

## **International Women's Day Celebration – 2023**

AMSUK Women's Forum hosted a celebration of International Women's Day 2023 on Sunday 12th March at Shree Krishna Temple Dudley.

The build up to the event included having a few meetings via Zoom, agreeing a format and the delegation of tasks! As always, team work was key.

The day of the event began with our chosen venue buzzing with the early shift of volunteers preparing tea and nasto, as a warm welcome, for our attendees.

We were delighted with the interest in the event and had 140 people support it.

As is our tradition, the programme began with prayers and our immediate past Chairperson, Roshniben, having the honour of lighting the Divo.

International Women's Day is designed to celebrate women and to bring issues that affect women, to the fore. Following this ethos, one of our chosen topics was, managing menopause. A subject that is little talked about and is taboo!

As a prelude to the talk, we had a short skit about Menopause.

Who better to deliver this than the Wembley Mandhata duo - Kantaben and Sushma, who despite the serious topic, had us chuckling, as their words resonated with many of us!

To deliver the talk on Menopause, we had an enthusiastic and experienced speaker, Bhavna Patel, whose background is, providing specialised bespoke well-being programmes and who is currently involved in an inequality research project with the NHS, as well as being an holistic therapist.

She engaged the audience with an informative, interactive style, referencing her own 'lived experience'. Questions from the floor too, were expertly answered.

Prior to our event, given the subject of the talk, the question posed by some was whether this would be a 'women only' event.

Our response was, what affects women is also of consequence to men and the family as a whole. The more awareness there is of this and many many health issues, the better armed we are to understand and deal with them. Hence the event was open to all.

Our second topic was, 'Dealing with Dementia', Another sensitive issue that has a stigma attached!

Drawing from her own experience, our knowledgeable speaker, Jyotiben Joshi also covered, with empathy, the delicate issue of 'care home' or 'home care', concluding that there is no right or wrong. It is what suits individual needs and what the immediate family feel would be in the best interest of everyone involved in the care giving.

A session, effectively delivered with compassion and understanding.

We had the opportunity of sharing our experiences and pertinent questions were asked, discussed and honestly answered.

We are extremely grateful to both our invited guests for their time, expertise and invaluable

advice.

Of particular benefit, was that they were able to connect with the audience at every level, speaking in Gujarati was definitely a welcome bonus.

It was soon time to natter, laugh and lunch together. A delicious meal was catered by Gitaben from Birmingham, whom we would like to thank for her accommodating efforts.

Thank you to our 'kitchen coordinators' and 'superb serving team' too.

The afternoon began with our appreciation for all who helped beforehand and on the day. The creative decor, providing a beautiful backdrop, was much appreciated.

Thank you to Nailesh, our AMSUK Youth Forum Lead and to Bina and Nikita, who gave us an overview of their immediate and future plans. They appreciated what the community had done for the youth thus far and that we are still a huge part of their future. To this end, we pledge our support for the continuity of our Samaj, through our youth wing, with whom we hope to work hand in hand.

Everyone was eagerly awaiting the afternoon's 'Music Magic'. We were not disappointed! Nimesh Sanghoi entertained us with his wonderful numbers adding his quirky, inimitable style which had us all engaged and delighted! Of course, it was not long before we took to the dance floor!

Our day ended all too soon - we had had, a wonderful time of celebration and informative interaction.

Thank you so so much to everyone who attended, you made our day! We look forward to your company at our next event.

A huge thank you to our dedicated volunteers, one and all, whose help allowed for the smooth running and success of our event.

A big shout out to Vijay and the venue management for being so accommodating and for looking after us throughout the day.

Thank you to the AMSUK President, Hasmukhbhai and his committee for the encouragement and support afforded to us, this includes the invaluable help and support of the Mandir Committee, ensuring the success of our event.

Funding such events is never easy. A special thank you to all the contributors for the 'extra' that you so kindly donated. Your generosity helps a great deal and it means that we can hold many more such 'self-funding' events.

The speakers have very kindly agreed to share their talk with us, by providing their informative slides for our benefit.

Please note that medical advice must be sought before embarking on the use of anything that has been suggested within these slides.

Ladies, here's to us - let's reshape the conversation and make our voices heard, in the best possible way - "there is no limit to what we as women can accomplish" and we welcome all

members of our Samaj to be the driving force that spurs us on to serve and to deliver the very best that we can.