



A Decade of Soulfree

SOULFREE
Joyously Welcomes You To Our
10
Years Completion Of Service Celebrations

DATE: 23 AUGUST - 07 SEPTEMBER, 2023
VENUE: SOULFREE INSPIRE CENTRE, TIRUVANNAMALAI

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I recently read in the Economic Times that only 20% of start-ups are able to survive for more than 5 years and only 8% manage to survive beyond 10 years. Clearly the odds are stacked against a new start-up founder. And, if the start-up is a non-profit organisation, the odds must be abysmal. Added to that, if the founder of the start-up is a quadriplegic, I'm pretty sure there are NO odds for it at all.

However, against all odds, Soulfree has not only survived for more than a decade now, it has thrived and so have our beneficiaries. Soulfree now supports more than 2100 Persons with Spinal Cord Injury who are struggling for survival below the line of poverty.

Our Soulfree INSPIRE Centre which was established in 2021, has transformed the lives of more than 125 beneficiaries and many who were bedridden for years and could hardly make eye contact are now walking with calipers and themselves employers! Actually, the transformations are so magical and miraculous that I feel blessed to be a part of it and to be a first-hand witness to everything.

There is no doubt that God's grace and the Blessings of Well-Wishers have been Abundant for Soulfree over the years and we now wish to share with you our 10th year Completion of Service Celebrations...

Preethi Srinivasan (Founder Trustee, Soulfree)

Part I

Day - 1 Events (23.08.2023)

Chief Guest: Senior Vice President of Ion-Exchange Mr. Harminder Bareja and Mrs. Rehana Taj, HR - Ion Exchange, Mrs. Vaishnavi Raja, Vice Chairman, My First School, Tiruvannamalai



The Senior Vice President of Ion-Exchange Mr. Harminder Bareja and Mrs. Rehana Taj were our chief guests on the first day. Ion Foundation has staunchly supported Soulfree and provided the INSPIRE Centre with a top tier water purification plant that guarantees the best quality of water for all our people.

Yes, financial support is there, but when they immediately agree to come hundreds of kilometres to be with us for our 10th Anniversary Celebrations just because we asked, that shows how much love and respect we have earned in their eyes. And that is priceless.

Mrs. Vaishnavi Raja, Vice Chairman, My First School, Tiruvannamalai was also present on the dais as a special guest. The school which offers a uniquely holistic form of education has been supporting Soulfree for several years especially in volunteering for the gift box drive packaging. She said that until she came to the Centre she never realised how difficult life could be and felt that her fundamental perspective of life had been altered. Our Founder appreciated the work done by My First School and also appealed to them to ensure inclusion of wheelchair users and other Persons with disability amongst the student population.



Day-2 Events (24.08.2023)

Special Guests and Respected Dignitaries from CHENNAI COUNSELORS' FOUNDATION: Dr. Saras Bhaskar, Mrs. S. Jayadevi Jayaprakash, Mrs. Padma Parthasarathy



For those any loss or failure in life, Mental Health And Emotional Well-Being become vital in their ability to manage their lives. For those who undergo life-altering injuries like spinal cord injury that causes them to become paralysed for life, pain, anger, depression and the sense of helplessness can often be unbearable. It was a great gift for us that the Professionals from CCF decided to come all the way down from Chennai to spend a day with us, enabling and uplifting our residents and co-residents with their heartaches and challenges.

Dr. Saras Bhaskar, a Counselling Psychologist from CCF gave a brief and valuable guideline on ways of tasting success in life amidst changes and challenges that we face. She conducted some mind- boggling activities through which she imparted tips and techniques to adapt to life. She was much supported by her other Team member Mrs. Padma Parthasarathy, whose impromptu her song and dance program was a big hit.

The entire session was extremely fun and insightful. The residents and co-residents enjoyed themselves immensely and also had a lot to learn about the program.

The guests also conducted one to one counseling session for the residents who preferred to clear their doubts. Our Sincere Thanks to Dr. Saras Bhaskar, Mrs. S. Jayadevi Jayaprakash, Mrs. Padma Parthasarathy for their valuable contribution in enriching and enabling PositivelyAbled Living!

We look forward to a long-term association with CCF because Mental Health and Emotional Well-being are an important aspect of the rehabilitation process as far as Soulfree is concerned.

Day – 3 Events (25.08.2023)

Chief Guest: Mr. Sultan Refai, Co-founder, Superlyfe Stores, Life Coach & Motivational Speaker And His Parents

Sultan was born with Osteogenesis Imperfecta, a genetic condition that affected his bones and caused him to have 200+ fractures and extremely painful malformation of the bones. Due to the extreme pain, he had to be homeschooled for the most part, but he fought hard to get enrolled into Loyola College, Chennai and gained vital knowledge of life and made many friends.

Today, he is a successful entrepreneur, the charismatic and determined leader at Superlyfe where he heads both Human Resources and Digital Marketing. He has built a diverse and inclusive team with 10% disabled and 50% women employment, driving the company's success.



Sultan subtly interwove life experiences, challenges and struggles with his own brand of humour and charm and motivated the residents of the Soulfree INSPIRE Centre

He shared from his own life experience on how he faced the struggle and setbacks in his life owing to a very rare disease he had and how he fought all those with determination and courage in spite of rejection of opportunities in education and employment by the society.

Starting with 'self-acceptance' as the first step to realize success in life, he shared at length ways of coping with stress and leading a meaningful life with dignity and purpose. His parents also shared some valuable insights by which the session came to an end. Overall, it was a wonderful and valuable experience for all of us to be cherished in our memories. He is truly a role model for all and a true hero!

Day – 4 Events (26.08.2023)

Chief Guests: Tamil Nadu Paralympics Wheelchair Tennis Players Mr. Karthik Karunakaran & Mr. Mariyappan Durai

Who would have thought that both India's Number One and Number Two Ranked Para-Tennis Players belong



to the city of Chennai? These two immensely hard-working men come not from privileged backgrounds, but from extremely difficult socio-economic segments and have had to struggle all the way to reach the pinnacle of success!

This Duo were our Invitees on the fourth day of our 10th Anniversary Celebrations –

Mr. Karthik Karunakaran aged 38 years, a Right-handed Wheelchair Tennis player has won 3 National Singles Titles and 2 National Doubles titles and his current ITF Ranking is 326. He has also participated and captained many International Wheelchair Tennis Tournaments like Thailand, Sri Lankan Open Tournaments.

Mr. Mariyappan Durai aged 44 years, a Right-handed Wheelchair Tennis player has won 4 National Singles Titles and 10 National Doubles titles. He has also participated and captained many International Wheelchair Tennis Tournaments like Thailand, British Open Tournaments, FESPIC Games, Malaysia, Asian Para Games.



They took the stage and both of them shared respectively their own stories on how they turned

to be a wheelchair person and their journey and struggle in achieving the success graphs. There was an open Q & A session with the residents to address their queries. They then shared on ways of accepting failures or setbacks and moving ahead in life personally or professionally irrespective of the results.

'BELIEVE IN YOURSELF, YOU CAN & YOU WILL DO' was their Mantra for seeing rosy terrains in one's life.

Day -5 Events (27.08.2023)

Chief Guests: Yogi RamSuratkumar Ashram Head Ma Devaki & Philips Bhaskaran

The fifth day of our celebrations proved to be a very special and blessed day for us as Ma Devaki, Head of Yogi Ramsuratkumar Ashram agreed to bless us by her Divine presence at the Centre. Mataji spoke eloquently about the power of faith and that the only true disability is actually the negativity in our own minds. She shared the power of Nama Chanting to fix our minds on God to keep us positive, healthy and single-minded in our pursuit of truth and happiness.



Her speech was like nectar and her holy presence created a calm and serene atmosphere and there can be no second opinion about the transformation she brought in our minds by her aura and holy presence. We felt blessed.

Ms. Preethi Srinivasan, our Founder Head in her key note shared about how she had arrived in Thiruvannamalai and a helpless quadriplegic teenager filled with anger and pain. She credited her guru, Yogi Ramsuratkumar in transforming inner being and permitting her to serve the greater good through Soulfree's work.

The second part of the day's session was addressed by Mr. Philips Baskaran, a Cost Accountant by profession inspired with his very brief narration of small stories through which he imparted life skills to be adapted. Later, he conducted a practical workshop on how to make functional gift items using simple raw materials and tools for financial self-reliance. The whole initiative and the practical demonstration and tips given by Mr. Philips Baskaran was much appreciated and well received by the residents.

Day - 6 Events (28.08.2023)

Chief Guest: Honorable Deputy Speaker of Tamil Nadu Thiru. K. Pichandi

On day 6, our Centre was graced by a Well-loved Veteran politician from Thiruvannamalai, Thiru. Pichandi, who also happens to hold the prestigious post of Honorable Deputy Speaker of Tamil Nadu. He not only spared valuable time from his hectic schedule to be with us, but he also promised full support from the government towards our service.



The formal function was energised by the enthusiasm of our audience who were thrilled when the Chief Guest spoke with so much empathy and understanding towards them. He eloquently spoke about his mentor Dr. Kalaingar and highlighted that he was the one who officially removed “handicapped” and began using the term “Differently Abled”.

He was extremely happy with our work since our Soulfree INSPIRE Centre was officially Inaugurated by the Honourable Chief Minister of Thiruvannamalai Thiru M. K. Stalin. It was purely because of the love and care our Chief Minister feels for the Differently Abled that he holds on to the Portfolio for their Welfare, said the Honourable Deputy Speaker.



Our Founder Preethi Srinivasan appreciated all the support from the government and requested for further infrastructure and space allocation for our future projects. She spoke passionately about the need for financial independence through voice-based training, employment, education for Persons with Spinal Cord Injury (PwSCI) to regain dignity in society because otherwise, they are treated as untouchables. The Deputy Speaker assured her that he would convey her request and that the government would support her.

Day - 7 Events (29.08.2023) – Aravind Eye Care free checkup and treatment

Evening Session by Mr PC Bala – Motivation Using the Dialogues of Mr Rajnikanth

Soulfree is committed to fulfilling all essential needs of our resident free of cost at the Soulfree INSPIRE Centre. Everything from dental checkups and haircut are provided regularly. In this context, we feel extremely blessed to have successfully set up a partnership with the Aravind Eye Care System Group of Institutions for free quarterly checkups for all our residents, co-residents and wheelchair users in the area who do not find access to proper eye tests.



It is difficult for an able-bodied individual to understand the tremendous difficulty wheelchair users have access to essential services like dental and eye care. As an agent of change, Soulfree has created a fully accessible environment is providing the best treatment and care for those who are unable to afford paid services elsewhere. This is our commitment and we are dedicated towards fulfilling it.



It was an icing on the cake that the eye checkup also coincided with the 10th Year Celebration and even previous residents and other beneficiaries could avail of this free testing and treatment.



Chief Guest: Mr. P. C. Bala

P C Balasubramanian or 'PC' as he is affectionately called, is a man of multiple interests. He is an entrepreneur, a lover of cricket, a movie buff, an author, a speaker and more. In the professional world, he is a Chartered Accountant by qualification and apart from being a promoter director of Matrix Business Services India Pvt. Ltd, India's largest integrated Business Assurance company, he is also an Executive Director in Updater Services Ltd and is also on the Board of a few other companies

He has great admiration for Superstar Rajnikanth and is one of his biggest fans! PC's respect for the star brought out the writer in him and led him to author two books based on the legend – Rajini's Punch Tantra and Grand Brand Rajini!

He inspired with live videos of Rajini's Punch dialogue scenes as he has described in his Rajini's Punch Tantra' book and correlated it to life and Management principles that can be derived out of such Punch dialogues. This was really amazing and his initiative deserves much appreciation. Many insights on life were explained simply by Bala and it touched the hearts of the residents.



Day - 8 Events (30.08.2023)

Preethi Srinivasan, who is respected today and Soulfree's founder was brought to Thiruvannamalai under the guidance of Yogi Ramsuratkumar, an enlightened master. At the time, she was nothing more than a broken-hearted teenager but his compassionate teaching was instrumental in transforming into what she is today.



Preethi always keeps her personal life apart from Soulfree and does not believe in thrusting her beliefs upon anyone. However, after she was overwhelmed by what she saw at the Soulfree INSPIRE Centre personally invited everyone at the Centre to visit the ashram and take Prasad. It was a great outing and adventure for everyone at the Centre and they were blown away by the grander and extraordinary vibrations at the ashram as well as the love emanating from Mataji, who also provided gifts and fruits.

Day 8 Evening

Chief Guest: Dr. Deepa Shree, MBBS, MRCP, FRCR, Interventional Radiologist

Dr. Deepa Shree is an Interventional Radiologist, based in Chennai having 10+ years of experience. Performed over 1800 trans arterial chemo-embolization, over 200 uterine artery embolization and several other vascular and non-vascular radiological procedures.



In her address to the residents on bringing positivity in life, she explained some amazing scientific evidence-based facts as recent findings on how water molecules change their shape when subjected to negative and positive environments and its connectivity to our body.

She further shared interesting facts about 'Chakras' and 'layers' of our body and gave the importance and significance on understanding of this for the overall well-being. She also turned the atmosphere electric with her dance performance with the whole intention of enriching the minds with happiness. It was on the whole a great new experience and learning for the residents which was well received by them

