

Discrimination and Stigma Against Patients of Mental Health and Related Psychosocial Dilemmas.

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There has been a significant change in last decade in the area of mental health treatment. But the much needed approach in awareness of understanding the mental health problems is yet to be determined.

Aim: To identify lacunae in our socio-legal infrastructure that creates a risk for individual with mental disorder and associated others.

Method: Case study.

Observation: Tania, a 17 year old suffered a manic episode with psychotic symptoms following the rigours of her board exams. She was sexually disinhibited and claimed to be pregnant. Her family believed that she had tainted the family's honor and physically chastised her. They believed her male tutor to be the culprit and seriously assaulted him despite his pleas of innocence. The family even contemplated suicide en-masse to escape a life of shame.

They eventually consulted a psychiatrist and Tania recovered with treatment. She denied any sexual liaisons with her tutor. She recalled that she had seen images of nude males on her maternal uncle's laptop which had probably influenced her disinhibited sexualized behavior. The family relocated to a different city to escape scrutiny.

Tania's maternal uncle denied possession of porn images and insisted that he was determined to lead a celibate life.

The uncle's insisted that the tutor had several porn films on the latter's laptop. The uncle himself sought psychiatric help for anxiety disorder.

Discussion:

Who is to blame?

For the stress that caused a 17 years old to become psychotic ?

For the atrocities meted out to a psychotic girl and an innocent man by the people ignorant of mental health problems ?

For the near suicidal decision of a family ?

For a suspected closet homosexual's reluctance to come to terms with his own personality? And tendency to displace blame onto an innocent other ?

How may we remedy this ?

The relevant points will be discussed.