



Inside the Mind

SAANVI RUNGTA & SPARSH DAK

Mrs Pragati Sureka has always found her passion in conversing with people and being inspired by their fascinating stories, so it's no surprise that she found her own interests lying in the magnificent and ever-evolving field of psychology.

Understanding human cognition, behaviour, and decision-making have always intrigued her, so when she found the opportunity to pursue these answers in her work, she seized the moment!

While she faced her own struggles in training post giving birth to her two children and balancing work and life as a young mother, she found her point of equilibrium in her passion for reading! Her love for acquiring knowledge and reading helped her through this phase and beyond.

Her ideologies and beliefs are not only persuasive but also highly convincing. Mrs Sureka shared one of the most common causes for falling mental health today: people only value themselves based on their achievements. The notion that "I am not good enough if I don't do X number of things or score Y% marks" is an underlying cause for overall mental health deterioration.

If we always set a benchmark to reach, we will never be happy in the 'here and now,' and we fail to enjoy the present: a time we earlier really looked forward to. Most people strive to have good physical health and diet, but no one does anything for their mental health. So, when people had to run a marathon with their mental health, most of them struggled.

Self-diagnosing and the phenomenon of browsing symptoms on the internet is another common cause of misinterpretation of mental health. This overgeneralization of mental illness, combined with a lack of resources and knowledge, is one of the primary reasons people are so misinformed about mental health.

Instead of worrying ourselves over fake symptoms on the internet, mental health awareness must be incorporated as at least part of school curriculums; students must learn the value of maintaining their mental health and well-being.

Mrs Sureka further asserted that just treating symptoms will not get you anywhere. You must nip the bud from its root if you want to get better and truly heal. Self-help methods like journaling and meditation may also be practical tools in managing a few mental health problems.

She discussed students' learning on the online platform and how fatiguing it can be. There are no real goals set; the only goal most people set is achieving a particular score or topping the class. This results in the 'I am not good enough' spiral, whereas a more genuine goal like the 'yearning for learning' would help students enjoy the learning process.

The pandemic really bolstered and boosted the number of mental health cases, and this

drastic increase helped people understand the gravity of mental health problems and how important it is to maintain their well-being.

"We've lived in the holocaust of mental trauma, with the fear of death so close to us. When we feel good, we develop resources that enhance our emotional ability. What can we work on to feel good about our mental health?"

To improve understanding and encourage conversation on mental health, Mrs Sureka has written several books on well-being and self-care.

Since most mental health practitioners only write academic texts, not available for a broad audience, she wanted everyone to have authentic information presented in a readable and user-friendly way.

Open conversations on mental health between children and parents will only result in more communication and a better understanding of each other. It will also lead to healthier relationships in the family.

It's important to feel emotions because each emotion has its space and function. A world with no emotion would be so apathetic or numb that it would be impossible to survive.

Mental health awareness is crucial, and people must value and respect it in the same way as any other factor in their life.

