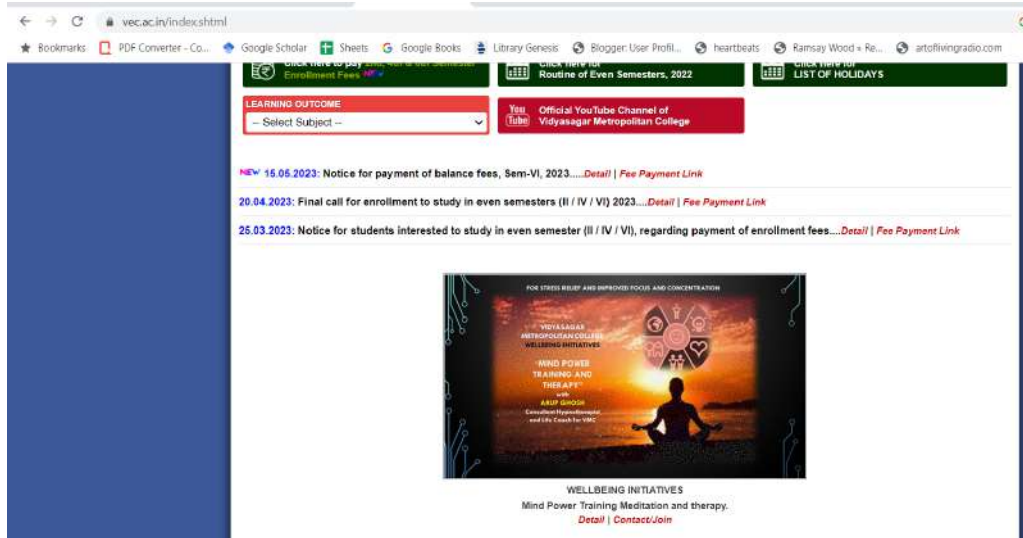


## I. Title of the Practice

### MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS AND COUNSELLING FOR STUDENTS



## Objectives of the Practice

This program is run by the college with the objective of sensitizing students and teachers regarding the importance of mental health in meeting life's challenges and for academic performance. This 'best practice' also aims to provide emergency counseling services to students in crisis, suffering from depression, suicidal thoughts, attention deficit disorder and those engaged in self harm. The program also attempts to remove the social stigma associated with seeking help from a mental health professional, by including students, teachers and parents in the discussion on mental health on campus, through online wellness programs.

## The Context

Particularly during the Covid-19 pandemic, students were reporting feeling stressed and disconnected from campus life. Many students complained that they were feeling depressed and this was affecting their studies. Online classes were not able to replace the warmth of campus life and they yearned to meet their friends and teachers. However, given the dangers of group meetings during the pandemic, the college considered possible means of alleviating their distress without endangering their health and started the practice of providing online mental health support and counseling to students.

One of the challenges faced by the college in implementing this program lay in creating a safe and secure environment for students to discuss their problems with the counselor invited by the college for the program, as they were at first hesitant in asking for help for their problems, for fear of being judged by peers and elders at home and at the college.

### **The Practice**

Many students reached out for help and the college then organized multiple one-one online counseling sessions for children suffering from severe anger, depression and self-harm issues with Life Coach and Therapist Arup Ghosh. Since most students of our college come from very financially challenged backgrounds and many are first generation learners, they would have been unable to afford such consultation or convince the need for the same in their homes, as there is still a long way to go for removing the stigma attached to going to a mental health professional in parents' minds. The college effort thus helped to provide comfort and relief where it was most needed at the same time ensuring privacy of students and the problems faced by them as the consultations

were online and one-on-one between therapist and student, funded and supported by the college. With increasing number of students asking for help and benefiting from the consultations, the college has continued the program with the name “Mind Power Training,” with regular group discussions, webinars and one-on-one consultations with students since, with Life Coach Arup Ghosh teaching techniques of stress relief and meditation to the students to cope with problems in everyday life.

**NO OF PARTICIPANTS-100+**

DATE MM/DD/YY	DURATION	DETAILS OF SESSION	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS
9/12/21	1 HOUR	LIFE COACH AND HYPNOTHERAPIST ARUP GHOSH CONDUCTED AN INTRODUCTORY SESSION WITH STUDENTS AND TEACHERS OF VIDYASAGAR METROPOLITAN COLLEGE ON THE IMPORTANCE OF MENTAL WELLBEING AND GUIDED THEM THROUGH A BASIC LEVEL MEDITATION PROCESS.	48
9/17/21	1 HOUR	COUNSELLING AND THERAPY SESSIONS WITH STUDENTS FACING CRITICAL PROBLEMS REQUIRING 1-1 GUIDANCE AND HELP	1
9/19/21	1 HOUR		1
9/25/21	1 HOUR		1
10/3/21	1 HOUR	ARUP GHOSH TAUGHT ADVANCED MEDITATION TECHNIQUES TO SEMESTER 3 AND 5 STUDENTS	27
10/17/21	1 HOUR	A STUDENT FACING DIFFICULTY IN HANDLING PROBLEMS AT HOME FOUND A WAY TO DEAL WITH THEM THROUGH THE COUNSELLING SESSION	1
10/10/21	1 HOUR	ARUP SIR CONDUCTED A GROUP DISCUSSION SESSION WITH SEMESTER 3 AND 5 STUDENTS ON WAYS TO COMBAT PEER PRESSURE AND IN THE FOLLOW UYP SESSIONS TAUGHT SPECIAL STRESS RELIEF TECHNIQUES BY WHICH STUDENTS COULD KEEP THEMSELVES STEADY IN ALL SITUATIONS AND STAND THEIR GROUND AND NOT BUCKLE UNDER PRESSURE OR BULLYING BY FRIENDS.	31
10/24/21	1 HOUR		
11/7/21	1 HOUR		
11/14/21	2 HOURS	ARUP SIR CONDUCTED ANOTHER INTRODUCTORY SESSION ON MENTAL WELLBEING FOR A NEW BATCH OF STUDENTS FROM SEMESTER 1	57
11/21/21	1.5 HOURS	ADVANCED MEDITATION AND STRESS RELIEF TECHNIQUES WITH SEMESTER 3 AND 5 STUDENTS , ON IMPROVING CONCENTRATION.	21
11/27/21	1 HOUR	A STUDENT FACING EXTREME ANXIETY FOUND RELIEF THROUGH THE COUNSELLING SESSION	1

11/28/21	2 HOURS	ARUP SIR CONDUCTED ANOTHER INTRODUCTORY SESSION ON MENTAL WELLBEING FOR BATCH 2 OF STUDENTS FROM SEMESTER 1	43
12/05/21	1.5 HOURS	GROUP DISCUSSION SESSION WITH BATCH 1 AND 2 SEMESTER 1 STUDENTS ON TACKLING THE NEW CHALLENGES OF COLLEGE LIFE.	61
12/07/21	1 HOUR	A STUDENT FACING SEVERE DEPRESSION RECEIVED A COUNSELLING SESSION, IN AN EFFORT BY THE COLLEGE TO HELP HIM FACE HIS PROBLEMS	1
12/12/21	1 HOUR	ARUP SIR CONDUCTED ADVANCED MEDITATION AND MIND POWER TRAINING SESSIONS WITH SEMESTER 3 AND 5 STUDENTS , PREPARING FOR THEIR EXAMINATIONS.	18
12/19/21	1 HOUR		
12/26/21	1 HOUR		
01/01/22	1 HOUR	COUNSELLING SESSION FOR A STUDENT SUFFERING FROM SELF-HARMING TENDENCIES	1
01/02/22	1 HOUR	ARUP SIR SPOKE TO STUDENTS' GUARDIANS REGARDING THE IMPORTANCE OF MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING AND SENSITIZED THEM TO THE BENEFITS OF COUNSELLING AND MEDITATION	32
01/16/22	1 HOUR	MEDITATION SESSION FOR STUDENTS OF SEMESTER 1, TEACHING TECHNIQUES OF BASIC STRESS RELIEF AND ADVANCED MEDITATION SESSIONS FOR STUDENTS OF SEMESTER 3 AND 5. THESE SESSIONS COVERED TOPICS RANGING FROM CONFLICTS EXPERIENCED BY STUDENTS IN THEIR RELATIONSHIPS, TO SUICIDAL TENDENCIES AMONGST PEERS, ABUSIVE EXPERIENCES FACED BY STUDENTS TO WAYS OF COPING WITH ANXIETY AND NERVOUSNESS. STUDENTS PARTICULARLY BENEFITED FROM THESE SESSIONS AND REPORTED FEELING RELIEF AND GREATER CONFIDENCE REGARDING HANDLING THEIR ISSUES.	34 STUDENTS FROM SEMESTER 3 AND 5 PARTICIPATED IN THE ONGOING SESSIONS AND 18 STUDENTS FROM SEMESTER 1 PARTICIPATED
01/30/2022	1 HOUR		
02/13/2022	1 HOUR		
02/20/22	1 HOUR		
02/27/22	1.25 HOUR		
03/06/2022	1 HOUR		
03/13/2022	1 HOUR		
03/20/22	1 HOUR		
04/03/22	1 HOUR		
04/10/22	1 HOUR		
04/17/2022	1 HOUR		
04/24/2022	1 HOUR		
05/01/2022	1 HOUR		
05/08/2022	1 HOUR		
05/22/2022	1 HOUR		
05/29/2022	1 HOUR		
06/05/2022	2 HOURS		
06/19/2022	1 HOUR		
06/26/2022	1 HOUR		

## **Evidence of Success**

The program's success was seen in the overwhelming positive feedback received from students, with conversations around mental health becoming the norm in online classes and between students themselves. The way the students contacted teachers for help after the Wellness Webinars, understanding the importance of physical and mental wellbeing, also showed the critical need of this program and events organized around this theme. In addition the one-on-one sessions were successful in alleviating the students' problems to a certain extent.

## **Resources arranged for the program included:**

A support group of teachers who would liason between the students and the counselor and spread awareness regarding the program.

A therapist who would understand the needs of students and be ready to provide his services with care and compassion and be available for students' problems at all times.

College funds for arranging remuneration for the therapists' services.

Internet connection on part of all participants—teachers, students and the therapist—for facilitating the program.

A database of all students requiring constant support and care through the program is maintained by the teachers in the Therapy Support Group.

Feedback is collected from all students post therapy, for continually improving the program

**II. Title of the practice:** TCS Training and Employability Programme.

**2. Objectives:** An Affirmative Action Training Programme especially for the SCs / STs, as a part of Corporate Social Responsibility of TCS. Following the ideals of our founder, the institution believes in creating a system of self-reliance that equips the students for life. The intention therefore was to create a system of knowledge outside the university syllabi that combined learning with career opportunities. Since a large number of our students came from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, it was the avowed purpose of the institution not only to disseminate knowledge to the students but also to provide them with career opportunities.

**3. The Context:** Convincing the students, training the students from vernacular backgrounds, getting the students interview ready, making the students ready for a corporate culture and also

ensuring that socially disadvantaged class of students formed the majority of the strength were some of the constant challenges.

4. **The Practice:** Higher education has increasingly become costly in India. The fee structure for technical education has gone beyond the reach of the common man. Privatization of higher education has only problematized the situation. Yet the right to education is a basic and fundamental right. Each individual should have equal access to resources. Guided by the philanthropy of Pandit Ishwar Chandra, the college aspired to provide free technical education to its students apart from the regular curriculum. One of the major problems encountered was that of the students dropping out of the programme mid-way. Despite this being a free course that opened up new vistas of interest and opportunities, most students backed out due to language problems. Inability to comprehend or communicate in English proved to be the greatest stumbling block. Lack of social exposure fueled by low self-confidence often led to students feeling overwhelmed and intimidated, subsequently leading to drop outs.

5. **Evidence of success:** The success rate was phenomenal. In 2019-20, 09 out of the 32 students got selected and further appointed by TCS. In 2020, 5 out of 39 students got their appointment letters. In 2021-22, 3 out of 46 got employed by TCS. This is a commendable achievement as it indicates the triumph of will and determination on the part of the students to overcome all odds. It is a definite measure of success for the college as well, since it is able to fulfill its vision of preparing its students for life.

**6. Problems encountered and resources required:** The resources required are basic like internet connection, computer/smart phone and stationary. Last but not the least the biggest resource/strength is the instructor from TCS. An enthusiast faculty that plans, implements and oversees the program is perhaps the strongest pillar of support. The problem however lies in getting the students to understand and appreciate the merit of this programme. Finding the requisite number of SC/ST students is a challenge every year. In the age of consumerism whatever comes for free is devalued. Since this programme does not have the gloss and sheen of corporate culture and is more of an outreach programme, the takers are few and evidently sceptical. In 2020-21 the entire exercise being online, it was challenging in a whole new way. A large chunk of our students come from interior areas and are economically challenged. Hence having a sustainable internet connection and affording internet data was a serious challenge for them. However the success rate of our students every year is the note of promise that keeps this training going.