



جامعة الفيصل
Alfaisal University

MED Well-Being TIMES

Fall Edition

2022-2023

YOGA TIPS!

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GUIDE ON
GARDENING

OPEN FOR A
DELICIOUS
RECIPE



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Messages

Med Times

FROM THE DEAN:

DR. KHALED AL-KATTAN

Alfaisal University was established with a mission to be student center university, so we take great pride in believing that our students are the cornerstone of our foundation. Over the years, we have had students belonging to different backgrounds join the Alfaisal family, and one thing they all shared the main pillars of the university, ***faith, knowledge, and performance.***

At our university, we foster an enriching environment that encourages our students to be the greatest versions of themselves; to excel not only in academics but also to achieve greatness in extracurricular activities. **“A good and sound mind is the backbone of thoughtful work”** is often what I tell my students. Without a healthy mind, you cannot excel in life. It is great that MedTimes focuses on **“well-being”**, highlighting the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle to achieve the perfect work-life balance. Standing alongside as an advocate, the students and faculty are encouraged to read the magazine in lieu of the variety of essential topics discussed in it.

Alfaisal University has ensured a safe, close-knit atmosphere for our students; the key component being the pleasant setting that allows them to express themselves and feel accepted. Owing to the diverse student body cultivated over time, you will always find someone to lean on, someone to support you. There will always be a friendly, smiling face to welcome you through our doors.

In consummation, we would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to our faculty, staff, and alumni for making this possible. Just as the motto of the MSA goes, we are for the students. Best wishes to you all on your continued pursuit of excellence; to continue showcasing your best work and giving back to the community. Alfaisal University will do everything in its power to assist you in this endeavor.



FROM THE VICE DEAN:

DR. AKEF OBAIDAT

Making the decision on which university you choose to go to is akin to setting the foundation for your future, and so it's not a decision that is made lightly. As the vice dean of the college of medicine it is my distinct honour, with this issue to welcome the future of medicine and of Alfaisal University as you will be the face and representation of our college across the globe. Within this issue of the magazine, I hope and pray that you find here the family, the tools and the inspiration you had hoped to find in order to achieve great and noble things.

With the loss of our beloved friend and professor Dr. Peter, who shaped the minds of many young doctors, we have faced a combination of some of our biggest challenges and with God's grace, have come out on top fighting and stronger than ever. Thus, instead of reaching back to our comfort zones, here at Alfaisal University we are reaching forward to grab opportunities and are certain that addressing and making moves towards the betterment of our student body and faculty's mental well being is the next big step towards success. Additionally, we believe that by encouraging a healthy mind and body we are also taking the first steps in growing this institution to reach new heights of success and excellence.

As future doctors, our students are equipped and expected to make waves in the lives of the people throughout the world. With a capacity to serve as advocates, we can and do make a very real difference in the lives of our friends, patients and loved ones. University is a time of great freedom, experience and challenges whether they may be academic or otherwise, so take time to explore, discover, exercise, relax, study, and make life long bonds.



I encourage you to take advantage of the great community of faculty, staff, students and mentors we have cultivated here at Alfaisal to meet your intellectual and emotional needs to develop your skills and experiences so that you may be the best YOU; and make those around you the best they can be, as is your duty!

Just as Professor Jon Kabat-Zinn once said “You can’t stop the waves, but you can learn to surf”. The stories and articles in this issue of MedTimes address and highlight unique experiences and preparedness tools on facing great challenges and improving student wellness and wellbeing. With great optimism I hope and pray that the contents of the magazine reach you in your time of need and that you find its content as inspiring as I do!

FROM THE DIRECTOR:

HIBA RAHEEL

Dear Reader,

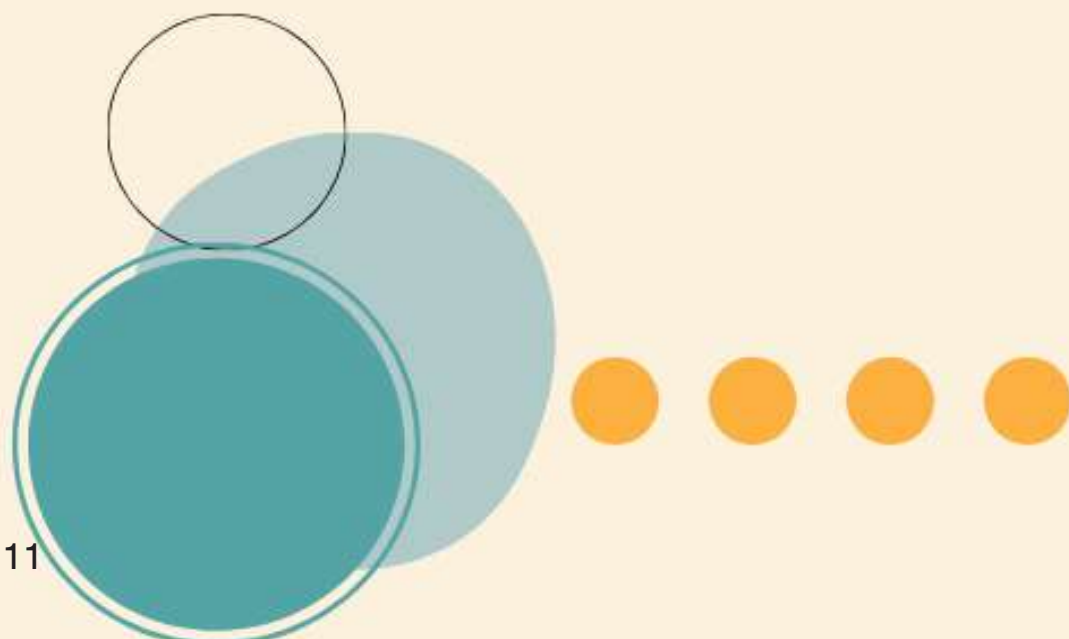
Thank you for grabbing a copy of the MedTimes Well-Being Issue. It is an honor for my team and I to bring to you this magazine after putting in a lot of thought and effort. This issue is tailored to your preference on what makes you happy and truly feel relaxed. This is a unique edition because it is the perfect guide to leading a more content life and finding hobbies that resonate the meaning of well-being to you! With long study hours, endless lectures, and countless exams we tend to forget that our body and mind need time to recover.

Here at Alfaisal University we are encouraged to find a well-balanced schedule that will encourage our growth and success, and what is success without a healthy mind? So, treat yourself with a relaxing time as you flip through the pages of the magazine and discover unique topics that have never been covered before by MedTimes. Explore the magazine to find delicious recipes for quick and easy comfort foods, gardening tips, coloring pages and inspirational interviews.

This Well-Being materialized due to the unwavering support of Dr. Akef and the guidance from our Dean, Prof. Khaled Al-Kattan

A very special thanks to my hardworking and talented MedTimes family for putting in so much effort into bringing this issue to life.

And now we leave you with the product of our hard work in hopes that you will enjoy reading every page as much as we enjoyed composing it for you!



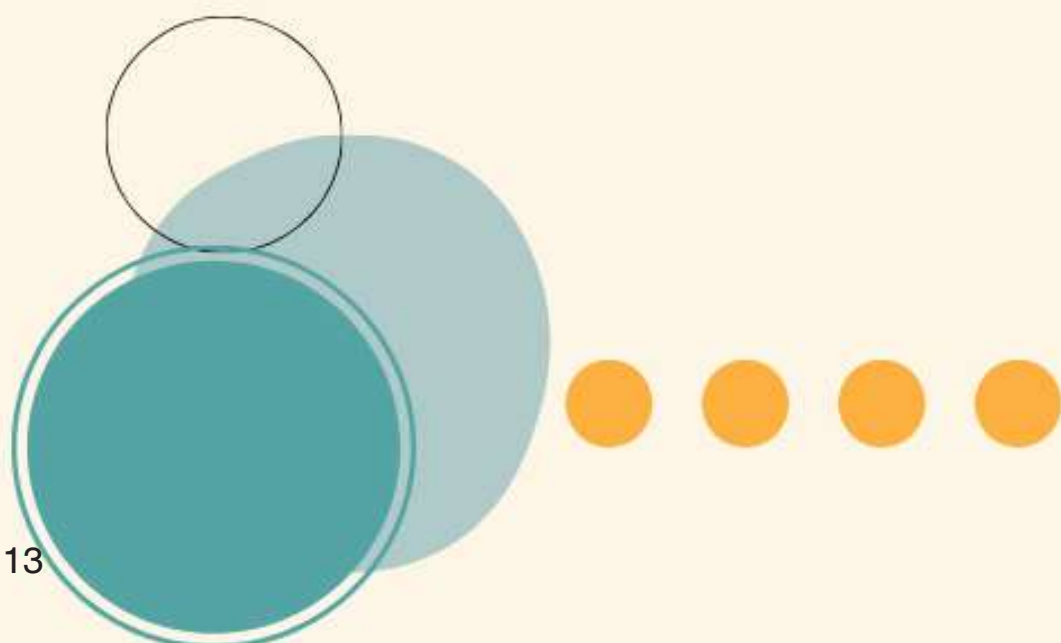


FROM THE CO-DIRECTOR: **MOHAMMAD HALAWANI**

Well-being can mean many different things. To me it is a chance. A chance to try to be better, a chance to help someone, a chance to love yourself and appreciate what makes you different.

This magazine will hopefully be a window for everyone reading it to take a glimpse on what wellbeing means to each of our talented writers, editors, photographers, designers, and last but not least our events team that gave everyone at the university a chance to express themselves in our events. It is easy to forget that we are more than medical students, keeping in touch things we enjoy will not only make us more productive but also better versions of ourselves.

Thank you for taking time out to experience our thoughts and feelings, I hope that everyone that reads this leaves with the belief that they deserve a chance at being happy, and that wellbeing is attainable for everyone.





Meet the MedTimes Team



Med Times

MEDTIMES



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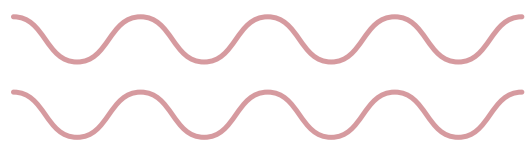
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ME, MYSELF AND US : AN INTERVIEW WITH PRINCESS MAHA

Written by: Dania Ahmed
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Emotional resilience in the field of academic medicine is often personal and multifaceted and can be quite dynamic, though it is essential to recognize that it is in dire need of rescue and betterment. As student doctors and future physicians, it is crucial to address these issues, from improving well-being in the medical workforce to dealing with burnout and keeping up with the ever-growing competition and development of the medical world. And so, dedicating to and promoting clinician and student well-being starts with education right at home, with ME and YOU, today!

It is the aim to address and tackle these ongoing issues through education and resilience to a joint goal of fostering and raising the students of Alfaisal to be inspired and produce great and noble things.

To gain a better understanding of what it means to educate oneself to be inspired to produce great and noble things, MedTimes sat down with Doctor and Princess Maha, who has previously stated, *“I stand for a different education, an education where students are inspired to produce great and noble things.”*

Princess Maha is truly an aspiring woman, a matriarch in its true form. She is a woman of many interests, talents, dimensions, and character.

In her interview with us at MedTimes, she shared her experiences and her advice for those of us newbies just starting out, and for anyone on the same path who may be struggling. During the interview, she shared with us how she coped with the crushing weight of her responsibilities and conquered her hardships.

I have always been interested in exercising, walking, swimming, and I always loved doing things,” said Dr. Maha.

With that being said, she admits to a lack of such invigorating activity during her time at school, with extremely rigorous 12-hour long days just jam-packed with lectures and resource sessions. She claims to figure out that working out and taking part in regular physical activity helped her feel good about herself. She advises students to avoid neglecting their physical and emotional health by balancing their lives, by taking some time to simply take a walk or enroll in an activity such as a competitive sport.

“You must concentrate on the physical, spiritual, psychological aspects, and be emotionally intelligent to understand why you are doing things a certain way and meditate in whatever form is peaceful to you to understand and process,”

emphasized Dr. Maha. As Alfaisal moves towards supporting their student-athletes, she encourages students to get more involved, make new friends, join communities, and build support systems.

Being with her close friends is what Dr. Maha claims made those long days of difficult and challenging lectures bearable. *Medicine is not just a career but a lifestyle*, says Dr. Maha, and so it is essential to be a part of the community and build strong relationships with friends who are supportive and understand your struggles, and are able to get you through the hard days.

She emphasizes the importance of surrounding yourself with people who are full of kindness to be a better doctor and person. She explains that this is an essential aspect of avoiding the toxic environment of competitiveness and constant self-doubt we often face in the medical field. Here, she emphasizes the importance of propagating kindness and putting yourself in the sphere of giving back. Dr. Maha attests that volunteering has changed her view of the world, by taking immense interest in the people around her, and their work and by leaning on them for the support she has gained great experiences and mindfulness.

During the interview, as Dr. Maha shared her journey through medicine, she shared that she is also currently in the process of obtaining her business degree from Harvard's business school of leadership in addition to her work with KFSH. Dr. Maha insists working on yourself daily by keeping one's mind active and looking to the next thing is the best way to continue improving and fostering better mindfulness.

It is important to normalize both suffering and joy and learn from them, to better equip ourselves with the skills and emotional intelligence to promote and practice well-being over all physical, social, psychological, spiritual, financial, and intellectual aspects.



*Here is to
Success
Beyond
Good
Grades*

*Dr. Khalid
Interview*

This year's issue of the Medtimes magazine has had the pleasure of including a talk with our beloved Dean of Medicine, Dr. Khalid Kattan. He has given us some great insight into the vision of our university.

Our university takes pride in being student-centered, and there are many factors to this approach. This includes the curriculum design which enables effective communication on a social and educational level. The curriculum/assessments such as TBLS, PBLs, and OSCE, along with other factors such as the events/activities which have been student-led since 2008 play a huge role in its success. Additionally, supporting students is a top priority. Alfaisal always strives to support students in multiple aspects such as socially, physically, and financially. To add further emphasis on well-being, Alfaisal is planning to release AI-based software very soon to help improve and guarantee the well-being of students and faculty.

A recurring theme throughout the interview was feedback and accountability. What that implies is that our dean and the rest of the university's administration aim to be dynamic and open-minded to help students, and provide them with whatever it is they ask for and need. Dr. Khalid emphasizes that certain changes are sometimes made in the university schedule, timing and hours at a cost to the university to better help the students and meet their demands. This includes an extension of library hours. However, this luxury isn't handed to us on a silver platter. We as students need to ask for the change we desire, for it's up to us to seek the improvement we need today to become the leaders of tomorrow.

The success of the university is defined by its students, and as mentioned earlier, the university does provide the care needed for the well-being of the students, through several facilities.

In our modern era, mental health has started to become a concern, and people are finally starting to appreciate and address this issue. The university leaves no stone untouched and

ensures that excellent counselors are always available to support you.

There's no shame in acknowledging that sometimes you need help, and a healthy mind is only found in a healthy body. Sports not only improve our physical health but also boosts us mentally. Alfaisal truly believes in this and has made ensuring an indoor/outdoor sports facility a priority. So to all the gym rats out there, Alfaisal will be able to take care of you soon!

It's not uncommon to feel lonely with a sense of estrangement especially when you are first exposed to a new environment. To tone down this feeling, our university has a "cosmopolitan atmosphere where we ensure there is equal opportunity to everybody regardless of gender, nationality and financial state". In addition to non-discriminatory efforts, the MSA, which is a student-led organization "by the students for the students" enables us to have the annual Culture Day, which is one of the most beloved events by students and faculty alike. And through events such as this, as well as the vast variety of clubs and teams present, Alfaisal hopes to help you find new friends and people you can call family.

We've covered a lot of what Alfaisal has to offer to ensure the well-being of the students in many horizons, such as physical health, social belonging, and many more. Yet the responsibility is on our shoulders, to make the difference we want by advocating for it and putting in the necessary effort.

Lastly, read this takeaway and take a moment to set yourself up for success.

"In life don't limit yourself to what is provided, you have to create opportunities, be innovative, creative, and ambitious. Aim to drive the entity you are in not the other way around "- Dr. Khalid

Please use this code to find out how to access the student counselors if required, and take a step forward to a brighter day.



Designed by: Nada AlMuaythir

Written by: Kenan Badran

Edited by: Jamaalia Bishri



INTERVIEW

DR AKEF

OBEIDAT

Written by Ismail Abdullah

Edited by Noor Al Eman

Designed by Tasneem Al-Ibrahim

The Key to Balance Between Success and Self well-being? Have you ever wondered how the Vice Dean of Medicine, Dr. Akef, grew to be one of the inspiring figures at our university? How did he deal with our daily struggles in medical school and yet be successful? This article is the answer to your million-dollar question! You, as a reader, would

look at success through a different lens, which is usually limited to your goals. Back in the day, when Dr. Akef started med school as a 17-year-old teenager with a heart of sorrow about losing his mother, and in a completely foreign country, his definition of success at that time was to finish medical school with a high GPA and become a prominent physician. But with exposure to different events and unique experiences, our definition of success can often get modified as we navigate through life. "The concept of life changes, and you come to realize that your life is not just about you; it's shared with others, and you don't know what's good or bad for you," said Dr. Akef when asked about how the definition of success changed in his one-of-a-kind timeline.

Success is the result of no regrets and constant effort, even on a rainy day! Dr. Akef mentioned that regret shouldn't be in your dictionary if you're thinking of being successful. As humans, mistakes will eventually occur, but we should not regret them because we were guided to such decisions and circumstances to learn and evolve into a better version of ourselves. Life can be challenging at times, and you might feel like you're out of breath or that you can't go on (POD moment), but when Dr. Akef explained, "Putting your hands in front of your face and focusing on the details will eventually make you forget about the world outside of your own hands," my eyes widened, and I was compelled to reflect on several things personally.

Being a human being, let alone a medical student, places our well-being under constant pressure from different factors, mainly friends and family. So how does that impact the degree of success?

We live in a world of a century-old mindset where you can either be a doctor or an engineer, and everyone would be building expectations that you feel the constant burden to keep up to, and that would be the case with most of us, as with Dr. Akef, but what's the secret to alleviating such pressure?

drum roll It is to like what you are doing! Dr. Akef's advice to each of us is to not let other people's wishes become the story of our lives. Regardless of the pressure, you should be the one to make the final decision because it will be your life for the years to come, so choose where you feel you fit best with respect to your own and very own traits and preferences but most importantly focus on what you would enjoy doing or else, you'd be living a hell of a life! So this brings us to the next and much-awaited question: did Dr. Akef really enjoy medicine?

"Yes, I did, and I actually miss practicing medicine and treating patients, seeing them leave in happiness, and having them wish prayers upon me. It was everything in the world," Dr Akef replied. Medicine is not for everyone. If you don't have a passion for it, then it isn't for you! Again, medicine is hard and not a piece of cake. He added, "Upon graduation, you would have to memorize 3–4 books." Other than passion, you have to acquire the ability to handle the stress of dealing with all kinds of patients, and the key to all this is, yeah, you guessed it, to like what you do!

How did Dr. Akef manage to keep that equilibrium between medicine and his well-being? Keeping in mind that he had a tough beginning and a hard journey, what really lent him a helping hand was good company and good friends. Those were his family far away from home. Sometimes we are so goal-focused that we forget important things in life. The people closest to you can be your worst enemies, and distant friends can be your best company. Choosing your friends is an essential element because you adopt their habits and eventually drive your decisions with a high degree of similarity to theirs.

"My friends were very competitive, but that didn't add any pressure at all because it wasn't toxic," Dr. Akef said when asked about how he dealt with competitiveness. "Competitiveness is not jealousy or toxic, but a healthy way to keep scoring higher as our ultimate target rather than scoring higher than X or Y; additionally, it is to share a common goal and compete in the sense of doing good rather than breeding bad habits."

Apart from medicine, being a member of a totally different society could make someone feel foreign and undesirable, adding tremendous stress to one's mental health. After Dr. Akef completed his MBBS in Iraq, he became a professor of medicine back in Ottawa, Canada. It certainly didn't feel like home at first, but he was able to tackle it by respecting the country and their religion's rules and regulations in hopes of exchanging mutual respect and being accepting of who you are.

Soon, you merge with that community, making friends and families that are willing to accommodate you. Being part of their culture won't happen overnight, so be patient.

Other than the stress of being a medical student and excelling in your goals for years, negative pressure would try to deflate the trust you've placed in yourself because people would always find a reason to envy you, but what is the optimal reaction to such circumstances?



Dr. Akef replied that "the key is to be patient and deal with it quietly and calmly as it will fade away with time because reacting would aggravate the situation and people might hate you more." Being patient doesn't mean accepting to be insulted or bullied. He added that "if there is no physical harm, then let it go," which is idealistic in not demoting yourself to their level. Instead, when faced with any sort of physical harm, light must be thrown on it by reaching out to the appropriate staff within the university. Dr. Akef has published research on burnout in the medical community, and he emphasizes that time management is a strategic way to deal with burnout. Medicine becomes part of your life, and as your life is a mixture of needs and wants, everything deserves its time. There's no such thing as "I don't have time for event A or event B etc. Back in the day, it was way harder for us, as we didn't have the luxury of accessing information at the "click of a button." We had to scroll through books, investing triple the effort that an average student would do today. So, always have time for everything but be wise in not wasting it on things that wouldn't benefit you. On top of all that, the most vital aspect of this entire essay is the relationship with God SWT. Spirituality aids us in dealing with stress through a sense of peace, purpose, and forgiveness because, through that portal, you can be yourself with God. "If you have the support of God SWT, nothing can stop you, what else would you need?" Dr. Akef confidently stated. Failure can be seen as an obstacle to success, but it's the other way around. Dealing with failure can be frustratingly awful. Dr. Akef described that failure, to a very narrow-minded student as when you don't get what you want. Never take failure through such narrow-minded thinking because as God SWT said



وَعَسَى أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ

Always trust God in the process, and if you fall, then stand up and keep fighting, because if you won't, you'll lose hope, and with that, you'll lose faith and fail to revive yourself by trying again and exploring different routes. Remember, success doesn't happen overnight or in 10 years.

Lastly, what advice would Dr. Akef wish to give his 20-year-old self? "I would advise him to be calmer, give time to everything, be patient, look at the big picture, and not plan too much," and I personally think that sums up this entire interview!!!

The takeaway is to enjoy every step of the journey rather than waiting for the destination, to trust God SWT because his plans are the best of choices, and to surround yourself with people with whom you can be yourself regardless.

Time to Take a BREAK



When people say university is your second home – it's true. We spend a lot of time at our university, whether it's waiting between classes, getting this week's studying out of the way, or just hanging out with friends. But university life can be stressful, so here are a few ways you can relax and de-stress on or near the campus.

1. Enjoy a breath of fresh air in the gardens

The gardens can be a very relaxing place – especially when the weather is pleasant. A lot of students like to take a stroll through the gardens, maybe meet a few of the university's popular cats (and perhaps take a few pictures for @au.cats?). While the benches are nice, for many students, lounging on the green grass suits them just fine. Make sure the grass is dry though – trust me, I've made the mistake!

2. Go to AlMaather Square

We all love the University cafeteria – but sometimes we can get a bit tired of the same options every day. A fun way to diversify your palate is to head over to AlMaather Square (the Panda complex next to the university) with your friends - or even on your own. Not only does this give you some time to de-stress – you get a delicious meal at the end of it!

3. Play a fun game of table tennis or pool

The table tennis tables in the male's cafeteria and the pool tables in the female's section can be a great way to perhaps learn a new sport and have some fun with friends – or even strangers.

4. Get in some exercise

Exercising can be a great way to relieve the mind and get your blood pumping. For those looking for an intense workout, Gold's Gym is a great option and is just a walk away from the university. However, for those looking for something a bit more toned-down, simply walking around the university hallways or the garden is a nice way to take a short break and let your mind and body wander. As a bonus for our extroverted readers, you may meet some people you know along the way and get a chance to catch up.

5. Volunteer at a university event

I get what you're thinking – more work? While volunteering can be tiring, the sense of satisfaction after completing a task or watching an amazing event unfold thanks to your effort makes it worth it. Helping others with the intention of doing a good deed can bring you a sense of peace and help you take a break from your everyday routine. Besides, doing it with friends makes it all the more fun!

These are great tips to take some time off and de-stress, but sometimes our stress stems from anxiety and may be having negative effects on our mental health. If you're struggling with your mental health or need someone to talk to, reach out to the university counselors - Dr. Homoud Alabri or Ms. Maryam Abalkhail.

Written by: Huda Syed

Edited by: Jamaalia Bishri

Designed by: Nada AlMuaythir

Yoga

it out



As we breathe, we naturally forget that we are doing so. More often than not, we take breathing for granted and fail to remember how taking ten deep breaths can clear our mind from everything, even if it's only for a few seconds. The act of breathing is emphasized in exercises of well-being for specific reasons, such as acknowledging the presence of oneself. One such example is Yoga, which is a collection of disciplines that help in being mindful of your physical and mental well-being.

Yoga was founded around 5,000 years ago in Northern India as a spiritual development. This discipline began with 84 asanas and body poses, which gradually turned into 8.4 million. It was found to be more beneficial for one's health than originally thought. There are numerous physical advantages of doing yoga. A study conducted by Johns Hopkins Medicine discovered that Yoga improves muscle tone, strength, and flexibility. Additionally, it can even better the health of your heart and bring peace to the mind. According to the American Osteopathic Association, Yoga brings inner calmness, improves concentration, and increases body awareness.

As medical students, our schedules are already packed and we function on a minimal sleep, so how do we incorporate Yoga into our routine? The good news is that Yoga does not require a lot of time or too much effort as it is a very flexible exercise. Its duration can range from 20-70 minutes, depending on how long you want it to last. You also have the choice of doing it every day or three times a week. Additionally, the asanas span from easy to complex, depending on how hard you want to challenge or push yourself.

The point is that however long and often you do this activity, it should genuinely benefit you. Here is a challenge: right now, at this moment, take a long deep breath. Forget about the stresses of life, the toxic environment, and the negative friends. Focus on yourself.



*Written by: Iman Bhat
Designed by Mayar Amboun
Edited by: Nabah Hussain*

So it's time to roll out your yoga mat and get working towards a healthier mental and physical state. As discussed above, yoga is quite simple and can be summarised in a culmination of 10 poses that even a beginner can have a stab at.

A beginner's guide to yoga.

Remember to hold each pose for as long as it's comfortable; breathing in and out slowly before trying the next pose.

1. Begin with the **Child's pose**, which is similar to when one bows down for sujood.



This pose allows for the gentle stretch of the lower back muscle, hips, thighs, knees, and ankles while relaxing the spine, shoulders, and neck.

2. To strengthen the arms, shoulders, and back, try the **downward-facing dog** while stretching the back, hamstrings, calves, and feet.

The downward-facing dog allows the yogi to focus on balance and weight distribution.



3. Strengthening the upper body while toning the abs can be accomplished via the **plank pose**.

4. To further build upon the plank pose, try the **four-limbed staff pose**.



5. The **Cobra pose** strengthens the back muscles and increases spinal flexibility.





6. Similar to the plank pose, the **Tree pose** can help strengthen the core, spine, calves, and thighs.

7. Moving onto a more holistic stretch and workout, the **Triangle pose** can be attempted.

This pose causes the stretch of muscles ranging from the legs, hips, spine, chest, shoulders, groin, and hamstrings to the calves.



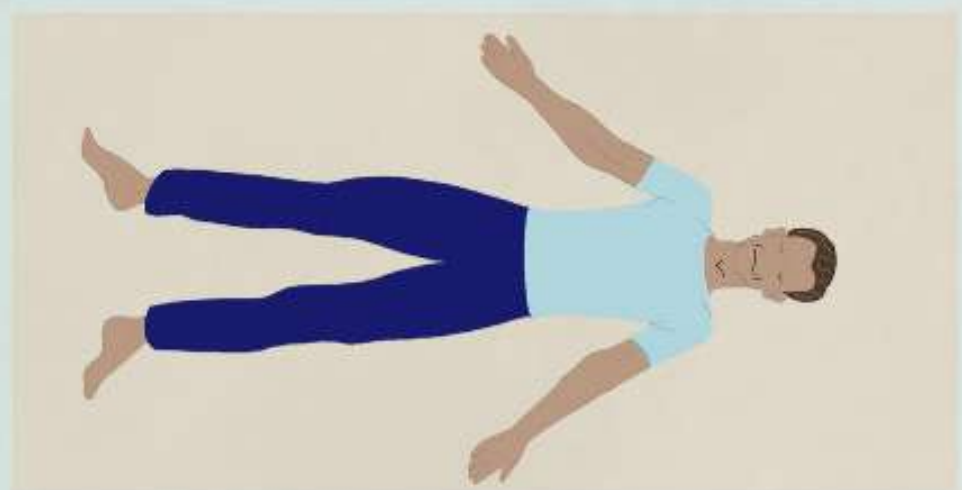
8. In order to increase flexibility and relieve tension along the upper body, try the seated **half-spinal twist pose**.



9. To build strength in the muscles of the back and the hamstrings, practice the **bridge pose**.



10. Finally, as morbid as it may sound, end the yoga workout with the **corpse pose**, while allowing yourself to sink into as relaxing a state as is manageable, almost a meditative state.



Remember to regulate your breathing as well as you can, while remembering to breathe as you move. Allow your body to move freely, make sure you stay consistent with your practice to see the best results, and find others to connect with to prevent straying the course.

WRITTEN BY: DANIA AHMED
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EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE



The term 'emotional intelligence' was first used in 1985 and later popularised by writer Daniel Goleman. Although the term itself was introduced somewhat recently, the concept was first described in the 1930s as social intelligence and then emotional strength by Abraham Maslow. The current definition of emotional intelligence is the ability to understand and manage your own emotions, as well as recognize and influence the emotions of those around you.

Emotional intelligence has 4 components: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management. **Self-awareness** is being mindful of your strengths and weaknesses, and being able to label your emotions so you can better respond to them. **Self-management** is handling your emotions in times of stress and negative setbacks. **Social awareness**, on the other hand, is being able to recognize others' emotions and read the room. **Relationship management** is the ability to influence and mentor others while resolving conflicts effectively.

Why would I need emotional intelligence and where would I use it? Well, you'd in fact use it in your everyday interactions. Not just as a leader but more importantly as a team player. You would use it while conversing with a difficult batch mate or when your younger brother is being annoyingly unreasonable. You could use it as the interviewer to make your interviewee feel at ease or while talking to someone senior in position about a conflict in schedules that needs to be resolved. You would even use it while tackling burnout.

What does an emotionally intelligent person look like? Well, one thing for certain is although they may be the diamonds in the rough, spotting them essentially means you are one too. Emotionally intelligent people can let go of mistakes and accept constructive criticism and responsibility for their shortcomings. They are sensitive to people's feelings,



have a strong sense of curiosity and concern and thus can communicate with others more effectively. They may be described as mentalists or psychics but as Patrick Jane would say, "It's just people reading." Emotional intelligence isn't something you're born with, nor is it taught. It's a learning process and often doesn't mean you have figured a person out. So, how do I improve my emotional intelligence? The first thing you can do is to spend time with your own thoughts and emotions. Whenever you feel like bursting with anger at something that happened, before you react, stop yourself and consider your response. Once you've figured yourself out, observe the people around you. Pay attention to a person's body language and listen to their tone. Learn to put yourself in that person's shoes; would you respond differently? What are some of the reasons this person is reacting this way? Are there factors at play that you just don't see?

One important thing to note is that being emotionally intelligent does not necessarily mean you are manipulating someone. Using a pencil to write poetry is very different to attacking someone with it just because it's sharp and pointy. In a world where people feel like they don't belong or are under-appreciated at times, make your interpersonal relationships healthy and holistic. People are drawn to emotionally intelligent people so empathise and be kind; the world needs it.



Written by: Tehreemah Raziq

Edited by: Lara Samhan

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*“You can’t pour from
an empty cup”*





If you've been on a plane even once in your life, you would have heard the phrase, "In case of an emergency, put on your oxygen mask before assisting others" in at least 2 different languages through a muffled speaker that's barely getting by. That's not very far off in theory from the quote in question, "You can't pour from an empty cup." The cup here is your physical, emotional, and intellectual capacity which when you're caught up in the barn fire of deadlines, exams, and interactions galore, is quite easy to run out of- or should I say burn out? (medical students say yooo). Trying to force anything past your limits is calling for severe exhaustion in all senses and definitely not the most optimal way of getting things done- whether it be for you or anyone else. The one difference between our empty cup and the oxygen mask situation; however, is quite clear: one leads to a hypothetical (hopefully) barn fire while the latter gives a full-fledged fiery beauty- I mean tragedy. With that said, trying to nurture your needs over anything else is a difficult thing to understand (more so do). But ask

yourself this: you wouldn't expect water to come out of an empty bottle, then why do you keep pushing your empty cup every day to pour out that double espresso shot?

No matter how cliché the self-help books are, they've got one thing right, which is the concept of putting yourself first. Taking the time to check in with yourself, as you'd do with a friend, can make all the difference in how the rest of your day, month, and life goes. Giving yourself that space to accept when you're not doing well and then not rushing the process to recovery is even more important. Now, it may seem like the biggest inconvenience when you're caught up in, well, life, and although that's true, ignoring your own warning signs is a bigger injustice and a future nuisance. I was once told that if I worked any harder without rest, I'd burn (not burn out, no, just burn), and after countless ironing mishaps and long nights cooking up a project that got an extended deadline, I have to say I agree- and it wasn't worth it in the slightest. So, to my little cups waiting to serve their next refill of coffee (or tea),



Written by: Samra Mirza

Edited by: Nabah Hussain

Designed by: Nada AlMuaythir

Self-Love In Islam

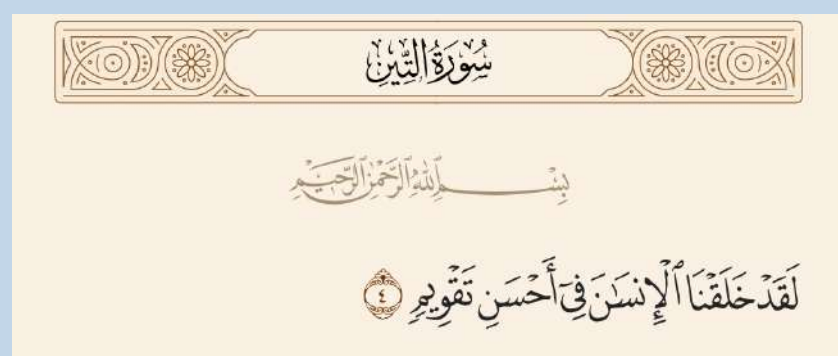
“I hate myself. I don’t like the way I talk, the way I walk, how I behave, I don’t like it at all.” Well, by the end of this page, I hope I can change that.

One of the most fascinating gifts Allah has given us -you guessed it- is self-love. What is self-love anyways? Is it going to cafes, having the courage to order a large cappuccino, and sitting there beside a window, sipping it while smiling, all on your own? Or is it meditation, praying, breathing, anything that benefits the nafs (soul)? Haha, why not both?

Self-love allows us to do what we like and make our decisions and be happy about them. In Islam, it’s a very worthy attribute, because with self-love comes acceptance of difficult times, and inspiration on how to deal with them, knowing your worth and importance in the big system of the universe, because you have been created by Allah for a reason, in the best form you can be. Self-doubting, in contrast, gives birth to questions: do we really matter? Which is an affront to Allah because He has created man in the best of forms.

“We have certainly created man in the best of stature.” [95:4]

You learn to love yourself with all your flaws and habits, accepting them as a core part of being human. Which brings up the question: if you love yourself inside out, how do you improve, or grow? The answer is simple. When you love yourself, you spend time with yourself, whether it may be in malls or inside your headspace. This way, you get to know yourself more, as one does with a recent friend. You discover your habits, your weaknesses, whether it may be not submitting assignments on time or reacting harshly to someone in a conversation you didn’t like. It may be disliking sunlight, to loathing the form you were created in: gender or race. And it’s perfectly natural to have these flaws. If they weren’t there, one could never learn the beauty of self improvement, for one’s self and for Allah. This leaves gaps (opportunities) for you to fill with something lovely. The only requirement is: you need to make an effort.



“ ... Allah does not change the condition of until they change what is within themselves...” [13:11]

If mental health is forgotten, the will to pray and do other things becomes as fickle as the air we breathe.

Loving yourself sounds easy, but let me assure you it's not. It needs a beautiful concept we call patience, and the art of time.



“...but patience is beautiful...” [12:18]

Self love is telling yourself ,“I am not the bad grades I brought. I am not the curses people yell at me. I made mistakes, and I can make up for them,” and having the motivation to follow through with it. You need to practice using strengths to surpass your limits. And those limits are only psychological chains you have put on yourself- to others they identify as ‘anxiety’, ‘depression’ and ‘instability’. But everything in the greater order of things is a blessing from Allah...

Abu Bakr reported: The Messenger of Allah (PBUH), said, «Afflictions, diseases, and sadness in the world are a recompense for sins.»

Source: Hilyat al-Awliya> 119/8

Grade: Sahih (authentic) according to Al-Albani

Loving yourself is loving Allah. It is an act of immense gratitude to Allah, a form of Ibadah (worship), to accept the form He has given you. Once you're halfway there, you look back and smile, because indeed the journey is more yielding than the destination itself...

Written by: Muskan Afaq

Edited by: Nasser Alsaleh

Designed by: Nada AlMuaythir

Conversing with the Creator

Dua is perhaps one of the most significant aspects of our deen. It is a direct form of connection from us, on the Earth, to Allah, above the heavens, for those willing to open that line of communication with Him.

Dua is not only an act of worship in which we seek Allah's forgiveness and mercy. It not only gives us the power to communicate with our Lord and have our worldly desires fulfilled, but it also has the power to change our destiny.

"Nothing repels Divine Decree except du'a, and nothing increases one's lifespan except good deeds." Authentic, reported by At-Tirmidhi and Al-Hakim from Salman, and is in Sahih al-Jami' 7687#

Fortunately for us, the prophet (PBUH) equipped us with the greatest duas in order to help us succeed in this dunya and the akhira. Though we don't talk about our mental well-being as much in the context of Islam anymore, the prophet (PBUH) gifted our ummah with duas to protect our mental well-

being and maintain our wellness, in addition to duas we can make when we are feeling down.

The first step to asking for Allah's help is allowing one's self to be open to receiving that help. In Islam we accomplish this by humbling ourselves, remembering Allah, and strengthening our relationship with Him.

فَلَوْلَا إِذْ جَاءَهُمْ بَأْسُنَا تَضَرَّعُوا وَلَكِنْ قَسَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

"If only, when Our calamity came upon them, they humbled themselves. But their hearts hardened, and Shaytan made their deeds appear good to them" [Qur'an 6:43]

Once we begin to open that line of communication, the world truly is our oyster. To begin with, as med students we know that the most important part of our job is prevention, so let's begin with a dua to protect ourselves from anxiety and depression.

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْهَمِّ وَالْحَزَنِ وَالْعَجْزِ وَالْكَسَلِ وَالْبُخْلِ
وَالْجَبَنِ وَضَلَعِ الدِّينِ وَغَلْبَةِ الرِّجَالِ

“O Allah, I take refuge in You from anxiety and sorrow, weakness and laziness, miserliness and cowardice, the burden of debts and from being overpowered by men.” (Al-Bukhari)

Dua for maintaining one's well-being and seeking divine protection

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ الْعَافِيَةَ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ
الْعَفْوَ وَالْعَافِيَةَ فِي دِينِي وَدُنْيَايَ وَأَهْلِي وَمَالِي اللَّهُمَّ اسْتَرْ عَوْرَاتِي
وَأَمِنْ رَوْعَاتِي اللَّهُمَّ احْفَظْنِي مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْ وَمِنْ خَلْفِي وَعَنْ يَمِينِي
وَعَنْ شِمَالِي وَمِنْ فَوْقِي وَأَعُوذُ بِعَظَمَتِكَ أَنْ أُغْتَالَ مِنْ تَحْتِي

O Allah, I ask You for well-being in this world and the Hereafter. O Allah, I ask You for pardon and well-being in my religion, my worldly affairs, my family, and my property. O Allah, conceal my faults and keep me safe from what I fear. O Allah, guard me from in front of me and behind me, on my right and on my left, and from above me. And I seek refuge in Your Magnificence from being swallowed up from beneath me. {**Abu Dawud and Ibn Majah**}

Oftentimes, our stress and worries come from concern for our family and loved ones; we just can't find a solution and are caught between a rock and a hard place. In these cases, where we can't help but wallow in the pits of depression, duas, such as the ones

mentioned below, can relieve these situations once supplicated.

اللَّهُمَّ رَحْمَتَكَ أَرْجُو فَلَا تَكِلْنِي إِلَى نَفْسِي طَرْفَةَ عَيْنٍ وَأَصْلِحْ لِي
شَأْنِي كُلَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ

“O Allah, I hope for Your mercy. Do not leave me to myself even for a blink of an eye. Correct all of my affairs for me. There is none worthy of worship except You.”

حَسْبِيَ اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَهُوَ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ
(سَبْعَ مَرَّاتٍ)

Allah is enough for me. There is no true god but Him, in Him I put my trust, and He is the Lord of the Great Throne. (**Repeat seven times.**) [**Abu Dawud**]

It's important to remember that Allah is only a dua away, so straighten your bond with Him, remember Him daily, and don't forget to call unto Him for everything, every major and minor inconvenience!

وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا
دَعَانِ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ

“If My slaves ask you about Me, I am Near. I answer the call of the caller when he calls on Me.” [Quran, 2:186]



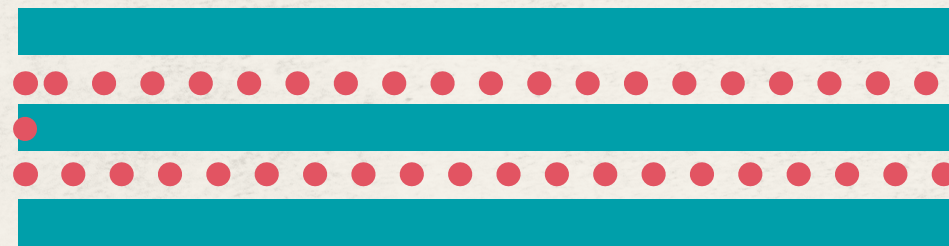
Written by: Dania Ahmed

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Mnemonic Images:

The Integration of Art with Academics



How many times have you read a slide, and upon attempting to recall the information, a blur of black squiggles on white was all you could see? The harder you strained, the further your train of thought travelled. Though this scenario may be considered relatable by one and all, the justified rationale brought to the forefront is, “Why should I study art in this new world propelled by a results-driven academical atmosphere, when I could be focused on other STEM disciplines?” While this approach is not frowned upon, the blindness that every individual exhibits has to be blamed on the veil that society has brought them up within. However, for art to have an effective impact on not only a student’s performance but also their personal development, it must be ingrained from a young age. This allows the child to have a greater awareness of who they are, the world they live in, and, most importantly, the part they play in it. Through doing so, it has been proven successful in achieving its motive.

The integration of art into a child’s curriculum helps them improve as a whole. Encouraging them to experiment with different forms of self-expression pushes them to put their creative juices to flow, thereby sharpening their skill repertoire and driving them to be successful in various facets of their life. Additionally, it aids in the growth and blossoming of new skills that would assist the child in the future; they learn to take constructive criticism from their peers and become more confident in breaking out of their shells. By the same token, they also develop a mindset of perseverance and an undying need to master any craft they set their mind to. These individual elements intertwined together play a much bigger role in the child’s future once they begin stepping foot out into uncharted lands (aka the real world outside the closed borders of their comfort zone).

But art isn’t just plain paintbrushes and pencils; it also includes a complex understanding of meters and notes used when learning to play a new piece on an instrument and the study of history when giving life to a play. These branches especially highlight how art is necessary for a link between different specialities. When strumming a guitar or playing the piano, a child could be intrigued by the working of sound waves. If a group of students want to put on a classical play, they would pursue learning its roots and historical significance to disseminate a stronger message among the audience. Similarly, through incorporating art, students can achieve a higher sense of different cultures and learn to accept the individual characteristics that help them stand out from the rest.

Now, being the medical students we are, how do we incorporate art into our academics?

A prominent example is Sketchy: comic-styled strips explained through pictures that marvellously help us remember the smallest of details pertaining to a specific microorganism or drug. Ask any friend you know who is either in or passed their second year of medical school about their experience. The one critical resource that everyone would speak highly of, which helped them through their first semester, particularly POD, would be Sketchy. So, what exactly is going on here?

Two words: Mnemonic Images. Powerful tools that, when implemented correctly, can be used to remember large quantities of information regardless of the field of academics. In a much simpler manner, mnemonic images are, in a way, associations. It is when you correlate, for example, a new colleague’s name with a character that you may already know from one of the many movies or series that you stream, or a distinguishing feature that is unique to them, say, a pair of spectacles or a sweatshirt. By having several of these skillfully drawn onto pieces of paper and storing them in your mind, you begin creating a memory palace. Here, just like in a library, with a prompt, you can quickly skim through a makeshift catalogue and pull out the paper with the correct illustration, making you recall every ounce of detail with the least amount of strain.

The human mind is a spectacle, unparalleled in its infinite formulations and possibilities. With a gift as such, we can only be grateful and use it to its full potential, finding an answer to every obstacle the world throws at us (medical school included) while treating it for the temple it is. While on the same page, art in all its forms is a magnificent glue that brings everyone together to cherish and appreciate it for what it is. And through its integrated application into the students’ academic environment, they can learn to be much more conscious of themselves and their worth, be more confident in their vessel, and broaden their horizons while developing a wide array of skills and abilities at the same time.

Written by: Rushdan Firdous

Edited by: Nameer Khaled

Designed by: Nada AlMuaythir

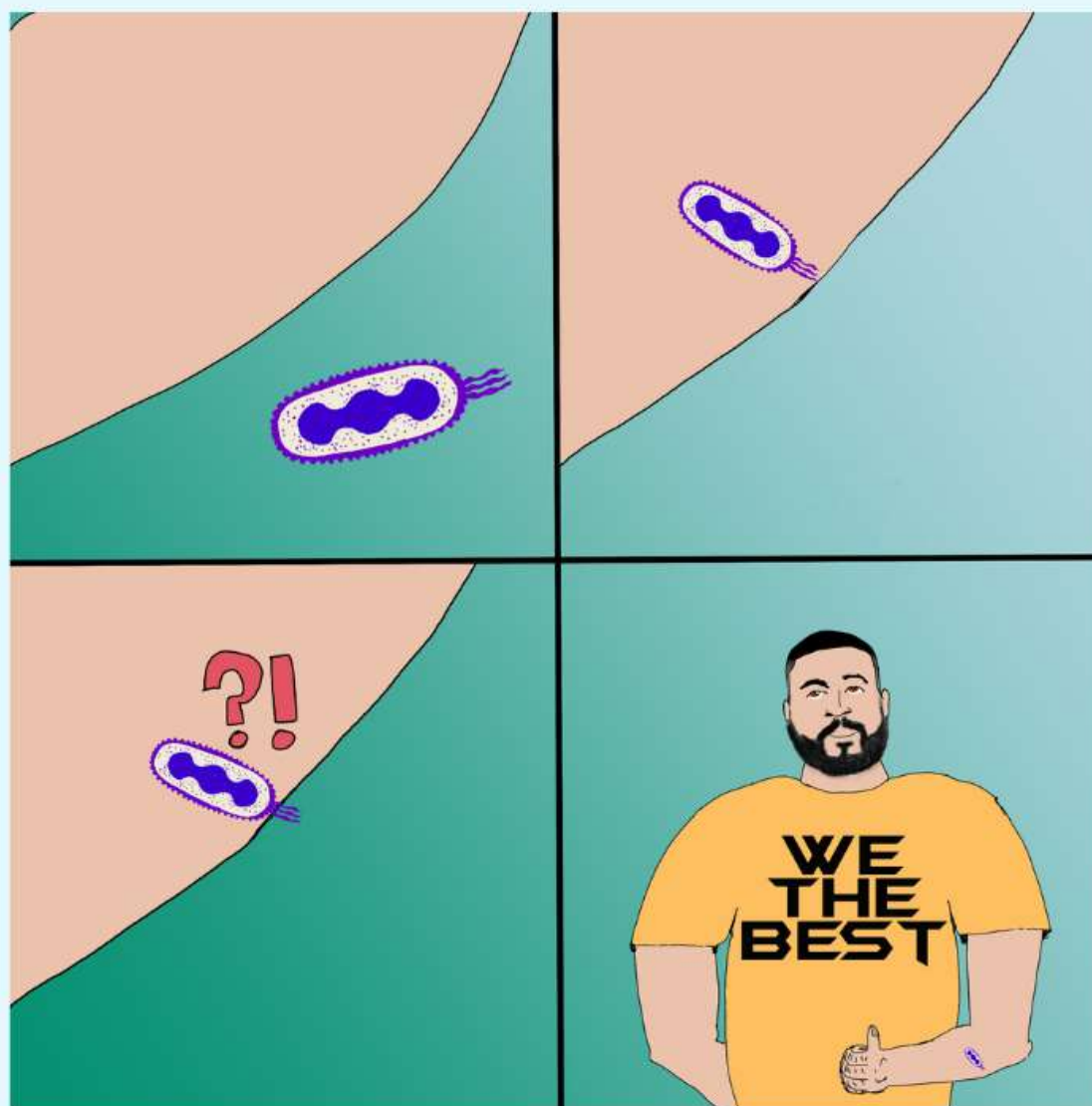




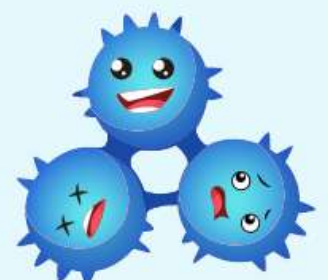
Battle of the Microbes: The Immune System Strikes Back

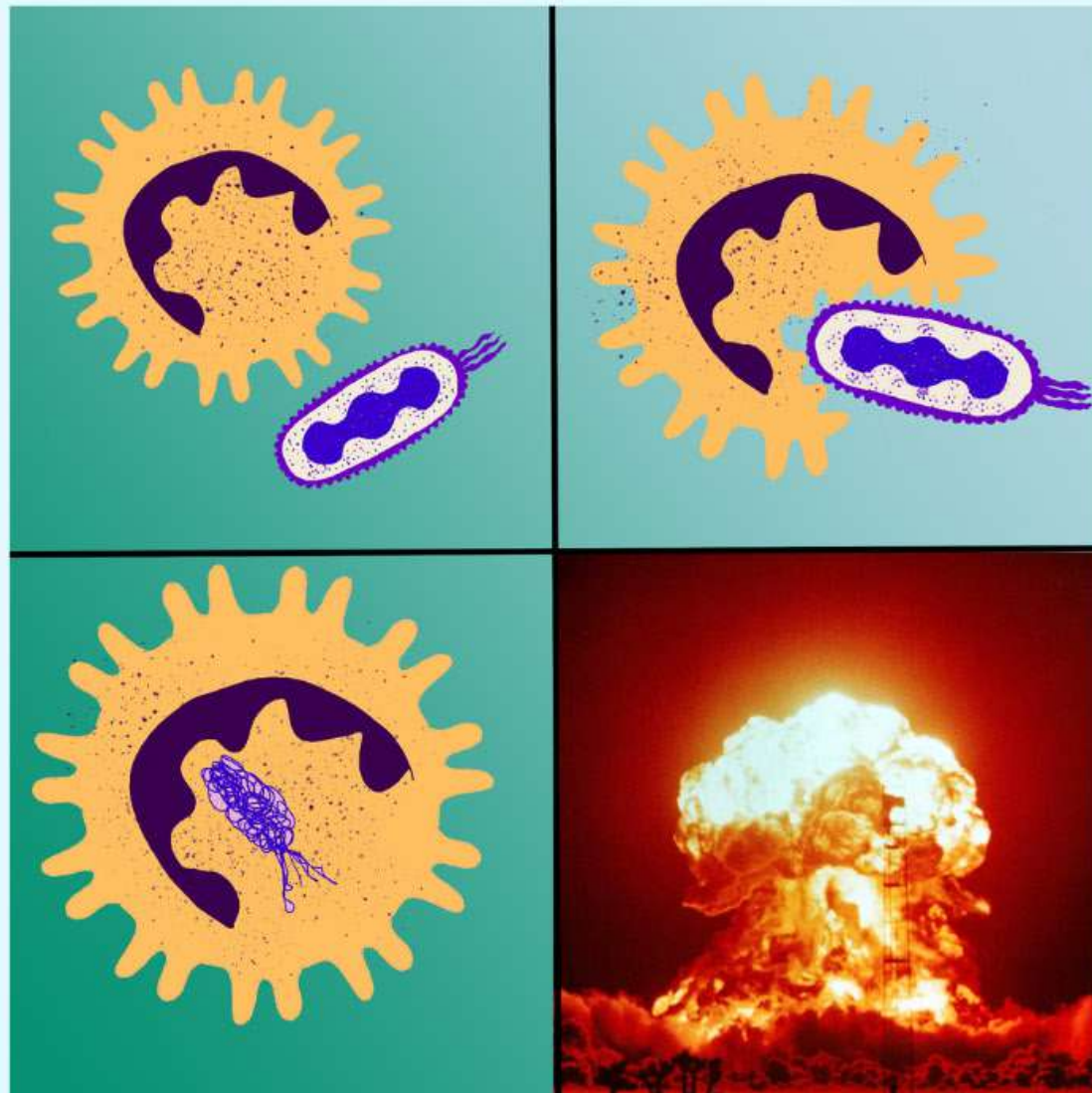


BY: RAFFI ALMUTAWA

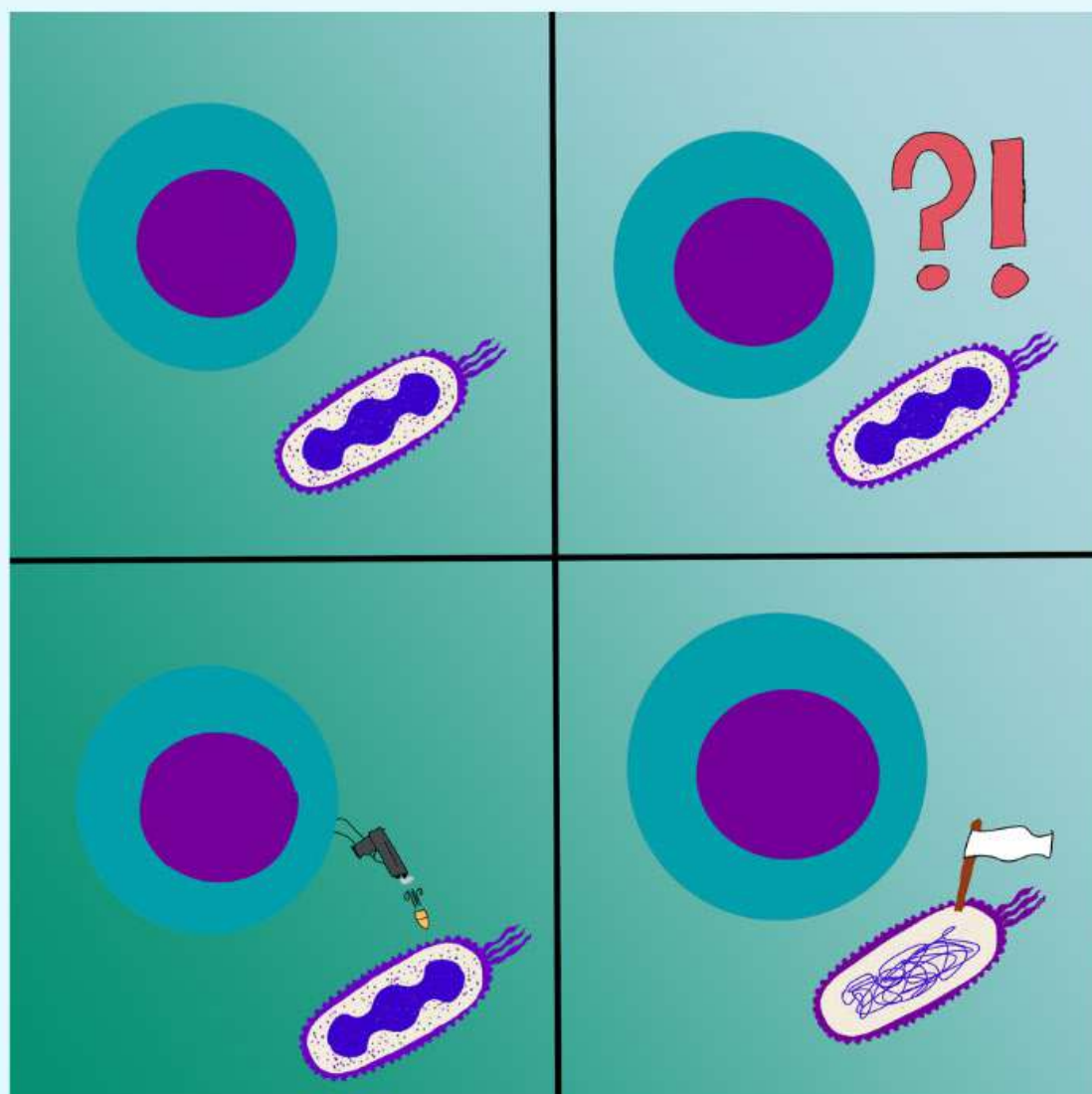


YOUR SKIN IS YOUR FIRST BARRIER TO
INFECTIONS. BACTERIA DONT EVEN SEE
IT COMING

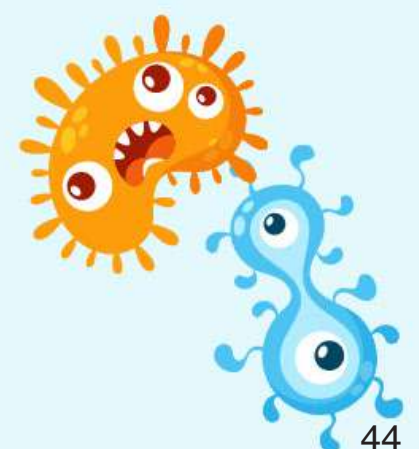




NEUTROPHILS KICK IN BY EATING THE BACTERIA AND OUT OF EXISTING AND THE DYING ITSELF



LYMPHOCYTES SEE BACTERIA AND PROCEED TO SHOOT THEM WITH PEPTIDES. THEY STAND NO CHANCE





Talk with Dr. Sadek Obeidat: *On the Leading Light of Health Care”*

Medical care is the act of providing health services to patients based on their needs. Health services vary and are ideally a collective's work that centers around patients. A patient is an individual whom we care for; this care, ultimately, comes from our cherishment of each other's lives.

To learn more about patient care, MedTimes sat with Dr. Sadek Obeidat, a prominent member of the Clinical Skills Department.

Dr. Sadek emphasized that one cannot simply look at a patient as a problem to solve. A patient is an individual who has their own problems other than their health. One must consider their physical health, the treatment they might need, as well as their mental health, which, if unwell, may greatly influence

treatment outcomes.

Doctors need to understand that patients have other stresses in their lives. At times, a health worker might be faced with very upset patients. Such situations could be truly distressing, therefore, one must keep in mind that what the patient is going through is a lot more difficult than it is from the perspective of a doctor.

Regardless of whether a medical student chooses to follow a clinically oriented career path, social skills are one of the most valuable skills they could acquire.

A physician must always introduce themselves and get an introduction from the patient to ensure they are dealing with

the right patient, or else there would be a risk of medical errors. Additionally, one must always read the patient's records, to observe what had been done and found out. By the same token, regardless of who has already spoken to the patient, a physician must always take a complete history and physical examination. It is often easy to rely on medical records; however, those who had examined the patients prior had likely done so as well. Needless to say, it is easy for vital information to be missed. Over and above, building a good rapport with patients could go a long way in ensuring their comfort.

To illustrate the necessity of approaching a patient as a whole rather than what they present with, Dr. Sadek recounted a day during his fifth year:

At the time, the attending physician walked into the inpatient's room and opened up his computer right away. He recited all that the patient went through – from medications to previous cancers – gave her a few instructions, and promptly left.

The patient was extremely uncomfortable and clearly in some sort of distress. The attending physician viewed the situation in terms of what the patient presented with and her management. When Dr. Sadek attempted to converse with her, asking her about how she had felt, the patient got quite emotional. She requested that she be moved to Dr. Sadek's care instead, drawing attention to the attending's indifference.

Dr. Sadek pointed out that patients care a lot more about being treated as human beings rather than mere problems that need fixing – even if their physician is the top expert in their field.

In an effort to foster better communication skills and empathy, the Clinical Skills Department introduced immersive simulation. Through it, students participate in scenarios that mimic clinical settings, which involve simulated patients and different mannequins to enhance their experience. The more students put effort into it, the more they can enrich their communicativeness and empathy.

At any rate, in true clinical settings, a physician cannot ensure a patient's well-being alone. A team consisting of physicians, nurses, technicians, and more, work together toward a said goal. Medical teams flourish when everybody appreciates and respects each other, as all are under the same goal of taking care of the patient. The difference between everyone is merely in their roles, each of which is a pillar that upholds the healthcare system. Patients should feel cared for by every member – that can only happen when all value and respect one another.

Dr. Sadek found in learning and teaching simulation a steady bridge between the preclinical and clinical years. With the emerging plethora of applicable ways of simulation, such as virtual simulation, Dr. Sadek hopes to journey on this path and discover how far this broad and interesting field can go both at Alfaisal University and worldwide.



Designed by: Nada AlMuaythir

Written by: Tasneem Al-Ibrahim

Edited by: Thaabit Raziq

How We Can Do Better

When you think of the medical field, what is the first word that comes to mind?

Perhaps sickness, health, or death? Unfortunately, those terms rarely expand to encompass **community, care, and empathy.**

Have you ever accompanied a loved one on a trip to the hospital, and seen them leave with frustration? I picture my mother as she sat by my grandfather's hospital bed before he passed, calling me to express her frustration that no physician would take the time to help her understand the illness plaguing her father. I picture my family near my cousin's bedside in the ICU after a terrible car accident, too shocked to understand the fatality of his case. I picture all the patients lying in a hospital bed as physicians and trainees hovered, speaking over them like they were a case instead of a human being. It is this notion that drives us away from empathy and compassion in medicine, and instead towards the robotic nature of modern care.

How did we get here?

First, let us understand the meaning of the word **EMPATHY**. The word, stripped down to its bare bones, etymologically comes from the Greek word ***empathēia*** meaning a passionate state of emotion, from an assimilated form of *en* meaning "in" and *pathos* meaning "***feeling***". The modern understanding of empathy is multifaceted and complex, posing a problem in the medical field with its difficulty to understand, measure and humanize. Though defined generally as the ability to understand and share the feelings of another, there is a different context for it within medicine. The term ***clinical empathy*** is defined by a 2021 comprehensive study conducted by *Laurence Tan, et al.* as

“a sense of connection between the healthcare worker and the patient as a result of perspective taking arising from imaginative, effective and cognitive processes, which are expressed through behaviors and good communication skills that convey genuine concern.”

This definition encompasses the many layers of the term, divided into **cognitive** (i.e. perspective taking), **emotional** (i.e. understanding another's feelings), and **compassionate** empathy (i.e. delivering that empathy and actively looking for solutions).

Its importance is vast and has been shown to be of benefit in all areas of medicine. Studies have shown that empathy can improve both the quality and experience of care for patients and healthcare professionals. Healthcare professionals that extend this compassion have been shown to have better patient outcomes, greater patient compliance and satisfaction, as well as increased efficiency and fewer malpractice complaints (Decety, 2020). This crucial skill is what gains a patient's trust, as it reverberates in them a feeling of being acknowledged and valued.

Though it is a current part of medical curricula worldwide, empathy has a tendency to be taught as a script in a checklist, as one utters the words “**I'm sorry to hear that**” without truly meaning it. Perhaps even more concerning is the significant decline in empathy levels throughout medical school, as studied by several medical colleges across the world. At Alfaisal University, a cross-sectional study conducted by Qasim, et al. in 2019 concluded

“Empathy erosion escalates with increase in stress as students progress to higher years in medical school.”

As students progress through a high-stress work environment in the face of emotionally challenging and difficult situations, the formal curriculum that describes empathy and ethical conduct can somewhat dissolve, noted by a shared sense of disdain towards the way some physicians communicate with their patients. This phenomenon, known as **ethical erosion**, can lead medical students and doctors to become less morally sensitive and ethically aware of their actions. Furthermore, observation of a **“hidden curriculum”** that prioritizes biomedical knowledge over patients’ lived experience can promote desensitization.

This decline or erosion in sensitivity towards others’ emotions can have potentially detrimental effects on future patient-doctor interactions and quality of care.

However, the contradiction lies in the fact that truly experiencing the suffering of each patient would lead to what is known as **compassion fatigue**. This term describes a sort of emotional burnout, defined as

“— the physical and mental exhaustion and emotional withdrawal experienced by individuals who care for sick or traumatized people over an extended period of time. —”

What can we then do to counteract this problem?

How can we effectively engage with patients empathetically without compromising rational thinking and quality of care?

It is imperative to understand that empathy, particularly clinical empathy, is a skill that, like a muscle, can be trained and expanded. Currently, medical literature lies more heavily on the scale of understanding empathy and its patterns, and is imminently shifting towards its implementation. As such, the following techniques have been shown to be of benefit at both an individual and institutional level.

Individually, the following strategies can be employed to train empathy as a skill.

- Actively listening to patient needs and concerns, and making a personal effort to express compassionate empathy. This includes taking the time to properly educate patients, as well as providing reassurance.
- Observational skills and “deep acting” techniques.
- Self-reflective writing is a teaching–learning strategy that can enable personal growth and increase in-situation awareness. This can be achieved in the form of journaling to aid with stress levels and ease anxiety, as well as increase self-awareness.

Incorporation of empathy training into both formal and hidden (informal) medical curricula.

- Increasing learning modules that highlight the importance of empathy, as well as modules that highlight how to cope with difficult emotional situations in the hospital setting, from stress to death of a patient under your care.
- Rewarding genuine displays of empathy as opposed to “tick-box empathy” often practiced in medical schools.
- Positive role modelling from professors, physicians, and medical staff. Although this may not always be possible, when incorporated with self-reflection, even negative role modelling can strengthen students’ drive to practice medicine with empathy (as opposed to the negative example shown).
- Accessible patient simulation training labs year-round through dedicated labs and softwares. For example, Virtual Reality (VR) immersion training is an effective teaching method to help medical and health professions students develop empathy, currently implemented by the University of New England (UNE).

With all this knowledge, it is crucial that we remember this: **a normal day in your life as a medical practitioner or trainee can also be the most difficult day in a patient’s life**. Through the deep understanding and continuous practice of empathy, we can shift today’s care from robotic to instead foster a more welcoming, comprehensive, and high-quality care for our communities.



Necessity is the Mother of Innovation

(الحاجة أم الاختراع)

An interview with the Director, Najlaa Omran Kateb

From health, education, infrastructure, recreation and tourism, it is no secret that Vision 2030's blueprint has been underway and put in action by Saudi Arabia in all its platforms. What if we, as future doctors of Saudi, could take a closer look into the initiatives led by the Ministry of Health? What if we could have a role? This is the type of work highlighted by the Innovation Center in the Ministry of Health, led by Najlaa Kateb.

Established in 2016 by HE Dr. Tawfig Alrabiah, the Innovation Center recognized change as the cornerstone of our development and progress, in line with the Kingdom's Vision. With the aim of beginning with internal change, the center creates a channel for over 270,000 employees in the Ministry of Health to submit their ideas. In this interview with Kateb, she emphasizes on the importance of change from an individual level. Her background in International Business and love for understanding the driving forces of human beings allow her to bring together people from all walks of life in the pursuit for innovation.

Some key objectives of the Ministry of Health, which are undeniably important in our population, are facilitating access to healthcare services, promoting health, preventing health-related risks, as well as increasing accessibility and efficiency of what we can provide as physicians, nurses, and the whole healthcare system.

How do you see the innovation center playing

a role in promoting healthcare, and enabling our progress towards Vision 2030?

We tend to look at this from two major perspectives. First, the innovation perspective, and second, the system perspective. In terms of innovation, one major or important aspect is changing the mindset of people in order to reach our set objectives and achieve impactful outcomes. Like you mentioned, accessibility is a key aspect in all this, and we focus on how we can do good for the Kingdom. How can we make it easy for all citizens to access health services? For that, it's essential that we create this shift internally first, which also applies to PHCs, clinics, and hospitals in the front lines. If these parties do not adopt the mindset to change, to find the weaknesses and fix them, then we cannot change as a whole. You cannot transform without people. This is what innovation does: we provide that awareness, guide shifting mindsets, and provide tools and methodologies for people through our network.

From the perspective of the system, we have created driven designs, projects and initiatives to achieve our goals. For example, the virtual clinic has made it easier to access a health provider from the comfort of your own home. Unfortunately, a few years ago everyone was going to the ER for any issue they had, by default, even for prescription refills, minor complaints, etc. It was the easiest access route to healthcare, which is what we are trying to change. Now, we have applications like "Sehaty" (صحتي), and "A Doctor for

Every Family” (طبيب لكل أسرة) that allows you to identify your neighborhood physician, others like “Know Your Numbers” (اعرف أرقامك) to track your vital signs from each visit, as well as health coaches. These tools are creating systemic changes in how we view and gain access to the healthcare system.

What type of structure and process does the Innovation Center follow?

The Innovation Center focuses on advocacy for all ideas by breaking the bureaucratic organizational structure at MoH. Our structure allows any employee at any level to submit their ideas directly to us. We then filter through all ideas and follow our own internal process for developing the idea, following design thinking, and engaging the end user (patients), as well as the owner of the idea, in the process. After creating this momentum, we move into incubation of the idea and execution depending on the relevant department. We are the pioneers that have established this type of structure, and it has proven to be successful for 7 years.

Can you provide some examples of programs and ideas developed by the Innovation Center?

Alongside the ideas submitted by the team, we host two annual competitions: “Alrowad” (الرواد), and “Idea to Innovate” (أبداع بفكرة), among others. The key thing about these initiatives is that individuals at the front lines find issues and come up with creative solutions; as the saying goes, “Necessity is the mother of innovation (الحاجة أم الاختراع).”

For example, tayammum (تيمم) is an important practice in Islam, particularly for inpatients in the hospital.

Unfortunately, the previous method was to transport large boxes of sand and give them to each inpatient. This was wasteful and difficult in terms of infection control.

With the project “Tayammumy” (مبادرة تيممي), a tissue is embedded with sand, and 5 are individually packaged to meet the needs of a single patient for a day. This created a great improvement in terms of infection control and accessibility to all patients. This idea was developed under “Alrowad”, commercialized with the help of the health endowment fund and now 16,000 units are distributed daily. Video example:



Another notable example developed through “Idea to Innovate” includes the use of Virtual Reality (VR) to help children overcome the fear of immunization and blood drawing, which is a painful and unpleasant experience in most cases, and family help is usually needed to calm down children and get them through vaccination. This VR experience will help relax and reassure the child while the vaccination procedure is taking place without help from others.

These are just a few examples of the successful projects we have developed, with a team effort, and we are excited to say that we have many more projects underway.

These are all incredible examples, and I am looking forward to seeing even more in the future, Allah willing. Being part of the future of the healthcare system in the Kingdom, and the team that will pursue great initiatives such as the Innovation Center, what piece of advice would you extend to us?

Be open to change, and look towards understanding others in your community. My ideal world is that of a healthcare system that feels like a community, so that any person can come into the healthcare system at any level and feel like they will be taken care of without a second thought.

I also encourage you to participate and be a part of the change! Join hackathons and keep a log of ideas you have, because at the end of the day, we need each other in order to grow and move forward with the Vision. Great ideas come spontaneously, even after participating in Hackathons and other programs, and although our structure is not currently established to take external idea contributions, we will always have a place for your innovation. You can email us to share ideas at innovation@moh.gov.

Written by: Maryam AlTayeb

Designed by: Nada AlMuaythir



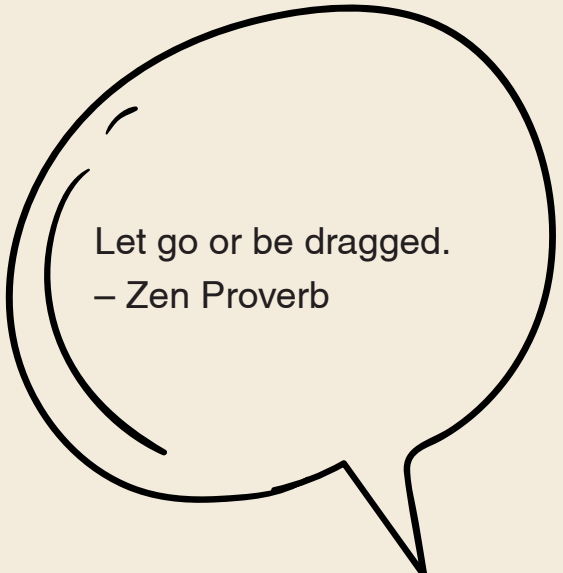
When a quote changes a life



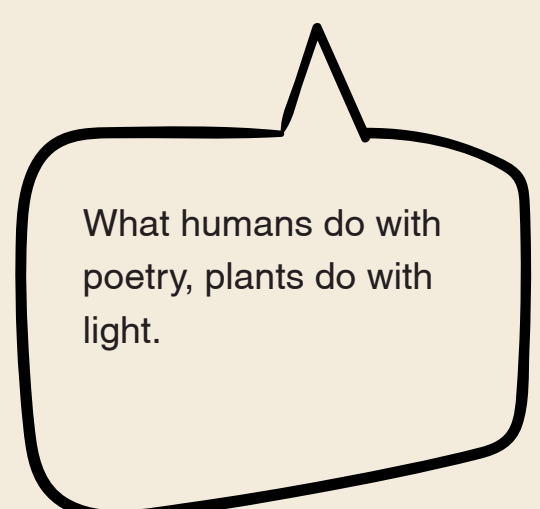
Two steps forward and
one back is still a step
forward.



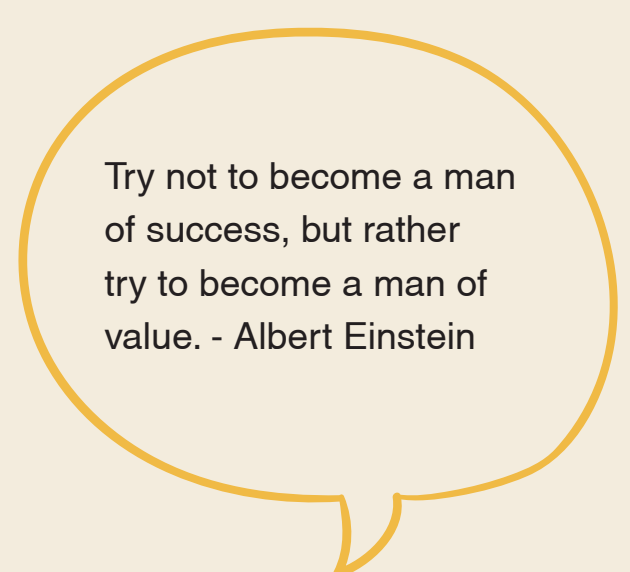
If it comes, let it.
If it goes, let it.



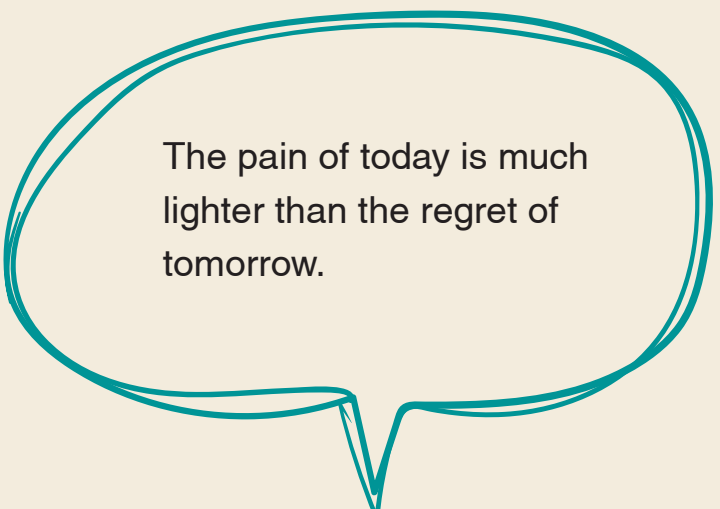
Let go or be dragged.
– Zen Proverb



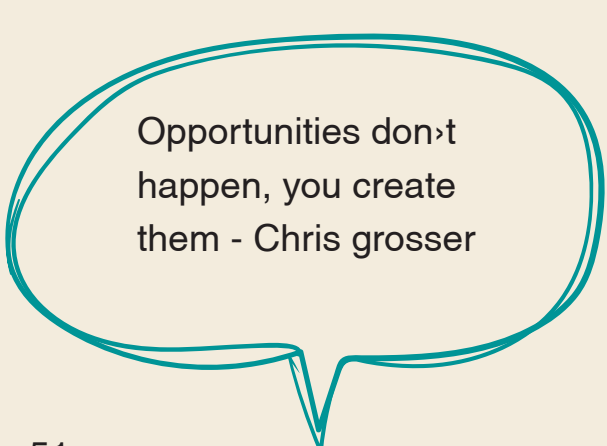
What humans do with
poetry, plants do with
light.



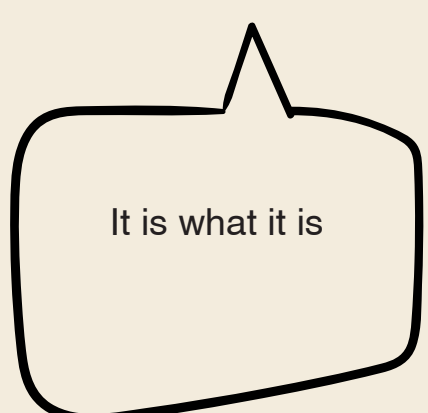
Try not to become a man
of success, but rather
try to become a man of
value. - Albert Einstein



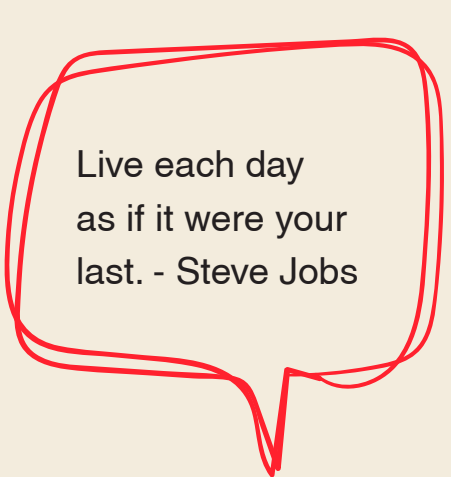
The pain of today is much
lighter than the regret of
tomorrow.



Opportunities don't
happen, you create
them - Chris grosser



It is what it is



Live each day
as if it were your
last. - Steve Jobs

Life moves pretty fast. If you don't stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it. - Ferris Bueller

«My philosophy is that worrying means you suffer twice.» —
Newt Scamander in «Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them.

Better to do it %100 OK
than %80 Perfect

When you think you are done,
you're only %40 into what your
body can do. That's just the limits
that we put on ourselves. - David
Goggins

As afraid as you are
of what other people
think of you, they are
just as afraid of what
you think of them.

You have brains in your head.
You have feet in your shoes.
You can steer yourself in any
direction you choose. - Dr.
Seuss

Comparison is the thief of joy -
Theodore Roosevelt.

You can be the ripest, juiciest
peach in the world, and there will
always be someone who hates
peaches. – Dita Von Teese

Designed by: Nada AlMuaythir



Environment and Well- Being

Color me!



It is becoming increasingly obvious how significant our environment is for our well-being. We are heavily reliant on our environment for every aspect of survival: food, shelter, peace, company, and anything that can be named.

Though we may not always realise it, our environment shapes our cultures and lifestyles. From the food we eat to the clothes we wear, it's all dependent on our surroundings. We decide to have a cup of tea and a conversation about rain or drink a hearty lemonade and plan a day indoors. We can never really sever ties from our environment. As a result, when we encounter the death and destruction of the flora and fauna around us, we lose much more than just green scenes and fragrant flowers.

In the past few years, innumerable lives have been terribly affected by preventable natural disasters. Drastic changes in temperatures were recorded in cooler countries this year. Furthermore, more than 30 million lives were thrown into jeopardy during the floods in Pakistan. Floods, landslides, wildfires have plagued innocent people due to environmental neglect not from the average citizen but rather from large corporations that refuse to take accountability. Spain has been encountering droughts and a water shortage. Hundreds of manatees are starving to death leading to their endangerment. New Delhi's atmosphere is being choked by pollution.

However, it is possible to reverse the damage. Ambitious individuals have taken it upon themselves to contest for environmental rights. Throughout the world, initiatives are being taken, albeit at a small scale, to save Earth's climate. In fact, Alfaisal University's very own Green Team has recently begun a virtual book drive to promote sustainability.

The efforts towards a better climate are present at different scales. However, the climate crisis does implore the involvement of the more powerful as they happen to steer the stakes at a much greater height. We can always appreciate our environment and aid its amelioration by little things such as spending time outdoors, adopting an indoor plant, and cleaning up after ourselves. Most importantly, we must be hopeful and remain informed.

Written by: Sarah Tullah

Edited by: Lara Samhan

Designed by: Nada AlMuaythir

An Interview with Lina Abusulayman

On a relatively fine November afternoon, I had the wonderful opportunity of interviewing Lina Abusulayman. Lina has a way with her words that can turn even the harshest of days pleasant. One could call her a garden fairy. She loves her cats, tropical trees, and exchanges about rain.

Lina has loved plants and botany since she was a child. This passion can be credited to her father who can be termed a scholar of nature. She grew up in Jeddah with tropical trees and fruits and humid winds. These elements of her surrounding always beckoned her towards them. She grew up to develop an even deeper love for her environment; she participated in beach cleanups, was a distinguished

member of Alfaisal MSA's Green Team, and filled her home with various plants.

She does, however, refrain from planting exotic species as they believe they do more harm than good. A pet peeve of hers is when plants are planted in areas where they will not grow well due to

an unsuitable environment.

The medical student also took the opportunity to discuss the environment on a global level. She is deeply devastated by the impact of carbon emissions from the global north choking the flora and fauna of developing countries.

She says that her favourite part of the Saudi environment is the diversity of plant species that can be found across the different regions.

As mentioned earlier, Lina grows an array of plants in her home. She has a designated greenhouse for those species that wouldn't exactly thrive in the natural climate of Riyadh.

By heeding to every plant's needs, she ensures that they are growing in the correct temperature with an adequate amount of humidity and nutrients. A few of the species that have been grown in the greenhouse are tropical trees such as mango, banana, and papaya trees (banana trees being Lina's personal favourite) as well as potatoes. Recently, she's been growing plenty of fruits and vegetables.

There are two criteria that a plant species must fit to be planted in Lina's garden: it must look pretty and must be useful in some way.



However, she iterates that the issue goes beyond complaining to local authorities. To make a change, it is imperative to target corporations and other larger bodies that can make an impact, i.e. get to the root of the problem.

A lack of recycling initiatives that are accessible and convenient is conducive towards people's lack of interest. Furthermore, an established system of public transport can easily eliminate a sizable amount of carbon emissions in Riyadh alone.

Lina emphasises the different ways the youth can contribute to combating climate change. A few of the lifestyle changes they can incorporate in their daily lives are recycling, carpooling, beginning initiatives that will attract other young people, and, this goes without saying, cleaning up after themselves. Spending more time outdoors can help them blend with their environment. Sneaking in some science, Lina explains how a full, bright room has the ability of brightening up your mood. The same goes for the colour green.

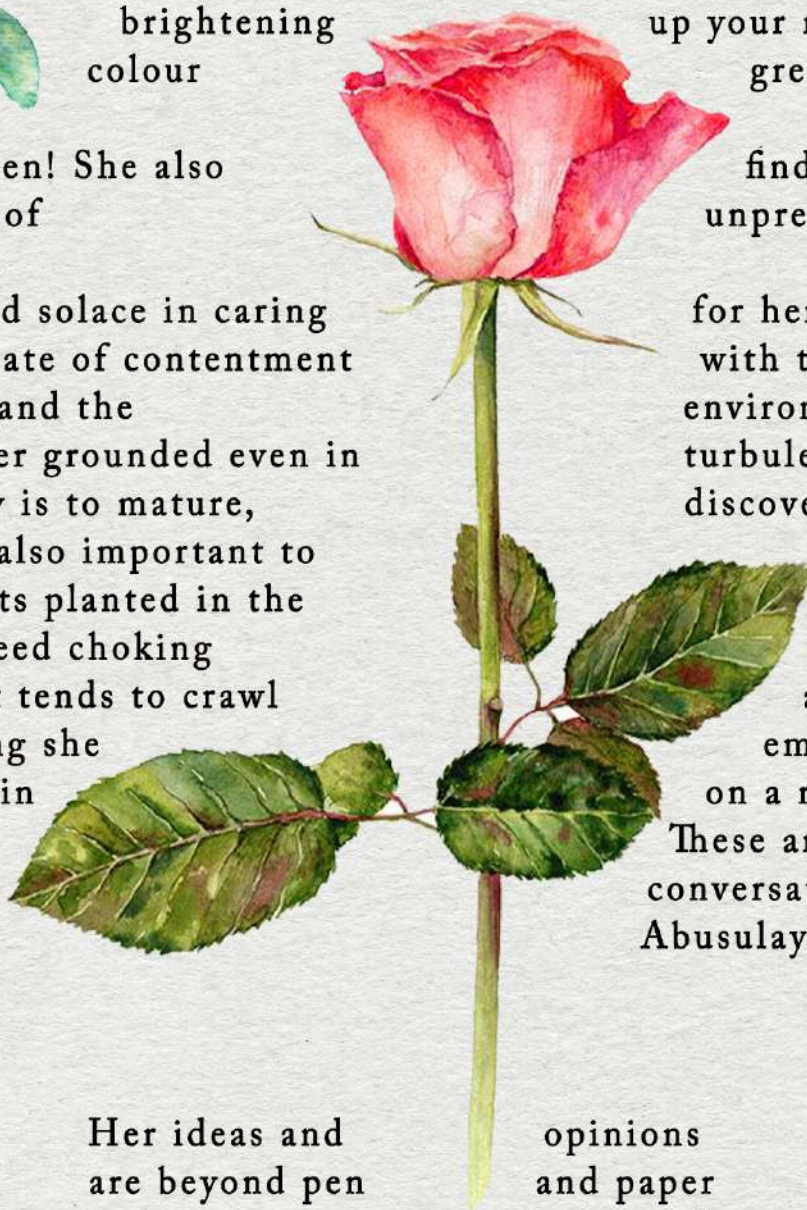
Thus, to avoid feeling blue, go green! She also finds that caring for something, such as a plant, can bring a sense of unprecedented joy.

Lina herself finds contentment and solace in caring for her various plants and her cats. To her, well-being is being at a state of contentment with the different aspects of your environment you live in. Her life: mental, physical, emotional, and the optimism and hopefulness keep her grounded even in turbulent times. Her advice to students just beginning university is to mature, discover individuality, and become confident in their own skin. It is also important to find friends that will help you grow—like two different plants planted in the same soil—instead of those that will hold you back—like a weed choking everything it finds. Avoid giving into the mass hysteria that tends to crawl around in first year and keep emphasising on is finding a physical activity you can indulge in on a regular basis.

These are mere snippets of the conversation I had with Lina Abusulayman.

Her ideas and opinions are beyond pen and paper and each more insightful than the other. She has left a wonderful impact on the MedTimes team and we expect a very similar result amongst our audience.

Written by: Sarah Noor Tullah
Edited by: Noor al Eman
Designed by: Wasima Kaidali



WK.

Our Pets and Our Well-being Are They Related?





Cats, dogs, turtles, fish, lion cubs, snakes, you name it we've seen it. Pets, and animals in general, have been a part of human civilisation for centuries. Whether for hunting, protection or well... just for a cuddle, we often rely on our furry friends. Amongst the many roles they play in our lives, they also employ a great influence on our well-being.

Biologically, interacting with animals has been shown to reduce cortisol levels and increase oxytocin levels. Elevated levels of cortisol, which is a stress hormone, have been linked to depression and other psychological disorders. On the other hand, oxytocin, commonly known as the 'love hormone,' plays a role in social behaviors and has been shown to have antidepressant-like effects.

One of the reasons for the many therapeutic benefits of pets is that they fulfil a basic human need for touch. Petting or hugging an animal you have a bond with can help calm you down in stressful or difficult situations. In fact, it has been shown that interacting with an animal helps lower blood pressure. Hence, pets can provide much wanted companionship to their owner and can be a great source of comfort.

While there are numerous benefits to owning a pet, one's individual attitude and personality should also be taken into account. The responsibilities of taking care of an animal may be overwhelming for some people and cause added stress instead of relieving it. In addition to the person, it is crucial to recognize that animals too have different personalities and needs. While some pets are

friendlier and tamer, others can be rougher and less welcoming of human interaction. Gauging an animal's personality before adopting a pet is important as pets often become a part of the family.

Interestingly, the pandemic has brought about a significant increase in pet adoption and ownership, with 78% of pet owners having acquired pets during the pandemic. Think back; how many people do you know who got a pet during the lockdown? Perhaps you're one of them? The sudden drop in social interactions paired with the restrictions on travelling has played a role in this increase. Many pet owners reported that they have been less lonely during the pandemic with the company of their pets. However, as the lockdown seized, separation anxiety has been a concern for many people and their pets as well, with owners worrying about leaving their pets alone as they exit the online space and return to work.

At the end of the day, it is hard to deny that pets bring about a positive impact to our well-being and overall mental health. While this can be subjective to different individuals and even different animals, the many benefits and just overall enjoyment they bring can often overcome most of the reservations people have when it comes to these lovable creatures.



Designed by: Nada AlMuaythir

Written by: Huda Syed

Edited by: Nameer Khaled

God's Tribute

A day in the life seems so normal.
Racing around to make ends meet.

But is it fate to conform;
Be pawns in play till infinity?
Questions and doubts seemed out of step.
For a snap was heard and a pop ensued.
The grip loosened, and vision returned.
The world so revered, crumbled; was nude.

A robotic turmoil befell around.
It was a rat race; all hell let loose.
Restrained in a bubble, their ball and chain.
Yet remained blind to their occult abuse.
Fear crept; my mind urged to flee
But my heart stood its ground; fought firm to disagree.
It was a tug-of-war, a game between mind and soul.
To lift or leave was choosing between lilies and coal.

Their bubbles bulletproof, their chains concrete.
Efforts futile over a spell tempered by greed.
An action further would bear no fruit.
It was destiny's oration; they were left to be.
Ready to start a chapter anew, free to chase pavements.
Racing towards the North Star, escaping the life I knew.
The dictator of my person, prepared to pen my book.
Taking the first step of a new life; of God's tribute.

Written and Designed By: Rushdan Firdous
Edited by: Nameer Khalid



HAPPINESS

ING TONIGHT ONLY

SOLD OUT

SIZZLE

BE LIKE THIS.

10

A video portraying
'The Great Rat
Race'





WHY MEDICINE



Medicine is more than just a career path; it is a lifestyle and allegiance to serving humanity. To commit to medicine is perhaps one of the toughest decisions to make as a young individual because it binds you to an intense life of hard work and dedication to your field, albeit ultimately resulting in an immensely rewarding apprehension.

We asked students of Alfaisal across the years questions regarding their journeys in medicine, including what inspired them to pursue it and if they would've done anything differently (and we're here to share their incredible stories and opinions?)

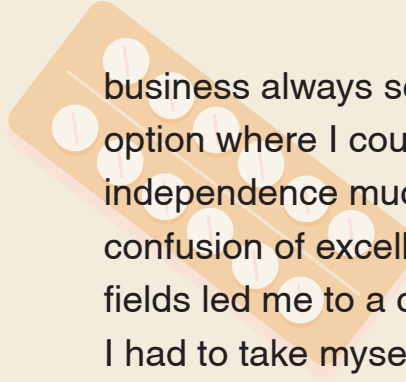
(Anonymous)

I've always had a keen interest in understanding the psyche of crime, what factors led up to it, and the characteristics and habits of people that could potentially carry out those unethical, immoral, and horrible crimes that go down in history. Despite my immense interest in criminology, I never wholly felt passionate about it as there was no contentment in my heart when I thought about becoming an attorney. Coming

from a long line of physicians, I always thought I would choose a separate path from my family but the more I grew up, the more engrossed I became in it, and eventually, I was able to find a middle ground after discovering the field of forensic medicine, a specialty where I get to enjoy best of both worlds. Ultimately as cliché as it sounds, I'm very grateful that I get to work towards a goal that just feels right and makes me feel complete.

Abdelrafour Houdane

During my 5 years of med school, I was always a bit of an unconventional student, being involved in various freelance work throughout the academic year and dedicating the entire summer break to working full time. Despite having a sense of accomplishment and relief after finalizing an interesting project, there was always a missing sense of fulfillment. That feeling which I could only attain after seeing a smile on my patient's face and feeling as if I had a significant impact in the greater scheme of things. While medicine is all about delayed gratification,



business always seemed like the safer option where I could have gained financial independence much earlier in life. This confusion of excelling in and enjoying both fields led me to a crossroad in my life where I had to take myself off the grid and go on a super hippie journey of self discovery: a very “Abdel” move actually. Eventually, after long hours of meditation, coastline surfing, and sipping on gallons of mint tea I was able to resolve the chaos in my head and take that leap of faith and thought “For better or worse, Medicine here I come”. Medicine is brutal; like a tumor, it has the ability to drain someone’s energy and completely take over your life if you let it. But, I don’t ever regret choosing medicine, and falling in love with it has always felt like such a blessing. Honestly, I never let my dream of wanting to become a superhero as a kid die and despite beginning to lose my hair as a broke -23year-old, I’m still adamant about helping tiny Abdel achieve that goal.

Abdulrahman Rasheed

Throughout high school, I was always more focused on the present and doing well on current exams due to which I feel as if I didn’t give my choice of career the thought and research it deserved. After prevailing with my grades in senior year, I applied to mechatronics based on my drawn interest in mathematics, physics, and the practicality of that field. Alternatively, the perceived stability and expanded opportunities in the medical field were also enticing. So, I left it up to Allah, prayed Istikhara, and ultimately chose medicine after I got my acceptance from Alfaisal first. I now realize that the stability I had presumed beforehand was

quite overestimated, the competition and intense studying led me to face burnout early on and get lost in the fake scenarios in my mind of what life would’ve been like if I had ended up in mechatronics. I would never say I regret choosing medicine, considering how I ended up enjoying the field and the fact that the future aspects of life that I look forward to would greatly benefit from the financial means that come along with it. But it is a frank statement to say that I neither hate nor love the field as my occupation to me is a means to an end, as well as a great contributor to my personal growth owing to my experiences throughout university.

Khalid Al-Najjar

Medicine to me is more than just a passion, it’s something I grew up attached to being surrounded by an entire family of medical fields. However, I don’t believe that there was any pressure from my surroundings to pursue medicine since I also possess great mathematical skills and have experience in the accounting field as well. The miraculous creation of Allah is the major driving force that captivated me into medicine, the burning fire of excitement and the willingness of wanting to help people and make a change in their lives for the better. It was only after I started medicine that I truly fathomed that there is nothing more in this world that I had wanted more than seeing myself as a surgeon in the future (InshAllah). Not even any hardships or obstacles faze me because I am a firm believer in only starting something that I’m confident I can succeed and thrive in.



Written by: Laiba Zahid

Edited by: Sidrah Arabi

Designed by: Nada AlMuaythir

The Inside of a Medical Student



“If well-being was a medical student, it would be at the top of its class”

The surprise, irony, and satire in this one quote would be enough to shock a medical student. If anything like maintaining a good well-being of the mind is not a common practice for medical students, rather, ignoring our mental health and waiting for everything to crash back down at once is the preferred method. But, why would we do that? It's as simple as mental health being the least of our concerns.

A lot of time is spent focusing on studies at the cost of our mental health and whether we acknowledge the price or not; we tend to ignore it. Our goals are to provide the best care to the patient and improve their health, nowhere in our minds does the health of our own self appear. Eventually, we become robots whose minds are wired in a way to suppress the loud anxious voices in our heads. We wear a mask everyday to cover the long hours of studying where even then, we still feel like we have not done enough, but what we fail to recognize is when enough really is enough!

Instead of taking a few steps back, we continue to run straight into the storm, so how exactly do we avoid this? Do we take deeper breaths, a quick study break, hangout with our friends once a week, do these pieces of advice really help us in the long-term? Honestly, trying to make up for the ignored well-being of our mind by doing these tasks is not enough nor does it stop the inevitable of a possible mental breakdown; rather, just postpones it until the limit has been reached. Instead, reaching out to those who share this common misfortune is a way to kill the murderous anxiety inside of ones self. This person can be someone who sits right next to you in a lecture, or even one who does not attend any of the lectures at all. Every medical student has the stress of studies and on top of this, they are dealing with their own personal problems. However, they will find a common ground where they can share these stresses and struggles to each other bit by bit, and no, this does not mean complaining. Rather, it is the act of psychotherapy, where the students talk to each other about their feelings and conditions in order to improve their state of mind. Not only this, but also, seeking help from doctors both inside and outside university plays a major role in impacting students positively.

Being a part of the top ten percent in a class is exemplary, unfortunately, when it comes to this quote medical students do not really display this excellence. If the quote was to be changed it would be more fitting to say, “If well-being was a medical student, it would be at the low rankings of its class.”

Written by: Iman Bhat

Edited by: Lara Samhan

Designed by: Nada AlMuaythir

Burnout 101

Do you know that feeling after a long block or just before a high-stakes exam, when you're so drained and exhausted you probably feel like giving up? That's burnout for you. Definition-wise it is a state of emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion caused by excessive and prolonged stress. Most people don't really talk about it, so it's natural to think that you're the only one going through it. To help shed some light on this issue, MedTimes interviewed 30 students to find out their opinions on burnout and how they deal with it.

Academic stressors such as back-to-back exams, long blocks and lecture days, and the stress of having to study parallels parallelly were major contributors to burnout. For some students, spending the summer doing internships and courses often meant they couldn't recuperate from the previous year. Specific factors contributing to burnouts include poor time management, exam pressure, heavy content, cramming, unsatisfactory exams or grades, long and unorganized to-do lists, and the inability to enjoy a block. Most students blamed negative peer pressure, unclear social boundaries, and family stress. Others were mindful of their drive for perfectionism, low self-esteem, and negative mindsets as causes for their burnout.

Burnout can be difficult to get out of. It can take hours, days, or weeks for you to beat the top of your game or at least halfway there. Burnout manifests differently for people. While some prefer self-isolation, staying in bed, binge watching and eating, others get grumpy and irritable. Many experience negative thoughts leading to fear, anxiety, and crying from frustration. Burnout may also have physical manifestations such as muscle pains and cramps and worsening of IBS symptoms.

What's admirable is that despite the hopelessness, most, if not everyone, have figured out how to pull through. You can connect with nature, listen to music, bake, cook, draw, and paint. Sometimes, talking to people you trust and are comfortable with and having a good bellyaching laugh helps as well. Self-care is especially important; this could mean skin-care, going to the gym, journaling to connect with your thoughts and dressing up. Reciting the Qur'an has also helped many soothe their troubled minds.





The first step to tackling any problem is to identify and acknowledge it. A lot of people tend to ignore or avoid their problems, leading to detrimental effects. Create a realistic schedule and take it slow. Have fun studying and don't think of it as a chore. If you're overwhelmed by a 158-slide presentation, break it down into manageable chunks; do 20 slides at a time, get up and drink water, do another 20, do some jumping jacks, and so on. If you feel tired, take a break; not necessarily for social media but an actual break where you go get some ice cream or go to your mum for hugs and a talk. Maintain a balance between academics and non-academics; physical exercise, religion, and extra-curriculars.

Finally, prevention is better than cure. If you try out a method and it doesn't help you, that's okay. Think of it as a learning process and feel free to experiment. Know your own strengths and weaknesses and do not compare yourself and your progress to others. Try not to bite off more than you can chew, and do not fall victim to your own mindset. Remind yourself of why you chose to get into what you're doing. You've come so far, so don't let burnout or anything else get in your way. We thank all the students for their interviews and wish them all the best in their own endeavors.

Written By: Tehreemah Raziq
Designed By: Mayar Amboun
Edited by: Salma Metwally

Anxiety

Written by: Omnia Adil | Edited by: Salma Metwally | Designed by: Omaima Almomen

YOU ARE MORE THAN YOUR THOUGHTS

The words “fear of failure is worse than failure itself” are commonly repeated to aspiring students all over the world, yet they serve little reassurance when it comes to dealing with the challenges of academia. During our academic journey, we are bound to encounter many situations that cause us unimaginable discomfort and anxiety. Whether these challenges are exams that feel like the end of the world or presenting and speaking in public, each is difficult and anxiety-inducing in its own way.

Although anxiety is a normal human reaction to seemingly scary situations, such as starting a difficult course or preparing for an exam with a reputation for being brutal, the effects it could have on a student’s learning experience are detrimental. Many students report feeling “paralyzed” by fear when they get anxious, despite knowing exactly what they have to do. It has been scientifically researched and proven that anxiety not only decreases cognitive function and memory but also decreases self-confidence; therefore, this article aims to discuss some healthy coping mechanisms to deal with anxiety and stress.



Anxiety can manifest in many different shapes and forms, from self-doubt to fear of failure, but no matter the shape it may take, it has an immense effect on the well-being of students. Many of them are too reluctant to ask questions and make mistakes out of fear that they will get criticized or belittled for not knowing enough.



Moreover, almost all of us have experienced an inherent fear of feeling inadequate and “not good enough” and might present with what is commonly known as Imposter Syndrome, where one feels incompetent despite having all the required merits.

Despite feeling endlessly trapped in anxiety, there are many ways to cope with it and the stress it causes. Perhaps the most important “trick” to overcome anxiety is to practice positive self-talk and to constantly reassure yourself that everything will turn out okay (like it always does). Positive self-talk also goes hand in hand with good self-care. It is crucial to maintain a sufficient amount of sleep and a healthy way of eating.

always remember

“ANXIETY DOES NOT EMPTY TOMORROW OF ITS SORROWS, IT ONLY EMPTIES TODAY OF ITS STRENGTH”.

Although it is easier said than done, building a healthy routine will give you the greatest benefits in the long run. Lastly, it is very vital to remember that we control what we can. This means that as long as we do our part, stay focused, and try our best to remain motivated, we will truly make it out alive.



A MINDFUL

The mind and body are often perceived as separate entities each existing in a different orbit that serves unique purposes. The mind with its limitless capacities of imagination, permanent depositories of memories, and gears that stir our logic and yield our thoughts.

The body with its biological requirements, fervently feeding oxygen to a starving pair of lungs, sweating your toxins out, and moving your legs on a much-needed walk. However, is that really the case? Between the two distinct orbits of the two entities, exists a plane of intersection. A common ground of some sort. In fact, many common grounds exist, but mental disorders in particular have been an area of interest to researchers worldwide. In order to further understand this very thin line separating the illnesses of the mind from those of the body; we will consider three mental disorders and their physical attributions to the body.

DEPRESSION

The WHO estimated that approximately 280 million people worldwide suffer from depression; making it a leading cause of mental disabilities. Depression is generally characterised by intense feelings of sadness, nagging sensations of guilt, intrusive thoughts flooding the mind (a lot of which are unpleasant and deeply pessimistic), emptiness, and a handful of other symptoms that present themselves physically. When it comes to depression particularly, the progression from mental symptoms to physical ones is still an area of extensive research missing a number of links. However, numerous physical symptoms proved to be communal between all depression patients. The most common physical offspring is fatigue. The amounts of distressing thoughts eventually become a burden on the bearer and the patient is physically wrecked and weighed down. Scientifically, this could be traced back to the deficiency of dopamine and serotonin levels within the patient, which is immediately perceived as bodily fatigue. Another physical attribution of depression can be seen in the presence of digestive issues, where patients often feel nauseated, constipated, followed by loss of appetite.

BODY

Anxiety is not a stranger to most people and just like depression, these battles often take on a physical route. At some point, each one of us must have caught themselves fighting a mental battle against the resilient armours of anxiety. Anxiety presents itself by paralysing worry which is a sense of impending doom. These battles often have the tendency to take on a physical route. Perhaps the most common physical marking of anxiety is insomnia, where sleep becomes a distant wish for patients whose minds are groaning under the weight of extensive worry. Another notable symptom of anxiety that is almost always physically present is a racing heart accompanied by rapid breathing.

ANXIETY DISORDER

OCD begins mentally when a patient experiences an onset of extremely distressing thoughts known as obsessions, which demand a response aiming to elevate the uneasiness left by these obsessions, known as compulsions.

OBSESSIVE COMPULSIVE DISORDER (OCD)

It is important to note that not all OCD compulsions manifest themselves in the real world; or in other words, they're not all perceivable. A huge number of OCD patients experience compulsions mentally. However, the physical side of compulsions can be just as laborious as the mental ones. For instance, OCD patients can suffer from compulsive cleaning, worrying about the potential contaminating dangers occupying the outside world. Compulsive cleaning can result in bleeding of the excessively washed areas as well as painful scarring. In addition to that, pain may develop in the different parts of the body undergoing repetitive movements during bouts of compulsive cleaning, such as the back, the wrists, knee joints, and neck. Taking note of an individual might be an important indicator to an underlying cause. Tracing back the origins of those symptoms and arranging their fragments into a complete picture might help you discover that which ails your mind. It is always crucial to check

with a psychiatrist, therapist, or a social worker to ensure professional intervention and delivery of safe and trusted treatment. An important thing to remember is that you are not alone.

Written by: Lina T. Mohammed
Edited by: Lara Samhan
Designed by: Omaina Almomen

Take a breather





The ductus arteriosus closes when a baby takes its first breath. Their lungs fill up with that sweet air, and for the first time in their entire being, they taste what it is to be alive. So, with breathing being such a core aspect of life, it makes sense that we can manipulate it to ensure we live to the fullest.

So how can we do so?

First, pursed lip breathing.

To do this, breathe in through your nose as you do about 22,000 times a day. Purse your lips tightly and forcefully, but slowly, exhale through them. This method has been used in pulmonary rehabilitation programs and can help people suffering from COPD and asthma. It can help strengthen the lungs and diaphragm while also increasing the amount of oxygen entering the body. It also keeps the airways open for longer

Second, box breathing.

Close your eyes and imagine a standard square. This will be our box.

Breathe in through your nose for a count of four while imagining yourself tracing the first side of the box. Hold that breath in your lungs for a count of four and trace the next side. Now let that breath out for a count of four, drawing the third side. Finally, wait for a count of four before doing this again. Now you have a full box!

This method can be used to relieve stress and boost concentration. We recommend using it in exams or while studying whenever you feel overwhelmed.

Finally, the 8-7-4 method.

This method helps relax you before sleep, so as you lay in your toasty bed after a tiresome day, close your eyes and breathe in for a count of four through your nose. Hold it for a count of seven, then breathe out for a count of eight. You'll feel grounded and focused on your own breaths, easing your busy mind. Resting your tongue on the roof of your mouth is also recommended to help relax your muscles.

So, what's the science behind this?

There are physiological and psychological reasons why such exercises have been used for centuries. Slow, deep breathing can increase the activity of the vagus nerve, which in turn stimulates the parasympathetic nervous system. This turns on the body's "rest and digest" mechanism, lowering heart rate and blood pressure, relaxing muscles, and increasing feelings of serenity in the brain. A study done in 2016 published in the journal of neuroscience also found a link between regulating breathing aids in memory, which is incredibly useful in exams. From a psychological perspective, focusing on a particular object, such as your breathing, can divert your attention away from your loud thoughts.

Written by: Yomna Aloufi

Edited by: Lara Samhan

Designed by: Nada AlMuaythir



Possessing Sovereignty Over Yourself





It is very common for someone to find themselves stuck with certain habits or ideas. These habits can build up, and over time take control of that person. Why does this happen and why do some people feel like it's impossible to let go of this suffocating clutch? Habit building is an interesting subject, with many articles covering the science behind it. However, let's look at it from a more personal perspective.

It's always best to tackle any issue faced with introspection. So why do people start bad habits if they know that it is just that, a bad habit? A couple of reasons can include that a person might be forcing themselves to do something, knowing that it will cause some harm, just because they think that whatever they are doing now is worth it in the long run. For instance, medical residents can overwork themselves, thinking that "it will all be worth it in the end". I find this especially dangerous because, over time, people lose their sense of worth. Another reason could be that because people tend to easily give up, it can end up being a direct consequence of the previous approach, leading them to be submerged into a plethora of bad habits that they can't find a way out of.

The difficulty in letting go of these practices can stem from the same reasons that cause a person to get into them, like giving more priority to money, work, and studies over one's self. The problem is deeper than just physical health and burnout, which have previously been covered in other articles in our magazine. The issue faced here is how people perceive themselves and how easy it is for someone to forget what they love about themselves. People underestimate how difficult it is to let go of such habits. It can get as bad as an actual addiction; the person can get stuck in a loop of harming themselves and justifying it for "some bigger reason".

The control a person builds takes time, and it depends on how disconnected they are from themselves. Some people spend their whole life trying to achieve a level of self-control that they think is acceptable, but more people find themselves chasing this goal for so long until they believe that it is unattainable. The approach differs between individuals, but if they stop chasing self-control, start by just appreciating themselves, and take it day by day, people might realize that they are underestimating what they can do in just one day. Wasting too much time focusing on what they "have" to do will reveal itself as a side effect of their negligence towards themselves. Once they follow these strategies, with time they can appreciate the changes in their habits and attitudes toward themselves.

Written by: Mohammad Halawani

Edited by: Nabah Hussain

Designed by: Nada AlMuaythir

Dichromatic Stars To Hold

My dear,
I know you had a bad day
I know the world seems to be against you
I know you wish for your journey to end here
I know you try really hard
to keep up with each breath,

to keep up with every single atom's pacing,

and yet the world seems to be moving on,
not stopping for a glance,
day follows night
autumn leaves behind winter
nothing changes for the world,
but everything keeps changing for you

but my dear,
take this candle-lit lantern from me
and walk till you find the darkest part of this forest,
and behind you there's a moon
that wishes to share
some of its ethereal glow with you
so your soul starts to feel as if its suffused
with radiance that pushes against your vessels,
your red, swollen eyes start to feel calm and cold.

so you look up in confusion,
and see the gift displayed by God-
a perfect example in nature,
of why light looks best in darkness.
Above you, behind the clouds,
is a world full of white dots
against an azure sky-scape
full of infinite potential and physics
you can spot giant stars,
and neighboring planets,
with your mere eye
it seems like colors were born in space,

and they loved to stay in space,
among auroras, sunsets and supernovas.

Down below: the smell of plants lined with dew
and golden fireflies dancing here and there,
glistening waterfalls meet ivy-covered rocks

soft sand and dirt with molecules
put together almost aesthetically

sometimes you do not find
something that makes you happy
in everyday life, like
in people demanding answers to questions
they didn't ask,
deadlines that make your heart race,
meetings that make you nauseous.

Your comfort space may begin to feel like a prison

To find the light, sometimes
you need to hide in the dark
To witness constellations in sight
and far away galaxies
full of incandescent suns
my dear,
God created those uninhabitable places,
full of complexity in studies,
For your wonder, for your awe
For you to forget your troubles with,

my dear,
do you see now?
How simple and hidden within sight it is?
The answer to everything,
The map to wellbeing?
There is light in darkness.

Sometimes
you just need to gather the strength to look up.

Written by: Muskan Abag

Designed by: Wassima Kaidali



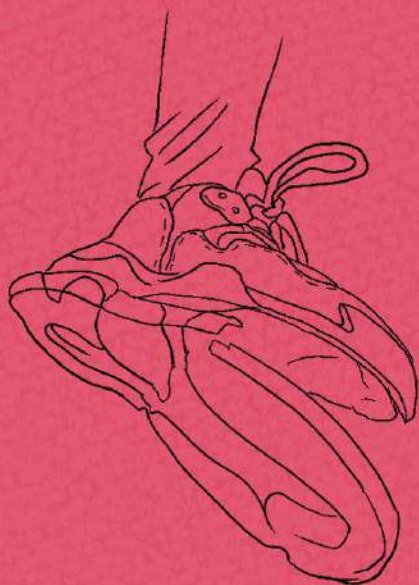
Bloom

On my desk sits a rather peculiar-looking cactus plant, An, along with her cacti brothers. Two years ago, when I first adopted An, she was much smaller, and her arms were growing out in quite a neat fashion. Then, one winter, one of An's arms was drooping down – I worried, for there was little to no sunlight at the time. Panicked, I attempted to “rescue” her using different pens, engineered pizza savers, and even prayer. An did not need my help at all – her prickly arm grew upwards all on its own. Today, An has arms growing in all possible ways: thin and thick, short and tall, and arched and twisted.

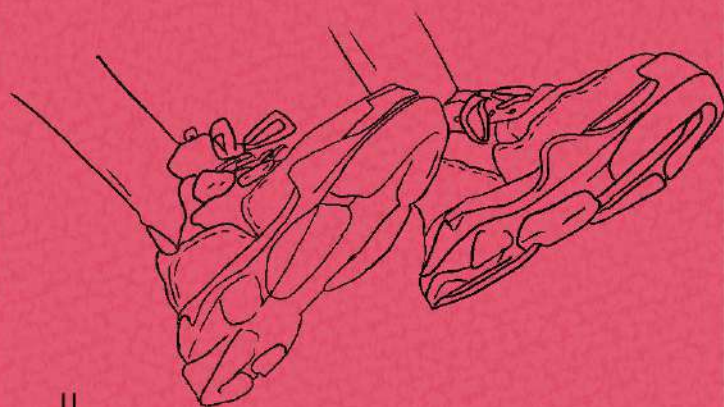
Humans are surely more complex than cacti, but within An lies a very good example of how chaotic a growth journey can be. At times, one may seem as though they are growing inversely, perhaps finding that they are losing their touch with regards to a certain skill, or falling behind in comparison with the rest of their peers. Feeling as though their efforts do not pay off, one may find themselves in a whirlpool of despair and helplessness, for seldom has man taken well to devolution. This period of supposed failure is, often, an important part of one's growth journey, for it shapes their blossoming into one beyond comparison.



IV.



III.



II.



I.



AZOOZ



An

Back to the subject of the cacti, there is An's round brother, Azooz, who has rarely appeared to be growing at all. He is a round little cactus with rather unique, long spines. He has, in fact, grown substantially; however, the rate of this and his appearance do not give away such an impression. Similarly, one may very much find themselves as though they are stuck in a state of stagnancy. Growth is rarely ever linear, and sometimes it happens at such miniature intervals that it becomes difficult to even detect its occurrence. However disheartening this may be, one can only be patient and place trust in themselves. Has a mass of water ever raised a sapling?

Growth takes on different forms in everyone, but the fact remains: we all grow – in sight, in sense, and under the blanket of the night when not a breath is heard. Then, perhaps silently or with a little bang, we bloom.

Healthy Ways To Express Yourself

People frequently conceal their genuine emotions because doing so can leave you open to a lot of risks. Even in their closest connections, some people tend to hold back on expressing themselves out of concern for rejection or humiliation.

Avoidance is the deliberate suppression of emotions or a deliberate effort to avoid talking about a particular subject. Communication issues brought on by this kind of behavior might strain interpersonal connections.

However, avoidance does not develop naturally. It's a taught behavior that develops in response to unfavorable feedback that someone has experienced.

Better self-expression can be learned, nevertheless, if avoidance is learned.

Why do we express ourselves?

In our lives, the demand for self-expression is crucial. If we don't express ourselves, we struggle and experience long-lasting mental and emotional discomfort because we are repressing important aspects of who we are.

Frustration turns into rage, and rage is pain.

Your bad habits will turn into a band-aid as you bottle up your stress to put it away, but eventually, it will find a way out and return stronger than ever.

As your emotions grow stronger but more negative, the difficulty of being in the moment pents up, making your experience of positive moments into a "I'd pay a million dollars for it" experience. This vicious cycle keeps going faster than a cheesy movie.

How can I express myself in a healthy way?

So now let's breathe and see how can we have a genuine connection with our emotions and release all that tension holding our smile back.

1. Writing about how you feel

Writing is a solid instrument to improve your life. You might be asking, "What advantage can I

possibly derive from myself if I keep a journal?"

Your intrusive thoughts about any incident that arises are diminished when you write about how you feel.

It can also elicit awareness, which is being aware of your surroundings and, most importantly, your feelings. This is in addition to increasing your memory, which you need as a medical student. want you

to treasure and value those times that can bring joy into your life. This can lower your blood pressure, improve your sleep patterns, and allow you to clearly exit your mental chaos whenever you desire, rather than waiting for your thoughts to take a break.

It can improve your communication skills by helping you find the right words to convey a message or how you feel. (when you want to scream at someone about why they're wrong) If you focus on your own honest feelings, you may find it easier to speak expressively.

2. Movement

Do you ever feel like you just need to strike someone or get angry at random people to get your anger out? Do you feel like anger is simply breeding in your soul, along with all the terrible



ideas and feelings you can ever receive? Okay, back off and maintain control. Which method would you use? When your mother enters the room to inform you that your dad was just upset and didn't mean what he said when he yelled all hell at you after getting home from work, she may or may not be correct.

Anyway, the best thing to do if you're feeling angry, depressed, or any other emotion you'd rather not act upon is to tie your laces and go for a walk, blast some music and dance your anger out, or simply go to the gym and abuse the equipment there. This will improve your thinking, emotions, and sleep. That also works. What is the chemistry involved here? When you walk around and work out your muscles, you create a conduit for your brain to exhale all of the negative feelings, resulting in serotonin production that will help lift your mood.

Thus, exercise acts as a preventative measure.

Why? What would it defend you against? Movement is beneficial for people who suffer from depression, anxiety, or PTSD.

3. Let out your creativity and paint using your emotions

Do you believe that all of your favorite artists' songs, paintings, poetry, etc. come from a joyful place? Oh, no!

The majority of the masterpieces they produce are the result of their ingenuity leading them along a path in the dark.

So be imaginative and indulge in your interests.

Draw, paint, weld, make a movie, take pictures—do whatever, exactly whatever you like. Letting your thoughts out helps you to think more slowly, which reduces tension and enables you to be vulnerable and satisfied with yourself.

Since art therapy's benefits are well established, a recent study from a trusted source set out to develop a scale to gauge how successful art therapy outcomes were.

Self-expression through art is strongly correlated with emotional control techniques, such as acceptance, release of problem-solving agency

4. Body language: the art of conversation

Understanding and interpreting a person's body language helps us interpret their words. That is why body language is so important. We can better understand the feelings and moods of people

because of it. Additionally, it improves our awareness of how other people respond to the things we say and the way we express them.

Ineffective communication is accounted for by words, body language, and tone of voice, according to a 1981 study by body language expert Albert Mehrabian.

To put it another way, we humans pay more attention to body language and tone of voice than we do to words. This study demonstrates the neurological roots of nonverbal communication and discusses the significance of body language in interpersonal communication.

So having good eye contact and using body gestures to help convey a message clearly is a necessity to express yourself in a healthy way and avoid miscommunication.

What is not self-expression?

Consider what drives your urge for self-expression in the first place if you're concerned that it makes you seem egotistical or draws attention to yourself too much.

Individuality is not: ***domineering, manipulative, and an attempt to gain popularity.***

If any of these serve as the basis for your expression, you are probably not being authentic and are instead being swayed by outside forces. Sincere self-expression is not intended to influence or persuade other people. It ties people to their tribe.

It can take some time to learn how to properly express oneself, yet doing so is a daring and bold act. It may be helpful to keep in mind the advantages, such as improved self-esteem, better communication, and more honest relationships, if being that vulnerable with others feels risky.

Takeaway

- Never feel bad for how you feel
- Be true to yourself
- Express your style in everything you do (your special touch)
- Take yourself on a date

Accept → Absorb → Digest → Release →
Breathe → Move on

Written by: Ismail Anwar Abdullah

Edited by: Nasser Saleh

Designed by: Nada AlMuaythir



of Well-being



1 8 hours of sleep zzz



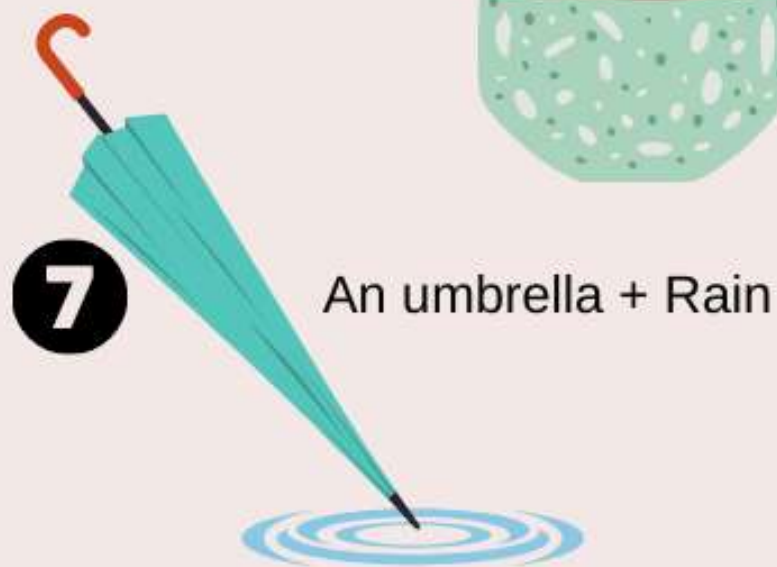
2 3 meals per day



4 Wearing pink on wednesdays



5 A cup of tea with an old soul



6 A pet



8 A software engineer friend

10
A silly neighbor



Estimated time: your entire life

1 Wake up from an 8-hour slumber to find your cat sitting on your jugular. Recover

2 Brush your teeth for 2 minutes.



3 Wash your face for 30 seconds with The Ordinary Squalane Cleanser



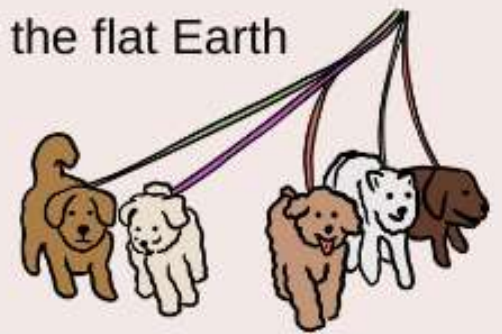
4 Eat banana bread for breakfast.



5 Have a cup of tea with a friend who would befriend a big bug renting out a room in their home..

6 Take your pet for a walk and argue with your neighbour over the flat Earth theory. Leave just short of going berserk.

7 Make the software engineer friend build you the outfit picker from Clueless™.



8 Wear pink on Wednesdays to honour pretty girl culture.

9 Discuss animal politics over lunch.



10 Eat a tub of mint chocolate chip ice cream while watching a comedy of errors.



11 Listen to the accounts of five cake girls murdering a pizza boy.

12 Attempt to do a flip.



13 Vandalise your kitchen drawer for dinner.



14 Eat your dinner.

15 Fall asleep before discovering the fate of Frankenstein's monster.



May Contain Allergens

Comfort

Banana Bread with Chocolate Chips

INGREDIENTS

- ❑ 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups of all-purpose flour (210 grams)
- ❑ $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of granulated sugar (150 grams)
- ❑ $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- ❑ 2 teaspoons baking powder
- ❑ 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ❑ 4 medium or 3 large very ripe bananas (you need about 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups of mashed banana)
- ❑ 2 large eggs
- ❑ $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (120 ml) oil or melted unsalted butter, cooled slightly
- ❑ 1 tablespoon of vanilla extract (15 ml)
- ❑ 1 cup chocolate chips (175 gr) + more for topping (after pouring batter into the pan)

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 180 degrees Celsius
2. Start by mixing your dry ingredients together:
 - 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of all-purpose flour.
 - $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of granulated sugar.
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of salt.
 - 2 teaspoons of baking powder.
 - 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons of ground cinnamon (it compliments the chocolate and banana flavors)
 - Whisk well until well combined.
3. Smash bananas into a separate mixing bowl
 - It doesn't have to be completely smooth
4. Add wet ingredients over the bowl with mashed potatoes
 - 2 large eggs
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (120 ml) oil or melted unsalted butter
 - 1 tablespoon of vanilla extract
 - Whisk well until well combined
5. Mixed the wet ingredients + smashed bananas mix with the dry ingredients
 - Mix with a rubber spatula or spoon
 - It should take about 20 seconds (make sure you don't over-mix the batter)
6. Fold in the chocolate chips and mix
 - You can replace the chocolate chips with dried fruits, walnuts, or toasted pecans
7. Pour the batter into a loaf pan lined with parchment paper or well buttered
8. Bake for 55-65 minutes & enjoy!

"It's so yummy and easy, everyone should try it + highly recommend with a cup of coffee"
-Dana Aldahmashi, a first-year medical student

Masoub for The Soul

INGREDIENTS

- ❑ Brown Arabic bread
- ❑ very ripe bananas
- ❑ Cream (Qishta)

DIRECTIONS

1. Mix all 3 together & enjoy!

F o o d s

Baked Mac & Cheese

INGREDIENTS

- ❑ 450 grams of dried pasta shells
- ❑ 1-liter milk
- ❑ 450 grams of Kraft cheese
- ❑ ½ to 1 stick of butter
- ❑ Salt
- ❑ Pepper

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 180 degrees Celsius
2. Put a pot of water on the stove to boil (will be used later for pasta)
3. To make the cheese sauce: in another pot, warm 4 cups of milk on medium heat
 - Tear slices of Kraft cheese into the milk
 - Add butter
 - Grind pepper on top
 - Stir until everything is melted and combined
4. Salt the pasta water & allow the shells to parboil for 5 minutes
 - Parboil: partly cook food by boiling
5. Drain the pasta
6. Oil a baking dish that can hold 3 liters and pour in the drained pasta and then the cheese sauce
 - Stir to combine
 - Cover the dish and let it bake for 45 minutes
7. After 45 minutes, uncover the dish and let it back for an extra 30 minutes
 - Take it out when it's brown on top
8. Let it rest for 30 minutes before scooping it out & enjoy!

3-2-1 Cake Mug

INGREDIENTS

- ❑ 3 tablespoons of cake mix of choice
- ❑ 2 tablespoons of water

DIRECTIONS

1. Place ingredients into your favorite mug
2. Microwave for 1 minute (or until cooked)
 - make sure the mug is microwave safe :)

Easiest Cookies Ever

INGREDIENTS

- ❑ Cake mix of choice
- ❑ Eggs
- ❑ Oil

DIRECTIONS

1. Don't add water to the mix
2. Bake according to the instructions on the cake mix

Aligned



What was the outcome

*When i lost mind
And some people who were always kind*

*When i drained my health
Or the last of my wealth*

*When I nearly lost my family
For we've seen quite a tragedy*

*He who watches over me
Finally gave me the chance to see*

*A commodity like no other
For with it even stab wounds no longer bother*

A simple remedy for my shattered heart and mind

The chance for my faith and I to be aligned

Written by: Kenan Badran

Edited by: Thaabit Raziq

Designed by: Nada AlMuaythir

Quality sleep, sound mind, happy world

Let's discuss the importance of sleep. Yes, you read it right. Before you groan in annoyance and defend your usual erratic sleep cycle, or lack thereof, see if you can accept why sleep is at least necessary. As med students alone, getting more than even 4 hours of sleep a day may seem impossible. When not constantly studying for exams, working in hospitals, or cramming from notes, a lot of med students may enjoy outings with buddies from class, having ping pong matches, painting murals, or entering gaming tournaments. What? Do medical students do that stuff? No way. Oh yes, we do, but at the expense of quality sleep time. Our day is usually so packed that students of all years and majors find difficulty in claiming a decent amount of hours in a day to relax. Hey, we only have 24 hours a day, and only about 4 of them may actually be used to rest the body and mind. Also, we should acknowledge that not all sleep deprivation is a result of voluntary actions, but instead factors such as anxiety and stress-induced insomnia. But, no people, running on caffeine and sugary energy drinks in lieu of proper sleep isn't the solution.

FACE THE FACTS

According to the National Sleep Foundation, young adults, aged 18-25 years old, and adults, aged 26-64 years old, should receive ideally 7 to 9 hours of sleep. If 7 hours can't be managed, then a minimum of 6 is good enough. I know I know, tough right? On the other side though, too much sleep is also detrimental. Alarm snoozers, this one is for you. Adults shouldn't sleep for more than 10 hours, while young adults 11. Back to the topic of insufficient sleep, the more common issue; long story short, impairments in sleep can have broad effects on neurological, metabolic, cardiovascular, and immune health, which in turn can increase the risk for neurological disorders such as stroke, neurodegeneration, neuromuscular disease, epilepsy, etc. Additionally, lack of sleep affects mood, memory, and overall mental health. For college students, these three are significant factors in academic performance, particularly negatively.

Allow me to further elaborate, starting with a mood disorder. What part of the brain processes emotion? A structure called the amygdala has been suggested as highly active during REM sleep (Rapid Eye Movement). When sleep deprivation occurs, the amygdala is consequently impacted. How about the correlation between sleep and memory? Unlike emotion, memory relies on a functioning hippocampus, the part of the brain responsible for learning and memory consolidation, the process by which a temporary, labile memory is transformed into a more stable, long-lasting form.

Furthermore, the formation of memory occurs due to the expression of various genes and proteins. Following lack of sleep is the upregulation

and expression of negative genes that promote negative memory consolidation, i.e Tsc22d3.

All right. We've seen how sleep deprivation affects mood and memory. But what about mental health? Newsflash, it's connected to the two topics. When there's a lack of proper regulation of mood and behavior, one may become anxious or depressed, which in turn causes even further obstruction to one's sleep. That's just it, it's a never-ending, vicious cycle. Memory plays a part too. Think about it. If the formation of memory is affected, that includes happy or positive memories as well.

To conclude, proper sleep is essential in any student's or person's life. Whether it be physically, mentally, or neurologically, it's clear that a lack of sufficient hours is highly damaging. In other words, stop bingeing Netflix all night.



Written and Designed By: Hana Abdulkareem
Edited By: Thaabit Raziq

MEDIA CONSUMPTION & HOW IT SURROUNDS OUR EVERYDAY LIVES

Scrolling for hours on a social media platform is something we are all guilty of. We have all been there; mindlessly scrolling and not realizing the consequences the media we are consuming has on our mental & social well-being, as well as our view of the world. The over-exposure to the multimedia at our disposal has an undeniable effect on our opinions, whether personal or general. That's all it takes to shift the way our inner psych works: a single tap.

These online platforms are structured solely to shape the consumer's perception of reality and form their opinions around it; this is reinforced by the cultivation theory. An example of that includes negative comments under posts; over time they tend to interfere with our personal and world views. Overall, the more we form connections with online platforms, the more our brains tend to form connections with what is happening online, be it true or not. We can also see this with the glorification of unattainable beauty standards; it's reinforced by celebrities, other public figures, and advertisements, and can be also seen when shopping



However, while a lot of what has been discussed is negative, the online world is also a place where you can feel validated and heard. Speaking from experience, when you read about others going through the same thing as you are, despite being told to suck it up multiple times by people around you, you feel a little better. It makes you feel justified and know that it wasn't all in your head after all. On another note, it can also be a way to spread awareness. This was prominently evident during the 2020 pandemic and rightfully so. People were forced to disconnect from the outside world and stop physically interacting with their families for up to 4 months.

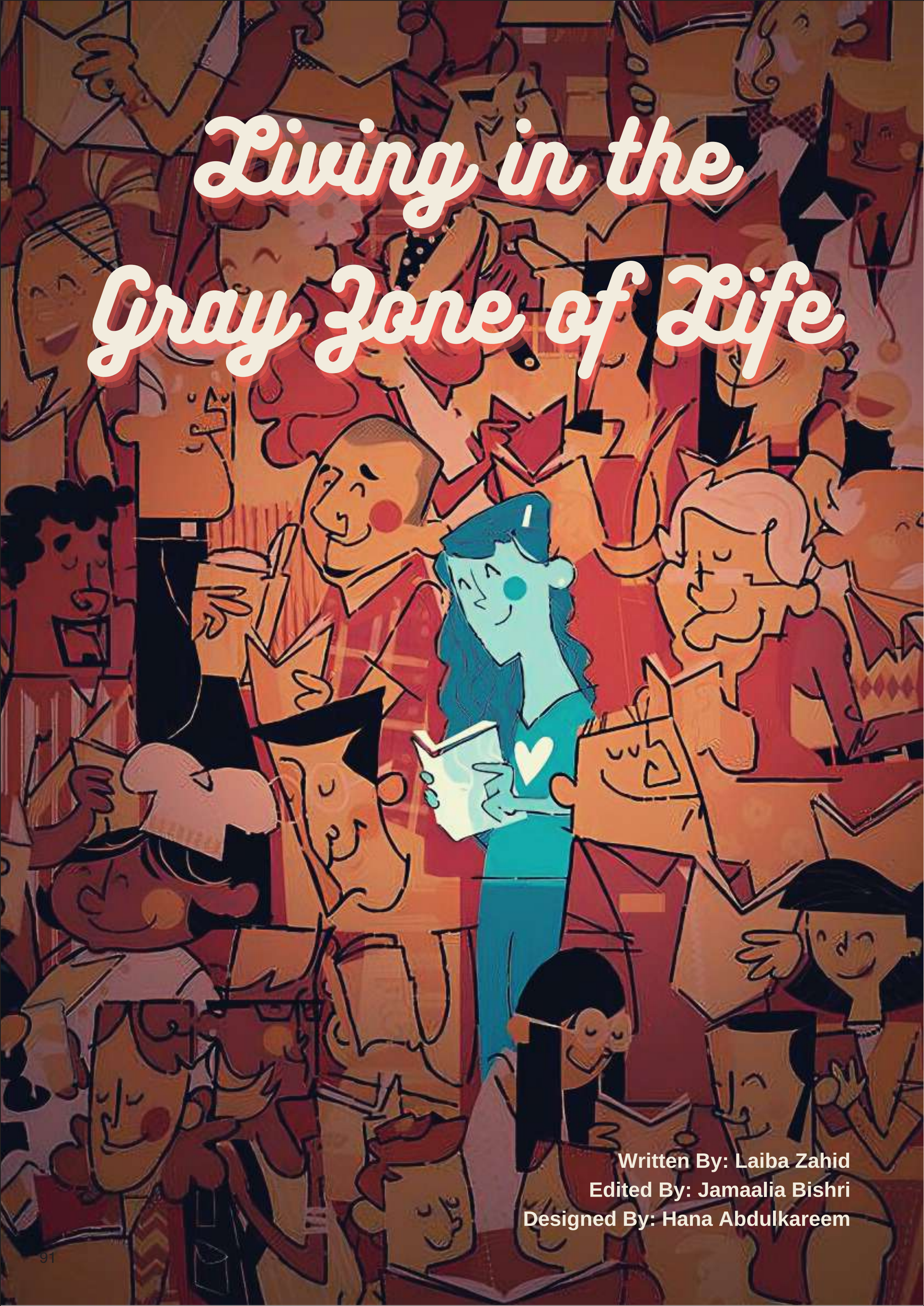
Consequently, mental health declined across the globe, but the constant discussions about mental health and its importance, especially during a time like that not only helped raise awareness on a large scale but also made people feel validated.

Although this article cites the internet and social media as examples, a lot of the points mentioned can be applied to other forms of media as well. For instance, TV series and how they influence our view of other cultures, books and how they influence the way we think in certain situations, music and how it glorifies certain concepts, and video games and how they condition our minds to certain things. And while a lot of times we try to sugarcoat the idea of the media influencing us negatively, it's time to start opening our eyes to both sides of the spectrum.

It's always beneficial to remind yourself to take a mental break from social media every once in a while, and it is always a good idea to distance yourself from these quick-paced dopamine-inducing platforms. Lastly, it's important to remember that the media we consume on a daily basis is a tool that can either destroy ourselves or help us heal; all depending on how we use it.



Written By: Ghedaa Armosh
Designed By: Mayar Amboun
Edited by: Jamaalia Bishri



Living in the Gray Zone of Life

Written By: Laiba Zahid
Edited By: Jamaalia Bishri
Designed By: Hana Abdulkareem

It is part of human nature to want to fit in, to be a part of the crowd, and to be able to relate to current major trends. And oftentimes, people tend to get lost in the chaos of trends and finding what they resonate with. The rise in social media and internet trends is a major factor that has largely contributed to the popularization of having your own set “aesthetic”, your own little box to fit yourself into complete with a label that describes who you are. Some people might use those labels to give themselves a sense of belonging or a sense of identity, while others might use them to separate themselves from mainstream society - ultimately, labels have always been a deeply integrated part of our culture.

Amid the quest to find their own identity and have their set label to identify with, it seems as if people have begun to lose themselves, either trying to fit into too many boxes or jump out of certain others. Society has shifted its focus more toward what the label is rather than what identifying with it means. People have begun allowing their personalities to be dictated by labels, they’ve allowed themselves to be confined within rigid walls and without realizing it, they’ve limited their potential of self-growth and expression. If I were to give a simple example, people find the need to label themselves as either “morning people” or “night owls” and while of course everyone most certainly functions to the best of their abilities at different times, oftentimes we begin to convince ourselves rather than try to adapt. I believe that as a society, rather than believing everything to be clear-cut black and white, we could instead learn to exist within the gray area of life.

Allow me to elaborate: to exist within the gray zone of life means not having to choose between black & white, not having to pick a side but just existing up to your free will in the center of things.

To be in the gray zone of life means to allow yourself to adopt bits and pieces of life that attract you and add them to who you are as a person, to allow yourself to pick and choose from whatever you might feel like you can relate to and resonate with rather having to force yourself to commit to certain labels and boxes. Going back to the same example, you can be both a morning person and a night owl at the same time without having to force yourself to fit within a certain category. You can allow your preferences to shift and change depending on different circumstances in life because at the end of the day, you are still the same person and your personality will remain true to yourself, just with different preferences. So, live in that gray zone, and allow yourself to be a little bit of everything. In fact, be everything, experiment with life as much as you can without feeling burdened to pick and stick to one label. Be everything because nothing is stopping you, especially not the label of whom you have to be.

Be who you choose to be.

Anti-Palindrome

*In this sea of unforgivable flaws
I see its fleeting claws
No longer will
I stop from getting into its murky waters
To escape from the heavy breaths it draws*

*I take three steps away
From a life of mistakes overgrown
I can find some solace
With submission to my faults alone
There is no redeeming place*

*When there are cracks in the crystal glass
For light can only shine through
When my failures won't burden each pass
Why wait for it
A life that promises to be kind
My heart's gone deaf and my eyes, blind for I
know*

*Whether it be a slip or a fall
These voices have grown tall
And although
My faults are not crimes
And
My poems don't need rhymes*

*Gaining control of it is knowing
That I can I do so much more
Who needs to know
The submerging of the one ashore
Stop*

*One last look to
Free my sea of the irredeemable "was"
One last look to
Greet my sea of forgivably unforgivable
flaws*

Now read from bottom-up



Written by: Samra Mirza

Edited by: Nasser Saleh

Designed by: Nada AlMuaythir

The Importance of Financial Literacy:

Money Makes The World Go Round

The ability to comfortably afford what your heart desires, to have the freedom to travel wherever you please, and to eventually retire debt-free; are the goals of many people, but they are only attainable with adequate financial literacy.

Financial literacy is the ability to comprehend and manage finances responsibly; it is understandably one of the most important skills to learn as an individual. Not only is it essential for personal growth, but it is also one of the few responsibilities in life that if not managed correctly, can go terribly wrong very fast.



As students, our sources of income are often limited. Therefore, it is integral that we learn how to responsibly budget and save up. The most important concept when it comes to understanding financial literacy is budgeting. Budgeting is the process of setting a monthly goal for expenses, and it is determined by expenditures and savings. The Economist and the Financial Times often recommend the “70/20/10” rule when it comes to creating budgets, where 70% of the monthly income is used for living expenses, 20% is saved up and 10% is set aside for leisure, hobbies, and personal needs. Furthermore, as students, there are various resources available that cater to our financial needs, such as student discounts and scholarships, which can help with the budgeting process.

Independent living is a normal part of the university experience, as some students are living independently of their families and may need extra guidance with regard to their financial spending. A budgeting method that can be suitable for this category of students is the “envelope technique” where each expense is assigned a specific monthly amount in an envelope and only that amount is spent. Although this technique is strict, it is very effective. Using apps such as Notion or Google Sheets can also be a helpful way to track spending and be more disciplined.



One of the key financial processes to understand is **Taxation**. Taxation is a substantial part of our economy, therefore it is of paramount importance that we understand the different types of taxes and how they affect our daily lives. The main types of taxes are Value-Added Tax (VAT), Social Insurance Tax, Zakat Tax, and in some countries, Income Tax. Taxes are integral and misunderstanding them almost always leads to legal action.

Having sound financial literacy is a life skill that will develop as we mature. It is crucial and essential in avoiding the trap of falling into debt. It also increases self-reliance, independence, and management. Moreover, it decreases stress and anxiety induced by financial illiteracy and irresponsibility.



“ In order to grow as an individual, one must understand how money works in all its aspects because *money makes the world go round* ”



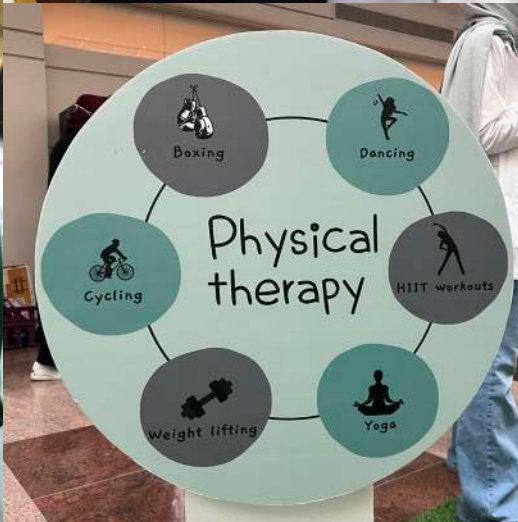
Events

Med Times

Breast Cancer



Mental Health Awareness Day



Hot Seat



How To With G&D



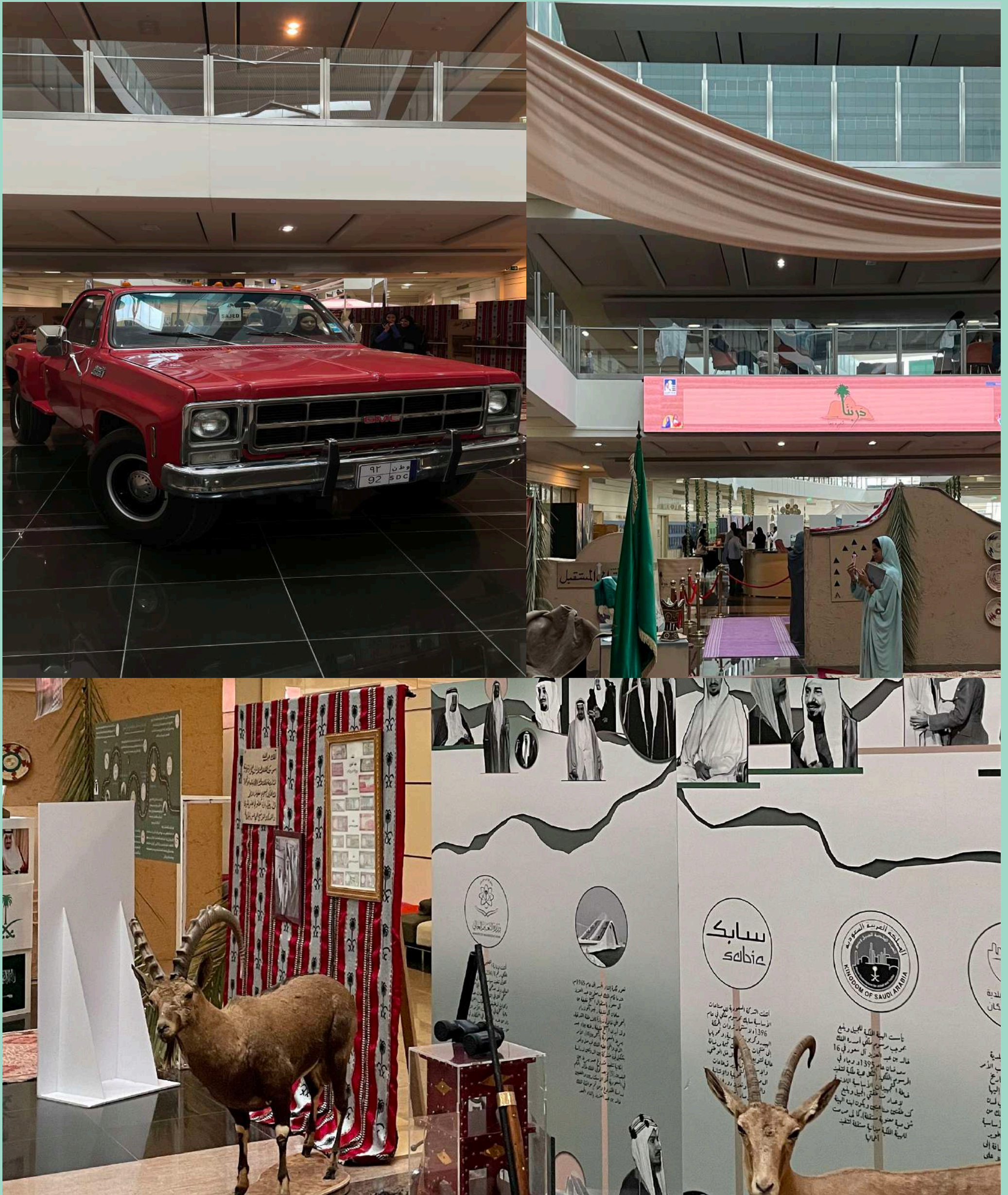
Coffee With Mentors



Green Team Cleanup Day



Saudi National Day



KSA VS Argentina



World`s Children Day

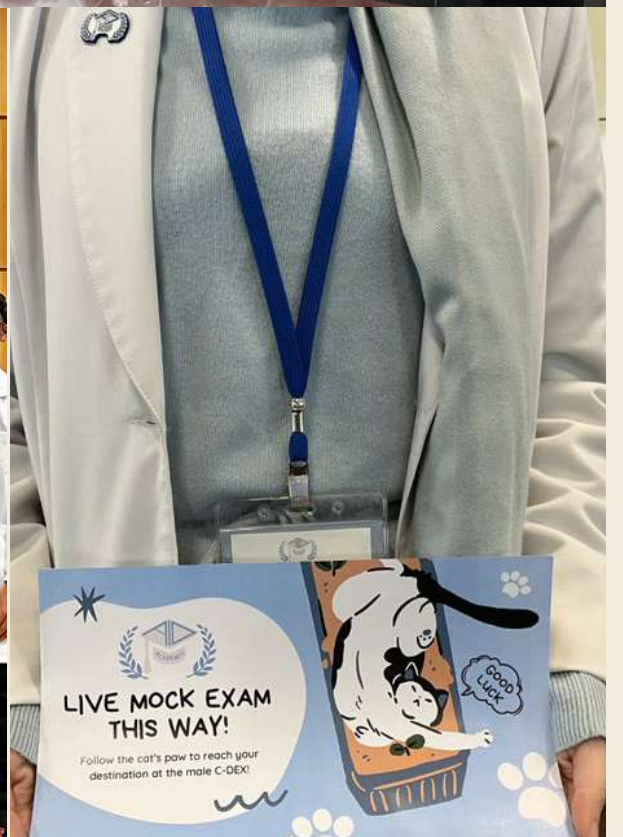


Semester 1 Ceremony



International Office





MedTimes Art Gallery







MINI Sticker Book

DESIGNED BY: RUSHDAN FIRDOUS

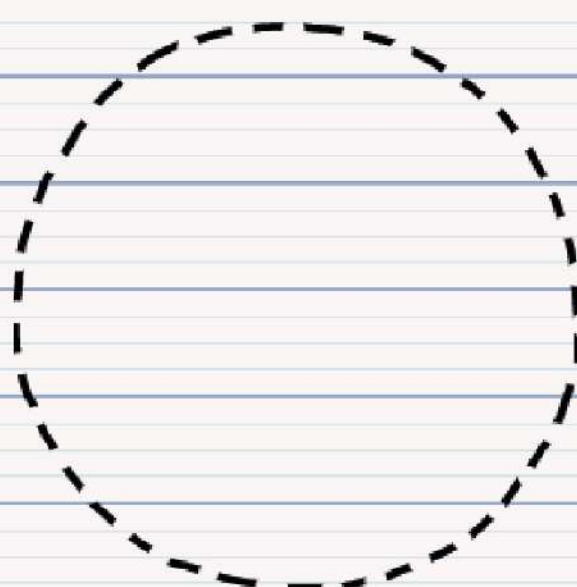
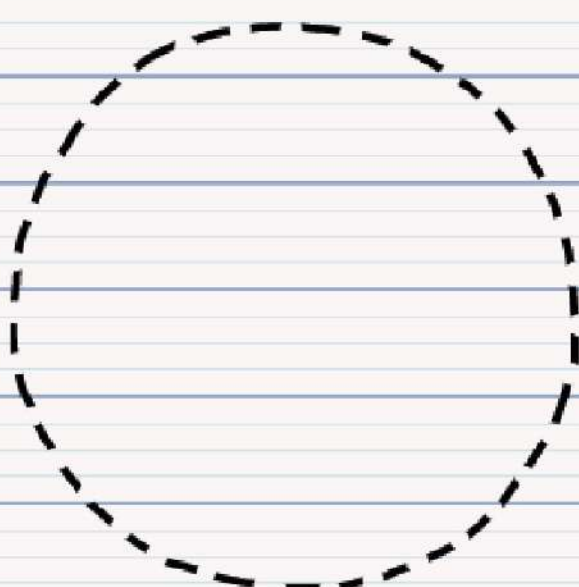
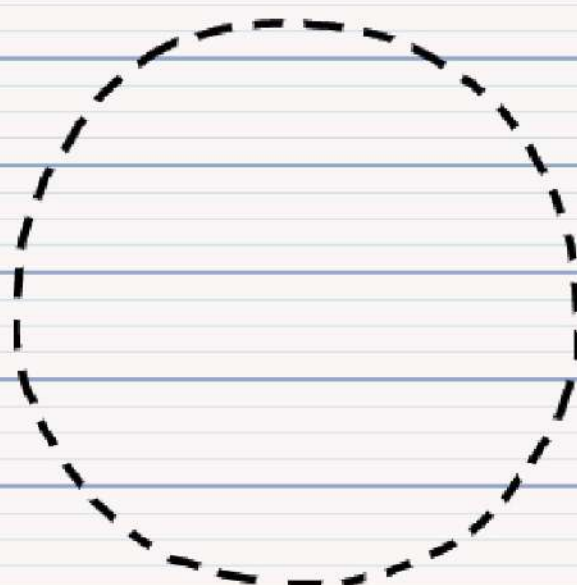
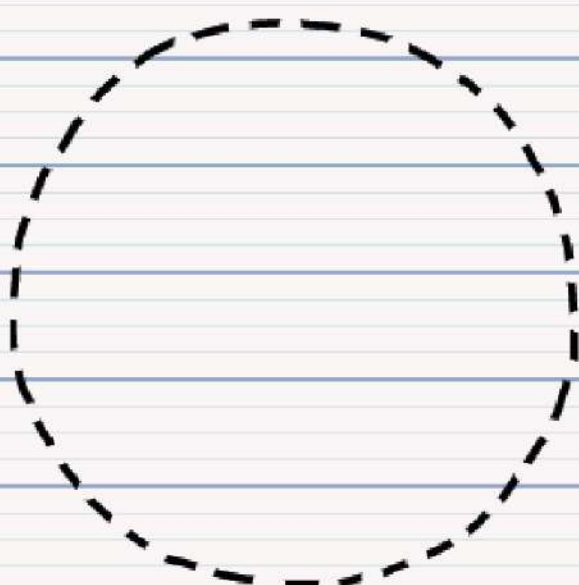
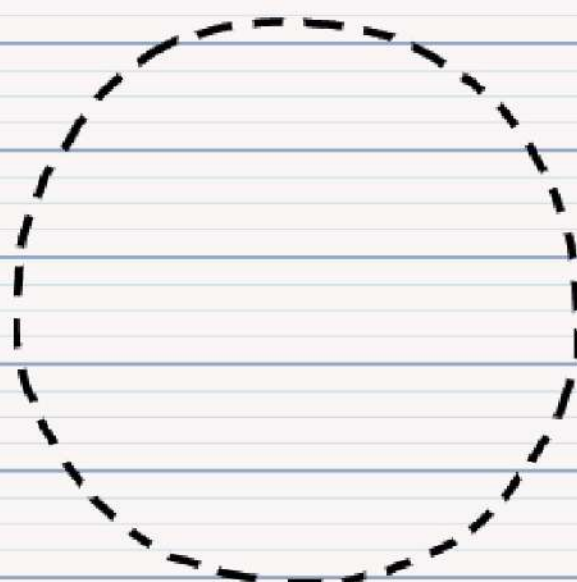
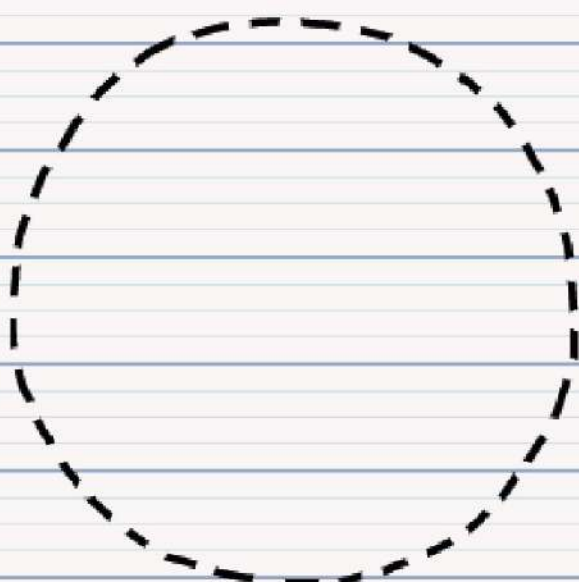
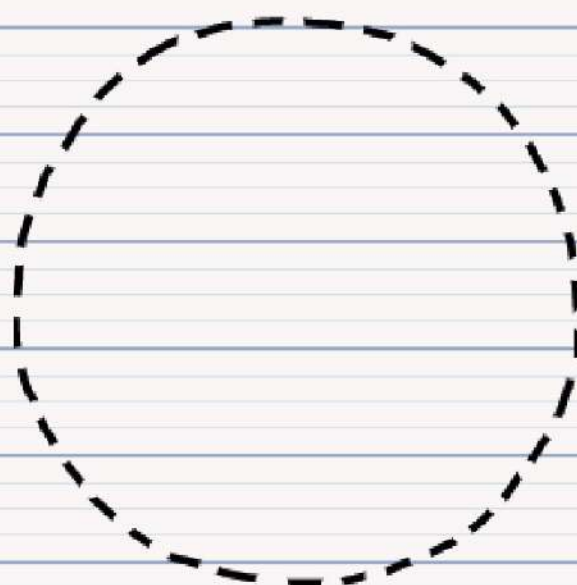
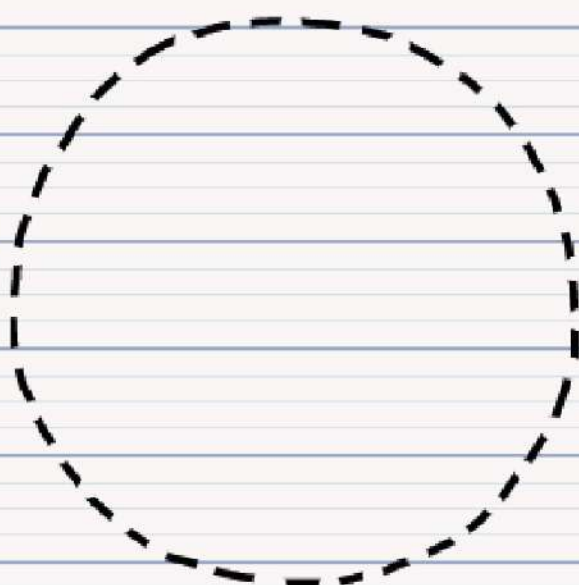
POD233

GAME OVER
INSERT COIN

POD233
WE'RE HERE TO HELP!

MSKIN
WE'RE HERE TO HELP!

Block Stickers



Pokemon Cards

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal blue lines. The paper is divided into six equal rectangular sections by two vertical dashed lines and one horizontal dashed line. Each section contains five horizontal blue lines, providing a template for handwriting practice or journaling.

Latest Editions

This image shows a full page of handwriting practice paper. It features eight large rectangular boxes arranged in a 4x2 grid. Each box has a thick black dashed border. Inside each box, there are five horizontal blue lines for letter height guidance. The background of the entire page is light gray, alternating with white vertical stripes. The first row of boxes is highlighted with a yellow background.

