



Mentality  
MAGAZINE

Volume 16

# Mentality

M A G A Z I N E

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Content Editor

**Paul Silaghi**  
Business Manager

**Noelani Conahan**  
Design Editor

### DISCLAIMER:

Some of our content could be emotionally triggering to those who can relate or have experienced similar struggles. If you find yourself becoming uncomfortable while reading, please take a moment for yourself. If you would like to speak to a professional, resources are listed at the end of our magazine.

We hope you enjoy.

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W W W . M E N T A L I T Y

# LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Readers,

I am proud to present the 16th issue of Mentality Magazine, which will conclude my involvement with the Magazine. I joined Mentality in 2020, during my online freshman year. Through the chaos that year brought, I found comfort in being part of a team whose goal has been creating a safe space to share about mental health topics. Coming up on the end of my college experience, I am sad to leave it behind but am equally proud of the work we have done up until now.

Fittingly, this issue of Mentality Magazine is about growing up, and all the different forms that could look like. As I am about to enter a transitory phase of my life, I feel the growing pains of getting older. Responsibilities that have felt so far away in my undergrad suddenly feel more concrete. Taxes, insurance payments, unemployment, and the isolation of adulthood now all feel like concerns I can no longer ignore. Many of our writers at Mentality are graduating this year, and feel similarly. Within these pages, you will find their unique perspectives on what it means to grow up.

This issue of Mentality wouldn't have come to life without the wholehearted contributions of the Mentality executive team. I'd like to take a moment to extend my gratitude to Paul Silaghi, Vibha Moorthy, and Noe Conahan for their tireless efforts in crafting and distributing the magazine you now have in your hands. A special thanks also goes out to all our writers for their dedication to penning and designing their pieces. Without their willingness to share their stories, this issue simply wouldn't have been possible.

Readers, I hope this issue allows you to reflect on the growth you have undergone to get to where you are. I want you to take time to mourn your youth, but also get excited about the future. There is enough space within you to hold both those feelings. I also want to express the importance of keeping your childlike spirit active even as you weave through the challenges of adulthood. As someone who frequently works with children, I can fully say you are never too old to bring in a childlike whimsy to your life. Endure the growing pains, embrace this older and wiser version of yourself, and enjoy growing up.

Enjoy,

Vaishnavi



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# WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

 @mentality\_magazine

 mentality@umich.edu

 mentalitymagazine.org

 Mentality Magazine

We're always looking for more people to help us!

**Writers:** All the lovely pieces in these pages were written by students like you! Join Mentality to have your own pieces published on our website or in the next print edition!

**Designers:** Interested in how these pages are formatted and put together? Join our design team!

**Business:** We're constantly looking for ways to partner with other orgs on campus and for new events to participate in!

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS!



# MENTALITY EBOARD...



Paul  
Business Manager

Age in photo: 1

Current age: 20

**Fun fact:** Fun fact:  
Overalls were usually my preferred fashion choice as a baby and young toddler

Vaishnavi  
Editor in Chief

Age in photo: 9 mo

Current age: 21

**Fun fact:** When I was a toddler my best friends were my grandmother's chickens





# ...CHILDHOOD PHOTOS EDITION!



Vibha

Content Editor

Age in photo: 3

Current age: 21

**Fun fact:** I remember racing around in little kid cars on my street and all the parents would be waiting with popsicles at the finish line

Noe


Design Editor

Age in photo: 6

Current age: 21

**Fun fact:** This photo was taken in New Zealand where there are more sheep than people!





# Petrification of Pinnochio

---

By: Vaishnavi Katta

## Intro

There was a period of time where my future felt drenched in apathy. Lost amongst the rat race, I wanted to go numb to all sense of feeling. I am happy to say I have grown out of that, but I wanted to present this poem to honor that history.

## Petrification of Pinnochio

Estranged from joy and despair,

I exist in a fog of apathy.

A limbo where I

forget my body

Time and time again.

So much so that

My frostbitten fingers feel like props

That hang dead from my heavy arms.

I cannot deny

That this is a wish granted.

When I was last drowning

In love,

In loss,

I wished for stillness.

Perhaps when I looked at the stars

and wished it all away,


they heard me.

Now I watch as my flesh turns to wood

And my blood runs dry.







I am slow to act,  
To move.  
To speak.

I am only compelled  
to follow the marionette string  
that guides me  
through  
my daily  
commitments.

Following the script  
My birth has auditioned me for.  
Becoming the perfect actor,  
Smiling when summoned,  
Crying when the curtain is down.

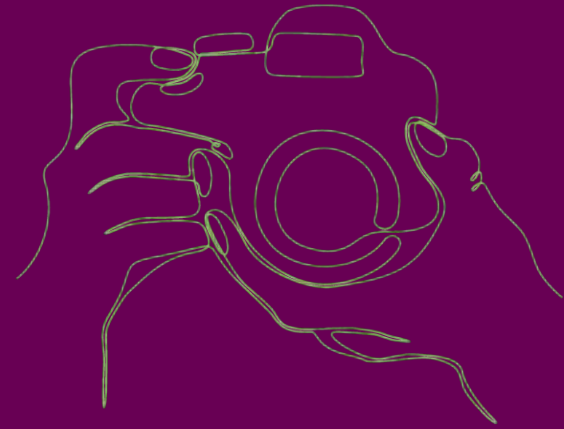
I wonder what will happen  
when the petrification reaches my heart.  
And I can no longer be a victim  
To my unfaithful emotional mind

Will I find stillness then?  
Or in the silence  
Will I go mad?



# Hiraeth

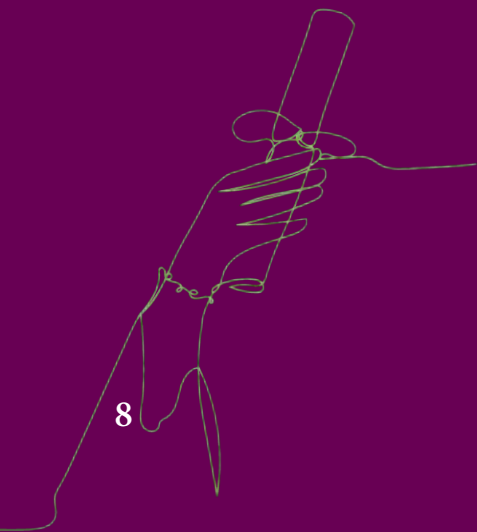
By: Vibha Moorthy



There's this scene from *The Office* (S6 E4 for fans) where Pam tells Jim they should take mental pictures during their wedding otherwise they'll forget the best moments. I'm not getting married, but I've been doing the same thing recently. Whenever I'm with my friends- whether it's at bars, in our living room, or strolling through the Diag- I find myself taking in the moment with a secondary lens. In HD, with ultra focus, set to rose-tinted. I'm desperate to remember these moments and these people before we're phased out into the next part of our lives.

Two months out from graduation, I am nostalgic for a time I haven't even left yet. I loved my college experience, and I don't think I'm ready to say goodbye. From *Mentality*, to my dance group. From childhood friends, to best friends I've made in college. Not just to the places I can't come back to, but also to the versions of myself I'll be leaving behind. It's not like Umich is forcing me to get out. I could easily stay and take more classes, and keep myself in this bliss. But, the best endings come slow and assured- like this one- giving you the time to adjust- naturally.

Whenever I'm in my childhood home or apartment now, I'm overcome with this feeling. It feels like I am a collection of chipped puzzle pieces that no longer fit quite right. If I tried hard enough, I could wedge myself there a little longer, lounge away an afternoon- and make the pieces fit again. Pretend like I am still that girl, instead of seeing the ghost of my younger self.



I am both a wanderer and a prisoner.

My mind goes back and forth from the past to the future, time kicking me out from one zone to the next. And then I worry about how the present is already the past each moment I stress about the future.

It's not all sad though. These past four years have made me realize how much I have already changed. I'm more secure and content. I prioritize my feelings. I laugh more. I handle situations much better than my 17-year-old self would. What's weird is as each day goes by, I never feel like something has fundamentally changed. But I've come to realize, that's what growing up is. Growing up happens when we're not looking, not expecting it. But one day you wake up and realize you feel differently about something. Suddenly, the heartache doesn't hurt anymore. You realize you enjoy activities you used to hate before. It's thrilling. To be constantly surprised by yourself.

Even now, I'm not sure what my future looks like. I'm still waiting to hear from medical schools, so I exist in limbo, unable to fully plan for what's next because it could change any day. It's stressful, seeing friends talk about new apartments, moving to New York, signing job offers, or committing to schools. Because we are all leaving together, except I am one of the last ones who doesn't know where they're leaving to.

Yet, as I write this, I realize I'm no longer scared. In fact, I'm excited. Change is coming, and I know I will be okay, regardless of what my future holds. While having all my friends in one place will no longer be a possibility, I look forward to the days when I'll receive calls from old friends- to tell me about their new jobs, new loves. Where I used to need assurance from other people or find validation in success, I now know I can find it in myself. I'm ready for new experiences. I'm ready to shed this version of myself like old skin because I cannot wait to see who I will become. I'm grateful for this resting period because I know I am being prepared to enter something greater. So whatever's next, I can only tell myself- go experience. Say yes.



# Just Keep Growing

By: Anushka Dalvi

As we waited for the flight on our way back home from spring break, my friend and I started talking about what our plans were after graduation. Soon our conversation started sounding a lot like what we hear from parents as we discussed seeking some stability, pursuing hobbies that we had put off due to school and even financial planning like getting insurance. Birthdays are definitely a reminder of growing up, but for me, it was conversations like these that made me realize how much I have grown up. I remembered in highschool, we used to talk about upcoming exams, plans with friends, and how much fun we are going to have in college. I realized that not only were our topics of conversation different, but so were our priorities and what we valued in life.

I thought back to the time when I first came to the US. Back then, my priorities were making friends and blending in. Being a minority in my elementary school, it was difficult to adjust and grasp how to grow up as an Indian-American. I felt like I had to choose between either side of the hyphen. Eventually, as I talked with and met more kids, I learned there were some in the same position as me. I soon learned that I wasn't going to find any solution looking outside; I had to introspect and learn about who I am and what I really value. Overtime, I started embracing both parts of my identity and this really helped me shape into the person I am today.



I had always been quite a shy girl and didn't talk much. But if anyone meets me today, I don't think they will ever believe me when I say that. My younger self, who had always been shy of presenting in front of class, would have never thought that I would present my research project to the MIT dean in a research competition in highschool. Thus, while purposefully learning about yourself is part of growing up, some experiences, meeting people or unplanned events can shape you in ways that you would have never imagined, which may be the magic of growing up.

As I graduate this year, and start a new chapter of my life, I hope I can make the best of every moment, fulfill the dreams I have been dreaming of, as well as embrace the things I haven't planned for. There's still a lot I want to do, experience and learn. Most importantly, I wish to keep growing. I guess part of growing up is knowing that you never stop growing up.





# The World's Problems Require More Than 280 Characters

Written and designed by Paul Silaghi

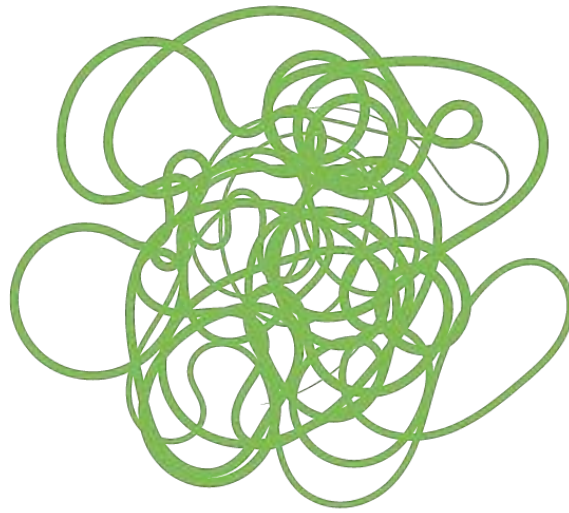
We are living in unprecedented times. Bet you haven't heard that one before! All kidding aside though, there is some truth to this cliché. People throughout history have grappled with existential challenges, but today's obstacles feel different. They seem more volatile, as if a spark in one part of the world can easily create a fire felt by millions or even billions. In just the last few years, we have witnessed the flames of a pandemic, ongoing armed conflict in Europe and the Middle East, and economic instability across the globe. While it may sound obvious, the kinds of solutions needed to address these crises are going to be complicated because, well, the circumstances that created them in the first place are complicated. The two go hand in hand, and the response to a problem simply can't be effective if it isn't rooted in the facts on the ground. It's not only the experts who need to know these facts, however. The lives of countless individuals are affected by the decisions reached on such issues, which makes staying informed and advocating for policy outcomes a collective responsibility. Embracing this responsibility and seeking to find where one can make a positive difference in our dynamic world is perhaps one of the most daunting "coming of age" matters. But how can we as ordinary people with jobs, classes, and commitments get the full story? How can we understand the whole picture when it comes to the latest clash in an armed conflict spanning decades or a trade agreement poised to affect thousands of people's work prospects? I don't have a perfect answer, but I have come to the opinion that one source in particular is especially counterproductive in this realm: social media.

The rise of social media has accompanied our generation's passage through middle school, high school, and college. As we've gotten older, social media platforms have diversified and become more complex, and their reach is more extensive than ever. There's no doubt that social media has a host of benefits, allowing for easy communication with friends and exposure to users with shared interests. The brevity of a Tweet or concision of a TikTok video makes these platforms well-suited for getting quick messages across too. In some

cases, a post can be seen and spread by millions, lending a voice to individuals who may not have otherwise been heard. But in its efficiency, social media leaves little space for nuance. This is foremostly a function of the character constraints and time limits these platforms impose on their content. It's really, really hard to explain any part of a topic in 60 seconds, let alone all of it. Attempting to do this can lead to posts that are incomplete and lack important context, giving people false impressions of issues. Such posts are harmful not only because of the insufficient information conveyed, but also because people may feel like they already know everything there is to know about a certain topic after seeing one person give their take on it. This creates less of an incentive to find credible sources that are better equipped to break down the issue at hand.

The danger of relying on social media for complicated information is also a result of the type of content that is incentivized by social media companies in the first place. Our brain craves inflammatory headlines and aggrandized thumbnail photos, and providing that represents the best chance these platforms have to keep us scrolling along. Therefore, it's a function of social media itself to promote quick answers, one-sided narratives, and unapologetic finger-pointing. This can extend beyond posts that leave out part of the story to include outright disinformation. When misleading or untrue content is popularized and repeatedly seen, it can become very difficult to correct it in people's minds, even with verifiable data (a phenomenon known as the illusory truth effect).





I believe that the de-facto transformation of social media platforms into news outlets in recent years has contributed to much of the polarization we feel in our country and world today. Viewing incomplete and inflammatory content on a regular basis often leads to possessing narrow beliefs, and when these beliefs are continuously reinforced in online echo chambers, compromise becomes exceedingly difficult. Thus, finding solutions to local, national, and global problems that are both effective and acceptable to large swaths of people gets even harder.

How can we resist this polarization and get to a place where constructive discourse, rather than fiery discord, is the norm? In my eyes, it starts with appreciating one of the most fundamental realizations of growing up: that the world around us is extremely complex. This means coming to terms with the fact that the reason why many of the challenges facing our generation have not yet been solved is because they don't have an easy answer. Most of the time, it's simply not possible for either side to get everything it wants. This is not an excuse to shy away from big political and economic issues; instead, it is all the more reason to seek to understand them in full. And when it comes to holistic assessments, social media falls short. The world's problems are just too big to be explained, much less solved, in 280 characters.

# Self-Acceptance

By: Hailey Prokop

**A**s a sophomore in college, I've learned that growing up is a time to discover who we are, what we want to be, and who we want to spend time with. Throughout the years, I've gained a better sense of myself by trying different experiences and meeting new people. College is a time for academic and career exploration, but it is also stereotypically a time for partying and drinking. I've never enjoyed going to parties and much prefer staying at home to read a book under the covers or spending time with family. However, I know that my likes and dislikes can vary drastically from others. Although I've now learned to better accept myself despite college's social environment, it wasn't always like that.

I used to force myself to go out with friends to parties and clubs whilst slowly counting down the hours until I could go home. Thankfully, I quickly realized that I didn't have to conform to all parts of "college life" and that I shouldn't have to fight who I am in order to fit in with others. College is a time for exploration, but it's also a time to develop yourself by figuring out who you are as a person. Whether you were in my boat or not, please know that you do not have to change in order to fit in or please your friends. There are 7.8 billion people in the world, and I know there are others who share the same ideals, values, and likes as you do. So never feel as though you have to conform, but rather learn to accept who you are.



# What's something you remember/miss from childhood?

“Here’s the secret, darling. Things— things don’t get better. They don’t. You do. Darling— you get better all the time. The world is always going to throw its left turns and spinning and chaos at you. It’s always going to try to tear things from your grasp— block your great plans— make you stumble.

But you are there to overcome all that. To grow and change and blossom. To get stronger and wiser and more sure of yourself. To learn what you want and don’t and what you’ll accept and won’t.

That’s the real journey, sweet soul, of life. The conscious decision that if you can’t fight the wind, you’re going to use it. To control the sails.”

I remember in elementary school every St.Patrick's Day, my best friend and I used to make Leprechaun Traps out of shoe boxes. We would put different gold looking objects and three leaf clovers in there hoping a leprechaun would wander in. Sometimes our teacher would humour us and add gold coins to our traps. I just loved the whimsy of it.

“The best versions of ourselves don’t come out when everything is going amazing- the best versions of ourselves come out in the midst of trial. Because that’s where we grow. That’s where our real substance comes out. That’s where you find the person you were always meant to be- the person who was there all along.” -Ashley Hetherington



## *(Responses from the Mentality Team)*

“Life is meant to be lived.”

You have to chase the things that ignite you. You have to do the things that bring you joy. You have to surround yourself with the people who bring you back home to yourself, with the people who respect you and embrace you in ways that make you feel like you are worthy and accepted and loved. You have to do the work to heal yourself, even when it

hurts - especially when it hurts, so that you do not continue to approach your life within the boundary of what is heavy within you. You have to put yourself out there, and you cannot worry about what other people think, you cannot rob yourself of experience or happiness or inspiration because you are scared of how you will be perceived. You have to be unapologetic in the way that you exist here. You have to believe that your ideas, and your hope, and your being, deserve to take up space. You have to believe that you have purpose.

Because our existence is finite. And as hard as that is to understand, as hard as that can be to connect with, from time to time remind yourself that in the most human way - we are all living on borrowed time. We live as if we are promised the experiences and the potential we are chasing, we live as if we have control over what happens to us. But we don't, and that is liberating, because it is pressing - there is urgency within the lesson. It is meant to wake you up.” -anonymous

The spontaneity of friendship formation...  
...feeling like you have all the time in the world



# Choosing to Enter a Personal Winter

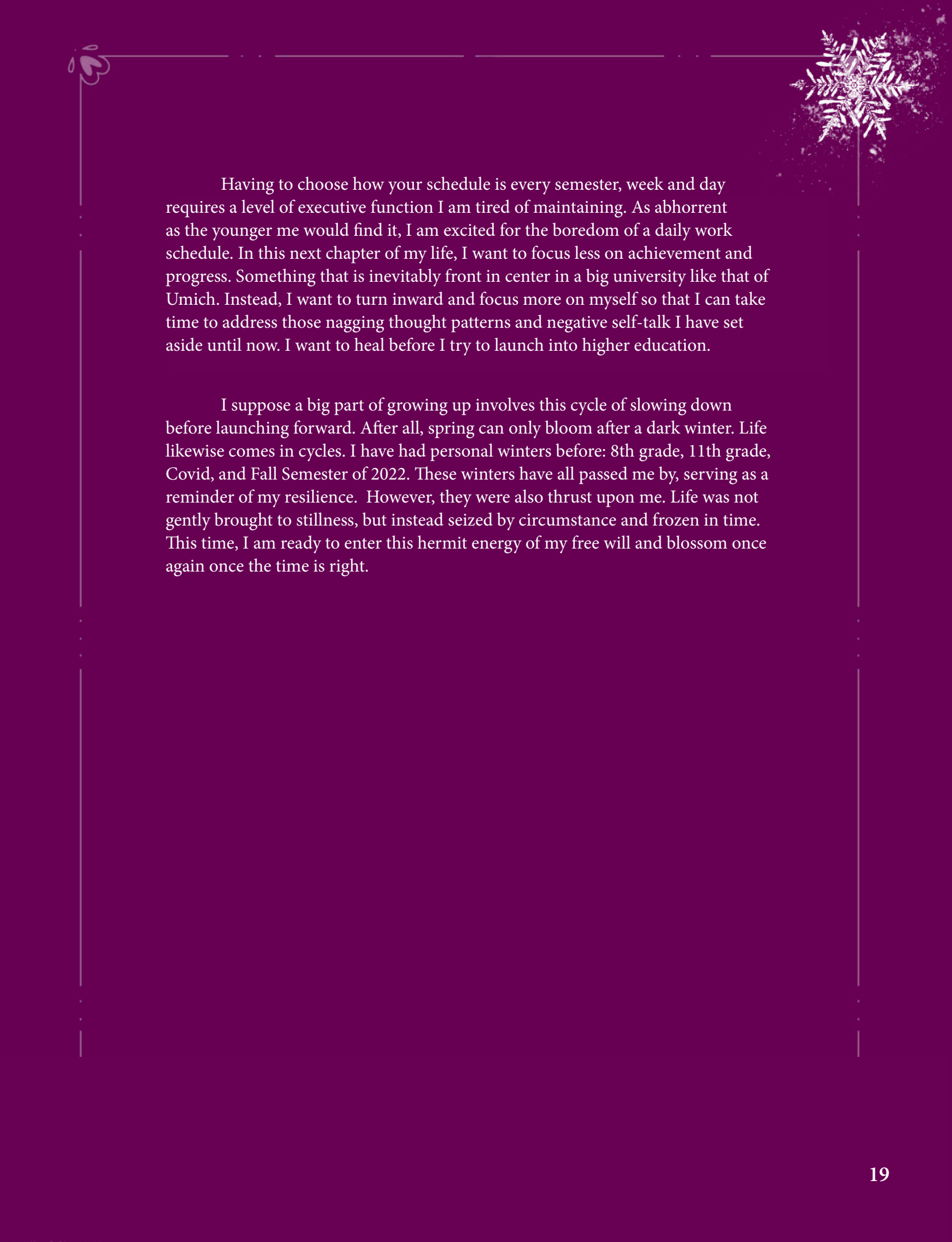
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By: Vaishnavi Katta

Looking back to my eighteen-year-old self, I can't help but feel a little nostalgic for the energy I used to have. Eighteen-year-old me was so excited to go to college, meet new people, try new things, and learn about the world. Coming up on the tail end of that experience, having done so many of those things I set out to do, I find myself craving something different. Something I have been afraid of for a long time: Solitude and stillness.

The thought of being alone sounded like a prison sentence to younger me, but now it feels like a breath of fresh air. I am grateful for all the people in my life, and all the experiences I have shared with them. I have loved every late-night movie night, every potluck hosted, and every trip planned. That being said, in doing so much with others I have forgotten to spend time with myself. After this busy and social few years I am looking to get reacquainted with myself.

In addition to calming down my social life, I also want to try and do less in general. College is a unique environment where things change semester by semester. There is always something new happening and each day is different from the last. Routines and schedules are loose and amenable to change as the mood strikes. This lack of rigid routine is what I have loved about college thus far. However, it has left me with a sort of decision fatigue.



Having to choose how your schedule is every semester, week and day requires a level of executive function I am tired of maintaining. As abhorrent as the younger me would find it, I am excited for the boredom of a daily work schedule. In this next chapter of my life, I want to focus less on achievement and progress. Something that is inevitably front in center in a big university like that of Umich. Instead, I want to turn inward and focus more on myself so that I can take time to address those nagging thought patterns and negative self-talk I have set aside until now. I want to heal before I try to launch into higher education.

I suppose a big part of growing up involves this cycle of slowing down before launching forward. After all, spring can only bloom after a dark winter. Life likewise comes in cycles. I have had personal winters before: 8th grade, 11th grade, Covid, and Fall Semester of 2022. These winters have all passed me by, serving as a reminder of my resilience. However, they were also thrust upon me. Life was not gently brought to stillness, but instead seized by circumstance and frozen in time. This time, I am ready to enter this hermit energy of my free will and blossom once again once the time is right.

# CAMPUS RESOURCES

## STUDENT SERVICES

### **Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)**

3100 Michigan Union

Hours: Mon-Thurs: 8am - 7pm, Fri: 8am - 5pm  
(734) 764-8312

**(Press 0 for After Hours Urgent Support)**

<https://caps.umich.edu>

Provides free, confidential services for U of M students including: counseling for individuals or couples, workshops and groups for support and changing patterns, Assessment of Substance Abuse Patterns (ASAP), online screening for mental health concerns.

### **MiTALK ("My Talk")**

<https://caps.umich.edu/mitalk>

Offers online screenings for depression and anxiety, skill-building tools, and recorded workshops, lectures and relaxation exercises.

### **Campus Mind Works**

<http://campusmindworks.org>

Provides resources for students who have been diagnosed with a mental health disorder.

### **Sexual Assault Prevention and Awareness Center (SAPAC)**

551 Michigan Union

Hours: Mon-Fri: 9am - 5pm

Office Phone: (734) 764-7771

**24-hour Crisis Line:** (734) 936-3333

<https://sapac.umich.edu>

Provides free confidential crisis intervention, advocacy, and support for survivors of sexual assault, sexual harassment, intimate partner violence, and stalking.

### **Spectrum Center**

3200 Michigan Union

Hours: Mon-Fri: 9am - 6pm

(734) 763-4186

<https://spectrumcenter.umich.edu>

Provides a range of education and advocacy services that work to make campus a safe and inclusive environment for LGBTQA students and staff. Also offers on-campus HIV rapid testing.

### **U-M University Health Service (UHS)**

207 Fletcher St.

Hours: Mon-Wed: 8am-5pm, Thu: 9am-5pm,  
Fri: 8am-4:30pm, Sat: 9am-12pm

(734) 764-8320

[www.uhs.umich.edu/mentalhealthsvcs](http://www.uhs.umich.edu/mentalhealthsvcs)

Provides medication and management of common mental health concerns.

### **U-M Psychological Clinic**

500 E. Washington St., Suite 100

(734) 764-3471

<http://mari.umich.edu/psych-clinic/>

Offers assessment, counseling, and treatment for adults in the U-M community, including: anxiety, depression, couples issues, and problems with work and study.

## EMPLOYEE SERVICES

### **U-M Faculty and Staff Assistance Program**

1009 Greene St.

(734) 936-8660

Provides short-term counseling and coaching for staff, faculty and their immediate family members.

## CAMPUS SAFETY

### **Division of Public Safety and Security**

**Emergencies:** Dial 9-1-1

**Non-emergencies:** (734) 763-1131

**Tip line:** (734) 763-9180

## NATIONAL 24-HR HOTLINES

### **National Suicide Prevention Hotline**

1 (800) 273-8255

### **The Trevor Lifeline**

**Trevor Lifeline:** 1 (866) 488-7386

**TrevorChat (available 7 days a week 3pm-9pm ET):**

<http://www.thetrevorproject.org/pages/get-help-now>

**TrevorText (Thursdays and Fridays 4pm-8pm ET):**

Text the word "Trevor" to 1 (202) 304-1200

Provides suicide prevention and crisis intervention to LGBTQ young people ages 13-24.

### **Veterans Crisis Line**

**Hotline:** Call 1 (800) 273-8255 and Press 1

**Online chat:** <https://www.veteranscrisisline.net>

**Text:** 838255

Connects Veterans in crisis and their loved ones with qualified, Department of Veterans Affairs responders.

## **U-M HEALTH SYSTEM**

*Note: Services at the U-M Health System are not covered by students' health service fee.*

### **U-M Depression Center**

(734) 936-4400

Dedicated to research, education, and treatment of depressive and bipolar illnesses.

### **U-M Collegiate Sleep Disorder Clinic**

(734) 936-9068

Helps improve your sleep, daytime function and, hopefully, academic performance.

### **U-M Anxiety Disorders Treatment Clinic**

(734) 764-0231

Offers treatment of problematic anxiety and stress.

### **U-M Ambulatory (Outpatient) Psychiatry Services**

1 (800) 525-5188 or (734) 764-0231

Provides comprehensive evaluation and treatment for patients and families affected by mental illness.

### **UM Psychiatric Emergency Services**

**Crisis Line:** (734) 936-5900 or (734) 996-4747

**University Hospital, 1500 East Medical Center Dr.  
Emergency Medicine Reception**

Emergency walk-in consultation and phone service available 24 hours per day, seven days per week.

### **U-M Neuropsychology Clinic**

(734) 763-9259

Performs psychological evaluation to differentiate cognitive functioning.

### **U-M Preventive Cardiology**

(734) 998-7400

Offers a "Power of Relaxation" program, as well as nutrition, weight management, exercise, smoking cessation and stress management programs.

**If you or someone  
you know struggles  
with mental health,  
there are ways  
to get help. Use  
these resources to  
find help for yourself  
or a loved one.**





# Mentality

M A G A Z I N E