

# SamvaadShaalaa

## NEWSLETTER

## COVER STORY

### Books Are Your Friends, Children!

...on page no. 6

### PUBLISHER'S NOTE

#### BEFRIEND BOOKS FOR LIFE AND NEVER BE ALONE

Walter Winchell says:

"A real friend is one who walks in when the rest of the world walks out."

Books EMBRACE  
you when you are ALONE

Books SOOTHE you when you SUFFER

Books ILLUMINATE  
when you are in ALIENATED

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## From the Editor's Desk

Prof (Dr) Shalini Verma 'LIFOHOLIC'

### Namaskaar Friends

Glad to come up with this November issue of SamvaadShaalaa.

With so many festivals and celebrations, this NOVEMBER month may be called as 'FESTIVALEMBER'. Starting with Karwa Chowth in the beginning of this month, we have Dhanteras, Deepawali, Children's Day, Govardhan Puja, Bhai Duj, Chhat Puja, and Guru Nanak Jayanti on 30th November, the last day of the month!

The constraints that 'lockdown-ness' had shackled us with, is slowly starting to get 'precaution-led-celebrations'. Shops, malls, offices, elections, polling booths...ALL are slowly opening across the length and breadth of the country.

Good that we are OPENING UP!

Even better could have been a scenario wherein our academic institutions – schools, colleges, universities – TOO would have OPENED UP.



The kind of education, rather 'neo-education' ('pseudo-education?') that the 'learners' are 'learning' is NOT what education ought to be about. Increased screen time is more hazardous than harnessing for studies show that longer screen time directly impacts the learners' development, and mental and physical health.

If we have tamed ourselves to have 'precaution-led-celebrations' and 'precaution-led-elections', there is no reason we cannot train ourselves to have 'precaution-led-education'...

After all CHILD IS FATHER OF THE MAN...

Happy Children's Day

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## NEWS & VIEWS

# A Doctor, A Daughter and A Grand-daughter

Suhani came to our lives when I was merely 20 years old, a year and a half after my marriage to Raman. On hearing the news that a girl child was born, my in-laws didn't even stop by the hospital to come see us. They wanted a boy, who would continue their familial legacy. My in-laws were orthodox like that. But it didn't matter to me, I had the most beautiful baby girl in arms and nothing could stop her parents from loving her, especially not something as minuscule as her gender.

A year later, my in-laws began to pressurize me to have another child but I was still weak in health to conceive another baby. Upon consultations, we found out the most dreaded news a parent wants to hear. “There are too many complications when one conceives so early. I am sorry, you won’t be able to conceive again”, the doctor informed me. I was shattered. More so, were my in-laws. Due to irretrievable differences, Raman and I decided to move out and make peace for a family of three.

As years went by, Suhani grew up to be an intelligent, top of the class student. We threw a big party to celebrate her success when she cleared the exams to get into one of the best medical schools of the State. In just a few weeks, she'll be leaving her mama's nest for 4 years. I was extremely excited for this new phase of her life but also a little tensed.

As she left with half the household items packed for her hostel, I had a separation anxiety attack just like Suhani, on her first day of Kindergarten. While setting the last bag in place on the carrier truck, Raman hugged both of us like a big cloud covering two small ones, and said, “She gets her crying skills from her mother, but also her courage. She’s a star born to shine, and it’s her time.” And we said our goodbyes.

Years later, while Suhani was working in the hospital and I was at home preparing her favourite South Indian dish- Idli Sambar, I got a call from her. She usually calls us during her



lunch break, almost every day since she started practicing. Raman takes the call, puts it on speaker and brings the phone to the kitchen. “Your mother is making shapeless Idlis for you; the batter mixing went a little wrong today. But I am sure they’ll be edible” Raman jokes. Instead of giggles, we heard something that made Raman fall into a chair.

“Papa, dadda (Grandpa) had a cardiac arrest and he is at the hospital. He asked for me as his doctor. Now I know you don’t like him very much, but I think you should come because he is a little critical”, Suhani informs us.

As Raman opens the door, his mother breaks down crying in his arms. I saw the lady for the first time in some 20 plus years. I hug her, console her and then introduce her to Suhani. “I will ensure the best of the best treatment is given”, Suhani reassures. There are tears in my mother-in-laws that she tries to conceal: tears of shame, guilt and regret.

Upon discharge we brought my father-in-law home, for he needed extensive care that his aging wife may not be able to keep up with. A granddaughter they refused to accept was the one who gave them a new life. They apologized for being so blindsided by loving and pampering Suhani like a toddler; hoping to make up for the lost time.

One afternoon, we planned a mini-picnic in our lawn, where Suhani joined us during her break. Looking at the food my father-in-law instantly claimed, “Idli-Sambar is my favourite.” “So is mine”, Suhani highfives. It was a happy day, pleasant breeze, some 90’s melodies and board games until it became the last day of our reunited family as my father-in-law, Suhani’s dad, left us for heavenly abode.

# World Students' Day

(15th October)

World Students' Day  
and  
Dr. Kalam's Birthday



Picture: Naukri

My nephew, Saurav, is 10 years old and in grade 7. It was just two days before. Everybody in our household was very busy. My brother, sister-in-law, their oldest daughter, Rina, all were busy working on a project.

It was a science project, and they were planning something new, something different from their last year project and also from what others have showcased. After much brainstorming, they came up with a plan and started working on it.

Saurav participated this year in a science fair which has been organized by his school on 15th October, World Student's Day, which celebrates the birthday of Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam Azad. Keeping the standards of social distancing maintained, the organizers have arranged everything in a safe way. Selected children of the schools who are science enthusiasts, were to showcase a new science project and the winner will get the prestigious Abdul Kalam Azad award.

This day is celebrated every year by his school with a science fair competition and award. Last year, Mahesh

from 7th grade stood first with only a few marks more than Saurav. So, this year Saurav was determined that he has to get more marks than Mahesh and come out as the winner. Hence the whole family is working on it.

Finally, the day came and Saurav went to the school with his family and the science project. As the judges went from one exhibit to another, Saurav stood by his project.

Suddenly it was his turn and he started nervously explaining his project to the judges. They heard him with interest and went to the next exhibit.

Soon it was time for the results. Saurav heard his name being called out and he ran towards the stage to collect his award. He has done it!

While accepting the award, he remembered APJ Abdul Kalam's words that he had learned in class "Dream, Dream, Dream. Dreams transform into thoughts. And thoughts result in action. If you fail, never give up because FAIL means 'the first attempt in learning'." Saurav had taken APJ Abdul Kalam's advice and has come out to be the winner.



**I**t was Raktim's birthday. He was the only son of a businessman father and a doctor mother. Both of them doted on him. They organized an elaborate party for all Raktim's friends.

Raktim loved eating snacks and sweets. He has recently become a little overweight. His mother, Dr. Sharma, has put him on a strict diet. But for his birthday his parents allowed him his choice of food. An overjoyed Raktim asked for ice cream, pizza, cake, and many other tasty foods.

Raju was Raktim's friend from the neighborhood. He came from a poor family. His father, a barber, was the sole earning member of the family. The family could barely manage to get enough food every day. Due to malnutrition, Raju and his sister Sheila were both skinny.

Raju was one of the invitees of Raktim's birthday party. When the dinner was announced, all guests went towards the buffet table and started eating. Many of Raktim's friends ladened their plates with more food than they can consume. Raju quietly went to Raktim's mother and requested if

he could take his food home in a parcel. Dr. Sharma was astonished. She asked Raju why he wants to take his food home. Raju told her that he is feeling bad that while he will be eating such lovely food, his sister will never get an opportunity to taste them. So, he wants to take his food home to share with his sister.

Dr. Sharma felt very sad looking at Raju. She started thinking that as usual many of her guests will leave leftovers in their plates and a lot of food will go waste. And here is this boy, so skinny that he must be suffering from malnutrition due to hunger. She packed food for both Raju and Shiela and gave extra so that the whole family could have a good meal for at least a day.

On 16th October, World Food Day, Dr. Sharma narrated this story to her son. She wanted him to understand why it is not a good thing to overeat and waste food when his friend Raju and people like him often have to go hungry with little or no food. Raktim understood what his mother was trying to say and promised not to waste food or overeat in the future.

# HALE 'n' HEARTY

## Wellness 'n' Health

Lately a lot of the new ideas and book suggestions that I have been working with have come from the Embodiment Conference.

The Embodiment Conference was a HUGE virtual event that gathered the topmost professionals from various fields: dance and movement, trauma and healing, breathing and meditation etc.



**About the Author: Daniel Rudolph** is freelance innovator and global creative. He is passionate about forming community, and building public spaces for meaningful, transformational gathering. Currently he is spending a lot of his time learning juggling and facilitating gatherings. He also enjoys writing and sharing poetry. He lives in Utica, New York, United States. He may be reached at : danrudolph108@gmail.com

The overall intention of the conference was to build a sense of community, and a safe space, for people to explore theory and practice focused on improving our well-being.

The intention of this series is the same. Each article will share the 'key points' of an influential figure in the 'Health and Wellness' world, my personal experiences/views on those thoughts, and suggestions for books that you can explore to dig deeper, on a more personal level.

Prior to the conference I was familiar with Gabor Mate, and had listened to one or two of his lectures, but never really dove deep into his work. The talk that he gave during the conference was titled,

'Compassionate Inquiry' and he actually conducted a round of Compassionate Inquiry with the person that was facilitating the conversation.

Essentially, from my understanding, Compassionate Inquiry is about asking, not telling, and guiding the person that you are engaging with to find the answers on their own. We can each do this in our daily lives, but to do this on a professional level requires deep knowledge, sensitivity and experience, which Gabor offers in special workshops and courses for practitioners.

**There were many ideas that Gabor shared that caught my attention:**

- We have become the victim of our own successes
- He referenced the importance of considering the biological, psychological, and social when looking into social problems, such as health and disease, and referenced George Engel's work with the biopsychosocial.
- We have a profound impact on the people that we interact with. Literally, our interactions shift the biology of the people we interact with. He referenced the work that Dan Siegal has done with interpersonal neurobiology.
- Addiction is not genetic and not a disease -- it is rooted in trauma. Illnesses are, for the most part, symptoms. (around 1:10,000 diseases are genetic)
- Most illnesses are caused by the environment that a person is a part of
- Transformation of identity - shifting to the more authentic, intuitive self - has the potential for radical healing. Conversely, having a strong 'sense of

identity' correlates with increased levels of disease.

- Everything has a reason, but the reason is not usually what you think it is, it is usually the result of a past trauma.
- So, it is important not to condemn people, or tell them they are right/wrong , good/bad. Rather the importance is in inquiring ‘Why?’ and getting people to think deeply about their predicament (see Compassionate Inquiry).

## My Views:

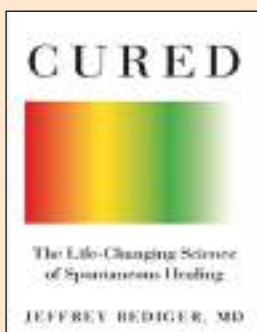
Everybody is in a unique place in their journey.

Everybody is perfect, with an infinite possibility for growth. How can we shift the way we interact with one another to embody that ‘perfectness’?

This not only includes our daily interactions, but also the structures and systems that encourage direct peoples' interaction styles (schools, economy, work, public spaces etc.). Perhaps, if we can transform these institutions to honor the individual, and include more space for developing healthy connections, internally and externally, we can significantly decrease the amount of disease and other environmental related social problems that our global society(s) is plagued with?

There is much more than meets the eye.

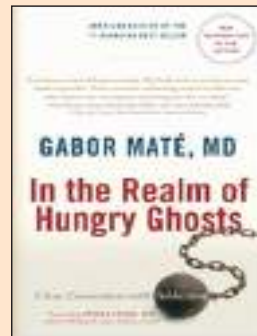
The river(s) run deep.



# Cured: The Life Changing Science of Spontaneous Healing - Jeffrey Rediger

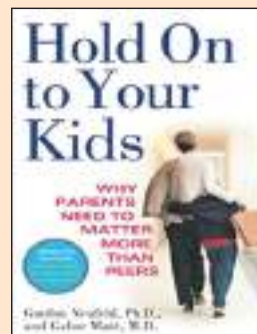
[https://www.amazon.in/Cured-Life-Changing-Science-Spontaneous-Healing/dp/1250193214/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?dchild=1&keywords=Cured%3A+The+Life+Changing+Science+of+Spontaneous+Healing++Jeffrey+Rediger&qid=1604824803&s=books&sr=1-1](https://www.amazon.in/Cured-Life-Changing-Science-Spontaneous-Healing/dp/1250193214/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=Cured%3A+The+Life+Changing+Science+of+Spontaneous+Healing++Jeffrey+Rediger&qid=1604824803&s=books&sr=1-1)

## Books to Explore



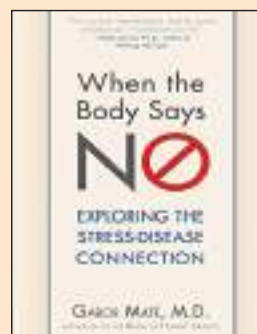
## In the Realm of Hungry Ghosts: Close Encounters with Addiction - Gabor Mate

[https://www.amazon.in/  
Realm-Hungry-Ghosts-  
Encounters-Addiction/  
dp/155643880X](https://www.amazon.in/Realm-Hungry-Ghosts-Encounters-Addiction/dp/155643880X)



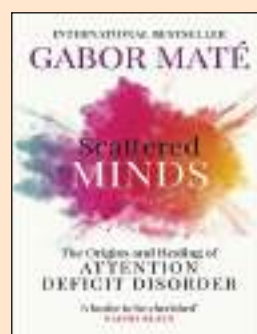
## Hold On To Your Kids: Why Parents Need to Matter More than Peers - Gabor Mate

[https://www.amazon.in/Hold-Your-Kids-Parents-Matter-ebook/dp/B07DK2CZ2V/ref=tmm\\_kin\\_swath\\_0?encoding=UTF8&qid=1604662966&sr=1-1](https://www.amazon.in/Hold-Your-Kids-Parents-Matter-ebook/dp/B07DK2CZ2V/ref=tmm_kin_swath_0?encoding=UTF8&qid=1604662966&sr=1-1)



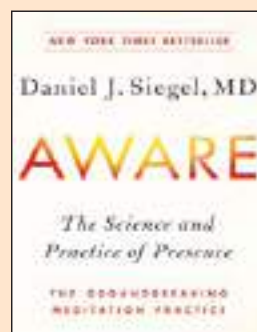
## When the Body Says No: The Cost of Hidden Stress - Gabor Mate

<https://www.amazon.in/When-Body-Says-Stress-Disease-Connection/dp/0470923350>



## Scattered Minds: A New Look at the Origins and Healing of Attention Disorder

[https://www.amazon.in/Scattered-Minds-Origins-Attention-Disorder-ebook/dp/B07DV5BYYJ/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?dchild=1&keywords=%E2%80%A2Scattered+Minds%3A+A+New+Look+at+the+Origins+and+Healing+of+Attention+Disorder&qid=1604824711&s=b ooks&sr=1-1](https://www.amazon.in/Scattered-Minds-Origins-Attention-Disorder-ebook/dp/B07DV5BYYJ/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=%E2%80%A2Scattered+Minds%3A+A+New+Look+at+the+Origins+and+Healing+of+Attention+Disorder&qid=1604824711&s=b ooks&sr=1-1)



## Aware: The Science and Practice of Presence - Dan Siegal

[https://www.amazon.in/s?k=Aware%3A+The+Science+and+Practice+of+Presence+-+Dan+Siegel&i=stripbooks&ref=nb\\_sb\\_noss](https://www.amazon.in/s?k=Aware%3A+The+Science+and+Practice+of+Presence+-+Dan+Siegel&i=stripbooks&ref=nb_sb_noss)

## Cover Story

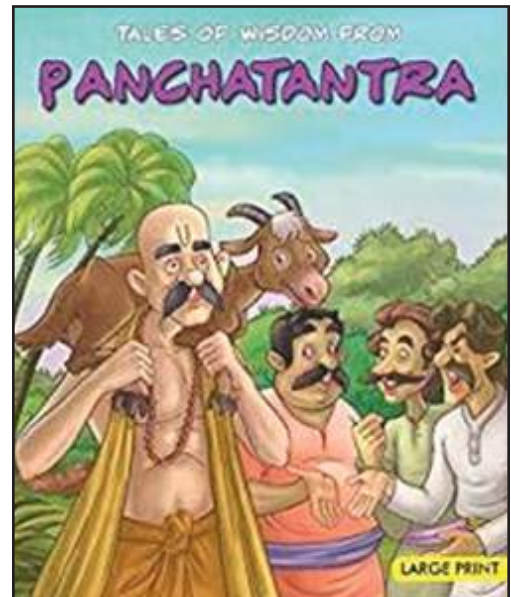
# Books Are Your Friends, Children!

Literature has been an important part of Indian literary learning, authorship, and a means of developing the readership's mind. From the ancient times to the modern days. Coming from the ancient times the literary works remained adult-centric, however, along the years it was realised that children needed them the most and, in a manner, which would appeal to them.

One cannot possibly imagine the mundanity learning had where pupils sat in a Gurukul reciting lines after lines of Indian history and heritage under the tutelage of a rather strict teacher.

Therefore, which it is not only the changing times and need to reach the youth and future of the country, it is also the world of books which has seen evolution in its entirety.

I was lucky to be born in the modern nineties when we had the luxury of printed and illustrated books. I remember when I was in the third standard, my mother took me the children's book fairs when ever possible.



My very first book was a hard-bound copy of the Panchatantra. Glossy pages, the brightest and most beautiful illustrations. I have had it forever and thirty years later while its spine is a little rickety, I cannot seem to part from it.

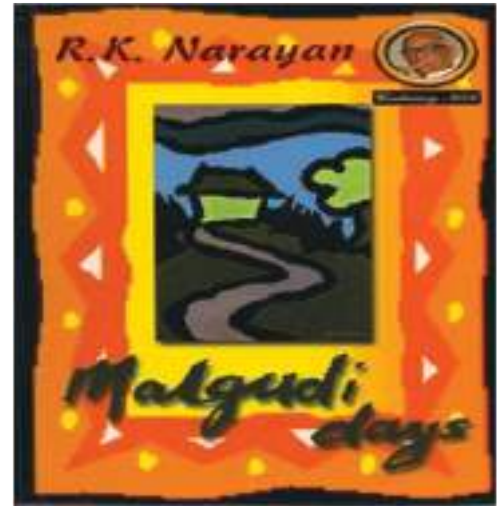
It is mostly the nostalgia of the book and how well my mind was able to articulate through imagination the stories and their essence, but above the book gave me an understanding and an opening door into the world of reading, books, stories and the message that lies at the end of each book.



Children's literature has seen a massive change and a growth about the stories, the style of writing and most certainly, the quality of the books itself.

From the slightly more later time of the Panchatantra which delved into the world of animal tales, we see writers like Rabindranath Tagore who wrote short stories. One of the most revered in Tagore literature for children is the Kabuliwalla. A story of childhood and innocence.

Towards the more modern developing Indian is a notable author R.K. Narayan without whom any form of discourse of Indian literature or for that matter children's literature is incomplete. The character of Swami in his *Malgudi Days* till date the most relatable. A young boy who faces the nuances of life under a strict father and an ever so concerned grandmother. The mind of Swami is what connects with us. R.K. Narayan took a lot of effort in being able to project the child within each one of us through this young character and it is pretty evident that he did a remarkable job.



So, to say, it is this evolution of writing, that has evolved children's literature over the years. We want more to be sink into the child. We want the child go back with an experience. The book should be able to not only touch a young mind's thought process but also help develop it into the kind that will mature from what he/she reads.

While it is always kept in mind the genre, age of the child and sometimes may also be gender sensitive, there are various forms of children's literature. These factors possibly make it the most difficult audience in the writing industry.

The evolution of Children's Literature has been a very positive one. It is not only the process of being able to retain the concept of "childhood" but has also greatly contributed to retaining that ecosystem while ensuring that the premise for the young readers is ideal. Children can be treated as adults and be respected in the same way and therefore, children's books need to be an equally pleasant experience.

# From the 'Roof of the World'

**DESH PARDESH (TRAVEL & TOURISM)**



**About the Author: Rajendra Prasad Koirala is the Director — HR at Glacier International College. He is also associated as an Assistant Professor at Padma Kanya Campus, Tribhuvan University. He lives in Kathmandu, Nepal. He can be reached at : koiralarp46@gmail.com, 977-9851136302**

Tucked cozily north to India, my motherland, Nepal has earned a very apt sobriquet - “The Roof of the World”. This is because our country houses the highest peak of Himalayas - the mountain chain in the world. Many people visit Nepal to see the Himalaya Mountains. Some even attempt the very difficult feat of trying to climb Mount Everest, which is the highest point on earth.

Mount Everest, which we Nepalese call Sagarmatha, which means ‘Mother of the Universe’. It is over 29,000 feet high. It, no doubt, requires highest degree of courage and passion to think of climbing the top of Mount Everest.

Our country is also known by another sobriquet- “A Root Between Two Stones.” It has this sobriquet because Nepal is located between Tibet in the North and India to the South.

Nepal is a federal democratic republican and a secular country in south Asia. It occupies three geographical regions, seven provinces and seventy-seven districts. The geographical territory of Nepal is 1, 47,516 square kilometres. The highest peak of the world Mount Everest lies in Nepal.

My country the birthplace of Lord Gautama Buddha - the messenger of peace. He was born as Prince Siddhartha Gautama, in 623 B.C. in the famous gardens of Lumbini. The place is pious that it soon became a place of pilgrimage. Among the early pilgrims was the great Indian emperor Ashoka, who erected one of his commemorative pillars there. The site is now being developed as a Buddhist pilgrimage centre, where the archaeological remains associated with the birth of the Lord Buddha form a central feature.

The most important national symbols of our nation are: Rhododendron (national flower), Lophophorous (national bird). The national flag of our country is the world’s only non-quadrilateral flag that reflects as both the state flag and civil flag of a sovereign country. The flag is a simplified combination of two single pennons, known as a double-pennon, and the crossed Kukhuri (twisted knives) of the Gorkhalis.

## Origin of Nepal

The word Nepal was originated from Sanskrit word

“Nepalaya”. Nepal has been known as a very ancient land explained in many ancient religious books and Vedas. Different dynasty had ruled over Nepal in different era: Gopal Dynasry, Kirant Dynasty, Lichhavi Dynasty, Malla Dynasty and last one is “ Shah Dynasty” (Late King Birendra and Later King Gyanendra were the last kings of the Shah Dynasty.

Modern Nepal was unified by King Prithwi Narayan Shah who is known as the messiah of the integration of Nepal which was divided into different 22 and 24 village states.

## Culture of Nepal

The culture of Nepal is very diversified as it consists of 125 distinct ethnic groups. It would not be an exaggeration to say that it is a unique reflection of hundreds of flowers with a single knot of a garland. The culture, tradition, custom and ritual are the blending of its various ethnicity, religions, values, and beliefs along with different tribal and social groups.

It is estimated that 85% citizens are Hindu, and the rest of others follow religions like Buddhism, Islam and Christians respectively. They celebrate various festivals all the year with incredible and unprecedented rituals and customs. Furthermore, Nepal is a multi-religious, multi-ethnic and multi-lingual country consisting of 30 million populations

and is popularly known for “Unity in Diversity”.

According to the 2003 travel book *Let's Go India & Nepal*, Nepal is often referred to as Pashupatinath Bhumi (Land of Pashupatinath, the compassionate Lord of the Animals, known in Hindu as Shiva), with the temple of Pashupatinath near Kathmandu considered the most important Hindu site in Nepal.

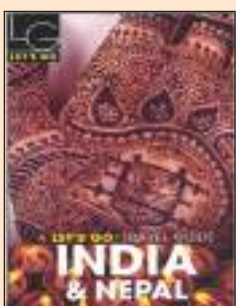
The Hindus in Nepal also consider Varanasi (also known as Benaras) in India as the holiest place on Earth, having taken this name from the two rivers that run through it, the Varuna and Assi. For many Hindus, a visit to Kashi (the city's former, ancient name, meaning "The Luminous One") is as holy and revered as the Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca.

Different ethnicity is founded on the diverse geography of Nepal. It is divided into three types:

1. Indigenous Nepalese
2. Indo-Nepalese
3. Tibetan-Nepalese

Nepalese tradition is a bright mixture of its ethnicity and religion; every culture has its own importance and essence with its appreciative spirit. They celebrate Dashain, Tihar, Chhata Puja, Eid, Lohsar, Baisakh Purnima, Red Machhindranath, Dumji (By Sherpa community), Gaijatra, Indrajaatra (Mostly by Newari Community of Kathmandu) in Himalaya, Hilly and Terai region accordingly.

## Books to Explore



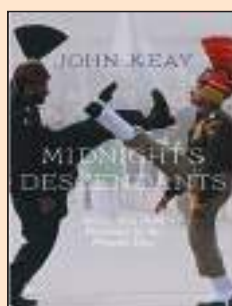
Let's  
Go  
India & Nepal

<https://amzn.to/2H5qNZi>



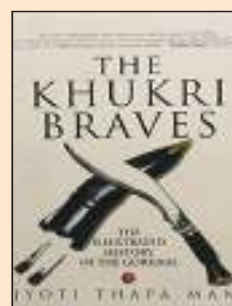
**On My Way To You:  
One Moment  
Can Change A Life**

<https://amzn.to/3nt48aT>



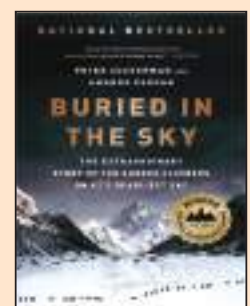
## Midnight's Descendants: South Asia from Partition to the Present Day

<https://amzn.to/2K894n7>



## The Khukri Braves: The Illustrated History of The Gorkha

<https://amzn.to/3f2BEBM>



## Buried in the Sky: The Extraordinary Story of the Sherpa Climbers on K2's Deadliest Day

<https://amzn.to/38Mpzi7>

# ASTROLOGERS ADVICE: A LESSON FOR LIFE!

## Relationship - Our World (Relationship based Short Stories)

Interestingly, one fine day my illustrious Mother decided to rename my elder brother at a fairly advance stage of his life while he had reached class 3rd or 4th standard?

Perhaps reason for name change was done under the influence of some astrologers or numerologist who had advised that with a 'REVISED NAME' the student and the boy will have a much better future.

During the same transitioning period, while the renaming process of my brother was underway, my father's dream project -State of the art fully-automated 1st of its kind industrial venture in the region was getting ready to commence production near "Swarnarekha river" at the beautiful hill city of Ranchi.

Being a long-term business commitment with significant investment made in the industry, our parents decided to shift our family base with log, stock & barrel to the hill city which is now the capital of Jharkhand.

Since we were migrating in the middle of school session, getting admission was posing a big challenge, especially in schools that our parents were aspiring for their wards to be educated at.

Thankfully, owing to my Mother's perseverance and Father's reputation, which usually preceded before his arrival, we were able to secure an opportunity at

possibly the best Anglo Indian School which was a much revered high pedigree institution at that time.

Fortunately, our interview was directly lined up with the 'Honourable Principal' - thorough bred English gentleman who carried a tough reputation of being a strict disciplinarian and final authority in the selection process.

My father was a qualified engineer (Gold medalist) and was blessed with scientific temper. He had high life condition and had enjoyed all affluence that life could offer. He served the prestigious Indian Oil Refinery in the initial years of his career at Madras.

Having entrepreneurial vision, he resigned from public sector and set up the 1st of its kind fully mechanized high-tension electrical pole factory -first in Patna followed by the second unit in Ranchi.

Subsequently, having been challenged by rampant power theft, corruption affecting our nation, he went on to develop first of its kind 100% tamper-proof electro-mechanical energy meter which was a global revolution in Ferraris technology.

His breakthrough in prevention of power theft and his research papers were duly published by Government Regulatory authorities. He went on to becoming technical advisors to some of the top industries of the nation for design innovation.



**About the Author: Shalabh Sharan (PGDM, ICFAI) has over two decades of experience working for global firms like Cushman & Wakefield, CB Richard Ellis, Ansal API developers.**

**Shalabh has keen interest in learning, training and development sector & has conducted training in some of the notable B Schools and corporate houses. He is passionate about writing and loves to contribute on subject which are of interest to millennials & generation at large. He lives in New Delhi with his family. He may be reached at: shalabhsharan@gmail.com**



## अतुल्य भारतः

## The Incredible Art &amp; Craft of India

## India Art Festival, Mumbai where Budding Artists Showcase their Contemporary Art Forms



About the Author: Sneh Anand is an HR professional currently working as a Sr. ERO (Sr. Employee Relations Officer) at Indian Oil Corporation Limited. She can be reached at : [sneh.anand2008@gmail.com](mailto:sneh.anand2008@gmail.com)

I sat under a shiuli tree once and pondered over love. The tree was blooming flowers this time of the year: October. The fragrance of shiuli flowers can be like a drug. Every breath I inhaled I wanted to take in more. I had never known that shiuli trees grew in Bombay, but here I was tantalised by this godly fragrance waiting for my friend.

We have known each other since school but the magic happened on the first day of college when we caught sight of each other and almost ran towards each other like lost lovers. Truth was that we were both glad

to find a face we both knew. My friend and I share one particular interest in common: art. Any form of art is our elixir. Artwork, paintings, photo-art, music, poetry, anything!! Romance with our books started in the first year but at the end of the third year of English Literature in the same old ramshackle of Delhi University, the essence of Keat's 'romantic' concepts was drying out. We both needed a breath of fresh air.

And so it happened.

Sipping on the ten-rupee canteen chaai writing endless notes someone dropped a flyer on our table.







पहले पेट पूजा, फिर कोई काम दूजा...

## Khajoor (Dates) Firni

*By Nidhi Jain*

About the Author: Nidhi Jain is a celebrity chef and a youtuber. The USP of her recipe is that they are easy to make with the normal ingredients that are readily available. She lives in New Delhi. She can be reached at : [koiralarp46@gmail.com](mailto:koiralarp46@gmail.com), 977-9851136302

YouTube Channel, Swadshaala : [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCKgmMl1\\_EqElJzKYKVEzbw](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCKgmMl1_EqElJzKYKVEzbw)

Covid has been here for quite some time and seemingly going to stay here for some MORE time. But this should not dampen out festive mood. Deepawali, Bhai Dhooj, Chhat and Guru Parv, all these lovely festivals round the corner, most of us are giving in to our temptations of eating lots of sweets and then spice up the 'sweetened mouth' with spicy-salty junk food.

This Deepawali, let us give a healthy twist without compromising taste the festive occasion.

I am sharing a healthy fat-to-fit sweet recipe which is 100 % sugar free and without any artificial or sugar free products. Yet it is 'apologetically' yummy and mouthwatering that you would find it hard to resist!

Made out of all-natural products and brown rice (which is much richer in fibre and nutrition than regular white rice), this KHJOOR FIRNI is something without which your festival celebrations would just be incomplete.

### INGREDIENTS FOR KHAJOOR (DATES) FIRNI

- 50 gms brown rice
- 1 kg cow milk /full cream milk
- 15 dates / khajur
- 3 - 4 Tbsp honey to taste
- 10 almonds
- 8 cashews
- 12 - 15 Raisins
- 10 unsalted pistachio
- 5 - 8 walnuts
- 10 -12 saffron threads soaked in 2tsp luke warm milk
- Some Indian rose petals for garnish



## HOW TO COOK

1. Wash the brown rice thrice n soak in water for at least 4 hours maximum and minimum 2 hours. Drain out the soaked water and grind it into fine paste with adding little water.



2. Wash all dates with water to clean them and then soak all the dates in 200 ml boiled milk for 1 hour. After half an hour dates will become soft deseed them and allow it soak for little more time so that they become super tender and then mix it into a grinder for a soft n creamy paste.

3. Take a heavy bottom pan grease the pan with little ghee from all the sides. Pour rest of the milk in the pan. Bring it to a boil and cook for 2-3 minutes on low flame.

4. Add brown rice smooth paste to the boiled milk and stir continuously to avoid lumps formation.

5. Cook well on low flame until the brown rice becomes smooth n starts to thicken and creamy in texture. It will take around 12 -15 minutes to cook it well.

6. Now its time to add saffron threads, finely chopped almonds, pistachio, cashews ,walnuts and raisins. Keep some aside for later garnishing.

7. Lastly, we will add Khajoor paste for sweetening of firni and cook for 2 more minutes.

8. Taste the Firni and add honey according to your taste or you can also add jaggery here instead of honey, if you want.

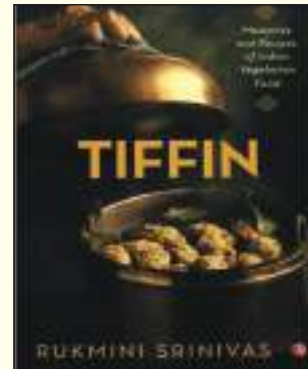
Please note honey or jagger, add only after turning off the flame and allowing the firni to cool down for few minutes.

Our delicious healthy ‘No Sugar No Sugarfree’ fat-to-fit khajoor Firni is ready.

Serve it ‘chilled’ in Mitti Kasolas and garnish them with rose petals and dry fruits.

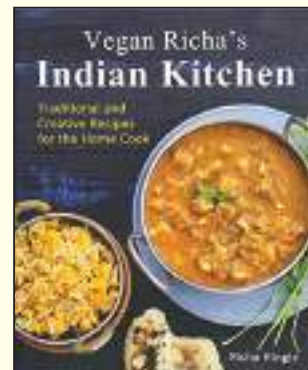
Hope you will enjoy my recipe and give it a try on this festive occasion as well as to whenever you want to satisfy your sweet tooth without gaining unhealthy calories.

## Books to Explore



# Tiffin: Memories and Recipes of Indian Vegetarian Food

<https://amzn.to/3pylaq2>



## Vegan Richa's Indian Kitchen: Traditional and Creative Recipes for the Home Cook

<https://amzn.to/2Uv4HEy>



# The Complete Vegetarian Cookbook: A Fresh Guide to Eating Well With 700 Foolproof Recipes

<https://amzn.to/2H4sV5w>

## The Book Planet

### TEN MOST FAMOUS CHILDREN BOOKS IN INDIA BY INDIAN AUTHORS

The world of books is the most basic of building premise for a child in his/her developing years, and while today in the modern years we love to inculcate the literature in English in our children we forget to also allow them to imbibe a little essence of their heritage. We have all grown up reading a lot of Enid Blyton and Roald Dahl, there are some very popular Indian Authors who have most beautifully painted the world of Indian mythology and fiction for our budding readers. The following are to name a few:

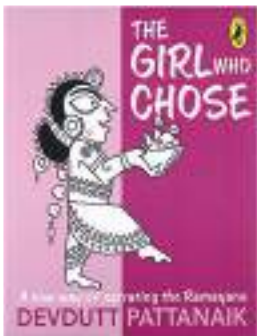
#### 1. Mahabharata By Samhita Arni

While the story of the Mahabharatha is an epic which even most adults find intimidating to pick up and read, author Samhita Arni has carefully designed the most child friendly version of this Indian mythological epic that till date forms the base of most Indian learning. Illustrations that may even grip an adult to reading the book.



#### 2. The Girl Who Chose: A New Way of Narrating the Ramayana By Devdutta Pattanaik

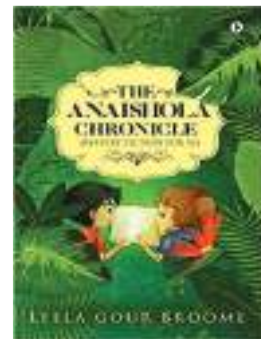
We've all read the Ramayana too, however, where the majority of the story is about lord Ram being the ideal hero, Devdutta Pattanaik has taken a completely different take and made this illustrated book not only a child friendly piece, but will also evoke the thought in a young learner to see the Ramayana from Sita's view. A must read!



#### 3. The Anaishola Chronicles By Leela Gour Broome

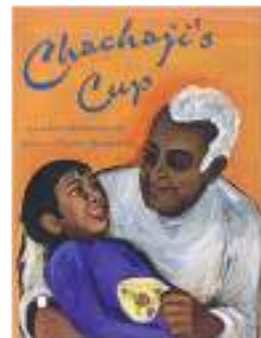
The book is fairly young in popularity but a total winner if you are looking for a book packed with mystery, the

eerie feeling of being a teenager on a mysterious journey on a mysterious tea plantation. The book is filled with fauna of a child's imagination in a dark and exploratory world. Broome is a popular Indian children's fiction writer and has written some remarkable works including the Earthquake Boy which is developed from the Gujarat earthquake of 2001.



#### 4. Chachaji's Cup By Uma Krishnaswami

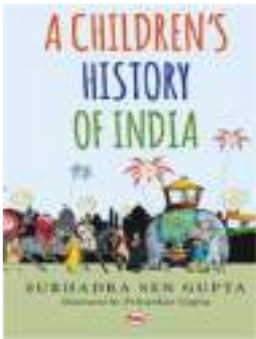
Like any other children's novel, Chachaji's Cup is a plethora of beautiful artwork which comes to life through the colors. Even more so, the story corroborates the time of the Indian Partition along with the character of chachaji narrating stories of Hindu Gods, demons and the Indian Army over a cup of chaai.



#### 5. The Constitution of IndiaBy Subhadra Sengupta

One on the most popular names in Indian children's literature of the 20th century class of writers is Subhadra Sengupta who has written several books for children and her works are most certainly notable.

Her most recent work was The Constitution of India which was recently released in 2020. This is a children friendly compilation of the otherwise thick constitutional framework. The importance of the book becomes all the more as it will help instill the legal backbone of the country’s political framework within a child.



6. School Stories By Paro Anand

Paro Anand is an Indian author who writes for young adults and adults, and her works are also known for her children’s literature books. She has written several books like School Stories,A Very Naughty Dragon, Being Gandhi etc. Have been received many accolades and international acclamation. While being awarded with the Sahitya Academy Bal Sahitya Puraskar, Paro Anand’s works are reminiscent of a child’s ability to imagine and to question what books teach us.



7. Stories by Anant Pai

If you have heard of the name Amar Chitra Katha which literally translates to Immortal Illustrated Stories, then you belong to a golden time. These are a series of stories which were a legacy that Anant Pai, also popularly known as Uncle Pai, left behind. The illustrated comics which taught history and mythology to our young readers.



8. Kabuliwalla – Short Stories by Rabindranath Tagore

As an Indian, the stories of Tagore form a part of the self and of the being. Kabuliwalla is a story everyone has read or watched as a child in an adaptation of some form new or modern. A particularly touching story which describes and concentrates the very innocence of a child and the nuances of two states. Kabuliwalla forms an important narrative and for young reader this is an essential read.

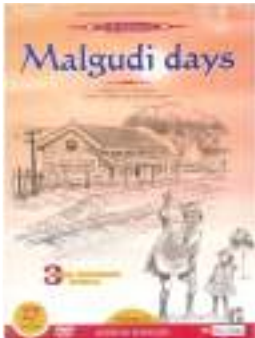


9. Books by Ruskin Bond

Ruskin Bond is one name that will always appear when mentioning children’s writing. Many of his stories take us to the mountainous beauty of hills. His books like Room on the Roof, The Blue Umbrella, The Night Train at Deoli and Other Stories, Rusty, the Boy from the Hills are some of his books that no book loving child would like to miss out.

10. Malgudi Days By R.K. Narayan

R.K. Narayan and the classic character of Swami is a quintessential part of every child who grew up in the nineties. For that matter, the Malgudi Days is a work that must, as a mandate, be put into every budding reader’s curriculum. R.K. Narayan has done immense justice in painting an earthen India which all its beauty and simplicity with an ambience of a time which saw India as a developing country at its best.



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## Un-learning, Learning, and Re-learning on Online Learning Platforms



In this lockdown scenario many things have changed and with this the norms for learning are also changed.

And as schools around the country have shuttered and now make plans for how the next school year will look, e-learning will be a large part of our future. We very well know that our kids are no strangers to the computer.

They are not like previous generations, and they know how to use devices better than the grown-ups. But we should not think that they are experts at getting the most out of online learning, it is our job as a parent to help them.

There are some facts to be kept in mind while coping with online learning. The first thing to keep in mind is that, make sure that your child doesn't fall too far behind the curriculum, to maintain this it's important to maintain certain classroom norms, so that they know this is not a vacation.

Children should get assignments, grades, tests. You should encourage your child by continually checking in on their learning by working problems together or encouraging them to read their assignments aloud. Simple measurements like self-quizzing or checking problems together can help you stay abreast of their progress and if you set a reward system for good performance then it will immensely motivate them.

Most kids use the devices from very early age, but it is mostly used as a distraction. Now that the goal has turned to online learning, you should help them rethink to use these devices. It is also important that you should create an appropriate space for learning of your child. It can be

the kitchen table or a designated corner in the living room, but try to eliminate as many distractions as possible so that they understand that when they're in this space, they should focus on their school work.

Our schools are built around structure and routine and a key component of that, is scheduled breaks. You should offer the same at home, too. You should schedule free time, hands-on learning, or walks throughout the day, and also lunch and snack breaks. Tell your child the whole routine when he is getting these breaks. It will help them to measure their day on a clock, like they would at school.

School is not all about academic learning only, a significant portion of what kids learn at school are social skills. While in this lockdown the physical relation cannot be maintained, make sure your child is still maintaining these relationships through video chats with friends. You can also teach them to email their friends.

In all we can achieve success in online learning as class assignments, quizzes, and tests can be done by the child albeit with your help. If your child is repeatedly having trouble, then you can take help of some professional

The problem of e-learning is that there is no physical interaction as there is no observant teacher that can read students body language to know that they might be struggling.

However, if your child needs a one-on-one attention, getting a tutor can help. With so much to do differently in this new normal times, online learning has opened yet another avenue of un-learning, learning, and re-learning.

*Model:*  
Dr. Susmita Paul



# *Her* **CHARISMA** *His* **SWAG**



*Model:*  
Sourabh Chatterjee

# WORLD THRIFT DAY

*Rupali Bhattacharjee*



As individuals we have all had that moment where we often do a few habitual things where we fantasize shopping or acquiring any form of material that we love the most. We have all looked at a dress at the window display and hoped to buy it. We have all watched a new car at the light and imagined being in it. We have all gone to our favourite online shopping website, filled the cart and placed a million other things in the wish list.

I have even made a list of things I would buy the next month (which usually exceeds expectations).

Then comes that moment where we all are touched by our conscience on our shoulder as though telling us, “slow down child, you still have bills to pay and we don’t want to be bankrupt just yet.”

All those dreams instantly come crashing like a house of cards. We walk past the dress on the shop’s window with a rock on our heart. We do not bother about the new car anymore. We empty our shopping

cart and hope to return to the wish list when our pay-scale goes up.

When I was growing up and I would throw tantrums at the shopping mall if I saw a ball of cotton candy that I wanted it, or I would see a dress and cry my lungs out till I wasn’t given that very dress. I realise now how resilient well planned a man my father has been. I mean I was an investment itself let alone other monthly house expenses or bills. He always had savings and a back-up plan should any dark days turn to us.

World Thrift Day (30th October) is initiated to spread the message across the world that as individuals we have a duty to ourselves first: save money.

Do not spend because you want to own material to please someone else. We are not spending for others. We should spend for ourselves and spend wisely.

More than SPEND, we need to learn to SAVE.



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