REPORT ON THE SEMINAR CONDUCTED BY DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY, NMKRV COLLEGE FOR WOMEN: “HYPNOSIS AND MINDFULNESS”

Inaugural Session and Keynote Address:

Reported by: Anusha Hegde, III BA ‘E’ Section

The program began with an Invocation song on Lord Ganesha, by KaladhariBhavani, III BA “C” Section. She also rendered the flute while the dignitaries lighted the lamp, officially marking the beginning of the Seminar. The dignitaries assembled on stage were Dr. JiniKGopinath, Director and Consultant, “Mind Matters” and the Chief Guest for the function, Dr.SnehalathaGNadiger, Principal of NMKRV College for Women, Dr. Ramachandra, former Professor of NIMHANS, Dr.Shailaja Shastri, Founder-Director of Training and Research Initiatives. The program was presided over by Sri. MKDattaraj, Chairman, Governing Body of NMKRV College.

The Principal welcomed the gathering. Dr.KSNagendra, Head of Department of Psychology, gave the audience a glimpse into the purpose and background of the seminar and also introduced them to the guests assembled. The Keynote address then began with Dr. JiniKGopinath.

Keynote Address: Dr. JiniKGopinath, is a Consultant Clinical Psychologist and a certified Clinical Hypnotherapist, has a varied experience in fields like Yoga, Astrology, Linguistics and has done his Hypnosis Therapy training in Europe. Currently, he works as Director and Chief Consultant Clinical Psychologist in the ‘Mind Matters’ Clinic. Dr. Gopinath teaches in several reputed colleges in Bangalore and has been a Performance Coach for Mumbai Indians in the IPL Season 6.

He began with the story of how Hypnosis, as a therapeutic tool and an academic discipline evolved in the past 200 years. Using the example of contemporary movies, he explained how the trend of mingling Tantric systems and Western Hypnotic measures emerged. By citing the ‘near death experiences’ talked about by Raymond Moody in his book,” Life after Life”, the speaker tried to explain how such philosophical questions, which had stopped in the 1940s post-behaviorism and cognitive-behaviorism were slowly coming into the picture through various works as such. Some works also ponders over the origins of information got after the brain had stopped working for a stretch of time, the distinctions between mind and body. The description of Hypnosis given by APA, how it cannot be equated with the other forms of therapy was discussed. He then moved on to trace Hypnosis’ primitive origins from the Asclepian sleep temples, Mesmer’s development of Hypnosis and his theory of ‘Animal Magnetism’, the Indian concept of altered states of consciousness- ‘Turiya’, how the ‘I’ concept changes its relevance across cultures and the Locus of Control. In India, Hypno- Anesthesia was introduced by James Braid. Though yoga therapeutic processes were however not acknowledged by others who came to India to learn the same, it gradually has developed in India. The technique of Free Association is similar to Hypnosis. While speaking about the misconceptions attached to the concept of ‘Hypnosis’, Dr. Gopinath spoke about the Low-hypnotizing, Medium- hypnotizing
and High-hypnotizing patients, in which the highly suggestible ones, with very high-hypnotizing levels are usually children below 14 years. He also supplemented it with contemporary examples of brainwashing. Though Forensic hypnosis is an evolving phase, it is not accepted by the Supreme Court as memory is about interpretations, not facts. Reincarnation, contrast between Mindfulness (Concentration and Awareness) and Hypnosis, necessity of educating clients about hypnosis before administration, Sports Hypnosis (creative visualization and imaging to disinhibit locked-up energy), Xenoglossia were his concluding points. He ended with his belief on the ability of Hypnosis to handle therapeutic emergencies in India. He was thanked by Dr. K S Nagendra.

Talk by Dr. Ramachandra:

Reported by- YaminiChincholi, II- BA ‘E’ Section

Talking about “Clinical importance of Hypnosis”, Dr. Ramachandra, Associate Professor and Senior Consultant in NIMHANS, is a life-member of ISCEH and IASP-Indian Chapter. He has a vast experience in this field and has toured several continents talking about hypnosis and various psychological issues.

Consciousness, its dynamism and it not being there at birth (Tabula Rasa-a blank slate) were his initial remarks from which he took us on the process of how exactly consciousness takes form with environmental impingements. Describing Consciousness as a “vast and oceanic concept”, he talked about Hypnosis as an interface between body and mind, material consciousness and subtle psychology. He provided an insight on the three aspects of hypnosis- Psychic monism (mind is primary), Epiphenomenalism (Body is primary) and Psychophysical Parallelism (body and mind influence one another), with relevant case studies. The process of hypnosis usually involves inducing hallucinations, deepening the trance, then asking information. He concluded his talk with several lab experiments, other real-life examples and relating Jakobson’s Progressive Relaxation therapy.

Talk by Dr. Shailaja Shastri:

Reported by- Nidhi C Upadhye, II- BA ‘E’ Section

Dr. Shailaja Shastri, the Founder Director of ‘Training and Research Initiatives’ (TRI), has 35 years of psychological teaching and guiding, has conducted over 600 life skills workshops with people of different walks of life, government employees, teachers, students, youth.

In the seminar, she gave a talk on the theme, ‘Status of Hypnosis: Perspectives and Reflections’, where she focused on the misconceptions and misperceptions people have about hypnosis and why they have it. Either people treat it as a bogus, are afraid of it, or see it as a glamorous and mystical concept. She suggested a de-glamourizing of these perceptions, such that they can be neutralized and centered in a balance. She moved on to focus on what influences such behaviors. Media (movies/TV shows, Internet and social media, stage shows), Academia (limited inclusion in university curriculum, limited academic debate), Absence of any authorizing body (certified training for therapy or skills, quacks) are major reasons for these
views to change into something not actually true. The risk of encountering non-academic practices is imminent. Hypnosis is “the state of highly focused attention and relaxation”, and as a “here and now” experience can happen to us even daily. It is an open state of mind, natural and linked to suggestibility of the person. Hypnosis involves the subconscious mind, as the deep-rooted beliefs are working. In suggestions, she also focused on the need for educative advertising and breaking the compartmentalization existing in the domain of psychology.

**Conclusion of morning session:**

Hints about the valedictory session was given by Ms. Anisha Mahendrakar, a consultant clinical psychologist and a certified clinical Hypnotherapist. The presidential address by Sri. M K Dattaraj saw him thanking the guests for their insight and reflected on the ideas conveyed as a whole in the inaugural session.

**Valedictory Session:**

**I Part:**

**Reported by Anusha Hegde, III BA ‘E’ Section**

The live hypnosis session was conducted by Ms. Anisha Mahendrakar, an International trainer California in Clinical Hypnosis in the California Hypnosis Institute. With a counselling psychology background, Ms. Anisha has an inter-disciplinary approach in applications of clinical hypnosis and has developed training modules, 10 new methods of “metaphor representations”.

In her presentation, she provided classification between meditation (de-concentration) and hypnosis (concentration). With a brief about the four levels of consciousness in Hypnotic theory (Awake, Sleep, REM/Dream state, Turiyaavasta-hypnotic trance), she moved on to explain the three levels of trance- Hypnoidal, focus being on motivating and convincing an individual, Cataleptic, where suppressed emotions are let out and physical consciousness is the focus, Somnambulistic, usually done for patients suffering from trauma or sensitiveness. Ice-berg theory of mind, mind’s languages (symbolisms, beliefs and cognitive structure, feelings, experiences, sensory memories, creating sub-conscious equations). She then did two demonstrations with 4 volunteers.

There were questions on relations between extraversion-introversion and suggestibility, difference between mediation and hypnosis, one session being powerful enough in some cases and whether hypnosis happens in a purely clinical state. Here, Ms. Anisha suggested back-to-back sessions for resistant patients. Ashwaija, a fashion entrepreneur shared her experience with metaphor analysis in hypnosis. The director of California Hypnosis Institute, based in Melbourne’s branch, had recorded a video message which was played. Feedback forms of the session were distributed among the participants. Other questions to Ms. Anisha revolved around side-effects of hypnosis, case studies previously shown, TV shows and their exaggeration of hypnosis, violent reactions in the psychodrama-emotional catharsis hypnotic tool.

**Valedictory Address-II Part:**
Reported by- Mamatha, II BA’C’ Section

Dr. H S Ashok, the Chairman, Department of Psychology PG Centre, Bangalore University, has specialized in Industrial Psychology, Organizational Behavior, Cross-cultural adjustment, internet addiction and Indian Psychology. He closely works with the Karnataka State Open University and is Consultant to organizations in development of Psychometric tests.

In his valedictory talk on ‘Academic Status of Hypnosis’, he first talked of how a person becomes suggestible in a motor level, the subject’s reactions and awareness. Dr. H S Ashok discussed its psycho-analytic, neo-dissociation (silent observer being in part suggestible) approaches. Other two are- Socio-cognitive (willingness of clients, external influences come into the picture here) and Transcendental approach (whether a higher level can be attained). Throwing light on the debate regarding usefulness of hypnosis, he discussed two segments in the same- if the problem was related to a person’s suggestibility as an attribute or if it was an attitude (favorable or unfavorable). He ended his talk with explanation on applications of hypnosis- Clinical and Holistic.

The program concluded with distribution of certificates among participating colleges and vote of thanks by Ms. Akhila V, Faculty, Department of Psychology.