

# REFLECTIONS



Issue 01 / 2016-17

## THE EGO THAT INSPIRED

Ego is bad only if you have ego  
over bad things otherwise it is  
the best type of self-motivator.

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## MINDFULNESS

Bringing the Mind to NOW

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## REALITY CHECK

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## SOCIAL WORK SYMPOSIUM AT THAMES

**YOUR  
PATH TO  
SUCCESS.**



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## Special Thanks

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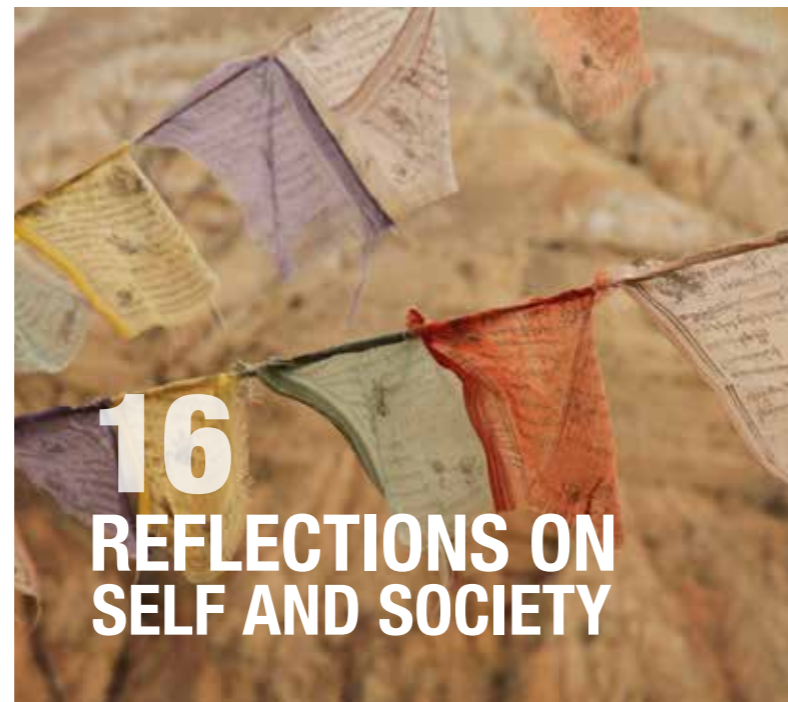
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# letter from the *editor*



We remember our first conversation with the codirector of Thames International College when he suggested, “Why don’t you guys start it?” That advice marked the beginning of this amazing journey, the end result of which is this magazine that will, hopefully, turn into a college tradition. After working on the 2016 Year Book, producing a college magazine did not seem like a big task at the beginning, but we encountered both known and unknown hurdles, some of which left us overwhelmed. At times like those, Niranjana Sir came to our rescue, making difficult tasks look manageable and helping us set the blueprint for the magazine. If it weren’t for Niranjana Sir’s constant guidance, supervision and direction, the magazine wouldn’t be what it is today.

The editorial team that coordinated the production would like to thank all the contributors for submitting your pieces. Having to work on this project itself was demanding; additionally, we all had various other academic, social and co-curricular commitments. Regardless, the amount of support we received from the Thames family in terms of participation is incredible. We feel very fortunate to have the entire Thames College come together to bring its first college magazine together.

Like every year, Thames College was buzzing with new “fresh” faces who joined the college a few months back.

The first year of college is a whirlwind of experiences and we wanted to capture that. Hence, one of the main features of this magazine is the section titled “My First Week at Thames”. The pieces are heartfelt, amusing and honest, and was written during writing workshops taught and conducted by our very own Debanjana Ma’am.

The other section, titled “Reflections on Self and Society” includes four essays written during a short-term course designed and facilitated by Niranjana Sir. Several weeks of intense discussions, challenging readings and substantial critical analysis helped us jot down our thoughts and feelings on paper. Participants wrote about topics and issues that challenged them.

It is said that every artist was first an amateur. The magazine dedicates a section to the budding artists within the Thames community. We are thankful to everyone who put the time and energy into their individual pieces for us. With beautiful poems, gorgeous sketches and some striking articles, the contributors shared their love for their chosen form of art, some even for the first time. It is a matter of great privilege for us that we were able to provide them with a platform to present their individual talents,

and for making the magazine what it really is. Who doesn’t like looking at pictures? We have a photo section in the magazine (collected from students and teachers) that bring back delightful memories from the college’s past.

Finally, I would like to thank Sujana Sir, who trusted us with the responsibility of the magazine and believed that we would start a new legacy. He was there motivating us and pushing us to create something that can be a benchmark for the future. I would also like to thank Kriti Ma’am and Ashish Sir who provided constant meaningful advice and contributed two lovely pieces. I would also like to thank Curves N’ Colors who designed the magazine and made it look beautiful. And finally, the biggest thanks goes to Niranjana Sir, without whom the magazine would not have been possible. \*I hope I am not forgetting anyone else to thank\*

I hope all of you will enjoy the magazine and excuse us for any kind of mistakes or oversight. I also hope the magazine inspires the readers to come out of their comfort zones, take intellectual risks and start exploring their passions, especially as it relates to creativity and imagination.

*Mohit Ranniyar*

Editorial Team

# POEMS

## Let's go back, let's be a kid again

Let's go back, let's be a kid again,  
when missing morning cartoons and going to school was the only pain.  
When the only delicious food was cooked by your mother,  
and playing games was great with your elder sister and brother.

Let's go back, let's be a kid again,  
when we made paper boats and paper planes.  
When you fell asleep in an unknown place,  
but still woke up in our own beds.

Let's go back, let's be a kid again,  
when we thought only our dads were the real men.  
When we loved playing with sticks and stones,  
and mom's lap was the only place termed as home.

Let's go back, let's be a kid again,  
when we were carefree and kinda insane.  
When we had no worries and no trouble,  
and our parents were the greatest known couple.

---

by Binesh Shrestha

## HOPE

Somewhere safer,  
where walking alone feels free  
not feared.  
Somewhere brighter,  
where darkness is a gift,  
not horror.  
Where your heels make music,  
not noise.  
Where your tiara means royalty,  
not adultery.  
Where love makes sense,  
and so do you.  
Where sexuality expressed is power,  
not a license to rape.  
Where liberation is a state,  
not just a word.  
But who am I to speak?  
Just a girl!  
Yeah, where a girl is not 'just'.

---

by Prajwalla Dahal

# INTERNSHIP

**Rojit Bhattarai**  
BBA, 8th semester

I'm writing to share my experiences as an intern. Working a real job is very different from going to school and college. I work at Beltronix Trading (Pvt.) Limited, which is one of the oldest IT companies in Nepal. It has been around for almost three decades. Since I studied marketing, I thought that working in the sales and marketing department would be the best fit for me. I also felt that the job suited my personality and my future life goals.

I have produced sections from my daily journal in order to give you a basic idea of my work life. Hope you find it helpful. My sincere thanks to Thames College for giving me the opportunities to develop myself and to my Internship advisor Ashish sir for guiding me and giving me this opportunity to share my experience.

But towards the middle of the day there was literally no work to do. It was quite annoying just to sit on the desk in front of the monitor. But I kept myself busy by reading books or thinking about the things I would do. I enjoyed making a list of product features, advantages and benefits and doing a SWOT analysis since it was what I had studied in the past. I thought that I would put my academic skills into action by developing a marketing plan for selling the product. From tomorrow I will begin my fieldwork to go to various prospects and gather information about them. I usually have a lot of questions to ask my supervisor but can't think of one now.

**It was quite annoying just to sit on the desk in front of the monitor. But I kept myself busy by reading books or thinking about the things I would do. I enjoyed making a list of product features, advantages and benefits and doing a SWOT analysis since it was what I had studied in the past.**



## May 2, 2016: My first day at Beltronix

Every morning, a fingerprint scanner marked daily attendance. I was full of emotions and energy. I had been volunteering at CAN Infotech Nepal as their sales representative so I knew some of the staff members already which was nice. I got introduced to the organization's culture and the rest of the staff.

I got briefed regarding my position. I was then given a brochure of Amaron Batteries and told to find all the information. I was assigned to research facts about the product and discuss my findings with various technical and non technical staff members. I studied the company closely under a supervisor. The discovered a surprising fact - the company's dealership ranged from printers, inverters to batteries.

## May 3, 2016: The real world environment

Today I visited various retailers who were in the battery, inverter and the UPS business. My job was to introduce Amaron Quanta batteries to these retailers after asking various questions and gathering information about other competing

industries and their strategies in the market. I went to several shops on my bike in a formal outfit and attempted to explain the product which I was introduced to only yesterday! Most of the firms I visited were selling Exide, Sukam and Asian batteries. The main competitor of our product is Sipradi Trading which is marketing Exide

batteries. My clients seemed pretty interested while I talked. Now I need to go back with a list of rates and follow up. I enjoyed learning about how different companies dealt with the market, offering various discount schemes and bonuses. But the task itself - going to shop after shop and repeating the same speech - was annoying.

## Real world is very different. You have to deal with different people in different ways and sales and marketing is a job where you need to show your professionalism and skills to persuade people. After all it's about making a sell.

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You don't always get a friendly smile. But then, on the other hand, visiting new places can be enjoyable as well. This job also connects to what I studied and I can relate the work to some of the academic content.

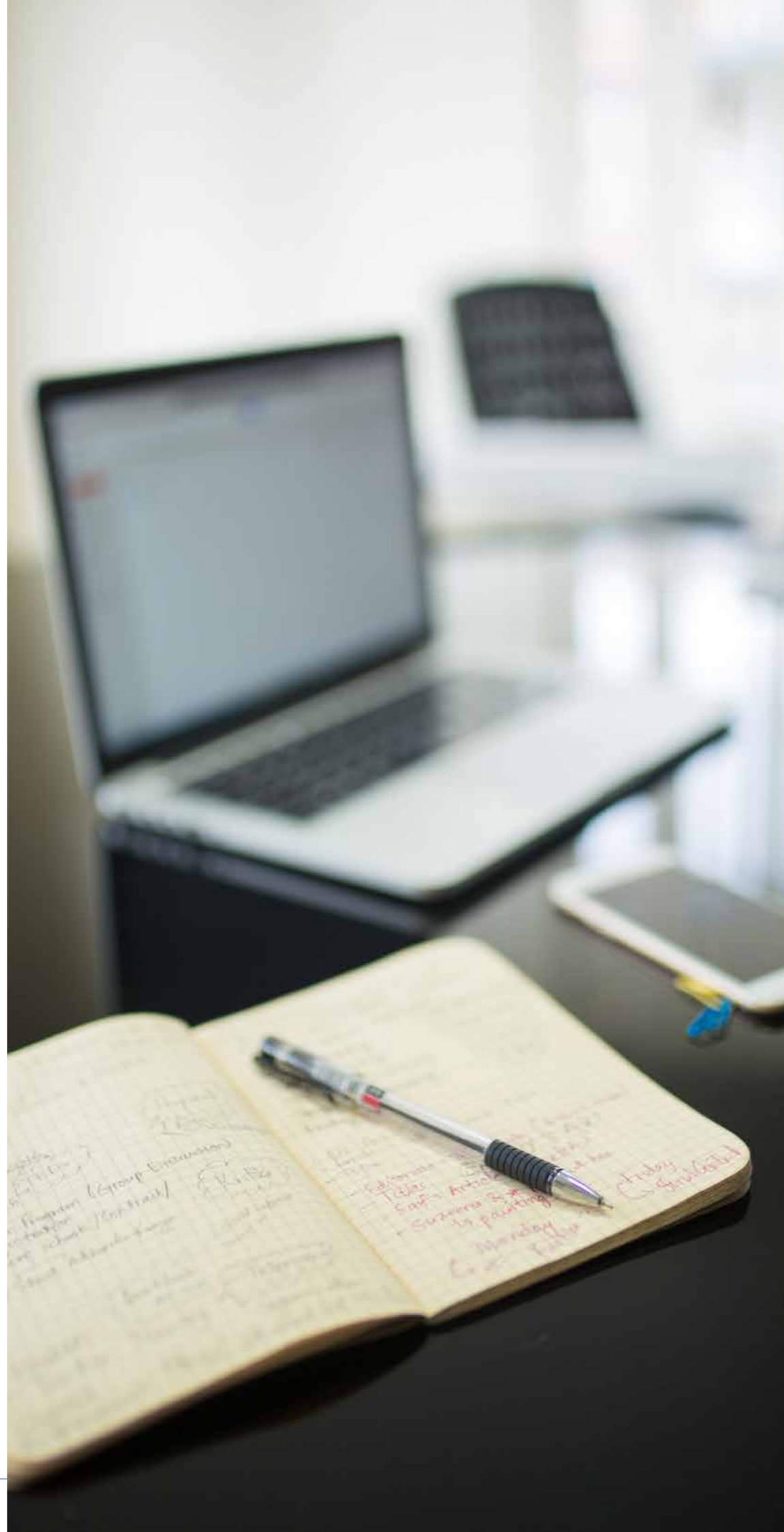
I returned to the office and made a sales register in which I jotted down numbers and locations and wrote short notes about my day that I can send to my supervisor.

### May 4, 2016: Market Research

Today my first task was to find out about competitive brands of batteries in the market and their reselling agreement. So I went to Lagankhel to my friend's place who is in the battery business. There are

various competitive brands. As I mentioned before, Siprodi's Exide is a major one. The companies usually give an extra bonus - 2 to 3% - for reaching the sales target. Now it's very surprising that companies would give from 30 to 50% discount on MRP for the retailers in the batteries. It felt like a lot. I could not ask my friend for more personal information regarding their sellers.

The office itself has a very friendly environment. I have a meeting with the supervisor everyday where we discuss what I found out in the market and make plans for the next day. The get motivated when I can engage with the retailers and have a good conversation. I feel like I'm learning about various different aspects of a product.



### May 5, 2016: Patience

Today I realized that the office environment is very informal but the employees are quite punctual. I started work researching about the companies' batteries and gaining various pieces of information. Then I went for a field visit. My territory for today was from Tripureshowr to Kalanki. I went to Exide to get some competitor's information. I was surprised that even though Exide has the same SMF (Maintenance free) batteries it has not marketed it to its full potential. And many places do not have those.

After a while, I got annoyed by Kathmandu's dusty roads. The sun made me sweaty. At one place in Kalanki, I was badly grilled by the business owner. I could not answer his questions. He asked me the discount percentage and I said "It starts from 30%." He returned the price list to me and asked me to leave. I was not sure what had happened. He even showed me his income sheet, revealing that he was a big seller. I just smiled and stood there for sometime and listened. I fully realized my immaturity but told myself that it has only been three days. I remembered reading in college about the traits of a sales person and how one had to deal with the person when one doesn't know the answer. At the end of the day I learned new things through that rough conversation and could control my emotions too which was nice. Perhaps that dealer wants to buy in bulk later on but I need to be more competitive next time I visit that place.

I am going to conclude my journal here. Real world is very different. You have to deal with different people in different ways and sales and marketing is a job where you need to show your professionalism and skills to persuade people. After all it's about making a sell. Nowadays, solution selling is old and traditional. The modern selling is insight selling where you ask a thought provoking question and give the solution that people don't even had problems with. Why would a dealer want to keep our product if they do not have a higher margin than other brands? There is cut-throat competition in the market where profit is not always guaranteed. So as an intern I am learning quite a lot. Each day brings something new and it's all about one's attitude and how one faces challenges. Next time you apply for a sales job, you know what to expect. I hope my reflection was enjoyable and helpful. Thank you for taking the time to read this. If you have any feedback or suggestions, please feel free to contact me.

# Illustrations



by Suzeena Shrestha

"I'm a self learned musician and artist, very passionate about music, arts and drama. I paint free hand abstract arts and mandala designs. I have no ideas about tricks and skills because I never took any classes. Talking about music, all genres are equally fascinating but I prefer alternative metal, post grunge, hard rock, nu metal, adhunik and it goes on and on. However, I keep on changing my playlist because its fun to explore new genres and artists. Music is what I live for and art is what I love doing. These are actually the stored honey of the human soul. We just have to explore and find out what we are capable of."



by Suzeena Shrestha



# Reflections on Self and Society

The following pieces are selections from the final projects submitted by students who took a course titled “Reflections on Self and Society”. The course exposed students to various social movements and encouraged them to reflect on ideas through writing and artwork.

## Being Nepali

**January, the very first month of the year, has brought forth many changes to my thought processes. Few weeks back, I received an email regarding a course titled “Reflections on Self and Society”.**

This course was designed to make us familiar with the Nepalese society, art and creativity. I have always been enthusiastic when it comes to learning something new and different. Having attended the session on reading, writing and thinking critically, I made up my mind to join this one too.

My first experience on day one was very interesting. On reading the text *Nepalipan*, my perception of the elements I considered to be a Nepali has changed. I realized that my understanding of ‘Nepalipan’ may have been quite limited and superficial, based mostly on a few facts, myths and historical tales. For example, describing Nepal as the ‘Land of Bir Gorkhalis’. However, the text was a reminder that Nepal is not only the land of Gorkhalis. Nepal is a country made up of numerous cultures, ethnicities and religions; it’s not just the Himalayas that represent the country but also the Terai and the hills. Likewise, the use of the terms ‘dhakatopi’, ‘hami nepali’, ‘daju bhai’ and ‘didi bahini’ show that we’re still describing Nepal through the eyes of previous generations.

Things have started to change with the change in politics and government. The recent Madhes

strike is a result of the unfair distribution of rights that was printed in the constitution a long time back. People are mainly concerned with what they have as a citizen of Nepal and are not as careful or critical while expressing their *Nepalipan*. It’s time that we unravel ourselves from the long used terms and ideas of being a Nepali. The sense of belonging should be reflected by the way we talk, act, follow, and moreover express ourselves as proud Nepalis.



The second class was quite different than the first one. The main idea for the session centered on art, its background and female Nepalese artists. I had no interest in aesthetics which is why it was a bit of a challenging task to understand what it meant to be an artist. But while listening to some of my classmates and the instructor, I’ve understood that art is not only concerned with paintings and drawings. Art can exist in any form, be it language, music or culture. Ashmina Ranjit, an activist and a motivator who was also mentioned in the text, “An Act of Differencing: Contemporary Nepali Women Artists”, shared her experiences as a performance artist who focuses on feminism. I, being a female, had never questioned my identity, my ethics and values with the precision that Ms. Ashmina had asked herself and the society. The conservative patriarchal attitude that prevails in Nepalese society could be a factor that limits women from getting ahead in life. That was a theme that Ashmina Ranjit has been working with. One should



**Dikshya Karki**

respect feminism; after all women are creators.

All the session till now have been distinct from each other. The first one had more patriotic thoughts and the second one was inclined towards feminism and art in Nepal. “On *Nepalipan*” has a strong commentary on the current affairs that has been occurring as a result of the older ones and I completely acknowledge them. Similarly, I agree with the second article to some extent. Raising questions in the society, changing thoughts on feminism can be very tough. The way my family thinks differs from the rest of the families in the country. It is praiseworthy that female



artists are trying their best to bring changes. However, if I were to be involved in similar projects, I would not be able to convince my family or the society, even in a rhetorical way. The beliefs that our forefathers presented to every generation is deeply rooted in my society and one needs to work really hard to remove that from the mind that’s already set with thoughts. Art may be a medium to step into someone else’s shoe and observe the world but practically, I do not think that it is the best way possible.

# Anonymous

**It's the second last day of one of the most important Januaries of my life. Important, because I realized at one point towards the beginning of this month that art was going to be an important part of my life.**

And that too of two kinds - the one done on paper with pencils and the other, photography. This has also been the month where I've made the highest amount of financial earning in my life until now Rs. 25,000. It might not seem like much to many people, but I took this as a sign. Perhaps this was going to be a stepping stone that will eventually lead me to financial independence.

Four years ago, I had taken my SLC examinations with 25 other classmates. Back then, we were all the same, my friends and me. Not a worry in the world, just doing our thing, enjoying the most 'not-give-an-ef' moments of our lives and



living on our fathers' money. But I guess that's what stupid teenagers do in general!

Back then, I couldn't imagine having a job Or handling any kind of pressure at a workplace. Or even speaking in front of a public without wetting my pants. To be honest, I never thought I'd amount to much, and that was something I've feared all my life, right until this very January. Somewhere around the beginning of this month, I started seriously studying structures of head and its anatomy. Something I'd been wishing to do, but never had the courage nor the energy to pursue. The beauty of a human face has always fascinated me and that's what I mostly try to replicate in my photographs and drawings. For the latter, sound knowledge of the anatomy is a must and that's exactly what I've aimed for.

I met some of my friends recently and was astounded as was they don't really have a passion on desire for anything. They went to study just because someone else told them to, are still partying after-school with money they didn't earn. Why am I comparing? Because if a series of events hadn't led me to meet one specific person (called 'Anonymous' hereafter), I'd

probably end up just like them.

Anonymous introduced me to a public speaking and debating platform called 'Smart Club'. And that's when my life totally changed. Everything I have today, almost ninety percent of my friend circle, my passion for photography, my passion for art, and my ability to actually think critically (at least I'd like to think so), the major opportunities that I got in my life, my best friend, is because of that place.

The thing that bothers me the most is the amount of impact that Anonymous has had in my life. He might not be my favorite person or someone I'd look up to, but I surely owe him a lot more than what might be considered normal or comfortable Had he not existed, or had I not met this guy, would I still be with my friends from childhood engaging in conversations like 'Who has the best weed in town?' or maybe 'belka night kaa hanney?' rather than about educating young kids at schools or getting better than I was yesterday.

I'm simply glad that I'm alive and well on this January day and I'm immensely satisfied as to who I am and have chosen to become.

– Saifullah Muhammad



# Thoughts on a January day



Sonika Neupane

Cold mornings, chilly breeze and the ever looming magnetic aura of warm bed, I loathe winter. I have always hated waking up early in the morning, whether for studies or survival. That's why January qualifies as one of my most hated months.. My deep dark urge to smash my alarm clock every time it squeaks, ending my most cheerful dreams, is suppressed by the need for education. As a female, I feel the pressure to meet numerous social standards each time I step out of my front door. During the winter months, this pressure seems magnified.

Countless estrogen triggered emotions boggle my mind every day. I describe myself as a reader but this hard and cruel winter morning has propelled my writing skills into new horizons. The cruelty of winter channeled my anger and frustration. The result seems surprisingly poetic.

**Early mornings  
alarm clock warnings  
urge to snooze  
till my coffee brews**

**Another minute, another second  
oh shit! Can't!  
Have to get up, I reckon  
Want to look like a brand  
have to make the entrance that's grand.**

**Ice cold water  
Wish it was a bit hotter  
hate morning showers  
crouching my way or simply cower**

**Don't have time for proper make up  
uneven eyeliner should do  
If only I had an early wake up  
I thought to myself while tying a shoe**

**Have to head out now.  
Am I late again? WOW!  
Rushing my way to school  
Winter is simple cruel!**

**Can't feel my hands  
Can't feel my face  
Gotta keep up with the pace  
Embrace the winter, so everyone says.**

**Finally, made the entrance  
I suppose, I made it grand  
everyone is aware of my presence  
and I look sloppy and bland**

**Dozing throughout the class  
winter creeping it's way in from the uncovered glass.**

**An hour just ended  
Have couple more to go**

**The professor asked, "Is everyone clear on the topic?"  
Nodding my head, like everyone else. I pretended.**

**No warm sun.  
I guess the winter won.  
Numbing January days  
Embrace the winter, so  
everyone says.**

With preposterous social standards to be met every day, I sometimes wish I were a boy but I guess they do have their share of difficulties to tackle. With the benchmark of female personality getting judged by appearance every day, the winter has certainly not helped me with first impressions either. Hungry for grand entrances, I try harder every day to meet the standards of female beauty and yet I step out of the door looking sloppy and fatigued. Having spent over an hour putting on the cleverly marketed "beauty products", I hate it when people come up to me and say, "Aww! You look so tired".

Furthermore, there is also the ever present fear of hypothermia each morning when I expose my hands to ice cold water while freshening up.. The only pleasant thing in the early mornings, as I get ready to be judged during the day, is my morning coffee. It might not exactly taste like the overpriced products from fancy coffee houses, but my morning cup of coffee does give my lips a taste of heaven. The coffee that gives me strength to lift my eyelids all day is literally the only thing that keeps me from stabbing every living being on my way to college.

As for someone who loves the outdoors and would prefer to be out for most of the hours, winter can be truly challenging. Shorter days and freezing weather is my one true challenge that keeps me bounded at home covered under a blanket. Having to think twice before acting on any of my plans for winter is mentally exhausting. Is all the trouble worth it? The battle against pure apathy and desire? Winter is chaotic.

The only things that excite me about winter are warm drinks, spicy food and snow in abundance. Although I've never truly experienced snow in abundance or snowfall to be precise, I wish to see it. Maybe then I will come to embrace the winter like everyone else. In my mind, a beautiful winter means plenty of snow to play, winter activities like skiing and other fun activities that get captured by Western movies and TV shows. . In conclusion, winter brings out the worst in me.

The well-stirred cocktail of anger, frustration and laziness, along with the infamous feminine hormones, make me look like someone who needs to see a priest for exorcism. Hence, my January is not exactly filled with parties, resolutions and holidays. Rather, it is my "time of the year" with laziness, mood swings and sheer clumsiness.

# Feminism?

**Feminism is a topic that always sounded ridiculous to me. For me, feminism was more like a psychological state than an advocacy for women's rights. Feminism was an imprudent ideology based on the emotional reactions of women to their perceived biological and psychological differences with men.**



**Mohit Rauniyar**

has been constricted by so many negative aspects that have held me back. On every occasion that I tried to enlighten myself, it was as if I was wearing glasses of the wrong power which made me see things unclearly. Similarly, when some of my friends tried to explain the real meaning of feminism to me, I just held on to one stereotypical thought in my head. And now, I understood that it is the 'stereotypical' wall that was erected in front of me and I am ready to break the wall.

I started reading and learning more

against decades of patriarchy that is entrenched in Nepali society. Feminism allows women to have the opportunity or ability to make whatever choice she wants, within reasonable and sensible limits. And in simple terms, it means fighting for equality.

Even though some women claim that they don't need feminism because they are not oppressed, that doesn't mean that other women aren't. There is injustice going on all over the world and the oppression can be seen quite clearly. Even in my house, my

they have the upper hand in almost everything? The inequality is just too apparent and the privileges of being a male are way too much. It is necessary to instill the feeling of feminism in all the women, even men. It is necessary to bring about a change in the hierarchy system of the world and convert it into a horizontal system.

It is a surprise to me when I reflect back and try to remember my attitude towards different issues of life. I was in a dark room with very little light coming from the small window and facing loadshedding



But then, there was a sudden change in my thought process that made me realize that feminism is indeed an extremely sensitive topic, almost as important as racism or terrorism. I learned that feminism can be a complex topic with various definitions and based on one's stance and outlook, can have different interpretations.

Initially, whenever I paid attention to any of my 'feminist' friends, all I heard was 'women are a stronger gender among the two'. And these feminists think,

'Oh girl power, girls should be dominating the society'. I was probably surrounded by people who had the wrong interpretation of feminism or who weren't mature enough to express their ideas properly. But all I could understand was that feminists were a bunch of women rapidly increasing in number, who felt superior to men and hated them. And these would be the same group of women who would argue with men when we sat on their reserved seats in a micro bus. These feminists would often advocate that they were

the stronger gender but when instances like holding seats in the micro bus or seats in the election comes, suddenly, they claim to be the weaker ones.

As time passed on, I came to a realization that I need to change my attitude because I may not be walking with the smartest or the most informed people. I realized that there is a giant wall between me and the 'right' attitude. I realized my eyes were not completely open when I received knowledge. My mind

about feminism. I started finding out different people's opinions on this delicate topic and realized that it has more than what I always had in my mind. It was as if I had zoomed out of the microscope and saw things in a more macro level. And now, I finally comprehend that, feminism is not actually the culture of hating men; it's not even the aggressive nature of superiority. It is simply the advocacy for women's rights, which they rightfully deserve, to be treated in the same way as men. Feminism has a goal of empowering women, and fighting

sister cannot go to the kitchen or the puja kotha when she has her menstrual period and I can go wherever I want even if I haven't taken a shower for a week. It is just sad that when a guy friend has many girlfriends, he is considered 'cool' and when one of my female friends does that, she is seen as a disgrace to the society. It is a shame that women are treated so badly whether it is a widow or women restricted to her duties only to cook food and clean the house. Why isn't a widower or a male restricted to do anything? Why do

problems during the night time. Now, instead of increasing the window size or getting an inverter, I have opted to break out of that room and go outside. My opinion about feminism, then and now, is an example of the change in my thought process and I am actually proud of that. Feminism, indeed, has many definitions and is interpreted according to those different definitions but the main gist should only by equality and nothing else.

# Interview with Santosh Raj Pathak

## Could you tell me about yourself and how you got started with photography?

Well, these days, every monkey who owns a DSLR camera is a photographer. I am one of these monkeys who got really passionate and serious about photography. Still, photography is my hobby and a medium to express the way I see things. By profession, I have been working in the development field for the past 5-6 years. I did my BBA from Thames Intl. College and evening MBA from Ace Institute of Management. I got into

is a must. Sadly, most of us realize its importance only later in life or once we start a professional career. I really value what I have learned from my college life, especially from Thames (apart from BBA degree, I was the president of Rotaract club, always active in literary events, drama, and emceeing). For me, education is not just about getting a degree or attending classroom lectures.

As for my job, photography plays a big role. I get a chance to travel around, giving me ample opportunities to see, learn and

to see things, decide what you want to click, then use whatever camera you have to make a photograph. Once, a famous novelist said to a photographer, you must have a good camera because you take good photos. Then the photographer smiled and answered, you must have a good type-writer because your novels are really good. More than a camera, it's about your passion, dedication and vision. Now, talking about camera, there are many varieties out there, depending on your price range and interest. But if you are planning to try out



Photocredits: Santosh Raj Pathak

by Kartika Yadav

Santosh Raj Pathak is a proud alumni of Thames. Involved in various pursuits of creative work, he is really passionate about photography. His love for the art began when he was gifted a DSLR Camera by his brother a few years back. Mr. Pathak is a prominent example of how one's career and passion can be juggled side by side, unlike many others who give up the former or the latter in their lives.

We had a rendezvous when we chatted about the nitty gritty of his life and photography.

photography when my brother got an entry level DSLR camera from the US in 2013. Then I started clicking everything around me and slowly my passion got bigger. I started to realize how important photography is and how much of an impact it can have in the world.

## How do you balance your job and your passion for photography?

No matter what you do, education

capture the culture, nature, people and things I come across. Photography is always that stress reliever component in my life.

## What's the "best camera" out there?

This question is a regular for me. Many people who are about to buy a camera has asked me. I believe there is nothing better than your eyes and your perspective. Before taking a picture, you need

photography, I would suggest you buy a basic/ medium range camera and once you get hold of photography and know your particular genre in photography, then buy the professional gears accordingly.

## What makes a beautiful picture in your opinion?

As Shakespeare said, beauty lies in the eyes of the beholder. Having said that, people have different



ways of seeing, different tastes and preferences. Though there is no particular norms to define beauty but for me it's all about meaning (something in a photo that moves you: smile, pain, or something unique). Most importantly, when you take any photograph, you should be happy with the output. There are a few guidelines that can help you compose photographs, understand lighting / exposures and other basics. Once you know these things you can make better pictures. But the only thing that your camera cannot do - and this is what makes a picture beautiful

good photos. Revisiting those photographs always bring back those moment I have lived through. This is one important reason why I love photography. You can always revisit those moments you have lived through.

**Could you tell me what practicality and passion means to you?**

These two terms actually helps us define and shape ourselves. For me, I count passion first, then only practicality. It's always the hunger in you that will motivate you to

**Once you know these things you can make better pictures. But the only thing that your camera cannot do - and this is what makes a picture beautiful - is your vision and perspective. Before taking photographs, ask yourself, why do you want to take that particular photo?**



- is your vision and perspective. Before taking photographs, ask yourself, why do you want to take that particular photo?

**Do you develop an attachment to your portrait subjects?**

Before taking most of my portrait subject, especially with human subjects, I prefer to talk a bit with the person, know about them, make them comfortable. This really helps me understand what I want to show in a photograph and how I should click. Actually there is always a level of engagement and attachment with most of your

attain your goal, even the one which are regarded as impractical or impossible by many. That's why I always love the quote from Steve Jobs "Stay hungry, stay foolish". But yes, a sense of practicality always makes you a good listener, observer and interpreter.

**What's the most recent movie you watched?**

THE JUNGLE BOOK....took me back to my childhood days.

**Any favorite books?**

I am not much of a bookworm but the last book I went through was "Karnali Blues".

**What is the one rule that every person should abide by/ follow in life?**

For me, rules change as you move through your life. Your priorities and situation changes. But whenever you get a chance to learn new things, don't ignore it. Ultimately it's the experience in life that define your richness.

---

*Mr. Santosh Raj Pathak is currently working as a Partnership Contract Officer at the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development.*

# My First Week at College



**My first day of college started out like any other. It was a cold December morning. The weather was so chilly that even the flies had stopped flapping their wings. I was excited and nervous at the same time; to be precise, I was nauseous. It was going to be my first day at Thames International College; so who wouldn't!**

I was lost, confused and stressed trying to find the right class to go to. I even asked for directions to the class that I was supposed to be at. I had absolutely no idea where I was being led to. The students hanging around the campus were all casually dressed, which confused me even more. It was a lot to take in and difficult to differentiate between teachers and students.

After I was led to my classroom, I quietly sat on the first bench that my eyes landed on. New faces, all of whom were supposed to be my classmates, seemed happy and joyful. Everyone was restless, goofing around, and full of life.

Being in a new environment and a new place was a lot to take in that first day. On top of that, I was all by myself - I didn't know anyone and couldn't find anyone to talk to. All I had was my guts. However, I reminded myself to be firm and make new friends, which I did eventually. I noticed a friendly face sitting in a corner. I introduced myself. "My name is Neha," she replied. Sitting beside her was Sabina, who had also happened to join Thames by herself, just like me.

After a while I started to feel like myself; I felt calm and comfortable. It was a fine first day for me.

However, the classes were taking too long. It was tiring to listen to one lecture after another, inside similar classrooms. The lectures were introduced us to new courses which got me scared because they seemed totally different from the ones that I had studied before.

After orientation classes were over, we had lunch. I chatted with Neha, my first friend at Thames. We talked about ourselves and got to know each other really well. She and I had so much in common. The next morning, I found out that our regular classes would start from Monday, which was just the day after.

That morning was a bit of unusual. It was my first real day of college, a fresh start. So I woke up early and really enjoyed the pleasant hours.

Knowing I had to look a little more neat and tidy compared to those earlier days at home, I tried looking a little prettier and put some effort on dressing up. There was a lot of excitement growing inside me, as I planned how I would spend each time frame with my new friends. I had to be at my best.

Monday, first day of our formal classes, was mostly introductions. Teachers introduced themselves to us and so did we. After attending a few classes, I realized that the teaching method here was a bit more practical and different compared to my previous experiences. Each subject was taught by an experienced, specialized teacher. All seemed friendly and welcoming and truth be told I had not experienced that before. I was used to being in classrooms with very little interactions where opinions between teachers and students were not shared. But at Thames, it seemed that students were already comfortable and at home.

The rest of the week turned out to be a foggy blur. Waking up for college, getting ready, attending those classes, completing assignments, long period breaks and returning home around two became my everyday routine. I was slowly getting used to it. Fortunately, I had my two gorgeous friends who were there to make my boring days a little exciting. I felt really connected and bonded with them during the week. We all had many similarities. I never had anyone with whom I could share so much. It was overwhelming. Frankly, I kind of feel lucky for finding these two friends who are not only beautiful but friendly and kind at the same time.

To wrap up, this college seems quite different than any of my previous schools. Although the first thing I noticed was the number of assignments and the possible work-related stress, I would still pick this college and these friends over anything else. Short assignment periods and large volume of reading is challenging and exhausting. However, I will always remember my first few days at Thames.

This new college life means a fresh start for me. I am determined to prove my worth and value to Thames. I had a great time during my first few days and I know that there are many more to come.

**– Amy Maharjan**

**It was Thursday. I got up early and got ready for college. I was feeling sleepy since I was used to sleeping late during the long break. It was my first day at the college. I reached the premises around seven in the morning. Then I went to the reception to get acquainted with my schedule and the orientation program.**

While I was heading to my first class, I saw a familiar face standing in front of me. It was one of my friends from high school. His name is Shiraj. We started talking and soon discovered that out of five groups that students were divided into, we happened to be in the same group - Group Four. So we walked towards our first class together.

The class was called MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses). The teacher introduced us to different online courses and websites where we can enroll. I liked the personality of the speaker and the way he presented the topic. He asked if anyone had heard of Coursera. I raised my hand since I had taken a few courses in Coursera. I had learned about guitars, music production and songwriting through Coursera. So I was familiar with it.

After that, I attended another class which introduced us to Thames' core values. I became familiar with the rules and regulations of the college.

The next day, I arrived at eight o'clock for a photo session. I was photographed for the college identity card. Then I attended another class where one of the directors of the college spoke to us. This class was not as interesting as others. I met my friend Shiraj again after that class.

We then went to an auditorium to attend the final part of our orientation sessions. This part was mostly lectures. So it was boring. I was not happy with the time management of this event. I was told about different clubs in the college and their work. I was given a T-shirt at the end of the program. I

selected a white one.

The student council had planned a hiking trip to Champadevi but I could not go because the weather was not suitable. It was cold.

Regular classes started on Monday. The first class I attended was Basic Maths.

The teacher taught a familiar topic - "complex numbers". So the class was not as difficult as I had expected. I met another friend from high school, Ashish, and his friend Shreyak. We sat together during the rest of the classes. One aspect which I do not like about the college is the long breaks between classes.

I attended English class taught by Debanjana Ma'am. She talked about the rules and regulation of the college and also the course plan. The next day was pretty much the same. All the teachers introduced themselves and the subject they were going to teach. They gave out course plans.

I started getting more interested in IT-based subjects like Computer Information Systems and Digital Logic Design. I also liked the positive incentive method used by the teacher who taught Principles of Management. She was going to give certificates to those who do their assignments well. Since I was studying BIM, I felt like I should focus more on IT-based subjects rather than English and Maths, which I have been studying all my life.

I started getting assignments. We were introduced to Google classroom which was probably new for all the students. I realized that we needed to submit some of the assignments through Google classroom. I found that fun and interesting.

To summarize, I had mixed feelings about the first few days of college life. I was still struggling with doubts such as "Have I chosen the right college? Have I chosen the right subject?" And I was overwhelmed by the fact that I have to study here for the next few years and shape my life. But these first few days also helped me calm my nerves and made me believe that I had perhaps done the right thing.



**Rohit Jung Karki**

**I joined Thames because my sister had suggested me to do so. I attended an interview and got selected to be a student at Thames. My friend and I had applied together but unfortunately we were in different sections. I came to know about the orientation and other schedules through the mail. Since it had been a long vacation after high school, I was waiting for the classes to start.**

Finally, the day arrived - December 14. It was going to be a totally new start with new people in a new environment. Since I woke up late that morning, I rushed to reach the college on time. The teacher was already in the classroom when I arrived. I asked for permission to enter the class and took a seat on the third row.

Two new faces were beside me. We shared our names and became friends. One was Niva and the other was Anamika. It was Principles of Management class and the teacher was introducing us to the subject matter. First class got over and we had a break. So we decided to go to the canteen and have a cup of tea.

With the hot cup of tea, we chatted a bit more, exchanging details about ourselves. We also talked about the tea and the fact that it was sugarless. After lunch break, we went to another class.

It was Maths and a bit boring. Time seemed to pass slowly, even though the teacher was not actively teaching. He was only introducing us to the subject matter, syllabus and rules. This made me yawn while the class was running and finally the teacher said "This much for today." Then the class ended.

Soon after that, we went out of the college gate to a cafeteria and ordered some food. Since the service was delayed, we were a few minutes late for the following class. Among all the classes we took, I found English class to be most exciting.

The first thing that made the class interesting was Madam's voice. It reached every corner of the classroom. Ma'am was explaining everything so beautifully that it made me very attentive. I was putting all my effort to understand each sentence she was saying. I never felt bored. The class seemed to end quite fast as well. One and a half hours seemed to pass by as quickly as a bullet train.

By the end of the day, I had made four new friends. Second and third day also passed in a fun way. We studied, gossiped and lunched. Within three days, we shared a lot more about ourselves. For some reason, we kept confusing each other's names. That was quite funny.

The fourth and fifth days had Orientation sessions. We were divided into groups and were strictly warned that not attending the sessions would affect our attendance. So I was at the college by 9:30 but a sessions had started half an hour earlier. When I entered the classroom, Sujan sir was giving a lecture on rules and regulations at Thames.

After the orientation, we had lunch and then we attended two more Orientation sessions. The second session was interesting as the teacher cracked many jokes. The third session was even more interesting because we got to play games. After attending these sessions, I felt that Thames college was a special place which had special values.

There was a photo session the following day. I came to college, had a photo - shoot and also attended a speech in the auditorium. Finally, my first week at Thames ended. Overall it was a good experience that I got to share with new friends.

**– Richu Bimali**

**Life was a tangled web of cell phone calls, computer, internet and more importantly, sleep. That was all I did until the day before my first day of college. The boredom factor had hit me hard; there was nothing else in the whole world that I wanted to do or desired to do apart from that. It was as if the word 'Productivity' had been long gone from my dictionary; as if that page of my life was torn away.**

But on that day, the first day of college, I was so driven by excitement - the level, unimaginable - that I lost the boredom factor. It was as if I was a spiritual Guru. I was taking everything so positively, keeping all the negative thoughts aside. I dressed the best possible way I could. I took a long time to fix my hair, although it doesn't set the way I want it to.

So I fix my hair, grab my keys and then the helmet. And suddenly I realized that all the time I took to fix my hair was not worth anything because I had to put on my helmet!

I got on my bike and hit the road. The cold didn't bother me. I was in heat, the excitement hitting every part of my body. I felt like I was one of those bike racers. I was fast! I reached the college gate, honked the horn, parked my bike and took off my helmet. Again, it was time to fix my messed up hair - the bike's rear view mirror came in handy. I wanted to look good, leave a good impression on that first day.

I looked around the college. All new faces. I looked around again for some old friends

but realized that they were late again! They arrived after a while, with bright smiles on their faces. We shook hands and were off on our ways to the first class. The teacher was standing outside the class, waiting for some late comers which were us I guess. The subject was Mathematics, not my thing, but I got through the period quite well. Then there was computer science. The teacher and I belonged to the same caste. The period became fun.

The breaks between classes were very long, long enough to go home, take a nap and come back to attend the next class. We spent our breaks in the canteen, had our fair share of food which we ordered jointly. The canteen would certainly be our crib to hang out from the next day.

With our tummies full, we went to our next class. Moving from one class to another was a thing here and certainly was a new experience for me. We had English Composition after that, so we sat inside the class. The teacher did some introductions where we had to use an adjective after our name which was fun and also provided some details about our syllabus, attendance and assignments. The class went by fast and it was time to get home. We hung out in the parking area, talking with friends from other sections about how their day had been. Everyone was happy that they had long breaks between the classes. So was I.

The first day of college went amazingly well for me. We had a few laughs, a few exciting moments and a bit of nervousness at times. Overall, it was a day very well spent and I am wishing that the coming days will pass by in a similar way. I have the utmost belief that this college can provide a platform to do something great, where I can develop myself as an individual and turn myself into the best version of my current self.

**– Ankeet Dhoj Khadka**

**I had been waiting for this day for a long time. Finally, the day came. I woke up at 6 a.m - quite early for me as I am comfortable waking up at eight. But, that was okay because I was excited about my very first day at college.**

I got ready and had breakfast. Then I went to the bus - stop and got a micro - bus easily. I was thankful when I reached the college because I was not very used to going to Baneshwor, specially on my own.

The first person I saw was a security guard who was standing near the main gate. Then I noticed two girls standing together and asked them if it was their first day too. Later, those very girls, Ritu and Urusha, would become my friends.

Then I saw students sitting in the reception area. I joined them. I went to class with Anamika, a friendly girl. We sat together. Then another girl, Richu, joined us.

Our first class on the first day at college was PoM (Principles of Management). We briefly went over the first chapter. Then we had one hour break where I met Khusbu and Aagya. This was my new group of friends. We introduced ourselves and chatted for a little bit. We went to the canteen and had a meal. We passed our remaining time standing in the sun.

Then our second class was Maths. The teacher informed us about the rules of the college and also of his own class. We also went through the first chapter a little bit. During the second break, I went to a cafe along with some friends and had lunch. Before the order arrived, we clicked photos to pass time. The service was late which delayed us for the following class, which was English. We enjoyed the class.

The second and third days, Tuesday and Wednesday, classes were regular, according to the routine. But something memorable happened. On Tuesday, during break time, after we had finished our lunch, we were passing time

clicking photos. At one point, Richu put her hand inside a bag. I was expecting chocolates from her but she took out a packet of popping candy. They had been talking about the candy for a few days. I was really happy that she brought it because I had never tried it. At first, I was perplexed because Richu said it would pop inside our mouth. But I was still eager to try it. So I put it inside my mouth and it actually started popping! More like bursting! Gosh!

On Wednesday, during after lunch break again, we went to an empty room and sat down. Richu and Ritu started singing horrible songs which Aagya and I did not like. So we started singing other beautiful songs which made them startled. We enjoyed that moment singing and laughing together. These two days, I became more familiar with my friends.

The other two days, Thursday and Friday, we had orientation sessions. We were divided into groups where the students of BIM and BASW were also included. Thankfully, Aagya, Richu and I were together, so we enjoyed the orientation.

On Thursday, we had two orientation sessions. During the first one, we were informed about the rules of the college and other details such as exam criteria, which made us familiar with the college policies. During the second one, we had a teacher from BASW. He was very friendly with us. We shared jokes. Apart from that, he gave us some knowledge about leadership.

On Friday, we had a photo session for our identity cards. Then, after a break, we had another orientation session where we received information about student organizations. Apart from that, we played games. There were two teams, with three students each. Each student had to be a tiger, a gun or a man and act accordingly. It was a fun game. Those who played the game were provided with chocolate later. I got one too.

On Saturday, the college had organized a hiking program. But our group decided not to go. This is how the first week at college ended. As morning shows the day, I hope that this first week is just a precedent of many more beautiful weeks to come.

**– Niva Ranjit**



**My first week at Thames International College was exciting and entertaining. On the first day, I was pretty nervous because I was alone. I had no idea how to make friends and how to interact with people.**

As I entered the college, I went straight to the reception to ask about my gmail account because I had no idea what my username and password were. I also enquired about the class schedule. After I received the information, I went to attend my first class.

My first class was Principles of Management. It was a quiet class because most of the students didn't know each other. Later on there were some introductions and we all started studying.

Second class - Business Mathematics - was pretty hard to understand because for six months I had not even touched any mathematics notebook. So I just sat throughout the class, feeling a bit dumb. Last class of that day was English. It was a fun class and Ma'am was also friendly. I was happy that at least one class was not as boring as the previous classes.

My second and third days passed in a similar way. Sadly, I still had not made any friends. I was all alone. I did not have any friends in high school as well. It felt a bit devastated, thinking that I will be alone for another four year. I was quite insecure because most students were already friendly towards each other. Would they think that I was the weird one?

Next two days, we had our orientation sessions. They were interesting because the teachers talked to us about college life. On the last day of orientation, all the freshers were summoned to the auditorium so that our seniors could tell us about various college clubs and their activities.

I was pretty bored during that session. I couldn't hear or understand what they were saying as I was sitting far away from the stage.

I was yawning most of the time. I kept hoping that the lecture would end soon so that I would be able to go home.

Sadly, there was some delay which made me mad. I was sleepy and hungry both at the same time which made my situation even worse. I was distracting myself by humming, leaning on the chair that was in front of me, looking here and there. But that didn't help.

I kept thinking about food and how I would enjoy eating. The hunger made me go crazy because it felt like I was having a real life "Hunger Games" situation. Later on I found out that some of my school friends were also studying here which made it easier for me because I could spend my free time with them.

There was a hike organized by some seniors for Saturday. My friends and I decided that we would all go.

Saturday - the last day of the week - we all gathered at the college to go hiking. We were going to Champadevi. We all walked a lot but enjoyed the moments. That day I made some more friends, interacted with new people and entertained each other by making funny conversation.

There were two students in that group. They made me laugh so much that day because they were not able to keep up with us and kept slipping off the rock while returning. Their names were Safal Shrestha and Ashutosh Sharma. The main reason they made me laugh was the way they slipped off the rock. Remembering that still cracks me up.

Even though I had never walked that far in my life, I enjoyed myself a lot. I made some new friends and created memorable moments. Although my whole body was aching, that day was well spent.

This was my first week at Thames International College. It started off on a pretty dull note but in the end it was interesting, entertaining and filled with some fun moments.



**Rushal Amgai**

**I had been lazy for so long since I was used to taking boring day classes throughout high school. When the time came to wake up at five in the morning, I did not hear the alarm bell ringing for three whole minutes.**

The previous night, mom had reminded me to set up four different alarms at four different places. I knew it would be really difficult for me to open my eyes so early.

After a few minutes of half-asleep chaos, I realized that it was my very first day to begin my Bachelors degree at Thames International College. Rubbing my tomato red eyes, I got ready and went to the bus stop, feeling the chilly wind hitting my nose and cheeks. Passing through the potholes of Kathmandu, I hoped that the first day would be good enough, if not the best day of my life.

My father left for the United States when I was seven and my younger sister was not even five. Since I was too young to assess the financial situation of our home, I told myself that my father had left because of my poor academic performance in school. I had been lazy. I had neglected my schoolwork which must have infuriated my father so much that he decided to leave home. This wasn't ideal and I had to make amends.

I had a plan. For the next exam, I would work really hard, get straight As and tell my father that he could come home, that I had changed my ways.

It wasn't an easy transition. I had gone on so long without doing my homework that it took me almost two weeks to bounce back. The results came out and I had passed with stellar grades. I ran home and told my father about my result over the phone. But his response was not something I had expected. He welled up like a baby and told me how proud he was of me. He told me how much I had matured. He also told me why he had to go. Most importantly, he told me he loved me. This was a powerful thrust to an already accelerated campaign of self-improvement.

Bang! The conductor hit the bus so hard that I woke up from my early morning thoughts. Pushing against all the people standing around me on the bus, I jumped out and gave the fare to the conductor.

I had my earphones on, trying to get on a good mood while entering the college. Bon Iver's music was the best option. Gently skipping my feet to the tunes, in a way that people could not really detect, I danced my way to college.

The guards at the gate smiled in a friendly way. It made me feel a bit more comfortable.

I looked around and saw a tall man, maybe in his early forties, standing on the way to the reception. Since there was no one at the reception, I had to ask him for directions to room B202. He, without speaking, gestured towards the left and then pointed upwards. I wondered whether the cold had frozen him in such a way that he was unable to speak. Such a good man!



**Ashwini Pandit**

I entered the classroom which was filled with new faces. There was an instructor at the front chair. Walking in tall blue jeans, a girl took a seat beside me. We were all asked to introduce ourselves on a sheet of paper. As I was going through my own writing, I held my hand forward and introduced myself to her. She responded with a cute smile. I made my very first friend, Grishma. Then I sat down with ease and put my bag beside her.

We then had a long break which lasted for one and half hours. We all grew weak when we realized that our classes were separated by such breaks throughout the day.

During the breaks, due to boredom, some of the girls formed a circle discussing the same old things again and again. To my surprise, most of the girls were wild and funny at the same time. Such whirlwind of emotions were taking our friendships to another level. Every face was new to me but it seemed that deep inside everyone was equally eager and excited to spend the rest of our college days together.

I returned home with a mixed sense of duty and liberty. I remembered how in most schools and colleges wearing a uniform is mandatory and how students are punished if they do not abide by the rules and regulations. But I walked out of Thames feeling how different the college and its environment was.

The following day, we received an email which informed us that a hike was organized for Saturday. Christmas was around the corner and I needed to practice singing in a choir. I could not miss the Saturday session. So I chose practicing over hiking.

My friends insisted that I join them for the hike. When I went to the reception to see how many of them were going, I saw many familiar names. As I turned around to call one of my friends, I saw a boy with spiky hair and Mongolian eyes. He was a student from my previous school. We were so happy to see each other and instantly started chatting about how college life.

All in all, the first week was quite different from my expectations. I believe that as time passes, I'll be able to adapt with all these new faces. I still have a lot to learn and at Thames, I know that my aspirations will be respected.

# AT THAMES





# EVENTS

## CRICKET TOURNAMENT

Thames Inter-College Cricket Tournament, the biggest college level cricket tournament in Nepal, was held from May 10 - 23, 2016 at Sainik Awasiya Mahavidyalaya. A total of 25 teams (BBA and BIM) participated in the tournament, completing another milestone in sports!



## DIVERSITY DAY

"Diversity Day" was organized with an aim to celebrate the rich and diverse culture of the student on May 29, 2016. The event acknowledged the variety of culture, cuisine, languages, and traditional clothing amongst Thames students, with cultural dances, food stalls, games, unplugged sessions and other exciting programs.



# NEPAL SOCIAL WORK SYMPOSIUM

Nepal Social Work Symposium was organized by School of Social Sciences at Thames International College featuring various personalities to discuss on the contemporary issues of the marginalized communities in Nepal. The guests to grace the symposium were: Mr. Bhairaja Pandey, Mr. Dilbhusan Pathak, Mr. Bishwabhakta Dulal 'Aahuti', Ms. Nayantara Gurung Kakshapati, Mr. Juanito Estrada, Word Warriors Nepal team, Mr. Ujjwal Prasai, Ms. Nirmala Sharma, Dr. C. K Gyawali, Ms. Sushma Gautam, and Ms. Bhumika Shrestha.



## MAY FAIR

'May Fair' was organized with an aim to celebrate life at Thames with exciting group activities like Treasure Hunt, Spin-a-Yarn, Freestyle dancing, Minefield, Mad ads were conducted at the event. The event concluded with a special performance and live music by the renowned Sabin Rai and the Elektrix.



# HOLI

## I WAS READY FOR HOLI BUT THE PLACE WASN'T!



Roni Lama

This year's holi was different for me, away from home with excitement, zeal to contribute to the school I along with my fellow friends, brothers and sisters headed to Panauti Kavre. With my stereotypical mind I thought the place would be full of greenery, children and colors but alas, those thoughts were limited to my thoughts.

Though my expectation did not meet with the place, I planned to make the place celebrate holi with me. Not with the colors but with the helping hands to decorate the classrooms. The dull, dusty, deserted place became delightful after the decorations.

For the past 15 years I played holi splashing water and colors and never felt this happy contributing to school, forgetting the worries, enjoying the moment and indeed this was a holi worth celebrating and cherishing.



CANOPY  
NEPAL

PRESENTS

## EIC LEARNER'S HUB

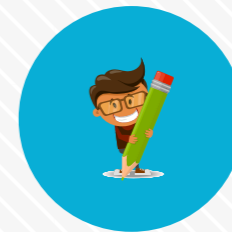
ENGLISH IMPROVEMENT CLASSES



SPEAKING



READING



WRITING

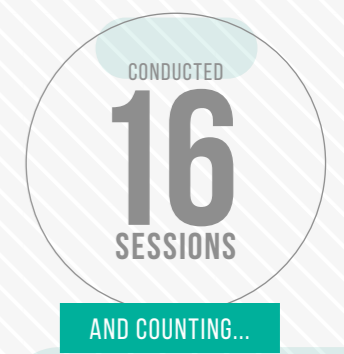
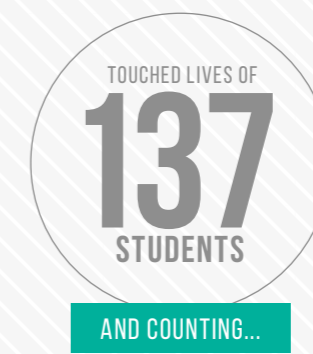


CRITICAL THINKING



LISTENING

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# Krishpa

by Angirash Karki



When I was in the sixth grade, I knew a girl, Krishpa. There was nothing special about Krishpa that you would notice on a first glance. She was like the rest of us, not too shabby and with a little more on our plates than we could handle. However, there was something very peculiar about this eleven year old girl; she was never seen talking to anyone and had no friends. School was tough because we were taught new things almost every single day and it was hard to catch up. I soon realized that the wise thing to do was to make acquaintance of as many people as possible so that there would be a reason to look forward to school and so, I made friends with almost everybody in my class, except Krishpa.

To this day, when I think about Krishpa, my mind runs off to the time she told one of our then teachers that she couldn't do her homework because she had the flu. I remember watching her in amazement as she carefully chose her words so as to sound convincing. Her thin lips quivered

silently and her eyes moistened. It was amusing to me at the time that nobody, not even the teacher, could see through this lie of hers, which was so fairly obvious to me even then. Not too long after that, Krishpa broke her right hand. Or at least that's what we thought. For two whole months, we watched her come to school with an immaculate white bandage wrapped around her hand, looking as if she was in agonizing pain. So when we learned later that she hadn't actually broken her hand and was only faking it to spare herself from schoolwork, we didn't know how to react.

These events slowly began to shape Krishpa in a different light in my eyes. A year passed. She was no longer the strange little kid who had no friends. She was a performer, a magician who could enthrall a room full of people with her act. But even though I admired Krishpa, I couldn't bring myself to talk to her. I was scared. And quite honestly, I was worried that she might be a bad influence on my impeccable grades. Thus, instead of talking to her and asking her why she felt the need to lie so much, I chose to be scared of her. I didn't help her when I could have.

Somewhere down the road, Krishpa lost her way. She began to get in trouble a lot more and when confronted, she didn't lie anymore. She blatantly told the truth and continued with her shenanigans the next day. She became a wreck and it broke my heart to watch her.

One day, when Krishpa came back from the principal's room for having stolen some girl's pencil case from class, I went up to her.

"Hi."

"Hi."

"I'm Anupama ."

"I know. What do you want?"

"I want to talk. Can you meet me after school?"

"Sure. Whatever."

"I'll wait."

With an anxious feeling in my stomach, I waited for Krishpa outside the bus station after school ended. After nearly five minutes, I saw her walking towards me lethargically with downcast eyes.

"You wanted to talk?"

"Yes. How are you?"

**She looked at me, stunned and managed a "Fine, thank you." At this point, she seemed to be more scared of me than I was of her, which funnily enough, put me at ease. I began to talk to her about her favorite cartoons and TV shows. The more we talked, the more I realized how similar our tastes were. We even had the same color on our walls. The next day at lunch, I invited Krishpa to eat with me and my friends. She was reluctant but joined us anyway.**

Kris and I talked almost every other day now but she was still stirring up trouble in school. I was worried about her so I asked her on several occasions why she felt the need to act out but all she ever told me

was "You'll see."

I did not understand what she meant by this, at least not at the time.

Kris and I, we went out for lunch several times. My mom used to call her to eat the aalu parathas. She loved them too. No wonder why she never missed the call. Slowly and carefully, Kristen became my friend. But that was it. She was only my friend. Neither did the other girls reach out to her nor did she strike up a conversation with any of them.

We graduated high school last year, Kristen and I. Our friendship is stronger than ever and she is always there for me when I need her. She is now a smart young woman who knows how to stay out of trouble. In fact, I'd go as far as to say that she is one of the best persons I know.

As I was brainstorming ideas for this story earlier, I thought of Kristen, her troubles with school as a sixth grader and how she had said "You'll see." when I asked her the reason for her acting out. Somehow, I had forgotten this over time. Excited about her long due response, I called her up and asked her what she meant when she said that I'd see. Taking the moment in and in her careful manner, she answered:

"I don't know, babe. I was bored. I didn't have any friends and there was not much to do in school, you know? Besides, I wanted to be your friend and I knew you wanted to be my friend too so I couldn't afford to keep a low profile. I had to keep you interested."

"You're kidding!"

"We are friends now, aren't we?"

# REALITY CHECK

by Anish Bhatta

“The people in power had everything delivered at their doorsteps while the poor were begging for a tarpaulin during the unforgiving monsoon.”

still the vultures gathered to clink glasses full of imported beverages. Normalcy restored faster for those higher up the social ladder. The ones that are considered to be at the bottom of the social ladder are still struggling. The calendar that showed the date of the disaster may have left our walls but the pain remains. While we're struggling to gather sufficient amount of basic needs, the crowd has set unrealistic goals far beyond our bounds of necessity.

Let's go back to November 2015. Imagine a common Nepali man, Rambahadur, a regular bike owner

signs of malfunction and half of his fuel turns to smoke in the midst of a traffic jam. Ridiculous as it sounds, we have heavy traffic during fuel crisis.

For once, he thought everyone was in his situation. For once, he thought everyone was equal during that ungodly hour. Everyone was walking the same road with the same shoes but no. Never were we equals and never will we be. Equality has always been an illusion.

Going back to Netflix, a multinational provider of on-demand Internet streaming media, which got

Going back to Netflix, a multinational provider of on-demand Internet streaming media, which got launched in our country. But then, we can torrent everything and watch pirated copies. Some days, having to pay 25 rupees for a packet of Wai Wai is difficult enough.



So I hear Netflix went global this year, expanding their services to an additional 130 countries including Nepal. YouTube now has a dedicated homepage for our country. And of course, how can we forget the LPG coming to our houses via pipeline. This year has toppled our country's economy from rock bottom to whatever's below that. The earthquake, the blockade and the black-marketing that followed was a complete nightmare. Despite the setbacks we were able to find some silver linings. Let's see how far we've come.

Even during the post-earthquake crisis, the people in power had everything delivered at their doorsteps while the poor were begging for a tarpaulin during the unforgiving monsoon. Homes turned to debris, cheeks as moist as a cold toad's skin, but

trying to survive in the capital, who has two options – either he stays in line for almost three days for five liters of petrol or pays half of his salary to the black-marketeers just to get his engines running and get to work on time. Choosing the latter, he sacrifices half of his salary convincing himself how everything is going to be alright. The bike now makes weird noises, shows

launched in our country. But then, we can torrent everything and watch pirated copies. Some days, having to pay 25 rupees for a packet of Wai Wai is difficult enough. How can I possibly justify paying for something which I can download for free?

However, I have stopped myself from wasting more of my not-so-precious time and tried to analyze

some real problems. We have other "important" matters to take care of like LPG via pipeline, owning merchant vessels, banning sport activities in the capital and the egregious list goes on. Let us stop wasting time and resources for all the things that we think that we need. Let's stop drifting away from reality and push ourselves towards equality.



# THE EGO THAT INSPIRED

by Wangdi Sherpa

**Ego is bad only if you have ego over bad things otherwise it is the best type of self-motivator.**



I remember the time when I caught my brother's hand while walking and he said "Holding hands while walking is what girls do". Similarly, when I played italicized my father scolded me and asked "Why are you playing like a girl?" These sorts of things made me start looking at things in two ways 1) Things that girls do 2) things that boys do. So I avoided doing things that girls usually do that included chunggi, gatta, crying, etc. My perception was built thinking that way and so I grew up following that idea.

In 7th grade I transferred school and I was assigned to a class where the majority of students were girls. It's not that I hated girls; I just didn't want to be categorized with them. That school had a culture of celebrating Teacher's Day in a grand way where students entertain the teachers with their talent. Our class decided to perform a dance routine. I was against the idea because I always thought dancing was something that only girls do, so the idea of dancing never crossed my mind since I had only seen girls dance. However, my parents always encouraged me to dance on every occasion. On Teacher's Day, I laughed when I heard that a boy agreed to dance with the girls but when I saw them perform it was

beautiful and entertaining. All the teachers were on their feet encouraging the dancers and enjoying the performance themselves. After the performance, everyone praised the boy and the girls, which made me angry since I was not in good terms with the boy who danced and that boy danced with the girl I liked. Jealousy overwhelmed me and made me furious. I started building up this ego of dancing better than that guy and so I started practicing. I practiced everyday trying to get better so that I could be the guy who would dance with her next year. And that is how dancing slowly started being a part of me. All the encouragement and motivation from my teachers, family and friends made me dance more and more. My perception of looking at things in two ways faded away.

People say, "Ego is a bad thing to have" but even though ego is a bad thing it led me to do something I thought I could never do. So, what I think is, ego is bad only if you have ego over bad things otherwise it is the best type of self-motivator. And I am glad I opened up and showed everyone what my talent is because even though I was not good at it at first everyone encouraged me and so I

started improving. Every criticism made me reach a new level. In the process of improving my talent I learned that if I hadn't showed my talent to other people I wouldn't be in this state. I probably would have given up dancing and would still search for something that I am good at. I remember at one point I was labeled as a "showoff" by my friends. This really made me sad and I stopped dancing in front of people. A good friend of mine asked me the reason why I was refusing all the dance proposals when people approached me and so I told him about the situation I was in. He listened to me patiently and told me something that I think I can never forget. He said, "Talent is something that can only be appreciated when it is shown to other people so let them call you a show-off. That doesn't change the fact that you are still a dancer."

So if you are good at something, show it to the people around you! Show it to the world! If they have negative comments about you then try to improve, considering all the criticisms that were given. Slowly but surely you will start seeing good results. Hiding or being shy of your talent will never get you anywhere else. Be proud of what you are good at and show it even if they call you a show-off!

# SOCIAL WORK SYMPOSIUM AT THAMES

“ Be the voice of the voiceless ”



Simran Silpakar



All over the world, people live in various societies that have their own distinctive features. The diversity has enhanced the beauty of our globe. In contrast, these differences have also created misunderstandings and prejudice. A complex network of problems related to these points have, in turn, caused unequal societal development. Missed opportunities for certain groups of people cause several social problems. Populations that have been historically marginalized and are vulnerable bear the brunt of these problems.

To lessen these differences and raise awareness about social problems, a Social Work Symposium was organized at Thames International College by the School of Social Sciences and the college's Social Work Club on May 17th and 18th (2016). The symposium adopted the theme of World Social Work Day 2016 which is: "Promoting the dignity and worth of peoples." The symposium created a platform for marginalized communities, and in doing so, also allowed social workers to understand multiple issues.

Representatives from different colleges (including St. Xavier's, Baneshwor Multiple Campus, Padma Kanya Campus, NIMS, KMC, Classic College) and social work organizations (such as Saath, ASC Pharping, Sneha Samaj) attended the program, as well as over one hundred students and social activists. The symposium offered two full days of insights from the most experienced and highly-regarded activists in Nepal. The symposium comprised of various events such as Speaker Series, Panel Discussions, Meet the Author, Slam Poetry and photo exhibitions.

As part of the Speaker Series, Bhairaja Pandey spoke about working with marginalized group in the global

context. Pandey ji retired as a UNHCR representative for Myanmar. He also has work experience as a Protection Officer in Somalia and Pakistan as well as Chief of Mission in Damascus and Operation Manager in South Sudan. Additionally, Dilbhusan Pathak, editor in chief of Kantipur News, talked about the role of media in raising the voices of minorities; Juanito Estrada, professional volunteer expert of the Volunteering Services Overseas (VSO) also talked about his work experiences.

Similarly, one of the panel discussions included Dr. Chandra Kant Gyawali (Advocate in the Supreme Court) Bhumika Shrestha (Transgender Rights Activist) and Sushma Gautam (advocate). Mrs. Nirmala Sharma, President of Sancharika Samuha moderated the panel which was titled "Women, Third Gender and Constitution". The symposium was also graced by personalities such as Mr Bishwa Bhakta Dulal (also known as "Aahuti", author of "Varna System and Class Struggle in Nepal") and Mr. Ujjwal Prasai (editor of online magazine Record Nepal and translator of "Battles of the New Republic" into Nepali).

The Word Warriors group also presented slam poetry that further raised social issues. Photo Circle exhibited photos reflecting the recent devastating earthquakes. Photo circle group also gave a short presentation on "Youth Engagement and Volunteerism". Different stalls from various organizations such as SAATH, HATTIHATTI and Burn Violence Survivors-Nepal were put up in order to raise funds that supported their social cause.

Social Work Symposium provided valuable information to numerous students and connected various social activists. The two-day program was successfully conducted.

# MINDFULNESS



Ashish  
Chaulagain

## Bringing the Mind to NOW

In today's fast-paced environment, many people are facing problems, whether it is balancing work and life or study and life. As a result, there can be a lot of stress. Stress can lead to anxiety, depression, and in some cases, even invoke suicidal tendencies. One of the major causes of anxiety and stress is our nature of mind, which most of the time is either thinking about past incidents or is engaged in planning, and therefore is not in the present moment. This is most likely because of the desire to correct the past and improve the future. But what happens when a person is able to live in the present

moment? They become more mindful about the present and can dedicate all their focus on whatever they are doing in the present. They can become more efficient and less stressed.

For example, students are usually worried about exams, assignments, and the general work load, instead of being focused on what they are doing in the present. Due to anxiety, they may find it hard to be mindful. Anxiety, in turn, can lead to unproductive worries. They may then get easily distracted from productive tasks. As a result, they may have to face difficult emotions such as anger



what happens  
when a person  
is able to live  
in the present  
moment?

and frustration. Already stressed and anxious, they are then doubly burdened, having to cope with all this.

Let's think about what happens during exam season. When the test schedule is published, a student may instantly react, "Oh, I am going to fail this time!" This student is already thinking about the future. When the exam is over - and let's say it did not go well for the student in question - the student might feel guilty and punish herself further with, "Had I studied from Day One..." She is automatically reverting to the past and trying, in vain, to correct her mistake. But the spiralling doesn't end here. She may make a commitment, thinking, "From next time..." And we all know that it rarely happens.

We can all relate to the example above. We often do not have the power to pull back from such negative thought patterns about the past and the future and focus on the present.

Dr. Elizabeth Hoge, a psychiatrist at the Center for Anxiety and Traumatic Stress Disorders at Massachusetts General Hospital and an assistant professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, says that mindfulness meditation makes perfect sense for treating anxiety. "People with anxiety have a problem dealing with distracting thoughts that have too much power," she explains. "They can't distinguish between a problem-solving thought and a nagging worry that has no benefit."

Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, MD sifted through nearly 19,000 meditation studies. They found 47 trials that addressed these issues and met their criteria for well-designed studies. Their findings, published in JAMA

**“If you have unproductive worries, you can train yourself to experience those thoughts completely differently through mindfulness.”**



Internal Medicine, suggest that mindfulness meditation can help ease psychological stresses like anxiety, depression and pain.

Following these pioneering researches, many well-known universities around the world have started offering sessions on mindfulness to its students and faculties. Here are the links to some.

<http://www.cw.uhs.harvard.edu/programs/index.html>

At Princeton University – University Health Services offers Mind- Body Program and A Day of Mindfulness program. The objective of which is stress reduction, body awareness, and inner care for undergraduate students, graduate students,

faculty and staff.

<https://uhs.princeton.edu/newsevents/events/day-mindfulness>

With tremendous amount of research being done in mindfulness, it is indeed a series of therapeutic techniques to bring our mind in present moment to increase efficiency. There are many ways of practicing mindfulness thus of all breathing is the most important phenomenon. Being mindful about breathing helps us become focus on the present, and prevents us from vacillating between past and future.

The present moment is the only time over which we have control over. The most important person at

the present moment is always the person whom we are with because they deserve our full attention. This could be a friend, a co-worker, your parents, and so on.

Therefore, here is an exercise we can do to practice mindfulness by following the breath.

1. You can do this either on a sitting or a standing position.
2. To start begin to inhale gently from the stomach, being mindful that, “I am inhaling normally.”
3. Then exhale being mindful, “I am exhaling normally.”
4. Continue this for three long deep breaths.

5. On the fourth breath, extend the inhalation, being mindful by remembering, “I am taking in a long inhalation.”
6. Again exhale saying, “I am taking in a long exhalation.”
7. Continue the long deep breaths for three times.
8. Now follow your breath carefully, becoming aware of every movement in your stomach and lungs. When you inhale, your stomach will start to fill in first before our lungs. Then, follow the entrance and exit of air and realize the ‘1’ shape that is formed during the breathing. Become mindful about how you are inhaling and

following the exhalation from its beginning to its end.

9. Continue the process for 20 breaths and then return to normal. After 5 minutes, repeat the exercise. It is important to maintain the half smile while breathing.

The effects of this mindfulness exercise can be experienced in less than 15 minutes as our thoughts will become more and more positive and our heart rate and other physiological response will start to slow down.

This attempt has been made to help you practice mindfulness to bring mind to the present moment or now and become more efficient,

happy and less vulnerable to stress.

Mindfulness will not abruptly eliminate your thoughts that bring you stress and anxiety because you worry, but in the words Dr. Hoge, “If you have unproductive worries, you can train yourself to experience those thoughts completely differently through mindfulness.” “You might think ‘I’m not prepared, I might fail in this exam if I don’t study, and it will be a disaster!’ Mindfulness teaches you to recognize, ‘Oh, there’s that thought again. I’ve been here before. But it’s just that—a thought, and not a part of my core self. So let me focus on now and act on what can I do’”.

# Letter to Students



Dear Students,

All stories have to start somewhere. My story as a social worker started back in 2007 when I joined Bachelors in Social Work program. Starting out on a new career path was exciting, challenging, thought provoking and at times daunting. Reflecting upon my first year, it was not very different from yours. Adjusting to my fresh role as a social worker and being in an unfamiliar setting and working with unfamiliar groups was really exhausting; but, at the same time, there was so much to learn and to process.

Unlike what people may tell you, social work is a demanding profession. As social workers, we need to understand and respond to a myriad of political, social, interpersonal, and intrapersonal forces that affect the people we serve. For this, field work is the heart of social work education. As a student of social work myself, fieldwork has been one of the most valuable experiences of my life. Not only does it really help in understanding what social work is all about, the kind of exposure that you get as a student is unparalleled. And, one of the major foci of a student is not only in gaining a learning experience, but also in understanding what you can do and cannot do, your capabilities and

drawbacks, strengths and weaknesses and hence, most importantly, your areas of growth.

Three years ago, I began my academic career as a social work lecturer and field work supervisor. Drawing from my experiences as a student, social worker, field supervisor and lecturer, I have been able to comprehend all sides of the field experience. I have learnt many valuable lessons, and I want to share them with you.

1. One of the important lessons I learned was that it's okay not to have all the answers. During my first internship, I co-facilitated a session titled 'Building Resilience among the children who are the victims of violence, conflict and natural disaster'. As you all know by now such sessions are very interactive and participatory and you can be asked any question in the midst. So the thought of not being able to answer the questions if asked was terrifying – no one likes the feeling of not being in control. I went hoping and praying not to be asked questions that I couldn't respond to. But then I realized that I was an intern and I was there to learn. A good social worker is not someone who provides all the answers but rather finds answers with the clients.

2. The importance of relationship: I have been telling you this almost every time that you need to maintain a good rapport (healthy and professional) with your client. But it is equally important to have good relationships with your co-trainees (senior, junior or your classmate), your supervisors and with the organization you are placed at. During the initial days of field work, I relied on the expertise of my seniors who taught me the ropes and supported me when I struggled. Many of you have seniors to guide you. And seniors, you need to be a mentor to your juniors and always work in collaboration.

In every field placement, remember you are meeting potential future employers. So it's important to make a good impression and network with all the organizations you work with. Also take this as an opportunity to build as many quality relationships in your field work as possible.

Finally, your relationship with your college supervisor is also crucial. Honestly, the continuous feedback from my supervisors cum mentors helped me develop both personally and professionally. It was through this constant interaction that I was able to develop my learning objectives, identify my role as a social worker in every setting and the skills I had to acquire through the field work.

These relationships are a source of both support and challenge for you throughout your career. Make sure you maintain a sound relationship with everyone and benefit from their knowledge and expertise.

3. Honesty: As a social worker, it's very important to be true to your profession and to your

clients. For that you have to be honest to yourself first. While going through your field work journals, I have found so many of you replicating your friend's journal. I never did that because I always enjoyed writing the journals. Don't take journal as a burden but enjoy it and use it as an effective tool to reflect upon yourself and the internship experience. You will discover so many different facets of yourself that you didn't even know existed as you start jotting down your experiences.

Be honest and do not hesitate to ask questions to your supervisor when you are struggling with something.

4. Take Initiative: Just like all of you, I got an opportunity to work at three different organizations during my field work. Believe me, while in my second year, the organization where I was placed had trainees from eight different colleges. Rather than relying on the work assigned by the organization, the two other co-trainees and I initiated a lot of programs (National level seminar on child rights, inter-school debate competition to collect funds for the seminar, first cultural program collaborating all the 14 drop-in centers run by the organization, etc.). These experiences may not have enhanced certain skills but we stood out among the volunteer groups.

Thus, it's when you take initiative that you challenge yourself and develop. I have heard many of you complaining how the organization only provides you mediocre jobs and that your field work is neither fruitful nor productive. Some of you are even frustrated that you are not getting enough direction or attention from your agency supervisors. I was

really amazed when most of you shared you had nothing to do in your organization. Having nothing to do is in itself the beginning of endless possibilities. You have the time to imagine, plan and work out everything that needs to be done! It could be a time to start initiating activities and projects on your own. Through effective initiatives, you not only develop your skills but will also enrich your professional portfolio.

Challenge yourself in doing something you have never done before.

5. Ask Questions: Never be afraid to ask questions and step out of your comfort zone.

Every field placement is providing you an opportunity to learn what it actually means to be a social worker. Take this opportunity and make the most of your field work experience. Be a proud social worker.

As social workers, our jobs depend on personal relationships. I have had the privilege of meeting and getting to know many different kinds of individuals in my short career span. It is interesting to reflect upon the fact that human nature boils down mostly to three kinds though – people who will passively wait on the side of the road for someone to clear the path for them, people who will yell and complain and even feel entitled that the road should be cleared for them and people who will roll up their sleeves, get down to work and clear the road themselves. The legacy that you wish to leave behind is upto you. After all, we have the famous social work rhetoric 'If not I, who? If not here, where? If not now, when?'

Love,

*Kirti*

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A WAY OF LIFE'

**“At Thames, we  
groom you for  
the career of your  
choice.”**



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## CULTURE

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to your learning.”