



ysdn2021
••afterword

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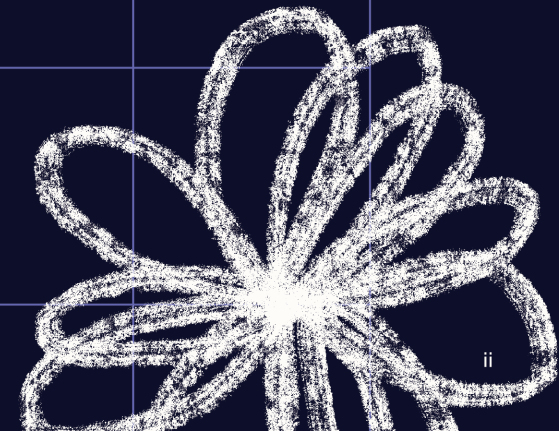
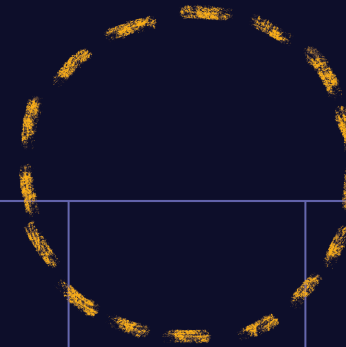
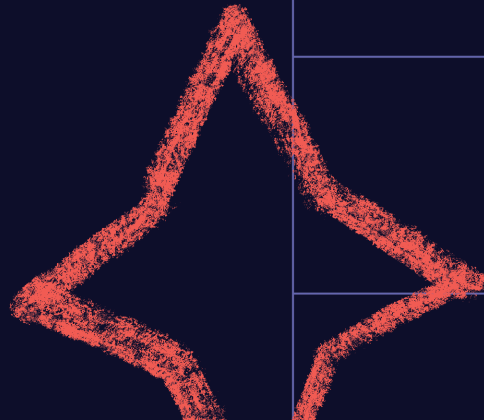
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intro

ysdn 2021 — afterword

The York University/Sheridan College Program in Design is a four-year journey filled with ups and downs. Apart from applying design knowledge and skills, it is a place where we met our friends, mentors, and future colleagues. This chapter was shaped by our experiences—from the moment we wake up to the time we go to sleep. Our day-to-day lives were impacted by emotions, work, friends, and the environment—all influenced by YSDN in one way or another.

As this era in our lives comes to an end, the aim of YSDN 2021 Afterword is to document shared memories for the cohort to look back on. It's created by the grads, for the grads; and it's a way for us to share our journey. We hope to encapsulate the little moments in this zine as a collection of artifacts that connect us and express our individuality.

experience ysdn in augmented reality



Step 1
download the Halo AR app

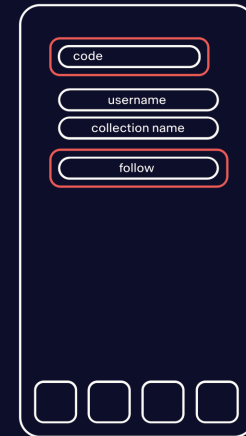
Step 2
go to the HALOS tab



Step 3
tap on the following tab



Step 4
press the icon in the top right



Step 5
enter collection code **syp827g**
or username: **thereforeYSDN**
and collection name: **Afterword**

Done!

- try hovering over symbols on
- ● different pages to view AR content!

morning

6am — 11am

Early mornings are a brutal reality for us, commuting to campus on the TTC and/or the GO bus. We take advantage of the ride to nap or drink our coffee while chatting with friends. We arrive early enough that the sun is still rising and the campus is quiet, with other students sleepily making their way to their destination. Soon, the rush of students fill the air as classes start.



These years were and probably will be the most joyous moments I have experienced.

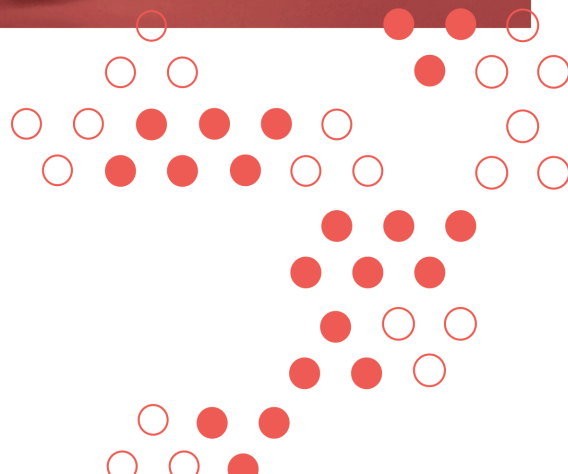
My YSDN journey felt as if it began last week. I was initially unsure what I would be doing straight out of high school, but I knew I wanted to do something different with a creative mindset. I made my applications to multiple design-related programs excluding York, and ended up being declined for my preferred options; not wanting to settle for less and following my ambition, I took the following year to brush up on digitizing my creativity. After a year of graduating from high school, I discovered the program's presentation, and I found the previous YSDN years' work phenomenal. I knew this environment was something special, and I wanted to be part of that. I put all my chips in and only sent one post-secondary application for the YSDN program.

Portfolio day was one of the most intimidating moments I had faced, seeing a room filled with talented people waiting for an assessment. Now I reflect on the restless accomplishing nights before an assignment deadline, from waking up at 6:00am for a 9:30am class at Sheridan (Trafalgar Campus) in my first year and sometimes fell asleep on the GO to sharing a few laughs on a productive evening in the TEL building. These years were and probably will be the most joyous moments I have experienced. I have met many great instructors and student designers and share a meaningful relationship with a few of them.

•• Trouvaille.



i'm at room J223 in Sheridan, listening to Mark Cheung give an encouraging talk at 10am.
i feel relieved, thankful, fulfilled
i hear "It's okay to not know what to do, you'll figure things out."
i see a blurred, teary-eyed sight of friends and i listening to Mark



				08

i'm at the front row of a Sheridan class, struggling not to laugh in a class of 8 people at 10am
 i feel my giggly face tensing up
 i hear a dead silent class and my prof lecturing
 i see friends running out of class to laugh, abandoning me



i'm in the DSA room, greeting Loris first thing in the morning at 7:40am
 i feel a little sleepy still
 i hear the sound of my music through my earbuds
 i see the sight of my work in-progress as Loris unpacks his stuff in his office
 i taste grande caramel macchiato, half sweet, and double shot of espresso



Brian Bingo!

It's actually real!

"Post modernism"	"We know it but we don't know we know it"	Starts speaking in different tones / voices	Apple reference	Critique of capitalism
Taylor Swift and / or Kanye (Can't say West)	I voted "no"	Neo liberalism / socialism reference	Mentions his facebook / grandchildren	"Percentage of college administrators"
"This is why the program is ending"	Finds out about this BINGO sheet	Questioning chairs (FREEBIE)	"Unpaid overtime"	Somebody mentions a refund
Round of applause for Brian	Trump reference	"Fuck"	Technical difficulties / complains about tech	"Don't think too hard about this" (in relation to essay)
"Fascist"	mOdErNITy	Existential crisis (up to you!)	"Lagging class notes"	You (or someone you know) receives a drawing of Brian over Airdrop



i'm in the J-Wing lecture hall, trying to hide my "Brian Bingo" card as i sit in first row at 10am
 i feel amused
 i hear roaring laughter from the class as someone yells, "BINGO!"
 i see Brian and Jamie standing at the front, visibly confused

i'm at the Sheridan Marquee, hearing about the end of the YSDN program, Thursday morning of October 12, 2017
 i feel like i should've gone to OCAD
 i hear an orchestra of curses
 i see panicking eyes
 i smell an overcrowded room



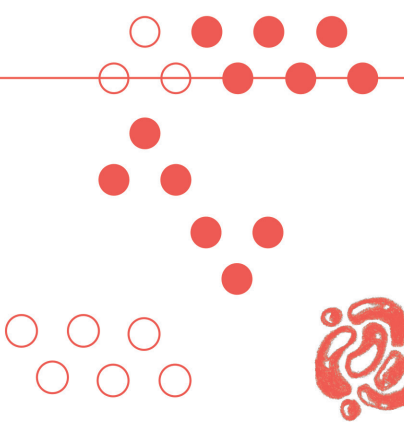
i'm at home on my computer, on YorkU REM trying to enroll in my 2nd year design courses at 8:01am
 i feel my heart beating and hands shaking
 i hear the sound of my mouse clicking rapidly, keyboard keys flying
 i see "ALL CLASSES FULL"
 i taste the bitter taste of defeat



i'm in the Blue Lab at York, sipping hot coffee, talking to friends before class starts at 8:29am
 i feel hella tired and serene
 i hear the *beep beep beep click* noise of someone trying to use their card to get in the room
 i see my wonderful friends and their baggy eyes

i'm in the Fab Lab, printing and binding a tabloid-size process book at 8am
 i feel wasteful since i'm submitting a PDF anyway
 i hear the printer hissing
 i see many failed prints
 i taste coffee





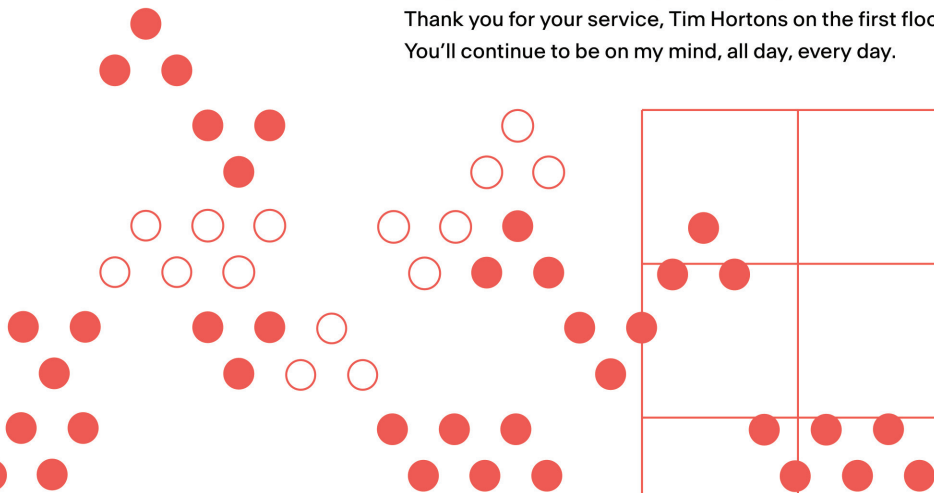
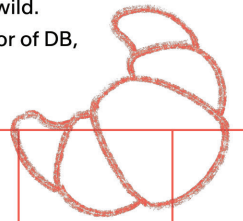
i'm passing the Starbucks, speed-walking at 8:45am
i feel tired but inspired
i hear the buzz and hum of morning chatter
i see sleepy people everywhere
i taste granola
i smell the delicious aroma of coffee and breakfast



i'm in the hallway through the film/theatre building, on the way to TEL,
running late to class at 8:35am
i feel stressed—and wishing i went to the gym more often
i see the line for Starbucks (contemplating if i can be 5 more minutes late)
i taste a nice caramel macchiato (yes, i stopped at Starbucks)
i smell coffee (and possibly sweat)



With dispirited mornings due to draining commutes,
I was always excited about a fresh new day in your presence.
Through the darkest nights and the longest days, I felt reassured;
The warmth of your embrace was more than of the essence.
My thoughts, with you, they spiralled; my anxiety always at a high,
you truly made me lose my mind.
I'm thankful for how you were always by my side while projects piled,
You grounded me while my world collapsed and went wild.
Thank you for your service, Tim Hortons on the first floor of DB,
You'll continue to be on my mind, all day, every day.



In the winter cold that lingers on YorkU's campus, there were special mornings that felt quite the opposite.

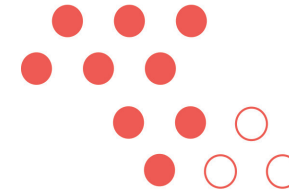
The tranquil warmth that surrounded me those mornings was possibly due to the fact that it was 7am—a time when students were seldom found on campus—or that my next class was five hours away. When this peace came to my realization, the poorly-insulated cup of coffee in my hands seemed to radiate heat more intensely. In the times before YSDN classes began, the peaceful atmosphere before the next onslaught of design deadlines, work, and presentations was something I truly appreciated. Walking into buildings, choosing what to eat for breakfast at Vari Hall's cafeteria, and watching Youtube melted the time away. All the while more students began to fill into the campus. By 10am, the campus settled down again as students drifted to classes.

The destination for the last two hours of peace was the Scott Library, where I quietly tapped away on my laptop, preparing research and process work to show for class. The earphones plugged into my phone helped dissolve the distracting pen clicks and footsteps around me, and sometimes I even forgot to take my jacket off. In this flow, I completely forgot my surroundings, the fact that my coffee went cold, or that class would start in 10 minutes. Only a sip of that cold coffee would wake my senses back into reality, and I would hastily pack up my belongings into my bag. Rushing outside towards the TEL building, the winter cold I'd forgotten hours ago caught up to me, filling my lungs with cold air. A chilling shock, but I'd remember that tomorrow I would be back here at 7am; another coffee cup in my hands, and the same warmth from before would come again.

The peaceful hours before winter class truly felt wonderful, and something I'll always look back upon.



i'm at Sheridan College getting off the GO Bus,
 it's so early the sun's barely out
i feel tired, sleepy, stressed
i hear the echo of my footsteps through the hall
 on the second floor of the J-Wing
i see secluded halls, walls covered with posters
 of student work but no students to be seen
i taste the earl grey tea latte that burns my lips



i'm on the GO Bus to York University,
 semiconscious sleeping at 6:30am
i feel blissful but also very tired
i hear the rumbles on the highway, the heater whirring
i see hundreds of other people commuting
i taste coffee
i smell dusty seats and carpet cleaner





Flashback to four years ago, I had secretly skipped class and commuted on public transit for the first time on my own. It's the YSDN portfolio review, and I'm sitting alone in the middle of a crowd of proud and anxious parents and my possible future peers.

I'm shaking a little bit with nerves and fiddling my fingers as I listen to someone else's mom assure their child in hushed tones. Although the words aren't meant for me, I feel a little better.

At the front of another room, an older gentleman calls for my name. It's my turn. While the review is all a blur of memories now, I remember my small and shaking hands holding a piece of paper at the end. I was offered an acceptance letter on the spot. Happy tears fell down my face as I rode the public transit for the second time on my own.

Forward four years later, and I've commuted on my own a thousand times over again. Those were probably my favourite moments; the quiet commutes, hot coffee in hand, earbuds on and the warm, "Good Morning," from Rich or Loris when I arrived at school.

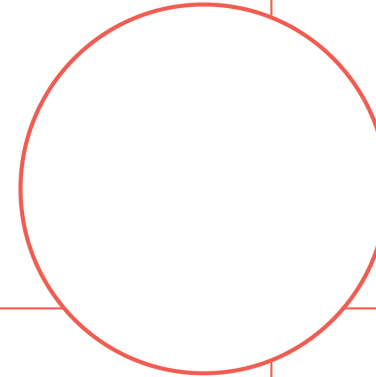
Now that I'm graduating, I can say that I've grown a little bit more mature, more confident in myself and my designs. I've found a group of chaotic and beautiful-minded people who are unique as individuals and provide unwavering and honest support.

Although I started this journey alone, I'm thankful to end this chapter with those I've been able to connect with along the way.

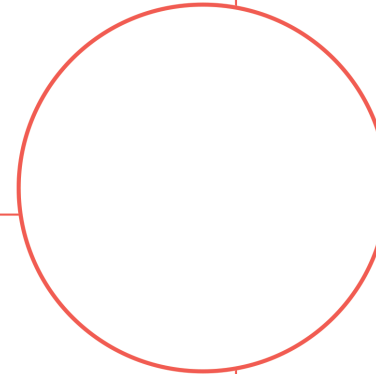


draw your mornings

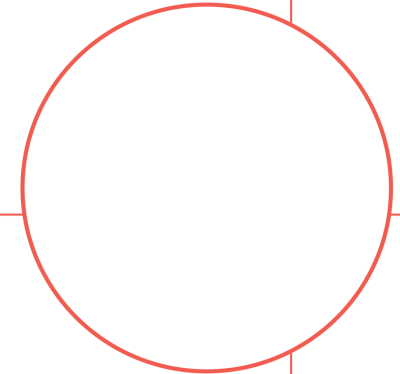
Decorate the next page with your favourite morning drink, first sight you see when you wake up, and your breakfast! Add anything else to truly make it your special morning.



your
breakfast



your favourite
morning drink



first sight when
waking up

afternoon

11am — 5pm

Afternoons are often the liveliest part of the day, whether it be in-class critiques, grabbing lunch, or having fun with friends during off days. Although this time of day is usually the reason for our daily exhaustion, it's when we feel the most inspired, interact with others the most, and create our favourite memories—only to do it all again the next day in a different way.





i'm halfway through the line at Tim Hortons,
 waiting to order potato wedges at 2:34pm
 i feel hungry, panicked, and restless
 i hear people chatting in line
 i see the potato wedges i crave
 i smell coffee

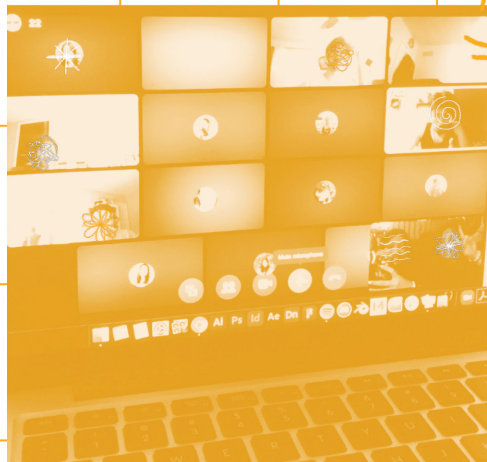
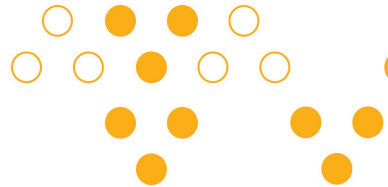


i'm at Earl Bales Park, lying on a picnic
 blanket during the YSDN Roast Session
 on a Sunday afternoon in June
 i feel happy
 i see a blue sky on a sunny day
 i taste hotdogs and chips
 i smell smoke from the barbecue

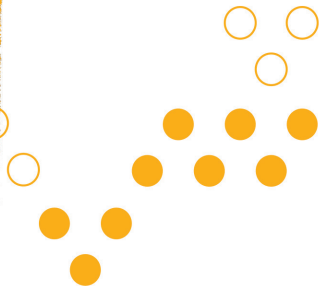
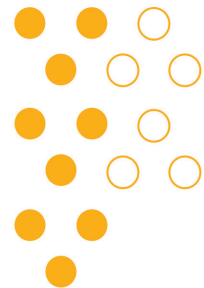


With this chapter finally coming to an end, I am happy to have learned, grown, and bonded with the most incredible cohort of designers.

YSDN started out with uncertainty for me. I was eager to pursue my passion for design, but also anxious at the thought of not having any familiar faces by my side. I remember my first GO Bus ride home from Sheridan, when I had connected with a classmate over the same taste in music. Little did I know I had met my closest friend that day, and was about to meet many more from a tight-knit community unlike any other. There were always other YSDN students hanging around in the design spaces, ready to support each other and get through our problems together. Whether we were panicking over a jammed printer, guillotining the largest prints I had ever seen in my life, or grinding away at our latest project, there was never really a dull moment. I tackled some of the biggest challenges in my career path, and took on even greater risks every passing year. With this chapter finally coming to an end, I am happy to have learned, grown, and bonded with the most incredible cohort of designers. YSDN brought limitless opportunities into my life, and I am so grateful to have spent my journey here.

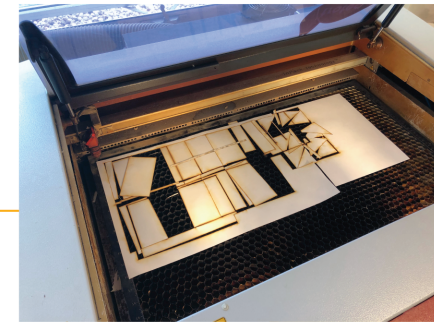


i'm on Zoom, in an Advanced Package Design critique at 1:30pm
 i feel anxious and nervous about presenting and hearing feedback
 i hear Albert saying, "Use your coconut."
 i see another student trying to show their project through their webcam





i'm in the Fab Lab, on my 6th round of laser cutting at 1pm
i feel anxious and frustrated with a hint of excitement
i hear the laser cutter mocking me
i see lots of paper
i smell paper and Tim's coffee



i'm in the DSA room, skipping class (again) during my class time
i hear a classmate say, "Nice, you're skipping too?"
i see my other classmates skipping
i taste freedom



i'm in DB, taking the elevator after class at 4:30pm
i feel exhausted, starved, and drained
i hear the beeps when clicking floor level 1
i see the doors opening
i taste coffee from earlier that day
i smell Smoke's poutine coming from the TEL cafe



i'm in Ross Building, on working on an FA/1900 Moodle assignment sometime in the afternoon
i feel determined to finish this assignment
i hear peaceful ambience of students walking by
i see my laptop, and a blur of people in my periphery
i taste the familiar taste of a homemade lunch



It's interesting how much our perspectives can change over such little time. During my first two years, I felt socially anxious and didn't have many opportunities to experience everything that this program has to offer. I was a commuter who often had evening to late-night dance rehearsals, so I always wanted to go home as soon as classes ended. Upperclassmen outside of YSDN would tell me that things will eventually fall into place and to not worry, but I didn't believe it would happen to me.



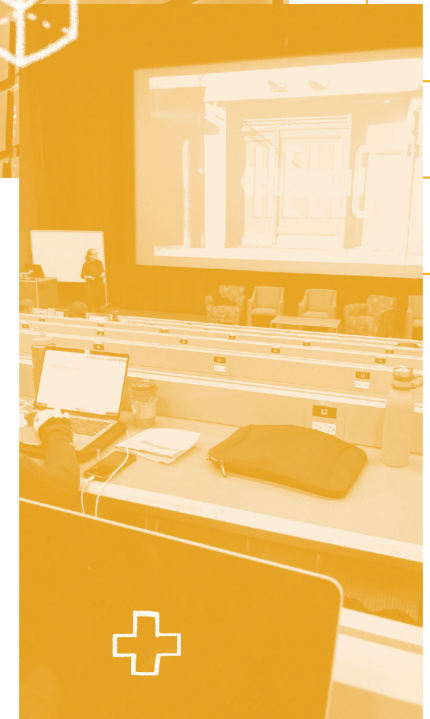
But then it did. I met people who would become some of my closest friends and grew to be more comfortable around my peers. I realized that everyone is just like me, trying their best to cruise along in their stressful schedules. I started making unforgettable memories of my friends and I laughing hysterically in class, or making the spontaneous decision to order a pizza together. I felt so understood being surrounded by other designers in general.

I now look back at my years at YSDN with so much affection knowing how much it has done for me. It allowed me to connect with amazing and talented people and was a catalyst for personal growth. The people—especially the wonderful instructors—taught me to be more confident in myself. Although the student journey is almost at its close, I am forever grateful for what YSDN has given me and am more excited than ever to see what comes next.



i'm at Sheridan, in S235, sharing snacks during Research in Design on a Tuesday afternoon
i feel extremely tired but happy
i hear Renée lecturing about research methods
i see the person sitting in front of me playing Tetris on their MacBook
i taste sweet & sour clementines

i'm at Gong Cha, getting to know my mentee during the afternoon
i feel excited and happy
i hear laughter and questions
i see students waiting in line for drinks
i taste Oreo milk foam earl grey tea



i'm in the Sheridan Lab, waiting for the new professor at 1:30pm
i feel nervous and excited
i hear conversations, and the door opening and closing
i see light peering through big open windows
i taste coffee





madlibs

Fill in the blank with random nouns/adjectives/verbs to make a funny and unique story about your YSDN experience!

It's 1pm. I arrive at _____ (York or Sheridan)

and see my prof, _____ (prof name).

We talk about my _____ (course name) project,

while they sip a _____ (type of hot drink).

I decide to visit _____ (coffee shop)

to get myself a _____ (food).

I _____ (action) to the

coffee shop, and quickly order my food. Oh sh*t, now I'm late to class.

I _____ (action) to class.

I hear a _____ (sound) as my access card lets me in.

I see my _____ (adjective) friend, _____ (name).

I sit next to them, feeling super _____ (emotion).

My prof, _____ (other prof name), says "Nice of you to join us.

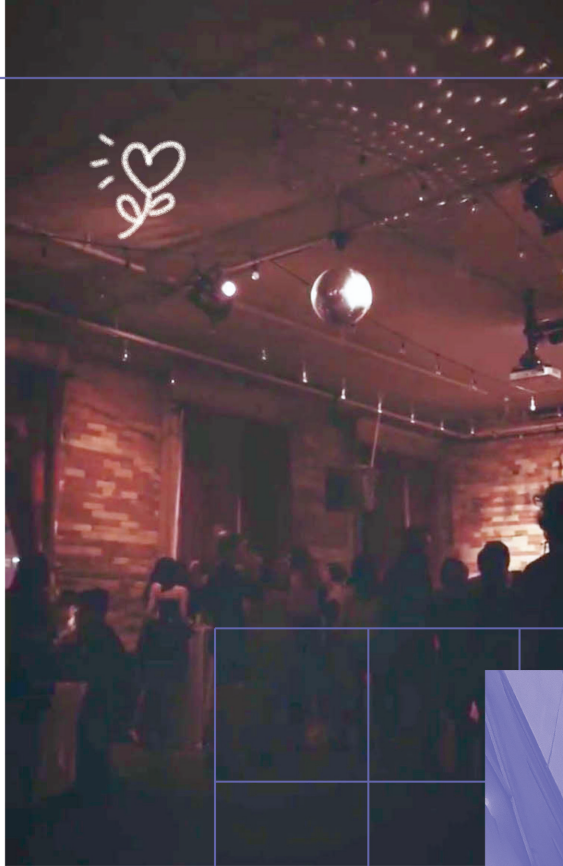
Today we're talking about _____ (random topic)."

evening

5pm — 10pm

We spend evenings in the Fab Lab (repeatedly printing our projects) and commuting back home, feeling exhausted yet inspired. Some eat dinner and some work right through it. Regardless, we're all hungry. Evenings are usually spent alone, but we continue to look back on experiences shared with friends: flipping through old pictures and reflecting on the good vibes we continue to cherish.





i'm at The Gladstone Hotel,
 dancing with friends at the YSDN
 Winter Formal at 9pm
 i feel elated, but my feet hurt
 i hear 'DONTTRUSTME' by 3OH3!
 blasting from the speakers
 i see the disco ball reflecting
 lights onto the walls
 i taste cheese, crackers, and a
 shot of vodka

If I'm speaking honestly, I've always felt as though I've missed out on some things in my four years at YSDN, as I tend to keep to myself a lot of the time and I've probably printed at the FabLab less than 10 times. Or at least I thought that I missed out. Talking with friends about shared experiences and looking back on photos that I have of events, places, projects, and friends made me realize that I didn't miss out on as much as I thought I did.

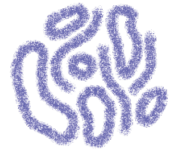
Most times I've brushed moments off, as I view them as normal experiences that I had gone through and that I should always be looking forward to the future. Over the long year of 2020 into 2021, I've come to realize how important those experiences were in shaping who I am now. I really loved this program and this chapter in my life, and I will miss it. Now I know that the experiences and relationships that I have made during my time in YSDN will last much longer than those four years. Thank you YSDN :)

i'm in my room, closing down my
 laptop after class on Zoom at 9pm
 i feel drained, yet relieved
 i hear my parents yelling at me to
 come down for dinner in Cantonese
 i see my laptop screen shrinking into
 a line of white as it's closed
 i taste a thirst-quenching sip of water
 i smell a very light, but noticeable,
 scent of oyster sauce



i'm at Free Space in Toronto, attending
 the YSDN 2019 Grad Show at 10pm
 i feel excited, inspired, and motivated
 i hear overlapping conversations nearby
 and people calling their friends from
 across the room
 i see beautiful packaging projects
 i taste the aftertaste of dumplings
 from earlier that evening
 i smell cold air from the open window





Throughout high school, the number of 'creative beings' were very limited making it easy to stand out, but also easy to work alone. When I was working on projects, I would sink into my own little world, tuning everyone out with no one to talk to.

I stuck with this mentality at the beginning of university: it was all I knew. My lonely work ethic continued and I eventually felt myself drowning in my own thoughts. "Is this even good?" "F*ck, why didn't I think of that?" When you work by yourself, there's no one to support you or share your experiences with.

Then, I realized I'd go insane if I did four years of this alone. I started pushing myself to unplug one earbud during work periods, do work in the DSA room, and MAKE FRIENDS. That shift was the best decision I have ever made, for my mental sanity and the quality of my design work. I grew more confident knowing I wasn't alone. My tuition payment could never cover the cost of having friends and peers to be by your side through the ups and downs. That sense of camaraderie is what kept me pushing through the all-nighters, soul-crushing crits, and this god-forsaken pandemic.

THANK YOU EVERYONE, YOU (ARE MY) ROCK!

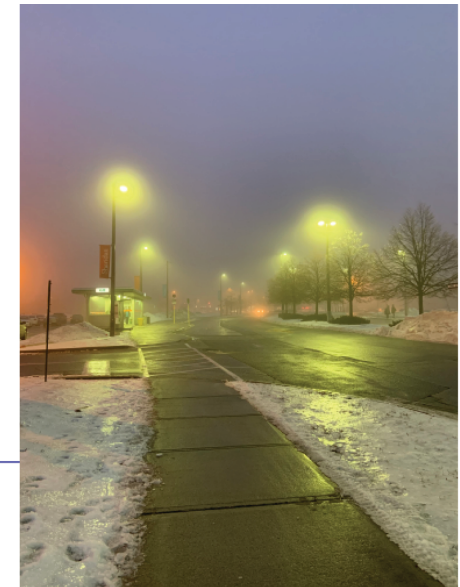


i'm in the pathway between Sheridan and Marlborough Crt., walking home from class with Kevin King at 6pm
i feel inspired, excited, and the crisp spring air on my cheeks
i hear wind blowing
i see the wooden carved Sheridan 'S'

i'm at Bramalea GO, suddenly being woken up by the bus driver—I was the last passenger—at 9:30pm
i feel a sudden jolt of warmth from the GO Bus heater
i hear the hum of the engine
i see the bright fluorescent lights of the bus



i'm in the Sheridan Lecture Hall, submitting my final project for the semester at 5pm
i feel burnt-out, relaxed, and happy
i hear light footsteps in the distance
i see a near-empty room
i smell the old blue carpet





i'm in the Fab Lab, scrambling to print my poster **at 8pm**
 i **feel** rushed, but comforted by the collective stress in the room
 i **hear** the printer jamming and students chatting away
 i **see** last minute changes on my laptop and students lining up to print
 i **taste** regret and the Pita Pit i just devoured
 i **smell** wet ink



i'm at York University Subway Station, sprinting to film
 my friends for a design project **at nighttime**
 i **feel** exhilarated, hysterical, desperate, and cold
 i **hear** the subway whooshing as it arrives
 i **see** my friends inside the subway, smiling with anticipation
 i **smell** underground air and brake dust



i'm on Highway 401 West, carpooling from Sheridan to York **at 6pm**
 i **feel** the most tired i've ever felt in my life, but full of adrenaline
 i **hear** my friends' tired voices while we talk about life and sing
 along to 'Just The Way You Are' by Bruno Mars
 i **taste** iced coffee (to keep me awake while driving)



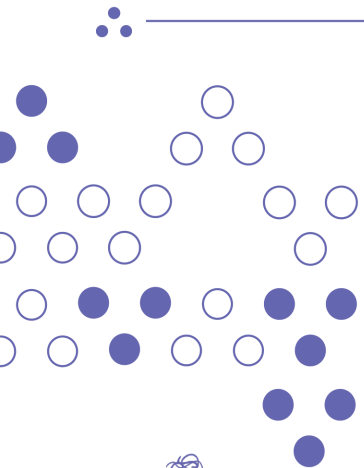
i'm in the DSA room, learning TikTok dances **at 6pm**
 i **feel** funny and happy
 i **hear** 'Don't Start Now' by Dua Lipa and laughter
 i **see** TikTok tutorials and friends filming us



i'm in the Blue Lab, working **at 7-9pm**
 i **feel** tired and stressed
 i **hear** MacBook keyboards designing away
 i **see** no work actually getting done

i'm in the Red Lab, playing Scattergories and
 exchanging Secret Santa gifts **at 7:34pm**
 i **feel** gratitude, joy, and amusement
 i **hear** chattering and music playing
 i **see** friends sitting around the table
 i **taste** various potluck treats





Dear ,

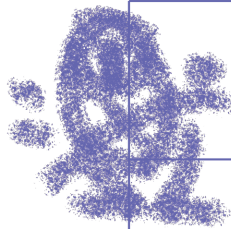
Sorry I haven't written in so long. My mind has been busy. I know you can relate, because I remember you to be the same. This letter will never make it to you, but the words here are as true as the ones I'd speak to you.

I'm writing the seemingly longest chapter of my life thus far. I've noticed the early parts and what's written now have no consistency. It's as if a stranger dissatisfied about the direction of my life broke into my home, picked up the pen, and wrote about their own joys and pains instead.

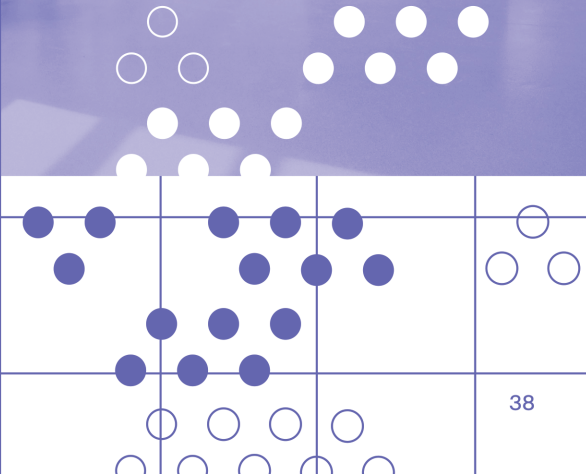
Change is a funny thing. What do you think about change? You never really talked about it. You lived your days as if you had the luxury of staying the same person forever. I think you took yourself for granted. Like how people don't pause when they look at the sun because they naively think the same vibrant colours will be there the next day.

Milan Kundera once wrote, "In the sunset of dissolution, everything is illuminated by the aura of nostalgia." Is that why I don't feel any sentimental longing or affection for you? Maybe it's this feeling of wanting to go home but already being home that has warped how I perceive time all year, but this doesn't seem like an end.

I'm running out of words. But know that you'll be okay. I think you'd be proud of your future self. I'm doing pretty well.



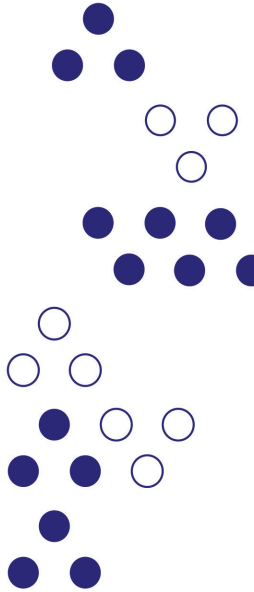
I miss having weekly lectures at Sheridan and then seeing the memes in the group chat. I miss spending time in between classes eating lunch with friends. I miss eating lunch in the lab and hiding it from the prof when we had no break in between studio classes. I miss looking at student work hanging on the walls. I miss the food on campus and finding a place to sit in the crowded eating areas. I miss the tables and displays that clubs and recruiters would set up in the halls with free stickers and stuff. I miss the Osmow's mascot. I miss seeing the graduating class decorate the halls with the branding for the grad show. I miss the YSDN stickers, and being in the Fab Lab when they got printed. I would say that I miss the good vibes in our program, but they're not gone. There's such positive energy shared among YSDN students and not even a pandemic can take that away.



late night

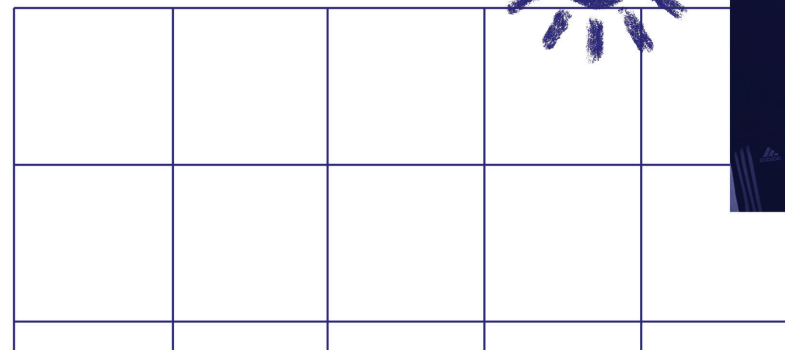
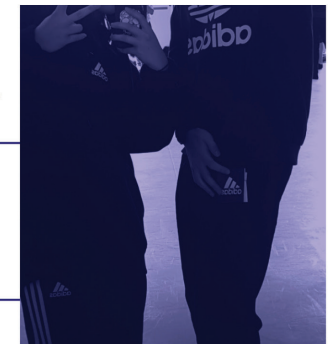
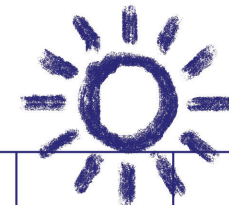
10pm — 6am

While others are fast asleep, most YSDN night owls rise and work throughout the night. We stay up late putting together the last minute touches on our final projects and process books due early the next morning. With tired bags under our eyes and an endless supply of coffee, we work until the sun rises, signalling another all-nighter completed and the start of a new day.



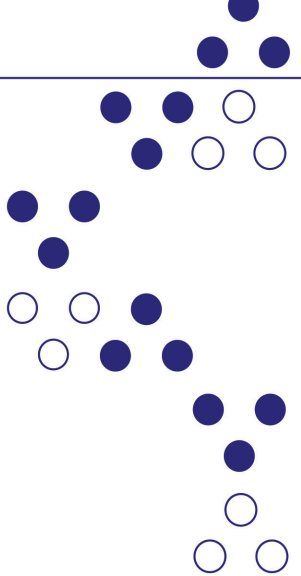
As a shy girl from a small city, being a part of YSDN has exceeded all expectations I had before joining the program. I am thankful to have met so many talented individuals and become friends with some truly amazing, caring people. With the program being smaller than usual, there was so much value in being able to have great conversations with my professors and have a great support system from them and other classmates.

It's hard to pick out one favourite moment from YSDN, but pre-class chats on the GO Bus, sitting with friends in the Red Lab and seeing my professors' pets during online classes are for sure on the list. Although I have gone through many challenges throughout university, I'm proud of myself for the growth I have made in all aspects of my life and I'm so grateful to have learned so much. I'm definitely going to miss all of these moments and experiences from my 4 years in the program.



I'm definitely going to miss all of these moments and experiences from my 4 years in the program.





i'm on the 46 GO Bus back to Sheridan, sitting & looking out the window after a long day of work and rehearsals at 11pm
 i feel sleepy, exhausted, drained, and ready to crawl into bed
 i hear someone talking obnoxiously loud on a phone call
 i see the headlights of cars on the 407
 i taste my leftover Thai Express
 i smell sweat and cold air

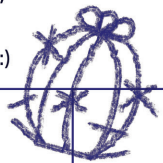


In the shadow of night, hours before dawn,
 Huddled we sit, to the screen we're drawn,
 We've got coffee, some memes, random snacks,
 There's no better fuel, you know that's facts.

Back to business, Workshop deadline is looming,
 Fake that process work? It's time consuming,
 4 years of practice, you've got this,
 Strikes, breakdowns, some other crisis.

Mentally, yeah, we've been strained,
 And physically sometimes drained,
 Yet somehow, meme ready we still appear,
 Skilled in giving friends much needed cheer.

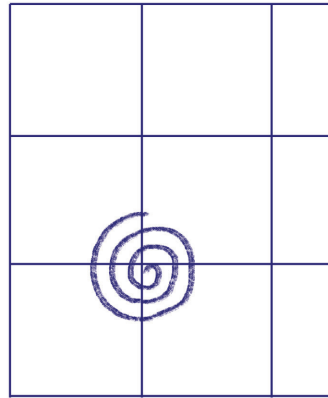
Therefore, how to define this goodbye,
 I'm wondering how to even try,
 Ughhhhh, this parts sucks,
 Hope y'all earn a billion bucks :)



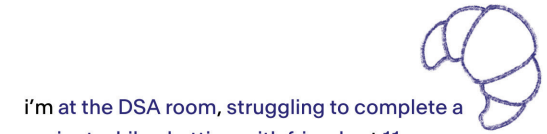
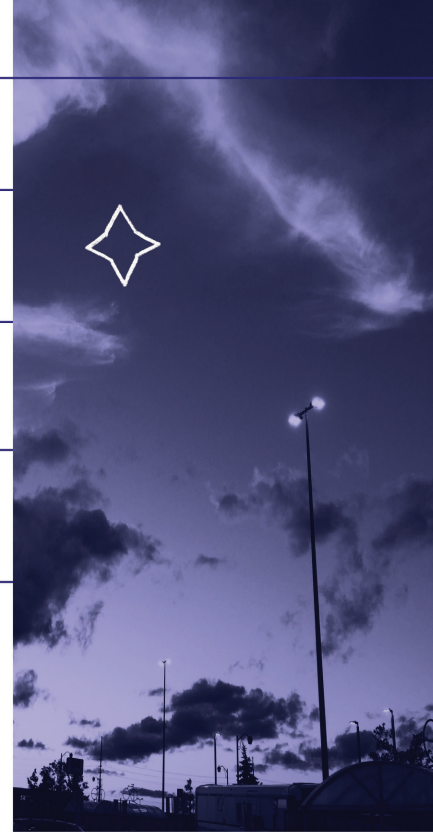
i'm at the Sheridan Trafalgar campus, deciding to stay in the labs overnight since i missed the last GO Bus home at 10:32pm and have morning classes anyway.
 i feel defeated, tired, and a sense of bittersweet bliss as
 i'm finally able to rest
 i hear the whirr of the fluorescent lights in J218
 i see the empty lab, with the lights dimmed
 i taste my leftover ice capp from the Tim Horton's in B-Wing
 i smell coffee and donuts in the trash



i'm at York's Vari Hall, drinking a Monster energy drink while doing a design contest with a partner at 3:24am
 i feel tired and quenched from the energy drink
 i hear the slow hum of ventilators and my partner talking next to me
 i see our prototyped application half complete on Adobe XD
 i taste an energy drink that's way too sweet and loaded with lemon-lime flavouring
 i smell the metallic smell of the drink's tin can



i'm in the Fab Lab, half-asleep, using the computer to print black and white sheets of posters at 11pm
 i feel desperate to finish and anxious not to miss the last GO Bus home
 i hear multiple printer sheets printing, small talk from the few people still in the lab, cutting cardboard and using the guillotine to make cards
 i see flashes of black and white paper quickly coming out of the printer
 i smell fresh printed paper, a familiar smell of ink that seems to indicate a lot was used



i'm at the DSA room, struggling to complete a project while chatting with friends at 11pm
 i feel drained and regretful
 i hear the slow transition of loud chatter to silence
 i taste the bitter dark roast that is no longer fresh
 i smell the paper and my Tim's coffee

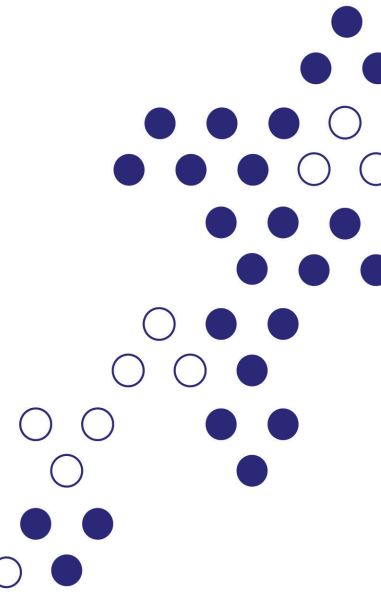
i'm at the TEL building, leaving a lab after working on some projects at 11:50pm
 i feel calm, balanced, and exhausted
 i hear the acoustics of the YSDN floor
 i see nightfall in the window and subtle lights in the main hall
 i taste the vending machine candy and vitamin water



i'm sitting on the floor at home, trying to keep my eyes open while working on my packaging project with 'That's So Raven' playing on the TV at 2am
 i feel exhausted, serene, and my back aching
 i hear, "Ya nasty," from the show
 i see laser cut taskboard and tacky glue through my dry eyes
 i taste Goldfish crackers



i'm in my room, finishing my portfolio website at 3am
 i feel tired and stressed
 i hear the sound of my keyboard typing away
 i see my laptop and case studies still in need of editing
 i smell my sweet coffee



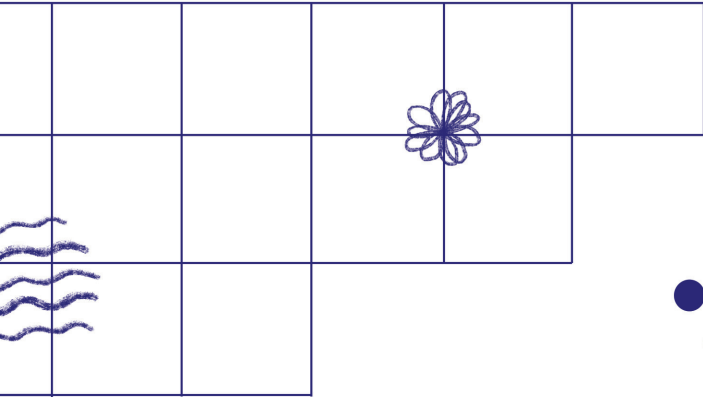
i'm at my desk, pulling an all-nighter at 4am
 i feel pain
 i hear sweet silence
 i see my laptop at 100% brightness
 i taste cold coffee
 i smell the crisp scent of an overheating battery



i'm at home, watching classmates type all over my Figma board at 3:42am
 i feel amused, entertained, grateful, fond, and sleepy
 i hear the loud whirring of my computer fan
 i see supportive messages in large capital letters telling me to go sleep
 i taste the sweetness of my late night snack
 i smell my computer overheating



i'm in my room, pulling an all-nighter to finish a project at 5am
 i feel exhausted, numb, and stressed
 i hear lofi hip hop beats to relax to
 i see jam-packed Illustrator art boards
 i taste the aftertaste of coffee
 i smell the fresh morning air from an open window

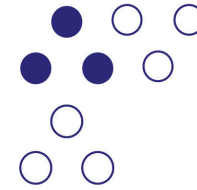


Going into YSDN, I was fresh out of high school, nervous about the world, and lacking confidence in myself. Four years have passed and I will soon be fresh out of university, still a bit nervous about the world, but more confident in myself; thanks to my journey in this program and the support from people I've met within it.

Don't get me wrong, I'm still figuring things out, but I can confidently say YSDN has pushed me to evolve as both a designer and person. From the perseverance it took to pull multiple all-nighters, to the help from friends getting me through it every time; from the hard work needed to make the design look 'perfect,' to developing the hindsight that 'perfect' is unattainable—I've grown to appreciate the dedication it takes because it has prepared us for this final year, the time to depart and continue on our own journeys.

As cheesy as it sounds, I've learned that through the heavy emphasis of process in YSDN in these four years, the biggest process is the growth we experience and the connections we make. I'm constantly inspired by the people I've met in this program and I'm lucky to have met some of my closest friends here. YSDN was a struggle at times, but it felt a bit easier knowing that we were all going through it together.

My experience in YSDN shaped me to be a more confident, curious, and risk-taking designer and person, and I will be forever grateful for all the people that helped get me to where I am today.

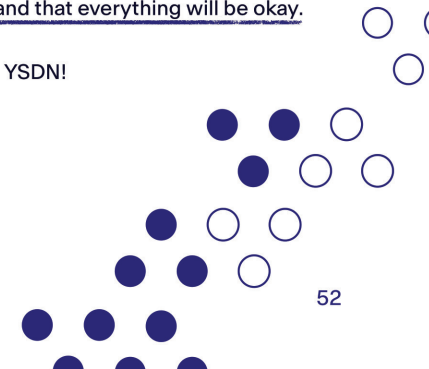


I remember the night of August 31st, 2017—it was the night before my big solo move to Toronto, and I was excited but terrified. I was leaving my home, my family, and my friends to move to a city that was 5 hours away from the place that I had lived my entire life... all to attend YSDN. As I lay in bed, trying to fall asleep but being too anxious to do so, I debated whether or not this was actually a good idea.

Fast forward to the night that I am writing this, which is a little over 3.5 years after that night. As I sit here and reflect on my rollercoaster of a journey, I can assure that I have absolutely no regrets in coming here. I am now happy to call Toronto my home, have had my fair share of interesting new experiences, and have created some unforgettable memories with people whom I consider my second family—and none of this would have happened without YSDN.

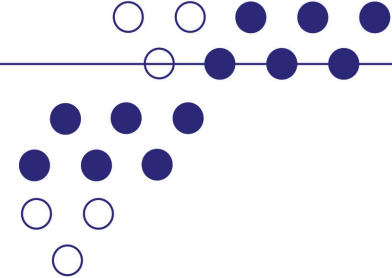
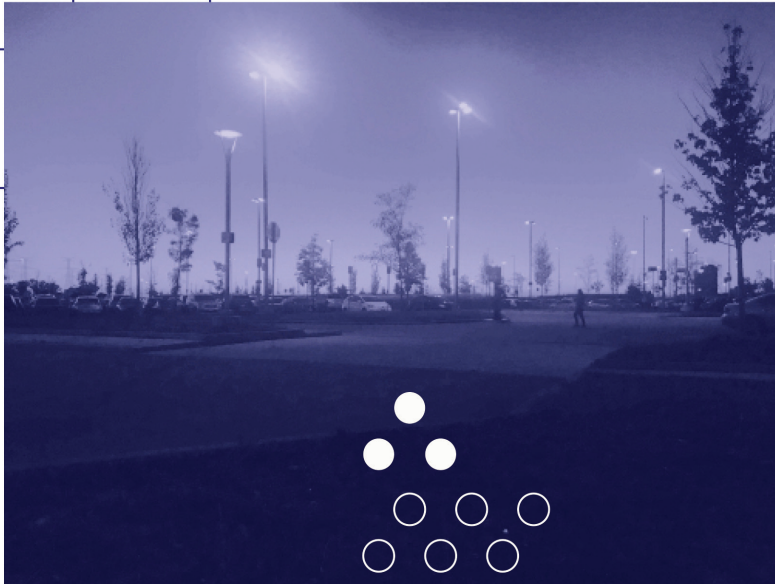
I feel like I have come full circle—as graduation fast approaches, I find myself excited yet terrified for what will come next. But having experienced this before, I now know to trust the process and that everything will be okay.

So thank you YSDN!



all-nighter essentials

All-nighters were inevitable during YSDN, whether we liked it or not. Fill out the blanks with what you absolutely needed to stay awake while working on your project(s).

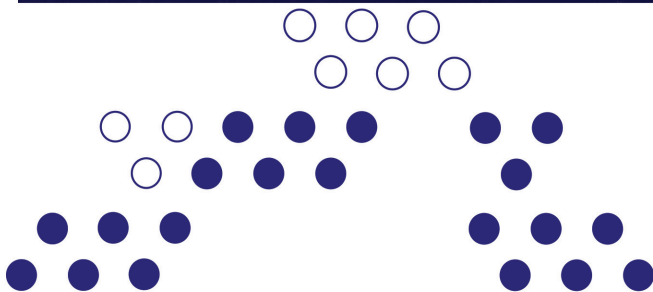


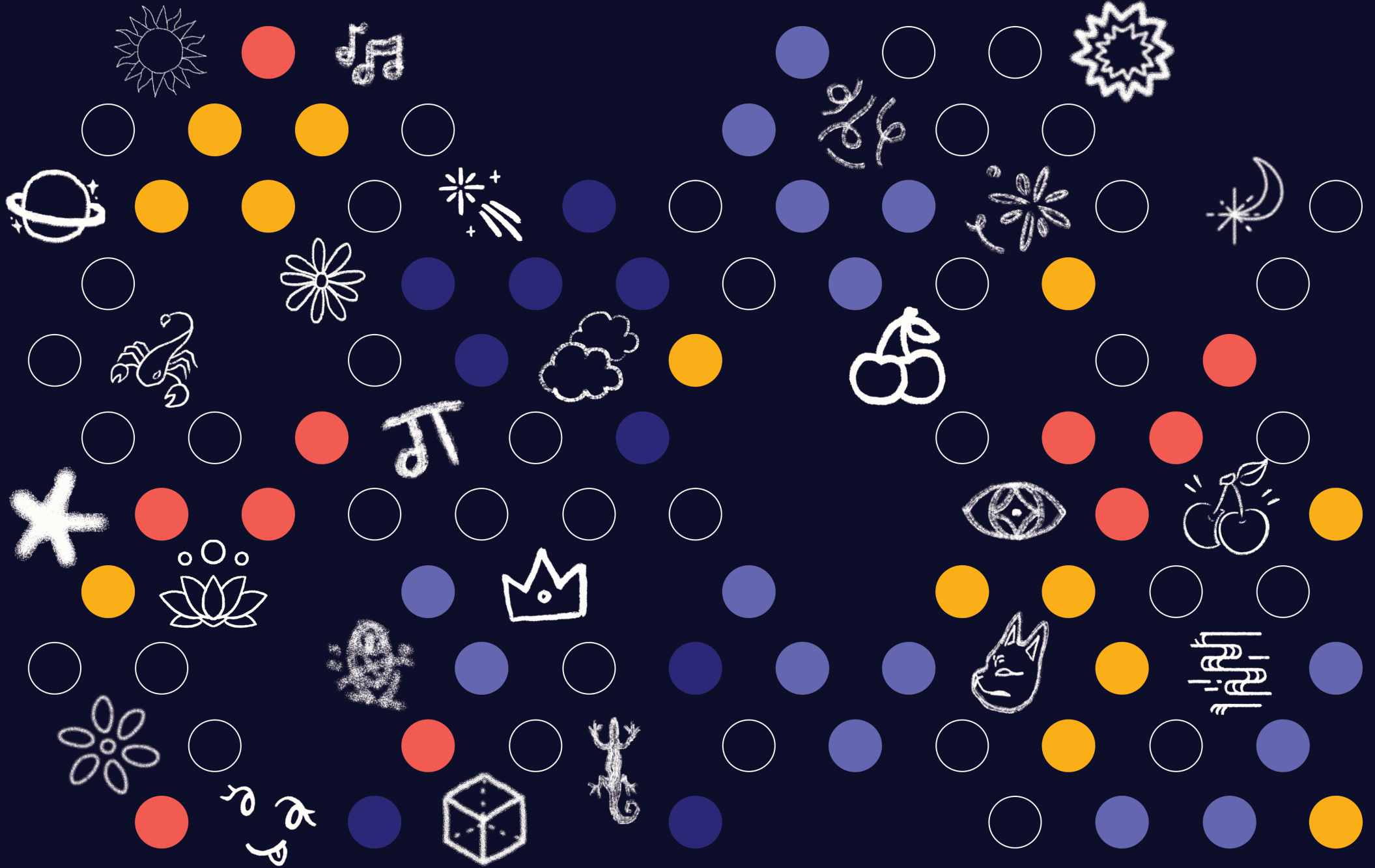
song or playlist

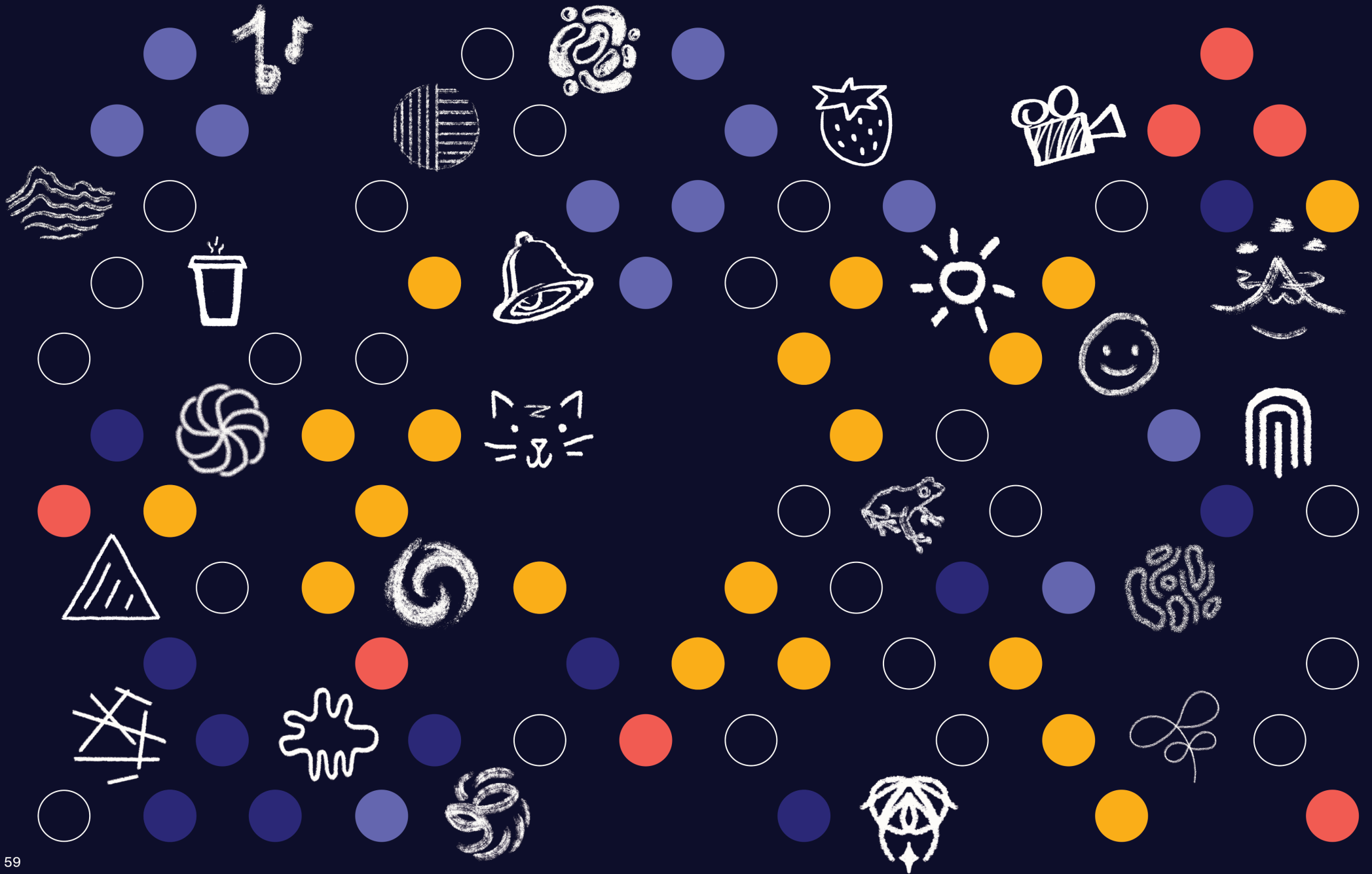
drink(s)

solo or with friends?

snack(s)











credits

Special thanks to everyone who submitted written & visual content!

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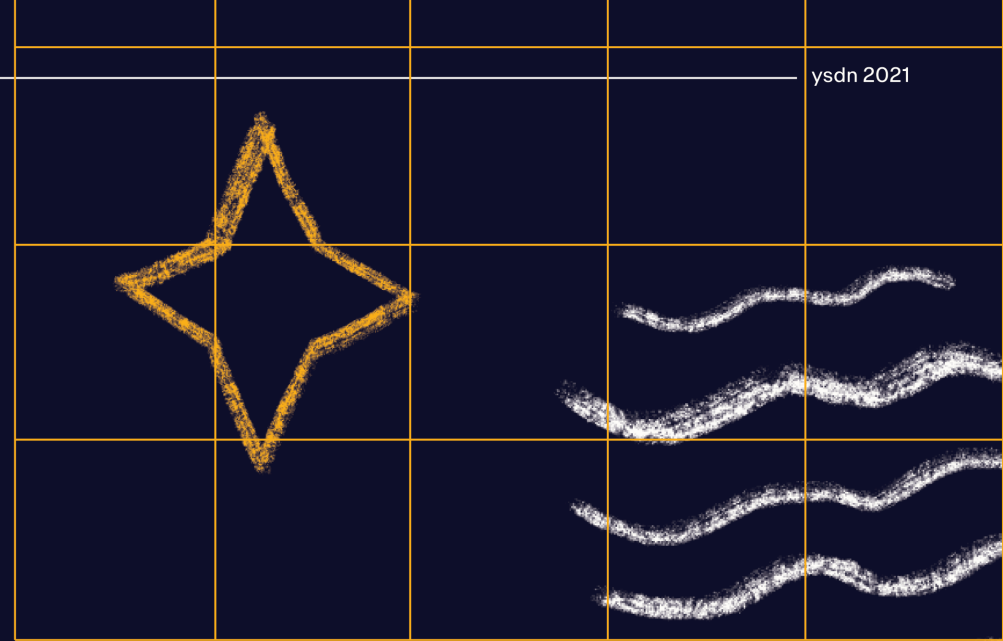
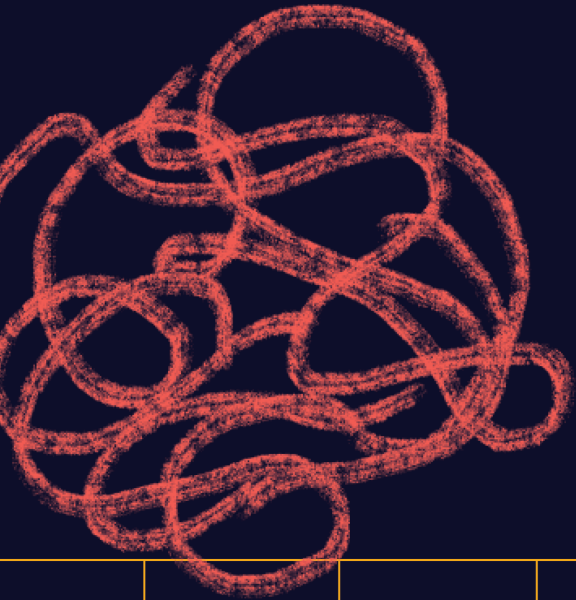
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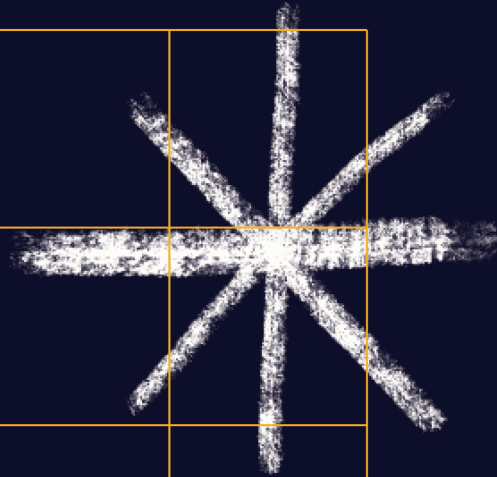
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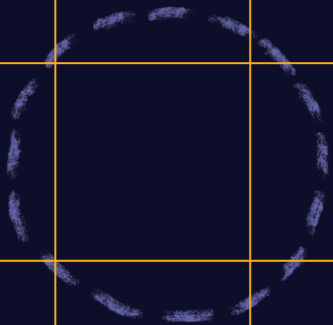
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individuality



connection



journey

the things we thought, felt,
and will always share in our
YSDN 2021 Family.

