

We have so much to tell you...

[View this email in your browser](#)



Welcome to the first Take Charge Newsletter! We are now into our second batch and have tripled our size from 32 mentees to 96 mentees. We felt it was time that we shared some of the highlights with you in a more structured manner. A lot gets done behind the scenes - spreading awareness of the programme so that potential mentees sign up, identify potential mentors and screen them, conduct training sessions for the mentors, screen mentees and then do induction sessions for the mentees with their mentors. This took us several months. This year we have partnered with Mentor Me India, who manage the entire back-end of the Take Charge Programme. We would like to thank Bevinda Mukherjee for handling the first cohort so well.

We have had some hiccups this year and we are gradually settling in. A few of you have had challenges with the Take Charge App, which is a great tool to track your mentoring sessions. It worked well last year, but this year we have had some problems. Whilst we fix these bugs, please use the website to record your sessions. Data gathering and analysis is a very important part of the Take Charge Programme.

As with last year, some of the mentors and mentees have been extremely creative in getting to know each other and building closer and useful

relationships. Based on the feedback we received, Gauri Row Kavi conducted 3 sessions on Mental Wellness for the mentees and mentors. From June onwards we will be hosting bi-monthly training sessions for the mentees on a variety of topics that the mentees have requested for.

Read on to find out more. We look forward to your feedback.

You can share your feedback on: krushna.takecharge@gmail.com

Comments from our First Batch



Quotes from our mentees:

"All thanks to Take Charge, my goals have become very clear. I know what I want to do in life, what I want to achieve. I can manage my time very well now and I have grown a lot as a person."

"Ever since I have been a part of Take Charge, I kind of end up with a report card every week for my ownself and that helps me to become a better version of myself"

"Sometimes we are confused about what we want to do. This program helps you become more focused in some of the objective parts of life and it will also give you knowledge and experience of people who are older than you. Because you are not generally going to listen to your parents, even if they say the very same thing."

*Name changed

The Beginning of Mentoring Journeys in 2016

In October, 2016 we kicked off the 2nd batch of Take Charge with 3 day-long training session for over 95 mentors. The session oriented the mentors to what the Take Charge programme stands for and dove into topics like what a mentor is and is not, tips for success, the importance of empathy and clarity of distance and how to dialogue with their mentees. The biggest highlight of the day was a panel discussion with a pilot year mentor-mentee pair and the mentee's parent. Vivien Amonkar, a mentor said, "This is the first time I have been formally trained to be a mentor at this level."



The takeaways from the session varied from mentor to mentor. Cheryl Koshy, a mentor who has taken on two mentees this year said, "How not to mentor - this was my biggest fear at the start of the day and this training answered all my questions." For another mentor, Ashwin D'Silva, the most helpful tip was that it isn't about giving advice, but listening to your mentee.

The Take Charge programme also ensured that the highest quality of role models were inducted. "As compared to other volunteers in the development sector, I saw high levels of professionalism from mentors at Take Charge and it was great to see the level of commitment that they exhibited just by arriving on time and engaging with the trainers," said Shweta Dandekar, Programme Manager at Mentor Me India.

Breaking the ice and the beginning of lasting impact

It's always exciting when mentors and mentees get to meet each other for the first time. Over a span of four hours, mentors and mentees got to know each other through a fun ice-breaker that

helped them explore each others' personalities and what they have in common.

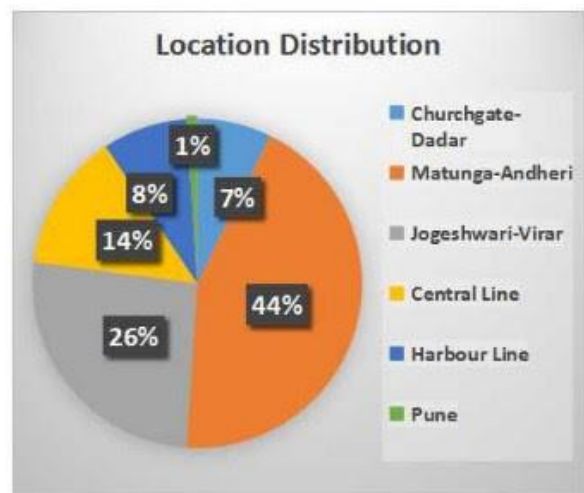
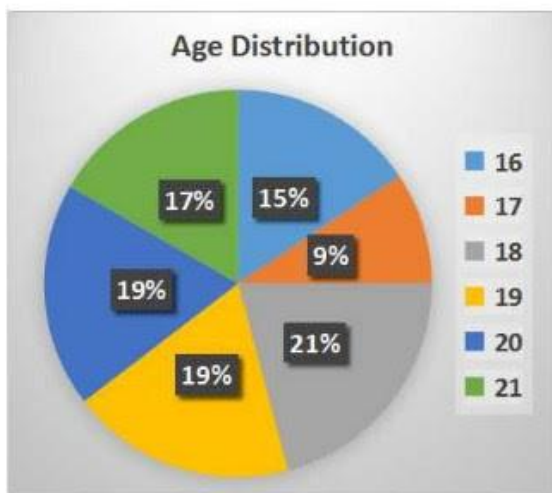
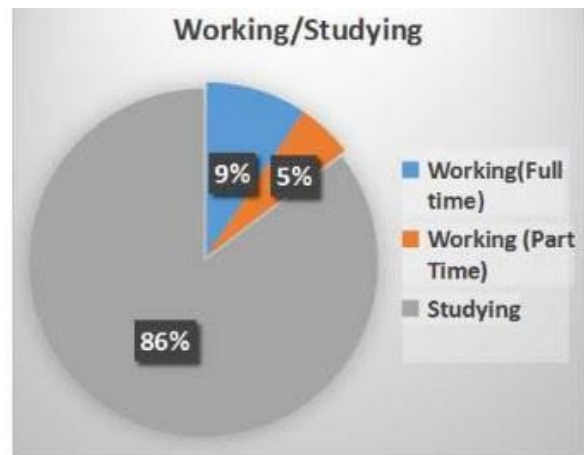
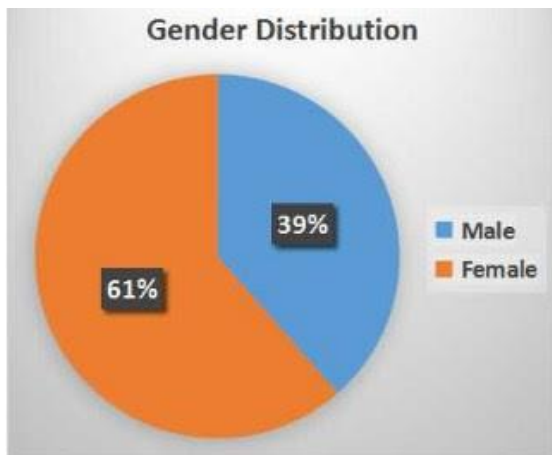
In the latter half of the session, mentees got a chance to reflect on their strengths and areas of improvement and begin the process of goal setting with their mentors. Many pairs used this opportunity to plan their first session with each other. A mentee recently told her mentor, "I am so glad they gave me you as a mentor because I can completely relate to everything you say."



Take Charge also invited parents of mentees for the induction to introduce them to the mentors. The trainers introduced them to the programme and responded to their concerns before signing permission forms. After an ice-breaking session, mentors, mentees and the parents got a chance to share what they all expect out of the programme, how they can best support each other and how frequently they should keep in touch. "This is a great programme, and I am glad that my child is a part of it. The mentor is really great and even though he is in a good position, he is very humble," said a parent.



Demographics of Mentees from our 2016-2018 Batch



ABCs of Emotional Fitness Workshops for Mentors and Mentees

After identifying that depression and other serious mental health issues are swept under the carpet, Take Charge organized 3 Mental Wellness workshops for mentors and mentees in February and March 2017. The workshop's facilitator, Ms. Gauri Row Kavi (Counseling psychologist, therapist and a life coach), talked about how to transform unhealthy negative emotions to healthy negative emotions and what depression means. In the session for the mentors, Ms. Gauri also discussed issues facing adolescents today.

"The discussion on the changes adolescents go through and why was an eye opener", said a mentor. The sessions received an overwhelmingly

positive response from all participants and proved to be helpful in identifying challenges that some of our mentees were facing. "Self realisation is something we all deal with. I am glad I learnt to realise the causes and the very core of the said topics", said a mentee.



Feedback from mentors and mentees:

- 100% mentors who attended the workshop said that the workshop was well designed.
- 100% mentors and 96% mentees felt that the resource person was helpful and knowledgeable and the content of the workshop was useful.
- 100% mentees who attended the workshop felt that the workshop will help them deal with the topic.

Mentor-Mentee Pairs in Spotlight

Michelle (mentee) and Devika (mentor)*

Like any other mentor-mentee pair, Devika and Michelle began their

mentoring journey by getting to know each other. Initially, Devika asked Michelle to write three things she is grateful for each day. They went out to watch a play together which was a first time experience for Michelle. Michelle had been struggling with prioritizing her tasks, which led Devika to help her make a decision-making chart and she even pushed her mentee to create daily schedules. Michelle felt that it helped her reduce her anxiety issues and procrastination and she learned better time management.

One of the biggest milestone of this relationship was when Michelle shared with her Programme Coordinator that she is extremely happy to have Devika as her mentor! "My mentor is so approachable and friendly. She is just a call away. So, if there is anything that I am stuck with, or any problem I can't find a solution to, I text it to her and she guides me on how to find away out. I feel much better and confident than I was before with my mentor's constant support and help with everything," she said.



Maurelle (mentee) and Jonathan (mentor)*

Maurelle believes that her mentor, Jonathan, is like a father to her with whom she can share her thoughts and get guidance from. They clicked well right from the first day at induction. In subsequent sessions, they talked about how she felt in the past few days and Jonathan would particularly ask

her what had made her happy and what could have been done differently. "I soon realized that she was really tensed about getting a job," said Jonathan.

Through his interactions with his mentee, he observed that that she was smart but lacked exposure about how to groom herself and make herself presentable for interviews. Jonathan started asking her to speak on various topics of world issues and encouraged her to ask him questions. They also talked about how she can improve herself on some of her personality attributes. His years of experience was carefully brushed onto her.

Through Jonathan's networks he encouraged her to apply for jobs in her chosen field. Unsurprisingly, due to several constructive sessions together, Maurelle got through and got a job with the company! Maurelle said, "I really like my job and I am learning a lot here." She continues to meet her her mentor every month to discuss her progress and build on her strengths and improve on her weaknesses.

**Names changed*



First Mentor Hangout

What better way to catch up and meet your fellow mentors again than meet and chat over drinks! A Mentor Hangout was hosted by Fiona and Luis Miranda at their residence in March, 2017 where 23 mentors came together and shared some of their stories, exchanged ideas for solving challenges with their mentees and had a good time over drinks and food. It was fantastic to see the mentors' enthusiasm on a Thursday evening!

Mentor-Mentee Day (5th August, 2-6 pm)

Mentors and mentees will come together once again to celebrate how much they've achieved halfway through the programme. The day will

provide you with space to reflect on your journey so far and see how much you've achieved. We will send more details closer to the date.

Workshops for Mentees

We will be organising a series of workshops for all the mentees starting from June 2017 to February 2018. We will have 6 workshops and programmes which will cover topics that the mentees feel are important for them.



"We believe even the slightest positive influence has the potential to change a person's life!"

Your Take Charge team



[Facebook](#)



[Website](#)

