

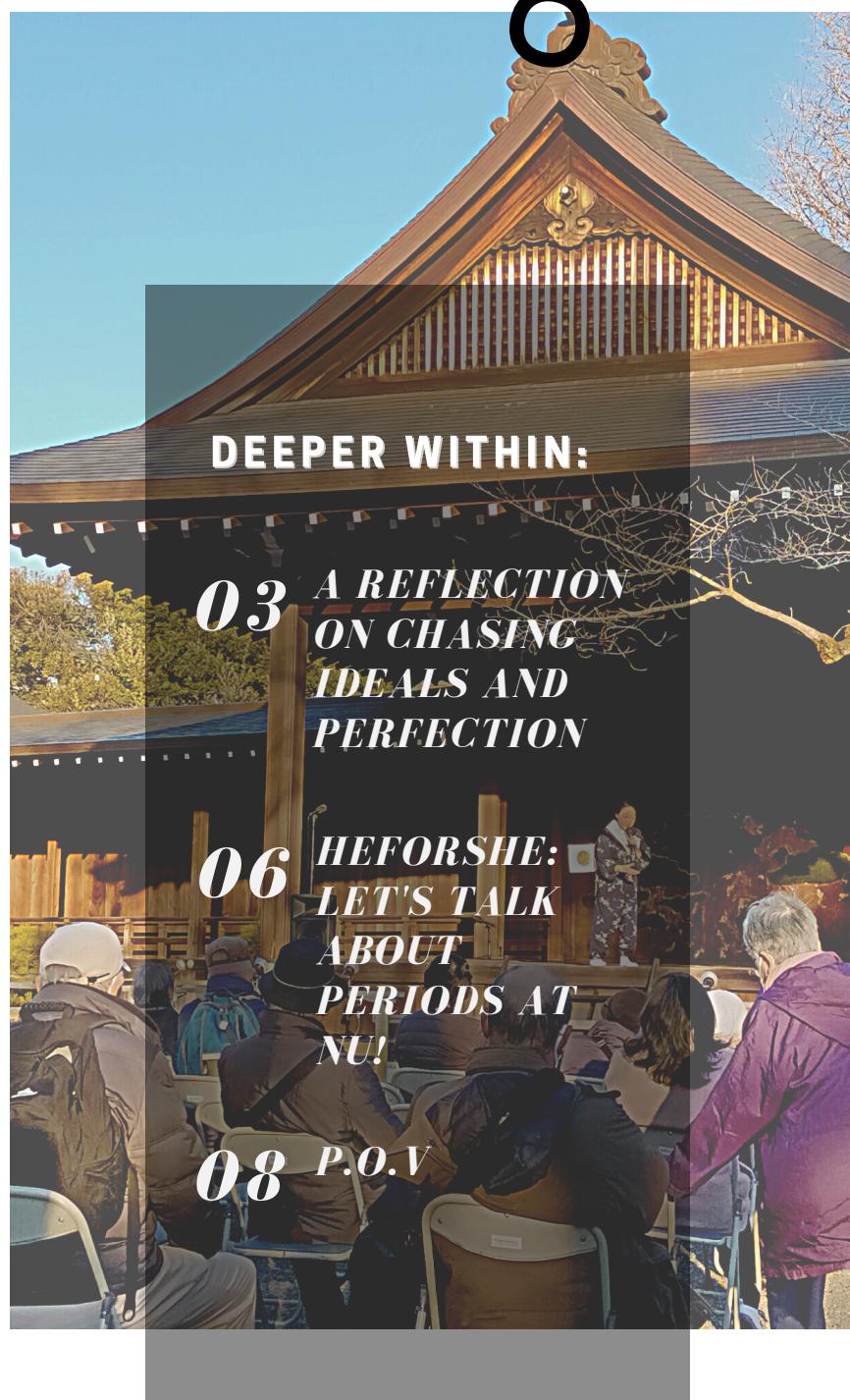
NUDGE //

WORDS RAJOO MOORLI
PHOTO

Happy 2022! 今年もよろしくお願ひします。

As we celebrate the arrival of this new year, we keep in our thoughts the many who are and continue to be impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. We are already in year three of the pandemic and our sincerest hope is that year three is better than year two.

Now is a good time to reflect on last year. In many ways, 2021 was an extraordinary year for our community. NUISG came in with full force. We introduced new projects, including the launch of this newsletter. 2021 was a difficult year too as our hearts longed to see many of our G30 fellows and other acquaintances who were scheduled to come to Japan but could not because of the pandemic and border restrictions.



VOL. 5 TEAM!

THE FIRST OFFICIAL
LITERARY PUBLICATION OF
NUISG

VOL. 5



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Despite all the headwinds we faced in 2020, we continue to be impressed by the resilience and esprit de corps demonstrated by our international community. A perfect example of such an esprit de corps is highlighted in the work that the HeforShe club is doing on campus. You can help them by reading about their work in this newsletter and by responding to their surveys. We also published a couple of articles that were inspired or catalyzed by last year's experiences.

We hope you enjoy reading this edition of our newsletter as much as we enjoyed putting it together!

Welcome our
newest member to
the Nudge Team!



'Chasing ideals'

A simple and innocent idea. For all intents and purposes, it is not a bad concept; it guides human nature and provides a direction in which to develop ourselves and grow. While the question of what IS 'ideal' is one that has started many conflicts, we've at least been able to define it somewhat well enough for humankind as a whole. Indeed, many of humanity's advances came about from people who saw their current circumstances as less than ideal and chose to do something about it.

Yet, when it comes to the definitions of 'ideal' that we personally impose upon ourselves, these can quickly turn into a deep-rooted parasite that drags its hosts along a destructive path, all while convincing them otherwise. For those of us who define ideal as perfection in all that we do, life becomes a never-ending chase that sometimes leaves us blaming ourselves for never achieving what is essentially an impossible goal. For the short-sighted like myself, an accidental steer away from 'ideal' behaviour is enough to destroy the confidence we've built up along the way, as we only see the small ditch we've dropped into, while not being able to see the mountain behind us we've climbed up to make it this far. For those of us who let others define what should be 'ideal', we spend

most of our time with our eyes closed searching for a goal that we scarcely believe in, hoping constantly that someone will tell us we've reached it.

As someone who has always been susceptible to external influences and worried about how I am perceived, the ideal that I could never get out of my head was this incessant need to be 'perfect' in the eyes of others, and to live in a way that conformed to what I've seen 'perfect' lives are depicted as on social media. Blinded by goals that were not 100% mine, my chase for these led me to go against my own personality at times, and I often tired myself out trying to play roles like 'the teammate that can do anything' or 'the one who's always out exploring the world'.

However, more so than the damage we inflict on ourselves, what is even more damning is the pain our behaviour brings to the people around us. We look to share our burden by imposing these 'ideals' upon others too, and feel betrayed or angry when they do not live up to the expectations forced upon them. For some of us, it is an expectation that we even feel entitled to have, as we believe that our 'ideal' is a universal good that everyone should strive towards. Since we've suffered so

much and put all our heart into these ideals, we start to believe that someone who doesn't share the same feelings is insensitive, unconcerned, and unsympathetic to our needs.

Sometimes, we forget that everyone is different.

Over the past year, as I realised that I was approaching the end of my time in Nagoya, the way I wanted to spend my remaining time changed drastically, as my idea of the 'ideal' college life began to revolve around spending any and all my free time running about new places in Japan. To me, the only acceptable way to spend my limited and fleeting time here was to constantly force myself out of my comfort zone and explore — a mini mid-life crisis of sorts. However, at the same time, I wanted to spend as much time as possible with the people I was closest to during the fleeting time we had. In my attempt to reconcile both aspects of how I wanted to experience my final years of college, the line began to blur between the expectations I imposed upon myself and the ones I imposed on others. I unconsciously began to expect — and at times, demand — others to feel the same way, without sparing much thought for the other party's feelings. I wanted to explore the world and still spend time with the people I cared about, so I conveniently and selfishly expected these people to want to explore the world with me too.

*Sometimes,
we forget
that
everyone is
different.*

It took me way too long to realise that what I perceived as the ideal college experience was something that I had been influenced to believe in, and that my tunnel-vision while trying to achieve it had, more than anything else, done more to hurt the stuff that I truly cared about. In this rat-race with myself, I had inadvertently dragged my loved ones along with me as I ran without thought, while forgetting to slow down and enjoy the scenes along the racepath with them. It is a cliche, but getting too caught up with personal achievements and whether I'm 'living life to its fullest' has frequently blinded me from the things

that truly made me happy, which more often than not simply came from living in the moment and appreciating the beauty of even the most mundane of things.

I was constantly clawing at the ideal loving and fulfilling life at the expense of everyone else, without realising that I was already living in it. I was constantly chasing perfection in others, while forgetting that I wasn't perfect myself. I got so lost in the ideals that I thought "should" make me satisfied, that I forgot to try to understand what "satisfied" actually meant to me.

Don't make the same mistakes as me.



A Reflection on Chasing Ideals and Perfection



*This piece was inspired by an article written by Apollo from The Rational Society:
<https://www.therationalsociety.com/post/establishing-the-concept-of-ideal-personality>*

Let's talk about

periods

at Nagoya University!

Why do we need to start now?

In June of 2021, HeForShe student club conducted a survey amongst Nagoya university students asking about their perception and awareness of menstrual periods. What came from that was a range of opinions and support from students on the topic. In this article, we give a little exclusive sneak peek to Nudge's readers into what the students have to offer about their views on periods and sanitary products.

But first, why do we need to talk about periods itself? The conversation around periods has already gained momentum in other countries like the US (with activists like Nadya Okamoto who have been vocal about the stigmatisation behind menstrual blood on Instagram) and the United Kingdom (such as the RedBox Initiative to provide free sanitary products at schools); in Japan, however, such discussions have only gained traction quite recently. In 2017, a



Japanese manga called "Seiri Chan" (Little Miss Period) was launched and gained popularity. The series, which was also later adapted into a live-action movie, helped dismiss various taboos regarding periods in a society that often condemns it as embarrassing to talk about. However, in the backdrop of its release, many menstruating people* still suffer from the taboos surrounding the topic as well as the hefty tax attached to sanitary products. Often, when we do not talk about an issue in the open, many of its complications do not come to light. This is why we need to bring this topic to our attention.

This brings us back to the survey conducted by the HeforShe club and what Nagoya university students had to

say about it. We received different opinions from approximately 60 students of different backgrounds (cultural, social, and geographical), departments, and genders at Nagoya University. For instance, in response to a question about whether free access to sanitary products should be considered, students provided varied perspectives, with many mentioning that since periods are a natural process and many menstruating people cannot often afford sanitary products, it is necessary to provide access to free sanitary products – as well as education – to eradicate the stigma attached. On the other hand, there are also others who mentioned that free access to sanitary products might be difficult to achieve, considering that it takes labour, which in turn needs to be paid. There were also some who considered that it is necessary to give access to menstrual products to people who cannot afford them or who have to resort to unsanitary means during their periods. Although this topic cannot be summarised in our small survey, it did provide us with a great chance to see what the students perceive about menstrual periods. It will be our task from now on to promote this topic and hopefully, bring more awareness, education, and sensitivity surrounding periods.

Lastly, we are still open to hearing opinions on our awareness and perception of the period survey, so please feel free to fill it out through this link. Also, Nagoya University Faculty Staff (Women's Branch) is conducting a survey for free napkins in toilets at Nagoya University! We request you to help with their project by filling out this survey here.

**Menstruating people - the term for all individuals who menstruate including women, trans men, non-binary people, and so on.*

for Nudge!

P.O.V

January 17, 2022

I wanna love me

The way that you love me

Ooh, for all of my pretty and all of my ugly too

I'd love to see me from your point of view

It's hard to remember life before you. It's as if I woke up, finally, after a long sleep, where I can't remember my dreams, if I even had dreams. It's as if I was stumbling through a dark room alone and scared, and someone just suddenly turned the lights on. And, suddenly, everything was fine. You came in bright and warm. Unexpected and all-consuming.

I've always worried about everyone else in my life. Not in a way that I cared about their well-being, happiness, whatever... but in a way that I only wanted to make sure I was perceived how I wanted. I cared what everyone thought of me. A lot. So, I adjusted accordingly. A lot.

You, however, seem to see me adjusting. You seem to see the real me.

How I wish I could see me from your point of view.

I have never met anyone so accepting and open, before. You have so much faith in yourself that it's overflowing into me. I feel your courage radiating the darkest corners

of my soul. I feel exposed and vulnerable, yet so hopeful and unexpectedly strong. You seem to be the inspiration I needed to finally face myself head-on.

And I feel comfortable. I feel I can keep walking towards myself with your gentle eyes on me.

I feel your presence with me in every step I take. A shadow in the corner of the street as I make my way home. A tingle down my spine while I get ready for bed at night. A ghost of your embrace as I dream of you in my sleep.

I have never met someone so devoted, before. And I can only hope to give back at least half of what you've given me. Your love, your support, your loyalty. I wish to be a better human in every aspect of my life to make you proud. I'm finally feeling worthy of my dreams and desires. I think I'm finally ready to go for my dreams.

I'm getting used to receiving

still getting good at not leaving

I'm a love you even though I'm scared

Learnin' to be grateful for myself

I can't wait to see me from your point of view.

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Thank you for your kind support

Special thanks to our contributors:
Shimuran Kitahara

See you in the next issue!

Have something to share with everyone?
Send in your article to nudge.nuisg@gmail.com!

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