SHINE GLOBAL
Manoji Wadugodapitiya

VOCAL FOR LOCAL

SHE LEADS
Smita Bhandare

Wellness Wonderland
Pooja Bedi

Hibicus tea
Winter skin
Insomnia
& many more
WOMEN SHINE CONTENT

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Let’s impact the lives of women, their families and their communities.

Till then take care & shine always!

#SHELEADS is the main segment of the e-magazine; we will feature a personality who is famous, humble, and passionate about impacting the lives of Women. This month, read about Ms. Smita Bhandare, Goa’s first lady Cartoonist.

‘Shine Global’ segment will feature a personality from around the world who is doing amazing work in their genre. This month, read about Manoj Wadugodapitiya

‘Celeb’ and "Cover Girl" of the month is Pooja Bedi, read about her passion and various facets of life.

The theme for this month is #VocalforLocal. We have featured a few Women Entrepreneurs who are a part of the “Vocal for Local Campaign and are working towards their dreams.

With a plethora of articles to read, subscribe to, and be a part of my beautiful Initiative. I look forward to seeing you all every month.

You are most welcome to share your suggestions on womenshinemag@gmail.com. This will help us to design this e-magazine in a better way.

Let’s impact the lives of women, their families and their communities.
Till then take care & shine always!

Shine Aways
Aparna Mishra
The novel coronavirus pandemic has evolved and reshaped almost everything around us. As the basic activities of life have turned to not so accessible luxuries, the businesses have been hit hard to the core.

While the whole global economy is struggling to remain upright from the weight of the several negative consequences, there has also been a bright side and a consoling aspect of the difficult year. This tough interval has paved a path for growth of opportunities and has put the indigenous brands in the foreground, queerly after Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced his support for an ‘Aatmanirbhar Bharat’ and made a vivid call for going ‘vocal for local’ much louder than ever before.

“The mindset of free India should be ‘vocal for local’. We should appreciate our local products. If we do not do this, then our products will not get the opportunity to do better and will not get encouraged.” - Narendra Modi

Numerous challenges are present for an Aatmanirbhar Bharat, but if there are lakhs of challenges then the country also has the power which gives crores of solutions, my countrymen and women who give us the strength of the solution.”

The government recognizes the challenges to a ‘self-reliant’ and a ‘superpower’ India but also puts a spotlight on the strength of the citizens considering the demographics. Going local is the need of the hour. Every civilized society in the world requires to go local, to the maximum possible extent.
There has been a huge spike of indigenous brands over the last few months, and the figures are expected to rise in the years to come. Even though the Swadeshi movement was an integral part of India’s fight for independence from the British rule, it has witnessed a rejuvenation in the ‘Make in India’ model.

Despite the hardships, we have all reeled under in the past few months due to the pandemic, both well established as well as small entrepreneurs are shifting their focuses on businesses that are independent of outside influences.

Considering the history of busting stereotypes and pushing limits, women of our country are firmly carving their paths ahead. They are redefining conventional careers and foraging a special niche for themselves by establishing their own position in the world of businesses. Some of the biggest homegrown startups today are headed and helmed by women.

We at WomenShine, hope this promising data and trends inspire more women entrepreneurs to follow their passion and establish businesses that are exclusive, prosperous, and of course, local.

Continue reading at and get to know about some women entrepreneurs, who are fierce and ardent supporters of #VocalForLocal.

Aditi Gupta
aditigupta0523@gmail.com
VOCAL FOR LOCAL SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS
NEHA KABRA

Neha Kabra, designer-founder for label Maati, grew up in a joint family, learnt to share, saw the lineage of passing on, sharing the belief that nothing should go to waste.

These habits became the centre of her label. With an urge to create something big, she now creates them with utmost care towards the human body and nature.

Maati means soil, the name is derived from the Hindi word ‘mitti’. She quotes, “the idea of sustainability is not new like I said we all follow it in our household but people are not aware of the procedure that goes behind a sustainable brand. The idea behind Maati is to bring a shift in society via smaller changes as they go long way.” One of the initiatives is eco-friendly fashion at affordable pricing, keeping the channels of costing and the people involved very transparent.
Maati by Neha Kabra is a contemporary womenswear label from Udaipur, Rajasthan that understands the balance between efficiency and expression. With a simple application, Maati uses pure and effortless silhouette bringing out the best in people. Every garment in Maati is created creatively with a sense of wearability. It wants to give each style its own identity and thus creates limited styles because less is more. It believes in the philosophy of ‘the more comfortable you are, the more productive you will be’.

Along with style, Maati also experiments with traditional Indian printing techniques which are hand done by local craftsmen hence creating every piece slightly different from another. So what you own is Unique. Maati believes in transparency hence, the complete cycle of making a garment is transparent.

Maati is a label that not only creates sustainable clothing but also working for women empowerment and is also working for rich local crafts and textile of India.

Maati is also an environmentally friendly, PETA verified brand. At every step, it tries to be cautious and keeps the agenda of sustainability. A part of the fabric is up-cycled. The dyes and print colours used are natural without harming nature. The packaging is plastic-free.

Maati’s ideology is to grow but, along with everyone else, hence it is a very reliant and honest project with clothing and fashion as its elements. Maati believes in minimalism. It is a small step towards a big change.
Neelima Thakur, a woman entrepreneur from Karaikal, a small town in Pondicherry, who despite of the odds, made a dent in the entrepreneurship world. She knows how to create magic with herbs and is called ‘a lady with magical herbal touch’.

Born and brought up in Mumbai, married in a Tamil family, she has spent 27 years in South India. She is a homemaker, a mother of three, a trainer of English Communication & Personality Development. She says, “injecting confidence in my students gives me contentment”. She adds, “while training a few disabled girls, listening to their experience with life, germinated the thought of involving differently challenged women some day in whichever ways possible. Now, with my new venture, I'll be able to just do that”.

Neelima always had a keen interest in the natural properties of herbs and oils. While in the menopause phase, to tackle my mood swings and to keep mind occupied, she prepared mixtures of natural oils and tried her hands at something unique to tackle hair related issues faced by almost every person irrelevant of age. She gave them to a few students and in 2 to 3 months, they noticed their hair growing thicker.

As the word spread, she was being appreciated for the quality and results of the oil. She started with a Facebook business page, ‘Shine Hair Oil’. It gave her an opening to many new customers and the business grew through customers’ recommendation. With the profits, she bought a smartphone, which gave a boost to the business growth.

Neelima have had her set of hardships. Initially, she could not find proper bottles, packaging boxes, a trustworthy shipping company as almost every courier company refused to accept oil delivery. Selling through social media is not as easy as it sounds. People try to snap customers and do cross promotions. But without losing hope and with constant efforts, she was able to make the business stable.

Studying the properties of oils and herbs in detail, she blended a few more oils and herbal extracts which help in regrowth and reversing of greying hair. Shine Herbals now deals in a variety of hair oils which have therapeutically value especially for regrowth and skin care products which can be used even for babies. Safe and natural, Shine Herbals now has almost 6000 happy customers in less than 5 years.

A simple effort to vent depression creatively turned out to be a successful venture with social networking.
With a strong aura to her name, determination and talent being a few remarkable traits, Mansi is the co-founder of the lifestyle brand ‘Tjori’ founded in January 2013 in India. She created this brand with the idea of promoting the traditional Indian handicrafts with the touch of modernism to get global recognition. A plan built on the whiteboard in a room of the Wharton University housing has now become a global e-commerce website with ever-expanding plans.

The happy and courteous child has grown up with a sense of business since her childhood days. The daughter of an elite clothing tycoon in Jammu has completed her MBA from the Business School of Cardiff University and has a specialization in the field of finance from the reputed University of Wharton.

From a young age, she always loved to explore things and now her new love is riding horses. She is a minimalistic and elegant dresser, a businesswoman and an all-rounder. The brand is a spitting image of her style sense and aura. The creation and curation are done in minding keeping the art and details of the handicraft intact while enhancing it with a modern touch. The products are very well thought about and then sold to the customers.

To build a brand is a herculean task which Mansi and her employees are very serious and dedicated to getting the brand to a global position fighting a small battle every day, because according to her “If we don’t have any battles to fight then the war is lost. A battle will only be won once we stand true to our aims and goals.”

When Mansi is not at work or she would like to de-stress herself, she loves to do yoga and meditation which helps her calm her mind, body and soul. A very simple yet effective way to tackle all problems of life. She believes in the simplicity of life and a firm believer of Ayurvedic wisdom which she follows religiously.
In association with Women Planet, she has been conferred the title of WINspires2020. Mavai Nao actively participated in Women’s Day activity 2020 and was featured on the digital platform among successful women entrepreneur 2020. She even participated on Vocal for Local campaign. She has been awarded as the ‘Women Entrepreneur 2020’ for the lifestyle and Fashion category at the WESA Event 2020.

Tjori began on a small whiteboard with a huge foresight for the brand, an opportunity which was explored due to the lack of knowledge about the traditional and heritage handicraft of India on a global platform. A very important sector of art that lacked “awareness, access, availability and affordability” these 4A’s were the driving force for the brand which it complies to even now. A brand that kept its strong footsteps in India with a single collection of ‘Kolhapur Chappals’ is now a fast fashion brand launching new collections every day.

Tjori is a lifestyle brand with apparel, home, wellness, jewellery, shoes, bags and now a new category of mother and child that all follow the richness of Indian handicrafts and the quality of international standards. The wide range of collection which further have subcategories that include handicraft like, Inlay works, Kota Doria, Ajrak, Kalamkari and following the new handicrafts with oxidized jewellery, Hand block printed fabric, Indigo etc. A well-priced collection that values the authenticity and craftsmanship while following the global standards of quality.

The gap in the Indian and International market between the authentic handicraft and faux work is the reason that motivates us to make sure the deserving products get highlighted and sold at the right price. The obstacles to this goal were the initial challenges faced by the brand and now its new challenge is to take this brand from e-commerce only to live stores in the Indian and global market. This goal will require authentic interiors, with idealistic locations and good store merchandising to stand true to the brands’ name and aims.

This transition from an e-commerce website to a walk-in store is Tjori’s next goal and we aim to win this battle by spreading our stores worldwide. With the new transition from a webspace to real space, we would not leave our web customers hanging and soon launch a mobile app for the convenience. The end goal would be to be the best-selling India lifestyle brand on a global platform.
Adah is a product of love; a love for weaves, prints and dyes; a love for fabric and a love for the people who make it. Adah believes that to truly love a piece of clothing means to utilize every inch of it, to empower those who spent time crafting it and to honour the earth that provided the means for it.

While at fashion school, founder and owner, Leesha Agarwal spent much of her time interning or working with various MNCs. What struck her most from that experience was the amount of scrap fabric and waste that went into landfills every day. She also noticed that workers were underpaid and over-utilized, often working excruciatingly long hours. And while these companies drew in massive profits, their people did not gain the benefit nor were their customers aware of where their clothes came from.

She decided to do it differently, and Adah was born – an ethical, zero waste, handloom fashion brand. At the heart of everything is an inherent need to do good.
• WE SOURCE DIRECTLY: Fabrics are sourced from different parts of India and directly from the weavers. No middlemen involved. Weavers are always paid the right amount for their effort and time.

• WE ARE ZERO WASTE: Everything we use, we use full. Nothing goes into our bins.
• WE GIVE DUE CREDIT: Our garments are produced by multiple tailors, each of whom is credited for the garment they have made. When you purchase from us, we tell you who made your clothes.

• WE RECYCLE: All tags used for branding are made with recycled Tetra Packs. Paper usage is kept to a minimum and we never use plastic.

• WE UPCYCLE: We upcycle every loose end, bobble and scrap fabric into earrings, diaries, hair scrunchies, bows, hanger covers – you name it!

• WE EMPOWER: Our earrings are made by and support the young women of the CHAIIM Foundation. Our bows and hair scrunchies are made by Monica Didi who quit her full-time job as a maid to make these items at her convenience, allowing her to spend more time with her young children.
When the entire world is steering towards building a more resilient, sustainable, and reliable ecosystem, we are realizing the significance of localization in helping us achieve this goal. With a similar goal in mind, Sonali Sharma - a social entrepreneur, built ‘Nugu Handmade’ with her partner, Sumanth Sampath - a ceramic artist.

Sonali spent the first 12 years of her career in the education sector where she had the opportunity of working with all major stakeholders in education, i.e. children, teachers, parents, and school leaders. As a learning coach, she created experiential learning interventions for teachers and school leaders in various international as well as local schools across India. During a project with an education NGO in India, Sonali worked closely with schools in indigenous communities and realized that one of the main reasons for poverty in these areas is the lack of consistent employment. She continued her exploration within indigenous communities to understand their ways of sustainable living and to learn how we could collaborate and co-develop. HD Kote taluk in Karnataka is a home for various native communities that live in extremely backward rural areas. Apart from farming being the main source of income, these communities especially the Kurubas, are craftsmen and potters that thrive the most when they cohabitate within their communities amidst nature.

However, due to lack of work opportunities in their areas they are forced to migrate to the cities and perform low paying daily wage construction jobs. This is a common problem across India. Even though rural India is abundant in resources, lack of focus towards developing the rural ecosystem has led to major problems like over-populated cities, slums in cities and underdeveloped villages. For building a sustainable and equitable future, it is imperative to build small-scale, local businesses within rural India that empower the rural ecosystem and provide dignified jobs, a career as well as entrepreneurship opportunities to people from rural India.
Nugu’s vision is to build a sustainable artisan business in rural India that holistically empower the indigenous ecosystem while building a conscious handmade brand. With this vision in mind, Sonali and Sumanth built their first rural business in a small village in Karnataka called Mullur. This ‘Designed for Environment’ production unit based out of a permaculture farm, makes exquisite, handcrafted, and eco-safe ceramic dining and décor products for the hospitality and retail markets. As a social enterprise, Nugu has thus far provided skill development and dignified job opportunities to over 100 craftsmen from indigenous communities in rural India and has raised impact funding from a US-based NGO – Upaya Social Ventures. Featured in top Indian media like – The Times of India, Elle Décor and Homegrown, for its Social Business Model, Designed for Environment Production Space and Trendy Designs, Nugu’s bespoke dinnerware has delighted millions of people dining at India’s best restaurants.

Sonali has an MBA degree from the University of Roehampton, London, a certificate in Design Thinking from MIT and a certificate in Social Enterprise Strategy from the University of Penn. She won the ‘Times She UnLtd Entrepreneur’ award in 2020 for her role in establishing Nugu as a promising and sustainable social brand. She intends to continue her journey as a thought leader by helping young entrepreneurs build enduring organizations that value impact-focus and human-centred innovation to achieve sustained profitability.

“Sustainability is at the core of Nugu’s mission. We develop local artisans, using natural and locally sourced raw materials, and follow sustainable production practices like recycling, and carbon sequestration to minimize our carbon footprint. We have thus far planted 7000 trees in the past three years and intend to create a food forest for our community in near future. Nugu’s bespoke eco-safe creations made by local artisans and admired by people across the world are a great example of how rural, local and sustainable businesses have the power to change and positively impact the ecosystem.”
“Women shine from within like they have an inner light in them when given an opportunity”,
says Meenakshi Walke.

One such woman who shined like a star when she got a chance to show-case her work is Meenakshi. She was born near a brick kiln, a small village of Savargaon in Nagbhir tahsil. She later started living in slum areas right after her marriage. Worries about her son’s future, lack of guidance on new technology and only average education to add to her struggles, overall poverty struck life, Meenakshi faced many such challenges to overcome her problems.

Now, Meenakshi Mukesh Walke does not need any introduction. She is the first craftsperson who got golden opportunity to design the aesthetic jewellery and crown from bamboo for the contestants in an international beauty pageant, ‘Miss Climate’ December 2019, sponsored by an American institution. On the very occasion, Meenakshi was also honoured on the stage by the dignitaries.

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Meenakshi is probably the first bamboo artisan in the country to have her skills ironed in Jerusalem, Israel.

The Chief Minister of Maharashtra had liked the Bamboo Rakhis made by her. Meenakshi came into limelight in 2020 when she sent Rakhis made up of bamboo to our Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi on the occasion of Rakshabandhan. It benefited her by giving business of six thousand rakhis and providing employment to the women in lockdown. Meenakshi’s hardship in life is unending. She lives in a small place, works there and trains many women in this field.

She is a unique artisan who inspires and teaches people, especially women who are from a similar background as hers to do bamboo farming and to learn Bamboo craft. Her talent for socially empowering women by teaching them techniques to make artwork and make an independent living is another feather in her cap. Meenakshi is now getting invitations to teach in many states like Telangana, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, etc.
Her work with bamboo as an artisan has many objectives behind like self-reliant, employment, plastic-free environment, the prosperity of farmers, village development, etc. Meenakshi has not only employed many women but brought Vidarbha’s name among eleven countries in the world.

Without any artistic background and encouragement, she chose to do something with her life and opted for a 70-day course in bamboo craft-work under the government’s scheme. Since then, Meenakshi has made several artworks with bamboo, forthwith empowered women around her and also achieved several awards for her contribution towards the society.

Meenakshi, who runs a social enterprise called Abhisar Innovatives, was given the ‘Top 20 Start-up Award’ in Delhi. The Human Rights Society of New Delhi also conferred the National Nari Shakti Samman Award to her. Meenakshi says that our culture is very vibrant and we must get inspired by it.

Along with making her bamboo artworks, she also works on social causes like emancipation of plastic goods, protecting the environment, promoting bamboo farming, rural development and employment, making bamboo available for cheap to build houses for the poor. Meenakshi says, “It will be easy to empower women if we work hard on our cultural inspirations.” Eminent media like The Hindu, Times of India, The New Indian Express, The better India, Enaadu, Deshbandhu and India TV have also covered her story. Meenakshi further adds, “Every woman is a star in herself, you just have to respect her, not discriminate and give her an equal opportunity.”

Her ultimate vision and the upcoming plan is to enhance bamboo cultivation across the country, guaranteeing employment and training. 24 years Government of Maharashtra’s award-winning magazine has also taken notice of her splendid work. Despite poor financial background, hardship in getting loans from a bank, difficulty in finding a decent and affordable place for her workshop, she can not sit idle. Her elevated soul makes her different from others. Her strong belief in integrity, truth and perseverance make her courageous woman.
Manoji Wadugodapitiya, the chairperson of Hydro Power (Pvt) Ltd and Arusalana Eco Lodge Hotel is a well-renowned name in the business arena has taken this as a responsibility of hers to upgrade the living standard of less privileged women in Sri Lanka. She attended the Flagship international convention in September 2019 in Bengaluru and received high recognition in the international arena as she is an asset to all women in need in Sri Lanka.

She believes that every single person has a born talent and a destiny in life and most of our lives revolve around these two facts. She has employed teachers who are well known to the trade of handwork industry. She started classes in the Kaduwela vicinity which was known to women in need as most of the women were housewives and had to depend on others for their daily living and their expenses.

She started a women's organisation ‘Simply Women’ in the year 2016 to upgrade the less privileged living standard of women in Sri Lanka by training the women in handworks such as sewing, patchwork, embroidery, beauty culture, costume jewellery, slipper making and many more that could be trained to generate an additional income for the low-income families.

She sights that there is no one to give them a helping hand, they will be stranded with no hope to face life. Due to financial difficulties, they intend to use illegal ways to earn additional income. This has been a reality; more inmates are detained in the prison for all types of illegal activities.
'Simply Women', with more demand to train less privileged women has expanded the training classes to most parts of the Island such as Kaduwela, Malabe, Athurugiriya, Kolonnawa, Maharagama, Dehiwala, Awissawella and has trained more than 200,000 women in various trades.

She has separate classes for special need children and young women and she has also employed some to her women’s organization, Manoji. Wadugodapitiya not only trains these women also gives them an additional helping hand by a way of financial support to buy the equipment need to start their own business and has gone a further mile to even get orders from renown companies. She has given some of these items to the prison mates who they had trained and the money has been deposited to their savings accounts opened by Simply Women.

Her vision is to see women trained by Simply Women start their self-employment which earns them a substantial income to enable them to support their families in all financial activities and to be recognized and respected women in Sri Lanka.
Pooja Bedi, an actress and a TV host, is the daughter of Kabir Bedi (film actor and TV personality). She began her acting career in 1989 and went on to appear in movies like Jo Jeeta Wohi Si-kandar and Phir Teri Kahani Yaad Aayee.

In 2020, Pooja launched her startup, Happy Soul, a multi-vendor eCommerce portal that aggregates the best of wellness products, services and experiences.

Aparna Mishra, Founder of Women Shine speak to Pooja...

1. What is your happy place?

I believe that happiness is a state of mind, what's on the inside is reflected on the outside. So to me, every place is a happy place as long as you are happy. If you vibrate positive energy you will attract and spread positive energy. I follow an attitude of gratitude which keeps my happy quotient pumping and it mirrors onto my surroundings.
2. What role does self-care and self-love play in enhancing our mental health?

It’s rightly said that love makes the world go round. If you don’t love yourself, how can you expect others to love you? Only when your well is full can others drink from it. So what are you filling your well with? Many of us put others ahead of us, not realizing we are depleting our own resources, which eventually leads to stress, unfulfilled feelings, pain and neglect. Mental stress, anxiety and negative emotions lead to physical ailments and diseases. Hence, Self-care and self-love are vital not just to our mental health but to our holistic wellness.

A Happy Mind leads to a Happy Body and then to a Happy Life. Self-care can be anything that makes you feel happy, like eating food that's good for your body, using chemical-free makeup and skincare, exercising, meditating and indulging in precious “me time” away from work & responsibilities so that you can do things that nurture your mind, body and spirit.

3. You are this versatile personality with a trail of successful avatars, which one of your occupations is closest to your heart?

Over the last three decades, I’ve donned many hats and every step of the journey has been a building block to get me where I am today. I always allow life to lead me and I’m happy to grow, learn and explore new opportunities.

Acting, modelling, being a talk show host and a columnist gave me the gift of experience and fame while the lineage I possess with my grandfather being an internationally celebrated healer, my English grandmother being an ordained Buddhist nun of the highest order, and the fact that I’m the 18th direct descendant of Guru Nanak Ji; has all lead to my journey as the founder of Happy Soul.

So every bit of this fascinating rollercoaster has been close to my heart. Interestingly, an amalgamation of all the above has culminated in my journey today with Happy Soul. Changing lives has always been an underlying theme through my personal and professional journey and through my workshops, website, columns and the wide following I enjoy it’s now a life that’s interwoven with legacy, fame, passion, knowledge, dreams and all the hard work over the years.
4. How did entrepreneurship happen to you?

It's amazing how the dots join. I was a class topper, extremely sporty, always had a savvy for investments and clearly had leadership qualities. I also grew up with a very healthy understanding of that wellness is ho-listic and inclusive of the body, mind and soul. My mother filled my life with the works of Osho, J.Krishnamurthy, Jung, Freud and more.

Coupled with the spiritual journey of my grandparents, and my study of various meta sciences, all of it has had a huge influence on my percep-tion of life. I spent more than a decade researching, studying and get-ting certified in a plethora of metascience related fields like Usui and Karuna Reiki, Heal Your Life, Soul Temple, Magnified Healing, Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP), Hypnosis and so much more. Changing lives, changing mindsets and making the world has always been a theme song for me.

I guess, the business brain kicked in and I realised there was a huge market that was ready and waiting for exactly what I had envisioned and a credible, feasible, ambitious plan was executed and voila! The happy soul was born!

5. We saw you recently in the Netflix Original show "MasabaMasaba" wherein you played a Counselor to the renowned designer. What was your experience in this?

The role was an irreverent look at the world of therapy and healing. It's not one that I would normally make fun off in any way, however, having a sense of humour is a key ingredient in handling the various situation in life.

Playing characters is always so much fun and it's wonderful to garner such appreciation from the masses. Being a part of web series, especially a number one show on Netflix, gets you noticed, keeps you relevant and a bigger fan base is a huge benefit to my business.
6. Would love to know more about "Wellness Wonderland".

We have many verticals of wellness, some of them active and some of them in the process of creation.

Through our retail and e-commerce website, Happy Soul provides millions of people across India access to the best quality of natural, organic, eco-friendly, cruelty and chemical-free products and services. We disseminate the knowledge of holistic wellness through various sections on our e-commerce website such as wellness travel, blogs, healthy recipes, access to holistic practitioners, online coaching, and more.

We also are in process of creation of our product line as well as intend have a chain of wellness centres and to be the leading name in wellness festivals etc. We provide you with everything you need in the world of healing and wellness under one umbrella. Which is why I call Happy Soul a wellness wonderland.

7. Your take on the growth potential of the wellness industry.

Wellness is a 6 trillion dollar industry and India has a 500 billion market share. Wellness in today's times seems to be the new buzzword and I think that's great.

Health and wellness products along with alternative healing modalities like yoga, meditation, psychotherapy and others, have seen a massive surge in interest and sales.

It is one of the fastest-growing industries. Ayurveda, yoga, meditation and energy healing have been apart of Indian culture for centuries and now people are opting for these alternative healing options instead of allopathic medicines.

People are developing a holistic view and realizing that spiritual well-being is just as important as physical health and that both are intertwined.

8. What is your advice to our women readers who are keen to join the entrepreneurship wagon?

Women have a clear advantage when it comes to business as we're na-turally gifted at bringing things to life. We're fantastic at multitasking and we're also naturally creative and intuitive.

My one piece of advice is to keep a logical head and don't allow your emotions to get the better of you. What you believe is what you achieve, so don't stop till you get there. Aim for the stars, you may end up with a handful of the sky, but at least it won't be a handful of mud!

Women Shine wishes you all the best with your venture.

-Team WS
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Q. Tell us a bit about yourself, and your journey as a cartoonist.

Intrinsically, I’m a dreamer, a misfit of sorts and a very private person, you can say almost a recluse. I respect my space and those of others, given the option, I rather read, write, draw, listen to soft music than socialize. I love children and animals. I get terribly upset when children or women are abused in whatever form or manner and I express the same in my writings or drawings, which in my opinion is subtle and restrained rather than effusive and overpowering.

Q. Have you always harboured an interest in cartooning?

Not really. It was only in 2009 that I got an unexpected offer to do cartoons for a local daily - Herald, that channelized my creativity. With time I did illustrations for other local publications, including Goa Today. With time, my work was selected for the exhibition of Indian Institute of Cartoonists, Bangalore, and the Kerala Cartoon Academy’s ‘CariToon 2016’.

I have also contributed works as a greeting card and illustrations for study material of Women’s Studies Department-IGNOU, Delhi. I’ve authored 3 books on creative writings, of which one is on socio-political cartoons.
Q. You were selected not only as of the ‘Cartoonist of the Month’ (December 2019 and again in November 2020) by a noted Turkish International Cartoon Magazine - Birkitapbindost, but you also garnered 3rd position as ‘The Cartoonist of the Year 2019’, organised by Toons Mag, Norway. You were interviewed by Le Crayon a French Organisation for your contribution in the field of the cartoon. Mario Miranda (consolation). Recently, your collection on women politicians and posters on menstrual hygiene for an NGO Pinkshe Foundation was well received. Your comments.

Recognition and acknowledgement of your humble contribution certainly motivate and encourage the artist to excel and give one’s best. I always experience a great sense of pride and achievement when my name is tagged with our national flag on these international events.

Q. What kind of cartoons you do and from where do you find inspiration to create cartoons?

I like to do cartooning on women and children issues, as also social, environmental and yes political too. A lot of reading, introspection and imagination is required, add to it the fact that your prejudice and ideology should not seep in your work. Apart from being unbiased, I ensure that’s sentiments are not hurt. I use digital art form for all the events.

Q. What are your future plans?

I’m hoping to start a full-fledged Cartoon Academy, especially once I retire from my teaching profession. I’ve already started working in that direction. God willing, someday, my dream will come true.

Q. What is your message for the aspiring cartoonists?

Practice, practice and more practice is the key.
**Ingredients**

Cucumber - 1
Carrots – 1-2
Capsicum – 1-2
Cabbage – ¼
Thick cream – ½ cup
Mayonnaise – ¼ cup
Salad oil – 1 tsp
Lemon juice – 1 tsp
Salt – ¾ tsp
White pepper powder – ¼ tsp
Cherries (for garnishing)
Orange slices (for garnishing)

**Method**

- Peel the cucumber and carrots.
- Cut all the vegetables into julians (long threads).
- Put in a bowl. Pour cream and mayonnaise.
- Add other ingredients. Mix well.
- Arrange in a serving plate.
- Garnish with orange slices and cherries.
APPLE JALEBI

Ingredients

- Apples – 2
- All-purpose flour – 1 cup
- Corn flour – 2 tsp
- Active dry yeast – 1/2 tsp
- Clarified butter/ghee – 1 tbsp
- Sugar – 1 tsp
- Salt – a pinch
- Oil/ghee (to deep fry)
- Pistachios (chopped) – 1 tbsp
- (For sugar syrup)
- Sugar – 1 cup
- Water – 1 cup
- Saffron – Few strands
- Lemon juice – 1/2 tsp
- Water (as needed)

Method

1. In 1/2 cup lukewarm water, dissolve yeast with 1/4 tsp sugar. Keep aside for 5 to 10 minutes. It will become frothy.
2. In a mixing bowl, add maida, cornflour, sugar and salt. Mix and add the yeast solution to it. Add ghee and more water to make a thick batter. Cover and keep aside for an hour. After an hour, mix well to get a smooth batter.
3. Boil water and add sugar, saffron to it. Boil for 8 minutes approximately.
4. Once one string consistency is reached, add 1/2 tsp lemon juice.
5. Slice the apples into thin slices. Remove the seeds part and discard it.
6. Heat oil in a kadhai. Once hot, put the flame to medium. Dip the sliced apples in the batter to coat it evenly everywhere. Carefully drop in the oil. Pour the hot oil over while it gets cooked. Flip and cook the other side too until crispy and golden.
7. Soak it in warm sugar syrup. Let it soak until you add the next one. Flip the jalebi in the syrup between.
8. Drain over a wire rack to let the excess syrup drain. Garnish with pistachios.
The term insomnia denotes a complete lack of sleep. It indicates a relative inability to sleep difficulty in staying asleep, early awakening or a combination of any of these complaints. Insomnia deprives the person of mental rest and thereby interferes with his activities in the day time. It constitutes a severe health hazard when it becomes a habit.

Sleep is a periodic state of rest for the body which is essential for its efficient functioning. It is the indispensable condition to the recuperation of energy and relieves from tension, rests the brain and body and a person wakes up in the morning fresh and relaxed. Sleep has been aptly called ‘the balm of hurt minds and the most cheering restorative of tired bodies’.

The amount of sleep varies within very wide limits from individual to individual. Normally, 7 to 8 hours of sleep every night is adequate for most people. Some, however, do well with 4 to 5 hours because their sleep is deeper and refreshing.

Insomnia is common among the elderly for a variety of reasons. The sleep of the elderly is often punctuated by brief periods of wakefulness during the night. In such cases, it is the quality rather than the quantity which is most affected. With age, there is a gradual reduction of periods of deep sleep. Sleep requirements also diminish with ageing. From 9 hours of sleep at the age of 12, the average sleep needs decrease to 8 hours at the age of 20, 7 hours at the age of 40, 6 and half hours at 60 and 6 hours at 80.

Difficulty in staying asleep is the most common type of insomnia. The Signs of pathological insomnia are dramatic changes in sleep patterns, lapses of memory and lack of concentration during the day. Other symptoms are emotional instability, loss of coordination, confession and a lingering feeling of indifference.
• The most common cause of sleepiness is mental tension brought about by anxiety, worries, overwork and overexcitement.
• Suppressed feelings of resentment, anger and bitterness may also cause insomnia.
• Constipation dyspepsia, overeating at night, excessive intake of starches, sweets, tea or coffee and going to bed hungry are among the other causes.
• Smoking is another suspected cause of insomnia as it irritates the nervous system, especially the nerves of the digestive system.
• Environment factors such as overcrowding, excessive noise or poor bedding or housing conditions may also lead to transient sleep difficulties.

Often, worrying about falling asleep is enough to keep one awake.

Sleeping pills are no remedy for sleeplessness. They are habit-forming and become less effective when used continuously. The side effects of sleeping pills include indigestion, skin rashes, lowered resistance to infections, circulatory and respiratory problems, poor appetite, high blood pressure and many more likely diseases.

Diet is an important factor in the treatment of insomnia. Researchers have shown that people with chronic insomnia almost have marked deficiencies of such key nutrients as B complex vitamins and vitamin C and D, calcium, manganese, potassium and zinc. The sleep mechanism is unable to function efficiently unless each of the nutrients is present in adequate amounts in the diet.

A balanced diet with simple modifications in the eating pattern will go a long way in treating insomnia.

• Do not take water with meals. (Have water half an hour before or one hour after the meal.)
• Eat slowly and chew your food thoroughly.
• Never eat to a full stomach.
• Get some fresh air; engage in brisk walking, cycling or swimming.
• Avoid tea, coffee, white flour, fried food, tinned and preserved food, condiments and pickles.

THE ARBITRARY DOCTOR
HIBISCUS TEA

Made with fresh or dried flowers, a hot cup of tea or hibiscus iced tea, either way, it is delicious and good for your health.

**Ingredients**
Fresh hibiscus flowers – 2 cups or (Dried hibiscus flowers – ½ cup)
Water – 8 cups
Honey (as sweet as you want)
Fresh lime juice – 3 tbsp

**Instructions**
• If using fresh hibiscus flowers, remove the calyx or the green part at the base of the flower to which the stem is attached. You can also remove the pistil which is the thin thread-like tube in the middle of the flower with pollens attached to it or you can choose to keep it.
• Bring the flowers and water to a boil in a large pot. Once the water starts boiling, switch off the flame and cover the vessel. At this point, you can also add other herbs such as basil, lemongrass, lemon zest, etc.
• Let the tea steep for 15-20 minutes. Mix in the honey and lime juice till completely combined. Strain the tea.
• Serve the tea warm or chill it in the refrigerator for a couple of hours.

**Benefits of Hibiscus Tea**
• rich in antioxidants
• helps lower blood pressure
• helps lower blood fat levels
• boosts liver health
• promotes weight loss
• helps prevent cancer
• fights harmful bacteria

Note
Hibiscus tea can affect estrogen levels. If you are trying to become pregnant or are pregnant, you should probably avoid hibiscus in your diet. It also lowers blood pressure which can be harmful if you already suffer from low blood pressure.

Tanya Sahni
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Womenshine.in | 25
‘KIAORA’ IS HOW YOU START YOUR EXPERIENCE IN WHAT I WOULD CALL PARADISE. A UNIQUE SALUTATION USED IN NEW ZEALAND TAKEN FROM THE MAORIS WHICH IS A ‘HELLO’, A ‘WELCOME’ AND A ‘THANK YOU’, ALL ROLLED INTO ONE GREETING.

Getting to New Zealand requires a commitment of time, energy and money. It’s a long flight from everywhere. It's an expensive country and the best way to go around is on a self-drive SUV. If this sounds daunting, it is soon forgotten. Starting from Auckland which has the best international connections we covered both the Northern and the Southern islands in 13 days. The biodiversity check at the airports is strict. Carrying an open sandwich saved from the flight service can easily set you back by a fine of NZ$ 500 or more. But yes, anything prepacked in a sealed pack is fine. No achaar, no chutneys and no poori sabzi. Unopened Haldiram packs are fine!
Auckland is a bustling city much unlike the rest of the country. You can still miss dinner like we nearly did if not for a 'late night' diner. That by the way in New Zealand is 9 PM or even earlier. So one of the first things you quickly learn about New Zealand is the country sleeps early and rises early. With hardly 4 million people spread all over, you rarely see crowds and the nightlife is nonexistent. 'Laidback country' is a phrase you will often think off as you travel around.

The pit stops have quite a few lodges and motels which are good for a night or two. Don't expect the Hyatt or the Sofitel though! Airbnb is a great help especially if you are a group of friends or a big family. New Zealand is best done with a company as life can often become lonely after the sunset. The rush season is January and February. New Zealanders themselves make it easy to enjoy their country. They're friendly, approachable with probably the world's most helpful and efficient police force which we had the pleasure to experience.

The countryside is awesome. Beautiful and serene are mild words to use. The valleys and rolling hills allow you views which are often breathtaking. It's clean, pristine, and gorgeous. A casual driver can't resist frequent stops to gawk. Hiking trails are abundant for the adventurous as are the huge gorges which sometimes look scary but the roads are safe.

The South Island offers a couple of hundred wineries, wonderful locally sourced food, and vista upon a vista that will turn an hour's drive into a jaw-dropping, photo-snapping marathon. New Zealand is a group of 600 islands formed over centuries of volcanic eruptions and earthquakes. This has also led to a collection of over 3500 lakes whose Bluewater is almost surreal. The ability of the country to have preserved nature has to be seen to be believed. Remarkably one sees no activities on the shores of the lakes. New Zealand is not all about beauty and nature. Sharing a common passion for cricket and driving on the same side of the road with highways which are still single-track makes it different from Europe and the USA which Indians will love. The wine tasting trip we did to Waiheke Island was as good as the Napa Valley of California.
The Glow Worm Caves in Waitomo were so unique that the silent sailing on rowboats still hasn't left our memory. Rotura has a great Redwood tree walk. This is something that should be done in the night and try reporting at the desk by 8:00 PM to avoid long ques. It is eerie as you walk in absolute darkness 100 feet above the ground on wooden slats and ropeways to support. The thermal walk amongst craters with crevices, pools, rings & all sorts of colour in its myriad forms is another unique geological phenomenon. A cloud cover that day allowed us to spend almost an hour of sheer joy. How can we forget the Lavender Ice cream right in the middle of a Lavender farm on our way to Mt Cook? A self-made meal in the courtyard of our air BnB Villa in Twizel under a full moon night was probably the high point of our trip.

Once in Queenstown, it is almost like you are back to civilization. Here, at last, is a town with pubs, cafes and a semblance of life after hours. Also, our first taste of authentic Indian food in many days. Just a word of caution though. The entire city is slopes and hillocks. Walking may not be as much fun as it is in Paris.
Generations after generations, strong, intelligent, determined women from across India, have made their mark around the world in varied fields from scientific research to the cricket pitch with their stellar achievements inspiring a million more. But, pick up a book about the achievements of women in India or even our history books in school and you will mostly draw a blank.

Anaya Deshmukh, an 8-year old, studying at Dhirubhai Ambani International School (Mumbai) is trying to improve inclusivity and representation in Indian women role-models. Her mission with ‘Daughters of India', a weekly series of short videos, is to highlight Indian women from the past and the present who have achieved great feats.

Women in India have been pioneers, innovators and trailblazers. Daughters of India like Lata Mangeshkar, Savitribai Phule, Chand Bibi, Indira Gandhi offer a kaleidoscopic view of how vast and far-reaching the contributions of Indian women have been in diverse fields.

Working with her mother, Shikha Dalmia, the storyteller in chief of Spin A Yarn India, she started researching about these incredible role-models. Daughters of India took came to life with episodes on Dr. Arunima Sinha, Savitribai Phule, Lata Mangeshkar and Rani Lakshmibai. Anaya’s focus is to spread the word about the Daughters of India and thereby ensure our future generations have role models that they can emulate.

Through the stories, made by children, for the children, Anaya touches upon various aspects ranging from discrimination, gender inequality, social norms, stereotypes and even violence. She focuses on the lessons each of these inspirational women has taught us like hard work, perseverance, discipline and courage.
Going ahead in the future, Anaya wants to create a platform where she along with other girls her age come together to present the stories of incredible women all around us. From our neighbours, teachers, friends, parents and grandparents. Because, it is through stories that we define our identity, express our history and culture, learn and engage in all aspects of society. Stories are not only the first medium for communication, education and social integration, but are also at the heart of each person’s unique identity, cultural history and memory. Anaya believes that with the voice and the stories she and her friends will narrate, they can spark the imagination of children just like them to break the stereotypes and forge a new path in the future.

Spin A Yarn India (www.spinayarnindia.com) is a partner of the United Nations Indigenous Language and the Bhasha Sangam programs and is on a mission to protect, preserve and promote indigenous language, culture and heritage in India and abroad. It is supporting this series as a part of Indias’ 75th Independence Day celebrations under the guidance of our Hon’ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji.
Sagittarius are the most friendly sign you will ever come across. They can find humour everywhere as they have a very peculiar way of seeing things and are optimists. Born as travellers, they are alive in their bones but they can get stuck in a situation where things may not work according to them because they have a very idealistic way on how they should be living. They get hard on themselves a little too much.

Sagittarius are most compatible with people who are easy-going and independent.

We have all grown up reading Linda Goodman and other books and magazines, reading our horoscopes and finding our perfect match, for friendship, love affair or even to do business with. If you always have questions on the secrets of compatibility, we are here to help.

In this section, we will share insights from our Tarot reader about zodiac compatibilities. Find out how you fare now.

**SAGITTARIUS**

*Sagittarius are the most friendly sign you will ever come across. They can find humour everywhere as they have a very peculiar way of seeing things and are optimists. Born as travellers, they are alive in their bones but they can get stuck in a situation where things may not work according to them because they have a very idealistic way on how they should be living. They get hard on themselves a little too much.

*Sagittarius are most compatible with people who are easy-going and independent.*
Sagittarius and Aries

Aries is an independent, self-motivated and artsy sign and this makes this couple shine. They take things lightly, fun-loving and always make each other laugh. They like to have friends around as both of them love to talk about different topics.

Sagittarius and Leo

Both the signs like to work, which makes them this busy couple who are passionate about how and where they are spending their time. They get along pretty well, understand and appreciate each other and have zero drama policy. Each of them is independent yet in love.

Sagittarius and Aquarius

This couple is a curious one where both are explorers and will never stop the other from exploring what’s beyond. They are adventurous and can talk comfortably about things which normally people don’t talk about in a relationship. There are the most amazing companions.

Kopal
Tarot and healer
Winter is one such season which brings some pleasurable experiences to your heart and mind but also brings uncomfortable dryness to the skin of the face, hands, and feet. With the temperature drop, the humidity levels drop and our skin becomes parched due to the dry air. Your skin can readily react to the atmospheric humidity and dampness which can lead to skin dryness and unnecessary pimple growth.

The reasons for skin dryness are several.
- Strong winter winds lower the level of skin's natural lipids, which are the most important part of the skin barrier and keep skin from drying out.
- Cold air has less moisture than warm or hot air which can immensely affect your skin by making it dry.
- A hot shower during winter can leave the skin dry, flaky, and itchy.
- Hot drinks like coffee contain caffeine that can dry the skin from the inside.
- Warm winter clothing can irritate and leave the skin itchy.
- Although you might not feel the heat of the sun during winter, yet the presence of ultraviolet radiation can damage your skin.

One of the natural remedies that can help in getting rid of dryness in winters is the usage of milk cream (malai).

Milk cream is one of the most well-known home remedies for dry skin. The presence of lactic acid in milk helps improve skin health. Lactic acid exfoliates the dry dead surface of the skin and accelerates collagen production. Milk is a great source of caprylic acid which helps maintain the proper pH balance of the skin. Milk cream is also an amazing moisturizer that is needed for dry skincare.
Using milk cream with lemon juice can protect your skin from dryness.

Ingredients:
Lemon juice – a few drops
Milk – 1 teaspoon
Milk cream – 2 teaspoons

Instructions
Add lemon juice and milk to the milk cream. Apply the paste on the face, hands and legs. Leave it for 15 minutes and thereafter wash off with lukewarm water.
Emerging from the green,
the blue water stream
seems like pearls on the sand.
When evening falls,
the soul, it soothes’
The pity sounds
of the waterfall,
is a rhythm played
by some invisible musicians
of the nature God.
The freshness of green herbs,
shrubs and leaves,
drawn as it brings fertility.
The showers of the waterfall,
the greenries with all,
adds as an unspoken feel to the moment;
as it could be felt, and kept in the eyes and heart
captured together,
as the soul is the best place to keep all the sweet
memories for all.

-Pranavi Gupta
LoveActually.Me is a social enterprise focusing on PWD (people with disabilities). The motto is to assist PWDs to be independent in social and professional spheres and bring behavioral change by representing PWDs from a different POV. We do online and offline activities to keep the community engaged. We are coming up with our signature activity iGNiTE 3.0, an online activity where the talented PWD artists put their best feet forward and thousands of people gather online to cheer and encourage them. We did two editions of iGNiTE offline and online. The iGNiTE 3.0 edition is bigger and better with international able performers sharing the screen with the PWD performers and fostering inclusivity. We have influencers like Parikrama Band, Dr. Tripti Gupta (Celebrity Nutritionist), Lavina Israni (Miss Universe India Mumbai’18). Our partners include Outreach Partners SP-TBI, Possibilities, HealthCare India Media Partners - Healthcare Magazine, Newzhook, Womenshine, Radio UdaanGift Partner - EzyMov, Atulyakala, Trend Printz. iGNiTE 3.0 is coming to you on 11th, 12th, and 13th December only on LoveActually.me instalive and it starts from 5 pm. The theme is retro and we are confident to make you nostalgic and entertained.
See you in the next edition