

A Humane Experience
A Humane Experience

Rehabilitation Of Mentally – ill Roadside Destitutes

Shraddha Rehabilitation Foundation

SHRADDHA IS DEDICATED TOWARDS

THE WANDERING MENTALLY ILL
ROADSIDE DESTITUTE



*Stripped of All
Human Dignity*



*Stripped of All
Human Dignity*



*But are Humans
Nevertheless*



*But are Humans
Nevertheless*

The Cornerstone of Great Humane Social Work

Two souls unknown to each other collide in their passages across Time

One of them takes cognizance of the existence & emotions of the Other

*The Cornerstone is to put the Focus on the
Opposite person's internal desires, longings and emotions*

**There is no relation by blood between anyone concerned,
nor is that gesture of yours put up anywhere on any media,
nor is it put up for any gallantry award by anyone**

*It is Reaching Out,
Emotions to Emotions,
Soul to Soul,
Bonding at its Ethereal Best*



FOURFOLD INTERVENTION OF SHRADDHA

Assisting
Mentally - Ill
Off Streets



Shelter
&
Treatment

Reunion
With
Family



GRASSROOT AWARENESS
PROGRAM



Awareness
&
Counseling

Shraddha - First 3 Room Setup established in 1988



SUNDAY
REVIEW
JUNE 1990

3 JUNE 1990

THE TIMES OF INDIA

GENTLY INTO DAYLIGHT

THE psychiatrists, Bharat and Smitha Vatwani bent over the derelict sprawled under the pitiless sun in the asphyxiating street. "Come with us," they said.

They gave him food, a wash, a change of clothes, a bed in their clinic and a new lease of life. A restoration of dignity to Vijayam, 25.

"Come with us." These three words have transformed the lives of 13 homeless, mentally afflicted persons in the past year, pulled back acute psychotics from the depths of their miasma.

Why do Smitha and Bharat Vatwani do it? Merely the uncoiling of an urge to reach out

mission of helping the homeless insane. "Out of 13 persons we've rescued so far," said Bharat, "ten have been restored to society. Three, unfortunately ran away."

One of their recent cases Hemant Thakare, 35, a 'brilliant' ex-student of the J.J.School of Art, who was knocked off the rolls last year due to a mental breakdown. This led him to take to the streets, and collapse outside the Jehangir Art Gallery, where he stayed till his friends finally managed to hear of the Vatwanis.

They not only pulled him back but also helped get him readmitted to the J.J.School, where he later became a staffer.

WAY-OUT
REVATHI SIVA KUMAR

and help those too sick to ask for help.

"The wandering insane have a right to treatment, as much as others" said Smitha. And we try to give them the best therapy possible. Patient 'consent' is not necessary, for he is clearly harming 'self' or others."

For instance, Vijayam was found near a gutter, subsisting on garbage. His recovery was fast, and a month's treatment later, he dredged out his identity and address—to which he was speedily restored.

"It was like a dream when I received a telegram from a far-away, unknown place, that my son was safe and well," his father, a zilla parishad superintendent in Andhra Pradesh commented. His son whose illness had flummoxed local medics for years, is on the road to recovery—even Vijayam can write back to his saviours. "I can't forget you all my life."

The Vatwanis are no dream merchants, though, but a no-nonsense, down-to-earth couple quietly tackling their self-imposed, unglamorous

The dean reports that he is among the most punctual and professional of teachers. One of his paintings sold for Rs 8,000 at an exhibition two years ago. He has put up a brave and spirited fight against his affliction and has proved his capacity for a "normal" role, in society," says Bharat.

The Vatwanis work in tandem with a social worker, who usually locates the patient and then helps in the cleaning and housing of the patient in their sprawling clinic in suburban Bombay.

It is no coincidence that the patients they take in are relatively young, confesses Bharat. They deliberately choose persons who have some hope of social acceptance and rehabilitation. "Otherwise we would be saddled with recovered patients who have nowhere to go. In one instance, an elderly man was cured, but did not wish to return to his family. At a loss, they almost connived at his 'escape'.

However, 56-year-old Pillai was an older man helped and rehabilitated by the couple. A Kerala migrant he was found in a post office writing letters to Indra Gandhi two years after her death. His relatives were overjoyed to have him back.

Usha Rani 40, is a similar exception. Though the Vatwanis usually don't take women in, to avoid getting into legal bottlenecks, they took pity on her emaciated, broken condition. Drawn out by a Punjabi friend, her home was traced out and she was escorted to Panipat.

All the others too have been ensconced in the family life again, their antecedents painstakingly discovered by the coordinated efforts of the entire staff at the nursing home. Sharif Mohammed, a schizophrenic meandering through a dingy street, was 'taken over' by the Muslim staffers, who probed the recesses of his memory by taking him on periodic visits to a nearby mosque, finally sparking a remembrance. He recalled his home in a remote pocket of Deoriya, Uttar Pradesh.

"When we undertake a task like this, everybody cooperates," said Smitha. "The

chemist supplies free drugs, the staffers help to establish a link with the patients, the police tap their sources."

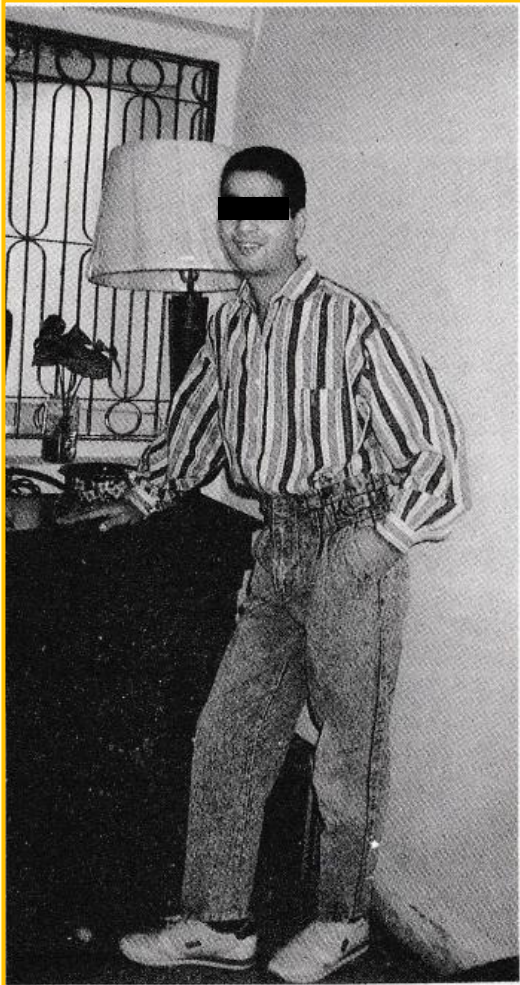
A CID officer of Purulia, West Bengal, helped the Vatwanis find the address of Bimal Kumar Acharya, 26. Having run away from home nine years ago after failing the 10th standard, the return of Bimal was like the redemption of a forgotten promise for his incredulous parents.

Often they get little by way of financial compensation from relatives, but they say that they can 'afford' one free bed for every seven patients who 'pay' for their treatment.

Quietly efficient, unassuming, ideally cut-out for the samaritan role, the couple seems an anachronism in today's corporate-doctor age. Their sprawling clinic takes medicare to a new dimension. For Smitha and Bharat Vatwani are not merely skilled doctors, they are practitioners in the forgotten art of healing.

- The Vatwanis help the mentally insane off the streets

A Note of Gratitude from a relative in Srinagar in Kashmir who was reunited with his lost son in 1991



G. M. S. [redacted]
Rural Development Department

STATION SRINAGAR (Kash)
DATE 7.2.1991

My dear Dr.Sahib.

With profound respect, we take this opportunity to express our deep gratitude for the kind and benevolent action of yours which has turned the immense gloom in our family into an occasion of tremendous joy.

Dr,Sahib,you can't imagine what you and your Mrs have done for us and we have no words to express the same.Mxxx

Here in Srinagar on our safe arrival on 2.2.91, you and your institution has been under a constant discussion among our kiths and kins and the people in general,who visited us on this moment of joy and happiness.All the persons who heard the story of Rajas recovery through your institution and through your benevolent self,have nothing,but prays and appreciation for you.We believe that in this world of turmoil only man like you sustain,some hope and it is through your kindness that the needy persons like us are benefitted.

Dr.Sahib,you know I am not a big man and I can't do what you actually deserve.We all the members of our family only pray to God Almighty for your prosperity,health,and success and this prayer shall be continued till our last sigh.

Raja is quite happy and in good spirits, he feels that in your person and institution he has been gifted by the God Almighty a savior

G. M. S. [redacted]
Rural Development Department

STATION SRINAGAR
DATE 7.2.1991

for him and we all are quite hopeful that this illness will be remedied completely through your good self.

You may recall that you have already been kind enough to give time scheduled prescription of medicine for Raja up till end 3/91. We are sure that we will religiously abide by that schedule and follow the instructions without fail. We however, solicit further guidance as to whether tablets'seup' (2-Every week) the injection are poule IM Every month,are to be continued or not,after the month of March,1991.Incase these tablets and the injection are not to be continued what alternative medicines is to be given.

Dr.Sahib,we repeat our sincere thanks to your good self and to Madam Dr.Smitha Vatwaeni for the Benevolent action you have done for us.We are eagerly awaiting the occasion when you will find some time to visit Kashmir which though apparently is in turmoil,is still a paradise for angles like you.

With best wishes and kind regards.

Sincerely Yours

Mrs. G. M. S. [redacted] 7/2/91
12-Rd
Housi y
Srinagar(Kashmir)
Pin code:190005.

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Even in today's selfish world, there are people like Smitha and Bharat

The Good Samaritans



HEALING TOUCH: DR SMITHA WITH ONE OF HER PATIENTS

By Dakshesh Parikh

KHALID was a boy walking insane on the streets of Bombay. He was dishevelled, muttering and laughing to himself. Lost in his own dream world, in tattered and ragged clothes, unable to make any headway in the surrounding world of sanity, he had been on the cruel roads under the scorching heat for 45 days.

To the lay person he would have looked like another beggar amongst the countless beggars thronging the streets of Bombay. But he was different. Mentally different.

To the psychiatrists Bharat and Smitha Vatwani, who happened to be on the roads at that time, the beggar presented a classical case of schizophrenia, a mental illness which temporarily makes a person lose touch with reality.

LOVING CARE

Immediately, without wasting time, they picked him up, brought him to their Shradha Nursing Home in Borivli in Bombay, gave him a bath, clean clothes, food and shelter, and started appropriate psychiatric medication on him.

After some days of gentle persuasion and loving care, all that they could elicit from Khalid was that he was from Srinagar, Kashmir. One week of further treatment saw Khalid

suddenly remembering his neighbour's telephone number in Kashmir. It was a golden opportunity which Bharat did not want to let go. An urgent trunk call to Srinagar confirmed Khalid's whereabouts and within 48 hours, the boy and his parents were reunited. The parents were overwhelmed with joy and thought of Bharat and Smitha as messiahs serving deliverance.

BASIC RIGHT

But to the two doctors, it was another chore for the day. For they had got into this habit of picking up mentally-afflicted destitutes wandering on the streets of Bombay and giving them treatment until they could get back to their senses, and hence give forth their address. Then they would find out their native place, their original home from which they had wandered out in a schizophrenic condition and help relocate them.

Why do they do it? "Because we believe that the wandering insane, who have no place to go, no shelter or roof over their head, no doctor or friend to turn to, do have a basic intrinsic inherent right to live life with dignity," says Bharat. "And we believe that as psychiatrists and as decent human beings, we should contribute towards this basic human right of the schizophrenic person," continues Smitha.

And they are well justified in

their cause, because today, five months later, Khalid is back with his parents in Srinagar pursuing further education and living a normal life.

Another recent case was that of Raneer, a woman of 35 malnourished to the bone, who was found semi-conscious on the streets of Juhu in Bombay. There was her child of four sitting and sobbing morosely by her side. They were picked up by Mother Teresa's organization and kept in their homes for destitutes. But there, after a week or two, on recovering consciousness, she suddenly turned violent. This is where they turned to Bharat and Smitha, with whom they were in regular touch, for psychiatric help.

NOBLE TASK

The Vatwanis were more than willing to help out, Raneer

The Vatwanis carry on their mission undaunted, in their self-imposed laborious and unglamorous task to tending to and fending for the mentally-afflicted destitutes on the streets of Bombay

was shifted to their nursing home and intensive psychiatric treatment was started. Eight weeks of vigorous treatment saw Raneer regain her sanity but still she was unable to speak about the whereabouts of her husband. Until one day, in the nursing home, she came across a facial cream pack of Nivea and suddenly jumped up to say that she remembered everything and that her husband worked in the company which made Nivea. Her husband traced. The tragic paradox of her situation was highlighted when her husband was found to have gone to Madras on the previous evening, because he had been told that a lady and a child were found to be sitting on the railway platform of Madras and that they could be his own.

When the Vatwanis undertake such a noble task, others do help out. Social workers, social organisations, the police, medical colleagues, and above all their ex-patients do contribute their worth and chip in.

REHABILITATION

In one instance, during the Ayodhya turmoil, three of their ex-patients volunteered and escorted Rajendra, a boy who hailed from Bihar, all the way to his native place in Bhagtiarpur. They did this without any financial considerations and despite the grave personal risks involved.

In another instance, Bharat undertook a trip to Pune to trace the antecedents of Gangadhar, a boy of 20, who had been picked up on the Bombay-Pune highway in an utterly emaciated condition with a broken leg and mentally in a

seeing him and wept unashamedly.

Often Bharat and Smitha get nothing by way of financial compensation. But this does not impede their burning desire to continue. "We never started this for financial gains and we want to continue our work as we have so far, on an absolutely charitable basis. Our only considerations and guiding force are the humanitarian aspects involved," they say.

How many mentally-afflicted derelicts have they picked up so far? "Thirty-two. Out of which four have run away, three are with us and 25 have been relocated to their parents and are living a normal life," is their modest claim.

LABORIOUS

"But this is only a drop taken away from the ocean of insanity wandering out there," says



THE ENTIRE VILLAGE GATHER TO THANK THE CRUSADER

deranged psychotic state. This time again he was picked up by Mother Teresa's workers and handed over to the Vatwanis for rehabilitation.

The local police of Bombay have also got wind of the social service activities of the Vatwanis and have given encouragement and a helping hand wherever possible. In Kishen's case, an appeal by them saw Kishen and his escorts being given lodging in the police quarters in Yavatmal in Maharashtra. Official police vehicles were lent to trace the location of Kishen's native place, a remote village called Yenidongre 46 kms away from Yavatmal. Kishen's incredulous parents and brothers could not contain their happiness at

Bharat grimly. "The lay people never care to bother or even look at the schizophrenic woman with her mud-smeared face, stinking clothes, hair all matted up, lying half-naked on the street. Nobody seems to give a damn. There is so much to do that we are awed by the enormity of the situation," adds Smitha feelingly.

Nevertheless, the Vatwanis carry on, undaunted, in their self-imposed laborious and unglamorous task of tending to and fending for the mentally-afflicted destitutes on the streets of Bombay.

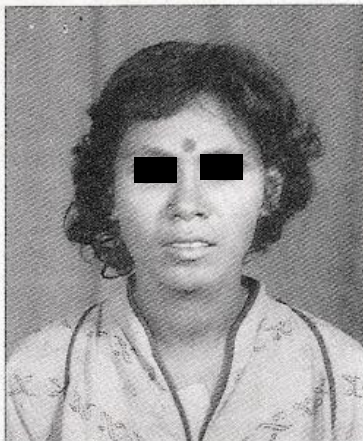
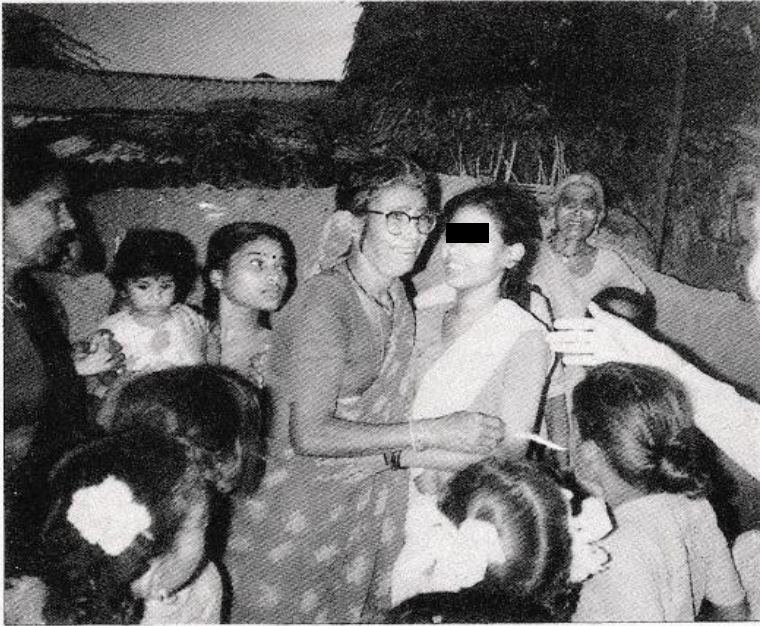
And when reminded of the magnitude of their task, they have the words of Robert Frost to look up to: "Miles to go, promises to keep, dreams to fulfill, before we sleep..."

NATIONAL
News

THE ILLUSTRATED
WEEKLY OF INDIA

DECEMBER 1991

13000 Tales of Hope



Revallamma was a 35 year old lady who was picked up from Borivli in Bombay. She was laughing & talking to herself and displayed features of mental illness. She was given psychiatric treatment for a period of 6 weeks. She improved radically & said that she belonged to **Vardamana Kotta, a small village 200 kms away from Hyderabad in Andhra Pradesh.**

The top left photograph shows a happy reunion between mother and daughter at Vardamana Kotta in Andhra Pradesh, after 4 years of separation because of mental illness.

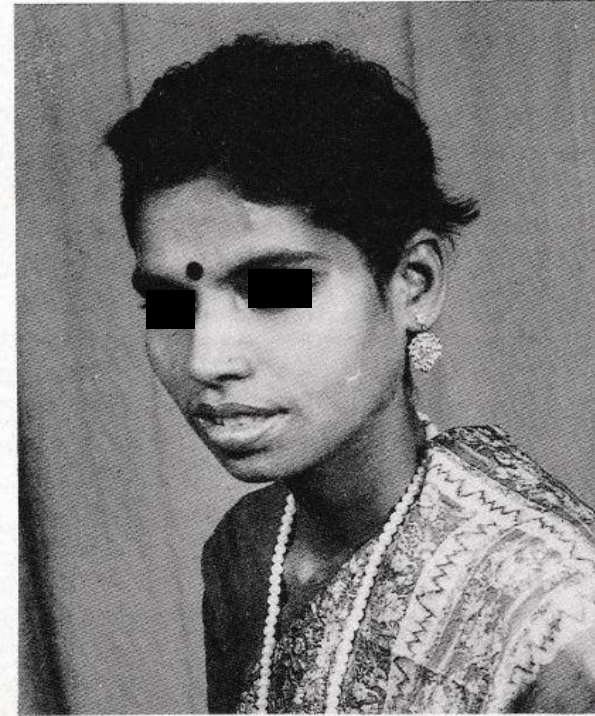
The photograph on the top right shows standing (from L to R) Revallamma's father, Revallamma's mother, Revallamma and Dr. Smitha Vatwani, who had personally gone to Andhra Pradesh to escort Revallamma to her native place.

13000 Tales of Hope



The photograph on the right shows Sageera after she had improved.

Sageera was personally escorted to her native place near **Jalgaon** in **Maharashtra** by Drs. Bharat and Smitha Vatwani. (photograph on bottom right)



The photograph above was taken on the day Sageera Sheikh was brought to the nursing home. She was severely anaemic, had multiple bruises on her hands, and was in an acute psychotic state. For nearly 10-15 days, she continued to be in the same state before gradually improving with psychiatric treatment. Two months later, she had recovered completely.



A Note of Gratitude from a brother who came to Shradha Mumbai to take him back to his village in Birbhum in West Bengal in 1992

Dear Sir

please take my cordial Compliments. Hope you are well.

We have reached safe. your patient Majibur is sound now. He is taking medicine regularly. I have no expression to praise you. After a long period we have find out a man who was a perished object to us due to your kind and generous activities. We are much ~~greatly~~ grateful and indebted to you. When we reached our residence a great crowd rushed to the place. All people praised you. our happiness ~~is~~ know no bound. It is reminded you that some group photograph was made at your nursing home at the time of departure. It is also in my knowledge that a video Casset in connection with your patient Majibur Rahman is kept in your custody. With my humble submission, I beg to state that you would be kind enough to send those group photograph and re-recording of video Casset by post. We are eagerly awaiting for those articles. This is my earnest request.

You will be very happy to hear that your passport-size photograph ~~with~~ which was presented to me is now not ~~is~~ in my possession. The photograph is working door to door like a living god. your praise knows no bound. All people are willing to take a vision of you through your photograph. They are thinking that God of heaven has stepped down to the earth. That's all.

Shaking you
yours ever grateful

Najrul
of Majibur
of Majibur
rescued patient.

My Address:-

West Bengal

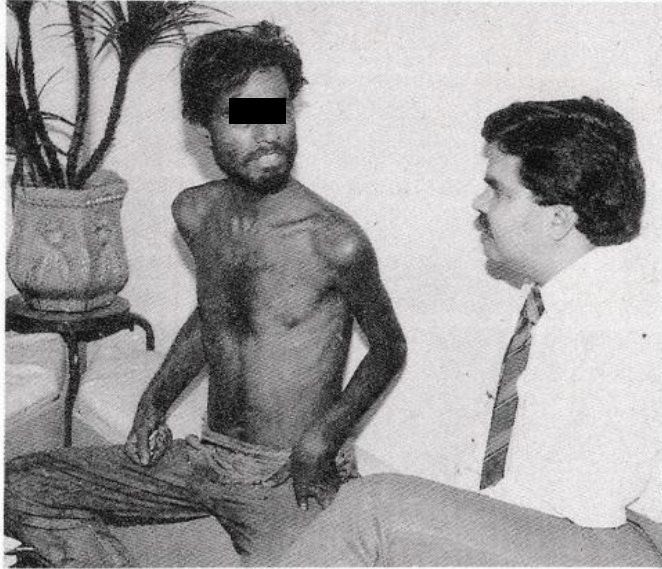
13000 Tales of Hope



The abject desolation of a mentally ill destitute is portrayed in the photograph on the left. Hair matted & tangled, ragged clothes worn one on top of the other, a tattered sock on his right hand & arm, eyes staring into vacant space, and a silly fatuous grin earmark his plight. On day one, he could only reveal that he hailed from **Barauni in Bihar**.

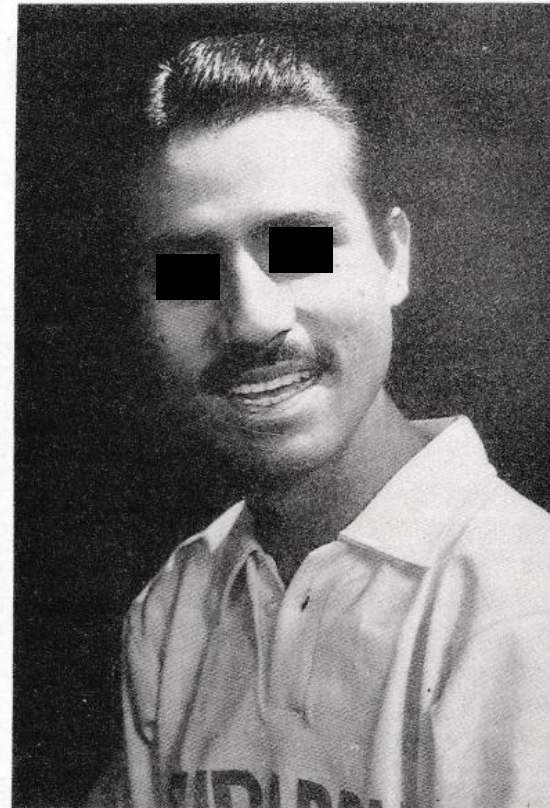
It so happened that this boy had put a rubber band round his neck and in his mental state, had not bothered about it. In the process, a deep ulcer had developed all round his neck which was stinking profusely & was badly infected.

13000 Tales of Hope



The photograph above shows Shakeb on the day he was picked up by Dr. Bharat Vatwani. Shakeb was talking absolute gibberish and was physically run down and weakened. His dirty mud-caked body showed multiple scars. His tattered trousers & his general appearance suggested that he had been on the road since many months, because of mental illness.

The photograph on the bottom right shows Shakeb at the time of discharge, two months after vigorous treatment. He had done his B.Sc in Agriculture & Horticulture from Poona University & was essentially from **Patna in Bihar**.



ज्या मनोरुग्णांना समाजाने शिडकारले त्यांना समाजात परत आणण्याचे आणि मानाचे स्थान मिळवून देण्याचे फार मोठे खडतर कार्य गेली जवळ जवळ ५ वर्षे वतवानी जोडपे करीत आहे. रस्त्यावर भटकणाऱ्या मनोरुग्णांना कुणाचाच आसरा नाही, खायला पोटभर अन्न नाही आणि उपचार करायला डॉक्टर नाहीत अशांना एक सुंदर जीवन जगण्याचा अधिकार आहे, जेवढा इतर सर्वसामान्य जन्तूला आहे. अशा व्यक्तींचा सर्वसामान्य जीवन जगणे हा मानवी अधिकारच आहे. या पाच वर्षांच्या काळात पाच हजारपेक्षा जास्त मनोरुग्णांना बरे करण्याची किमया या डॉक्टर पती-पत्नीने साधली आहे.

अलकोहोल, ब्राऊन शुगर, मेटली गीक, आत्महत्येचा प्रयत्न, वेड लागणे, आणि नोकरी न मिळणे अशा अनेक केसस या डॉक्टर पती-पत्नीने यशस्वीपणे हाताळल्या आहेत. हे मनोरुग्ण मानसिक रोग असल्यामुळे रस्त्यावर येतात, बाकी त्यांना काहीच रोग नसतो. यात चांगल्या घरातील लोकांचा जास्त भरणा असतो. हा रोग कोणालाही होऊ शकतो.

हे दोघेही डॉक्टर पती-पत्नी मुंबई विद्यापीठाचे एम. डी. आहेत. स्मिताला सुवर्णपदक मिळाले आहे. भरत यांचे दोन्ही भाऊ डॉक्टरच आहेत. स्मिताचे वडील व एक भाऊ डॉक्टर आहे. १९८७ साली भरत यांनी पदवी घेऊन प्रॅक्टिस सुरू केली. तर स्मिता सुरुवातीला मायम व कुपर इन्सिस्टन्ट डॉक्टरच आहेत. भरत रेतत असे. एम. डी. करतांना ही दोघे एकत्र होते. इशेच ते दोघे एकमेकांच्या प्रेमात पडले. पुढे मग ते विवाहबन्ध झाले. मुंबईत मनोरुग्णांवर उपचार करणाऱ्या डॉक्टरांची संख्या फार कमी आहे. नर्सिंग होमदेखील अजभी चार-पाचच आहेत. लोकांचा फकीर, महाराज, बुवा यांवर जाल विस्वास असतो. या दोघांनी स्वतः नोकरांला श्रद्धा नर्सिंग होम दोन वर्षांपूर्वी सुरू केले. तेथे कमीतकमी पेशात मनोरुग्णांना हे पती-पत्नी सेवा उपलब्ध करून देतात. मनोरुग्णांना कोणी भाली नाही. समाजात त्यांना शिडकारले



उत्तर प्रदेशचा राजेंद्र शर्मा त्यांना रस्त्यावर सापडला. त्यांच्यावर उपचार केल्यानंतरचे शर्माचे प्रकाशचित्र.

नोकरीच्या अमिशाते मुंबईत आला व मुंबईत बसला. तो बी. एस. सी झाला होता. या दोघांनी त्याला या आजारातून बरा केला. मग राजस्थानांत त्याच्या घरी संपर्क साधून त्याच्या भावाला बोलावून घेतले. मग विनोदला घरी पाठवले. दहिसर येथे रेणुका नावाची एक स्त्री त्यांना सापडली. ७ महिन्यांचा तिचा मुलगा गेल्यामुळे तिच्या डोक्यावर परिणाम झाला होता. ९ महिने ती घरातून जेपता झाली होती. अखेर यवतमाळ येथील तिचा पत्ता शोधून तिला त्यांनी घरी पाठवले. हैद्राबाद येथील रेवल्मा हिलारदेखील त्यांनी बरे करून परत हैद्राबादला पाठवले. त्यावेळी रेवल्मा



जळगाव येथील सगीरा शेखला तिच्या घरी डॉ. भरत व स्मिता वतवानींनी आणल्यावरचे प्रकाशचित्र.

मनोरुग्णांना संजीवनी

जाते त्यांना नवीन जीवन देण्याचा प्रयत्न या पती-पत्नींचा सुरू असतो. रोज त्यांच्याकडे सरासरी ३ ते ४ पेशंट येतात. रुग्णाला औषधे वर्षे दोन वर्षे घाली लागतात. सातत्याने औषध घेणे ते महत्वाचे असते.

मुंबई महाराष्ट्रशिवाय कळप्पा, बिहार आंध्र प्रदेश गुजराथ कलकत्ता आणि काश्मिर येथूनदेखील मनोरुग्ण बातवानी यांच्याकडे आले आहेत. या पती-पत्नींना कुठेही जाता-येता रस्त्यावर फ्लॅटफॉर्मवर गल्लीबोळात अथवा हायवेर असे मनोरुग्ण दिसले तर ते त्यांना आपल्या नर्सिंग होममध्ये घेऊन येतात. योग्य उपचार करून त्यांचा घरचा पत्ता काढून त्यांना घरी पाठवून देतात. नोकरीच्या अमिशाते बरेच जण मुंबईत येतात. नोकरी मिळत नाही व जाताना गाडीही मिळत नाही, त्यामुळे ते चक्रात अडकतात व मनोरुग्ण होऊन बसतात. योरिवली येथील फ्लॅटफॉर्मवर विनोद योयल या मनोरुग्णाला पती-पत्नीने बघितले त्यांनी त्याला घरून आपल्या नर्सिंग होममध्ये आणले. राजस्थानमधील विनोद चार वर्षांपासून या रोगाचा आहारी गेला होता.

बघायला गाव जमा झाले होते आणि घरच्यांचा आनंद तर काही औरच होता. आमरावतीचा हेमंत टाकरे हा जे. जे. स्कूल आर्टसचा फाईन आर्टसमधील सुवर्णपदक विजेता विद्यार्थी नंतर त्याला सुहास जोशी

तिथेच नोकरी मिळाली. पण मनोरुग्णाचा पेशंट झाल्यामुळे त्याला नोकरीतून कमी केले.

डॉक्टरांकडे टाकरे यांचा मित्र होता त्यांनी डॉक्टरांच्या कानावर ही गोष्ट घातली त्याचा केसचा डॉक्टरांनी अभ्यास केला. गंमत म्हणजे टाकरेला पूर्णपणे बरे करण्यात डॉक्टरांना यश आले. विशेष म्हणजे त्याला परत कामावर घेण्यात आले. आज टाकरे डॉक्टरांच्या नर्सिंग होममध्ये राहून त्यांना मदतदेखील करतो. टाकरेवर इलाज करायलास जवळ जवळ आठ महिने लागले. शक्यतो तरुण पेशंट हे डॉक्टर पती-पत्नी घेतात. दारु पिणाऱ्या रुग्णांना ते घेत नाहीत. साधारण महिना-दोन महिन्यांत मनोरुग्ण बरा होतो. पोलीसांचे चांगले सहकार्य या दोघांनाही मिळते. बरे झालेले मनोरुग्ण व त्यांचे नातेवाईक यांचे मोलाचे सहकार्य डॉक्टरांना मिळते. मनोरुग्णांना बरे करणे यावर बराच खर्च होतो.

सुरुवातीचे दहा दिवस मनोरुग्णांची परीक्षाच असते. परंतु या दहा दिवसांत या डॉक्टर पती-पत्नींची जणू काही अग्नीपरीक्षाच असते; नर्सिंग होमच्या आजूबाजूचेदेखील लोक डॉक्टरांना म्हणाने तसे सहकार्य करत नाहीत. त्यांना एक स्वतःची मुलागी आहे व शिवाय एक मुलगा आणि मुलगी त्यांनी दत्तक घेतली आहे. या मुला-मुलींकडे ते लक्ष देतात. हे रुग्ण एकमेकांत मारामाऱ्या करतात. चोऱ्या करतात. काही वेळा त्यांना माराबयास लागत, बांधून ठेवायला लागत, हा मनोरुग्ण बरा झाला की जाताना आम्ही व सर्व स्टाफ त्याला सॅड ऑफ देतो. भरतला व्यवसाय सुरू करून पाच वर्षे झाली. तर दोघे पती-पत्नी या व्यवसायांत ३ वर्षे काम करत आहेत. एखादा मनोरुग्ण पळून जातो तेव्हा त्यांना तीव्र दुःख होते.

अंधेरी व विरार दरम्यान मनोरुग्णांवर उपचार करणारे हे एकमेव नर्सिंग होम आहे. या मनोरुग्णांची माहिती हे डॉ. पती-पत्नी मिळवण्याचा प्रयत्न करतात. ती आल्यावर त्यांचा फोटो काढून ठेवतात व जाताना नवे रुप दिल्यावर त्यांचा परत फोटो काढतात. मनोरुग्णांना घरी जेव्हा पाठवतात तेव्हा

घरच्यांचा आनंद, त्यांचे आनंदातून यातच सारे काही या पती-पत्नींना मिळून जाते. हे समाजकार्य करत असताना या दोघांना बऱ्याचदा स्वतःचा पैसा व सगळ्या वेळ तया घालवावा सांगतो. असे असूनदेखील त्यांच्या समाज सेवेला खीळ बसत नाही. आमची विवा आमची प्रेरणा आहे हे ध्येय डोक्यासमोर ठेवून या पती-पत्नींची यशस्वी वाटचाल चालू आहे.

MAHARASHTRA
News

MARATHI

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Mumbai

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सामना

शामना

मुंबई, सोमवार, दि. २५ मे १९९२ - पान ३

गेले दोन वर्षे त्या हीकर टोपल्याने जगातल्या घाल घेतल्या, वित्तीयपट्टे रोखी मीस रू टाटून सोमवारी इत घेतले.

'सुखरस्तू' समजात कोणतं जादूचिन्ह असल्याची हे काळी वेड वेडोचं तुपच्या टोपल्यात? असा सवासी समजवणाऱ्याची सोबत केला, पण ते दोघी त्यातल्या इतले नाहीत.

त्याच ते इत अगड-वेगळे म्हाणें लागेल हे मार विविधात. रस्त्यावर घटकणाच्या वेड्यांना पुन्हा सामनात आणण्याचं हे इत आहे. वेगळी टोपे वशीत

वेड : वेड्यांच्या पुनर्वसनाचं!

'गुरू मॅनिंग' म्हाणसा सायनातल्या सायनात हल्ले त्याने स्वगत केले. अत्युत्कीर्ण 'अल वा' म्हाणसा, मात्र गुरक्याने त्या गुरक्याचा दर घडवला. 'अदर पळो!' म्हाणू आदेश सुटला. 'साय वे वेगळे हे, इटी मार तुप्या रीत हे!' गुरक्याच्या या मॅनिंगीने अजबजब विविधाप जवळपास घडवत घडवत. ती मुळात वेड्या असल्या, हे काही वेगळा म्हाणसा

की, पण रस्त्यावरील रुग्ण रस्त्यावरच मरतून मरतून म्हाणू अजबजब हा प्रत्येक टोपे वर्षे अजबजबले तुकू आहे. ही ही विमला वाटवानी बोलत होत्या. बरेच दिवस सायनात केलेल्या भावभावना त्याच्या म्हाणसात स्पष्ट होत होत्या. जगातल्या या टोप्यांमध्ये मात्र ती पुढा हादरून गेले होती.

बनवता. अजब वेडी त्यांच्या कळाने हार काही वेड्या, त्यांना ह्यागा-विण्याचं अजिब टाकतून सोडतात बसकियात घेते रुग्णांच्या वेडेपणाची कायची बरीच अन्मू झाल्यात. बहिशा रुग्णांना पळवतांना बहिशाच लागते, त्याचंही एक शास्त्र आहे. रस्त्यावर मरतून वेडे काळे कापणे रुग्ण समाजाच्या दुष्टीने बरी बडकट, विताय असे असले तरीही अजबच्या दुष्टीने

दिवी
दुष्टाच्या पुनर्वसनासाठी शिवाजीराजगुरू श्री. बाबासाहेब इकले पानी घोषवरीत 'रुग्णांचा' तुकू केले. अशिपा खंडवरीत तो एक वेगळा उपक्रम आहे. दुष्टाचं आयुष्य तेथे फुलत आहे. त्याच घट्टीत मनोरुग्णांसाठी एक इकलेचा निवाहा हवा आहे. मन-मन-मन घाट्टी मरत मरताने कायकीत उभे राहिले राहिले, कायला मनोरुग्णांच्या प्रश्न (अन्मू त्यातूनही भरवण्यावर घटकणाच्या) हा तुप्या-आयुष्यात काही ना काही, प्रत्यक्ष-अप्रत्यक्ष हा सायनात वेगळा आहे.



आपल्या रुग्णातपात वाटवणी टोप्या रुग्णांना आयुष्यकोने भोजन पारविताना.

सुमारी ३५ ते १०० जणांचा पुन्हा 'मायूस' म्हाणू त्यांनी सतत-ध्या रावणार उभे केलेय, अन् तेही कुठलीही अजिबात मनी न केलात, वेगळे एक समाजाचे म्हाणू...

बोरीवली परिवेसत ही. वाटवानी टोप्या रुग्णातपात त्यांची वेड वेड्यात वेडो, तेव्हा अजबजब अजबजबानी म्हाणूच वेडो. स्पूरी हरवेलेपाना पुन्हा पुर्वेचा आत्मसातवारी दिव-रुत झगडवता या पुन सायनातपात कायची अजबजब घडत घडते!

वेड दुपारची. बोरीवली परिवेसत ही. वाटवानी टोपे रुग्णातपात रुग्णातपाचे अजिबे हा बंद होतो. मलेमले कुणूच बाहेर मुळाक आधी यायनावर वेड्याची तेव्हा विविधी बहिशात घाललेला एक घडवत

की, पण रस्त्यावरील रुग्ण रस्त्यावरच मरतून मरतून म्हाणू अजबजब हा प्रत्येक टोपे वर्षे अजबजबले तुकू आहे. ही ही विमला वाटवानी बोलत होत्या. बरेच दिवस सायनात केलेल्या भावभावना त्याच्या म्हाणसात स्पष्ट होत होत्या. जगातल्या या टोप्यांमध्ये मात्र ती पुढा हादरून गेले होती.

संजय इहाळे

वेगळा जगवारी बहिशात इतक्या दरवारी बोरीवली वाटवतात आली आहे. 'सुमारी सवारीत रस्त्यावर घटकणाचासाठी समर्पित संस्था!' असे विविधाप या इकले घटकणाचेसमर्थ आहे. सारी आध्यात्मिक, बोरीवली परिवेसत (एव्हा रीत) येथे असलेल्या रुग्णातपात त्यांचा सतत हाण टोप्यात घेत आहेत.

या रुग्णांचे समाजातपात मनीस आत्मसातवारी केलेली म्हाणूने, मनीस रुग्णांच्या प्रश्न भवात्मक आहे. वाटवानी टोप्यातपाची हाती घेतलेला उपक्रम सायनातपात दुष्टीने मोलतपा आहे, त्याच दुष्टीकायला सहजपाचो हात मात्र हवा आहे. वाटवानी टोप्यात एव्हा ही आहेत. त्यांच्या सहजपाचोसाठी अने मनीसमन सजक हे सायनातपात करतात. त्यातूनच अजबजब आपलं हादरलेलं आयुष्य पुन्हा मिळवते.

रस्त्यावरील रुग्णांच्या काय काय पळवतून आयुष्यात, या प्रश्नावर ही. मात्र वाटवानी टोप्या अजबजब अजबजब सांगितले. सोबत विविधी टाकतून काही प्रश्नांची टाकविले. 'हे रुग्ण रस्त्यावर मरतून असल्यात काळे करतात. घडवणी विविधी



रस्त्यावर घटकणाच्या मतिमंदांचे आयुष्य बदलविणारे वाटवणी टोप्या

हे एक आवाजच असतो. एकदा त्यांना रुग्णातपात आणले की आपले बरम तुकू होते.'

मुंबई शहर म्हाणूने अनेक घडवणी टोप्यासाठी जोडविले एक वेड आहे. रजे म्हाणूने प्रवास होतो. वेडे असल्याने विकिटाचा झाल वेत नाही. मात्र मुंबईच्या रस्त्यावर ते मरतून सायनात. आसाय, मध्य प्रदेश, गुजरात, उत्तर प्रदेश येथूनही रुग्ण आलेले आहेत. बहिशा-टीट बहिशात सामान्य रुग्णांतपाचे दुपार होऊ शकतो. एकदा का ते मनीस झाले की घडवणी सायनात बहिशात काय सायनात नाही या पुनर्वसन कायकायला सायनाची घडवणी काय होईना पण आपला काय उपचारात, हे र पोष्य वेडी उपचार आयुष्यात आहेत, अशी बहिशा ही. मात्र वाटवानी टोप्या

जवळ झालेला अवघड हा कायून वेड्यात नाहीत, तर रस्त्यावर उपचाराची मारमपुडी केलेली जाते!

मानसिक घडवणी बोग्यास, काहीही, कायची वेड झकटो. त्यातून सायनात व वेगारी म्हाणूने घडवणीत बनवतात. त्यांच्या पुनर्वसनाचा प्रश्न मुंबईशारातपात म्हाणूनेही विविध बनवत घालताय. त्यांचा मनेचा हात इकले. सहाय्युपारी हीच अजिब पोष्य तो वेड्यांचे उपचाराची....

धर्मिक व जोडवणीचं काय आज इकले घटकणाचेसमर्थ हाती घेतलेलं. त्या रुग्णांना समाजाचे बहिशात काय सायनात नाही या पुनर्वसन कायकायला सायनाची घडवणी काय होईना पण आपला काय उपचारात, हे अजिब अजिब वेड्याचं वेडेपण रूत म्हाणूच घाल घेतलेल्या या उपचारात स्पष्टेचा !

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THE WEEKEND OBSERVER



A couple with a conscience: Drs Bharat and Smitha Vatvani talking to a young patient at their Bombay nursing home

PSYCHIATRY WITH SHRADDHA

THE tiny waiting room is crowded in the early evening hours, but Mickey and I manage to find some seating space. It is our first trip to distant Borivli, and I happen to have come along only because her confidence in local area geography is rather shaky. Also, she is a bit nervous, this being her first interview as a journalist: a rookie maybe, but nonetheless a genuine card-carrying member of the press.

"Can you help him?" was the agonised appeal of some students of the prestigious J.J. School of Art. Their favourite teacher, Hemant Thakare, had slipped deeper and deeper into the throes of schizophrenia and had eventually lost his job. Worse, he had wandered from his home and had ended up living on the pavement near Jehangir Art Gallery in ritzy downtown Bombay. It is from here that his former charges took charge of him and delivered him to the Vatvanis at Borivli.

Today, Hemant, a former gold medalist at the School, is back on the faculty at JJ, thanks to the personal interest shown by the Maharashtra education secretary, Mrs Kumud Bansal, in his reinstatement. Hemant is the living proof of a miracle that the Vatvanis bring about frequently enough to make us wonder at their patience, their perseverance and, above all, their passion for psychiatry as a medium for their message. Love conquers all. Even schizophrenia, a disorder that reduces human beings to levels of existence hard to fathom unless one deals daily with the phenomenon.

"Without adequate training, one cannot distinguish a schizophrenia from other derelicts on the street," says Dr Bharat Vatvani.

Michelle "Mickey" Mathews had sought out the remarkable Drs. Bharat and Smitha Vatvani at Shradha Nursing Home, Borivli, in order to explore their fascinating work of bringing back people from the edge of sanity to normal existence. A recent fatal motorcycle mishap prevented this young Observer reporter from ever having a chance to file the story. Anjan Ray, who accompanied her to Shradha, recalls that evening and articulates the tributes she wished to pay the dynamic doctors

"But if one knows what to look for, they're fairly easy to spot. Unlike the other homeless, they do not fight for food. Often, they are found talking and laughing to themselves, lost in a world of their own. Time and space have little meaning for them. Little, insignificant events can intimidate them and turn on their latent aggression, which can make them difficult to handle." But that has not deterred this amazing couple from taking on the challenge of rehabilitation for those cases where a chance may exist, however slim. They generally do not attempt therapy outside the age group of 14 to 40, preferring to concentrate their energy and limited resources where the likelihood of success is greatest.

Apart from those whom they themselves detect and bring back from the streets of Bombay, patients are brought in by concerned citizens who are aware of the Vatvanis' mission. The Mother Teresa Home at Borivli also refers cases on occasion. In their 15-bed nursing home, four to five are usually available free to the destitute; the rest are allotted to private patients who are the primary source of funds for the psychiatrists. Much of their administrative work is handled by an M.Tech. engineer whom they brought back from the brink and

who stayed on with them as their amanuensis after he was pronounced cured. While I'm taking notes, Mickey has started up an animated conversation with Hemant, whose shyness diminishes gradually. He takes her to the room adjacent to the doctors' consultation chambers. The Vatvanis and I follow. What unfolds is a wall full of some exquisite art, the creative output

"People often fail to recognise the onset of mental disorders in their near and dear ones. Sometimes they pretend the problem doesn't exist."

of Hemant during and after his recovery. He, too, has stayed on with the Vatvanis. Shradha is not his nursing home any longer; it is simply his home. "People often fail to recognise the onset of mental disorders in their near and dear ones," says Dr Smitha Vatvani. "In some extreme cases, they wish the problem away and try to pretend that it doesn't exist. The social stigma of

a 'mental case' in one's family can be devastating." Many of those who have found succour at Shradha were turned out of their homes when the situation got out of hand. Several others, like Mr X, wandered away of their own accord. X strayed to Bombay from Asansol, on the Bihar-West Bengal border; it is only after the therapy took effect that she was able to recollect her address and a message was sent to her home for her folks to come and take her away.

The Vatvanis are both young. I'd guess in their mid-30s. Their idealism is laced with an understanding of the reality that they cannot possibly aid every schizophrenic on the city sidewalk. They have had to turn away cases in some instances where they didn't think a cure was possible. And once in a while, they have failed. But not without trying. And sometimes they have beaten steep odds, as in the case of Ms Y from Jalgaon who will be returning to her home tonight, personally escorted by Smitha.

A new patient has just been brought in. His strange behaviour was noticed by the watchman of their building and the Vatvanis have persuaded him to come inside with some effort. For an 18-year-old, his eyes are ageless and untamed, his hair tousled,

appearance unkempt. I can tell Mickey is apprehensive, but she does a good job of keeping up the flow of conversation.

The doctors speak to him gently and he seems willing to eat something and go to bed for now. Tomorrow, his treatment will begin. At Shradha, the emphasis is on medication, supplemented by lots of tender care and a clear understanding of the nature of the disorder. Trained male nurses work in shifts round the clock. The convalescent patients chip in to run the kitchens and take care of the newer arrivals to some extent; they are already on the road to regaining their rightful places as productive elements of society.

"What are your ambitions?" Mickey enquires of Smitha. "We dream of having our own hospital for the destitute, a place where they can help each other get better even as they undergo therapy. A place large enough that we can multiply the present level of rehabilitation several times over." On the way back home, Mickey's eyes are brimming, the stern simplicity of the Vatvanis' sincere and unflagging efforts have touched her to the extent that she will end up writing and rewriting this feature article several times, never being quite satisfied with the result, never considering it equal in standard to the ongoing magnum opus that she has just experienced.

And thus it is that I have to finish the piece for her. I wish it were otherwise; that she were still around to do this last rewrite. But not all wishes come true. I fervently hope that the Vatvanis at least will have theirs fulfilled. Mickey would like it that way. On her behalf, I dedicate this to our midst, with respect. With Shradha.

...for Drs. Smitha and Bharat Vatwani

"Nice meeting you. Have a good day." Sudhir Madhav Phadke is pleasantly courteous as he takes his leave. In a little over five minutes, he has run through an encapsulated account of his life, all 40 years of it. A degree-holder from the VJTI (Victoria Jubilee Technical Institute), he was an assistant engineer at the Bombay Municipal Corporation (BMC) not long ago. He was also a freelance correspondent for *Mahanagar*, he says, as well as for several other publications, including *The Washington Post*. You are impressed, until he adds that Bob Woodward (of Watergate fame) is currently in town, at Yogi Nagar in fact—a middle-class locality in the Bombay suburb of Borivli where Sudhir himself has a flat. And Woodward, says Sudhir, is collaborating with him on a journalistic assignment. The subject? "Religion, community... religion..."

HANDS-ON HELP FOR STREET-SIDE SCHIZOPHRENICS

Somewhere along the way, Sudhir's mind has tripped, making the precipitous transition from reality to the phantasmagoric world of the paranoid schizophrenic.

He's under treatment now, but it's no thanks to his family—he has two failed marriages behind him, but he also has other family members who one might have thought would care about what happened to him: a brother who's a scientific researcher, a sister who's a high-court lawyer. But nobody wants to 'get involved', it seems. When close colleagues at the BMC tried to get him admitted into the K.E.M. hospital for treatment, the hospital refused because of the stipulation that admission must be through a relative.

If Sudhir has anyone to thank for the fact that he's steadily getting better, it's a husband-wife team of psychiatrists who, over the last three and a half years, have picked up and rehabilitated over 100 mentally-ill persons off the streets of Bombay. Although Sudhir has a flat of his own, he has 'given it out' to someone else; and when Smitha and Bharat Vatwani found him a month ago, he was scrounging around a street in Borivli, laughing dementedly to himself, spouting gibberish without end, his hair long and matted and infected. Today, as he makes the slow climb back to reality and wellness, his 'before' and 'now' pictures (above) speak for themselves.

"Mental illness is the most neglected of all ailments—even when the sufferer is living within the secure confines of the family," says Bharat Vatwani, explaining why he and Smitha, both of them privately-practising psychiatrists, decided to help the most helpless of them all—those who are mentally ill and destitute, wandering the streets, with no family at hand or interested in getting them treated.

And, like Sudhir, they are not necessarily poor or homeless. The first person that the Vatwanis picked up was Paeres, whom they found eating out of a garbage bin just outside their nursing home in Borivli.

HEALTH HURRAHS

Applause for persons or steps to improve the

institutions that have taken innovative standard of community health



ON THE ROAD TO RECOVERY: Sudhir Phadke on the day he was picked up from the streets (above). And, right, Sudhir today at Shradhda where he is still undergoing treatment



He turned out to be a pathologist, with a Diploma in Medical Laboratory Technology (DMLT), from Cuddapah in Andhra Pradesh! He'd had a past history of mental illness, had come to Bombay for a job, failed to get one, and had spent four years as a schizophrenic on the streets. His father, a superintendent of the area *zilla parishad*, had long before given him up for dead.

Then there was Shakeb Alam from Patna who had done his B.Sc. in Agriculture and Horticulture from Pune University, and had then disappeared from Pune. When the Vatwanis found him at Eksar, a residential locality in Borivli, he was bare-chested, had grown a beard, had not eaten for two days, and was talking "non-stop nonsense", says Bharat. Two months of intensive therapy and he was unrecognizable. He was eventually taken back home by his uncle who is editor of the Urdu daily, *Shama-e-Bihar*.

There is no dearth of patients in need of rescuers. A

person suffering from psychosis (which is characterized chiefly by a loss of contact with reality) may often get into the first available public transport and get off at a terminus. "Borivli being a railway terminus, we often find them sitting on the platform," says Smitha.

Others, like Paeres, actually come to Bombay for a job, fail—and the frustration and anxiety lead to chronic depression and an emotional overload. Often without close relatives in Bombay, they end up on its dog-eats-dog streets.

The Vatwanis do not wait for destitute patients to be brought to them. They go out into the streets, stop when they see a likely candidate and, winning him over with a promise of tea and biscuits, lead him, unresisting, to their car and thence to the *Shradhda Nursing Home* that they run at Borivli. "They are usually too weak and emaciated to resist," says Bharat.

After a thorough scrubdown, a haircut and/or a shave, they are generally put on intravenous therapy—drips of glucose and vitamins to cover their nutritional deficit. Alongside begins the intensive psychiatric treatment—drugs and, if needed, electroshock therapy. Two months or so later, there is virtually a transformation in these men and women: you see them as the persons they really are, not what their mental illness metamorphosed them into.

It's only then that the Vatwanis try to return them to their families. Not always an easy matter. Some, who have come from a faraway village or town, may only know its name. For instance, Padma who came from Warangal (A.P.) could only give them the name of 'Mulu'—but the Vatwanis managed to get her back home to a deliriously happy mother, her only immediate family. Then there was Shivkumar, a young boy they treated, who could only tell them he was from Benares. But once they reached Benares, it all came back to him and he took the rickshaw unerringly to his house.

"In the case of a female patient: either my wife or I was always accompanies her back home," says Bharat. "In the case of a male patient, a *Shradhda* volunteer goes along."

"At the time we return the patient to his family, we write out a detailed case history and a prescription for maintenance therapy," says Smitha, "and we ask the family to follow up with the nearest government or municipal hospital. And some of them do stay in touch. A few also mail us money orders for drugs to be sent to them from Bombay."

But they have not always been successful in re-uniting patients with their families. In some cases, relatives may simply be unwilling to accept the patient back. "When the parents are alive, especially when the mother is alive, we get a good response," says Smitha, "and this is more so in the



TWO FACES OF FUCHO: Fucho Sau, 20, from Barauni, Bihar, when the Vatwanis brought him in from the roads (left). Right, the Vatwanis with Fucho (following treatment) and a relative who came to take him back home

villages than in the urban areas, especially Bombay." If the Vatwanis are unable to return a rehabilitated patient to his family, they generally get him admission into one of Mother Teresa's homes.

But there are exceptions who remain with the Vatwanis long after they have been treated. There's Maniben whom the Vatwanis found feeding gutter water to her four-year-old grand-daughter (her grandson, aged two years, had died some days before the Vatwanis found Maniben.) The grand-daughter was herself emotionally traumatised at the time, but has now recovered sufficiently to go to a nursery school. And Maniben can smile again.

Today she helps out at *Shradhda* with the cooking and other work. "Our long-term plan is to set up a separate home for destitute patients," says Bharat. (Today they share the same premises as the Vatwanis' private patients). "If we cannot return them to their families, we can at least keep them gainfully occupied—which is an important aspect of recovery."

Space is the major problem, and the reason why the Vatwanis have to keep an upper limit of about 7 on the number of 'roadside cases' they can take in at a time. For the present, they also employ certain criteria when considering potential candidates. "We give preference to the younger ones because we feel they are more likely to have surviving parents who will take them back," says Bharat. "Also, we do not take in alcoholics or drug addicts. The criterion is that the problem should be totally beyond the person's control. In alcoholism or drug addiction, we feel, there is also a contribution to the problem, to some extent, from the person himself."

And where do the funds for all this come from? "It's mostly been our own money," says Bharat, "although now the Rotary Club of Borivli (West) is also helping with funds."

About a year ago, the Vatwanis registered the "Shradhda Rehabilitation Foundation" for mentally-ill destitutes as a charitable trust. "At that time," says Bharat, "we found that we were the only ones in Maharashtra involved in this kind of work—which shows to what extent the problem has been neglected."

The enormity of the problem is, without question, overwhelming. But the Vatwanis are trying to make that small difference that counts. It's a beginning that we applaud, and hope will be emulated, for the alternative is to be paralysed into inaction.

NIRMALA FERRAO

NATIONAL
News

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Indian Express

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From the roadside to mainstream

Mini Pant Zachariah reports on the efforts of the Shraddha Rehabilitation Foundation to resettle mentally-affected destitutes



A 35-year-old dishevelled man with his head full of pus and lice, incongruous

speech and a vacant look in the eyes was picked up in December last year by Shraddha Rehabilitation Foundation from a Borivli roadside. Suffering from schizophrenia, he fancied himself to be a *Washington Post* correspondent!

Surviving on alms and savouring his delusions of grandeur, oscillating between psychotic breakdowns and brief spells of near sanity, he would have continued as a vagabond but for a chance happening.

After watching a video clipping of the foundation on cable TV, a resident of Yogenagar, from where Sudhir was picked up, informed Bharat and Smitha Vawani, psychiatrists at the foundation about him.

After two months of treatment with anti-psychotic drugs, Sudhir was ready to receive psychotherapy. The doctors helped demolish his grandiose ideas and build his self-confidence. By April, Sudhir was ready to face reality. He wanted to go back to BMC, his work place.

The Vawanis and Ghanshyam Bhimani, Psychiatrists from Bombay University and trustees of the foundation,

started providing free medicare to mentally unstable people on the roads seven years ago.

"As students we realised the dearth of institutions for the care of the mentally afflicted. We started providing free medicare, food and shelter to these destitutes diverting funds from our private practice," said Bharat.

The first patient from the roadside was a youth who was laughing and muttering to himself. Months later, when his condition stabilised, it was learnt that he was a Zilla Parishad official's son from Andhra Pradesh. He had wandered and probably boarded a train which brought him to Bombay.

His parents who had lost hopes of finding him were thrilled when the Vawanis reunited them. "The boy who holds a diploma in medical lab technology is working at his native place," said Bharat.

Most of these cases are of people who have strayed from their native places. Disoriented in time and space, they board any train and get off at the terminus.

Shakil Alam, a native of Patna lost his mental balance and landed up in Bombay. He was studying B Sc (agriculture) in Pune. He was picked up from Borivli station by the Vawanis and reunited with his family 18 months later.



Fuchou Sau from Barauni in Bihar was another person found by the psychiatrist couple on the streets in tattered clothes, a sock in one hand and stinking a mile away. Alam's relatives helped locate Sau's family which took the boy back after five months.

"We counsel the relatives that the patient will have to continue medication for some time. These medicines are available at the local government hospitals," said Smitha adding that most people follow their instructions. She, however, admitted cases of relapse.

Most pathetic was the case of Santoshi, a young woman from Ambawadi whose photo is on the foundation's advertisements displayed on suburban trains.

"She was a sight to see when we brought her here. Her tight petticoat had cut into her skin. She had lice and ulcers. After months of treatment, we located



her family. She is at home and visits the clinic occasionally for therapy," said the Vawanis.

The foundation spends up to Rs 1,000 per month on medication and food of each patient. At any point of time, there are five or six such patients accommodated at the 20-bed private clinic of the Vawanis in Borivli.

The money for their upkeep comes through donations from institutions, public and former patients. A major art exhibition-auction is being organised by the trust from October 18 to 24, 1993 to raise funds.

The idea of the exhibition was mooted by Hemant Thakare, a lecturer at JJ School of Arts who was once in Vawanis care. A gold medalist, Thakare was struck off the faculty rolls of the school when he had a mental breakdown.

Jobless and mentally unstable, he took to streets, collaps-



ing one day outside Jehangir Art Gallery.

The foundation which took him under its wings not only treated him but also took up his case with the Education Secretary and got him reinstated.

Well-known artists - Anjolie Ela Menon, Bikas Bhatnagary, J Swaminathan, Manjit Bawa, Jatin Das, Manu Parikh, G R Santosh, Akbar Padamsee, Prabhakar Barve and Badrinarayan among others - have agreed to participate in the auction.

"Artists are very sensitive to the cause of the emotionally disturbed," says Smitha.

The Vawanis who have treated up to 150 deranged destitutes so far, pick up only psychotic cases now and avoid all drug addicts, alcoholics and the old. "Our aim is to help those whose tragedies are not of their own making."



Psychosis is an illness which impairs the thinking of the patient. Unable to meet the day-to-day stresses of life, he breaks down withdrawing into a world of make-believe which does not pose threats to him.

Once cured, rehabilitation of the patient is necessary not only to give him a sense of usefulness but also to ward off disturbing thoughts. "This is why we made great efforts to get Sudhir back on his job," said Smitha.

"Although P M Kale, Director engineering services at BMC, was most sympathetic, Sudhir is still to be reinstated. His file has been pending at BMC for the last four months," said Bharat.

Well-groomed, Sudhir assists the Vawanis with odd-jobs at the foundation waiting for the BMC to clear his papers. With Kale retiring on August 1, his wait could prolong.

NATIONAL
News

BOMBAY

AUGUST 1993



॥ जननी जन्मभूमिश्च स्वर्गादपि गरीयसी ॥

જન્મભૂમિ

હીરક જયંતી વર્ષ

અંક: ૯૦ મુંબઈ, બુધવાર, તા. ૨૨-૯-૯૩ બહારગામની આવૃત્તિ, ગુરુવાર, તા. ૨૩-૯-૯૩ પાનાં: ૧૦

GUJARAT
News

GUJARATI

JANMABHOOMI - 1

SEPTEMBER 1993

સેવા, સ્નેહ ને સારવારનો 'શ્રદ્ધા' - સમન્વય



દરદી સાથે ડૉ. ભરત અને ડૉ. સ્મિતા

મુંબઈમાં વસતા અને મુંબઈની મુલાકાત આવના હજારો કલાકારો અને લાખો કલાપ્રેમીઓની પવિત્ર ભૂમિ જેવી જહાંગીર આર્ટ ગેલેરીનાં પત્રવિધાં પર સિસ્ટર વર્માના પરદેશી જેવા લાગતા એક બુઝુરૂ મેલાંધિલાં કપડાં અને મહિનાઓથી પરમાં ચોટી ચણેલાં મોજાં સાથે બેઠા છે. ગેલેરીમાં આવતાં જતાં સૌની નજરે પડે એ રીતે તે અંગ્રેજીમાં કથુંક બોલ્યા કરે છે. તેમની 'પની સ્કોટલેન્ડ પાડમાં કામ કરે છે' એવું બધું. તેમની સાથે વાત કરવાનો પ્રયત્ન કરનાર દરેક વ્યક્તિને એણે જ તેમની પર નજર રાખવા મોકલ્યા હોય તેમ તે માને છે. નામ પૂછતાં કહે છે : 'રાબિન્સન.'

ઓનસ્ટ મહિનામાં આ લખાણ લખાયું હોત તો ઉપરના ફકરામાં કથો જ ફેરફાર કરવાની જરૂર ન હોત. પરંતુ આ થોડા દિવસમાં એક એવી ઘટના ઘટી છે કે ઉપરનાં વાક્યોને ભૂતકાળમાં લખવાં પડે એવી સ્થિતિ સર્જાઈ છે.

જહાંગીર આર્ટ ગેલેરીના કેકુ ગાંધી ઓફ્ટોબર મહિનાના એક કેન્સલેશનમાં એક ડાઉન્ટર દંપતીને જોઈતી તારીખો જોઈતી રહ્યા છે. પછી તો ડૉ. ભરતના ગેલેરીના ચફકર શરૂ થઈ ગયાં છે. અને એ જ ગાળામાં કેકુ ગાંધીના મનજીમાં ચમકારો થાય છે. તેઓ ડૉ. ભરતને ફોન કરે છે અને જહાંગીરનાં પત્રવિધાંને જ પોતાનો આવાસ બનાવી જિંદગી વિતાવતા

પેલા બુઝુરૂના છવનમાં એક વળાંક આવે છે.

ડૉ. ભરત વાટવાની એ પારસી સજીવને વાતચીતમાં પળોટી, ફોસલાવીને પોતાની સાથે બોરીવલી (શાંતિઆશ્રમ પાછળ એફસર વિવેજ, બોરીવલી પશ્ચિમ)ના પોતાના 'શ્રદ્ધા નર્સિંગ હોમ'માં લઈ આવ્યા. એના દસ દિવસ પછી નર્સિંગ હોમમાં હું જેમને મળી એ એક સ્વચ્છ, હંસમુખ પ્રકૃતિના

તરુ કજારિયા

સજીવન હતા. હસીને અભિવાદન કરતાં તેઓ કહે છે 'હવે અહીં જ રહેવું છે.' ડૉ. ભરત અને ડૉ. સ્મિતા વાટવાનીની દસ દિવસની તબીબી સારવાર અને હુંફળી માવજતથી આ બુઝુરૂના દેદાર ફરી ગયા છે. તેમની પાસેથી તેમના સજીવોની માહિતી મેળવી તેમના ભાઈને ખબર આપી તો ભાઈ ડૉ. દંધનીનો આભાર માનવા ઠોડી આવ્યા. તેમની પાસેથી મળેલી માહિતી મુજબ તેમના આ ભાઈનું નામ ભરજીવ અસલી છે. તે અપરિણીત છે અને પિતાના મૃત્યુ પછી જે સજીવ સાથે રહેતા હતા ત્યાં તેમની ચંદાગોબરા રહેવાની અને અવવસ્થા તેમ જ ચિત્ર-વિચિત્ર હરકતને લઈને તેમને ઘરમાંથી બહાર કાઢી મુકાયા હતાં. ત્યાર બાદ અન્ય સજીવોને ત્યાંથી પણ તેમના સભાવને કારણે નીકળવું પડ્યું. ત્યારથી

ભરજીવ અસલીને માટે જહાંગીર આર્ટ ગેલેરીનાં પત્રવિધાં પોતાનું ઘર બની ગયાં હતાં. પત્રવાન પિતાએ મૃત્યુ પહેલાં પોતાની મિલકતનું ટ્રસ્ટ કર્યું હતું. પાંચે દીકરાઓના ભારતનું બ્યાજ બંધમાં તેમના પાતામાં જમા થતું હોઈ ભરજીવને પૈસાની તકલીફ નહોતી. ક્યારેક ક્યારેક તેના સજીવો કે 'જહાંગીર'ના નિયમિત મુલાકાતીઓ બ્રેડ, ચીઝ, બિસ્કીટ અપાવી દેતા. સજીવોનોને ભરજીવને જે વિચિત્ર ટેવો લાગતી એ

પીડાના લોકો મનજીનો રસાયણોની અસમનુવાને કારણે વિચિત્ર રીતે વર્તે છે. પરંતુ એમની એ વર્તણૂક એટલા સમય પૂરતી જ હોય છે. બાકીના સમયમાં તેઓ સ્વસ્થ માનવીની જેમ જ વર્તે છે. આને કારણે ઘણા કિસ્સામાં દરદીનાં સજીવો (જે તેઓ આ બીમારી વિશે કશું જાણતા ન હોય તો) દરદી અને વેરસમજૂતી કરે છે. આવા દરદીઓના મનજીનો રસાયણોની સ્થિતિ એન્ટીસાઈકોટિક દવાઓ દ્વારા

અહીં લવાયા છે. પરિચિતો અને ક્યારેક તો અપરિચિતો પણ મનજીની બીમારીથી પીડાતા દરદીઓને 'શ્રદ્ધા નર્સિંગ હોમ'માં લઈ આવે છે. રસ્તે રાજીના એ દરદીઓને સ્નેહ, સેવા અને સારવારથી સાજા કરી તેમના ઘર અને સજીવો હોય તો તેમની પાસે અને ન હોય તો મધર ટેરેસા'એ હોમ જેવી સામાજિક સંસ્થામાં મોકલાવાય છે. મીન્ટ જેવા ધમધોકાર તબીબી વ્યવસાયમાંથી અટકળ રળી લેવાની વૃત્તિ



ગુજીવને 'મનજી'માં લવાયા ત્યારે

.... અને આજે

સંતોષી : ત્યારે

.... અને આજે

ખરેખર તો તેની માનસિક બીમારી હતી અને છે. ડૉ વાટવાનીએ શરૂ કરેલી એન્ટી-સાઈકોટિક દવાઓથી આજે એ ઘણી અકુશમાં આવી ગઈ છે. ડૉ. વાટવાની કહે છે : 'માનસિક બીમારી ધરાવતા, ખાસ કરીને સિઓફિનિયાથી

સામાન્ય થઈ શકે છે.' ભરજીવના કિસ્સામાં તો તેના સજીવોની સારવારનો ખર્ચ ઉપાડવાની નેધારી છે. પરંતુ ડૉ. દંધનીના નોંધકડાં (વીસ પવારીના) નર્સિંગ હોમમાં અગાઉ બીજા આઠ દરદીઓ છે જેમને રસ્તા પરથી

કેળવવાને બદલે ગાંઠના ગોપીચંદન કરવાનું આ યુવા દંપતીને શી રીતે સૂચવ્યું હશે ? ડૉ. ભરત કહે છે : 'આખાપણમાં ખૂબ સરીબી જોઈ છે. પિતાની હુંક પણ નાની વયે ગુમાવી હતી. અભાવના એ દિવસો કપરા (અનુસંધાન પાનું ૮)



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(૭માં પાનાથી ચાલુ) હતા. આ વ્યવસાયમાં આવ્યા ત્યારે માનસિક બીમારીનો ભોગ બનેલા રસ્તે રજાના લોકોને જોઈને થયું કે આમને મદદની સૌથી વધુ જરૂર છે. અને તેમની સારવાર કરવાનું નક્કી કર્યું. સહાયકોનીમાંથી પત્ની બનેલી સ્મિતાને પણ આ કામમાં રસ હતો જ.

છેલ્લાં પાંચ વર્ષથી શરૂ ફરેલી આ પ્રવૃત્તિ દ્વારા આજ સુધીમાં આ દંપતીએ લગભગ બસો જેટલા દરદીઓને સાજા કર્યા છે. ટ્રેનમાં જાહેરખબર વાંચીને કોઈ દરદીની માહિતી આપે છે તો ક્યારેક વળી કેબલ પર વીડિયો ક્લીપિંગમાં જોઈને કોઈ દરદીને લઈને આવે છે. વર્લ્ડની ગ્લેકસો કંપનીની સામે એક છોકરી જાભી રહેતી. અર્ધપાગલ જેવી લાગતી એ છોકરીની લોકો છેડતી કર્યા કરતા. એકવાર ગ્લેકસોના એક કર્મચારીએ ટ્રેનમાં વાંચેલી જાહેરખબરને આધારે 'શ્રદ્ધા'માં ફોન કર્યો અને એ છોકરી-સંતોષીને 'શ્રદ્ધા'માં લાવવાની વ્યવસ્થા કરાઈ. પોતાને છોકરો ગણાવતી સંતોષી નર્સિંગ હોમમાં છોકરાનો પોષાક ટી-શર્ટ અને હાફ પેન્ટ પહેરવાનો જ આગ્રહ રાખતી. સારવાર દરમિયાન જાણવા મળ્યું કે એ કોઈવેલીમાં રહેતી હતી. ત્રણ બહેનોની મા મરી જતાં પિતાએ બીજું લગ્ન કર્યું હતું અને ઓરમાન માને દીકરો થયો હતો. ત્રણ મહિનાની સારવાર પછી સંતોષી સાહજ થઈ અને તેને કોઈવેલીના ઘેરે પહોંચાડી દીધી. હવે દવા લેવા નિયમિત આવે છે.

રસ્તા પરથી લાવવામાં આવેલા આવા દરદીઓમાં અનેક બહારગામના અને દૂર દૂરનાં-મધ્યપ્રદેશ, આંધ્રપ્રદેશ, કર્ણાટક, તામિલનાડુ, બિહાર, બંગાળ વગેરે રાજ્યોના પણ હોય છે. એ લોકોને પોતાને ઘેર પહોંચાડવાની વ્યવસ્થા પણ આ દંપતી કરે છે. સ્ત્રીઓ કે છોકરીઓને મુકવા તો ડૉ. સ્મિતા પોતે જાય છે. આ રીતે દરદીને

તેને ગામ મુકવા જવાના પ્રસંગો યાદ કરતાં ડૉ. સ્મિતા કહે છે : 'ગામડાંના દરદીઓને પાછા મુકવા જઈએ ત્યારે તેમનાં સ્વજનો જ નહીં, આખા ગામના લોકો જાણે આભારનથી છલકતી આંખે અમને વધાવી રહ્યા હોય તેમ લાગે છે. એક ઠેકાણે તો ચાવલ અને મરચાની ભૂકી ખાઈને છવતા ગરીબ ગ્રામજનોએ ક્યાંકથી બે ઈંડાનો જોગ કરી મારે માટે ભૂજી બનાવી હતી. વીજળીવિહોણા એ ગામમાં તુટેલો હાથપંખો લઈ ક્યાંય સુધી મને હવા નાખતા રહ્યા હતા એ પ્રેમાળ સ્વજનો.' 'અરે એક વાર તો એક છોકરીને તેને ઘેર સોંપવા ત્યાં ત્યારે જાહેર વરસાદ વરસી રહ્યો હતો. તેને ઘેર પહોંચાને થોડી વારમાં તો આડોશપાડોશ અને પછી તો આખા ગામના લોકો વરસતા વરસાદમાં પણ અમારો આભાર માનવા પહોંચી ગયા હતા.'

પરંતુ આ બાબતે મુંબઈનો તેમને કંઈક જુદો જ અનુભવ છે. પાગલ ગણી તરછોડી દેવાયેલાં સ્વજનોને આ અજાણ્યા દંપતી પોતાનાં તનમન-ધનથી ઘસાઈને સાજા કરી જ્યારે તેમનાં સ્વજનોને સોંપવા ત્યાં ત્યારે કેટલાંક સ્વજનોના ચહેરા પર આશંકાના વાદળ છવાઈ જતાં જોયાં. હવે આ ડૉક્ટર પૈસા માગશે તો ? કેટલા માગશે ? આવી ચિંતા મન પર ફરી વળી હોય એમ પણ લાગ્યું છે. આ રીતે સાહજ થઈને આવેલી વ્યક્તિ પોતાના પરિવારની હોય તોપણ દૂરનાં સગા થાય' કહી લાંબી વાત ટાળે છે. હજી ત્રણ-ચાર મહિના પહેલાં જ નર્સિંગ હોમના સામેના મકાન પાસે જાભી જાભી જેમતેમ બગડતી એક રસ્તીને 'શ્રદ્ધા'માં લવાઈ. તેને સારવાર આપી અને સાહજ થતાં મલાડના તેને ઘેર મુકવા ગયાં. ઘેર બે કમાતી દીકરીઓ હતી. આભારનો એક શબ્દ પણ બોલ્યા વિના માને ઘરમાં લઈ એ છોકરીઓ બોલી, 'પિતાજી બહાર ગયા છે. અમે પછી આપને ત્યાં આવીશું.' ત્યાર પછી એ સ્વજનો

સેવા, સ્નેહ ને સારવારનો સમન્વય

આવ્યાં પણ નથી કે નથી તેમણે ફોન કર્યો. ભરત-સ્મિતા આવા અનુભવોથી વ્યથિત થઈ જાય એ સહજ છે, પણ નિરાશ નથી થતાં. તેમનાં અનેક દરદીઓ સાજા થઈને 'શ્રદ્ધામાં' સેવા આપી રહ્યા છે. બાર જેટલા આવા સ્વયંસેવકોની મદદથી 'શ્રદ્ધા'નો સેવાદાય જળહળે છે. પરંતુ પોતાની ખાનગી પ્રૅક્ટિસ અને આ મફત દરદીઓ બંને માટે નર્સિંગ હોમની જગ્યા નાની પડે છે. 'રોડસાઈડ પેથન્ટ્સ' માટે એક અલગ નર્સિંગહોમ જાણુ કરવા તેમણે દહીસરમાં જગ્યા લીધી છે. 'ના, સરકારની કે સુધરઈની કોઈ મદદ માગી નથી.' એ અમલદારશાહીની કાર્યશૈલીનો અમને ઘણો અનુભવ છે. આ યુવાન સિવિલ એન્જિનિયરને જુઓ છો ને ?' કહેતાં ભરતે મને સુધીરનો પરિચય કરાવ્યો. ભાવવાહી આંખો અને સૌમ્ય ભાષામાં વાત કરતો આ ઈજનેર હજી બે વર્ષ પહેલાં જ બાંધે મ્યુનિસિપલ કોર્પોરેશનમાં કામ કરતો હતો. વાંચન અને લેખનનો શોખ હતો. તે લેખો લખતો અને અખબારોમાં પ્રગટ પણ થતા. પછી તેને 'ફૂલ ફ્લેજીડ' પત્રકાર થવાની લગન લાગી. ડિસેમ્બર ૧૯૯૧માં બી.એમ.સી.ની બાંધી આવકની નોકરી પરથી રાહતનામું આપી દીધું. ધ.ડાંધ લેખો લખવા મંડી પડ્યો. હવે તેના મનમાં ઠસી ગયું હતું કે એ 'વોલિંગ્ટન પોસ્ટ'નો ખબરપત્રી છે. પોતે તો એમ માનવા જ લાગ્યો અને સૌને કહેવા પણ લાગ્યો. તેના ધ.ડાંધ લખાતા લેખો છપાવા બંધ થયા. સુધીરને લાગ્યું તંત્રીઓ તેને અન્યાય કરે છે. પરંતુ એ સિઓફિલિયાનો ભોગ બન્યો હતો. એનાં લખાણો માથા-મેળ વિનાનાં હતાં. દિવસે દિવસે તેની સ્થિતિ બગડતી ચાલી. યોગીનગરનો તેનો ફૂલેટ એક માણસે પૈસાની લાલચ આપી ભાડે લઈ

લીધો અને સુધીર રસ્તા પર આવી ગયો. ત્યાં ડિસેમ્બર મહિનામાં બોરીવલીના રસ્તા પરથી તેને 'શ્રદ્ધા'માં લાવ્યા ત્યારે તેના મેલા, વાસ મારતા વાળમાં જ-લીખ ખદખદતો હતાં. હાથમાંથી પરુ વહેતું હતું. બે ઝમ-રસોડાના ફૂલેટનો એ માલિક રસ્તા પર ભીખ માગતો હતો. 'શ્રદ્ધા'માં ચાર મહિનાની સારવાર પછી સુધીર સાજા થઈ ગયો. દરમિયાન ડૉક્ટરે પોલીસની મદદથી તેનો ફૂલેટ પણ પેલા માણસને તેના ડિપોઝિટના પૈસા પાછા આપીને મેળવી લીધો.

વાસ્તવની ભૂમિ પર પાછા ફરતાં જ બી.એમ.સી.ની નોકરી પાછી મેળવવા સુધીર તત્પર બન્યો. ડેપ્યુટી મ્યુનિસિપલ કમિશનર પી.એમ. કાળેએ સુધીરની વિનયકથા સહાનુભૂતિથી સાંભળી. ડૉ. દંપતીની નિર્વાજ સેવા તેમને સ્પર્શી ગઈ. તેમણે સુધીરને ફરી નોકરીમાં રાખવા આદેશ આપ્યો. ત્યારથી (એપ્રિલ '૯૩થી) સુધીરની ફાઈલ બી.એમ.સી.ના વિવિધ ખાતાઓમાં 'Move' થઈ રહી છે. દરમિયાન કાળે પહેલી ઓગસ્ટે નિવૃત્ત થયા છે. સુધીરને તબીબી તપાસનું તેડું આવી ગયું છે. અમે મળ્યા તેના પછીને જ દિવસે (૧૩ સપ્ટેમ્બરે) સુધીરને એ પ્રમાણપત્ર મળી જવાનું હતું. ડૉ. ભરત કહે છે, 'ખરેખર, આ સુધીરની ફાઈલ ઝડપથી 'Move' થઈ છે. બાકી તો ઘણો સમય લાગી જાય.' અને સરકારી તંત્રોની આ 'ઝડપ'ને કારણે જ ડૉ. દંપતી બંને ત્યાં સુધી આત્મનિભરે રહેવા માંગે છે. અલબત્ત, શ્રદ્ધા ફાઉન્ડેશનને અપાતું દાન કરમુકિતને પાત્ર છે અને અનેક સેવાભાવી વ્યક્તિઓ તેમ જ સંસ્થાઓ તરફથી અનુદાન મળતા જ રહે છે. પ્રત્યેક ફ્રી પેશન્ટના ખર્ચમાં લગભગ ત્રીસ ટકા ખર્ચ દાનની

રકમમાંથી નીકળે છે; પરંતુ હાલ જગાની બેંચને કારણે નાછૂટેકે કેટલાક દરદીઓને પાછા વાળવા પડે છે. દહીસરનું નર્સિંગ હોમ માત્ર આવા દરદીઓને માટે જ રહેશે. પણ નર્સિંગ હોમ માટેના નાણાં... ?

એ માટે ભારતના લગભગ તમામ અગ્રણી કલાકારોએ (ચિત્રકારોએ) પોતાનો કલાત્મક હાથ લેખાવ્યો છે. આવતા મહિને-ઓક્ટોબરની ૧૮થી ૨૪ તારીખ સુધી જહાંગીર આર્ટ ગેલેરીમાં ૧૧૬ કલાકારોનાં ચિત્રોને પ્રદર્શન 'શ્રદ્ધા-સમર્પણ' યોજાઈ રહ્યું છે. આ પ્રદર્શનમાં ભારતમાં વસતા ૧૧૧ નામાંકિત કલાકારોનાં ચિત્રો હશે. પેરિસ, જર્મની અને ટોરેન્ટોમાં વસતા પાંચ કલાકારોનાં પણ ચિત્રો હશે. સૂચિત પ્રદર્શનનાં ચિત્રોનાં વેચાણની આવકમાંથી રજાના દરદીઓ માટેનું દહીસરનું નર્સિંગ હોમ જાણુ કરવાની શ્રદ્ધા ફાઉન્ડેશનની યોજના છે.

કલાકારોના આ અભૂતપૂર્વ સ્નેહ, સાથ અને સહકારનો ઉલ્લેખ કરતાં ડૉ. ભરત એનું શ્રેય જ. જે. સ્કૂલ ઓફ આર્ટ્સના જોલ્ડ મેડલિસ્ટ અધ્યાપક હેમન્ટ ઠાકરેને આપે છે. ચાર વર્ષ પહેલાં જ. જે. સ્કૂલ ઓફ આર્ટ્સનો આ તેજસ્વી યુવાન લેકચરર માનસિક બીમારીનો શિકાર બની ગયો. ત્યારે તેને નોકરી પરથી રજા અપાઈ ગઈ હતી. જહાંગીર આર્ટ ગેલેરીની આસપાસ આંટા મારતો અને પત્રચિત્રો પર બેસી રહેતો હેમન્ટ મકબૂલ ફિદા હુસેન માનતો. તેની જેમ પત્રચિત્રો પહેર્યા વિના ઉઘાડા પગે ફરતો. હેમન્ટના વિદ્યાર્થીઓ તેને 'શ્રદ્ધા' સુધી પહોંચાડવામાં નિમિત્ત બન્યા. ડૉ. દંપતીનાં જહેમત અને નિષ્ઠાએ હેમન્ટને માત્ર સાજા જ ન કર્યો, સંપૂર્ણપણે સ્વસ્થ હેમન્ટને રાખ્યા શિક્ષણસંલગ્નની સહાયથી ફરી જ. જે. સ્કૂલ ઓફ આર્ટ્સના મસ્ટર પર પણ મુકાવ્યો. આજે જે. જે. ના ડીન કહે છે

'હેમન્ટ ઈઝ એમન્ટ મોસ્ટ પંકઅચલ એન્ડ પ્રોફેશનલ ટીચર્સ.' જે. જે. માં ફરી નોકરી મળી તે પહેલાં હેમન્ટના આત્મવિશ્વાસને મજબૂત કરવાં આ ડૉક્ટર દંપતીએ એક સરસ કીમિયો કર્યો હતો. હેમન્ટ નિયમિત જે. જે. સ્કૂલમાં જતો વિદ્યાર્થીઓને ભણાવતો. તેને પગાર પણ મળતો. પરંતુ તે પગાર સ્કૂલ નહીં, ડૉક્ટર તરફથી મળતો. એ બે મહિના દરમિયાન હેમન્ટની સંપૂર્ણ માનસિક સ્વસ્થતા અને વ્યાવસાયિક સજ્જતાની ડીનને પ્રતીતિ થઈ ત્યાર પછી જ તેને ખરેખર નોકરી પર લેવાયો. આજે હેમન્ટ ડૉક્ટર દંપતીના પરિવારનો જ નહીં શ્રદ્ધા ફાઉન્ડેશનનો પણ એક સ્થાયી સાથી બની ગયો છે. પ્રદર્શનનો વિચાર પણ તેને જ આવ્યો હતો. અને હમણાં મુંબઈ, દિલ્હી, મદ્રાસ, વડોદરા, અમદાવાદ, કલકત્તા, શાંતિનિકેતન, હૈદરાબાદ, બેંગલોર, ભોપાલ, પૂના, ઉદયપુર, વિશાખાપટનમ વગેરે શહેરોમાંથી કલાકારોની કલાકૃતિઓ જહાંગીર પર પહોંચતી કરવાના કામમાં ગળાડૂબ છે.

હેમન્ટ માટે બીજા એક સરસ સમાચાર એ છે કે 'સુધીર હવે બી.એમ.સી.માં કામે લાગી જશે પછી હેમન્ટ અને સુધીર-બંને મિત્રો-સુધીરના ફૂલેટમાં રહેવા જવાના છે.' આ વાત કહેતા ડૉ. ભરતના ચહેરા પર અજબનો સંતોષ છલકે છે. પરંતુ પ્રદર્શનની સફળતા અંગે એમને થોડો ઉચાટ છે. 'આવા ખ્યાતનામ કલાકારો પાસેથી ચિત્રો આવ્યાં છે અને કદાચ બંધા ચિત્રો વેચાય નહીં તો !' એવો આછો આછો અંદેશો તેમની આંખોમાં ડોકાય છે. પરંતુ મુંબઈનો કદરદાન અને કલાપ્રેમી વર્ગ ડૉક્ટર દંપતી ભરત-સ્મિતાના આ 'શ્રદ્ધા સમર્પણ' પ્રદર્શનને સફળ બનાવશે જ એવી શ્રદ્ધા તેમનાથી છૂટા પડતી વખતે મને બંધાતી હતી.



WHAT IS
SHRADDHA

Shraddha is a FULLY CHARITABLE Non-Government Organization (NGO), the only one of its kind in India providing Professional Treatment, Protective Care & Rehabilitation to THE WANDERING MENTALLY ILL ROADSIDE DESTITUTE.

We do NOT take in patients brought by family members or whose family antecedents are known. The idea being to treat the LOST & WANDERING MENTALLY ILL & ULTIMATELY REUNITE THEM with their families, across the length & breadth of India.

The Foundation's prime movers are Drs. Bharat & Smitha Vatwani, practicing Psychiatrists of Mumbai.

They are ably assisted by Dr. Roopa Tekchandani (Psychiatrist) & Denit Mathew (Psychiatric Social Worker) & Dr Nilesh Mhatre (Consulting Homeopath) who are all Fellow Trustees, along with Dr. Swarali Kondwilkar, Dr. Sravani Gaddipati and Dr. Prathamesh Hemnani, all Associate Psychiatrists & Shri Gajendra Ganla (Ex-Chairman, Indian Water Works) who is a Technical Advisor.

GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION

SHRADDHA REHABILITATION FOUNDATION

- **Registered with the Charity Commissioner, Maharashtra, in January 1992**
- **Exemption under Section 80G & 12A of the Income Tax Act, 1961 as of Dec 1991**
- **Registration under FCRA (Foreign Contribution Regulation Act of 1976), Ministry of Home Affairs, Govt. of India, as of March 1997 - Allowing the Foundation to receive Foreign Donations**
- **Registration under NITI Aayog (NGO Darpan) as of 2018**
- **Registered with the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Govt. of India, for Undertaking CSR Activities as of April 2021**
- **Memorandum of Understanding with State Mental Health Authority (SMHA) of Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu & Andhra Pradesh**
- **Memorandum of Understanding with Govt run Shelter AUTD in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh and Motilal Nehru Govt Hospital, Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh**
- **Notification u/s 35AC of IT Act, 1961, as of December 2002 recommended by the National Committee for Promotion of Social and Economic Welfare, Ministry of Finance, Govt. of India. Discontinued when Govt withdrew same for all NGO's as of March 2017**