

Women's Special

INDIA

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**DR MANJUSHA
BALEKUNDRI
& SHANTHA RATII**

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COVERSTORY
WOMEN'S SPECIAL

Celebrating **Women**

Women achievers are clothed with strength and dignity; they laugh without fear of the future

By **NITHYA SUBRAMANIAN**

Come March and it is the time to celebrate womanhood with International Women's Day. This is the time to recognise their social, economic, cultural and political achievements.

Each year the United Nations comes up with a special theme and this year it is Planet 50-50 by 2030: Step It Up for Gender Equality. Apart from this, an independent campaign is being run by financial firm Ernst & Young with other corporate partners, organising events around a #PledgeForParity hashtag.

In line with this day, we present two dynamic women who have contributed to the betterment of Singapore. Dr Manjusha Balekundri is a well-known homeopath who has cured thousands of patients suffering from chronic ailments. Spiritually inclined, she believes in the spirit of service.

Shantha Ratii is a consummate dancer and believes that it is important to be passionate about your art. She has recently returned to Singapore, her country of birth and hopes to make a significant contribution to promoting dance here.

Read on to learn more about these accomplished achievers.



The Healing Touch

Meet Dr Manjusha Balekundri, an established homeopath in Singapore, who believes in holistic body and mind treatment

The greatest violinist of our times, Yehudi Menuhin said, Homeopathy is the safest and more reliable approach to ailments and has withstood the assaults of established medical practice for over 200 years." Like Menuhin, there are many who believe that the sweet white pills provide greater and long-lasting cure to many chronic ailments.

The practitioners of this German alternative medicine are few and Dr Manjusha Balekundri is one of the few recognised homeopaths in Singapore. Ten years ago, she set up Satguru Homeopathy Clinic and has so far treated thousands of patients specialising in chronic and acute disease treatment. Her patients are multi-ethnic including Chinese, Malays, Indians,

Americans, Germans, Arabs and many more. She also treats overseas patients in countries such as America, Canada, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Dubai, Thailand, Indonesia, UAE and many more through online consultations.

In a free-wheeling interview with **India Se**, the 47-year-old Dr Manjusha Balekundri, shared her experience of practising homeopathy in Singapore.

India Se: Tell us a little about your childhood and upbringing.

Dr Manjusha Balekundri: I am a Maharashtrian, born in Belgaum, Karnataka, India. However, I was brought up in Pune, as my father was working there. Later, he started his own

business in Wardha so we shifted there.

I think I get my entrepreneurial roots from my father as he started his own business when I was studying in primary school. The way I operate as an entrepreneur stemmed from my father. His hardworking nature and determination inspired me to walk in his footsteps.

India Se: What got you interested in homeopathy?

Dr Manjusha Balekundri: When I was a child, I noticed my father consuming homeopathy pills. At that age I did not quite understand what they were. But as I grew older, I realised its benefits – his piles were cured without surgery. Soon after, I also started taking homeopathy medicine for my ailments.

Since young, I always had the passion to serve the community. However, I got married at a young age, and my priorities revolved around my family. Once my children grew up and became independent, I decided to pursue my passion in homeopathy. A friend introduced me to Professor, Dr M A Rangachari, who is the founder and principal of Singapore Faculty of Homeopathy. I started off by joining his first aid course, which was the beginning of the development of my interest of becoming a homeopath.

After completing my Diploma while pursuing my post-graduation, I volunteered to work at charitable clinics in Singapore. After completing my education, I was awarded the Doctorate of Homeopathic Medicine by The British Institute of Homeopathy (London). After that, I decided to go to Pune, India and work at homeopathy hospitals and private clinics to further solidify my practical knowledge. I had the opportunity to interact and treat patients with a variety of ailments and diseases. This boosted my confidence in establishing my own clinic and practicing Homeopathy on a practical level. Thus, since 2006,

I have successfully treated thousands of patients and have become a trusted homeopath for multi-ethnic patients in Singapore.

India Se: And why did you choose this field of medicine instead of the more common allopathy?

Dr Manjusha Balekundri: These days, people are seeking natural and permanent cure without any side effects, instead of attaining temporary relief. Homeopathy has a sure shot answer for many ailments



like asthma, sinusitis, gastritis, migraine and skin problems like urticaria or hives.

It is the most effective system of medicine that has the potential to heal very difficult and challenging conditions. The beauty lies in understanding the individuality of the patient and the art lies in selecting the accurate remedy for the patient. The more precise the remedy is, the quicker, deeper and more profound its effect is going to be. It is dependent on the Homeopath's ability to select the appropriate remedy based on the in-depth and detailed case taking of the patient concerned. Homeopathy has discovered new methodologies and has developed many systems which makes the homeopathic treatment much more flexible, consistent and result oriented.

India Se: How does homeopathy differ from other treatments and how do you treat your patients?

Dr Manjusha Balekundri: Homeopathy is a form of natural science and has recently started gaining momentum in modern societies. It is gaining popularity mainly because it's natural remedies do not contain any toxic materials and has no side effects. Homeopathy consists of remedies that are extracts of plants, herbs and minerals and help to stimulate the natural ability of our body to heal itself. Homeopathy not only treats the disease from its physical roots but also treats the person on an emotional and mental level. In other words, it tackles all forms of mind and body disorders. It is capable of treating various mind related ailments effectively like anxiety, grief and depression

and it also treats body related ailments like common cold, asthma and many more.

Homeopathy provides an individualistic treatment. For example, 10 different patients who have asthma may receive 10 completely different remedies. It depends on the individual's symptoms, way of living, reaction to life challenges, daily habits, personality traits, his past and family history of diseases. Moreover, the symptoms of the patients are taken note of in a detailed manner; for example, noting the timing of the patient's headache or the specific area of the body where pain is experienced. This helps in identifying the most appropriate medication as there are more than 4000 remedies available. With all of the information provided, we find the root cause of the illness and select an appropriate remedy accordingly which gives them long lasting cure.

Patient consultations require around 15 minutes to 1 hour, depending on the nature of the patient's illness. Acute cases normally take a shorter period of time while chronic cases require a longer period of time.

India Se: Your resume mentions that apart from chronic and acute ailments, you are able to help children with emotional and behavioural problems too, including ADHD and autism. Please elaborate.

Dr Manjusha Balekundri: For children's behavioural and emotional problems, detailed case taking of the patient is done right from the time the child was conceived. We also take note of the mother's pregnancy period involving stresses and other major situations she has gone through. Her physical ailments (i.e. gestational diabetes, thyroid, hypertension etc.) during that period and medical

history are also noted. Any complications that occurred during childbirth which may have impacted the child emotionally are acknowledged as well.

The aim of homeopathy is not to just treat ADHD or Autism, but to address its underlying root cause and individual susceptibility.

India Se: Could you tell us about your family life here in Singapore?

Dr Manjusha Balekundri: We are a family of four, living in Singapore for over 20 years. My husband, Shirish, is a chemical engineer, my son, Ankush, is working in Chicago as a technology consultant and my daughter, Saloni, is currently pursuing her studies in psychology. My entire family supports me as a homeopath and as a mother and I really appreciate it. I feel very fortunate and lucky to have them in my life.

India Se: What are your other interests and hobbies?

Dr Manjusha Balekundri: From time to time, I attend homeopathy seminars to network, gain expert knowledge, improve my communication, renew my motivation and confidence. My other interests include pranic healing, meditation, listening to devotional and classical songs music, and attending spiritual retreats which give me positive energy and help to enhance my calmness and stability. I also enjoy cooking and spending time with nature, especially at the beach.

India Se: You are also a Pranic Healer, how does homeopathy and pranic healing come together?

Dr Manjusha Balekundri: Homeopathy and Pranic Healing are two different therapies. I treat the patients with purely Homeopathy. I have learnt pranic healing for my own interest in spirituality. It helps me in purifying my mind and soul, and also enhances my positive energy. 

