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SHRI NIKETAN ARTS COMMERCE COLLEGE,
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Presentation

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Extempore

The art of speaking without preparation—testing fluency, clarity of thought, and the ability to think on your feet.

What Is Extempore?

Extempore is the act of delivering speech without prior preparation or script. It tests a speaker's ability to analyse a subject, form an opinion, and present it with clarity within a limited time frame.

Topics may be abstract (like change or empathy) or concrete (like global warming or AI). It displays spontaneity, logical reasoning, and persuasive skills.





Why Master Extempore?



Professional Edge

Prepares you for interviews, meetings, and discussions where quick thinking is crucial.



Competitive Advantage

Valuable in academic and competitive settings to assess communication skills.



Originality

Showcases spontaneity, command of language, and audience awareness.

Five Stages of Extempore

01

Understanding the Topic

Listen or read carefully. Identify the central idea and ensure you understand what is being asked.

02

Quick Brainstorming

Spend 30-60 seconds thinking of relevant points, examples, or current events related to the topic.

03

Structuring the Speech

Organise into introduction, body (2-3 main points), and conclusion.

04

Delivery

Speak clearly and confidently. Maintain eye contact and use natural gestures.

05

Time Management

Most extempore speeches last 1-2 minutes. Cover all points concisely.

Common Challenges

Lack of Preparation Time

Speakers may struggle to organise thoughts quickly and logically.

Nervousness or Stage Fright

Anxiety can lead to hesitation, shaky voice, or forgetting key points.

Limited Vocabulary

Difficulty expressing ideas clearly, using repetitive or vague language.

Losing Track of the Topic

Under pressure, speakers may digress, weakening coherence.

Time Management

Finishing too quickly or exceeding the time limit.

Handling Unexpected Topics

Abstract or unfamiliar topics require quick thinking and relevant content.

Strategies for Success



Understand Clearly

Grasp the topic fully, whether abstract or specific.



Use IBC Structure

Introduction, Body (2-3 points), Conclusion.



Past-Present-Future

Discuss how the topic evolved and its future relevance.





More Winning Strategies

Start with Impact

Use a relevant quote, anecdote, or personal story to grab attention and ease into the topic.

Take a Stand

If the topic allows opinion, take a clear position. It gives direction and conviction.

Use Examples

Real-life examples, statistics, or analogies make abstract ideas clearer and show awareness.

- 📄 **Stay Calm and Breathe:** Nervousness affects clarity. Take a deep breath before speaking. Pause if needed—it's better than rushing.

Sample Extempore: Social Media

A Double-Edged Sword

The Positive Side

- Revolutionised global communication
- Helps stay connected with friends and family
- Raises awareness about important issues
- Creates support networks and communities

The Dark Side

- Spreads misinformation and fake news
- Breeding ground for panic (e.g., COVID-19)
- Causes anxiety and low self-esteem
- Rise in cyberbullying and harassment

Social media is neither inherently good nor bad. Its impact depends on how we choose to use it. With responsible use, it can empower voices and build positive movements. If misused, it can be divisive and damaging.

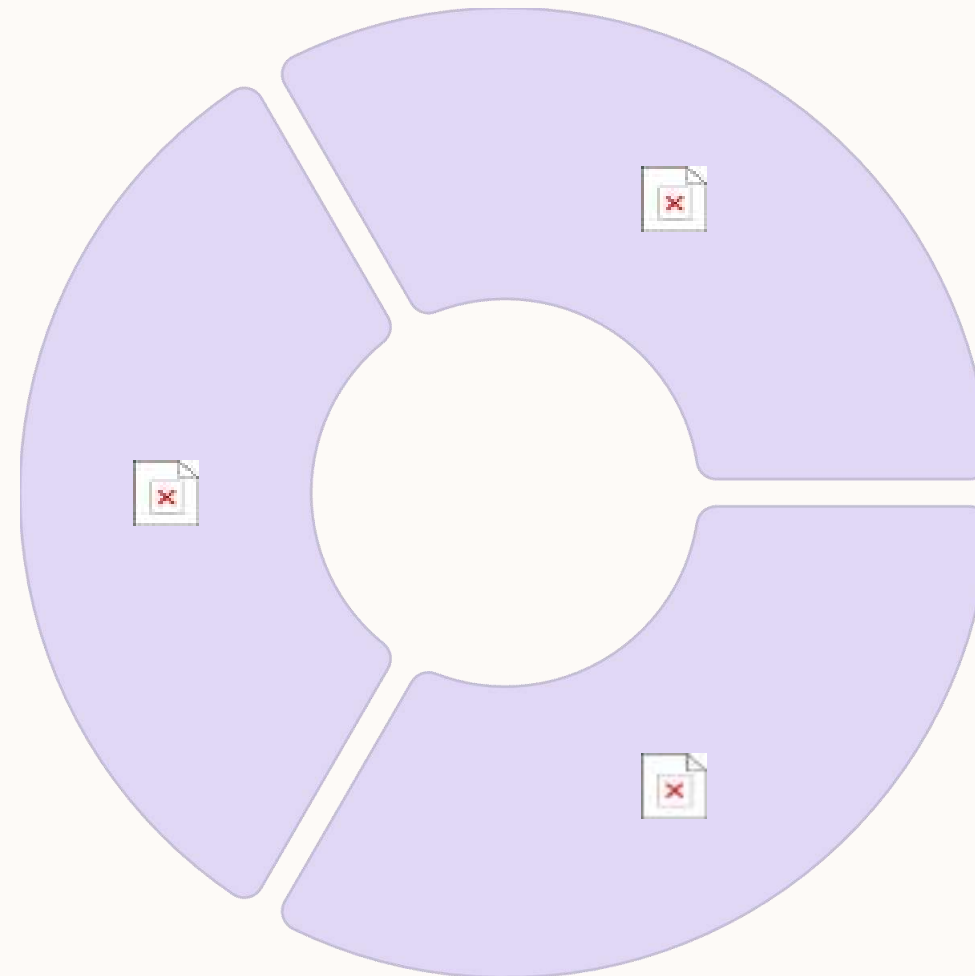


Sample Extempore: Silence

Silence may appear to be merely the absence of sound—but in reality, it speaks volumes. It can communicate emotions too deep or complex for words: empathy, grief, love, disappointment, or understanding.

Communication Tool

Gives space to think, listen actively, and respond mindfully.



Source of Creativity

Greatest ideas and insights are born in stillness.

Moral Responsibility

Silence in the face of injustice risks complicity. Breaking silence becomes necessary.

Silence is much more than the lack of sound. It is a form of communication, an emotional language, a space for reflection, and, at times, a stance of resistance.

Master the Art of Extempore



Consistent Practice

Regular practice builds confidence and fluency.



Reflect and Improve

Analyse your performance and learn from each experience.



Become Compelling

Transform into a confident and articulate speaker.

Through consistent practice and reflection, you can become a confident and compelling extempore speaker, ready for any real-life situation that demands quick thinking and articulate responses.



Drafting Concise Messages and Dialogues

Concise communication conveys information clearly and briefly using the fewest words necessary without sacrificing meaning. It focuses on clarity, precision, and relevance—enhancing understanding, saving time, and reducing miscommunication.



Why Conciseness Matters

Brevity

Respects time and attention spans. Delivers key points quickly and efficiently in our fast-paced world.

Clarity

Prevents confusion from long-winded explanations. Uses precise language focused only on what's relevant.

Impact

Well-crafted, brief messages are more memorable and actionable. Demonstrates confidence and understanding.



Barriers to Concise Communication

Rambling

Straying from the main point without clear direction. Leads to confusion and loss of audience interest.

Redundancy

Unnecessary repetition like "each and every" or "future plans". Weakens messages and wastes time.

Irrelevant Detail

Information that doesn't support the main message. Distracts listeners and derails conversations.



Short Message Formats

1

SMS

Quick, direct updates. 1-2 sentences, informal to neutral tone.

Example: "Hi Sarah, meeting at 3 PM in Room 210. See you!"

2

Email

Detailed information, requests, or instructions. Neutral to formal, structured format with subject line.

3

Memo

Formal internal communication for updates or policy changes. One page, structured with To/From/Date/Subject.

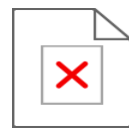


More Message Formats



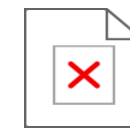
Notice

Public announcements of events, rules, or changes. Brief, formal, includes date/time/venue. Displayed in common areas.



Reminder

Polite prompt about tasks or deadlines. Very brief (1-2 sentences), clear and courteous tone.



Announcement

Formal statement for large groups. Shares updates, achievements, or events. Clear, direct, well-organised.

Crafting Effective Dialogue

A dialogue is a written or spoken exchange used to share ideas, ask questions, and build understanding. It appears in everyday communication, literature, interviews, and role plays.



Clarity

Each message is easy to understand, avoiding vague or confusing language.



Natural Flow

Exchange sounds realistic and smooth—not forced or robotic.



Relevance

Conversation stays focused on the topic without unnecessary digressions.



Appropriate Tone

Tone suits the context and reflects the relationship between speakers.

Contextual Appropriateness

Formal Contexts

Workplace meetings, emails, interviews require respectful, structured language free of slang. Builds trust and professionalism.

Informal Contexts

Casual chats with friends allow relaxed, conversational tone. Understanding context is essential for effective communication.



Clear Expression

Avoid filler words (um, you know, like), unnecessary repetition, and over-explanation. These habits make speech sound hesitant, cluttered, or unclear.

1

Wordy

"I personally think that I myself believe we should proceed"

2

Concise

"I believe we should proceed"

Practising clarity and relevance keeps listeners engaged and ensures messages are delivered efficiently and professionally in any context.

Editing and Revising

Effective communication continues through careful editing and revising to refine your message for clarity, brevity, and impact.

Checklist for Conciseness

- Eliminate redundant words or ideas
- Shorten long phrases (use "now" not "at this point in time")
- Replace vague terms with precise words

Peer Review Tips

- Ask peers to review for clarity
- Take breaks before self-editing
- Trim wordy sentences
- Check each sentence serves a purpose



Read Aloud for Success



The Final Test

Read your message aloud to check tone, flow, and clarity. If it sounds awkward or wordy, revise it.

A natural tone improves engagement and ensures your message is understood as intended.

📌 **Key Takeaway:** Concise communication is a vital life skill that demonstrates respect for others' time, improves relationships, and enhances credibility in our fast-paced world.

The Night Train at Deoli: A Study in Fleeting Connections

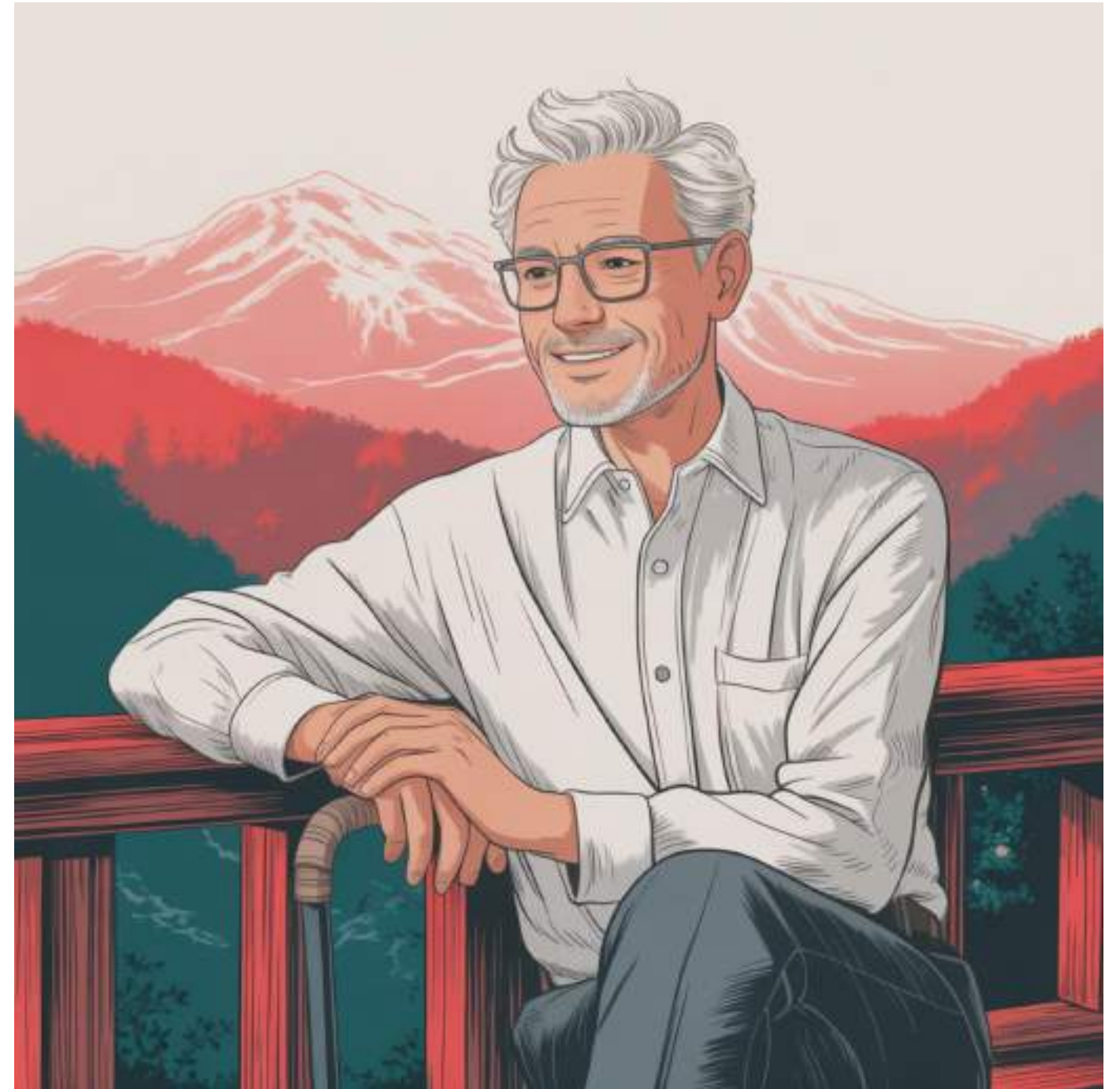
An exploration of Ruskin Bond's poignant short story about memory, longing, and the roads not taken in life.



Ruskin Bond: Master of Evocative Simplicity

Born in 1934, Ruskin Bond is a celebrated Indian author of British descent whose literary legacy spans decades. His writing is characterized by:

- Simple yet profound narratives set in the Himalayan foothills
- Themes of nature, loneliness, and transient human connections
- A gentle melancholy that pervades his observations
- Semi-autobiographical elements woven into fiction



"The Night Train at Deoli" exemplifies Bond's signature style — capturing ephemeral moments that

Setting: The Insignificant Station

Deoli Station

A small, dimly lit railway platform at the edge of the Terai jungles

Trains stop for just ten minutes, though "no one ever gets on or off"

Symbolic Significance

Represents the overlooked moments and places in life

The narrator feels "a strange sympathy for its loneliness"

Time and Season

The critical encounter occurs during the narrator's summer vacation journey

He is eighteen—at the threshold of adulthood

The setting becomes a metaphor for those brief, seemingly inconsequential moments that unexpectedly transform our lives.

The First Encounter: A Moment of Connection

During a routine stop at Deoli, the eighteen-year-old narrator notices a young basket-seller on the platform—poor but dignified, with "bare feet and old clothes." Their eyes meet, creating an immediate, wordless connection that transcends their brief interaction.

The encounter lasts mere minutes before the train's whistle blows, yet leaves the narrator with an indelible impression—the girl's smile from the receding platform haunts his thoughts long after the train departs.



The Second Meeting: Deepening Connection

Anticipation and Recognition

Two months later, the narrator eagerly searches for the girl during his return journey

Their reunion is marked by mutual recognition—"like old friends"

Their connection deepens despite minimal conversation

Unfulfilled Impulses

The narrator feels an impulsive desire to "take her with me"

He holds her hand and promises to return

The moment ends abruptly as he must run to catch the departing train

Her memory remains even more vivid after this second encounter

📄 This second meeting intensifies the emotional impact, transforming a chance encounter into something that feels like destiny.

The Absence: Loss and Uncertainty



Eager Return

The narrator returns to Dehra earlier than usual, anticipating another meeting



Desperate Search

He finds the girl absent from the platform, leading to frantic questioning



Indifferent Responses

The station-master knows nothing; the tea stall owner remembers her vaguely



Profound Loss

"She has stopped coming now... She was nothing to me."

The casual dismissal by the tea stall owner contrasts sharply with the narrator's deep emotional investment, highlighting how differently people value the same connections.



Literary Techniques: Creating Emotional Resonance

First-Person Narration

Creates intimacy and immediacy

Allows readers to experience the narrator's emotions directly

Minimalist Dialogue

Emphasizes the power of unspoken connections

Creates space for readers' interpretation

Symbolism

The train represents life's journey and passing time

Deoli symbolizes overlooked moments of potential

Sensory Details

Evokes atmosphere through descriptions of light, sound, and touch

The basket becomes a tangible memento of the encounter

The Psychology of Never Stopping

“

"I always hoped that I would see her again, while dreading the possibility that I might pass through Deoli and find her gone."

“

"Something prevented me from breaking my journey at Deoli... perhaps I was afraid of disturbing the dream."

“

"I preferred to keep the memory as it was, rather than spoil it with reality."

“

The narrator's reluctance to stop at Deoli reveals a profound psychological truth: sometimes we cherish the potential of what might have been more than the certainty of what is. By preserving the mystery, he maintains both hope and the perfection of the memory.

Thematic Analysis: The Beauty of Transience

Impermanence of Connections

Bond explores how brief encounters can leave permanent impressions

The story captures the poignancy of paths that cross momentarily

Roads Not Taken

Examines the power of unexplored possibilities

Questions whether some connections are meant to remain unfulfilled



Memory and Imagination

Lasting Literary Impact

Universal Resonance

"The Night Train at Deoli" endures because it captures a universal human experience—the lingering impact of fleeting connections and the bittersweet nature of might-have-beens.

Quintessential Bond

The story exemplifies Ruskin Bond's literary genius: his ability to transform ordinary moments into profound meditations on human existence through simple yet evocative prose.

Reader Identification

Each reader brings their own "Deoli"—memories of brief, meaningful encounters that continue to haunt and shape their emotional landscape long after they've passed.

The story's enduring appeal lies in its gentle reminder that some of life's most significant moments are the ones that pass by almost unnoticed, leaving us forever changed.



Professions for Women

Virginia Woolf's 1931 address on women's professional experiences and the obstacles they face in creative and intellectual work.

The Writer's Path

A Smooth Road

Literature offered fewer obstacles for women than other professions. Pioneers like Fanny Burney, Jane Austen, and George Eliot had already cleared the path.

Writing required minimal resources—just paper, a pen, and a room. For ten shillings and sixpence, one could buy enough paper to write all of Shakespeare's plays.

A Simple Beginning

Woolf's entry into journalism was straightforward: a girl in a bedroom, moving her pen across the page from ten o'clock to one.

Her first article earned £1 10s 6d—which she spent not on necessities, but on a Persian cat.



The Angel in the House



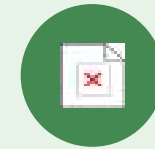
Intensely Sympathetic

She was immensely charming and utterly unselfish, excelling in family life.



Self-Sacrificing

If there was chicken, she took the leg; if there was a draught, she sat in it.



Above All, Pure

She never had a mind or wish of her own, preferring to sympathise with others.

This phantom haunted Woolf whenever she tried to write honestly. The Angel whispered: "Be sympathetic; be tender; flatter; deceive. Never let anybody guess that you have a mind of your own."

Killing the Phantom

"I turned upon her and caught her by the throat. I did my best to kill her. Had I not killed her, she would have killed me. She would have plucked the heart out of my writing."

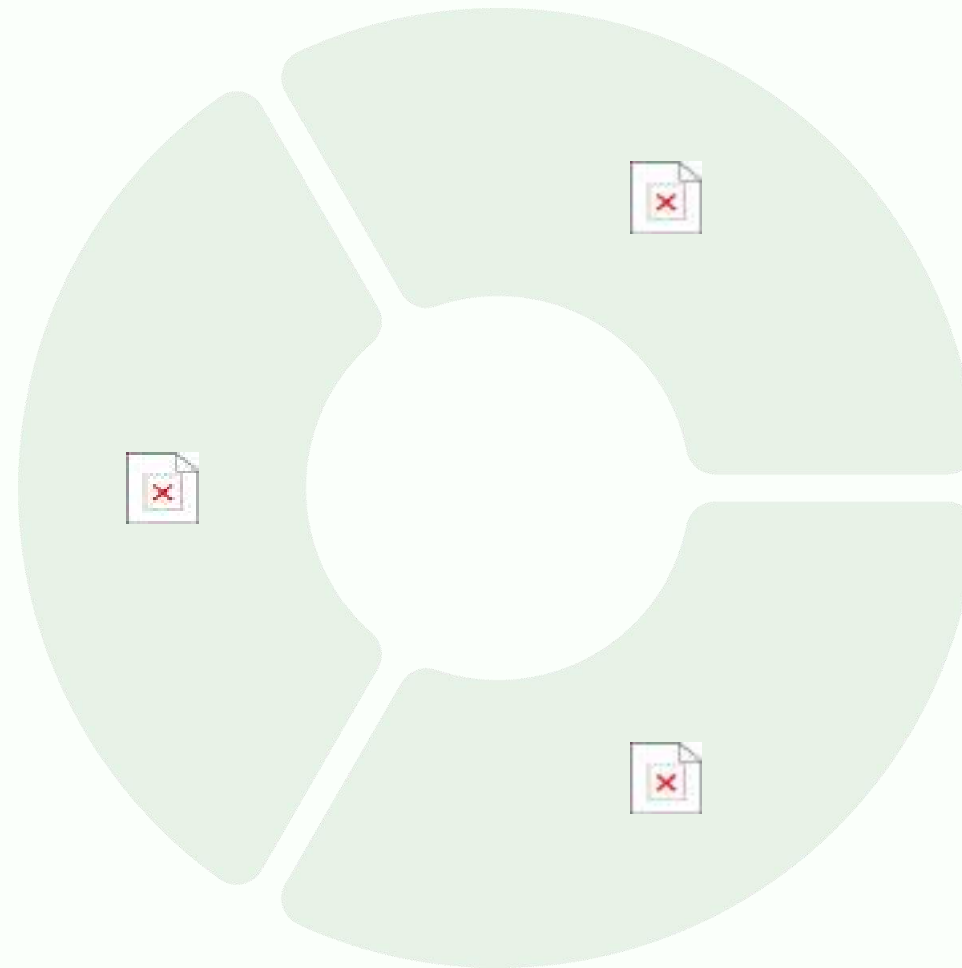
The struggle was severe. The Angel's fictitious nature made her harder to kill than any reality. She kept creeping back, taking time that could have been spent learning Greek grammar or roaming the world.



What Is a Woman?

An Unknown

Once freed from falsehood, what remained? A young woman with an inkpot—but what is "herself"?



In Process

Women are showing us through experiments, failures, and successes what a woman truly is.

Expression Needed

Nobody can know until women have expressed themselves in all arts and professions.

The Novelist's Trance



A novelist's chief desire is to be as unconscious as possible—inducing a state of perpetual lethargy where nothing disturbs the imagination.

Woolf imagined herself as a fisherman lying in dreams on the verge of a deep lake, letting her imagination sweep unchecked through the submerged depths of the unconscious.



The Smash

1

The Rush

Her imagination raced away, seeking the pools and dark places where the largest fish slumber.

2

The Collision

Then came a smash—an explosion. The imagination dashed itself against something hard.

3

The Censorship

She had thought of something about the body, about passions, unfitting for a woman to say.

The consciousness of what men would say roused her from her artist's trance. She could write no more. The imagination could work no longer.

Two Adventures

First: Killing the Angel

Status: Solved. The Angel in the House died, though the struggle was severe and took much time.

Second: Telling the Truth

Status: Unsolved. Speaking honestly about her experiences as a body—this obstacle remains immensely powerful and difficult to define.

Woolf doubted that any woman had yet solved the second challenge. The obstacles are still there, though very difficult to define.



Ghosts and Phantoms

Outwardly, what is simpler than to write books? What obstacles exist for a woman rather than for a man?

Inwardly, the case is very different. Women still have many ghosts to fight, many prejudices to overcome. It will be a long time before a woman can sit down to write without finding a phantom to be slain.

- If this is true in literature—the freest of all professions for women—how much more difficult must it be in the new professions women are now entering for the first time?



A Room of Your Own

01

You've Won the Room

Women have won rooms of their own in the house hitherto exclusively owned by men.

02

You Can Pay the Rent

Through great labour and effort, you're earning your five hundred pounds a year.

03

But It's Only a Beginning

The room is bare. It must be furnished, decorated, and shared.

04

The Questions Remain

How will you furnish it? With whom will you share it, and on what terms?

For the first time in history, you are able to ask these questions. For the first time, you are able to decide for yourselves what the answers should be.



My Greatest Olympic Prize

The True Story of Jesse Owens and an Unexpected Friendship

A powerful account of sportsmanship, courage, and connection that transcended prejudice at the 1936 Berlin Olympics.



Setting the Stage: Berlin 1936

The Berlin Olympics were held during a pivotal moment in history. Adolf Hitler, the Chancellor of Germany, had a specific agenda for these games.

- Hitler wanted to showcase German superiority and prove that the Aryan race was superior to all others
- Jesse Owens, an African American athlete who had faced racism throughout his life, was determined to prove Hitler wrong
- The political tension created a charged atmosphere beyond typical Olympic competition

Jesse's Olympic Journey

Years of Dedication

Jesse trained relentlessly for six years, determined to win at least one gold medal at the Olympics. His preparation was so thorough that he set a world record in his university, jumping 26 feet 8¼ inches.

A Formidable Rival

Upon arriving in Germany, Jesse met Luz Long, a German athlete who was also jumping around 26 feet in practice. Luz was reportedly close to Hitler, and there were high expectations for him to win.

Initial Struggles

Jesse's anger and prejudice of Luz affected his performance. He faltered in his first two qualifying jumps, putting his Olympic dreams in jeopardy.

An Unexpected Hand

Suddenly, Jesse felt a hand touch on his shoulder. When he turned, he saw his opponent, Luz Long—the very man he had resolved to defeat.

Despite being competitors and coming from drastically different worlds, Luz approached Jesse with genuine concern. He offered both encouragement and practical advice, suggesting Jesse start his run from a few inches back to avoid faulting.

This simple act of sportsmanship would change the course of the competition—and of Jesse's life.



Breaking Barriers



Beyond Competition

That evening, after Jesse qualified thanks to Luz's advice, the two athletes had a profound conversation that transcended their athletic rivalry.

- They shared their personal beliefs and worldviews
- Jesse learned that Luz disagreed with Hitler's racial theories
- Despite their different backgrounds, they discovered they shared similar values
- A genuine friendship formed, based on mutual respect and understanding

The Finals: Sport at Its Finest

Mutual Excellence

During the finals, both athletes performed at their peak. Luz broke his own record with an outstanding jump.

Inspired Performance

Seeing his new friend's achievement, Jesse was inspired to push himself even further, ultimately surpassing Luz's mark.

True Sportsmanship

After the final jump, Luz was the first to congratulate Jesse—a gesture he repeated for each of Jesse's four gold medal victories.

What made Luz's actions particularly courageous was that he openly celebrated Jesse's victories in front of Hitler, who was visibly displeased to see a Black athlete triumph over his "Aryan champions."

The True Prize

"The friendship of Luz Long was my greatest Olympic prize."

While Jesse Owens won four gold medals at the 1936 Berlin Olympics—a remarkable achievement—he considered these physical awards secondary to what he truly valued from the experience.

In Jesse's own words, the friendship he formed with Luz Long was more precious than any medal. It represented a victory over prejudice and hatred, achieved through human connection rather than athletic prowess.

Lessons in Sportsmanship

i In an era defined by racial tension and political conflict, Luz Long's behavior exemplified the Olympic ideal at its most pure—where competition brings out the best in humanity rather than dividing it.

Beyond Rivalry

Luz never viewed Jesse as merely a rival to be defeated. Instead, he saw him as a fellow athlete deserving respect and fair competition.

Moral Courage

By befriending and publicly supporting Jesse, Luz demonstrated remarkable moral courage, risking disapproval from his country's leadership.

True Victory

The story reveals that sometimes the greatest achievements in sports have nothing to do with medals or records, but with the human connections formed along the way.

Reflections for Today

Jesse Owens' story reminds us that even in our most competitive moments, we have the opportunity to display humanity and kindness.



Bridges Over Barriers

The friendship between Jesse and Luz shows how personal connections can transcend societal divisions of race, nationality, and politics.



Redefining Victory

True achievement may not always be measured by the medals we win, but by the character we display and the lives we touch along the way.



Moral Compass

Luz's willingness to stand by his own values, even when they contradicted those in power, demonstrates how individual conscience can triumph over societal pressure.



Train to Benares

By Prantik Banerjee

A journey of memory, loss and human connection

A Story by Prantik Banerjee

The Journey Begins

Rahul and his elderly companion Dada board a train from Nagpur to Benares, one of India's most sacred cities. Along the way, they meet Abhishek, a young man travelling to perform his grandfather's final rites in the Ganga.

Through shared meals and quiet conversations, the train compartment becomes a microcosm of Indian society—where stories of grief and resilience quietly intersect.

Setting

AC 2-tier coach, Nagpur to Benares

Characters

Rahul, Dada, and Abhishek



The Exchange of Berths

1

The Request

Rahul approaches Abhishek to swap berths for Dada's comfort

2

Immediate Generosity

The young man agrees without hesitation

3

A Story Unfolds

Abhishek shares his grandfather's passing in Hyderabad

"I was very close to my nanaji..."

Childhood Memories



The train journey awakens Rahul's memories of travelling First Class with his Air Force father to Kolkata each summer.

The small reading light on the upper bunk fascinated him—like a magic lamp from Ali Baba's cave. He would retreat into that cosy space with Indrajal comics, Sherlock Holmes, and Feluda stories.

📄 "He never wanted the train to reach anywhere."

Breaking Bread Together

Simple Meal

Rahul's wife packed chapattis and sprouts cooked with ginger, garlic, and potatoes

Shared Comfort

They coax Abhishek to join them—he accepts gratefully, having eaten nothing for hours

In the warmth of shared food, strangers become companions. The smell of parathas and mango pickle fills the compartment as stories and sustenance flow freely.

The Newspaper Revelation

The Discovery

Dada's photograph smiles from the newspaper used as a placemat

Recognition

A distinguished writer's face beneath oil stains and masala

"Well, the paper could've been put to a worse use and a writer's fame come to a foul end!"

Dada laughs with a guffaw, gesturing silence. But Rahul feels the coincidence carries significance—connected to whatever might unfold during their quiet pilgrimage.

An illustration of a newspaper with a portrait of a man and a plant. The newspaper is shown as a stack of pages, with the top page featuring a large headline and a central portrait of a man with dark hair and a light-colored shirt. The portrait is surrounded by green and yellow foliage. The text "HREW KIMINS" is visible at the top of the page. The newspaper is set against a light green background with a circular cutout effect.

HREW KIMINS

Burdens of the Past



Rahul's Gaya Experience

Two years ago, he performed pind daan for his father who died unnaturally. He returned and shut himself away for days.



Dada's Regret

His mother wished to visit Benares. "I always made excuses for not taking her there...and I never did."



The Unspoken Journey

Both understand what remains unsaid about this trip to the Ganga.

A Sangam Meeting

Abhishek reads the article with wonder mixed with incomprehension. He carefully folds the newspaper, straightens its crumpled edges, and smoothens the crease on Dada's photo.

He requests an autograph with childlike glee: **"I'll show it to ma and babuji. They will scarcely believe that I met such a famous writer on the train...such a sangam meeting you both."**



Vulnerability and Care

At the station, Dada wore crisp white cotton over black trousers, his fit frame maintained through seventy-one years. When Rahul held his elbow: **"Don't treat me like an invalid."**

But in the compartment's harsh light, he suddenly looks old—wrinkles showing, bronze skin darker, chin drooping. *"I'm a nervous traveller,"* he had confessed.

Rahul makes Dada's bed with care—white sheet neatly spread, pillow arranged, blanket folded. He tucks him in gently. In the gesture lives unspoken tenderness.



Parallel Lines Meeting

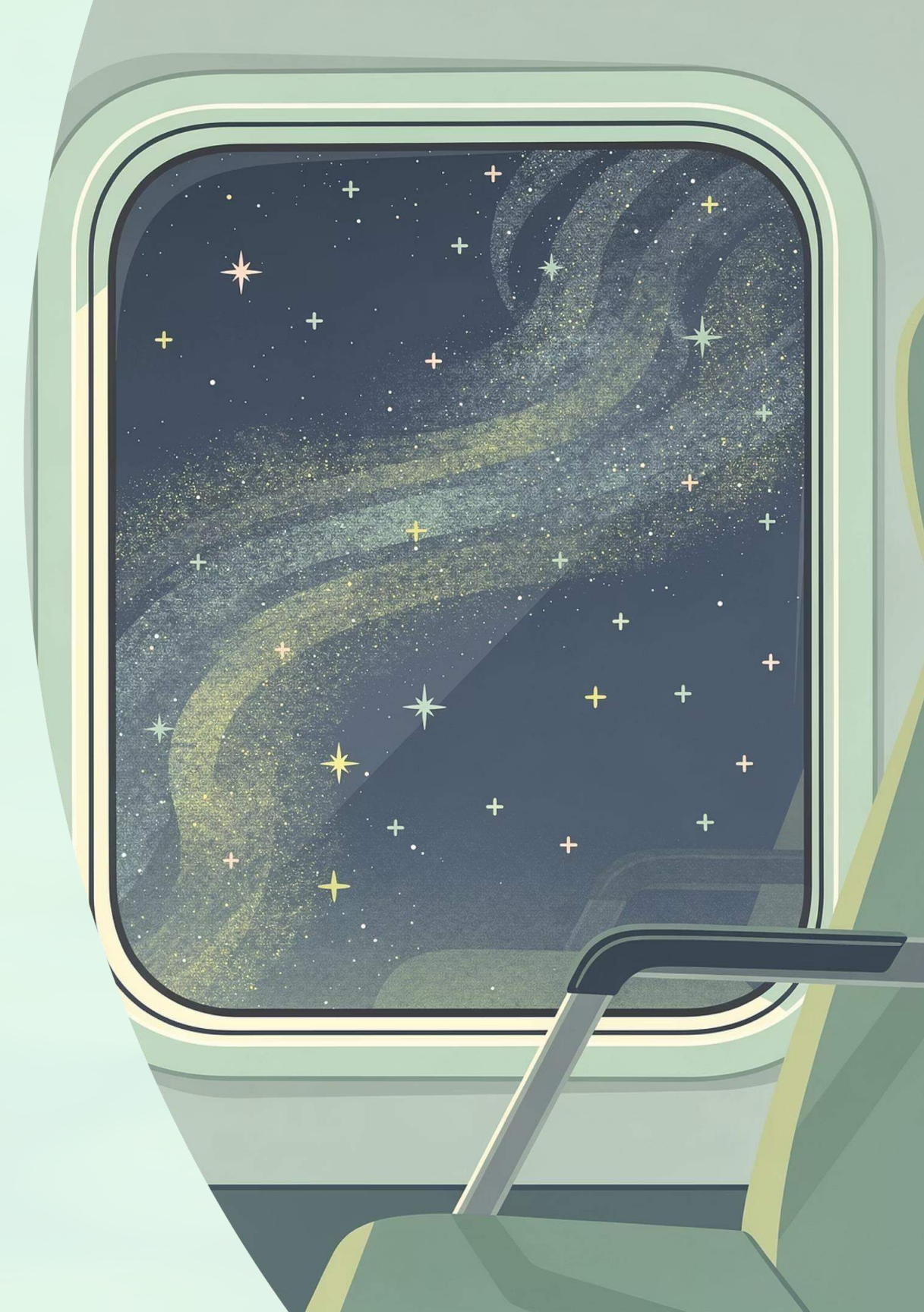
When Rahul switches off the compartment lights, Dada breaks into a smile in the dark. Its radiance slowly opens up the roof of the train, revealing stars glittering from far away.

“

The reading lamp glows softly with the sadness of a young man's loss and the restlessness of an old man's search.

”

The night train rattles onwards, taking parallel lines to meet the dark, deep waters of the Ganga—where grief seeks solace, memory seeks peace, and strangers become companions in the sacred journey of letting go.





Wilfred Owen's "Anthem for Doomed Youth": A Poetic Indictment of War

A detailed analysis of one of the most powerful anti-war poems from World War I, exploring how Owen strips away the romanticism of warfare to reveal its brutal, dehumanizing reality through carefully crafted imagery and sound.

The Poet and His Context

Wilfred Owen (1893-1918)

One of the most significant poets of World War I, Owen served on the Western Front and experienced firsthand the horrors of trench warfare, gas attacks, and mass casualties.

His poetry is renowned for its:

- Unflinching realism about warfare
- Condemnation of romanticized views of battle
- Profound empathy for suffering soldiers

Tragically, Owen was killed in action just one week before the Armistice was signed in November 1918.



The Irony in the Title

"Anthem for Doomed Youth"

Anthem

Traditionally a song of celebration, praise or patriotism - often used for national anthems or songs of glory

Doomed

Predetermined for death or destruction - suggesting the inescapable fate awaiting the soldiers

Youth

Emphasizes the young age of most soldiers - highlighting the tragedy of lives cut short before they truly began

The title itself creates a jarring contradiction - an anthem should celebrate, but here it mourns those inevitably destined for death. This establishes the poem's bitter irony from the very beginning.

Structure and Form

Sonnet Structure

The poem follows the Petrarchan sonnet form with a clear division:

- **Octave (lines 1-8):** Focuses on battlefield deaths and the sounds of war
- **Sestet (lines 9-14):** Shifts to visual imagery and distant mourning at home

This traditional form contrasts with the poem's anti-traditional message, creating tension that reinforces the theme.

Sound Patterns

Owen masterfully employs sound devices to reinforce meaning:

- **Alliteration:** "rifles' rapid rattle" mimics gunfire
- **Assonance:** "no prayers nor bells" creates a mournful tone
- **Onomatopoeia:** "stuttering," "patter," "wailing" evoke battlefield sounds

The Octave: Battlefield Sounds Replace Funeral Rites

1 "What passing-bells for these who die as cattle?"

The opening rhetorical question compares soldiers to slaughtered animals, dehumanizing their deaths while questioning the absence of proper funeral bells.

2 "Only the monstrous anger of the guns. / Only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle"

Artillery is personified with "monstrous anger" while machine gun fire is recreated through onomatopoeia, replacing solemn church bells with weapons of destruction.

3 "The shrill, demented choirs of wailing shells"

Instead of choir hymns, the soldiers hear only the "demented" sounds of artillery shells screaming through the air, creating a hellish auditory landscape.



Battlefield "Mockeries" of Funeral Rites

Traditional Funeral Elements

Church bells	Signal a death with dignity
Prayers	Offer spiritual comfort
Choirs	Sing hymns of remembrance
Bugles	Play ceremonial music

Battlefield Replacements

"Monstrous anger of guns"	Violent, uncaring noise
"Stuttering rifles"	Mechanical, impersonal
"Wailing shells"	Sounds of destruction
"Bugles from sad shires"	Distant, insufficient

Owen systematically contrasts sacred funeral traditions with the horrific sounds that actually accompany soldiers' deaths, emphasizing the vast disconnect between civilian perception and battlefield reality.

The Sestet: Visual Imagery of Distant Mourning



"What candles may be held to speed them all?"

Questions the absence of funeral candles traditionally used to guide souls, shifting from sounds to visual imagery.



"Not in the hands of boys, but in their eyes / Shall shine the holy glimmers of goodbyes."

The only "candles" are the tears or fading light in dying soldiers' eyes - an intimate, tragic farewell without ceremony.



"And each slow dusk a drawing-down of blinds."

The closing line evokes the drawing of curtains in homes of the bereaved - a quiet, repetitive act of private mourning far from the battlefield.

The sestet moves from the chaotic soundscape of the battlefield to the quiet, invisible mourning that happens in distant homes, emphasizing isolation in grief.



Metaphorical Substitutions

1

Funeral Pall → Girls' Pallor

"The pallor of girls' brows shall be their pall"

The cloth covering a coffin is replaced by the pale faces of grieving women at home, connecting physical signs of mourning with emotional devastation.

2

Funeral Flowers → Patient Thoughts

"Their flowers the tenderness of patient minds"

Physical floral tributes are replaced by the enduring, sorrowful thoughts of those who wait and remember, offering spiritual rather than material remembrance.

3

Funeral Ceremony → Daily Dusk

"And each slow dusk a drawing-down of blinds"

The single funeral service is replaced by countless quiet evenings, suggesting mourning becomes embedded in the daily rhythm of life for those left behind.

Central Themes and Techniques

Dehumanization

Soldiers "die as cattle" - reduced to anonymous masses without individual dignity or recognition, slaughtered impersonally on an industrial scale.

Juxtaposition

The poem constantly contrasts sacred funeral traditions with battlefield realities, and public ceremony with private grief, highlighting unbridgeable divides.

Sensory Imagery

Moves from predominantly auditory imagery in the octave (guns, rifles, shells) to visual imagery in the sestet (eyes, pallor, dusk), creating a complete sensory experience.

Personification

Gives human qualities to inanimate objects: guns have "monstrous anger," shells form "demented choirs," creating a nightmarish battlefield landscape.

Historical Significance and Legacy

Anti-War Message

"Anthem for Doomed Youth" stands as one of the most powerful anti-war poems in English literature. Owen's unflinching portrayal of war's realities challenged the patriotic propaganda of his time and continues to resonate today.

The poem serves as:

- A stark condemnation of warfare's dehumanizing effects
- A poignant elegy for a lost generation
- A reminder of the gap between public glorification and private suffering

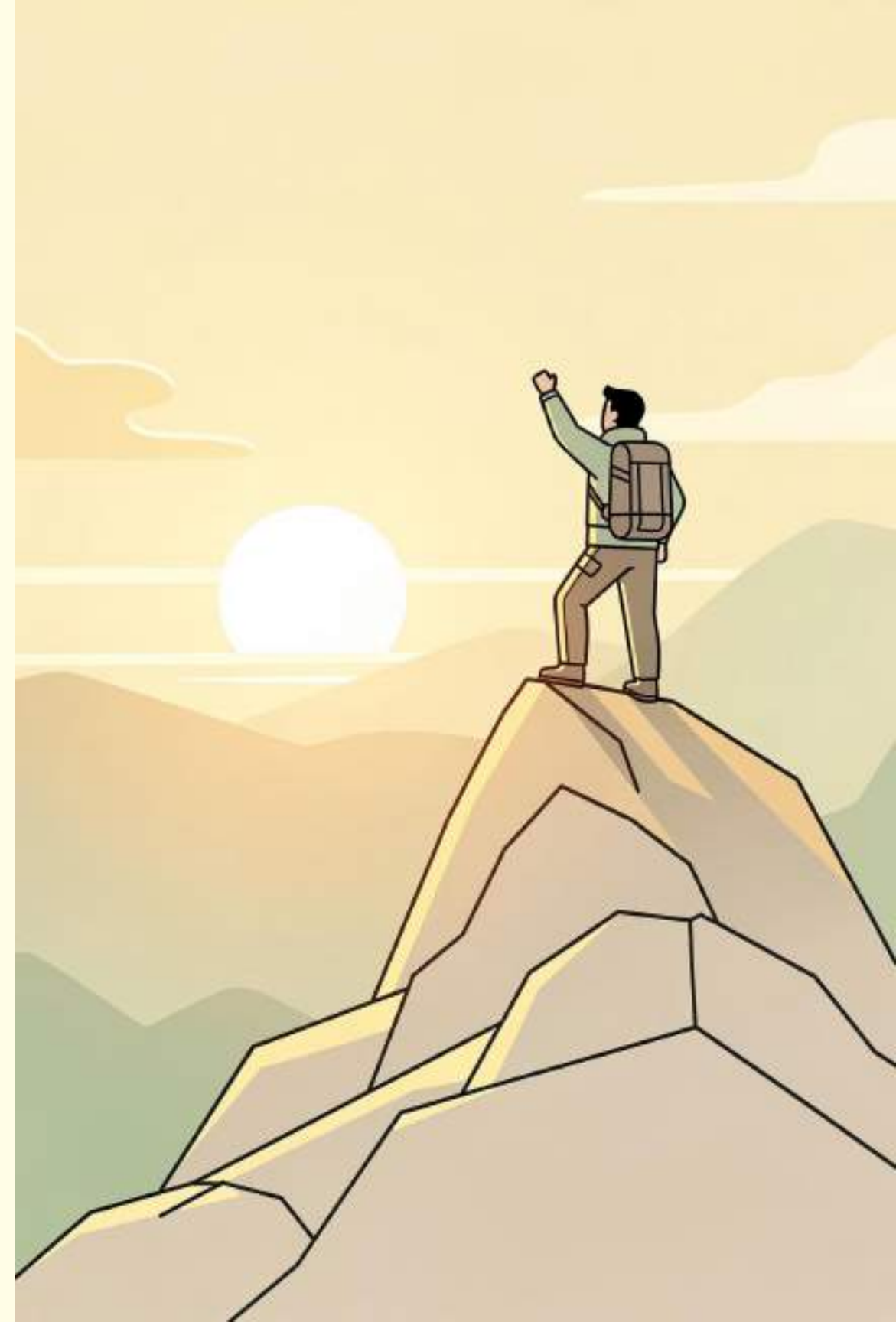


Owen's words "The old Lie: Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori" (from another poem)

Courage

By Edgar Albert Guest

A timeless exploration of what true courage means—not a fleeting moment of bravery, but an enduring quality that defines character and shapes destiny.





Not a Moment's Flash

Courage isn't a brilliant dash, a daring deed in a moment's flash. It isn't an instantaneous thing born of despair with a sudden spring. It isn't a creature of flickered hope or the final tug at a slipping rope.

Rather, it's something deep in the soul of man that is working always to serve some plan—a constant, unwavering force that guides us through life's challenges.

"It's something deep in the soul of man that is working always to serve some plan."



Always Present, Never Absent

Not a Last Resort

Courage isn't something you call upon only when you're apt to fall. It must exist within you now, in this moment.

Essential for Goals

Who would strive for a distant goal must always have courage within his soul—it's the foundation of all achievement.

Present Before Need

If you haven't it now, you will have it not when the strain is great and the pace is hot.

A Slow, Unwavering Trait



Not a Dazzling Light

Courage isn't a dazzling light that flashes and passes away from sight. Instead, it's a slow, unwavering, ingrained trait with the patience to work and the strength to wait.

Like roots growing deep beneath the surface, true courage develops gradually, becoming an inseparable part of who we are.



Present in All Seasons

1

Blue Skies

It's part of a man when his skies are blue—courage exists in times of ease and prosperity.

2

Work to Do

It's part of him when he has work to do—courage sustains us through daily tasks and challenges.

3

No Need of It

The brave man never is freed of it. He has it when there is no need of it—always present, always ready.

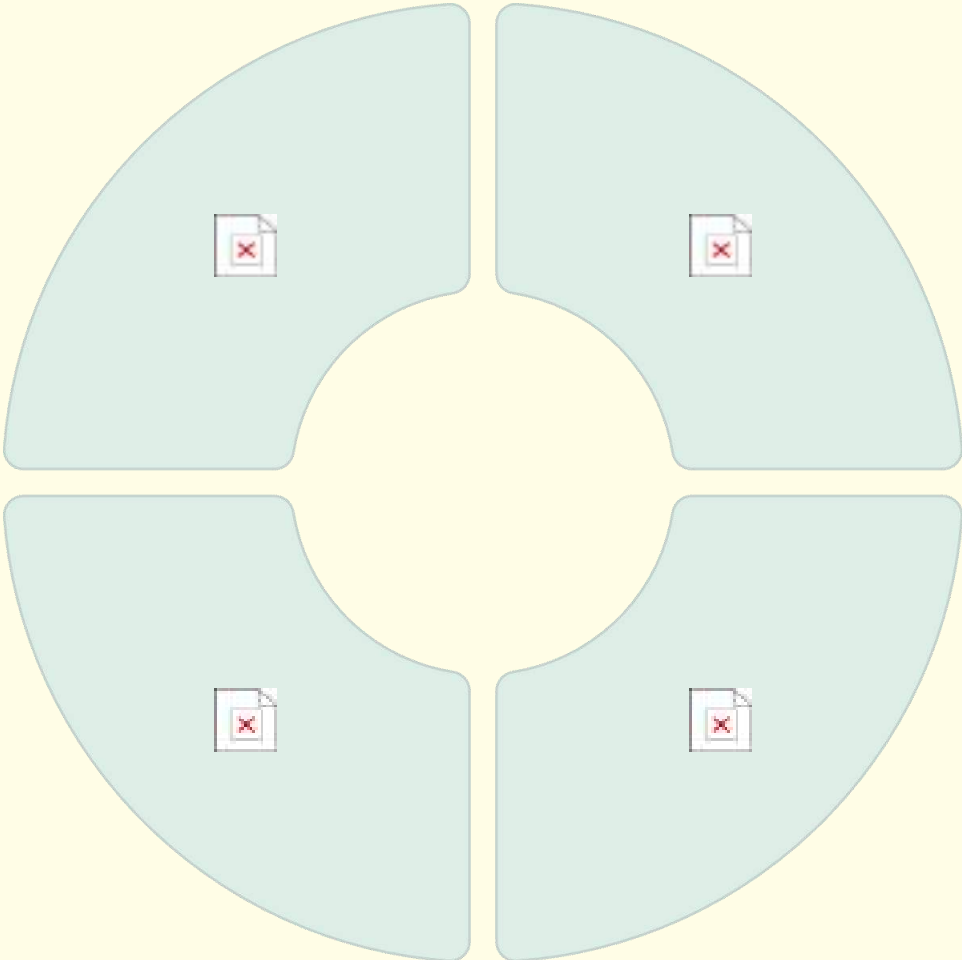
Written in Every Experience

Victory

Courage is written in victory, celebrating our triumphs with grace and humility.

All Moments

It's part of his hours, his days, and his years—woven into the fabric of existence.



Defeat

It's present in defeat, helping us rise again and learn from setbacks.

Every Trial

Courage meets every trial a man may face with steadfast resolve.

Behind Smiles and Tears



Back of His Smiles



Behind His Tears

Never Designed for Show

Not for Display

Courage was never designed for show—it isn't a performance or spectacle meant to impress others.

Cannot Come and Go

It isn't a thing that can come and go at will. True courage is constant, not conditional.

Authentic and Real

Genuine courage exists independently of audience or recognition—it's an internal quality, not an external display.



More Than a Daring Deed



The Breath of Life

Courage is the breath of life—essential, continuous, and life-sustaining. It animates our existence and gives us vitality.



A Strong Man's Creed

It's a strong man's creed—the fundamental belief system that guides decisions, actions, and character through all circumstances.

Courage transcends individual acts of bravery. It's the foundation upon which a meaningful life is built, the principle that defines who we are when no one is watching, and the force that carries us forward through every challenge.



The Essence of Courage

“

"Courage is more than a daring deed: It's the breath of life and a strong man's creed."

— Edgar Albert Guest

”

True courage isn't found in singular moments of heroism, but in the quiet, persistent strength that lives within us every day—guiding our choices, sustaining our efforts, and defining our character through all of life's seasons.



Motyarin

By Usha Kiran Atram

A rallying cry for courage, resistance, and collective action against oppression. This powerful poem calls women to shed their fears and rise together in defiance.

Breaking the Silence

The Question

Friend! Tell me, how long we'll continue to shy? The poem opens with a direct challenge, questioning the prolonged silence and timidity in the face of injustice.

The Reality

Wealthy scoundrels armed with weapons are hidden like thieves on the ways leading to the crossroad. The oppressors lurk in positions of power, blocking paths to freedom.



The Call to Action

Seize Power

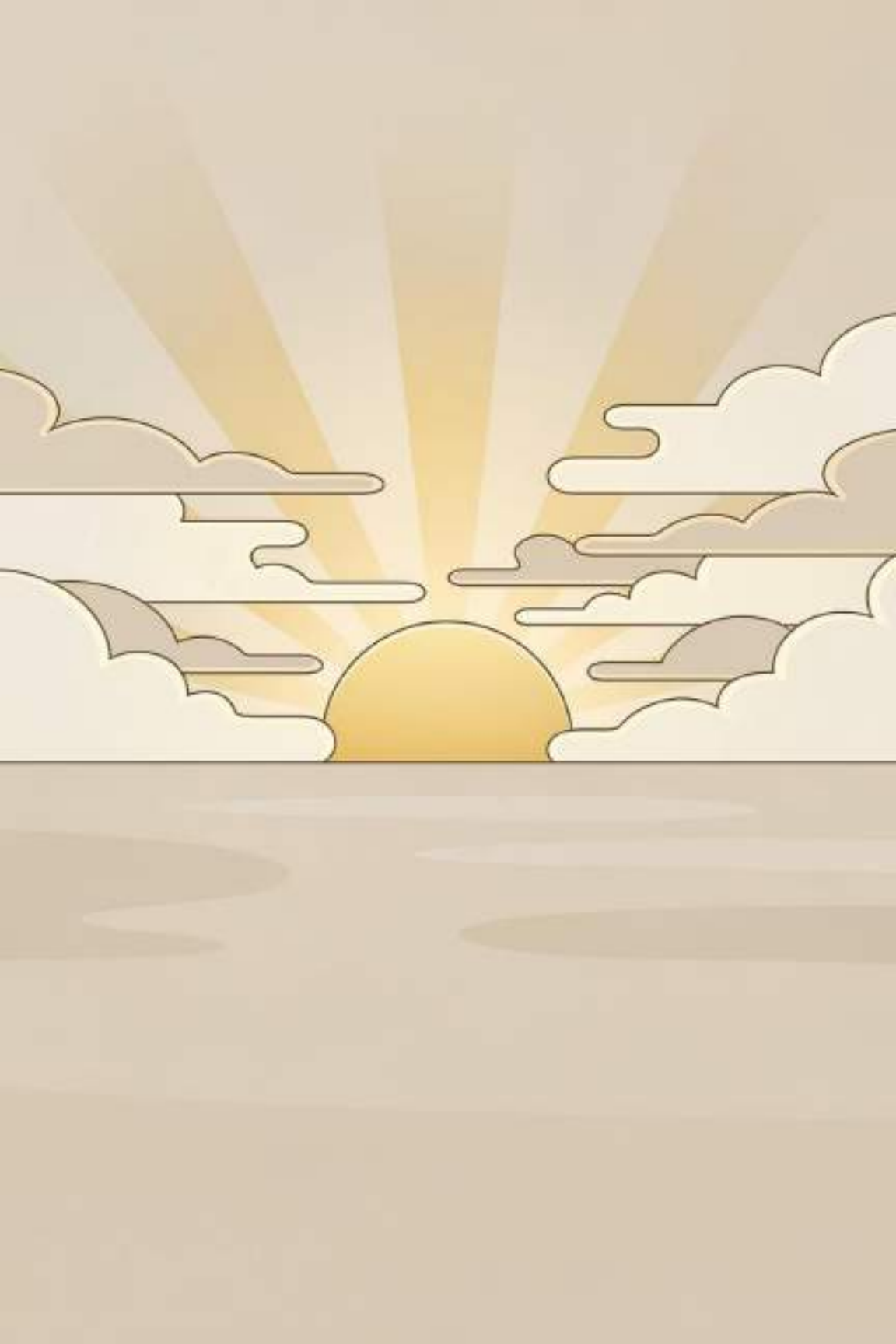
We'll snatch arms from their hands. A bold declaration to disarm those who wield weapons of oppression.

Illuminate the Path

We'll light flambeaux on the ways of crossroads. Bringing light to guide others through darkness and uncertainty.

Strengthen Vision

We'll smear a strong Anjan in their eyelids. Traditional eye medicine symbolising clarity and protection.



Learning from the Sun

Tell me! Does the Sun stop for anybody? Does it cry whilst moving from the East to the West?

The poet invokes the sun as a powerful metaphor for relentless progress. Just as the sun continues its journey across the sky without pause or tears, so too must the movement for justice persist.

This natural imagery transforms cosmic certainty into human courage, suggesting that forward movement is as inevitable and necessary as the sun's daily arc.

Three Questions

- Why shall we weep?
- Why shall we stop?
- Why shall we fear?

Gathering Strength



Unite the Sisters



Tie the Suns

I Am Your Motyarin

Friends! Sisters! Daughters!

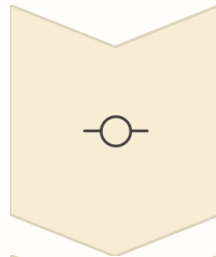
The speaker addresses her audience directly, claiming kinship and shared identity across generations.

Be Ready

A call to preparedness, signalling that the moment for action has arrived. The time for waiting has ended.



Cast Off the Chains



Throw Away Rosary Beads

Reject the symbols of passive submission and religious constraint worn around your necks.



Set Yourself Free

Break free from this bondage. Liberation requires active rejection of the systems that bind.



Remove Fear from Your Eyes

Don't be afraid. Fear itself becomes the final obstacle to overcome.

Take Up the Torch



Take up burning flambeaux

The flambeau—a burning torch—becomes the central symbol of the movement. It represents enlightenment, defiance, and the power to illuminate dark paths.

This is not merely metaphorical light, but active, burning resistance that transforms fear into courage and passivity into action.



Follow the Leader

01

I Am Leading You

The speaker claims the mantle of leadership, positioning herself at the forefront of the movement.

02

All of You Follow Me

A direct command that transforms individual courage into collective action through unified purpose.



The Spirit of Motyarin

Courage Over Fear

The poem transforms fear into fuel for resistance, demanding that women shed timidity and embrace boldness.

Collective Power

Individual strength multiplies through unity—friends, sisters, and daughters rising together as one force.

Active Resistance

Motyarin calls for direct action: seizing weapons, lighting torches, and marching forward without hesitation.

Usha Kiran Atram's "Motyarin" stands as a powerful anthem of resistance, calling women to cast off the chains of oppression and fear. Through vivid imagery and commanding language, the poem transforms the speaker into a leader—Motyarin—who guides her sisters towards liberation with burning torches held high.

Father Returning Home

A poignant exploration of isolation, aging, and the quiet dignity of everyday life through the lens of a father's evening commute.



The Evening Commute

Silent Journey

My father travels on the late evening train, standing amongst silent commuters in the yellow light. Suburbs slide past his unseeing eyes as he journeys homeward through the humid monsoon night.

His shirt and trousers are soggy, his black raincoat stained with mud. His bag, stuffed with books, is falling apart—a testament to years of use and dedication.





A Word Dropped from a Long Sentence

"Now I can see him getting off the train like a word dropped from a long sentence."

This powerful metaphor captures the father's insignificance in the vast machinery of urban life. He hurries across the length of the grey platform, crosses the railway line, enters the lane. His chappals are sticky with mud, but he hurries onwards towards home.

The Ritual of Return

01

Arrival

Crossing the grey platform and railway line, chappals sticky with monsoon mud

03

Contemplation

Retreating to the toilet to contemplate man's estrangement from a man-made world

02

Sustenance

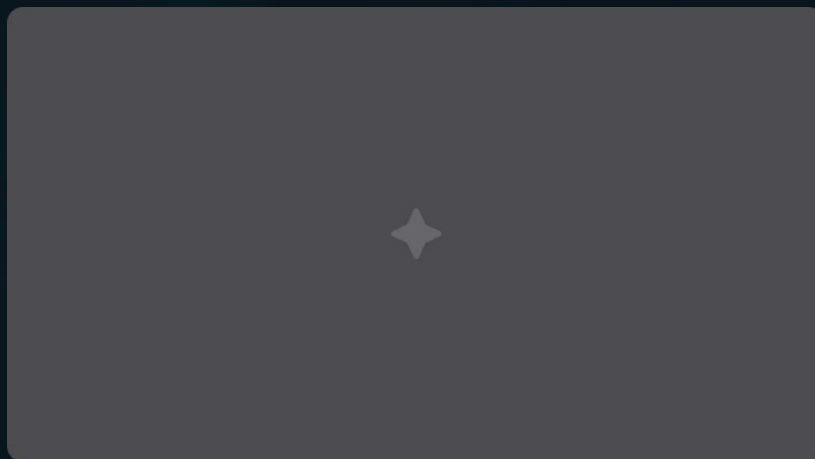
Drinking weak tea and eating a stale chapati whilst reading a book

04

Ablution

Trembling at the sink, cold water running over brown hands

Man's Estrangement



He goes into the toilet to contemplate man's estrangement from a man-made world. This moment of solitude reveals the profound alienation felt by the father—disconnected from the very world humans have created.

Coming out, he trembles at the sink. The cold water runs over his brown hands, and a few droplets cling to the greying hairs on his wrists—a tender detail that speaks to the passage of time.



The Generation Gap

Refusal to Share

His sullen children have often refused to share jokes and secrets with him, creating an unbridgeable emotional distance within his own home.

Isolation at Home

The father's loneliness extends beyond the commute—even in the sanctuary of home, he remains disconnected from those closest to him.

Dreams and Static

He will now go to sleep listening to the static on the radio—a fitting soundtrack to his isolated existence. The white noise mirrors the emptiness of his daily routine and the lack of meaningful connection.

In sleep, he dreams of his ancestors and grandchildren, thinking of nomads entering a subcontinent through a narrow pass. These dreams connect him to a larger historical narrative, offering escape from present alienation.



Symbols of Decay and Endurance



The Black Raincoat

Stained with mud, symbolising the wear and burden of daily labour and the father's diminished status.



The Falling-Apart Bag

Stuffed with books, representing intellectual pursuit despite material deterioration and dedication to learning.



Sticky Chappals

Covered in monsoon mud, illustrating the difficult journey and the father's persistence through adversity.



Greying Hairs

On his wrists, marking the passage of time and the physical manifestation of aging and weariness.

Themes of Alienation

Urban Isolation

The father is surrounded by people yet profoundly alone, lost in the machinery of modern urban life.

Existential Reflection

He contemplates humanity's estrangement from the world we've created, seeking meaning in solitude.



Familial Distance

Even at home, he faces rejection from his children, unable to bridge the generational divide.

Passage of Time

Physical details reveal the toll of aging—dimmed eyes, trembling hands, greying hair.



The Quiet Dignity of Endurance

"Father Returning Home" captures the poignant reality of aging and alienation in modern urban life. Through vivid imagery and tender details, the poem reveals a man who persists with quiet dignity despite physical exhaustion, emotional isolation, and the relentless passage of time.

His dreams of ancestors and nomads suggest a yearning for connection—to history, to family, to something larger than his solitary existence. In this ordinary evening routine lies extraordinary human resilience and the universal experience of loneliness within the familiar.



Confidence

The feeling or belief that one can have faith in or rely on someone or something. At its core, confidence is built on trust—directed at others or oneself—and serves as a cognitive and emotional process driving all decisions we make throughout our lifetime.

Types of Confidence

Self-Confidence

Trust in one's abilities, qualities and judgements. Creates an optimistic attitude that one can accomplish whatever one wishes, leading to competence and resilience.

Social Confidence

Belief in one's ability to navigate social situations. Requires extending faith to society, not just oneself. Gateway to deeper interpersonal relationships and opportunities.

Over-Confidence

Bias in measuring confidence through over-estimating abilities or over-precision in beliefs. An optimistic illusion that can be catastrophic despite giving a sense of control.

Under-Confidence

Lack of trust in one's abilities, negatively impacting self-esteem. Sustained self-doubt makes one hesitant towards growth opportunities. As disadvantageous as over-confidence.

Sources of Confidence

Confidence is cultivable and expandable through psychological and social sources



Mastery

Preparedness to demonstrate skills achieved through training and experiences. Physical, mental and holistic readiness that influences confidence significantly.



Accomplishment

Past accomplishments reinforce faith in abilities and skills. Provide opportunity to self-reflect, readjust, and commit to higher goals with confidence.



Self-Presentation

First impressions matter. Dressing well, eye contact, careful language use, and welcoming body language garner favourable responses that feed confidence.



Social Support & Mentorship

Social support eases stress and ensures wellbeing through materialistic and psychological assistance from friends, families, teachers and institutions.

Mentorship offers guidance from experienced individuals, helping track progress systematically, gather connections and improve efficiency.

Environmental Comfort

Resource-rich, empathetic and evolving environments contribute positively towards self-awareness, social relationships and self-esteem.

Finding environmental comfort keeps the spirit high and confidence strong.

Theories on Confidence

Symbolic Interactionism

George Herbert Mead's theory: individuals construct meaning and self-identity through communication. Confidence accumulates through social interactions.

Social Comparison Theory

Leon Festinger (1954): individuals measure their worth by comparing with others. Evaluative comparison boosts self-esteem and confidence.

1

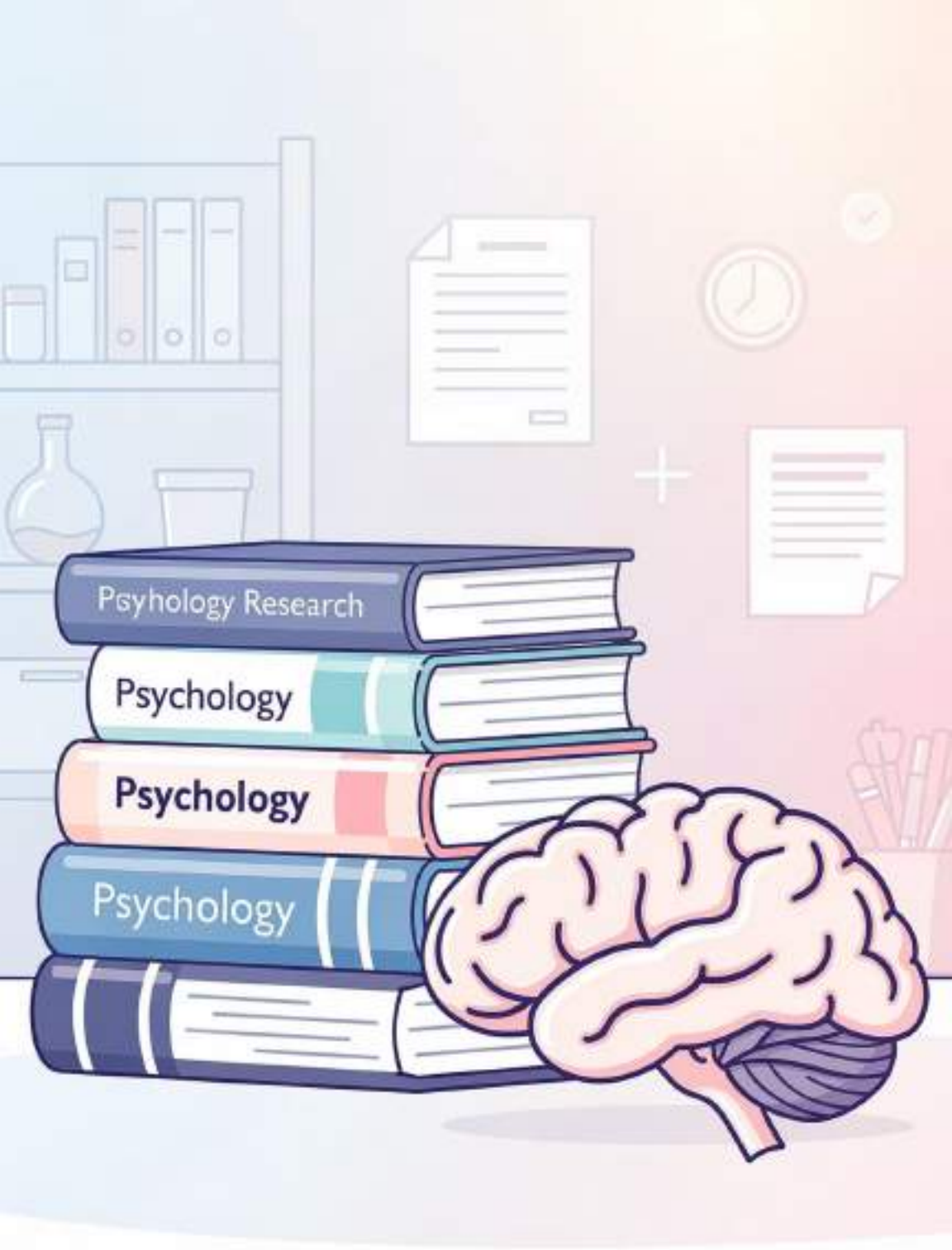
2

3

Adlerian Theory

Alfred Adler: individuals strive for superiority to overcompensate for inferiority whilst emphasising belongingness and social cooperation.

More Theoretical Perspectives



Self-Efficacy Theory

Albert Bandura (1977): belief in one's abilities influences behaviours and persistence when facing challenges. High self-efficacy means high motivation and performance.

Sociometer Theory

Mark Leary (1995): self-esteem acts as a social monitor analysing interactions. Self-esteem reflects not just internal beliefs but social perception.

Hard-Easy Effect

Cognitive bias showing misalignment of confidence and accuracy. Individuals tend to be over-confident about hard tasks and under-confident about easy ones.

The Impact of Confidence

When internal beliefs interact with external environments, confidence levels get influenced. Personal development through confidence transforms the institutions and communities one belongs to.

An individual's confidence level has positive and negative impacts on the world around them. Instances of confidence deterioration need examination individually and socially.

Groups and organisations must offer opportunities to foster confidence in individuals.





Case Study: Sujata Gidla

From Untouchability to the Literary Forefront

01

Early Life

Born into a Dalit family in Andhra Pradesh (1964). Exposed to caste discrimination from a young age despite educated family background.

02

Education & Career

Pursued Physics at Regional Engineering College, Warangal. Worked as researcher at IIT Madras. Discrimination followed her faithfully.

03

New Beginnings

Moved to USA after 26 years in India. Became first Indian woman subway conductor in New York City (2009).

04

Literary Success

Published debut novel "Ants Among the Elephants" (2016), addressing discrimination, segregation and stereotypes with autobiographical flavours.

Lessons from Gidla's Journey



Self-Awareness

Understanding one's position and challenges in society enables strategic navigation of obstacles.



Self-Appreciation

Valuing one's worth despite external discrimination builds internal resilience and strength.



Social Assistance

Support from missionaries, education systems and new communities provided crucial foundations for growth.



Endurance

Persistent effort through challenges demonstrates how confidence can rewrite personal and social narratives.





Confidence Transforms Lives

Gidla's journey reminds us that confidence is not merely happenstance—it results from self-awareness, appreciation of the self, social assistance and endurance. When these elements combine, they instill the confidence to overcome systemic barriers and rewrite narratives.

26

Years in India

Before seeking new
opportunities

2009

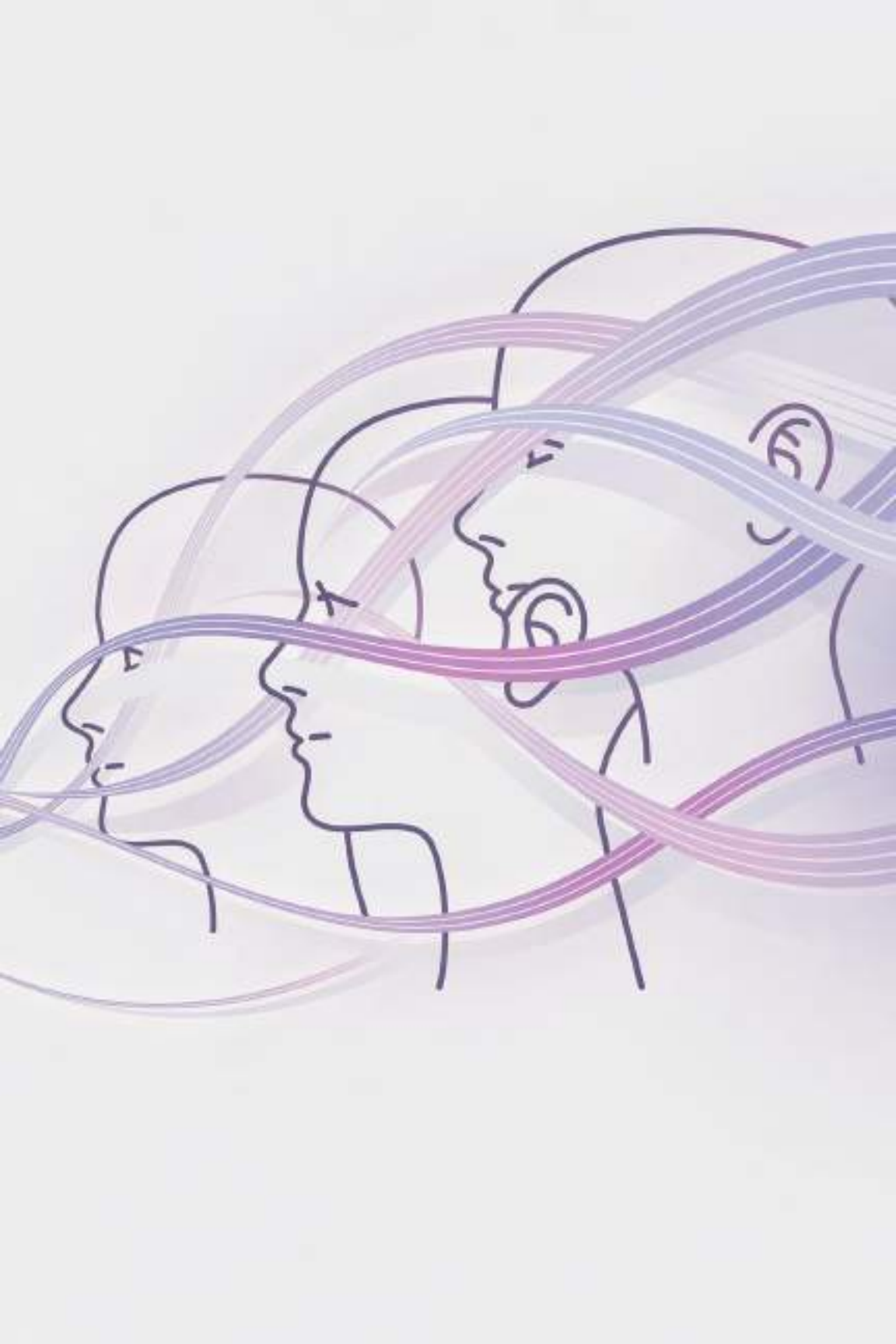
Historic Achievement

First Indian woman NYC
subway conductor

2016

Literary Debut

Published transformative
memoir



The Art of Persuasion

We are born into a world of persuasions. Every exchange, every interaction shapes our beliefs and actions. Understanding persuasion is understanding human connection itself.



The Ancient Roots of Rhetoric

Greek Origins

Persuasion emerged as a field of study during the 5th-4th century BC in Greece. The Greeks understood persuasion as 'rhetoric', crucial to democratic governance and leadership.

Evolution of Understanding

Romans expanded on Greek ideas. Later scholars explored persuasion through social psychology and cognitive processes, building a rich theoretical foundation.

Aristotle's Three Pillars

Ethos

Ethical appeal banking on character and authority. Credible sources neutralise cognitive resistance through expertise, integrity and goodwill.

Pathos

Emotional appeal targeting the heart. Connecting through passion, empathy and shared experiences releases oxytocin, deepening connection.

Logos

Logical appeal using reason and evidence. Rational engagement demonstrates benefits through objective, evidence-based arguments.

The Fourth Pillar: Kairos

Kairos is an appeal to time—seizing the right moment to persuade. Understanding audience readiness and contextual awareness helps gauge the exact right time.

Modern understanding reveals Kairos as the starting point of rhetoric. An emotional appeal by a person with integrity who ensures factual accuracy has greater persuasive power.



Yale Attitude Change Approach

The Source

Credible, trustworthy person with expertise has immense persuasive power.

1

2


3

The Audience

Understanding beliefs, intelligence and attitudes ensures favourable response.

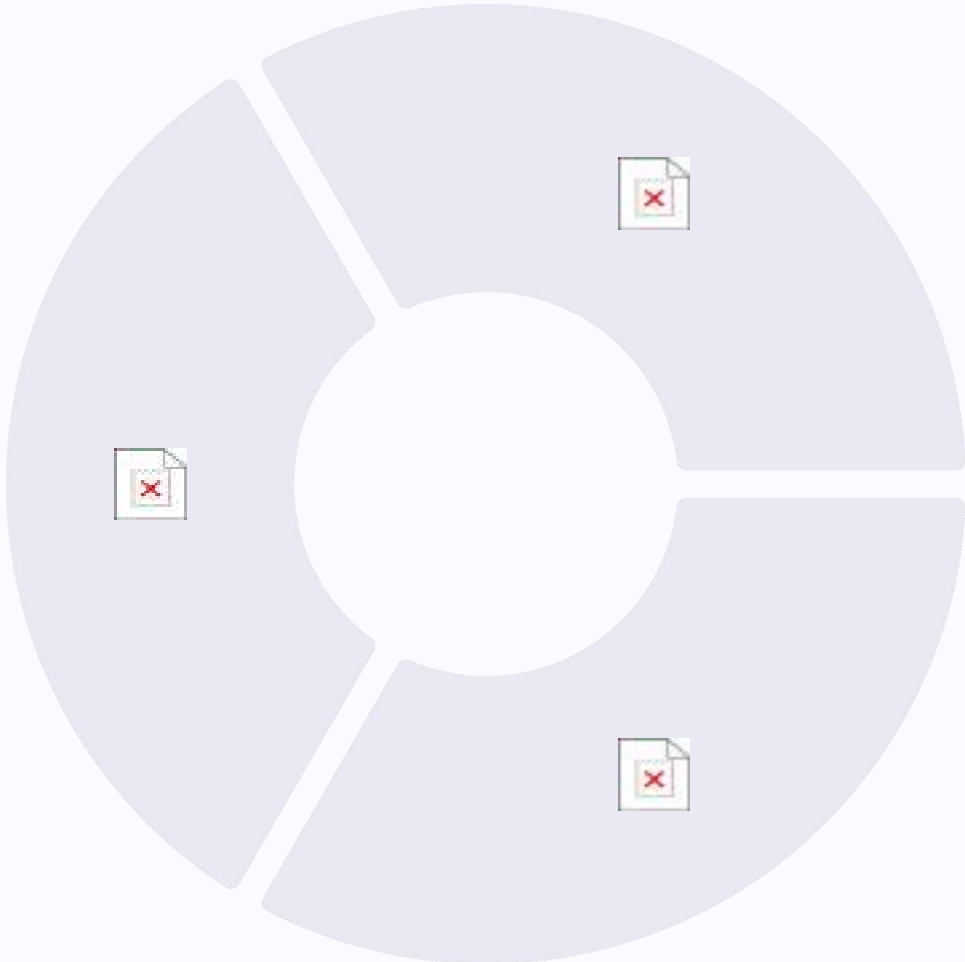
The Message

Clearly structured, emotionally resonating, logical message tailored to audience needs.

 **Example:** A doctor discussing smoking dangers with youngsters instils appropriate fear and information more effectively than a parent.

Understanding Resistance

Latitude of Acceptance
Messages aligning with existing beliefs gain compliance easily.



Latitude of Non-Commitment

Neutral positions offer persuasion opportunities with careful messaging.

Latitude of Rejection

Strong opposition to ideas results in automatic rejection of persuasive attempts.

Social Judgement Theory (1961) by Sherif and Hovland reveals how prior beliefs affect message evaluation. It's far easier to persuade those sharing similar beliefs.

Modern Persuasion Models

1

Inoculation Theory

Exposing individuals to weak counterarguments builds resistance to persuasive attacks, like medical immunisation.

2

Theory of Reasoned Action

Behavioural intention precedes action. Intention is influenced by one's attitude and subjective norms.

3

Narrative Paradigm

Humans are natural storytellers. Coherent, probable stories with fidelity persuade more effectively than logical arguments.

4

Elaboration Likelihood Model

Two routes of persuasion: central (high elaboration) creates lasting attitudes; peripheral (low elaboration) produces temporary change.

Cialdini's Six Principles

01

Reciprocity

Receiving favours compels returning them.

03

Social Proof

People follow majority choices in uncertain situations.

05

Liking

People conform to those they like or find similar.

02

Commitment & Consistency

Declared commitments create desire to stay consistent.

04

Authority

Individuals trust those with authority and expertise.

06

Scarcity

Limited availability increases perceived value and desirability.

Sunderlal Bahuguna: Persuasion in Action



India's renowned environmentalist championed the Chipko Movement through persuasive leadership. His 4,700-kilometre trans-Himalayan march mobilised villages against deforestation.

- Established trust through Gandhian non-violent resistance
- Used folk songs and cultural expressions to connect
- Brought women to forefront of ecological resistance
- Persuaded PM Indira Gandhi to ban tree cutting for 15 years

The Power to Influence

15

Universal Approaches

From asking to invoking morality, researchers identified 15 persuasion strategies.

3

Core Modes

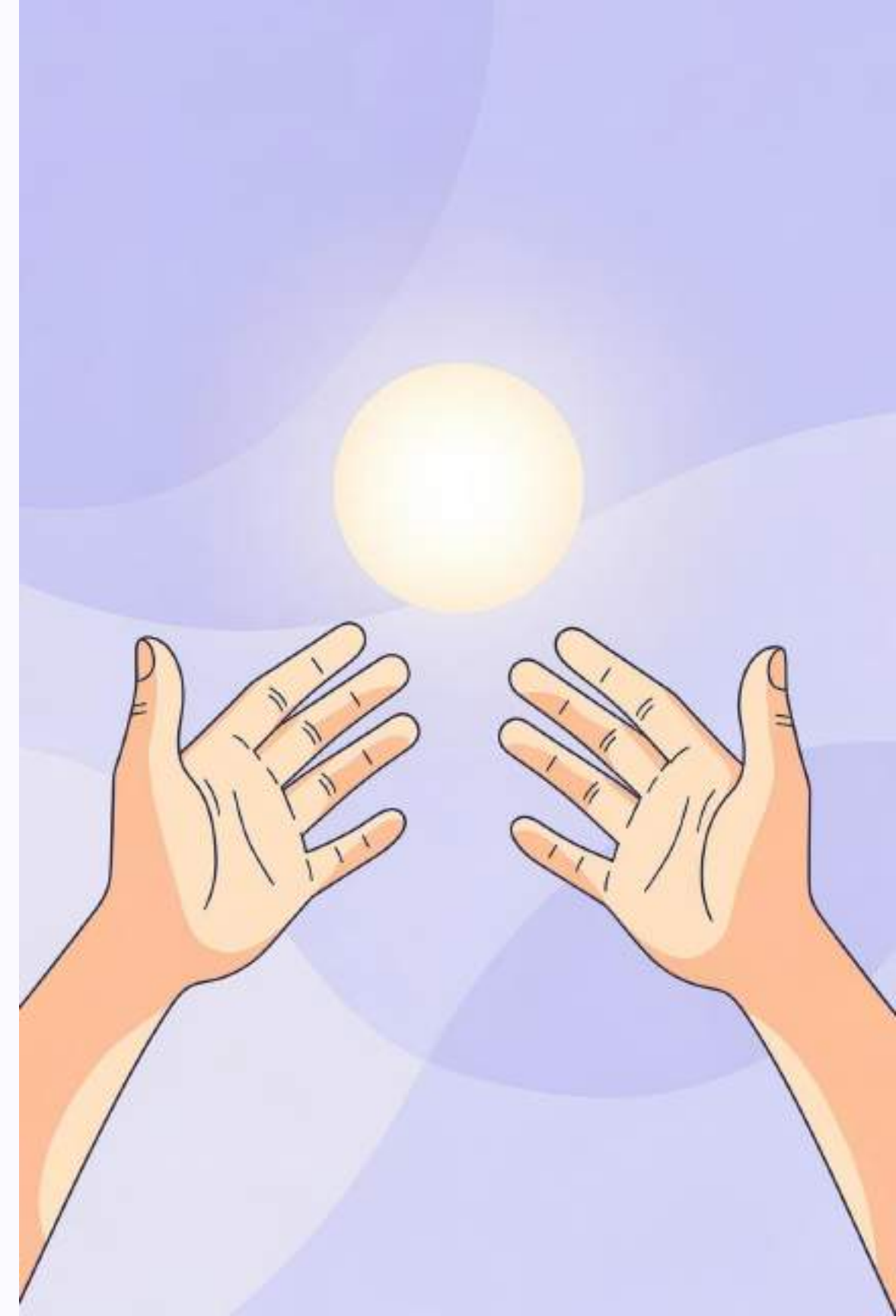
Ethos, pathos and logos form the foundation of all persuasive communication.

1

Ultimate Goal

To influence response to one's wish, demand or need through ethical means.

Though persuasion takes many forms, understanding its principles empowers us to communicate effectively and ethically influence positive change.



Being Respectful

The Foundation of Human Progress

From wars to remarkable feats, respect has shaped human history. As societies evolved, respect transformed from a privilege for the few into a universal right for all.



The Evolution of Respect

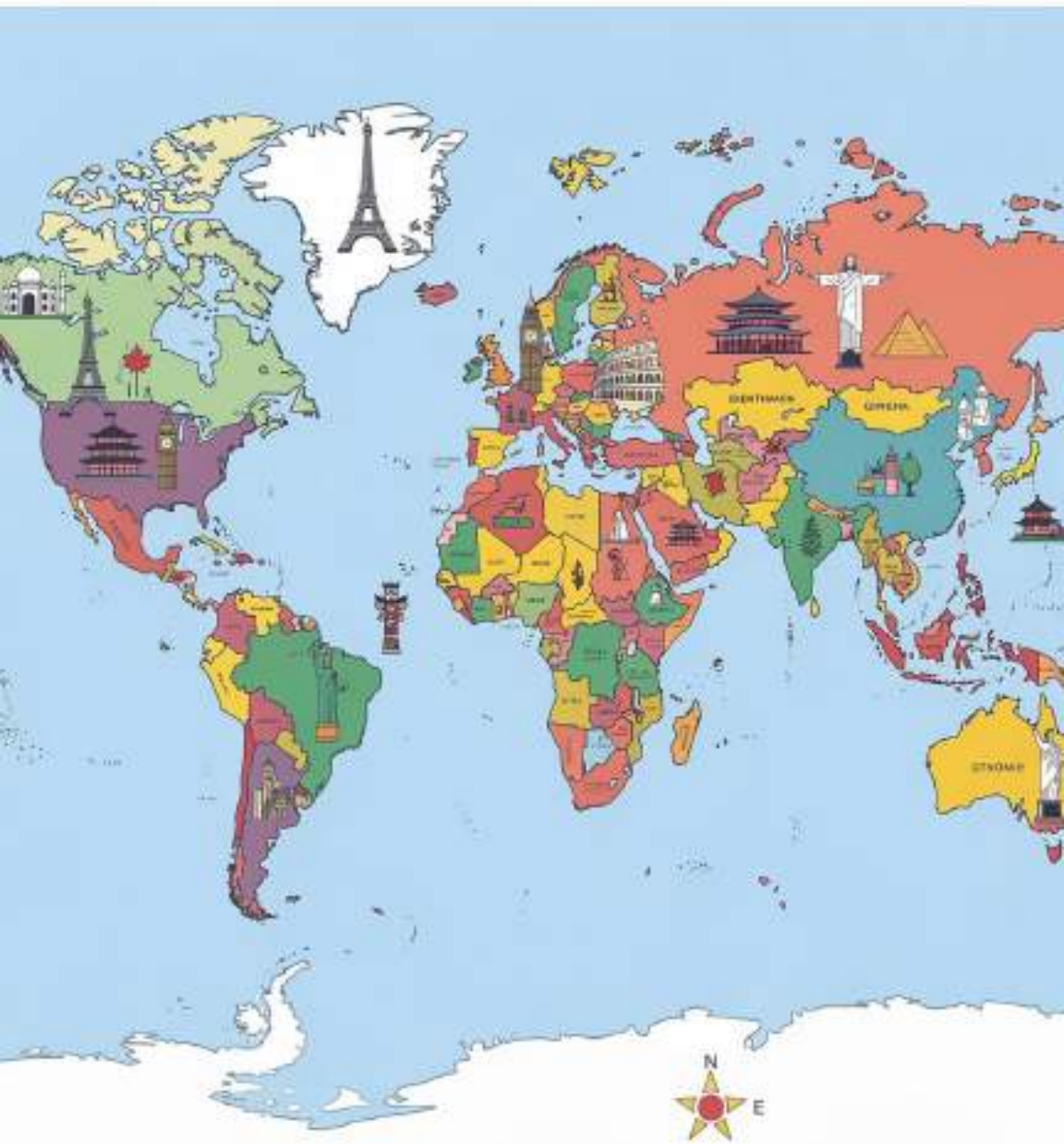
"Every human being, of whatever origin, of whatever station, deserves respect."

— Ralph Waldo Emerson

Respect evolved from elaborate rituals favouring the privileged to a fair, universal understanding. Today, respectfulness is far more than mere conduct—it's the outward manifestation of valuing every human being.



Cultural Dimensions of Respect



High Power Distance

Hierarchical societies emphasise titles and ranks. Authority commands respect, and inequality is accepted as the norm.

Low Power Distance

Respect relates to earned status rather than inherited position. Individual merit takes precedence over hierarchy.

Cultural Variations

Some cultures prioritise individual autonomy; others value group harmony. Physical affection and directness vary widely across societies.

The Brain on Respect

Respectful Behaviours

- Trigger dopamine release (pleasure and motivation)
- Increase oxytocin and serotonin (bonding and mood stability)
- Enhance emotional regulation and cognitive flexibility
- Improve self-worth and optimism

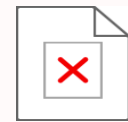
Disrespectful Behaviours

- Activate stress response (fight or flight)
- Release cortisol (stress hormone)
- Impair rational thinking and memory
- Lead to social anxiety and cardiovascular issues

Respect isn't just social—it's neurological. Our brains respond profoundly to how we're treated, affecting health, productivity and wellbeing.

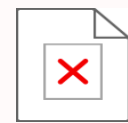


Universal Etiquettes of Respect



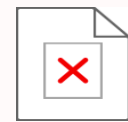
Active Listening

Pay full attention without interrupting, multitasking or engaging in distracting behaviours like scrolling.



Mindful Communication

Adjust language, pace, pitch and tone to convey respect, empathy and approachability.



Punctuality

Value others' time as you value your own. Communicate delays promptly and arrive early when possible.

More Universal Practices

Respect Personal Boundaries

Ask permission before entering physical or emotional spaces. Knock before entering, avoid unwanted touch, and respect work-life boundaries.

Cultural Humility

Learn aspects of unfamiliar cultures without judgement. Share cuisines, learn native phrases and participate in cultural events.

Acknowledge Efforts

Make people feel seen and appreciated through thanks, gifts or appraisals. Frame mistakes as learning opportunities, not personal failures.

Cultivating Respectfulness

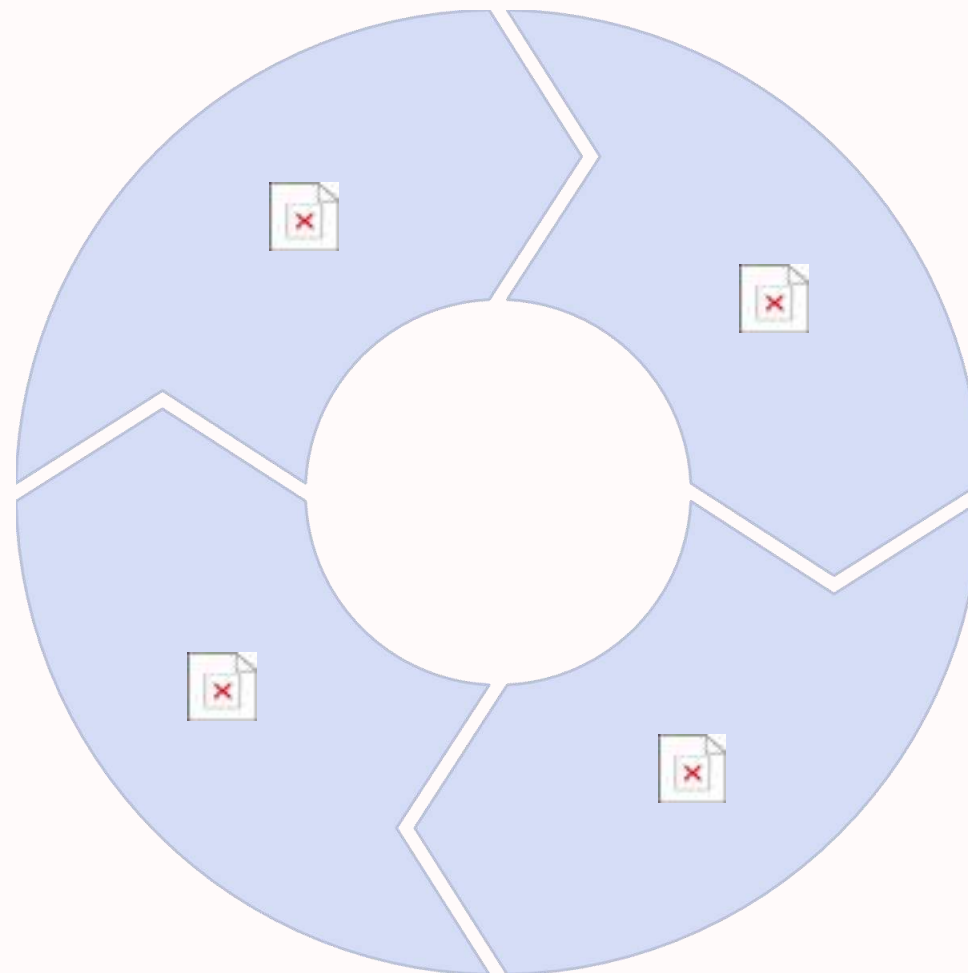
Respectfulness stems from within. Four interconnected values create a foundation for lasting respect:

Self-Respect

Believe in your inherent worth. Set boundaries and recognise others' boundaries with empathy.

Gratitude

Practise thankfulness towards yourself and others. Recognise inherent worth beyond productivity.



Accountability

Accept responsibility for your actions. Build trust through integrity and stress-free reflection.

Collaboration

Work jointly with others. Navigate differences and acknowledge everyone's strengths and contributions.



Respect in Organisations

- **Fair and Equal Treatment**
Respect mandates treating everyone fairly, regardless of position or background.
- **Clear Communication**
Approachable, transparent dialogue builds trust and understanding across all levels.
- **Optimal Outcomes**
Respectful environments naturally produce better results through enhanced collaboration and motivation.

Case Study: Jacinda Ardern

Leadership Through Respect and Empathy



New Zealand's 40th Prime Minister exemplified respectful leadership during the 2019 Christchurch mosque attacks that killed 51 people.

Her response:

- Wore a hijab in solidarity with Muslim victims
- Refused to name the perpetrator, honouring the lost lives instead
- Swiftly implemented gun control laws
- United the community through cultural sensitivity and humility

"Speak the names of those who were lost rather than the name of the man who took them... he will, when I speak, be nameless."



The Power of Self-Respect

"You can't ask other people to believe you and vote for you if you don't back yourself."

— Jacinda Ardern

After five and a half years navigating crises—from biosecurity threats to a global pandemic—Ardern stepped down in 2023, demonstrating ultimate self-respect.

"I am leaving because with such a privileged role comes responsibility. The responsibility to know when you are the right person to lead and also, when you are not."

Respect begins within and ripples outward, transforming individuals, organisations and societies.



Taking Responsibility

Human beings, as creatures of evolving civilisations, carry the burden of acting responsibly. From childhood lessons to adult obligations, responsibility shapes our character and defines the quality of our lives.

What is Responsibility?

Forward-Looking

The duty to deal with something or control over someone. Pro-active and functional—what is expected or should be done.

Backward-Looking

Being accountable or to blame for something. Reflective and evaluative—focusing on consequences of what was done.

Responsibility is an obligation or duty with accountability, encompassing both authority and answerability.



Five Faces of Responsibility

01

Taking Responsibility

Wilfully taking ownership with courage and maturity, understanding that actions have consequences beyond oneself.

02

Giving Responsibility

Assigning tasks to others, establishing trust and fostering independence through guidance and confidence.

03

Acting Responsibly

Virtuous practice demonstrating ethics and consideration for others—being reliable, cooperative and trustworthy.

04

Being Responsible

A stable trait fostered over time through upbringing and education, becoming a predisposition rather than instant response.

05

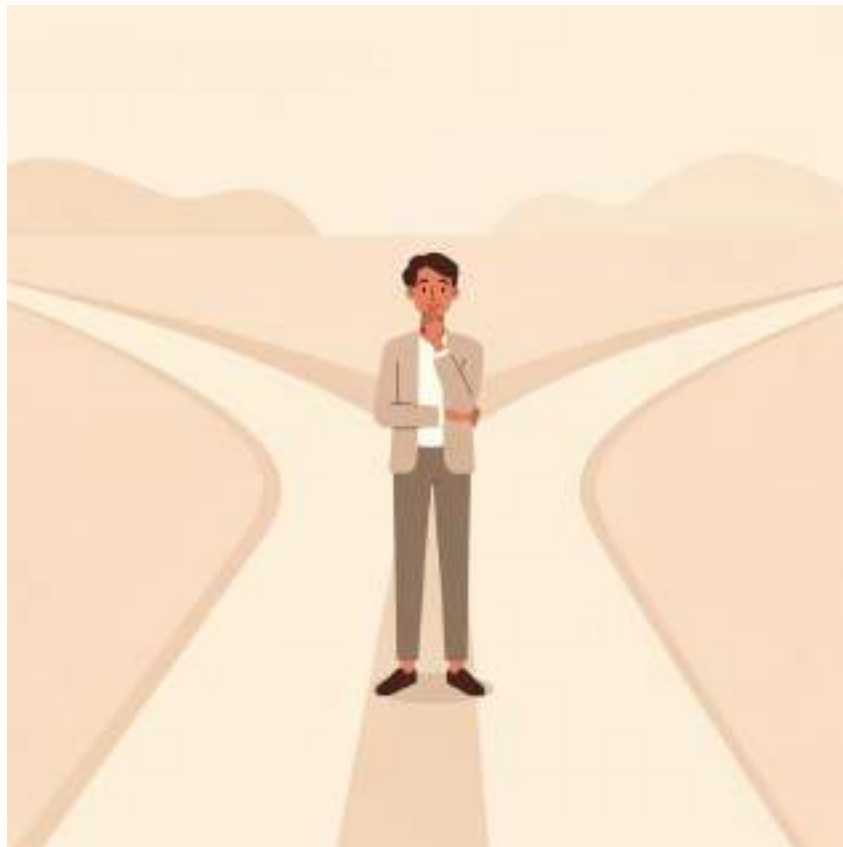
Being Held Responsible

External enforcement of moral and legal stances, ensuring justice, fairness and accountability in society.

Types of Responsibility

Moral Responsibility

Making decisions based on ethical accountability, centred around the philosophy of free will.



Legal Responsibility

Adhering to laws and regulations. Failure results in penalties or punishments through accountability systems.



Collective Responsibility

Demonstrated by groups or communities coming together with common purpose, such as rebuilding after disasters.

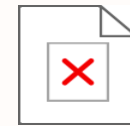


Cultivating Responsibility



Self-Reflection & Empathy

Understanding strengths and weaknesses helps evaluate consequences. An empathetic outlook places these in relation to the outside world.



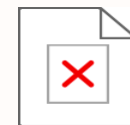
Volunteer to Participate

Take up opportunities, no matter how small. Make sincere contributions, observe mistakes, acknowledge shortcomings and derive positive lessons.



Setting Goals & Expectations

Working towards goals helps rework oneself. Meeting expectations requires boundaries, self-control and respect for those boundaries.



Communication & Mentorship

Strong feedback systems and effective mentorship expand ability to value perspectives and find encouragement in modelling responsible behaviour.

The Growth Journey



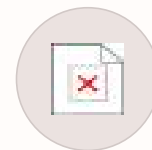
Childhood

Holding a sibling's hand, keeping space tidy, being punctual—early lessons in character development.



Adolescence

Completing homework on time, performing well in studies and sports—expanding the scope of responsibility.



Adulthood

Personal success, social ethics, institutional obligations—responsibility spills into all domains of life.

The quality of our lives is most often determined by how well we handle our responsibilities at every stage.

Captain Mahendra Nath Mulla

The Naval Officer Who Went Down with The Vessel

During the Indo-Pakistan war of 1971, Captain Mulla commanded INS Khukri as squadron leader. On 9 December 1971, a Pakistani submarine fired a torpedo that struck the ship, causing it to sink in less than three minutes.



A Leader's Ultimate Sacrifice

The Attack

Torpedo struck INS Khukri's oil tank. Captain Mulla issued orders to abandon the sinking ship whilst maintaining composure.

1

2

Swift Rescue

Captain supervised evacuation arrangements, though rescuing all 260 men was impossible in three minutes.

3

The Tradition

Maritime tradition: 'The captain goes down with the ship.' Though no longer legally enforced, Captain Mulla honoured this duty.

4

The Choice

Captain Mulla prioritised his crew's evacuation and chose to go down with his vessel and 193 of his men.

Legacy of Responsibility

67

Survivors

6 officers and 61 sailors rescued
from INS Khukri

INS Khukri became independent India's only warship lost in combat. The nation posthumously honoured Captain Mulla with the **Maha Vir Chakra**, India's second highest gallantry military decoration.

193

Lost Lives

Men who went down with Captain
Mulla and the vessel



A Matter of Grit and Foresightedness

Until his last breath, the fallen hero stood committed to the duty towards his nation and his men. His leadership and sacrifice continue to inspire generations of seamen, serving as a profound lesson in responsibility for all of us.

No matter where we are in life, fulfilling our responsibilities requires courage, integrity and unwavering commitment. Captain Mulla's legacy reminds us that true responsibility means placing duty above self.

