



Commemorating 75 years 1932-2007

MAYA PUWATH

Volume 3 Issue 5 December 07

DHAMMAPADA

As he instructs others so should he himself act. Himself fully controlled, he should control (others); for oneself, indeed, is difficult to control.—Dhammapada

EDITORIAL

Ayubowan!

As we get ready to bid adieu to 2007 I thought of dedicating this issue of Mayapuwath to HOPE in all its forms.

Where would we all be without hope? 2007 for me personally was an extremely challenging year. But I have hope that I will be able to fix everything that went wrong in 2007 in 2008 at least. Hope to me is basically what makes waking up and getting out of bed each morning worth it! It is the optimism that keeps the world moving.

Some, who in my eyes are pessimists see hope as an illusion, a carrot that is dangled to keep you moving away from harsh reality towards an often unattainable goal leading to disappointment. The optimists on the other hand such as Dale Carnegie say "Most of the important things in the world have been accomplished by people who have kept on trying when there seemed to be no hope at all."

Growing up, when my father suddenly took ill and we had to have a major lifestyle adjustment and there was much socio-political chaos in Sri Lanka. I still vividly remember my mother telling me when ever I used to complain, "remember that you still have hope"...Hope sprung eternal in her mind and soul. That is all there was for us and Amma used to tell me, "Never let anyone take that away from you. Once you have no hope- you will be as good as dead". These words of my mother still echo in my head even though she is no longer with me. Amma also told me to never take away another person's right to hope and it is this "hopeful" environment in which I was nurtured in that has helped me get through my trials and tribulations in life.

This is why we need to spread hope, give hope, build hope in the lives of people who are caught in a vicious cycle of poverty and give the opportunity to those of us caught in the mad rush that is called life these days the chance to do something good by someone and feel happy about it. And this is something we could do through the MGCAANA family. Give the opportunity to hope, by networking, providing scholarships and funds to the endowment committee to help less fortunate students at Mahamaya. You will certainly be giving hope to those kids who may not dare to hope otherwise due to the circumstances they are in and therefore are unable to reach their full potential to contribute to society. Hope is contagious, it spreads fast and easy. Try it if you haven't already. A good place to start would be the scholarship fund of MGCAANA. **You can make your tax deductible contribution to this cause right now through MGCAANA.** Contact us! See page 2 for more details.

The Members of the Editorial Committee wishes you happiness, peace and prosperity in 2008!.

May all beings be well and happy!

Chathuri Nugawela-Munasinghe

Dear members

On behalf of the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors, I would like to wish all our members and their families a very happy new year. Thank you for all the support you gave us during this past year and we hope you will continue to support us in the future.

May the Triple Gem bless you all!

Erandi Suriyaarachchi-President—

Editorial Committee: Chathuri Nugawela_Munasinghe (Editor of current issue), Priyanka Jayakody, Dakshika Bandaranayake & Nazrana Caffoor.

HOW TO MAKE YOUR
TAX DEDUCTIBLE CONTRIBUTION
TO MGCAANA SCHOLARSHIP FUND/ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE

Dear Members and non-members,

MGCAANA is a tax-exempt non-profit organization under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions made by you are deductible under section 170 of the Code. Therefore, in this giving season, please consider contributing to our Organization. Your contributions, how big or small they may be, will be much appreciated and in good use.

ENDOWMENT:

MGCAANA is working on setting up an endowment to give financial assistance to those students who are in need at Mahamaya. We already have a program that helps disadvantaged students. The endowment will help the students in need to have a permanent fund to rely on. On behalf of MGCAANA and the Scholarship and Endowment Committees, I would like to express my deepest appreciation for those of you who very kindly and willingly sponsored 23 students; many of them would not have been able to afford to stay at Mahamaya without your financial support. Here in this Newsletter we are publishing a letter written by a mother of one of the scholarship recipients. Almost all of these students are 5th Grade Scholarship holders who have come from remote areas. Heartwarming "thank you letters" that these children have written to donors tell us their life-stories and how thankful they are.

We appeal to you, to be part of our Endowment and Scholarship Program by your generous support. When you decide to support this program, you will realize that you are giving the greatest gift of education to someone worthy to fulfill her dreams and achieve her life's goals. These children are little gems.

Our target of the Endowment is to reach \$20,000. If we have 200 donors with \$100 each or, whatever you can afford to donate to our cause, we will reach our goal.

With much appreciation,

Sujatha Werake

On behalf of MGCAANA, and the Scholarship and Endowment Committees

For more information, please email: Mahamaya_alumnae@yahoo.com

Or call: 425-228-0988

HAPPY SHOPPING!

Since it is the holiday season and most of you would be looking out for deals, I thought this would be helpful to provide you with some internet sites that will give you an insight into best deals. I got this information from <http://finance.yahoo.com>.

<http://www.dealsofamerica.com/> - updates every hour to provide you with the latest information,

<http://www.slickdeals.net/>

<http://www.shoplocal.com/Default.aspx?> - Find the best prices near your home

<http://www.pricegrabber.com/> - For price comparisons

<http://www.couponsabin.com/> - To get your coupons

Sent by: Chathuri Nugawela- Munasinghe

Mahamaya Alumnae Membership

Mahamaya Alumnae, please come and join us to help the Mayans in need and to build up the Maya community. Alumnae who have not renewed their membership for the 2007/2008 year, please do so. This would allow us to keep you updated with all the happenings in the Maya community. Please take a few minutes of your time to join us or renew your membership by visiting our

website www.mahamayaalumnae.org

e-mail us at Mahamaya_alumnae@yahoo.com

or snail mail us at : **MGCAANA, 2417, NE
24th street, Renton, WA 98056**

Rel:

A NEW ARRIVALS



It is with great pleasure that we announce the births of Chanduni Himaya Herath to our –editorial member of Mayapuwath– Dakshika Bandaranayake and her husband Sanjeeva

and the birth of

Nevin Kithmaka Jayasinghe to our member Tharoshi Kasthuri and her husband

Congratulations!



A New Mother's Hope...

I hope you grow up to be a good person;
A person who brings smiles to where sadness dwells,
A person who brings warmth to where coldness dwells,
A person who lights up a whole world.

I hope there will be a better world for you to live in;
A world that has no wars and fewer woes,
A world that is filled with green, blue and all other hues,
A world that is filled with all good things.

I hope you are surrounded by love all the time;
Love of all the people who love you and whom you love,
Love for all beings and things that you love,
Love for yourself, which is the utmost of love.

I hope you stay like this forever to hold in my arms;
I hope you don't have to grow up and go away, like I did;
I hope you will stay my little girl forever smiling your toothless grin at me,
But most importantly,
I hope you stay asleep a little longer this time so I can take a shower and brush my teeth!

Dedicated to my little daughter, Chanduni Himaya.
- Dakshika Bandaranayake.

Men and Women are limited not by the place of their birth, not by the color of their skin, but by the size of their hope. ~

John Johnson

A leader is a dealer in hope -**Napolean Bonaparte**

Hope is the companion of power, and mother of success; for who so hopes strongly has within him the gift of miracles

Samuel Smiles

Sent by Nazrana Caffoor

Look to this day– KHALIDASA

For it is life, the very life of life.

In its brief course

Lie all the verities and realities of your existence.

The bliss of growth,

The glory of action,

The splendor of achievement

Are but experiences of time.

For yesterday is but a dream

And tomorrow is only a vision;

And today well-lived, makes

Yesterday a dream of happiness

And every tomorrow a vision of hope.

Look well therefore to this day;

Such is the salutation to the ever-new dawn!

Sent by Chathuri Nugawela_Munasinghe

Did you know? You could save money on Home Owners Insurance by:

- Having a burglar alarm , Having a newer home, Being claim free in the past and Insuring your vehicles with the same company

<http://www.suffolkinsurance.com/save/tips/>

FAMILY TRIVIA

I really cannot wait for this year to be done with. It has pummeled sickness upon sickness upon our family. The anxiety was so much that I had a stress-induced asthma attack- this was a first. I had never had asthma and I did not even recognize it for what it was. When things got so bad and I started having chest pains, I arrived at the ER thinking I was having heart related issues. I watched with great sadness as I saw the anxiety in my children's eyes as to what was going to happen to Amma. Meth could hold onto it no longer and blurted out- "Amma, are you going to die? You could tell me you know" he said. Iru hearing all this asked, "If you die, when will you come back?" So there I was, as gently as possible explaining that No, once you die, you do not get to come back again in the same form, as their Amma, although I would like to and there was still life left in me and that I hoped, I would live a while longer.

A couple of weeks later Meth was in the ER twice. After that he came home with a sort of a crooked nose after having had a fall on a concrete sidewalk at his after school care center. I could not bear to look at him. His nose looked like a gourd grown wrong. It was swollen and blue. When I took him to his pediatrician they wanted me to show him to an ENT Specialist. I took him with great trepidation to be told that his nose was yet cartilage and not bone. So it was contoured as opposed to broken and that nature will heal it in due course. Iru of course has a better solution, and that was in her words "Amma, if you stick a crayon in Aiya's nose it will be straight again." So then onwards we had the additional responsibility of watching the nose even more closely in case Iru got too close to it with a crayon in hand. While we were busy with Meth's nose, as much as we tried to keep Iru occupied, she felt left out. She cried one day saying "nobody loves me anymore". A couple of days later Iru was sick and of course we rushed her to the doctor. I could not understand why she seemed so happy about the whole episode. Then Iru said "I am so happy I am sick Amma, because I get to be in hospital with you just like Meth!" She went on to tell the doctor that "My Amma brought me to hospital because she loves me." It saddened me no end that Iru thought that she needed to fall sick to get to spend time with me. It is amazing how sensitive their little minds are especially when they cannot comprehend that I was spending more time with Meth because he was sick and needed to keep him away from his sister for fear of something being stuck up his nose by her! Then of course Iru had her fair share when she was taken to hospital with a tummy upset, and ear infection and the list goes on.

Iru is again back to her querying. Last night's question was "Does the moon wear trousers?" When and where this came from I do not know.

To add to my woes, I found a crumpled up piece of paper with a phone number in Meth's bag. Mind you, he is just five. It was written by a kid as the 3's and the 7's were written facing the wrong way. I asked him what it was, trying not to make a big deal about it but curious to know what this was. When I asked him what it was, our conversation took place like this: He said "Oh it is Kayla's number". "Who is she?" I asked. "A girl in my class." "So is this for a play date?" I asked. "No, Kayla said I could call her anytime I wanted to" responded Meth. Not happening! I said to my self. So we kept the number,. Jeeva wants to give it to Meth when he turns 21! A couple of days later Meth comes home and tells me, "Kayla is bothering me." How I asked, he said she wont let me be Amma, she always wants to pull at me, sit next to me, talk to me. In the meantime, cute as it may sound, I, the straight-laced mother is very annoyed that there are itsy bitsy girls trying to distract my son. I know he is going to be someone else's husband someday. But Jeepers can I have sole custody of him at least for a quarter of a century! I had the nine months of morning sickness, and the 21 hours of labor! I gave birth to him you know. So I think I have well and truly earned both my children. I am sorry I fail to see the funny side to all this. Kids should be kids and have a childhood. Iru has no such issues, after reading all these Snow White and Cinderella stories, she said she wants to marry her dad. So I asked what are you going to do after you get married to him? Pat came the response. Oh, "go feed the ducks, you can come too." Iru is also in to "I do not like vegetables as they do not taste like candy" phase. Now, when I was a kid when Amma looked at me playing with the vegetable as opposed to eating them I gobbled them up then and there. If I stare at Iru, she stares back and says "Whats wrong Amma? You asked me not to stare at people because it is bad manners!" So I showed her a clip of BBC news where they showed famine-stricken kids begging for food in other parts of the world. I tried to let her know how lucky she was to have any kind of food even if it was not her favorite. After that she looked me straight in the eye and said, "sad Amma, so so sad, lets send all our vegetable to them and make them happy. There are more vegetables in the fridge and in the shops,-lets send them also". Needless to say I was dumbstruck by the antics of my three and a half year old. Meth on the other hand had been learning about community helpers and the role of doctors, illnesses and that sort of thing. He watched a cartoon with a character with a lot of spots on his face—who appeared sick and said, "Amma, I think he has got chicken POPS!"

Chathuri Nugawela– Munasinghe

COOKS CORNER– Try these websites

<http://www.recipezaar.com/104673>

http://www.ammas.com/ar/home.cfm?r=b_arec&topicid=2

<http://www.foodnetwork.com/>

OBITUARY

It is with sadness that we learnt of the demise of Mr. Peter Hettiarachchi, father of our alumni and teacher Ms. Eloma Hettiarachhi and grandfather of Iyanka Ponnampuruma. We wish the late Mr. Hettiarachchi a smooth journey through samsara in his journey towards Nirvana!

Life Vs Hope.

Life without hope is like a garden without flowers. There is nothing more depressing than having to live without any hope for the fulfillment of your dreams and expectations. Everyone has many dreams & aspirations in life. And the fulfillment of these dreams are not always without obstacles. Some obstacles are far more difficult to overcome than previously expected. What keeps many of us trying again & again to achieve our goals is Hope. Hope, that tomorrow will have a better result than today. It is after all a new day which dawns with renewed Hope.

We humans are more or less creatures of hope. It is very difficult to get through life without Hope. And Hope keeps some vital ingredient for life alive.

Life is never hopeless. It is always a situation or an action that causes one to lose hope. And we are such a hopeful species that hope springs up even when everything seems an impossibility. We are also the only species that has logical thinking. This is the greatest deterrent for us to Hope. We think and make sure that hope does not play a part in our life. Because to hope and have your hopes unfulfilled is not easy to accept. So we try our best to suppress our inner voice which is telling us to hope. Because experience has given some hard lessons to us where hope is concerned. It is not only disappointing but sometimes there is an unmentionable pain when one's hopes are not satisfied. And it is no doubt difficult to Hope again. It is difficult because we are aware of the pain & suffering and we make a conscious effort to avoid hoping again. But is life worth living without hope? The joy in life comes with achieving our goals. And hope is the one aspect that keeps us on the path of achieving happiness. Hope always gives us new life when all else seems lost. If we have hope nothing is lost nor unachievable. The harder we try the more hope we have of succeeding. Hope is an intangible feeling that gives us a spring in our step and makes us face the world with a smile despite the sorrow and worry we inevitably have in our lives.

So let's make sure and make a conscious effort never to suppress or lose Hope. It is the most essential ingredient for a happy life. Hope seeps in through the cracks in your denial, your pain, your inertia. It erodes your cynicism. ~ Kimberly Ridley.

Sent by Nazrana Caffoor

Some Methods To Save More Money

1. Turn off all lights when they are not in use.
2. When/If you go away on holidays or a friend's house, turn off all not used power points (eg. tv, CD player, computer power points)
3. Pull the plug out any electrical items that are not in use.
4. Buy energy efficient light bulbs.
5. Buy a shower timer, the reason is that you can time all your showers to a short time reducing 2 bill types, Water and Electrical (Electric power is used to heat your water).
6. Spend less time on the phone (don't sit there talking when you have nothing to talk about).
7. DO NOT BUY A MOBILE PHONE. Mobile phones cost more, you may think 'every one's got one so I want one too', don't think that. They are a waste of time and money, but mostly money (and you'd waste electricity on charging them).
8. When driving a car reduce your speed, this will take the air pressure and air resistance off your car (air resistance pulls your car back putting on loads of friction therefore paying less for getting fuel for your car).
9. Empty all un-needed items out of your car, this will reduce the weight your car has to pull (therefore paying less for getting fuel for your car).
10. Garage Sales always attract people. Finding old items around the house that you don't use can be great, as they say one man's trash is another man's treasure.
11. Get a water tank, it may cost some money but the money saved from all the rain water will help in the long run.
12. If writing on paper, use the other side as well, so you don't have to buy more.
13. Reduce the amount of products (hair, facial, eye, etc.) you buy.
14. If you have the Internet, try not to use it as much or it will take a chunk out of your credit card.
15. If you want to entertain the kids, don't plop them in front of the TV for 2 reasons 1. you will save electricity. and 2. they won't learn all the stupid influences from the idiot box.
If you want to keep them happy, send them outside or give them one of their toys etc.
16. Don't keep buying batteries for toys and other objects just buy rechargeable batteries.
17. NEVER stand in a shower and relax under the rush of the water, if you do this you are likely to waste electricity, waste water, and miss a probably important phone call.
18. Instead of lights use curtains to fill the room with sunlight.
19. Try to buy Home Brand foods, they pretty much taste the same but cost less.
20. And Finally, always keep a penny jar so if you are strapped for cash just reach in and grab it.

From: <http://www.wikihow.com/Save-Money> Sent in by : Chathuri Nugawela- Munasinghe

Ayubowan Sri Lankan.....

I was supposed to fly to Sri Lanka with My 19 month old baby boy. It was going to be a long, tiring journey and I was dreading it. My husband could not come with us and I was feeling terrified by the minute. I so wanted to go home and see my family and that made me determined. Those of you who have traveled with children know what I am talking about!

My husband dropped us at the airport and stayed there till the last minute. I was flying Virgin Atlantic Airways and the gentleman at the ticket counter was an elderly African American looking person with a West Indian accent. He was very nice, and helpful and got us good seats. The first leg of our journey had begun. In the plane we were asked to put on the seat belts. My son was strapped onto my lap. He stayed calmly for 5 minutes and then started to struggle. He was getting impatient. I quickly got him a toy I had packed and won myself a few more minutes. When was this plane going to take off? It was getting hotter and hotter as the air conditioning was switched off and the baby was starting to get annoyed and bored. He started to whine and cry. I tried various things to keep him occupied but failed. Suddenly from the back I heard a "oh! Shut up." I was astounded. Was some one saying this to the baby? I ignored and tried to concentrate on easing my son's discomfort. Twice more I heard the same voice saying the same thing. I almost broke down. Here I was, trying desperately to quieten my son and there was some one shouting for him to shut up. The plane was stuck to the ground, not even making the slightest effort to leave the ground and everyone was getting irritated and uncomfortable. Specially the children. Being annoyed is one thing but shouting to a baby to shut up.. oh well This consistent badgering was wearing me off and I lost my cool. I shouted as loud as I could, encouraging my son to shout. "Baby, darling, cry harder, shout louder, some one back there is enjoying the music, loves your voice!" good boy!! I felt horrible. This was so against the non-violent, non-reacting, no-revenge Buddhist culture I was supposed to be from. But it worked and we did not get anymore comments from the stranger and finally after almost an hour on the ground we took off. We were only at the beginning of our journey and I was already on the verge of breaking down crying! Baby had been slightly ill a few days before and I had not slept in days and it was catching up now.

It was night time and I thought a little bit of milk might help get the baby to sleep. So I asked for some milk. "We don't have so much of milk... let me check... I don't know if we can give you any..." . Even 4 oz would do, just to comfort him to sleep...something familiar. Please. I pleaded. "Oh, alright, I will get you a little milk". The milk came and my son slept happily for a couple of hours. It felt wonderful. The flight was an 8 hour one. He woke up after a while and wanted to move around and I took him for walks up and down the aisles. Up and down, up and down! We sat down after a while and a steward came to take my food tray away. I asked him if they have anything that might calm the baby- like a little benadryl. He gave me a crooked smile and with an English accent told me "We can throw him out of the plane." Served me right for asking!

The plane finally landed and I wearily took the baby and my hand luggage to make the transit to catch the Sri Lankan flight. A gentleman from the back offered to carry my bag but I was annoyed at the whole set-up and everyone 'back' was the 'wicked' one! I refused but he insisted and carried my bag for me. A little chivalry is still left in this world I guess. Anyway, I got into the Airlanka flight and was met with smiles from the air hostesses and hosts. I looked quickly for my seat as I felt I would collapse soon with exhaustion. My son was running wild. This was another adventure for him. He went up to the airhostess and started pulling her 'Sari pota.' Oh, no! I got up with an apology but she said with a smile "Don't worry. He was "soo cute!" Cute! Was the last thought that crossed my mind right then. I sat down again and was scanning my son's activities trying not to say "NO" to everything he was doing. He was walking all over but no one seemed to mind. I had 4 seats to myself and the couple on my right smiled knowingly at me and said they would also keep an eye on the "little one." A steward in a maroon blazer came over and spoke nicely to me and told me not to worry, for me to rest awhile and they would keep an eye on my son. I felt tears starting and thanked him, and looked down quickly. My son was happily "helping" (disturbing!) the air hostesses in whatever they were doing and they were laughing and joking with him calling him a "danga bole" "cutie pie" "naughty patiya" etc. and I think he felt he was accepted and not a pain to the surroundings, that he felt very comfortable in this atmosphere and went from seat to seat "chatting" in his baby language to them. He got extremely friendly with the couple on my right and would go and sit with them a long time before going and hanging on the sari pota's of those beautiful sari's again.

The difference in the service given on Virgin and Sri Lankan was amazing. For one it was just a service, a paycheck but to the other it was what they liked doing and wanted to do . I felt so proud being Sri Lankan. I felt very proud of our civilization that goes back centuries and although called a third world country, I was extremely proud to belong to that culture.

Nilmini Dorabawila