

EMPOWERING THE IMPOVERISHED



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2021 marks the **10th anniversary of Hope Learning Stations**, along with bringing our destiny-changing Hope curriculum and Dr. Pillai's teachings to thousands of impoverished children in rural India. As we look back on our years of work, we interviewed **Hope Sponsor Krishna**, who had the opportunity to visit a Hope Station in 2019. He shared with us his perspective as a supporter of our programs.



What Brought You to Hope Learning Station?

I had heard about the Hope Station Project during my first birthday trip with Babaji in January 2018. I had also read online about the Hope Station-focused trips that Babaji's Singapore community used to organize. This piqued my interest, and I wanted to witness in person this grassroots level work in my own country that was partly put together by my co-disciple friends from the West. Hence, I made room for a Hope Station visit in the middle of a Nadi remedy trip in 2019 for myself and my family.

Besides, the only dimension of Babaji that I was exposed to was his profound teachings and transmissions. So I was eager to see this philanthropic dimension of Babaji's work in the world. As if it would allow me to see more of Babaji himself.

How Do You Relate to Dr. Pillai's Mission?

I have always felt humbled by the fact that I (and most of us) belong to the top 1-2% percentile of this world when it comes to the satisfaction of basic needs, privilege and wealth. **Paying it forward** should be our endeavour. To create an ecosystem and facilitate a swelling tide where all of humanity can escape the poverty trap, uplifting living standards to live with dignity like the privileged few of this world all the way up to the noble life of a compassionate king or leader. That's how I primarily relate to Babaji's Hope Station mission.

What Is the Most Inspiring Aspect of Hope Learning Stations?

Supporting a child who comes from extreme poverty and disempowerment and uplifting him to the diametrical opposite of empowered leadership (within his community to begin with) leaves me so inspired. It is not about sustenance, survival, or coping like how it works with a government scheme, but about empowerment.



Tell Us About an Experience That You Had While Visiting One of Our Stations?

We (five of us from my family) were scheduled to reach the Hope Station at a particular time, but we ended up arriving 10 minutes late. As our vehicle steered to park, we saw the whole group (maybe 40 or so Hope children) silently waiting at the gate in two neat lines on opposite sides of the pavement to welcome us heartily. Seeing that sight where so many sweet little children were silently waiting for us to come – **with gratitude in their hearts, a divine smile on their faces, and without a modicum of complaint about the extra time they must have been waiting was so touching.** Such acts of love are rarely experienced in a high-octane urban life. Subsequently, playing some fun outdoor games with the whole group was also so heartening. **The ease with which the kids opened up to our love and we opened up to theirs was priceless.**



What Message Would You Like to Share About Our Work?

I would love for people to know that Hope Stations are run most economically. I have served and worked with many NGOs in my life, and the amount of money that trickles down to the grassroots (as a percentage of what is donated) is the metric to look for, as a donor. For donors looking to get the proverbial maximum bang for the buck, Tripura is the most suitable NGO to engage with. With significantly less admin costs and overheads, almost all the money finds its way to the needy in the case of Tripura.

Why Do You Think It's Important for Others to Fundraise for Tripura?

Babaji recently told me that money is like water. All life collapses without water. Ditto with money. Tripura has such a dedicated humane team doing splendid work in the field supported by many devotee donors. The team could touch many more children and families with yet more financial resources at their disposal. India has a humongous number of children and families who could do with our loving support. Those who have access to the generous and noble within our community can most effectively help by channelling these resources. I believe that while those who are close to and work on the ground should support with their love and time, those who are close to capital should support with capital.

Besides, as for me, when I fundraise, I feel awesome when I help people get in touch with their intrinsic generosity. That little reunion with their intrinsic generosity helps people feel much better about themselves and their lives. It adds a certain anchor of meaning, a dose of self-esteem, and re-experience of their limitless divinity.



What Message Do You Have for the Children of Our Programs?

I would love for our children to know that Baba's devotees and the noble people in this society have their backs so that they feel a certain lift under their wings and choose to soar higher up into the skies. And as we are of use to these little sweethearts, we hope that in the bargain, some of their rustic innocence, carefree playfulness, and inspiring leadership will rub off on us as well.