

The Richmond Fellowship Society, India

► About Us

The Richmond Fellowship Society (RFS) India is an NGO and a “non profit” organisation started in 1986 with the first branch being established in Bangalore. Currently, there are three other branches of RFS- Delhi, Lucknow, and Sidlaghatta in rural Karnataka.

The RFS runs Halfway Homes, Day care Centers, Long stay home (only in

Bangalore) for psycho-social rehabilitation of Persons living with Mental Illnesses (PMIs). Community outreach and advocacy activities are also carried out to promote mental health awareness.

The National Board of RFS (I) was formed in 2001 as an advisory and coordinating body of the activities of all the branches.

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► Message from the Chairman



**Dr. Shashi Rai,
Chairman, RFS (India)**

Dear All,

Greetings from The Richmond Fellowship Society (India) to all!

It is a privilege to pen down a few thoughts in the inaugural Issue of the newsletter of the society. I thank and congratulate Dr. Mridula Seth, Vice President RFS (I) Delhi Branch, and the whole team for this very much-needed effort. RFS (I) is the only national-level organization having a Pan India presence and working in the field of rehabilitation of patients with chronic mental illness. RFS is the world's largest network of mental health providers and occupies prominent status in UN. RFS (I) is an associate member of Richmond Psychosocial Foundation International with fellowships in

more than 35 countries.

As per the National Mental Health Survey conducted in 2016 by NIMHANS, Life time incidence of mental illness is 13.56%. Whereas the current prevalence is 10.56%. This translates to 150 million people suffering from various mental illnesses in our country.

When severe mental illness strikes a person, he or she may lose a few of his or her abilities. The life of a person, which had been moving on a smooth track, gets derailed. This is where the role of rehabilitation steps in. Rehabilitation is a process of enabling the individual to return to highest level of functioning through various psychosocial interventions. RFS (I) with its 4 branches, namely Bangalore (1986), Delhi (2000), Sidlaghata (2002) and Lucknow (2005) is playing a pivotal role in the field of psychosocial intervention.

The newsletter will showcase the various activities done at all the centers. I wish this "Newsletter" spreads awareness about the role of rehabilitation in the general public at large.

Wishing great success to this issue and many more which will follow.

► Branches of RFS

RFS Bangalore



Asha
(Halfway Home)



Chetana
(Long stay Home)

Started 1986

RFS Delhi



Vishwas

Greater Noida (U.P)
Started 2000

RFS Sidlaghatta



Pragathi

Rural Karnataka
Started 2003

RFS Lucknow



**Nav Uday
Mansik Vikas
Sansthan**

Lucknow
Started 2005

1.

The Power of Gratitude



The Richmond Fellowship Society of India (RFS) initiated a series of four webinars on the theme “Mental Health and Happiness” in July 2023. The first webinar focused on “The Power of Gratitude.” In her welcome address, Dr. Mridula Seth, Vice President of the RFS Delhi Branch, said that in the last few years, especially post Covid, people have realized that material prosperity does not result in happiness. The purpose of starting the series of webinars is to understand the various facets of mental health and how we can create a world of happy people with good physical, social, mental and spiritual health.

Dr. Shashi Rai, Chairperson RFS India, gave a brief overview of the organization and expressed her views that in a world of fast-paced lives, digital connections, and changing relationships, the significance of growing pleasant feelings for overall wellbeing has become increasingly apparent. Dr. Deepa Gupta, Dean G.L. Bajaj institute of Management & Research gave a glimpse of the positive impact of partnership between an NGO and educational institution as experienced by her students.

The key speaker Ms. Vibha of Tara

Richmond Fellowship Society (India) Development Communication & Extension Dept. Lady Irwin College (University of Delhi) ace GL Bajaj Institute of Management, UP

Under the webinar series 'Mental Health and Happiness', we present a session on

'The Power of Gratitude'

Ms. Vibha
Initiator, TaraSri Foundation (Resource Person)

Dr. Shashi Rai
Psychiatrist, Chairperson, RFS (I) (Guest Speaker)

Moderators:
Dr. Mridula Seth
Vice President
RFS (India), Delhi branch

Prof. Aparna Khanna
DCE Department
Lady Irwin College (University of Delhi)

1st July 2023 (Saturday) 3:00 pm – 4:30 pm <https://zoom.us/j/93990748187>

Sri Foundation, explained how feeling happy is more than a simple gesture. It is a powerful force that can promote peace in society. This growth stems from its ability to improve interpersonal relations. Gratitude serves as a bridge in relationships, fostering empathy and creating deeper connections. Appreciating the efforts and the goodwill of others can have a positive cascading effect, strengthening the ties that bind communities together. Prof. Aparna Khanna, from Lady Irwin College (University of Delhi), moderated the webinar. Dr. Manish Jha, General Secretary RFSI, thanked the speakers, audience and Ms. Aprajita and Ms. Apoorva of the organization team.

2. Learning and Unlearning about Mental Illnesses



The second webinar in the series of “Mental Health and Happiness” on August 5, 2023, focused on enriching our understanding related to mental illnesses. Dr. Mridula Seth, Vice President, RFS (I), Delhi Branch, welcomed the participants and introduced the theme by listing five important innovations in the last two decades influencing mental health – telemedicine; smartphone Apps; gut-brain connection; Artificial Intelligence using digital data for monitoring; and health insurance for persons living with mental illnesses.

Dr. Anupa Siddhu, Director, Lady Irwin College (University of Delhi) appreciated the collaboration between mental health specialists, NGOs, and educational institutions. She emphasized the importance of joyful learning for connecting with people to bring about behaviour change and learning coping strategies.

Dr. Sujatha Sharma, Consultant Clinical Psychologist, explained the wide spectrum of mental well-being to mental disorders. She advised everyone to be careful using terminology that can stigmatize

 Richmond Fellowship Society (India)	 Development Communication & Extension Dept. Lady Irwin College (University of Delhi)	 RAHAT Charitable and Medical Research Trust, Delhi
Under the webinar series ‘Mental Health and Happiness’, we present the 2 nd webinar on		
‘Learning and Unlearning about Mental Illnesses’		
		
Prof. (Dr.) Nimesh G. Desai Senior Consultant Psychiatrist Former Director, IHBAS, Delhi (Panelist)	Dr. Sujatha D. Sharma Consultant Clinical Psychologist Managing Trustee, RAHAT Trust (Panelist)	
Closing Remarks: Dr. S. Kalyanasundaram Advisor, RFS (India), Bangalore		Moderator: Prof. Aparna Khanna Lady Irwin College (University of Delhi)
 5 th August 2023 (Saturday)  3:00 pm – 4:30 pm  https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89729224922?pwd=WlFZ2htUDlVbGVhOTNlUWZlTDRlZz09		

Persons living with Mental Illnesses (PMIs). Holding oneself is the first step toward mental illness. It’s about accepting your unique qualities, both strengths and weaknesses, with compassion and without judgment. “Remember, self-acceptance is not about perfection it’s about self-love” she said. Further Dr. Sharma discussed about building power and inner voice and said “Mental wellness depends on learning. Our brains are capable of good change through continuous education and new experiences. Cultivate a curious mind, for it is the gateway to personal growth. Speak to yourself with the kindness and understanding you would offer a dear friend. Your inner voice can be a powerful source of healing.” Dr. Sharma also discussed the type of professional help



available for diagnosis, counselling, and treatment.

When asked by the moderator, Prof. Aparna Khanna, about what we need to learn and unlearn about mental illnesses, Prof. Nimesh Desai, Senior Consultant Psychiatrist, narrated an interesting story to drive home the importance of ‘unlearning’ for changing attitudes. He talked about the changes that have taken place in the last few years and future scope of advancement in mental health. Dr. Desai mentioned the need for appreciation of interface between disability and mental illness. He mentioned the importance of diagnosis and standard definitions for health insurance of PMIs. Prof. Desai further highlighted journey of self-discovery which one should have to perform and said “Self-discovery is a lifelong journey. Embrace it with curiosity and an open heart. As you learn more about yourself, you’ll find the path to mental wellness becomes clearer.”

Dr. Kalyanasundaram, Senior Consultant Psychiatrist and Advisor, RFS Bangalore branch, gave his concluding remarks and emphasized the importance of health insurance of PMIs which is long overdue. He strongly expressed his views that it is not only the professionals but all in society who must play a role for creating an environment for positive mental health. He also believed in having a strong monitoring mechanism for professionals for providing quality mental health care. Dr. Kalyanasundaram gave a brief genesis of RFS in India and the concept of psychosocial rehabilitation and how RFS is meeting the needs of persons with severe mental illnesses.

Dr. Manish Jha, General Secretary RFS India, thanked the panelists, organizing team and audience and reiterated the importance of unlearning for challenging our attitudes and reducing stigma related to mental health.

▶ Activities of our Branches

RFS Bangalore

Fund raising event: RF Charity Golf 2023



The 16th edition of the Richmond Fellowship Charity Golf Tournament was conducted in two sessions on 2nd and 3rd February 2023 at Karnataka Golf Association (KGA), Bangalore. It was a grand success with 243 golfers taking part in this

tournament (116 on 2nd February and 127 on 3rd February 2023). The paintings of residents were auctioned during this event. All the 13 paintings were sold and this amount directly to the residents' account.

TCS World 10K Bengaluru 2023



On 21st May 2023, members comprising of the CEO, staff team, few residents of ASHA and JYOTHI, few committee members of RFSB and interns took part in the 5 K Majja Run, an on-ground event, organized by the Tata Consultancy Services (TCS).

Re-opening of CHETANA Day Care Centre



'Chetana' Day care centre, which was temporarily closed due to COVID in March 2021, was re-opened on 1st August 2023, in association with the Government of Karnataka under Manasadhara Project. Under this project, which is for a period of 1 year, the clients attending the Day Care Centre are provided free vocational training.

The inauguration of this project

was held on 7th August 2023. Dr. Rajani P, Deputy Director of Mental Health, Department of Health and Family Welfare and Medical Advisor, Karnataka State Mental Health Authority was the Guest of Honour for this event. The core team from DMHP office took part in this programme. It was a well-attended programme comprising of family members, members from other NGOs/residents of RFSB, staff and committee members of RFSB.

Awards and Honors



It was a moment of great pride that Dr. S. Kalyanasundaram, Hon. Advisor, Richmond Fellowship Bangalore, was felicitated for his dedicated work in the field of mental health on 18th August 2023 during the valediction of Medico Pastoral Association's Golden Jubilee celebrations. Shri Dinesh Gundu Rao, Minister for Health & Family Welfare, Government of Karnataka, did the honours.

CanSupport Walk for Life



Every year, members of Vishwas participate in 'CanSupport Walk for Life' to show their solidarity for people living with cancer. This year, the walk was organized on 12th February 2023 at the Biodiversity park in Noida.

Celebrating Annual Day



The Annual Day of RFS Delhi branch was celebrated on 14th March 2023 at Vishwas Greater Noida. Dr. Nimesh Desai, former Director of IHBAS (Institute of Behavioural and Allied Sciences) and Dr. J.M. Wadhawan, Psychiatrist Ganga Ram Hospital were the special guests. Certificates to members and trophy to RFS Delhi for the art competition organized by Srivatsa Memorial Trust were given by Dr. Rangashri Kishore, a founding member of RFSD.

Advocacy meeting for families on Guardianship and Trusts

A meeting for families of Persons living with Mental Illnesses (PMIs) was organized on the topic of Guardianship and Family Trusts in collaboration with FACEMI DILLI (a carers' group) and Sambandh Health Foundation.

Cooking classes

A volunteer, Sumeeta Chopra has started cooking classes once a fortnight as a daycare activity. Members enjoy learning to make items of their choice - cup cakes, pasta, burgers.



Training youth to become Mental health Ambassadors



In January and April 2023, Orientation programmes were organized in Fostima Business School (Delhi), G.L. Bajaj Institute of Management & Research (Greater Noida) and Delhi Metropolitan Education (DME) in Noida. Students were sensitized to mental health issues and trained to use traditional floor games for communicating mental health messages in the community.

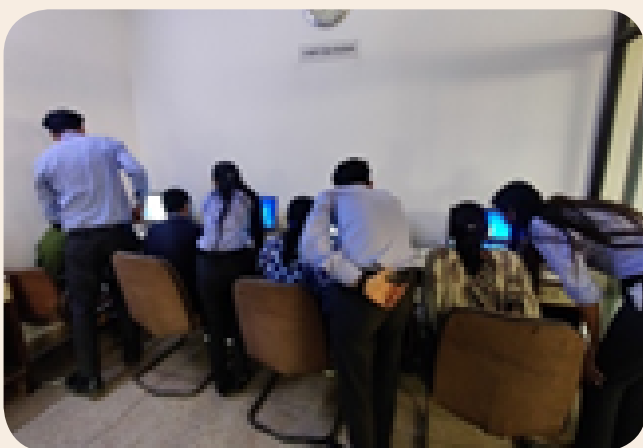


Working with children from marginalized communities

Members of Vishwas were interacting regularly before COVID-19 with “My Perch”, an NGO working with children of marginalized communities in Noida. This year not only did the children participate in the CanSupport walk, but also visited Vishwas for “Open House” organized on 23rd August 2023.



Honing skills



Students of G.L.Bajaj Institute helped the members to hone their computer skills.

Training of post graduate student of Nursing



Post graduate students from AIIMS (All India Institute of Medical Sciences) College of Nursing and Holy Family Hospital College of Nursing attended training at Vishwas for one week and one day respectively.

RFS Sidlaghatta

Inauguration of new building of Pragathi



Inauguration of new building by Dr. G.N. Narayana Reddy



Pooja by Mr. & Mrs. S.M. Narayanswamy, Pragathi President



Memento to Pragathi land donor Mr. & Mrs. B.K. Narayanaswamy



Memento to Pragathi Building donor Mr. & Mrs. A.R. Chandrashekar Reddy

Mental health and Epilepsy camps



Over 1200 patients received diagnosis, consultation and medicines at the health camps organized twice



a month on Sundays with volunteer psychiatrists coming from Bangalore (about 70 kms from Sidlaghatta).

Republic Day Celebration



Annual Day



World Schizophrenia Day



18th Annual Day celebration of RFS (I) Lucknow branch was held on 25th March 2023. Theme of the workshop was "Suicide Prevention." It was a very successful Programme with more than 250 people attending the programme.

Shri Brijesh Pathak, Deputy CM, Govt. Of U.P. was the Chief Guest. Mr. Sudhir Halwasiya, a politician, social activist & leading businessman of the city was the Guest of Honour. Dr. Alok Bajpai, Psychiatrist from Kanpur and Dr. Divya Prasad R.C.I. registered Clinical Psychologist were the two main speakers.

World Environment Day



World Environment Day – saplings were planted at the Centre and talk was given regarding the importance of tree plantation.

► Inter-branch Activity

RFSI branches- Sharing and Learning

RFS National Board meeting



The RFS National Board (NB) comprises of executive members from all the four branches. Once a year, the members of the NB meet to discuss

important matters related to governance issues. The meeting this year was held on 31st March 2023 hosted by the Bangalore branch.

Visits to other branches



To promote a culture of sharing and learning, the executive members from RFS Delhi visited and interacted with the members of the Bangalore and Sidlaghatta branch in March 2023. Dr. Narayana Reddy and Dr. Aditya, Secretary Bangalore branch, visited Sidlaghatta branch on 27th August 2023.



► Creative Minds

RFS Bangalore

Artefacts by Residents



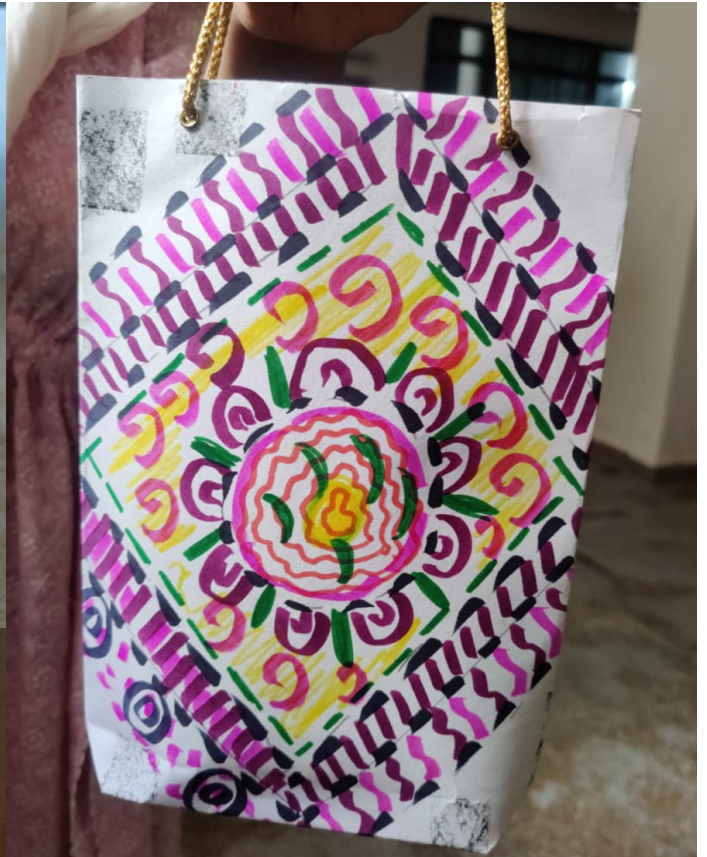
**Ms. Namratha Nagaraja,
a resident of ASHA Halfway Home**

Topic: Positive Health

Life starts to unfold in bits and pieces,
Day after day like thorns and roses.
Why is my mind drifting to paradise,
When we know that troubles come at a price.
My lonely heart cries out for some solace,
Which only shows that could be a quantum pace.
Oh! Behold my beautiful mind!
Cry not for less of a grind!!
Because life is all about love,
When your well-being has to be up and above.
Oh! Let my mind be at peace;
Which comes in piece after piece.

RFS Delhi

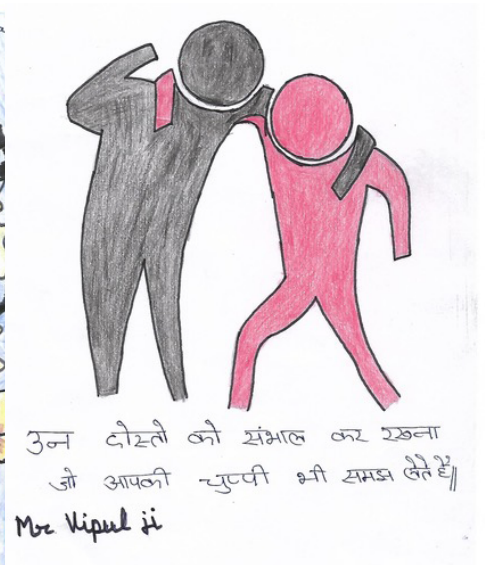
Artefacts by Residents



RFS Lucknow

Painting by Resident





**Ms. Anita Ji,
a resident of Nav Uday Mansik Vikas Sansthan**

Topic: अध्यापक

- जीवन जीने की कला सखाते हैं अध्यापक ।
- हारी बाजी जतिते हैं अध्यापक ॥
- जीवन के कांटों को फूल बनाते हैं अध्यापक ।
- जीवन के प्रेरणा स्रोत हैं अध्यापक ॥
- दीपक की तरह सबको बराबर रोशनी देते हैं अध्यापक ।
- सूर्य की तरह अनुशासति बनाते हैं अध्यापक ॥
- धूल से मस्तक मणबिनाते हैं अध्यापक ।
- आकाश की बुलंदी तक पहुंचाते हैं अध्यापक ॥

- आपसी प्रेम का दीप जलते हैं अध्यापक ।
- आपसी सहयोग की राह दिखाते हैं अध्यापक ॥
- डूबने वालों को कनारे पहुंचते हैं अध्यापक ।
- रोने वालों को हंसाते हैं अध्यापक ॥
- सभी को अध्यापक दविस की शुभकामनाएं ॥
- स्वरचति द्वारा अनीता खन्ना,
नव उदय मानसिकि स्वास्थ्य संस्थान, लखनऊ ।

► Our Volunteers

RFS Bangalore



Mrs. Sreelekha Jayanandan

Mrs. Sreelekha Jayanandan, MSc in Counselling and Family Therapy from IGNOU, is an accomplished Malayalam author. Sreelekha is an active volunteer, currently at RFS Bangalore where she fosters cognitive development and creativity, inspired by the dedicated staff. Her previous volunteer experience includes AASARA KALYAN CHILDLINE.



Mrs. Meenakshimma N

Mrs. Meenakshimma, a former teacher from Mysore, chose homemaking for family reasons. After her husband's passing, she became the sole caregiver for her daughter, Kum. G. Rachitha, with a 90% disability. Passionate about psychology and social service, she's volunteered at RFS Chetana for 11 years, finding personal growth in this supportive community.

RFS Sidlaghatta



Dr V. Venkataramaiah

Dr. V. Venkataramaiah, a 90-year-old retired psychiatrist, exemplifies selflessness. He commutes 70 km from Bangalore bi-monthly for 17 years, offering medications and care to patients from afar. His unwavering dedication continued through the COVID-19 pandemic, showcasing his enduring compassion and commitment to humanity.



Mr. Mohan Raj

Mr. Mohan Raj has been associated with RFS from past 5 years. He helps in registering the patients coming for OPD, giving medicines as prescribed by the psychiatrists to the patients.

RFS Delhi



Mrs. Sumeeta Chopra

Mrs. Sumeeta Chopra, a talented artist, creates beautiful paintings and mandalas. Alongside her art, she's passionate about baking and volunteers at Vishwas, teaching members simple yet delicious recipes twice a month. Pinki Ma'am, with her love for plants, assists members in creating lovely potted plant paintings as their vocational trainer.



Ms. Kamiya Dargan

Ms. Kamiya is the compassionate founder of My Perch, an NGO transforming lives in the Barola slum community. For eight years, she's been a beacon of hope, providing underprivileged children a haven for self-expression and skill development. Children of My Perch frequently interact with resident members of Vishwas. Intergenerational bonding builds life skills of children as well as the PMIs.

RFS Lucknow



Mrs. Rashmi Dani

Mrs. Rashmi Dani is a passionate and dedicated individual currently serving as a volunteer at Nav Uday Mansik Swasthya Sansthan (RFS Lucknow), committed to improving mental health and well-being within our community through her yoga classes. She has a background in social work and a deep-rooted commitment to positively impacting the lives of individuals facing mental health challenges.



Ms. Manshi Singh Chandel

Ms. Manshi Singh Chandel is a passionate Dance Instructor at RFS Lucknow, dedicated to using dance as a tool for mental health advocacy. Since 2018, she's been crafting tailored dance therapy sessions, promoting self-expression and holistic well-being for individuals of all ages and backgrounds. Her commitment shines as she fosters positive change through her work.

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