial Board,  
Department of Psychology,  
Gokhale Memorial Girls College



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# OUR MINDS

# OUR RIGHTS

## World Mental Health Day 2023

10 October

### “Our minds, our rights”

World Mental Health Day 2023 is an opportunity for people and communities to unite behind the theme ‘Mental health is a universal human right’ to improve knowledge, raise awareness and drive actions that promote and protect everyone’s mental health as a universal human right.

Mental health is a basic human right for all people. Everyone, whoever and wherever they are, has a right to the highest attainable standard of mental health. This includes the right to be protected from mental health risks, the right to available, accessible, acceptable, and good quality care, and the right to liberty, independence and inclusion in the community.

Good mental health is vital to our overall health and well-being. Yet one in eight people globally are living with mental health conditions, which can impact their physical health, their well-being, how they connect with others, and their livelihoods. Mental health conditions are also affecting an increasing number of adolescents and young people.

Having a mental health condition should never be a reason to deprive a person of their human rights or to exclude them from decisions about their own health.

Yet all over the world, people with mental health conditions continue to experience a wide range of human rights violations. Many are excluded from community life and discriminated against, while many more cannot access the mental health care they need or can only access care that violates their human rights.

WHO continues to work with its partners to ensure mental health is valued, promoted, and protected, and that urgent action is taken so that everyone can exercise their human rights and access the quality mental health care they need. Join the World Mental Health Day 2023 campaign to learn more about your basic right to mental health as well as how to protect the rights of others.





**Dr. Atashi Karpha,**  
**Principal,**  
**Gokhale Memorial Girls College**

## PRINCIPAL'S NOTE

The theme for the World Mental Health Day 2023 is "Mental health is a universal human right". Effort to strengthen the state of mental well-being is now a global priority. Mental health is a basic human right; it is something more than just absence of mental disorders. Mental health risks and protective factors can be found in society at different levels. Promoting and protecting mental health at work and among adolescents are another priority and is a growing area of interest for the policy makers.

An initiative by the students of the Department of Psychology to publish an e-journal on mental health on account of celebrating World Mental Health Day on every 10th of October shows an innovative way of improving mental health awareness from a scientific paradigm. It gives me an immense pleasure to be a part of this effort for collective response towards better mental health for all.



# MENTAL HEALTH AS UNIVERSAL RIGHT

মানসিক স্বাস্থ্য একটি বহু বিতর্কিত সার্বজনীন বিষয়। আজ সারা বিশ্বে বিভিন্ন ক্ষেত্রে মানসিক স্বাস্থ্যের গুরুত্ব আমাদের চোখে পড়ে। ছোট শিশু থেকে শুরু করে বয়স্ক, বৃদ্ধ, স্বাভাবিক অস্বাভাবিক সকলেরই মানসিক ভাবে সুস্থ থাকার অধিকার আছে। জীবনের প্রতিটি ক্ষেত্রে সাফল্যের পিছনে মানসিক স্বাস্থ্যের অবদান অনস্বীকার্য। একমাত্র মানসিক স্বাস্থ্যই মানুষকে দিতে পারে একটা সুস্থ, পরিচ্ছন্ন এবং সুন্দর জীবন। প্রতিটি মানুষ, যে যেখানে, যে অবস্থায় রয়েছে, তাদের প্রত্যেকেরই মানসিক সুস্থতা অর্জন করার একটি বিশেষ দাবী বা অধিকার রয়েছে।

আগের দিনে কেউ অস্বাভাবিক আচরণ করলে তাকে তথাকথিত ‘পাগলা গারদে’ পুরে দেওয়া হতো। অস্বাভাবিক, অসুস্থ মানুষেরও যে সুস্থ মন নিয়ে সমাজে বেঁচে থাকার অধিকার আছে, সে বিষয়ে তখনকার সমাজ তা মনে করতো না। গারদ থেকে বেড়িয়ে এলেও তাদের পুনর্বাসনের মাধ্যমে সমাজের মূল স্রোতে ফিরিয়ে আনার প্রয়োজনীয়তার কথা কেউ কোনোদিন ভেবেও দেখত না। তাদের শারীরিক এবং মানসিক ভাবে অত্যাচার করা হতো। এইসব অবহেলিত মানুষও যে ভালোবাসার কাঙাল, সেই বিষয়ে কেউ কোনো ভাবে গুরুত্ব দিত না।

বর্তমানে ২০২৩ সালে বিশ্ব মানসিক স্বাস্থ্য দিবসে সমস্ত সম্প্রদায়ের প্রতিটি মানুষের মনে মানসিক স্বাস্থ্যকে রক্ষা করার গুরুত্ব জাগিয়ে তুলতে হবে। প্রতিটি মানুষেরই উন্নত মানের যত্ন, ও পরিষেবা পাওয়ার, সমাজ- সম্প্রদায়ের মধ্যে নিজেদের সঠিকভাবে জায়গা করে নেওয়ার অধিকার আছে।

মানুষের সার্বিক ও ভালো থাকার জন্য একটি অন্যতম গুরুত্বপূর্ণ বিষয় হল উন্নতমানের মানসিক স্বাস্থ্য। কিশোর-কিশোরী ও প্রাপ্তবয়স্ক ব্যক্তিদের উপর সবচেয়ে বেশী প্রভাব ফেলে মানসিক স্বাস্থ্য বজায় রাখার বিভিন্ন শর্তাবলী। সমগ্র মানব জাতির মৌলিক অধিকার হল মানসিক স্বাস্থ্যের অধিকার এ সংসার – যা কোন ভাবে লঙ্ঘিত হলে সমাজের উপরে তার বিশেষ ভাবে প্রভাব পড়ে। মানসিক সুস্থতার উপরে নির্ভর করে মানুষের চিন্তা, অনুভূতি ও কাজকর্ম। শৈশব থেকে বাল্যকাল, কৈশোর ও প্রাপ্তবয়স – জীবনের প্রতিটি স্তরেই মানসিক স্বাস্থ্য রক্ষা করা অত্যন্ত প্রয়োজন – যার যলে তারা নানাধরণের মানসিক চাপ থেকে নিজেদের মুক্ত করতে পারে, বিভিন্ন পরিস্থিতিতে উদ্ভূত সমস্যার সঙ্গে মানিয়ে নিতে পারে।

মানুষের জীবনের বিভিন্ন ক্ষেত্রে, বিভিন্ন পরিস্থিতিতে- যেমন শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানে, কর্মক্ষেত্রে প্রতিটি জায়গাতে আজও মানসিক স্বাস্থ্য বিপর্যস্ত হচ্ছে – যার উদাহরণ আমরা স্পষ্ট দেখতে পাই – বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ছাত্রাবাসে শিক্ষার্থীরা আজও র্যাগিং – এর শিকার হচ্ছে এবং দুর্ভাগ্যবশত তাদের প্রণও বলি দিতে হচ্ছে।

কর্মজগতের বিভিন্ন ক্ষেত্রে, আমজনতা ও চাকুরীপ্রার্থীদের অন্যায় ভাবে বঞ্চিত হতে হচ্ছে। বিভিন্ন অবস্থায় মানুষকে রাজনৈতিক ক্ষোভের শিকার হতে হচ্ছে। এই সবকিছুই মানসিক অসুস্থতার বহিঃপ্রকাশ। তাই বর্তমানে একবিংশ শতাব্দীতে এসে আমরা বলতে পারি স্বাধীন দেশের নাগরিক হিসেবে প্রত্যেক মানুষেরই মানসিক স্বাস্থ্যকে বজায় রাখার জন্য মানবাধিকারকে গুরুত্ব দিতে হবে।

মানসিক স্বাস্থ্যের সম্বন্ধে ভারতীয় সংবিধানে মানবাধিকারের দাবীকে স্বীকৃতি দিয়ে একুশ নম্বর ধারায় বলা হয়েছে যারা আসুস্থ তাদেরও সুস্থভাবে বেঁচে থাকার অধিকার আছে, তাদের সম্মান রক্ষার জন্য আইনী ব্যবস্থার প্রয়োজনীয়তা সম্বন্ধে আইনী সহায়ক প্রতিষ্ঠান গুলি তাদের অভিমত প্রকাশ করেছে। মানসিক স্বাস্থ্য রক্ষার সার্বজনীন অধিকার বিঘ্নিত হবার মূলে রয়েছে সমাজের সাধারণ মানুষের মধ্যে মানসিক স্বাস্থ্য সম্পর্কে অজ্ঞতা ও ভ্রান্ত ধারণা। শারীরিক স্বাস্থ্যের মত মানসিক স্বাস্থ্যও যে সমান ভাবে গুরুত্বপূর্ণ সে সম্পর্কে স্বচ্ছ ধারণার অভাবের ফলে জন্ম নেয় এক ধরনের ট্যাবু (taboo)। এর ফলে অকারণে অযথা এক মনোরোগীকে সামাজিক নির্যাতনের শিকার হতে হয়। আজকে একবিংশ শতাব্দীতে দাঁড়িয়ে যখন বিজ্ঞান নানান ক্ষেত্রে প্রভূত উন্নতি করেছে, তখন মানসিক স্বাস্থ্য সম্পর্কে সকলকেই সচেতন হতে হবে।

**-ডঃ সুমিতা মুখার্জী**

Ex-faculty member, PSYA dept, GMGC



# articles ARTICLES

articles



# MENTAL HEALTH STIGMA OF INDIAN SOCIETY

-By Nandini Priyadarshini Jana, SEM 1

In the recent past, India has been emerging as one of the most powerful countries across the globe, and many factors have contributed to her emergence. One of them is “Yoga”, a group of practices where the union of the body, mind and soul takes place. It has become so popular that every year, on the 21st of June, the ‘International Day of Yoga’ is celebrated. It has even made its way to the discipline of Psychology and mental health as a form of rehabilitation and reducing stress. In that way, isn't India a pioneer in the field of mental health?

The answer to this question is quite ambiguous. In the ancient times, India had done some revolutionary work in the field of mental health and psychology, which can be attested through the “Yoga Sutras” by Patanjali, Upanishads, and our own Indian mythology, where Lord Shiva is known to be the “Greatest Yogi” of the world.

On the opposite hand, according to WHO, India is now becoming one of the most depressed countries of the world, with an alarming increase in suicide rates. This clearly indicates a shift from psychology-oriented society to a neglecting one.

The “Live Love Laugh Foundation” is an NGO based in Bengaluru, Karnataka, which had conducted a survey on mental health awareness in 2021 across 9 cities of India, and revealed very interesting results.

Out of those findings, the one noteworthy is that 40% of the respondents answered that they couldn't access professional help for mental health due to the “stigma” attached with it. But what is this mental health stigma? It's the belief that if someone faces issues with mental health, that person is crazy and thus, isn't seen as just another human being by the society. Due to this single misassumption, many people of our society have been denied mental health support, even when the condition worsens. So, either these sufferers tolerate their poor mental health all by themselves or take the extreme step of committing suicide. They are just not left with any other choice. . If they talk about their internal struggles to even survive every day, they're made fun of by their friends, parents, extended family, teachers or ultimately the society.



They're made to feel like as if having mental health problems is a bad thing, and they should be sent away to asylums because that's where they belong to. In a nutshell, the social institution we call "society" ultimately acts as hell for suffering from poor mental health.

It is something that is discussed a lot over the past years, on how much stigma around mental health stops sufferers to access professional help, and how these people are still treated differently from others. But what we need is solutions to reduce this stigma.



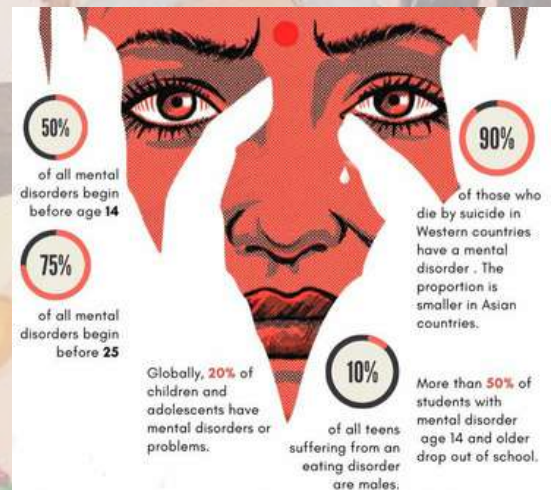
Here are some Suggestions in this direction:

1. **All the superstitions regarding mental health should be eradicated**, especially beliefs like a person is suffering mentally due to supernatural forces. It has long been seen in the medieval Europe where some women were suspected of witch hunting due to their poor conditions. In fact in present-day India too this is prevalent in some areas, where people believe that evil soul enters a person's body, thus causing peculiar and unnatural behaviors. These cases should be seen with more scientific, logical and empathetic ways.
2. **Psychology or related subjects should be introduced since elementary education** among kids who're in the right stage of life to learn and absorb more of the psychological knowledge imparted to them. This subject or study area shouldn't be used to evaluate children academically, and the classes should be run in a light and positive atmosphere. They're similar to moral knowledge, but relying more on the mental health aspect. This may make kids aware of the importance of mental health and make them empathetic right from the beginning.
3. **Giving weekly classes on mental health to the adult population** who're the most vulnerable to the stigma of mental health. These classes may be taken by psychologist from any field who are interested to impart their knowledge to the common masses in simple and lucid manner. *This method may have four advantages-*
  - (a) Freeing the common masses from the stigma of mental health, and thus allowing them to be more empathetic towards their own and others' problems. This in a way also promotes peace and harmony in the society as people become emotionally and mentally more understanding
  - (b) Just how we all have home remedies for little physiological problems, like common cold, we can have home remedies for little psychological problems as well. For example if someone suffers from stress, anxiety or lack of concentration, that person will know how to help himself/herself since he/she may have taken those weekly mental health classes and apply the knowledge from there for his/her own betterment



(c) It's a known fact how much stress psychologists have to go through themselves since they deal with everyday human problems. This in turn affects their mental health as well. This could be prevented through the weekly classes as suggested above. Since common people will themselves have some knowledge about mental health, they'll not always rush towards professionals for help. This in turn will ease the workload on psychologists as they'll have less people to deal with for the least.

(d) People will learn to differentiate between real psychological facts and pseudo psychological information from the pop culture. This will keep them aware of what is right and wrong whenever faced with new details about psychology as imparted by the pop culture, thus making them more objective and logical in making decisions for them.



There may be way more methods and ways to reduce mental health stigma as given by respected psychologists and fellow students of psychology, but one thing should be very clear. Just like how the medical line has always been dedicated to serve the society and its people and help them with physiological problems, our psychology line should also have the same aim. All the studies on different areas of psychology and related fields will be futile if we can't even serve the humankind. As it is an essentially applied field, our first and foremost mission should always be to help others with mental health and related issues. This was the sole reason to separate psychology from biology and philosophy so that we can understand human behavior and mind more and apply this knowledge for the betterment of the humankind after all. So let's not forget this whenever we conduct any research, study, test and interview- we all are psychologists to help ease the psyche of our fellow human beings.







# HEALTHY HABITS TO ADD TO YOUR TO-DO LIST

-By Sannita Datta, SEM 6

Have you ever wondered what healthy habits you should add to your list of to-dos? We all should devote a certain amount of time and attention to our mental health and it is always allowable to adopt some new healthy habits along the way. If you keep a habit, sooner or later it can feel like a part of you. So, the healthier, the better. Here are a few tips to improve your mental wellbeing:

## 1. Practice positive thinking

Plethora of researches continue to show that your thoughts about yourself strongly effect how you feel. The best way to change any negative feelings you may have is to counteract them with positive ones. According to psychologist Patricia Harteneck, when we perceive ourselves and our life negatively, we can end up viewing experiences in a way that confirms that notion. Instead, practice using words that promote feelings of self-worth and personal power. So instead of saying, "I was terrible at my math test!", use positive words and self-compassion like "I will study harder next time then I will do better on the next test."



## 2. Adopt an upright posture

"Attention!" Stretch out those muscles and stand like you really mean it. According to a study in the Journal of Behavioral Therapy and Experimental Psychiatry, upright posture can have a positive effect (Wilkes, 2017). The preliminary study's conclusions suggested that adopting a upright posture may increase positive affect, reduce fatigue and decrease self-focus in people with mild to moderate depression. Are you hunched over your phone right now? Computer? How's that posture looking?

## 3. Take a stroll in nature

My absolute favourite! Is there anything soothing like the soft green grass between your toes? The blue sky above your head, the warm sun burning your nose or the gentle evening breeze caressing your skin! A simple walk in nature can have the ability to boost your mental wellbeing. According to a research published in in the Journal of Positive Psychology, a 2019 study from Canadian researchers found that merely 5 minutes of contact with the natural world improves mood, human health, self-esteem and general emotional wellbeing.



#### 4. Hug someone

Sometimes we just need a hug, the hug solves all the problems, maybe once our parents have told us and they are right! (according to findings from a 2011 study, conducted by UCLA). Oxytocin's receptor gene is linked to self-esteem and optimism. Oxytocin is often known as the 'cuddle hormone'. Hugging, snuggling and physical touches release oxytocin. Hugging is a great way to release that hormone and perhaps boost your self-esteem and optimism in the process. According to the study, life scientists identified for the first time, a particular gene's link to optimism, self-esteem and mastery. The belief that one has control over one own's life, the three are the critical psychological resources for coping well with stress and depression. Sounds like, a good hug is sure to give a boost to your mental wellbeing!

#### 3. Exercise

Exercise is not only important for our physical health but also our mental wellbeing. Regular exercise release endorphins, which makes us happy naturally. According to an article from Mayo Clinic, exercise can release feel-good endorphins, natural cannabis-like brain chemicals, endogenous cannabinoids and other natural brain chemicals that can enhance your sense of well-being.



#### 6. Get enough sleep

Yes, you may all have heard that the adults need a good 8 hours of sleep each night. Well, you have definitely heard right. We need a good night's rest to recharge and rejuvenate with enough energy for the next day. Not getting your 8 hours of sleep every day, has been shown to negatively effect your mental health. What makes things worse is 60-90% of patients with depression also have insomnia (according to Sleep Health Foundation). People whose emotional wellbeing may already be suffering, are possibly causing further health problems by not being able to get their full rest. Not only do you get grumpy and groggy from not getting enough sleep but also its not the best for your emotional wellbeing in the long run. So, sleep well!



## 7. Keep a gratitude journal

Expressing gratitude can work wonders for our mental wellbeing. Gratitude has been linked to increased happiness, good mental health and improved wellbeing (according to psychologist Patricia Harteneck.) Harteneck notes that, the best researched method to increase feelings of gratitude is to keep a gratitude journal or write a daily gratitude list, which means, every morning before going for a walk, write down something you are thankful for, no matter how grand or simple. And at the end of the day, when you go to to bed early for those full 8 hours, write down a few more things you appreciate before you hit the sheets.



I hope you all found this relevant and helpful. Do remember to prioritize your needs and spend your energy in the things that are absolutely important to you. If you are currently facing a lot of trouble, struggling with your mental health, please seek professional help immediately. Remember that you are loved, you are valuable and you never walk alone



# SOCIAL MEDIA AFFECTING MENTAL HEALTH

-By Sreejita Ghosh, SEM 1

"Addiction is just a way of trying to get at something else. Something bigger. Call it transcendence if you want, but it's like a rat in a maze. We all want the same thing. We all have this hole. The thing you want offers relief, but it's a trap."  
- Tess Callahan.

In today's generation, social media is a very familiar and popular way to communicate with people all over the world. But just like any other addictions, it has become a trap of loneliness and sadness in the mask of emotional satisfaction. Human beings are social animals and they need social connection with others. But in today's busy world, due to lack of enough time and energy, people rely on social media for lost connectivity and companionship. Somehow social media is trying to replace the real-world human connection which is absolutely not possible. That's because in person communication triggers the hormones which diminish stress and elevates happiness and positivity. On the other hand, virtual social connection via social media is technologically designed to bring people closer and spend more time together by engaging on the platform which can actually make them feel lonely and isolated, later leading to anxiety and depression

A study of Common Sense survey in 2015 shows that teenagers who are mostly engaged in social media for as much as nine hours per day are themselves concerned about their high usage of the internet which can cause mental health issues. A 2019 study on social media users found that too much browsing of social networks can cause disrupted and delayed sleep. Biologically, regular and high quality of sleep is very essential for a person's healthy lifestyle and well being. But due to lack of good sleep, people are prone to experience adverse mental effects such as depression and memory loss. Aside from sleeping disorders, social media can directly expose individuals to cyber bullying which triggers mental health adversely. In a survey of 2020, researchers have found more than 6,000 individuals aged 10-18 years have experienced cyber bullying which is one of the reasons for severe mental health issues.

Another downside of social media platforms is that it allows the spread of harmful rumours, misleading information and use of abusive words against a person or a group that turned into emotional damage and deep long-lasting scars. Over consumption of social media may trigger feelings of insufficiency. Consciously or unconsciously individuals are liable to compare their life and appearance with that of others on social media and when their condition does not favourably match with others, they feel incompetent and dissatisfied. Another fact established by a 2018 survey is that, rather than decreasing, high usage of social media increases the feeling of loneliness. It's also proven that social media creates unhealthy self-centeredness and distance from family and friends.

Other negative impacts causing from social media are:

- **FOMO**, which stands for **fearing of missing out**. It's a very common feeling when a social media user worry about missing out of anything related to social media platforms i.e., interesting news, trending topics, latest gossip or articles. They feel left out and lonely if they couldn't reach it on time which makes them think everyone else is living a better life than them. Eventually which forces them to go through the sites again and again.
- **Body Image Issues** are another disturbing feature emerging from recent studies. Our young generation, who are mostly engaged in social networking, are often seen to use AI technologies or filters to change their original appearance into a so called presentable one with which they are succeeding to gain a lot of desirable attention and boost their mental satisfaction. But in this process, they are somewhere unconsciously comparing their original appearance with the altered version of themselves that is later leading to dissatisfaction and unhappiness. As they can not accept their flaws, individuals are going for cosmetic surgery and treatment procedures to achieve their desirable looks which is getting very much concerning.





Besides mental health, social media is also affecting concentration, attention span, and memory capacity of the brain. Studies have shown students nowadays having difficulty in reading 10 pages for class. Listening to lectures, completing works on time or even just to focus on a book has become an extremely burdensome task for them and the reason behind this excessive exposure to social media platforms and increasing usage of electronic devices which is not very much surprising though. Beyond reading, they are facing an inability to focus on every single aspect of life. Whether it's studying or a slow scene of any movie, checking social media once has become an uncontrolled behaviour skip boredom. Eventually these are helping to conditioning them with the instance appeasement. As results, they are becoming intolerant and aggressive in nature. In our brain, a hormone name dopamine allows an individual to feel pleasure and satisfaction. Following this fact, social media also tries to give as much of this natural feeling of happiness as possible in a very short period of time. They enforce the brain to seek this pleasure with every "likes" and "follows" or even just a notification. In simple words, social media is successfully making people dopamine addicts through the process of feeding quick and instant satisfaction. It takes over attention span and affects brain functions to focus on things that are less interesting.



Fortunately, while this issue is so widespread, there are few ways to combat it and improve mental health:

- Reduce social media use and increase engagement in other physical or creative activities.
- Make a substitute for social media which can give the same amount of happiness but is also harmless.
- Spend more quality time with offline friends as much as possible.

In the end, advancement of technology is a blessing for mankind as well as a curse. It has both positive and negative effects and as a product of technology, social media is not exceptional. It also has its advantages too. Hence, one should always remember that mental health is the priority and it's an important responsibility to take care of it.



# PARENTS

## THE ULTIMATE ROLE MODELS

-By Sunidhi Sinha, SEM 3

*"Look, parents are the bones on which children cut their teeth". - Peter Ustinov*

Parenting is a complex activity that includes many specific behaviours that work individually and together to influence child outcomes. Although specific behaviours are spanking, or reading aloud may influence child behaviour, looking at any specific behaviour in isolation may be misleading. Most researchers who attempt to describe this broad parental milieu rely on Diana Baumrind's concept of parenting styles. **"The construct of parenting style I used to capture normal variations in parents' attempts to control and socialize their children"** (Baumrind, 1991). Two points are critical in understanding this definition. First, parenting style is meant to describe normal variations in parenting. In other words, the parenting style typology Baumrind developed should not be understood to include deviant parenting, such as what might be observed in abusive or neglectful homes. Second, Baumrind assumes that normal parenting revolves around issues of control for children.

The **four parenting styles** that have been identified by Baumrind are: **authoritative parenting style** (good at setting standards and monitoring their children's behaviour); **authoritarian parenting style** (in this style of parenting, children are expected to follow the strict rules established by the parents); **permissive parenting style** (indulgent parents, make very few demands of their children); and **uninvolved parenting style**. (neglect the needs of their children.)

Parenting Styles have been found to affect a child in different domains of social competence, academic performance, psychosocial development, and problem behaviour. The long-standing assumption that parents assert a direct and powerful influence on their children through the process of socialization has permeated research and theory on human development as well as most cultural belief systems. If children turn out well, it is to the parents' credit; if they turn out badly, it is the parents' fault. This assumption has been challenged by researchers who highlight the role of biological influences on children's development. Behavioural genetic studies, for example, show that adopted children are more like their biological parents than their adoptive parents in basic characteristics such as personality, intelligence, and level of mental health.



Some researchers have also noted that the correlations between parenting styles and behaviours are sometimes weak, and the expected child outcomes do not materialize. For example, parents with authoritative styles may have children who are defiant or who engage in delinquent behaviour. Parents with permissive styles may have self-confident and academically successful children. There isn't a universal style of parenting that is always the best, with respect to culture. For example, while authoritative parenting is linked to better results in European and American cultures, research has also found that this may not be the case for Black and Asian youth.

Additionally, some scholars have criticized the emphasis on parenting by asserting that other factors, such as peer relationships, exert a strong influence on development. The impact of parenting is at its greatest level of intensity during infancy and toddlerhood. Because of the enormous flexibility of the human nervous system during the early years, this period offers unparalleled opportunities for learning and development, which are best supported by an enriched environment. The caregiver's sensitivity to the child's cues helps the child learn basic regulation and predicts the security of the child's attachment to the caregiver, which becomes organized toward the end of the first year. In the second year of life, the utterly dependent infant becomes the passionately autonomous toddler, inviting increasing opportunities for discipline. Early and middle childhood brings in new challenges as children move further out into the world. School adjustment and peer relationships become central, and here too children benefit from parents who are involved and supportive.



Adolescence, once characterized as a time of 'storm and stress', is now viewed as a period of dynamic change, but one that most children (75–80 percent) navigate successfully. This period was once also characterized by severing of ties between parents and their children. Contemporary studies, however, show that adolescents benefit from maintaining close and connected relationships with their parents even as they move toward a greater sense of independence. The American psychiatrist Lynn Ponton, a specialist in adolescent development, noted that, risk-taking is a normal part of the many explorations in which teens engage. Parents play a critical role by encouraging their children to take positive risks, such as trying out for a sports team, running for a position in student government, or working on a special project.



Acceptance of a child's interests with responses that are contingent to what the child signals supports learning, by facilitating the child's development of mechanisms for coping with stress and novelty in his or her environment. Responsive support for the child to become actively engaged in solving problems is often referred to as parental scaffolding, and is also thought to be key for facilitating children's development of self-regulation and executive functional skills. Responsive parenting is most frequently described when researchers try to understand the role the environment plays in children's development. Research shows it has the potential to promote normal developmental trajectories for high-risk children, such as those with premature births.

In contrast, unresponsive parenting may be detrimental to children's development. The importance of responsive parenting is highlighted by recent evidence identifying links between high levels of early responsive parenting, and larger hippocampal volumes for normally developing preschool-aged children, associated with more optimal development of a number of psycho-social factors (e.g., stress reactivity).

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Parents with permissive styles may have self-confident and academically successful children. There isn't a universal style of parenting that is always the best, with respect to culture. For example, while authoritative parenting is linked to better results in European and American cultures, research has also found that this may not be the case for Black and Asian youth.

Parenting styles are associated with different child outcomes, and the authoritative style is generally linked to positive behaviours such as strong self-esteem and self-competence. However, other important factors, including culture, children's temperament, children's perceptions of parental treatment, and social influences, also play an important role in children's behaviour. Authoritative parenting, which balances high parental demands with emotional responsiveness, is one of the most consistent family predictors of competence from early childhood through adolescence. However, despite the long and robust tradition of research into parenting style, a number of issues remain outstanding, foremost among them are issues of definition, developmental change in the manifestation and correlates of parenting styles, and the processes underlying the benefits of authoritative parenting (Schwarz et al., 1985; Darling & Steinberg, 1993; Baumrind, 1991; and Barber, 1996).



# ANATOMY OF EMOTIONAL BRAIN

-By Shreya Mishra, SEM 6

All emotions are, in essence, impulses to act—the instant reactions for handling life that evolution has instilled in us (Goleman, 1995). The very base of the word emotion is “motere” meaning to move, and the prefix 'e' means away, thus summing up the meaning as "to move away", indicating our tendency to act is implicit in every emotion (suggested by the actions of children and animals). However, only in 'civilized' societies do we find practices such as 'to sit with our emotions' which is an aberration in itself in the animal kingdom.



Goleman stated in his book 'Emotional Intelligence, though not the first one to say so, that our mind can be divided in two different fundamental ways: the rational mind (the one that thinks) and the emotional mind (the one that feels), the names of which can be self-explanatory. The more intense the feeling, the more powerful role the emotional mind plays in a given situation (and the more ineffective the rational mind becomes).

Normally, there is an equilibrium between the emotional brain (controlled by the limbic system) and the rational brain (controlled by the frontal cortex), with emotion and information acting side by side. However, there frequently comes the time when passion surges high and the emotional mind takes over, which was termed by Goleman as 'amygdala hijack'. This hijacking occurs in an instant, even before the cortex has had the opportunity to register what has

happened. These emotional reactions can be formed without any conscious, cognitive participation. These are the moments that are described as the individual somehow "lost it", without finding a proper explanation of their behaviour later when they think about it. For example, spontaneous, hot-blooded acts of aggression, ranging from killing a friend because of their 'leg pulling gone too far' to blowing up at your mother for a reason that seemed uncalled for in the future. Joseph Ledoux, a neuroscientist, was the first to discover the key role of the amygdala in the emotional brain. In the physiology of the brain, the amygdala acts as the alarm system, sending out emergency signals in fight or flight situations. It is bilateral, one in each brain hemisphere, sitting under the cortex in the temporal lobe. Once it gets activated due to an alarming situation, it triggers the secretion of stress hormones and activates the cardiovascular system, the muscles, and the gut.



Ledoux explains how the amygdala takes control over the neocortex while the latter is still processing the information. The evidence for the amygdala's role in aggression is extensive- if one lesions the amygdala in an animal, rates of aggression decline; the same result is found when the amygdala is silenced temporarily by injecting Novocain into it. However, the amygdaloid role is more powerful in processing fear and anxiety. In PTSD sufferers, the amygdala is overreactive to mildly fearful stimuli and is slow to calm down after being activated (Gilboa, 2004). During an emergency, the fearful stimulus is perceived by the sense organs (eye and ear), then carried to the thalamus and then to the amygdala without reaching the cortex. This direct, short circuit consists of a small portion of sensory messages, compared to the main

route (one with the cortex), thus acting as only a warning signal without understanding the whole of the situation. Such an impression, say, in a rabbit, is essential when its survival is in question, so that they can determine whether to fight or flee the danger. But to think of the species that has evolved in a way that makes him to 'sit with his emotions' can have disastrous consequences. Such emotional mistakes result from "precognitive emotions," as termed by LeDoux. These are reactions based on neural scraps of sensory information that have not been fully rationalized into integrated information. Research has shown that moments after perceiving something, we not only comprehend what it is, but also decide how we feel about it. These unconscious opinions are emotional memories registered in the hippocampus, forming our sense of perceptual patterns—our ability to differentiate between a swimming pool and a pond. While the hippocampus remembers the events (ordinary facts), the amygdala retains the emotional components of those events (emotionally charged ones).



The emotional memories seem to imprint in our brains with an added degree of importance- you may still remember with clarity the time you got beat up by your father when you were very small and cried like the world was ending. But these emotional memories are faulty guides in the present. The amygdala stores primitive and out-of-date neural alarms, which hampers our reaction in the present scenario.



LeDoux applies neurological findings to the basic tenets of psychoanalysis: that the interactions of early childhood life lay the foundations of adult life, and it becomes difficult to make sense of our current emotional responses because they are the results of the memories stored in the amygdala as "rough, wordless blueprints for emotional life" (Goleman, 1995), going back to a time when the cortex or rational mind was yet to develop.

The ultimate aim at the end remains to harmonize emotions and thoughts simultaneously without letting one overpower the other. The prefrontal cortex, the seat of the rational mind, is the region responsible for working memory—a phonological loop for temporarily manipulating and storing speech-based information and a visuospatial sketchpad that performs a similar function for visual and spatial information (American Psychological Association).



During a hijack, due to the neural static, the prefrontal lobe loses its ability to maintain the working memory, which can explain why continual emotional distress can create anomalies in a child's intellectual abilities, which can affect his/her decision-making in the future. Patients with damage to the prefrontal-amygdala circuit might not show deterioration in their IQ, but their decision-making is nevertheless very poor (Damasio, 1994). Evidence like this suggests at the end that emotions are indispensable for rational decisions, and indeed, "The heart is forever making the head its fool" - François de la Rochefoucauld. To think about it, W.H. Auden, the Irish poet, was not wrong to point out about people in the present generation in his poem 'The Age of Anxiety':

"Ours is a time of anxiety,  
Because we have lost our sense of direction.

We have a great deal of knowledge  
But we do not know what to do with it."





# LET'S EASE 'HER' POST NINE-MONTH STRUGGLE

-By Amrita Sen, SEM 1

Mental health has now become a major concern all over the world. It is something that can lead to serious repercussions and can make a person pay a very high cost if not taken care of at the right stage. The stigma surrounding mental and psychological wellbeing continues, trapping and preventing 1 in every 9 people from leading a psychologically healthy life. Maternal mental health is yet another essential stage that often gets neglected, where thousands of new mothers become prey to typical societal stigma and stereotypes which often leads to tremendous disruption in one's life,



making one unable to deal with the daily happenings, and may lead to severe psychological disorders like "POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION" thereby preventing a mother from enjoying the pleasures and joy of celebrating her motherhood.

## **POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION- A SILENT STRUGGLE OF MOTHERS**

The birth of a newborn baby is expected to be a joyful milestone in a woman's life which welcomes a lot of emotions in a new mother ranging from joy, excitement to fear, anxiety and perhaps sometimes something very unexpected to which we term as- 'DEPRESSION'. Most new moms experience 'POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION' (PPD) or "baby blues" just right after childbirth, which commonly gets identified through the symptoms like mood swings, crying spells, anxiety, insomnia, appetite problems and a feeling of not being a good mom and experiencing difficulty to bond with the baby. Sadly, the voices of women suffering from postpartum depression often remain silent which presents a multitude of challenges to most women and their partners in the phase of parenting. From not being able to wear one's favourite dresses, not being able to take one's favourite food to suffering from a range of physical problems like excessive bleeding, pelvic pain, headaches, sudden weight gain, swelling legs, hands and face and leaking breasts, a new mother has to go through and adapt to immense biological, hormonal, emotional and psychological changes which are perhaps the most significant life experiences during pregnancy, labor, and birth that a woman has to encounter in this phase of extreme transition to become a mother.



From facing minor adjustment issues to debilitating and grave mood disorders, more than a half of the women with PPD go undetected and undiagnosed because of the unwillingness of a mother to reveal her feelings or because of the lack of support from spouse and from family. Feelings of embarrassment about the symptoms, fear of getting separated from family has shut the lives of thousands of new and young mothers to lock and tie up their feelings within the four walls, leading to tremendous losses in the mother's interpersonal and familial world. Postpartum depression gets detected between 2-6 weeks and may last up to 2 years if not handled properly at the right moment. About 13% of the new mothers suffer from PPD which deprives them from reciprocating her love and care to her new born baby. Triggered by the drops in the level of estrogen and progesterone the chemical changes in the mother's brain caused leads to a lot of emotional imbalances in a woman ranging from hopelessness, mood swings, emotional disruption, inability to sleep or sleeping too much, tiredness, agitation, feelings of guilt, shame, severe anxiety and panic attacks to feelings of being an imperfect mom, thoughts of self-harm and can even lead to death and suicide. Untreated, postpartum depression may last for months and even longer than that. Post-partum psychosis is yet another condition that may involve symptoms like, hallucinating and having delusions, feeling upset, feeling paranoid, making attempts to harm oneself or the baby etc.

### **RISK FACTORS' CONTRIBUTING TO DECLINING MATERNAL MENTAL HEALTH**

Factors like stressful events during pregnancy, complications during birth including premature delivery, unplanned pregnancy make a mother more vulnerable to postpartum depression. Women across many places still lack adequate emotional support from family, and spouse during and in the post pregnancy period which further increases the fight of a mother to cope up with PPD. Unplanned, unwanted, young and non-consensual pregnancies are other risk factors contributing to maternal anxiety and depression that can have serious impact on the child's development thus resulting in an unhealthy relation between the mother and offspring. A woman's unwillingness and unpreparedness to become a mom and being tolerable of the continuous crying spells of the baby, sleep deprivation of the mother combined with unemployment or insufficient maternity leave during pregnancy, a trough in her career graph, balancing between work life and family along with the adaptation to the different physical, hormonal and emotional imbalances and transitions like painful breastfeeding, her own physical recovery after child birth and the lack of emotional and social support in various ways like the constant pressure and unacceptance from spouse and family members for the new body image makes the new mother ashamed of her post pregnancy body shape .Getting back to the previous body shape becomes yet another challenge for the new mother. Non-consensual pregnancy is another risk factor contributing to incredible distress during and in the post pregnancy period that acts as a continual stressful trigger of forcefully carrying the motherly duties which makes many young mothers to indulge in smoking, alcohol, and even drugs. Yet another evil that continues to be responsible for poor maternal mental health is domestic violence. About 30-60% Women experiencing intimate partner violence and abuse while being



while being pregnant and in the post pregnancy period are more likely to experience PPD which puts a mother at risk of prolonged depression and hinders her relations with the baby. Multiple and negative birth experiences also put a mother at a greater risk of developing PPD.

### POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION VS SOCIETY

The stigma surrounding postpartum depression still exists across many parts of the world. Research shows that 1 in every 8 women suffers from postpartum depression but unfortunately the silence among mothers about PPD still persists due to family and societal pressure. It is now high for us to realize the immense struggle that a new mother has to combat with and therefore it's extremely important to give proper attention to a mom in her post pregnancy fight. People rarely show concern about how a mother is doing after childbirth. It is to be understood that a new mother requires enough rest, nourishment nutrition and care just as the baby. It is important to be shoulder to a new mother to make her realize how important is her physical and mental health after childbirth. A mother's care givers should take the responsibility to be by her side and ensure her good psychological and physical wellbeing so that she doesn't have to apologize for sleeping too much or question about her ability to be a good mom. It is now high time that that we talk about PPD openly and do not view it as something very light and let it to be fixed by the mother herself.



It is to be realized that PPD can have serious repercussions on a mother and reasons with her baby and family if not treated properly at the right stage or if neglected. The society's pressure and remarks on a mother's changed body shape, the pressure to abandon her career, the negligence to maternal health and the stigma that prevents women to speak about PPD etc. are need to be smashed off and people need to make efforts to break this silence of PPD and normalize it so that a family does not consider it as abnormal and become stereotypical about it instead they act as a support system during and after a woman's emotional 9-month journey to become a mother to ensure her psychological wellbeing.





### **"FATHERS TOO ARE PART OF POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION"**

Studies indicate that in recent times the fathers also get affected after the birth of their child in many ways which most often goes unnoticed. A history of depression or anxiety, financial problems, excessive stress, questioning about one's ability to be a good parent etc. and may result in symptoms like fatigue, changes in sleep, changes in appetite etc. Sometimes PPD in fathers may also be linked with the baby's sex. Seeking help from a mental health professional can help them fight against PPD.

### **CALLING ATTENTION TOWARDS POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION**

Knowing someone suffering from PPD needs to seek help right away. As mentioned above PPD if left neglected can cause serious harm to a mother's health. Her daily life can get hampered, she may not eat well, lack energy and can even think of hurting herself or her baby. Therefore, to treat PPD one needs to seek help from mental health professionals. Counselling/talk therapy can help a person to cope up with PPD through various coping strategy. It involves a deep one to one conversation with the parent that helps them a lot to understand their feelings and combat PPD. Antidepressant medication can also help that can help in regulating the mood of the mother. But above all lies the very deep truth that it is ultimately her family, spouse and her friends who can support her and ensure her psychological wellbeing by providing mothers a better world to live in.





-Iree Mukhopadhyay, SEM1



# EFFECTS OF CHILDHOOD TRAUMA ON ADULT MENTAL HEALTH

-By Syedas Umm e Kulsum, SEM 6

Childhood is a crucial phase of life that lays the foundation for an individual's overall development, including their mental health and well-being. It is during this time that the brain undergoes significant growth and maturation, and experiences and interactions play a pivotal role in shaping the architecture of the developing brain.

However, not all childhood experiences are positive. Many individuals experience trauma during their early years, which refers to deeply distressing events or experiences that overwhelm a child's ability to cope and can be perceived as life-threatening or significantly disruptive.

Childhood trauma can manifest in various forms, it could be:

1. **Physical Abuse:** Physical abuse involves the intentional infliction of physical harm or injury upon a child by a caregiver( such as hitting, slapping, kicking, burning, or any form of physical aggression that causes pain or injury).
2. **Sexual Abuse:** Sexual abuse refers to any form of sexual activity or behavior imposed on a child by an adult or an older person. It includes acts such as fondling, molestation, rape, or any other sexual exploitation.
3. **Emotional Neglect:** Emotional neglect occurs when a child's emotional needs are consistently unmet or ignored by caregivers. It can involve a lack of affection, emotional support, or validation. Emotional neglect can lead to feelings of abandonment, low self-worth, difficulty forming relationships, and challenges in regulating emotions.
4. **Domestic Violence:** Domestic violence refers to the witnessing or experiencing of violence between adult family members, typically between parents or caregivers. Witnessing violence can have a profound impact on a child's sense of safety and security.
5. **Parental Substance Abuse:** When a parent or caregiver struggles with substance abuse, it can have significant repercussions for a child's well-being. Substance abuse can lead to neglect, emotional instability, and an unsafe home environment. Children may experience parental absence, unpredictability, and an increased risk of exposure to other forms of trauma.

It is important to note that these types of childhood trauma often occur in combination, and one form of trauma can exacerbate the impact of others. Moreover, the effects of trauma are not limited to the immediate aftermath but can persist into adulthood, influencing mental health, relationships, and overall functioning.



### **Immediate and Long-term Effects**

Childhood trauma can have immediate effects, such as feelings of fear, anxiety, and a compromised ability to trust others. However, the lasting impacts extend well into adulthood. Individuals who experienced childhood trauma are at higher risk of developing mental health disorders, including depression, anxiety disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and substance abuse disorders.

### **Biological and Neurological Changes:**

Childhood trauma can result in significant biological and neurological changes that influence adult mental health. Studies have shown alterations in brain structure and function, particularly in areas responsible for emotional regulation, memory processing, and stress response. These changes contribute to difficulties in emotional regulation, heightened stress responses, and impaired cognitive functioning in adulthood.

### **Emotional and Psychological Consequences:**

Childhood trauma often leads to a range of emotional and psychological consequences. Survivors may struggle with low self-esteem, feelings of shame and guilt, difficulties forming and maintaining relationships, and challenges with intimacy. They may also exhibit self-destructive behaviors and engage in self-harm as maladaptive coping mechanisms.

### **Interpersonal Challenges:**

The impact of childhood trauma on adult mental health extends beyond the individual. Survivors often experience interpersonal challenges, including difficulties establishing and maintaining healthy relationships. Trust issues, fear of abandonment, and difficulties with emotional intimacy can strain relationships and contribute to social isolation.

### **Risk of Revictimization and Retraumatization:**

Childhood trauma can increase the risk of revictimization and retraumatization in adulthood. Survivors may find themselves in abusive relationships or prone to risky behaviors that further perpetuate trauma. Without proper support and interventions, the cycle of trauma can continue across generations.

It is important to note that not everyone who experiences childhood trauma will develop mental health difficulties in adulthood. Resilience and protective factors can mitigate the impact of trauma and promote healthy development.

### **Resilience and Protective Factor:**

Supportive relationships, access to mental health services, and effective coping strategies can enhance resilience and mitigate the negative impacts of childhood trauma.



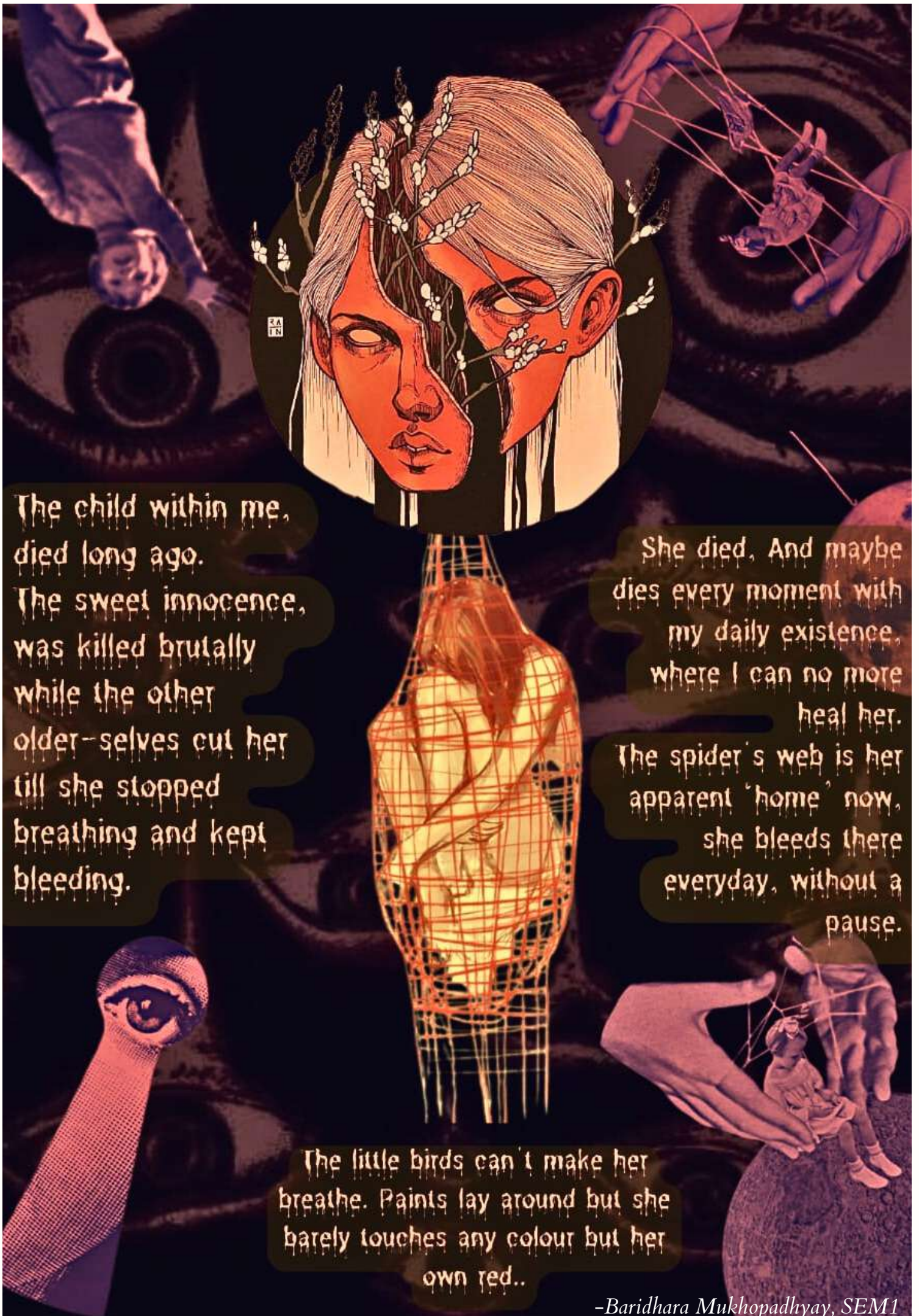
## Healing and Recovery:

Recovery from childhood trauma is a complex and ongoing process. Therapeutic interventions, such as trauma-focused therapy, cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), and eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR), can be effective in addressing the lasting impacts of childhood trauma. Support groups, self-care practices, and holistic approaches, including mindfulness and expressive therapies, can also aid in healing.

Thus, it is very important to understand that childhood trauma leaves indelible marks on an individual's mental health, with enduring effects that can persist into adulthood. Understanding the lasting impacts of childhood trauma is crucial for developing effective prevention strategies, providing early intervention, and offering comprehensive support to survivors. By unraveling the complex relationship between childhood trauma and adult mental health, we can foster healing, resilience, and create a more compassionate and trauma-informed society. Recognizing and addressing childhood trauma is crucial for promoting the well-being of affected individuals. Supportive environments, early intervention, and access to trauma-informed care and therapeutic interventions can play a vital role in helping children and adults heal from these traumatic experiences and mitigate their long-term effects.







RA  
IN

The child within me,  
died long ago.  
The sweet innocence,  
was killed brutally  
while the other  
older-selves cut her  
till she stopped  
breathing and kept  
bleeding.

She died. And maybe  
dies every moment with  
my daily existence,  
where I can no more  
heal her.  
The spider's web is her  
apparent 'home' now,  
she bleeds there  
everyday, without a  
pause.

The little birds can't make her  
breathe. Paints lay around but she  
barely touches any colour but her  
own red..

-Baridhara Mukhopadhyay, SEM1



# PSYCHOPATHOLOGY THROUGHOUT THE YEARS

-By Aiyuushi Roy, SEM 5

History is a screen through which the past lightens the present and the present brightens the future. The evolution of mental illness, however, has not been linear or progressive but rather cyclical. Whether a behavior is considered normal or abnormal depends on the context surrounding it and thus, changes as a function of a particular time and culture.

In the 18th and 19th centuries, mental health was thought to be due to existence of the supernatural. People with mental health problems were considered to be acting against human nature, such as through witchcraft.

Many of the ideas offered in the past to explain and treat maladaptation have been shown to be incorrect when exposed to scientific investigation. Perhaps the greatest benefit of studying the history of Abnormal Psychology is the discovery that certain theories of maladaptive behavior have occurred over and over again and, whether correct or incorrect, reflect the interest over time in what constitutes "differentness." One ancient theory that is still encountered today holds that abnormal behavior can be explained by the operation of supernatural and magical forces, such as evil spirits or the devil. In societies that believe in this theory, therapy generally involves **Exorcism**, that is, removing the evil that resides in the individual through countermagic and prayer.



Although this view is most prevalent in nonliterate cultures, it is still found in industrialized societies and often exists side by side with more modern approaches. Through Shaman (or a medicine man who believed to have contact with supernatural forces), an afflicted person can learn which spirits are responsible for his or her problems and what needs to be done to appease them.

A recurring theme in the history of abnormal behavior is the belief that individuals behave strangely because their bodies are not working right. Such people have been thought to have organic defect. The finding of ancient skulls with holes in them that were not caused by battle wounds has led some anthropologists to conjecture that abnormal behavior was sometimes treated by means of a procedure called **trephination**, where a sharp tool such as a stone was used to make a hole about 2 centimeters in diameter in the skull.





The philosophers of ancient Greece were the earliest to write about psychological and organic approaches to deviance. At the time the Iliad and the Odyssey were written (about the 19th century B.C.), disturbed or psychotic behavior was interpreted as a form of punishment for offenses against the Gods. Therapy took place in a group of temples dedicated to Asclepius, the God of healing.

The ancient Egyptians, as well as the Mesopotamians and Hebrews, believed the seat of the mind to be in the heart. For the Greeks, however, the brain was the seat of the mind. Despite this lack of anatomical knowledge, the Greek physician Hippocrates looked to the brain in his efforts to explain why people behave as they do. He moreover, described the brain as the interpreter of consciousness and as the body's most important organ.

Other Greek philosophers like **Socrates** (470–399 BC), **Plato** (428–347 BC), and **Aristotle** (384–322 BC) also deserve a mention for their contributions to abnormal psychology. Socrates was interested in self-exploration and believed in using inquiry to further knowledge; his goal was to teach by asking questions instead of giving answers, which is now known as the **Socratic method**. Socrates' most famous student, Plato, developed the **Organismic point of view**. He saw behavior as a product of the totality of psychological processes. Aristotle, a pupil of

Plato and the teacher of Alexander the Great, wrote extensively on the nature of reasoning and consciousness and also sought to analyze human emotions.

**Galen** (A.D. 130–200), the great Greek physician, consolidated and augmented the Greek theories of mind and body. He elaborated on ancient theories about the role of the 4 humors in personal character and temperament, according to which the material world was made up of 4 elements—earth, air, fire, and water—that combined to form 4 essential body fluids, or humors, whose balance shaped each individual's temperament. Imbalances among the humors of blood, black bile, yellow bile, and phlegm were believed to cause disorders.

A host of changes accompanied the decline of ancient Greek culture and the rise and fall of the Roman Empire. The Christian religion served to comfort people in those troubled times. In addition, the Christian church acted as a unifying force when the civil government of Rome finally fell. One figure in the early Christian era, the theologian and philosopher **Saint Augustine** (AD 354–430), stands out because he helped lay the groundwork for modern psychodynamic theories of abnormal behavior. He wrote extensively about feelings, mental anguish, and human conflict. The unrest of the Middle Ages was intensified by nearly constant warfare, as well as by the Black Death and other epidemics







that came without warning and wiped out thousands of people. During this period, fear and terror spread like brushfires, causing many outbreaks of hysteria. Some groups of people behaved like packs of wolves; others danced in the streets, making spiderlike movements.

Although ideas like demonology and exorcism persisted during the Renaissance( spanning roughly the 14th through the 16th" centuries), this period was marked by increased humanism, curiosity about nature, and interest in scholarship. For example, Johann Weyer (1515–1576), a physician, emphasized psychological conflict and disturbed interpersonal relationships as causes of mental disorders. Weyer had the courage to insist that witches were mentally disturbed individuals rather than creatures of Satan.

The 17th century, known as the **Age of Reason**, and the 18th century, known as the **Enlightenment**, have been so labelled because during these two centuries, reason and scientific methods came to replace faith and dogma as ways of understanding the natural world. Brauch Spinoza (1632–1677) anticipated modern approaches to psychology and physiology with his argument that mind and body are inseparable. He discussed the psychological

causation and roles of emotions, ideas, and desires in human life. Spinoza even referred to unconscious mechanisms that influence behavior. During the Age of Reason, a number of authors probed especially deeply into the problems of human motivation and emotions. By the end of the 18th century, superstition had almost totally been replaced by a commitment to rationality, scientific observation, and humane treatment of the mentally ill.

From the late 17th to the 19th centuries, interest rose in physiognomy, the art of judging character, personality, and feelings from the form of the body, particularly the face. In the early 19th century, another new approach to abnormal psychology emerged.

Franz Joseph Gall (1758–1828), a physician, studied the brains of different kinds of people (young, old, and deranged) and gathered evidence suggesting that brain size and mental development were related. On the basis of this evidence, he formulated the theory of phrenology. Gall believed that bumps and indentations on the surface of the skull were accurate reflections of the underlying parts of the brain. William Cullen (1710–1790), a Scottish physician, believed that neurotic behavior was caused by physical defects of the nervous system.





Cullen's therapeutic efforts seem naïve, but they were a logical outgrowth of his organic orientation. Anton Mesmer (1734–1815), a flamboyant and ambitious man, contended that all human beings were endowed with a special magnetic fluid, a kind of sixth sense that when liberated, could cure and prevent all illness.

The growth of a scientific attitude towards mental disorders in the 18th century contributed to an increase in compassion for people who suffered from them. This new compassion became the basis for the reform movement of the 19th century. Philippe Pinel (1745–1826), a leader in the reform of French mental hospitals, expressed great sympathy for the plight of the deranged.



*Pinel ordering the removal of chains*

He firmly believed that they required humane care and treatment. Although his orientation is widely accepted by both professional workers and the public today, it was far from commonplace in his time. He had to fight against the view in certain situations, for the insane were needed more to be protected in society than to help the deranged.

The 18th century was not a good time to be insane in the fledgling British colonies; often, the mentally ill simply languished in jail. In the early colonial days, the mentally ill were generally ignored unless they were thought to be a nuisance or a menace to the community.

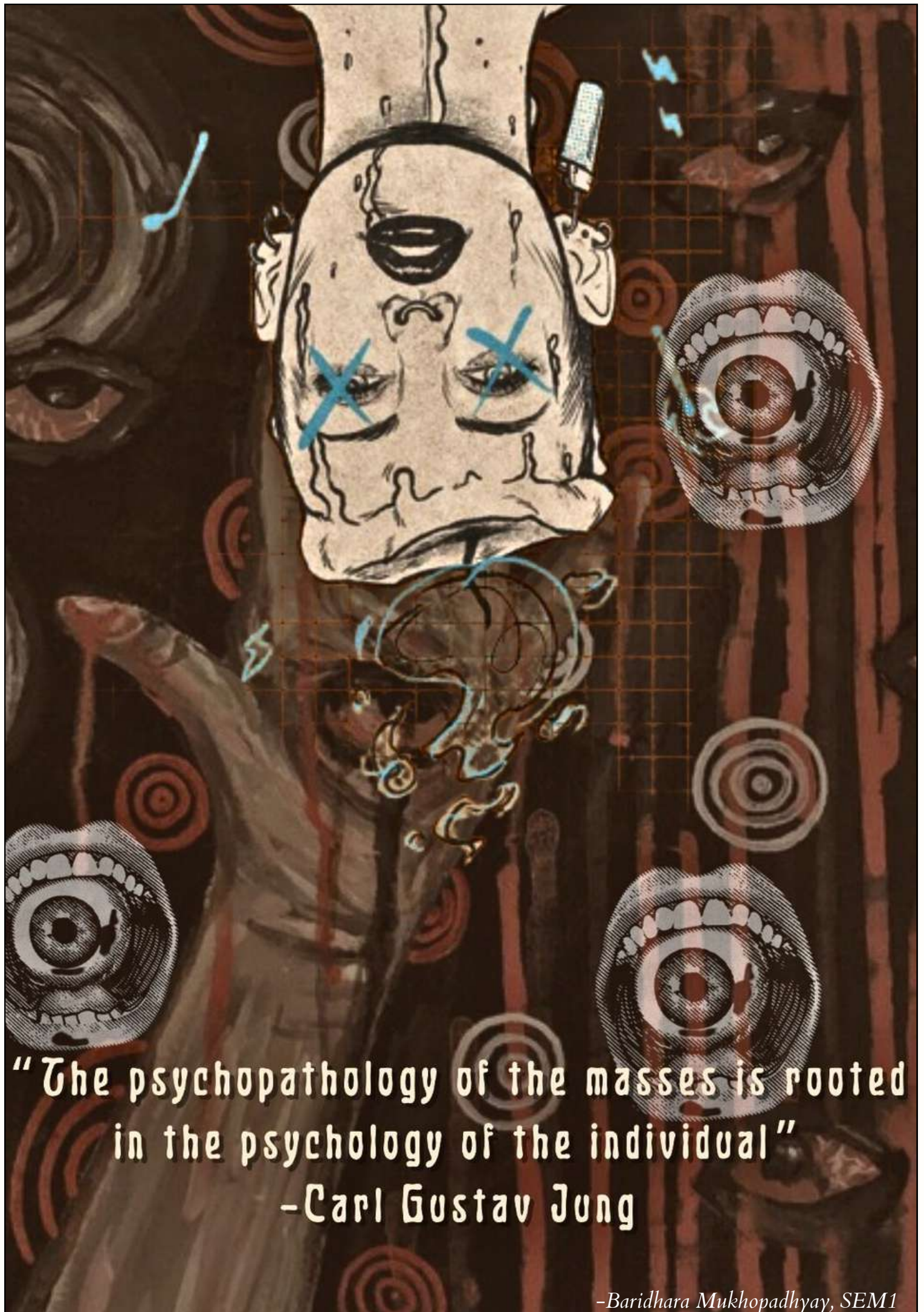
Benjamin Rush (1745–1813), a signer of the Declaration of Independence, is often credited with the founding of American psychiatry. Although his methods (bleeding, purging, and water cures) today seem more like punishment than therapy, his work took place in a hospital rather than in a custodial institution, and these were intended to reduce pressure on the brain's blood vessels and thus alleviate mental illness.

Another important force in improving care and treatment of the mentally ill was an American businessman named Clifford Beers. In 1908, he recorded his own experience as a mental patient in his book, *A Mind That Found Itself*. After his recovery, Beers became determined to make changes in the conditions in mental hospitals, and his book helped him gather support for a citizens' reform group, the National Committee for Mental Hygiene (now called the National Association for Mental Health), which was founded in 1909. This group promoted social programs aimed at preventing mental illness as well as ensuring humane treatment of the mentally ill.

Today, the quality of care in many hospitals has improved over time. The deinstitutionalization movement begun over 25 years ago has resulted in a lower standard of care for many people afflicted with mental illness. For instance, the situation of homeless mentally ill people in many ways parallels the less humane treatment of the mentally ill in earlier periods of history.

Our review of the history of abnormal psychology has emphasized two themes: (1) the changing beliefs about what abnormal behavior is and what its study be about, and (2) the need for humane approaches to the mentally disturbed. The history of abnormal psychology has not been all progress; there have been advances and retreats.





"The psychopathology of the masses is rooted  
in the psychology of the individual"  
-Carl Gustav Jung

-Baridhara Mukhopadhyay, SEM1



# CRISIS OF MEANING IN MODERN SOCIETY

-By Ahana Dasgupta, SEM 6

In the words of Viktor Frankl, “those who have a why can deal with almost any how.”

This quote by the eminent propounder of Logotherapy points to the idea that since time immemorial has been the crux of existential philosophy; that life is a prolonged quest for finding a definite purpose or meaning of one's existence. Dr. Frankl's view of human nature was a bold departure from the zeitgeist of the time. When Freud said that life is a quest for pleasure, or a striving for power, as Adler said, Frankl chose to emphasize on the quest for meaning. Modern society is characterized by a lot of things; but alienation and hedonism are of prime importance in this context. The hedonistic man crusades through life always looking for pleasure and avoiding pain. He has resigned to the mundanity of everyday life and finds pockets of happiness by bingeing on his favourite food.

**Albert Camus** writes about such a person in his book '**The Myth of Sisyphus**'- *“Rising, streetcar, four hours in the office or factory, meal, streetcar, four hours of work, meal, sleep and Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, according to the same rhythm”* – this path is easily followed most of the time.



But one day the 'why' arises and everything begins in that weariness tinged with amazement." If our 'what' does not satisfy our 'why', we fall into the endless pit of trying to justify our existence and get welcomed by the throes of depression. The drastic rise in the incidence of mental illness in the modern times can be largely attributed to this existential vacuum. Several factors contribute to this state, ranging from materialism to social media and the negativity bias- the tendency for people to pay more attention to negative information. Social media has exposed us to the lives of thousands of people across the globe. This inevitably leads one to judge themselves harshly. 'They have better jobs, better houses, fifteen iPhones and vacations in the Maldives- what value does my life hold?' When individuals fail to orient themselves to their meaning, a sense of futility develops which is marked by hopelessness related to the inability to answer existential questions. Such a person will tend to believe that his existence makes no difference in this unjust world and show signs of depression.



The modern family structure has in turn supplemented the meaning crisis. Rising divorce rates have disproportionately affected children by increasing feelings of loneliness, emptiness, and alienation in them. There is evidence to suggest that children of single parent families are more likely to fall prey to depression and substance abuse (symptoms of the existential vacuum that Frankl talked about). The modern education system spends a lot of time focusing on providing information and skill training, but fails to provide true knowledge. It stifles individuality, hinders the growth process and the individual remains as an imitation, a mere face in the crowd. Youngsters graduate from the system fully equipped with the 'Hows' but very few 'whys. No wonder the youth has no idea what to do with their lives.

Dr. Frankl described three different kinds of experience that can aid us in our pursuit of meaning- through deeds (working as a mental health practitioner), experiencing something of great value (love in a relationship, beauty through art) and suffering. So, happiness and wellbeing are not an end, but a byproduct of leading a meaningful life. This approach might sound idealistic, and too philosophical at best, but taking a quick look at the rising cases of what is termed as 'existential depression' might help provide an insight. Freud was perhaps right when he said that humans are a slave to their childhood experiences and the forces of the unconscious. But how people decide to create meaning out of an experience and take responsibility for their lives is what decides their life course. Frankl evoked the above thought when he said that 'Human freedom is not freedom from but freedom to.' Ultimately, it is meaning that helps us sustain. It is meaning that helps us fight the ills of depression and suicide. It is meaning that will help us build relationships.



Emily Dickinson's poem '**Each life converges to a centre**' describes the spirit of the discussion-

Each life converges to some centre  
Expressed or still;  
Exists in every human nature  
A goal,  
  
Admitted scarcely to itself, it may be,  
Too fair  
For credibility's temerity  
To dare.  
  
Adored with caution, as a brittle heaven,  
To reach  
Were hopeless as the rainbow's raiment  
To touch,  
  
Yet persevered toward, surer for the distance;  
How high  
Unto the saints' slow diligence  
The sky!  
  
Ungained, it may be, by a life's low venture,  
But then,  
Eternity enables the endeavoring  
Again



# CONVERSATIONS AROUND MENTAL HEALTH

-By Sneha Nandi , Sem 1

**“How would you react to, you know, a friend or family member who’s diagnosed with mental illness?”**

**“If possible, I would just stay away as far as possible.”**

The above conversation is one which actually takes place as a part of a social experiment by National Council of Social Service, the umbrella body for over 500-member social service agencies in Singapore. Regretfully, conversations revolving around mental illnesses in India are remarkably similar. A survey conducted by The Live Love Laugh Foundation in 2018 revealed that even though 87% of the respondents showed awareness about mental illness, 71% of them also showed high stigma against people with mental illness. This leads us to question, “Why is it so that there is such an attitude towards mental illnesses?” A huge role is played by the media who attempt to sensationalize news focusing on violence by adding tags such as “depressed” and “mentally ill” along with the beloved Bollywood industry portraying mental illnesses as comic relief. People with mental illnesses are frequently portrayed as violent, unpredictable and dangerous to themselves as well as the people around them. The Swaddle reports that in the Atharva-Veda, mental illness may result from divine curses and in the Ayurveda for Pisachis, mental illnesses or fits, may be caused due to possession by evil spirits.



Various traditional healing practices such as exorcisms continue to propagate that mental illnesses are caused due to evil spirits and such beliefs contribute to these popular absurd perceptions of mental illness. These beliefs not only harm people who suffer from severe forms of mental illness but also cause various Indians to completely deny the existence of much more common forms of mental illness such as anxiety (“Anxiety-wanxiety kuch nahi hota.”). However, statistics report that 20% of Indians suffer from depression in their lifetime (according to WHO). Another survey, the National Mental Health Survey in India (2015- 16) has estimated that only about 10-12% of people suffering from depression in India get treated. They have also reported that 1 in 10 Indians have a mental health condition and 1 in 20, is depressed.

In recent times we also often hear various adults who belong to the Generation X and Baby Boomer eras casually mention how “young adults nowadays are unable to handle pressure compared to our times.”



These casual remarks imply that current generations are more susceptible to mental health issues and are “weak” or “lazy”. Various people often assume that people with mental illnesses are simply “attention seeking” as they have “no good reason” to be mentally ill. After all, they do get food on their tables, a roof over their heads and a warm bed to sleep on at night. However, one can be born with riches, have a great lifestyle and may even have understanding and supportive parents but the real fact is that mental health issues do not discriminate like humans do and the causes behind why a person might suffer from a certain mental disorder varies widely. It is also important to remember that one of the major reasons contributing to the low level of diagnosed mental illnesses in older generations is simply the fact that there were lesser people seeking out help for mental health issues due to the taboo associated with mental illnesses, which has only recently started to reduce due to the increased conversations about mental illnesses on various social media sites and offline settings too. The fact of the matter is that people cannot “snap out of it” if they try hard enough, people with mental health issues are also not violent (only 3%–5% of violent acts can be attributed to individuals living with a serious mental illness. The fact of the matter is that people cannot “snap out of it” if they try hard enough, people with mental health issues are also not violent (only 3%–5% of violent acts can be attributed to individuals living with a serious mental illness.



According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, people with mental health conditions can be just as productive as other employees, especially when they are able to manage their mental health condition well. Employers often do not know if someone has a mental health condition, but if the condition is known to the employer, they often report good attendance and punctuality as well as motivation, good work, and job tenure on par with, or greater than, other employees.

The aim of this article is not to preach how one should behave with people suffering from mental illnesses (that the reader can decide for themselves) but to bring to the reader, facts by valid sources. And perhaps the next time an older relative makes a mocking comment about a cousin considering therapy or an insensitive joke about how this is “just a phase”, and you, the reader, politely reminds them about the seriousness of their unfunny joke, maybe they will think twice before repeating similar things said in jest.



*book reviews*

# BOOK REVIEWS

*book reviews*



# IKIGAI

-By Briti Roy , SEM 5

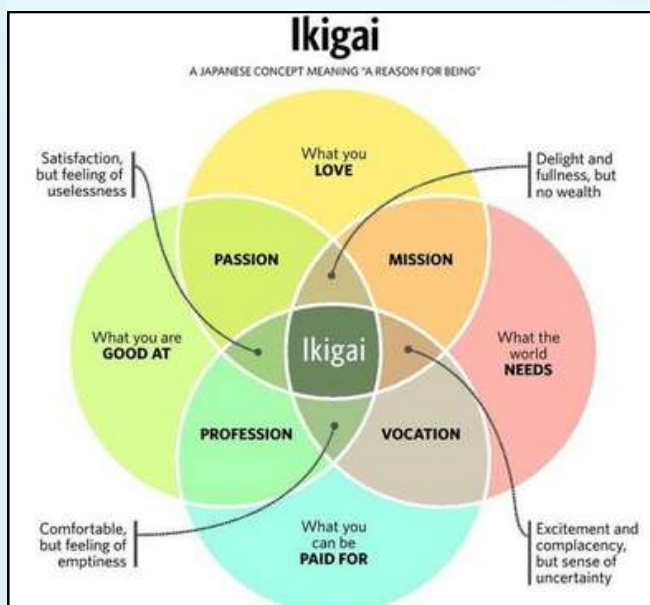
IKIGAI, the book is written by Hecter Garcia and Francese Miralles focus on the purpose of living. The word "IKIGAI" is a Japanese word which means "the reason to jump out of bed" and the people of Japan believe that everyone has an IKIGAI. This book provides a primary source of motivation, inspiration and creativity.

This book analyses the fact that Japan has highest life expectancy in world and a region named Okinawa in Japan even have higher life expectancy than national average. There is a town in Okinawa called Ogimi also known as Village of longevity, a 80 year old person of age is concerned to be too young among them, because touching 100 is norm there and this book Ikigai study lifestyle of people of Japan/Okinawa/Ogimi. - **So why they live longer??** One thing that is common in them is that they have found their ikigai which give meaning to their life. Although there are other factors too but finding life's ikigai is most important.



The Book includes interview of people who have age of 100 year or more. Those rich minds give very basic advices about life which help them in living longer. (The book is about the people living in Okinawa who have found a way to live happy and long life.) The book introduces some of the concepts of Japanese culture and value of, "the happiness of always being busy." It narrates the art of staying young while growing old, scientific facts about food, active mind that would translate to youthful body. The book continues later on discussing on Logo Therapy, where a person has to keep rediscovering the purpose of life.

The following chapter is about flow. This is the soul to live to find a flow, a flow where there is no future, no past and there is only present. According to IKIGAI in order to reach the state of flow one must have to achieve optimal experience, which requires three certain strategies. Authors also shared interesting stories about Steve job's Japan visit which provide small details and facts got to know Job's more.





Small chapter is also added with a different technique and benefits of the tai chi, yoga, radio taiso, qigong and breathing techniques that help the people stay more physically healthy.

The book ends with a chapter on resilience. As everyone discover their IKIGAI and follow passion no matter what. As they never give up on passion and in case things go wrong then how to build the ability, to preserve and live life; and not just keep doing urgent things. I am glad that I read the book till end and see deep insight to resilience.

By achieving IKIGAI, not only could one's performance improve in study, but also improve mental well being in academic and/ or other fields of life. Throughout stressful period the work and transition, IKIGAI is a useful method of recalibration to refer back to.

10 rules are noticed that are distilled which can be followed in order to achieve IKIGAI (the reason to jump out of bed) according to the authors embedded in this book, such as

- Most Important, (the objective of the book, according to the title of the book):- Find something which you love doing or can be said as follow your IKIGAI. This is secret of long life, doing things you love.
- Stay active; don't retire
- socialize with good people or can be conveyed as surround yourself with good friends.
- don't fill your stomach. Always eat 80% of hunger
- Reconnect with nature
- Take it slow

## Ikigai

[ik-ee-guy] *noun.*

a reason for being; the thing that gets you up in the morning.  
japanese origins.

At the time of writing of this article, there are thought to be close to 800,000 deaths around worldwide per year as a result of suicide. IKIGAI is a psychological construct thought to reflect one's purpose in life or reason for living and until recently, has only been explored in Japanese samples. Across multiple large scale studies, IKIGAI is consistently found to be associated with reduced morality, including incidence of cardiovascular disease, lesions and suicide as well as better mental wellbeing.

Finally, a beautiful quote from book that sums up all ...

***"Life is not a problem to be solved. Just remember to have something that keeps you busy doing what you love while being surrounded by the people who loves you"***

Thus, to conclude as the authors suggest this book can play a significant role to achieve a happy, long and purposeful life. In my view this book truly satisfies the authors' willingness about it and is a sufficient source to discover one's purpose of life.

A book can't be judged by its title or cover. But the book has a strong opinion and view on the topic it enlightens.



# TURTLES ALL THE WAY DOWN

-By Ankita Brahma, SEM 3

*"There are something like a thousand times more microbes living in my particular biome than there are humans on earth, and it often seems like I can feel them living and breeding and dying in and on me"*



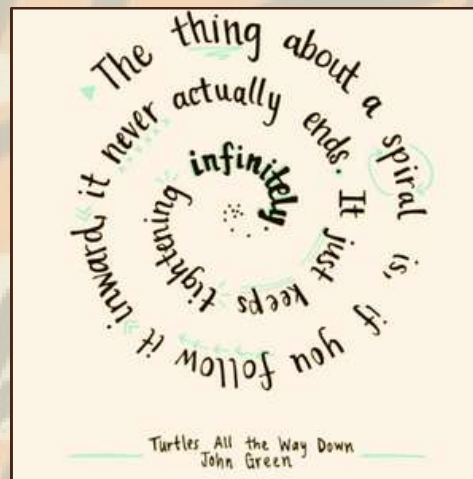
Obsessive Compulsive Disorder often termed as OCD is a mental disorder characterized by excessive thoughts which leads to repetitive behaviors. Abnormal behaviors literally means those behaviors which deviates from normal. It's a qualitative difference and implies deviation from clearly defined norms and standards. This can worsen over time with symptoms ranging in severity, and how often we are experiencing them. There are several things that can trigger an OCD episode and conditions known as comorbidities which contributes to the severity of the OCD.

Worldwide statistical data finds that 1.1 – 1.8% of individuals contend OCD .

The World Health Organization(WHO) previously ranked OCD as 10th most debilitating illness for the general population , as its symptoms can lead to extreme anxiety , distress, frustration, self criticism and impairment in central- social spheres of life. The NICE (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence) guidelines referred to a 2001 paper, the '**quality of life and disability in patients with OCD**' reported, it to be considered as the 5th most debilitating disability specifically for women aged 15-44 years. The lifetime prevalence of such is estimated 2-3 % and the prevalence among 1st degree family members is estimated to range between 10 and 11% . according to recent findings , WHO have published other reports like ' global burden of disease , 2004' where OCD is listed and classified under 'neuropsychiatric disorders'



The title of the above mentioned book “Turtles all the way down” itself is an eye catcher and an expression referring to “unmoved mover”, describing something which is never-ending .The story portrays a young girl Aza Holmes, 16, lives in Indianapolis and suffers from terrible anxiety and OCD. She tends to have an extreme fear of germs and stomach infection and cannot stop worrying about the possibility of parasitic infection ,or breeding microbes in digestive tract ,or possibility of contaminating an infection involving clostridium difficile or the prospects of sweating ,or not being able to stop sweating , r touching someone who is sweating.



Even with professional help from Dr. Karen Singh her obsessive thoughts about microbes never ends rather she describes it as a thought spiral which keeps tightening, infinitely. She often has to fight off the unignorable urge to put sanitizers in her mouth to prevent the possibility of an infection and sometimes that urge wins. With all these in her mind she questions her mere existence and refers to herself as more fictional than real. According to her, “Bycell count humans are approximately 50% of microbes meaning that about half of the cells that make you up are not even yours at all. There are something like a thousand times more microbes living in a particular biome than there are human on earth, and it often seems like I can feel them living and breeding and dying in and on me”. While interacting with her friends Michael and Daisy even though it was an interesting topic which she wanted to listen, but the thought of microbial balance of power, presenting symptoms of infection with bacteria clostridium difficile which can be fatal, kept her disturbed and while she assured herself of not having a fever, her self replied- “you don’t have a fever YET”. Aza soon finds herself in a romantic relationship with Davis but there also her anxiety about microbes transfer while kissing, sweat palms, and others such direly obsessive thoughts kept bothering her. It is as if the obsessions and compulsions begin to rule her life. Thus this story depicts the role of Aza, a young girl tightened up by her obsessions and compulsions “cannot wills what she wills” and she realized that even though her thoughts were overwhelming but still those were just thoughts and not actions.



In older times mental illness has been regarded as a supernatural view of abnormal behavior and the work of evil spirits, demons, gods or witches who took control over that person. People performed exorcism, magic, starvation, or sometimes ingest drinks. This topic has been alienated, stigmatized, discriminated and looked down upon in many more ways. Similarly in this book Aza's mental health condition have often been misunderstood by one of her close friend Daisy as she tells her to get away from her anxiety instead of emphasizing it and that she should not be so stuck in her head. Through Daisy's character Green tried to portray those people who were unaware of the severity of her mental condition and considers it as a dramatic act seeking for attention. This is very challenging for those who are not only struggling like Aza inside their head but also faces prejudice and misconceptions that result from such mental illness. Mental illness are health conditions involving changes in emotion, thought or behaviour. It sometimes causes so much distress that it disrupts one's personal, social, and occupational life. Self care plays a role in maintaining mental health and support treatment and recovery. Maintaining a positive mental health is important in establishing constructive behaviours; thoughts; improves our social relationships and also impacts our physical health, affects our eating and sleeping habits as well and leads to chronic stress which in turn is correlated with heart disease. Mental illness like all other illnesses should be dealt with empathy and concern. Neither does it occur by choice nor does it go away by choice, it reflects an uncertain and destructive wave of health issue. Thus through Green's book we can learn to be aware of mental illness and be empathetic and understanding towards people suffering from any kind of mental illness. It can thus help to create a world that does not live by stigma, mistreatment, discrimination and misinterpretation towards people with mental illness.









# INSIDIOUS: THE RED DOOR

-By Megha Das, SEM 1

*Duration: 107 minutes ,  
Release Date: July 7, 2023  
Director : Patrick Wilson*



**"The Red Door"** is the fifth part from "Insidious" movie. The storyline is basically based on a young family that is haunted by a demon and group of evil souls wanting to possess the families body. This movie highlights the areas based on supernatural and psychological elements to give a terrifying effect in the minds of the audience. The plot of the movie focuses on the main two characters, where the psychological factor occurs i.e "Astral Projection".

Young Dalton Lambert has grown from a possessed little boy into a brooding 19-year-old art student beginning his first semester of college. His parents, Josh and Renai, have separated. And his grandmother Lorraine, who played a role in saving Dalton from the evil spirits of The Further, has died. Dalton doesn't remember his trip into The Further, nor does Josh; the film opens with a scene of the two of them being instructed to forget an entire year of their lives by a hypnotist. Then, Josh Lambert heads east to drop his son, Dalton, off at school. However, Dalton's college dream soon becomes a living nightmare when the repressed demons of his past suddenly return to haunt them both. At the college the arts students were asked to create something thoughtful, after a countdown of 10

Dalton gets some visual images of a red door. Eventually his skills helped him create the "red door" image, which gave rise to some supernatural activities around him. One day at night time, Dalton falls asleep and slowly he feels the separation of soul from his body that is when the movie breaks in the most interesting psychological based on Astral Projection. Here, Josh and Dalton's gift for astral projection isn't just a mysterious phenomenon. It's that old saw of inherited trauma and mental illness that's been wreaking havoc on horror movies since "hereditary" This manifests in the form of revelations about the father Josh never knew, which overlap with Josh's guilt and Dalton's resentment about the divorce. However, once the college-centric main plot kicks in, Patrick Wilson exhibits prowess as an actor and director, as the



as the movie is peppered with many spine-chilling sequences—a frat party that Dalton attends with his friend Chris Wilson (Sinclair Daniel) where he encounters the ghost of a dead student, his astral projection episodes, Josh stuck inside the MRI scanner machine when he wants to dig deeper into reasons behind his brain fog. Scott Teem's screenplay, however, is lacking as it fails to tie up the loose threads eventually. The story had immense potential, with Josh finally discovering why his father abandoned the family, his ex-wife Renai (Rose Byrne), and his mother keeping secrets from him, Dalton delving deep into his subconscious through his art, etc., but it does not translate effectively. One does not see enough of the red demon, and the friendship track between Dalton and Chris is superficial.

Ty Simpkins performs ably as the sulking and intense young art student, but his Dalton seems a bit one-dimensional after a point. One would have liked to see more of Rose Byrne, too. Sinclair Daniel, as the spunky roommate, gets a bit loud.

The film has a promising beginning. It's watchable for the intermittent flashes of brilliance and some serious jump scares. But overall, it ends up being tepid and too rushed to call it wraps for the Lambert family's nightmare.

'As the ghosts from the past come back to haunt his family, Dalton and his father, Josh, return to the dark realm called the Further to get rid of the demons forever. Will they succeed?'



#### INTERESTING PSYCHOLOGICAL FACT!



Astral projection is a term used in esotericism to describe an intentional **out-of-body experience** that assumes the existence of a subtle body, known as the astral body or body of light, through which consciousness can function separately from the physical body and travel throughout the astral plane.



# QALA

## THE ROLE OF THE MOTHER IN SHAPING THE CHILD'S SENSE OF SELF

-By Gurpreet Kaur Gill & Rishika Bhaumik , SEM 5

Qala was a recent film that was released on the 1st of December, 2022, on the renowned OTT platform - Netflix, with a total running time of 119 minutes. It was written and directed by Anvita Dutt Guptan, and produced by Karnesh Ssharma. The main cast of the film included Tripti Dimri (as Qala Manjushree), Swastika Mukherjee (as Qala's mother: Urmila Manjushree) and Babil Khan (as Jagan). The cinematography was done by Siddharth Diwan, and the music was directed and written by Amit Trivedi. Both the cinematography and music in the film, especially the lyrics by Amit Trivedi, play a huge role in depicting the intentions, emotions, and most importantly, the mental states of the characters.



Set in 1940s Machilipatnam, Qala is about the tumultuous relationship between an aspiring singer and her domineering mother. Qala was born to Urmila, who was pregnant with twins, but unfortunately her twin brother was a still born baby. In a fit of rage, Urmila had eventually tried to smother Qala. Later, her initial disdain for her daughter turned into an attempt to teach Qala the art of music with the intention to make her a “maestro” at it.

The entire movie showcases many aspects of society: the deep-rooted beliefs of patriarchy, and how it affected the mother-daughter relationship between Urmila and Qala, as well as her decision to become a singer and everything she had to endure to get a place in the entertainment industry. Urmila initially says that Qala's name should have the prefix of 'Pandit', and not 'Bai',







clearly demarcating the unfair distinction between the talent of two genders. A woman's talents were, and still are, always looked down upon. Urmila herself being a talented singer, mentions that she wants Qala to follow her father's legacy, and not her own. Qala soon realizes that she doesn't have what it takes to be a "maestro" at music, the way that her mother wants to be. But she makes it her ultimate mission to be good at it, as she believes it to be the only way to gain her mother's love and affection. Qala was not treated affectionately by her mother, and was rather only met with harsh words and criticism. She was never appreciated by her mother, and her hard work was never acknowledged. At a time when the movie is set, the topic of mental health in general, was not very spokeThe aspect of patriarchy affected the view of mental health in women too. Much like the unfortunate history of hysteria, women's mental health was not taken seriously, as they were believed to be "too emotional" and only being able to "overreact" to situations, whenever they would express themselves. We see an instance of this in this movie when Qala mentions to the doctor about the noise in her mind and how something is wrong with her, but her complaints are quickly dismissed by the doctor as nothing serious, and is all due to the hormonal changes in women during "that time of the month". Qala tries to win her mother's approval all throughout the movie. The arrival of Jagan's into their lives was a turning point in Qala's mental state and intentions. The man whom they did not even know,



was quick to win Urmila's approval and appreciation only due to his talent, something Qala could not achieve for all these years, even through intense hard work. Qala, who already felt a huge distance between herself and her mother, was drifting even farther away from her. Urmila started favouring and catering to Jagan more, abandoning her daughter in the process. All of a sudden, Jagan had become the main character and Qala took the backseat in her own life, only having the mere role of assisting Jagan by giving him a glass of milk to keep his throat healthy and ready for performance. It seemed as if Urmila had unconsciously replaced her dead son with Jagan. She had started believing that Jagan was her own son. So, as per the rules of patriarchy, she quickly decides to get Qala married, as she mentions, daughters are supposed to stay with their in-laws, and sons get to stay with their mothers.



In an earlier conversation with Jagan, he mentions that Urmila wants him to join the industry and win the Golden Disc. Qala says that she wants to win the Golden Disc and make her mother happy. This becomes her only motivation to pursue music. After her mother decides to get her married and live with Jagan, her "brother" for the rest of her life, she finally gives in to her intrusive thoughts and mixes mercury into his milk just before his performance, which leads to him possibly permanently losing his voice. After this comes a pivotal point in the movie, as Qala performs "Phero Na Najariya" in place of Jagan's original performance, as a helpless, desperate plea for her mother to finally notice her and appreciate her. Her mother watches her with disgust and leaves to take care of Jagan instead, leaving her own daughter again. Jagan eventually commits suicide as singing is all he had and all he lived for. This leads to an immense sense of guilt in Qala, which would later guide many of her actions, thoughts, and lead to the deterioration of her mental health.



Qala goes on to be a part of the film industry after his demise, despite her mother's disapproval, hoping to win her love, again, by winning the Golden Disc. Qala gets taken advantage of by Sumant Kumar and sees the bitter side of the glorious industry, and how different things really are for men and women. Qala achieves her quest of getting the Golden Disc, but she still doesn't win her mother's love, affection and approval. In fact, her mother refuses to talk to her and cuts off all communication with her once she sets foot in the industry. After achieving her goal, Qala does not know what else to live for, and slowly her mental state deteriorates, as she is haunted by guilt and regret of her past actions. She feels that she took what was not supposed to be hers; Jagan was supposed to be in her place. She is terrified at the sight of milk, as it reminds her of her past. She starts hallucinating Jagan, who constantly keeps reminding her that she does not deserve what she has, and it was his dream that she stole. Qala tries one last time to contact her mother, pleading, seeking for help, but Urmila dismisses it again. Eventually, Qala gives in to her inner battle and surrenders, committing suicide. Urmila is left with only her recorded voice and certain low quality videos. She has lost both her son and her daughter. Regretting her actions, she embraces Qala's music album, knowing that it is too late to make things right, as she will not get her beloved children back.



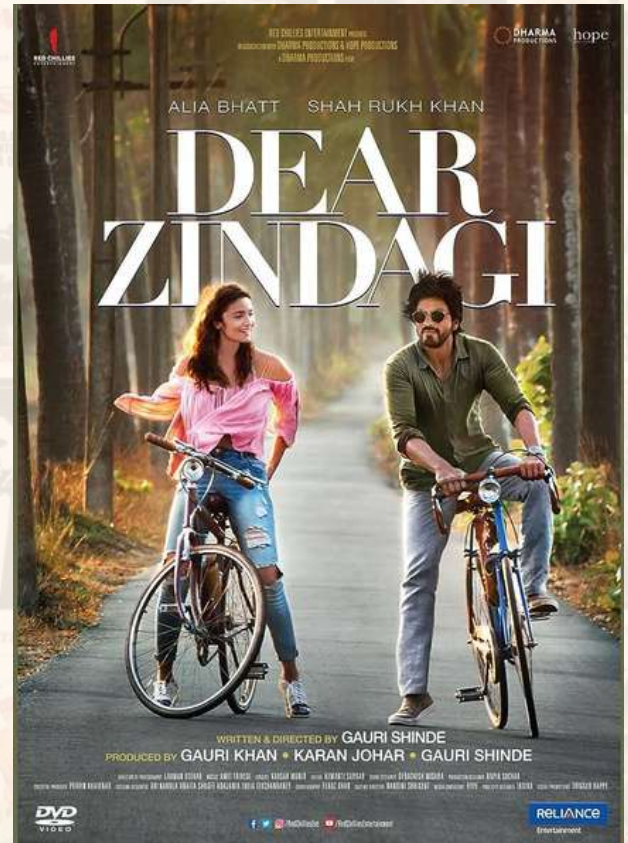
Qala does an excellent job of portraying many aspects of society. As seen in the entire movie, Qala thrives and longs for words of encouragement from her mother, who lacks what Humanistic Psychologists call 'Unconditional Positive Regard', which is the attitude of complete acceptance and love, whether for one's own self, or for others. The term was coined by Humanistic Psychologist, Carl Rogers. This attitude is very important, especially in children, for the development of a healthy personality. Hence, parents, especially mothers, who are most often the primary caregivers for the child, are heavily responsible for shaping the child's sense of self. Erikson's Psychosocial Stages of Development also emphasizes parent-child relationship and the effects it has on the child's personality development. From deep-running patriarchy and the struggle of a woman to find her place in society, to childhood trauma and social learning, and covering the state of mental health throughout these aspects of life, the movie has done fairly well. It has accomplished its job in demonstrating how our childhood relationships, especially our relationship with our mothers, shape who we are today. The movie explores the need for achievement, a sense of belonging, (which was also emphasized by Humanistic Psychologist Abraham Maslow in his Needs Hierarchy theory), and the struggle one faces regarding these both physically as well as mentally.



# DEAR ZINDAGI

-By Tanistha Dey , SEM 1

The movie dear zindagi revolves around the life of an ambitious, career driven women Kaira (Alia Bhatt). A cinematographer by profession she wants to shoot a film of her own. She suffers from complicated family relationships and is the happiest when with her two best friends. It is shown that she cheats her former boyfriend Sid by being with Raghuvendra, his colleague. Kaira leaves Raghuvendra upon knowing that he was going to reunite with his ex on a project in New York of which Kaira was also going to be a part. After a week or two Raghuvendra gets engaged with his ex and Kaira was devastated to know that. The landlord of her house in Mumbai evicted her as the housing society decided that only married couples would be allowed to stay in there.



She lost the New York project which was a big break for her, lost Raghuvendra, had to vacate her house and thus suffered from insomnia and anxiety. During this turmoil when Kaira's mental health was at stake she came across Dr Jehangir (Shahrukh khan) whose ideas significantly deviated from orthodox psychologists. Meanwhile she met Rumi a musician , fell in love with him but they broke up before anything serious could happen between them after she realized that he was not a right fit for her. Kaira reunites with her brother Kiddo who is the only person in her family who can empathize with her. She bursts out in a family get together when she confronts her parents for abandoning her for years in her grandparent's house. Finally Kaira narrates the story of her abandonment to Dr Jug. Jug tells Kaira that due to her bitter experience in childhood she has grown to fear abandonment so much thus she leaves people before they can leave her as she does not want to experience that similar kind of pain again. As a result of this childhood trauma she as an adult has unhealthy attachment styles and suffers from mistrust and is often emotionally unavailable to people. Dr Jug tells her that she does not have to forgive her parents for abandoning her but as an adult she should be mature enough to understand that her parents are normal people and are able to make mistakes. Jug's therapy sessions turns her life towards better, she reconciles with her family, is able to complete her short film on which she



was working for years, learns to deal with her fears and gains fair control over her life. This film is a perfect representation of how the empathy and warmth provided by a therapist can play a crucial role in the life of patients suffering from such kind of past fears which prevents them from leading a healthy and adaptive life. It also conveys an important message that poor mental health is a cause of concern and should be addressed just like any other kind of physical ailment instead of being considered as a taboo. It teaches us to be accepting of others and to accept ourselves. The moment we start embracing ourselves with our inner fears and flaws we give an opportunity to the society to accept us the way we are. It also shows the dark side of our society which considers single women as incapable and someone who cannot be financially independent. It is always expected that women should depend on their husbands for financial help and it is the man who should run the house. We also observe that a married woman enjoys a much better status and position in a typical



society whereas if a woman of same age is unmarried she is often looked down on and labeled as a slut. Such societal pressures of which one's family and relatives are a part hinders the unmarried individual, (Kaira in this case) from socializing with family and relatives. The individual is desperately made to feel useless and not offered a respectable position in society as she is not married. We also find that during childhood years when a child is in desperate need of warmth and affection of parents, Kaira was abandoned by them. Thus parents should know and understand their child and give them the right amount of time and care that they deserve. Otherwise due to faulty parenting patterns many children like Kaira may grow up to fear attachment and would have to deal with a lot. To sum up, the most important lesson that this film tries to teach people is that we should never allow our past to intimidate our present and thus ruin our bright future. This movie accompanied with an amazing story line, optimistic view of life and brilliant acting of the cast is a must watch for everyone.



# THE QUEEN'S GAMBIT

## CHESS, BRILLIANCE AND ITS BURDEN

-By Rajsree Sarkar , SEM 5

*Program creators: Scott Frank, Allan Scott*

*Genre: Coming-of-age; Period drama*

*Year of Release: October 23, 2020*

*Rating: 4 stars*



**"The Queen's Gambit,"** a Netflix miniseries adapted from Walter Tevis's novel, is a gripping tale that explores the mind of a prodigious chess player and delves deep into the intricate world of human psychology. From a psychological viewpoint, the series offers a fascinating exploration of various themes, including genius, addiction, trauma, and resilience.

One of the most captivating aspects of "The Queen's Gambit" is its portrayal of the main character, Beth Harmon, brilliantly portrayed by Anya Taylor-Joy. Beth's exceptional talent in chess becomes a reflection of her exceptional mind. The series delves into the psychological aspects of her genius, showcasing her ability to visualize complex chess moves and her relentless pursuit of perfection. It effectively captures the all-consuming nature of her obsession and the toll it takes on her mental and emotional well-being.

Furthermore, the series delves into the darker side of genius, depicting Beth's struggles with addiction. Beth's reliance on tranquilizers and alcohol, initially introduced to her by the orphanage staff, serves as a coping mechanism for her past trauma and

a means to enhance her focus during chess matches. The psychological implications of her addiction are explored, highlighting the fine line between self-medication and self-destruction. The series raises important questions about the relationship between creativity, brilliance, and the fragile state of the human psyche.

Trauma and its impact on psychological development are the other central themes in this miniseries. Beth's experiences in the orphanage, the loss of her parents, and the absence of nurturing relationships shape her worldview and contribute to her emotional vulnerabilities. The series adeptly portrays the long-lasting effects of childhood trauma, depicting the way it intertwines with Beth's chess journey. The psychological scars from her past are skillfully interwoven





into her character, influencing her relationships, decision-making, and overall psychological well-being. Nevertheless, the series also highlights the power of resilience and personal growth. Beth's journey is not solely defined by her struggles; it also portrays her ability to overcome adversity. Through her interactions with various mentors, friends, and opponents, she gradually learns to confront her inner demons and develops a sense of self-worth beyond her chess achievements. This psychological transformation beautifully demonstrates the potential for healing and personal growth in the face of trauma and addiction.



In conclusion, "The Queen's Gambit" is a remarkable series that offers a captivating psychological exploration of the complexities of human brilliance, trauma, addiction, and resilience. Through its compelling storytelling and nuanced character development, it provides a thought-provoking lens into the intricate workings of the human mind. The series stands as a testament to the profound influence of psychological factors on individuals' lives, leaving viewers with a deeper understanding of the fragility and resilience of the human psyche.



# BELASURU

-By Annapurna Debnath , SEM 3

*Directors: Nandita Roy and  
Shiboprosad Mukherjee.  
Genre: Family drama  
Year of Release: 20 May 2022  
Rating: 4 stars*



Belashuru is a Bengali movie revolving around a family that comes together in Shantiniketan to look after their matriarch, Arati Sarkar (Swatilekha Sengupta), who is suffering from Alzheimer's disease after 50 years of married life and is unable to recognize her husband, Biswanath Sarkar (Soumitra Chatterjee), due to a drastic loss of her memory. The family members oscillate between two worlds of reality and dementia as they try to deal with Arati's illness, signatored by Biswanath's unconditional love for his wife, moulding his life into an ongoing concert of their marriage vows. The film explores rooms of hardships, emotional breakdowns, introspection, and complexities of Alzheimer's disease and crafts its impact on a family and society. The film has layers of spellbound cinematography, a camouflaging score of music in particular scenes, and casts a touching direction for a difficult plot

The movie starts with Arati (Swatilekha Sengupta), who has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease, running away from her house in the absence of her husband, Biswanath (Soumitra Chatterjee), in search of Faridpur. This incident pairs her four children with immense fear and assembles them under the same roof, seeking to take care of their mother. However, Biswanath's reluctance does not allow her to travel with them to Kolkata, where all four are well settled, and therefore, they stick to their father's decision and try every possible measure to bring back their mother's lost memory of her married life. The film features the same cast as "Belasheshe" but does not mark the continuation of the same; rather, it evolves into a different portrait as a whole. Alzheimer's disease is an incurable, progressive neurodegenerative disorder marked by cognitive and behavioral impairment that significantly interferes with social and occupational functioning. It was first discovered by Dr. Alois Alzheimer when he spotted changes in the brain tissues of a woman, which was paired with her untimely death due to an unknown mental illness. Her symptoms included drastic loss of memory, speech problems, and unpredictable behavior, syncing perfectly with those of Arati's symptoms,



which also included dementia (caused by changes in the brain, including abnormal buildups of proteins known as amyloid plaques and tau tangles in Alzheimer's)—where a person gets lost in a neighbourhood, acts impulsively, hallucinates, does not care about others feelings, uses unusual words to recognize familiar objects, loses interest in normal daily events, and experiences difficulty in speaking, understanding, reading and writing. As shown at the beginning of the film, Arati can't track her way back home and gets lost in a place familiar to her; she dresses up as a bride and snatches things, which portrays her impulsivity; she suffers from auditory and visual hallucinations of people and places; she slaps her daughter, losing self-control; she loses memory of her 50 years of married life; and most importantly, she cannot recognize her husband and falsely believes that he had abandoned her. Thus, we can find Biswanath playing crosswords with her to keep her mind active and looking after her daily life activities, which range from feeding her to keeping her happy through cinemas and stories. Although enough retrieval cues were provided to bring her memory back, from visiting her ancestral home to making arrangements for her marriage, nothing worked, leaving Biswanath heartbroken as his beloved hid in a garb that was alien to him.



Belashuru provides a deep analysis of how much affected a family and society can be due to a mental disorder. The background music and songs perfectly muse with the mood, and a picture of infinite care and compassion echo in chants of loving everything by loving the same person. The plot of the movie has been like a free paper of unconditional love, which fell into the origami of a mental disease.



# CREDITS



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THANK YOU

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