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CONTENT.



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CONTENT.



STARTER

FEATURE

- Pet Mama - For the Love of Fur Baby - 12

COLUMN

- Mother in Law Demystified - 14

CULTURE

- Feasts, Faith and Light - 18



PARENTING

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

- Connection & Joy: A Festive Reframe - 42

COLUMN

- Anxious Parents = Anxious Children - 44

FEATURE

- The Third Parent Effect - 46



BODY

FITNESS

- The Ultimate Life Hack- 48

MENTAL HEALTH

- Family Ties & Festive Triggers - 52

FITNESS

- The Escape from Obesity- 46



FOOD

FOOD COLUMN

- Legends and Ayurvedic Sweets for Harmony - 32

RESTAURANT REVIEW

- Japanese Food Restaurant- 38



HOME

QUICK TIPS

- Single Bulb- 56

PLANT

- Aromatic Plant- 58

MARKET - 62

ASTROLOGY

- Zodiacs During Festive Gatherings - 66



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EDITORIAL.

As the crisp October air settles in and the city begins to shimmer with lights and laughter, we're reminded once again that this season is about connection. The festival of lights has always carried a deeper message: to dispel darkness not only from our homes but also from our hearts, and to rekindle the bonds that hold us together as families and as a community.

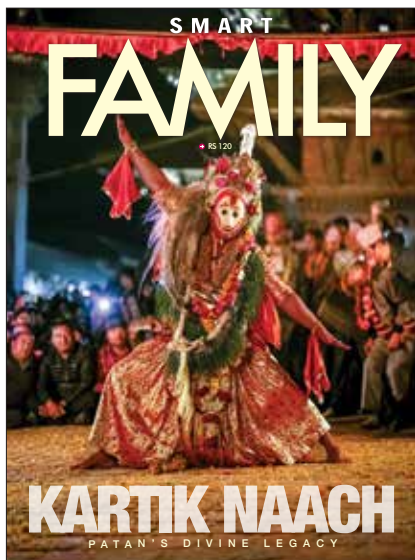
At Smart Family, this issue is a gentle homage to that spirit. It's about honoring the beauty of legacy, the kind that is passed down through rituals, stories, and shared meals, while also embracing the shifts of modern life that redefine how we live, parent, eat, and rest. October's pages shine a light on the art of balance: between tradition and transformation, festivity and reflection, the outer glow and the inner calm.

We celebrate the joy that fills our homes during this time. We think about what family truly means in a world that's constantly moving faster and how simple acts of connection can help us rediscover a sense of grounding and peace.

The stories in this issue invite you to look beyond the surface of festivities to explore the values they uphold: gratitude, respect, understanding, and love.

So as the diyos are lit and homes fill with music and mirth, let this season also be a moment of celebration of not just what we have, but who we are together. May the light of Tihar brighten every corner of your home and every corner of your heart.

Wishing you love, laughter, and light.
The Smart Family Editorial Team



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ON THE COVER:
Narsimha Avatar from
cultural dance of Patan -
Kartik Naach.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY:
Suraj Patra Bansha

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A JOURNEY OF GLOBAL LEARNING

GRADE 8 INTERNATIONAL TRIP TO CHINA



**Ridhima Aggarwal,
MYP III, Rhino**

The recent educational excursion to China proved to be an engaging exploration of the dynamic cities of Beijing, Shanghai, and Chengdu. The opportunity to investigate notable sites such as the Great Wall of China, the Temple of Heaven, the Summer Palace, and Shanghai Disney provided a harmonious combination of historical significance and contemporary amusement.



**Bhavik Thapa,
MYP III, Rhino**

Our China trip was a truly remarkable and memorable experience. We had the opportunity to visit Beijing, Chengdu, the Great Wall of China, the Summer Palace, Olympic Park, the Temple of Heaven, Shanghai Disneyland, and the Beijing Zoo. Each place was unique and gave us a deeper understanding of China's culture and history.



**Saanvi Shrestha,
MYP III, Rhino**

The trip felt like stepping into a story both ancient and alive, where every moment breathed history and possibility. I'm grateful beyond words to have walked these paths, to have seen a world so vast and intricate, where past and future danced together under the same sun. This trip wasn't just a journey across a place—it was a journey into the heart of possibility.



**Sambriddha Gurung,
MYP III, Rhino**

The China trip was one of the most memorable experiences I've had in my life. I got to experience Chinese culture and many different places in China with friends. We went to many famous historical places, such as the Summer Palace and the Great Wall. We also went shopping in various places and visited Disneyland, which was undoubtedly the best part of this trip.



**Baidhik Timalisina,
MYP III, Tiger**

Our China trip began with a flight from Kathmandu to Chengdu, followed by a journey to Beijing. We visited the beautiful Summer Palace, the Great Wall of China, Shanghai Disneyland and a large Chinese school. Overall, the trip was a fantastic mix of cultural exploration, modern attractions, and unforgettable experiences.



**Saanvi Ratna Shrestha,
MYP III, Tiger**

My trip to China was an unforgettable learning experience. Seeing the Great Wall stretch across the landscape was amazing, a powerful symbol of history. Each place taught me something new and gave me a richer appreciation of China's culture and history. The trip was absolutely unforgettable and a great learning experience for me.



**Sparsh Pradhan,
MYP III, Tiger**

The China trip was very memorable. We got to see and experience the culture of China. While in Beijing, we got to see the Great Wall of China. Along with that, we also got to see the modern part of China, which was Shanghai. Overall, our China trip was a learning experience where we got to learn about the differences between China and Nepal.



**Sashna Bidari,
MYP III, Tiger**

We visited so many incredible places, each teaching me something new. In Shanghai, we explored the city's culture and modern life by visiting Xing Zhao Public School and the Urban Planning Exhibition Centre. In Beijing, I was amazed by the mix of history and tradition. Walking on the Great Wall of China was a once-in-a-lifetime experience.



**Nora Shrestha,
MYP III, Rhino**

The moment I set foot in China, I knew this trip would be unforgettable—and it indeed was. Climbing the Great Wall in Beijing, with its steep steps and surrounding mountains, and old architecture, felt like I stepped back in time. Shanghai's modern cityscape was captivating. I observed advancements in technology, innovative architectural designs, and a city operating at an accelerated pace. I picked up more than souvenirs; I gained a deeper understanding of cultural nuances, economic systems, and local customs.



**Soumya Shakya,
MYP III, Rhino**

The whole journey to China was absolutely unforgettable! From the majestic Great Wall to the magical Disneyland, every place we visited showed us just how beautiful and vast the world truly is. There's so much more of the world waiting to be explored. This wasn't just any ordinary school trip—the memories we created and the jokes shared with everyone are deeply engraved in my heart, and those moments are something I will cherish forever.



**Yushu Gurung,
MYP III, Rhino**

The seven-day trip to China commenced with a flight to Chengdu, followed by visits to Beijing and Shanghai, allowing for an immersive exploration of the country's diverse cultural and historical landscape. The itinerary featured visits to some of China's most celebrated landmarks, each reflecting a unique aspect of the nation's heritage. This thoughtfully curated itinerary provided a comprehensive experience, celebrating both the timeless grandeur and modern vitality of China.



**Kripa Simkhada,
MYP III, Tiger**

I recently went on a wonderful tour of China, visiting Beijing, Shanghai, and Chengdu with my friends and teachers. The trip was exciting, but what made it truly special were the lessons I learned along the way. In Beijing, we explored the Great Wall, the Temple of Heaven, and the Beijing Zoo. In the city, I enjoyed a scenic cruise, visited Disneyland, and spent a day at a local school. Looking back, the trip was more than just sightseeing—it was a journey of learning.



**Aarav Dhakal,
MYP III, Tiger**

My journey to China was full of excitement, learning, and unforgettable memories. We explored the beautiful Summer Palace, visited the panda zoo, and enjoyed shopping at the lively Pearl Market. Finally, on the eighth day, we flew back to Nepal—carrying home beautiful memories, new friendships, and a deeper appreciation for China's culture and history.



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STARTER.

Pet Mama

Inspired by a personal journey of love and loss, Pet Mama Nepal is changing how we view and care our furry friends. Combining warmth with professionalism, this pioneering brand is nurturing a culture where pets are treated as cherished members of the family.

FOR THE LOVE OF EVERY FUR BABY

FOUNDED with the vision of bringing compassion & professionalism to the world of pet care, this homegrown brand has quickly become a trusted name among Nepali pet parents.

Where did idea of “Pet Mama” begin?

The idea of Pet Mama began from my personal experience with my dog, Benju. I used to struggle a lot finding reliable and professional grooming and care services for him.

After I lost Benju in a car accident, I realized how big the gap was in Nepal’s pet care industry. Traditionally, many people in Nepal didn’t view pet care as something that required professionalism or specialized attention. That’s how Pet Mama was born with the goal of providing love, comfort, and professional services to every pet, just like they deserve.

What attitude did you observe regarding professionalize pet care?

Traditionally, many families viewed dogs mainly as guards or outdoor animals, responsible for protecting the house. At the same time, there are also many people in Nepal who truly love their pets and treat them as part of their family giving them care, affection, and comfort. Seeing this contrast inspired me deeply.

I realized that with the right awareness and facilities, we could help shift people’s mindset and show that every pet deserves proper care and respect.

Why your pet deserves the pet care services offered by Pet Mama?
Every pet deserves more than just the basics. They deserve care that understands their personality, comfort, and

happiness. At Pet Mama, we go beyond grooming and boarding; we create experiences that make pets feel loved, confident, and cared for. Whether it’s a nervous first-timer or a playful regular, every pet is treated like our own.

Pet Mama is helping change how people see pets from being just animals or guards to becoming true members of the family. By providing professional grooming, care, and education, they’re encouraging a more responsible and compassionate approach to pet ownership in Nepal.

What do you think pet parents value most when they visit Pet Mama?
Parents value the love, care, and trust they feel the moment they walk in. They know their pets will be treated gently,

professionally, and with genuine affection just like how they would care for them at home.

How do you cheer up a grumpy dog? Or a nervous one on their first visit?

We try to be patient and gentle with every pet. Once they realize they’re safe and cared for, they start to open up and that’s when the magic happens.

Go-to treat for pups?

Soft, protein-rich treats that are healthy, tasty, and easy to enjoy.

If Pet Mama were a dog breed, which one would it be and why?

It would be a local breed. They’re smart, loyal, and full of love. They’re adaptable, welcoming to everyone, and have the purest hearts.

Good pet care isn't a luxury; it's a responsibility" -Nikita Jalan, CEO

Kukur Bhoj – Pet Mama's Annual Celebration

The annual event celebrated by PetMama to honor dogs for their loyalty, love, and companionship.

PetMama host a festive gathering for all dogs, where they get special treats, grooming, and fun events like a little pet parade or talent show.



MOTHER

DEMYSTIFIED

IN LAW

Sadhguru uses a witty Tamil saying to highlight how people often seek perfection instead of presence. Through his insights on family dynamics, he reveals that harmony in relationships whether between a mother and wife or anyone else comes from awareness, acceptance, and genuine involvement, not comparison.

By Sadhguru



There is a common saying in Tamil: “There is no man who has the right cattle for his farm. There is no man who has the right wife for his mother.” What is your perspective on this?

Sadhguru: This is a fundamental problem in most human beings. They are always looking for the best person or the best thing to do in their life. There is no best person, nor is there a best thing to do on this planet. Whatever you do, if you put your heart into it and really throw yourself, it becomes a great thing to do. Whoever is next to you right now, if you give yourself totally, if you show total involvement, you will see, just anyone is fine. This moment, whoever is next to you, if you show absolute involvement, it is great to be with them. If you think, “Is this the best person?” no one in the world is the best person. Even if you get married to God, not just your mother, you yourself will complain.

A Mother and a Woman

About satisfying the mother – when you say a mother, essentially she is a woman. Then she became a mother. When you say a wife, essentially she is a woman, then she became a wife. It is a secondary role. Her basic identity is that of being a woman. The next identity is maybe a wife and the next is a mother. It comes in that order.

Once it happened in America, a young man from a family in the Mid-west was going to get married to a girl. He told his mother

➔ “There is an instinctive rejection or resistance to the new woman coming into the house because you are now required to share someone who belonged to you – not even in an equal proportions.”

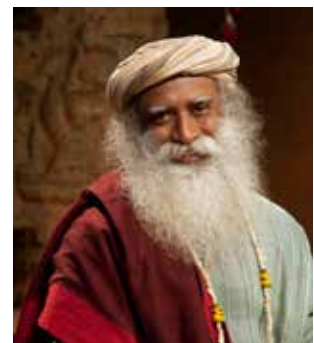
and wanted to bring the girl home. It is a question of the mother’s blessing and also a little bit about her approval so that altercations do not happen in the house. At the same time, he was very fond of his mother, and he wanted to make it a little challenging and humorous for her. So, he brought three other office colleagues of his, who were all young women, along with his girlfriend. They all came for dinner, and his idea was that the mother should find out who the intended girl was. He behaved just the same with all of them so that she would not make out. After they all left, he asked, “Mama, do you know which is my girl?” She said, “I know. The one who was wearing the red vest.” He asked, “How did you know? I did not even look at her. I was always glancing at the others just so you do not know.” She said, “The moment she walked in, I didn’t like her. So, it must be her.”

There is an instinctive rejection or resistance to the new woman coming into the house because you are now required to share someone who belonged to you in an unequal proportion – not even in equal proportions. A mother wants her son to get married and be happy. But on another level, a mother

is still a woman. You have to seek permission to share something that belonged to you. That makes things a little difficult. Unfortunately, the same stupid relationship problems have been going on for centuries, endlessly. It could be changed, but people have not decided to change it.

It is somewhat biological because it is all a process of procreation and protection. If a woman is not possessive about what belongs to her, she would not have taken care of her children. She would have just delivered them and walked away. It is biological, and that extends itself throughout life in some way or the other. However, if one is mature and aware, one can grow out of it.

Editor’s Note: Why are relationships such a circus for most of us? What is this primal urge within us that demands a bond physical, mental, or emotional with another? And how do we keep this bond from turning into bondage? These are the fundamental questions that Sadhguru looks at in “Compulsiveness to Consciousness”. Ebook available for purchase at Isha Downloads.



Ranked among the fifty most influential people in India, Sadhguru is a yogi, mystic, visionary and a New York Times bestselling author. Sadhguru was conferred the Padma Vibhushan by the Government of India in 2017, the highest annual civilian award, accorded for exceptional and distinguished services.



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Feasts, Faith, & Lights

THE SPIRIT
OF TIHAR



More than a festival of lights, Tihar is Nepal's radiant celebration of gratitude honoring humans, animals, and deities alike. Through food, music, and faith, it rekindles our connection to nature, community, and the divine, illuminating both homes and hearts.

By Kiran Karki Silwal

THE MONTH of Kartik, the season of harvest, brings with it one of Nepal's brightest festivals - Tihar. Also known as the festival of lights, Tihar transcends the celebration of bond between brothers and sisters and celebrates the harmony between humans, animals, and gods. Each of its five days known as Panchak is dedicated to a different being like crow, dog, oxen, Goddess Laxmi, symbolizing gratitude and the victory of light over darkness.

In the Hindu calendar, Kartik is considered the holiest month. During Tihar, homes, courtyards, and temples glow with rows of diyos, candles, and even electric lights. Our ancestors advised doubling the lights during Kartik, believing that as the days grow shorter, homes need more brightness both for daily life and for the soul. Lighting lamps is also believed to dispel darkness and negativity, welcoming Goddess Laxmi, the deity of wealth, prosperity, and abundance.

The Five Days of Tihar KAAG TIHAR (DAY OF CROW)

Crows, believed to be messengers of Yama (the god of death) are offered home-cooked food and water. This ritual wards off sorrow and misfortune, inviting good news into the household.

KUKUR TIHAR (DAY OF DOG)

Dogs, known for their loyalty and protective nature, are honored with tika, garlands, and delicious meals. Even street dogs are celebrated, reflecting compassion and respect for all living beings.

GAI TIHAR AND LAXMI PUJA (DAY OF COW AND

WORSHIPPING GODDESS LAXMI)

The cow, representing Mother Earth and symbolizing wealth and kindness, is worshipped with grass, food, and garlands. As evening falls, families welcome Goddess Laxmi with devotion. Her footprints are drawn at the entrance, beautifully adorned with rangoli designs, inviting prosperity into the home. The night comes alive with Deusi-Bhailo, when neighbors sing, dance, and exchange blessings under twinkling lights.

GORU TIHAR AND GOVARDHAN PUJA (DAY OF OXEN AND NATURE)

Oxen, vital helpers in agriculture, are honored for their hard work and service. Govardhan Puja is performed to express gratitude to nature, the earth, and the animals that sustain human life. For the Newar community, this day also marks Mha Puja (worship of the self) and the beginning of the Nepal Sambat (Newari New Year).

BHAI TIKA (DAY OF BROTHER AND SISTER)

The festival culminates in a celebration of sibling love. Sisters apply Saptarangi Tika (seven-colored tika) to their brothers' foreheads, adorn them with Makhamali and Saya Patri garlands, and offer a tray of food, sweets, and nuts. In return, brothers give gifts and promise lifelong protection. The Makhamali garland, which blooms long after the festival, symbolizes resilience and eternal love.

Beauty of Tihar is in the Food and Music

Majority of house prepare sel-roti (ring shaped rice bread). It is offered as a

prasad to goddess Laxmi and Kubera. Many other sweets are prepared during Tihar like Anarasa, Fini, Khajuri, and Lakh Mari. Food has always played special place in any festival as it preserves culture and traditions of the country. Palak (Green spinach) and fish is also offered in the special plate of Bhai tika as Palak symbolizes of longevity and health whereas fish is the symbol of prosperity and abundance, believed to bring good fortunes to brothers.

This year as we gather with our families, exchange blessings and decorate our homes. Let us also remember those young lives of GenZ who sacrificed their future in the hope of building a better nation. Their courage their voice and their dreams remains eternal light that continue to inspire us. Let us all dedicate lamp to them. A lamp for peace so that no more lives are lost in unrest and struggle. This Tihar may our collective prayers bring comfort to grieving families and strength to those continuing the struggles for justice, fairness and equality. Because the true essence of festival is not just in celebration it is the promise to building a future where peace, justice and love prevail.

May every lamp lit during this Tihar shine for better Nepal.



Kiran Karki Silwal
Certified Parenting & Lifestyle coach | NLP -Sub Practitioner| Women in spirituality |Mrs. Nepal World 2nd Runner Up | Podcast: @shinewithkirann IG: @kiranarkasilwal

KARTIK

Day 6 of Kartik Naach(Jala Shayan) - Lord Krishna's (in black costume) fight with demonic duo Madhu and Kaitabhya. Photo Courtesy: Suku Lal Shrestha

NAACH

PATAN'S DIVINE LEGACY

Every autumn, Kartik Dabli, the historic courtyard of Mangal Bazaar comes alive with Kartik Naach, a 384-year-old dance-drama depicting the 17 tales of Lord Vishnu. Rooted in devotion, artistry, and community, the festival celebrates the triumph of good over evil while preserving Patan's rich cultural heritage.

By Malika Joshi in conversation with Kiran Chitrakar,
Chairman of Kartik Naach Preservation Committee





Bhairav's appearance on 5th day of Kartik Naach. Photo Courtesy: Ajay Maharjan



Balkumari's appearance on Devi Pyakhan (5th day of Kartik Naach). Photo Courtesy: Ayushman

King Siddhi Narsingh Malla was advised to perform a narabali (human sacrifice) to remove it. Refusing such a direct act, the King, faithful devotee of Vishnu instead created a dance-drama depicting Lord Vishnu's Narasimha avatar defeating the demon, Hiranyakashipu.

This grand tradition began in 1661 AD, when Patan/Lalitpur was least dazzling state among others. King Siddhi Narsingh Malla was reigning at the moment and his spiritual guru (mentor), Haribansha Upadhyaya told him that there was dosha (bad omen) surrounding the state and was advised to perform a narabali (human sacrifice) to remove it. Refusing such a direct act, the King, faithful devotee of Vishnu instead created a dance-drama depicting Lord Vishnu's Narasimha avatar defeating the demon,

Hiranyakashipu. This performance became a sacred annual tradition, symbolizing the triumph of good over evil and contributing to Patan's rich cultural legacy. Each performance combined devotion and discipline, weaving together stories from Hindu mythology that reflected moral, social, and religious values. At its core, the festival sought to promote righteousness, peace, and unity among his people and prosperity of Lalitpur valley.

Initially spanning fifteen days, the festival's length and grandeur expanded under King Yog Narendra Malla, eventually evolving into a 27-day dance drama. Performed against the majestic backdrop of the Malla palaces and temples, the Kartik Naach became a symbol of the era's cultural sophistication, blending storytelling, dance, and spiritual devotion in one harmonious act.

Over time, the festival became a testament to the Nepali spirit, celebrating

the country's enduring connection to art, faith, and community. Although today the full 27-day performance is rarely possible due to limited financial and managerial support, the Kartik Naach Conservation Committee and the local Kartik Naach community have kept the tradition alive since its revival in 2030 B.S. (1973 A.D.), now performed annually for 10-12 days.

Even in a fast-changing modern world, Kartik Naach remains a sacred dance of ethics and enlightenment reminding every generation that art, when rooted in devotion, has the power to unite, uplift, and preserve the moral heartbeat of a nation.

Kartik Naach

Each night brings forth a distinct story blending music, movement, and symbolism to portray the eternal struggle between good and evil, devotion and desire, knowledge and ignorance.



Day 1

Bhakta Surdas Pyakhan (Devotee Surdas Dance): The opening performance pays tribute to Surdas, the blind devotee, whose deep faith and devotion to Lord Krishna grants him divine vision.



Day 2

Batha Pyakhan (Baas Dance – Chwe le khuda Da Khwa): A lively folk sequence expressing community life and the harmony of labor and festivity.



Day 3

Batha Pyakhan (Baas Dance – Kaula Khicha): A continuation of the Baas tradition, celebrating unity, teamwork, and the spirit of collective joy.



Day 4

Yuddha Kala (War Art): Enactment of epic battle between gods and demons. A powerful depiction of ancient combat strategy using traditional weapons.



Day 5

Devi Pyakhan (Goddess Dance): The divine feminine takes center stage portraying goddesses' divine power and her battle against evil. It honors the spiritual energy of devi and her triumph.



Day 6

Jala Shayan (Water Offering – Slaughter of Madhu and Kaitabha): Enactment of Lord Vishnu reclining on the cosmic ocean where he defeats the demon duo Madhu and Kaitabha. Shows the triumph of divine over chaos.



Day 7

Baraha Avatar (Boar Incarnation -Slaughter of Hiranyaksha): Enactment of Lord Vishnu's boar incarnation defeating the demon, Hiranyaksha. It symbolizes the restoration of order and dharma.



Day 8

Narasimha Avatar (Narsimha Incarnation - Slaughter of Hiranyakashyapu): A dramatic portrayal of divine Lord Vishnu manifested as Narsimha (half-man, half-lion), slaughtering demon, Hiranyakashyapu to restore dharma.



Day 9

Bastraharan Leela (The Play of Stealing clothes) – A playful episode of Lord Krishna stealing the clothes of the Gopi's while they bathe, symbolizing divine mischief and love, conveying Krishna's charm.



Day 10

Dadhi Leela (Yogurt Play) – Portrays childhood exploits of Lord Krishna stealing curd. Also showcases breaking of clay pots filled with yogurt as remembrance of Krishna's childhood.

Lord Krishna's appearance in Kartik Naach,
Photo by: Suraj Patra Bansha



The Iconic Characters

The central part of Kartik Naach are its characters; divine, heroic, and demonic figures that come alive through sacred dance.



Narasimha Avatar

Half-man, Half-lion incarnation of Lord Vishnu. Embodiment of good, justice and protection.



Hiranyakashyapu

The demon king who refused to acknowledge Lord Vishnu and tried to kill his own son. Embodiment of evil and arrogance.



Baraha Avatar

Lord Vishnu's incarnation as the boar.



Lord Vishnu

Lord Vishnu, the central character around which the dance and drama revolves.



Prahlad

Son of Hiranyakashyapu, also catalyst of Narsimha's appearance.

KIRAN CHITRAKAR,
CHAIRMAN – KARTIK
NAACH PRESERVATION
COMMITTEE

“ After the demise of my grandfather I took on the role of Hiranyakashyapu and Hiranyaska on 2055 B.S and performed for 25 years. Before that, I used to perform other roles in the Kartik Naach. Hiranyakashyapu role are given to Chitrakar family/guthi of Sundhara, and my family is the one from them. Currently, my nephew is performing as Hiranyakashyapu. I used to be scared while I started performing for this role because I had pressure to match the expectation and also as a teenager was not sure if I would faint or not. I used to feel nauseous.

For families, witnessing this age-old tradition is not just entertainment, it is an opportunity to connect with history, pass on values, and inspire the younger generation to cherish and preserve Nepal's rich heritage along with celebrating family ties, culture, and shared experiences.

The Narsimha Avatar: The Anticipated One

Among the many narratives enacted during Kartik Naach, the Narasimha Avatar stands as the most anticipated and dramatic. This performance depicts the fierce incarnation of Lord Vishnu as half-man, half-lion, arriving to vanquish the tyrant Hiranyakashyapu and restore cosmic balance. Traditionally, the climax involved a symbolic act of sacrifice but today, this is no longer sacrificial. Instead, in a powerful ritual moment, the actor portraying Hiranyakashyapu faints when touched by Narasimha, symbolizing the overwhelming divine power. To revive him, a priest from Patko conducts a tantric ritual, sourcing water from Manga Hiti (the sacred water spout of Mangalbazaar) and feeds it to the performer.

The selection of the performer playing Narasimha is itself a sacred responsibility, reserved for the Rajupadhyaya lineage from Gabahal's Mahadev Nani, descendants of the renowned scholar and performer Haribansha

Acharya. Within this lineage, there is an internal rotation system to become the performer.

Behind the Performance

While most performers conduct a basic Natyeshwor Puja before taking the stage, the actors portraying the Baraha Avatar and Narasimha Avatar undergo a far more elaborate and sacred preparation.

On the day of their performance, the masks for these avatars are worshipped inside the Patan Museum, receiving full ritual. Unlike other characters, who enter the stage via Nasa: Chowk (the door opposite Kartik Dabli), the Baraha and Narasimha performers proceed through the Patan Museum door into Kartik Dabli, the main courtyard of performance.

These main characters also conduct personal pujas with their family members. The discipline extends to fasting: actors portraying Baraha and Hiranyakashyapu abstain from food the entire day, while the Narasimha performer observes a strict fast from both food and

water. Training follows a structured routine as well. While most performers rehearse at Nasa: Chowk, the Narasimha performer trains separately.

The Musical Companion

Music in Kartik Naach is far more than a background accompaniment it is the voice of the performance, narrating stories, guiding the dancers, and conveying the emotional essence of each scene. Originally, the naach incorporated 60 different raags and 253 songs, each tailored to a specific episode or character. Every segment has its own distinct rhythmic signature (taal), with melodies that mirror the mood of the story. Through these songs, the audience is able to follow the action unfolding on Kartik Dabli, even without words or dialogue.

Today, performing all the original raags and songs has become challenging. Many senior musicians who once kept alive the music is no longer present, leading to a reduced set of songs and rhythms. Despite this, the essence of the musical storytelling remains intact, preserving the spirit of the festival.

Musician roles are highly specialized. The Right Khin performer is traditionally from the family of the actor playing Narasimha, while the Left Khin performers are usually senior mentors or dedicated musicians who have learned the songs and rhythms through years of voluntary practice.

➔ The selection of the performer playing Narasimha is itself a sacred responsibility, reserved for the Rajupadhyaya lineage from Gabahal's Mahadev Nani, descendants of the renowned scholar and performer Haribansha Acharya.









Photo Courtesy: Pratinshan Rajbhandari

➔ Following the 2014 earthquake, the naach was held for four days, and during COVID-19, performances were conducted for two days without a live audience.

Keeping Kartik Naach Alive

The Kartik Naach is currently overseen by the Kartik Naach Preservation Committee, chaired by Kiran Chitrakar. Chitrakar is a long-time performer of Kartik Naach himself, he has gradually taken on responsibilities that include organizing performances, mobilizing resources, and safeguarding the festival's rich traditions. All committee members are experienced performers deeply familiar with the dance forms, myths, rituals, music, costumes, and the cultural expectations of the community.

Financial constraints remain the greatest challenge today. While the festival receives donations and grants from various organizations and government bodies, the support is often insufficient. This makes it harder to meet the festival's needs. As a result, the performers often receive little to no remuneration.

The committee aspires to support the performers in meaningful ways, such as providing scholarships for young participants, and ensuring that while discipline is maintained, performers also have the

freedom to explore different roles according to their interests.

Despite challenges, the committee has shown resilience. Following the 2014 earthquake, the naach was held for four days, and during COVID-19, performances were conducted for two days without a live audience and were broadcast on television. The team continues to train young generations, ensuring that the cultural heritage of Patan and indeed, of Nepal is passed on.

The youths of Patan play a vital role in sustaining this legacy. Fortunately, the committee has not struggled to find enthusiastic actors on recent years, as young people actively participate, attend as audiences, and promote the festival on social media. Their empathy, dedication, and desire to preserve culture have allowed the festival to continue its 10-day-long performances year after year. As the elder generation grows older, it is a profound source of pride to know that the youth are stepping in as active custodians, ensuring that the Kartik Naach tradition continues to thrive.

FOOD.

Deusi

Re

LEGENDS AND AYURVEDIC SWEETS FOR HARMONY

This feature explores the cultural and culinary heart of Tihar through the traditions of Deusi and Bhailo songs rooted in ancient legends of blessings, protection, and harmony. Chef Sandeep Kumar KC then bridges past and present with Ayurvedic-inspired sweets crafted to nourish as well as delight.

By Chef Sandeep Kumar KC

As the lamps of Tihar flicker across villages and city courtyards, the air fills with the call of “Deusi Re!” and the answering melody of “Bhailo Re!” These two songs are the heartbeat of Nepal’s five-day festival of lights, when groups of neighbors visit homes after dusk to bless families with music, dance, and good wishes. Coins, sel roti, and handfuls of treats flow in return, turning every doorway into a small celebration of generosity and harmony.

Why Deusi is Sung by Males and Bhailo by Females

Traditionally, Deusi is performed by groups of boys or men, while Bhailo belongs to girls or women. This division reflects old social and ritual patterns in the hills of Nepal.

- Deusi traces its roots to King Bali, also known as Kirati Bali Hang or Hindu Mahabali. Male singers delivered blessings in the king’s name, often declaring, “Hami tesai aayenau, Bali Raja le pathaye” (“We have not come on our own; King Bali has sent us”), carrying his message of prosperity.

- Bhailo, in contrast, embodies a sister’s devotion to protect her brother. According to Kirati lore, Jamuna, Bali Hang’s sister, delayed the god of death through rituals of love and care. Girls and women re-enact this protective spirit during Bhailo, offering blessings of long life and family unity.

As music and rituals fill homes with blessings and joy, Tihar is also a time to celebrate through food. Tihar offers heaps and varieties of sweets. Ancient rishis believed that the

festival’s sweets should not only delight the senses but also nourish the body, reflecting the same care and intention seen in the songs and dances.

Ancient Rishi Sweets: Ayurveda in Every Bite

Long ago, ancient rishis taught that festival sweets should be made with healing grains, ghee, jaggery, nuts, and digestive spices so food could nourish as well as delight.

This Tihar, we carry that philosophy forward crafting traditional Bhailo treats and modern recipes that honor

the rishis' wisdom while keeping every bite balanced for the three doshas.

Modern research shows that refined sugar raises blood glucose rapidly, aggravating insulin resistance and increasing the risk of diabetes complications. The American Diabetes Association recommends pre-meal glucose targets of 80–130 mg/dL and <180 mg/dL one to two hours after eating, and stresses portion control about 15g carbohydrate (“one carb choice”) per sweet serving for anyone with diabetes, including those using insulin.

Ayurveda recognised a similar disorder called Madhumeha, described in the Charaka Samhita and Sushruta Samhita, and advises barley (yava) and green gram (mudga) with light ghee and digestive spices such as cardamom, cinnamon, and dry ginger to stabilize agni (digestive fire) and help regulate blood sugar. Building on these principles, contemporary Ayurvedic physicians recommend festival sweets made with barley flour, moong dal, nuts, and non-nutritive sweeteners like stevia or erythritol, spiced with cinnamon or fenugreek, so that even people with diabetes can enjoy Tihar treats in small, carefully measured portions while staying within safe glucose limits.

These are based on classical Ayurvedic guidance (Charaka Samhita recommendations for Madhumeha) and modern nutrition practices.

Yava Laddoo (Barley Power Bites)

A low-GI laddoo using barley flour, nuts, and digestive spices.

INGREDIENTS (MAKES 12 SMALL LADDOOS)

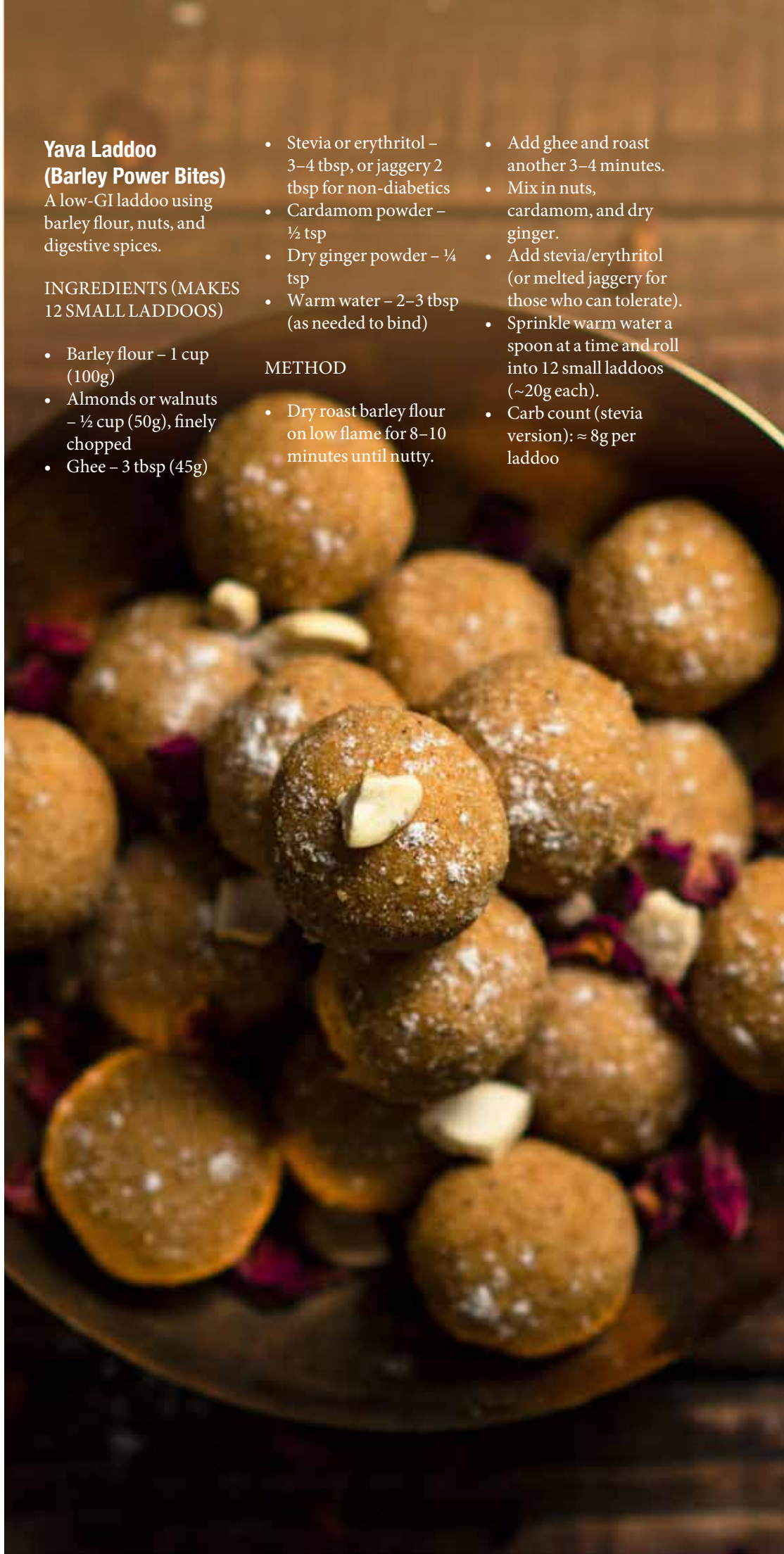
- Barley flour – 1 cup (100g)
- Almonds or walnuts – ½ cup (50g), finely chopped
- Ghee – 3 tbsp (45g)

- Stevia or erythritol – 3–4 tbsp, or jaggery 2 tbsp for non-diabetics
- Cardamom powder – ½ tsp
- Dry ginger powder – ¼ tsp
- Warm water – 2–3 tbsp (as needed to bind)

METHOD

- Dry roast barley flour on low flame for 8–10 minutes until nutty.

- Add ghee and roast another 3–4 minutes.
- Mix in nuts, cardamom, and dry ginger.
- Add stevia/erythritol (or melted jaggery for those who can tolerate).
- Sprinkle warm water a spoon at a time and roll into 12 small laddoos (~20g each).
- Carb count (stevia version): ≈ 8g per laddoo



Mudga Phirni (Moong–Coconut Pudding)

A protein-rich phirni made from split yellow moong.

INGREDIENTS (SERVES 6, ½-CUP PORTIONS)

- Split yellow moong dal – ¾ cup (150g), soaked 3 hrs
- Low-fat milk or unsweetened almond milk – 3 cups (700 ml)
- Stevia or erythritol – 4 tbsp, or jaggery 2 tbsp for non-diabetics
- Cardamom powder – ½ tsp
- Saffron strands – few (optional)
- Ghee – 1 tsp

METHOD

- Pressure cook or boil soaked moong with 1 cup water until very soft.
- Blend cooked moong into a smooth paste.
- Heat milk and ghee, add paste, cook 10–12 minutes stirring until thick.
- Sweeten with stevia or erythritol; add cardamom and saffron.
- Serve chilled in ½-cup bowls.
- Carb count (stevia version): ≈ 12 g per serving.



Kodo Barfi (Finger Millet Fudge)

A mineral-rich barfi using finger millet flour.

INGREDIENTS (MAKES 16 SMALL SQUARES)

- Kodo (finger millet) flour – 1 cup (100g)
- Low-fat milk – 2 cups (450 ml)
- Ghee – 2 tbsp (30g)
- Stevia or erythritol – 4 tbsp, or palm jaggery 3 tbsp for non-diabetics
- Toasted sesame seeds – 2 tbsp
- Cardamom powder – ½ tsp

METHOD

1. Roast kodo flour in ghee for 7–8 minutes on low flame.
2. Slowly add milk, stirring to avoid lumps.
3. Cook until thick and glossy (~10 min).
4. Sweeten and add cardamom.

5. Spread on a greased tray, sprinkle sesame seeds, cool, and cut into 16 squares (~20 g each). Carb count (stevia version): ≈ 9g per square.

AYURVEDIC NOTES

- Barley (Yava) and moong (Mudga) are classical foods for Madhumeha (diabetes) because they are light, high-fiber, and support digestive fire (agni).
- Finger millet (Kodo) provides calcium and slow-release carbohydrates.
- Spices such as cardamom, cinnamon, and dry ginger improve digestion and help stabilise blood sugar.
- Tip: People on insulin or oral diabetes medicines should check blood glucose before and 90–120 minutes after eating and keep portions to ≤15 g carbohydrate per serving (about one of the above pieces).



Chef Sandeep Khatri, Pakmharishi, a Glion-educated culinary expert, integrates psychology and food technology, champions Raithane Food, minimizing post-harvest losses, and advocates zero waste.



Superstar Ayurvedic Barley–Kodo Jeri

INGREDIENTS (MAKES ABOUT 12 MEDIUM RINGS)

- Barley (yava) flour – ½ cup (50g)
- Finger millet (kodo) flour – ½ cup (50g)
- Plain low-fat yogurt – ¼ cup (60g)
- Warm water – ½ to ¾ cup (120–180 ml)
- Fresh marigold petals – ¼ cup, plucked and destemmed (for natural yellow color; pound to a paste or wrap in muslin and soak in the warm syrup)
- Fenugreek seed powder – 1/8 tsp (aids fermentation and supports glucose balance. Use only a pinch and roast seeds lightly before grinding to avoid bitterness.)

- Cardamom powder – ¼ tsp
- Ghee or cold-pressed mustard oil – for shallow frying
- Stevia or erythritol syrup – ½ cup (120 ml) (or a thin jaggery syrup for non-diabetic guests)

METHOD

1. Batter – Whisk barley and kodo flours with yogurt, warm water, cardamom, and fenugreek (if using) until smooth. Cover and ferment for 8–10 hours until slightly bubbly.
2. Color syrup – Warm the stevia/erythritol (or jaggery) syrup and add the marigold petals wrapped in a muslin cloth. Let them steep for 10–15 minutes to release a natural golden hue.

Remove the cloth before coating the jeri.

Other natural color options: a few strands of saffron, a pinch of turmeric, or a small piece of fresh turmeric root can also be infused for a yellow-golden tone.

3. Fry – Heat ghee or mustard oil in a shallow pan over medium heat. Pipe the fermented batter in spiral shapes and fry until crisp and golden.
4. Coat – Dip each hot jeri briefly in the warm marigold-infused syrup to glaze and color evenly.

NOTE

Use fenugreek sparingly and lightly roasted to prevent bitterness while retaining its mild blood-sugar-supporting properties.

DISCLAIMER

This recipe and the accompanying Ayurvedic information are provided for general educational purposes only. They are not a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Individuals with diabetes, pre-diabetes, or any other health condition should consult their physician or a qualified health-care provider before making dietary changes, adjusting medications, or consuming sweets even low-glycemic or “Ayurvedic” varieties. Portion control and regular blood-glucose monitoring remain essential regardless of ingredient choice.

CLC BLOCK

CELLULAR
LIGHTWEIGHT
CONCRETE
BLOCK

CLC BLOCK

CLC is condensed form of Cellular Lightweight Concrete. Also known as Foamed Cement or Light Weight Concrete worldwide with its greater advantages from past 60 years. It is prepared from a precise mixing of cement, sand, foam, water and other additives for accurate mixing without altering its original chemical and physical properties.

NEST CLC BLOCK

Nest CLC Block is manufactured with European technology and with German chemicals, which are developed especially for the building material industry. So it possess unrivalled technical properties and physical characteristics.



LIGHT IN WEIGHT
Nest Block are three times less weight than clay and concrete blocks.



ECO FRIENDLY
Environment-friendly. The production process of Nest Block or its use does not release any harmful effluents to ground, water or air.



FIRE RESISTANCE
Nest Block offers great fire protection. Fire rating of cellular concrete is far superior to that of brickwork or dense concrete.



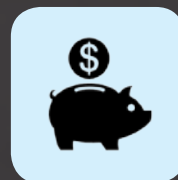
EASY TO HANDLE
Nest Block can be easily sawn, carved, nailed or drilled using ordinary tools.



THERMAL INSULATION
Wide range of Nest Block density gives the builder multiple options for finding the most practical & economical solution.



SOUND INSULATION
Extensive range of Nest Block density offers effective, proven & cost-effective solution to acoustic performance.



MATERIAL SAVINGS
Saves cement, sand & labor cost. Also saves steel cost if building is designed by considering light weight block.



LOWER WATER ABSORPTION
Nest Block contains millions of closed cells which resist moisture and water from passing through it.

RAW MATERIALS



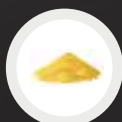
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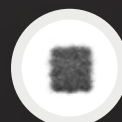
SAND

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ADDITIVES



JAPANESE RESTAURANT Kotetsu

Located on the 1st floor of Hotel Ambassador, Japanese Restaurant Kotetsu is more than just a place to eat it's a warm, authentic experience that feels like stepping into Japan without leaving Nepal. The moment you enter, you're greeted by the ever-present Japanese Mama-san, whose welcoming smile and attentiveness make you feel like a guest in her home. Soft Japanese music plays in the background, blending seamlessly with the comforting aromas of grilled meats and simmering broths.

Inside, the atmosphere is cozy yet lively, with two highlights: the sushi counter and the teppanyaki counter. At the sushi counter, chefs delicately prepare rolls and sashimi with precision, while at the teppanyaki grill, you get a front-row seat to the sizzle and aroma of steak, seafood, and garlic rice being cooked before your eyes. It's dining as much as it is performance.

The menu is a true celebration of Japanese flavors, beloved not only by locals but also by Japanese residents in Nepal who swear by its authenticity. Here are some standout dishes worth trying:



📍 Jyo Nigiri Sushi

Kotetsu's Jyo Nigiri Sushi is a sublime experience for any sushi enthusiast. This platter features 10 pieces of expertly crafted nigiri, including salmon, tuna, sea bream, yellowtail, and salmon roe. Each piece showcases fresh, melt-in-your-mouth fish atop perfectly seasoned rice, creating a balance of flavor and texture. The salmon, in particular, stands out with its rich, buttery taste. The selection varies, ensuring a unique experience every time. Simple yet elegant, this nigiri platter captures the essence of authentic Japanese sushi in every bite.





⬅️ **Kyushu Tonkotsu Ramen**

End your meal the Japanese way with a steaming bowl of ramen. The pork-bone broth is creamy and rich, simmered for hours, and paired with springy noodles, chashu pork, mustard greens, bamboo shoots, and pickled ginger. It's hearty, filling, and deeply satisfying.

➡️ **A5 Steak (100g) with Garlic Rice**

A must-try for meat lovers. The A5-grade beef, with its fine marbling, practically melts in your mouth rich, buttery, and deeply satisfying. The garlic rice, cooked on the same iron plate, soaks up all the beef juices, butter, and garlic, making it almost impossible to resist. (Kobe beef is also available for those who want to go all out.)



⬅️ **Hiroshima-style Okonomiyaki**

A Japanese soul food classic. This layered savory pancake combines cabbage, pork belly, noodles, and egg, topped with rich sauce, bonito flakes in the steam, and a drizzle of mayonnaise.

➔ **California Roll**

A colorful, crowd-pleasing favorite. Rolled inside-out with rice on the outside, sprinkled with sesame seeds, and filled with salmon, tuna, cucumber, avocado, carrot, dried gourd, and shiitake mushrooms. Finished with a crunch of tempura flakes and creamy mayonnaise.



⬅ **Unagi (Grilled Eel)**

Crispy on the outside, soft and fluffy inside, glazed with a sweet-savory sauce that lingers on your palate. Served over rice in a traditional lacquered box, this dish is pure comfort food.

➔ **Ikamaru (Whole Grilled Squid)**

Smoky, tender, and slightly chewy in the best way possible. The fresh squid is grilled whole and served simply with soy sauce, mayo, and shichimi chili powder. It's the kind of dish that pairs perfectly with a cold beer.



PARENTING.

CONNECTION &
Joy

A FESTIVE REFRAME



While rituals and traditions nurture identity and family bonds, they can also present challenges, especially for neurodivergent children. The true spirit of the season lies in celebrating each child's unique way of participating; embracing joy, honoring emotions, and creating spaces where every child feels seen, safe, and included.

By Ganga Gurung

AS THE scent of jamara fills the air and diyos light up our homes, Nepal prepares for its grandest celebrations - Dashain and Tihar. Festivals hold deep meaning in our culture: they are times of togetherness, rituals, blessings, and laughter. For parents, festivals often represent continuity of tradition and pride in passing values to the next generation. For children, they are filled with colors, sounds, and new experiences, sometimes joyful, sometimes overwhelming.

As a pediatric occupational therapist, I see festivals as more than just cultural events. They are natural opportunities for children to grow socially, emotionally, and developmentally, while strengthening family bonds. Yet, they also bring unique challenges, especially for children who are neurodivergent.

What Festivals Mean for Parents

- **Connection:** A chance to bring family together across generations.
- **Tradition:** Parents take pride in teaching children rituals like putting tika, making sel roti, lighting diyas.
- **Reflection:** Festivals are a time to look back at the year with gratitude and forward with hope.

What Festivals Mean for Children

- **Exploration:** Festivals introduce children to new textures (jamara, tika powder), smells (incense, sweets), and sounds (music, laughter).
- **Belonging:** Being included in rituals builds identity and cultural pride.
- **Play and Joy:** Kite-flying, decorating, playing cards, these aren't just games; they help children develop motor, social, and cognitive skills.

For Neurodivergent Children: The Good and the Bad

Festivals can be double-edged for neurodivergent children such as those with autism, ADHD, or sensory processing differences.

THE GOOD

- A natural way to practice social interactions; greeting relatives, saying "Namaste," sharing food.
- Opportunities for sensory play; touching jamara, arranging flowers, listening to drums.
- Predictable rituals (like tika ceremony) can give comfort through structure.

THE BAD

- **Sensory overload:** Loud music, firecrackers, crowded gatherings, strong smells.
- **Changes in routine:** Travel, visitors, late nights may unsettle some children.
- **Pressure to perform:** Being asked to greet, dance, or recite in front of relatives may trigger stress
- **Parenting with Grace During Festivals**

The beauty of parenting during festival time lies in finding balance between tradition and your child's needs.

Prepare the stage gently: Use stories, songs, or drawings to explain what Dashain or Tihar will look like this year.

Create safe havens: A cozy corner with soft cushions, headphones, or a favorite book helps children retreat when the celebrations get too big.

Celebrate participation, not perfection: A rangoli made with scattered dots is still a masterpiece when created with tiny fingers.

Honor emotions: Allow your child to say no, to take breaks, to celebrate in their own rhythm.

Imagine this: a child, shy of fireworks, instead delights in arranging flowers on the mandala. Another, tired of relatives, hides in the kitchen rolling tiny balls of dough. These are not deviations from tradition, they are unique ways of belonging. Festivals, at their heart, are not about uniform rituals but about shared joy.

So, whether your child laughs the loudest during bhailo songs or prefers to watch from the quiet comfort of your lap, remember: they are still celebrating. Festivals are not about perfection, but about presence. They are less about how beautifully the rangoli turned out, and more about the laughter that spilled while making it together. For neurodivergent and neurotypical children alike, festivals should feel like celebrations of belonging, joy, and acceptance.

eThis festive season, may we redefine blessings not just as tika on foreheads or lights at doorsteps, but as moments where children feel seen, safe, and included. For in their laughter, their quirks, and even in their silences, we find the true spirit of Dashain and Tihar: love that holds, traditions that bend, and joy that lasts long after the marigolds have withered.



Ganga Gurung, a Pediatric Occupational Therapist with 6 years of clinical experience, is the co-founder of Bloom Park Clinic and Bloom Park Store Pvt Ltd., Nepal. She has also served as Project Lead and member of International Chapter of All India Occupational Therapists Association (ICAIOTA) and Secretary of Association of Nepal Occupational Therapists (ANOT). She has worked as a freelance consultant/expert for rehabilitation activities by the LCDMS, EDCCD-Ministry of Health and Population, WHO-Nepal and Handicap International-Nepal.

ANXIOUS PARENTS

Children mirror our actions our emotions. Our own stress and coping habits subtly shape how they handle life's challenges. By managing our emotions, modeling healthy strategies, and creating safe spaces for conversation, we teach resilience and equip them to face stress with confidence.

By Neha Lohia

I USED to be terrified of flying. The fear would creep in days before a trip, showing up as nightmares and restless nights. I would secretly hope that my travel plans would somehow get cancelled. On the actual day, I'd be on edge, forgetful, and anxious. Every bit of turbulence had me clutching my daughter's hand, silently praying for the plane to land. I couldn't even eat during the flight.

One moment still stays with me. My daughter was six at the time, and just as we were about to board a flight, she burst into tears and insisted she didn't want to go. She was convinced the plane was going to crash. That's when it hit me: she wasn't scared of flying. She was simply reflecting my fear back at me.

That day taught me a powerful lesson. Children learn less from what we say and far more

from what we show them. We, as parents, are their first and most important role models. When our kids deal with anxiety, it often mirrors our own struggles with coping, whether we realize it or not.

And it isn't just about flying. In the rush of everyday life, many of us deal with stress in unhealthy ways; we skip meals, snap at people when we're anxious, mindlessly scroll through our phones, or turn to unhealthy habits when we don't know how to cope. Our children see all of this. Quietly, they absorb the message that this is what stress management looks like.

So how do we break that cycle? Here are a few practices that have helped me and might help you, too.

Manage Your Own Stress First

Children feel safer when we are steady. That doesn't mean never losing your cool, it means finding small ways to reset. A few deep breaths before reacting, checking if you're just tired or hungry before snapping, or even splashing cold water on your face can make a huge difference. And when you do mess up, own it. Saying, "I was upset and raised my voice. Next time I'll pause first," shows children that mistakes are fixable.

Normalize Stress as Part of Life

Stress isn't a sign of weakness, it's a signal. Talk about it that way at home. Instead of saying, "This is a disaster," try, "This is hard, but I'll figure it out." You can even rate your stress on a scale of 1–10 to show kids

ANXIOUS CHILDREN

that it comes in levels and can be managed. Remind them: everyone feels stress, and in this family, we notice it and choose a healthy way to deal with it.

Make Space for Family Conversations

A regular check-in as a family can work wonders. Once a week, sit down together. Start with something good that happened, let each person share one worry and one win, and then pick a single issue to solve together. End with a small plan for fun, a walk, a board game, or a story. With phones off and everyone listening, children learn that feelings are safe to share and problems can be worked through as a team.

Practice Coping Skills Together

Coping isn't something to lecture about, it's something to model. Try simple tools as a family: deep breathing, grounding exercises (like noticing five things you can see and four you can feel), or movement breaks like a quick dance or some wall push-ups. You can even put a "Coping Menu" on the fridge; stretching, drawing, journaling, listening to music, so everyone has options when stress hits.

Ask for Help When Needed

Sometimes, stress gets too big to handle alone. If it's disrupting sleep, eating, schoolwork, or family harmony, don't hesitate to reach out for professional help. Frame it positively for your child. Counseling or therapy

isn't a failure; it's another form of strength.

Remember You Are the Role Model

At the end of the day, children watch us more than they listen to us. They notice how we calm down, how we apologize, how we ask for help, and how we stick to routines. Even narrating your own coping out loud helps: "I'm at a stress level six right now, so I'm going to drink some water and take a few deep breaths." It shows them, step by step, what resilience looks like.

Final Thoughts

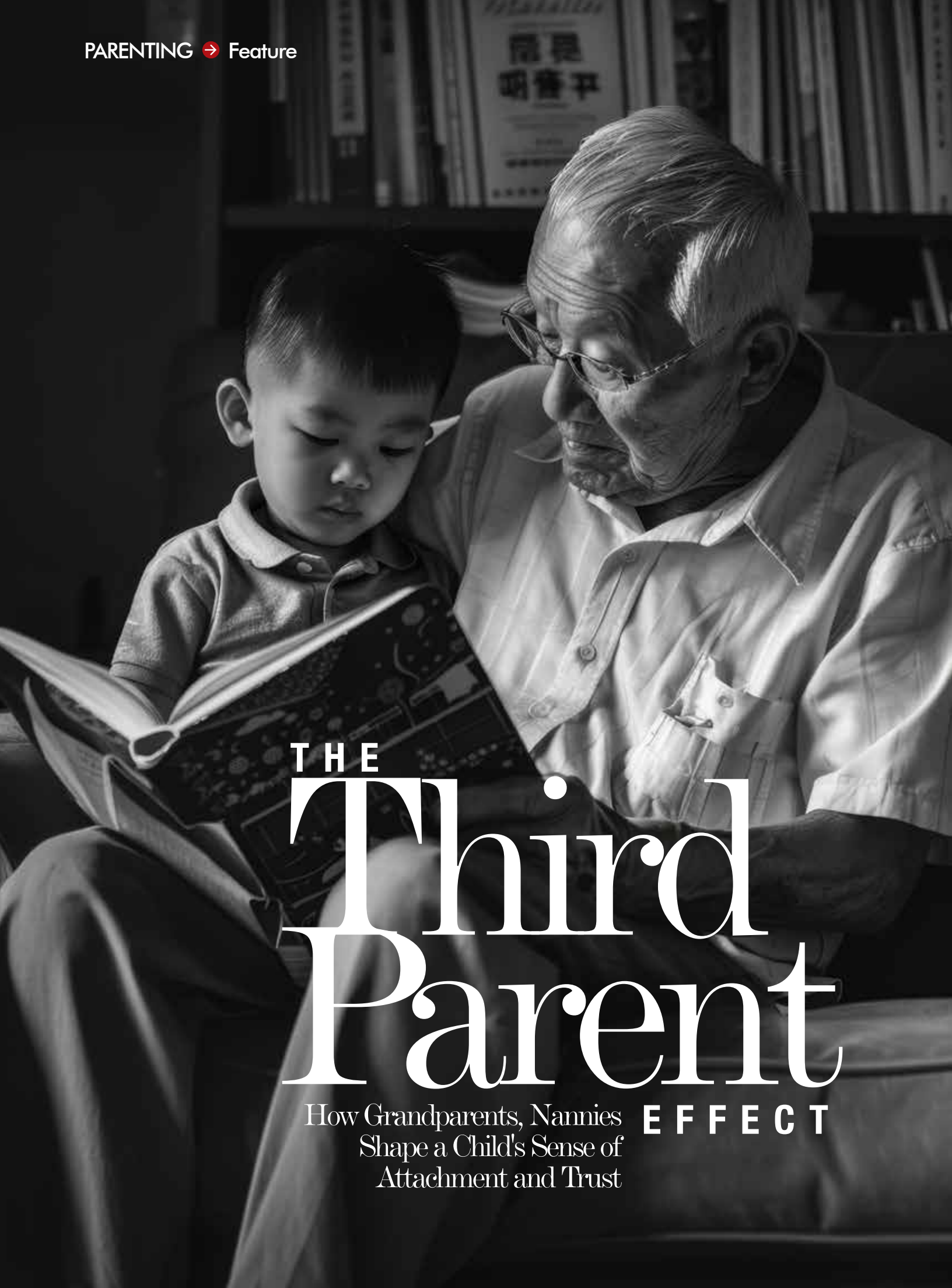
Stress will never disappear from our lives. What matters is how we respond to it and what our children learn by watching us. If we can manage our own stress, talk about it openly, and create safe spaces at home, we raise children who feel more

secure and better equipped to handle life's challenges. The best gift we can give them isn't a stress-free world. It's the confidence to face stress with calm, courage, and healthy tools.



Neha Lohia

Freelance writer with a passion for story telling, a foodie always thinking what to eat next, and a health & wellness enthusiast dedicated to balanced living!



THE Third Parent

How Grandparents, Nannies
Shape a Child's Sense of
Attachment and Trust

EFFECT

In many Nepali households, grandparents, nannies, or other long-term caregivers become a child's "third parent", offering love, structure, and guidance alongside parents. Their consistent presence can strengthen trust, emotional security, and adaptability, enriching a child's world with multiple sources of care. But to turn this influence into a strength, balance, clear communication, and shared values among caregivers are essential.

.....
By Rati Sharma

IN MOST Nepali homes, while parents juggle careers and commitments, the stable presence of grandparents, nannies, or other long-term caregivers becomes a child's everyday anchor. They help reduce tears, cheer small victories, and offer guidance when parents are busy or away from home. This is the soul of the "Third Parent" effect, the idea that children often rely on loving figures beyond their parents to feel safe and understood. But it raises an interesting question: what happens when love, discipline, and comfort come not only from parents but also from another steady figure?

The "third parent" can be grandparents, nannies, older siblings, or even long-term family friends. They are not replacements for parents but extensions of parenting, quietly shaping a child's emotional world. Think of them as the co-authors of a child's story, contributing chapters of care, encouragement, and guidance. Their presence adds depth to the child's life, offering extra support and wisdom, while complementing the unique bond each parent provides. They may notice small signs that parents might miss, like when a child looks upset or lights up after learning something new, and respond in ways that help the child feel confident and secure.

This influence has a profound impact on attachment and trust. According to Bowlby's attachment theory and Erikson's stage of trust versus mistrust, children need consistent,

responsive care to feel secure. A third parent can offer a safe base when parents are unavailable, provide an extra layer of emotional safety, and help children adapt to different caregiving styles, making them flexible and strong in relationships. But it can also carry risks. Conflicting approaches among caregivers can confuse the child, and unclear boundaries may lead to over-dependence. Balance and communication are key to turning this extra care into a strength rather than a source of uncertainty.

The "third parent" effect challenges traditional thinking. Rather than seeing additional caregivers as a compromise, they can be a unique advantage. Today, children often grow up surrounded by a network of caring adults, which can nurture empathy, adaptability, and confidence. For instance, a five-year-old who runs first to a nanny or grandparent when hurt can still develop secure attachment and resilience, because love, not labels, anchors the child's sense of safety. A supportive third parent can enrich a child's life without diminishing the parent-child bond. Over time, these additional relationships can help children learn to navigate the world with patience, kindness, and a sense of security that comes from knowing multiple adults care deeply about them.

Parents can make the most of this effect by staying connected with caregivers and ensuring routines, rules, and ways of encouragement are consistent. Showing

gratitude to grandparents, nannies, and other caregivers models respect, which children internalize. At the same time, parents should maintain special "only us" moments to reinforce their unique bond and provide stability. Celebrating small victories together, sharing stories, or even just spending quiet time listening can strengthen connections across the entire circle of caregivers.

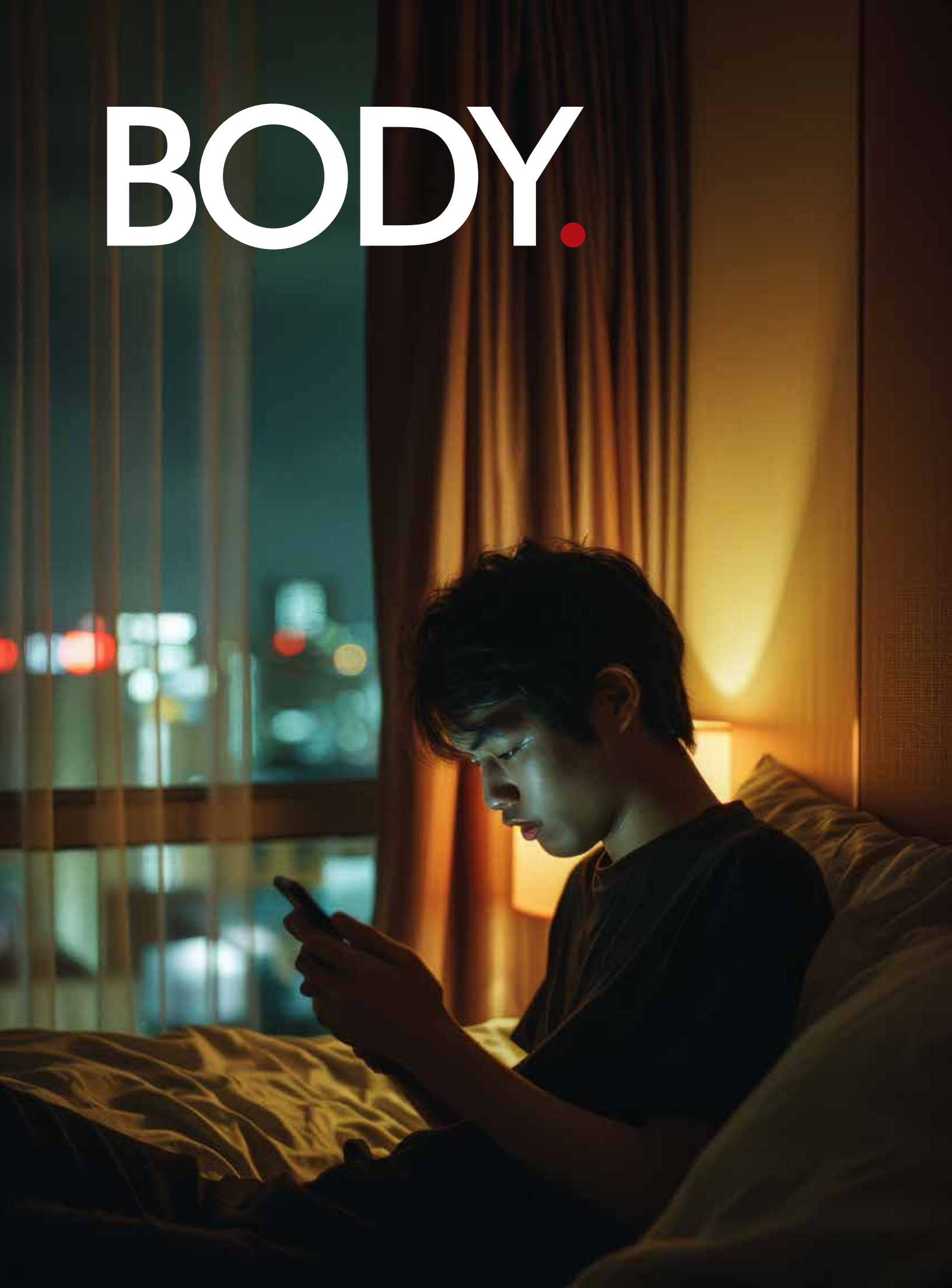
When a child is surrounded by love, whether from two parents, three, or a whole village, trust grows deep roots. Instead of asking who parents a child, perhaps the question should be: how many hearts hold them safely?



Rati Sharma

Rati Sharma is an Early Childhood Development (ECD) Consultant dedicated to advancing quality learning and nurturing environments for children. She serves as the Chairperson of Barhakhari Kids Foundation, where she leads initiatives to promote child development and well-being. As the Co-Founder of Taali Education & Research Pvt. Ltd., she is committed to creating innovative educational solutions and fostering impactful research in the field of education. She is also an esteemed member of Smart Parenting Nepal.

BODY.



Sleep

THE ULTIMATE LIFE HACK

Sleep is the most underrated pillar of good health, yet often the first thing we sacrifice in our busy lives. This article explores how everyday habits from late-night scrolling to irregular routines quietly ruin our rest, and offers simple, practical ways to restore a healthy sleep cycle.

By Sukadev Karki, Nepal's First Strength & Conditioning Specialist

SLEEP IS one of the most powerful yet most ignored pillars of good health. It's as important as diet and exercise, but in our busy lives, it often becomes the first thing we sacrifice. Quality sleep allows our body to repair itself, balances our hormones, boosts our immune system, and sharpens our memory and mood. Without it, even the strongest body and the cleanest diet can't perform at their best.

In Nepal, where early mornings and long workdays are common, many people go through life tired without realizing it because they never get restful sleep. Whether it's staying up late scrolling your phone, drinking coffee at night, or simply living in a noisy, chaotic environment, these small habits add up.

Over time, lack of proper sleep affects not only your energy but also your mental health, productivity, and emotional balance. The consequence is an altered circadian rhythm which affects the entire course of our life. It alters our body's natural clock, which affects our mood, metabolism, productivity, and overall wellbeing.

The good news? Sleep can be fixed. With a few simple changes, we can train our body and mind to fall asleep

easily, stay asleep longer, and wake up feeling truly refreshed.

Let's look at some everyday habits that quietly ruin our sleep and how we can fix them.

Late-Night Screen Scrolling

That one last scroll through TikTok or YouTube or Instagram reels feels harmless, but the blue light from your screen tricks your

brain into thinking it's still daytime. It stops your body from releasing melatonin, the sleep hormone, delaying your natural sleep cycle.

How to fix it: Try a "digital sunset." Stop using your phone or watching TV at least 45–60 minutes before bed. Listen to calming music, stretch lightly, or read something soothing. If you must use your device, turn on "night mode" or blue-light filters to reduce the effect.

Too Much Chiya and Caffeine Late in the Day

Many Nepalis love their cup of milk tea or black coffee even after dinner. But caffeine stays active in your system for hours, keeping your mind alert when you should be winding down.



The consequence is an altered circadian rhythm which affects the entire course of our life.

How to fix it: Enjoy your last caffeinated drink before 1 PM. In the evening, try switching to caffeine-free herbal teas such as chamomile, tulsi, or simply warm milk with turmeric - all of which promote better sleep.

Heavy or Spicy Dinners

Eating a large or oily meal late at night like dal-bhat with extra ghee, fried items, or spicy curries can cause indigestion, bloating, or acid reflux when you lie down, disrupting your rest.

How to fix it: Eat dinner at least 2–3 hours before bedtime. Keep it light but nourishing, rice, lentils, and steamed vegetables work best. Avoid deep-fried snacks or chili-heavy foods at night. A small bowl of curd before bed can also soothe your digestion.

Irregular Sleep Schedule

Going to bed at 10 PM one night and 12:30 AM the next confuses your body clock. Your body relies on rhythm, and irregular sleep patterns can make it harder to fall asleep naturally.

How to fix it: Go to bed and wake up at the same time every day even on weekends. Once your body adjusts to a consistent routine, you'll start feeling sleepy at the same hour automatically.

Lack of Sunlight and Physical Activity

Many Nepalese spend long hours indoors in offices, classrooms, or on phones. Without sunlight or physical movement, your body doesn't get the natural signals that help regulate sleep and wake times.



Eat dinner at least 2–3 hours before bedtime. Keep it light but nourishing, rice, lentils, and steamed vegetables work best. Avoid deep-fried snacks or chili-heavy foods at night.

How to fix it: Get 20–30 minutes of sunlight exposure in the morning. A short walk or light exercise outside during the day boosts serotonin, which later helps your body produce melatonin (the hormone that makes you sleepy).

Overthinking and Stress

Stress about work, studies, finances, or family often keeps the mind spinning at night. Even when your body is tired, your thoughts can prevent deep rest.

How to fix it: Try deep breathing, journaling, or short meditation before bed. Write down what's bothering you so you're not holding it in your head. Practicing gratitude or mindfulness for a few minutes can calm your nervous system and prepare you for peaceful sleep.

Afternoon Naps That Stretch Too Long

A short nap can recharge you, but sleeping for over an hour in the afternoon especially after 4 PM confuses your body's internal clock and makes it harder to sleep at night.

How to fix it: Keep naps short (20–30 minutes) and take them before 3 PM. If you feel sleepy later in the day, get some fresh air or stretch instead of lying down.

Temperature and Sleeping Environment

During cold Nepali winters, people often pile on too many blankets or wear heavy clothes to bed, which can cause overheating. In the summer, hot, stuffy rooms make it hard to stay asleep.

How to fix it: Keep your room comfortably cool with proper airflow. Use lighter blankets and breathable clothes. Dim the lights, reduce noise, and make your sleeping space a calm, comfortable place.

Final Thought

Sleep Is Self-Care and a rejuvenation of our healthier being. Sleep isn't a waste of time but it's our body's natural healing process. Every night, our brain organizes memories, our muscles repair themselves, and our hormones rebalance. Without it, motivation drops, immunity weakens, and emotional control fades.

In a world where everyone is "busy," sleeping well is a form of discipline and an investment in our long-term health. So, tonight let's make rest our priority. Switch off your screen, quiet your thoughts, and let your body do what it's built to do: recover, heal, and prepare for another beautiful Nepali morning.

Do tag us @smartfamilyMagazing, @sukadevkarki @befitptstudio and share your journey that helped you fix your sleep pattern.s



Sukadev Karki - NSCA CSCS
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SCAN ME





family ties & festive triggers

INTERGENERATIONAL EMOTIONAL DYNAMIC

Festivals are meant to unite families, but they often stir up hidden emotions, unresolved conflicts, and generational differences. From old family roles and shifting identities to cultural expectations of respect and harmony, gatherings can become emotionally intense. Let's navigate these psychological dynamics from psychologist's perspective.

By Sneha Agrawal

FROM A psychological perspective, why do gatherings of multiple generations often lead to emotional tension?

From a psychological standpoint, multi-generational gatherings can evoke emotional tension due to the convergence of individuals who share a common history and represent diverse life stages of life, with varying values and ways of communicating. Family members may fall into old roles, like being treated as children even when they are adults, while secretly expecting approval and a sense of belonging. The different worldviews between younger and older generations can seem judgmental, and unresolved past hurts may come up again. Since emotions within families tend to spread, stress from one person can quickly affect the whole group. Therefore, these dynamics increase the emotional intensity of such gatherings, as they challenge individuals to reconcile their old identities with their current selves.

Are certain life stages more likely to experience emotional tension during festivals?

Emotional triggers can often trigger us when we're figuring out who we are and what we want, especially with our families. For example:

- Teenagers are trying to be independent, but they're still seen as kids, which can lead to disagreements about rules, traditions, and what they can do.
- Newlyweds might feel caught between their families' expectations and their own, which can be

stressful as they try to find their own way.

- Parents with young children might feel judged on how they're raising their kids or overwhelmed with the busyness of family gatherings.
- Middle-aged folks often juggle kids and aging parents, making it tough to host, mediate, or keep traditions alive.
- Older parents or grandparents might feel unheard or worried about losing influence, sometimes showing this through criticism or attempts to control.

Nepali culture highly values respecting elders and maintaining family unity. How does this affect how conflicts are managed or avoided during festivals?

In Nepali culture, where respecting elders and keeping the family together are very important, festivals often focus on harmony instead of conflict. People tend to suppress disputes or express them indirectly because arguing with elders is viewed as disrespectful and can spoil the festive mood. Younger family members usually go along with what's expected, while middle generations act as peacemakers to keep everyone feeling connected. This approach helps festivals look peaceful on the outside, but it can hide underlying tensions that might carry over into future gatherings.

Nepali families can balance respecting hierarchy with allowing the younger generation to express their emotions by creating an environment for respectful and gentle communication.

What steps can help families handle emotional conflicts during festivals?

Rituals like puja, tika, and shared meals help create unity. Showing respect through silence or gentle redirection can avoid confrontations with elders, and trusted elders often mediate tensions. Acts of kindness, such as serving food or exchanging gifts, help shift focus to caring and generosity. Group activities like singing or playing games can bring joy and distract from conflicts. The cultural value of samjhauta (compromise) allows family members to make small concessions, turning potential disagreements into deeper feelings of belonging.

How can individuals prevent unresolved issues from coming up?

To keep things smooth and avoid lingering problems during festivals, here are some practical tips:

- Take a moment to consider what might upset you before the festival begins.
- Be realistic about your expectations and remember that connection is more important than perfection.
- Set boundaries around sensitive topics.
- When feeling stressed, try calming habits like deep breathing or a quick walk.
- Join shared rituals to promote harmony.
- Hold sensitive conversations until afterward if needed.
- Reach out to family members who can help ease tension.

How can festivals be re-imagined as

opportunities to heal family wounds instead of causing more conflict?

Wow, that's a great question! Festivals are all about celebrating and making memories with family. They can also be perfect moments to heal old family rifts. When families focus less on being perfect or strictly following traditions and more on connecting and understanding each other, they can rebuild relationships. Sharing stories, doing fun rituals together, and working on team projects help bridge the generational gap. Plus, a simple, respectful chat or a kind gesture can make everyone feel heard and appreciated, making gatherings more about healing and bonding rather than arguing.

Let's acknowledge that festivals come and go, but the cherished memories we create with our loved ones endure forever. Let's take a moment to slow down, be present, and relish the joy of shared moments.



SNEHA AGRAWAL CHAUDHARY is an experienced licensed psychologist with over a decade of experience in clinical psychology. Holding a Master's Degree in Applied Psychology from the esteemed University of Delhi, Sneha specializes in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. Currently practicing at Norvic International Hospital, she is deeply committed to helping individuals navigate various mental health challenges.



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HOME.

Single Bulb

Home isn't just a place, it's a feeling. And the right lighting? Well, it's the invisible magic that sets that feeling. Even as the day's light filters through your windows, artificial lighting is your home's personality warm, quirky, bold, or calming. From classic bulbs

to stylish lamps, every glow has a story. A single light can change the vibe of a room entirely, making it feel inviting, cozy, or energized.

Think of lights as the mood-makers of your space. A soft, golden bulb in the living room says, "Relax, take a

Ever noticed how a single bulb can change everything in a room?

By Anushka Shakya

breath." A bright lamp on your desk whispers, "Time to focus!" Ceiling lights give general brightness, but the little extras table lamps, floor lamps, or even fairy lights bring personality and life to your rooms. These small touches can turn a plain corner into a comfy corner or make a quiet evening feel special.

Bulbs aren't just for seeing they're for feeling. Warm white bulbs feel cozy and comforting, perfect for curling up with a book or having a chat over coffee. Cool white or daylight bulbs energize, great for cooking, working, or tackling creative projects. LEDs are the modern heroes long-lasting, energy-saving, and smart. With a simple tap, you can change brightness, switch colors, or even create different moods, turning a calm dinner into a small party or movie night into a cinematic experience.

Fixtures are where style comes in. A sleek pendant light can make your dining area feel elegant. A quirky lamp can be a fun conversation starter. Even a small chandelier can make a hallway feel special. Lights aren't just functional they add character, charm, and personality to your home. Layering is key. Ambient lights fill the space, task lights help you focus, and accent lights highlight details. Mix them, play with them, and see what feels right.

At the end of the day, lighting isn't just about seeing it's about feeling. It lifts your mornings, calms your evenings, and makes every moment in between just a little brighter. So, pick your bulbs, hang that lamp, and play with light. Your home isn't just a space it's your stage, and your lights are the magic that bring it to life.





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Aromatic Plants

Bringing the Magic into Your Home

Aromatic plants bring nature's soothing magic indoors, filling spaces with natural fragrance and calm. Beyond beauty, they uplift mood, purify air, and promote well-being, turning any home into a fragrant sanctuary.

In an increasingly bustling world, the gentle, grounding presence of nature within our living spaces offers a vital sanctuary. Beyond their aesthetic appeal, a special group of aromatic plants brings a unique, transformative magic into the home. These plants, rich in volatile compounds and essential oils, infuse the air with natural fragrances, acting as living diffusers that offer a multitude of therapeutic and practical benefits. Cultivating them indoors is a simple, yet profound, act of self-care, enhancing both the atmosphere and the overall well-being of a household.



The decision to incorporate aromatic plants is a conscious choice to embrace natural aromatherapy. Unlike synthetic air fresheners, the scents released by plants are complex, subtle, and often evolve over time, providing a dynamic sensory experience. This natural diffusion has a direct impact on our limbic system, the part of the brain associated with emotion and memory, making these plants powerful tools for mood regulation and mental clarity.

Different aromatic plants offer distinct therapeutic

↓

Sweet, intoxicating scent of Jasmine (like Jasminum sambac or Arabian Jasmine) is a potent mood booster that promotes relaxation.

profiles, allowing homeowners to curate their indoor garden to meet specific emotional and physical needs:

- For Calm and Sleep: Lavender is perhaps the

most famous sleep aid, its sweet, floral aroma known to reduce heart rate, lower blood pressure, and alleviate anxiety. Placing a potted lavender plant or a sprig of dried

flowers near the bed can significantly improve sleep quality. Similarly, the sweet, intoxicating scent of Jasmine (like Jasminum sambac or Arabian Jasmine) is a potent mood booster that promotes relaxation, making it ideal for the bedroom or a cozy reading nook.

- For Focus and Energy: The sharp, earthy aroma of Rosemary is a natural mental stimulant. Traditionally associated with memory, its invigorating scent can enhance concentration and mental clarity, making it a perfect addition to a



SUPER LUXURY INTERIOR EMULSION





home office or study area. Mint varieties, such as peppermint or spearmint, with their crisp, refreshing fragrance, offer an instant energy lift and help to reduce fatigue.

- For Kitchen and Culinary Delight: A fragrant herb

garden transforms a kitchen into a functional oasis. Basil, with its mildly spicy and sweet scent, not only elevates Italian dishes but also offers a fresh, inviting aroma. Bay Laurel (Bay Leaf) can be grown as a small, fragrant

shrub whose savory leaves are a staple in cooking. Brushing against these herbs or harvesting a few leaves immediately releases their concentrated essence, connecting the ritual of cooking directly to the living garden.

- For a Zesty Uplift: Small Citrus trees like Meyer Lemon or Calamondin orange are prized for their beautifully scented flowers, which fill a room with a fresh, tangy, and uplifting aroma. Even before bearing fruit, the blossoms alone are a powerful source of natural fragrance, known to help reduce anxiety.

Many aromatic plants also double as air purifiers. Herbs

like Rosemary and Eucalyptus emit volatile compounds that possess natural antimicrobial properties, which can help reduce the presence of airborne microbes. Like all indoor plants, they contribute to a healthier indoor environment by converting carbon dioxide to oxygen and absorbing common household toxins.

Care and Placement

Bringing the magic indoors requires understanding the basic needs of these scented guardians.

Light: Place your aromatic plants, especially sun-loving varieties like Lavender, Rosemary, and Basil, in the brightest spot possible, ideally a south-facing window that receives at least six hours of direct sunlight per day.

Watering: Overwatering is the most common pitfall. Herbs like Rosemary and Thyme, accustomed to drier climates, prefer their soil to dry out between waterings. Others, like Basil and Mint, need more consistent moisture. The best practice is to check the soil by inserting a finger two inches deep; if it feels dry, it's time to water. Always ensure your pots have proper drainage holes to prevent root rot.

The Touch Test: For many leaf-scented plants like Mint, Rosemary, and Scented Geraniums, the fragrance is released when the leaves are gently bruised or brushed. Strategically place these plants in high-traffic areas, like a windowsill in the kitchen or near a doorway, where accidental contact will release a refreshing burst of natural scent.

➔ **Overwatering is the most common pitfall.** Herbs like Rosemary and Thyme, accustomed to drier climates, prefer their soil to dry out between waterings. Others, like Basil and Mint, need more consistent moisture.

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MARKET.



↑ Nabil Bank Invites Applications for Social Entrepreneurship Program

Nabil Bank Limited has opened applications for the Fellowship Program and Certificate Course under its Nabil School of Social Entrepreneurship (Nabil SSE), aimed at promoting social entrepreneurship for poverty alleviation and empowerment. Nepali citizens aged 18 and above can apply online until November 13, 2025. The Fellowship Program, run with

Tribhuvan University, offers six months of training, mentorship, and funding support, while the Certificate Course provides three months of foundational learning across all seven provinces. Focused on province-specific themes like agro value chains, tourism, and digital innovation, Nabil SSE has so far produced 76 fellows, 62 enterprises, and 17,000 jobs nationwide



↑ Aloft Kathmandu Thamel Named Nepal's Leading Hotel 2025

Aloft Kathmandu Thamel has been honored as "Nepal's Leading Hotel 2025" at the prestigious World Travel Awards Asia & Oceania Gala Ceremony held in Hong Kong. This recognition celebrates the hotel's dedication to exceptional hospitality, innovative guest experiences, and its bold, modern design reflecting Thamel's vibrant spirit. General Manager Vikram Singh expressed gratitude, crediting the team's creativity and commitment to delivering outstanding service.

Blending urban style with Nepali warmth, Aloft Kathmandu Thamel continues to redefine the city's hotel scene through its social and culinary spaces while upholding sustainability, community engagement, and Marriott International's global standards.



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The Astrology of Siblings

Tihar's Bhai Tika is more than a ritual — it's a reminder of one of the most powerful bonds we share: the sibling relationship. From lifelong protectors to playful rivals, astrology reveals how each zodiac sign behaves as a brother or sister and the unique role they play in this cosmic connection.

Aries – The Protector

Bold and brave, Aries siblings are natural defenders. They'll stand up for you in any fight, even if they were the ones teasing you five minutes ago.

Taurus – The Steady One

Dependable and loyal, Taurus siblings are the rock of the family. They might be stubborn, but their love is unwavering and lifelong.

Gemini – The Partner in Crime

Curious and chatty, Geminis make siblinghood fun. They're always up for an adventure, a gossip session, or a new inside joke.

Cancer – The Caregiver

Emotional and nurturing, Cancer siblings are the ones who check in, offer comfort,

and make sure you're eating enough during festivals.

Leo – The Cheerleader

Proud and generous, Leos adore celebrating your victories — and theirs too. They light up every family moment with warmth and enthusiasm.

Virgo – The Guide

Practical and thoughtful, Virgo siblings give advice (whether you ask or not) and always have a solution when life gets messy.

Libra – The Peacemaker

Fair and diplomatic, Libras smooth over fights and keep the sibling bond harmonious. They're happiest when everyone's getting along.

Scorpio – The Loyal Ally

Intense and deeply devoted, Scorpio siblings are protective and secret-keeping. Once you earn their trust, they'll guard you for life.

Sagittarius – The Explorer

Adventurous and spontaneous, Sagittarius siblings are the ones dragging you on road trips or pushing you to dream bigger.

Capricorn – The Mentor

Responsible and disciplined, Capricorns often feel like older siblings even when they're not. They'll challenge you to aim higher.

Aquarius – The Unconventional One

Independent and quirky, Aquarius siblings might do their own thing — but they'll always show up when it truly matters.

Pisces – The Empath

Gentle and intuitive, Pisces siblings feel your emotions deeply and offer unconditional support, often without needing words.

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