

■ **EDU GUIDE** ■

# What to do when you are a **DISGRUNTLED CSE STUDENT**

**SABIL SADAT ZAHIR**

Computer Science and Engineering has become an oversaturated subject in this country. Countless students enrol in this major every year hoping for great career prospects. Eventually, many become disgruntled with the subject, yours truly included.

But how do you deal with hating your CSE major, and how do you move forward?

I enrolled at my university during the pandemic, and like many students during that period, I felt directionless. I needed to start the next chapter of my academic life but was unsure of what path to take. Due to being considered "tech-savvy" (I spent an unhealthy amount of time playing video games and



PHOTO: **ORCHID CHAKMA**

watching movies on my computer), my parents advised me to study CSE. Without putting much thought into the whole ordeal, I enrolled.

The first few semesters were fun and easy, but once I started the Data Structures course, I realised the dire predicament I had put myself in. Then, moving on to Algorithms, I became very confident in my hatred for coding. Somehow passing several anguishing semesters, I made it to my third year, where my mind alternated between wanting to finish the degree as soon as possible and pivoting into something else entirely.

Of course, if you are genuinely passionate about Computer

Science and coding, this programme might be the best thing in the world. But if you are genuinely passionate about hating them, CSE can be your kryptonite.

Much like Superman finding ways to overcome a kryptonite affliction, I began to think of ways to make the best of the scenario. Statistically speaking, not just CSE students but most engineering majors regret their fields of study and look for alternative career options. And the one good thing about CSE is that your options are more open than you think.

The main issue I have with CSE is the coding and mathematical aspects. Other people might struggle with the theoretical side of things. First, you need to understand what about the field you particularly do not like and then search for alternative ways to utilise your degree. Secondly, you need to understand what it is that actually interests you.

In my case, I prefer creative work which does not involve coding, so I started exploring different avenues and figured UI/UX design is one of the better career choices for me. Even though I have only recently started to learn UI/UX designing, it is something I am having fun doing. I also really enjoy writing and am trying my best to improve on this professionally. This led me to see data journalism and technical writing as other viable options.

Your preferences will obviously vary. If you like the mathematical side but not so much the coding, maybe data analytics is the way for you. Perhaps you do like coding but not the math. Then, software or web development could be more up your alley.

However, not everyone has the luxury to completely pivot to a different major. It is also important to realise whether you are struggling with the major in particular or with academics in general. So, based on your own assessment, you could explore other possibilities within your respective field or consider switching to a different line altogether.

I am still trying to figure out what I am meant to do. But what I have learned is that if you can invest real thought and time, you can circumvent the woes of being a CSE student and find your true calling. If possible, connect with CSE graduates who did something different that they enjoyed after getting their degree. Counsel and advice can help you immensely in figuring out what to do. Along with that, by exploring your abilities and doing enough research, you can find hope amidst the struggles of this major and realise that you have a lot of choices.

*Sabil Sadat Zahir is a student of BRAC university.*



## Understanding people from the way they code

### Short and efficient code

The only shortcut they take in their lives is when they write their codes. Every time they face a runtime error, a part of their soul dies. Their temper is short, just like their codes. They also pretend that they know everything.

### Inefficient code that still works

They do prefer shortcuts in life but not when it comes to their codes. Their life choices may seem unnecessary to others but somehow, things always work out in their favour. Very good at giving advice – not so good when it comes to following the same.

### Code full of bugs

They belong to the category of people who want to watch the world burn. They do not leave any task incomplete, but they don't do a good job at it either.

### Unfinished code

They are usually the ones who are confused about everything in life including the reason as to why they decided to try programming in the first place. They usually suffer from identity crisis and are master procrastinators.

### Clean code with comments

The fact that such a category exists is a blessing to coding communities all over the world. They are pretty good at time management but are also likely to have OCD. A bunch of narcissists when it comes to academics. Have trust issues.

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