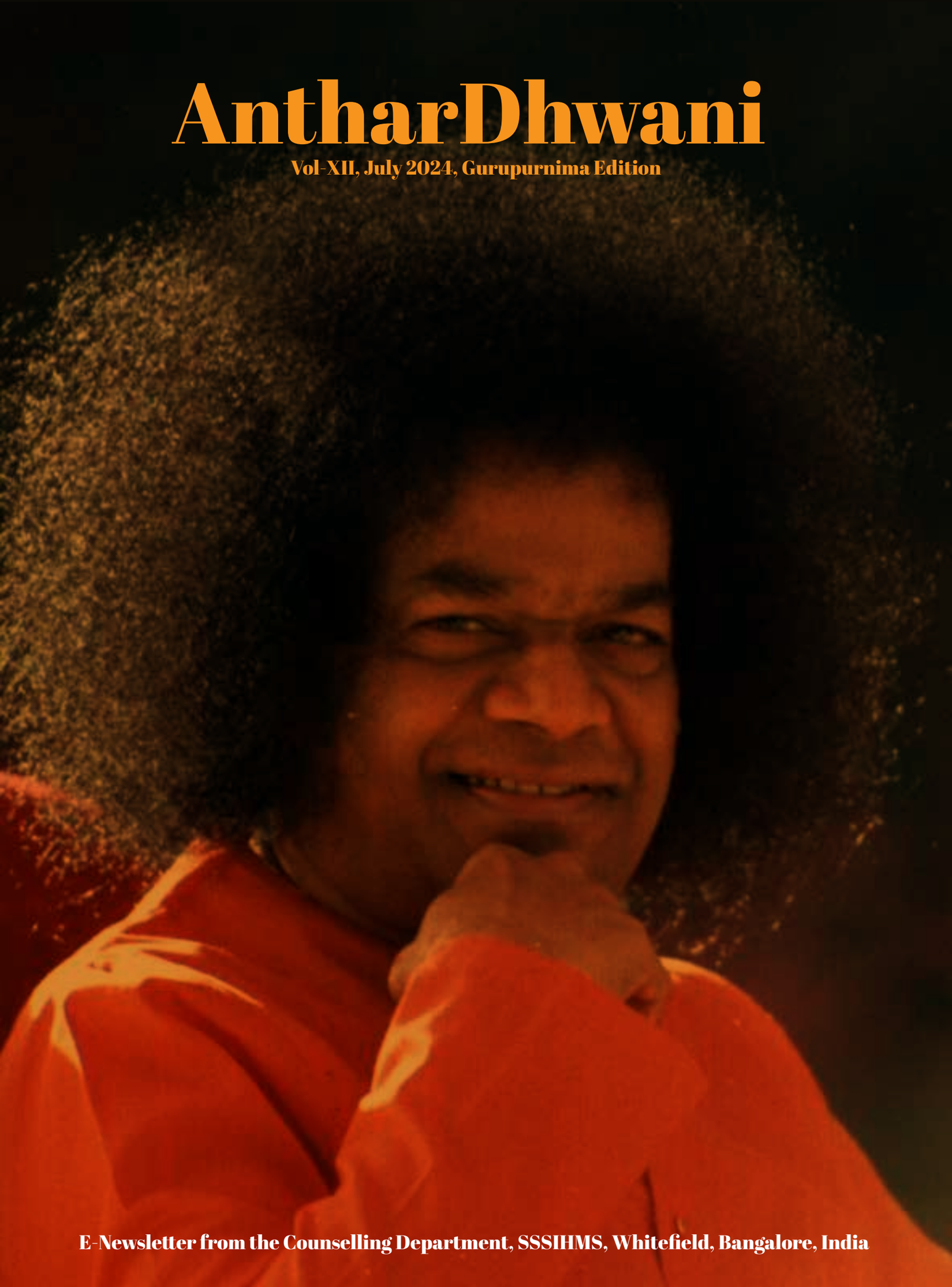
AntharDhwani

Vol-XII, July 2024, Gurupurnima Edition



E-Newsletter from the Counselling Department, SSSIHMS, Whitefield, Bangalore, India

CONTENT

1 Swami's Divine Message

2 Director's Message for AntharDhwani Vol XII - Guru Purnima Edition

3 'Patient Wellbeing - Healing the Body, Mind and Spirit' - Gita Umesh

4 **'Triumph Over Trauma'** - *Patient Vinutha's Story*

6 **'The Lord Works In Mysterious Ways'** - *Patient Dilip Debnath's Story*

8 **'From Fear To Faith'** - *Patient Rumana Khatun's Story*

10 **'Swami's Hospital: A Holy And Healing Place'** - *Patient R Patil's Story*

12 **'Light At The End Of The Tunnel'** - *Patient Bisal Karmakar's Story*

14 **'The Guiding Hand Of Divinity'** - *Patient Aloke Kumar Dutta's Story*

16 **'Compassion And Care The Sai Way'** - *Patient Md Rehman's Story*

18 **'SERVICE FOR SAI'** - *An offering from SAI Counsellors, Nursing Staff/College*

EDITORIAL

Historically all religions have had a God of their choice as a Supreme Being perhaps in different forms and names whom they worship and have the faith that their God will always take care of them. In this twelfth issue of AntharDhwani ADXII, 2024, Swami in His Divine Message has very aptly titled it as "The Best Tonic", highlighting the primacy of prayer to the God in whom you believe. His following saying is contextually so relevant
'Have Faith in the Lord and His Grace'.

"In all effort, if you trust in a Higher Power, which is ready to come to your help, work is made easy. This comes out of devotion and reliance on the Lord, the source of all Power. Put your trust in the Lord and carry on to the best of your ability. Have faith in the Lord and His Grace".

In our Hospital we see this in each and every patient that comes to our Hospital for tertiary level treatment in cardiac and neuro illnesses from all parts of India and elsewhere. We bring you in this issue seven patient stories each bearing testimony to faith in God, faith in modern medicine and God's Grace playing a major role in their journey of illness to wellness.

Patient Vinutha's story - 'Triumph Over Trauma' is an outstanding example of how Faith in God was the best Tonic. How it helped her to withstand two years of uncertainties while undergoing four major emergency brain surgeries. She overcame it because of her and her family's steadfast faith in God, built up over several decades, and their faith in Swami and His Hospital. Read her story for a detailed narrative of her journey as a patient in our Hospital.

A very significant but low profile change initiated by the SAI Counselling Department is working together with the Nursing Departments, the Nursing College faculty and the Nursing College students with the primary goal being to provide better service for the patients. A harmonious working environment has been created for the Nursing staff and patients with Swami's shrines virtually duplicating the shrine in the Counselling Department set up in both Neuro and Cardiac wards. A picture is worth a thousand words and hence included in this issue is a page titled ***"My Life is my Message, Expansion is my Life" – Sathya Sai Baba.*** The guiding philosophy for the SAI Counselling Department.

Jai Sai Ram
The Editorial Team
(Contact person: Umesh Rao <counsellingblr@sssihms.org.in>)

Anthar Dhwani

The Best Tonic

Extracts from the Divine Discourse of Sri Sathya Sai Baba, at the General Hospital Prashanthi Nilayam, Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 28, 21/09/60.

The greatest disease is the absence of peace. When the mind gets peace, the body also will have health. So, everyone who craves for good health must pay attention to the emotions, feelings, and motives that animate the individual. You have to wash the mind free from dirt. you should see that no dirt settles upon the mind. That is to say, you should move about in such company, so that dirt is avoided. Falsehood, injustice, indiscipline, cruelty, hate - these form the dirt. Truth, righteousness, peace, love (Sathya, Dharma, Shanthi, Prema) - these form the clean elements. If you inhale the pure air of these, your mind will be free from evil bacilli and you will be mentally sturdy and physically strong. As Vivekananda used to say, you should have nerves of steel and muscles of iron. That is to say, you should have hope and joy and elation as an unshakable resolution, not despair and dejection.

Have Faith In The Lord And His Grace - *In all effort, if you trust in a Higher Power, which is ready to come to your help, work is made easy. This comes out of devotion and reliance on the Lord, the source of all Power. Put your trust in the Lord and carry on to the best of your ability. Have faith in the Lord and His Grace. Try to earn it by using the intelligence and the conscience with which He has endowed you.*

Cultivate Prema Toward All Beings - *Prema should be cultivated toward all beings so that you may see the Innermost Self in all beings. The Atma is Omnipresent. Do not think it is found only in persons belonging to certain castes or colours or creeds, or that it is of a big size in fat people or of a brilliant nature in rich people. It is consistently being, awareness, bliss absolute (Sath, Chith, Ananda) in every being. Spiritual exercise has to go a long way to win this outlook. But you can begin with little things. You can avoid causing annoyance to others, can't you? Even if you are unable or unwilling to do service to others, at least, if you desist from causing harm, that is meritorious service indeed! For example, take the words you speak. I always say purification of words leads to cleansing of the mind. That is why I insist on quiet talk, sweet talk, and little talk; the pure and serene (Sathwic) talk - no anger, no heat, no hate. Such talk will cause no quarrel, no blood pressure, and no factions. It will promote mutual respect and love. Then again, do not cynically laugh at the good that others do or at the spiritual exercises of others. Inquire, but do not insult. Respect the sincerity of the other person; respect also elders and people with more experience than you. In company, behave in a well-mannered way, showering brotherhood and joy on all around you.*

Moderation In Food Is Always To Be Welcomed - *By regulating your diet and avoiding certain bad habits, you can preserve health. Moderate food and food of the pure (sathwic) type, will promote mental poise and also physical happiness. Moderation in food is always to be welcomed. Many people consume more than the necessary quantity of rich food, they have to practice moderation. So too, if you do not smoke, you escape a number of illnesses that follow that passionate (rajasic) practice. Any intoxicant or stimulant, because it disturbs nature's even trend, is harmful. Moderation in food, moderation in talk and in desires and pursuits, contentment with what little can be got by honest labour, eagerness to serve others and to impart joy to all - these are the most powerful of all the tonics and health-preserves known to the science of health.*

Om Sri Sai Ram

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE - Dr D C Sundaresh

"Since man has gained his wealth, knowledge and expertise from society, he has to discharge his debt to society by doing some good in return to it". - Sri Sathya Sai Baba

All of us serving at the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences in any capacity is because of Bhagwan's immense grace. How we use this is entirely up to us. The professionals rendering service here are doing a wonderful job of patient care, maintaining the highest standards. The doctors are contributing to this unique health care mission in the course of practicing their profession. The patients seeking relief at SSSIHMS, Whitefield are a vulnerable group due the seriousness of their illness & lack of resources to seek relief elsewhere.

There are many groups of people who go out of the way to contribute to this unique service, the Counselling team is one such group. They come from varied strata of society, taking a lot of time & effort to travel from the city to the hospital premises to fill in the communication gap between the doctor & the Patient. The recent addition of tele-counselling the Neurosurgery patients has proven to be of great help. The outcome is that the vulnerable patient goes through major life-threatening surgical treatment with a lot more confidence. Thus, helping the patients to reap the benefits of a far better outcome than a similar treatment in other hospitals.

The feedback of these patients who have undergone surgical treatment after the Counselling by the department of counselling is a very gratifying experience. The happy faces & the gratitude expressed is the best reward that any health care professional will look forward to seeing.

My heartiest congratulations to this group of Counsellors & pray that may their tribe increase.

Jai Sai Ram.....

Sundaresh
Director, Sathya Sai Institute of Higher medical Sciences, Whitefield

'Patient Wellbeing - Healing the Body, Mind and Spirit' - Gita Umesh

The Mission Statement of the Hospital, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, (SSSIHMS), Whitefield, Bangalore, reads as follows.

"To provide free medical care to the sick and ailing with dedication, commitment, love and the best of skills to facilitate healing in body, mind and spirit."

While the doctors and medical staff address the bodily illnesses to heal the body, Counselling complements their work by addressing the emotional needs and fosters the inherent spirituality of the patient. The Counsellor's role is to reach out to the patients to help them reach within themselves to draw upon their inner spiritual strength.

"Look upon them as your own kith and kin and attend to them lovingly and with unflinching care and maintain this attitude in every situation." - Sri Sathya Sai Baba

TRIUMPH OVER TRAUMA - PATIENT VINUTHA'S STORY

As counsellors we often wonder who the person is behind the patient, who when suddenly confronted by a life threatening bodily and mental ailment has rushed to the Hospital seeking medical treatment. The saga of Patient Vinutha Joshi and her family is an extraordinary example of how a simple and loving family confronted and overcame the most terrifying and challenging phase of an emergency medical crisis - terrifying because Vinutha had to undergo four major neuro surgeries within a span of about two years! She overcame it because of her and her family's steadfast faith in God, built up over several decades, and their faith in Swami and His Hospital. One can only stand back and admire the grit and courage of Vinutha and her family and be filled with awe at the relentless effort and commitment of the team of doctors and nurses providing exemplary service at SSSIHMS. Truly a story of Triumph over Trauma.

Vinutha was a young bride when we were first introduced to her by her husband Vittal Joshi, who worked as an engineer in our company at Bangalore. Over the years we were impressed with her dedication to her home and family as a devoted housewife, a caring daughter in law and a loving mother. She was the pillar of her family and home consisting of four members, her husband Vittal Joshi, her mother-in-law Jayashreeamma and her young college going daughter Rachana and herself.

On 24th May 2021 Vittal called the office to get advice concerning Vinutha's sudden illness. He explained she had been suffering from bouts of severe headaches and vomiting over the past three days and today at about 3pm had suddenly slumped at home in an unconscious state. He was advised that it could be an emergency situation and to take Vinutha immediately to our Swamis hospital for a consultation. At SSSIHMS she was admitted as a patient who needed emergency care and her condition was diagnosed by the team of neurosurgeons. Vittal Joshi was told that Vinutha had suffered from a stroke resulting in left side hemiplegia (paralysis). Doctors explained the need for immediate surgery and Vittal had to sign the consent form for Vinuthas surgery for the doctors to perform an emergent decompressive craniectomy surgery.

That was the most crucial moment in the prime caregiver Vittal's life. As her husband he knew that was the best decision for the family, but the responsibility and burden of convincing the extended family members fell heavily on his shoulders. He reached out for counselling support for their entire family. From that moment onward counselling support was provided not only to the patient and immediate family but also to her brother and mother who were passing through the trauma of her sudden and terrifying illness.

Her journey as a patient at SSSIHMS began soon after her admission. In retrospect Vinutha attributes her timely treatment and regaining consciousness entirely to Swami's Grace, the loving care she received from the doctors and cheerful nursing sisters who attended upon her round the clock and provided excellent treatment and the continued counselling support she and her family received over the months. She was blissfully unaware of her serious condition while in the hospital due to the unconditional support she received from the sisters at the hospital. The seriousness of the matter was cloaked in their light hearted conversations with her. They even joked about coming to her house for a meal and this filled her with confidence of a cure and she actually invited them to come home so that she could host and serve a meal cooked by her.

She was discharged on 9th June 2021 and was advised to come back in three months for another surgery. When Vinutha went home she had no idea her left side was completely paralysed and was rudely shocked to realise it took ten people to carry her in a stretcher to her apartment on the second floor. It was only when her neighbours came to visit and kept reiterating how lucky she was to have survived, that she realised the extent of her trauma.

During the three month gap between surgeries Vinutha was given an exercise regimen which she faithfully adhered to under the caring supervision of her husband. Vittal Joshi took leave to work from home to help her recover. She attributes most of her progress to the love and care of her husband and seventeen year old daughter Rachana. Her mother-in-law Jayashreeamma also contributed by taking charge of the kitchen to make sure the family was well nourished. Even though she was often in great pain doing the exercises she was determined to do her best - the grit and courage in her nature predominated and helped her overcome challenges. Soon she progressed from her bed to her wheelchair and then began to walk. With her husband's assistance she manoeuvred the flights of stairs to get to their second floor apartment and also went out with him for short walks.

She was admitted on 15th September 2021 for her second surgery. It was a matter of pride for her that this time she could walk into the Hospital, when three months ago she had been transported through the same doors in a gurney. On 16th September 2021 another cranioplasty using an autologous bone flap was performed and the surgery went well.

She was discharged on 26th September 2021. When she returned home this time she said she felt as though she had returned victorious from battle. The disciplined exercising was resumed under her husband's unflagging supervision.

She was readmitted on 25th May 2022 as an emergency case at SSSIHMS. She had been having intermittent headaches and was concerned when she had discharge oozing from the head from the previous surgery. It was diagnosed as an infection and needed emergency surgery, her third surgery, where the bone flap was removed. During her twelve days' stay in hospital post surgery she was given a course of injections to keep the infection at bay. When discharged on the 5th June 2022, she was told there was another surgery scheduled after three months! Her positive attitude and faith in her God and Swami helped her accept it without any trepidation.

The next three months Vinutha followed all the doctors instructions and concentrated on getting fit. She shared with the counsellor how her faith in Swamy had gone from strength to strength as she believed only His grace could have seen her through all her frustration and misgivings. There were times she would weep with pain and beseech God not to make her dependent on other people for the rest of her life .

She was admitted on 26th September 2022 for her fourth surgery which was performed on 27th September 2022. She underwent cranioplasty using a titanium mesh, which was performed successfully. The doctors advised her that her body would take time accepting the mesh and she would need to be patient. She was discharged on 30th September 2022 with the discharge summary providing detailed medical advice.

Her husband and daughter have stood by her on this long journey of trials and tribulations. Her daughter especially was involved not only in helping her mother but her grandmother as well, while keeping successfully abreast of her studies. In spite of being so young she was in effect a caregiver just like her father.

She had experienced moments of frustration at the slow pace of her mother's improvement and her reluctance to accept being helped all the time. That aside, Rachana now understands that is how recovery works. In her own words, she feels having witnessed her mother's travails and suffering she herself has come out stronger. It has taught her to be more empathetic not only towards her mother but the world at large.

Vinutha realises that recovery from a stroke takes a long time and it will be a while before she comes back to the person she was before it happened. She has found a lot of comfort in rekindling her love for writing in Kannada. At present she is busy writing a novel. As her faith continues to grow through this entire journey she is confident she will recover. She cannot thank Swamy, the surgeons,doctors,nurses and counsellor enough for being with her through every step of this incredibly hard journey.

As their counsellor observing Vinutha and her family navigate through their long and arduous journey from sickness towards recuperation and health I have learnt the lesson of the unfailing power of prayers, love and faith.

Truly an inspiring story of faith in God, Swami and modern medicine.

Jai Sai Ram

Contributor - Sai Counsellor Gita Umesh, HOD Department of Counselling, SSSIHMS, Whitefield.

‘THE LORD WORKS IN MYSTERIOUS WAYS’ - PATIENT DILIP KUMAR DEBNATH’S STORY

Patient Dilip Kumar Debnath, aged 57, from Silchar, Assam, presenting with a history of coronary heart disease was admitted to the cardiology department on 4th May 2024. After mandatory investigations, a POBA (Percutaneous old balloon angioplasty) surgery to mid LAD was done successfully on 6th May 2024 and he was discharged on 7th May 2024. His elder son Dipyaman Debnath, who had accompanied him from Silchar was his caretaker during his stay in the Hospital. Their family deity was Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa in whom they had total faith.Their faith and prayers to their God led them eventually to our Hospital with His Grace being showered on them in a very unusual way.

The Patient’s story here onwards is as narrated by the patient and his caretaker to the counsellor. Patient Dilip Kumar Debnath owns a hardware shop in Silchar. His wife, Namitha, looks after the home. They have two sons, the elder one Dipyaman Debnath works with his father in the family business while the younger one Diptaman Debnath, a scholarship student is studying for a Physics Honours degree. Dilip was a hard working man doing well taking care of his family, when he first lost his 60 year old mother to heart disease and then in 2006 lost his younger brother to it as well. He took the loss of his brother especially hard, resorting to smoking, alcohol and becoming careless about his health. Soon after this new setback it gradually dawned on him that he had to stop relying on substances like cigarettes and alcohol to face life and rethink how he wanted to live. Around this time he became a follower of Guruji Nandaji Maharaj and was given diksha (initiation) by the Guru. Their family deity was Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. It brought him a spiritual stability which bolstered his resolve to get his life back in gear.

Just when everything seemed to be falling into place they had another serious setback.

One day while at work Dilip Debnath suddenly had a serious heart attack. The family was stunned and instinctively reached out to their God, Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, and rushed Dilip Debnath to a hospital in Silchar where the doctors found he had four blocks in the arteries in his heart which needed immediate surgery. He was admitted and the doctors were able to put stents in two arteries but they were unable to treat the other two because of complications and required further consultation.

Desperate for a solution they came to Bangalore with high hopes of getting the required cardiac operation done at a reputed local hospital at no cost under the Ayushman scheme as advised in Silchar. Unfortunately they could not avail of this concession due to procedural issues, they would have to pay the normal rates which they could not afford. Naturally feeling dejected and helpless and praying to their God as they were driving by they saw our Hospital which they thought was a temple! They decided to stop and pray there and were taking permission from the security guard, who let them in and told them this place was not only a temple but also a heart hospital founded by Swami offering free medical care!

At that moment standing inside Swami’s Hospital they felt their prayers were answered and were overcome by a feeling of immense gratitude and relief. As narrated earlier they were treated successfully in our Hospital and returned home happy and healthy.

Dilip Debnath is doing his best to comply with the Discharge Advice given to him by our doctors in his Discharge Summary for his physical well being, while emotionally and spiritually he has found great solace in his faith. Every Sunday he visits the local temple and relives the deep connection he feels to the divine intervention on that fateful day when he entered our Hospital. A picture of Sri Sathya Sai Baba occupies a prominent place in his home and his connection to Swami grows stronger every day and he sees His divine mercy as the reason for him being alive today. He and his son practise the BMRC therapy taught by the Counsellor as they both find it relaxing.

This has been a long and arduous journey for father and son but at the end of it they have benefitted more than they could have ever imagined. In his son Dipyaman Debnath's words "We were vaguely going somewhere but look where we arrived". Dilip Kumar Debnath meanwhile can never forget the blessing bestowed on him by Swamy in routing them via His hospital when they were looking for a solution, and realises how prayers can be answered in unexpected ways.

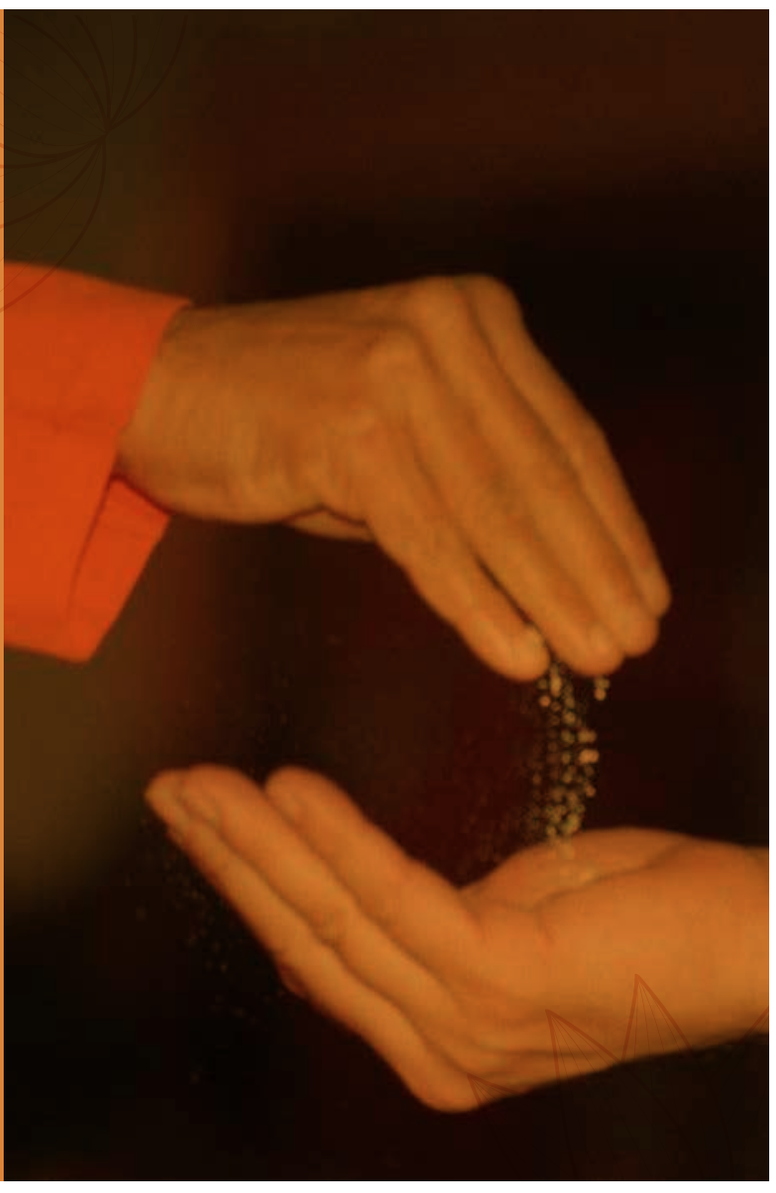
Truly indeed the ways of Swami are mysterious!

Jai Sai Ram

Contributor - Sai Counsellor Lalitha, Department of Counselling SSSIHMS, Whitefield.

"Do not ever think that you and God are separate. Think always, God is with me; He is inside me; He is around me. All there is, Is God. I myself am God. I am the Infinite, the Eternal. I am not two; I am one, only one. There is no one else besides me. I and God are one and the same."

Sri Sathya Sai Baba



’FROM FEAR TO FAITH’ - PATIENT RUMANA KHATUN’S STORY

Patient Rumana Khatun, a fifteen month old baby was brought to our Hospital by her parents Sahabub Hussain and Saina Khatun from their hometown in Behrampur, Murshibad Dt, WB. They sought medical treatment for their child suffering from frequent bouts of colds, coughs, fever and were advised by their local doctor in Behrampur that their child needed a heart surgery which was also confirmed by a reputed hospital in Kolkata. Needless to say this came as a big shock to the family especially since they had consulted their local doctor in Behrampur seeking some medication for their child who was suffering from only a cold , cough and fever. Thus they ended up coming to our Hospital seeking treatment for a cardiac condition warranting a major surgery. She was admitted to our Hospital on 10th April 2024, her parents were naturally the caregivers. She was diagnosed with acyanotic congenital heart disease and underwent a successful PDA device closure on 11th April 2024. She was discharged on 12th April 2024.

During the counselling sessions the counsellor learnt a lot about this young couple, Sahabub Hussain and Saina Khatun, were married just three years back and Rumana was their only child. Sahabub and his brother work as car drivers for travel agencies. They lived in a relatively large joint family of nine members that bonded well which was of great support during the crisis they had to face when Baby Rumana fell seriously ill.

They were devout Muslims and regularly prayed to Allah. They learnt about Swami’s Hospital in Whitefield from one their family member’s friends and supported by Sahabub’s mother, they promptly fixed an appointment and came to Bangalore to our Hospital in Whitefield from their hometown Behrampur in West Bengal.

On the day she was admitted her parents brought her to the counselling department’s shrine area for prayers. Naturally, as parents they had a lot of fear and anxiety regarding their only child’s health. Later, under the guidance of the counsellor they were taken through a session of BMRC therapy after which they said they felt relief from their fear and anxiety. They connected to Allah, while soothing music and their adhan (call for prayer) was being played in the background. They expressed a sense of peace in the ambience of the department.

On the second day during the tele counselling session initiated by the counsellor, Sahabub expressed their relief. He mentioned how all his family members and neighbours were praying to Allah for Rumana’s successful treatment and speedy recovery. At the end of the session, there was a marked shift in the parents towards a positive frame of mind. They are a devout family that prays together every Friday at home and at the mosque. Their faith and surrender to Allah seemed to give them the strength to face the challenges of their situation. Coincidentally, little Rumana’s surgery was done on the day of Ramzan Eid-Ul-Fitr, a sacred day for them. They surrendered to Allah which gave them trust and faith in Our Hospital, and the loving service provided by the doctors, nursing and other supporting staff.

When the discharge counselling was done in the counselling department both parents were very happy that the treatment had been successful. They offered their gratitude to Swami and all the staff. As Sahabub spoke Hindi the counsellor could communicate with him but not with Saina since she could speak and understand only Bengali. The counsellor sensed that Saina as a mother was longing to express her feelings and emotions to the counsellor directly. A Bengali speaking counsellor was brought in to connect with her.

Saina Khatun's voice was full of joy while expressing her feelings and emotions in her mother tongue. She began by saying how well her little girl was doing now. She elaborated on how she felt when she first heard about her daughter's cardiac condition. She had been shattered by the news and when they mentioned surgery as the only cure she was very scared and found herself weeping constantly. She just could not imagine her baby undergoing surgery, also she had no idea what the after effects would be. She felt satisfied only after listening to their friends' reassurance that many children and babies had undergone successful surgeries in Swami's hospital and recovered fully. With her mother-in-law's support they had made the right decision by coming here. With Swami's blessings her daughter is fine now and all her fear and worries got transformed to faith and courage after coming here.

She was very moved by the love and care showered on her child by the doctors and nurses. She also expressed her deep gratitude for all the counselling support received by her and her husband during this very testing time.

A very touching story of a young couple blessed by their God and Swami. A story of faith in modern medicine, intense prayer and steadfast faith in the Grace of a loving compassionate God.

Jai Sai Ram

Contributor - Counsellors Sadhana Rao & Sukanya Chattopadhyay, Department of Counselling SSSIHMS, Whitefield.

"The secret of perfect health lies in keeping the mind always cheerful – never worried, never hurried, never borne down by any fear, thought or anxiety." – Sathya Sai Baba.

‘SWAMI’S HOSPITAL : A HOLY AND HEALING PLACE’ - PATIENT R PATIL’S STORY

Patient R.Patil, from Bangalore, male aged fifty eight years, came to Swami’s Hospital in Whitefield on 16th February 2022 seeking medical treatment for his heart palpitations and high blood pressure. The doctors after listening to the patient and doing the necessary diagnostic tests found that he had moderate AR (aortic valve regurgitation), which did not warrant immediate surgery. He was prescribed medication for his cardiac condition and discharged on 18th February 2022 to be on medical management and asked to come back in May 2023 for another assessment. The doctors also found that he had hernia that needed an operation which would have to wait till the cardiac issues were resolved.

Patient R.Patil was readmitted on 5th June 2023 and diagnosed as requiring an aortic valve replacement. Accordingly he was operated on 19th June 2023 and successfully fitted with a metallic valve. He was discharged on 28th June 2023 cured of his bodily ailment. He was advised to meticulously follow the discharge advice, especially taking the prescribed dosage of Acitrom daily and getting the PT-INR blood tests done monthly, as also the dietician’s advice on avoiding certain foods that would affect the PT-INR values.

He was cured of his bodily illness but for his well-being he also needed the healing of his mind and spirit which was provided by the counsellors of the SAI Counselling Department. Coincidentally he and his wife/caretaker had the same counsellor counsel him and his wife during both his hospital stays, in 2022 and 2023. They had intense faith in their family deity Mahalakshmi and in Swami and total trust in SSSIHMS, Whitefield.

During the various counselling sessions the counsellor learnt a lot about who the person behind this patient was, as also about his wife, Anita. Their family consisted of the two of them, their twin sons, one went to the UK to pursue an MBA program which he has just completed and taken up a job there and the other is studying Astrophysics in Bangalore staying with them, as also his unmarried seventy two year old elder sister. He sounded very proud of his sons and the fact that all his hard work had paid off in educating his sons in the subjects they individually desired. He considered the additional responsibility of looking after his unmarried sister as his duty. Over and above this, their son who was staying with them in Bangalore was suffering from epilepsy since 2021. Mr.Patil is retired and now runs a small property maintenance business. He has always been an active person with no addictions. In his younger days he was a good athlete and a state-level cricketer. It was puzzling to him how he became prone to heart disease.

Five years ago he had experienced hypertension and palpitations and consulted doctors in a private hospital in Bangalore. He was prescribed medication and his symptoms receded. As he felt fine then on, he neglected to go for regular check-ups. Down the line due to COVID restrictions he delayed them even further. Then he began getting excruciating pain in his back and went to a private hospital again. While treatments were being explored for his back he developed a hernia. This time he decided to come to Swami’s hospital as he had been here a year ago to have his son treated for epilepsy.

He was extremely impressed by the entire process of his admission, investigations and the caring staff. He was very keen to do Seva in the Hospital, as he felt it would keep him calm.

Mr Patil and Anita are now very devoted to Sathya Sai Baba.They believe that it is their faith in Mahalakshmi that has seen them through many difficulties, especially their son's epilepsy. Even though Mr Patil had an overall sense of calm acceptance of his cardiac condition, the incidence of his son's sudden epileptic seizures a year ago, his parents demise and the added responsibility of his sister could well have been contributory factors towards his heart condition.

Mr. Patil's wife Anita shared with the counsellor how she felt when her husband was diagnosed with valvular heart disease and had to undergo an open heart surgery for aortic valve replacement. This coming soon after her son had been diagnosed with epilepsy left her feeling as though her whole world had shut down. Her faith and strength derived from prayers gave her the confidence that the Lord wouldn't abandon her during this stressful period. "Under Baba's shelter" her son is much better and her husband has recovered enough to go about his daily business. In her words "I offer koti koti pranams to Baba for His Grace and Blessings on my family."

During his last session with the counsellor he said he has been diligently following the Hospital discharge advice, taking his medication and coming for his PT INR tests, reviews and check-ups. He has been following the dietary advice. His health is good and he feels fine. Anita and he find a lot of strength in prayers. Mr Patil found the BRMC therapy taught in the hospital by the counsellor extremely helpful and practices it regularly. The counsellor also made him aware that this practice could help him when faced with any crisis or stress in the future.

Both Mr Patil and Anita are very thankful to Swamy, and grateful to the doctors, nurses and all the staff of the hospital for the exceptional care during pre-and post surgery. Mr Patil feels fortunate to have been treated in this holy and healing place.

Jai Sai Ram

Contributor - Sai Counsellor Sadhana Rao, Department of Counselling SSSIHMS, Whitefield.

"Where there is faith, there is love; where there is love, there is peace; where there is peace, there is truth; where there is truth, there is God; where there is God, there is bliss."
- Sathya Sai Baba

‘LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL’ - PATIENT BISAL KARMAKAR’S STORY

Patient Bisal Karmakar, a twenty-five year male from Dumdum, Kolkata, came to our Hospital suffering from high fever and chest pain seeking medical treatment accompanied by his mother, Mita Karmakar, as his caregiver. The patient was thoroughly examined and diagnosed as having a left ventricular sarcoma tumour. He was admitted on 12th June 2023 with a cardiac tumour. On 29th June 2023 the surgery was performed successfully, the tumour removed and sent for biopsy. A week later the Histopathology report showed no malignancy but a tuberculosis infection was detected, for which the patient was prescribed DOT (Directly Observed Therapy) regimen and discharged on 9th July 2023.

The above is the medical history of the bodily cure successfully performed in our Hospital. But the goal of our Hospital is ensuring the well-being of the patient through healing of the mind and spirit also so that there is total harmony of the body, mind and spirit. This is the role of the counsellors. The counsellor struck a bond of trust with the patient and his mother, enabled primarily by their sharing the same mother tongue - Bengali, and by her love and empathetic approach. The patient’s journey from Kolkata to final resolution at our Hospital was arduous in more ways than one could be gleaned only by the counsellor as narrated here.

The counsellor could understand the plight of a single mother working in a bag making factory and running a household to help her son move forward in his life. Her life of hardship was very visible in her face while Patient Bisal was more positive having taken up a part time job to augment his mother’s income and was also a second year BA student. Life was going on smoothly for mother and son when like a bolt from the blue a calamity struck them.

On 14th April 2022 Bisal, a young and energetic person, came home from work with a high temperature and chest pain. A local doctor prescribed some medication which only worked for a couple of days before the fever spiked again. In spite of her financial constraints Mita took him to several reputed hospitals in Kolkota with no conclusive diagnosis of his illness. She told the counsellor how as a mother her heart was filled with fear, anxiety and worry. She spent many sleepless nights. With a lot of sadness and tears in her eyes every morning Mita used to sit in front of their family deity Adhya maa praying for her son’s life.

Finally a glimpse of light came into their life. Mita’s friend’s brother informed them about Baba’s Hospital and made an online appointment for them at SSSIHMS, Puttaparthi. They arrived in Puttaparthi in the first week of November 2022. After the initial round of tests as per protocol Bisal was admitted to the hospital on 18th November 2022. Upon entering Swami’s Hospital both Mita and Bisal could feel within them a sense of peace and hope.The doctors and nurses were very compassionate. After further detailed tests and scans the doctors diagnosed Bisal’s illness as left ventricular sarcoma tumour, which needed surgery. They were referred to Swami’s Hospital, SSSIHMS, Whitefield, Bangalore, where the necessary medical expertise was available. Both mother and son were shocked and shattered at the turn of events in their life. They proceeded to Bangalore with a heavy heart.

They arrived at Swami’s Hospital and were directed to proceed to cardiac OPD, where Bisal had MRI, ECO and blood tests done. After the doctors reviewed the results he was referred to a local cancer hospital for further investigations and treatment to be cleared for the cardiac surgery. The very fact Bisal was referred to a cancer hospital struck terror in the Mita’s heart but mother and son stoically accepted that their quest for a cure was not an easy one, and complied. At the cancer hospital a round of three chemotherapy sessions was advised to shrink the tumour. After completing the chemotherapy, Bisal was finally considered ready for the surgery. They returned to our Hospital and he was admitted on 12th June 2023.

While awaiting the surgery the counsellor asked Mita to visit the Counselling department shrine area. The calm atmosphere and the first BRMC therapy session conducted by the counsellor was like a balm to Mita’s agitated mind and made her feel relaxed and calm. She mentioned to the counsellor that Bisal was also very disturbed and needed some reassurance. The counsellor visited Bisal at his bedside in the ward where she spoke to him soothingly and developed a motherly bond which helped to infuse courage and positivity while waiting for the surgery. Bisal spent the long waiting period listening to music and looking at Swami’s large picture on the wall praying and restoring his faith. Till the day of the surgery Mita went every day to the shrine in the counselling department and prayed to her personal deity Adhya Ma and to Swami. During the long wait, both mother and son derived considerable comfort from talking to the counsellor virtually daily either in person or through their mobile phones. Finally the operation was performed successfully on 29th June 2023. Both Mita and Bisal waited calmly for the result of the histopathology report with total faith and trust in Swami and their family deity Adhya maa. When the results showed no malignancy there were tears of joy in Mita’s eyes, while relief was writ large on Bisal’s face.

Mita's gratitude to Swami for giving her son his life back was boundless. She realised that it was largely her faith and prayers that had sustained them throughout, and had empowered her to face the travails encountered. She told the counsellor she would never forget the love and care which she and her son received from all the doctors, nurses and counsellors at our Hospital. She was not only taking back a totally healed son, but also the gift of unconditional love shown to them by the Sai family.

Three months later they connected with the Counsellor when they came for Bisal's check up. Bisal is now keeping well and by Swamy's Grace his medical reports are all normal. He has resumed his part time job and continues with his BA course.

Jai Sai Ram

Contributor - Sai Counsellor Sukanya, Department of Counselling SSSIHMS, Whitefield.

"Life is a challenge, meet it!
Life is a dream, realize it!
Life is a game, play it!
Life is love, enjoy it!" - Sathya Sai Baba

‘GUIDING HAND OF DIVINITY’ - PATIENT ALOKE KUMAR DUTTA’S STORY

Patient Aloke Kumar Dutta, a fifty two year old male from North 24 Paraganas District of WB, suffering from multiple episodes of Syncope (sudden fainting for short durations) in the past year came to our Hospital seeking medical treatment for his illness on 1st April 2024. His wife Mou Dutta accompanied him as caretaker. He was examined in our Cardiac OPD the same day and advised he needed a permanent pacemaker implant. He was admitted to the Hospital and after further tests the doctors found he needed a Permanent Pacemaker Implantation.The procedure was done on 2nd April 2024 successfully and he was discharged on 4th April 2024 with a Discharge Summary containing the Discharge Advice. He was asked to come for a review and check up on 12th April 2024. After that he was told it would only be a routine annual check up. Patient’s wife Mou Dutta was with him throughout.

On the day of his admission they both visited the counselling department and the counsellor noticed Mou Dutta looking very stressed. After participating in a group session of BMRC, Mou and Aloke felt more relaxed and opened up to the counsellor about their long journey filled with trials and tribulations until reaching Swami’s Temple of Healing.

Their family consists of the two of them and a twenty one year old son who is preparing for the entrance exam in the police department. They are a spiritual family, their family deities being Bholenath and Ma Kali. Aloke, having taken voluntary retirement after 21 years service with the Para Military Force, had set up his own business for a while before joining Bengal Gas Company where he still works. He has always lived a disciplined lifestyle and starts his day at 5.15 am. He is a nature lover and avid gardener. He grows flowers, fruits, vegetables and medicinal plants at home. Having been in the military service he was a fit and healthy person.

In December 2023 he had taken up a new hobby of running in marathons. On 29th December 2023 while practising for the marathon he collapsed with his first attack of Syncope, which needless to say shook him up as well as the family considerably. After first aid at a nearby nursing home he was advised to have some tests done.Two days later he had another Syncope attack on the way to work. He was admitted to a hospital in Kolkata for nine days of tests and investigations where they ruled out any cardiac malfunction.

He continued to feel unwell and slept badly after his discharge from the hospital and in desperation consulted a psychiatrist who put him on medication which seemed to help. A month later he was back at work but he didn’t feel like his old self . He considered getting a second opinion and being a concerned and caring wife Mou agreed with him and they both decided to come to Bangalore. On the 26th of February while on the train he suffered another episode in the restroom, severely hurting his foot in the process. With the help of the co-passengers he was brought back to his compartment. When they reached Bangalore the owner of the lodge where they were staying suggested he go to Manipal hospital for a consultation.

A Holter test done there revealed his cardiac malfunction and a pacemaker was advised. This was shocking news to them as they had been told the opposite in Kolkata. While returning from the hospital, trying to digest the frightening diagnosis and its solution, a stranger at the Kadugodi bus stand who happened to be from West Bengal, got talking to them. Hearing about the diagnosis he suggested they go to SSSIHMS, Whitefield because his mother-in-law had recently received excellent treatment in the Neuro department there.

On 1st April 2024 when they came to our hospital, even though they had no prior appointment, on the basis of the previous Holter and other test results they were referred to the Cardiac OPD. They were impressed by the efficiency and sincerity of the doctors. Aloke was examined by a specialist who confirmed a permanent pacemaker implant was essential.

Seeing Aloke and Mou's frightened resistance to having the procedure, the doctor took the time to explain patiently how it would work and it wasn't a procedure to be afraid of, as he would only benefit and be able to lead a normal life. It was a Eureka moment for Aloke as he finally gave his consent. He is ever grateful to that kind doctor for allaying his fears.

During the discharge tele counselling the counsellor was surprised to hear Swami had intervened in Aloke and Mou's life once before in 2008 when Aloke was on Para-military duty in Cooch Behar. When their son had a prolonged illness and wasn't responding to his treatment, their neighbour had given them a photograph of Swamy and suggested they offer sugar candy and pray to Him daily. They attribute their son's rapid recovery to those prayers. Aloke termed it as "Swami's Mahima" and continues to pray to that photo in their Pooja room along with his deity of choice, Bholenath. Mou is also an ardent devotee of Swamy and Ma Kali.

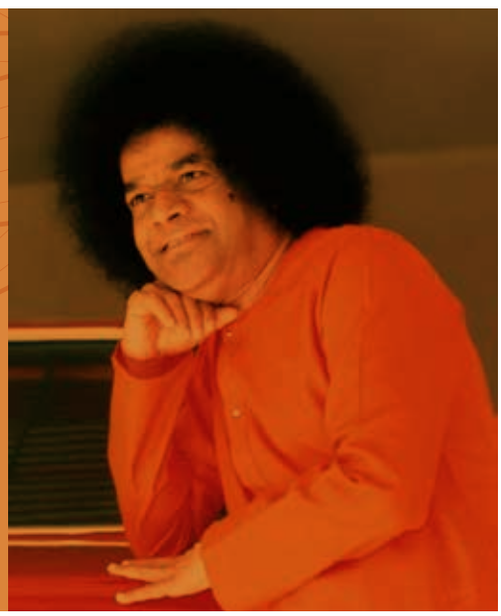
They shared their innermost feelings of gratitude for the unstinting care given by the doctors, staff and the counsellor in our Hospital. Aloke was very impressed by the way the physical healing done by the caring doctors and nurses in our hospital goes hand in hand with the healing of the spirit and mind, which our counsellors do when they support the patients emotionally through the trauma of illness and feeling of helplessness. For Aloke, Swami's hospital remains a place of peace, caring and quietude - a temple. So much so that he would like to do Seva in Swami's organisation.

The manner in which Aloke and Mou in their terrified and undecided state were directed to Swami's hospital by a random stranger is a miracle in itself, as is the fact that Swami had entered their lives in 2008 itself. How can one not wonder about the hand of Divinity in this patient's life?

Jai Sai Ram

Contributor - Sai Counsellor Sharada, Department of Counselling, SSSIHMS, Whitefield.

"The essence of spiritual wisdom lies in apprehending and experiencing the oneness of the trinity of sathyam, jnanam, and anantam."
– Sathya Sai Baba



‘COMPASSION AND CARE THE SAI WAY’ - PATIENT MD REHMAN’S STORY NARRATED BY PARENTS MD TALIK AND ALIA KHANUN

Patient Md Mustafizur Rehman, a three year old boy from Khulna District in Bangladesh was brought to our Hospital by his father Md Tarik and mother Alia Khanun, on 3rd February 2024 seeking medical treatment for frequent bouts of cold accompanied by high fever. The patient was examined at our Hospital’s cardiac OPD and found to be suffering from Acyanotic Congenital Heart Disease. The patient was admitted on 3rd February 2024. Doctors after doing the routine tests diagnosed the patient with ACHD (Acyanotic Congenital Heart Disease). The patient needed an ASD closure surgery which was successfully performed on 5th February 2024. The patient was discharged on 8th February 2024. The patient was prescribed some short term medication and asked to come on 17th February 2024 for review and suture removal.

During their stay in our Hospital the Counsellor connected with them and learnt more about their story from Md Tarik and Alia Khatun, the Patient’s parents and caregivers during his stay in hospital. Tracing the illness the parents had for some time been noticing their child getting frequent colds and temperature and decided to take him to Dhaka heart foundation where he was diagnosed with ASD (commonly known as a hole in the heart) a congenital defect. The patient’s close knit family of grandparents and parents, were very concerned regarding the diagnosis when they luckily came to know of Swami’s hospital through a patient in their neighbourhood, who had undergone successful surgery there.

Both parents work. Father is a driver in Singapore and mother is a primary school teacher in Khulna district. They decided to come to Bangalore hoping to have their child treated in Swami’s hospital. On the day of his admission the counsellor contacted them and they shared their trepidation about their little boy’s impending surgery. As young parents they needed support at such a time. The counsellor assured them their child was in very capable hands and would be well looked after pre and post surgery. She took them both through a session of BRMC with Adhan (call to prayer for Muslims) playing in the background. This calmed them considerably and as Alia says ‘I experienced peace within’.

On the day their child was taken to the OT, the counsellor was surprised to see both parents in the counselling department. Alia looked extremely sad and disturbed and didn’t say much but Tarik told the counsellor he had brought her there because she was dumbfounded after listening to terrible news from home and was in a state of shock - her younger sister had just died in Bangladesh and that her in-laws had murdered her! She was survived by her baby girl. Feeling extremely sympathetic towards Alia, who had to bear the burden of such disturbing news while her little boy was in the OT, the counsellor immediately created a quiet and private space in the counselling shrine for both Tarik and Alia and requested them to sit there and pray to their God. A little while later Tarik regained his composure to leave for the OT where his son was undergoing surgery.

Alia continued sitting quietly in the counselling shrine. The counsellor silently handed Alia the Holy Quran kept in the Counselling Department shrine room. She began reciting verses from the Quran Sharif aloud while holding a photograph of her departed sister.

After Mustafizur Rahman was discharged Tarik and Alia expressed their relief at having their son's health restored. They said their heart was overflowing with gratitude towards the Hospital staff, nurses and doctors for treating their child and them with so much compassion.

Alia said she had come to this Hospital on the basis of hearsay and had hoped at least some of it was true, especially about the wonderful care given to children. She was not only not disappointed but overwhelmed with joy. In her own words she says "After the operation when I was allowed to see my child in the ICU, I felt a bit sad seeing him. But then, I was truly touched to witness the loving way in which the nurses were feeding my child. I felt I am his mother but here the Sisters are taking care of him, better than what I could have taken care of. She could not thank the doctors and nurses enough for the care and understanding bestowed on their child and themselves, as concerned parents. She expressed how coming to the Counselling Department's shrine before the surgery and doing the BRMC allayed some of the fear she had been feeling and also the kindness shown to her on the dreadful day of her sister's death. Being given the Quran and a place to pray had granted her immense peace. ***"I pray that this Hospital will remain like this and continue to treat many more patients".***

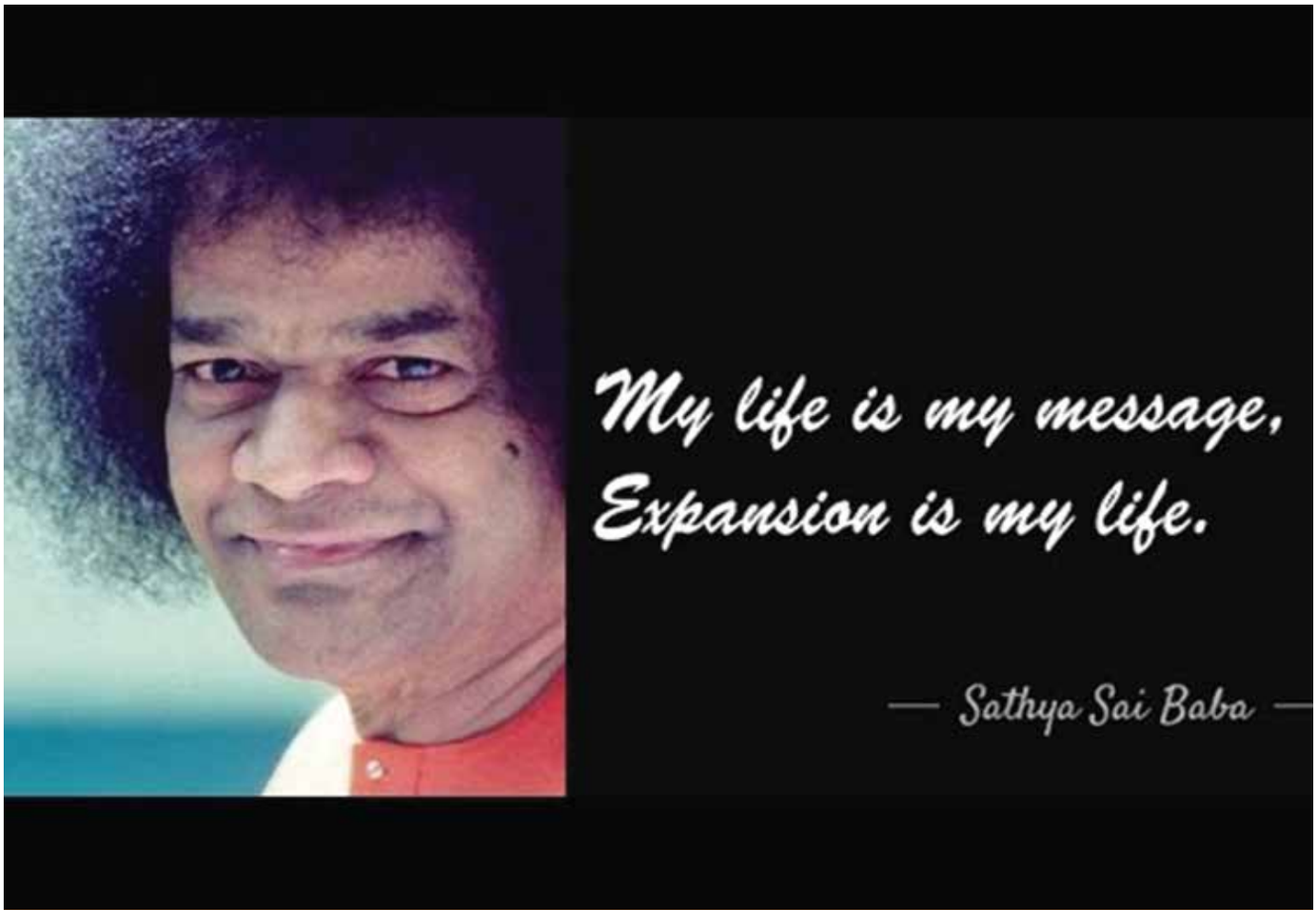
Patients and their caregivers coming from far flung corners of our country and beyond must experience considerable apprehension as to what they will encounter in an unknown hospital, far from their homes. The counsellor connecting with not just the patient but the caregiver at this juncture to build a relationship of trust and confidence to be able to help them emotionally and spiritually is a unique aspect of Swami's Hospital in Whitefield, as illustrated in the case of Patient Mustafizur Rehman's parents, Alia and Tarik.

Jai Sai Ram

Contributor - Sai Counsellor Sharada, Department of Counselling SSSIHMS, Whitefield.

"The best way to love God is to love all and serve all."
– Sathya Sai Baba.

‘SERVICE FOR SAI - AN OFFERING’



On this holy occasion of Guru Purnima 2024, this issue of AntharDhwani XII is dedicated to Sri Sathya Sai Baba, who in His Divine Wisdom founded this tertiary Hospital, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences (SSSIHMS) in 2001, in Whitefield, Bangalore, providing total healing of the Body, Mind and Spirit, completely free of cost for cardiac and neuro patients from all societal categories from all over India and elsewhere. Service to Humanity was the exemplary Message of His earthly sojourn, which also clearly paved the way for ever expanding life.

Sai Baba passed away in 2011, but His Spirit and Divine Energy continues pervading this unique institution, a Temple of Healing. The institution continues to thrive providing solace to the thousands of patients who come here every year seeking medical treatment for their illnesses, a testimony to His Infinite love of humanity.

‘SERVICE FOR SAI’ - AN OFFERING

The guiding philosophy for the SAI Counsellors, Nursing Staff & Nursing College Faculty

College of Nursing Staff

Cardiac Ward Sisters

'Do not look on, when you find someone in pain or grief. As far as possible, relieve the pain, console the grief-stricken'. - Sathya Sai Baba.

Neuro Ward Nurses

Neuro Ward Head & Nursing Superintendent

Neuro Ward Sisters Neuro OPD Executives

Cardiology and CTVS Executives

We are fortunate in being staff members at a very unique Institution, the SSSIHMS, Whitefield, Bangalore, often referred to as 'The Temple of Healing' - we cannot afford to waste this once-in-a lifetime opportunity. The sense of satisfaction and fulfillment that one experiences truly cannot be expressed in words. During Sathya Sai Baba's lifetime from 2001 to 2011, a majority of us had the good fortune to be guided and inspired by the Divine Guru in our daily work, our approach always to be values based - Sathya, Dharma, Shanti, Prema and Ahimsa (Truth, Right Conduct, Peace, Love and Non-Violence). We must always remember that the medical profession is the only profession where the client (Patient) comes in pain and suffering desperately seeking help for medical treatment for his/her ailment.

The Team of SAI Counsellors at SSSIHMS, Whitefield, Bangalore

SAI SANKALPA AND GRACE

MAYO CLINIC

"COUNSELING THE SAI WAY"

Umesh Rao and Gita Umesh, SSSIHMS, Wfd.

2010 Mayo Spiritual Care Research Conference

Spirituality and Health Across the Life Span: Investigation and Application

5 November 2010

2010 MAYO SPIRITUAL CARE RESEARCH CONFERENCE- Comments about the presentation from the session participants.

· Was very nice to have the depth of a different culture than we usually get and found their work very inspiring.

· Loved hearing about how spirituality is incorporated into patients' hospitalization.

· Extremely interesting. Truly, if the mind is at ease, the body can be.

· My favorite session. I also believe that the holistic approach to healing is far more effective than just the medical aspect. This seminar was especially helpful and enlightening.

· Good Material. It was interesting to learn about their SAI counseling.

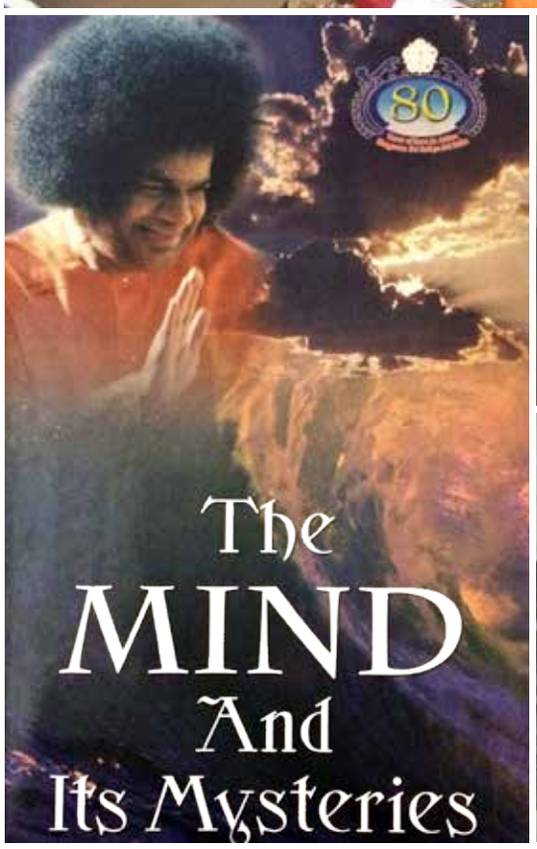
· We can learn much from what they are doing at their hospital in India.

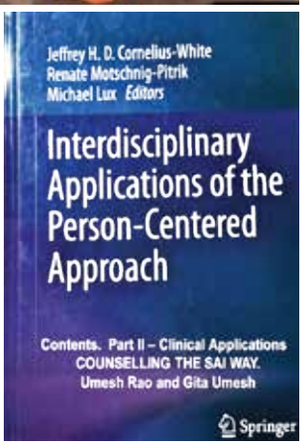
· Thank you! At last, the mind, body and spirit approach I believe in. I loved the comment they made, "Let's open our minds". PS I love Sai Baba!

· Very interesting philosophy, we need to do more health care like that!

· They were amazing, as is this facility and the teachings of Sai Baba.

· Great example of a refreshingly different model of spiritual care.





Layout design- Sailatha Bopanna Aiyappa

" There is only one religion, the religion of love.
There is only one caste, the caste of humanity.
There is only one language, the language of the heart.
There is only one God, and He is omnipresent."
- Sathya Sai Baba.

counsellingblr@sssihms.org.in | https://whitefield.sssihm.org/counseling/anthardhwani/