

Life story of Krishnappa

1. Country & Programme: BasicNeeds India
2. Name: Krishnappa
3. Age: 30
4. Gender : Male
5. Date of visit : 27th July 2007
6. Venue – Krishnappa's house
7. Other Participants –
 - a. If **Family members** – Bheemappa(Father, aged 46), Shivamma(Mother aged 40)
 - b. If **Volunteer** – Name and mention that he/she is a volunteer
8. Village name: Kanakagiri
9. Writer's name and designation: Shravya Raghunand (Research officer)
10. Name of Photographer: Prabhakar and Shravya

Since I was working on an article on accessibility and availability of drugs and treatment in Koppal, I thought it would be a good idea to hear and record from the families their experiences regarding the same. So I went to meet Krishnappa and his family to write their life story.

When we went to his house, we found that Krishnappa had gone to work, inspite of telling him that we were coming to meet him. His parents welcomed us and told us that he has become so money conscious that he will not skip work at any cost. Disappointed that we could not meet him, we introduced ourselves to his parents and informed them about our intention of listening to them. They were happy to have us in their house.

His father began telling us about the onset of the illness. “We sold 20 sheep we reared and bought a 3 acre land for Rs.40,000. He saw me counting that much money and ever since he was disturbed that we wasted 40 thousand rupees. It increased day by day and the villagers told him that I(his father) was not intelligent as we spent so much money and bought a land. But I always cajoled him saying that the land was worth it and not a waste of money.

One day, my son and myself had a small fight and he asked me to get out of the house and stay with my daughter. I was perplexed as he is not the kind of person who talks like this. He kept on scolding me and even came to hit me, when I tried hitting him. So we shackled him , but even then he went to the neighbor's fields and shouted ‘I am not a thief’

We decided to take him to Dharwad hospital (KIMH). Some youth of the village helped us to take him there.”

Then Krishnappa's mother said, “ I was so worried about my son. I pestered my husband to take me to Dharwad to see my son, else I will die. So we both went there. The doctors asked us not to visit our son often and that once he is ok, they will inform us. But they

never got back to us. So went again to see him. This time he recognized us. They doctors said that we could take him back. They even gave back the Rs.500 we had deposited.”

The father continued, “The doctor gave us medicines only for one month. We were not asked to come back for any follow-up. He discontinued the medicines after that one month and my son showed improvements after that. We never went back for three years. Only when he relapsed again, and we tied him up and took him to Dharwad again, were we told about regularity in treatment and medicines. The doctor advised us not to irritate him about anything and that we should sweet-talk him into things.

We had to spend Rs. 200 per person every month to collect medicines for Krishnappa. We then bribed the concerned people there and got medicines for two months. This continued for a couple of years. Our daughter-in-law’s parents told us about one faith healer. They told us that this person would squeeze something in the nose and Krishnappa would be alright. We wouldn’t have to go to Dharwad again and again. Tempted by this, we took him there. That faith healer squeezed something in the nose and we spent Rs. 100 there. He asked us to stop medicines. Following his instructions, we even spent Rs.1000 and sacrificed a goat.

Then he relapsed again. We took him to another temple. There a flower fell from one side of the God and it was sign that we should go back to Dharwad. By the time we reached it was 7.30 pm. We had to spend the night in the police station. One person had to be awake at any given point in the night to look after him.

Next day we met the doctor who gave medicines and injection. When he asked us why we had stopped medicines, we were scared and we lied to him that we had migrated from that place. The Doctor advised us to give medicines regularly.

20 days later, Krishnappa started improving and doing small jobs. We decided that we would not stop giving him medicines till we die. We never knew about the treatment and medicines being available at Kanakagiri. We continued to go to Dharwad. The doctor at the PHC, Dr. Bijjol’s father stays very close to our house. When he told us about the treatment available in Kanakagiri, we went there one day. The two doctors, there, Dr. Ajay and Dr. Bijjol, asked us to take medicines from them.

It costs us Rs. 10 to go to Kanakagiri hospital. But now, Krishnappa goes all the way in his cycle and it does not cost us anything.

When asked what are the changes they see in their own lives and in Krishnappa’s, father said, “We are thankful to Samuha for having brought treatment so close to us. This has helped us to save money and improve the health of our son. He brings his medicines by himself. He is working in the field and earns about Rs.30-40 per day for 15 days in a month. Average earning is about Rs500”

What do they think of their and their son’s future?

Krishnappa has taken the ownership of the family. We were asking Samuha to give us some IGP loan. We could buy a couple of sheep and rear them.”

When asked if they were part of any SHG, Prabhakar said that they were not and that integrating them into some SHG is in the pipeline.

I then asked for his wife and when she came, I asked her what she thinks of the problems her husband had, and how she has been managing her life with him. To this she replied,” I am scared and worried about my husband. This problem started after our marriage and after the birth of our first son.. He used to look after me and our kids well. I know he has some mental problem. I will remind him about taking medicines if he forgets.”

We thanked them and wondered how long it would take for Krishnappa to come back. They said that he would be back any minute. We waited for some time and when he did not come, we decided to leave. But when we had left and about 3 km away, Krishnappa called us and told that he had come back home. We decided to have a few words with him and so we rode back to meet him.

Upon reaching, we found Krishnappa waiting to meet us and he apologized that he had to go to the field. We asked him to tell us whatever he feels like telling. “I am feeling better these days. I am taking my medicines regularly. I keep my medicines in the pocket the previous night itself so that I don’t forget to take them when I am away at the field. I want to earn more and look after my family. I want to educate my children and take care of my parents.”

We thanked him and the family for having us and bade goodbye.