

VOLUME 24, ISSUE 13, TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2024
BHADRA 19, 1431 BS

Star
LIFE
Star

E-mail: lifestyleds@yahoo.com
64-65 Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Dhaka-1215. A pub

A Love Story *in* BLOOM

THE POWER OF SELF-LOVE P3, 4 & 12
ON BODY POSITIVITY AND CONFIDENCE
WHISPERS OF ROMANCE C
ALL ABOUT RED
PEACE OF MIND P9
UNDERSTANDING NEWS ANXIETY

PHOTO: ADNAN RAHMAN
MODEL: EFA
STYLING: ISHA YEASMIN
MUA: SUMON RAHAT & TEAM



Eat, sleep, move, repeat: The lazy person's guide to cardiac health

It's easy to feel overwhelmed by the idea of changing your lifestyle drastically for the sake of your cardiac health. However, the path to improved cardiac wellbeing is often made up of tiny, consistent steps. Incorporating simple and impactful habits into your day-to-day life reduces the risk of heart disease by many folds.

From nourishing your body with healthy food to discovering effective ways to manage stress and busying yourself with physical activity, here we provide practical guidance that prioritises your cardiac health.

Have a healthy diet

Nourishing yourself with food good for your heart plays a huge role. Eating foods rich in fibre, like apples, pears, beans, oats, and barley lowers your "bad cholesterol". Including whole grains, leaf proteins, fruits, and vegetables in your breakfast also helps in maintaining a healthy diet and weight.

There are also other foods you can (if



you must) include in your nutrition regime — fish, nuts, certain types of tea, and dark chocolate (if you have a sweet tooth).

Fish contains omega-3 fatty acids. Nuts like almonds, walnuts, and tree nuts contain "heart-friendly" fats; green or black tea



keeps angina and heart attacks at bay, and flavonoids in dark chocolate reduce the possibility of inflammation and heart disease.

Salt and saturated fat are detrimental to the heart, so you should limit their intake.

Perform physical activity

It's probably the one suggestion you have heard your entire life, regardless of the nature of potential diseases you might be dealing with. Sitting for long hours has a bad effect on blood cholesterol levels.

Try to get at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity per week to manage your blood cholesterol and weight. If you have a desk job, move a bit during your lunch break and perform exercises at your leisure.

Practicing yoga reduces one's risk of cardiovascular disease, so try to incorporate it into your routine. Other than these, strength and interval training, dancing, taking stairs instead of lifts, walking, running,

swimming, aerobics, and housework offer immense heart health benefits.

Get enough sleep

You must get a good night's sleep to ensure your cardiac health is at its best. The time span of your sleep matters, as too little or too much sleep can be harmful. It is suggested that one gets seven to nine hours of sleep to avoid the risk of heart disease.

You should make a habit of going to bed and waking up at the same time, even when you wish to sleep a few hours more on the weekends. A proper sleep environment is needed, which is a dark, quiet place, keeping away electronic devices from your bedroom. It's better to avoid any large meals or caffeine before bedtime.

Quit smoking

At least seven million people die from smoking around the world, a devastatingly high number, which gives an idea of how detrimental it is for your body.

Smoking disallows your pumping heart to carry blood properly as it makes it more likely to develop atherosclerosis, which is building up plaque in the arteries. It will eventually evolve into an increasing risk of peripheral artery disease.

Ensure sound mental health

Finally, we have all heard this: a healthy body is connected to a healthy mind. So, it's integral that you take care of your mental health. Engaging in hobbies like painting, reading books, crocheting, or even sitting in nature simply to unwind, can do wonders.

By Tasneem Azim
Photo: Collected



Bactrol®

ব্যাকট্রল লিকুইড হ্যান্ডওয়াশ
২০০ মিলিঃ এখন ১০/-
কমে মাত্র ৮০/-



Left Right
Left Right



#FASHION & BEAUTY

BODY POSITIVITY

A call for self-love, acceptance, and inclusivity

We have long been obsessed with the idea of perfection. But what does the “perfect” really look like? Is it a slender figure, six-pack abs, or a fair complexion? Unrealistic beauty standards have conditioned us to prioritise a narrow and often unattainable definition of beauty.

However, it's time to change our perception. Challenging these rigid standards, the body positivity movement emerged, which advocates for the appreciation of all body types — irrespective of size, shape, or appearance.

The essence of body positivity

The body positivity movement has its roots in the fat acceptance movement of the 1960s, which sought to combat discrimination against overweight individuals. However, it has evolved into

something much broader over the years.

At its core, body positivity is about finding peace within ourselves. It's a commitment to appreciate our bodies as they are. Samia Tunazin, a development worker, aptly captures this sentiment: “For me, body positivity means accepting how we are. I believe that if you

don't have any health issues, you need not be bothered about your shape.”

She adds, “We need to be aware of our well-being instead of getting concerned over people's remarks or the latest trends.” Samia's perspective highlights the essence of body positivity: prioritising health and well-being over societal expectations.

A fundamental aspect of body positivity is the concept that health is not determined solely by body size or weight. This principle advocates for a holistic approach to health,

focusing on physical, mental, and emotional well-being rather than a specific body type.

“Body positivity starts with awareness”

Body positivity is closely linked to mindfulness. Eliza Chowdhury, a certified yoga instructor, highlights, “Body positivity, I believe, essentially comes from awareness. It is about being positive about the way our body naturally is.”

Mindfulness helps individuals appreciate their bodies and recognise their intrinsic value beyond appearance. It promotes a healthier self-image and encourages self-compassion. On developing a positive self-image, Eliza points out, “I have seen women who are on the heavier side perform yoga poses with incredible ease and flexibility, often surpassing what some slender women can do. It's a reminder that physical ability and grace are not confined to a specific body type!”

It is about how we treat our bodies. Thanks to social media, we are exposed to picture-perfect lives of people and as a result, is easy to get hypnotised by all this glitz and glamour.

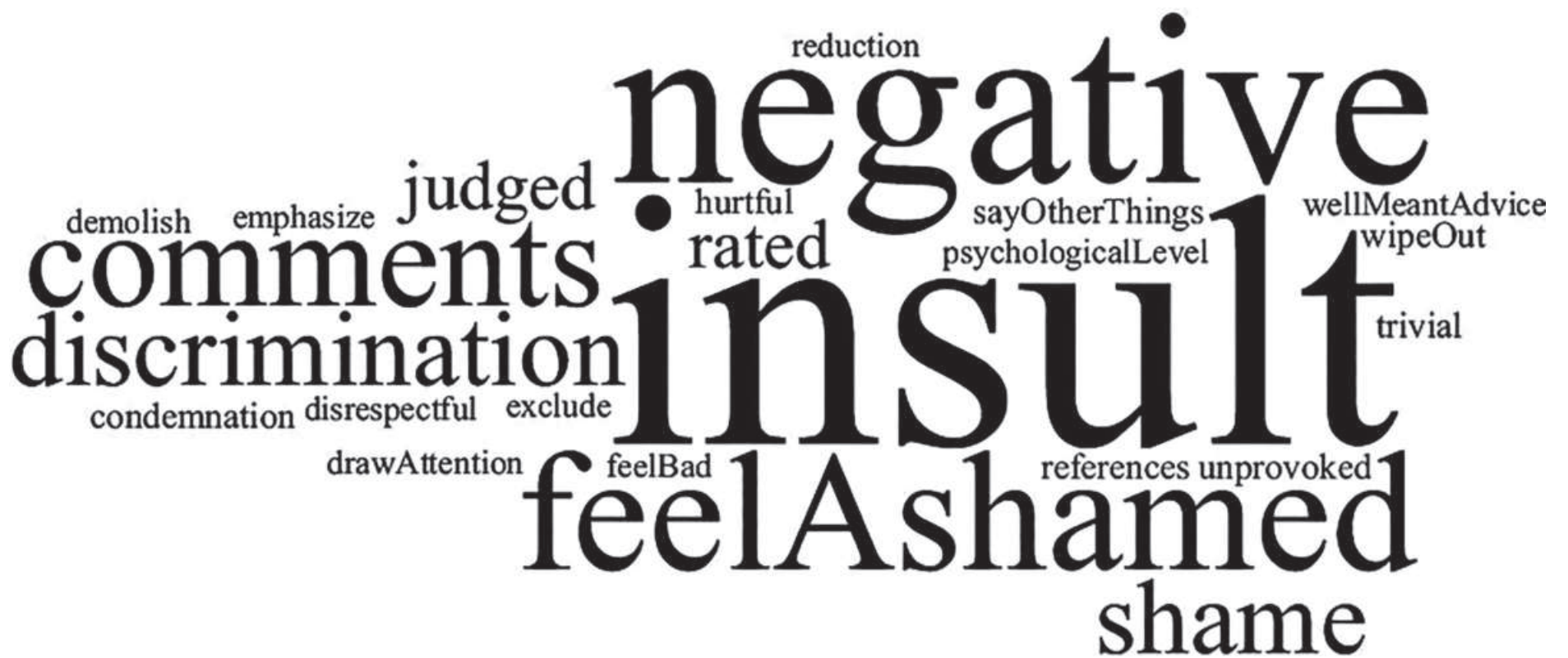
Eliza asks, “It's easy to feel envious of someone you perceive as beautiful, but what if that person is struggling with an illness and isn't truly healthy? Would we still feel the same way if we knew their reality?”

Though the grass may appear greener on the other side, in reality, it might be bleaker than you realise. It is about time we start questioning and dismantling the unrealistic and often harmful beauty ideals perpetuated by media and advertising.

Why all shapes and sizes are good

Human bodies are wonderfully diverse. Our differences in size and shape are natural and beautiful. This diversity should be celebrated, not stigmatised.





#PERSPECTIVE

Skinny shaming

The bullying we pretend doesn't exist

Confession of a skinny person

Body positivity never really caught up in Bangladesh. It's shocking how even in 2024, body shaming not only exists in our society, but also is taken for granted. In recent times, there has been some awareness against fat shaming. Yet, the same cannot be said about skinny shaming. Being a person in his late 20s and still weighing less than 50 kilograms, I have experienced body shaming throughout my life.

What do I call you?

Chicken wings, Patlu, Skull, Deadman walking, Little friend — I have been called many other names that I do not even remember, nor do I want to. Yes, I know my arms look like a skeleton. And yes, I know I look like a skull if I get a haircut. I weigh less than I should but that's hardly a reason to constantly call me by these names.

You may mean well, but no skinny person enjoys being called 'my little friend.' It may not tantamount to be bullying, but it's still a mockery.

Questions like — "What do I call you? Patlu? Or Rugno (my name is Rudro and it sort of rhymes)" — might seem funny to you and while it's okay to be humorous every once in a while, I do not find it amusing when people say the same thing every day.

Are we invisible? Hello!

Perhaps the biggest drawback of being skinny is that people do not seem to take our existence seriously. Everywhere we go, people act like we are an apparition, something to acknowledge only if it makes a noise, otherwise just pretend that it does



not exist.

Finding clothes that will fit is a big challenge. And if skinny people manage to find something that they like, it's either too large or too small to give the perfect fit. And then there's the question of what would seem presentable and what would not make us look as if we were on our deathbeds!

I, myself, have been wearing nothing but full sleeves for the last decade because it's the only thing that prevents people from staring at my arms, something that makes me very uncomfortable.

How people act around us on public



transport is another disturbing experience. It's like we do not occupy any place in the space-time continuum. If we are on a bus, the person next to us acts like we do not exist. So, they do the most (not) logical thing — grab as much space as they can, practically pushing us out of the seat.

This happens on every single public transport, and unless we are vocal and call people out, we have to suffer during the commute.

For those unlucky skinny people who cannot find a seat and are forced to stand, they suffer even more because the constant push from both sides makes it difficult to

stand. And because we lack in mass and strength, very little can be done while being pushed around.

Trust me, we are fine

"Don't you eat?" is the question I get asked regularly. "You don't have to diet control, you know," — I get that you are trying to be funny, but I do not appreciate the same joke every day. Being a skinny person feels like we have committed some heinous crime and now, society must shame us at every opportunity they get.

"Are you addicted to some sort of serious drug?" I was asked by someone when I was only 18. As someone who did not even smoke and spent all his time in his room reading books, it was a devastatingly insulting comment.

Some of my teachers asked me if I had any serious illness, which was sweet of them and I did not mind because they seemed to care. But when someone randomly assumes that you are a substance abuser just because you are skinny, it's very insulting. Almost every skinny person likely had to face this at one time or another.

Whatever happened to being sensitive?

Just like calling someone fat is rude, it is also rude to mock someone for being skinny. These two actions are the same and, in their essence, body shaming! It's something that is prevalent in our culture and should be driven out.

Please be sensitive and polite. The change can start with you!

By Ashif Ahmed Rudro
Photo: Collected

#MUSING

Sleepless *in* Dhaka

At three in the morning, my neighbourhood is so desolate that it can make you feel empty at heart. The little nightlife it offers dies down by then. Main roads around that area are also eerily quiet -- no traffic, except the occasional car or two from time to time and some rickshaws. Most of the shops and eateries have their shutters down. High-rise office buildings appear wearisome after the corporate grind of the day. But a few neon signs and electronic billboards relentlessly show ads, throwing out different lights and hues in the air.

It was in those odd circumstances that I met her. Clad in a black-and-white striped dress, she was standing under one of those large TVs or electronic billboards which lit up her face and accentuated her contours and gorgeous eyes and the red roses which were tucked in her hair.

"Hi, I don't mean to intrude, but did your car break down?" I offered to help.

She paused -- probably trying to judge this stranger -- before nervously answering, "Yes, and my phone is out of juice too."

She was at an after-party that stretched late. Her car stopped midway when going home, and despite trying for a long time, she could not make it run again.

In a few minutes, we were walking down the empty streets, with me giving her company on the way to her apartment some blocks away. She said she would send her chauffeur to deal with the car at dawn in a couple of hours.

"What are you doing here at this time of night?" she enquired as we turned into an alley.

"Nothing, I just like to walk."

"At 3 AM?"

she was startled.

It was a fair question. I explained, "I am a writer. When I am stuck or out of ideas, be it for my novel or for a literary piece in the magazine where I work, I come down to the streets. Late night walks and empty roads give me a lot of interesting experiences that I can convert to stories."

"Like this one tonight?" she teased.

May be! I looked at her closely: a petite woman, not more than 30. A finance specialist in some corporation, as she had mentioned. Seductive red lips and red nails. Red roses on her head.

"Are you checking me out?"

Taken aback by her frankness, I quickly rummaged for a harmless answer. "The

roses look nice on your hair."

It was a lie. I never liked flowers on hair or in a vase or anywhere except where they belong: plants and trees. I cherish the water lilies floating about at a pond in my ancestral home in Munshiganj. I get mesmerised by the blazing Krishnochuras along Chandrima Udyan in Dhaka. I miss the tulips at the Alexandra Gardens in Cardiff, which I took pictures of and sent to my mother when I was there as a student. And of course, I love

the sight of roses in any park.

But when taken out of their natural habitats, I have no interest in them whatsoever. I also lie whenever someone gives me flowers, pretending to be pleased, while in reality, I would rather prefer a book, an Xbox, a lamp, a shirt, or anything else as a gift.

"There were more roses earlier tonight," she continued, mingling with a couple of petals shyly. "I took a few of them off."

While she was toying with her hair, my eyes caught a tattoo of a single rose just under her wrist.

Roses must be her favourite.

"When I am married, I want my husband to present me flowers. On every occasion! Anniversary or birthday or Valentine's Day," she opened up.

"I never celebrated Valentine's when I was dating. Everything about the day seems so cliché and cringey!"

"I thought writers were romantic?"

Perhaps, I am not a good writer after all. But, in that late hour, this strange girl meant the world to me. The city was asleep and had disappeared into the darkness. It was only her.

When we reached her apartment, she took out the roses from her hair, letting her locks cascade down. "Here, I give you these. Something to remember me with."

That was the first time I felt nice about getting flowers. After I reached home, I carefully placed them on my desk and then opened my laptop. I had a story to write.



By M H Haider
Photo: Adnan Rahman
Model: Efa
Styling: Isha Yeasmin
Mua: Sumon Rahat & Team

SEEING RED

The colour that never goes out of style

Red. The colour of love, passion and energy. Of good fortune, fertility and danger too. A hue so replete with emotions and feelings that in some cultures around the world it is revered and respected. In Chinese culture, it is not a mere colour but a symbol of hope, good luck and strength. In South Asian traditions, it is the colour of conjugal love, fertility, familial harmony and romance. Shidoor with its bright red hue brings divine love and prosperity to Hindu marriages, and brides in Bengal and India adorn themselves in red sarees as an auspicious beginning to the rest of their new lives.

A woman in red is mystique personified. She radiates passionate energy and her allure is unmatched. With a spring in her step, her aura is warm and loving as she spreads magic wherever she goes.

She is in a league of her own; in a room full of women one notices the lady in red first. She dazzles with a slow burn fire, reflecting the passion in her heart. Easy to love but hard to forget you will never miss the lady in red!

Red forever holds a special place in the sartorial sphere. Notable designers around the world have dedicated entire collections to red. Some designers are known for designing red dresses that are so iconic that it became their niche style.

A Valentino red dress is extraordinary and will forever stay relevant. Salvatore Ferragamo once designed a pair of sequined red shoes that skyrocketed him to fame. Christian Louboutin leveraged red soles on his stilettos that singlehandedly elevated his entire brand to success.

Movie stars and celebrities are drawn to red to stand out and make a statement at events and award shows. Red is iconic and amazing in many ways and always will be.

Every fashionista worth her Louboutins must have one special red piece in her wardrobe. It could be a bodycon dress with

a killer neckline, a standout piece with a long train or a twill dress that will see you through from the boardroom to a night out in town.

A red blouse is fabulous for those wanting to wear red without going all out. Red bottoms may seem a bit out there but they can also be surprisingly stylish when worn the right way. A red saree is a closet staple for Bangladeshi belles.

Chiffon, crepe or georgette-red sarees are beautiful in every way. Wear it with an appealing sleeveless blouse. Red brocade sarees are a timeless piece that will forever hold its value so it's a must to have in one's collection.

A red fusion gown will have you looking like a bombshell in the upcoming wedding season! Lehengas are another option; a classic red Sabyasachi lehenga is one of a kind and is nothing short of an heirloom!

Red has many variations so choosing the right shade for one's skin tone is paramount. Bluish reds are perfect for fair skin tones while warm reds such as sienna, vermilion and crimson complement most skin tones.

In terms of make-up, the red lipstick is a favourite and has a cult following. A lady swipes on red lipstick and instantly her face and persona are uplifted; it gives

an immediate boost of glamour and sophistication.

There are hundreds of shades to choose from but the iconic ones are Ruby Woo and Lady Danger from MAC. These shades are universally flattering and complement most skin colours.

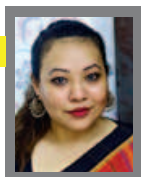
Red is more than just a colour. It is a vibrant expression of human emotions. Whether embodied in the classic elegance of a red dress, the timeless allure of a red saree, or the striking impact of red lipstick, this hue never fails to captivate.

Like the red rose, which symbolises deep love and beauty, red in all its shades continues to dazzle and inspire, proving that its power to enchant and command attention is truly eternal.

By Sabrina N Bhuiyan
Photo: Adnan Rahman
Model: Efa
Styling: Isha Yeasmin
Mua: Sumon Rahat & Team



FUSION FLAVOURS
CHIANGMI TALUKDER
LENA



Spice up your life with these bold recipes from the hills

Embark on a culinary adventure with these hilly delights. Unique ingredients straight from the heart of the hills give these dishes a burst of flavour. Each dish combines traditional ingredients with a touch of flair, making them perfect for those who love bold and distinctive tastes.

Hattol Biji Huro Aera (Chicken Curry with Jackfruit Seeds)

Ingredients

1 kg hilly chicken pieces
 1½ cup Jackfruit seeds, peeled
 3 tsp ginger-garlic coarse paste
 2-3 tsp hilly green chilli coarse paste
 1 tsp turmeric powder
 1 tsp cumin powder
 ½ cup oil
 1 cup chopped onion
 1 cup sabarang or lemon basil
 Salt

Method

Heat a cooking pan with oil on medium flame, add chopped onion and fry until colour changes to golden. Add ginger, garlic, chilli paste, turmeric, cumin and salt. Sauté until everything gets well fried. If necessary, add a small amount of water.

Add chicken and jackfruit seeds, and stir until everything gets well incorporated.

When oil comes out, add water accordingly to cook the meat and the seeds. Cover with a lid and let it cook until meat and seeds get well cooked.

Adjust the amount of salt

and gravy. Add sabarang leaves, stir and cover the lid, and let it simmer for a few minutes on low flame.

Bacchchuri Del (Bamboo shoots Lentil)

Ingredients

5 pieces bamboo shoots, processed and boiled
 1 cup lentil
 ½ cup chopped onions
 2-3 cloves garlic, chopped
 4-5 pieces green chilli, slit open
 A pinch of turmeric powder
 ¼ cup oil
 Salt to taste
 A dash of Fuji leaves (wild jhum coriander leaves)
 Water, as required

Methods

Boil lentils on medium heat. Meanwhile, heat a pan with oil. Add chopped garlic and onion and sauté until it turns golden. Add turmeric and salt. Add pre-boiled diced bamboo shoots and fry for a few minutes.

Put the sautéed bamboo shoots into the lentil pan and cook until everything gets incorporated.

Transfer into a serving bowl and garnish with a dash of Fuji pata (hilly



wild coriander leaves).

Oulod Phool Hurbo (Turmeric flower Salad)

Ingredients

4-5 pieces turmeric flower
 ½ cup Thai pea eggplant or teet begun
 ¼ cup dried shrimp, roasted
 2 onions, sliced
 10-15 pieces green chillies

Methods

Collect only the petals from the flowers and blanch.
 Boil Thai pea



eggplant with salted water.

Roast green chillies and dried shrimp and turn them into a paste using mortar and pestle. Add peas and petals. Add salt and serve with rice.

Sabarang Ejeguri Ton (lemon basil with dried shrimp)

Ingredients

1 cup dried shrimp
 2 onions, sliced
 ½ cup sabarang or lemon basil
 A pinch of turmeric powder
 ½ tsp red chilli powder
 2 tbsp oil
 Salt to taste

Method

Heat a pan with oil. Add sliced onion and sauté. Add dried shrimp and shallow fry for a few minutes.

Add turmeric and red chilli powder. Add salt and stir until the dried shrimp gets cooked. Use water if needed. Add basils and stir. Transfer immediately into the serving dish and serve with rice.

By Lena Talukder
Photo: Courtesy



#LIFEHACKS

How to deal with news anxiety?

The world has been in unrest for a minute and a half now. It is normal to stay up-to-date with the latest updates. However, we must also allow ourselves to take a step back when the news starts to feel overwhelming, and begins to take a toll on our mental health.

So, how can we alter our relationship with the news?

Avoid dwelling on things we can't change

No matter how much we want, some things are beyond our control to fix. Stay informed and understand the situation instead of overanalysing it. Instead of going through the entirety of a news report, read the news ticker and stay updated with the essential facts you need in order to plan your day.

Fix your 'worry time'

In difficult times, news anxiety can be



at its peak. Hence, we should limit our media consumption. Instead of constantly refreshing our pages for the next update, we should fix a time for ourselves to keep up with the news. For instance, you can go through the news in the morning for 20 minutes and let that be your 'worry time' instead of pondering over it your whole day. The news will come up regardless of whether we choose to see it or not. So,

if engaging with the headlines is causing harm to your mental health, you can always choose to tune out, or at least limit how much news you are absorbing.

Make a difference on issues we care about

We should advocate for what's right by being involved in charity and community

work to help those we can access. It is natural to feel guilty about not doing enough for your community. You can research and share factual information that will be helpful to others. Personal stories may trigger anyone with news anxiety, hence, shifting your focus to statistics can be a more practical way of doing your part.

Stay active and socially disconnected

Feeding our brains 10 different international and national stories before we fully open our eyes can lead to potential physical and mental health problems or unhealthy habits, which include 'doom-scrolling', feeling agitated, and having trouble with concentration, to name a few. When the information starts flooding, and you feel overstimulated, kindly log out or deactivate your socials. Take a break from the outside world and focus on destressing. The easiest way to release stress is to exercise. Go for a walk, cook a hot meal, or simply talk to a family member. Diverting your mind to something within your control will help you relax.

WORRY LESS

By Tasnim Kabir
Photo: Collected

How to identify fake news

Fake news existed even before the internet, but with the World Wide Web and social media, the problem has been elevated to a whole different level. Add to that the protests and volatility Bangladesh — and many other places in the world — have been witnessing, what you have is a breeding ground for fake news.

But the term itself is problematic: too broad, too vague, and overused and rotted by politicians worldwide! Words such as "misinformation" and "disinformation" and various theories and concepts have attempted to make better sense of it.

So, how do you go about spotting fake news?

Rely on the most reliable sources

If you can master just this, you can often



easily steer away from fake news. When you come across a news story, simply check whether it is from a trusted news outlet. Reputed news organisations have a solid fact-checking process and gatekeeping. It is therefore less likely for a reputed brand to publish major inaccuracies, let alone publish totally fabricated or downright misleading content.

Beware of imposters

Getting into murky waters now, there is the concept of imposter content, imposter site, imposter account etc., where the source

tries to mimic a trustworthy brand. So, for fake news, it can be about pretending to be a reputed news organisation which many people are familiar with, let's say by adopting a similar name or URL.

Don't drink old wine in a new bottle

Continuing with the example, you can come across videos and reels with false or misleading captions. A video, reel, and image may be "real", but it does not necessarily mean that the caption is too. In other words, any content is as real as the caption itself.

You may come across a reel of a harrowing incident or a mob attack which happened a few years ago but with a caption framing it as something recent.

A good way to deal with it is to be politically aware and use your evaluation before sharing.

Tackle the threat of deep fakes

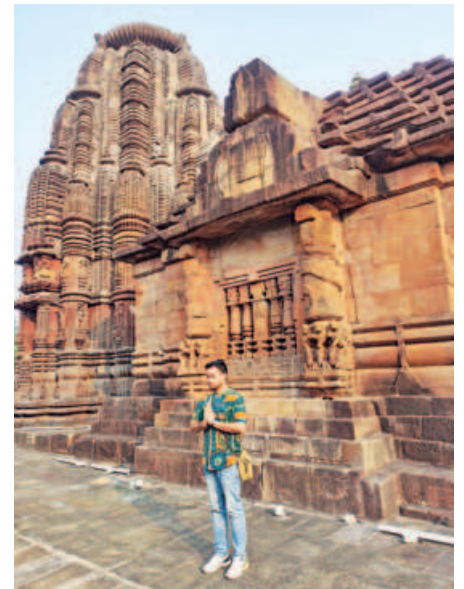
Artificial Intelligence can be scary! With technological tools, fake images/videos/audio clips can feature people doing things they never did or saying things they never said.

However, while deep fakes are getting better day by day, there can be glitches or inconsistencies. Does the number of fingers of the person add up? Does the skin look too smooth? Do the lip movements seem natural and sync with the voice? And so on.

There are deep fake detectors you can find online, but tell-tale signs and your judgment on the believability of the content can take you a long way, along with crosschecking from a few trusted brands.

We should improve our media literacy in the long run. For now, when in doubt, one should at least consider how believable the story is, crosscheck, and just apply common sense with a bit of sense of humour as well!

By M H Haider
Photo: Collected



#HEALTH & FITNESS

HANDS-ON HEALING

The art and science of Reiki

It is often described as palm healing or hands-on healing. Through Reiki, practitioners believe they can channel energy into a patient, activating the natural healing processes to restore physical and emotional well-being. The roots of Reiki trace back to Japan, but its branches have spread worldwide, touching the lives of many seeking holistic wellness. One such Reiki practitioner Shadin Haque shares his journey and insights into this transformative practice.

"Reiki is an ancient spiritual healing practice of channelling universal energy to harmonise mind, body, and spirit," says Haque. He details that during a Reiki session, the healer acts as a conduit for this energy, focusing on 24 primary energy points in the human body associated with various physical and emotional functions. This process aims to clear blockages and promote a free flow of energy, improving overall well-being.

Haque's path to Reiki began with his exploration of yoga and meditation. "My journey into mindful and spiritual practices began with learning yoga. As I deepened my practice, I was drawn to meditation, seeking something more profound and healing," he recalls.

His curiosity led him to Reiki, introduced by a yoga teacher. Haque's pursuit of knowledge took him to Reiki Masters in Bangladesh and India, where he learned Traditional Usui Reiki.

"In any spiritual practice, it's essential to follow your inner calling. It will guide you to your destined path," he reflects.

Haque shares an important experience that deepened his connection to Reiki during a 21-day self-healing practice required for his initial degree.

"I felt incredibly rejuvenated, which deepened my connection to Reiki even



further," he recalls.

Staying with his Reiki Master, Bharati Dey, in Kolkata, provided him with invaluable guidance and nurturing, enriching his learning and bonding with

the practice.

Describing a typical Reiki session, Haque notes, "It is a relaxing experience where you lie fully clothed while a practitioner gently places their hands on or above your body."

Clients may feel warmth or tingling as the energy flows, with sessions typically lasting 60 to 90 minutes. The outcome is often a deep sense of relaxation and peace.

On the effects of Reiki, Haque observes significant benefits across physical, emotional, and spiritual domains. "Reiki positively impacts physical health by reducing pain, improving sleep, and supporting the body's natural healing processes."

Emotionally, it can alleviate stress and negative emotions while increasing self-awareness. Spiritually, it enhances the connection to one's inner self or a higher power, providing clarity and energy balance.

He shares, "Reiki has profoundly deepened my connection with myself, offering a sense of inner peace and clarity." This practice has allowed him to find a serene space to reconnect and recharge, continually nurturing his inner well-being.

So, if you want to be a Reiki practitioner, Haque's advice for you is to start by experiencing it first-hand and seek out a qualified teacher.

"Progress through the levels at your own pace, practising regularly to develop your skills," he advises.

That said, Reiki remains a mystical and intriguing practice, nestled on the fringes of mainstream medical science. While definitive clinical evidence is still evolving, the anecdotal testimonies of many, like Shadin Haque, who have found solace and healing through Reiki's gentle touch are persuasive.

If you want to enjoy a Reiki session offered by Shadin Haque, visit: <https://www.facebook.com/BodyTreeBd?mibextid=LQQJ4d>

By Ayman Anika
Photo: Shadin Haque

#SOCIAL ISSUES

FLOOD RELIEF DONE RIGHT

Essentials beyond clothes and rice

As the country grapples with severe flooding, displacing thousands of people, who now find themselves without food or shelter, everyone is trying their best to help. Some are donating clothes in bulk, while others are providing staple foods like rice and lentils.

Although our intentions are noble, it's important to be well-informed about what flood victims need. Below, we suggest a few critical essentials to consider when donating to those affected by the floods.

Food supplies

Food shortages become a harsh reality with fields underwater and supply chains disrupted. Eliza Chowdhury, a student at Dhaka Art College and member of her college's flood response team, emphasises the importance of providing dry, ready-to-eat food.



Providing non-perishable foods and setting up community kitchens to serve warm meals can offer not just nutrition but comfort to those who have lost everything.

Clothing and hygiene kits

While many are distributing clothes, Eliza advises focusing on children's essentials and personal hygiene. "Many girls, who have their periods, had to leave their house without any preparation. So, we are requesting everyone to donate sanitary pads along with other necessary items as well."

Clean clothing for children and hygiene kits, including sanitary pads, soap, hand sanitisers, and toothpaste, are vital. These

items help maintain health and dignity, offering comfort in difficult circumstances.

Medical supplies and first aid kits

Flood conditions bring increased risks of injuries, infections, and the exacerbation of chronic health conditions. Basic medical supplies and first aid kits with bandages, antiseptics, and pain relievers are essential for immediate care.

Eliza also highlights the need to prepare for disease outbreaks post-flood.

"There will be an outbreak of flood-related diseases such as diarrhoea and malaria. Therefore, it would be wise for us to gather and donate as much saline as

possible." Mobile health units with doctors and nurses can provide essential care and vaccinations, keeping communities safe.

Communication tools

Amid a disaster, staying informed can be a matter of life and death. Radios, mobile phones with solar chargers, and community notice boards can keep people updated on weather conditions, safety measures, and available relief services. Communication tools not only help coordinate rescue and relief efforts but also connect families separated by the chaos, offering reassurance and hope.

How to get aid to those in need

Md Adnan Hossain, Founder and Executive Director of It's Humanity Foundation (IHF), shared insights on how to distribute aid effectively. He recommends using volunteers, having a clear route plan, coordinating with local communities, ensuring the use of safety equipment, and collaborating with other NGOs to maximise outreach. Communication with local armed and rescue forces is also vital for effectively distributing food, water, and other essentials.

Hence, by providing essentials such as food, clothing, and medical care, we can help flood victims survive and find the strength to rebuild their lives. In times of crisis, our collective humanity shines brightest when we extend a helping hand to those in need, ensuring that no one is left behind.

By Ayman Anika

Photo: Shahriar Kabir Heemel



"One of my team members went to the flood-affected area with rice but could not distribute it as there is no way for people to cook such items. On top of that, there is no dry place to keep them," she explains.

এখন প্রতিটি **বিডিটিনা** হেয়ার অয়েল
২০০ মি.লি. এর সাথে **৫০ গ্রাম**
ম্যান্ডালিনা লোপ **ফ্রী**



বিডিটিনা

হেয়ার অয়েল



5

চুল পড়া নিয়ন্ত্রন করে।
চুলের গোড়ায় অতিরিক্ত পুষ্টি যোগায়।
চুলকে করে খুশকিমুক্ত।
চুলকে করে হালকা ও নরম।
চুলকে করে উজ্জ্বল ও বালমলে।

5

BENEFITS

ফ্রী



Complete Hair Therapy...

KOHINOOR CHEMICAL

Body positivity

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

"My friends used to tease me about my breast size, which is in every sense wrong," says Samia. Many of us, including Samia, have faced crude, insensitive remarks like, "Why did you put on weight?" or "Why did you lose weight?" These questions are all too common and often directed at us.

Such questions are undoubtedly hurtful. No one deserves to be taunted about their shape because all shapes and sizes are good.

Sumaiya Sayat Rubama, a strong advocate for self-love, shares her thoughts on the emotional complexities of body

positivity: "Body positivity for me means being able to hug myself on days I catch my reflection in the mirror."

"It's about accepting that maybe today, the outfit doesn't look as good as I thought, and the love handles seem more pronounced. But even then, I'll still hug myself because this body has been incredible at staying strong, even when my mind has played tricks on me."

Many people struggle with feelings of inadequacy, believing that they don't measure up to the standards set by the media, peers, or even their unrealistic expectations. This negative self-image can lead to a range of emotional and psychological issues, including low self-esteem, depression, anxiety, and disordered eating.

However, self-love stands as a powerful antidote to these challenges, offering a path to healing and acceptance. Understanding why self-love is needed and how it can help overcome a negative self-image is essential for personal growth and well-being.

The need for inclusive fashion

The fashion industry has long been dominated by narrow beauty standards that cater primarily to a limited range of

body types. This lack of diversity not only restricts choices for plus-size individuals but also perpetuates harmful stereotypes about body image and self-worth.

Zarin Farhana Rakhee, founder of Zaria – a fashion brand for plus-size women – explains her motivation: "The inspiration to start a business catering to plus-size women in the fashion industry came from a combination of personal experiences, social awareness, and a passion for inclusivity. I noticed a significant gap in the industry concerning the representation and options for plus-size women."

Rakhee's vision goes beyond business – it's about challenging stereotypes and creating a more inclusive fashion landscape. "The vision for the business was clear—to redefine beauty standards and empower plus-size women to embrace their bodies confidently," she says.

By offering stylish, well-fitting clothing for plus-size individuals, designers like Rakhee help to normalise diverse body types and promote body positivity. Fashion is a powerful form of self-expression, and everyone deserves to feel confident and beautiful in what they wear.

To conclude, body positivity is more than just a hashtag or a fleeting trend. It's a movement that calls for radical self-love and acceptance. It is about time we embrace diversity fully and take intentional steps towards creating a world where every type of body is celebrated and respected.

By Ayman Anika
Photo: Shahriar Kabir Heemel
Models: Arsila, Natasha
Wardrobe: Starlet Style Studio
(Starlet Style Studio is an advocate for body positivity and circularity in fashion)

