Say It Brave- Initiate the Conversation

Mental health is an integral and essential component of health. Health, according to WHO, is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of diseases or infirmity. Mental health is the state of someone who is "functioning at a satisfactory level of emotional and behavioural adjustment." Mental health helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices. It is important at every stage of life. There are specific psychological and personality factors that make people vulnerable to mental health problems and it is a common problem, but help is available. However, one needs to start the conversation to assist and be assisted. People with these problems can get better and recover completely.

India has one of the largest populations affected by mental illness. The country accounts for nearly 15% of the global mental, neurological and substance abuse disorder burden out of which 7.5% of the Indian population suffer from mental disorders. Nearly 90% of these people have received no care at all in the past year . Hence, it is no exaggeration to suggest that our country is undergoing a mental health epidemic. WHO labelled India as the "World's Most Depressed Country", closely followed by China and US.

The lack of awareness and sensitivity about the issue in the country is the foremost reason behind such tremendous gap. There is a big stigma around mental health issues and people living with any kind of mental illnesses. From using discriminatory lexicons like 'crazy', 'dangerous', 'lunatic' etc. in daily conversations to overt discrimination in the society, mental health stigma leads to a vicious cycle of shame, suffering and isolation for the people diagnosed with mental illness along with their family members, friends, relatives and caretakers.

In India due to the lack of mental health professionals, medications are used instead of undertaking proper counselling and sensitization as a first step. Therefore, taking into account the prevalent situation, this Webinar intends to discuss issues on mental health, mental health stigmas and how to overcome them, how to start a mental health conversation, rubric of mental language etc.