



REPORT

25th National Conference of CCPI – 2024: A Profound Journey into Therapist Self-Care and Client Engagement

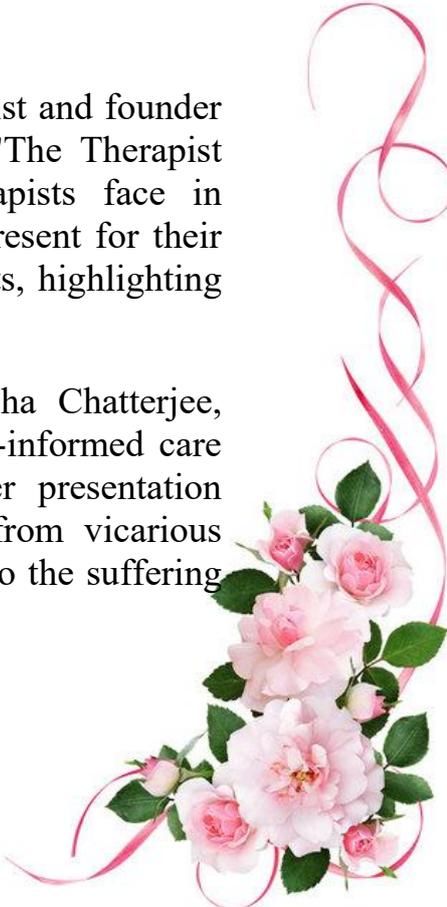
The 25th Annual Convention of the Conference of Catholic Psychologists of India (CCPI) was held from September 20 to 22, 2024, at Seva Kendra, Kolkata, bringing together nearly 75 Catholic psychologists from 12 states across India. The central theme of the convention, “Fostering Wellness – Innovative Approaches to Therapist Self-Care and Client Engagement,” resonated deeply with the participants, highlighting the growing need for mental health professionals to prioritize their own well-being while providing optimal care to their clients.

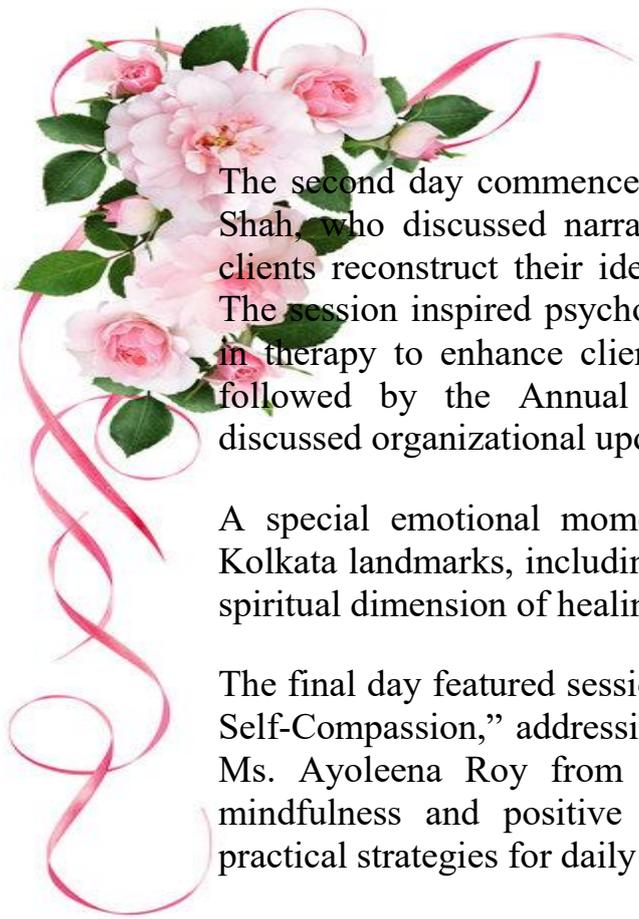
The conference was inaugurated by Archbishop Thomas D'Souza of Kolkata, who emphasized the importance of spiritual guidance in psychological practice. His message set a reflective tone for the convention, reminding psychologists of the interconnectedness between spirituality, self-care, and professional responsibility. Dr. Fr. Thomas Mathilakathu CMI, the CCPI President, warmly welcomed the delegates, encouraging them to engage wholeheartedly in the sessions.

Christian Brother Sunil Britto CFC, the conference coordinator, introduced the theme with a session on “Self-Compassion for Our Self-Care,” which urged participants to introspect on how they nurture themselves while tending to the emotional needs of others. His presentation effectively laid the foundation for the subsequent discussions focused on therapist well-being.

On the first day, Dr. Priya Puri, Chief Clinical Psychologist and founder of The Healing Space, led an insightful session titled "The Therapist Dilemma." She addressed the critical challenge therapists face in balancing their own emotional needs while being fully present for their clients. This session deeply resonated with the participants, highlighting the emotional toll caregiving roles can often impose.

The afternoon session was enriched by Ms. Shatabhisha Chatterjee, Consultant Clinical Psychologist, who introduced trauma-informed care through the Internal Family Systems (IFS) model. Her presentation emphasized the importance of helping therapists heal from vicarious trauma, a common concern for those frequently exposed to the suffering of others.





The second day commenced with a dynamic session by Dr. Deepa Das Shah, who discussed narrative therapy as a powerful tool for helping clients reconstruct their identities and develop empowering life stories. The session inspired psychologists to incorporate storytelling techniques in therapy to enhance client resilience and personal growth. This was followed by the Annual General Body Meeting, where members discussed organizational updates and future directions.

A special emotional moment of the day was the visit to prominent Kolkata landmarks, including the tomb of Mother Teresa, reinforcing the spiritual dimension of healing and psychological care.

The final day featured sessions by Ms. Somdatta Mukherjee on “Mindful Self-Compassion,” addressing compassion fatigue among therapists, and Ms. Ayoleena Roy from AIIMS, Kalyani, who skillfully integrated mindfulness and positive psychology into clinical practice, offering practical strategies for daily therapeutic work.

The convention concluded with a heartfelt note of gratitude towards the organizing team: Dr. Fr. Thomas Mathilakathu CMI (President), Dr. Sr. Beena Chetanyii SABS (Secretary), and Dr. Sr. Agnes Antony MSC (Executive Team). Participants left the conference with renewed energy, practical tools, and a deeper commitment to self-care and client engagement in their therapeutic journeys.

The event was a meaningful blend of professional learning, spiritual reflection, and community building, setting a high benchmark for future CCPI gatherings.

