

Self-Development Centre
Annual Report-2024-25

Faculty In- charge: Mrs. Kavita Jajoo

The Self-Development Centre functioning at R.A. Podar College of Commerce & Economics (Autonomous) has now completed 24 years successfully and continues to offer unique and impactful contributions throughout the academic year of 2024-25. The Self Development Centre started functioning from June 2024 and bi-weekly sessions in a hybrid format were conducted. The counseling cell facility functions bi-weekly on Thursdays (in-person) and Tuesdays (online) from 10.30 am to 2.30 pm.

The **Self Development Centre** was involved in conducting multiple programmes and activities along with the bi-weekly student support sessions through the year. Some of the highlights of the various programmes conducted are as follows:

- **‘MANACHYA GAVALA JAUYA’**: Under the guidance of Mrs. Kavita Jajoo & Ms. Sudarshana Saikia; an in-person workshop programme was conducted on the 29th February 2024 by the Self-Development Centre under the aegis of RUSA 2.0 in collaboration with Disha Counseling Center. The workshop was titled as **‘Manachya Gavala Jauya’**. The target group of the workshop were the school students of the nearby government-aided schools. Some of the core contents covered in the workshop were:
 - Self-awareness, ‘development of ‘self’ and ‘self-concept’
 - Understanding and building self-insight, self-confidence and self-esteem as boosters to healthy Personality development
 - Effective Concentration enhancement skills
 - Healthy self-expression and effective Communication Skills
 - Importance of Social relationships and integration healthy social skills
 - Handling peers, peer pressure and age-relevant habits
 - Identifying & Developing Life skills
 - Handling Gadgets, practicing gadget and screen-time hygiene in a changing world.

The workshop was well-received by the participating school students. They exhibited exemplary involvement and motivation to pursue activities presented. Child-friendly and age safe practices of interventions were utilized to convey the diverse themes through the workshop viz. Art, Metaphor & Play based interventions, Using Movement, Expression, Dance, Drama & Narrative practices, Role-playing methods, brainstorming and written activities.

- **STUDENT AWARENESS & INDUCTION PROGRAMME**: Under the guidance of Mrs. Kavita Jajoo & Ms. Sudarshana Saikia; an in-person programme was conducted by the Self-Development Centre under the aegis of RUSA 2.0 in collaboration with Disha Counseling Center. The topic of the programme was “Levelling Up – A workshop designed to equip

students to make the transition from Campus to Corporate background 23rd & 24th of August 2024 and a total of 900 students.

The team of counselors conducted an in-person workshop for all students of the TY B .COM/ Self-Financed Professional Courses. The total number of students was 900; hence 4 batches were conducted across the divisions on the 23rd & 24th of August 2024 (8.00 am – 10.00 am; 11.00 am – 1.00 pm consecutively) from morning till afternoon on both the days. The programme was conducted with support of the entire committee of student volunteers and teachers. The aim of the workshop was to generate awareness about:

- Understanding and exploration of ‘the self’, robust self-esteem and its importance while handling the various emotional, psychological, social, physiological and environmental concerns that are faced by today’s youth in these challenging yet stimulating years of young adulthood.
 - Raising understanding the importance of effective non-verbal and verbal communication skills, essentials of self-awareness and handling social relationships while navigating the world of work.
 - Handling Relationships in the time of transitions and preservation of ‘self-identity within friendships and interpersonal connect
 - Helping students explore and integrate importance of intrapersonal and interpersonal values, identifying their personal ‘Ikigai’ and managing self across challenging settings
 - Understanding the mind-body connect and awareness of ‘self-concept’, self-care, understanding the link between ‘thoughts-emotions-behaviours’, developing Emotional Intelligence strategies and effective self-help toolkits to manage stressors.
 - Team building skills, and supportive social skills, and interpersonal efficacy, in a cross-cultural and multi-dimensional changing times in the world of work.
 - Lastly, understanding today’s transitioning times and integrating self-compassion into their mind-frames to create an all-round personality development and growth. Similarly, the students were informed and discussion was generated about the availability, accessibility and the reach of the Self-Development Centre. They were further informed that the services can be availed at no extra costs and utilizing them will help them build a stable base towards self-empowerment and all-round development in these crucial years. Informative Visuals supported with video analysis and discussion, interactive activities, open ended questions, group discussions, self-reflection exercises and brainstorming discussions were used to help learn the energy and wholesome impact of the concepts introduced. A compiled exercise workbook was also provided to the students to practice their learnings, write down reflections and as a takeaway for them to reconnect back whenever necessary in the long run. This was aimed to ensure student participation, connectivity and internalization of the themes with the workshop conducted.
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- **EMPLOYEE ENRICHMENT WORKSHOP FOR NON-TEACHING STAFF** :The burning need of the hour is that secretarial and non-teaching staff members to stay abreast with latest evolution in work and educational settings and yet preserve the genuineness, honesty and hard work towards their work roles which can sometimes be sprinkled with monotony and life’s other challenges. The real readiness also begins truly when staff members and aspirants are open towards Flexi-Thinking & Continued Learning. Thus, under the aegis of RUSA 2.0

in collaboration with Disha Counseling Center a unique workshop designed to reach out to the Non-Teaching staff and support members of educational institutions across the Mumbai metropolitan city was conducted on the 5th of December 2024.

The title of the workshop was '**Saksham Paaul Padte Pudhe - Ek Kadam Aage - Tu Nahi To Kuch Nahi aimed at addressing the following outcomes of the programme:**

- The importance of overall Mental, Emotional, Psychological and Social Well Being in a multifaceted world.
- Sensitizing participants towards the importance of Handling Personal, Professional as well as Interpersonal skills and boundaries while navigating in a highly modernized and competitive work environment.
- Understanding the pillars of their unique 'SELF-IMAGE': Mental, Emotional & Social Grooming to be in the forefront of their sustained career management & satisfaction.
- Identifying stressors, challenges and other life concerns which may sometime impact work efficacy
- Effective Self-Care practices, Communication Efficacy and ensuring Healthy Emotional Skills.
- Identifying Motivators and Strengtheners of 'Healthy Mind-Body Connect' to enhance Coping Skills & Strategies
- To address the participants and help them understand the importance of overall well-being and focusing on self-development while handling today's work environments.

The workshop delivery and functioning was designed with a special and divergent blend of:

- Art, Metaphor & Play based interventions
- Using Movement, Expression, Dance, Drama & Narrative practices
- Story telling & Narrative methodologies
- Body Based Interventions
- Written activities & Skill building games
- Individual and Group exercises
- Reflection Exercises, Case study sessions
- Video Analysis & Role playing

Under the guidance of Mrs. Kavita Jajoo & Ms. Sudarshana Saikia; an in-person programme was conducted by the Self-Development Centre. The unique workshop aimed at helping teachers to nurture and foster their own unique self, develop inner vision and harness self-care. Similarly, creating the beauty inside will empower them to find their sources of synergy, enhance inner journey towards what authentically motivates them and be empowered leaders in their work spaces. The target group was teachers across the country of India from Junior & Degree college and the event was organised as a day-long engagement programme. The core concept of teachers being the pillars of self-journey who shoulder the dual responsibility towards themselves as well

as the countless number of students who they connect to. The multiple themes explored and introduced during the workshop were as follows:

- i. To begin and enhance the inner journey of self-awareness, self-care and connecting to our inner space
- ii. To help build synchronicity between inner motivators and develop an effective, empowered and fulfilling presence in the work space
- iii. Enhancing positive and effective team relationships and enabling happier work environments

The workshop was well received and the group shared that the diverse aspects helped them to build understanding of both the verticals of Self-Care & Group Engagement in their personal and professional space.

- **ORIENTATION SESSIONS & AWARENESS BUILDING TALKS** were consistently provided to students of First Year – Junior college in December 2024 & January 2025 to recreate awareness and the divergent access spaces of the Self Development Cell. The purpose was to remind students regarding the availability to self-help space available especially required during the examination season.

- **Individual Career Sessions:**

The Self-Development Centre conducted a total of 60-65 career counselling sessions between the academic year June 2024 till January 2025. Individual career counselling sessions were held for 22 students from all streams in Junior and Degree College. Due to the after-math of Covid-19 certain career choices made by students evidently exhibited dissatisfaction and so many students came for sessions who had dropped out of academic courses. Mainly student's queries also revolved around reselecting certain vocational choices and creating newer career pathways. The trend suggested more orientation and re-thinking of earlier career plans and hence guidance and counseling was conducted accordingly. Due to the on-going industry and student motivational changes; significant hands-on support was given and students were consistently encouraged to conduct a thorough market research and observational approach while planning future prospects.

Various queries from students were answered about campus-corporate diversity vision, work-role specifications, courses, their eligibility, entrance exams and top-ranking institutes. Information was also given about general options after HSC, B.Com, and Graduation. Information was also given regarding requirements for Postgraduate options after completing Commerce stream and other related careers, professional courses (BAF, BFM, BBI & so on), Chartered Accountancy, Liberal Arts, Psychology & Mental Health professions, Teaching, Social Work and Welfare, Finance related fields, Computer related fields, Civil Services, Hotel Management, Hospitality & Tourism, Designing related courses, Business, Law, Economics, Foreign Languages, Defence Services, Mass Media, Banking, Life Coaching, and so on.

- **Individual Therapy Sessions:**

A total of approximately 450-480 counselling sessions were conducted within Individual Personal counselling via online as well as offline modes for students from all streams in Junior and Degree College.

The counsellor addressed, identified and handled various issues this year as well. The concerns addressed ranged from mental-emotional and psychological in nature. To name a few, the addressed concerns ranged from handling personal emotional concerns, career planning, peer relationship conflicts and influences, handling anxiety and panic attack support, relationship difficulties and pre-marital exploration, rehabilitation counseling for students defaulters of copying and cheating concerns during exams, family conflicts and difficulties of responsibilities faced in young adulthood, health – related behavioural counseling, exam anxiety during assessments and so on. Many other issues were reported for help in sessions like handling bullying via social media, suicidal ideations, anxiety and stress-related concerns, psychosomatic issues, personality development, study planning difficulties, exam stress, time management difficulties and study related issues, need for exploration of sexual identities, fears and phobias, peer pressure and so on. Family-centered and support interventions were also provided for students and parents in dysfunctional family systems. Some salient points are as follows:

Brief summary of Counseling & Guidance sessions conducted:

- **Duration of session:** minimum 30 mins upto maximum of 1.15 minutes per student
- **Counseling Themes: Psychotherapeutic interventions & Counseling Psychotherapy** as well as Career Guidance was conducted depending on the reported concerns.
- **No. of sessions:** 450- 480 - Total no. of sessions were conducted from June 2024 to January 2025 by Ms. Sukhada Kelkar at the Self-Development Center
 - The students connected with the psychologist via multiple mediums viz. walk in inquiries, via the college information portal, references by faculty and parents, and so on. A dedicated email id has also been generated for students to contact the Self—Development Center regarding information and appointments. Accordingly, the students were allocated a session slot on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 10.30 am to 2.30 pm.
 - Individual Counseling and one-on-one psychotherapy were provided within sessions.
 - In some sensitive and cases needing attention - Telephonic mentoring and supervision was also provided viz. in cases of possible suicidal ideations and accordingly appropriate referrals were made.
 - Parental Reach sessions, Family Therapy & Joint Therapy sessions were engaged between students and their family members depending on the nature of the concerns identified.
 - Some group sessions were also conducted to address certain reported incidents of Social Media bullying amongst students.

- One on one parent engagement and counseling sessions were conducted with 15-16 families as they were motivated to address the underlying concerns impacting their parenting styles after the series of workshops conducted.
- 2 brief intervention sessions were also conducted for some members of the non-teaching staff for stress management and managing work-life balance.

The psychotherapy and guidance sessions were directed at handling various issues like detailed below:

- Grief Counseling for students & family members affected by loss of academic grades, academic failures, entrance-exam post-stress, relationship break-ups, terminal illness impact and related losses.
- Handling student's mental - emotional concerns & lifestyle rehabilitation in the ever-evolving academic and vocational front.
- Identifying and dealing with self-harm episodes and creating support network for the same. Raising family support systems to ensure student safety and long-term support.
- Handling health related anxiety, panic attacks, and depressive symptoms presentations due to the stressors of the post-pandemic times.
- Suicidal intervention & crisis management sessions for students reported by teachers and sometimes parents.
- Self-confidence, Self-Worth issues, Communication Skills training, Goal-Setting, Time Management.
- Difficulties in concentration and improving attention span, and effective study management.
- Study skills, memory enhancement strategies, developing long-term and short-term goals
- Handling Exam anxiety, study skills and career decision making.
- Realistic goal setting, motivational difficulties.
- Relationship management, social media pressure & handling peer pressure.
- Handling Social Media pressure and bullying.
- Addressing and making appropriate referrals/ interventions for cases of addictions
- Handling difficulties faced by students related to adapting to future career planning, handling current responsibilities, and managing family/ peer expectations.
- Effective Self - Regulation skills and balanced lifestyle management.
- Supportive therapy for students with obsessive-compulsive disorders, body dysmorphic disorder, eating disorders, gadget addiction, gender-identity confusion and post-traumatic stress induced anxiety and behavioural concerns.
- Handling parental, peer, personal belief systems and expectations to help manage self in context of social media.
- Career uncertainty causing emotional and familial distress.
- Handling family conflicts and dealing with parental pressure/ responsibilities.
- Career Awareness, Career Exploration & Career Information exploration were conducted during some of the students' counselling sessions. Parents were also involved in some cases for a deeper intervention and long-term impact.
- Crisis Intervention & Management sessions were conducted and appropriate referrals were given for a suicidal prevention as well as deeper psychiatric concerns observed in student cases.

Some of the intervention strategies used within counseling sessions were as follows:

- The students were taught effective study skills techniques, emotions-focussed approach, venting exercises, concentration techniques, time management skills, motivation, goal setting, acceptance of self-relaxation techniques and strategies to handle emotional stress.

- Behavioural Modification therapy, Reference-Point therapy exercises, Inner Child interventions, REBT, CBT, cognitive therapy, motivational counselling, vocational guidance and coaching, Family therapy, Grief Counseling, Crisis Intervention, Palliative Therapy Approach of counselling, Narrative-based therapeutic approaches, Music-based relaxation and NLP exercises in combination and Art-Based Modality were some of the approaches used to help clients to address the issues.

- **Future Plans & Programmes:** Training programme for students to develop Mental Health awareness at a Community level will be aimed to be conducted in the Mental health Awareness week in October 2025.

Report Compiled by:

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