

ISSUE 09 | VOLUME 09  
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**MAITRI**

# Anahita

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MaitriBodh



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# Editorial

Dear Loved One,

We hope this note finds you in the best of spirits. The theme of the magazine for this month is 'Compassion'. All beings need compassion and affection in their lives. Kindness and a good heart form the underlying foundation of this value and this feeling also forms a basis of our progress on the spiritual path. Feeling compassion towards one and all opens the heart. This feeling can be all-consuming when one functions through this mode at all times since every single act will arise out of love and kindness. Every thought and the consequent action will consider the benefit of everyone involved. The simplest of simple acts will involve deep thought so as to not cause harm to anyone, whether it is our fellow beings or animals or Mother Nature. It is a feeling that wishes for the other being to be free from suffering and wanting them to have happiness. When one experiences the bond of 'Maitri' (friendship) towards every being, compassion flows naturally. The MaitriBodh Parivaar is working relentlessly to establish this bond of friendship and love through human transformation to achieve the vision of 'One World, One Truth, One Family'.

In this issue, under '*Pearls of Wisdom*' Maitreya Dadashreeji answers a seeker's question on how one could overcome an unstable state of mind considering the uncertainty and struggle that the pandemic has brought along in the lives of many.

Inside, read more and enrich yourselves reading two more recently introduced columns *Modern Heroes* and *My Favourite Places* along with – *Power of Affirmations*, *Practice for the Month*, *Music for the month*, *Movies for the Soul*, *Sacred Rituals around the World*, *Pots around the World*, *Sustainability and MBP Family*.

The second batch of the *Worldwide Transformation Program* commences on 12th September 2021, read more for further details. We also gladly announce the commencement of a WELLNESS RESEARCH with the aim of studying '*The impact of online spiritual practice on a person's emotional wellbeing*', a collaboration between the Hinduja Hospital and the MaitriBodh Parivaar, further details shared inside.

Follow your heart and spread goodness!

With Love & Light,  
Team Maitri Anahita

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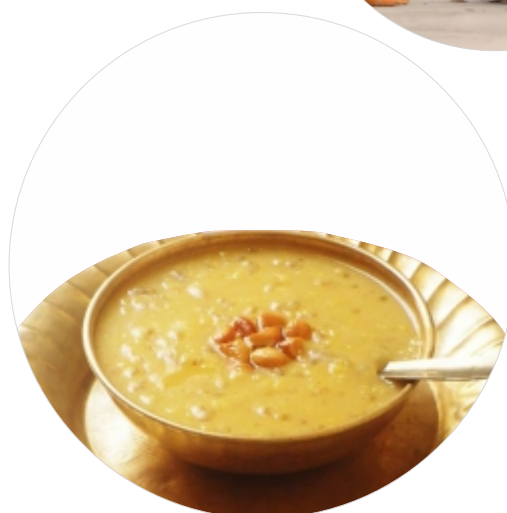
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**Seeker:**

Today, we all are going through the Covid pandemic, a situation no one was prepared for. Be it an individual, society or the world at large. Together all of us are struggling with it in many ways. Frustration, helplessness, anger, depression are increasing.

Maitreya Dadashreeji, can you please guide us on how we can come out from this unstable mental situation and from this state of mind in very simple and practical ways?

Actually, I am an artist and today the situations in which the artists are; for instance, a singer or an actor, they feel that their focus has shifted. For example, there is a singer who wants to make her career in singing. Firstly she wants to learn to sing really well, wants to devote her life to it. But now suddenly, she has had to become a teacher to run the household to cater to basic needs. She now feels that her growth has stopped because she is not learning anymore and is forced to teach instead. In such a situation how can her focus come back?

**Maitreya Dadashreeji:**

The one who is a teacher, herself progresses when she teaches. It's not only the ones who are being taught who benefit. The teacher too develops simultaneously. When you look at the situation positively, you realize that you are also benefitting from it.

This pandemic situation was unanticipated by everyone. Nobody knew this was going to happen. No one had a date, that on this day, something like this will happen, so we will prepare for these 5-6 months in advance. Nobody decided that we will take a pause from our career of our passion, be it singing or acting, and start taking tuition classes, pursue that for 2 years and then again, we will come back to the same work - our main profession of singing or acting.

As it is, irrespective of Covid, no one knows how much work someone will get, how much they will receive or for how many years. You cannot say, that for the next 30-40 years I will keep on singing or keep on acting, no matter how big the platform is.

Maybe Covid has opened your eyes, what if there is no work?

I still possess an art, which I can teach someone else, and someone can benefit from it, gain from it. You can at least carry this thought. Don't think this is something wrong.

Only that person's focus shifts, who doesn't want to do anything big. When you get hungry, you get up and eat; no one tells you to do this. You felt hungry, you got up and ate; in the same way if the focus has shifted, you yourself need to bring it back. This is because it is your need. Your goal is your life. You cannot compromise with that at all. You have to reach there, that is your dream.

You should use this time in such a way that you build yourself anew. Something went wrong but let's make something new. The dreams we had 2 years back might be shattered today, but let us dream anew. Keeping the pandemic in mind, dream anew by putting this time to use in the right way. You have to take this first step. Because the focus shifted, create another dream. That is very important and for this you require faith. Then the dream will certainly manifest one day.

Today maybe the situations are not conducive or are adverse but you still have to create a dream, believe in it, have faith in its happening and move ahead. Moving ahead means that you keep practicing and keep at it daily.

So, you would need to understand three things –

- create a dream,
- have faith in it, and
- practice for it every day.

If you persist then why would you not succeed?

*Have no fear!  
Have no doubt!  
Your Divine is with you always!!*

So, rebuild yourself and move ahead. We will all support you.

**Love and Blessings,  
Maitreya Dadashreeji**

*(This is an excerpt from Maitreya Dadashreeji's 'Beyond Enlightenment, Towards Transformation' Buddha Purnima 2021 message - continued from July 2021)*



## Affirmation for the Month

**E**ach month we will be sharing an affirmation. You may repeat this affirmation at least three times daily - first thing in the morning, midday, and just before you go to sleep. Regular repetition will help in its manifestation.

*Practice and witness the change!*



### Affirmation

♥ "I am simply me,  
I love and accept myself  
as I am, I am enough"

## Practice for the Month



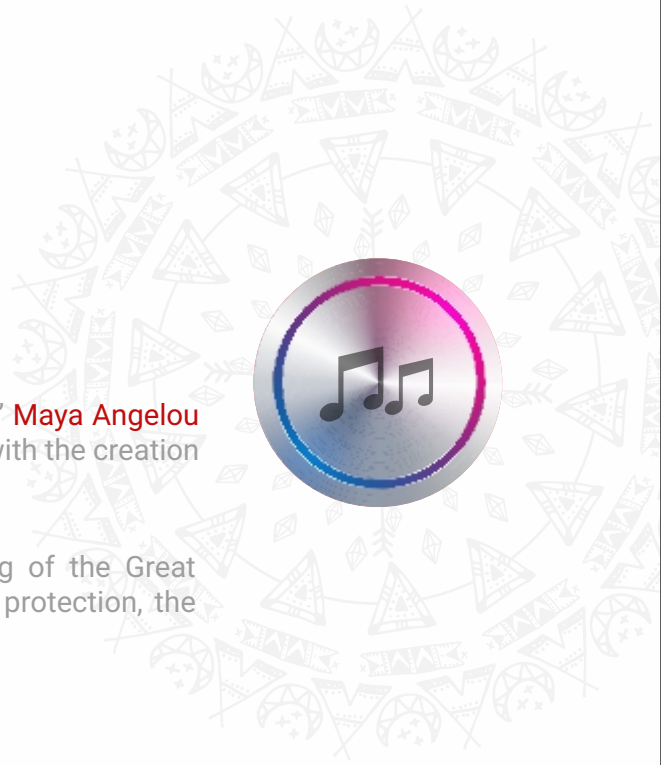
**C**onnect with the ones who are 'helpless or in need' and spend time with them daily. If someone is unwell, be by their side. If they are in quarantine then call them and listen to them. Try to be available for the elderly, homeless, children who are unwell, orphaned children, those who stay alone or anyone who is in need of love. Spend quality time with them daily (in person or by other means). You may expand your circle of compassion to Mother Nature and animals too.

## Music for the Soul

“Everything in the universe has a rhythm, everything dances.” **Maya Angelou**  
Music is one of the ways to express ourselves and connect with the creation and it's Creator. Music is a direct way to connect to the Divine.

**W**e share below the link to the traditional chanting of the Great Compassion Mantra (for purification, healing and protection, the Maha Karuna Dharani Sutra – benefitting all beings).

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1j\\_MWW0oQ2c&t=148s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1j_MWW0oQ2c&t=148s)



## Movie of the Month : *Beauty and the Beast*



The truth is out there’ – all we need to do is seek! Under this space we will be recommending a movie to you each month; we hope you are able to derive meaning even as you are entertained. Spirituality can be fun!

### The Plot

**T**he movie is the modern-day narrative of the fairy tale Beauty and the Beast. Belle’s father is imprisoned by a terrifying beast for stealing a rose from his castle’s garden. Belle offers to be the Beast’s prisoner in her father’s place. Once handsome but vain and arrogant, a prince is cursed by an enchantress, turning him into a ‘beast’ as a punishment for his selfishness. The spell can only be broken if the ‘Beast’ finds true love. Belle sees beyond the Beast’s brutish exterior and despite the overbearing actions of the Beast, showers him with love, kindness and tender care. Does Belle’s compassion have the power to transform? Does the Beast find true love? Watch this movie to find out.

### Takeaway

The movie speaks of the transformative power of compassion. Upon finding non-judgmental acceptance and compassion even the most hardened of beings turn to their true nature, love.



## Compassion

Compassion, stemming from oneness and interconnectedness, is what makes us truly human says the article. In compassion we find our own Divinity

**T**he offering of kindness and love to ease the suffering of another is compassion. A compassionate being holds the hand of others with an intention to alleviate their suffering or condition. The call to be compassionate is found in cultures around the world. Compassion and love are seen as two aspects of same thing in the Buddhism. It is the wish for another being to be free from suffering; while wanting them to be happy arises out of love. The Mahayana school of Buddhism focuses upon cultivating two qualities - compassion extended to all sentient beings, and enlightened wisdom on the path to becoming a bodhisattva (a Buddha in the making). In the western Christian tradition the call to compassion is found in the teaching in a story told by Jesus of the Good Samaritan which urges us to reach out to people in need of kindness and without discrimination of any kind. True compassion has no boundaries!

A teacher was teaching math to a class of six-year-olds, a number of whom had recently-arrived as refugees from other countries. The topic was fractions. The teacher explained what a half and a quarter were, and then asked the children to write down whether they would prefer a half or a quarter

of a chocolate bar. As she walked around the room, she noticed that some of the new students wrote they would prefer a quarter of the chocolate bar. She thought that she would have to re-teach the lesson, as they didn't seem to understand that a half was bigger than a quarter. She asked the students why they would prefer a quarter of the chocolate bar and one little girl replied, "So that more people could have a piece of chocolate."

**Compassion arises from the feeling of being interconnected, with the thought of happiness for all and eradication of suffering from everyone's lives being predominant.**

Empathy (the awareness of others need) and compassion (the emotional response to empathy) are important human values that will ensure our success as a race. There is suffering all around in today's time. The challenges are many. Each challenge, whether great or small, is an opportunity for compassionate selfless service.

In America, many restaurateurs who had to close business due to Covid-19, chose to use their stored foodstuffs to provide free meals to health workers and families suffering from the Covid-19 virus. Food has been donated daily and the compassionate feeding of those in need continues to date.



A couple based in Mumbai, India during the pandemic last year, Faiyaz and Mizga Shaikh dipped into the money (Rs. 400,000) that they had been saving up for a house, and utilised it to buy rations instead for fifteen hundred people during the lockdown. In yet another act of compassion, amidst the shortage of food, many NGOs and individuals came forward to help migrant workers who lost their livelihoods. An 85-year-old woman from Coimbatore made idlis (savory rice cake) for these workers despite her business losses due to the lockdown. Many people came forward to help her with raw materials so that she could provide these idlis.

Compassion arises from the feeling of being interconnected, with the thought of happiness for all and eradication of suffering from everyone's lives being predominant. From a state of compassion arises genuine concern for others, and a heartfelt act to relieve the pain and suffering of others. Let us recognize the Divine in each other and reach out to one and all without exception.

“Just as a mother would protect her only child at the risk of her own life, even so, cultivate a boundless heart towards all beings. Let your thoughts of boundless love pervade the whole world” – Buddha (Sutta Nipata 149-150)



# The Divine Quality of Compassion

From the mind flows judgment while from the heart flows compassion, writes **Maitreyi Sulata**. Being connected with the heart, with the Divinity within, would mean compassion flowing naturally from us, understanding the interdependence and interconnectedness of human beings

Dear Friends,

warmly greet you in the Love and Light of the Divine!

We are all aware of what is going on in the world: disease, crisis, competition, ambition, frustration, chaos, and violence as the present one, one may wonder if a word like compassion has any relevance left at all. At this point in time, experiencing empathy leading to compassion has become vital for the survival of the human race!

*"Show compassion towards all living beings", we often hear people say, but compassion is not something to be shown. It's neither a sentiment of sympathy nor of empathy. Compassion, a*

*state of Being, is to be experienced within us, which then naturally culminates into an outward expression towards our fellow human beings and the environment.*

When a child asks his mother, "Mumma how are you feeling today?", he expresses love and care for his mother. When we ask our newly shifted neighbours next door, "How can I help you?" "Can I get you something?" we are expressing concern. In politely offering our seat to a pregnant woman or an elderly person on the train – we show consideration and reverence for them. Feelings of love, kindness, concern, consideration, understanding, reverence are different ways through which we all have touched compassion (even if at a superficial level) in everyday living.

Compassion is said to be one of the highest spiritual qualities. It goes beyond feelings of kindness, sympathy and empathy, and is a flow of the unconditional love of the Divine in our hearts to another with complete acceptance and deep understanding of the other's condition, with the sole purpose of their growth and betterment.



Most of us are quick to judge, to point out the defects in others, to tell them to get over their worries and anxieties. But what is needed is not judgment or advice, but a deep understanding of how human beings are in the grip of their minds, their beliefs, their conditionings, and past unpleasant experiences which will help them grow beyond their present state to a better state of being, and that is true compassion!

Compassion is said to be one of the highest spiritual qualities. It goes beyond feelings of kindness, sympathy and empathy, and is a flow of the unconditional love of the Divine in our hearts to another with complete acceptance and deep understanding of the other's condition, with the sole purpose of their growth and betterment.

Our own existence is dependent on the help of others and our need for love lies at the very foundation of our existence. Therefore, we need a genuine sense of responsibility and a sincere concern for the welfare of others. Even in ordinary conversation in everyday life, if someone speaks with heartfelt feeling we enjoy listening, and respond accordingly; the whole conversation becomes interesting, however important the topic may be. On the other hand, if a person speaks coldly or harshly, we feel uneasy and wish for a quick end to the interaction. From the least to the most important event, the affection and respect for others are vital for our happiness. But somewhere humanity has lost touch with this reality of being interconnected and pursuing our own life with indifference or little care for others!

Compassion is not something which one can cultivate through positive thought, discipline, control, suppression of ambition and desires, nor by trying to be kind, polite, gentle, and all the rest of it. Compassion comes into being from the heart and only when one connects with the truth of our existence- the Divine in our hearts and thus goes through a process of Spiritual Transformation under the grace and guidance of a genuine Guide who is himself/herself in the spiritual state of bestowing this Divine Grace on others, thus helping them transform their present condition.

It is only the Divine who is truly compassionate; being connected with the Divine, communicating and experiencing the Divine in our hearts is what leads to flowering of the Divine quality of compassion in us.

If we are able to experience compassion and loving kindness for others, irrespective of what they do or say, we have really reached a high level of evolution. As the Dalai Lama says "Love and compassion are necessities, not luxuries. Without them, humanity cannot survive". Our prime purpose in this life is to help others." Jesus, is always remembered for His ultimate compassion that in His last utterance, he said, "Lord, please forgive them. They know not what they do."

Once humanity begins to experience Compassion, it's natural that our society and world will undergo a transformational shift towards the Divine Age!

This month's moment in prayer, is seeking this Compassion of the Divine to flow through us seamlessly!

**Beloved Maitreya,  
As your Divine presence flowers within my heart,  
Awakening me to my true nature; of love's passion,  
Blessed I am with Thine deep compassion!  
Thank you Maitreya Dadashreeji!**



## Tonglen – Tibetan Meditation Practice

With compassion at its core, the Tibetan Buddhist practice of Tonglen one inhales any concern relating to others thus relieving them of the suffering; exhaling with loving compassion leads to a sense of peace settling on the other. Mitra Philip shares this ancient practice with us



The ancient Tibetan Buddhist meditation practice of Tonglen focuses on compassion. Tonglen means to 'give or send' (Tong), and to 'receive or take' (Len). In the practice of Tonglen, one imagines that as we inhale, we are relieving others of any suffering found in the world, and then exhaling well-being and love to the place of suffering. The practice is based on active compassion: developing it and applying it in our daily life.

The practice of Tonglen involves focusing on the inhalation and exhalation of the breath. The breath is the vehicle on which the intention rides. The steps are as follows:

- Breath-watch. Sitting quietly, one brings one's awareness to the natural breathing in and breathing out. If thoughts stray into the consciousness, they are admitted and released
- without concern. Upon experiencing the serenity of breath-watch, one moves to the next step.
- The cause or concern. One may pick any concern relating to events in the world or the welfare of people in our life. With inhalation of the breath the concern is received into the heart where it will be transformed into light. Then follows the exhalation with conscious attention and expression of loving compassion, for the suffering associated in the concern. As you breathe out the light, a sense of peace settles in when the concern has been sufficiently met, and it is then released.
- One may progress from simple to complex concerns. The purpose of the measured progression is that one is not emotionally overwhelmed when the

larger concerns are eventually taken up.

- Avoid clubbing concerns. It is more efficient to take each concern as singular thereby according to it focused attention. Multiple concerns can be taken up in a practice session sequentially. It may be wise to return to the breath watch for re-centering before taking up the next concern.

Tonglen is a deep and deliberate practice for serving the world with love and compassion. It can be practiced when one is aware, mindful and empathetic of one's surroundings and the sufferings in our life. The feeling of compassion for one another with an intention to help makes this practice truly beautiful as it allows the light within each one to shine and spread goodness in the world.

## Pots around the World

### Parippu Payasam

As an offering to the Goddess Varalakshmi, the sweet delicacy of Parippu Payasam is divine in more ways than one says **Seethalakshmi**

**T**his sweet delicacy is offered to the Goddess Varalakshmi in Southern India as an expression of love and gratitude, especially during the Varalakshmi festival. It is believed that worshipping the Goddess Varalakshmi is equivalent to worshipping the eight forms of energy, known as the 'Ashtalakshmi' (eight goddesses) viz., Goddesses of Wealth, Courage, Prosperity, Victory, Nourishment, Progeny, Wisdom and Protection. This festival is observed largely by women. It involves invoking the blessings of the Goddess Lakshmi and holds a special place in most households in Southern India. The sweet dish is prepared with love and gratitude in the entire process. The recipe is given hereunder

#### Method

Dry roast 1 cup of yellow split lentils on medium flame, till the aroma is released and the lentils are hot to the touch.

Add 3 cups of water and pressure cook it for one whistle. Once it cools, mash it to a smooth paste.

Take 1-1.5 cups of jaggery. Add water as required and bring it to boil on medium flame till it is completely dissolved.

Transfer the lentil paste and the jaggery solution to a pan. Mix it well with required quantity of water and boil on a medium flame for 8-10 minutes. Add cardamom powder and dry ginger powder. Mix well. Add coconut milk and mix well on a medium flame for about 1 minute till the milk froths. Roast the cashew nuts and finely chopped coconut in 2 tbsp of ghee and add it to the payasam.

#### Ingredients

- Yellow split lentils (moong dal) – 1 cup
- Jaggery 1-1.5 cups (as per taste)
- Coconut milk 1-2 cups
- Small pieces of finely chopped coconut 1-2 tbsp
- Clarified butter (ghee) – 2 tbsp
- Cardamom powder – 1 tbsp
- Dry ginger powder – 1 tbsp
- Cashewnut – as required

Delicious parippu payasam is now ready to be served!



## Food as Medicine

Being grateful to Mother Earth for her fruits of love and following correct eating habits and practices promotes holistic health for all, explains **Maitreyi Sabine**. Love too, she continues, is a powerful 'medicinal food' with great healing powers

**O**ur planet Earth, our beloved Mother is nourishing humanity selflessly at every moment. To me she represents the nourishing and giving principle at all levels. She as the Mother is unconditionally giving Love, and providing shelter, care and food for her children. We her children need to be aware that it is not only food which nourishes us, but our inner, mental and emotional nourishment also matters. All levels of our being are interconnected and interact with each other. True nourishment starts from within us, within our core.

### Influence of Food

There are two questions that arise in my mind which represent the inner and outer influence. The first is that, when we eat, are our hearts filled with gratitude for where our food comes from and do we enjoy it to the fullest? And the second,

are we in awareness of our body, which is connected with the outer world, as to what exactly it needs in terms of the food we are eating? Are we able to appreciate what is good depending on our individual body constitution and life circumstances? If we dwell more and more on these aspects of our consciousness, that everything - thinking patterns, emotions and the quality of food we consume - we realise that each of these are essential for our wellbeing on all levels, and thereby food takes on a completely different quality than we assumed.

For example, the emotion of stress makes a huge impact on the food we eat, as this emotion affects water at the cellular level by creating acidic reactions which impact our body adversely.

In this phase of life when stress and lack of sleep is has become the norm it is recommended

that we eat more alkaline foods. This will definitely help our body to balance the acidic reactions as mentioned before. Shared below are a few simple vitamin boosting recipes that have incredible advantages.

### Vegetable Broth

Ingredients (to make 1 litre)

½ Onion  
1.5 litre water  
1 Red bell pepper  
½ White cabbage  
1 Zucchini  
3 Carrots  
2 Parsley roots  
1/2 Leek  
1 Bay leaf  
Some coriander seeds

### Method

Add the coarsely chopped vegetables to the water. Simmer for one hour, do not boil. Heat to just below boiling point and strain. Allow to cool and drink often during the day.



## Traditional Remedies

### Tea Cure

The simplest and most effective way to increase the alkalinity level in our body is by using the herb 'nettle'.

### Ingredients

½ litre water

1 tsp dried nettle tips or a handful of fresh nettle tips

### Method

A handful of fresh nettle tips or 1 teaspoon dried ones in 1/2 litre boiling water and steeped for exactly 1 minute (no longer!). Strain and drink one cup before each meal for 3 weeks.

### Mindful Consumption

Give your stomach adequate room to digest. Don't eat too much, you shouldn't feel full after eating. Try not to eat for at least four hours between meals and allow hunger pangs to arise naturally. Listen to your body and communicate with it. We have the opportunity to evolve and grow with this awareness within us that food and eating correctly can be pure medicine for all our levels. This promotes holistic health especially when we understand and follow this integrated approach to life.

### Divine Love as Food

We all know our true nature is 'Love'. What we all truly need to

realise in our hearts is that love is the most powerful healing food for us. When we express love, perform our duties with love, interact with each other with love, it nurtures all our body cells positively and in the most efficient way. Love is the energy with the magic power to heal us, and indeed everything. Pure love is truly the best 'medicinal food'.

With deep gratitude to our beloved Mother Earth for the selfless offering of her fruits of love to us every day, I wish you healthy and mindful enjoyment of her gifts.





## Household Cleaning Agents

Cleanliness is certainly next to Godliness but only if done with respect for the environment. We provide easy to follow recipes for making environment-friendly household cleaning agents

**W**hile cleanliness at one's home is a virtue, it should not be at the cost of the environment. Regular cleaning agents and detergents are loaded with non-degradable chemicals; extended use of such cleaning agents may make for a clean home, but it also results in a polluted environment. All human activity must be sustainable in terms of friendliness towards our planet.

In this article we are listing a few organic cleaning agents that are environment friendly. Each of these cleaning agents may be used separately or in combination, depending on the cleaning activity. Three of such agents are Soap Pods, Soapnuts and Vinegar. In combination, these cleaning agents can be used to prepare liquid soap (recipe shared in the August 2021 edition of Maitri Anahita) which has great utility in cleaning surfaces like kitchen platforms, table tops, bathroom tiles, etc., as also for washing clothes.

You can also prepare cleaning powder using soap pods, soapnuts and baking soda for cleaning utensils. You will notice that you require less water to clean and rinse the utensils.

### Soap Pod

*Properties* - Mild, natural soap, surfactant, first-class softener, anti-fungal, natural astringent

*Usage* - Soap pod powder makes for a great bathing soap.

### Soapnut

*Properties* - Natural soap, surfactant, excellent cleaning agent for anything from clothes to ornaments, anti-microbial, insecticidal and anti-inflammatory.

*Usage* - Used to wash silks and delicate clothing.

### Baking Soda

*Properties* - pH regulator, excellent cleaning agent, natural deodorizer, therapeutic agent.

*Usage* - Sprinkle on kitchen sink and wash basins, scrub and wash. You will notice that the kitchen sink will not clog if cleaned daily with baking soda as it is a dirt buster and cuts across grime as it washes.



### All-purpose cleaner (Vinegar)

*Properties* - Antioxidant, antimicrobial, antibacterial, antiseptic, excellent cleaning agent, natural deodorizer, sanitizer, fabric softener, colour fastener, stain remover, food preservative.

#### Recipe

##### *Ingredients*

- Acetic acid of 50% concentration
- Distilled water

##### *Method*

To prepare one litre of all-purpose cleaner, add 100ml acetic acid to 900ml distilled water.

##### *Usage*

Add one cap of the cleaner into half a bucket of water to mop the floor or to clean the kitchen platform. In addition, you can add two drops of citronella (essential) oil / lemon grass oil / mint oil to the mopping to ward off flies and insects. The water used in the mopping may be used to water household plants.

If faced with paucity of time in preparing homemade vinegar, you may use commercially available white (cooking friendly) vinegar for the above purposes.

### Toilet Cleaner (Vinegar)

*Properties* - Antioxidant, antimicrobial, antibacterial, antiseptic, excellent cleaning agent, natural deodorizer, sanitizer, fabric softener, colour fastener, stain remover, food preservative.

#### Recipe

##### *Ingredients*

- Acetic acid of 50% concentration
- Distilled water

##### *Method*

To prepare a liter of toilet cleaner, add 200ml acetic acid to 800ml distilled water.

##### *Usage*

Sprinkle baking soda and scrub the desired surface (washbasin, bathroom tiles, bathroom floor and toilet bowl). Add 1 cap of toilet cleaner to half a bucket of water and then wash the scrubbed surface with this solution.

Vinegar mixed with baking soda is a potent cleaning agent. Mix two spoons of baking soda with half a cup of vinegar and pour on desired surface. Let it sit for a few minutes and scrub as usual. You can use the same mixture for scrubbing sanitary fittings and fixtures (other than chromium plated fixtures) like taps, showers, health faucets, etc. Hard water stains can also be removed. Baking soda acts as an abrasive so taps and shower nozzle holes are cleared resulting in a good flow of water.

##### *Caution*

Cleaner not to be used on marble floor. It may cause corrosion or leave white marks. In case the cleaner is mistakenly swallowed, flush your stomach by immediately drinking at least a litre of water.

*Reference:* [www.jeevitnadi.org](http://www.jeevitnadi.org)



## Daniel Toben

A life well lived is one that leaves a positive impact. We may leave an impression of our presence on the souls and the lives of those nearest and dearest to us, but there are a few individuals who leave their mark on humanity. These are individuals who have brought about a change in the lives of many with their vision, their dreams and their hopes for a better tomorrow for mankind. This column features inspiring and motivating acts of such personalities that truly made a difference in the world. Today, we share with you the journey of one such hero

**D**aniel Toben, from North Carolina in the United States, has been involved in cleaning up of the local environment since 2009. What started as a cleanliness drive in his university turned into a full-fledged passion for Mother Earth. Recognized by his county for his service, Toben has spent thousands of hours cleaning up trash in the 'most neglected parts of Orange County'. He has led school and church groups in classes about environmental restoration; raised funds online to purchase supplies for community clean-up drives. Having picked up over a million pieces of trash, Toben goes on clean-ups three to four times a week, each trip lasting three hours or more. He has done this while working a full-time job. Videos of his efforts have gone viral and he has been interviewed by local, national, and international news stations. Maitreyi Meredith accompanied him on a few clean-ups prior to the Covid 19 pandemic and saw how he inspired people in each community to join in the clean-up. Friendly and approachable, he is dedicated to serving Mother Earth.

Interviewing Toben, the passion and commitment for a clean Mother Earth shone through as he addressed the questions put up to him by **Maitreyi Meredith** on his cleanliness campaign

**How did you start picking up trash? We see litter around us every day without necessarily acting on it. What is different in your background that drove you to launch this initiative to clean up the local environment?**

I started picking up trash when I was young. It became a symbolic thing for me was when I was a student at university. On the way to class, the students walked over a small stream that was littered with plastic bottles. There were placards nearby describing the natural area and exhorting the students to protect the environment. The irony was that the stream contained our trash, and it was already witnessing its destruction. This conflict between preservation and destruction mirrored my own life, the life on campus, and the world at large. Nature has

always been a sanctuary for me, and I find that being in a secret spot heals any negativity I may be harbouring. So, after contemplating I decided to go clean up the stream. Healing the stream was healing myself, and it gave me a place to imagine my future after college, my hopes for the planet to be happy and whole, and a picture of what society could be like.

**Do you have faith in the essential goodness of mankind? Do you think there is a way to transform humanity to align it with the concept of sustainable living and sensitivity towards our environment?**

I believe we will "cut it close" as they say in the States. I believe we will push the planet to the brink of collapse and then turn it around. The air pollution, waste pollution, forest destruction, and other planetary destruction will push the planet to the very edge until we see ourselves as one global society and change our ways to become environment friendly. Then, we will turn around and heal it. But, there is a better way. The better

## Modern Heroes

way is to love the Earth and care for the Earth and choose to help the planet out of goodness in our hearts, establishing a society that is caring to not only the planet but to other people too. Aspects such as selfless care for nature and devotion of personal time for making the planet a better place are aspects that we need to inculcate. Giving people the opportunity to get hands-on experience in beautifying the planet makes them stakeholders in the future of the planet. Part of my cleanup work is meant as a community building endeavor. There is nothing more powerful than seeing what is possible as a team that is impossible by yourself. Lastly, trash in particular, is a symbol of the air pollution that is causing climate change. With every piece of trash imagine an equal piece of air pollution because making plastic pollutes the air; and so, to inspire people to care more about the planet, get them to pick up litter.

### What has been your experience in mobilising the local community in your cleaning-up drive?

By cleaning up litter publicly and highlighting such drives on social media, I am drawing attention to myself, and I have let go of personal pride just so that my work is interesting to people. I used to clean up just places that were in my neighborhood, but now I travel around and do cleanups wherever I go. People have respected my lifelong passion for cleaning up and they ask to join-in. Some people want to help me be successful in what I do, and they ask to come along to help me be as successful as I can be. Others are inspired, as they have never thought of a thing like this. Some people just want to 'hang out' and have fun, so they ask to come. I have even gotten messages through social media of people from around the world saying that I've inspired them to go out and do cleanups. I have understood that the best way of mobilizing people would be to speak to them one-on-one. Asking a large group of people, to do anything, never works; but asking one person to come along with you on a cleanup works almost every time. Speak to people one on one, and you will be successful. I try to keep the work spontaneous rather than organized to make the activity fun rather than seem like a chore. As a group we've cleaned up probably two million pieces of trash, and we have cleaned up hundreds of locations.

### How do you remain motivated? How do you sustain the drive to keep cleaning up against all odds?

I remain motivated because I was born for this. I just don't focus on anyone else. I focus on what I am doing. I don't worry about the possibly of things not working out for me. I love restoring the planet to its sacred beauty. When I do a cleanup it feels like the earth can breathe again, and I feel a tremendous sense of accomplishment. I feel like I've made a difference for the better. The encouragement from other people, online and in my community keeps me going too. Every cleanup is a process where I push through the hard part till I see the result unfolding before me and that motivates me to do more of the same in the future. I also realise that I can choose to be angry at everyone for littering or I can feel happy that I'm doing a good job, and I choose the latter. Besides, if everyone joined in for just one day, the whole planet could be cleaned up.

### Where would you begin in bringing about awareness and responsibility amongst humanity about not littering our environment? Do you think that one person's actions have the potential to trigger lasting change among others around?

I think respecting and caring for the planet is the way forward. One of the steps towards helping the environment would be to work towards climate change or for the preservation of the natural world by making conscious decisions and adapting a sustainable lifestyle.

I do believe that small acts of service by one person positively impact not only the environment but also inspire others to do something proactively to help the planet. I do think that individual examples can inspire others to help the planet and create a positive impact. I think a model based on authentic action would serve as an inspiration for other people to follow.

In my opinion responsibility does not rest in an individual; even the greatest leaders are successful because of the help that they get from other people. It is community-based action that makes the difference!

## My Favorite Place

*Benalmádena Stupa*

A tourist visit to a well-known stupa in southern Spain proved to be well beyond a mere sightseeing exercise; **Maitreyi Meredith** and her mother found themselves cleansed and healed with the Divine vibrations at the stupa



A few years ago I was working for the French education system teaching English in elementary schools located in the Loire Valley, France. I had a break in the winter so my mother and I decided to go to Spain for the holidays. I adored Blois, France (where I was living) but there wasn't very much sun there, so we decided to spend some time in the south of Spain to leave the grey skies behind and soak in the sun.

We headed to Benalmadena on the Southern Coast (known locally as Costa del Sol) of Spain. I have always connected with water and the warm currents of the sea were a source of joy to me. You could see the African coast from the Spanish shores and it made the whole world seem more connected, with the African continent seeming just a hop, skip and jump away!

On the second day of the trip my mother excitedly suggested, "We should go to the Stupa of Enlightenment! This is the tallest Buddhist stupa in the Western World." I wasn't sure what a 'stupa' was, but I was game for an adventure.

**Coming Home**

It turned out to be a challenge getting to the site - we had to take two public buses into the hills and we were unsure of our whereabouts. I had limited knowledge of the Spanish language and that added to the uncertainty of our adventure. Once we arrived at the Stupa, we felt safe and at ease; there was a feeling of having come home. The Stupa of Benalmadena symbolizes Lord Buddha's enlightenment and is situated in the mountains and overlooks the Mediterranean Sea with breathtaking views of Gibraltar and the African continent. The peace was palpable and you could breathe it in.

Belonging to the Tibetan Buddhist tradition, the Stupa was built by a Buddhist master, Lopon Tsechu Rinpoche from the Kingdom of Bhutan. A Stupa or in Tibetan a 'chorten' is a holy site charged with energy. The Stupa has evolved over time and serves multiple purposes - it is a reminder of Lord Buddha's life, a holy and blessed site to grant wishes, and a place to pray among other things. A Stupa is consecrated by high lamas with rituals and its walls are inscribed with

## My Favorite Place

prayers while sacred objects such as Buddha relics are contained within. The shape of the Stupa symbolizes the elements of earth, water, fire, air and consciousness and it is said that a Stupa is a sacred mandala in itself.

Pilgrims walk around the Stupa in the clockwise direction while expressing their deepest wishes. The Benalmadena Stupa is an exception as it has a meditation hall and a small museum dedicated to Tibetan Buddhism.

### A Time to Heal

On entering the Stupa and going into the meditation hall we felt an indescribable connection with the place. Feeling the

vibrations of the Stupa we were in awareness that we were there as seekers rather than as tourists out for sightseeing.

My parents were in the middle of a divorce at the time and the past few months had been rather traumatic for my mother. I felt her pain. I could see clearly that this trip and the visit to the Stupa was through Divine intervention, a time to mend and heal. Both of us cried when we sat in the Stupa. With Divine energy supporting us, we felt our souls cleansed of all pain and hurt. Connecting to our true selves, we felt one with each other and with Creation. It was a place of acceptance and healing; to see each other with Love and Compassion.

## Path of Faith

**F**aith can move mountains.' The corona virus pandemic, turned out to be a blessing in disguise for me. It steered me towards a path of faith and awareness of the true self. My sister had been coaxing me to walk the path of transformation and communicate with the Divine Light for almost a year. I had been in depression over my college life and my relationship with my parents. I would remain cut off from everyone at home, would not speak much and there were arguments on regular occasions which would lead to silent treatment for days at a stretch with no one to talk to. My sleep and work schedules were messed up too.

Finally giving in to my sister, I visited an Aarohan Centre where I heard and chanted the Dadashreeji mantra for the very first time. Soon after, on my sister's insistence, I attended a couple of sessions of Bodh and also took Maitri Light which did help me. Gradually, with my belief increasing, I would talk to Him occasionally and tell Him about my feelings, hoping He was listening.

One day, I woke up to the news that my Dad and younger brother had tested positive for Covid. My mother was feeling sick as well and showing symptoms of Covid. This left me as the only unaffected member responsible for taking care of everyone. The situation itself had taken away all my sleep and I was terrified of what the future had in store for me. Calls came pouring in from all the family members, taking regular updates and encouraging me to stay strong. My uncle, a doctor, who is also associated with the MaitriBodh Parivaar advised me to keep communicating with the Divine Light and suggested the process of Maitri Light for all of us.

It was in these desperate times when I really needed to talk to someone, when I needed someone to listen to me, that I regularly started communicating with the Divine Light. I would always talk to Him in my mind with a hope that wherever He is, He would be listening to my pleas. I would always send a silent prayer to Him, hoping that one day all these prayers would be answered and this nightmare would end. Every time I communicated with Him, I only told Him about how scared I was, what exactly I was going through and always prayed that He help of us get through it.

Over a week's time I found strength within to keep going and take care of everyone. Everyone started recovering and things were getting back to normal. This was the incident that reinstated my long lost faith in the Divine and motivated me to keep communicating with the Divine Light. I started opening up to Him more and more. From only telling Him about my pain and weaknesses, I started sharing about my day, the daily chores that I did and everything that would happen throughout the day and my thoughts about those incidents. The conversations kept getting longer but I still had doubts as to whether He was always listening to my long talks.

After a couple of months, one fine evening when I was in the middle of my prayer, I heard a voice replying to me and saw a shadow of a Divine figure. Instantly, almost reflexively, I bowed my head to offer my prayer and seek His blessings. Indeed, it marked the beginning of a new journey for me - one of hope and faith. From that day on, I had a firm belief that our beloved Friend, Maitreya Dadashreeji was listening to each of us through the Divine Light. From then on I sat in front of the Divine Light to talk to Him.

It was as simple as that, only a small step was needed from my end - to communicate with Dada and have faith in Him. I would take this opportunity to thank Dada from the bottom of my heart for helping me grow and making me what I am today.

Charvi Somani

## MBP Programs & Offerings

### Dear Friends,

It is a great privilege to announce the commencement of a WELLNESS RESEARCH with application of scientific methods, collaboration between the Hinduja Hospital and the MaitriBodh Parivaar (details in the flyer). The research activity started in August with the aim of studying “The impact of online spiritual practice on a person’s emotional wellbeing”.

In this research, the MaitriBodh Parivaar’s online Maitri ShaktiPravaah process (a transformational energy transfer process) will be studied for its impact on the emotional wellness of individuals. For this purpose, we need the participation of four hundred open-minded volunteers in the study from anywhere in INDIA, who fit the eligibility criteria (shared on the website link below).

Registration and the steps involved in participation are simply explained in the link to the site of the MaitriBodh Parivaar, viz., [https://maitribodh.org/wellness\\_research](https://maitribodh.org/wellness_research). The link contains a schedule of events, with each event not exceeding an hour-and-a-half in duration.

Please note that sevaks of the MaitriBodh Parivaar, regularly practicing active sadhanas (spiritual practices) cannot be a part of this study (please look for eligibility criteria on the website).

The study opens the gates to people from varying backgrounds to be a part of this research, people who may otherwise be hesitant in participating in spiritual sessions; it will give them a window to evaluate their own emotional wellbeing.

The results of this study offer a unique opportunity to aid further research and help humanity deal with mental illnesses. This is an opportunity to work for a noble cause, hence request you to share this with your family, friends and other contacts.

Looking forward to your support.  
With Love & Gratitude,  
MaitriBodh Parivaar



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## *Request a Prayer*

*"Your prayers work magic in others' lives. Your prayers give them hope to cope up with this challenging world. When you pray for others, it brings a smile on the face of the Divine and you earn merit and His blessings without asking for them. These blessings would manifest in your life in myriad ways or forms" – Maitreya Dadashreeji*

Heartfelt prayers give Divinity the reason to act or intervene. You may now send in your prayer requests to the following email id: [invokedivinegrace@gmail.com](mailto:invokedivinegrace@gmail.com)

Following details of the person for whom the prayer needs to be offered are required:

- Full name
- Location
- Concern (for which the prayer needs to be offered)

The team will coordinate via email the suitable day, date and time for the same.

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In wake of the current pandemic all live events have been postponed and replaced with upcoming events like Bodh, Spiritual Triangle, Maitri Prayer, 21 days Maitri Sambodh Dhyān, Maitri Yoga and follow-up sessions which are taking place online on Zoom and through live Facebook sessions.

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For those seeking spiritual counseling/guidance from Mitra Shankh, please send an email to: [meeting.mitrshankh@gmail.com](mailto:meeting.mitrshankh@gmail.com) requesting an appointment for the same.

*Words used by us have the power to attract or repel the listener. Remember at all times to use words, which are like a balm and not hurtful. Choose your words with care and compassion. Divinity exists in everyone!*

Maitreya Dadashreeji

## Contributors

A gentle love within, quiet determination and an unshakable faith in Dadashreeji's Grace best describe **Maitreyi Sulata**, who has lived under the Guidance of Dadashreeji since her formative years. She works tirelessly to spread Dadashreeji's message of Love and Transformation across the globe to seekers who have been mesmerized by her soft, compassionate and love filled personality. Her discourses have transcended the boundaries of the mind with respect to religious and cultural differences and have touched the hearts of seekers across the world.

Through the years, **Mitra Philip Zemke** has served as a nurse, teacher, minister of a church, and an art therapist. His name Philip means love given freely to friends and surname Zemke means - in service to the beings of Earth. True to his name, his life has focused on narrating motivational stories of the wonders of life thereby encouraging and spreading positivity in one and all. Maitreya Dadashreeji's Love, Grace and guidance has further awakened him to the guiding presence of his Inner Divine for which he is ever grateful to the Maitreya.

**Seethalakshmi** is a home maker, animal lover and passionate towards serving humanity.

**Maitreyi Sabine**, is actively involved in the field of promoting healthy living by holistic eating in Europe. As a conversiologist (diagnosing by examining feet) she is fascinated by people's feet as they reflect our way of living and recommends opportunities in nutrition, herbs and body services for a balanced approach.

Growing up **Maitreyi Meredith** loved seeing the unity and connection in all religious traditions to one truth: Love and has longed to help others. Meredith has experienced Maitreya Dadashreeji as 'Love' and felt her life complete in that moment. She is a student and seeker of truth, simplicity, love and is passionate to help Mother Earth. She has a doctorate in physical therapy and currently works as a physical therapist and teaches yoga. She also has a degree in Dramatic Arts and was professionally trained as an actress, director and in dramaturgy.

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