

Voices of Life Lecture Series

Lecture #6

&

Observation of World Kindness Day

Date: 28th November, 2025

Online Platform: Zoom

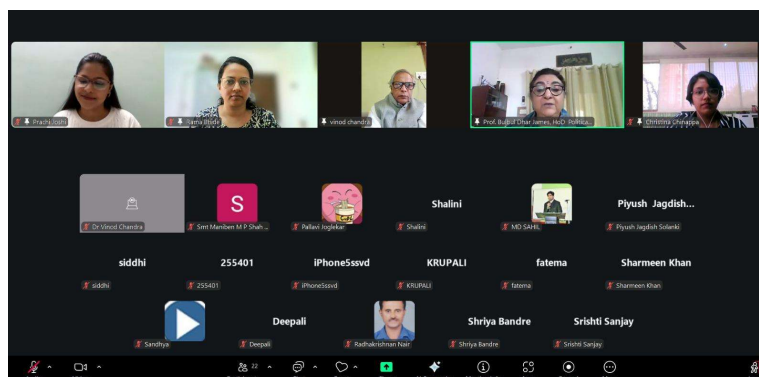
Organized by: Indian Association of Life Skills Education (IALSE), Chennai & Smt. Maniben M. P. Shah Women's College of Arts & Commerce, Mumbai

In Collaboration With: Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi

EVENT REPORT

The Voices of Life Lecture Series is an initiative of the Indian Association of Life Skills Education (IALSE) that equips individuals with essential life skills and promotes holistic wellbeing. The term 'Voice of Life' embodies a beacon of hope, education and empowerment, aiming to amplify voices of resilience, purpose, and positive change. By undertaking this initiative, IALSE seeks to empower individuals to resist harmful temptations, make positive choices and create a culture of positivity and resilience.

Lecture #6 of the Voices of Life Lecture Series was held on November 28, 2025, as part of the observance of World Kindness Day. First introduced in 1998 by the World Kindness Movement, the day highlights the value of compassion, empathy, and the power of small actions that strengthen human bonds. The lecture focused on the idea that kindness is not only a virtue but a core component of emotional intelligence, shaping relationships, communities, and personal growth.



The event began with a warm opening by student compere Christina Chinappa, a second year M.A. Psychology student from Smt. MMP Shah Women's College of Arts & Commerce. She reflected on how the series had already explored themes such as drug abuse, population concerns, single working women, suicide prevention, and mental health awareness. Her opening line, "Kindness is the simplest gift we can offer, yet the one that stays the longest with someone", beautifully set the tone for the evening and invited the audience to reflect on the impact of small, compassionate actions.

The welcome address was delivered by Ms. Prachi Joshi, Core Faculty, Department of Psychology at Smt. MMP Shah Women's College of Arts & Commerce. She highlighted the essence of World Kindness Day as a reminder to pause, soften, and return to human connection in a world that often moves

too fast. She explained how kindness goes beyond polite behaviour and becomes a meaningful life skill that shapes emotional intelligence and personal relationships.

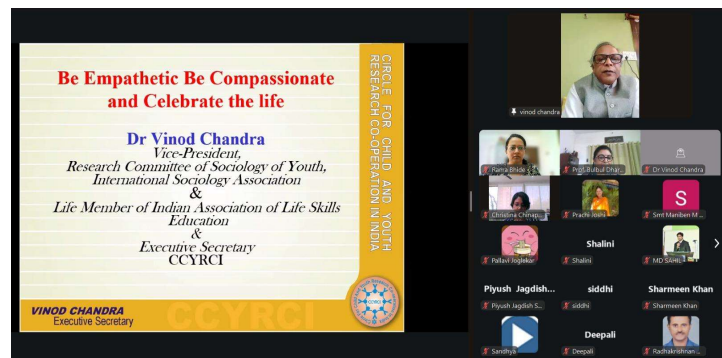
Prof. Bulbul Dhar James, HOD, Political Science, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, delivered an insightful Presidential Address, drawing attention to the role of kindness in leadership, governance, and social development. She spoke about emotional intelligence as a collective responsibility, something that influences not only individual behaviour but the functioning of families, organizations, and society at large. She highlighted how empathy and kindness are foundational for understanding human behaviour and building inclusive spaces.



Her address prepared the ground for a deeper exploration of the lecture's theme.

The keynote address was delivered by Prof. Dr. Vinod Chandra, Principal, Sri Jai Narain Misra Post Graduate College (KKC), Lucknow. With a PhD from the University of Warwick through a Commonwealth Academic Staff Scholarship and over 30 years of experience in teaching, research, and academic leadership, Prof. Chandra brought a rich sociological lens to the theme of kindness and emotional intelligence.

His session was reflective, engaging, and deeply rooted in real-life experiences. Prof. Chandra approached kindness by first explaining the heart of emotional intelligence: empathy. While psychology describes empathy through emotional and cognitive processes, he emphasized that sociology views it as a bridge between people, communities, and cultures. His experiences in fieldwork and community



research helped him present empathy not as a textbook concept, but as a living, everyday practice. He defined empathy as “feeling with someone” rather than “feeling for someone.” Empathy asks for active involvement, understanding another person’s perceptions, emotions, and lived experiences, and responding with sincerity and acceptance. Sympathy, he explained, is often momentary and superficial, whereas empathy leads to connection and meaningful action. To illustrate this, he shared a childhood memory: feeling sorry for an injured stranger is sympathy; stopping to help them, staying with them, or taking them to the hospital is empathy. Empathy moves a person from emotion to responsibility.

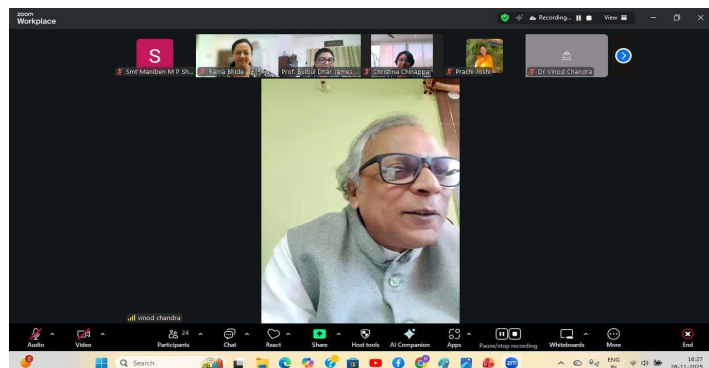
Prof. Chandra highlighted why empathy is essential in daily life. People interpret situations differently based on their backgrounds, emotions, and experiences. Even within one family, the same event can be seen through six different perspectives. Empathy helps reduce misunderstandings, encourages healthier communication, and strengthens interpersonal bonds. He explained that empathy enables individuals to

see situations from another person's perspective, suspend judgment, stay open to differing viewpoints, understand emotions more fully, and communicate that understanding with honesty and sensitivity.

Drawing on sociological theory, he outlined four key attributes of an empathetic individual: the ability to grasp another person's perceptions and feelings; the capacity to broaden one's own thinking by viewing situations through others' perspectives; the discipline to remain value-neutral and non-judgmental despite personal biases shaped by one's background; and the skill to convey this understanding with care and appropriateness. He emphasized that empathy is not just for psychologists but is essential for sociologists, teachers, administrators, researchers, and citizens. It helps people understand human behaviour in fuller, more realistic ways.

Prof. Chandra also highlighted that empathy is a learnable life skill. While some individuals may naturally be more empathetic, everyone can cultivate empathy through active listening, self-awareness, imagination, and meaningful interaction. When paired with compassion and kindness, empathy becomes transformative. Compassion gives empathy a moral direction, and kindness brings it into action, creating relationships and communities that are humane, respectful, and emotionally healthy. His lecture beautifully tied kindness to emotional intelligence, making the audience reflect on how small, thoughtful actions can shape stronger inner growth and more connected societies. (Prof. Chandra's slides have been attached as Annexure I).

The session then moved into the audience interaction segment, where Prof. Bulbul Dhar James appreciated the wide scope of Prof. Chandra's lecture and reflected on how today's generation often teaches their parents new ways of thinking - a form of reverse socialization she frequently observes in her sensitization workshops. She emphasized that while educators expect empathy from students, it is equally important for teachers to embody empathy, openness, and consistency in their own actions.

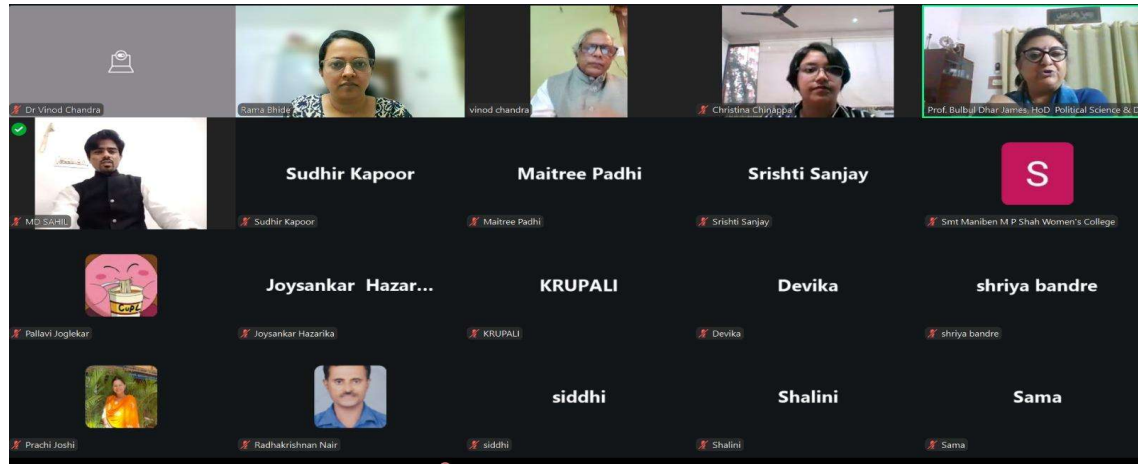


In response, Prof. Chandra agreed wholeheartedly and stressed that modern teaching requires building genuine connections with students, listening without hierarchy, and engaging with them at their level. Their exchange added depth and warmth to the session, reinforcing the central message that empathy grows when people model kindness in their everyday interactions.

The Vote of Thanks was delivered by Ms. Rama Bhide, Secretary, IALSE. She expressed heartfelt gratitude to Prof. Vinod Chandra for an enriching and thought-provoking keynote address, and to Prof. Bulbul Dhar James for her insightful Presidential Address. She thanked Ms. Prachi Joshi for her warm welcome address, and acknowledged the efforts of the organizing teams of IALSE, Smt. MMP Shah Women's College of Arts & Commerce, and Jamia Millia Islamia for coordinating the event. She expressed appreciation to all participants for their engagement.

The lecture concluded with a collective reminder that kindness, though simple, carries a powerful impact. As World Kindness Day encourages small acts of empathy and compassion, it can make daily life gentler and relationships more meaningful. The session inspired participants to continue nurturing emotional intelligence through understanding, openness, and kindness in action.

Lecture #6 added another important chapter to the Voices of Life Series, emphasizing that when people choose kindness, they help create a world that feels more humane, supportive, and connected.



Report Prepared by:

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