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Spring *is in* THE AIR

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PHOTO: ADNAN RAHMAN
MODEL: TANIA, RABBI
STYLING: SONIA YEASMIN ISHA
WARDROBE: AARONG
MAKEUP: PIASH

#FASHION & BEAUTY

Radiant in your 40s: Your skin's best decade yet

No matter what they say, your 40s can bring some of the biggest skincare challenges. Some believe it's the beginning of the end; others will not scare you as much. While the feeling is overwhelming, the real secret to youthful skin starts with embracing ageing rather than fearing getting old. With some simple changes and smart skincare habits, you might actually find that you look better than you expected.

THE DAILY ROUTINE

Cleansing

The right cleanser can transform your skincare routine. Since you use it daily, it's crucial to find one that suits your skin type rather than just following trends or influencer recommendations.

Exfoliation

Although not a daily step, exfoliating at least twice a week is essential. Choose an exfoliator with gentle ingredients to avoid damaging your skin barrier as harsh scrubs can strip away delicate cells, making your skin more vulnerable.

Moisturising

As we age, our skin loses moisture, leading to dryness and dullness. A good moisturiser helps keep skin hydrated, improves elasticity, and even conceals blemishes.

Sunscreen

This should become your best friend. In your 40s, it plays a crucial role in reducing signs of ageing and protecting against harmful UV rays. Choose one with at least SPF 30 and reapply throughout the day.

Natural remedies

For those who prefer gentle, homemade treatments, ingredients like sandalwood (chandan), aloe vera, almond oil, yoghurt, and honey can work wonders. Skincare products containing natural extracts can also be incorporated into your routine for added benefits.

TARGETED TREATMENTS

For those looking to enhance their skincare beyond the basics, targeted treatments can address specific concerns like fine lines, uneven tone, and loss of firmness.

Retinoids: A must-have for reducing wrinkles, fine lines, and pigmentation. Start with a low concentration and increase gradually to avoid irritation.

Eye cream: This helps with dark circles, puffiness, and crow's feet. Look for peptides and hydrating ingredients.

Hyaluronic acid: Boosts hydration, plumps the skin and minimises fine lines.

If you are unsure about specific treatments, consulting a dermatologist or skincare specialist in your 40s can be incredibly beneficial. Professional treatments like chemical peels, microdermabrasion, and laser therapy can help with skin texture, pigmentation, and collagen production for more visible results.

— LS Desk

Photo: Collected

#RELATIONSHIPS & FAMILY

Sharing passwords with your partner: Is it worth it?

Everybody knows that maintaining a strong, long-lasting relationship is not easy, and because of that, trust is needed. But would you be willing to share a secret with your partner in the form of letters and numbers? Password sharing is quite a controversial topic, and is a practice that many people have mixed opinions on.

Kamran, 36, is a happily married man of eight years. He said, "Me personally? I share mine. My wife and I know all of our passwords for things like our bank accounts and phone passwords, mainly for safety reasons in case of an emergency, but it is not something that we look into much."

He believes that in this generation, nobody wants to give out their passwords

but he still thinks it could be a good idea. Kamran explained that as long as there is a balance and a mutual agreement between you and your partner, exchanging those codes may not seem like a bad idea after all.

This approach can be good, especially in cases of emergency. Having someone who knows your sensitive passwords with a sense of trust can be beneficial in

certain situations and as long as you are not too nosy, this can be a great thing to incorporate into your relationship.

Some people are not so lenient to this idea.

Taslima, a 21-year-old university student, shared her stance on this question, and heavily disagrees on password sharing, almost believing it to be quite oppressive

in nature.

"Password sharing is one of the deadliest giveaways that you and your partner are insecure people," she said and went on to say that people who feel the need to share passwords want a sense of ownership over their loved ones, where the two parties try to exhibit power over the other but end up accomplishing nothing.

In some cases, this can be true! Quite often in relationships, an excessive sharing of private information and possessiveness can lead to strains between the two partners and lead to the relationship breaking apart as a whole.

If you feel that you cannot trust your partner without snooping into their phone multiple times, it may be time to take a few steps back and reflect. Sometimes it is best to leave things be; your partner deserves a sense of privacy and personal space too.

Others see the beauty of both!

We spoke to 27-year-old Ahana, whose opinion was more nuanced in nature.

"I do not think you should feel like you have to but I choose to share mine with my partner because I have nothing to hide," she expressed.

Ahana told us that she believes sharing passwords depends on what you are sharing and could sometimes also bring a sense of comfort but at the same time, in some cases, can be too invasive.

The truth is that there is no 'correct' answer when it comes to how you handle your relationship.

Password sharing, like many private moments with your loved ones, is built on trust and faith. If sharing your secret codes does not seem like your cup of tea that is perfectly fine.

Knowing your partner's social media, email password, or credit card PIN is a serious commitment and you should never take advantage of that trust. While having access to the personal space of your significant other may seem appealing, it can also be an extreme invasion of privacy — one that can become toxic and suffocating.

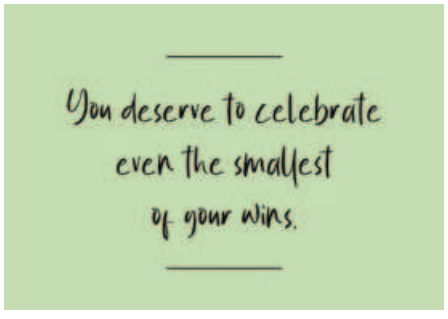
We believe it is important to assess the level of trust in your relationship before engaging in this practice.

By Adiba Islam
Photo: Collected
Names have been changed to maintain confidentiality.

#FYI

The power of small wins: Why celebrating little achievements matters

Satisfaction at jobs is a rare thing in this hyperactive generation; feeling underrated and unappreciated at work or personal life is a common story nowadays. Understandably, this can lead you to feel disengaged from your work or studies. The dilemma arises when people are expected to put in their best efforts irrespective of how they are feeling. Needless to say, people cannot do their best job when they are disengaged. So, how can you do your best? The answer probably lies in



celebrating small wins, even if they seem insignificant!

It can help build momentum. Consider creating a checklist for a cumbersome job. When you break your task into bite-sized, micro-segments and set priorities for each day, you set milestones for yourself to reach. Each milestone is a small win for you.

Creating a checklist and following through with each task will make you want to move to the next task immediately. That's called momentum. You need it so that you

stay put with the course of action. Without momentum, you will stumble upon several roadblocks or setbacks that will be enough to put you off.

Consider this, you give someone a strenuous job and they get it done. You will gain confidence in that person that he can be trusted with important jobs. Likewise, when you set a commitment for yourself, and you stick to it, you start trusting yourself. By doing this, you avoid overwhelming yourself with a big task. Instead, you break it into actionable steps and focus on completing just one step at a time.

Moreover, taking time to celebrate even small accomplishments can rejuvenate your spirit and prevent burnout. Recognising these moments boosts self-esteem and reinforces your confidence in the progress you are making.

Research indicates that individuals who acknowledge their small victories tend to have more energy and are less likely to experience burnout. By reflecting on the progress you have made at the end of each day, you track your own development, enhancing your sense of accomplishment. More importantly, it helps you get through even your bad days easily!

By Minhazur Rahman Alvee
Photo: Collected

#FASHION & BEAUTY

BLOOMING STYLES Spring fashion inspirations

Bengal is the land of poets who were inspired tremendously by the beauty of nature. In all of her six seasons, Mother Nature endows us with boundless charm and an abundance of beauty only found here. This seasonal splendour not only inspires art and literature but also deeply influences our fashion choices, reflecting the vibrant spirit of spring

The season holds a special place in the hearts of Bangladeshis with its soft breeze, mellow sunshine and myriads of flowers galore. From sweet marigolds that brighten one's days to pink dahlias that are romantic and lovely, to poppies as red as a bride's saree — these magnificent blooms bring absolute joy to our lives with their vibrancy.

By virtue of its calming and relaxed nature, the season is a great time to play dress up. As the weather is temperate and mild, one can get away with fun and bright colours. Happy hues like canary and sunflower yellow, orange, and mango are perfect for those tea parties with your girlfriends. A taant saree in these shades with a contrasting border will look lovely when worn with wrists full of glass bangles.

Handloom weaves are the way to go for ladies with a penchant for organic materials and one is truly spoilt for choice when it comes to our heritage pieces. From taant to tussar, and tantuj — there is something for everyone.

Accessorise with terracotta or brass jewellery but do not forget the all-important flowers. Wear them in your hair as jewellery and however else your heart desires. They deserve to be worn around your neck, your wrists, and on the head as a wondrous floral crown can truly emulate the spirit of spring!

Miranda Priestly, the fictional tyrannical fashion editor, once famously remarked, "Florals for Spring? Groundbreaking!" As obvious as it may be, it is indeed flowers that make spring special.

Is there anything more alluring than a delicate floral chiffon saree? Perfect for those springtime days when all one's heart desires is happy times spent in good company, idling away in mellow afternoon sunshine.

Floral dresses and skirts are just as beautiful and elegant. Let beautiful spring blooms inspire you when accessorising. Pair your lovely chiffon or georgette saree with a lariat necklace with dainty floral motifs. Wear a hairband with demure crystal daisies with your pretty pink skirt with oversized red roses.

By Sabrina N Bhuiyan
Photo: Adnan Rahman
Model: Tania, Rabbi
Styling: Sonia Yeasmin Isha
Wardrobe: Aarong
Makeup: Piash

Dhaka Makers 3 SHOWCASES *a* thriving art scene

When Dhaka Makers first launched, it was a humble initiative to showcase local artisans and designers. By its second edition, it had become a hub of innovation, blending tradition with contemporary design. Now, in its third edition, Dhaka Makers 3 has become a cultural extravaganza, proving that Dhaka's creative ecosystem is thriving.

Presented by City Bank and hosted at Aloki Convention Center, the five-day event – held from 30 January to 3 February 2025 – transcended the conventional marketplace, offering an immersive experience that celebrated craftsmanship, sustainability, and artistic expression.

WHERE HERITAGE MEETS INNOVATION

The festival officially kicked off with an inauguration ceremony attended by dignitaries, including Mohammad Mahbubur Rahman, Additional Managing Director and Chief Financial Officer of City Bank, and Susan Vize, Country Representative of Unesco.

Their presence underscored the festival's significance as a platform that not only celebrates craftsmanship but also fosters cultural exchange and economic opportunities for artisans.

At its heart, Dhaka Makers 3 provided a space where handmade craftsmanship and contemporary art could coexist. The Makers' Market, a line-up of small, independent local brands and creative entrepreneurs was a haven for those seeking one-of-a-kind, handcrafted goods. Each item, from ceramics and stationery to home décor, jewellery, and accessories, was more than a product; it was a story of passion, skill, and tradition.

Among the entrepreneurs were ASM Jiaul Hoque and Naveed, founders of Aicha, a platform dedicated to sustainable handicrafts made from coconut shells.

They shared, "Coconut shells are usually discarded, but we transform them into beautiful, functional pieces — home décor and jewellery. It's a way to repurpose waste while empowering artisans. Dhaka Makers gives us a voice in a growing movement towards ethical craftsmanship."

Srishty Sancharee, co-founder of Tulsipata — a clothing brand specialising in batik and cotton apparel — highlighted, "Batik has a long history, but we often see it fading commercially. At Tulsipata, we are trying to keep it alive by blending it with contemporary styles. Dhaka Makers is the perfect place to connect with people who truly appreciate handcrafted garments."

Another standout addition this year was the Craft Market, which spotlighted Bangladesh's rich textile and handicraft legacy. Here, visitors could engage with skilled artisans, observe their craftsmanship firsthand, and purchase unique handmade creations.

Among them was Horendro Kumar Das, an elderly artisan who has been making shitol pati for about half a century. Sitting at his stall, he remarked, "I have been making shitol pati since I was a boy. It is a craft passed down through generations, but today, fewer young people are taking it up. Events like this help people appreciate our work, and maybe, some will be inspired to carry on this tradition."

The festival was not just about preserving heritage but also about fostering new interpretations of tradition. The Art Market, another exciting new segment, redefined accessibility to contemporary art. Featuring paintings, sketches, prints and pop art, it became a space where both seasoned collectors and first-time buyers could interact with emerging and independent artists.

AN INTERACTIVE EXPERIENCE: WORKSHOPS AND MUSIC PERFORMANCE

A key highlight of Dhaka Makers 3 was its interactive experience, where visitors did not just observe but actively engaged with the creative process. The festival's workshops and live demonstrations transformed learning into an immersive activity, offering hands-on opportunities to work with heritage crafts and contemporary art forms.

Attendees participated in Bangla calligraphy sessions and crafted Tepa Putul terracotta dolls, learning directly from master artisans. Meanwhile, the Demonstration Zone came alive with performances such as live body painting, rickshaw art on objects, and tapestry weaving, allowing visitors to witness the magic of art unfolding in real time.

As the sun set, the festival transformed into a vibrant musical retreat, where an eclectic mix of artists took the stage each night. From the soulful performances of Muiz Mahfuz Band and Krishnokoli to the high-energy rock of Subconscious and Powersurge, the evenings kept the crowd engaged long after the craft markets had closed.

The line-up also featured Metrolife, Kafil Ahmed, Kanak Aditya, and Post Office Society, bringing a mix of contemporary and folk influences. The grand finale featured the Rehman Duo, who closed the festival on a melodic high. Through this fusion of interactive art and music, Dhaka Makers 3 created an environment where creativity was not just displayed — it was experienced, shared, and celebrated.

LOOKING AHEAD

As Dhaka Makers 3 wrapped up, it proved that Bangladesh's art, craft, and design scene is evolving constantly – fuelled by a community that values craftsmanship, innovation, and sustainability. With each edition, Dhaka Makers is shaping itself into not just a festival that continues to push the boundaries of how we experience, engage with, and support the arts.

As we await the next edition, one thing is certain: Dhaka's makers have more stories to tell, more crafts to revive, and more creativity to unleash.

By Ayman Anika
Photos: Ayman Anika

#TRAVELOGUE

Three friends, one epic night, and the serene seas of Cox's Bazar

If you ask people to pick between the sea and the mountain, most would go with the 'Mountains by the sea' response. Not me, though. It's the sea or nothing! When life gets me down, being by the sea is like an instant battery recharge and mind purge. Sadly, for the last couple of years, be it for time or some other recurring reason, I have been unable to visit my heaven on earth, Cox's Bazar.

Last week, I was enviously watching a resort plan to kick off their electronic music festival, Burning Crab, which I guess is a nod to America's Burning Man, and wishing I could attend. I had resigned myself to my fate when one of my school buddies called asking if I wanted in on a trip to Cox's (even attend the festival!) with friends. But there was a catch — I had to confirm within the hour.

I would like to sound cool here and say that I accepted immediately, threw office papers in the air, and ran out to celebrate while traffic stopped to celebrate my good fortunes as we see in movies! However, this is reality and the first thing I did was check my work calendar and see if I could spare the time, and if I could not, was it possible to work remotely (the nail-biting experience of being in your late 30s, right?).

I guess I had some unused good luck tokens for a while because it turns out I could go. It also occurred to me that while I made several trips to Cox's with other friends, colleagues, and so on, I never went there with school friends, so that was yet another thing to look forward to.

Next day, we were all present at a place where all good stories usually start — the airport terminal. I have this travel procedure — I refuse to eat or drink anything three hours before any journey and during the journey itself. That does not apply to my friends however, and soon we were standing in front of a booth ordering samosas and shingaras.

The best part of taking a plane anywhere is the take-off, which I love, and I enrich the experience further with Kenny Loggins's Danger Zone. Other than this short excitement, the flight, landing, and drive to lodgings was mostly uneventful, so let's skip ahead.

Our accommodations this time were somewhere quite new, and quite far — past Inani Beach. One look at the building and you could tell it would be a swanky 5-star experience, and it was, and then wasn't (more on that later).

After settling in, we sat down to plan, because we arrived on Wednesday and would leave on Friday afternoon, and Burning Crab, held at Mermaid Beach Resort, was happening for exactly the same days. So realistically, we could only attend for one day, and we had to pick between that night and Thursday, and we surmised that as Wednesday is still a working day, the real crowd would not show up until Thursday, so that's when we go.

As we arrived late on Wednesday, we decided it would be better spent to eat out somewhere, and maybe explore this area of Cox's. We were recommended Sun Dancer Café, but one of our friends went there with family, so we two decided not to intrude and instead went to try another café.

Perhaps, it was our fault in choosing, but the food was TERRIBLE (I ordered French fries, while my friend ordered loitta fry). We quickly paid, and found ourselves embarking on an adventure; going back to our hotel, and the eateries around it, before they closed at 2 AM.

We already started on the backfoot because we were setting off at 12:30 AM, with a slow electric rickshaw, and the Inani Bridge (Reju Khal Bridge) shut down at 11 PM for some maintenance work. Making matters worse, as an advertisement for electric transport, our vehicle ran out of juice just past Mermaid Beach Resort, with no other transport in sight.

We decided to walk the kilometre or so to the bridge, until thankfully, another transport popped up. We got off at the bridge, crossed on foot, managed to grab another and we were on our way. For the stargazers reading this, all I can say is on that road, with no light and a clear sky, the night and seas were illuminated by starlight!

We decided to stop, and just walk to the beach because these are moments you only read about in books or see on TV — a beach completely void of any humans, except us two bros, and of course our rickshaw driver, who was waiting on the road.

We managed to get back in one piece, (imagine how many times we'd be robbed if we attempted this in Dhaka), brought a couple of bottled sodas back to our room to go with the hefty snacks I bought from the airport.

This is where the 'wasn't' part of the 5-star experience shows up. We call the front desk and ask for a bottle opener. "Sorry Sir, we don't provide the service, but opening the bottle is easy. If you twist, the plastic will automatically give way," replied the unbothered concierge.

I quickly corrected him by saying we needed a bottle opener for a glass bottle while wondering how he connected a bottle opener and a plastic bottle. But its late in the night, so I let it go. "Sorry Sir, but we don't have a bottle opener," was his reply, to which I incredulously responded, "No bottle opener in a 5-star hotel?"

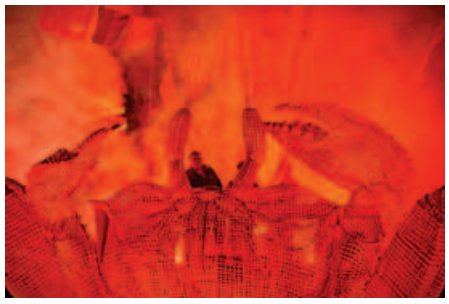
His response was that he would send someone over to sort it out. Thirty minutes later, someone appeared with something wrapped in a napkin, which we assumed was the fabled bottle opener. Jubilation turned to utter confusion when he unwrapped a knife. We knew his plan would not work, but we let him at it, and five minutes later, he came to the same conclusion and took the bottles to the kitchen.

Another 20 minutes later, after we were already done snacking, he comes up with the now-open bottles. We had to drink them if only to justify the hour and nonsensical conversations that led up to this moment.

Thursday morning started as it usually does during holidays, grumbling your way to a breakfast buffet, cursing the 7-10 AM timing logic. With that done, we headed to their infinity pool, which credits where credits due, had an incredible view of the sea.

While my friend, let's call him A, was ready to dive-bomb into the pool, me and my other friend, let's call him B, told him to ditch the pool because the sea was literally METRES away from us.

Begrudgingly, he obliged, but all that disappointment of his went away the moment the waves hit him. Pretty soon, three 37-year-olds devolved into 17-year-



old brats, slinging mud and splashing sea water at each other, while laughing at lame jokes loud enough for the coast guard to take notice.

The rest of the day was pretty uneventful; yet another forgetful lunch, and a monotonous afternoon, but things were about to pick up because we were gearing up for Burning Crab. We experienced all of the joy of school life, but now, we wanted that final experience; a class party excitement, sort of.

We were out by 10 PM, reached, got scanned in, made to wear a bracelet, and in we went to what was shaping up to be Bangladesh's first such EDM (electronic dance music) festival of its kind. There were other elements to the festival, such as art, and wellness, but that's not why I came.

The festival made good use of Beach Resort's vast front portion, housing two zones for DJs, many of them flown in from abroad and quite famous, to play their tracks, and listeners to vibe to. Interlaced between these zones were pop-up shops selling all kinds of food, albeit at astronomical prices!

We decided to forgo those and went to Mermaid Beach Resort's restaurant and ordered us a seafood platter for my friend and Kala Bhuna with tandoor ruti for me. I am a land mammal and I prefer to stick to food from the land, so not a lot of fish was highlighted on this trip.

Once dinner was done, we were back out to enjoy the music and just sink into the vibe that was this festival. I was particularly fond of the Zone 2. That was being held on a tiny island, with the DJ occupying one of Mermaid's iconic egg-shaped sitting areas on one end and the uninterrupted sea on the other where the listeners were.

To say it was a transcendental experience would be an understatement — the sound and feel of the waves lapping at your feet, the darkness pierced with light shows, and of course, the music! For an introvert like me, who always wanted to experience events like Tomorrowland, and A State of Trance, but never could because A. Introvert and B. Cost, this experience really hit the spot.

The rest of the night went by in a blur, and by 2 AM, we decided enough was enough (mostly because we would not get transport otherwise). We came back and I wanted to get rid of the bracelet. Unfortunately, I had another enlightening conversation with our hotel's front desk. This time, I called for scissors, and guess what? They don't have that either!

This was later solved on Friday morning, at the breakfast buffet egg station, where the chef, also without scissors, whipped out a gigantic knife and cut it off me.

After that, it was boarding another delayed plane, land in this urban depression prison we call our capital, and back to normal life. Like I stated before, I have travelled with others before, but never with school friends, and that's important because unlike with other people, you can cut loose without any worries or judgement. And if I were to sum up this trip, you could say this is going down as perhaps a death-bed-memory.

By Intisab Shahriyar
Photo: Mermaid Eco Tourism Ltd

#FYI

Why should you love A GAMER?

Video games are a world of their own, offering players an opportunity to immerse themselves, and providing a temporary escape from daily stressors. According to research, this form of cognitive escapism can lead to significant relaxation and improved mental health. Open-world games, known for their expansive and interactive environments, are believed to allow players to experience a sense of freedom and autonomy, busting stress, and enhancing mood.

Engaging in gaming can also activate important chemicals in the brain, benefiting social connections, mental well-being, and creativity. Video games can help individuals connect with their inner child and manage difficult emotions better.

Balancing personal time and relationship dynamics

While it can be difficult to watch one's partner prioritise a machine over you, mutually agreeing on a reasonable amount of time in the day for this can actually be good for your relationship. A good way to make peace with it is to take it as their time for self-care.

Just as self-care is proven to allow a person to be their best selves, so can allowing gamers the time to game in peace. It acknowledges their need for personal space and aligns with the "Let Them" theory, a concept which advocates for relinquishing the need to control others' behaviours and judgments. Implementing this approach involves setting boundaries and trusting partners to make their own decisions, leading to better relationships.

Enhancing relationships through shared gaming experiences

While personal gaming time is important, sharing this interest with your partner can also strengthen relational bonds. Cooperative (co-op) video games require players to work together towards common goals, fostering trust, communication, and teamwork. These elements are crucial for building long-lasting relationships. Games like "It Takes Two" and "Unravel Two" are designed specifically for co-op play, encouraging partners to collaborate and support each other within the game.

Playing video games with a partner is linked to better relationship satisfaction. Married couples who play as a team tend to be happier than those who do not, possibly due to common goals and shared challenges that help bring them closer.

Communicating the need for gaming time

For gamers, it's important to communicate to their partners how important game time is to them. One individual shared their experience on Reddit, explaining that video games have been their escape for many years, helping them relax and momentarily leave the stresses of the world behind. They emphasised that gaming is a form of self-care, similar to other activities people engage in to unwind.

Our advice: say it to your partner, not to strangers on a random site. And partners, if gamers respect you enough to lay it straight to you, level it back up — there's room for both you and that console in there.

By Munira Fidai
Photo: Collected

All about dream journals

Have you ever wondered why we dream and where these visions come from? Have you ever questioned what to do about the mad yet incredibly realistic ones that sometimes invade your sleep? These fleeting experiences often fade away as quickly as they appear, and the best way to keep track of them is by simply maintaining a dream journal.

What is a dream journal?

It is a simple way to keep a record or a personal note of your dreams by writing them down as soon as you wake up before they fade away from memory. It serves as a tool to help you understand your dreams over time, ultimately revealing a significant pattern or theme that emerges during your sleep.

It is also a common method for people intrigued by the concept of lucid dreaming (when you know you are dreaming while asleep) or those who try analysing their subconscious minds better.

Pretty fascinating, right? Once you get accustomed to keeping a journal, you will find yourself in surprising situations while writing down your experience.

Writing in a dream journal can help you better understand your emotions, improve coping skills, benefit mental health and can even improve sleep!

The details of one's dreams are often incredibly vivid but they begin to slip away within a few minutes right after one wakes up. So, if you fail to write them down, you will not end up remembering much of your dreams at all. Preserving the details, even by just scribbling or jotting some words down from the bigger images in your head will be very helpful for later reflection.

Similarly, if you are stressed out about something and you fully have not been able to acknowledge or process it in reality, you probably will see it in the form of losing something, feeling trapped, or being chased.

This is an obvious sign to grasp that often you dream of whatever's in your subconscious mind. The subconscious mind is also another reason why you should be writing your dreams down as they usually work like an indicator pointing to areas where you are struggling emotionally in life. Hence, you can try allowing yourself to explore unprocessed feelings to gather more emotional insight that you have not yet by beginning to write a dream journal.

Furthermore, our dreams are often wild and strange with the most bizarre combinations or scenarios.

Some people like to use all that wildness and draw creativity out of it. If you are a writer, artist, musician, or any kind of creative person, having a dream journal could be great for deriving creative inspiration. If you want to read more into it, you will also learn about some famous artists and scientists who have credited their dreams for their inventions.

Last but not least, as impossible as it may sound, keeping a dream journal helps you realise and become aware that you are dreaming while in the dream, or, in other words, lucid dreaming.

Although it is something that improves your sense of control over your own dreams, lucid dreaming requires a lot of training, practice, and patience to track a difference or progress. In other words, lucid dreamers take time to reach the point where they fully trigger the lucidity of their dreams. Not only that, but these types of dreamers have a particular intention as to why they dive into their interests.

When you dream, recognising "dream signs" — things that appear in your dreams but would surely be strange in the real world — is one of the first steps to triggering your lucidity. For instance, if you constantly keep dreaming about the colour red whenever something important is about to happen, it's a sign of a sort. In easier terms, these repetitive signs or symbols are what you can track to understand when you are in a dream.

Every benefit you have read about so far is related to how consistent you become with writing a dream journal and how better you get at remembering your dreams. Something even more interesting that adds up to it is how over time your ability to recall and notice more details improves because you have done nothing but "train" your brain to pay attention to your dreams.

Reflect on the meanings of your dream, as understanding it can lead to self-discovery and help you understand your true self.

Keeping a dream journal is quite simple. You can start by placing a diary on your bedside table so that when you wake up, you can immediately jot down whatever you remember. When you write things down, try focusing on the details of it more. Focus on describing the characters, signs, patterns, environments, emotions, and more with as much as possible. Sometimes make an effort to include your thoughts on the dream you are writing about. Most importantly, keep it consistent.

It will become easier for you to maintain a dream journal if you follow these simple tips —

It's always best to have an open mind and be non-judgemental when you write about a dream.

Do not think too much or worry about making a great piece of writing or the quality of it, just go with the flow and express.

If you are experimental with scribbling, sketching, or drawing here and there, it could help you convey the details and depths of your dream that words may not fully capture.

By Tazri Marwa Ahmed
Photo: Collected

#EVENTS

Discover the Ultimate Valentine's Weekend Plan in Dhaka

Finally, the perfect plan for Valentine's weekend in Dhaka has been discovered! After scrolling through my phone in search of a fun activity with friends, and a special way to spend 14 February with my girlfriend, it quickly became clear that there were not many major events happening in Dhaka at that time. However, just when all hope seemed lost, "1972Art39 x Elaka: Bhalobasha & Bhalovasha (Love & Language)" was found — exactly what was needed!

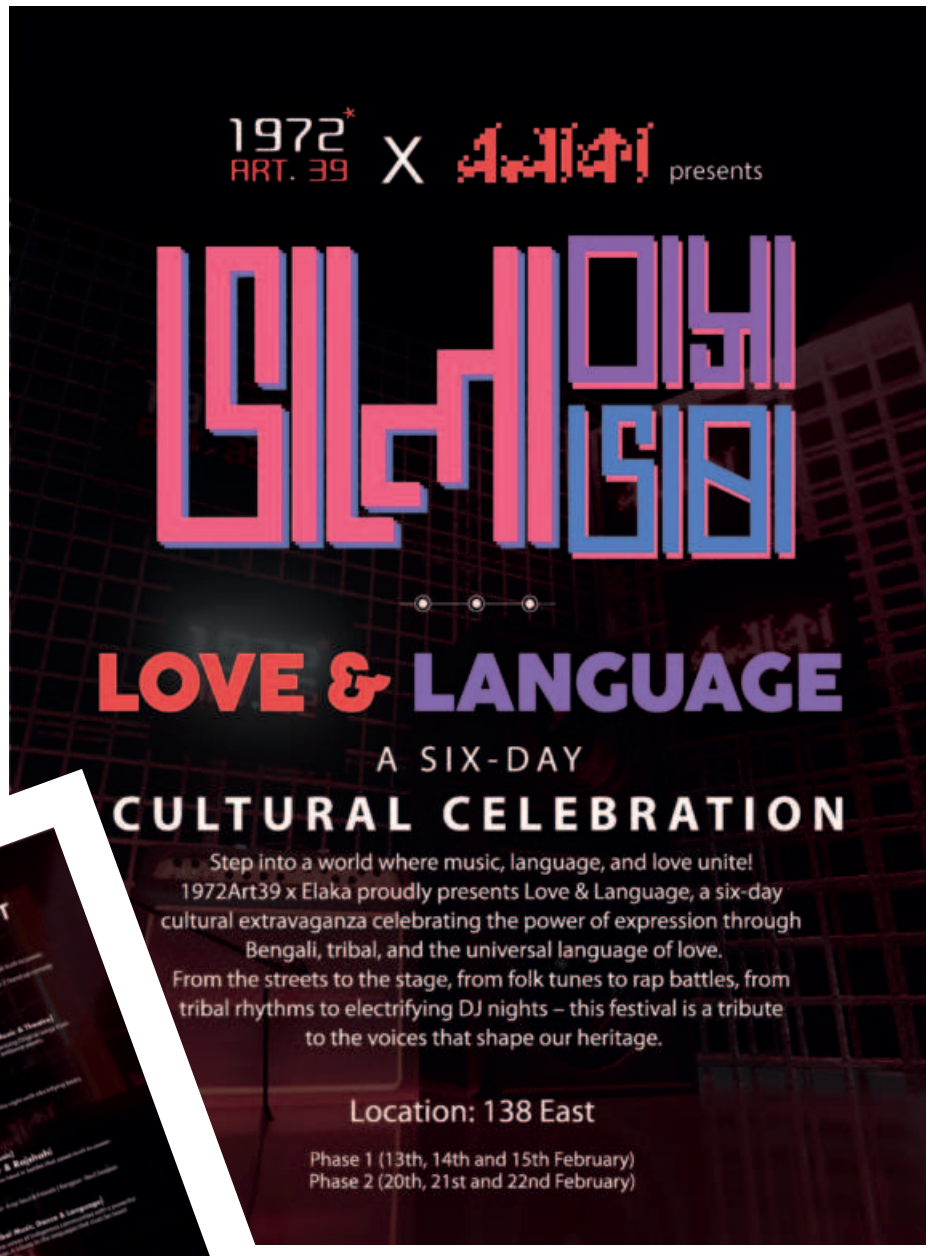
What's so special about it?
This festival, running from 13th-15th and 20th-22nd February at 138 East, is all about love, music, and expression. The first three days of the event will be packed with performances, comedy, and music, making it the ideal place to hang out with friends or enjoy an unforgettable Valentine's date.

Why go?
It's the only major event happening that weekend
From 13th to 15th February, there is not much else going on in Dhaka. Rather than aimlessly hopping between cafes, this festival provides a solid plan to relax, enjoy live performances, and soak in the atmosphere.

It has everything — music, comedy, and vibes
On Day 1, renowned hip-hop artists like Black Zang and Big Spade will face off in exciting rap battles, while uproarious stand-up comedy sets the tone for the evening. Day 2 will bring a soulful vibe with performances by Ahmed Hasan Sunny, Unmesh, Showrov Babna, and Mikat. On Day 3, world-famous DJ Daamer will take the stage, spinning high-energy beats all night, providing the ultimate opportunity to unwind before Valentine's Day.

A different kind of Valentine's date
The usual dinner date felt a bit too predictable. This event promises a unique experience with poetry, music, and unforgettable moments. For a girlfriend who loves live performances, it's the perfect surprise!

Plenty of cool merchandise
A highlight of the event is the wide variety of merchandise and unique items available from the Elaka store. Besides enjoying great music, there will be an opportunity to grab something cool as a memory of the night.



It's affordable and hassle-free
Unlike many Valentine's plans that are overpriced and stressful, this festival offers entertainment that's both accessible and wallet-friendly.

By Asif Alam
Photo: Courtesy

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#DÉCOR

DIY living room décor on a budget!

Interior design styles are ever-changing, and hiring a designer to keep up with the latest trends can be pricey. This is where DIY projects come to the rescue. Not only can decorating your rooms be a fun and rewarding task, but it can also allow you to cut costs. Living rooms deserve some extra care, as guests come over and we unwind there after a long day. However, decorating the living space by ourselves is more engaging and allows us to plan within a budget.

Maximalism: Go big with your personal style

Contrary to the subtle colour palettes and minimalistic elements, maximalism welcomes a bold and expressive approach — a mix and match of loud textures and furniture items, and adding a lot of personal details.

Start with a vibrant colour palette — jewel tones or striking wallpapers — to set the mood. Mix and match patterns in your cushions and curtains for depth.

Do not hesitate to bring in the ornate armchair or coffee table. Style it with dramatic upholstery and turn it into a statement piece. Opt for contemporary sofa sets with heavy decorative features. You can also add a grand centre table as the focal point of your room.

Recycled souvenirs or handcrafted pottery make great displays for a maximalist living room. Cohesively organise all these items to express your bold personal style!

Minimalism: Modern, sleek and efficient

For a minimally aesthetic living room, go for furniture with a modern design and prioritise quality over quantity. Look out for items that have a neat profile with a smooth finish to ensure they are visually calming.

Use a neutral colour scheme and keep your walls devoid of too many elements. Instead try to create empty spaces with a few focal points to make a statement. Ambient lighting enhances the open and spacious feel. Make sure that every piece serves a purpose while contributing to a harmonious space.

Bohemian chic: Reveal your eccentric side!

If you want to try something eccentric and stylish, why not go for bohemian aesthetics? It is casual, cosy, and creative — perfect for relaxing after a hectic day.

To DIY a boho-style space, start with an earthy base. Opt for warm whites, terracotta, or muted greens and layer in rich textures.

Use wall hangings, woven rugs, and embroidered cushions for a cosy and collected feel. Natural materials such as rattan, wood, and jute can add an organic warmth.

Choose furniture sets with classic details like a wooden coffee table, file rack, or small bookshelf. Mix and match with modern living room furniture sets for a fresh touch. Decorate with plants using potted greenery and trailing vines to breathe life into your space!

Vintage-core: The timeless allure of antique aesthetic

A vintage living room infuses nostalgic charm with timeless furniture items creating a classic and character-filled space.

Contemporary furniture sets and accent tables come with an antique look — blending minimalism with a vintage feel. They can be an ideal choice.

Displaying your old books, and black-and-white photographs goes a long way in creating an old-style charm. An antique clock or a stunning photograph can also dramatically enhance the nostalgic feel.

When it comes to buying furniture to craft your dream living room without financial overload — opt for furniture brands that offer an EMI (Equated Monthly Instalment) option. This allows you to purchase premium items without breaking the bank!

By Tasmiah Rahman
Photo: Hatil