



PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION SOCIETY'S
MODERN COLLEGE OF ARTS, SCIENCE AND COMMERCE (AUTONOMOUS)
GANESHKHIND, PUNE-16
NAAC GRADE A+

Department of Psychology

KALEIDOSCOPE
VOLUME XVIII

Exploring Relationships



2025-2026

ISBN NO. 978-81-928564-9-0



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We are grateful to our proactive Principal, Dr. Sanjay Kharat, for his input and encouragement to the Disha team every year. He not only guides us in the process, but also wholeheartedly participates in making Kaleidoscope more evolved each year. We are thankful to Dr. Jyoti Gagangras (Vice Principal, Arts Faculty) and all the Staff members of Arts Faculty for their collegiality and continuous support.

Our Former Head of the Department and the Founder of the Kaleidoscope Magazine, Prof. Dr. Sadhana Natu, deserves special gratitude for her constant guidance and support. If it was not for her consistent dedication and unwavering enthusiasm Kaleidoscope would not be in its 18th Volume today.

I would like to thank my colleagues Neha Kolhatkar, Manasi Deshpande, Pragti More and Samruddhi Kamble for their enthusiastic participation in all the tasks connected with Kaleidoscope Volume XVIII from ideation to completion. Their dedicated efforts, attention to detail and creativity have helped in the successful output.

I wish to congratulate all the students who have written for Volume XVIII. Student members of Disha, who have written articles and thematic pieces, have contributed to making this issue of Kaleidoscope come alive. Sanika Joshi from SYBA and Manasi Deshpande have compiled the Cover and Back page suitable to the theme. I thank the both of them.

It is a proud moment filled with happiness that I place the Eighteenth Volume of KALEIDOSCOPE before all of you, our readers. I hope this journal reaches out to all of you. Do read it and send us your feedback and suggestions at psydepmcgk@gmail.com

Nashome Crasto,

Head of the Department,

Department of Psychology.

P. E. Society's,

Modern College of Arts, Science and Commerce, Autonomous

Ganeshkhind, Pune-16

January 2026

From the Principal's Desk...



It is a pleasure to present *Kaleidoscope* Volume 18, the annual Magazine of the Department of Psychology. Each year, this Magazine reflects not only academic engagement but also the curiosity, sensitivity, and creativity of our students, and this edition is no exception.

The theme '*Exploring Relationships*' resonates deeply with all of us, as relationships shape who we are and how we experience the world. Through thoughtful writing and reflection, the students have explored the many facets of human connection with insight and empathy.

I truly appreciate the effort and sincerity with which students have contributed to this Volume. I also acknowledge the dedication of the faculty of the Department of Psychology, whose guidance continues to nurture both academic growth and personal understanding. My special appreciation goes to the editorial team for bringing this Magazine together with such care.

The Magazine also included a section which is a Tribute to the Former Head of the Department and the person behind the idea and execution of *Kaleidoscope*. The touching expressions of Colleagues, Alumni and Students of Prof. Dr. Sadhana Natu is a true validation of her expertise and contribution to the field of Academia.

I am confident that *Kaleidoscope* Volume 18 will connect with its readers and encourage meaningful reflection

Dr. Sanjay Kharat,

Principal,

P. E. Society's Modern College of Arts, Science and Commerce (Autonomous),

Ganeshkhind, Pune 16.

Vice Principal Speaks...



It gives me genuine joy to see the release of *Kaleidoscope* Volume 18, a Magazine that has become a meaningful expression of student thought within the Dept of Psychology. Each edition reflects not only academic learning but also the lived experiences and perspectives of youth.

The theme '*Exploring Relationships*' invites us to pause and reflect on the connections we build; with family, friends, society, and ourselves. The contributions capture the nuances of these relationships and highlight their importance in personal growth and emotional balance.

I am heartened by the enthusiasm and openness with which the students have engaged with this theme. The guidance provided by the faculty and the dedicated efforts of the editorial team are clearly evident in the quality of this publication.

The section paying Tribute to Prof. Dr. Sadhana Natu my dear colleague and friend also deserves special mention. It was heartwarming to read what everyone has to say about the charismatic person that Prof. Dr. Natu is!

I hope this Volume of *Kaleidoscope* encourages readers to think, feel, and connect more deeply. I extend my warm wishes to the Department of Psychology as it continues to nurture thoughtful and reflective learners.

Warm Regards,

Dr. Jyoti Gagangras,

Vice Principal, Arts

P. E. Society's Modern College of Arts, Science and Commerce (Autonomous),

Ganeshkhind, Pune 16

Founder Editor's Musings



With humble beginnings as a modest effort to encourage thematic writing on psychological themes in English, Marathi, and Hindi too, Kaleidoscope our in-house magazine/journal has evolved and flourished in the last 18 years! When I conceptualized and curated Kaleidoscope 17 years ago, I was not sure whether this effort would be sustained, but today I feel vindicated, that yes indeed it has. How does it feel to hand over a 'baby that one has created'? At 18 Kaleidoscope is an adult, and will start adulting, so it will have a life of its own!

17 years ago, with Kaleidoscope, as an act of writing out, along with Disha, 33 years ago as the Speak Out and Peer Support Group, I imagined, diverse sets of students would come together and bring faculty members together as well and listen, be heard and write. Once again, as my alumni reminisce about both these efforts and share how deeply it has impacted their lives, I am overwhelmed. Since my alumni have made their mark in India and abroad, Disha and Kaleidoscope have 'traveled in India and globe trotted'! I am happy to note that the work has been sustained this year too, and my team, Ms. Nashome Crasto at the helm and colleagues Neha, Pragati, Manasi and Samruddhi and the students have kept the flag flying high, continuing my legacy and I am proud of them. Principal Dr. Sanjay Kharat has been a champion and supporter of both these endeavours and all the colleagues from Arts faculty and other faculties for their support too.

The habit of thematic writing without using AI must be nurtured early, in current times, before the mental set of rushing for readymade words and phrases, courtesy, ChatGPT becomes hard wired among students. What better a topic than '**Relationships**' to

motivate students to type/pen their original thoughts, ideas, feelings, as this year's theme. Students have lived up to my expectations presenting a mélange of clichéd, complex, intricate, outré webs of relationships in articles, poems and pictures that are eminently readable. There is a small section dedicated to my work that Nashome kindly conceptualized and found a place for in Kaleidoscope. I am deeply grateful to my students and colleagues for recognising me as a person and my work! Congratulations and Best Wishes to all my colleagues and students for bringing out Kaleidoscope Volume XVIII.

Professor Dr. Sadhana Natu

Professor and Former Head of Department of Psychology

P. E. Society's Modern College of Arts, Science and Commerce, Autonomous

Ganeshkhind, Pune 16

FOUNDER EDITOR, KALEIDOSCOPE

Editorial



With immense pride and thoughtful reflection, we present the 18th Volume of the Annual Magazine of the Department of Psychology ‘Kaleidoscope’. This volume arrives at a moment that is both celebratory and deeply poignant for our department—a moment that invites us to look inward, backward, and forward, all at once.

The theme of this year’s magazine, “**Exploring Relationships,**” could not be more fitting. Relationships form the very foundation of psychological inquiry: the relationship with the self, with others, with society, and with the evolving world around us. They are dynamic, complex, nurturing, and at times, challenging. They shape identities, influence well-being, and define lived experience. Through this volume, our students have engaged thoughtfully with these dimensions, offering articles that explore relationships across contexts—familial, romantic, social, professional, therapeutic, and intrapersonal—drawing from theory, research, personal reflection, and their multiple realities.

What makes this volume particularly special is that it reflects relationships not only as an academic theme, but as a lived truth within our department. Each contribution stands as evidence of the intellectual curiosity, sensitivity, and empathy that psychology seeks to cultivate. The diversity of voices and perspectives in this magazine mirrors the richness of human connection itself, reminding us that there is no single way to understand or experience relationships.

At the heart of this volume lies a deeply emotional tribute to **Prof. Dr. Sadhana Natu**, whose retirement in August 2025 marked the end of an era for the Department of Psychology. This is

the first time our annual magazine is being released without the guiding presence of our Former Head of the Department—a reality that is both difficult to accept and impossible to ignore.

Prof. Dr. Sadhana Natu's relationship with the department transcended roles and titles. As an academician, mentor, administrator, and guide, she shaped not only curricula and classrooms, but lives and careers. Her unwavering commitment to academic excellence, her firm yet compassionate leadership, and her deep belief in the potential of students left an indelible mark on generations of learners and colleagues alike. The department as it stands today bears the imprint of her vision, dedication, and tireless efforts.

In this volume, colleagues, students, and alumni have come together to pay homage to her through letters, reflections, and personal narratives. These heartfelt contributions speak of mentorship that extended beyond syllabi, of encouragement offered at important moments, and of a leader who believed deeply in the power of relationships to transform individuals and institutions. These pages are filled not just with memories, but with gratitude—gratitude for a relationship that continues to inspire even in her physical absence from the department.

As readers journey through this edition, we invite them to reflect not only on the articles presented, but also on the relationships that shape their academic and personal lives. May this magazine spark dialogue, introspection, and connection? May it remind us that psychology is not merely the study of the mind, but the study of human bonds in all their complexity and beauty?

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to the students for their insightful contributions, to the faculty for their continued guidance, and to the alumni who remain deeply connected to the department. Above all, we dedicate this volume to Prof. Dr. Sadhana Natu—with respect, gratitude, and enduring admiration.

Volume 18 is not just a collection of writings; it is a reflection of relationships lived, learned, and cherished.

**Warm Regards,
Editorial Team.**

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□ *A TRIBUTE TO PROF. DR. SADHANA NATU*

DEPARTMENTAL UPDATE

ACADEMIC ACHIEVERS

PHOTO GALLERY

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WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A PERSON TRIES TO MAKE RELATIONSHIP WITH SOMEONE WHO IS NOT SIMILAR TO HIM?

-Hitanshi Gujrathi

[FYBA]



A real-life case reported by Indian media, including BBC News, highlights the struggles faced by queer individuals against honor-based violence. With names changed to protect their identities, the story follows a Trans man named Manoj who endured intense emotional and physical abuse from his family because of his gender identity. In an attempt to suppress his Trans identity and same-sex relationship with his girlfriend, Rashmi, Manoj was forcibly married to an older man by his family. When the two tried to reunite, they were brutally beaten and threatened with sexual assault. Manoj was even coerced into signing suicide notes blaming Rashmi for his death. Eventually, with support from a Queer Feminist Resource Group, they escaped and secured legal protection.

What if it was me or you instead of Manoj forced to marry twice an age man? What if it was you instead of rashmi reciving rape threats? It is scary to even just imagine those things happening to ourself. Just like Manoj, there are many queer identities who are struggling through, honor-based violence and are in urgent need for stronger legal safeguards to ensure dignity and safety. But what actually is causing this? Just some belives or societal pressure or anything else?

Relationships are essential for human connection, yet they become complex when diversity increases and challenges social norm.

Homophobic person – The person who has a negative attitude, who is prejudice and discriminates with queer identity.

Queer identity – A person who embraces/belongs to sexual and gender identity.

There are many layers in relationship between queer individual and homophobic person:

There are different values in which both the individuals live – Queer person is open to authenticity, diversity, freedom; a homophobic person holds traditional, cultural or religious beliefs. This creates an emotional and ideological gap.

Psychological safety and threat:

For any kind of relationship a person should be feeling safe, which is constantly lacking for a queer individual. Whereas a homophobic person also feels uncomfortable and challenged with the idea of sexuality.

Power imbalance:

We have heteronormative dominated society. This causes power imbalance and creates psychological tension for an individual of a queer identity.

Identity threat:

For a queer individual, their identity is a core part of who they are. When a non-accepting person rejects that, it's not disagreement what they feel but it feels like denial of their existence.

From a psychological/cognitive perspective Queer individuals and homophobic people both face problems such as:

- Minority stress
- Internalized homophobia
- Cognitive dissonance
- Attachment insecurity

Stigma attached to sexuality makes it more difficult for people to accept queer identity. Society and their pressure causes trouble to accept their loved one. Constantly explaining and judgments causes emotional tiredness for queer identity. Hoping for change or aware homophobic people while reality is contradictory to it causes them to fall out in relationships.

These relationships are shaped by different values, communication gaps, lack of shared interests, stigma, society, stereotypes, power imbalance etc. Psychological theories even reveal how social identity, cognitive dissonance and power imbalance hinder connection and empathy.

Sometime what a queer person really need is an ear to listen and not to judge, an ally who understands them and not tries to fix them. Someone who cares about their identity and not about some unwritten rules of society. A relationship only lasts when prejudice is replaced by empathy and understanding. Accepting new ideas and giving sense of security for their feelings would improve any relationship. Respecting every individual's identity and not showing superiority would create better society.

One can evolve them self and their relationship by creating safe space, using proper pronouns and names, not assuming any person's sexuality or their gender and not only supporting the idea of acceptance publically but also personally.

Conclusion

This relationship is hard. It includes fear, resistance, and lack of understanding or refuse to understand, standing on pervious believes, being superior or having fear of being inferior after accepting idea of queer community and many more. But spreading awareness, securing people about their own feelings towards lgbtq+ community could change mind-set of discomfort to well understand human being. And a well understand, empathetic aware human can bring a big change in society and as well in their own relationship.



~~*

“Relationships don’t thrive on love alone,
they thrive on effort, patience &
Understanding”

BUILDING A RELATIONSHIP WITH YOURSELF: THE FOUNDATION OF ALL CONNECTIONS



Nidhi Belhe

TYBA Psychology

Introduction

This article explores the importance of cultivating a strong relationship with oneself in order to nurture fulfilling and meaningful connections in other areas of life. While there's an abundance of material on this topic, very few sources offer practical guidance on how to actually build that relationship, especially in real life.

As a 20-year-old psychology student, I've noticed a growing awareness around self-development, which is a promising shift. Unlike previous generations, who often overlooked emotional and mental well-being, today's youth are beginning to prioritize inner growth. This change is long overdue.

Carl Rogers, the humanistic psychologist, once said, "The curious paradox is that when I accept myself just as I am, then I can change."

Clinical psychologist Melanie Greenberg echoes this sentiment: "The biggest struggle in life is to know, embrace, and accept ourselves, with all of our faults and imperfections."

And C.G. Jung, the renowned psychoanalyst, observed, "People will do anything, no matter how absurd, to avoid facing their own souls."

In psychology, we're trained to help individuals develop strategies to cope with life's challenges. Many people enter therapy focused on external issues such as relationship conflicts, career stress, life transitions, seeking relief from immediate discomfort. These concerns are valid, but what's often overlooked is how deeply they're connected to internal patterns. People tend to view their struggles as isolated events, disconnected from their sense of self, rather than as reflections of long-standing emotional dynamics, beliefs, or unresolved experiences. Therapy offers a space to shift that perspective, to move beyond symptom relief and begin uncovering the narratives that shape how we relate to others, navigate adversity, and understand ourselves. This inward journey isn't easy, but it's where true transformation begins.

The Complexity of Self-Development

Self-development and building a meaningful relationship with oneself involve many layers. Practicing this in real life can feel overwhelming, confusing, and time-consuming. Just like any other relationship, the one we form with ourselves requires time, effort, and most importantly, willingness. Personally, I believe that forming a healthy self-relationship is harder than forming connections with others. Our conscious and unconscious minds often fail to recognize our own unhealthy patterns, yet we're quick to notice them in others. As humans, we tend to believe we're right most of the time. But to build a constructive and strong bond with ourselves, we must be willing to change and that begins with awareness. Becoming conscious of our patterns, mistakes, strengths, weaknesses, habits, and beliefs is the first step.

In a world flooded with both helpful and harmful advice, especially through social media which dominates our content consumption, having access to reliable, trusted, and valid information is essential. Based on what I've learned from respected authors and my studies in psychology, this article is my attempt to raise awareness and offer insights that may be helpful to others, especially those around my age.

What Does It Mean to Build a Relationship with Yourself?

Building a relationship with yourself means recognizing your behaviors, habits, and emotional patterns (self-awareness), understanding them, and reasoning with them. Ask yourself: Why do I act the way I do? There's always a reason behind our actions. Then, take time to reflect; what would you like to change, and how do you want to grow into a better version of yourself? This



process takes time, and it cannot be rushed if you want genuine results. Patience and empathy toward yourself are essential. Often, we're so hard on ourselves that we feel pressured to constantly improve, but that's not sustainable. Compassion and empathy are vital in building a strong inner relationship.

How Do You Develop That Bond?

The first and often hardest step is accepting that true happiness, health, and fulfillment come from being completely okay with the fact that you are on your own. The only person you can always count on is yourself. Ask yourself: Would I be happy spending extended time alone with the person I am today? For many, the

answer is no, because we've never taken the time to truly understand ourselves, to offer love, compassion, and patience inward. No one teaches us how to do that.

Once you've processed and accepted the need for inner work, the real journey begins: defining expectations for yourself and others. Every individual has their own negotiables and non-negotiables. What works for you may not work for someone else, and that's okay. Each person is different.

Setting boundaries with yourself and sticking to them is one of the most important steps in building a healthy relationship with yourself. Boundaries create structure, which helps you manage whatever life throws your way.

Boundaries with Others

Once you've established internal boundaries, the next challenge is setting them with others—family, friends, and coworkers. This can be tricky. People often take boundaries personally, as if you're being rude or pushing them away. But that's usually because they haven't set boundaries for themselves, so yours feel unfamiliar or even threatening. The truth is, not everyone will respect your boundaries. Some may ignore them or cross the line. When that happens, you face a difficult choice: Do you preserve the relationship, or do you protect your peace and self-respect?

There's no universal answer. It depends on the situation, the person, and what matters most to you. At its core, setting boundaries is about choosing yourself, your growth, your well-being, and your values even when it's hard.

That said, not every relationship requires boundaries. Some connections are naturally respectful and balanced, and that's perfectly okay too.

The Balance between Showing up and Self-Priority

On the other hand, we're seeing a trend where boundaries are taken too far, especially in friendships and relationships. Some people avoid showing up for others simply because it's inconvenient. But that's not what boundaries are meant for. It's important to maintain a balance between being present for others and prioritizing yourself. Relationships thrive on mutual effort, not avoidance.

Consistency and Discipline

Another key aspect is consistency and discipline. In theory, all of this sounds easy to follow. But is it really? Probably not.

Boundaries have become a powerful tool for self-preservation, and rightly so. But somewhere along the way, we've started using them to avoid discomfort rather than to foster growth. In relationships, this can lead to emotional absence choosing not to show up simply because it's hard. Yet meaningful connections aren't built on convenience; they're built on presence, effort, and care.

Navigating the space between honoring your needs and being there for others requires emotional maturity and a willingness to engage, even when it's uncomfortable. This is where consistency and discipline come in qualities that sound simple but demand deep commitment. Showing up for yourself, especially on days when guilt, fatigue, or self-doubt weigh heavy, is one of the hardest things to do. But it's also the most transformative.

Discipline isn't about rigidity; it's about devotion to your growth, your values, and the life you're trying to build. Even when you falter, the act of trying to showing up despite resistance, carries profound meaning. Time will test your resolve. You may lose people, opportunities, or

comforts along the way. But if your efforts are rooted in authenticity and aligned with your deeper truth, then every sacrifice becomes part of a meaningful journey.

In the end, it's not about being perfect. It's about being present, intentional, and courageous enough to keep going.

Building a relationship with yourself is a lifelong process rooted in self-awareness, compassion, and discipline. It's about showing up for yourself, setting boundaries, and choosing growth even when it's hard. The stronger your connection with yourself, the more authentic and fulfilling your relationships with others will be.

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DETACHING TO GROW: HOW I FOUND MY INDEPENDENCE IN MY TWENTYS

Satyajeet More

MA I Psychology

In my early twenties, I believed closeness defined care that being constantly available for others meant I was doing the right thing. I thought love was presence, and friendship was sacrifice. But somewhere along the way, I realized that I had forgotten to show up for myself.

Growing up isn't just about age or responsibilities. It's about understanding where to invest your energy and when to step back. Life in your twenties moves fast you chase achievements, follow expectations, and try to prove you're doing well. But the truth is, growth often requires detachment- the kind that brings peace, not distance.

Learning to Step Back

At eighteen, like many, I believed I needed to figure everything out quickly. Everyone around me seemed to have a plan like preparing for competitive exams, early success, a clear destination. Some achieved it right away; some stumbled. I learned that both paths hold lessons. The idea of failure, once terrifying, slowly became a teacher. Each setback carved strength and perspective into me.

Detachment isn't about giving up on people or dreams; it's about learning that not every moment deserves your full weight. I had to accept that some relationships end, some opportunities slip by, and some phases simply aren't meant to last forever. What remains is what's meant to help you grow your values, your resilience, and your clarity.

Redefining Self-Care

In a world that constantly tells us to keep going, I discovered rest as a revolutionary act. I stopped seeing self-care as luxury and started treating it as discipline. Setting boundaries, saying no, taking breaks- these weren't signs of weakness, but commitments to a sustainable life.

Self-care also became about choosing what aligned with who I wanted to be. I began investing my time in learning new skills, reading more, and staying close to people who encouraged growth instead of draining it. That shift replaced guilt with purpose.

The Beauty of Being Alone

There were evenings when solitude felt heavy, when the absence of constant validation made me question my worth. But slowly, those moments became my sanctuary. It's in quietness that we hear our true voice- not the noise of comparison, fear, or expectation.

I started enjoying my own company dinners alone, walks without music, and thoughts without distraction. That's when independence began to take its real shape: not financial stability or success, but emotional grounding. It's a comforting realization that even when everything feels uncertain, you can be your own safe place.

Moving Forward with Purpose

Now, when I plan for the future, I start with myself. My independence isn't about isolation; it's about balance. I no longer aim to prove my worth but to preserve my peace. Detachment taught me that growth doesn't need to be loud. Sometimes, it's simply the quiet courage to continue to forgive yourself, to let go, and to trust that your path, however slow, is still progress.

The long race of life demands not just endurance, but awareness of when to push and when to pause. My twenties have been a journey of learning that detachment isn't losing connection; it's gaining perspective.

And in that clarity, I found freedom...

~~*

“The privilege of a lifetime is to become who you truly are”

~ Carl Jung

नाते मातृत्वाचे...!

हर्षवर्धन कसबे

MA I (Psychology)

नातं म्हणजे माणसाच्या असण्याचा पुरावा, माणसाच अस्तित्व हे नात्यापासून सुरू होतं. गर्भाशयात बीजाकार घेतल्यावर पहिली नाळ जी निर्माण होते ती आईच्या अपरा(Placenta) येथे जोडली जाते आणि जगातलं सगळ्यात पवित्र, प्रेमळ, निस्वार्थी, सुसंस्कारीक, उदार नातं जन्म घेतं ते म्हणजे माय लेकरांचं...! पण यामध्ये माय लेकराच्या संबंधात विशेष महत्त्व जातं ते आईच्या प्रसुतीला आणि तिच्या संस्कारदानाला. कित्येक पिढ्या ज्या पूर्वापार स्वतःच अस्तित्व निर्माण करीत आल्या त्या या नात्याच्या फलस्वरूप आणि आजची जी मिश्र संस्कृती निर्माण झाली ती याचं नात्याच्या फलस्वरूप!

आईचं महत्त्व भारत पुरुषप्रधान देश असला तरी कधीही लपून राहिलं नाही याचे दृष्टांत द्यायचे झाल्यास आपण वास्तववादी उदाहरणांचा प्रथम विचार करू आणि मग धार्मिक अथवा काल्पनिक उदाहरणांचा विचार करू.... झाशीची राणी लक्ष्मीबाई तिच्या पाठीवर बाळ पदराने बांधून लढणारी एक वीरांगना होती, तिने आपल्या मायेची गाठ मूलापासून विभक्त होऊ नये म्हणून कधीही मुलाला रणावर जाताना घरी टाकलं नाही तर सोबत घेऊन इंग्रजांचा सामना केला, हेच कारण आहे की तिने आपल्या जन्मलेल्या मुलाच्या मनात भारतभूमीबद्दल प्रेमाचे व आदराचे बाळकडू पेरले. छत्रपती शिवाजी महाराजांना घडवणाऱ्या आई जिजाबाई यांनी युगयुगांतक जाणाऱ्या विचारांना महाराजांच्या मनात निर्माण केले आणि तो महान जाणता राजा निर्माण झाला, किंवा सावित्रीबाई फुले ज्यांनी अखंड समाजातील साळी, माळी, तेली, तांबोळी, कोळी, कोष्टी, मांग, महार, चांभार, ढोर, लोहार, कुंभार, वडार, ब्राम्हण, मुस्लिम, ख्रिश्चन आणि ज्ञानापासून वंचित असलेल्या तत्सम लोकांसाठी स्वतःचे तन-मन-धन आणि ऋण सर्व काही वाहिले!

स्वतः जन्म दिलेल्या लेकरासाठी तर कोणतीही आई जगते पण परक्याच लेकरू आपलंच लेकरू आहे ही भावना मनात बाळगून त्याच्यासाठी आयुष्य वेचणारी सावित्री ही पहिली जगन्माता असेल! थोडक्यात मातृत्व हे इतक विशाल आहे याची परिकल्पना वास्तविक इतिहासावरून आपल्याला येते.

पुराण व काही इतर धार्मिक ग्रंथात पण ईश्वर व त्यांच्या माता यांचे श्रेष्ठ दाखले देण्यात आलेले आहेत, जसे सीता व लव-कुश यांचे रामायणातील संबंध व लालनपालनाच्या कथा, किंवा जिझस आणि आई मेरी यांच्या संस्कार व प्रेमाच्या तसेच त्यांच्या सामाजिक जीवनात आलेल्या संकटांच्या कथा, किंवा करबला येथे

आईकडे पाणी व अन्न मागत केलेला हसन आणि हुसैन यांनी देहत्याग, त्यांनी न्यायासाठी सत्यासाठी शरणागती स्वीकारली नाही, उपाशी पोटी अन्नपाण्याविना मृत्यूला जवळ केले. या गोष्टी खडतर आयुष्यप्रवासात माणसाने कसे जगावे याच्या शिकवणी देतात, मातृत्व या विश्वाच्या परिवर्तनाचा व सद्वर्तनाचा पाया आहे, संस्काराचे उगमस्थान आहे. ही गोष्ट सध्याचा समाज विसरतो आणि धर्मातीत गोष्ट जेव्हा समोर येते तेव्हा स्वतःचा धर्म सर्वश्रेष्ठ आहे ही भूमिका या वसुंधरेचा प्रत्येक बाळ मांडतो, तो विसरून जातो की या भूमीवर जन्म घेतलेली सर्व आपलीच भावंडे आहेत!

आई आपल्या मुलाला स्तनपान करते म्हणजे ती तिचे केवळ औपचारिक कर्म करते असे नाही... ती आपल्या दूधातून मूलाला ज्ञानतेज, संस्कारतेज, आस्था, शौर्य, प्रेम, सत्यशोधन अशा कित्येक गोष्टींचे दान देत असते, रुधिर हा मानवी शरीराचा निकटवर्ती अमृतपल्प आहे जो मानवी जीवन जगण्यासाठीची शक्तीधारा मानवाला प्रदान करतो, तो पल्प आई दुधाच्या रूपाने अर्भकाच्या तोंडात ओतते, या पल्पाचे मोल प्रत्येक मूलाला कळणे गरजेचे आहे. हेच अमृत मानवं जातीला अमरत्व प्रदान करते. ना केवळ भारत तर संबंध विश्वामध्ये हीच सत्य व सध्य परिस्थिती आहे!

आपली भारतभूमी ही संस्काराने प्रभावित व परिवर्तित झालेली आहे, पण आपण का म्हणून पाश्चिमात्य संस्कृतीचे इतके गडद अनुकरण करतो आहोत? होय आधुनिकीकरण, मॉडर्नायझेशन, विज्ञानवादी दृष्टीकोन आणि सत्यता यांची अनिवार्यता पण याच्या पुढे आपण आपल्या आईच्या संस्कारांना तडे पोहोचवत आहोत...! हे ही तितकंच सत्य. नक्कीच प्रत्येकाने नवीन विचार, परिकल्पना, परिवर्तन ह्या गोष्टींचा स्वीकार करायला हवा पण आईची पवित्रता आणि संस्कार यांची प्रतिमा डागाळण्याचे वर्तन कदापि करू नये! मातृत्व हे केवळ एका जीवनाचे कारण नसून, ते युगयुगांतक चालणारे विश्व सत्यधर्मसूर्य तारांगण आहे.

आई म्हणजे सृष्टीची मृदुता, प्रेमाचा महासागर आणि संस्कारांची उगमभूमी, आणि विद्रोहाची ज्वालाही बरं का! ती स्वतःच्या वेदनेतून जीवनाचा दीप प्रज्वलित करते, आणि त्या दीपातून विश्वाचा प्रत्येक बाळ उजळतो. मातृत्व हे रक्ताने जोडलेलं नातं नाही, तर आत्म्याने ओतलेलं प्रेम आहे. जग बदललं तरी आईच्या अस्तित्वाचा अर्थ कधीही बदलणार नाही कारण मातृत्व म्हणजेच संपूर्ण सृष्टीचं शाश्वत सत्य!

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THE FAMILIAR STRANGER: THE PEOPLE WE KNOW WITHOUT KNOWING

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Introduction:

In the flow of daily life, many people share public spaces without ever exchanging words. We might see the same shopkeeper on the way to college, a commuter on the same bus every morning, or a neighbour we pass on the street but never speak to. Over time, these individuals become recognizable, forming a subtle yet meaningful part of our routines. Such individuals are known as familiar strangers - people we know by sight but not by name or conversation. Though there is no direct communication, their repeated presence can evoke a sense of comfort, belonging, and normalcy in everyday life.

Definition:

The term "familiar stranger" was first used to describe this type of non-interactive recognition by Stanley Milgram in his 1972 work. According to Milgram, a familiar stranger is "a stranger who is nonetheless recognized by another from regularly sharing a common physical space but with whom one does not interact." Later, Eric Paulos and Elizabeth Goodman (2004) placed the concept in the context of public spaces and digital design, exploring how familiar strangers contribute to ambient social presence even without verbal exchange.

Psychological significance:

Psychologically, familiar strangers influence how we perceive safety, belonging, and comfort in shared spaces. These silent recognitions activate subtle social cognition — familiarity, memory, and routine-based reassurance — creating predictability amid social anonymity.

Zahnow and Corcoran (2024) demonstrated that these small recognitions nurture emotional connection and belonging. Their survey of 278 Brisbane residents showed that individuals who frequently encountered familiar strangers in communal spaces like cafés or parks reported a stronger sense of attachment and security. They described familiar strangers as people who

“frame your day,” transforming public spaces from impersonal landscapes into “comfort zones.” Repeated, wordless encounters also reinforce a sense of social rhythm, creating what the authors call “bounded communities of belonging.” Thus, they suggested that such interactions, even without speech, act as “an antidote to the global loneliness epidemic” — subtly reminding us that we exist within a shared social fabric.

The MIT Technology Review (2013) similarly noted that these unseen networks form a “hidden layer” of social connection, shaping behaviour and comfort in public life. Recognising the same faces daily helps anchor people psychologically, reducing the sense of isolation common in dense urban settings.

Everyday examples:

- A shopkeeper passed each morning without greeting
- A fellow commuter who boards the same bus every day
- The jogger seen regularly on a neighbourhood route

Such people become psychological landmarks — strangers by interaction, yet familiar enough to elicit comfort and continuity.

Conclusion:

The familiar stranger illustrates how silent, recurring encounters can foster a quiet sense of connection and belonging. These individuals—though unknown to us—bring subtle comfort through their consistent presence, grounding us in the rhythm of everyday life. Psychologically, they fulfil a small but powerful human need: the reassurance that we are part of a shared world.

In an era where many interactions happen online, familiar strangers highlight the enduring importance of physical presence and unspoken recognition. Their silent companionship reminds us that connection can exist even without conversation—it can live in a glance, a nod, or the simple act of being seen.

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“There is no greater source of Joy and meaning in our lives than our relationships with others”

~ Esther Perel

ESSENCE OF PLATONIC FRIENDSHIPS: THE SILENT STRENGTH OF PLATONIC CONNECTIONS

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Platonic friendship is a profound, non-romantic bond rooted in emotional intimacy, trust, and shared understanding. Derived from the ideas of the philosopher Plato, the term emphasizes relationships based on affection, intellectual connection, and mutual respect—without romantic or sexual involvement. In modern psychology, platonic friendships are recognized as crucial for emotional well-being, resilience, and social development. Their expression varies across cultural contexts, including India, where social norms, family expectations, and media portrayals influence how such friendships are understood.

Understanding Platonic Friendship – A platonic friendship is characterized by:

- Non-romantic, non-sexual connection
- Emotional closeness without romantic intentions
- Trust, mutual respect, and empathy
- Clear boundaries that protect the relationship
- Balanced give-and-take and loyalty

These friendships can exist across or within genders and ages. They offer personal growth, emotional support, and companionship without the pressure of romantic expectations.

Psychological Perspective: Research shows that friendships, especially platonic ones, contribute significantly to:

- Lower stress and anxiety
- Emotional regulation
- Resilience during life challenges
- Higher life satisfaction
- Social identity formation

High-quality friendships help individuals cope better with problems and develop a stronger sense of well-being (Bagwell et al., 2005; Demir & Davidson, 2013).

Real-Life Examples of Platonic Friendships

- Male–Female College Friends

A boy and girl studying in the same degree program bond over shared academic interests. They prepare for exams, participate in cultural events, and support each other through personal challenges. Despite deep emotional closeness, neither develops romantic interest.

Why platonic: Clear mutual boundaries, respect for each other's life choices, and transparent communication.

- Long-Term Childhood Friends

Two individuals who grew up in the same colony or neighbourhood continue to maintain an affectionate, sibling-like bond into adulthood, calling each other for life decisions without romance.

Why platonic: Rooted in shared history and trust.

- Workplace Friendship

Male and female colleagues in a corporate setting maintain a professional yet emotionally supportive bond, helping with presentations, deadlines, and career decisions.

Why platonic: Professional boundaries and mutual respect guide the relationship.

- Online Platonic Friendship

Two individuals from different states meet through online social media platforms or gaming communities. They share emotional struggles and support each other without romantic involvement.

Why platonic: Bond built entirely on shared interests and conversation, not physical attraction.

- Married Person with an Opposite-Gender Friend

A woman maintains a lifelong friendship with a male classmate after marriage. Her spouse knows and trusts the friend, making the bond transparent and healthy.

Why platonic: Honesty, communication, and clear boundaries maintain trust.

Platonic Friendship in Indian Cultural Settings

India's cultural landscape includes unique forms of non-romantic friendship:

- Rakhi Friendships

Many women tie Rakhi to male friends they trust deeply. Though not blood-related, the relationship becomes socially recognized as a sibling-like platonic bond.

- Coaching Class Friendships

Students preparing for NEET, UPSC, CAT, or SSC study together for long hours and support each other emotionally without romantic involvement.

- Family Friends

Children raised among each other at gatherings often become close adult friends, considered "family-like" without romantic elements.

- Hostel/PG Friendships

Living together in hostels during college (common in Indian cities) fosters strong platonic bonds among students facing exams, homesickness, and adulthood transitions.

Platonic Friendship in Indian Movies

Indian cinema provides several powerful portrayals of platonic friendships:

- Jaane Tu... Ya Jaane Na (2008) – Jai and Aditi

Much of the film highlights their deep emotional intimacy as best friends before romance enters the story. Their deep understanding and support represent classic platonic friendship.

- Yeh Jawaani Hai Deewani (2013) – Naina, Aditi, Avi, and Bunny

The group dynamic normalizes mixed-gender friendships. Naina and Avi remain purely platonic throughout.

- Jab We Met (2007) – Aditya and Geet

Their bond begins as pure friendship based on emotional support, understanding, and mutual care.

- Queen (2014) – Rani and Her International Friends

Rani forms deep platonic bonds with friends she meets abroad, showing cross-cultural friendships free of romantic tension.

- Dil Chahta Hai (2001) – Akash, Sameer, and Sid

Although male-only, the film beautifully portrays emotional closeness and vulnerability within platonic bonds.

- Chhichhore (2019) – Anni, Maya, and the Hostel Group

A realistic portrayal of hostel friendships and emotional support systems in Indian student culture.

- Kai Po Che (2013) – Govind, Ishaan, and Omi

Their friendship reflects loyalty, sacrifice, and emotional depth in a purely platonic manner.

Importance of Platonic Friendships

- Emotional Support: Provides relief during stress, breakups, academic pressure, or family issues.
- Personal Growth: Encourages self-reflection, honesty, and maturity.
- Social Balance: Prevents emotional dependence on romantic partners.
- Identity and Confidence: Friends help us understand ourselves better.
- Mental Health Benefits: Linked to reduced loneliness, anxiety, and depression.

Challenges in Platonic Friendships

- Risk of misinterpretation by society
- Jealousy from romantic partners
- Crossing boundaries due to emotional closeness
- Cultural stereotypes such as “a boy and girl cannot be just friends”

Clear communication helps overcome these challenges.

Conclusion

Platonic friendships enrich human life in profound ways. Whether between same or opposite genders, these bonds are built on trust, emotional intimacy, and mutual respect. In Indian contexts, where cultural norms shape interpersonal relationships, platonic friendships thrive

through shared experiences, family interactions, professional collaborations, and evolving social values. Media representations and real-life examples affirm that friendships need not be romantic to be meaningful. With clear boundaries and open communication, platonic friendships remain one of the most emotionally rewarding and psychologically protective social bonds.

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“Each relationship nurtures a strength or weakness
within you”

~ Mike Murdock.

DUALITY OF RELATIONSHIPS

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There is something endlessly mysterious about relationships. They begin in the quietest ways, while helping a stranger, in a shared glance, a half-smile, a silence that somehow speaks and before we know it, they shape who we are. Every relationship, whether its friendship, family, or love, becomes a mirror reflecting parts of ourselves we didn't know existed.

In ancient India, relationships were never seen as mere emotions; they were considered sacred exchanges of energy, 'Sambandha'. The word itself carries layers of 'bandha' meaning bond or tie, but also bondage. It's strange and yet perfect: the same bond that gives us strength can also weigh us down.

In the Rig Veda, there's a line - "संगच्छध्वं सं वदध्वं सं वो मनांसि जानताम्" meaning, 'Let us move together, let us speak together, let our minds be one.' But the same tradition later teaches 'Vairagya' that is 'Detachment', the art of letting go. It's almost as if the Rishis were saying that love and freedom were never opposites; they were two sides of the same truth.

Even in our epics, every bond or relationship had a meaning beyond emotion. Krishna and Arjuna in the Mahabharata shared a relationship that was not just friendship but awakening. Krishna never told Arjuna to escape life but he asked him to understand it. Their bond was duty (Kartavya), compassion (Karuna), and guidance (Margadarshan), all woven into one. As Krishna says, "कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन" meaning, 'you have a right only to action, not to its fruits. 'Well, isn't that true for relationships, too? We love, we give, not for guarantees but because that act of giving itself transforms us and sometimes gives us more than what we give to the other one unknowingly.

In Marathi, there's a simple line that captures this tenderness: "संबंध फुलासारखे असतात, धरले तर टिकतात, घट्ट धरले तर तुटतात." meaning 'Relationships are like flowers, they last when held gently, but break when gripped too tight.' Perhaps that's the most timeless truth of all.

Across the sea also, Dante wrote the love that elevates and consumes all at once. Shakespeare wrote friendships that tested loyalty and love that taught humility. Austen turned relationships

into mirrors of growth; showing that affection without understanding is incomplete. Gulzar said, "A true relationship is one that allows both people a little space," capturing the modern need for love that breathes, not suffocates.

No matter the language, every culture found the same truth: that to relate is to reveal — not the other person, but ourselves.

And yet, for all the wisdom, relationships remain beautifully human - full of contradictions. They are both anchor and wave, joy and ache. They demand presence but also patience, freedom but also faith. We want to be known, but not judged; loved, but not confined. It is in this dance, between closeness and distance that relationships live.

I once saw an elderly couple at a temple once. They didn't talk much. He just placed his shawl over her shoulders as the evening breeze turned cool. She smiled faintly, her eyes still following the aarti flame. That quiet moment said everything - that love is not in words, but in care that doesn't need to be spoken.

Today, our connections may exist on glowing screens and fleeting calls, but the essence remains unchanged. Relationships still demand what they always did, awareness, noticing small things, respect, and gentle effort. They ask us not for perfection, but for presence. Like a Marathi saying I once heard - *संबंध टिकवायचे असतात, जिंकायचे नाहीत* meaning 'Relationships are meant to be nurtured, not won.'

Maybe that's what makes them so achingly beautiful, the fact that they hold both fragility and strength in the same heartbeat. They teach us to hold and to release, to give and to grow. They remind us that being in relation, to a person, to a family, to the world is what keeps us human.

And perhaps, when all philosophies fall silent, what remains is simple: that the people we love, and the bonds we build, are the only real legacy we ever leave behind.

So as I think of it all, the verses, the stories, the gestures that time cannot erase, I wonder that in a world that moves faster than our hearts can keep up, do we still pause long enough to truly feel the relationships that make us who we are?

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“The meeting of two personalities is like the contact of two chemicals substances: if there is any reaction, both are transformed”

~ Carl Jung

ती आणि तिची मासिक पाळी

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सकाळची वेळ होती ऐरवी सकाळी बोलायला वेळ नसणारी माझी ताई ओसरीवर निवांत बसली होती. आणि वेळेवर काम पूर्ण नाही झाले तर तिच्यावर ओरडणारी माझी काकी आज ताईची सगळी कामे करत होती हे बघून मला काहीतरी चुकल्यासारखं वाटलं म्हणून आजीला विचारलं तर आजी म्हणाली, "काही नाही गं, तुझ्या ताईला कावला शिवलाय" समजलं नाही म्हणून मी आजीला पुन्हा विचारलं तर, "तू लहान आहेस, तुला नाही समजणार अस उत्तर मला मिळालं पण आज त्याचा पुरेपूर अर्थ समजतो."

आज २१ व्या शतकात जगाची गाडी आधुनिकतेचा पटरीवर सुसाट पळत असताना मासिक पाळी म्हणजे चारचौघांत न बोलण्याचा विषय मासिक पाळी असे शास्त्रीय नाव असताना देखील 'अडचण आहे' 'वेगळी बसलीये' 'कावळा शिवलाय अशा तुच्छतेच्या नावाने ओळखला जाणारा विषय काय आहे मासिक पाळी? का म्हणायचं तिला अपवित्र?

मासिक पाळी हा महिलांच्या जीवनातील फार महत्त्वाचा विषय आहे. जोवर स्त्रीला पाळी येत नाही तोवर तिला पूर्णत्व नाही अशी समाजात धारणा आहे त्याचं कारणही तसचं आहे. पाळी आल्याशिवाय स्त्रीला मातृत्व प्राप्त होत नाही. इतकी महत्त्वाची असलेली ही पाळी आज अंधश्रद्धेने ग्रासलेली आहे. कुठेही स्पर्श करायचं नाही, देवघरात जायचं नाही स्वयंपाक घरात जायचं नाही, घराबाहेर बसायचं अशी बंधने स्त्रीवर लादली जातात. घरात मुलीला पाळी सुरु झाली

तर लवकर कोणाला सांगितले जात नाही. घरातील पुरुषांसमोर त्याविषयी बोलले जात नाही त्यामुळे पाळीविषयी मनमोकळे पणाने चर्चा होत नाही. केमिस्टकडे सॅनिटरी नॅपकीन दबक्या आवाजात मागितला जातो. केमिस्टही तो अगदी कागदात गुंडाळून देतो. कशाला हवी ही लपवा – छपवी?

मासिक पाळी म्हणजे दर महिन्याला स्त्रीच्या शरीरातून गर्भधारणा न झाल्यामुळे योनी मार्गाद्वारे होणारा रक्तस्राव आपण सर्वजण जन्माला आलो ते याचमुळे आणि आपणच त्याला अपवित्र म्हणायचं? अपवित्र, अशुद्ध, विटाळ मानायचं? या नैसर्गिक प्रक्रियेला एवढा बाऊ का करावा? परमेश्वराने जग निर्माण केलं म्हणता मग त्याचं जगाचा इतका महत्त्वाचा भाग अस्पृश्य कसा असेल?

आसामच्या कामाख्या देवीचं मंदीर एक शक्तीपीठ म्हणून पाहिलं जात कामाख्या देवीला ' मासिक पाळीची देवी ' असा दर्जा आहे. एकीकडे शक्ती पीठ म्हणून देवाची पूजा करायची आणि दुसरीकडे प्रत्यक्षातील स्त्रीशक्तीला अपवित्रतेचा दर्जा द्यायचा. केव्हा बदलणार आपण आपली मानसिकता? मला आठवतं मी ७ वी किंवा ८ वी त असेल. मुलींना मासिक पाळीविषयी माहिती देण्यासाठी एक महिला डॉक्टर आल्या होत्या. लगेच सर्व मुलींना एका वर्गामध्ये बोलवण्यात आलं मग त्यांनी मासिक पाळीविषयी बोलायला सुरुवात केली. एवढेच असूनही मुली मासिक पाळीविषयी बोलायला तयार नव्हत्या. मुळात त्यांना मासिक पाळी येते हे सांगायलाच त्या लाजत होत्या कारण घरातील वातावरणानेच त्यांना तसा विचार करायला भाग पाडलं होतं. घरात कधीच मनमोकळेपणाने यावर चर्चा होताना दिसत नाही. मुलीचे वडील तिला मासिक पाळी बोलताना क्वचितच दिसतील. बदलत्या जगासोबत विचारही बदलले पाहिजेत. अंधश्रद्धेच्या जोखडातून स्वतःला मुक्त करून घेतलं पाहिजे. वाद झाला तरी चालेल, संवाद हा मात्र व्हायला हवा जाता-जाता.

हे नारी, क्यों ये रिश्ते पडते तुझपर ही भारी,

तोड बेडियाँ, अब नही है तू बेचारी!

शर्म नही है मासिक धर्म,

पंच दिवसीय सहनशक्ती की परिक्षा है ये हमारी!

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“कठीण काळातच खऱ्या
ताकदीची परीक्षा होते”

EXPECTING THE UNEXPECTED

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Whether it's locking eyes with a stranger during your favourite song at a concert or sharing eyeliner in a club washroom, Gen Z is finding platonic relationships in the most unexpected places. Those friendships that form under unexpected circumstances likely happened because the universe was finding a way to push you together. There weren't any outside pressures or expectations, it just happened.

Each one of us has a friend who we thought was an unexpected one. We never expected them to be a part of our life. Maybe we never even might have considered them as the potential people for our friendships, despite all this we have them in our life.

Unexpected friendships are all like that, "strangers turned into friends", and each one of them has a unique story to it.

In addition to this article which explores the formation of platonic relationships in unusual circumstances, we also share our experience of forming an unexpected bond with a group of strangers. This extraordinary connection resulted in an unforgettable experience and a lasting memory.

As we live in the digital era, social interactions have evolved and changed from meeting in person to using digital platforms for communication and maintaining relationships, social media platforms like Instagram, snapchat, twitter, discord, reddit have made it convenient to stay in touch and help people connect with other people around the world regardless of culture, location, and time zone, allowing friendships to flourish despite physical distance.

Various ways through which social media nourishes the platonic relationships are:

- Convenience in communication by instant messages, video calls.
- Helps people with similar likings connect with each other. (E.g. Discord, Reddit)
- Managing long distance relationships

- Offers emotional support and a comfortable platform, especially for the individuals facing issues in one-to-one interactions or having social anxiety

Social media is providing us a safe place to express ourselves and to convey our ideas, thoughts, and messages to various people. It's also helping in building new relationships and forming online communities, maintaining valuable bonds that cherish us throughout our lives. It acts as an invisible bridge which connects people by heart and emotions. It often provides us emotional support, diverse social exposure, easy access, encouraging openness. Though social media has its disadvantages it still plays a major role in building platonic relationships.

The current world does not bind friendships by geographical location or distance anymore; Gen Z has mastered the art of making friends online with similar interests. We all see each other in Reddit communities about our preferred shows, games, or artists or in group chats, Discord servers or courses instead of parks or schools. In these online spaces, people are able to express themselves freely and share common interests with others and have become the new social groups. It is almost never impossible to find a person as obsessed about anything as you are, be it K-pop, anime, video games or a viral meme, and it instantly makes you feel relaxed and at home. Even minor issues such as a commentary, a reply, and a joke at a commonplace can trigger a friendship that can slowly grow up to other forms of significant relationships. What starts as an accidental message in fandom circles may evolve into voice calls, late-night conversations and emotional support.

These virtual relationships are less formal and more open. When one realizes that another person, though he or she may be miles apart, still knows your hobbies, then this makes you feel like you are one community. It is refreshing to be in a place where you are not afraid of being yourself because you are not afraid of criticism. Similarly numerous Gen Zers have found such communities, which, like a second home, offer them a safe environment with backing, creativity, and jokes readily available. It is more complex to maintain these friendships, but it is easier since the foundation of friendship is mutual passion.

Experiences of these online interactions have shown that strong relationships do not necessarily need to be close to each other in physical space. In some cases, they start with the simplest

common thing, a favorite song, show or moment and develop into a friendship that seems as real as any other friendship.

As written in the earlier paragraphs, friendships are increasingly blossoming through social media. But in the real world, you can quickly build relationships with friends and strangers alike just by giving them a sincere compliment.

So, Gen Z is finding unexpected ways to form platonic relationships, often through something as simple as exchanging compliments. By casually saying “love your style!” or “love your outfit!” to someone who can spark a conversation that gradually grows into a meaningful bond. They might think of each other, share the joy of these small interactions, and feel genuinely good. This leads to exchanging social media handles, conversing online, and sharing more wholesome compliments. This simple yet powerful gesture has become one of the most common ways Gen Z is forming friendships in real life.

Similarly, many Gen Z's are forming platonic relationships through approaching strangers. Small acts, like helping someone in need, or giving a stranger a sanitary napkin when asked, fixing their makeup, or consoling someone crying in the bathroom. Instead of just walking away and ignoring, Gen Zers are approaching strangers and starting to talk to them. For instance, on the social media platform Instagram, there are many viral reels where someone approaches a stranger eating and asks them for a bite of their food, and that stranger agrees to it. Such behavior shows how just one small question or interaction can facilitate the formation of a new bond. Wholesome moments like these are making our generation be friends with each other! This highlights the beauty of taking that first step- proving that people are more friendly than scary!

One more way Gen Zs are expanding their platonic relationships is through mutual friends! It's surprising how often when two separate friend groups meet, it's very possible that at least two or three people know the same person. This common person becomes the catalyst for them bonding further. While it might seem like forming a platonic bond with someone knowing your “mutual” is expected, the intensity of surprise when a stranger knows someone you least expected is truly unexpected.

In a happening city like ours, where youngsters go out almost every weekend, a variety of clubs, such as book clubs, resin art clubs, and pottery clubs, are being hosted at cafes all over the town.

People opting to attend these clubs usually form a strong bond over the same interests and shared opinions!

Friendships tend to start in the most bizarre manner. To a ton of Gen Z, it is no longer necessary to meet people at school or work but at concerts, clubs, or parties where they randomly happen to connect. Whenever two individuals groove to the same music, have the same artist preferences, or have the same taste in music, the environment immediately becomes comfortable. It is a bit odd when you find that you have the same likes and dislikes in common with a stranger, instantly transforming into becoming friends.

Friendships in social get-togethers, particularly amongst girls, often begin with little genuine moments. It might be as simple as telling a friend that they look nice in something, assisting one another while getting ready, or talking while getting ready. Sometimes, after a few drinks and deep conversations, people open up, and that's how a bond forms. Even stepping in to help someone deal with an uncomfortable or even a creepy situation can lead to a real connection. Something simple like a smile, a gesture of kindness, or even beginning a dialogue can count.

The friendship gets strengthened by social media. Once they meet at an event, they tend to follow each other on Instagram or Snapchat, establishing a way of staying in touch. Gradually these little online exchanges become something tangible. Even blind dates, which are usually meant for romance, can sometimes lead to lasting platonic relationships if the vibe just matches and as long as there is a good feeling between the two people.

In the present-day world, friendships are naturally developed through mutual experiences, gestures, and vibes. The right feel and a splash of goodwill are all that is needed to get something real going!

Our experience:

This idea of effortless connection came to life in our own story of meeting a group of strangers. The four of us were on a simple trip to the hills, not knowing it would become something unforgettable.

The four of us boarded a bus for sightseeing and ended up sitting beside a bunch of strangers who soon became friends.

All of this started because the four of us started watching a stand-up comedy show during the journey. They approached us by saying that they, too, liked the same stand-up comedian. This small interaction was the catalyst for our platonic relationship. Subsequently, we introduced ourselves and taking our sweet time we got to know each other. Thus, this was the start of something new!

Gradually we started to get along effortlessly, our vibes started to match and a bond blossomed. By the time we got off for sightseeing, we had seamlessly blended into one big group. We started visiting local sightseeing places together. Since the terrain was very rocky, uneven and rough we also helped one another keep our balance.

As we sat down for lunch, we passed around food and shared jokes, enjoying each other's company. As time passed, we became close enough to joke around and tease each other playfully. We also played games with the local children, exchanged contacts, and on our way back home, created a group chat- a chat that is still active today, one that still keeps us connected daily.

Writing this article, which explores the idea of forming platonic relationships in the most unusual, unexpected, and even silly circumstances, has been a wonderful experience for the four of us!

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WHY PLATONIC RELATIONSHIPS DESERVE MORE SPACE IN OUR CONVERSATIONS



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As we grow up, the meaning of love keeps shifting. What starts as attachment to our parents or caregivers slowly expands into friendships, mentorships, and later, romantic connections. But somewhere in that process, we start ranking them, placing romantic love on a pedestal, while every other form of affection quietly takes the backseat.

For a long time, I believed that was how it was supposed to be. That the deepest kind of love had to be romantic, the kind that makes your heart race or keeps you awake at night. But over the years, I've realized that the most grounding and emotionally fulfilling relationships I've had were often platonic.

Some relationships in my life faded as I grew older. Some changed in ways that hurt more than I expected. But friendships, the honest, evolving, platonic ones remained steady. They didn't demand constant attention or dramatic gestures; they simply existed as a kind of quiet companionship. They grew with me. They held space for me to fall apart and come back again.

In fact, research in India has echoed this sentiment. A study published in the International Journal of Indian Psychology found that the quality of our friendships directly contributes to our psychological well-being and that friendships, when healthy and reciprocal, play a crucial role in shaping our sense of stability and happiness (Falki & Khatoon, 2016). It's comforting to know that something we often take for granted the simple act of being there for a friend holds real psychological weight.

Platonic love is underrated because it's not packaged as something "desirable." We don't chase it; it just finds us. It doesn't have the social glamour that romance does, but it's often the most stress-free, enriching, and genuine kind of connection we'll ever have.

I've also come to believe that love whether platonic, familial, or romantic is never truly unconditional. And that isn't a bad thing. We've been taught to see conditions as selfish, but I think they make love more human. Relationships, in any form, survive on effort, respect, and reciprocity. Expecting someone to meet you halfway isn't demanding, it's a sign of emotional honesty.

Maybe that's what makes platonic love so powerful. It acknowledges boundaries and expectations but still chooses to give freely. It's not built on obligation or fantasy, just mutual care. In a world obsessed with being romantically chosen, there's something quietly radical about friendships that stay.

Because sometimes, the most meaningful kind of love isn't the one that sweeps you off your feet, it's the one that simply stands beside you, without needing to be anything more.



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“Assumptions are the termites of Relationships”

~ Henry Winkler

TOXIC RELATIONSHIPS AND COPING FROM A BREAK-UP



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We've all encountered many struggles in our daily lives; be it with our familial relations, our friends, our partners etc. Recognising what a toxic relationship is can be tough for many; coping from it? Even more difficult. I look around me every day and I see people stuck in toxic relationships be it platonic or romantic. This is why I decided to choose this theme for my article. To clear the air, let's start with what toxic relationships actually are.

Toxic relationships can be subjective for people but there are some general key points that cannot be ignored or avoided. Such relations drain you physically and mentally. You lose interest in your favourite hobbies; you lose interest in academics or your work of interest. You lose motivation in daily life altogether. Sometimes such relations are very tough to recognise. Many people avoid talking about toxic relationships and the end of one.

Let me give you an example of such a relationship. One of my friends was in such a relationship for around 3 years. She claimed that they had a really great connection. Great intimacy. She refused to even think of ending it even though they barely talked. It was hurting her and exhausting her. It also ruined her sleep schedules and also gave her anxiety attacks. It was a late realisation but she understood that she had mistreated herself in the whole process.

In such relationships, when one realises that they have been hurting themselves the whole time... it's a good sign. A sign of improving self-awareness and esteem. Mental exhaustion is one of the

worst things that could happen to a person and we all should keep in mind to avoid such a thing, that's why we must know the signs to a toxic connection.

How do we know that it's toxic? Top 8 signs.

1. The moment you start expressing your expectations to your partner, in large amounts: By this statement I do not mean that you shouldn't do that. But statements like "Listen, I want you to..." "Where are your efforts..." etc. When you practically have to beg your partner to change the way they behave with you after a certain period of time, just know that it has turned one-sided.
2. When they stop acknowledging your achievements: When your partner stops acknowledging your achievements; be it small or large, it's a sign that they're not worth your time. When they stop or lessen their interest in your hobbies, your goals or even your passions... it just shows that the relationship has exhausted itself.
3. When they stop/lessen their communication with you: A big sign. Lack of communication just shows their disinterest in your bond. They don't want to associate much with you. Don't waste your energy on a person who doesn't want to communicate.
4. When they show excessive possessiveness or jealousy: Another extreme end is being overly possessive or jealous. When your partner doubts you constantly and accuses you of actions you've not even thought of doing, it's a big RED FLAG. It's your sign to get out of it.
5. When they openly express their interest to other people (romantically): Infidelity or 'cheating' is a huge issue in relationships be it marriage or just live-in. This point doesn't need an explanation
6. When you settle for "bare minimum": When you find bare minimum display of affection as a huge investment in a relationship, it's a big red flag. For example: when your partner opens up emotionally or even talks to you about their day; it's just bare minimum a person is supposed to share when in a relationship.
7. Choosing their friends over your bond: When your partner prioritises their friend circle over your relationship, just know that they have set up a hierarchy and might put others before you in any situation. Loving friends, absolutely acceptable. Forming a hierarchy? Take an exit.

8. They're bad listeners: Not hearing you out? Not letting you finish? That's an exit. That just means they do not value your problems enough to acknowledge them.

These signs are not applicable to just one gender, it's universal and in every form of relationship. Often, many of these are mistaken for affection and love, it's understandable. From these signs one can also understand that THEY might be the toxic one in the relationship. Realisation and self-improvement can be a big step towards personality development.

Such relations might not be easy to avoid because humans have a dynamic personality which tends to change according to their surroundings, their experiences, and the people they surround themselves with. Most important point is to clarify your expectations from your prospective partner. If they accept it and express their expectations too, then it's a thing to consider.

I'm not going to put cliché advices on how to avoid such experiences or even how to choose a "great" partner. Instead, we should focus on how we can end such a connection and how we can move on. It's easier said than done, but so are many other things!

How to end a relationship and move on?

1. UH. UH. UH. Before you write a big paragraph, take some time to think. Think it through. Think why you both are having a downfall. Think why this isn't worth it. Think about how it has harmed you. Always think before taking any action. Don't keep even a centimetre of space for your regrets. Think about the pros and cons.
2. Now you can write what you want. Writing big paragraphs can be tough and if your partner is ignorant, it can cause many other misunderstandings. Instead, call with them, talk to them about how this isn't working out for you both. Explain it to them in a polite manner. Impulsive texts and words can cause a bad reaction. Calling always help connect. You can meet them in person and end it on a polite note where you get your closure.
3. It is very much acceptable that you might miss their company or feel empty after you break up: Give yourself time, spend time with your friends, connect with your loved ones and share with them whatever is bugging you. Spend time trying to reigniting that spark with your interests and your passions. It's going to pass. :)
4. Learn from your mistakes and decisions in the past: Try to learn and develop your decision-making skills with the help of your failed relationship. Try to avoid choosing

similar people in your life later on, always keep space for new mistakes. Yes, I said what I said.

5. If you're ready to find a new relationship, good luck: After you've returned to your stress-free, healed and developed self... only then should you proceed to find another partner/connection. Focus on your interests and goals, prioritise yourself. Cherish your on-going connections.

As said before, it's easier said than done. Humans aren't programmed to follow one serial order in life. We're fluid and tend to adapt according to circumstances and experiences. Also, if a person is toxic in their approach with you, it doesn't necessarily mean they're a bad person, even though you might feel that way for a short period of time. Every individual has their problems, different life experiences but if they continue acting or behaving the way they were, even though they're aware of it, be cautious.

Stay safe, stay happy. <3

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“Love and abuse cannot coexist.”

— *Bell Hooks,*

All About Love: New Visions

PARA-SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS: WHEN A STRANGER START'S TO FEEL MORE LIKE HOME

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Do you have an influencer or a celebrity that you have watched and connected with so much you know random things about them? Their favorite coffee order, their living or streaming room, even their dog or cats name. Do you feel joy when they are happy and sorrow when something wrong happens to them? Inspired by their success or even jealous of their lifestyle.

It is hard not to connect to the individuals on the screen or characters in a series, movie, book etc. Especially when you have seen and learned so many things about them. You have seen their highs their lows, them being vulnerable and being brave. Them starting something and ending it. It gives us a sense of connection or even ownership.

This is a para social bond. Parasocial relationships (PSRs) are nonreciprocal socio-emotional connections with media figures such as celebrities or influencers. According to Britannica parasocial interaction (PSI), semblance of interpersonal exchange whereby members of an audience come to feel that they personally know a performer they have encountered in mass media.

This form of connection or relationship has existed for a long time, for example a religious head or a social figure but The term parasocial interaction first appeared in the writings of American sociologists Donald Horton and R. Richard Wohl in the 1956 article “Mass Communication and Para-Social Interaction: Observations on Intimacy at a Distance.”

Parasocial bonds are not as bad as they are made out to be according to a study done by Times magazine. Parasocial relationships can help adolescents, in particular, form an identity and develop autonomy, according to one 2017 study. By imagining relationships and associating emotions with people at a distance, we have a “safe forum ... to experiment with different ways of being,” the researchers concluded. Additional research has found that parasocial relationships can help people with low self-esteem feel more confident and become closer to their ideal self.

Those with avoidant attachment styles—who are generally wary of closeness—often get attached to TV characters with desirable characteristics that they then try to embody, which can be an effective coping strategy. “We find people, characters, stories, whatever it is to emulate and to take attributes from and to sort of use as inspiration,” Zubernis says. “It’s a lifelong process—not just something that happens in adolescence.”

So then the question arises that why does one need to know the existence and importance of parasocial relationship now? And the answer to that might have to do something with the age of mass media and social media. We now have access to these people and we don’t just see them in one platform but all platforms. That is almost every place on the internet and sometimes off of the internet has their presence may it be Instagram, YouTube, etc. Or in form of merchandise fan meetings.

Another thing to note that has quite the influence on this topic and idea itself is the feeling of loneliness. Currently the world is going through the largest recorded loneliness epidemic. Social isolation and loneliness are widespread, with around 16% of people worldwide – one in six – experiencing loneliness. While the latest estimates suggest that loneliness is most common among adolescents and younger people, people of all ages experience loneliness – including older people, with around 11.8% experiencing loneliness. A large body of research shows that social isolation and loneliness have a serious impact on physical and mental health, quality of life, and longevity. The American Psychological Association noted. Wars, climate change and social inequality have only accelerated this ‘silent’ threat.

We are social creatures and crave genuine connection when this connection is not fulfilled in our life on daily basis we try to search it through any other form. And parasocial relations are a form of that. It is alright when a movie/book character or an idol helps you process grief. But when these relations leave you unable to connect with people around you that’s when you cannot turn a blind eye to them.

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LETTERS TO STRANGERS



Anusha Bhanap

Alumna 2020-2023

“I used to read so many books, Josh. I was murdering these books, just 15 books in like three months. And then [the phone] showed up, and it’s... I can tell you everything about Pete Davidson and Kim Kardashian, but I can’t tell you a thing about literature. I just want to vomit. I hate myself, [I have] such self-loathing about it.” — Chris Pine, 2023

In incredible conciseness, Chris Pine articulates a collective grief over the lost depth of intimate connection readers shared with their books. Yet, from 2023-25, I believe we’ve taken a small step ahead, with the rise of long form essays over blogging platforms. Lingual Intimacy is spilling through the crevices of image-based media via Substack, Medium, etc. where readers can find solace. An escape from the augmentation of parasocial relationships of fan pages, fanfictions and of course the incessant criticisms and trolling on the internet. These writing platforms have accelerated the era of ‘witnessed writing’:

1. Use of ‘*I*’ or ‘*You*’ to simulate shared experiences.
2. Emotional adjectives like ‘*Lonely*’, ‘*Happy*’, ‘*Serene*’, to evoke affective bonds.
3. Writing ‘*Maybe you’ve felt this too*’ becomes a linguistic bid for resonance and readers keep attuning to it by agreeing with the writer’s thoughts through comments, or shares.

Thus, we have successfully established, ‘*A Secure Base*’ as put forth by Bowlby: consistent, emotionally supportive and non-judgmental.

The traditional 'Active writer-Passive reader' model doesn't really thrive here. The entire ecosystem of Posting/Publishing -> Commenting/Sharing pave for asynchronous empathy where readers are *held* and writers feel *seen*. A phenomenon that echoes relational psychoanalysis, where recognition itself becomes curative. The writer arriving at a mental equilibrium through bursts of creativity and heightened emotions and the reader finding validation and empathy for their emotional states.

Circling back to Chris Pine's confession, perhaps it's a lament of erasure of the slowness and depth of communication. Maybe, this wave of reflective, long form writing is a rebellion against that loss. The future of digital connection isn't faster communication. It is the slower language, which is patient, vulnerable, language centered intimacy which doesn't demand a reply. The kind that listens it speaks.

If we find words which soothe, mirror and co-regulate across distance, then perhaps, language is the oldest and newest form of relationship technology.

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BEYOND THE PARTNER PARADIGM: RETHINKING RELATIONSHIP NORMS BEYOND MALE-CENTRICITY

Anusha Bhanap

Alumna 2020-2023

For centuries, the social architecture surrounding femininity has hinged on one defining axis: the man. From fairy tales to film, women have long been told that the ultimate proof of worth, beauty, and success lies in romantic partnership. However, this equation is steadily collapsing. A growing number of women today are choosing not to center men—or even relationships—in their lives. The article by Joseph (2025) in Vogue Magazine talks about how influencers and celebrities curate now content focusing on themselves or non-romantic experiences, rather than adhering to the passé phase of validation via romantic relationships. Beneath the humor and irony lies a psychological movement rooted in self-definition, boundary-setting, and collective rebellion against emotional exhaustion.

"I'm 27 years old; I've no money and no prospects. I'm already a burden to my parents, and I'm frightened"

- Pride and Prejudice (movie), 2005

Charlotte voices out the severely limited autonomy and social stigma surrounding spinsterhood. Charlotte's agency in making a pragmatic decision of choosing peace and security displayed a striking contrast to Elizabeth's idealised choice of holding out until she finds love and respect. Historically, women's identities were scaffolded around relational dependence. To be unmarried or unattached once meant social invisibility, as female value was measured through a man's gaze and social standing. This legacy is not abstract or purely literary. It manifests in generational scripts encouraging women to "find a good man" as both life goal and moral achievement. Romantic failure, therefore, wasn't just personal disappointment; it was social shame.

The modern cultural shift, however, signals a psychological realignment. Bruno (2025), in her Daily Free Press column observes that young women are increasingly resisting the expectation that partnership is the default or pinnacle of adulthood. Singlehood is no longer seen as lack, but

as liberation. Rather than cynicism, this detachment from traditional relational centrality represents a refusal to equate self-worth with attachment status. The decision to choose oneself is thus not born of rejection but in an attempt to redefine: the self becomes the primary emotional project, not a side character in someone else's story.

"I beg you don't embarrass me [redacted]" - Sabrina Carpenter, 2024

Embedded in the traditional script of heterosexual relationships lies an unequal distribution of emotional labour. Women are often conditioned to carry the psychic burden of maintaining emotional harmony: soothing egos, anticipating moods, and mitigating embarrassment when partners falter publicly. The embarrassment many women now feel about having a boyfriend is the recognition of the exhausting asymmetry that relationships often entail.

Psychologically, this emotional labour breeds quiet resentment and chronic self-monitoring. When men behave immaturely or insensitively in public, women feel an inherited cultural responsibility to absorb the social fallout. Their partners' mistakes reflect on their own character. This dynamic reinforces a double bind: women must both nurture and protect, often at the expense of authenticity. Over time, such patterns erode self-esteem, as the woman's sense of self becomes contingent on her ability to regulate another's behavior. The decision to withdraw from this dynamic, therefore, is an act of self-preservation.

"I think, first of all, it is absolutely not women's responsibility to resolve this crisis ..."

-Zohran Mamdani (2025), on the "male loneliness crisis"

An incel backed argument is often that women rejecting male-centered living are retreating from intimacy, the obvious answer is: they are recalibrating it. This autonomy implies redistribution: of energy, attention, and emotional investment. Many are channeling the care once expended on partners into creative work, community bonds, or self-development. This also mirrors psychological theories of self-actualization, such as Maslow's hierarchy, where fulfillment arises from pursuing intrinsic meaning rather than external validation.

In this reconfiguration, autonomy becomes an assertion of boundaries and a refusal of emotional servitude. The *cringe* boyfriend is not impressing anyone but reinforcing the societal expectation that women must endure love at any cost. To "choose oneself" is to resist the inherited guilt that

often accompanies female independence. It is the psychological act of reclaiming agency over one's time, emotional bandwidth, and narrative.

"If someone so much as says "my boyf—" on social media, they're muted."

- "Is Having a Boyfriend Embarrassing?" - Joseph (2025), Culture Journalist for Vogue

To understand this trend solely as a matter of personal choice would be to ignore its structural underpinnings. Behind jokes about "embarrassing boyfriends" lie years of accumulated frustration with partners socialized to expect care without offering emotional depth in return. It points toward a culture where women have grown weary of unequal reciprocity. From a feminist psychological perspective, this detachment can be read as a form of collective resistance to internalized misogyny. By rejecting relationships that reproduce patriarchal hierarchies, women are asserting personal agency, and in turn creating systemic awareness. Their decisions are informed by the recognition that love, under current conditions, often comes tethered to disproportionate sacrifice. Thus, what one might like to naively believe to be apathy is in fact ethical discernment: a refusal to participate in emotional economies that undervalue female labor.

Nowhere is this redefinition of womanhood more visible than online: The TikTok trend, where women jokingly crop or blur male partners in otherwise perfect pictures function as collective rituals of re-centering. In these digital performances, the woman reclaims her image from relational framing, humorously asserting individuality over romantic identity.

Psychologically, this phenomenon underscores a growing need for self-definition in an era of constant visibility. Social media has turned identity into narrative performance; being perceived becomes a form of currency. For women, detaching that narrative from male validation is both a social and psychological milestone. The meme, then, becomes a micro-act of rebellion—where laughter replaces apology, and self-display is no longer an extension of male affiliation.

Singlehood, in this context, is not a pause before "real life" begins. It is real life. It is deliberate boundary-setting, radical self-fulfilment, and a reclamation of psychological space long occupied by others. To choose oneself is to ensure that when love enters, it finds room built on equality, not obligation.

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“Single is no longer a lack of options — but a choice.”

~ Mandy Hale,
The Single Woman

ROAD OF LOVE THROUGH JOURNEY OF LIFE

Nitya Ravishankar Kadle

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“Successful long term relationships are created through small words, small gestures and small acts.”

– John Gottman

Happy, stable relationship is the most comforting and beautiful feelings in life. Loving each other, supporting each other and knowing that someone is right behind you through every moment brings an amazing sense of peace and joy. It makes an ordinary day feel alive and meaningful. No relationship is perfect. There are ups and downs, happy moments and sad ones, but when one truly loves someone and they are aware that they love you back even more, all highs and lows become part of a shared journey. What matters the most is the security and warmth that come from standing by each other through everything.

Relationships can be emotional, crazy and even dramatic at times but that's what makes them feel real. They challenge us, teach us patience and reminds us that love can't just be about the good days, but also about holding on through the difficult times. When you are with the right person, everything feels just right, even the chaos feels beautiful. True love isn't about making everything right, it's about presence. It's about knowing that no matter what happens, someone will always choose you again and again, every single day. Love alone doesn't sustain connection, it's the everyday effort, understanding and self-awareness that keep two people close. Relationships offer comfort, companionship, growth and they also test our patience, empathy and our ability to communicate. One of the most important lessons in a relationship is the power of communication. It is not just about the talking, it's about listening without preparing your response while the other person is

talking. Being in a long term relationship teaches us that love is not just about excitement, it's about how you understand each other and enjoy the existence.

When love is genuine, misunderstandings, ups and downs these fluctuations don't weaken the bond, they strengthen the bond. As psychologist John Gottman (1999) observed successful relationships are not defined by the absence of conflict, but by the presence of repair it's the ability to reconnect, forgive, and move forward together.

A strong relationship is also built on emotional intelligence. It's the awareness of one's own sensitivity and emotions to the partners feelings. Daniel Goleman (1995) emphasized that emotional intelligence on five core components self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills, they play an important role in maintaining relationships. Self-awareness helps partners in understanding their feelings how their moods affect communication. Motivation keeps the relationship driven by care rather than a routine. Empathy enables each other to truly understand emotions, while social skills strengthen trust and co-operation. Self-regulation allows to respond calmly instead of reacting impulsively during misunderstandings. Together all these elements work towards a healthy relationship.



Attachment is an emotional bonding between two individuals also shaping the way we connect and relate throughout our lives. Attachment theory was explained by John Bowlby (1969), the theory says that emotional security strengthens our relationships, it creates a safe space for both individuals. Understanding attachment reveals how emotional connection heal us throughout life. Small gestures matter equally in a relationship, a small message, a smile, a hug these actions seem very simple but these gestures and appreciation towards your partner strengthens emotional closeness. Enhancing one's relationship is all about growing together, choosing each other at the end of the day, forgiving, finding joy in each other.

Relationships are not developed overnight, they grow with trust, patience, communication and understanding. Every relation needs care, appreciating one's presence, listening with empathy. In the end, relationship is not about perfection, it's about the willingness to share a story and making it beautiful together.

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THE UNSEEN FOUNDATION: CULTIVATING YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH YOURSELF



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When we talk about "relationships," we usually think about the people around us our family, our best friends, or our partners. But there's one relationship we often forget, and it's the most essential one: the connection you have with yourself.

This "self-relationship" is the bond you have with your own thoughts, feelings, and needs. It's made up of things like self-awareness (knowing who you are), self-esteem (how much you value yourself), and self-care (taking time for yourself). Think of it as the engine for your whole mental well-being.

Why Your Inner World Matters So Much:

A good relationship with yourself is the foundation for a happy, healthy life. It affects your mind, your emotions, and even your physical body. When you're solid on the inside, you can handle the constant changes and challenges of the outside world much better.

The way you think, feel, and act is a direct reflection of how you see and value yourself. If you have a positive inner voice, that positivity naturally spills out into everything you do and everyone you meet.

The Roadblocks We Face:

Sometimes, we're taught that everyone else's feelings are more important than our own. Society trains us to be outward-focused, and we end up neglecting our inner selves.

A poor self-relationship is like trying to drive with the parking brake on. It holds you back from even trying to reach your goals because your inner critic is saying, "You can't do that." This negativity can lead to real problems like increased stress, anxiety, and depression. In today's world, social media adds extra pressure. It makes it easy to constantly compare your real, messy life to someone else's curated, perfect highlight reel. This comparison game is a major thief of self-acceptance.

Simple Steps to Build a Better Inner Bond:

Cultivating a healthy relationship with yourself isn't complicated; it just requires showing up for yourself with compassion:

Acknowledge Your Feelings: Take a moment to just notice what you're thinking and feeling. Don't judge it; just say, "This is how I feel right now." Pay attention to your body—a tight chest or a headache is often your inner self sending a message. You are always allowed to feel what you feel, no matter what anyone else thinks.

Learn to Say "No": Taking care of yourself means putting your needs first sometimes. This might involve setting boundaries with the people you care about. Setting a boundary is just a way of saying, "I respect myself and my limits." It's not selfish; it actually makes you a better friend or partner because you're less likely to feel resentful.

Write It Out: If you feel lost or can't quite pin down what you need, try journaling. It's like having a quiet conversation with yourself on paper. It gives you the space and time to understand your truest needs.

Use Kind Words: Start using positive affirmations. Instead of letting that inner critic run wild, replace its harsh words with kind, cheerful ones. Believe that you are capable and worthy.

The Outcome:

Your self-relationship influences absolutely every aspect of your life—from how you talk to yourself to how you interact with a stranger. When you treat yourself well, you give yourself the

strong foundation needed to face the world with confidence and peace of mind. It truly is the most crucial investment you can make.

"The curious paradox is that when I accept myself just as I am, then I can change."

— Carl Rogers

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भावना आणि मी

Tanaya Jadhav

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आपण सगळे आपल्या आयुष्यात वेगवेगळ्या फेजेस मधून जात असतो. अगदी लहानपणापासून आणि सगळ्यात महत्त्वाची कसरत तेव्हा सुरु होते. जेव्हा आपण शाळेतून एका मोठ्या समुद्रात जातो. हळू हळू गोष्टी उलघडायला लागतात, नवीन अनुभव येतात आणि त्याप्रमाणे आपणही बदलत जातो. तर माझाही असाच प्रवास मी माझ्या ह्या कवितेत व्यक्त करण्याचा प्रयत्न केलाय.

आपलं मन म्हणजे वेगवेगळ्या भावनांचा खेळच,

निरनिराळ्या, रंगीबेरंगी धाग्यातून जे सजवतात व्यक्तीच्या आयुष्याला,

कधी गोड, कधी तिखट, कधी आंबट, तर कधी खारट,

अशा वेगवेगळ्या भावनांची माणूस खात मेजवाणी रोज ,

पण कधी व्यक्त करायला चुकलच,

तर लागतात परिस्थितीचे चटके ,

आणि नाही व्यक्त झालं तर मन आतल्या आतच गुदमरते.

मग अशा सजलेल्या मनाला नक्की म्हणावं तरी काय?

खजीना की ओझं,

वेगवेगळ्या भावनांच्या पावसात मन अगदी भिजून गेलं,

तरिही कोरडं राहिलं तर खजिना,
 नी त्याच पावसात वाहून गेलं तर ओझं.
 पण बदनाम मात्र ती भावनाच होते.
 कारण मनाच्या 'प्रतिक्रियेचे' कारण ती बनते.
 ती बिचारी थोड्यावेळासाठी येते,
 पण परिणाम मात्र कायमचा करून जाते.
 आणि मग विकारांचे परजीव करतात मनाला पोकळ,
 त्यांचं अस्तित्व करते अपयशाची भेसळ.
 मत्सर मोहं नि अपेक्षा नष्ट करतात व्यक्तीच्या महत्त्वकांक्षा,
 निर्माण होते व्यक्तीचे मायावी जग,
 स्वताःच्याच विश्वात तो रमतो,
 मग एकदा का विकारांच्या चक्रात अडकलं कि मग संपलच सगळं,
 दैनंदिन जिजनातही शोधावे लगते मग आपलेपणाचे स्थर,
 पण आपल्या मनाचाही असतात कि दोन सावल्या,
 म्हणजे जर ह्या वादळाचा उगम मी,
 तर ते शांतं करण्याचा मार्ग मीच.
 म्हणजे माझं वागणं परिस्थितीला साजेल असं वागणं शोधणं,

स्वताःचं नि दुसऱ्याचं मन साभांळत पुढे जाणं,
आता मन गोंधळलं तरी नाही सोडणार माझं ध्येय
वास्तविकतेला धरुणच सोडवेन सगळं कोडं !

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“ आपण विचार फार करतो आणि व्यक्त फार
कमी होतो, ज्यामुळे नात्यांमध्ये गैरसमज
वाढतात.”

THE WARMTH THAT REMAINS IN MY HEART

Anjali jeswani

TYBA Psychology

Some people leave behind memories, while others leave behind a way of living — my grandmother left behind both. She was not just my guardian or elder; she was the heart of our home, the quiet force that held our world together. Her presence was comforting, her kindness effortless, and her love infinite. Even now, when I think of her, I feel that same sense of warmth that made every space she entered feel like home.

Now, when the topic is about relationships, the most beautiful one I remember is my relationship with my grandmother. She shaped our home, and she shaped every bond that exists within it. Today, if we as a family are still so deeply connected, it's because of her love that tied us all together. She was the root of our togetherness — gentle, giving, and endlessly kind. I wish the essence of her kindness stays in every corner of our home for as long as we live, and I hope to pass that same essence on to the generations that come after me. The peace of her soul will always stay in my heart, no matter what life brings or how it turns out. I will always remember her as the closest person in the world.

My grandmother had a heart that never knew boundaries. She made everyone — from close relatives to complete strangers — feel welcomed and loved. She never let anyone leave our home without food; no matter how little there was, she always made sure to offer more than enough. For her, feeding others was not an act of duty but an act of love. It was her way of saying, "You belong here." She embodied the very meaning of generosity — simple, genuine, and without expectation.

There was something about her presence that made people feel safe. She didn't have to say much — her eyes, her smile, and her touch spoke of warmth, comfort, and care. Every person who knew her, even distantly, carries a piece of her kindness within their hearts. To this day, when people talk about her, their eyes glisten with memories of her gentleness. Her ability to make others feel "at home" was her greatest gift to the world.

I often find myself missing her in the smallest of moments — in the quiet of early mornings, in the smell of home-cooked food, in the way sunlight filters through our old verandah. I still have the clothes she stitched for me when I was a child. Those clothes are more than fabric; they hold the warmth of her hands, the patience in her work, and the tenderness of her love. They remind me of who she was — someone who poured love into even the simplest acts.

Whenever I came home from my studies, she would always tuck a 500-rupee note into my hand before I left again. It wasn't about the money; it was about her love, her care, and her silent prayer for my safety. Even today, I remember the warmth of that note — a symbol of her endless giving nature. Her love didn't need grand gestures; it lived in the little things — in her food, her touch, her words, and her eyes.

She raised me through my childhood, and so much of who I am today is because of her. Whatever kindness or empathy I show now comes from the lessons she taught me — to help others, to support people, and to take care of everyone, no matter who they are. She believed that kindness was the truest form of strength. And that belief became the foundation of my own life.

Her absence has left a silence that words can't fill. There are moments when I try to talk about her but can't — the emotions are too overwhelming. Yet, even in that silence, she feels present. I see her in the way my family cares for one another, in the way we treat guests, and in the way we continue her tradition of offering food and love to everyone who comes home. Her spirit is woven into the fabric of our family, binding us together with the same love she once wrapped us in.

Her legacy isn't just in the stories we tell, but in the lives she touched and the kindness she planted in all of us. Though she is no longer here to hold my hand, I feel her guiding me every day — in my choices, in my compassion, in my heart. She may have become a memory, but her memory has become my strength.

She was, and always will be, the light that makes my world feel like home.

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THROUGH THEIR EYES AND PURRS: THE MANY WAYS CATS EXPRESS LOVE AND TRUST



Kimaya Sameer Aslekar
MA II (Clinical Psychology)

Human–animal relationships have evolved significantly, with cats becoming one of the most common companion animals worldwide. This article explores the multidimensional relationship between humans and their pet cats, taking into account behavioural, emotional, and psychological components.

Bonding Differences between a Male and a Female Cat

MALE CATS	FEMALE CATS
More physically expressive	Subtle but deep attachment
Enjoys sitting close or on your lap	Chooses specific moments to seek closeness
Thrives on interactive play	Forms strong one-person bonds
Often acts as the “social glue” between household members	Communicates through gentle cues (soft meows, slow blinks)
Your relationship may feel warm, playful, and openly affectionate.	Your relationship may feel respectful, intuitive, and emotionally rich.

How Cats Show Trust and Love

- Slow Blinking (Cat Kisses)

A cat that looks at you and slowly closes and opens its eyes is showing affection and trust. It's like their version of saying "I feel safe with you."

- Purring

Cats often purr when they are: Relaxed, Happy. Comfortable around their favourite human. If your cat sits next to you or on your lap and purrs, it indicates deep trust.

- Head-Butting (Bunting)

Cats gently bump their head against your hand, legs, or face to: Mark you with their scent, claim you as part of their family, Show affection. This is a strong signal of bonding.

- Following You Around

If your cat follows you from one room to another, sits near you, or waits outside the bathroom, it means they enjoy your presence and feel attached.

- Exposing Their Belly

Cats only expose their belly when they feel completely safe. Even if they don't want belly rubs, the posture means complete trust.

- Bringing You "Gifts"

Cats may bring: Toys, Leaves, Small objects. This shows they consider you part of their social group and want to share.

- Kneading

Kneading ("making biscuits") on your lap or blanket is a kitten-like behaviour that indicates comfort, security, and affection.

Real life examples that show the strong relationship between Cats and humans.

- The Sneaky Toy Attack

A cat hides behind the curtain while the owner shakes a feather toy. The cat wiggles, pounces, and then proudly looks at the owner, this play bonding builds trust and mimics hunting, which is important for a cat's well-being.

- Running Behind the Owner

Some cats enjoy “chase games.”

For example, when the owner walks quickly down the hallway, the cat suddenly sprints after them, tail straight up, showing excitement and playful affection.

- The Midnight Zombies

A cat runs around at night and jumps on the bed to involve the owner. Although funny, it is a sign that the cat feels energetic and secure enough to be silly around the human.

- Comforting During Stress

When the owner feels sad or cries, many cats approach calmly, rub against their legs, or sit near them. This is their way of offering emotional support.

Real-life scenario: A girl crying after a stressful day finds her male cat jumping on her lap, purring, and staying beside her until she calms down.

- Staying Close When You're Sick

Cats often sit near or sleep beside their human when they're unwell. Their instinct tells them to provide warmth and companionship.

Real-life scenario: During a fever, the female cat curls at the owner's feet and refuses to leave the room, showing protective involvement.

- Greeting You at the Door

After you return home, your cat may: Rub against your legs, Meow softly

Follow you inside: This greeting behaviour shows they missed you and feel emotionally connected.

- Seeking Safety in Your Presence

If there is a loud noise (thunder, fireworks, vehicles) cats may run to their human for comfort, hiding under legs or beds.

This indicates deep trust, because the cat believes the human is a “safe zone.”

Conclusion

Human–cat relationships are filled with subtle, meaningful gestures. Cats show love not through loud expressions, but through soft behaviours, e.g. Purring, following, slow blinking, and seeking safety. Playful interactions strengthen the bond, while emotional moments reveal trust and attachment. Understanding these signs helps build a stronger, more loving connection with your feline companions.

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“Until one has loved an animal, a part of one’s soul remains unawakened.”

~ *Anatole France*

UNTANGLING RELATIONSHIPS - FINDING SIMPLICITY IN HUMAN CONNECTION



Nidhi Tummulwar

FYBA

Ever wonder why relationships feel so complicated?

It could be with anyone: your parents, partner, friends or siblings. Maybe you feel a generational gap with your parents, your opinions don't match with your partner's, or

Your friends don't always understand you. It can be anything.

But, what if I told you that relationships aren't complicated- humans are.

We carry egos, unrealistic expectations, fantasies of how things should be. We wish for perfect relationships where everything is ideal- conversations, space, and understanding and when reality doesn't match the picture, we start to believe that something is wrong.

Sometimes, we either wish for others to be perfect - a flawless parent, sibling, friend, or we try to perfect ourselves.

But, here's the truth - Perfection doesn't exist, and it doesn't need to. Humans are beautiful because of their weird flaws, silly gestures and imperfections, and so are relationships.

Every person is different- their thoughts, beliefs, needs, opinions and their way of expressing love differ. That's what makes every relationship unique. So instead of trying to fit them into framework of how someone should be, let's try to understand who they are.



I believe relationships get complicated because we often overlook the core, simple yet difficult steps.

Here are a few which truly make a difference:-

1. Acceptance Think of every important person in your life- their strengths, weaknesses, opinions, beliefs, how they express love, what you love in that person and what frustrates you about them. Now accept all of it, as it is.

Every relationship is unique, different, and it has its own rhythm- some are fun, peaceful, while others involve clashes, tiffs, and some are a mixture of both. Accept that too, it doesn't mean you have to agree with everything, just recognize what is there.

2. Forgiveness.

What grudges do you still hold-a fight, a misunderstanding, and a quality that hurt you or still hurts? What still feels heavy in your heart?

It is difficult to forgive, but it is crucial for enhancing relationships and for your peace of mind.

We are humans, we make mistakes, we judge, we misunderstand. And we are all going to hurt each other. So, forgive people, especially those who are worth the pain.

Forgiving doesn't mean you have to tolerate anything wrong; it's about releasing those heavy grudges and making peace with the people you love and with your own mind. Imagine forgiving every important person in your life-how much lighter would you feel?

Once you have accepted people for who they are and forgiven them for everything that hurt you, things will be simpler and clearer.

If you still wish for some things to change, you can move towards them with a clearer mind and calmer heart.

3. Communication.

The most important and strongest pillar of any relationship. We often hear about how communication is the key, but it's not just about words-it also involved in action, as they often speak louder than words.

For instance, most parents don't usually say 'I love you' out loud, but they show it through simple gestures- by making sure you have everything you need, buying your favourite snacks, cooking your favourite meal, oiling your hair or taking care of you when you are sick.

Clear communication - through both actions and words - builds trust, respect, understanding and empathy. These are the qualities we all crave in our relationships.

So tell people how much they mean to you, how they complete your life and express your love, care, respect and trust for them through small gestures.

In the end, loving, caring, fighting, misunderstanding, forgiving and loving again - all of these are part of a relationship. Each phase adds a unique layer to our lives.

The world outside is already complicated; let's try not to make our personal relationships that way, too.

Let's make them simpler - for ourselves and for the people we love.

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- Merche H - Illustration of a tangled string being untangled.
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“The most painful thing is losing yourself in the
process of loving someone too much, and
forgetting that you are special too.”

~ **Ernest Hemingway**

WHO ARE YOU, WITHOUT TITLES?

From self- discovery to self-love.

Nidhi Tummulwar

FYBA

Can you imagine yourself without your name, appearance, occupation, achievements, or family background?

It feels tricky, right? That's because we often build our identity on shifting sands—how we look, what we earn, what people think about us, or the titles we hold.

However, these change with time. Your glowing skin or abs may not be the same after a few years, and a career that once made you proud and wealthy may face a dip. Suddenly, the mirror tells you that you're not beautiful, and your achievements don't feel enough.

When we tie our worth to things that fade, our sense of self loses its stability. That's when self-esteem, doubt, or self-hate creep in low. I once read a quote that stuck with me -

“You don't hate yourself; you just don't know who you are.”

So why would you create an image of yourself, your worth using things that keep shifting? Why let temporary labels define you?

Instead, ask yourself:

- What is permanent within me?
- What are the core values that guide me?
- What lights me up?

These qualities truly define you and they stay with you, whether you are 25 with a low-paying job or 40 with a successful career; 20 with fresh, glowing skin or 60 with wrinkles and smile lines.

Let's look at this with an example-

Think about your best friend. Why are they so special? Maybe because they accept you exactly as you are, make you laugh, or make your worries feel lighter. You love them for their heart and intent—not for their net worth, skin or body.

So, why don't we treat ourselves with the same acceptance and compassion? Why do we make loving ourselves harder by setting ruthless standards—standards that would never define our value?



Loving yourself begins with knowing who you truly are beyond external labels. So, get curious and discover your true self. Build your identity and worth on that core; it will be invincible to any obstacle, highs or lows in life.

People often regret not expressing themselves, hiding their quirks or trying to fit into boxes designed by others. But why live a life drifting away from your true self?

Embrace your imperfections—everyone has them, even those who seem 'perfect.' Life is too long to spend it judging yourself for everything. Lift yourself up because you can always rise and grow again.

Loving yourself also means making yourself safe inside your heart, not relying on others to validate each step you take. Who you were yesterday, who you are today, and who you will be tomorrow—all of them are you, enough and deserving of love.

You might not be where you want to be yet. Today you are who you are with all your faults and mistakes, doing the best you can. Tomorrow, you will be better and wiser—and that is growth.

The longest relationship you'll ever have is with yourself, so make sure it's a loving one.

I'll wrap this up in Bollywood style -

“Khud pe daya karna band karo aur khud se pyaar karna seekho.”

References

- Image source - <https://www.prevention.com/>
- Some ideas in this article were inspired by BTS's music on self-love and acceptance

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"उत्खननातून साधला जाणारा नात्यांचा समतोल"

स्वाती जगताप

Reprinted from Kaleidoscope XVI

हा एक मानवी स्वभाव आहे एकदा एक इच्छा किंवा स्वप्न पूर्ण झाले की माणूस संतुष्ट होतो अर्थात जगातील सर्वच व्यक्ती या वर्गात येतात असे नाही परंतु बहुतांश लोक या वर्गात नक्कीच मोडतात असा माझा प्रामाणिकपणे समज आहे. हळूहळू या आत्मसंतुष्टतेची इतकी सवय होते की त्याचे रूपांतर व्यसनात कधी होते हे कळतच नाही.

साधारणपणे तीन-चार वर्षांपूर्वी नातू मॅडमच्या सांगण्यावरून मी 'उत्खनन' ही गौरी देशपांडे यांची लघु कादंबरी वाचली होती. प्रथमतःच मी एवढं धाडसी लिखाण वाचत होते. असे लिखाण माझ्या वाचनात पूर्वी आलं नव्हतं त्यामुळे थोडं बीचकायलाही झालं, पण खूपच वेगळ्या धाटणीचं हे लिखाण वाटलं. 'उत्खनन' ही कादंबरी मला इतकी आवडली की गौरी देशपांडे यांच्या तीन-चार लघु कादंबऱ्या मी लागोपाठ वाचल्या. त्यांचे साहित्य आवडण्याचे कारण म्हणजे त्यांचे साहित्य हे स्त्रीवादी आहे तसेच समतेला धरून आहे असे मला वाटले आणि एक गोष्ट मला इथे जाणवली ती म्हणजे त्यांची नायिका ही कधी असाहाय्यतेचे, अगतिकतेचे किंवा असमर्थतेचे स्वतःचे दर्शन इतरांना करू देत नाही. ती शिक्षित, सुसंस्कृत आणि स्वावलंबी असते. तिला स्वतःविषयी आत्मभान आलेले असते आणि स्वतःच्या व इतरांच्याही व्यक्ती स्वातंत्र्याला जपणारी ती असते.

'रात्रंदिन आम्हा युद्धाचे प्रसंग 'म्हणत दोन हात करत लढणारी असते, रडणारी नव्हे!'

त्यांच्या कथानकातील व्यक्ती सर्वसामान्यांना रोजच्या जीवन प्रवासात भेटणार्या असतील असे वाटत नसले तरी त्या असूच शकणार नाहीत असेही म्हणता येत नाही. आपण अनेक कथानकामध्ये बघतो किंवा अनेक कादंबऱ्यांमध्ये असेल किंवा अनेक मालिका असतील ज्यामध्ये पात्रे ही एकदम सोज्वळ फक्त चांगली म्हणता येतील अशीच असतात विशेष करून स्त्रीचे मुख्य पात्र. 'So Called' चांगुलपणा त्यांच्यात खच्चून भरलेला असतो.

पण थोडा विचार केला तर आपल्या लक्षात येते की व्यक्ती संपूर्ण चांगली किंवा संपूर्ण वाईट अशी कधीच नसते. नाण्याला जशा दोन बाजू असतात तशाच व्यक्तीलाही असतात याचे भान

आपल्याला राहत नाही आणि मग प्रश्न पडतो की आयुष्यात समतोल पूर्ण नातं कोणाशी बरं ठेवावं, कोणाशी मैत्री ठेवावी? कोणाशी वाढवावी? खरंतर येथे वेळ येते ती आत्मपरीक्षाची. एक व्यक्ती म्हणून स्वतःकडे बघताना आपल्यातही काही चांगले तसेच काही वाईट गुण असणारच जसे इतरांमध्ये असतात तेव्हा एकमेकांना गुणदोषांसह स्वीकारणे हा स्थायीभाव ठेवून जेव्हा आपण चालू तेव्हा जीवन अधिक सुखकर होईल. थोडा विचार केल्यावर असं वाटतं की जीवन हे एक उत्खनन आहे. सतत शोध, आत्मशोध. आपण कोण आहोत आपल्याला भविष्यात काय करायचं आहे , आपल्याला नक्की काय हवं आहे? या सर्व प्रश्नांची उत्तरे आपल्याला स्वतःच्या उत्खननातूनच मिळतात. कोणती व्यक्ती कशी आहे हे आपल्याला पूर्णपणे कधी कळतच नाही, आपण लावतो तो फक्त अंदाज. खरंतर उत्खनन ही एक अविरत चालू राहणारी प्रक्रिया आहे. कधीही न संपणारी ही बाब आहे. आपल्याच मनाचे किती कंगोरे असतात ना.. तसं पाहिलं तर स्वतःच्या मनाचा ठाव घेता आला.

स्वतःशी समतोल पूर्ण नातं साधता आलं तर आपण इतरांशीही समतोल पूर्ण संबंध ठेवू शकतो. आपल्या स्वतःचं स्वतःशी समतोल पूर्ण नातं असायलाच हवं आणि आपलं तसं नातं असतं ही . जसे की आपलं मन क्षणार्धात किती दूरचा प्रवास करतं. क्षणार्धात लहानपण आठवतं, काही वर्षांपूर्वीचे दिवस आठवतात, त्या व्यक्ती आठवतात, त्या व्यक्तींसोबत घालवलेले क्षण, ते दिवस आठवणीच्या रूपाने पुन्हा आपण अनुभवतो. त्यात आपण किती रमून जातो अगदी त्यातून बाहेर यावंसं ही वाटत नाही पण तरीही आपल्या मनाला आपल्याला कुठेतरी थांबवावं लागतं आणि वर्तमानात यावं लागतं किती सहज नैसर्गिकपणे आपण समतोलाची पातळी गाठतो.

वास्तव जीवनातही आपल्याला विविध स्वभावांच्या व्यक्ती भेटतात. कधी कुणाशी आपला सूर जुळतो तर कधी त्यांच्या संगतीत तो बेसूर होतो. तसेच जेथे विरोध असतो प्रतिकाराची भावना असते तेथे संघर्ष संभवतो. हा संघर्ष माणसाला कितीही कटकटीचा त्रासदायक वाटला तरीही एका अर्थी माणसाला तो जीवनाचे धडे, शिकवण देत असतो. त्यातूनच माणसाचे आयुष्य घडत जाते. सगळीच माणसे एका विचाराची असती तर जीवन रंगहीन, रुचीहीन झाले असते. इतके जीवनात संघर्षाला महत्त्व आहे. व्यक्ती म्हणून जगताना नात्याच्या चाकोरीबद्ध कल्पनेतून मुक्त होणे हे अत्यंत अवघड आहे. पण गौरी देशपांडे यांचे साहित्य आपल्याला या चौकटीच्या बाहेर विचार करायला मदत करते.

नात्यांमध्ये समतोल कसा साधला जावा किंवा नात्यामध्ये अगदी सहजतेने समतोल कसा साधला जाऊ शकतो यासाठी मला 'उत्खनन', 'गोफ' या कादंबरीचा संदर्भ घ्यावासा वाटतो.

'उत्खनन' ही गौरी देशपांडे यांची शेवटची कादंबरी. 2002 मध्ये मौज प्रकाशन ने प्रकाशित केली. अनंत, दुनिया- दयाल, मनी- जब्बार, तीर्थकर, अभया, अर्णव, सती आदी.. यांच्या नातेसंबंधाची, नात्यांमध्ये जपला जाणारा समतोल सांगणारी नात्यांमधील भावविश्व हळूहळू उलगडत जाणारी तितकेच वास्तवतेचे दर्शन घडवणारी अशी ही लघु कादंबरी. या कादंबरीतील काही प्रसंगांचे वर्णन करावेसे वाटते. यातील मला एक प्रसंग जसाच्या तसा आठवतो तो म्हणजे, अभया जी दुनियाची मैत्रीण आहे तिचा मुलगा तीर्थकर. जो मणी पेक्षा दहा वर्षांनी लहान असतो तो मणीच्या प्रेमात पडतो आणि मणीचा ध्यास घेतो. तेव्हा मणी तीर्थकरला समजावून सांगते ती म्हणते, 'तीर्थकर 'I Love You' पण माझं तुझ्यावर तू अपेक्षितोस, म्हणतोस तसे प्रेम नाही आणि म्हणून मी तुझ्याशी सारं आयुष्य गुंफायला तयार नाही. ही बाबही तुझ्या माझ्यावरच्या प्रेमा इतकीच महत्त्वाची आहे. माझ्यावर प्रेम करायचं तुला जसं स्वातंत्र्य आहे तसंच तुझ्यावर अमुकच प्रकारचे प्रेम न करण्याचं तू मला स्वातंत्र्य घ्यायला पाहिजेस'.

किती प्रगल्भतेने मणीने तीर्थकरला समजावले आहे, किती प्रगल्भता आहे या प्रसंगात. ती तीर्थकर ला ओरडत नाही किंवा तिला तीर्थकरचा रागही येत नाही, ती त्याच्या सोबतचे नाते ही तोडत नाही. तीर्थकर ला ही तिचे म्हणणे समजते, प्रेम म्हणजे फक्त ती व्यक्ती मिळवणे, लग्नाने आपली होणे असे नव्हे.

30-35 वर्षांनंतर असाच एक प्रसंग वर्णिला आहे. अनंत म्हणजे दुनियेचा पूर्वाश्रमीचा प्रियकर दुनियेला एक पत्र पाठवतो, ब्रेन ट्युमर झाल्याने बरे वाईट होण्याआधी दुनियेला भेटण्याची इच्छा व्यक्त करतो. त्याच्या पत्राला उत्तर म्हणून दुनिया त्याला बोलावून घेते. दयालही त्याचा मोठ्या मनाने स्वीकार करतो. मनी व दयाल दोघेही ब्रेन ट्यूमरवर उपचार करतात. अनंतला 'बोर्हेजच्या' कविता आवडत असतात. त्याच्या तोंडून बाहेर पडलेल्या कवितांचे भाषांतर अर्णव करतो. दयालही दुनियाची सर्व हकीकत समजून घेतो तिचा आनंदाने, प्रेमाने स्वीकार करतो. मणीचा बाप म्हणून अनंतचा संभाळ करतो. दुनियेचा पूर्वाश्रमीचा प्रियकर म्हणून त्याचा तिरस्कार करत नाही किंवा त्याला असुरक्षितही वाटत नाही. परस्परांविषयक विश्वास, प्रेम, आदर याचे उदात्त दर्शन या प्रसंगातून वाचकांना जाणवते .

‘गोफ’ मध्येही दोन स्त्रियांच्या (सासू-सून) संमिश्र भावभावनांचा गोफ हळुवारपणे गुंफण्यात आला आहे. दोन स्त्रियांमधील त्यांच्या नात्यातील काही बाबतीतला विरोध आणि त्यातून साधत गेलेला संवादाचा, मायेचा जोडला गेलेला भावबंध, हे खूप वैशिष्टपूर्ण आहे.

एकंदरीत विचार करता असे जाणवते की नातं कोणतंही असो जर त्या नात्यात आदर, विश्वास आणि सामंजस्य असेल तर अतूट नात्याचे बंध निर्माण होतातच परंतु त्याच्या जोडीला नात्यात योग्य तो समतोल ही साधता येणं शक्य होतं.

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"गैरसमज झाल्यास लगेच प्रतिक्रिया देऊ नका, शांत राहून समजून घ्या आणि मग बोला."

A HEALING RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UNDERWATER WORLD

Prachiti Bhutkar

MA II (Psychology)

Most relationships in our lives are with people family, friends and partners. But some of the most transformative relationships are the ones we build quietly, with spaces and experiences that reshape us from within. For me, that relationship has been with nature, formed and nurtured through scuba diving.

I still remember my first dive the mix of nervousness and excitement as I stepped off the boat, the sudden hush of the underwater world wrapping around me like a soft blanket. As I descended slowly, the chaos of the surface faded, replaced by a silence that felt almost sacred. That moment marked the beginning of a relationship that would change me forever.

At first, scuba diving was an adventure, a hobby I wanted to try. But as the months passed and the dives increased, it became something deeper a safe space where my mind felt clearer, my body more alive and my heart unexpectedly full. Underwater, I found a version of myself that I rarely accessed on land: calm, grounded, aware, and present.

In the underwater world, distractions disappear. Every breath demands attention, every movement requires intention. This mindful presence something psychologists call '*flow*' helped me manage stress and anxiety in ways I never thought possible. The ocean became a therapeutic space, offering the kind of non-judgmental acceptance we often search for in human relationships.

Nature doesn't ask you to be anything other than who you are. It doesn't critique, compete or overwhelm. Instead, it holds space. The sea, especially, feels like a vast container that absorbs your worries and hands you back a sense of perspective.

As my relationship with the underwater world deepened, I began to notice profound changes within myself. The psychological benefits were impossible to ignore. The slow, intentional breathing, the feeling of weightlessness, and the sensory stillness of the ocean created a

meditative state that significantly reduced my stress levels and helped regulate my emotions. With every dive, I felt more centered and calm. Navigating underwater challenges gradually improved my self-esteem, making me more confident, capable, and comfortable with uncertainty. Being surrounded by marine life also nurtured a deeper sense of connection and empathy witnessing the grace of the underwater world filled me with awe and respect, qualities that extended into my daily life and relationships. Scuba diving also cultivated mindfulness; it trained me to stay fully present, aware of my body, my breath and my surroundings, a practice that continues to ground me even on land.

The transformation wasn't only psychological it was physical too. Diving strengthened my body in ways I hadn't expected, improving my stamina, flexibility, breath control and overall wellness. Moving gracefully through the water felt like rediscovering the simple joy of inhabiting my own body. Instead of focusing on how my body looked, I learned to appreciate what it could do the strength it carried, the balance it maintained and the freedom it allowed me to feel beneath the surface.

Some relationships grow quietly in the background, while others change us in powerful, unforgettable ways. My relationship with nature, experienced through scuba diving, has done a bit of both. What started as simple curiosity slowly became a deep, meaningful connection that touches every part of my life. The ocean has become more than just a place to explore it has become my teacher, my therapist, my adventure partner and the space where I feel most grounded and safe.

Now, whenever life feels stressful or too heavy, I find myself going back to the water. The waves remind me that everything in life our emotions, our problems, our good and bad days moves in cycles. Nothing stays forever, and that thought brings comfort. The ocean has a way of holding me steady and reminding me of the strength inside me, especially during moments when I tend to forget it. And that's the true beauty of this relationship. For me, it's not only about diving or seeing beautiful underwater life. It's about feeling a sense of belonging. It's about discovering parts of myself that I might miss in the rush of daily life. The calmness of the sea teaches me to slow down, breathe and stay present. And every time I leave the water, I carry a little bit of that peace with me into the rest of my world.

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MARRIAGE: SACRED BOND

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Marriage is a sacred bond between two individuals, as pure as Ganga water (Gangajal). A foundation which is created through friendship, respect, and trust. A marriage doesn't work through the effort of one person; it works through companionship. Just like a bike, it cannot work if even one tyre is punctured; in marriages, too, both partners have to move forward together. In our culture, there are two types of marriage: first, the Love marriage in which both partners have like each other liking turns into the love and they both decided to get married and the second is Arranged marriage in which families set up meeting between the individuals and after meeting they decide whether they have to marry that individual or not ---- cool, right? But still scary.

Most individuals, especially women, feel that marriages are scary because of what we see happening around the world, like extramarital affairs, domestic abuse, unsupportive partners and much more. But have seen the magic of marriages. I am not saying that all marriages are good; some also have bad marriages. But still, I believe marriages have some kind of magic.

From ancient times, we have a saying: "*Lagna cha gathi swargat bandle jatat,*" meaning the bond of marriage is tied in heaven. I believe that is true some point, it is true because sometimes one person enters your life like a storm and changes everything. From childhood to adulthood, whatever you achieve might seem small or vanish and begin to create a new form of identity. It sounds very scary, right? But what if he just accepts you as you are? What if he shows your achievement proudly to the world? What if he gives wings to your dreams, and what if he wants to walk with you and not ahead of you? Sounds dreamy, just like our favourite fairy tales.

These fairy tales become the benchmark of our lives. The prince is our ideal, and the princess is you. As we grow, we try to find our prince in our school, neighbourhood, classes, college, office—everywhere but you find him. If you find in these places, it becomes a love marriage. And if they don't, they usually meet through an arranged setup. But they will meet. They will

meet- talk- reject, and again they will meet- talk- reject until they meet the one person. The person who may be like you or completely different, but something in them will make you feel special, that you will feel that the other individual doesn't have this talent, and this is just for you. Now, this is the magic of love and marriage.

I don't know why people have created a difference between love and arranged marriages. But the feelings, the emotion, the trust, and the respect between the partners are the same. The only difference is that in love marriage, you experience these feelings before marriage, while in arranged marriage, they begin after marriage, slowly and beautifully. It is the start of something unclear, vague, but on a strong foundation of trust and respect.

Marriage is a journey, like a traveller who doesn't know the final destination but believes that it will be as beautiful as a setting sun. A sunset that creates magic with its colour, sound and a starry night follows. Similarly, in marriages the both partners don't know their final destination, the upcoming chaos and challenges lie ahead, but they believe that they will face everything together.

The person who changes your life story, your whole identity and everything within you, the one whose presence completes your happiness, your achievements, the one who brings out the best in you that you hide from the world, accepts you as you are, and promises to stay even in your hardest times, and that person becomes your forever.

This beautiful, alluring bond is created by the relationship called MARRIAGE.

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"In love the paradox occurs that two beings
become one and yet remain two"

~ Erich Fromm

WHAT RELATIONSHIP REALLY MEANS?

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What is a relationship?

Everyone has their own definition for the term "RELATIONSHIP", for one, it might be beautiful as flowers, for some might be chaos, confusion, and for some it might be as useless as labubu. From birth, we are tied in a relation with our surroundings, whether we choose or not, through blood, emotion, or other relationships. As we grow, we are all always tied to them, and we also form new ones. Some are closed, while some are distant, and others barely matters. By the time of death, only a few truly ones remain that will prosper and remember you in there and your good times as well as in bad times.

A relationship is the way in which two individual feels connected through sharing their thoughts and the way they behave towards each other. I believe a good relationship is like a cactus: no matter how harsh the sun or the environment, they never dry out; they just need ample water to be or feel alive till the next rain, and when it receives enough, it also blooms the flowers. Similarly, in a relationship, people don't have to be always together like a magnet. Just a simple sense of being there for them in hard as well as good and some memorable moments are enough to bloom the relationship. Instead of constant calling, one single genuine call, not for others or work, just meant for them is enough to making them feel seen, respected among thousands of others.

But what happens when there is no respect, love, or togetherness in a relationship?

Can it really work? Will it be able to survive that relationship till the end?

Or should we do any ritual, just like Indian families do to make that relationship work?

Most relationships face these struggles, whether between in a couple or within families. I call such connections as "An UNWANTED OR BURDEN RELATIONSHIP". Many of the people stay together not out of love but out of habit. Most of the time, people are just living with each

other, just like actors for someday and sometimes they have to act with other actors for few minutes or hours, and after that, going back to the silence - NO INTERACTION AND COMMUNICATION with each other. We are so busy ourselves with worries, careers, and future plans and our emotional exhaustion that we avoid to create more problems for ourselves. And being busy doesn't mean physically; it's often emotionally busy.

Deep inside we are all constantly searching for a single person or a relationship that will last forever and ever. A single bond or thread that means a lot for them and us. Someone who sees them as they really are, the true self and not the filtered one, with whom we can share our joy, saddest moments, worst breakup stories, and of course, our inner hidden fears. A relationship which non-judgmental, trustful, respectful, and filled with love.

Being in a relationship without love is like being robots in a doll house, which is beautiful from the outside, but inside its empty - no feelings, emotions, or togetherness. We're just functioning for each other from being in a relationship till the end, but there is no sense or meaning to it, just like food without any taste. We are just in a constant loop of hope that it is not working now, but it will sometime in the day or maybe it will take months, but it will work, and in this loop, we make ourselves ready for work and endure being rejected in some hope someday or sometime they will acknowledge our efforts, the person, and us. But as time goes our hope turns into a burden, we become lonely and form a wall of insecurities, even if a genuine person wants to break that wall, he can't. It's not that the other person doesn't want to, it's just that they have gotten used to this lifestyle and the fear of being rejected and somewhat fear of losing self again.

Before being in a relationship with someone, we must first be in a relationship with ourselves. It is necessary to know our choices, likes, dislikes, opinions, and much more. Too often we try to fit in the mold that our surroundings, family, and friends are create for us. And when we don't fit in, we face rejection, exclusion, and isolation. If we know who we are, we might end up in a relationship with a person who accepts us as we are. This awareness of choices might not be now but if you spend time with yourself and give time to understand the surroundings, we will discover a quite magic within us one that will help our life shine. We will feel whole, secure and fulfilled without needing anyone else to feel you whole.

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EXPLORING THE FATHER-SON RELATIONSHIP

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The relationship between a father and his son is one of the most profound and complex dynamics in the human experience. It's a connection that shapes identity, influences future relationships, and often serves as a **silent curriculum** for navigating the world. Far from being a monolithic bond, the father-son relationship evolves dramatically over time, marked by shifting roles, challenges, and immense growth.

The Foundation of Identity

In the early years, a father is often the son's first hero and role model. The son observes how his father interacts with the world, manages emotions, tackles challenges, and treats others. This observational learning is critical. A father's presence—or absence—leaves an indelible mark on a son's developing sense of masculinity and self-worth.

For many sons, the father provides a vital blueprint for:

- **Emotional Expression:** How to handle anger, sadness, and joy in a healthy way.
- **Responsibility:** Understanding duty, work ethic, and commitment.
- **Interpersonal Skills:** Learning to form healthy friendships, partnerships, and respecting boundaries.

The Need for Separation and Individuation

As a son enters adolescence and young adulthood, the dynamic inevitably shifts. This period is often characterized by a necessary, yet sometimes turbulent, process called individuation. The son must define himself not just as his father's child, but as an independent person.

This transition often manifests as:

- **Challenging Authority:** Questioning the father's beliefs, rules, or life choices.
- **Seeking Validation Elsewhere:** Finding mentors or role models outside the home.

- **Establishing Autonomy:** Making personal decisions about career, values, and lifestyle that may diverge from the father's expectations.

While challenging, this friction is **essential**. It allows the son to build his own confidence and stand firmly in his own convictions, moving the relationship from one of **dependence** to one of **mutual respect**.

The Adult Partnership: A New Equilibrium

When both father and son mature into adult men, the relationship has the potential to achieve its most rewarding form: a **friendship built on a shared history**.

In this stage:

- The father often sees his son as a **peer**, valuing his advice, and celebrating his accomplishments without feeling the need to constantly instruct.
- The son gains a deeper **empathy** for his father, recognizing him not just as a parent, but as a man who faced his own struggles and made the best decisions he could.

They share common experiences—work, family, life's inevitable disappointments and triumphs—that strengthen their bond. For many college-aged students, this transition is currently underway, moving from seeing a father as an all-knowing authority to viewing him as a **key confidant** and **lifelong supporter**.

The Takeaway for Sons

The father-son relationship is a journey of continuous refinement. If you are a son, remember: Vulnerability is strength. Initiate conversations about topics that matter, share your struggles, and don't be afraid to ask your father about his life. By bridging the generational gap with honesty and appreciation, you can transform the unwritten curriculum of this bond into a richly satisfying and enduring connection.

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DECONSTRUCTING RELATIONSHIPS

Sharvari Waghmare

FYBA

Relationships are woven into every part of our lives, they exist in many forms, with parents, friends, colleagues, romantic partners, platonic connections, nature, and art and even with ourselves. Relationships act as mirrors that reflect our beliefs, strengths and insecurities. They influence the way we communicate, set boundaries, trust others and build relationships. Through every connection, we learn patterns that shape our identity and emotional landscape. Bowlby's attachment theory explains how early childhood bonding influences how we form, maintain and sometimes disconnect from relationships later in life. But the reality is that not all relationships are healthy or meant to last; a bitter but undeniable truth, not every connection supports our well-being. Often, relationships begin to untangle where boundaries are crossed and no mutual respect and understanding is present. One of the most common reasons relationships don't work out is when there is a clash of different ideologies or values, where distance becomes a form of protection. In such situations stepping back and analysing is necessary, not as an act of rebellion but as an act of self-preservation, inner transformation and healing. Deconstructing relationships helps us understand hidden dynamics that shape them like attachment styles, unmet needs, trauma, cultural expectations and emotional patterns. It allows us to rebuild healthier ways of maintaining relationships.

WHY DO RELATIONSHIPS SOMETIMES NEED TO BE DECONSTRUCTED?

Deconstructing relationships is more than just analysis; it involves examining a person's relationship patterns and behaviour to create meaningful, soulful connections. Relationships profoundly shape us into who we are, they influence our well-being, personality development, personal and social life. According to the American Psychological Association (APA), close relationships influence identity formation, long-term well-being and emotional regulation. Therefore deconstruction becomes a necessary tool for self-growth and preservation. But when a relationship begins to force outdated patterns on us, especially those deeply rooted in childhood, it often needs to be deconstructed before it can be rebuilt or harm us.

BREAKING DOWN OF RELATIONSHIP DYNAMICS

1) BOUNDARIES

Boundaries are the foundation of every healthy relationship. They are limits or rules set within a relationship that define what feels safe, respectful and emotionally sustainable for us. They are the base of stability in relationships. When boundaries are crossed the trust and mutual understanding in a relationship is weakened.

2) IDEOLOGIES

Every person is shaped by their unique thought process, ideas and personal beliefs. When these core values clash, it creates issues that require reflection, re-alignment and adjustments.

3) COMMUNICATION PATTERNS

How people speak, listen, react and resolve conflicts determines the emotional weather of the relationships. Miscommunication, silence or unhealthy patterns often lead to unresolved tensions. It is not a conflict that predicts the state of relationships, but rather how the conflict is handled. Gottman's Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse which explains criticism, contempt, defensiveness and stonewalling, represent the most destructive communication patterns. When these patterns appear it calls for reflection and deconstruction of relationship patterns.

4) EMOTIONAL PATTERNS

Each relationship rests on the ability to give and receive emotional support. When needs like validation, safety, affection or understanding remain unmet, the relationship begins to strain.

5) CULTURAL EXPECTATIONS

Culture carries many unspoken rules like how we behave, whom we prioritize and how we can be acceptable. These expectations can create pressure and may lead to emotional exhaustion.

WHY DECONSTRUCTION BECOMES NECESSARY?

Relationships don't fall apart suddenly, they fail when needs go unheard. Deconstruction becomes necessary when a relationship causes distress and no longer maintains mutual respect or personal growth.

- **Cognitive Dissonance:** It is the mental stress felt when an individual forces themselves to stay in a relationship that goes against their values and does not line up with what they truly believe in. Staying in a situation that goes against your values causes mental exhaustion because you always try to explain or justify things.
- **Self-Silencing:** Consistently suppressing opinions or emotions to maintain harmony affects self-worth and leads to anxiety.
- **Emotional Burnout:** The state of mental and emotional exhaustion caused by prolonged stress from work, relationships, and feeling emotionally drained.
- **Evolving Identity (Outgrowing Relationships):** As people grow, their values and priorities change, it can create distance when old relationships no longer fit who they are becoming. Outgrowing relationships is a natural part of self-development.
- **Cultural Pressure:** Cultural norms can pressure individuals to maintain relationships even when they no longer align with their growth or well-being.

THE PROCESS OF DECONSTRUCTION: A BLUEPRINT FOR CHANGE

Deconstruction is an active, intentional process of change. It means stopping the habit of accepting a relationship's damaging patterns and instead recognising, questioning and changing patterns that no longer support your well-being. This process looks different for everyone, but it generally follows a few core psychological steps:

- **Identifying Harmful/Unhealthy Relationship Patterns (Awareness):** The first step is awareness. It involves mindfulness in observing relationship dynamics clearly. Instead of simply reacting to a conflict, we must step back and identify the cycle and try to break it, and ask ourselves "Am I always the one to apologise?", "Who always ends up starting disputes?", "How can we stop the miscommunication?". Recognising these patterns is the beginning of self-control, it helps you understand how the relationship functions and what needs to change.
- **Cultivating Self-Love and Self-Worth:** A key part of understanding relationships is strengthening your own sense of security as a foundation. Cultivating self-love and self-worth reduces dependency for external validation from people. This is a type of self-independence which makes it easier to set and enforce boundaries.

- **Setting Healthy Boundaries:** This is where awareness becomes action. Boundaries function as regulatory systems in relationships. Setting boundaries involves clear and consistent communication clarifying personal limits and what behaviour is acceptable and what is not.
- **Practising Radical Transparency:** The practice of radical transparency involves emotionally clear and honest, often uncomfortable conversations about relationship's vulnerabilities and flaws. This process brings the reality to the surface, making avoidance impossible, and pushing the dynamic toward repair or ruin.
- **Consistent Communication:** Overcoming the "Four Horsemen Theory" requires intentional, consistent and respectful communication. Techniques like "active listening" and expressing feelings with "I" statements help conflict turn to cooperation.

THE END AND AFTERMATH OF RELATIONSHIPS

As we know, not all relationships are meant to last. Even with the best intentions, deconstruction often leads to the end of relationships. It is not a sharp break but a gradual emotional process that feels a lot like grieving.

The Breakup:

The ending of a relationship often follows predictable stages, as noted by researchers like Steve Duck, in the 'Relationship Dissolution Stages' (Duck's Phase Model):

- **The Internal Shift:** It all starts, internally, individuals start evaluating the relationship by quietly observing what feels wrong, and questioning the right and wrong. In this intrapsychic state, a person weighs the drawbacks of the relationship against its rewards.
- **The Confrontation:** This is the point where the underlying dissatisfaction becomes impossible to control. This stage is marked by arguments, honest conversations and the last attempt to fix what is breaking, often referred to as the dyadic stage.
- **Going Public:** Sharing the decision with friends or family marks a critical shift, the ending is socially acknowledged becoming largely irreversible, called the social stage.
- **The Post-Game Narrative:** After a relationship dissolves, individuals naturally begin to construct the narrative about what went wrong. This is known as the grave-dressing stage, it helps preserve self-worth allowing them to move forward.

The Aftermath: Grief and Growth

Breaking up unavoidably builds up grief. You are not just losing a person but a bond too. The end of any significant relationship, initiates a psychological aftermath that resembles the grieving process. Even when we consciously choose to step away, our mind still mourns the loss and regrets. The grief is not a sign of weakness; it is the evidence of emotional investment.

During this phase, individuals often go through cycles of denial, anger, bargaining, silence and lastly eventual acceptance. These stages loop, collide and resurface, reflecting the messy nature of healing. As these initial stages fade, one last phase begins that is 'growth'. People slowly reclaim their power, reconnect with forgotten parts of themselves, and figure out more about themselves. During this phase they start creating a clear narrative of the ending (the grave-dressing stage), this helps them protect their self-worth and understand the role the relationship played in their life. Growth takes time and commitment, but it is in this stage that real change begins to appear and shape a person. Growth does not erase grief, but it reshapes it into wisdom.

Deconstruction of relationships is the ultimate act of awareness, of seeing what clearly supports growth and what silently diminishes it. Whether the outcome is repair or release, the process helps individuals to understand their emotional patterns and reclaim their sense of self. In this sense, deconstruction is not the end of connection but a foundation for healthier and more conscious relationships.

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“Everything that irritates us about others can lead us to and understanding of ourselves”

~ Carl Jung

HEALING WITH PAWS: THE THERAPEUTIC POWER OF HUMAN– PET RELATIONSHIPS

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MA II Psychology

The relationship between humans and pets often begins with affection, but for many it grows into something deeper, softer, and quietly transformative. When words feel heavy or emotions feel overwhelming, a gentle nudge from a dog or the familiar vibration of a cat's purr can offer comfort without a single sentence exchanged. Many individuals describe their pets as emotional anchors silent companions who sit with them in loneliness, confusion, or sadness without demanding explanations or change. Pets don't remind us to "try harder" or "move on"; they simply stay, and in their presence, many people feel understood in a way human relationships sometimes struggle to offer.

Why This Bond Matters

Psychological and physiological research supports the depth of this connection. Human–animal interactions have been shown to decrease cortisol (the stress hormone) and increase oxytocin, the hormone associated with bonding, trust, and emotional security. This hormonal response explains why pet owners often report feeling calmer, more grounded, and emotionally supported. Beyond hormones, pets offer unconditional acceptance: no fear of judgment, no social pressure, no expectations. For individuals who find human relationships overwhelming, unpredictable, or emotionally complicated, the steadiness and predictability of a pet can feel healing. A pet's presence can also help regulate emotions, provide routine, and encourage moments of connection, small but powerful steps toward emotional balance.

Animal-Assisted Therapy in Practice

The natural emotional bond between humans and animals has evolved into a structured therapeutic practice known as Animal-Assisted Intervention (AAI). Research shows that AAI can be particularly effective for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder, helping improve

social engagement, motivation, emotional regulation, and communication skills. In these interventions, animals serve as gentle bridges between the individual and the world reducing anxiety, increasing responsiveness, and creating a safe emotional space. Children who struggle to communicate with people often find it easier to interact with animals, and this small shift can open the door to broader social growth. The presence of a therapy animal also reduces tension during difficult tasks and increases willingness to participate, making therapy feel less clinical and more relational.

Emotional and Everyday Healing

Even outside formal therapy, pets contribute to emotional well-being in meaningful ways. Feeding, walking, or grooming a pet introduces routine and responsibility elements especially helpful for individuals coping with low motivation, grief, or depression. Pets provide companionship that reduces loneliness and fosters a sense of connection, especially among people who may feel socially isolated. Many pet owners describe their pets as sources of stability during difficult emotional phases something to return to, something that waits, and something constant. These small but intentional interactions create a sense of purpose and belonging, encouraging emotional resilience and day-to-day mental strength.

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विद्यार्थी जीवन : एक संघर्षमय प्रवास

शिवम राठोड

Reprinted from Kaleidoscope XV

शालेय जीवनामध्ये यश मिळविण्याकरिता विद्यार्थ्यांना संघर्ष व समस्यांचा ताळमेळ साधावा लागतो . विद्यार्थी जीवन हे अनेक समस्या आणि संघर्षाने भरलेले आहे . विद्यार्थी त्यांच्या खडतर जीवनात अनेक समस्यांना तोंड देत आपला शिक्षणाचा प्रवास करतात हे जीवन जणूकाही कष्टच असतं. अगदी प्राथमिक शिक्षणापासून या खडतर जीवनाची , या संघर्षमय जीवनाची सुरुवात होते. ज्या बालवयात आपल्या मातृभाषेचं अर्धवट देखील ज्ञान नसते त्या वयात चार ते पाच वर्षांच्या मुलांना आई वडील खासगी इंग्रजी माध्यमाच्या शाळेत मुलांचा प्रवेश निश्चित करतात . ज्या मुलाला मातृभाषेचे पुरेसे पण ज्ञान नसते त्याला सर्व विषय इंग्रजीतून शिकावे लागते . त्यामुळे त्याच्या मनावर दडपण येते. त्याची आकलन शक्ती कमजोर होते. विद्यार्थ्यांमध्ये मानसिक तणाव येतो अथून मधून कोचिंग क्लासमध्ये पण विविध अडचणींचा सामना करावा लागतो.

अशा रीतीने एक विद्यार्थी शिक्षणाच्या प्रवासात पाऊल ठेवतो. पुढे हा प्रवास चालतच राहतो. या प्रवासाच्या मृगजळात विद्यार्थी खेळापासून दुरावत जातो . त्याच्या मनाचा कोंडमारा होत . नंतर आई वडिलांच्या भांडणामुळे विद्यार्थ्यांच्या कोवळ्या मनाला भावनिक त्रासाला सामोरे जावे लागते. ते त्यांच्या पालकांना काही कारण नसताना ओरडताना पाहून घाबरून जातात याचा परिणाम त्यांच्या मानसिक आरोग्यावर होतो. आजच्या काळात काहीही विचार न करता लहान मुलांसमोर केली जाणारी घरगुती हिंसा ही एक सामान्य घटना आहे. विद्यार्थ्यांचं संपूर्ण जीवनच संघर्ष व समस्यांनी भरलेलं असतं. या जीवनात विद्यार्थी अनेक समस्यांशी संघर्ष करत शिक्षणाचा प्रवास करतात. प्राथमिक शिक्षण झाल्यावर

जेव्हा दहाव्या वर्गात प्रवेश झालेला असतो त्यावेळी तर घरच्यांचा अगदी वरून अभ्यासाचा प्रेशर असतो त्यामुळे फक्त अभ्यास आणि अभ्यासच एवढेच त्याला करावे लागते. त्यावेळी त्याला खेळ, समारंभ, सहली इत्यादींचा त्याग करावा लागतो, आपल्या समाजातील निरक्षर लोकांच्या चुकीच्या परंपरेमुळे विद्यार्थ्यांना अनेक समस्यांचा सामना करावा लागतो. परिणामी या कारणांमुळे त्यांच्यावर अभ्यासाचा ताण येत राहतो आणि हे विद्यार्थी आपण चुकलो किंवा आपल्याला परीक्षेत कमी गुण मिळाले तर परिणामी समाज, कुटुंब यांची मनधरणी कशी करायची याबद्दल विचार करत राहतो .

दहावी झाल्यानंतर विद्यार्थ्यांना कला, वाणिज्य आणि विज्ञान या शाखेमधून आपल्या आवडत्या शैक्षणिक शाखेत प्रवेश घ्यायचा असतो. जर एखाद्या विद्यार्थ्याला कला शाखा आवडत असेल परंतु , आई वडिलांच्या प्रतिष्ठेसाठी त्याला विज्ञान शाखेत प्रवेश घ्यावा लागतो, येथे आवड एका बाजूला व आई वडिलांची प्रतिष्ठा एका बाजूला असल्यामुळे त्याला आई - वडिलांच्या प्रतिष्ठेसाठी विज्ञान शाखेत प्रवेश निश्चित करावा लागतो. जो विद्यार्थी विज्ञान शाखेत शिक्षण घेतो त्याची प्रतिष्ठा आजही समाजात खूप खूप उच्च दर्जाची समजली जाते, आणि आजही कला शाखेला आपला समाज कमी लेखाताना दिसून येतो. जर एखादा विद्यार्थी कमी बुद्धीचा असेल आणि त्याने विज्ञान शाखेत प्रवेश घेतला असेल तर त्याची प्रतिष्ठा समाजात उंचावेल, याउलट जो विद्यार्थी हुशार व बुद्धिमान असेल परंतु त्याने कला शाखेत प्रवेश घेतला असेल त्या विद्यार्थ्यांना आपला समाज कमी लेखतो. येथे फक्त शाखेचे महत्त्व असते इच्छा आणि आवडीला महत्त्व दिले जात नाही. ग्रामीण भागात आजही कितीतरी घुसमट बघायला मिळते घरच्यांच्या प्रतिष्ठेपायी विद्यार्थ्यांना स्वतःच मन मारून इच्छेवर पाणी सोडावं लागतं. खरं तर शिक्षण म्हणजे जणूकाही स्पर्धाचं. दुसऱ्या विद्यार्थ्यांपेक्षा तुला जास्तीचे गुण मिळालेच पाहिजेत हा पालकांचा अट्टाहास. मार्क्स कमी मिळाले तरी चालेल पण विचाराने, ज्ञानाने मोठा हो असे सांगणारे फार थोडे पालक दिसून येतात .

बारावी झाल्यानंतर पदवीच्या शिक्षणासाठी मोठमोठ्या शहरांकडे प्रवास वळवावा लागतो तेथे राहण्यासाठी करावा लागणारा संघर्ष अर्थातच वेगळा. त्यातही अजून दारिद्र्य रेषेखालील विद्यार्थी जेव्हा शहराकडे येतात तेव्हा पैशांपासून ते खाणं, राहणं ...सगळीच जुळवाजुळव करताना करावा लागणारा संघर्ष . हा संघर्षमय प्रवास इथेच थांबत नाही तर तो नेहमीच चालणारा असतो, अर्थातच चालू आहे. संघर्षमय शिक्षणाचा प्रवास इथपर्यंत मर्यादित नसतो, हा तर शिक्षणाच्या प्रवासाचा पायाच असतो अजूनही आपल्या समाजात शिक्षणासाठी अनेक विद्यार्थ्यांचा लढा सुरु आहे .

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"संवादाचा अभाव आणि गैरसमज नाट्यांमधील
दुरावा वाढवतात, म्हणून थेट संवाद साधा."

RELATIONSHIP WITH PETS

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This unique connection is built on unconditional love and companionship, with pets providing emotional support, reducing stress and anxiety, and encouraging a sense of purpose and routine. Long-term ownership and frequent positive interactions deepen this attachment and can lead to a stronger, more positive relationship over time.

Pets not only accompany us but provide us with so many hidden benefits.

- Pets offer a constant source of companionship, which can reduce feelings of loneliness and isolation. Their presence can be comforting and help provide a sense of security.
- Interacting with pets, such as petting a dog, can help lower stress and anxiety levels. They can also provide a calming influence and a sense of peace.

- Interacting with pets, such as petting a dog, can help lower stress and anxiety levels. They can also provide a calming influence and a sense of peace.
- Pets can contribute to improved heart health, potentially by lowering stress and encouraging more activity.
- Dogs, in particular, require regular walks and play, which encourages owners to be more physically active.
- Pets can teach children empathy, responsibility, and compassion, helping them develop better social skills.
- Pets can help children feel important and can be a positive outlet for their emotions.

Conclusion -

Dogs can have a powerful positive impact on relationships. They bring joy, reduce stress, and encourage shared routines and bonding moments. Whether it's walking together, caring for a pet, or simply experiencing unconditional love, dogs can strengthen emotional connection and communication between partners.

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**“If there are no dogs in Heaven, then when I
die I want to go where they went.”**

~ Will Rogers

LOSS OF RELATIONSHIPS: STAGES OF GRIEF

Dinzeen La

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Introduction:-

“We accept the love we think we deserve”

-The Perks of Being a Wallflower

There are many types of relationships and each one is unique and very important in every individual's lives. These relationships make up who we are and shape not only our thought process but also how we act and behave. They can range from romantic to platonic to even the bond you share with your parents, friends and even your hobbies. The word ‘Relationship’ can be used as an umbrella term because every bond that we share is personalized to our own likes and dislikes and these differences and even similarities is what helps us create a sense of identity and self-concept.

Earliest Foundation of Relationship:-

The formation of any relationship can be seen in infancy during the pre-attachment phase where the babies begin to recognize emotional bonds which is the core foundation of how in later life they're going to perceive love and form relationships with others.

According to psychologist John Bowlby, He described attachment as a “lasting psychological connectedness between human beings” and came up with “Attachment Theory” which suggests that humans are born with a need to form a close emotional bond with the caregiver as one of the most central parts of a human's life because it moulds our perception of love and how we treat others, going back to as far as our parents, how they treat each other and how they show their love and their love language also plays a huge role in our views on what love can be, when we are young what we see growing up gets engraved into our brains and we start to form an idea of what love and relationship is to us.

Grief Cycle:-

When we are met with a loss of any type of relationship it is inevitable that we are struck with an insatiable amount of grief.

During this moment of grief, it's often a very common practice to cheer up your friends or anyone close to you by saying “oh, it wasn't meant to be because they weren't the right person for you” or “you'll find someone way better” but truth be told it's not that easy to move on from someone with whom you envisioned your life with, no matter how long or less time you spend with someone, the loss of relationship makes you mourn not only the time you spent with them but also the part of you that used to be when you were with them, the positives, good days and this sudden loss will hit you with this feeling of losing yourself.

It is important to realize that no matter how long or short your relationship lasted it is okay to mourn, cry and cherish the good times you spent with them;

Every single person you interact with in your life has some purpose in your life, it's similar to how we as humans have emotions, habits and weird quirks that we carry can sometimes be naturally internalised by seeing our loved ones and when that loved one is no longer a part of our

lives we find it very difficult to cope with that because it feels like we've become a reflection of someone from the past whom we can no longer reach out to.

Although not all relationships are healthy yet it is also true that sometimes people may miss even the unhealthy type of relationship due to '*Trauma Bonding*', this term was coined by Dr. Patrick Cranes, a psychologist who defined the term as '*Misuse of fear, excitement, sexual feelings and sexual physiology to entangle another person*' said that trauma bonding was created through a cycle of intensity, withdrawal, control, apology and charm. This unhealthy cycle makes the person miss the rush of constant highs and lows which manifests due to the confusing pattern of positive and negative reinforcement by the abuser making the victim emotionally stunted to think for themselves clearly.

5 Stages of Grief:-

There are many stages one might go through to deal with loss but '5 STAGES OF GRIEF' by Swiss-American psychiatrist Elisabeth Kübler-Ross in 1969 book *On Death and Dying* is the most well-known model when it comes to dealing with loss, it was originally made to showcase how people may have common emotional response to death but this model can be used in many settings like mental health counseling, bereavement support and even loss of relationships.

The stages aren't fixed to any rigid order so every person may experience these emotional; responses in a different order.

This is outlined by 5 emotional responses which are:-

- **DENIAL:-** In this stage one may feel numb and suffer from some sort of psychological buffer often resorting to accept the reality of the situation and being in denial about the situation trying to act normal as if everything is still as things used to be. This stage can be seen as someone ignoring reality but oftentimes it can be used as a coping mechanism temporarily as the initial shock of the situation can catch people off guard.
- **ANGER:-** When a person finally grasps the gravity of the situation more clearly anger follows through and the sense of injustice is very strong as people may grovel on the whole plethora of "why, when and how?" It is considered normal for a person's emotional response to be very unstable in this stage as they are still yet to get a hold of the situation

and may indulge in irrational behaviour and that anger can be directed towards others or self. Although irrational, this stage is very important as it allows people to showcase their emotions rather than bottling it up. They may also get triggered by small inconveniences.

- **BARGAINING:** - *This* stage is the final attempt at having a psychological bargain, an desperate attempt to trying to make things 'right' as they may ponder on "What if I had just done so and so then I could've prevented this" they may mentally replay the situation trying to constantly juggling between hope and despair as the mind tries its best to come up with an alternate outcome which is more favourable and despair feeling regret over not doing the favourable outcome.
- **DEPRESSION:** - This is very different from clinical depression but both can overlap. This stage can have significant changes in one's life like social withdrawal, crying, changes in sleep and appetite. This stage is when people start to get the gravity of their loss and mourn the good times and the overall past. It is very important to have some help or support as it can boost morale and make one feel at ease even if they're being consumed by grief.
- **ACCEPTANCE:** - This may come gradually or after a long time of processing one's emotional state. In this stage people accept their loss and move on while still honoring the loss, they may start to live their life normally step by step re-engaging in hobbies they once loved or even reconnecting with people they lost in touch and overall being in peace mentally because the mind finally feels like it has some sort of clarity and the grief is slowly fading away even though they might still miss the person or the security they felt in this relationship, acceptance acts as a balanced view allowing the person to be in tune with their feelings and allowing themselves to start a new journey.

CONCLUSION:-

Loss of any relationship can be soul crushing regardless of the duration. It brings out such an aggressive emotional turmoil that it has us convinced that we aren't good enough or they messed up or the world is just very unfair, it makes us feel like we should be afraid of it because having experienced something very painful, all of us dream of a happy and healthy relationship without

realizing that ending and loss is an inevitable part of our lives and 5 stages of grief showcases how each emotional response be it uncomfortable and ugly are very important to deal with in order to deal and overcome with grief in a healthy way.

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ONE WHEEL CYCLE

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In life, having both our parent mother and father is very important. When even one parent is not there, our life becomes like a one-wheel cycle. Just as a cycle cannot run properly if one wheel is damaged, in the same way, if one parent is missing from our life, things become difficult. That is why having both parents are so important.

People often say that even if the father is not there, it is okay, but the mother must be there because mothers express their love more. But fathers also love us they just don't express it openly, especially with their sons. This does not mean that fathers don't have emotions. They do.

A single parent, especially a mother, gives her child so much love, care, and support sometimes even more than what two parents together can give. But still, one person may take the responsibility of two people, yet one person can never give the love and care of two people. No



one can take someone else's place. No one can be an alternative. Every bond and relationship we have in life is unique and special.

A child's feelings in such situations cannot be fully expressed in words. A single parent may feel that she is fulfilling every responsibility, but for a child, what matters most is quality time, sharing, care, and having a parent who understands their emotions like a friend.

Not having a father feels like losing a protective shield a support from above that is difficult to describe. In life, if we have our father, we feel we have everything. A daughter is always closer to

her father. Just like a daughter is a fairy for her dad, in the same way, a father is a hero for his daughter. For a daughter, her father is the first and the best friend in life.

Fathers may not show their love openly, but they still love and care deeply for their children. That is why, just as mothers are important, fathers are equally important, and their presence matters. When a father is there, life feels more beautiful and easier. This is why having both parent mother and father plays a crucial role in shaping a child's emotional world.

A child's life becomes truly balanced and meaningful when both parents are present to give love, support, and guidance.



RELATIONSHIP WITH NATURE

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With technology becoming a constant presence in daily life, it's easy to see how smartphones, tablets and screens have woven themselves into almost every age group. In many families, especially in urban parts of India, parents often hand devices to young children because it's

The simplest way to keep them occupied while managing work or household tasks. But relying on screens this way comes at a cost. Children need real-world stimulation, movement and curiosity, and those things are far more abundant outdoors than on any screen. Spending

Time in nature gives children space to explore, move and develop resilience, but the benefits don't stop with childhood. People of every age gain something essential from being in nature.

Regular contact with natural environments slowly builds a more grounded relationship with the world around us.

A person's relationship with nature refers to the emotional, cognitive and behavioral connection they have with the natural world. It reflects how attached they feel to nature, how they think about it, how often they interact with it, and whether they see themselves as part of it or distant from it. We're biologically wired for greenery, uneven ground, sunlight and wind, not endless screens. Our relationship with nature is basically our relationship with the parts of ourselves we keep ignoring. Research shows that spending time in natural environments

Improves emotional balance, reduces stress and strengthens mental clarity (American Psychological Association, 2020). Natural settings allow people to drop the noise of daily life and become more honest with their own thoughts. Real trees, real sunlight and fresh air impact the mind in ways that digital spaces simply never will. Studies consistently show that nature exposure appears to benefit human health in a range of ways, including improved

Cognitive functioning, improved brain functioning, decreased blood pressure, improved physical health, improved sleep, and improved mental health symptoms. These benefits

include decreased tension, anxiety, depression, anger, hostility, fatigue, and confusion; but, research also shows that nature exposure can improve humans' resiliency against cancer and other illness. For children, early and regular contact with nature has been linked to lower

risks of later mental-health difficulties, suggesting that nature may lay foundations for long-term resilience.

Beyond the immediate benefits for mental health, a person's relationship with nature shapes how they understand themselves and their place in the world. Natural settings offer a kind of quiet that modern digital environments cannot replicate. Research shows that green spaces

reduce cognitive overload, allowing people to think more clearly and reflect more deeply. Even brief experiences like sitting in a park or walking near trees create moments of mental restoration that help people process emotions and regain perspective. Over time, these repeated interactions can build a consistent sense of calm and familiarity, strengthening the emotional connection people feel toward the natural world.

A strong relationship with nature is not just beneficial; it is increasingly necessary in a fast-paced world where many individuals spend most of their time indoors. Studies consistently find that nature exposure supports attention, learning and emotional balance, especially for students and working adults who deal with constant demands. Accessible

activities such as walking in a nearby garden, spending time under open sky or simply being around plants can enhance well-being without requiring major lifestyle changes.

Strengthening this connection does more than improve personal health; it also helps people develop a more appreciative and responsible attitude toward the environment, which is essential for maintaining both individual and ecological well-being.

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“Nature does not hurry, yet everything is
accomplished.”

— *Lao Tzu*,

Tao Te Ching

THE SIBLING PARADOX: WHY SIBLINGS GROW UP TOGETHER BUT BECOME OPPOSITES

Srushti Jain

SYBA Psychology

Introduction

It is common to see brothers and sisters grow up in the same house, eat the same food, follow the same rules, and still become completely different from one another. This surprising pattern is often called the “sibling paradox”- the idea that people who share parents and childhood spaces can end up with opposite personalities, interests, and life choices. Researchers like Adler, Sulloway, and Plomin have shown that this happens because siblings actually experience childhood in different ways, even when they live under one roof.

Birth Order and Family Roles

Adler’s early work and later research by Sulloway show that each child enters the family at a different time, when parents have different levels of stress, experience, or expectations.

- **Firstborns** often take on responsibility and leadership because parents treat them like mini-adults.
- **Middle children** learn to adjust and negotiate because they live between two roles.
- **Youngest children** often grow up in a more relaxed environment, which may make them more social or expressive.

These changing roles mean that siblings do not grow up in the “same” family, even if the home is the same.

The Non-shared Environment: Unique Experiences Shape Each Child

Plomin and Daniels found that a major reason siblings become different is the non-shared environment the experiences that are unique to each child.

Examples include:

- different teachers
- different friends
- different hobbies
- different challenges or pressures
- different interpretations of the same event

According to their work, these unique experiences often influence development more than the shared home environment. In simple terms: a house may be the same, but the childhood world inside it is not.

Genetic Differences within the Same Family

Even full siblings share only about half of their genes. This means each child has a different natural temperament such as being calm, energetic, sensitive, shy, or outgoing. These differences affect what activities they choose, how they react to situations, and how they connect with others. Over time, these small genetic differences grow into big personality differences.

Parents Do Not Treat All Children the Same

Research from McHale and colleagues shows that parents often interact with their children differently, even when they try to be fair. One child may receive more guidance, another may get more freedom, and another may get more attention. Children also interpret parental behaviour in different ways. These differences shape how each sibling feels, behaves, and develops their personal strengths.

Identity and the Sibling Contrast Effect

Siblings often try to form their own identity by being *different* from each other. This is known as the sibling contrast effect. For example:

- If one child is studious, the other may choose sports.
- If one is quiet, the other may become talkative.
- If one is responsible, another may take on a fun or creative role.

By choosing different paths, siblings avoid comparisons and get a sense of individuality. Over time, these small differences become stronger, making siblings grow apart in interests and personality.

Life Events Affect Children Differently

Even when the family goes through the same event like moving houses, financial problems, or parental stress siblings are affected differently depending on their age, maturity, and understanding at that time. A situation that feels small to a teenager may feel huge to a young child. This adds another layer of difference in how siblings grow.

Conclusion

The sibling paradox shows that a shared home does not guarantee similar personalities. Birth order, unique experiences, genes, parental behaviour, identity choices, and timing of life events all work together to create separate “worlds” for each child. Even though siblings often grow up to be very different or even opposite from one another, they usually share deep love, respect, and attachment. Their differences give them wider perspectives, help them learn from each other, and often make the bond stronger. In the end, siblings become not only unique individuals but also each other’s lifelong support system and best friend for life.

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THE FIRST BOND - RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NEW BORN AND NEW MOTHER

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- The First Embrace

The moment a child is born, two lives begin a simultaneous journey of discovery. For the newborn, the world is a kaleidoscope of new sensations - light, sound, gravity, and the sudden, overwhelming absence of the familiar aquatic world. For the mother, an equally profound shift occurs. A woman transitions into a mother, often experiencing a complex mix of fierce, protective love and a challenging first-time negotiation of the role of "motherhood."

This relationship, forged in the liminal space between pregnancy and parenthood, is a unique dialogue of mutual dependence and unspoken understanding.

- The Child's Anchor: Security in the Senses

For the new-born, the mother is not just a caregiver; she is the continuation of their existence. The world, terrifying and loud, is filtered through her presence. The child's relationship with the mother is purely sensory.

- The Scent and heartbeats

The unique smell of the mother is the first anchor of security, a biological signature that says, "You are safe here."

After nine months of a constant rhythm, the sound of the mother's heart provides immediate, powerful comfort, a familiar echo of the womb.

- The Touch

Skin-to-skin contact is the primary language of this relationship. It regulates the baby's temperature, heart rate, and breathing, serving as the first, critical blueprint for love and trust.

For the child, there is no one else who can replicate this primal security. The mother is, quite literally, their closest, most understood world.

- Simultaneous learning

While the child is learning how to exist, the mother is learning how to be a mother. This is the poignant duality of the relationship. A mother may be surrounded by advice, books, and family, yet she experiences her child's needs as a deeply personal and often isolating challenge.

In this early stage, the mother is often the only interpreter of her child's needs. The strength of this bond is rooted in this mutual vulnerability the child is utterly reliant, and the mother is dependent on her nascent, quickly developing instincts.

This first relationship sets the stage for all future human connections. Through the consistent, responsive care of the mother, the child develops what psychologist Erik Erikson called Basic Trust. They learn that the world is a place where needs are met, and love is reliable.

For the mother, the intense, non-verbal connection offers deep psychological rewards. It validates her new identity and confirms her capability. The infant's gurgle, smile, and restful sleep are the purest forms of affirmation a mother can receive.

The relationship between a new mother and her child is a journey where both participants are beginners. It is a relationship defined by fierce love, profound discovery, exhaustion, and transcendent joy- a true "first embrace" that shapes the trajectory of two lives forever.

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UNSEEN AND UNHEARD: THE BROKEN RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INDIA AND ITS NON-CRICKET ATHLETES

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India is a country of over a billion people, home to immense sporting talent. Yet, the spotlight shines almost exclusively on cricket, leaving athletes from other disciplines struggling for recognition, funding, and institutional support. Despite producing world class performers in badminton, wrestling, weightlifting, boxing, athletics, and para-sports, India's sporting ecosystem remains heavily skewed. The result is a broken relationship between the nation and many of its athletes one where their achievements are celebrated only momentarily, while their struggles remain largely invisible.

The commercial and institutional dominance of cricket is stark. According to a 2024 "Sporting Nation" industry report, the Indian sports sponsorship and media spending market was worth ₹16,633 crore yet cricket alone accounted for 85% of that sponsorship share. Even as "emerging sports" presence has grown, they still account for a small fraction: in the same 2024 report non-cricket sports collectively contributed about 15% of the sponsorship + media market, leaving the remaining 85% to cricket.^[1]

This skew isn't limited to corporate sponsorship it reflects in visibility, institutional support, and public memory. While budgets and fanfare unite around cricket, athletes from other sports struggle to secure stable funding, training infrastructure, or even basic recognition. Although the overall sports industry economy has grown dramatically (crossing ₹14,000 crore in 2022) and non-cricket disciplines have seen some rising interest their share remains disproportionately low compared to the vast population and untapped talent in the country.^[2] What often goes unnoticed, however, is the emotional and psychological weight this creates for non-cricket athletes.

This unequal treatment affects athletes mentally in the following ways:

1. Impact on Motivation and Identity

Athletes derive a significant part of their identity from the training, recognition, and support they receive. When an athlete works as hard as a cricketer but receives neither visibility nor institutional encouragement, their self-esteem and professional identity are affected. Psychologically, this leads to:

- decreased motivation
- feelings of invisibility
- questioning the value of their efforts

Studies in sports psychology show that lack of recognition is one of the strongest predictors of athlete burnout. ^[3]

2. Perceived Inequity and Stress

Non-cricket athletes often experience chronic stress stemming from:

- inconsistent government support
- poor training facilities
- financial instability
- lack of job security

Many athletes are forced to train with poor infrastructure or even rely on crowdfunding to participate in international events. ^[4]

3. Limited Social Recognition

Public recognition plays a major role in shaping an athlete's confidence and career, but for most non-cricket athletes, it is limited and inconsistent.

- Lack of role models:

Kids rarely see athletes from weightlifting, athletics, or wrestling being celebrated in media. Without visible heroes, fewer children are drawn to these sports.

- Limited sponsorships and job opportunities:

Brands and sports quotas heavily favour popular sports. Even high-performing athletes often face delayed or missing support, something frequently highlighted in media.

- Short-lived media attention:

Non-cricket athletes get noticed only after major wins and fade from headlines soon after. As Chirag Shetty said, “corporate houses need to step up and support sports other than cricket,” underscoring the need for long-term recognition. ^[5]

Real Stories That Reveal Systemic Gaps

India’s sports system has produced remarkable talent, but it has also failed many athletes whose achievements did not translate into long-term support. The following cases widely reported in national news outlets highlight how neglect, poor infrastructure, and inadequate financial assistance continue to discourage young athletes.

1. Poor or Neglected Infrastructure: Training Centres Gone Bad

Across several states, sports facilities meant to nurture talent are often poorly maintained. Damaged tracks, broken equipment, and rusted structures reflect deeper systemic apathy. A tragic reminder came from Rohtak, Haryana, where a 16-year-old national-level basketball player lost his life when a rusted hoop pole collapsed during routine practice. Reported by Hindustan Times, India Today, NDTV, and Khel Now, the incident underscored a disturbing truth: many athletes face life-threatening environments even while training. This was not an accident caused by an athlete’s mistake but by a system that failed to uphold basic safety standards. ^[6]

2. Stories of Athletes Pushed to the Margins

These real-life examples illustrate how athletes who once brought pride to their states or the nation were left unsupported after the applause faded.

• Pushpa Minj — Para Throwball Medalist Turned Vegetable Seller

Pushpa Minj, a national para throwball medalist, had to sell vegetables to support her family due to the absence of financial stability in her sporting career. Her story shows how achievements alone cannot secure a dignified livelihood without sustained institutional backing. ^[7]

• Sita Sahu — Special Olympics Medalist Selling Golgappas

Special Olympics medalist Sita Sahu from Madhya Pradesh, who won two bronze medals, later resorted to selling golgappas to survive. Her story gained attention as an example of how athletes with disabilities face even greater neglect after initial recognition fades. ^[8]

Top athletes in other sports have spoken out about these issues. For many, especially those not raised in metro cities or without ease of access such support would make the difference between giving up and believing in a career.

Conclusion

India's broken relationship with its non-cricket athletes is not just a sporting issue it is a psychological, cultural, and structural problem. The paths for success are narrow, the support systems are weak, and sometimes, the infrastructure itself is dangerous. This failure affects motivation, mental health, and safety. It wastes potential and crushes dreams before they even get a chance.

If India wants to become a truly diverse sporting nation not just cricket juggernaut things must change. That means: proper funding, accountability, safe and well-maintained infrastructure, fair media support, and long-term commitment from institutions and brands. Because talent should be rewarded with support not left to luck.

Practical steps that would help include better funding for SAI and state centres, long-term corporate partnerships with non-cricket sports, and media coverage that doesn't vanish after a single medal. Most importantly, society including schools, colleges, and local communities should cheer for effort and not just the scoreboard. When more kids can see real, supported

athletes in many sports, India will have a healthier sports culture and more chances to win on the global stage.

We owe it to the athletes seen and unseen to build that chance. India's sporting rise begins not with medals, but with the courage to value every athlete who wears its colours.

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“Medals are not just metal—they are dreams realized.”

~ *Mary Kom*,

Boxing legend

WHAT THEIR CHEMISTRY SAYS: A PERSONALITY BREAKDOWN OF ICONIC MOVIE COUPLES

Pratham Pathak

MA II Psychology

All of us have at least one favourite movie couple that are close to our hearts. We root for them, cheer for them, celebrate them - They just seem to be “*made for each other*”. But then why can't we have such pairs in real life as well? Are the movie couples not realistic enough?

So, out of curiosity, I decided to deep dive into MBTI personalities of popular fictional romantic pairs and the compatibility between the two. For this, I used the *Personality Database* website to get accurate MBTI results of fictional characters and then I checked the compatibility of MBTI of both the characters. The link for the same is mentioned at the end of the article. I believed that could help us understand why the movie couples work (or don't) and also if they would work in real life.

1. **Jack and Rose** (*Titanic*, 1997)

Starting with possibly one of the most popular fictional couples, although they didn't get a happy ending, Jack and Rose seemed to be perfect.

Now, *Jack Dawson* is an ESFP who are known for their liveliness, positivity and vitality. They are passionate and prefer living in the moment. They tend to be practical and spontaneous and are warm, generous and good team players.

Rose Bukater, on the other hand, is an ISFP. They are independent, creative, and sensitive to aesthetics and beauty. They tend to be quiet, caring, reserved and value their personal space.

Their compatibility was revealed to be very compatible. Not only do these two types have three common preferences - Sensing, Feeling, and Perceiving, but they also have almost identical cognitive functions. In this relationship style, one person acts as a mentor, helping another to achieve their goals. This dynamic emphasizes learning and growth. They are bound by shared spontaneity and openness, and the communication embodies freedom and fluidity, fostering

comfort in expressing yourselves authentically. Together, they can break from routine, embracing adventure through travel, new hobbies, or spontaneous moments. The ESFP men's sociable and warm nature will balance the ISFP women's quiet and mild energy, bringing harmony to this relationship.

2. **Peter Parker and MJ (MCU)**

Peter Parker/Spider-man is an ENFP. They are dreamy, energetic, optimistic, receptive, and innovative and are known for their disillusionment and idealism. They often have a range of abilities and skills and are known for their ability to motivate and inspire others.

MJ/Michelle-Jones is an INTP. They are logical, analytical and prioritize knowledge and understanding. They are usually flexible and tolerant till their beliefs are challenged.

When their chemistry was checked, it turned out to be very compatible as well. ENFP male and INTP female compatibility is generally high, although the INTP type is rare among women, while the ENFP type is more common among women than men. Both ENFPs and INTPs are creative and imaginative individuals with compelling ideas. Still, as they are different in more ways than one, they might encounter some challenges down the road.

The communication between the two tends to be calm, composed, and devoid of strong emotional expression. It may prioritize logical reasoning, factual information, or a more matter-of-fact approach rather than being driven by emotional or passionate exchanges.

3. **Geet and Aditya (Jab We Met)**

Geet, just like Peter, is an ENFP.

Aditya is an INFJ. It is the rarest personality type with traits like being idealistic and compassionate. They are known for their deep nature, being empathetic and understanding, and a desire to improve themselves and everything around. They are often called mysterious and wise.

Their compatibility, according to the Personality Database, was 99%. The relationship benefits from the perfect complementary nature of their cognitive processes. It can be characterized by deep connection, mutual respect, and complementary strengths that enriches the bond and support each other's growth and development. The [INFJ male](#) and the [ENFP female](#) can make a good pairing, although INFJ males are generally reserved and introverted, while ENFP females

are bubbly, curious, and fun-loving. The ENFP female can find the INFJ male's depth and intelligence attractive. The INFJ male can learn how to be more outgoing and adventurous. This discrepancy may actually benefit their compatibility, as they can learn a lot from each other and draw from their differences.

4. **Ana and Christian** (*50 shades of grey*)

Ana is an ISFJ. They are considerate, dependable and sensitive. They value harmony and cooperation and have a strong memory for information important to them. They value security, kindness, traditions and laws. They excel in roles involving organizing, helping and supporting others.

Christian is an INTJ. They are logical and value intelligence, knowledge and competence. They are driven to understand new ideas and concepts. They are often described as independent, decisive, self-confident and ambitious.

The pair doesn't seem to be very much compatible according to their MBTI types. At first glance, ISFJ and INTJ may seem like a good romantic match—after all, both are judging introverts who value their peace and enjoy quiet nights indoors.

However, these two types rarely gravitate towards each other. ISFJs and INTJs have drastically different communication styles, which may pose a problem in the relationship. ISFJs and INTJs may still struggle to resolve issues. INTJs may prefer to approach the situation from a logical standpoint and look for solutions, whereas ISFJs often simply want to be heard and validated. INTJs are highly ambitious, always striving for more than what they have. ISFJs, on the other hand, cherish their simple, comfortable lives and find such ambition intimidating and aggressive. Despite their apparent similarities, ISFJs and INTJs have surprisingly little in common. As a result, they may seem highly incompatible at first.

5. **Harley Quinn and Joker** (*DC*)

Arthur Fleck/Joker is an ENTP. They are curious, investigative, quick witted, enthusiastic, flexible, and good at many things that interest them. They are good at debating their ideas, and exploring all sides of an idea rather than specialising in one perspective. They also are good leaders.

Harley Quinn is an ENFP like Geet.

Their compatibility was extremely high. They do well in dynamic environments and have a talent for inspiring others with their idealism and optimism. They both share the same information processing function, fostering trust, reliability, and a strong sense of reassurance in the relationship. Both personalities exude vibrant and differing traits, which might initially seem conflicting but actually play on each other in an amazing way. The [ENTP male's](#) innovative curiosity and thinking go well with the [ENFP female's](#) enthusiasm and warmth.

6. **Chandler and Monica** (*Friends*)

Chandler Bing is an ENTP like the Joker mentioned above.

Monica is an ESTJ. They are responsible, ethical, honest, straightforward, and logical and excel at devising plans. They may have trouble seeing value of goals outside their practical scope.

Their compatibility percentage is 86%. It is a classic “opposite attracts dynamic”. Their matched cognitive functions foster mutual admiration and their relationship is characterized by mutual growth, learning, and discovery. They broaden each other's perspectives, challenge assumptions, and encourage personal development and enlightenment. Their communication features a blend of structured reasoning and creative expression and may utilize analogies, metaphors, and anecdotes to convey your ideas and insights. Chandler's Ne (extroverted intuition) helps to break Monica out of her rigid thinking, while her Te (extroverted thinking) provides the structure and decisiveness he sometimes lacks.

7. **Anakin and Padme** (*Star Wars*)

Anakin Skywalker is an ESFP like Jack, while *Padme* is an INFJ like Aditya.

In theory, they are not compatible. [INFJ female's](#) reflective and future-oriented nature is still very likely to stand in stark contrast to some of the prominent and opposing traits of [ESFP males](#). INFJs often hide their vulnerability behind a reserved facade and have difficulty opening up, whereas ESFPs, as they are direct and honest, choose to take action rather than discuss their feelings and the difficult issues at hand. This kind of contrast already sets the stage for hefty conflict potential down the line. INFJs could also be alarmed by ESFPs' need for new experiences and adventures, while ESFPs could view INFJs as dull and too philosophical.

In the end, MBTI compatibility doesn't decide whether a fictional couple is destined for bliss or heartbreak but it does reveal why certain romances feel believable, magnetic, or inevitably doomed. By understanding how different personality types clash or complement each other, we gain a richer perspective on the stories we love and the characters who shape them. Whether it's a pair held together by shared vision or torn apart by mismatched values, these dynamics remind us that every relationship, real or imagined, is a reflection of the complex ways people think, feel, and connect. And that's exactly what keeps these onscreen love stories unforgettable.

It is essential to note that just because you and/or partner share similar MBTI personalities, it's not necessary that you might end up just like the fictional characters or are exactly like them. Just because you aren't the best example of highly compatible couples doesn't have to mean your relationship must be a recipe for disaster.

Don't let your [personality test](#) results stand in the way of love. If you both are committed and are willing to overcome your differences and listen to each other, your relationship can be fulfilling and full of growth and learning.

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- <https://styx.personality-database.com/chemistry>

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“To be loved and accepted as we are is one of the deepest needs”

~ Carl Rogers

SOMEONE THAT MAKES YOU WANT TO LIVE MORE

Swara Kulkarni

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As a teenager, I experienced poor mental health where I used to spiral every day and sometimes ended up harming myself whenever it got too much. I had almost given up on life until she came into my life. All my life I never even imagined my future because I believed I'd give up before it came. It was all until I became friends with this girl. She cheered for me so loud that I didn't even notice who didn't. She believed in me and helped me believe in myself. Life is bearable when she's there. She makes me want to live more. And I find myself working on building my life all over again. I have stopped harming myself and I don't think of ending everything anymore. Miracle does happen. I want everyone to hold on until it does. Life is really worth living. You'll also find someone or something that'll make you want to live more. That right there is love. It doesn't always have to be romantic. It could be platonic. It could be art, profession, hobby, anything. Love isn't only in romantic relationships. It's wanting to paint more, wanting to play more violin, it's looking forward to do something or meeting someone that makes you want to live more. It's important to wait for your "someone or something that makes you want to live more". It's important to know life isn't over yet.

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“Where there is love there is life.”

~Mahatma Gandhi

EXPLORING
REALATIONSHIPS

NOVEMBER 2025

BEYOND FRIENDSHIP



HOW FRIENDSHIP DEFINED KINSHIP

BY CHARLENE JAMES

Friendship is a relationship of mutual affection between people. It is a stronger form of interpersonal bond than an "acquaintance" or an "association", such as a classmate, neighbour, coworker, or colleague.

Young children use cues such as sharing resources, like snacks, and sharing secrets, especially in older adolescents, to determine friendship status. When comparing cues of similarity in food preference or gender, propinquity, and loyalty in adolescent children, younger children rely on similarity in gender/food preferences but more so propinquity to infer friendship while older adolescents rely heavily on propinquity to infer friendship.

Strengthening of Bonds*

- As the students grew older, their friendship became stronger. Their families also started forming closer ties. Even though there were occasional disagreements, the friends always made up, showing how strong their bond was.

Conclusion*

What started as a simple school friendship grew into a lasting connection between two families. This story shows how early experiences at school can lead to lifelong relationships that flourish outside the classroom.

TWO PEAS IN A POD

***THE EVOLUTION
OF A SCHOOL
FRIENDSHIP INTO
LASTING FAMILY
BONDS****



Introduction*

Starting school can be scary for many children. This story looks at two students whose initial nerves turned into a strong friendship that eventually brought their families together.

- ***Initial Encounter****

Moving to a new school was overwhelming for both students until they met each other. Their shared anxiety quickly turned into a friendship. They began spending a lot of time together, sharing lunches and doing various activities.

- ***Development of Friendship****

A key moment happened on a rainy day when one student invited the other home. The friend's parents welcomed the guest warmly. Even though there was some mischief, this visit started a new friendship. They began visiting each other's homes, leading to their families getting to know each other.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF LOSING PEOPLE WHO ARE STILL ALIVE

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TYBA Psychology

Some losses don't come with funerals or last goodbyes. They arrive on an ordinary day, quietly, when someone you love becomes a stranger. Ironically, a stranger with memories, pictures, and dreams you once shared.

If the person were gone forever, maybe the mind would be kinder. But when they still exist in the same city, the same friend group, the same digital space, the grief becomes harder to name. It's not dramatic; it's just there an ache that doesn't know where to go.

Losing someone who still appears in your everyday life someone whose name still comes up, whose voice you still hear doesn't sound like grief. But it is. The laughter that once filled my phone screen now echoes faintly in my mind.

Psychologists call this *ambiguous loss* a kind of grief that has no closure, no ritual, no end. The brain cannot tell the difference between emotional and physical loss; to it, both are equally painful.

You still see them around on social media, in passing, maybe even smiling with someone else. And for a brief second, your brain forgets. You remember the good moments, the laughter, the way their presence felt like home. But then it hits: those memories no longer belong to your present life. They've quietly slipped away.

This kind of emotional grief doesn't just happen in romantic heartbreaks. It happens when friendships fade too when people who once shared your world suddenly become strangers. It's the loss of "what was," the quiet mourning of a version of life that doesn't exist anymore

So why does this hurt so deeply? We still see them around, exchange small conversations, but it still reminds us of what we used to have and what is left now, speaking from personal experiences this grief of losing a friend hurts more when they chose to move forward without you, without any closure and because no one taught us how to mourn the loss of a person who's still alive

It aches to see the castles we once dreamed of building now stand abandoned — or worse, being built with someone else. It hurts so much because there's no clean ending. No closure, no goodbye, no moment that tells you, "This is where it ends." They just slowly fade replying less, showing up less until one day you realize you're the only one still holding on to something that's already gone.

The world doesn't stop when u grieve them, while they are still laughing, posting, living like what we shared was a chapter bound to end perhaps this is what makes the pain of losing someone alive hurt more, "what could have been" is different from "what is"

Speaking from a psychological point of view studies say, humans need an ending a closure. We need stories to have endings so our minds can rest and not plunger into the deep abyss of the unwritten ending, but ambiguous loss robs us of that peace and puts us right into that gap of constant grieving and not letting go

It hurts because our brains are wired for attachments, when we bond with someone make deep connection the same neural links that light up in physical pain activate when these connections are broken. Studies show emotional rejection/pain triggers the part of brain which processes physical pain so when they walk away it doesn't just feel like a wound it in fact is one.

Every text, every meme, every little inside joke lights up the same reward circuits in your brain that respond to connection, belonging, and safety. You begin to associate their presence with comfort, their laughter with stability. In psychological terms, your brain starts wiring them into your daily rhythm, into the map of what feels like "home." And then, suddenly, they're gone. No warning, no closure—just silence.

That silence isn't just emotional; it's biological. The brain, still craving that familiar hit of dopamine, goes into withdrawal. The same neural pathways that were once flooded with joy now ache with absence. It's your body mourning a bond it thought was permanent. And the grief of that kind of loss, though invisible, mirrors the grief of death itself. Because in a way, someone has died not in the world, but in yours.

But here's the strange thing about grief, the world doesn't stop for it. You still wake up, attend lectures, and scroll through your feed, laugh at something new. And yet, somewhere deep inside, there's a ghost of what once was, not haunting, just lingering. The person you lost is still alive,

but the version of them that knew you isn't. So you learn to live with it. You stop refreshing old chats, stop checking who viewed your story. You start building new dopamine pathways

Healing isn't forgetting; it's rewiring. And maybe one day, when you pass them on the street or stumble across an old photo, your heart won't ache it'll just nod in quiet recognition of something that was.

Because losing people who are still alive teaches you one thing: love doesn't always end, sometimes it just changes form.

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~~*

"Grief is the price we pay for love."

~ *Queen Elizabeth II*

WAYS TO ENHANCE RELATIONSHIPS

Mrug Rajguru

MA II Psychology

Core Principles:-

Effective relationships rely on active listening and honest sharing of emotions using “I” statements to avoid blame. Trust develops through reliability and transparency, while appreciation via compliments and kindness makes partners feel valued. Respecting personal space, handling disputes collaboratively, and prioritising self-care form the bedrock of healthy dynamics.

Nurturing Connection:-

Partners should plan regular activities like game nights or outings to build closeness. Small acts of kindness and celebrating each other's successes provide reliable support. Allowing independence prevents resentment and sustains individuality within the partnership

Unexpected Strategies:-

Spending time apart refreshes desire, as therapist Esther Perel notes that excess closeness stifles intimacy. Aligning bedtimes reduces conflicts and boosts interaction, avoiding distractions like screens. Sharing vulnerabilities about personal blind spots deepens trust, while novel experiences combat routine boredom.

Conflict and Positivity:-

Approach arguments gently with polite tones and repair attempts like humour or empathy, per John Gottman's research on successful couples. Maintain a 5:1 ratio of positive to negative interactions during disagreements. Reminiscing fondly about shared memories reinforces appreciation and counters daily stress.

Marriage Strengthening Tips:-

Commit fully by ruling out divorce thoughts during tough times, forgive promptly to avoid grudges, and communicate daily about feelings and finances. Schedule date nights, prioritize wellness through fitness, and grant space without control. Seek therapy or counselling if challenges persist for skill-building and goal-setting.

Communication Essentials:-

Open, blame-free dialogue using “I” statements prevents escalation, while active listening builds emotional safety. Couples who dedicate distraction-free time daily report higher satisfaction and fewer grudges. Research emphasizes this as the foundation, reducing misunderstandings in busy lives.

Space and Novelty:-

Time apart fosters independence and desire, countering fusion that Perel describes as intimacy's paradox. Introducing surprises—like new hobbies or adventures—combats routine, with studies showing novelty reignites passion in long-term pairs. Shared sleep schedules minimize conflicts by promoting connection and limiting screen interference.

Conflict Resolution:-

Gottman's methods include soft start-ups, repair attempts (e.g., empathy or humor), and a 5:1 positivity ratio during disputes. Reminiscing positive stories shifts focus from negatives, strengthening bonds amid stress. Forgiving quickly and apologizing sincerely clears resentment, enabling future-oriented growth.

Long-Term Marriage Tips:-

Commit by viewing divorce as off-limits, align on finances early, and maintain wellness through joint activities. Regular dates and mutual respect for autonomy prevent control issues leading to abuse. Professional help via therapy equips couples with tools for lasting success.

~~*

अरसा हुआ

(A Bilingual Poem Blending Hindi and English from Heartbreak to Acceptance.)

Ketan Kaule

TYBA Psychology

अरसा हुआ तू मेरे दिल से है जुदा,
 पलके झपकाऊँ तो आँखों में क्यों बसा?
 चेहरा भुला नहीं, धुंधली यादों का फ़साना,
 क्यों बुन रहा जो तू अरसों से दूर था?
 ज़िंदा शाम-ओ-सुबह, तेरी आहटें महसूस करे बिना — मर जाऊँ क्या?
 हालात ऐसे करके छोड़ चला, तेरे बिन किसको क्यों चाहूँगा?

Baby I'm just so done with your love,
 Don't know if all along I was your foe,
 Feeling all of these nights lately — so cold;
 Want you to knock my door — or else bring back my love,
 Feeling alone...

थाम लेना हाथ मेरा जब आएगी सुनामी,
 सहारा था बस प्यार का — जो क्यों बुझ गया?
 साथ में जो बहे आँसू, तेरा मैं किनारा;
 मंज़िल बदल के टापू वीरान कर गया।
 था सिरहाने से, हँसते आँखों से, बीता वक़्त कैसे जब तू था दूर?
 किए वादों से, हुए हादसों से, छीना पल कैसे, किससे मैं कहूँ?
 बातें हैं अधूरी — काफ़ी ख़ुद से करता था...
 रास्ते बदल चुके, हम हैं ख़ुद से ख़फ़ा।

फ़ासले बढ़े, अपनों के प्यार को पहचानना;
चाहता हूँ लेकिन — दिल तो मर चुका।

Baby I'm still so done with your love,
Don't know if ever I'll feel that same love.
Feeling all of those fights lately — so warm;
Want you to knock once more or else bring back my love,
Feeling alone...

~~*

“Love looks not with the eyes, but with the
mind, and therefore is winged Cupid painted
blind.”

~ *William Shakespeare,*
A Midsummer Night's Dream

THE LONG WAY HOME: RELATIONSHIP WITH SELF



Mahek Javedkhan Pathan

TYBA Psychology

I have met myself in fractured mirrors,
in the hush that follows a storm.
Some nights, I forgot my own name
it lingered in the air, unanswered,
like a prayer without faith.

I have loved to quiet the ache inside,
offering warmth I couldn't feel myself.
But emptiness has a way of returning
soft-footed, unannounced,
sitting beside me like an old friend.

I once mistook healing for forgetting,
until I learned to touch my scars
without flinching
each one a small, luminous truth
etched into my becoming.

Now, I return to myself gently
not as a saviour, nor as a sinner,
but as someone still learning
that love, too, begins at home.

~~*

Poet's Note:

This poem explores the evolving relationship one has with the self; the journey from estrangement to acceptance, from seeking wholeness in others to rediscovering it within. It reflects on how healing is not the absence of pain, but the presence of tenderness toward one's own fractures.

परत येऊ नकोस

Vaishnavi Magar

MA II Psychology

परत येऊ नकोस

आता जसा गेलास तसाच जा

पण मागे वळून पाहू नकोस

मी सावरेल स्वतःला तू मात्र येऊ नकोस

भेटलो कधी कुठल्या अनोळखी वळणावर पाहून तुला डोळे पानावतील

पण मी सावरेल स्वतःला

तू मात्र येऊ नकोस..

जसे मासे साथ सोडत नाहीत पाण्याची तशी तुझी आठवण आहे रे..

सोडायचा प्रयत्न केला तरी सुटत नाही

पण तू मात्र येऊ नकोस..

नको तो स्वार्थ आता तुझी एक झलक पाहण्याचातुझ्या आठवणीत ,नको आहे ते बोलणं आता ,

...लपन आता

आणि जर यावसं वाटलं तर पूर्णपणे माझा हो

आणि नाही होऊ शकलास माझा

तर पुन्हा एकदा सांगते

तू मात्र येऊ नकोस...

तू आलास तर आठवणी नव्याने उमलतील

तुला मिळवण्याची आस परत जागी होईल

परत ते बोलणं , परत भेटणं नको आता

तुटलेय रे मी खूप स्वतःला सावरून!..

तू मात्र येऊ नकोस.

तू मात्र येऊ नकोस!...

~~*

LOVE



Vaishnavi Bhuwad

FYBA

To live is to love, and to love we all must ache
But the warmth of affection is all that we crave
To pour every ounce of you, a heart must be so brave
Without demanding anything in return in a world so fake
Having your presence beside me is so sweet
Sitting quietly, without a word under this oak tree
Listening to the melody of your heartbeat on repeat
To love whoever and however, we are all free.

~~*

“Souls tend to go back to who feels like home.”

— *N.R. Hart*

मिळवणं कठीण नसतं

Vaishnavi Magar

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मिळवणं कठीण नसतं,

कठीण असतं ते जपणं आणि टिकवून ठेवणं!

विश्वास एकदा तुटला,की परत जुळत नाही ,

जुळलाच तरी त्या सुरकुत्या लपवत नाही.

नातं एका शब्दाने तुटतं,

आणि हजार प्रयत्नांनीही पुन्हा जुळत नाही.

प्रेम मिळवणं सोपं,

पण त्यातला ओलावा कायम ठेवणं अवघड.

कधी नकळतच हृदयावर ओरखडे उमटतात,

आणि त्या जखमा सहज भरून निघत नाहीत.

मन मोकळं करणारे अनेक भेटतात,

पण मन समजून घेणारे क्वचितच

सापडतात.

काही लोक नसतानाही सोबत असतात,

आणि काही जवळ असूनही परके वाटतात.

म्हणूनच, शब्दांचा वापर जपून करावा,

प्रेमाच्या नात्यांना हळुवारपणे जपावं,

कारण मिळणं नशिबाने ठरतं,

पण टिकवणं आपल्या हातात असतं!

~~*

“8 BILLION - 1”**Varun Pujari****MA (Part 1) Psychology**

Left in the dark, the joy is not yet won,
But please remember, it's just Eight Billion Minus One.
The chapter is finished, abruptly done,
But it was only Eight Billion Minus One.
The path shared together vanished with the setting sun,
But it's just the memory of Eight Billion Minus One.
Your new journey ahead has already begun,
You're free to explore the whole of Eight Billion Minus One.
Don't let your bright future be utterly undone,
For the sake of that single Eight Billion Minus One.
Life is not a sprint, but a long marathon run,
Have patience, it's always just Eight Billion Minus One.
There's a friend waiting for you, my little one,
Hidden in the rest of Eight Billion Minus One.
Go find your bright star beneath the moon and sun,
Because the world is always Eight Billion Minus One.

~~*

OF WHAT REMAINS...

Shreya Joshi
TYBA Psychology

We thought that growing up would gleam
a golden key, a lifelong dream.

That age would bring a secret door
to freedom, power, maybe more.

We thought we'd meet our celeb-crush one day,
just cross their path in some cliché
grown and glowing, fate would spin,
as if the world would let us win.

The future sparkled, loud and bright,
a firework bursting through the night.
But growth whispers, soft and low
it hums a tune we didn't know.

Some attachments grew wings but stayed behind,
like faded stickers, half-defined
still clinging to a diary's page,
a softer glow, a gentler stage.

There's warmth, no doubt
in sleepy beams,
in kind hellos and quiet dreams.

But sometimes creeps a thought, unfair:
What if it peaks right here, right there?

What if the years ahead just show
not answers, but the way things flow?
Not perfect paths or signs above
but something close to self and love.

Not joy that shouts or truths that sting,
but balance simple, steadying.
A peace that stays when others flee,
a calm that roots itself in me.

~~*

आँसू

Abhakiran Sharma

MA I Psychology

आँसू मुझसे नहीं संभलते,
 पता नहीं कब बिना दस्तक चले आते,
 दुःख में आ जाते,
 सुख में भी आ जाते,
 बिन बुलाए मेहमान की तरह,
 पर कभी भी अकेलेपन में अकेला नहीं छोडते,
 हर दुःख, सुख सांक्षा करते,
 उम्र की संध्या बेला में भी आ जाते,
 हौसला देने में साथ हूँ सखी,
 तुम अपना जी हल्का कर लो,
 दर्द की सारी परते खोल दो,
 ये जमी धूल को बहा दो,
 गहरी सांसे लो,
 मन के संमदर को स्थिर करने के लिए तुम बढ़ों मोक्ष की ओर....
 मैं हूँ साथ तुम्हारे...

- किरण

~~*

राह

Abhakiran Sharma

MA I Psychology

एक राह चुनी है टेड़ी सी-मेड़ी -,
कच्चीपक्की पंगडंडी जैसी-,
कभी फिसलती धूल उडाती,
पर मंजिल को ले जाती,

थक कर बैठ जाँऊ कभी तो,
संभाल लेती वो मुझको,
हर मोड़ एक नया मंजर है,
फिर भी ले जाती मंजिल को,

जो हार कर रूक जाँऊ तो,
क्षितिज की ओर इशारा कर देती,
राही मैं अपने राह की,
तलाश कर रही मंजिल को,

ये सवेरा नवजीवन का,
पा लिया है जो मंजिल को.....

- किरण

~~*

SUMMER, COME BACK

Dinzeen La
TYBA Psychology

On an ordinary Sunday like this I often wonder
if you ever end up thinking about me...

For the way,

The memory of ever so delicate traces of your finger pads that used to brush
against my skin with so much assurance is now etched into my brain.
The way you'd trace every doubt and replace them with stars instead.

Oh! But you were like tapestry my love!

Making me ember shame in my soul
which eventually followed me around like stray dogs.

Even a con man could tell my ruse
Oh, how they can see I dissected my vanity just so
I could be a slave to your impurities
wanting every atom that made up your body and
the blood that kept your bones warm to engulf me
into your wretched flames.

I perish to be engraved into that tapestry
for your presence and warmth
Every minute that passes by without you present here
makes me yearn for you even more.

सुरू न होणारं नातं

प्रियल शाह, यश ओझा

TYBA Psychology

कधी होशील तू माझा, या विचारात मग्न राहिले,
मग्न असल्यामुळे हे कळलेच नाही, कधी त्याने मला पाहिले.

त्याने पाहिल्यामुळे हृदयाचे ठोके वाढले,
काय करू? कसं सांगू? या विचारात हरवले.
हिम्मतीने शब्द जुळले, शब्दांनी मनं जोडली,
सुरुवात आमची अशी झाली.

नात्याला अजून नाव नव्हते, पण प्रयत्न चालू होते,
अशा या गंमतीजमतींनी प्रयत्नांना आकार मिळत होते.

वाढत होतं महत्त्व या नात्याचे —

जसं गाडी बिन प्रवाश्यांचे

जसं माणूस बिन श्वासाचा,

अजून किती सांगू महत्त्व या नाट्याचा?

खेळ असेच सुरु असतात वेळेचे—

तो नसताना थांबून असते, मी;

भेटताना निघून जाते.

वेळेला होती माझी अशी तक्रार—

“थांबून जावं कधीतरी, कधी होईल असा चमत्कार?”

जेव्हा बारी आली नाट्याला नाव घायची,

ओझार आमच्या हातात न्हवते,

आकारांना भेटत न्हवते साकार,

पावसातही दडत होतं कोरडं संसार.

समाज अनोळखी नाती घडवून आणतो,

घडलेली नाती अनोळखी करून टाकतो

नाती अशीच असतात—

सुरु होण्याआधीच मनात रुजलेली,

न सांगता शब्दांच्या पलीकडे बोललेली.

कागदावर नाव नसले तरी हृदयात जागा केलेली,
पण काही काळाच्या वाळूतही न पुसता येणारी.

हीच तर कथा होती आमची—

सुरु न होणारं नातं,

पण कधीच न संपणारं नातं.

~~*

"विश्वास असेल तरच नाते टिकते,
नाहीतर फक्त नाव उरते"

वो अन कही बात...

प्रांजली उबाळे

FYBA

ऐसा क्या हुआ था मुझे उन दिनों....

ऐसा क्या हुआ था मुझे उन दिनों....

कि जब मैंने पहली बार देखा तुम्हें मुझे देखते हुए,

कि जब मैंने पहली बार देखा तुम्हें मुझे देखते हुए,

तब पहली बार लगा कि मुझे इश्क़ रूह से हुआ है,

तुम्हारे जिस्म से नहीं।

ज़रूरत थी रूह को रूह की....

शायद इसलिए जिस्म की चाह कम थी।

यह हुआ तो बस एक धोखा था आँखों का,

हकीकत तो तुम्हारी सादगी में छुपी है।

क्योंकि बोलते तुम लफ़्ज़ों से कम हो,

पर तुम्हारी आँखें सब कुछ कह जाती हैं।

जैसे पहले वो इश्क़ जताते थे,

अब मोहब्बत जताने लगे हैं।

इस बार लफ़्ज़ों से कह दो ना,

क्योंकि मेरे कान

तुम्हारे लफ़्ज़ सुनने को तरस रहे हैं।

पर कुछ बातें अनकही रह ही जाती हैं शायद....

कुछ लफ़्ज़ों की कमी रह जाती है शायद....

पता है, तुम कभी कह नहीं पाओगे,

पर तुम हमारे रहोगे..... शायद।

की मैत्रीही संपल्यासारखी वाटावी!

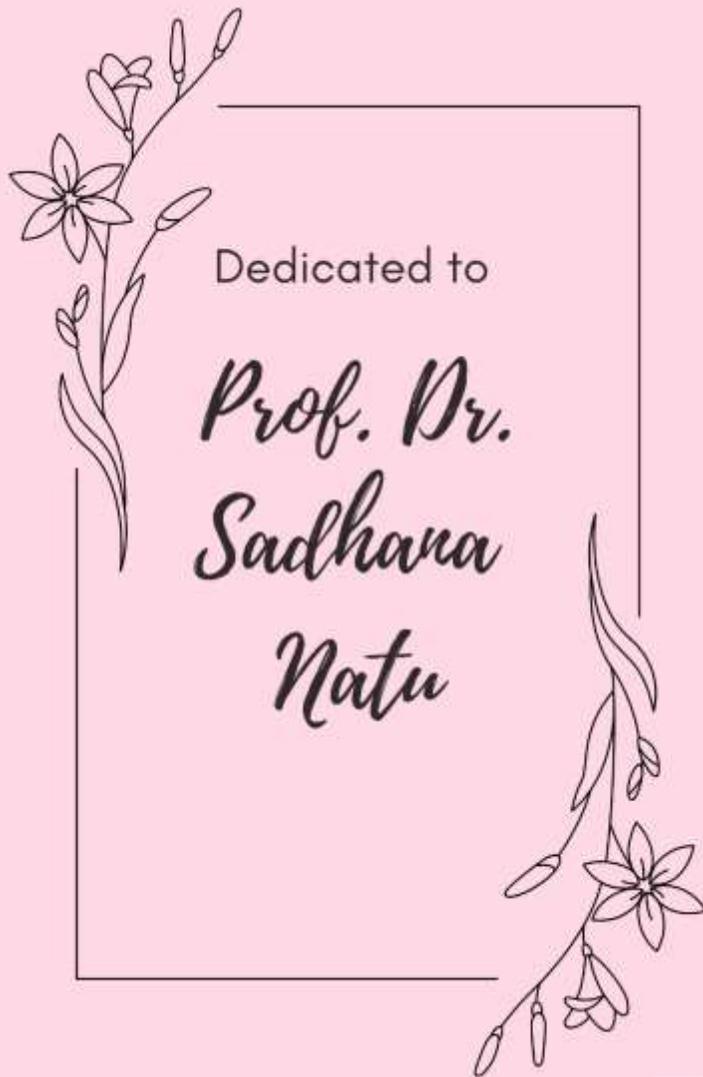
-ऐश्वर्या शिंगाडे

MA II Psychology

इतकी जवळीक करून घेऊ नको
जवळ असताना पण दूर वाटावं
तेवढी सवय लावून घेऊ नको की
त्याच्या न बोलण्याचं दुःख व्हावं
तेवढी त्याची सोबत करू नकोस
सोबत नसताना अस्वस्थता वाटावी
इतकं कोणावर प्रेम करू नकोस
की मैत्री ही संपल्यासारखी वाटावी!

~~*

"मैत्री ही जीवनाची माळ गुंफणारी दोर
आहे."



Paying Tribute to Prof. Dr. Sadhana Natu

This special section in the Kaleidoscope Journal is to honour and celebrate the remarkable academic life and service of **Prof. Dr. Sadhana Natu**, whose retirement in August 2025, marked the conclusion of an extraordinary professional journey and the continuation of an enduring intellectual and social legacy.

With over **thirty-seven years of dedicated service** as an academician, researcher, psychologist, and social activist, Prof. Dr. Natu's career has been defined by an unwavering commitment to knowledge, justice, and human well-being. Her academic journey, distinguished from its very beginning by national merit scholarships and a UGC-JRF, laid the foundation for a life devoted not only to teaching psychology, but to transforming it from being mainstream to multicultural and inclusive.

As **Professor and Head of the UG and PG Department of Psychology at Modern College, Ganeshkhind**, she played a pivotal role in shaping generations of students. Her classrooms were spaces where theory met practice, where critical thinking was nurtured, and where sensitivity to gender, mental health, and social context was deeply cultivated. Many students remember her not only as a teacher, but as a mentor who encouraged intellectual courage and ethical responsibility.

Besides being excellent in curricular activities she was also the curator of many co-curricular activities. The Department hosted a plethora of well thought of and even better executed activities which were all the brain child of Prof Dr. Sadhana Natu. **Disha the Peer Support and Speak-Out Platform** provided a safe space for students to interact with one another and share their thoughts and feelings. **Kaleidoscope** the student journal provided the students an opportunity to hone their writing skills and a chance to have a publication on their name.

Psy-World was designed to present a slice of Psychology to the rest of the college. Koshish our Hands on internship activity was functional long before the National Education Policy made it mandatory. **Koshish** bought Prof Dr Natu's two worlds together where her students got a chance to interact with her professional engagements across sectors. **Ummeed College Community Mental Health** was Prof. Dr. Natu's way of establishing the college as a community and catering their mental health needs as well.

Mind Scape a research compendium publishing under graduate research papers was distinctive cause that no other colleges were engaging in under graduate research. Attending the **National Academy of Psychology Conferences** was something that Prof. Dr. Natu regularly encouraged among her students and this gave them exposure to the latest developments and updates happening in the field.

Beyond the Department of Psychology, Prof. Dr. Sadhana Natu has been the Principal, Vice Principal and has held many Leadership roles at different Committee levels. As the Arts Circle Head she inspired many students to understand the nuances of theater and music. Being the Head of the Counselling Cell she helped many students and staff better their mental health.

Prof. Dr. Natu's scholarly contributions are vast and impactful. With **over 80 research papers, numerous books and book chapters published with leading international and national publishers**, and several independent research projects as Principal Investigator, she has significantly advanced the fields of **gender psychology, social psychology, clinical psychology, and mental health**. Her recent books on psychology and gender stand as important academic resources, reflecting both depth of scholarship and clarity of thought.

Beyond academia, Prof. Dr. Natu's work has consistently bridged the gap between the university and society. As a **trained psychotherapist**, community psychologist, and feminist practitioner, she has worked extensively with grassroots organizations, NGOs, and policy bodies. Her leadership of the counselling cell and peer support initiatives, and her long-standing engagement with the women's movement, mental health movement, and disability rights, reflect a life committed to social transformation.

Her contributions to curriculum development, faculty training, editorial work, and professional bodies at national and international levels further demonstrate the breadth of her influence. The many awards and recognitions she has received stand as testimony to the respect she commands as an educator, scholar, and public intellectual.

As Prof. Dr. Sadhana Natu steps away from her formal academic role, we know that her ideas, values, and inspiration will continue to shape minds and movements. We express our deepest

gratitude for her service, her scholarship, and her unwavering commitment to psychology with a human face.

We wish her a fulfilling and meaningful new phase of life, confident that her voice and vision will continue to guide and inspire us all.

Nashome Crasto,
Head of the Department
Department of Psychology.

“एका व्यक्तिमत्त्वासोबत असणारा आगळा वेगळा प्रवास”

Dr. साधना नातू हे असं नाव आहे ज्या नावाला कोण ओळखत नाही अशी फार थोडी लोकं आहेत.हा माझा वैयक्तिक अनुभव आहे. मी ज्या ज्या लोकांना आजपर्यंत भेटले त्या सर्वांच्या कडून मी तुमचं नाव ऐकलंय. तुम्हाला कोणी नातू मॅडम म्हणतं तर कोणी आमच्या साधना ताई असं म्हणतात.काय बोलायचं मॅडम तुमच्याबद्दल. तुम्ही एक व्यक्ती नसून एक विचार आहात, जो अखंडितपणे चालू राहणार आहे.काय बोलायचं,काय सांगायचं याबद्दल साशंकता आहे मनात. आजच्या या भावनात्मक क्षणी मी निशब्द आहे ma'am. एका लहानशा खेडेगावात राहणारी स्वाती ते Modern महाविद्यालयात एक Assistant Professor म्हणून तुम्ही नव्याने ओळख मिळवून दिलेली स्वाती जगताप. 2016 मध्ये काहीही Qualification नसताना तुम्ही मला विभागात शिकवण्याची संधी

प्राप्त करून दिलीत. त्यानंतर अर्थात SET Qualification मध्ये तुमचा खूप मोठा हातखंडा आहे. PHD साठी ही नेहमी प्रोत्साहित करत आला आहात.

तुम्ही खूप काही दिलं मला. तुमच्याकडून खूप गोष्टी शिकता आल्या. माझ्या व्यक्तिमत्वातल्या काही पैलुंची नव्याने ओळख मला तुमच्यामुळे झाली. Kaleidoscope मध्ये लिहिण्यासाठी तुम्ही मला नेहमी प्रोत्साहित करायचात. तुम्ही मला मी college मध्ये नवीन होते तेव्हा नेहमी म्हणायचात संधी मिळालीये तर त्याचा फायदा करून घे, सगळ्यांना संधी मिळते असं नाही. आपण equal आहोत पण same नाही त्यामुळे मिळालेली संधी उपयोगात आणायची. मग मी हे वाक्य नेहमी लक्षात ठेवलं अगदी बस मध्ये seat मिळाली की काहीनाकाही तरी मी वाचत राहायचे. अगदी ह्या तुमच्या वाक्याचा मी आयुष्याच्या वेगवेगळ्या टप्प्यावर use केला.

तुमच्यामुळे माझी पुस्तकांशी मैत्री झाली आणि याचा फायदा मला वर्गात तर झालाच परंतु माझ्या personal आयुष्यात जी काही वादळ आली त्याची intensity कमी करण्यासाठी मला या पुस्तकांची, वाचनाच्या सवयीची फार मदत झाली...होतीये. लोकसत्तेतील चतुरंग, लोकरंग, ही पुरवणी काही संपादकीय लेख वाचायची सवय मला तुमच्यामुळे लागली. सामाजिक भान हा शब्द उचित नाही ठरणार पण सांवेदनिक महत्त्व याबद्दल जाणीव आपल्या सततच्या चर्चेमुळे निर्माण झाली. तुमच्यामुळे Psychology पलीकडचं वेगळ्या धाटणीचं लिखाण माझ्या वाचनात आलं. अनेक स्त्रीवादी लेखिकांचा कथा कादंबऱ्यांच्या माध्यमातून परिचय झाला. सानिया, गौरी देशपांडे, व इतर तसेच सुरज येंगडे, शरद बाविस्कर यांसारखे प्रेरणादायी लेखक असे आदी.... . विचारात भर पाडणारे अनेक पुस्तकं, लेखक तुम्ही मला सांगायचात. विभागात दाखल झाल्यावर फार वर्षापूर्वी पुरुष स्पंदन मध्ये आलेला तुमचा intersectionality वरचा लेख मी वाचला आणि मी एकदम भारावून गेले. ग्रामीण भागात राहूनही मला उमजलं नव्हतं, मला ती संकल्पना नव्याने समजली. तेव्हापासून equal आणि same यातला फरक मला समजायलालागला. तेव्हापासून मी ही प्रयत्ने

गोष्टीबद्दल खोलवर जाऊन विचार करायला लागले. तुमच्यामुळे Gender sensitization बद्दल खोलवर ज्ञान प्राप्त झालं. तुमच्यासोबत राहून खूप गोष्टी नव्याने शिकता आल्या.

तुमच्यासोबतचे 2 वर्ष miss केले मी. माहित नाही इथे सांगणे कितपत योग्य ठरेल पण तुमच्या हातची साबुदाण्याची खिचडी, दम आलू अशा अनेक पदार्थांची चव miss केलीये मी, lunch break मध्ये आपली अभ्यासात्मक, काही personal चर्चा व्हायची ...खूप काही miss केलं मी या दोन वर्षांत. माझ्या Personal आयुष्यात परिस्थितीने जो निर्णय घेतला तो मी स्वीकारला आणि.... असो.. . किती comfort झोन होतात तुम्ही माझा. तुम्ही आहे म्हंटल्यावर निम्म्याहून जास्त दडपण कमी व्हायचं. Principle सरांकडे काही काम असेल तरीही तुम्ही सोबत यायचात. तुमचा खूप आधार वाटायचा नेहमी.

तुम्ही teachers training घ्यायचात. विभागात वेगवेगळे उपक्रम तुमच्या नेतृत्वाखाली राबवले जातात. तुमची कार्यशक्ती, तुमचं ज्ञान तुम्ही किती निष्ठेने समर्पित केलंय विभागाला, महाविद्यालयाला हे मी पाहिलंय. पैसे देऊनही एवढं ज्ञान, माहिती मिळणार नाही एवढं तुम्ही आम्हाला किती निखळपणे तुमचं ज्ञान निःस्वार्थ पणे Teachers Training च्या माध्यमातून दान करायचं काम केलंत. अगदी नवीन कोणी आपल्या dept ला join झालं की त्यांनाही trained करायचात. Next year ती व्यक्ती असेल का. नाही..? याची काहीच शास्वती नसून ही तुम्ही तुमचं teachers training चं काम सातत्यपूर्ण सुरु ठेवायचात, प्रत्येक महिन्याला तुम्ही teachers training घ्यायचात, syllabus बदल updates घ्यायचात. सर्व students ना समान धरणाऱ्या तुम्ही... आजही काही मराठी medium च्या students चा फोन आला की ते आठवणीने आणि आवर्जून तुमच्याबद्दल विचारपूस करतात. तुमच्यातलं वेगळेपण जे मला जास्ती भावलं ते म्हणजे तुम्ही कधी जातीयता मानली हे माझ्या पाहण्यात आलं नाही ना मी कधी ते अनुभवलं. धर्मनिरपेक्षता खऱ्या अर्थाने तुम्ही अमलात आणलीत. तुमच्या लेखी आम्ही सर्वजण सारखेच होतो. देव-धर्म, जात, कर्मकांड या

मानवनिर्मित संकल्पनांच्या तुम्ही विरोधात आहात. तुम्ही साठी (60) ओलांडली खरंतर मन मानत नाही. आजही तुम्ही AV hall ला येण्यासाठी Lift ची वाट पाहत नाही, आजही तुम्ही शक्य होईल तेवढं stairs चा use करता. तुमचं राहणं, दिसणं, तुमचा color sense, तुमचं सदाहरीत असणं सर्वच अजब आहे.

मी जेव्हा College नवीन join केले होते तेव्हा मला फार दमायला व्हायचं कधी बस मध्ये जागा भेटायची तर कधी नाही त्यामुळे मला जरा थकवा जाणवायचा पण college मध्ये आल्यावर तुम्ही भेटायचात आणि तुमचा प्रसन्न, हसरा चेहरा बघून.. थकवा कुठच्याकुठे जायचा. मग नंतर तुमच्यामुळे मलाही सवय झाली, एकदा college मध्ये प्रवेश केल्यावर थकव्याला bye bye करायचं आणि teaching वर आणि विभागाने सोपवलेल्या जबाबदारांवर concentrate करायचं, तुमच्याबद्दल नेहमी एक आदरयुक्त भीती असायची ...ma'am तुम्ही मला काय नाही शिकवलेत.. सगळं तुम्ही आणि Nashome मॅडम कडून मी शिकले.

वैचारिक प्रगल्भतेकडे वाटचाल माझी तुमच्यामुळे झाली. एखादा movie जर पाहिला तरी त्याचा psychological angle ने analysis कसं करायचं.. हेही शिकवलेत.

तुमचं विवेकी पालकत्वाबद्दलचं मत... खूप काही प्रत्यक्ष-अप्रत्यक्षपणे शिकता आलं मला. अगदी माझ्या personal life मधील काही आनंदाचे क्षण मला तुमच्यामुळे अनुभवता आले. तुमच्या अनुपस्थितीची पोकळी कायम विभागाला जाणवत राहिल. तुमच्या शिवाय Department ची कल्पना करणं खूप अवघड आहे.

या आठ वर्षांत तुम्ही मला जे दिलंत त्यासाठी Thank you हा शब्द खूप तोकडा पडेल, मी तुमच्या नेहमी ऋणात असेल ma'am. तुम्ही माझ्या आयुष्यातल्या महत्वाच्या व्यक्ती आहात. तुमची सतत आठवण येते, येत राहिल. तुमच्यामुळे माझी वाचनाची सवय वृद्धिंगत झाली. कोणती

पुस्तकं वाचायची जेणेकरून वैचारिक प्रगल्भतेत भर पडेल हे तुम्ही नेहमी सांगायचात..आयुष्याच्या प्रवासात प्रत्येक टप्प्यावर वेगवेगळ्या अर्थाने पुरेल एवढी शिदोरी दिलीत, त्यासाठी मी आयुष्य भर तुमच्या ऋणात राहीन.

आजच्या या सेवानिवृत्ती निमित्त होणार्या कौतुक सोहळ्याच्या क्षणी मला तिथे असायला हवं होतं पण नाही जमलं त्यासाठी sorry....ही खंत मनात आयुष्यभर राहिल. पण काही बाबतीत माझा ना इलाज आहे. खूप सार्या आठवणी सांगायच्या राहून गेल्यात याची जाणीव आहे, अर्थात वेळेचा ही अभाव आहे.

तुमच्या आयुष्यात येणार्या नवीन जबाबदारींसाठी , नवीन आव्हानांसाठी आणि जी कामे राहिली आहेत म्हणजे college च्या व्यापामुळे काही काम अजून चुकून दुर्लक्षिली आहेत ती सगळी कामे पुर्ण होण्यासाठी खूप शुभेच्छा . तुम्ही व्यक्ती नसून एक विचार आहात जो सातत्यपूर्ण अखंडितपणे चालू राहणार आहे.

Healthy aging साठी, तुमच्या एकूणच सगळ्या wellness साठी आयुष्यातल्या नवीन अध्यायासाठी खूप सदिच्छा. तुम्ही फक्त अष्टपैलू प्राध्यापक नाही आहात तर तुम्ही एक ground level ची व्यक्ती आहात. तुम्ही जमेल तसं सामाजिक कार्यकर्त्या म्हणूनही काम करत आला आहात. तुमचं कर्तृत्व खूप मोठं आहे, तुम्ही तुमच्या कामामुळे, ज्ञानामुळे प्रेम, आदर, मान, सन्मान मिळवलाय. माझ्या मते असं कोणतं क्षेत्र नाही ज्याबद्दल तुम्हाला माहित नाही. Ma'am...तुमचा नेहमीच आदर वाटत आलाय आणि आयुष्यभर वाटत राहिल.खूप प्रेम आणि खूप शुभेच्छा!! तुम्हाला उत्तम आरोग्य लाभो, तुमच्या हातून अनेक पुस्तकांचे लिखाण होवो, अनेक विविध विषयांवरचे podcast, विविध लेख लिहिले जावो या सगळ्यांसाठी खूप खूप शुभेच्छा!!! 37 वर्षांचा अध्यापनाचा प्रवास या अर्थाने संपला असला तरी तो वेगळ्या अर्थाने सातत्याने चालू राहिल.

तुम्हीच एकदा म्हणाला होतात age is just a number... Actually Sky is a limit. असं काहीतरी.. आणि तसंही Profession म्हणजे आपलं आयुष्य नाही , आपल्या आयुष्यातला तो महत्वाचा Part आहे, होता. लवकरच भेटू अशी आशा आहे ma'am.

इथे माझा Physical Presence नसतानाही मला व्यक्त होण्याची संधी दिल्याबद्दल मी विभागाची, महाविद्यालयाची आभारी आहे.

धन्यवाद!!

स्वाती जगताप
मानसशास्त्र विभाग

A Dedication to Dr. Sadhana Natu

It is rare that someone in a position of influence chooses humility over hierarchy, and reflection over comfort.

The gravity of Dr. Natu's integrity is something I've only begun to truly understand nearly a decade after first sitting in her classroom. To be a feminist, to hold your own, to refuse to be a sellout; she has embodied all of this boldly, consistently, and with a moral clarity that is a benchmark for everyone who knows her. In a world where privilege is treated like an heirloom vase, she taught us to examine ours with honesty, responsibility, courage and to be willing to shatter it.

I still think about how rare it is to feel *seen* by a mentor, not just academically, but as a whole human being navigating the complexities of coming-of-age, culture, and selfhood. Ma'am always saw us. She spoke to us like we mattered, even when we doubted ourselves. She carved out spaces where we could question society, question power, and even question her!

Natu ma'am has uplifted students and society through knowledge and her fierce belief in fairness, justice, and emotional honesty. She has modelled what it means to lead with integrity while still holding compassion at the center. Through the relentless years, institutional battles and victories, she has inspired us by being who she is - fearless, thoughtful, and deeply, beautifully human.

As we celebrate her retirement, I find myself feeling awe and gratitude. Awe, because her legacy is expansive and alive in all of us. Gratitude, because it has been the privilege of a lifetime to be shaped by her mind.

Congratulations, Ma'am. Thank you for the paths you lit for us, the mirrors you held up to society, and the faith you placed in your students. We carry your lessons with us as memories, and as a way of being.

It feels important to name the sheer grit it takes to do this work. She has built her career on relentless effort, unshakeable self-belief, and a refusal to dilute her values for comfort or approval. She has done a demanding, often thankless, and certainly under-rewarded job with a level of excellence that is breathtaking. She is an icon—an enduring source of inspiration. While this retirement marks the close of one chapter, it is also the beginning of a new era for her. If her past is any indication, whatever she creates next will be bold, imaginative, and paradigm-shifting. We cannot wait to witness it.

**Regards,
Ananya S
Alumnus**

To Dr. Natu

Dr. Sadhana Natu, as a mentor and an educator you established an environment that was both emotionally reassuring and intellectually enriching, where a variety of perspectives were accepted and carefully considered and explored. I now have a deeper and holistic understanding of psychology and human behavior because of your ability to relate theory to practical

applications. I really valued your openness, your constructive feedback, and the way you constantly encouraged introspection over memorization throughout my college days and also now when I am a working professional. In addition to helping me get a deeper understanding of the subject, your mentoring has improved my confidence, empathy, critical thinking skills and made me a better human being.

Regards,
Pratik Dhote
Alumnus

डॉ एक : साधना नातू .उत्कृष्ट व्यक्तिमत्व

साधना नातू हे नाव मी कॉलेजला असताना पहिल्यांदा ऐकले आणि त्यांना प्रत्यक्षात भेटण्याचा योगही कॉलेज मध्ये असतानाच आला होता, त्यांचे सामाजिक मानसशास्त्राचे एक पुस्तक मी वाचले होते, पण त्या आणि त्यांचे काम याबद्दल आमच्या कॉलेजमधील देवकर मॅमने आम्हाला डॉसाधना नातू मॅम आणि त्यांच्या कामाबद्दल सांगितले होते ., त्यांना पहिल्यांदा भेटण्याचा योगही देवकर मॅम सोबतच आला, एकदा आम्ही विद्यापीठात (IUCCA) विज्ञान दिनानिमित्त आलो होतो तेव्हा देवकर मॅम आम्हाला नातू मॅमना भेटण्यासाठी घेऊन आल्या होत्या, तेव्हा पहिल्यांदा त्यांच्याबद्दल जाणून घेतले आणि त्यांच्या मानसशास्त्रातील कामाबद्दल जाणून घेतले . त्यानंतर खूप वर्षांनी मला इथे येण्याचा योग आला, सहाय्यक अध्यापकाच्या मुलाखतीसाठी मी आले होते, मी त्यांच्याबरोबर मानसशास्त्र विभागात काम करत असताना त्यांच्या कामातून आणि नॉलेजमधून मला कसे शिकायला मिळेल याचा मी जास्त विचार करायचे आणि त्यांना आलेल्या अनुभवातून त्या आम्हाला वेळोवेळी मदत करायच्या, आणि त्यांचे अनुभव आणि त्यांचे काम

याबद्दल आम्हाला सांगायच्याआम्ही मानसशास्त्र विभागात नेहमी दुपारचे जेवण सगळे एकत्र . त्यांचे ज्ञान आणि .करायचो तेव्हा जेवण करताना मॅमसोबत वेगवेगळ्या विषयांवर चर्चा होयची त्यांची मते हे मला नेहमीच ऐकायला आवडायचे, त्यांच्या बोलण्यातून आता जगात काय चालले आहे आणि आपली त्यामध्ये भूमिका काय आहे आणि काय असायला पाहिजे यावर चर्चा चालायची याची मला नेहमीच आठवण येतेनेहमी त्या माझी विचारपुस करायच्या कशी आहेस .? सगळं व्यवस्थित चालू आहे ना, जमतय ना सगळं व्यवस्थित आणि कधी कधी त्या काही टिप्स पण घायच्या, त्या नेहमीच मला खूप मोलाचा आणि फायद्याच्या ठरायच्यात्यांच्याकडून खूप . काही शिकायला मिळालं, मानसशास्त्राच्या बाबतीतही आणि बाकीच्या आयुष्यातले धडे शिकायला मिळालेमी नेहमी त्यांना म्हणायचे की ., तुम्ही एवढे काम केले आहे आणि करत आहात पण तुम्ही सगळ कस काय एवढं व्यवस्थित मॅनेज करता, तेव्हा त्या मला नेहमी सांगायच्या की, आपण कोणत्या गोष्टींना महत्त्व घायचं आणि कोणत्या नाही ते ठरवायचं, त्यांचे इंग्रजी माध्यमातून जेवढे काम आहे तेवढेच मराठी माध्यमातूनही आहे याचे मला आश्चर्य वाटते कारण त्या स्वतः इंग्रजी माध्यमातून शिकूनही त्यांना खूपच चांगली मराठी यायची हे पाहून मला खूप आश्चर्य वाटायचे आणि त्या नेहमी म्हणतात मी तिन्ही भाषेतून काहीही सांगू शकते त्यांचे तिन्ही भाषेतून असणारे नॉलेज खूप जास्त आहेत्यांनी खूप सार्या मानसशास .त्रतील वेगवेगळ्या क्षेत्रांमध्ये काम केले असल्यामुळे त्यांच्या अनुभवाचा मला खूप फायदा झाला त्याचबरोबर नवनवीन गोष्टी माहीत झाल्यामुळे नेहमीच माझ्या नॉलेज मध्ये भर पडत राहिली.

तुमची उणीव नेहमीच आम्हाला जाणवत राहिल.

प्रगती मोरे

मानसशास्त्र विभाग

A Teacher Who Taught Me How to See

Some teachers teach you a subject. Very few teach you a way of seeing the world. Dr. Natu did the latter for me, and that difference quietly shaped my entire college journey back then; continues to shape my life today.

From the very beginning, what stood out about her was not just what she taught, but how and why she chose to teach it. Her classrooms were never confined to textbooks or neatly defined theories. Psychology, as she showed us, was not something that lived only in cognitive models, diagnostic labels, or prescribed therapeutic techniques. It was alive—embedded in culture, power, privilege, lived realities, and everyday human struggles.

Her teaching style was deeply multi-dimensional. While she respected theory, she constantly pushed us to ask: Who does this theory serve? In what context does it work? And who might it leave out? Through this lens, psychology became less about memorisation and more about responsibility. I learned that applying psychological knowledge without cultural awareness could do more harm than good.

One of the most powerful aspects of her guidance was how seamlessly she connected psychology to real life. Discussions in class often extended to social structures, gender, privilege, and ethics—conversations that helped me understand not only others, but also myself. She taught us to recognise our own positionalities and to practice psychology not from a place of authority, but from humility and awareness. This approach stayed with me far beyond exams and assignments; it shaped how I think, listen, and engage with people today.

Ma'am was not just a teacher; she was an expert facilitator. She knew when to guide, when to challenge, and when to simply hold space for ideas to unfold. Her use of real-life examples and stories made complex concepts tangible and human. Learning felt organic, reflective, and deeply relevant rather than forced or theoretical.

Another defining aspect of Ma'am's guidance was how strongly she encouraged us to step beyond the classroom and actively participate in departmental and extracurricular initiatives. She believed that learning psychology did not stop at academic excellence, and she consistently

pushed us to engage in activities that built real-world skills—organising events, facilitating discussions, collaborating in teams, and taking on leadership roles. Through this, she helped us develop behavioural skills such as communication, empathy, adaptability, accountability, and ethical decision-making. She often emphasised that while hard skills can be taught or acquired over time, behavioural skills are what truly make one industry-ready. In hindsight, this emphasis played a crucial role in preparing me for professional spaces, giving me the confidence to show up at workplaces with confidence, competence, and a learning mindset.

In a time when curricula are shrinking and disciplines risk becoming rigid and narrow, her teaching reminded me that psychology is vast, evolving, and inseparable from lived human experience. Some teachers leave you with notes. Others leave you with questions that stay with you for life. Dr. Natu, you gave me the courage to think critically, the sensitivity to work ethically, and the vision to see psychology as a living, breathing field. For that, I will forever be grateful!

Aasawari Kulkarni

(B.A. - 2017 - 2020; M.A. - 2020 - 2022)

डॉएक समृद्ध व्यक्तिमत्व- साधना नातू .

मन मनास उमगत नाही

आधार कसा शोधवा

स्वप्नांतील पदर धुक्याचा

हातास कसा लागावा ?

मन थेंबांचे आकाश

लाटांनी सावरलेले

मन नक्षत्रांचे रान

अवकाशी अवघडलेले

मन गरगर आवर्त

मन रानभूल, मन चकवा

मन काळोखाची गुंफा

मन तेजाचे राऊळ

मन सैतानाचा हात

मन दैवाचे पाऊल

दुबळ्या गळक्या होळीत

हा सूर्य कसा झेलावा?

चेहरा मोहरा ह्यांचा

कधी कुणी पाहिला नाही

धनी अस्तित्वाचा तरीही

ह्यांच्यातील दुसरा नाही

ह्या अनोळखी नात्याचा

कुणी कसा भरवसा द्यावा?

ही सुधीर मोघे यांची कविता नेहमीच मनाचा ठाव घेतेमनाचा गुंता स्पष्ट .
मॉडर्न महाविद्यालयात .करणारी ही कविता मला नेहमीच मानसशास्त्राकडे ओढून नेते,गणेशखिंड
येथे शिक्षक म्हणून रुजू झाल्यावर प्राध्यापक डॉ. साधना नातू यांच्याशी ओळख झाली त्यांचा .
विषय मानसशास्त्रासल्यामुळे त्यांच्याशी बोलण्याची उर्मी दाटून येत असे, त्यातूनच त्यांच्याशी
मैत्री झालीमुळातच . स्टाफ रूममध्ये रिकाम्या वेळात त्यांच्याशी गप्पा रंगत असत.
त्यांचे वाचन चौफेर असल्यामुळे बोलण्यात वेगवेगळे विषय निघतआज त्यांची सेवपूर्ती . होत
आहेया अनुषंगाने . मागील अनेक वर्षांचा सहवास असल्याने खूप आठवणी दाटून येत आहेत.

मुळातच नातू मॅडम मानसशास्त्र हा विषय शिकवत. यामुळे विद्यार्थ्यांना
समुपदेशनकरण्याचे कामही त्यांच्या कडेच होते याशिवाय त्या बाहेरही सुप्रसिद्ध समुपदेशक .
म्हणूनही त्या कार्यरत आहेतयामुळे त्यांना . अनेक जटिल समस्यांना सामोरे जावे लागत असे .
विविध व्यक्तींच्या मनाचा गुंता सोडवणे, त्यांना कठीण अश्या आवर्तातून बाहेर काढणं सोप
नहे. तरीही अतिशय संयमीत पणे त्या हे विषय हाताळत असतकुठलाही त्रागा न करून घेता .
अनेक समस्या त्या लीलया सोडवत असतत्या नेहमीच उत्साही आनंदी . दिसायच्याअनेक .
वेळा काम करता करता हळुवारपणे त्या गाणे गुणगुणायच्या, नीटनेटके रहाणे, आणि प्रसन्नपणे
प्रत्येक गोष्टीला तोंड देणे हा त्यांचा गुण नेहमीच मला भवायचामी नेहमी विचार करत असे ., की
त्या मनावरचा ताण हलका कसा करत असतील? अर्थात लगेचच मला उत्तर मिळालंत्यांचं .
कलासक्त असणं, जीवनावर मनसोक्त प्रेम असणं हे त्यामागचं खर कारण आहे हे मला

जाणवलं. यामुळेच त्या आपल्या विषयात इतक्या झोकून देऊन काम करत असाव्यात याची खात्री पटली. सवाई गंधर्व उत्सव , वसंतोत्सव या कार्यक्रमांना त्या आवर्जून उपस्थित राहत असत . विविध चित्रपट, चित्रपट गीते हे आमच्या जिव्हाळ्याचे विषय होते. पुस्तक वाचण्याची ही त्यांना मनस्वी आवड होतीजागतिक साहित्याबरोबरच . मराठी साहित्याचाही त्यांचा व्यासंग होता . म्हणूनच मराठी मराठी साहित्य, विविध कविता, विविध पुस्तक यावर आमची चर्चा होत असते आत्मचरित्र वाचनाचा छंद त्यांना होतावाचले' लमाण' आज मी श्रीराम लागूंचे ., विजया मेहतांचे 'झिम्मा.वाचले ' अशा आमच्या चर्चा रंगत असत. एकूणच या साधक बाधक बोलण्यामुळे स्टाफ रूम मध्ये जिवंतपणा येत असे. या असल्या सकारात्मक वातावरणात आम्ही अनेक वर्षे वाटचाल केली. पण मानसशास्त्र विभागाची जागा बदलल्याने आमच्या वरचेवर होणार्या भेटी नक्कीच कमी झाल्या.

तरीही अनेक वेळा आमच्या भेटीमध्ये कौटुंबिक विषय निघतवडिलांचाही -तेव्हा त्यांच्या आई . वडिलांचे-त्यांनी आपल्या आई . विषय निघे शेवटपर्यंत काळजी घेतली. त्यांचे आईवडील ही - .त्यांच्या मर्मबंधातील ठेव होती त्यांचे वडील सैन्य दलात अधिकारी होतेत्यामुळे नातू मॅडम . त्यांच्या वडिलांची शिस्तही .यांना नेहमीच मिश्र भारतीय संस्कृतीमध्ये वावरायला मिळाले त्यांच्यात उतरली, त्याचबरोबर एक अंतर भारतीय दृष्टिकोनही त्यांच्यामध्ये भिनला गेला असे मला वाटतेअर्थातच एका विस्तारित परिप्रेक्ष्यातून विचार करता येणे हे . या वातावरणाचे योगदान असावे.त्यांची आई उच्चविद्या विभूषित होती . फर्ग्युसन सारख्या महाविद्यालयात त्यांनी साहित्याचा अभ्यास केला होता विविध कलांची गोडीही त्यांच्या मातोश्रींना होती. गाण्याचे संस्कारही त्यांना घरातूनच मिळालेले आहेत. असा सुंदर वारसा घरातूनच मिळाल्यामुळे नातू च मॅडमचे व्यक्तिमत्व चौफेर घडले असे म्हटले तर वावगे ठरणार नाही.

घरातल्या संस्कारांबरोबरच मनाचे संस्कारही खूप महत्वाचे असतात. स्वतःच्या चिकाटीमुळे, मनापासून केलेल्या परिश्रमामुळे आणि सूक्ष्म अभ्यासामुळे त्यांच्या विषयात त्या अत्यंत पारंगत झाल्या. आपल्या क्षेत्रात आंतरराष्ट्रीय भरारी घेणे त्यांना शक्य झालं . विविध चर्चासत्रे व कार्यशाळा यासारख्या व्यासपीठांवरही त्यांनी व्याख्याने दिलेली आहेतसंशोधन . .मार्गदर्शक म्हणूनही त्या कार्य करित आहेतच मानसशास्त्रावरील त्यांची पुस्तके व शोध निबंध अभ्यासकांना नक्कीच दिशा देत असतात. एक उत्तम प्राध्यापक म्हणून त्यांची कारकीर्द बहरलेली आहेच पण विद्यार्थीभिमुख उपक्रम राबवणे हा त्यांचा हातखंडा होता. आजही अनेक आंतरराष्ट्रीय पातळीवरचे विद्यार्थी त्यांच्या संपर्कात आहेतहे विद्यार्थी महाविद्यालयाचे नाव नक्कीच उज्वल . एक शिक्षक म्हणून .करत आहेत, एक व्यक्ती म्हणून आणि एक मार्गदर्शक म्हणूनही त्या कायम स्मरणात राहतीलमॉडर् .न महाविद्यालयातील सेवापुर्तीनंतरही त्या सक्रिय असतील याची खात्री आहेच!!पुढील वाटचालीसाठी त्यांना अनेक शुभेच्छा .

संस्कृती आवलगावकर

मराठी विभागप्रमुख

A Letter to Dr. Sadhana Natu

Respected ma'am,

Honestly for the longest time I could not think where to begin writing about my experience and inspirations from you.

You were never the stereotypical teacher/professor in a college for us. You were always doing more than what the so-called curriculum prescribed or expected from you.

With your vast and rich experience, you brought a plethora of knowledge as part of your lectures to us. You talked about cinema, poetry, literature, research, authors, scientists, and activists - all while connected to the topics at hand. Due to this, I never had to mug up from the textbooks to write answers for the exams. I only reproduced what I had gathered in my notes from your lectures and did well enough to score distinctions throughout the years at the college.

Till this day, all those resources which I got exposure to in your classes continue to benefit me in staying informed and updated. You helped me to enrich my personality and develop interest in reading which helps me survive during the otherwise boring lifestyle of a public service exam student.

The Department of Psychology under you was such a vibrant place of activities, discussions and learning. I will always cherish all the opportunities and experiences gained through Disha, Koshish, Kavita Katta, Workshops, NAOP conferences, Kaleidoscope and Mindscape journals and so much more.

I would have to thank you immensely that I never felt as a stranger in a faraway place.

Yours sincerely

Shivani Bundela

B.A. (2017-20) M.A. (2020-22)

डॉ- साधना नातू . एक शिक्षक

एक शिक्षक म्हणून एक गुरु म्हणून मी त्यांना ओळखतेच, पण त्याचबरोबर एक ज्येष्ठ सहकारी म्हणून त्यांना मी अनुभवले आहे. अध्ययन अध्यापन आणि संशोधन, सामज्य भिमुक्ता अशा चौफेर क्षेत्रात नातू मॅडम यांनी केलेली कामगिरी अतिशय कौतुकास्पद आहे. यात काहीही शंका नाही की

त्या मानसशास्त्राच्या तज्ञ अशा प्राध्यापिका आहेत, परंतु फक्त तज्ञ असून चालत नाही खरा गुरु तोच असतो जो आपल्या जवळ असणाऱ्या ज्ञान सर्वबौद्धिक सामाजिक गटाच्या विद्यार्थ्यांपर्यंत यशस्वी पद्धतीने आणिप्रभावी रीतीने पोहोचवू शकतो. आणिया कसोटी मध्ये मॅडम यशस्वी झाले आहेत. कारण मी त्यांची विद्यार्थिनी आहे. विद्यार्थ्यांसोबत त्यांचा असणार नातं जरी मैत्रीच असल तरी शिक्षक विद्यार्थ्यांच्या नात्याच्या मर्यादा एक शिक्षक म्हणून आणिएक विद्यार्थीम्हणून कशा पायाच्या हेही मॅडम कडून शिकण्यासारख आहे. राष्ट्रीय आंतरराष्ट्रीय दर्जाच्या सामाजिक संशोधकीय बौद्धिक क्रियापकालामध्ये त्यांनी आपला ठसा उमटवलेला आहे. त्यांची संदर्भपुस्तके आणिनामांकित नियतकालिका प्रसिद्ध झालेले लेखन त्यांच्या गुणात्मक संशोधन कार्याची साक्ष देतात.

सामाजिक क्षेत्रामध्ये हे त्या सक्रिय आहेत, आणिसामाजिक संस्थांशी त्या संलग्न आहेत, स्त्रीवादी चळवळीच्या त्या खांद्या कार्यकर्त्या आहेत. या सर्वांमधून सामाजिक प्रश्न समस्या यांबद्दल असणारी त्यांची जाणीव आणितळमळ आपल्याला दिसून येते. त्यांचा अजून एक गुण मला जास्त प्रभावित करतो तो म्हणजे त्यांच अद्यावत ज्ञान आणिआंतरशाखीय दृष्टिकोन, नातू मॅडम यांना सगळ्यातला सगळं माहिती असतं. चर्चाकोणतीही असो प्रत्येक मीटिंग मध्ये त्यांना स्वतःच मत मांडायाचं असतंच. आणि त्या मांडतातच. आतापर्यंत मी जेवढे नातू मॅडम यांच्या विषयी सांगितलं ते सगळं औपचारिक होता आता थोडसं अनौपचारिक बोलते.

1. मॅडम एक दिलखुलास आणिहसतमुख व्यक्तिमत्व आहे

2. त्यांना कधीही मी रागवलेल्या बघितलं नाही. त्यांच्या विभागाचा काय अनुभव आहे ते मला माहित नाही. त्यांना कधीही खरच मी रागवलेलं पाहिलं नाही. त्यांचं बोलणं त्यांच्या एक्सप्रेसन मुळे अतिशय प्रभावी बनल आहे आणित्यामुळे त्यांना नक्की काय सांगायचं ते अतिशय चांगल्या पद्धतीने समोरच्या माणसाला समजते.

3. त्या ज्या ज्या वेळेस बोलतात तेव्हा एक लय दिसते, संयम दिसतो आणि आत्मविश्वास पाहायला मिळतो.

4. त्यांचा फॅशन सेन्स पण कमालीचा आहे. अतिशय नुट्रल आहेत आणि चांगल्या गोष्टी त्या नवीन विचार, appreciate पण करतात. आज मॅडमनी कोणता ड्रेस घातलाय कोणती साडी नेसली आहे गळ्यातलं कानातलं काय परिधान केले आहे याविषयी विद्यार्थी असताना मला खूप उत्सुकता असायची जी आजही आहे.

5. आणि यातून त्यांची सौंदर्यवृत्ती आणि जीवन विषयक आशावादी दृष्टिकोन दिसतो.

6. यावरून मला एका गाण्याची एक ओळ आठवते जी नातू मॅडम यांच अतिशय समर्पक वर्णन करते, ती म्हणजे so beautiful so elegant just looking like wow!!!!!!

प्रत्येक व्यक्तीकडून काहीतरी शिकण्यासारखं असतं, आणि असे गुरु आणि जेष्ठ सहकारी आम्हाला लाभले हे आमचे भाग्यच म्हणायचं.....

मॅडम अशाच आनंदी राहा यासाठी मी आमच्या इतिहास विभागाकडून आपणास शुभेच्छा देते. आणि थांबते धन्यवाद!!!

श्वेता सावले

इतिहास विभागप्रमुख

A Teacher, A Guide

My connaissance with Natu ma'am dates back to 2022, when I decided to take admission for my Master's at our Department of Psychology. I still remember so vividly that she said to me, "Only

take admission if you are willing to attend lectures regularly.” That one sentence tells us so much about how she is as a person—dedicated, passionate, consistent, regular, student-centric, and truly an educator. She has been a guiding light for me since the beginning of my journey in this field. I was fortunate to complete my MA research project under her guidance as well. Not only does she empower her students with knowledge and impart skills in the classroom, but she also helps us develop a perspective and think for ourselves, whatever the situation. Her exposure to and presence in so many diverse fields (psychology and otherwise) really add to her presence in the classroom. Working with her in the department was truly a joyful experience. She is a fabulous mentor, always looking out for her mentees wherever she goes—thinking about them and getting in touch whenever something reminds her of them.

In every sense, Natu ma’am embodies what it means to be both a teacher and a guide. Her influence extends far beyond the classroom, leaving a lasting impact on her students’ academic journeys and personal growth. For that, I will always remain deeply grateful.

Manasi Deshpande
Student and Mentee

Lessons that stay

Looking back, my journey into psychology began at the moment I applied for graduation, with more curiosity than clarity. Coming from a science background, I hadn’t been fortunate enough to study the subject during my former education. That changed right in the very first lecture by Natu ma’am, a moment I still remember vividly.

The spark in her eyes and her passion for the subject had the entire class enthralled. Her strong academic foundation and extensive field experience gave us a sense of assurance that only true credibility brings. When combined with her youthful spirit, it created the perfect blend for an educator who was both deeply revered and genuinely loved by her students.

We looked forward to her engaging lectures and the anecdotes she shared. With Natu ma'am, it was never just about covering the syllabus, instead she introduced us to the realities that often remain hidden behind theory. She challenged our thinking, gently yet effectively breaking stereotypes and planting the seeds of critical thinking within us. Encounters with her outside the classroom offered a different yet equally meaningful experience. She maintained a warm and wholesome connection with her students, and her habit of checking in on us created a strong sense of safety and care, something many students deeply valued. Through thoughtfully designed departmental initiatives like DISHA and Kaleidoscope, she provided many of us with a space to express ourselves and truly belong.

Today, as a faculty member in the very department that introduced me to a subject I now dearly love, I was fortunate to once again receive Natu ma'am's guidance; this time as a colleague. In her role as a superior, she supported me immensely as I adjusted to this new professional identity. The transition from student to educator was far from easy, but her mentorship helped me navigate these unfamiliar waters with confidence. The pedagogy training sessions conducted by ma'am, in particular, helped me understand the art of teaching and facilitation, and they continue to shape my work even today.

Although I joined the department just a month before ma'am's retirement, limiting the time I could be directly guided by her, she ensured that even in that brief period I was equipped with the essential tools and insights to move forward.

I remain deeply grateful for the opportunity to have had Natu ma'am as both a mentor and a colleague...an influence that continues to guide me, professionally and personally.

Samruddhi Kamble
Department of Psychology

A Teacher Forever

Throughout her journey of being a 37 years experienced educator I was lucky enough to be there for few years with her as a student & colleague. She has always been a guiding light & inspiration for me & my friends & now colleagues.

She taught psychology in a way no one taught me till bachelors. Her classes used to be very engaging & interesting with not just textual knowledge but about her own valuable experiences throughout her career. It opened our eyes not just to psychology but many other fields. The best thing about her is that she understands youngsters & their challenges. She never dismissed us when we talked about our problems with her. I'm thankful that I got a chance to be her colleague & continue this inspiring journey with her. Thank you ma'am for everything you have done for your students & this field. We are going to miss you!

Neha Kolhatkar

Student and Colleague

डॉ. साधना नातू

सळसळता उत्साह अन् उर्जेचा अखंड स्रोत,

ज्ञानदानाची ती पुजारी, हाच ध्यास दिन रात ।

आदर्श शिक्षक, विद्यार्थी प्रिय असा मिळविला लौकिक,

होते निरसन शंकेचे, असेल जरी छोटी वा मोठी ।

तल्लख बुद्धी, तेजस्वी मुख अन् प्रेमाचा झरा,

समानतेच्या युगात *Gender Sensitization* चा देते नारा ।

बहुभाषिक, विचारांची सूसूत्र मांडणी, खिळवून ठेवण्याची कला,

मनाची डॉक्टर, ही गार्गी सक्षम नारी सबल ।
अखंडित आहे चालू, मनोभावे, ज्ञानाची आराधना,
अद्भुत, अद्वितीय अशी विदुषी मॅडम साधना ॥

Dr. Manisha Bele

Commerce

Farewell Speech

Professor Dr. Sadhana Natu

I have been fortunate that there were many farewells that I was given in the college: one by a select, dear and exclusive group of senior colleague-friends, one by my dear and closest colleagues from my department, a memorable one by Arts Faculty, one from the heart by colleagues from the Office (admin staff) and a fantastic one by the college as a whole! Most of them lasted for 3 hours and I was overwhelmed by the love, respect, admiration, validation and acknowledgement of my work and me as a person that came from my colleagues! For that I will remain, ever grateful! But it also meant that my speech on all these occasions was 3 to 5 minutes!

Hence, I am thankful to my Team Psychology that I can pen my thoughts here and convey them to you!

Flashback: Like every other student who scores fantastically in 10th and 12th standard (Science) board exams I too was supposed to head towards either Medical or Engineering education. But I took the 'road less travelled by' and chose Psychology 32 years ago! Not because I was 'bad at Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Mathematics and Statistics but because I did not want to choose the beaten-typical path of Medical and Engineering! I love PCMB and use it in Psycho Physics, Neuro Chemistry, Biological Psy and Bio Neuro Psychology and Maths applications and Stats for Psychometrics, Experimental Psy and psy research and let me assure you that it is hard core, considering that the first psychologists were all from pure/fundamental sciences.

Now with 30+ years of goal setting exercises that I have conducted with students, let me confess that I did not do any goal setting! I just went with the flow! I became a professor by chance: I taught at Poona College followed by St Mira's college and in those 3 years I started liking the work and the role of a teacher/educator/professor. Then came a turning point and I was selected as a Research Officer in a fantastic field research organization working in public health with grassroots to global perspective, Foundation for Research in Community Health and (MASUM) Mahila Sarvangeen Utkarsh Mandal as well as Modern College Ganeshkhind. Later I also worked in another global organization: National Centre for Advocacy Studies, Pune which

partnered with Advocacy International Washington, DC, USA as a Program Manager. Working in both these organizations gave me glocal (global+ local) perspective.

I cleared UGC National Eligibility Test JRF with 100% negative marking and 3 papers in 1992 while juggling two jobs, one in our college that was Non Grant and as a researcher and got JRF for my Ph.D. but did not avail SRF and completed my work and was awarded PhD on 'Gender Roles of Young Men and other factors with special reference to Maternal Employment'.

At that time there were not too many Grantable, Open posts and setting up a new department that would be 'different' rather than joining 100-year-old, 75-year-old, 50-year-old departments was something that fired my imagination as a youngster. Today after 37years I can claim that I have succeeded in doing so with: Disha, Kaleidoscope, Khoj, Koshish, Mindscape, PsyWorld, Ummeed, Conferences training, master's dissertations with a difference, perfect placemngt and my mentees who have spread their wings far and wide! The fact that Principal Dr Kharat Sir chose Mental Health Promotion activities of my department as a 4th Cycle NAAC 2022 Best practice is validation for us. I succeeded in creating a mental health ecosystem, along with my team, students and alumni.

I have been able to contribute to institution building, both at the department and college level. For that I must thank all the authorities of Progressive Education Society and foremost our Chairman, Hon. Dr Gajanan R Ekbote for entrusting me with many responsibilities and offering encouragement, guidance and support. I have handled administrative responsibilities of Principal, Vice Principal, Arts Faculty, IQAC member, NAAC work in several capacities, Chaired more than 20 committees over the years. Spearheaded and established the Performing Arts Circle, the huge onus of being Presiding Officer of the Internal Committee (POSH), Head of the Counselling Cell and helped to mentor colleagues as members who worked with me in these committees and win their respect, admiration and friendship.

Thanks to encouragement and support from our Hon Chairman and Principal, I was elected to the Board of Studies in Psychology at the Savitribai Phule Pune University and contributed as an invited member before and after being an elected member for almost 20 years. I also worked in the BOS of Women's Studies at Savitribai Phule Pune University as well as several private universities too. As a researcher and Research Guide I have mentored psychology and women's

studies students across universities and trained professors across states in India online and offline.

I did not limit my work to academia and research. I have worked with community-based organizations whose work spans grassroots to global vistas as an expert and I am proud that many of my mentees work in the development sector and some have started their own NGOs and I work with them as an expert. That is life coming full circle! Many of my students chose community, outreach and community mental health thanks to the engagement and experiential learning that my colleagues and I could give, them, while most of the psychology students from other colleges only work in treatment domain. I encouraged my students to work in preventive domain of mental health.

I was invited to teach at MA Psychology programs, practically at all centres under Pune University, including the University department. I was asked to start MA Psychology program at Modern Shivajinagar and finally at our college since last 6 years. Both our UG and PG departments are performing very well. I have straddled the worlds of Psychology and Women's Studies as a professor, researcher and research guide and engendered Psychology and Psychologized Gender Studies!

I am happy that I could proactively contribute to students' progression and placement. 1992-2010 marginalised students were about 60-70%, after that in the last 15 years we have had more middle and upper middle-class students across streams. Hence from 1992 to 2010 I trained students for MSW and B Ed entrance exams after BA and they were placed into jobs! Simultaneously I was able to guide both Psychology and other social science students about opportunities for education abroad as well as opportunities in applied fields in India after graduation and post-graduation. Through our Setu initiative of helping needy and deserving students of 7 years and a long-standing initiative of my life partner and I off sponsoring and mentoring them, I have been able to give back to society as a person and an educator.

Since the last 37 years I have always been a Community Psychologist on and off campus: sensitizing those who are middle and upper middle class and hand holding the तळातली. I have been able to establish and maintain an equal and respectful relationship with all stakeholders: tertiary, administrative, teaching staff, current and alumni students, parents, employers, experts

et al! I am equally proud of all my alumni: the highfliers in USA, Europe, those working on the ground in rural and tribal areas and back in their hometowns in the Northeast. I helped them to dream and then helped them to nurture their dreams-skill up and make them come true! I have always invested academically and emotionally in youngsters, and the majority have showered me with love and admiration! As a result of that, I have an Envious Student Community from grassroots to global! These are students from Psychology, arts faculty, all other faculties and the performing arts circle, my counselling clients and others that I mentored in college and outside.

Last, but not the least I wish to thank Principal Dr Sanjay Kharat for being an encouraging leader and appreciative colleague, all the Vice Principals, who have been friends and supporters, all my colleagues from the Arts faculty (Shweta and Jitender were also my students) and colleagues from my department: Nashome, Swati, Neha, Pragati, Samruddhi, Vinayak as well the dozens who worked with me earlier.

I owe immense gratitude to my late parents- Avinash and Nandini 2 universities and liberal parents, my extended family and friends. My educators: Late Sr Eugene Dias, Neelima Raddi, Vidya Chand and Joseph Lobo at Fergusson College and Prof Palsane and Dr SW Deshpande at university. All of them have been my guiding lights in academia. Satish, my life partner and my son Tanmay – my sounding boards and constructive critics and participants in all my work. Satish is task manager, time manager and program manager of my work! He keeps my work ethic and credibility intact. Both are my moral compasses too.

Before I sign off: teaching-learning and being an Educator is a vocation, a calling not a job! Like performing artists engage in constant Riyaz we must constantly prepare, and it is a lifelong Sadhana! नाही तर मेहफिल रंगत नाही, नाटक वठत नाही!

This is Professor Dr Sadhana Avinash Natu signing off! Thank You!

Retirement Function



Departmental Update



ANNUAL REPORT 2024- 2025

Induction Program for Students: Staff members from the Department of Psychology as well as Head of the Department Dr Sadhana Natu, conducted a session on 'Mental Health and Counselling Services offered by the Department' for Induction Programs across Faculties of the College. Head of the Department Dr Sadhana Natu also conducted sessions on 'Gender Sensitization and Anti Sexual Harassment Cell'.

Bridge Course was run for FY students.

The Department also conducted an in-house induction for students of Psychology Special and MA Psychology.

Induction Program for Staff: Head of the Department Dr. Sadhana Natu conducted sessions for the Teaching and Administrative Staff members.

World Suicide Prevention Day: On 11th September, 2024 a Suicide Prevention Campaign was conducted in the college campus. Students created posters which were displayed to the students around campus along with the message that Suicide is Preventable.

Disha Psychology Study Circle: A session on '*OTT and I*' was conducted on 9th August 2024, and on 13th September 2024 the topic '*Inclusion*' was taken up for discussion. Another session on the topic 'Love Aaj Kal' was conducted on 16th December 2024.

Avishkar Competition: Four students from the PG Department of Psychology participated in the Research Competition of the University. Shrutika Deokar and Urvi Khopkar MA Part 2 students won first and second place prize.

Stress Management Workshop: Head of the Department, Dr. Sadhana Natu conducted a session on Stress Management and Mental Health for Staff members at Modern Law College on 5th October 2024 as a part of MOU activities.

MOU with Anjali Morris Foundation: An MOU was signed with Anjali Morris Foundation which is working with Learning and Specific Learning Disabilities.

World Mental Health Day Awareness Day 10th October 2024 was marked through the Noticeboard and discussions in the classroom.

Visit to SWACH- Students of SY and TY visited SWACH and were a part of the Waste Trail.

Savitribai Phule Jayanti- was commemorated by the Department with an Interactive session and discussion.

Master Mind Quiz was organized at the College level on 11th January 2025. 50 students participated in the Psychology based Quiz. There were 3 rounds of testing, reasoning, problem solving and attention shift. Prize Winners were Pratham Pathak and Maitreyee Joag.

National Academy of Psychology Conference Delhi: Three Students from MA Part II presented their papers through Posters/Presentations at the 34th Annual Conference.

Annual Prize Distribution Program Felicitation of Deserving Meritorious Students of Psychology through Endowment Prize instituted by Dr. Sadhana Natu in the memory of Late Avinash and Nandini Natu was awarded to Shalmali Gokhale and Madhavi Gavhane of M.A. Psychology Part I.

The **17th Volume of Kaleidoscope**, the annual magazine of the Department of Psychology was released by Principal Dr. Sanjay Kharat and Dr. Shalaka Shah from Flame University and Dr. Sadhana Natu, Head, Department of Psychology on 30th January 2025. The theme of the magazine was 'Technology and Psychology'. The program got a very enthusiastic response.

Alumni Meet: The alumni gathered on 16th January 2025 for an interaction with staff members and college at large.

Pre-Placement Activity: On 1st March 2025, ten Alumnus from the Department interacted with the students of master's to give them insights into the work they were doing and discuss opportunities after Masters.

Umeed College Community Mental Health: A session on Work Life Balance was conducted with teaching staff of the college by Dr. Sadhana Natu.

Career Guidance: Dr. Sadhana Natu conducted an in-house session with TY Students guiding them with their many queries of options for Higher Education and International Opportunities.

Career Guidance for PG: Dr. Sadhana Natu conducted an in-house session with MA Part II students guiding them on career paths available for them as job prospects.

Field Visits – Students pursuing Masters were given an opportunity to visit different organizations such as Sunshine Child Development Centre, Tapas Elder Care and Niramay Rehabilitation Centre.

Internship and Practicum- Students from MA Part II who are pursuing Clinical Psychology undertook various internship stints. Few interned at Sunshine School, few others at Anjali Morris Foundation and few students visited Manasvi Counselling Centre.

Field Practitioners' Interaction- For a better understanding of the curriculum three Field Practitioners were invited to interact with the MA II students on the topic of 'Interventions in Child Psychology.' They were Counselor, Remedial Teacher and CBO member.

Alumni who were placed

- Suraj Shinde (Manoday De-addiction Centre)
- Rushikesh Bandal,
- Shravani Sakalkale (Anjali Morris Foundation)
- Netra Bhave (Schizophrenia Awareness Association)
- Vikrant Bele
- Rumi Bhandari (Manipal Hospital)
- Sakshi Pujari (Bhonsale Military School, Nashik)
- Pratik Dhote
- Manasi Deshpande (Modern College, Ganeshkhind)

Individual Report of Dr. Sadhana Natu (Head, UG and PG Department of Psychology)**Honour and Recognition:**

National Academy of Psychology 33rd Annual Convention held in February 2024 at GITAM University, Vizag, invited as an Expert for 'Roundtable on UNSDG: spoke on Gender and Psychology and UNSDGs' February

Chaired a Paper Reading Session at the National Academy of Psychology 33rd Annual Convention held in February 2024 at GITAM University, Vizag

Selected for International Congress of Psychology for **Keynote Address** on Gender and Psychology, going to be held in July 2024 in Prague.

Expert at Pune Obstetrics and Gynecology Society Conference on Trans Inclusion, on 5th March 2024. Spoke on Psychology of Transgenders.

Resource Person:

9 July 2023 Senior Citizens Group Sahaj Bhet, Spoke on 'Love and violence'.

2 August 2023 Modern College Warje. Spoke on 'POSH and Gender Sensitization'

25 November 2023 FLAME University, Pune. Conducted an interactive Session on 'Psychology of Gender'.

9th March 2024 Rotary Club Pune of Aundh Spoke on 'In Pursuit of Happiness'

Research Work and Expert at Conferences

From September 2023, Kaveri KGERC Research Advisor on three projects. Participation and guidance in quarterly meetings (Nov, Feb)

12th December BAMU FDP Resource Person

21st January 2024 Resource Person at PsyCon organized by Mukta Charitable Foundation. Spoke on 'Intersectionality and Mental Health'.

Guided 5 MA students for Research Projects.

Currently Guiding 1 PhD Student of Psychology who has submitted her thesis in February and 4 PhD. Students of Women's Studies under SPPU. Co guide for 1 student under SIU.

Mentored 15 MA students and 1 staff member for presentations at the National Conference organized by National Academy of Psychology in February 2024.

Conducted Session for PhD students on Mixed Methods in Research at Department of Sociology, SPPU

Subject Expert and Consultancy Work

1. IGNOU Syllabus Revision Committee
2. Leadership For Equity, NGO POSH Training and Case work
3. Code to Enhance Learning, NGO POSH Training and Case Work
4. Member of Board of Studies at Ramkrishna More College, Autonomous, Akurdi
5. Member of Board of Studies at Pimpri Chinchwad University, Pune
6. Expert in Interview Panel for selection of Fellows at Dr Anjali Morris Foundation, Pune.

Publications:

Book: Psychology and Gender: An Advanced Reader 'Routledge, International, UK, USA ISBN 9781032592435. Solo authored International Publication.

Chapter in Edited Book: आपल्या पाल्यांचे तृतीय पंथीत्व स्वीकारलेल्या पालकांशी संवाद in 'आम्ही ही भरताचे लोक' Deepak Pawar Edited, Published by Chief Election Commissioner, Government of Maharashtra, Mantralaya, Mumbai, November 2023.

Editing and Peer Review:

Psychology and Developing Society National Journal done Expert Peer review of research papers.

Journal of Qualitative Research International Journal done Expert Peer review of research papers.

Edited Kaleidoscope and Mindscape.

Coordinated and Monitored Departmental Activities like Organizing 'Euphoria' the Performing on Psychological Themes Event, Release Function of Psychology Journal 'Kaleidoscope', Organizing Pre-Placement Workshop for MA part 2 students and a Workshop on Thematic Analysis and Coding for MA and PhD. Students.

Prof. Dr. Sadhana Natu

Professor and Head

UG and PG Department of Psychology

Modern College, Ganeshkhind.



Academic Achievers

S.Y.B.A.

Nidhi Belhe	9.27 CGPA
Priyal Shah	9.16 CGPA
Anjali Jeswani	9.07 CGPA

T.Y.B.A.

Anahita Kulkarni	90.86%
Aarya Kulkarni	89%
Diya Shah	88.57%





Academic Achievers

M.A.-I

Kimaya Aslekar 90.63%

Pratham Pathak 88.72%

Anika Soni 88.45%

M.A.-II

Shrutika Deokar 93.36%

Isha Joshi 90.54%

Urvi Khopkar 90.18%



PHOTO GALLERY

MASTERMIND QUIZ



Winners!





Disha: Speak Out & Peer Support Group



Students spreading awareness about World Suicide Prevention Day



Students on the SWACHH TRAIL



Visit to Niramay De-addiction Centre



Visit to Sunshine Child Development Centre



Release of Kaleidoscope Volume XVII, the annual magazine of the Department of Psychology by Dr. Shalaka Shah, Dr. Sanjay Kharat, Dr. Sadhana Natu.



Student contributors to the Magazine!

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