



Picnic at Baga Retreat house Cause You Matter Program Judges of Short Film Contest

Our gratefulness will remain to all those who have supported our work, thereby becoming advocates of mental health promotion. We look forward to a continued partnership in 2015.

Thank you for being friends of COOJ.



COOJ TEAM:

Trustees Sitting (left to right) : Romaldo Fernandes , Lakshmi Unny , Dr. Peter Castelino, Theresa Trinidad (Founder), Estevao D'Costa. Standing (left to right) : Liza Barboza, Aldela Fernandes, Martha Fernandes, Vincent D'sa, Donna Noronha, Lata Desai, Cheryl Monis, Neetha Rodrigues, Rashmi Palav.

Listening Helpline: 0832 2252525

MONDAY-FRIDAY : 3PM-7PM



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YOU MATTER BY COOJ COOJ MENTAL HEALTH FOUNDATION

- Dr Peter Castelino
Managing Trustee



Recognising the need to keep the elderly living in senior citizen homes engaged into regular meaningful activity in order to reduce mental health problems, we have commenced the COOJ ElderCare program at the Old Age Home in Aldona as a pilot project. Through this we hope to create an inclusive model which could be replicated at other homes keeping community involvement at the core.

Keeping up with our efforts to bring mental health care services to the community, the monthly psychiatric clinic in Vasco continues to function through its 8th year of existence.

With our goal of training, students pursuing courses in Psychology, Economics, HRD, Management, Media have been exposed to our programs through internship placements and field work.

A lot has been accomplished in the year of 2014 and it has been possible only through the efforts of the entire COOJ team supported by our friends, partners, benefactors and well wishers. We continuously seek support of the community in aiding our work. This year 45% of our funding came through donations highlighting its importance. We are ever grateful to all who have supported our work in 2014. We remember our dear sponsor Mr Lirio Lopez from Delhi who passed away this year as well as the parents of Mrs Maite Dias and Jacinta Costa Bir. We pray for them and their families.

Hope you all have a wonderful Christmas and a fantastic year ahead!!

Dear Friends,
Reflecting back on 2014 allows me to take a walk down memory lane to yet another fruitful year of working towards our mission of promoting mental health in Goa.

This year saw us shifting our centre located in Mapuca to the premises owned by the Society of Community Counselling Service at Bastora. Located on a hillock and very much spacious turned out to be ideal for our work. We are ever grateful to Asha Dsouza, President of the, SCCS who without the blink of an eyelid opened up the place for our use. Our centres "Sahodaya" located in Bastora and Vasco that work towards the psychosocial rehabilitation of persons disabled due to mental illness saw many more taking advantage of the tailor made programs of personal interventions in a group setting. This year too our clients at the rehabilitation centre had disabilities due to schizophrenia, mood disorders, OCD's, mental retardation, autism and addictions. We also saw a number of elderly with memory problems coming in for cognitive retraining.

With music therapist Aarti Sinha, we introduced regular music therapy as well as restarted weekly dance therapy thanks to our very dynamic volunteer Vandana Fernandes. Joshua Noronha, a horticulturist gave our clients an experience of growing their very own vegetables in pots.

Cooking continues periodically and with Amita Mendonca's help, our clients were thrilled with baking their very own muffins. Singing continues as a regular group activity and our clients were delighted to hold a mike in their hands and sing karaoke thanks to Sydney Cardozo.

Our annual picnic took the clients of the Mapuca Centre to the Baga Retreat House where Avina Madeira ensured that everyone were on their toes with zumba and games. Clients of our Vasco centre relaxed on the beach at HOLLANT.

This year Sahodaya, Mapuca celebrated 10 years of its existence by organising for the second year inter-rehabilitation competitions between COOJ and Chaitanya, Goa coinciding with World Schizophrenia Day 2014. It was an entertaining day where in we could see soaring competitive spirits and hidden talents expressed but yet again Chaitanya took the trophy home leaving us ever more determined. A sports day was held at our Vasco centre. Friends club (a club for persons disabled due to psychological illness) meetings continue monthly in both our centres where planning and decisions are taken on activities to be conducted by the members. Some of these have been outings to the Japanese Gardens in Sada, presentations on various health topics, cleanliness drives etc. Our carers met periodically to share stories, experiences and learn from one another. Carer's Sunrise 2014, was an event organised by our clients at Vasco to showcase their talents to their families as well as to help them develop skills in event planning. A Summer camp at Vasco and a Fun week at Mapuca witnessed our clients learn, compete and most important enjoy themselves.

COOJ participated in the World Disability Day organised by the Department of Social Welfare, Goa wherein our clients through their dance performance were able to break through the misconceptions regarding the ability of those disabled with mental illness.



The COOJ Suicide Prevention Program conducted several events throughout the year to educate the general public that suicide is a preventable condition. The "Cause You Matter" evening of dance, music, talks, exhibitions, workshops held at the Garcia de Orta in Panjim on the 10th of February saw the community come together to promote this cause.

In August, we organised a month long "Go Yellow" campaign through which several organisations and institutions like schools, colleges, religious groups, media, artists etc joined hands with us to advance the cause of suicide prevention in our state. The events included rallies, walks, gatekeeper workshops, discussions, media interviews, short film competition, etc. The campaign culminated with us observing World Suicide Prevention Day on 10th September at Don Bosco, Panjim.

The COOJ Suicide Prevention Listening Helpline, number 2252525 completed one year on the 4th of September with us receiving around 150 calls. Two workshops on Mindfulness Based Active Listening were conducted to train more volunteers in taking calls. In order to sustain the service as well as increase the working hours from the present Monday to Friday, 3-7pm, we are always in search of new volunteers especially those who are good listeners

