

A little bit of everything makes millennials the most anxious generation

Reflecting back on the year, the growing anxiety and looking for help

ABIDA RAHMAN CHOWDHURY



ILLUSTRATION: KAZI TAHNIN AGAZ APURBO

The internet has had a complete ball of a year, thanks to millennials turning older and 'CRAY-zier' and fighting the growing costs of living. If you think that this 'I cannot buy a home because I spent all my money on avocados and that is why I am sad' is a problem just in the west, just drag your mouse and zoom in on Dhaka on the map (especially on the tri-state area). While in the west millennials are struggling with how to finance their avocados, millennials in the east (yes, the privileged middle-class ones) are worried about how to appease their moms after breaking their 11:00pm curfew.

And then there was this past one year in Bangladesh, especially Dhaka, which was rocked by protest after protest. Some demanding better jobs, some for safer roads, and some completely losing their wits over Raba Khan as a panelist at the Dhaka Lit Fest. There was too much happening too fast and it felt as though the whole country was hopped up on steroids. And yours truly, was no different, what with constantly shielding numerous triggers and also succumbing to it time to time.

Through all this, I also found very personal, often minute problems around me take centre stage; and while we all write for a particular audience or a cause whenever we pen a piece, I feel this article is a little bit of everything. By everything, I mean, it is a piece of writing for me, it is for those kindred spirits around me who

have been overwhelmed by everything around them and it is my first, real attempt at writing about a life with anxiety and mental-health problems through the last and final years of 2010s and my own 20s.

It took me a long time to come to terms with the fact that this is a very real, sometimes debilitating health condition, and it was this very year that I finally acknowledged the need for help. Be it through therapy, through reading, through cooking or through long, sometimes hyperactive, conversations with friends going through the same. And in all of this, constantly questioning everything, my job, my education, my choices, is this shirt too loose? After all, Sigmund Freud proclaimed in his classic introductory lectures on psychoanalysis, "There is no question that the problem of anxiety is a nodal point at which the most various and important questions converge, a riddle whose solution would be bound to throw a flood of light on our whole mental existence."

Like I said, this past year has had its fair share of triggers: the violent turn of the quota-reform movement, mass arrests of student leaders, another violent turn of the movement for safer roads, the passing of the Digital Security Act, the definitive knowledge that the areas near Sundarbans will become an industrial zone and all the concerns that come with living in Dhaka.

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