



AMHS CONNECT

JULY '20

From the Editor's Desk:

With thoughts resonating from School days, to "...bring honour to thy name...", the AMHS Committee presents 'AMHS Connect', our very own newsletter which is also uploaded on our website www.mhsalumni.in. It has been our endeavour to reach out to Modernites across all batches and share news from our desk as well.

During these troubled times, in compliance with the new normal, it is only possible to meet on a digital podium. We are working towards hosting the 6th Season of Alumni Idol, which is an Inter Alumni singing competition, on a virtual platform. The tech savvy and singing talents amongst us, could volunteer to come on board.

With generous support from our members, the AMHS has given a humble donation of Rs1,30,000/- for cyclone Amphan Relief Fund to Ramkrishna Mission (Belurmah).

We look forward to increasing our membership base and to more active participation. Please feel free to connect with us at amhsconnect@gmail.com.

Sushma Mimani Nevatia
Batch of 1989



Where do I begin the sweet love story of school and me? At the thought of school Memories Have Surfaced!

It all started when I joined school at the age of two and a half years. By the way, school and I are the same age! Those days school was in a small building on Camac Street. Certain scenes are still vividly etched in my mind...like walking in line holding on to the tip of each others' dresses (social distancing)! From there we shifted to Theatre Road and finally to the present building. This was our 'big school' with spotless corridors and classrooms on either side. The huge playground was a major attraction with swings, see-saw, slides and jungle gym. How we raced to get to the swing as soon as the lunch break started.

Time flew by... A few years later we reached our teens,

We asked our friends ,

"Why give a test?

How will it help us day after day

To study and not take rest?"

Then we grew up and joined high

school,

We asked our teacher,

"What lies ahead?

Will all our wishes and dreams come true?"

Here's what our teacher said...

Que sera sera, whatever will be, will be,

The future's not ours to see,

Que sera sera!

And so, as Fate would have it, I walked in through the gates of MHS once again...this time as a teacher. I was about to cross the LOC to the other side of the curtain...into the staffroom! But thankfully I settled in soon enough to spend the rest of my working life there.

I loved teaching and interacting with



A TRIP DOWN THE MEMORY LANE

young minds. And I loved being a Class Teacher – there was a sense of bonding. So much so, that at the end of each year, as one batch of students left, I felt a dull ache.... a sense of not belonging anymore.... a boat cut off from its moorings floating aimlessly. Then I realised it was just a lull before the next storm!

Students have always been petrified of exams and while invigilating I used to observe them closely...

Some write slowly, their papers are bare,

While others are agitated and ready to tear

The locks and strands on their head – called hair!

Some on their faces frowns will wear, Their expressions show they are full of care.

A result of all the knowledge we share! But everything said and done, there's

no doubt that school life is a lot of fun, days of laughter for everyone!

With time I learnt to appreciate nature. My office overlooked the school garden and my memories are wrapped up by the beautiful colourful flowers.

Bright hued gerberas gently swaying in the breeze,

Butterflies flitting and flying, sucking nectar with ease.

Blushing pink little phlox smiling up now,

Magenta bougainvillea hanging from the bough.

Orange and golden yellow rows of marigold,

Brown eyed and tight lipped with secrets untold.

Ramrod straight sentinels are red salvia,

Lazing at their feet are mauve striped petunia.

Sunlight filtering through leaves play a game of light and shade

Forming strange shadows on the close cropped grass blades.

Majestically in the centre stands the tall Magnolia tree

A sign of permanence saying...just let me be.

Dr. Rajeshwari De

Batch of 1968



LOCKDOWN: A TIME NEVER SEEN BEFORE

On 19th March' 2020 our Honorable Prime Minister addressed the nation. Every tax paying citizen knows the implications when he addresses the nation at 8 pm. My entire family was glued to the television when he announced a 'Janta Curfew' followed by 'Thali Banging' as a celebration at 5 pm on the following Sunday. Our India being an emotional country, celebrated the success of this event in huge social gatherings instead of 'Social Distancing'.

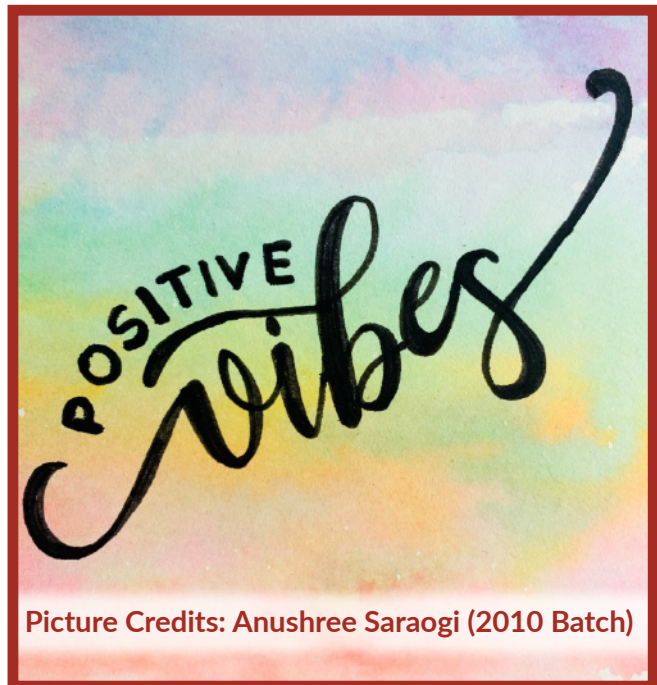
However, before we knew it, our Prime Minister announced a complete halt of India, an unprecedented event never recorded in the history of our Nation.

The first phase of the lockdown taught us that we can survive on bare minimum. Family members came together to deal with the 'no maid' problem and duties were distributed. Secretly we even rejoiced the thought of an unexpected holiday from work and of course the children were thrilled with the idea of not going to school.

As time passed, India entered the second phase of the Lockdown where everything looked uncertain. Fear and anxiety gripped every emotion. Financial stress and the condition of the migrant labors brought tears to all our eyes and people scrambled and fought for a day's meal. It even appeared that Mother Nature herself had turned against Humanity. With the rising number of deaths infected by the deadly virus across the globe, our World was also hit with the Australian Bush Fire, the Ukrainian Jetliner Crash in Iran, Floods in Indonesia, Taal Volcano eruption, Earthquake in Turkey, Locust swarm outbreak in Rajasthan and many more which contributed to take human lives. West Bengal and Odisha were hit by Amphan, a blowing disaster which left both the States in agony and destruction.

At the same time, while we humans were learning their lessons by Disaster itself, Mother Nature kept on healing herself for us. The ozone layer started to repair itself, our rivers became clean, pollution dropped to unimaginable levels revitalizing our lungs. Wild life became free and the World was becoming a better place to live in, but all at the cost of tears.

Whatever may happen or may have happened, this Virus and the consequent Lockdown have



Picture Credits: Anushree Saraogi (2010 Batch)

taught us at least two important lessons. The first lesson is to make the most of whatever situation you might be in. This is why we teachers at MHS learned the transition to a virtual school almost overnight. The second lesson is not to take anything for granted as it may be suddenly taken away from you. We, who were so thrilled at the prospect of an unexpected vacation are now longing to go back to our beloved School.

Anahita Gupta
Batch of 1988



ALUMNI OF MHS MEMBERSHIP DETAILS

Price: Rs 4500 (for life membership)

Website: <https://mhsalumni.in>

For queries, contact:

Ritu Singhanian: +91 98302 49817

Urmi Basu: +91 98310 90103



FOOD IS LIFE

"Find something you're passionate about and keep tremendously interested in it."- Julia Child. A culinary enthusiast and an avid lover of food, six years ago when I graduated from Modern High School for Girls, is when I started my journey in the kitchen as a teacher. It was in senior school, post the IIHM Young chef competition that I realized that this was what excited me the most.

I began conducting culinary workshops without any fee and eventually for over a year I started donating

all of my proceeds for charity. After having completed my graduation in Nutrition and my Diploma in bakery, I took my passion up professionally and gave it my all to make my dream come true.

A normal day in my life now gives me simple joys like the aroma of freshly baked breads and garnishing pretty cakes with flowers, playing with flavours and colours to packaging food aesthetically. The icing on the cake is when students message me with their feedbacks on recipes they made from their friends and family from what they learnt in my classes, it is very fulfilling and humbling.

I have been very lucky to have been taught by the best of teachers throughout my life and have been bestowed with so many opportunities to learn and grow that whatever I can offer, seems less.

With my love for teaching and exploring delicious food every day, I enjoy baking assorted breads, gourmet snacks, decadent cakes and gifting platters apart from teaching multi cuisine cookery, dessert and hands on bakery classes to people of all age groups, students of various schools (including our very own) and corporate houses.

You can also register for a one on one online workshop with me with a menu of your choice or enrol for group classes which happen at a frequency of every 10 days in Ballygunge, Kolkata.

A teacher first and a baker later, I would like to share some of my favourite recipes with the Almuni family. - With easy ingredients and no fuss, you can prepare these in minutes!

- Anjali Kejriwal (Batch of 2014)

The Everything Chaat

Ingredients

- 2-3 tbsp ketchup
- 2 tbsp regular fresh dahi
- Chaat masala to taste
- Veggies- 1/2 cup
- Finely chopped
- Dry namkeen - 1 cup or more
- Assorted items like Muri, Chidwa, chana, bhujia, cheeselings (homemade), etc

Use only roasted ones for a healthy version

Mix everything well and serve immediately!

Delhi Style Aloo Chaat

Serves 2:

Ingredients:

- 4-5 baby potatoes
- 4 tbsp ghee
- 2 tbsp imli chutney
- 1 tbsp green chutney
- Spices as per taste - Rock salt, red chilli powder, black pepper powder, Amchur powder, chaat masala
- Ginger julienne
- Coriander
- Onions (optional)

- Lemon juice.

Method:

- In a pan heat ghee and smash the boiled potatoes (with peel) directly on the pan.
- Cook till brown and crisp on both sides.
- Make sure you have the toppings ready while your potatoes are roasting.
- Top the hot potatoes with all the above ingredients.
- Assemble super hot potatoes and serve hot.
- They should be red hot brown and crispy.

ARTISPIRATION

Anushree Saraogi
Batch of 2010



The national lockdown on account of COVID-19 caught us all unawares and led to general feeling of despair, among others. Amidst the chaos, Anushree Saraogi, an MHS alumni member from the batch of 2010, chose to stay away from all gloom and focus her energies on channelling positivity. "It all started with me wanting a way out from discussing the hopelessness of Corona. My sister, who is into creative arts, suggested me to begin practising Art as a form of therapy and challenge myself to a 100-day challenge where I would create one painting every day."

Anushree has since started her own page on Instagram (@vibrantartwork) wherein she chooses to paint "positivity on a canvas". She started off with learning brush lettering, which is a type of calligraphy, through various online classes and perfected her skills with lots of practice, courtesy the lockdown! Gradually moving to more advanced forms of artwork such as aquarelle, commonly known as watercolour painting, Anushree started adding some complexity to her artwork but remained loyal to putting out cheerful and upbeat quotes no matter the art.

Asked about where she would like to take this, Anushree hopes to continue using this opportunity to perfect her skills in a form of artistry that has been therapeutic for her while spreading "happiness through colours".



THREE LITTLE WORDS THAT CAN MAKE ME CRY:

"Are you happy?"

Three little words that can make me cry. I cannot remember the last time someone asked me that. Actually, yes I can, but I cannot remember the last time I answered that question honestly, with all my heart.

Just because I have a stable and well-adjusted life, I am supposed to be happy, aren't I? After all, there seems to be nothing wrong with my life. Yet, I sometimes hesitate to share my thoughts, to speak of the things that make me not so happy and I imagine myself less happy than I should be. But is that all there is to it? Is happiness so black or white that there is no space for the greys? And anyway, I always say that black and white are two ends of the spectrum. Real life is lived in between, in the greys, the blues and the yellows. Which begs the question, what IS happiness? Where is it found?

Is happiness in the fragile joys of our childhood? I can honestly say that as a child in my father's arms, when we potted around in the garden or when we mucked about in the sand in Puri, I was genuinely, truly happy. Yes, but that is such fragile happiness. Did I know I was happy? Or is it that time has made me look back and realize that THAT was a time when I was happy? If there is one thing life teaches us, it is that happiness is fleeting, happiness is transient. And relative. It's all a matter of perspective.

Sometimes, in my teenage angst I used to shout out that "it's not fair." My father used to smile and tell me that no one promised that life would be fair... we just have to do our best with the skills we do have. Just like that, one of his favourite expressions when I used to be upset, be it over marks or someone who hurt me, used to be "it's not the end of the world". Even now, when life seems a little over-whelming, his words whisper in my ear and I know things are never as bad as they seem! And don't let anyone judge you for what they think happiness is. Happiness is within YOU. No one can take that away, no matter how narrow their own perceptions of happiness may be.

Over the years, our ideas of happiness change. Speaking for myself, as I have evolved from daughter to working woman to wife to daughter-in-law to aunt to mother to working mother to harried, harassed mother to empty-nest mother, my needs, my wants, my outlook towards that ever-elusive "happiness" has changed. There was a time when an outing with no poop in the diaper would have made me happy. Now, just knowing that my daughters are well and safe makes me happy. At one time my daughter's happy smiles when I ordered a pizza would have made me happy, now, the fact that they have survived another day of mess food makes me glad. My daughter's friends visit even when the daughters are not there, they call me and ask about my day. Things like that make me happy. There was a time when parties and loud music made me happy, now, a quiet coffee with a good friend makes me happy.

Real happiness is like that: ever-changing, ever-evolving and gentle.

You know that feeling, we all have days when we feel the burden of the world upon our shoulders, real or imagined. Days when the problems seem to outweigh the positives, when tears threaten to flood the few smiles that we share.

That is when we need to remember that happiness cannot be bought or out-sourced. Happiness has to be found in everyday things, happiness is a mind-set, happiness is a way of life. Someone famous once said you are only as happy or as unhappy as you want to be. Over the years, I've found that is so true. One can choose to wallow in misery or one can choose to count one's blessings. Happiness waits in a corner for you to realize that it is there. Quietly winding itself in the smile of a loved one, the eyes of a kindred soul, the touch of the hand of one who understands and cares. Why, even in the curve of moonlight falling on your floor, the golden egg-yolk of the sunset or the quiet of the dawn. Happiness is everywhere. If you want to find it.

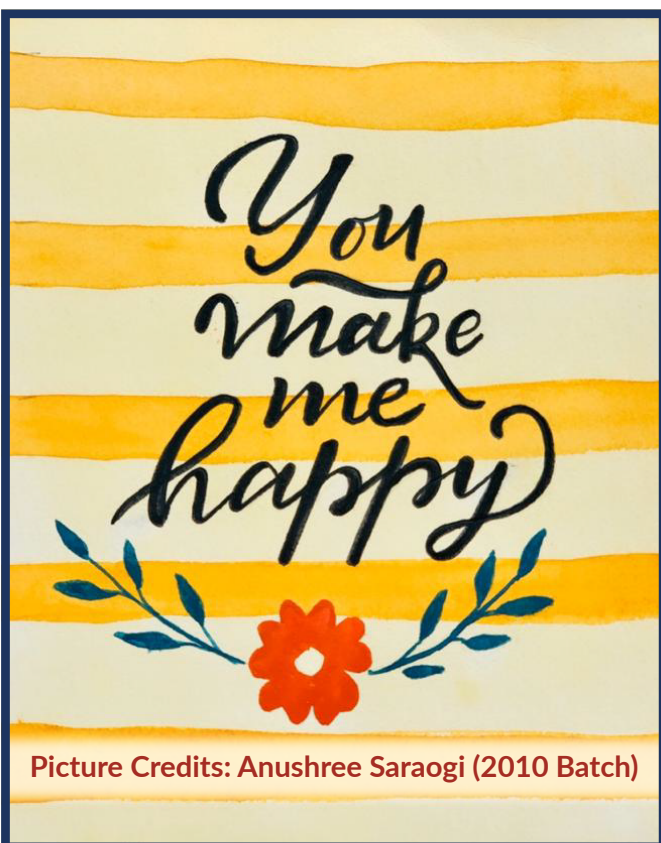
And real happiness does not shout from the roof. Real happiness is silent. Like love, most days you are forgiven for thinking that it is not there!

Now, close your eyes, take a deep breath and answer that question again:

"Are you happy?"

The original article can be found at:
<https://www.momspresso.com/parenting/mommy-magic/article/three-little-words-that-can-make-me-cry-amwriting>

Ipsita Banerjee (Batch of 1989)



Picture Credits: Anushree Saraogi (2010 Batch)

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