



Think India (Quarterly Journal)

ISSN: 0971-1260 Vol-22, Special Issue-05

ONE DAY NATIONAL SEMINAR

ON

DISABILITY, REPRESENTATION AND LITERATURE

held on 03 October 2019 and Organised by P.G. & Research Department
of English

S. T. HINDU COLLEGE, NAGERCOIL-2, Tamilnadu, India



Afetrmath Of Mania In Preeti Shenoy's Wake Up Life Is Calling

Dr.A.Ramasubbiah

Assistant Professor of English

Mannar Thirumalai Naicker College

Madurai- 625004

mannarsubbu@gmail.com

9842163687

D.Vimala

Assistant Professor of English

Mannar Thirumalai Naicker College

Madurai- 625004

vimalatamo@gmail.com

9597792936



ABSTRACT:

Disability studies is an academic discipline that examines the meaning, nature, and consequences of disability. Initially, the field focused on the division between "impairment" and "disability", where impairment was an impairment of an individual's mind or body, while disability was considered a social construct. Disability is expanded to chronic illness and to the broader work of the medical humanities. Though it traces back its history to 1980s mental disability remains much unexplored. But this is an area where much attention is needed. This paper focuses on Bipolar Disorder, a mental depression with mood swings, the treatment and aftermath consequences in the victim

KEYWORDS:

Disability, Impairment, Bipolar, Mood swings, Aftermath

Disability studies, an interdisciplinary area of study based in the humanities and social sciences that views disability in the context of culture, society, and politics rather than through the lens of medicine or psychology. In the latter disciplines, "disability" is typically viewed as a distance from the "norm" in order to bring the disabled closer to the established norm. This area of study questions that view and presents a variety of perspectives on disability, from contemporary society as well as from a range of cultures and histories. Seeking to broaden the understanding of disability, to better understand the experience of disability in society, and to contribute to social change for people with disabilities, the discipline challenges the idea of the normal-abnormal binary and suggests that a range of human variations are "normal."

Wide range of disability studies normally cover physical disability and its consequences. But there is one alarming disability which is widely, blindly and passively spreading in the world. This disability is hard to identify in the affected person where the result is massive than the physical disability. Mental disability stands as an alarming note to the many Asian countries. Mental Depression in any form like OCD, anxiety disorders, mood



disorders, and schizophrenia disorders. A few years back World Health Organisation came out with the report that in 2020 India is going to more number of people with mental depression compared to other countries. Very few have attempted to bring out this passive disability, while this needs an alarming call for everyone.

There are writers like Rohinton Mistry, Anita Desai and Salman Rushdie who have wrote novels on mental disorders. Among the contemporary writers Preeti Shenoy has made an attempt to handle a mental disorder named Bipolar Disorder and its consequences in the character she has portrayed. The statistics result of her research gave her a shock that in India and China alone there were more than 12-15 million people with mental health issues. It is this shock that made her to write on particular disorder bipolar disorder. She herself states:

“I wanted to expose this terrible monster, which nobody talked about, yet which claimed so many lives. I wanted it to be a story that everyone could relate to.” Shenoy has visited NIMHANS, Bangalore and spent many hours in Norwich Millennium Library to have extensive reading on mental health conditions which further resulted in the book *Life is What You Make It* and its sequel *Wake Up, Life is Calling*. Shenoy has never dreamt of coming out with the sequel to *Life is What You Make It*. But the pressing need on mental disorder has made herself to come out with a sequel.

Bipolar Disorder is a disorder associated with episodes of mood swings ranging from depressive lows to manic highs. Manic episodes may include symptoms such as high energy, reduced need for sleep and loss of touch with reality. Depressive episodes may include symptoms such as low energy, low motivation and loss of interest in daily activities. Mood episodes last days to months at a time and may also be associated with suicidal thoughts. Treatment is usually life long and often involves a combination of medications and psychotherapy.

People having a manic episode may:

- Feel very “up,” “high,” or elated
- Have a lot of energy
- Have increased activity levels
- Feel “jumpy” or “wired”



Think India (Quarterly Journal)

ISSN: 0971-1260 Vol-22, Special Issue-05

ONE DAY NATIONAL SEMINAR

ON

DISABILITY, REPRESENTATION AND LITERATURE

held on 03 October 2019 and Organised by P.G. & Research Department
of English

S. T. HINDU COLLEGE, NAGERCOIL-2, Tamilnadu, India



- Have trouble sleeping
- Become more active than usual
- Talk really fast about a lot of different things
- Be agitated, irritable, or “touchy”
- Feel like their thoughts are going very fast
- Think they can do a lot of things at once
- Do risky things, like spend a lot of money or have reckless sex

People having a depressive episode may:

- Feel very sad, down, empty, or hopeless
- Have very little energy
- Have decreased activity levels
- Have trouble sleeping, they may sleep too little or too much
- Feel like they can't enjoy anything
- Feel worried and empty
- Have trouble concentrating
- Forget things a lot
- Eat too much or too little
- Feel tired or “slowed down”
- Think about death or suicide

Life is What You Make it is a novel that has a woman as the main protagonist. The lead female of the story is Ankita Sharma. She is a sweet, attractive, smart, ambitious and happy go lucky girl born into a conservative middle class family. It is a chronicle of her life. Set in 1989 when Doordarshan was the main source of entertainment and when letter writing was in vogue. The tale begins from her college days, then her admission into MBA in Mumbai.

Everything is going her way till then. But suddenly her life is in a mess. She finds herself in a disturbing situation partly because of her fault and partly due to destiny. The novel tries to spread awareness about this problem through the story of Ankita and its attempt to



Think India (Quarterly Journal)

ISSN: 0971-1260 Vol-22, Special Issue-05

ONE DAY NATIONAL SEMINAR

ON

DISABILITY, REPRESENTATION AND LITERATURE

held on 03 October 2019 and Organised by P.G. & Research Department
of English

S. T. HINDU COLLEGE, NAGERCOIL-2, Tamilnadu, India



enlightened people about the mental illness and the cure. The novel tries to remove the various stigma and humiliations attached with mental illness. Like the birth of Phoenix Ankita overcomes this disorder. The story ends with the rebirth of Ankita into person who celebrates every day for being alive

Persons with mental disability undergo hell like torment when they are under diagnosis. They are unable to express their exact mood swings. In addition to that the close acquaintances like, parents and friends are also unable read their mind and heed to their exact needs. This makes the situation and the patient even worse. What if completely cured protagonist come across swings when reminded of past which she has put in her dark compartment and locked and which she never wants to reminded of and unlock too. Such sequential past comes her way one by one switching on her mood swing. She hides it from her parents as she doesn't want to trouble them more. This is the plight of Ankita in the sequel *Wake Up Life is Calling*.

Ankita has fought a mental disorder, been through hell, and survived two suicide attempts. Now in Mumbai, surrounded by her loving and supportive parents, everything seems idyllic. She is not on medication. She is in a college she loves, studying her dream subject: Creative Writing. At last leading a 'normal life', she immerses herself in every bit of it. Underneath the surface, however, there is trouble brewing. A book she discovers in her college library draws her in, consumes her and sends her into a terrifying darkness that twists and tears her apart. To make matters worse, a past boyfriend resurfaces, throwing into further turmoil.

Every aftermath of any disaster is challenging and always sprouts to have a new pleasant beginning. For Ankita its with her new course on Creative Writing, her new friends Parul and Janki. She was exclaims her every move but ends in excruciation. The coming back makes Ankita : ...looking for the smallest signs of hope. You clutch at even the tiniest positive bits. (Pg-1)

Every day is a new beginning and challenging for her. She wishes to improve her style quotient after meeting Parul and Janki, for a girl like Ankita who has just come out from mental trauma first wishes to see the natural world rather giving importance to her attire. The



treatment phase is a junk which made her numb, unable to read, unable to write which was her passion. In due course her life was fighting her own thoughts everyday because whatever she does it will be viewed through the prism of the symptoms of mental illness. She often arises to look-at-me – now moment with positive wings as phoenix but that's in vain. She has undergone silence of discomfort unlike her earlier silence of anticipation

It's at this moment Mrs. Ruth Hayden comes as a life saver as Dr, Madhusunan in *Life is What you Make It*. Mrs Hayden's Past, Psychotherapy techniques, Blue Balloon technique, positive vibrant energy at the age of 53 and single strong minded attitude transforms Ankita's worthless attitude to giving mind space to selective persons etc. Finally this positivity makes her to feel: Life is calling and I am awake... Let go anything that doesn't serve my growth, moment.

It's not actually the mental trauma or swings that affect them more but, our treatment and negligence worsen them. So aftermath of any disaster needs a complete, pure, innocent, plain care rather than voicing for their fears, criticising them and reminding of them their past. Even the toughest king needs comfort from time to time. Why not we offer our comfort to these ailed souls? Comfort and care heals the ailed soul

WORKS CITED:

Shenoy, Preeti. *Life is What You Make It*. New Delhi: Srishti Publishers, 2011

Shenoy, Preeti. *Wake Up Life is Calling*. New Delhi: Srishti Publishers, 2019

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Disability_studies#Definitions

<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/bipolar-disorder/index.shtml>

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/disability-studies>

<https://blog.aboutamazon.in/books-and-authors/i-thought-i-wouldnt-write-about-mental-health-again>

<https://www.goodreads.com/en/book/show/44574620-wake-up-life-is-calling>