

Case story on Chhaupadi

Case No. 9: Changing mind-set behaviour of traditional healer (Jhakri)

Nawal Bahadur Raut (34) from Jumla district is a father of four children with sick wife. He was an astrologist from the age of 10. He got some inner voice and speak about other people. He then worked as healer too. During that time, women were not allowed to touch him or cross the road by him. He never ate any touched water or food. He was happy with this profession but later when he faced problem (health and family), he then realized that his work is of no use for himself. He can predict on others but not for self. His wife also faced a serious illness (3 months of time to die of illness) and was in the mouth of death. He became hopeless as there was no improvement.

One day he got a leaflet of Christianity and was impressed with the definition of life. He realized that human life is dangerous as it cannot be measured and predict. Then before two years he changed his religion along with his profession. He started to advocate against chhaupadi and started from his home. His wife is also doing well and still alive though it is almost three years doctors has warned for her untimely death if not cured. As his family do not follow norms of chhaupadi in their locality, they are banned from many things; like they cannot touch public tap and if touched it is cleaned immediately.

His past and present experience showed that the only thing is the mind-set. His culture and mind set on chhaupadi has made him shaken when touched as nothing happens now even he eats the food cooked by such women. His experience showed that worshipping self and taking safety measures of one's health is the most, no matter what religion one follows.