

Wellbeing at Ashoka During The Pandemic : Reflections from Ashoka Centre for Well Being



OUR VISION

Operating with a mindset of well-being, instead of diagnosis, the ACWB focuses on the preventive, clinical, and promotional aspects of mental well-being.

The centre's focus lies in promoting the value of good mental health to improve individual coping capacity through skill-building.

About Us

Established in 2016

The **Ashoka Centre for Well-being (ACWB)** is a non-aligned center offering counselling and psychological support for students, staff and faculty at Ashoka University.

The ACWB was established **to provide a safe space that offers free and confidential individual and group counseling support.** It is the only centre of its kind in India with its focus on capacity building at every level of an organization.

Team ACWB

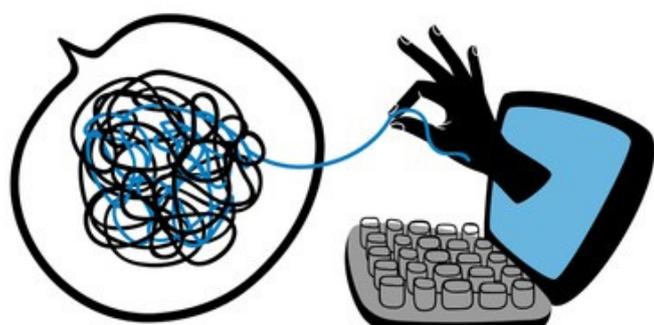
We are a team of professionally qualified counsellors led by Founder and Director Arvinder J Singh. The centre provides a emotionally safe space for students, staff and faculty at Ashoka to share their concerns , uncover their strengths and build resilience

All our counsellors are queer friendly.

Services Offered

Individual & Group Sessions

The Ashoka Centre for Wellbeing offers individual as well as group counseling sessions to students, staff and faculty to address their emotional and mental health concerns in an emotionally safe space whilst collaborating to uncover strengths to cope with life circumstances effectively.



Crisis Intervention & Helpline

The Centre provides appointments via portal and email for anyone who seeks counselling support for emotional turmoil. Pre-pandemic, walk-in sessions were also encouraged during crisis to help our clients.

Feeling blah?

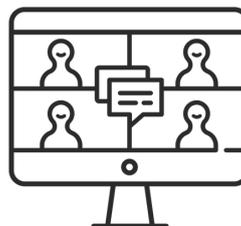
Reminder

Counsellors at ACWB are here to help and support you through free and confidential helpline services.

Talking to a professional helps!

7 days a week
5pm to 9 pm
Contact : +91 7082000421

Ashoka Centre for Wellbeing, ACWB



Mentoring & Collaboration

In its role as a centre for excellence, ACWB has mentored students and faculty across universities in India to curate webinar series as well as set up walk-in centre for emotional problems.

A memorandum of understanding has been signed with the Central University of Kashmir, wherein ACWB provides the expertise to set up a walk-in centre for students to talk about their emotional issues with a faculty member trained by us. Training has been provided in effective listening and identifying anxiety and high risk.

We will also provide timely supervision training and support to run the centre.

Join us for a webinar on

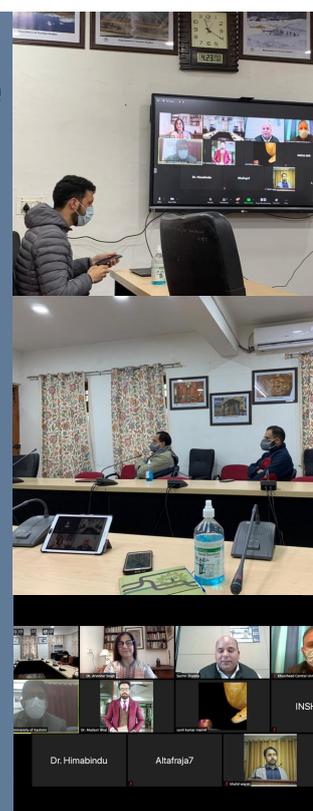
SURVIVING OR THRIVING DURING COVID-19?

Organised by Ashoka Centre for Wellbeing, Ashoka University and Department of Politics & Governance, Central University of Kashmir

23.07.20 **11:30AM**

Arvinder J Singh,
Founding Director
ACWB, Ashoka University

Join us here: <https://rb.gy/2onlp3>



Offering expertise

The Centre serves as a resource to offer its expertise to various other institutions - **Bar and Bench, Youth for Sustainability India and National Progressive School Council** to name a few.

ACWB through its webinars, workshops and training serves as a resource to other departments of the University such as Office of Academic Affairs (OAA), Centre For Social Impact and Philanthropy (CSIP), Admissions Team, Chief Minister's Good Governance Associates Programme (CMGGA), Centre for Studies in Gender and Sexuality (CSGS) and Office of Outreach.



ASHOKA CENTRE FOR WELL-BEING

is a proud knowledge partner of India's

social innovation summit

#SIS2020

'Technologies for Resilience'

November 18 & 19, 2020

Register for free today!
ashoka.edu.in/sis

Presented by
Centre for Social Impact and Philanthropy



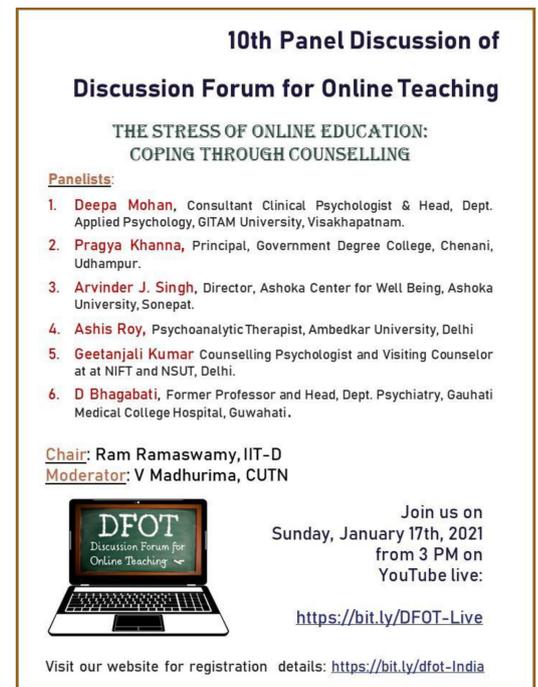
QS I-GAUGE
INDIAN COLLEGE & UNIVERSITY RATING

QS I-GAUGE invites you to a virtual roundtable on
FACULTY WELL-BEING AND DEVELOPMENT

16th December 2020 3 PM (IST)
<https://bit.ly/16DecFac>

PANELIST
Dr Arvinder Singh
Director, Ashoka Centre for Well-Being
Ashoka University

<https://bit.ly/16DecFac> | www.igauge.in | [f](#) [t](#) [i](#) [l](#) /igaugering



10th Panel Discussion of Discussion Forum for Online Teaching

THE STRESS OF ONLINE EDUCATION:
COPING THROUGH COUNSELLING

Panelists:

1. **Deepa Mohan**, Consultant Clinical Psychologist & Head, Dept. Applied Psychology, GITAM University, Visakhapatnam.
2. **Pragya Khanna**, Principal, Government Degree College, Chenani, Udhampur.
3. **Arvinder J. Singh**, Director, Ashoka Center for Well Being, Ashoka University, Sonapat.
4. **Ashis Roy**, Psychoanalytic Therapist, Ambedkar University, Delhi
5. **Geetanjali Kumar** Counselling Psychologist and Visiting Counselor at NIFT and NSUT, Delhi.
6. **D Bhagabati**, Former Professor and Head, Dept. Psychiatry, Gauhati Medical College Hospital, Guwahati.

Chair: Ram Ramaswamy, IIT-D
Moderator: V Madhurima, CUTN

Join us on
Sunday, January 17th, 2021
from 3 PM on
YouTube live:
<https://bit.ly/DFOT-Live>

Visit our website for registration details: <https://bit.ly/dfot-India>



MENTAL HEALTH & WELL-BEING
"BRIEFLESS ≠ HOPELESS"

ON FRIDAY, 24TH JULY FROM 5:00 - 6:30 PM

SPEAKERS

CONCEIVED & MODERATED BY

EVENT CO ORDINATOR

HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE MANMOHAN
DELHI HIGH COURT

DR. ARVINDER J. SINGH
PSYCHOLOGIST & PSYCHOTHERAPIST

GAURAV KUMAR
ADVOCATE

SURYA RAJAPPAN
ADVOCATE

SATVIK VARMA
ADVOCATE

TANVEER S. OBEROI
ADVOCATE

IN COLLABORATION WITH
ASHOKA CENTRE FOR WELL-BEING
ASHOKA UNIVERSITY

WATCH LIVE ON
[zoom](#) [YouTube](#)

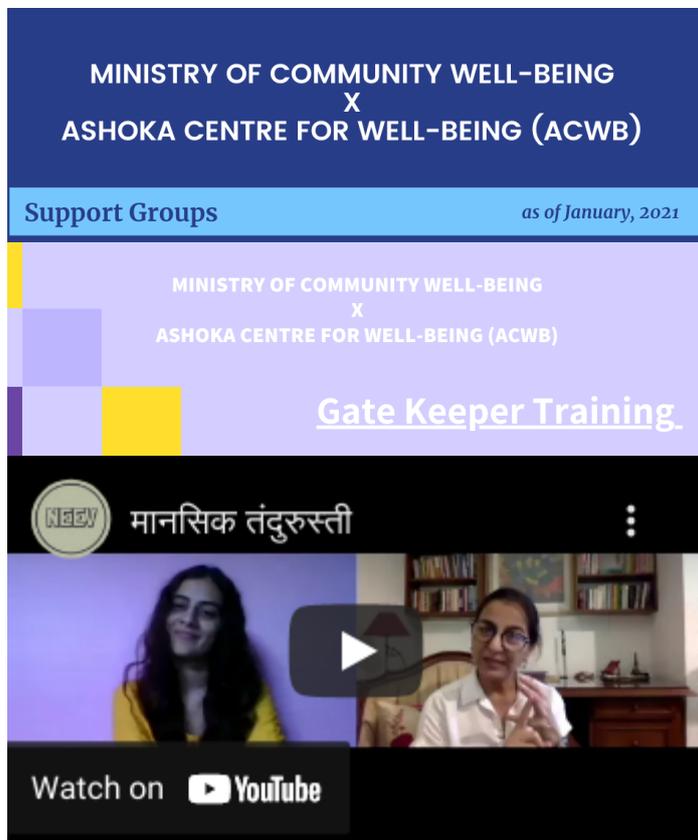
MEDIA PARTNER
Bar & Bench
INDIAN LEGAL NEWS

Capacity Building

Gatekeeper Programme

The programme is designed to offer sensitivity training for various student groups, residential advisors, cohort leaders, and student representatives.

It aims to train in identifying sources of anxiety and stress, offering peer support, and helping connect students with the right resources. Through these training we have managed to build a well-equipped group of first responders from amongst the campus community.



Link - <https://youtu.be/r0KrQ23DW24>

Student Initiatives

ACWB **collaborates with student bodies** such as the Ministry of community Well-Being, and the **Community engagement club Neev** to reach out to a larger population that goes beyond the Ashoka campus. The initiatives focus on advocacy by focusing on the preventive and promotive aspects of mental health and Wellbeing. These initiatives are very helpful in reducing the stigma around seeking help for mental health concerns as well as building awareness for early intervention.

Students have also volunteered and helped in designing advocacy campaigns.

Here is the video on how to book online appointments with ACWB designed by Social Media Department, Ministry of Academic Affairs

*Go to acwb.ashoka.edu.in
and sign in using your
Ashoka email ID*

Link - <https://youtu.be/g-fe4Bg-XuE>

Research Collaboration with Cambridge University

A significant achievement for the centre has been successfully securing a grant from Cambridge University for collaboration, conference and research titled '*The Past, Present and Future of the Psych-Clinic: Global Perspectives*'.

The resultant research will culminate with a conference on the same. This partnership will create a unique flagship network between scholars and practitioners across India, Cambridge, and in the wider world of mental health.

PROMOTING POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH

ACWB uses an interdisciplinary approach to spread the message of positive mental health. The centre not only uses social media platforms but also collaborates with the student body to run on ground awareness campaigns about mental health and Wellbeing.

ACWB and The Hindu came together on World Mental Health Day, 2020. In a Live session with Arvinder J Singh, Director, Ashoka Centre for Well-Being (@acwb_ashoka), there was a discussion on the importance of mental health in the 15-25 age group who are young adults who face a whole new set of challenges such as dealing with online classes, separation from friends, and placement worries in a spiraling economy,

THE HINDU METROPLUS
Live on Instagram

YOUNG ADULT ALERT

Saturday, October 10, 9 pm

Arvinder Singh, psychotherapist, The Ashoka Centre for Well-being (@acwb_ashoka) on why mental health in the 15 to 25 age group is so important.

Find us: @thehindumetroplus
STAY #AtHomeWithMetroPlus

It's June. It's Pride Month.

Join us on 25 June, 2021
(Friday)
5:00 pm to 6:00 pm

PRIDE AND PREJUDICE - UNDERSTANDING LGBTQ+

Facilitated by -
Nazariya: A Queer Feminist Resource Group

#For entire Ashoka Staff

ASHOKA CENTRE FOR WELLBEING (ACWB)

Mental Health Awareness Month
May 2021

#BreakTheStigma
#LetsTalk

Reach out to us at well.being@ashoka.edu.in
#Wellbeing #COVID19 #StayAtHome

ASHOKA CENTRE FOR WELLBEING (ACWB)

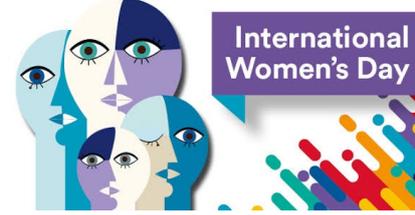
WHAT EXACTLY IS MENTAL HEALTH?

Myths & Facts

#BreakTheStigma
#LetsTalk

Reach out to us at well.being@ashoka.edu.in
#Wellbeing #COVID19 #StayAtHome

ADVOCACY AND PROMOTING POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH



Observing Wellbeing day, De-stress day, Gratitude day, Suicide Prevention day, International Yoga Day has been a tradition from the last four years. Conducting Wellbeing workshops are some of the spaces which attract huge student participation and open up conversations around breaking the stigma.



Let's Strive to Thrive

"Self care is giving the world the best of you, instead of what is left of you."
- Katie Reed

- Structure your day
- Declutter
- Healthy diet
- Exercise
- Talk to a friend
- Ask for help
- Digital Detox
- Get some Vitamin D
- Kind words to self
- Hydrate
- Remember to rest
- Journal
- Spend time with your pet
- Practice gratitude
- Dance, cook or paint!
- Celebrate accomplishments

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well.being@ashoka.edu.in

Tip: If not you, then who? if not now, then when?

Tip: It's 'normal' to not feel normal in the 'new' normal!

ASHOKA CENTRE FOR WELL BEING

Tips to Deal with Anxiety

- Figure out what's bothering you → Journaling
- Practice 4-7-8 breathing: Inhale to 4, Hold for 7, Exhale to 8 secs
- Exercise
- Self-soothe by taking a bath; ground yourself by soothing the senses
- Practice being in the 'here and now'

TALKING HELPS...
Reach out to us at well.being@ashoka.edu.in



PREVENTIVE MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVES

Wellbeing tips During Stay At Home

Amidst the lockdown, comes a trying time for all of us to take care of ourselves. Here are few ways we can look after our mental health



Stay Informed

Limit consumption of News & seek information from reliable sources only.



Structure your day

Having a routine gives us a sense of control and makes us feel less stressed.



Move around

Stretch or workout! Making the heart pump is a quick way to release feel-good endorphins.



Be a Good Samaritan

Small acts of kindness can give you a sense of purpose and make you feel happier & satisfied.



When in doubt, pick a chit

Fill the jar with activity notes which make you happy, like Journaling, dancing, cooking, painting or watching a movie. Take your pick!



Engage in Self-compassion

It's okay to say "I am struggling today." Treat yourself as you would treat a good friend



Build a Quaranteam

Stay connected & check in with your loved ones. Plan activities together such as playing indoor or virtual games, working out



Practice gratitude

Acknowledge the goodness in your life.. Write down 5 things you're grateful for when you start or end your day.



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well.being@ashoka.edu.in

ASHOKA CENTER FOR WELLBEING CELEBRATES



GRATITUDE WEEK

"GRATITUDE MAKES SENSE OF OUR PAST, BRINGS PEACE FOR TODAY, AND CREATES A VISION FOR TOMORROW."
-MELODY BEATTIE

The ACWB invites you to share any experience you have been grateful for!

When: 5th-10th October 2020
What: Stories, a message, posters, doodles, sketches, photographs, video
How: DM us on our Instagram page- acwb_ashoka

- Your content will be reposted on our Instagram page with your consent.
- You can choose to be anonymous

#ACWBGTRATITUDE
#WORLDMENTALHEALTHDAY2020



International Yoga Day



Yoga aids our mental well-being in many beneficial ways such as:

Relief from Anxiety & Stress!

Yoga reduces heart & respiration rate, and lowers blood pressure. It also calms your nervous system.

Boosts Brain Health!

By finding and maintaining your balance, yoga improves your concentration, focus, and memory.

Improves your Mood!

Yoga helps you release negative emotions and replace them with positive ones.



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NAVIGATING STRESS DURING ONLINE EXAMS



The Pandemic is **not a productivity championship**. As these are trying times for us, let's set our expectations accordingly

Having a routine helps us **streamline our tasks** and gives some semblance to the day

TO DO



Sleep, healthy diet & exercise- keeping the **vitals in check**

Taking a Pause - Taking breaks in between to focus on some self-care, like having your favorite beverage while looking at the birds

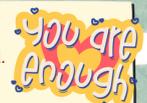


Share and care- Stay connected with dear ones



Acknowledging that we are staying at home and facing all these challenges due to something that's not in our control.

Let's be gentle with ourselves



TALKING HELPS...

Reach out to us at well.being@ashoka.edu.in
#Wellbeing #COVID19 #StayAtHome

Transitioning during Pandemic

March of 2020, ACWB transitioned to the online medium owing to the pandemic and the subsequent lockdown. Since then, the Centre has been reaching out and helping through the virtual medium and **extending its additional support** to the members of the Ashoka Community through offering counselling support on weekends as well as **helpline services**. **The helpline remained open 7 days a week and for longer hours** to reach out to more stakeholders. We helped many students and staff in these trying times and served close to **1500 members of the Ashoka community through nearly 3400+ sessions**.



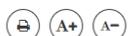
News ▾ Interviews Blogs Feature ▾ Medical Specialties ▾ Data & Analytics ▾ HealthTV Br

Health News / Latest Health News / Industry

The pandemic has exacerbated challenges for women: Dr. Arvinder Singh

The pandemic has already resulted in many job losses, especially in the case of working mothers due to inadequate caregiving responsibilities bestowed on them

ETHealthWorld • May 08, 2021, 12:26 IST



Univs connect with students to help cope with uncertainty

Start Mental Health Counselling On Phone And Via Video Con

Mohammad Ibrar & Shraddha Chettri | TNN

New Delhi: The stress about curtailed academics, anxiety created by the novel coronavirus and the sheer pressure of having to stay indoors and socially cut off during the three-week national lockdown could affect the mental well-being of thousands of students. Accordingly, city universities have started mental health counselling services either on telephone or through video conferencing.

Jamia Millia Islamia initiated its tele-counselling services for students, teachers and non-teaching staff on March 31 to help them deal with the uncertainties created by the anti-Covid-19 lockdown. Professor Naved Iqbal of the psychology department, who helms the university's counselling and guidance centre, told TOI that "the lockdown has left several students concerned and in a state in which they need help to deal with mental stress".

Jamia has a team of volunteers, including research scholars and a couple of professionals, to counsel such people. Calling the lockdown an unprecedented situation, Delhi University's S P Jena, head of the psychology department, said, "We have plans to start a helpline soon to connect with students, hear their concerns and provide them support and counselling." Jena said that the initiative, started by DU's World University Services health centre, would facilitate interaction with students who were surprised by the "unpre-

KEEPING YOUR MIND HEALTHY DURING LOCKDOWN

- AMBEDKAR UNIVERSITY DELHI** | Daily telephonic and email conversations with students started by Ehsaas clinic since March 23
- JAMIA MILLIA ISLAMIA** | A team of research scholar volunteers, some professionals deal with students through phone calls
- DELHI UNIVERSITY** | A helpline to be started for students to connect with mental health professionals
- RAMANUJAN & RAJDHANI COLLEGES** | Social welfare and youth development society in touch with students living in PGs and providing them essentials
- IP COLLEGE FOR WOMEN** | Running a counselling service through video conferencing
- ASHOKA UNIVERSITY** | Support services for students such as office of learning support and Centre for Well Being operating online

PROBLEMS FACED BY STUDENTS

- Many don't speak openly as they are concerned about their privacy
- Several at home with families and unable to open up as their families are the reason for their mental issues
- Many students living in small PGs do not have private space

fe". The clinic said in a statement, "We recognise that students are experiencing considerable stress at present. A large part of the students' anxieties comes from the serious nature of Covid-19 and the fact that there is no definite cure for it even in the most advanced countries. This results in feelings of insecurity and uncertainty about their own personal safety and those of their loved ones. The bombardment of tips, dos and started online psychological counselling. Arvinder Singh, counsellor at Ashoka's Centre for Well-being, disclosed she has been receiving a lot of queries from students. "Most are to do with the lockdown. What is important to understand is what the lockdown does to the mental health of an individual. The immediate feeling is that of helplessness, fear and panic," said Singh. She added, "With such an-

Some of the students who are graduating don't know what the future is going to be like. There is no clarity even about when they will graduate. Another problem students face is in not being able to go home. For foreign students, loneliness is a big issue." Individual colleges, such as Indraprastha College for Women, are also making provisions for mental health counselling. Others are providing assistance to students to reduce their stress. Ramanujan and Rajdhani colleges have been easing the minds of students who live as paying guests by providing them with basic services. S P Agarwal, principal of Ramanujan

JAMIA PROFESSOR SAYS

The lockdown has left several students concerned and in a state in which they need help to deal with mental stress

Dealing with the Fear and Loneliness During the Second Wave

During the second wave and with the increasing covid scare the centre rose to the challenge and continued to provide emotional support to Ashokans through conducting **wellbeing and self care workshops, by extending helpline services for longer hours, by sending personalised emails to nearly 800 students in campus.** While we were serving the community we also made sure to take care of ourselves by meeting twice a week and having wellbeing activities within our team. **We took mental health breaks when required.**



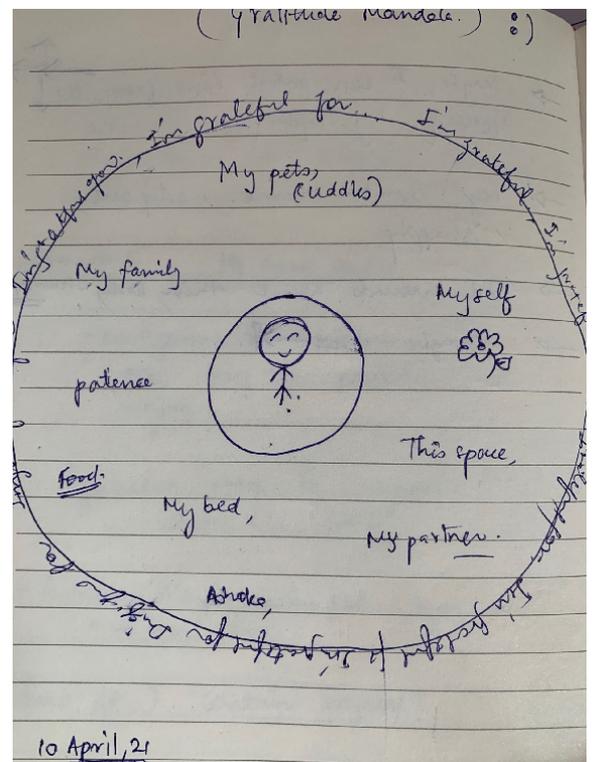
Join us !

10th May 2021 (Monday)
3:00 pm to 4:00 pm

“Improving Emotional Resilience during Pandemic”

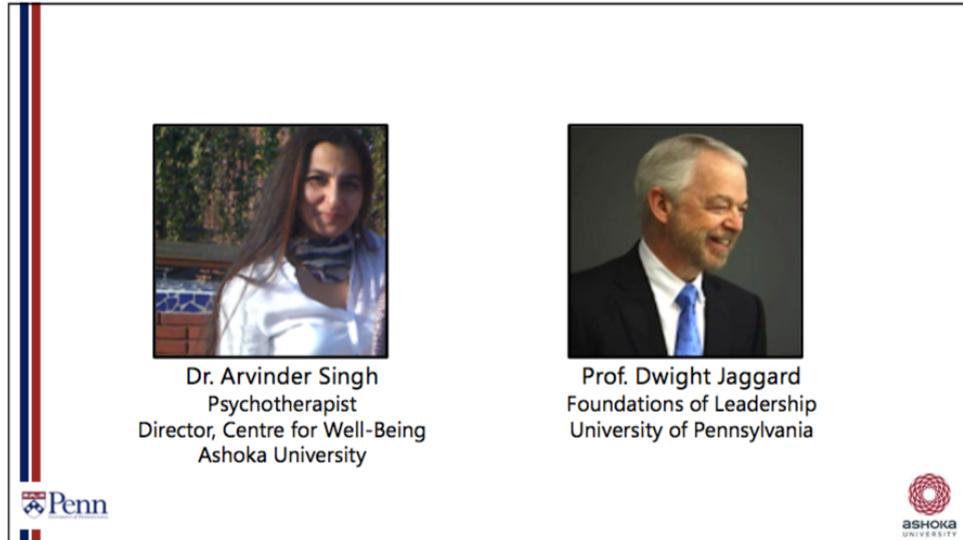
Facilitated by Arvinder J Singh,
Director,
ACWB

#Only for Staff
Zoom link is added in the caption below



REACHING OUT TO BUILD RESILIENCE

Dr Singh from ACWB and **Prof Dwight Jaggard** from the Department of Positive Psychology, University of Pennsylvania **collaborated** to hold **webinars for students** across both campuses to **build collective resilience**.



Foundations of Leadership with Dwight Jaggard

University of Pennsylvania & Ashoka University 18



Arvinder states that it is important to acknowledge everything you have accomplished and learnt so far, to cope better. “Everybody is doing something new, whether it is cooking, or doing a virtual workout, or learning a new skill. Accept that these are, extraordinary circumstances, and the way each person deals with it will be different. Cut yourself some slack.” She suggests building some exercise into your day, dressing up for work and practising good sleep hygiene, saying “calmness lies in small things. Human beings are resilient, so we will bounce back.”

OFFERING SUPPORT DURING DIFFICULT TIMES



Grief & Loss

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Grief is a natural response to loss.

It is usually associated with the passing of a loved one, but even *loss of an experience* can evoke a sense of grief.

For example, you might grieve after a breakup, moving away from home, losing financial security, or graduating from college.

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The Wellbeing Bank of Exams

The Unhealthy Debt



- Comparison with others
- Not taking breaks
- Unrealistic goals
- Cramming up all night
- Temptation of social media & other addictive habits
- Not asking for help
- Toxic productivity

TALKING HELPS...
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#Wellbeing #COVID19 #StayAtHome



ASHOKA CENTER FOR WELLBEING

The Wellbeing Bank of Exams



- Organized study space
- Rest & sleep
- Exercise Routine
- Healthy Eating Habits
- Talking to Dear ones
- Deep breaths
- Hydration
- Soothing Music

The Deposits

TALKING HELPS...
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#Wellbeing #COVID19 #StayAtHome

Mental Health Advocacy through Art at the India Art Fair:

A week-long workshop with Ashoka students from diverse backgrounds and cultures facilitated by Dr Arvinder Singh culminated in an Art installation that was exhibited at the premier show of India Art Fair





Testimonials

"The ACWB at Ashoka is known for its one of a kind services from one on one counselling to open conversations on mental health - empowering students. Our collaborations with them were fruitful especially because student-driven initiatives such as the Gatekeeper Training, and Support Group initiatives were given importance. The commencement of these will help lay the foundations for more such initiatives to flourish, strengthening community well-being and student leadership."

- Bhavya Dixit, Minister of Community Well-Being, 2020-21

"Several of our initiatives with the ACWB strived to strengthen community-based and peer support, and hopefully, contribute to the greater well-being of the Ashokan community. Working with the ACWB has been an enriching experience giving me insight into approaching well-being and mental health at the community level."

- Kashish Janiani, Deputy Minister of Community Well-Being, 2020-21

"Many thanks for all the support the centre has been providing during these times. I personally have benefited a lot from the support provided. Thank you for organising the activity today. It helped identify and acknowledge support systems that we need to be grateful for in these times and also put things in the right perspective for me."

- Anonymously Shared

"My experience during the sessions that we had was extremely helpful. I can't thank you enough for being there and helping me work on myself every session in 2020 was so much insightful. Our sessions helped me explore myself and accept myself the way I am. I don't know how to put this in words but you have literally helped me so much during a really dark phase in my life and the learnings are something that I will carry with myself always."

- Anonymously Shared