



Adveka Foundation
An Organisation for Mental Health

Promoting better self care for caregivers of cancer patients

In September 2017, Adveka Foundation worked extensively with its partners to promote better self care for caregivers of people suffering from cancer.

Cuddles Foundation

Adveka's first partner organization, Cuddles Foundation, which works with children suffering from cancer, celebrated "Nutrition Week" from 1st to 8th



September. Adveka held workshops on self care and emotional management at Wadia and Sion hospitals with over 80 parents whose children have some or the other form of cancer. Adveka does ongoing work with Cuddles Foundation

dietitians who take care of the specific dietary needs of these children.

Cancer Aid & Research Foundation

Adveka collaborated with Cancer Aid & Research Foundation (CARF) to hold three days of intensive self care sessions with caregivers of cancer patients. The sessions dealt with four topics: proper self care, emotional management including cognitive distortion, assertiveness training, and anger management. CARF is based in Byculla, Mumbai, and works to alleviate the circumstances of people suffering from cancer, especially those from low income and underprivileged families.



Nurturing partnerships to promote mental health

Adveka Foundation began individual counselling sessions with Gharkul and Ashiana, two new partner organizations with whom we began working this year. Earlier in June, Adveka collaborated with Gharkul, a school that works with children with special needs, for the caregiver counselling programme. Work with Ashiana, an organization that works with children who have autism, began in August. The individual counselling sessions will be held with the parents of these children. Over the past few months, our individual counselling bandwidths have grown exponentially, and we now work with over 11 clients.

Thirteen Reasons Why — Let's talk about suicide

A few months ago, I read *Thirteen Reasons Why* by Jay Asher. The book is about a teenage girl, Hannah Baker, who commits suicide and leaves behind a series of tapes explaining why she did what she did. She sends these tapes to the people she feels are the reason behind her decision to take her own life.

As the story progressed, I tried to understand why Hannah killed herself, what incident triggered it. Because to me, nothing seemed big enough to warrant such a drastic step. But when I thought about it more, I realised something important. Was it for me to decide what was big for her and what wasn't? We do not know the battle that the other person is fighting. We do not know the pain they are in. And we don't have the right to judge it. All we can do is empathise and try to understand it in the best, most sensitive way we can.

Suicide is the deepest form of depression. There is a pervasive sense of helplessness which convinces a person that this is the best path of action, that there is no other way out.

The foremost way to combat suicide is to create more awareness about it. A person who feels that suicide is the only way out must know that there is always someone they can approach for help. A person who feels that their sibling or parent or friend or classmate may be suicidal should not balk at talking to that person about it, as intimidating as that might be. We as a society need to understand that we cannot just brush away someone's concerns or anxiety because we might be uncomfortable dealing with it. Our vigilance, our empathy may just save a life.

(To read the full article, please visit advekafoundation.com/blog)