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'I think you can safely celebrate your love'

SERIOUSLY CYRUS

I have been in love with a girl for the past year-and-a-half. She is dating someone else. She told me that she would break up with that guy, but she hasn't. Initially, I thought she loved me. I now feel she keeps in touch with me only because I help her whenever she requires it. I think she is using me. What should I do?

- RR

Back in the day, the government of India came up with a five-year plan. The idea was to come up with a five-year plan every five years. Then, they forgot about it, and started coming up with newer ones. I guess five years later, your girlfriend could have a similar plan. The bad news is that she does seem to be stringing you along. The good news is that now you know what India feels like. So, put your foot down and give her a final timeline.

I love a guy, but I am not sure if he loves me. When we bump into each other, we just end up staring at each other. Should I wait for him to propose or should I do that myself?

- KB

Listen, if you end up staring at each other, please be careful while crossing busy intersections. The traffic can be a real threat. By the way, you have passed the official test for lovers as exposed by the Crimean University's linguistic department. People who continue to stare into each other's eyes are either in love or are on amphetamines. I think you can safely celebrate your love. And if you are staring into each other's eyes at every nook and corner, does it really matter who makes the first move?

I have been in a relationship with a guy for the past four months. He didn't get admission in my college. Now he says we don't have a future. He wants to study food technology at a different college. He says till the time he completes his two-year course, we can be friends. He also wants to marry me. He has even convinced my mother and his parents. What should I do? Please help.

- CK

This is the most confusing

JUST WRITE TO UNCLE CY

CYRUS@HINDUSTANTIMES.COM AND I'LL GIVE YOU SOME RELIEF... ERR... THAT IS, PROVIDED, I'M NOT DOING A HEADSTAND AT THE TIME.

question since Donald Trump asked himself, "What's the capital of Mexico?" On the one hand he says there is no future for the two of you, as he's in a different college. On the other hand he's asked your mother for your hand in marriage. So, which is it? Or are there two guys involved here? So CK, he wants a two-year waiting period? Then marriage? That's a great idea. You have two years to find out more about each other. Two years to find five million reasons why you can't get along. Two years to weigh your options. I say go for the two-year process. There's no guarantee in life, but in two years, you both should have a better idea of food technology and love technology.

IN HARM'S WAY

As Amber Heard accuses Johnny Depp of domestic abuse, we ask experts what makes people continue to be in abusive relationships



PHOTO: AFP

Collin Rodrigues

Actor Amber Heard filed for divorce from her husband, Johnny Depp, on May 23. She claimed that the Hollywood star had abused her. She provided pictures of her bruised face, as evidence. In the court petition, Heard also claimed that Depp had been inflicting physical and verbal abuse on her through their three-year-long relationship.

Abuse in relationships is not confined only to celebrities. Almost every day, newspapers report stories of people who go through physical, emotional or sexual abuse in relationships. Psychiatrist Gittanjali Saxena says generally, people who subject their partners to any form of abuse suffer from issues related to power and control. "The abuser could also have had a pampered childhood, in which the parent allowed him or her to do whatever they wanted. This inflated the person's sense of importance and ego. So, he or she now wants a

partner to do what the parents always did," she says.

Fear of the unknown

Strangely, many people continue to be in abusive relationships for years. Relationship expert Pranay Anand says there could be multiple reasons for this behaviour. "Sometimes, there is a lot at stake in a relationship or a marriage — children, finances, social pressure and legal implications. Some people also become accustomed to this way of life. The fear of 'What next?' might stop people from taking steps to protect themselves," he adds.

Anand reveals that at times, people cope with abuse to a point that they do not even realise what is happening to them. He says in such situations, it is important to talk to a friend or a family member, who the individual trusts. "Seek help from a therapist who has worked with abuse and trauma victims. Do not act aggressively. Do not let guilt stop you from taking an action," he says.

Child support

Abusive relationships are not only harmful for the couple, but also for any children that they may have. Relationship counsellor Shyam Mithiya says watching either of their parents abuse one another impacts children mentally. "Sometimes, children start believing that one person is abusing the other because of them. If the abuse continues, children can become depressed. They learn from their parents how and when they should get angry. They start behaving that way with their peers while playing," he says.

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SIGNS OF ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIPS

- The first sign is fear of your partner. If there's a sense that you have to be careful around your partner, or behave in a certain manner out of fear, it is time to analyse the reason behind your feeling

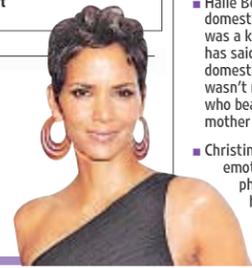
- Belittling, harassment, emotional manipulation and excessive financial control are also signs of abuse

- Coerced sex

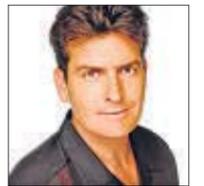
Pranay Anand, relationship expert

I'm a victim of domestic violence. I wasn't married to a man who beat me up, but my mother was.

HALLE BERRY, ACTOR



CELEBRITY CASES OF ABUSE



- In 2009, Charlie Sheen was arrested for domestic violence, after he reportedly tried to choke his wife, Brooke Mueller.

- In 1998, Carmen Electra was arrested after a fight with her then-husband, NBA star Dennis Rodman. Rodman was also charged in the case.



- Drew Barrymore suffered child abuse and neglect at the hands of her father, John Barrymore.

- In 2009, Chris Brown was arrested for beating his then-girlfriend, Rihanna, before the Grammy awards ceremony.

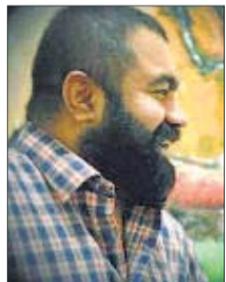
- In the early '90s, Axl Rose, and his ex-wife, Stephanie Seymour, sued each other for domestic violence.



- Charliz Theron grew up with an abusive father. He would frequently threaten to kill the whole family. Her mother even shot her father once in self-defence after he came home drunk and fought with her.

- Halle Berry witnessed domestic abuse when she was a kid. In the past, she has said, "I'm a victim of domestic violence. I wasn't married to a man who beat me up, but my mother was."

- Christina Aguilera was emotionally and physically abused by her father when she was a kid.



(From left) Muzzumil Ruheel, Saubiya Chasmawala and Youdhisthir Maharjan

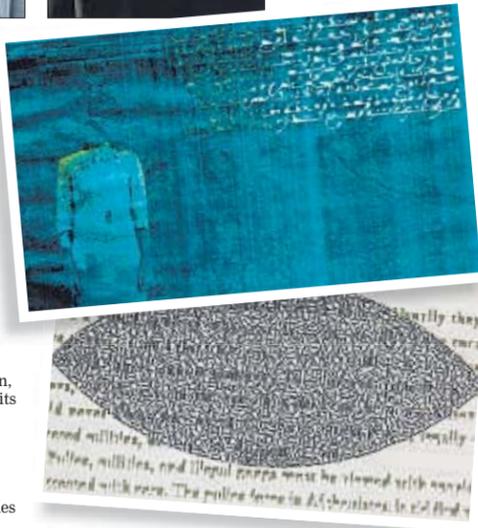
It's only words

Ruchika Kher

If you wish to see an amalgamation of art and books, head to In Letter And Spirit, an exhibition, where a collection of works by three artists — Saubiya Chasmawala, Youdhisthir Maharjan and Muzzumil Ruheel — is on display. The artists will showcase their individual works, which are

based on the way they approach the idea of text. US-based Maharjan's collages examine the notions of erasing and rewriting, separating the text from its inherent meaning. "I work with reclaimed text. I alter it to create a new language that transcends its origins. Then, the text takes a new life of its own, independent of its prescribed meaning and form," he says.

Pakistan-based Ruheel's works question how we write. He presents the stories of the past in the present. "The investigation of documented history is what defines my works. They are a premeditated, calculative and exhaustive analysis of how history, through the ages, has been mis-contextualised. I use the contradictions and fragments of truth to find the poetry within. The realm, which reverberates in my verses, is when actualities



Saubiya Chasmawala's untitled work (top); Youdhisthir Maharjan's In The Land Of Blue Burqas (above)

merge and decimate into fiction," he says.

As far as Chasmawala is concerned, her works revolve around her ideas of transience through text that was inaccessible to her until her college years.

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CATCH IT LIVE

On till July 2, at Tarq, Dhanraj Mahal, Apollo Bandar, from 11am to 6pm

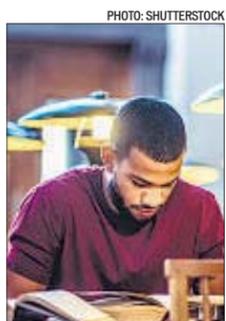


PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK
Take a break every 45 to 60 minutes, and try to do something relaxing

How to stay healthy during exams

Getting through the exam period is a challenge for many students. It can often feel like you don't have the time for health and fitness. Here are a few tips to help you beat exam stress.

EAT WELL
Include plenty of iron-rich leafy green vegetables, such as spinach, to give your body a natural energy boost. Eat carbs, such as sweet potatoes, for slow energy release. It will help you sustain through

revision sessions. Get plenty of fruits, especially summer berries, to help with concentration levels.

EXERCISES
Exercise releases endorphins, the body's happy hormone. It will improve your mood, reduce stress, improve concentration and mental acuity.

STAY HYDRATED
Limit coffee and tea, and drink plenty of water for optimum hydration and focus,

with studies even finding a link between students who drink water during exams and higher grades.

TAKE REGULAR BREAKS
Take a break every 45 to 60 minutes, and try to do something relaxing such as reading a book or going for a short walk. Taking your mind off your work will help you come back to it feeling refreshed.

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