

# YOUR MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

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Happiness can be found, even in the darkest of times, if one only remembers to turn on the light...

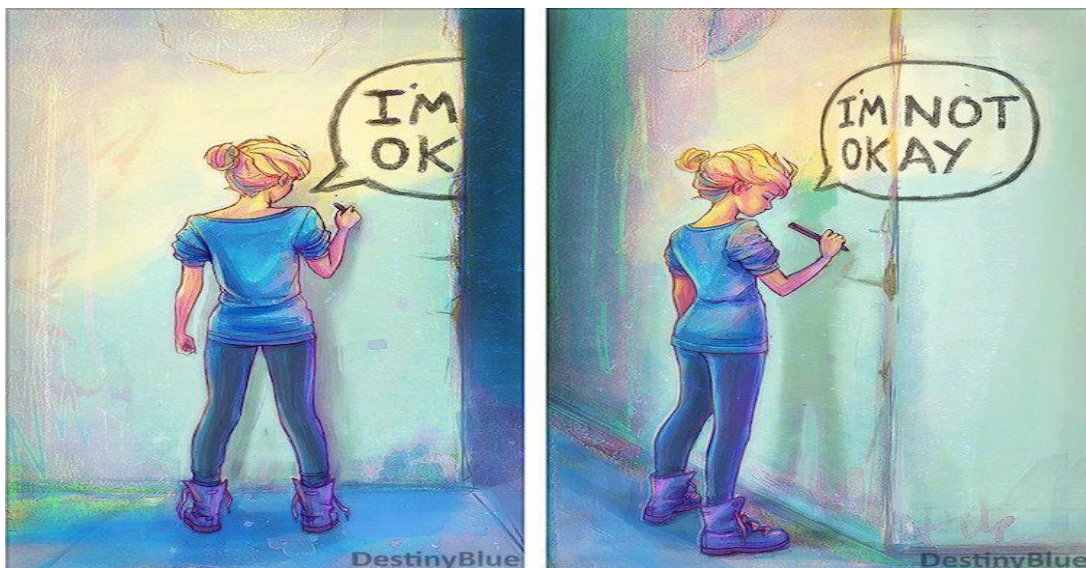
**“It is during our darkest moments that we must focus to see the light.”**

-Aristotle Onassis

It all starts very slow. Some things are out of place, You are distracted and cannot focus on school. You don't feel like eating or doing anything. Maybe it has happened before too, so you don't think too much. Everything is normal.

Happens a few more times, the frequency increases, from once a week to every two-three days. Increasing in intensity each time. You are no longer hungry, you're tired all the time. It feels like there's a heavy weight on your chest.

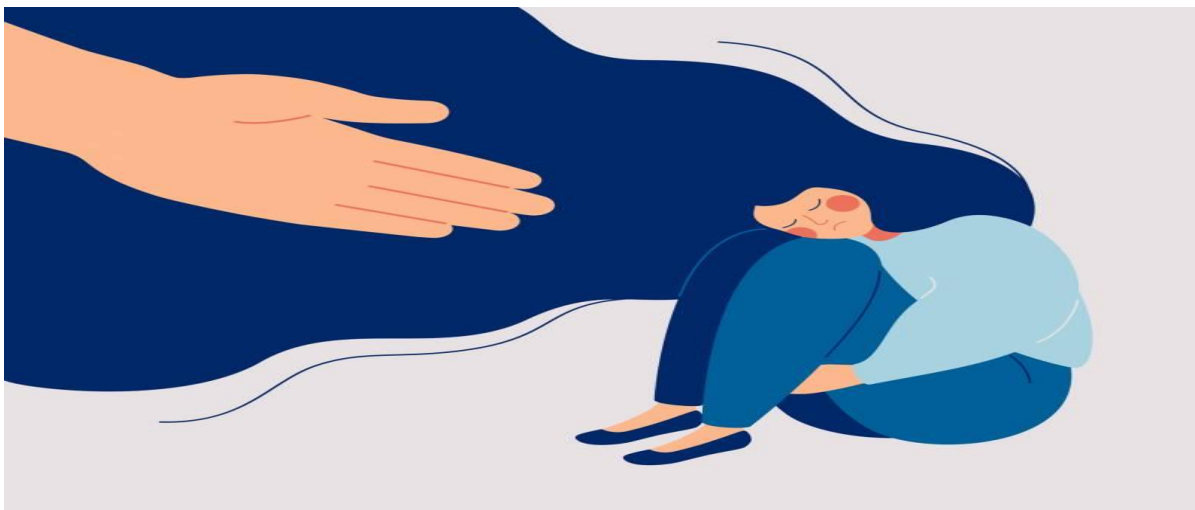
You try to act okay, remain pleasant in front of friends and relatives since you don't want them to worry. You laugh like crazy on funny jokes, still try to be the old you. Even if things are unbalanced, they are bearable for now.



You compare your hardships to the less fortunate. You tell yourself that you should stop feeling sorry for yourself. Maybe you should work harder to get a sense of accomplishment, that might help. At this point, you're probably the best in the world at not feeling sorry for yourself.

Time passes. You accept this as the new normal, Now your YouTube is filled with experts advising you to see a professional. You talked to some friends about it who'd had similar experiences. They say it'll get better.

This goes on, Daily tasks are a burden. Nothing seems easy now. You feel alone.



You realise you are not at all fine. Maybe you need professional help, but you feel the stigma society associates with that. You don't want society to judge you.

Being struck with unimaginable anxiety everyday is so much harder. You sleep for most of the day now and the rest of the day you just lie still in your bed with eyes open and a blank mind. You don't eat, you don't talk to anyone, there's a sense of doom around you. You're alone, you sometimes cry yourself to sleep.

It's clear to you that you need help, but you're not sure what to do. You put up a WhatsApp status in hope someone would ask how you have been. People reach out. You're genuinely surprised at the lengths people are willing to make sure you are okay. You finally muster up the courage to open up. You talk with your closest friends, and

recognize what you kind of already knew all along. You need professional help, and there is nothing wrong with that. You finally do that.



It takes time, but things do get better. You work on your problems with a professional, you can feel the progress. Things don't seem so bad now.

Many times you meet people who went through similar stuff, and advise them through your earned wisdom. You can clearly tell the early signs. The amount of resistance to your advice sometimes surprises you, but all you want to tell them is that it is fine to reach out, to seek help. You don't want them to make the mistakes you did. You wanna make them realize that even the darkest times have a ray of light, that there are people who are there to help.



**All they have to do is realize that, and reach out.**

Your attempts might not always work out, but you still continue, determined to remove the stigma regarding mental health that is so prevalent. You continue on, hoping your message reaches someone out there who needs to hear it.

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