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CHANAKYA

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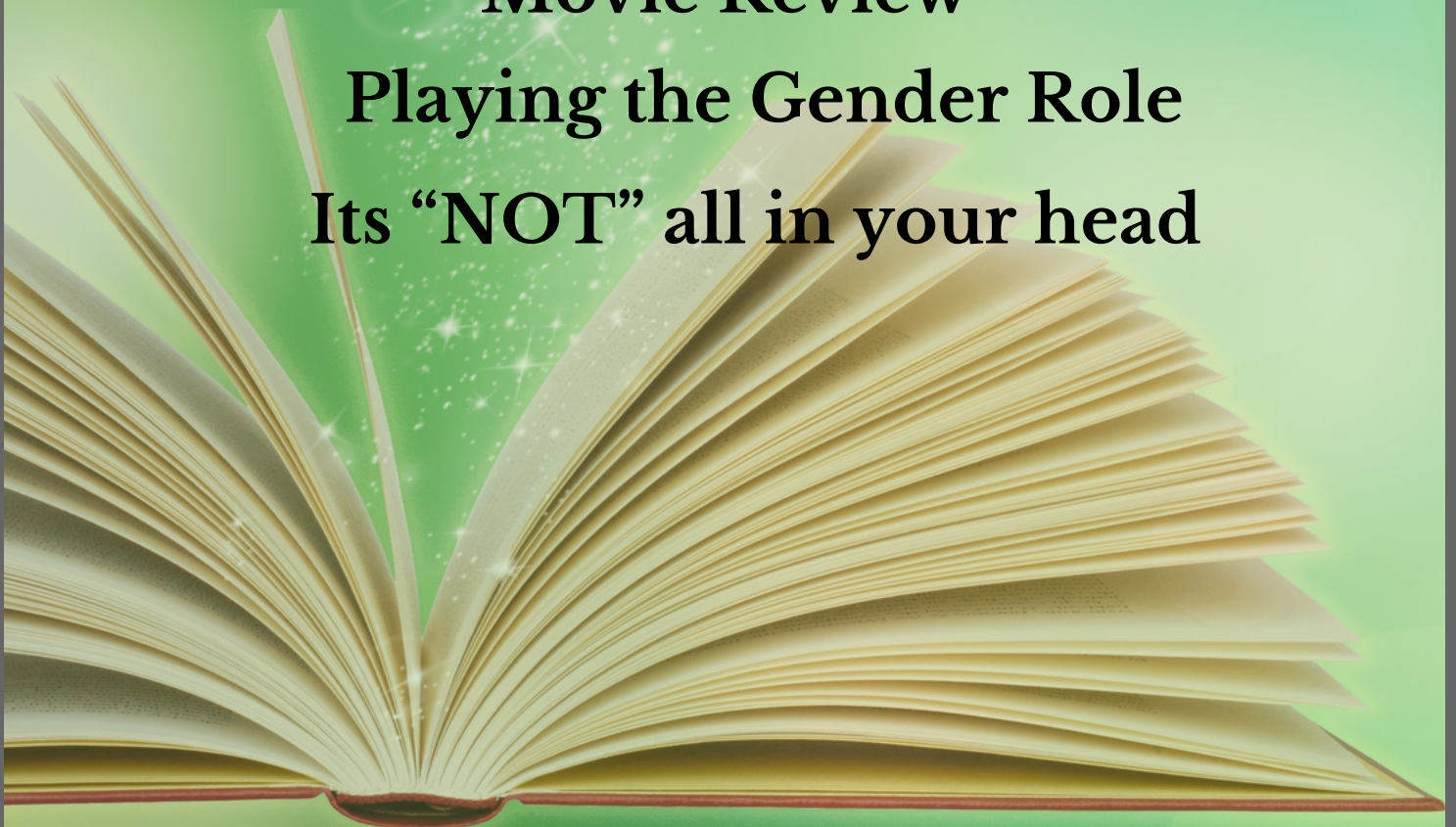
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Grief And You

Consider this, you have just heard that your friend or colleague has lost a loved one. The next time you talk to them, you want to assure them that you will provide them with any help required or lend a shoulder during their time of need. However, you are not sure how to express the same.

While grief is an inescapable part of life, it is quite surprising that most of us would not really have any idea of how to provide the proper support to an individual dealing with it. Most of us would try to offer our condolences, but beyond that it becomes difficult to communicate our thoughts and intentions of being truly present for a grieving person.



Death and the grief that follows can be an alienating experience. Most people experiencing grief feel that they have nowhere to go, and this in turn can be an added stress to an already painful experience. Just as there is no right way to grieve, there is also no right way to console someone grieving. But there are some things to be kept in mind. The death of a loved one being an already traumatising experience doesn't need to be numbed down by words or advices. Rather than trying to find positivity or making the person realise some meaning in the loss, a simple "Sorry for your loss, I am here for you." can go a long way. Instead of saying things like "I know what you are going through" or "I can relate to your pain", try saying "I can't imagine what you are going through right now". An individual going through a personal loss doesn't need to be reminded about the commonality of death. Similarly, saying things like, "Everything happens for a reason", "You should be grateful that they lived a long life", "God always has a plan", and other such generic responses, might seem right in the moment, but may not be well received. If nothing comes to mind, silence is always golden. You can try to console them by being at their level, whether they are sitting or standing, be next to them and just place your hand on their shoulder. A sincere touch can be a nice way to let someone know you are there for them in their time of need

If the situation seems appropriate, you may also ask them about their lost loved one: What did they do? What was their favourite music? Do they have any pictures of them? If they seem happy to share, just listen to them as it may help them remember the happier times when their loved one was alive. You may also share briefly with the griever if you have faced something similar and that they are not alone. But make sure to not just emotionally dump on them. Your response should come from a place of empathy rather than as a way to gain sympathy. It is important to remember however, that you might be trying to be helpful and empathetic to the individual, but they may not be in a place to open up or share. Some people may not feel comfortable being vulnerable and each of us have our own way of feeling and processing emotions. Forcing someone or telling them something as to a “normal way” to grieve is never acceptable as there is no such defined way. We cannot fix grief and our desire to help may backfire.

A quote by David Kessler states that,

“Each person’s grief is as unique as their fingerprint”

But what everyone has in common is that no matter how they grieve, they share a need for their grief to be witnessed. That doesn’t mean needing someone to try to lessen it or reframe it for them, the need is for someone to be fully present to the magnitude of their loss without trying to point out the silver lining.” So, we must remember to be present but not try to interfere or judge anyone healing from death of a loved one.



Grief is a very personal journey and one which will be faced by all of us at some point in our life. While grief is usually faced after the loss of someone, it is not unusual to grieve the loss of something such as a job, a relationship, a pet, etc. Most of us, to cope with such losses would go through a spectrum of feelings that may be embodied as grief. Some emotional symptoms of grief include feelings of shock, surprise or confusion especially if it is a sudden or unexpected loss. Feelings of sadness, nostalgia, loneliness, are also common. People may also experience anger or feel helpless or irritable for the situation they are facing. Additionally, guilt about the unsaid and undone things and anxiety and fear about self is also very frequent. Additionally, people may contemplate about their perceived mistakes or worry about the oncoming changes that will be brought by their loss. People would also be triggered by places, situations, or things and be reminded about the memories shared with the person. Fantasizing about what life would look like if the loss had not happened is also commonplace. Physically, tiredness, fatigue, increased physical pains along with changes in appetite, weight gain or loss are also observed in grievers. Similarly, difficulty sleeping, or a loss of motivation and/or isolating oneself from usual activities are some of the behavioural or social changes during grieving times.

Beyond this, most of us would have heard of the five stages of grief: Denial, Anger, Bargaining, Depression and Acceptance. But it should be noted that while this is a general model, there is not much evidence that it can be used for every case, situation or across cultures. There also is no use thinking that grief progresses through some pre-determined stages. Every person is different and so is every loss, and the ways in which every person would process the loss would be unique to themselves. It is so important to understand this so that we can seek help when needed for ourselves or our loved ones. Some people may be feeling complicated or prolonged grief. If the person feels detached or numb towards their own loss, unable to think about the loss with any pleasant memories or have intense longing for the person, then this may point towards complicated grief. In prolonged grief, the person maybe paralyzed by their grief for long periods of time and have strong reactions towards their loss. During such cases, it is necessary to not only support the person but also suggest that they turn to grief counselling or therapy. Each of us would have different time lines and ways of processing our loss. Some may cry more, and others less often, but going through grief maybe one of the most intense experiences of one's life. The only thing one needs to do is be present for it and feel it in all its forms, intensity and emotions.

-Kirutika borkar

Men don't Cry

"I wish I were a man like him!" "He is so manly!" "What a strong man!" - These are statements we all have heard. Men and masculinity are two terms that has been used immeasurably. From being a son, a husband, a father and what not, a man has multiple roles to play. But does being a man always have all the advantages? Does it have any downfalls? Are men really contented? Are they healthy? Let us consider the following instances:

Akash, a 3 year old child stumbles and falls down while running and starts to cry. Seeing him in tears, his grandmother comes to his rescue and tries to calm him down by saying, "Stop crying like a girl. Boys don't cry".

Harsh, an adolescent goes through academic pressure and a bitter relationship and breaks down in front of his friends. His friends consoles him saying, "Come on Harsh, be a man! A man doesn't cry."

Saurav, a 30 year old man suffers through a huge loss in business and conveys his emotions through drinking alcohol, having fights and beating up his wife. He too remembers what society taught him, "Man doesn't cry!"



The similarities in all the three situations above are the barriers of toxic masculinity and gender stereotype that has come into play in expression of emotions by men. Akash, Harsh and Saurav all goes through situations that are emotionally distressing for them but they have been abstained from using any means to express them. In many societies, the idea of masculinity has always been associated with being strong, tough and someone who is not keen into display of emotions except anger, rage or violence. Warmth and affection, crying or venting out one's feelings are often considered to be characteristics of a woman and a man doing so is laughed at. Men while dealing with any emotional distress tries to suppress himself from emotionally breaking down. They have been conditioned from a young age that display of emotions is associated with weakness and men are not weak beings. Even though some men do try to reach out for help when faced with unpleasant situations, the fear of being judged, lack of empathy and unreceptive behavior by others prevents them from doing so.

The bottling up of negative emotions by men often leads to harmful consequences. Many men suffers through them in silence and it has implicit effects like facing depression, anxiety and other mental disorders. Others use explicit ways like using addictive substances, resorting into violence and aggressive behaviors, crimes or even taking their own lives. Men are not taught how to channelize their emotions and thus resort to unhealthy coping. Men and women even though equally suffers from mental health problems, there are less data of men taking professional help.

But are there ways to overcome such issues? Yes. The most important way to help man is by educating them from a young age that emotions are healthy and the expressal of emotions does not make anyone weak. It's time for our societies and for us to change our views regarding masculinity and men. . Specific traits and characteristics should not be associated with only one gender. Gender stereotyping should be stopped and men and women should be raised as equal beings.

Moreover, men should be taught healthy ways to cope with negative emotions. Knowledge of effective coping strategies will help them from not using addictive substances or other harmful measures.

Another important way is to form a strong support system around them. Be there for them, listen to them and make them feel not alone. Having a reliable and strong support around them will make them less vulnerable to mental health issues.



They should be educated about mental health disorders. Awareness of mental health disorders and when and whom to seek help from also should be done. The stigma associated with mental disorders should be broken down so that everyone and anyone can reach out for help whenever needed.

And most importantly, they should be taught that, "Emotions are experienced by all! Emotions are not signs of weakness and MEN DO CRY!"

-Sayanika gogoi

Movie Review

Wonder

Wonder is an inspirational and feel good family movie.

Introduction

Movie's name - Wonder

Genre - Drama/ family

Language - English

Available on - Netflix

Directed by - Stephen Chbosky

Released on - 1 December 2017



About the movie:

This movie has the main picture on the life struggles faced by a little boy who was born with facial abnormalities. The protagonist of this story is a boy named August. He was born with severe facial abnormality and was home schooled till his fifth grade. After that he gets ready to face his biggest challenge of going to board school.

His parents also hesitate a lot to send their son to school. The movie also encompasses the sacrifice of his mother. She postpones her PhD and teaches his son. August has a big sister. The way she feels left alone is also depicted in this story.

August faces a lot of bullies, betrayals and back stabbings. He struggles but comes out with flying colors. The whole movie is truly inspirational in spite of the age group of the audience.

Conclusion

This is a must watch movie for kids and teens. The value of life is very much evident. Kids will start being grateful for everything they have in life after watching this movie. The essence of the movie is

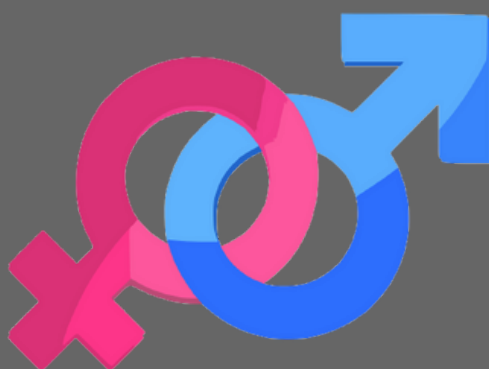
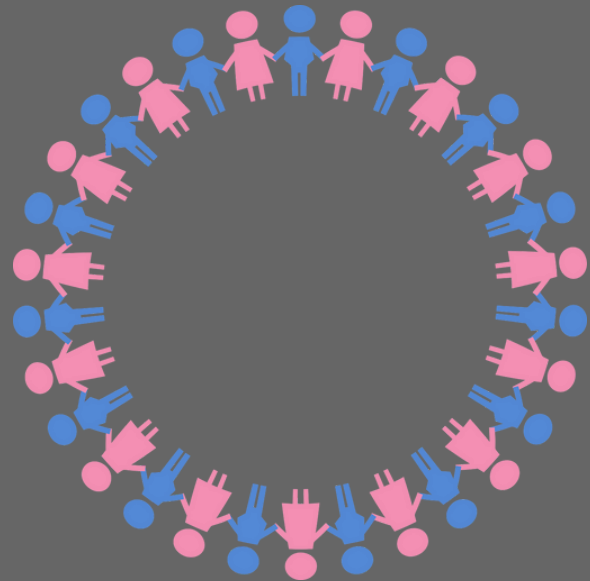
“kindness above all”.

-Keethai

Playing the Gender Role

Stepping into 2022 with a heartful of gratitude and love. With beautiful wishes for a wonderful year, let's start our journey towards happiness and joy!

Homo sapiens when created, were given different forms of physical look and capabilities. Man, generally portrayed as a strong physique frame, with facial hair and greater muscular strength. On contrast, women are sketched as a very calm and serene creature with more curves, the strength of producing life and are blessed with the power of multitasking. Think and tell : How practical is the thought of tying up humans to a category of work based on their gender? Well the situation would have made sense if the same question was asked about 50 years ago. Unisex products have already occupied top brands and designers, but when will it become a thing of common sense in people?



Hitting the bulls eye : When a girl/boy is deprived of something they wishes to do, it leaves a void in them forever. No replacement can weigh equal to what's lost. It doesn't only end with a few days of sadness but keeps them in turmoil about all the questions that it rises. • Am I incapable of doing it? • Self confidence goes into stake • Agony of being deprived results in poor results in whatever you do • Richness can be found, but contentment and satisfaction are never to be found.

Current trend :

Breaking stereotypes, today's youth redefine gender role paradigm. Boys find it absolutely fine to cook and clean the home, girls are ready to help the family financially. Unless the toxic relatives and neighbours poke their nose into such matters, a family with no gender role grows and glows.

Cooking and working are just minimal examples. It extends to

- Choosing our education
- Opting of career domain
- Settling down or hustling harder
- Choosing our life partner
- Deciding on kids
- Handling expenses
- Dress and fashion

**To conclude :**

The next time someone judges you or others based on that one organ that differentiates men and women, knowingly do that work with more determination. The feel of success hits different when proving them wrong. Boomer uncles and aunts are going to come and go but this, your mentality is for life. It may even inspire a new culture of freedom and equality

-Sriharshini

Its “NOT” all in your head



Around the world people always talk about how a person should be a good human being first. How a person should be helpful to other or else the least thing they expect one thing from you is “LIVE AND LET LIVE”. As a human being, we have made our paths on moon and mars. But still we are not being able to remove or change the mentality of people for mentally ill patients.

I am a vivid reader and love to read the self help books, in every book it was written that life is beautiful. For the person to grow, you have to face or go through some difficult situation in life. These situation can be anything, loss of loved one, loss of job or any worse thing you imagine could happen to you. People give you one advice that “ONE DAY AT A TIME”. It will not give you any stress.

But the sad part is not everyone has the same strength to go through the pain, it affects them one way or the other. And surprisingly most of the people are not able to handle this pain and it affects them mentally. When a person falls sick, you can take leave from your work place saying that you have fever, cold etc. But the people who is not able to take up the stress, not able to sleep for a month or two, having palpitation, not feeling like getting up from the bed, not feeling like answering calls and spend time staring at the wall through the night and waiting for this weird feeling to go away, they don't have the courage to call it a sick leave or infact, they cant even share this feeling to their peers because of the very obvious reason which most of the people hear it

“Stop overthinking, its all in your head, get engaged in some work, you are just being lazy, you just want to procrastinate your work, or they would say that person is just asking for attention”.

All the signs which are mentioned above are the few initial symptoms of depression. There are many more worse symptoms, when not been taken care of and then it leads to suicidal tendencies or the actual suicide.

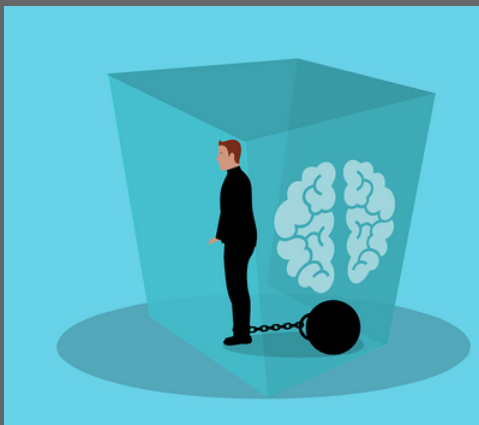
Being a mental patient suffering from depression by myself, I have heard all those things. Sometimes people give you a tag of “drama queen”. Why? Just because your leg is not broken , you are not puking or having fever or name any other major disorder. you don't have any diagnostic test or blood test for the diagnosis of this feeling.

Brain is said to be the most important part of the body, its written almost everywhere. Even an eight years old kid knows about the importance of brain but why no one ever think when some one tells them, they are not feeling good and finding things dull or would say don't feel like getting up from bed, not feel like talking to people. All these people don't care about your brain or mental health. Though it should be considered the most important thing but no one even try to consider it.





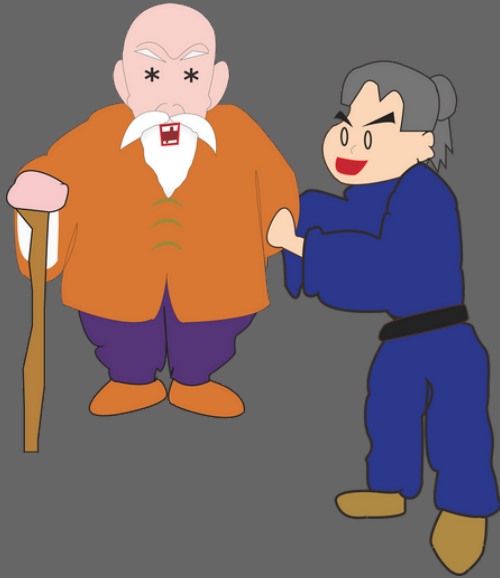
The unwanted thing which comes as a tag along with mental health is “ STIGMA”. The people who suffers from any mental health condition like depression, Anxiety , pschyzophrenia, PTSD etc. they are scared to even share their traumas or what they are dealing with because people are not aware of such kinds of disease the way they are aware of heart dieases, liver disease, obesity, diabetes etc. People who faces all such symptoms of depression usually avoid to share it because its hard to make the people understand that its not normal. People with mental health problems also experience discrimination (negative treatment) in all aspects of their lives.



This stigma and discrimination makes the problem worse. It can come from society, employers, the media, and even our own friends and family. You may even experience internalised stigma, where you come to believe the negative messages or stereotypes about yourself. They eventually do the worse things with themselves. Even when they go for therapy or psychiatrist, people starts giving them tag which makes their life more difficult.

Being the second most common disease in the world after heart disease, still it is associated with stigma.

Its high time we should de-stigmatize or stop discrimanting people suffering from mental disease. The only least thing which we can do for the people who are dealing with these disease along with discrimination or stigma is :



1. Be patient and kind to the people who share their hard phases with you.
2. Don't call their unsocial behaviour a mood swing.
3. Don't give advice like be positive and it's all in your head and snap out of it. They didn't choose this thing, this mental illness happens due to many reasons which could be a childhood trauma, losing a loved one, breakup, loss of job or due to stress.
4. Or if we can't do all the above things, don't discriminate them because maybe it helps them for a few seconds to stop staring at that wall or maybe they feel lighter or less grieved for a while.

JUST BE KIND

The aim should be **REMOVING THE STIGMA ASSOCIATED WITH MENTAL HEALTH**

“What mental health needs is more sunlight, more candor, and more unashamed conversation.” – Glenn Close.

Trust me it's **NOT** all in your head

-Monika srivastav

Contributors



Keethai



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Monika srivastav



Harine



Sayanika gogoi



Kirutika borkar

Founder's note



Nikhil Vyaas
Founder

"Chanakya Mental Health Service" an online startup company purely dedicated to mental health and wellness started off in January 2020. Building a strong physique, staying fit and fab is now a trend that almost everyone is attracted to. But mental health and related ailments being ignored and deprived of the same energy provoked the thought of coming up with a solution to the cause. Since then we never looked back. A fresh start into a new platform, we built the company on hope, dedication and to serve a purpose. All of India's top magazines, journals, books and media publish mental health related topics as a part of the edition and not as a whole volume. To come up with an e-magazine solely dedicated to the purpose of serving mental health related contents was first practiced here and now, we are happy to have completed one year of Chanakya E-magazine. With positive response and constructive criticism, we look forward to soon publish our now digital magazines as hard copy as well!



Thangavelu P

Co - Founder

Today, we happily step into a new milestone. Celebrating New Year and Chanakya's One year of E-magazine. Started with a basic question, "Why not a journal purely dedicated to mental health domain?" is how Chanakya Mental Health Service started its e-magazine activity. With the right planning and enthusiastic approach, we have almost made it a consistent thing to publish one edition of the magazine at the start of every month. Chanakya E-magazine for Mental Health is available free of cost for anyone in need. Cherry on top of the cake is, we have readers from around the globe now! It's not confined only to our country but knowing our magazine's reach in other countries as well pushes us to give our best more and more. We learn from the feedback of our audience and readers. The positive reviews and knowing that people take in something from our works gives us immense pleasure and confidence. Our writers who have contributed endlessly gave us topics from various elements of mental health in different perspectives. Thankful to the entire team of Chanakya for giving their fullest. And to our beloved audience for their constant support. Have a great year ahead, Happy New Year!