

# THE MIDTOWNER

BULLETIN OF THE ROTARY CLUB OF CALCUTTA MIDTOWN

President: Rtn. Mayuri Mody Doshi | Secretary: Rtn. Shalini Agarwal | Editor: Rtn. Radhika Sahni  
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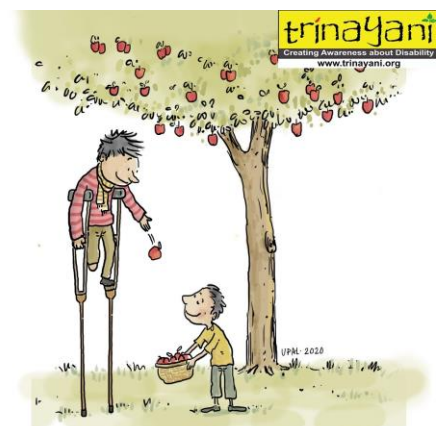
**Guest Editor - Ritika Sahni**

## Inclusion Starts With 'I'

The problem is not how to wipe out the differences,  
 “but how to unite with differences intact” - Rabindranath Tagore.

One group that people and others know very little about are people with disabilities. This lack of awareness and understanding of what it is to live with a disability is very natural as we usually do not study, work, play or even live alongside someone with a disability. This community therefore is almost invisible to us. As a result attitudes towards people with disabilities is often steeped in misinformation and assumptions. You will be surprised to know that people with disabilities are the largest minority community in the world. According to the 2011 Government of India data on disability 2011, there are over 26 million disabled people in India. Activists however place this figure at anywhere between 80 and 90 million people. Disability, like ethnicity and gender is a natural condition of human existence and will be there as long as humankind exists. The challenges for persons with disabilities in India are complex and varied. It would take careful sensitization, focused litigation and most importantly a change in the mass mind-set, for a difference to set in.

**Trinayani: founded in 2006 has been working tirelessly towards creating mass awareness about disability and diversity issues.** Our core objective is to make a difference in the lives of people with disabilities, but the process actually involves seeking the attention and bringing about a change within minds of non-disabled persons through sustained awareness building. Disability awareness to us at Trinayani, is helping oneself and others to change the attitude of ignorance and confusion into opportunities for acceptance and understanding. Some of our initiatives include [Sensitization Workshops](#) depending on the industry and sector, [Inclusive Meetups](#), [The Learning Factory puppet show](#), [Sparsh Foot Spa](#), [Pehli Baarish Inclusive Music Band](#), [Think Ink electoral awareness campaign](#), [Mud Mud Ke Na Dekh radio show](#).



Lets keep it in mind that Disability awareness is good for all and affects us all



Here are a few Disability Awareness Tips that will help open lines of communication

1

Remember, though some people may look, sound, or do things differently, inside, we are all very much the same. So the first golden rule is: Treat others the way you would want to be treated - you can never go wrong by doing that. Everyone is entitled to Human dignity. Empathy is the key.

2

Suspend assumptions of what the person with disability can and cannot do.

3

Lets all use Inclusive language which seeks to treat all people with respect, dignity, and impartiality, to bring everyone into the group and exclude no one.



Moments from Trinayani's diverse initiatives.



### A Little About Inclusive Language

Since, what we say has a serious effect on people around us, we must learn how to use appropriate language. Words have POWER of their OWN. They can Encourage and Empower or Discourage and Dishearten, and this is regardless of Disability. We all want to say and do the right thing, but sometimes knowing the right words to say can be a mystery. Here are examples of words with dignity, a vocabulary that's inclusive and respectful of everyone.

Do Say	Don't Say
People with disabilities	The handicapped or disabled
He has an intellectual disability. She has autism (or an autism diagnosis).	He's mentally retarded. She's autistic
He has a diagnosis of down syndrome. Deaf or hearing impaired, She uses a wheelchair	He's Down's Deaf and dumb He is confoned / wheelchair bound.
He Receives special ed services.	He is in special ed.
She is of short stature. She's little person. She has a learning disability diagnosis.	She's a dwarf / midget. She's developmentally delayed,
He has a physical disability diagnosis.	He is quadriplegic / crippled.
He has a mental health diagnosis. Kids without disabilities.	He's emotionally disturbed / mentally ill, Normal or healthy kids.
Communication with her eyes / device etc. Brain injury, Congenital disability.	Is non - verbal Brain damaged Birth effect
Accessible parking, hotel room etc. She needs..or she uses...	Handicapped parking, hotel room etc, She has problems.
She has a development delay.	She's developmentally delayed.

## Disability Etiquettes

Here are some pointers one can follow while interacting with persons with disability

When talking to a person with disability, speak directly through that person rather than through a companion or a sign language interpreter who may be present.

Treat adults as adults. Address people who have disabilities by their names, go beyond the labels and diagnosis.

When introduced to a person with disability, it is appropriate and polite to offer a handshake.

Listen attentively when you're talking to a person who finds it challenging to communicate.

When meeting a person with visual impairment, always identify yourself and others who may be with you.

When speaking with a person in a wheelchair or a person who uses crutches, place yourself at eye level in front of that person to facilitate the conversation.

If you offer assistance, wait till the offer is accepted. Then listen to or ask for instructions.

Relax! Don't be embarrassed if you happen to use accepted, common expressions, such as "See you later" or "Did you hear about this", that seem to relate to the person's disability .

### **Inclusion is a process, an ongoing journey where awareness building is constant**

Trinayani has recently developed and launched the first-of-a kind, unique, 6-in-1 Card Game kit on disability awareness, "**TOWARDS INCLUSION**" which I extensively use to conduct sensitization workshops with participants across ages, sector and professions.

Along with a panel of experts I have also designed "**En-able**" an annual disability awareness program to help mainstream schools to incorporate disability awareness as part of the school calendar, by blending the different activities thus planned by Trinayani. This year-long program aims to spread awareness, provide knowledge, resources and tools that will equip regular teachers and students to foster an inclusive environment within their academic community.

Our belief in equity and equality finds us exploring various creative media to sow the seeds of tolerance, understanding, acceptance and open mindedness and we look forward to continue to engage with audiences to spread the message of Disability Equality.

In conclusion, I would like to leave you with some words that are close to my heart 'There are two ways of spreading light- to be the candle, or the mirror that reflects it.' The strongest light is the light that shines within you. Our hope for future is that we will honour similarities, respect differences and celebrate diversity. I would like to thank Rotary Club of Calcutta Midtown for The opportunity to share my thoughts and wish each one of you a happy 2023.



Click to hear Ritika answer a few questions on Disability.



**Ritika Sahni**  
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Founder-Trustee: Trinayani  
Singer-Performer  
Trainer, Disability Campaigner  
Member, International Executive Council  
(GEIN) Global Inclusive Education Network



# Anniversary



Rita & Ranjit Sen  
11th December



Suchi & Chetan  
11th December



Nupur & Samir Prasad  
13th December

# Birthday

"Cheers to another wonderful year"



Rakesh Sahni  
13th December



## Editor Speak

As a life- long advocate for individuals with disabilities, Ritika's tireless drive to bring Awareness on Disability to the forefront is extremely commendable. Her efforts are an inspiration to us all. Thank you, Ritika for sharing some important knowledge on disability with us.

Rotary too feels the need to foster change for individuals with disabilities. Rotary's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion has allowed the organisation to put its efforts into bolstering the dignity of people with disabilities worldwide. With the chartering of an E-Club Rotary Club of World Disability Advocacy and the Rotary Disabilities Advisors Group whose mission is to identify and fill the human-rights needs of people with disabilities around the world. Closer to home in 2017/18 we saw the inclusion of individuals with disabilities as members through the chartering of Rotary Bangalore Abilities. I hope this edition encourages all to understand the world of Disability better so that in the near future Midtown too can emulate the passion that our fellow Rotary clubs have shown.

Editor – Radhika Sahni

## Minutes of the Meeting

### ROTARY CLUB OF CALCUTTA MIDTOWN

DISTRICT 3291

Club No. 16155 II Charter Date: 16/06/1975



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**Minutes of the 2109<sup>th</sup> Continuous and 10<sup>th</sup> Meeting for the year 2022-2023 of Rotary Club of Calcutta Midtown, held on Thursday, 24<sup>th</sup> November 2022 at 6.30 pm on Zoom.**

**Meeting called to order:** President Rtn Mayuri Mody Doshi called the 2109<sup>th</sup> continuous and 10<sup>th</sup> meeting for 2022-2023 to order.

**National Anthem:** The National Anthem was sung by all.

**Confirmation of previous meeting minutes:** The 2108<sup>th</sup> continuous and 9<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes for the year 2022-2023 were passed and seconded by Rtn Bhupesh Kapoor and Rtn Sonali Gupta respectively.

**Address by President Rtn. Mayuri Mody Doshi:** She welcomed all Rotarians and Annes.

**Model High School:** To celebrate Children's Day at Model High School Rtn Shalini Agarwal had arranged for a magic show which the children really enjoyed – the younger were awestruck with the tricks while the older ones were trying their best to decipher how they were done. The children too had put up a short but vibrant dance program. Food packets and chocolates were distributed to the children. Suraksha Sikri and Rtns Dr. Surinder Kapoor, Mayuri Mody Doshi, Sonali Gupta, Yugal Sikri, Shalini Agarwal had attended the project.

**Matrishakti:** On 19<sup>th</sup> November 2022 at Rtns Mayuri Mody Doshi, S. Ravi, Bhupesh Kapoor and Dr. Surinder Kapoor along with their spouses Annes Kiran, Shobha, Suman had gone for the Matrishakti project.

- 38 Nutritional Food Grain packets were distributed.
- 3 cases have been completed
- 5 new expecting mothers have been added to the program.

On the way back they stopped for a quick lunch fellowship at a small restaurant. In the month of February, a small celebration will be organized to celebrate the birthday of all the babies born during the Matrishakti project. Dr. Kalyan Sarkar would be organizing a medical camp at the same time. Since it will be a two-day affair, an overnight fellowship will also be planned.

**Cancer Awareness Camp:** On the 20<sup>th</sup> November, 2022 a cancer awareness program, jointly with Rotary Club of Benevolence, was organized in the slum areas near the Ballygunge police station. Dr. Kanishk Sarkar gave a very informative talk to the 50 people who had attended. Apart from this the loudspeakers were placed in such a way that people residing in that area could also hear what was discussed. First aid boxes were distributed to the people who attended. Dr. Sarkar has agreed to the same every alternate month. The next camp will be organized in January.

**Modifications of Trusts:** The modified trust deeds have been Circulated on Mail. Many members have already voted by mail. While a few would like to vote physically during the EGM which will be held on Sunday, 27<sup>th</sup> of November 2022, at 9.30 am in Waypoint on Sarat Bose Road. Rtn Dr. Surinder Kapoor suggested that the EGM should be held both online and offline mode so more members can attend.

**Kolkata Kettle:** Rtn Priti Agarwal suggested that everyone should start sharing the creatives of the exhibition. Members should share contact details of prospective Participants for the exhibition.

**Any other Matter:** She opened the floor for members to share their views.

- Rtn Ankush Khanna suggested that leaflets for cancer awareness should be made and distributed in future camps.
- Rtn Ankush Khanna requested members to share their children name if they were interested in joining the Rotaract club.

**Secretary's Report:** Birthdays: 7<sup>th</sup> December- Rtn Vikram Gupta

8<sup>th</sup> December-Rtn Sunil Agarwal

Anniversaries: 30<sup>th</sup> November - Rtn Vikram Gupta Anne Punam

1<sup>st</sup> December - Rtn S. K Mehra and Anne Shalini

2<sup>nd</sup> December - Rtn Hitesh Dani and Anne Bindu

3<sup>rd</sup> December - Rtn Ravi Kedia and Anne Disha.

7<sup>th</sup> December - Rtn Ashish Bhuwalka and Rtn Ruchira.

**Attendance:** 20 Members / 40% attended the meeting.

President Mayuri Mody Doshi invited the guest speaker for the evening Ms. Priti Jain. She introduced her as an a certified astrologer, numerologist and a tarot card reader. She has done Jyotospraveena and Visharadha from ICAS i.e., Indian Council of Astrological Studies. Currently she is working as a lecturer at ICAS and does private online classes on astrology numerology and



Tarot card reading. Since last three years she has been into Tarot card readings and doing Chart readings. She says Astrology is not a profession but a passion for her. Ms. Priti Jain spoke about the different aspects of Astrology and how even if two people are born at the same time and place what make them have two different kinds of lives, what affects a person and how, among other things. She also spoke about its history. In the end she answered the various questions put up by the members.

**Vote of Thanks:** President Mayuri Mody Doshi thanked Ms. Priti Jain for the wonderful and informative session. She thanked everyone for attending closed the meeting.

**Minuted by-**

**Rtn. Shalini Agarwal**

**Secretary**

**2022-2023**