

# BALM ANNUAL REPORT



**The Banyan Academy  
of Leadership in  
Mental Health**

**2016-17**





# **BALM**

## **Annual Report**

### **2016-17**

**BALM'S**  
**First Decade**  
**2007-2017**  
– A Special Report

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## Founder's Message

The Banyan is closing in on a quarter of a century and life only gets more exciting, challenging and fulfilling every year. Change and growth has been a constant because we keep the vulnerable population we serve as our central focus and have from them learnt the importance of grit, introspection, courage and empathy. At The Banyan we have always served persons with illness whose social context, poverty traps and perpetual exposure to structural barriers propelled them into a downward spiral of distress, hopelessness, and often homelessness, and withdrawal from life. Those whom we serve, the consumers of our services, are at the heart of our strategy, and we look at their needs and lifetimes in entirety and build the best solutions, processes and frameworks to help them rebuild their lives, take control of their destinies and stay functioning members of society.

While we started with a humanistic response to the tragedy of a woman lost, ill, befuddled, helpless, and homeless, everything we did was aimed at understanding her crisis – why did she get there, how best could she heal, stay well and regain her rightful place in her family, community and society. Those questions led to responses that encompassed concepts of crisis care, rehabilitation and long-term care. We explored the link between homelessness and mental illness, the shortcomings of our healthcare system, our social mores and structures that stigmatise and make illnesses, and indeed people, invisible. From one homeless mentally ill woman we upscaled to many, and then to men, and to whole communities and villages and towns. As we grew, we found partners who helped us scale this movement, and ways to work with government and civil society to bring about systemic changes. We offered to set up new models of healthcare to demonstrate that health for all wasn't all that unachievable.

Every year we grew, or sometimes fine-tuned, or scaled down our ideas and approaches based on the lived experiences of people we serve. Over the last few years we



On World Health Day 2017, the  
**WHO** Country Office for India  
recognized

**Dr Vandana Gopikumar**

as the

**Public Health Champion**

for exemplary work in the area  
of mental health.



**Dr Vandana Gopikumar with  
Dr Nachiket Mor, who received  
the Award on her behalf.**

have seen them actively shape, participate in, or even run some of these programs, drawing on their personal histories as people who nearly slipped through the cracks, and as active consumers of mental health services. Our inclusive community-living projects are a prime example of this and you can read more about it later in the report. We have reiterated the limited and yet essential role that hospital-based care plays for finite periods of time, especially when situated in humane and appropriate settings that we are now engaged in developing. But otherwise, we have advocated for social mixing, social inclusion and mobility and radical acceptance and appreciation of diversity, in the context of persons with critical levels of disability. Today, we have examples of the efficacy and effectiveness of this approach in our inclusive living programmes.

In early 2017, in a most encouraging turn of events, Parliament passed the new Mental Health Care Act. While no legislation is perfect, this Act is far more pro-rights and pro-poor than the older Act it replaced, and does a lot more to put people with mental illness at the heart of the issue. A little later the Supreme Court issued a directive on the urgency to create an appropriate policy for reintegration of persons with mental health issues back to the family / community. In this case, the focus was on people with moderate to high support needs stuck in hospitals, beggar and rehab homes. Our work and approach has become all the more relevant now, and we believe our focus on scaling up mental health systems and designs, i.e., approaches and interventions that service vulnerable populations are critical. Our Home Again projects in Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Assam (in collaboration with partner, Ashadeep) support transition into community-living options that promote participation and agency. They also help in battling stigma and discrimination to some extent, And help us better understand the nature of prejudice, useful in improving our messaging and awareness campaigns.

We are in the process of consolidating ideas and introspecting on approaches that maximise work in high impact / high expertise areas, such as, firstly, value-based and patient-centric care in institutions. Whether we like it or not, the need for emergency care and hospital-based services will exist. What form they take is the question. So what numbers to cap at, who are the caregivers, how and what in should they be trained, what are the interventions needed, when do we use them, how should the social architecture be developed, what are people's rights in a particular socio-cultural context, what is self-directed care, are all questions we are introspecting on and developing answers to in our Transit Care Centre and Health Centre. If you ask people with mental illness what recovery means to them, they point out to experiences that give them a sense of living a life beyond the illness – reconnecting with their identity, pursuing work, engaging in leisure, relationships, responsibilities, and so on. And indeed, all therapeutic interventions should put this front and centre - a person's notion of what it means to be well.

These are also the outcomes that the inclusive-living options we discussed earlier promote, and that is our second focus area.

Thirdly, we are focussed on a high social care component in mental health in primary care. We are considering the caste / class / gender level losses and nexus, and the structural barriers / systemic issues that impact well-being. We have seen and heard from the people we work with that mere pill popping is not sufficient. Recovery needs to include other facets -- income enhancement,

problem solving support, skilling and employment. Our programs such as Nalam are founded on this approach.

Lastly, we are working on promoting self-advocacy amongst persons who have experienced mental health concerns and homelessness, so the discourse on global mental health is more nuanced and representative of multiple realities, particularly those of the Global South. Without co-production of knowledge, without putting the lived experiences of people with mental illness at the centre of the debate, there is no debate. In our journey to promote all-inclusive recovery (not just clinical, functional and social recovery, but personal recovery as well, even in the absence of the former) we are not alone. Our stakeholders include the people that we serve, our donors, volunteers and caregivers. Each of them is a collaborator and partakes in making this vision a reality. It is so important that this base widens, that collaborations are fostered and strengthened, and private public partnerships initiated. This is our goal – to bring in and work with diverse partners. After all, mental health is everybody's business.

Vandana Gopikumar

Vaishnavi Jayakumar

# Message from the Chairman

A couple of years ago we discussed organisational sustainability. How more and more people are taking ownership of The Banyan vision, and how we are moving beyond a founders-led organisation. How the young, passionate and committed professionals that form the Senior Management Team (SMT) drive and grow the services we deliver to vulnerable groups. How our most engaged and committed Board of Directors and Executive Committee (EC) drive strategy, ensure our vision stays on track and look at governance.

The Banyan is lucky to have a board with extremely engaged and committed members. All board members have an in-depth understanding of the programmes, are fully aware of the funding status, and know the teams well. The increased engagement is largely routed through the SMT, with the board splitting itself into several smaller committees to work with each project head on specific requirements. For instance on fundraising, on new asset creation (the building committee), programme management and workflow processes, and strategy and quality audits.

The empowered EC, that has some board members from The Banyan and BALM (Banyan Academy of Leadership in Mental Health), engages with the SMT on a monthly basis and provides direction and inputs on more operational matters – problem solving support, financial queries, and overall management related inputs. This ensures a seamless link between strategy (at the board level) and operations (percolating down to SMT level).

All major decisions are routed through the board, and passed through the SMT and EC for board approval. In the same vein, all decisions on future strategy taken at board meetings are operationalised through the SMT in conjunction with teams.

I am proud of the many new programs we have launched, and those that we have refurbished and strengthened. As we grow in scale and outreach, and partner and operate in so many new states and districts, I am grateful for the focus of the Board and the EC that helps us stay on track.

I am also grateful to our most generous donors, our volunteers and our staff, particularly to some of the personal assistants, healthcare workers, and community mobilisers who have all been through immense distress themselves, and are now the backbone of the organisation. Specific donors to thank include: Tata Trusts, Breadsticks Foundation UK, Paul Hamlyn Foundation, Azim Premji Philanthropic Initiatives (APPI), Bajaj Group, Grand Challenges Canada (GCC), Rangoonwala Foundation India Trust (RFIT), Lufthansa, RIMT, BMW, BHEL, Oracle, Friends Of The Banyan USA and Switzerland, besides the many individual donors. Without you, none of this would have been possible. Thank you for believing in our vision and partnering with us to address distress and restore the hope, dignity and rights of some of the most marginalised and vulnerable.

**A. Sankaranarayanan**

# Message from the Treasurer

When I see how with every year we grow our engagement deeper and wider with the people we serve, and engage with the structural, social, political and economic underpinnings of mental health, I am truly pleased and positive for the future. Growth is great but also demands organisational discipline and focus. The success of our many programs across the country demand a seamless organisational support system, smooth and streamlined processes and rigorous checks and balances.

To deliver to that scale, all internal services have now been strongly protocolised, and have robust governance manuals that ensure fair and transparent processes across the board -- hiring, capacity-building, financial management, etc.

All programs operate much more smoothly now given that internal services are more well-integrated into the programs and standardised. We follow similar accounting, recruiting and induction processes across programs, and the administration teams do regular audits of the premises to ensure robust asset maintenance and management.

We have institutionalised a strong system of audits, both internal and external. Our internal auditors who look at processes (HR, finance, infrastructure) are KPMG. This ensures smooth functioning of all internal services, and ensures that we do not have any queries from Government-sanctioned bodies – including the IT department, FCRA, etc.

To avoid leakages, and improve fiscal oversight, cash transactions have been minimised with anything over INR 2000 being paid only through cheque or direct transfer modes. As per the new income tax regulations, incoming cash donations have also been minimised, with all donations over INR 2000 being received only as direct bank transfers, online, or through cheque.

Accountability extends end to end - from budgeting and allocation, to programme tracking and delivery and donor reporting. Program heads are involved in all aspects of the process along with the finance team. In addition to easing the burden on the finance team, this ensures greater transparency, control over budgets, and the ability to re-work programmes and make mid-course corrections as required.

As we adapt to the ever-changing challenges that spring up in the course of delivering services to marginalised people, we hope to provide strong systemic, fiscal and infrastructural frameworks to further the task of ensuring the rights of the most vulnerable, homeless, poor and mentally ill - the right to rescue, the right to care, the right to options for the future, the right to a full place in society and the right to life.

**Balraj Vasudevan**

# Message from the Director

The Banyan Academy for Leadership in Mental Health (BALM) is contributing to the national resource of mental health care professionals in India, by training Social Workers, Clinical Psychologists and Counselling Psychologists. The uniqueness of this institution is the access to clinical setting within the campus, so that the students are able to gain hands-on experience and skills for practice in their professional life. Most students who have graduated from BALM have been successfully employed in the mental health sector in various parts of the country. A proportion of students are pursuing higher education in other institutions, and small proportion have started their own NGO's in remote locations of the country. The TISS - BALM collaboration has also attracted partnerships with other universities in the U.K., the Vrije University, Netherlands, and several other universities in the US.

The BALM has been conducting a winter school for students of Social Work from the Rutgers University, New Jersey, USA. This has been a popular program for the last two years and our collaboration will further develop into Ph.D. programme in the near future.

The current initiative of the BALM to establish a Centre for Research and Social Action in Mental Health with the Sundaram Fasteners Limited is remarkable in the field of mental health.

Development of community based human resource for mental health in the form of a Diploma in Community Mental Health Care, in collaboration with Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Youth Development (RGNIYD), Sriperumbudur, has been a major innovation for filling in human resource for community based mental health program. We are in the process of developing Diploma programs for persons working with children with disabilities, vulnerable children, and in the field of health promotion, which is expected to be launched in the near future.

The academic programmes of BALM have made rapid strides in the short span of four years. It has become a favourite institute for post graduate training in Social Work, Clinical Psychology and Counselling Psychology in a short period of time.

**Dr K. V. Kishore Kumar**



## From the Dean's Desk

In the life of an organization, a few years of existence is generally considered too short a time frame for evaluation. However, the milestones that the Banyan Academy of Leadership in Mental Health (BALM) has achieved in this short period has been commendable. The credit for this goes to the team and the very active support of the Board of Trustees, Executive Council, TISS, BALM faculty, administrative team and the students.

Three batches have graduated till May 2017- the first in 2015 (2013- 15 batch) with the MA Social Work (Mental Health), three specializations in 2016 (2014-16) - MA Social Work (Mental Health), MA Applied Psychology (Counselling); and Masters in Policy Analysis, Management and Entrepreneurship in Health (MPA). The 2015-17 batch have an additional specialization of MA - Applied Psychology (Clinical Psychology). In addition, in order to extend our services to the grass-roots, a six-month program in mental health has been designed at the community level - the Diploma in Community Mental Health Care. This program is offered in collaboration with the Rajiv Gandhi Institute for Youth Development (RGNIYD), Sriperumbudur. Three batches have completed this Diploma course, with participants of the first two batches engaged in rural health services, while the third batch consists of health care workers with a focus on urban mental health care.

My sincere thanks to the TISS team, especially Dr. Parasuraman, Dr. Asha Banu, and faculty, staff and professors at Mumbai for their continued support. Thanks to Dr. Joske Bunders and Dr. Barbara Regeer of VU University, Amsterdam, who have offered their time, energy and expertise to BALM. Our thanks to the Banyan team, especially Dr. Vandana Gopikumar, Founder-Trustee, the Banyan and Professor, TISS ; Dr. Kishore, Director, Banyan, and the Banyan teams of all the programs. My thanks to the BALM team, including all faculty and staff and our visiting faculty, all of whom add value with their experience and competencies. Our special thanks to our generous donors and funders including Sundaram Fasteners, First Capital, Mr. Jagdev Singh Gill, Mr. Ranvir Shah, Mr. Amarnath Reddy, Tata Trust (NRTT and SRTT), Mr Sivakumar, Mr. Balraj Vasudevan, Mr K. C. Mohan, Mr. Vikram Phadke, Mr. Desiraju, Mr T. K. Gowrishankar and supporters who have made it possible to convert our dream to reality. Thanks also to our Board of Trustees beginning with the Chairperson Shri. Sankaranarayanan, who have spent their time and resources to ensure smooth functioning of BALM.

With best wishes and looking forward to continued support.

**Madhuri Menon**

# BALM's first decade

## **BALM's journey - fulfilling a promise**

BALM is TEN. It is TEN years since The Banyan Academy of Leadership in Mental Health (BALM) was instituted way back in 2007.

Dr Nachiket Mor once spoke to Dr Vandana Gopikumar about sharing The Banyan experience and learnings with other stakeholders in the sector – ‘the transfer of The Banyan DNA’ – to use the Banyan’s grassroots work and space as the core and build research and training as strategies to validate or throw up challenges and gaps in the services being designed. Thus began a conscious attempt to engage in research and BALM was born.

BALM's mission is:

- 1) to increase stakeholder participation especially in support deficient regions and improve prevalent trends through research, training and advocacy
- 2) to train and nurture professionals in mental health and
- 3) to map, document and disseminate information on best practices, challenges and progress in the sector.



*The seed is sown*

*"Transfer the Banyan's DNA"*

(share The Banyan's experience and learning with other stakeholders in mental health sector)



*Address the need of the sector, be it the lack of access to care and awareness, or high family burden, in a significant and strategic manner.*

## Research

BALM initiated its research activities and educational work through three centres:

- 1) Health and Mental Health Policy Research
- 2) Inclusive Development and Social Innovation (in collaboration with Vrije Universiteit (VU), Amsterdam, the Harvard School of Public Health and the Global Psychiatry Department at Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston) and
- 3) Mental Health and Marginality (in collaboration with New York University - McSilver School of Poverty).

Some of the research studies conducted during the initial years, include Disability allowance of the Banyan – a study on reintegrated clients and their care givers, Self-help group as an alternative model of rehabilitation and Impact assessment of The Banyan's various projects.

## Teaching and Training

BALM has steadily broadened its scope and reach through various Indian and international collaborations for research and training. The Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) and Vrije University, Amsterdam, are among the broad based collaborations, offering post graduate courses in Social work and Applied Psychology, doctorate degrees and research activities. It has partnered with University College, London, to conduct courses in Cultural Psychiatry and for research; with Washington University and Rutgers University, USA for training international students on Mental Health in India, a low resource setting; with Rajiv Gandhi Institute for training rural and urban social workers and with IFMR-LEAD for research and teaching.

*A Peepal tree was planted by Former President of India,*

*Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam in the campus in 2007.*

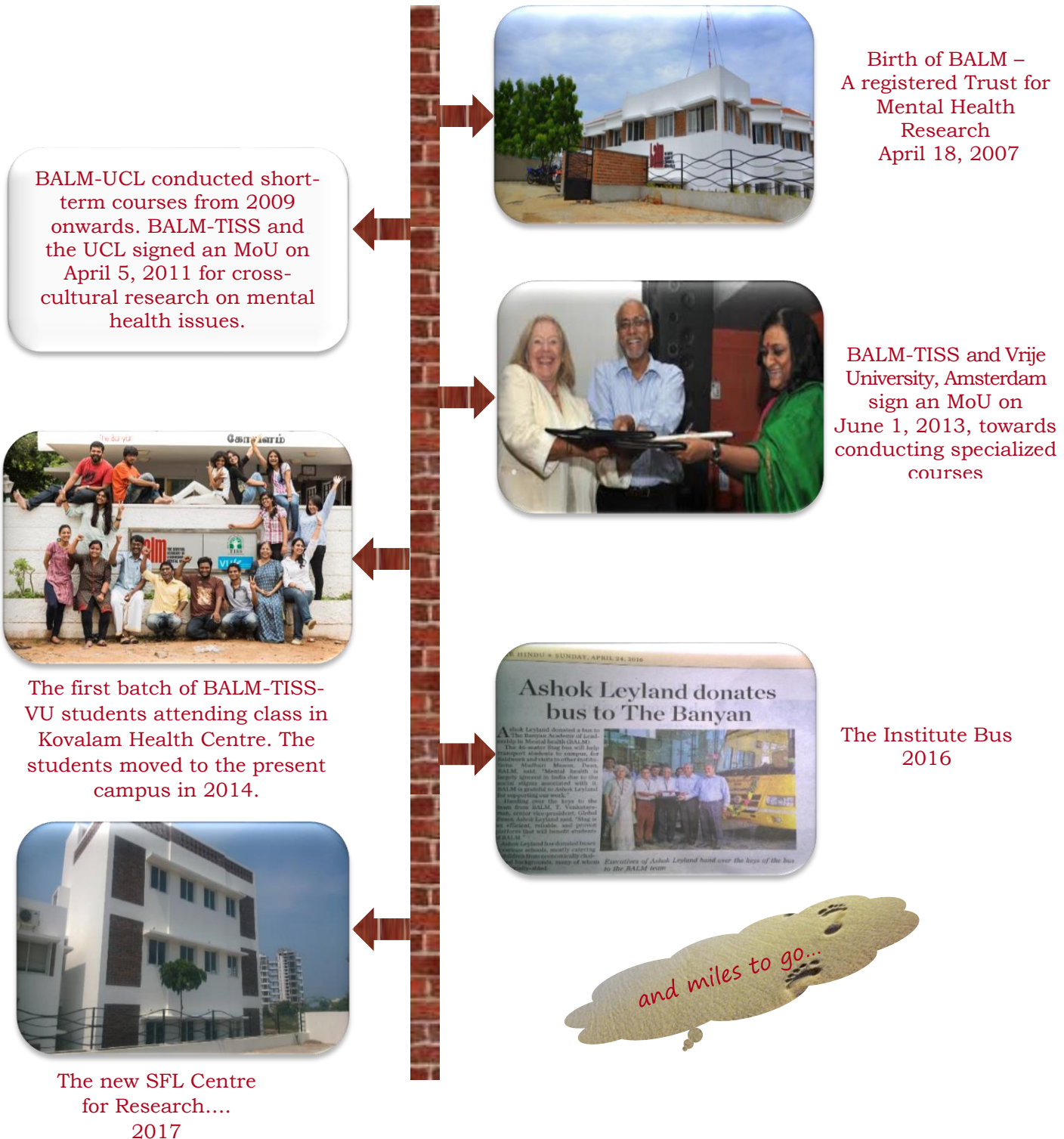




BALM seeks to create a cadre of mental health professionals who can grapple with complex problems and pave the way for systemic reforms.

*"Our attempt is to groom you to understand what care and rights stand for, expose you to real world dilemmas and immerse you in action and research to apply theory in practice."*

- Dr. Vandana Gopikumar





The collaboration between TISS and BALM has been extremely beneficial for the society through joint teaching, research and field action projects, and we plan to reach out to 1,000 men and women living in institutional and quasi-institutional settings.

BALM has built a formidable team of scholars in inter-disciplinary areas of mental health (drawn from institutions within and outside the country) as full-time and part-time teachers and researchers, thereby strengthening the mental health work of the Institute.

Prof S Parasuraman, Director, TISS  
TISS Annual Report 2016-17



## Founders



Dr Vandana Gopikumar



Ms Vaishnavi Jayakumar



Mr Balraj Vasudevan

Leadership  
over the  
years

## Institute Head



Dr Madhu Sharan  
2007-2009



Dr Lakshmi Ravikant  
2009-2013



Dr Vikram Gupta  
2013-2015



Dr Kishore Kumar  
2016-

## Dean



Dr Nalini Rao  
2013-2015



Ms Madhuri Menon  
2015 -

## Skilling and Empowering Community Workers – Diploma Programme on Community Mental Health, First Batch 2014







Living, learning and sharing our college space with the clients at the Banyan Academy helped acquire the required sensitivity towards mental illness beyond textbooks and disciplinary ethics. An eclectic group of professionals who taught, problem solved and encouraged my own limits contributed great deal. -Upasana Iyer, MA Social Work, 2013-15

With the acquired guidance and knowledge I gained from the BALM TISS programme, not only I learnt the skills in counselling psychology but also I took back a great proportion about the skills I had within myself. I carry forward them in both, my personal and professional life.

- Veena Balakrishnan, MA Applied Psychology, 2013-15



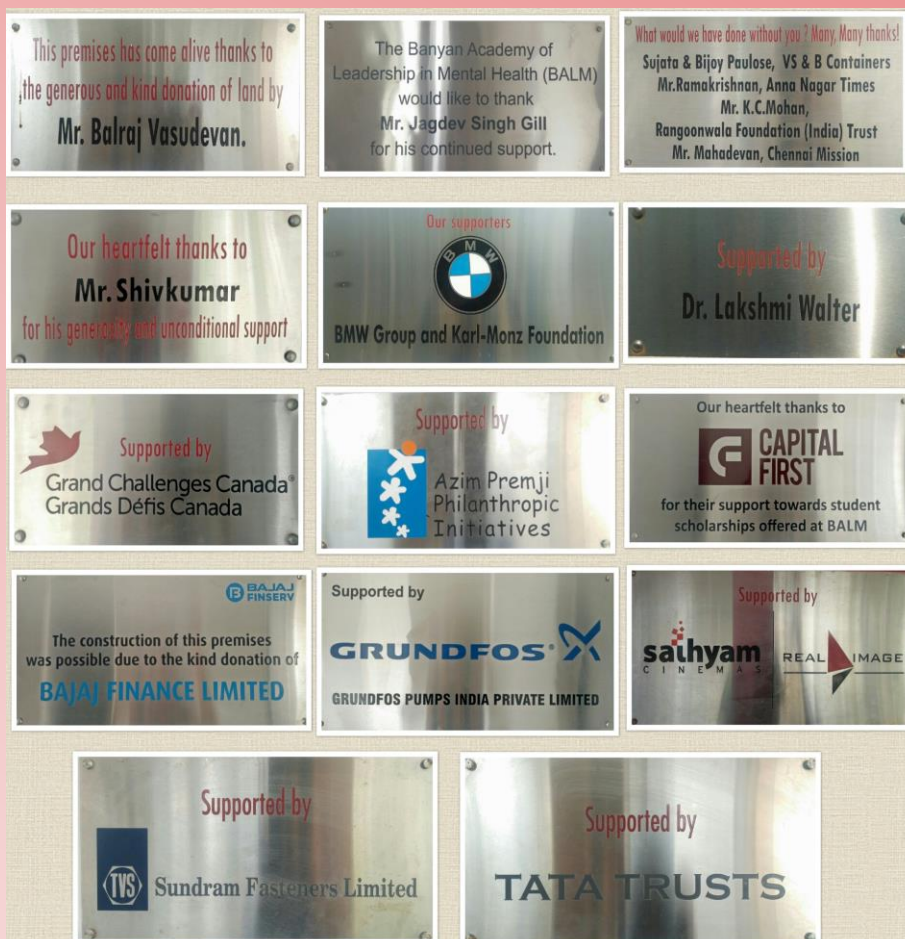
## Stakeholder Expansion

BALM has actively worked in expanding stakeholder participation so that mental health is added as a priority area within their service delivery system. Partnerships with the Panchayat Academy for training Panchayat Leaders to play a key role in influencing the communities at the grass roots level, Missionaries of Charity in Kolkata, Family Planning Association of India, All India Federation of Mental Illness, are some of the organisations that BALM works with.

## Advocacy

BALM has played a very important role in upgrading the Mental Health Act 1987 to its current form. Dr Vandana Gopikumar was invited as the member of the Mental Health Policy Group formed by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. Since then, BALM's senior personnel continue to work with State, National and international governments to influence policy making for the sector.

BALM has grown into a robust institution, fulfilling and expanding its mandate over the last 10 years. It hopes to have a strong influence in shaping communities to integrate with the mentally disabled persons and give them a life of dignity and social belonging.



Individual  
and  
Institutional  
Partnership





## "TOGETHER... WE BUILD"

Nurturing Mental Health Professionals through a Transdisciplinary Approach

The Banyan Academy of Leadership in Mental Health (BALM) was instituted in 2007 to focus on research and documentation of the pioneering services offered by The Banyan. Today, it has developed into a notable Educational Institution in the niche area of mental health with multiple initiatives in teaching, training, research and field-action with national and international collaborations. This expansion has followed The Banyan's interests in building a well-equipped cadre of mental health professionals in India.

BALM lays great importance on working together with people across disciplines, in the process of evolving knowledge and practice models. The process of engagement with people includes a spectrum of mental health services, from service users, grass root level workers to advocates and policy makers. This process of engagement between academicians, researchers and practitioners through a transdisciplinary approach has been significant in building up holistic knowledge, which is contextual, encompassing and insightful.

In the process of working with varied field experts, BALM has developed significant collaborations with Universities, research institutions, corporate partners and NGOs/INGOs. Also, the enormous support received from individual donors and voluntary service from experts and professionals has been remarkable. In addition, the co-location of students and residents with mental health issues has been conceived as a value-based learning. The shared space provides unique pedagogical opportunities. This expertise in transdisciplinary approach goes beyond the boundaries of mental illness into mental health and well-being and adds value to the community.

The key activities of BALM include teaching and training programmes, research initiatives, field action and advocacy and exchange programmes with universities.

*BALM focuses on Advance Research, Academic Programmes, Training & Workshops, Field Action and Advocacy in the field of Mental Health*

*Transdisciplinary approach involves experts across disciplines to work together to evolve knowledge and practice models. The experts of multiple perspectives from different disciplines move beyond boundaries or transcend each other to form a new holistic approach.*

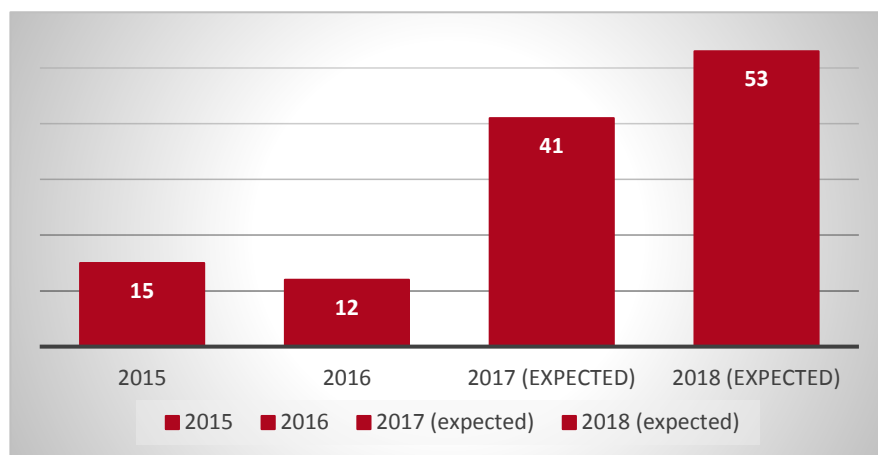
## (i) ACADEMIC PROGRAMMES

### Post-graduate Programmes of TISS-BALM

The post-graduate programmes of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences offered at BALM are established as notable mental health programmes of TISS. The Masters programme began in 2013, in collaboration with TISS, an eight-decade old institution and a deemed university with Social Work in Mental Health. The next year Counselling Psychology and Management, Policy Analysis and Entrepreneurship in Health (MPA) programmes were added, followed by Clinical Psychology in 2015. The MPA programme was offered in collaboration with TISS and Vrije University, Amsterdam.



Number of Graduating Students (as of March 2017)



The Ph.D. Scholars at BALM who are registered with VU Amsterdam, have regular meetings and discussions with VU faculty.

No. of Current Students 2016-2017 (as of March 2017)

Programme	II Year	I Year
Social Work in Mental Health	11	5
Clinical Psychology	8	19
Counselling Psychology	17	14
Management, Research & Entrepreneurship	4	3

Class room teaching is enriched by inputs from practitioners and experts from renowned organizations at the local, national and international levels.

## M.A. Social Work in Mental Health

The Masters in Social Work in Mental Health seeks to create a committed pool of human resources, willing to go the extra mile to push social boundaries and influence policy. It includes practical and experiential activities to build students' abilities to apply theory to practice within the framework of human rights and individual dignity. The students' classroom assignments are oriented to sharpen their theoretical knowledge by engaging in field-based learning and action. This programme includes research and field work to understand ground realities, develop strong competencies across community organization, development practice, building networks and liaising with governmental and non-governmental organizations.

Students are trained to become leaders and innovators, who can align broad-range solutions to social systems, look critically at present ways of functioning, find innovative alignments, conduct research and develop viable project plans for social enterprises. They are well equipped to be employed in Government agencies, companies seeking impactful CSR and for social entrepreneurship among others.

Social Work faculty and students with Dr K V Kishore Kumar, Director, The Banyan & BALM



Active classrooms





## M.A. in Applied Psychology

Following The Banyan's objective of developing competent professionals to support and propagate mental health care through a variety of interventions, BALM offers two MA courses in Applied Psychology – Clinical Psychology and Counselling Psychology.

### Specialisation in Clinical Psychology

The Master of Arts in Applied Psychology (Clinical Psychology) programme develops professionals to work with clients with mental disorders and their families. The programme focuses on the development of practitioners with a sound base in research as scientist-practitioners. Clinical psychology professionals are trained to interact with clients suffering from severe or chronic psychological problems, including mental health disorders as defined by the DSM criteria. Students develop the skills to use the latest DSM and ICD criteria and nomenclature to evaluate mental illness and devise suitable intervention techniques. They are also trained to administer and interpret standardized intelligence, aptitude, personality and other tests along with interviewing skills. Most importantly, students are sensitized towards human diversity, socio-cultural contexts in which individuals are enmeshed, and the rights of every human being for a life of dignity and social relevance.

Applied Psychology students with Prof S. Parasuraman, Director, TISS



## Specialisation in Counselling Psychology

The primary focus of this programme is to impart education in counselling that has a developmental and contextual stance. Counseling Psychology facilitates personal and interpersonal functioning across the life span of individuals. It trains students to support clients through emotional, psychological, social, vocational, educational, health, developmental, and organizational issues.

Training includes equipping students with the necessary skills to counsel on issues ranging from physical/mental health, school, workplace, marriage, relationships, substance abuse, apart from overall quality of life and wellbeing.

Counselling needs in the Indian context emerge against the background of tremendous social change, especially over the last ten years of economic reform, which have enhanced the pace of change and transformed life styles. The programme seeks to bridge this gap with a critical orientation in social context and involves practicums in various settings.

Applied Psychology Class 2015-17



## M.A. in Health Management, Policy Analysis and Entrepreneurship

This programme was instituted in collaboration with VU, Amsterdam. It introduces the student to theories, strategies and application models for innovating methods, as mediators to deal with the range of social challenges in the field of health and mental health. The focus is on integrating approaches from different disciplines. The programme includes theories from the fields of ethics, management, leadership, entrepreneurship, innovation, finance, law, sociology and culture in order to develop critical and lateral thinking in approaching deep-rooted issues. Students are trained to become leaders and innovators who can align broad-range solutions to social systems and look critically at current ways of functioning to develop innovative alignments.



Dr. Nachiket Mor's lecture on Health System Frameworks.





## Field Work and Internships

Field Work and Internships are an integral part of the curriculum. They help students to gain an understanding of ground realities, observe and learn from practitioners, gain exposure to successful innovations, and understand the need of the hour to tackle the enormity of the issues faced in India.

Students attended field visits to TTK hospital for substance abuse, NIEPMD - National Institute of Empowering People with Multiple Disabilities, Indian community welfare organisation which works with LGBT and commercial sex workers, a Crematorium managed by Women, Schizophrenia Research Foundation, Adyar Cancer Hospital, The Banyan's sites such as Adaikalam, Shelter, NALAM rural mental health project sites, KK Nagar and Loyola college outpatient clinics, and many others.

Rural Block Field Work by social work students was completed at

- Ashadeep, Assam
- MHAT, Calicut,
- The Banyan RMHP,
- Anjali, West Bengal,
- Aghai, Maharashtra,
- Keystone, Kothagiri
- Ashwini, Gudalur.

### Field visit to NIEPMD



## Diploma in Community Mental Health Care

The Diploma in Community Mental Health Care is a unique programme of BALM. This programme aims at creating a committed work force of mental health workers at the ground level to promote wellbeing in the community and facilitate early diagnosis of mental distress and access to mental health care.

Started in 2015, 3 batches have completed the programme, training 68 students in all. This includes 25 from the most recent batch, of which there were 22 women and 3 men participants. Many of these students were deputed from their respective projects and hence returned to work there. A few have been absorbed in other projects, including some as NALAM workers at The Banyan's outreach programmes.

The diploma was conducted in collaboration with Rajiv Gandhi National Institute for Youth Development, Sriperumpudur. Talks are ongoing with different national/international organisations to introduce new Diplomas in the area of support to Mental Health professionals, vulnerable children, especially street children, etc. The Diploma programme is also likely to be replicated in other Indian States and South Asian countries.



Convocation at the  
RGNIYD, 2016









### (iii) INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATIONS

BALM continuously explores new partnerships to collaborate for quality research, education, conferences, training, exchange programmes and other similar activities. Towards this, BALM has developed new programmes, research agendas and mobilized resources.

**VU (Vrije University, Amsterdam)** is one of the important academic partners of BALM. The students and faculty from VU participate in BALM's research and educational programmes.

BALM has collaborated with **Rutgers University, USA**, to host and deliver a special course to a group of students during the Winter Session. The course is open to Master's and Doctoral-level students in the School of Social Work. Graduate level students with demonstrated interest in psychology, mental health, field studies or social development are also eligible.

Students on this programme, examine how persons with severe mental illnesses can achieve recovery. They learn about the structural barriers to achieving mental health recovery, including poverty, violence, social exclusion, stigma, the intersections of class and caste, homelessness, and how these impact individuals with severe mental illness. The course is experiential and comparative, exposing students to real-life practices and challenges of caring for individuals with mental illness in India's urban and rural communities.

Coursework and field assignments are coordinated by Dr. Ramesh Raghavan, Professor and Associate Dean for Research at the School of Social Work at Rutgers and faculty from TISS and BALM. The programme extends over 2 weeks and includes visits to The Banyan's various centres in and around Chennai and its experience in supporting recovery from mental illness among the economically challenged sections of the population.





Students from Rutgers University participating in Field Study Course

Cornell University, Oxford University, University of Pennsylvania and others are in talks with BALM to develop shared goals in research, disseminating relevant information and sharing research findings with other similar institutions in India and the world.



#### (iv) CGH AND BALM – A SYMBIOTIC RELATIONSHIP

The Banyan's Clustered Group Home (CGH) is a long term facility for women with psycho-social needs. Residing in a cluster of 3 or 4, about 50 clients live in a free environment with opportunities for community living, interactions with young students and means to earn. This leads to an environment of developing a healthy sense of self and personal dignity.

The CGH supports the students of BALM by extending not only its infrastructure but by also sharing the opportunity to interact and share the lived experiences of the residents. The regular interactions with students foster affectionate bonds benefitting both the students and residents. The residents' ongoing exchanges with students promote social cohesion and a resultant improvement in mental health. Concurrently, students get a unique opportunity to interact with mental illness, its social impact and the process for recovery, and the impact of self-direction and dignity on individuals.



The members of the CGH consider the students as a part of their family and the feelings are mutual for the students as well. Residents, students, faculty and staff share the cafeteria, auditorium and other facilities. Festivals, birthdays, Sing-Alongs, local outings, trips to the beach, etc. offer plenty of opportunities to create and share memorable experiences

Joint performance by  
students and residents



## (v) FACULTY CONTRIBUTION IN RESEARCH

Faculty at BALM are actively involved in research activities and participate in various Research Conferences, presenting research papers and publishing them in academic journals. Given below are some of the details of their work.

### Prof Vandana Gopikumar

#### Project

- Home Again: A Quasi Experimental Study of Housing with Supportive Services for Homeless Women with Mental Illness Experiencing Long Term Needs.
- Reliving and Replaying Lived Experiences through Auditory and Verbal Hallucinations - Implications for Theories and Management

#### Publication

- How a billion can help a fraction, *The Hindu*, Open-ed., July 22, 2016
- Basic income and mental health gains, *The Hindu*, open-ed., February 24, 2017

### Lakshmi Narasimhan

#### Research Study

- Factors Associated with Service Discontinuation among Service Users of Urban and Rural Outpatient Services of The Banyan
- Perceived Influences of Vocational Training on Personal well-being among Users of The Banyan
- Prevalence and Risk Factors for Homelessness among Women with Severe Mental Disorders Accessing Outpatient Services at The Banyan

### K. S. Ramesh

#### Presentation in National and International Conferences

- 'Presentation on "Contribution of Commonwealth to Social Work Associations' (Joint presentation with Naomi Spencer, Australia)' and 'Mental Health Social Work Education by non-Governmental Mental Health Organisation has become a Reality', at the Joint World Conference on Social Work and Social Development, June 27-30, 2016, at Seoul, South Korea.
- Presentation on 'Enhancing Contributions of Voluntary Organisations to Resurgent India' at a seminar organised by XIME at Chennai (29-30th Nov. 2016)

#### Project

- In collaboration with TISS, BALM organised people consultations at 3 different locations in Chennai on the theme 'Sanitation'. The inputs were collated and submitted at the National level consultation organised by TISS and the Ministry of Urban development in New Delhi (Sep. 2016).

### Publication

- K. S. Ramesh and N. Anandan, '*Community Mental Healthcare and Grass-root level Workforce Development - The Experience of an Academic institution*'. Special Issue on Social Work interventions in diverse settings. Mar. 2017. Journal of Management and Science. ISSN 2249-1260

### Dr Josephine Anthony

(on deputation from TISS)

### Ongoing Research Projects

- SARASWATI – An FP7 Project sponsored by DST, Govt. of India and EU (PI for TISS along with Prof Surinder Jaswal)
- Education of Migrant Children, Sandvik Asia Pvt. Ltd. (with Mr Sivakumar, TISS)
- Children with Special Needs, Sri Aurobindo Society, Puduchery, (Project Director - Prof S Parasuraman)

### Workshops Organized

- Stakeholder Workshop on Social and Institutional Evaluation of Wastewater Treatment Plants, TISS Mumbai, August 8, 2016
- Workshop on 'Qualitative Research Analysis' BALM, Chennai, December 2, 2016

### Presentation in National and International Conferences

- Paper presented at the International Conference on Smart Water Solutions for Smart City, in IWWA, Pune, on 'Critical Evaluation of the Laws Associated with Wastewater Collection, Treatment and Reuse in India in the Current Scenario and its Adaptation towards Dynamic Social Changes', October 21-22, 2016.
- Paper presented as a Panel Member on 'Youth and Mental Health' at the Professional Social Work for Youth Development, RGNIYD, November 10, 2016.
- Session Chair on 'Youth and Health: Models on Safety Reproductive and Mental Health' and paper presentation on 'Educational Vulnerability of Adolescent Migrant Children' at the International Conference on Emerging Trends in Youth Development, Sacred Heart College, Tirupattur, January 20-21, 2017.
- Session Chair on 'Therapeutic Skills in addressing Behavioural Problems of Children with Special Needs' at the International conference on 'Recent Trends in Special Education for Young Persons with Special Needs', DARE-Srishti, Munnar, Kerala, February, 11-12, 2017.
- Paper presentation on 'Educational Status of Migrant Children: Role of Parents' at DRBCCC Hindu College, Chennai on March 1, 2017.
- Session on 'Multi-Therapeutic Approach for Children with Autism' on World Autism Day, April 10, 2017 at NIEPMD.
- Paper presented at the International Conference on 'RPWD Act 2016 India' on "Digital Accessibility and Social Inclusion: Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016" on April 12, 2017 at NIEPMD, Chennai.

### Publication

Educating Children of Migrant Families: Role of Parents, *Journal of Management and Science*, 1(1), 187-193, 2017 (ISSN: 22491260)

## Dr Harini Christopher

### Presentation in National and International Conferences

- Presented poster titled "Sustainable Livelihood at Ashadeep, Assam: Re-integration of Persons with Mental Illness", 'Innovations in Mental Health Care in India', SANGATH, Goa, December 2016. (co-authored)
- Presented poster titled "Outreach and Street Engagement of Persons with Mental Illness: Role of Local Youth", 'Innovations in Mental Health Care in India', SANGATH Goa, December 2016. Won prestigious scholarship "Lester Fernandez Studentship" to the conference (co-authored).

### Publication

- "Social Work Interventions with Family Caregivers of Persons with Schizophrenia in Reducing Burden and Emotional Distress", Proceedings of International Symposium on Evidence in Global Mental Health, Rajagiri College of Social Sciences and International Centre for Mental Health Social Research, Kerala. Edited by M.K. Joseph and Dr. Sunirose I.P., Bonfring, India, ISBN: 978-93-85477-05-8.

## Dr Lakshmi Sankaran

### Research Study

- Alcohol Use Disorder Study in Health, Rural MH Project, Kovalam (Tata Trust). Completed report in 2016 as Principal Investigator.

## Dr Lakshmi Ravikanth

### Presentation in Conferences

- Key note address in Goa Psychiatric Society, "Women and Mental Health -The Banyan -Challenges and Interventions", June 2016.
- Panelist in discussion on World Mental Health Day on 'Counselling as an Intervention', Dec. 2016, Chennai Doordarshan.
- Panelist in discussion on Mental Health and Law, All India Conference of Legal Luminaries, January 2017 Chennai.

### Paper Presented

- Perceived Influences of Vocational Training on Personal Well-being among Users of The Banyan, by Lakshmi Narasimhan, Lakshmi Ravikanth, Anuza and Varun Vishwanathan, 2016.
- Knowledge Attitude and Practice related to Mental Health in an Urban Area, Chennai, Tamilnadu

## Smrithi Vallath

### Research Projects

- Home Again: A housing with supportive services interventions for homeless persons with mental illness experiencing long term care needs
- Developing a culturally sensitive screening tool for PTSD in populations of homeless persons with severe mental illness;
- Alcohol Abuse in Families with Mental Illnesses in Rural Tamil Nadu, India (The Banyan, BALM)
- Learning and Schizotypy (Prof.Reed, Swansea University) Reliability of eyewitness testimony in Schizotypy (Dr.Saunders, University of Strathclyde)



# Student Activities

## Language Labs

### English Language Lab and Scientific Writing

The English Language Lab, conducted by Ms Aprameya Manthena was initiated to help students develop the ability to write reports effectively and also learn the style of scientific writing for research papers. This soon expanded into a discussion group, exploring different topics in literature, psychology and philosophy.

### Tamil Language Lab

Tamil, being the local language, students were keen to learn it, to be able to converse in Tamil during field visits, rural camps, in professional situations as well as everyday situations in Chennai.

The Tamil Language Lab conducted by Mr Anandan enabled students to converse

reasonably and enjoy the benefit of deeper integration in the local community.

## Rural Camp

The Rural Camp is a journey of discovery, of pushing oneself beyond one's comfort zone, of learning to live with limited resources and community living. It is a valuable experience in learning to adapt to different situations. Most importantly, it helps in understanding the ground realities of rural India.

This year, the Rural Camp was conducted in Nellikuppam village. Students actively interacted with the villagers, the local Panchayat, women's self-help groups, students in the village school and others and contributed towards spreading awareness about health, hygiene and possibilities for growth. It gave them an insight into the prevalent social structure, the challenges faced, the financial difficulties and a realistic understanding of the Development sector. Apart from engaging in clean-up activities,





Towards a Greener  
Tomorrow....  
Rural Camp 2016



## Seminars and Conferences

### International Conference on Justice and Rights of Homeless Persons with Psycho-Social Needs, Sept 1-3, 2016, Chennai

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The Conference was organised by The Banyan and BALM in collaboration with TISS, VU, NYU and with support from APPI, TATA Trusts and Grand Challenges Canada. More than 250 participants including students, academicians, researchers, policy makers, practitioners and social entrepreneurs took part in the proceedings. Representatives from Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, India, Rwanda, Belgium, Hungary, Netherlands, Italy, and the United States participated.

Some of the themes discussed include:

- Issues of accessibility to mental health services in different countries
- Challenges in upscaling services
- Innovative training, knowledge sharing practices and value based learning
- Focus on Article 19 of the UNCPRD, the importance of living independently and being included in the community
- Re-orienting culture of care and swiftness of responses to emergency situations

The **India Homelessness Resource Network** was launched on August 31<sup>st</sup> and the **Global South Initiative** was launched at the end of the conference. The GSI aims to create a platform for a diverse group of stakeholders to capture innovations, contextually replicate approaches to care, build human resource capabilities and develop advocacy platforms to effect change. At the pre-conference, the Destitution Bill was presented and positives and negatives of the bill and its critical role in the rehabilitation of homeless persons and persons engaged in begging were discussed.

### Participation in International Conference on Recent Trends in Special Education for Young Persons with Special Needs, Feb 10-11, 2017, Munnar, Kerala,

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The Conference proceedings deliberated on addressing loopholes through teaching sign languages, enhancing the scope of career opportunities, incorporating more sign boards in Braille, becoming technologically competent, etc.

The effectiveness of interventions such as stories and puppetry, ensuring a sense of well-being, through physical hygiene and introducing inclusive spaces were discussed. Also, statistical figures suggesting policy changes to enable the Government to go beyond concessions were discussed. The conference was organized by Srishti and DARE, and was supported by Tata Global Beverages.

### Participation in Workshop on Unpacking Participatory Democracy: From Theory to Practice and Practice to Theory, February 27-March 2, 2017, Kerala.

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This workshop was organized by Dr Aruna Roy, Founder, MKSS, It brought together practitioners and theorists of 'participatory democracy' to reflect on the contemporary crisis in democratic practice. It looked at the powerful concepts of transparency and accountability in defining participation of people in democracy. The workshop was conducted by experts from across the world.

### Participation in International Conference on Innovations in Mental Health Care by Sangath, April 7-8, 2017, Goa.

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The students from Social Work won the Lester Fernandez Studentship Award to the conference and presented posters.





International Conference  
on Justice and Rights of  
Homeless Persons with  
Psycho-Social Needs

## Special Lectures and Workshops

### Organ Donation

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A Session on 'Organ Donation' by the Mohan Foundation, Chennai, highlighted the critical importance of 'time' and the psychosocial issues that influence the organ donation process. Students learnt about the huge responsibility and the gravity of the situation and realized what a big part the counsellor's skills play in mediating between the donor, the family and the medical system.

### Psycho – Oncology

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An expert from Adyar Cancer Institute talked about the etiology and the biological manifestation of Cancer. He explained about its psychological impact on the patient and the family, the intensity of personal distress caused by a poor understanding of the disease and the treatment process.

### School Counselling

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Transcend, an NGO working with schools to provide mental wellness services to students and attempts to reduce the stigma related to mental health, discussed about specific types of counselling for children facing anxiety, impulse control, phobias and Obsessive Compulsive Disorders. Also, the importance of Counselling for parents was emphasized.

### Art Based Therapy

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Reshma Malick, conducted an interactive session with students on Art therapy, a form

of expressive therapy, used in tandem with regular counselling practices especially for those who are not very articulate.

### Hypnotherapy and Indianizing Psychology

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The two day workshop conducted by Dr. Jimi Gopinath gave a new understanding of hypnosis. It discussed the difference between hypnotherapy and other traditional therapies. The significance of a cultural context and the need for Indian medical models as against Western models were discussed.

### Business Plans and Funding

---

A workshop was conducted by Mr. Vinod Muthukrishnan, an entrepreneur with an interesting background. He served in the merchant navy and a strategist in Mobile First Financial Technology startup. Through an interactive session he guided the students with entrepreneurial ideas to conceptualize business ideas, plan finances and the importance of forming a core team.

### Motivational Interviewing

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Ms Aditi Ganekar, Counsellor and Trainer at TTK Hospital conducted a workshop on motivational interviewing for clients of substance abuse disorder, HIV/AIDS etc to motivate clients for behaviour modification and consistent self-care.

### Success Principles

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Ms. Swetha Reddy spoke about what it takes to be successful in a highly competitive world.

## Narrative therapy

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Ms P Bhuvaneshwari conducted a one-day workshop on the Principles of Narrative Therapy. The workshop discussed how to use narrative therapy with children and adults and its scope in a therapeutic scenario.

## Résumé writing

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Ms Gangapriya from Ford India conducted an interesting session on writing a concise and attractive résumé, a valuable skill for students graduating and looking for career opportunities.

## SOLVE - Stress, Tobacco, Alcohol and Drugs, HIV and Violence

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A 3-day workshop conducted by Dr. Lakshmi Sankaran, took students through different types of addiction problems – alcohol, drugs, tobacco, gambling, and cyber addiction; violence issues - both physical and psychological, and problems associated with HIV/AIDS.

## Democratising Research: Participatory Action Research

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Dr Vinalini Mathrani talked about the fundamentals of qualitative research, including how it differs from quantitative research. She gave students a field based practical orientation to qualitative research and PAR.

## Special lecture on Social Ecology of Mental Disorders: Experiences from the Nilgiris

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Mr Andrew Willford of Cornell University presented the research work that was carried out in Nilgiris district with the 'Alukurumbas' tribal sect. Mr Willford is part of the team that is developing research projects with The Banyan and BALM.

## Conversations on Kashmir

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Mr. Suja'at Bukhari, senior Kashmiri journalist and the Editor-in-Chief at Kashmir Media House, a member of the Advisory Board of Sahitya Akademi, and the Bureau Chief of *The Hindu* for fifteen years, gave an eye opening talk on the Kashmir issue.

## 'Embracing Greys' - A Seminar on Psycho-Social Care for the Elderly

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Dr. Shridhar, Mrs. Sabita Radhakrishna, Mr. Ravi Samuel and Mr. Sanjay discussed the newly developing area of Geriatric Counselling, the issues faced by the elderly and the need for them to be treated with dignity and care. The importance of social relationships, family interactions and financial independence was brought to light.

*'Old is Gold' is the only store in India, which caters exclusively to the needs of the elderly with a range of products. It sells safety mats, adaptive clothing, grooming aids, hearing aids, and so on for the use of seniors*





Student-volunteers at the Workshop on Participatory Democracy, with Dr. Aruna Roy, Founder MKSS



Workshop on Democratizing Research: Participatory Action Research, by Dr Vinalini Mathrani

## Celebrations at BALM

### ONAM and Sing Along

Onam was celebrated with a Sing Along that brought together residents, the students, and faculty. It was followed by a sale of handmade jewellery by the tribal people in Mahabalipuram.

### Republic Day

BALM staff and student and CGH residents joined the celebrations at NIEPMD. After formal speeches by the Director of NIEPMD and guests, BALM students organized a 30 minute performance on eve teasing that highlighted women empowerment.

### Madras Day Celebrations

An Open Photo Shoot about Chennai's uniqueness was conducted for the public and students. The winners were awarded by Mr

Mani Ratnam, a famous film Director in Chennai.

### Pongal and Lohri

The students, faculty and residents cooked the special festival dish 'Pongal' together at the CGH to celebrate the harvest festival known as Pongal in South India and Lohri in the North. The grand 'kolams' done by the residents and everyone in gorgeous ethnic clothes made the festival memorable for all.

### Annual Day

Annual Day was celebrated on March 4th, 2017 at BALM campus. Mr. P Jayendra, Chairman and Co-Founder, Real Image Technologies was the Chief Guest. He gave an inspiring talk on being passionate about one's choices, and how it can guide one to great achievements. Students and residents gave a scintillating performance, showcasing their varied talents.

Other events organized were Sports Day, Independence Day and Christmas Cantata.

At NIEPMD











## Statement of Accounts

BANYAN ACADEMY OF LEADERSHIP IN MENTAL HEALTH TRUST 6th Main Road Mogappair ERI Scheme Mogappair West, Chennai - 600 037					
RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2017					
RECEIPTS	Amount in Rs.		PAYMENTS	Amount in Rs.	
Opening Balance			NRTT Grant Expenses - Annexure - 6		1059175.00
Cash - in - Hand	7854.00		Education - Annexure - 7		8640248.00
Axis Bank Ltd - 13469436	863744.89		APPI Grant Expenses - Annexure - 8		2256658.00
ICICI Bank - 032901000112	8948.00		Mental Health Social Action Lab		81074.00
ICICI Bank - 602701224002 - NRTT	1051195.79		Professional & Consultancy		218475.00
Axis Bank - 35603862	3470.60		Salaries & Wages		548790.00
Kotak Bank - 8411432649	24117.52		Stakeholder Relations		57340.00
Kotak Bank Ltd- 8411540818 -FCRA	999783.00		Seminar Expenses		26922.00
Kotak Bank Ltd-A/c. No-8411622477	818727.58		Travel & Transportation		108328.00
Fixed Deposits	62416.00	3860267.48	Communication		312083.00
			Bank Charges		1339.69
			General Expenses		24545.00
Donations - General		18363316.00	Photography Contest		20000.00
Consultancy charges		432000.00	Printing & Stationery		27703.00
Interest Income		286284.00	Staff Bonus		7000.00
Bus Fees		100960.00	Staff Welfare Exp		5821.00
Course Fees		1948650.00	Studies on the Banyan's Project		48830.00
Donation - FCRA		5187482.25	Caregiver Study - Research		10177.00
Internship		44500.00	Website Designing Charges		123379.00
Miscellaneous Income		40207.00	Assets Maintenance		234422.00
			Loan refund		603915.00
			Purchase of Fixed Assets		570796.00
			Advances given		31554.00
			Closing Balance		
			Cash - in - Hand	4349.00	
			Axis Bank Ltd - 13469436	957370.97	
			ICICI Bank - 032901000112	8948.00	
			ICICI Bank - 602701224002 - NRTT	660236.79	
			Axis Bank - 35603862	3611.60	
			Kotak Bank - 8411432649	11560200.30	
			Kotak Bank Ltd - 8411540818 -FCRA	1136528.54	
			Kotak Bank Ltd - A/c. No - 8411622477	909717.84	
				15250963.04	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>30265646.73</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>30265646.73</b>

For BALM TRUST

Balraj Vasudevan  
Honorary Treasurer

Place : Chennai  
Date : September 30 , 2017



For G. Joseph & Co.,  
Chartered Accountants  
[FRN 0013525]

G. Joseph  
Partner  
(Membership No : 027151)

# Thanking our Donors

BALM owes its existence to the broad inclusive vision and generosity of many individuals and organisations. It recognizes and appreciates that Mental Health is often shrouded under social stigma and is not easily comprehended and that it takes a big leap of trust and compassion to support our activities.

The staff, faculty and students at BALM remain indebted to all the Donors and would like to share their good wishes and gratitude with them.

Corporate Supporters	 
	 
Institutional Trusts	 
Individual Donors	Mr. Jagdev Singh Gill      Mr. Neeraj Gambhir Mr. Shivan Ramachandran      Mr. Ranvir Shah Mr. Siva Kumar and Prabha Associates



**BALM**



## **The Banyan Academy of Leadership in Mental Health (BALM)**

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044 2747 2127/28, 9940592691

<http://www.balm.in/>