

Isolation.

5-08

Mentored by Ms. Grace Ong

Group Members:

Yeo Ian (4P126)

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Zheng Jia (4O231)

About

One in three millennials feel lonely or depressed. We want to raise self-awareness about isolation and depression, encouraging people going through it to speak up.

Our work comprises sightings and compositions a viewer might never have seen, but feel that it's familiar. A familiarity with the emotion and the atmosphere of the image conveys moments of isolation and loneliness. Hopefully, the viewer is able to recognize if they are in need of assistance, and find friends, find a home, and talk to someone they trust.

Choice Of Medium

We have decided on the medium of digital and analog photography, as this accurately portrays scenes people may observe in real life, making it relatable to the viewer.

Project focus

Aside from the reasons in the first page, we strongly believe this theme is relatable to students like us with a busy schedule, having little time for interaction. Furthermore COVID-19 causes people being at home alone.

Product

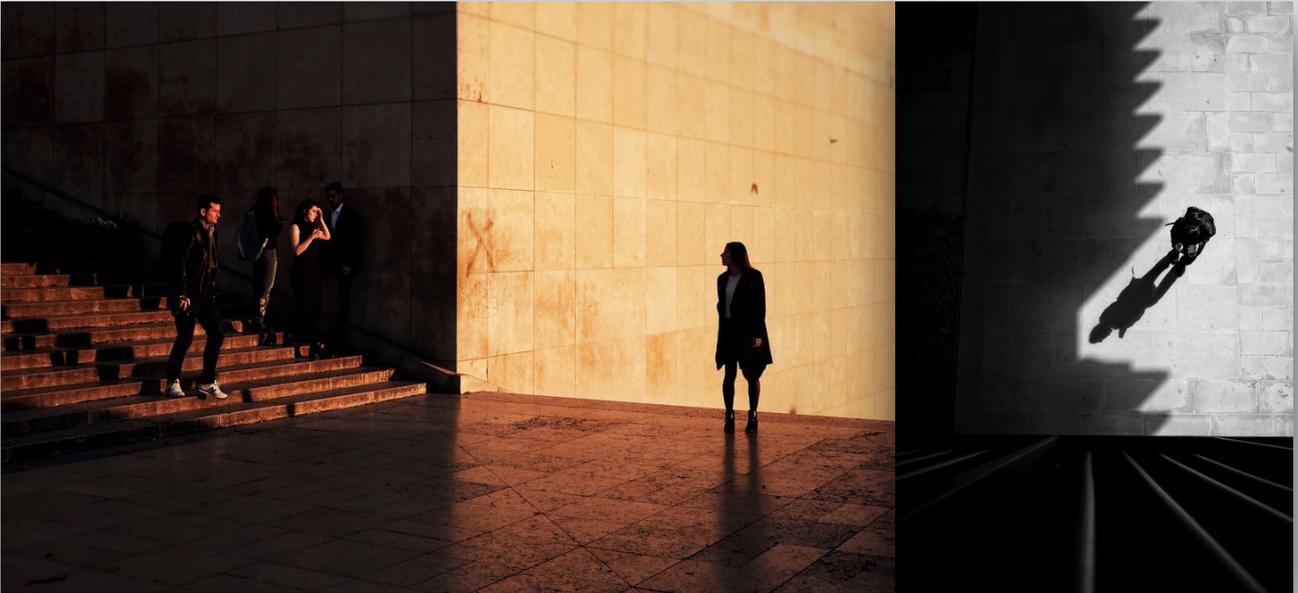
We made a photo journal that empathizes with the viewer's isolation before ending on a hopeful message, allowing viewers to see hope.

Artist Inspiration

- Sean Tucker
- Nan Goldin
- Simon Åslund

Sean Tucker.

Sean Tucker often creates a sense of timelessness and stillness in his photography. He captures moments of people's lives while forming shapes with lights and shadows. Looking at his work, the viewer often feels that reality slows around them.



Although his images do not often have an intentional message in them, they evoke emotion.



Sean Tucker captures moments in peoples' actions.

Nan Goldin.

Nan Goldin does not capture the shots most would call "perfect shots". People usually seek sharp focus, clarity, visually appealing compositions etc. Nan Goldin often goes against the flow, capturing images that evoke strong emotions of tension and conflict, often causing the viewer to feel her work.



The image is out of focus and the mirror is dirty. There is a sense of familiarity as we always take mirrors that might be a little dirty to be clean, until we see this image, causing the viewer to feel uneasy. The glare from the person in the mirror also creates a sense of tension and unrest, as if the person in the image is trying to say something to the viewer. A standard focal length (between 35mm and 50mm, this will be elaborated on later) is used, creating a sense of familiarity.

People love symmetrical images and visual balance. Goldin goes against that logic. The subject is squeezed into a mirror in the top-left

corner, causing the viewer to feel that the left side requires more attention than the right side, causing tension.



Simon Åslund.

Åslund's work aims to convey peace, sadness and isolation.



The use of negative space, small subjects, and cold colors says it all.



There is also a lack of clarity in the images, creating a "dreamy" effect.

Artistic Techniques

As a photography project, artistic technique was our most important criterion for selecting photographs. These techniques were learnt from many sources like books, teachers, websites, and online videos.



Negative Space.

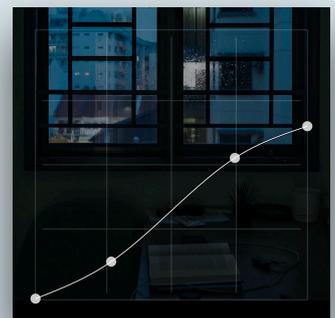
Negative space shows insignificance in the subject, which seems small and insignificant, compared to its surroundings, allowing the viewer to ponder.

Cold Colors.

Cold colours (like blue), achieved by toggling the white balance in post-processing, connoting a peaceful sadness.

Fade.

Fade can give a sense of being trapped, achieved by changing the "tone curve", darkening the bright parts of the image.





Abstraction.

Most forms of abstraction in photography involves taking pictures of textures and shapes. However, abstraction can come in the form of chiaroscuro as well. Chiaroscuro means

that a large part of the image is completely black. This creates a feeling of being shrouded in darkness.



Visual Imbalance.

Symmetry and visual balance connote peace and stability. However, when one side of the image requires more attention than the

other side, a visual imbalance is created, giving rise to tension and uneasiness.



Motion Blur.

The “perfect” photographs which gives us positive vibes often use a shutter speed as fast as possible, which means the camera records information for a long time. However, we don’t always use that, and occasionally have a shot with a slower shutter speed, recording the image for one second. This creates a smeared effect which gives gives a sense of tension.

Natural Focal Length.

In technical terms, the lens focal length is between 35mm and 50mm. This means that the lens captures and image not too zoomed in or out, just right to portray the field of view our brains pay attention to. This gives the image a sense of familiarity to the viewer, making it more relatable.

Difficulties Faced

COVID-19.

We were not able to carry out many shots we had originally planned to shoot outdoors in places like national parks and the central business districts.

Communication.

Difficulty convincing people to change their mindsets about isolation, because mindsets are inherently difficult to change - people may not want to voice out their grievances for fear that society may ostracize them.

Selection of Photographs.

By the time we were nearing the end of the project, we had more than 70 photographs to choose from. However, only the best few were selected to enter the final product.

Criteria

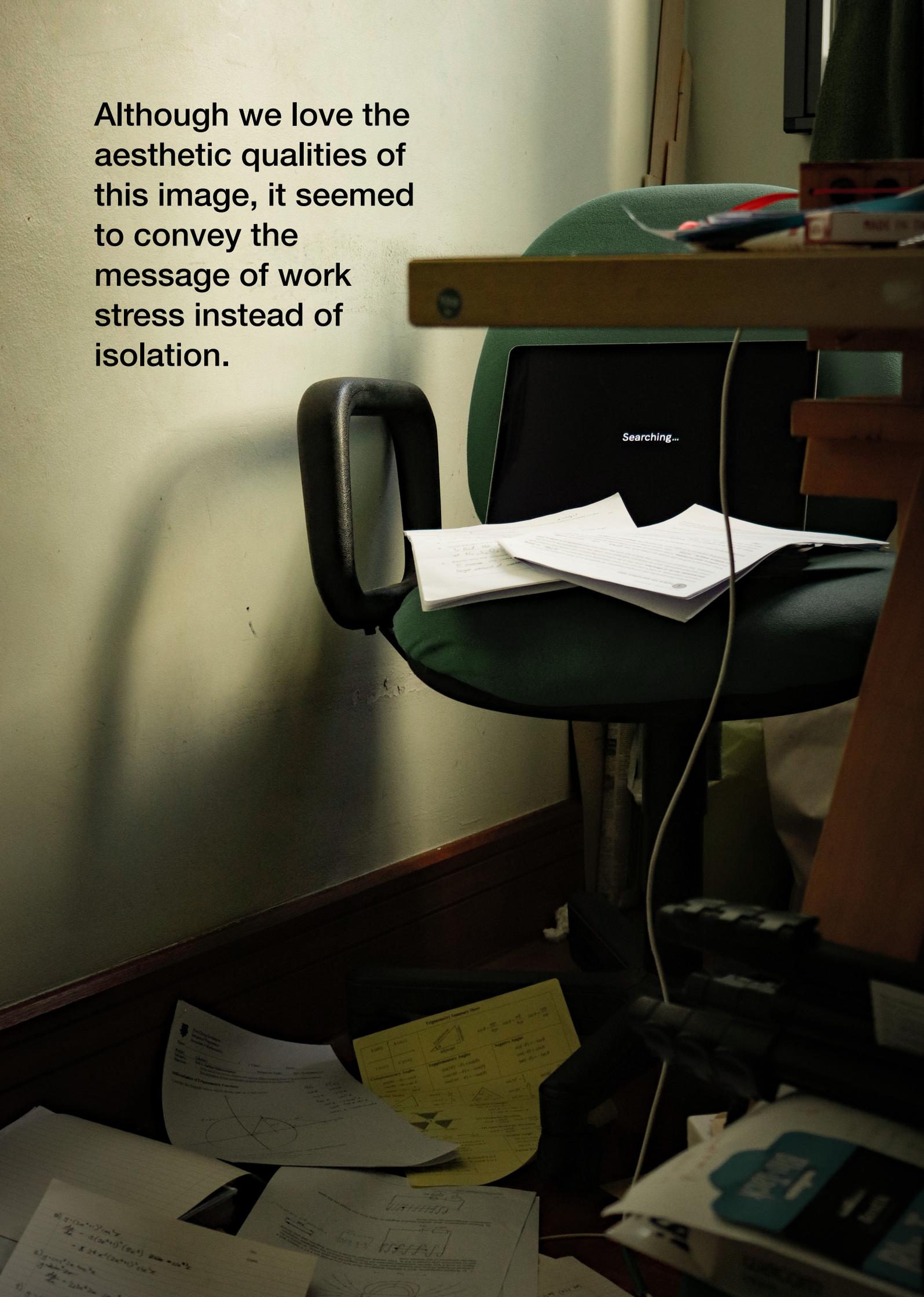
- Aesthetically appropriate.
 - Motion blur and out-of-focus-ness was only to be used intentionally.
- Evokes the mood we want.
 - Sadness, peace and isolation.
- Is able to fit the story of our photo journal.



Concept inaccurate.

For example, this experimental shot did not accurately convey the message we want, and felt quite meaningless.-

Although we love the aesthetic qualities of this image, it seemed to convey the message of work stress instead of isolation.

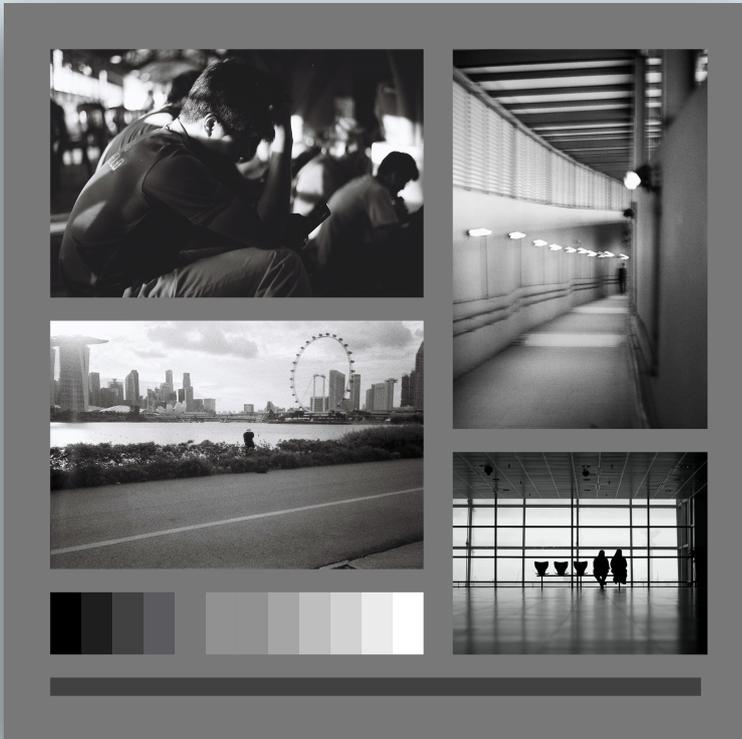


Here, although deep blue, there was not enough green tint, and would look weird if it did, making it unable to convey isolation.



Sometimes, we realized we did not take images with the right techniques, Here, a slow shutter speed for smooth water would have been better.





More experimentation included moodboards.

However, we felt it did not add enough meaning to our final product, hence we excluded them.



Final Product

We created 2 photo journals with the website builder Adobe Spark.

<https://spark.adobe.com/page/8FXSjhLvWd9Sh/>



Isolation can trap us in our own worlds. We know the light from outside, but can't feel it.



Small details are noticed, even the tiniest flaws.



What we have in our own worlds starts to become a little dark, often too dark for us to handle **alone**.



Life can seem bleak.



Some of us realize, we need the outside world, and we cannot survive isolated.



The unfamiliar outside world can often be seen as dangerous, scary and sometimes even more isolated.



But **you're not alone** in this journey.



Once we get out, it might not look much brighter initially.



It might feel pointless.



After a while, the light and warmth will become obvious.



We see more...



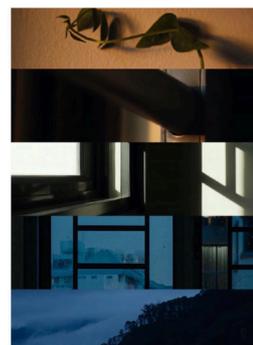
...and a once blurry path starts to show itself.



The new light will give us hope.



A world with seemingly new mechanics is seen.

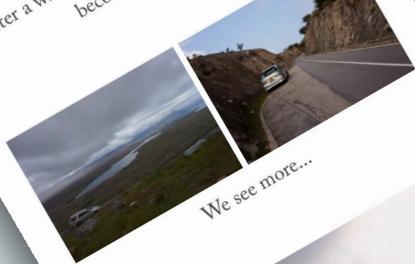


Time.

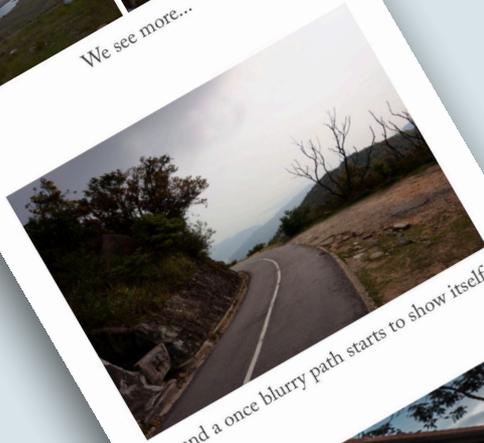
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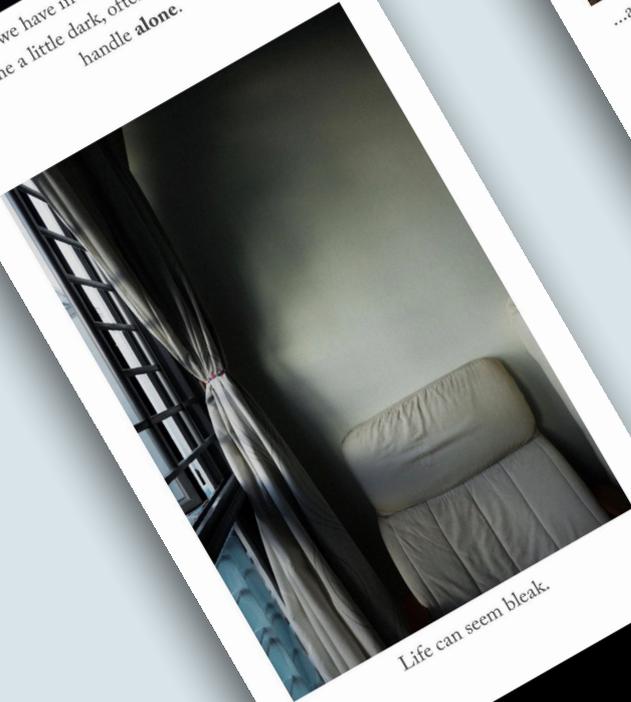
We see more...



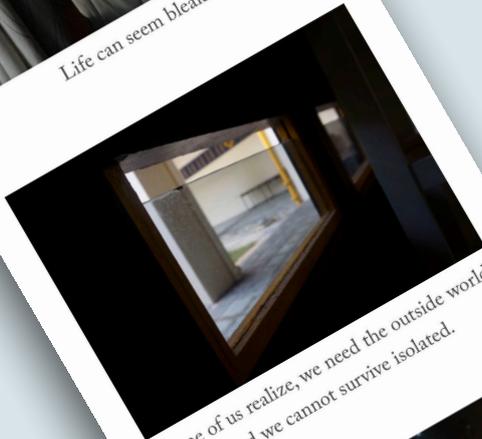
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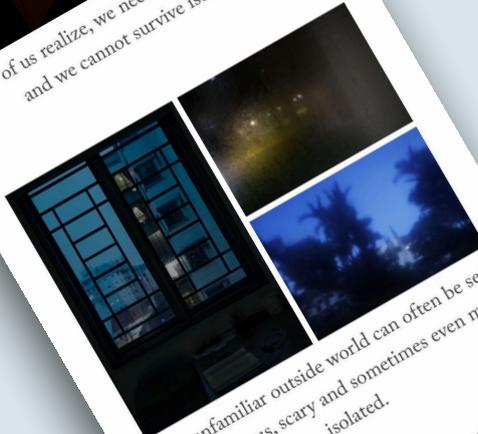
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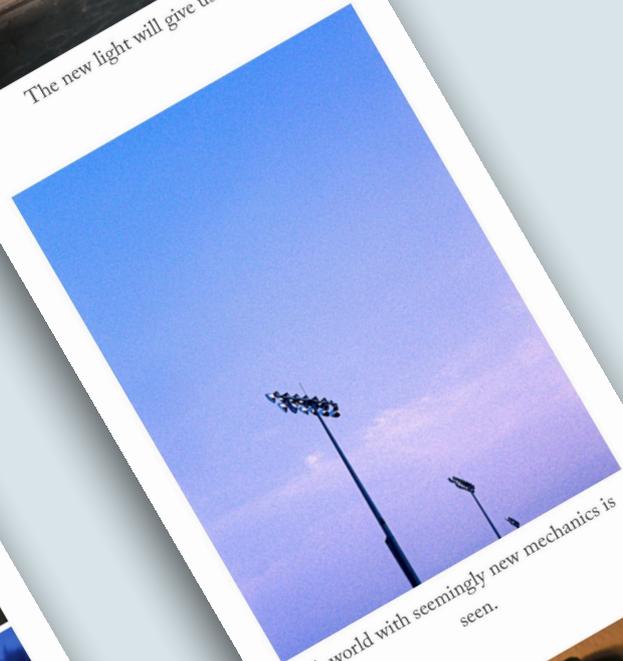
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as dangerous, scary and sometimes even more
isolated.



A world with seemingly new mechanics is
seen.



...is journey.

The storylines
follow the
sequence of
finding
oneself in
isolation,

then
finding
hope in
life, and
changing
perspectives,
battling
isolation and
loneliness.

Social Isolation.

No man is an island, an expression people have used thousands of times.



Social isolation is in various parts of humanity, especially with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Together, they capture most aspects of peoples' and society's relationship with Isolation.

There is information to seek help at the bottom of the website as well.

The two photo journals are named Social Isolation and and Deep Thought. Deep Thought aims to capture moments where people would pause and contemplate life, meanwhile Social Isolation aims to portray peoples' lack of contact and interaction, resulting in feeling lonely.



Social isolation, however, does not need to be felt alone.



It infiltrates our societies, even the most busy and crowded cities.



Reflections

Yeo Ian

Although I've had a great interest in photography for a long time, I have never really done a photography project until this year. This was an eye opening experience as there were many things in a project that I had not previously known from taking individual still photographs.

COVID-19 allowed me to think outside the box in my home. Working with others on photography really changed my perspective on the art.

Ee Zed

Personally, this project was something I have always wanted to do, to be able to use my love of photography to convey meaningful messages and present stories using photos as a medium. There are certainly challenges faced in this project as being stuck at home for long periods of time can really make you feel less creative. As a group, we overcame this by taking some shots from past archives that fit our theme as well as shooting at home and in school. This was a journey filled with challenges and definitely a unique experience.

Zheng Jia

This project, while challenging due to the numerous difficulties we faced, has allowed me to think out of the box. For example, thinking about how everyday objects can be repurposed to serve as props, which somewhat increased the number of shots we could get out of a single location many of us have spent for a majority of our lives - home.

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