



Executive committee members

President

Dr. Gurdip Aurora

T: +61 (3)9763 5005

M: +61 (4)1735 7715

president@aisv.org.au

Vice President

Dr. Manjula O'Connor

T: +61 (4)1935 4482

Manjula@aisv.org.au

Secretary

Aanchal Sood

T:(04)3098 2330

aanchal@aisv.org.au

Treasurer

Uma Ganapathireddy

T:(04)1534 1627

uma@aisv.org.au

Committee members

Jasvinder Sidhu

T:(04) 3365 8273

sidhu@aisv.org.au

Raj Kumar Dhamodra Swamy

T:(04) 3785 2450

raj@aisv.org.au

Australia India Society of Victoria Inc.

P.O.Box 482
Brunswick
Victoria 3056
Australia

Email : aisv@aisv.org.au

<http://www.aisv.org.au>

<http://www.aisv.com.au>

The President's Message

Australia India Society of Victoria makes history

On the 12 of May 2012 Australia India Society of Victoria celebrated their Golden Jubilee anniversary. No other community organisation has been in existence in Australia for 50 years. 230 people attended a function at Kingston Arts Centre to celebrate this momentous occasion. I had the privilege to honour the past presidents of the Society along with the Founder, the late Professor Alexander Boyce (Sandy) Gibson who founded the Association in 1963.

The invited guests who attended the function had been close friends of AISV for over fifteen years. The Hon Martin Ferguson, Minister for Energy and Resources and Minister for Tourism had attended all of AISV's Independence Day functions and some of their Republic Day functions since he became a Member of Parliament in 1995. Mr Ferguson, who was representing the Prime Minister, read out Julia Gillard's message that commended AISV on their achievement.

Perhaps the biggest honour was the presence of a very close and old time friend of mine and AISV, the Hon Phillip Ruddock, MP, former Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs and later the Attorney General in the Howard Government. So close was the relationship between AISV and Mr Ruddock that he even attended AISV functions while he was the Attorney General of Australia. In his speech, Mr Ruddock, who was also representing the Leader of the Opposition, said he had accepted my invitation weeks before he was asked to represent the leader of the opposition.

Other invited guests included the Hon Nick Kotsiras, Minister for Multicultural affairs and Citizenship, who started his speech on a humorous note by asking the Audience if they could tell him who the Prime Minister of India was in 1963 when AISV was founded. No one could respond. Mr Kotsiras reminded the audience that Australia India society of Victoria was established at a time when the 'White Australia policy' was still in place. He said it was an excellent achievement for any association to represent the interests of the community, the people and even change laws and partake in important political and social issues affecting the country in the fifty years since being established. He announced a grant of \$15,000 to AISV for community building relationships.

MP for Cranbourne, Mr Jude Pereira, representing the leader of the State Opposition said that these days even a marriage does not last fifty years and it was very creditable for an association to be celebrating its golden jubilee and still so active in its activities. Ms Marsh Thomson MP from Footscray and Ms Elizabeth Miller from Bentleigh were also present.

AISV has reached this historical occasion with many memorable moments, some of which were highlighted in the souvenir booklet available on the night, which commemorated the achievements of the society. The booklet also acknowledges all of those individuals who have supported the society through their attendance at functions and through their volunteer work. I hope you enjoy reading the souvenir.



Dr. Gurdip Aurora

President AISV

Inside this newsletter

Men can help to fight against Domestic Violence

Page 2

Secretary Report

Page 3

Membership Application form and Advertisement

Page 4

Vice President's Message

Men can help to fight against Domestic Violence

Modern Neuro understanding of the way the brain works is that the need for control is the ability to purposefully direct and suppress change. We all like to feel in control by stopping change. Yet change is the one thing that happens with regular monotony. When one migrates, job is made redundant, spouse wants to leave the marriage, house is to be sold all are situations that cause change and induce anxiety and stress. Because change brings uncertainty an opposite feeling to the safety of certainty it causes stress and anxiety. And if the individual has a pre existing unrecognized level of insecurity and anxiety at deeper level then the need for control is even greater.

Anxiety is uncomfortable, causes agitation and in extreme circumstances a known contributor to suicide. So it is natural to avoid anxiety by using defense mechanisms well defined by Freud and Jung over the centuries. Commonly used mechanisms are aggression, alcohol, and control by domination of the next person.

Migration breeds isolation and a source of much anxiety. One avenue of lowering anxiety is looking for support mechanisms. Women usually are much better at it by seeking meaningful, confiding and supportive relationship from other women. Women seek each other out but young men may not be able to reach out to others in the same way. Particularly in situations of unemployment, lack of recognition of their education and when sensing a loss of status in society.

In such situation unfortunately many young men may turn to controlling, dominating and aggressive behaviour towards women mistaking that for hyper masculine behaviour. Research suggests those men's perceptions of other male's behavioural patterns, be they accurate or not exerts a strong influence on men's own behaviour towards women. So misperception of acceptable male behaviour pattern as one of disrespect or dominance over women will invite other men to copy such behaviours. On the contrary behaviours that are concerned with respect, dignity and equality of women when emphasised by cultural opinion makers and leaders as the acceptable norm for masculine behaviours even when under stress will have a copying impact.

The murder of a woman in December 2009 in Sydney by her husband shows the degree of rage he felt when he strangled his wife then slit her throat at least eight times. He was convicted not of murder but manslaughter because his evidence was he "lost it" after his wife verbally abused him and said she loved another man. The judge said Singh had been an immature young man, far from his family in India, and did not have the personal resources to deal with his deteriorating marriage.

Speaking as a psychiatrist, I believe he would have blamed her for his misery instead of seeking to understand his role in their potential marital breakup. Blaming or displacing the source of pain on to her without self-reflection on his contribution would have only exacerbated their marital woes.

The case of Paul McCuskey's who received Bravery award from Humane Society shows another aspect of good use of control and abuse of control, His past history was one of extreme physical violence against his partner and then he finds himself saving an elderly lady 's life in bushfires. Both instances are examples of exercise of control and dominance, Men who need to control and dominate but don't have the confidence to compete against others tend to take it out on their female partners. Because she is physically smaller and not threatening.

We all need control. But there is good control and abuse of control. Good control is use of control over one's life; abuse of control is unfair dominance over others - domestic violence. The abuse of control reflects a deeper layer of insecurity.

How can we use the patriarchal structures of society for good of all, men and women? The authority figures of the community such as religious leaders and community and political leaders can play more of a useful role in the community by showing their discomfort with cultural myths and norms that equate male strength with control, dominance and physical violence over women. More needs to be done with clear emphasis on respectful behaviours. Most men are dignified and respectful of women and they need to express their discomfort with the behavior of men who choose the path of abuse, gender oppression, homicide or suicide.

Their interventions can help to challenge male socialization practices, and teach men to have empathy for victims which in turn enhance maturity. Empathy is putting himself in the shoes of the woman and by genuinely attempting to understand her thinking and feeling, and why she would seek love and comfort elsewhere and change himself accordingly. Male community and religious leaders can be role models and highlight the need for consent in inti-



Dr. Manjula O'Connor

mate relationships within marriage. By exposing cultural myths research has demonstrated success in increasing the percentage of men who engage in behaviors that reduce the incidence of assaults.

This would help men to be better allies to women. Further, any assistance from the religious leaders that encourages help seeking by young men and women from health professionals, particularly their family doctor in the first instance would be of great assistance. This is not always an easy path but one that will be an exercise in 'good control' over their choices and enhance maturity.

Women need men to become *allies* and *equal* partners in the fight against domestic violence and reduce levels of domestic violence that afflict 1 in 3 women currently costing \$13 Billion to the Australian economy every year.

Dr Manjula O'Connor
Psychiatrist and Senior Research Fellow CIMH, the University of Melbourne
Vice President, Australia India Society of Victoria.
manjulao@unimelb.edu.au
Mob +61(4)19354482

Important contacts

Your family doctor
In Touch 1800 755 988
Police 000

Secretary's Message

Golden Jubilee Celebrations

On the 12 of May 2012 Australia India Society of Victoria celebrated their Golden Jubilee anniversary at Kingston Arts Centre. The function hall had beautiful ambiance which was much appreciated by everyone.

We were honoured with the presence of The Hon Martin Ferguson (Minister for Energy and Resources and Minister for Tourism), Mr Ferguson (representing the Prime Minister), Hon Phillip Ruddock (MP, former Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs), Hon Nick Kotsiras (Minister for Multicultural affairs and Citizenship), Mr Jude Pereira (representing the leader of the State Opposition), Ms Marsh Thomson (MP from Footscray) and Ms Elizabeth Miller (from Bentleigh).

At the beginning, the committee members encountered serious problem because of missing numbers on the tables and lack of organized sitting arrangement, but it was handled effectively with unanimity.

The function was hosted by Divya Dhingra, who did a fabulous job. The night started with an Indian classical dance performance by Mrs Rajashree Behra followed by other entertainment performances (Bhangra and Bollywood dance) arranged by Oorja entertainment. Bhangra performance failed to excite the audience. However, Bollywood dancers were amazing and energetic. Not only was the dance incredible, but crowd engagement was wonderful.

Dr. Aurora presented a brilliant speech, honoured and thanked all the past presidents for their hard work in setting up the backbone of AISV. As mentioned by Dr. Aurora, 50 years would have not been possible without their efforts.

The catering was looked after by Curry Leaf. The quality of the food was good, but there were certain issues that caused tribulations like charging for soft drinks. As soon as this was brought to Curry Leaf's notice, it was immediately rectified. The instantaneous action on this issue was worth positive reception. However, difficulties were veiled adequately by the members and a very diminutive amount was observed by the crowd. The good quality of the food and the variety were the positives that were appreciated by all the guests.



The night continued with Dj Manj's music and dhol and the crowd danced till the end on their tunes, bringing the night to an incredible and unforgettable end.

Overall, the Golden Jubilee celebration was a success and would always be an important milestone with memorable moments. AISV would like to thank all the Honourable guests for their valuable presence.

Secretary
Aanchal Sood



Membership Application/Renewal

(Please Print)

New ApplicationRenewal.....

Title/s

First Name.....Surname.....

Partner/Spouse's First Name.....Surname.....

Children's names

1.....

2.....

3.....

Address

.....

CityPost Code

Tel (B/H)Tel: (A/H)

Mobile:

Email:

Other Details: (Hobbies, Interests)

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Would you be interested to join the committee of AISV Yes No.....

Membership Category (Circle one) Life: \$500, Family: \$80, Concession: \$50, Single: \$50

Do you want a receipt Yes/ No

I hereby apply/renew membership of AISV in the above category. I am aware of the rules and regulations of the society.

.....

Signature / Date

Membership Application may be sent to: **P O Box 482, Brunswick VIC 3056**

Advertisement

Required Living in Nanny, Salary negotiable.

For further information Contact Dr. Gurdip Aurora M:(04)1735 7715