

Respected Mrs. C.M & Dearest Miss G

By

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I choose this title and this article today to emphasize the importance of mental health especially for women.



According to the WHO Depression and anxiety disorders are common mental disorders that have an impact on our ability to work, and to work productively. Globally, more than 300 million people suffer from depression, the leading cause of disability. More than 260 million are living with anxiety disorders. Many of these people live with both. *Mental health in the workplace* is the theme of World Mental Health Day 2017. World Mental Health Day is observed on 10 October every year, with the overall objective of raising awareness of mental health issues and mobilizing efforts in support of better mental health.

Reference, credit, statistics quoted from the WHO (2017).

I come back to my title as I have changed the names of the two women whom I have observed in my childhood ,one was my Math's teacher and another was my English teacher in school .I will first speak of Mrs. Chaitali Mukherjee as a fiery gutsy Bengali ,Mrs. Mukherjee was a divorcee ,she had a differently abled child ,a girl ! , all this info and gossip always provided to us by our seniors who in turn got it from their seniors .All her frustrations, anger she used to vent out on helpless kids. I was fortunate enough to have had a change of section and a different Math's teacher the next year but other kids were not that lucky .I am sure her students would be

less afraid of a Dracula or a Ghost as she was more terrifying. All the while her students would be cursing her ex-husband for turning her into a devil and making her take out her vented anger and bitterness in the most violent form towards him onto her helpless students .As she had an excellent academic record no one questioned her as her eccentricities were taken as normal as she taught Math's and Math's teachers require to be strict, hostile and insensitive or else how would they teach the subject?, wow!!!.... That was a great logic!!!

Next is my English teacher Miss Geetha, well her name is not Geetha but I want to protect her identity too .As unlike Mrs. Chaithali she was gentle, sweet and polite .She was a Tambram ,a spinster and had great command over the language. Her classes were mesmerizing: she added interesting anecdotes, giving a personal touch to each piece of prose and poetry. Very good. So what was the problem? ,The problem was that she was disconnected ,she was in her own world ,she would foresee nonexistent problems and preach safety to her students .So much so that she would be overprotective and start to counsel students and literally persuade them to stay away from non-existing dangers and risks. It was then revealed to me by the ever benevolent seniors that she had heartbreak when she was studying in a college in Chennai then Madras. Perhaps her lover's unfaithfulness had led her to this state, but as she had an excellent academic records and prestigious degrees she was offered very good jobs ,which she could never sustained. She finally could to continue in our school in Kerala , as she was living with her sister who was also working in Kerala .

My purpose in recalling these two examples is to illustrate that both these ladies needed help: one was hostile and bitter while the other was gentle and mild but both were not mentally fit or healthy. They had physical issues too- one was obese, the other was borderline anorexic .They needed guidance, psychological counseling which in those times was a taboo as there were not many outlets. There was no choice but to live abnormally. They never understood the underlying problems of being bottled up: one became an image of terror or a figure of sympathetic caricature. Both were in their 40s and both had excellent academic record .But then our universities are not in geared towards gauging mental fitness or ability to cope with stress .

On the eve of world mental health day I appeal to all Chaitali's and Geetha's in our country to take help. Taking help will not label you as "Mad "or mentally unstable. And it is necessary to take professional guidance and counseling for mental as well as physical health. Your friends or bajuwali aunties, relatives even parents may not be the right people sometimes to counsel or guide you. It is necessary to take professional help from authorized personnel .Your mental health is your priority. But unfortunately our education and work system train us to work like robots ,loading the mind, increasing the stress and making it a chore instead of making it enjoyable . Hence people who have disorders or mental health issues break under the pressure either by becoming hostile and aggressive like Mrs. C .M or they become cut off and live in hallucinated world like Ms. G . So it's high time we give our mental health top priority like everything elsemind your mind! ...

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Pic credit :mental disorders ,google pictures .

