

Loyola College (Autonomous)

Chennai – 600 034

AURA

Center for Counselling

The term 'AURA' denotes the invisible radiations which emanate from within a person acting as strength and a shield. The main objective of 'AURA' center is to help, support and facilitate persons to positive mental health and wholesome well-being making them to truly 'Shine from Within'. With this ideal, the former counseling service at Loyola College was renamed as "AURA" (*shine from within*), Center for Counseling in June, 2014.

The center has three counselors, Ms. Yazhini, Ms. Christina and Mr. Prince.

AURA center for counseling serves the student and staff of Loyola and community at large by providing

1. Individual one to one counseling
2. Group therapy
3. Campaign/Seminars/Discussions/Workshops
4. Special focus groups
5. Aura club in-training in peer counseling

REPORT - June 2014- March 2015

AURA Activities

1. Individual one to one Counseling:

- Beneficiaries {from June 2014 to February 2015} -520 Students
- One to one counseling facility is availed by Students, Staff, Parents and Referrals from other institutions through the staff.

2. Orientation Programme:

Orientation program on Counselling was conducted for the 1st year & 2nd year U.G students of both shift I & II during the last week of July. The purpose of the orientation was to bring to the attention of the students the services offered by the counseling unit and to remove the misconceptions and stigma attached to it. The program was conducted jointly by the two counsellors Ms. Christina and Ms. Yazhini.

3. De-Addiction Programme:

A program on De-Addiction was conducted by School of Human Excellence during the month of July 2014 for the 1st year UG students of both shift I & II (around 2500 students). The counsellors conducted sessions highlighting the different types of addiction and its impact on various aspects of life.

4. Awareness workshop :

An awareness workshop on counseling was conducted on 10th October 2014 for all the students of the college. The goal of the workshop was to sensitize the students about the Need for, Importance and Areas of Counseling. As part of the workshop, teaser campaigns involving Face painting, Installations display, Street plays, Posters, LEDdisplays, handouts and competitions were conducted for 4weeks (15th September to 10th October, 2014) on the topic. The students of visual communication were engaged as part of working team of the teaser campaign.



5. Competitions conducted :

In commemoration of World Mental Health Day, competitions which were open to all students were conducted from September 19th-26th, 2014, on the topic, "Breaking the stigma on Mental Health". Competitions were held on poetry, poster painting and photography. The best entries were selected and prizes were awarded on the World Mental Health Day celebrated on 10th October 2014.

6. Programme for the B.Ed. college students :

Around 250 B.Ed. college students attended the session on “Stress and its Implication” at their college venue on 16th September 2014. A detailed report of the students’ views and feedback with our suggestions and recommendations was duly handed over to Management, B.Ed. College.

7. World Mental Health Day :

The World Mental Health Day was celebrated on 10th October 2014. The program was open to all and was attended by around 200 participants including students (mainly from the departments of Medical Sociology and M.S.W) and staff. Ms. Sanjeevana, Additional Director for Poverty Reduction Programme, Govt. of Tamil Nadu, was the chief guest, and Dr. Thiruvikraman, Consultant Psychiatrist, was the guest speaker. The chief guest addressed on the topics of “Changing trends and Concepts of Mental Health”, “The various government initiatives and scheme in action and planning for the betterment of Mental Health”. Dr. Thiruvikraman spoke about the General Mental Health Disorders highlighting on Schizophrenia.

Educational handouts, posters circulated throughout the college, poetry recitations, theatre plays (throughout the week) on the Awareness to Mental Health were the main highlights of the program.



8. Work Life Balance :

“See-saw”, a one day workshop on work-life balance was conducted for the staff on 21st November, 2014. The beneficiaries were around 50 teaching staffs from each shift I and shift II [staffs with 5 years and 10 years experience]. The program was conducted in two sessions, shift II in the morning [9:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.] and shift I in the afternoon [1:30-4:00 p.m.]. Mrs. Leema Peter, Consultant Psychologist, Trichy, was the resource person of the day.



9. Program on Suicide Intervention and Prevention :

An Awareness and Intervention Program “Suicide-A Preventable Epidemic” was conducted for the staff (total of about 450 staff) of shift-II {9:30am- 1pm} and shift-I {1:30-5pm} on 28th November 2014. Dr. KaminiKannappan, Consultant Psychiatrist, Kaveri Hospital, spoke about the Physiological Dimensions and Factors involved in Suicide, its aftermath and Intervention. Fr. Arul Xavier, O.F.M Cappuchin, Consultant Psychologist and Rector, Cappuchin Theological College, Trichy addressed the Statistical and Psychological Dimensions, warning signs and clues and Interventional strategies of Suicide and its Prevention. Review of feedback forms collected from the participants generally conveyed appreciative comments and valuable suggestions.





10. Programme for the Hostel Girls :

An interactive session was conducted for the inmates of the Loyola ladies hostel on 7th December 2014 on the topic “Life issues: Purpose, Conflicts and Resolutions”. The session was attended by 300 students.

11. Programme for the hostel Boys :

An Awareness program was conducted for the inmates (1st year students) of the Loyola Men’s hostel on 16thDecember 2014 on the topic “How to Handle Stress.” The program was attended by around 500 Students from each shift.

12. Workshop attended :

One week workshop on “Healing the Inner Child” held at Anugraha Center for Counseling and Psychotherapy, Dindigul, was attended by Ms. Christina from 1st-8th December 2014. The purpose of the workshop was to bring an awareness about the whole focus of self with its limiting Psychological Boundaries and Restrictions and on How to free oneself from it for an enhanced and fully satisfied, potentiated life.

13. One day orientation programme :

“Bridges-Connecting Lives” a program based on efficient and respectful, congenial inter-personal relationship was conducted by the counsellors (Ms.Christina and Ms.Yazhini) for Non-Teaching Staffs of both shifts on 17th November 2014 from (9a.m. to 1 p.m.). The Sessions involved games, roleplays, active group discussions and enlightening feedbacks.

Training Orientation Programme Conducted

The following are the counseling training, orientation and exposure programmes conducted. 25th August 2014 - 4 students of M.A Applied Psychology from the Institute of Mental Health Social Science and Trans Disciplinary Research. 21stand 22nd January 2015 - One M.S.W exchange student from Boston University.

REPORT (June 2015 - April 2016)

INDIVIDUAL ONE TO ONE COUNSELLING

BENEFICIARIES: 268 *students*

The students are encouraged to visit the counsellors in their time of need. The one to one counselling caters to the UG, PG, scholars, alumni, teaching and non- teaching staff and special referrals.

Systematic suicide consent, informed consent and history taking are done and documented.

GROUP THERAPY

This year, Aura center has extended its horizons to conduct group sessions for identified special students groups as three

- RCDA (56 students)(resource center for the differently abled),
- LSSS (62+24=86),
- Loyola boys hostel(262+189=451)
- Loyola girls hostel (70+43=113).

These group sessions are conducted for these special students monthly based on need analysis and imperative issues which has to be addressed.

SPECIAL TARGET GROUPS:

1. FOCUS GROUP

The Aura center has also conducted special focus groups for sharing and grievance redressed among detained students (one semester) from UG with their parents.

2. UPTSTREAM - DESTRESSING PROGRAMME

After the great upheaval and turmoil in Chennai due to the floods (November to December 2015) the Aura center conducted de-stress program 'upstream' for the staff and students who faced the challenges of the Torrents.

Date: 22/12/15 Venue: Bertram Hall Participants: 75

The students who were affected by the Chennai floods put up a brave front and on the outset were seemingly unmoved. The Aura center made an attempt to explore the impact of the floods on the students and thereby planned for further session if warranted. Aura conducted a first level group session for the students.

The session started with a prayer song followed by an introduction and warm up session which included the students introducing themselves to the group. Then the main session started with a video footage of the Chennai floods. The students were then invited to share their experiences during the floods and what they felt and learned from it. Surprisingly, many students of shift II reported intense fear and those in shift I report grief and sense of loss. The sharing session gave them more exposure. Further intervention was necessary in this issue. The session seemed to be a channel of ventilation and emotional catharsis for the students.

The Students gained positive affirmation and strength through session.

Date: 21/12/15

Topic: De-stress programme

Participants: Non Teaching Staff 20 Nos

Venue: YD Hall

The Chennai floods which broke the homes and hopes of thousand in November and December 2015 left its mark on many of the Loyolalites as well. Hence the Aura Center took the cause of addressing the grievances, stress and trauma of the affected staff by conducting a group session for them.

The program started with a prayer song followed by a sharing session where the staff narrated their experiences, grievances and lessons learnt from the flood. It was a very heart rendering session as they poured out their anguish and pain.

This was followed by a NLP psychotherapy session by visual kinesthetic disassociation and anchoring.

During the process, the participants were helped to remove and/or minimize their emotional blocks and trauma of the flood which hindered them from pursuing a normal life.

The programme wound up with positive visualization and feedback session. Feedback forms were collected from them after the session.

The outcome of the programme was targeted to reduce the stress, tension and pain following the therapy. The overall outcome of the session was satisfying.

3. Intensive training program for Deaddiction WITH JMAADD for outreach

Title: Intensive counseling training programme in collaboration with JMAADD for the Department of Outreach

Target group: The volunteers from UG II years

No of beneficiaries: 70

Dates: 21, 22, 23, 24, 26 September 2015

Introduction about the topic:

Students from the outreach programme had volunteered to reach out to the persons suffering from addiction disease and help them through. But it was very necessary for them to first fully understand the disease, its nature, effects and prognosis as well as the way they needed to approach, handle and guide such a person.

Hence in an attempt to accomplish the above said JMAT and AURA joined hands training the students intensively through a 5 day workshop. The role of AURA was to prepare the students in understanding, accepting, appropriate handling and referral system of the affected persons and their co-dependants.

Aims and Objectives:

- To bring awareness to the students in the outreach department about addiction disease and its manifestation in different dimensions of their lives.
- To educate and equip the students with the knowledge and skills of counseling/ assessing, understanding, communicating and handling the addicted persons.

Outcome of sessions

At the end of the 5 days of intensive counseling training programme, the students reported, they gained more awareness, information, motivation, eagerness and commitment which equipped them fully in their mission to help the addicts and their families.

Overall Outcome of the Programme

The feedbacks from the students were healthy and positive. Intensive training programmes were suggested by the outreach department for the entire set of students.

4. SPRING BOARD - LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME

Date: 20 January 2016

No of Participants: 40

The topic of this session was titled “Emotional Quotient and Leadership”. The training was conducted for an hour and half which includes activities, discussions and lecture. More self-awareness leading to better emotional handling was the essence of the training. It is hoped that these trainings will go a long way in helping students overcoming their emotional challenges and to be leaders wherever they may be.

OTHER ACTIVITIES OF AURA

Suicide prevention day

- Loyola joined hands with the world in commemorating the Suicide prevention day by the following activities.
- Throughout the week, from 7th to 12th September, Human Excellence staff conducted classes to all the 2nd years on the topic of “I love myself.”
- A banner was put up at the entrance and stickers were distributed to the student community on the day and to remind them that they need to love themselves.
- LSSS students’ team under the direction of Prof. Kaleeswaran performed theatrical demonstrations during breaks disseminating the importance of the day and self-love.
- A symposium was held for the students of Sociology and Fr. Emmanuel delivered a speech on the topic of Suicide prevention.
- Awareness sessions were conducted for all first years in batches (up to 7 batches) on reaching out to those who may be suicidal.

The statistics of each of the programme is mentioned below:

Date	Activity	Students covered
7 th to 12 th September 2015	Class sessions on the topic of “ I love myself”	3500
10 th September 2015	Suicide Prevention Symposium	30
11 th September 2015	Awareness sessions on helping those who are suicidal	3500
10 th and 11 th September 2015	Issuance of stickers	4000

We would like to thank the Rector, Principal, Father Secretary, Fr. Henry Jerome and SHE staff, Fr. Jacob and LSSS staff, and Prof Kaleeswaran for their generosity.

WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY - 16th OCTOBER 2015

AURA -Center for Counselling, Loyola College was started in 2014. The main objective of Aura is to facilitate a healthy, positive and wholesome development of the students by enhancing their psychological well-being.

In commemoration of the World Mental Health Day, Aura organized an awareness program on this year's WHO theme: "**Dignity in Mental Health**" on 16 October 2015 at Lawrence Sundaram Hall, Loyola College. The program was organized by the AURA team comprising of Ms. D. Yazhini, Ms. D. Christina and Mr. J. Prince. The program was held in two phases:

Phase 1:

The officials and dignitaries of the Loyola College; Rev. Dr. S. Lazar S.J., the Secretary; Rev. Dr. Jacob S.J., Vice Principal- Academics and Student Services; Rev. Dr. S. Jeyaseelan S.J -Controller of Exams, and the Guest of Honor, Mrs. Parimal Pandit, Program Director, V-Excel Education Trust, felicitated the gathering and released the balloons to signify the start of the Human Chain by the students.

Subsequently the students formed a human chain outside the college campus mainly to bring about sensitivity and awareness among the students and public highlighting this year's theme on how we should show acceptance, respect and dignity to people with mental illness.

Phase 2:

In this phase of the meeting, the people recovering from mental illness from NGOs namely SCARF and BANYAN were honoured by Rev. Fr. Henry Jerome, Dean of School of Human Excellence and Dr. Sowmya Bhaskaran, Child Psychiatrist, Guest speaker of the day. This was done to express our acceptance, respect and solidarity with the people suffering from mental illness.

Intake of interns:

Aura had set yet another milestone this year by opening opportunities for intern training program where interns from other institutes can get exposure training and practical training. The first batch of interns started on February 15th 2016.

Staff Development Programme

The AURA Staff are encouraged to attend training programmes and workshops and conferences to enrich themselves. They are also encouraged to contribute to other institutions as resource persons.

Aura club

The main objective of the club is to train the students in Peer Guidance and Counseling. The students are systematically trained through 120 credit hours which includes training and theory sessions. 120 members have registered themselves this year.

Volunteers Training Programme was conducted for students.

PRODIGAL SON PROJECT

Group sessions were conducted twice this academic year for the students and also to their parents as part of this project.
