

Santhosh
Happiness Personified
(Book in Memory of Santhosh)



1973 - 2014

Published by
Santhosh's Family & Friends

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Santhosh - Happiness Personified: Book in Memory of Santhosh

Published by : Santhosh's Family & Friends

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A Tribute to Santhosh

We remember and miss Santhosh every day. The last year has been extraordinarily difficult for us, but we are slowly coming to terms with Santhosh's untimely passing away.

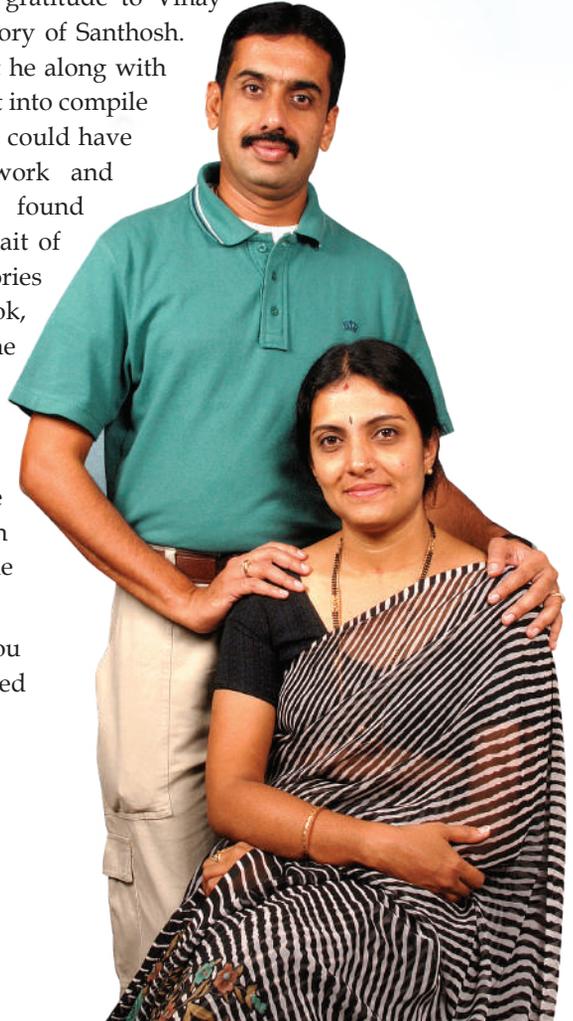
The anecdotes in the book illustrate the indelible mark Santhosh left on people from many walks of life – his immediate family members, relatives, friends, colleagues, and acquaintances. This book will be invaluable for Sanjani, Rachith, and me to remember the wonderful human being that Santhosh was.

Mere words cannot express my gratitude to Vinay for assembling this book in memory of Santhosh. I really appreciate the huge effort he along with the able support of Umesh has put into compile this book. It is the best tribute we could have given Santhosh. Despite his work and personal commitments Vinay found the time to create a unique portrait of Santhosh by stitching together stories and remembrances into a book, thereby helping us remember the values that Santhosh stood for.

I also want to extend my thanks to Umesh BK and Sudarshan Kyathasandra (Target) for the time they spent in coordinating with friends and colleagues to gather the write-ups.

My sincere thanks to each one of you who contributed articles and shared your experiences about Santhosh.

- Rajani BS



Why This Book

How Time flies! It is already one year now that we lost our good friend Santhosh. Words fail to express the loss we are experiencing. It is as if a part of us is lost forever. He was such an integral part of our day-today lives that we are finding it difficult to come to terms with the fact that we will never see him in life and blood again.

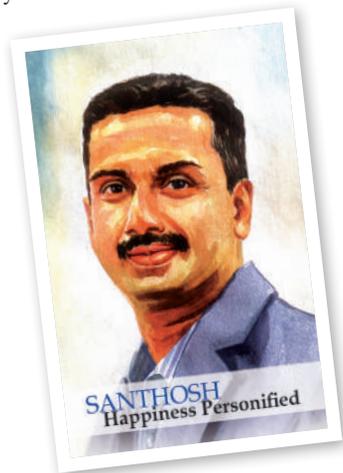
Even though Santhosh is no longer with us physically, his spirit will remain with us forever. His words, his laughter, his uninhibited energy and his never-say-die attitude still linger in our minds. For someone who was so full of energy, it is our duty to preserve Santhosh's spirit in whatever little way we can. One of the ways we thought we could achieve this is by publishing a book about Santhosh.

We didn't intend this to be an erudite literary work, but a simple consolidation of our own personal life experiences with him. We wanted this book to be a combination of write-ups and rare photographs that captures the essence of Santhosh as he lived. As planned we are unveiling this book on the occasion of the first anniversary of the departed soul.

On our request to share with us your personal experiences with Santhosh, you all came up with great inspirational stories of how Santhosh has impacted your lives. Your words came straight from your heart that have given us a glimpse of the multiple dimensions of Santhosh. The stories inside show how much people loved and adored Santhosh.

We only hope this book inspires all of us to be a little more organized, a bit more disciplined, tad more industrious, touch more fearless and a lot more humane in our lives!

- Vinay Babu GP



The Beginning

- *Rajani BS*

I was one of the last to give my write-up to Vinay. I kept buying time and making excuses to him. The reality is I simply didn't have the courage to go back the memory lane of 23 years to write this. I feared re-living the pain and uneasiness of missing Santhosh, of summarizing the wonderful life we built and lost, over the span of a few pages.

Finally, here it goes...

My life with Santhosh

Our life together has several big numbers associated with it. Acquainted for 25 years, friends for 24 years, good friends for 23 years, in love for 20 years, married for 16 years...

This familiarity and our shared youth helped us build a very comfortable and compatible relationship. Santhosh and I were part of a large group of 13 like-minded friends in college. He was my senior by a year. We had a great time together. After college, we friends stayed in close touch with each other. Over the years, Santhosh and I decided to turn this friendship into a long lasting relationship and give it a name - "marriage".

Right from the beginning, we were very clear about how we wanted to live. We valued each others' independence, were quite practical in our thoughts and built our life bit by bit. We decided to get married only after we had our money saved from our earnings, so we would not depend on anybody for our financial needs. We started our married life with a salary of Rs 15,000 inclusive of both our earnings. We knew that life would be difficult, but we had each other for company. We shared



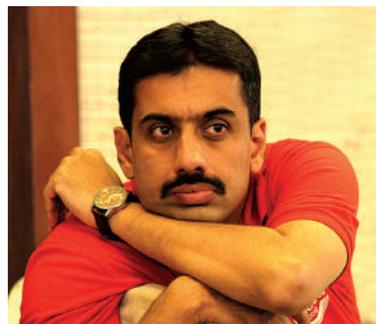
SANTHOSH - Happiness Personified

common values, thoughts, friends and goals in life, which always kept us working hard, happy and content.

Life with Santhosh was more than a pleasure for me, being the centre of his attention, love and affection. He was very protective of me, my wants & needs. He stood by me like a rock through ups and downs and ensured that I got my share of respect and dignity, from relatives, friends and society. He had no qualms in staying away for the rest of his life from those who hurt me. Santhosh respected me as a partner and commanded respect from me. I truly enjoyed my life with him. What more could I have asked for from life? I am sure Santhosh's affection for me made many people envious. Ah.. probably even God !!!???

After all the love and attention, tragedy struck. It had been a life of two extremes: The 16 years with Santhosh passed in a flash and now I wonder how I would spend the next 16 years, until Rachith grows up to be a man.

I keep wondering what I did to deserve this! I stop myself when I complain about life being unkind to me. Although life with Santhosh was short, it was filled with love, fun, laughter, arguments, debates, and memories which I will cherish for the rest of my life. Even if I had known that our life together would be this brief-- just 16 years long--I would still have chosen this path to live with Santhosh, a man who loved, respected and delighted me no end. We shared something magical that many couples who are married for far longer may never experience.



Family man

Santhosh loved his family to the core. On holidays, he loved to spend time with his family. He maintained a “places to visit” list and was very keen to take me and the kids to restaurants or resorts that he visited with his office team or friends. On long weekends, he would plan longer trips, both for the drive as well as for the joy of spending time with family and friends. Both of us loved good food and enjoyed visiting our favorite food joints. There were times when we drove to another part of the city just to have a good dosa or cup of coffee. My birthday always featured surprises, and he would insist on celebrating my birthday as a ‘no kitchen day’.

Santhosh loved his kids tremendously and showed it in his actions every day. He was part of all their PTM’s, sports days, annual days and assembly activities. He used to work around his commitments to be part of the kids activities, and was always concerned about their well-being. If kids were unwell, he would leave office early and reach the hospital to pick us up on his way back home. His travels outside the city were synonymous with lots of shopping for the kids. And he was happily a ready volunteer for any household work.

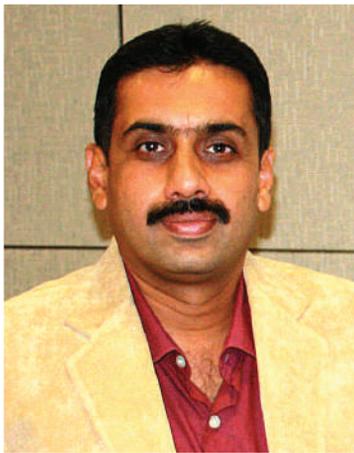


The Santhosh I know

Santhosh was honest, sincere, discerning, disciplined, hardworking, extremely organized, ambitious, risk taking, generous and fun loving. He was clear in his thoughts and action, and was a great planner. These qualities were evident through my years with him and only got strengthened over the years.

Not many people know how meticulous and organized Santhosh was. A small example: He would keep the clothes for the following week ready and hung in the closet (including 5 pair of socks and 5 hankies and any warm clothing for the upcoming work week) on the previous Friday evening. Only when he was ready for the next week would he retire for the weekend. His planning for business/family trips was also meticulous. He would give me his clothes 3 days in advance to pack for the trip.

You could never find his wardrobe, shelves, racks scattered. He rarely searched for any of his things as everything would be neatly arranged. He preserved the smallest of things with great passion, be it his air tickets which he bought to fly down to see his daughter in Bangalore when she was born, or newspapers of the day his kids were born, or the tickets and bills of his foreign travel. All these were filed and preserved. He remembered the dates of important events like birthdays, anniversaries of relatives and friends and would promptly be the first one to wish them.



Santhosh was very keen on 'Time Management'. He hated to be late for any appointment or for work. In the morning, he insisted on having the breakfast at least 20 mins before he left for work. He hated to rush to work immediately after breakfast. So, if breakfast was not served in time, he would rather skip it than go late for work. His weekend would run on a 'to-do-checklist'. He rarely accommodated any unplanned events or visits to anybody's house. He rather preferred sticking to his plan.

He loved to travel and was a passionate driver. He enjoyed driving fast but was never aggressive or out of control.

On trips with our college friends, he would ensure that everybody was up as early as 3 AM and used to start by 4 AM. He would drive comfortably for a stretch of 12 hrs without complaining. His closest friends know the yelling they would get,

in case they were late and did not keep up the time. His friends would often say that they wouldn't sleep the previous night as they were worried of being late the next morning and getting shouted by him. He ensured that people around him were also punctual like him.



He loved to shop and had a good collection of watches, pull overs and shoes. He was a fitness freak and a health stickler. He would very regularly walk, run and cycle. During college days, he used to freak out on sweets but later he developed restraint to refuse sweets without being tempted. His discipline and clarity on what he wanted used to surprise me a lot. He was particular about eating the right food and in the right quantity. He had good will power to refuse tempting foods. He loved to have varieties of food, but knew his limitations. His love for music and movies was evident to all. He was a gadget freak.

He was always committed to his words. Once he agrees to do any work, you could rest assured that he will complete the work. His qualities attracted a lot of people towards him. He was popular amongst my relatives. My mother was always a little more partial towards Santhosh than me. She lived with us during the last few years of her life and Santhosh was kind and took good care of her. She was always proud of him.



Beginning of the end

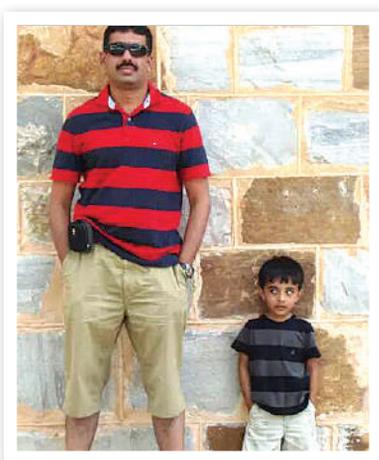
The last two years of my life with Santhosh was the most horrifying years of my life. Who else can vouch for his fighting abilities more than me! I have seen him battle the disease with great dignity and grace from close quarters.

When his persistent cough could not be relieved by regular medicine, we were forced to consult specialists. Finally, after a series of tests, the killer disease was diagnosed at Apollo Hospital. We were shattered to hear this devastating news which no one wanted to hear. I was dumbstruck on hearing this and I was literally shivering. Santhosh appeared to be brave, he assured me that 'we will battle this out', he sang his favorite lines to give me courage "*honge kamyab hum honge kamyab ek din, man mein hai vishwas poorā hai vishwas...*". I could not stop my tears rolling down even though I wanted to hide them and wanted to give him courage.

From there on, our journey of silence began. The two of us who were such good friends, who updated each other from anything to everything on a daily basis were now reluctant to talk to each other. We feared that once we start speaking to each other, we would land up sharing our fears, thoughts and uncertainties in life and would weaken each other. Life had turned upside down for us. The only way we could pretend to be strong was by keeping our feelings to ourselves, though it was not easy. But, silence could not separate us from our emotions, we could sense each other's discomfort even without speaking. Though our actions showed that we were strong and nothing was wrong, we knew it was not true. This silence gradually drifted us apart, though care and concern was always there.

Treatment

With "discipline & will power" as weapons, Santhosh battled the odds and side-effects of the treatment gracefully without making a noise of it. The treatment was expected to last just for 4 months and the possibility



of cure was expected to be high. We had to visit the hospital for a day once every fortnight. After a month, gradually the toxic medication started taking control of him physically and emotionally. We were helplessly watching the changes. Food became tasteless for him and he would crave for something palatable. We had to stop him from consuming outside food as his immunity levels were low and he was prone to infections, but it was not easy. His appearance gradually changed for the worse; he started looking sick, weak and tired. But, he would never complain. He once told me that he hated to look at his face in the mirror. It was painful for me to see his face too, the once handsome guy was now unrecognizable. While this was nothing less than hell for me, I could not let him know it.

The treatment continued into the second phase. In this phase, he had to undergo treatment for 20 mins every day for a period of 21 days. During this period, he would take the treatment and then go to office. Santhosh's cousin Sudarshan and my cousin Anusha were very helpful in ferrying us to the hospital and back during this phase. My repeated requests to him to take break from work fell on deaf ears. The effects were different this time. The medicines given were so strong that it caused burns internally, mouth ulcers, heart burns, etc. He struggled to eat and swallow. His dishes were cooked without any spices. He could only consume liquid or semi-solid food like pongal, curd rice or mashed fruit. After these two phases, we were hopeful that he would have conquered the disease. But unfortunately traces of the disease still remained in his body, which brought us to the next course of treatment.



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In this phase he was administered oral medication that had to be consumed twice a day for a period of 3.5 months. The food situation got worse during this period. The medicines made him hungry, but he couldn't eat much as his taste buds had become numb. Even an overdose of chillies could not bring him taste, which made him add extra chilli powder for all the dishes. It was scary for me to see this as I feared this would lead to severe stomach ulcers. The steroids were masking his pain and he was putting on weight due to which he was experiencing difficulty in breathing and sleeping. I was a silent spectator all along. After 3 phases of treatment, it was finally time to check the disease condition once again. To our great relief, the scan results this time showed negative results for the diseased cells. He was completely cured!!!

Our happiness knew no bounds. We were preparing ourselves for a new life again. When the results arrived, I was in Mumbai with Sanjani who was participating in National level UNO competition. He called me up to say that the report had arrived early and the doctor had called him up personally to say that he is healthy now, free from illness. He was extremely happy but the fact that he could not share this news with me in person made him a tad sad. He wanted to fly to Mumbai and join us there to share



this happy news with me, but could not get the tickets. He called our close friends and relatives to inform that he was alright. He celebrated this news by going out with his friends for lunch. I rushed back from Mumbai with double happiness of Sanju winning the National

level competition as a runner-up and Santhosh recovering from his illness. We met the doctor as a happy couple to thank him for all his effort & for giving Santhosh a second lease of life. The doctor explained to us that even though Santhosh was fully cured, it was important for him to avoid a relapse. And he suggested stem cell therapy as the way to ensure that the disease doesn't recur. We went by his advice and decided to go for stem

cell therapy. We were both confident that we will be victorious in this final test. We now knew luck was in our favor and we didn't betray any fears.

The stem cell treatment went off well for 15 days. He responded very well to the treatment and the stem cell transplant happened successfully, after which we waited with our fingers crossed for the blood count to increase from 100 to a safer number. This usually happens on the 7th or the 8th day from the day of transplantation. During this period, umpteen number of blood transfusions were done to sustain the 100 count. Friends, relatives, colleagues, classmates and almost everyone who knew him were eager to give him blood. His office staff had meticulously maintained a database of all the interested donors whose blood group matched with Santhosh. Unlike regular blood donations, many parameters were tested and only a handful of donors were shortlisted. Only one out of 8 to 9 donors of the same blood group became eligible to donate blood. Many were disappointed that their blood was not accepted. Their eagerness to contribute in bringing Santhosh back to life really touched me. The support only spoke about the love Santhosh had earned in his short lifespan. I was eagerly waiting to share with him how everybody supported me during this treatment.

However, he started developing complications on day 5. His BP fluctuated, he had difficulty in breathing that prompted the doctors to go for a non-invasive ventilator first and an invasive one later. One complication lead to another and things went out of control. We spent the next 4 days and nights without sleep. During that period his close friends of 25 years-- Umesh and Shashi were with me in the hospital day and night. His office colleagues on directions from Rakesh (Santhosh's boss) kept guard in the hospital as well. Santhosh's uncle (Satish), his aunt (Geeta), my sister (Revathi), my aunt (Padda), and Padma (Shashi's wife) too stayed with me in turns during those crucial 4 days in



the hospital. The support comforted and reassured me that nothing can go wrong for a person who has the love of so many people. Medical treatment apart, our relatives, his friends -theirs wives and their mothers, colleagues, fasted, gave offerings in temples and prayed for his life. No stone was left unturned, but destiny had decided to take him.

Did he have a premonition?

Seldom did Santhosh express fear of losing his life, but now I remember some of his acts and utterances during the treatment phase that alluded to this.

When I used to restrict him from eating outside or visiting crowded places, he said, “please don’t stop me from doing this, I don’t know how long I am going to live let me do what I want to”.



He wanted to do something for Sanju’s future. When I asked him why he was hurrying to do this instead of concentrating on his treatment, he said, “I don’t have much time left, I want to do something for the kids, especially Sanju. Let me do and feel good about it”.

Also, when we were discussing with the doctor, he was checking if there was any place in the world he could go and get treated to save himself?

I could only stand and curse myself for my helplessness during these situations.

The end game

Looking back, I now realize how he was being pulled away gradually from us by destiny. I was there with him throughout but could not see nor understand it then. At every step, there was a clear indication of what was to come in the final phase. First, he was isolated from people in the name of treatment. Then, he slowly stopped his food intake, he was on drips and we could see him from outside the ICU and could talk to him for a few minutes. When he was put on ventilator and induced into a coma he was barely breathing, he was just alive but he could neither see us nor talk

to us. He was slowly losing the worldly connection, was being pulled away from us. But, still, I was confident that he would bounce back to life once the blood counts came up for he was a fighter. Maybe it is not good to be positive always. Only if we had sensed something was wrong, we could have had one last conversation. I feel heavy in the heart for having missed out on that last talk. I am sure if it was not for the induced coma, the fighting spirit in him would have saved him. Our love for each other and his love for the family



would have certainly motivated him to survive. That was why probably, even God knew that he had the energy and courage to change his destiny upside down and so he put him into coma, thereby reducing Santhosh's inner strength by 50%. His fighting spirit even surprised the doctors, when he survived for 48 hours on an extremely low blood count, without treatment, when he was infected by a deadly virus.

Today, I stand by the life's decision of keeping me lonely but know and trust that Santhosh will always be with me wearing his favorite cap of a 'guide and mentor' and will help me fulfill "our" dreams and responsibilities. I have always been and will always be proud to have been his wife. His courage, attitude, confidence, positivity, his zest for life, love for his family, friends and relatives, his lifestyle will be model for others to follow.

It would be inappropriate, if I didn't mention key persons associated with him at different stages of his life. During his childhood it was his grandparents, uncles (Raghu and Satish) and his aunt (Geetha). During his work life it was Vinay who stood by him as a mentor and guide. Throughout his growing up years and later, it was his close friends Umesh and Shashi who supported through all the ups and downs.

Rajani is Santhosh's wife.

Happiness Personified

- *Vinay Babu GP*

How can I describe this guy? A man in a hurry? A perfectionist who didn't tolerate indiscipline? A professional who took his job more seriously than any others around him? A connoisseur of all good things in life? A fighter who looked forward to challenges and never accepted defeat? A great friend, who always stood by his comrades and lent a helping hand to them when needed? A critic who never hesitated to call a spade a spade? A complete family man who loved his family like no other? A mentor, coach, leader, path breaker,?

Well, he is all the above and many more things to many of us. Perhaps the best description of this guy is that he was a great human being. He spread happiness and always kept the environment around him vibrant.

He is Santhosh – Happiness personified!

In normal parlance, he was a friend to me. But was he just that? I had a long association with Santhosh—about 18 years. I am not sure what clicked between us, but I had the good fortune of working closely with him for more than 6 years across 4 different jobs during this period.

Our first meeting

I still remember the day Santhosh came to Deldot for an interview for the post of a DTP operator. He immediately came across as honest, enthusiastic and no-nonsense guy who wore his passion on his sleeve. As the editor of 'Technoworld', a first-of-its-kind magazine in science and technology, I was looking for dedicated individuals to join my team. I had not-so-pleasant experience with the earlier recruits who made the job of bringing out this magazine a burden. Not so Santhosh. With his super-fast typing skills and good knowledge of English language, he soon became the most reliable



member of the team. He was hard working, punctual and highly focused on the job at hand. The most endearing aspect of him for me was his clock-work like punctuality. I have never seen anyone attending office at such precision timings (see '**Intelligent Spider**' on page 21).

With his dedicated effort, he soon stabilized the magazine, pretty much managing the entire spectrum of production activities. However, the financial burden of running a magazine forced Deldot to close down the print publication within 2 years. This didn't deter Santhosh, as he adapted to the changed circumstances and quickly picked up the skills required to move to the digital world. He got into web designing and worked hard for the next 6 months to gain the necessary knowledge and the confidence to move over to the web world. Thus started a journey that allowed him to scale greater heights in his career that helped him as well as the companies he worked for to prosper.

Into the big league

His next stop (along with me) was in Jasubhai Publications at Mumbai. He joined my team at Jasubhai as a web designer and in less than one year of his stay there he designed and published several websites. He was now ready for bigger things in web development and the business environment was just right for him to do so with dotcom boom on the horizon. Over the next 12 years Santhosh's career moved from strength to strength. From Team Leader to Project Manager to Director and finally Business Manager at Target, Santhosh's career was on a high.

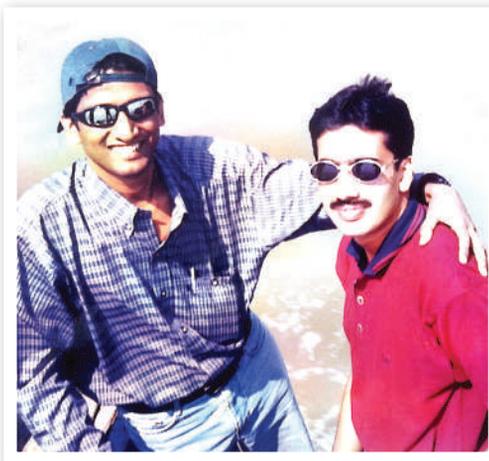
What a transformation for someone who was satisfied with a simple data entry job in the early part of his career to reach the heights of corporate ladder with sheer hard work and determination!

Spreading joy and hope

When you are in the company of Santhosh, there is never a dull moment. He used to joke about things, critique unacceptable behavior of his friends and offer whole-hearted advice on many day-today things to others. He may not have been the quintessential business guy, but he had this great ability to grasp things. He used to learn fast on the job and could implement his learnings pretty quickly. This made him a valuable asset to organizations he worked for. One important aspect about Santhosh was that he never

used to make unsubstantiated statements or unrealistic claims. If he didn't know something, he never used to venture into making judgements on that. He was also someone who never believed in saying 'Yes' just to impress others. He knew the art of saying 'No' and even though this landed him in some trouble at times, he never worried about it. He didn't want to be politically right. His mantra was 'under-commit, but over-deliver'. Even though living by this dictum made his bosses unhappy, as this meant not getting approval to whatever they thought was right, they soon realized that his analysis of things were always realistic. When Santhosh committed to something, he always used to do it to the best of his ability and at the highest quality. This is the reason why he made long-lasting friends and cultivated some of the best professional relationships.

During our first job together, Santhosh used to own a Bajaj Super scooter. The way he used to ride this two-wheeler was pretty scary. His zig-zags, sharp turns and zip pasts could make anybody's heart beat fast. Even on his Hero Splendor, known more for its economy than its speed, he could beat some of the fastest bikes on the road. He did the same with his Maruti 800 and later with his Santro as well. What amazed me was his ability to live on the fast lane and have the control while being fast. He was never reckless and never lost his sense of balance while living on the fast track. This is something that all of us need to learn from Santhosh - Be ambitious, but be responsible and be in control of the situation.



Sweet tooth

As a young 20-something man, Santhosh was fond of sweets and he made no secret of it. Not only did he gleefully accept any kind of sweets offered to him, he would also accept others' share of sweets helpfully. He also liked all South Indian food items and snacks. He was a food enthusiast and frequented

Intelligent spider



8.40, 8.40, 8.45, 8.50. 8.40.... These are not gymnastic scores. They are not even CGPA academic scores. They are just early morning timings clocked by the ever-consistent Santhosh, whose name could be taken almost synonymously with punctuality. When you entrust something to Santhosh you can be more than sure of the completion of that work. I had the good fortune of working alongside him as a senior colleague and I've been in awe of his immaculate nature and great presence of mind.

He is sincere, efficient, consistent, determined, industrious and an amazingly fast learner. Above all he is sharp and witty. His impressive qualities got the boost it needed when he shifted to Web designing from print design in 1996.

Not a born Spiderman himself, he is an ardent admirer of the fabulous arachnid. The delicate strands of its web, its skillful creation of complex patterns, ingenious ways of capturing prey and never-say-die attitude, have all congregated in him. This probably has also shaped his outlook towards life - From being a quiet academic-oriented guy doing simple things in life to a creative thinker who could play around with new ideas and seemingly outrageous designs.

What you see in Santhosh is perhaps a personification of all these qualities - be it the attention he gives to smaller details, like the delicate strands of a web, the creative endeavors he pursues (like the exotic web patterns) or the fighting spirit he displays, quite similar to that of the fabulous arachnid.

An excellent weaver, Santhosh has worked on Internet, designing Web pages and developing CDs. His entry into the cyberworld happened, strangely, not so much due to his passion for computers but as a consequence of his dexterity on the keyboard. Being a rank holder in typewriting obviously helped. Riding on this strength, he got into his first job as a DTP operator. Soon he joined Technoworld, a popular Science & Technology magazine, where he grew from strength to strength on the way acquiring a multitude of skills in digital multimedia and Internet.

some of the well-known South Bangalore restaurants. His favorites were Vidyardhi Bhavan in Gandhi Bazar, Dwaraka Hotel in NR Colony and SLV in Basavangudi. When he was in Mumbai, he used to make detailed plans on which restaurants to visit and what to eat and on which day during his short visits to Bangalore.

He also had some eating quirks. He used to create his own recipes of food items. The most famous was his act of mixing Gulab Jammun with coffee. You would think why anybody would do such a thing. Well, that's the way he was.

On Personal Turf

His personal life was an adventure too. Some of the decisions he took in his personal life and the way he stayed put on those decisions despite road blocks is testimony to his attitude of living life on his own terms.

Despite being the only child of his parents, Santhosh grew up with his grandparents due to his father's transferrable bank job. Because of this, he was closer to his grandmother, maternal uncle and aunt in his growing up years. His friends meant a lot to him during these years. He depended on his friends to make important decisions in life. Even though his parents came back to Bangalore during his college days, his life pretty much revolved around his friends.

When he took the biggest decision in his life of marrying his college friend Rajani, he had to face the tough task of convincing his parents on this. He tried his best to get them to agree, but when that didn't work, he went ahead with his plans to tie the knot at a temple in Bangalore. His friends stood by him in this period of uncertainty. They ensured that his wedding and reception on May 7, 1998 happened without any hiccups. Not having the complete support of his parents didn't perturb Santhosh as he set up his family in a separate house in Bangalore. His friends helped him here again. He had to keep up the commitment to the girl who had decided to spend the rest of her life with him. He did that until his last breath despite a number of hurdles.

Just after starting his new family he had to face the tough task of a job change. If that was not enough, the new job was in a different city. Without blinking an eyelid he moved lock stock and barrel to Mumbai from

Bangalore to pursue his career. He created a new life in Navi Mumbai. Being a self-made man, he learnt the ropes of living in a megacity. He had his own share of difficulties in Mumbai. He had to change at least 3 jobs during his stay of 6 years in the city. His daughter was born when he was in Mumbai.

One of the not-so-well-known qualities of Santhosh was his ability to sing. He was fond of old Kannada songs and he knew most of Dr. Rajkumar's songs by heart. He used to remember the lyrics of all these songs very well. I used to learn the lyrics of some of my favorite songs from him whenever we went on outings. I had the great opportunity to hear him sing many of Dr. Rajkumar's famous numbers when we went on a trip to Kemmannagundi, a hill station in Karnataka. While travelling around the looping hilly road he sang these amazing songs and need I say more that I was absolutely thrilled with this musical treat.

His knowledge of film music was simply amazing. After a few months of Santhosh joining Technoworld I came to know that he liked a girl (who eventually became his wife). I wanted to get more information from him about this girl and her whereabouts. When asked, he was not forthcoming to reveal her name. However, he gave me a clue that the name is hidden in a popular Kannada song '*Cheluveya andada mogake kanne bhushana*' (Vishnuvardhan starrer DevaraGudi) and gave me a puzzle to find out the name of the girl. He mentioned a stanza from this song with a blank '*----ge endendigoo Shashiyebhushana*'. He said the name of the girl was hidden in the blank part of the stanza. I had to do quite some research to ultimately find out the name Rajani, which was the word to be inserted in the blank.



My guide

Santhosh was a guide to me in many aspects of my life. Even though he was younger to me, he always had words of wisdom for me on various topics. He didn't mind how his words would be received by me, all that mattered to him was getting things right. I looked upto him to provide critical inputs on various important decisions in my life. When I was looking for a change in job from Philips, he suggested that I apply for the company he was working for. This made a huge difference to my career and I remember Santhosh for this critical move I made in my career.

Santhosh and I have followed each other in at least 4 different companies. He joined my team in Technoworld in 1996, and then again in Jasubhai Publications in Mumbai in 1999. In 2005, when he was looking to shift to Bangalore, he got an opportunity to work in Philips where I was working then. Later, I moved to TLI where Santhosh was working in 2007.

His family

Santhosh loved his family like nobody does. He was a very responsible family man. He was always thinking about ways to keep his family happy. He had his own desires, but what mattered to him most was his family's happiness. For someone who walked out of his parent's house to make his marriage work, he came a long way to acquire all that a middle class family man aspires – happy family, good job, own house and car.

His wife Rajani was always a constant source of support for Santhosh through their 16 years of married life. The mentalities of the two matched so much that they seemed always on the same page on all important matters in life. If Santhosh was strong, she was resilient, if he was adventurous, she was accommodative, if he was a risk taker, she was balancer and so on. They complemented each other so well that I feel life or death, their hearts will always be together.

His daughter Sanjani is already an accomplished dancer at a tender age of 12 years. The choice of name 'Sanjani' shows Santhosh's creative mind. Sanjani is a combination of Santhosh and Rajani's names. It was an appropriate name for a girl who was the joy and pride of her parents. Being a very aspirational parent, Santhosh encouraged his daughter to excel in whatever she did. Apart from being a good dancer, Sanjani excelled in Abacus, Uno and other school competitions. Santhosh had great plans of

taking Sanjani to Singapore in November 2014 to attend the global UNO competition for which she had qualified. That he couldn't live to see that proud moment is a tragedy.

His son Rachith is already showing signs of following his father's footsteps. Rachith's mannerisms and actions remind us of Santhosh.

Tragedy on the happy lane

Santhosh's cruise on the happy lane was rudely cut short by a killer disease. It is hard to believe how this disease took shelter in Santhosh, one of the fittest guys in our friend circle. I remember how he used to actively abhor any form of indisposition. Not for once had I seen him being lazy or reporting sick in all my years of association with him both as a manager as well as a friend. He was known for his economical sleep. On many of our travel sojourns neither would he sleep nor let others sleep in the group. He had this invincible energy that he radiated to all of us. I still remember the pilgrimage to Sabarimala, the hill temple in Kerala that we completed in 36 hours flat. We started from Bangalore at 5 am in the morning and came back by 5 pm in the evening the next day that included taking a holy dip at Pampa, climbing up and down the steep Sabarimala hill of about 14 kms by foot and having Darshan of the Lord in heavy rush during the night, not to mention the non-stop driving. He had that superhuman strength to achieve the unthinkable and more importantly he had the ability to motivate others to go the distance with him. I have also heard stories from others of how he would drive non-stop on other trips too (he used to do Bangalore Chennai in less than 5 hours - that's some speed!). These experiences only show his penchant to be in action all the time.

Santhosh is irreplaceable is an understatement. I still feel he is around and I can feel his aura in whatever I do. I can still feel his laughter during my day-today chores that prompts me into self-correction. I am trying to be more punctual these days for the fear of being mocked by him for not being on time. What an impact he has on people even when he is not around. A great soul and an amazing human being.

One thing's for sure, I will be guided by Santhosh all through my life. I really miss him!

Vinay is Santhosh's friend for more than 18 years.

Appa is the Best!

- Sanjani Rao

He was one of the most handsome people I have ever met in my life and I loved him a lot! He was very supportive. He encouraged me in every step of my life. He was my Appa, Santhosh.

Even before I was born, my parents had decided that if they had a baby girl, they would name the child as 'Sanjani' and my dad had his email id in my name sanjani@gmail.com. My mom used to work when I was 3 years old and hence had to leave the house very early. My dad used to work for a Canada based company and his office work would start in the afternoon and go on till midnight. So, he used to wait till I came back from school in the afternoon, feed me, put me to sleep and then go to work. This continued until my brother was born.

Appa would buy me whatever I wanted. My mom tells me that I was a daddy's daughter than a mom's daughter. Though my dad was in Mumbai when I was born and was probably the last person in the line to see me, he loved me a lot. He used to take us out often. Be it summer vacation or winter vacation he used to take us out to different places. We would play together as though we were friends of the same age.

He used to pull my leg a lot, by mimicking the way I talk, walk and behave.

My dad and my brother never used to miss an opportunity to scare me.

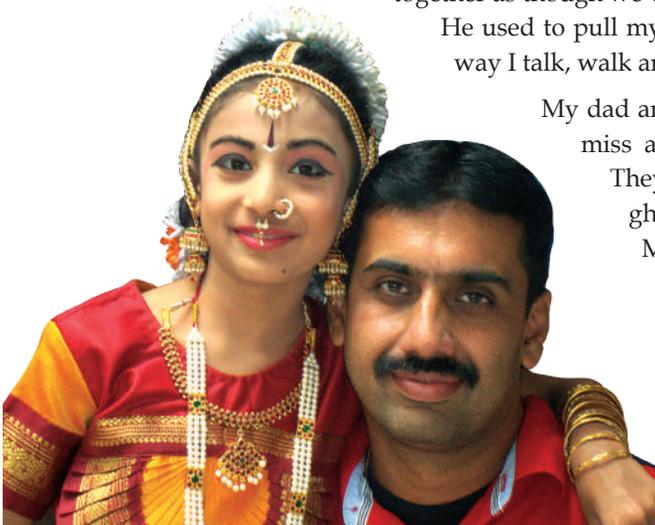
They used to scare me about ghosts and haunted houses.

My dad and my brother liked to speed in the car,

whereas my Mom and I didn't. So when dad used

to go at 120 km/hr speed on highways Mom and I

used to beg my dad to go slow whereas my brother



used to ask him to speed. Whenever my brother and I fought, dad used to support me and scold him. My mom tells me that I have hardly got any scolding from my dad and that's how much he loved me.

During my exams, he used to be very helpful by taking my brother out somewhere so that he would not disturb me and allow me to concentrate. Each time I did something noteworthy he used to post it on Face book and there would be around 100 likes in about 2-3 hours and as a proud father he would share it with me. During festivals, he would take us out to shop for new clothes.

He was very protective of my mother and could not tolerate anyone going against her or hurting her. He used to take me to swimming classes during summer. He used to boost up my confidence and encourage me to swim as I was scared of water and heights. But now I am not scared of water at all because of my father. He was a dedicated family person and spent time with us. He allowed me to have sleepovers with my cousins and friends although my Mom was not in favor of it. I liked having long hair as I used to go to dance. But my dad did not approve of it as he felt it would take a lot of time for my mother to comb my hair. So my dad suggested me to cut my hair. Only during the last few months, due to antibiotics and its side effects he used to lose his temper very frequently.

I have spent a lot of good time with Appa. I will always cherish those memories. He is the best dad in the world. East or west Santhosh Rao is the best.

Sanjani is Santhosh and Rajani's daughter.



Epitome of Positivity

- Umesh BK

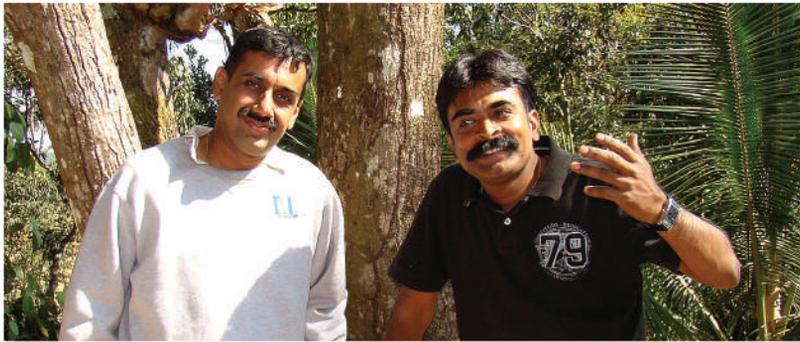
The word Santhosh is synonymous with life to me, for my life is divided between before Santhosh and after Santhosh!

I met him as a young lad in first PU, and my life has never been the same ever since. He was fearless, strong and our gang leader. We were very close to each other--a friendship at the soul level (*Atmamitra*)! It's really not easy to write about Santhosh in few lines. Words fail to capture the influence he had on my life.

Our friendship is 25 years old. We regularly updated each other about every single thing in life-important and trivial. He jokingly called me his "first spokesperson" as he always used to talk to me or I used to talk on his behalf first. He wanted to be the first in everything. He rushed to see his daughter from Mumbai, but I beat him to that. I was also the first to know when he fell in love. Such was our bond.

On May 6th 1998, he stayed in our house, which happened to be the day prior to one of the most important and unforgettable days in his life, his marriage day. Vinay and I supported his marriage when many were against it.

As I jog down the memory lane, I remember our first trip during first PU to Ooty and from thereon we have visited different places every year this continued even after his marriage. My family, his family along with Shashi's Family have gone on several memorable trips. He used to initiate these trips always.



His favourite song was “*haalallaadaru haaku, neeralladaru haaku Raghavendra, haalalli kene aagi, neeralli meenagi haayagi iruve Raghavendra*”. And he stood true to this song! Not once did I see any fear of death or ‘why me?’ questions from him. He glided through life for the sake of others and all his time was spent in ensuring people around him were kept happy, many times at the cost of his own comfort.

Santhosh my soul mate, was the epitome of positivity. There was no “NO” word in his dictionary! We used to be so close that I always used to tag along with him everywhere, except his honeymoon trip ☺. I never left his side, neither did he leave me. The day he was diagnosed with the illness, he said “Boti if I go up, I will take you along as well, otherwise I will get bored” and we both laughed at this. Our common friend Shashi and I ensured that we took turns to be with him during his treatment.

27th July 2014, was one of the happiest days in his life as the doctor had told him that he is disease-free. He called me at that instant and told me to meet him in 30 minutes. He wanted to share the happy moment and spend some quality time with me. I rushed to meet him and saw his happy face. During our meeting that day he mentioned at least 10 times that he wanted Rajani around to hear this news (Rajani had been to Mumbai for UNO Competition where Sanju was participating).



Santhosh was known to be service-oriented and was ready to help anyone in need. But the best part is Rajani was one step ahead of him. They both used to go out of the way to lend a helping hand to others. They invited people to their home and insisted on hosting them for lunch or dinner. They wanted themselves and their children to mingle with good people to learn good things in life.

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This is not the only area that the couple used to think alike. I feel they were a role model for all couples on how to lead a compatible life. The best of Rajani and Santhosh came out when Santhosh was unwell. He used to hide his pain to make her feel good and she used to swallow her sadness to keep him in good spirits. Rajani's real care and love for Santhosh was evident during those two years of his illness. She looked after him like a child. She wouldn't let him eat outside and would always be by his side to attend to any of his requirements. There is no count of the number of Gods she prayed and the number of offerings she made. She wanted to see him back in action at all costs. Even during the last few days, she had great optimism that Santhosh would walk home completely cured. But that was not to be.

Now I try and talk to Santhosh regularly hoping he will respond. Santhosh was my life and breath and I miss him very much. I can only write so much with my heavy heart and grief struck soul. I know I will meet him again and we will rekindle the old life back.

Umesh is Santhosh's Athma mithra for more than 25 years.

I know you are always with me...

Every night, when I sleep I hope to meet you in my dreams & hope to have that last conversation which is pending. It is an year since you left us. Even though you are not physically present, there has not been a single moment that we have not thought about you. Maybe that is how we were able to spend the last one year - just thinking, talking about you always. I know you are there with me when the seemingly impossible tasks happen smoothly. You are there to show me the path, whenever I feel I have reached a dead end. I know you are guiding me through the tough decisions. I trust you are on vigil in all my actions and will correct me when I am wrong. Your continued support as a guide and a guardian has given me the strength and courage to face this life.

- Rajani BS

Rainbow

*If my life was like a sky,
You are the moon & Kids - the twinkling stars,
the time i spent with you was like a rainbow,
Your temperament, jokes, laughter,
actions were like the bright fluffy clouds....
Your absence is nothing less than
a storm, tornado, or a flood...
No salvage operations of the world can help me
put back the broken pieces of my life.
I miss you always in the vast ocean of life!*

- Rajani BS

ಸಂತೋಷ

ಸಂತೋಷ ನಿನ್ನ ನಾಮ
ಹಾಗೇ ನೀನಿದ್ದೆ ಆರಾಮ
ಸಮಯ ಪಾಲನೆ ನಿನ್ನ ಆಯಾಮ
ಪಾಲಿಸುತ್ತಿದ್ದೆ ನೀನದನ್ನು ಪ್ರತಿ ಕ್ಷಣ
ನೀ ನಡೆಸುತ್ತಿದ್ದೆ ಶಿಸ್ತಿನ ಜೀವಿತ
ನಿನ್ನೊಡನಿದ್ದರು ರಜಿನಿ, ಸಂಜನಿ, ರಚಿತ
ನಿನ್ನ ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ಷಮತೆ ಪರಿಶ್ರಮ
ನಿಲುಕಿಸಿತು ನಿನ್ನ ಎತ್ತರ ಸ್ಥಾನ
ನಿನ್ನೊಡನಿದ್ದರೆಲ್ಲರ ಜೀವನ ಪರಿಕ್ರಮ

- ಜಿ.ಪಿ.ವಿದ್ಯಾ

GP Vidya is Santhosh's family friend

Unalloyed Man

- *Srinivasan K*

In life, sometimes we encounter situations, relationships and gains we describe as 'too good to be true'. In materialistic world of today, one hardly finds a soul who thinks, much less acts, beyond his/her immediate family. Even children are tutored to believe that even grandparents are not entitled for the kind of love, concern, help, association, and protection that immediate family receives. In this self-centered world, every step is weighed with reference to benefits derived. Yet, beneficiaries turn their back after they fulfill their objective. Invasion of alien culture has seeped into the fabric of our society, corroding the feeling for fellow humans, while the niceties and do's and don'ts of that society are easily forgotten.

In this background, isn't it amazing to find a rare gem that is different from others, in spite of being in the midst of corroding influences? Let us see what his associates say about that 'rarest' of rare gems. Quote 'His words, his laughter, his uninhibited energy and his never say die attitude still lingers in our minds. For someone who was so full of energy, it is our duty to preserve his spirit in whatever little way we can'.

Perhaps one can make out that above reference relates to a person who was unconventional and close to so many. They were all of the view that he was their bosom friend. Very grieving fact is that person is none other than dear Santhosh Rao, who disappeared from us recently. He was in his prime, accomplished in career and hailing from an enlightened family. It now appears that he was on a mission and was in a hurry to complete the tasks and accomplish his dreams. He left his mortal frame on 05th September 2014 despite many assurances that he had recovered from the deadly disease, which he went through very bravely with a smile.

Debt of gratitude

What was so great about him to write a memoir? Many feel, it is his eagerness to help in situations where even an angel hesitated to tread that made him great. I am sure host of his friends, relatives, colleagues, etc. will pour over their instances with a heavy heart. That way I do not know him as well as his enviable age group friends. Yet, my conscience is pushing

me to pay my debt of gratitude to him in a humble way by expressing his timely help.

It was a winter night in Bangalore. I had the misfortune of a heart ailment leading to a surgery at Wockhardt (Now Fortis) Hospital. Doctor Javali was more in a hurry than me to apply his 'scissors' perhaps knowing the status of my ailment. He would not heed to my request to postpone the inevitable by a few days by which time my son/daughter would arrive from USA. Santhosh was working at Cunningham road office at that time, very near to Wockhardt. He stood by me during this phase of uncertainty and illness. He used to be present at all checkups and on admission day, his public service 'Santro' was at my doorstep at 7 am. All paper work including blood donors was arranged by Santhosh. Many well-wishers that included my sister, brother-in-law, nephews and the care taker saved me from the jaws of death during this period. What was most noteworthy was Santhosh's handling of the issue. His support not only helped me but his constant update relieved the anxiety for my children at USA. Would anyone expect or anticipate or look forward for such a spontaneous help from a person known to me only for a short period of time as compared to many close relatives and friends known for decades?

Following the surgery, there were moments of anxiety and Santhosh was a buffer. Unfortunately, the dreaded fever chose to visit me during the recovery period. On one of those days, with my adamant attitude, I refused to eat food as it was tasteless to the discomfort of my care taker



Smt. Anuradha. As the night progressed I started behaving strangely -- singing, praising, abusing, etc. The caretaker was distraught and could only think of Santhosh to come to her rescue. My confused conclusion was that abundant sweating was due to fever and nothing to do with low sugar. Santhosh arrived around 5.30 am and I believed he was God sent. He immediately suggested that we go to Vidyarthi Bhavan at Gandhi Bazaar. This suggestion looked great since I had not liked any homemade food for days. We drove and I was hoping to reach VB quickly. Of course, I was not aware of the coordinates of his route in my confused state. Yet, I saw that we were near Puttanna Chetty Town hall. Even my gray mind taught me that we were not moving towards VB. I became very upset and asked Santhosh what he is upto. He then said that we are going to Fortis at Cunningham road for a checkup and then to VB. Can I forget this incident as long as I live? Who would be so considerate? Who responds to a caretaker's distress call? Who can handle such a delicate issue so well with calm, composed and dignified behavior? This incident speaks volumes about him.

There are many more to relate like receiving/sending people to and from the airport at odd hours. His contributions for a web site of Nallan Chakravarthy Trust were also immense. There was hardly a good reason for him to invest time and effort on the web site, as it was not in the line of younger generation to think about it. Our society of elders did not even acknowledge his effort with thanks.

It now looks to me that such volunteering was not only for a person like me, but across the cross section of the society. It was also notable that in rendering such assistance, there was not an iota of expectation of any returns. Planning, programming, resourcing, and meticulous execution appeared to be his 'forte'. It is very clear that he had not only excelled in personal relations, but also in professional. He was a leader and not a boss to his people. It is evident that what people pour out is not out of emotions after his disappearance from us but genuine feeling for an unalloyed man.

I miss my dear Santhosh till my last breath.

Srinivas K is Rajani's maternal uncle.

I still feel he is around

- Padma Krishnamachar

I came to know about Santhosh's entry into our family one fine day. My niece Rajani who has been always close to me once said that she had found a match and wanted me to support her to raise the topic with her parents. I asked her whether the boy was the one to whom she gave all the sweets in a marriage where I was also present (a common acquaintance's marriage). She was surprised that I had noticed. Then she told briefly about him. Her mother (my elder sister) was very close to me. Rajani and her sister Revathi strongly believed that my sister would listen to me. I had my apprehensions about Santhosh since I did not know him at all except that he studied in the same college as Rajani. Later I realized that the apprehension proved to be baseless. Rest is history as they say.

Their marriage happened in a cinematic fashion, with much tension and curiosity. Santhosh at that time appeared to me as a handsome boy with good manners and respect for elders. As he got settled in the family life, he grew to be a complete family man, totally dedicated and caring for the family. His affection to my niece Rajani was seen to be believed. He was always supportive of her in all walks of life. He stood by her when she started working. He who never went to the kitchen, used to warm food for my sister who was staying with them after my brother-in-law passed away, tending to her needs. His support to children in all their extracurricular activities, be it dance or ABACUS, was remarkable. Even when he was not well, he encouraged Sanjani to participate in the UNO competition, accompanied her for many rounds of the competition which finally got her the runner-up trophy in the National level competition. He could unfortunately not see her participate in the Asia championship held in Singapore. He was very proud of Sanjani, which he expressed through several posts on the social media. He was there for the kids on all occasions, for the parent's meeting, for their cultural activities, video-graphing Sanjani's dance performance or looking after Rachith, when Rajani was busy. There are several such things to write about, but in summary he was an excellent family person.

On his professional achievements, I have closely observed him right

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from the beginning. In 15 years that I knew him, he grew technically and managerially. I knew that he was doing very well in his career.

As a human being, we all knew that he was an extremely nice person, ready to help and had a good set of friends who are all known to our family well. But the day he left us, we realized how much we did not know his other noble qualities. A big gathering of people whom he had helped inside the office and outside, spoke about how they were helped by him on many occasions. This part was not known to me, because he had never spoken about himself or boasted about anything.

My husband, my daughter, my elder brother and I had great affection for him. He was there as a solid support on any matter. We called him as 'walking encyclopedia'. Whenever we needed information or clarification we said 'ask Santhu (Santhosh)'. It might be computer related, railway/flight booking, booking a taxi, paying taxes, petrol prices; name anything, he knew about it or he would find it out soon. He was meticulous, practical and no-nonsense person. He was precise on everything, working on the minutest details on everything, be it a small event or big, or just visiting a home. If he cannot meet the schedule, he would call up and communicate promptly. I had a great rapport with him on this matter. He was an extremely good planner and implementer. You could trust him to the core on any responsibility.



Though he had lot of capabilities on organizing, I have a small incident to narrate during my daughter's marriage. Because of his busy schedule, I had entrusted him with the finance management and to bring silver articles at the appropriate time during the proceedings. He came home in between from the marriage hall and delivered the articles to me in minimum time as I had expected without any problem. After the marriage was over, he gave detailed account of the money spent during the marriage proceedings and handed over the balance amount to the last paisa.

Personally, I miss him very much especially when I visit their house. I still feel he is around and has just gone to the office. I am deeply touched by my grandchildren's bravery in everyday life and my daughter's ability to face challenges. I always keep thinking and wondering how only Santhu did not have a place on this earth when so many living and non-living beings can stay on. He passed away very early like all noble men, detached himself like a saint and disappeared, probably because such people would quickly finish all their jobs assigned to them by the God and are probably needed by Him or ordered by Him to take re-birth to start a fresh set of tasks to help people.

Padma Krishnamachar is Rajani's aunt.

Never give up spirit

- Manoj Pampady

I am at a loss of words when I think of you not being around us. The energy and enthusiasm you carried with you all the time will be missed immensely. Your persistence and never-give-up spirit is something that I will always remember. Miss you friend and mentor, you will always be in our hearts.

Manoj Pampady was Santhosh's colleague at Target.

A thorough gentleman

- Revathi BS

Even though Santhosh was my brother-in law, our interactions were like that of a brother and sister. He was a very cheerful guy, always jovial, witty, and ready to pull my leg. He was a very good planner and was time conscious. I was hesitant to go for outdoor trips with him since his plans involved starting as early as 3 am at times. My parents and I were extremely happy about his love and affection for my sister. His love for food was admirable. He relished eating sweets.

He was a gentleman who was very kind to my parents and relatives. He had earned the love and respect of all our relatives. He was very protective towards my sister. He never restricted her for anything. They gave each other their space, yet always enjoyed staying together. Their fights were also funny to watch. Their mutual concern, understanding and respect always made me proud of them as a couple. No matter however much he was tired, he would offer to drop me a little distance back home. I would take his advice and suggestions be it for buying a mobile or for any investments.

His love for my sister was unparalleled. He would be tensed whenever my sister fell sick. He would run around panicking. He would give me a call asking me to rush to his house and to accompany my sister. Once, my sister had a severe chest pain and struggled the whole night to sit, sleep or breathe. He was sitting with her worried, awake until morning. He called me at 5:30 am and asked me to rush to his place. When I reached their house, he was looking completely lost. We took her to one of the hospitals, got her thoroughly checked and were relieved to know that it was just a severe muscular catch. He always insisted her to work less and rest more.



For having witnessed them as a caring couple, it is painful to see this loss.

He was playful with his kids. He would tease Sanjani a lot. It was a treat to see him spend happy time with children. He was very affectionate towards kids. All was well, till tragedy struck them.

I am glad, I accompanied them for a movie on the previous day of his last treatment. It was on my sister and Santhosh's insistence that I got an opportunity to spend little more time with him. I hope God gives Rajani the strength to face life without him. I trust she will emerge successful in bringing up the kids as dreamt by both of them.

Revathi BS is Rajani's sister.

Glad to Know Santhosh

- Sandeep

Santhosh as the name suggests was always a happy man. I have never seen him lose his cool for any reason. After joining Philips, even though Santhosh just sat one cubicle away from my desk, it took us some time to talk. Once we spoke, there was no looking back. We would talk every day and spoke all current events including cricket, movies, politics etc. Santhosh was really awestruck with the movie 'Black'. Though both of us didn't support Indian Cricket Team openly, we always enjoyed their wins. The most memorable one was the Mumbai Test Match against Australia when Indian team was defending a small total and Australia tumbled for 90 odd runs. When Santhosh said he was leaving Philips, it was a mixed feeling for me. I was happy that Santhosh was moving up in his career but at the same time felt bad that I can no longer talk to him every day. We stayed in touch even though we moved to different companies. I am at a loss of words that Santhosh is no longer with us. There will be a void in everyone's life who have known Santhosh and I am one of them. I can gladly say that I have known Santhosh.

Sandeep was Santhosh's colleague at Philips.

Our memories of Santhosh

- My father informed me that my sister Kala delivered a baby boy (Santhosh) at 4.13 am on March 29, 1973. I visited St. Marthas Hospital around 7 am with Santhosh's father and saw a cute baby.
- When he was less than one year old, I was studying engineering. After college, I used to play with Santhosh. Even while studying, he used to be on my lap.
- When Santhosh was 1 to 2 years old, I used to come home by car from office. He used to be waiting for me at the road to go for a ride in the car. He was also eagerly looking for his grandfather for bun and jam.
- When Santhosh was 3 years old, I left Bangalore and went to KGF. During vacation (April, May, October & December) he was eagerly waiting to come to KGF to be with me. He was very happy to spend time with me.
- During 1980 - 81, when TV was new to Bangalore, we are the first to get it in our locality. Santhosh was 7 years old and was thrilled/excited about it.
- In 1981, during his summer holidays, we went to Varanasi. While travelling in a boat across river Ganga the boatman instructed everybody to sit quietly without any movement. However, Santhosh started dancing in the boat, I told him to be quiet, but he did not listen and started dancing. So I was forced to hit him once (first time in my life and also the last time).
- In 1982, when Santhosh was 9 years old, I gave him a watch worth only Rs.40/-. Its strap was loose, but he altered it to perfectly fit to his left hand. There was a big smile on his face that day which I never saw again.



- From 1983 onwards I started visiting Shabarimala every year, and from 1996, Santhosh joined me for the pilgrimage. From then on we have visited Lord Ayyappa temple together 14 times. The last visit to Shabarimala together was 2012.

- Satish

Satish is Santhosh's uncle. Santhosh spent his growing up years in Satish uncle's house

- Santhosh started staying with us from 1980 (from the age of 7). One day he came from school in the evening and was very sad. When asked for the reason he told me that the teacher made him stand on the bench. I met the class teacher next day and enquired about it. The class teacher told me that he was made to stand on the bench as he was neatly dressed, hair properly combed and shoe polished and the teacher wanted other students to dress like him.
- In the evening, he used to play out on the street with friends and get injured and get hurt in the knees, hands etc. His grandmother and I used to feel the pinch and pain.
- Santhosh was fond of Dr.Rajkumar and Amitabh Bachhan, and used to wear the kind of dresses they used to wear in films.
- Santhosh was very good in studies and did not have any stage fear. He used to participate in drama, sports, fancy dress and debates boldly.
- Santhosh used to remember the hotels he visited as a 2 year old and was forcing us to take him to the same hotel and sit on the table and have idli/masala dosa and cool drinks.
- Between age of 2 to 5 years, he was with his parents. Whenever myself or his grandmother visited their house, he used to pressure his grandmother to take him to their place. If we left him without taking him, he used to boycott eating food and



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demanded that his grandmother come back.

- Whenever India played test matches, he used to give the commentary along with the radio (No TV during those days).
- When his grandmother passed away he silently suffered a lot and was very sad and missed her a lot for a long time.
- Santhosh stayed with us for more than 20 years. We took care of him to ensure that he didn't feel sad for not being with his parents. Santhosh enjoyed his stay with us and as he grew up, he used to express his love, affection and gratitude towards us.
- We are left now with only memories and think of him every day and every minute and remember the golden days we lived and enjoyed with him.

- Geetha

Geetha is Santhosh's aunt. Santhosh was taken care by Geetha aunty right from his childhood until he completed college.

- Santhosh was a man of courage. He was helpful, action oriented and has inspired me a lot. I had never seen him sitting idle or lazy, he always worked on something.
- Whenever Santhosh was in pain, trouble or had problems in life mentally or physically, he never allowed others to know about it. But used to suffer silently, so others don't feel his pain.
- Whenever, I went with Santhosh outside Bangalore, he used to share jokes, puzzles, short stories and professional experiences with me, which are even now lingering in my mind.
- I had lot of expectations from my only cousin who guided me in my personal/professional life, but unfortunately and suddenly God snatched him away to his place. He was a wonderful personality, who was loved and admired by many.

- Sudharshan

Sudharshan is Santhosh's cousin and Satish uncle's son.

Most Trusted Advisor

- Rakesh Gupta

Time stops. The world freezes. Everything starts to blur for me. Memories flood back with gigantic tides of emotions. Years turn into decades and quickly becomes a lifetime worth of treasures that can't be replaced.

This was all due to one special person - Santhosh Rao. One who was loved and adored by the whole team and one who I always considered more of a brother and a friend rather than a colleague. Time that we spent together working for Target was special and important. But more than that the invisible, non-discernable time of our emotional connect transcends a whole lifetime that I will live by till I am alive.

Santhosh is special. He had God's special blessing for his family, friends and extended social circle. He radiated authenticity. He was real for what he was. No pretention. Stood by his principles and discipline in every situation. What courage of conviction! I wish I had some bit of it myself. My colleagues and I know of Santhosh as our most trusted advisor and friend. He was like a rock for all of us. Would remain that way. Strengths that the Himalayas could betray but not this guy! May we mere mortals be inspired for having spent those moments with him.

One other thing that I have personally felt a huge connect with Santhosh. His unflinching faith and limitless love for his family. His wife Rajani was his pillar of strength and his reason of existence. His daughter Sanjani and son Rachith meant the whole world for him and they were there with him every moment of time.

I won't say "I miss you Santhosh." I think I have you every day just beside me. You continue to guide and inspire me with your presence. Thank you for being with me every day!

*Santhosh was reporting to
Rakesh Gupta at Target*



My friend Santhosh

- Geoff Newman

I first met Santhosh when he agreed to join TLI as our first Project Manager. At that point, TLI was a company that was just starting to add software development to their portfolio and we thought we might need someone to help us manage the projects. We had no idea how badly we needed someone in that role until Santhosh started; he had an immediate and profound effect on the business.

It is rare to get a person who can lead people as effortlessly as Santhosh did and yet be as well-liked and respected as he was by the entire team and his colleagues in the other departments. This respect for his talent, confidence and professionalism extended to the team in Canada on his visits to the head office in Canada as well.

My favorite story that shows the confidence of Santhosh happened on his first trip to Canada. He and the team were planning to go to Niagara Falls which is about an hour's drive from the house at which they were staying. I had assumed when he told me about the trip that I would drive them so they wouldn't have to go on the highway. Although the driving in Toronto is far less hectic than the frantic chaos of the Bangalore roads, our highways move much faster and rarely do visitors want to drive on them. However, this was not a concern for Santhosh. He made it clear that he was going to rent a car and drive the team to Niagara Falls. He wouldn't hear me taking the time to drop them off and pick them up. Despite my consternation, the drive proved to be no challenge at all for Santhosh and upon his return his only comment was how easy it is to drive in Toronto!

He remains one of the most driven, strong-willed and confident people I have had the pleasure of knowing. To this day, I cannot think of India or my time at TLI without thinking about my friend Santhosh. He will be missed.

Santhosh was reporting to Geoff Newman at TLI

Remembering Santhosh

- Acharya VA

My memories of Santhosh rush back to the last couple of years both preceding and succeeding the new millennium, when he came over to the city of Mumbai and soon set about establishing himself in the then emerging domain of Information technology and World Wide Web.

Santhosh along with Vinay babu and Wagesh Kulkarni formed a live-wire multi-tasking team at the Jasubhai Media, where I had some role cobbling and anchoring for the Business-to-Business (B2B) print publishing space, at the edge of a momentous digital transformation. Onset of the Internet and incumbent knowledge revolution that came knocking in its wake, had made each one of us then frontiersmen of sorts, caught in the cross-currents of digital revolution and its disruptive technologies.

The convulsions in the conventional print publishing industry that initially brought us together and the rush of events soon set us all apart on different courses - each trying to fiercely fend for oneself along indeterminate and independent trajectories. Our personal bonds however, stayed intact through the turbulence, interspersed with meetings and get-togethers - at weddings, anniversaries, children's birthdays, festivities etc.

Vividly recall the memories of our family get-together, at Santhosh's flat at Andheri, before he moved with family to Bangalore city. It still seems as if, it wasn't that far back. Santhosh and Rajani were excellent hosts, who made us feel so special. Even when physical distance had kept us away from each other, the digital bonds kept our old relations live and updated through MSN Messenger, Facebook, etc. I recall we took particular delight watching each other's children grow and shine through their prime years in school, college and other creative pursuits, which indeed became our new found obsession.

Santhosh and Rajani, have in fact been an ideal role model of a highly industrious family and shone as highly cultured parents that took immense pride in the accomplishments of their children and nurturing them with such loving care and engagement. Despite his light-hearted, matter-of-factly demeanor, Santhosh to me always seemed a highly intense person

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within himself to whom everything around and everyone around him mattered a lot more than it might have seemed. His penchant for detail and depth stood by him as an outstanding web architect, who had to seamlessly weave together discrete elements design and streams of backend data.

Santhosh also stood out as someone who was ever surcharged with enthusiasm and tremendous stamina in sticking around despite the travails of Mumbai city. Above all, despite the complex technical and non-technical nuances of his profession that were hard-wired into Santhosh's



professional persona, he was essentially a simple soul content with his rather epicurean delights - be it enjoying performing arts or culture, travelling places and networking and not to miss taste for ethnic food and his tripsy bouts of nostalgia especially of the food joints of Bengaluru - the inimitable Vidyarathi Bhavan at Gandhi Bazaar (Basavanagudi) and the legendary Mavalli Tiffin Room (MTR) at Lalbagh.

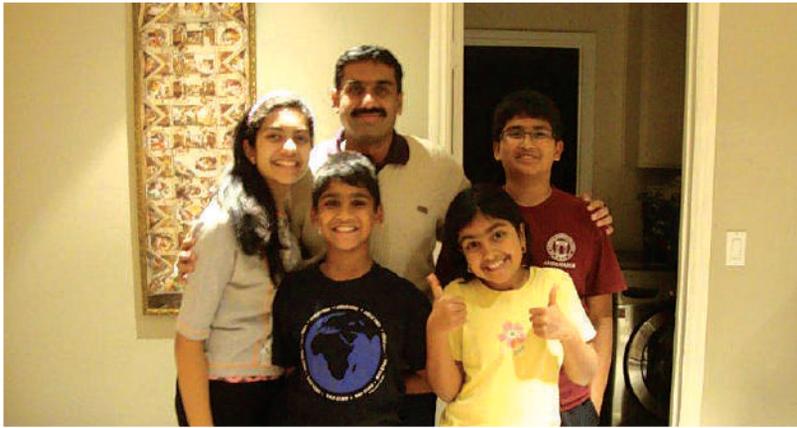
Santhosh, I remember always wanted to live his life to its very brim but still he was never a man in hurry and not the one to take short-cuts. He worked his way assiduously biding his time and never letting out his own inner turbulence and struggles weigh or draw upon others attentions. He left our midst so suddenly yet so eloquently that few amongst us would ever believe it to be still so immediately comprehensible to our cherished camaraderie and yet not without making a clear and profound statement of a life, that he lived with so much of an intense knowing and deeply felt sense of its purposes, ways and means and goals. He indeed, remains a source of inspiration for many of us in more ways than one.

Santhosh worked with Acharya at Jasubhai Publications.

We will always remember that good man

- Anil, Deepali, Ananya & Apurva

It is hard to believe that it has almost been a year since Santhosh passed away. Santhosh and Rajani made a wonderful couple, each complementing and completing the other. We have been trying to remember what our family was like before Rajani married Santhosh. It is hard to remember! Santhosh became a critical member of our family that quickly. He mixed so well with everyone and made friends so easily that we cannot remember the usual period of awkwardness that follows when someone joins a new family.



Santhosh visited us in California in early 2013. He had come to Minneapolis on business. He had a weekend free so he flew out to California to spend a couple of days with us and Rohini's family. It was a short but sweet visit, and in hindsight, it is very poignant. This visit was before he was diagnosed. He had a persistent cough which he thought might be latent TB. He told us he would get it thoroughly checked when he went back to Bangalore. We remember him telling us that he had a lot of shopping left when he went back to Minneapolis because he could get the employee discount at the flagship Target store there. On that visit, his main concern was whether Rajani, Sanju and Rachith would like the gifts he purchased in

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the US! We went to a bagel store in Cupertino where Santhosh really liked the sesame bagel with cream cheese. He wanted to bring Rajani and their kids for a summer vacation so they could enjoy the bagels and Disneyland (in that order).

Especially for my father, Santhosh was the “go to” person for everything. “If you want to get something done, just ask Santhosh.” Whether it was something related to the Nallan Chakravarthy web site, or something related to official paperwork, or virtually anything else, Santhosh was the point man.

Santhosh was always resourceful and quick on his feet. One morning at 4 am, he received a call that my father had gone into a semi-delirious state. Santhosh arrived quickly and told my father that he would take him to Vidyarathi Bhavan! My father, who hates going to doctors, liked that idea and got into Santhosh’s car. Santhosh took him straight to the Fortis hospital on Cunningham Road. My father recovered swiftly (the problem was low sugar). Even today, my father appreciates Santhosh’s quick wit in handling a difficult customer!

Santhosh’s qualities and his outlook enabled him to be the life and soul of our family. He adapted well to everyone regardless of their age, background, or wealth. He neither put anyone on a pedestal nor looked down on anybody. He was always willing to help without expecting anything in return. He enjoyed the good things in life, but never coveted anything or showed envy. He was confident but not arrogant. He was proud of his children but not boastful. He stayed above the petty disputes that are inevitable in every family. His outlook was always positive even when he had to face illness.

The flame burned brightly throughout his life. We will always remember that good man.

Anil is Rajani's cousin living in the US.

Santhosh lived the Indian dream

- Rohini

I was recently reading an essay by Anand Giridhardas, a columnist for the New York Times, called "In search of the Indian dream". He makes the case that the essence of the Indian dream is self-invention, the daring approach that is required to make something new of one's self, to nourish selfhood without tempting selfishness. As I read the piece, it struck me that he was describing Santhosh. The Santhosh we all knew lived the essence of the Indian dream.

I met Santhosh soon after he married my cousin, Rajani, and was quickly impressed by his self-confidence and poise, a calm self-assurance that he would be a winner in life. Santhosh had already overcome many a difficulty in his early years, so it was especially endearing to see his amazing zest for life as well as the complete lack of a sense of entitlement.

Over the years, he and Rajani built an oasis for themselves and for those around them, an environment where they could achieve great things. Santhosh's colleagues attest to his many accomplishments at work, but we saw his work ethic and commitment in his role as chief cheerleader for Sanju and Rachith. Santhosh played cameraman at Sanju's dance performances with relish and you could count on him to edit and send out the video right



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away. And Rachith's athletic ability and smart personality were sources of great pleasure for his father.

Santhosh and Rajani shared a wonderful ability to enjoy life, to laugh at its many absurdities, and to appreciate the little joys. He may have eaten a hundred dosas at Vidyarthi Bhavan, but his anticipation for the next visit was undiminished. His eagerness to see and experience new things was childlike. When he visited us in the US, he was eager to see the main spots in California – San Francisco, Monterey, Stanford. And despite a stern warning from Rajani, he enjoyed making snow angels in Minnesota and taking pictures of himself in the snow to prove it to her. Gadgets were a special love. He knew the next camera he wanted (a Nikon D60), the next car he would buy if he had the money and the next phone that was worth waiting.

Santhosh's generosity extended to a wide group of friends and family, and he was an enthusiastic supporter of Rajani's giving spirit. His patience with the eccentricities of his many relatives and friends made him the rock that everyone leaned on. He endured the "small", "first circle only" 100 people events Rajani pulled together, softly joking about how this was sprung on him, but was never cross with her. He was the favorite uncle who gave rides on the motorbike, the kind cousin who always picked you up at the airport in the middle of the night and the friend who unfailingly gave you a ride home, no matter how tired he was. He was the one who drove my father to the hospital at 4 am during a medical emergency: prompt, decisive and kind when it really mattered. And Santhosh was the go-to guy for free IT support, that rare relative who is both knowledgeable and reliable.

Santhosh lived the Indian dream, nourishing his own aspirations, and simultaneously giving enormously to others. It is agonizing that he was taken in the middle of his life project, with just the scaffolding done for the two little ones and much of the work of building them up left to Rajani. He is irreplaceable for his family and for all of us who cheered for his continued success. We mourn deeply.

Rohini is Rajani's cousin living in the US.

Santhosh – A Remembrance

- K R Ramu

'SANTHOSH' the very name personifies happiness and Santhosh lived true to this meaning spreading happiness and joy with whomsoever he met.

My association with him has been very brief, as the husband of my dear cousin, few and far between were our interactions. But whenever we met he gave the impression of a thorough professional highly competent in his chosen field and totally devoted to his wife and children- the two gems – Sanjani and Rachith.

In fact, the encouragement he provided to the two of them so that their latent talent especially in the fields of fine arts, in which Sanjani is prospering so well, is evidence of his open-mindedness. Rachith is also developing into a fine boy regularly topping his class and participating actively in extracurricular activities with distinction.

My last interaction with Santhosh is still etched in my mind, I can never forget it. We were performing the Srinivasa Kalyanotsavam at the Devagiri Venkatramana Swamy Temple and he attended the event despite being very ill. Not for a moment did he even give a hint of his illness nor the discomfort he was in. He took part actively and was the perfect guest. Little did we realize that this was the last occasion when we would see him alive. When news of his demise reached us, it was sudden, unexpected and unbelievable, because both husband and wife had not given any hint of his ailment or the trauma that they were going through. All I can think of now is that he will still be spreading 'Santhosha' wherever he is now.

May his soul rest in peace.

Ramu is Rajani's cousin

Santhosh – A man full of energy

- Archana Santhosh

While writing about Santhosh it all appears so magical and as if it was just a few days back. I had experienced some of the best moments of my life with Santhosh and Rajani. I met Rajani at my first job; it was immediately after graduation. I wanted to do my post graduation but due to some reason couldn't pursue my studies and thus had to take up this job. Just a few months before this I had met my soul mate, but we couldn't spend a lot of time together as we were working in different corners of Mumbai. We would try to snatch some time for us and that would be after our office hours at the bus stop or at Rajani's place. That time period was actually filled with hardships and struggle at home and pressure at work place. Rajani had joined as a senior counsellor at SSI, Vashi and I lived in Kalamboli. Over a period of time Rajani and I became good friends, and then I met Santhosh her husband. One similarity between me and Rajani was both our soul mates shared a common name Santhosh. Santhosh means happiness and that's how his personality was, always cheerful and happy. Rajani would often get tensed at work but I have seen her as a different person altogether while she was with him. They were the first couple I have seen so closely other than my parents. They were phenomenal and deeply in love with each other. I have seen them working together, doing household chores, fighting on petty issues and patching up overnight.

I often thought ideal married life should be like theirs. Once they insisted on me staying back at their house and Santhosh had a plan, he took us for a movie we went triple seat on his scooter and I remember us freaking out on streets of Mumbai where people hardly care for anything glaring at us. We saw three movies one after the other. I would hardly go to theaters to watch a movie but that day was different. I couldn't



believe myself watching three movies in a day! So much enthusiasm! That's how he was -- full of energy. We would go for long walks, have food together, watch horror movies, which Rajani hated to watch, but would accompany us out of no choice.

On 29th March, 2001 Rajani, Anupama and I decided to celebrate Santhosh's birthday. We decorated the house and went shopping for his gift. I was a big fan of Salman Khan then and he would tease me as a mad fan of 'Salu'. So I decided to trick him, Rajani wanted to buy a shirt for him and she wanted us to help her choose the color we zeroed on a florescent green shirt that was Salu's most happening color then. I was so sure he wouldn't like that color and we would have to replace the shirt with another one because his choice was much sober but to our surprise he loved the color and happily wore the shirt. Immediately after the celebration he asked me, what had I got for him? I had bought a small cake for him the same morning but felt awkward to give it as Rajani had already bought a nice cake for him. He actually searched my bag and got the cake out and cut it immediately.

He was my Rakhi brother, although rakhi was a mere namesake formality for our relation. After few months I got married and flew to Jeddah, from where we were in touch with each other through mails. My husband would answer the mails and get a printout for me as we didn't have net facility at home. I would be so happy to read them. Years passed by and mails reduced, although the love in our hearts never faded. Their memories were always fresh in my heart. Santhosh would often send me photos of all the major events of their lives. After few years we came back to India and one fine day I saw a message from Rajani on WhatsApp, I was so glad to hear from them once again but this time it was a bad news Rajani had to share with me. It read "Did you hear about Santhosh?" and I don't know but a strange chord struck my heart, I didn't like her words. I spoke to my husband and told him "I don't understand what's wrong with Rajani's English." Not even for a moment I thought something as heart breaking as this could happen. I called her and those words which she uttered were ear piercing Santhosh had left us all, only leaving behind his wonderful memories.

Archana is Santhosh and Rajani's family friend living in Dubai.

Balanced life

- Vimala Ramesh

Santhosh as the name suggests was joyous person. I will try to explain some features of Santhosh as seen by me (his friend's sister). He was a newly wedded person when he entered Mumbai (then was called Bombay). He was full of responsibility and commitment towards his family. He was always working out on the cost of living in Mumbai and what best he could do to live in Mumbai without compromising on his life enjoyments. He had perfectly balanced his life with his friends as well as his family. He never missed his friends for the reason that he had married. Rajani was a great inspiration to his life. She just stayed with him in every bit of his life.

He was very spontaneous in expressing his opinions. It was all just straight from his heart. He was a person with strong left brain - very systematic, practical, calculative and working out possibilities in advance. He could never manipulate things but was just straight forward in speaking. His nature appeared clear as crystal.

He and Rajani landed in Mumbai with their suitcases to my place where my brother also stayed with us. They completely had faith in Vinay, my brother. Later they moved to their place in Kopar Khairane in Navi Mumbai. They lived happily and learnt to lead life in new city and adapted pretty well to the city, though their favorite city was Bangalore.

Vimala Ramesh is Santhosh and Rajani's family friend living in Mumbai.



Hello to Santhosh

- Shivkumar (Guddu)

Umesh sent me text asking me to write about Santhosh for this book on him. I immediately agreed, but then I started wondering what will I write? Because I have always known him as a friend, and when someone is a true friend, you will never think of what he is as a person. For me he was just a friend who used to be with me all the time. And we spent every single day together for 5 years. Now when I put pen to paper, I am trying to know him. All I have are moments imprinted in me. I will try to unfold them as my mind takes me back to Vijaya High School

As I could not make the first list for admission to Vijaya High School (VHS) for 8th Standard, I had to take help from my god father CV Rajagopal to get admitted. Due to this, I had to join school couple of days late by which time classes had started. All students with influences, recommendations and whose first language was not Kannada or Sanskrit were dumped in G section. As I made it to the class, I saw an ocean of students inside the class room. For someone who had seen just 30 students in a class (Niveditha school), this was a shock as I saw 100+ students here. I slowly made it to the back benches and in the penultimate bench, there were only 4 guys. So I took a seat in the bench and sat next to a boy from Prathiba Bala Manidra and his name was Santhosh, that's how I met him.

When he introduced himself, the first thing I asked him was his full name. He said it was Santhosh and he had no initials. For the first time, I had met someone without any second name or initials. Maybe this curiosity made me know more about him.

But we did not have to know more about each more, as we felt we knew each other from ages. In the blink of an eye, we had spent 3 years in VHS. And every day there used to be something new for us to learn, to chat, to debate, to fight, to do crazy things. Why was he crazy? May be because, he was a big fan of Crazy Star Ravichandran then. I think Santhosh was much crazier than Ravichandran. I really have lost count on how many times we have seen PREMALOKA.

The other crazy thing was his liking for movies. One crazy day, we watched

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two movies back to back at Shanthi Theatre. He was my translator, if we were watching a Telugu or a Tamil Movie. At home, he was a pampered kid, as he was the only grandson of his house. Our meetings and time spent together started reducing after PUC when we got into BSc. But we were back in action during the final year when we both worked on the same project and presented in two different colleges.

After college, the gap still widened in terms of time spent together. During this period, I noticed few changes in him, the changes one goes through when people are in love. Though I had a doubt, I had not asked anything with him nor had he mentioned it to me. He wanted me to talk to his dad about Rajani. This scene, the conversation I had with Mr. Haridas Rao, cannot be forgotten in my life. No cuts, no actions, the take went for almost 2 hours. The best part was Santhosh sitting on the other side and making all funny faces at me.



As the years passed, we just could not be in touch as one would have loved to. But I am glad he remembered me on every occasion in his life be it Gruhapravesha, child birth, birthdays, etc.

If at all I have a complaint against him, it is his silence and not revealing what he was going through on his health front. Not that I would have made a difference to him, but it would have made a difference to our friendship. Moral support, prayers from our family might have given him more time. Time to be together, to recollect all the things we had done.

Now, I just pray that God give all the strength, courage and wisdom to Rajani so that she can bring up the kids as per his dreams. Will not say bye, will say hello to Santhosh, as he is inside us.

Shivkumar is Santhosh's schoolmate.

Santhosh

- My friend, leader, mentor and what not?

- Aneesh Kumar G

When I met Santhosh first time..

I still remember the day I met Santhosh first time, It was back in 2007 June. I was working at a small firm, and got the opportunity to attend interview at TLI software. I met Santhosh and Vinay during the interview. I never seriously thought of joining TLI – but, the positive vibes, energy and enthusiasm that I saw in Santhosh made me consider the job if it was offered. It took couple of days to get a confirmation. I took no time to accept it. By then, Santhosh created an impression on me. He was a very confident, sensible, strong and fun loving person. He had lot of passion and responsibility about his job. I have learned a lot from him, he was not only a leader or colleague for me! He was like my elder brother and a close friend who was always there to support me.

Days spent together @ TLI

By the time I joined TLI in August, Santhosh was on an onsite visit to Canada. During those initial days in office, I kept hearing so much about Santhosh from our colleagues. Vibhor was one of them who used to talk so many good things about him that I was eagerly waiting to work with him. Santhosh came back from Canada and it was really exciting! He started conversing with me as if he knew me from ages!! We got so close that I never felt any hesitation to talk anything with him. He taught me lot of things; rather I should say I have learnt a lot from him. In those days managing e-mails was a tough task for me!! Santhosh had a unique way of managing e-mails – which now also I follow. He was very organized and disciplined person. Although I tried learning it, could not follow it.

Another and most important thing that I learnt from him was his leadership quality. I can say so proudly that he was the best leader! He was just amazing, very different from others the way he used to lead the team. Initially I got surprised when I witnessed him shouting, pulling someone's leg or commenting on colleagues or people reporting to him. I thought those people might have felt bad and might have had a bad impression

about him. But I was wrong! I did not come across a single bad word about him!! The reason being, he had created such a bonding, had won trust and love of each and everyone in the team. Everybody had a huge respect for him and they were understanding his intentions to build trust and confidence within the team. This particular quality was something I saw only in Santhosh. I admire him, since he was the one who taught me the basic lessons of good leadership – give respect, build trust and believe your team members, in return they would do anything for you. I have followed his path and achieved many goals, success in my career.

The impact Santhosh created in TLI was so much that if he was not in office on a particular day, it used to be a very dull day! I am sure lot of colleagues at TLI will vouch for this. He was a great team player and used to think about team all the time. He was available for them anytime. For me, every day was a great day to start with his emails.

As Santhosh moved out from TLI, he gave me the opportunity to take-up his position. I was always compared with him, typically like Virat being compared with Sachin the legend. I am sure Santhosh was far ahead of me as a Project Manager.

Days @ Target

I joined Target on June 2009. Continued my learning from TLI. By then I got an opportunity to refer Santhosh for the role of Business Manager. I was lucky enough that I got him as my Manager again and one more time I got a chance to work with him. It gave me lot of comfort as I knew him very well and above all that I had huge respect for him. Santhosh continued his good work even at Target, he always made sure to coach me, gave me personal space and showed lot of confidence in my work.

Santhosh with his unique way of communication and hard work created a very good name for himself across India and Global teams. His



leaders, peers, partners and direct reports showed lot of confidence in him. He was always approachable and played a part in taking decisions which benefited team members. Apart from regular work, he was responsible for taking Marketing Team Huddle to a new height! I also respect Santhosh for his contribution towards Target's Community Relations activities. He was someone who's speech and actions were straight from the heart!!

Santhosh and myself had mutual agreements. However at lot of places we had our disagreements as well. Interesting one is about cricket - he used to like Dravid and I am a big fan of Ganguly. There were times when we used to pull each other if one of the Cricketer did something good / bad. We also used to have lot of arguments while playing Cricket! Despite all this once match got over we came back to our normal senses and relationship.

He played a key role in my success at Target. He provided me the right direction as well as supported me really well in my growth. It was unbelievable the way he supported me as I took up the role of Business Manager. He was my mentor, my first critic to point out my mistakes yet provided me lot of comfort.

There were times in office when I used to get really upset and was not sure what to do! During such time, I had the liberty and intimacy with Santhosh in sharing those issues. That used to give me lot of relief. I definitely miss that now and sometimes it really hurts!

We used to chat occasionally on WhatsApp and one of the final chat conversation we had even when he was undergoing treatment was, enquiring about how I am doing with Marketing Team Huddle preparations. He wished me all the best! Till now I have not deleted that chat conversation and will never delete. His out of office mail is still in my outlook calendar - I have not deleted it and will never delete it. Hoping Santhosh will finish his vacation and come back to office.

Santhosh was a brave person. Physically and mentally he was very strong - even during his last days. I have not seen anyone who can take-on such a dangerous ailment head-on! It's like you see such things only in movies. But to see someone nearer to you being like that is a huge inspiration and hope for all of us.

Aneesh was Santhosh's colleague at Target.

Santhosh – the go getter!

- *Keshav Raju K*

When I think of him, different visuals appear in front of me and each of them tells a story!

The first visual

His desktop screen saver - Kamal Hassan's Uttama Villain poster. He was a big fan of Kamal Hassan and was eagerly waiting for the movie's release and wanted to watch it on day one. Yes you read it right! He had the energy and enthusiasm of a teenager and wanted to see the movie on the day one itself but it's sad the movie kept on getting delayed and missed the date with Santhosh who eagerly awaited the movie.

The second visual

Sticker on his car - Sara Sara (The short creative that carries the names of himself, spouse and kids). Santhosh had the passion for driving and used to do a lot of road trips. His black Santro ornamented with a red sports toy car on the dashboard is a silent witness to the numerous conversations that we had. I used to leave my vehicle at office and hop into his car occasionally on a hectic day! By the time I reached my destination all my exhaustion would have gone!



The conversations would be light-hearted and depended on the songs that we used to hear. One particular song that I still remember is from the movie Paramaathma directed by Yograj Bhat. It had very unique lyrics and the song was "*Kathlalli Karadige Jaamoonu Thinisoke Yaavattu Hogbaardu Ri.....*". We had a very hearty laugh and debated if the lyrics were good or bad.

Our car journey would not be

complete if I don't mention about Sudarshan and the filter coffee that he used to offer. That said myself, Santhosh, Sudarshan and Chidanand were like Kannada Balaga at office and have enjoyed all the conversations that we used to have over lunch or on the office floor.

The third visual

Captain of Punters and Pillagers. Santhosh was the captain and I had the opportunity to closely work with him as a co-captain. He was a fighter and loved winning. We were at the bottom of the listing in the group of 8 teams. As we were coming closer to the final day of the competition, Santhosh was determined that we should win despite being at the bottom of the list. He led the group from the front and the 'Grand Finale' belonged to the 'Punters and Pillagers'. The true PUNTER was Santhosh. We finished the day at the second spot. The final day truly belonged to him and it was a very special day for him and for all of us. I still remember how happy he was and the way we celebrated it! And, 2014 opened on a high note for him... but very sad on how the events followed in the later part of the year.

The fourth visual

The most difficult part to write, Santhosh changed his Facebook profile to this icon before getting into the final treatment. He used to tell me he will get rebooted and come back with full force. Throughout the treatment phase he was very confident, as I said earlier he was a fighter. Seeing his confidence and positive attitude none of us even remotely thought that something would go wrong. That made things even more difficult to digest. That said, I've shared a great rapport with him for over 6 years and have always seen him to be very optimistic and cheerful. Hats off to this person who carried himself so confidently even in the most adverse situations.

Lots to learn from you Santhosh and you will always be remembered as a fighter and go getter and will be dearly missed.

Keshav Raju was Santhosh's colleague at Target.

Thank You for making a difference

- Sakshi

Santhosh!

No better way to start this article than calling him out. This should be about him and it is. It is as much about missing him as it is about moving forward with him alongside. I miss him and I have no hesitation in saying that. I sometimes think of what he would have done if he were here. My first friend at Target.

After his demise, I was shattered and it was really very difficult to just even sit at my desk. He used to sit next to me and his empty desk always reminded me of him. I am sharing a note I wrote to my team on 7th Sept 2014 when after he passed away. He will always mean a lot to me. I feel a deep sense of loss and emptiness, hopefully it will pass soon...

"Hi team,

I just thought of putting together my feelings around Santhosh's passing and share very openly with you all. I am struggling to come to terms with this loss and I am sure some of you are too.

For those who have been here over the last few years, you might have noticed the camaraderie that we shared. Santhosh to me was Target. He basically defined what Target meant to me. He was my first and then my best friend here. When I walked in more than 3 years ago, I joined leaving behind a lot of turmoil and basically

jumped into an organization that was so meticulous and planned that it was difficult, very difficult. From leading one or two team members, I came in here to lead a team ten times that, the Target way. Santhosh helped me make sense of it all.

I was lost and he literally showed me the path. He held



my hand when I needed and kicked me when he thought I needed that. Though that was never as harsh as it could have been. After all it was Santhosh.

We were the only BM's then and just had each other to rely on.

Suresh joined us a few months later and then things just went ballistic. Suresh, Santhosh and me just had a ball. Pulling each other's legs at the drop of a hat and basically leaving no stone unturned. Santhosh was at the center of it all. We made a great team. Ganging up. I sometimes went overboard and he told me it was too much. I listened, because it was him.



We sat together for almost 3 years sharing a lot more with each other than normally happens between just colleagues. He was my friend after all. During this time we had so much to celebrate and we had our lows as well. He was there for me always, never letting go and being the pillar that he is.

As the disease took hold of him, he got a lot quieter and was not in office that often. The desk would be empty on many days and I missed him. He went through multiple sessions of treatment and came back stronger if not in body, at least in spirit. So there was always hope as he would come back one day and it would all be fine again. This time was supposed to be the same. But it was not to be. The last few days have been tough as we hoped against hope and tried everything we could to make things better. A lot of you played important parts directly and indirectly in helping out and so a huge gratuitous thanks to everyone. He was a fighter. He looked calm and peaceful from the outside but was always so tough inside that it was hard to imagine. That's why there was hope as there always is but stronger because it was HIM.

The doctors were surprised by the fight he showed against tremendous odds that we would not even think of demonstrating. That was him that was Santhosh. I was privileged to have been by his side as he lived and as he moved on. In his final moments I was close to him and I saw the fight. I wished I could fight alongside him but I could not.

SANTHOSH - Happiness Personified

I don't want to make this about me. Rakesh, Aneesh, Mohan and many others kept vigil and hoped for the best. Many literally gave their blood to keep him going. They had larger, greater contributions to this effort and I salute them all. No one was unwilling to move and everyone was just around when they were needed and called upon. This is what a great team is about. This is what makes it tougher.

His family- Rajani his wife and his young kids are such a great reflection of him and were exceptionally strong in the face of such a loss. Truly Santhosh style. My heart goes out to them as they have lost someone who means so much more than he was ever to us. I will miss him. My partner in crime, my partner for lunch and my partner whenever required. The last and probably only time I felt such loss was when I lost my grand mom. That's what Santhosh meant to me. There is this void that will probably never be filled and rightly so.

I wish I could be a lot more like him. I would definitely be a better human if I could. He had a grace unmatched by many. His life and the way he lived needs to be celebrated. I think he would have wanted that. Rajani and the kids are a fantastic reflection of him. He truly lives on through them. We miss you Santhosh and really hope that you are up there, looking down on us and correcting us when we falter Thank you for making a difference."

Sakshi was Santhosh's colleague at Target.

He is just away!

- Chidanand

I know for certain that we never lose the people we love, even to death. They continue to participate in every act, thought and decision we make. Their love leaves an indelible imprint in our memories. We find comfort in knowing that our lives have been enriched by having shared their love. When we see Santhosh missing now, we feel the whole world seems depopulated. But I say, he is not dead, he is just – away.

Chidanand was Santhosh's colleague at Target.

Lasting impressions

- Suresh Babu

A friend, a companion, a mate, a humraz and a very humble human being - that's how I can relate to Santhosh Rao. My early encounters with him was a little overwhelming. He was quite a stern guy. He appeared intimidating a couple of times. But later I understood that his intention was good. Our journey which started as peers turned into best of buddies. Slowly but steadily I was finding like mindedness and similar energies between us. Suddenly it felt like we knew each other for a long time.

Out of the many things that I admired about him, the first and foremost was his meticulous planning and clear approach in everything he did. He would visualize the problem and arrive at solutions with ease. Often he would put himself in others shoes and understand the situation. His



undying passion for his profession and work place was very inspiring. He was as transparent as a clean glass and very direct, he would hardly beat around the bush. Santhosh would always encourage me and motivate me. There were times I have confided in him about my personal situations and concerns. There was no doubt that he was my mentor and a guide in lot of things. I would emulate him often unknowingly and that was the impact he had on me. For that short time we got closer, he left lasting impressions on me.

I can never forget his love for pure vegetarian food at historical popular joints around Bangalore. We would often discuss the names of dishes and I even got an opportunity to visit one famous one with him. One more thing I can never forget are those days when we would whatsapp each other

about Kishore Kumar's old songs for hours together. He would love to drive and go on long trips and it was always nice to hear his adventures. One movie which will always remind me of him is 'ulidavaru kandante'. There is a particular song in the movie that still haunts me.

This day as I write a few lines about my friend, I feel I owe him a lot more than this. Nature has been unkind to him and I cannot digest the fact that he is not physically with us. He lives on forever in my heart and every day I drive back home from work, I feel like he is with me, sending me messages and even talking to me. Did I say that I miss you, my dearest friend? I know when I need you, you will be there to absorb my tears because between us, time and space have become both limitless and meaningless.

He will continue to live in our thoughts

Suresh Babu was Santhosh's colleague at Target.

He empowered people

- Shishir Rattan

"Before you walk into a meeting, it's your brand that enters the room. So focus on building your brand, Shishir." These were Santhosh's words during our first meeting. To this day I keep this in mind and go about my job. Santhosh was not just a manager but also a mentor and a guide to me. He was someone I looked up to not just because he was a senior leader but also because I felt that he understood my way of working and hence was committed to helping me develop. That to me was his number one strength - To believe in and empower people!

The other thing that was striking about him was his presence in many official events even when he was undergoing treatment. The way he would talk and carry himself around would not make you even think that he was battling a serious ailment! He personified strength in not just his words but also in his actions. Something most notable about him!

His leadership has had a lasting impact on me personally and I will continue to hold his advice dear. He is missed dearly by the team but he will continue to live in our thoughts!

Shishir Rattan was Santhosh's colleague at Target.

Never a dull moment

- *Rajesh Rao*

There is never a dull moment when Santhosh is around. That's how I'd like to remember my dear friend Santhosh! *Shoot Maad Bidthini* was a patent dialogue of Santhosh to us in any context. He is one of a kind person and I don't think I'll ever meet someone like him in this life. He would make us laugh anytime anywhere. The only person who would crack a joke in the middle of a serious meeting by either messaging us on WhatsApp or pinging us through our official chat messenger and remain still as if he was deeply listening to what our boss was saying. A true hardcore vegetarian *brahmana* who would cherish any traditional vegetarian meal and clean it up as though nothing was served on his leaf. He would store mixture in his pedestal locked up and open it at the right time for us to eat. A genuine person by heart, a strong individual and most importantly a person who was always kind to everyone. Santhosh Rao, we haven't forgotten you and never will. We remember you even today in everything that we do. Till we see you again next!



Rajesh Rao was Santhosh's colleague at Target.

I miss you

- *Vibhor Gupta*

I remember the day Santhosh interviewed me at TLI Software. Our journey of friendship started from that day and I have always felt blessed. I was new to Bangalore and he was my mentor and always guided me in the right path in all aspects of life. I miss his smile, jokes, pickup and drops at late nights, concern for my family, outings and lunches, funny scoldings for coming late to office and many more!

Vibhor Gupta was Santhosh's colleague at Target.

God had a different script

- *Vinod Nanaiah*

What can I say about Santhosh? Should I start by saying that there is absolutely no need for words of flattery when this person is no more with us? Yes, he deserves a glowing tribute.

Having worked in this big (sometimes bad!) corporate world for almost 10 years and having seen all kinds of people in their best theatrical avatars, here comes a man as my manager who was absolutely transparent. Yes I was cautious, not knowing what egos I need to nurture to keep him at bay, but it didn't take much time to realize what a true, genuine and approachable person Santhosh was!

He was friendly, never hesitating to don on a mentor's hat when needed and never hesitating to shun the manager's hat and be a true friend if needed. He could understand my apprehensions in dealing with the nuances of the corporate world and whatever advice he gave, he would be very empathetic and one could feel that he was trying to be as genuine as possible. At the same time I could give him feedback about his performance without the fear of any repercussions.

We were the best partners in crime when it comes to teaming up and pulling someone's leg! I would say his quick wit combined with a terrific sense of humor was a deal maker in our relationship! There was always some laughter when he was around; be it in his regular walk around the isles or in our team outings. He may not have been a great inspiration as a creative guy, but as a true fighter he is! Even when he was battered with illness, even when he was physically down, did we miss his smile? No! We crib about small little illness bothering us, at least I do. But here was a man battling a deadly disease but putting up a bold face and doing his work in style and a smile.

After his treatment when he was back looking like a superstar day by day, and when we were all thanking God for putting his misery behind, God unfortunately decided a different script...or maybe he was missing some humor in his abode?

Vinod Nanaiah was Santhosh's colleague at Target.

Strong positive person

- Viral

The journey started when Santhosh joined Target as my Business Manager. We worked for around 3 years together. In that period, we had many meetings and moments that we spent together that included sheer laughter and positivity. Rides to GWS from my place, Wednesday meetings, discussions and many such moments are still so fresh in my mind that I feel that he is still around. He was a strong positive person and knowing what he was going through was quite painful. However I really respect that not a single time he mentioned that or told about his ailment. He has been a great speaker and really clear thinker at work and personal life. Apart from work and professional life, he was a great human being. It's hard to believe he is not around us. I still remember him whenever I pass by his desk. I wish and pray all the time that his soul rests in peace.

Viral was Santhosh's colleague at Target.

Pillar of Strength

- Mrinalini

What can I say about Santhosh? he has been the pillar of strength for our whole family. Without his support Rajani would not have been able to handle family responsibilities. He took care of Mani atte like he would his own mother. We have visited their house many a times. My sons being a little naughty have sometimes even troubled Sanju but I have never seen Santhosh getting angry or cribbing. I miss his photographic talent as we always used to look forward to the photographs he would post on the web. We miss you Santhosh! You will always remain in our heart and memories. Stay blessed wherever you are.

Mrinalini is Rajani's Cousin living in Muscut.

Eternal Santhosh

- *Samyukta*

A great teacher need not teach--his every move, his every act is teaching. Such was Santhosh's effect on my life! He was a friend, philosopher and beyond. He left with a broad smile and I pray he continues to smile with peace. I miss you Santhosh, until we meet again.

He always was very keen on the way I used to write and he would always tell me "*bariyokelsamado, illienumadtitya, ninna potential ge*". He was the biggest critic and admirer of whatever I used to pen down. And when I told him about difficulties in my personal and professional life, he suggested I study further and take the risk of starting afresh in every aspect of life. I am what I am now, all because of him. Things that I noticed are: he would always walk the talk. He would call movie as piccher and his eyes would light up with just the notion of Vidhyarthi Bhavan! And would always tell dialogues from Rajnikanth's movie, and would tell "*tension togobedvo, nange enu agalla, paapi chirayu*". Only few people knew how humorous he was! He would not even spare

a stray dog sitting on the road and would enact how it is sitting and staring. He was a big Raj kumar fan and would sing his songs passionately, sometimes enough to make us deaf. When I used to ask him about



death, he would say, 'I have never feared anything in life! Nor will I think "why me", rather "*bandaaga nodkotini, sumne tale kedskolde chutney tinno*" and he would devour chutney and *congress kadle kai*. I still can't believe he is gone, for all the confidence he had shown in life! As clichéd it may sound "Heaven is a better place with him there".

Samyukta was Santhosh's colleague at Target.

Angel in heaven

- *Mohan Rao*

I am missing Santhosh terribly. I have known Santhosh since 2009. He had trust and confidence in me that if I get an opportunity I could work hard and excel in any area. He was a great man who helped a lot of people like me to grow in their career. My bonding with him was so special that he was like a mentor to me in my life. He guided me on how to face life bravely and excel in life through troubles. His confidence was amazing and I have not seen a person with more confidence like him. He showed me the path of Ayyappa Swamy deeksha and took me with him for 2 years. He was loved by all of us and he will be cherished in our memories forever. When we lose a loved one here on earth, we gain an angel in heaven who watch over us. He departed from us but is still alive in our hearts and minds. He will not be forgotten. It was an honor to have known such a great person and I truly miss him in my life.

Mohan Rao was Santhosh's colleague at Target.



Devarukotta Anna

- *Suma Nagesh*

Somebody said blood is thicker than water; but I found solace in water, he was God's answer to my prayer for an elder brother. He was guiding, consoling, laughing at every step and I still think he does it even now. No wonder you called me DKT (*devaru kotta thangi*) meaning God given sister. I miss you Anna. These words fail to do justice to him.

He was a loving brother and would always say "*le CBI shankari, ootamado, tension togo beda ella olledagutte*" I remember how delighted he was when Sam and me were in his team for marketing events, he used to tell lets rock the show! And he did, the way he supported me for my drama stint was breathtaking, he giggled like a child when we won the second position. He was fearless and most loving man! One day I got a sweet made by my mother and he gobbled it up! And would tell me "*ellu*



bella jasti madsu tagondu baro". He would encourage me in everything! And would never say no to me. The love that he shared with me was beyond any words and measure. We have seen him closely, we have seen him through smiles and never did he show tears but chose to defy logic and face things.

Suma Nagesh was Santhosh's colleague at Target.

He would make us laugh!

- Wagesh Kulkarni

I joined Deldot in the year 1997. I was part of Graphic Multimedia team and Santhosh Rao was part of the Technoworld magazine team headed by Vinay. At Deldot office Santhosh, Vinay and I used to have breakfast and lunch together. During lunch hour Santhosh used to comment on the appearance of the food items which used to be really funny. That's how Santhosh was, he could find humor in any object and he would make us laugh at any point of time.

I stayed for one year in Mumbai that helped me know more about Santhosh and Rajani. Both used to be friendly with me and used to share their college experiences and their love and marriage. I used to feel their life journey was like a romantic love story that we see in movies.

I got an offer from Baan and decided to move to Hyderabad, so I packed my bags to move. Santhosh commented that I don't need to plan for shifting at all and I can shift at any moment because I carry only two bags and we all had a laugh. The one year stay in Mumbai is still fresh in my memory. Our Goa trip from Mumbai was also memorable. On the way to Goa we played Anthakshari and when I couldn't remember the lyrics for a song, I used to create my own to suit the tune, but Santhosh used to find out always. We all got back to Bangalore in the same order Vinay, Santhosh and finally me in 2009.

Santhosh planned his vacation to Hyderabad in 2006 and I took a complete week off from work. We had great fun all the five days and visited all sightseeing locations. I don't know how time passed during those five days.

I did not know Santhosh was suffering from illness, but when he was hospitalized at Apollo and in a critical condition Vinay informed me. I was shocked and felt very sad to see him in the hospital on a ventilator, but I had hope that he will be alright soon and I could talk to Santhosh again. God did not listen to our prayers and we lost him forever.

Wagesh Kulkarni was Santhosh's colleague at Deldot and Jasubhai Publications

“ಸರ್ ಐಯಾಮ್ ಬ್ಯಾಕ್” (“Sir, I am Back”)

– ಸುದರ್ಶನ ಕೆಎನ್

ಸಂತೋಷ್ ರಾವ್ ಎಂದ ತಕ್ಷಣ ನಮಗೆ ನೆನಪಿಗೆ ಬರುವುದು ನೀಳಕಾಯದ ಸ್ಫುರದ್ರೂಪಿ ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿ. ಹಸನ್ಮುಖಿ. ಏನೇ ಬರಲಿ ನೋಡೇ ಬಿಡೋಣ ಎಂಬುವ ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿತ್ವ.

ನನ್ನ ಮತ್ತು ಸಂತೋಷ್ ಪರಿಚಯ 2010ರಿಂದ. ಮೊದಲ ಬಾರಿ ಭೇಟಿಯಾದಾಗ ನಮ್ಮದು formal English introduction. ಸ್ವಲ್ಪ ಹೊತ್ತಿನಲ್ಲೇ “ಓ ನೀವು 9ನೇ ಬ್ಲಾಕ್‌ನಲ್ಲಾ ಇರೋದು? ಸುಮುಖಿ ಸ್ಟೋರ್ಸ್ ಪಕ್ಕದಲ್ಲಾ?” – ಹೀಗೆ ಶುರುವಾದ ನಮ್ಮ ಮಾತು ವಿಜಯ ಹೈಸ್ಕೂಲ್, ವಿದ್ಯಾರ್ಥಿ ಭವನ, ಅನ್ನಪೂರ್ಣ ಬಜ್ಜಿ ಸೆಂಟರ್, ಮಂತ್ರಾಲಯ, ಬಸವನಗುಡಿ, ಪುತ್ತಿಗೆ ಮಠ, ಎಂಟಿಆರ್, ರಾಜ್‌ಕುಮಾರ್, ರಜನೀಕಾಂತ್, ಹೋಮಿಯೋಪತಿ ಹೀಗೇ... ಮನೆ ಮನೆಯ ಕತೆಗಳು. ಒಂದಲ್ಲಾ, ಎರಡಲ್ಲಾ ಬಹುಶಃ ಲಕ್ಷಾಂತರ ವಿಷಯಗಳ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ನಮ್ಮ ಮಾತುಕತೆ.

ಅವರು ಟಾರ್ಗಟ್ (Target) ಸೇರಿದ ಕೆಲವೇ ದಿನಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ‘ನಮ್ಮಲ್ಲೊಬ್ಬರಾದರು’. ನಾನು, ಕೇಶವ್, ಚಿದು (ಚಿದಾನಂದ್) ಹಾಗೂ ಸಂತೋಷ್‌ದೇ ಒಂದು ಸಣ್ಣ ಗುಂಪು. ನಮ್ಮ ‘ಆ ದಿನಗಳ’ ವೈಭವ ನಮಗೇ ಗೊತ್ತು! ಒಬ್ಬ ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿಯನ್ನು ವಾಚಾಮಗೋಚರವಾಗಿ ಕಿಚಾಯಿಸುವ ಕಲೆ ಇದ್ದದ್ದು ಸಂತೋಷ್‌ಗೆ ಮಾತ್ರ – ಅದೂ ಕೂಡ ಆ ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿಗೆ ಸ್ವಲ್ಪವೂ ಬೇಜಾರಾಗದಂತೆ!! ಸಂತೋಷ್‌ರ ಈ ಗುಣವೇ ಅವರು ಇಡೀ ಮಾರ್ಕೆಟಿಂಗ್ ಟೀಮ್‌ಗೆ ಹತ್ತಿರವಾಗುವಂತೆ ಮಾಡಿದ್ದು. ನಮ್ಮ ಇಡೀ ಫ್ಲೋರ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಅವರೊಬ್ಬ ‘ಲೈವ್ ವೈರ್’ (Live Wire).

ಸಂತೋಷ್‌ರ ‘ಪ್ರೆಸೆಂಟಬಿಲಿಟಿ’ (Presentability) ಅವರ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಎಲ್ಲರಿಗೂ ಗೌರವ ಮೂಡುವಂತೆ ಮಾಡಿತು. ಯಾವುದೇ ಕೆಲಸವಿರಲಿ ಅದರಲ್ಲಿ ಅವರು ತೋರುತ್ತಿದ್ದ ಆಸಕ್ತಿ, ಶ್ರದ್ಧೆ, ಆಳವಡಿಕೆ, ನಿರಂತರ ಅನುಸರಣೆ ಹಾಗೂ ಸಲಹೆ ಸೂಚನೆಗಳು ಎಂದಿಗೂ ಮರೆಯಲಾಗದು.

ಅವರ ಸರಳತೆ ಮತ್ತು ಸ್ನೇಹ ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿತ್ವ ಇಂದಿನ ದಿನಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಬಹಳ ಅಪರೂಪ. ನಮ್ಮ ತಾಯಿ ಕ್ಯಾನ್ಸರ್‌ನಿಂದ ಆಸ್ಪತ್ರೆಯಲ್ಲಿದ್ದಾಗ “ಸುದೀ, ನಿಮಗೆ ಯಾವ ರೀತಿಯ ಸಹಾಯ ಬೇಕಾದರೂ ಸಂಕೋಚಪಡದೇ ಕೇಳಿ – I am just a phone call away” ಎಂದು ಹೇಳಿ ಧೈರ್ಯ ತುಂಬಿದರು. ವಿಪರ್ಯಾಸವೆಂದರೆ, ಅದೇ ಕ್ಯಾನ್ಸರ್ ಅವರನ್ನಾವರಿಸಿದ್ದು!

ಸಂತೋಷ್‌ಗೆ ‘ಸಾವು’ ಎನ್ನುವ ಮಾತು ತುಂಬಾ ‘ಹಗುರ’. ನಮ್ಮ ಮಾತುಕತೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ನಾನು ಬಹಳ ಸಲ ಹೇಳಿದ್ದಿದೆ “ಸರ್ ಬೇಡ ಹಾಗೆ



ಮಾತನಾಡಬೇಡಿ, ಎಲ್ಲಾ ಚೆನ್ನಾಗಿರುವಾಗ - ಯಾಕೆ ಸಾಯುವ ಮಾತು?" ಆ ಸಮಯದಲ್ಲಿ ನನಗನ್ನಿಸುತ್ತಿದ್ದದ್ದು - ಈ ಮನುಷ್ಯ ಇರುವ ಜೋರಿಗೆ ಯಮಧರ್ಮನೂ ಸುಮ್ಮನೆ "ಆಯ್ತು ಸಾರ್, ನೀವು ಹೇಳಿದಾಗ ಬರ್ತೀನಿ" ಅಂತ ಹೇಳಿ ಹೋಗುತ್ತಾನೆ ಎಂದು!!

ಮೊದಲ ಸಲ ನಮಗೆ ಸಂತೋಷ್‌ಗೆ ಕ್ಯಾನ್ಸರ್ ಇರುವ ವಿಷಯ ತಿಳಿದಾಗ ನಾವು ಅಧೀರರಾದವೇ ಹೊರತು ಅವರಲ್ಲ! ಪ್ರತೀಬಾರಿ ಅವರು ಟ್ರೀಟ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪಡೆದು ಬಂದ ನಂತರ ಅವರ ಬಾಹ್ಯರೂಪದಲ್ಲಿ ನಮಗೆ ಬದಲಾವಣೆ ಕಾಣುತ್ತಿತ್ತೇ ಹೊರತು, ಬೇರೆ ಯಾವ ನಡವಳಿಕೆಯಲ್ಲೂ ಕಿಂಚಿತ್ತೂ ಬದಲಾವಣೆ ಇರಲಿಲ್ಲ. ಇವರು ಆ ಮಹಾಮಾರಿಯನ್ನು ತೊಡೆತಟ್ಟಿ ಸ್ವಾಗತಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೋ ಏನೋ ಎಂದನಿಸುತ್ತಿತ್ತು.

ಅವರೊಬ್ಬ 'ಯುವರಾಜ್ ಸಿಂಗ್' ಆಗೇ ಆಗುವರೆಂಬ ನಂಬಿಕೆ ನಮಗೆಲ್ಲರಿಗೂ. ಬಹುಶಃ ಸಂತೋಷ್‌ರ ಆ ಒಂದು ಜೀವನೋತ್ಸಾಹ ದೇವರಿಗೂ 'ಹೊಟ್ಟೆಕಿಚ್ಚು' ತರಿಸಿತೇನೋ? ಅಥವಾ ಇವನ್ಯಾರೋ ನನಗೇ ಸವಾಲೆಸೆಯುವವನು ಎಂದೇನಿಸಿ ತನ್ನೊಂದಿಗೆ ಕರೆದುಕೊಂಡನೇನೋ?

ಕೆಲವೇ ಕೆಲವು ದಿನಗಳ ಹಿಂದೆ... ನೋಡುನೋಡುತ್ತಿದ್ದಂತೆ ಸಂತೋಷ್ ನಮ್ಮ ಆಫೀಸ್ ಫ್ಲೋರ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ನಡೆದು ಬರುತ್ತಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ನನ್ನ ಬಳಿ ಬಂದು "ಸರ್, ಐಯಾಮ್ ಬ್ಯಾಕ್" ("Sir, I am Back!") ಎಂದಾಗ ನನ್ನ ಮುಖ ಊರಗಲ! ಹೀಗೂ ಉಂಟೇ ಎಂಬ ಸಂತೋಷ, ಆಶ್ಚರ್ಯ!! ಆದರೆ ಇದೊಂದು ಬೆಳಗಿನ ಜಾವದ ಕನಸೆಂದು ಅರಿವಾದಾಗ ಅನಿಸಿದ್ದು - "ದೇವರೇ, ಅಂತಹ ಒಂದು ದಿನ ಬರುವಂತೆ ಮಾಡು"

ಆ ದಿನ ಬರುವುದಿಲ್ಲ ಎಂದು ಗೊತ್ತಿದ್ದರೂ, ಆ ದಿನಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಕಾತುರದಿಂದ ಕಾಯುತ್ತಿರುವೆ!

Sudharshan KS was Santhosh's colleague at Target.

Salute his Spirit

Anuradha Madhusudan

When you look back it almost feels unreal that it has been a year since Santhosh left us. His smile is so clearly impressed in my mind that it feels like I just saw him yesterday making his rounds on the floor with a smile on his face, a joke in his mind and imparting his infectious laughter to all! What will always stay with me as a lesson for life is the courage he showed through the entire phase of fighting the illness. Santhosh made every effort to keep it normal during life's most difficult battle. I can only salute that inner strength which made that possible. I salute his spirit that I will always remember!

Anuradha Madhusudan was Santhosh's colleague at Target.

ಸಂತಾ! ನಡೆದು ಬಂದ ದಾರಿ....

- ಉಮೇಶ್ ಬಿಕೆ

ಸಂತೋಷ್... ಸಂತಾ.... ಎಂದ ಕೂಡಲೇ ನೆನಪಿಗೆ ಬರುವುದು ಶಿಸ್ತು, ಸಮಯ ಪ್ರಜ್ಞೆ, ವಿತಂಡವಾದ... ಹೀಗೆ ಹಲವಾರು ಸಂಗತಿಗಳು.

ನನ್ನ ಮತ್ತು ಅವನ ಪರಿಚಯ ಮೊದಲನೇ ಪಿಯಸಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಇಂದಿಗೆ 25 ವರ್ಷಗಳ ಹಿಂದೆ ಆಯಿತು. ಅವನು ನನಗೆ ಮಿತ್ರ ಮಾತ್ರವಲ್ಲ ನನ್ನ ಹಿತೈಷಿ ಮತ್ತು ಮಾರ್ಗದರ್ಶಕ. ನನ್ನ ನೋವು-ನಲಿವು ಯಾವುದೇ ಇರಲಿ ಮೊದಲು ನಾನು ಅವನ ಬಳಿ ಹಂಚಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಿದ್ದೆ. ನೋವಿಗೆ ಮುಲಾಮು ಹಾಗೂ ನಲಿವಿಗೆ ಹರ್ಷವನ್ನು ಅವನು ವ್ಯಕ್ತಪಡಿಸುತ್ತಿದ್ದ. ನಾನು ಇವತ್ತಿಗೆ ಏನೇ ಆಗಿದ್ದರೂ ಅದು ಅವನ ಮಾರ್ಗದರ್ಶನದಿಂದ. ಈಗಲೂ ನಾನು ಯಾವುದೇ ತೊಂದರೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಇರುವಾಗ ಕಣ್ಣು ಮುಚ್ಚಿಕೊಂಡು "ಸಂತಾ ದಾರಿ ತೋರಿಸು" ಎಂದು ಅವನ್ನು ಕೇಳಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವೆ. ಮೊದಲೆಲ್ಲಾ ಅವನಿಗೆ ಕರೆ ಮಾಡಿ ಹೇಳಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಿದ್ದೆ, ಆದರೆ ಈಗ ಮನದಲ್ಲಿ ಹೇಳಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತೇನೆ. ಅದು ಅವನಿಗೆ ತಲುಪುತ್ತಿದೆ ಎಂದು ನನಗೆ ಗೊತ್ತು.

ಅವನನ್ನು ನಾನು ಸಂತಾ ನೀನು ಭೋಜನಪ್ರಿಯ ಹಾಗೂ ಬಹುಜನಪ್ರಿಯ ಎಂದು ಹೇಳುತ್ತಿದ್ದೆ. ಕೆಲವು ತಿನಿಸುಗಳನ್ನು ಹುಡುಕಿ ಕಾದು ಅವನು ತಿನ್ನುತ್ತಿದ್ದ. ಅದರಲ್ಲೂ ವಿದ್ಯಾರ್ಥಿ ಭವನ್ ದೋಸೆ ಎಂದರೆ ಅವನಿಗೆ ಪಂಚ ಪ್ರಾಣ. ಸಾಲುಗಟ್ಟಲೆ ಸಾಲು ಇದ್ದರೂ ಅವನು ಕಾದು ದೋಸೆಯ ಸವಿಯನ್ನು ಸವಿಯುತ್ತಿದ್ದ. ಇದು ಅವನ ಭೋಜನ ಪ್ರಿಯತೆಯನ್ನು ತೋರಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಇನ್ನು ಅವನ ಸ್ನೇಹಿತರ ಬಳಗವನ್ನು ನೋಡಿದರೆ ಅವನ ಬಹುಜನಪ್ರಿಯತೆಯನ್ನು ತೋರಿಸುತ್ತದೆ.

ನಮ್ಮನ್ನು ಅವನು ಅಗಲಿದಾಗ ಅವನ ಮನೆಯ ಮುಂದೆ ಅಪಾರ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಜನ ನೆರೆದಿದ್ದರು. ಅದರಲ್ಲಿ ಅವನ ಬಂಧು ಬಳಗದ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ ಬೆರಳೆಣಿಕೆಯಷ್ಟು ಮಾತ್ರ, ಆದರೆ ಅವನ ಸ್ನೇಹಿತರ ಮಹಾ ಪೂರವೇ ಅಲ್ಲಿ ನೆರೆದಿತ್ತು. ಇದು ಅವನು ಬಹುಜನಪ್ರಿಯನೆಂದು ತೋರಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಅವನು ಕೆಲಸ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಿದ್ದ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಯ ಸ್ನೇಹಿತರ ಹಿಂಡು ಹಿಂಡೇ ಅಲ್ಲಿ ಸೇರಿತ್ತು. ಇದು ಅವನು ಎಂತಹ ಒಳ್ಳೆಯ ಲೀಡರ್ ಎಂಬುದನ್ನು ತೋರಿಸಿಕೊಡುತ್ತದೆ. ಒಂದೇ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಯಿಂದ ಅಷ್ಟೊಂದು ಮಂದಿ ಅವನ ಅಗಲಿಕೆಯ ಸಂದರ್ಭದಲ್ಲಿ ಸೇರಿದ್ದು ಅವನ ಜನಪ್ರಿಯತೆ ಮತ್ತು ಮುಂದಾಳತ್ವಕ್ಕೆ ನಿದರ್ಶನ.

ಅವನು ಡಾ|| ರಾಜ್‌ಕುಮಾರ್ ರವರ ಪಕ್ಕಾ ಅಭಿಮಾನಿಯಾಗಿದ್ದ. ಬಹುಶಃ ಡಾ|| ರಾಜ್ ಚಿತ್ರಗಳ ಎಲ್ಲಾ ಹಾಡುಗಳೂ ಅವನಿಗೆ ಗೊತ್ತಿತ್ತು ಹಾಗೂ ಅವನ್ನು ಬಹಳ ಚೆನ್ನಾಗಿ ಹಾಡುತ್ತಿದ್ದ. "ಜೀವನ ಚೈತ್ರ" ಚಿತ್ರದ 'ನಾದ ಮಯ' ಅವನಿಗೆ ಬಹಳ ಇಷ್ಟವಾದ ಹಾಡು. ಅವನು ಚಿಕ್ಕಿತ್ರೆ ಪಡಿಯುತ್ತಿದ್ದಾಗ 'ದೇವತಾ ಮನುಷ್ಯ' ಚಿತ್ರದ "ಹಾಲಲ್ಲಾದರು ಹಾಕು ನೀರಲ್ಲಾದರೂ ಹಾಕು" ಎಂಬ ಹಾಡನ್ನು ಸುಮಾರು ಬಾರಿ ನಮ್ಮ ಮುಂದೆ ಹಾಡಿದ್ದಾನೆ. ಆದರೆ ಆ ರಾಘವೇಂದ್ರ ಸ್ವಾಮಿಗಳು ಅವನನ್ನು ಹಾಲಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಹಾಕಲಿಲ್ಲವಲ್ಲಾ ಎಂಬ ದುಃಖವಿದೆ.



Santhosh with his grandparents.

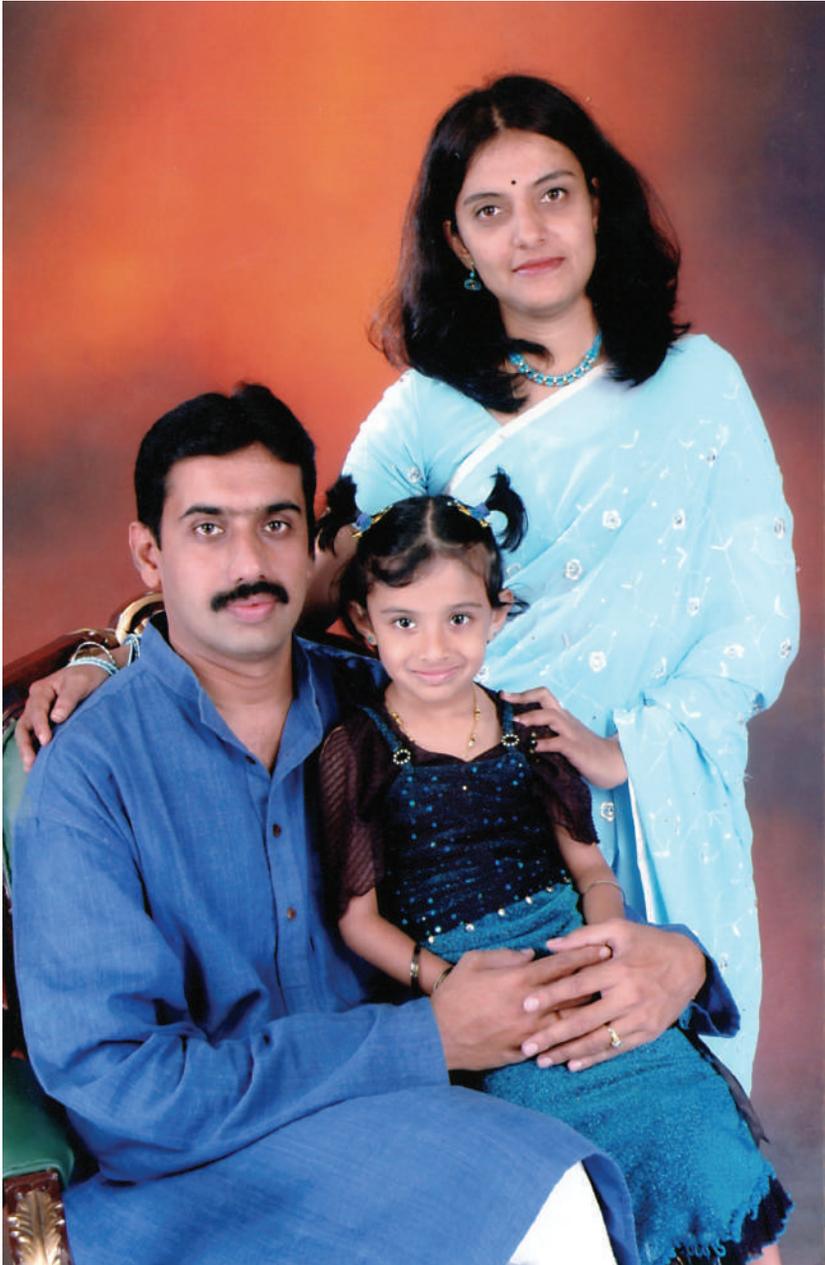


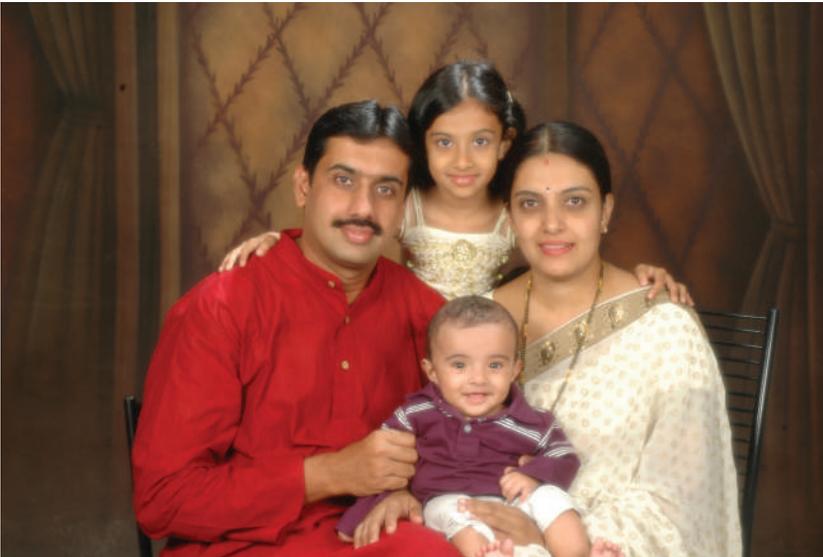
Santhosh at his thread ceremony.



Santosh & Rachith as Krishnadevaraya.







SANTHOSH - Happiness Personified

