

# Breaking Barriers

Creating Intergenerational Conversations  
on South Asian Mental Health

Nivedita Krishnakumar  
Public Health & Medicine  
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**RUTGERS**

Institute for Women's Leadership

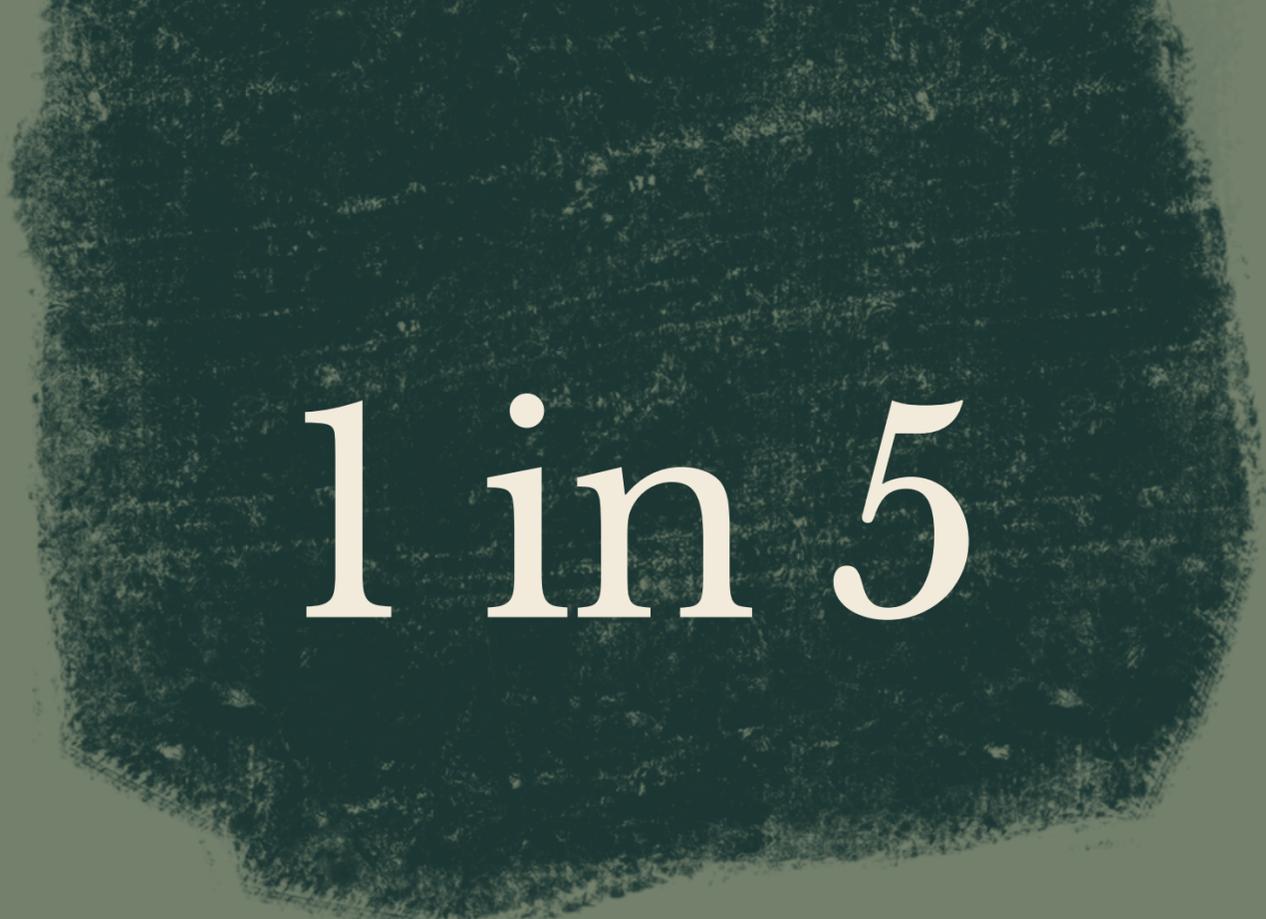
The Leadership Scholars Certificate Program is a two-year selective, interdisciplinary certificate program that prepares Rutgers undergraduate women to be informed, innovative, and socially responsible leaders.

Leadership Scholars design and implement social action projects to expand their understanding of issues and problems and to develop leadership skills.

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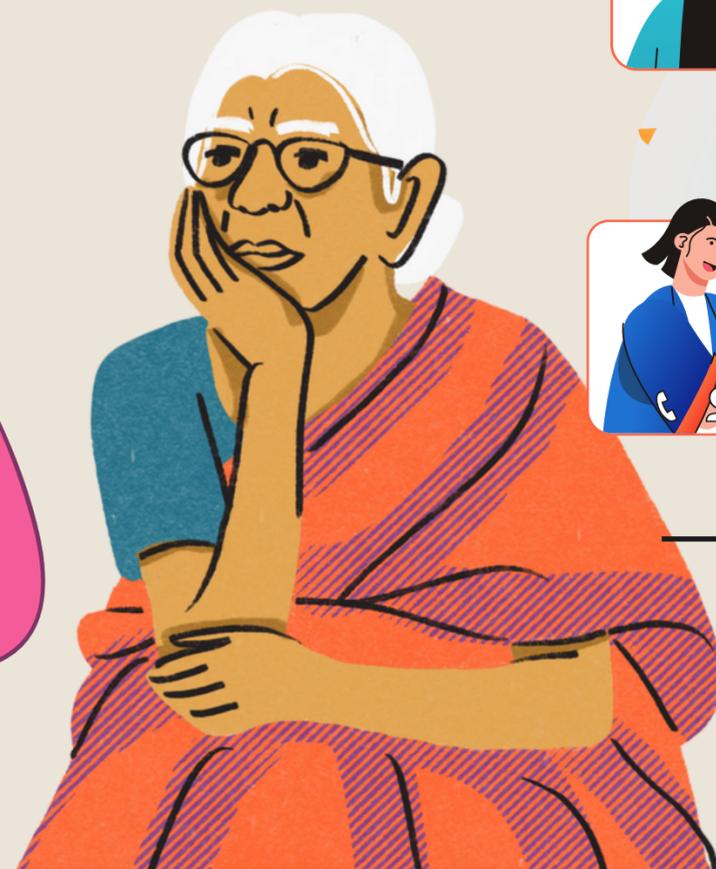
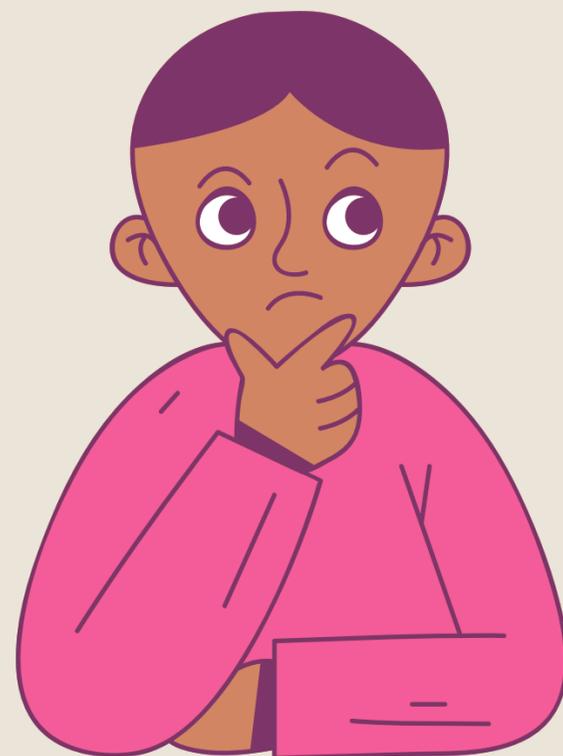
1 in 5



US South Asians report  
experiencing a mood or anxiety  
disorder in their lifetime.

# Log Kya Kahenge?

*What will people think?*



# BIGGEST CHALLENGES WHEN ACCESSING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Cost

Access to resources

Stigma

Language barrier

Hard to find a therapist from your culture

Transportation

Family opposition

# Goal Statement

My project seeks to foster intergenerational dialogue through a panel event and discussion to address the lack of conversation and stigma regarding mental health in the South Asian community



# Intellectual/Conceptual Foundation

## **Narrative Analysis**

Youth Activist Tool Guide

## **Importance of culturally sensitive language**

“Tension” in South Asian Women: Developing a Measure of Common Mental Disorder Using Participatory Methods

(Karasz et al)



## **Premise of Chai & Chat**

Mental Health Outreach to the South Asian  
Community  
(Aggarwal)

## Event



- Prepare the tote bags
- Prepare the food
- Prepare the venue + Zoom
- Host the panel event!
- Publish Exit Survey

## Outreach



- Set a date for the event at the AACCC
- Invite panelists
- Reach out to organizations to cosponsor

## Research



- Compile potential topics to focus the discussion
- Create mental health resource guide



## Timeline

# Marketing

**Chai & Chat**

Asian American Cultural Center  
49 Joyce Kilmer Ave,  
Piscataway, NJ 08854

Dec 5  
7-9 pm

Listen in to this author's lived experience during the panel!

How can I help my child manage stress and anxiety?  
What does it mean to take care of mental health?  
How do I know when they are struggling?

RSVP + Zoom link

For more information reach out to [nivedita.krishnakumar@rutgers.edu](mailto:nivedita.krishnakumar@rutgers.edu)

NAMI Sharing Hope  
National Alliance on Mental Illness

Empowering Mental Health Dialogues at a South Asian Dinner Table

**Chai & Chat**

Asian American Cultural Center

Dec 5  
7-9 pm

Listen in to this author's lived experience during the panel!

RSVP + Zoom link

M.A.R.

@nami

59 0 30 8

**Co-sponsored with**  
**5 Rutgers Clubs, 2 NJ Organizations**  
**1 National Organization**

# Questions Asked:

- What does mental health **care look like to you**?
- Have you experienced hesitancy or **cultural barriers** in addressing mental health topics within your family, if so, how did you overcome them?
- What role do you think family can play in creating a more **supportive environment** for mental health within the South Asian community?
- Have you tried looking for **therapy/counseling** and what do you look for in a good therapist?
- Can you share some **self-care strategies** that have been effective for you in managing the demands of academics and cultural expectations?
- What **advice** would you give to parents or kids who are trying to start this conversation at home?



# Mental Health Resource Guide

Overview

## Table of Contents

1. What is Mental Health
2. Organizations
3. Finding a Therapist
4. Tips for Self Care
5. Rutgers Resources



# The Event

**Heard the words I really needed to hear today and I really resonated with the panelists**

Having boundaries with yourself. I didn't think about this before until this conversation which was very insightful.

# Impact

I learned that it can be as simple as starting a conversation with a pleasantry like "how are you" to open up the possibilities of talking about mental health with my parents



**Next Up!**  
• **Fireside Chats in 2024**

# Feminist Leadership



**Leading by listening**



**Creating a collaborative  
space for dialogue**



**Self-Care &  
Mindfulness**

# Lesson Learned

Collaboration is key

Time management  
and adaptability

Don't underestimate  
the power of your  
network + support of  
your community



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- Charu Aggarwal, NAMI Consultant
- Malayalee Association of Rutgers
- Kerala Association of New Jersey
- Family + Friends <3



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