

## *Presidential address*

### MOBILE ADDICTION -AN EMERGING EPIDEMIC

(Delivered during the inaugural function of the annual conference of the branch of Indian Psychiatric Society, Kerala SIPSCON- 2021 on 29/8/21)

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Respected Immediate Past President Dr Thomas John, Chief Guest of the day Dr Gautam Saha, SZ President Dr. K Ramankrishnan, Secretary Dr Anoop Vincent, Treasurer Dr Sagar, Editor Dr Vidhu Kumar, Distinguished guests, Senior members of the Society and my dear friends,

It is a glorious moment, and I feel honoured to address you as the newly inducted President of the branch of Indian Psychiatric Society, Kerala, for the year 2021-22.

I feel humbled by the confidence you've reposed on me to helm this amazing organisation that has a proud past and an exciting future. All of you here share the most special gift you could possibly give - the gift of your time, presence, and support. Thank you for being part of this special day.

On this joyous occasion, on behalf of IPS, Kerala, I salute my eminent predecessor, Dr Thomas John, for his committed service to the IPS. I acknowledge the service rendered by him and his team and thank all the members of the IPS family for keeping up the good work.

My deep appreciation and heartfelt Thanks go to the Venad Guild of Psychiatrists for hosting the SIPSCON 2021, keeping up the spirit of the conference in all aspects, even in these strange times.

I place on record my sincere gratitude to the Kollam

Psychiatric Society for the valuable insights and guidance given all through. My journey this far was shaped through their unflinching support extended to me.

I am fortunate to be backed by a team of enthusiastic and dedicated Executive committee members and look forward to serving with them to take our organisation to newer heights.

The strength of our association is unity, and that is well reflected in terms of the guidance and support offered to me. I am extremely thankful to each of you. Over this year, we will continue to build on our strengths and take on new directions.

As we enter the third decade of this millennium, life has changed in an unprecedented way. We witnessed the global pandemic happening, and the restrictions brought on by the Covid-19 contagion have had a far-reaching societal and psychological impact on us all, particularly among our children.

It's exciting to look forward to as I believe that the deliberations during the forthcoming year would be of great value in bringing new thoughts and perspectives in addressing the contours of challenges for the younger generation. In this regard, we need to scale up our energies and skills to turn peril into possibility and a setback into strength.

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The theme of the year - "Mobile addiction", is particularly relevant in the context of the changing dynamics in the use of mobile phones as devices serving multiple purposes. Virtual classes, which have become the norm, have also become a reason for enhanced mobile usage by children, increasing the opportunities for misuse. Learning through digital devices poses a massive challenge, not only to the students but also to their parents, as most children remain addicted to mobile phones. We need to design creative and empathetic solutions to address problematic internet and technology use in children effectively.

Significant work lies ahead in making a positive difference and building a responsible mobile culture among our children and youth. We plan to develop

educative content on safe and judicious mobile usage to be delivered across the state with the help of various Guilds of IPS, IMA and WDW of IMA to reach maximum stakeholders of education - students, teachers and parents. The collective spirit of purpose fuels our enthusiastic members to prepare teaching modules by intertwining good values and new visions in technology usage so that the freedom and security in mobile use go hand-in-hand.

I am closing my thoughts, hoping that the unfolding year may help us find happiness in the spirit of unity that guides our work, helping us remain a disciplined, vibrant and dynamic organisation.

Thank you. God bless us all.

**Dr RADHAKRISHNAN M P**