



ELIXIR



2018-2019

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**SAMPURNA MONTFORT COLLEGE
BANGALORE**

A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR AND PRINCIPAL ...



Sampurna Montfort College has come a long way since its inception in 1998 with 8 students and just one program – M.Sc in Holistic Psychological Counselling. Today, the college has 290 students on roll across the four programs that we are offering. What characterises Montfort as unique is its personalised attention to each and every student in terms of their growth and empowerment. Every individual is treated with utmost respect and love irrespective of race, religion, gender, ethnicity or the position one holds. The healthy atmosphere of freedom prevailing in the College facilitates the individuals towards maximising their growth and achieving their full potential.

I congratulate the editorial team for their initiative and hard work in bringing out the Elixir regularly in beautiful layout as well as with interesting and useful content. While providing a platform for the young and upcoming psychologists and counsellors to showcase their talents in publishing, it also serves as a chronicle for all the events happening in the College.

Finally, I congratulate the graduating class of 2019 for their accomplishment as Mental Health Professionals and their determination to contribute to the well-being of humanity. May God bless them in their mission.

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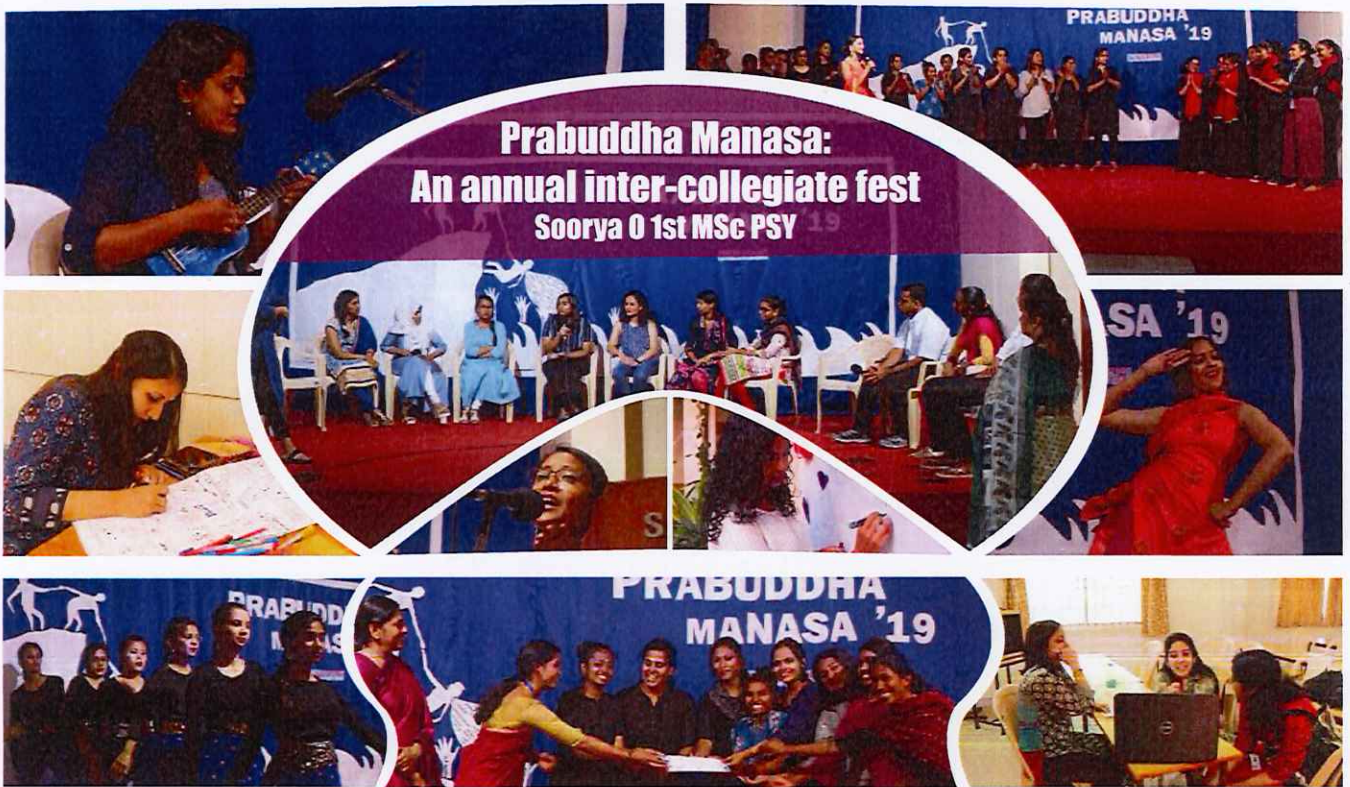


Women's Day

International Women's Day was celebrated on 8th March 2018. The entire college came together and love and respect for the women was expressed through various forms of art such as music, dance and poetry. The men of the college dedicated a performance to show their respect for women and to celebrate their day. The women expressed their emotions and feelings associated with being a woman in our society through rap, poem, instrumental music, song and dance. It was an overwhelming day, filled with love and positive energy.



**Sanjushree V H,
1st PSY**



**Prabuddha Manasa:
An annual inter-collegiate fest
Soorya O 1st MSc PSY '19**

The much awaited annual inter-collegiate fest "Prabuddha Manasa" was conducted on the 16th of March. It was a day-long program with various cultural events like Street Play, Group Dance, Group Discussion, Photography, Poster Making and Open Mic. In addition, since the need for prevention and awareness of suicide has increased, the theme for the event was chosen to be "Suicide Prevention and Awareness".

The excitement and enthusiasm was palpable on the day of Prabuddha Manasa, and all the students were eager to begin; Montfortians had been looking forward to this fest, as the entire community had put in a great deal of work and many hours of thought to ensure all the events ran smoothly and the day was a success.

The day started with the chief guest Dr. Zakkaria Abbas inaugurating the event, following which all the events

commenced. Different events took place in areas allocated for them and each class was given responsibility of organizing one particular event which also ensured that all the classes were given equal opportunities. The dances, mimes, plays, posters, photographs and speaking skills mesmerized the audience and there was a great display of talent and skill that was given a platform to shine.

The fest seemed like it was well enjoyed and appreciated by the audience and the participants alike.

"The events were well organized and gave the students varied opportunities to showcase themselves beyond academics. It was a platform to indulge in our hobbies and do something just for fun and frolic", says Kanica, a Montfort student.

"We really enjoyed performing here, it was very organized and most importantly we received a warm welcome from the college. The decora-

tions adds on to the warmth of the place" states Rajul, an IIPR student.

"It was a memorable experience organizing the whole event, a lot of learning, socializing took place during working for the event" explains Sanju, a Montfort student. Numerous students from a whole host of colleges participated, but the overall championship was won by Kristu Jayanthi College.

Prabuddha Manasa became, and still is, the exciting, uniting and refreshing event for all Montfortians to look forward to. The enthusiasm, vibrancy and tangible euphoria was infectious and lifted everyone's spirits and the fest itself provided some respite from the everyday routine of college. Everyone got an equal opportunity to showcase their talents, and this was appreciated by Montfort students and participants alike. Overall, it seems safe to say that Prabuddha Manasa was an undeniable success.

Sports Day 2019

Samarchitha. S,
1st MSc PSY

At Sampurna Montfort, one's overall development is emphasized so, individuals are encouraged to participate in various activities throughout the year. The Annual Sports month began in the month of February, which created a platform for students to showcase their athletic skills.

The theme for this year was "Rainbow wars" for which students and staff were divided into four teams - Red, Blue, Yellow and Green. The Sports Month was inaugurated with Brother George and captains hoisting the flags of different teams. Each team participated in around 30 activities stretched over a month. The activities included chess, carrom, cards, lemon and spoon, shot-put, memory game and team games like hop - relay, badminton, throw ball, volleyball, cricket and so on.

The Sports month witnessed active participation from staff and students which charged the atmosphere with zeal and fervour. The cheering squad backed the participants to give their best and added to the success of the event. Most of the games took place under the watchful eyes of referees

Mr. Santaraj and Mr. Anto from sacred heart school.

There were some closely fought matches, hard earned wins and heartbreaking losses but the spirit of sportsmanship was held high throughout. Amidst fierce competition new friendships bloomed. Rivalry was seen on the field but there was bonding off the field. A great deal of perseverance, determination and effort was displayed by all the participants.

The much awaited sports day was held on April 5th. The Chief Guest for the program was Benjamin Michael, an NBA player. The event began with a jumble march and followed by the hoisting of the flag. The flags of the four teams were also placed on the dias, following which the captains greeted the chief guest. Then, the captains passed on the torch and took the sportsman oath to maintain the integrity and spirit of sportsmanship. The inauguration ended with a note by the Chief Guest who highlighted the importance of sports in an individual's life. The skies blessed

us with a pleasant weather and the day started off with basketball finals which ended with a nail-biting finish, followed by dodgeball, football, one minute games, slow cycle race, football and the final event was an enthralling game of tug of war. It was a delight to watch everyone perform to the best of their abilities. Lunch and snacks provided by college fuelled the energy and enthusiasm among everyone present. The teams in the lead changed often throughout the day, with the score updates sustaining the element of surprise till the end.

Sports day ended on a high note with teams coming together to felicitate the ones who contributed to the points on the scoreboard. The winners of different games were awarded with certificates and trophies. After a month long battle, Team Blue emerged as the Champions.

Trophies may rust but the memories created on field will remain with us forever. It was definitely a month to remember.

National Symposium on Challenges for Psychological Practice in the 21st Century

Jyoti Mariam Jacob
1st MSc PSY



A On the 27th of April, 2019, Monfort College hosted a one day National Symposium on "Challenges For Psychological Practice in the 21st Century". Nearly 200 participants attended this program and the topic was considered extremely relevant as there seems to be ever mounting pressure for individuals to attain work-life balance and fruitful interpersonal relationships, which has led to an increase in mental illness. This has in turn has the encouraged acceptance of counselling and psychology into various organisations and the progressive erasure of its related stigma. Due to this, it has become crucial for psychologists to introspect, sharpen their skills, take initiative to develop and deliver appropriate interventions to meet the demands for psychological services. All these tie together to contribute to the challenges faced by psychological practices today.

The first half of the event witnessed a keynote address by Dr. H.S. Ashok and a Panel Discussion by Dr. Chaitanya and Dr. Ashwini as the panellists, which was moderated by Dr. Sudha. The second half of the event, being the highlight of the day, comprised of the felicitation ceremony of Dr. Ashok in remembrance of his ardent, dedicated and selfless contributions to the department of Psychology at Bangalore University (North).

The day started at 9.30am when registered participants, faculty and guests were all seated in the college auditorium and the blessings of the Almighty were invoked. Jose and Phiba from II MLCU offered the prayer song, following which, the keynote speaker, Dr. Ashok, as well as Dr. Sudha and the Principal, Brother George Padikara officially inaugurated the event by lighting the lamp.

Brother George Padikara welcomed the keynote speaker Dr. Ashok and other senior faculty from Bangalore University (North), along with the whole gathering. Professor Meera Neelakantan was the MC for the symposium. After the welcome address, the symposium continued to the keynote address.

The Keynote speaker was Dr. H.S. Ashok. He is a Professor of Psychology at Bangalore University and has completed his PhD in Occupational Psychology. He is also a research guide and a trainer in human dynamics. Dr. Ashok spoke about the challenges in psychological practice by highlighting three major domains of challenges. The first was indigenisation of the theories, concepts and practice of Psychology. The second was psychometry and related issues, while the third domain related to academia and focussed on incon-

gruence in the syllabi, practical work and replication of research. The session was to the point, informative as well as interactive and Dr. Ashok, a well versed scholar, punctuated his points with a timely sense of humour, which made the session light-hearted, interesting and enlightening. After a session of about 40 minutes, the stage was open for questions and comments and the memorable keynote address was concluded by Brother George acknowledging Dr. Ashok for his informative and edifying session.

After a short tea break, the audience gathered once again, for the panel discussion. Two eminent and scholarly professors were the panellists for the day and the session was moderated by Dr. Sudha Bhogle, Head, Educafe Students' Solutions. The first panellist was Dr. Chaitanya Sridhar, Sports Psychologist. She was able to throw some light on the field

with yet another important challenge in psychological practice i.e., understanding of the violence as a concept.

She emphasised that was as important to see violence from the light of the perpetrators, as well as from the victims of abuse and violence. To conclude the panel discussion, the moderator, Dr. Sudha summarised the session and commented about the role of changing times in looking at such newer challenges in practice.

The second half of the session witnessed a public meeting to felicitate Dr. H. S. Ashok. The chief guest for the event was Professor T. D. Kemparaju, Vice Chancellor of Bangalore University and Dr. Srinivas, Co-ordinator of Department of Psychology, Bangalore University. All the dignitaries were seated on the dais and Brother George formally welcomed both the chief guests by adorning them with a shawl, symbolising a mark of our

the speakers consistently acknowledged the selfless and ardent dedicated service rendered by Dr. H.S. Ashok to the department of Psychology at the University of Bangalore. Dr. Ashok has been a part of this department since 1979, first as a student and then as a faculty. All the dignitaries and the audience alike, hope that he will always continue to be a guiding light to the department and to many more students who are finding their path in this field.

Then, Dr. Ashok spoke a few words, acknowledging every word of recognition and stating that he appreciated all the effort that was needed to ensure this event ran smoothly. The audience gave a standing ovation to Dr. Ashok, once again paying him due respects. The national symposium and the felicitation ceremony were officially concluded by Brother George proposing the vote of thanks. The symposium was a great learning



of sports psychology as well as the major challenges that sports psychologists face in India. Dr. Chaitanya's session was comprehensive in her content as well as presentation and she was able to illustrate a holistic picture of sports psychology as seen in India.

The second panellist was Dr. Ashwini Ganig, founder, Muktha Foundation. Dr. Ashwini illuminated the audience

gratitude. Dr. Ashok was also given an ornate turban symbolising honour and dignity and a crystal memento to acknowledging his unmarked contributions. After this, a number of felicitation speeches took place including good wishes and greeting from the chief guests as well as Brother George and senior faculty members from Bangalore University, like Professor Suryarekha, and Professor Sudha Bhogle, amongst others. All

opportunity, and the Montfort community, as well as other participants, had a chance to be introduced to enriching and well experienced professionals in the field of psychology. Overall, the program was not only informative, but enjoyable and truly memorable.

Celebration of The Pride and Mis-match Day

APARNA RAJEEV,
1st MSc PSY



For the first time in the history of Montfort, the Pride and Mis-match day was celebrated on 23rd April 2019. The event was conducted as a result of the active efforts of the student council. The guest speaker for the event was Mrs Mangai Arasu - an academican, theatre artiste and a social activist. She has also written many books on women empowerment.

The highlight of the event was the mis-match outfits worn by the students. Lavanya John, from first year, was dressed up as a unicorn to signify pride.

The event began with a beautiful violin performance by Ms Aparna Rajeev. This was followed by a very interesting and informative speech by Mrs Mangai. She spoke about gender

identity and her experiences with the transgender here in Bangalore, her speech was so inspiring it rendered the audience awestruck. The event concluded with a photo session.

IMPACT OF DIVORCE ON KIDS



Visalakshi.K.V.
PGDC

BACKGROUND:

A shift in the traditional roles of women and their emergence as the bread-winner, coupled with other causes such as discrimination and torturous treatment of women, has led to many psychological consequences leading to adjustment and ego problems, resulting in ever-increasing number of divorces in this country.

The direct effect of the demon of divorce falls on the kids, who find themselves going through the painful pangs of re-birth in the changed scenario. The trauma and hardship that a child goes through is hard, untold and unrelenting. The scars of separation are scathing and suicidal, and the social stigma faced is a suffering beyond redemption, giving rise to myriad life-long psychological problems, the embers of which are kept alive and burning by the thrusts and stabs which social interaction brings in its wake.

The divorce between parents leaves far-reaching, debilitating and devastating effects on the emotional footprint of the child and creates conditions for anomie and anti-social behaviours to take root and flourish in the mental make-up of the child.

Bringing up a child by a single parent, especially if the single parent is a woman, is more often than not, an uphill task and akin to swimming against the current, more so in countries like India, where the breaking of barriers, social reform and change are not kindly taken to, and viewed with a bias and prejudice. The social pressures (ridicule and stigma), coupled with personal trauma, agony and anguish through which both the divorced parent and child make their journey, have a cumulative and spiraling effect on their psyche and mental health and well-being. Certain laws have been implemented for the maintenance and protection of children of divorced parents but they are still ill-equipped to deal with the problem in its entirety.

The author also recommends certain suggestions to improve the quality of life of kids of divorced parents in India and protect them from life-long mal-adjustment and psychological disorders. The writer recommends that more stringent policy and implementation at the ground level has to be brought about, education and awareness has to be improved and counseling and support to battle the problems is to be provided, in addition to framing and implementing of strict laws for empowering, improving and protecting the rights of kids of divorced parents.

AIMS:

Much research and many studies have explored the effects of divorce on kids and ways to combat and counter the risks of various psycho-social stresses like vengeful attitude, ebullition, lethal behavior, living in boundary along with kids of single divorced parents. The study outlines and examines the several direct and indirect effects of divorce on kids in India and ways to combat the deploring situation thereof.

METHOD

20 people aged 35 to 45 years, of which 10 are happily married, were selected from among a cross-section of people consisting of professionals on the one side to salaried class and laborers on the other. Brief and user-friendly self-assessment scales were used to assess their attitude towards society, their perception of societal treatment of themselves, their willingness and capacity to cope with the trauma associated with divorce, being prone to suicidal behavior, and the state of their well-being, using purposive sampling and descriptive cross-sectional design.

RESULTS

Ten married women were happy and comfortable in marriage, adjusting and moulding themselves to situa-

tions and circumstances. Ten single parents (woman) faced regular psychological problems, anxiety, depression, and carnal thoughts. Ten percent had vengeful attitude towards society, 30% reported that the society treated them despairingly and with disrespect, 35% of the population exhibited daring to face the world and its cruelties, 45% admitted that they were prone to suicidal thoughts and behavior (at least 2 persons reported suicide attempts in the past), and 65% declared their state of well-being as not happy.

CONCLUSION

In a country like India, where divorce rules the roost, broken families

and traumatized kids are the mainstay. The irresponsible off-springs of divorced parents, stumbling into the bloom of their youth, but growing weak in body, perverted in mind and bloodied in intellect, have already been conscripted and forced to parade on the training grounds of merciless society, armed to teeth by the witches of divorce. Even though legislation has been brought in, in recent times, governmental efforts have left much to be desired and India lags far behind other countries in the sphere of nourishing and nurturing young minds under the guidance of divorced parents.

Kids of single divorced parents con-

sider time, attention and patience much more valuable than expensive gifts or vacations. It is very disappointing to see the level of ignorance and bias even among educated woman regarding the 'single mother'. In court, single women convey that judges form their own opinions about a woman who wants divorce. Single divorced women in India face a lot of judgement and discrimination, and things are far from easy, even though there is change; however this change is slow and will take a large amount of time to permeate fully into Indian society. We can do our bit by supporting these women to the fullest of our capacities.



A WRITER'S BLOCK

Simona. N, 1 M.sc CP

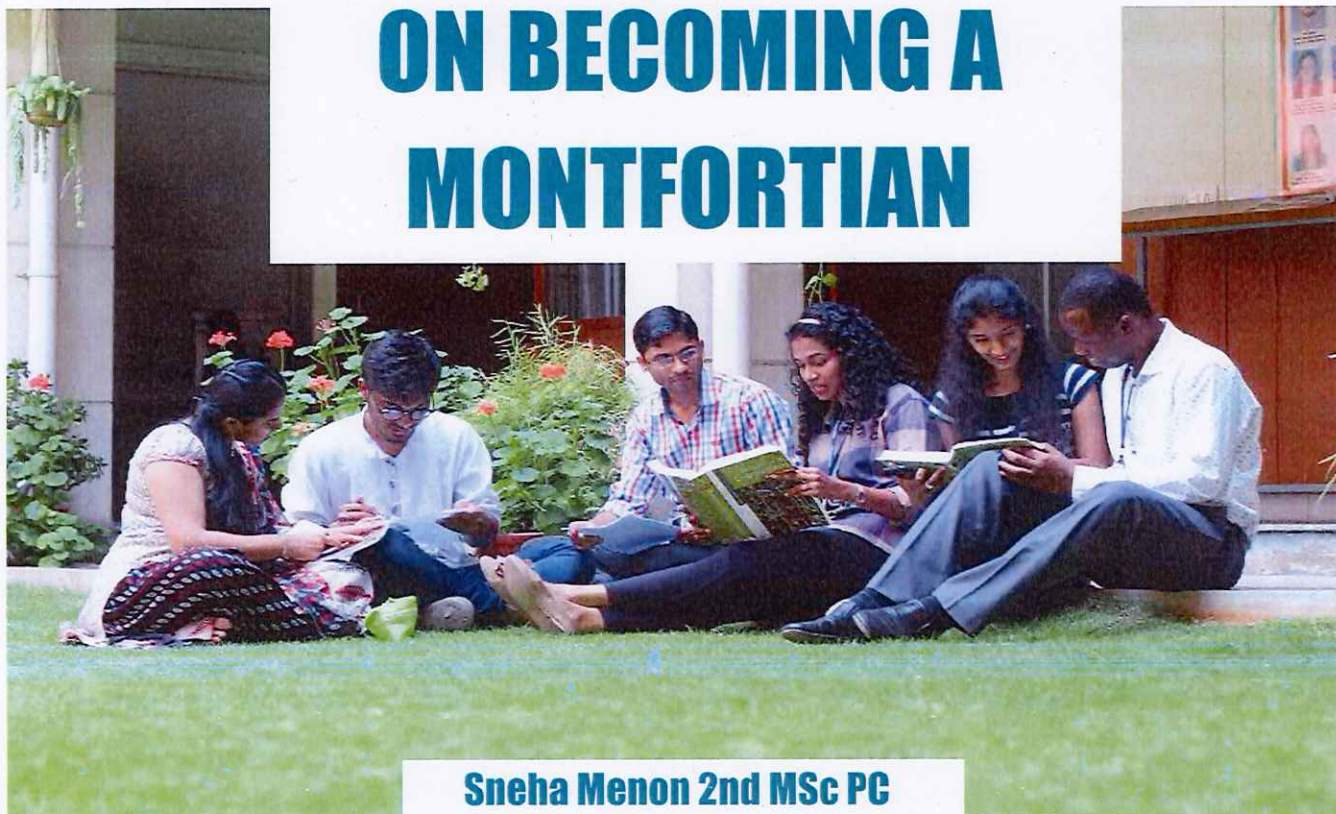
This is what is happening to the sentences I write these days. They are fading away, day by day. The words have decided their fate, they no longer take up the blank space. The blank space has sucked in all the words. They no longer belong to the sentences we have so fiercely etched in our hearts, in hopes of being understood. Now, they are blank spac-

es masked in ink, and the ink has started fading. The mask is falling apart. What lies within is emptiness.

Each time I tap my finger on the keypad, or take a pen to write, I hope to wipe away the blank space, but my words have sided with it. When words have surrendered to blankness, I have nothing else to fall back to, but silence. The silence is so

comforting that I stop writing. Maybe my words would also have found comfort in silence, and chose to fade away. Here I am, stuck in my own blankness, no matter how many papers I fill with words, or shred to pieces, I see nothing but unwritten words. Staring into blank space, here I am choking in silence.

ON BECOMING A MONTFORTIAN



Sneha Menon 2nd MSc PG

“Two more months, Sneha! And we officially complete our Msc in Counseling”- my inner self tells me. It’s a bag full of mixed emotions. It has been a long, bumpy yet enriching journey so far.

I joined this institution as I really wanted to help people in my life as well as outside my life. I was a hyperactive, ‘always on my toes’ kind of kid when I began my journey. The ever accepting Montfortian climate, the natural beauty and silent atmosphere slowly began changing bits and pieces of me that I couldn’t even spot. I could just see CHANGE in myself. Change, for the better, Change that was necessary, Change that helped me unfold into a more responsible adult.

They say it takes 21 days to form a new habit. It took way longer in my case, but I changed. From being the girl down the road who looked for quick fixes to problems, having an

innate need to always see everyone happy around her, who would make noise around the place and run like an express train being overworked, I SLOWED DOWN. Oh my! And you guessed it right. It was not easy. It took a huge toll on me, but I could see the various fragments of myself that I disowned for the longest period of my life come to my AWARENESS. Once the awareness process began, Ego-defence mechanisms started playing, but I knew at the end of this, there was HOPE.

There was hope that I would see a better, more understanding, mature Sneha. The inner child, the inner adolescent and adult in me started integrating as I gave myself enough time to heal through self-compassion. It definitely was not easy, but it is worth it. I am grateful from the bottom of my heart to every human at Montfort and mother-nature for guiding me through this healing process. I have LEARNED to pause, pay attention, actively listen, understand

as well as be there for myself and others. I have learnt to cry, be angry and express it in healthier manner. I’ve learnt to care and share each other’s pains, sorrows, fears, and secrets. The most beautiful part of sharing is that we find emotional comfort in the universality of human suffering.

I have learnt to draw my boundaries where necessary and be assertive when required. In times of distress, I have learnt to fall back to myself as well as seek the help of others around me. I have understood the meaning and depth of friendships and relationships from this beautiful place, we call - “Montfort Family”. Thank You, Family. May the Universe bring good vibes your way now and forever.

P.S: I belong to the class that originally started using the slogan #unconditionalpositiveregard



FOOD WASTAGE

Tarika Kannan 1st psych

What do we do after a tiring week of either school, college or work? We either relax, visit a friend/relative or most importantly go for a movie on weekends – something which is an integral part of our lives.

Recently I had watched a movie at PVR. It is custom (in my family) to wait till the end of the movie and watch the credits stream down the screen. This is done in order to show our appreciation and give respect to the many people who have contributed to the film in many ways. As I stood there, I saw the cleaning staff approaching the theatre to clean up the mess we movie viewers had made. What was this mess? Mounds of food. Piles of it strewn everywhere. From popcorn to nachos and anything else available for sale. Its time we wake up to this horrid fact of food wastage.

There are two parties at fault. PVR

on one side has try to understand why the food their offering for sale is only being partly consumed. The food items for sale end up in garbage bags just about half an hour from its sale. On the other hand we have the consumers. These people who visit this cinema are well off and come from a sound background. So why do they make such an irrational decision of buying something they do not desire to consume.

Due to the actions of these two parties our nation India as a whole is losing. Our loss is millions and tons of food being dumped in landfills. In our nation there are thousands who are starving everyday. And look at us wasting our food not only in the cinemas but even at home.

It is crucial and necessary to understand the behaviour pattern of the consumer as well as the cinemas to solve this issue. That is where psy-

chology comes in. By learning how these two parties function we can save so much food everywhere. By applying the various attributes of psychology we can end this issue. Understanding how the consumers can choose wisely as to what they need to consume and what factors influence this decision. Or try to figure out how the cinema companies can either reduce their portions or even give the option of pre-ordering their menu so the consumers do not get hassled in the queues (with the help of economics of course)

So think. Think hard next time you throw your food away as you are very fortunate to have food to throw away. Many people do not get one meal a day leave alone three with such convenience as us. So friends lets not waste food. Let us do our part to end hunger and starvation throughout our country

A LOVE FANTASY

Each time I write my name I can't help but wonder what yours would be, I write my name on currency notes, misted glass panes, walls of the places I have been to, carved them on tree trunks on my way home, hoping you would find your way to me if you ever get lost.

Each time I look at the mirror, I seek your face in my reflection. Each time I stop to think, I wish the voice in my head would be yours.

Each time I write the date and time on my diary, I wonder how many more days I will have to pass to get to you

Each time sleep pushes me to dream, I search for you in the endless night, never wanting to wake up not finding you

Each time I stay home on holidays, I wonder if we would go to places where we can stay still and forget our names, or not have a name at all,

when we leave those beautiful lands, we would leave parts of ourselves there,

Growing in age and warmth, we would revisit those places holding hands and stay there forever. The wise lands would have known our plans even before we were born, the whisperers of time would have betrayed our little secret to them. It is so strange that despite the long wait, we would be the only ones left to know each other.

Simona. N, 1 M.sc CP

A GAY TALE!

So when I was a kid, I hated wearing anything even close to being "girly", I even bargained and wore a suit once for a wedding which by the way is a huge deal, because little girls don't wear suits in traditional Tamil families, they wear pattu pavada. Should have known then only that several years later I'll go through what is commonly known in our psych language as, "gender identity crisis". No, wait that's not the only issue at hand, I'm also homosexual but if my gender identity is masculine (predominantly) and I like women doesn't that make me just another regular straight guy?

I know. I know. Sexuality can be very confusing! Let me break it down to you, for now let me say I'm gender queer! Not exclusively male or female. I love flaunting the ramp in a formal full black suit with my short hair and I also don't mind wearing a saree and showing off a little bit of skin. How exactly did this all start? There was no beginning, I was always like this. I remember being a teenager when everyone's going crazy over Madhavan (the chocolate boy), I wanted to be like him and not have a boyfriend like him. To me it was just super normal to be who I am, to be a man in my head. Ok let's go down memory lane, had my first crush in 6th grade, she was my Science teacher and Good Lord, she was stunning. School was fine; I dated two sweet straight girls. College

started good, I dated a straight girl again and one fine day she just got up and told me, "Hey you are not an actual guy so bye!" ok, reality check, what just happened? It all started hitting me for the first time, second year in college that was one horrible year I must say. It was when I came to know I'm going through a gender identity crisis. At that point I couldn't comprehend a single thing that I was going through; accepting myself for me was the last thing I thought of. My religion considers homosexual actions as mortal sin and man I don't want to go to hell, for now my parent's ignorance is my bliss but they'll get to know one day that I'm bisexual, and the girl I thought was the love of my life ignores me in college every single day - what was the solution my adolescent brain offered? Kill yourself! The strongest suicidal thought I've had till date, an entire night I was lying on my bed numb and thinking of ways to end my life. Here's where we thank religion again, suicide isn't really allowed you know so I got through that night and left the kitchen knife back in its place. We went to a one week retreat program that summer and it was quite a revelation, guess what? I've been thinking I'm bisexual for so long and it hit me like a high speed turbo truck that I'm actually gay and bonus I even hallucinated of seeing Lucifer run past me and oh only after coming here and talking to Neha (our college professor) I realised I was hallucinating because

for two years I believed I saw the devil himself. So anyway, after this very happening retreat, we got back home and in two months I cut my hair short for the first time. One word - "liberation". It was the most liberating I've felt my entire life, for years now I didn't like what I saw in the mirror and I finally did. It was my best friend's birthday and it was an impulsive decision which I did, of course, regret later because when I went home that day, my mom bawled out crying, she couldn't take it and I couldn't take it either because I've never seen my mother cry so much and there it goes again, I went into this never-ending loop of guilt. I'd read about sex reassignment surgery and then I'd read Romans 1: 26-28 in the Bible. Should I just ignore the fact that I feel trapped in my body? Yes, that's what I did.

For the next two years, I started coming out to a few friends and teachers. I began to realise I'm not abnormal and it wasn't something purely psychological. I got used to so many things in these two years, being glared at in public spaces, old aunties staring at my breasts and wondering why I have breasts but look like a man, kids asking their dads if I'm a guy or a girl, the guy checking while entry in the metro telling me to come to the men's side (which by the way I was very proud of) and so on. And then got into Montfort - the safest space I've been in so far. This place is addictive-

ly liberating I must say. But acceptance isn't that easy and I still pulled off one last stunt, I decided I'll push myself and wear "proper feminine clothes" for 21 days to see if I can embrace my femininity. Having learnt how we all have feminine traits and masculine traits and not being able to comprehend gender ambiguity, I wanted to try real hard to bring out my femininity and I failed miserably. Last December was a nightmare, I had a mild depressive episode and my therapist said if this continues I should start taking meds. Thank God for good people around me, mainly my roommate, my little sister here, my Chris mom and our Principal; they pushed me to eat at least once a day, bathe and brush my teeth every morning. The crying stopped slowly, from four hours a day to just an hour until it completely stopped.

2018 was over. I attended the first Pride march this year and I've finally started accepting myself.

This year began with a bang. I've started coming out unapologetically. I don't feel guilty for who I am. When I see the mirror now, I see the most handsome man I know. I sweet talk to every other girl I see. I don't want to do the surgery to feel belonged in my body. I accept myself for me (maybe not fully yet but I'll get there). I even own a lungi now. And I don't feel guilty in the presence of God, I finally understood that Jesus isn't going to punish me for being me, all He said was love one another and do good to people, He's probably a little upset because I haven't submitted my assessment reports yet but that's about it! So this is my journey so far, there still

are days when I wonder if I can do something and change myself because I don't want to break my parents. I know I have a long way to go but I also know I've come a long way and I've learnt that patience is the key and it's really important to be kind to yourself in the process of growing. I know the worst is yet to come and I also know I might hit rock bottom again. But who knows? Maybe in 10 years I'll be the most feminine thirty year old you'll see and in 20 years I'll have a gorgeous wife and 3 adorable children who call me Daddy. What matters is right now I know in my heart that this is who I am. I am a gentleman and maybe even the chocolate boy in my class!

Yours faithfully,
Mr Anonymous.



FAREWELL MONTFORT

Aradhna Mohan 2nd MSc PC

I don't think words can truly describe how I feel about graduating. Montfort has been my home for two years now and leaving this safe haven is almost scary. The first thing I'm going to miss is how open and honest you are allowed to be here; nobody judges you or treats you differently for voicing your opinion. You are allowed to be you and honestly, nothing beats that! Be it the teachers or your peers, there's always been a

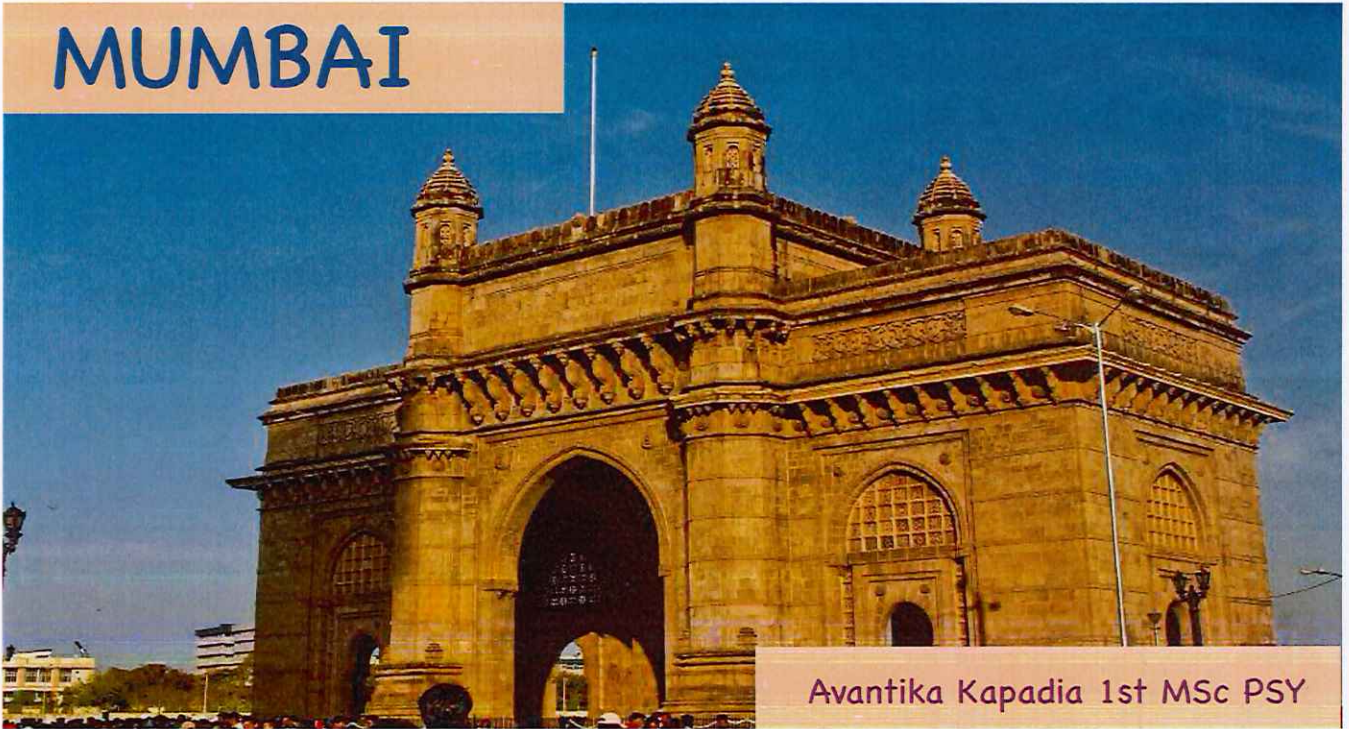
sense of belonging.

I'm really going to miss the warm smiles, sports month, case conference (believe it or not!), the samosas and brownies in the canteen, friendly banter with Asha, Brother George's hugs, figuring out how much food to get for an event with Saritha, brain-storming research ideas with Visal, those quiet evenings on campus... the list could go on and on.

It's been a crazy two years and the learning has been immeasurable. Working with the editorial team has been such a pleasure! Good luck to all the juniors and remember that you are in a space where love and kindness are in abundance, so soak it all in and make the most of it!

#UnconditionalPositiveRegard
always!

MUMBAI



Avantika Kapadia 1st MSc PSY

Mumbai is a city that has sparked the creation of dozens of narratives. It's no wonder, the beautiful, albeit chaotic place is an amalgamation of history and modernity; the huge cement apartment blocks co-existing side by side with iconic monuments like Victoria Terminus Station and India Gate. The city to outsiders might seem shabby, rusted around the edges, caving in on itself. Yet, to its inhabitants it's a treasure trove of wonders just waiting to be discovered.

Mumbai sheds its skin every season. During summer, the city is hot; heat shimmering in invisible waves off the cars, coal black tar on the dirt streaked roads and evenly laid out brown tiled roofs. People are especially agitated, their expressions masked with frown lines, women trying to cover their faces with duppattas, men hurrying along wiping sweat shined foreheads. The sun is a perpetual entity, watching the hustle and bustle of the people and

the black and yellow taxis rushing through streets. Here, Mumbai is ominous, almost oppressive, pressing down on you until you're unable to breathe, except in the cool air-conditioned rooms that provide some respite from the heat.

Come monsoon and the city is unrecognizable. The sky is a stormy grey; dull and uninviting. Everything seems sluggish and slow, and the unrelenting rain hampers much of the progress that the still prevalent crowds seem to make. Sheets of water fall from overhead bridges, hitting windshields with such force that cars and even the big BEST buses shake, passengers alarmed for a few seconds, but then relapsing to their monotonous thoughts. The sewers overflow, and the dead bodies of rats occasionally flow out, black and rotten. This has become a routine; people lift their feet daintily and move on, not giving it a second thought; in a sense monsoon represents Mumbai best, illustrating just how unforgiving the city can be.

Towards the end of monsoon, when

the mud has been washed off the roads, there is another transformation that takes place. Mumbai becomes a city of tranquillity; well, as tranquil as a city can be with twelve million people. You're still surrounded by the cacophony of horns, curses from beady eyed cab drivers, the screech of tyre wheels, and the smell of burning rubber. There are still little children with tattered and filthy unkempt clothes tugging on the hem of your skirt, or holding their dirt crusted hands out for a few rupee coins. Yet, there is breeze in the air. Everyone seems more cheerful, calmer, at ease, secretly thankful for the lack of a downpour, despite the hot sun. This is the when Mumbai is at its most picturesque.

Mumbai is a city of colour and vibrancy. There is an energy that pulsates through the place, an energy that winds its way down slippery, sea spray slicked boardwalks, and lonely streets lined with green and yellow flecked trees. All around you, there are a variety of hues; an emerald green salwar, or the black, granite

building with a golden plaque. Brown skin, and blonde streaked hair. A regal marble porch, and gleaming teak rocking chair.

This vibrancy is only enhanced by the tantalising smell of famous Mumbai 'street food'. From freshly made potato chips, to crispy papdi chaat and tangy pani puri, Mumbai is known for its array of street dishes. Masala chai is also especially well known, a spicy kind of tea served in often dirty, unwashed glasses. Strolling in the grey-yellow sand of the beaches, you'd be likely to find dozens of vendors selling chana in a paper cone cleverly designed to hold a meagre amount. On the boardwalk of Marine Drive, you'd find roasted groundnuts or peanuts instead, delivered to you by thin, scruffy looking men with hungry eyes, greedily watching as you counted out your ten rupees and handed it to them.

During the day, Mumbai is caked with the acrid smoke from vehicles, dark red paan stains, plastic bags, and footprints. Daylight does the

city no favours; exposing its cracked façade for everyone to see, shedding light on the flaws that are usually hidden behind expensive murals, and fancy, intricate installations. It is in the night when the city truly comes alive. The night allows Mumbai to thrive; lights throb invitingly, jewellery sparkles on the throats of elegantly dressed women and Mumbai seems much like those Western cities with glitzy night clubs, and underground restaurants.

While to many, Mumbai appears to be a city of "glamour", in reality, day-to-day life is far from glamorous. The hordes of people, the dirty streets, and dusty red BEST busses bursting at the seams with passengers are sights one is usually greeted with every day. The roads are blocked with an array of cars; Innovas, Maruti's and a rare Porsche, along with the unstable motorbikes and yellow and black taxis- often the cause of accidents. Men and women alike sit under flyovers, swatting flies, and picking grime out from

under their fingernails. Footpaths overflow with vendors, and women knotting flowers into sweet smelling garlands, looking moody and chasing away mangy, tired looking dogs from time to time.

The real impoverishment however, lies in the slums; a part that Mumbaiers try to overlook. Filled with garbage, and frail tarpaulin constructed tents, the slums represent the flipside of this city; an area that is neglected, and usually forgotten. The slums loom over the city, threatening to spill over and break the boundaries between the wealthy and the poor.

Mumbai is a place of dreams and promise. It's a city of adventure, of possibilities and opportunities and there is no denying that Mumbai is special. Perhaps it's the atmosphere, the beaches, the boardwalks, or energy that keeps people coming back for more, but whatever it is, Mumbai is undeniably a place you simply cannot get enough of.

SEWN WINGS

A bird with wings, I was;
 caught in the midst of a cyclone.
 I thought that you were protecting me;
 you held me by my anklebone.
 You put me down, you made a cage and then, called it home.
 The sky was once my throne but
 now I'm a broken flower pot, mercilessly thrown.
 You were a predator, not a life - saver;
 my bad, I should have known.
 You broke my voice, I broke the silence,
 I still know the sound of my tone.
 You sharpen your claws; I sew my wings
 in hopes of getting back home.
 Just you wait, I'll merge with the breeze
 and by the time you know, I'd have flown.

Perhaps, someday you shall see me croon.

SEWN WINGS

Judy Doris,
 1st PC

ARE YOUR BELIEFS REALLY YOUR OWN?

Ritika Rachel Thomas
2nd MSc PSY

Two years and seven months ago, I decided to turn vegan. Now before you feel irked by the negative connotations memes have made you associate the word "vegan" with, give me a chance to explain. I'm not writing to tell you that you should go vegan because some vegan said it's wrong to kill animals but I'd like a chance to help you challenge yourself. Why? Because before society conditioned you into believing that animals are commodities and desensitized you from their plight, in all probability, you yourself believed that it's wrong to kill animals and if you're being honest with yourself, you most definitely still think it's wrong to kill animals.

How does that work? How are we conditioned to ignore our natural inclination not to harm another living being and become complicit in the pain inflicted on them? Let's take a look:

- We're taught "Old MacDonald had a Farm" but never told what really happens to the animals on that farm. We're taught "Bah Bah Black Sheep" and the sheep says, "Yes Sir. Yes Sir. Three bags full!" as if wool is a victimless product.
 - We're shown cartoons and movies where kids are crying looking at broccoli and other vegetables and demanding chicken nuggets so we're conditioned to associate fruits and vegetables with something unpleasant and animal products with something pleasant.
 - We're asked to complete 'match the following' exercises in school where we are required to "Match the animal with the products they give us" and are rewarded when we match cows with milk, chickens with eggs and sheep with wool. Do animals actually willingly 'give' us anything or do we forcefully take everything from them?
 - We're taught that the correct pronoun to be used for an animal is "it" – the same used for objects, when we should be taught that animals are individuals, not commodities.
 - We're taught the "Balanced Diet Pyramid" and told that protein comes from meat and calcium from milk only. We're never told about the plant based sources of protein and calcium and never taught to ask why humans are the only ones that drink milk beyond infancy – that too the milk of another species. We don't even question why we'd need a cow's milk any more than we'd need a dog's, cat's or horse's milk.
 - There are ads EVERYWHERE with cartoon images of animals smiling and selling their own cut up body parts to persuade people to buy animal products. We don't really have to think about the torture they went through when all we see is a finished product and an animated picture of the animal smiling asking to be eaten.
 - Animal products are mentioned in literally every cartoon, movie, serial, so much so that the disclaimer, "No animals were harmed in the making of this film" doesn't even apply to animals killed for food.
 - We're taught to use euphemisms like beef, pork, mutton, ham, bacon, leather and gelatine so that we're not reminded of the fact that these are the cut up corpses of someone who once had a family, a friend, a face and a heartbeat.
 - We're told that words like "farm fresh", "organic" and "humane" should somehow make us feel guilt free because killing is acceptable as long as it is done quickly – only if the victim is an animal of course.
 - We're given toy animals with our Happy Meals while failing to make the connection that these toys come with a meal of a tortured, slaughtered being.
 - We're taught that a horse lives in a stable, a lion lives in a den and a dog in a kennel. Schools take us to zoos to learn about "how animals live" even though there is nothing natural about these settings.
 - Through our actions, we reinforce the idea that the same principles of justice, equality and peace don't apply to animals because "they're just animals" and "they're different" so what we do to them is okay for whatever reason we use to justify our behaviours. And as social beings, we tend to do whatever is considered "normal" in society.
- So you see, most of what we know about animal products comes from a carefully constructed image of what we're expected to know about them. Why? Because if people weren't desensitized to their plight, it'd be so

much harder to convince otherwise kind and compassionate people to pay for and even argue for the use of animals. That would mean huge losses to the businesses that profit from animal exploitation by keeping consumers in the dark. There's a reason that slaughterhouses, dairy farms, fur farms, research labs and other exploitative businesses are located out of the public eye. There's a reason it's illegal to record inside.

Sadly, it's worked. They've managed to convince us that cut up body parts are food, ripped off skins are fashion accessories, watching them in captivity is "educational", and testing is something that needs to be done for our own sake. But it doesn't have to be this way. The best thing about conditioning is that although it is powerful, it doesn't have to be permanent. Ask yourself the tough questions: What's the difference between the Yulin Dog Meat Festival and what happens to other animals in the rest of the world? As a child, if I were put in a room with a dog, cat, cow, goat, pig, chicken, would I know the difference between which is a pet and which animals are "food"? Do I believe harming animals is wrong? If I were in the animal's position, what would justify someone treating me this way? And once you've asked yourself these tough questions and answered them honestly, I hope you are able to reject the societal norm.

WHAT IS LOVE ?

What is Love?

The younger me asked my matured self!

I replied, with all the experience I had...

Love is Caring. Love is kind.

Love is all the memories, we leave behind!

Love is the mould that melts the coldest hearts.

Love is reason for peace in the world, Love is selfless...

"But hold on..." She said, stopping my wisdom flow

"Isn't this a popular opinion and hence could be flawed?"

"Where am I here? Where do I stand?" She asked to which my face had a glow.

Listen then, little one, as this is what I've learnt!

Love is to try when rest fail,

Love is to stand up for yourself, when everyone else bail!

Love is to find you and find the beauty in you.

Love is empowerment of the imperfection in you!

Love is me and me alone.

Love flows from me to everyone I know!

...

Suddenly, the silence was broken.

The younger me vanished.

I came back to reality,

In front of me was, a loveless world to conquer!

Shivli Shrivastava
2nd MSCP

YOUR TURN

Half open door,
 You don't know what's facing you.
 Take a step, one more.
 Take a breath, maybe a few.

Uncertainty paints you white,
 As you wait without making a noise.
 A sunny day turns to night,
 You speak but can not find your voice.

Hesitantly, you take one more step,
 Wide eyes, peep through the vent,
 On the floor were tears freshly wept,
 Face to face, you see yourself.

Flowers growing out of one,
 Dead leaves out of another;
 You shed all the leaves,
 Scars, labels and broken feathers.

Now go, find your happy ending,
 No one writes it for you.
 Within you, there's a fierce lover,
 It's your turn to love you.

**Judy Doris,
 1st PC**

MONTFORTIAN

Never knew what just two years could do
 To me and the people around
 A journey within to learn, unlearn and miles to go
 To love oneself, the other and the world

From making a few friends and foe
 To converting them to be our strong hold
 Young, old or new little did we care to know
 A shoulder to cry, hold and be glad

Theories, research methods, assessments this and that, woe
 Unconditional positive regard is all that we learned
 Little did we worry about our marks after we know
 It's Bangalore University after all

I was just aware about the time and space
 When the seniors left the place
 The brotherhood we shared made Zeus jealous
 No, it ain't about a late-night party but a few deep conversations

The rat race of finishing hours and hours of practicum
 The fear of case of conference and the uncertainty of research completion
 Was not a muse with a hope it comes to some use
 We survived not with ease but with the support of each it is

Samson Roy, 2nd PC

TAKE TIME TO MAKE YOUR SOUL HAPPY

Take time to make your soul happy,
Take time to heal,
Take time to acknowledge your pain,
That the deepest heartaches and the unanswered prayers in His love remains.

Take time to be open and soft,
Take time to forgive,
Take time and apologize,
Take time to extend the love,
As difficult as it is, take time to love.

Take time and step into places, one feet at a time.
Take time to embrace your desires.
Take time and look at your choices.
Take time to see what you lack,
Take time to build.

Take time to identify the temporary,
Take time to look out for differences,
Take time to know what's real,
In your sensitivity, take time to reveal yourself.

Take time to celebrate your flaws,
Show the passion deep within.
Take time and realize your freedom,
Take time to be thankful.

Take time to fall,
Take time to rise up,
Take time to see beyond the failures.
They are a part of who you've grown into, a part of you that's strong.

Take time to fall deeply,
In love with all your might,
Take time to cherish a million feelings,
Take time to stay, remain and fight.

Take time to make promises,
Take time to say your vows,
Let it arise from the deepest part of your heart,
Let it discover a beautiful place.

Take time and notice the details,
Take time and open your eyes,
See the beauty hidden in everything,
See the truth beneath the lies.

Take time and prioritize,
Take time to smile,

Take time and count your blessings,
Take time and love your life.

Take time to feel,
Take time to breathe,
Take time to embrace what you embody,
Take time to believe.

Take time to step into adventures,
Take time to enter the unknown,
Set yourself apart from fear,
Set your heart on a journey, explore on your own.

Take time to make your soul happy,
Take time to know who you are,
Take time to run and chase,
Take time to pause before you go too far.

Evita Edward 1st PC

SUICIDE AWARENESS

Sahiti G
1st PC

S "ometimes you have to hurt to get better," My physiotherapist says, as she jabs her elbow into my shoulder, and I think about you.

I think about how you wrote all those love letters to death, quoted Sylvia Plath and Charles Bukowski, wished your pain could become something poetic, how you juggled razors and tiptoed on the sides of bridges, danced amongst the traffic.

You wanted to whisper sweet nothings to the edge, because you couldn't escape the cold embrace of your own sadness. You couldn't help but think about how easily you could disappear into the darkness.

You sit in a psychology class for the first time in high school, and your best friend hands you a flier filled with statistics and you start to cry.

There are too many people who've been reduced to bodies.

People like you who become a teenage tragedy, and you are terrified that you'll lose yourself, become a minor headline in some tiny section of the newspaper someday.

There is nothing poetic about leaving too soon. Nothing romantic on giving up before it gets better. Nothing beautiful about dying to make a point. There are no thirteen reasons why.

I know you wrote your own end, believed that you'd crafted a masterpiece, but I think you believe in resurrection. In Lazarus who climbed out of his own grave.

Here is another narrative: one where you know that despite trying and falling over and scraping your knees, there's always a possibility of the

wounds healing, of the itch of scars that means a new beginning.

I know that I'm a poet who sometimes stutters, stumbles over my words. I'm aware that poetry cannot be a band-aid, but I know how to tell you to stay.

To not give up on yourself.

To say that sometimes when you reach rock-bottom the only place to go is up, and I believe you've got enough strength left to climb

And if you're tired and your legs hurt, and if your nails are broken from digging yourself out of the dirt,

I'll give you a hand.

All you have to do is reach out and take it.

