



Directors: Sneha Kashyap Thakur (Founder/President), Bharti Agarwal (Vice President), Akriti (Secretary)

Leads: Chakshu Arora (Team Lead), Cynthia Ceil Shah (Volunteers lead)

Team: Devika Kattula, Ritu Sharma, Rohini Reddy, Dhruvi Mehra, Kinjal Shah

About Us:

Hello Divas,
Thanks for being part of IDIA. By now, we hope you know that IDIA (Inspiring Divas In Americas) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization for South Asian women welfare. It's an organization **for the women, of the women, and by the women**. Our mission is to build this collaborative and empathetic environment to Engage, Enhance, Enable and Empower women with an aim to build a safe space where creativity, learning, life experiences, passion for the causes we care about are nurtured. With 20+ women welfare programs and a community of 2.2k members within a year, we hope to benefit a lot of south Asian women in Austin. We also look forward to more collaboration from all!

From the editor's desk:

One day while grocery shopping, I hesitantly picked up a pack of peeled garlic cloves. Later on, every time I used the garlic, I thanked myself for buying it & allowing myself the luxury of having taken the shortcut of peeled garlic. Those peeled cloves of garlic made me realize **"It's okay to ask for help, and it feels good to receive it"**. It got me thinking about how women cringe to ask for help, sometimes at the cost of our own mental health.

In most South Asian homes, traditionally the women take up most of the household chores along with the emotional labor of running a home. It is ok to take family's help in fulfilling smaller tasks like groceries or washing dishes, which could make a huge impact on their daily stress levels. The pandemic has not helped the situation as well with a record increase in stress and anxiety.

Moreover, social media with its constant information overload has only added to stress levels as we women keep comparing our lives to the idyllic posts of random strangers on IG. It is important to understand the early symptoms of chronic stress (sleep or appetite changes, feelings of irritability or hopelessness, lack of energy, and concentration) which can lead to anxiety, depression, and other stress-induced diseases. If you feel any of these symptoms, seek help immediately! Seek help from friends, family; talk to your doctor or Ob/gyn who can point you to a behavioral health specialist. There is a lot of taboo in our culture about seeking help for mental health. It is often dismissed as **"Sab theek ho Jayega (Everything will be fine)"**, but more often than not, you might need help.

I have compiled a high level list of Austin area community organizations that specialize in mental health :

ASIAN FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES OF AUSTIN (AFSA): afssaustin.org | info@afssaustin.org | 877-281-8371

BLUEBONNET TRAILS COMMUNITY SERVICES: bbtrails.org
General: 844-309-6385 | 800-841-1255

WHAT'S IN THE MIRROR: whatsinthemirror.org
info@whatsinthemirror.org | 737-704-1641

NAMI CENTRAL TEXAS (NATIONAL ALLIANCE ON MENTAL ILLNESS) NAMICentralTX.org | info@namicentraltx.org | 512-420-9810

This is what some of our team members said when asked **"How do you take mental health break?"**

"Drop everything, breathe and try to get a workout" - Dhruvi

"I stop looking at the condition of the house" - Ritu

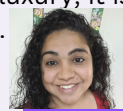
"Normal day, I make an effort to go out at least once in the sunlight and take a walk to clear my mind and workout" - Reema

"I vent to my closest friends & journal if I find the time" - Cynthia

"Mental health begins from the mind and has a chain link of thoughts. I break the link by completely distracting myself. And I do a few things to distract myself based on where I am" - Jyoti.

I came across this proverb that says, **"Be strong enough to stand alone, Smart enough to know when to need help, and Brave enough to ask for it"** May we all be smart, brave and strong. Your mental health is as important as your families and those you take care of. Mental health is not a luxury, it is a priority. And only you can prioritize it for yourself.

Priyanka Bhatt
IDIA Editorial Team



Quarterly highlights!!!

Women Wellness Seminar with Dr. Niveditha Manokaran and Dr. Tanaya Narendra

This July, IDIA organized a **2-day Wellness Seminar** where we invited Doctors cum influencers to talk on Health and Wellness. This event was sponsored by 3 successful entrepreneurs- **Jyotsna Paul**(Life Insurance Agent), **Sheela Sharon**(Realtor), & **Meena Reddy**(My Snaps Photography). 60+ women joined the Seminar and had their questions answered!



Day 1 (July 23rd) was an online event on, "**Are you in a healthy relationship?**" with **Dr. Niveditha Manokaran** AKA @**dr_nive_untaboos** who is a highly accomplished Doctor in sexual & reproductive health, passionate about women's health, sex educator, domestic violence awareness advocator, a TEDx speaker and what not!

Our key takeaways from the session:

- **Seek Counseling** - Are there any red flags in your relationship? Having a third party intervene might help!
- **Recognize Abuse** - Abuse can come in the form of mental, emotional, physical, or even financial
- **YOUR Safety First** - your physical safety is the most important step in leaving a toxic relationship
- **Have a Plan** - Consult with family and friends on how you can leave with a support system

Day 2 (July 30th) was an in-person event on Let's Talk Women's Health" with **Dr. Tanaya Narendra** AKA @**dr_cuterus** who is an Award-winning, Oxford University trained doc who talks SEX(ual health) on the interwebz with over 1M followers!



Our key takeaways from the session:

- **NO to Douching**- Can cause a higher risk for ovarian cancer, STI, and infections
- **Self Breast Exam** - Once every month, preferably 1 week after periods
- **Birth Control Options**- Hormones are not bad. Talk to your Doc for the right treatment



- **PCOS Health** - Symptoms show differently for every woman and can be managed with the help of a Doctor

IDIA joins the Freedom parade at the Capitol

IDIA is grateful to be invited and proud to have participated as a non-profit organization in the Freedom Parade festival organized for celebrating INDIA's Independence Day at the Capitol. IDIA team with its 20+ volunteers joined the parade and enlightened 100+ people about its programs!!!



Coming from a patriarchal society, South Asian women are largely excluded from making decisions, have limited access to/control over resources, restricted in their mobility, and are often under threat of violence from male relatives when these women land in the States.



IDIA participated to show how it can support these women with its community and resources, at-least in Austin. This August when we celebrated **INDEPENDENCE DAY** with Pakistan and India, we ensured that every women who stopped by our booth knew IDIA exists for them to help them feel physically, mentally, financially, and socially independent.

IDIA Core Team Brainstorming Session



The Core Team met at the Domain to plan the next quarter and celebrated the success of this quarter's events. A big THANK YOU to all you Divas for helping &

supporting us by participating and engaging for us to grow as an Org. **We are because you are** ❤️



Nukkad Adda (Networking Meetup):



We were back with our Nukkad Adda again this quarter. And this time it was in South-West Austin in Hill country Galleria at FoliePop's. With "IDIA NUKKAD ADDA" our purpose is to create that one spot in every zone where women/girls can meet on a regular basis every quarter. Our ADDA/meet-ups are held to instill the social aspect of our women empowerment program by setting up this cadence to generic meetup, wellbeing meetup, hiking meetup, bookclub, toastmaster, playdates with kids, volunteering activities, etc. 🍷🍷🍷
This was our first meet-up in South Austin where approx. 50 Divas joined us and we brewed some fun conversations, learned about IDIA's 5 pillar programs, upcoming events and shared their feedback! ♥

CLASSIFIED

Win & be Featured on our IG!!!



Post answers on your IG/FB story and tag

@idiauxa to win!

Winner will be decided by our Core Team

Hints:

1. This speaker came to talk to IDIA about all things women health
2. This speaker came to talk to IDIA about healthy relationships
3. She was featured on IDIA's IG as the first South Asian Woman in Space
4. This is one of the Texas' resources for mental illness support
5. More 40% of South Asian women as they still cannot exercise this human right
6. The "I" in IDIA
7. [Two words] Means "corner/square" and "hangout". Came from the idea that men would meet, talk, and make friends and now IDIA reclaims it for our Zonal Meetups.
8. "For the __, by the __, of the __"

Advertise here!!

Want to get you/your business featured in our newsletter? Shoot us an email at divasinaustin@gmail.com

New Member Alert !!

IDIA Welcomes Chakshu Arora to the core team



“Hey, I am Chakshu aka ‘enlightened misfit’. I am currently living in Austin/Manor area and hail from Punjab/Haryana in India. I am a passionate soul, hence I love to explore new avenues both personally and socially. I came across IDIA around a year ago and saw how this non profit org was providing a perfect platform to not just meet with like-minded women but also with a safe space to step out of your comfort zone & change the world inside out. When I further learnt about IDIA's mission, vision and value , it motivated me to join IDIA's core team. And since this year I have been enjoying my journey proudly with IDIA, as a TEAM LEAD. My experience with IDIA so far has been better than I could have ever imagined. IDIA has helped me understand various ways women can be empowered. Everyday since I have joined, I have led efforts on various women engagement & enablement activities by IDIA. In the process, I have learned and shared mental/ physical strengths, vulnerabilities, experiences with the women tribe leading to mutual growth and empowerment. My hope with IDIA is that I am able to share my growth and learnings with all South Asian women in Austin and help them grow. As we always say- **“We R Bcoz U R”** Let **#idiabethechange**

8 Oct - IDIA fun Booth @Diwali at Domain

22 Oct - IDIA RR Diwali act

6 Nov - IDIA family picnic

