

# CARRYING THE BATON OF MAKING INDIA MENTALLY HEALTHY



## **Dr. Sheba Singh (Khumar)**

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- **TalkSpace – A Mental Health Studio**
- Mumbai, India.**

World Health Organization (WHO) in the blueprint of the comprehensive mental health action plan laid 3 key levers for the success of which “Deepen the value and commitment we give to mental health” stands foremost. Echoing WHO, it’s encouraging to see the attention social media influencers have rendered to mental wellness, by addressing it openly, movies incorporating the practice of therapies, corporate organizing awareness talks and giving mental wellbeing leaves/days off, making flexible policies to support mental health, educational institutions recruiting mental health professionals, and families having open talks about mental health at dinner tables.

While all this is encouraging, WHO also rings alarms that a huge number of people are suffering from mental health disorders and the growth there-in is excruciatingly rising, giving a reality check of how the changes brought by the efforts are slow-paced and perhaps serving a particular stratum of the country. WHO says one in every eight individuals suffers from a mental health disorder.

While efforts are oriented to curtail any shame, guilt, prejudice, and embarrassment around mental health, the growth is concerning. Some estimates are that about 20% people in India may suffer from mental health issues. Going by this, there could be about 38-40 lakh people only in Mumbai that needs mental health interventions. Several other pieces of research have found results that are an outcry for the indispensable need for mental health skilled and trained professionals. There are only 3 Psychiatrists and Psychologists for every 1,00,000 people.

Undoubtedly the path is daunting but there are different genuine and sincere efforts being made and one such by skilled and trained mental health practitioner Dr Sheba Singh who is serving in this field for over 22 years now. With her Mental Health Studio called TalkSpace, Dr Singh and her daughter Ms. Aira Singh who is also a psychologist, and their team are undertaking many endeavours. 10th



TalkSpace – A Mental Health Studio, Mumbai

October is celebrated as World Mental Health Day and the theme for this year was “Making mental health wellbeing, a priority for all.” TalkSpace is celebrating the entire month of October 2022, to raise awareness around mental health in all domains they could possibly tap into. One unique and collaborative initiative “Experts Speak at TalkSpace” - getting medical experts interviewed at TalkSpace.

The budding and under-training psychologists at TalkSpace conducted a series of interviews with some of the leading doctors, from India and abroad, like general physicians, psychiatrists, dermatologists, and gynaecologists.

The interviews brought out their thoughts and experiences around the

mind and body connection, diabetology and wellness, and skin and mental health. They have also picked thoughts by counsellors, journalists and psychologists on the effects of media and technology on

mental health, hustle culture etc. The broad objective was to collectively and collaboratively raise awareness. The videos are short, informative and enlightening and are available at [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCd6YaZTqYC-AG0ykp\\_YRQ6g](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCd6YaZTqYC-AG0ykp_YRQ6g).

TalkSpace is one of the leading providers of mental wellness to corporate in the ambit of Employee Assistance Programs (EAP) for their employees/staff. In the month of October 2022, TalkSpace conducted group sessions to inculcate workplace mental well-being to incorporate the idea of mental health. It also catered one-to-one sessions for employees seeking therapies to relieve their mental challenges. It's encouraging to see organizations taking efforts to support the mental well-being of their employees. TalkSpace has curated a new unit to cater especially to students to address their mental challenges. A Group of young psychologists, trained by Dr Sheba Singh, attend to adolescents and students to alleviate their mental challenges through commercially affordable therapy packages. There is an overwhelming response to this endeavour. TalkSpace in their endeavour to demonstrate customer centre-centricity has offered differentiated and lower pricing for students, to ensure that they should not stay bereft of mental wellness, for sheer unaffordability.



Team – TalkSpace-A Mental Health Studio



Workshop with parents

TalkSpace believes in contributing and giving back to society with modesty. This was demonstrated by Dr. Sheba Singh when she accepted an invitation from The Book Lounge, Raheja Vistas, Powai, Mumbai to conduct an awareness workshop series for the resident parents and adolescents. These sessions were fun, interactive, activitybased, and gleaned with the goal of making mental health communication a taboo-free dinner table topic in families. In this workshop, adolescents were open to talk about their issues on whom to reach out and parents were receptive about taking their children for professional help if needed. TalkSpace is open from Monday to Saturday and all clients must fix appointments. The clients have only good feedback to give. Clients generally combating issues like marital, pre-marital, anxiety, depression, personality-based, OCD, behavioural, vocational and career guidance, could feel a positive change and impact within a few sessions



Workshop with children