The Uncomfortable Truth

Krishiv Jaiswal analyses the commitments made to deep-rooted friendships in School.

Peer pressure is an omnipresent reality at Doon and this influence of friends can have a ripple effect on our daily actions. It may be seen in the figures defiant of authority in School, us becoming extremely image-conscious, exhibiting behavioural differences, and it becomes a part of how the world perceives us and we perceive ourselves. When parents compare their children to others, the issue takes another dimension.

We conform to the norms set by the people around us, even when those norms conflict with our own identity. This urge to ‘fit in’ can lead to one surrendering one’s own ethics and sense of self, and can be seen in the form of daily interactions with different individuals. It is similar to a poisonous undercurrent that tempts us to stray from morality, because the commitment to our integrity is trumped by our fear of social rejection.

Now, I am not here to stand on my soapbox and completely (and easily) villainize peer pressure because, if we’re being honest, giving in to it can sometimes become a survival tactic, a way to scrape through socially challenging situations and establish a social standing. So yes, there are situations in which it can be rationalised, reflecting its intricate nature. Moreover, peer pressure can also promote desirable behaviours as seen in the case of Doscos cheering and encouraging their form-mates to achieve their full potential, and also, to complete their meals!

It can be tricky to differentiate times when peer pressure is detrimental and the times when it can spur constructive change. Striking this fine balance entails introspection and a keen awareness of one’s values. It’s critical to consider the rationale behind succumbing to peer pressure and figure out whether it is an unhealthy need for validation or a sincere search for connection. Some people defend peer pressure by saying that it pushes people outside of their comfort zones and challenges preconceived assumptions, serving as a crucible for personal growth. However, in my opinion, the unease that results from defying this pressure is what leads to opening the door to a more expansive outlook on life.

Really, peer pressure is like a double-edged sword, and it is not uncommon for one to feel its sharp edge against one’s throat, threatening and coercing one to an unrecognisable self and corrupting one’s own perspective. Acknowledging its existence and understanding its subtle nature is the first step toward reclaiming autonomy over our choices (for me, this was through the film The Perks of Being a Wallflower which made me recognise that this pressure had inadvertently consumed...)

(Continued on Page 3)
**AD HONOREM**

The following are the DSMUN appointments for the year 2024-25:

**President:** Divyaansh Surana  
**Secretary General:** Aryavardhan Agarwal  
**Executive Director:** Kriti Goel  
**Deputy Secretary General:** Rohan Jalan  
**Director General of Operations:** Jaisal Sahgal  
**Director General of Production:** Vir Marwah  
**Director General of Hospitality:** Umaid Dhillon  
**Chief of Production:** Arjun Prakash

We wish them a fruitful tenure!

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**THE NEW GUARD**

Zubin Dhar has been appointed the Library Council Secretary for the year 2024-25.

All the best!

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**PRIMUS INTER PARES**

School Colours have been awarded to Neil Bulchandani, Vidit Verma, Tarun Doss, Vivaan Malik, Gursanjan Natt, Rohan Taneja, Yashovat Nandan and Shhezaad Shergill.

The General Proficiency Cup for Seniors has been awarded to Tarun Doss.

The Gentleman Sportsman of the Year has been awarded to Vidit Verma and Neil Bulchandani.

Congratulations!

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**UNQUOTABLE QUOTES**

- *Cows are not natural, they are man-made.*  
  - DSD, avid zoologist.
- *I am a slave of the system.*  
  - NAS, stuck in The Matrix.
- *The opposite of duality is non-duality.*  
  - SKD, FYI.
- *I haven’t lost it, I just can’t find it.*  
  - Agastya Khanna, glass half-full.
- *You shouldn’t not lose less weight.*  
  - Abhijit Samananda, more or less.
- *Rather than coming in my car, I would come by walk.*  
  - SSR, street-smart.
- *We’re going to watch a video, but it’s an audio.*  
  - MPY, AV Squad.
- *Why’s that blank face on your look?*  
  - ABE, the mannequin challenge.
- *If I would be 5 minutes late, I wouldn’t be.*  
  - RSL, Schrodinger’s commute.
- *If you quoted the things I’ve said, I’d be in federal prison.*  
  - Udi Singh, wanted.
- *I need mechanical advantage to my advantage.*  
  - Aadvik Agrawal, harnessing ‘the Force’.
- *Open the key.*  
  - Aadi Jain, master ‘keysmith’.
- *How is this become?*  
  - Prabhav Jain, shocked.
- *I am topper than you.*  
  - Anantvikram Sinh, aspiring valedictorian.

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**The New Guard**

**France** became the first country to make abortion a constitutional right. US laboratory Valisure found high levels of cancer-causing chemical benzene in many common acne treatments. The Indian Navy rescued a cargo ship crew from Houthi missile strikes, near Yemen. Gang violence in Haiti caused more than 15,000 people to flee their homes. Sweden officially joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation after it completed its accession process in Washington, becoming the 32nd member. Max Verstappen won the Bahrain Grand Prix.

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Congratulations!

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**Primus Inter Pares**

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

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**The Hunger Games II**

— Pragyan Goel

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**Saturday, March 9 | Issue No. 2700**
Trek Talk

The Doon School Weekly interviewed veteran mountaineer, Brigadier Ashok Abbey.

The Doon School Weekly (DSW): How have you contributed to programs like ‘Leave the Himalayas Clean’, that protect the mountains?

Brigadier Ashok Abbey (BAA): To contribute to any environmental program in the Himalayas, you first must understand the Himalayan environment. It’s only when you understand the Himalayan environment and all the stakeholders in its ecosystem, can you plan to contribute to any program in the Himalayas effectively. The Himalayan environment comprises its forests, lakes and rivers, glaciers, flora, fauna, mountain people, and other aspects. To clean the Himalayas, you need to be fully aware and committed, individually as well as institutionally. You need to have a plan based on a long-term vision, immediate mission and defining objectives, and most importantly, responsible conduct by a committed team. You need to have leaders and volunteers who understand and genuinely care about the Himalayan environment and its people, who are trained to work in extreme conditions if required. Else your effort may get diluted and become counterproductive. Over the years as a responsible expedition leader and a mountaineering administrator, I have tried to incorporate the ‘Leave the Himalayas Clean’ culture in my expeditions, share and propagate the above sentiment in letter, spirit, and action with my team members and in various other capacities that I have had the privilege to serve the mountain community.

So, before you undertake any expedition or trek in the mountains, you should plan your venture in a manner that will not degrade the environment in any manner or at least any further. Most importantly the expedition must have a systematic and dedicated plan to bring back its non-biodegradable waste, which will litter and harm the mountain environment, including the human waste from Base Camp and higher camps. The waste must be brought down to the Road Head and taken down to a District Headquarter or a nominated area by the administration for recycling and further disposal. This waste removal plan is as important as the climbing plan itself. For instance, you can have a ‘Pick, Clean and Bring Down Yourself’ campaign, where every member disposes of his garbage systematically in contrast to just disposing of it in an ad hoc manner. Plastic, polyethylene, glass, synthetic, battery, and aluminium can be very harmful to the environment. So there has to be constant monitoring and a streamlined mechanism to get the waste generated, systematically off the mountain. The golden adage that one should leave a campsite as you would like to find it, and leave nothing but your footprints, must be followed in letter and spirit.

DSW: How do you think we could implement such programs on a larger scale to prevent pollution on highly commercialised treks and expeditions?

BAA: To implement such programs on a larger scale, the expedition must be organised right from its planning stage. In the tasking of the expedition apart from stating the climbing objectives, the cleaning and the environmental objectives of the expedition must be spelt out, as well as the methodology to achieve the same. The Leader and the Team Members must be committed to achieving these objectives. For example, students of the Doon School going on the Everest Base Camp trek must be sensitised on the environmental aspects and need to be very clear with regard to the disposal of waste generated by them on the trail. You have to be in sync with the agency that is conducting the trek, and you must make it a point to ask them the all-important question “What about the disposal of the waste generated?”. It is quite possible that you may have to raise their awareness level too along with the porters accompanying you. You should also endeavour to raise awareness levels of the locals whom you will be meeting en route. You need to sensitise them and educate them on the long-term benefits of a clean trail and a natural mountain environment, which is likely to have a multiplier effect in attracting more visitors to the area, thus greatly benefiting them economically in the long run.

me). Honestly, it is just about valuing your true self and setting yourself free of these groundless constraints. In the end, I would just leave you, the reader, on the note that you do not need to blindly succumb to this pressure but rather strive to work around people who try and exert this pressure, without compromising your fundamental values, for the responsibility lies with you to discern when to yield to the crowd and when to stand firm in the pursuit of what is right.
वही सपना वही दर

प्रकृति पंकज | हिंदी साहित्य प्रतिविनंदन के विषय

“अब तुम मुझसे दूर नहीं जा पाोगी। आशिर्वाद मैंने तुम्हें हुंड ही लिया।” वह मेरी ओर बढ़ते लगा और अपने हाथ मेरे कंचे पर रखा, कभी मेरे जोड़े आकर कहा “पंकज जाल में फंस गया है।” पछीने से लघुसंग के लक्षण, सांस पूली हुई, मेरी ओर से चिंता त्योहारी हिंदी से आ रही सूरज की किरणों से चींतिया उठी। मेरे पैर रजहरी में लपिटे हुए थे। वह कोई नई व्यक्ति नहीं हूआ बल्कि हर रोज़ा यह होता जाता है।

अगर! तुझे ही तो खोज रही थी। चल तुझे कुछ अचूक बख्श बनानी है!” मेरे शब्दों में मेरी सूदी इतनी रही थी और उसे हाथ मे हस्ताक्षरित हुए मैं उसे कमरे मे ले गई।

“मुझे इस महीने का सबसे महत्वपूर्ण एब्लॉयी का खिसकावा है जिसके कारण मैंने मुझसे एक रहने का स्थान प्रदान करना पड़ा।” उसने मुझे गले मे स्फटक और मानो मेरी सारी चिंता और वो ब्रह्मीत कर देने वाला बालक स्वप्न, सब गायब हो गए। अगले तीन दिन मानो मेरे पर मैं नहीं बनकर मेरे जिसदी मे भी तो आया। तबका है तो परत में शान नहीं हो तो सुकून के मिल पाई।

प्राण लाल और थाकन से क्रूर होकर मैंने कहा “मुझे इस महीने का सबसे महत्वपूर्ण एब्लॉयी का खिसकावा है जिसके कारण मैंने मुझसे एक रहने का स्थान प्रदान करना पड़ा।” उसने मुझे गले मे स्फटक और मानो मेरी सारी चिंता और वो ब्रह्मीत कर देने वाला बालक स्वप्न, सब गायब हो गए। अगले तीन दिन मानो मेरे पर मैं नहीं बनकर मेरे जिसदी मे भी तो आया। तबका है तो परत में शान नहीं हो तो सुकून के मिल पाई।

वही सपना वही दर। अविश्वास और फूंकना नहीं होता है जिसके कारण मैंने मुझसे एक रहने का स्थान प्रदान करना पड़ा। उसने मुझे गले मे स्फटक और मानो मेरी सारी चिंता और वो ब्रह्मीत कर देने वाला बालक स्वप्न, सब गायब हो गए। अगले तीन दिन मानो मेरे पर मैं नहीं बनकर मेरे जिसदी मे भी तो आया। तबका है तो परत में शान नहीं हो तो सुकून के मिल पाई।
The New Addition

Arya Das comments on the need for School to adapt to a more gender-inclusive setting.

International Women's Day started as a medium of highlighting the disparity between men and women in the workplace, especially pertaining to wage rates and working hours. It is also a way to celebrate and to recognise their contributions to the workplace. This has now been extended to encompass the many other disparities that lie between genders.

Within one such disparity lies our beloved Doon. We are “one of India’s finest schools”, although one gender is not getting the opportunity to access our excellence. However, we hear that this is about to change. A cohort of girls may be coming into Doon.

Admitting girls into School means accepting within our community, an uncharted range of feelings, experiences and perspectives, the type of which are bound to change our interactions and outlooks as well. This is of course, not a bad change, or so we hope. Yet, somewhere the question begs to be asked: are we doing enough to confidently say that it is as good as it should be? As a community are we waiting to embrace them? Or, will we leave it for later and embrace them only when we have to?

The future co-ed batch of Doscos dream of entering the current Doon School — glorious and reliable. It is upon us to provide them the Doon that they deserve. As for infrastructural development, we are more than ready. It is the intangibles that need more consideration. Just because we will eventually learn how to deal with being co-ed does not mean we don’t proactively try to learn sooner.

Platonic intimacies are an important part of our School community, and they shape the understanding of our identities and emotions. Having a role model is a genuine and important developmental need. Generally, girls tend to look up to girls, and boys tend to look up to boys. Schools often are the best place to foster such relationships. Yet, in our situation many of the girls who join might feel like they lack a grip in this regard.

The girls will not have the body of the people they will be required to look up to, and so the boys must step up, the community must step up. While it is true that it is impossible to provide for this need completely, we at least should do what we can to make it easier for the girls to find their footing. We must prepare ourselves from now on for the changes we need to bring amongst ourselves to help the girls deal with this vacuum. We must inculcate empathy and appropriate sentiments in the current Juniors (who will become seniors for the first co-ed batch of Doscos) in a way that they are a little closer to fulfilling the needs of these girls than they otherwise would have been.

Our School is on the brink of an evolution. We must empower ourselves to drive this evolution when it starts. We are the ones who invited it. We cannot let the burden of change or constancy fall upon the shoulders of these young women. It is important to take charge.
The Week Gone By

Zubin Dhar

The models, shaped by unseen, but subconsciously felt hands, take their final form. Fired in the roaring inferno, their clay sets and fortifies. No longer simply water and earth, but intricate statues to look up to, Ozymandiasises to be looked down upon by, legends and infinities cemented alike. Painted in their colours, bright or sombre, dressed in their finest glaze, polished to perfection, they leave the kiln. The Sculptor, ever changing and ever fickle, runs his eye across his latest productions. He sighs, sad to see them go, sadder that he had no more time to work on them. And so he puts them, one by one, on the conveyor belt that leads to the outside, past his studio walls. He knows not where it goes, nor what happens to them, but he is proud, unimaginably proud, of what they represent, and the warmth they bring outside his little studio, high in the mountains, far away from anywhere at all.

What a week this has been, with several endings and a few beginnings taking place in such a short time, a veritable week-of-the-phoenix in our DS Calendar (our answer to the Chinese one).

After the Farewell Assembly, tears were shed and bones were crushed, as it finally hit some of us that our dear ScLs will soon be Old Boys, and we in their stead as leaders of the institution. Though there was more “rain” on the Baski courts than anywhere else in School that night, take heart my dear readers, for when these departing Seniors come back, it will be with tales of global exploit, to thrill you once more.

And now we go to our in-house meteorologist, (me), with the weather! We were granted temporary reprieve thanks to the showers on Monday morning, but I would suggest that if you want that to continue, gather a few friends, and do one of the more simple rain dances, preferably no sacrifice needed.

The CDH has been ramping up its corporate game, with its PPT skills on full display. Graphs and numbers have been put up for all to see, but it’s a shame that the screen’s velocity between slides is equivalent to the average Lockheed Martin Jet. Another oft-heard announcement these days is that Indian food is being served. It’s reassuring, if not slightly insane, to see that the “dal-chawal only, beta?” gang of tradition is alive and well in the modern era.

A Form is to be congratulated on finishing their exams, for they are the valiant Horatios of the academic world. For those staying back for cricket, apply that physics to your cricket bowling, or economics when calculating opportunity cost between net practices or futsal.

With PT ending, and exams just over the horizon, I wish everyone fortification of the soul, for this is it, once more unto the breach. Good luck!

Wordsearch | Dosco Lingo

1. Not doing your work properly; also used to refer to indolent people.
2. A person who consistently offers their unwanted presence.
3. To derive entertainment by, legends and infinities cemented alike.
4. Being a nice and disciplined person just for the sake of it, for any other motives at all.
5. The best way in School to place a reservation.
6. A surplus of haughtiness and arrogance.
7. The last minute resort for missing class or morning PT.
8. A fresh cup of diluted chocolate milk to wake you up.
9. The place where the best extra PTs late evening workouts occur.


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