



MindScape *Where Mind Meets Matter*

Theme - Self Care in this Millennial World

News Letter - July to September 2022

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"Self-care is never a selfish act – it is simply good stewardship of the only gift I have, the gift I was put on earth to offer others. Anytime we can listen to true self and give the care it requires, we do it not only for ourselves, but for the many others whose lives we touch."

Parker Palmer

News and Events

INTERNATIONAL

1. About 1 in 8 people in the world live with a mental disorder, reported WHO.
2. Researchers from University of Cambridge and Fudan University of China found that 7 hours of sleep is important for improved cognitive performance and mental health in elderly & Middle aged population
3. According to American Psychiatric Association, extreme heat can be associated with irritability & symptoms of depression.
4. Policymakers should consider integrating yoga into community based Mental Health & Well being initiatives, said WHO on the occasion of International Yoga Day.

NATIONAL

1. The health department will tie up with the private hospitals to examine & follow up treatments to patients with mental health problems in rural areas at OPDs, under the National Mental Health program.
2. Kolkata Police arranged 'Sainik Sammelan', and focused on the stress management as well as on the cop's mental health.

LOCAL @ Manasthali

1. Manasthali launches first ever Online Wellness Restoration Program.
2. Manasthali launches Basic Stress Management and Skills Training program for people with special needs.
3. Manasthali's Evolving Personalities support group celebrates its first anniversary by conducting an offline meet.
4. Manasthali's Mental Health internship program is now being conducted at the premises, focusing on equipping the students and budding professionals with exposure and experience of clinical set up.



Manasthali's
Mental Health Support Helpline
(Psycho Education, Guidance, Support)
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Editor's desk



Self care vs. Selfishness

The word self care is trending today, from taking care of self in terms of physical and emotional health to beauty and lifestyle, we are focusing on the individual's right to be happy and content. In a society, where focus on self is seen in terms of neglecting others and selfless sacrifice is seen as a desirable quality in the pursuit of nobility, it's a difficult concept to imbibe unless we are able to discriminate between the popular idea of what selfishness is versus what self care is not.

From a psychological perspective, self-care has been defined as providing adequate attention to one's own physical and psychological wellness (Beauchamp & Childress, 2001). Beyond being an aspirational goal, engaging in self-care has been described as an "ethical imperative" (Norcross & Barnett, 2008) and is part of the APA's Ethics Code (2002). According to another psychological perspective elucidated for the development of self care assessment for psychologists, Self-care has been defined as "a multidimensional, multifaceted process of purposeful engagement in strategies that promote healthy functioning and enhance well-being."

All in all, the focus on self here is not to full fill the gross desires of individual body but on the skills and strategies to help one become more aware of one's own needs at an emotional and intellectual level. Self care is thus self exploration, to achieve a better understanding of what makes one happier and more fulfilled to achieve a balanced perspective of the world around. Because it's only through inner balance that one can achieve balance in outer environment. The perspective of self care is thus more about not denying self against the selfishness paradigm which is about being inconsiderate towards others over one's own requirements or pleasure.

Self care is not a luxury but a priority in terms of achieving a healthier life. The three major aspects of self care help in delineating all that should be

emphasised while developing an effective self care routine.

Physical self care- We look for sturdiness in everything we buy for our households, be it a gadget or furniture. Because unless the gross body of something is strong enough, it can't function effectively for long. The same principle applies for our physical self. It's only through maintaining a healthy body by eating well, getting enough rest and sleep and exercising physically that we can be receptive to the bounties the world has to offer.

Mental self care- The mind runs our body and the directions it can take are infinite. And so, from the ideas we feed to ourselves and the belief systems we develop, all affect our mental state. Strengthening the mind is thus mental self care which extends into emotional and spiritual aspects as we delve deeper into the philosophy. From mental exercises and meditation to sharpen concentration and focus to practicing gratitude, developing an accepting and tolerant view, being kind to oneself etc all go a long way in achieving a healthier state of mind.

Social self care- Research has shown that social connectedness is vital for our well-being. The quality of our relationships defines the quality of our life as well as gives us a more stable sense of happiness. It is thus imperative that we understand how one relates to others in one's immediate environment as well as in broader sense of belonging to a larger community. Here the doubts relating to selfishness can be easily clarified because an inclusive self takes care of not just one's own self but also has the capacity to affect others positively.

So let the charity begin at home, care for self to be able to take care of others. That's probably a better form of social service.

Dr Jyoti Kapoor

Consultant Psychiatrist and Psychotherapist

SELF-CARE FROM A CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST'S PERSPECTIVE

Self-care is representative of two of the most important pillars of psychological health: the relationship you have with yourself and the relationships you have with others. In simple words self-care is an activity or choice that allows a person to replenish, rejuvenate or reserve energy." It is about prioritizing our needs so necessarily self-care doesn't have to be a grand gesture. It can be as simple as starting the day with some stretching or making a choice not to go out one night because you are not well.

The World Health Organization defines health as : Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. Self care is an important part of our health.

I have been in practice for almost 10 years. I have observed there are a few misconceptions about self-care—that it's just a trend, that it's a chore—but really, self-care is a big part of taking care of our mental health. Simply put, it's taking the intentional time to focus on yourself and saying, "I am worth it. I am valuable. Self-care means different things to different people. It extends to multiple realms—physical, emotional, and spiritual. However, it doesn't have to be a visit to the spa or a week-long vacation—a lot of people don't have the time or money for that. Everyone can find ways to restore themselves. Self-care can be as simple as listening to a favourite song or as elaborate as blocking off a day to do activities you enjoy, like planning a game night with family members or an online happy hour with friends. It might also be something that most people wouldn't consider pleasant but sets you up for success down the road, like organizing emails or doing the dishes. For some people, those can be relaxing activities.

In my work with clients, I'm always trying to help them regain control in their lives and take better care of

themselves, instead of being overly anxious or self-critical. That can be especially tough right now, however I advise my clients, as much as they can, to put work aside and spend quality time with family and friends, to take just a few minutes out of their day to do some breathing or muscle relaxation. Plan for self-care in your schedule. Do whatever you can to capture those little bits of joy.

To start with self-care, schedule self-care like it's a meeting or appointment. We usually prioritize everything and everyone else over our own self-care, and there's always something to do, whether at home or at work. Which is why it's vital to think of self-care as you would any important activity. When possible, communicate your plan to your partner, roommate, friend, or family member, as they might be a good support. Check in with yourself regularly. It is important to have honest conversations throughout the day about what you truly need and trying to meet those needs. This in itself is self-care.

Self-care is not an indulgence; it's a requirement. It's not a short-term fix; it's a long-term, comprehensive practice. Self-care is also not a selfish act. When you take better care of your own mental, emotional, spiritual, and physical needs, you're in a better position to care for others.

Aishwarya Raj

Consultant Clinical Psychologist

Self Help Tip - Take time during the month to think about how you can practice self-care to help improve your health and well-being. One such thing is Negative Self talk.

We've all been there, Cutting out your inner negative talk is one of the ultimate forms of self-care. Try giving it a go.

HOW SYSTEM IMPACTS MENTAL HEALTH AND SELF CARE?

Imagine a situation wherein a therapist is working with an adolescent who comes from low socioeconomic strata of the society and is experiencing anxiety and depression as he might not be able to continue his studies. If the therapist doesn't acknowledge the role of society, poverty etc in maintaining his condition, the therapy will not make sense at a point.

This highlights the role of the system in our mental health. If we tend to see well-being and self-care from an

individualized perspective, we may ignore the larger picture as well as its structural aspects. It might seep into the therapy rooms too, wherein the mental health professionals may unintentionally look over the structural violence that exists outside the therapy set-ups and how it may create a hindrance in adopting self-care. When we phrase this " mental health is political", it doesn't indicate the involvement of any specific political party in mental health scenarios, but boils down to the statement:

Mental health is influenced by several social, cultural,

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Insights from the Vedic Lore

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Self and Self-care- The Vedic Perspective

"Who am I?", is a question asked by many since the dawn of civilization. The concept of self has been explored and expounded through spiritual, philosophical and scientific means and yet, we struggle with the idea. Oyserman, Elmer & Smith (2012) reviewed hundreds of published work on self, self- concept, and identity carried out in modern psychology and observe that "...self, self- concept, and identity are mental constructs that are shaped by the contexts in which they develop and influence action."

The Vedic worldview affirms the spiritual dimension of human existence, hence from that perspective, self is defined as something beyond the material aspect of physical body and the physical environment it relates to. In Indian psychology we can distinguish two kinds of terms related to self and identity: (1) those that represent our spiritual side such as ātman, purusha, jīva, jīvātman and so on; and (2) those which are conceptual (mental constructs) such as aham, ahamkāra, ahambhāva, abhimaṇa, and asmita.

So how do we take care of something which is not material or gross?

The following verse from Kathopnishad gives the horses led chariot analogy - the gross body led by our five senses reined in by the mind as the symbolic representation of the workings of mind-body unit. The same symbolism is further expounded by Sri Krishna in Bhagwad Gita.

आत्मानं रथितं विदिथ शरीरं रथमेव तु ।
बुद्धिं तु सारथिं विदिधि मनः प्रग्रहमेव च ॥३॥

3. Know the atman to be the master of the chariot; the

body, chariot; the intellect, the charioteer; and the mind, the reins.

इन्द्रियाणि हयानाहुर्विषयाँ स्तेषु गोचरान् ।
आत्मेन्द्रियमनोयुक्तं भोक्तेत्याहुर्मनीषिणः ॥४॥

4. The senses, they say, are the horses; the objects, the roads. The wise call the atman-united with the body, the senses and the mind-the enjoyer.

As we start looking at ourselves through vedic perspective, the path to self-care also becomes simpler. It's like the ladder that takes us from the gross to the subtle. Like any other scientific method, the philosophy of the Veda starts at the level from which we can observe and experience ourselves through our sense organs, and then a step by step approach helps us peel through the outer layers to reach the inner and subtler aspects of existence. Here the microscope is the faculty of introspection. So self-care begins by taking care of the physical body while reining in the sensory perceptions. For a beautiful journey, we need a strong chariot, horses that are agile but disciplined, reins that are strong and tied effectively to our sense organs so the flow of information to and from the intellect (charioteer) is well balanced.

Once the basics are taken care of, one can focus on the journey and its destination, which according to Vedic vision is self-enlightenment or realization of our potential.

Dr. Jyoti Kapoor

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political, economic, and environmental factors such as national policies, living standards, working conditions, and community support (WHO, 2018). Treatment outcomes and help-seeking behavior of an individual are also dependent on these factors and not considering these will exponentially escalate the issues.

Self-care is not an isolated phenomenon but co-exists as well as interacts with the environment in which an individual thrives. In culturally and politically rich

societies like India, where there are social hierarchies and significant financial gaps among the various communities, the access to mental health as well as the maintenance of the same through self-care is affected by the various factors which also include systemic impacts. As it cannot exist in a vacuum, it is tied to structural bodies of working, may it be on the level of government, policy-making, education, economy, etc. our social fabric

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Outlook of Mental health in India 2022

Current assessment of Mental health in India

In India over 14% of the population is suffering from a mental ailment, this includes 45.7 million suffering from depressive disorders and 49 million from anxiety disorders. As the country witnessed one of the worse setbacks in its history- COVID 19, rises in mental ailments were observed throughout the nation.

In India, there is a lack of infrastructure with one psychiatrist for 3,500 patients. Which is way lower than the recommended ratio- at least three psychiatrists per 100,000 people.

Nearly 80% of people with mental problems did not receive treatment for more than a year, according to the National Mental Health Survey (NMHS), 2015–16.

Provisions available for Mental health in India

Several provisions were introduced by the Mental Healthcare Act of 2017 aim to improve India's mental health. The Mental Healthcare Act of 1987 is dissolved by this Act, which was criticized for failing to recognize the rights and agency of persons who suffer from mental illness (Mishra and Galhotra 2018). This includes establishing Central and State Mental Health Authorities (SMHA), which would focus on establishing a solid infrastructure, including the registration of mental health practitioners and the implementation of service-delivery norms, and declaring access to mental healthcare as a "right."

Budget 2022-2023 and Mental health

The honorable finance minister's recognition of mental health in the Union budget 2022-2023 is a positive move and an indication of a progressive shift in the Indian health ecosystem from the conventional focus on physical health to mental health.

The Department of Health and Family Welfare received INR 83,000 crores from the Union Budget for FY 2022–23

Budget Estimates. The Center's budget for mental health has increased by 12.15 percent as compared to 2021–22 BE.

The new budget proposes creating a National Tele-Mental Health Programme to provide access to high-quality mental healthcare services in keeping with the technology-enabled development strategy. Under the management and guidance of the National Institute of Mental Health & Neuro-Sciences (NIMHANS) and with technological assistance from IIIT Bengaluru, this will include 23 specialized centers that will offer free tele-counseling.

Secondly, the offer of a tax break for those with disabilities is a step in the right direction. These actions are encouraging given the increased number of cases, the evident lack of mental health experts in India, the vast treatment gap, and the difficult access to rural and outlying areas. As a result, meeting everyone in person was difficult; nonetheless, teleconsultation will be beneficial.

Conclusion

The funding is currently dispersed and insufficient to support the population of mentally unwell people. Sadly, words alone won't be sufficient to address the increasing rate of mental illness.

In light of this evidence, the responsibility falls on an individual to take care of their mental health. This emphasizes the need for self-care in today's busy life. In the end, I would like to quote Buddha "You yourself, as much as anybody in the entire universe, deserve your love and affection." Keeping that in mind one must focus on their mental well-being to ensure they grow resilient and experience life positively.

By Sharmishtha Sarkar
Assistant Psychologist

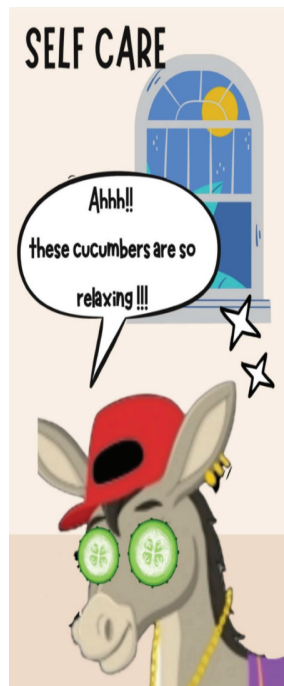
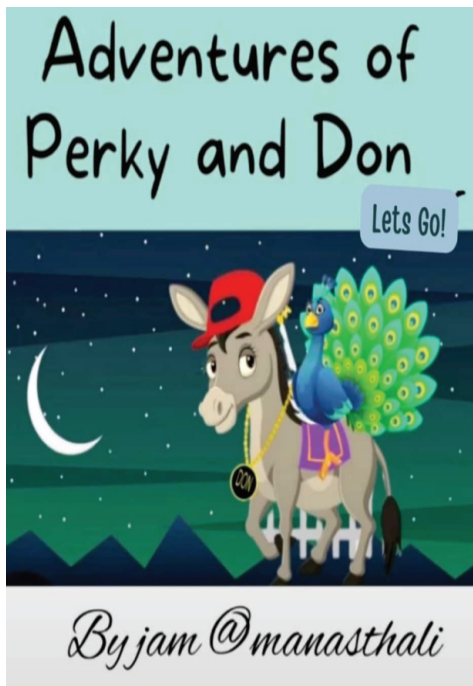
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is weaved around the caste system and other inherited inequalities revolving around issues of Gender, economy, etc. For people whose basic needs are not met or who struggle to earn two square meals, talking about self-care, as social media and other sources report it, may look like a far fetched dream.

Hence it can be said that acknowledging mental health

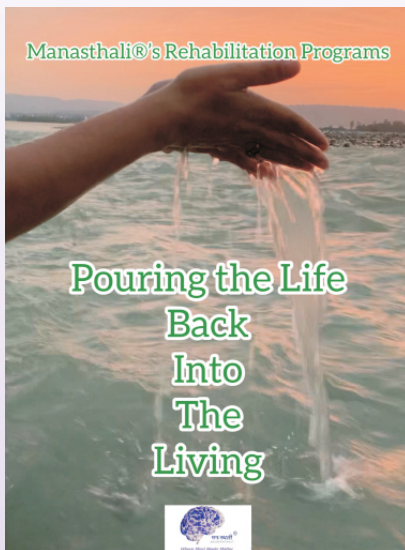
and self-care without acknowledging systemic concepts such as patriarchy, casteism and economic differences may not fill the gaps that exist in our understanding of the prevalence of various mental health issues as well as rates of dropouts and relapse in the intervention scenarios.

Mehak Thukral
Assistant Psychologist



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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 :-

Basic Stress Management and Skills Training Program

Aim-Rehabilitation of People with special Needs

Approach- Integrative Medicine and wellness

Components- Behaviour Therapy, Social Skills Training, Music Therapy, Therapeutic Yoga, Positive Psychology

Online Wellness Restoration and Wellness Programs

Aim- Restoration of various elements of routine life that go out of sync as a result of disease process by daily counselling and follow up by qualified psychologists via phone/online means.

A. Online Healthy Routine Restoration Program (Behavioral Activation)

B. Online Mood Restoration Program

C. Online Substance abuse Rehabilitation Program

D. Online Positivity Development Program (CBT based cognitive restructuring)

E. Online Dementia Rehabilitation Caregiver support Program

F. Online Schizophrenia Rehabilitation Caregiver support Program

For more details,

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Self Care Flower



Diet

- Food can impact both your physiological and psychological health. Hence eating when you are hungry becomes an essential part of self care routine. Even a simple act of preparing food for yourself can induce the feelings of self care.

Exercise

- You can practice self care by doing a physical activity or any form of exercise. It can help in improving and stabilizing mood, increasing productivity and mental focus along with several other benefits.



Sleep

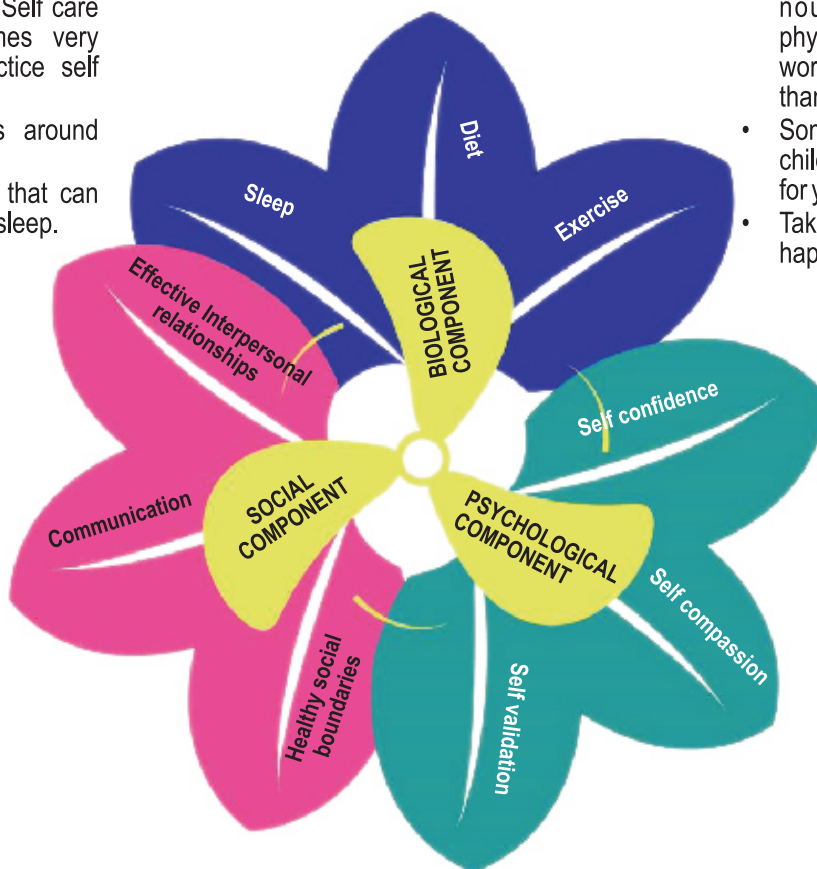
- Sleep is one of the three pillars required for a healthy life. Self care for sleep hence becomes very important. One can practice self care in this domain by:
- Setting good boundaries around bedtime.
- Creating an environment that can help in maintaining a good sleep.

Self confidence

- When you include something that nourishes you mentally and physically, you replenish your self worth. Can be practiced in more than one way.
- Some can be Activating the Inner child by doing activities that are fun for you.
- Taking responsibility of your own happiness and well-being.

Healthy social boundaries

- Setting boundaries are one of the initial self care practices. They protect us physically and emotionally. It helps us to prioritize our needs and helps to create a space to breathe between others and yourself.
- Healthy social boundaries as self care might look like:
- Saying No at times when we don't want to indulge in any of the activities
- Taking an off or stepping back from social interactions for a while.



Self compassion

- Self compassion works at the heart of self care. Self-compassion fosters an attitude of kindness and is practiced by committing ourselves to various acts of kindness aimed towards our own self. Prioritizing self-care commitments is a concrete embodiment of one's self-compassion.
- It can be practiced by
- Practicing self forgiveness
- Being mindful of critical self talk.

Communication

- Effective Communication can contribute significantly in an individual's well being in social settings and relationships. It can be practiced by
- Taking aside some time in your relationships to communicate
- Acknowledging other's point of view while communicating
- Communicating your needs.

Self validation

- It is important to self validate to understand and accept ourselves better. Self validation can itself be an act of self care.
- Other than that self validation as self care can be practiced as:
- Making yourself and abilities a part of your gratitude list.
- Acknowledging and accepting your own emotions and thoughts.

Effective Interpersonal relationships

- Having effective Interpersonal relationships can help us with fulfilling emotional as well as physical needs to an extent. Practicing self care in interpersonal relationships may mean.
- Practicing forgiveness in relationships.
- Establishing boundaries.



Guest Section

A poem for survival

You're only 24
Your heart has only had its first crack
It is yet to break open
Do not be worried about life's triumphs and loud celebrations
Even if you want to live quietly in your room, it is more than enough
On days of unbearable loneliness
Simply hug your mother
It is okay if you keep your dreams small and wishes smaller
It is okay if your only ambition is to be a good person
The quality of life is not measured by achievements
But by the friendships and relationships you make
Do not hustle if you need rest
If they're all going somewhere, let them
Sometimes the best way to spend time is by doing nothing
And you're at your best when you're not trying to attain anything
Listen, you do not need credit for all your goodness
Kindness isn't a business of recognition
Maybe you have trouble seeing it, but your beauty is overwhelming
On the other side of the world, they speak about you
I know you want to kill yourself
But wanting to kill yourself is only a part of living
Your absence will hurt more people than you think
And sometimes when you wake up and can't find a reason to live
Consider this to be one
Only you can bring what you've brought to people's lives
And they wouldn't trade you for anything
There's only such little space you're taking in the world
You're only 24
And even if you think you're a loser, you've lost so gracefully
Tonight the moon is a dog wagging its tail at the sight of you
Nothing makes it happier than you
And it is this love that you're here to share
And it is this love that will keep you alive

Prashant

Fun Fact

Self care makes you more energetic and mentally present. It may also help in building self esteem.

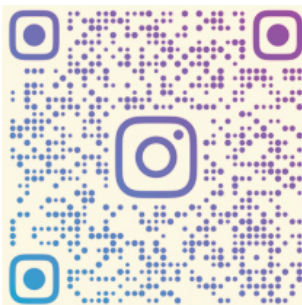


Pervasion of Self Care
Art by Mehak Thukral

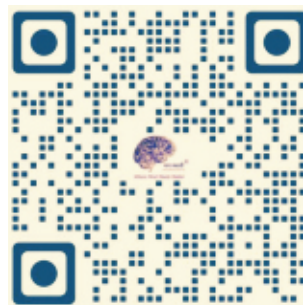


art by Preeti Hazarika

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