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O/O STUDENTS WELARE

VIT COUNSELLING DIVISION PRESENTS

thetrespasser

Your guide through ventured paths

THIS MONTH'S EDITION:

"FREEDOM"

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VIT[®]
Vellore Institute of Technology
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*FREEDOM IS NOT DOING WHAT YOU CAN
IT IS DOING WHAT YOU OUGHT TO DO*



FOREWORD

“ THE BRIGHTEST OF SUNSHINE AND THE MOST SERENE SUNSETS WILL MEAN NOTHING IF YOU’VE CHOSEN TO LOCK YOURSELF UP IN A ROOM WITH NO WINDOWS TO LET THE LIGHT BREAK IN ”

Prof. Blessing Calvin

Many a times the tendency to settle for something lesser, than what we deserve is not a conscious decision that we end up making. It slithers and slides within us from the moment we settle for the appreciation and applause that we receive for our pit stops.

What happens when we make pit stops our destination?

The cheering crowd will soon be looking for something more and with our eye off the ball; the will to rise up, the determination to carry on and the purpose to toil towards our goal is all lost. **Pit stops cannot become our destination**

What exactly happens when you feel lost?

Everything that you’ve known and believed in begins to look like a Lie. Familiar faces become strangers in a snap. Priorities misplaced, values and morals broken; we become everything that we’ve stood against. The essence of living dried up within; we seek not life, but destruction.

How do we seek Life?

Seeking answers for questions you do not possess will lead you down the road towards the path where it wants you to go and not where you need to go. Define your directions and make choices. Question your choices and never back away from questioning life. Make sense out of all your varied answers.

But remember, the answers do not lie within your locked walls. Let the sunshine graze over your forehead. Live every moment of it. Watch the sunset and take it all in to remind yourself that you’ve survived another day. **Thrive.**

This edition of “The Trespasser” focuses on some of the issues that we’ve been caught up with and how freedom from all those are a possibility. Read through the pages and grab on to the things that might keep you going.

FREEDOM TO LIVE

Divij Kulshrestha

Going to college is definitely one of those big events that can shape a person's life. It can be a daunting task only achieved after answering a series of important questions, making hard decisions and saying goodbye to friends, family, significant others, and the familiarity of your own home. But while it is understandably hard to do all this, it is also easy to see this as a new beginning. With a positive mindset, one sees this as an opportunity.

An opportunity to meet new people—roommates, classmates, club members, seniors, mentors, professors and so on. Different people from different walks of life all walk together as the campus becomes a cultural and social melting pot. VIT boasts one of the most diverse student populations with people from all parts of the country and even from overseas. You can see this fresh start as an opportunity to reinvent yourself – are there things about yourself that you're unhappy with? Or are there things you're interested in but haven't had the chance to try them out? The college gives you the chance to do this and a lot more.

The Periyar Central Library acts as a repository of knowledge. Coupled with the modern academic infrastructure, the many technical clubs and chapters, and you have abundant resources to apply, showcase and further your skills. VIT has an established Chinese Language Center, apart from student and faculty exchange

programs with colleges in the US, Australia, and China— opportunities galore. There are dozens of places to explore in and around campus. It is this freedom and flexibility that makes our campus refreshing. Done with your classes for the day? Chances are there is a music concert going on at Greenos, or an interesting workshop or seminar in the Technology Tower, or an awesome event on display inside Anna Auditorium. There is a lot to do once you actually take the time to explore. From clubs to engage in your hobbies, and recreational activities, sports and fitness facilities.

It is easy as a college student to find yourself chained down with exams, assignments and deadlines that sneak up on you, with multiple commitments and expectations that become overwhelming. It is easy to feel that everything is going downhill, and that the further you go the harder it will become to leave this abyss.

Not everything goes according to plan, and sometimes the best things in life happen unexpectedly! You might discover a hidden talent, make lifelong friends and meet wonderful people, you might find motivation and inspiration from unexpected sources, who knows what tomorrow will bring?

Know that there is always a future to look forward to. That here you have the freedom to live life your way, make decisions on your own terms. And if ever in need of guidance, turn to the caring counselors on campus for help.

Freedom

FROM LACK OF IDENTITY

Life is hard
Life may leave some scars
You might get afraid of what lies ahead
But just with a little faith
You can get through.
I know, the feeling is so numb
You just can't shake.
You really start to wonder how long it'll take.
The worst part will be when you'll think you're fine.
But it's only a matter of time.
But the tree that never had to fight,
For sun and sky and air and light
But stood out in plain
And always got it's share,
Had no life.
You can get annoyed,
And explode in fury,
For all the pressure
But after calming down
You'd look back and see
That you can live in the moment, just take it all in.
You don't let your mind wander
To what's coming next
Cherish their moment,
And give you your best.
And the person you're with
In that moment, you share,
Give them all your focus,
Be there.
Cuz' what life means to be is,
To live a life that matters
To be someone of worth
To love and to be loved in return
And make your mark on Earth.

Vaishnavi Shukla

Glaring Insecurities

Leeza Zachariah

I wake up to the sound of my alarm
Another day, filled with challenges
I get dressed
Do I look good enough for the people I don't even know?
Maybe.
I step out to see a rush of mindless bodies running
to be on time.
How can one expect to stand out among such a huge crowd?
I suddenly see a girl, a beautiful girl.
Her stride, her smile, her poise
I suddenly felt small, unimportant
My insecurities glared at her, and then at me.
That's when it happened.
Her eyes met mine.
I saw my reflection.
The undeniable look of a person weighed down
by their insecurities.
Why? Had I imagined it? Why would she be just like me?
Why? "She had everything", I thought.
Why did I see myself in her?
That's when I realized,
insecurity is a plague that spares no man.
Insecurity is not biased.
The rush of mindless bodies I meet every day
has the same ailment that I do.
Convincing ourselves we are not good enough
is something we know all too well.
Knowing I was not alone, I felt lighter.
I felt free.
And without a second thought, a smile came to my face
Jealousy seeping away,
I now looked at her with kindness and understanding.
"You are not alone", I thought to myself.
You are not alone.

Loving yourself and realizing your self worth is hard to do when our minds criticize everything we do. We compare, we judge, we rank ourselves, and it takes a toll on our mind.

Kindness can however, make you blind to the things that weigh you down. Kindness makes our souls happy. Kindness is the cure.

FREEDOM FROM LONELINESS

Meghna Reddy

We, the millennials, are constantly connected with people from all over the world through our phones; but take these gadgets away, and we find ourselves lost in a state of “loneliness”. But is this feeling really loneliness, or is it just the universe giving us signs to unwind and find ourselves, in the form of extra time?

I found myself in such a situation years ago. With WebMD at the tip of my fingers, I did what everyone resorts to, i.e., trust WebMD and self-diagnose my loneliness as a result of my anxiety. But this was where I was wrong. I was too deceived by my perception and I didn't know how to dig for a positive through all this negativity. It took a lot of introspection to realise that there is a fine line between loneliness and solitude.

Solitude, or a state of being alone, is often used synonymous to being lonely. However, it was something I only started to cherish after understanding the true meaning of it. Most people tend to perceive solitude in its negative sense of loneliness, which could hinder their pursuit of self-love.

Ask yourself, how many times did you skip going to the theatre to watch a movie you were eagerly looking forward to, just because you didn't have anyone to accompany you? Was it because you were afraid that you would feel “lonely”? Maybe look at it from a different perspective; perhaps as a form of self-care?



No, loneliness is not an illness or a state of mental-being, but rather a perspective that requires a little tweaking. Don't let the society make you feel like you're lonely, when it's just extra time at your disposal. This little fix of perspective could change the way you feel about a lot of things around you. The only task required is for you to perceive loneliness as solitude for self-care and introspection.

Only when you embrace this solitude, will you actually invest time in making yourself a better person than you were yesterday. Solitude skyrockets productivity and creativity. For all you know, you might just find hidden passions, and you'd find that you actually have the time to pursue them. Take it from an extrovert who's always wanted to step out of her comfort zone and constantly needed to be surrounded by people. It took me years of fighting my fear of loneliness to turn it into something that made me better than I am with each passing day.

So, go on. Watch the next movie on your own. Learn to play an instrument. Learn a new skill. Read the book you've wanted to for a long time. Turn this solitude into your personal space of productivity. Remember to give yourself time to grow. Become a better you and find your freedom from loneliness!





SIDE EFFECTS OF LIVING A GOAL - ORIENTED LIFESTYLE

Ansh Mehra

When I was a fresher in college, every one used to talk about their **dreams and goals**. Most of these goals were to get a job that pays them **good money**. There was one who's goal was to get popular, some wanted to lose weight and **some just didn't want anything!**

It is easy to get intimidated by other people's progress and goals. You ask yourself "*what am I chasing? shouldn't I also dream of something this passionately? why am I so chill?*" and eventually set up a dream. You take this goal and try your best to achieve it. You work super hard, avoid bad habits, say no to things that felt more fun and even broke a lot of friendships

You have been working for quite some time, not feeling comfortable unless you achieve that goal, doing everything you can because once you do, **you know that your life is going to be perfect**. The final day comes and **woohoo! you achieve it!** Yes! You are finally what you dreamt of!

Everyone is talking about you, you are getting twice more likes on your posts, the prettiest girl on campus just followed you on Instagram and people look up to you! You aren't arrogant about it because you know how much you've worked for it.

Time goes by and slowly slowly your rush begins to fade away. Everyone still respects you but you feel like something is missing. "*Why is this not feeling the way I thought it would?*" "*Why is this job not as exciting as I wanted it to be?*" "*Why is this car not giving me the same amount of happiness it did a year ago?*"

you begin to get bored of your own assumed end goals and start to feel low because there is nothing new to chase. You were extremely happy for some moments after achieving your goal but now it's all gone.

What if instead of winning, you fail. It happens quite often. You thought you'd get it but you didn't and now you feel even worse than the guy who's bored of his achievement.

We all commit the mistake of giving ourselves a precondition before it can feel truly happy. We delay our happiness and comfort until we achieve our goals. This is a fascinating behaviour because nobody ever said that happiness reduces your chance of winning. You can be happy and work hard at the same time. Yet most of us avoid feeling happy and joyful unless we get a certain commodity. This is a flawed way of living because you can never be happy if your happiness depends on exterior circumstances.

There is nothing wrong with being ambitious. I used to live by goals too, make a list of all my dreams until I realised that the word 'dream' or 'goal' makes our aim as a life goal.

Therefore, instead of making your aims as end goals, **consider them as a milestones** because **milestones are not missed, they are only delayed**. Milestones never end, they just keep on going as you move ahead on a straight road. There is no highest level of achievement on this planet, the ladder just keeps going on and on. If you delay your happiness and joy to an end goal, you'll always keep yourself in a chase of something that doesn't exist.

Therefore, **free yourself** from living a goal oriented life and begin to see your ambitions as milestones. This is an important perspective because if you live your life just to achieve that one goal, you'll be out of joy once you achieve it because you wouldn't have anything else to look forward to. If you do not achieve it, it'll hamper your confidence forever.

"A goal once missed is missed forever and a dream once broken can never be relived."



FREEDOM FROM PROCRASTINATION

We've all come across scenarios in our life where we toil hard and yet the fruits of our labour just don't seem to make us happy. We eventually give up on the idea that hard work equals success and somehow find ourselves in a place where we do not want to work but we still seek results. On a moral standard if you believe that stealing is a rightful act then I guess seeking results without working for them is not wrong at all.

Fortunately our sense of humour also knows when to let us taste reality and when we know we are not entitled to results without hard work. Tasting the results of our labour is all about the perfect timing.

We start too soon;
We get drained quickly.
We start too late;
We lose sight of what we're working for.

The right time is not something that others get to decide for you. It is YOU deciding on when to start, knowing fully about your shortcomings and strengths.

When we start early,
We chase a dream which becomes a mirage in the end.
When we start late,
We play catch up to the person we could have been.

Knowing fully about all the distress we will face, why is it we still chose to procrastinate? Procrastination is not an involuntary act; we chose to ignore a responsibility that we need to do at a fixed point of time. What happens is we pile up responsibilities one after the other and eventually even though we sort them all out, the essence of the art is lost.

Imagine, you walk up to your favourite restaurant and order the dish you love. You wait anxiously as the waiter brings the food steaming hot and ready to be devoured. Just then you are pulled up by acquaintance who keeps you occupied for the next hour or so. You finally return to your food and tell me honestly, does the food taste the same way you wanted it to?

The product of procrastination is your favourite dish served cold at the wrong time. You're never going to get the real taste at the end.

Set your goals straight, start right and finish triumphantly.



FREEDOM FROM FEAR OF FAILURE

Shreyas Sharma

There are many concepts in the world created by humans. All of these concepts come with plenty of adjectives associated with them. Tangible, intangible, astonishing, convenient, flabbergasting, perplexing, mind blowing, preposterous and well the list has no end, virtually. One of these concepts, which I believe all of us have encountered in our lives multiple times, is that of Success and Failure. And like all other concepts invented by us, this also has some adjectives associated with. Generally, we associate success with a lot of positive adjectives that attract us and others to achieve it. On the contrary, and very understandably, failure is associated with negative adjectives with leads to a sense of fear towards this half of a whole concept.

Before writing this piece, I was contemplating the whole point of this concept and the general sense of how and why it exists. To my surprise I realized this is not the first time I was thinking about it. And upon this, it's not even the first time a human is sitting on a chair and thinking about failure and success. The fact is, every single sentient being on this planet has gone through this thought process. Even you, the reader, has thought about it. And I'm sure as you complete reading this sentence you must've recollected at least one incident in your mind that pushed you to think about it. The only sad part is that most of us always reach the same conclusion from this sort of introspection. "You need to fear failure"



I don't know if I'm the right person to take up the role of an evangelist and tell you that this shouldn't be the case; that failure is not something to be feared. There must be a million other humans better equipped than me to tell you exactly why you need to be free of this fear of failure, how this fear can stop you from achieving success and what this fear could do to you if you don't find a way out of it. It's possible that you already know this. I mean, there are so many motivational speakers out there that it's hard not to know this. But, then again, why are you still afraid?



Maybe, I'm not the right person to talk you into leaving that fear behind. I can't motivate you by the means of words. I know how good I am with words. I know I can't do this. What if I fail in motivating you? I'm carrying the expectations of all the readers like you at this very moment. They want this article to be a magical enchantment that they read and become super confident! An unreasonable expectation but it is an expectation nonetheless. How can I even hope to satisfy that? To be honest, it may seem like I'm fretting for no reason but it is a huge deal for me. Every single soul that drinks these tiny black lines on a white background will judge them for what it's worth and derive a meaning from it. What if they don't understand what these tiny black lines have to say? What if you, the reader, decide I'm not good enough for this? Seriously, I'm afraid.

I'm afraid, and yet my fingers haven't stopped running over the keys, still typing. Why is that? I shouldn't be writing it anymore. I'm too afraid of the result. I'm too afraid of the failure that awaits me. I should probably just stop typing right now...

Irony: What an elusive small word.

The fact that you are here reading this sentence, my dear reader, must mean that I overcame my fear at some point in time. Most of the better equipped people that I was talking about won't be able to show you this: "Freedom from the fear of failure" in action.

It's easy to be free of this failure. Lot of people have different ways of doing it.

In my version I just had to look at the reason why I was doing it. I love writing. I am an author. The art of intricately sewing words together and creating a fabric that connects humans through time and space excites me. It is with this medium that I am able to talk to you, the reader, sitting in the distant future. How wonderful is it? Then why do I have to fear? I love the art. I write because I want to express myself. Not because I want people to judge me. They are going to do that anyway. Maybe I won't be able to motivate you. Maybe I won't be able to meet everyone's expectations. Maybe I will be judged by every soul who reads this. But would that mean I failed? I don't know. And I don't care. I wrote my heart out and

I am happy with this.

As I said in the beginning, failure and success are manmade concepts. They warp their meaning according to the will of the person who wants to set a standard. But blinded by success we let others set these standards for us. And then we fear what is feared by others. And because of this fear we don't even try. Do you realize how absurd this concept is? You stopped doing something you wanted to, based on the parameters set by others. Change the standards yourself. You decide what failure is and what success is. For me, failure is not being able to write this article and success is when you actually read this last sentence in the future.

Let's see what the outcome is...

FREEDOM FROM MY PAST

I've never been concerned with my choices until they've become a burden. Because then, they consume me and dictate terms about my future. What is it about our choices that we always find ourselves caught in a cob-web? Do we blame them on the circumstances and move on, or do we succumb to its pressure and give up once and for all.

Life, as we know it; is a journey.

A journey does not begin with the first step. It begins the moment you've thought about it, and the first step towards getting the journey into a reality is when you step out. We step out with a limited knowledge of what is out there for us. Our limited options mean fewer choices to choose from and we invariably end up choosing wrong. Sometimes we don't even choose the path. We are pushed towards them. When we've been pushed or when we've chosen the wrong path they will only lead us to where they are supposed to and not where we want them to.

A major bump on our journey leaves us questioning everything. We question purpose, we question life and we question existence. We are left hanging with questions to answers we do not possess.

Dry of answers we want to end it all. Pushed towards our limits we feel unwelcomed and our journey seems like a lost cause.

Dry of answers we want to end it all. Pushed towards our limits we feel unwelcomed and our journey seems like a lost cause.

Along this journey we carry wounds and pain that might never seem to die. The one thing that we fail to do along this journey is forgive ourselves for our mistakes. When we chose to forgive we learn to accept. We learn to appreciate what we've become; we learn to ignore what we were.

We criticize ourselves and fail to recognize that we are no longer a caterpillar but a butterfly filled with colors from different paths of life. The dark colors might denote the phase we chose to forget. The light colors denote the ones we want to hold on to.

As a whole, it forms a beauty that only we have failed to recognize. My wrong choices, the circumstances, the events that led me to having scars have all come in full circle to make me who I've become. Forgive yourself and appreciate the journey through which you've come to show great strength and character. The journey, that's got you where you are.

I will never forget the saying of an old widow at her husband's memorial – 'I have learnt to pick up the pieces, smile at them and move on'. Let's smile at our past, pick ourselves up and move on.

FREEDOM FROM STEREOTYPE

Bhawana Choudhary

What is it that comes to your mind when you hear the word stereotype? Does its existence feel right? I'm sure your answer is, No.

Stereotype, is not only a widely held but also a fixed and over simplified image or idea about particularly type of a person or thing. It's a perception held by a small section of people which in turn affects a large crowd. For ages, it's been difficult for people who fall under this stereotypical category to survive in the society. For example, a girl's beauty is defined by her skin colour and her body type. Complexes are created and certain girls give upon ambitions because of their own skin tone and body type. How do we get a real freedom from this entire stereotype?

In order to come to a solution it's important that we locate the problem and its cause. The major cause with stereotypes has been with how things have been advertised. Every social media platforms, posters, television shows, movies and pageant contest have allowed advertising of beauty in a particular manner. And a lot like learning from what we see, this has affected our mind-sets.

We perceive certain type as beautiful and ignore many other.

We can't change everything about us. We need to understand that we are perfect the way we are. If we start following stereotypes, we will never be satisfied with our appearance or even our existence sometimes.

We might have to change something or everything about us. But changing is not easy for everyone and hence it becomes hard for some people to stay in the society. So what do we do then? How do we get rid of this problem?

We should understand that it's not just the society's fault but ours as well. And by changing individually on how we see things we fix the society.

Changing society does not mean we should ask them to change their mindset. We should change our mindset. And the only thought that we should have is "Things are beautiful the way they are." This can change everything around us and inside us. It can make us feel more confident about ourselves. We don't have to feel inferiority complex even if we fall under category of "stereotypes". And we can actually live our lives in a better way. Nobody's judgement will matter; no one's comments will bother us. We can listen to our inner voices more than world's demotivating ones. So the best way to get rid of this problem is by changing our own thoughts. We should stop listening to people who don't like us the way we are. Nothing in this world can torment us more than our own thoughts. Hence, freedom from our own narrow mindedness that cares about people's perceptions can help us get freedom from stereotypes.



You are Exactly Where You Need to Be

Siddhant Singh

People talk about living in the present, but let me ask you a counter question, if not here then where? i.e. **If you would not live in the present, where will you live?** The past has already been lived by you. The future is yet to be lived. What remains is the present. We don't have to live in the present, the truth of the matter is that we cannot live anywhere else except for the present. So, it's not about living in the present rather **it's about realising that we are in the present** and any of our thoughts related to the future cannot affect what is going to happen.

There have been countless experiences when I deviated from the present and went on to worry about the future. One which comes to my mind right now is when I was going for a roller coaster ride and the entire time I was standing in the queue, **I was scared as hell**. But as soon as the ride started I figured out that it wasn't scary at all and on the contrary, it was very enjoyable.

**"I've had a lot of worries in my life,
most of which never happened."**

Mark Twain

This experience made me question how my mind worked. I realised that all my worries were unnecessary, and **I was just anticipating the future**. The fact that I can live without any worries was a groundbreaking insight for me. I applied this perspective to every arena of my life and saw that there was a very evident pattern that connected them all, be it me **worrying about my exams a night before them or me worrying about the outcome of a particular game**.

Don't get me wrong; I am all up for planning for the future but the problem with us is that we rarely ever stop at planning and eventually start worrying about the future.

We are always **trying to predict the future** and lay out our entire lives in front of us, but that's a very limited life, it is a life based on your current understanding and that's not how it works. Life is all about improvisation, look at your own lives for an example, five years ago, could you have predicted where you are right now? Probably not, because as you went on with life your level of understanding increased and you could see beyond what you could see in the past.

"A completely predictable future is already the past. You've had it!"

Alan Watts

I carefully studied everything around me and found out that two sets of beings were never stressed or worried, they were animals and babies, **you can call them far from reality** but if you ask me they are the ones **closest to reality** as they know nothing except the present. It was how we were created in the first place, how we were meant to be. It can be seen in almost any form of nature, for example, the river

Once you start living in the present, **you realise that the future is just a myth**. It doesn't really exist except in our minds. The present is all that we have and all that we will ever have and if you know it's true value, it is more than anything you can expect. **It's not about acquiring rather it's about letting go**, freeing ourselves of all the worlds we create in our minds and starting to live in the real one. Soon you will realise that you do not have to get somewhere rather you are exactly where you need to be till the time you are here.

**"Where are you? Here
What time is it? Now
What are you? This moment."**

Dan Millman

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