



WALTAIR TIMES

VOL-28 | ISSUE-9

THE HOUSE JOURNAL OF WALTAIR CLUB



VOL. 28 | ISSUE 9



Women - Down the ages

Women in India - Unity & Inclusion

Emotional Alignment

Managing change and anxiety

Women's Empowerment

Diverse perspectives of empowerment



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From the President's Desk



Dear Members,

As we bid farewell to the vibrant month of March, I am delighted to share with you some of the wonderful highlights and celebrations that have marked our journey together.

March, the month of honouring women on International Women's Day is an opportunity for us to recognize the invaluable contributions of the women within our club community and beyond. Their dedication, passion, and unwavering commitment continue to inspire us all, shaping our club's diverse and inclusive ethos.

March also brought us closer to spirituality and introspection as we celebrated the auspicious occasion of Maha Shivaratri. This sacred festival provided us with a moment of reflection and spiritual renewal, reminding us of the importance of inner peace, harmony, and devotion.

Beyond these celebrations, March has also been a time of unity, friendship, and camaraderie within our beloved club. The annual sports festival for women and children created a lot of enthusiasm and it was a joy to see members participate actively.

Thank you for your continued support, dedication, and enthusiasm. May the spirit of March inspire us to embark on new beginnings and meaningful connections in the days to come.

Best Regards

K. Vamsi Kishore (V-168)

98491 66669

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9849166669

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9393103358

Vice-President's Message

Dear Members,

I hope this message finds you well. I want to express my deepest gratitude to our lady members for their remarkable contributions in honour of International Women's Day.

Their well-written articles about women empowerment have truly captured the essence of this special day, shedding light on the incredible achievements, challenges, and aspirations of women around the world.

As we reflect on the significance of International Women's Day, your contributions remind us of the importance of celebrating the achievements of women, while also recognizing the ongoing work that remains to be done in achieving gender equality and empowerment for all.

I thank senior member, Mrs. Rajeshwari for her graceful contribution in honour of Lord Shiva on the occasion of Maha Shivarathri.

Best regards,

Dr. Murali Krishna Reddy (K-077)
92466 23943



From the Editor's Desk



As we celebrate International Women's Month this March, Waltair Times proudly shines a spotlight on the remarkable contributions of our women members across diverse domains. From historical reflections to contemporary triumphs, this issue is dedicated to celebrating the strength, resilience, and innovation of women everywhere.

Embark on a captivating journey through "Women in India - Down the Ages" by Nandini Sengupta, unraveling the intricate tapestry of women's roles and influence throughout history. Explore the inspiring narrative of Sonia Panda as she navigates the realms of entrepreneurship and motherhood, exemplifying that success knows no boundaries.

Immerse yourself in the exciting world of marketing and cinema with Anita

Nuthakki and Payal Chopra and gain fresh perspectives on leadership from e-commerce consultant Saumya Garuda.

Dive into the depths of inner strength and emotional alignment with Sushma Perla's insightful exploration. Sandhya Godey speaks about the power of gratitude and how volunteering helps us create a difference while Betsy Williams talks about women in leadership roles, emphasizing the importance of clear boundaries and effective communication for success.

In our special feature on Women's Day and empowerment, engage in thought-provoking conversations with Mandira Row, Dr. Sravani Bellam, and Rajini Chitra as they share their perspectives on empowerment and progress.

Here's to celebrating our achievements, amplifying our voices, and championing

women's causes not just this month, but every day.

Happy International Women's Month!

- Deepa Raju Kodali (D-098)

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Hon. Secretary's Message

Dear Members,

Thank you for your unwavering commitment to making a difference and for being a driving force behind positive change within our club and beyond. Your voices matter, and your contributions are deeply appreciated.

Looking ahead, let us continue to uplift and support one another, creating a more inclusive and equitable world for all. Together, we can make a difference.

Warm regards,

B. Lakshman Patro (L-025)

98664 46747



శివం అంటే శుభకరం. శివం అంటే మంగళకరం.

శివుడు శుభకరుడూ, మంగళ ప్రదాత, లయ కారుడు కూడా.
లయ కారుడు అంటే సకల ప్రకృతి నీ తనలో లీనం చేసుకునేవాడు.

శివుడు నాట్య ప్రియుడు, నాద ప్రియుడు.

ఆకుల కదలిక నాట్యం, గలగల సంగీతం.

నదీ గమనం నాట్యం, నీటి గలగల సంగీతం.

ఇలా ప్రకృతి యొక్క ప్రతికదలికా,

ఆయన నాట్య విలాసమే!

భౌతిక నేత్రాలతో చూడలేని కణములూ ,

పరమాణువులలో కొలువై ఉన్న శక్తి, తేజస్సు అంతా ఆయనే.

ఆయన సూర్య కోటి సమ ప్రభుడు.

అంతులేని నక్షత్ర , గ్రహ, తారా మండలాలతో నిండిన ఈ విశ్వ వ్యవస్థ ను ఏక కాలంలో, ఏక మొత్తంగా వీక్షించ గలిగితే అది లింగా కారంలో ఉంటుందని విజ్ఞులు చెబుతారు.

సకల చరాచర ప్రకృతి నీ సదా సృష్టిస్తూ, పోషిస్తూ, అపారమైన కరుణతో తనలో లయం చేసుకునే పరమేశ్వరుడు లింగాకారం లో ఉద్భవించిన రాత్రే శివరాత్రి.

బ్రహ్మ, విష్ణు ల అహంకార, జ్ఞాన తిమిరం నశించిన రాత్రి.

మాఘ బహుళ చతుర్దశి నాడు ఈ అద్భుతం సంభవించింది.

“నేనే ఈ సృష్టికి మూలకారణం కాబట్టి నేనే గొప్ప “అని బ్రహ్మ “ఈ సృష్టి ని పోషిస్తున్నాను కాబట్టి నేనే గొప్ప “అని విష్ణువూ వారిలో వారు యుద్ధానికి తలపడి భీకరమైన సంగ్రామం సలుపుతూ ఉంటే వారి జ్ఞానాన్ని రూపు మాపడానికి పరమేశ్వరుడు తేజోమయ లింగా ఆవిర్భవించాడు.

వారి శస్త్ర అస్త్రాలన్నీ వృధ మై పోగా వారు పరమేశ్వరుని

ఆజ్ఞ మేరకు ఆ లింగం యొక్క మొదలు కనుక్కోవడానికి వరారోహుడై విష్ణువూ , తుది కనుక్కోవడానికి హంసవాహనుడై బ్రహ్మ ఉద్యమించారు.

ఆ ప్రయత్నంలో విఫలమై వెనుదిరిగి వచ్చారు.

విష్ణువు, మొదలు కనుక్కోలేని తన అశక్తను నిజాయితీ గా ఒప్పుకుని పరమేశ్వరుని కృపకు పాత్రుడై పరమేశ్వరుని తో సమానం గా పూజలూ సత్కారాలు అందుకునే టట్టు వరాలు పొందాడు. శివుడు విష్ణువు కి ఈ సృష్టి స్థితి పోషకాల బాధ్యత ను అప్పగించాడు.

ఇక బ్రహ్మ అంతం చూడ గలిగానని అనృతమాడి, ఆయన ఆగ్రహానికి గురై ఒక ముఖం పోగొట్టుకుని చతుర్ముఖ బ్రహ్మ అయ్యాడు. భూలోకంలో గుడులూ, పూజలూ ఉండవని శపింప బడ్డాడు.

బ్రహ్మ పశ్చాత్తాపం తో శరణు వేడుకున్నాడు.

అత్యంత కరుణతో ఆయన మానవులు చేసే ప్రతి యాగం లో మొదటి హవిస్సులు బ్రహ్మ కే చెందేటట్లు , వరం ఇచ్చాడు.

పరమేశ్వరుడి తేజోమయ రూపం ప్రకటితమైన పరమ పవిత్రమైన రాత్రిని మహా శివరాత్రి గా జరుపుకుంటాము.

మహా శివరాత్రి నాడు అభిషేకాలు పూజలు చేసి ఉపవాసం ఉండి శివ నామ స్మరణ చేస్తూ జాగరణ చేస్తారు.

సర్వ సాధారణంగా ఇది అందరికీ సాధ్యం కాదు. అందుకే జన్మానికో శివరాత్రి అని నానుడి వచ్చింది.

అందరికీ ఆ పరమశివుని కటాక్షం ప్రాప్తించాలని ప్రార్థిస్తూ హర హర మహాదేవ! శంభో శంకర!

స్వస్తి.

రాజేశ్వరి A-58



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MEMBER HONOUR



Mr. V S Rao (S-462), a member of CII-CMD since 2008, was recognized as a Distinguished Member for 2023-24 by Dr. Kamachi Mudali, Chairman of CII-CMD. Initially inducted by Padmashri Dr. Baladevraj, he has contributed to corrosion audits in chemical industries and currently serves on three subcommittees. A retired General Manager of HPCL, Mr. Rao has received awards from Nace International India section and various national and state bodies for his contributions to engineering and valuation. He has also held positions in arbitration councils and other professional bodies.

BUMPER TAMBOLA



SUNDAY SPECIAL TAMBOLA



OBITUARY

We regret to announce the sad demise of the following member.



MR.POTLURI PRASANTH (M.NO.P-191)
EXPIRED ON 27.03.2024



MR.Y.PRAVEEN KUMAR (M.NO.P-367)
EXPIRED ON 28.03.2024

CLUB CALENDAR

05.04.2024	Friday	Movie	7:00 pm
07.04.2024	Sunday	Special Tambola	12 noon
08.04.2024	Monday	Ugadi Sambaralu	7:00 pm
12.04.2024	Friday	Movie	7:00 pm
14.04.2024	Sunday	Sunday Bazaar	10:00am
15.04.2024	Monday	EID	7:30 pm
17.04.2024	Wednesday	Sri Ramanavami	6:15 pm
19.04.2024	Friday	Movie	7:00 pm
21.04.2024	Sunday	Annual Sports Bash	4:00 PM
26.04.2024	Friday	Movie	7:00 pm
27.04.2024	Saturday	Bumper Tambola	7:30 pm



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WOMEN IN INDIA: DOWN THE AGES

'Diversity and Inclusion' is frequently used and heard of today but ancient India did not need this because Women of that era were learned, and wise, well versed in the Vedas and Puranas and there was not much problem of exclusion.

To quote Dr BR Ambedkar who said, "I measure the progress of a community by the degree of progress which women have achieved."

Let's see how well we have progressed over the years.

It is seen that the Vedic period was quite kind to the Indian woman and we till today remember the learned women as, Gargi or Mytrei or the poet Khana and her wisdom from the Medieval times.

A husband's spiritual journey was never complete without the wife till there came a transformation from matriarchal to the patriarchal form of society. Priests began to have a major role to play and the importance of the woman was undermined because they were discouraged from participating in rituals and the women became a neglected lot.

The Islamic invasion and the advent of the Mughal dynasty further sealed the fate of the Indian woman and they began to be confined to the four walls of the house. Despite the presence of women like Razia Sultana who rose up in rebel and increasingly showed her power but by and large it was not a rosy picture for the Indian woman. In fact, evils such as Sati, and the Devadasi system among Hindus relegated women to an insignificant position. They became an exploited class with no access to education.

Colonialism did not initially usher in much change and inheritance laws did nothing much to favour women. But gradually with the abolition of Sati, introduction of the widow remarriage act and the abolition of the Polygamy system, Indian women started breathing easy.

Many talented and brave women took part in the freedom struggle such as Matangini Hazra, Pritilata Waddedar, Madame Bhikaji Cama, Begum Hazrat Mahal and others. Besides this there were also women like Rani Laxmibai of Jhansi before them, who fought till her last breath to gain freedom from the shackles of colonial rule that came with its own evil.

Today we can look back and feel proud that we had a woman, Mrs. Indira Gandhi leading India much before other countries did, the first Indian lady doctor Anandibai Joshi in the 19th century and then Kadambini Ganguly qualified more than a century ago. Today there are many more but the percentage is still low in comparison to male doctors. Women head corporates too but the climb to the summit is full of hurdles due to gender bias that unfortunately still prevails.

The average Indian woman's life is hard, it's a daily struggle to balance her domestic or personal life and work life. Many more continue to suffer in our rural areas due to lack of education, malnutrition, preferential treatment, over work, Foeticide, dowry menace, crimes against women both in urban and rural areas and most importantly Trafficking, that people turn a blind eye to.

The Indian Woman, is innately talented and intelligent but she has still not got the place she deserves because the society is still patriarchal at large. Reform movements of the 19th and 20th centuries did positively boost the situation but centuries of suppression are definitely not easy to overcome in a day.

So never give up, try, try and try again till we succeed!



Mrs. Nandini Sengupta

Mrs. Nandini Sengupta (M.No. A-175) born into an illustrious family of Kolkata, is a post graduate from Calcutta University with Hons. in English and has a Bachelor of Education degree as well.

An IELTS trainer, content writer and English language Teacher, Mrs. Sengupta has worked as Headmistress of Siva Sivani School and as an English teacher in many well-known institutions of Vizag. Her passion (inherited from her grandmother) is to serve the underprivileged and her hobbies are painting, cooking, reading and writing. Married to Capt. Aninda Sengupta, she has one daughter.

SONIA PANDA

This Women's Day, read on to know more about some trailblazers who embrace challenges and leave us all wanting to know more. Their journey is a testament to the fact that there is no limit to what women can accomplish.

1) Please tell us about yourself.

I began as a young girl with big dreams, navigating my way through an industry mostly dominated by men. Despite doubts from others, I successfully completed tasks many thought I couldn't. Personally, I've played various roles - daughter, friend, wife, daughter-in-law, and most importantly, mother. Being a mother is my favourite role. As an entrepreneur, I faced numerous challenges starting in the late 1990s, and now I deal with ageism. However, my "never say never" attitude keeps me adapting to changing times.

2) Why support women's empowerment and gender equality?

Firstly, I'm a woman, so that's reason enough to support it. Also, I've missed out on opportunities because of my gender. As women, we empower humanity by raising children. Humanity, in turn, should empower women. By empowering women, we improve society, as we are instrumental in raising children. The UN states that gender equality is a basic human right and empowering women has many benefits, including boosting productivity, economic growth, and development. Greater gender parity could increase global GDP by up to \$28 trillion by 2025.

3) Share a women's empowerment moment that inspired you.

I'm inspired by the women in villages who, against all odds, become leaders in their communities, promote education, preserve traditional arts, and contribute to their families' livelihoods through hard work. They challenge unjust rules and create better lives for themselves and their families. Every woman has a story that can be more inspiring than any moment I could share.

4) Why we need more women in leadership:

While I believe leadership should be based on merit rather than gender alone, research shows that organizations with gender-diverse leadership are 25% more likely to outperform competitors. Women bring unique perspectives, teamwork skills, and decision-making styles that lead to increased innovation and overall better performance.

5) How can we expand women's links to each other e.g. mentorship, coaching, and networking?

Firstly, women must support each other. We need to break ingrained norms and not feel threatened by or threaten other women's growth. Women should have access to traditionally male-dominated skills like carpentry and plumbing. Also, we should accept men in roles traditionally seen as for women only, and not look down on the idea of a "house husband."

6) As an entrepreneur, what advice do you have for women who are just starting their careers?

- Continuously learn new skills to build confidence.
- Don't be afraid to negotiate for what you deserve.
 - Have a long-term plan but remain flexible.
 - Strive for financial independence.
 - Learn from the mistakes of others, including your mothers'.

7) How do you achieve a work-life balance?

- Take care of yourself through exercise and hobbies.
- Set boundaries by disconnecting from work.
- Don't hesitate to ask for help.
- Get enough sleep.
- If married, ensure your partner is involved in all aspects of life.

8) What makes you a strong woman? What fulfils you?

- Having financial security.
- Surrounding myself with positive people.
- Showing resilience, assertiveness, and self-belief while continuously growing.
- Finding purpose and passion in both personal and professional endeavours.
- Contributing to the empowerment of other women.

I continuously strive to learn and improve, and I'm currently a visiting faculty member at a prestigious college, teaching "Shipping and Logistics," which is one of the small steps I'm taking towards personal fulfilment.



Sonia Panda

Sonia Panda M.No. N-77 is a partner at Visakha Trades. Under her visionary leadership, Nilachal Shipping flourished, expanding its footprint to Visakhapatnam, Tuticorin, and Bangalore by 1998. Soon, she emerged as the only female shipping agent in the southern region, breaking barriers and shattering stereotypes along the way.

Though Sonia's journey took a personal turn with marriage and motherhood, she continued to pursue her academic aspirations, earning her second MBA in Finance from IIM-Kozhikode in 2008. She is also an avid solo traveller, teacher and philanthropist.

BETSY WILLIAMS ///

1. Why do you support women's empowerment and gender equality?

Supporting women's empowerment and gender equality is essential because it fosters equality, diversity, and inclusivity in society. When women are empowered, they can participate fully in decision-making processes, contribute their talents and perspectives, and pursue their goals without discrimination or barriers. Additionally, promoting women's empowerment helps address systemic inequalities and creates a more just and equitable world for everyone.

2. Share a women's empowerment moment that inspired you.

Every woman holds a unique power to inspire us, often as silent influencers in our lives. From the moment of our birth, mothers empower us, shaping us into the individuals we become. The sacrifices women make for our well-being and growth are immeasurable, and their contributions are invaluable.

3. Why do we need more women in leadership?

They bring fresh ideas and different perspectives. It's fair for women to have equal opportunities. Women leaders inspire others. More voices at the table lead to better decisions.

4. How can we expand women's links to each other e.g. mentorship, coaching, and networking?

Experienced women can mentor or support other women who are eager to learn. By sharing their own experiences and life journeys, they can inspire other women to pursue their goals despite any challenges they may face.

5. What advice do you have for women who want to work in a male-dominated field?

Trust in yourself and don't hesitate to seek support when necessary. If you ever feel uncomfortable or harassed at work, don't stay silent—speak up. Your thoughts and ideas matter, so don't be afraid to share them openly.



Betsy Williams

6. What makes you a strong woman? What fulfils you?

My never-give-up attitude, coupled with unwavering support from my family, has been instrumental in my journey. I'm immensely proud to have achieved the historic milestone of becoming the first female Vice President in the 300-year history of the National Council of YMCAs.

7. How do you achieve a work-life balance?

Balancing work and life require having clear boundaries, organizing tasks by importance, and allocating time for relaxation and hobbies. Effective communication with your employer about your needs, delegating tasks when feasible, and

prioritizing self-care are crucial. Make a conscious effort to detach from work during non-working hours and cherish meaningful moments with family and friends.

Dr. Betsy Marilyn Williams, a second-generation entrepreneur, is engaged in customs clearance for exports and imports, as well as domestic seafood trading at Merilyn Shipping & Transport. She was elected unanimously as the first-ever female Vice President of the National Council of YMCAs of India.

With a PhD in English from Andhra University, Betsy has a passion for teaching, having previously served as a lecturer at VMC Mahila Vidya Peeth Degree College.

Hello Payal, why do you support women's empowerment and gender equality?

Women's empowerment is a critical aspect of achieving gender equality. Every individual, regardless of gender, deserves to have equal opportunities, rights and access to education, employment and resources. Women's empowerment and gender equality are fundamental human rights that helps create a more just and balanced society where everyone can thrive without discrimination.

Moreover, in today's world with rising costs, inflation and expenses, women can be equal contributors to the family income. When women have equal access to education, employment and financial resources, they contribute significantly to their household income and to the economy overall. Also, educated women are more likely to participate in decision-making and contribute positively to their communities.



Payal Chopra

Supporting women's empowerment and gender equality is just the right thing to do. It aligns with the ethical principles of fairness, justice and respect for all individuals, regardless of gender.

Share a women's empowerment moment that inspired you.

There have been so many developments in the last decade or so which aim to empower women such as equal property rights, also mandating at least 1 woman representative in the board of directors of companies, formalising POSH at the workplace or the recent diversity and inclusion agenda of most MNCs (and also some Indian companies) which includes enhanced hiring of women and so on.

There was a time, when as a child, I had wished to see more women flying aircrafts (fighter or commercial), more women in front line combat roles in the Indian Army or having women in the Merchant Navy (which were traditionally male bastions) or even having a woman Prime Minister (Smt. Indira Gandhi) or even a woman President of our country. These developments have finally taken shape over time. That, to me, is a true testimony of women's empowerment.

Personally, I have almost always worked in male traditionally male dominated fields such as the paint industry and passenger car tyre industry and have always been successful. We have now broken the glass ceiling with women leading teams in what we know as traditionally male dominated domains. Once seeing me turnaround the company's profits in a paint company that I worked for, my boss complimented me saying that he made the right choice by hiring me and that 'the best man for the job now is a woman'. Having said that, it helps to have supportive male colleagues and bosses and one is truly grateful for that.

Why do we need more women in leadership?

Women make up roughly half of the global population, yet are often underrepresented in leadership roles across various sectors. Women bring in different life experiences, perspectives and leadership styles to the table. It's no surprise that women leaders generally excel at soft skills. Most are considered to be natural nurturers who are more sympathetic to their teams. As a result, teams perform better because they are able to connect seamlessly and foster a supportive and encouraging work environment.

Women executives usually are also highly proficient at handling crises in the workplace. On the occurrence of such an event, they usually have the ability and characteristics to control the situation and help reduce their co-workers' anxiety. Women bring out different communication styles, problem-solving approaches, conflict resolution strategies to leadership roles, which can lead to more balanced and well-rounded decision-making processes. Also, increasing gender diversity in leadership ensures that a wider range of viewpoints is considered in decision-making process, leading to more innovative and effective solutions. It helps create more inclusive and equitable workplaces and societies. Studies have shown that diverse teams including those with gender diversity make better decisions.

At corporates and businesses, diverse leadership teams are better equipped to understand and address the needs of diverse consumer bases, leading to increased innovation and market competitiveness. Corporates, especially MNCs, now have a larger commitment to diversity, inclusion and social responsibility which can enhance their reputation and stakeholder trust.

Moreover, having more women in leadership roles provides role models for younger generations and signals that women can succeed and thrive in any field or industry.

Overall, every individual, regardless of gender, should have the opportunity to fulfil their leadership potential and contribute their skills and talents to society, whether in corporates or self-owned businesses (small, mid- sized or large) or as entrepreneurs, in NGOs, as volunteers for any social cause or just about in any area of life.

How can we expand women's links to each other e.g. mentorship, coaching, and networking?

Expanding women's connections to each other through networking, coaching and mentorship is crucial for fostering support, empowerment and professional growth. Some strategies to achieve this include creating or supporting networking groups for women in various industries or professional fields. These groups can provide opportunities for women to connect, share experiences, exchange ideas and offer support to one another. Another way to do this is to host events, workshops, seminars and conferences focused on women's leadership, career development and skill-building which can serve as platforms for networking, learning and mentorship.

One can also leverage online platforms and social media networks to facilitate connections by creating dedicated groups or forums where women can network, seek advice and share resources and opportunities. It would be good to also encourage coaching and mentorship relationships between women at different stages of their careers. Younger women can benefit from the wisdom and guidance of the more experienced professionals, while seasoned professionals can gain fresh perspectives and insights from younger generations, making it a win-win situation for both.

By implementing some of these strategies, we can expand women's connections to each other, strengthen their professional networks and create opportunities for mutual learning, support and growth.

What advice do you have for women who want to work in a male-dominated field?

Always do your best and treat yourself as a professional and a contributor and not just as a woman. Earn the respect of your colleagues by being result oriented and successful at your job and more importantly take ownership of your team and be not just a good team leader but also a good human being. It's important to respect your peers and colleagues but always speak up for what you believe is right and fair. Try and be factual in your decisions and have data handy to support important decisions. Walk the talk and be authentic and credible at all times. It also helps to have a senior leader as your mentor and get the support of the leadership team, especially of women leaders, where possible.

Moreover, upskill yourself and be enthusiastic about learning more and adding value rather than thinking it is a man's job. If you are hired, you are an equal who has been given an equal opportunity, so prove yourself by being the best version of yourself.

It helps to follow the mantra 'do unto others as you would expect them to do unto you'. It's not only about 'give and take respect' but also how you earn it through your actions.

What makes you a strong woman? What fulfills you?

To me, being strong is being positive, confident and resilient during difficult times as well as having a clear sense of purpose and vision. I like to stay focused and committed to my priorities.

What fulfils me is seeing things through from start to finish and seeing my efforts bear fruit. It's equally important to make my family proud of me.

Payal Chopra (M.No. P-180) is a marketing professional with over 23 years of work experience in building brands and driving successful marketing campaigns, with 10+ years in FMCG Marketing, 6+ in Decorative Paints and Passenger Car Radials. She has comprehensive experience in the Marketing function (brand / product / innovation / activation / channel marketing / consumer research / PR) and has deployed strategies to grow market share and grow businesses profitably.

Personally, Payal believes we never stop learning in this fast-paced 'VUCA' world. In an endeavor to upskill herself, she recently completed her Senior Management Program from IIM, Calcutta (Jan 2023 - Feb 2024). Some of her interests include travelling to new places and trying out different cuisines. She loves music and reading books. Payal would like to write a book someday which hopefully becomes a best seller.

ANITA NUTHAKKI

Hi Anita, please tell us why you support women's empowerment and gender equality?

Gender equality is a fundamental human right, and having more women in leadership position is crucial for creating a more equal and fair society. When women are represented in leadership roles, it not only promotes gender equality but also brings diverse perspectives, experiences, and ideas to the table. This diversity can lead to better decision-making, more innovative solutions, and a more inclusive work environment.

Share a women's empowerment moment that inspired you.

Indra Nooyi is an exemplary figure in the realm of women's empowerment. As the former CEO of PepsiCo, she shattered glass ceilings and became a trailblazer for women in the corporate world.

Why do we need more women in leadership?

Women bring different life experiences, perspectives, and approaches to problem-solving, which can lead to more innovative and effective solutions.

How can we expand women's links to each other e.g. mentorship, coaching, and networking?

Building a circle of friends can be a powerful way for women to support each other and expand their networks. Here are some strategies to help women build and strengthen their circle of friends:

1. Participating in women's groups or organizations can provide opportunities to meet like-minded women with similar interests and goals.
2. Volunteering for causes you care about can connect you with other women who share your passion. Working together towards a common goal can help form strong bonds of friendship.
3. Social media platforms can be a great way to connect with other women, especially those who share your interests or professional goals. Joining online communities or groups can lead to meaningful friendships.
4. Be open to meeting new people and approachable in social situations.

By actively seeking out opportunities to meet new people and building meaningful connections, women can expand their circle of friends and create a strong support network to help them navigate challenges and achieve their goals.

As a marketing professional, what advice do you have for women who are just starting their career?

The field of marketing is constantly evolving, so it's important to stay curious and keep learning. Stay up-



Anita Nuthakki

to-date with the latest trends, technologies, and best practices in marketing to remain competitive in the industry.

Attending industry events, joining professional organizations, and connecting with other professionals can provide valuable insights, opportunities for collaboration, and career advancement.

How do you achieve a work-life balance?

Finding the right work-life balance is a highly personal journey. What works for one person may not work for another, and it can also change depending on circumstances and priorities. Regularly reflecting on your work-life balance and making adjustments as needed is key to maintaining a healthy balance that suits your needs and goals. Flexibility and a willingness to adapt are important as you navigate your career and personal life.

What makes you a strong woman? What fulfills you?

Taking risks and willingness to embrace change has helped me grow, learn, and become a stronger and more resilient person.

Anita Nuthakki (M.No. I-28) has worked with leading entertainment companies such as Times of India, Group M, Sony Pictures Entertainment, Universal Pictures, PVR Pictures before beginning her career as a producer at Lion Tooth Studios.

Her filmography includes some of the highest grossing block-buster films such as Casino Royale, Quantum of Solace, No Time to Die and KGF 2 to name a few. Anita is also a partner at the well-known firm, Shaurya Constructions with her husband Inder Nuthakki.

SAUMYA GARUDA

Hi Saumya, please tell us about yourself.

Hey there! I am Saumya Garuda, an e-commerce consultant at Manimal Tales. With a passion for digital commerce, I've recently transitioned into this exciting career path. Outside of work, I'm usually reading a new book, spending time with my adorable pup or brainstorming new hobbies to explore! I'm also a firm believer in the importance of self-care - I enjoy my long walks, spa days and the occasional cooking adventures.

Why do you support women's empowerment and gender equality?

I support women's empowerment and gender equality because everyone should have a fair shot at chasing their dreams, no matter their gender. It's about creating a world where everyone's talents and ambitions are valued equally, and no one gets held back because of outdated stereotypes. Plus, let's face it, when women succeed, we all win – it's a win-win for society!

Why do we need more women in leadership?

We need more women in leadership because it brings fresh perspectives and ideas to the table, leading to better outcomes and a more inclusive work environment. Seeing women in leadership inspires confidence in future generations and breaks down outdated notions of who can lead. Plus, diverse leadership fosters an environment where everyone feels valued and empowered to contribute, leading to greater overall success and fulfilment.

How can we expand women's links to each other e.g. mentorship, coaching, and networking?

To expand links in terms of mentorship, we could have mentorship circles where experienced professionals provide guidance and support to those just starting out. Hosting fun coaching sessions focusing on women's growth and development can boost skills and self-belief as well. And hey, why not have a Women's Networking Gala at Waltair Club? It's the perfect way to bring together amazing women from all walks of life for some inspiring conversations and connections!

As an e-commerce consultant, what advice do you have for women who are just starting their career?



Saumya Garuda

As someone who is also relatively new to the field, my advice is - trust yourself and your instincts, and do not hesitate to seek guidance when you need it. Stay adaptable and open-minded, as the e-commerce landscape is constantly evolving. Lastly, prioritize continuous learning and skill development because this field is always changing. And most importantly, never forget your worth—you bring something special to the table, so own it!

How do you achieve a work-life balance?

Balancing work and life is all about setting boundaries and prioritizing what truly matters. I

make sure I take regular breaks to recharge and spend time with loved ones. I find that staying organized not only helps me manage my work effectively but also creates space for activities that rejuvenate me, such as hobbies or exercise. And most importantly, I remind myself that it's okay to say no and take time for self-care when needed.

What makes you a strong woman? What fulfills you?

My strength comes from pushing through tough times, chasing my dreams with determination, and bouncing back when things get tough. What fulfills me is making a positive difference, whether it's through work, helping others, or standing up for what I believe in. Plus, personal growth and sharing special moments with loved ones brings me so much joy. In the end, it's all about making progress, building connections, and leaving a little bit of goodness wherever I go.

Share a women's empowerment moment that inspired you.

Whenever I see a woman lending a hand to another, big or small, it warms my heart. In a world that sometimes pits us against each other, supporting one another feels like a rebellious act of love. It's a reminder of girl power and how we can lift each other up. This sense of solidarity fuels my optimism and reminds me of the importance of women empowering women.

Saumya Garuda (M.No. S-1195) is an e-commerce consultant. She has a Bachelors in Business Administration degree from GITAM University. Saumya enjoys swimming, reading books & Netflix.

Welcome to Waltair Times' special feature on Women's Day and empowerment. Today, we have the privilege of engaging in a conversation with three remarkable women who embody the spirit of empowerment in their respective fields. Join us as we explore the path towards a more inclusive and equitable future.

Editor, Deepa Kodali was in conversation with Mandira Row, Dr. Sravani Bellam and Rajini Chitra

Why do you support women's empowerment and gender equality?

Mandira: Equality is a human right. We support women empowerment to create better lives that will not just benefit women, but everyone around them. When you light a candle, you brighten up a room and the more candles you light, the brighter the room becomes. Also, I just want to add that, it is important to question what equality are women looking for exactly. Patriarchy as a concept has been detrimental for both men and women.

Sravani: One woman makes a difference but together we can change the world.

Rajini: Over the past 25 years, I've had the privilege of working alongside a team of 350 women and interacting with women from various backgrounds daily. It's disheartening to witness how societal norms and entrenched patriarchy continue to condition them, leading to emotional, financial, and social dependency issues. However, empowering them to break free from these challenges, not only for the betterment of their children but also for their well-being, is our constant endeavour every day.

Are women raising responsible men? Are men learning equality?

Mandira: For true equality it is the duty of the majority (in this case, men) to stand up for the minority (women). When they have the power, they must use it for the right reasons. And as women, it is our duty to choose these men, raise these men and build these men.

Sravani: However modern we are, when we go higher up, it's only men who get leadership positions. You see only 10 percent of women in leadership positions. There is a great need to balance this.

Rajini: We have a section conscious about this and making an effort, but at the same time, some sections of the population are not understanding the importance of teaching responsibility. It's not about equality. Men and women are not equal. They are different. Each one of them needs equal opportunities. I believe the need is for equity not equality. Are men learning equality? Yes, if they are forced to. They still need to change their mindset when it comes to women and how to treat and respect them as coworkers. There are some men who are naturally inclined to this,

but only some. It might be a result of their upbringing. From my experience, many men don't yet understand how to see and treat women beyond their gender.

Share a women's empowerment moment that inspired you.

Mandira: When I see a woman try anything for the first time, I see it as inspirational.

Sravani: Seeing specially-abled girl children from Campus Challenge rehabilitation centre in Vizianagaram make bags and retail them at Sunday Bazaar in Club was very inspiring for me. This gave me a profound sense of hope and resilience.

Rajini: I believe every woman is a hero in her own unique way. There have been many such moments, but recently, we invited a nationally recognized female athlete to our event. We were thrilled to see her mother, who had worked with us in a very basic position, come to us and share her story. It was inspiring to see her go beyond her struggles and pave the way to raise another, stronger woman. Seeing that girl as the chief guest at our school event, with her mother sitting beside her, was a moment of pride and happiness for all.

Why do we need more women in leadership?

Mandira: Women have been conditioned all their lives to multitask, but most importantly women tend to be better leaders because of their ability to balance emotional and practical decisions, which help make better decisions.

Sravani: Women represent almost about 50 percent in gender ratio so if there are not enough women to represent you in a leadership role, most likely a man will be making that decision for you.

Rajini: According to me, there is no question of more or less; in fact, none of the statistics could ever be clear. In some areas, there is a need for more women leaders, and vice versa. Women in leadership bring diverse perspectives, foster inclusivity, and enhance decision-making, paving the way for another. It is also not about favouring one gender over another but recognizing that diverse leadership teams lead to a more feminine gaze and perspective.

How can we expand women's links to each other e.g. mentorship, coaching, and networking?

Mandira: If you ask me, this should start from school. Girls from a young age need to be educated about their capabilities by other women. That, one woman's win is all the women's win. Networking for young girls is important and mentorship by young women leaders from various professional fields should be introduced. Girls should be exposed to various fields they could take on and open up their minds to various possibilities of lives they could make for themselves, choosing for themselves.

Sravani: Conferences and networking with women in positions, mentoring your juniors, and introducing them to each other.

As a dermatologist I'd say - Firstly, take advice from your seniors or colleagues.

It's definitely tough to survive, but don't get commercial to earn more money; being genuine will always help you in the long run.

Try to help if someone asks for your help when you are in a position to help.

Rajini: Here I would say, let us leave networking to the women themselves; they will do wonders. All women empowerment schemes and programs need hand-held support and guidance, not hastily put-together ones. Organizations need consistent hand-holding until results are achieved, with smaller groups having a stronger presence on social media.

What advice do you have for women who want to work in a male-dominated field?

Mandira: While it's hard being the minority in a workplace, it is important to own your position. If an organisation does not allow you to have a voice, opinion or equality, it's not meant for you.

Spend your energy in a space you will be cherished and heard.

About your question for male dominated professions, it is important that we hear what the majority has to say. What do men think about women in these professions. We need to hear how better opportunities can be gained.

Sravani: Continuously learn and improve. Stay updated on industry trends, enhance your skills, and seek out opportunities for professional development.

Remember, you have the power to challenge stereotypes and make a significant impact in any field you choose to pursue.

Rajini: See people as people, beyond gender. When you become a woman, they will be a man. Treat them just as a person. They will eventually respond to you as one.

How do you achieve a work-life balance?

Mandira: I'm not really the best person to answer this question. I have fewer personal commitments compared to my contemporaries.

I see working moms and single parents in a big city, making time for their work, their children and their ageing parents while maintaining a social life. And they make it look like a piece of cake. It's admirable really.

I guess, if we truly enjoy what we do, and are passionate about our work, and the life we want to lead, the balance will come on its own.

Sravani: It's a myth to have work-life balance. We as women constantly have the guilt of not doing better for our family or at work, so try to feel less guilty because you are doing your best.

Rajini: I don't subscribe to the concept of work-life balance. When you draw a strict line between work and life, conflicts arise. At various stages of life, certain priorities will emerge, and you'll devote yourself to them. Whether you're at work or at home, you're still the same person. Be fully present wherever you are and give your to whatever needs you the most at that moment.

What makes you a strong woman? What fulfils you?

Mandira: My people. I surround myself with strong and supportive women and men who empower me.

Sravani: My family and friends, of course. Every time I do an activity in Young Indians, be it a health camp, sensitising children or helping villagers I feel fulfilled.

Rajini: In every moment and situation in life, I see myself totally gathered and at times detached and unaffected. It makes me more empowered to see beyond emotions and conditioning and respond as needed. My intensity toward everything in life is another strong presence.

What fulfils me? I am in present in every moment totally, that fulfils me and makes my day, week and in turn every interaction fulfilling.

Mandira Row (M.No. M-264)

has a Diploma in Art and Design from Srishti School of Art and Design and is resident curator at the Amarnath Sehgal Private Collection in Delhi.



Dr. Sravani Sandhya (D-105)

is a senior dermatologist and owns Aura Skin & Hair Clinic. She also serves as the Co-Chair for CII Young Indians, Visakhapatnam Chapter.

Rajini Chitra (S-591) has an MS in Electronics and Electrical Engineering and an MA in Psychology. Rajini is the Academics Director of Pollocks Schools from the past 28 years.



SANDHYA GODEY

Speaking Chalk

One reads quotes on different topics ever so often. They touch a chord within us based on our experiences. It's only when we experience certain situations that we realise that quotations must be the result of someone's own experiences or observations. This point of view hit home very strongly when I was looking for quotations to print on coffee mugs to give to all Speaking Chalk volunteers. I had a hard time narrowing the quotes down to just one. All of them rang so true and seemed to exemplify what Speaking Chalk volunteers have been doing - week after week - for the last seven years.

For the many who haven't heard of 'Speaking Chalk' - it is a volunteer group effort to teach spoken English to school students who do not have English as part of their home environment. The importance of spoken English is a given in today's world, where despite translation software, English is needed in almost all spheres of activities.

Every Thursday, Speaking Chalk volunteers reach the school full of enthusiasm, innovative teaching ideas and a whole lot of love and patience for their students. Basics of grammar and spoken language are taught by way of games, competitions, drama, role play, action etc. These informal teaching methods ensure eager participation by the students and also help in retaining the lesson by way of various associations.

There are many Waltair Club members - Vijay Atmakuri, Hymavathi Garuda, Shravya Garuda, Sruti Kondragunta, Anita Pakki, Shruti Mullapudi, Madhuri Colluru, Jansi Tripuraneni, Shilpa Colluru and yours truly, Sandhya Godey who are among the current batch of volunteers.

"Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they just have the heart." ~Elizabeth Andrew

Though the beginning of this effort was not intended to be a group activity, the sheer necessity of teaching all classes from class 1 to class 10 necessitated involving more than just me and I am eternally grateful to all my friends, their friends and their friends for joining this effort and proving all the quotes below as being absolutely true.



Sandhya Godey



"You make a living by what you get. You make a life by what you give." ~Winston Churchill

For the first time since Speaking Chalk came into being, we decided to have a year-end program to showcase the learning that the students imbibed as a result of our efforts. All 25 of us volunteers and all our respective students at the Prema Samajam schools gave it our best effort.



The high that comes from hard work and dedicated effort paying off is something only someone whose been there and done that will truly understand. What a wonderful surprise it was for all of us volunteers and to the guests who made the time to watch the show and encourage the students and us volunteers. The confidence, the clarity of speech, the knowledge of what they were sharing on stage and the dramatic talent came to the fore in a wonderful culmination of our year- long effort. Our sincere gratitude to Justice DVSS Somayajulu, former Judge of the AP High Court (also a Waltair Club member and ex-President of the Club) for kindly consenting to be the Chief Guest for the occasion.

A wonderful range of performances with the students enjoying the process of rehearsals, getting dressed and finally hearing the applause for all the effort they put in. The confidence this exposure has given them will go a long way in their self-belief and will to push

themselves into uncharted territory in the future. A heartfelt thank you to the many friends for their support by way of being an appreciative audience and for cheering the students and the volunteers.

PS: Classes for the next academic session will begin mid-June 2024. Anyone willing to make one hour every Thursday, please feel free to reach out.

Sandhya Godey (M. No. R-185) is the founder of Speaking Chalk and director of Lit Lantern. She has also served as a member of the editorial committee of the Waltair Times and twice as chairperson of the ladies committee.



YOUR INNER GAME

In any game, sport or otherwise, we have multiple levels that we need to work through to get to the end. We need to work harder to conquer each level as it gets tougher. But the reward feels sweeter and more fulfilling as we progress, isn't it? Our INNER GAME isn't any different...

We constantly play all sorts of mind games, tug-of-wars (conflicts), self-fulfilling prophecies, creating and shedding identities, beliefs and so much more on a daily basis. Whilst this part of us is here to stay and is always going to come up for resolution, learning and growth, doesn't it only make sense to learn to play it better and build resilience for what's in store?

We can never truly be prepared for the curve balls life throws at us and with that said, creating 'Emotional Alignment' within takes us a long way. It makes the journey of life so much more rewarding, effortless and fulfilling.

Here are a few pointers from my model of the world that create alignment within:



Sushma Perla



Have a purpose.
Discover your WHY.

- Have a daily ritual/practice that keeps you grounded.
- Develop a healthy stack of core beliefs as your beliefs create your REALITY.
- Raise your vibration through multiple ways and whatever feels right for you. You need to be the vibrational match to what you want in your life.
- Be consistent with your inner-work, it hard to see a big shift without it.
- Stay open to the concept of 'I don't know what I don't know'. Meaning you are always in a learning state. Be curious!
- Align with thoughts, actions and beliefs.

- Take responsibility for everything that's a part of you. Every situation that comes up in your life. It's not an option to go half way. If you own it, you will find a solution for it.

Most importantly, there is no rule book to follow. Just by trusting yourself enough to be guided, allowing and accepting every thought/emotion to flow through you and surrendering to however life wants you to have your human experience; creates enough magic within!

Sushma Perla is an Emotional Alignment Specialist, Certified Master Life Coach/NLP Practitioner and Life Scripting practitioner. She helps people release unprocessed negative emotions, anxiety, change limiting beliefs and break patterns through her coaching programs.

Simple Grounding Technique

Notice the following around you:

- 5 things you can see
- 4 things you can touch
- 3 things you can hear
- 2 things you can smell
- 1 thing you can taste



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