

WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY ISSUE

# Outlook

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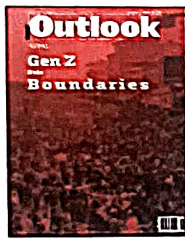
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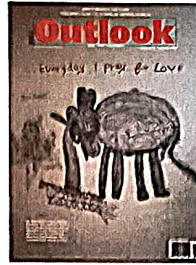


#### ON THE COVER

'The Initiation' is an event being carried out by instinctual forces that connect personal and collective realms and stirs up the unconscious and the subconscious material for close examination.

#### ABOUT THE ARTIST

Ruchi Bakshi Sharma studied Communication Design at the National Institute of Design and has directed several award-winning live action and stopmotion shorts. She works with multiple mediums—lenticulars, paper and video assemblages inside shadow boxes, optical and animating toys, puzzles and zines. More recently, she has been interested in making interactive ritual objects. She is inspired by folklore, totems and mystical diagrams. Play and motion are the dominant elements in her work. She has won numerous international awards.



*"It has to be emphasized that if the pain were readily describable most of the countless sufferers from this ancient affliction would have been able to confidently depict for their friends and loved ones (even their physicians) some of the actual dimensions of their torment, and perhaps elicit a comprehension that has been generally lacking; such incomprehension has usually been due not to a failure of sympathy but to the basic inability of healthy people to imagine a form of torment so alien to everyday experience."*

—William Styron in *Darkness Visible: A Memoir of Madness*

In order to address this inability, we, at Outlook, have decided to commit to raising awareness about mental illness as part of our journalism. For our Independence Day issue in August (picture above), we looked at freedom from the stigma of mental illness, and as we prepare to observe World Mental Health Day on October 10, we once again focus on stories of those who feel too much and those who struggle with being understood.

We remain grateful to everyone who spoke to us, and those at Chennai-based The Banyan—which offers comprehensive mental health and social care services for the homeless and low-income populations—who helped us understand the issues regarding mental health, especially our guest editors Dr Vandana Gopikumar, the organisation's co-founder, and Dr Lakshmi Narasimhan, a mental health researcher at The Banyan.

This is in solidarity with everyone who has struggled with mental health issues and those who have been their caregivers, the many people who are helping out in their own capacities and our readers who bravely engage with stories that are sad and yet, they give us strength and hope.

#### 4 | "IN THIS CITY, I AM MEMORY"

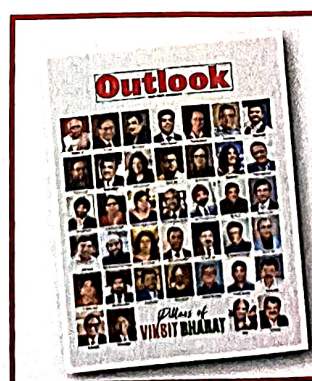
Another Mental Health Day is coming up. Increasing awareness must be matched with improving access to mental health services  
**By Anirudh Kala**

#### 8 | LANGUISHING IN LONELINESS

How do people deal with the unbearable emptiness of being when the system commodifies everything, including love, sex and companionship  
**By Snigdhendu Bhattacharya**

#### 44 | TO UNDERSTAND AND BE UNDERSTOOD

About one crore Indians over 60 years old have dementia. But the availability of services does not match the demand  
**By Sridhar Vaitheeswaran and R. Thara**



# Pillars of VIKSIT BHARAT

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