



# MindScape *Where Mind Meets Matter*

The Concept of Self  
News Letter - July to September 2023

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We cannot change, we cannot move away from what we are, until we thoroughly accept what we are. Then change seems to come about almost unnoticed.

Carl Rogers

## News and Views

### INTERNATIONAL

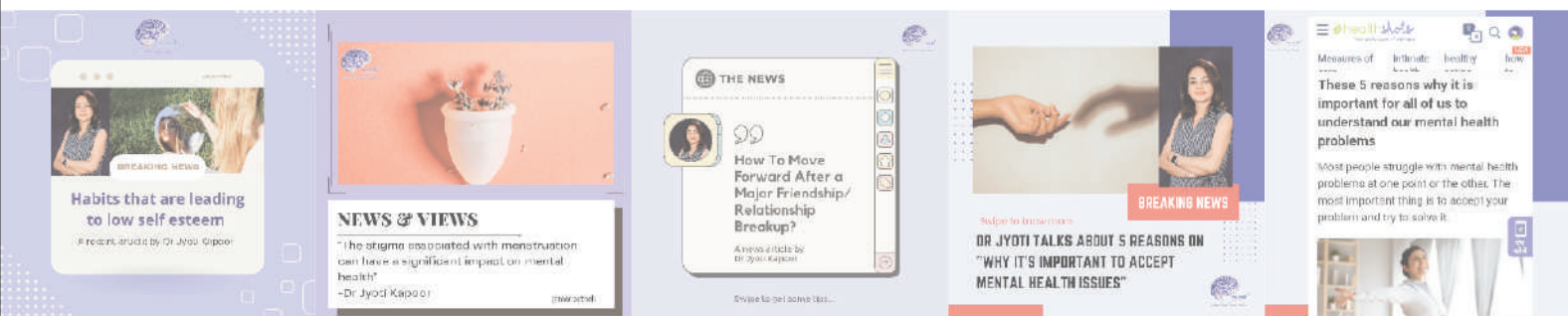
- Research conducted by Massachusetts Institute of Technology designed a technology to probe connections between the brain and the digestive tract which can influence hunger, mood and variety of mental health diseases.
- University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine conducted a study that concluded and identified cells that involved in the communication between stress responses in brain and Inflammatory Bowel Disease.
- In a study published by Garvan Institute of Medical Research found that stress damages the brain's natural response to satiety and leads to non-stop reward. This leads to increased cravings of comfort food.

### NATIONAL

- Manoj Sane who was accused of his wife's murder was put through series of non-invasive psychological tests to determine the truthfulness of his statements.
- Study shows that loneliness and insomnia is linked to working to AI systems.
- UG students to be taught sports psychology in Allahabad University.

### Local @MANASTHALI

- Manasthali has started a happiness club in its premises. The club aims to provide safe space for expression and promote wellbeing.
- We are happy to announce the expansion of our team with professionals from various integrative approaches like Aromatherapy.
- A new kind of Manotsava will be held this year by Team Manasthali on the occasion of World Mental Health Day.





## *Editor's desk*



### THE CONCEPT OF SELF

"Who am I?"

It's an oft asked question throughout history. Philosophers, psychologists, scientists have all tried to answer it and still the concept is so abstract that it slips the grasp of an analytical mind. The psychological theories around self concept define self as one's knowledge of who one is from physical, emotional, social and spiritual perspective. Carl Rogers suggested three components of self concept namely self image, self esteem and ideal self. From the framework of Roger's theory, many more theories and explanations developed all leading to the understanding that our perception of self defines our behavior ( self presentation ) and helps us develop an identity ( self categorization). Eventually, 'who am I' explores, 'who am I supposed to be' and 'who I should be'!

**Abstract Right!**

The self concept begins to develop as the new born baby starts realizing that she is separate from the environment. The Object Relations Theory examines this growth from psychodynamic perspective and the process of differentiation from environment. By 7 years of age, child is able to draw social comparisons and how they are perceived by others. This is when the self concept becomes more abstract. By adolescence , an individual explores various roles and personas and starts integrating a personality which is structured by the expectations and perception of others and success in gaining approval. These self concepts are varied and malleable, often motivated by situations and self enhancing information. We observe ourselves through other people's perceptions and lead us to believe in or ignore aspects of us that are not perceived well.

**And there lies the catch and the potential!**

Because our self is a forever evolving entity. It's something we create, something we become. Most

of the time, we define ourselves by other people's view of who we are or what we are expected to be. This process is rather automatic, a subconscious phenomena instead of a more conscious understanding of our motivations. The ideal self is an outcome of social expectation and self image is a sum total of our success and failure in reaching that ideal, but without realising this process, we often reach at the cross roads where it all appears false, or at least not completely true. That's when we question the 'I'.

From the philosophical standpoint, the concept of self has been defined sometimes as an activity , devoid of senses or an intellect independent of the physicality of it. Dennett's deflationary theory proposes self as a story we tell us in which self is a character. Like the concept of the center of gravity which is a convenient concept for solving problems in physics, the self-concept allows for individuals to give meaning to their existence.

As concepts change while transitioning from macro world of classical Newtonian physics to micro environments of quantum physics, so do the definitions of who I am, from 'I am a certain gender, age, physical characteristic, ethnic group or a social role', to a component of a collective consciousness striving to find the whole.

This evolution of the individual consciousness realising its limiting belief and exploring its unlimited potential is the exciting self-awareness that can finally set us free. From a practical standpoint, the self-concept is a choice we can make, if we are mindful of who I wish to be, I can become.

**Dr Jyoti Kapoor**

Sr. Consultant Psychiatrist and Psychotherapist

## “WHO AM I?”- FINDING SENSE OF SELF

Sense of self is referred to as one's perception of the array of qualities that one possesses. Your self-image or distinct identity as a person is shaped by your personality traits, skills, likes, and dislikes, as well as your beliefs and moral principles.

People who have a clear sense of who they are tend to be able to describe these components of their identity with ease. If you have trouble naming more than a few of these qualities, it may indicate that your sense of self is less clear. Even if you don't give your identity much conscious thought, it still has an impact on how you live. Knowing who you are enables you to live purposefully and create fulfilling connections, both of which can contribute to overall excellent emotional health. However, some people can succeed in life without divulging too much about who they are. So, you might be wondering: **Does having a strong sense of self really matter?**

### **It most certainly does.**

A strong sense of self is incredibly helpful in guiding our decision-making in life. Knowing what originates from our own selves contrary to what originates from others enables us to live genuinely, whether it is with regard to smaller things like favourite foods or more significant matters like personal beliefs.

Understanding who you are as a whole, including the qualities you're proud of and those you'd like to develop, makes it simpler to accept who you are. When you have a good sense of your personality and abilities, you'll find it easier to address any areas where you do feel unsatisfied with yourself. On the other side, it can frequently be challenging to know exactly what you want when you don't have a strong sense of who you are. When it's time to make significant decisions, you might find it difficult to make any decision at all if you feel unsure or indecisive.

As a result, rather than moving forward with your own momentum, you can merely drift through life.

### **So how do we check-in with our sense of self?**

It is important to understand where on the spectrum

does your sense of self fall? You may have observed a tendency to make decisions based on what you believe others desire from you. Or perhaps you are glad to simply go with the flow.

The following questions can help you gain some understanding:

### **Do I say yes to everything?**

While occasionally making accommodations for others is entirely acceptable, if you usually go along with their requests, you probably aren't living for yourself. It may indicate a less-developed sense of self if you define yourself primarily via your interactions with others or your capacity to please your loved ones.

### **What are my strengths?**

Knowing and believing in your skills to use your strengths to accomplish your goals are essential components of having a strong sense of self. A strong sense of self is frequently a sign that you have a good hold on your abilities and are using them to their fullest in everyday life.

### **What makes me joyful?**

What aids in your relaxation and enjoyment? What pastimes or pursuits give life meaning? Finding the people and interests in your life that are important to you and that you wouldn't want to lose or change might reveal a lot about you.

### **What values do I hold? Do I act in accordance with that?**

Your sense of self can be greatly shaped by being aware of your particular ideals. Values are the qualities you value most in yourself or others, such as empathy, honesty, reliability, kindness, and so forth.

### **Do my decisions align with my interests or those of others?**

If you're unsure of how to respond to this inquiry, consider it from a different perspective: Would you make the same decisions if you were alone? Strong sense of self is often shown in decisions that are primarily driven by your aspirations and objectives for yourself.



**Things that may have an impact on your feeling of self**

Let's say that you had some difficulty responding to the questions above.

"Really, who am I?" You might be curious, possibly in distress at times.

You might feel more at ease knowing that having a hazy sense of self is not at all unusual. This doesn't imply that you did anything wrong or that you'll be stuck without a distinct identity for the rest of your life. It will be easier for you to start honing your self-image if you have a greater awareness of the elements that contribute to its construction.

**An attempt to fit in**

It would have been simpler for you to adopt the persona of a social chameleon if you had trouble fitting in with your peers when you were a teenager. Instead of clinging to your sense of self, you started changing who you were to fit in with more than one group. Acceptance is an effective motivator. This lesson can stick with you well into adulthood if your malleable sense of self served you well during your teenage years.

At work, with your family, and while you're with friends, you might adopt one identity; at home, another. It may be considerably more challenging to discover your genuine nature and stressful for you to alternate between these many "selves" when doing so.

**Enhancing one's sense of self**

You may feel hollow and unfulfilled if your sense of self is shaky, but it's always possible to improve it. To start creating a more distinct persona, try these strategies:

**Establish your values.**

Fundamental components of identity are personal values and beliefs. Your belief system can aid you in identifying what is most important to you and establishing your position on significant issues. For instance, your desire to uphold animal rights may influence your decision to buy products that don't test on animals and to eat foods that you know more about. Your personal limits with other people can be influenced by your values. For instance, if

you value honesty, you can be clear that you can't continue to be friends with someone who lies to you. While you don't have to pinpoint every one of your beliefs at once, try to consider a few as you go about your day and engage with others.

**Choose your own actions.**

Most of the time, you should make choices that are primarily for your health and wellbeing. You should also consider your partner's or your kids' needs if you have them, but you shouldn't put yourself last. Keep in mind that when your needs are not satisfied, you are less able to help others. You may have previously allowed others to decide on crucial matters for you, such as your college, employment, or place of residence. If so, starting to make decisions for yourself could feel unsettling or even frightening.

But it's okay to start out modestly. Practise acting without seeking advice from others and doing only because you want to.

**When to seek help?**

If you've never given your identity any attention, starting to define your sense of self could feel quite overwhelming. If you're having trouble, think about asking a mental health expert for advice. A therapist can help you if you're experiencing emotional pain that affects your sense of self, such as:

Low self-esteem, despair, and anxiety, as well as ongoing unhappiness brought on by problems in the workplace or in relationships. Therapy is a great way to start the self-exploration process even if you don't have any mental health symptoms.

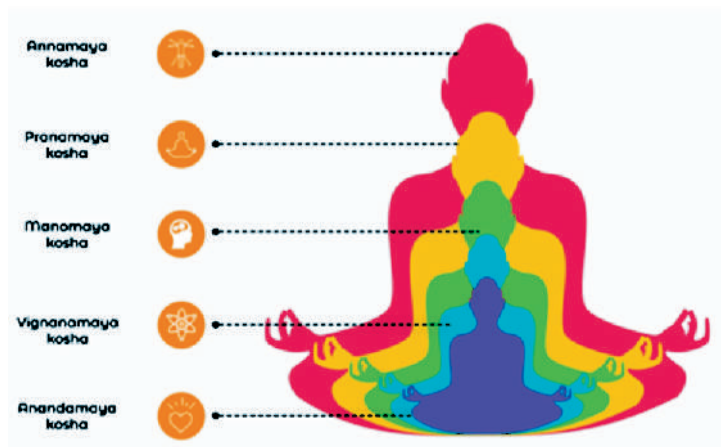
By  
**Aishwarya Raj**  
(Clinical Psychologist)

**Self Help Tip** -Set your vision / intention

If you don't know where you're going, how do you know you're walking in the right direction? When you start a self-exploration routine, you strengthen your sense of purpose. And it's handy: a personal mission statement will re-energise you towards your greater mission at difficult times.

## Insights from the Vedic Lore

'5'  
Who Am I?



While the human civilization has been grappling with the concept of self, Vedic scholars have explored the idea and concluded ages ago that

अहम् ब्रह्मास्मि

**I am Brahman**

(Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 1.4.10, Yajur Veda)

The Mahavakyas have repeated the knowledge to the humanity in definitive terms-

तत् त्वम् असि

Chandogya Upanishad 6.8.7, Sam Veda)

प्रज्ञानं ब्रह्म

(Aitareya Upanishad 3.3, Rig Veda)

अयम् आत्मा ब्रह्म

(Mandukya Upanishad 1.2, Atharva Veda)

But what is Brahman, that we define is the self, that permeates the whole creation.

As we introspect, we go through our understanding of our physical layers, like peeling an onion.

It's an arduous process, if we are the onion itself, peeling away from the five senses to look inside is bound to be difficult. The outer layer, the Annamaya kosha comprises of the body and all its functions. As a child that's all we know of our self, 'This is my hand, this is my foot, this is my mouth'.

'But if I lose my hand, I still exist, I am still whole, so my body is not me.'

'Like I hold a doll, and think of it as mine, so do I hold my body and think of it as mine, but it's not actually me'.

It's certainly a tricky situation, difficult to grasp that if my body is lost, can I still exist.

Vedic philosophy expounds that the self is the mover of the body, the 'atma', not the spirit or the ghost of our imagination but part of the essence that moves the creation. Call it energy or force or the field that quantum physics is trying to come to terms with. So

अयम् आत्मा ब्रह्म

This Atma is brahm (brahman).

Is Self is the atma that resides in the body and atma is the brahman that resides in the creation and therefore

तत् त्वम् असि

That is you.

But eventually what opens up the understanding is

प्रज्ञानं ब्रह्म

Knowledge is Brahman

It's the experience, the awareness, the wisdom that is actually the self. Once I am aware of myself, I know myself.

And so all roads lead to Rome

Being mindful is the key to knowing the self, the self that moves or motivates, that inspires or cripples, that expands or limits the potential of this speck of consciousness glittering on grand fabric of universal consciousness. This is the self that exists in one and all at various levels of awareness, and this difference in level of awareness is what separates us.... until we can reunite. And how do we reunite?

Vedic philosophers have named the tool of unity as union itself, 'Yoga'. It's the path to self-awareness and self-realisation. It can't be explained in a book or told in discourses. It needs to be experienced, as the layers are peeled of, what are we left with in the end, that is the question and the answer as well.

**Dr Jyoti Kapoor**

Sr. Consultant Psychiatrist and Psychotherapist

## THE CONCEPT OF REAL & IDEAL SELF: HOW DOES IT IMPACT OUR WELLBEING?

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

Many personality theorists have tried to define "self" over the developmental timelines in psychology. One such description sees self as a person's consciousness of their physical self and character, along with the emotions they experience. Another definition by Roy Baumeister defines self as, "The individual's belief about himself or herself, including the person's attributes and who and what the self is". Our perception of self is important because it affects our motivations, attitudes and behaviors. Its impact can also be seen on how we see ourselves and whether we're competent or not. These perceptions of self solidify with age and play a crucial role in identity formation.

### FROM WHERE DOES THE CONCEPT OF REAL SELF AND IDEAL SELF COME FROM?

A prominent name highlighted when it comes to the concept of self is CARL ROGERS. According to Rogers, an individual's concept of self is made from three components. They are

#### THE REAL SELF

The real self is the actual version of yourself at a given point of time. It reflects the true qualities, aptitudes, inclinations and characteristics of yourself. It is intrinsically who a person actually is. It is the way one thinks, feels, looks and behaves.



#### THE IDEAL SELF

The ideal self is that version of yourself that you want to achieve and is the highest version of yourself. You want to be the person you see yourself to be. This individual embodies the traits or qualities you are striving for or aspire to have. It is the person you see yourself as if everything went according to plan.

#### SELF ESTEEM

Your self-concept is influenced by how much you like, accept, and appreciate yourself. Numerous things, such as how other people see you, how you feel you stack up

against other people, and your place in society, can have an impact on your sense of self-worth.

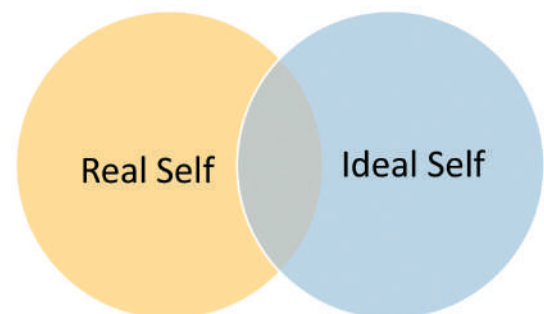
### HOW CONGRUENCE OF IDEAL AND REAL SELF INFLUENCES OUR WELLBEING?

The ideal self of a person might not match their experiences and actual life circumstances. Consequently, there can be a discrepancy between a person's ideal self and their real experience. It is known as incongruence. A state of congruence exists when an individual's ideal self and actual experience are consistent or strikingly comparable. All persons feel some degree of incongruence; complete congruence is rare, if ever, experienced.

The emergence of congruence depends on unwavering admiration. Carl Rogers thought that a person needed to be in a condition of congruence in order to reach self-actualization. We want to feel, experience, and act in ways that are compatible with our self-image and that mirror our ideal selves, according to Rogers. The more consistent or congruent we are, and the better our sense of self-worth, the closer our self-image and ideal-self are to one another. If a portion of a person's whole experience is unsatisfactory to them and is denied or twisted in their self-image, they are said to be in a condition of incongruence.

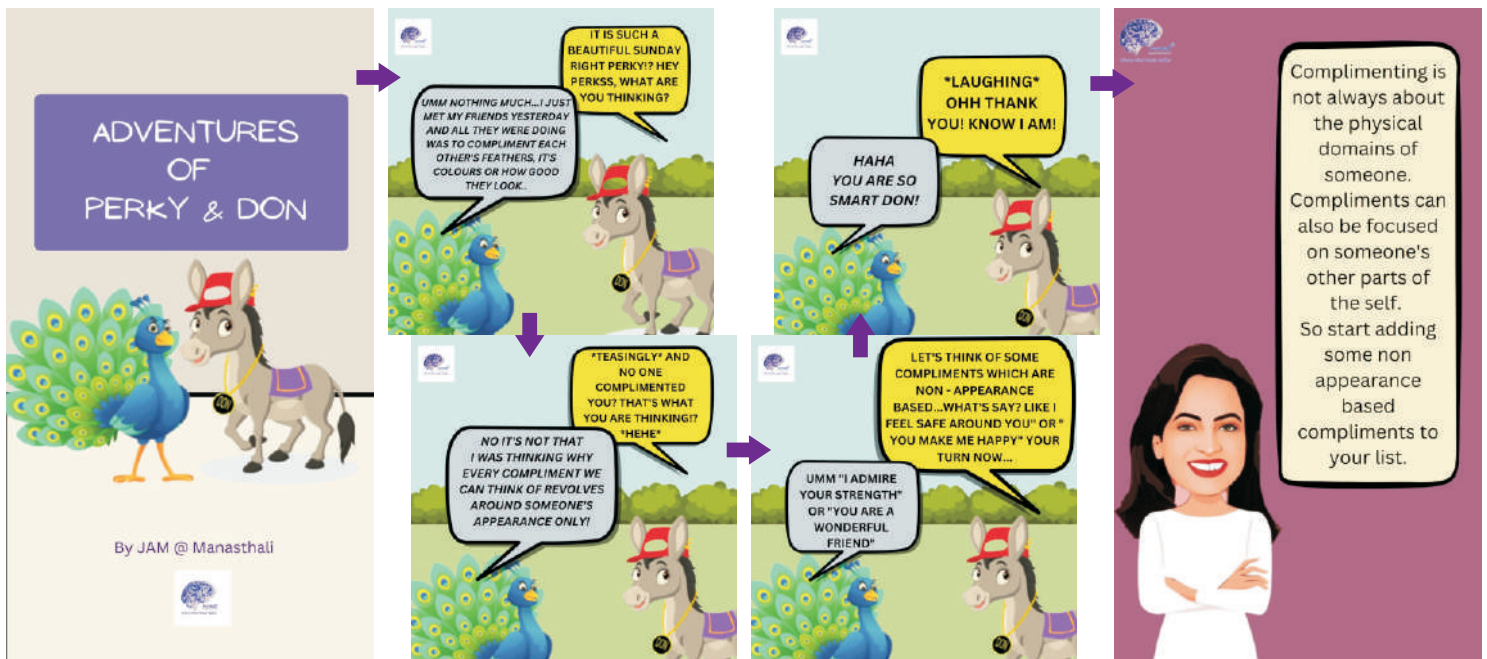
Incongruency is "the contradiction between the actual experience of the organism and the self-image of the individual representing that experience". Because we prefer to see ourselves in a way that is consistent with our self-image, we may use defense mechanisms such as denial and repression to keep some of our unwanted emotions from feeling threatened by us.

### CONGRUENCE OF REAL AND IDEAL SELF



By  
**Mehak Thukral**





## Manasthali® *Mental Health and Wellness Services*

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### Manasthali®'s Rehabilitation Programs

According to WHO, Rehabilitation is "a set of interventions designed to optimize functioning and reduce disability in individuals with health conditions in interaction with their environment".

At Manasthali®, we understand the role of Rehabilitation as an essential element in holistic recovery and wellbeing of an individual and have designed programs which incorporate psychological, social and alternate healing practices to achieve integration of the individual into socio cultural milieu.

### Our Programs :-

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- D. Online Positivity Development Program (CBT based cognitive restructuring)
- E. Online Dementia Rehabilitation Caregiver support Program
- F. Online Schizophrenia Rehabilitation Caregiver support Program

### Our Services :-

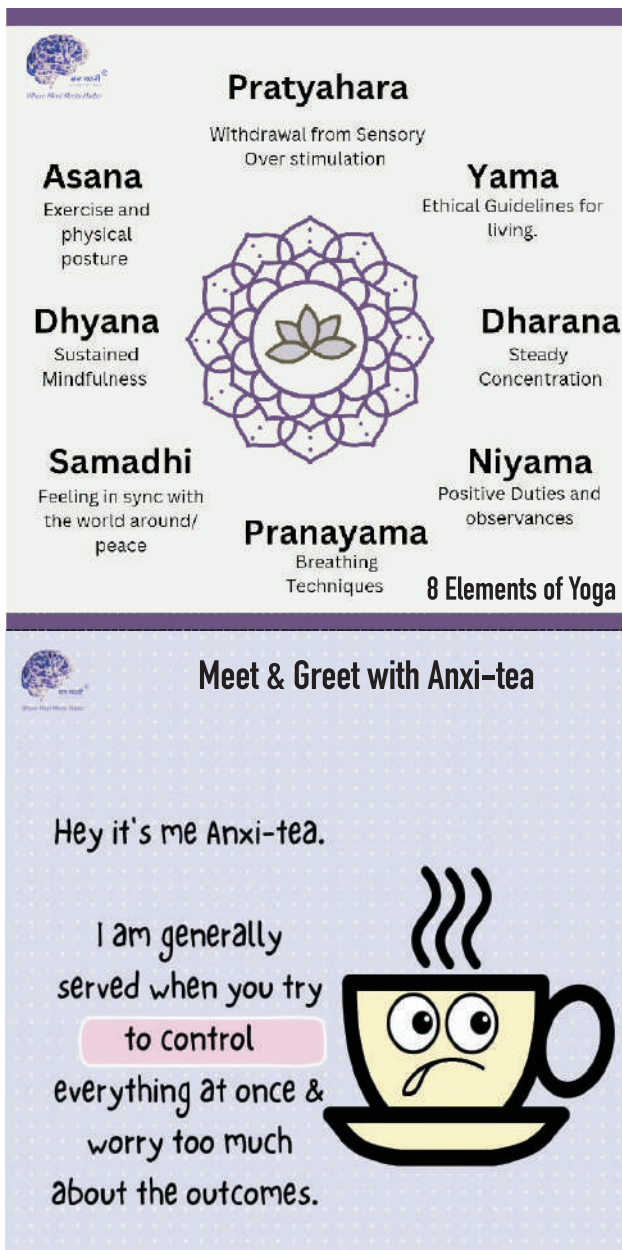
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For more details,  
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## Guest Section



### Meet & Greet with Anxi-tea

Hey it's me Anxi-tea.

I am generally  
served when you try  
to control  
everything at once &  
worry too much  
about the outcomes.

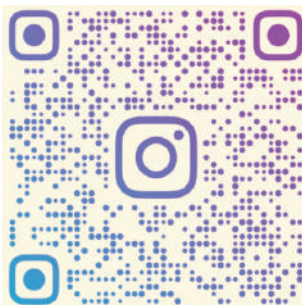


### LOOP

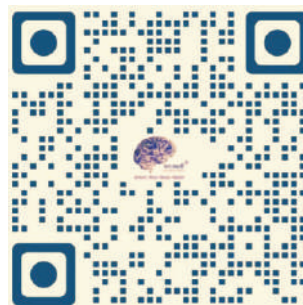
Someone inspired me to  
Be who I want to be with  
Taught me to persevere  
And be the shoulder I could rely on  
In times where the mind and soul are at war  
I learn to become the shelter I seek  
With the mind wandering off to  
Their words  
The paucity of love there.  
With my desire of the profuse  
Reliability  
I want to be my own  
Guardian Angel and show up  
For the little one  
Who had been contrived of  
The same feeling I had and then lost  
I know how she feels  
In regret I apologise;  
In promise that I will be her guardian  
And love her the way I want to be  
This is my self-discovery  
A journey that'll be the universe  
Ever-expanding and infinite  
A journey that makes me  
Dependable for others  
Where even in the worst times  
They say, "it's going to be alright, she's here"  
A pseudo sense of transient affection  
In process of the journey I long to discover  
All for never  
Feeling the way I felt  
When what I claimed mine was taken away  
Turned against, and kept latent.  
This is for them  
Who taught me to be who I want to be with  
To persevere and to show up  
And somewhere in my heart  
Their fingers a wish  
That they know I'll follow through  
And be the epitome of my own identity.  
And somewhere in my heart  
Their fingers a wish  
That they know I'll follow through  
And be the epitome of my own identity.

*Divyana Madan*

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and tips on mind and wellness.



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