

# MAITRI *Anaahita*



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# Editorial

Email your  
articles  
stories  
poems  
spiritual questions  
to [anahita@maitribodh.org](mailto:anahita@maitribodh.org)  
and  
experiences  
to [experiences@maitribodh.org](mailto:experiences@maitribodh.org)

We bring to you an opportunity to get answers to your questions from Maitreya Dadashreeji!

Email your questions to [anahita@maitribodh.org](mailto:anahita@maitribodh.org)

Please note that the questions asked should be for the benefit of all and not personal questions. The answers to the selected questions will be published in Maitri Anahita.

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**Dear Loved Ones,**

As the year comes to an end, it is time for reflection and regeneration of the purest and the best within ourselves. Many of us will make resolutions on how to be better tomorrow than today. If we look carefully at these resolutions, the most powerful ones will be about being better to our own self by taking care of our health, and being better to others, being there for them, and giving more. Nothing feels more rewarding than to do something for another.

'Selfless Service' is one of the pillars of MaitriBodh Parivaar's mission, and is also the theme of this month's edition. It is a way to attain the highest experience of internal freedom. So, in some ways, the irony of selfless service is that it is probably the most selfish thing we can do, because we are aware of the fruits our soul would reap from our service. So, what really is selflessness? Maybe it is that deep humility to take the action and leave aside the desire for its fruit, to give because we are moved by another's need, to 'forget' our own existence in service to another and be completely devoted to what will bring them comfort, joy, expansion, relief, support and so on. It is that moment when the Divine takes over and acts through us. The mind that is bowed in service becomes pure, the heart that is connected to service becomes sensitive and the soul becomes free. On 25th December we celebrate Christmas, the birth of Lord Jesus Christ a true Love incarnate who gave all He had to serve humanity and spread Love. A great example of unconditional Love and selfless service for all of us, Christ Jesus even humbly washed his disciples' feet and gave His life to help liberate many souls. In doing so He taught us to serve humanity - selflessly.

In this issue, under 'Pearls of Wisdom' Maitreya Dadashreeji guides us to the purpose of our existence and how we could prove to be true to it. Inside, read more and enrich yourselves with the 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 the MBP Family. On 25th December, MaitriBodh Parivaar celebrates 'Grace Day', the birth date of Mā Nārāyani and 'Selfless Service Day' on 27th December which is the birth date of Maitreya Dadashreeji. These are two opportunities to renew our commitment to serve others and to ask for Grace and blessings from Mā Nārāyani and Maitreya Dadashreeji to take us by the hand and expand our capacity to give to others. May we ensure that we take every single opportunity by basking in the shower of Grace and open our hearts to selfless service at all times!

*We wish you happy new beginnings and a transformational New Year!!  
Let us serve each other with true love and understanding!*

**With Love & Light,  
Team Maitri Anahita**

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## Question:

Maitreya Dadashreeji, our Creator created us. He created nature, plants, birds, sky, rivers, drains, mountains. He created everything. And everything that has been created has a purpose. The purpose of the river is to give water, mountains to maintain ecological balance; plants have a purpose of giving oxygen. Dadashreeji, what is our purpose? What is humanity's purpose. What is the purpose of the human race? The Creator has also created humanity. Surely it would have been for a purpose. So, what is our purpose and are we proving true to our purpose?

## Maitreya Dadashreeji:

Whether we are able to achieve our purpose should only be known to us from within ourselves. No one will come from outside to tell us that. As you near the goal of fulfilling your purpose, you start feeling peace within. A voice comes from within telling you that, "you are straying from your purpose" or "you are following your path correctly". We get to know this from within ourselves. There is no one who does not understand this from within. Close your eyes, look within and ask, "Am I on the right path"? If not, a voice from within will tell you that "no you have strayed a bit from the path", so you should try to rectify this.

You mentioned many things that have been created, but what is the purpose as you have inquired. So, specifically for humans, they come here to find themselves. To understand what his 'Sat Swaroop' (True Nature) is. Who is he? Who am I? You are here only to understand this, nothing else. As you said plants give oxygen, rivers water, Sun gives light, but while you were saying this you didn't realise that all these are only giving. You kept saying this- "giving". But what are humans doing? Humans are only taking. How much do they give? How much attribute do they have of giving? Except for humans everything around them gives a 100%. Humans are those who only give 10% and take 90%. They know how to snatch. And in this process, they are unable to know about themselves.

You feel you are the reflection that you see in the mirror. But later the question arises, "Am I really the way I am able to see myself? Maybe I am the way my wife sees me, that's the real me." Then you feel, "No. The way my daughter sees me is the real me." Then you feel, "No. Not the daughter; maybe the way my son sees me is the real me." You will realise that everyone sees you differently. The real 'you' is standing there with your name as the identity. And it is seeing someone completely different. So, who are you in reality? That's what you need to find out. "Who am I?"

We want to accomplish a lot, “I want this, that, name, fame, everyone should respect me, everyone should love me.” We are seeing everything but in this “I want ..., I want ..., I want ...” who is the ‘I’? We are forgetting that. That is why we keep falling again and again. We work a little then we get into fear and we stop. We think “What will happen? How will it happen?” Until we understand ‘Who I am’, there will be restlessness. This restlessness will always be there. So, this core question or we can say the first question, the moment you get its answer, you achieve ‘Poornatva’ (state of being complete). Meaning, you now know everything about ‘Who am I?’ For this, hard work is not required. Understand your purpose and move ahead. And while doing this, you have to continue doing your duty towards your household, your family members. You are not supposed to leave everyone, go and sit in the jungle. There is no need for you to sit with a guru. You only need to go within yourself.

Search within - ‘Who am I?’ As you get closer, slowly everything will automatically open up for you. Everything, as they say, becomes clear automatically, the reality in its best form appears in front of you. And then there is absolutely no confusion after that. Then there is only clarity. There is ease, there is simplicity. It feels as if you have truly come under your own control.

What is our intention right now? It is to control others. Wife, son, daughter, brother, people... We are trying hard to control them. But when we get anchored within ourselves, then even that intention goes away. You become simple, calm, filled with love. This is your purpose in life. There is nothing else. You keep coming back repeatedly for just this. And it’s not necessary for you to take birth on Earth itself. You can stay up there as well. You can learn there as well. But you come to Earth again and again, take births, with the intention of learning. But if you hold onto your name, like, “My name is Kiran Kumar”, the moment you hold onto that identity you get stuck. Because your name has been given to you by your parents or someone else and it’s only for a few fleeting moments, limited to just this birth. “I am beyond that. I have to seek, who is ‘he’ who is named Kiran Kumar. Who is ‘he’ who is seen as a movie character? Who is ‘he’ whom people respect, give love? Who is ‘he’ whom my daughter, my son call ‘Papa’? Who is ‘he’? I have to find ‘him’.” This itself is the purpose. And everyone helps you to realise this purpose. The entire Universe, The Creator, all Divine Beings. They all help you reach that realisation of ‘Who am I?’ Then there, your journey will get complete.

You limit yourself thinking that as you are a householder, you cannot experience all that. Divinity is not saying this, you are. Divinity is telling that you can experience it even whilst being a householder. I’m a householder myself. I’m not a hermit. I fulfill all my duties and while fulfilling my duties I experience that. You can too. It is not said that “‘it’s’ only for hermits or only one who sacrifices will experience ‘it’”. You can do everything in your life and still experience ‘it’. You can still reach there even while doing your duties for your people, your family, your work. You don’t need to sacrifice anything. You don’t need to change anything by yourself. Just keep this sentiment that “I must realise the truth about myself before my last moment”.

*Just maintain this sentiment.  
You will be helped to attain that experience.  
Stay in the belief that “I will make this my last birth”.*

**Love and Blessings,  
Maitreya Dadashreeji**

(This is an excerpt from Maitreya Dadashreeji’s interaction with renowned actor Kiran Kumar, 2021)

## Affirmation for the Month

Each 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!*



## Practice for the Month: Serve Selflessly

Living a life with the essence of serving selflessly is a deep spiritual practice.

In every interaction, bring the fullness of yourself not only to your friends and family but to the whole world.

- *Set an intention to do daily acts out of love and kindness*
- *Ask to be shown where to serve*
- *When the opportunity presents itself, don't shy away!!*



## 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 its Creator. Music is a direct way to connect to the Divine.

We share below the link to the Psalm 91. It conveys how, when one takes refuge at the feet of the Lord, the Divine showers It's Grace on us, protecting, uplifting and comforting us all the way.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rG\\_y6X2K\\_dM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rG_y6X2K_dM)



## Movie of the Month : Mully



The truth is out there' – all we need to do is seek!  
In this space we will be recommending a movie to you each month; we hope it strikes a chord within you, even as you are entertained. Spirituality is fun!

### The Plot

'Mully' is more like a documentary film. Charles Mulli, abandoned by his family at a young age, survives by begging for food. Eventually he decides to head to Nairobi in search of work. A kind woman helps him land the job of a household worker; in time with his disciplined work and commitment, Mulli becomes a multi-millionaire and the owner of many large companies. One fine day, Mulli decides that he does not want to work for money. He felt this to be the call of God and to answer it, Mulli sold his businesses to help the orphans in the streets of Nairobi by bringing them to his home. Eventually, his family had to move to a desert area since his family now comprised of over a thousand orphaned children. Calling him 'Mulli Daddy', the children in MCF (Mully Children's Family) adored him. Mulli had faith that God would provide him with all the means necessary for helping these children and that is how it pans out.

### The Takeaway

By acting from the heart Mulli had transformed the lives of many by putting their needs first. Any selfless act will always find support of the Divine and this documentary highlights the fact. As good, noble human beings we can make a difference by a simple act that arises out of compassion, love and empathy. Acts of love need not be of great magnitude; something as simple as offering an old person/a woman or a child a place to sit in a bus or a train. Watch the documentary Mully, based on the real life of story of Charles Mulli to witness how his selfless actions transformed the lives of thousands of children in Kenya.

## Pay it Forward

Material wealth provides but fleeting joy; real happiness lies not in acquiring but in giving

There was once a king whose son was always unhappy, depressed and sad despite all the riches at the command of the royal family. The king called upon all sorts of people in the kingdom to help his son but to no avail – the son remained as unhappy as could be! It was then that the king was told of a saint who lived in an ashram on the outskirts of the kingdom; the king reached out to the saint for help on this matter. The saint told the king that he could help but for that the king's son would need to stay with him for a few weeks and he would require some resources like grains from the king. The king happily obliged as all he wanted was his son's happiness.

### The Joy of Giving

After two weeks of staying at the ashram the son returned to the palace, happy, glowing and energetic. Amazed at the

**Lasting happiness lies in giving to the best of one's ability and the capacity to light up the lives of many.**

transformation, the king asked his son as to what had the saint done to bring about this turnaround. The son said that the saint took him daily to the nearby villages dressed as a commoner. The villagers were in a state of poverty and in need of food and other help. The saint

told him to distribute the grain to the needy and help them in every which way possible. This activity was done on a daily basis, visiting a different village every day. The happiness and satisfaction that he witnessed on the faces of the people, and the blessings they showered on him, gave him joy and contentment that he had never experienced before. In the palace he lacked purpose but the two weeks spent among the poor and needy had given him motivation and an impetus to do something for others. From that day onward the king made his son responsible for the well-being of the people and the prince made it a practice to travel the kingdom regularly, helping the needy in their kingdom.





# Grace and Giving!

**Maitreyi Sulata** writes that divine will determines the course of life; equally, humanity has access to Divine Grace which is but an expression of the love of the Divine. We open ourselves to receiving Grace by acting selflessly, be it through seva or the act of selfless givingness, the striving for a better tomorrow!

**Dear Friends,**

I warmly greet you in the love and light of the Divine!

Every December the MaitriBodh Parivaar celebrates the presence of the Divine in our lives as 'Grace Day' (25th December) and 'Selfless Service Day' (27th December).

Let's take a moment to understand how the cycle of Grace and Giving helps humanity transform to a higher state.

Divine Grace refers to the Divine blessings bestowed upon us to purify, inspire virtuous desires, and impart strength to endure trials, tribulations and resist temptation.

As the saying goes, "Man proposes but God disposes" - we may plan meticulously for our dreams, exult over possible successes but If God does not will it, all our plans fall to pieces. There are instances galore in history where great rulers having mighty armies tried to conquer the world but failed miserably with their dreams turning into dust. Alexander the Great tried conquering India but faced rebellion from his own forces and was forced to retreat! Napoleon wanted to overrun Europe and conquer Russia but his invasion of the latter proved disastrous for him and he finally had to accept defeat at the hands of the British. Hitler's dreams too evaporated into thin air! It is human nature to be led by the ego and believe that whatever they desire would be successfully attained.

Today humans have forgotten to selflessly give all that which does not cost anything to another -virtuosity - samskar daan, love - prem daan, forgiveness- kshama daan, respect - maan daan, knowledge- gyaan daan, compassion- karuna daan, listening- aakarnam daan

*It is clear, therefore, that there is a higher force that regulates this entire Creation!*

*The source of Divine Grace is this Higher Force that we may address by various names. All we need is to accept and acknowledge with gratitude His presence in every aspect of our lives, in every moment. Divine benediction is not just restricted to those who immerse themselves in religious or spiritual practices, or to those undertaking severe penances to purify themselves. His Grace flows through everything in life. We could spend a lifetime celebrating His precious gifts - family, loved ones, moonlight, chirping birds, the vast ocean, the cool breeze, the summer*

*heat, the beautiful white snow, the mighty mountains, the food we eat, the air we breathe, the varied experiences of life with its roller coaster ride, there is never a moment when the Divine is not present. Acknowledging Divine Grace is to affirm that life itself is the fundamental gift, with all its offerings.*

*His Grace is the bedrock of creation, with humanity bestowed with the unique gift to understand, experience, express and ascend through Transformation.*

*Yet Humanity is faced with a question that when we are living in an ocean of Grace why we are unable to tap into it? We question why one is stuck in a peculiar and challenging situation*

seemingly with no solution? How do I help myself or a loved one come out of this pain? Why is God not helping me? We pray for Divine intervention but are not quite sure how to receive it.

*The answer is that to receive something we must first give.* Giving is just for the sake of giving, selflessly and without seeking anything in return. This is when the Grace we seek automatically embraces us. Divine Grace is a natural gift that takes the form of love, kindness and compassion that flows to us from others. The seeming contradiction in receiving it is that we must give; for your giving to someone is a receiving of Grace in their lives, thereby in yours and the circle of life goes on whereby someone gives so that we may receive.

The Divine has provided multiple opportunities for offering service in each moment of life. The greatest service is to consider every being and matter to be a gift and a part of the Divine, a part

of you for you too are part of the Divine. Today humans have forgotten to selflessly give all that which does not cost anything to another –virtuosity - samskar daan, love - prem daan, forgiveness- kshama daan, respect – maan daan, knowledge- gyaan daan, compassion- karuna daan, listening- aakarnam daan etc.

As we learn to offer selflessly, we naturally get tuned to the Will of the Divine and His Grace. An act of giving from us, turns into an act of Grace from the Divine for the receiver!

**Maitreya Dadashreeji says, "The simplest act of service brings profound transformation in your life. Through seva, not just you but society itself is transformed. You free yourself from all bindings. Your consciousness is cleansed and purified within. Divine Grace is showered on you abundantly."**

*Let's end the year 2021 with a moment of prayer that may His Grace bless us with the act of selfless giving for the rest of our lives! Come why wait? Take the first step and give of yourself, just give and be liberated of I, me, mine...*



Beloved Maitreya,  
As the Divine becomes the focus of our gaze,  
And every passing day is in an offering of selfless  
service in myriad ways,  
Gratitude galore O Thy magnanimous Grace!  
As you allow us to offer ourselves selflessly for the  
human race!



## *Selfless Service*

Integral to all religious doctrines and forming the essence of spiritual striving, selfless service is a natural expression of our oneness. It aids one's growth while helping the society at large

**S**elfless service is a pure action that arises out of the emotion of compassion and love. Every religious tradition includes a component of service and charity. In Judaism, for example, charity is a 'mitzvah' or a commandment and a very important part of the tradition of 'tithing' (to give one tenth of annual produce or earnings). In Islam, the practice of 'zakat' or giving alms is one of the five pillars of Islam. Zakat also means purification and this service is best practiced in 'sadaqa' or done in secret and that forms the essence of the selfless act. In the Christian tradition, Jesus taught in parables to help all equally. He encouraged selfless service without any expectation or recognition. The Bible states (Mathew 6:3), "But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing." Buddhism too propagates that charity and service should be offered with compassion and a feeling of oneness. Generosity is one of the seven virtuous qualities that needs to be cultivated, as per Buddhist doctrine. All these paths value service when offered with a pure, selfless intent. When one operates with love and compassion, serving selflessly comes naturally. It is a vital aspect of our life.

### **Significance of Selfless Service**

True selfless service precludes desire or the need for personal gratification. We are acting on behalf of the Divine. Each act of selfless service rests on our surrender to the Divine as the doer, and the giver of Grace, who provides the opportunity for selfless service for the transformation of everyone involved. One must be grateful to the Divine for every opportunity to grow through humble service. For it is in giving that one receives. The false 'self' is challenged and Grace manifests in our life to purify us as we begin the process of letting go of the barriers of separation and judgment. As we progress along our path, and become regular in the practice of selfless service, we become aware of the truth that every act of love performed for anyone is an act of love to Divine, and that is how we move toward that union with Divine while living in the world. Selfless service fulfills the purpose of our lives and makes us realize the interconnection as our heart flowers.

### How to Serve?

Selfless service doesn't have to be a grand gesture. One can start with small acts of love like a kind word to a co-worker, listening to a friend with complete attention and compassion, or even smiling to a stranger, praying for someone or humanity at large is also a form of selfless service. It can be an act directed towards human beings or other living beings or Mother Nature too.

### Grow in Service

Selflessness springs from deep Love in one's heart, is expressed with simplicity, and forgotten by the person. Selfless service is an integral part of the process of transformation - it brings purification, compassion, and connection. Selfless service can be naturally integrated into one's daily life. Eventually, one may begin to feel

so much love for everyone that it seems like all there is to do - is to give. Today, let us start with simple and small acts of love, offered from the heart. Let's move toward transformation together by serving selflessly, one act of love at a time.

**Selfless service is an integral part of the process of transformation - it brings purification, compassion, and connection.**



## Pots around the World

# Pepper Rasam

Easy on the stomach, flavoursome on the taste buds – **Seethalakshmi** shares an appetizing, nutrient rich and satiating recipe with us to make this winter even more enjoyable



Rasam is a light broth made from tamarind and tomato pulp seasoned with traditional spices. It is used as a side dish with rice in almost every household of southern parts of India, viz., Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Kerala. A bowl of steaming hot Pepper Rasam acts as a flavoursome appetizer, is also a good antidote for the common cold and cough, lack of appetite, headache and tastelessness in mouth due to fever or digestive problems. This appetizing broth has various names depending on the combination of the spices used as seasoning.

**Ingredients**

- 2 tsp whole black peppercorns
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 1 tsp mustard seeds
- 4 to 5 whole dried red chillies
- Turmeric powder – a pinch
- 1 tsp oil
- 2 tomatoes- finely chopped
- Tamarind - lemon size ball soaked in water
- For method one - 100 gms yellow split pigeon peas (toor dal)
- For method two - 1 tsp yellow split pigeon peas
- Few curry leaves
- Few coriander leaves
- Salt as required
- 1 tsp of clarified butter - optional

**Method I**

1. Dry roast pepper and cumin seeds separately and grind it to a coarse or fine powder
2. Pressure cook yellow split pigeon peas (toor dal) for 3 to 4 whistles
3. Take a heavy bottom pan. On medium heat, add oil and mustard seeds and let it crackle
4. Add whole dry red chillies and then add chopped tomatoes. Fry the mixture for 5 mins.
5. Extract and add the pulp from the tamarind.
6. Add a cup of water
7. Add turmeric powder, salt and let it boil for 10 mins till the raw smell of tamarind goes
8. Now add the mashed lentils (dal) and boil for another 5 - 10 mins. Add extra water if needed
9. As it boils, add the pepper cumin powder
10. Stir it for 1 to 2 mins and switch off the flame
11. Add 1 tsp. of clarified butter / ghee (optional) and garnish with coriander leaves  
Serve hot and enjoy!

**Method II**

1. Dry grind black peppers, cumin seeds, dry red chillies, lentils and curry leaves to a coarse powder and keep it aside
2. Take a heavy bottom pan. On medium heat, add oil to it
3. Add mustard seeds and let it crackle
4. Add tomatoes and fry for 5 mins
5. Add the tamarind extract, half a cup water and continue cooking for a minute or so
6. Add turmeric powder, salt and boil for 10 mins till the raw smell of tamarind goes
7. Add the powdered spices, a cup of water and boil the mixture for 5 to 10 mins.
8. Add clarified butter (optional) and switch off the flame
9. Garnish with coriander leaves

*Serve hot and enjoy!*

## Traditional Remedies



### *Sharirabhyanga* (Full Body Massage)

Our body is our temple, reinvigorate it with an Ayurvedic massage says **Dr. Sreelatha Shetty**

Ayurveda suggests incorporating a full-body oil massage into one's daily routine (dinacharya) as it has holistic benefits rather than just local benefit to the skin. 'Sharira' means body and 'abhyanga' refers to oil massage.

#### Method

Make the oil lukewarm by the double boiler method (i.e., oil poured in a steel container is placed over a vessel containing hot water). Using this oil, massage the entire body starting from head to toe. Use long strokes for the limbs and circular strokes for the joints. The direction of massage is in the direction of body hair. Massage each part for three to five minutes. After the massage is done, wait for fifteen minutes before taking a hot water bath.

**Massage duration:** 30 to 60 minutes

It is best to get the massage done by others as proper pressure cannot be applied by oneself and the back of the body isn't easily accessible).

#### When to do Oil Massage?

The ideal time for massage is in the morning prior to bathing. Any type of massage should be done preferably on an empty stomach or with a gap of an hour or more after food intake. Keeping this in mind an early morning massage is ideal. If morning time isn't suitable one may get the

massage in the evening time as well.

If a daily massage is not feasible, massaging once a week will also benefit. If time does not permit a full body massage, one can reap equal benefit from local massage.

Local oil massage is ideal in painful conditions of the knee joint pain, neck pain, back pain etc., where it helps to give relief from the pain.

#### Benefits of a Full Body Massage

- It delays aging, prolongs lifespan
- It relieves tiredness and pain
- It improves vision
- It nourishes body tissues
- Induces good sleep
- Improves blood circulation
- Improves texture, skin tone and complexion
- Increases body strength
- Relaxes the muscle and the mind
- Relieves anxiety
- Strengthens ligaments, joints, tendons

#### Ideal Oil for the Massage

- Coconut oil – It cools the system, and it is best to use this oil in late spring, summer seasons.
- Sesame oil- warms the system hence best used in winters, spring season.

**Some of the medicated Ayurveda oils used for full body massage are as follows:**

- Mahanarayan oil - beneficial in arthritis, paralysis, muscular pain, joint pain, etc.
- Kottamchukkadi oil - useful in neuro-muscular pains like sciatica, spondylosis, etc.
- Mahamasha taila - improves muscle bulk and strength; used to combat muscle wasting, neurological conditions like paralysis, neuralgia, etc.

- Balashwagandhadi taila - used to improve bulk and strength of the muscles. Used in muscle weakness.
- Sahacharadi taila - relieves muscle stiffness, muscle pain, etc.
- Bala taila - used to make the muscles strong, used in conditions like paralysis, palsy, etc.

The active ingredients used in the medicated oils get absorbed by the skin and yield results.

Make the most of this powerful tool and take charge of your well-being!



## Welcoming Winter Sustainably

Renuka Vijairaghavan suggests how to chase away winter blues, naturally!

Winter is a time when nature pauses, hibernating creatures prepare for sleep, seed germination and plant growth slows down. For our health and well-being it is a good time to prepare ourselves to sync with nature in humility, with a keen awareness that we are but a miniscule part of this cosmos.

### Mood lifters!

Long nights and short days affect us physically and psychologically. It is no coincidence that we celebrate the festivals of Hanukkah, Diwali, Christmas during winter. The bright lights, festivities and delicacies cooked at this time uplift the mood and energize us at all levels. Here are some measures that help in a smooth transition to winter ensuring that we sail through the cold weather.

Using earthy and warm colors for drapes and wall decorations, switching to warmer tones in room lighting, etc., are some effective steps which lift the mood. This would also be a good time to retrieve the pinecones, needles and dried flowers collected through spring and summer and place them strategically to reassure us that, 'if winter comes, can spring be far behind'?

### Go natural!

Using aroma diffusers with essential oils of peppermint, citrus, lavender, bergamot, or lemon grass is sure to elevate the spirit. During an attack of the cold, eucalyptus oil may be used too.

It is important to use only natural fragrances as artificial fragrance is loaded with chemicals (upto five thousand). Many gases used in aerosols are fast acting cardio toxins. Extra care should be taken to maintain indoor air quality

where we are not able to ventilate our rooms because of extreme cold outside. It is best that we avoid chemicals at all times as they are detrimental to our health and our environment. Indoor air quality can be enhanced by growing local indoor plants. They provide companionship even as they maintain purity of the air.

### Ideal time to pamper yourself!

A nice oil massage followed by a bath with aromatic bathing salts is a lovely way to start the day. It is a good way of lifting the mood, invigorating fatigued muscles, and rejuvenating the skin. Here is a homemade recipe for making bathing salt.

### Ingredients

Epsom salt {Magnesium Sulphate}	3 tbsp
Sea salt	2 tbsp
Baking soda	1 tbsp
3 to 4 drops of your favorite essential oil	
Mix thoroughly and store in an airtight jar	

These salts can be mixed in a bucket of water or in a tub bath. It exfoliates effectively. This preparation can also be used to soak tired feet as well as for pedicure or manicure.

*Winter can be fun too, with these interesting activities which are sure to perk us up. The satisfaction we derive from these sustainable living measures is enormous. Thus equipped, winters can be a lot of fun even as we are curtailing pollution by avoiding toxic chemical products, reducing production of plastic waste and canisters and helping to contain air and water pollution. Every natural remedy we adopt makes for a better tomorrow for us and the future generations. Together, we can make a difference. Go natural!*



## Kanchan Todi



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 the journey of one such hero with you

An artist, a poet and an agent of change, Kanchan Todi from Navi Mumbai, India established the Kanchan Foundation with the heartfelt thought of nurturing young minds and making them independent. The Foundation strives to empower children and women to take charge and change their lives for the better through education and skill projects at The Kanchan Foundation. She shared her thoughts and vision in this interview with Maitri Anahita.

### Could you tell us how 'The Kanchan Foundation' (TKF) began and what are its projects?

One afternoon in 2009 while walking with Kalpana, a support staff, we saw some school children playing near the garbage dump of Juhugaon (a slum community in Navi Mumbai). On asking why the kids weren't at school, Kalpana informed, "The children go to school only for the free midday meal; the rest of the time they play by the roadside even as the parents are away to earn a livelihood". The sight that afternoon and related conversations with my house help, birthed the desire to do something meaningful and led to the initiative of 'Khichdi Ghar' outside the RadhaKrishna Mandir of Juhugaon, where the slum kids and elderly were served porridge every afternoon. *Subsequently, The Kanchan Foundation was started as an NGO in 2010.*

### Tell us more about the journey of 'TKF' since its inception.

From the very beginning local residents, be they, homemakers, retired professionals or eventually

college students volunteered their time and selfless service for the projects carried out by the foundation, viz.,

KhichdiGhar - Serving nutritious meals to the children attending sessions at the community centre

Akshardaan - Academic support for children of the community

SarwaGunn - All round development of children through art, craft, music and storytelling

SwaLakshmi - Vocational training for women and youth for financial empowerment

Seva Kendra - Natural therapy without allopathic medicine (Health care)

Spiritual and healing sessions too have been conducted for the residents of the slums.

### What are the challenges that you face in running this organization?

The mission to serve humanity came with its own highs and lows. Just like in any other organization, there are day to day operational challenges, challenges on the funding front, etc.; the primary challenge, however, was ensuring mental and emotional wellness of the beneficiaries as well as maintaining consistency of effort among the volunteers. Beyond the challenges is the joy of being a part of growth and development of underprivileged children and seeing them blossom into young, conscious citizens of the land. Today many of the young graduates return to support the community projects.

# Modern Heroes

**Has this endeavor had an impact on your life? If yes, in what manner?**

The journey of a decade of serving the community impacted my life in more ways than can be expressed in words. Being with children taught me compassion, being non-judgmental and to be joyous in any given situation by living in the moment and allowing myself to experience all emotions in their natural flow. While working with the youth and women of the community on vocational skills, I learnt the importance of financial inclusion and social entrepreneurship through successful ventures such as the tea house - Chai Shai etc, set up in 2011 and Kuttir - (sustainable fashion) which not only provided employment to the beneficiaries but also provided quality service.

During the 2020 lockdown while the world was confined to their homes, The Kanchan Foundation in collaboration with Navi Mumbai police took the opportunity to serve the community at large. While most of the world was clouded with the fear of death, we volunteered distributing meals to the homeless, milk to infants, medicines to the sick, etc. It was only with Divine Grace that the team served fearlessly during the global crisis. The seva project during the Covid period, Mission Annapurna, strengthened my faith through the

many miracles that we experienced during the seva.

**Where do you get the inspiration to offer strength, direction, hope and transforms the lives of people?**

The foundation started as a small community centre, a safe space to share and care; gradually it became a space of strength, hope and transformation not just for the beneficiaries but also for the volunteers, the youth and senior citizens alike. I am not sure where I was receiving the zeal or strength to serve. It was just that life felt happy and joyous as if this is what had been chosen as my life path. The projects were funded and supported mainly by my family till 2017 when I met with a personal crisis.

I lost hope and felt that I won't be able to continue with the community service due to lack of funds and emotional upheaval in my personal space. It's then that I realized that when your intentions are genuine things happen of their own accord. Support poured in from unknown resources and by Divine Grace we continue serving with joy and love. Today when I sit back and think of my journey my heart fills with immense gratitude for the blessings of my Guru, Divine Friend Maitreya Dadashreeji. It is His Grace and blessing which drives me in my mission to serve humanity.



## Gurudwara Bangla Sahib



**Maitreyi Sonee** expresses her love for one of her favourite places in the world

**T**he Bangla Sahib Gurudwara in New Delhi, India is one of the major holy shrines of the Sikhs, built in remembrance of Guru Har Krishan ji. The presence and love of the Divine here is to be experienced to be believed. The word 'gurudwara' means the door to the Guru's home. Today, I write my story of this Divine place, one of my favorite places in the world.

### **Serving with Love**

My experiences in various gurudwaras since childhood taught me about the importance of humanistic values of equality, humility, kindness and service to humanity. Langar (free community kitchen) is the main service offered selflessly

through all Gurudwaras across the world. The concept of langar or free meals, was introduced by Guru Nanak Dev ji (the founder of Sikhism and the first of the ten Sikh Gurus) stemming from His belief in the oneness of humanity. Hot meals are served for free to everyone regardless of their religion, caste, gender or wealth. This is solely run by volunteers; it is an honorable and noble act for it expresses a devotee's love and devotion for the Divine by serving selflessly. This selfless act nourishes the soul, imbuing it with love, humility and compassion. It is non-discriminative and inclusive, anchoring human association with love while propagating oneness.

### **Experiencing the Divine**

The Bangla Sahib Gurudwara not only provided me with an experience of Divine love, but also a sense of security, deep peace and belongingness – emotions I have experienced whenever I have been at Bangla Sahib. A feeling of having reached home! The visit to the main prayer hall charges one with Divine energy, experiencing absolute silence and stillness within, soaking in the Grace and the Love. This moment of bowing in surrender and connecting to the Divine has been the source of energy for me always. Just being in the holy presence makes me feel that life has been worth it for I have been offered this moment of surrender.

### Labour of Love

Food is served for free and round the clock in the Langar for all who are visiting. This has been my place of deep devotion and service where I could forget everything else and heal with the love of my Divine.

In the Gurudwara's kitchen men and women take turns to cook, fostering friendship,

selfless service and oneness. The emotion behind every action is worship, devotion and love for all of humanity. I have learnt the true meaning of selfless service through the purity and essence of the Gurudwara and am grateful for the opportunity to have shared, with my friends the joy and love of selfless service.

I quote from the Granth Sahib, *'Seva Karat Hoi Nihkami, Tis Ko Hot Parapat Suami'*

The essence of the quote is that the one who performs selfless service without thought of reward, shall attain His Lord and Master.



## Arise, Awaken!!

Like other Parivaar members, I too place water and food (fruits, dry fruits, etc.) in front of my Divine Light every day (image of Maitreya Dadashreeji). In the Maitribodh Parivaar we know the Divine Light to be alive, and not only does He listen and communicate with us but also partakes the offerings. Last summer when the pandemic broke I had one such experience that I would like to share.



The summer temperature had soared to 39°C (102° F) in those days. One such day, I took the container of water kept for the Divine Light to fill with fresh water, when I noticed that the level of water had not reduced since the previous day; I believe that my Dada drinks it. As soon as I realised that the water was unconsumed I chided my Divine Light for not having drunk water despite the heat. Scolding Him further, I explained to Him the importance of keeping oneself hydrated in the summer. I filled the container with fresh water and looking at the Divine Light strictly told Him to drink sufficient water during the day.

After this I was consumed by the additional chores of the day and totally forgot about the incident. The next day when I picked up the water container I was taken aback, for my Divine Light had consumed more than half the container of water. I asked my family members if they had something to do with it, but they replied in the negative. I was speechless as I sat in front of my Divine Light with tears streaming down.

The Divine Light waits for us to communicate with Him and listens intently. He guides, protects and is always accessible to us wherever we may be. The rational mind may not comprehend this but dear friends, all that you need is to experience it. Drop the apprehension and take the leap of faith, for the Divine is here to guide us. Recognise the Presence and experience It!

*With Love & Light,  
Maitreyi Varsha*

## I am Love

I had a very interesting experience recently. After having given final touches to the preparations for the next day's Akhanda Japa, I retired to bed. With Rudram playing on my phone, I was drifting off to sleep when I heard Dada's voice, "Hi Priti, what are you doing?" It was so clear that I turned —over to my side to face my nightstand where I always keep my Divine Light. But tonight as a matter of chance, the Divine Light was a few feet away. I had taken it to the space where I do my morning sadhana and had forgotten to return it to my nightstand. Now, looking in the direction of my Divine Light, I responded "Dada I am listening to the Rudram." Dada then told me not to be too hard with someone with whom I had a difference of opinion regarding seva and seva goals earlier. Dada said that just like me, the other people were also learning and growing and hence I shouldn't be too harsh with them.

And then all of a sudden, my other phone different from the one playing the Rudram, began playing Shri Shankaracharya's Nirvana Shatakam and went silent again after it finished the chant. Needless to say, I was surprised as I had not touched my phone or the other device on which the Rudram was still playing. In fact, I was nicely tucked under the blanket, pulled all the way up to my chin. Nirvana Shatakam is one of my favourite chants so I believe that Dada wanted to remind me to become aware of who I am!

*Priti Purushottam*

## MBP Programs & Offerings

### Maitri Chitta-Shuddhi Kriya

*a way towards health, healing and happiness*

Experience powerful ancient practices and simple Maitri processes under the Grace & Guidance of Maitreya Dadashreeji, to remove accumulated unwanted energies from your being thereby effectively detoxifying and purifying deep layers of our consciousness.

#### Batch I

**Date:** 7th to 9th Jan 2022

**Time:** Friday 3:00 PM to Sunday 6:00 PM

#### Batch II

**Date:** 20th to 22nd Jan 2022

**Time:** Thursday 3:00 PM to Saturday 6:00 PM

**Venue:** ShantiKshetra Premgiri Ashram, Karjat

To register click: <https://maitribodh.org/chittashuddhikriya>

*Limited seats available per batch. Only 8 males, 18 females per batch.*

*All COVID-19 guidelines to be strictly followed*

*For any further queries, please feel free to call us at 9716511672*

## 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.

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.

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.

*Speaking on absolute Truth is  
useless if you don't offer  
yourself in Selfless Service. If  
there is anything highest in  
one's life, it's the joy of serving  
others!*

**Maitreya Dadashreeji**

## Contributors

A gentle love within, quiet determination and an unshakable faith in Dadashreeji's Grace best describes Maitreyi Sulata, who has lived under the Guidance of Dadashreeji since her formative years. **Maitreyi Sulata** 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.

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

**Dr. Sreelatha Shetty**, is a B.A.M.S and M.D.(Kayachikitsa). She has practiced ayurvedic medicine along with panchkarma treatment for 8 yrs. Sreelatha currently works as a research fellow for an AYUSH project in an Ayurvedic hospital.

**Renuka Vijairaghavan** spreads awareness regarding sustainable living, conducting awareness sessions and workshops for corporates, and other organizations including the Ecological Society, Pune. Her other areas of interest are healing with herbs, designing ecologically sound housing and landscaping, art and literature. She is spiritually inclined and believes in a toxin free world inside out.

**Maitreyi Sonee Singh**, a woman filled with love and passion, embraces life and its challenges with open arms. A learner and a writer, Sonee, shares her experiences and transformation after she met her Divine Friend Dadashreeji. She soon discovered a whole new side of herself, and found the purpose of life.

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