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# Frustration Box filled with calls as women battle stress

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KOCHI: “Can I come back to my house in Kerala and meet my children. I have tension over Covid-19”, read a message sent to Frustration Box, a helpdesk launched by Kudumbashree. “I travelled with my friend, who was tested positive for Covid-19 later. Will I be infected? I cannot sleep in the night due to tension,” read another message from an NRK from the Middle East.

These are some of the messages, reflecting anxiety of thousands of NRKs, received by the helpdesk, a platform launched to address frustration and anxiety women go through as they are stuck inside the four walls of their houses during the lockdown.

“We have received 95 messages from NRKs raising concern over Covid-19. We reply them to alleviate their tension. Some, who went abroad on visiting visa, have asked whether they can return home, will they be infected if people, who is Covid-infected in hotels prepare food and parcel it?” said Jesmine George, counsellor Frustration Box in Ernakulam received around 280 calls since its launch a week ago. Women, who want to share their emotions and frustrations, can either call at the helpdesk or share it in the form of messages, paintings, audio clippings or photo to the dedicated phone number of the helpdesk.

The counsellor will intervene in the issue only when the caller or the aggrieved person demands for it. The Frustration Box is run by the same team, which mans ‘Snehitha’, a gender helpdesk of the Kudumbashree mission. “Women from upper class have started calling the Frustration Box which was not the case with Snehitha. With the lockdown in force, women face a lot of problems as they have no other ways to vent out their frustrations or stress. Family issues crop up when all the members remain in the house. Some are anxious about the future of their business due to uncertainty in the market. Two-months-long school vacation is the time for many women to visit their houses and relieve all the stress. But the Covid-19 disrupted their plan and many women are worried about it,”s said Jesmine George.

The helpdesk included paintings, messages and audio clippings as medium to intimate the counsellors about frustrations, anxieties or stress woman feels about. “As there would be more members in the family, women might find it difficult to call us

and share the problems. If they ask us to intervene in their issue, we will do it and give them counselling. Many mothers are under stress due to quarrel among their children. Though the helpdesk gives priority for women and children, men can also approach us for support,"s she added.