

Special Lecture : Well Being is a Skill

Maitreyi College
University of Delhi

The Centre for Research, (CFR), with Aashayein, an initiative of the Department of Sociology, Maitreyi College, in collaboration with Manodarpan, Ministry of Education, Govt. of India organized a special lecture on 7th December, 2022. The theme of the lecture was “Well Being is a Skill” and was conducted in hybrid mode. The event had registrations across India, comprising attendees from different universities and colleges as well. There was a veritable number of participants on the day of the lecture with 20 members of faculty in attendance, 181 members attending physically and 45 attending virtually.

The lecture was delivered by Professor Richard Davidson, William James and Vilas Professor of Psychology and Psychiatry at the University of Wisconsin–Madison and the Founder and Director of the Center for Healthy Minds. He is well-known for his ground-breaking work studying emotion and the brain. Time Magazine named Davidson as one of “The 100 Most Influential People in the World” in 2006.

The session was chaired by Professor Vivek Suneja, Dean, Faculty of Management Studies, University of Delhi. Prof. Suneja currently serves as a Professor of Strategy in FMS, University of Delhi.

The session began with lighting of lamp and Shanti Mantra "*Asotama Sadgamaya*" being sung by the students of the Department of Sociology. Following this, a welcome address was given by Dr. Brototi Roy, Department of Zoology wherein she laid out the objectives of the session. Prof. Haritma Chopra, Principal, Maitreyi College formally addressed the gathering and expressed her gratitude to Prof. Davidson and Prof. Suneja. She elaborated on the significance of the lecture and discussed the relevance of the topic in our everyday lives.

Prof. Davidson started the lecture with an insight on well-being as a skill which could be harnessed, by substantiating his points through contemplative neuroscience built at the confluence of neuroplasticity and epigenetics. He unpacked the notion of nurturing kindness to counter a mental health pandemic similar to the viral pandemic that we had lived through. Furthermore, he emphasized the importance of four pillars of well-being, which would collectively lead to signs of resilience; these were awareness, connection, insight and purpose.

Prof Davidson talked of using brain imaging technology to measure the function of the brain. He went on to elaborate a study conducted in 151 nations which made a discourse on well-

being impacting biological health in consequential ways. Furthermore, he touched up on research which concluded that human beings were born with the natural instinct of kindness. He also mentioned William James' book "Principles of Psychology" (1890) which elaborated on the strategy of educating attention and discussed his experiment which concluded that long term meditation practitioners are resilient towards physical pain. The functioning of the brain is amenable to changes through mindfulness meditation and he accentuated nourishing minds through simple practices paired with pedestrian activities to bring wholesome changes in the world.

He then shed light on "The Healthy Minds Program" developed by him and his team which in the form of a mobile app had proved to be scaling well-being through randomized trials. He concluded his lecture by quoting from His Holiness, the Dalai Lama's book "The Art Of Living" :

"The systematic training of the mind - the cultivation of happiness, the genuine inner transformation by deliberately selecting and focusing on positive mental states and challenging negative mental states - is possible because of the very structure and function of the brain . . . but the wiring of our brains is not static, not irrevocably fixed. Our brains are also adaptable."

The session was followed by an engaging interactive session. Several questions were addressed from varied themes viz. perceptions towards good and bad attributes, meditation, gamma-oscillations, management of anger, to positive neuroplasticity influencing spirituality.



Prof. Vivek Suneja summed up and moderated the session with a host of wonderful insights. He reiterated Prof. Davidson's points on resilience - awareness, connection, insight and purpose - the four pillars of well-being. He also made a significant mention of inner truth, culture as a collective myth and why co-operation should be opted by men being a social animal. He stressed on the importance of the process of socialization; which had not done justice on its part.

The award for best question was awarded to Anusha Maurya, a student from the English Department.

The special lecture concluded with a formal vote of thanks by Dr. Meena Yadav, Department of Zoology.

A feedback session was held after the event and approximately 150 online responses were received.

Poster




CENTRE FOR RESEARCH
MAITREYI COLLEGE (ACCREDITED A++ BY NAAC)
UNIVERSITY OF DELHI

Celebrating Centenary Year of the University of Delhi

ORGANIZES


SPECIAL LECTURE

WELL BEING IS A SKILL



DATE: DECEMBER 7TH, 2022
TIME: 10 AM
HYBRID MODE
Offline Venue: Maitreyi College

FREE REGISTRATION
REGISTRATION LINK:
<https://forms.gle/WgRLpFqVeUgZtjmh7>
Link for online mode will be shared with registered participants



PROF. RICHARD DAVIDSON
William James and Vilas Research Professor
of Psychology and Psychiatry
Founder & Director of the Center for Healthy Minds
University of Wisconsin-Madison. USA
Founder and Chief Visionary for Healthy Minds Innovations, Inc.

SESSION CHAIR: PROF. VIVEK SUNEJA
Dean and Head
Faculty of Management studies, University of Delhi, Delhi

HAPPINESS PARTNER:
AASHAYEIN : PROJECT HAPPINESS
, AN INITIATIVE OF DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY, MAITREYI COLLEGE
IN COLLABORATION WITH
MANODARPAN, AN INITIATIVE OF MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, GOVT. OF INDIA
certificates will be provided to all registered participants

Geo-Tagged photos

