

SOULFREE'S FIFTH ANNUAL REPORT (2017-18)

Soulfree was born out of dire necessity, in a desperate attempt to save myself and those facing the same struggle for survival due to spinal-cord injury. Now, we are completing five years on September 7, 2018 and I must say that we have exceeded my wildest hope. With the blessings of God, Guru and our well-wishers, our fifth year has really turned out to be a game-changer for us.



All our impactful projects are continuing to improve, and at the same time, we are fundamentally streamlining our processes to be more organised and ensure better efficiency over a period of time. The main ways we are

doing this is through digitalisation and optimisation of our:

- ✓ **DATABASE MANAGEMENT** – Every year we struggled to get all the data of our beneficiaries in order, because much of it was not systematised and would easily get lost or misplaced. This uphill battle was won through a complete shift in our database management methods. Now, one of our trustees is working full-time staying connected with our beneficiaries, motivating them, learning about their needs and constantly updating their records in our OneDrive. In the process, our database has steadily increased to more than 500 beneficiaries, which is a phenomenal improvement.



MANIKANDAN Received gift box and airbed (posing in his new T-shirt)

- ✓ **ACCOUNTING** – As we do not accept cash donations our accounting procedures are very simple. Till date, Soulfree has no employees, so we have absolutely minimal overheads and all



Members of the Tamil Nadu Government's expert panel test drive motorised wheelchairs

contributions directly reach our beneficiaries, through our programs. However, as we grow, the accounting work was becoming overwhelming. As a solution, we have purchased the latest Tally software, and employed two junior accountants to maintain and update our accounts with complete accuracy and transparency. The salary for the accountants is being sponsored by Mr Prasad K. who has been a great guiding force over the last year. They are working in tandem with our auditors to ensure complete transparency and precision in our accounting procedures.

Some of the current projects that are working well are:

- ➔ **MONTHLY STIPEND PROGRAM** – Our monthly stipend program supports those from low-income backgrounds and those with highly-level injuries, who are struggling for day-to-day survival,

with ₹ 1000 per month for a period of one year. We are currently supporting **21** beneficiaries and are seriously contemplating increasing the number to 25.

→ **WHEELCHAIR DONATION DRIVE** – Soulfree is currently providing four different types of wheelchairs – 1. Reclining 2. Light-foldable 3. Commode 4. Motorised. With extensive research and commitment to quality, we have upgraded the wheelchairs we provide, to what we think are the best available products in the market for the price range, and we are sponsoring more wheelchairs than ever before.

→ **INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM** – Our effort to ensure the financial independence of our beneficiaries continues through the purchase of sewing machines and other seed funding operations.



RAMALINGAM – An impoverished SCI is now financially independent with the Sewing Machine provided by Soulfree

→ **GIFT BOX DONATION DRIVE** – As our database grows, the scope of the gift box program has increased phenomenally in terms of number of items as well as beneficiaries. Each gift box contains as many as 32 items and has been provided to nearly 200 people and is growing towards 300 in the coming months, despite only benefiting those with an overall family income of less than ₹ 5000. In a sense, the numbers are alarming, but we are glad to make a positive impact in their lives and show them that they're valued. This year, we have also received corporate support for our gift box, in the form of vitally important health supplements and preventive medicines from The Himalaya Drug Company and Franco-Indian Pharmaceuticals Pvt. Ltd.

→ **AIRBEDS DONATION DRIVE** – Soulfree was fortunate to receive a corporate sponsorship from CAMS for 100 Airbeds this year that we have more than fulfilled. We are proud that CAMS has chosen to be associated with us, are grateful for their support.



→ **SPINAL-CORD INJURY AWARENESS PROGRAM** – As always, our visits to colleges and other institutions spreading awareness about the seriousness of spinal-cord injuries continues all over India.



→ **ADVOCACY FOR WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBILITY AND DISABILITY RIGHTS** –

Through our nationwide "Ekta – Uniting with the Positively-abled", Soulfree is working hard towards increasing awareness about the need for wheelchair accessibility in all educational institutions, public buildings, government offices, recreational centres and modes of transport. Also, our participation in various inclusion forums like the "National Conference For Ensuring Inclusive and Equitable Quality Education And Sports for Empowerment Of Women", International Red Cross Society, India Inclusion Summit and Inclusive India Conclave, speaks of our commitment to being the face and voice of the spinal-cord injured community. We are also making constant attempts to sensitise government officials towards the need for improving medical and infrastructural support

Preethi learnt about how a SCI rehabilitation centre works from Dr Thomas Joseph and motivated the inmates at SAHAJ

systems for persons with SCI. For the first time ever, I was also invited to be on an expert panel of the Government of Tamil Nadu for the procurement of 1000 motorised wheelchairs.

- **FCRA APPLICATION** – Due to several queries from persons wishing to make contributions to the Soulfree effort from outside India, we have now applied for FCRA clearance and have also completed our physical enquiry. Dragon are
- **INFLOW OF FUNDS** – Soulfree has received a big boon of rupees one crore from Samudhaaya foundation this year that is to be used for the purchase of land and building construction, towards setting up our first rehabilitation centre. We owe special thanks to Dr. Kris Yogam and all our contributors for their generosity.



Preethi explains about SCI to Defence Min Nirmla Sitharaman ji and Communications Min Manoj Sinha ji



Preethi is congratulated by former Miss Universe Sushmita Sen, a fellow recipient of the "I Am Woman" award

We have added five awards to our mantle this year including the "Aval Award" from the Vikatan group and the "I Am Woman" award from the Karan Gupta Foundation in Mumbai.

We have lost around five of our brothers and sisters this year alone to our knowledge and we hope to set up our rehabilitation at the earliest, so as to save as many lives as we possibly can.

As always, I wish to convey my deepest gratitude to our volunteers, contributors, well-wishers and friends for encouraging and inspiring us to keep performing this labour of love. Most of all, I wish to express my gratitude to our beneficiaries, for giving us this opportunity to serve a greater purpose. It is

because they embrace our efforts, choose to become inspired and allow us to enable them in their determined efforts to turn their lives around, that we feel validated, as if we are performing a transformational service.

Thank you,

Yours most humbly,

Preethi Srinivasan

Soulfree
Thiruvannamalai
07. 09. 2018

Contact details for Soulfree Public charitable trust are:

WEBSITE: www.soulfree.org
E-MAIL: preethi@soulfree.org
FACEBOOK: /Soulfreetrust
TWITTER: @preetistan
PHONE: +919994282299
WHATSAPP: +919994477147