



## #WhatWENeed 2022

### Spotlight interview with Kavita Nair

#### Transcript

**Waqar, TCI:** Hello, everyone. Welcome to the #WhatWENeed Spotlight Interviews. TCI has been running this advocacy campaign since 2018. The objective of this campaign is to challenge and correct the medical oppression against persons with psychosocial disability. The campaign starts in October during the Mental Health Week, and we carry it forward till the end of December. The campaign gives an opportunity to TCI members for presenting their works to the global audiences, and every year we have set thematic areas for this campaign. This year, thematic include deinstitutionalization, community inclusion, access to justice, and lived experiences of persons with neurodiverse and intersectional identities. We are conducting these spotlight interviews with our members and networks in order to highlight the works they are engaged in and put a spotlight on their ongoing advocacy initiatives. Under this initiative today, we in TCI will be going into a short interview with Ms. Kavita Nair, one of the directors in Bapu Trust, and also a founding member of TCI. Hi Kavita, it is a pleasure to have you with us today and we thank you for giving us time for this spotlight session. Kavita, I would start with the introduction. Can you please give a brief introduction of yourself and tell us where you live and what do you do?

**Kavita, Bapu Trust:** Thank you so much Waqar for having me here with you today. Thank you to TCI for giving us an opportunity to send out our message on inclusion to the world everywhere. My name is Kavita Nair, and I live in Pune, which is a city in Maharashtra, India. I work with Bapu Trust for Research on Mind & Discourse. I am a Board Member with the organization, and the organization works in low income communities of Pune city through direct service provision. Apart from that, we also work in partnership with development organizations in the area of disability inclusive development. This is in brief what we do in the organization, Bapu Trust.

**Waqar, TCI:** Thank you. Thank you so much, Kavita, for this this short introduction. I'll move to my next question to you, which is about community inclusion. We know that community

inclusion is a very broad concept and it's a very huge topic. Bapu Trust is one of the experts and leading organizations on community inclusion subject. Can you share with us what community inclusion means for you as a person with psychosocial disability?

**Kavita, Bapu Trust:** I think community inclusion means a lot of things for me, for our communities and for persons with psychosocial disabilities. It means to enable people so that they have the means, the resources and the opportunities. They are able to make choice. They have a voice to reach to their full potential without having any barriers. For this, the first and foremost thing to do is to have contact with people with disabilities so that you are able to see them and experience them as people first. People with psychosocial disabilities are empowered not just to receive, but also to give love, care and support to others and to contribute to communities. When people come together and connect on a one to one or human to human basis without any preconditions, agendas, or plans, only then robust support systems get cultivated. For me, this is community inclusion, where I am able to connect with others and others are able to connect with me. We exchange with each other, we transact on emotions, we have friendships and we enjoy companionship. There is presence of a wide network of support systems around you and of support services around you. An entire community of people must provide for and interact positively with each other, with people in distress, with people experiencing difficulty, with people experiencing disability, with children and with elderly. So that each one of us are able to not just grow, but also thrive in a safe and healthy environment where, especially for persons with psychosocial disabilities, the mind and the heart is without fear. So for me, this is community inclusion.

**Waqar, TCI:** Thank you, Kavita, for sharing the broader perspective of what is community inclusion for you. Thank you so much for sharing that with us. Now, I'll move to next question. We cannot achieve this without involving different stakeholders. For having an inclusive community, we need a number of stakeholders to get involved and start working on the community inclusion concept and different organizations for taking this grassroots initiative to different areas at the national and global level. With this, I would like to ask you to share with us what are the key steps which the stakeholders should take to ensure full community inclusion for persons with psychosocial disabilities?

**Kavita, Bapu Trust:** I think to look at disability as a part of diversity because diversity is a fundamental part of human existence and of experience. Unfortunately, as a society, we tend to focus on how people with disabilities are different from other people, and there is more focus on differences than focusing on what we have in common with other people. To ensure full community inclusion of persons with psychosocial disabilities, the multi stakeholder groups need to recognize these commonalities and that is so important. The need for happiness, to be

happy, the need to be healthy, the need for growth and development, to have education opportunities, housing, sustainable and meaningful employment, to travel, to make community contributions, to have family, friends, to have love, companionship, belonging, to have respect and dignity and to have freedom. I think this is what we need to be able to participate effectively in the society. Multi stakeholder groups definitely need to enable full and effective participation of persons with psychosocial disabilities in development. So, I do feel that the opportunities of growth, opportunities of development, education, housing, all the things I mentioned just now, they need to be made available and accessible to persons with psychosocial disabilities and without any barriers to this. This is what we need from multi stakeholders to ensure full community inclusion of persons with psychosocial disabilities.

**Waqar, TCI:** Thank you so much, Kavita. Thank you so much for contributing to this short spotlight interview and talking about community inclusion with us. It was wonderful talking to you today and thank you for sharing your thoughts with us about community inclusion and how we can achieve it. We will be sharing this and disseminating the video widely on our social media platforms and also ensure that the links are shared with you for further dissemination within your networks. Thank you once again with this, we'll close the interview for today. Have a good day. Kavitha.

**Kavita, Bapu Trust:** Thanks a lot. Thanks. Bye. Bye.