

A Day of Wellness & Mental Health Recognition

On the second day of Bengali Year 1424, a very unique fair was held in Dhaka. Sajida Foundation and Purnava Ltd. organised this event at the BRAC Centre, titled 'Health and Wellness Fair'.

Sajida Humayun Kabir, wife of the founder, Late Syed Humayun Kabir, mentioned in her welcoming note that the fair was also the starting point for Sajida Foundation's Psychosocial Counselling Centre - Inner Circle.

The entire day was filled with a variety of activities, sessions, discussions- all of which focused on a person's mental health. Inner Circle arranged self-service stations for visitors to get a feel of the services they provide. This included storytelling through Sand Tray Therapy and the extremely popular Sand Art in a bottle.

On the spot app-s were open for users to check if they had the early signs of any mental health issue. Aroma therapies with muscular relaxation techniques were provided at the fair, and a bioscope was used to add in the fun factor.

Clay Station, Dhaka took part in the event allowing interested participants to have a go at the pottery wheel. For a different take on food, The Florist gave the crowd a taste to vegan desserts. Other organisations taking part in the event were Ink by Inaka, Munchkin Dhaka, Musings of Wildflower etc.

The main highlight of the fair was of course the various sessions with the mental health professionals. Monira Rahman's interactive session was an eye-opener. UK based Intuitive Therapist Catrima Gabrielle addressed the crowd with an insight into emotional intelligence.

Dr Ashique Selim discussed substance abuse. Founder of Obhoyaronno, Rubaiya Ahmad, took the stage to discuss mental health and how veganism could help in



coping with everyday maladies.

The final session was a panel discussion based on previous queries. The core focus was on parenting and Dr Helal Uddin, famed child, adolescent and family psychiatrist, highlighted parenting issues.

Psychological Counsellor Nissim Jan Sajid added how children's demands were increasing without limits and the preferred way to cope with the problem.

Dr. Sabrina Faiz Rashid, Dean and Professor of James P. Grant School of Public

Health, BRAC University, addressed how Bangladesh was caught in the whirlwind of the changing world culture making life more complicated and how everyone should deal with it elegantly.

The panel discussion ended with the country's renowned psychologist Dr Mehtab Khanam discussing mental health and its practical solutions.

Other activities in the fair included a yoga session with Anika Rabbani and Ampersand's poetry recitation session

focusing on mental wellness.

The day ended with musical performances by Shayan and Samir Obaid followed by a 'Circle Singing' session with Armeen Musa, to channel 'mental healing' through music and unity.

Visitors at the fair, were given a free mental-health handbook, as well as stress relieving colouring books to take back home.

By Iris Farina

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