

# Caregiving and its fallouts

A report on a visit to  
Eklavya Foundation for Mental Health  
on 23<sup>rd</sup> Aug.



*Greet Mala Talota*



<https://www.eklavyamh.org/>



# The Voice of a Caregiver



Samsung Quad Camera  
Shot with my Galaxy M31

Just that protective circle of Eklavya making it so easy to share my own pain.

# The Voice of a Caregiver (Continued)

A caregiver looks and sounds exhausted. That is because he / she probably is. A caregiver's own personality is over taken by the persona of the person they are caring for. They look and sound nothing like Deepika Padukone in "Piku". Don't get fooled by it and put yourself under pressure to look like that when what you are actually feeling is exhaustion. In fact there was a more realistic portrayal of a caregivers plight in the 1970 movie made by Asit Sen, "Khamoshi". movie shows how the lead character, Waheeda Rehman has a break down from constantly caring for patients (Dharmendra followed by Rajesh Khanna) who have had a heart break. Though the premise of the movie was a bit extreme but its understanding of a care giver's plight was more plausible.

The exhaustion comes from giving priority to another person's needs before yours, feeling exasperated by their needs and constantly subverting yours. It is totally natural to feel exasperated, exhausted and guilty for wishing it to be over. But it never does. You know when other people talk about "how to set boundaries with narcissists" or "Avoid negative people", I feel like shouting at them for their insensitive behaviour. What if narcissist or negative people are a member of your family? Caregivers have willingly given up their freedom to take care of such people. They not only willingly take care, for free, but also have to give up on their own life. It is in this context that I want to laud Eklavya Foundation for doing a remarkable job; because they are supporting the caregivers, nurturing the nurturers.

# The Voice of a Caregiver (Continued)

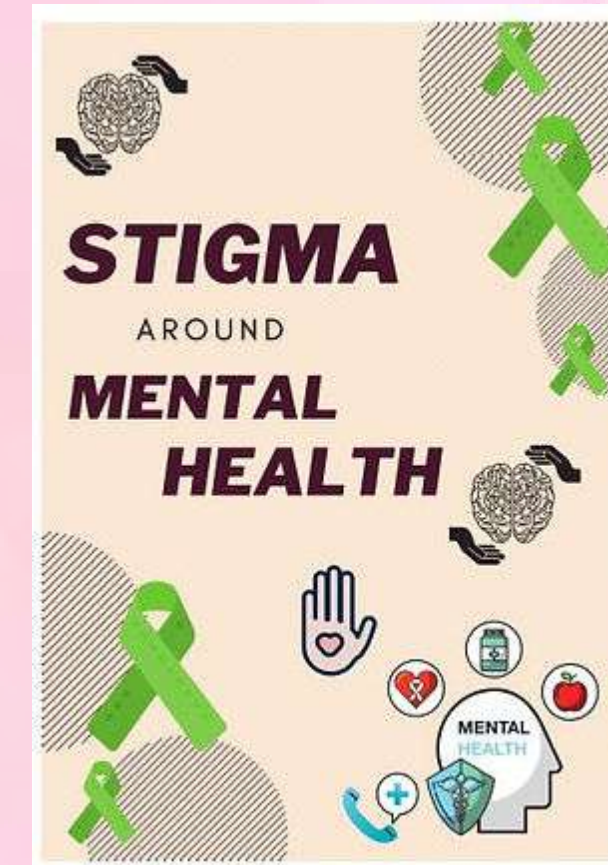
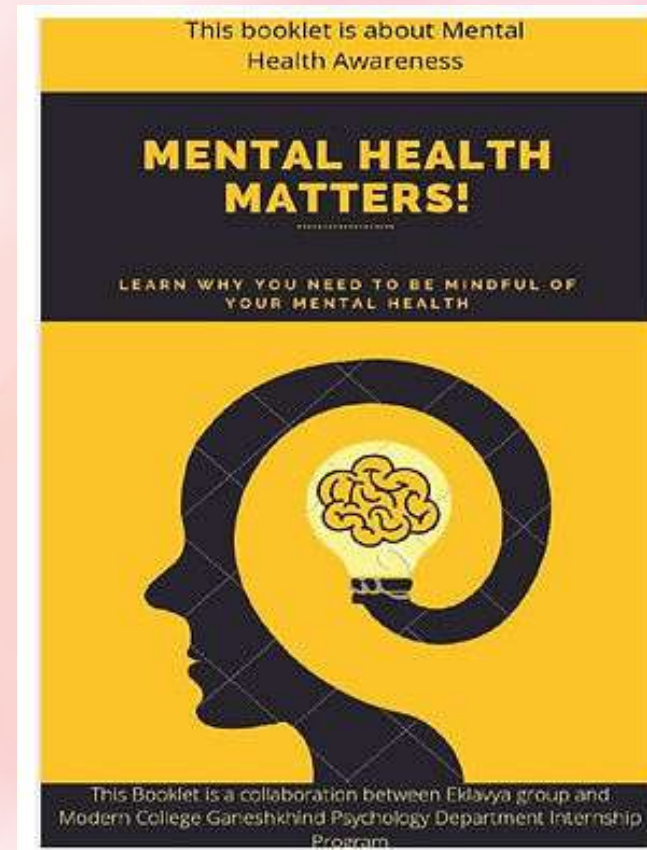
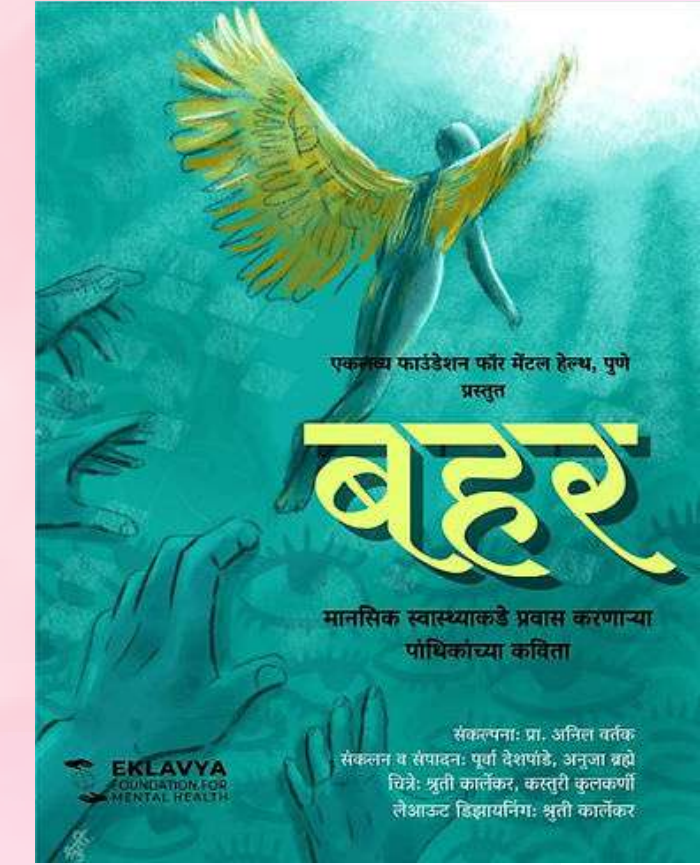
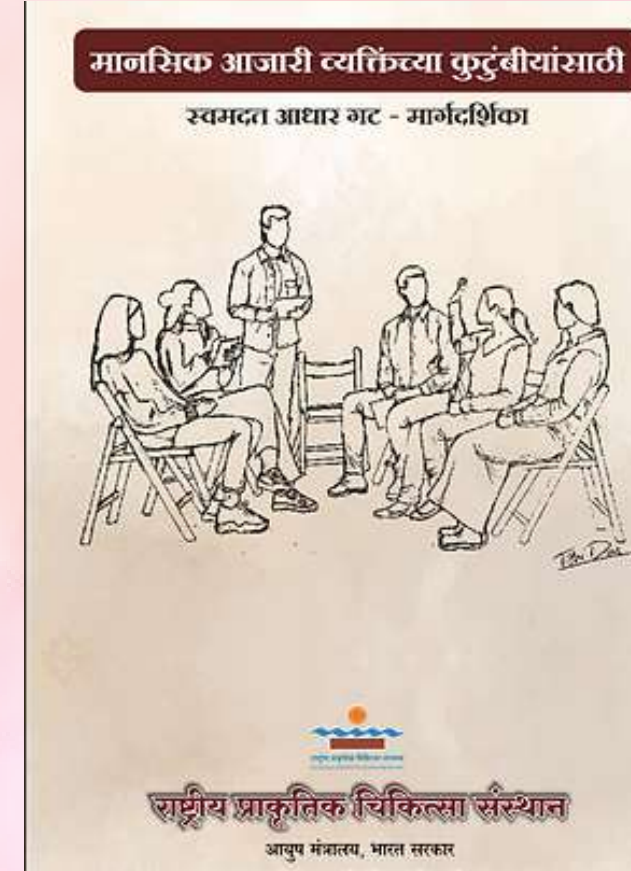
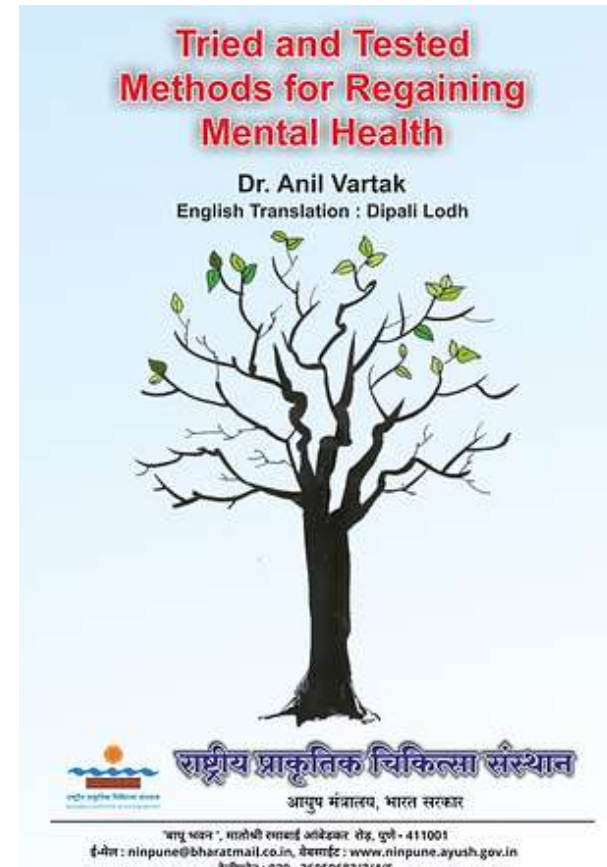
Over a period of time a caregiver starts avoiding motivational talks. There is a danger of them ending up becoming loners, because nobody can identify what they are going through. They end up becoming trapped in their own life in-between health and ill health. They cant talk about what they are feeling within their primary family for fear of being judged. And as for secondary family, nobody understands what mental health issues so they will never understand what the caregiver is going through. I must mention here that when I say care giving, I do NOT include mothers, because motherhood is a separate state in itself, where there are hormones surging through the mother's body while she is caring for her baby. In case of caregiving, no such hormones are coursing the caregiver's body.

Most caregivers experience burnout from constantly throttling their own needs. It is extremely essential that they get the support that they themselves give. Even a psychiatrist goes once a year for a de-briefing otherwise they are not able to function effectively. It is said that an empty vessel cannot give anything. The caregiver has to be filled with love and to get back into that space, they need to refill their vessel with love.

It is very easy to say that if you cant give love and understanding then why are you even in this place. So let me take this moment to remind you that not many people have any choice in that matter. They have been put in that position because of love and the trustful relationship the caregiver has with the patient; or they are natural nurturers.

# The Voice of a Caregiver (Continued)

The first step towards recovery from a mental health issue, is becoming aware of it. And that work Eklavya Foundation is doing in plenty by talking about. Look at all the publications they have brought out to bring awareness:



# The Voice of a Caregiver (Continued)

Everybody thinks that mental health issue can be cured by motivational talk or being with positive people. That is the worst suggestion you could give to a mental health patient. In fact I would label that a disease, the number of “feel good” talks that are in circulation as a cure for mental health. Everybody thinks they are experts in it, because there is no monitoring. So check the credentials before you start listening to a mental health “professional”. And in the name of knowledge what they write is wrong, misleading. In fact it should come with a warning, believe at your own risk.

That makes it even more important, that as a patient or a caregiver you “listen” to a professional qualified like Eklavya Foundation to talk about it,. Because they take extreme care to vet their speakers, we know that they would be the “right” one And the topic is selected by the Foundation, based on their research.



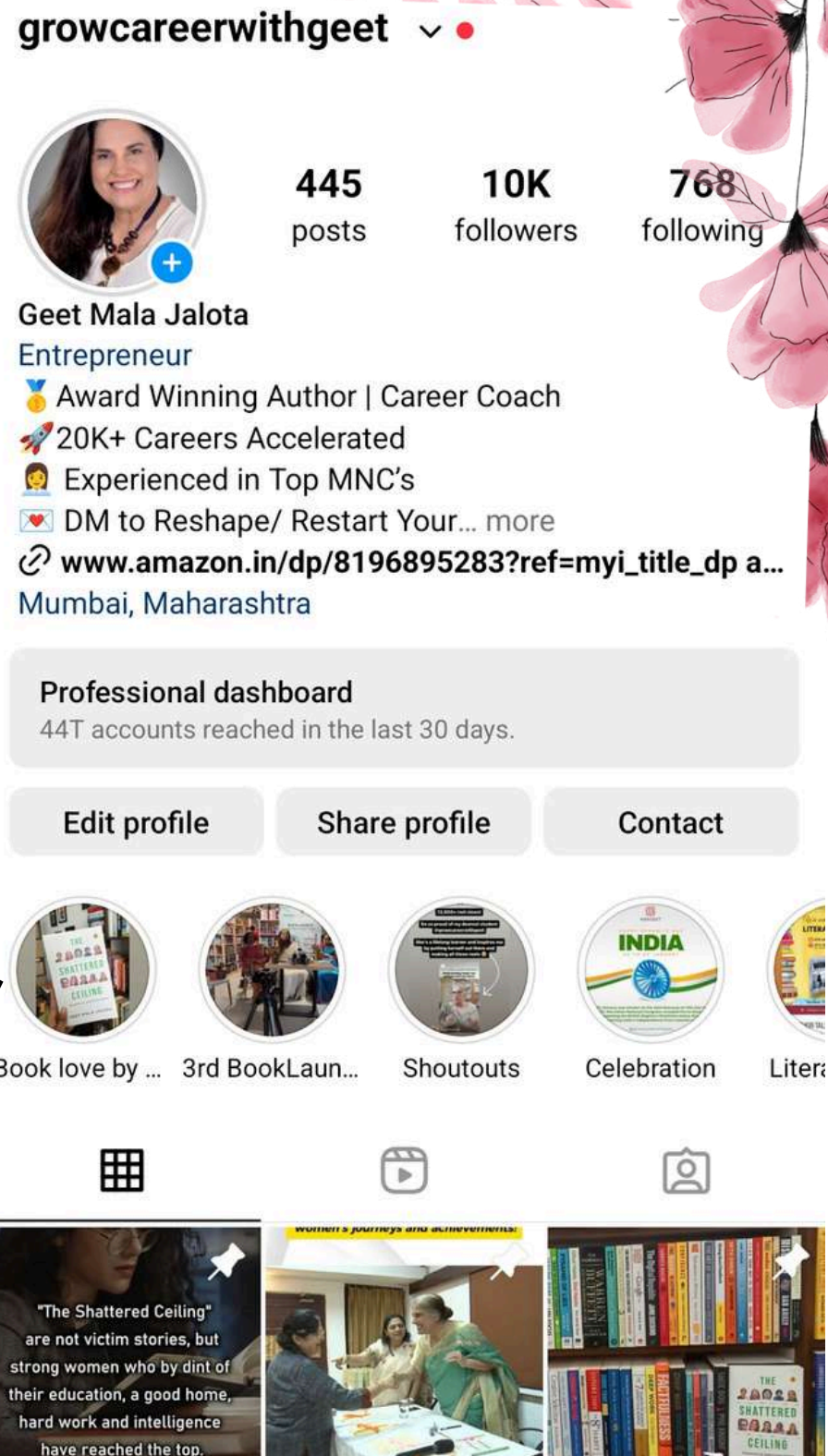
# Eklavya Foundation Managing Committee




*On the whole a successful visit where not I end up feeling supported but also to provide my own skills to further the foundation's aims and objectives.*

**For any career related advice you can get in touch with her on her insta handle.**

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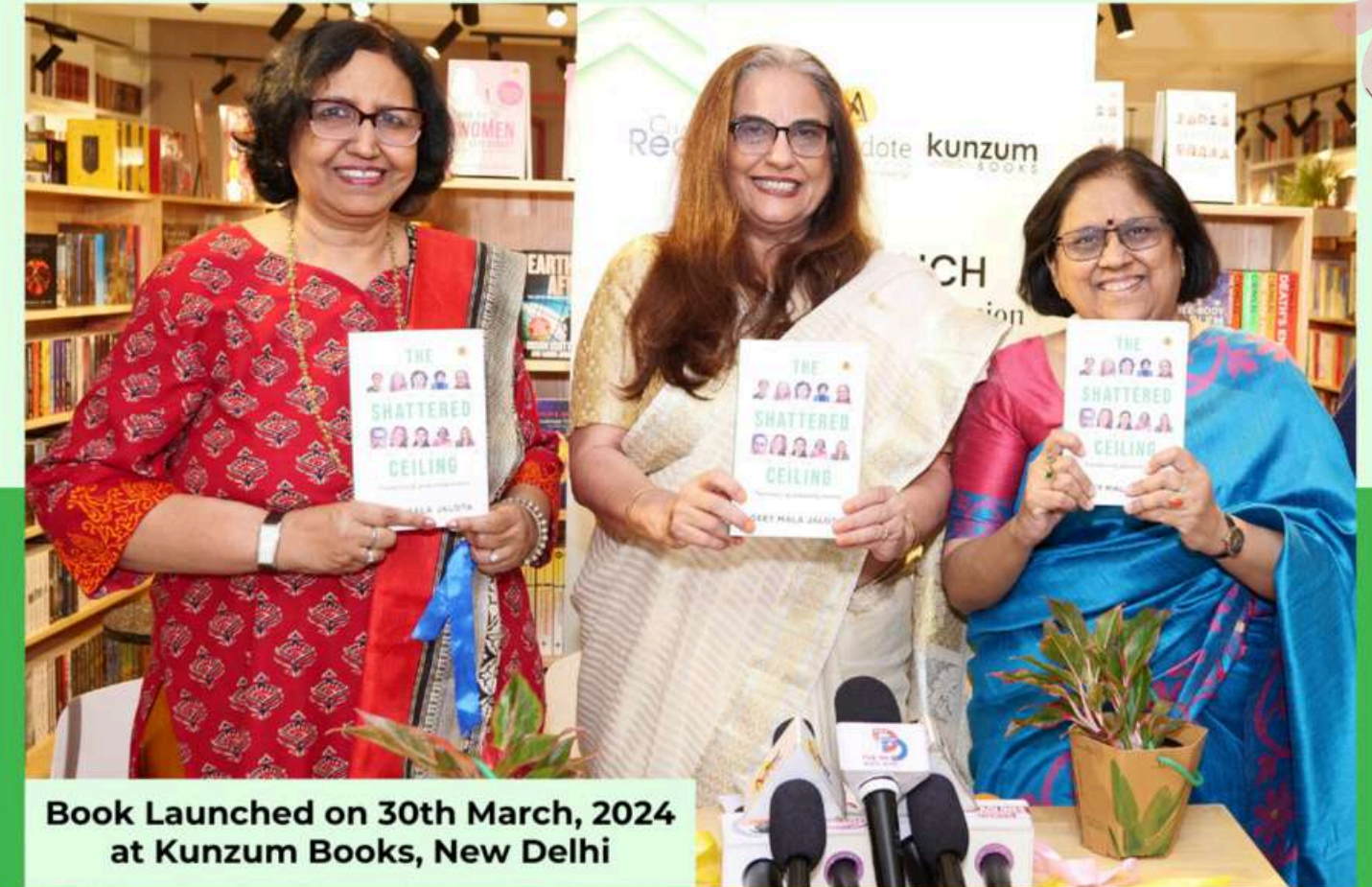
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# THE SHATTERED CEILING

By Geet Mala Jalota



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