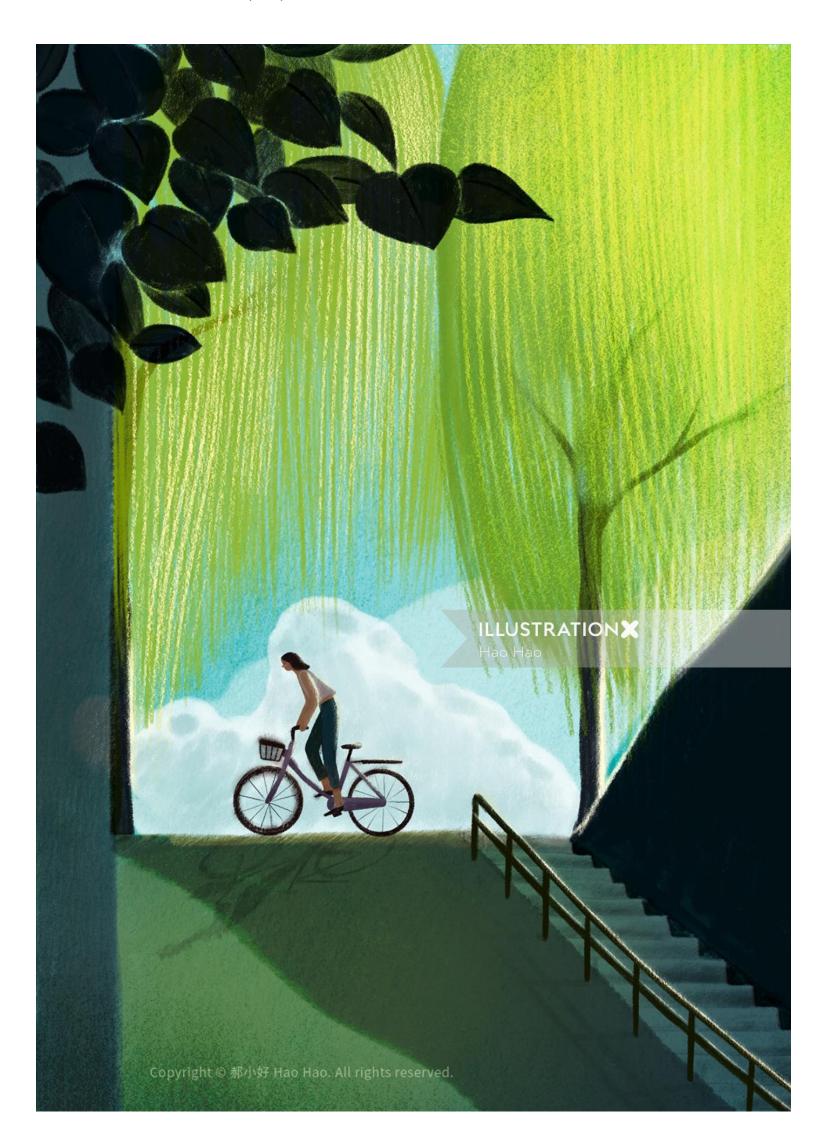
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Not Just a 'Guy Problem'

The truth about porn and how it affects you

BY JESSIE MINASSIAN / ILLUSTRATIONS BY HAO HAO

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The first time Shea was introduced to pornography, she was too young to know what it was. Looking for tips to beat her favorite video game, she clicked the wrong link. At first, she was disgusted by what she saw. Then a natural, yet misguided, curiosity kept her clicking—for years.

Bethany adored her longtime boyfriend. When he suggested they watch a video to "spice up" their relationship, she reasoned they were going to get married someday, so what could it hurt? Eventually they broke up, but she couldn't stop watching porn.

Lia felt like an outsider at school. When she stumbled onto a fantasy fan fiction group, she thought she had finally found her people. She dove headlong into every book and group they recommended. But soon the books and accompanying art became explicit.

With more than half of kids being exposed to porn by age 13, you might even have your own story. If you are one of those kids, you may feel troubled, guilty or confused, or you may have difficulty staying away from pornography use. Or perhaps you want to know how to avoid the battle of looking at porn



altogether and become a trusted friend to someone who might be struggling. >

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Ditch the scale. That number doesn't tell you anything about how strong you are, how fast you run or how great you feel when you climb a flight of stairs.



Listen to your body. It will tell you when it needs to be nourished and when it doesn't need more food.



Stop labeling foods as good and bad. You might crave hot, stringy pizza one day and a crisp, green salad the next. Indulging once in a while is perfectly acceptable.

your next meal, ask yourself: • What will give me the most energy? • Will this make me feel bloated or lethargic? • Which snack will

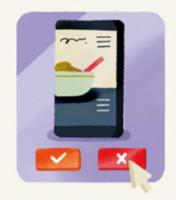
Eat foods that work with your body. When you feel hungry, or you're planning

Which shack will fill the gap if I'm going to eat soon?
Will this fill me enough to make it through my workout?

If You Struggle With Body Image

BY SHARI TALBOT / ILLUSTRATIONS BY HAD HAD STRAT

What if you resolved to break up with the diet culture? Instead of stressing about your body size, read these tips to get you started:



Limit your exposure. by diet discourse, avoid the magazine rack and stop clicking on diet posts in social media feeds.



Embrace body positivity. Make a list of the great things your body does for you and then practice thanking God for it. Guard against negative self-talk, and celebrate the things you like about yourself.



Build healthy friendships. Spend time with friends who are comfortable in their own skin. Encourage each other instead of focusing on flaws or exchanging diet tips. It's OK to tell people you're not comfortable with negative comments.

Being healthy is more important than being a certain body shape, so commit to taking care of the unique body God gave you. If you struggle with food and body image, reach out to your family doctor, a counselor or dietitian. She will work with you and your family to help you better appreciate and respect your body. *§*

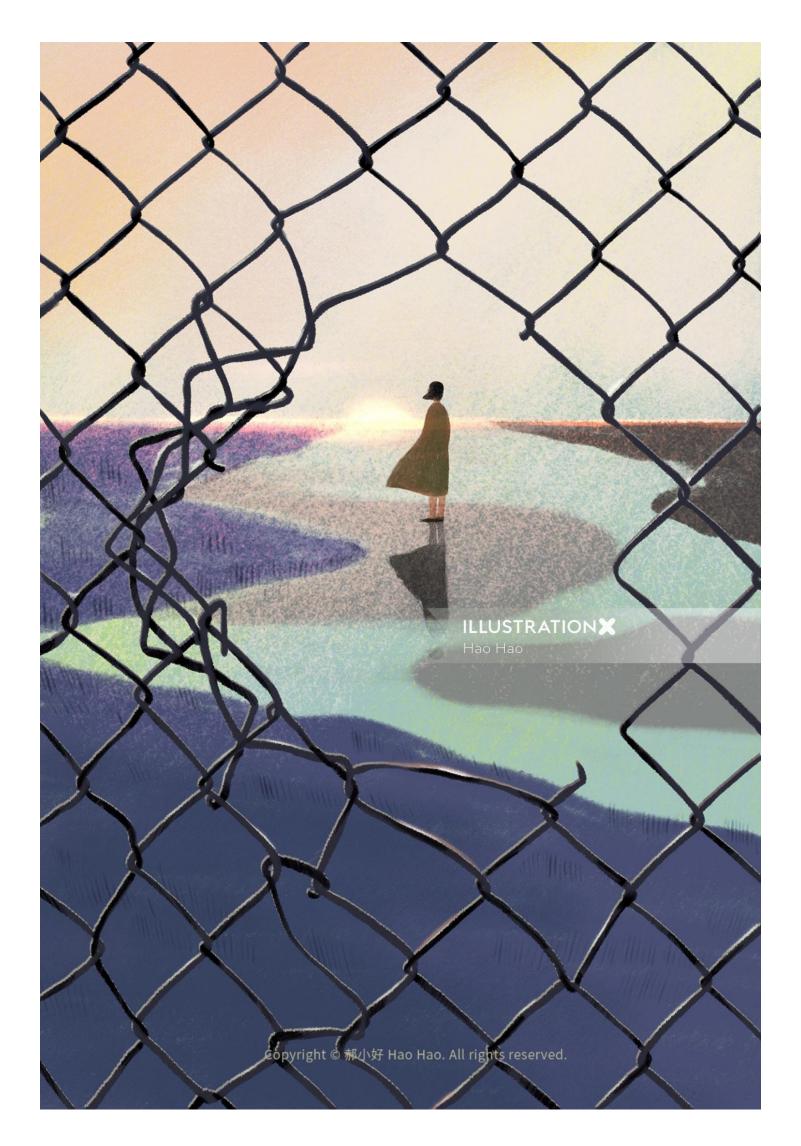
Shari Talbot is a freelance writer in Ontario, Canada. When not focusing with her husband on small businesses, she enjoys music, the outdoors and traveling with her family. This article first appeared within "Breaking Up With Diet Culture" in the December 2020 issue of Brio magazine.

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Establishing your anchor

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Establishing your anchor The posule Peter tells us, "You are a chosen race, a royal priest, hood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you darkness into his marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9). Did you catch that? As Christians, we are a people for Gods "won possession". Translation: You belong to the King of the numberse. You can anchor your identity in Jesus when you're telling alone. When you hold on to the truth that you are loved, seen and caref for as a child of the King you can begin taking "every the words? I don't belong make you can begin taking "every the words? I don't belong make you feel alone, consider why you might be experiencing these feelings and remind yoursel. Every take a look at how you can do this: Better the truth instead of believing this lean al tering it multiply. Let's take a look at how you can do this: Better the second of the s



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Reset: When your thoughts start to spiral, try breaking the cycle by physically doing something else. Go for a walk, journal, work on a craft or shift your attention to what's happening around you.

Remember: Open your Bible and fill your mind with the truth of God's Word. Compile a list of verses that help anchor you in Him when you feel disconnected.



Superficial relationships and valuable friendships. But you may need to be brave enough to take the first step. Here are some ways you can do that:

Superficial relationships Once you've anchored your sense of belonging to Jesus, it's easier to look at your relationships. I remem-ber being shocked when I read that most people have the capacity for only five close friends. That's it-five. This means not everyone in my friend group or on social media is my "close" friend. I'm not going to field eeply connected to every sin-gle person I hang out with . . . and that's OK. Donsider your five closest

that's OK. Consider your five closest friends—the people whose shoulders you can cry on and who you would call when your life is falling apart. My if yo fire also in ready to close that suggestift and give up because you can't think of anyone—but is it, with your think of a few people who you admire or would like to become closer friends with. There are ways to change with. There are ways to change surface-level relationships into deep



about their lives. Being curious, asking good questions and listening carefully will help you learn more about another person. Practice vulnerability: Sometimes you may need to go first. If you want a friend to be open and honest with you, you may need to share your story first. She may soon follow your lead. Have patience: It takes time to develop rela-

Have patience: it takes time to develop real-tionships, so don't give up. A bib prot of a re and a vie hat h dot to the address and a super-line a group. You can't expect to have that kind of 'ntimacy, vulnerability and closeness. It probably sin't realistic without the time component." Find others with similar interests and values:

Find others with similar interests and values: Consider joing a youth group, a community ser-vice group, an after-school club, a sports team, a choir or another group that interests you. Finding people with similar interests and values will help you connect even faster.

Ask good questions: Most people like to share

As you consider the One you ultimately belong As you consider the One you ultimately being to and how you can connect with others, let me leave you with a simple reminder: You are beauti-ful, you are worthy and you are enough—because your worth rests in the Savior who created you. You are fesus' friend (John 15:15), and you belong to Him. \sharp

Laura Pottkotter is the managing editor for Brio magazine. She is also a writer who enjoys growing flowers and exploring the sights in Colorado with her husband.



Ask Your Friends Before asking your friends,

That will help you better understand how others might answer so you can continue the conversation.

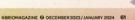
I REMEMBER WHEN YOU TOLD ME ABOUT ______ HOW DID THAT GO? HOW ARE YOU DOING WITH THAT?

HOW CAN I ENCOURAGE YOU DURING THIS TIME?

WHAT WAS THE BEST PART OF YOUR DAY? WHAT WAS THE WORST PART?

WHAT DID YOU LOVE ABOUT YOUTH GROUP LAST NIGHT?

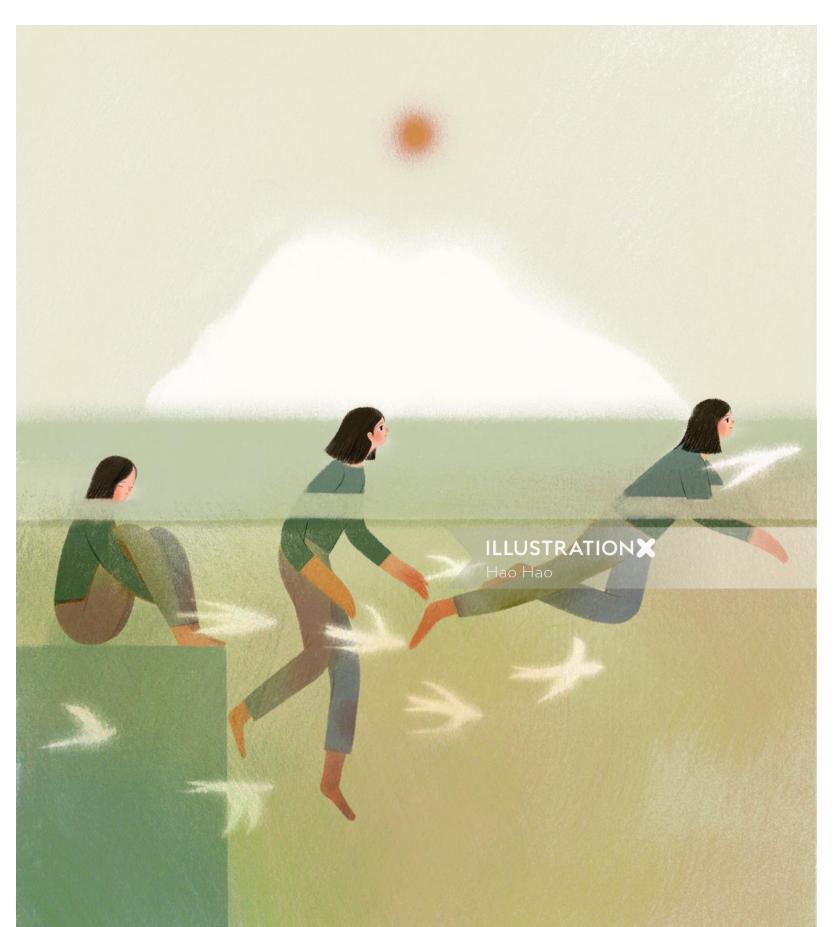
IT SEEMS LIKE SOMETHING IS WRONG, WHAT HAPPENED? WHAT DO YOU NEED?



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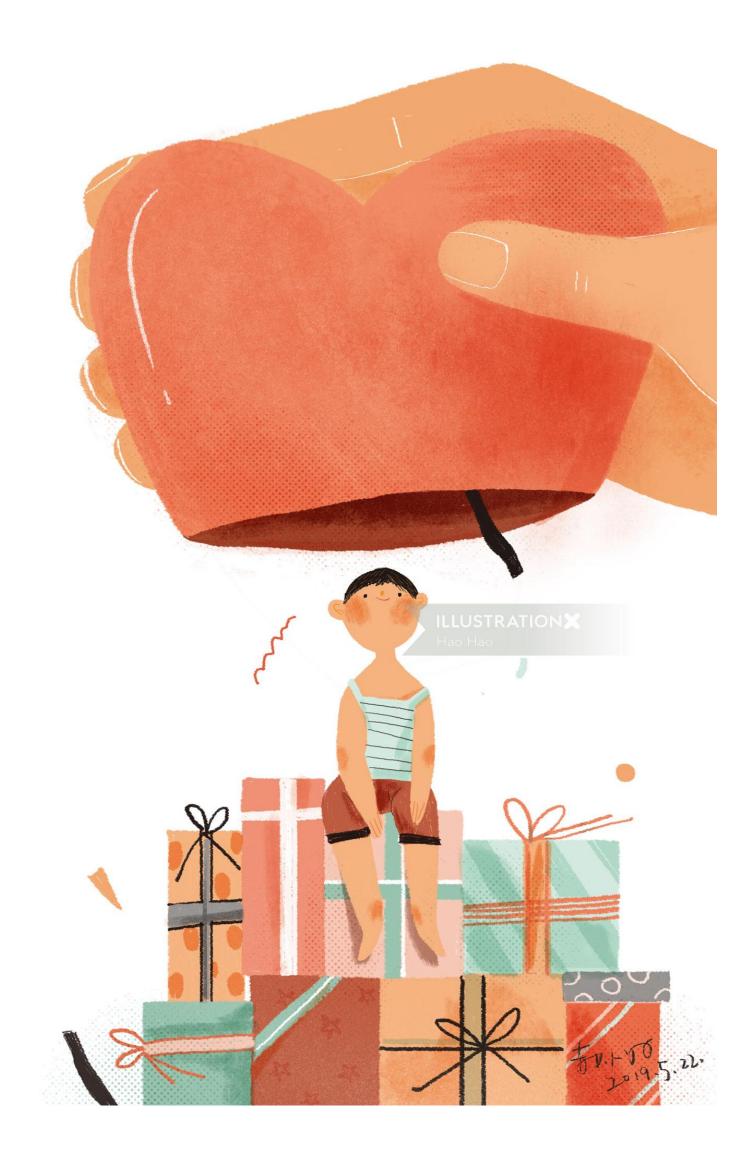


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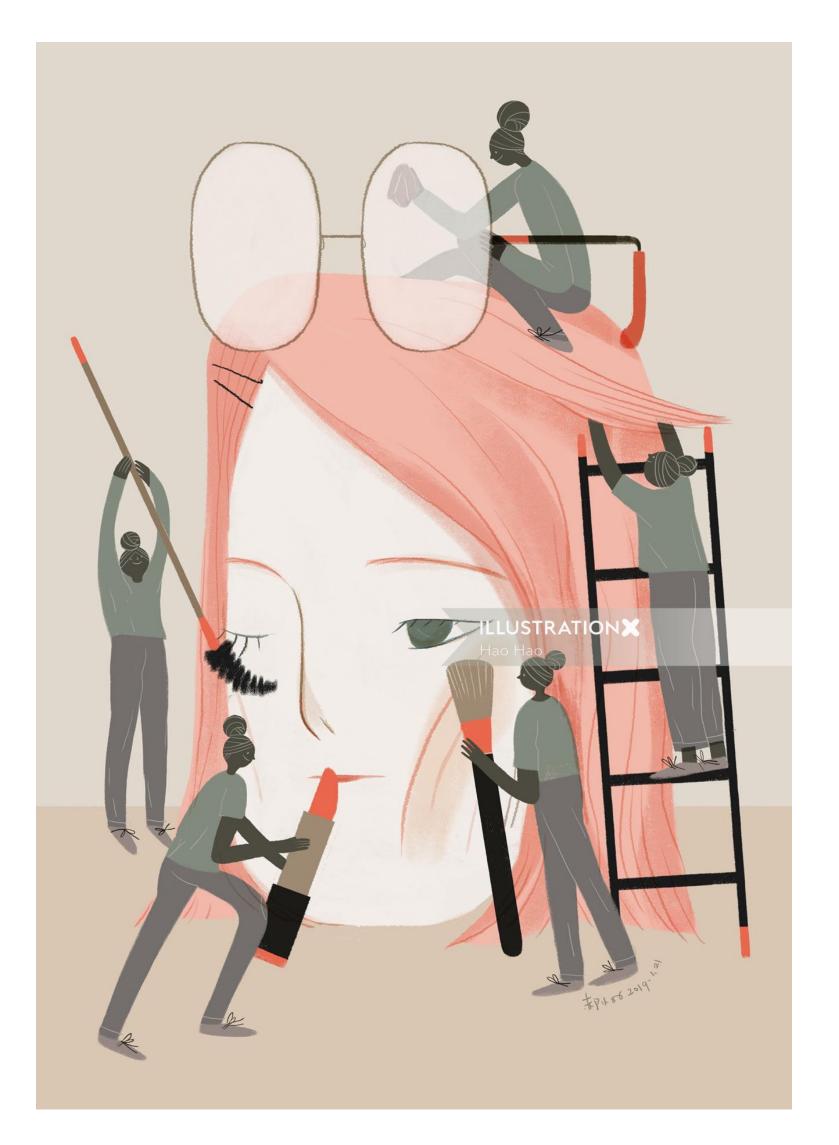


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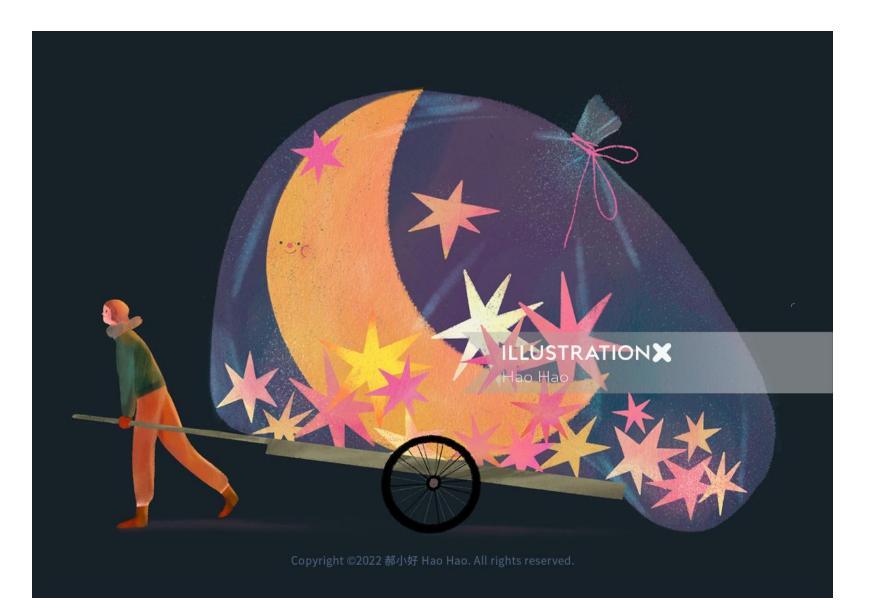
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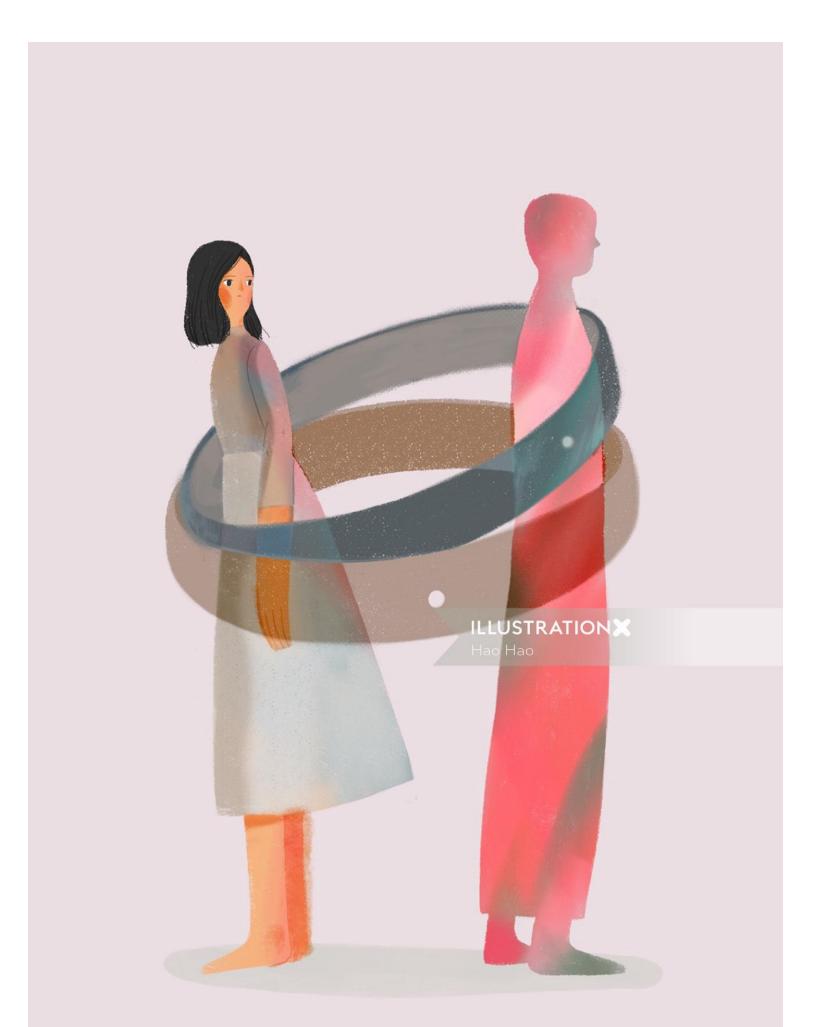
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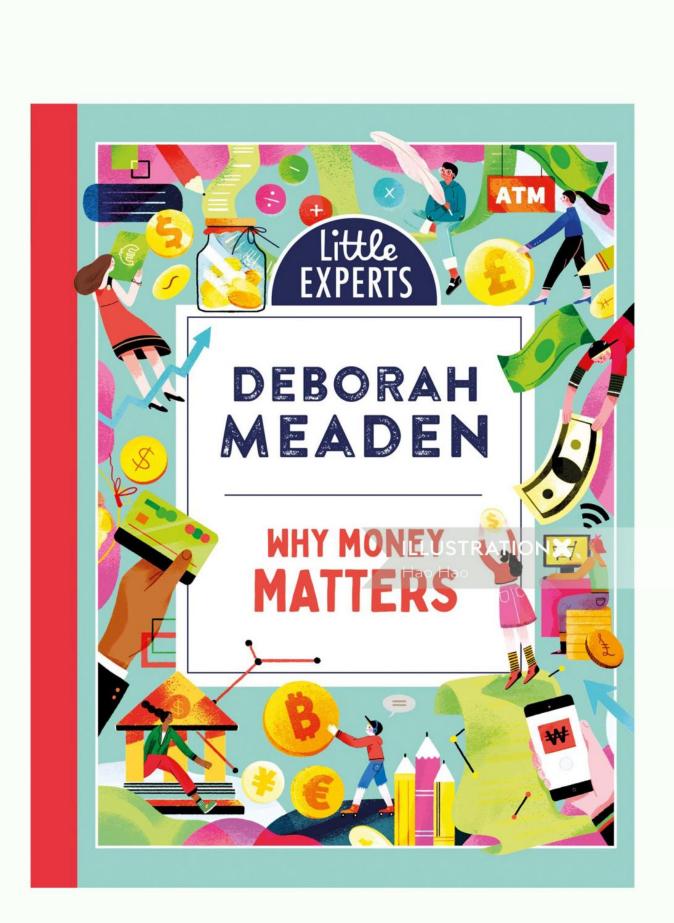
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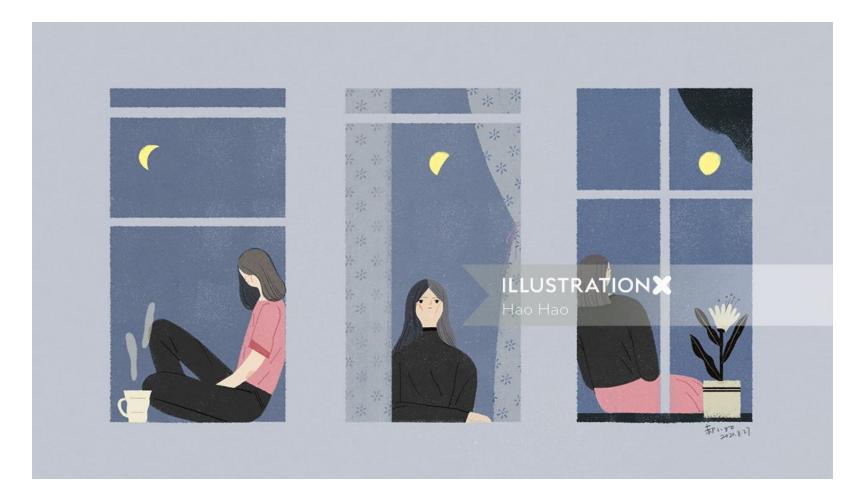
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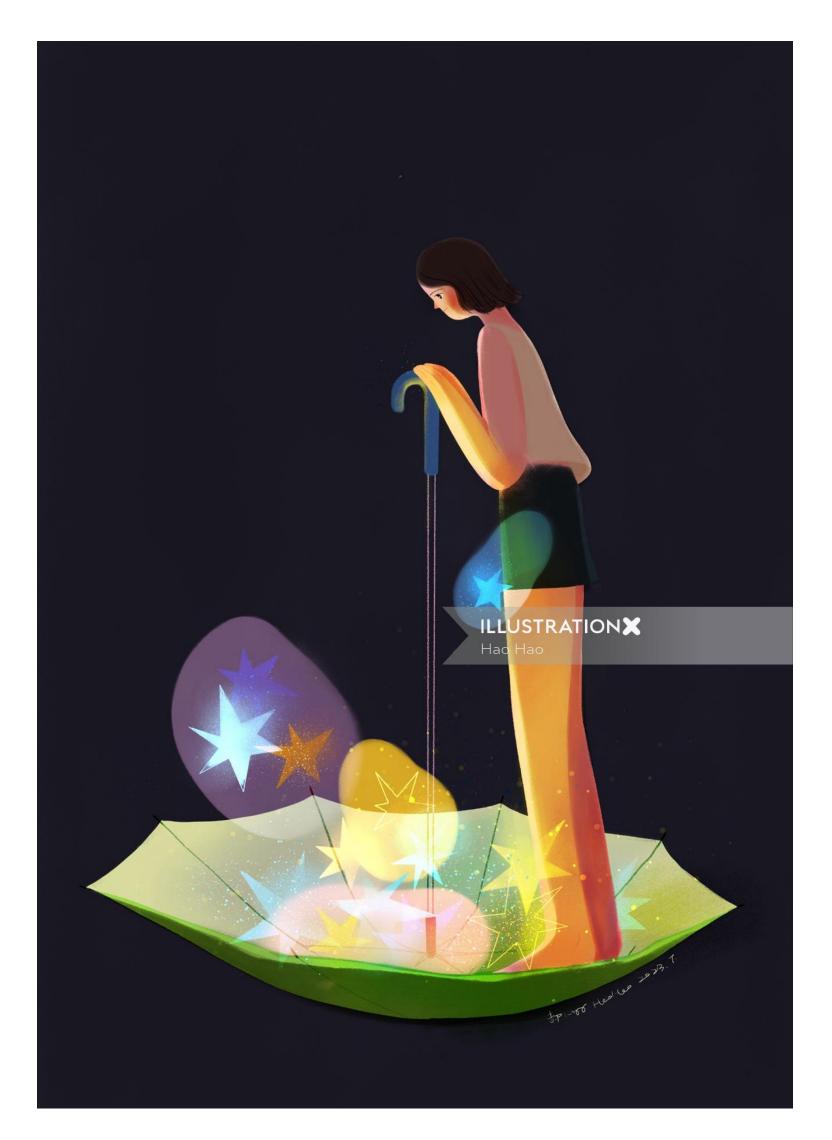
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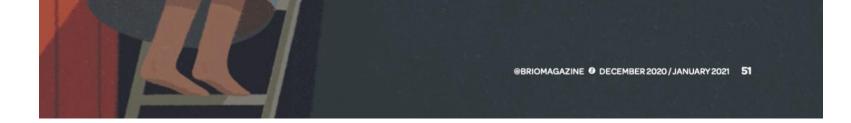
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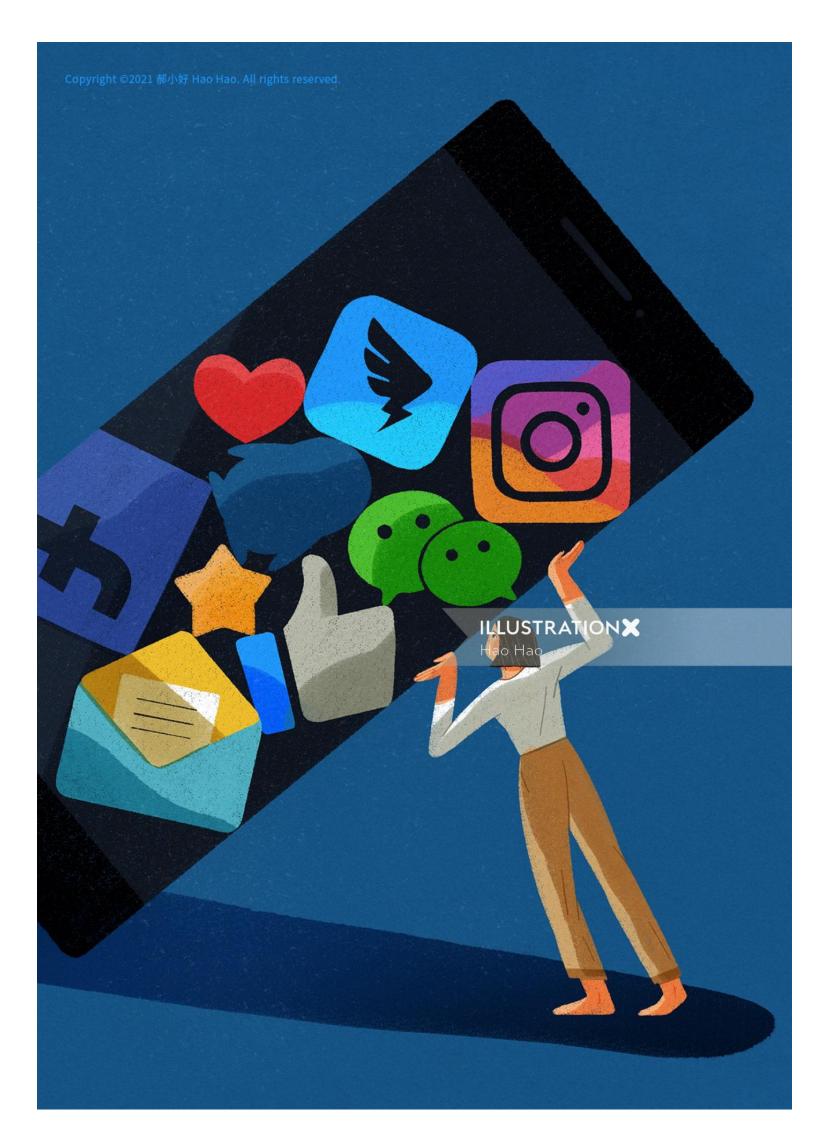
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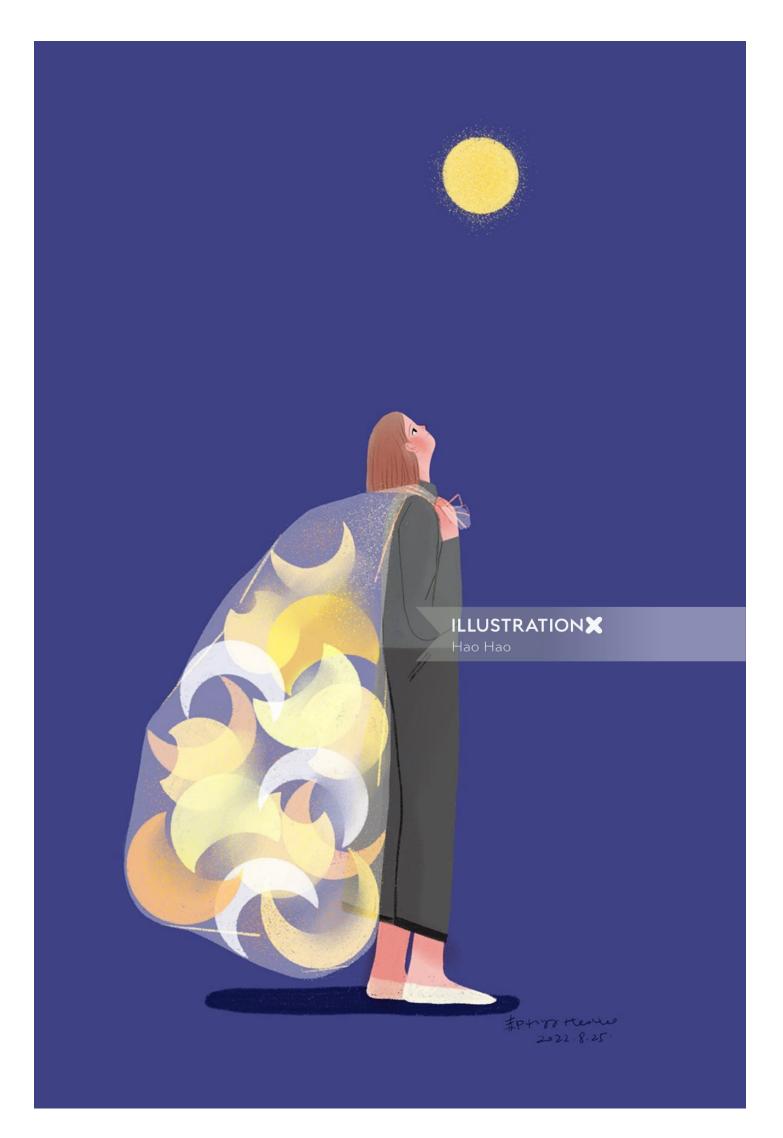
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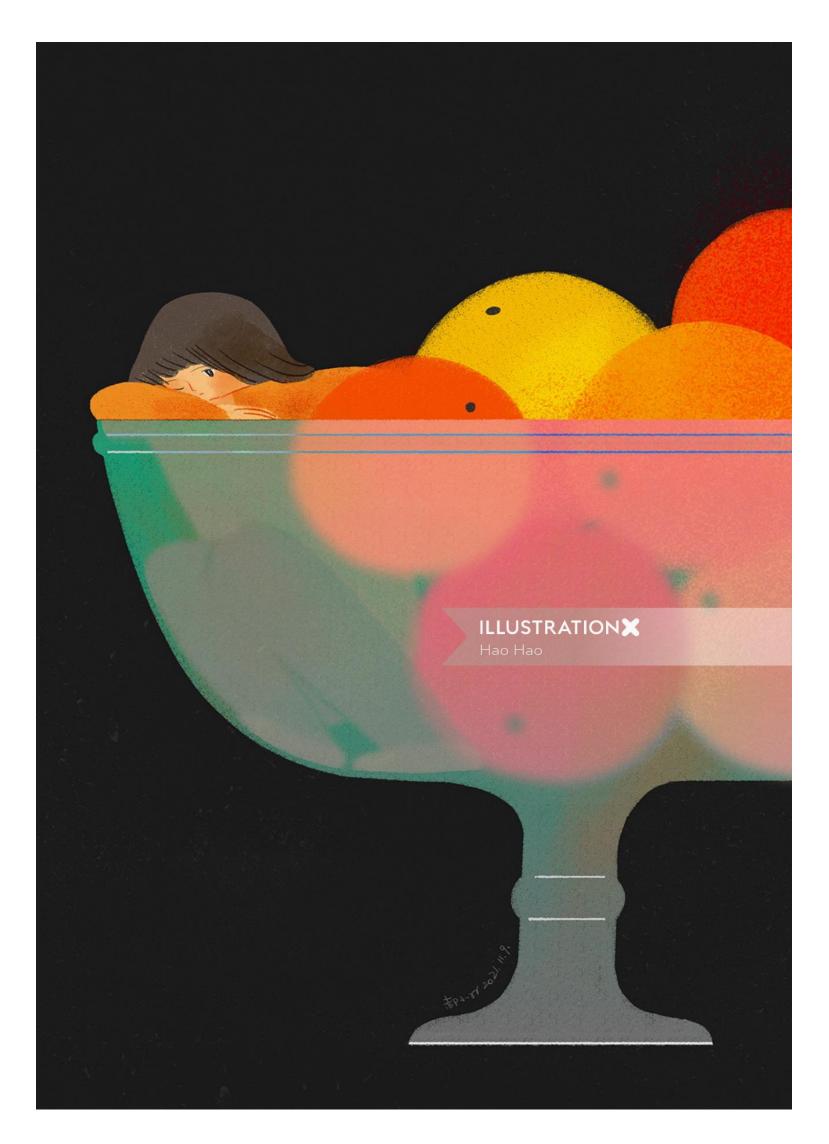
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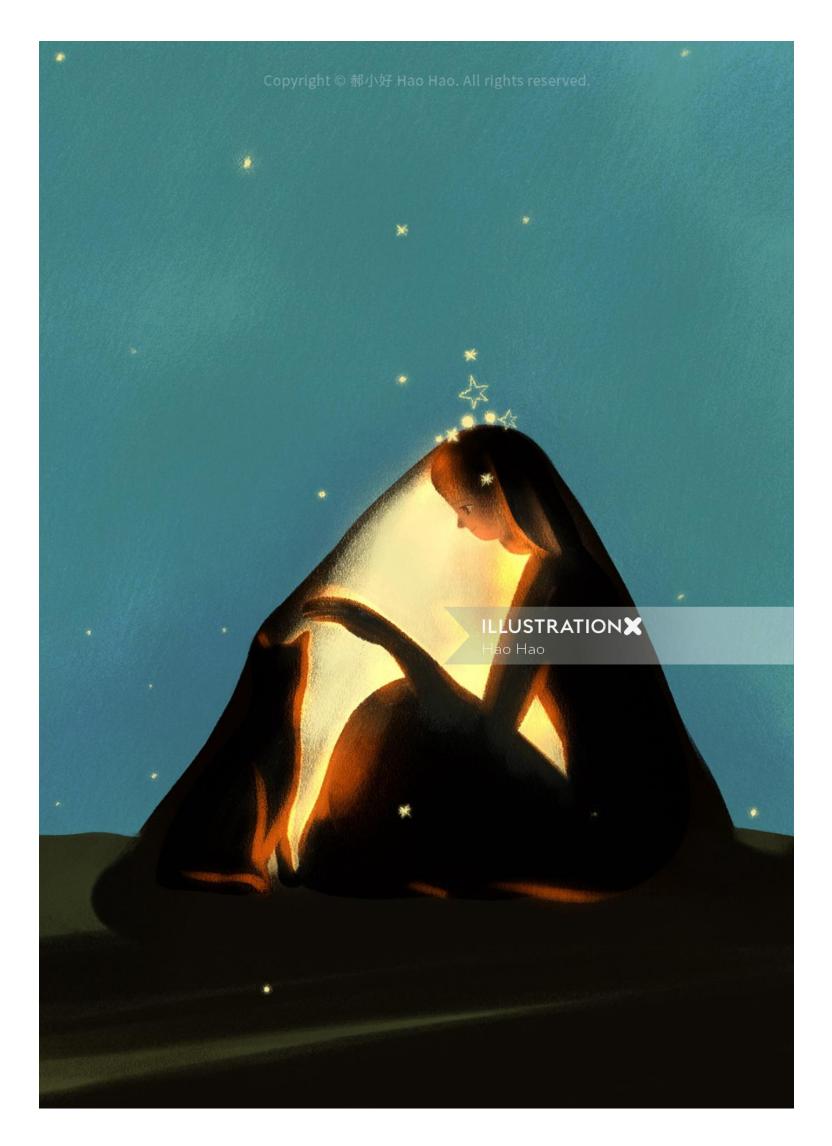
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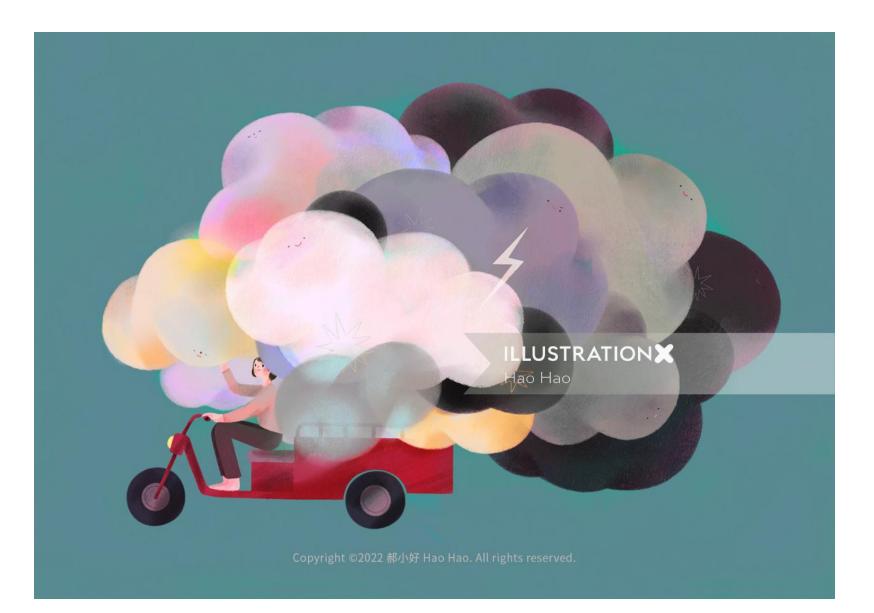
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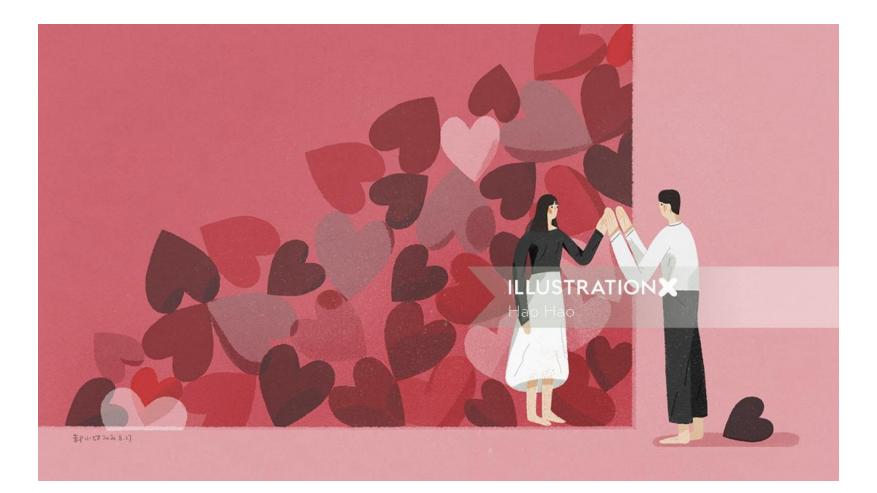




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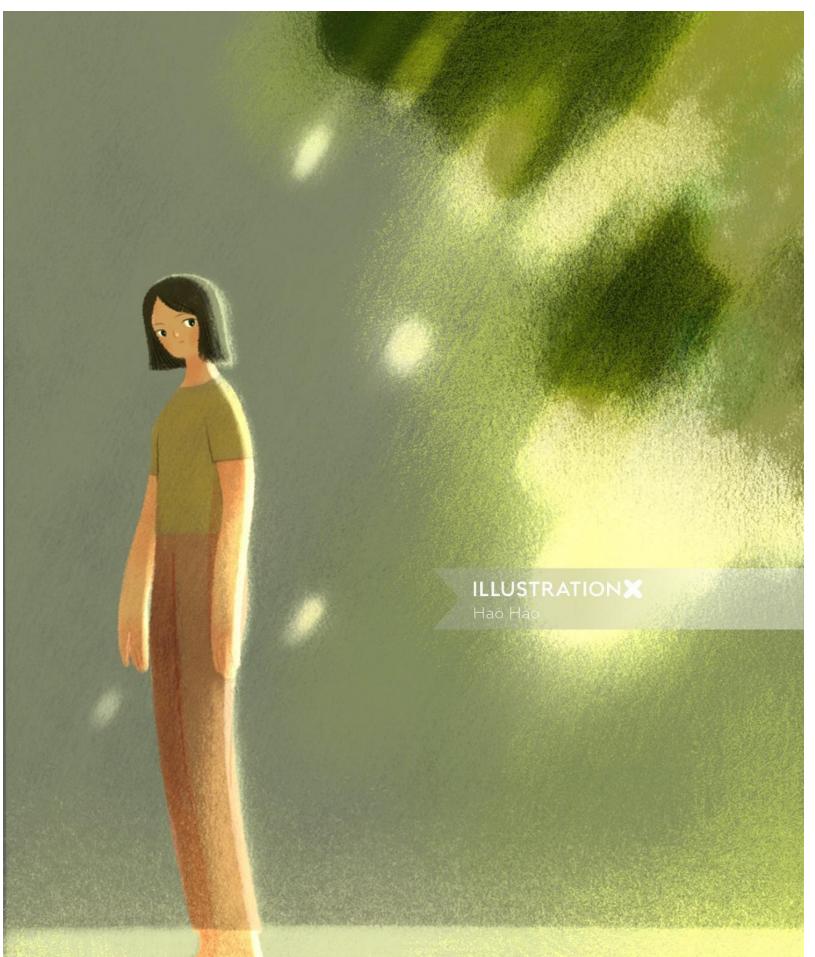
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Balance

What are your social media priorities?

You're a member of a digital generation, which has its blessings and its challenges. Have you ever paused to ask yourself: What are my goals and priorities in these digital spaces?

Perhaps you find great ways to connect with others through

LLUSTRATION Media and are a witness for Jesus. Or maybe you use it as a resource but are more comfortable developing friendships offline. Regardless, you daily navigate the positives and negatives of the digital world.

> Occasionally, it's healthy to reflect on how your social media usage aligns with your life's priorities and goals. That's what Wendy Speake and Emily Washburn did. After reflection, Wendy and Emily took differing approaches to social media but still



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How Far Is Too Far? Why purity is more than just saving yourself for marning RATIONX

BY JESSIE MINASSIAN

Rising like an otherworldly, monolithic fin in the center of Zion National Park, Angels Landing-a 1,488-foot-tall mountain formation known for its difficult and narrow hiking trail and steep drop-offsattracts visitors from all over the world. I mean, with a name like Angels Landing, you'd expect it to be a place of awe-inspiring views. But you might not expect it to be the location where more than a dozen hikers have met their, well, downfall.

Interestingly, the hike itself isn't the most dangerous part. After all, most people who attempt it make it home just fine. The danger lies in that stunning view. Overconfident hikers inch to the edge, maybe for the

thrill or (more likely) an Insta-worthy photo. They believe they're capable of safely getting just a little closer. But then forces outside their control take over—a foothold gives way, or a stiff wind blows-and, adios.

I often think of that hike when I get questions from young women about sexual purity. Girls questioning, "How far is too far?" Or they're fighting guilt over compromises they never imagined. What I've learned, both from my own journey and from the stories of others, is that physical intimacy is a lot like Angels Landing: The view is amazing, you'll want a closer look, but that edge? Not exactly trustworthy.

To keep hikers from falling off Angels Landing, some have proposed installing a fence. Sounds logical. The problem with that solution? People can always find a work-around. As other national parks with breathtaking views have found, where there's a will to flirt with the edge, there's most certainly a way.

That's why it's so important to understand the difference between virginity and sexual purity. You might say abstinence (or saving the act of sex for marriage) is like a fence that can help keep you from a dangerous edge. But unless your goal is holistic sexual integrity, you'll always find a way to get just a little bit closer to the edge, which can possibly lead to that downfall.

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