

Programme 3 Short Term Capacity Building Programme on “Emotional Well -Being at Technology Enabled Workplace”

The Association of Indian Universities (AIU) - Academic and Administrative Development Centre (AADC) of Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, organized the third Short-Term Capacity Building Programme titled "Emotional Well-Being at the Technology-Enabled Workplace" from April 24th to May 3rd, 2023. The program was aimed at enhancing the emotional well-being of participants in the technology-driven work environment. It catered to Deans, Deputy Deans, Directors, College Principals, Heads of Departments, administrative and Academic officials, counselors, academicians, and Tech-based employees. A total of 31 participants from various Higher Education Institutions across the country attended the program.

The Inaugural Ceremony featured a serene Prayer Song, Dr. S. Gayatri Devi's welcome, and Chancellor Professor S. P. Thyagarajan's address on technology's role in workplace well-being. The event discussed education reforms aligned with National Education Policy 2020. Dr. N.V. Amudha Devi concluded with gratitude.

Dr. Ramya, the Nodal officer of AIU-AI-AADC, highlighted how depression and anxiety cause a trillion-dollar loss in workplaces. Harvard's studies showed a 42% decline in employee mental health. Dr. S. Kowsalya, the Registrar, thanked Prof. Dr.V. Bharathi Harishankar for an effective conference focusing on technology usage, emphasizing COVID-19's impact on emotional well-being.

Dr. Caven Mc Loughlin, Emeritus Professor from Kent University, USA, inaugurated the session "Emotional Wellbeing of Employees In A Technology Enabled Workplace." He introduced 8 wellness dimensions, emphasized their impact on institutional productivity, discussed emotional wellbeing's centrality, addressed gender equality, explored physical health's connection to emotional wellbeing, and encouraged raising awareness, reducing stigma, and boosting productivity.

Honorable Chancellor Professor S. P. Thyagarajan discussed about technology's workplace impact: telework, automation, and algorithmic management. He highlighted tech's educational benefits, improving critical thinking, collaboration, and personalized learning. Challenges in e-education like commitment and change were addressed. Technically competent teacher qualities included software use, smart boards, and facilitating learning.

The subsequent session featured Mrs. Sathya M., Assistant Professor of Psychology, who conducted a pre-assessment of participants' emotional well-being. This assessment covered key dimensions such as self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and relationship skills, contributing to holistic personal and professional development.

Dr. Ann M. Bauer oriented the participants about the importance of families in regulating the social media usage of children. The session revolved around the concept “Family Media Plan” that served as the factor of encouragement to the participants to make a plan to prioritize one’s chores, provide clarity and plan to work. Professor emphasized on contribution of parents and other family members to a child's digital well-being. Dr. Ann M. Bauer suggested the participants to encourage the children towards channelizing their digital time constructively by involving in productive and career oriented screen time like Game and Application development.

Dr. Surendran, Professor from Adyar Cancer Institute, expertly conducted the session on "Psychotherapeutic Interventions for Emotional Well-being." The session covered significant theories including Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Carl Rogers' approach, along with fundamental elements of cognitive behavior therapy. Attendees gained insights into addressing cognitive distortions and employing effective countering techniques.

Professor Azizuddin Khan from IIT Bombay handled the session on "Emotional and Psychological Well-Being in a Technology-Saturated World." He explained psychological well-being's core features and evolving health concepts. Various types of well-being were discussed, along with strategies to combat technology's negative impact on mental health.

Dr. M.V. Sudhakaran, Professor and Director of the School of Social Sciences at Open University, Tamil Nadu, served as the resource person for the session "Promoting Optimism at Workplace." The lecture covered optimism's significance, differentiating it from unrealistic positivity. The role of optimism in enhancing productivity, well-being, collaboration, innovation, and retention was discussed. Strategies for fostering optimism and measuring its impact were highlighted, concluding with effective approaches like trust-building and celebrating strengths.

Dr. Fr. Sundar Wilson, Director of Anugraha, Capuchin Institute of Psychotherapy, presented the session "Building Resilience: Physical and Mental." Discussion encompassed resilience types - physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual. Albert Ellis' 'Disturbance of Irrational Thoughts,' Elizabeth Hurlock's child appreciation concept, and the link between physical and mental resilience for emotional well-being were highlighted, emphasizing student growth.

Dr. Venkatachalam.J, Professor at Periyar University, Salem, delved into "Constructive Teams for Effective Work Culture." The session differentiated 'team' and 'group,' highlighting team building's significance for enhanced spirit, motivation, appreciation, and leadership potential. Key team-building actions, work culture factors, and the value of positive work culture in recruitment, motivation, and productivity were addressed, concluding with an inspiring quote on unity and success.

Continuing the program, Dr. Vidhu Bala, Director of Fenivi Research Solutions, delivered an enlightening session on "Happiness Index and Emotional Well-being." Commencing with a comprehensive exploration of the Human Development Index and its key indicators, India's placement at 132 out of 191 countries underscored the context. Discussion of India's consistent ranking beyond 100 in the Happiness Index and Afghanistan's standing in the World Happiness Index 2023 ensued. Addressing the profound subject of sustainable development goals, the discourse delved into methodologies for measuring happiness, notably emphasizing critical parameters such as GDP per capita, social support, and the assessment of positive emotions.

Presenting the session on "Emotional Well-being and Indian Psychology in the Workplace" was Dr. Mala Kapadia, Director of Transdisciplinary research initiatives at Anaadi Foundations. The discourse thoughtfully examined the dynamic interrelationship between technology-driven workplaces and emotional well-being. It underscored the significance of both inner and outer technologies, advocating the integration of scientific and artistic elements. Ayurvedic and psychological perspectives were skillfully woven together, highlighting their impact on human immunity rooted in consciousness and creative vitality. Yogic principles, notably Triguna and Panmahaputra, were elegantly elucidated, connecting emotions to these profound tenets.

Dr. Babu Rangarajan, a clinical psychologist, led the session on Emotional Well-being. He spotlighted six core emotions' influence on various life aspects. Introducing a cognitive model technique encompassing thinking, feeling, and behavior, he illustrated it through multiple examples. This technique aids in mitigating unfavorable emotions, with its interpretation and benefits elucidated. Dr. Rangarajan discussed its applications, particularly in managing social scenarios and potentially mitigating negative emotions. The session holistically explored emotional well-being and the practical application of this technique throughout individuals' lifespans.

The activity session focused on managing worries. Stressors were discussed, along with techniques to break the worry cycle. Real vs. hypothetical worry differentiation was emphasized. Participants listed their worries, distinguishing between the two. Strategies to overcome hypothetical worries were taught. The session also included identifying strengths, distinguishing between fear and daring, and fostering positivity and celebration of life.

Mr. Kishore Kumar Kengeri Venkatesh initiated the session on "Mental Health Policy and the Indian Mental Health Scenario." He outlined mental health policies' advantages and their role in addressing individual well-being and India's current mental health landscape. He highlighted the post-COVID-19 surge in mental health issues and discussed policy implementation challenges. Emphasizing affordable care and a decentralized community approach, he spotlighted reducing stigma and the treatment gap. The session concluded with the significance of the Mental Health Care Act's implementation across states and union territories.

Commencing the session on "Life Skills for Emotional Well-being," Dr. Surrendra Kumar Sia from Pondicherry University emphasized the paramount importance of emotional well-being. This facet empowers effective work, stress management, and personal growth. Definitions and classifications of emotions, affect, and mood were succinctly provided. Dr. Sia expounded on life skills, outlining them as adaptive behaviors encompassing knowledge, attitude, and skills. Core domains including self-awareness, communication, critical thinking, problem-solving, and stress coping were illuminated. The session further delved into adult learning theory, emphasizing emotional well-being's foundation rooted in self-awareness, resilience, motivation, empathy, and social proficiency.

Delivering the session on "Support Mechanisms for Internal Flexibility and Technology-Enabled Campus" was Dr. Sam Manikkam, a distinguished Clinical Psychology Professor and founder of IPN. He delved into societal advancement, justice accessibility, and inclusive institutional frameworks, underscoring the repercussions of disregarding challenges. Addressing technology's influence on role dynamics and work systems, he introduced the concept of Dramaturgical Analysis. Additionally, Dr. Manikkam expounded on comprehensive self-care dimensions and engaging activities that collectively contribute to holistic well-being.

Dr. Natarajan Elangovan, a distinguished psychiatrist from the US, conducted an insightful session on "Stereotype and Peer Pressure in the Workplace." He explored universal gender stereotypes, accentuating their relevance in varied contexts, including pandemic-induced employment shifts. Dr. Elangovan initiated contemplation on the term "stereotype," spurred by discussions on Anti-Semitism's profound impact. Comparative analysis of stereotypes in the US and India, focusing on Scheduled Tribes and Castes, highlighted entrenched gender biases. Historical gender roles and pioneering feats, like the first female pilot, were cited as illustrations. The session culminated in a compelling reflection on human progress.

Dr. Aarthi Rajarathinam, a TED Expert, addressed the pivotal role of emotional intelligence in the workplace, highlighting the need to regulate, rather than suppress, genuine emotions. She underscored the impact of controlled emotions on fostering healthy relationships, contrasting them with unregulated emotions that lead to toxicity. The built-in cycle for emotion regulation, lasting around one to one and a half minutes, was discussed. The session emphasized teaching the next generation emotional management and establishing healthy boundaries for personal growth.

Mr. Thamilselvan, Assistant Professor of Psychology, led the subsequent session on "Behavior Addiction and its Management." Commencing with Kensley's quote underscoring empathy through experience, the session delved into addiction's four Cs: compulsion, control, craving, and consequences. Media use, especially via apps like Whatsapp and Instagram, fosters detrimental elements, fueling FOMO (fear of missing out) and behavioral addiction. Problematic online behavior patterns were discussed, followed by Cognitive Behavioral Therapy techniques such as role-playing and cognitive restructuring. Recognizing cognitive fallacies aids addiction reduction, while consistent behavior modification supports coping and lifestyle changes.

Dr. Neena Kohli's presentation on "Emotional Intelligence in the Workplace" explored various intelligences, including emotional intelligence's role in decision-making and effective leadership. The seven fundamental emotions were highlighted, and Daniel Goleman's five components of emotional intelligence were discussed. These elements aid negotiation for win-win situations, customer satisfaction, and conflict resolution, promoting emotional wisdom at work.

Dr. Pooja Purang from IIT Bombay discussed "Managing Stress by Developing Rational Emotions." Rational-emotive therapy, cognitive assessment, and coping strategies were highlighted. Adapting to change and open-mindedness were advised for stress management. Chronic stress's impact on physical health was mentioned. Irrational beliefs triggering emotional turmoil were addressed, emphasizing rational appraisal and altering thought patterns for emotional well-being.

Dr. Sudha Ramalingam's session on "Ethics and Respecting Boundaries" highlighted the importance of establishing boundaries for a productive workplace. She emphasized how boundaries enhance work-life separation, create a safe environment, and promote harmonious interactions. The session emphasized professional ethics, personal boundaries, and the significance of workplace policies. Real-life examples were used to underscore the concepts, including power dynamics, vulnerability, and confidentiality maintenance.

Dr. Shubhra discussed teamwork, motivation, and the impact of technology on individuals. Motivational traits—achievement, power, affiliation, security, and adventure—were briefly explained. Personal challenges and technology's dual influence were highlighted. The distinction between public and private personas, blind spots, and dark spots were addressed. Self-management elements encompassed self-disclosure, feedback openness, and perceptiveness. The 3C and 3A framework for effective social media usage was introduced, focusing on authenticity, consistency, and awareness.

Dr. Payal Chandel, Associate Professor at Central University of Haryana, led a session on "Emotional Agility," a term coined by psychologist Susan David. This concept involves being adaptable and aligned with values, managing emotions rather than being driven impulsively. Emotional agility enhances resilience, empathy, communication, and work-life balance. It's fostered through self-compassion, mindfulness, self-reflection, and seeking support, leading to better emotional regulation and empowerment.

Dr. Manas K. Mandal, a distinguished Ph.D. and FNAPSY, initiated a presentation on workplace empathy. He explored self-transcendence, empathy, sympathy, apathy, loneliness, and melancholy. Dr. Mandal differentiated sympathy, empathy, and compassion. Empathy involves understanding feelings, providing space, and engaging in meaningful conversation for comprehensive understanding and solution-seeking. Mirror neurons, driving empathy, were discussed, emphasizing their role in fostering innovation, collaboration, and subtle connections at work. Practical tips and a recommended book on empathetic leadership concluded the session.

Dr. T. Santhanam commenced the session on workplace emotional wellness by sharing an illustrative empathy anecdote involving Ratan Tata. He proceeded to explore the emotional and rational segments of the brain, delving into various lobes and the role of the amygdala in emotional hijacking. The discussion extended to neurotransmitters, emotional traits, and the utilization of the "Rain Technique" for recognition, acceptance, investigation, and non-identity. The conclusion emphasized the significance of resilience, awareness, and meditation as tools for achieving success.

Mr. Rajesh Kumar Kallimuthu, Vice President at Accenture Philippines, inaugurated a session on "Human Connect" with a discussion on remote workplace challenges and the fundamental elements of human connectedness. Stressing the significance of belonging and interpersonal bonds, he referenced Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Mr. Kallimuthu underscored the advantages of interconnected teams and offered a range of strategies to nurture connection, placing emphasis on equity, diversity, and inclusion as vital factors for fostering a profound sense of belonging.

Prof. Shikha's session explored "Coping with Burnout with Reference to Gender." She examined gender differences in burnout experiences, delving into factors like gender schemas, scripts, and stereotypes that influence women's and men's behaviors in organizational settings. She highlighted

challenges women face, discussed gender consciousness and self-silencing, and advocated for gender equity through initiatives, sociocultural changes, safety, and acceptance in workplaces.

Dr. V. Bharathi Harishankar, distinguished Vice Chancellor of Avinashilingam Institute, led a session on "Managing Multiple Intelligence and Multiple Roles in the Technology-Enabled Workplace." Delving into the amalgamation of emotions, traits, and behavior with reference to Piaget's approach, she expounded on the concept of various "hats," including thinking hats for diverse perspectives and intelligence types. The speaker underscored their significance in the context of a technology-enabled workplace and enhanced comprehension with a shared video clip.

In the subsequent session, Dr. Alex Joseph. delved into the Compassionate Mind Theory, highlighting the shift from old to new brain and mind for holistic well-being. He underscored the significance of self-awareness and the positive impact of Indian greetings. Additionally, he elucidated concepts such as Vimorchana, Shakti (self-empowerment), Dhaivim (positive emotions), Anukambha (compassion), Dhaakshyam (resourcefulness), Prerana (self-motivation), Sankalpam (determination), and Anumodana (acceptance and appreciation) as pivotal factors contributing to success in the workplace and fostering healthy relationships.

The valedictory session commenced with a harmonious prayer song, followed by a warm welcome address by Dr. K. Ramya, the Nodal Officer. Dr. V. Bharathi Harishankar, Vice Chancellor of Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women, delivered an insightful presidential address. The report summary was eloquently presented by Dr. S. Gayatri Devi, Professor and Head of the Department of Psychology. Dr. V.D. Swaminathan, a retired professor from the University of Madras, delivered a thought-provoking valedictory address, shedding light on the practical application of basic psychology, successful living principles, and the integration of technology with psychology. The session concluded with his engaging questions that stimulated contemplation. Mrs. M. Sathya, Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychology, extended gratitude through the vote of thanks. The successful Eight Days Capacity Building program instilled a renewed sense of purpose and dedication among participants to prioritize and nurture Emotional well-being in the rapidly changing digital Environment with valuable insights and practical strategies. The event served as a catalyst for promoting mental health and fostering a harmonious workplace.