



Mental Health: Roots and Wings

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ABSTRACT

Mental health is often dismissed. Unless we recognise that mental health is as debilitating as physical health we can never say we are a caring society. Mental health is silent, the stigma attached still prevails and prevents thousands from talking and seek help. Anything that helps and opens a margin of help for them should be encouraged. We need to breakthrough these old rooted stigma and make it a universal message that “Your Mental Health is a priority”.

INTRODUCTION

Mental and physical health are equally important for overall health. Mental health awareness is the only portal for mental health mediation in India. In India where we live in a communist society. Occasionally by being a part of this collaborative we tend to ostracise people within our own community, who may not fit the norm. These individuals could include people with mental illness.

ROOTS: DIFFICULT TO BLOW AWAY

Shame against people with mental illness is a unrestrained problem that pollute the Indian society deeply. This ignorance is one of the main reason why people with mental illness are so reluctant to seek help. According to National Mental Health Survey around 14% of Indian population suffers from mental illness and the figures keep on adding every year. India has been ignorant to this issue for times. This explains why the mental health sector remains severely under-resourced till this day. A severely understaffed sector serves the world's second largest population with only 0.75 psychiatrists for every 100,000 patients.

LACK OF KNOWLEDGE LEADS TO REJECTION

The lack of knowledge about mental health causes people to overlook and dismiss the signs that someone needs help for example: For someone suffering from depression, observable symptoms such as low motivation and sleeping excessively might be mistaken for laziness. Mental illness can be invisible, people

suffering from it lives in denial due to the lack of knowledge and access to the professional help. This growing crisis in dealing with mental health issues is further compounded by the deep-rooted social stigma.

IGNORANCE IS VOLUNTARY MISFORTUNE

We live in a society where people understand and watch for physical health, we are so, so accepting of any body part breaking down, other than our brains. That's the stigma and that's ignorance and this ignorance has created a society that doesn't understand mental health.

A person can have depression and still smile and make jokes, a person can feel suicidal and still turn up to work every day and appear fine. Talking about mental health is not attention seeking. People die in silence everyday due to this judgment and rendering them unable to seek help. Our society needs to acknowledge these facts. The increased suicide rates confirm the helplessness regarding this issue. The government needs to offer more to the nation regarding this issue. Wings: a much-needed change.

Before COVID-19 India never prioritized mental health. Due to Covid-19 mental health challenges have only grown which overburdened the system. But this led people to self-realization. Discussion about mental health has increased due to this pandemic where people are more open about their issues. Where lockdown was important to control the situation still the lockdown also forced the people to be confined to their homes, with irregular eating and sleeping habits which has led to discomfort, agitation, aggravation and a range of neuropsychiatric symptoms.

NGOS KNUCKLING DOWN MENTAL HEALTH HURDLE

The pandemic has already left deep scars both to the body and the mind. To overcome these problems certain NGOs have been set up which are focusing in combating Mental Health issues



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One of the leading non-profits, The Live Love Laugh foundation founded by actor Deepika Padukone who herself once was a victim of depression now has prevailed over it and also working for the betterment of people and society going through the same.

Facebook is also working with the organisation to stop suicide attempts from being live-streamed. There are also certain known foundations which are doing tremendous jobs such “The Banyan”, “Mindroot Foundation”, “The MINDS Foundation” and many more. Newspaper, social media and the influencers has played a big part in improving the picture.

Greater awareness of mental health is the key in creating more acceptance and conversations and it can only be seen if people understand its prime importance. The changes are slow but much needed than ever.

CONCLUSION

Even though the perception of India is changing towards mental health. But somehow this change is limited to cities. The rural areas are still embedded in the old-rooted stigmas and hinders the growth and acceptance about the topic. This can only be changed by the mental health awareness programs on a large scale. Today, the average citizen is more aware in regards to Mental health. While we have learned a lot, there's still so much more we can do to grow as a society.

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