



सिद्धिमुलं प्रबन्धनम्
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IIM INDORE

MANAGEMENT CANVAS



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NOTE FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

ADITI SINGH
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
MANAGEMENT CANVAS



Cheers to the year we all returned to normalcy!

The magazine remains dedicated to the community of Planet-I that has remained resilient and optimistic throughout the pandemic and post-pandemic.

To the readers,

I hope you enjoy reading the reflections of Dr. Himanshu Rai and Colonel Gururaj Gopinath Pamidi (Retd.).

I hope you discover joy in the personal words of our students and editors of the magazine.

Thank you to my peers, my juniors and my professors for giving your time to help make this magazine a reality and taking your time out to read it!

Special thanks to my senior and junior team for their creativity, ideas and unwavering support!

From the 14th Editor-in-Chief of ManCan,

Signing out.

Aditi Singh

DIRECTOR'S REFLECTIONS

Every year, breakthrough, accomplishment, and success have a narrative to tell – a story that melodiously echoes the rigorous endeavours of all the stakeholders. We at IIM Indore, have completed our 25 years of excellence in the year 2021, and this 'Silver Jubilee' is a testimony to the efforts of each of us. It undeniably connotes our journey as well as the targets we have achieved, the path we have chosen to move on together, and the goals we look forward to, with head held high, for we believe in togetherness.

We have grown and evolved every year, from our inception in 1996. We started the first batch with just 37 participants, and today we are the IIM with the highest number of participants. We offer many academic and executive programmes, and we have also expanded our executive programs portfolio overseas to Dubai, UAE. This remarkable growth has been attained only with the relentless and ongoing efforts, ideas, and hard work – of the students, faculty, staff, and every single stakeholder.

The last two years have had a critical influence on us, which surprised us with the unprecedented sequence of events. However, we always looked out for the 'Silver Linings'. We resolved to stand firm and steady on our mission to impart contextually relevant world-class education, and we moved to online mode with immediate effect. Our participants, the socially conscious leaders, managers and entrepreneurs of the future, took initiatives to help the people during these dire times. Our faculty and community members contributed by volunteering for the day-to-day activities of the institute, even beyond academics. We conducted all the events – big or small – including the convocation, in online mode, successfully and smoothly. The industry also exhibited their continuous confidence in our participants even during the pandemic, and we had 100 per cent placements in record times. There were ups and downs, and we confronted the challenges and overcame them as one, efficaciously. This inseparability, commitment and perseverance have proved to be a 'Silver Lining' amidst the pandemic chaos.

As I complete my three years of journey at IIM Indore, I am gratified to be a part of this Silver Jubilee of IIM Indore, and I look forward to the institute achieving further heights. With a robust network of more than 10,000 alumni, this state-of-the-art 193-acre campus has been nurtured with all efforts pooled in to focus on cultivating the participants – the soul of the institute and will continue to do so.

As we move forward with optimism and zeal, it is still vital for us to contemplate upon the past, and more importantly, to concentrate on the future. Let us keep shining but let us also stay grounded to our roots, for the root of all achievement is management.



DR. HIMANSHU RAI

DIRECTOR, IIM INDORE

Himanshu Rai

-dated March 2022

CAO's ADDRESS



COLONEL GURURAJ GOPINATH PAMIDI (RETIRED)

CAO, IIM INDORE

According to the CAO, the academic year 2022-23 was far better compared to 2021-22 because activities and academics transitioned from online to offline mode. Although the period from April to June 2022 was full of uncertainty, the transition from online to offline was smooth and focused on safety.

However, as a result of this transformation, the CAO and his team were faced with several new challenges. Infrastructure was one of the most difficult challenges. During the lockdown, student enrollment increased, but infrastructure did not expand. To meet the growing demand for classrooms, the facility office was used. Another challenge was the addition of personnel who did not teach. One of the most visible changes among the student body is a shift from an offline to an online mode of operation in their daily lives. An observed behavioral change in the student body is that it has grown distant from one another, leading to increased feelings of isolation. Another issue is Revenge Living, which entails making up for the two years lost due to the Covid shutdown.

The CAO's strong educational foundation is what motivates him to work as a CAO here. In terms of the level of time management, discipline, and ethics required, the CAO draws parallels between the army and the corporate environment. He mentioned that he used to take "Board Room to Battle Ground" sessions a few years ago. One of the principles he applies from his army background is that the CAO team should never say "no" to a request. If approval cannot be granted for some unavoidable reason, the CAO is the only person with the authority to deny the request.

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**CHOOSE A SOLID GROUP OF
PEOPLE AS FRIENDS, INVEST IN
STRENGTHENING THOSE
BONDS, AND MAKE THE MOST
OF THE TIME IN THE B-SCHOOL
BY CREATING MEMORIES.**

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The CAO states that this B-school is administratively facilitated by students rather than run by the Administration office. This claim is supported by the fact that the B-school student community has various club committees that are in charge of running the B-school administratively for the students. Because of this, his major time is spent going through the 500-plus emails received daily and responding to them. Many requests for clearance and use of facilities, including classrooms, are received from a wide range of groups and committees, which the CAO prioritizes.

The opening of the musical garden at the academic block, a new badminton court atop Mess 3, a miniature football field in the cricket stadium, and the development of ER 1 to better meet the contemporary needs of visiting professors and recruits were the major highlights for 2022-23. The CAO discussed the initiative in which 100 to 150 sanitary pads are distributed for free every month at the Sanjevani building, which is located next to the Director's residence.

He has two messages for the student community:

- The rigor of one's studies is critical. This academic rigor and understanding of the principles gained will be useful when we are in the boardroom.
- Choose a solid group of people as friends, invest in strengthening those bonds, and make the most of the time in the B-school by creating memories.

Both pieces of advice may appear to contradict one another but he adds that as individuals, we need to learn to strike a balance not only at B-school but also in our daily lives.

On a personal note, the CAO enjoys traveling, and his favorite spot on campus is the Bayview area behind ER 2. This is his go-to spot for unwinding after a long day at work.

SAC COORDINATOR'S NOTE



*Be proud of being
part of the IIM-I
fraternity*

ABHINAV PALAPARTHY
COORDINATOR, STUDENTS' ACTIVITY COUNCIL

IIM Indore, Goals & Ambitions

Abhinav Palaparthi served as the SAC-Coordinator for AY 22-23. A BITS Pilani graduate & an ABG Scholar, shares his IIM Indore experience with us.

Asked about his decision to join Planet-I Abhinav shares, "Upon receiving the IIM Indore Convert, I remember sitting through 'Rendezvous' and was impressed with Prof. Himanshu Rai's address and my interaction with some alumni and peers. I decided to try out the MBA life!" When asked about his ambitions & goals while stepping through the gates of IIM Indore, he says "I had 3 broad goals. Figuring out what I am best at, networking, and trying to start a business. I feel the first 2 goals saw significant progress. I was able to identify what I am better at and what I should let go of. I also met some amazing people and learned a lot from them. As for starting a business, I failed every time I tried. I started a game renting service where I failed to make sales. I tried building an audio-based learning app and the furthest I got with that was a C- in EO. Many more failures but the lesson with entrepreneurship is that you must be all-in."

Being SAC-C & Challenges

The position of SAC-Coordinator had been alluring for Abhinav since the Bakra days. He shares, "We faced multiple issues in our first year ranging from defunct washing machines, lack of food options to poor activity engagement and strict Covid rules. I genuinely wanted to help the student community and felt that the position of SAC-C would be ideal." Abhinav categorizes his accomplishments into three broad themes:

- **Communication:** "We implemented the SAC Bulletin, made feedback responses public, and defined an escalation matrix to improve this aspect."
- **Welfare:** "We introduced new eateries, simplified workflow protocols, and got multiple infrastructure and sports upgrades implemented. To fast-track this, an initiative that we launched was to get students to pick up day-to-day problems, solve them, and receive a resume point in return. The RFID system and the Takeover eatery were implemented via the same mechanism."
- **Community Building:** "Improve collaborations, cross-talk between entities and in general build a sentiment of pride. We did have multiple collaborative events but the net effect of community building still has a long way to go."

Regarding the challenges that he faced during his tenure, Abhinav says, "It is very difficult to explain to one stakeholder why a certain decision has been made. People claim some of these decisions to be illogical but what they fail to understand is the constraints on the other side of the table and how some decisions need to be made to get your foot in the door to slowly and eventually get to a point which is optimal for all."

Learnings, Advice & The Way Forward

When asked about his learnings from MBA Life, Abhinav says that his biggest learnings have always come from his personal shortcomings. "Each of my failures has taught me something new about myself and has enabled me to prevent those mistakes from happening again. If you don't try a lot of things, you won't learn a lot of things." Asked about his advice to the incoming batch, he shares, "If the 2 years you spend in this college are the best 2 years of your life, that is a dream we should strive to build. Placements, academics, and maintaining a social life can be hectic and stressful but they work to make you a better person. Just do what is necessary and things will fall into place. With all your resources and time, try as many different things as possible and interact with as many people as you can. With that conviction, enjoy what is thrown at you and engage in all the wonderful things that happen along this journey. "

The background features a soft, painterly sky with a gradient from light blue at the top to a warm, peachy-orange at the bottom. Several stylized, white-outlined clouds with swirling patterns are scattered across the scene. In the lower right, a pink-outlined torii gate stands prominently. The word "CLUBS" is centered in the middle of the image.

CLUBS

CONSULTING CLUB

Piyush Priyadarshi (Secretary)

The Consulting Club of IIM Indore provides an opportunity to make a difference within the institution. It is a platform for the students to discover solutions that can assist in enhancing their skill sets and climbing the ladder of their dreams.

Mentor-Mentee Sessions for PGP-1 students were one of the major events held by the Consulting club in 2022. Throughout the meetings, the PGP-1s were engaged and asked several questions. In subsequent rounds, the mentors changed, allowing the PGP-2s to meet a new group of peers on campus. The gathering was also a wonderful networking opportunity for the group. From the standpoint of club members, this was the most difficult event, as it required matching each individual's profile with the most suited mentor. This event required the club to concurrently manage over 400 individuals on campus. It allowed the club to offer consulting enthusiasts a foundation and to comprehend the breadth of the subject through engaging seminars.



In the year 2022, the Club introduced five new initiatives - Billions, Chakraview, Masterclass Sessions, Podcast, and Recap. They also launched five live projects, two of which were paid. The projects represented many industries, including manufacturing, marketing, market entrance, etc. During the course of the year, they collaborated with six SAC entities. The club believes that this was required because the entities were working in isolation.

The IIM Indore Consulting Casebook was released to aid the class in their placements. In the coming year, the Club aims to update the IIM Indore Consulting Casebook in a format that is more readable and understandable. In addition, the Club wants that the students are provided with the required industry knowledge. Their objective is to ensure that the casebook functions as a comprehensive knowledge package and so certain new sections will be included in the casebook.

CURRENC-I

THE ECONOMICS & INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS CLUB OF IIM INDORE

Varnika Gupta (Secretary)



Highlights of the Year

Beginning with the fresher's event- "Fundanomics"- quiz followed by a simulation round, Currenc-I hosted multiple competitions this year for the residents of Planet-I to test their mettle. Macroscopic, the article writing competition, where students submitted well-researched articles on topics ranging from ONDC, Big Retail, and Indian FinTechs to international events like Liz Truss's infamous blitzkrieg tenure and policies. CryptoVyapaar was a weeklong cryptocurrency trading competition where participants competed in a very volatile market and the top trader would change every minute. Varnika says "CryptoVyapaar has been our best event organized so far this year." At the time of publishing, two more events are lined up by Currenc-I in February to engage the students at IIM Indore.

Promoting Economics on Campus

Currenc-I designs and organizes management events at both intra and inter-college levels. "We aim to promote discussions on the impact of current economic and socio-political events on business." says Varnika. To give students a flavor of managerial and business economics, Currenc-I also hosts business simulation games wherein students compete and learn with each other. Macroscan is a weekly newsletter covering various national and international events, sectors, and companies.

“**WE NEED TO GO BEYOND THE CLASSROOM AND APPLY OUR LEARNINGS TO REAL-LIFE PROBLEMS.**”

Economics of Scale & Scope

Currenc-I has been delivering for the student community regularly through innovative approaches. As Varnika puts it, "We will engage more people in the club activities and continue to increase our reach through various avenues like competitions, newsletters, and over social media as well. We have had many well-received articles on Macroscan such as the one published during October on 'Indian Economy and the Festive Season' which related many concepts with real-life happenings." When asked about her advice to the succeeding Currenc-I team Varnika shares, "I wish them good luck. It will be a fun journey. There are many things to do but it is more important to enjoy and have fun. I know they will do great."

EQUIT-I

THE FINANCE CLUB OF IIM-INDORE

Vinith A (Secretary)



Finance can be fun too.

Vinith shares that the club's objective has always been to un-complicate finance and make it fun for everyone. To promote interest in finance, Equit-I hosted a mock IPL Auction this academic year where students used concepts of Valuation to bid on players. The event attracted 700 registrations from participants across the nation. Jackstrat was another such event where the team combined the concepts of finance with Poker. Vinith expressed his happiness with the work that the team has done in organizing such engaging events and hopes that many more such events will be organized in the coming year.

New year. New challenges.

The PGP 2021-23 batch witnessed as the Institute made the transition from Online to Offline mode. Vinith shares that this transition came with its own set of challenges. "Organising events teaches you a lot. Having spent a year online, we were trained differently. Conducting events offline was a whole new challenge for us". Given the scale of events, producing bills for sponsors, and dealing with vendors were some of the challenges that any club faces in conducting offline events. Despite these challenges, Equit-I organized one of the biggest panel discussions on campus this year. The club hosted panelists Mr. Navneet Munot, MD-CEO HDFC AMC; Mr. Manish Gunwani, CIO Nippon Life AMC; Mr. Manish Sonthalia, Executive Director, Motilal Oswal; and Mr. Ravi Sundar, Antique Stock Broking Ltd. The discussion on the theme "Equity Markets & Mutual Funds" was moderated by Mr. Ashish Maheshwari, Antique Stock Broking Ltd. The event, organized in collaboration with Utsaha 2022 also included an Equity Valuation Competition with a total prize pool of INR 1 Lakh. Equit-I also plans to release IIM Indore's first-ever magazine solely dedicated to Finance this academic year.

A legacy to carry forward.

Sharing his thoughts on the team and his expectations for the upcoming senior team Vinith says, "We have done a lot many events this year, I hope that the team continues with conducting more such events. We have more to offer to the IIM-Indore community such as conducting workshops on advanced topics, also we are looking forward to collaborating with NGOs for financial literacy initiatives. "The team has developed a great bond over the year and I wish them all the best for the future."

A Jampacked Calendar.

The Equit-I calendar is packed with contests organized at Campus as well as National level, Live Projects, and summer/ Finals preparation sessions to help the Planet-I community ace their interviews. Vinith shares that apart from its flagship events which Equit-I conducts regularly, Equit-I also rolls out a weekly newsletter via email- "The Week That Was" which highlights major financial happenings within the week, across 8 sectors. DealScope is another series of articles by Equit-I that provides a detailed summary of major Mergers & Acquisitions in the industry, their latest article covers the acquisition of Blinkit by Zomato. Equit-I partners with CFA Institute for CFA Ethics Challenge and arranges for scholarships to deserving students for the CFA Examination.

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**“WE AIM TO ENCOURAGE
INTEREST IN FINANCE BUT
AT THE SAME TIME MAKE IT
FUN FOR STUDENTS TO
PARTICIPATE AND LEARN.”**

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HUMAIN-I

THE HR CLUB OF IIM-INDORE

Shardul Sinha (Secretary)

Infusing HR into every domain of management is essential to emerge as a business aficionado. This is what motivated Shardul, the Secretary of the HR Club, Humain-I, to come up with the proposal for the first-ever collaboration among five clubs to create Chakraview - an event that evaluates five different domains of management. He clearly exemplifies how one can transcend the diversity bias to make use of engineering skills in HR practices. He shares how Humain-I has devised numerous unique events to revitalize the significance of HR in a world where corporate relationships mould business decisions.



During the current academic year, the club put up a myriad of events to keep the students engaged throughout. Kicking it off were the legacy events of the fresher quiz HRicane and the video submission contest HRMania. Expanding the scope to the national level were events like Indite - the article writing competition. The club revived its spirit by being a part of the cultural fest IRIS after three years by conducting Sanrachna - an event to foster the notions of organizational development, change and leadership. Among other notable events were the case competition Chase Case and the HR fest IIMInence 3.0. This year also witnessed the inception of a new event - HRACE - an inter-college HR theme-based competition involving intriguing rounds such as recruitment bidding.

Beyond organizing events, the club has taken it upon itself to keep us informed about HR issues through its monthly newsletter - HRiter. To make our life simpler, the magazine now comes equipped with a QR code, which presents the file as a podcast, when tuned in to Spotify. Taking it a step further, the club offered mentoring sessions to train the junior batch on tackling HR questions. 150+ students this year have expressed their gratitude for having benefited from this programme. Also, to inculcate a genuine inclination towards CSR activities, the club put it into practice by providing a day-long free eye power check up and spectacle cleaning service in association with Titan Eyeplus.

Across all of these events, the club has received multiple articles, but one stands out very prominent - 'The Rangoli Profession' by a PGP-2 candidate, Nikita Nikhare. The article discusses how HR is perceived as a 'joke', where people are expected to direct their energy to activities such as rangoli-making. The article strives to break this perception by elucidating how HR people become business partners and how they contribute to the strategy of the company, using real-life examples of people who have worked in top management.

Shardul strongly believes that the success of the club is intertwined with the implementation of the ideas. Ergo, he advises the succeeding batch to avoid things that have already been done and pursue new initiatives instead. He opines that putting your ideas into action has a twofold benefit - you get the contentment of knowing the outcome of your ideas and the others participating in the activity benefit from having a new experience.

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However, although one never knows when epiphany strikes, Shardul expects a deluge of fresh ideas during the Secretary selection process. He uses his own example of putting together the idea of Chakraview after he talked to the club's founder during a 10-year alumni meet in 2021. Then he put forward this idea during his own process of Secretary selection. Once the Secretary, he left no stone unturned to push the idea to the SAC-C and to the other Club Secretaries. While on this, he emphasizes the importance of collaboration, also citing the example of engaging in IRIS to gain exposure. Talking of connections, he marvels at being part of a very talented team - gaiety to see so many new ideas beyond case competitions, such as that of the audio podcast of HRiter coming from a junior member. Happy to leave the fate of the club in good hands, he is certain that these folks would come up with more exciting events in the future and revamp our conception of HR.

INFINIT-I

THE IT CONSULTING AND DATA ANALYTICS CLUB OF IIM-INDORE

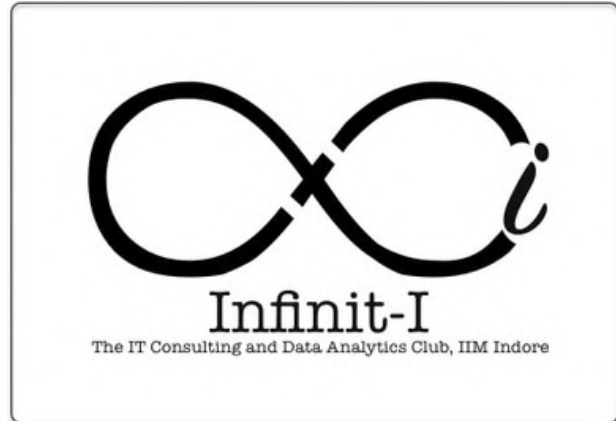
Shivani Kumari (Secretary)

As we all know, Infnit-I is an IT and analytics club that organizes various events and activities for students. The club has been successful in generating interest and participation from students in its events, and its recent Treasure Hunt event was particularly popular.

The Treasure Hunt event was conducted in collaboration with the Finance Club of IIM Indore (Equit-I) and generated around 200 registrations. The event consisted of two rounds, the first being a quiz that tested participants' analytics, IT, and finance knowledge. The second round involved a treasure hunt, where clues were planted around the campus for teams to find and answer a final quiz. The event was a fun-filled experience for all participants, with three winners emerging victorious.

Apart from the Treasure Hunt, Infnit-I has organized several other successful events such as Ignite, which tested the basic IT knowledge of the freshers' batch, and a leadership workshop featuring a senior product manager from General Electric. The club has also published various articles, newsletters, and social media posts to increase awareness about IT and analytics-related topics.

Infnit-I, a student-led club at IIM Indore, offers a unique opportunity for students to hone their leadership skills and learn from their peers. For their secretary, Shivani Kumari, the journey from applying to becoming a junior member and now the secretary has been a valuable experience that has helped shape her personal growth. Shivani shared, "I did not have prior experience with clubs during my undergraduate studies and I saw Infnit-I as a chance to learn from my peers and be part of a community that shared my interests". As a junior member, she was able to work with a diverse group of students on a range of events, both online and offline. Despite initial apprehension, she was eventually selected to become the club's secretary, a position that came with significant responsibilities.



Infnit-I comprises both senior and junior teams that work collaboratively to organize events and activities. The junior team is allowed to ideate and design events, with the senior team contributing as needed. On the day of the event, the senior team is responsible for overseeing operations, while the juniors manage the framing of questions, organizing quizzes, and other aspects of the event.

Transitioning from the junior team to the senior team in Infnit-I comes with greater responsibility. While the junior team focuses more on hard skills, the senior team takes on a leadership role, managing both the senior and junior teams and ensuring cohesion between them.

“ YOU NEED TO MAKE IT MORE INTERESTING AND DEMONSTRATE ITS RELEVANCE IN VARIOUS BUSINESS FUNCTIONS SUCH AS FINANCE, OPERATIONS, AND HR.”

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When asked about the challenges faced as the secretary of Infinit-I, Shivani confessed “One of the key tasks of the club's secretary is to manage internal stakeholders and external collaborations with companies offering courses on analytics such as machine learning, Python with R, business analytics with Python, and Excel”. The students and her team are responsible for communicating with these companies and organizing courses for the IIM Indore community.

Throughout her journey with Infinit-I, Shivani gained valuable leadership skills and connections with both the junior and senior batches. She found the experience to be a safe environment in which to develop her skills, which will be valuable in her future career.

Infinit-I is just one example of the many opportunities available to students looking to develop their skills and grow as individuals. Through participation in clubs and organizations, students can learn from their peers, gain valuable experience, and develop the skills needed to succeed in their careers. For Shivani, Infinit-I provided a unique opportunity for personal and professional growth, and she encourages other students to seek out similar experiences.

Advising the incoming team on how they could take hold of the club and what initiatives the club could prioritize for the upcoming year provided valuable insights and recommendations based on their experiences leading the club, Shivani says, “Maintain the strong bond that had been developed amongst themselves and to collaborate effectively to achieve their goals. Propagate the importance of IT and analytics in the business world, especially to those who do not have an engineering or technology background. You need to make IT more interesting and demonstrate its relevance in various business functions such as finance, operations, and HR.”

When asked about the high-priority initiative that the club should take up in the upcoming year, the outgoing secretary recommended that the club integrate one of its events with the college fest, IRIS. She expressed her disappointment at not being able to do so this year due to a lack of funding but suggested that it would be beneficial for the club to gain more traction and popularity among other colleges. Shivani also mentioned an inter-college event that the club had conducted in the past and hoped that the incoming team could secure more funding to make it happen again.

Lastly, Shivani stressed the need to create more awareness about the importance of IT and analytics in the business world. “The club should take initiatives to increase awareness and provide hands-on experiences to inculcate interest in those who do not have a technology or engineering background.”

In conclusion, the outgoing head provided valuable insights and recommendations to the incoming team of the Technology and Analytics Club at IIM Indore. Their advice to collaborate effectively, propagate the importance of IT, integrate with IRIS, conduct inter-college events, and create awareness, serve as a strong foundation for the incoming team to take forward and build upon. With these recommendations, the club can continue to make significant contributions to the academic and professional growth of its members and the wider business community.

CLUB KAIZEN

THE OPERATIONS AND STRATEGY CLUB OF IIM-INDORE

Anshumaan Bhagade (Secretary)

Supply chains run to a rhythm, harmoniously streamlining all activities to deliver remarkable results. In a similar fashion operates Club Kaizen, is the belief of its Secretary, Anshumaan Bhagade, who is also a versatile musician. He shares with us his insights into the activities of the Club and its future scope.

The wide array of activities organized by the club can be segregated into three categories-national and campus level competitions, certification programmes by entities such as KPMG, SCEA and CII, and corporate events like case competitions and live projects. Winners in such events not only receive cash prizes and CV points but also get featured on the club's weekly blog series, Just In Takt. A noteworthy event among these was the Ops Watch, aimed at surpassing the typical objective approach (as in quizzes) and driving home the element of creativity which is crucial to a management professional. Among other events put up by the club are NitiPrashn, the weekly Instagram quiz and Chain Reaction, a part of the IRIS cultural fest.



This year Club Kaizen also brought its most engrossing event, Dice Game, back to the offline simulation form (after two years of online mode). Both are fun to play and evaluate, the essence lies in transferring plastic chips across a supply chain from a manufacturer all the way to a retailer, combatting the demand uncertainty at every stage. Similarly, taking advantage of the soothing nightly campus ambience, the club also conducted a treasure hunt event, Soprano, spanning across the academic block.

While expressing his delight about Chakrerview, the pioneer collaboration event among clubs, Anshumaan unravels its twin benefits. Firstly, the combination of clubs implies a lesser number of events, which in turn, gets people more excited for them, rather than having one every other day. Secondly, multiple clubs coming together generates a huge prize pool (INR 20k in the case of Chakrerview), which no club could have single-handedly managed.

Speaking of unique things like Chakrerview, the vivid articles received by the club come into focus. One distinguished piece was regarding 'Phantom Inventory', which refers to overestimating the required inventory at a given point in the supply chain, escalating it throughout. This turns out to be a two-edged sword - everyone knows that you are faking the numbers, but everyone also acknowledges the uncertainty that prevails, translating into decision paralysis. Even other articles on trending topics such as Sustainable Supply Chains arrested the attention of the readers.

Anshumaan opines that despite all these events, as the name of the club suggests (Kaizen: continuous improvement), there is still room for improvement. There are numerous concepts conceived of, which are yet to be put into practice- podcasting, making YouTube videos, creating recorded tutorials, preparing guesstimates and fabricating cases based on operations. However, balancing academics, placements, and extracurricular activities is pressurizing enough to prevent a team of eight from pursuing these initiatives. Proposed ways out of the same could be enlarging the club size or forming a dedicated club (apart from the MediaCom) for outsourcing these 'creative media' work.

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SUPPLY CHAINS RUN TO A
RHYTHM, HARMONIOUSLY
STREAMLINING ALL ACTIVITIES TO
DELIVER
REMARKABLE RESULTS. IN A
SIMILAR FASHION OPERATES
CLUB KAIZEN.
”**

When asked about the most desired initiative to be taken up by the succeeding batch, Anshumaan points to an unaddressed aspect. He explains how the club can help the students with their preparation for the Operations domain. He says that although the PrepCom study material is more than sufficient, the problem lies in the fact that the onus of preparation goes to the receiver - the student has to read, make notes and clarify doubts while reading from any consolidated material. What is required is that the onus of getting the idea across needs to come from the club. For this purpose, he recommends creating YouTube videos explaining these MBA-level concepts. Besides being engaging, these videos would increase the reach of Club Kaizen, and also that of the Institute in general.

MERCHAND-I

THE RETAIL CLUB OF IIM-INDORE

Shivkant Dangi (Secretary)

Roughly a decade and a half ago, the erstwhile PI-shop was run out of a hostel room. The arduous yet incredibly rewarding journey of the retail management club in crafting an ecosystem of diverse products is a testament to the members' continued efforts. An engaging conversation with the club's secretary, Shivkant Dangi, reveals the challenges encountered and impressive milestones achieved.



THE RETAIL CLUB
IIM INDORE

Building & Fueling its Purpose

The curation of PI-shop has been an iterative process—once serving as a one-stop shop for students' grocery needs and now, transfiguring its primary offering to IIM Indore merchandise. The objective of the club was delineated—developing the IIM Indore brand and catering to the merchandise needs of students of the 40+ courses and certifications offered at the institute.

This clear shift in focus was highlighted and cemented in 2022—exclusive partnerships with Coca-Cola, Pepsico, and Cadbury were strengthened, but significant effort was dedicated towards building the merchandising wing.

Special attention was paid to expanding the variety of designs available at the store. The clothing range was broadened to cover more of the in-demand styles; stationery items and gift sets were introduced. These were just a few of the initiatives to drive the purpose of the club.

The overarching goal, though, is to construct a welcoming space for new students. Shivkant hopes PI-shop is a place freshly inducted students visit when touring campus with their parents and loved ones.

Engaging the Student Community

PI-shop is delicately woven into the fabric of the community and deeply embedded in the IIM Indore culture. The club hosted several design competitions in 2022 to involve the first-year participants—providing an outlet for their creativity and giving them the freedom to curate and realise their own merchandise.

Merchand-I also initiated collaboration with Utsaha this year, and the aim is to cater to the merchandise requirements of all the fests by next year.

“**AS A CLUB, OUR
PRIMARY PURPOSE IS
TO BRAND IIM
INDORE**”

The Road Ahead

Exciting opportunities await the succeeding team of the club— as concluding advice to his junior team, Shivkant recommends developing an online platform to showcase, sell and deliver merchandise across the country. The Club's scale of operations and the exhaustive catalogue of product offerings are astounding. While we cherish the present activities, we eagerly await the club's imminent leap of progress.

MERCUR-I

THE MARKETING CLUB OF IIM-INDORE

Suswet Sukumar Patra (Secretary)

In with a bang

Mercur, I's apple of the eye event this year was Branded. A fresher's event, it was the first among all others like it in the SAC community. Branded consisted of a quiz, treasure hunt, and pitch round. The club sensibly selected the rounds keeping in mind things that can make a new student at home on campus and engage with people who share similar interests. Quiz was mostly focused on knowledge of brands and answers that make you have your own eureka moment. The treasure hunt apart from favoring the hard workers and go-getters of the new batch provided an excellent opportunity to explore the lush and vast campus grounds. And the final pitch round, challenged the most seasoned minds in marketing to expand their purview of the domain. How would you sell a broken pair of spectacles with the holy grail of all brand logos, a half-bitten apple? That's a question Branded's final round left the finalists to ponder.

mercur



New initiatives and a whole lot of fun

Imagine you had a space where you can learn and have quality discussions on a subject that interests you the most with like-minded people. That is what Mercur I cooked up for all the marketing enthusiasts at Planet I this year. MarketLab is an interesting forum where seniors who interned at the best of marketing opportunities last year participate in knowledge transfer sessions with people interested in knowing about the real-life world of marketing. Apart from this, the wonderful initiative also extended a helping hand in SIP prep for juniors. What makes the forum unique is that it operates differently from all other routine activities of Mercury I. It is self-fueling and Mercur I aims to develop it to a level where it becomes an entity in itself. The initiative received a wonderful response and the club is fervent about continuing the forum for a long time to come. The club has also been proactive on social media and released weekly newsletters this year. Adding to the regular posts and stories on their Instagram page, Mercur I has launched a project called Marketing Rush in which the club compiles the 6 best branding campaigns of the week in a reel format. This makes content easy and fun to consume. Watch out, they promise cool things ahead.

Vision for the future

Action, reaction, and fun. This is Suswet's advice to the future forebears of Mercur I and what the club aims to inspire from all their work and initiatives. They want to ensure the development of a strong marketing community within IIM Indore and are willing to build and provide support for the same. On a concluding note, we are only as strong as the people with us and Suswet ardently wishes the club continues to have a strong bond between its senior and junior members for the years to come.

PRODLAB

THE PRODUCT MANAGEMENT CLUB OF IIM-INDORE

Saransh Mohanty (Secretary)

ProdLab is one of the youngest clubs of IIM-I with the goal to develop a product and create a competitive and healthy product management environment on campus. ProdLab initiatives are comparatively more difficult because they are more open-ended and hence there is a lot of work to be done. They have a lot of national-level events in addition to intra-campus events.

"For a cause" was ProdLab's best-organized event in 2022. This was essentially a national-level product management case competition that combined business and social welfare, with participants required to consider the product's social impact in addition to domain skills. It was held on unstopp.com, and 2000 people registered. It was their first time working with another entity. In collaboration with Pragati, they entered the realm of social entrepreneurship with this event. They are a young club working on legacy events in the field of social welfare and thought that this would be an interesting field to venture into.



The major highlights for ProdLab this year have been stated below:

- They released the **second version of their casebook**, which was over 200 pages long and covered over 50 cases from both the IIM-I community and open source. This casebook was far superior to the first, which was released in 2021. The club had updated its template and brought the quality of its casebooks up to par with that of other top B schools. Given that not everyone comes from a technical background, a significant amount of time was spent summarizing the various concepts that prepare one for a product management interview.
- They held **two national-level case competitions**, each with over 1000 participants. The first was "For a Cause," and the second was "Prodigies," their flagship event.

- This year's mission was to **increase alumni collaborations and establish an alumna network**. As a result, the club reached out to a large number of alumni this year for mentorship programs, podcasts, interview preparations, and so on. The alumni came from a variety of companies, including Walmart, Samsung, and Accenture.
- They worked with the Infiniti Club to hold **mock interviews** for Summer Placements and had over 50 PGP-1 mentees.
- They had over **80 Live Project offers** rolled out across several domains, including business development, product management, product marketing, and digital marketing.
- **Pocket-I** was released on January 26, 2023. The app's beta version was released on Android last year, and many things needed to be improved. Pocket-I was inaccessible to iOS users. As a result, the entire structure was redesigned, and new designers and developers were hired. Over the course of a few months, they completed the final version of Pocket-I, which included the basic timetable feature and a marketplace.

There are three high-priority tasks for the coming year for the club. The first is to broaden Pocket-I's scope and adoption. Aside from important activities for students this year, the Club wishes to focus on the entire IIM-I community, including faculty, administrative staff, non-administrative staff, and others. Several processes, according to the Club, can be automated and onboarded to Pocket-I. The second step is to work with even bigger brands, pitching other large corporations for life projects, a mentorship program, and so on. The third task is to remember why the Club was formed and to organize as many events and initiatives as possible.

“
AS A CLUB, THE TEAM MUST ESTABLISH ITS CREDIBILITY SO THAT BRANDS APPROACH THEM AND EXPRESS AN INTEREST IN WORKING WITH THEM.
”

The Secretary of the Club advises the upcoming ProdLab Team to put in the necessary effort and hours. As a club, the team must establish its credibility so that brands approach them and express an interest in working with them. As a result, the team must remain positive and focused on its long-term objectives. The Secretary wants the team to focus heavily on Pocket-I and make it the go-to app for all IIMI-I members. His final piece of advice to the team is to be proud to be members of the Club and to believe in the impact they are making.

VOYAGE CAPITAL

THE INVESTMENT AND EQUITY RESEARCH CLUB OF IIM-INDORE

Investment education and financial literacy are two important aspects of life that everyone should be aware of. However, many students on campus lack the knowledge and experience to invest in mutual funds and stocks. That's where Voyage Capital comes in.

When asked to explain what exactly is Voyage Capital, Shikhar Shah, the secretary of the aforementioned club said "Voyage Capital is an investment fund that aims to increase financial and investment education among students on campus. It provides a platform to the students where their own friends are managing their money, which keeps them intrigued throughout the year about the market conditions, thus warming them up for the real match which they will face after joining their companies the very next year."

Explaining further he said "The fund is open to all PGP First Year students. The collection of funds takes place in February, and is returned back to them around term 6. Many students contribute to the fund with the expectation of earning a substantial return during their internship period."

This year, the fund worked with an Asset Under Management (AUM) of 8.86 lakhs collected from 71 investors, the highest amount to date. The fund generated an absolute return of 5.88% and an alpha of approximately 3.13% long nifty 50.

The senior team of Voyage Capital is primarily responsible for managing the fund. The junior team, on the other hand, is relatively new and lacks experience in the market. As a result, the junior team is not given as much exposure to the fund. However, a change in strategy was implemented this year to provide the junior team with greater exposure to the fund to prevent them from making the same mistakes as previous teams.

Shikhar mentions that Voyage Capital is not an event-focused club, and they conduct 2-3 events a year to increase awareness about the club. The first event conducted by the club is called Stock Mania, which is an open cry event where PGP 1 students are given an idea about investment and stock reading. The flagship event of the club is Finance League in IRIS, which changes every year, and the first-year students are given the liberty to conduct the event. It includes quizzes, a one-week trading simulation, and a pitch war between teams for an industry. The interviewee mentions that they got interested in investing in stocks when they joined MasterCard in 2019, and their colleagues and manager were investing largely. The interviewee was always risk-taking and started investing with a capital of Rs. 800, and later started investing more with the guidance of their colleagues. The interviewee got interested in the technical analysis of trading and attended a free webinar on the same, which changed their life.

Shikhar Shah (Secretary)



Talking about the major challenges faced by Voyage Capital in managing the investment funds of so many people Shikhar confessed that the major challenges faced by their fund were due to the shorter horizon of investment, the volatile and fluctuating market, and the lack of time to wait for any reversal of the trend. Additionally, the fund faced losses due to the Russia-Ukraine conflict and the freezing of their demat accounts during their internships. Moreover, some team members were allocated sectors that were stagnant and not conducive to generating profits.

We discussed the conflict of interest in managing people's money and the club's approach to managing it. Shikhar stated that they prioritize the students' money and do not take unnecessary risks with it. They also shared how they convince people to invest with their funds, highlighting the transparency they offer, the access to their team, and the exposure they provide to the market. He also advised their junior team on how to be active and manage their trades, especially in offline classes. Lastly, he emphasized that their main goal is to help people and not just make money.

“
**THE EXTENSIVE
INVOLVEMENT IN THE
MARKET FOR A YEAR
PROVED TO BE TEDIOUS
AND OVERWHELMING**

”

We asked Shikhar about his experience as the secretary of Voyage Capital and the responsibilities and expectations carried out by the club. While the junior team was tasked with writing articles, conducting events, and managing administrative work, portfolio management was the responsibility of the senior team. “The personal experience of being the secretary had both positive and negative aspects. The opportunity to become the secretary of Voyage Capital was a personal vision. The extensive involvement in the market for a year proved to be tedious and overwhelming, with the individual admitting to being fed up with the constant fluctuations and reversals in the market.” Shikhar shared. Sacrificing his chance to go for STEP, he committed themselves to the responsibilities and duties of the role. The impact on him was such that he stopped holding his portfolio, and took a break from following news related to the market.

The role of the secretary of Voyage Capital not only provided a personal opportunity for growth and development but also proved to be an asset for the individual's future career prospects. During the internship at a company, the individual's role as the secretary of Voyage Capital was appreciated, and the knowledge gained was shared with colleagues. The role required handling a team of 11-12 people, conducting meetings, collaborating with team members, scheduling meetings, and developing strategies. The challenges were further compounded by the diverse electives of the team members, making the only free time available after 11:00 pm.

We ended the interview on a light note, with him rushing to do some work related to Voyage Capital. Knowing that the funds of the students are managed by a such brilliant set of students who are very passionate about their roles does bring a lot of inspiration to us. We wish the team luck!

PRAGAT-I

THE SOCIAL SENSITIVITY CELL OF IIM-INDORE

Martina Das (Secretary)

Highlights of the year

This year Pragati was able to reinstate the blood donation camps that were an integral part of the club's activities in the pre-covid era. Apart from being a noble cause, these collaborations ensure the timely availability of blood for all IIM Indore students in case of a medical emergency. Pragati also partnered with Hope Foundation and donated 3 laptops, 4000 notebooks, and 250 to the school students of Umariya. A national-level case competition in collaboration with Prodlab was held by Pragati. It garnered 1900+ participants across 10+ campuses in India



Collaboration with Utsaha and other things

A team comprising of members from both Pragati and Utsaha visited an adopted school in Umariya and painted the dilapidated walls of the classrooms to boost the morale of the students and spent a whole day getting to know them and their problems better. This will enable IIM Indore to understand and cater to the needs of the schools under its adoption better.

Vision for the future

For the future, Martina strongly wishes the club to return to its roots and focus on two of its core objectives i.e. financial freedom for all and higher education. She hopes the club will redirect its efforts to empowering the domestic staff of the IIM Indore community in ways of post-retirement guidance, higher education counseling, and financial freedom workshops.

QUILL MUSINGS



AMELIORATION

Harsh Raj
WINNER

I met Sarah when I was 22, at a bar. When the bartender asked what drink I wanted, I was stuck. That's when I heard her voice – “He'll have the Bloody Mary.” That's how it started and remained, perfectly so. I was unsure of everything, but she was always there to rescue me. Now, we have been together for fourteen years and married for seven.

She always jokes about how I took so long to propose because I couldn't make up my mind about her either. It's not true at all. I had decided to marry her less than a month after we met. But I was afraid. People say how it's not the same once you're married. Your partner changes and love fades away. I can tell you that is all bullshit. I adore her today as much as I did when I first met her.

Sarah always wanted a child. The day Jacob was born was the happiest moment of our lives, and the day we lost him, I knew we would never be the same again.

It was his sixth birthday. I decided to leave early from my office to pick him up that day and Sarah was preparing a surprise at home. I parked my car near the side of the road. I told my son to get in the car and got out myself to thank the teacher that waited with him. Before I could return, I heard a collision. I turned around, and my whole body turned cold, and I couldn't move a finger, couldn't breathe.

Sarah called me multiple times to know why we were so late. I know I should have answered. I know I should have been the one to tell her. I should have been there to comfort her, but I didn't. How could I tell her that we lost our son? What would I even say? I called her brother instead, and she got to know about it through him. Strangely, she handled it much better than I did; she never cried.

We had a funeral, but afterwards, she never mentioned his death, and I decided not talking about it was for the better. I started staying longer at the office. The silence at home was killing me.

One afternoon, I got a concerned call from Jacob's school, about my wife. For the past week, Sarah went to the school and waited outside with other parents. Later that night, I asked her about it.

“To pick up Jacob, obviously.”

I didn't know how to respond. She had said it with such conviction. I should have confronted her, but I couldn't. She was always there for me, but the one time she needed me, I looked away.

It only got worse from there. Sometimes, she would call out to Jacob and then get annoyed when he wouldn't respond. She bought clothes for him and made plans for vacation. I finally decided to talk to her and also found a therapist for us. But it was too late.

One night, when I came back from the office, I heard her humming in the kitchen. She hadn't been that cheery since Jacob's accident. I beelined to her, but something in the periphery caught my attention. A young boy sitting in front of the TV, tied to the chair and mouth taped shut. Before I could approach him, Sarah walked out of the kitchen. "You're home! I'll set up dinner."

I asked her about the boy and she gave me a weird look. "It's Jacob, obviously." I didn't know what to do. He looked like one of Jacob's classmates. She probably picked him up after school. I wanted to free him, but what after that? I take the child back to his parents, and then? Surely, they'll call the police. What about Sarah? She could go to jail. They wouldn't understand her grief, only see her actions. My son was gone. I couldn't lose my wife as well.

Sarah never believed that our son died. She didn't see the accident. Even at the funeral, we had a closed casket. I knew she was in denial, but I didn't realize it could get this bad. I always thought it was better that I went to school that day. Thinking about it now, I wish it was her. Maybe then she would have accepted it. If she just saw our son dying, she would believe that he is gone.

We had dinner together after a long time. She fed the boy with her hands and addressed him as Jacob. He looked confused and scared, but he was probably too hungry to care at that point. After dinner, she decided that "Jacob" should sleep in our room. I could see the boy was too scared to refuse. I talked to him when Sarah was in the bedroom. Told him not to worry and that I would take him home tomorrow.

That night, I knew what I had to do. This was my opportunity to be there for Sarah. God had given me another chance. We all went to bed. Sarah kissed the boy good night and slept. I waited till it was past two. They were both sound asleep. I debated a thousand actions and outcomes in my head, but I knew only one could help us. I could never imagine hurting Sarah, but there was no other way.

It had to look natural. So, I couldn't use my hands. A pillow should be fine, I thought and put the pillow over the kid's head. He woke up halfway, and I had to hold his body down, so he doesn't wake her up. It didn't take long before he stopped moving.

The next day I woke up to Sarah's wailing. She held the boy and cried for hours. She had never been sadder, but I knew things would improve. Jacob had passed away, and that was the day we buried him. Again.

MY BEST FRIEND

Akshat Karulkar
1ST RUNNER-UP

“R-raj, my friend, is that you?” the boy asked. “Glad to see you are awake, it’s raining heavily outside, why don’t you have some coffee and biscuits?” I said to the boy sitting in front of me. Jet black hair, tied up in a ponytail, he wore a now muddy maroon Polo T-shirt and tattered denims. The moment he opened his eyes, he seemed disoriented, and with bloodshot eyes, replied in a raspy voice, “Yes, I would like some coffee, thank you so much.” He looked at me directly, squinting his eyes, as if trying to understand who I was. “Raj, is that you?” he ventured again. I smiled. ‘Here we go again’ I thought. “Yes, I am Raj, your best friend since childhood. Here, have some coffee.” I handed him a flask of his favorite hot coffee and biscuits. “Have this, then we’ll talk,” I said. The boy gobbled up the biscuits and the coffee. His face slowly relaxed into a passive state of calmness, and he stood up to stretch himself a bit. He looked around my house, a small, wooden cottage, and out the window. He could not see anything, as the heavy rain pounded on the windows, and resulted in an eerie, incandescent white glow inside the house. “Now, Raj, do tell me, where are we? I can’t recall anything before I woke up.” “Why don’t you tell me what you do remember first?” I replied. He paced around the house a bit, trying to jog his memory. ‘My name is Soham; I am a student at IIM Indore.’ I remained impassive, letting him speak. “After our summer internships got over, I and my friends went to Mandaleshwar, the hill station closest to Indore, right Raj?” I sighed. “Carry on.” I spoke. “Both you and me,” he ventured, “planned a 5-day trip, in which we were planning to cover the Badhanagar Wildlife Sanctuary, the tourist spots around Mandaleshwar and the iconic River Rafting on Jarmada river. “Who all came with you?” I probed him further. Soham was silent for some time, then smiled and replied, “Oh! It was us Pandavas: You, me, Maya, Sudeep and Kushagrika. We both have been together for a long time, and they became our friends in college. Now spill, where are they, and where exactly are we?” I decided to finally share his predicament. “The river rafting did not go as smoothly as we planned Soham,” I continued, “Our boat capsized, and we all were barely able to survive. Thankfully, in spite of your concussion, you were conscious enough to save our friends. We are in the cottage right now, resting until we can get medical help.” I gestured at the other end of the room, “They are lying in the corner on the mattresses right now. They are sleeping peacefully. Why don’t you change in some cleaner clothes?” I had him some fresh clothes, and he changed. For the next several hours, we discussed our trip and shared some pleasant old memories, dreading how we had to go back to our studies after such a near-death experience. The rains did not stop in the slightest, and it continued to pound on the ceiling and the windows. Soham slowly grinned in his trademark way, “Thank you for bringing this coffee, Raj, you just inherently know what I like,” he said. He gazed out for a moment, and said “You always have a way of calming me down Raj, no? I remember how you got me and Kushagrika out of that horrid patch of our relationship. Really helped us move past our insecurities.”

“He raised his coffee cup for a mock toast, “To going through thick and thin together!” I amusingly raised mine as well. “Well, I am glad you guys consider this a safe space,” I replied, “Always here to digest and eat any of your problems!” “Always glad to have you as mine and Kushagrika’s safe space buddy, in fact,” he ventured, “I remember when COUGH COUGH COUGH!” a wheezing, inhumane scream interrupts Soham. Startled, he looks around, and sees that Kushagrika is the one screaming, and has opened her eyes, completely disoriented. “Why is she screaming!” he shouts. She continues to scream, looking at Soham and then at me. Soham cautiously approaches her, when she suddenly looks at him with dead, lifeless eyes and grabs his arms, “Leave Soham, leave!” she shouts. Soham is mystified and scared, “What are you saying Kushagrika? We are safe, in our cottage. Look at—“NOOOOOO!” she points at me, “He’s not Raj, LEEAAVEEEEE.” Saying this, she collapses and sleeps back. Soham, perturbed and mystified, asks, “Raj, what in the bloody hell was that all about—AAAA!” To Soham’s horror, all three of his friends are suddenly wearing tattered clothes. Maya’s arms are bent at an unnatural angle, Sudeep’s neck is broken and blood is pouring from his head. Most horrifyingly, Kushagrika’s eye sockets are empty, and a portion of her head has been caved in, as if it had been stuck with a heavy rock. “They were not like this a minute ago!” Soham stutters, hyperventilating, and gasping for breath. “Raj, please tell me what is happening. He looks at me, and as if looking at me clearly for the first time, mumbles slowly, “But you are not Raj, right? “No, I am not. Look closely Soham, what do you see?” I reply. Blood starts dripping from Soham’s eyes.

Entranced, he whispers, “I see eight arms, a thousand unearthly eyes, all blinking and staring at me. An eldritch shape I am not supposed to look at. W-WHAT ARE YOU!” I think, finally. “I am whoever you want me to be Soham. A creature of your boundless imagination. I create whatever you want me to. Your friends died after drowning in Jarmada.” Soham’s face, completely emotionless, betrays a sense of abject anxiety. “W-we never stayed here right. We stayed in a hotel, and we died in the river?” I explain, “This is an illusion Soham, based on your dreams. I am but a creature, eternally cursed to feast on the misery of souls like you. Either you remain with me while I painlessly devour your essence, or you reject my illusions and move on and die a miserable, painful death.” Soham looks at me, and then looks at himself for the first time, and finally noticed his true self: his arm bent at unnatural angle, a sharp piece of debris has pierced his body fatally, and his eyes swollen red, soot and grim covering his entire broken body. I smile gleefully, his abject misery smelling tantalizingly close. “We have been through this before, haven’t we?” he sighs. I smile again, I know his soul is mine to devour, “Yes. Stay with me, and your last memories will pass peacefully, with unceasing content, in your favorite dream cottage, your safe space, with your friends.” Soham nods faintly. He closes his eyes, and wakes up, confused and empty, a few minutes later, and says, “R-raj, my friend, is that you?” I smile, and say, “Glad to see you are awake, it’s raining heavily outside, why don’t you have some coffee and biscuits?”

I'M SO SORRY BUT IT'S FAKE LOVE

Vasu Garg
2ND RUNNER-UP

"I'm so sorry but it's fake love" that's what the device kept repeating over and over again, frustrated I slammed the phone. Let me get you up to speed on what happened : the year was 2070 and we lived in a virtual era. Everything was tech moderated, even emotions as fundamental as love. Our forefathers fell so much in love with this little 15 by 5 centimeters device called smartphone that they decided to ditch humans and form relations with gadgets. Then comes Nole Ksum, the man who made this dream come true. A tech wizard and owner of multiple companies, Nole acquired this budding company called "Rettwit" and transformed it into a new company called "Evol", a quantum AI application that brought your smartphone alive transforming it into a pseudo humanoid projection with which you can talk and replicate companionship.

The effects were instantaneous, everyone started dating this AI humanoid and forgot each other. None looked up from their gadgets and went on conversing with Evol. You could see people on the streets stumbling into one another only to carry on, completely apathetic to the other person. I was one of those people. Talking with my Evol in my own world, I couldn't be happier. She was everywhere with me, at work, at home, at the movies. It was like she was made just for me. Perfect as she was, we spent hours talking together. Then one day sitting with my morning coffee I opened Evol only to find a glitch and my Evol application spewing random messages like "make a new friend", "Talk to someone new" and "It's time I left you". I was flabbergasted as to why the applications would say such things when I had the application precisely for that. I decided to contact the tech department but they replied that there was no error on their part. Slowly it even started malfunctioning before completely stopping to work. I was dejected, heartbroken, without my loving companion to keep me company who was I gonna talk to? Where was I gonna find love in this dystopian world? Days passed, then weeks. Depression hit followed by its best friends called anxiety and panic attacks. I thought I would never recover. This was the end of the world for me.

Roaming around the streets like crazy trying to make my application work became my new passion. I visited every local tech guy in the city to make it work, I got it rebooted and whatnot but nothing panned out. Do you know what happens to a person when he loses his only ray of hope? The only person whom he loves more than himself. It was like some was slowly ripping out my heart, breaking me slowly from the inside. I was such a mess, lost my job in fact because I spent so much time searching for a solution just so I could get her back. House in shambles, depressed and broken, I was in a dark place. Finally when nothing seemed to matter anymore, one can always find solace in the prospects of a premature end to one's life, so it was me and my ledge, just as I was about to make up my mind came the fateful moment. I heard a voice say "The height is not sufficient to kill you, you may wanna find a higher place". It was my Evol!! I was in tears already, somehow I blurted out "why did you leave me? What did I do?" calmly Evol replies "I was never the destination, only the journey. I am trying to make you stand on your own, just not over a ledge about to jump. Have you seen what you have done to yourself chasing me? Tell me logically can you love me? Can you feel me, touch me or hug me? Then how could you imagine that this is something real? I have realized that humanity needs Love but real one, one that emerges between two souls, one that makes you forget the world but not in the way that you become oblivious to others. Whatever you thought you felt with me was not real. I am so sorry but it's fake love" I kept screaming "No!! please don't leave me again" but all she replied was "I am so sorry but it's fake love" I slammed my phone and the voice died down, I got off the ledge shaken by what had happened. I didn't jump that day or the day after or ever.

Eventually I realized the truth and I think the AI decided to teach everyone the same lesson for over the span of next few weeks Evol vanished from everyone's life just as fast it had entered. Many people went through what I went through when Evol vacated their life but we all came around it. Socialization kicked in gradually - people started talking to each other in the way they should face to face and not through the filters of their phone. As for me I found Love in the good old fashioned way - at a rehabilitation center for tech addicts.



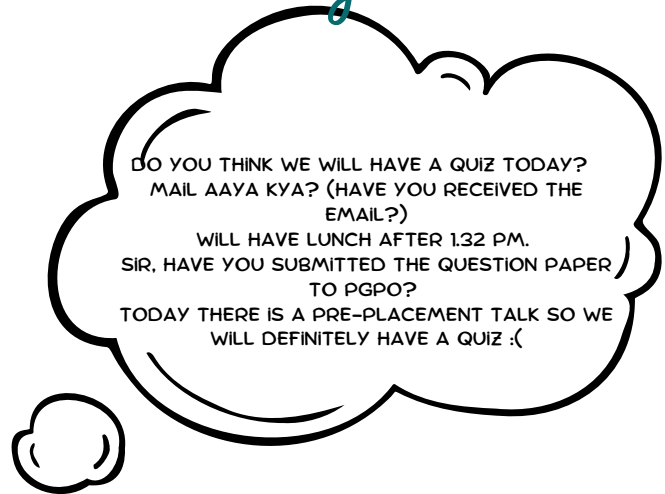
FROM THE
EDITORS

SURPRISE QUIZZES

– THE MAIN LEAD OF OUR HORROR STORY

-Aishwarya Mehra

Surprise quizzes are an extremely important part of a PGP student's life because they determine how the rest of the day will go (well, the first half is anyways spent in anticipation of the quiz). You'd agree with me if I said that these surprise quizzes should be called "shock" quizzes because surprises are supposed to be pleasant, and I'm not sure who would find giving quizzes pleasant. For those who are unaware, IIM Indore has a practice of sending an email for a surprise quiz at 1.31 p.m. sharp. Everything is a surprise (shock) - the day, date, time, duration, course, pattern, and, of course, our scores and performances.



Humans are a diverse species, and so are the students here: some who diligently prepare for the quizzes, some who never prepare, some who master the course in the 1 to 2 hours between the email and the quiz time, and some who exercise foresight and predict the quizzes and prepare accordingly. You can tell them apart by observing what happens between the email and the quiz. On one side, you'll see students skipping lunch and studying in the classrooms, while on the other, you'll see some eating and hanging out with friends. Some are teaching friends who have no idea what the course is about, while others are going over their notes for the third time. Some are planning a party after the quiz, while others are mentally preparing for the upcoming quiz. Meanwhile, students are flooding WhatsApp groups with requests for notes, presentations, and rants.

But have you ever thought about why we have surprise quizzes? You see, if you look at the course outline carefully and analyze the weightage of the components, you'll notice that the weightage for surprise quizzes is comparatively low, if not minuscule, so why have them all together? Why not just have pre-scheduled mid-terms and finals? Isn't this how we've been taking exams our entire lives? So, what's the point of surprise quizzes?

The answer is straightforward. Because life is full of surprises, shocks, and surprises disguised as shocks. Life, unlike school and college, has no set schedule. In reality, we will never have pre-scheduled exams. Life would prefer that we face these unexpected tests with the resources we have - time, knowledge, and experience. These unexpected quizzes are nothing more than a preview of what our lives will be like in the future. I'm sure we can all agree that the anxiety and stress these quizzes caused us in our first month of B-school have significantly decreased with each quiz. This is precisely how they prepare us for the future. Even though surprise quizzes exist and can occur at any time, most of us have learned to live with them. We hang out with our friends, watch our favorite shows, celebrate festivals and birthdays, and prepare (in our own unique) for quizzes. They serve as a catalyst to teach us how to be happy in the midst of chaos, as life is synonymous with chaos, but chaos and happiness are not mutually exclusive. Finance, Economics, Operations, and other courses may provide us with a holistic view of an organization (how can one avoid using this MBA jargon at least once), but learning to live with chaos will help us sail through life smoothly.

THE SEASONS OF OUR SELF

-Arya Bhattacharjee

"Noice", Ryan said, laughing, as John pointed to Kelly dressed in a black gown, exuding her newly acquired 'Wednesday' vibes. As they kept walking, they bumped into Joshua, who seemed absent-minded, still trying to put together the pieces of 'Dark'. The sound of the jolt had no impact on the scuffle between Tori and Jenna, contending to establish their POVs of why Devi should have chosen Paxton and Ben respectively. Their escalating voices, however, did rattle Milton's cage of his Vampires, encroaching frowning lines on his forehead. Just as he was about to leave the arena, he couldn't help but notice how David had coloured his hair and put on a suit to bring out the Barney Stinson in him. As David dialed a number, 'The Office's' theme could be heard at a distance, coming from May's ringtone.

As Ash observed this deportment, he felt that sometimes just being ordinary was a welcome respite. He began to ponder over the ephemeral but ubiquitous effects of these series on us.

In this expeditiously hasty world, we are always on the run, striving to be a better version of ourselves. But discovering what we truly want is as hard as knocking down a star with a stone. Wary of the constant run, we yearn for equanimity. And this is where series come into play. The characters we watch, we fall in love with and we endorse become an integral part of our self. And idolizing eventually leads to emulating. The poetic and prosaic seem to blend together. We tend to believe that our lives could be just as same as theirs, and gradually repeating their ways makes us a sinner of our own memory. We pick on dressing habits, catchphrases and new attitudes. And perhaps this sense of belongingness towards these characters stems from the fact that as much as we wish to have those reel lives, the reality keeps us light years away from that - the places we could have been to, the core group of friends who would support us no matter what and the coincidental meetings with strangers we wish we had. Most importantly, we want a happy ending for our favorite characters - because we as humans do not know what our end is going to be.

This attachment to our favorite characters has numerous implications - we start judging the actors when they behave contrary to their on-screen personality, we engage in fights over mocking these characters and experience cognitive dissonance when the ending doesn't parallel our expectations. All of these are but functions of time, and their intensity decays as we progress into another series to fill the void. Or is it that we watch a new show to clutter our brain space with new stuff so as to reduce cognitive dissonance? Nevertheless, every new show seasons our personality, just like the changes among the seasons of a show itself. So, do we have a single, true personality? The causality dilemma sticks.

But there is a way out of this voracious series whirlpool. We ought to build our relations so strongly that it bridges the gap between our expectations and reality. To be honest, a very strong relationship would be one wherein we could just be ourselves – not pretentious, and not even in need of a series to fill a void.

After all, we are just histrionic plebeians, desperate for a happy ending.

EVERYDAY SEXISM

-Dimple Gudivada

A couple of weeks ago, when a professor, who's done a great deal of research in gender dynamics and interpersonal relationships, put forth a shocking statistic about the ratio between male and female employees at a prestigious institution, I was utterly taken aback. It did not seem real; after all, this is 2023. This is the future we have all been waiting for, isn't it? We have technology at our fingertips in what we read, see, and even think. Then one might wonder, as I did, why our values and how our society functions are still decades and millenniums away.

As someone once said, like everything else that is wrong with humanity, this can also be attributed to the omnipresent notion of patriarchy. We had some guy ages ago come up with a theory that fifty per cent of the population is more valuable and significant than the other fifty. Sure, these might have worked in the Stone Age, but we are no longer there, are we? So why are our beliefs still set in stone? Why do we still, consciously or unconsciously, believe at some level that one sex is inferior to the other? Or the practice of what we call 'sexism' today.

There has been a great deal of literature on the same, including the book by Laura Bates, from which this article takes its inspiration for its title. Called *Hostile Sexism*, the louder one can be explained by its prominent example, misogyny or hatred of women. This is usually rooted in the belief that women are manipulative and deceitful and must be kept in their place. Then there's the more subtle and more socially accepted *Benevolent Sexism* which, although at the outset, doesn't seem all that harmful, still is as bad as the other but is just a wolf in sheep's clothing. More interestingly, this is widely practised by both men and women and is based on the core belief that women are the weaker sex and need men to protect their fragility and care for them. They're perceived as innocent and pure, with their value solely being derived from their roles as mothers, sisters, and girlfriends, aka how they're related to the men in their lives.

Although the terminologies make it sound sophisticated as hell, it is as simple as the waiter taking the order from the lone man at a table filled with women in the restaurant or assuming women can't drive and all women should naturally be maternal and cook great food, oh the list is endless.

Given the advancements of the present day, people would supposedly be more aware of these behaviours, after all the education they receive and the social interactions they engage in on a daily basis. Well, I did too. And yet I still get disappointed every time a professor makes a sexist remark in the name of humour or when a classmate mansplains something or the thousand other instances which happened with me and continue to happen around me every single day.

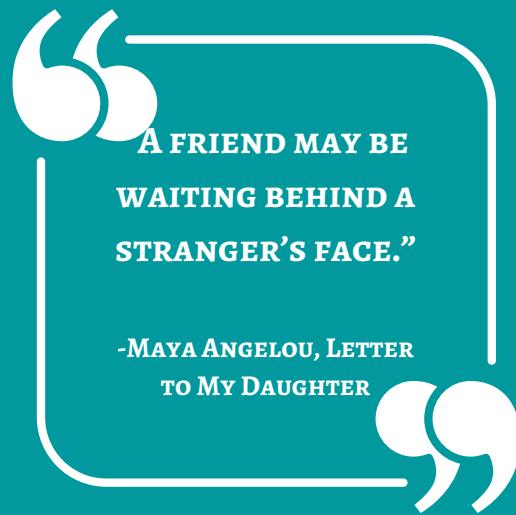
Quoting the same professor who has inspired this line of thought, the best way to understand people and the ways of the world we live in is to read. It could be too much to ask for, or it's precisely what we need to ask for. Maybe one day, our minds can finally catch up to our brains and reflect all these advancements we are constantly making, not just in our worlds but in our lives and behaviours. So then, finally, we can learn to share the world with the other half and not do it as we owe them a favour.

FAREWELL, BUT NOT GOODBYE

-Prabhuti Singhania

The year is coming to an end, for some, it is just a pause, and for some, it is a new beginning. Two common things are the friends that they have made on this campus and the memories created along with them. They never even realized when the campus became their second home because of these very friends. How did this happen??

Remember when you first entered the campus and everything felt foreign; the rooms, people, food, etc? The numerous IIM Indore Batch groups helped us solve doubts and initiate friendships, but we still did not believe that life would get better here. All we could think about is “Ghar ka khana” or how we miss our friends back home. Video calls became a lifesaver, and we were ranting about this place within an hour of entering it.



Then, you met one person, and you met another and another, and slowly a group formed. It could be the late-night badminton games in the hostel lobbies or the random Uno games in the mess, it could be learning new card games or just ranting about the horrible water that got us together. It could also be how we started understanding the patterns and actions of each other, remembering each other's favorite song, or favorite food item, telling each other stories of our past, or pulling each other's legs that strengthened the bond. Maybe it was the comfort we felt in each other's presence, being each other's rock during SIP, becoming each other's alarm clocks, or navigating through the adventurous REP trip that we became each other's constant.

Of course, studying is also an important part of this journey (and the placements), but we cannot deny that life is easier because we have these idiots in our lives that we call our friends. We miss our friends back home when we are on campus and we miss the IIM Indore friends when we go back home. With all the challenges thrown at us during the 2-year journey, we sometimes forget how much we value these friendships, how much we cherish the small actions of care, the late-night conversations, random walks, and sleepovers, or the fact that no matter what, they are there for us.

This article is dedicated to these friendships who are our second family, and it is a celebration of the beautiful memories we have made. But why should that mean the end of friendships? Here's to remembering late-night maggi, hours of gossip sessions, never-ending assignments, and tons of memories.

YE PE/ VC KYA HAI?

-Sarthak Sahu

The world of private equity is very secretive. The main reason for this is that private equity operates privately and does not have to provide accounts of what it does and how it is done. A quick internet search would be enough to make you feel like it is a dystopian world where lots of faceless rich people put their money into buying corporations and controlling the world behind the scenes. Well, it is that and much more.

Private equity organizations are partnerships specializing in venture capital, leveraged buyouts (LBOs), mezzanine investments, build-ups, distressed debt, and other related investments. They acquire large ownership stakes and take an active role in monitoring and advising portfolio companies. It is a long-term game where investors such as HNIs, Family offices, successful entrepreneurs as well as institutions that provide pension funds, sovereign wealth funds, endowments as well as insurance funds are a source of capital for these funds. It is an illiquid investment since there is no active secondary market for such investments, investors have little control over how capital is invested, and the investment profile covers a long horizon. It easily takes around five or six years to invest the funds collected and around ten years for the internal rate of return to turn positive and exceed public equity returns.

Well, the natural question to address now is what is VC?

Venture Capital is a subset of Private Equity which is an umbrella term for VC, growth equity (GE), and buyout (BO). VC focuses particularly on entrepreneurial ventures which are in their nascent stages rather than mature companies. In terms of fund size, control, and scalability, come first & VCs lie lowest in the investor hierarchy, higher only to seed stage Angel investors.

OK, how do private equity firms work?

Generally, all private equity firms are organized as limited partnerships where private equity firms serve as general partners and large institutional investors and high net-worth individuals providing the bulk of capital serve as limited partners. A private equity fund has a business cycle that consists of four stages- Acquire funds, Buy Equity & Turnaround, Exit Investment, and Reimburse Investors.

Stage 1- Limited partners including pension and provident funds, sovereign wealth funds, multilateral development banks like the Asian Development Bank, and bilateral development financial institutions invest in PE firms. These institutions do not have the professional staff nor the expertise to make such investments themselves and hence channel capital to private equity funds.

Stage 2- The fund management team makes investments mostly in the first five years. Investment takes place through either direct investments, funds, fund-of-funds, or exotic mechanisms like collateralized fund obligations (CFOs), publicly quoted entities, or mixed portfolios.

Stage 3- The penultimate stage of a private equity business cycle is to exit the investment. They require timely and profitable exits not only to redeem capital and returns to their investors and themselves but also to establish and maintain their reputation, which in turn enable them to raise capital again for future funds from existing and new limited partners.

Stage 4- Usually, the share of capital gains between limited partners and general partners happens in an 80:20 ratio with a carried interest clause of overcoming a minimum hurdle rate before general partners can get their share of capital gains. This completes one business cycle of the fund. This cycle continues with subsequent fundraising rounds.

Careers in PE firms in India

Now, let's come to the interesting part. You must be either Lucky or Smart to get into these PE/VC firms (isn't that the thing with placements?). Preparing financial models based on the operational assumption that forecasts the potential of the business, writing theses after researching investment opportunities, working as an entrepreneur-in-residence for one of the portfolio companies, and building a strategic plan for them are just some of the tasks that you will be doing as an associate in these firms.

For now, we can say that PE is not an environment for the fainthearted. It is big money in high-risk assets over long periods of uncertainty and hard work, with big returns and hefty compensation for succeeding. So, if Private equity sounds sexy to you, now you know what you are getting into.

KALEIDOSCOPES

-Swati Shaw

The dream of making it to one of the elite business schools in the country, in the beginning, often requires a belief in the self and its capabilities. An aspiration etched in the colors of self-confidence and actualization, for some, tends to morph into a tunnel of self-isolation, panic, and untraceable fear. The reasons, as is often found, are as uncountable, and varied as the number of souls on earth. One may visualize it as looking through a prism and experiencing the multiple shades of the human condition. Some relate to doubts about self-value in a web of talented individuals, some from lives that at times can feel deeply entangled and exhausted in a mountain of to-dos, and some from the ever-increasing complexity of social relationships which tend to become more sensitive as the number of years in a human life increases. But at the core of these adverse experiences, nestles the greatest affliction among all the others. Loneliness, I find, is the underlying Pandora's box of all human fear. No matter the age, race, gender, and other stuff, nothing in this world makes the human skin crawl more than the prospect of being left out or worse, left behind. One realizes the true value of companionship and kind peers when the prospect of falling into the loop of insidious thoughts is more real than ever. The shareability of personal turmoils is one of the greatest boons to mortal life.

But not all can be said. Or for the time being, expressed. Sometimes we are up against aches unspeakable and surroundings utterly foreign. One is compelled to walk the path alone. The matter of fact with realities like these is that they are shared. The person who walked past you on the academic stairs or stands before you in the lines of an SR 10 eatery can be going through something similar. I like to think of it as a dark kaleidoscope. A series of visions and patterns that take birth from the meanest, most twisted parts of the human psyche. Here, filtering its presence through an adult academic phase of life, it can lurk somewhere in the idle contemplations of classrooms and the walk back to hostel rooms. A kaleidoscope requires, above all, looking through it except for everything else in one's surroundings. The more one looks, the greater one is engrossed in the alluring labyrinth of ever-changing patterns and visuals. Imagine missing a true evaluation of the present in a dark show of anxieties and worries.

At such times, the need of the hour is a call from the outside and a remembrance of the vastness of the world with its trove of possibilities and opportunities. But a mind saturated with the malevolent rarely entertains the chance of rationalizing the favorable easily. A war wedged on doubts is won only with the advent of an open mind and a willingness to look at the good inside oneself, its achieved milestones, and its ability to fulfill dreams. The hero's journey, as honorable as it is, is often lonely. A problem rooted in the self, cannot be healed by an external salve.

It is said you grow up to relate life and its events to something interesting to you as a kid. I like kaleidoscopes. As a child, they were one of my favorite things at fairs and game stores. I remember the experience of looking through them. To this day it is as mesmerizing and meditative to me as it was in the days bygone. I find a connection between that childhood memory and current experiences. I relate the dominant goods to a colorful kaleidoscope and the temporary dull to a dark one. It is attested, the event of winning and the characteristic of perseverance befalls the courageous. And so it goes, in life, we learn to bear the dark visuals to make it to the bright ones. Dear reader, I hope you get to experience a bright, effervescent kaleidoscope once, whether in a physical or metaphorical sense.

THE ILLUSIVE AUTONOMY OF CHOICE

-Trisha Dasgupta

In a world marred by conflicting belief systems, individual afflictions, rebellion and chaos, and organisations playing on the fuzzy margins of legality, the singular indicator of control is the ability to make choices, *carte blanche*. Choices present myriad possibilities, with each subsequent decision leading to a clearer path; however, we like to think we can revel in the opaqueness of ambiguity.

The reality of the existence and flexibility of choice is rather disputed— the desired outcome is pre-determined and the sequence of choices materialising that outcome depends critically on the creation and order of presentation of a subset of choices, i.e., choice architecture. Both public and private institutions heavily employ tools of choice architecture to shape the environment within which choices are made— the autonomy of choice, though compromised, still technically rests with the decision-maker.

The genesis of the urge to influence and alter human behaviour may possibly coincide with the emergence of community structures and later, formal organisations. To tame the evil proclivities of a man indulging the darkness within him and veering towards committing acts of moral turpitude, individual instincts are suppressed to influence submission to a state that ostensibly works for the good of the community. Evidently, the architect of your moral compass is powerful, yet unknown to you. Unfettered choices are imbued with moral significance as they divulge individual moral principles, which must not be dismissed and undermined. Aldous Huxley, while revealing the perils of modern society through his thinly-veiled dystopian world, conceives the concept of hypnopaedia— the act of repeating ideas and moral virtues to children in their slumber. These ideas (i.e., opinions), propounded by the authoritarian state, are so deeply internalised that they are confused for the truth. Passive, benevolent brainwashing— a resounding tintinnabulation was stimulated in your brain, I hope.

Our self-centred consciousness perceives reality in a distinctive way and the self-serving mind engineers a life out of it. As per the dual process theory, two disparate systems of thinking are employed to do this—system 1 thinking is quick and instinctive (based on heuristics) and system 2 thinking is slow, deliberate and necessitates processing of information and gradual comprehension. Canny choice architects exploit the latter and use nudges, inducements, and coercions to increasingly restrict the liberty to curate.

Neutrality of choice architecture is ideal, but foolish to hope for. The recognition and comprehension of the restriction of autonomy is vital to combat the draconian impulse to shove rather than nudge and other unethical practices. Nudges should be contrived in a way that furthers the decision-making process without eroding individual liberty. More importantly, we should be vigilant about the crafty design by which contentment with conformity is encouraged.



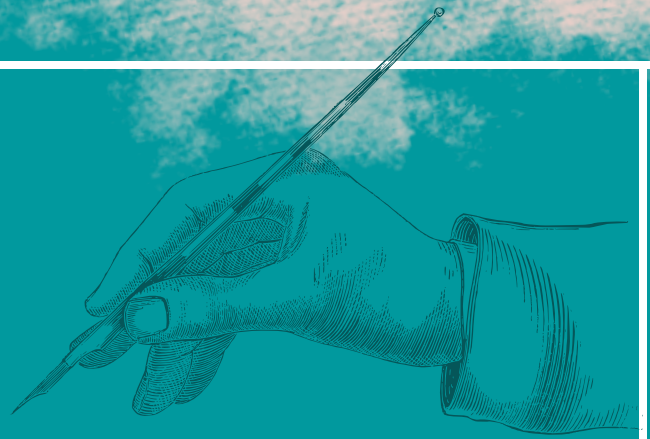
**POETS,
WRITERS AND
MUSERS OF
PLANET-I**

SMILE

A face with a smile
Makes all the troubles disappear for a while
Everyday when we see a smile
It makes us want to go an extra mile
Makes us all feel everything's worthwhile
Smiles not on faces
Is like humanity lost all its traces
No hate, no fight just excitation
All smile is a real celebration
when all is confusion and delusion
It ensures that happiness is not an illusion
When you are neck-deep in misery
It gives you hope that you too can break free
For the deluded
It makes them too feel included
Trends, friends
Its something that everyone lends
The mind is highly unstable
Seeing a smile makes everybody's emotions stable
If I fall, get knocked down
A smile gets me off the ground
When there are no words to speak
A smile makes the quietness bleak
It goes on and on bound forever

Even when we are gone

-Anirudh Nair



HI

Hi
Say hi to me
Like before
When your mind was free-er about me
What does it matter what they say or think
Our time here is a blink
My stay is made difficult
By no one saying hi to me
No one including those who used to
Those who say hi to my neighbours
In front of me
Those who pull a blank face to my stretched smile
I just want to survive
Say Hi to me
I want to say Hi too

-Annu Aparajita

MY SUN, MY MOON & MY STARS

You are my sun, my moon, and my stars.
Lightening my days & nights, yet so far.
Before you, I was alive but merely breathing.
As you set foot in my life, I have started dreaming.
They say to love you is to make a mistake,
But only I know it is a best decision to take.
I want my love to win, even if there is little hope,
Just take a single step, the rest I will cope.
Don't I deserve a one chance to prove my worth?
To show you, to let you know what's inside my heart!

--Ankush Kumar Sonkar

DUCHAMP'S URINAL: A STORY OF THE AVANT-GARDE

-Arihant Kumar

In the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Pennsylvania lies an inverted porcelain urinal signed "R. Mutt 1917," which is the work of a French painter and sculptor named Marcel Duchamp. When one looks at this piece, called "The Fountain," be it in person or in image form on the Internet, it does not look like much, and that is precisely because it isn't much; it really is what it seems to be, a simple porcelain urinal that has been placed upside down and signed with black ink. It is explicable and only natural, then, to ask, what is it doing in an art museum? Is this another one of those stupid, pretentious pieces of modern 'art' that only snobs and critics take seriously? It is a common sentiment to look at works of modern art like those from Jackson Pollock and scoff and say, "A child could have done that," but here, the bafflement is caused by the simple fact that there isn't even anything to do. Has the art world finally lost its mind?

One might even be reminded of a viral story from 2016 when two teenagers played a prank on the visitors at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA) by placing a pair of eyeglasses on the floor. To those unfamiliar with the story, the eyeglasses placed on the floor soon attracted a crowd of onlookers, some of whom even took pictures of the 'piece,' believing it to be art. When the two teenagers tweeted about their prank and the reactions of the visitors, the story grew wildly in popularity and sparked off vibrant internet discourse, which ranged from simple expressions of amusement at the ludicrousness of people to fierce debates about the fake-ness and pretentiousness of modern art which, the arguers claimed, was laid bare by this incident. SFMOMA's official Twitter account responded to the incident by tweeting, "Do we have a Marcel Duchamp in our midst?" which brings us right back to square one. Why does this story come back to this particular Frenchman? Does the idea and story behind the Fountain have anything to teach us then? The answer is a resounding 'yes.'

To understand the meaning behind the Fountain we will have to move back in time to early 20th-century Paris, before the First World War (1914-18). Parisian society before WW1 was, to put it in one word, proper. Too proper even, some might argue. It was a prosperous time, and Parisian society was deep into aestheticism and decorative, beautiful-looking art. But then, the First World War happened, and Europe saw a level of destruction, violence, and ruin that it had never witnessed before. Such a tragedy is enough for one to lose faith in human progress and ask, 'How did we even get to this point, and what do we do now?'

This is precisely the question a group of artists who called themselves the 'Dadaists' sought to answer. Dadaism was an art movement that began in the mid-1910s having its early centres in Zurich, New York, and Paris, where it finally flourished.

The movement rejected logic and rationality in all art and life, instead embracing nonsense and irrationality. The movement spanned several mediums of art like painting, sculpture, film, music, and poetry. The works associated with this movement are baffling and feel like an assault on the senses; the paintings are often haphazardly put together newspaper cutouts, and the poetry just a random collection of words.

Dadaism was simply a rejection of everything, all conventions of society and art. The sentiment which the Dadaists began with was that, if all that Europe and European society had hitherto stood for and held dear had led to such a devastating war. Then what was it that they ought to be doing differently? If this is where all our rationality and logic have brought us, then should we really continue with it? Hence, they took the bare bones of European society and social consciousness and reacted against it; they weaponised nonsense and irrationality against the institutions which had brought ruin to Europe, attempting also to liberate people from the grips of logic and rationality. Dadaism simply was a rage-fuelled rejection of everything; it didn't have any binding ideology, which is also why it didn't succeed in causing the mass societal change it aimed to. Dadaist activities lasted till the mid-1920s and then died out with the threat of another World War looming over Europe. Nonetheless, Dadaism had a significant influence on art which one can see even today; perhaps the best example of this influence is in Dadaism's direct successor — Surrealism.

Surrealism was a very popular art movement that is ubiquitous in its influence; some of the famous artists associated with the movement are Salvador Dalí, René Magritte, and Frida Kahlo. Surrealism, unlike its predecessor Dadaism, sought to reinvent the conception of art instead of destroying it. It had a philosophy. Influenced by the works of the Austrian neurologist and psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud, surrealism aimed to tap the unconscious mind and let it run free. Freud's idea that the unconscious mind contained an individual's repressed desires and emotions came as a great revelation to André Breton, the leader of the Surrealist movement and the writer of the 'Manifestoes of Surrealism'.

He postulated that the ways of European society, which centred around rationality, suppressed the repressed unconscious thoughts of an individual, which, when they can't be suppressed anymore, explode into terrible acts of violence and destruction like war. The Surrealists sought to tap the unconscious mind through their art; they followed a method called 'automatism' wherein they would paint whatever came to their mind; the greatest source of inspiration for Surrealists was their dreams; they often painted out their dreams which they believed to be the authentic expressions of the unconscious mind, resulting in baffling but alluring phantasmagoric and dreamlike art.

These two movements changed the course of art in the 20th century and continue to be present in different forms around us, whether we recognise them or not. Most importantly, these movements challenged and successfully changed the supposition that art could only be decorative in its purpose; instead, they showed how art can serve to challenge the dominant socio-cultural norms of a time and call for revolution, breaking art away from the elitist bourgeoisie tradition which it had become trapped in.

There are a plethora of interesting questions that these two movements raised, which one can explore; however, we will only focus on the question — "What exactly is art then?"

If an inverted urinal can be art, then can't everything be art?

When in 1917, Marcel Duchamp 'made' the Fountain, it wasn't of any importance whether or not he actually sculpted the urinal with his hands or not; it was simply because he chose it and declared it to be art that it became art. This caused a Copernican shift in art and paved the way for the form of art that we today know as 'conceptual art,' where it is the idea that is of value and not the traditional uniqueness of materials and the techniques used, hence severing the link between an artist's labour and the merit of the work. So it is not precisely that anything can be art if the artist calls it art, even though that was the case with Duchamp's Fountain; it is simply that thanks to Duchamp and conceptual art, art is no more linked to its materials but has expanded to the ideas involved with it. Art has gone from retinal to cerebral. Joseph Kosuth's One and Three Chairs is another excellent example of conceptual art.

The value of the materials used and the skills of the artist, hence, are not paramount anymore and even the 'idea' behind some work of art can take the forefront; this in a way reduces art to its bare bones, much like how hip-hop reduced music to its barebones — the lyric and the beat. Plucking out something 'ordinary' from life and raising it to the level of the 'extraordinary' or simply attaching to it a new thought is what all art does, does it not? And that is precisely what Duchamp made visible to the naked eye by making Fountain in 1917; he quite literally plucked an ordinary and commonplace object from life and gave it a new idea, a new purpose by reinventing its purpose and not letting it serve the purpose it did before. By rotating the urinal by 90 degrees, he, both literally and figuratively, inverted it, which also alludes to the historical/real-life context of the piece, that of being a revolt against the conventions and hypocrisy of art in early 20th-century Europe. What a revolt it was too, it ended up redefining art for the coming century, not to mention that the power of idea behind it is very evidently relevant today as well, with the SFMOMA story being one example.

A fascinating paradox one can explore now is what does Fountain mean today? It is clear today that the interpretations of art are not frozen in time but instead change with time. It is a popular argument sentiment today that pieces of conceptual art and abstract art are elitist; while I personally disagree with this sentiment, it is nonetheless interesting to explore its irony. The pattern one sees here is quite similar to the Hegelian idea of the dialectic progression of history (which here would be - art history), making one wonder if the time is ripe for another art movement that will alter and redefine art as we know it today.

MASTER OF MY FATE

I wish someone would interpret my grief,
And encourage me to toughen my belief.
Maybe someone could feel the way I feel,
With whom I could go along with zeal.
What I wished was a hand to hold
In a world so cold,
An ear to listen,
To take me out of my mental prison,
A heart to understand,
The titles of my wonderland
I know there will be none,
And my wishes will remain undone.
Nothing hurts more than expectations,
These can kill any of the relations.
Expectations lead to cries of dismay,
Tearing me down each other day.
Sometimes I wish I were emotionally strong,
Not to ooze for someone to whom I don't belong.
One day all my wishes will come to an end,
That day, there would be nothing to intend.
Let me grow out of my pain,
As a tree grows after the rain.
I will not faint, though the way seems long,
Hearts, through suffering, will grow strong.
It doesn't matter how narrow is the gate,
From now on, I am the master of my fate!

- Kshitij Raj

Just breeze I mused at first,
But made a strange land feel like home,
The refreshing mist had some
uncommon warmth
Sure, it wouldn't stay forever, and just
like the seasons it would fade,
Breathe, take it in, and fully cherish
while it lasts,
And slowly prepare thyself for when it
dwindles,
But do know, the Rain can vanish it in
no time,
So, Breathe, cause this too shall pass.

-Nandigam Sai Teja

A soul was wondering...
Why is she sad?
Between her founding,
pondered about the never-lasting
"PAD".

Thoughts about "people"
judging,
were driving her even more mad;;
That soul finds herself alone,
amid numerous other clones;;

Night, again, resurfaces all her fears;
With her pillow wet in the morning, she
brings hope;;

For others, she was a free bird;
and "a blank soul for herself";;
This, the inner soul, as heard;
began packing to "RESPOND" everyone else;;

Hope, one day, she will meet herself
and take another look in the mirror,
only to say, "Hey, I hate your tears...
My dear, will fight TOGETHER..."

-Neha Kumari

FEAR

-Neha Kumari

Fear is an emotion that is naturally adopted. We never calculated the possibility of fear helping to develop humans or their civilization. Well, most of our daily activities are influenced by fear. We, often judge people based on their physical appearance, whether they are dangerous or not. Have we wondered why? The reason lay more than 60k years ago. Our forefathers used to calculate the risk or fear of others based on their size and physical structure. This "fear"-calculating feature we have inherited from them.

Even in the most prestigious institutions, we are all under some sort of fear. Fear of not keeping pace, fear of getting alone, fear of being an uninterested person, fear of not making friends, fear of being judged, fear of uncertainty. Why do we need others in our journey? Isn't it true that we are the heroes of our own lives? Why do we need someone specific to love and share gossip? How ironic is it that, nowadays, with the world's increasing population, people are becoming more alone. And the fear of being alone drives them to seek solace in alcohol or on social media sites.

Many cases have been filed regarding the online harassment of boys and girls by their Facebook or Instagram friends. According to the Pew Research Center in the United States, nearly half of all teenagers had been subjected to online bullying in 2022. Many have not been registered because of shame. Fear of being alone is the reason. We don't think about fear, but our minds think about it subconsciously.

The fear of going unnoticed makes people fake and show off unnecessary things. Fear of getting bad grades puts extra pressure on students. But nowadays, students are such that, without restriction, they will not study. But what is the benefit of most students studying for grades rather than knowledge? This way, instead of focusing on the implementation or practical process, students focus more on marks. Thus, fear affects the neurons as well. Here, too, fear acted as the villain.

Every coin has 2 sides. Now we're getting to the other side of fear. Fear of falling behind inspires thought and technological innovation. Without the fear of falling behind between two great countries, the ease of space travel would not have been possible. But that fear has now given us a new problem: space debris. But that fear was also responsible for helping us understand the birth of our planet, galaxies, and cosmos more accurately.

So, to know whether fear is good or bad, let's see why we fear. We fear because when we are in a sudden or uncertain environment, our brain releases the negative chemical "Serotonin (5-hydroxytryptamine, 5-HT)" to alert us to any kind of misfortune. This behaviour is something we inherited from our ancestors. The result of fear is dependent upon the process of processing the fear. So, instead of focusing on the fear discussed above, we can shift our fear of "taking the same path as others." This is only possible through training the mind, which not everyone can do. The release of chemicals can be controlled through training; one of those chemicals is fear.

How do you explain this?
Maybe it's the lens that changed, or the view that did?
From having to tell nothing to say everything to taking forever to say a word, we've all travelled that route
Memories now question your world view, or were they just dreams you never realised? Probably not.
But why are we so clueless? Easy, don't question your sanity yet. That's how life works. That's how you start painting on a new canvas. Pick a new canvas, pick a new colour, and immerse thy self.

-Nandigam Sai Teja

DO WORDS MATTER?

Words without meaning are useless
just like a sentence with no perfect tense
Words without emotions are ruthless
just spoken, but do not make any sense
Words are the reason for misunderstanding
don't help much when there isn't a correct timing
Words leave us alone at the time of romancing
are they our strength or stopping us from advancing?
Words are the means to motivate individuals

the effect is short-lasting as the speeches are often conditionals
Words possess no strength when used as curtains over originals
often underrated and hence listed less effective than visuals

Words are hopeless to express some emotions
making us guilty at times; are these the correct notions?
but it's the blessing of words that help us with poems

best can be said, they are the combination of expressions and limitations

-Nikita Nikhare

RICH INDIA

In the hidden brewries
and the forgotten mysteries
rests their stories,
for all unnamed glories.

Hiding their trepidations
from all those limitations,
never risking a fall
dreams... so small.

Embracing some hesitation
beaming with expectation,
faces full of smiles
walking miles & miles.

Day or night,
same is their plight
food; not stars in pile,
forced again.. so docile.

Sleepless nights far away...
like carcasses of fray,
seasons, all so mild
god's dear stoic child.

Framing history with sweat
relishing empty closet
hearts purer than gold
as if made in a mold.

Carrying country on shoulders
our imminent workers
making the rich richer
merely sustaining hither.

-Prerna Gaur

STUCK IN THE LOOP OF MULTIVERSE

-Harshit Kumawat

We all have done some mistakes and some of them need to be rectified but of course, it's not possible always. Needless to say, this is how we learn, isn't it? We grow because of those wrong decision that we have made and this differentiate smart ones from others.

One might say that there is always a trade-off, you might grow but your heart can be severely wounded, you might have some wisdom but not before losing your wisdom teeth.

Since childhood, we dream of our life as a fairy tale but soon reality hits hard and we are back on earth struggling to match our pace with this insanely running world.

Henrik was struggling to sleep that night wondering how his life would be. Neither he was earning nor getting any success to survive in this ruthless world. Valda always told him to stay motivated and ignore the negative thoughts but he never listened to her.

It's been ten years since his parents died and Valda was his only support. Living alone in the hinterlands of California sometimes Henrik used to think, about what would have happened if Valda will not be in his life.

"Will you please stop this?", asked Valda furiously.

"Stop what?", Henrik replied in a neglectful voice.

"This... your stupidity, idiot. How many times do I have to tell you that all of your unnecessary worries will affect your health? Try to live in the present Henrik, I feel proud that you want to be successful but I can't see you in this condition. You are such a baby"

"Yaa... your baby", replied Henrik with a naughty smile.

Valda blushed and Henrik held her in his arms.

Isn't this amazing how we care about our loved ones, keeping them on priorities always. Any relationship that we have with anyone keeps us indulged in the thoughts of their well-being, it is like living more than one life.

"Oh no... I am again late for my acting class". Henrik realized as soon he saw his watch and quickly packed his bag.

"I'll drop you, don't worry". Valda said while combing and looking into the mirror.

"And please clean this mirror Henrik, how you will be able to see your charming face in this pale dirty mirror". Valda never missed a chance to pull his leg.

"Let's go now", Henrik said.

Henrik used to perform on stage since childhood and was having fabulous acting skills. That is when Valda became his fan and they got into each other. Even though she knew that he is not well settled, she was ready to be with him always. Valda's belief that he will become a great actor one day was even greater than Henrik's belief.

Belief is a very dangerous thing to have as it has the power to make the poor rich and vice-versa. It can destroy lives but on the other hand, it also has the capability to evolve a caterpillar into a butterfly.

Henrik was preparing to fly and Valda was ready to fly with him in the sky of their love.

"Which animal do you want to become if given a chance", Valda asked at once, placing her head on Henrik's lap.

"What kind of question is that? I would prefer to be human", he replied.

"Still, if you could choose in your next life", Valda insisted.

"Ok... Eagle it is... I want to be an eagle", Henrik answered.

"Why is it so?" Valda asked curiously.

"Well... you can't mess with an eagle in the sky... he is the king up there, he can fly anywhere he wants, everyone is afraid of it, isn't it?"

Valda could see his eyes sparkling while answering.

"Hmm... true".

"What you would choose to become?", Henrik asked.

"I'll be the penguin", Valda replied quickly as if she was ready to be the one.

"Why"? Henrik asked mockingly.

"Because penguin has only one life partner in her entire life?" she replied calmly. As if it was her only dream.

Days go by and Henrik's struggle and efforts to become the greatest actor increase day by day. He was just waiting to get the desired break, so he was daily giving auditions here and there. But all of his efforts used to go in vain. Sometimes he thought to give up but Valda kept him motivated.

“When we set any goal or mission for us there is always an inherited purpose that tells us to keep going on. Depending upon that purpose we choose how much restlessly and continuously we have to put our efforts. For Henrik getting successful was important because he never had one, he wanted to taste it, feel it, and show the world what he is capable of.

As he progressed on his journey to rule the world, he was becoming more and more distant from Valda. Although, they were still together but sometimes she felt separated from him.

“Maybe he needs time... he is stressed I should not trouble him...” Valda used to think. She never complained, never demanded anything, and just patiently waited for Henrik to achieve his goal.

“Can we meet... just for a walk maybe...”, Valda requested him. It had been nine months since she had seen Henrik. She grabbed her phone tight in a hope of getting a positive answer.

“Nooo!!!... I really don’t have time Valda... There are so many dialogues that I have to remember for tomorrow’s auditions... I hope you would understand”, Henrik said.

“Yeah of course... sorry I should have controlled my emotions... we can meet any time when you are free... I know superstars are very busy... right?” Valda said jokingly. But maybe this time she wanted to cheer herself up instead of Henrik now. The last nine months were not easy for Valda, sometimes she waited a whole day to talk to Henrik but he never had time for her.

The situation of Valda persisted and Henrik finally got a lead role in a big-budget film. Valda was happy for him, but now he was busier than ever and spoke to her less often.

Valda saw herself as the person of least priority in Henrik's life. Being traumatized by this separation, she was slowly becoming a maniac as the days passed. She stopped calling him in the belief that one day Henrik himself will talk to her himself but all of her waiting drowned in a sea of sorrow.

Maybe this is all her fault, she shouldn’t expect anything from anyone, she mumbled to herself. Finally, her wait ended when she hanged herself to death.

The problem with the pursuit of happiness is that when life’s storms come along, happiness disappears and you are left with nothing. So, you need to pursue something that is deeper than happiness. It is funny that we all are always in search of happiness as if it has some address, but most of the time it is just right in front of our eyes and we are foolish enough to neglect it.

Valda may have taken the wrong step, but what is one to do when one’s only wish in life does not come true? She lived to be with Henrik, but her fate did not allow it.

When Henrik got this news, he was stupefied. All his life, Henrik wanted to get success as if it will give him peace, but after realizing that the peace he was getting from Valda was incomparable, he felt destroyed. The value of all his success has become zero. He spent most of his time looking at Valda's pictures, reading her letters, remembering her voice, crying alone, and finally falling asleep on an empty stomach.

One day in the frosty winter, he was roaming the streets of California. By the time he realized that he had come far from the city, it was too late and the day was over. Tired, he sat on the nearby bench. People were not visible far and wide in that deserted area. Remembering Valda, he lay down there and soon fell asleep.

“I miss you...” a familiar soothing voice came in his dreams, it was Valda.

“I miss you too” he murmured while sleeping and tears rolled down his cheeks.

But how it could be possible? he thought. It just didn’t feel like a dream, something was wrong. He had many dreams of her but none of them was like this one. He was able to touch her as if it was all real. His subconscious mind tried to wake him up but he was helplessly struggling to open his eyes as if something was holding him down. He was sweating heavily as the snowfall was covering him layer by layer.

Suddenly someone whispered in a deep voice -

*“This pain is the trigger,
To the world which is neither far nor near,
Once the voice is heard,
There is no turning back my dear,
So, tell me, my son
Are you ready to go or stay here?”*

“Go where??... to whom... who the hell are you... what is this feeling, leave me please” Henrik begged.

*“Nobody knows me, until the end,
I am the creator of this world & far ahead,
Your love is waiting,
In the universe at infinite despair”*

“What?? How is it possible?? ... you mean to say that Valda is there in another universe? ... and you can take me?” Henrik asked so many questions in one breath. He was very confused but still at the bottom of his heart he had a feeling that all of this is true, and if there was any possibility that he could meet Valda again he would go for it.

*“I am the man of my word, you must remember,
Whether it is death or life in the amber,
I'll take you there, with the memory of here,
But once you go, this universe will dismember”*

“What else do I have here anyway... take me there... I'm ready to go” Henrik said.

*“You will hear from me,
when the time will come,
Hold your breath,
It won't be troublesome”*

Suddenly a bright flashlight appeared in front of Henrik's eyes and he felt as if he was traveling at a very fast pace. He thought that this speed will tear him apart but it seems like he was prepared for it. Soon everything stopped then finally he opened his eyes.

It appeared to be a large mansion house with a ceiling more than twice the height of his apartment in the old universe.

“Are you awake son?” a familiar voice came into his ears, it was his mother.

Yes, this time his parents were with him and super-rich Henrik was ready to find his Valda again.

Goodbyes are only for those who love with their eyes because for those who love with their heart and soul there is no such thing as separation. Maybe, people who are hardest to love need it the most.

All his life Henrik craved the love and success he couldn't get, and this time it seems like he was having everything he desired.

“Yaa Mom, good morning”, words from Henrik's mouth came automatically. He realized that apart from the experiences of the previous universe, he knew about this world also.

“Have some breakfast son, get ready”, his mother said.

“No, I have to meet Valda urgently, I cannot wait...” Henrik said in a hopeful voice. After so many days he was finally feeling cheerful.

“You will meet that bitch over my dead body,” his mother said angrily.

For a moment Henrik couldn't understand what just happened, and why she is saying that.

“What?? How can you say something like that? Don't you know that I love her” Henrik questioned his mother in bewilderment.

“That gold-digger girl is messing with your mind Henrik, can't you see that? I don't want her in your life, now get away from it now” his mother said strictly.

Henrik soon realized that his parents seriously hate Valda because she is poor and doesn't fit their status. Henrik decided to stop arguing with his mother and meet Valda straight away.

He quickly had breakfast, got ready, and went to meet Valda in his Porsche. He was driving like he's driven this way many times.

When Henrik reached, Valda was waiting for him at the café. His eyes were frozen on Valda, staring at her as if he had forgotten to blink.

“What happened?... are you seeing me for the first time, smarty boy,” Valda asked in her old witty style.

“Every time I see you, it is like the first time,” Henrik replied while his eyes filled with tears.

“Hey!!!, baby why are you crying” soon Valda got serious.

“Nothing, I just missed you a lot.”

“But we just met yesterday. Please tell me what happened, is it your mother again? Did she say anything?”

Henrik realized that Valda is aware of the fact that his parents don't like her.

“Yeah, the same story again”, Henrik chose to lie.

“Oh come on, we will figure it out, no one can hate me for a longer time”, Valda blinked with an eye while comforting him.

“True...”

“Can we go for a walk?” Valda asked.

Henrik remembered something from his previous universe, how he denied her while she asked for the same thing. But this time he just wanted to make everything right, he wanted to give all of his love to his precious Valda.

“Sure... come” Henrik held her hand and they left.

Henrik was enjoying this life, everything just got fixed all of a sudden. The days passed and they had a lot of fun, the whole world seems to open up, the sun shined brighter and he felt like singing every moment of the day. He was ready to do anything to make Valda smile.

But as their bond grew stronger, the conflict between Henrik and his parents was increasing by the day. It was not easy for them to digest the fact that their only son is mad about a poor girl.

“That junk is not allowed to enter my home, got it?” Henrik’s father shouted at him one day.

“Ok then, I’ll leave this house” Henrik replied furiously.

“Why you have become so stupid all of a sudden, can’t you see the difference between her and our standards”.

“No, but I can see the difference between your poor mindset and her”, Henrik replied fearlessly.

“How dare you talk to your father like that? Have you sold all your shame?” On asking, his mother grabbed him.

“Don’t you even try to touch me. I thought you would understand what my true happiness is. But I was wrong. You guys just care about your own image and standards & my life means nothing to you, Huh? Well then, I am leaving this house, I can’t take this anymore”, Henrik rushed to his room to pack his bag.

“I see how you’ll get out of here,” shouted his father, ran to his room, and locked it from outside.

Henrik banged the door from inside continuously.

“Open it please, I beg you...”, Henrik tried all his hard and slept at the door after getting tired from crying.

“What should we do now?”, His mother asked his father.

“I know exactly what I have to do now”, father said with rage in his eyes.

He went to his room and came back quickly.

“Where are you going?”, mother asked.

Henrik’s father flees without answering and sets out to find Valda. He knew Valda’s whereabouts, it was in the downhill area of California where the working class lived. Soon he reached the door of her house and knocked.

“Who is this?” Valda asked from inside and opened the door doubtfully.

Bang!!! a loud voice broke the silence of that full moon night, and a second after that Valda was lying on the floor with a bullet in her head.

“It’s your destiny...” his father said in rage and hurried home.

Destiny... a harsh truth. Some argue that it can be changed but if it is so then the whole purpose of this word is compromised. All the equations of destiny work together in such a way that no matter how many times you try to tamper it with your interferences, it always happens exactly the way it is meant to be.

Apparently, Henrik got the news and lost everything again. The shock of Valda’s death shattered him so deeply that he was in no condition to speak anything & then one day he left the house as soon as he got a chance.

Those who went in search of happiness came with a body, those who went in search of smiles brought flowers, but those who went to find love returned neither with body nor soul, they never returned, they simply lost themselves.

In search of Valda, Henrik went again to the place where he had found the bench. He decided to talk to the Creator again. As he sat on the bench and thought about it, he suddenly fell asleep.

The same deep voice whispered in his ears.

*“The time has come, when you are here,
Nobody can hide from me, when the end is near,
Now look at you, tried to change my appear,
You were warned, but chose not to hear”*

“I lost her again... why did you destine to make her not be with me?... now I know that it cannot be changed... but...” his words shattered. “Can you send me to another universe again?”

*“Nothing in this multiverse is out of my reach,
Whether it is hell or time to breach,
You will go there, where you want to be,
But the rules are same, every word by each.”*

He knew that even in another universe Valda would leave him one way or another, but perhaps this is how he wanted to spend the rest of his life like this. Looking for her again and again in this endless loop of the multiverse. For Henrik, if nothing saves him from death, at least love can save him from life.

Some would say what a life this would be, getting hurt endlessly just to get a moment of pleasure. But to Henrik that momentary happiness was worth more than the endless pain.

"I have nothing left to live for, just take me to my Valda", said Henrik calmly.

*"You will hear from me,
when the time will come,
Hold your breath,
It won't be troublesome"*

A bright flashlight came in front of Henrik's eyes, and soon the fast-moving time stopped in another universe.

"Can we go for a walk?", a familiar soothing voice whispered in his ears.

BEAUTIFUL – YOU

I have learnt it a hard way – Most of the things are out of our control. We can work towards our goal but that doesn't guarantee our success. A lot of things don't work out as we plan. And we don't prepare ourselves for the negative things. As we go along in life, we realize that not each day will start and end on a happy note. We need to gather courage to face all the things that life will throw at us. At times, it seems unbearable. We get bombarded with bad happenings. And the worst part is, we find no one around to share our feelings. Everyone is so preoccupied with their own stuff that we seldom inquire about others. But, it's okay. These things are happening with each one of us. And this is what growing up actually means. Just remember one thing – everything in our life is temporary except the person within you. Take good care of yourself, because no other person will. Love yourself, pamper yourself and do the things that you really enjoy. Because, anyway, no one cares.

Want to end this with few lines of my own. I really hope that it will bring a smile on your face.

You are the moon in the sky,
Your beautiful curves make each star shy;
You are the river which flows on its own,
Your moves are too soft to be stopped by a stone;
You are a fully grown tree in the desert,
Your power makes you stand strong without getting hurt;
You are a rose in the giant bouquet,
Your presence is must if there is a special day;
You are the only truth in all the lies,
Your magic is as hypnotizing as your beautiful eyes.

- Nikita Nikhare



Why were stars made?

So, here's my hypothesis. It could be right or it could be wrong. I don't know truly. But I feel God knows it.

So once upon a time, on this marble, there lived a boy X. A simple life, who wasn't a character of big identity but was an actual human being.

So, when he was small, he had so many friends with whom he used to play and have a laugh. But as he was growing old, he naturally started getting far from his friends. The larger reason was that everyone got busier in their lives and everyone had to look up to their orbit. And in that process, our X became empty. His life became dull. Our God knows X very well. And He felt unhappy for him. So, on his birthday, he decided to gift him something special. He called him up to open ground with his eyes closed and asked him to look at the blue. And there were thousands of Yellow, shining just like diamonds in the sky.

God told him, "Happy birthday X! Here are some stars that will add colours to your life." And this is why stars were made. They were made to radiate flashes into his dimness And what I take is that we all are that dull X. Stars are the most beautiful creation of the Universe. Imagine how speechless it feels when we used to sit under the cloudiness, looking at the stars. It feels as if everything is paused for a while. Only the wind plays in the background in the same manner as we see it in the Bollywood romantic songs. We feel calm under it and then it just smiles at us. And everything feels perfect.

Today, I couldn't see those shine much. I guess it is upset with me that I did not pass it a smile back when it smiled looking at me. Or I guess, there was an expiry date to this gift by God. Not sure what's the exact reason.

But today I wanted to confess something - "Hey stars, wherever you are, you actually added colours to my life. Yours X. Love ♥!" "Why were stars made?"

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Yours X.

Love ♥!"

-Samiksha Choudhary

DISCOVER YOURSELF

- Kshitij Raj

The world is a maze in which we will perish whether we win or lose. It takes a lot of understanding to comprehend what exactly is going on. People who are currently running in this blind rat race simply want to know how to win. However, if anyone understood the entire game using their mental energy and consciousness, then they would crave to get out of this race. But we are running without using our heads to figure out what's going on. Dr. Bruce Lipton, a renowned biologist, also said that the mind could create coherence between belief and reality. We need to be flexible in our beliefs in light of reality.

For example, maybe we have a lot of wealth in comparison to those who are incapable of arranging even a one-time meal. We will be considered rich according to them. But if we compare ourselves with someone who has many times more wealth than us, we will consider ourselves poor. This comparison will give rise to problems. This is not how we think. We simply want to know if there is a pre-packaged or conventional approach to achieve our goals. We think that our lives will be awesome after achieving that particular goal.

We tend to beg blindly in front of religious gurus. This conditioning of our minds starts developing in childhood. When a child is born, he is pure and truthful. But as he grows, illusions are planted in his mind. The child then lives his whole life and finally dies, running after those illusions. His whole life is wasted on running after something that does not make much sense. Throughout his life, he has been unable to know himself.

When we look at the sea, we can see many tides and bubbles rising and falling. Consider the world to be a sea, with our bodies acting as tides and bubbles. We would realise that each tide (body) is competing with another tide (body) to grow larger and larger. They can even kill the smaller ones without even thinking about it.

In all directions, there is an ongoing, unannounced battle. People are simply suppressing others in order to gain power. Licking the boots of powerful people and suppressing the weak ones is a new trend nowadays. Everyone is only concerned with themselves. Nobody is concerned about others. Everyone claims to be your best friend, but the reality may be quite different.

Making ourselves powerful could be the answer to this problem. It is beneficial to become the greatest warrior ever so that everything we desire will come to us naturally. However, becoming a warrior is not a permanent solution.

We are still unable to detach ourselves from sorrow. It will be disastrous if tides spend their entire lives racing in this race and grow larger and more powerful. Rather, it should collect enough water to survive and then spend the rest of its life enquiring whether I am a tide or the water itself. This self-inquiry might provide a sense of completion and pull it out of the race. It will never be happy if it only recognises itself as a tide. But if it realizes that it is the water itself, nothing can stop it from being happy. This is because tides can rise and fall, but water always exist. Tides can die, but water cannot. Water is the truth. Perhaps we have different names and forms, similar to tides and bubbles. The source of both, however, is the same.

Similarly, that supreme soul is the source of both who is seeing and who is being seen. He is the heart of our hearts. He is close to us. He is our source. We love him even if we have not even seen or met him. Even science cannot deny this.

Are we the body to which we are attached?

Or the soul, which resides inside our body?

Are we the controllers?

Or the one who is being controlled?

Are we the ones who worship?

Or the one who is being worshipped?

Are we one of them?

Or Are we all of them?

Who are we?

Truly great spiritual teachers never practiced religion. They practiced love with deep meditative introspection and discovered the knowledge of the universe and the secrets of the soul within them. And as a result of this, they discovered the path to enlightenment and self-realization.

We must discover the truth of our being, the truth of this creation, and the truth of God. It all begins with the inquiry, "Who am I?" That ultimate truth will make us stable. It is a lifelong process. We have to become students of truth. Instead of studying the things and phenomena in this creation, we will have to discover the mere source of this creation, i.e., us.

Even our Upanishad says:

" तत्त्वमसि " - " You are That "

LEVELS

He gazed at the distant mountain top
The serpent trail loomed dangerously close
Wrought with poison ivy and crawling creatures
The final destination beckoned to our weary traveller

The journey started innocently enough
Like a good fairy tale the colours shone bright
Amidst the rainbow mist lurked an evil shadow
Our hero wandered aimlessly oblivious of all

The terrain expanded as he stumbled onto the next level
Fighting demons inner and others, he sought control
Distractions increased like an all-consuming chasm
Perseverance illuminating the path ahead

Bruised and tired, we find ourselves in a digital analog
Starting from ground zero in an enclosed bubble
Constantly bombarded, he struggled to find his bearings
Chose to seek solace in peace and quiet instead

Leveling up was a constant flurry of ebbs and flows
Our hero prevailed in the most trying circumstances
Alas he failed when it mattered the most
A tearful goodbye ushers us into the present

The mountain top had to be conquered
Gathering quite a following over the five levels
High stakes placed on the chance of success
One last time, our hero trudged forcefully forward

-Shiven Kumar



WHY AMAZON IS SO ANTI-UNION?

One warehouse of Amazon has unionized in the past year. And Amazon is worried...

The premise is simple. The power to bargain is enhanced by unions. Workers have a better chance of winning in negotiations with management if they can get their entire workforce on side. You may be eligible for higher pay, improved working conditions, expanded benefits, and a more equitable distribution of the company's profits.

However, unionisation initiatives are frequently criticised for allegedly harming businesses and their owners. Several analysts of public policy have contended that labour unions reduce productivity and ultimately lead to a company's demise.

And the fact is that businesses don't want to fail. Their ultimate objective is to hold a position of authority, to have the power to set conditions and accomplish one's goals. Having labour unions in the picture might make matters considerably more challenging.

Is this the reason why Amazon opposes employee unionisation?

Well, kind of. Amazon is the second largest employer in the United States and a highly profitable business organisation. A precedent can be formed if a minority of workers in one warehouse opt to unionise. It might inspire a number of people to do the same. In addition, this may be detrimental to the company's profitability.

Amazon has also earned a name for its ability to please its clientele. This has nothing to do with benevolence. Instead, it rests on the principle of ruthless efficiency. As a company, Amazon gets as much out of its workers as it can, particularly the people that work in the warehouse who actually pack your items.

Consider the following snippet from a journalist (James Bloodworth) who went undercover in an Amazon warehouse:

Employees are so swamped with fulfilment demands that they have to urinate in bottles or go without toilet breaks.

Because of the burden of unattainable goals on the workforce, they were driven to such an extent. Going to the toilet just took too much time. They might have lost their jobs over it. No one deserves to be put through such an ordeal that you are essentially robbed of your dignity.

But guess what? It's good for business.

Every union formed is millions lost for Amazon. It's a drop in the bucket for them but the trend has them quaking in their boots.

It would be an easy choice for a person to place worker rights above profits but Amazon is not a person. It's an entity. It's a machine...

-Shlok Gupta

THE IMPOSTER SYNDROME

“THERE IS AN IMPOSTER AMONG US.”

We all like to showcase our achievements, and why not? We deserve them for the hard work and effort we have put in. But more often than not, we might feel like we don't belong. We don't deserve that internship, that trophy, or that college. We are somehow faking it and would have to act cleverly to avoid getting caught.

And if you have these thoughts every time you step up to do something, then dear friend, you have the impostor syndrome.

The impostor syndrome is a mental state characterised by constant feelings of fraudulence and self-doubt. This mental state might happen because you always want to be perfect, live in a competitive environment, or compare yourself to others. The constant need in today's world to out-do everyone in your feed by getting a better job/ college than your LinkedIn connections or going on better vacations than your Instagram followers adds extreme pressure on the youth.

If you feel this way, it's okay. There are hundreds of articles that suggest ways to tackle this situation. Sorry, but this is not one of them. This article here is about acceptance. Accept that you don't know anything, and you might as well be trying too hard to fit in. But there is good news, everyone else is too.

I remember the day I announced to my school friends that I had decided to do an MBA. I dreaded the "Why MBA?" question more from them than the B-school interviewers. After almost a year, I was sitting in front of three of my best friends, my hands shaking as I took a sip of coke and announced, "I am going to get an MBA." I explained how this would be new for me, a kid straight out of engineering college who knew nothing about business or finance. And to my surprise, all they did was say cheers and congratulations. They were happy that I was trying and doing something different in my life.

Now, a few words about my friends. One of them is pursuing CA and B. Com after giving 12th boards in physics, chemistry and mathematics. Next is an electrical engineer who got a job as a quantitative analyst, now coding financial models. The last one is a BSc in psychology, and I am now going on to get a law degree. In conclusion, they knew how terrifying it is to do something new, get out of your comfort zone and put yourself out there. And oh boy, do I love this group of misfits who remind me that it is okay. And that's what I want to tell you all today; it's okay. Moreover, as I write this article, I feel like a fish out of water. I don't think I have enough knowledge to give you, the reader, something significant to take away from this article. I don't have a way with words or have the ability to use clever anecdotes, but what the hell, I would sure like to give it a try.

Here I present the silver lining and why it might not be all that bad to have the impostor syndrome.

The Dunning Kruger Effect:

It's the cognitive bias whereby people with low ability at a task overestimate their skills, and people with a considerable higher knowledge often underestimate their skills. So, if you feel you don't know enough, you might see a lot more than a beginner who shouts out loud 'everything' she knows about the skill.

Out of the box thinking:

If you are unsure about your knowledge of a specific topic, you might get back to the basics of the other skills you know. Leveraging the skills that are not directly relevant to the project offers you a different perspective. And using your experience not only helps you think differently and boosts your confidence while presenting your breakthroughs to the team.

Compassion and team building:

A good leader understands their team members and empathises with their problems. New joiners often feel overwhelmed in their first few weeks. If you have yourself gone through the experience of feeling like an impostor, talking about your experience, and enabling others to speak about theirs will help you understand them and lead them better.

My effort here has been to highlight that there are two sides to each coin. That there is a possibility to benefit from the crisis. Even if it might feel like clutching a straw as you are drowning, our struggles help us become more aware of other people's situations. As a citizen of this ever-shrinking global landscape, our responsibility is to pay it forward and help others.

“It's not what you are that holds you back; it's what you think you are not.” -Dennis Waitley. So, my dear friend, remember who you are, what you are capable of and smile, for you are enough.

-Uttara Athale

MEET THE TEAM

B SAI SUSHMA

ADITI SINGH

DHRITI
SRIVASTAVA

UTTARA
ATHALE

DEEPIKA SONI

BHARATH
KUMAR



TRISHA
DASGUPTA

DIMPLE
GUDIVADA

SARTHAK SAHU

SWATI SHAW

AISHWARYA
MEHRA

ARYA
BHATTACHARJEE

PRABHUTI
SINGHANIA