

# **REPORT OF THE WORKSHOP ON NATIONAL WORKSHOP ON PSYCHOLOGICAL FIRST AID**

(25<sup>th</sup> September 2017)

**National Workshop on Psychological First Aid** was organized by the Department of Social Work, Bharathidasan University at seminar hall, HRDC Bharathidasan University, Tiruchirappalli on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2017. Participants from various parts of the country attended the workshop. The Workshop featured various aspects of the topic, Psychological First Aid.

## **The specific objectives of the workshop were**

- To impart knowledge on the concept and theory of Psychological First Aid.
- To spread awareness among social work fraternity about the possibilities of social work intervention with Psychological First Aid.
- To train the participants in the core skills needed for Psychological First Aid.
- To discuss about the important strategies followed under Psychological First Aid.
- To set standards for professional implementation of Psychological First Aid in Social Work Practice.

The Workshop was started at 10.00 am with the Inaugural function. Dr. D. Nirmala, Organizing Secretary of the workshop welcomed the gathering and sketched out the theme of the workshop.

Workshop was Inaugurated by Dr. P. Ilango Syndicate member of Bharathidasan University and delivered his inaugural address. He highlighted that, today everyone is experiencing some kind of problems and it is essential to know about Psychological First Aid in this context. And he encouraged the participants to learn basic skills of Psychological First Aid to help the people as distress can come at any time to any people and at any situation.

Followed by Dr. V. Sethuramalingam the head of the department of Social Work presented his presidential address, pointing out the importance of Psychological First Aid and all sorts of Psychological First Aid given in relevant situation. He concluded with the sayings that “Use common sense in an uncommon situation”

Then Dr. J. O. Jeryda Gnanajane Eljo, Assistant Professor, Department of Social Work, Bharathidasan University Delivered the vote of thanks.

The resource person, Dr. Anoop Antony, faculty, St. Joseph College, Kerala, started his technical session dividing the group into different teams and gave an introduction to Psychological First Aid.

He mentioned Psychological First Aid is an approach to help people by responding to their basic needs and showing them concern and care in a way respecting their wishes, culture dignity and capabilities. He made a note on where to give priority in distressing situation and to use common sense in determining the requirements.

He also explained some basic skills, required for Psychological First Aid and they are congruence, Empathy, Unconditionality and Positive regard, Readiness, Observation, Listening and Linking.

Resource Person talked about Action principles and made it clear with many Psychological First Aid examples from his life experiences and video clippings.

**He highlighted some basic skills such as**

- Comforting people to feel calm
- Listening but not pressuring, people to talk
- Assessing people's needs and concerns
- Giving Non-Intrusive, Practical care and support
- Helping people connect to Information, services and social support

Resource Person assigned a role play to every group to practice skills of Psychological First Aid, and made them to share their experience. This session paved the way for the participants to practice the skills. He ended up the session with an interesting activity to give practical training for the participants.

The next session was started with the video on core actions of Psychological First Aid. He explained beautifully the core actions of Psychological First Aid given by Richard Hill, which are

- Contact and Engagement
- Safety and Comfort
- Stabilization
- Information gathering : urgent needs and concerns
- Practical Assistance
- Information on coping
- Linkage with collaborative services

He asked the participants to prioritize action according to the need of the person and concluded the session with the Clarifications to the participant's questions.

The valedictory function started at 04 . 30 pm. Professor V Sethuramalingam, Head of the department welcomed the gathering. It was followed by the report presentation by Miss.Puspalatha, II year MSW student of Bharathidasan University. Feedback was given by the participants. The valedictory address was given by Professor R Thirumurgan, Controller of Examinations, Bharathidasan University Tiruchirappalli. He highlighted the prevalence and effects of mental health problems especially depression and stress. He mentioned psychological first aid is essential to address the social problems in contemporary society. Certificates were distributed by Professor R Thirumurgan. At the end Dr. D. Nirmala, Organizing Secretary and Assistant Professor , Department of social work proposed the vote of thanks.