

Daffodils Toastmasters

More than a Club!

# Cupcakes

*Assorted Speeches*



Affiliated to Toastmasters International  
NEWSLETTER | OCTOBER 2014 Edition



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## Editor's Note | *by TM Anish D'Souza*

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“Cupcakes are Sweet, and even Sweeter when Shared.”  
— Marie Williams Johnstone

With this edition of the Newsletter we aim to do just that – share and also, learn.

How? Let me illustrate.

We all love Cupcakes. But, I can safely bet that there is no two year old in this city who loves Cupcakes as much as my little niece does. With a red velvet sweater, white scarf and a red bobble cap she even looks like a cute li'l walking talking Red Velvet Cupcake.

Give her a box of assorted cupcakes, and watch while a group of assorted friends she makes. With every bit shared, she learns something

new. With every cupcake shared, she learnt not only to throw a ball and scribble on a wall, but also to jump like a frog and sound like a dog (and of course to scream Ice-cream!). Most importantly, she made me realize that with sweetness of sharing comes limitless learning.

Even Toastmasters advocates sharing and learning; it is in fact, built upon it. At every Club meeting, people share through and learn from speeches. Personally, with my experience at Toastmasters, I observed that you learn not only from the speeches that you deliver, but also from the speeches delivered by your peers.

This newsletter is an effort to create a similar influence of your peers to encourage you to deliver more speeches by sharing and learning.

**This edition of our Newsletter is like a magical box of creamy Cupcakes.** It holds an assortment of speeches that are crispy on the outside and fluffy on the inside, memories that appealing and comforting, events that are refreshing and relishing, pictures that are sweet and sugar-free; and yes, it is homemade. The box also contains a recipe to bake your own cupcake - an article that helps you to prepare speeches, written by a great connoisseur of Toastmasters –Dr. Ram.

Like the delightful scent of fresh Cupcakes that makes you pick one and eat, I hope you pick this Newsletter to not only enjoy, but also to help you deliver some amazing speeches.

Well, go ahead. Indulge!



# President's Address | *by TM Madhu Sudan V*

## **T'S MORE THAN JUST A CLUB...!**

It is a great honor and pleasure to serve as President of this distinguished Daffodils Toastmasters Club for the term July 2014 to December 2014. Thank you all for supporting me and giving me the wonderful opportunity to take on this role in our prestigious club.

They say "First you crawl, then you walk and finally you are all set to run the marathon". Likewise, we at Daffodils Toastmasters Club have grown from strength to strength every single year. With every term we have set and achieved bigger goals as members of the club.

This term, we have chosen to give our members and the club ample opportunity to share their thoughts that are woven around the theme: **"Imagine. Believe. Achieve."** The committee strives to give its best, and a little more every single meeting. We make sure that there's fun, laughter, warmth, camaraderie and learning in every meeting.

After speaking with many of the past club presidents, I learnt from more than one that the experience of being the President makes you a better person than the one you used to be. I would say this is true not only for a President but to everyone who spends 6 months committed towards bringing a positive change and growth in Communication and Leadership skills. From what I've seen in my three years with this club, is everybody who regularly attends and takes on roles at meetings has an amazing and noticeable transformation for the better.



My fellow club members, it is our task to keep the flag of commitment, excitement and consistency of the club flying high. I encourage you all to take a few steps ahead and strive to do your best in all that you do. For in the end it is not just you, but an entire Toastmasters Club that benefits.



The only thing that's constant is change. Daffodils Toastmasters is a catalyst for making sure that the inevitable change leads towards growth and positive transformation. I hope you take that mindset to heart and accept the quest, to be your best, and put your limits to the test. Because Daffodils Toastmasters is more than just a club...!

I hope you enjoy reading this Newsletter, and more Newsletters that come.

*Your serving leader,  
Madhu Sudhan V  
President*

# GIVE a SPEECH | *by DTM Dr. Ram Jayaraman*



communicate your message; your audience will not be simultaneously looking at the dictionary, while listening to your speech!!

Secondly, a speech would be generally more forceful if you **PERSONALIZE** it. Talk about YOUR involvement in the anecdote / organization / topic that you are talking about, for example “MY grandfather”, “in MY College”, “when I was keeping wickets”.

One pitfall you want to watch out for is “pouring in” example after example after example to illustrate the point you wish to make. When this happens, people go back home recapitulating some of the numerous anecdotes you talked about, but they have forgotten your message! Remember that there are just TWO “E”s in “speech”. It would be effective to restrict your speech to “Two Es” : **“EXAMPLE” “EXAMPLE”**.

The letter “C” denotes **CONFIDENCE**. Do your homework diligently, collect relevant statistics and research your topic thoroughly. When this vital earlier work is done, your audience will notice the confidence you exude and respect you for that.

Lastly, and certainly not in the least, weave good appropriate **HUMOR** as you write out your speech. Good humored speeches are always very much enjoyed and remembered; further, they help tremendously in driving home a message.

Let me now highlight some basic elements to observe when you GIVE your speech. Let me start with the “G” - **GESTURES**. When you are delivering your speech remember your whole body speaks. Hand gestures

I've attempted to outline below in a brief manner some of the basic elements to keep in mind, while preparing for a speech and then delivering it.

While writing the speech, keep in mind that it is going to be orally delivered and NOT read from a book, a magazine or listened to from an audio or video recorder. This major difference calls for the writing to be **SIMPLE**. As you speak, what you say must be immediately intelligible and not ultimately understood! Your audience does not have the luxury of “flipping back” a few pages and reading again what you've “written”; nor do they have the opportunity to “Stop and Rewind” and listen to what you said even a few seconds ago. Use simple words/sentences to



would help, as you speak, in talking about physical things; (—BIG / small , —petite / obese ); facial gestures would aid in communicating emotions; love, anger etc.

The —I” in GIVE is for “**EYE**”

**CONTACT!** When you are speaking before an audience, do NOT ignore the group of people in front of you! Don't talk to the clock on the wall or the lovely tie you are wearing!! Talk looking at the people who are eager to listen to you and get them involved. When your eyes are turned away from your audience, it is translated to “insincerity” in the minds of people. (Especially of a Western audience).

**VOICE** or **VOCAL VARIETY** is an excellent skill to develop to win your audience. Vary your voice as you go along to emphasize salient points and draw your



audience's attention. Even a very significant message would be lost, if the audiences were put to sleep by a monotonous voice!

The most important ingredient of any speech, in my view, is **ENTHUSIASM**. If YOU are not enthused about the topic you are talking about, how could you expect your audience to be interested in listening to what you have to say?! Your enthusiasm is easily perceived through your

animated gestures, arresting voice and the look in your eyes!! And enthusiasm is truly contagious; it inspires your listeners and motivates them to act on lines mentioned by you.

So, you have to give a speech. Go ahead! GIVE that SPEECH!!

## Toastmasters Leadership Institute (TLI) – July 20, 2014

A TLI Club Leaders Training program guides the club officers to perform their duties to the fullest and to help their club's members reach their potential.

Daffodils Toastmasters Club committee members ensured that they learnt from this event and planned based on the ideas that were shared at the event.



All the great speakers were bad speakers at first.

- Ralph Waldo Emerson



## SPEECH 1

# The Gift of Life | *by TM Aditya Kamath*

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I clutched my father's hand tighter as the train roared past beneath us under the bridge and I shrieked in joy! What a moment it was! Watching trains was one of my favorite pastimes in Bombay and my father would always take me hand-in hand to the nearest station to watch them. Be it eating paav bhaji on Juhu beach, or vada paaav at phatak road, riding my toy scooter on warm Sunday evenings at marine drive or trying my hand at kite flying on the terrace, I always knew that when I looked up to my side, I would see .....my father.

Never in my wildest dreams had I imagined that one day, my father wouldn't be there to hold my hand to teach me how to walk the path of life, that I would have to drive myself around the town, when actually I've been driven all this while, that today when I look by my side, all I would see is his shadow. One night just after celebrating the end of my 10thstd exams, my father broke the news to me that he had been posted abroad

for work. He would be departing in less than a month's time.

For one brief moment, my life came to a still. Father has always been a pillar of strength for me. I was never used to his absence. It made me wonder who was going to take me out on weekends. More importantly, how was I going to look after my mother and brother?

On the day he was leaving, he hugged me tight and placed in my palm a gift... a very special gift. My first ever... camera! The gift of life!

As months passed by, I lay idle, and so did my camera. Dad called every day. In the course of one conversation he asked me if the camera was in one piece.....I gave a blank stare at my camera, dusty on its shelf. Coincidentally the very next day, I was called to represent my college at a photography competition.

**Out came the camera, and out came my spirits!** Wonder of wonders, I won the competition. After that, there was no looking back. I declared it my first love and even confessed to my dad that I loved the camera....and he approved. I became so engrossed in photographing subjects that I earned the tag "Mr.Click" among my friends. I won several photography competitions, and one of my photographs even had the privilege of being showcased at the UN Conference of Parties. The camera became my life, my addiction, so much so that mother had to lock away my camera until I "mended" my ways. It was like a drug for me because this gift was helping me see the world in new light. I wasn't just taking photographs, I was making new relationships and upgrading the current relationships every step along the way!

Out in the streets, I would talk with the vendors and hawkers, learn about their lives, step into their shoes and steal a little part of them with me... forever frozen in time. I was never a very expressive person,



photography helped me to not only be visually expressive, but I also struck up long conversations with ease.

Too long ago, I was always in my father's hands, going wherever he went, never venturing out too far without him. But the gift of life, it was the magic lamp; it took me on expeditions far and wide, to the unexplored corners of the city, the misty tops of the mountains, to waterfalls of the Western Ghats and estuaries along the Arabian Sea. I became a traveler not only for the pleasure of visiting new places but for the hunger to meet new people, learn from them and gain new perspectives.

While I've travelled far and wide in search of relationships, there was a special one waiting right at home. My brother Ananth! Up until then, you would call us bloody brothers rather than blood brothers; fighting, clawing and quarrelling over the smallest of things. But all this was changing. For whenever I came back home, he was most interested in hearing about my adventures. His eyes would gleam when I showed him my photographs. It wasn't long before we became the best of friends, planning our own photographic adventures. I realized that not only was I helping him understand the complex world of photography, but I was guiding him in everyday life, in his academics, standing up for him in times of trouble. It's during this time that I truly realized what it was to be someone's mentor - to hold someone's hand; to be responsible.



It's been 7 years now since the gift of life came to me. One gift led to another, I was no longer the quiet child in my father's shadow, but a photographer, an explorer, a mentor, a big brother, most of all a responsible man.

I still miss my dad... but the camera he gifted me symbolizes his trust and life's lessons. It truly has expanded my horizons. In our lives, this gift, visits us through the ones we love. Sometimes, we set it aside and lose one great connect. But, sometimes, we take it in our palms, to unravel a new world, the one filled with opportunities to experience, to benefit, to SHARE!

Just like how a little tennis racket gifted to a young girl transformed her into the tennis sensation named Steffi Graf, and how a little prodding, nudging and a jump into the pool unleashed a legendary swimmer named Michael Phelps, the camera I was gifted has let my creativity and imagination blossom.

Today, as I take this adventure one step ahead, as I leave for the USA, I hand over my gift of life... to my brother. **After all, aren't gifts meant to be shared?**

People, what does your palm hold? If it is empty... seek the gift of life! It need

not be something flamboyant or even expensive. It could just be a hug from your brother, or a kiss from your mother. Go home, pick it up, dust it and let it blossom into a thousand other gifts... for you, for me and everyone around us. Remember, "Being gifted doesn't mean you've been given something. It means, you have something to give."



The greatest speakers have usually been remarkable for the abundance of their ideas and their economy of words.

- Ralph C. Smedley

## SPEECH 2

# No Bark, No Bite | *by TM Lekha EM*



**P**icture a typical TV scene : The heroine stands holding back tears. This is because she is hurt, angry or upset. She then turns around dramatically. Conveniently, her room is located just four feet away. She leaps into her room and proceeds to sob away to glory.

As far as I am concerned, my home is like that room. You want to know how? Well, my home might not have been four feet from my school. But it is four roads away. So whenever anything happened in school, I would try to remain calm and composed. Then I would rush home and begin 'drama queen' mode. Wailing, 'Do you know what happened!!' my furious outburst would ensure that everyone indeed knew what happened.

The gigantic amount of anger in a pint sized child surprised people. My grandmother would explain, "She was born at noon. The sun was blazing. So she is like this." The family priest blamed my stars, literally - "She is born under Bharani. That is all." The only people not very bothered by all this were my parents. My mother's only comment was, "She will soon grow up. She will either grow out of it. Or grow tired of it." As she predicted, I grew up. However, unfortunately for her,

my anger grew with me and everyone grew tired of us. I had never been short and sweet. And as years passed, I was neither short nor sweet.

I knew that such uncontrolled anger was wrong. I was aware that it hurt people. I regretted it every time I snapped. I apologized sincerely. And I tried and tried and tried to keep my cool the next time. But it never seemed to work. Meditation, burning off excess energy, yoga, Pranayama, counting to 10, deep breaths - nothing seemed to work. The snake would rear its ugly head time and again. And I would lose. Lose my calm. Lose my cool. Lose my temper.

All this came to a head when I was in high school. I was standing in the assembly line reciting prayers. The school headmistress walked by. She looked at me and told me, "Your shoes are not polished." I looked down. They seemed black enough to me. Anyway, I bit my tongue and nodded my head. Pointing at a classroom, she said "Go and stand in the nursery class." **I stood there for fifteen minutes in front of fifty giggling little devils.** The headmistress came back. She looked at my shoes and then at my face. She then declared, "You cheated! You polished your shoe now." Pat, I flew off the handle. I yelled at her, "Come off of it. Do you think I carry a brush and a polish everywhere?" What followed were censures and rebukes.

But I must say, I got off lightly enough. My parents weren't even informed. However I told them the whole story. My father told me, "There are 3 stages at which we express: thoughts, words and actions. Thoughts are the most difficult to master. So start with actions. You are not punching people or slapping students. So your actions are alright. Control your words. Choose the right ones at the right time. Focus on your thoughts. Over time, your thoughts will be under your control." I was confused. Whatever you think, say something else? Isn't that lying? My mother explained. "Being truthful is

saying what you think. But what matters is how you say



it. Suppose a lady with a big nose approaches you. She asks you, "Is my nose big?" The truth is that her nose is big. The truth as courtesy would be "Well, in proportion to the rest of your facial features, it is a little big. But nothing in the world's perfect." Truth as blunt honesty would be "Yes. It's big." Truth as cruelty would be "You call that big? It's enormous. I'm surprised you don't fall flat under the effect of gravity.""

Thus I learnt. I learnt to keep watch on my words no matter how angry I was. I learnt the hard way, but I learnt. Along the way, it did become easier. I was no longer thinking harshly, and speaking carefully. Eventually, I began to think carefully and speak freely. It's not to say I never lose my temper now. I still do! I still regret. I know I have a long way to go. But I know I have come a long way. Only by bearing in my mind: Watch your actions, watch your words and watch your thoughts.

Perhaps the best way to tell you how far I've come would be to quote my childhood friend, who says, "First I was all bark, all bite. Then I was no bark, all bite. And now, I'm no bark, no bite."



***Toastmaster of the Term -  
TM Madhu Sudhan V***

### CONTRIBUTIONS

- DCP points added :1
- Speeches given in the year:13
- Article to the News Letter.
- MC at Funtabulous, Division B.
- Lead Mentor : YLP (8 weeks)
- Lead Mentor : Eloquest 3.0 (8 weeks)
- Demo meetings : At Novozyme and IBM TM Clubs
- Club Mentor : ABBS TM Club.



The mind is a wonderful thing. It starts working the minute you are born and never stops until you get up to speak in public

- Roscoe Drummond

## SPEECH 3

# Inspirations from the Himalayas | *by TM Dr Tarak Goradia*

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Imagine a vacation where besides soaking in natural beauty and relaxing, you get some free advice that changes your entire life!

In 2007, my family and I visited the Himalayas. Our hotel was perched on top of a beautiful mountain about fifty miles south of the Himalayan range. It offered a magnificent panoramic vista. Lush green mountains in the front, snow covered peaks behind, bathing in the morning gold. White fluffy clouds resting among the mountains slowly awoke from their slumber and floated higher. The morning rays of the Sun revealed glimpses of a river meandering through the valley. This picturesque landscape got me all excited about our upcoming trek to Gaumukh -- the source of the mighty river Ganga. I started visualizing how beautiful, how splendid it would be up there!

The next morning, fully-equipped with our trekking gear, we began in earnest. The mountain air was thin. We had difficulty breathing and got tired very easily. My wife and children wanted to stop at every rest area. But with my mind set on the destination, I played the cheer leader and kept the troops marching.

After several long hours, we finally made it to the source of the river, and the view was ... pathetic! Water flowing slowly from the glacier with gravel, silt, ice... all barren. It was nowhere close to the spectacular view I had imagined or the view I witnessed the previous morning.

I was dragging my feet in disappointment, when I heard: "Welcome, hope you enjoyed the journey!" Journey? Aaaaah! Journey...! I was so focused on reaching the destination that I didn't pay any attention to the vistas along the way. I didn't let my children stop to watch goats fight on mountain ledges or to play in the tiny streams that crossed our path. I didn't let my wife enjoy that extra cup of tea while chatting with fellow trekkers. Fortunately for us, there was a second chance! On our way back we thoroughly enjoyed the journey!

The following day, having learned my lesson, I was all prepared to enjoy the journey to our next destination. As luck would have it, only within an hour of driving, we had to stop. It had poured heavily the previous night and a massive landslide blocked the road. There isn't going to be any journey, I quipped. Looking at a laborer sweat profusely clearing the debris, I remarked -- "You must hate this unpredictable weather!" Standing up, he looked at the tall peaks in reverence and said: "The Mountains stand tall no matter the weather because they know that everything is impermanent; whatever arises will sooner or later pass away. **Learning from these mountains, we don't start dancing in the sunshine, nor get depressed during harsh weather**". These words worked like magic. Instead of getting bored for hours with nothing to do, I learned how to repair roofs damaged by rain. My wife explored culinary secrets of the native cuisine, and my children enjoyed discovering new games with the locals.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the vacation was soon over but a new perspective on life remained with me forever. Previously, I used to run my life from one goal to another... from weekend to weekend ... from one vacation to the next ... and didn't really pay attention to the journey in-between. Now, I keenly observe every precious moment that passes by -- a child frolicking on the way to school, a bird shooing away the cat trespassing its territory, a sister sabotaging her brother's toys. I now look at life's ups and downs in a much more equanimous manner as advised by the Himalayan laborer. I try not to get too excited when I earn a huge bonus, or win a speech competition or



when my daughter achieves high honors. I neither get too dejected when people chuckle at my stuttering or on discovering my brain tumor or on becoming blind in one eye.

Because the Himalayas have taught me that both pain and pleasure are ephemeral, and are essential parts of an incredible journey called Life! **Because we have the freedom to choose Happiness in response to either pain or pleasure.** Here is the 7 billion people question facing us: Can we choose to be Happy?



*Toastmaster of the Year -  
TM Siddharth S.P*

### CONTRIBUTIONS

- Runner up for the Division level International Speech Contest
- Second Runner up for Division level Evaluation Contest.
- Coordinator for Speechcraft - Eloquest 3.0
- Lead Mentor at the Youth Leadership Program.
- Contest chair at the District Conference Reverberations
- Speeches given in the year: 7



There are two types of speakers in the world: the nervous and the liars

- Mark Twain

## SPEECH 4

# Breaking Walls | *by TM Sanjay Khandelwal*



“**S**he is a curse to the family. I wish she was never born. I wish I was dead before she did this”, said my uncle seething with anger when he was told that his daughter had done the Unacceptable.

My sister Sonal was pursuing her Bachelor’s degree in commerce in Ahmedabad. Here, she was enamored by her classmate Rohan - a university topper, athlete and a young philanthropist. They became friends and eventually fell in love. My sister very well knew, her love story wouldn’t be taken kindly, for the boy was not from our community. Still, she mustered the courage last month and told her father about Rohan and her desire to marry him. “NO!!” was the answer she got.

My sister, however, had no intention to listen. She would have her way. She called her father four days back on Wednesday and said “Rohan and I are married. We seek your blessings”.

All hell broke loose at home. Sonal was cursed and criticized from all quarters. Her

parents were blamed for bringing dishonor to the family. Some modest people restricted to just offering suggestions on how daughters should be groomed. Amidst this entire ruckus however, there was one person extremely happy – that was ME. I was proud of her. Not because she dared to choose a non-Khandelwal or because I have any similar plans, but because she had contributed to NATIONAL INTEGRATION.

Our country is like a globe. To the world it is a whole, but from within there are thick invisible lines of culture and caste that segregate us into different communities - Marwari’s, Khandelwals, Tamil Brahmins, North Indian, South Indians, Hindu’s, Christians, etc. Then there are people like my uncle who believe that they are the guardians of these walls. To me, these walls are a threat to the oneness we can achieve as a nation, and one way to break them is Inter-caste marriage.

**Intercaste marriages do not just bond two people or just two families, but two distinct cultures.**

Recently, one of my brothers married a Marathi girl. During the wedding I saw the bride’s sisters enthusiastically trying to learn the Marwari folk dance called ‘Goomer’. Surprisingly, I heard that the bride’s father ask a cousin of mine about the recipe to

make a Marwari dish called ‘Choorma’, which he learnt even before the wedding ended. On the other hand, my cousin and I, who secretly attended the wedding learnt about the Marathi customs and rituals. By the end of the wedding, their culture and my



culture had become our culture. The mixing and desire

to learn from each other was so beautiful that we were not bidding goodbye as Marwari's and Marathi's but as members of one family. As we left, I carried some Marathi in me; they carried some Marwari in them.

Today my uncle has two sons, who unlike me are neither exclusively Marwari, nor exclusively Marathi. They derive their identity from both. In other words, they represent two cultures of India than just one that I

do. Tomorrow these boys might marry a Malayali, or a Punjabi and they will represent a more complex mixture of cultures, but isn't this very complex mixture of cultures that India epitomizes?

I hope someday, my uncle will realize, Sonal and Rohan didn't just break the wall between two communities; they have also strengthened and cemented the sense of belonging and oneness amongst us.

## An Educational Session with Saro Velrajan



A gentleman with a tranquil smile, a conscientious attitude and a charming demeanor – Saro Velrajan with his thoughts on how to communicate to connect with our audience left us astounded.

His simple GEM principle described:

G for Gestures

E for Eye Contact

M for Material

Your purpose is to make your audience see what you saw, hear what you heard, feel what you felt. Relevant detail, couched in concrete, colorful language

- Dale Carnegie



## SPEECH 5

# The Girl | *by TM Poornima Srinivasan*



A sudden light blinded me. I squinted. For a moment, I didn't know what to do. I was standing near the river bed. Lustrous grass fields, radiant flowers, bushy shrubs. As I enjoyed the picturesque view, I heard a mumbling weep.

I scanned the place and I saw a girl sitting and crying profusely, her tears flowing like waterfalls.

Perplexed, I went near the girl. Her beauty amazed me. I wondered what had happened to her. Unbearable by her grief, I bent towards her and touched her. She didn't realize my presence. I asked her, "What happened to you? Why are you crying?" just to realize that all my words fell on deaf ears.

Failed by the attempt, I kept quiet and sat next to her. Time passed and the silence was broken. She spoke loud and clear, probably not to me but to herself.

"He is my best friend. No, I am his best friend. In fact, we were more than friends. How can he do this for me?"

He is dark skinned and the most handsome man I have ever seen in my life. His crystalline and magnetic eyes speak more words than his lips. He is more transcendent than thousands of cupid. Many of my friends love him. But, I know that I am the only one in his heart. How can he do this to me?

When he starts to play his flute, the mesmerizing music intoxicates the animate as well as the inanimate and takes them into a trance. When the entire universe pauses, how can I, a naive girl save myself from his charm.

He is not only a great musician, but also a dexterous dancer, an accomplished actor and an uncontrollable prankster. He is too generous, especially to girls. No one can ever be angry with him or scold him. He fills the place with laughter, joy and happiness. But, how can he do this to me?

I know he wants to live here in this beautiful Brindavan.

I know he loves me. I know he dreams to have a happily married life with me. He even convinced his parents. Recently, he discovered his origin, his true parents and his life's purpose. He is no more a cow herder, but a Prince. He has to accomplish the task of saving his people from his cruel, arrogant and demonic uncle. I understand him. No more of his explanation is necessary."

She stopped. I wondered what she was thought. Suddenly, a smile sparkled on her face. It is the most beautiful smile I have ever seen. I couldn't understand the sudden peace that dropped down on her. She stood up and walked away. "Hey, stop!" I cried.





But my words fell on deaf ears. There she walked away, out of sight.

A sudden light blinded me. I squinted. I looked at the poster of Lord Krishna. I was lying flat on my bed and wondered what I saw. It took time for me to realize that I was dreaming.

Such unconditional love this girl had. She was just a little girl. But, her resolute love towards Krishna

transformed her into a heavenly idol. Their love didn't end up in marriage. They didn't live together. Yet, people prefix her name, when they call him "Radha Krishna". They are eternally together. Forever.

Most of my dreams have never meant anything. But, this dream means a lot to me.

## Memoirs from Malaysia: Toastmaster International Convention 2014



Attending the International Speech Contest and witnessing the success of a key member of our very own district 82 is something DTM Kumaran would ever forget in this lifetime. The accolades he received, the conversations he had with various dignitaries and the awards that he won would stay with him forever and ever.

He shared his thrilling experience from the event and inspired us to dream and achieve more at Toastmasters.



A speech is poetry: cadence, rhythm, imagery, sweep! A speech reminds us of words, like children, have power to make dance the dullest beanbag of a heart.

- Peggy Noonan

## SPEECH 6

# The Funny Little Doctor | *by TM Shwetha Shrikant*



I was rushed into a tiny box like room. The nauseating smell, the pounding rain, the throbbing pain – it was all rushing at once; but my body failed to keep up.

As I slumped on the stiff bed covered with a pale white cloth inundated with strange stains I looked down at my blood soaked uniform. Then I looked up, at the funny little doctor.

It was the monsoons in the year 1995. The previous year's bag, a fancy red water bottle, a Disney themed rain coat and it was game-set-match for yet another school year. Not surprisingly, I was the class prefect and I quite liked having my way around with the other kids in my class. Tiny for my age, nonetheless a teacher pet.

It is when you move from kinder garden to the 1<sup>st</sup> grade, things start to change. You don't see your class mates wailing outside the school gates and you definitely do

not see worried parents looking down upon their young ones clinged on to their trousers – refusing to let go.

I was assisted off my school bus at 7:45 am only to be overwhelmed by the nauseating smell from the fish market. As we ran into the gates with our hands over our nose, the gloomy weather took over. The sky was overcast by dark clouds – waiting to unleash its fury. The warm smile from the Aayah - a maid in the school, brought me back to the craft contest that I was so excited about.

Half the day was over, and the contest started. My mother's meticulous instructions played in my head. "Be careful while you pull out the scissor. Fold the paper into half making a thin long rectangle. Now, make a series of cuts along the folded line. But make sure you don't cut all the way to the edge" she had repeated to me over 20 times over the past 2 days. 50 minutes of recollection, and I was done making blue lanterns, all stringed together and ready to be judged.

Leading my class, we started off in a straight line towards to the auditorium where we to display all that we've made. As we climbed the winding stairs, I skipped a step to avoid ruining my shoes from the puddle of water. But the girl behind me wasn't smart enough. She slipped, only to tug me down. As she dropped her painted pot, I was face down on the stairs.

Crowd began to gather, as someone screamed that a child had fallen. Before I knew it, alarmed girls had circled around me trying to give me comfort. I felt something strange, something cold trickle down my chin. My teeth had gone numb and I just couldn't decipher how a perfectly normal day had just become a nightmare!

A teacher rushed to me and in an effort to stop my chin from bleeding profusely, she did something. Thinking of that moment now, it seems odd! It was the 90's where

hand kerchiefs were a common sight. In a time when the Fresh One's ad on TV brought about excitement, this teacher took out tissue paper from her pocket and places it under my chin! A decision, that later was understood to be extremely unwise!

She then grabbed me by my hand, walked me down the stairs and out of the school. It was that nauseating smell again – but this time it was made much worse with the rain pelting down like bullets and my chin bleeding like an open tap.

After a short, but traumatic walk later I was ushered into a tiny room, whose only source of light was from a floor lamp. The only resemblance this place bore to a clinic whatsoever was a short, narrowly shouldered man sitting there in his white coat with his eyes closed - as if he were asleep. His large bald head was like an afterthought, because what captured ones attention were his ears. They were rather big and uncanny.

However, as he opened his eyes all physical characteristics became secondary. The pain had now gripped me, my breath coming in shorts gasps. As I lay down awkwardly on the bed, the doctor examined the blood soaked tissue. As he shook his head in despair, I looked at his ears move from right to left! The tissue was conveniently stuck to my chin now, which made



matters worse. He yanked it out in one sharp pull, to get a scream from me.

Then started what I call the chicken ordeal! The doctor prepped my face like he was basting a chicken for a feast. As my face went lifeless from the injection, he began cleaning my chin. While I lay still, imagining how it would be to look like Frankenstein with my face all sewed up, the teacher looked like she was going to throw up! The funny little doctor's stubby fingers were now tugging at my face. **I could only see the movements of his hand, the suture needle pointed right at me.** I felt like a dead helpless chicken, in the hands of a master chef, stuffed and being stitched, ready to be thrown into the oven!

A few kicks and a couple of stitches later, I finally left the tiny box like room. As we walked back to school, the thoughts of the funny little doctor faded away. My mind was set upon the blue lantern that was left unattended on the bottom of the stairs. I couldn't help but replay my mother's instructions on not cutting the paper all the way to the edge!

Some days are just bad days, no matter how prepared you are! I guess you simply need a stitch or two to be reminded of the day you won the 1<sup>st</sup> prize in a craft contest!

It usually takes more than three weeks to prepare a good impromptu speech.

- Mark Twain



## SPEECH 7

# Appeal to the Nation | *by TM Prithvi Raj*



**M**any things in our nation which deserves respect do not get any. While on the other hand, many things which do not deserve any respect get a huge share of it.

My Fellow Indians...

Kargil is in the Ladakh region, nestled in the Himalayas. The place is rich in natural beauty, with the Terrains shooting out to the skies, ranging from 12,000 to 15,000 feet in heights. In between are the serpentine like roads, for the people to commute. If you were to stand there and look down, you see a scorching depth of 15,000 feet. Anything falling from its tall tip will be lost to its endless deadly depths. This is the place, where the Indian army guards the upper most part, the head of our nation, the Himalayas.

Kargil is below freezing, and has biting, bitter and blasting cold throughout the year. The Indian Army guards the Kargil terrain is harsh climate.

About eleven years ago, during the Kargil war, the soldiers guarding the extreme terrain were hiking down the mountains. A local inhabitant informed the army

men, that the rival forces had taken positions to attack them. Ignoring the information from the local boy, a regiment of six soldiers marched further down only to be trapped by their rival troops. In the course of their imprisonment, the soldiers were tortured to reveal the secrets of the Indian army. When the soldiers showed reluctance in revealing the army secrets, the rival troupes mutilated their fingers, hands, legs and even their private parts. The dead bodies of these soldiers were chopped into thousand pieces were sent back home.

We belong to a Nation of such heroic soldiers. When we speak of such remarkable heroes, there are many inspirational stories, and one such story I would like to share is of Manoj Kumar Pandey.

Manoj Kumar Pandey, at the age of 20 made a brave decision to be a part of the Indian army. Manoj was an



engineer by qualification. Being extremely intelligent, he easily cleared all the rounds of his interview to join the Indian Defense. Looking at his impressive profile, the Army Commanders called him for a final round of discussion and asked just one question: "There are a lot

of companies outside ready to give you a handsome salary, but why Indian Defense?"

The answer of the young boy was extremely heart touching. He said, the ambition of my life is to earn a "Param Vir Chakra" and the only profession that takes me on the path to fulfill my dream is the "Indian Army". The 20 year old didn't speak about the salary. Rather, he spoke about the pride of winning the "Param Vir Chakra" award. We belong to a nation of such Inspiring Soldiers.

As Manoj Kumar Pandey joined the Indian Army, the Kargil war was declared. Was it his fortune or a misfortune, destiny alone can tell!!

Manoj Kumar Pandey was now Major Manoj Kumar Pandey. He engaged in war and led a battalion to conquer the Kargil terrain. Hiking a terrain of 15,000 to 20,000 feet with a bag pack close to 25 KGs, carrying rifles and grenades, this was an insurmountable task the nation had ever faced. On the other side, the opposite forces were on the top of the terrain, in other words, they had the advantage of winning the war. They need not even fire; just rolling a huge boulder beyond the edge could've killed the climbing Indian soldiers in an instant.

Major Manoj Kumar Pandey hiked to reach the top of the terrain successfully. He hurled a grenade on the tanker of the rival army, within seconds the tanker burst into a thousand pieces. Soon after which, a series of bullets targeted the Major. In the

course of time, the Major's right hand was pierced by a bullet, which resulted in cutting his right hand. But, his right hand was not cut completely; a part of it was left painfully hanging, his counterparts who survived the battle say. Even then, his courage did not deteriorate. He quickly called a soldier and asked him to "Tie his hanging right hand to his belt" and he bombed the remaining tankers with his left hand.

When a bullet struck his head, the brave Major Manoj Kumar Pandey made his final say "Do not leave them, Kill them and declare that we have captured the Kargil Terrain".

Major Manoj Kumar Pandey was rewarded with the prestigious "Param Vir Chakra" post his death.



A 22 years young lad sacrificed his life for the nation and people hardly remembers him today. My dear friends, as you sit back comfortably and enjoy your life, please do not forget, you're able to do so, because people like Major Manoj Kumar Pandey shed their blood to keep you guarded.

Let's always remember the soldiers who laid down their lives for our Country. Let's give them our Respect.

Here's a quote of John.F.Kennedy:

**"Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country."**

Jai Hind!



A good speech should be like a woman's skirt: long enough to cover the subject and short enough to create interest

- Winston Churchill

## SPEECH 8

# Million Dollar Smile | *by TM Apoorva Vyas*



Imagine playing cricket, hitting the ball for a four and it lands in another country? Not even the master blaster, Sachin Tendulkar can do it! But, a young boy did!

I visited Bhutan in 2011 and was on the brink of the Indian Territory. This young boy was playing cricket with his friends. As the ball approached the young batsman, he hit a four. The ball landed at my feet. I was still in India, one step away from Bhutan! The boy casually stepped into India and grabbed the ball and ran back to Bhutan! Strange story, Amazing facts!

I first read about Bhutan in my Geography class in 7th grade. Rekha Ma'am, our geography teacher sang praises about Bhutan and its beauty. The picturesque image of the snowcapped Mountains and the deep blue sky was imprinted in my memory. Since then, I dreamt of visiting Bhutan. A few years later, my dream materialized.

In college, I saw this pin-up at the notice board which read **“Come! Be a part of the Bhutan trip! 11 days and 12 nights of absolute Fun! HURRY! LIMITED SEATS ONLY!”** My joy knew no bounds, but it instantly turned into anxiety. I wondered, “Will my parents allow me?” Instantly, I transformed into an obedient girl to please my parents. At home, Dad saw me studying seriously and was perplexed! “OK Apoorva! What do you want?” he asked. I broke the ice and said “Rupees Sixteen Thousand Dad!” His eyes popped out “Sixteen Thousand!! . What for?” he said. I replied, “Dad, it has been my dream to visit Bhutan since childhood! I promise to be obedient, and abide by all your rules!” I could’ve easily won the national award for that acting and my dream took shape.

The journey to Bhutan was strenuous. It took us, four days to reach there. I went into a trance looking at the



scenic beauty of Bhutan; in front of me stood great giants – the snow painted peaks of the Himalayas standing tall under the deep blue skies. Sinking into the breathless beauty, my friends and I posed for the camera. At a distance, I spotted a short girl dressed in a colorful Kira, the Bhutanese outfit. Kira reminded me of our Ghagra Choli. Hesitantly, we approached her for a

picture. She lit up our hearts with her million dollar smile. Pelden was her name. She suggested us the right places to shop. Her valuable guidance fetched us beautiful souvenirs. Within a few minutes, she bonded with us. This friendly move of Pelden bound us to the lovely nation.

Another person made our visit memorable. It was Sonam, our travel guide. His abundant knowledge of Bhutan stunned us. From the history, to the mystery, he knew it all. He had a magnetic aura that attracted the tourists towards him. Unlike the other guides, he was proficient in English and helped us to understand Bhutan even better. Throughout the journey, he entertained us by singing Bollywood songs. With Sonam around, we learnt and had fun at the same time.

One fact stated by Sonam about Bhutan might have impressed me. Being happiness-oriented, the country Bhutan measures its prosperity from its index of happiness known as the gross national happiness. Jigme Singye Wangchuk, the fourth king of Bhutan coined this term in 1972. This concept uses the Buddhist principles to enhance the happiness of their country. It made me wonder how many of our leaders would be able to bring about that level of a change to our country.

I left Bhutan with a sad heart, but earned memories for life. It's not only the place, but also the people that mattered. The boy, Pelden and Sonam just added on to it! Pelden's smile and Sonam's style multiplied my love



for travel.

We find many excuses not to travel. No time, no money, I'm married and I have Toastmaster's meetings on Saturdays! But remember, Life is not about the number of breaths you take, but the moments that take your breath away! As Mark Twain puts it, "Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things you didn't do than by the ones you did. So throw off the bowlines, sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover."

You can speak well if your tongue can deliver the message of your heart.

- John Ford



## SPEECH 9

# The Crossroads | *by TM Maithili Jayapathi Kumaran*

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“**M**aithili Ma’am, we wish all the lectures were like you, you are the coolest lecturer we have ever had”.

I chuckled, giggled and got into the car. It was my first day at work in Carmel College. I got these compliments. If these sounds like a bed of roses, I tread the thorn before I reached here.

After being a home maker for 15 years, I decided to take up counseling as my career which was my passion. I completed my master in Child Psychology and Masters in English literature through Distance Education. I scouted from play homes to college for a job. The tailor made answer was “In our Institute the teaching staff is very supportive. We don’t need a counselor. Thank you!”

In one Institution, the Principal boasted “My students are very comfortable with me. They get all help from me all the time”. I wondered, in such cases why do some students commit suicide. Though all these comments were dampening my spirit, but I had not

given up being optimistic. I counseled senior citizens at Nightingale Old Age Home. Their child like smile gave me immense satisfaction.

In 2007, I finally landed a job at Shanthi Dhama institution as a counselor. Satisfaction turned to sadness. To the Principal of this school, discipline and counseling meant corporal punishment. I intervened, but was in vain. I had to quit the school.

In 2008, I got a call “Hello, I am Sandhya Menezes, Principal of Carmel College. Maithili, with your counseling and literature background you can be an asset. Can u please teach at my college?” Persuaded by her kind words, I joined. On the first day at college, I felt like a school child being anxious and nervous. Exactly two hours later, I became a cool, lovable teacher. I became a lecturer who was approachable and reachable, I was forgiving, yet encouraging, and I always made a point to find something positive to encourage a student. Challenges arose the next academic year. My son who was stepping in to Tenth grade needed my support. I had to be with him. My request for a part time job was declined and I had to quit.

I was at a crossroad. After umpteen interviews, I landed a job at Sai Women’s College. After six months of teaching, the chairman of the college called upon a review meeting. He asked “Maithili, what have you done for the growth of the institution?” I replied “Sir, I have been a very encouraging and motivating lecturer.” He repeated **“What have you done for the growth of the Institution?”** He then went on to berate me for the next 10 minutes. I was moved to tears. I walked into the staff room, to see all the 18 lecturers in tears. I was surprised to see even a male lecturer in tears. I later learnt that with this way the Chairman kept all his staff on their toes.



The next review meeting appeared and I was all set. I asked the chairman “Sir, what do you expect me to do for the growth of the institution?”. The perplexed



chairman replied “You have to be very encouraging to the students”. I said “Talk to, my students you will know how good a lecturer I am”. I had to quit again.

Everywhere the students liked me, but the Institute did not.

Again, I was at crossroads. I remembered reading somewhere “*Never panic when you get lost; just change the direction you want to go*”. I did go ahead. I quit many a jobs, but I did not quit my ambition and belief in being a positive lecturer. This time I did not scout for jobs, the job scouted me. I got a call from Ms. Sandhya Menezes, Principal of Carmel College. She said “Looks like the students love you, we want you back”.

Today, I work part time at the Carmel College. I am a passionate lecturer - motivating and counseling students. The best part came at a college fest. Two lads walked up to me and introduced themselves as my students. They were notorious trouble makers. One was a Medical Graduate, and the other Engineering. “You were always patient and had good words for us. We will never forget you.” they said. It was my moment to shine.

We all come at the crossroads at some point of time in our lives. From my learning, I took the road of purpose, passion and ambition. When you are at the crossroads, never panic when you get lost, just your directions to where you want to go.

The most precious things in Speech are Pauses.

- Ralph Waldo Emerson



## SPEECH 10

# The Candle | *by TM Arjun Sundar Raj*



**T**he purpose of a candle is to give light...

In the process of giving light, the candle, melts... The wax that is melting from the candle does not belong to it anymore, but the light that the candle gives belongs to itself. In other words, what you have belongs to others, and what you give belongs to you!

In Mahabharata - One of the greatest Indian epics – the invincible warrior, Karna is known for his generosity. He's known as a man who never refused a request. When Lord Indra asked for his armor as alms, Karna happily gave them away although he knew it would cost him his life! In the process, Karna became the candle of light! Now, even after thousands of years, when we think of the word generosity, we relate it to Karna.

I'm privileged to know of such people in my life as well. They are like the jewels that constantly sparkle to ensure that our lives sparkle even more. I call them – Mom and Dad.

The year 2001, the start of the new millennium marked a turning point in my family. My brother, Mithun, and I were in crucial stages of our schooling. My mother was working in National Dairy Development Board. And she was in her prime. Well, mothers being mothers, she felt her presence was more required at home with her family, to take care of us than outside.

At 40, my mom quit her job to help me and my brother with our studies see us succeed. My mom, the person with whom I had all the conflicts during my teenage years, the person with whom I didn't always agree with, the person whose sacrifices I really didn't appreciate until I left Bangalore with three bags for four years, moved to Trichy for my engineering. That jewel, my mother, sacrificed 20 years of her professional career to see her two teenage tykes succeed in life. Today, my parents are proud to say their sons are alumnus of NIT! In the process, my parents became the candle of light!

Just look around, you can see many such people who have become light to this club. One such great person I'd like to mention is our very own Dr. Ram! His experience in Toastmasters is over 32 years. Yet, he comes week in and week out, not weak, but strong, to help each of us become better speakers, better leaders and better people in life.

In the process, Dr. Ram has become the candle of light for many Daffodilians till now, and many more yet to come!

Giving is ingrained in our culture, giving is ingrained in our families, Giving is ingrained in our system, And... slowly giving got ingrained into me!

One of our friends, in his speech the other day, said India is a country where people do Engineering and then decide what to do. It was not much different with Mithun and me. Ever since we finished engineering, both of us have wanted to do an MBA. Preparations for

exams, research about schools, application process and so on... Both of us dreamt of doing an MBA. The difference is that I dreamt of doing just an MBA from a good school, but Mithun dreamt of doing an MBA from an Ivy League school. Honestly, I feel Mithun deserves it more than me!

Come August this year, the man who instilled in me the feel of graduating from a top engineering college, who inspired me to join Toastmasters, who was my childhood enemy, my biggest critic, and my best friend – my brother, Mithun will be joining one of the top 5 B-schools in the world.

You see, with a retired father and a homemaker mother, it's not possible for both of us to go for a graduate program at the same time. Financially it's a huge burden to my family. So, I have decided not to even think about my MBA until Mithun graduates. I have never told this to anyone. Not even to my parents, not even to my brother. I'm telling you now. Every other day, they ask me about my MBA plans, I silently shift the topic to something else, and now... they understand... Compared to all the sacrifices my parents did to us, this is just too small a sacrifice from my side. And I am very, very happy with this decision. Because seeing my brother succeed is like seeing myself succeed. Because seeing my parents happy and healthy, is like me being happy and health. Because what I have belongs to others, and what I give belongs to me!

Ladies and gentlemen, this candle is glowing for the last 8 minutes. In the process, it's melting. **Lord Buddha says, thousands of candles can be lit from**



**a single candle, and the life of the candle will not be shortened.** Happiness never decreases by being shared. Well I've just lit 1 candle... I still have 999 left!

Who has been the candle of light in your life? In whose life have you been the candle of light? What's the barrier for your thoughts, actions and decisions!?? Is it age? Well, in my own way, I broke that barrier... So what's stopping you!? Go ahead and break that barrier! Break it today, or break it tomorrow. Just break it and experience the joy of giving and bring light to the darkness. Because remember, even the stars. Even the stars shine only in darkness!!!

There are no absolutes in Public Speaking.

- Ralph C. Smedley



# The Cream of the Team

## Daffodils TMC – The MOM Junction

*Imagine. Believe. Achieve.*

“Which club has the best Minutes of Meetings?”

“OURS!!” a fun-loving group of people in the corner roar with pride. They are the Daffodilians!

We don't just make Meetings enjoyably good, but also make them amazingly memorable. How? Those cheerful moments of every meeting are captured to the very minute and picturesquely portrayed on our Photo Blog. With this, we not only reflect and relive our happy times, but also give the world a glimpse into our meeting rooms! (Not to forget, learning to pose better at every photo shoot). Thanks to the Secretary Kuldeep and those who helped him.

### **Take a look at these interesting comments from the Blog:**

*Kudos to the most patient, hard-working secretary team ever!*

*Brilliant job Kuldeep and Keerthana !!*

*You just redefined the Secretary's role :)*

*- Madhu Sudhan V*

*Great to be able see the meetings via pictures during my U.S. trip*

*- Tarak Goradia*

*This is indeed a Benchmark for “MOM's”. It helped me stay in touch with dear Daffodils even when I had to be away from the meetings.*

*- Dr. Ram Jayaraman*

*It's not always that you see someone put in so much effort !!! Great stuff Kuldeep and team!! Kudos to you all!! Much Appreciated!!*

*- Siddharth SP*

*Thanks for the opportunity Madhu & Sanjay. I thoroughly enjoyed my visit to Daffodils. Yours is the first club meeting that I attended in Bangalore. You guys made the experience very memorable for me. The club is filled with Toastmasters who display amazing enthusiasm, passion to serve, and commitment to excel. In fact, some of the new members also did an incredible job during the club meeting. You guys are like ONE LARGE FAMILY... I had great fun during the dinner too. Thanks for your wonderful hospitality.*

*Kuldeep... You have been doing a brilliant job of promoting the club through the innovative photo blog. I don't know how many people read the “regular” meeting minutes. However, I'm sure many people go through the photo blog. It helps in capturing the “real moments” that happened during the club meeting. Sharing the meeting minutes on the web also helps in attracting guests to the club. Kudos to you and your team.*

*- Saro Velrajan*

*This was a great experience for me. Participating in a speech contest was unthinkable just few months back. This MOM makes it even more memorable*

*- Narendra Shikaripur*

*Reading this blog has become my weekly routine. Nice going team! :)*

*- Anish D'Souza*

*Once in while you come across a person in a team who brings with him/her all new energy and innovation. It is such a person who transforms your journey and lifts the whole team to all new heights. You are one such person Kuldeep. Fabulous job brother.!!:)*

*- Sanjay Khandelwal*

Visit our Blog at: [www.daffodilstmcmom.wordpress.com](http://www.daffodilstmcmom.wordpress.com)

# A Work Shop at ABBS Toastmasters | *by TM Siddharth SP*



“Every obstacle is an opportunity to shine.”  
 This quote was personified when I walked into the ABBS TM club to give a session on, “Topic Selection and Speech Organisation”

As I walked through the door to present my session, all eyes rolled over me. “Will I be able to convey my point? Will the audience be receptive for a first timer?” were certain questions that were bothering me while I walked in. But, all the apprehensions and fear disappeared when I broke the ice with the audience by playing a game of – If you’re happy and you know it.

The next one hour turned out to be a roller coaster ride. I went about by giving my thoughts on how to choose a topic and how to organise a speech. Although my content was plain and simple, the questions asked by the audience, made me uncomfortable yet made me think. On a subject, which I thought I knew all, the audience made me understand that, there is still much to learn. It was a learning experience not only for them but also for me.

On a whole, it was an experience of a lifetime. Going to a new place to give your first session is not always easy, but what more can you ask for, when one person comes over to you and says, “Sid, so when is your next session?”

## The Fun side



# The After Meeting

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# The Committee | July 2014 to December 2014

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# Thank you

I thank all those speakers and writers who contributed for this Newsletter. I also thank our President Madhu Sudan, our VPE Sanjay, VPM Siddharth, Lekha and last but not the least Associate VPPR Aishwarya for their support. This Newsletter would not have been possible without you. Thank you.

We enjoyed making this Newsletter. Hope you enjoyed reading it!



“Those who are happiest are those who do the most for others.”

- Booker T. Washington



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