

PSYCH!



A COLLABORATIVE ZINE

BY 5-10*

PSYCHOLOGY STUDENTS

UH, CAN I GET
SOME MENTAL
HEALTH WITH
THAT PSYCH DEGREE?
PLEASE?!

This zine is the result of conversations, creativity, and general trouble-making that emerged when talking to students about their experiences in academic psychology.

In August 2022, I asked 9 upper-year psych students at York University to tell me what it's been like to be a psychology student, what has been encouraging or discouraging about the program, and whether they could think of ways a psychology program could fit them better. I transcribed these interviews and applied narrative thematic analysis, noting my reactions and responses as I went, constructing themes from the connections my brain made among students' stories.

In February 2023, 5 of them accepted my invitation to a focus group meet-up / zine workshop. I presented my themes to the group, each with cut-out quotes from everyone's interviews.



They shared their reactions to these quotes and themes, discussed the relationships among their experiences, and tinkered and messed around with the materials on the table: the quotations, guiding questions, colourful paper, magazine clippings, markers and pencils.

Then, each student gathered quotes that interested them and made the pages that follow. They deal with themes of excitement, disillusionment, contradiction, alienation, ambivalence, hope, stress, and often-unrequited love for psychology.

The process of the entire workshop was hands-on, embodied, procedural, social, informal, messy, intuitive, and open-ended. These words are rarely used to describe what goes on in an undergraduate psychology program. I think the change was good. Doing something very differently helped us disturb the power dynamics that traditionally happen in undergraduate psych spaces, for one.

The workshop also helped us get unstuck from psychology-brain: the conceptual framework of academic psychology (its vocabulary and modes of thinking) has been trained into us for years. I *know* it was activated in this context in particular (a psychology study *about* psychology education!) But the messy, hands-on, iterative and conversational process of collaborative zine-making allows us to break out of those frames, to use *different* parts of our brains.



This zine is a reflection of that process. It's unfinished and ongoing... And now you're a part of it!

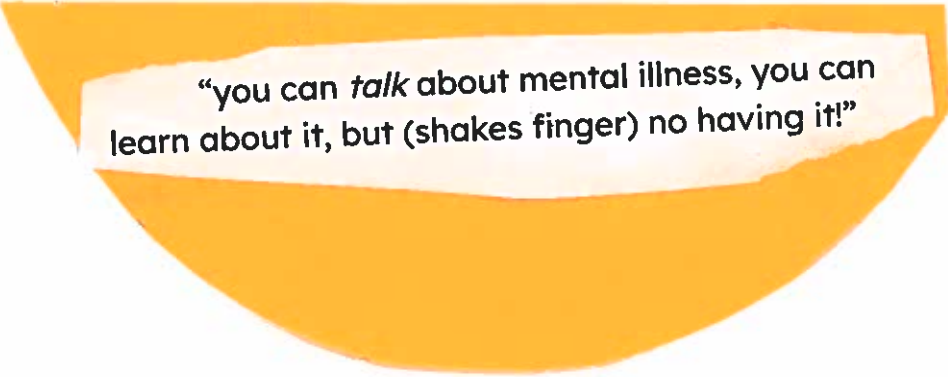
CURRENTLY, you are reading this zine. Maybe you can relate?

ALSO, you can participate. Do you have answers to any of the questions raised? Add your own thoughts; scribble in the blank pages. Take apart the zine and refasten it with extra pages left in for future readers. Add your name on the authors page.

NEXT, you can share it. Who do you think should know about the experiences in these pages? Give a copy to your professor or your dean. Share it with a classmate; leave it in a classroom or office. Take it apart and photocopy it using the instructions enclosed. If you're reading an online version, you can print it out, or just attach it to an email.

Thank you!

~ Zoë Martin, 2023
(email me at kzmartin@yorku.ca if you have questions or comments)

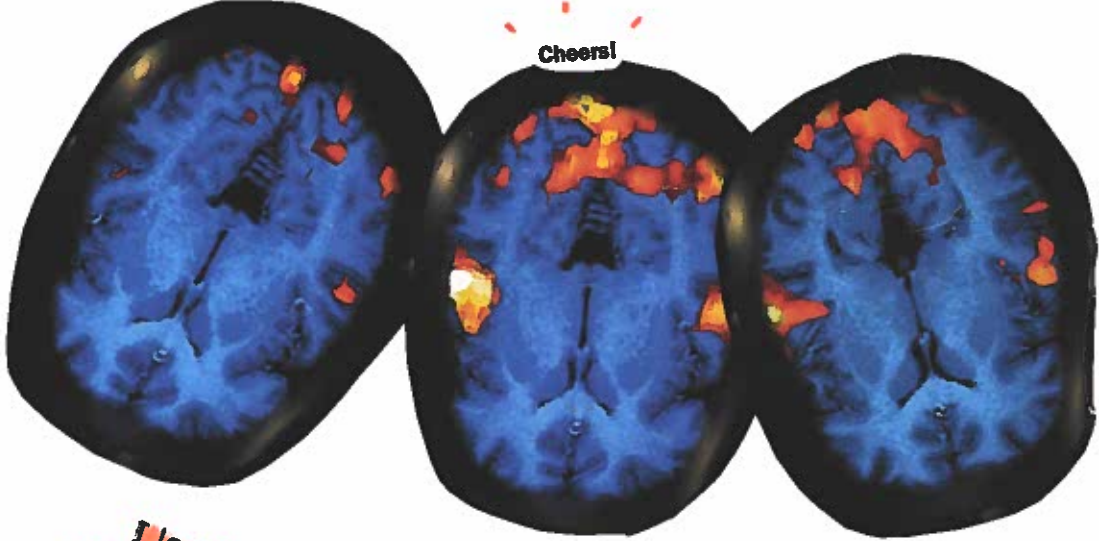


"you can *talk* about mental illness, you can learn about it, but (shakes finger) no having it!"



Hell yeah!!

Psychology is one of the few fields of study that genuinely do fuel me.

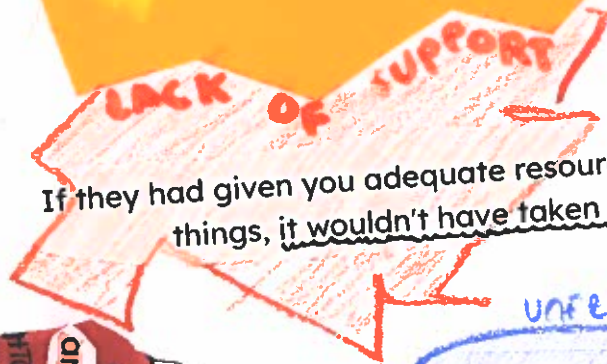


I loved hearing about it. I loved accumulating information. I'd just look up every article I could find about mental health stories and like, you know, this new brain imaging technique... I just try and absorb as much of it as possible like a sponge.

The care is so big...
so there is **HOPE!**

I love it. As much as I'm not a big fan of the structure, the words + the information in the textbook just speak to me. Sitting there reading my textbook is like sitting there reading a fiction novel. I just sit and I read and **I love it.**

It is so interesting
6 ☺



If they had given you adequate resources, appropriate things, it wouldn't have taken so long.



unfeeling...?
Something felt weird in me just taking notes on my laptop about things that are so extreme... not even having any statement from the professor saying, "...and it's so awful when this happens." "and it" so unfortunate that this happens." It felt like there was a lack of sympathy or empathy there.

FOR NOW
It is what it is.
It's part of the process, right?
We have to do what we have to do.

"DIVERSE"
one person in one of my classes went "well, were there women in psychology?" And my history of psych professor went, "Yeah, but that's not important right now," and went back

We can do better...

it's always been a passion of mine--to understand the way people think and why they do the things they do, on a deeper level. it gives me insight in kinda every area of my life.

I just like learning about the mind and human behavior and the way people think.

there's a lot riding on our education

We just want the most out of our education...

Get rid of profs that are too old. Or never stay on topic. Spending 3 hrs off topic, is not what makes me want to be here.

"why am I here? Why am I even listening to you?"

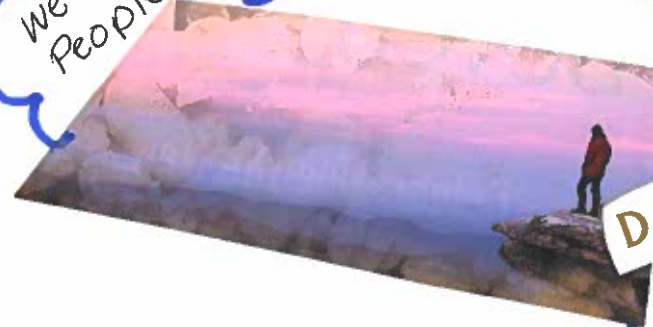
Not what I should be feeling when I'm trying to learn!

I want to enjoy learning...

I WANT to want to be here.

A prof being actually invested in your work, and actually invested in how you turn out, is so motivational.

We are people too!



We have hopes, and **DREAMS** and goals.

A huge part of the reason I want to study psychology is to maybe become a counselor. How am I supposed to counsel kids now if all I know is stuff from 50 years ago? You're in a field of human behavior and you're not being flexible with human behavior! It doesn't make sense...



Why is this

the default for
Students?

I ended up getting an iPad my second year so that I could sit up closer to the front and record the prof. And then ... you end up having a bunch of stuff to look through and not enough time to do it.

is there supposed to be this much self-teaching?

It's like you're always playing catch-up.

I had to

go back to the textbook
learn all the information
myself.

it feels like it never ends.



alone again

It feels like everyone is very on their own; they do their thing and they go. It definitely can make you feel extra lonely.

there is so much potential here

we want more windows

Y R

so many Profs?

white

Bring me guest lecturers!
(of different backgrounds)

THE PROGRAM IS NOT
DESIGNED
WITH SOMEONE
LIKE MÈ:
IN MIND

What is undergrad psych?

The curriculum that we learn is so male-dominated, and as a woman, it makes you feel so out of place.

Not a single tutorial in sight. It's a little bit sad because I thrived in that dynamic.

I'm an accommodation student, and sometimes when I verbalize that, or when I speak to my professors about some things, it's almost like "do the reading and you'll understand." Or "just check out this website and you'll understand." And I'm like, "I have

when we're talking in a class, it feels like there's this really interesting breakthrough information. And then you look at the participant list and it's like "20-year-old cisgendered white males. Also, there was one individual who was East Asian!" and it's like...Ohhh, okay. Suddenly this...does not feel as intriguing."

NEUROTYPICAL

It's very NT-oriented.

Issues with marginalized groups that aren't just racism are brushed over so quickly that it's really unfortunate. With topics about sexuality and stuff like that, I've noticed that happen a lot.

The students need it to be slowed down... it's obviously going to take longer for them to take it in than it's going to take for the professor to put it out.

I have borderline personality disorder, and so that actually has some symptoms that overlap with ADHD and some focus issues... If the material's not engaging, the prof's not engaging, that's going to trigger a lot more easily.

I go to some of the male professors, and they look at me like I'm in the wrong field.

We need to do something about this.



[redacted] sometimes it feels like you *are* expected to take the position of the white male researcher, and not ever be relating to whatever person is being studied.

~ 10000000%

It sometimes does suck to not see people who sound like you on paper, in any of the research that you're seeing.

WE

FEEL

ISOLATED

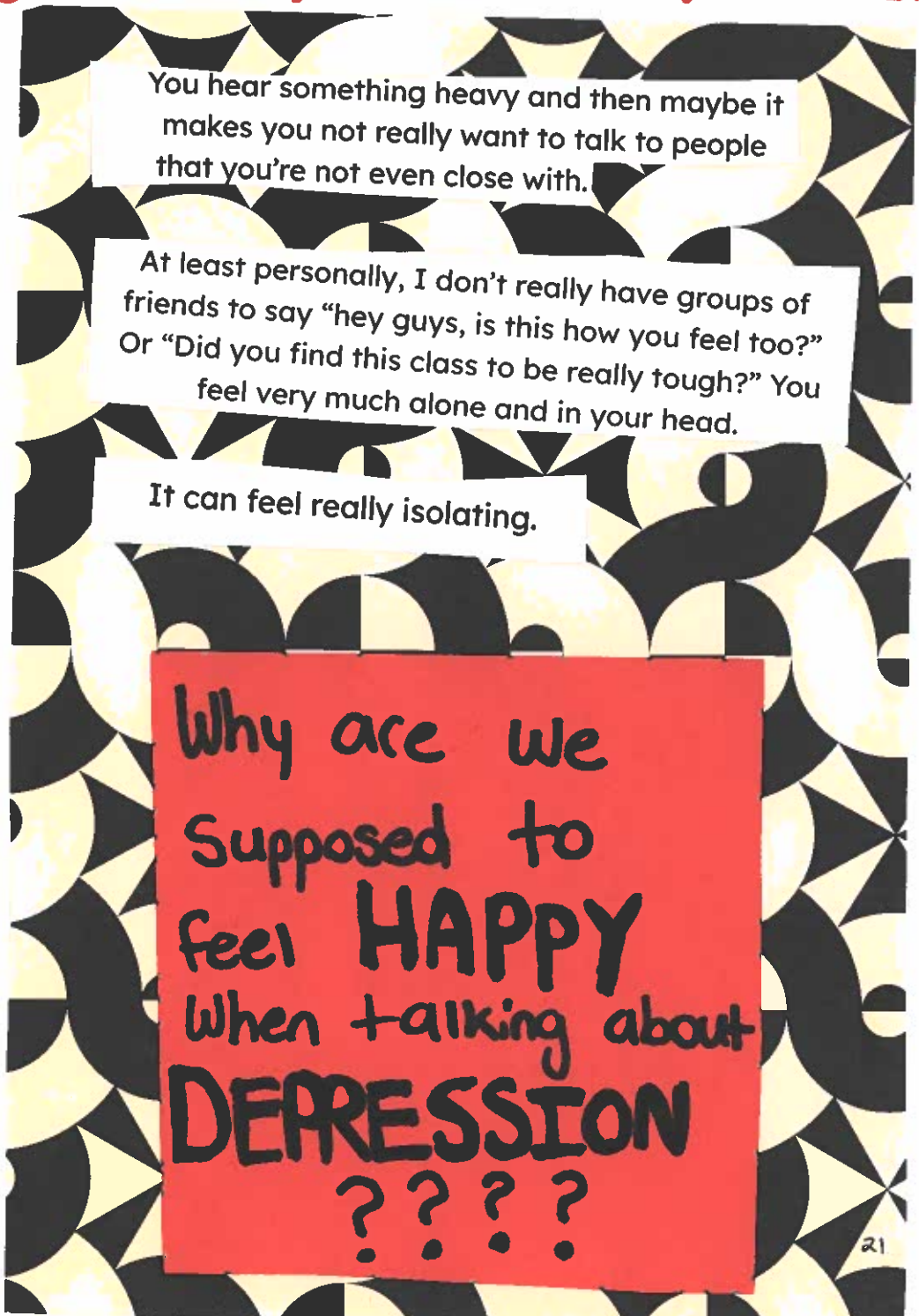
Trying to make Psychology not so



What's the issue???

- When you're sitting in a class and they're talking about something that may have happened to you, but they aren't really showing that they care or anything...it feels like you are the example. It can just feel very, **dehumanizing**.
 - “you can talk about mental illness, you can learn about it, but (shakes finger) no having it!”
 - I'm not seeing, or I'm not being shown, or there are no resources.
- 20

NO SUPPORT, ISOLATING, LONELY



I feel like when we talk about mental health, they don't really talk about what to say to people, or how to help people. I find it strange, honestly, that they don't teach things like that.

I did expect a little bit more of ... just having a little bit of emotion in there, rather than like *just* teaching it. I went into it being so passionate about mental health, and caring about others, and having more of a therapy perspective on things. And then to hear it just be like, scientific-sounding, it just did feel a little bit...strange. I guess I was expecting a bit more care and sensitivity towards certain topics.

It's just like, "this is what depression is," "this is anxiety," ... it's shallow.

That's almost like the, the foundation of psychology, it seems like: being able to empathize with others and help either you, or them, or both understand and process either emotions that are potentially too complex handle on their own, or just help you work through things.

I love it. I look at any other degree and I can't imagine doing it. Despite all these problems it has, it's so interesting. It has to do with how our minds work and how we work as people. That in itself is so interesting and I keep just wanting to learn more.

I feel like it just helps you understand everything better.

In the cases where I've connected with professors after or even during the course, it's motivated me a lot more significantly to do well.

... it's kind of this funny situation to be in when studying psychology, because you know so much about something, but you don't know what to do about it.

The amount of group work that there is in psychology hasn't really lent itself to facilitating a lot of friendships. In the psychology courses, it's all quite individual.

Somehow get the students to think about what they want to do with psychology going forward. And maybe help guide and steer them in that direction. There's so many options out there, right?

Zoë: Yeah. I didn't personally learn about many options in my schooling. Did you?

No. Not at all.

The only resource I have is to talk to people who are already doing that.

They have no problem telling you what you need for grad school, but they have a lot of trouble telling you where you can go to get it.

What steps are you taking to actually ensure that things are actually as accessible as you say?

What resources will you give your students who are maybe trying to cope with these things as they go through your class and learn about them?

PSYchology is great!

it's enjoyable to study, and it's entertaining. And obviously it's real life stuff, which I love. I like how a lot of the time when teaching certain things the professor might say "if this has ever happened to you, or if you've ever seen someone react like this,"

... it's just so real and relatable and it feels like just an easy thing to talk about, because it's like something that I see every day in myself and the people around me. I feel like it just keeps you connected to people. Even if you're not talking to anyone, it's still cool that while studying I'm learning about people.

BUT...

They had FIVE workshops about how to apply for a clinical psychology pathway. I'm like, clinical psychology makes me feel like I want to have a panic attack. ...Can we talk about anything else I can apply my degree to? It feels very limiting and it feels very scary, if your aim or even your interests don't align with this "Get your undergrad, get your master's, research clinically in psychology" formula.

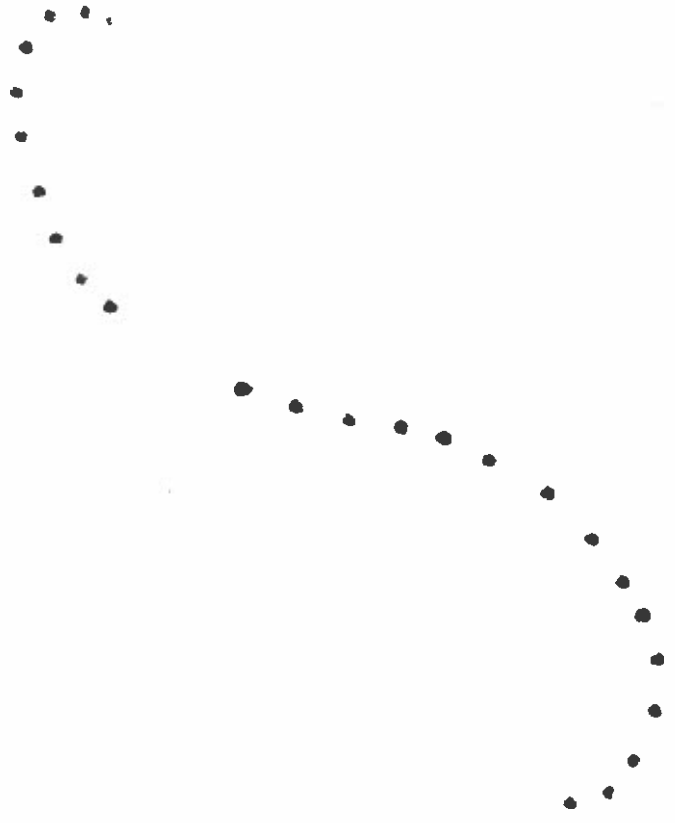
We ♥
Psychology

Feeling a bit lost...

We just want
psychology
to love
us back...

"Getting this
degree was great...
Now what?"

...found a pit 1024...



WHAT WOULD THE
PSYCH CURRICULUM
LOOK LIKE

IF IT TOOK INTO
ACCOUNT ALL

OUR EXPERIENCES?

1954
1955

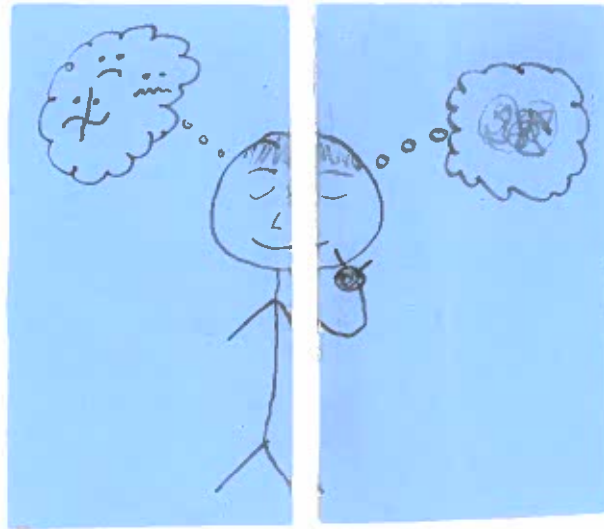
1956

ASHLEY (she/her)



MEET THE AUTHORS

Luna



Ashley #2



NOT PICTURED:

— 4 other students whose quotes are contained herein

- You? Readers who are PUSHED OUT, marginalized, or feel ambivalent, as you work towards a psych degree.
- ~~po~~ have been -lized, dis-abled, disillusioned



Created in 2023

by the students/artists/participants whose self-portraits appear on the previous page, including...

- *Alyssa Soroka*

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Also made possible by 4 other anonymous students, whose quotes appear alongside the authors mentioned above.

Other contributors include: [insert your name below if you want to]

And by Zoë Martin (cover, introductory material, assembly) as part of their Master's thesis in Critical Psychology at York U.
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* 1 MA STUDENT ASKED
9 UNDERGRADS ABOUT THEIR
EXPERIENCES IN YORK U'S
PSYCH PROGRAM.
5 OF THOSE UNDERGRADS
CAME TOGETHER,
USING QUOTES FROM ALL
9 INTERVIEWS TO BUILD
THE PAGES OF THIS ZINE.

PSYCH!



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PSYCHOLOGY STUDENTS