



WOMEN **SHiNE**



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CHIEF EDITOR'S LETTER

#SHINEON
APARNA MISHRA
Founder , Women Shine

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Dear Readers,

As we step into the vibrant month of October, there's a special energy in the air — of celebrations, new beginnings, and gratitude. Festivals like Navratri, Dussehra, and Diwali remind us of the power of light, courage, and resilience — the very essence of womanhood that WomenShine continues to celebrate every month.

This issue is all about **"Utsav - The Celebration of Women"** — their achievements, creativity, and unwavering spirit. From inspiring entrepreneurs making waves in their fields to changemakers creating impact in their communities, we bring stories that radiate positivity and purpose.

October is also a time to reflect on health and harmony, so we've curated insightful articles on wellness, mindful living, and festive fashion that lets you shine — inside and out. As WomenShine continues its journey of inspiring millions, we thank our readers, contributors, and partners for being part of this empowering community.

Let's embrace this festive season with joy, compassion, and confidence — because every woman deserves to sparkle, not just in October, but every single day.

Keep shining and celebrating YOU!

Aparna Mishra
Founder & Editor-in-Chief
WomenShine E-Magazine

Financial Empowerment through Employment: How Jobs Transform Women's Lives



“When you empower a woman financially, you don’t just change her life—you transform an entire community.”

In my two decades as an HR leader, I’ve witnessed how jobs for women go far beyond a monthly paycheck. They represent freedom—from patriarchal norms, from dependence, from invisibility. They bring dignity, decision-making power, and the courage to carve out a unique identity.

The Numbers Tell a Powerful Story

The data underscores this transformation. In India, the Worker Population Ratio for women aged 15+ jumped from 22.0% in 2017–18 to 40.3% in 2023–24. Similarly, the Labour Force Participation Rate for women surged from 23.3% to 41.7% in the same period. This is not just statistical progress—it is social change in motion, powered by government schemes, private sector initiatives, and women’s own determination.



From Employment to Empowerment

The last 25 years have seen women gain ground in education, healthcare, and employment. Yet, only 18% of senior leadership roles in corporate India are held by women today. This gap highlights why sustained employment is so crucial. In rural India, over 10 crore women are part of 91 lakh SHGs, running small businesses, accessing microfinance, and reshaping local economies. Women now own 20.5% of India's MSMEs, and that number is steadily rising. These aren't isolated successes—they mark a paradigm shift in how rural India views gender roles, wealth creation, and leadership.

“Every woman who enters the workforce brings with her not just skills, but the seeds of social transformation.”

Technology as a Game-Changer

One of the most exciting enablers of women's empowerment today is technology. With 83% of women owning a mobile phone, 60% having smartphones, and 66% using mobile internet, the digital revolution has reached even the most remote corners.

Digital adoption is directly impacting financial independence. A study by NPCI revealed that digital transactions by rural women have risen by 22% in just two years. Women now use UPI to run micro-enterprises, access credit, and trade on online marketplaces. Each digital transaction is not just economic—it's symbolic of confidence, inclusion, and independence.

The Ripple Effect of Financial Independence

Research by UN Women (2024) found that financially independent women are 33% more likely to educate their daughters and 25% more likely to invest in healthcare. These numbers show us what we, in HR and development, have always believed: when women earn, families thrive, and societies progress.

We've seen this play out at the grassroots. Villages with women leaders often prioritise essential services—clean water, sanitation, healthcare—because women understand their disproportionate impact on households.

The Road Ahead: Building Inclusive Economies

Of course, challenges remain—social stigma, limited mobility, and restricted access to opportunities. But we also know the levers to address these gaps: digital literacy, legal reform, and stronger public-private partnerships. As leaders, we have a responsibility to design not just jobs but ecosystems—where women can participate fully, lead confidently, and shape the future of economies.



Closing Thought

Employment for women is not merely transactional; it is transformational. Every job given to a woman multiplies into education for children, health for families, and growth for communities.

“Empowering women through employment is not just social justice—it is an economic strategy. And it is the surest way to build a sustainable, inclusive future.”

I have seen this firsthand, and I remain deeply committed to ensuring that women—from rural SHGs to urban startups—are not just included in the workforce, but celebrated as leaders of change.

- Written By : Aditi Mittal



FREEZING TIME: WHY INDIAN MILLENNIALS ARE TURNING TO EGG FREEZING FOR REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM

Egg freezing (oocyte cryopreservation) is an exciting option for women wanting to preserve their fertility. Over the past 10 years, egg freezing—with women reclaiming control of their reproductive clock—has skyrocketed worldwide.

According to research from the Royal College of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists (RCOG), the number of egg freezing cycles in the UK increased from 363 in 2010 to over 4,000 in 2020. In the US, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) estimates that the number of egg freezing cycles performed annually exceeds 10,000.

In India, we are also witnessing an increasing demand for egg freezing, with a predicted 15% CAGR growth rate between 2020 and 2025, driven by enhanced awareness and advances in medicine.

Why Millennials Are Driving the Trend

For Indian millennials, social or medical or social-medical reasons can drive egg-freezing options. Women may delay marriage and/or kids for career choices or money, or because a suitable partner is unavailable. Medical reasons may include cancer, endometriosis, or early ovarian failure. There are medical reasons for considering egg preservation, even though the majority of public interest seems to focus on social reasons.



The Limitations to Keep in Mind

Egg freezing is not without its limitations, despite its potential benefits. Egg freezing success rates vary; there is no guarantee that pregnancy will occur with frozen eggs once they thaw. Age matters. Egg quality and quantity decline with age, so the medically optimal time to freeze eggs is far less than optimal in life. Egg freezing costs can be staggering. Expenses in India are ₹1.5 lakhs to ₹3 lakhs per cycle. Any extra fees, particularly for long-term storage fees, should be anticipated and planned for accordingly. There may also be varying levels of emotional stress and/or anxiety or regret for women, as well as the potential for medical complications/side effects from the fertility drugs, procedures, and egg retrieval.



The Benefits of Egg Freezing :

- Preserves reproductive potential
- Provides flexibility in family planning
- Relieves social pressure to rush into marriage or motherhood



An Informed Choice for the Future

An increase in egg freezing can be seen in India, but experts are encouraging informed decision-making. Egg freezing procedure can give individuals some flexibility and peace of mind in their efforts to make decisions about their reproductive future; however, egg freezing is not a guarantee. Fertility specialists encourage patients to discuss with providers and consider the advantages and disadvantages before proceeding to egg freezing.

Egg freezing may not stop the biological clock, but for many Indian millennials, it is turning out to be a very effective option for making important decisions in their future.



**- Written By :
Dr. Kajal Singh**

Disha Maurya



Disha Maurya, a talented lifestyle influencer from Lucknow, has become a name synonymous with elegance, authenticity, and inspiration. With a growing community of over 19,000 followers on Instagram, she continues to capture hearts through her creative content, positive energy, and

relatable personality. Disha's journey as an influencer began with a simple passion for fashion and lifestyle, but her hard work, dedication, and eye for aesthetics have helped her carve a distinct space in the digital world.

Her Instagram feed is a perfect blend of style and simplicity — showcasing everything from chic outfit ideas and beauty tips to glimpses of her everyday life. What truly sets Disha apart is her ability to connect deeply with her audience. She doesn't just post pictures; she shares emotions, thoughts, and stories that resonate with people from all walks of life. Her genuine approach has made her not just an influencer, but a role model for many young individuals who look up to her for inspiration and motivation. Disha believes that confidence and self-love are the true foundations of beauty, and she constantly encourages her followers to embrace their individuality. Her content reflects her belief that real influence lies in positivity, kindness, and being true to oneself. Whether she's collaborating with brands or sharing personal insights, Disha ensures that her work always carries a touch of honesty and creativity.

As she continues to grow in her journey, Disha Maurya remains focused on inspiring others to dream big, work hard, and live beautifully. From the charming streets of Lucknow to the digital screens of thousands, her story is a reminder that passion, consistency, and authenticity can turn dreams into reality — and Disha is doing just that, one post at a time.

Festive Stress & Sleepless Nights? Here's How It Shows on Your Skin (and How to Fix It)

The festive season is one of my favorite times of the year, but I also see the toll it takes on my patients' skin every single time. Late nights, stress, and endless sweets, while all part of the celebrations, often show up as dullness, breakouts, puffiness, or those dreaded dark circles. When we don't rest enough, stress hormones like cortisol increase, making skin more oily, inflamed, and tired-looking. Add constant makeup and it becomes a recipe for an unhappy skin barrier.

My advice is simple: don't chase perfection, just add small habits. Drink plenty of water between those mithai breaks and never sleep with makeup on, no matter how late it gets. Even a basic cleanse and a nourishing moisturizer can go a long way. If you can, sneak in a vitamin C serum in the morning as it helps brighten skin that looks fatigued. For quick rescue, I personally love cooling eye patches or a hydrating sheet mask before stepping out.

And if you really want that festive glow, gentle clinic treatments can make a visible difference:

- **Hydrafacial** - a multi-step facial that cleanses, exfoliates, and hydrates the skin for an instant glow.
- **Laser Toning** - helps improve skin texture, reduces pigmentation, and refreshes dull skin.
- **IV Therapy** - delivers vitamins, antioxidants, and hydration directly into the bloodstream, helping combat fatigue, stress, and dullness from within.

The season is for you to enjoy- your skin just needs a little extra care to celebrate along with you.

**- Written By :
Dr. Rupika Singh**



Breast Cancer Awareness Beyond Pink Ribbons:

Encouraging Early Action and Collective Support



We all know someone who has faced breast cancer. Maybe it's a friend, a colleague, or a sister. Sometimes we see them struggling quietly, or we only hear about it later, and it hits us unexpectedly. The pink ribbons, the campaigns, the social media posts – they matter, yes. But awareness is more than a ribbon. Awareness is noticing. It's acting. It's caring. And it's really being there for each other when it matters most.

We all know someone who has faced breast cancer. Maybe it's a friend, a colleague, or a sister. Sometimes we see them struggling quietly, or we only hear about it later, and it hits us unexpectedly. The pink ribbons, the campaigns, the social media posts – they matter, yes. But awareness is more than a ribbon. Awareness is noticing. It's acting. It's caring. And it's really being there for each other when it matters most.

Early detection matters so much. Feeling for changes, going for screenings, asking questions – it can feel scary. Sometimes we put it off. **"I'll do it tomorrow,"** we tell ourselves. Or maybe next week, as life is busy and fear creeps in. But here's the thing: these steps aren't just for those who feel a lump or have a family history. Every woman benefits from regular checkups. It's about caring for ourselves before there's a problem. It's about taking control while we can.

And the mental side – we can't ignore that. Anxiety, sleepless nights, fear, the constant “**what ifs**”—it's real. Mental health is just as important as physical health. Talking to someone we trust, sharing how scared or overwhelmed we feel, and joining a support group – these things help. They don't remove fear, but they make it lighter. They remind us we are not alone.

Support doesn't have to be big. A phone call, running a small errand, sitting together quietly. These little gestures matter more than we sometimes realise. Families, friends, colleagues – our presence, our listening, our care; it gives strength. It reminds women they are not facing this journey alone.

There are barriers. Stigma. Lack of knowledge. Difficulty accessing healthcare. These things stop women from acting early. But talking openly, sharing what we know, and making screenings and checkups accessible for everyone, as every small action counts.



Breast cancer awareness is never just a month or a ribbon. It is noticing. It is acting. It is supportive. It is standing together. Regular checkups for all women, attention to our bodies, and caring support turn awareness into real empowerment.

Let's honour the women in our lives – not with symbols alone, but with care, attention, empathy, and action. Together, we can help them face breast cancer with courage, hope, and resilience.



**- Written By :
Dr. Malini Saba**

Blend, Glow, Repeat with Magical Blends! The Only Skincare Shortcut Your Festive Calendar Needs



Diwali is almost here, and while you're busy picking outfits and gifts, don't forget the most important accessory — glowing, healthy skin.

Enter Magical Blends, India's first patented personalised skincare system, designed to take the guesswork out of your routine. Their AM-to-PM Festive Regime is fuss-free, effective, and perfect for this season of endless soirées. Think glow-boosting actives, overnight repair heroes, brightening serums and a nourishing base that work as hard as you do.

Glow Boosting Serum (Niacinamide-powered)

Targets dullness and blemishes, strengthens the skin barrier, and gives you that fresh, lit-from-within glow.

Vitamin C Brightening Serum

Fades pigmentation and dark spots, boosts collagen production, and revives tired skin for that even-toned festive radiance.

Renewing Overnight Serum (Ceramides + Squalane)

Your bedtime saviour — hydrates, nourishes, and repairs while you sleep, keeping fine lines and fatigue away. Gives you a youthful feel to your skin so it never feels stretchy or itchy.

Deep Nourishing Cream

A rich, non-sticky moisturiser that hydrates, soothes, and softens with shea and cocoa butters. Clean, and comforting — your skin's daily dose of lasting nourishment.



The twist? Magical Blends' blend-it-yourself system. Just add 3–4 drops of your chosen serum(s) to the nourishing cream, mix, and apply. Custom care in under a minute — no 10-step rituals, just results.

Good to know: Dermat-tested | Vegan & Plant-based actives | No sulphates, mineral oil, or artificial fragrance or colour | Cruelty-free

Price: From ₹300 onwards.

Shop here: magicalblends.in

This festive season, glow isn't optional — it's personal.

FRAGRANCES THAT OUTLAST THE FESTIVITIES — FONZIE FOLKSY THIS DIWALI

This festive season, go for the unexpected.

Fonzie Folksy perfumes aren't just gifts, they are memories you will always remember - a gift that lingers long after the festive moments! Create lasting impressions with one or all four of their exquisitely crafted unisex perfumes, each defined by its own personality and sillage!



The Gallerie – A floral-meets-citrus burst settling into a woody base, perfect for those who love an effortless, elegant aura.

O'live It – A sweet floral concoction that's playful, uplifting, and pure joie de vivre.

Evenfall – A bold, timeless fragrance with a touch of Oud, ideal for chilly festive evenings.

Runway Bows – A refined floral trio with a woody twist, bringing modern sophistication to a classic scent.

Crafted with premium ingredients, these perfumes embody freshness, style, and longevity — making them a **perfectly luxe Diwali gift for him, her, or even yourself.**

Price: ₹4,299 onwards

Shop here: fonziefolksy.com

Make this festive season unforgettable with Fonzie Folksy — one spritz at a time.

How Earrings Define Your Everyday Style

Accessories add that final touch to any outfit, helping complete the look, and among them, a pair of earrings has especially played a crucial role. Whether you choose to experiment with layers or a simple look, a good pair of earrings has the power to instantly upgrade your outfit.

When it comes to regular wear, a pair of right studs holds a significant place. They are versatile, understated, and classic. A pair of simple and classy stud earrings can work brilliantly with casual jeans and a basic t-shirt, while also complementing the evening attire or a formal dress. Their minimal design ensures that they add just the right amount of drama to any look, which can never overpower the outfit but rather contributes to enhancing the look.



Comfort is one of the primary reasons studs are adored across generations. They are not heavy and comfortable to carry, whether you are in the office, doing errands, or going out for a social event; they are perfect for long hours. In spite of their firm and minimal finish, studs never look dull. From shiny gems and slender metallic finishes to classic pearls, there's something for all occasions.

Earrings bring immense possibilities to be styled and adjusted according to one's own capacity, which makes stud earrings even more desirable. For those who like understated elegance and simplicity, one pair of studs can work like magic. For those with multiple piercings, however, different sizes, textures, and finishes can be layered to develop a special and personalized ear stack. This timelessness and flexibility make them not only another item to put on, but also create an expression of personal style.

Stud earrings remind us that style must be effective, yet not loud. A tiny, subtle piece can make a bigger impact than a showy accessory, depending on how it's been worn. They put sophistication and practicality together, opening up access to you to express yourself in the most elegant and simple manner. In the end, style isn't about piling on more pieces of accessories. It's about choosing the ones that quietly speak for you. A pair of well-made studs does exactly that: they slip into any moment, carry comfort through the day, and still leave a little sparkle that feels entirely your own.

**- Written By :
Shraddha Singh**



Why a 365 days-haircare ritual is essential to fix root problems



Would you work out for just one month a year and expect to stay fit? Of course not. Hair care works the same way. If you only pay attention to your hair during **“problem seasons”** — summer greasiness, winter dryness, monsoon frizz — you’re only addressing the surface.

The real issues stay hidden, quietly creating damage until another problem shows up in a different form. We often chase quick fixes — a smoothing cream, an anti-frizz spray, or even salon treatments like hair botox. While they deliver instant results, they’re temporary. Once the effect fades, your hair’s underlying weaknesses are still there.

The only way to truly tackle these root problems is to build a regular, round-the-year healthy hair ritual — one that works in every season, for every hair type, and addresses the real needs of your hair from scalp to tip.

A Simple 4-Step Healthy Hair Ritual - That Works

• **Cleanse**

Healthy hair starts with a clean scalp. A scalp clogged with oil, dirt, or product buildup becomes a breeding ground for bacteria and flakes. It also stops treatments from working properly. Using a shampoo with a tri-surfactant formula and argan oil ensures a deep yet gentle cleanse, so your hair is fresh, balanced, and ready to absorb all the goodness from the next steps.





- **Nourish**

Your hair loses moisture daily — from washing, styling, sun, and pollution. A rich mask with a Deep Conditioning Concentrate, argan oil, and repair agents replenishes hydration, smooths frizz, and keeps strands flexible. This step restores the hair's softness and prevents it from snapping under stress.



- **Protect**

This is the unsung hero of hair care — often skipped, yet possibly the most important step. A leave-in conditioner with panthenol and argan oil creates a shield against UV rays, pollution, and humidity, while locking in the moisture you've just added. It works silently all day to keep your hair from losing its strength and shine.



- **Repair**

Even with the best care, small amounts of damage happen daily. A serum with hydrolyzed keratin and argan oil repairs from within, strengthening weak spots in the hair fibre, improving elasticity, and restoring visible shine over time.

Like fitness and nutrition for your body, this ritual works best when it's regular. Over weeks and months, you'll notice fewer bad hair days, less breakage, and hair that feels stronger, smoother, and healthier through all seasons.



**- Written By :
Ritu Vijayvergiya**

Pink October & Beyond: Celebrating Women's Health in Every Dimension



SEEING BEYOND A MONTH

Every October, pink ribbons are showcased, campaigns are commenced, and women's health circulates into the limelight. However, health is not a seasonal affair -it is a practice, a continued discourse well beyond awareness months. Pink October serves as a sign, a nudge, to acknowledge, reflect, and take action. Nonetheless, much of the work happens every day, in homes, offices, and communities, usually in places that are erased or forgotten.

For most women, health is the **"background task"** of life. Career, personal ambition, caregiving, and the day-to-day stresses of living life come first; mounting silently and over time, stress rises. Burnout is typically imperceptible, but it can gradually show up as exhaustion, anxiety, and a gradual decline in self-esteem. Many women in demanding professions, particularly those navigating corporate, entrepreneurial, or communications roles, experience invisible friction due to the pressure of constant deadlines, emotional labor, and societal expectations. It's crucial to learn how to set boundaries, express needs, and conserve energy.

TOOLS AND PRACTICES THAT EMPOWER

Digital access and flexible practices have opened new pathways for women to take control of their wellness. Teleconsultations, virtual mental health support, mindfulness apps, and online workshops represent access to options that were barely crawled-out seeds ten years ago. However, technology is not the only answer. It is the habits, frameworks, and purposeful implementation of those practices that turn awareness into action. These small interruptions - pausing for two minutes before replying, daily reflections of gratitude, or a ten-minute **"voice warm-up"** before entering a high-stakes conversation - become resilience and clarity tools.

The power of communication extends far beyond professional settings. Communicating discomfort, setting boundaries, and seeking assistance aren't faults - they are representations of leadership ability. Women who build that capacity see a cascading effect of teams responding more positively, families feeling honored, and self-identified decreases in stress. Public speaking, regardless of the space (mentorship programs, workshops, community centers, etc.), becomes an opportunity for women to engage in a form of therapy. The act of speaking truth, discussing life experiences, and even simply practicing presence allows women to assert confidence, manage anxiety, and regain a sense of agency.



Open dialogues, mentorship programs, and support networks have been normalizing the difficulties that women frequently conceal. Women thrive in settings that encourage openness and where mutual education and trust are the norm. Whether online or in person, these spaces enable women to shift awareness into continuous behaviors, such as putting mental health first, striking a balance between physical activity, or demanding checkups.

TOOLS AND PRACTICES THAT EMPOWER

We cannot leave out digital wellness here. When technology goes unmanaged, constant notifications, comparison traps, and mindless scrolling can undermine trust in oneself. Engaging with intention -taking charge of positive, empowering content, using social media with boundaries, and using online platforms for engagement and learning -changes technology from a stressor to a supportive tool.



Pink October invites us to continue the conversation, not conclude it. It highlights the importance of communicating with our bodies, honoring our boundaries, and practicing wellness on a daily basis. Women who possess these qualities are better able to lead, start their own businesses, and take care of their families. Since they are fundamental, they shouldn't be optional.

The impact of these choices is tangible. Women who choose to prioritize daily wellness, communicate deliberately, and create networks of support are creating influence that is much larger than themselves. In many ways, teams, families, and communities benefit. Workplaces become healthier, conversations become deeper and more real, and societal norms begin to shift. Empowered women advocate the healthy tension of ambition and self-care (self-care is not a luxury - it is leadership).

WELLNESS EVERY DAY

Pink October returns, but the real story takes place in the inklings between meetings, moments when women choose - to rest, to talk, to be. Health is not a checklist, but a way of being in relation, as there are moments when the body, the mind, and the heart are honored. There is courage in saying (or not saying) no, in carrying graciously, in moving with gentle insistence to be seen. When women attend to these layers of themselves, day in and day out, it is not simply a matter of survival - it is a revolution under the radar. And when women care for these layers, subtly and persistently, the world seems to lighten, becoming a little bit more whole.

**- Written By :
Ayushi Arora Gulyani**



WELLNESS IN THE HIMALAYAS

(Rendezvous with Chandan Singh Koranga, Founder of Koranga's Wood Villas)

The North Indian state of Uttarakhand, popularly referred to as **"Devbhumi"** or the abode of Gods is at the forefront, positioning itself as **"New India's"** ultimate Wellness Tourism hotspot.

Given the stunning Himalayan vistas that encircle the state and the picturesque setting, the Government of Uttarakhand is focussed in developing the concept of **"Homestay"** as well as **"Chalets/Log Huts"** in the higher reaches of the Himalayas – Almora, Ranikhet and beyond. This initiative in the High Himalayan Zone is having a positive rub-off effect or **"Multiplier Effect"** on the villages and Himalayan hamlets of Uttarakhand - curbing the instinct of migration to urban areas and generating enough revenues for villagers who have opted to transform their homes into homestays.

Below are the excerpts of a freewheeling conversation with a native Kumaoni- Chandan Singh Koranga, Founder of Koranga's Wood Villas, who is pioneering the concept of Responsible Tourism in Kumaon Himalayas-

What prompted you to undertake this daunting task of building Wood Villas in Kumaon Himalayas?

The concept of building Villas with wood as the primary material is the new buzz. Although, wooden villas are commonplace in US, Canada and most of Europe, it hasn't been as popular in India, due largely to the climatic conditions (tropical), prohibitive forestry laws and outdated sawmills; in spite of being blessed with century's old rich legacy of wooden craftsmanship that were patronised by the Maharajas of yore.

Any new venture that is aimed at bringing about a paradigm change in perceptions, particularly on the hospitality landscape, has its share of hindrances and mental blockages. It all depends on how focussed one is towards realizing the ultimate goal.

Thanks to the state government's unwavering support and friendly disposition towards Wood Villa entrepreneurs, Uttarakhand's hilltops are on the verge of showcasing the beauty of the Himalayas in all its grandeur. I have witnessed firsthand the mass migration of Kumaoni youths migrating to metropolitan cities for livelihood and wanted to arrest this disgusting trend through my Wood Villas initiative, the cornerstone of which is employing local Kumaoni youths and women folks with the project.

What is the USP that draws visitors to Kumaon Himalayas and in what ways do you craft your itineraries?

Since ancient times the majestic Kumaon Himalayas in the north Indian state of Uttarakhand has been a preferred place for Yoga, meditation and other spiritual austerities. Justifiably, the Kumaon Himalaya is popularly referred to as the "**Devbhumi**" or the abode of Gods! Being a Yoga practitioner myself and my passion for Slow & Immersive Travel, I craft itineraries that offer visitors a chance to explore the grandeur of Kumaon Himalayas through tailor-made itineraries with a fusion of soft treks and cultural immersion to visitors from abroad.

One must bear in mind that Kumaon isn't all about high octane mountaineering; rather, it is about tranquillity and peace. It is one region of India, where you can leave your so-called civilization behind (at least for a week or so) and embrace the meditative Himalayas, breathe the same air that the ancient Rishis of yore breathed and go back home, a thoroughly transformed person!



The concept of “Regenerative Tourism” is one of the reasons why visitors prefer Kumaon Himalayas. Can you offer your insights on this issue?

Consider for instance the Kasar Devi Temple. If you are in search of true bliss, this is the place to be in. Just 9 Kms. away from Almora, the Himalayan panorama surrounding Kasar Devi is breathtaking. And, when it comes to soul enrichment, the entire Kasar Devi hill is actually a massive geomagnetic radiation field, courtesy, the Van Allen Belt. There are only two other such Van Allen Belts - Machu Picchu in Peru and Stonehenge in England.



Kasar Devi's potent energy fields and the picturesque Himalayan surroundings offer today's jaded traveller a spiritual nectar that is truly indescribable. Apart from being a much preferred place for Sadhana & Meditation since ancient times, great men and women of the stature of Swami Vivekananda, Noble Laureate Rabindranath Tagore, Bob Dylan, Uma Thurman, George Harrison, Cat Stevens,

Allen Ginsburg, Steve Jobs to name just a few have been past visitors to Kasar Devi. This place oozes with spiritual energy and so strong is the influence that even people with psychiatric disorders find relief by spending some quality time here.

The Himalayas do have an influence on you in terms of peace, well being and mindfulness. However, most visitors tend to overlook the cultural side of the Himalayas in their desire to chase those imposing snow clad peaks and jaw dropping mountain panorama. What are your views on this issue?

The hallmark of my itineraries are **“Village Excursions”**, offering visitors a once-in-a-lifetime's opportunity to indulge in concepts like Slow Living & Mindfulness. Visitors get a chance to appreciate the simple delights of everyday life in Kumaon as they go about caring for livestock, prepare firewood and still take great pride in characters from the Hindu epics – Ramayana and the Mahabharata.

Visitors should try to coincide their visit to Kumaon with any Kumaoni mountain festivals, for a chance to partake in the rich cultural fiesta. Their traditional dance forms like Jhora Chanchari, Hukriya Baul and Chholiya have captivated the outside world for centuries together.

You recently introduced “Himalayan Bazaar Walks” in and around the hill station of Almora. What type of experience is there for today’s discerning visitors?

The Himalayas are a class apart when it comes to walking tours; more so, if these walks are “**Bazaar**” or Market-centric, as they are a beehive of activity through trade and commerce, thereby connecting people and cultures. It is through such connections that visitors and locals alike get to know each other’s diversity. The bazaars of Almora are bustling nerve centres and each bazaar has its own charismatic charm. Almora Bazaar Walks have touched the heart of countless discerning visitors, many of them repeat visitors, who were bewildered by the rich assortments of Almora’s bazaars.

Needless to say, Almora Bazaar Walks are 100% private, bespoke and guided walking tours that take you along some of Kumaon’s most intriguing markets. Consider, for instance, the Khazanchi Mohallah & Johari Walk. In the days of yore, Almora used to be the bastion of royalty where trading in gold, silver and jewellery was commonplace. You can still find an exclusive settlement of goldsmiths at the Johari market where some of Kumaon’s best jewellers have their outlets selling traditional Kumaoni jewelleries like nose rings, necklaces



and a wide variety of bangles. Gold and jewellery aside, the Johari market is renowned for the world famous Pashmina and Angora wools, stitched to perfection by highly skilled tailors.

Wrapping Up

People from across the world come to the Himalayas in search of peace and solitude. Practising yoga and meditation in the Himalayas can be a very purifying experience. The Kumaon Himalayas, which has been the hub of Yoga & Meditation since ancient times, has emerged as contemporary India’s most idyllic region for Yoga and Mindfulness. With oxygen concentration being high and with the easy availability of Carbon Neutral sites, the Kumaon Himalayas offer an irresistible invitation to indulge in a rejuvenating Body-Mind-Soul purification journey.

For tailor-made Treks & Tours of Kumaon Himalayas, please feel free to get in touch with –
Chandan Singh Koranga
Wood Villas, Dhamas,
Uttarakhand, India.



**- Written By :
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बुढ़ापा

कल रात मैं जब सोई थी
मीठे सपनों में खोई थी
तभी अचानक ऐसा लगा कि
किसी ने दरवाजे पर थपकी दी है
मैंने सपने में ही देखा
कि एक बूढ़ा दरवाजे पर खड़ा था
जिसके बाल सन्न से सफेद थे
कंधे झुके और काया थी कृषकाय
हाथों में सहारे के लिये लाठी थी
मैंने चिंतित स्वर में पूछा
बाबा , सुबह सुबह कैसे आये ,
वह जोर जोर से हँस कर बोला
मैं बुढ़ापा हूँ ,
तुमको लेने आया हूँ
वह अंदर आने को खड़ा था
अपनी जिद्द पर अड़ा था
मैंने कहा , नहीं भाई अभी नहीं
अभी तो मेरी उमर ही क्या है
वह फिर से हँस पड़ा था ,
'जबर्दस्ती की जिद्द मत करो
मुझे तो रोकना नामुमकिन है '
मैं मुस्करा कर बोली , 'मान भी जाओ



- पद्मा अग्रवाल

अब तो मुझे थोड़ी सी अक्ल आई है '
"अभी तक तो मैं दूसरों के लिये ही जी रही थी
अब तो कुछ दिन अपने लिये भी जीना चाहती हूँ
कुछ कविता कहानी लिखना चाहती हूँ
अपनी सखी सहेलियों के लिये
के साथ हँसना खिलखिलाना चाहती हूँ "
बुढ़ापा पोपले मुँह से हँस कर बोला ,
"अगर ऐसा चाहती हो
तो ऐसा ही होगा , तुम चिंता मत करो"
तुम्हारी उम्र तो बढ़ती जायेगी
लेकिन बुढ़ापा नहीं आयेगा
तुम लिखती पढ़ती रहना
सहेलियों के संग हँसती खिलखिलाती रहना
बुढ़ापा तुमको छू भी ना पायेगा "

खिलखिलाती हँसी

थोड़ी सी खिलखिलाती हँसी
 बहुत दिनों के बाद पकड़ में आई हो
 उसको देखते ही, मैंने पूछा ...
 कहाँ रहती हो आजकल ...
 ज्यादा मिलती नहीं
 यहीं तो हूँ ... जवाब मिला ..
 मैं बोली , बहुत भाव खाती हो ...
 खिलखिलाती हँसी...
 कुछ सीखो अपनी बहन से ...
 हर दूसरे दिन चली आती है
 हमसे मिलने परेशानी
 आती तो मैं भी हूँ ...
 पर आप सब ध्यान नहीं देती.....
 अच्छा कहाँ थीं तुम ... जब पड़ोसी
 ने नई गाड़ी ली
 और तब कहाँ थीं
 जब रिश्तेदार ने बहुत
 बड़ा सा घर बनाया था
 शिकायत होठों पर थी कि
 उसने टोक दिया बीच में
 मैं रहती हूँ
 कभी बच्चे की किलकारियों में
 कभी रास्ते में मिल जाती हूँ
 एक पुरानी सखी के रूप में
 कभी
 एक अच्छी सी कहानी में फिल्म में ...
 कभी किसी खोई हुई चीज के मिल जाने पर
 घर वालों के प्यार भरी परवाह में
 कभी नई साड़ी में ... तो कभी खुद सजने में
 कभीकिचन में कुछ स्पेशल बनाने में ...
 कभी मानसून की पहली बारिश में
 कभी कोई गीत सुनने पर
 दरअसल थोड़ा थोड़ा बाँट देती हूँ
 खुद को
 छोटे - छोटे पलों में



उनके एहसासों में ...
 लगता है चश्मे का नंबर....
 बढ़ गया है आपका ...
 सिर्फ बड़ी बड़ी चीजों में ...
 ही दूढ़ते हो मुझे
 अब तो पता मालूम हो गया
 ना मेरा
 दूढ़ लेना आसानी से
 दिन भर की छोटी - छोटी बातों में



- पद्मा अग्रवाल

पति पत्नी के रिश्ते में मजबूती लाने के लिये प्रयास आवश्यक हैं



शादी सात जन्मों का बंधन है ... जोड़ियाँ ऊपर से बन कर आती हैं ...वर्तमान समय में ये कहावतें अर्थहीन होती जा रही हैं क्योंकि दिन प्रति दिन तलाक और ब्रेक अप की खबरें हमारे आस पास सुनाई पड़ती रहती हैं . रिश्तों में कड़वाहट या दूरियाँ आते ही आपस में गलतफहमियाँ जड़ जमाने लगती हैं और आपसी संवाद कम होने लगता है तो स्थिति बिगड़ते देर नहीं लगती है .

किसी भी रिश्ते में मजबूती लाने के लिये दोनों तरफ का प्रयास जरूरी होता है . जिंदगी भर का साथ निभाने का वादा करने के बावजूद रोजमर्रा के झगड़े , मनमुटाव धीरे धीरे रिश्ते को कमजोर कर देते हैं . कई बार छोटी छोटी बातें बड़ी बन जाती हैं और रिश्ता टूटने की कगार पर आ जाता है .

सबसे आवश्यक बात है कि एक दूसरे पर भरोसा और विश्वास रखें. एक दूसरे के साथ दोस्ती वाला व्यवहार. बनाने का प्रयास करें. पति या पत्नी दोनों आपस में कंफर्टेबिल अनुभव करें . पत्नी को भी स्पेस मिले जिससे वह अपनी बात कहने में हिचके नहीं.. नीला के बॉस उसे अक्सर देर शाम तक रोकते फिर वह अपनी गाड़ी में उसे ड्रॉप करने के लिये कहते . उसे बॉस की यह बात नागवार लगती ,

उसने पति रवीश से कहा तो उन्होंने कहा, यदि तुम्हें ठीक नहीं लगता तो साफ साफ मना कर दो . वैसे तुम मुझे रिंग कर देना , मैं पिक करने आ जाया करूँगा . तुम्हारे बॉस समझदार होंगे तो तुरंत समझ जायेंगे . यदि नीला पति से इस बात को छिपाने का प्रयास करती तो संभव था कि पति रवीश के मन में शक का बीज पनप कर रिश्तों में दूरियाँ पैदा कर देता .

पति पत्नी के खुशहाल रिश्ते में आपस में सम्मान की भावना रखना जरूरी होता है . एक दूसरे के प्रति इज्जत का भाव रहने से आपसी मनमुटाव अपने आप समय से दूर हो जाता है .

कई बार देखा जाता है कि पति पत्नी एक दूसरे की समस्या सुनना समझना ही नहीं चाहते . ऋषि के ऑफिस में छटनी चल रही थी ,उसके मन में हर समय नौकरी जाने का खौफ छाया हुआ था . इधर पत्नी अंजली अपनी शॉपिंग और पॉर्लर , किटी की दुनिया में मस्त थीं . ऋषि ने कई बार अपनी समस्या इशारों इशारों में बताई लेकिन उन्हें इन बातों से कोई मतलब ही नहीं था ... जब नौकरी चली गई तो अंजली ने रोना धोना और झगड़ा शुरू कर दिया . ऐसी स्थिति में रिश्ते में दरार आना स्वाभाविक ही है . इसलिये ये जरूरी है कि एक दूसरे की शारीरिक , आर्थिक या मानसिक परेशानी को सुनो समझो और महसूस करके उसके समाधान का प्रयास करें तभी रिश्ते बने रह सकते हैं .

पति पत्नी दोनों ही एक दूसरे की कमियों को देखने के बजाय उनकी कोशिशों पर गौर कीजिये . हर समय दोष देने की बजाय उसे समझने का प्रयास कीजिये.

आपके सकारात्मक कदम रिश्तों को बेहतर और और अच्छे पार्टनर बन कर रिश्तों में निखार ला देंगे . आशा निराशा , हार जीत तो जीवन की दिनचर्या का आवश्यक हिस्सा है . उसके लिये किसी व्यक्ति विशेष को दोष देना समझदारी नहीं है . रिलेशनशिप कोच इला जैन कहती हैं कि आपस में ब्लेमगेम खेलने से रिश्ते खराब होंगे . इसलिये साथी के प्रयास को सराहें , संभव है कि वह अगले प्रयास में सफल हो जाये . उसे बेहतर करने के लिये आप प्रेरित करें .

हम सभी अपने बचपन से सुनते आये हैं कि पति बाहर के काम करते हैं और पत्नी घर के अंदर का.. परंतु आज के समय में सब सीमायें टूट चुकी हैं .



आजकल पति पत्नी दोनों ही बाहर काम करते हैं तो पति का कर्तव्य बनता है कि पत्नी के घरेलू कामों में मदद करे . जब पति पत्नी साथ में मिल कर काम करते हैं तो दोनों के संबंध में प्रगाढ़ता आती है . निष्ठा और विशेष दोनों ही आईटी कंपनी में कार्यरत हैं . विशेष अक्सर पत्नी से पहले आ जाते हैं और निष्ठा जब घर आती है तो पति के हाथ की चाय पीकर उसकी थकावट छुमंतर हो जाती है और फिर दोनों मिल कर डिनर बनाते हैं .

इला जैन कहती हैं कि अब वह समय नहीं है कि आप यह कह कर पत्ला झाड़ लें कि यह मेरा काम नहीं है .. जब पत्नी घर चलाने में सहयोग कर रही है तो आपसी तालमेल के साथ एक दूसरे का हाथ बँटा कर रिश्ते में मजबूती ला सकते हैं . कई बार हम ऐसे शख्स के साथ रिश्ते में होते हैं जिसकी नजर केवल साथी की कमियों पर ही लगी रहती है और वह मौके बेमौके आपकी कमियों पर नजर टिकाये रखता हो और कमेंट करता रहता हो ,तो रिश्ता निभाना मुश्किल हो जाता है . यदि आपके साथी में कोई कमी या व्यवहार में खामी है तो आपको यदि उससे परेशानी है तो सही मौके पर सही तरीके से उसे उसकी कमी से अवगत करायें , यह भी ध्यान रखें कि आपके अंदर भी कई कमियाँ होंगी जिसे आपका साथी नजरअंदाज करके आपके साथ निभा रहा है इसलिये आप भी उसकी कमियों को नजरअंदाज करने की आदत डालिये . रश्मि को पढ़ने लिखने का शौक था, उसके कमरे में पेपर और मैग्जिन बिखरी रहतीं ... पति अखिल जब ऑफिस से आते तो चारों तरफ बिखरी किताबें देख कर उनका मूड ऑफ हो जाता , वह बहुत बार रश्मि को किताबें समेट कर रखने को कहते लेकिन आदत से लाचार वह एक कान से सुनती दूसरे से निकाल देती .. उसकी इस आदत के कारण कई बार आपस में कहासुनी भी हो जाती थी . आखिर में अखिल ने आते ही सबसे पहले बिखरी किताबों को समेट कर रखना शुरू कर दिया तो रश्मि ने पति के आने से पहले ही समेट कर रखना शुरू कर दिया . इस तरह से धैर्य से रिश्तों में मजबूती लाई जा सकती है .



यदि आपका साथी ओवर वेट हो रहा है तो आप उसके साथ वॉक पर जाना शुरू करें या एक्सपर्ट डायटीशियन की सलाह से आप स्वयं भी साथी के साथ अपने खाने पर भी कंट्रोल करें . आप अपने फैसले अपने साथी पर मत थोपें , संभव है कि वह आपकी बात आपके दबाव में मान लेता हो परंतु रिश्तों में यह कड़वाहट पैदा कर सकता है . आपको अपने साथी की भावनाओं का भी ख्याल रखना होगा . अपने साथी के सपनों को पूरा करने में सहयोग करें . मीना को लेखन का शौक था ..

वह कहानी और लेख लिखतीं पति मिहिर उसको कोरियर करते , उनके लिये कॉपी पेन आदि सबका ख्याल रखते , आज मीना जी पति के सहयोग के कारण प्रतिष्ठित लेखिका बन कर लेखन जगत में अपना विशिष्ट स्थान रखती हैं.

मनोरोग विशेषज्ञ उन्नति कुमार का कहना है कि जब हम पार्टनर चुनते हैं , उस समय तो हम केवल दो ही लोग हुआ करते हैं परंतु सच्चाई यह है कि रिश्ते निभाने में ससुराल , दोनों के दोस्त और कैरियर जैसे अनेक पहलू होते हैं , जिन्हें अक्सर नजरअंदाज किया जाता है . यदि इन सबके साथ सामंजस्य नहीं बैठ रहा तो आपसी रिश्ते में खुशी नहीं मिल सकती . इसलिये सिर्फ अपने बारे में ही न सोचे वरन् अपने साथी की प्राथमिकताओं को भी इज्जत दें .

हर व्यक्ति के मन में अपने साथी के लिये अनेक सपने और ख्वाहिशें होती हैं कि वह ऐसा हो ... वैसा हो ... वह उसकी सारी अकांक्षाओं पर खरा उतरे ... और जब वह आपकी आशाओं तो पूरा नहीं कर पाता तो आप उसको बदलने की कोशिश न करना शुरू कर दें वरन् वह जैसा है वैसा ही उसे स्वीकार करें . आपको यह ध्यान रखना जरूरी है कि आप उसकी खुशियों का ख्याल रखें . पति या पत्नी कितना सहज है , दूसरों के सामने उसके मान और इज्जत का ध्यान रखना जरूरी है . शादी शुदा रिश्तों में कई बार पति पत्नी एक दूसरे की फैमिली को ज्यादा पसंद नहीं करते लेकिन आपसी रिश्तों को ठीक रखने के लिये परिवार के लोगों के साथ संबंध बना कर रखना जरूरी हो जाता है .

शादी शुदा कपल्स ज्यादा तर आपसी रिश्तों इमोथशन्स जाहिर करना बंद कर देते हैं और मशीनी सी जिंदगी जीने लगते हैं तो रिश्तों में बासीपन आ जाता है इसलिये कभी डिनर तो कभी कोई ट्रिप जरूर प्लान करते रहना चाहिये ताकि आपसी रिश्तों में ऊष्णता बनी रहे

जब कभी आपस में बहस हो जाये तो ध्यान रखें एक दूसरे को अपशब्द या दिल दुखाने वाली बात न कहें अपनी भाषा पर कंट्रोल रखें . कहावत है कि तलवार का जख्म भर जाता है लेकिन जुबान से निकले शब्दों का घाव कभी नहीं भरता .

यदि आपकी गलती है तो माफी मांगने में संकोच न करें .जब क्रोध आ रहा है , कोशिश करें कि मन शांत हो जाने के बाद ही बात चीत करके मामले को सुलझायें .

यदि इन प्रयासों से भी सामंजस्य नहीं हो पाता तो ऐसा रिश्ता खुशी नहीं दे सकता , इसलिये केवल अपने बारे में ही न सोचें वरन् अपने साथी की प्राथमिकताओं को भी इज्जत दें . दूसरों के सामने उसके मान इज्जत का ध्यान रखना होगा .अच्छा रिश्ता तभी हो सकता है जब निराशा या असफलता के पलों में एक दूसरे के आत्मविश्वास और खुद पर भरोसा बढ़ाने में सहयोग करे .



- पद्मा अग्रवाल

WOMEN **SHiNE**

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