

Looking forward to 2021

*A year-starter message
from Dean Ruel Cajili*

We had a very challenging 2020. This has made us realize so many things that we have not even thought before. As we ended the year, we are all mostly hopeful to embrace better, bolder and bigger positive changes in 2021.

What I am most looking forward to this 2021 would be the opportunities that 2020 has prepared us for. Yes, I am still grateful as I learned so many things with my experience in the previous year. I would love to think that God has made all these things to happen for us to be ready for something better. There are so many things that I have been preparing for in 2021. No pandemic or any other things can stop me to do alternatives to ensure quality of education that we commit to impart with our stakeholders.

The launching of the Health and Wellness Center of the College of Psychology is one that I look forward to operationalize this 2021. This is one of the big projects that we have been planning to help the SISC community. Through this, we get to extend the help and the practice of the profession and the discipline. I believe that we must all value our mental health in the same way that we are doing with physical health.

I also look forward to having more high impact

research outputs of the students and faculty members; research that will bring the name of the college and school in the local and international arena. I want the College of Psychology to be known as one of the institutions which has high caliber in research works.

I also look forward to producing 100% board exam passers for Psychometricians and Psychologists and to produce topnotchers, so everyone will know the quality of education that we impart to and for our students.

And most important of all, what I look forward to this 2021 is the social end of the pandemic, so we may all live with peace of mind and be free from worry.

*With prayers and
hard work, I am
confident and I
believe that all these
that I envision will
happen.*



About the Artwork

The Persistence of Memory is a painting by artist Salvador Dali. He coined his technique "paranoic-critical method" wherein he self-induced psychotic hallucinations in order to create art. He called this particular painting as a "dream photograph" wherein the melted versions of typically solid objects represented the line between the real and the dream state.

The Persistence of Memory is displayed in the Museum of Modern Art in New York City.

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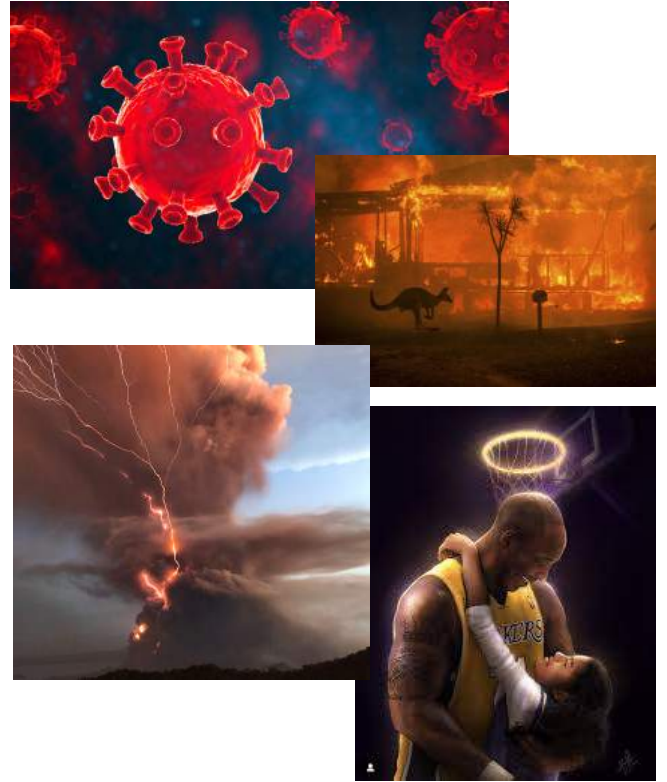
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From the ashes we rise

Musings from the Editor

To say 2020 was a difficult year is an understatement.

Headlined by a global pandemic which has claimed the lives of over 1.5 million people worldwide, the year has been punctuated with disasters and tragedies left and right: volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, typhoons, and wildfires; the crashing of the stock market and countries going into recession; the devastating explosion in Beirut. Not to mention those that passed away in 2020 was a veritable collection of the world's most influential people: Kobe Bryant and his daughter Gigi, US SCJ Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Pinoy vloggers Emman Nimedez and Lloyd Cadena, actors Chadwick Boseman and Sean Connery, among many, many others.



In this seemingly year of loss, however, 2020 was also filled with silver linings which we may have forgotten amidst the chaos of living: selfless health workers rising up to fight a pandemic; big businesses using their manpower and resources to produce direly needed medical equipment, PPEs, and disinfectants to keep people safe; a global movement for racial justice; a going-back-to-basics as we made do with what was available; an Earth that began to heal as people sheltered in their homes; all the nameless people - heroes really - who have come together to help victims of natural and man-made calamities. It may not feel it right now, but 2020 was the year when we were all reminded of the immense power of the indomitable human spirit.



This issue of Flares is dedicated to you - teachers, students and mental health professionals - who have risen up to the challenge of the past year. We celebrate your efforts, your commitment, your hard work, your heart.

And like the phoenix rising from its ashes, we stand with you in facing the hope that 2021 brings.

DR. MARJORIE GUTIERREZ-TANGOG



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HER INSPIRATION

My parents inspired me. My mom, a BS Accountancy graduate, magna cum laude from the San Carlos University in Cebu City has always believed that I have a gift with people. She so advised me to take up either mass communications or teaching. My dad tutored me in Maths and always told me that a way to check for understanding was for me to teach others. During high school, I would be the go-to person to help others with Math, Chemistry and Physics. As such, when I eventually majored in English during college, everyone was surprised, expecting me to major in Chemistry or Physics instead.

Four other people, all from the academe, inspired me to become an educator. The first was Dr. Loureli C. Siy, my high school principal who said there are only a few bright and intelligent women in education, and are usually in the field as a last resort. Dr. Eleanor Eme E. Hermosa of UP Integrated School, a Metrobank awardee for outstanding teachers, was an inspiration as well, as was Dr. Theresa de Villa, former Principal from the UP Integrated School. Lastly, my supervising teacher, Prof. Bernadette Palo, inspired me to be the best that I can be, telling me that graduating with honors meant more than individual honor, rather bringing the honor back to the school. Prof. Palo encouraged me to spread my wings and consider teaching in the southern part of Metro Manila, since at the time, there was a dearth of good teachers in the area.

AN ADVENTURE OF A LIFETIME

In 1997, the UP system was invited to run a training program for teachers through the Pahinungod, in Jolo, Sulu, and I was tapped to be one of the faculty trainers. It had been a tough decision to go, since it was during the time when kidnapping was rampant in Mindanao. Our team consisted not just of faculty and trainers, but also of doctors as part of a medical mission. It was nerve wracking at that time, but was meaningful as we reached out to teachers through the training program. The trip, which was supposed to be for one week, was cut short for our safety.

I experienced riding a full capacity C130 helicopter and on the way back home, we rode with a cadaver and some jars with medical samples since only PGH had the capability to conduct tests at the time.

KEEPING TRADITIONS ALIVE

Usually on the holidays, we would take time to visit relatives in Cebu and Leyte. Obviously, this year, we will be having online celebrations instead.

HINDSIGHT IS ALWAYS 20/20

During high school and college, I was friendly but also very focused by making sure I prioritize my studies as my goal was to graduate with honors. My advice to my younger self would be to enjoy life while balancing it with life goals.

WORDS OF WISDOM

This pandemic has blurred the lines between our work and home lives. It would be wise to integrate home and work responsibilities. Flexibility between employers and employees, and between families matters. Help family members understand that the context of work right now has evolved, and it's no longer an 8-5 thing. Balance is, of course, key.

Seek calmness to lessen anxiety. Do something different from what you are doing, maybe do gardening, watch a short video, play ball. Be kind. When there are disappointments, practice Habit 5: Seek first to understand, before being understood.

Road to Meritissimus

Jan's inspiring journey

Often, thesis writing and defense is one of the toughest part of a graduate student's academic life. The time, effort and commitment it entails is quite demanding. Add a global pandemic to the mix, and it just seems impossible!

Yet, **Jan Dalawampu** made it look so easy, successfully finishing and defending his thesis, earning for himself a Meritissimus award, the MAP program's first, and getting published in ResearchGate along the way.

FLARES: What is the title of your thesis?

JAN DALAWAMPU: My thesis is "Psychological Distress and Disability Acceptance as Correlates to the Psychological Well-being of Adults with Acquired Physical Disability".

F: Why did you choose this topic?

JD: I've always wanted to do a research focusing on people with disabilities ever since my undergrad years (in case people didn't know, my undergrad was in Marketing). It didn't happen because I wasn't sure that time on how to incorporate people with disabilities in a marketing research paper. So I let it go.

Then as I was working on my final paper for my first class in grad school, which was Development of Psychological Thought, I encountered this paper about parental stress among parents with ADHD children, and wondered, "What if I do a research on parental stress among parents whose child has a congenital disorder?". From then on, the idea further evolved and led to what it is now - targeting people with acquired physical disabilities.

The idea of wanting to do a research related to disability started at a rehabilitation centre that I frequently visit. At one point,

I wondered: "How does having a disability affect an individual? Does everyone experience the same thing or is it different?". As I was searching for local literature related to disability, I noticed that there aren't that many studies catering to this demographic. That made me want to pursue this topic even more.

F: Who was your thesis adviser? Who else helped you?

JD: Ms. Dee was my thesis adviser. I chose her because I felt comfortable with her. I've known her since the early days of my grad school since we're in constant communication with each other regarding PsychSoc. Throughout the process, she trusted and supported my decisions while steering my paper in the right direction.

Ms. Juli, aka the mother of research in the College of Psychology, guided me through the technical aspects of the paper. She gave us tips and tricks in class - my favorite tip from her would be on how to sort the RRL. I won't explain it, I'll let you guys hear it from her when you reach thesis writing.

Sir Obet helped me with the statistical side of my research. He helped me generate and understand my results, and during the times when they did not seem to make sense, he explained it thoroughly so I can understand better.

Of course, there's Dean Ruel and my panelists (Hi Dr. Sam, Dr. Felma, and Dr. Marj!). They helped me see the research in a different perspective and helped me improve my paper so it can be more comprehensive, making it more compelling.

F: What preparations did you undertake to get ready to tackle your thesis?

JD: Before Thesis Writing 1 class started, I knew that writing a



thesis in a post-grad level will be a laborious process. I searched online for tools other people used when writing their master's thesis to help keep me organized. I came across Mendeley, which is a reference manager software where you can put all your research readings, annotate, highlight, even generate a citation in APA format. Talk about convenient!

I also used a study timer called (열품타) that tracks the hours I spent writing. It kept me motivated because I can objectively measure the hours I put in. I watched Study with Me videos on YouTube to motivate and inspire me to write. Also, virtually seeing people study motivated and inspired me, and also helped me concentrate. I also made checklists and placed a calendar beside my desk to keep me on track and meet deadlines.

F: What challenges did you encounter as you were working on your thesis?

JD: It was hard to finish a paper during a pandemic - especially the time when the nationwide lockdown started. I struggled with balancing with the uncertainty of the pandemic and meeting my own academic expectations. I read on Facebook that keeping ourselves busy was a way to cope with the uncertainty, so I worked on my paper once again and initiated sending weekly pipelines and Gantt charts to my adviser to keep me accountable and somehow "force" me to keep going.

Road to Meritissimus

Jan's inspiring journey

F: Who or what inspired you as you worked on your thesis?

JD: To be honest, I didn't have one until I visited Tahanang Walang Hagdan in Rizal in early 2020 for my data collection. It was my first time to see so many different-abled individuals in one location. I can't describe what I felt when I first saw them, but it felt like home.

It was fascinating because they can function independently and manage what normal people do - from admin work, welding, packaging, woodcraft, and more. Hearing their stories first-hand was heartwarming and inspiring because they are happy with their work and they felt proud because they can provide for their families.

F: How did you feel when you were defending your thesis?

JD: On the day of the defense, I was exceptionally calm, unlike the other days. I was supposed to present at 9 in the morning, but I woke up at around 8, which meant I had less than an hour to take a bath, fix myself, and set-up my workstation. I was too excited that I even forgot to eat my breakfast (huwag tularan!).

When the actual presentation started, I presented my research according to how I rehearsed it days before. I answered the panelists' questions as coherently as possible.

I guess I felt calm because I felt confident with what I've written and believed in myself that I've answered and addressed all possible gaps in my paper.

F: You got a Meritissimus. How do you feel about that?

JD: I was actually surprised because I wasn't expecting to get a grade that high. When the panelists' were about to give my grade, Dr. Felma asked me what grade I was expecting. I said "12-14 balls" (the number of balls corresponds to a certain grade percentage). After that, we started counting the balls as they flashed onscreen. After the 8th ball, which is the passing mark, I said to myself "Ah, I finally passed. I can finally graduate.". Then suddenly, more balls kept pouring in. I even lost count at some point because I was so elated.

As we got to the 13th ball, Dr. Felma asked if there'll be more balls, and me and my adviser were screaming "MORE!". We stopped at the 14th ball, the panelists gave their congratulations, and then suddenly another ball came up - the 15th ball! I was screaming and flailing my arms in the air as if I won a jackpot prize in a game show.

Back when I was writing my results and analysis, I said to myself I'll just be aiming for a Meritus because Meritissimus seemed too high an expectation for someone like me who came from a non-psych undergrad. Suffice it to say that I was extremely happy with how it all turned out!

JAN'S TOP THESIS-WRITING TIPS

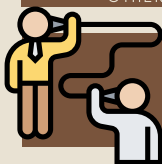
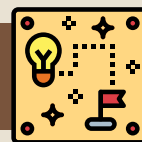


Pick a topic you are passionate about

WORKING ON A TOPIC THAT YOU REALLY LOVE WILL MAKE THE EXPERIENCE MORE ENGAGING AND FUN.

Organize and Strategize

WRITING A THESIS CAN BE A LABORIOUS PROCESS. PRACTICE ORGANIZING YOUR FILES EARLY ON, MAKE USE OF CHECKLISTS AND OTHER TOOLS TO KEEP TRACK OF YOUR PROGRESS.



Be in constant communication with your adviser

YOUR THESIS ADVISER IS THERE TO PROVIDE YOU WITH APPROPRIATE ADVICE AND GUIDANCE. IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO KEEP YOUR ADVISER UPDATED OF YOUR PROGRESS.

Make time for yourself

FIND TIME TO FOCUS ON YOURSELF. WATCH A FILM, DO YOGA, OR ANYTHING THAT CAN HELP YOU RELAX. YOU DON'T WANT TO EXPERIENCE BURNOUT WHILE WRITING YOUR THESIS.

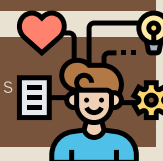


Practice

WINGING YOUR PRESENTATION MAY SOUND TEMPTING, BUT DON'T DO IT. IT'S BETTER TO REHEARSE THE FLOW OF YOUR PRESENTATION. PREPARE A LIST OF POTENTIAL QUESTIONS THAT YOU THINK THE PANELISTS WILL ASK YOU.

Enjoy the process

THERE IS NO PERFECT THESIS EXPERIENCE. YOU WILL HAVE UPS AND DOWNS ALONG THE WAY. IT'S NOT GOING TO BE OFTEN THAT YOU MAKE A RESEARCH ABOUT SOMETHING YOU'RE PASSIONATE WITH SO ENJOY IT.



Believe in yourself

BELIEVE THAT YOU WILL DO WELL.

Moving through Uncertainties

Dealing with the effects of 2020 by Ann Agustin

How did you imagine 2020 would be? Most, if not all, thought it would be great – until reality struck.

Almost everything was put to a halt: there's this ongoing pandemic, volcanic eruptions, earthquakes here and there, and typhoons one after another. With all that's been happening and the changes they bring, we question: "Could we ever adapt?"

The thing is, life's journey is unpredictable. It's naturally filled with trials and struggles; events of 2020 just intensified them.

Amidst those, here's what you need to understand: you are better than everything that's happening around you, even more capable of moving forward.

The key is **resilience**.

In Psychology, there's Gestalt Therapy which guides individuals in how they view and cope with present circumstances.

If you're one of the many who are going through such a difficult time, practicing these self-regulation methods may help bring back the spark you had for tomorrow.

Acknowledge the past

The first step is always the hardest. Dig deeper into your thoughts and emotions and figure out the things that are holding you back.

The only way to breakthrough is to come to terms with your past and let go. This way, your mind is clearer as you try to navigate what lies ahead.

Embrace the present

As you accept the changes, you become significantly closer to reality. In this stage, you are more aware and can now easily identify your needs for growth, which is what we ultimately want.

Note that awareness – that unfocused alertness – is necessary in order to grow and respond appropriately to the environment.

Work on your future

Once you know and understand the difference between your past and present, you can easily adapt to situations and circumstances.

Know that you are in full control of your life. Though you can't control everything, you can always adjust and decide how you want to experience the moment.

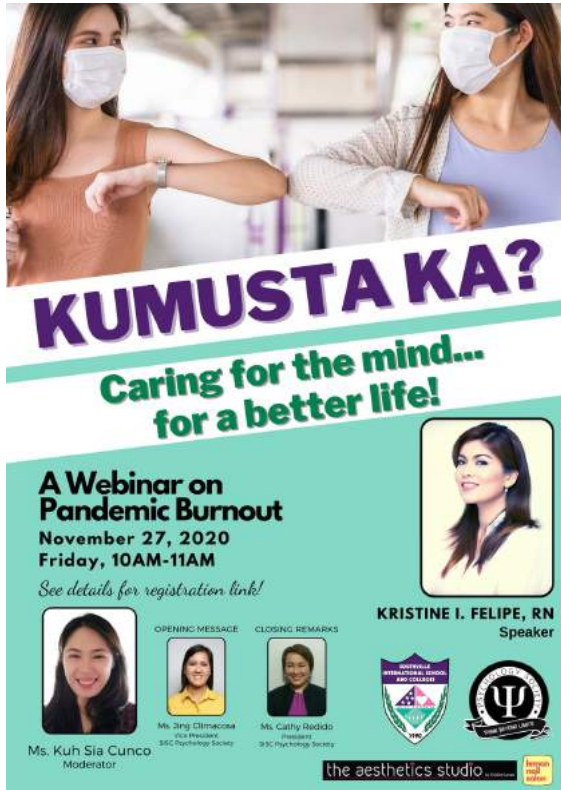
This pandemic forced change in us, no one was exempted. Now's the perfect time to discover and re-create ourselves.



When all these has come to an end, we might soon realize how "being locked up" actually made us better individuals and brought us closer to those who matter most.

Post-World Mental Health Day Celebration

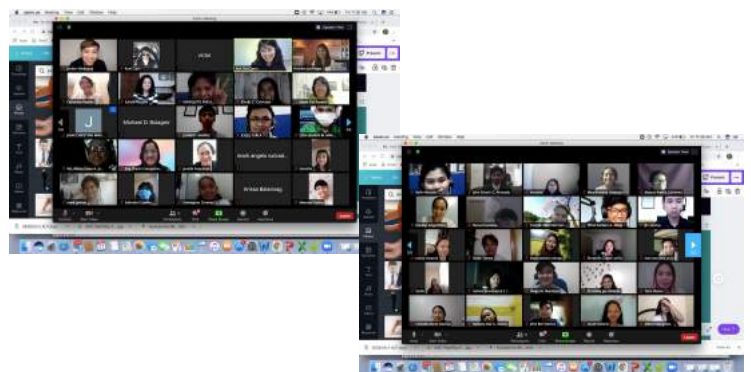
Achievement Unlocked: MAP's first-ever webinar



MAP students Tin Felipe, Kuh Sia Cunco, and Jordan Manlapaz, in coordination with the MAP PsychSoc, hosted a webinar last November 2020. Dubbed "Kumusta Ka? Caring for the Mind... for a Better Life", the webinar attracted hundreds of participants via Zoom and FB live. Attendees were mostly from SISC, St. Matthew Academy of Cavite, Adamson University and National College of Science and Technology.



As speaker, Tin enlightened everyone on what burnout is, gave common signs of pandemic burnout, and provided helpful tips on how to prevent it. Kuh acted as moderator, deftly fielding questions from the very participative audience. Jordan was game master, leading an exciting game of Quizziz. The top 3 winners were given self-care prizes courtesy of The Aesthetic Studio by Kristine Lucas and Lemon Nail Salon.



The webinar was well received and feedback from the audience, students and faculty alike, was very positive. Here are just some of what they said:

"This is the best webinar I've ever attended!"

"I learned a lot from you. I hope you help more people."

"The webinar was lively and interactive from the start and the same energy was sustained all throughout which was great!"

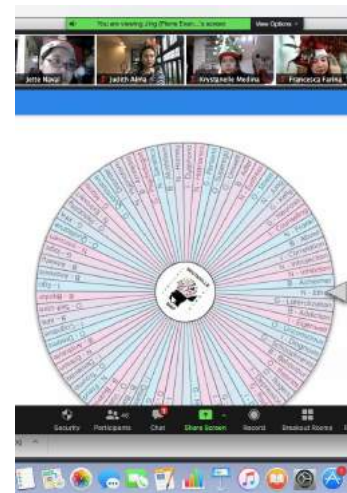
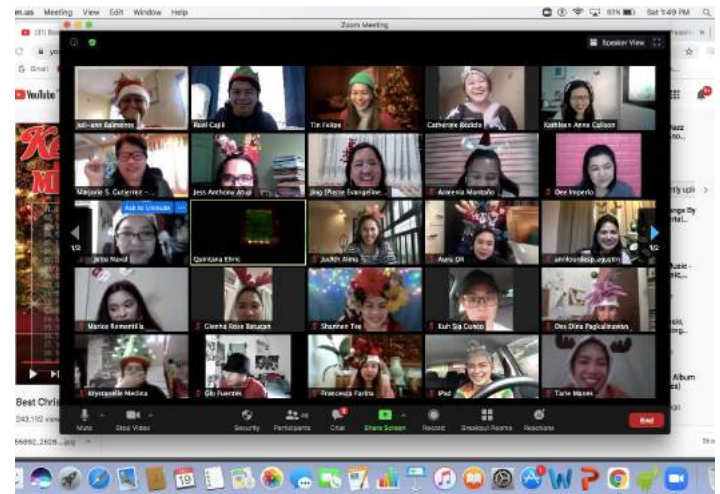
"Great topic! Fun experience!"

PSYBingo

MAP Christmas Party 2020: Virtual Edition

In a year of many firsts, the entire MAP family – students, faculty and alumni – came together last December 19 to celebrate its first virtual Christmas party, and debut its first-ever PSYBingo, a fund-raising activity for patients and staff of Estrellas Nex-Care Custodial Facility.

Ms. Juli opened the celebration with a short prayer followed-up by a half-year report from MAP PsychSoc president, Cathy. Throughout the virtual event, we were regaled with entertaining presentations from Darius, Monique, and special guest Matt. Tin and Cathy performed hosting duties.



★ Most Creative Christmas Headdress winners ★



The PSYBingo was a twist to the usual bingo game, with Psychology-related words, instead of numbers, in each of the bingo cards. Four rounds were played with Lester, Kharll and Darius winning rounds 1-3 and P300 grab voucher each. Kim claimed the final blackout round, and won for herself a copy of the DSM 5, the bible of psychologists.

Creativity was afoot as everyone donned and competed for the Most Creative Christmas Headdress award. The winners were: Shannen – first; Dinah – second; Jessica – third; France – fourth; and Lester, Ivy and Jestoni – fifth.

The event ended with closing words from Doc Marj and Dean Ruel, and a rousing community song of "Christmas in Our Hearts".

We're all in this together!

Giving the best of us

TYPHOON RELIEF FUND DRIVE

MAP PsychSoc launched a relief drive in October, calling for monetary and in-kind donations for those affected by typhoons Ulysses and Rolly.

MAP students and faculty heeded the call and in four short days of fund-raising, were able to raise P43,000.00 cash, and collect 5 boxes and 8 bags of clean clothes, food items and bottled water.

The donations went to the people of Catanduanes and other parts of Bicol, Cagayan, and Marikina City, in partnership with Asian Hospital, the Philippine Navy, and RockEd Relief.



CHRISTMAS GIFT-GIVING

The song says "Give Love on Christmas day".

For 60 kids and families of CAA Elementary School and the Southville aites and kuyas from AltaServe, love came in the form of noche buena packs. For the patients, staff and faculty of Estrellas Nex-Care Custodial Facility, love was manifested through hygiene kits and noche buena packs.

Absent the usual Christmas party fanfare that goes along with the gift-giving, this gesture from MAP students, alumni and faculty was no less meaningful and doubly appreciated, especially during this time of pandemic which has hit everyone in different ways, but especially for those whose livelihood and income were adversely affected, and for those missing the warmth of a loved one's visit.

Truly, "no greater gift is there than love".



Salamat sa
mala**PSYCH**kit!

Hope for the new year...

What I wish for in 2021

I am looking forward to a 2021 without the impending fear of infection. Hopefully a year of self improvement and recuperation.

- **Jeremy**



I look forward to a healthier and safer 2021 — for us to be provided the best vaccine that will be fairly distributed to all Filipinos. I am very hopeful for a brighter tomorrow for us and the future generation.

- **Dabe**



2021 is the year of possibilities , renewed friendships and surmountable holistic growth in life.

- **Darius**



I look forward to once more reuniting with family and return to normal activities as we used to. With the current situation we're undergoing, being away and can't physically share our love is taking away a greater aspect of our existence of free will. Above all, it's my hope that we beat Covid-19 very soon.

- **Philemon**



I am looking forward to have unity, compassion and discipline among our countrymen. I am also looking forward to give emphasis to mental health institutions and rehabilitation center and implement progressive projects/plans regarding their needs.

- **Ivy**



The challenges and difficulties we all experienced made us even stronger and realized how powerful we can be to overcome all those trials. Now more than ever, we have to be more hopeful and determined. Blessings and possibilities await us in the coming year.

- **Judith**



Traveling without fear of being sick. Planning of get-togethers and gathering with family and friends.

- **Myles**

