



Community
Mental Health
& Social Care

Stories of Change



"Atmiyata has not only given me the opportunity to help others, but also the space to grow as a caring and compassionate individual"

MANIBEN

Maniben, a 38 year old passionate woman from Gamanpura village (Mehsana) is a diligent Asha worker (Community health worker) and Atmiyata Champion. She got involved with Atmiyata a year ago, because she saw it as an important initiative for her community. She knew of people attempting suicide, women facing domestic violence etc in the community and strongly believed that through Atmiyata she could extend a helping hand to people facing distress in her village.

After attending the Champion's training she gained a better understanding of Mental health issues and is now able to confidently identify cases of common and severe mental health issues. She has strong links with members of the community and she is well respected for her work. She is a 'multipurpose community worker' catering to the physical health and mental health needs of her community.

ATMIYATA CHAMPION STORIES



Parulben is an Atmiyata Champion from the village of Martoli, Jotana taluka , Mehsana. She also works as a Mission Mangalam leader, managing various Sakhi Mandals (Self help groups). She is an active community leader and has a good rapport with the people in her village. Her reason for becoming a Champion was her past history of domestic violence for several years and thoughts of ending her life. Eventually through the support of some family members, she was able to come out of the distress. When the opportunity came along, she strongly felt the need to be a part of Atmiyata, to reach out to people in distress in her community.

Being an Atmiyata Champion is often not that easy, but Parulben is determined and committed to her role.

“Even if we are from the same village, people don’t open up to us, in the first visit. This trust building requires multiple visits before we can even begin our sessions. My strategy is to keep trying and not give up in one visit. If I have to get my message across, I need to keep meeting them to win this trust”

Being a part of Atmiyata has also helped Parulben deal with her personal stress in an effective manner.

“I know I get stressed too. In such circumstances, I usually understand that I am under stress. When I am, I try and find solutions to my problems by making a plan and I speak to my daughters if I need someone to listen to me. Through this program I have been able to handle my own stress ”

ATMIYATA CHAMPION STORIES

PARULBEN WITH HER DAUGHTER



ATMIYATA

STORY OF CHANGE

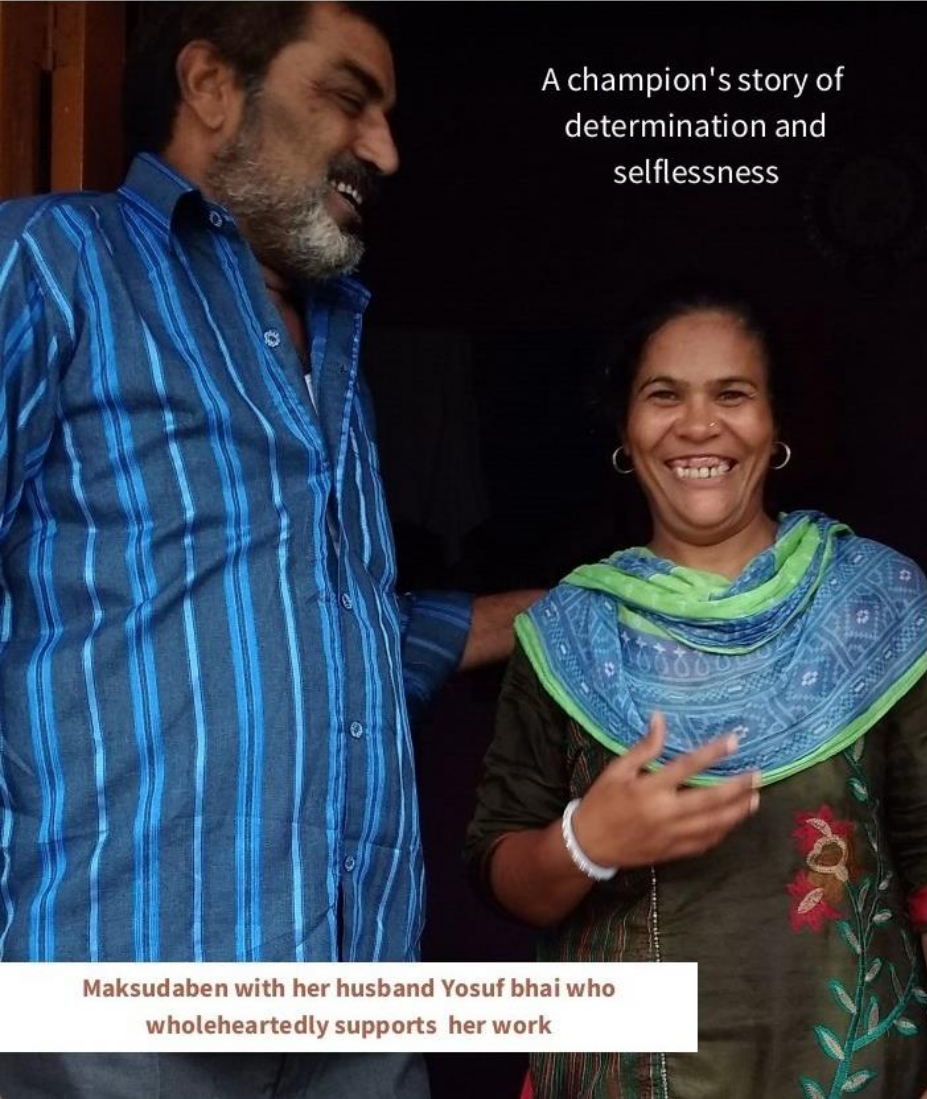
**"Being an Atmiyata
Champion has given me
a chance to help my
villagers and has made
me a stronger and
confident woman in the
process..."**

MAKSUDABEN, CHAMPION



Maksudaben
Atmiyata Champion in Kamli village , Mehsana





A champion's story of
determination and
selflessness

**Maksudaben with her husband Yosuf bhai who
wholeheartedly supports her work**

Maksudaben , a 35 year old Muslim woman from Kamli Village, in Unjha taluka of Mehsana has been battling all odds to extend informal care to community members in distress, as an active Atmiyata Champion. Her socio-economic location and context makes it far more challenging for her to work as a community volunteer.

Against all odds, she goes out of her way to identify individuals in distress, despite caste, class, gender or religious boundaries. She has successfully reached out to 15 individuals in the last five months. She has brought together women from different vaas (caste based living quarters) of the village, to be Atmiyata Mitras.

She strongly believes that being a champion has given her the opportunity to promote well-being and reduce distress in her community. It has given her the space to grow as an individual. However , this wouldn't have been possible without the warmth and support extended by her family.

