



NEWS LETTER

EDITORIAL

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THE FRIENDSHIP RECESSION: THE LOST ART OF CONNECTING

A friendship recession refers to the decline in the number and quality of close friendships. Despite digital tools that keep us “connected,” many report feeling lonelier than ever. Men, in particular, have seen a sharp decline in close friendships. Younger generations are more likely to report emotional distress tied to loneliness.

Nearly 1 in 5 persons say they have no friends at all. The average number of close friends has dropped from 3 to 1 over the last few decades. Loneliness is now considered a public health concern. The rise of the gig economy and economic pressures have made free time a luxury, a cultural crisis. “time for friends is a privilege, but it should be a matter of priority.”

It’s often said that if you ask an American what they do, they’ll tell you about their job, whereas a European might talk about their hobbies or passions. In India people will discuss about politics, policies and people around him. 77% of Americans work more than 40 hours per week, and few take their full paid leaves. Research suggests that the percentage of persons 65 and older who are employed has nearly doubled since 1987, rising from 11% to 19%. These shifts are in part driven by broader economic forces, higher cost of living and stagnating wages for low- and middle-income earners. Majority people place greater importance on extrinsic work rather than work that helps others and society. Yet finding fulfilment in work comes at the expense of meaningful personal relationships.

Socializing is increasingly deprioritized. Friendship is no longer seen as an integral part of daily life, but rather something we squeeze in when all our other responsibilities have been met. Teens are spending increasing amounts of time on devices and media. The average teen spends almost nine hours on daily screen, up from seven hours in 2015. Online friendships require a different set of social behaviours than in-person ones. Young people, growing up

immersed in digital interactions, are losing the opportunity to develop the in-person social skills that once defined deep human connection. Socially underdeveloped childhood leads to socially stunted adulthood. In short, we’re building a generation of people who do not know, and may not have the ability, to tolerate the messy work of forming friendships. Digital interaction has led to weaker connections and lower sense of mental well-being. Hearing a familiar voice reduces cortisol and boosts oxytocin—hormones tied to stress relief and bonding—while text-based communication and video calls fail to trigger the same response. Without these biological cues, digital interactions can feel strangely empty, reinforcing isolation rather than alleviating it.

Given the way our brains are wired, we also gravitate toward the safest, most familiar spaces—choosing the comfort of home and close family over the unpredictability of community spaces and new relationships.

While we’re more digitally linked than ever, many of us are losing the emotional skills and social structures that once fostered deep relationships. Face-to-face time has been replaced by text and social media and deep conversations replaced by likes and memes. Community spaces (third places like cafes, clubs, churches) are disappearing and Social skills like listening, vulnerability, conflict resolution are eroding.

It’s clear that something in our cultural fabric needs to change. The key lies in strengthening the two pillars of friendship: forming and sustaining connections. Three years back I contacted my early school friends and decided to have Sunday Lunch atleast once in 3 months. The group has been increasing and we never discuss Politics or Policies of Govt. We talk of family, school old golden times and share our personal life time experiences.

Cont. to Page 4

“संवाद, सहयोग, सेवा”- A DONOR - BENEFICIARY INTERACTIVE SESSION

The Department of Philanthropic Service, RGCIRC, recently hosted a special donor-beneficiary interactive session titled “संवाद, सहयोग, सेवा” on 19th September 2025 at the IP Hall, RGCIRC. This two-hour session aimed to foster meaningful dialogue between donors and beneficiaries, providing a platform for donors to witness firsthand the lives they have touched through their generous support.



Event Highlights

The conference commenced with the ceremonial lighting of the lamp, led by **Ms. Sushma Kaushal, Senior Patient Welfare Officer**, who welcomed the donors and beneficiaries warmly, setting a positive and inspiring tone for the event.

Mr. D.S. Negi, CEO of RGCIRC, delivered the welcome address, expressing heartfelt gratitude to the donors and highlighting how their contributions transform the lives of patients. He assured attendees that no patient would be denied treatment due to financial constraints, reinforcing RGCIRC's commitment to accessible care.

Dr. Gauri Kapoor, Medical Director (RGCIRC - Niti Bagh), and Dr. Archana Atreja, MS (RGCIRC), addressed the audience with sincere thanks, acknowledging the invaluable support of donors and emphasizing the hope and relief their contributions bring to patients and families.

A short film, “**Our Journey of Thanks – आभार गाथा,**” was then screened, showcasing patients expressing their heartfelt gratitude to the donors for their generosity.

The event also featured an inspiring segment with **Ms. Indrani Patatunda, GM, CSR, (GAIL India Limited)**, a cancer survivor, who shared her personal journey and experiences. Her story of courage and resilience motivated patients and survivors to continue their fight with determination and hope. The following donor partners participated in the interactive session:

1. Coal India Limited
2. GAIL India Limited
3. Indian Cancer Society – Delhi Branch
4. Indian Cancer Society – Mumbai
5. Shree Ram Krishna Sewa Sansthan
6. Yuvraj Singh foundation
7. Relaxo India Limited

8. Bhiwani Parivar Maitri Sangh
9. Hind Agro Sales
10. Forever New Apparels Pvt. Ltd.
11. DKMS Foundation



Several donor representatives also offered words of encouragement, including Mr. Amit Dogra from Coal India Limited, Ms. Renuka Prasad of the Indian Cancer Society – Delhi Branch, Ms. Sachita V. Chawhan from the Indian Cancer Society – Mumbai, Mr. Mahendra Tayal and Ms. Meenakshi Garg of the Bhiwani Parivar Maitri Sangh, Mr. Prateek Bhatnagar from Forever New Apparels Pvt. Ltd., and Dr. Nitin Agarwal representing the DKMS Foundation.

The beneficiaries expressed their gratitude not only for the financial support but also for the emotional encouragement, acknowledging that donors and RGCIRC have stood by them through their journey, offering care, compassion, and hope.

A **one-hour open forum** provided an interactive space where donors and beneficiaries connected directly, fostering meaningful conversations and allowing donors to witness the impact of their generosity.

The event concluded with a **lunch and a vote of thanks**, where donors were appreciated with a token of gratitude for their continued support, leaving everyone with a sense of fulfillment and shared purpose.

The success of this event was made possible due to the dedicated efforts of Ms. Swarnima Jaitley, Head of Philanthropic Services, along with Karan Kumar, Senior Patient Welfare Executive, and Upashna Rawat, Executive, whose commitment ensured a smooth and impactful experience for all involved.

The day was a true celebration of generosity, compassion, and the transformative power of philanthropy.



WARRIORS MEET 3.0 - CELEBRATING WORLD PHYSIOTHERAPY DAY 2025

THEME: “UNBREAKABLE: STORIES THAT SHINE”

Department of Physiotherapy & Onco-Rehabilitation at RGCIRC(Rajiv Gandhi Cancer Institute & Research Centre), Rohini, celebrated **World Physiotherapy Day 2025** with its flagship event – **Warriors Meet 3.0** – on **6th September 2025** at Indraprastha Hall, B Block to spread the awareness of physical activity in cancer survivors.



The program commenced with an inspiring Inaugural Address by **Mr. D.S. Negi, CEO – RGCIRC**.

The occasion was marked with the blessings of **Dr. Sudhir Rawal, Medical Director & Chief of Genito-Uro-Oncology Services**.

Dr. Gauri Kapoor, Medical Director – RGCIRC, Niti Bagh & Director – Paediatric Hematology & Oncology, delivered the Opening Remarks, followed by a warm welcome note from Dr. Archana Atreja, Medical Superintendent, setting the tone for an engaging and impactful day.

Key highlights included:

- **A Tribute to Our Warriors – Virtual Tour** by **Dr. Navneet Singh (PT), Head PT- Department of Physiotherapy & Onco-Rehabilitation**
- **Panel Discussion:** “Because Movement is the Beginning of Healing”, featuring eminent oncologists, surgeons, and rehabilitation experts, moderated by Dr. Archana Atreja
- **Heartfelt Patient Stories:** Patients and caregivers shared their personal stories, challenges, and triumphs, creating a supportive environment where everyone felt heard and understood
- **Networking Opportunities:** Attendees had the chance to network with others in similar situations, building connections that extend beyond the meeting. Many expressed appreciation for the opportunity to meet others who understand their experiences
- **Wellness Assessments:** Lymphedema measurements, Balance assessment, and body composition evaluation

Warriors Meet 3.0 reinforced the message that **cancer may challenge the body, but together we remain unbreakable.**



CME WITH ASSOCIATION OF PHYSICIANS OF INDIA (API) HISAR, HARYANA



RGCIRC organized an Oncology CME in association with the Association of Physicians of India (API), Hisar, Haryana, Saturday, 06th September 2025, at Hotel Lazeez, Lajpat Nagar, Hisar, Haryana. Dr. L. M. Darlong, Head – Thoracic Oncosurgery, delivered an insightful lecture on **“Advances in Thoracic Oncosurgery to Diabetes & Obesity in Lung Cancer – Newer Insights”**. The session shed light on the evolving landscape of thoracic oncosurgery, particularly

addressing the interplay between metabolic disorders such as diabetes and obesity with lung cancer outcomes, offering attendees the latest clinical insights and advancements in surgical oncology.

I have few suggestions on ways to make forming friendships a priority:

1. **Invite a group of people**—ideally, these are individuals who share a mutual interest in forming lasting friendships or share a common goal. The key is to gather people who are open to connection.
2. **Choose an activity** that allows the group to explore a new “frontier”, something unknown. The goal is to create an environment where everyone is learning and navigating something unfamiliar together.
3. **Set the intention**—clearly share the purpose or goal of the activity.
4. **Sustain relationship** - Forming friendships is only half the battle. As such, sustaining them requires intentional effort, particularly in a culture that prioritizes work and family over social ties. This means making active choices to spend time with friends—even when it feels inconvenient.
5. **Repeat and repeat**—consistency doesn't mean monotony. If you have regular dinners, try hosting

with rotating themes like “comfort food” or “childhood favourites.”

6. **Prioritize People:** Treat friendship as vital, not optional.
7. **Go Deep and deep:** Focus on fewer, deeper connections. Open up. Let people really know you.
8. **Reconnect Offline:** Make time for in-person connections.
9. **Create Community:** Join or build spaces where people can gather regularly. Invest in relationships—add up to and actively shape the culture we live in.

Friendship is not a luxury — it's a lifeline. In a world that's always online but often emotionally offline, relearning the art of connection may be one of the most radical, healing acts we can do.

"रफ़्तार ज़िन्दगी की कुछ यूँ बनाये रख ग़ालिब, कि दुश्मन भले आगे निकल जाएँ पर... दोस्ती पीछे ना छूटे"

Dr. A. K. Dewan
Director - Surgical Oncology

Mr. D. S. Negi (Chief Executive Officer)
Dr. S. K. Rawal (Medical Director)
Dr. D. C. Doval
Dr. Gauri Kapoor
Dr. Anurag Mehta
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