

NOTHING FOR THE DISABLED WITHOUT THE DISABLED



I Konnect



News letter -September, 2020

Sr.	Inside this issue	Page
01	A leaf from the Diary of the Chairperson	02
02	Projects updates & Project snapshots	03
03	Retrospective	04
04	Random reflections	06
05	Parents & Donors speak	08
06	Global Window	09
07	Bygones yet not bygones	10
08	Poem	11
09	Special mention	12
10	Birthday wishes	13
11	Stars of the month	14
12	Your Column	15
13	Know your colleague	17
14	Chicken soup for the soul	18
15	Quiz & Humor	19
16	Festive season	21



Meeting of the Trustee Board

The meeting of the Trustee Board of ADAPT was held on the 19th of September 2020 via zoom. This was attended by Dr. Mithu Alur, Professor Sitanshu Mehta, Mr. Nikhil Chib, Dr. Rupin Shah, Ms. Malini Chib, Mrs. Priya Dutt Roncon, Mrs. Varsha Hooja

Members of ADAPT's Governing Body, Mr. Jayabrato Chatterjee and Mrs. Usha Ramakrishnan, CEO, Mrs. Bhavana Mukherjee, and Senior Finance and Accounts Manager Mrs. Madhavi Dave were special invitees



Dr. Mithu Alur holding one of the numerous zoom meetings to develop the curriculum for the online course Inclusion Matters



Launch of Dr. Alur's Online Course Inclusion Matters

The Mithu Alur Centre for Inclusive Studies continues to address manpower training and aims to offer a bouquet of training programmes addressing teachers, therapists, social workers, psychologists, corporates and other stakeholders. This period of the lockdown is an ideal time for teachers to upgrade their skills and deepen their understanding of inclusion and the strategies that will help them address all differences in their classroom. Dr. Alur therefore designed a five- week online course entitled 'Inclusion Matters'.

The course began on the 21st of September and aims to enable participants to address discriminatory forms of practice towards people with disability and to understand good practices of social inclusion and to build the capacity of teachers and teacher trainees to teach all children in an inclusive classroom.

It is being held via zoom four times a week and is divided into four clusters:

- Exclusion of Disabled People
- Special Education
- Inclusive Education
- Inclusive Employment: Vocational Rehabilitation

The faculty headed by Dr. Alur herself, comprises of professionals at ADAPT with wide experience of working in the field of disability, education health and development. We are into the second week of the course and the response has been very positive so we hope to have another one next year too.

Where there is no medicine for a cure

by Dr Mithu Chib

There are no drugs unfortunately which can suddenly and miraculously cure the severely handicapped spastic. The condition he suffers from is a chronic one which is lifelong. Unfortunately, unlike other cells in the body, the brain tissues when damaged stay permanently so, and nothing can repair or rejuvenate these nerve cells.

One cannot therefore glibly use the oft used phrase so common with specialists – 'Your child will be perfectly alright', or 'It's just a few months, be patient, your child will be normal.'

Anyone using such phraseology does not know what he is saying or even worse, he probably does, but is being kind, to be cruel.

Treatment through therapy is what the spastic needs urgently. This is as urgent as antibiotics are for pneumonia or surgery is, for acute appendicitis. Through daily, systematic exercises normal patterns of movement are imprinted on undamaged parts of the brain which enables the person to function normally.

Slowly, but surely, over a long period of time, the various disciplines of speech, physio and occupational therapy help to get rid of abnormal patterns and establish meaningful ones.

Unfortunately, in India, the major colleges of training and producing therapists have a block against cerebral palsy. This is mainly so with physiotherapists and occupational therapists.

For some idiosyncratic reasons of their own, they do not include enough of it in their curriculum or syllabus, thereby doing grave professional harm to the paramedical staff who have little or no idea of how to treat severely handicapped children or children suffering from cerebral palsy and urgently needing treatment to save them from being totally crippled for life.

At present, the situation is such that therapists would rather treat patients needing short term care in hospitals or clinics. They are eager to own their clinics or work with private patients, main reasons being it is more lucrative and there is more variety.

A lifelong chronic condition which spastic people suffer from needs commitment, expertise and feeling. Feeling - for a person whose body is trapped with severe multiple handicaps for his whole life.

Yet therapy or treatment with spastics can be fun. In a special school, therapists and children are great friends. The relationship is not that of a professional and patient, but goes much deeper than that.

The Occupational Therapist, Miss Sakina Shikari at the Spastics Centre in Colaba says, "It is both a pleasure and a challenge to work with cerebral palsied children." It is a pleasure because this is one field in which I have not been made to feel inferior than a physiotherapist, as is the common practice in general hospitals. My identity as an occupational therapist has been truly valued.

It is a challenge because cerebral palsy is such a vast topic that it makes a therapist use all her professional abilities to the maximum and if she is really capable, she can work wonders in exploring new methods and designing new equipments as there is no inhibition whatsoever preventing you from generating new and useful ideas in a dynamic form of treatment.

Physiotherapist Miss Anuradha Behere, at the Spastics Centre in Colaba says 'The field of Neurology has always intrigued me. My training as a physiotherapist never gave me the opportunity to be exposed sufficiently enough to permit me to specialize in the field. I began to realize that the only way I could enter this sphere was by working with the neurologically handicapped.'

Out of my searching an opportunity showed itself. I joined the Spastics Society's Centre for Special Education as a physiotherapist. Initially, I was overawed by the task of dealing with cerebral palsied children.

For the first few weeks I observed my colleagues at work and read specialized books. As time moved on, I began to understand the condition of cerebral palsy. And suddenly one day, I found myself involved.

I have discovered at the Centre that each child is considered not as a patient, but as an individual with his own trials and triumphs. Each is a world.

For us therapists here it is a continuous process of discovery and experimentation. The challenge becomes more exciting and meaningful when we exchange ideas and share our experiences.

Speech therapists Mrs. Kermin Merchant at the Spastics Centre in Colaba says 'Working with cerebral palsied children is definitely not monotonous and dull as one would tend to think, but, infact a very interesting, stimulating and challenging proposition – As a speech therapist, I have been fortunate enough to work with such children and I feel that it provides ample opportunities to explore one's professional expertise in introducing new ideas and techniques in the treatment of this lifelong neuro – muscular disorder.

As we all know, there is no medical cure for cerebral palsy. It is here that the para – medical profession of Physiotherapy, Occupational and Speech Therapy play a very important role. It calls for a 'team Approach' and this entire dedicated team approach in making 'LIFE' a little more easier and worth living for this handicapped child, really gives one plenty of professional satisfaction.'

Disabled Women and the Taboo of Sex

Between close friends, sex-talk is hot. A question like 'So, how was it last night with that hot dude at the party?' that you ask a friend when you are young, gets turned to 'so when did you last have it?' or 'Should I hook you up with this great guy. Despite his age he's great in bed' type of question when you are older. But God forbid if a woman in a wheelchair were to elicit any interest in any sexual talk. The quick retort you will get, either through looks or words, is: 'Sex? You? But you are disabled?'

Romantic love, sex and sexual intimacy is a celebration of perfection. Film after film, ad after ad, image after image you are subjected to beautiful people falling in love, lusting for one another, getting intimate, having sex. Think hard and tell me, do you remember even a single image, where any disabled person got intimate with someone. Forget intimacy, did you ever see, in any advertisement or film or any such medium, anybody with even the slightest deformity in their body, even fantasizing about sex?

In the 'real' world, sex and a disabled body do not mix. Well we disabled have other important things to think about, don't we. Like how do I stop spontaneous drooling, or how do I say one word without slurring, or how do I relieve myself in a restaurant that not only has a cramped toilet, but where the toilet is inaccessible... where is the time to think of sex or intimacy? Right? Wrong.

Sex and intimacy are subject hardwired into your brain, no matter who you are. You don't have to consciously think about them. Do you need to be told to think about sex? Well, neither do we. So what if our hands and legs don't move properly, or we don't have eyes to see, or we live all day in our wheelchairs, or we can't even hold a hand even if we do get a hand to hold? You see, people forget that the most sexual organ in the human body, is the brain. If it is intact, we will think of sex, whether we want to or not.

But, that is not how the world sees us. For the world, we are object of pity and patronage. Charity is the best that most of the world can do

In the west sex is natural. Friends have sex with one another all the time. To be unmarried and yet have sex is not looked down upon. Most people in the west desire sex and seek out sex in multiple ways. Even when it comes to the disabled, it is better. I saw a fascinating documentary about a disabled man having a surrogate woman performing sex on him. He was ecstatic. And why not? If sex by surrogary is available go for it.

Contrast that with India where sex as a topic is mostly out of bounds for women. School do not have sex education. Indian people don't necessarily seek out sex, especially Indian women. In India almost 80 percent marriages are arranged so sex came with marriage.

The disabled in India can forget about sex for the country is regressive to the idea. Even the connection – disability with sex - is thought taboo. Yet, according to a study, 83 percent disabled women have been sexually assaulted in India. If you are disabled, you are not allowed to even think of sex, but others have the licence to sexually assault you. That's the hypocrisy.

If one has a disability it is doubly hard to have sex whether it is inside marriage or outside of it. In India marriages are arranged. Disabled people with no hand function have no chance in the marriage market. It's unacceptable if a disabled woman can't use her hands because marriage is the woman taking care of the man's every need, be it clothes or food while the men provide financial support.

Usually disabled men are better off than disabled women. There are many many more cases of disabled men getting married, even the severely disabled ones, than there is of disabled women getting the same.

Sex and disability or shall I say sex and disabled women don't go together. Why because disabled women don't seem whole enough to be fit for sex. If one is a disabled man, he usually falls in love with his carer who is a woman and they lived happily ever after like in the case of Stephen Hawking. The disabled man is contented as he doesn't have to do much, especially if he is endowed, financially or otherwise.

Disabled woman meanwhile cannot expect the same treatment. They can have men friends but nothing else. Women with disability are allowed to get married but talk of sex and it's a no-go zone in India. The average person certainly thinks disabled women should not have sex in India

The film Margarita with a Straw is made by my cousin Shonali Bose. The film is inspired by me. The story is fictitious where the girl falls in love with a woman and has a fling with a man. The film ends happily leaving the viewer excited that its disabled protagonist Lalia is alone and discovering herself. The film has its own triumphs and storms not related to me. I love the film. The film is hugely current in today's world, especially in India.

Many people ask me if I have had sex and I reply I have preferred not to have it. Years ago, after my book, I fell in love with a man who came to interview me for a TV series. The series never materialised but our relationship did. It continues to this date. We are good, intimate friends. He knows everything about me, and I poke around trying to know about him, but you know how men are. So I let it be and am happy with it. Yet, the truth is that I am a woman who hasn't been sexually touched. Does that mean I am unfulfilled, unloved. Definitely not. Do I wish I had sex? Yes. But I do so without being blind to the many other blessings I have been richly endowed with. And for that, I am really thankful.

By Malini Chib

Parent's Point of view

I'm Vandana Bhatt a special educator and mother of a child with autism. I joined 'ADAPT' in the month of August 2019 as a volunteer and worked till February 2020

During my small stint at ADAPT I found that the organization is doing a wonderful job in providing meaningful education not only to the children with special needs but also to children from economically weaker and deprived section of the society residing in close proximity of the organization.



The school has a very good set up in terms of experienced teachers, resource rooms, teaching techniques and programs.

The organization's main focus is to work towards the inclusion of its children in the mainstream schools.

The passion and warmth which is exhibited by the teachers and staff in discharging their duties is really inspiring and praiseworthy.

Vandana Bhatt is a Defence Personnel's wife ,a volunteer and a mother of a son with Autism and stays in NOFRA.



This Global Pandemic has affected not only our physical health but our mental health as well especially people with disabilities and their families and care takers. Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices. Mental health is important at every stage of life. However, many people are afraid of being stigmatized if they admit they need help. We have always given less importance to mental health and it's high time we give equal importance to mental health which is why this month we decided to stress on mental health.

Over the course of your life, if you experience mental health problems, your thinking, mood, and behavior could be affected. Many factors contribute to mental health problems.

Many research studies suggest that if you are experiencing one or more of the following feelings or behaviors, it can be an early warning sign of a problem:

- Eating or sleeping too much or too little
- Pulling away from people and usual activities
- Having low or no energy
- Feeling numb or nothing matters
- Having unexplained aches and pains
- Feeling helpless or hopeless
- Smoking, drinking, or using drugs more than usual
- Feeling unusually confused, forgetful, on edge, angry, upset, worried, or scared
- Yelling or fighting with family and friends
- Experiencing severe mood swings that cause problems in relationships
- Having persistent thoughts and memories you can't get out of your head
- Hearing voices or believing things that are not true
- Thinking of harming yourself or others
- Inability to perform daily tasks like taking care of your kids or getting to work

Some ways to maintain positive mental health include:

- Getting professional help if you need it
- Connecting with others
- Staying positive
- Follow healthy diet
- Getting physically active
- Helping others
- Getting enough sleep
- Developing coping skills

For anyone that needs to hear this today: You are not less of a person because you have panic attacks, you are not less of a person because you have anxiety or depression, you are not less of a person because you are struggling with your mental health. Switch your brain and relax, it doesn't make you lazy, we are living through exhausting time right now and its okay to rest.

“You have a good heart. You are doing the best you can. And today, that is enough”.

Precious Memories

The ADAPT premises in Bandra – that's home when I visit Mumbai!

Because ADAPT is a special emotion, an exceptional feeling that stretches beyond the purview of being just an institution that the general public associates with multiple disabilities. Today, ADAPT is for the abled and disabled; for all people together – a groundbreaking NGO that Mithudi had pioneered almost 50 years ago. And that continues to render services to the poorest of the poor even in these most trying times.

It is a privilege to be on ADAPT's Governing Body. But it is a far greater honour to work with Mithudi and remain overwhelmed by her dedication and compassion. She gives till it hurts. And she gives those most in need with overwhelming empathy and consideration. Her generosity makes no distinction between the privileged and the poor. And that spirit of tolerance compels ADAPT to turn into such a novel organisation.

As a filmmaker and a Corporate Communications professional based in Kolkata, one of my earliest memories of helping Mithudi is with the inauguration of the National Job Development Centre at Chembur way back in 1989. I was, perhaps, the first person who occupied the lovely little apartment on the premises on the topmost floor, overlooking the golf course and its verdant bounty. I lived there for almost a month, rehearsing a play with the students and staff, amply helped by Salome Roy Kapur, dancers from Mallika Sarabhai's Darpana Academy in Ahmedabad, our very own Varsha and, of course, under Mithudi's guidance. The theme of the play was based on River Ganga, and how it continues its timeless flow, despite being abused by pollutants, regardless of manmade barrier, preserving its purity and the lucidity of its unceasing waves. It is so similar to ADAPT and the core values of this unique institution. I can never forget the deeply moving experience, imbibing the enthusiasm of the children, laughing with them, sharing their secrets and mounting a production that Sunilbhai (Shri Sunil Dutt, who was then the Chairperson) applauded most unabashedly.

I was back again for the opening of the ADAPT Centre in Bandra in 1992, with dignitaries like Shri Manmohan Singh, our erstwhile Prime Minister, and Mother Teresa visiting and showering their blessings. And since then, my nest in Mumbai has always been Bandra! All the staff members working there in various capacities have in common all that they have imbibed from our leader – the spirit of concern and kindness. My life, primarily revolving around the world of cinema and the corporate sector, is often frazzled and tense. And it is at the ADAPT Centre in Bandra that I realized why happiness is the 'new rich,' inner peace is the 'new success,' health is the 'new wealth' and kindness is the 'new cool!' As Mithudi often says, 'Be kind, because everybody is fighting a harder battle.' And I understand now why life becomes easier when you can see the good in other people.

ADAPT reminds me of a benevolent Banyan tree that stands tall. In its highest boughs the world of knowledge and experience rustle; the roots rest in infinity but they do not lose themselves there; they struggle with all the force for just one purpose – to fulfill themselves according to their own laws, to build up their own form, to represent themselves. Nothing is holier, nothing is more exemplary than a beautiful, strong tree. For in its trunk are hidden the rings of its years, its scars, all the struggle, all the suffering, all the sickness, all the happiness and prosperity and the attacks withstood and the storms endured.

Like trees, ADAPT is a sanctuary. Whoever knows how to speak to them, whoever knows how to listen to them, can learn the truth. Trees do not preach learning and precepts – they preach, undeterred by particulars, the ancient law of life and goodness. A tree says, 'My strength is trust. I trust that God is in me. And I trust that my labour is holy. Out of this trust I live!' A longing to wander tears my heart when I hear a particular tree rustling in the wind every evening across my flat in Kolkata, on the fringes of the Dhakuria Lakes. I think of ADAPT and my longing for home, for a memory, for new metaphors for life.

For me, Mithudi is that extraordinary tree personified.

By Jayabrato Chatterjee

एक खूबसूरत कविता सभी शिक्षकों के लिये!!

मत पूछिए कि शिक्षक कौन हैं?

आपके प्रश्न का सटीक उत्तर

आपका मौन है

शिक्षक न पद है, न पेशा है,

न व्यवसाय है।

ना ही गृहस्थी चलाने वाली

कोई आय हैं।

शिक्षक सभी धर्मों से ऊंचा धर्म है

गीता में उपदेशित

"मा फलेषु "वाला कर्म है ॥

शिक्षक एक प्रवाह है।

मंज़िल नहीं राह है ॥

शिक्षक पवित्र है

महक फैलाने वाला इन है

शिक्षक स्वयं जिज्ञासा है।

खुद कुआं है पर प्यासा है ॥

वह डालता है चांद सितारों ,

तक को तुम्हारी झोली में

वह बोलता है बिल्कुल,

तुम्हारी बोली में।

वह कभी मित्र,

कभी मां तो ,

कभी पिता का हाथ है।

साथ ना रहते हुए भी,

ताउम्र का साथ है।

वह नायक ,खलनायक ,

तो कभी विदूषक बन जाता है।

तुम्हारे लिए न जाने,

कितने मुखौटे लगाता है।

इतने मुखौटों के बाद भी,

वह समभाव है।

क्योंकि यही तो उसका,

सहज स्वभाव है ॥

शिक्षक कबीर के गोविंद सा,

बहुत ऊंचा है।

कहो भला कौन,

उस तक पहुंचा है ॥

वह न वृक्ष है ,

न पतियां है,

न फल है

वह केवल खाद है

वह खाद बनकर,

हजारों को पनपाता है

और खुद मिट कर,

उन सब में लहराता है।

शिक्षक एक विचार है

दर्पण है, संस्कार है ॥

शिक्षक न दीपक है,

न बाती है,

न रोशनी है

वह स्निग्ध तेल है

क्योंकि उसी पर,

दीपक का साया खेल है।

शिक्षक तुम हो, तुम्हारे भीतर की

प्रत्येक अभिव्यक्ति है

कैसे कह सकते हो,

कि वह केवल एक व्यक्ति है।

शिक्षक चाणक्य, सान्दिपनी

तो कभी विश्वामित्र है।

गुरु और शिष्य की

प्रवाही परंपरा का चित्र है।

शिक्षक भाषा का मर्म है।

अपने शिष्यों के लिए धर्म है ॥

साक्षी और साक्ष्य है।

चिर अन्वेषित लक्ष्य है ॥

शिक्षक अनुभूत सत्य है

स्वयं एक तथ्य है।

शिक्षक ऊसर को

उर्वरा करने की हिम्मत है

स्व की आहुतियों के द्वारा ,

पर के विकास की कीमत है।

वह इंद्रधनुष है ,

जिसमें सभी रंग हैं

कभी सागर है,

कभी तरंग है।

वह रोज़ छोटे - छोटे

सपनों से मिलता है।

मानो उनके बहाने

स्वयं खिलता है !

वह राष्ट्रपति होकर भी,

पहले शिक्षक होने का गौरव है

वह पुष्प का बाह्य सौंदर्य नहीं ,

कभी न मिटने वाली सौरभ है

बदलते परिवेश की आंधियों में ,

अपनी उड़ान को

जिंदा रखने वाली पतंग है

अनगढ़ और बिखरे

विचारों के दौर में,

मात्राओं के दायरे में बढ़,

भावों को अभिव्यक्त

करने वाला छंद है।

हां अगर ढूंढेंगे ,तो उसमें

सैकड़ों कमियां नजर आएंगी

तुम्हारे आसपास जैसी ही

कोई सूरत नजर आएगी ॥

लेकिन यकीन मानो जब वह,

अपनी भूमिका में होता है

तब जमीन का होकर भी,

वह आसमान सा होता है।

अगर चाहते हो उसे जानना।

ठीक - ठीक पहचानना ॥

तो सारे पूर्वाग्रहों को ,

मिट्टी में गाड़ दो

अपनी आरस्तीन पे लगी ,

अहम् की रेत झाड़ दो।

फाड़ दो वे पन्ने जिन में,

बेतुकी शिकायतें हैं

उखाड़ दो वे जड़े ,

जिनमें छुपे निजी फायदे हैं।

फिर वह धीरे-धीरे स्वतः

समझ आने लगेगा

अपने सत्य स्वरूप के साथ,

तुम में समाने लगेगा।

सभी शिक्षकों को समर्पित

Shared by Mrs Vinita Gurjar
a mother of an Ex-Student Vaibhav
& a volunteer of Mother's Kitchen
at ADAPT Colaba.

A Memorable Visit

Mr. Hrishikesh Parthasarthy, Chief, Strategy and Programmes Officer, Azim Premji Philanthropic Initiatives visited the ADAPT services on the 10th of September 2020.

Founder Chairperson, Dr. Mithu Alur had connected with the Azim Premji Philanthropic Initiatives (APPI) and a proposal had been submitted for support. There have been visits by the team at APPI who have seen all our services and programmes. The visit by Mr. Parthasarthy was the last leg of the due diligence carried out by APPI.

Mr. Parthasarthy's wife is a special educator so he connected and understood the model immediately. He visited our Centres where he interacted with staff. He met with Anand Singh, Theresa D'Costa and Gulab Sayyed in Colaba and was given a tour of the first centre set up by Dr. Alur.

At Bandra, Mr. Parthasarthy met with CEO Bhavana Mukherjee, Madhavi Dave Arundhati Bose Verma, Sujata Verma, Catherine Ameno, Atula, Tsewang, Leena Gomes and Bijoy Thapa. He was particularly interested in the work of the training department and asked for a link to access the resource material and offered to share contacts to help with software installations in our computer. Presentations were made by Mrs. Mukherjee and Mrs. Dave.

He saw the microcosm of India in Dharavi and the centre was pointed out to him while passing through.

Sangeeta Manna, Omrika Rohra presented the work being carried out at The Skills Development Centre and Mr. Parthasarthy also met with Moumita Das and Tiwari.

A pen drive with some of our films was also given along with two books: A Birth That Changed a Nation: A New Model of Care and Inclusion by Dr. Mithu Alur and One Little Finger by Ms. Malini Chib.

He then connected via zoom with Dr. Mithu Alur, Ms. Malini Chib and Mrs. Varsha Hooja.

Dr. Alur shared that she had worked with Mr. Premji's mother and set up the education department at the Children's Orthopaedic Hospital

The discussion focused on the services that Dr. Alur has set up and her journey of producing knowledge in country, working closely with doctors, creating a model of professionalism with care and the Post Covid Tele Rehab services she had set up as well as the relief work that had been carried out in the slums during the Covid pandemic with our beneficiaries and migrant labour

Mr. Parthasarthy had read Ms. Malini Chib's book One Little Finger on the flight and was delighted to meet her and learn that apart from Heading the One Little Finger Department, she was also the Diversity Officer at Tata Sons addressing issues related to women, disability and the LGBTQ community.

Mr. Parthasarthy explained the three aspects of APPI's work:

- 1) Improving the quality of education.
- 2) University for the social sector under Public Policy, Government.
- 3) Philanthropy

Dr. Alur spoke of the need to integrate general education and special education and mentioned that she wanted to strengthen pedagogy and the school syllabus in collaboration with APPI since education was a critical component of APP and with its network of regular schools and Universities, they could lead the way on this. She suggested the introduction of courses on inclusion in their Universities and short-term programmes for parents.



Leena Gomes (2nd September)

Shubhangi Kamble (9th September)

Madhavi Dave (14th September)

Manju Thakur (26th September)

From
All at ADAPT



Ms. Tsuknungtula



Ms. Tsewang Chozom

*Atula and Tsewang have been the bright stars of ADAPT.
They have very happily taken on work and handled jobs efficiently.
With a smile they say 'Bring it on!'. They are smart and keen on learning.
Their commitment is praiseworthy.
All the best Atula and Tsewang keep shining bright and keep smiling!*



Toxic Positivity



"Be positive! Look at the brighter side! If you are positive you will attract positive vibrations."

"Why are you so full of negativity? Its ridiculous!

Everyday is a new dawn. Let the past go, focus on the positivities of today."

Most of us have been assaulted with such statements by well meaning friends (really?) at some point in our lives. While the idea of positivity is a powerful one, it could possibly take an ugly turn if we continuously bask in it with a perpetual happy spring in our steps. Positivity is a state of being which makes us experience pleasant emotions of joy, affection, curiosity, confidence, contentment, amusement and so on.

While some amount of positivity is integral to overall well - being and improved quality of life, it requires to be grounded in realism.

Positivity as a state exists on a spectrum. We often have a tendency to bracket people as either being positive or negative, which are the two ends of the spectrum. However, this journey is not a linear one. We are constantly moving (like Galileo's pendulum,) back and forth on this spectrum. Unpleasant emotions or negative states are an integral part of us. It is rare to only experience pleasant emotions or unpleasant emotions.

Unpleasant negative emotions such as anger, fear, loneliness, hopelessness and disgust sometimes act as a survival mechanism aiding us as we walk this road of evolution, success and growth. Emotions are fleeting, ever changing. Every emotion that exists on this spectrum is crucial for our cognitive, emotional, physical and spiritual well - being.

Over the last few years, there has been a considerable increase in the number of social media posts, articles, blogs about "positive and happy thoughts." The idea that our positive thoughts might instantly soothe us by changing the way we think and feel acts as a barrier to our personal growth and evolution. In fact it is thoughts combined with action that marks the journey to progress and not happy thoughts.

A fascinating irony is that positivity can also be toxic ! As E.B. Johnson puts it, " toxic positivity is marked by layers of consequences that come from relying too much on positive thoughts." This state can often lead to denial, avoidance, resistance or the sublimation of the actual thought, emotion or behaviour, causing a build up of unpleasant emotions. This might later cause a tornado of emotions causing an upheaval within and around us.

The idea of being positive all the time makes us then set expectations that are not grounded in reality. Instead of viewing setbacks as a part of the learning process, we tend to completely sideline the idea of failure on a task. This affects our psychological flexibility by making us feel guilty, overwhelmed, anxious, fearful, coupled with self blame.

Toxic positivity is like wearing rose tinted glasses, where we view things as being favourable, rosy, bloomy, and sunny, even when its taking a considerable toll on our personal and professional lives.

While there are several images, quotes and self help books out there asking us to think positive, stay strong, make a fresh start and constantly look for the sunny brighter side, it is surreal to be on the positive end of the spectrum all the time. The human brain is constantly changing and rewiring itself with different experiences that we have on a day to day basis. Instead of pushing ourselves too hard to feel ecstatic all the time, embracing the unpleasant is the key to experiencing an authentic state of self.

Think of this. While we aspire to reach the peak while trekking, being grounded in reality about the possible hurdles prepares us to surmount those hurdles with ease.

Remember not each day has to be a new beginning. Not each emotion needs to be explained. At times, embracing and witnessing the emotions and thoughts as they manifest without a conscious effort to change them, facilitates introspection and insight. Authentic pleasantness is not achieved by shunning away unpleasant emotions, but by being accepting, compassionate and less judgemental towards these parts of ourselves.

It is not rainbows and unicorns all the time. Not each sunrise would bring the best of you. And that's okay. It is okay to have cloudy bleak days, dark emotions. On such days, instead of being hard on yourself, labelling yourself, and putting up a happy facade - embrace your emotions and be mindful of them.

A little more kindness and acceptance towards who YOU are does wonders! Remember, It's OK not be OK.

*Written By
Reshma Tanna.*

Name: Tsewang Chozom

Department: Admin & Training

Years at ADAPT?

8 months

What brought you to ADAPT?

I did CII course in 2019 as I was keen to learn about inclusive education. Post CII, Dr. Alur has given the opportunity to join ADAPT. I am very happy and proud to be part of the movement.

Who inspires you?

His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama.

Where's your favorite place in the world?

Tibet, although, I have never been there but Tibet is my home. Home is where your heart is right.

I am passionate about:

I like to read and watch movies.

What's your favorite movie?

Highway and freedom writers.

Who would you like to swap places with for a day?

Don't know!

If you could visit any place in the world, where would you go?

Tibet

What's your favorite family tradition?

—

Which 3 individuals, living or dead would you like to eat dinner with the most?

I guess, Yuval Noah Harari and my 5th standard class teacher.

What's your secret talent that no one knows about?

Sadly, I do not have one

Which is your favorite book?

I recently read "Educated" by Tara Westover and I really loved it. Such an engaging and thought provoking read as provocatively titled. Truly, whole world should read this marvel of a work.

At home we would find you doing.

Cleaning I guess!

The best meal you have ever had is.

I can't choose one but homemade is always the best.

Your most memorable moment at ADAPT.

This year International Women's Day

You have your own late night talk show; who do you invite as your first guest.

Lot of people! Can't choose one.

What would be the title of your autobiography?

Grateful mind brings wonder in life!

As a child what did you want to be when you grew up?

I wanted to become a helpful teacher like my 5th standard class teacher.

Name the first 3 things on your bucket list.

To go on a long road trip with my friends.

What is the one thing we don't know about you?

I don't know!!

if you could rename yourself, what name would you pick?

I wouldn't want to rename myself.

What would you choose: Power to become invisible OR Power to read people's minds,?

I want to read the mind of successful people.

Which lines or lyrics sum up your view on life?

Most girl by Steinfeld.



The Golden Buddha

“And now here is my secret, a very simple secret; it is only with the heart that one can see rightly, what is essential is invisible to the eye.”

- Antoine de Saint-Exupery

In the fall of 1988 my wife Georgia and I were invited to give a presentation on self-esteem and peak performance at a conference in Hong Kong. Since we had never been to the Far East before, we decided to extend our trip and visit Thailand.

When we arrived in Bangkok, we decided to take a tour of the city's most famous Buddhist temples. Along with our interpreter and driver, Georgia and I visited numerous Buddhist temples that day, but after a while they all began to blur in our memories.

While they all began to blur in our memories, however, there was one temple that left an indelible impression in our hearts and minds. It is called the Temple of the Golden Buddha. The temple itself is very small, probably no larger than thirty feet by thirty feet. But as we entered, we were stunned by the presence of a ten-and a-half-foot tall, solid-gold Buddha. It weighs over two-and-a-half tons and is valued at approximately one hundred and ninety-six million dollars! It was quite an awesome sight—the kindly gentle, yet imposing solid-gold Buddha smiling down at us.

As we immersed ourselves in the normal sightseeing tasks (taking pictures while oohing and ahing over the statue), I walked over to a glass case that contained a large piece of clay about eight inches thick and twelve inches wide. Next to the glass case was a typewritten page describing the history of this magnificent piece of art.

Back in 1957 a group of monks from a monastery had to relocate a clay Buddha from their temple to a new location. The monastery was to be relocated to make room for the development of a highway through Bangkok. When the crane began to lift the giant idol, the weight of it was so tremendous that it began to crack. What's more, rain began to fall. The head monk, who was concerned about damage to the sacred Buddha, decided to lower the statue back to the ground and cover it with a large canvas tarp-to protect it from the rain.

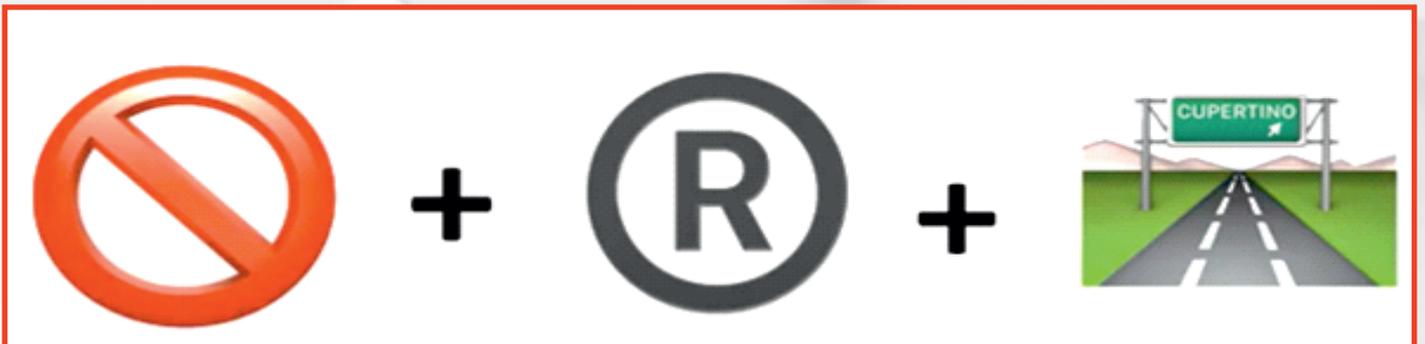
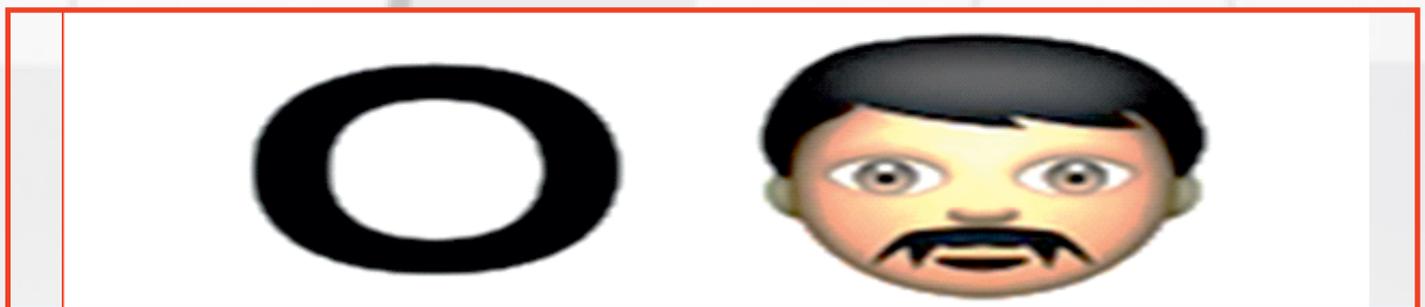
Later that evening the head monk went to check on the Buddha. He shone his flashlight under the tarp to see if the Buddha was staying dry. As the light reached the crack, he noticed a little gleam shining back and thought it strange. As he took a closer look at this gleam of light, he wondered if there might be something underneath the clay. He went to fetch a chisel and hammer from the monastery and began to chip away at the clay. As he knocked off shards of clay, the little gleam grew brighter and bigger. Many hours of labor went by before the monk stood face to face with the extraordinary solid-gold Buddha. Historians believe that several hundred years before the head monk's discovery, the Burmese army was about to invade Thailand (then called Siam). The Siamese monks, realizing that their country would soon be attacked, covered their precious golden Buddha with an outer covering of clay in order to keep their treasure from being looted by the Burmese. Unfortunately, it appears that the Burmese slaughtered all the Siamese monks, and the well-kept secret of the golden Buddha remained intact until that fateful day in 1957.

As we flew home on Cathay Pacific Airlines I began to think to myself, "We are all like the clay Buddha covered with a shell of hardness created out of fear, and yet underneath each of us is a 'golden Buddha' a 'golden Christ' or a 'golden essence,' which is our real self. Somewhere along the way, between the ages of two and nine, we begin to cover up our 'golden essence,' our natural self. Much like the monk with the hammer and the chisel, our task now is to discover our true essence once again.

- by Jack Carifield



Guess the country names





Guess the country names

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JA

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YE

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Cultural Festivals and events in the month of September.

The symbolism of September month focuses on refocusing our energies. In the Northern Hemisphere, it signals the beginning of autumn, while it kicks off the spring season in the South. Like the other months, its name comes from the ancient Romans. It comes from the Latin septem, meaning “seven”.

Ganesh Visarjan

The grand and fantastic idols of Lord Ganesha are worshiped for 10 days, followed by a mesmerizing immersion ceremony on the last day.



Pitru Paksha

The Pitru Paksha Shradh is a 16-day period

Shraddha, originally a Sanskrit word, is combination of two words "Sat" meaning truth and "Adhar" meaning basis. So it means anything or any act that is performed with all sincerity and faith. It is said, “Shraddhyaa Kriyate Yaa Saa”: Shraddh is the ritual accomplished

Pitru Paksha is a lunar cycle that takes place for 16 days that is devoted to worshipping the ancestors, seeking their blessings, asking for forgiveness for any wrong that one may have done to them, and helping them attain Moksha. The rituals of offering Pind Daan and Tarpan starts on the following day. Within this period, Hindus pay homage to their pitrus or ancestors who have passed on. A variety of foods and dishes are offered to dogs, cows and crows .



Purushottam Maas.

Purushottam Maas or Adhik Maas is an extra month in the Hindu calendar that is inserted to keep the lunar and solar calendars aligned. Purushottam is an epithet of Vishnu, to whom the month is dedicated. The position of Adhik Maas amongst the other months is variable, re-occurring about every 32.5 months.



There are usually twelve months in a year, but an additional month is added once in about three years to align the lunar and the solar calendars. 2020 is one such year that will have an extra month, and this addition is called Adhik Maas. It is also referred as Purushottam Maas, Mal Maas, or Lond Maas. Though the Adhik Maas is significant for balancing the difference between the Lunar and the Solar cycle.

Teachers day - 5th September.

The birth date of the second President of India, Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, 5th September has been celebrated as Teacher's Day since 1962, when Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan began serving as the second president of India.



Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan was an Indian philosopher, academician, and statesman who served as the first Vice President of India and the second President of India

He was famous for his work on comparative religion, comparative Eastern and Western philosophy, and was also a teacher in India and at Oxford University in the United Kingdom. He was awarded Bharat Ratan in the year 1954. He was a great teacher and due to his commendable inputs in India's educational front his birthday is celebrated as teachers day.

Bakrid

Out of the widely celebrated festivals in September in India, Bakrid is the most popular one among the Muslims across the country. The festival memorializes the holy sacrifice of Prophet Ibrahim or Abraham, who was keen to compromise his first born on Allah’s command but later sacrificed a lamb according to God’s directives. Bakrid is known as Eid-Al-Adha globally. This holy day is observed on the end of the month of Islamic holy pilgrimage or Hajj.



Athachamayam Festival

Athachamayam Festival is closely related to Onam. Athachamayam celebrates the revolutionary victory of Raja of Kochi as the 10-day long Onam festival in Tripunithura near Kochi in the Ernakulam district of Kerala



The gala procession includes a ceremonial parade showcasing all art forms of Kerala (folk dances, elephant rallies, music, and dances) and colorful tableaux demonstrating local history, tradition, & culture is showcased.

Snake Boat Festival

Kerala also witness the thrilling boat races in the serene and picturesque back waters of Kerala. Both Payippad Boat Race and Aranmula Boat Race are celebrated as important festivals in September that are closely related to Onam. These races demonstrate the true essence of team coordination, bonding, and spirit. Long snake boats are driven by local people with absolute zeal & fervor. The people watching these races also showcase equal enthusiasm.



Neelamperoor Padayani

Among the traditional festivals in September in India, Neelamperoor Padayani holds a special significance for the Buddhists in Kerala. It is celebrated in the Malayalam month of Chingam and has a rich history of over 1700 years associated with it. Dances and rally of effigies of swans (locally known as annam kettu) & other mythological characters including Bhima, Ravana and Yakshi are displayed.



Bandra Fair

Bandra Fair is a week-long fair held annually in the Bandra suburb of Mumbai. It starts on the first Sunday of September, the Feast of the Nativity of Mary, mother of Jesus, at the Mount Mary Church, Bandra. The Bandra Fair is estimated to be around 300 years old. The fair started when a statue of Mother Mary was found floating in the Arabian Sea between 1700 and 1760, which, according to a legend, a Koli fisherman had dreamt about a few years earlier.



Muharram

Muharram is the first month of the Islamic calendar which is celebrated by the Muslim community Udaipur, Rajasthan and in several other parts of India.

Taziya Procession. It commemorates the martyrdom of the grandson of the Holy Prophet, Hazrat Imam Hussain. On the last day (tenth day) of the festival, Sunni Muslims take ‘taziyas’ in procession in the evening.



Art & Cultural Festivals In India In September

Ladakh Festival

Ladakh festival is celebrated for a week in Leh and its surrounding villages. As one of the most popular art festivals celebrated in India in September, this celebration is marked with a rally of cultural troupes, dancing, singing, and enacting scenes from the folklores. Local people wear colorful traditional Ladakhi attires and rejoice every bit of this gala celebration with solemn joy.

Archery, polo, and masked dance are the main attraction.



Ziro Festival

The breathtaking Ziro Valley of Arunachal Pradesh hosts one of the most popular music festivals in September – Ziro Festival. With more than 100 bands, folk troupes, and individual singers; this is one of the most renowned outdoor events in September and has everything to offer to music enthusiasts.





*Onwards
we march together*

Thank You

ADAPT Mission Statement:

ADAPT's mission is to influence and change public policy in order to create an inclusive, accepting, disability friendly India by demonstrating and promoting the philosophy of inclusion through model innovative techniques guided by the key principles and

Vision:

ADAPT's (Formerly The Spastics Society of India) vision is to establish rights and entitlements for children and youth with disability, to introduce policy and legislative changes combined with reformative actions so that all existing services of education, health, welfare and employment are inclusive and to ensure that

Solution to the Puzzle :

ANSWERS

- 1 Madagascar
- 2 Whales
- 3 Oman
- 4 Norway
- 5 Congo
- 6 Andorra
- 7 Jamaica
- 8 Yemen
- 9 Sudan
- 10 Qatar