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VOICES

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INDEX

01 Lookback

- Self Care Initiative
- Installation of Sanitary Pad Dispensers
- Launch of Women's Newsletter
- Breast Cancer Awareness Month
- Breast Cancer Awareness Session

02 Get Inspired

03 Get Informed

- Give Your Chest A Rest -Everything you need to know about Breast Cancer
- 16 ways you can stand against rape culture- UN Women

LOOKBACK



Self Care Initiative

As a countdown to the International Self-care day, we started the 10 Day Self Care Challenge where we invited everyone to schedule a daily date to do something nice for themselves. This could be as simple as mindfully drinking a glass of water, or as complex as an elaborate spa day.

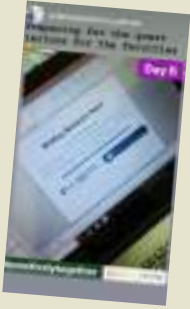


THE 10-DAY SELF CARE CHALLENGE

Use hashtag #positivelytogether and tag us
@voices_mpstme

The goal was to connect with and support themselves. Because we strongly believe that even if life is hectic, everyone deserve to take a little time out for themselves. Various students and teachers took part in this challenge on social media using the hashtag #positivelytogether and tagged us @voices_mpstme .

Self Care Initiative



Installation of Sanitary Pad Dispensers

With the help and support of the Associate deans, we managed to get sanitary pad dispensers installed in the 2nd, 4th and 6th Floor Girls washroom.

Launch of Women's Newsletter

We launched the Womens Newsletter of MPSTME- Voices at Freshers 2019. We made the first volume available in the library and sent e- copies to all students and faculty members of Mukesh Patel School of Technology Management and engineering.



Breast Cancer Awareness Month

According to Union Health Ministry, Breast Cancer ranks as the number one cancer among Indian females with rate as high as 25.8 per 100,000 women and mortality of 12.7 per 100,000 women.

October being the Breast Cancer awareness month, Voices MPSTME pushed everyone to pick up one Ribbon from the registration desk and wear it throughout the month to show their support and spread awareness. Throughout the month Students and Faculty members wore the ribbon and put them up on their belongings to show their support.



Breast Cancer Awareness Session

October being the Breast Cancer awareness month, Voices organized an Awareness session in collaboration with the Pink Initiative to throw light on the Pre- detection and prevention of Breast Cancer and also to further the cause of spreading awareness. The session was attended by interested students and Faculty Members. Everyone who attended the took back something they can implement in their daily lives. We strongly believe that the ripple effect of small things is extraordinary.



GET INSPIRED



“Save one life and you are a hero, save hundreds and you’re an angel”

Bindu Vinodhan who was the Global Head - Learning and development, at the WNS Global Services and who also has over two decades of experience at similar posts at Multinational Companies like Vodafone, Hewlett Packard and Bank of America under her belt.

There is some present among us who have proof of life but not of identity. This was the case with the tribal villages of Chuliaposi and Macchia, which are present on the maps but not on paper. Eighteen women along with the team of Mauna Dhvani decided to step forward to regain the lost pride and lost livelihood of these villagers. Bindu often says that "I have two families, one that is back home and one at a place far away from home". She has had to knock on various doors some of them did respond, and some of them didn't. Their tradition of weaving had lost its cause, swept away in this modern world.

Bindu made these villagers meet a weaving master, one of the very few left in the state holding on to the dying legacy. The road to building a community centre was not an easy one but, this didn't stop Bindu from knocking on the doors of various government offices. The road was a difficult one but giving up was never an option, finally, on 2nd October 2018, a community centre to start weaving had been inaugurated, not only this but the first toilet in the village was set up. Now, it was not only a castle in the air, but unemployment had also turned into employment, dreams into reality. What Bindu realized was that you don't need to be an IAS officer to help the society all you need is the first step.

A Promise in Pink

Cancer. It's a word people wince at.

So, it shouldn't be a surprise that breast cancer has been stigmatized in the same country where breast cancer is the most prevalent forms of cancer that are diagnosed. Every four minutes, one woman is diagnosed with breast cancer with cancer-related death approximately every 8 minutes. These are raw statistics and simply show that breast cancer cannot be prevented, but it can most definitely be cured. Accurate information, early detection and most importantly, awareness is key to fighting this battle.

For this very reason, Ujwala Raje, who successfully battled breast cancer, co-founded "The Pink Initiative", an NGO intended to spread breast cancer awareness and provide the information necessary to overcome it.

Ujwala's mother was diagnosed with late-stage breast cancer 13 years before when Ujwala herself was diagnosed with this demon disease. Ujwala was diagnosed with breast cancer at the age of 40. She hadn't yet exhibited any symptoms, but her vigilance led to the diagnosis at an early stage. Ujwala was wary that an estimated 6 to 8 per cent of breast cancer cases are hereditary which is why she requested her gynaecologist to prescribe her a mammogram. This combination of awareness and caution led to the identification of two malignant tumours in her breast. Ujwala underwent surgery, several chemotherapies and radiation sessions during the course of her battle. Although Ujwala revelled in her battle, she acknowledged her lack of preparation for the mental and emotional toll the diagnosis would take, not just on her but also her family. It goes to show that preparing for any life-altering incident is not the same as actually experiencing it. Still, Ujwala did not shy away from her challenge and underwent her treatment with complete positivity and courage. She did not sugar coat any aspect of her experience and shared everything with her family, who in turn followed suit in her example to tackle the situation head-on. Ujwala also refused to resign from her job and found that keeping herself occupied was to an extent therapeutic and may have even helped her in her recovery.

External factors apart, she made it apparent that overcoming breast cancer is largely down to self-care. Being a food technologist, she emphasized the role of nutrition during her recovery, especially to minimize the side effects of chemotherapy. She advocates the inclusion of antioxidant-rich foods to counter the effects of chemotherapy on the body.

However, post her recovery, Ujwala soon realized that not many women across India have access to the resources or information that she had to battle breast cancer. The widespread stigma associated with breast cancer suppresses women from freely talking about the disease. Thus, even though offering support and counselling to breast cancer patients tend to have a positive effect on their mental health and attitude towards recovery, several women find themselves isolated and unaware of the basic symptoms of breast cancer.

Hence, along with her doctor, Ujwala launched the Pink Initiative to give women all across India a new hope, a safe space to talk about their recovery, a source of information and awareness and most importantly, the motivation to never give up in their battle.

Today, the Pink Initiative is involved in organizing several seminars and awareness campaigns regarding breast cancer to inform women about the importance of early detection and also, the steps to recovery post-diagnosis. Moreover, this organization is one of the driving forces in the effort to ensure that breast cancer is no longer considered a taboo and that the importance of its awareness receives widespread attention.

- Contributed by the Editorial Board



Ms Shreya Bondre - Traveller | Luxury Marketing | Fashionista | Foodie | 23 Countries | 150+ Cities

A girl of 27 years, a girl of dreams, a girl of goals, that's who she is. She is a person who believes that dreams and goals are what we live for, facing obstructions and handling them are a suspension of life, and what we love is the fuel that keeps us moving toward our dreams. She believes in the fact- "Be Ambitious with Goals, Not Deadlines!"

We are living in an age of empowerment. Women all over the world are working shoulder to shoulder with men. By and large, they are now empowered to decide different aspects of their life and profession. Shreya is one such inspiring girl and we will be amazed by her extraordinary achievements.

Who is She?

Shreya Bondre is an experienced marketing professional, an avid traveller and a fashion enthusiast currently working as a senior marketing manager @ Palladium mall Phoenix, Lower Parel, Mumbai. Earlier she worked as a Brand Manager for Connoisseur Group in Shanghai.

With M.Sc. in Luxury Management and Marketing from EMLyon Business School in France, Shreya has lived and worked with leading brands in the fashion and luxury industry in Paris, London, Shanghai and Mumbai. Working with Lakme Fashion Week, she has first hand experience managing the established brands in the Indian Fashion industry. Her stint with Aditya Birla Retail and Fashion helped her to shape the luxury consumer psychology and get better insights into the Indian consumer behaviour.

Recently, Shreya has also started her brand called The Aww Store, offering distinguished funky daily life quirky gifting items at an affordable rate all over India.

A meritorious student of Computer Engineering from the University of Mumbai with extraordinary technical and analytical skills helped her grow in the field of luxury brand management at the age of 27.

What has she achieved?

Currently a Senior marketing manager @ Palladium mall, Mumbai Phoenix at the age of 27- Driving the marketing strategy and revenue maximization efforts for the mall through events and other revenue-generating initiatives. Worked as a BRAND & PROJECT MANAGER at Connoisseur Group Shanghai, China - Planning the annual event calendar- promotional events, product launches and exhibitions.

Managing Brand Strategy, Business Procedures and rationalization of all brands under Connoisseur Group. Developing the marketing plan and strategy to launch international luxury brands in China through Connoisseur Group.

Founded and scaled The Aww Store, Mumbai to 48% growth on YOY basis- Directed the product management and development of The Aww Store as a youthful e-commerce brand driving engaging content through digital mediums

Avid Traveller with 23 Countries and 150+ Cities in the span of 4 years. Writing Travelling blogs on Tripoto community with more than 10k views in

She worked on the following real-time project:

Success factors of setting up a luxury brand in India

Concept and Strategy development for Luxury services app- The Lifestyle

Marketing and Communication strategy for expansion of Vass Shoes, Budapest

Marketing Strategy, Brand and Concept Development- MPH China

Analyzing Business models of emerging fashion labels in London, UK

Market Research & Strategic Partnerships for Kalco Golf, China

My 10 years of best friendship with her has not only given me the best mentor but at the same time, we motivated each other to do something different apart from regular life-things. Be it being the Class representative ship, Students' council, Academics, Research in my College and professional life, she has always been my inspiration and supported me throughout my extra-curricular activities. I am sure, like me, she will be an inspiration for all MPSTME girls to do something better, better and better!

- Contributed Prof. Prathamesh Churi

GET INFORMED



Give Your Chest A Rest - Everything you need to know about Breast Cancer

Breast cancer is the leading cancer amongst women in the world. 1,62,468 new cases registered was and the number of deaths was 87,090. Overall, 1 in 28 women is likely to develop breast cancer during her lifetime. But you already know this, you've probably read some of these disturbing stats, but somehow you never truly consider that it can happen to you. In India for every 2 women newly diagnosed with breast cancer, one woman dies of it, Breast Cancer accounts for 14% of the new cancers detected. Which is a lot.

Do A Self-Examination

According to many oncologists, half the cases could have been averted if a timely self-examination had been conducted. A 5-minute monthly ritual can lead to early detection or even prevention.

What should I be looking/feeling for?

The biggest misconception about breast cancer is that you get a lump when you develop the disease, while it is indubitably one of the more known symptoms.

Here's what you should be looking for:

- variations in skin texture like puckering or dimpling.
- rash or crusting of nipular area.
- an abrupt alteration in shape or size of the breast
- nipple inversion
- nipple discharge

Here's what you should be feeling for:

- lumps and thickening
- unusual pain in your breasts or collarbone

Know Your Family History

Customized risk assessment begins by scheduling an appointment with your ob-gyn and to go over your family history. Do your homework (please take this more seriously than your assignments-do it) before you go:

Piece together a definite health history of both parents, three generations back, to understand when to begin imaging tests.

Take a Blood Test

A simple blood or saliva test can reveal a host of mutations—from BRCA 1 and 2 to other genetic variants—that may or may not be malignant. Armed with this knowledge, women can proactively make judgments about their health. Those who carry genes linked to cancer should talk with doctors to set up customised screening plans tailored to their distinct genetic modifications.

Take Preventative Measures

We all have the inherent ability to lessen our uncertainty by changing our behaviours. 20-40 minutes of exercise three times a week can decrease the risk of cancer. Limiting alcohol to a glass of wine a day (but not seven in one night) also helps. So it's never too late to start taking better care of ourselves (that's the one thing Instagram influencers are right about).

But in the end, it's all about your genes, there are so many people out there who would comment that all you have to do is eat healthily and then you won't get breast cancer. Of course, nutrition is very crucial in terms of prevention, but a gene is a gene and you can't change your DNA.

Some women don't get checked because there is a taboo, and some people believe it's their fault. People need to realise that it can happen to anyone, and there was nothing they did to bring this on. The more we talk about it, the less fear there will be.



Let's Unite Against Rape

The recent turn of events have shook the conscience of the entire nation and the nation finds itself at the exact same place it was during the dastardly rape and murder of Nirbhaya in 2012.

The Unnao and Hyderabad case further signifies that as a nation, we have to collectively make giant strides to prevent such heinous crimes.

In a matter of grave concern, there's a sense of fear among the women in light of the recent incidents and there's a feeling 'Oh, that could have been me too!'. The time has come to unite against the atrocities against women. The time has come to speak up because women are not a commodity, they are the pillars over which the nation is built on. Let's call out the misogynists, let's take a pledge to protect the daughters of the nation, let's make a promise to make India a truly safe country for all.

16 ways you can stand against rape culture- UN Women

1. Create a culture of enthusiastic consent.

Freely given consent is mandatory, every time. Rather than listening for a “no,” make sure there is an active, “yes,” from all involved. Adopt enthusiastic consent in your life and talk about it.

2. Speak out against the root causes.

Rape culture is allowed to continue when we buy into ideas of masculinity that see violence and dominance as “strong” and “male”, and when women and girls are less valued. It is also underpinned by victim-blaming—an attitude that suggests a victim rather than the perpetrator bears responsibility for an assault. When discussing cases of sexual violence, a victim's sobriety, clothes, and sexuality are irrelevant. Instead, counter the idea that men and boys must obtain power through violence and question the notion of sex as an entitlement.

3. Rtedefine masculinity.

Take a critical look at what masculinity means to you and how you embody it. Self-reflection, community conversations, and artistic expression are just some of the tools available for men and boys (as well as women and girls) to examine and redefine masculinities with feminist principles.

4. Stop victim-blaming.

Because language is deeply embedded in culture, we may forget that the words and phrases we use each day shape our reality. Rape-affirming beliefs are embedded in our language: "She was dressed like a slut. She was asking for it," It is part of popular song lyrics: "I know you want it." It is normalized by objectifying women and calling them names in pop culture and media. You have the power to choose to leave behind language and lyrics that blame victims, objectify women and excuse sexual harassment. What a woman is wearing, what and how much she had to drink, and where she was at a certain time, is not an invitation to rape her.

5. Have zero tolerance.

Establish policies of zero tolerance for sexual harassment and violence in the spaces in which you live, work, and play. Leaders must be particularly clear that they are committed to upholding a zero-tolerance policy and that it must be practised every day. As a starting point, take a look at what you can do to make harassment at work history.

6. Broaden your understanding of rape culture.

Across time and contexts, rape culture takes many forms. It's important to recognize that rape culture goes beyond the narrow notion of a man assaulting a woman as she walks alone at night. For instance, rape culture encompasses a wide array of harmful practices that rob women and girls of their autonomy and rights, such as child marriage and female genital mutilation. Know the factors that underpin rape culture and the myths that surround it. While no one may disagree that rape is wrong, through words, actions and inaction, sexual violence and sexual harassment is normalized and trivialized, leading us down a slippery slope of rape culture.

7. Take an intersectional approach.

Rape culture affects us all, regardless of gender identity, sexuality, economic status, race, religion or age. Rooting it out means leaving behind restrictive definitions of gender and sexuality that limit a person's right to define and express themselves. Certain characteristics such as sexual orientation, disability status or ethnicity, and some contextual factors, increase women's vulnerability to violence. LGBTQI individuals may be subject to "corrective rape" in which the perpetrator intends to force the victim to conform with sexual and gender stereotypes. During humanitarian crisis, prevalent discrimination against women and girls often exacerbates sexual violence. Gulzada Serzhan, is an active member of Feminita, a Kazakhstan feminist initiative that protects and defends the rights of LGBTQI community members. While working as an IT project manager, a male co-worker began to sexually harass her on business trips. When she told him she was a lesbian, his harassment became stronger. "He believed he could 'correct' me," Serzhan says. "He said that I needed a strong man...In Kazakhstan, the society accepts and values men who are savage and brutal. It's considered natural when men make sexual advances towards women." "If you are invisible in everyday life, your needs will not be thought of, let alone addressed, in a crisis situation," explains Matcha Phorn-in, who works to address the unique needs of LGBTQIA individuals in crises.

8. Know the history of rape culture.

Rape has been used as a weapon of war and oppression throughout history. It has been used to degrade women and their communities and for ethnic cleansing and genocide.

There are no quick reads for this. You can start by learning about the use of sexual violence during past and recent conflicts, such as in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Guatemalan civil war, or the Kosovo conflict.

9. Invest in women.

Donate to organizations that empower women, amplify their voices, support survivors, and promote acceptance of all gender identities and sexualities.

10. Listen to survivors.

In the era of #MeToo, #TimesUp, #NiUnaMenos, #BalanceTonPorc, and other online movements, survivors of violence are speaking out more than ever before.

Listen to their experiences, read stories of survivors and activists around the globe,

14. Be an active bystander.

One in three women worldwide experience abuse. Violence against women is shockingly common, and we may become witness to non-consensual or violent behaviour. Intervening as an active bystander signals to the perpetrator that their behaviour is unacceptable and may help someone stay safe.


First, assess the situation to determine what kind of help, if any, might be appropriate. You may be able to support the target of sexual harassment by asking how they are or if they would like help, or by documenting the incident, creating distractions to diffuse the situation, or making a short and clear statement directly to the perpetrator such as, “I’m uncomfortable with what you are doing.” Read up on how you can be an active bystander, and take a bystander intervention training hosted by your university, municipality, or local NGO.


15. Educate the next generation.

It’s in our hands to inspire the future feminists of the world. Challenge the gender stereotypes and violent ideals that children encounter in the media, on the streets, and at school. Let your children know that your family is a safe space for them to express themselves as they are. Affirm their choices and teach the importance of consent at a young age. Looking for inspirational content? Here are 12 feminist books that everyone should read.

16. Start—or join—the conversation.

Talk to family and friends about how you can work together to end rape culture in your communities. Whether it’s hosting a conversation club that unpacks the meaning of masculinity, fundraising for a women’s rights organization, or joining forces to protest rape-affirming decisions and policies, it will take all of us to stand united against rape culture.



Rhea Gupta,
Lady Representative
+91 - 99200 42930
 voices_mpstme