

February  
2023 edition



*Life is like  
Music,*

**SOME HIGH  
NOTES**

**SOME LOW  
NOTES**

*But always  
a good song.*



**PARIVaab  
PATRIKA**

*... The Quarterly Newsletter*

JANUARY 2023

## FOUNDER'S FOCUS

2ND EDITION

Hello All,

Seasons Greetings!

*I have been working with some young college students on enhancing self awareness.*



*During my sessions, I paused and reflected on my relationship with music and its deep connection to self awareness.*

*Music flows..invokes and releases emotions.. provides a state highly conducive for mindfulness and self awareness.*

*While I am practising, listening and composing music, I leave the realm of social conditioning and conscious thought and that allows me to be in direct contact with my emotions. As I am engaged in such musical experience and creativity, I am present in the moment. This presence allows me to get in touch with my emotions and harness them.*

*We all know that self-awareness is about being conscious and mindful of different aspects of ourself including our traits, aspirations, interests, behaviors, and feelings. We can develop this awareness through self-introspection and conscious practices. Being in a state of self awareness allows us to meaningfully integrate the feedback that comes our way, both praise and criticism, into our self understanding and build and enhance ourselves, and grow towards our purpose.*

*Fusionatica Parivar is committed to providing us all a platform to offer and receive feedback that can help us grow, in and through music.*

-RK

## Concerts and Learnings Series

Namaste. We, as music lovers, have so much opportunity to learn from concerts and this series is an attempt to raise our awareness to observe, learn, imbibe and be grateful for the experience, artists and everyone involved.



Learning is always in two dimensions - what to do and what not to do. When we talk about what not to do, it may sound like being judgemental, especially when we are talking about artists at a much higher level of art mastery than us. Our perception of information is what makes it judgemental or non judgemental. But we need to perceive to be able to experience. During perception, if our intentions are pure and if we feel truly grateful for the information that we are given, then we can perceive it in a detached way keeping judgement at bay.

With this background, let us listen to this amazing mini concert.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kEvojYnBaak>

One of my school classmates shared a video of Taufiq Qureshi Ji and a young flutist playing Hai Rama ye kya hua and I heard Taufiq ji for the first time then and wanted to listen to more of him. That's how I chanced upon this video of Bengaluru Ganesh Utsava, where Vijay Prakash Ji and Taufiq Quereshi Ji jammed together. The first round of listening can just go by, in awe of the performers. What amazing breath control by Taufiq ji. Those who practice Pranayama can relate so much to this and I feel like we could call this as Musical Pranayama and we all can learn and practice too.

Out of the 11 minutes of this performance, the first 3 minutes is complete breath and sound work. As a child when I used to see masters singing with gestures, I used to wonder what was the necessity to move one's hands or body so much (more than necessary) while singing. I related it to show off with my limited knowledge at that time. As I started using the hand gestures to teach the SwaraSthana to students, I figured out that our mind associates our body movements with harkat whether it be frequency of sound or Brigas or Fast Rhythm etc. In the first 3 minutes of this video, we can see how Qureshi Ji's hand movements are guiding his rhythm and sound production.

The artist on the flute was amazing. In the parts where Vijay Ji would sing a phrase and Taufiq Ji and the Flute Artist would repeat his phrase, what I noticed was, couple of times, when the flutist was repeating the phrase, Vijay Ji would not look at the flutist while he played, but would turn his back to him looking at Taufiq Ji and preparing for the next phrase. I could not notice the same behaviour when Taufiq Ji was repeating the phrase. From the overall interactions though, I felt that Vijay Ji respected the flutist also. His intention in not being with the flutist while he was playing, may not be because of disrespect but may be because of familiarity and "ye to apna hi hai" feeling. This "ye to apna hi hai" feeling can also translate into a "taken for granted" feeling. When the recipient is going through some low phases, they can immediately sense this "taken for granted" feeling. Those who might be contributing to this feeling of the recipient may not be even aware of their contribution. Simple techniques like practicing to give our undivided attention and listening fully to everyone irrespective of their stature can raise our awareness in this area and will be extremely beneficial in building empathy in relationships.

The third aspect was this amazing idea of Vijay Ji to engage the audience totally. As the camera was moving during the audience engagement, we could see each and everyone singing and clapping. Concerts are no longer like - I give and you receive. They are like - I give and I want to engage and I want to know how you are feeling. There is a huge difference in the attitude even when there is a gap between the artist and the audience. The latter approach bridges that gap and it is this inclusiveness that always brings joy to all those involved.

Hope you enjoyed the first of this learning series. Please feel free to share your learnings from this video in our Global Parivar Group. Looking so much forward to your thoughts and learnings.

Thank you for listening and have a nice time until we meet next.

-Shobha Srinivasan



## The best kind of happiness is making others happy .... !!!!

Hi Fusionatica Parivar Members! Trust 2023 has augured well for Everyone!

Praying to the Almighty to keep the Earth safe, peaceful and healthy for All.

With Krishna's mercy, so glad to be a part of an active and positive Group of Parivar members♥

While at it, I thought of sharing, one of many incidents, that goes to prove the magical power of music, in real life, contrary to our belief and expectation. I got an opportunity to perform Karaoke, (on an invite from a Rotary Club hostess) at an Orphanage and institute for Destitutes in Byculla, Mumbai in 2014. When I entered the huge premises (attached to a beautiful church) during a rainy day, I found it silent, dull, damp, unkempt and depressing. There was not even a sign of life and I doubted if I made a mistake travelling all the way, with a heavy Laptop. To add to my woe, the hostess herself had not arrived dampening my spirits further. Then I double-checked the address, went to their office and was told an event was slated to be held in a hall, behind the premises, shifted due to the heavy rain-drenched lawns. Luckily, the hall was dry and neatly kept, with chairs and tables arranged. Staff then welcomed me with coffee that soothed my frayed nerves after a long journey from home in the suburbs. Luckily, soon the hostess and her team arrived and we got ready to start the program on time. I expected a few others but discovered I had to entertain Solo for an hour and half atleast. A lady who was to accompany me was a doubtful starter with cold, last minute. So you can imagine the scenario of (expectedly) being able to hold fort to an audience that was also a totally unknown factor. It was a tailor-made situation for challenging a performer to come good or else!! I took a deep breath, greeted, smiled, chanted Hare Krishna and started.

Audience consisted of the hostess and her team, staff-in-charge plus a large gathering, all women, old and middle-aged destitutes and orphans, many of them in wheel-chairs, a posse that could hardly buoy the spirit of a performer in a city like Mumbai. But I knew Rotary stood for Charity and braced myself for the occasion. I could see my hostess and her team smiling at everyone. Be that as it may, I could also see and feel everyone's warmth and keen joy in their gait, movement and cheerful spirits. Though I was used to all kinds of audiences, (from stage since '94) this was my first Solo experience in such a different environment. I just didn't know what to expect from this crowd but decided to entertain them, all out and set up my playlist in the system. When I introduced myself and what I intended to do, they all responded in chorus, they wanted to hear RafiSaheb's Golden melodies (of 60s and 70s). Then there was heavy expectant silence. I felt it was a signal God-sent, right up my alley and half the battle was Won there itself! Glory be to RafiSaheb, I thought.

It was all as if it happened yesterday and such a humbling experience. What transpired thereafter was nothing less than magical!! I was so wrong in gauging the audience, their position, mood and reception. Within a matter of 30 minutes, the crowd of 60 odd women, turned totally delirious, energetic and ebullient to say the least! Even some 70+ women got up from their wheelchairs, clapped and danced rhythmically, others joined, embraced each other and it was as though they turned the clock back to their prime youth! I don't know from where I got energy but an hour and half got extended to another hour, all Solo, to my own surprise and delight, rendering some special choices as well. A marathon Show 😊 They were all so pleased and happy, some had tears of joy and mirth, they blessed me and took pics. They profusely thanked the team, insisted on having the home-made lunch with them, arranged delicious food from somewhere for all and served us lovingly. They found their missing Family in Us . Gifted me a song book, a salver. They just kept praising, saying I helped them regain their spirits and memories back and it was their best day in ages. It was all a genuine appreciation and I was feeling as if I earned millions overnight, which was so difficult to explain and so different! So much so, I wish every Parivar Performer gets it sometime or other.

Why I'm mentioning this episode is to show **How much We enjoy our Performance is equally important to how much We make the audience enjoy, too!** A sort of Win-Win quid pro quo. Because such occasions are once in a lifetime experiences. Anyway, more of such experiences as we go along, in future editions. All the Best to Everyone ♥ Thank you for tuning in. Happy 2023 once again !!

- C K Vasudevan

## "The less you want, the Richer you are"

A feedback on my 10 days Vipassana experience at Igatpuri !

(Igatpuri, the main and oldest centre is about 2 hrs drive from Mumbai on the Nashik road)



It's not Bhakti Marg, nothing to do with religion, anybody can attend. It is a pure Gyan Marg to lead a life of bliss eradicating craving, aversions and miseries from the roots of the mind by meditation tools shown by Buddha, 2500 years ago. It is a connection of mind and matter. It is 10 days of very tough life at the campus (Shibir) with meditation at the deepest levels (about 7 hours a day and 2 hrs of Pravachan on video) from morning 4:30 AM to 9:30 PM with some intervals, rest in between, frugal eating and Satvik food (no food after 5:30 PM). Meditation is sometimes in groups or in individual cells in the Pagoda. Not recommended for weak bodied and weak minded (because one has to sit long hours down on the floor or on a chair), needs tremendous determination and will power. Not at all for the weak hearted.

Like many others, I also felt like running away after two days but got used to it as it progressed and made it by sheer perseverance and determination. The course itself tells that if the determination is there to achieve the bliss of end results, the path obviously will be tough. The 10 days of rigorous training provides the tools to apply in day to day life. I am happy that I could complete it and feel good now. My family and I myself felt that my years of yoga practices, reading spiritual autobiographies, and recent completion of the Veda Course helped me in completing it easily. The yardstick of success is how equanimous quality you develop to live in the present moment and accept the universal truth of the moment. Typically, some 250 odd attended, about 200 men and 50 women (they are in a completely separate adjacent compound). The average age group was 30 to 40. The good news is, it is catching up on next gen and this was a surprise and a good feeling that youngsters are also becoming aware. I was among a handful of seniors. I felt a sort of jealousy on the youngsters who attended that they have a longer life to apply, by their early exposure to this knowledge and path of Dharma.

One thing I thoroughly enjoyed was the total silence of 10 days. This is an absolute mandatory requirement as the focus is 100% on oneself and inner mind and sensations. In the 10 days one lives like a monk (except that you don't shave your head and you don't wear orange robes). A monk lives on alms and charity and seeks knowledge and gives knowledge. That's why the program is absolutely free and donation is voluntary. Accommodation was exactly like our hostels, single seated rooms. Breakfast at 6:30 AM and Lunch at 11:45 AM were unlimited, varied and very tasty. Evening snacks cum dinner at 5:30 PM comprised murmura, fruits and milk. Nothing after this. It is preached that one has to always have at least 10% of the stomach empty.

We may confuse this with the meditation that we may be doing generally but that is a routine meditation that we all do day to day and trying to be in the present. But that is all at the superficial level. But Vipassana is going deep down to eradicate craving, aversion and miseries from the root level and developing equanimity and realization of the universal truth. It cannot be explained and one has to go through at the experiential level. That's why it's a mandatory course of 10 days (first 3 days to develop the tools of having focussed attention and from 4th to 9th, actual Vipassana technique). I felt like getting out because of physical strain in my knee, leg and back over long sitting. But I got over it when I chose a chair, sitting with a cushion from 3rd day onwards and looking forward to the daily discourse. The 6x3 cell in the Pagoda is not at all intimidating. In fact, I used to look forward to it in comparison to group meditation in a big hall. Once you close the door of the cell you feel entirely to yourself and one has to experience that feeling.

The highlight of the 10 days is the daily Pravachan of Pujya Guruji Shri S N Goenka, the founder of the Vipassana Centre started at Igatpuri and now spread globally into many countries and languages. The Pravachan is about imparting knowledge on the theory and practice of Vipassana and the techniques of how they should be applied in our daily lives. One really looks forward to this time of 7:30 PM to 9:00 PM. The 10th day afternoon is like the opening of the flood gates to the world when the mobiles are returned and the Noble Silence period is lifted. After 10 days of isolation, the reality of life hits you but empowered with the tools of Vipassana one is ready to take on life afresh.

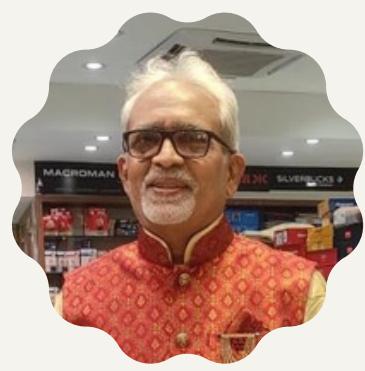
The learning to summarize in quick words is "Don't react impulsively but respond wisely".

Be Happy!!

- Shankar Ramamurthy

*"If it scares you, it might be the best thing to try"*

I have worked for the government of Karnataka, various hospitals and now am a retired veterinary doctor. From 1986 to 2021 I was in government service, then after retirement, I followed my passion. I studied Hindustani Music when I started my career as veterinary doctor at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan Mangalore under able guidance of Vidwan K.M.Das. I finished my seniors of Hindustani Music also under him. Later on, my craze for music brought me to Venkatesh Godkindi who worked at AIR Mangalore.



## “PATRIKA QUIZ!

1. An excessive fondness for music is called:

- Megalomania
- Hypomania
- Graphomania
- Melomania
- Kleptomania

2. With which song did Lata Mangeshkar do her first Hindi playback?

- Main Khili khili Phulvari
- Janari Janam Bhoomi
- Natai Chaitrachi Navalai
- Pa Lagoon Kar Jori Re Shyam
- Mera Dil Yeh Pukare Aaja

3. Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam used to play which instrument?

4. Who was the first woman to perform Carnatic music on a stage?

5. Which among these composers have created pieces in the genres of kriti, svaramji, tillana and varnam?

- Mysore Vasudevachar
- Shyaama Saastri
- Mayuram Viswanatha Sastry
- Papanasam Sivan
- Melattur Veerabhadrayya

6. Who was the first to compose in the raaga Chintamani?

- Shyaama Saastri
- Swati Tirunaal
- Maha Vaidyanaata Aiyyar
- Papanasam Sivan
- Thyagarajar

7. Begada was a specialty of which composer?

- Patnam Subramanya Iyer
- Veenai Kupaiyar
- Annamaacharya
- Thyagarajar
- Bhadrachalam Raamadasar

8. Who was the first to receive the Sangita Kalanidhi title?

During the month of September I received a message from my friend Sujatha in Bangalore regarding participating in Fusionatica. My mind thought, Why not give it a try? I sent my audioclippings to RK Sir. He encouraged me immensely and very patiently.

When RK Sir asked me to perform for Navasandya Navaratri festival, I was filled with joy. I started practicing and concentrating on my music and exploring the tiny musician inside myself. In August 2022, I finished my first video recording in a local studio. I had prayed to Lord Ganesha before the recording. This was the first time I am facing the camera. Although a bit nervous initially, I got the grip and completed the recording and sent it to RK Sir. He said he would send it to the panel for final approval.

When he told me my programme would be relayed on September 26th, I said it to my friends.

Finally the day arrived, I along with my Dad, my wife Radhika, watched the program on Television. My singing had come out well, beyond my expectations. Programme was also organized in a beautiful way. I could see a child musician in me in action.

I found out that we are truly instruments of the divine, when we tune inwards within ourselves, the path blossoms, divinity enters.

Tremendous are the potentialities of RK Sir, who along with the Parivar, nurture budding talents like me, who always gives positive affirmations, encouragement to all and I appreciate the concern of his in making music, a Global Phenomenon. Once again a big thanks to him and Fusionatica Parivar.

Music is divine, and let all of us spread this wisdom !!

### LAST EDITION'S QUIZ ANSWERS:

1. KaraNadu land of black soil
2. Jews harp
3. Kharaharapriya
4. Vasantha
5. RTP
6. Venkatamakhin
7. Konnakol
8. Guess the Raga:
  - Malayamarutham
  - Charukeshi
  - Naadanamakriya
  - Naasika Bhushani
  - Surutti

# *The sound-flavour relationship: a lifelong love story*

***“Exploring the foodie in us!”***

Parivar Members !!

There goes a saying like, ***“MUSIC is to the soul as FOOD is to the body”***. You are in the kitchen, the scent of dishes takes shape in the air and stimulates the appetite. Your dish is almost ready, and you can't wait to taste it. But stop for a moment: have you ever tried to cook with a musical background paying attention to how you perceive different tastes? Just like that, the sounds you hear while you are cooking and eating have a strong impact on how you perceive the taste of the dishes.



*- Srija & Sriyanya  
(Daughters of Shobha Srinivasan)*

*Feb'23 edition*

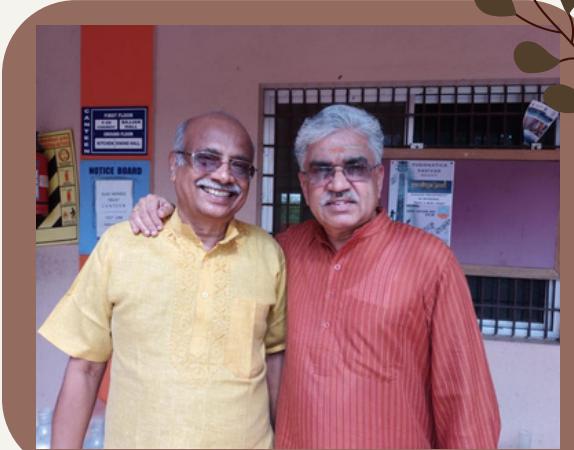
Food and music are harmonious in many ways - it is essential to use the “*correct ingredients*” in “*appropriate proportions*” and to follow an “*established methodology*”. In both instances, the end result is expressed through the aesthetic marker known as “***Ras.***” Connecting us to the “***Ras***” of Food and Music, we are delighted to bring you the snippets of exciting recipes from “***Fusion Bhojan***”, which is one of Fusionatica’s Program to give a platform for the budding food enthusiasts to showcase their talent of cooking and giving us a sneak peak to a healthily yummy treat. Lockdown has pushed us to explore many cuisines inside our home kitchen and bring out the inner Master Chefs hidden in us, right from cooking the traditional and daily meals to innovating new delicacies, from Dalgona Coffee to baking cakes and cookies, we all have come a long way in exploring the kitchen just like how we explore and learn from music every time!

*- Shruti & Sai Nishanthi*



*- Swarna Narayan  
(Mother of Shruti Narayan)*

Feb '23 edition



**PARIVAR MINI MEETS!**



## MEET OUR TEAM

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**R N RAMKUMAR**

Founder



**SIVAKAMI S**

Co-Founder



**SHRUTI NARAYAN**



**SAI NISHANTHI**

