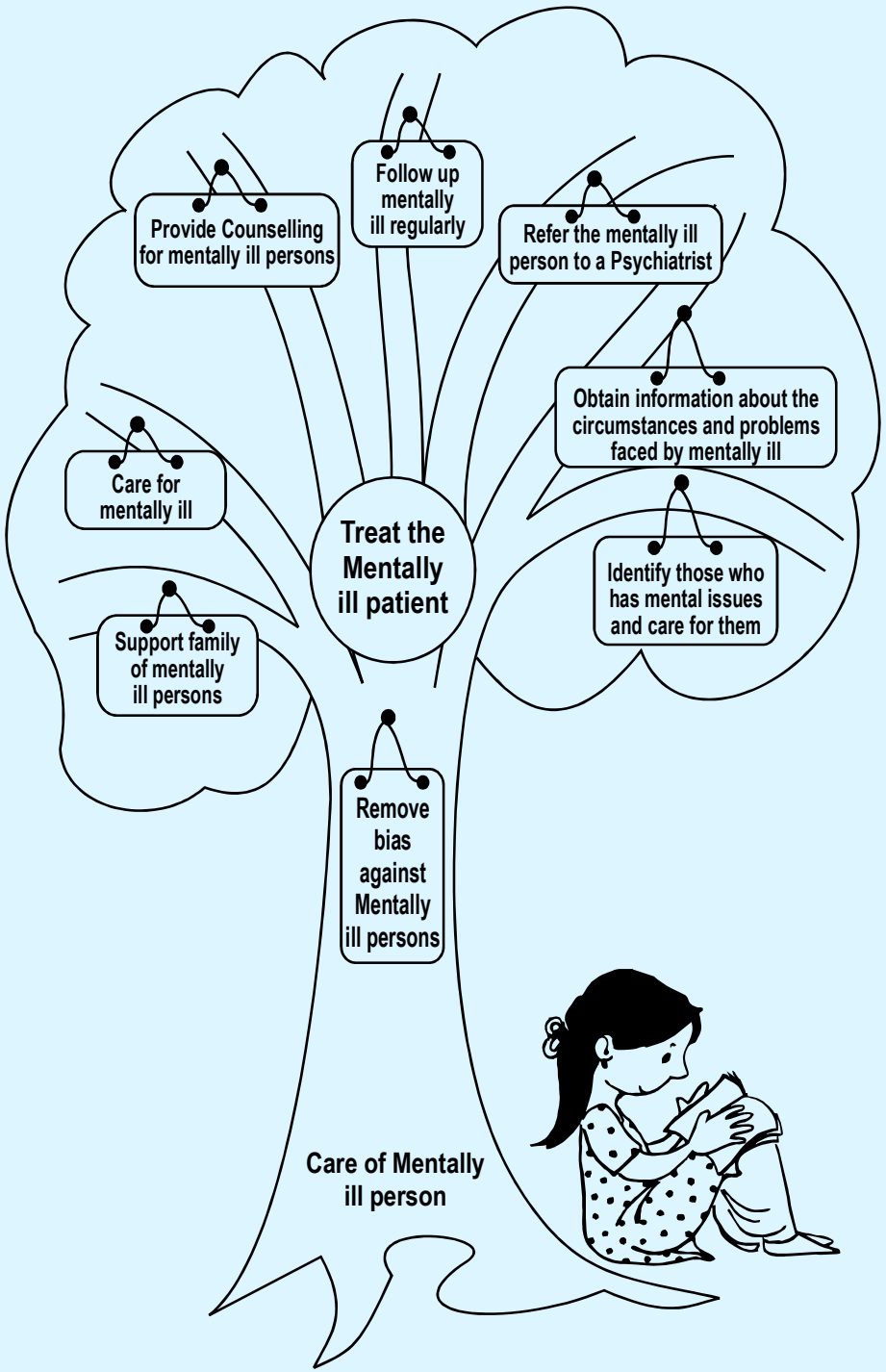
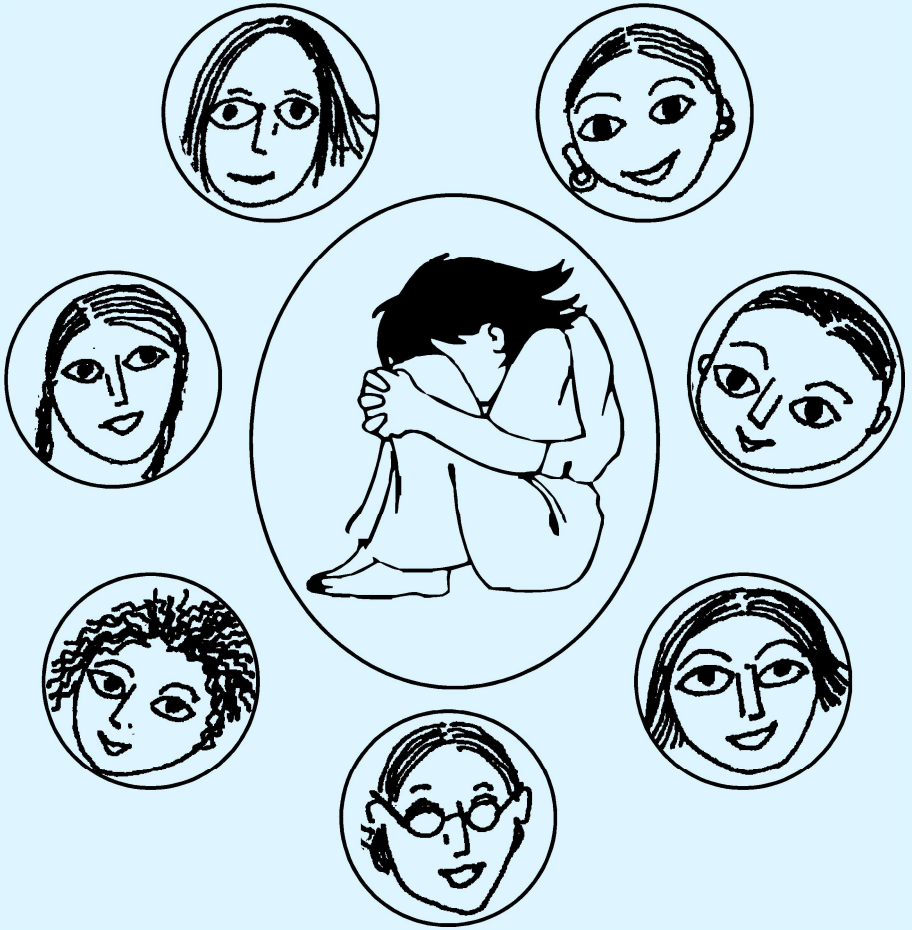


Mental Health: Understanding and Care



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MANSIK SWASTHYA SAMAJ ANE SAMBHAL

This booklet is meant for awareness for mental health issues among common people. Objective is to reach basic information to the lay literate persons in the villages so that they can make use of the information to help those persons in mental illness. Any part of this booklet can be used for reprinting of free distribution to the people in need. We would appreciate a courtesy acknowledgement and a copy to us.

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FOREWORD

For last some years now, the intensive work for mental healthcare has been started. But not enough understanding about Mental Health is developed among lay people, leaders and the health workers at various levels including even doctors. Misunderstandings and belief systems are many. This book is an effort to clarify certain basic issues in mental health care especially the care of severe mental disorders.

We know that at least two persons out of 100 require treatment for mental illness. Most of the times people cannot recognize these patients. Sometimes even if people know persons having mental illness, they do not know what is to be done exactly and therefore these patients also remain without treatment. The society at large has many misbeliefs for this disease and people attribute the illness to sin of the previous birth, he / she is possessed by an evil spirit, he / she has not done good for anyone, so now it is natural that the person has contracted the mental illness. Such beliefs prevent reaching out correct services to the persons suffering illness. Biggest irony is that the condition is not considered as an illness and so never the community seeks help from medical services.

Such patients are isolated by rest of the family. Thus, he /she does not receive proper treatment and are subjected to violence, some times social and sometimes psychological ill-treatment. The mentally ill are not respected at almost every level of the community. The women patients usually have to leave their in-laws' home, those in any job has to leave the job, etc are the consequences of mental illness. Through this book we try to make the lay literates of the rural and urban communities to know that this condition is a mental illness that can be overcome by medical treatment. At a wider level it is important that the people should develop sympathy towards such patients and also motivate the relatives / family members to seek medical help for their patient. At a larger level we must know that this is a basic right of any patient to get proper treatment and care for illness.

Our organization has attempted to reach the basic information in lay language and simple format to the common people. It is expected that the students, youth, village leaders, aware citizens and the workers of different service sectors would be able to get proper information about mental health. Let us decide that the information contained in this booklet will be shared with those who need services and we will try to prevent ill information and its spread. We shall help the helpless patients to get proper treatment for the illness. So we appeal that please read this booklet and make others to read it so that correct information spreads and we are able to help the unreached patients.

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Through this book you will learn :

Chapter 1 What is health

- Definition of health Physical, social and mental well-being
- Factors affecting mental health
- Three levels of intervention for mental health care

Chapter 2 Need for Mental Health Awareness

- What is mental illness
- Care that is needed for mental health
- What can you do for the mental illness and its treatment
- Beliefs and taboos about mental illness
- Stigma related to Mentally ill patients and the family

Chapter 3 Reasons for developing mental illness

- Physical, Social and Psychological reasons

Chapter 4 Some mental illnesses and their symptoms

- Depression, Anxiety - various types of anxiety, Mania, Schizophrenia, childhood mental diseases, addiction and its consequences,

Chapter 5 Treatment for mentally ill persons

- Objective of the treatment
- Four steps to community based rehabilitation of the patient
- Five main benefits of taking medical treatment
- Importance of the family in provision of treatment

Chapter 6 Rights of mentally ill persons

- Right to treatment
- Right to legal protection and those related to the social standing of Mentally Ill persons

Chapter 01 : Concept of Health

When marriage season is on and during festivals there is an atmosphere of celebration all around. Crops are ready and when everything is normal, it is natural that we get together and also go to friends' or relatives' home to enjoy good food, tea / coffee for self and others. We enjoy gossiping and these are our fun times.

It is natural to discuss about several things when we are together. One of the subjects is health as well. We talk to each other about one's sickness on such occasions but we rarely discuss about health of mind and sickness of body.

Body and Mind

We/people normally consider those without any disease as healthy. Body can be healthy but there may be many persons who are unhappy, under mental stress, distraught and fear. We do not consider them sick but there are many derogatory social references or insulting words. We often feel either pity for them or we consider them idle, pretending and weak. So, we / people neglect them.

People tend to insult, hate, neglect or leave alone those who do not accomplish their tasks with full vigour and efforts. However, it is necessary to know that modern science and traditional system of ayurveda have recognized that body and mind are very strongly connected. It is true that mind greatly affects body and therefore it is necessary to understand mental health and its basic principles.

What is health ?

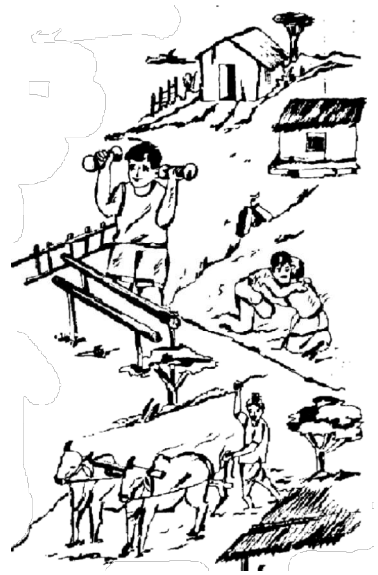
WHO informs that health is well-being of body, mind and happiness in society. Friends, when you talk of well being or happiness you would not remember pains, sickness or disease. WHO thus says that let us build a society and state where pain, misery, disease and disappointment do not exist. This is very good to imagine, but let us consider the facts.

Physical well being :

We find people suffering from many diseases. Although we do not become sick, we experience small or big sickness 2 or 3 times during a year. When we are sick, we are not happy with ourselves. There are some people in our town / village who cannot manage two meals a day. They have to beg or they depend on others for daily living. Thus hungry, diseased and infected people are not happy bodily.

Social well-being

We / people consider Barias, Rathvas or those of our own caste as our society. But society means all the people around us including those who may not be our caste or class. Human life is dependent upon all the numerous people habituating in surrounding areas and even those living in distant places. E.g. We / people wear clothes which have passed through several stages of production. Farmer grows cotton which is sold in market, woven in cloth sold by shopkeeper and get sewn by some tailor. When all these happen we get a shirt to wear. All these are members of our society.



Society with divisions of castes - higher and lower, religion and work, rich and poor etc are considered unequal and so the society is not healthy. At the same time, we find that those who are considered higher, insult the lower groups. Often these people get work done without justified payment or for free. Such people / groups receive advantages due to others as their own. Wherever these differences are prevalent, the society cannot remain healthy or happy. We find differences even in same caste where people differentiate on other parameters. We find that happiness of one group is a reason for unhappiness of another group. That is why members of our society do not have healthy relationship among themselves. Healthy and happy society is where all members experience equality and behave equally with all and help each other in each other's difficult times. Thus, social well-being of a person depends on the society in which he / she lives.

Mental well-being

People without physical illness and are prosperous, often suffer from anxieties and suspicions. Some people drink, smoke or eat tobacco, consume substances in various forms like inseparable part of their daily life. Frequent quarrels, crying, giving pain to others, etc. are not the signs of being mentally healthy. They cause anxiety, insecurity and unhappiness. Peaceful, normal and energetic behavior, smiling face and non-threatening existence to others are signs of healthy mind.

Mind and mental health

Mind as such is not a distinct organ of our body. But daily experiences and feelings like greed, happiness, misery, hope, despair and response to these experiences are the function of mind. It can be said

that people with happy mind are able to cope with life situations with happiness, enthusiasm and sincerity. They can organize their daily life with joy, enthusiasm, diligence, and contentment. Such people can adjust their life in spite of several painful incidents and disappointments. They are able to balance themselves and come out of unhappy incidents and failures. All experiences, which create hopelessness, anger, pain will affect this person for a short time. This person accepts these experiences and overcomes and makes his / her mind free from the ill effects of such situations.

There are many such healthy people in the society but there are 10 to 15% people who are not able to shake off their feelings for a long time. They may suffer from anxiety, depression, etc. About 1% of them suffer from severe symptoms. He / she may not be able to sleep, keep thinking about irrelevant matters, remain with him/herself only and is not aware of what is going on around him / her. These are some of the negative effects of what one is suffering from. This person may be mentally sick. There is direct relationship with physical health. It is clear from above that those who are so affected become mentally ill.

“These persons are socially isolated, are often not able to continue their daily chores, they become unproductive and may not be able to continue their economic activities. Because of such symptoms they have other difficulties and face a different set of problems in life.”

Family members of such persons experience many difficulties. They have to keep him/her safe, take care of his / her daily routines (like eating, washing, cleaning etc.), maintain his physical health, take care that others do not harm this person and also that he / she does not harm others and often he/she is not able to take care of the dependents (like parents, wife, children, etc). In short, the family has a lot of added social and economic burden.

Social scientists call such a family as a family "at risk". Please ponder over if it is fair that a family having such circumstances is usually not seen with sympathy and faces neglect, hatred, insults, isolation, or ridicule by others. This is not okay. They need to be helped.

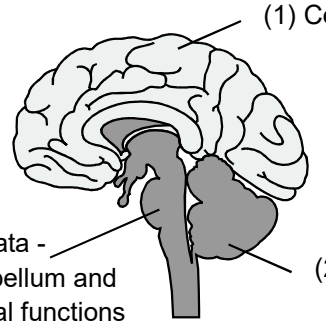
The brain and human behavior

Human body is a unique creation of nature. Better than in any super computer various functions and processes in our body are coordinated by our brain. There are different systems to carry out different functions in the human body. They are interconnected and work in integration with each other. For example, eating food and digesting it, mixing oxygen from our lungs with blood and through blood carry oxygen and food all over the body parts, giving birth to a baby, seeing, speaking and hearing works etc. - all different parts work in perfect coordination with each other. The nervous system in our body and the hormonal system regulates various functions of different body systems.

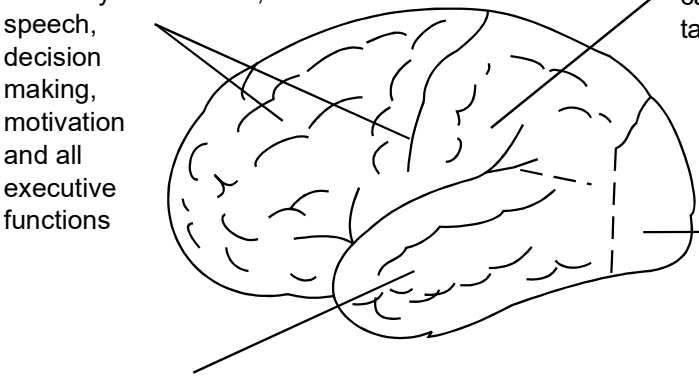
The brain is most important part of the nervous system. It co-ordinates all functions. All emotions, impulses, feelings and human behavior, the human perceptions and understanding are manifestation of brain.

The Brain is made up of innumerous / lakhs of nerve cells and nerve fibers. The brain functions are complex. Various parts of the brain coordinate various activities, emotions, speech and behavior, etc. This coordination is achieved among various neurons through synapse. Synapse is a kind of junction where messages from one neuron to other neuron are transmitted through various chemicals called

neurotransmitter. Disturbance in uptake of these transmitters causes problems which may result into mental illness. There are 3 parts of the brain as shown in picture here.

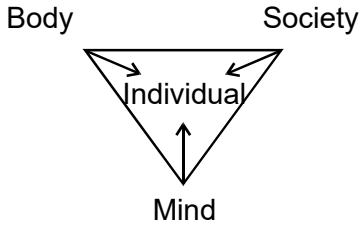


The Cerebrum has 5 distinct parts as described in the figure below.



Factors affecting metal health

Mental health is not only absence of mental illness but it is mental well-being. Whenever any person does not have bodily pain or sickness or when a person has social and economic satisfaction or when his/her daily life is without difficulties, he/she is happy. Social scientists believe that our society has rich and poor, high caste and low caste, male and female, religion, occupation and other inequalities and therefore everybody cannot remain happy. We can understand this through following diagram



It shows human mind, body and society are 3 different corners of a triangle that symbolyses human existence. Triangle is balanced on mind corner. Pressure on any one side results into unbalanced position and triangle tumbles down. Similarly, bodily illness or social struggle [death of a relative, war, revolution, economic loss etc.] result into unbalanced triangle, i.e. human being.

Person with weak body or sickness lags behind in every aspect of life. It affects his/her mind. When mind is distressed, the body shows symptoms of different sicknesses. E.g., loss of sleep, acidity, asthma, pains in hands, legs or body, weakness, etc. Persons with illness of long duration are not able to perform their social roles and responsibilities properly. All these affect society as well.

Similarly, inequalities result into one section of society feeling higher or lower than others. Lower sections of people are insulted, have less opportunities for education, less economic advances, are subjected to violence of different kinds and experience disadvantages from higher sections of society causing more imbalance. Dissatisfaction prevails in the society as a whole affecting mental stability of its members. Thus body, mind and society have bearings that affect individual's healthy mind.

Mental disease

We have observed that a person with mental disease experiences several difficulties. But it is very true that persons with common symptoms like sadness, anxiety, sleep disorders, experiencing body problems without any physical causes are not considered as being sick. So despite of fact that they are many, almost 10 to 15% people do not consult mental health specialist and they are left to deal with their mental difficulties by themselves.

Similarly, those with severe mental problems are addressed by many derogatory words like “Mad”, “insane”, “mental”, etc. We do not consider them as individuals and do not treat them worthy of social relationships and their access to healthcare services is limited. They or their family members are not helped. Their rights are not protected. These persons roam around places, remain unclean, they do not wear proper clothes and are often not aware of natural calls, hunger or thirst. Your village may have at least one or two such persons. You must have observed that children run after them, tease them and behave so as to excite them. Some indulge them in wrong practices. All of these are improper. These traits are inhuman. We will now provide information about different mental diseases and provide guidance so as to do the needful at family or village level. Your active co-operation is expected.

Efforts to improve mental health

First of all, medical treatment to reduce and overcome mental illnesses are now available. These illnesses may be normal or serious but medicines are available to provide relief. These medicines can be prescribed only by expert mental health doctors or by those doctors with MBBS degree, who have undergone training in mental health.

Gujarat state has 5 general hospitals and 4 other facilities. But efforts to reach out to remote rural locations in the state are limited. Awareness programs in this direction are now available at all levels.

Besides, all these are problems of mind. Psychiatrists and Psychologists have been trained to provide treatment for illness of mind. A psychologist would understand what disturbs the individual's mind through discussions and try to provide help through counselling. In order to treat a patient, there is an effort to bring patient (client) out of negative behavior pattern by using his/her positive qualities and enabling him/her to take decisions through talking. Thus, the patient is encouraged to shade off negative thinking or negative behavior and face his/her problems with more enthusiasm and capability.

At the third level, family counseling workers are trained to advise the family members about how to behave and help the patient, to give the medicines to a patient, etc. There are efforts to provide information to teachers, social leaders in society and general public by inviting them to attend awareness programs. You should also participate in mental health awareness programs and become active. It is important to guide people around you to not follow faith healing, wrong practices and beliefs about mental illnesses. An effort to reach the mentally ill persons to access the mental healthcare services to needy.

Chapter 2: Need for Awareness about Mental Health.

We may be living in an interior village or in a town/city. Now we know that different tasks become simpler if we have proper information about the task and proper solution to a problem. To have information means we should know about how to solve the problem using that information. When there is no information, simple tasks also become difficult. E.g. If we have to go from one village to another, which bus or public vehicle can reach to that village is a crucial information. Information about what kind of preparations are required, how much money and other resources would be necessary etc will help us to make the travel successful.

Similarly, we must know basic information about illnesses - whether illness is common or serious, where to approach for treatment, what is necessary to prevent the spread of illness which doctor can provide treatment, address of doctor's clinic, cost of treatment etc. information helps to enable treatment. Information that helps to take treatment for health problems is known as health awareness. With the help of several workers' efforts and assistance, we are able to treat illnesses like Malaria, TB, Dysentery, Diarrhoea, etc. But there are problems regarding treatment of heart diseases, diabetes, and others. Information is spreading slowly that blood pressure, diabetes, cancer etc. lifelong diseases require regular and long treatment. But not all patients keep up taking medicines continuously for a long time / for life time. Similarly, Mental illnesses also require long and continuous treatment.

Why awareness of mental health :

We have earlier learnt that the brain functions through neurotransmitters i.e. certain chemicals. Disturbance in neurotransmitters leads to abnormal thought, speech and behavior. Usually, a person behaves or communicates according to the norms of one's society. But mental illness may change the person's behavior and

communication, which may not be considered acceptable by others. Such behavior may be embarrassing for the family and community. It can also invite negative and insulting response from others, which may be harmful to the person with MI. Sometimes it even denies the basic rights to food, health, clean and safe environment, etc. and results in isolation of the person, so that the quality of life for the person is seriously affected.

For example, it is expected that individual will take regular bath and wear clean clothes. Those who do not behave regularly and wear untidy clothes are insulted and others avoid talking with them. Similarly, person in a family is expected to fulfill his/her duty and is able to contribute to economic support in family. A person who is not able to earn livelihood and meet the family's needs or a woman who cannot perform daily routines are not respected and are neglected by the family. Thus, the society usually discriminates and ignores such people who cannot meet their expectations.

It has been observed that some people

1) are not able to undertake economic or productive activities.

2) do not perform their daily routine regularly

3) do not maintain social relationships

Please remember that every patient may not show all the signs together, but people with such behaviors are considered mentally sick. Traditionally many derogatory words / labels are used for such persons, e.g. “Mad, Insane, Lunatic, Idle, Not having intentions to work, brain failed, etc. People seek help from Bhuva, black magicians and other faith healers. Such measures do not heal the person but aggravate the situation. Health workers often hear from the family, that “we have spent huge costs for treatment of this person but his condition does not improve, we are tired and now we do not want to make any efforts for the same”.

People normally do not consider this condition as an illness that can be treated by medicines and therapy. Therefore, first of all it is important to accept this condition as an illness and seek treatment from a doctor, that too a psychiatrist. Usually general practitioners do not prescribe treatment for mental illness.

Nowadays the extent of education is much more and so it is important to think about this situation. and persuade each other that any amount of traditional treatment by faith healers or Bhuva does not help. There are scientific remedies for the treatment of mental illness and with a proper usage we can satisfactorily treat and help persons suffering with mental illness.

Modern medicinal research has given us some very effective medicines having less side effects. Psychiatrist understands the symptoms of the illness and gives diagnosis and accordingly prescribes appropriate medication. When these medicines are taken for long enough periods and some other care is also taken, then the patient can be reestablished in the society.

Following is required to be taken care of:

1) Diagnosis by a psychiatrist

2) Treatment of patient with regular and proper dosage of medicines

3) Visit the Psychiatrist at least once in a month and give updates about the patient and continue the medicines as per instructions.

4) Patient will be responding within one or two months and it is necessary to help him undertake various activities

5) Do not get angry even if the patient makes mistakes. Have faith in him/her and guide for correction of mistakes. Whenever the task is completed without mistake, the person should be appreciated and encouraged.

6) When the patient is able to accomplish activities / tasks within the family and village, then only think of assigning outside activities.

Do not leave him alone in the beginning. Remember that he requires help and guidance in many small matters also.

7) Even when you feel patient's condition is under control and getting to normalcy, continue with medicines as per instructions of doctor.

Thus, by proper implementation of above 7 steps one can surly treat the patient and bring normalcy. Sometimes even when patient is not totally cured, the medicines have to be continued to control adverse effects of the illness.

What can school students do ?

You are now studying and are young. You feel that whatever your parents or grandparents decide must be correct. But now you are also learning new subjects like science and social studies. You can benefit your house, family, society and villagers through your knowledge. Now you know that for any disease conditions you should contact an expert doctor and not believe the Bhuvas, Maharaj or faith healers. You may discuss this with your family and contact closest medical center for treatment.

You will find some persons roaming on the streets. They have no recognition of time, place and circumstances. They remain untidy and unclean. In place of making fun and harassing the person you must help such people. Find his/her home address if the person seems to belong to this area. Inspire the family to go to mental health center. Often the family needs help for reaching the person to the mental health center.

You can also help the health worker in your village to identify patients. Health worker has a list of patients who have started medicines from your village. The caregivers of thiese patients need to be reminded about when and how to give medicine to their patient. You can read the MH Clinic card given to the patient and advise the family about giving medicines to the patients.

What can aware persons do ?

You may be a member of village panchayat or a leader of the community or a leader of the hemlet in your village, or more educated person, may be a teacher or president of a local dairy, it is your responsibility to help those in need. You should understand the needs of such people and provide assistance not necessarily that by giving money.

Some mentally ill patients do not have a family member to reach them to a medical facility / a hospital. For example, a young patient having only the mother at home; does not want to obey his wife / husband (caretaker) for treatment, other members of family staying away from the village, or a patient is behaving violent and aggressive. In such circumstances it is difficult to reach the patient to the MH Clinic / a hospital without help from people like you. Perhaps you have to accompany the patient to the MH Clinic / hospital after initial discussion with the caretakers/family. You can also encourage the youth group, women's group or dairy members for help. Thus, you may be able to do following:

1) Support the family member treating the patient.

2) Actively help patient reach the MH Clinic / a hospital at least once or twice in the beginning

3) Help people seek modern medicine instead of approaching faith healers and witch doctors.

4) Observe if patient is regular at treatment.

5) Explain proper dosage information to the family / caretaker.

6) Help mental health worker identify new patients.

7) Talk about Mental Healthcare to the social gatherings and help people to get rid of the faith healing practices for such a patient.

8) Persuade others not to ignore or insult patient or his family members, i.e. work to remove stigma from people's minds.

Various beliefs about mental illness in our community:

There are many traditional beliefs since decades. In olden times when the science had not developed so much, the assumptions and experiences propagated certain wrong beliefs in our society. People have believed and practiced them for generations.

But now many of those beliefs have been proved wrong and baseless. Nowadays the science of illness and treatment explains causes and provides effective remedies. For example, Smallpox used to be known to be caused by the curse of a goddess (Shitla Mata) and so the patient was simply asked to bow down before the godess at the end of ten days of illness. But now we know it as a disease and using vaccination it has been eliminated world over. Similarly, there are many beliefs about mental disease. Let us discuss them here.

Wrong beliefs

1) Mental illness is caused due to effects of a ghost, evil spirits or bad deeds of previous life.

   Correct understanding : Medical research has proved that disturbance in thinking, behavior, speech and feelings of a person is because of chemical changes in nerve cells (neurons).

2) Person thus affected can be treated by faith healing practices, Bhuva, Maharaj etc.

   Correct understanding : It is known that although the person has psychic symptoms, the illness is physiological. Therefore, medicines play a major role in the treatment. Just as diseases like High Blood pressure and Diabetes are controlled by medicines, the mental illnesses also require medicines for control of symptoms and gaining insight.

3) The person is lazy. So he/she does not want to work and therefore he / she pretends or behaves dramatically.

   Correct understanding : No desire to work is a common symptom in several types of mental illnesses. If somebody feels like this for a long time, he/she may be mentally sick and it is necessary to get treatment.

4) Mostly the medicines for mental illnesses are nothing but sleeping pills:

   Correct understanding : Due to mental illness the patient usually has disturbed sleep / less sleep. Initial medication relieves the symptoms and so the person may sleep for a longer time than before. But, primarily patient feels better because of relief in symptoms. He can sleep undisturbed now and regains control over bad effects on his thoughts, behavior, feelings, work capacity. Patient can perform his/her daily chores. He/she is able to live good quality of life.

5) Marriage is a way to cure the patient of mental illness.

   Correct understanding : Just as physical illnesses like diabetes, blood pressure and thyroid, in mental illness also medicines are required to relieve the symptoms. It cannot be cured by marriage. On the contrary marriage will put the other person in marriage in difficult situation and affects his/her life. It may worsen the disease and sometimes result into separation or cause more social harm. It is necessary to treat the illness of the patient.

6) Medicines for mental illnesses should give immediate result within a short period.

   Correct understanding : It is known that chronic physical illnesses require treatment for years together and sometimes lifelong For example: Treatment for Tuberculosis is to be taken for 6 to 8 months. Treatment for Diabetes and High

Blood pressure is required for lifetime. Similarly mental illness require long time treatment varying from 6 months to 2 – 3 years or even longer. Medicines have to be taken regularly and proper dose is needed to control symptoms of the patient. Sometimes the patient feels some relief from symptoms and the family discontinues treatment in a short time. This may result in relapse of the symptoms / illness and quality of life of the patient gets deteriorated.

7) Medicines for mental illness are 'hot' for the body (i.e., more side effects).

Correct understanding : Medicines are never hot or cold. Doctors' advice is required if there are any side effects. Doctor would alter the medicine to suit patient's needs.

Stigma faced by mentally ill patient and his/her family:

Harassment:

1) Patient is subjected to violence and severely punished, for example, often such patients are tied to a pole or locked in a room.

2) Patient is continuously insulted. As for example: labelling “mad”, sometimes does not get even food.

3) Patient suffers physical and mental harassment. Example: mockery, calling names, stone pelting, snatching away his/her possessions, tearing of his/her clothes, make him to do wrong acts, sexual harassment of female patients, etc.

4) Woman patient is a witch having incomplete training or one practicing black magic and therefore people keep distance from such a woman. Sometimes she is subjected to grave violence such as physically beaten or even killed.

Social Isolation:

5) Patient is socially outcast. Example: People stop talking to the patient, he/she is not invited to attend social functions, even friends would leave him alone, etc.

6) Women with mental illness have to leave their in-law's family. Often the children do not take care of the mother.

7) People believe that children of mentally ill patient are also mentally ill. So, the family is isolated and relationship is curtailed.

8) Even when patient has improved, he/she receives insults and is not heard with sincerity

9) It is believed that some curse has caused this illness and so, people do not maintain social relations with the family for fear of the same curse.

10) Marriages of sons and daughters of patients become difficult. Often the families have to pay more in terms of dowry or bride price.

Denial of basic rights:

11) Traditionally treated by faith healers. Family does not seek help from medical facility.

12) People are scared of the mentally ill person and so do not allow children to go and play near them. This results in further isolation of the patient.

13) The basic right to food, health, clean environment, etc are denied people do not pay attention to the basic necessities of these patients.

Chapter 3 : Causes of Mental Illness

Cause of a disease is not always clear and specific. In some diseases like Tuberculosis, the cause is clear and specific i.e., the Tuberculous Bacteria. Many other risk factors may play role in causing the TB Disease. But in mental illness the causes are not yet identified as clearly and specifically as in infectious and other diseases. Brain infection and brain trauma may cause some mental illness. Genetic factors are identified as playing causative role in some mental illnesses. So, for common understanding one should look at the risk factors and contributing social factors which are conducive for mental illness. Therefore, in this chapter we will lay more emphasis on the risk factors contributing to development of mental illness.

There are several causes of mental illness. It is not possible to pinpoint one single cause. In mental illness, there are some chemical changes in human brain. Mental health problems also precipitate as consequence of physical illnesses of long duration. Unfavorable situations, lifestyle, frequent conflicts, hate and extra sensitive nature about certain things or some psycho-social events also precipitate mental illnesses. Sometimes social and family factors encourage the illness. Child rearing practices, challenging events faced in life, stressful education, economic activity, social discrimination, etc. have important bearing on development of mental illness.

Despite there being several risk factors, which can contribute to mental illness, we may attribute mental illness to a social situation or stressful situation in life. The person may continue to remain ill even after the adverse situation changes if the illness is not treated properly.

Some serious physical illnesses like Diabetes, Heart disease, cancer, etc may sometimes induce mental illness. Pathophysiological changes in brain functioning are responsible for change in thought, speech, behavior, etc. occurring in mental illness. Manifestations of mental illnesses are attributed to changes in chemical transmitters by nerve cells in various parts of the brain. For example, if the part governing functions like making decision, starting or completing of a work, control of emotions, etc. is affected, the person is not able to do the executive functions. Thus, the capacity to make decisions, to grasp any situation, to concentrate on anything, etc. are reduced and he/she is unable to

think clearly and carry out any activity. Similarly, the part where memory functions are conducted is affected then, the person is unable to remember things, becomes forgetful, lack of concentration, reduced capacity to cope with difficult situations, reduced endurance, increased anger, quarreling frequently, etc are the symptoms.

Thus, the factors which are not in the person's control bring mental illness. It is still not known how and why the illness is caused. But the medical science has discovered certain medications which help in controlling of the symptoms which is of immense importance to the quality of life of the patient.

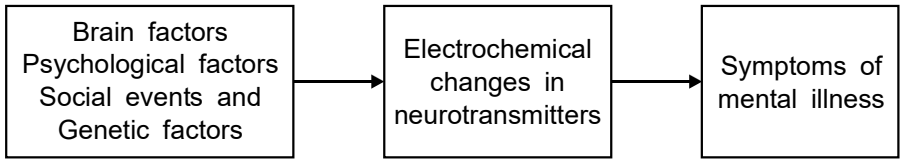
Psychological factors :

Some inherent individual qualities can be an important risk factor for the illness. Some people lack enough coping capacity for sorting out matters and they remain psychologically incapable since childhood. They are more prone to develop mental illness at the older age. Because of less coping capacity, they are not able to deal with situations of hopelessness, non-compromising nature, frequent misunderstandings and disagreements even in common matters, inability to articulate feelings and beliefs, etc. are also contributing to developing mental illness in some persons.

Social factors :

Response to certain situations in life and certain social events affect an individual is well-known. For example, death of a near relative, personal insult, loss of social prestige, failure in exam or profession, continued illness of a family member that does not improve, untimely or accidental death, strong personal grudge or bitterness with a family member pressurizes his sensitivity and may bring mental illness to a person. One can thus be mentally ill because of social and family factors. But developing mental illness depends upon how long such responses remain in that person's life.

Sometimes the mental illness develops because of hereditary / genetic factors. These are beyond human control and the illness precipitates suddenly sometimes due to any event or otherwise.



Chapter 4: Some mental diseases and their symptoms

There are different kinds of mental diseases. Often some symptoms are common for some. We can categorize the mental diseases in following headings.

1. Common Mental Disorders (CMD). E.g., Depression, Anxiety, Phobia, Panic attacks, Obsessive Compulsive Disorders, etc
2. Severe Mental Disorders (SMD). E.g., Major Depressive Disorder, Schizophrenia, Psychosis, Bi-polar mental disease, etc
3. Addictions and substance use, such as Alcohol consumption, ingestion of drugs, Canabis, etc
4. Childhood problems, e.g. Bed-wetting, Temper Tantrum, mental retardation, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity, etc
5. Nerological problems such as, Epilepsy, Dementia, Alzheimer, etc.

Now we will try to get an overview of some of these diseases. Remember, it is not an in-depth description of the diseases, but it will serve you to gain some understanding about the illness.

Common Mental Disorders:

1) Depression:

Patient remains sad all the time. There is the lack of concentration, excessive disappointment, feeling of helplessness and frequent bouts of anger. If following 4 or more symptoms appear for more than 2 weeks, consultation by a mental health practitioner is advised.

- Excessive sadness,
- Late sleep and waking up from sound sleep, Person is awake 2 or 3 hours before his daily routine, he does not get sound and refreshing sleep or often feels more sleepy
- I have done something wrong and a feeling of committing some sin prevails.
- Cannot concentrate even in activities of one's own interest

- Feeling of constant disappointment
- Acute or constant feeling of sadness, sometimes feeling lazy in the mornings, slowness in thinking, speaking, routine work / activities, etc.
- Continuous feeling of uselessness
- Low self esteem
- Difficulty in making decisions,
- Lack of concentration,
- Constant thinking of death and suicide or has already attempted suicide
- Feeling of weakness, getting tired easily
- No / reduced appetite for food, loss of weight

Depression is linked to certain incidents like death of a near relative, divorce, serious physical illness, loss of money and prestige, not able to gain promotion in place of employment, change of residence, etc. This disease can surely be cured with timely treatment from a psychiatrist. Treatment by medicines and psycho-therapy sessions are useful. Medicines can correct electro-chemical changes in neurotransmitters.

Electro-convulsive therapy is used in patients who do not respond to certain medicines (anti-depressants) and where immediate intervention to evade suicide is required. In ECT, the patient is given medicines to become unconscious, electrodes are attached to patient's head and mild electric current is passed through the electrodes. This causes a seizure like response and the patient regains consciousness after one or two minutes depending upon the dose of anesthesia and given electric current. This treatment can be used twice or thrice during a week. This can definitely help. But nowadays many newer medicines are available which can be effective in controlling the symptoms of the patient. Therefore, the use of ECT is reduced considerably.

The Psychologist talks with patient to address feeling of depression. Psycho-consultations based on scientific principals help a lot to the patient. This kind of therapy is based on scientific principles and is helpful in modifying patient's feelings, attitude and behavior. The issues resulting in sadness arising out of breaking of social relationship etc can be helped through this kind of therapy. Fear of failure at exams or otherwise, can be treated by such consultations. Thus, patient is able to get the help of a Psychologist / Counseller to solve certain problems. Psycho-therapy treatment enables patients to achieve better coping capacity. But there are very few psychologists who can really help to alter behavior of the patients because most of the times they are unaware of the social milieu of the patients. Secondly, they are very few / nearly unavailable to people at large. Therefore, most cases are dealt with medicines.

2) Anxiety:

Anxiety for a short period is a routine part of life. Whenever a person is faced by an adverse condition or an unpleasant experience one can be worried and anxious for a while. But when such a condition persists for a long time (more than a month or so), it calls for consultation and treatment. Severe physical illnesses also cause anxiety. This anxiety usually gets over once the physical illness is gone.

2.1) General anxiety: If one suffers from excessive worry for most parts of the day about any condition, which may or may not exist, for more than 6 months, then it is termed as Anxiety. It is not possible to control and it causes discomfort all the time. It is not related to any time, space and circumstances.

Mental symptoms can be observed as discomfort, irritable behavior, difficulty in concentration, feeling that mind is not working

Physical symptoms :

- Tiredness in a short time,
- Tension in muscles,
- Disturbed sleep,
- Unable to remain sited at one place for a long time
- Increased heartbeats, feeling of tremor, difficulty in breathing, disturbance in stomach, headache, pain in shoulders, neck or back
- Perspiration
- Dry mouth

2.2) Panic disorder : When an excessive feeling of danger or uneasiness prevails or when following symptoms suddenly appear without any specific reason. The symptoms are experienced intensely within ten minutes of the attack.

- Increased heartrate,
- excessive perspiration,
- tremor in body, hands and feet
- Pain in chest, increasing feeling of heaviness upon the chest,
- breathlessness, vomiting, nausea or emptiness in stomach
- Feeling that death will come very soon now
- Feeling giddy, feeling of encircling in the head, patient feels like he /she will fall down just now,
- Patient feels that things have changed around or that he/she is a different person
- Loss of self-control or feeling that one will go mad
- Numbness in limbs, as if hands and legs have become very heavy and weak
- Feel as if all body strength is lost
- All body parts become reddish and face is turned red too.

2.3) Post traumatic disorder :

Even when natural disasters like flood, earthquake, cyclone, etc. are gone, thousands of people keep feeling tense and frightened for a long time. Similarly, men-made disasters like riots, rape, war, etc. affect the victims with this illness. Not all affected people feel this illness. Most people are relieved with the help of friends, relatives and society. But some need treatment for such trauma.

Symptoms : Even after several months of the disaster, following symptoms are observed:

- Person keeps experiencing the shocking incident. At that time the person feels stressed or excited. The heartrate increases, excessive perspiration, feeling tension in other body muscles
- Experiences and reacts as if facing same trouble again
- Often gets nightmares
- The scene is repeated one by one
- No sleep or wakes up from sleep because of feeling of danger
- Feels at risk and totally upset
- Experiences sadness after incident
- Person seems to avoid circumstances which remind of the calamity
- Cannot sleep or wakes up frightened from sleep
- Person becomes frantic and perplexed
- The person feels guilty and unhappy for a situation where he/she is saved but the near relative is affected badly or died

2.4) Phobia : This also falls under the broad heading of Anxiety. Some people feel insecure and afraid of the sight of an animal or insect (like lizard, cockroach, etc). Some are too scared for height, sight of water, blood, injections, enclosed places like lift, airplane, etc. Some are scared to go to a crowded place such as a social gathering, vegetable market, bus stand, marriages, parties, etc. For some, speaking in public, giving lecture from a rostrum etc are very frightening and they cannot control themselves.

Their symptoms are as follows:

- Increase of heartrate, suffocation, increased breathing or uneven breathing, feel trembling, feel as if one would die

Person feels normal as soon as such scary situation is over. When these cause disturbances in regular daily routine, treatment is necessary. Some medicines are definitely useful.

2.5) Obsessive compulsive disorder

When someone gets obsessive about a thought or activity and when he/she has a mental compulsion to do the same thing again and again, he / she is said to suffer from this condition. (e.g., checking if the door is locked properly, washing hands again and again, etc) Often this affects his / her daily routine also.

In case a person does the same activity repetitively and is not able to overcome the thought then he /she needs treatment. E.g., a person keeps feeling that his/her hand is unclean and that he cannot avoid washing it again and again, often getting ulcers due to this. This person is aware about his/her behavior but he/she cannot avoid doing so. He/she feels ashamed and tense. This is also a mental illness and requires treatment. There are good medicines to cure such a behavior.

Several medicines are satisfactorily used for the treatment of all the above kinds of anxiety. All five illnesses related with anxiety require psychotherapy treatment and it can only be provided by a mental health professional.

Severe Mental Disorders

3) Mania :

Person suffering from mania shows out excessive happiness without an evident cause. This illness is contradictory to illness due to depression. Person continues to show happiness with consequence that his/her behavior, speech and communication is changed / affected adversely.

Following symptoms are observed in this illness :

- Remains very happy without reason, boasting, feel that one has a lot of power, money and energy (for example, feeling of being great like a politician or a very rich person).
- Smiling or singing, using English or other language for routine communication also

- Talk too much, mix with everybody immediately and engage in talks, argumentative, answering long and unnecessary, talk endlessly
- Loss of sleep and excessive hunger
- Develop interest in religious activities or increase in sexual desire / activity
- Increase of ornamentation, make up and up-to-date dressing
- Excitement for small things and getting angry
- Spending unnecessarily and buying inessential things
- Performing same tasks but not able to concentrate fully
- Often change topics of conversation which the others cannot understand

Often one cannot identify if the person has mania. But patient's relatives and acquaintances notice change in behavior. It is necessary to take care of such a person. He / she has risky behavior that can harm himself / herself or even others.

Treatment for mania :

This patient requires hospitalization if he is rowdy, violent and harming others around him. Medicines have to be taken regularly for a long period. Often, patient refuses treatment. But medicines can be given - at times mixed with food. Only then the patient is improved. Mania can recur even though it has remitted and then treatment has to be administered again. When such a situation repeats, patient requires medicines as per psychiatrist's instructions, sometimes on maintenance dose for a long period.

4) Schizophrenia :

Schizophrenia is a severe mental illness. It begins at an early age of 15 to 30 years. There are no laboratory tests for diagnosis. The diagnosis is based on symptoms of the patient, his history and mental status examination.

Following symptoms are observed :

- Delusions: Patient's beliefs may be wrong but they are very strong and persistent(e.g. everybody around me are conspiring against me, everybody is discussing about me). The beliefs do not change even after persuasion.
- Hallucinations: The patient has hallucinations (visual, auditory, smell, touch, etc.) which other persons cannot perceive, see or hear. (For example: Patient can see someone rushing towards him to harm him when actually there is no one).
- Disturbance in thinking: Language which is not understandable, speaking incoherently, continue using new words, not able to explain what he spoke about
- Besides, standing or sitting for long in awkward and one position for a long time, strange behavior, laughing or crying without reason can also happen.
- Patient does not go to work, does not take bath or wear clean clothes, not observing cleanliness, washing, not dressing properly, not sleeping at night, sitting alone, keep thinking, mumbling, becoming angry or shout without reason, remaining aloof from people, loss of work, always seem to be lost in one's own world, etc are also some more symptoms.
- People suffering from such illness often commit suicide. Sometimes they become agitated and aggressive, quarreling unnecessarily.

These patients and their families become isolated because people have wrong beliefs about this illness. In addition, patient's relatives also suffer social and economic solitude. But proper identification of illness, regular medicines for a long time and avoiding circumstances which lead to adverse situation in the patient's life, the patient can improve and

rehabilitated. In this illness patient does not believe that he/she is sick and requires treatment. Therefore, the patient refuses to take medicines. Others in family have to take extra care and help the patient by explaining and cajole the patient to take treatment.

5) Children's mental illnesses :

Children are not small copy of adults. Their brain develops gradually and mature at an age of 18 to 20 years. Their mental problems are different. Often, they have mental issues but they are unable to describe the same. It can be understood from their changed behavior and day-to-day dealings. Only certain medicines can be used. Often it is necessary to modify their environment and social interactions with the children.

5.1) Attention Deficit Hyper-activity Disorder (ADHD) :

Children show following symptoms:

- They look lost as if absent from current scenario,
- Making mistakes often so that the studies are affected
- Concentration wavers from one to other matter in a short while
- Not listening to teachers or parents disobedience
- Losing of things and belongings
- Often forget what they have to do or even what they were talking
- Not completing tasks
- Leaving class to go out so that studies are affected

- Not able to sit in one place for some time
- Running around without purpose,
- Speaking excessively
- Disturbing otherpeople's work
- Being excited and angry repeatedly
- Not participating in games peacefully as per rules
- Answering before question in completed
- Cannot wait for their turn in any matter

Proper diagnosis by a mental health professional and timely psycho-education helps such children and the parents. More than medicines they require a patient approach and problem solving by teachers and parents. Psycho therapy should be provided to such cases.

5.2 Behavioral problems :

Behavioral problems are leading amongst all adolescent issues. 10 to 15% of boys and 2 to 5% of girls exhibit them. Basically, when other people are affected due to behavior of an adolescent and also when he / she is not able to maintain age appropriate social relations with others, we can say that the boy or girl has behavioral problems. Often confusions of adolescence exhibit as behavioral problems. If there are 3 or more such symptoms presented by one person then it is termed behavioral problems.

- Argumentative, often speaking bad language,
- Quarreling unnecessarily and enters into fights to harm self or others
- Often speaking lie
- Stealing things

- Damaging property and other things
- Use of addictive substances
- Sexual harassment of girls
- Harassment to birds, animals and people
- Fighting with weapons reported more than once

Causes :

Psychiatrists say that behavioral problems are observed if he / she has lost the mother or have not experienced motherly affection or a child who cannot control emotions and outrages displays behavioral problems. Social science also says that some children in adolescence want to get the social status, comforts and facilities which others (peer group) have and are not in position to get them show up with behavioral problems. Bio science says this can be hereditary in some cases. More boys than girls have such problems. Often the male hormones secreted may cause such problems in some children.

Treatment :

- Problem specific treatment and behavioral therapy helps.
- Medicines are to be given only when required
- Counseling with parents and teacher for specific behaviors is utmost needed.

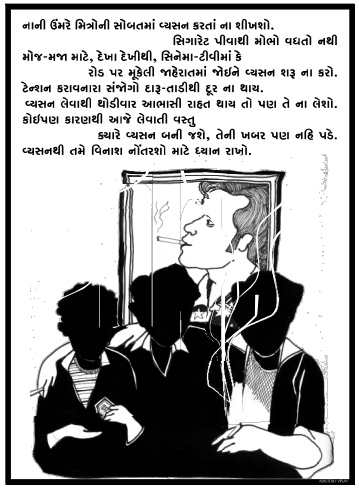
Mental illnesses among children and adolescents need proper attention, These happen due to inherited genes, head injury, insufficient development of brain, chemical changes in brain, improper child rearing and problem in child's mental development. The illness has adverse effect upon his/her educational progress, social relationship and

psychosocial development. Proper diagnosis and treatment where required helps such children. These children have to be trained properly with patience and love.

Often the parents and teachers of such children need a big support both emotionally and socially. They are extremely worried and do not know how to sort out the issues occurring in everyday life. MH Professional would have a big role for support to the parents and counseling for the child.

Addiction is also a mental illness :

This picture shows young boys smoking cigarettes and eating tobacco. There is an advertisement of cigarettes on the wall behind. The advertisements encourages youngsters to act in such a fashion. Continuous show of rich and modernly influential persons who smoke or the pretty girls standing beside a person consuming tobacco pack leave a memorable picture on the young mind. Young boys and girls often feel that smoking cigarettes adds to their impressive outlook. They start nurturing the impression that the smokers are more influential and strong persons. There is some kind of a competition among friends at younger age to smoke and teach how to smoke to the friends who do not know how to smoke. Small kids try to smoke old cigarette stubs or half-finished beedi from father or other older relatives. Slowly they get addicted. Young son is often asked to go to the shop for purchasing Cigarette or bidi for father or other older persons in the family. Often he takes out one from the pack and smokes later in hiding places. Here, father smoking beedi is more serious a



matter than the child stealing a cigarette. He directly influences the young mind that smoking is good enjoyment.

Similarly, use of country liquor, toddy and tobacco starts at young age. Drinking Toddy is not considered a bad habit among rural and tribal people in most areas. Often Toddy is served to the guests or at social gatherings. Young and old, men and women and even young children, everyone enjoys toddy. But it is not proper. Toddy is also a kind of liquor and is habit forming. It harms body, mind, society and it is socio-economically disastrous at a later age.

Young boy in home sees father, uncle, grandparents, other elderly persons, moneyed or powerful people who smoke. The child also tastes bidi / cigarette / alcohol and begin consuming the addictive substances in hiding to start with. They grow up soon and continue drinking in public as well. It becomes a habit that cannot be abandoned even if he wants to leave it.

To prevent this, a strong and wider campaign is necessary. For example: people in Balasar decided that no gutka will be sold in the village. Those who bring it from outside are punished by friends. Panchayat collects fine on it. Such a movement against liquor and beedi is required at workplaces and in the society. At individual level, people have to abandon this habit, teach and advice children about harmful effects of addiction from tobacco or alcohol.

Effect of tobacco and liquor addiction

The adjoining picture shows bunches of tobacco and gutka in different forms. You can also see Beedi, cigarette, chillum and hukkah forming big smoking clouds. Why do we show this? You are familiar with all these different forms of tobacco. Tobacco is a plant that is not eaten by animals also. But we all use (eat and smoke) it in different forms. Tobacco juice particles and smoke hurt all parts of body. Tobacco has an adverse effect wherever its particles, smoke or its ashes touch our internal organs. Tobacco is smoked, smelt and chewed. Let us

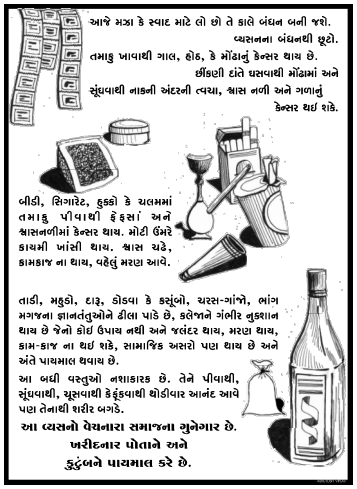
examine, how does it work on us? How does it affect us?

Tobacco smoke has about 4000 active poisonous chemicals which harm a human body. When one smokes, these chemicals affect inner surfaces of mouth, nose, throat, breathing pipes and lungs. It has nicotine (chemical) which is responsible for addiction. Carbon monoxide present in the smoke reduces the amount of oxygen reaching different parts of a human body. Smoke contains aromatic hydro carbons, amines and nitrosamines each can cause cancer.

Death rate amongst those who smoke is about 70% higher than death rate among non-smokers. Highest death rate is between 45 to 55 years of age. Main reason of death is heart attack and cancer. Smoking reduces person's working capacity. He begins to remain absent at his job and suffers economically

1) Lung cancer is 10 to 25 times higher due to smoking. Breathing pipes get smaller causing asthma, coughing forever. Acute respiratory infection and flu are common besides cancer. Additionally it can cause cancer of larynx (voice box), mouth, food pipe, liver, kidney, pancreas, lungs and ovaries.

2) Smoking affects the cardiac blood vessels to shrink resulting into heart attack and ultimately death. Other blood vessels carrying fresh blood to body parts are similarly affected, reducing extent of blood circulation. The blood vessels taking blood to and from the brain also narrow down and thus it may result in stroke. Main arterial walls become weak, thin down and they inflate like a balloon, the arteries then can rupture and death can also happen. Similarly, the hair-like



small veins reaching other parts of the body become smaller and cause unbearable pain, difficulty in walking and movement and non-healing ulcers.

3) Foetus of women who smoke does not grow properly and often results into abortion, still birth or death of the newborn child.

4) Those who smoke beedi and tobacco can have ulcers in stomach and intestines.

5) Other persons who live with the smoker also breath the smoke of tobacco causing such harmful effects in their body also. It can cause burning eyes, breathing trouble and even lung cancer in the children. Thus, tobacco and gutka are addictive substances which cause body damages and other painful experiences. Should we not abandon tobacco in our family?

Country liquor and toddy

Toddy is as addictive as country liquor and a bottle of English alcohol. Alcohol is produced by fermentation and boiling fruits, rice, wheat, jaggery etc which contain carbohydrates. In the process several other chemicals are added. Fresh juice occurring in a palm (called tad in Gujarati) tree is called Niro. It is fresh and healthy. Such fresh Niro is usually not available. What is marketed as Niro also gets fermented soon in less or more proportion and becomes toddy or alcohol.

Let us examine how it affects our body. Approximately, 80% men consume alcohol occasionally. 10% of males and 3% females become addicted to alcohol. They face many problems of mind and body as well as social problems.

Ethanol is main component of liquor. Small proportion of methanol, butanol, aldehyde, histamine, phenols, tannins, iron, lead and cobalt are also present. These affect human body. Alcohol is absorbed from stomach to some extent only. Majority of alcohol gets absorbed in our

body through the walls of small intestines. It is believed that 2 to 10% alcohol is thrown out of body by breathing, urine and perspiration. But most of it gets converted into acetaldehyde. The acetaldehyde is stored in liver. It accumulates in liver, brain, etc. causing extensive damage.

Effects of alcohol

Addiction due to Alcohol causes physical, mental and social damage as well. They are briefly described below:

Physical damage : The liver is severely damaged, which may manifest as jaundice, ascites (collection of fluid in abdomen) and severe liver dysfunction leads to death. It may also contribute to development of cancer in various parts of the body.

Impotence and infertility : It may also lead to infertility and impotence among men and women.

Early deaths : It cause reduction in life span by approximately 15 years. Generally, heart attack but at times, cancer, accident or suicide may cause death in alcoholic persons.

Mental effects : It may lead to changes such as thoughts, speech and behavior. Sleeplessness, loss of memory, confusion, helplessness, suspiciousness, day dreaming, hallucinations, etc. These are all the symptoms of mental illness.

Social effects : An alcoholic person is not able to work, loses job or work, cannot maintain social responsibilities, marriage may break, children's education is often interrupted, loses friends and social contacts, may have financial bankruptcy, gets punishment for breaking laws, etc.

It is surprising how and why one falls prey to addictive substances. All addictions are harmful to body and bring catastrophes. Why can one not leave such addictive habits?

Normally no one helps if somebody quarrels after a drink. They look at it from a distance and make fun. They are hesitant to maintain relations.

People think twice about marrying their daughter or sister in that family. Thus, his social relations begin to end. Even friends do not support. Alcohol is served on social celebrations, marriages, meetings, etc. Thus, even a person who does not drink for himself distributes alcohol on such occasions. It is wrong to consider that serving drinks is an honor and necessary requirement.

Young adults begin drinking from such occasions. This custom is not beneficial but harmful to society. Our traditions and customs on social occasions and marriages are improving day by day. We should begin to change this custom and prohibit serving drinks and drinking in public.

Drinking in Gujarat is unlawful but there are spots run by individuals often joined by family as well in this illegal activity. Often the liquor shopkeeper makes alcohom from inedible items also to gain more profits. Drinks from these preparations cause irreparable damage to body. For example: drinking of such bad quality alcohol leads to blindness and causes death. We often come across such incidents in newspapers.

Effects of Alcohol and toddy on family:

Wife of an alcoholic man suffers the most. Men start drinking and increase its quantity and frequency over a period of time. They find several excuses to drink. In the beginning they give reasons for drinking alcohol. They are even sorry for odd behavior when effect of alcohol is almost gone. He requests pardon for bad manners, talks wisely but drinks again and again. He spends his earning on alcohol rather than fulfilling domestic needs. When the wife or family objects, he would say, “I am earning and

spending, I am not asking from you". He is not able to perceive the side effects and damage to himself.

He loses self-control due to drinking. He quarrels over small matters. He beats children and also his wife. He would snatch away earning or savings from his wife / family to spend on alcohol. He damages household furniture, etc. Besides, this inflicts mental stress to the family members. Children are adversely affected. Children raised in such situations observe that the father is able to get things done as per his wishes by beating and psychological torture to their mother. Such children thus learn that women have to bear atrocities and she must behave as the husband dictates. Thus alcohol, toddy drinking and the vicious cycle of atrocity on wife and children continues.

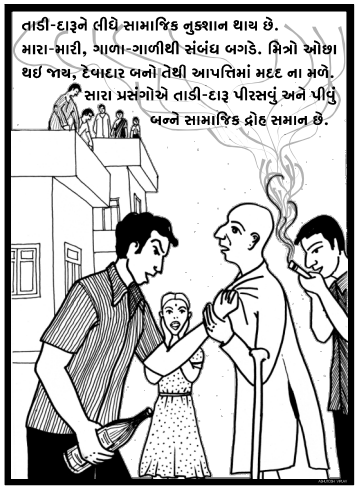
The man who drinks, begin slowly consuming more and more. He cannot undertake the work / duty after drinking and therefore loses the job. Often drinking does not stop even after this economic shock. He further starts using money from home. The wife has to work more because he does not have a job to feed his family. Even children have to start earning at a younger age.

We see this happening in families of relatives and friends. It is required that we persuade our relatives and friends not to get habituated of alcohol and toddy. We should explain that the man is the main supporter of family. If he loses everything on alcohol, nobody can save the family and the home. Considering family's economic, social and psychological safety, all must abandon drinking and must see to it that children and youth of next generation do not learn to drink.

Other social effects :

The man drinks in the company of friends but after that he is lonely. We have seen many persons roaming on the road, sleeping in dirty places beside a road or near wastebins, getting hit by vehicle, fighting with people for no reason or for any trivial cause, sometimes fights end up into hitting each other or causing problem and crime for which he gets

into unnecessary trouble. Most of the times no one help such persons or people cut jokes or is laughed at etc. Often the relatives are not comfortable meeting such a person and even are not willing to marry their daughter or sister in family of such a person.



It is a matter of concern that in many village communities during social events especially during marriage alcohol distribution to guests is a must. So, even if the host does not drink, he has to make available the alcohol / toddy / tobacco in different forms etc so that a wrong message is conveyed that distribution of alcohol is a matter of status. Many young boys start drinking at such celebrations only. Thus, it has a long term implication and not-called for effects on the community.

Similarly, the person who manufactures alcohol and runs a liquor shop involves his wife, mother and children in this trade which is not legal in Gujarat. This results into giving bribes to the policemen, dealing with persons who are not having good reputation and sometimes criminals. Often the chemicals used in Alcohol may have adverse effects on those who consume which can cause blindness and death also.

All the above effects have a long time implication for our society and we need to rethink about the evil of alcohol.

De addiction and treatment :

Generally, people believe that it is not possible to leave the abusive substances such as alcohol, tobacco, merry juana, cannabis, gutka, opium, etc. They say that if they do not consume the substance then there is a lot of physical problem. They will also say "tried to leave it several times, but could not do the same and so they have to continue".

Is it really true? This picture of a person shows that he is habituated with alcohol and other stuff. In spite of that he has decided that he does not want to continue to drink even if he has so many problems. If he is strong in his determination, his friends, relatives and health workers of village will co-operate with him to help. Nowadays treatment for de addiction is available. The person has to be taken to such a center to get treatment. After the treatment of 8 to 10 days, one's body is freed from all ill effects. It is important to keep a watch for him not to start the substance again after he comes home. Old friends and relations and customs should not provide an opportunity of drinking again.

Please remember :

1) Treatment of de addiction is expensive. If you have benefited, you must recognize and should not restart.

2) If you have strong desire to leave and are determined then it is possible to get rid of addiction for ever.

3) Belief that some addictive substance is less harmful than other is not relevant. Every substance has its bad effects which make your body weak and sick. For example: leave alcohol and begin toddy. Leave smoking and eat tobacco or eat gutka, or smoke chill or hukkah in place of cigarettes, etc.

4) Avoid the circumstances and occasions that encourage you to drink. Avoid the friends and relatives who pressurize you to start substance. Work hard to change the events and circumstances which give you tension. Be occupied in creative activity to forget about substances.

5) Create a group of those who are deaddicted, meet them often, talk to others about your experiences and slowly help them leave drinking. Young people may concentrate on certain other activities instead of addiction. For example, undertake tasks for improvement in your society, village cleanliness, village health etc. activities. You can also call and listen to some respected leader at such meetings.

Treatment for de addiction

Socio-psychological causes are responsible for boys to start smoking and then it continues. It is observed that 90 - 95% smokers can leave smoking if they decide strongly. They do not require special program, clinical guidance or medicines. However, help by suggestion, guidance, consultation, change in behaviour, hypnosis, self-determination and a societal ban can help. Smoking can begin again within first three months of quitting it. If one receives social support and suggestions by a doctor or respected persons it can greatly help him.

Relief from smoking habit

Please support those who want to stop smoking. He can begin by reducing number of cigarettes or beedis per day and then slowly stopping it altogether. Please talk to him about ill effects of tobacco, suggest him to read related literature, advice and guide him. Suggest him to leave the company of those who are smoking or insisting one for smoking. He should visit his respected guru or Maharaj for advice and counselling. Take him to a well-known doctor. If required, advise him to chew nicotine gum,. Also observe that one does not start using tobacco in another form after leaving smoking.

Advice those who cannot stop smoking to hold beedi for long time between fingers and but not smoke it. If he smokes beedi, he should not inhale the smoke deeply. He can use beedi or cigarette made from other herbs except tobacco.

Explain your college going young boys not to be habituated by beedi or cigarette. Explain the economic and social losses due to smoking, discuss in family and public places, prepare educative material and display it at several places in village.

Alchohol and toddy de addiction

1) Those addicted to alcohol have tremors, vibration in head, sleeplessness, bad dreams, illusions and even epilepsy
2) While leaving alcohol sufficient nutrition is required - B complex in particular, vitamin B1, Thyamin 50gm every day for 7 days
3) Diazepam 10mg tab is to be given and reducing increasingly after 5 days
4) Alcohol de-addiction should be under medical supervision only

Social contacts after stopping alcohol drinking is necessary

5) Explain the harms for physical, mental and social harm perpetuated due to alcohol
6) Teach one to live without alcohol
7) Continue to counsel, guide and support
8) Teach him to use leisure time by spending time with non-drinking friends, go for walks, read, hear songs, bhajans etc.
9) Teach him to face tension and problems without alcohol. Try to remove his causes with the help of friends and relatives

Please remember alcohol does not remove primary reason of tension. Alcohol is harmful not only for self, but also for dear family members

Chapter 5: Treatment Of Mentally Ill Persons

Scientific and medical research has helped to provide a quick and easy treatment for these illnesses. Person with proper treatment can have a normal, productive and social life. Earlier, treatment of mental illness was confined within four walls of a hospital. Patient had to stay in the hospital for a long time or sometimes, for life also. According to new thinking it is better to provide treatment at home. Based on this, our organization, Lok Swasthya Mandal provides home treatment to patients from villages.

Purpose of Treatment

PURPOSE OF TREATMENT FOR SUCH PATIENTS IS TO ENABLE THE PATIENT TO RESUME HIS DAILY SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES LIKE WHAT HE USED TO DO BEFORE BEING SICK.

World Health Organization (WHO) emphasizes that the patient should have improved quality of life as a result of treatment. Following steps are required for the purpose of treatment and rehabilitation.

1) Controlling the symptoms of illness: Can be achieved by taking medicines in proper doses regularly
2) Patient must understand his work and financial responsibilities, become self-reliant and maintain own productive / work related activities or service activities
3) Accept the family responsibilities consciously and observe the same
4) Become active socially and perform all social roles

Treatment with medicines

Psychiatrist decides the dose, duration and frequency based on the kind of illness of the patient. Care takers are required to follow the instructions ritually.

Attend to following :

1) Regularity of medicines as per doctor's instructions
2) Medicines take at least two to four weeks to be effective and show improvement
3) Do not change the dose of medicines on advice of relatives or friends or on your own. In case it is required then only the treating doctor will change the dose.
4) In case if you notice any side-effects of the medicines then consult the treating doctor or the health worker in charge.
5) Stopping medicines abruptly results into relapse of the illness. In case of relapse the medicines are to be started afresh from the beginning and sometimes much more.

Psychotherapy :

Psychiatrist / Psychologist tries to understand patient's wishes, problems and thoughts. The patient and the caretaker also express themselves frankly and the doctor guides the patient accordingly.

Importance of family during treatment :

Care takers in the patient's family have a good idea of what the patient likes or dislikes, his expectations and information about his /her behavior. The family can help in treatment by modifying patient's behaviour and responses. The family should be explained that in no case they should use demeaning and insulting phrases like idle, pretending, mad, dramatizing etc. for the patient.

Family's care and love for patient, their sympathy and readiness makes the recovery speedy for the patient. Expressing too much concern and feelings, patient becomes more dependent on the care-taker. So the

care-taker should take a firm attitude for making the patient to take care of his/her responsibilities and his / her daily activities. Even if the patient makes mistakes the patient must be encouraged to learn his / her earlier skills and start working. Such attitude makes rehabilitation possible.

Patient care by near relatives is very important. It helps recovery of the patient and creates amicable family atmosphere. Mentally ill patient adds to the family fs responsibilities. If the patient remains without treatment, the burden keeps increasing and it increases unhappiness, stress and tension in the family. Treatment helps patient recover. The family's love and care help the patient to improve fast and reestablishes himself / herself in his family and the society. Therefore, if anybody in the family has mental illness, do not neglect nor consider him useless. If you do so, the severity of illness increases. So, it is important to concentrate on his illness and get proper treatment. Sometimes illness may persist for long, but continue to take care with love and affection in order to create a happy family life.

Expectation from care giver of a patient

Patient needs to be treated. Therefore, care taker should take him / her to the Psychiatrist. Friendliness and sympathetic care from the care givers is the best support. Please treat the patient with love and affection. Care giver should take him/her for a walk and also to work. Have faith in the patient. Do not keep doubting his / her ability to carry out any task. Help him remain busy in daily schedules (like cleaning, bathing, grooming, etc. Do not get angry at the mistakes by the patient. In fact, the patient should be rewarded positively for accomplishing any tasks (however small). Help the patient to sort out any social issues or confusions. If you do this much then it means you care for and support the patient

Continue the treatment regularly and consistently. You should understand the dosage of each medicine and the timing also from the doctor or from health worker. Sometimes when the patient is not willing to swallow / take the medicines you can give him mixed in his food. But remember that the patien has a right to refuse the medicines. For the patient who has lost insight you may take decision to mix it with food. But as the patient improves and regains his insight you need to tell him how and what medicines he is being given. Also explain that the decision to give medicines has been taken in the best interest of the patient.

There may be other families having a mentally ill person. Please help them to reach out to Mental Health services, meet the patients and care-givers often and discuss about the behavior and treatment of patients. Sometimes organize a picnic with both families of patients. Your guidance and active help will be able to improve life of so many patients. This is a humanitarian task and it is important to find time and resources to help such people. If you do not help then it is difficult to say when these patients will attain better life.

Mental illness can be controlled by provision of medical treatment. Then it is required to arrange for proper counseling and support by a health worker or a clinical psychologist. The patient on recovery should not be allowed to remain without activity. Allow and encourage the patient on recovery to carry out daily activities by himself / herself. Even new skills can be taught so that he / she can feel self-reliant, healthy and happy. Thus, mentally ill patients can return to their original work. The illness can thus be restricted and patient is able to do small and big tasks at farms. He can visit social gatherings and resume useful role with the family.

All this is possible due to careful treatment of patient. Encourage other defaulting patients to continue treatment by giving examples of patients who have recovered or are on recovery stage.

Medicines prescribed by doctor may have some side effects like slobbering, dry mouth, extra perspiration, vomiting and nausea, not passing urine, having fever etc. Whatever it is do not decide anything about medicines. Visit the doctor, explain the difficulty and seek his guidance. Some patients require lifelong prescription of medicines. Do not get tired or disappointed. Such a patient requires medicines just like one requires his regular food.

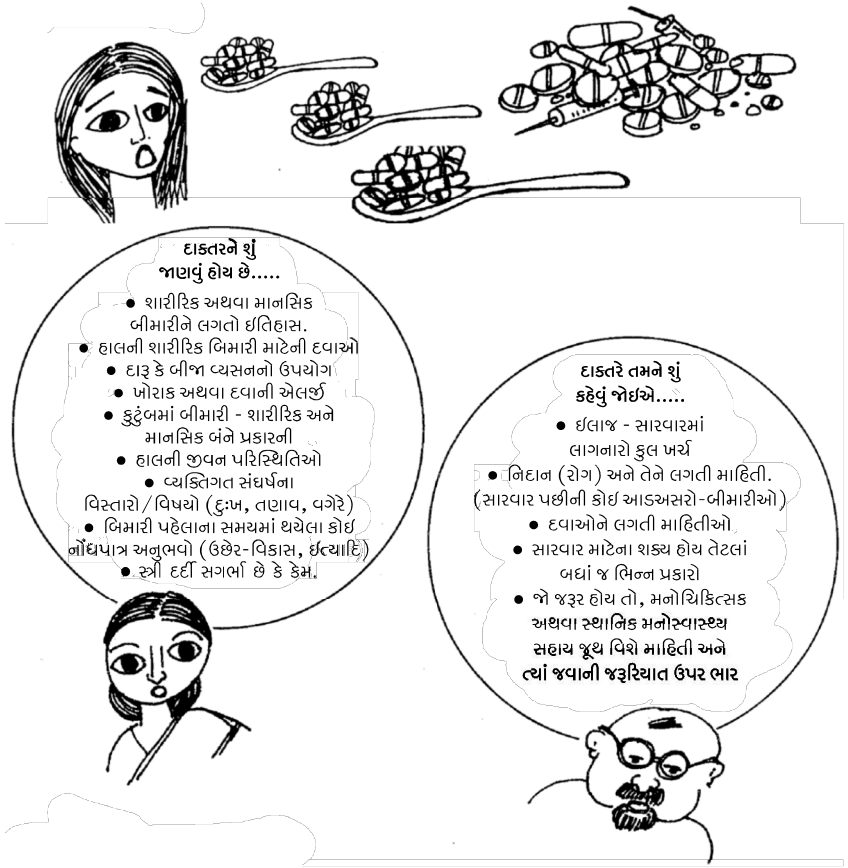
When you visit hospital with the patient

MOST MENTALLY ILL PATIENTS ARE UNABLE TO GIVE PRECISE INFORMATION ABOUT THE SYMPTOMS OF ILLNESS. THEREFORE, RELATIVE / FAMILY MEMBER TAKING CARE MUST ACCOMPANY AND PROVIDE RELEVANT INFORMATION TO THE DOCTOR / PSYCHIATRIST.

REMEMBER:

- Relative or his caregiver from family must accompany patient and provide detailed information
- Person accompanying patient must have thorough information about symptoms and details of illness for example: since how long are these symptoms, which are symptoms, information about previous treatment, whether treatment is now continued, which medicines are used by patient, dose of medicines, what is the response etc. It must be informed to the doctor. Papers containing details of treatment or medicine strips or its packing should be shown to the doctor.
- Information about pregnancy of woman patient and her menstrual cycle is required

- Any social event which is known to be the cause of the illness, must be told to the doctor by the accompanying person



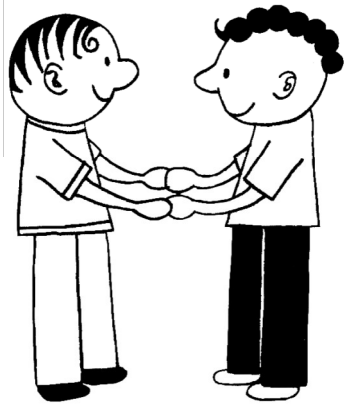
- Accompanying person must understand medicines, their dose size, frequency during day and how to administer. Accompanying person should ensure that patient receives medicines as per exact details given by doctor. Care must be taken to see that medicine does not get altered. Often accompanying person with the patient and caregiver at home are two different persons in our villages. In such cases it is necessary that the person who went to the clinic explains every instruction to the home caretaker. If this is not done then the patient does not get proper dose and kind of medicines. Ultimately, the patient does not improve and the illness continues.

Chapter-6 Rights Of Mentally Ill Patient

There is great amount of work being done for those who are disable. It is now accepted at every level that the persons having any disability should receive extra care and facilities in all public places. Mental disability is also one of such disabilities.

UNO has published a special charter known as United Nations Convention for Persons with Disability. India is one of the nations who have signed / agreed to this charter. Its implication is that all nations are bound to organize facilities and make laws, rules and traditions to protect the rights of the disabled as suggested by the charter. Very briefly we will go through some of the suggestions applicable to mental disability.

1) Right to live a good life: The mentally disabled persons have a basic right to live a good life. This means they should receive sufficient food, clean clothes, well-ventilated living space, comfortable and clean bed, etc. There is a general negligence for the mentally ill in our country and so they do not always receive all these conveniences.



2) Right for social security: Just like other members of our society, the mentally ill must receive a comfortable and secure environment, occasions to meet other persons in community, social respect, etc. Most of the mentally ill persons are isolated due to negligence and social insults in our

society. Such persons are insulted, nobody wants to meet them, nobody talks nor believes them and they are not accepted as guests also, etc situations are common.

3) Right to health and mental health: The mentally ill persons must receive good medical treatment for necessary time period. They should be reached to the health centers or a hospital if they fall ill (both physical and mental illnesses). People generally spend money and time on folk healing practices, bhuva, etc and not provide effective medical treatment for the patient, this should change in favor of medical treatment.

4) Right to freedom: Just like other citizens of our country they should also receive. They should be able to take decisions for themselves, their treatment mode, place of living, taking care and decisions about his land or agricultural matters, financials, etc. are rights which need to be paid extra attention.

5) Right to receive legal aid: The mentally ill persons should be protected by laws. In the matters involving law, court of law, and other offices they must receive help of an individual who takes decisions and provide guidance in favor of the client. There should be arrangements by which whatever resources the disabled holds, like land, money, jewellary, etc. are used in favor of the disabled only. Other people or relatives should not take away any of the advantages available to the disabled. Often we find that the relatives or neighbors provide some food to the person but not give him full right to his property and even do not take care to improve life of the disabled by medical treatment and rehabilitation. It is necessary to establish patient's legal right and support group at community level must be organized. The govt can also intervene to create a trust of his property and arrange to provide treatment and improvement for the person.

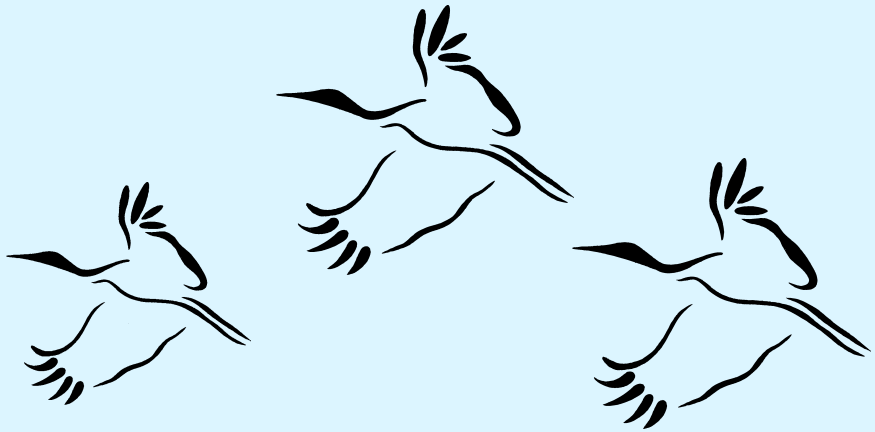
6) Freedom from violence or cruelty: The mentally ill person should not be subjected to undue punishment and violence or cruel

behavior. There should be an environment to prevent punishment, act of cruelty, unfair dealings, personal injuries etc to the disabled. Often mentally ill women are left alone without any assistance. They are sexually abused and left alone without any help. Often we find that people make the mentally ill person to do the work illegally without enough compensation, tied up, get beaten for any mistakes or otherwise. All this is wrong. Nobody can have a right to undertake violence and cruelty, exploitation and oppression against these persons in any circumstances. This is not only illegal but it is punishable by law.

SPECIAL NOTE :

Friends, it is very important and helpful to guide those who have been alone and are not being treated medically. It is a social service. You should not stop at advising such patients and their family. You are expected to provide active help to such families.

Our legal system has many weaknesses. We can strive to get proper treatment for them and motivate the relatives / family through our sympathetic help. Also a larger campaign in favor of the mentally ill persons is a need of the day.

Please observe the following:

We must receive sufficient advice from doctor and others about suggested medicines, effects of medicines over a shorter as well as a longer time, ill effects if any and also about addiction due to medicines. We must also discuss food, other habits and lifestyle. Mental illness medicines affect pregnant woman and her child in different manners. Several medicines used in mental illnesses have special effects combined with other general medicines. All these must be discussed with the doctor. Medicines prescribed for mentally ill patient should never be taken by others to be used without consulting doctor. Medicines must be administered under direct and careful supervision only. Patient and his caregiver must participate in deciding all matters about the treatment. It is often required to provide psychological support to the patient as well as the care takers. This can be arranged through the health center in our area.