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**Dr K L Narayanan**  
(1957-2008)  
MBBS MD

It is extremely difficult to write something about Dr Narayanan, who was one of the most sincere and dedicated mental health professional who laid down his life for the suffering humanity. I feel honoured to write something about him for the special issue, which has been planned by the editorial team of the Bengal Journal of Psychiatry.

I became acquainted with Dr Narayanan (we used to call him “Naru”) in the year 1983 when we were doing our post graduation in psychiatry. He was a person with a different mind. It took me months to discover that he was actually from Kerala, so good was his knowledge and vocabulary in Bengali.

Dr K L Narayanan was born on 26th January, 1957 in his maternal grandparents’ house at Kerala. He grew up in Kolkata and attended National High School for Boys at Hazra Road. He was always a good student and was among the top boys in the school. Since his school days he dreamt of becoming a doctor so that he could serve the ailing people who were economically backward in the society. His dream came true when he joined National Medical college at Kolkata through joint entrance exam.

He was a self made man as he raised the expense of his studies by doing private tuitions. He was a

voracious reader and was very popular with his fellow students because of his altruistic mind. Though his parents wanted to send him abroad, he preferred to stay back in Kolkata to do his post graduation. He got through the MD entrance exam and did his post graduation in Psychiatry. Just after passing MD he joined Antara, a small hospital at Baruipur, a small town near Kolkata. The hospital had only a male ward at that time. He was instrumental in the expansion of service of the Antara hospital in the form of opening of a female ward, a child Psychiatry ward and a ward for clients with substance dependence. In the process of expansion of the hospital he had differences of opinion with the authority but he was able to convince them about his futuristic views and subsequently he was appointed as the chief Psychiatrist there.

He started his private practice in 1986 and began to be associated with various organisations who were working in the field of community mental health. Dr Narayanan gradually became an ardent fighter for the cause of mentally ill persons, specially for the economically backward persons. He was actively involved in training and creating awareness as well as advocacy for the rights of the mentally ill. Community Psychiatry was his preferred area and

he started working for the homeless mentally ill persons.

To fulfill his desire to do something for the marginalized homeless mentally ill persons he, along with others, created an organisation named Iswarsankalpa. Iswarsankalpa works for the homeless mentally on community based care model.

Dr Narayanan was a sincere, dedicated and a kind hearted human being who crossed all the barriers and created a new dimension in the field of community mental health services. It was always a pleasure to work with Dr Narayanan. During the Annual National Conference of Indian Psychiatric Society (ANCIPS) in 2002 and 2008, which were held at Kolkata, I had the opportunity to work with him. I would love to recall a few events of those golden days; after completing the days work he, along with another super brain of our Society, namely Dr Debasish Chatterjee and of course, Dr Srikumar Mukherjee and Dr Ranodip Ranjan Ghosh Roy and myself used to assemble at West Bengal IPS Office at 1/1 Gobra Road at around 10PM to work together till 2AM!!

Both Dr Debasish Chatterjee and "Naru" were methodical and perfectionists and had put all their efforts to make the Scientific programs almost flawless.

Dr Narayanan was truly a workaholic and. He even rose above his personal tragedies to render his service towards his clients! I can recall that even after completing the rituals following the death of his 3 month old son, he went on to attend his duties!!

He was a rich man by his heart and not by his pocket, which he never cared for. He was a serious person while at work but at other times he was a person with good sense of humour. We still miss his presence and will continue to miss him on our "adda" (informal chat) sessions which the Bengalees are very much fond of.

Dr Narayanan left us for heavenly abode on 10th April, 2008 leaving behind his wife and two daughters.

Before I conclude I want to quote a few lines from a poem of Henry Words worth Long fellow which says "Lives of great men remind us, We can make our lives sublime and departing leave behind us foot prints on the sands of time." Dr Narayanan may not have been a great man but he certainly has left his foot prints on the sands of time!