

Popular Series Mann Ki Baat Addresses Psychological Problems and Mental Illnesses

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After a short break in the telecast owing to the Commonwealth Games, 'Mann Ki Baat'- Doordarshan's popular series on Mental Health awareness is back on air, now demystifying **Psychological Problems and Mental Illnesses** for the regular viewer.

The series has already covered psychosocial issues of children, adolescents, women, middle as well as old age. Specific episodes were devoted to issues related to work pressure, managing negative emotions, inculcating positive thinking and emotional intelligence.

The series now moves on to **Psychological Problems and Mental Illnesses** and will cover issues ranging from anxiety, depression, phobias, disorders to suicides. The very first episode in the capsule seeks to demystify some common misconceptions about mental illnesses.

More than any other aspect of health, we are most ignorant about mental health and mental illness. This is due to the taboo surrounding mental problems and people not wanting to discuss them or understand them better. There are countless superstitions and myths associated with mental illnesses. Not many people know what causes mental illness, how it is manifested and how to effectively deal with it.

Increased levels of literacy and awareness have not yet changed most people's attitude towards people suffering from mental illnesses. People still look at mental illnesses and those afflicted with it in a stereotypical manner – mad, crazy, lunatic, weak minded etc. Having a mentally ill person in the family is seen as a stigma and is generally kept a secret for fear of embarrassment, little realizing the impact of the stigma on the person already dealing with the illness. The second episode in the capsule aims to deal with this stigma and create awareness about the plight of those suffering from mental illnesses.

Worry and fear are seen as a normal part of our daily lives. The intensified form of worry with physiological components is anxiety. Anxiety is the by-product of the fast paced stressful lives that we lead today. The third episode deals with the issue of anxiety and how to deal with it effectively. The subsequent episode deals with an illness where fear becomes irrational and leads to anxiety and avoidance behaviors, also called phobia, sometimes seriously interfering with an individual's daily life.

Depression is a term very commonly used in conversations these days. It is also a commonly occurring mental illness that most people do not take seriously. It is said to be amongst the biggest silent killers today. The next episode seeks to educate the viewers on the intricacies of depression and its treatment.

Another important issue that the series will cover in this capsule is the increasing menace of suicides. The rising statistics have made it a public health problem. People of all ages, class and genders are susceptible to the problem. People contemplating suicide generally send out clear warning signals that the unaware tend to miss. The issue is dealt with in detail in one episode with the risk factors, warning signals, the psychological aspects of it as well as remedies discussed.

The future episodes will continue to focus on other commonly occurring mental illnesses like Obsessive Compulsive Disorders, Eating Disorders, physical problems caused by mental issues (Psychosomatic Illnesses) etc in the lives of people who lead otherwise normal lives.

These episodes are aired every **Wednesday and Friday** on 'Mann Ki Baat'- a series on Mental Health at **8:30 a.m.** on **Doordarshan's National** channel.

Program website: <http://www.mannkibaat.com/>

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