

**Hon'ble Health & Family Welfare Minister Thiru.Ma.Subramanian
Delivering Presidential Lecture in American Psychiatric Associations
on 'Daily Walking and its Effects on Mental and Physical Health.**

It is indeed a matter of great honour and delight to stand before this august gathering and bring with me the warm and affectionate greetings of our Hon'ble Chief Minister and the people of Tamil Nadu, the Southern most State of India and home to 72.1 million population. As the Minister for the Department of Health and Family Welfare, it is indeed a great privilege for me to address this esteemed audience to represent our State known far and wide for its diverse culture, ancient history and architecture dotted with it's historic building religious sites, beautiful beaches, forests, serene mountains, hills and valleys. At the outset, I have no words to express my sincere thanks to the distinguished delegates of one of the world's largest, oldest and most respected organizations - American Psychiatric Association, Eminent Psychiatrists of America Renowned Professors, Scientists & Academicians who all have come here from different parts of the world, My dear friend Dr.Ramaswamy Viswanathan - Professor of Psychiatry from Down State University in New York & President of the American Psychiatric Association.

Tamil Nadu is known for its remarkable track record of excelling in Healthcare delivery through its impressive achievements in Health sector. The State carries a rich history of pioneering Public Health initiatives which also includes setting trends for promoting healthy lifestyle practices in the community. As I stand here to deliver a lecture on "The Daily walking And It's Impact On Mental Health", I chose the following caption 'WIN YOUR HEALTH TO WIN THE WORLD' as I have a real life testimony of my own which I will be sharing – a story of a sudden tragedy and how I rose above it to stand as a tall witness to what I am today" In the year 2004, my life saw a devastating Road Accident which smashed my right ankle joint into 4-5 pieces that resulted in emergency admission in ICU and being bed-ridden for three months. The newspapers flashed news on my severe and grave condition with chances of recovery being remote. Post Surgery – Doctors advised not to sit cross-legged on the floor or try to walk or run fast came as a thunderbolt !! As I was a known Diabetic since 1995, it all added to my fears and brought a great sense of hopelessness "Return from the Grip of 2004 Tragedy" Mere Self-will, Grit and Determination motivated to Start Yoga exercises first, Followed by gradual walk ...,

Then, attempted running short distances, which all proved my strong will power, Yet, it was least imagined that I would progress one day to become a Marathon runner, With

confidence growing, I started my first Marathon in 2014 and subsequently went to the level of setting a tall goal of completing 100 Marathons in five years which I did, Today, have completed 160 Marathons and heading towards the 161 Marathon, Though neither a sportsman by profession nor driven by Passion for Sports, I am a living testimony for having encountered Life's challenges boldly at it face UNDETERRED – GET SET,GO' This impressive slide displays the series of Marathons run by me stretching from the first virtual Marathon on 9th February 2014 to 160th full Marathon in the year 2025. The Marathons have covered a distance range of 21.1 kilometres and the 101st Marathon run in the year 2019 was unique and challenging as I had run a full marathon covering 42.2 Kilometres. Apart from this, 4 ultra – marathons were run in difficult and tough terrains. The successive and successful attempts at Marathon across India and abroad drew wide recognition far and wide and I was conferred Honorary Doctorate degree by the World Records University for creating awareness among the youth through 'Running'. Though a full fledged Politician in the realm of Politics, there has been tremendous impact in the community by creating awareness and stressing on the value of Physical activity so as to envisage a Tamil Nadu with strong and healthy next generation.

While running Marathons became my passion and driving force for my Physical and mental well-being, my attention and focus also went on to organize series of 'Kalaigarnar Memorial International Virtual and Live Marathons' based on the slogan..., "Run Wherever and Whenever You Want", which has drawn Global Attention and Acknowledgement and has promoted Community participation especially among the Youth. In the first virtual Marathon run during 07-31 August 2020, participated - 8,541 from 28 Countries. The registration fee of Rupees 2.3 Million Forty One Thousand Seven Hundred and Twenty Six was contributed for the Corona Disaster relief fund. In the second virtual Marathon during 07-31 August 2021, participated by 19,596 from 37 countries. The Registration fee of Rupees 5.6 Million 2 thousand Six Hundred and Ninety Three was donated for Covid Relief Fund to the Honourable CM of Tamil Nadu. The Third Live Marathon run on 07- August 2022 was participated by 43,231. The registration fee of Rupees 12.20 Million was contributed for building 4 storied 'Parents Shelter' at Institute of Child Health Centre, Egmore, Chennai. All the above three marathons have found place in Asian book of records. In the fourth Kalaigarnar Centenary Guinness International Marathon run on 06.08.2023, participated -73,206. The registration fee of Rupees 34.2 Million was Presented to the Honourable Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu for the Construction of an Advanced Cancer Treatment Centre at the Royapettah, Government General Hospital Chennai. In all, 54.3 Million in Indian currency has been generated and donated for good will cause. 8 KM Health Walk Scheme inaugurated by Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru.Udhayanithi Stalin on 04th November 2023. There is mounting evidence that daily walking / running / aerobic exercises have positive impact on Mental Health. During a visit to Japan from 7 -9 2023, it was impressive to take part in a 8 Kilometer / 10000 steps

walking pathway and taking it as a model and as part of initiatives to promote daily walking / running among general public, the Department of Health & Family Welfare, Government of Tamil Nadu identified and established 8 km walking / running corridors in all 38 districts in collaboration with the local Municipal bodies. Guides, milestones, sign boards with health awareness messages, rest seats, drinking water facilities have been included in these walking / running corridor. As a result of concerted efforts, utilization of these corridors by the general public has gradually increased. These walking / running corridors have also served as sites for special medical camps conducted to screen for lifestyle diseases. Since the launch of these corridors, a total of 63,703 individuals have been screened and 3,720 with Diabetes or Hypertension. The Steady and sustained efforts through my regular physical activities of walking, running, yoga and marathon racing have kept my body and mind fresh enabling me to lead a healthy life with my sugar under control.

I am able to sustain my energy levels and preserve my mental health as evidenced by the 8 books published so far and the intensive efforts that goes behind the planning and implementation of various health schemes introduced by the Government of Tamil Nadu We live in a world of Evidence based Medicine and I am very pleased to present a initiative of Government of Tamil Nadu to study. **A RECENT STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF DAILY BRISK WALKING / SLOW RUNNING ON HAPPINESS AND WELL-BEING AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS**". It was Officially inaugurated by me as 'Steps to Happiness' project" on 30th March 2025. This is a Multi-centric Study between Madras Medical College Chennai, Institute of Mental Health Chennai, Saveetha Medical College & Hospital, Glanis Hospitals, Madurai. Objectives of the study is to assess the effect of a brisk walking / slow jogging intervention on happiness and well-being of college students on account of Rising Mental Health Concerns among the University and school students as they increasingly experience stress, anxiety and depression due to academic pressures, social challenges, and lifestyle changes. The Role of Physical Activity and it's outcome is well founded as Regular exercise has been shown to have positive effects on mental health by reducing symptoms of depression and anxiety, and improving mood and overall emotional well-being. It also improves Academic and Cognitive Performance as it boosts concentration, memory, and cognitive function which are critical for academic success. An **EXERCISE PROTOCOL** has been used for the study which includes Warm Up for 5 minutes which includes Dynamic stretches, light jogging in place and deep breathing exercises. The Main Activity is for 20 minutes which includes of 10 minutes brisk walking followed by 10 minutes of slow running. This is followed by a Cool Down for 10 minutes by doing Static stretching, Yoga poses and Mindful breathing techniques. Encouraging results have come based on the Interim Findings. The findings from this 4-week intervention study has promised to demonstrate a clear and positive impact of daily physical activity on the Happiness and Well being of student participants. The Study has used validated

instruments such as the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (OHQ) and the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS) and observed progressive increase in both happiness and wellbeing indicators. At baseline, 56% of participants had OHQ scores above the midpoint value of 4 which rose to 70% after two weeks and 84% by the end of the four-week regimen. Similarly, WEMWBS scores increased from 56% to 67% which all suggest that even modest daily Physical activity can yield substantial Psychological benefits within a relatively short timeframe. As Non-Communicable diseases and life-style practices are closely connected, the State, based on the burden and the challenges posed, has shown the way for the entire country by introduction of Popular and Pioneering Initiatives such as Makkalai Thedi Maruthuvam Scheme, Padham Padhukaapom Thittam, Idhayam Kaapom Thittam, Innuyir Kaapom – Nammai Kakkum 48 Assured Cashless Treatment, It is my honour to touch upon the salient features of them to highlight the importance given by the Government of Tamil Nadu through its innovatives schemes for addressing the NCDs and preventing deaths. The flagship scheme of the Government, the Makkalai Thedi Maruthuvam Scheme was launched by the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu on 05.08.2021 starting with delivery of drugs at Home to the first beneficiary Mrs.Sarojammal at Samanapalli in Krishnagiri district. Makkalai Thedi Maruthuvam Scheme – a flagship program of the State was launched by the Hon'ble Chief minister of Tamil Nadu to address the increasing burden due to NCDs through Home based healthcare services which includes Home-based screening services for Hypertension and Diabetes by Women Health Volunteers, Home-based drug delivery for those aged 45 years and above and with restricted mobility, Home-based Physiotherapy services, Home-based Palliative Care services, Home-based provision of Continuous Ambulatory Peritoneal Dialysis bags. There is reduction in the Out-Of-Pocket Expenditure (OOPE) for the common man. Has improved health services coverage and health outcomes through making services available, accessible and affordable. Has strengthened greater equity, social inclusion and community participation and social accountability of the department of Health & Family Welfare. So far, 23.21 million beneficiaries have availed first time services. MTM has got global recognition bringing United Nations Interagency Task Force (UNIATF) Awards for 2024. The Department of Health & Family Welfare, has been recognized by United Nations at global level and conferred with the United Nations Interagency Task Force (UNIATF) Awards for 2024 for the innovative and successful implementation of Makkalai Thedi Maruthuvam Scheme under the Ministries of Health category. Padham Padhukaapom Thittam - this is another unique scheme of Government of Tamil Nadu for carrying out Diabetic Foot (DF) Screening in an organised manner. The purpose is to prevent amputation and save limbs. The Screening of Diabetic patients for at-risk foot is carried out by Middle Level Health Providers (MLHPs) in Health Sub-Centres in the Rural Villages and by the NCD staff Nurses in Primary Health Centres, District Hospitals, Sub-District Hospitals and Medical College Hospitals. Among 10.4 million Diabetic patients identified, 2.17 million were screened for Diabetic Foot and 1.9 million have

been referred to Foot Clinics for further management. At global level, this is a State owned first of its kind initiative with creation of Digital Data Base to manage data and with a provision to capture photo image of the Diabetic Foot. Efforts are on to improve further by AI based Predictive Analysis This scheme is another unique one as it focuses on early and immediate administration of emergency cardiac dose drugs for those presenting with MI/ Heart Attack symptoms and preventing damage and death at the earliest. Administration of Cardio-Protective Loading Dose Drugs to at-risk Population includes Tab Aspirin 300 mg, Tab Clopidogrel 300mg, Tab Atorvastatin 80mg. It was launched on June 27th 2023- by me at Malumichampatti HSC, Coimbatore district. Minimum 10 sachets of Cardioprotective Loading dose drugs made available in all the 9421 HSCs and HWCs in the Rural areas across the State. All the MLHPs, 108 Emergency Ambulance Medical Technicians and PHC Medical Officers have been trained in Heart Attack Management. Each MLHP/PHC Nurse/MO is linked to the Hub hospital Cardiologist for timely diagnosis of suspected Heart attack. The patient is advised Cardioprotective loading dose drugs and immediately transported to Hub hospital in ALS ambulance. 17,028 patients have been provided Cardiac loading dose drugs and referred from Rural centres for definitive cardiac care since inception of program. Innuyir Kaapom – Nammai Kakkum 48 is a widely acclaimed scheme which provides Assured Cashless Treatment. The service is delivered on an assurance mode and brought reduction of Out Of Pocket Expenditure. For accident victims, cashless treatment on Government assurance model are provided during First 48 hours. Dovetailed with Chief Minister Comprehensive Health Insurance Scheme after 48 hours with a ceiling of up to Rs. 0.2 million per person. 723 Empanelled hospitals including 250 Government and 473 Private Hospitals provide services. 101 emergency life saving procedures are covered under insurance. Beneficiaries Covered :3,43,156, Claims Settled: Rs. 30.2 million. “ I have come a long way from the point I was told I could not run... “What Life has taught me is that we need to take strides with determination – ‘One Step At A Time”. “Effort is the key to both Physical and Mental Health”. “So, my simple message is – whether you feel low or overwhelmed or toppled, just lace up your shoes and hit the path for which your body and mind will reward you with a big ‘Thank you’”

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