

PREPARED FOR

Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling

# Student Wellbeing in Competitive Exam Preparation

A Mental Health Framework for Coaching Institutes

Presented by Dr. Priya Dubey Sharma

Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling

UDYAM-MP-10-0120839



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## Programme Overview

Coaching centres in India are often at the forefront of student anxiety during intense competitive preparation. This programme equips faculty and management with essential tools to support student mental wellbeing effectively.

### Learning Objectives

- ✓ Understand the unique psychological pressures faced by students preparing for competitive exams, recognizing why these challenges are critical for academic success and personal growth.
- ✓ Develop the ability to identify early indicators of distress in students, enabling timely and sensitive support that can prevent escalation.
- ✓ Learn practical, evidence-based intervention strategies that can be easily integrated into daily interactions by faculty and staff.
- ✓ Establish a clear understanding of when and how to refer students for specialized support, ensuring a seamless escalation pathway.
- ✓ Implement proactive strategies to foster a positive and supportive living and learning environment within hostel and campus settings.

#### WHO SHOULD ATTEND

This programme is designed for coaching faculty, counsellors, directors, and hostel wardens involved in the academic and residential care of students preparing for competitive examinations.

## Programme Content

### 1. Understanding the Psychological Landscape of Competitive Exam Preparation

Students preparing for exams like JEE, NEET, and UPSC face immense pressure, often leading to feelings of inadequacy, intense competition stress, and fear of failure. This intense environment can manifest as sleep disturbances, appetite changes, and social withdrawal, significantly impacting their academic performance and overall happiness. Understanding these common psychological reactions is the first step towards providing effective support. This session will delve into the specific stressors unique to the Indian competitive exam context, from the pressure of parental expectations to the relentless pace of syllabus coverage.

 **Activity: Group discussion: Sharing common student stressors observed.**

### 2. Recognising Early Indicators of Student Distress

Faculty and hostel wardens are often the first to notice changes in a student's behaviour. Subtle shifts like a decline in academic engagement, increased irritability, persistent sadness, or physical complaints without clear medical cause can be early warning signs. It is crucial to recognise these indicators promptly, as early intervention can significantly mitigate potential negative outcomes. This session will provide practical guidance on observing behavioural changes, understanding their potential significance, and approaching students with empathy and concern.

 **Activity: Case study analysis: Identifying distress signals in hypothetical scenarios.**

### 3. Simple Faculty Interventions for Enhanced Student Support

Equipping faculty with simple, yet effective, strategies can make a profound difference in a student's journey. This includes active listening, providing constructive feedback, encouraging breaks, and fostering a growth mindset rather than a fixed one. Small gestures of support, such as acknowledging effort and progress, can build student resilience and reduce anxiety. This session will equip you with practical communication techniques and simple encouragement strategies that can be easily integrated into your daily interactions.

 **Activity: Role-playing: Practicing empathetic communication.**

#### 4. Establishing a Clear Escalation Pathway for Referrals

While faculty can offer initial support, knowing when a situation requires professional help is vital. This involves understanding the limits of informal support and establishing a clear, confidential pathway for referring students to dedicated counsellors or mental health professionals. A well-defined referral system ensures that students receive appropriate care without delay, safeguarding their wellbeing. This session will outline how to create and communicate such a pathway within your institute.

 **Activity: Developing a referral flowchart for the institute.**

#### 5. Fostering Wellbeing in Hostel and Living Environments

The living environment plays a significant role in a student's overall wellbeing. Creating a supportive hostel atmosphere that encourages healthy routines, social connection, and peer support is crucial. Simple practices like promoting adequate sleep, balanced nutrition, and opportunities for recreation can buffer stress. This session will explore practical strategies for hostel wardens and staff to cultivate a positive and nurturing living space that supports academic success and mental health.

 **Activity: Brainstorming: Creating a 'Wellbeing Checklist' for hostels.**

#### 6. Building a Culture of Mental Wellness in Coaching Institutes

Sustaining a focus on mental wellbeing requires a systemic approach. This involves integrating mental health awareness into the institute's culture, policies, and daily operations. Leadership buy-in and consistent messaging about the importance of mental health are key. This session will guide participants on how to champion mental wellness initiatives, promote open conversations about mental health, and create an environment where seeking help is normalized and encouraged.

 **Activity: Action planning: Identifying one initiative to implement in the next quarter.**



## Action Plan

Concrete steps for implementation.

Action	Owner	Timeline	Notes
Conduct an internal assessment of current student support mechanisms.	Management/HR	Week 1	Identify existing resources and potential gaps in student mental health support.
Schedule mandatory training sessions for all faculty and hostel wardens.	HR/Training Department	Month 1	Ensure all staff attend the programme to gain essential skills and awareness.
Develop and disseminate a clear referral protocol for students needing specialized support.	Counselling Department/HR	Week 2	Document the process for identifying, approaching, and referring students to external or internal counsellors.
Implement one new wellbeing initiative in hostel common areas.	Hostel Management	Month 1	Examples include designated quiet zones, group exercise sessions, or hobby clubs.
Integrate mental health awareness messages into regular student communications.	Marketing/Communications	Month 2	Use notice boards, newsletters, and digital platforms to normalize conversations about mental health.
Establish a regular feedback mechanism on student wellbeing.	Leadership/HR	Quarter 1	Collect anonymous feedback from students regarding their experience and perceived support levels.

## About Manas



### Dr. Priya Dubey Sharma

Founder & Consulting Psychologist | Applied, Organizational & Behavioural Psychologist | PhD | 18+ Years

Dr. Priya Dubey Sharma brings 18+ years of applied psychology to corporate wellness. She has worked with SBI, educational institutions, and corporate teams across India. Her evidence-based approach combines CBT, mindfulness, and culturally contextualised psychology for measurable outcomes. She is the creator of the Performance FOMO Index™ and the High-Functioning Distress Framework™.

### Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling

A MSME-registered organisation dedicated to evidence-based mental wellness.

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**Disclaimer:** This document has been prepared by Dr. Priya Dubey Sharma – Founder & Consulting Psychologist (Applied, Organizational & Behavioural Psychologist, PhD, 18+ years), Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling (UDYAM-MP-10-0120839). Content is for programme overview and educational purposes only. Nothing herein constitutes legal advice regarding POSH Act compliance – organisations should consult qualified legal counsel for specific legal guidance. For clinical or psychological support, please reach out to the Manas Team for personalised guidance, or consult a qualified Psychiatrist or licensed mental health professional. © 2026 Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling. All rights reserved. Confidential – prepared specifically for the named organisation. For queries: [manu@manas365.com](mailto:manu@manas365.com) | +91 99818 13224