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SPOTLIGHT
SISTER SHIVANI SPEAKS

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FROM THE EDITOR

New Year, New Hope



Last year, my New Year resolution was to go for a run first thing every morning. It started well: 1 January was a great success. Sadly, on 2 January I hit snooze and went back to sleep. I tried to get it going again, I really did - I even wore my gym clothes to bed - but nothing worked. This year, I've resolved to wean myself off scrolling mindlessly through social media on my phone, but when it comes

to making resolutions - or, rather, breaking them - it feels as though there are forces at work far stronger than my willpower. I know I'm not alone in that; if I were, there wouldn't be nearly 6,000 books on Amazon under the category "self help - habits", nor so many psychologists researching the subject.

I do believe that the reason I failed so miserably at keeping my running resolution last year could be that I had no outer accountability. Had I arranged to meet a friend for runs, turning inner expectations into outer, I might have been more successful. Why I decided to run early in the morning when I usually exercise in the evening? Why I chose running when I prefer fitness classes? Now, I realise why it went wrong: I didn't know myself. I was rather an obliger - someone who meets outer expectations, but resists inner expectations.

Everyone needs some inspiration, and I hope that these 10 promising social entrepreneurs on P.32 will give you the edge you need to create your success this year and beyond. Remember that real change takes time, effort and patience. Whether it is quitting smoking, spending more time with family or losing weight, *Society's* readers seem very dedicated to their own resolutions and hope to achieve them before the year ends. Here are some of the resolutions that we received on P.28.

I hope you've enjoyed the past year with *Society* and look forward to a fabulous 2019.

Happy reading!

Amjad Vanimal
Editor
amjad.m@gulf-times.com

MY TOP 3 PICKS

NATURAL WAYS TO RELIEVE STRESS



Stressed? Whether it's a crazy deadline, cranky boss, or mind-numbing commute, these natural stressbusting remedies will help.

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MUSIC BEYOND BOUNDARIES



Music has no boundaries. That is true for Nadir Abdul Slam, who has made it a point to warble in multiple languages, including Arabic, Persian and Malay.

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KALEIDOSCOPE

No matter what happened in the past, there's always a reason to make a new beginning.



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Captured by Karthi Thangaiah **P12**

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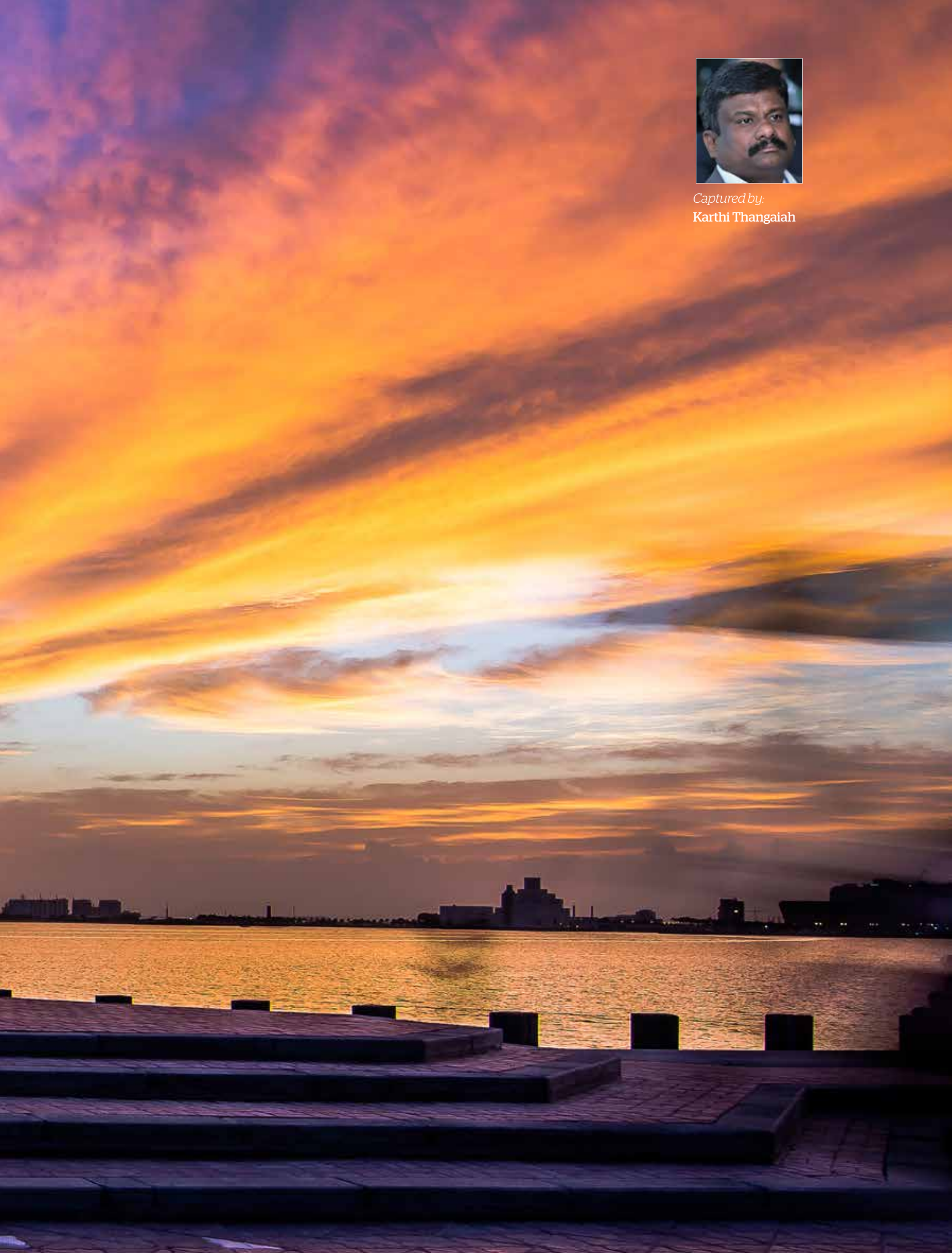
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An interview with **SISTER SHIVANI**

Simple lifestyle changes make our spiritual journey easier and more enjoyable, says Sister Shivani in a free-wheeling interview with **Amjad Vanimal**

Shivani Verma, better known as Brahma Kumari Shivani or Sister Shivani, is surely among the flag-bearers of holistic success. A gold medalist in electronic engineering from Pune University (1994), she could easily have stridden down the golden path of an MBA, a cushy corporate job and a fancy lifestyle. But she chose the road less travelled. Having been exposed to spirituality through her mother's involvement with the Mount Abu-based spiritual organisation, the Brahma Kumaris (BKs), she began to explore its tenets in her early days. Although married and even helping in her husband's business, her priority is her role as a Raj Yoga meditation teacher with the

Brahma Kumaris.

Over the years, thanks to her programme called Awakening With Brahma Kumaris, broadcasted on Aastha, Sanskar and India Today, she has become one of the most popular speakers not just from the BK stable but in the field of spirituality itself.

Tall and slender, dressed invariably in a white sari, Sister Shivani emanates an unmistakable air of peace and purity. Blessed with a rare clarity, she can penetrate to the depths of any subject you invite her to speak on, with a perspective that is both profound and fresh.

Society caught up with Sister what:



Q *Your journey from a young engineering graduate to the articulate face of a spiritual organisation has been phenomenal. When did you get associated with the Brahma Kumari Movement?*

A: My mother started going to the Brahma Kumaris while I was in engineering college. So, there were discussions at home about the organization and the practice of Rajyoga Meditation. I would also accompany her to functions and events. It gradually sowed seeds of curiosity in me. But the biggest influence came from seeing my mother grow from strength to strength over the years, in terms of emotional stability. Her ability to remain peaceful and powerful in every situation convinced me there was something remarkable about the teachings there. I started my journey with the Brahma Kumaris in 1997.

Q *Despite being a gold medallist, how come you chose to put your energy in a spiritual organisation rather than going into the material world?*

A I had a loving family and a promising career after graduating as a gold medallist in electronics engineering. Life was perfect. Besides, I would only spend one hour for Rajyoga meditation and daily spiritual study at the Brahma Kumaris centre. I

spent rest of the day for my professional pursuits, so I never had to give up or even compromise on any aspect of life.

Truth is that spirituality is not a separate entity from everyday living. Spirituality is inner work which is to be done while doing everything that needs to be done in our outer world. It has to be ingrained into our routine because it teaches us the art of right thinking, right behaviour and right living. These are relevant to every age, every profession and every individual. Actually, the sooner, the better. There is a need to change the widespread, wrong notion that spirituality is a path for someone in distress, or for someone who has discharged all his responsibilities.

When you experience a transformation, you feel like sharing it with others. So I started sharing what I was learning with individuals, gradually groups of 20 to 50. And then in 2007, "Awakening With Brahma Kumaris", the TV show happened. Thereafter I get the opportunity to share with bigger groups. But it is just a sharing of what we are learning.

Q *Do you find that people, especially young ones, are more receptive to spirituality these days?*

A Absolutely. Contrary to the negative belief that today's generation is indifferent about values and principles, a majority of

the youth are inclined towards spirituality. They are keen to explore topics like emotional and mental resilience, decision-making, leadership skills, relationships, healthy habits, overcoming addictions, value education, meditative practices, overcoming childhood trauma, and so on.

Whether it is the daily study class at the Brahma Kumaris centres, meditation sessions, seminars, retreats or public programs, youngsters turn out in overwhelming numbers. They churn on the knowledge shared, ask pertinent questions, they find ways to integrate science and spirituality, and are willing to apply it their situations. Several school and college students meet us and write to us on daily/ weekly basis. They are becoming more and more aware that spirituality provides simple and practical ways to experience a happy, healthy and stress-free life.

Q *How often do you travel for your programmes and where all do you conduct them? What exactly do you do at a typical session?*

A Brahma Kumaris has a global reach, so events are organized round the year, across the world. In my role, Seva (service) entails both domestic and international tours. I travel anywhere between 10 and 15 days each month. This year, apart from around ten states within India, I toured



Sister Shivani during her recent public talk in Qatar.

Photo: Firoz Ahmed

Bangladesh, USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the Middle East.

Sessions focus on emotional empowerment on the foundation of spiritual principles. They are interactive in nature and typically include self-introspection, topic-specific points of knowledge, annotations, experiences and assignments. Most of them end with a guided meditation along with visualisation. The aim of each programme is to release emotional blockages, create new patterns of thinking, taking personal responsibility of your thoughts and behaviours, irrespective of situations and resolving conflicts in relationships.

Q *What is the difference between positive thinking and being delusional?*

A Positive thinking implies 'right' thinking at every moment. We do think of the best and visualize the best to happen, but we accept the result and create the right thoughts regardless of the outcome. Positive thinking also includes accepting that whatever happens is the best at this moment, that it is accurate and just the way it was meant to be. Such acceptance that comes with understanding, keeps us stable at that moment. We retain our inner strength, confidence and motivation to give our best in the next moment.

Delusion is about creating a certain mental image of how we want situations to unfold, and latching on to that image. We nearly start 'living' in that mental space

and make it our comfort zone. If the reality turns out to be different, acceptance is hard and hence emotional stability collapses. Spirituality helps us to come out of delusions and cultivate positive thinking.

Q *What is your core philosophy?*

A We are personally responsible for what we think and how we feel. Nothing and no one can be held accountable for our thoughts, words and actions. We choose them in every scene of life, and our choice creates our destiny. Each of it is the conscient energy which is master of this body. Original quality of each one is peace, love, happiness, purity, wisdom and bliss. Rajyoga Meditation is the science of emerging these original qualities and use them in our every interaction. We shift from wanting peace, love and happiness, to being it and radiating it to all.

Q *What are some specific examples of how your philosophy has helped people?*

A Over the years, many individuals and organisations have been sharing their transformative experiences. The most common feedback is that people have shifted from an automated way of living to a conscious way of living - to respond to circumstances rather than react impulsively. Many of them feel their resilience has increased, helping them to easily cross challenges in day-to-day life. Then there are examples of harmony being re-

stored in conflicted relationships among couples, parent-children, siblings, friends, colleagues. Several individuals suffering from bouts of suicidal tendencies have healed emotionally. Couples contemplating separation or divorce changed decisions and are living happily together. A lot of them have recovered from mild to acute depression, panic attacks, anxiety and over-thinking. And in many other cases, improved emotional health has helped people overcome lifestyle diseases and ailments like blood pressure, diabetes, weak immune system, sleep disorders, and so on. Even individuals battling chronic or terminal illnesses have been able to accept and cope better.

Q *What is the key to giving a good motivational speech?*

A It is important to influence people with vibrations, not impress them with words. I believe that when we share what we truly follow, the audience will not only get the knowledge, but they also get vibes of conviction that 'the knowledge works'. It inspires them to apply that point of knowledge back in their lives.

People are more receptive to simple and practical aspects. There is enough information about life's lessons everywhere - media and social media are flooded with them. So, everyone already knows what is to be done. But sometimes the vibrations or energy needed to implement it goes missing. That vibration comes when the speaker lives by whatever he or she is sharing.



Q *What is the kind of audience that you deal with on a regular basis?*

A I have interacted with individuals from different faiths and cultural backgrounds, in over 3,500 programmes across 40 countries. I also had opportunities to speak at corporate houses like Google, Microsoft, Cisco, Intel, Amazon, Maruti Suzuki India, Indian Oil Corporation, Godrej Industries Ltd., Sony Entertainment Television, Airtel Mobile Services, Reliance Jio, Ranbaxy Laboratories Ltd., GE Energy, Asian Paints, Times Of India, among others.

Through conferences, seminars and retreats, I have spoken to professionals across media, businesses, administration, IT, engineering, sports, judiciary and politics. I have addressed the Indian Armed Forces, Airport Authority of India, Jet Airways, Singapore Airlines, Rotary International and Lions Clubs International. I have also had the opportunity to address students at schools, colleges, management institutes and leadership institutes across India.

Since 2007, I have been connecting with viewers through a daily Television talk-show 'Awakening with Brahma Kumaris'

directed towards personal, emotional, mental, social and spiritual wellness. The show has completed 1200 episodes and airs in 5 continents. I also regularly engage with users on my Facebook page and YouTube channel, which together have an audience of over 3 million.

Q *Finally, can you give us some tips on how to make the spiritual journey easier?*

A Simple lifestyle changes make our spiritual journey easy and enjoyable. Anyone can experiment these for three months and see the transformation it brings about:

- We become what we read, watch or listen. So, avoid reading newspapers and watching news channels first thing in the morning. Begin the day with 20 minutes of consuming a healthy emotional diet of spiritual or self-transformation messages. Practice meditation to enhance emotional health.
- Exercise caution with consuming social media. Detox emotionally by deleting without going through messages of bias, criticism or ridicule which shows people in poor light.
- Avoid leakage of inner power. Pause for 1 minute after every 59 minutes to observe what you are thinking.

Consciously change any negative or wasteful thought into a positive, pure and powerful one.

- Refrain from discussing or judging people. Thinking, talking or listening about someone's weakness depletes our own energy.
- Apart from nutrients, food carries vibrational energy and hence it influences our state of mind. Meditate or pray while cooking and partaking food to energize it.
- Money earned through rightful means brings blessings with it. Clients, employers and co-workers should feel comfortable and contented with what we do. Upholding ethics at work raises vibrations of money that comes home, and hence influences the emotional and physical health of the entire family.
- Prioritize values and principles over assets and achievements. Live them in every situation. Teach children the same.
- Before going to sleep, meditate for 10 minutes and fill the mind with words of peace, acceptance and happiness. Forgive people and let go of past hurt. Resolve any impending issues on the mind. ●

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Music beyond boundaries

Music has no boundaries. That is true for Nadir Abdul Salam, who has made it a point to warble in multiple languages, including Arabic, Persian and Malay

By *Fathimath Jazeela*

A gifted singer raised in an Arab country - Qatar, Nadir Abdul Salam paved the way for reinventing his musical talent in Arabic and opened several opportunities to groom his singing skills. Now, he sings in Malayalam, English, Hindi, Arabic, Persian and Malay. A soon to be graduating student in Music, Nadir aspires to take up his musical career in a much broader way.

Born on 1st September, 1997 in Kerala as the eldest son among the ten children of O.S. Abdul Salam and T.K. Balkees, Nadir began singing at the age of two with a kick-start to his stage performances at the age of three. His parents observed him listening to and singing songs in different languages in perfect accent when he was just one and a half years old. Realizing this talent they encouraged and brought him up to let it bloom. Starting his public performance at the age of four, he stepped on singing in Arabic at the age of five were he first

sang for the Qatar TV. "I used to listen to the song and sing accordingly. Gradually, I started to learn myself listening to the song and grasping its lyrics with the help of my father," Nadir said.

Embracing Arabic songs

When asked about the biggest obstacle he had to overcome while taking hold of other language music and portraying his skills in those, he said it was the dialects. "As someone who grew up as a Malayalam singer and then coming across Arabic music, the biggest hurdle I came across was the dialects and the pronunciation as well. It was pure Arabic, the Fushà Arabic. My father used to change the Arabic words to Malayalam words and I used the same tactic to sing in Arabic. So when I go to any events or any shows, the Arabs would see the reference paper and get shocked and they would show to everyone and say astonished 'see he is singing like this'," Nadir exclaimed joyfully.



Nadir Abdul Salam
Photo: Firoos Syed



Nadir will take the breath out of anyone listening to him singing.

In 2003, Nadir was introduced as part of the children's show in connection with Qatar Summer Wonders festival presented by Qatar TV. It was this incident that changed the life of Nadir. Until then he used to sing in only four languages - Malayalam, Tamil, Hindi and English. "When I went for the event in Qatar TV and I used to only sing Indian songs so they asked me to learn an Arabic song and so that's when I learned the first Arabic song with the help of my father. He helped me in improvising my pronunciation. The response was good. They said my pronunciation was good but the dialect issues were there but they didn't say anything about it. I came to know about the dialect issue when I joined Qatar Music Academy," Nadir said.

The way to Qatar Music Academy

Nadir explains his journey to Qatar Music Academy, "There was a heritage village in Al-Bidda Park, there used to be traditional events and cultural events. We came across it once and my father approached them on my behalf. My father used to

get me opportunities singing every where. The owner of the band listened to me singing and he invited me to join the band - Al Mahabba. It happened in 2008. From then, he invited me for events with the Qatar Foundation and there used to be campaigns for two months - 'A Flower Each Spring'. I used to perform in various other platforms representing the band. It was at that time when I was performing with Al Mahabba orchestra, Dr. Saif Al Hajari, Chairman of Qatar Music Academy, offered me scholarship, two years prior to the opening of the academy."

Nadir started attending Qatar Music Academy since its inception in 2011. He was the ambassador of the academy for six years till he left to Malaysia for further studies.

"I realized the dialect issue after joining Qatar Music Academy. Until then I used to feel that I was singing good. I came to know how different it is to pronounce like in each country in different dialects. I realized the seriousness and importance

of pronunciation in a much deeper way. They taught me how to sing in different dialects like Khaliji, Lebanese, Egyptian etc.," Nadir said sharing his deep regards for his academy.

Nadir is not only an Arab singer but also an excellent 'Oud' player. "It was after joining Qatar Music Academy that I learned to play Oud. I knew about the instrument and I always wanted to learn it. Oud was a prominent instrument in Arab music and most of the singers play Oud and sing. So, I also wanted to do that. Oud is very difficult to learn. It has no fret like in guitar. We should find out the keys and notes by ourselves and play. It needs a lot of practice."

Apart from Oud, Nadir also plays Keyboard, Guitar and Cajon. "I learned keyboard myself first. I play guitar, that too self-taught. When I was in Malaysia, the spare time I spent in my room, I played guitar. I also enjoy playing Cajon, which is also self-taught," he said with a gentle smile.



Nadir performs during Qatar National Day 2018 celebration at the Doha Festival City.

Now and what's ahead

Currently Nadir is doing undergraduate study in "Recording Arts" at Limkokwing University of Creative Technology, Malaysia. "I am so glad that I got an opportunity to study at Limkokwing. The University has students from almost 160 countries. Limkokwing even has the largest cultural festival in Malaysia - 'Muslim World Biz' and I had a chance to perform in that for two consecutive years.

The conference hosts a lot of eminent personalities and renowned figures from all over the world and I am indeed glad that they invited me to this international conference in both 2016 and 2017," Nadir said.

"I learned a Malay song before going to Malaysia. After going there, my friends helped me improve my Malay singing. I want to learn more Malay songs and even

tried exploring the traditional Malaysian music. It's sort of similar to my regional language, Malayalam. I felt the songs – even some words – are so similar."

"I have tried most of the Arabic dialects. Now I'm trying to learn Iranian language as well as Iranian music," the determined and passionate singer declared.

Nadir published an album named 'Signature' as part of his project work in Limkokwing University. "The response was very good. All the songs in the album were mainly steeped in tradition and spiritual elements. One was instrumental, totally done with my Oud, which had influence from both the western side as well as the Arabic side. Two were Malayalam songs which were sung by my younger siblings which I recorded when I came to Qatar for my semester break. One was a Malay song which was about life after death. One song is in Arabic which is about Qatar. All songs were orchestrated in more spiritual kind of way."

Another great achievement of Nadir was that he has signed a contract with popular British singer Sami Yusuf's music production company Andante Records in 2013. It's under post production now.

Nadir is currently doing his internship at Habaib FM Arabic Channel which was launched on Qatar National Day 2018.

"I've just completed one week training so far and the experience there is very good. There are well experienced people and there I could meet a person who worked for eighty radio stations. There are lots to learn from there and I am so excited. I want to mix culture with music. I want to make music for everyone, an Arab, an Indian, any Westerner should like it. That's my goal."

To conclude, I'd like to thank Mr Yassine Ayari, the Head of Arab Music at Qatar Music Academy, Mr. Debora, who taught me music theory, Mr. Bayan, who taught me Oud, all my teachers and most of all, my principal from Qatar Music Academy Mr. Abdul Ghafour Al Heeti. He was the person who supported me throughout. He even invited me to perform for the National Day celebration 2018. ●

COMMITTED TO GREEN LIVING

While many people just set goals with no follow-up action, Qatar-based Indian couple Ritu Bhatnagar and Dr Shridhar Iyer stays committed to green living in all aspects of their lives

By Ruchika Dubey



RUCHIKA DUBEY

is a freelance writer who explores hidden talents in Qatar. She loves to write blogs on travel and about different places around the world as well as Qatar. Currently, she works for an online travel portal as a part time content writer.





It is the New Year and what better way to kick-start the year than by adopting an environmentally-friendly lifestyle. While many people just set goals with no follow-up action, one couple stays committed to green living in Qatar. Ritu Bhatnagar and her husband, Dr Shridhar Iyer, are an admirable and inspirational couple who have embraced green living in all aspects of their lives.

Ritu Bhatnagar is a tireless defender of the environment while Dr Shridhar is an ecologist and the duo acknowledged that their childhood upbringing had a great influence on their choices in life. They often embark on efforts to champion green initiatives in society.

An educationist, teacher trainer, mental math trainer, and an aspiring yoga and wellness consultant, Ritu has been living in Qatar for the past 16 years. She says Qatar is a mystical wonderland rolled into one and is a new economic marvel, that everyone living here calls Qatar 'home'. It's the most prosperous, peaceful country in the Middle East where Arab heritage and modernity go hand in hand.

Ritu talks about her passion and intense focus on being an environmentalist throughout her life.

Being an environmentalist

We believe that our physical being is embedded in our DNA, however, our life's journey is encoded by our actions, emotions, and our psycho-social being. This is very much my start of the journey of my life with my husband, who I got married to in the year 2002 and landed straight in Qatar. My husband, a grass-roots ecologist/environmental person, having done post-doctoral research from France and an influencer who uses positive energy, came to Doha in 2000. He has worked on project involving community-based conservation, water harvesting and understanding natural ecological processes in arid regions of India and West Africa, under a French professor at Pondicherry for six years. His work on ecology and passion for conservation can be seen from the scientific papers and the book he has co-authored on Community Based Conservation, published by the International Institute for Environment and Development, UK.



Ritu Bhatnagar



A good part of my life was spent as a teacher in schools at New Delhi as well as schools in Doha. As part of the co-curricular activities, I was organizing what can be termed as, "The Environment Week" that coincided with the World Environment Day during June 2003. Here I have been able to conceptualize means of communicating the complex topic of environment in simpler terms to the school children. We also did the, "Environment Walk" with the permission of Qatar's Ministry of Interior, then to demonstrate the serious intent and interest for Environmental Protection.

Learning and giving back

Looking back now on my path, I feel that one has to learn from the low points in our lives. Why? It is these experiences that helps us use the spring-board to jump into our next high point in our lives. Tides come and go, so also, we had our waves with their peaks and troughs and we learnt a lot together as husband and wife. Where he continued in dedication to the environment, by providing consultancy

services for environmental remediation, and management systems.

Many may not understand the term expect the unexpected, however, I now understand it, as we made our return back to Qatar in the year 2005 after a short break. This is when we saw some of our golden years. My second son was born in Qatar and life became busy with the upbringing of my son. We were back in Qatar, which has given us so much. These years also allowed us to travel and explore the beautiful nature at many a place around the world, in Qatar and in India.

With our two children and with the younger one born here, they grew up with their experiences in a multi-cultural, multi ethnic community which they learnt to respect and appreciate.

As much as possible, I and my husband have tried our best to give back to Qatar. With our expertise in our respective subjects, we have mentored and coached graduate Qatari students become professionals. That part is so satisfying for

the fact that we are able to nurture new talents for the State of Qatar.

Inspiration

Inspiration is everywhere. As the old saying goes, beauty lies in the eyes of the beholder, inspiration is in the expression of every face, decibel of every sound, the feel of every touch, warmth of every word. What really matters is what you want to see, hear and feel.

As an entrepreneur

As a woman entrepreneur, wellness consultant, and with a strong inclination to environmental protection, I worked towards understanding the circumstances and surroundings that make a difference to us. I want to organize trips for children and adults in resorts which is a haven for yogis and those seeking a wellness vacation, some balance, rejuvenation and a healthy lifestyle getaway.

To quote John D. Rockefeller, "If you want to succeed you should strike out on new paths, rather than travel the worn paths of accepted success". This was the key to my venturing into the world of entrepreneurship. The desire to do something for fellow citizens raises one's own expectations. Leading teams of hard working and vibrant colleagues raised bar to do better. This also brought responsibility towards one another.

Sensitive to environment is being sensitive to the country that we live in. Land that provides us with our every need and wants, with respect and compassion equally. The environment does also include people, plants and animals in it.

As an educationist

Insecurity about unknown always creates fear in one's mind. As an educationist you get to see that the baton is most of the time given away by parents to school thinking that many things are learnt from school. This brings in huge responsibility for educators and not teachers to become facilitators.

Letting students lead projects that can help them learn life skills was the thought and as a leader, providing them with opportunities for them to lead is vital. Thought was shared, a few adults just to supervise as an advisory team helped students to think differently and implement the project.

I had a chance to work with DurgaSree Muvuru, an educationalist, freelancer and humanist, to work for a mission to help the needy in the society, three years ago.



This campaign was leading students to do projects like SMILE campaign, which is one of those where life skills are understood and implemented. Students are to collect donations in the form of dry food, clothes and regular material from other students at school twice in one academic year. They had to think about strategies to advertise, had to make posters for marketing, organize the whole event which lasts for a week, collecting and packing as per the category, coordinate with team members, maintain a record, write a report, present a report to others, photography, press release are all done by students for labor in camps. Students learnt teamwork, patience, coordinating, record keeping, report writing etc. all together. These kind donations were well received by ICBF with huge acknowledgment and a mention in their annual report.

Kindness spread further through other programs like hosting a football match with students and school's facility management staff. This gesture was to extend students heartfelt gratitude for all the efforts in keeping them safe at school and on buses. These matches were followed by hosting, serving and enjoying the feast together along with all school facility management staff.

Explore Qatar campaign

Ritu initiated Explore Qatar campaign in 2016 where Indian and expatriate students also participated in a photography competition depicting the local monuments, history and why they think that it is an important milestone in the history of the host country.

Ritu and Durga Sree were also involved in

the collect donations through various programs like kindness, donations in Qatar Charity, pink, sale as a tribute to mothers and in support of the Qatar Cancer Research Centre through Qatar Charity for Gaza victims, in Nepal earthquake victims. Not just these, School students every month worked on a theme and spread awareness. Respect one another, empathy works over sympathy, patience, healthy lifestyle, human rights, animal rights, environment, safety are some of the topics. Members of the school community hugely appreciated and applauded students for the effort that they were putting in to become Global Citizens with life skills and just not academics as their strength.

As a wellness consultant

I have worked on a wellness and Yoga concept for five years and firmly believe if we take care of our physical and mental health, we will not face any problems in the later years of our lives. I am a regular practitioner of yoga and do Surya Namaskar every day.

Working towards the path of channelizing the positive energies, I have also completed Reiki level 1 in Delhi. Reiki, a Japanese concept emphasizes self-Reiki as the goal of the Level 1 designation, encouraging students to focus on practicing Reiki on themselves, thereby working through their own obstacles and health related issues. We do experience physical symptoms of energy in our palms after the first attunement –including tingling, coolness or heat. Reiki symbols allow the practitioner to connect more deeply to the universal energy, as well as draw on the qualities that the symbols represent.

This includes the ability to provide distance Reiki, or sending healing energy to individuals wherever they may be. This symbol also may be used to clear energy blockages across time, as well as physical locations. As a special needs teacher and working with children with learning difficulties, I researched through different ways in which they can overcome their difficulties. Keeping a positive environment around the person, talking motivating words, finding the positive energies and skills of the child and working on it.

As an animal activist

As an animal lover, Ritu believes in saving the lives of millions of animals through immense efforts. She is providing funding, promoting animal welfare campaigns, even adopting animals as their own. Best of all, she encourages children and individuals all over India and Qatar to do the same. Ritu says we should act as animal rights activists and make sure our favourite furry creatures and four-legged friends are kept safe on our planet! I am always passionate about animal care and love to work for animal rescue at local level.

New venture

Entering the world of entrepreneurship was like re-discovering my inner instincts and at the same time channelizing my positive energies for a positive cause. And no better way to achieve this than being close to nature and focusing on being healthy.

To give this approach a meaning, my project was conceived to channelize people to the destinations of their choice. I have ensured that I will dedicate part of my earnings towards charity in Qatar and part to animal welfare.

We are on a new venture focusing on promoting team building registered as an online website company which would allow people to book and "Travel the World" with us. Learning life skills through travelling and wellness is our main objective of this project. I would give this a new meaning with itineraries to cater to the elderly people. I am hoping I will be able to provide the citizens and residents of Qatar an easy means to fulfill their dreams of travel, may it be an adventure or for wellness purposes.

Moreover, Ritu is keen to organize corporate wellness program and yoga sessions to encourage everyone for healthy mind and beautiful soul. ●

What's Your NEW YEAR Resolution?

Whether it is quitting smoking, spending more time with family or losing weight, *Society's* readers seem very dedicated to their own resolutions and hope to achieve them before the year ends. Here are some of the resolutions that we received

With the passing of twelve months and a new leaf in the calendar reminding us that an entire year has passed by, it somehow seems befitting to jump right back on the bandwagon of making New Year resolutions. Much as this tradition is mocked, and even outright dismissed by many, the truth is, there is no better time than a New Year to take stock of your life and commit to bringing about positive changes. *Society* asked residents to share their New Year resolutions and received a largely resolution-prone feedback.





SAMINDA MALANI
JAYAKODY, homemaker

“I determined to allocate more time on some creative stuff such as sewing and crocheting in the new year, of course, giving adequate time to social media, my friends and family. Therefore, my New Year resolution is to have anytime divided between productivity and leisure...and to be relaxed and happy. And to contribute to the society in a positive manner as much as I can.”



PREETI TRIVEDI,
architect

“F or myself – I would like to go for healthy diet including more fresh veggies and fruits so as to stay healthy.

For family & friends – I would like to spend more time in “social life” rather than “social media life”
For society – I will be more involved in my campaigns for “Woman Empowerment and Girl Child Protection plus Allergy Awareness.”



PUJA DUSIJA,
homemaker

“I want to live long and healthy for my lovely family. So I have two things which are important to change or develop – body and mind. I will exercise 3 days a week by walking in the park or go to the gym and I will eat healthier food and avoid junk food. And for the mind, I will meditate at least 15 minutes every day. Stay calm and stop over-thinking. Focus and give happiness to my family. I believe if my mind and body remain strong, I can achieve the world.”



NIRMALA RAGHURAMAN
Head PRO - IWA

“R esolutions are the one which motivates you to achieve your desire and dreams. We need that extra energy to reach our goals and fulfill our dreams. This year, I want to travel a lot and explore the world. My resolution is to meet new people, see new places and know people better. Choices and chances are always less. So make use of it when you are hale and healthy.”



PRIYADARSHINI TRIVEDI,
homemaker

“Our New Year resolution is to keep ourselves fit by regular exercising, avoiding junk food, having positive thoughts and living disciplined life.”



SUSMITA PATTNAIK,
president - IWA, poetess & homemaker

“The only thing that rules my life is the power of now. I live in the present and that’s the moment of my life. Whether it’s a resolution or promise, if I need to do something, I do it at that moment and never wait for any special time to come.”



SONIA FAZAL,
IT professional/yoga teacher

“I plan to introspect happenings that occurred during the year and listed down things that have made me keep moving so I can continue those for the coming year too. Below is what I listed down:

Wake up thinking about things that make me smile, moments spent with friends, or a little prayer for a loved one.

Be surrounded with people that bring the best in me. People who encourage me to take risks, support me in my decisions and don’t judge me for my mistakes.

Contribute to the community through teaching yoga, helping a colleague.

Take care of myself, not to follow a diet plan and a strict fitness routine but to be comfortable in my skin.



ADELFA SAN JUAN,
homemaker

“It’s the perfect time to make positive changes by taking up new opportunities that I have been thinking about, learning a new life skill or making a mental change to improve my well-being. Although it is hard for me to stick to my resolutions, nevertheless I would like to take the opportunity to make 2019 the best year yet. My New Year’s resolution is to try to have a more positive outlook in life and be less stressed, realistic towards people, situations and experiences.

Being placed in Qatar means I have placed in a land of opportunity. In the coming days, I will be focusing more on my career development, finding new opportunities with the aim to be financially more stable. Then again life is too little, so I want to spend more time with my family back home who care about me deeply as this is the best way to stay happy.

10 MOST PROMISING SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS TO WATCH IN 2019



Paula Hass works for the office of the UN special envoy for financing the Health SDGs. She was previously an engagement manager in McKinsey's healthcare practice in Germany and London. She has designed and implemented impact evaluations of social enterprises in Asia and Africa.

Here are the top ten young entrepreneurial leaders who are continuously capitalising their entrepreneurship skills to shape the future of the fast-changing world

By Paula Hass, Elize Wang and Vikas Kumar

As the world today is facing some of the serious issues, the largest youth population in human history is coming of age in a steady, unstoppable wave. The bulging populations of young people will drive political and social norms, influence modes of governance and the role of women in society, and embrace or discredit extremist ideologies. They are the fulcrum on which the future hinges upon.

The common string that connects all these young people is simple: they all are trying to solve world's toughest problems, they all are doing something risky and unproven, and their initiatives send a message or statement. These people are taking a biggest risk not only with their career but also with their life; they are heroic, inquisitive and persistent, inspired and inspiring.

Highlighted in this article are the top ten young entrepreneurial leaders who are continuously capitalising their entrepreneurship skills to shape the future of the fast-changing world. We hope that these stories surprise and inspire you and make you hopeful about our future as we welcome 2019.



Elize Wang

is a professor of social policy at Harvard University. An economic sociologist and public policy specialist, she has published extensively on the broad theme of social innovation, most notably on the health and well-being impacts of social enterprise-led activity. Her principal research interests include poverty, social innovation, and social policy in low-income countries and non-democracies.



Vikas Kumar

is an Indian Journalist, working with India's second oldest English daily, The Pioneer as a Business Reporter. Having an extensive knowledge of Economics, Political and Social affairs, he writes on international trade, market, policy matters, humanitarian and development resilience. His investigative reporting has appeared in various dailies.



1

Jean Bosco Nzeyimana

Jean Bosco, who was born in a poor family and had seen the poverty from close quarter in his childhood days, founded Habona Ltd, a company that provides waste management services and process that waste into various cost-effective natural energy sources. The company offers a range of affordable environment-friendly fuels - biogas for household cooking and lighting, biomass briquettes, and bio-fertilizer for the farm sector. The Habona's other offerings include consultancy and maintenance services for waste management and energy solutions, and research and development of environmental-friendly solutions. In addition, the company has also started its operations in green energy - installation and operation of renewable energy power plants, hydro and wind, and climate-smart farming.

In so much of rural Africa, people had no electricity and gas, and had to rely on charcoal for cooking. Around 80 percent of people in Rwanda are still solemnly dependent on firewood for cooking and lighting that has led to massive deforestation. Nzeyimana says "cutting down trees is dangerous because it is exploiting nature". His concerns prompted him to form an organization that can potentially address these issues. Now the scenario is changing as the Habona (which means "Illumination") is making a big impact on peoples' lives through its initiatives.

Vikash Das

Vikash Das is the founder and managing director of Vat Vrikshya, a social enterprise which seeks to bring about socio economic development and inclusive growth in rural India by engaging both: the community and the market.

Vikash quit his high paying corporate job and ventured into remote tribal villages of India with a desire to do something. Vikash began to research business options that could adhere to fair labour practice, but function in an environment without electricity, running water, a banking system or machinery and within a culture that restricted women's access to financial resources. Four years on, Vat Vrikshya, through grassroots initiatives and strategic corporate partnerships, has a workforce of 2,500 women artisans. It has provided business and financial trainings to almost 20,000 tribal women so far. Tribal women are connected with role models, such as successful women entrepreneurs from other tribal villages, enabling the creation of a market network between different tribal villages, towns and cities. They are given the initial capital, linkages to women's social groups, NGOs and financial institutions to help them launch their own arts and crafts enterprises.

Vocational training is given to tribal women based on their expertise and areas of interest. The enterprise identifies market needs by interviewing potential customers about the requirements. It also educates urban customers about tribal arts, handicrafts and culture to encourage sales. The products are then branded and packaged attractively. Women are also taught how to market their products effectively.

2



Adam Braun

Adam Braun is an American philanthropist, bestselling author, and a social entrepreneur. He founded Pencils of Promise, an NGO builds schools and has been active to provide quality education to the children of developing world. He also co-founded MissionU, a debt-free higher education program.

According to Pencils of Promise website, so far, 497 schools have been built, where 97,211 students are studying. The school buildings were built with the help of local community people. Through its programs in Ghana, Nicaragua, Guatemala and Laos, the organisation is changing learning experience of children. It does not only build infrastructure of the school, but also conducts various training sessions and plays a proactive role to ensure the desired outcome what they have been built for. PoP focuses on sustainable education programs because participation of every child is very important in this ever-evolving world. Since it is a non-profit organisation, all of its operations are sponsored by the donators around the world.



3



4

Alaa Murabit

Alaa Murabit is a Canadian Physician, founded Voice of Libyan Women, a non-profit that challenges prevalent malpractices in society and culture, and utilizing traditional and historical values. Murabit has also been encouraging women to take part in peace processes and conflict mediation.

Her policies and programs designed for different fields such as international security, peacebuilding, sustainable development, leadership, global health policy and negotiation, have been adopted world over. The organization has been working women's economic and political representation in Libya, and to discuss their situation in the country. The Voice of Libyan Women ensures that women are taking their rightful place as leaders of tomorrow to rebuild the social structure of the nation.

Commenting on adversaries faced by women in Libya, Alaa said, "I had worked with a lot of very wonderful women during the revolution and felt that, for lack of an organizing body, they were no longer doing the work they had been very passionate about. They are going back to their more culturally-accepted roles."

Vibin Joseph

Vibin Joseph is a mechanical engineer with masters in management from Imperial College London. He is executive director at Biozeen, a Pharmaceutical company, which focuses on manufacturing vaccines as it believes in fair, equitable and inclusive growth for the sustainability of societies. Since getting a treatment has become very costly, Biozeen is playing a vital role in manufacturing affordable vaccines, and also working to meet the healthcare needs by fulfilling the aspirations of the people to contribute to a better living.

Vaccination is considered as the most effective medical innovation ever introduced. It prevents infectious diseases once used to claim millions of lives. A recent World Health Organization report revealed that around 2.5 million deaths are being prevented per year through vaccination



5

Jeremy Lamri

Jeremy Lamri is the CEO and the founder of Monkey tie, a recruitment website that provides detailed information about the candidates to recruiters to identify whether their portfolios matches with the standard and culture of the organization. Monkey tie is playing a pivotal role in eradicating the unemployment; it is also endorsed by Government of France. Recently, Monkey tie and the French Ministry of Work and Employment signed a contract to set up national platform together for predictive career orientation, in which Monkey tie will provide its data and technology.

According to its website, Monkey tie stands for four basic principles: youth employment, sustainable development, action driven projects, and management and leadership. More than 1,500 companies are using the website throughout France, Belgium, Switzerland and Luxembourg to recruit the people. The website is managed by 15 talented people who have been working to create a sustainable and empowering platform where job seekers and employers interact on the same page.



6



Rainier Mallol

Rainier Mallol is co-founder and COO of AIME, a company that is helping governments world over to tackle deadly diseases before they strike by using epidemiology, public health best practices, and above all, artificial intelligence to predict the breakouts of such diseases.

He has contributed in bringing positive impact in Brazil, Malaysia and in his own country - Dominican Republic, by creating an epidemiological system full of cutting-edge technologies. AIME is building a disease prediction mobile platform, where artificial intelligence will be used to predict deadly diseases like Dengue and Zika outbreaks in three months in advance and geo-locating them up to 400 meter radius.

The platform will provide scientifically accurate information to the public at well as to the policy makers in the public health sector. For this, his organization will design specific interfaces so authorities could use the information to take pragmatic decisions

7

Elaha Mahboob

Elaha Mahboob is an Afghan philanthropist, a young social entrepreneur and focused on spreading digital literacy among women and children in developing countries. She is the CEO & Co-Founder of Digital Citizen Fund, a New York based non-profit organization. The organization builds IT centres, provides digital tools necessary for digital literacy and educational programs for women and children in developing countries. The Digital citizen has been funding girls and women in the developing world to create a platform for them where they can understand technology and utilize it to connect to the world, and also helping them obtain necessary skills to participate in global market. To achieve such an enormous task, the Digital Citizen Fund has set up eleven Internet Training Centres and two media centres in collaboration with MTI (currently known as Bitlanders) and the Afghan Citadel. Under this partnership, so far, the organization has enrolled more than 12,000 young women and helped start-ups in Kabul and Herat.



8

Alexie Seller

Alexie seller is an Australian engineer. She is among the founding members of Pollinate Energy, a social enterprise that delivers products like solar lights, solar fans and water filters to the poor families throughout India. The company is playing a key role in employment generation providing skills and tools to the masses so that they can earn a sustainable income to support their families. In 2013, Pollinate Energy won the United Nations Momentum for change Award.

Alexie, who has held several local and international social development roles, moved to Bengaluru to pursue her passion for improving energy access in the developing world.

Pollinate Energy has been improving peoples' lives by providing them access to sustainable products, and also encouraging Indian entrepreneurs to join its business model to be the part of the noble cause.

Pollinate Energy has been making an impact on communities in Bengaluru, Kolkata, Lucknow, Kanpur and Hyderabad and in Nepal, several districts of Chitwan and Kailalli. Having achieved a target to reach out to 4,000 families across India and Nepal, Pollinate is eyeing to reach another one million people by 2020 through its various initiatives.



9



10

Carlo Delantar

Carlo Delantar is the country director of Waves of Water, an international non-profit organisation that aims to provide clean water to the people. So far, the organisation has provided around 10,000 water filters in Philippines, helping more than one million people to have access to clean potable water. The social enterprise focuses on the water-insecure communities.

According to its website, with primary focus on clean water, the enterprise also "coordinate and execute natural disaster relief efforts around the world". For the last four years, it has helped in almost every major global disaster such as earthquake and tsunami in Nepal, Bosnia, Philippines, Indonesia, Haiti, Japan, Chile, Pakistan, India and Mexico; and on the east coast of the United States with a comprehensive initiative in response to "Superstorm-Sandy". ●



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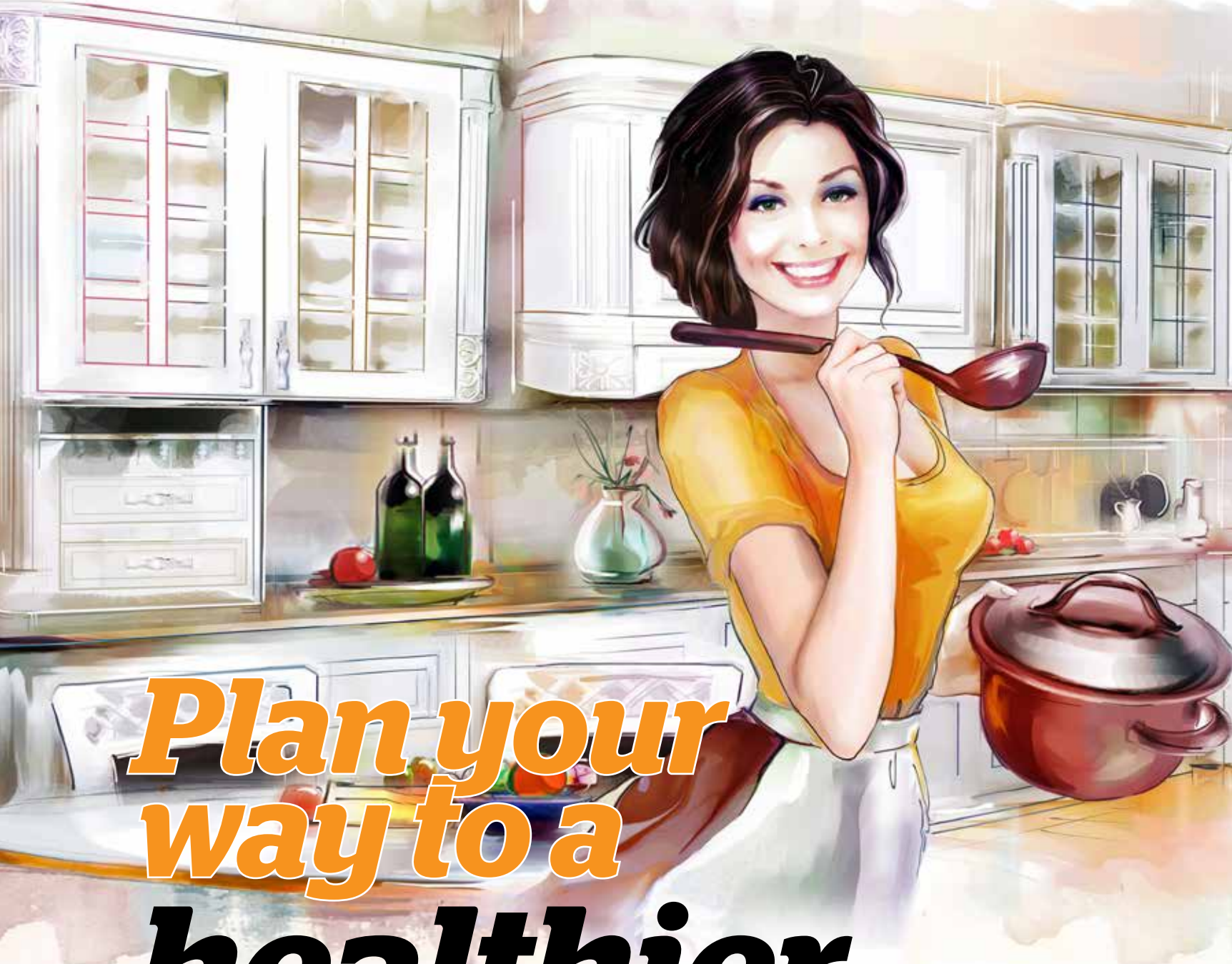
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*Plan your
way to a*
**healthier
you!**

Making sure you have a well-balanced, varied diet can easily be achieved with meal prep, **Sondra Hope** writes



We all aspire to live a balanced, healthy lifestyle so we can embrace life's challenges with open arms. But let's face it, life can get busy, and those romantic notions of eating healthy and staying consistent can go right out the window. But it's not impossible to stick to your healthy habits and reach your goals!

This is where meal prep can be a definite game changer. So what's 'meal prep'? It's when you plan, prepare and pack your meals and snacks in advance, usually for the full upcoming week. The main goal of



meal prepping is to know what you're going to eat for the week so you don't have to resort to on-the-go options like takeout, as well as to optimize for healthy, nutritious meals in appropriate portions.

Although the thought of cooking all of your meals at home can be daunting, but there are so many benefits to eating homemade food. You'll be convinced in no time (just as long as it takes to read this list, in fact!).

■ **You will save money**

If you're not used to doing your shopping

for the week in one go, it can sting to see that first grocery bill total. But in reality, it's an investment. When you buy ingredients in bulk and make the freezer your bestie, you can score sweet deals and waste less food. If you're ready to take meal prep to the next level, stock up on staple pantry ingredients like brown rice, nuts, quinoa, and legumes when they're on sale. You'll also save compared to what you'd spend on meals out.

■ **You will save time**

No one has time to spare, and going through the same cooking routine every



single day can be a drain on your energy. By spending a couple of hours meal prepping on a Saturday, you not only save the actual time spent in the kitchen during the week, but you also save yourself the time you'd otherwise spend every day just thinking about what to eat.

■ You will control portions

When you've prepared your meal, you know exactly what and how much you're consuming. And, in eating your portioned out meals, you can get a true idea of what a portion looks like (which makes you better in estimating in other situations). Once the container is empty, you stop eating unlike with take-out, dining out, or those instances where you make two servings of dinner on a Tuesday night and end up eating both of them instead of saving one for lunch (can you tell I've been there?).

■ You will clean up less

This is a perfect example of killing two birds with one stone! Since you'll only be cooking all of your meals once or twice a week, you'll only have to clean the kitchen that many times. Which won't just save you energy, it'll free up so much time too.

■ You will ease stress

Not wanting to think about food constantly, but then being forced to make food-related decisions can create a vicious cycle. That's why thinking about it once (during

the prep) can free up your mind and reduce that mental stress and any food anxieties.

Hopefully, by now you're convinced so we can move onto the next step: some quick meal prep tips!

Cook foods all at once

Some veggies have the same cooking time, so instead of roasting them individually, go for a one-pan bake! Potatoes, parsnips, cauliflower, onions, and carrots are perfect for roasting simultaneously, while fast-cooking veggies like tomatoes, zucchini and mushrooms can go in another batch.

Invest in good Tupperware

Investing a bit more for good quality Tupperware will make a huge difference to your meal prep routine. We love glass containers, and you can consider mason jars as an option for food-friendly and eco-friendly storage. Then you'll be able to make and enjoy all these jar salad recipes.

Line your containers

Using a paper towel to store your food-storage containers helps absorb moisture, ensuring your food stays fresh for longer. You don't want your fruits and veggies to spoil - it would be a lot of hard work gone to waste. You can also keep the delicate, fresh elements of a meal aside and add it when you're ready to chow down.

Separate wet ingredients

Dressings and sauces can make a meal, but make sure you keep them separate to avoid soggy salads and the like. You can keep them in a small bottle of a tightly-sealed container if you're transporting them, or you can store some select ingredients and condiments in your office kitchen (or on your desk, if you're worried about hungry coworkers) and prepare sauces and dressings fresh just before eating.

There is no one-size-fits-all approach or a 'right' way to meal prep. Meal prepping is a learning process, and it's meant to help simplify your routine and lifestyle. It's a success if you've made your diet more nutritious while saving time and money. ●



SONDRA HOPE

is a Qatar-based international certified fitness and health coach, specialising in personal, sports and child nutrition. She is the founder of HopeFit, which specialises in online and personal training and nutrition coaching. In her spare time, she also does motivational speaking, spends time with her other passion, Pixel8 Photography, as a professional photographer, and dabbles in painting and fine art.



FLYING HIGH IN THE BEAUTIFUL SKY

As a professional pilot, Captain Feras Malallah is living his dream, and even more impressively, is dedicated to inspiring others to achieve their own

BQ Rida Khan

Captain Feras Malallah is a successful airline pilot from Kuwait. He is a Boeing 777-300 Captain flying for Kuwait Airways. As a pilot he got more closer to the world of sky and also became a traveller. Travelling to different countries, he gained immense knowledge and experience by exploring those places. But he wanted to spread his knowledge on a wider scale, knowledge which is helpful for all the people of this world. So he started writing books on aviation, traveling, social media which you can get in most of the countries. And he launched his own brand "AVIATOR" which includes different aviation accessories available at Aviator Sky Mall. He is a pilot, an entrepreneur as well as a traveller.



Captain Feras Malallah



Rida Khan caught up with Captain Feras Malallah and asked him some of the questions you've always wanted to ask a pilot. Excerpts.

Q *How do you describe your life as a pilot?*

A It's been an up and down journey. Being a pilot, life is full of adventure and enjoyment. Sometimes I enter in turbulence area, some other times it's all sky clear. When I wear my pilot uniform, it gives me a responsibility of thousands of souls whom I have to take safely to their destination. This form of responsibility I ensure to make it successful all the time.



When I am in the clear sky I see the nature more closely and at that time I thank Lord that he gave me this opportunity to watch the sky life and travel to so many places.

Q Tell us something about your brand and where are they located?

A The idea started when I thought of opening a brand which should be related to the pilot lifestyle. Therefore I named my brand "Aviator" and included the accessories not only meant for pilots but also to aviation. Today's world is a fashion-oriented world, people love products which are fashionable and that look nice on them. I concentrated on this point and made products according to it like t-shirts, caps, lanyard for ID cards etc. My branded product is targeted at all the age groups, from kids to youth, to older people. You can find my brand in

the shopping district of Salmiya Kuwait. It is also available online @aviatorskymall - Instagram.

Q In your opinion, why travellers should visit Kuwait?

A Kuwait is booming very fast. You can see new restaurants and cafes at every corner; you'll see the old and the new in a very short time and distance. Apart from this, there are plenty of beautiful sightseeing which visitors can explore, like Kuwait Towers, Al Kout Beach, Doha Harbour, Doha Village in Kuwait, Failaka Island, House of Mirrors, Grand Mosque, National Museum, Kuwait House of National Works Museum, Aqua Park, Entertainment City etc. I will say Kuwait is a place where tradition and culture is mixed with the modern technology which is helping the country to grow successfully.

Q What's your favourite Kuwaiti food and why?

A Murabyan. It's basically lentil rice with shrimps. If you put 10 plates in front of me, they'll disappear in seconds.

Q When you are away from your city, which is the one thing that you miss the most about your city?

A Of course my family.

Q How would you like to explore different countries when you visit them?

A I go where the locals go. I hate tourist places, that's how you really benefit from your trip. I visit local restaurants, café to know about their traditional food, shopping malls where I can get the knowledge about the lifestyle of people living in that country. Visiting tourist places is not my idea to explore any country where I visit. In my opinion, you get more information about the country by mixing with the people and going to the places where the citizens of that country go.

Q What advice do you have for the travellers?

A Travel light, have a power bank and avoid tourist places. ●



Rida Khan is an aviation author from India. She is passionate about aviation industry and loves to explore different countries, cuisines and their culture. Reach her on Instagram @aviationauthorridakhan

The power of taking risks

Creating a culture where taking risks and accepting failure is important in helping students to be resilient, adaptive and ambitious, **Alan McCartney** writes



Alan McCartney teaches in the Primary School at Compass International School Doha, a Nord Anglia Education school. He supports the Global Campus and STEAM initiatives as well as the Student Leadership Team. To find out more about his leading edge programmes, contact the school by email: learning@nais.qa





Public opinion usually recognises that success is good and failure is bad. For teachers, there is a broader perspective because they know that we learn as much from our failures as we do from our achievements. Although it is often a challenge to break the status-quo, teachers know the importance of trying to accomplish something, often for the first time, and the importance of reflecting and adapting following a set-back. Growth and perseverance are invaluable traits for the global community in which we live, and these qualities can only be developed through challenge and adversity. Teachers know this and thus facilitate and nurture responsible risk-taking ventures for students in their classrooms.

When asking the nine year olds in my Year 5 class what it means to take risks in their education, the children had some inspiring answers. Some offered examples of trying something new or challenging even if they knew it would be hard at first; not being afraid to fail or to look silly; to accept failure as it means they are learning and, in time, will become better at the task. When faced with food that I was uncertain about, my mother would always say: "Try it; it might be the best thing you've ever had." Applying the same principle to new, everyday experiences is

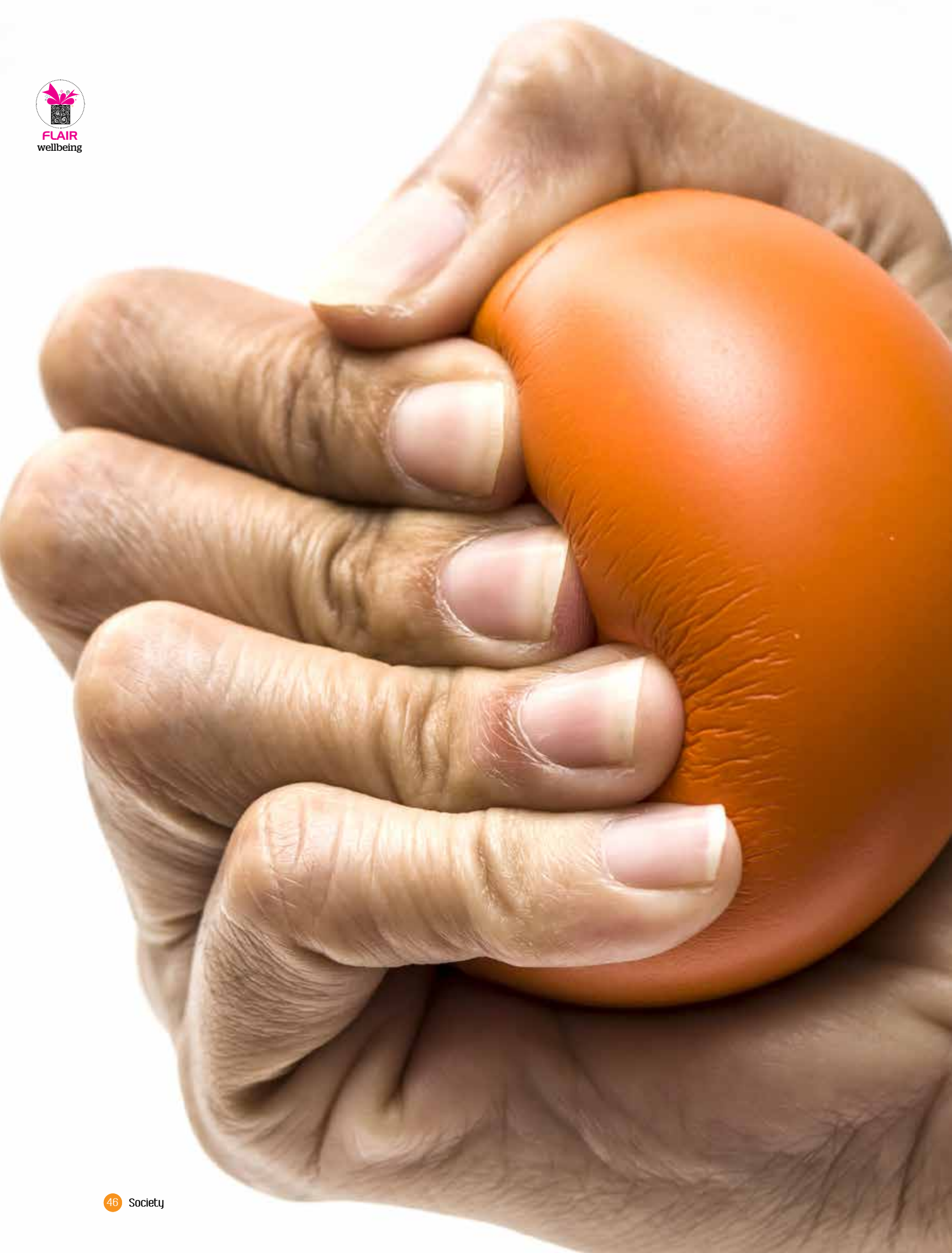
exactly what good teachers do, each and every day. Try it, you may really enjoy it, and you will be inspired by the challenge of overcoming the uncertainty of not knowing how well you could succeed.

Taking risks applies to all areas of education - it is the foundation of our pedagogy, the art of teaching. It is a fundamental part of the psyche of good teachers and how we approach our practice. Quality schools will enable and encourage risk-taking staff members, innovative methods and new ways of learning. Creating a culture where taking risks and accepting failure is important in helping students to be resilient, adaptive and ambitious. This, in turn, encourages a mindset that enables them to develop strategies to deal with defeat and overcome limitations.

Let me finish with the story of a young, Scottish teacher and his first experiences teaching a class of seven year olds. Keen to share some of his culture and heritage, the teacher plans for a Scottish Country dance lesson. However, his excitement plummets when the introductions are met with groans and frowns from a large number of the boys in the class. Their moaning continues on the way to the gym, and the teacher begins to worry if

this might have been a mistake. Keeping calm, a final invitation is given to the boys who have stubbornly chosen to sit on the benches at the side instead of taking position in the centre of the hall. Those who showed the courage to stand feel anxious about what will happen next. As the music begins, there is a final attempt by the teacher: "Feel free to join in whenever you like." The music plays, the dancing begins, there are some embarrassed mis-steps but a lot of laughter. Gradually, the other boys begin to take their places with the rest. By the end of the lesson, the benches are empty and there is a full class spinning, stomping, clapping and laughing as they execute the routines. By the end, the frowns are now on every child as the lesson must come to an end before lining up and returning to the classroom.

It is now five years since I taught that class and I realise how close those children were to missing out on a unique learning experience; an experience they would often remind me of as they moved further up the school and one that I too will never forget. So, give it a go, take a risk – it might be the best thing you have ever done. ●



Natural ways to RELIEVE STRESS

Stressed? Whether it's a crazy deadline, cranky boss, or mind-numbing commute, these natural stressbusting remedies will help

 Carla Magdalene



Carla Magdalene is from the UK and of Scottish and Jamaican descent. She teaches English and practices holistic therapies such as aromatherapy and herbalism. Her hobbies include reading, writing poetry and doing Tai Chi.

In the modern world it is not uncommon or even unreasonable to experience feeling of stress on most days. People face many pressures and many find themselves caught in stressful lifestyles. It might be pressure to establish or maintain a comfortable standard of living. Or racing around trying to balance family commitments and responsibilities with demanding careers or several jobs. It may be life as a single millennial trying to make enough to buy that first house or send money back home to support partner or extended family members. The reasons that people are living stressful lives differ significantly. The results however are the same. Stress, stress and more stress!



It is valuable to know that although our lives may seem more stressful than ever before, stress is not new.

Comfort foods

With all this stress, people seek relief. They look for something that can give a feeling of relief at the end of the day. Most people just need to recover enough at the end of the day to be able to get up the next and do it all over again. Some of the common stress relievers we use include smoking, drinking caffeinated beverages or watching TV. Some people also find comfort in calorie dense foods such as sweets and fast food. These foods are often seen as treats or rewards. They are associated with good feelings and can help to improve our mood after a hard day. They also provide energy that can keep the body going past its natural limit. It is true that the odd comfort food may not harm us. Over long periods of time living a stressful lifestyle and relying on caffeine or junk foods can cause us to form bad habits. What was previously a treat has then turned into daily fuel. This kind of pattern can wreak havoc on our bodies over time. Although everyone knows the benefits of eating healthy foods, it is not always easy to make such choices when life is stressful and demanding.

Quick fixes

Other modern approaches to managing stress may be marketed to us as solutions by professionals such as doctors or therapists. It is not uncommon nowadays to know people who are relying on prescriptions to help them cope with hectic

lifestyles. These may be recommended when stress has reached stage where it is overwhelming and affecting a person's ability to maintain their current lifestyle. Medications that help with sleep, or mood problems should be a short term solution. They should only be used until a person has managed to establish a more manageable way of living...a way that does not put them under so much pressure that they cannot keep up. However, for many people, changing their lifestyle to make it less stressful does not seem achievable. When nothing changes, it is easy to become dependent on the medications. Just like other quick fix solutions, long term use of prescription medications for stress related conditions can have damaging effects.

Stress is normal

It is valuable to know that although our lives may seem more stressful than ever before, stress is not new. Humans have also experienced pressure, tension and drama and we are able to cope with it. Our bodies release chemicals such as adrenalin and cortisol to help us cope during demanding and stressful times. This means that we are actually designed to cope with stressful events. We are just not designed too much of it, too often! The human body also has a natural stress relieving hormones production factory where chemicals such as oxytocin are produced. This is often referred to as the love hormone because it is associated with romance and the bonding of

mothers and their newborns. The secret to natural and healthy stress relief is to reduce cortisol and adrenaline and increase oxytocin and other happy hormones such as serotonin and dopamine. With the right techniques this is easy. In a world where money pressures often add to our stress, you'll be happy to know that many natural approaches to stress don't cost anything other than a little 'me time.'

Boost serotonin

Serotonin is often known as the don't worry, be happy hormone. It is a neurotransmitter that plays many functions. It is essential for enabling healthy and deep sleep, maintaining balanced moods, self-confidence and social skills. It also helps to maintain a healthy appetite and reduce the need to comfort eat. Serotonin also helps to improve learning and memory as well as help the brain to function better overall. This helps to maintain clear thinking which in turn reduces worrying. The cheapest and easiest way to naturally increase serotonin is through gently, daily exercise. During times of stress, excessive exercise will add to the stress on the body. It may also be unappealing after a hard day to go and sweat in the gym. Gentle and enjoyable exercise in the form of a walk, bike ride, yoga or tai chi is all it takes to increase serotonin levels. Doing this outside in natural light will also help to regulate the hormones in the body and help it to cope with stress more effectively.



Increase dopamine

■ Dopamine is referred to as the motivation molecule. It is another one of the brain's neurotransmitters. Increasing your dopamine levels will naturally beat the sugar cravings, insomnia, mood swings and fatigue often seen in stressed out people. Just like serotonin, dopamine can be increased through exercise. Other ways to increase the motivation molecule are through listening to relaxation sounds at the correct frequency for soothing the brain and setting aside enough time for a peaceful sleep. Sometimes demanding schedules may mean that a full night's sleep is not an option. In this case, sleeping for periods that are multiples of 90 minutes or taking 30-minute power naps can also reduce stress by increasing the levels of helpful neurotransmitters.

Be mindful and meditate

■ Two of the most effective ways to manage stress that are free to everyone are mindfulness and meditation. Mindfulness is the art of being fully present, aware of where we are and what we're doing in the moment. It is the practice of avoiding thinking about the past and the future and enjoying the experiences of life more fully. Being more mindful, for example, might be completely enjoying a moment playing with your children without having a goal or other thoughts on your mind; just playing and having fun with them. Mindfulness can be practiced while enjoying a warm drink,

watching and listening to birds singing or just sitting quietly in a chair. The art is to just let go of thinking and worrying and just be at peace. Meditation is similar to mindfulness in that it is about letting go of over thinking, worrying, planning and the other goings on inside our minds. These may often be the results of stress but they actually cause more stress too. Too much thinking and worrying actually increases cortisol levels and can damage brains over time. Meditation has been shown to reduce this damage.

An extra bonus from meditation is that it can also help the brain to repair damage when practiced regularly. Repairs brains function better and also find solutions to problems easier. Meditation can be practiced for as little or as much time that each person has available. It can be started with as little as five minutes. Even for this amount of time, there will be changes in the way the brain functions and a reduction in stress levels. Mindfulness and meditation are often mistakenly associated with certain religions. However neither of these practices are linked to any religion. This is not true and they can be practiced by anyone regardless of their religious beliefs. They are ways to train the brain to work more effectively, calm the mind and body as well as reduce the negative effects of modern stressful lifestyles.

Small changes make a big difference

■ Changing daily habits in order to

reduce stress can be a challenge. For some people they may even add to their stress by worrying that they cannot reduce their stress levels! To avoid this trap, it is best to start with one or two small, simple changes that can be added to the daily routine. This might be doing a few minutes of meditation during a part of the day when there is a chance to take some personal time. It could be first thing in the morning, during a lunch break or at night before bed. Choosing a suitable time during the day to practice being mindful is also achievable for most people. A nice time is through a regular routine task such as having the first drink or meal of the day. This is a time when the mind can be trained to just relax and enjoy the experience before it starts to think on the concerns of the day.

For people with busy mornings it might be better to try to have a relaxing dinner or a cup of a soothing tea such as chamomile before bed. Enjoying such as mindful moment can end the day in a peaceful way. The idea is to find ways to gradually increase the feelings of calm and control felt over time and practice. This may not remove the sources of stress in life completely but it will help us to cope better. It may also give the brain time to rest and recover. When given that break, the brain will function better and people may begin to find ways out of stressful situation and towards creating a world where there is less stress altogether. ●



MODEL OF THE MONTH

RUKIYA NAZIR AHAD

PHOTOGRAPHY: Sajin Orma

MUA: Lea Abo

DIRECTION & RETOUCHING: Sajith Orma

LOCATION: Marsa Malaz Kempinski-Doha

FULL NAME: Rukiya Nazir Ahad

NATIONALITY: Indian

OCCUPATION: Masters Student

ALL TIME STYLE ICON: Blake Lively

FAVOURITE DRESS: Baggy T-shirt paired with Mom jeans and white FILA disruptor shoes

FAVOURITE CUISINE: I enjoy everything

I LIKE: Climbing hills and mountains to watch the sunset

I DISLIKE: Being inactive

HOBBY: Travelling and reading non-fiction books

COUNTRY I'D LIKE TO VISIT: South America

I WANT TO CHANGE: To bring a change you have to be the change. To quote Mahatma Gandhi: "Be the change you wish to see in the world."

MY BIGGEST DREAM: Is to continue to have opportunities to help the less-fortunate in ways that I can. "You can have everything in life you want, if you will just help other people get what they want." Zig Ziglar





Society style



Society Style



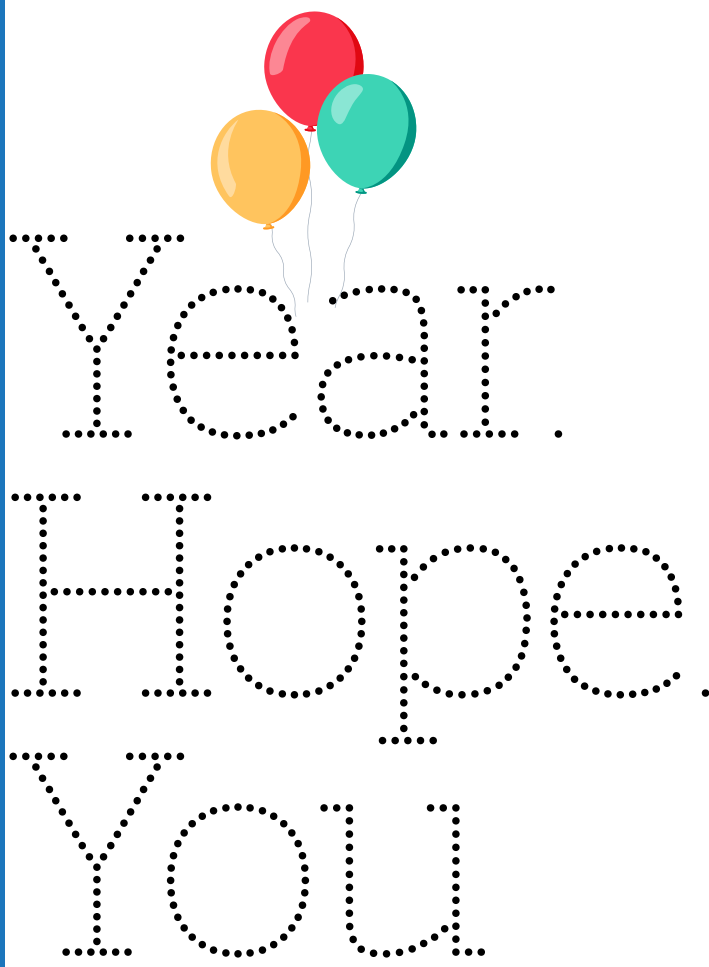


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No matter what happened in the past, there's always a reason to make a new beginning

By Dr Aruna Dhade

“Every moment is a fresh beginning.”

T.S. Eliot



Dr Aruna Dhade
MBA, PhD in Banking and Finance is a senior lecturer, freelance writer, poet, watercolor painter and a traveler. She has been living in Qatar for the past twelve years.

New Year is the right time to start a new life. On this occasion many of us make the new beginning and start a new life. There is always chance to restart a life. Every new beginning comes from some other beginning's end. Every day is a chance to begin again. As they say the darkest night is often the bridge to the brightest tomorrow. One has to start today with more positivity without focusing on the failures of yesterday. Life is precious and we need to make the best of it. No matter what happened in the past, there's always a time and reason to make a new beginning.

You cannot grow, evolve, or progress without embracing change in life. By adopting change one can start a new a life. The strong conviction, determination and

discipline would certainly help in achieving the goals of our life. All you need is the right attitude, a controlled mind, belief in self and faith in life. To begin with, you need to love your life and yourself! If you look at each day as a new beginning, you will feel happier, more energetic and more motivated and that's the new you! Lot of people spend a large portion of their lives waiting for a sign to tell them it's the right time to pursue a goal, or wait until they feel ready. The right time could be anytime, any day. The foremost only real time is the "Now." Why wait until a certain date to transform their life? You can set goals and chase dreams every day when you get out of bed; you don't need a calendar to tell you when you can make resolutions. Though the idea of the time is perpetual,



irrespective of that we set goals for a specific period of time in order to achieve them in specific timeframe. However why can't 'right now' be the right time? If you wait until tomorrow, you might still think you're not ready to wake your dreams into reality. You can create whatever reality you want to see right at this moment, and that will set the stage for every subsequent moment you want to experience. Our dreams are renewable. No matter what our age or condition, there are still untapped possibilities within us which is waiting to be born. The fresh beginning offers chance to create happiness and success all-over again.

Change begins when the old starts to die and go away. During the fall, trees lose their leaves, the plants turn brown and go away. The old leaves make ways for

the new. You can't have change without something going away. Everything that was once old starts to disappear for the new. To accept change gracefully nature has always been inspiring us for centuries. The leaves colour change from bright to dull. Everything around us is transforming every moment. Change is something that's always going to happen, come rain or shine. We see it again and again with new season and even feel it in the air. Every stage of nature goes through a beautiful makeover. From blossom to fallout its great teaching prepares us to face upcoming changes with dignity. We have to be humble equally at blossom and fallout stage.

We humans have invented the idea of time to measure every moment of our life. It offers the track of important life

events which are precious and always remains close to our heart. Every New Year is counted as a significant event of everyone's life. Most of us prefer New Year to make a new start with new resolutions. Although many of us failed to keep our resolution promises after few weeks. Instead of getting disappointed, one has to believe in oneself. You simply need to be a better person that you know you can be. As Lao Tzu says, "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step" hence do not wait until the conditions are perfect to begin, in fact sincere beginning makes the conditions perfect. The tireless efforts to relive every moment with its freshness that's the new beginning. That's the new you!

Happy beginning always!!



GIVE THE GIFT OF HOMEMADE FOOD

To show your friends and loved ones that you care, make them a gift yourself. Homemade food gifts are always appreciated, and they can be simply wonderful

By *Daniel Neman*

When you care enough to send the very best, you know that the very best is often homemade. A box of candy is a lovely gift, and so is a big tin of flavoured popcorn. But they just don't have that personal touch.

To show your friends and loved ones that you care, make them a gift yourself. Homemade food gifts are always appreciated, and they can be simply wonderful. The ones I made are good. I mean really, really good. And don't tell anyone, but they are also easy. I mean really, really easy.

How easy? The Slow Cooker Dulce de Leche is literally nothing more than pouring canned sweetened condensed milk into jars, placing the jars in a slow cooker, adding water and turning on the heat.

Admittedly, this one gift does take time until it is done, but you can be off doing other things while it is cooking at a slow and even temperature. It takes about 11 to 12 hours on low heat – you can make it overnight – but I made it on high heat in six hours.

And what I had at the end was honest-to-goodness dulce de leche. If you've



never had it before, maybe you should make a jar for yourself, too. It's impossibly rich, impossibly creamy, impossibly delicious. The flavour is sort of like caramel, but it's somehow better and more intense than caramel.

There are other ways of making dulce de leche that take less time but are more laborious. Traditionally, you slowly simmer together milk and sugar, stirring occasionally, for at least an hour and a half. But that takes a lot of standing at the stove.

The slow-cooker method allows you to

set it and forget it for about six hours or so. When it's done, it can be used in any number of desserts, from pastries to the filling of sandwich cookies to an unbeatable sauce for ice cream. But to be perfectly honest, a lot of people just eat it out of the jar. It's that good.

Almost as easy to make as the dulce de leche is Winter Orange Pomegranate Iced Tea. It's the perfect gift for an iced tea lover like me. It's iced tea with extra zing and a holiday flair.

Instead of using regular water to make the

tea, you begin with water that is flavoured with orange, cinnamon and cloves. You steep the tea bags in this water for five minutes before adding orange juice, pomegranate juice and sugar.

Do add the sugar. I don't like my iced tea sweetened at all, but this one needs it to counteract the tartness of the pomegranate juice. The hardest part of making this iced tea gift is finding the bottles to put it in. I bought some shaped like soft-drink bottles for \$2 apiece, and even as I was paying for them I was thinking "I could just buy soft-drink bottles for \$1 and actually have

the soft drink.”

I also made a big batch of Caramel Crunch, because it’s so easy and who doesn’t like it? It is the familiar blend of popcorn and peanuts coated in caramel.

Some say that it is impossible to crunch and munch such a homemade treat, that it cannot be made at home. Poppycock, I say.

The popcorn is easy; I used a microwave. But the caramel, which is usually tricky to

make, is also easy. You just melt butter with granulated and brown sugars plus some corn syrup, bring it to a boil and add a dash of baking soda. Simple, but it becomes light and crispy and does a terrific job of coating the popcorn.

Finally, I made something called Snowflake Mix, which is just a different form of Chex Mix. This one begins with Rice Chex and Corn Chex, plus pretzels and honey-roasted peanuts. You coat it all with

melted white chocolate, and then comes the ingredient of true, unadulterated genius: mint-flavored M&Ms.

It’s like eating a beautiful snowfall, wintry and cool and refreshing. It’s got crunch, it’s got peanuts, it’s got pretzels. It has everything your friends and loved ones will want in a snack.

They’ll be singing “I’m Dreaming of a White Chocolate.”



SNOWFLAKE MIX

Yield: 16 servings

Ingredients:

- 3 cups bite-size rice square cereal, such as Rice Chex
- 3 cups bite-size corn square cereal, such as Corn Chex
- 1 1/2 cups small pretzel twists, squares or sticks
- 1 cup honey-roasted peanuts
- 24 ounces white chocolate chips or baking pieces
- 9 ounces mint M&Ms

Method:

1. In a very large bowl, combine rice cereal, corn cereal, pretzels and peanuts. Set aside. Lay out a large piece of waxed paper or parchment.
2. Melt white chocolate in a metal bowl over simmering water, stirring constantly. Pour melted chocolate over cereal mixture. Stir gently to coat. Spread on waxed paper and sprinkle with mint M&Ms. Allow to cool, and break into pieces. Store in an airtight container for up to 1 week or in the freezer for 1 month. Adapted from Midwest Living

WINTER ORANGE AND POMEGRANATE ICED TEA



Yield: 6 servings

Ingredients:

3 cups water
1 navel orange, cut into 1/4-inch slices
1 cinnamon stick, broken
6 whole cloves
4 orange-flavoured or black tea bags
(decaffeinated is fine)
1 cup orange juice
1 cup pomegranate juice
2 to 3 tablespoons granulated sugar

Method:

1. In a medium saucepan, combine water, orange slices, cinnamon and cloves. Bring just to boiling; remove from heat. Add tea bags. Let stand, covered, for 5 minutes. Remove tea bags and discard. Strain tea mixture through a fine-mesh strainer; discard orange slices and spices.
2. In a glass pitcher, combine strained tea mixture, orange juice, pomegranate juice and sugar, stirring to dissolve sugar. Cover and chill for at least 4 hours. Serve over ice with wedges of orange and lime.
3. If giving as a tightly sealed gift, it will keep in the refrigerator for three days.

Recipe by Midwest Living ●

CARAMEL CRUNCH POPCORN

Yield: 24 servings

Ingredients:

2 bags of microwaved light popcorn
2 1/2 cups salted dry-roasted peanuts
8 ounces (2 sticks) butter – no substitutions
1 cup granulated sugar
1 cup packed light brown sugar
1/2 cup light corn syrup
1/2 teaspoon baking soda

Method:

1. Preheat oven to 250 degrees. Lightly grease 2 rimmed baking pans or spray with nonstick cooking spray. Place popped corn in very large bowl, discarding unpopped kernels. Add peanuts, and toss to combine.
2. In a 3-quart pan over medium heat, cook butter, sugar, brown sugar and corn syrup, stirring frequently with metal or heat-safe spatula, until butter melts and sugars dissolve; about 5 minutes. Increase heat to medium-high and bring to a boil. Boil 3 minutes. Remove from heat; stir in baking soda (the mixture will bubble vigorously) and pour over popcorn mixture. Stir immediately and continue stirring until all popcorn is evenly coated.
3. Divide popcorn mixture between prepared baking pans; spread evenly. Place pans on 2 oven racks. Bake 32 to 40 minutes, rotating pans between upper and lower racks halfway through baking, and stirring occasionally.
4. Cool mixture completely in pans on wire racks, about 1 hour. Break apart any large clusters of popcorn when cool. Store in tightly sealed containers at room temperature up to 2 weeks.

Slightly adapted from Good Housekeeping





RECIPES BY
SHAHANA ILYAS



COCONUT PRAWNS

Ingredients:

Medium size prawns- 15 no
Chilly powder- 1 teaspoon
Turmeric powder- ¼ teaspoon
Pepper powder- ½ teaspoon
Lemon juice- 1 teaspoon
Salt- ½ teaspoon
Corn flour - 1 tablespoon
Egg white- 1
Bread crumbs- ¼ cup
Desiccated coconut- ¼ cup
Oil for frying

Method:

1. Clean prawns well after removing its shell and vein.
2. In a bowl take chilly powder, turmeric powder, pepper powder, salt, egg white and lemon juice and combine well to form a paste.
3. To this, add corn flour and mix thoroughly. Marinate prawns with this paste and keep aside for 10 minutes.
4. Combine bread crumbs and desiccated coconut.
5. Take prawns one by one and roll in this bread crumbs, desiccated coconut mix and deep fry in hot oil on medium flame.
6. Serve hot with tomato ketchup. ●

PUMPKIN SOUP

Ingredients:

Pumpkin- 200g
Onion- 1
Garlic- 2 cloves
Turmeric powder- 1 pinch
Pepper powder- 1 teaspoon
Corn flour- 2 tablespoon
Chicken stock /veg stock- 1 cube
Coconut milk- 1 cup (optional)
Butter- 2 teaspoon
Spring onion chopped- 1 tablespoon (for garnishing)
Water- 1 cup

Method:

In a pan or pressure cooker, heat butter and add chopped onion and garlic. Saute well. When onion starts to get brown, add pumpkin pieces and saute again. Add pepper powder, turmeric powder, salt and water and cook until pumpkin cooked well. Let it cool and make it puree using a hand blender or mixer. Heat this puree on a medium flame. When it starts to boil, add chicken /vegetable stock. Mix corn flour with some water and add to this. Add one teaspoon butter and saute continuously. Add coconut milk (optional) and when it starts to boil, switch off the flame. If you are not using coconut milk, change quantity of water from 2 cups to 3 cups. Garnish with spring onion and serve hot.





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