

MUSINGS

Official Newsletter - BY MHAI

PC: Rohan Somkuwar

I Don't Believe in Affirmations

BY RANJITHA RAJ

Some people genuinely struggle with expressing appreciation. They may have grown up in families where praise was rare, achievements were expected rather than celebrated, and affection was shown primarily through responsibilities rather than words. To them, saying "I appreciate you," "You did a good job," or "I am proud of you" may feel uncomfortable, exaggerated, or insincere.

Others may believe that praise makes people complacent. They may think that pointing out mistakes helps individuals improve, while compliments serve little purpose. Some might even say, "Why should I tell someone they did something right? That's what they are supposed to do."

While these beliefs may explain their behavior, they do not necessarily justify its impact.

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The Contradiction: Rejecting Positivity but Accepting Negativity

The difficulty arises when someone claims not to believe in affirmations, yet regularly says things such as:

- "You always do things wrong."
- "You are too sensitive."
- "You never understand."
- "You are not good enough."
- "You disappoint me."

If words are considered unimportant when they are positive, why do negative words continue to be used so freely?

The truth is that our brains do not selectively absorb only criticism. Human beings are wired to pay greater attention to negative experiences and comments because they are perceived as potential threats. Repeated criticism, even when casually delivered, can gradually shape how a person sees themselves and their relationships.

Negative statements repeated over time can become internalized beliefs:

- "Maybe I really am incompetent."
- "Perhaps I am difficult to love."

“Human beings are wired to pay greater attention to negative experiences and comments because they are perceived as potential threats.”

- RANJITHA RAJ



IT'S NOT ENOUGH



- "I should stop expecting appreciation."

In this sense, criticism itself functions as an affirmation—except it is an affirmation of inadequacy, failure, or unworthiness.

Appreciation Is Not Flattery

Many people confuse appreciation with excessive praise. Genuine appreciation is simply acknowledging another person's efforts, qualities, or presence.

Examples include:

- "Thank you for helping today."
- "I noticed how much effort you put into this."
- "I appreciate your patience."
- "You handled that situation well."

These statements do not inflate someone's ego. They help people feel seen, valued, and emotionally safe.

Research in relationships consistently shows that positive interactions help buffer the impact of inevitable conflicts and disagreements. Feeling appreciated strengthens trust, belonging, and emotional resilience.

**“Many people
confuse
appreciation
with excessive
praise.”**

- RANJITHA RAJ





When Criticism Becomes the Primary Language

Relationships in which criticism is the dominant mode of communication often become emotionally exhausting. The person receiving constant negative feedback may begin to anticipate judgment, withdraw emotionally, or stop sharing their thoughts altogether.

Over time, they may wonder:

"If words don't matter when they are kind, why do they hurt so much when they are harsh?"

The answer is simple: words matter. They shape emotional experiences, influence self-perception, and communicate whether someone feels accepted or rejected.

Building a More Balanced Way of Communicating


For individuals who are uncomfortable with affirmations, the goal is not to become overly expressive overnight. Small shifts can make a significant difference:

- Notice efforts, not just mistakes.
- Offer appreciation as often as criticism.

“Relationships in which criticism is the dominant mode of communication often become emotionally exhausting.”

- RANJITHA RAJ





BELIEVE

- Ask loved ones how they prefer to receive acknowledgment.
- Remember that appreciation does not weaken accountability; it strengthens connection.

A relationship does not require constant compliments to thrive. However, when criticism is abundant and appreciation is absent, people may begin to feel emotionally starved.

Kind words are not empty rituals. They are reminders that beyond our imperfections, we are still worthy of being recognized, valued, and treated with dignity. *If we believe words have enough power to wound someone repeatedly, we must also acknowledge their power to heal, encourage, and help another person feel that they matter.*

Meditation

BY SHAILAJA S

The lingering fragrance of your deodorant circulating in the air as I breathe in. The smell of the burnt tava that I switched off late, as I breathe out. The "Après de ma Blonde" jingle from the washing machine reminding me to hang the clothes out to dry.

A message on the phone. The dilemma of cooking

“When criticism is abundant and appreciation is absent, people may begin to feel emotionally starved.”

- RANJITHA RAJ





pasta for lunch or dinner. A new idea for a book that am working on. The sweat dripping down my back. The perpetual itching on my scalp. My stomach growling for breakfast. Taste buds reminding to eat nuts and dry fruits first.

The fight lasts three minutes. I surrender to the four senses and the brain, working in tandem against my fifth sense. I open my eyes.

Partibha, The Street Sweeper

BY BALASUBRAHMANYA ICHE

When he was sweeping the street, Partibha always wore a gentle smile. It was his job. Whether it was because he felt he couldn't find any other work or because he truly loved the job, only God knows.

He arrives in front of the last house on the street, number 362, where little Anjali enters the school bus at 7.30. Anjali sees him and smiles, calling “Uncle”, boards the bus. At that moment, her mother, walking like a cat, sets the trash can by the roadside and goes inside. Sometimes she looks at him. Not always.

“Small shifts can make a significant difference.”

- RANJITHA RAJ





From 361 to 308, no creature wakes up until seven o'clock. At least they don't come out. He collects the trash can near their compound wall. Selvi, the Tamil girl from 307, combs her wet hair to the side and continues to draw the rangoli. She glances over at Parthiban occasionally and smiles. She's just smiling in a friendly way... or at least, that's what he tells himself. He stays for few seconds in front of the rangoli and moves.

Doddarangayya, B.E., M.E., the “Beware of the Dogs” man, owner of the three-story house, throws the small things from above, or keeps the trash bag on road previous night. Chasing the street dogs that surround it, Partibha has to clear the dirt. Sometimes he feels like he's going to be sick. With an empty stomach, his bowels feel like they're about to spill out, yet he says nothing.

House number Two hundred and ninety- seventy-year-old Gauramma is a pension teacher. She hands the rubbish bin to Partibha, asks about his well-being, shares her sorrow, and then goes back inside the house. A lonely woman, her son is in America, her daughter in Germany, and her husband with almighty. She gets up at five in the morning. She can't sleep until eleven at night.

“The presence of the man who was just doing his job with love, was experienced more during his absence.”

-BALASUBRAHMANYA I





Parthiban knows everything; she's the one who told him. He even helps her with her small tasks. He gets a tip from her pension money.

Whether he seemed like a person to everyone on the street, or not, is unknown; like the sun rising every day, like the moon, like the trees and plants seen daily, like an inanimate object of constant existence, Whether anyone thanked him or not, Partibha—who remained unchanged by good or bad times, as if to say “I did my job, and that was that”—one day, let's say on the twenty-eighth of September, quit his job.

On the twenty-ninth, no one came. Anjali glanced back twice as she boarded the bus. Selvi cast a slanting glance at the street. Gauramma waited until 8:15. It was only in the evening that B. E. M. E. Doddarangayya realised that Partibha had not turned up. A dog had taken the piece of meat from his basket and left it by the gate of the Aiyengar's at the end of the street. Ayyangar stood before his gate and shouted, as if to recall every single moment of Doddarangayya's life. The next day, by half past seven, the rubbish bin was brought down by Doddarangayya himself. Partibha didn't come.

“Whether he seemed like a person to everyone on the street, or not, is unknown; like the sun rising every day, like the moon, like the trees and plants seen daily, like an inanimate object of constant existence.”

- BALASUBRAHMANYA I





On thirtieth, a man with uncropped beard, half ‘beedi’ in mouth, Darvin, arrived. Anjali looked at his face and didn’t say ‘Uncle’. She made a face as if in pain and got on the bus. Her mother, bowing her head, came out, and went inside. The Selvi’s Rangoli programme started ending at seven. On October fifth, Darvin shouted at Doddarangayya along with his fifteen generations of ancestors for throwing garbage to street from third floor. After that, there was complete discipline on the street. Guramma started to have forced prolonged sleeps.

Partibha had no idea about any of this. The presence of the man who was just doing his job with love, was experienced more during his absence.

When the Same Person Makes Us Feel Safe and Insecure

BY RANJITHA RAJ

Human relationships are rarely black and white. The same person who comforts us during our most difficult moments can also be the one who leaves us questioning ourselves, feeling anxious, or emotionally unsettled. This emotional contradiction is more common than we often

“Human relationships are rarely black and white.”

- RANJITHA RAJ



UNSAFE

realize and deserves thoughtful reflection.

The Comfort of Feeling Safe

Feeling safe with someone means experiencing acceptance, understanding, and emotional security. We feel heard when we share our thoughts, valued for who we are, and reassured that our vulnerabilities will not be judged or used against us. Such relationships provide a sense of belonging and can become a source of strength during challenging times.

Safety in relationships is built through consistency, trust, empathy, and open communication. It allows us to relax, be authentic, and believe that we matter to the other person.

When Safety Coexists with Insecurity

At the same time, it is entirely possible for the very same person to make us feel insecure. They may not intentionally cause harm, yet their actions, words, or inconsistencies can trigger feelings of uncertainty and self-doubt.

Some common reasons include:

1. Inconsistent Behavior

A person may be affectionate, attentive, and supportive one day, but distant, unavailable, or

“Safety in relationships is built through consistency, trust, empathy, and open communication.”

- RANJITHA RAJ





dismissive the next. This unpredictability can create emotional confusion. We begin to wonder what changed, whether we have done something wrong, or if the relationship itself is unstable.

2. Mixed Messages

Sometimes people express care verbally but behave differently through their actions. They may say they value us but repeatedly cancel plans, fail to communicate, or appear emotionally detached. When words and actions do not align, insecurity often follows.

3. Personal Vulnerabilities

Our past experiences also shape how we perceive relationships. Previous experiences of rejection, abandonment, criticism, or betrayal can make us particularly sensitive to certain behaviors. Even minor changes in another person's behavior may activate old wounds and create anxiety.

4. Unmet Emotional Needs

Each individual enters relationships with emotional needs such as validation, reassurance, appreciation, or closeness. When

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- RANJITHA RAJ





these needs are inconsistently met, we may feel unseen, unimportant, or uncertain about our place in the relationship.

The Emotional Push and Pull

Relationships that simultaneously provide comfort and insecurity can feel emotionally exhausting. We may find ourselves cherishing the moments of connection while struggling with periods of doubt and overthinking. We might constantly analyse conversations, seek reassurance, or question our own worth.

This push-and-pull dynamic does not necessarily mean that the relationship is unhealthy. Human beings are imperfect, and everyone occasionally disappoints those they care about. However, when insecurity becomes a persistent pattern caused by repeated unpredictability, emotional unavailability, criticism, or neglect, it is important to pay attention.

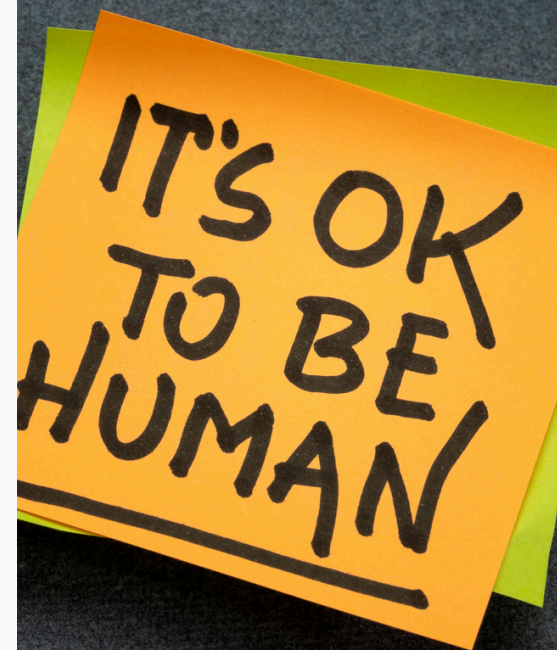
Reflective Questions

Instead of asking, "Why does this person make me feel insecure?" it may be more helpful to ask:

- Do I generally feel valued and respected in this relationship?
- Are my concerns acknowledged when I express them?

“Human beings are imperfect, and everyone occasionally disappoints those they care about.”

- RANJITHA RAJ





- Does this person make efforts to repair misunderstandings and rebuild trust?
- Am I feeling insecure because of their recurring behaviour, my past experiences, or a combination of both?
- Can I be myself around them without fear of judgment or rejection?

Finding Clarity

Feeling safe with someone does not mean never feeling hurt, disappointed, or insecure. Rather, emotional safety means knowing that difficult feelings can be discussed openly, understood compassionately, and repaired together.

Healthy relationships are not defined by the absence of conflict or insecurity. They are defined by the willingness of both individuals to communicate honestly, take responsibility for their actions, and create an environment where each person feels consistently valued, respected, and emotionally secure.

Perhaps the most important question is not whether someone has ever made us feel insecure, but whether their overall presence in our lives helps us grow into a version of ourselves that feels more confident, more authentic, and more at peace.

“Healthy relationships are not defined by the absence of conflict or insecurity.”

-RANJITHA RAJ





Why Do Negative Thoughts Visit Us at Bedtime?

BY RANJITHA RAJ

Many people who struggle with stress, anxiety, grief, relationship difficulties, financial worries, or other emotional burdens often notice something puzzling: they seem to cope reasonably well during the day, but the moment they lie down in bed, a flood of negative thoughts appears.

"Why couldn't I have handled that situation better?"

"What if things never improve?"

"What if I fail?"

"Why do I feel so lonely?"

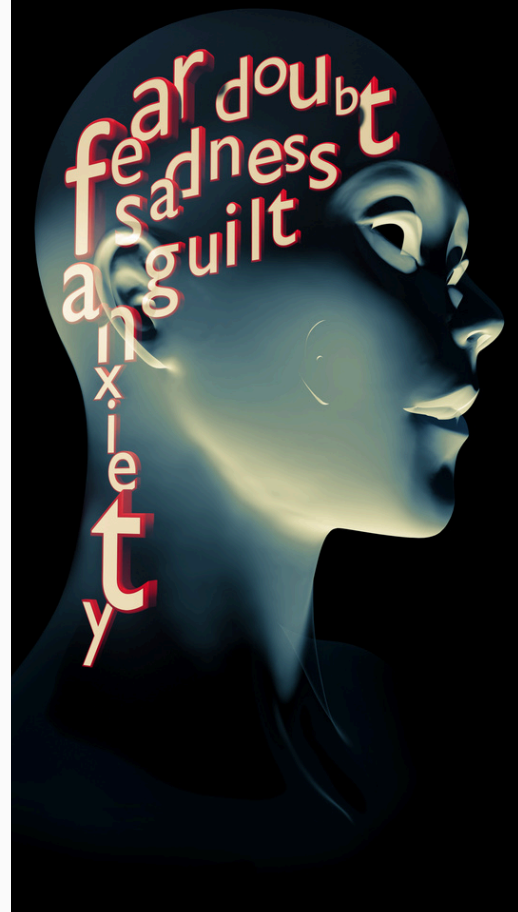
If this sounds familiar, you are not alone. There are several reasons why our minds tend to become noisier at night.

The Day Keeps Us Occupied

During the day, our attention is pulled in many directions. Work responsibilities, household chores, conversations, social media, commuting, caring for family members, and daily routines keep our minds engaged. Even when we are

"Our minds naturally try to make sense of unresolved issues. Arguments that were never addressed, fears about the future, regrets from the past, and worries about loved ones may surface when we are no longer busy."

- RANJITHA RAJ





carrying emotional pain, these activities provide structure and distraction.

At night, however, the external world becomes quieter. There are fewer demands, fewer notifications, and fewer tasks competing for our attention. In the silence, thoughts that have been pushed aside throughout the day finally find space to emerge.

The Mind Begins to Process Unfinished Experiences

Our minds naturally try to make sense of unresolved issues. Arguments that were never addressed, fears about the future, regrets from the past, and worries about loved ones may surface when we are no longer busy.

In many ways, bedtime becomes a meeting place for all the emotions that have been postponed during the day.

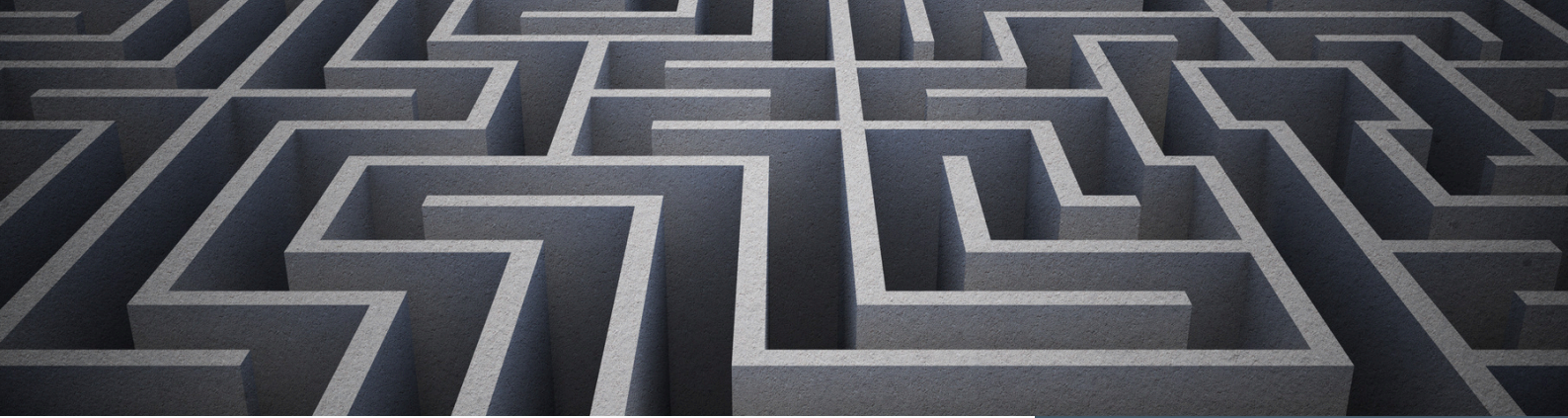
Fatigue Makes Coping Harder

By the end of the day, our emotional resources are often depleted. We may have spent hours managing responsibilities, regulating emotions, making decisions, and interacting with others. Mental exhaustion can reduce our ability to

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challenge unhelpful thoughts effectively.

As a result, worries may seem larger, problems may appear unsolvable, and self-critical thoughts may become louder.

We Often Avoid Difficult Feelings

Some people cope with distress by staying constantly busy. Productivity, social interactions, or endless scrolling may temporarily protect them from painful emotions. While distractions can be helpful in moderation, avoiding emotions altogether means they remain unprocessed.

When the distractions disappear at night, those unattended feelings may return with greater intensity.

The Body and Mind Are Closely Connected

Poor sleep habits, excessive caffeine intake, irregular schedules, prolonged screen exposure, or ongoing stress can increase physiological arousal. When the body is not ready to rest, the mind may remain alert, scanning for threats or replaying worries.

What Can Help?

There is no single solution, but small practices

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- RANJITHA RAJ





can make a difference:

- Set aside a “worry time” earlier in the evening to write down concerns and possible next steps.
- Engage in calming bedtime rituals such as reading, gentle stretching, prayer, journaling, or listening to soothing music.
- Practice mindfulness by noticing thoughts without immediately believing or fighting them.
- Remind yourself that thoughts are mental events, not facts.
- If worries become overwhelming or interfere significantly with sleep and daily functioning, seeking support from a mental health professional can be beneficial.

A Gentle Reminder

The appearance of negative thoughts at night does not necessarily mean that something is wrong with you. Often, it simply means that your mind finally has the quiet it needs to acknowledge what has been waiting to be heard. Rather than viewing these thoughts as enemies, we can learn to approach them with curiosity, compassion, and patience. Sometimes, healing begins not by silencing the mind, but by listening to what it has been trying to say all along.

“Healing begins not by silencing the mind, but by listening to what it has been trying to say all along.”

- RANJITHA RAJ





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JULY 2026 EVENTS

BY MHAI

1. Support Group Meet ONLINE

Date: 27-Jul-2026, Monday

Time: 6 PM to 7 PM

Topic: "Communication: Intention vs. Interpretation"

Hosted by MHAI

2. Human Books ONLINE

Date: 27-Jul-2026, Monday

Time: 7 PM to 8 PM

Hosted by MHAI

3. Diploma in Mental Health & Counseling Skills

Facilitated By: MHAI

Mode : Online

Date: 28th July 2026 - 28th Jan 2027

Days: Tuesdays & Thursdays

Duration: 6 Months

Time : 2 hrs, Twice a week,

Age Group: 18+ Yrs

To Register:
www.mhai.in

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- Integrative Therapies
- Field-Relevant Resources
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Starts on: 7 JUL 2026
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Time: 2-hour classes – Tue & Thu
Mode: ONLINE

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PAST EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

MHAI - CREATING HEALTHY MINDS

Communicating Love in Family Session for Mythri FACEMI Bengaluru by MHAI at Annaswamy Mudaliar General Hospital



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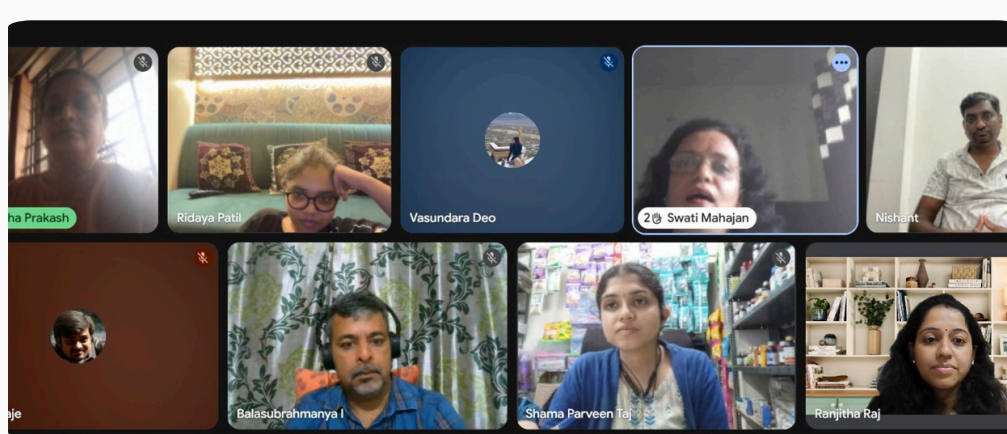
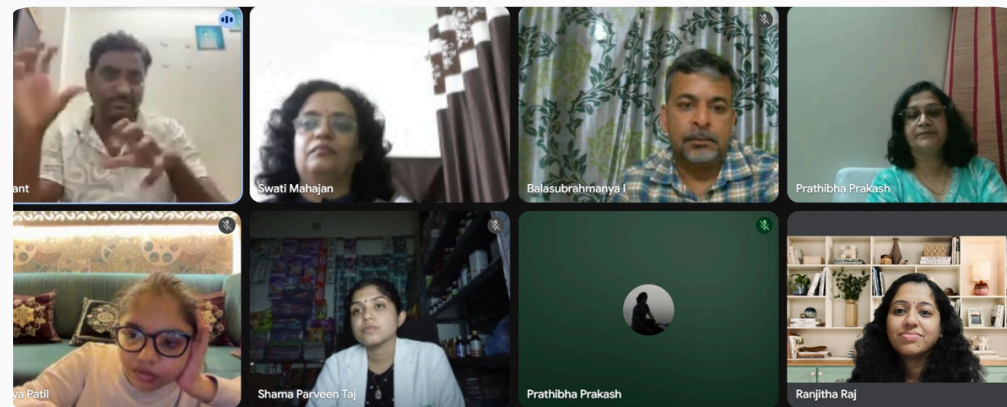
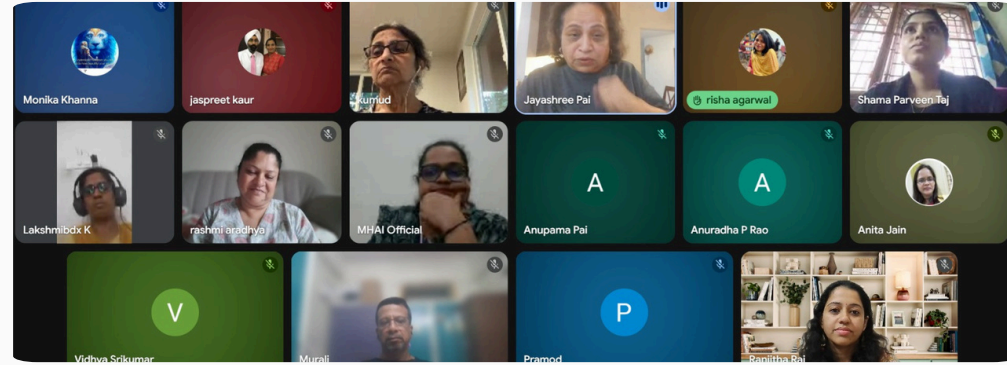


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PAST EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

MHAI - CREATING HEALTHY MINDS

SUPPORT GROUP & HUMAN BOOKS SESSION, SELF-HARM PREVENTION SKILLS WORKSHOP BY MHAI



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MHAI Services

CREATING HEALTHY MINDS

- **Diploma in Life Skills**
- **Diploma in Mental Health and Counselling Skills**
- **Certificate Course in Suicide Prevention Skills**
- **Certificate Course in Non-Suicidal Self-Injury (Self- Harm) Prevention**
- **Workshops - On Invite**
- **Human Books**
- **Support Group Meet**
- **Holistic Health Rural Training in collaboration with Mental Strides, Australia**
- **Eco Therapy/Shinrin Yoku (Forest Bathing)**
- **Emotional Counselling**
- **Mentoring and Internships (Teens and Adults)**
- **Mental Health Awareness Programs**
- **Harmony/Mann-Thann - The Journey Within - Outdoor Workshops**
- **Kaadu Harate - Expressive Art Therapy (EAT)/The Sound Mind - Sound Healing and more..**

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