UNREAD
OPEN YOUR MIND AND POCKET THE WORDS

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October is here! And already, it has been so busy. Well, I can tell you the team at Unread have been working their socks off to create content you’ll enjoy. It was in fact World Mental Health Day and World Sight Day not too long ago and with Unread a strong advocate for loving oneself and taking care of both mental and physical health - we felt it right to address certain issues and topics. Make sure you have a read of Amina’s Social Anxiety piece and Qudsiya’s thoughts on Post-Graduation Blues (yes, it’s a thing). Humaa has also put together an interesting piece about eye health! Have a look! I’m sure a lot of you are just about settling into your new job, new university/school/college routine or waking up every morning - wishing it was Saturday (me too) - regardless, make sure you have a flick through this issue and get some tips on organising your time and your environment. The weather is changing and the leaves are falling - yes, I’m sure you’ve noticed - so, why don't you make yourself a lovely cup of ‘Kashmiri Tea’ - Kanwal has the perfect recipe. If you find, like many, you don’t have the time to start that next epic novel to enjoy with that tea - take a dip into the different worlds crafted by our very own writers, in this issue, on your way to work. The Unread family is always welcoming new talented writers to the team since the first issue, head over to www.unreadmag.com to see who they are! If you’re flicking through this magazine and feel like you would fit right in, drop us a few lines - we’d be more than happy to hear from you!
Throughout the duration of further studies, a shocking one in four students will suffer from a form of mental illness, with anxiety and depression being the most common. As a student, the newfound freedom of moving away from home into a bright and colourful city is exciting and often at times daunting. But, imagine living a life full of so much freedom and independence suddenly being snatched from beneath you when moving back home post graduation. Which is the case for most students who move back home, either due to financial or family reasons. Some may even see this as a way of regressing back to their former selves and see any progression made, in the last three years, as null – as though they have stepped backwards in their lives. This in itself can be hard on anyone that has become accustomed to fending for themselves.

If you think about it, as humans we are stuck in the education system from the tender age of three all the way to twenty-one (average graduate age). That is pretty much your entire life planned out from birth in a solid structure. You know that you have set learning periods, such as term times and you know when your holidays are. Now fast forward to the point where you have your degree in your hand and the only thing on your mind is “Now what?” You have no lessons to attend, no job in hand, no real idea of what is coming ahead. It’s difficult not to become overwhelmed in a panic to figure your life out.
The feeling of being lost along with social pressures, whether that be from friends and family, can often push an individual into a fragile state of mind. What a lot of people fail to understand is that you are already beating yourself up about not having a solid plan and having them constantly question your every move, only adds to the pressure and anxiety. You've had to shed the image of your youth and your next move is vital as its the start of your 'new' adult life. The pressure is already there, why amplify it?

Although the conversation around mental health is growing and help is more readily available for students in university, the help isn't so widely broadcasted for those not in education. Why is there no conversation on the reality that students are leaving education with higher stress levels than psychiatric patients in mental institutes in the 1940's? Why is this problem being treated as if it is just the 'blues' and will blow over? Mental illness isn't just a phase that'll go away in a few days. Mental illnesses leave scars and can be extremely damaging to an individual, should they not recover or receive the right help. More needs to be done in recognising that this is a very real issue that needs our attention. Rather than feeling as though they should just get over their feelings in a few days, the youth should know that help is always available. Whether that be from a loved one or a professional, help is always there.

No matter how trivial they may think their feelings are, they are not. Their feelings matter, their health matters, they matter.

If you or someone you know is effected by any issues raised in this article, please use the links below for some information on mental health issues as well avenues to seek advice.

**SAMARITANS**
116 123
samaritans.org

**MIND**
0300 123 3393
mind.org.uk

**RETHINK MENTAL ILLNESS**
0300 5000 927
Social anxiety is the fear of a specific or wide variety of social situations. This can include speaking in a public setting, meeting new people, being in an unfamiliar environment, attending parties or other social gatherings, speaking to someone in an authoritative position and disagreeing with people. People with social anxiety are mostly afraid of what others are thinking of them to a point where it can restrict their every move. One fear which is prominent in socially anxious people is the fear that others can see the signs of their anxiousness, which then leads them to overthink these situations. For example, I used to be afraid that people noticed my cheeks blushing as they approached me, so I stopped talking to people at work. There are so many other scenarios that can trigger overthinking, even thinking about an upcoming event can cause high levels of anxiety.

When anxiety is at a very high point, people tend to avoid the place or thing they are worrying about. Although avoidance will feel satisfactory, and even relieving at times, it has a negative long term effect and can very easily lead to depression when constantly finding a way out of it. This can be any situation, such as being too embarrassed to do a presentation. The anxiety leading up to that presentation may lead you to not going at all and as a result, feeling satisfied. However, having successfully avoided that presentation will make you feel very down afterwards. Avoiding situations that make you feel anxious will gradually cause you to convince yourself that you are incapable of doing those things. You may begin to tell yourself you are useless and are a failure. Self-esteem will drop, therefore allowing anxiety and depression to rocket.

Who Is Affected By It?
A very common misconception is that being socially anxious means you are simply a shy person who doesn't like to go out. In my experience, I would say that social anxiety has actually caused me to
be shy and stopped me from going out - it suppressed who I really was. You might find that the outwardly most confident person in the room could be suffering from social anxiety. More than one out of eight people will suffer from socially anxiety at some point in their lives. It is twice as common in women than in men, but men are more likely to find help. Social anxiety is most commonly developed when people are in their early teens. However, much like myself, it can develop a lot earlier in life. When seeking help for it is delayed, the problem can last for years.

There is no exact cause for social anxiety but there are a few factors that can singlehandedly or collectively contribute. Some of them can include genetics (relatives who are shy or who also have social anxiety), prior experiences of embarrassment or humiliation that cause a fear of those situations, negative thinking, and a lack of social skills.

How To Get Help?
If you notice these symptoms in yourself and you feel the anxiety is distressing and unbearable, I highly recommend you seek help. Here in the UK, you can receive therapy under the NHS. It can seem daunting at first to call your doctor and talk to them about it, but know that you will be one step closer to getting better. Just as you would call the doctor for a physical illness, you should take the same precautions with your mental wellbeing.

I simply had enough one day, called my GP and told them my social anxiety was becoming distressing. I had a very relieving conversation with my doctor who then suggested I attend cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT). The CBT sessions were 2 hours a week for 12 weeks, in a group therapy setting. It is vital that you attend every session as you begin to learn more about the condition and how you can make improvements, one week at a time.

Luckily, I found my therapist to be helpful and understanding, but if you find that they are not what you are looking for, definitely tell your doctor who will do what they can to help you recover. It can be very scary to seek help for a mental health condition, but it is detrimental to your well-being to delay something so distressing and disruptive to your everyday life. You are never alone in this and there are so many resources for you to use.

Therapy Is Over – What Now?
Don’t panic, everything is fine. I do still find myself feeling quite anxious of my surroundings, but I keep a few things in mind to keep myself sane. Know that people are actually immersed in their own thoughts and problems, so they most likely won’t notice you blush or stutter...
or sweat or tremble at all! Don't allow your thoughts to spiral out of control and become restrictive for you. People are not judging you, and if they are, is it true? Do they know you well enough to make these mindless judgements? No. Remind yourself of your good attributes and what makes you the great person you really are. Shut out the negative and concentrate on the positive.

After therapy, you have so many resources to read back on and even start on some of the activities again if need be. Set yourself one or a few simple goals for yourself to meet. For example, you could tell yourself you want to build your confidence. So, you could go to the shops and not use the self-checkout to give yourself an opportunity to have a small conversation with the cashier. It also helps immensely to write down your thoughts and goals to clear your mind and figure out the root cause of some of the misleading thoughts you may have. One thing I have started doing is writing down one thing that made me happy every day to give myself a reminder that every cloud has a silver lining. Even if I have a bad day, no matter how small, there has got to be one thing in that day that made me smile. I have also started writing a journal (or diary). This has given me a lot of clarity with my thoughts, regardless of whether I am writing about something totally uninteresting or not, it definitely helps.

As cliché as it sounds, please find time for things that make you happy. I found that baking with the company of my favourite movie or TV show at stupid o’clock was very therapeutic. And of course, enjoying the end result of my baking. Other activities to keep your mind at ease can include going for a walk, chilling in the garden, reading a new book, reading a book you’ve read 100 times, spending time with family and friends, watching The Office, working out, writing, drawing and the list goes on.

Don't ever allow the setbacks in life leave you feeling behind. Allow these experiences to help you grow stronger because I know you can do it.
More often than not, the hardest part of anything is simply starting. Whether it's a report for school or a project at work or a household chore, the initial step is usually the toughest. But I'm here to offer you some hope, particularly in cleaning and organizing your room. I'm choosing to focus on bedrooms because they are the place where almost all of our belongings reside. And, while some say a messy room equals a messy life, I'm here to tell you that getting your room into better shape doesn't have to be super complicated.

Marie Kondo is a Japanese organizing consultant who recently published a book called *The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up*. She is also the creator of the Kon-Mari method, which is aptly named after her. This method simplifies the way we organize our things. She's appeared on many talk shows and her book has become a bestseller. Many bloggers and celebrities have also adhered to this method and it's all created quite a buzz. Let's take a closer look at the Kon-Mari method of organizing your bedroom.

One of the main concepts is to clean by category and not by location. For example, don't just tidy up the closet or the bookshelf, but rather tidy up all your clothing and all your books in general.

So to start off, you'd put all the clothes you own on the floor or bed. Next, you'd hold each article in your hands and ask yourself, *Does this spark joy?* Those that do, will go into a ‘Keep Pile’ and those that don't spark joy will go into a ‘Donate
Beyond the obvious functionality and necessity of clothes, we forget that items themselves can actually have an affect on our mood and on our lives, which is why the question on joy is so important.

After clothing, you’d move onto books and then miscellaneous items such as photos, letters, and knick-knacks after that. What you’re basically doing is deciding what to keep and what to discard.

After this step is complete, you then move onto the next step, which is designating where to put your things. Kondo suggests having books all around your room rather than just on the shelf. Limiting them to the shelf kind of limits the joy they could be giving you if they were all around your room, such as a pile on your nightstand and a pile on the desk.

She also suggests folding as many clothes as you can vertically, so that they ‘stand.’ For specified folding methods, search her on YouTube. If you prefer hanging your clothes, her tip is to hang from light colors to dark, as this will be more pleasing to the eye.

I’ve tried this method myself and I have to say that though I’m left with less things after donating, I find myself using the things I have, so much more than I did before. And since they mostly all ‘spark joy,’ I’m much happier because of it. I’ve got a pile of books on my dresser, nightstand, and desk, and though I don’t have much time to read them all, just seeing them lying around like little friends makes me smile.

The time and effort I dedicated to this method was well worth it because with less things, I don’t have to spend as much time cleaning my room now. I hope that you find yourself trying the Kon-Mari method as well!

Amina Ahmed
Things to do in Brunsbüttel:

- **Take a ferry to the other side of town**: Brunsbüttel is divided into two parts; north and south. The only way to reach the south side is to take a ferry across; it's free of charge and a quick ride. And my, this quick trip gives you a full amazing view of both sides of the town.

- **Roam the town**: as Brunsbüttel is a small town, there are less places to shop till you drop in comparison to other big cities. However, it does have an outdoor unique shopping market, which consists of few different fashion boutiques, jewellery shops, hair salons and supermarkets.

- **Nord-Ostesee Canal**: is a fresh water canal which links the North Sea in Brunsbüttel to the Baltic Sea Kiel-Holtenau. It's a great place for a chilled day out and actually one of the busiest mans-made canals in the world.

- **Harbour**: is another lovely spot to chill with the family or a bunch of friends. With seating arrangements and a park nearby, it's a great place to have a picnic by the sea. Now, who does love that?

- **Wall of Locks**: is another unusual, yet quirky place, to visit. Laying just at the end of the harbour is a wall/grill of padlocks. You can place one of your own with you and your loved ones name on it and throw the key into the canal. Many people come here and use this to symbolise their never-ending love for each other. Cute!

I must add that these are not the only things you can do in this picture-perfect town. Though, I hope if you do ever visit Brunsbüttel, you get a chance to embrace its simplicity.

Happy Travelling!

Shumaila
The words that may first spring to mind include ‘flashy cars’ or ‘money’. A more unlikely, however very recent one is blockade - beginning on 5th June and now nearing its 5th month.

Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, the UAE and Egypt have initiated an embargo on Qatar, specifically over its alleged support to terrorist organisations such as the Muslim Brotherhood, Gaza-based Hamas and the Islamic State, as well as its relations to Iran.

14th September marked 100 days since the ban was set, with artists showcasing an exhibition at Doha Fire Station titled ‘100 Days of Love’.

The blockade has cut Qatar off from all diplomatic relations along with bans of trade, travel and airspace, forcing Qatar to reroute flights to Europe and Africa over Iran. The three Gulf states (Saudi Arabia, UAE and Bahrain) ordered their citizens out of Qatar and gave Qatari visitors and residents two weeks to leave their counties. Qatar was also removed from the Saudi-led intervention in Yemen, with part of the Yemeni government also cutting ties. The countries have issued a list of 13 demands of Qatar in order for a dialogue to ensue. These include:

- Shutting down the Al-Jazeera news network and any other Qatar-funded outlet
- Closing a Turkish military base in Qatar and end all partnership with the Turkish military - Turkey rejected this request on 23rd June
- Reducing diplomatic and military relations with Iran - only trade complying with US and international sanctions will be permitted
- Payment of reparations for years of alleged wrongs

Qatar has refused the demands and denied allegations of terrorism. Other countries joining in on the embargo are
the Maldives, a branch of the government in Libya, (who accuse Qatar of funding terrorists in their land), as well as African countries including Senegal, Djibouti, Niger, Gabon and Chad – all recalling their ambassadors and cutting ties.

On 23rd July, anti-Qatar adverts costing over $13000 (roughly £96 000), paid for by the Saudi American Public Relation Affairs Committee, were first aired in the US on Washington based channel NBC4. As of 9:30am on Monday 18th September 2017, Snapchat blocked all Al Jazeera news articles and videos in Saudi Arabia, after a request from the government.

‘We make an effort to comply with local laws in countries where we operate’ said a Snapchat spokesperson.

With the closing of all contact between Qatar and Saudi Arabia, the official service providers stated that they could not provide any service for Hajj, leaving many Qataris despairing. In July Saudi Arabia said Qatari pilgrims wanting to perform Hajj would be allowed to enter, but imposed certain restrictions, including that those arriving by plane must use airlines in agreement with Riyadh.

However, Saudi did not clarify their position on how expats could perform the pilgrimage, and refused to confirm consular services for the duration, raising concerns about accommodation and security. The Qatari authorities then accused Saudi Arabia of politicising Hajj by refusing to guarantee the pilgrims safety.

Qatar seems unfazed! It is forming deeper alliances with Turkey, through military forces bonding, restoring relations with Iran (in an act of defiance against Saudi Arabia) and developing new relations with Pakistan by launching a new port costing $7.6 billion (£5.7 billion) for a direct service between Doha and Karachi. Two other states in the Gulf Cooperation Council(GCC), Oman and Kuwait, have not joined in with the blockade.

Although nothing is shipped from the GCC countries, food supplies and other goods are flowing into Qatar’s docks as it expands its trades routes to Turkey, Oman, Pakistan and India. Qatar has also donated $30 million to Texas in aid of the destruction caused by Hurricane Harvey – the largest contribution from a foreign government. The UAE pledged $10 million on the same day.

The future seems uncertain for the Middle East - as other nations give their alliances to either end of the divide, it can only create a bigger rift, potentially causing it to spiral out of control and provoking a serious military conflict.
Going back to school or university means preparing yourself for a tonne of work and stress. I’m a big advocate of comfortable clothing, but I also like to look and feel presentable. A simple hoodie and jeans won’t make the cut for me on most days. So, I’ve compiled four outfits for any of you who feel the same and are going back to school, college or university.

Outfit 1 - PREPPY PALAZZOS

Palazzo pants are my absolute favourite type of trousers because of their super clean and chic look with a whole load of comfy. I’m speaking specifically to wearers of skinny jeans; wide leg trousers will change your life. You will be totally covered yet feel absolutely nothing on your legs. Sitting in classes and lectures for hours can be especially tiring on your legs, so let them breathe! I paired my beloved trousers with a simple burgundy turtleneck, ensuring the only flowy part of this outfit were the palazzo pants. Shoes play a big role in staying comfortable, which is why I wore my pair of New Balance trainers. Any trainers, or any shoes for that matter, would work perfectly with this outfit which is why it’s one of my favourites; it’s so versatile. If you prefer backpacks then go ahead and wear one. To stop this ensemble from looking too dark and dreary, I wore a light grey scarf to bring back a little life. I also wore these fake glasses because for some stupid reason they make me feel focused and ready for the day (sorry to people who actually need glasses).
Outfit 2 - JUST WOKED UP

This outfit is, again, focusing on the trousers. Like I said, comfort is key. You can really count on these when you're in a rush, especially if you're like me and can easily sleep in them. I'm not encouraging you to go out in your pyjamas but, if you can fall asleep in these and still look good in them then those are your go-to trousers. I wore a white shirt with the trousers, but any simple and easy to grab top will work perfectly as trousers like these are very easy to style. I completed the look with my trusty converse. Again, these are all very versatile outfits so, any bag would fit perfectly here.

Outfit 3 - WHATEVER FOREVER

Once you're back at school, depending where you are in the world, the weather can be pretty miserable but not bad enough for you to wear a coat. This is where sweatshirts come in handy. They are warm and don't require any accessories, especially if you've used an iron-on badge that says “Whatever Forever” like I did (great attitude for back to school right?). Everyone needs a good pair of jeans, which is why I'm showing you my favourite pair. Usually, you would think to wear skinny jeans with a big jumper, but I'm not willing to stop blood flowing to my legs in the name of fashion. We're trying to be as comfortable as possible, which is why I wore these mom jeans. They actually make an excellent, comfy alternative to skinny jeans as they are tapered and ensure zero frumpiness.
I do like a good piece of knitwear and that is why this long jumper made the cut for my top four comfy outfits. I especially love the slits that go up each side as they give, what could be a regular, boring and grey jumper, some character. I decided to add to that character with a pink scarf and a bomber jacket. As you can probably tell by now, I’m not one for a dull outfit - colour is my best friend. So, I finished off with my favourite pair of shoes; my red vans! They are super comfortable but also look great which I think is great for days when you feel too tired to put a decent outfit together. Use brightly coloured shoes, bags or jackets to liven up a potentially dull outfit and you are good to go!
Kashmiri Chai
- A WINTER RECIPE -
BY KANWAL

A typical breakfast in Kashmiri homes is incomplete without a pinkish, flavoursome and steaming cup of Kashmiri Chai – aka Pink Tea. Traditionally, this drink is salty. The following recipe, however, is a sweet variation of it. Pink Chai is made from Green tea leaves but varies dramatically in taste. A bit salty and incredibly creamy, this Chai is as unique in its taste as it is in appearance. It’s a lot of trial and error with this tea, if you’re making it for the first time. If it doesn’t turn out the way you wanted, don’t be disheartened. It took me quite a few attempts to succeed and get that perfect pink shade. Just follow these steps, be patient with yourself, and you’ll be a pro in no time.

This Pink Tea makes a perfect drink for a fancy get-together!

**Method**

1. Over high heat, pour 2 cups of cold water into a pot. Add tea leaves, salt, cinnamon, and cardamom pods.

2. Once it starts to boil, add baking soda, lower to medium heat, and cover, letting it cook for about 30 minutes.

3. After 30 minutes, add in another cup of cold water and stir continuously for 5 minutes. This is supposed to “shock” the tea leaves. Now let it boil again and then simmer on medium heat until it changes to a deep wine or burgundy color.

4. Next add 2 cups of milk. If you prefer a rather mild flavor, make it 2 ½ cups of milk. Increase the heat and let it come to a boil. Lower the heat, cover the pot partially, and let it simmer for 10 minutes. You may add sugar to it now or later when serving.

5. Now seep the Tea into cups and garnish with pistacchios and/or almonds.

**SERVES: 4**

**INGREDIENTS**

- 3 Cups of cold water
- 2 heaped tsp.
- Green Tea Leaves
- Cinnamon stick (about 5 cm long)
- 3 green cardamom pods
- Pinch of Salt
- ¼ tsp. of Baking Soda
- 2 cups of Milk
- Chopped pistacchios and/or almonds
**Yassou!** Whether it’s a family holiday, a short city break or a tour around a few countries, it is not always easy planning a trip beforehand or whilst you’re there. So, to save you some time, I have put together an itinerary table that will allow you to manage your time effectively and get the best out of your trip. In the fourth of Unread’s travel series, **Athens, (Greece) is checkpoint number four.**

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**NOTES**

Buy tickets in advance! Visit the following website: [http://www.thisisathens.org/](http://www.thisisathens.org/) to get additional details about sightseeing, events, travel deals, tickets and tours. Also, students from all over the world get free entry to visit any place, so be sure to take your I.D card with you!

The main purpose of my trip to Athens was to collaborate with the students from the University of Athens on a project based on architectural space and design. Being an Interior Architecture and Design student back then, the opportunity to go visit a beautiful destination like that, made my whole experience unforgettable. I got to visit a city where its history dates back to fourth millennium BC – that’s definitely something!

The spots I must highlight: Acropolis, Acropolis Museum, Parthenon and Plaka (because of its greenery and scenic views). However, that doesn’t mean that I didn’t enjoy visiting other places, no! In fact, I loved the whole city and cannot wait to visit it again, because Athens is a city that leaves you mesmerized! I definitely miss walking past old ruins, breathtaking day and night sights along with learning about the city’s history. What makes it all the more better is that Greek people are very welcoming and friendly, so that that made my stay at Athens even more perfect.

Considering Athens as your next destination? Get your phone out and either: A. Take a photo of the itinerary if you’re viewing this from a desktop or B. Screenshot if you’re viewing this from a handheld device.

**TRAVEL, EXPLORE & ENJOY!**

Happy Holiday!

Your travel guide,

Momina
While moving with the hustle and bustle of life, my heart forced me to stop for a while. I was standing on the third floor of my college from where I could see my entire town. Right next to the grand edifice of my college stood a small abandoned Government school. Government schools in my country were still a luxury, despite lacking furniture, clean water and even trained teachers. A number of times I have shamelessly stared at the students sitting under the shady tree, proudly repeating the utterances of the teachers. It was a bright sunny day. The neighbouring students were busy playing and enjoying their break. They ran after each other in the extreme hot weather, laughing, unaware of the fact that someone was enviously observing their grins. It was me, someone who apparently had everything necessary for survival, yet was ungrateful. The school held two rooms and a large bare ground, crowded with young students and their innocent hearts. It was a place born from the euphoric demeanours of the wretched hearts, where melancholy was abandoned despite all odds, where love knew no limits, no boundary, where the pleasures of life were found in the simplest of things. It was a place where life rejoiced its very existence. A place distorted enough to appear as a ruin and delightful enough to please the eye. A place often ignored in the hauntingly chaotic silence. It was the place that made me realize that the life we take for granted could in fact be a luxury for another. Some hearts are so beautiful, so kind that they never question or rebel against life.

They, with wide smiles on their faces, accept what life brings to them. The secrecy of their refreshing grins was unveiled to me that day.

*By Ayesha Q*
I always need to spend time with the nature. It simply makes me happy and motivates me to keep going. It's hard for me to explain how and why nature has this sort of positive impact on me. It's like a loyal friend and today, I write for that friend.

Usually, I would write some sort of advice piece about how we can protect our environment, but I just didn't know what to start with. Plastic usage? Air pollution? Recycling? I could write a book just about recycling, so, instead of throwing a whole load of instructions at you, I decided to offer you the most powerful advice:

~ Learn about Nature ~

Why is planning tree so important for the environment? What does climate change mean? What are the causes of air pollution? What are the solutions? The more we research, the more we will understand why it is so important we look after nature and the more likely we will start making small, yet impactful, differences.

“I always wondered why somebody didn’t do something about that. Then I realized I am somebody.” (Lily Tomlin) This quote was posted by ‘Greenpeace Belgium’ on Facebook and it made me think.

When I heard the news about the increase in air pollution, my first thought was: “Is there really anybody who can change all this?”

I have always hoped that there was ‘someone’, someone who made the world a better place and looked after nature so it didn’t have to suffer. But after I read that quote, I decided to be ‘the someone’. I’m not just going to only hope, I will do. I will make difference.

And I really hope you will do too, because I believe in the power of ‘we’.

We will do.
My muscles feeling torn and overworked I sat on my bed stiff and rigid, with a throbbing headache. The ability to move even an inch felt impossible. So, it hurt, even more, knowing that in a few hours I would catch a flight to Switzerland for the Hockey Premier League. I wasn't in the best shape; my body was pleading for rest every day and the people I loved were close to walking away. Dua was sat in the living room drinking her tea. I shifted off the bed and used whatever strength I had to join her. I rested my hand on her knee, waiting for a response, a hug or kiss, but she just looked the other way. “Babe?” “Your bags are packed and organized, it's better you arrive a few hours early for your flight. Don't forget to take your meds, so your muscles don't lock,” Dua shifted away from me once she was done talking, her voice was harsh and almost heartless. Her hair hung from her shoulders, revealing her face just a little bit. I caught a glimpse of her swollen eyes and runny nose. I wasn't the only one feeling low. Normally I would have said something or even pleaded for her to talk to me properly, but over the years I learned the best thing you can ever be, is patient. Dua supported my dreams and ambitions, but when she really needed me she made it clear. And the reality for me was that I would help her and support her, but that didn't mean I could always be present. These differences always managed to tear us apart. My rusty brown leather bags were huddled together beside the front door, I slipped on my black bomber jacket along with my baseball cap. There wasn't much time left. With everything ready and prepared, all I had left to do was say goodbye, for the time being. I placed a gentle kiss on Dua's forehead, a small and confused smile appeared on her face. Not all goodbyes are passionate.

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I grasped onto my jacket as the wind blew past, the leaves followed behind in a trail. A mixture of purple and orange appeared in the early sunrise. I inhaled the frosty air with a silent prayer, telling myself that everything would be okay.

“The 7.15 train is approaching platform 27, please stand behind the blue line.”

Within a few seconds, the bright red train with the name ‘Madison Fast Trains’ flew past, gradually slowing down at the end of the platform.

I grasped onto my bags and stepped onto the train, the fresh fragrance of vanilla swarmed me. I was already feeling a little better. My bags sat next to me, whilst the metal doors merged shut together, followed by the train whisking off, taking me with it.

Behind the foggy and cracked windows, the city moved like the Doppler effect beyond the train windows. My eyes were focused on the city around me, until the train went through a tunnel. And it near enough felt like we never left.

For five minutes I sat in silence and complete darkness, at one point I felt like I was alone on the train. It didn't take me long to realise I was when the silence immediately felt sinister. Panic instantly emerged. Was I on the wrong train? Is this a planned attack?

“You have reached your destination, thank you for traveling with Madison fast trains.”

I was lost for words when the train came to a halt. I slung my bags onto my forearm ready to get a refund. I stepped onto the platform with hope that a quicker and better train was yet to come. The circulation of blood in my veins froze, when I noticed my mom stepping off the next carriage from mine. She was wearing a long pink dress with flowers in her hair.

My dad stood on the other side wearing a suit and a long smart brown jacket. He held his arms open for my mom, as she walked towards him with a smile that I rarely ever got to see.

The date of that exact day was ‘20/06/1990’, the day that my mom first got to see New York City with her own eyes. And somehow, I was there. The best explanation I had was that the train took me back in time.

As delusional I may have sounded, it was real.

I followed my parents wary of where they were going, soon to discover I was in New York City during, what looked like, the early nineties. Everything appeared a little aged and vintage. People walked around in real denim jeans, unlike today, surrounded by aged advertisements with bright colours and blurred out images.

My parents drove off in my dad’s black Dodge Charger, the same one that sits in his garage today. I slipped into the back, behind the driver’s seat, just like old times. He parked the car outside of what looked like the apartment my dad was living in back, whilst he was working as an automotive engineer.

In his apartment, I noticed his desk was flooded with papers of drawings, calculations, and measurements; each set of papers belonging to an individual car. Just by the appearance of his
desk, I could see the passion and the motivation.
My mom stared in awe. I stood beside her just not in the physical realm.

“Lucas, why do you drive yourself so mad? Spending so much time with me, how will you get time to focus on what you love? How will you ever pursue your career?”
My dad sighed, he sat down calm and relaxed, unlike mom.

“When you really have a passion for something, you prioritise it no matter what else is going on in your life.”
My dad’s words rung in my ears, they reminded me of the challenges I faced with Dua. It was clear that he still managed to look after his career and heart.
I just had to learn to do the same.

Unaware of the time or even if the time was the same in my reality, I turned the doorknob ready to leave.
The metal doors flew open and everybody rushed off the train. I started heading towards the airport, which was already connected to the station.

A lady in a navy-blue suit with red lipstick greeted me.

“Hello sir welcome to Bronte Airlines, please could you make your way to gateway seventeen. We will check your bags and you will have the opportunity to freshen up.”
I gazed at the woman lost for words, I went from 1990 to 2017 within a matter of minutes. The speechless expression convinced the woman I needed to take a little breather before my plane departed for Switzerland.
I was led towards a VIP room decorated with luxury velvet beige sofas, and three vintage Moroccan lamps hanging from the stark white ceiling. On the centre of a glossy table, there was a large fruit platter with a note, which had my name written on it.

“You pursue what you love, and I love that about you. See you in Switzerland. Dua xx”

Just as my dad always said, you prioritise what you love, and make time for it so it can grow.

By Selena
First of all, let’s be real we all have thousand things to do every single day. It always feels like that there isn’t enough time, so much to do but so little time. Saying this, there are some people who get so much done within a given amount of time. How you ask? Good time management that’s how. Read on as I will be giving you some ideas on ways you can manage your time, as well sharing few of my own experiences.

One of the things you could do is making a right environment to work in. Pick a place that feels right for you, such as a library or a somewhere where there is minimal distractions. Your surroundings have a big impact on your mood and motivation, so be picky!

Be clear with your objectives by keeping a list of tasks that need to be done! A to-do list can help keep you organized and it’s actually satisfying to tick off each accomplished task as you go along. It makes sense to get the important thing out of the way first, to eliminate all the stress. It sometimes helps to even note down the small tasks, like reading unread emails – accomplishing any task, big or small, can boost motivation. Multi-tasking can be a bad idea, it might work for some, but honestly it can risk you becoming less productive whilst trying to balance a variety of things.

Be clear with your objectives by keeping a list of tasks that need to be done!

I know how much we love our technology, especially our phone that we can’t seem to live without, but let’s face it, phones can take up a lot of our time and sometimes, for no good reason. The best thing to
do, when really trying to get some work done, is to switch off the phone and cut out digital distractions for a solid hour or so. Social media, like Facebook, Twitter and yes, Instagram, does also come under this category by the way. If you feel like you really can’t resist, there are few websites that blocks off any sites of your choosing for a period of time.

Your surroundings have a big impact on your mood and motivation, so be picky!

The best way to keep on top of things is scheduling and adhering to that schedule. You can simply download an app or use a calendar on your phone to keep track of appointments, meetings or deadlines. Personally, this has been the best way for me when it comes to managing my tasks and time. My phone is always with me and having calendar on it means I can jot down everything that needs to be done for the day, knowing it is easily accessible.

Another thing, try to suss out what time of the day you’re most productive at. Me? I’m most productive in the morning – I plan everything early and get most of my work done throughout the day. If you find it difficult to establish when you’re most productive, just look out for when your energy is on a high and when it’s on a low (where you decide you need a coffee to spruce you up a bit).

It’s so important to have breaks when your brain is constantly on the ball. If you’re working from 9 till 6, you need to have an hour break with few small breaks too. This helps clear your mind – trust me! A short walk around the office, the library or a cheeky break to the kitchen for a glass of water makes a huge difference.

Last but not least, stick to a good sleeping routine. A good sleeping routine means going to bed and waking up the same time everyday. If it’s a good pattern, your body will want to sleep early at night and wake up early in the morning brimming with energy.

Whether you’re going back to work and getting into a new routine, getting back to school or just in general – following these little pieces of advice can make a difference in your overall attitude, mood and performance.

- Rameen
Sabrina was her ride or die. Sabrina was the one she would call if she had murdered someone and needed help to cover it up and get rid of the body. Sabrina was the one who knew the worst of her and didn’t judge her for it. Sabrina was the one who brought out the best in her. They were more than best friends, they were sisters in every meaning of the word and more.

Sabrina and Anisah had met when they were three years old and had been inseparable since. They had experienced all the changes and growth, yet their friendship remained immovable. Now, they were in their third year studying at the same university, albeit different courses, and were living together in a flat.

Anisah, for the first time in her life, found her best friend unrecognisable. Sabrina had had a boyfriend for the past year and a half but that was not why she was unrecognisable now. The reason behind it was what concerned Anisah the most, in that she did not know the reason. Sabrina was acting differently; she wasn’t attending her lectures or working on her assignments. She was neglecting herself and Anisah had to nag her to eat. Worst of all, Sabrina was not opening up to her, she was pushing her away and insisting there was nothing wrong.

Anisah had noticed a change in Sabrina’s relationship with her boyfriend, Zak. Before, they had both been happy to spend time and hang out with Anisah, the three of them. Whether they went out or stayed in the flat. Now, Sabrina and Zak would hardly ever spend time alone, because Sabrina wanted to go about things the ‘right way’, according to religious guidelines (which advised
against relationships before marriage). For the past few weeks, whenever Zak came to see Sabrina they wouldn’t invite Anisah to join them. Anisah could see, clear as day, that Sabrina wasn’t happy to see him as she used to be but, couldn’t work out what had changed.

Anisah tried to work out when these changes had first arisen and she knew it had been a few weeks. There had been a weekend when Anisah had gone back to her parents’ home and Sabrina had decided to stay at the flat and catch up on some work. That had been the turning point. Something had happened that weekend but what, she had no idea.

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Late one evening Anisah was preparing dinner in their flat, deep in thought, Sabrina and Zak were in her bedroom. Anisah was abruptly pulled away from her contemplation when she heard raised voices. For a moment she paused, completely still, knife and half chopped onion in her hands.

“Get out, get out, get out!” Sabrina’s voice raised louder than ever, frantic and furious. Anisah dropped the knife and the onion. She bolted to Sabrina’s room faster than she knew she could run, surprised she didn’t give herself whiplash. She burst into the room and saw Sabrina sitting at her desk facing away from Zak, who was standing behind her. He was red in the face and looked irritated at Anisah coming in. She stood there, silently, waiting for some kind of explanation or excuse from either one of them, but nothing.

Zak barged out of the room, swearing under his breath and clipping Anisah’s shoulder on his way out. As soon as Zak had left the room, Sabrina crumbled. Tears were eagerly flowing, as if they had been held back for too long. Anisah was immediately at her side and embraced her friend without hesitation, and held on for dear life.

When the tears subsided, Anisah still held on, more for her own sake than for Sabrina’s. Reluctantly, she pulled away and quietly looked at Sabrina, waiting for an explanation, knowing it would come now.

Solemnly Sabrina began, “It’s over between Zak and I.” Anisah nodded, then carefully prodded, “Why?” Sabrina stared into her lap, shaking her head, unable to find any words as tears rolled down her cheeks again. “What happened? Please Sabrina, he did do something, I know he did.” Anisah persisted. Sabrina looked up at that, and saw her unaltering friend, wanting and needing to know the truth. With that, came everything.
Sabrina told Anisah what had happened that weekend. She told her every detail, because she knew she would never tell another soul. The two young women, both in tears, held each other and sat in silence when the ugly truth had been revealed.

Anisah was bewildered, she tried to process everything she had just heard. The hardest thing to bear was knowing that her best friend, whom she loved so much, had gone through something so traumatic and damaging.

Sabrina who was such a kind soul, who would do anything to help anyone. Why did it have to happen to her? As much as Anisah hated knowing what had happened to her friend, as painful as it was for her to comprehend; she knew it was only a grain compared to the suffering of Sabrina and was relieved that she had finally shared her burden.

“We have to go to the police,” Anisah said with certainty and conviction.
“No Ani,” Sabrina said softly.
“Please Sabrina, he has to pay for what he did!”
“He will pay, of that I’m sure. Allah is the most Just. But, there’s no way I’m going to the police,” Sabrina was adamant.
“Why not?” Anisah couldn’t stand the thought of Zak facing no consequences.
“Because of many reasons Ani. There is no evidence, certainly not now. The police will put me through hell. The likelihood of him getting convicted would be virtually zero. The joys of being a criminology student,” Sabrina muttered.
“But still, we have to try!” Anisah insisted.
“Even if he were convicted, Ani, it would ruin my life. You know that it’s true if you think for a minute past wanting revenge. Whether he was convicted or not, I would be telling the world I had a boyfriend. I was alone in my room with a man. I got what was coming to me, that’s what they’ll say. I would be an outcast in the community. How would I have a hope of ever getting married in the future? People would blame it on me; say I tempted him. Say I knew what would happen. All of these things Ani, you know it’s true,” Sabrina looked sadly at her best friend and knew she understood immediately.

As Anisah processed everything, she could not help but admit to herself the truth in Sabrina’s words. The harsh reality made her feel sick. But in that moment Anisah knew she had to do something. She knew she had to find a way to make Zak pay.

To Be Continued...
They say your eyes are the mirror to your soul. Our eyes give us the ability to envision the beauty of this world. However, many people are either born without the blessing of sight, while others live with avoidable eye conditions, rendering them blind.

In efforts to educate and screen more individuals for eye conditions, the World Sight Day is held yearly on the second Thursday of October. This year’s theme is Make Vision Count. As an optometrist, this year’s theme couldn’t have been more appropriate.

My clinical days generally surround with educating people on the importance of eye care and regular screening. Day in and day out I deal with patients who take their vision for granted and view eye health as ‘low priority’ on their busy list of things to do. The sad truth is, many people seek help when their vision is unsalvageable.

In line with this year’s theme, I urge my readers to have regular screening done – once every two years. We are creatures of habit and we are unable to consciously detect if we may be suffering from refractive errors. Some may even be unaware of what refractive errors* are and the toll they can have on their daily lives, therefore going unnoticed. Unfortunately, this has become the sole reason for uncorrected refractive errors being the main cause of visual impairment globally. [Read some more facts]

The first signs to systemic conditions can be detected from an eye exam. Regular eye examinations can help detect these conditions, allowing proper treatments when required. Thus, reducing the prevalence and preventing several non-communicable diseases.*

A quote by Stedman Graham comes to mind and it goes like this; “Having a vision for your life allows you to live out of hope, rather than out of your fears.” Due to lack of treatment facilities, developing countries are the main preys of preventable eye conditions. The hope of these people slowly diminishes as does their eye sight. They begin to live out of fear; contrary to Graham’s belief.

As I part my two cents, I hope you take better care of your eyes and have your routine eye exams. Enjoy the beauty surrounding you!

Refractive Errors – the shape of your eye does not bend light correctly resulting in blurred vision. There are four types of refractive errors – Myopia (nearsightedness), Hyperopia (farsightedness), presbyopia (loss of near vision with age) and astigmatism (seeing distorted images).

Non-communicable disease – any medical disease or condition that is not caused by an infectious agent and are often referred to as chronic diseases – lasting for long periods.
Eliza hastily took a piece of paper with a sandwich in it and ran towards the door. She stopped to put on her shoes and glanced over at the words carved on a wall hanging. Smiling to herself she mumbled, “I don’t even know why I bought that in first place, sounds stupid.” After successfully putting on her shoes, she rushed out the door. It was not for the first time that she was late for work and would certainly not be last time she would frantically run to the corner of her street, from where her carpool would pick her up.

It was a pleasant morning. The sun was trying to make its way through the clouds, while the wind blew stubbornly but peacefully. Everyone was in a hurry; few were rushing towards their offices, while others were accompanying their children on the way to school. The chirping of the birds was overcome by the sound of traffic horns. It was that time of the morning where everyone was either excited about the upcoming adventures of the day or reluctantly embracing the feeling of being trapped in the cobweb of worries and slavery.

As she chewed hastily on her breakfast, she saw a beautiful little girl in school uniform standing not far from her. The girl was looking at her with a sweet smile and as a school bus stopped near her, she excitedly climbed on. Eliza was curious and delighted at the same time by the smile offered by the little girl. In the meantime, her own ride arrived and she started her own journey towards the office.

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Eliza arrived at the bus stop a bit earlier the following morning and noticed the little girl standing there again with the same smile and twinkle in her eye. Eliza smiled back at her and savored the innocent joy on the girl’s face. This event became a part of her daily routine. Eliza would wait for
the little girl, finding her cheerful smile a great way to kick start her day.

One day, Eliza arrived at the spot as usual, only to find that the girl was not there. She became worried, but there was no way to find out why. She had become so accustomed to surrounding herself with work and responsibilities that she had forgotten to pay attentions to meaningful and uplifting things. The little girl’s smile had changed that. The innocence and simplicity made her forget her worries and served as a force that would drag her through the morning.

The next day, Eliza went to the spot and was delighted to find the girl there. As Eliza approached her, she asked her mom about her absence and her mother replied, “Muskan was ill, so she took a day off.”

“Muskan, a smile,” Eliza recalled the meaning of the name, “So that’s what her name is, as pleasant as her cute little self,” Eliza was intrigued by the little girl, but with it being morning rush hour, she had to leave and decided to leave her questions for another morning.

Eliza tried to accomplish that goal a few days later. Upon seeing Muskan, Eliza greeted her but in response, the little human simply smiled. After thinking for a moment, Eliza asked Muskan about her school, but again she didn't reply and continued looking at her. Eliza changed the question and asked her about her favorite cartoon character, yet Muskan - with her ‘Muskan on’ - said nothing.

That made Eliza curious and worried her at the same time.

Muskan’s mother approached her and before Eliza could speak, a tear rolled down her cheek.

“Muskan really likes you, she always waits for you – I put it down to the power of smile, whenever she smiles at you, you always smile back at her,” Muskan's mother said, causing Eliza to look at the girl, who was indeed still smiling.

“But why does she not speak?” asked Eliza.

“Because,” Muskan's mother sighed, “She cannot hear, nor speak, she is deaf and a mute.”

Eliza was startled!

“There are many people around the world who cannot understand your words, but it doesn’t mean you cannot communicate with them. You can easily communicate and make them understand if you know the language of love, kindness, and affection. And that is the only reason Muskan, without knowing what you are saying, can still understand you. Sometimes being deaf is a blessing as words hurt more, but communicating in a language of love is more than a blessing. And as love begets love, both of you are blessed,” Muskan’s mother continued to speak more about Muskan, while all Eliza could recall were the words carved on that wall hanging near her front door, which for the first time were making sense to her: “Listen with ears of tolerance! See through the eyes of compassion! Speak with the language of love. – Rumi”

By Misbah
Get Involved

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