

SWARA

The Unheard Voice of Mental Health

The Cover says

Mission Aashalok

A home to men
with mental illness

Inside Voice

Human Resources

for mental health care:
The Strategic Edge

Editor's Desk

Mental health disorders are real illnesses that often cause people to suffer silently. And unfortunately, there is still a stigma associated with them. But, having discussions and raising awareness about mental health are the first steps to combating the stigma. This non-profit group believes that mental health is, in fact, a critical part of overall wellness. They are an authority in mental health support, recovery, and advocacy, even say that their advocacy work helps to strengthen their own mental health recovery, an activism is a way that caregivers, loved ones (People's), and all those touched by mental illness can give back to and aid others.

People's Forum is a leading organization, in Eastern India, that raises awareness and provides support and resources for mental health. The organisation offer a number of ways to turn one's suffering into action. The introduction of Mission Ashra and Mission Aashalok, Eastern India's First initiative shelter home for destitute individuals with mental illness was established by People's Forum, in Odisha. To address and treat mental health conditions before they cause individual suffering. They advocate for prevention services, early identification, and intervention of symptoms, and plans of action to hopefully stop the progression of mental illness.



Strategies Facilitating School Connectedness of Children with Hearing Impairment in Special and Mainstream Schools: A Survey

----- *Monica S. Dkhar (Special Educator, SSA-Inclusive Education)* -----

Education plays a significant role in an individual's life. It is considered as a powerful agent of change and change in an individual is possible mainly through education. Today, education is considered as one of the primary needs for successful living of an individual. The beneficial effects of education are many. The more the individual gains knowledge, the more he/she grows. Education facilitates knowledge acquisition and helps an individual to show what is best in him/her. Education helps in determining what is good or bad and assists an individual to be a responsible citizen of the society. Being educated and earning a professional degree prepares an individual to be a part of the workforce. Thus, education transforms an individual to a well adjusted and productive individual in society. Without education, an individual is incomplete. So, education has become a necessity of life.

School is one of the places where the children spend most of their time for learning. In school, students with hearing impairment form a minority but an integral group. Earlier, the education to them was offered in special school set ups only. As the years passed along, the number of special schools available in the country was found not enough to offer education to all eligible children with hearing impairment. With the emergence of the philosophy of inclusive education in the country, more and more mainstream schools are enrolling students with hearing impairment. As a promotion drive, the Government of India has also come up with various programmes like Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (2002) and Rastriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (2006) to include all

children regardless of their individual differences and difficulties. Most of the state governments adopted the principle of inclusive education, enrolling children with hearing impairment in mainstream schools. Action plans are being drafted and implemented in such a way that all children have access to mainstream education system thereby expanding the coverage and reach of the unreached population. Several efforts have been initiated to create a barrier free environment for education in all these schools. Majority of the existing school systems have been modified in terms of physical factors, curriculum aspects, teaching-learning strategies and styles and leadership roles to include all children hearing impairment in the educational process. Thus, the education of children with hearing impairment today is offered in both special and mainstream schools. Both programmes focus on enrolling and sustaining all children including those with hearing impairment in schools. The success of all these programmes is dependent on how well the students with hearing impairment are connected with their schools and vice versa.

Teachers play a vital role in schools, their influence is enormous during the school years. The necessary teaching skills and competencies amongst teachers help them to perform their tasks efficiently as well as to connect their children with school so that they become a part and parcel of the school system. Well connected children consider school as a second home.



Inauguration of Mission Aashalok: A home to mentally ill men



Mission Aashalok, literal meaning of which translated to land of hope'. This is the land of hope for the destitutes and mentally ill men who were denied by the society, disowned by their family, and whose self-worth and self-esteem gets crushed everyday on streets, railway platforms, and outside the holy land of temple, mosque and church. The rescue team of Mission Aashalok had rescued a total of 45 male individuals from Bhubaneshwar and Puri on 14th and 15th August respectively. Even in the adverse conditions, the rescue team has successfully provided psycho-social care to the rescued residents, who were not only from Odisha but also from other parts of the country, like Karnataka and Maharashtra. Till now Mission Aashalok have reunited 5 residents with their family and are also in the process of tracing family of others. The objective of Mission Aashalok is to build a therapeutic community in the centre in which the resident will have a feeling of ownership in the centre. They won't be a mere recipient of the service rather they will be a participant of the whole process.

“Start by doing what's necessary, then do what's possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible.

Saint Francis of Assisi



Mission Ashra observed its 16th Foundation Day, on 18th July 2019, at its centre in Janla, Odisha. The event was inaugurated by Mr. Gobinda Chandra Pattanaik (The Member Secretary & Founder of Mission Ashra), Mr. Nishitha Ranjan Nanda (Treasury), Dr. Subendhu Narayan Mishra (consulting Psychiatrist) and Ms. Madhumita (UNICEF). Foundation Day observed guests from Annapurna Finance Pvt. Ltd and People's Forum. The event observed participation from the staff and residents at Ashra, who performed dance routines on musical numbers and also sang during the event. There were group dance performances by the counselors, care workers and residents. The performances were enjoyed by the audience. Mr. Gobinda Chandra Pattanaik (Member Secretary and the founder of People's Forum rewarded one of the care worker of Ashra because of her exceptional performance. He thanked the guests for coming and participating in the joyful event, marking the 16th year of the foundation of Mission Ashra

Independence Day celebration at Mission Ashra

Independence Day was fervently celebrated at Mission ASHRA. Mission Ashra is a shelter home for destitute women with mental illness. It currently houses 243 women from various parts of the country. The centre provides integrated support to the inmates, from rescue, treatment, counseling to final rehabilitation in the family and in the community. It is located in Janla Industrial Area, Khorda. We also have a male unit, Mission Aashalok, which started functioning from August, 2019.

The celebrations were remarkable as ASHRA commemorated its 73rd Independence Day, which was very special in more than one ways. The residents and Care workers heartfully coordinated and helped in decoration with rangoli, balloons and paper flags. The residents were given tri-color hand bands, ribbons and batches which were also provided to all the attendees.

The Member Secretary & Founder of Mission Ashra, Mr. Gobinda Chandra Pattanaik, hoisted the Tricolor Flag along with the chief guest, Mr. Dibyajyoti Pattanaik (Director), Mr. Sanjay Pattanaik (COO), Mr. Nishitha Ranjan Nanda (Treasury) and Mr. Satyajit Das (CFO). The chief guests paid tribute to the National freedom fighters. Members of Annapurna Finance Pvt. Ltd and



People's Forum enthusiastically participated in the celebration. The founder of Mission ASHRA proposed the idea of providing rewards to the attendees as a token of thanks. The program took place from 8am onwards, which comprised of theme (dance, speech, songs). The residents of ASHRA also cheerfully participated in the program and enjoyed to the fullest.

Monthly Updates

Number
Speaks

Mission Ashra Janla	No. of Residents 248	Total Rescue 1309	Total Reunion 705
Mission Ashra Jharsuguda (Female Unit)	No. of Residents 105	Total Rescue 218	Total Reunion 113
Mission Ashra Jharsuguda (Male Unit)	No. of Residents 54	Total Rescue 121	Total Reunion 67
Mission Ashra Talcher	No. of Residents 47	Total Rescue 64	Total Reunion 17
Mission Ashalok Gangapada	No. of Residents 40	Total Rescue 40	Total Reunion 5

Raksha Bandhan Celebration at Mission Ashra

A large number of under-privileged, vulnerable people of all age, hungry & homeless; hoping for spark of light. Holdings hands with love, care & protection which can rescue them from the fear of being excluded, the oppression, and the stigma attached which bring negativity over separation from others, restrictions in areas, and sometimes belief of untouchability. All these though of fear make them unacceptable, which force them to beg for their living and expose to suffering in the streets.

Ashra is like home for the people who have experienced suffering. Ashra is a place for them

which can protect them and keep them safe. It is a place that enlightens their soul and brings them happiness and belief in themselves. These women live a healthy life here, and ride their dreams like horses, with peace and confidence. Carrying this belief inside, they enthusiastically celebrated the festival of bond and protection. On that beautiful they exchanged Rakhi with each other, in the name of care & protection. These rakhis were prepared and made by them. They also went to collector's office and police station to celebrate Raksha Bandhan



Bonding Story

Her family was in search of her and at the reunion process, the family accepted her, despite her mental illness. They were ready to fight against the stigma attached to her mental illness and promised to take responsibility of her, instead of abandoning her.



Due to her speedy recovery, while residing at Ashra, the resident soon got reunited with her family.

The Essence

Beautiful women disturbed with pain,
So much to say none to retain
She will never leave the place
Never again feel the same
Tears rolled down by her cheeks
But time to say goodbye
Never is it too late to feel alive





She is bold and brave, escaped from tired circumstances far away from her home, searching for new life but miserably found inside the loom full of crowds- she shouted! "Where am I?" She walked miles and miles with that deep wound in her leg and finally found hopeful hands taking her towards the brighter land.

The welcoming hands helped her search for her quest and in the basket of unwanted rocks, she found sisters just like her struggling for them.

During her time she got well, her quest for herself was found. Her guardian angels came for her rescue. Now she leaves with sparkled tears, for those helpful hands.

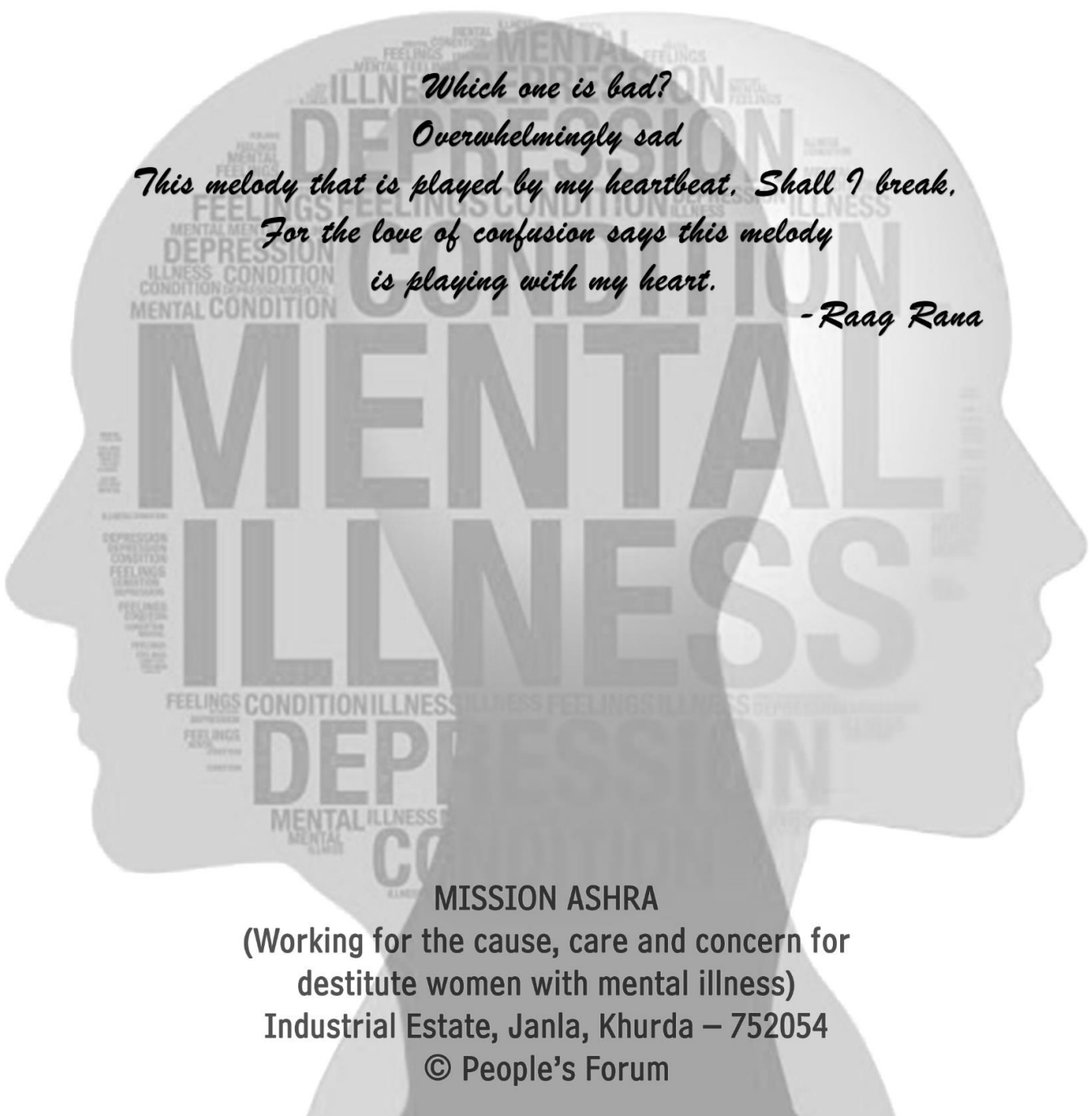
The Face of Ashra

The oldest resident of Mission Ashra, she is aware about everything from the rules and regulations of the organization to the daily schedule. With her wrinkles of experience, known to be the 'media face of Ashra', she acts as a mediator between the untold stories to the happy phase reunion of the residents.

With her painful legs and round body she performs tasks and engage in activities with beautiful curve in that face. At Ashra, she is not only a mere resident but also works as an employee in the kitchen, helping in cooking and cutting vegetables and getting remunerated for the same.

She gets joy in cooking and serving food to others and the remunerations builds as a positive enhancement that allows her to be alive in the dark sight with beautiful pain.





*Which one is bad?
Overwhelmingly sad
This melody that is played by my heartbeat. Shall I break.
For the love of confusion says this melody
is playing with my heart.*

- Raag Rana

MISSION ASHRA
(Working for the cause, care and concern for
destitute women with mental illness)
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