#dear
tomorrow

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#dear tomorrow

NOTES TO MY FUTURE SELF

MAUDY AYUNDA

#DearTomorrow
Notes to My Future Self
Maudy Ayunda

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About me

There are many versions of me out there—it is an amusing reality that comes with doing what I do. But right here and right now, I'm going to give you *my* version.

Professionally, **I am a singer-songwriter and actress**—but for those who knew me when I was little, this will seem like an unexpected turn of events. When I was younger, I was shy and introverted. Visitors would come to my house and spot me in a corner—reading. I would also *hate* being on stage. Compared to my sister, I had zero nerve and pleasure from being the center of attention.

Looking back, I'm not sure how I got here. But somewhere along the line, I learned to enjoy sharing my energy with others through the art of expression and writing. And this desire to share started to outweigh the fear of performing. That and a dose of bullying in middle school—thickened my skin and here I am.

On a personal level, **I like to describe myself as a *storyteller***. Be it through music, film, or through writing, I find passion in sending across a message in the best way possible. I love putting words together and I get an epiphany when a sentence or a word captures an emotion or a story perfectly.

Here is another thing about me: **I have a strange obsession with structure and learning**. I often get asked, "Why are you so passionate about education?", and my response would be the geekiest one possible: simply because I love to study. I can never recall a time when I disliked school. Something about the learning environment just fits. Bizarrely, I think I even enjoy the deadlines and structure that come with a school environment. This is partly why I don't just endorse *one single* kind of education. I know that even if I *just so happen* to enjoy a conventional learning environment—others might not. All I care about is that everyone gets an education that harnesses their way of thinking and any other passion they would like to pursue.

I like to say that everybody has a little bit of everybody else. Underneath the surface, I have my own insecurities and struggles about what I want to do vs what I should be doing. What I look like vs what I want to look like. Who I am vs who I want to be vs who I should be. Like most people, the thoughts inside my head can be messy and full of questions. But I'm working on it and it's okay. So who am I? I'm a girl feeling like I'm about to step out into the world. I have different ideas of what I want to be: but one thing is for sure—I want to be the reason of many smiles. I want to be able to look back and say I have made a difference, that I have brought impactful change in people's lives.

Shout-out to all the over-thinkers out there.

I feel you.

I know that feeling of getting caught up by one simple thought. I know the feeling of being called out as "over-sensitive" or "complicated" when in fact, your mind just naturally brought you there.

At the end of the day, I love having my own space. I guess that's just the introvert in me: I get my energy from small-group conversations and from spending time on my own. You know that moment when you get finally can tune everything out from your head? Yup, that's my version of heaven on earth.

Tea

I love drinking any warm drink, but something about tea just feels especially right. I'm not sure why—but my theory? I was probably influenced by my three years living in England. Moody cold weather, the crazy pressure from my studies, and spending long periods of time alone, all had a role in feeding this obsession. But hey, I'm not complaining.

Some interesting Misconceptions About me

I am very ambitious and coherent with what I want to achieve in life.

I guess that very much depends on what those two adjectives mean—but on the most part, I think you'll be surprised to know that I never feel like those two words accurately describe me. More often than not, I am still changing my mind everyday about what I want to do and how I want to do it.

I studied Politics, and therefore I dream of being a Politician.

In university, I studied Philosophy, Politics, and Economics. There have been so many times where because of it, people have concluded that I must want to go into Politics, someday. I'm not ruling it out of the picture, but my primary interest was originally in Economics and Philosophy. Even the subjects of politics that I undertook was for the most part theoretical: looking at political philosophy, questioning what justice, equality, *really means*. So... no plans to go into Politics for now.

Things I ~~hate~~ dislike

oops, hate is a strong word

LABELS

ILLOGICAL ARGUMENTS

LACK OF AUTHENTICITY

Things I love

PLEASANT SURPRISES

READING WHEN IT RAINS

CONVERSATIONS ON SIMPLE,
MIND BLOWING, CONCEPTS

GREEN TEA

SPICY FOOD
—PREFERABLY FROM THE SEA

Things that get me going on and on

EDUCATION

FEMALE
EMPOWERMENT

YOUTH ISSUES

Introduction

Guilty as charged: I am one of those people who *adore* witty quotes and phrases. I love being reminded by simple truths. I love how short statements can strike a chord in our minds and *move* us to do something.

This book is a compilation of my experiences, thoughts, and conversations with myself on love, dreams, and life. All throughout this book, I curated takeaways—things that I want to be reminded of in the future. Saving it for all my tomorrows.

I hope that you will read this book, and see glimpses of my personal thought and philosophies. Maybe you will find something that resonates with your heart and mind, that can serve as a companion for your day to day.

If anything I write here can make you smile—or think, then I've done what I wanted through writing this book.

Notes on being yourself

A QUESTION TO ASK YOURSELF
WHEN YOU WAKE UP:

"Who are you going to be today?"

She remembered who she was
and the world started to listen.

Finding yourself

Sometimes the phrase "be yourself" confuses me. First of all, the "self" is partly an accumulation of all our past experiences. So I am most likely a combination of the many different people that have surrounded me or inspired me. Secondly, the integrated nature of the digital world today basically means that we are exposed to so many versions of selves, that it can be so intuitive to find yourself in others. So who is this self?

A couple of years ago, I so badly wanted to know who I was. I knew I was lucky to be able to try so many life path options—but I still couldn't decide. I was convinced that I had to "find myself" soon, that all I had to do was to *look inside* and find this *inherent* self that has been hiding all this time. I wanted to know if I was *meant* to be a singer, *meant* to be an economist, *meant* to be an educator, *meant* to be an actress. So I looked and looked inside me, evaluated my past actions, but couldn't really pinpoint any *one* thing that defined me.

So I started to look *outside* instead. I looked at the people around me, the people who inspire me. I looked at meaningful and inspiring work that others had done. I looked at the world, humanity, and the many challenges we had to face. And I think from it, I learned more about my "self" than I thought I ever could. I learned that I looked up to people who, through their art, could *move* hearts and minds. I learned that I got excited when talking to people about education reform. I learned, that I looked up to strong independent women who lived by principles of morality and equality.

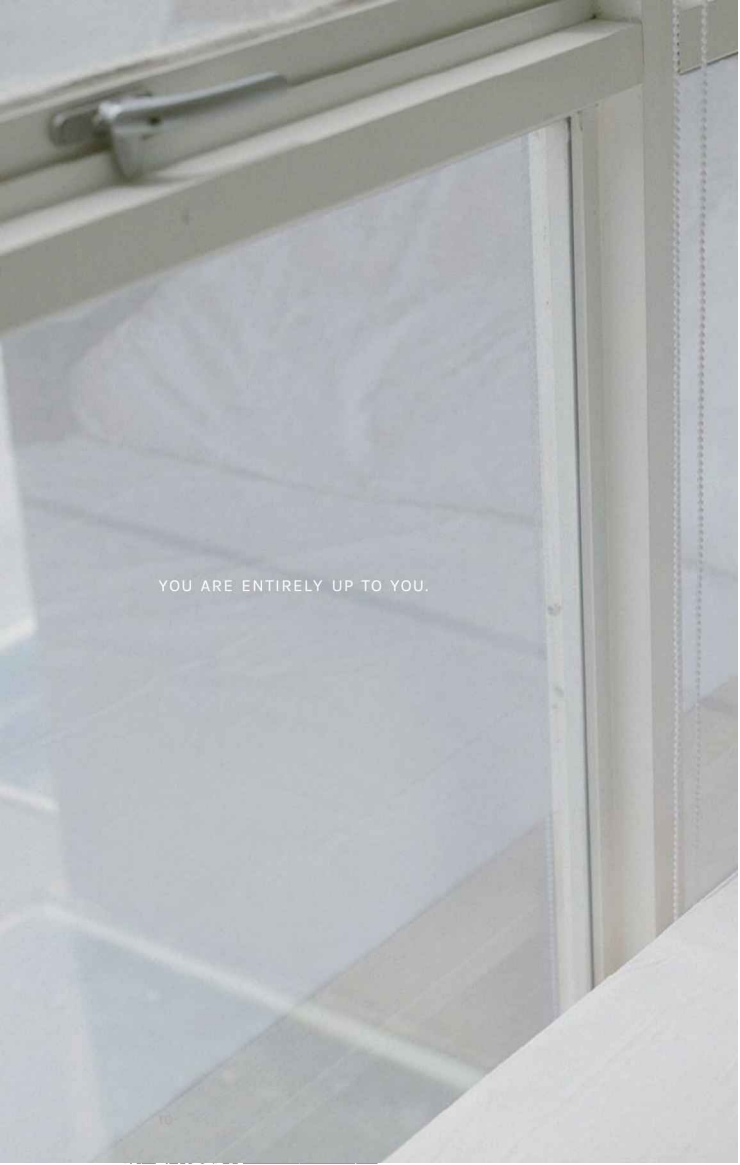
I don't know if I have found my true self, but I now have a better idea of who I want to be. I am also much more content with me as I am. Because now I believe that my "self" is not necessarily something to be found inside me. My "self" will grow as I change and interact with my community, my work, and my world. Finding myself may be a never ending progress and I choose to be excited about the prospect of being able to customize myself.

#DearTomorrow

Your *self* may not be something that you can find—it may not exist just yet. It is a combination of what you do, what you stand for, and who you want to be. In other words, your *self* is for you to define—not for you to find. So instead for looking within, look outside and find your *self* while you learn more about the world, what characters attract you, what actions inspire you. Once you have, strive to be just that.

S

I DON'T BELIEVE THAT THERE IS SUCH A THING AS A PERMANENT FAILURE, A PERMANENT TRAIT. "I AM MEANT TO BE FAILURE, SO WHY TRY?" IS A MISLEADING MINDSET. WE CAN GROW, CHANGE, ACCORDING TO WHO WE WANT TO BE AND WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE.


YOU ARE ENTIRELY UP TO YOU.

Take your time

Sometimes the world is so clearcut. The obvious path to take is laid right in front of my eyes. But other times, the road is winding, full of twists and turns and dead-ends. Approaching adulthood, I feel like I definitely faced the second case more. Sometimes I even felt drowned by expectations. Expectations from the people around me, from society, but mostly, from myself. Suddenly, I had to figure out a career, a relationship, adulthood—all the while trying to understand this whole thing called independence.

Some tell me to hurry, settle on a career path and persist on it. Others say take it easy, slow down and enjoy the process of figuring it all out. I can't help but wonder which advice to take.

> *#DearTomorrow*
> If anything, what you have now is time. Breathe and relax. Now is the time to seek and figure out who we are and what we want—and that is no easy task. Until then, it is natural to change your mind—even if it is for no reason other than "because your heart says so".

TIME DOES NOT WAIT...

BUT IT DOES NOT CHASE EITHER.

"You don’t have to have it all figured out to move forward."

—ROY T. BENNETT

Filter expectations

Living in a country with such a close-knit society is great. I have other individuals to learn from, and a place to always belong to. The warmth and support that is reciprocated in communities and families are truly special.

But sometimes living alongside others can blur the lines between my own desires and those others have of me. Others have their own ideas on when I should pursue a Masters degree (if at all), get married, etc. Sometimes I find myself questioning which beliefs are truly *mine* and which are societal norms.

#DearTomorrow

Remember that your journey is your own: do not allow yourself to be pressured if the source of that pressure is somebody else other than yourself. Others are entitled to their lives and opinions, as you are to yours.

It is ridiculously crucial to filter the expectations that you put on yourself, because it will affect the energy in your very own universe. They affect your mindset and therefore, the decisions and actions that you take.

"Be yourself –
not your idea of
what you think
somebody else's idea
of yourself should be."

—HENRY DAVID THOREAU

Maybe sometimes
it is okay to be selfish

The key word here is "*sometimes*". I can't deny that there has been times when I needed to put my own interests first. Because at some point, my unhappiness made it more difficult to make others around me happy.

There was a time when I felt overwhelmed with trying to please everyone else. I started to stress myself out, trying to achieve everything yet achieving nothing at all. I became entangled in a mess of effort and potential—instead of fruition. I didn't make anyone else happy, and worse, I was unhappy too.

I eventually decided to stop looking to please others, and started to do what felt right for me. Strangely enough, by doing this, I was then able to make myself and the people around me smile.

THE MORE YOU TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF,
THE MORE YOU CAN TAKE CARE OF OTHERS.

#DearTomorrow

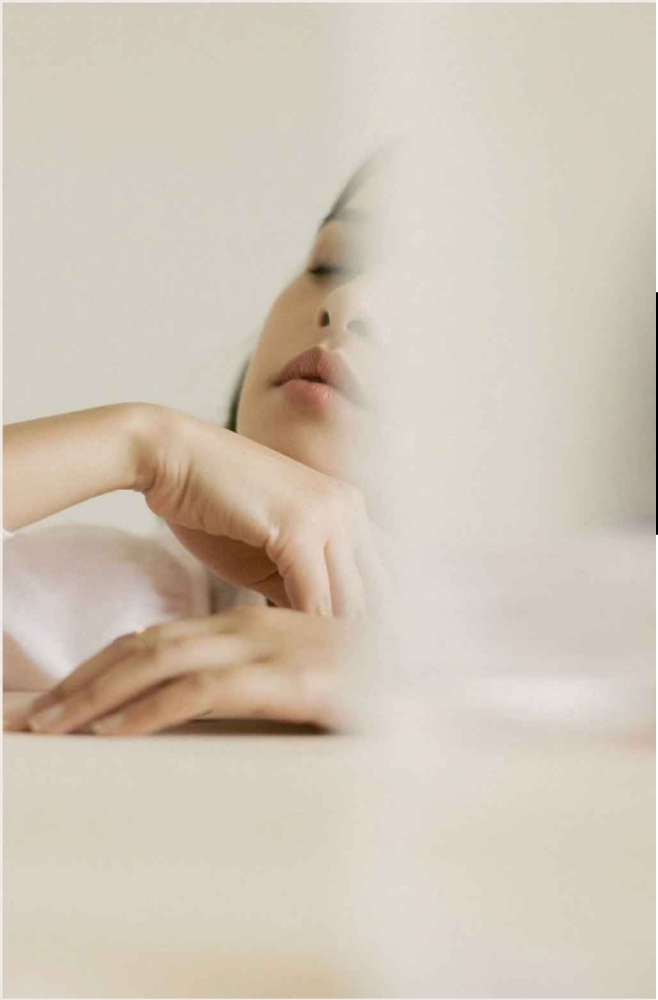
Whenever you feel insecure, upset, and unfulfilled, you will be less likely to pay attention to others, let alone positively affect their lives. Instead, you might spend more time feeling sorry for yourself, or racking your brain for solutions to your own problems. Feed yourself enough love, energy, passion, self-care—because then you would be able to look around with a clear mind and seek to care for others.

MAKE YOURSELF A PRIORITY.
AT THE END OF THE DAY,
YOU'RE YOUR LONGEST COMMITMENT.

Forgive yourself

NOBODY IS PERFECT.
WE ALL HAVE MADE MISTAKES
AT SOME POINT IN THE PAST
—BUT DON'T LET THAT HAUNT YOU.

PLEASE STOP BEING TOO HARD
ON YOURSELF. YOU PROBABLY
DID ALL YOU COULD.



Habits for self-discovery

MAKE TIME FOR YOURSELF EVERYDAY

LISTEN TO SLOW JAZZ

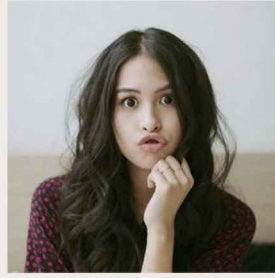
PRACTICE MINDFULNESS (MEDITATE)

SAY "NO" TO SOMETHING YOU TRULY DO *NOT* WANT TO DO

READ. ENRICH YOUR MIND.

HAVE GOOD, DEEP CONVERSATIONS

DAYDREAM



Conversations with myself

Hey

Who's this?

What do you want?

Notes on dreams

A QUESTION TO ASK YOURSELF
WHEN YOU WAKE UP:

"If you only do one thing today,
what would it be?"

Recently I've realized that just staying where I am and being content, can dangerously turn into complacency. In other words, choosing to stay in my comfort zone can be a risk in itself—a risk where I rid myself of my potential, strip myself from new experiences and new opportunities to grow.

#DearTomorrow
Frankly, I think lack of growth is a so much scarier. Take risks, instead.

STAYING AT YOUR COMFORT ZONE

vs

TAKING RISKS

The only consistency
you must maintain
is in positive growth
and improvement.
Other than that,
what is life
without changes?

Do what makes you happy

A person once asked me, "Does it matter that you love what you do? Or do you just have to do it well?"

The challenge with this question is the fact that the two things above often go hand in hand. Doing something that you love, inspires you to do that thing often, and so you will naturally get better at it, and will eventually do it exceptionally well. On the other hand, if a person does something well, it is also likely that they will grow to enjoy it—perhaps because of the appreciation and recognition that the skill may bring.

I think the answer depends on what exactly *brings us happiness*. Some people find happiness in the *process:* for example, if I find happiness in the act of writing a song, then regardless on whether songwriting is something I am good at, I should still do it. But for others (and I think this might include me), the source of happiness is the *end*, not the means.

For me, what motivates me is the conviction and desire to be impactful. My happiness is knowing that I can inspire people, I can bring change to people's lives, and bring positivity in the world. In that case, there are multiple ways to achieve that.

#DearTomorrow

If you are confused about the type of work that gives you happiness, think about the kind of life that you want to lead—and let that vision lead the way.

DOING WHAT YOU LOVE IS FREEDOM.

LOVING WHAT YOU DO IS HAPPINESS.

Keep your own definition of success in mind

SUCCESS IS LOOKING AROUND AT
WHERE I AM AND SMILING.

SUCCESS IS HAVING BROUGHT POSITIVITY
TO MY COMMUNITY AND THE WORLD,
THROUGH THE WORK THAT I'VE DONE.

SUCCESS IS BEATING THE DESIRE TO GIVE UP
DURING THAT 1 MINUTE PLANK.

SUCCESS IS ACHIEVING A PEACEFUL STATE OF MIND.

SUCCESS IS NOT HAVING TO CARE ABOUT
WHAT THEY HAVE TO SAY.

SUCCESS IS MAKING MY LOVED ONES SMILE.

"SUCCESS IS LIKING YOURSELF,
LIKING WHAT YOU DO,
AND LIKING HOW YOU DO IT."

—MAYA ANGELOU

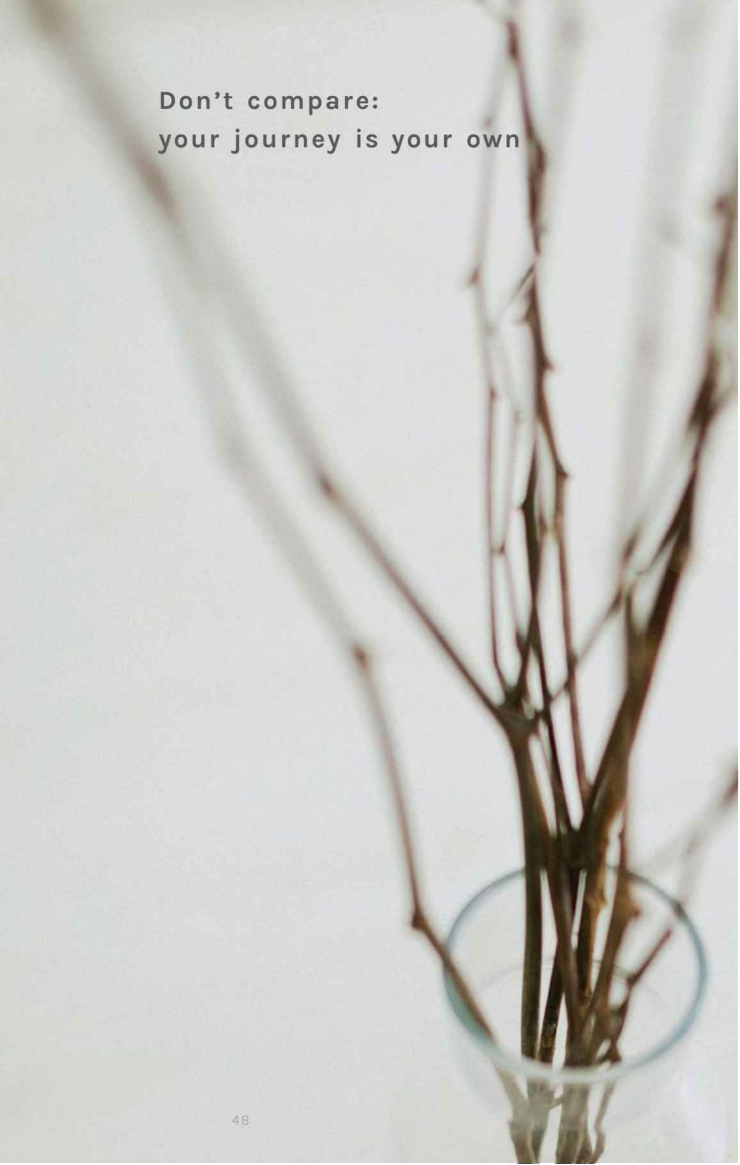
I once wrote on a song, "time doesn't wait for anyone". I wrote this partly as a reminder to myself. Time moves along, and it is our responsibility to make the most of the time that has been given to us.

I read a book called *The ONE Thing* by Gary Keller, that really changed the way I looked at time. Among the other perspectives that he shared, he spoke about people's tendency in wanting to get everything done in a day. He warned that this can be counterproductive: instead, he reminded me that *not everything matters equally*. Trying to do everything all at once can be counterproductive. Start with one thing each day: one thing that is most important, the one thing that would either make everything else easier, or redundant.

This view completely shook my world. I used to take pride in the act of "multitasking": but the author made me realize that what I should do is *not* multitasking but task alternating. In task alternating, we do get a lot of things done: but not by trying to do them all at once, instead by choosing to work in phases, focusing on different things at different times. I realize that the key to achieving things is to prioritize, and minimize the distractions that may get in the way of achieving the single most important thing we choose to do.

#DearTomorrow
Everyone has 24 hours in their lives. It is what you do with those hours that make the difference.

Don’t compare:
your journey is your own



One of the hardest things that I had to go through in college was having to adapt to new standards—much higher ones than I have ever encountered before. I was so scared and intimidated by the idea of studying in a place where everyone else had also beaten the odds of being accepted in the first place.

Instead of believing in myself, I let that fear steer the first few months that I was there. I was hard on myself if I didn't understand something the first time around, like some of the others did. I made myself feel like I always had a deadline looming, because I believed that I had to *feel* stressed all the time in order to do well.

It took an even heavier toll on me when I looked around and compared my process with others. I started overplaying my weaknesses, convinced that others were *more capable* than I was, and before I knew it, I started to disregard my goals and label them as too ambitious.

At my lowest, I decided to change my perspective. I decided to see new standards as challenges, as reminders that I was in a place where I would continuously grow, improve, and learn. I quickly became more comfortable in my learning environment, and started enjoying the process.

#DearTomorrow

A place of struggle is *also* a place where you will grow, learn, and improve. There is nothing desirable in feeling like the smartest person in the room—it may mean that you are not challenging yourself enough.

Face your failures
and start again

When feeling under pressure, I try not to bet on the idea that what I'm working for will be achieved *no matter what*. I think finding motivation in a guaranteed result can be scary—if there is any point along the way where I feel like I will not achieve the goal—I will most likely become demotivated and stop the process.

Instead, I seek to find motivation from the conviction that "at least I've tried", regardless of whether or not the dream will be achieved. Regret is my greatest disincentive. Not achieving something might feel like a failure, but the ache of regret in having not tried will never fade.

#DearTomorrow

Hey, at least you've tried. If failure comes your way, use that extra energy to fight back harder.

MAKE THE COMEBACK STRONGER THAN SETBACK.

Change is super scary for most people—myself included. It is uncomfortable, and is sometimes followed with a phase of second-guessing oneself.

Looking back, I realized however, that many of the milestones and important steps in my life have been brought about by *change*. In 5th grade, that change came when a group of casting directors went to my school to scout a talent for a movie. I was randomly picked, went through an audition, got a callback, and my entire life *changed* when I decided to take the project.

Some other examples of change are less straightforward. But one thing is for sure:

#DearTomorrow

Don't forget to see *any* change as an opportunity. An opportunity to recreate yourself, your dreams, and your destiny. An opportunity to improve on your previous status quo. You will struggle, because you will have to adapt. if it is easy, then it's not a change at all.

On accepting setbacks

Along the way, you will face challenges. There is no doubt about that. Every road has a bump, a rugged path, or a misleading detour.

I always go back to some years ago, when I have only graduated high school. I had applied for several universities abroad and had received offers from them. However, my parents—understandably—were hesitant about sending me so far, so soon. I was only seventeen years old at the time. Thus, I had to take a gap year—a year off between high school and university where my family and I could have a think.

At the time, I was devastated. I loved the idea of going to college—I couldn't imagine a whole year off. Mainly I was afraid of being left behind—that my peers would graduate before me and that my world will burn and crash.

(Of course, problems always seem more dramatic when still unresolved.)

It is amazing to see now that taking a gap year, which I saw as a door closed on my face, in fact opened many more doors than I could ever imagine. In that year, I ended up focusing on my singing career: which was detrimental to the platform that I currently have. Even more importantly, because of the extra year, I was able to apply to my dream university: Oxford—where I eventually went to study.

I suddenly realized that the closed door that I was crying over—was never the one I wanted away. The universe has secrets—ways of letting us know which path is truly *for* us.

#DearTomorrow
If it doesn't open, it's not your door.

Conversations with myself

(in five years)

Acknowledge the presence
of doubt and work around it

Anyone who can dream, can doubt. Doubt is just a feeling—yet it can prevent people from reaching for the stars more than physical barriers do.

I definitely learned this the hard way. The only reason I didn't apply to my dream university the first year, was because I was drowned in doubt. I had people tell me that I couldn't possibly reach good enough grades for Oxford if I still did movie shoots or vocal recordings while going to school.

I was so engulfed in my own self-doubt that a *possible outcome* suddenly became *the only outcome*. And my self-doubt prevented me from chasing my number one dream.

I was lucky that because of my gap year, I was given a second opportunity. But I can only imagine the regret that I would have to live with—if self-doubt was the only thing standing between me and my dreams.

"Doubt kills
more dreams

than failure
ever will."

—SUZY KASEEM

"*Impossible*

IS JUST
AN OPINION."

—PAULO COELHO

Playlist for the dreamer

BE OK — *Ingrid Michaelson*

WHOLE WIDE WORLD — *Mindy Gledhill*

JUST A LITTLE BIT — *Maria Mena*

HAPPY AS THE SUN — *Tyrone Wells*

STRONGER THAN EVER — *Raleigh Ritchie*

READY FOR YOUR LOVE — *Gorgon City*

ON TOP OF THE WORLD — *Imagine Dragons*

CRYSTALIZE — *Lindsey Stirling*

DON'T WORRY BE HAPPY — *Bobby McFerrin*

EARNED IT — *The Weeknd*

You are always
one decision away from
totally different life.

Mind blowing realities

IT IS NOT
THE STRONGEST
OF THE SPECIES
THAT SURVIVE,
NOR THE MOST
INTELLIGENT,
BUT THE ONE MOST
RESPONSIVE
TO CHANGE.

#DearTomorrow

Remember the things that people say you can't do, that you did anyway?

Remember the times that people have said, "you can't do that" or "that's really difficult", and yet you achieved it anyway. Remember the thrilling rush of doing something that people thought impossible.

Don't give power to prohibiting words. Let it fuel your desire to prove them wrong.

Being underestimated is one of the biggest competitive advantages you can have.

Habits of an active dreamer

START THE DAY EARLY

READ THE NEWS: BE IN THE KNOW

MAKE A TO-DO LIST

BE PROACTIVE AND TAKE INITIATIVE

CONTINUE LEARNING

TAKE CRITICISM WITH GRACE

BLOCK OUT TIME FOR IMPORTANT TASKS

BE CLEAR ABOUT YOUR PRIORITIES

NEVER BE AFRAID TO ASK FOR HELP

SAY YES TO OPPORTUNITIES THAT SCARE YOU

WRITE EVERYTHING DOWN

LEARN TO MINIMIZE DISTRACTIONS

Notes on love

A QUESTION TO ASK YOURSELF
WHEN YOU WAKE UP:

Who deserves a "good morning"
from you today?

Fall in love?

Fall deeply, or not at all. Half-hearted love leaves the deepest scars, tint the most regret, and haunt you with "what ifs". Loving without limits in a relationship makes you feel like you've given your all, tried your best. If it works out well, perfect. If it doesn't, you will have no regrets because you did all you could.

"Love is never wasted, for its value does not rest on reciprocity."

—C.S. LEWIS

Falling in love

To forgive and stay,
or to forget and go?

Obviously the answer to this question will mostly depend on the specific circumstances that one is in. But it intrigues me that the two choices of actions given by the question above are paired as they are. Why not *forgive and go* instead?

If someone does something hurtful towards me, forgiveness is probably the best response. Not for the inflictor, but for me. Anger, animosity, and vengeance, are bad energies that can take anyone further away from happiness. Forgiving someone, gives a sense of peace and understanding that brings me closer towards contentment.

But forgiving does not necessarily imply a submission towards staying. I would argue that sometimes the best combination is to forgive and then cut the string between me and the cause for my pain.

#DearTomorrow
Leaving does not have to be an action characterized by anger and sadness. When driven by your own self-love, leaving can be a powerful source of confidence and strength.

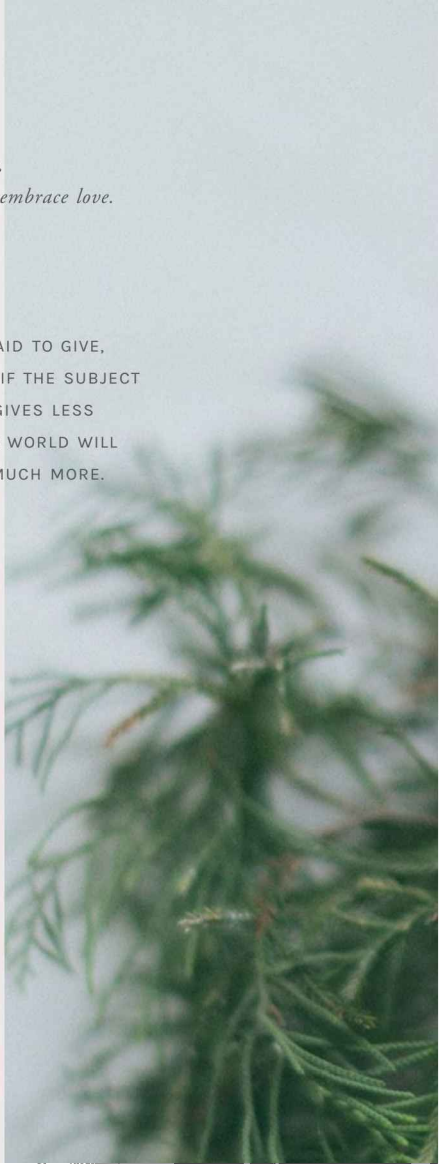
To be with the one
who loves you the most,

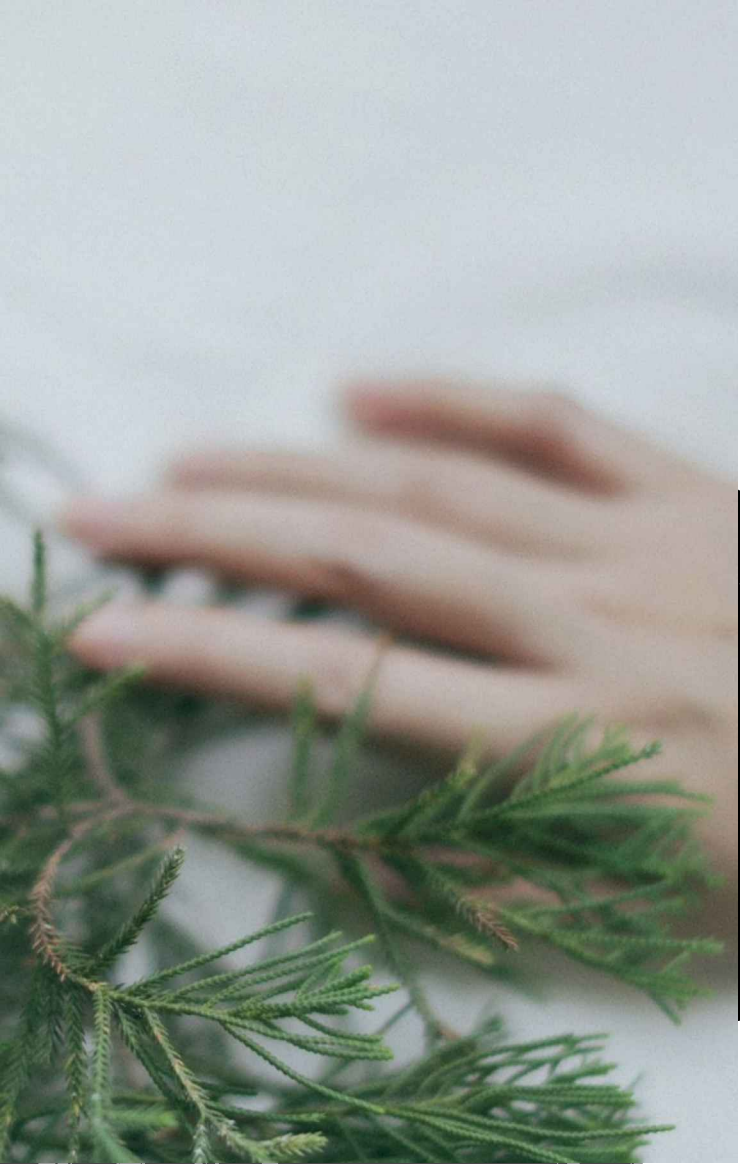
or

to be with one
who you love most?

Aim to give love,
exude love, and embrace love.

DO NOT BE AFRAID TO GIVE,
BECAUSE EVEN IF THE SUBJECT
OF YOUR LOVE GIVES LESS
IN RETURN, THE WORLD WILL
GIVE BACK SO MUCH MORE.





Know when someone is toxic for you

Sometimes the people closest to you can be the most toxic. And it is often difficult to weed them out, because simply, it can be difficult to *tell* that they are indeed giving you negative influence. Because even the most caring people can lead you astray.

LEARN HOW TO SPOT TOXIC ADVICE:

"I don't think you should try to pursue your dream, I just don't want you to be disappointed."

"I am only telling you what to do because I care about you. You simply won't be able to do it on your own."

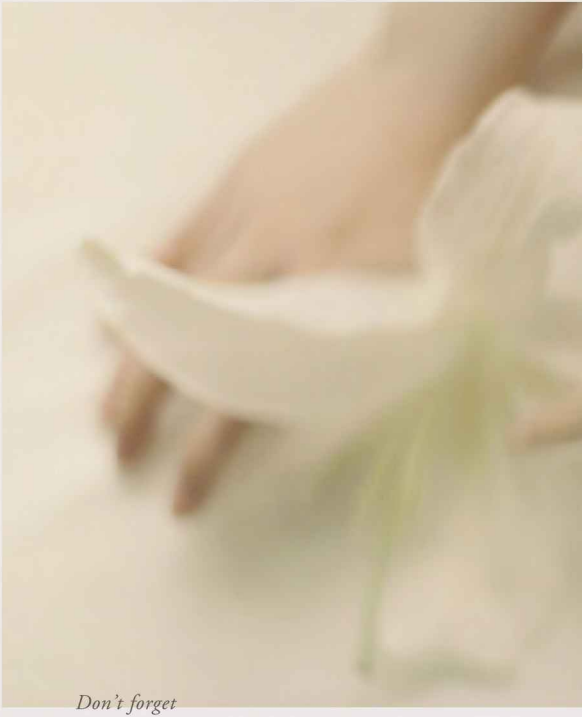
Notice that the motive behind these words are *positive (be it love, affection)*, but in essence, they are discouraging. They either instill self-doubt in you, or they lead you to perceive yourself negatively i.e that you cannot achieve things on your own.

"*Detach from what destroys you*"
—R.H. SIN

Love *is* in some ways blind. It is like getting so close to a painting, where you only see a tiny speck of color and miss out on the whole image. When you spend days and hours in close proximity with a person, it can be near impossible to look at the person in a subjective way.

STAY AWAY FROM PEOPLE WHO MAKE YOU FEEL LIKE YOU ARE HARD TO LOVE.

NOBODY DESERVES AS MUCH LOVE FROM YOU, THAN YOURSELF.



Don't forget

to fall in love

with yourself first.

What does heartbreak feel like?

LIKE LOOKING AROUND A ROOM AND SEEING NO FAMILIAR FACES.

LIKE BLUE RAIN PATTERING ON THE ROOFTOP.

LIKE SAD SONGS THAT AREN'T SAD ENOUGH.

LIKE WINTER NIGHTS—LONG AND UNFORGIVING.

Habits of
A love-giver

Accept the fact that not everyone is going to like you

Say please and thank you

Love without asking for anything in return

Set a regular get together with your loved ones

Be the first to forgive

Give your loved ones a call to ask them how they're doing

Mind blowing reality

"Years of love have been forgot,
in the hatred of a minute."

—EDGAR ALLAN POE

How do you fall in love?

SLOWLY, RATIONALLY....

AND THEN ALL AT ONCE.

Subjectivity in relationships

"You are just being oversensitive."

WELL, HONEY. THEN I THINK YOU'RE BEING EXTREMELY *UNDER*SENSITIVE.

You aren't
always to blame

"Maybe you were everything

and he wasn't enough

it's not always you sweetheart."

—R.H. Sin

Sometimes
love simply doesn't
make sense—
and that's okay.

IT'S NOT YOU

IT'S NOT HIM

MAYBE IT'S JUST THE WAY
THINGS ARE MEANT TO BE

Conversations with your past heartbroken self

HONEY DON'T BE DRAMATIC

IT HAS ONLY JUST BEGUN

Playlist for the brokenhearted

ONLY LOVE CAN HURT LIKE THIS – *Paloma Faith*

PLEASE DON'T SAY YOU LOVE ME – *Gabrielle Aplin*

I NEVER TOLD YOU – *Colbie Caillat*

MY HEART WILL WAIT – *Joe Brooks*

LOVE LIKE THIS – *Kodaline*

DANCING ON MY OWN – *Calum Scott*

GET A HOLD OF YOURSELF – *Jamie Cullum*

GONE – *Lianne La Havas*

LET IT ALL GO – *Birdy featuring Rhodes*

DISTANCE – *Emily King*

ALWAYS REMEMBER ME – *Ry Cuming*

HEART LIKE YOURS – *Willamette Stone*

COME HOME – *One Republic*

CLOSER – *JP Cooper*

LOST WITHOUT YOU – *Robin Thicke*

LIKE A STAR – *Corinne Bailey Rae*

RUNNIN' (LOSE IT ALL) – *Naughty Boy*

THE LOVE YOU'RE GIVEN – *Jack Garratt*

THIS AIN'T THE WAY – *Jeremy Passion, Tori Kelly*

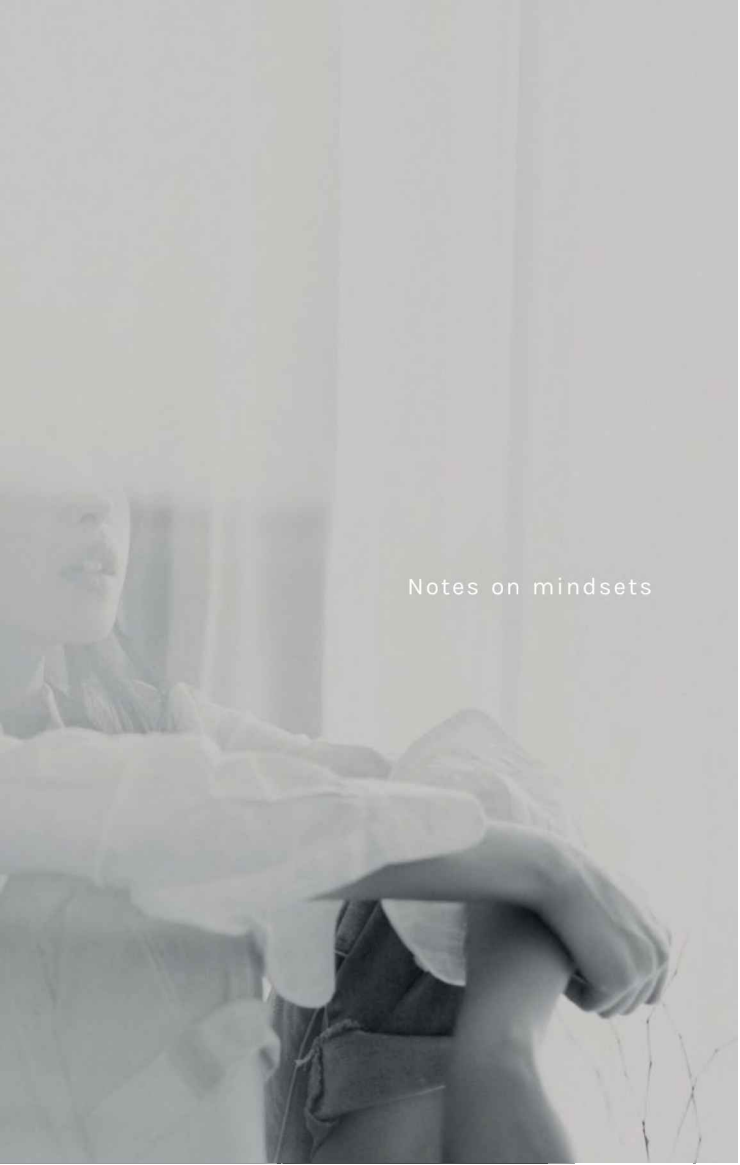
WHERE DID WE GO WRONG – *Toni Braxton, Babyface*

RUN – *Joel Compass*

SLEEPLESS – *Cazzette featuring The High*

HAPPY PILLS – *Norah Jones*

THE PIECES DON'T FIT ANYMORE – *James Morrison*


Notes on mindsets

A QUESTION TO ASK YOURSELF
WHEN YOU WAKE UP:

What is a life philosophy
you're going to try and live today?

How to

Keep an open mind

Realize that you are basically an accumulation of the experiences and people around you. You know nothing of how another person got to where he/she
is right now.

Realize that some of the most ridiculous theories were once commonly endorsed.

Realize that you could be wrong.

Is it possible to know
without a doubt,
what is good and what is bad?

Oh I just love questions on subjectivity.

Humanity has asked questions of morality since forever. What makes something good or bad? Who defines the moral standard?

We can go into the gory philosophical details, but let's not. Instead remember that the search for moral truth will be a constant battle between the general truth (those adopted by others and the world), and your own. The objective vs. the subjective. That is where the individual is crucial: our role as constant evaluators. Everyone in this world will eventually have to draw their own line.

#DearTomorrow

Many actions can be justified;
but it doesn't mean that
they are right.

Evaluate and reflect

People like to say; don't look back, close the book, and start over. I don't think that's healthy. Past mistakes are there to remind us where we've been, they become constant reminders that we should always strive to improve ourselves, and they pave the way for better actions in the future.

"In order to love who you are,
you cannot hate the experiences
that shaped you."

-ANDREA DYKSTRA

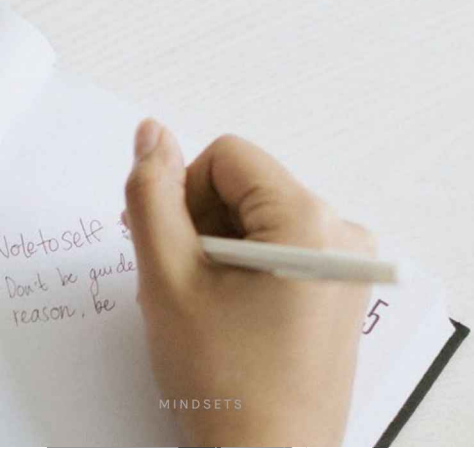
Restart

Look Back

Evaluate the past and understand why you did what you did. Be curious of your own storyline: the people who lead you astray, what actions were crucially damaging, and what things led to that crucial point in the first place.

With this new understanding of what happened and of yourself—look beyond, and decide on the new mindsets or changes that you have to adopt to leave the vicious circle.

Breath, open your eyes, and live your days consciously.



What you think = what you get

YOUR MIND WILL ALWAYS BELIEVE WHAT YOU TELL IT.

FEED IT LOVE.

FEED IT COMPASSION.

FEED IT POSITIVE ENERGY.

"What you think, you become.

what you feel,

you attract.

what you imagine, you create."

—BUDDHA

BEWARE OF KARMA

Understanding insecurity

INSECURITY

=

VULNERABILITY TO *OPINIONS*
OF PEOPLE THAT *MATTER* TO YOU

How to get rid of insecurity

Develop strong self-conviction so that you are not *vulnerable*

They are just opinions. Last time I checked, opinions are opinions because they are subjective and not facts.

They only affect you because they *matter*. Think about whether these people who cause your insecurity really add value to your life.

You are worth it

Looking in the mirror, we don't always like what we see. The only things we see are the lack of symmetry, that little mark that never fades, and all other things we lack.

It's difficult to look at the ever so colorful world: with all its interconnectedness, its new culture of sharing, without comparing oneself to others. Without realizing that we are being spoon-fed a misleading currency of worth.

But beauty and worth can mean so many things.

Some people say that your worth is something to be found. They say "look within".

But don't just look for your worth within, but create it. Define what you think is worth it. Is it a sense of compassion, purpose? Is it the energy from helping others? Is it the power and desire to change the world for the better? Is it intelligence? Is it kindness?

Define your sense of worth and develop it. Like all things valuable, your own worth needs building and nurturing.

Things that shine

Diamonds

Sun

Glitter

You

Small steps are better
than none at all

I am prone to the alluring call of procrastination and delay. It is very natural to gravitate towards the things you *want* to do as opposed to the things you *have* to do. Especially when you feel like you have all the time in the world to achieve whatever it is.

Imagine the one thing that you want to achieve right now. Now think of the time range that you think it will take. If the dream is big enough, I'm sure that it will feel like you have ages to go.

But big steps are only a combination of small little steps. Many days of delay will eventually lead to a big delay too. Don't rely on tomorrow to get things done: there will be brand new distractions, and you might never get around to it.

"Forever is composed of nows."

—EMILY DICKINSON

Do not judge

Here is the main issue in judging others.

It is near *impossible* to know a person's whole life story—let alone be in their shoes completely. You never know what drives them, whether they've been through a traumatic life experience, or why they have grown into the individuals that they are.

You can tell a lot about a person
by what the choose to see in others.

Don’t take it personally

Criticism should excite you: it means people care enough to evaluate you. But it is on us to know *when criticism* stops being constructive and starts feeding in to your insecurities.

It is up to us to remind ourselves that they are not always right.

Don’t ask people for directions
when they’ve never been where you are going

"Just remember
that sometimes,
the way you think
about a person
isn't the way
they actually are."

—JOHN GREEN

Absolute truths

The world revolves around the sun.

Gravity keeps you grounded.

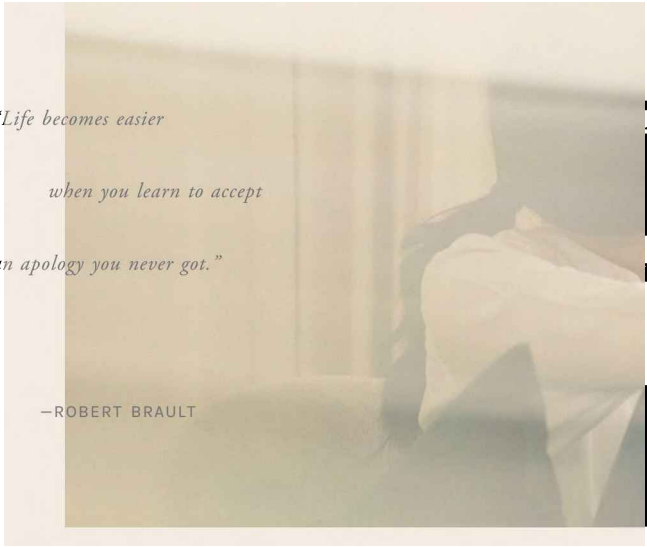
You are enough.

Let go of what you can't change

If it won't bother you in 5 years,
don't let it bother you for 5 minutes.

Most of your mental exhaustion may be caused by worrying about things that you have no control over. Whether it is something you are waiting for, a failure in the past, a major regret—some things haunt us every day and discourage us to move forward.

#DearTomorrow
Remember to forgive.



"Life becomes easier

when you learn to accept

an apology you never got."

—ROBERT BRAULT

ALEXA CHUNG
WHY NATIONS FAIL

Do not make decisions when you are in a stressed state of mind

The worst decisions happen when we are under pressure. At that point, we're not really letting our mind decide, we're letting stress and exhaustion decide for us.

Trust me, most of the time, these decisions would not have been the one we would make in normal circumstances.

Girl talk

To all the girls out there.

Let's talk.

She

She is more than just the colour pink.

She is more than just the lipstick she puts on.

She is more than you can imagine.

It is a very interesting time to live as a Millennial girl. Issues like female empowerment are now amplified and louder than ever. There are so many inspiring women taking up powerful roles that perhaps used to be male dominant. Be it in politics, and in other fields, women are taking charge of their own destinies and careers more than was ever seen before.

I love that girls these days are embracing their individuality: designing their own lives. Chasing their dreams like they deserve to. I think social media platforms help bring this to the surface; young girls are now able to see inspiring ladies do what they do while sharing it with the world.

On a different note...

Interestingly, I have had some people around me smirk and joke around when I say that I'm proud to be a feminist. As if it is something extreme or something "daring" or funny for me to say—as if being a feminist is over the top.

I think this is due to a crucial misunderstanding of what being a feminist entails. Some people take it to express anti-male sentiment: that it demands to take away power from men. When in essence, feminism simply talks about *equality*. It is a symbol of acknowledgement that there persists gender privilege, unequal access to resources and standards of judgement on the basis of gender. It criticizes gender roles that are limiting. Feminism seeks to equalize opportunities, not overthrow anyone.

I wish that we can have more conversations—to discuss and talk about important issues like this. To prevent misunderstandings—and to give this movement the respect it deserves.

#DearTomorrow

Watch out when you hear, "you have to do x, because you're a girl", "you shouldn't do this, because you're a girl". Because you're a girl, you can do anything you want, and achieve anything you set your mind to.

Some say she's too ambitious, too emotional, too liberal.

I say she's hardworking,

compassionate,

open-minded.

She exists outside of *his* universe.

HE OFFERED HER

THE WORLD

SHE SAID

SHE HAD HER OWN

Pink habits

SHE CHALLENGES HERSELF

SHE UNDERSTANDS GUILT, ACCEPTS IT AND MOVES ON

SHE SMILES

SHE HELPS OTHERS THROUGH SELFLESS ACTS OF KINDNESS

SHE AIMS TO THRIVE, NOT TO OVERPOWER ANYBODY ELSE

MOST DAYS, SHE LOVES HERSELF

Go offline
How to Love
WHY NATIONS FAIL

As a Millennial, I love technology. I love the efficiency and access to information that it brings. But as is the case with most revolutionary breakthroughs, there are costs that come with it.

For the young generation, with interconnectedness through social media and other platforms, there is an expensive price to pay: our time and productivity. I often catch myself holding on to my phone for a dangerously long time—and for two minutes I would question the meaning of life before forgetting again the next day.

I cannot imagine the time that I have lost because of my smartphone and social media. I wake up in the morning and my hand automatically reaches out to scroll through other people's lives and updates. The same automatic impulse comes in bouts throughout the day, until it almost feels like a subconscious itch.

#DearTomorrow

Only open up your social media account *with purpose*. Before tapping on that icon on your phone screen, ask yourself, "Do I have anything specific I want to look into?" and if so, stick to that purpose and exit once you have achieved the task.

Aimless scrolling and absorbing updates rarely adds significant value. You could be saving the world with that time.

Be present

I
want
to
feel

grass underneath my feet

wind in my hair

ripple of the waves

heat of the sun

I
want
to
hear

whispers of the night

your heartbeat next to mine

the loudness of silence

singing of the birds

I
want
to
see

without a screen

between

me

and

the world

"Wherever you are,
be all there."

—KIM ELLIOT

Questions to ask yourself

WHAT DO YOU SPEND TOO MUCH TIME ON?

WHEN DO YOU FEEL LIKE YOUR MOTHER?

DO YOU ALWAYS WANT TO WIN?

WHEN ARE YOU AT YOUR BEST?

DO YOU SAY YES OR NO MORE OFTEN?

DO YOU MAKE THE MOST OUT OF EACH DAY?

DO YOU FIND IT EASY TO ADMIT YOUR MISTAKES?

WHO KNOWS YOU BEST?

ARE YOU PROUD OF YOURSELF?

HAVE YOU LOOKED AT THE CLOUDS TODAY?

DO YOU THINK PEOPLE ARE INHERENTLY GOOD?

DO YOU ALWAYS SAY WHAT YOU THINK?

WHAT CRITICISM HURT YOU THE MOST?

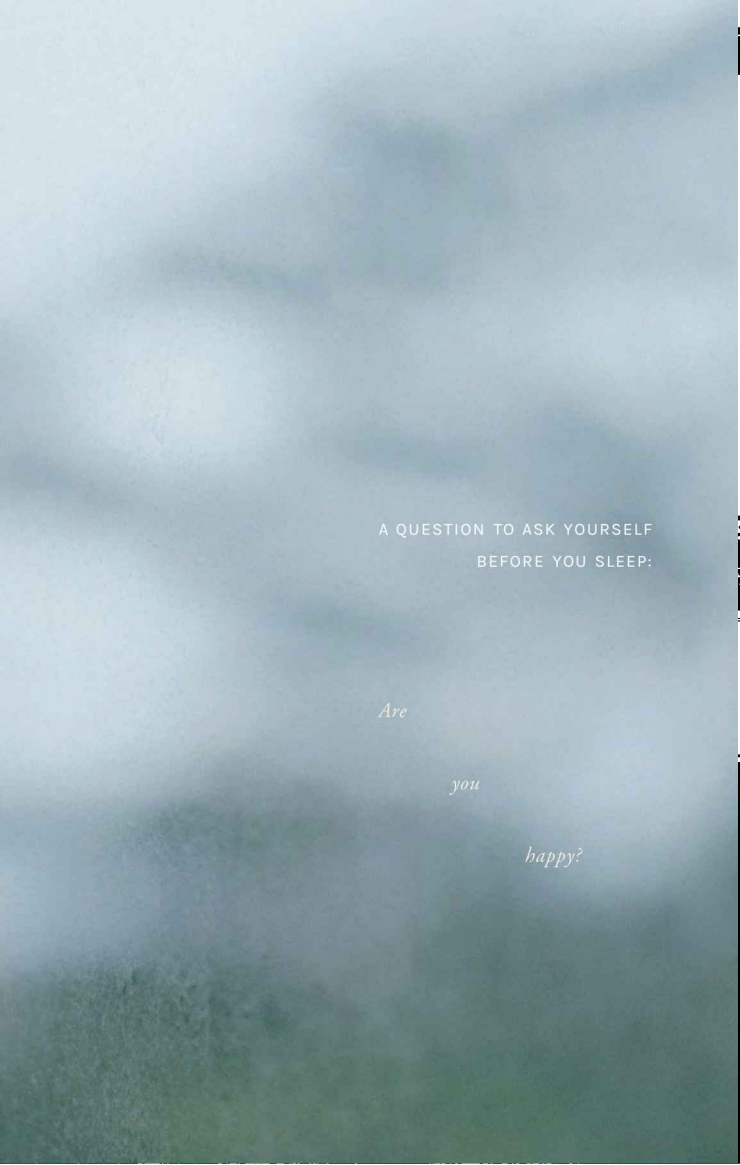
HOW SELFISH ARE YOU?

WHAT DO YOU WORRY ABOUT THE MOST?

ARE YOU SENSITIVE TO CRITICISM?

DO YOU OFTEN FEEL HAPPY?

WHAT GIVES YOU ENERGY?


A QUESTION TO ASK YOURSELF
BEFORE YOU SLEEP:
Are
you
happy?

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