



PROF. DR. MALIK HUSSAIN MUBBASHAR

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How does one pay homage to the person who made you who you are? How does one come to terms with the death of the mentor who is a permanent part of your own being? The eyes that showed you the world for what it is, the ears that attuned you to hear what is worth paying heed to, and the mind that forever changed the way you think; how does one bereave their departure? The two authors of this obituary of Prof Malik Hussain Mubbashar, Sitara e Imtiaz, Hilal e Imtiaz (Civil) are mere representatives of academic and spiritual progeny that runs in thousands. We have taken ourselves to record on their behalf the arduous task of encompassing his achievements, and giving a glimpse into a life well-led for our readers.

Prof. Malik Hussain Mubbashar, departed this ephemeral world on the 10th of August, 2020, at 75 years of age. Prof. Mubbashar is held in fond memory by 7 children (5 of them psychiatrists), 15 grandchildren, and innumerable students & patients. Decorated as Companion He received two of the highest civilian awards conferred by the Government of Pakistan in the form of Hilal-e-Imtiaz and Sitara-e-Imtiaz. His services in the field of mental health, medical education, and policy making are second to none in the history of the country.

After completing his medical degree from King Edward Medical College in 1968 (with Honors in 8, distinctions in 3, and medals in 7 subjects) he proceeded for specialization to the UK. In congruence with his father's desires he pursued training in medicine and attained membership of not one but three colleges of medicine. He then proceeded to fulfill his own destiny: specialization in the field of psychiatry. This was a dream Prof. Mubbashar had harbored since his childhood upon seeing the ill-treatment of the mentally ill. He trained with Sir David Stanford Clark and showed great promise for a lucrative career as a psychiatrist in the UK, however, in order to serve the people of his country he chose to return to Pakistan in 1972.

The entire country was open to Prof. Mubbashar upon his return, but he chose the city of Rawalpindi. He was appointed at the Central Government Hospital, however, much to his chagrin, the administration of the hospital made it abundantly clear that he was not welcome as a psychiatrist and refused him any clinic space to see psychiatric patients. Manifesting the inimitable grit that he would later become famous for, Prof. Mubbashar set up his table and chair under the shade of a tree in a neglected, remote corner of the hospital. This is how the Department of Psychiatry, Central Government Hospital, came into being. His unrelenting resolve saw the department grow into an Institute within a short span of 8 years and then into a WHO Collaborating Center soon after.

With his unrelenting effort he was able to make the Institute the hub of undergraduate teaching, post-graduate training,

collaborative research, and community mental health. He was a man of vision and innovation, and this reflected in all his academic and clinical activities. Despite limited resources at his disposal he strived to deliver the most cutting edge treatment to his patients. At the same time, he was acutely aware of indigenous challenges and his pragmatic approach allowed for him to adapt novel treatment models in local settings.

His contributions in community psychiatry are particularly noteworthy. The Community Mental Health Program was his brainchild and went on to critically influence the development of similar programs by the WHO especially in the Eastern Mediterranean region. Prof. Mubbashar was also instrumental in the development of the School Mental Health Program. The Institute of Psychiatry, spearheaded by Prof. Mubbashar, was always at the forefront in responding to the various mental health needs of disaster struck areas.

Prof. Mubbashar had the keenest eye for talent. He would spot potential in its most rudimentary form, take students under his wing, opened vistas they never knew existed, thereby expanding their "zone of proximal development", and brought out the best in them. It was the genius of his mentorship that led to the first program of foreign psychiatrists being trained in England with Prof. David Goldberg. He took it upon himself to send the best potential in psychiatry to Prof. Goldberg where they earned their diplomas and went on to serve the field of psychiatry all over the world. A significant number, in the footsteps of Prof. Mubbashar, returned to Pakistan to serve the mental health needs of the local populace.

Prof. Mubbashar was renowned for being a hard taskmaster. He set a high standard for punctuality and expected the entire staff to report half an hour before the official starting time. Many of the greatest names in Pakistani psychiatry would be found cowering under his gaze for being late to his ward round back in the day. The most laid back and incorrigible of individuals from the remotest cities of the country, would be molded by his rigorous training standards into professionals of high standing. Despite his physical stature, the depth of his vision and commitment, allowed for him to tower over and discipline students twice his size. Training under him was not for the faint and frail at heart; many didn't dare, some left in the middle, but those who stayed went on to become proficient clinicians and prolific academics.

Prof. Mubbashar had been closely involved in developing the postgraduate curriculum with the College of Physicians and Surgeons Pakistan (CPSP) from the very beginning. From formulating the curriculum to convening the examination he saw the faculty of psychiatry at the CPSP every step of the way and went on to become the Dean of Psychiatry. The gold-medal for excellence in psychiatry, at CPSP, the most prestigious medal in the

field, is named the Malik Hussain Mubbashar Gold Medal. Later he continued to extend his services to psychiatry in Pakistan through his position as President of the Pakistan Psychiatry Society.

He was part of the founding faculty of Rawalpindi Medical College (RMC) and rightfully earned the position of the Principal of the College. As a faculty member, his contributions allowed for RMC to be recognized by the General Medical Council. He became Principal when medical education in Pakistan was at a critical juncture in its development. Despite all opposition, he didn't shy away from revamping undergraduate education and introducing the Problem Based Learning methodology. Under his leadership the college rose to being one of the top and most sought-after medical college in the entire country. Prof. Mubbashar as head had placed the Institute of Psychiatry on the map of the world, and as principal he did the same for RMC. Under his leadership he organized numerous International Conferences. He would aspire to bring the best minds from all over the world to RMC; in one conference he hosted 50 foreign delegates, a benchmark yet to be surpassed.

He carried his legacy to higher levels by being one of the founding members and then the Vice Chancellor of the University of Health Sciences (UHS). This is the first medical university in the country. His innovations at RMC were given a wider platform with UHS and went on to positively influence medical colleges across the country. As VC he succeeded in making the subject of Behavioral Sciences mandatory for undergraduate medical education across the country. After his retirement from the position of VC he continued to serve the university as part of its Board of governors.

Through all the positions Prof. Mubbashar has held, research has been his central focus. Prof. Mubbashar focused his attention on both international collaborations and development of indigenous data. Prof. Mubbashar opened his doors to universities from around the world and some of the collaborations he garnered continue to bear fruit to this day. He represented Pakistan in the development of the ICD-10 and has 28 books and innumerable publications to his credit.

The greatest of Prof. Mubbashar's achievements are in the area of policy making. The mentally unwell had little to no legal representation and their rights were at the mercy of outdated mental health acts. To influence that in any way required crossing paths with the ruthlessness and ignorance of politicians and layers upon layers of bureaucratic red tape. After years and years of incessant effort, Prof. Mubbashar was finally able to get the Mental Health Ordinance 2001 passed.

He was a man of protean talents and abilities; his oratory skills gave the audience a peek into the depth of his great soul. His knowledge of poetry and mysticism would be reflected in each of his talks and he would have his audience mesmerized with poetic verses and inspirational stories, he had committed to memory. Towards the end of his life, he had turned his focus towards the teaching of the Holy Quran and Sufi thoughts as well. He would seamlessly connect the works of saints like Rumi, Sultan Bahu, Bulleh Shah, and Bhagat Kabir with the psychopathologies of our times. He would interpret the work of his revered teacher, Dr Stafford Clarke as 'Gospel' of Psychiatry, and quote his writings from his book titled '*What Freud Really Said*' verbatim, the same way as the poetry of Mian Muhammad Buksh, and Waris Shah. This merger of spiritual and mental dimensions led him to profusely use quotes from saints for

psychotherapeutic interventions. For him the spiritual health had cure for several diseases that afflict humans hitherto not described in books of therapeutics. He would describe them as diseases of soul presenting as psychiatric and physical disorders as much as aberrations of human behavior, and named them 'greedosis', 'lustoma', and 'jealousemia'. He firmly believed that one day the world of psychopharmacology would discover receptors for these 'disorders'.

When he finally breathe his last at the Armed Forces Institute of Cardiology, Rawalpindi, Pakistan, a robust ECG on a cardiac monitor turned into a straight line, but not to announce death, but to symbolise life hereafter of a global champion of mental health. He had again won, when everybody thought he had lost the battle of life.

People as multifaceted as Prof. Mubbashar are born once in centuries and through their accomplishments never die.

We pay homage to his greatness by embodying his teachings. We come to terms with his death by remembering how fully he lived and living in his footsteps. We bereave his departure by celebrating his legacy. It is a matter of great satisfaction and pride for us that Prof. Mubbashar certified, time and time again, that his work was carried forward. For the authors, and all his biological, academic, and spiritual progeny, that is a solace in this time of grief.

On his sad demise, the great names of the world of psychiatry from around the world have paid homage to late Professor Malik Hussain Mubbashar (may his soul rest in eternal peace):

Prof Alistair Burns, University of Manchester UK

What an extraordinary life he led and what an inspiration he was to everyone who met him.

Prof Shon Lewis, University of Manchester UK

*Mubbashar was a giant of international psychiatry. Prof Bill Deakins, University of Manchester UK
So sorry to hear Prof Mubbashar has died. He was an extraordinarily energetic and inspirational man with many academic achievements.*

Rachel Jenkins, Prof Emiratis, King's College London, UK

I am so sorry. He was such a remarkable energetic person who achieved a great deal for Pakistan

Prof Dinesh Bhugra, Professor Emeritus, Kings College, London

President, Royal College of Psychiatrists (2008-2011)
President, World Psychiatric association (2014-2017)
President, British Medical association (2018-2019)

There are some individuals in one's life who leave a lasting impression. Professor Malik Mubbashar was one of those. I was really saddened to hear about Professor Mubbashar's passing away. A true giant of psychiatry in South Asia, I had the privilege of reading his work way before I met him. His work as Director of the WHO collaborating centre in Rawalpindi with its focus on community mental health and training was truly ground breaking and Pakistan was the first country in the Eastern Mediterranean Region of the WHO to adapt and deliver this.