



Surging beyond the bottom line

Insights into a successful
integral enterprise

Rishabh Khanna

Acknowledgements



Vasudha, a young adult with Down syndrome and autistic traits, was the main inspiration for the beginning of Om Creations. She was the guiding light for Mrs. Durga Jain, Dr. Radhike Khanna and many others who have been working for the institution. Vasudha was like a source of energy which stems from Mother Earth, inspiring Om Creations to nurture the seeds which have become fruit-giving trees, through a lot of selfless service.

This effort would not have been possible without the support of my mentors: Mohan Bhagwandas, Alexander Scheieffer and Ronnie Lessem. Mohan's style of management at Initiatives of Change has been very useful for me in my work and research. Alexander and Ronnie have inspired me with their research on Integral Management. It seems to be a path-breaking area of research for people working on social innovation.

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A special mention also goes to Sister Gaitonde and Tatiana Sokolova for their meticulous editorial support.

The Om Creations Team

Staff

Archana Mehta – Art Teacher since inception (20 years)
Rajni Porecha – Art Teacher since 11 years
Hoshang Chacha – Executive Secretary
Nutan Patil – Ceramic Art Teacher
Avinash Durshettiwar – Ceramic Art Teacher
Nayanjeet Nikam – Artist
Vaishali Waghchaure – Head, Catering Department
Akshay Purohit – Head, Catering Department
Shakif Rauf – Accountant
Neville Berrie – Accounts Assistant
Dorothy Valliyapalath – Arts Assistant
Tasneem Rajkotwala – Arts Assistant

Care Workers

Rohini
Bali
Nitesh
Sushma
Brijesh
Mahindra
Janardhan
Suresh
Shabbir
Parshuram
Parin
Pravina
Nandini
Shashikala
Rao

Volunteers

Jyoti Seth
Shalini Khiani
Zaver Sepoy
Roshni Sinor
Bimla Makhija
Shireen Kolah
Divya Chaudhry

Trustees

Dr. Radhike Khanna
Mrs. Durga Jain
Mr. Kersi Kapadia
Mrs. Thrity Shastri
Ms. Ranjana Mahadevia

Nothing would be possible without the Om Creations family. This includes the Trustees, Staff, Care Workers, Volunteers and our special students.



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Introduction

Welcome to a journey through which you can discover the unique management practice of an organisation which has been working towards redefining the capabilities of the differently-abled for the last two decades.

This book captures some of my learnings on what social innovation is and how it relates to the current challenges in the world:

- It describes the concept of integral management, and how we can capture social innovations in the context of an organisation like Om Creations
- It presents the Om Creations model of integral management
- It documents the transformation of each of the organisation's core functions

Each core function is described in detail along with examples, stories and the principles of how the core functions meet organisational and social needs. In the end, we look at how these core functions, being interrelated, form a perfect web of a holistic management system. This can be very useful, not only for scaling up the social enterprise in the future, but also to educate and train new people for working with Om Creations or other, similar social enterprises.



Background

The research has been carried out by GlobeOne Consulting, an organisation aiming to create change by uniting stakeholders working in the various aspects of development of human society.

Om Creations is pioneering an integral approach of management in the sphere of rehabilitating differently-abled young adults. GlobeOne Consulting took an interest in documenting innovations to illustrate how social enterprise functions in the Indian socioeconomic scenario. To fulfil this endeavour, we have created this book with the help of the Om Creations team and its supporters, along with an interactive presentation of films on diverse aspects of the organisation. The complete kit will be a starter's guide for people who wish to learn about social innovation and the integral management style of Om Creations. GlobeOne Consulting has enjoyed its association with Om Creations extremely, and hopes to continue its engagement in multiple ways in the future.

Rishabh Khanna has been the main person behind this project. He holds degrees in Economic Development, Environmental Law and Management, and International Law and Diplomacy, and is passionate about applying the principle of social biomimicry to the global economy and our collective connection to mother Earth. He has been associated with Om Creations, in one form or the other, for the last eleven years, and has been truly inspired by their work.

The other people from GlobeOne Consulting who have supported him are Nirjay Singh, Surendran Balachandran and Pinaki Dasgupta.

He also wishes to express gratitude to his parents and grandparents for supporting him in his endeavours.

We also feel that the readers and users of this book are part of our learning process, and we are open to their thoughts, suggestions and feedback.



PART I

Integral Management and Social Innovation

1.1 Shift from Technological Innovation to Social Innovation

What is social innovation?

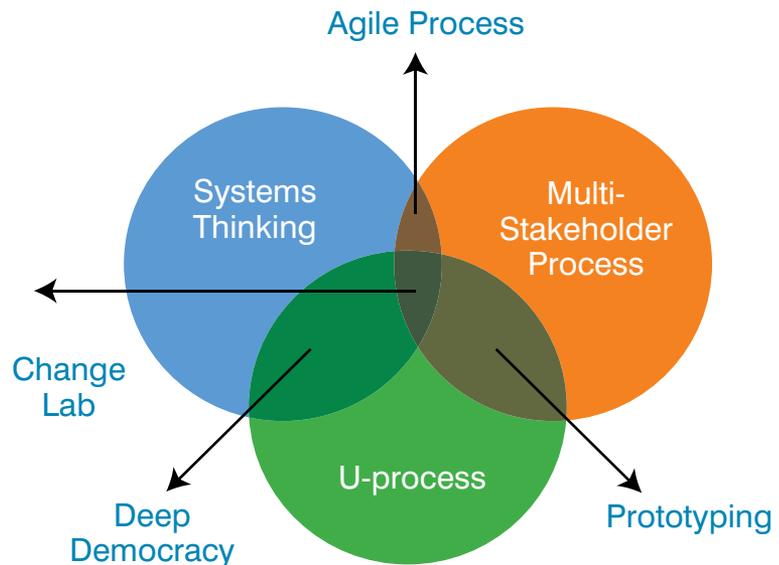
Innovation has become the prime focus area for many institutions in the government, private sector and civil society, but most of the global focus lies on technological innovation, and social innovation lags behind.

This prompted a discussion regarding the necessity of a different economic model, particularly in affluent industrial countries. Many governmental and nongovernmental organisations from around the world participated in this discussion in Rio de Janeiro at the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development. After 20 years of the Earth Summit, the same question is being raised at Rio+20 this year. This book is therefore being launched at a very appropriate time. There have been many definitions to social innovation, and in the next section, I try to explain my perception of social innovation and some of the principles behind the alchemy of social innovation.

1.2 The Alchemy of Social Innovation

The principles of 'movement' and 'structure', which are harnessed in an oppositional symbiosis to create the flow and energy manifested in matter, are expressed in pure economic terms of structure (land, labour, capital) and movement (entrepreneurial skill).

It is crucial that the microcosm of an organisation reflects the vision of the change it wishes to see in the socioeconomic scenario around it. According to the Change Lab process (methodology of the Reos Partners), for any vision to be achieved, the right stakeholders need



Change Lab is a methodology of social innovation deployed by Reos Partners

to be in the room, those who not only represent the vision but are also able to bring together the people, ideas and resources to implement it.

The process of engaging these stakeholders or members is also a key to enabling a deep, democratic dialogue and individual and collective swaraj (Gandhi's idea of political, economic, social and spiritual freedom). One of the processes that I have been practising is the Meshwork process (www.gaiasoft.com) for connecting individuals' vision and action to collective shared vision and action in shared strategy.

Another process to connect individuals is Otto Scharmer's 'U' process which takes people from co-sensing and co-presencing towards co-creation. These are the processes which enable people to see unity in diversity, to see that everyone is a part of the whole, and to see the colourful and vibrant diversity of life.

Mimicking nature to create 'Movement' and 'Structure'

There are many social innovations which we can learn from nature. This system of application is often called social biomimicry. It is believed that organisations are like living and breathing organisms, requiring structure and movement. The 'structure' is the strong masculine force which is manifested in organising, planning and financial monitoring. 'Movement' is a feminine force and deals with human relations and the development of a sense of family and community in the organisation. 'Movement' is also the invisible architecture of organisation culture and values. People could live in a culture with a certain set of values, outside the formal organisation structure. According to Anand Nadkarni (Vice President Group Corporate Sustainability, Tata Council for Community Initiatives), the Tata way is the formal organisation structure and its innate



The 'movement' and 'structure' are complimentary; the opposition and contrasting force creates energy for the organisation

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For organisations like Om Creations, it is critical to document the beliefs, values, systems and culture beneath the visible functions of management. These hidden systems can often be the key points for their journey of transformation.
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'Tataness' is the invisible aura of the organisation which exists beyond the formal institution. The 'movement' and 'structure' are complimentary; the opposition and contrasting force creates energy for the organisation. Adam Kahane from Reos Partners sees this opposition as the opposition of 'power' and 'love', and the Hindu culture represents this dichotomy as that of Shiva and Shakti.

According to Collins and Porras (2002), visionary companies embrace the genius of the 'and' — they prefer to be both pragmatic and idealistic, rather than choosing one 'or' the other. Thus, movement and structure are part of most successful organisations and there have been attempts to capture both.

1.3 Integral Management as a Tool for Social Innovation

Integral management is a cutting-edge framework which allows organisations to navigate through the 'chaos' and 'order' dynamic of their function. Some of the principles of integral management create a process for an organisation to better understand themselves and their cultural context. There are several tools which can be used in this process, one of them being a functional perspective of an integral organisation. This perspective looks

at transforming the core functions of an organisation for it to become an integral organisation. Thus, production becomes knowledge creation, marketing becomes community development, finance is sustainable development and human resource management is spiritual development. In the case of Om Creations, production is therapeutic and of healing value for the beneficiaries.

This framework is empowering to all the people who are involved in the organisation as they act in solidarity and oneness. Thus, integral management is a very important tool for social innovation, because it allows organisations to capture value in things which are often hidden in a capitalistic economy. For organisations like Om Creations, it is critical to document the beliefs, values, systems and culture beneath the visible functions of management. These hidden systems can often be the key points for their journey of transformation. For society and the economy in general, we ought to change our lens with the new paradigm of integral management. Our effort is a small step to document the work of Om Creations in this new lens and set the stage for scaling up transformation to happen in a holistic manner.

PART II

Om Creations

2.1 Om Creations — An Integral Organisation

An important element of Indian thought is the theory of karma. Karma means action, and generally, the karma theory can be formulated as “every action gives its own fruits”. This, indeed, is adding new utility to available resources.

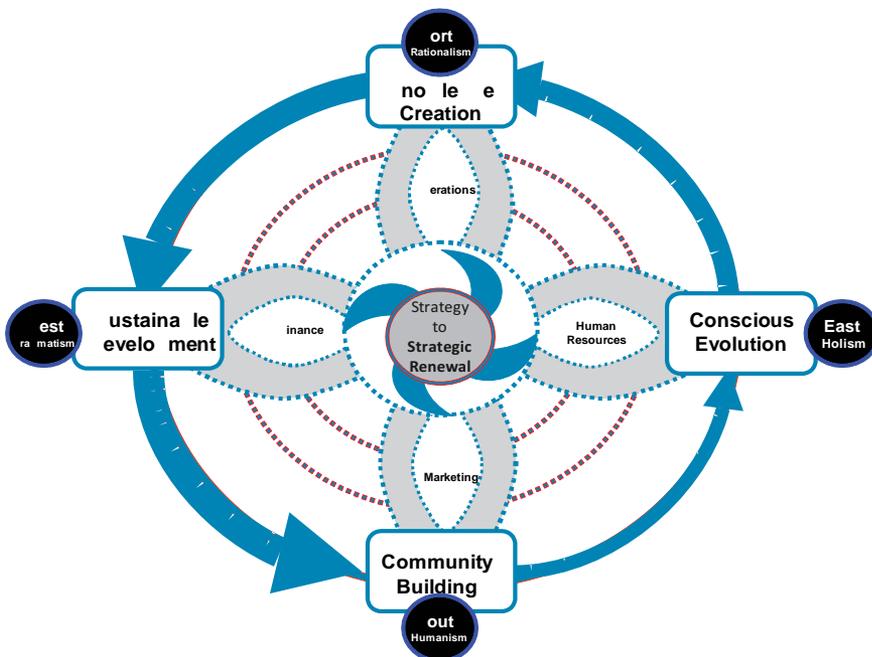
Karma, in effect, stands for the creation of “impersonal wealth”. Capitalism and the market economy are based on the creation of personal wealth, whereas in communism, ownership of capital is concentrated within the state. The concept of impersonal wealth is totally different. Wealth is something to which individuals have access but it does not belong to any individual or group. In the karma theory, profit results from the combined efforts of all factors of production, and should therefore belong collectively to the community as a whole.



Dr. Radhike Khanna (extreme left) with Vasudha Jain, Mandira Bedi (centre), and the rest of the beneficiaries

According to Chansarkar (author of Artha: Science of Oriental Economics Rediscovered, 1997), humans struggle in the reign of profit and loss. He believes that the members of a society cannot imagine themselves in a mutual-gain scenario, where

there is neither profit nor loss. The system of pricing products is also focused on profits. The consumers belong to the same culture of greed, and accumulate goods which are not useful for them. A free economy can only be created if we are unattached to the fruits of our labour. Public utilities can only be created through impersonal wealth for the benefit of all.



Model of integral management (Lessem and Scheffer, 2009)

2.2 The Om Creations Journey

Om Creations has tread a journey which has been truly transformational for every stakeholder associated with it. I have had the privilege to be part of this journey and experience many burning issues in the path first hand.

Over the years, the organisation has created capabilities to navigate themselves through various ups and downs, without losing its beneficiary-focused approach. As an integral organisation, it has managed to stay rooted in the Indian cultural context while delivering services to the modern globalised world.

From an integral perspective, they have managed to transform the four functions of an organisation. In the next few pages, I shall explore both, the structure and the spirit of the organisation with an integral framework, go deeper into each of the functions, and determine how authentic these are. I would also like to draw linkages of the core functions with each other to make the symbiosis more visible, thus looking at how community development (marketing), healing (production), spiritual development (human resources) and sustainable development (finance) are integrated and closely linked.

We will also look at how the organisation has reinvented relationships with all factors of production and other stakeholders of the organisation. Lastly, we will capture both, the formal structure (masculine pragmatic side) and the softer movement aspect (feminine idealistic side).

2.3 Foundations and Philosophy

“God places the heaviest burden on those who can carry its weight. If God sends us on difficult paths, we are provided strong shoes. All glory comes from daring to begin. So we dared to dream and so began the momentous story of Om Creations.”
— Zaver Sepoy

Creating an organisation where the differently-abled can realise their creative selves and harness their potential, thus allowing them to stand on their own feet by being productive and earning members of society, and supporting them to have a life of dignity till the end — this is the mission of Om Creations.

Om Creations Trust is a registered non-profit organisation, a unique and pioneering project that was started in 1991 for developmentally challenged women. It is run on the conviction that with professional training and support, women born with Down syndrome and other mental disabilities can imbibe professional skills and become productive contributors to society.

The young beneficiaries are absorbed into Om Creations upon graduation from S. P. J. Sadhana School. Today, it has 66 specially-abled women producing unique items in three departments — Om Foods, Om Visual Arts & Crafts and Om Flowers — all of which are sold in the Om Creations shop as well at other retail outlets through exhibitions, website and private orders.

A challenging journey of 20 years has made Om Creations unique, and it has grown into an organisation

which is a haven for differently-abled individuals. Initiated by the visionary Dr. Radhike Khanna and parents of young adults who graduated from S. P. J. Sadhana School, it has evolved today into a successful venture.

According to Dr. Khanna, we have a beautiful relationship with energy in every dimension. Normally we talk about only three — the economic, environmental and the social — but there is a fourth dimension which is often left out, and that is the spiritual dimension.

The spiritual is the energetic plane which is embedded in every other material plane on the social, environmental and economic level. Om Creations was facing major challenges in becoming sustainable, and Dr. Khanna had the intuition that there was an energy blockage in the organisation. Barbara Ann Brennan describes this as dead orgone energy (DOR), the energy which vibrates below the frequency needed for life, which can penetrate deep into the earth. To remove these blockages, Dr. Khanna had created an energy grid underneath the land. According to her, this has greatly helped the organisation.

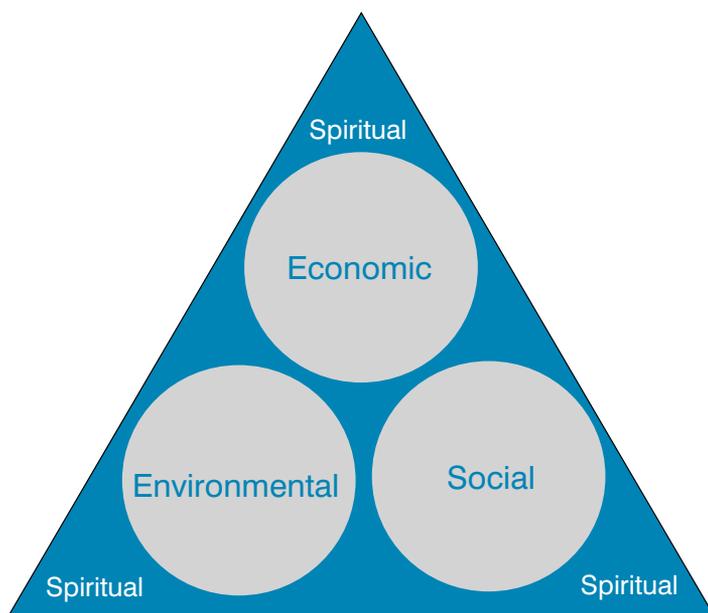
Now the physical place has been radiating with energy and become a magnet for resources, people and ideas.

Moral core: Om as a social enterprise

According to Hindu tradition, ‘AUM’ (usually transcribed as Om) is the original sound from which the Universe came into existence.

‘A’ in AUM means acceleration. Productivity is another word for accelerated production; the differently-abled in the organisation are made productive by being supported to find their creative potential. If products are made with positive intentions and love, they radiate with energy.

‘U’ signifies unity among factors of production. It also stands for utility. Most of the products are created from concept to the final product by



The spiritual is the energetic plane which is embedded in every other material plane on the social, environmental and economic level

the same team, and every time they create something, they think about how it will be useful for the client. When a waste fabric is converted into a bag, it is adding utility to the fabric. It is impossible to create utility without combining factors together, and so, utility and unity are connected.

‘M’ stands for management, method and money. If utility and unity have to be purposeful, they have to be supported by scientific management, modern methodologies and money markets. Therefore, Om Creations has made a special effort into organised management, by having a dedicated staff for Administration, Accounts, PR and Marketing, and Departmental Heads. These efforts have shown clear results in the last three years.

According to Chansarkar, “A community inspired by the ‘A’ principle has cast away its sleep and is awakened by the reality of life. ‘U’, on the other hand, corresponds to the realisation of the inner strength of the person. ‘A’ gives science and technology, ‘U’ gives the art of utility to the existing creation; ‘A’ provides an objective approach, ‘U’ gives a subjective dimension. ‘M’ identifies totally with the results of ‘A’ and ‘U’. When ‘AUM’ comes together, an economic miracle comes about.” This is true in the case of Om Creations. Constant wakefulness, inner strength and total identification with planning and development gives rise to A+U+M, pronounced OM.

The organisation at the core has been practising and living by morals and values based on the philosophy of the Founder Trustees. Living and practising value-based leadership has made most of the management fearless. There have been many instances where these values of the organisation have been tested.

There have been many occasions to display courage in the organisation. Dr. Khanna has been a leader herself, here. One such instance was when Dr. Khanna initially decided to set up Om Creations in the King George V Memorial, and most parents did not accept the place. They felt that the

place was in shambles and there were no resources available for putting up a structure.

In order to get these resources, Dr. Khanna showed her project report to a philanthropist, but unfortunately, this prospective donor threw the report on the floor and told her that such children could never work nor could they ever earn. He said, “Like Mother Teresa, you should just take care of them without expecting anything in return.” He rejected the entire Om Creations project.

However, they continued to persevere with conviction, and believed that things would turn around one day. The place had very little infrastructure, and a lot of effort had to be put in to build the Centre, since it was in a dilapidated state and needed a lot of restoration. At that time, providentially, the Times of India Foundation understood the essence of this project and supported Om by giving them the first installment of seed money to build the Centre.

After the structure was put in place, there were many legal requirements in order to make the kitchen operational. There were many impediments along the way but the management persevered and treaded the right path, even as they faced many challenges, such as greedy land sharks who were eyeing the land used by the Centre for converting it into a commercial project.

After a lot of red tape, the Trustees finally decided to resort to the Right to Information (RTI) Act to understand

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the sole purpose for which the land was intended.

Once they were convinced that the land could not be used for any commercial purpose, they approached the Governor who gave them his whole-hearted support to create a new board for safeguarding the land.

2.4 Governance

There are formal policies and procedures for governance and management. Om Creations follows strict procedures for recruitment and payroll, medical fitness, remuneration, probation, suspension, background verification, relevant educational qualification and satisfactory references. Rules are followed for financial credit policies and stringent donation policies are followed.

The board strength and composition

Sr. No.	Name	Profession	Gender	Age
1.	Mr. Kersi Kapadia	Architect	Male	74
2.	Dr. Radhika Khanna	Educationalists Rehabilitation Consultant, Founder Trustee	Female	49
3.	Mrs. Durga Jain	Patron and Founder Trustee	Female	76
4.	Mrs. Thrity Shastri	Founder Trustee, Treasurer	Female	75
5.	Ms. Ranjana Mahadevia	Trustee	Female	54



Mr. Kersi Kapadia, Mrs. Thrity Shastri, Dr. Radhike Khanna, Mrs. Durga Jain, Ms. Ranjana Mahadevia

The board carries out all functions pertaining to internal functioning and the external relations of the organisation. The board focuses on issues of policy and identity in addition to the issues of day-to-day implementation of programmes. The role of the board is to promote and provide opportunities for skilled/unskilled specially-abled young adults and to employ skilled individuals who have a kind heart and the patience to train these students.

- A Ph.D. in special education, Dr. Radhike Khanna epitomises total commitment in the training, education and rehabilitation of specially-abled and autistic persons. Dr. Khanna has already devoted 25 years of her life to her cause with unwavering focus and rare courage. Believing in practising what she preaches, Dr. Khanna broke away from the traditional mould to spark revolutionary, out-of-the-box strategies for the multiple-challenged. She created the first and only five-year polytechnic course in the world that guaranteed jobs to multiply-disabled, mentally-challenged autistic individuals. Dr. Khanna

has also worked tirelessly alongside corporates and has placed over 1,000 specially-abled individuals in productive roles in society. Her international expertise also led her to train Nigerian, Sri Lankan and Kenyan professionals to help train mentally-challenged persons with effective work skills. Dr. Khanna, a National Award Winner, is the Founder Trustee of the Om Creations Trust. Dr. Khanna oversees catering as well as the visual arts department on a daily basis. The daily routine activities of the Centre are monitored by her in coordination with staff/volunteers, followed by written weekly reports. She also helps the organisation in presentation, packaging and financial costing.

- Mrs. Durga Jain is present at the centre on all working days and is instrumental in creating new designs for the products in the visual arts department.
- Mrs. Thrity Shastri overlooks the financial aspects of the Centre and also takes care of its accounts and administrative aspects. She also monitors the progress of staff and young adults throughout the year. In the past,

she had many more managerial responsibilities.

- Ms. Ranjana Mahadevia is directly responsible for the catering section.
- Mr. Kersi Kapadia looks into all the payments made/received by the Centre and also looks into funding.

The welfare of the students is the main objective of the Trustees. Therefore, they are closely involved not only in policy matters but also in the day-to-day functioning of the Centre.

The appointment of the board of Trustees is governed by the Trust Deed and subsequently by co-opting for new members only after a minuted resolution and the same being submitted to the Charity Commissioner. As per the Trust rules, Trustees are for life.

Ms. Ranjana Mahadevia has been co-opted recently to help in the effective growth of the organisation and help in the governance of the Centre, as the strength of the young adults has grown from 8 to 66 beneficiaries.

The board meets quarterly and attendance of two-thirds of the board members is mandatory.

The board is very effective in ensuring a shared vision and a common perspective on the direction of the NGO; there is also a collective commitment by the board towards the well-being of the organisation.

The active, alert and functioning board, which feels both a legal and moral obligation with regard to financial and statutory accountability, takes the necessary checks-and-balances for proper recording and reporting according to agreed targets and rules. The board oversees compliance by providing a set of measures needed in the organisation, such as: Internal Audit, VAT Audit, External Audit, submitting reports to the Charitable Commissioner, possession of food license, fire brigade permit, NGO license, FCRA return, tax return and statutory audit.

PART III

Creating an Integral Organisation

3.1 Transforming the Four Functions of the Organisation

So far in the book, I have been describing my perception of social innovation and introducing the history and context in which Om Creations became a unique social innovator. In this next section, I will go deeper into how Om Creations is following the paradigm of Transformation Management. We will notice how the core functions of the organisation are fundamentally different from a conventional organisation.

These core areas of management are delivering both on the structural ('Shiva') and relational ('Shakti') needs of the organisation. Thus, the production of creative products gives a dignified livelihood to the beneficiaries as well as being therapeutic to them. This happens in the same way as marketing enables the organisation to become more visible to the outside world and build a community of friends and supporters, mainly to bring

sustainability to the organisation as well as to the beneficiaries. The other two focus areas, Human Resources and Finance, follow the same pattern, where finance is meeting material and relational needs for now and the future. Human Resources is one of the main functions of any organisation, and here, most of the people have been able to align their mind, body and soul to the vision of the organisation.

3.2 Production as Healing

Archana Mehta, the head of the visual arts department, joined in 1992 and started to take care of one child. From once in a week, she continued to do so for six days a week, over a period of two years.

When they shifted from Shikhar Kunj to King George, Om Creations was an institution only for ladies. In the new barracks, they also initiated the food and catering service, where initially they only offered snacks and savories.

The embroidery and art section was merged, and they had 13 beneficiaries with them. They developed new products like napkins, table mats, bags and tie-and-dye bags.

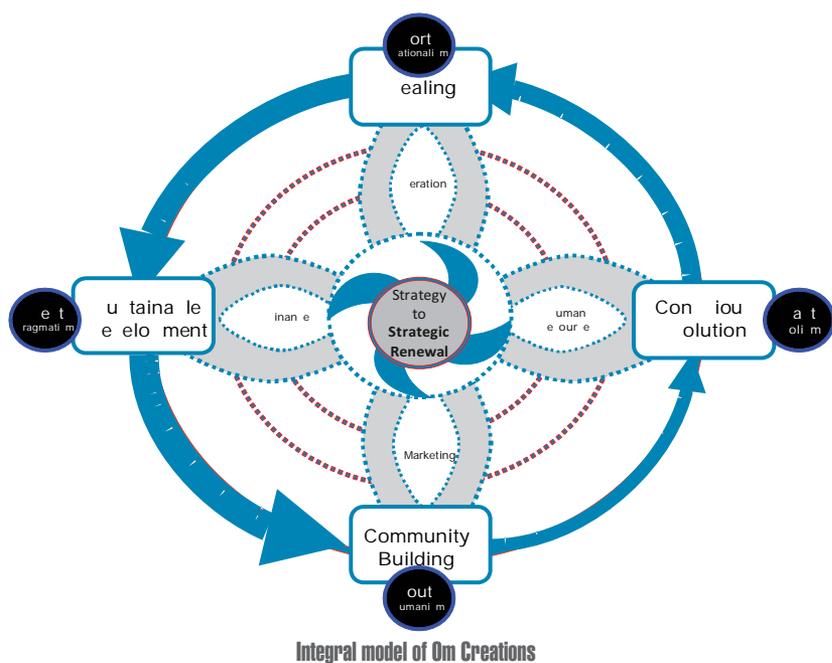
Today, the organisation has two full-fledged production departments. One is for visual arts products, which includes crochet, ceramics, embroidery, etc. The other is a food and catering section, which creates one of the best chocolates in town and serves everything from snacks to a meal.

Om Creations is able to achieve a decent turnover compared to most other organisations in this sector, with the help of certain underlying principles which have helped this function and aligned it with the core values and purpose of the organisation.

Innovation for creating a diverse portfolio of unique products

Om Creations innovates all the time with new ideas and products according to the market demand. Om Creations started with the production of only cocktail and dinner napkins, then went into making bags of various sizes, followed by table mats with dinner napkins. Today, they produce 150 items which are unique and not available in the market. Their products are sought after not only by individuals but large corporates too.

They have also diversified into making ceramic items, pottery, crochet items, silk paintings, paintings on sleeper wood, paper flowers, *torans* and *diyās*, which are sold at large exhibitions at the IMC (Indian Merchant Chambers), the





Archana, head of the visual arts department, mentoring Natasha

Marwar Show, Sahachari Foundation, Shaila Trust and Crescent Moon to name a few.

Kabaad ka jugaad (reuse and recycle of waste for making new products)

There was a lot of wastage in the initial stages, but Om Creations stored the waste and reused it in creative ways. The team believes in never throwing anything away; waste of one product adds utility to another. Many people give donations to Om Creations in kind, so the production team is constantly thinking of unique ways of adding utility to such material. For instance, old fabric might be used to make bags, paper napkins, table mats and coasters.

Waste within the organisation is being reused to make other products. Smaller pieces of fabric are made into key chains, rugs and mats.

There seems to be an extraordinary intelligence within the institution which is capable of creating beautiful products, which have utility and a market value, from waste.

This has really helped the organisation reduce its costs, their impact on the environment and be more creative.

Magic of thinking and delivering big

The organisation has a lot of self-belief and its vision goes beyond

the boundaries of a conventional organisation. From its early days, Om Creations believed that it could serve both retail and corporate clients.

Their first corporate order was Mahindra & Mahindra, who commissioned 5000 bags to Om Creations to be delivered in 12 working days. This was a great learning experience for them, as one of the processes to make the bags was very intensive and they had to get many volunteers to do that order. After that experience, they had sufficient confidence to take on orders from anywhere in the world.

“Aligning the talent of beneficiaries with what needs to be created by the organisation is extremely critical. “Vasudha had a gift of packing, she would just push away the other employees so that she could do all the packing.”



The magic of thinking and delivering big had led the organisation to move towards a large turnover spread over the year.

Creating a beneficiary-focused approach

The thought behind this is to connect the unique spirit of every beneficiary and inspire creativity which fulfils the soul.

Aligning the talent of beneficiaries with what needs to be created by the organisation is extremely critical. As Archana puts it, “Vasudha had a gift of packing. She would just push away the other employees so that she could do all the packing.” According to Dr. Khanna, “Vasudha was a passionate packer and could even pack with closed eyes.”

Working conditions need to be appropriate for the beneficiaries. For example, beneficiaries like to work under white tube lights. They feel more comfortable in this lighting.



Shreya, a young beneficiary who loves working with ceramics

If they are used to certain people, they don't like changes. If people leave the organisation, they became very insecure.

Another challenge they faced was to get the old beneficiaries to work with the new beneficiaries creating the right mix. For example, the more talented younger employees do the intricate, inner part of the crochet, and the older ones do the simpler processes. The special employees are able to do most of the processes in production.

Avinash, who has been working here for 18 months in the ceramics section, says that they always need to think about how a certain product can be made by the beneficiaries. They develop the entire production process according to the needs of the beneficiaries.

The skill set of beneficiaries has been increasing over a number of years, and volunteers use different methods to help them make the products. For example, for beading, they put different coloured beads in different boxes so that it's easier for the beneficiaries to string them together.

Work that heals

As already explained, the Om Creations programme is designed to suit the needs of their young adults and train them to be on par with ever-growing needs. Most of these young adults have soft, cushioned hands with short fingers, which enable them to work skillfully and artistically with their hands.

Shreya, who has been working with Avinash and Nutan in the Ceramics department, has changed a lot. Earlier, she used to talk to herself all the time and was lazy. Ever since she has started working with clay, she has become more focused. Working with clay is also very therapeutic for them.

Nutan felt that a lot of change has happened over the last three years, and the beneficiaries are also opting for change a lot more.

The ageing special employees need extra care, as they are not very productive. The volunteers have to tell them stories and keep them engaged. The plan is to keep the students who are ageing with the organisation until they relocate or die. The routine in the organisation

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The master chefs of Om Creations



Mrs. Durga Jain leading from the front at the Gallery Art & Soul, at the Art Trisomy art exhibition.

“
The parents would never feel that this was not their job and have been extremely supportive since the beginning. Archana and her colleagues had a tough time understanding the beneficiaries; understanding Vasudha, especially, was a monumental task.
 ”

keeps them healthy and is a source of energy for them. There is a tremendous sense of belonging for them in the organisation. They enjoy being part of the community with their friends, which keeps them happy.

Parents leading from the front

When there were just three people working in the organisation (a printer, a tailor and Archana), Mrs. Durga Jain and the other parents would also work along with the team. The parents would never feel that this was not their job and have been extremely supportive since the beginning. Archana and her colleagues had a tough time understanding the beneficiaries; understanding Vasudha, especially, was a monumental task.

“Durga aunty would help a lot in helping me understand Vasudha. Durga aunty had to make her talk to us.” — Archana Mehta

Kamal, who is another beneficiary, was a chatter box, completely opposite of Vasudha, and her parents have also been very supportive of the organisation.

Not much could have happened, if the parents did not lead from the front. Their support is greatly appreciated in making support staff more comfortable with their children. Many parents volunteer for the organisation and support the organisation in multiple ways.

Discovering the special master craftsman in each beneficiary

“The beneficiaries are very punctual and are focused on their work; however, they need a lot of attention and guidance, and some of them need one-to-one attention.

“They are very empathic, and do not like being stressed about work. They will work at their own pace, but keep working at home even after the workshop hours.” — Archana Mehta

Every special employee has a unique potential which is waiting to be tapped. It takes many years for the staff and teachers to discover the special talents, but once these hidden talents are discovered, they start to blossom and radiate with energy and enthusiasm.

“
**Om Creations was
 a mandatory visit,
 as some of my ex
 students were working
 there. My first visit
 to Om Creations was
 fascinating, as I
 could never imagine
 how much a Down
 syndrome person
 could achieve.**
 ”

“There are some special employees who could be very dangerous with knives, but there are others who are suited for it. Monica and Priya are specialists in packaging and very passionate about how they do it. We miss these children when they are not around.” — Vaishali Waghchaure

Young beneficiaries like Alifya can create 150 bags each day, with dedication and love for what they are creating.

The beneficiaries also consistently amaze the staff by pointing out mistakes in the work that the support staff does; many of them have learned a great deal by working with them.

Leveraging efforts for greater return

“Om Creations was a mandatory visit, as some of my ex students were working there. My first visit to Om Creations was fascinating, as I could never imagine how much a Down

syndrome person could achieve.” — Ms. Ranjana Mahadevia

Especially in the food section, Om was growing by leaps and bounds. They were so dedicated and enthusiastic that this inspired Ms. Ranjana Mahadevia to make a change. She felt that something was missing in the way they were doing lunch service, as it was not fetching adequate returns for the efforts that they were putting in. They started the chocolate programme, and today they are doing 3,500 kg of chocolates per year.

Thus we see that creating products at Om Creations has the modern management (masculine) aspects of efficiency, quality, customer focus, innovation and scale. At the same time, it has preserved its identity by being focused on the beneficiaries through the healing attributes of the production process, which have enhanced their physical and mental capabilities.

Fine chocolates, made by hand from the choicest of ingredients. What makes them especially unique, is the incredible skill and indomitable spirit of the special women who craft each piece with a child-like passion. Amidst much laughter and banter, they go about making these little marvels in a cheery, spotlessly clean workplace. Truly a labour of love!

ASSORTED
One kg - 945 ₹
Half kg - 473 ₹
Quarter kg - 236 ₹
ALMOND ROCKS
One kg - 1150 ₹
Half kg - 575 ₹
Quarter kg - 250 ₹



Ladies from Harvard University visiting Om Creations

However, simply creating unique products would not have been sufficient. The products needed to be useful to the community so that they would have sale value. Thus the next function of marketing and community building is crucial.

3.3 Marketing as Community Development

Om Creations had been not very effective at this function in the first decade or so of its operation. In the last three years, with the help of additional support from the Tata's and the addition of Zaver and Roshni as volunteers, the Om Creations brand has been enhanced in a major way.

There are several efforts which are being made in this direction, some of them have been described below through the experiences of the marketing team.

Education and awareness

According to Zaver, marketing Om products is a big challenge, as there is still a change that needs to be brought about in most people's

mindsets. When people hear that products, especially food, are made by the developmentally-challenged they are apprehensive on several scores — will the products be hygienically prepared? Can they be compared to the best in the market? Will they cost less than the rest of the same type? Hence creating awareness is of major importance.

Even educated members of society have a very cynical mindset, and they feel that products made by developmentally challenged young adults are unhygienic and hence refrain from buying the products. In 2010, during Diwali, when Om Creations approached multinational companies to buy their chocolates, they refused, doubting the level of



Pasta event with Rahul Bose and Jaspal Singh Bindra, Group Executive Director and a member of the Board of Standard Chartered Bank

hygiene. This was a very big lesson for the team.

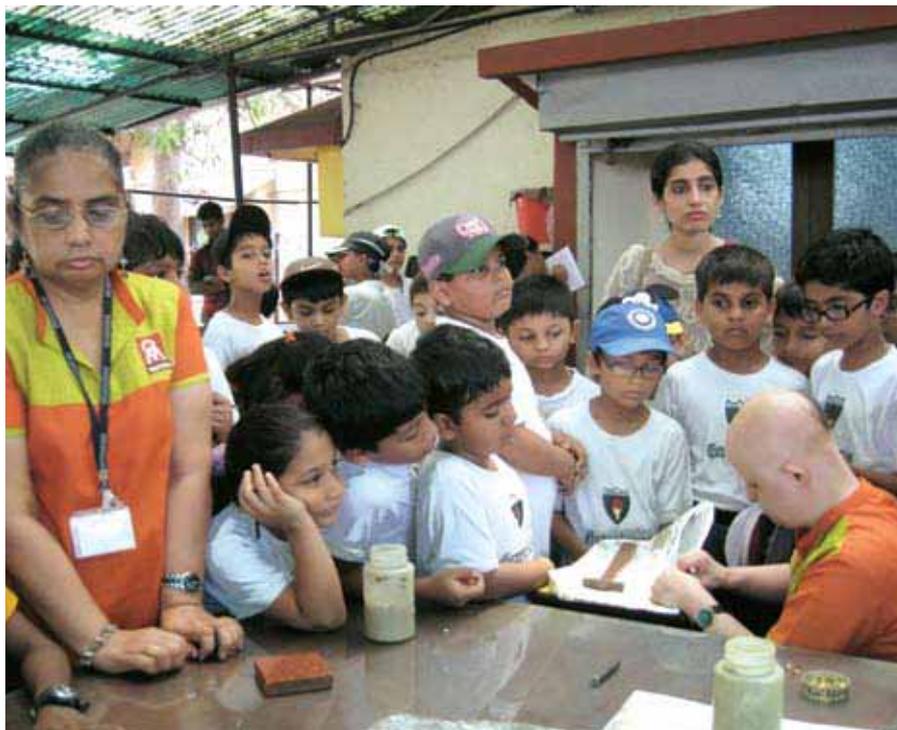
Since this statement came from educated people, it sent a message that society at large has still not accepted developmentally challenged young adults with open hearts, but this was taken up as a challenge. The multinational personnel who refused to buy Om Creation's chocolates were invited to the centre and were awed by the high hygiene standards and the professional way in which chocolates and other products were produced and packed.

Relational perspective

Building personal relationships, not only with clients, but also within the organisation with staff and students, parents of the students, and support staff, is an important objective of senior management.

Om Creations participates in Bazaar Days at corporate offices, creating awareness in society and learning, in turn, about the demands of the corporate world. They innovate and incorporate suggestions according to the feedback.

They also have corporate members visiting their centre and working



Green Lawns school children observing Nilufer work

alongside the young adults, exposing them to the difficulties they face, which creates an empathy towards them. This relationship leads to these visitors buying the products created by the young adults as and when they can.

Building relationships with corporate houses and others is the key to

marketing. Developing personal contacts with CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) heads as well as personnel in HR (Human Resources) departments and persuading them to visit Om to see the working of the organisation for themselves goes a long way in building rapport.

Once a client comes to Om, they experience a sense of belonging to the place, and there is a continuous relationship, akin to home and family.

Making people step into the shoes of the differently-abled

Om Creations not only encourages individuals, but also school and college students as well as corporate employees to experience working alongside their beneficiaries. "The question that many may ask is 'What can we learn from such an organisation?'" feels Zaver. Personally, after many years of working in the corporate industry with organisations such as Indian hotels, she believes that what the corporate world had not taught her, she has learned at Om.

Through their CSR activities, Om allows its visitors to be totally involved in the working of the centre, in the Food as well as the Art Departments.



Debasmita Pani, CSR Coordinator; Abdulla Khan, General Manager Materials; and Chef Gajanand from Taj Lands End came to teach recipes to the Om Creations staff and beneficiaries

Chefs from the Four Seasons and the Taj come regularly to work with the students and support staff to share and learn recipes.

Their catering section serves large corporations, supplying meals on a day-to-day basis, as well as for their corporate parties. Various health shops avail of Om's high-end food products, made by their special employees. Leading hotels also use their gift bags and other gift items for their guests.

Marketing from the horse's mouth

Nobody can market their products better than these young adults themselves. Be it food or art items — they are very proud of the products they make, and they love to be part of any exhibition; hence, whenever they have any special event planned,

they always make sure that they are involved.

Many Om Creations clients agree that the beneficiaries are great sales people; they are convincing, authentic and are able to create a bond of trust. Their qualities for selling their own products would be hard to get from the outside.

Cultural marketing

Om Creations has been very intelligent in connecting with the cultural ethos and the diversity of festivals in India.

There are themes for all festivals and festivities, be it Ganesh Chaturthi, when chocolate *modaks* are made, Diwali when they produce, pack and deliver Om branded chocolates, or chocolate hearts for Valentine's

Day, in decorative heart-shaped boxes. Additionally, they cater to consulates for their National Days. Their Christmas cakes were very successful with one and all, including the Executive Chef of the Taj, who came to Om to teach the beneficiaries and their chef to bake perfect plum cakes.

A culture of celebration keeps the energy of the organisation very high. During Diwali, the attitude of being alive and celebrating every moment motivates them to endure longer shifts to keep up with the huge season demand.

Challenges with the corporate world

A huge challenge is faced when beneficiaries have to complete an order from a multinational, as multinationals expect order completion within their usual stipulated time. However, since Om products are handmade by the beneficiaries, it obviously takes more time than it would with a regular vendor. So, it is a big challenge to break this corporate mindset and make corporations understand that Om Creations items require more production time.

Corporations have to keep in mind that they are buying products that are not outsourced and are made by the specially-abled. Therefore, they need to ensure ample time is allocated to Om Creations for delivering the order.

The other big challenge while working with corporations is that the quality of the products needs to be up to the mark as they can easily reject the order. Some corporations have rejected orders in the past and the loss has been borne by Om Creations.

Loyalty of clients is another major issue, as most customers want new products every season, and so the organisation needs to build the product list and community of clients each year.

Marketing communication

It is critical that the organisation is communicating with its clients

Sample Marketing Communication

Young adults of Om Creations Trust are very grateful to your organisation for giving them an opportunity to prove themselves time and again.

The prices of Om Creations items are as follows:

Tissue Batwa (Pink & Gold)	@ Rs. 55/-
Paper Batwa (Pink & Gold)	@ Rs. 45/-
Crochet Coasters (4x1)	@ Rs. 300/-
Wrapping Paper	@ Rs. 45/-
Gents' Kit	@ Rs. 75/-
Ladies' Kit (with zipper)	@ Rs. 85/-
Cane Basket Cover	@ Rs. 125/-
Black Case	@ Rs. 100/-

Prices for all the above items are inclusive of taxes.

The continuous order placed by your organisation is going to keep our young adults busy and this means a lot.

We are indeed very grateful for your support.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Thank you and warm regards,
Zaver and Roshni

Hence, we see that marketing at Om Creations is a complex exercise combining reaching out with a deep level of authenticity, providing a valuable service to the community, and staying true to Om's identity. Marketing also carries the huge responsibility of developing and nurturing relationships through education, sharing and exchange.



Organisation trip to Ootacamund

in an appropriate manner. The communication needs to allow clients to trust the organisation with respect to the authenticity of the cause, as well as the value and quality of the products that they are buying from them. The box on page 16 is an example of an email written by the marketing team to their client.

Marketing through education, outreach and PR could expand the community of support for Om Creations, but this takes a lot of energy and creativity. Thus, developing the human and spiritual being is as important as any other function in the organisation. In the next section, we shall see how Om Creations has co-created a space for a learning community within the organisation.

3.4 Human Resources as Spiritual Development

“There is a slight difference in how we work with the senior students at Sadhana school and Om Creations. In Om Creations, the beneficiaries

have a greater sense of belonging and co-ownership. Om Creations is their workshop, they learn to share, they learn to be with peers, and they learn to be much more independent.”
— Ms. Ranjana Mahadevia

Om Creations as an institution is a learning community for the beneficiaries and the support staff. They are doing many things to be productive and create revenue through the workshop. Yet, at the same time, for many it’s a happy and safe place to belong — a family of friends who are there for each other.

Here are some of the sutras that have allowed Om Creations to nurture and create a thriving team.

Aligning the IQ (intelligence quotient) and the EQ (emotional quotient)

The Trust has invested in qualified people (people hired from Sir J. J. School of Arts) so that they can train the young adults and make them more skilled. For example, Shreya

“
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”



Shruti working tirelessly on her sculpture

can work on ceramic products for hours together without feeling tired; Purvi does painting on silk scarves. Building the creative skills of these young adults enhances their dexterity, and believe it or not, creativity is a lifeline for them, creating a livelihood not only for these young adults but also for educated members of society.

However, having the right technical skills is not sufficient. According to

Ms. Ranjana Mahadevia, training the support staff has been the most challenging issue, as they need to have a balance between technical skills and high emotional quotient.

Om Creations needs professional staff who not only have the appropriate technical skills, but also have the appropriate behaviour and attitudes for working with the beneficiaries of Om Creations. They are not there for the sole purpose of making money, and that is something

that has been instilled in the staff since the beginning. The staff has been given the space to be creative so that they can manifest their creativity in new and unique products for the organisation.

The support staff needs to be creative in not only making new products, but also for coming up with new ways for engaging the differently-abled, making sure that all of the beneficiaries are harnessing their true potential. The organisation requires one support staff for every three beneficiaries.

Nurturing the body and health

Not many are aware that these young adults have a very flexible spine, and hence they can work on a job for hours together without feeling tired. However, as they age, the productivity level of these special employees reduces. In order to keep their productivity going, Om Creations has initiated a senior citizen project whereby attention is given to beneficiaries' motor skills, so that they don't need any kind of psychiatric help and heavy medication to cope with ageing. To this effect, Om also introduced homeopathy treatment by Dr. Anita Daswani, and it has greatly helped beneficiaries with various psychological disorders.

Weekly yoga is extremely important for beneficiaries, as it is an exercise for the body, mind and soul. It helps them mentally and makes them flexible and calm.

“
**Not many are aware
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adults have a very
flexible spine, and
hence they can work
on a job for hours
together without
feeling tired.**



Brain Gym is done three times a day. It is a form of exercise, which helps both sides of the brain to function in coordination. It awakens beneficiaries' concentration powers and enables them to perform their tasks in a better way. It is also a physical form of exercise which keeps them active, so it is beneficial again for the mind as well as for the body.

Beneficiaries are kept agile, and their creativity is kept on continuous "go" because they strive to continue with the routine activities like Brain Gym, yoga, picnics and travel.

Art of Living courses were attended by several staff members. Such courses have helped some of the staff to manage their anger and other emotional issues at work.

Human resource policies

The organisation has a comprehensive human resource policy which makes the staff secure about their future and old age.

The HR policy includes: appointment letter and staff orientation, employee salary benefit, travel rules and regulation, holidays and leave, employee termination rule, performance evaluation system, policy for annual performance evaluation, communication policy, fixed assets policy, finance policy. The full strength of the organisation is 19 staff and 66 young adults, 9 care workers and 7 dedicated volunteers.

Training and development

Om Creations strives to be a learning organisation. Professional staff attend Thursday quarterly meetings, which are an avenue to share critical information and to cover professional development topics. The staff at every level engages in three general types of training and development programmes: formal group training and development, mentoring programmes and self-directed learning. From orientation programs to life-long learning initiatives, Om Creations is fully committed to enhancing staff

“
Brain Gym is done three times a day. It is a form of exercise, which helps both sides of the brain to function in coordination. It awakens beneficiaries' concentration powers and enables them to perform their tasks in a better way.
”



Om Creations team having fun on a learning journey

**“
I began spending time
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few months. The more
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”**

members’ professional as well as personal growth. Om Creations dedicates a lot of time, financial and human resources to their training and development programmes.

In 2010, a workshop using some tools from Meshwork and the change lab was conducted at the centre by Rishabh Khanna, a leading professional in organisational development. A Meshwork is a way for people and organisations to self organise, using online and face-to-face dialogues to develop collaborations, exchange knowledge and resources and make a greater impact. The basis of a Meshwork is to commit to a meaningful and ambitious goal, and then to find the people and resources to develop the structures to achieve that goal.

“I began spending time with each person in the organisation, listening to their struggles in the last few months. The more I heard them, the lighter they became. I could feel the healing happening in front of my eyes. I had never sensed a joy in listening to these people before. It was the first time I saw that

just listening can bring a smile to someone’s face.

“As there seemed to be an absence of team spirit, shared vision and trust, I decided to get all the employees of the organisation under one roof for a workshop. It was a tall order in the midst of all their work to convince them to come, but I managed in the end to get them for a couple of hours, everyone, from the office boys to the managers. We sat outside in a circle, in the sunshine, surrounded by the noise of traffic. We slowly introduced ourselves and shared where our attention was. We entered into the chaos game, learned about the importance of communication, flowed into the testing magic of the crazy train, learned about each other through deep dialogue and concluded with the Meshwork strategy and action plan.

“Their aha moments were of ‘trust’, ‘importance of communication’, and ‘learning to flow with the organisation’s spirit’. I did not have to tell them anything; they articulated the key point themselves with astonishing ease, after just a few



Learning happens through mutual sharing at Om Creations

moments of quiet, reflection, joy of sharing and listening. They emerged from the workshop proud of their work and their purpose. Now they had an action plan, were more visible to each other and promised that they would continue sharing with each other.

“The learning of the workshop was compiled and gave a boost to the staff. The following are the words with which the Om Creations team associated their vision and dream of the organisation: Quality, Joy, Global, Capacity Building, Child-centric, Increase in Production, Happiness with Young Adults, Team Work, Care for Young Adults, Create an Om Creations Centre.

“The workshop also helped in analysing the progress of individuals, Om Creation’s professional approach and the development of the staff during 2010 and in the past.”
— Rishabh Khanna

Picnics and travelling outside make the students very excited and joyous. They have been trained at the Sadhana School for these outings, and they thoroughly enjoy themselves. It cuts the routine, and they really look forward to such visits and are at their best.

Recently they organised a 6-day trip to Ootacamund where the specially-abled along with staff members visited Madumalai forests. This helped them not only in unwinding but also encouraged personal bonding — which is of utmost importance for any organisation to function. A successful organisation always needs cooperation and understanding among its members. Employees were sent for Art Therapy Training, which aids in showcasing more creativity in art.

Staff have also been sent for training programmes in resource mobilisation and fundraising.

Performance and review

The teacher is committed first to establishing and nurturing a bond with the child — a bond based on mutual respect, trust and love.



Archana, oldest staff of the organisation, celebrates 50 years with Om Creations staff and beneficiaries

Once this bond is formed, the child opens his or her self to learning and learns at a very rapid pace. And whatever the child learns, he or she retains because the learning is self-motivated; it is based on his or her own needs and interest. Special teachers are a rare species today. When this kind of bond is created, it becomes possible for the developmentally challenged to perform. Also, the close involvement of the trustees with the staff/special employees helps ensure that upward feedback is very easily acceptable and open. The organisation has a performance review system in place not only for staff but also for the beneficiaries.

Reward and recognition

For the beneficiaries, a stipend is given on a monthly basis, according to the production. Additionally, a Diwali bonus is given once a year along with gifts for Diwali. Parties are held, which are enjoyed thoroughly by the special employees, and picnics and trips to places of interest are organised. Paintings made by the students are sent for awards. There are also monthly meetings appreciating the efforts of the special employees.

“Three F’s move the world. They are Favour, Fear and Faith. Favour and fear have often been used to get work done. However the effect is temporary, On the other hand, faith

“
The teacher is committed first to establishing and nurturing a bond with the child — a bond based on mutual respect, trust and love.
”

is permanent. It induces intrinsic values.” — Zaver Sepoy

According to Zaver, Om Creations is a great place to work because the staff has faith in the organisation. This is seen by the fact that most of the staff has been here for long time. Even in a normal organisation, very few people stay for more than 3 years. On an average, staff members have been at Om Creations for 5 years.

Transformational change

There are stories of transformation all around the organisation. These inspiring stories of hope continue to fire the passion of the support staff, management, trustees and all those who support the organisation from outside.

“I find a lot of change in myself, due to the unconditional love that the children give me. It’s been a wonderful experience, things that I have never learned in the corporate world, I have learned here. I have learned to have no ego, and forgive easily.” — Zaver Sepoy

Vaishali, who heads the Om Foods department, says that she has learned many things after coming here, such as new cuisines. Along with learning new skills, she has become more patient after working with these special employees. She prefers working here, than at her previous work place in the hotel industry.

Volunteers management

Om Creations has many volunteers, who have supported them in multiple ways.

They have a database of volunteers and, whenever required, they call upon them to help, especially for exhibitions, Bazaar Days at corporations, Diwali orders and

any other events. They generally acknowledge them at their annual Diwali party, as they become an integral part of Om. They also invite them for any celebrations they have at Om.

As can be seen, the staff in Om Creations have a great space to learn, experiment, share and be together as a learning community of close friends and family. They receive adequate financial rewards, and at the same time, opportunities to grow intellectually and spiritually.

Om Creations needs to ensure that their work and celebration is sustainable and viable both in the short term as well as in the long run. Financial independence and being self sufficient as an organisation is a dream for any individual or organisation. Thus, the next core function enumerated is finance.

3.5 Finance as Sustainable Development

“I had to develop multiple skills. One of the main issues was finance. If we

are not financially sustainable then all the creative energies get sapped.” — Dr. Khanna

According to Chansarkar, the term “Artha” in Sanskrit includes various aspects of man’s socioeconomic development including politics, economics, health, education, law and moral values of society. In Isha Upanishad, the very first stanza speaks about wealth: ‘All resources necessary for living are available to all, thus believing in abundance has been part of our heritage and tradition in India.’

According to Hoshang Chacha (Executive Secretary), for the past two decades, Om Creations has been dependent largely on donor money. In the last three years, it is showing some amazing trends, where revenue from the goods it sells is exceeding its grants. This is very exciting for the organisation, but at the same time, it cannot forget about the objectives of the Trust and its responsibility towards the beneficiaries and the staff.

“
I had to develop multiple skills. One of the main issues was finance. If we are not financially sustainable then all the creative energies get sapped.
”



Senior staff of Johnson & Johnson volunteer at Om Creations

The following are some of the underlying principles which are embedded in the organisation for it to move towards sustainable development.

Complimentary currencies

There are both masculine and feminine relations with the factors of production. Certain economists call it complimentary currencies. Land is taken care of by rent, as well as the nurturing and caring for it to flourish. Labour requires a salary and, at the same time, could be part of the community of practice in the organisation and might accept the gift culture. We might be able to earn interest on capital, but real growth of capital can happen only through a fluid system of exchange. An entrepreneur who is taking all the major risks could reap the profit, but at the same time, needs to realise that he or she is a co-owner, and needs to share the profit as common good for the entire organisation.

Diversifying sources of revenue

Om Creations raises funds through exhibitions, fundraising campaigns, charity melas, products sold at corporations, Bazaar Days, events, individuals, corporate partnership and display of products at the Om Creations shop. Some of the resources are raised in kind. Thus, the organisation is not dependent on one or two sources; this helps the organisation to be more resilient in the long term. Within the Food Department and the Art Department, constant innovation takes place, so that the organisation moves along with the demand of the customers.

There has also been a strategic move towards spreading the revenue throughout the year, thus creating a better cash flow for the organisation. Earlier the organisation was extremely dependent on the sales during Diwali.

Space constrained

As the organisation grows, with more beneficiaries and more products, space is a huge challenge. The organisation has been very creative with the space they have and it has been a great challenge for them

to retain the current space in King George Fifth Memorial in South Mumbai; this can be the most expensive part of any operation.

They have been very creative with using every inch in the barrack, keeping in mind health and safety standards in the operation.

They are facing problems with space. Since there is limited space, they cannot expand their production and cannot admit more young adults, resulting in reduction and manpower shortage. This creates a bigger challenge during the festive seasons when they are inundated with lots of orders in both departments. However,

the organisation is getting queries to set up similar workshops in other places where the Om Creations know-how and brand are required.

The organisation cannot afford to have many retail outlets, so it sells mostly from the workshop, word of mouth and through the website.

Creating products that pay

There are certain items which are no longer in production such as tea lights, Ganpati photo frames, *salli* boxes, kane envelopes, bead necklaces, spray flowers, etc. Some of these items stopped because of high overheads and non-recovery of cost after retailing. Hawaiian



Om Creations raises funds through exhibitions, fundraising campaigns, charity melas, products sold at corporate Bazaar Days, contribution from individuals, corporate partnerships and retailing of products at the Om Creations shop



Diwali chocolate mountain, high-end bags, greeting cards, Ganesha — all hand made by the beneficiaries

“
Producing chocolates is one of the more profitable products, as it has relatively less overheads and big sales.
 ”

bags are being discontinued due to the incompatibility of the paint and the paper. Bead necklaces are discontinued as the designs were not captivating enough to generate sufficient demand.

Producing chocolates is one of the more profitable ventures, as it has relatively lower overheads and big sales. The chocolates that Om Creations is making are being bought by some of the biggest corporate houses in Mumbai. The surplus money brought from sales of certain products helps the organisation to do research and development for creating more innovative products.

Managing donor relationships
 There is a dedicated team in the

organisation which works on finance and fundraising. This is crucial in maintaining healthy relations with those who are supporting the organisation.

Om Creations gets in contact with their donors and expounds the reason and objectives for the fund requirement. They unveil each and every detail of how the funds are utilised. Costs include the administrative cost incurred while staging the campaign. The organisation has been achieving the objectives mentioned above, though not thoroughly and completely.

Om Creations also helps smaller NGOs — for example, it helped the NGO Akanksha set up tap faucets —



Representatives of Sir Dorabji Tata Trust at Om Creations

by providing them with continuous feedback on fund utilisation, financial updates, invitations for special occasions and promotional sales.

Lack of awareness

Fundraising has always been an issue when it comes to supporting the cause of developmentally challenged young adults. Earlier they were labelled as *pagal* (crazy) and it took many years of struggle to make society understand that these young adults, under expert supervision, can create unique products comparable to the best in the world. The exquisite handmade pieces are made from the highest quality materials and reflect these young adults' innate creativity.

Since Om Creations is small in size and with limited resources as compared to large organisations like CRY and UNICEF, challenges are enormous in raising funds. But now they have volunteers 24x7 to face the market challenges. This was not an easy task. But since Om Creations got the Tata trust support to sustain their project, they have hired marketing personnel and fundraising personnel, which helps them to a large extent in their fundraising campaign.

Gift economy

Since inception, Om Creations believes in reciprocating goodwill in a small way by gifting items made

by their beneficiaries to people who have helped them. This not only helps to show their gratitude, but also to create awareness of the centre. Whatever time is given to Om is always acknowledged and appreciated, so it is very important to give credit where it is due, be it a school child, or a college student, or a corporate house visiting Om.

Thus, we see that Om Creations needs to address becoming self-sufficient in multiple ways. In many ways, sustainability is a combination of all the core functions that the

organisation is working on. Hence, integrating all the core functions is vital for getting the entire organisation to work towards a shared vision.

3.6 Integrating the Core Functions

Om Creations believes, "It's a team effort and it's always going to be like that." The ecosystem of the organisation has become more visible to the individual departments in the last few years. The Meshwork sessions helped facilitate trust building among the different core functions. The various departments starting seeing the synergies and interdependencies in their work.

The marketing team has started working very closely with the production team; in fact, there are certain client meetings which they have conducted together.

The production team has always been very sensitive about utilisation of resources, and have a deep relationship with the finance team. There is a new bridge between production and finance through the newly employed stock team. The underlying principles in every function are also an integral part of the organisation, and of course, a beneficiary focused approach is a common thread running through the entire organisation.



Maneck Davar accepting a token of appreciation for his support for the event at the Art and Soul Gallery

“
They [the specially-abled] indeed have the potential to create an alternative world, which knows true brotherhood, universality and inclusion. Om Creations is an amazing example of this alternative world, where beneficiaries and support staff have been given an environment to flourish.
”

greater national effort in addressing this cause. There are many fears in the minds of people which need to be addressed with respect to such persons.

We have used the integral approach to capture the management practice, as it allowed us to combine the pragmatic focus on material gains as well as happiness through spiritual satisfaction.

There has to be a judicious combination of these two approaches. Moreover, individual gains can be enhanced when they have a wider social purpose. Without a social dimension, individual gains often create disparities and can lead to exploitation of one another. Social purpose, therefore, has to be at the centre of all individual efforts. Gains must be shared with others. It is essential to combine efficiency with equality. Today, these seem to be divorced from each other, creating several deformities in the economic system.

This understanding of indebtedness to the society is a prerequisite for combining individual and social causes. The self and the society are an integral part of an economic unit. While the individual must produce goods and services, society must protect the individual.

The ancient oriental economic system, as such, provided a solution whereby, first, there would be no need for anyone to get anything for himself because everything is available in a common pool of goods and services; and there would be no need to preserve the gains individually, because the “impersonal” wealth is protected by the society as a whole.

The basic foundation today in fact is knowledge. Natural resources may be there in abundance, but without the knowledge to exploit them for human progress, communities may be relegated to backwardness.

Hopefully, this book and the CD will be a great tool for spreading the knowledge of the Om Creations integral management practice in India and the rest of the world.

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Appendix

Integral leadership

As part of our research on creating an Integral Management approach for Om Creations, one of the elements of our work was of facilitating a workshop for the senior management of Om Creations and some of its sister institutions. The three sessions were designed to explore 'integral leadership' in the context of running a social enterprise.

The workshop focused on "understanding who we are", which has results in an understanding of our strengths. That now gives us the possibility to use them as a tool for leadership. We will be able to find a leadership quality in each person, based on our common values, culture and heritage.

This workshop did help to develop new skills and tools to bridge differences, build cooperative relationships and understand agreement and commitment.

Description and insight from the workshop

Through this workshop we wanted to develop better personal skills, to be a leader at work and in the community. It was designed to help create an empowerment of "the person" by understanding "who we are" and the power within. Further, this workshop helped to capture different management styles and answered the question about what leadership means to every single participant.

Our main goals have been:

- 1) Understanding personal transformation
- 2) How to resolve conflicts in such an organisation
- 3) How to facilitate a space to allow collective leadership
- 4) How to build a shared vision
- 5) Human development matrix
- 6) Human system dynamics

The methodology we use to perform this research is called GENE. It uses the four paths to Integral Research and Innovation that we are able to follow: the 'southern' and humanistic relational path; the 'eastern' and holistic path of renewal; the 'northern' and rational path of reason; and the 'western' and pragmatic path of realisation. These four paths constitute, altogether, the Integrity of our Research and Innovation.

These four discrete paths each serve to make up the Integral GENE, a term that was created by Alexander Scheiffer and Ronnie Lessem. The GENE stands for grounding, emerging, navigation and effecting, and is the generic trajectory that releases the full genius of a person, a community or a society.

Within Integral Research the GENE can be found in two forms: the analytical and the transformative. The analytical research trajectory, for the social scientist, comprises research method (G), methodology (E), research critique (N), and action research (E). The innovation trajectory, for the social and economic practitioner, builds up from origination (G) to foundation (E), on to emancipation (N) and transformation (E).

Session 1

After introducing the coaches and each participant, the first session started with a travel through time. We looked at the last four decades starting in 1973, when S. P. J. Sadhana School was founded. We used two different angles to go through the time. One angle was to look at what happened in India and globally, the other angle was to remember what happened at S. P. J. Sadhana School and Om Creations at the same time. Through remembering, we got to understand

what drove us to take certain steps, how certain visions came into life and how we made them a reality. Especially for the members of S. P. J. Sadhana School and Om Creations, who joined recently, this exercise was extremely helpful, because they got to know a lot that they did not know before.

Reflecting on the four decades we tried to come up with a pattern. What determined those decades and what can we learn and derive from them? We concentrated on areas and affirmations, such as:
VISION – DIRECTION – GROWTH
Resistance/Challenges
Determination can get you anywhere!
Life is tough but I am tougher!
You can emerge out of turmoil!
Wonderful journey!
People connecting!
Personality development!

The organisation has been focusing a lot on the spiritual development of the students and the staff. Meditation, yoga, reiki and aura healing are some of the mediums through which opportunities have been created for spiritual growth.

After that we started discussing what has changed over the past four decades in our mindsets and what this change will bring for the future of both Om Creations and S. P. J. Sadhana School. We also went over the major wishes for the future.

The majority of the participants felt enriched by all the children they either taught or helped to set foot in society. Everyone was impressed by how the children transformed through school. The importance of the emotional quotient was imminent. They all experienced a change in the mindset of society. And not only did the mindset change, but social stigmas also transformed alongside.

The following table describes each session:

Opening	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4
Context	Who we are	Who we should be	Action plan	Close
<p>Introductions of participants</p> <p>Explain the process for the day and the strong participatory nature of the workshop</p>	<p>1. Our Inner World and Outer World</p>	<p>1. Workshop — Obstacles we face to achieve the leadership visions we carry in our hearts</p> <p>2. Brainstorm individually what these obstacles are</p> <p>3. Brainstorm in groups to pull together the main obstacles listed by the group</p>	<p>1. What is the common factor in every human being? Daya on Human Development Matrix</p> <p>2. Display, analyse and categorise the obstacles we face to achieve the leadership visions we carry in our hearts</p> <p>Reflection on the process and outcomes</p> <p>What did we learn on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culture • History • Core Beliefs • Values • Preference • Perception • Image • Emotions • Aspiration • Anticipation • Expectation • Behaviour Change <p>Outcome of our learning</p> <p>Reflection on the session</p>	<p>Summary of the principles we have identified and how they can be integrated into our daily life at Om Creations.</p> <p>Reflection on the day</p>
10 to 10.15	10.15 to 11.15	11.30 to 1.00	1.45 to 2.45	2.45 to 3.45

The following table shows what we remembered:

1973	1983	1993	2003
In India	In India	In India	In India
<p>War with Pakistan Bangladesh → own state Emergency state</p>	<p>Spiritual awakening, Osho Television</p> <p>PM Indira Gandhi assassinated Delhi Riots</p> <p>India won Cricket World Cup Sanjay Gandhi murdered Mandal Commission 1991 → liberalisation</p>	<p>Rajiv Gandhi assassinated Liberalisation Oil shock IT/Computers entering homes India knowledge industry</p>	<p>India rising economically Gujarat Riots MNCs enter India Kalam Commonwealth Games</p>
In Sadhana	In Sadhana	In Sadhana	In Sadhana
<p>Vision/Idea No specific school Parent initiative 5 or 6 people Volunteer parents</p>	<p>Great Principal Polytechnic courses for the specially abled First art exhibition</p>	<p>Om Creations set up in 1995 1999 Sister Gaitonde Principal 5-year graduation course</p>	<p>Om Creations enables 90% success in employment Sadhana on International scene — paper every two years</p>

In the end, everyone agreed that they were now capable of moving forward and putting their projects onto a new level.

Session 2

The second session focused on “Who we are?” and “Where do we go from here?” or more precisely on our vision for the future. We started this session with a short discussion on everyone’s dreams for the upcoming years.

Vision for the future

- Om Creations under one roof
- Multiplying — making it global, replicating the business model in several Indian states
- Rehabilitation centre
- 100% employment
- More students
- Possibility of online studying
- Creating more awareness in society
- Residential space
- Relearn how to teach

Session 3

This discussion was followed by a small exercise. At first, everyone had to write down three profits, three personal dreams, three obstacles they fear and three concerns. After individually thinking about those three, we came together in little groups and exchanged our dreams, obstacles and concerns. Putting all those post-its onto a white board, where everyone could see them, followed that.

In the afternoon session, those post-its were then categorised by us. We were looking for common dreams, obstacles and concerns, which indicated certain foci, and in the long run helps us create a roadmap for the future.

The following table summarises our findings:

Time management	Personal relationships	Space funding	Education, Children	PR, Policy, External	Organisation issues	People and capacity
Factor time, everything is moving so fast, how to keep up	Mindset, human relationships, sharing more deeply, how to deal with the students	Lack of space, more space to grow, planning resources, residential space	Parents integration	Few public awareness, scale up social ventures	Clashes, resistance to changes	More stuff

This discussion was followed by the last exercise for the day. It was called Nature of Difference. We had to ask ourselves the following questions:

At this point in my life, what are the strongest influences I can identify?

How do these influences affect my actions?

Worksheets that triggered certain questions (shown in the table below) were handed out.

At first, we had to answer the questions alone and later discuss it in small groups. The groups were S. P. J. Sadhana School. Om Creations and Om Creations Administration. After a short discussion within the groups, every group had to present their findings.

To sum this exercise up, one can say that we are all different, but with similar goals (“same, same, but different”). We should try to see those differences as strengths. It should also be acknowledged that our collective goodness is leading the way into the future. All participants agreed that value and integrity are the two core strengths that are the most important.

The selections of contributions below are indicative of the open and transparent qualities of the entire Sadhana and Om Creations group.

The following table contains the worksheet questions:

Influences from my personal history and culture	How these affect my actions
Influences from my core beliefs and values	How these affect my actions
Influences from my preferences (thinking, relating, etc)	How these affect my actions
Influences from my feelings and associations	How these affect my actions

Everyone has been very authentic and vulnerable and has shared from their hearts and identified areas where they can do better. There was no finger pointing or blame. This is a very high level of “leadership and the person”.

Session 4

Start thinking collectively

For an oil lamp to burn, the wick has to be partially immersed in the oil. If the wick is completely drowned in oil, it cannot bring light. Life is like the wick of the lamp; you have to be in the world and yet remain untouched by it. If you are drowned in the materialism of the world, you cannot bring joy and knowledge in your life. By being in the world, yet not drowning in the worldly aspect of it, we can be the light of joy and knowledge.

Every human being has some good qualities. And every lamp that you light is symbolic of this. Some people have forbearance, some have love, strength, generosity, while others have the ability to unite people. The latent values in you are like a lamp. Don’t be satisfied with lighting just one lamp; light a thousand! You need to light many lights to dispel the darkness of ignorance. By lighting the lamp of wisdom in yourself and acquiring knowledge, you awaken all facets of your being. We all have a diamond within.

The following table summarises our findings:

S. P. J. Sadhana School	Om Creations	Om Creations Administration
Past and present — connection Heal negative experiences, otherwise	Value, Integrity, family Positivity, negativity, moving forward -> important Good childhood is important, core	Past — present — future Healing through working Religion, culture Letting go, preferences

Leadership and the person

The final point on our agenda for the day was a short review of what we achieved.

Through our various discussions we managed to come up with a common agenda and a roadmap for the future. But we also figured out that we are just at the start of everything and there's still a long way to go.

In the end, one participant asked a very important question: the workshop's title was "leadership and

the person", but for a few participants it was not clear at all, what the above has to do with leadership. What do we learn from our discussions in relations to leadership? How can we lead people better?

In conclusion and in answer to this question, Mohan offered the following:

In the workshop we have journeyed within to look at 'who we are'. In being open and sharing who we are, we have experienced the power of Collective Leadership.

In a world that is changing rapidly, the old command and control style of leadership is giving way to each of us discovering the power within and learning that when we understand our history, our beliefs, our preferences and our feelings and can be free human beings, we are empowered to give moral and spiritual leadership to each other, to the organisation we work for, to our family and to society.

Thus, the exercise we conducted during the day helped us to understand one and another. Our focus now lies in a shared leadership concept by building blocks of leadership. One of the reasons for Om Creations being as successful as it is, is that the people who work for it have their own minds and common goals. Therefore there is a lot of space for independent work and decisions. Different strengths can be leveraged.

Outcome for the research

S. P. J. Sadhana and Om Creations are drawing together a unique group of people, staff and volunteers, who are working for a purpose greater than 'just doing a job'.

In a country where there are an estimated 20 million people with special needs, this team at S. P. J. Sadhana is pioneering something for the whole of India.

The research also looks into how a life purpose integrates with career and making a living, as against working for the sole purpose of making money or to get rich.

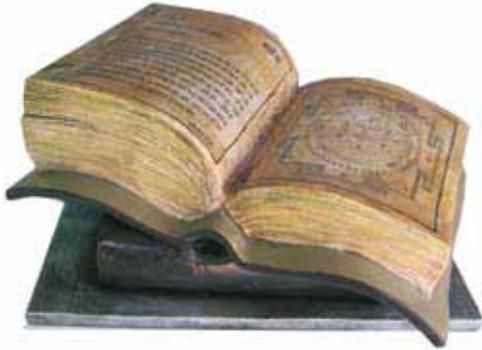
From an organisational perspective, the subsequent development of relationships marketing for Om Creations, as well as, to some extent, service management, served to remind us of the originally communal and natural scope of physical and human exchange.

In transforming marketing into community building, we are revisiting those communal and natural grounds, building upon ecology and anthropology, albeit in a 21st-century guise. Such a community building function, as opposed to marketing, is equally applicable to the public, civic and animate, as it is to the private enterprise.

Looking back on the history made us experience where we stand now. Our status quo got determined.

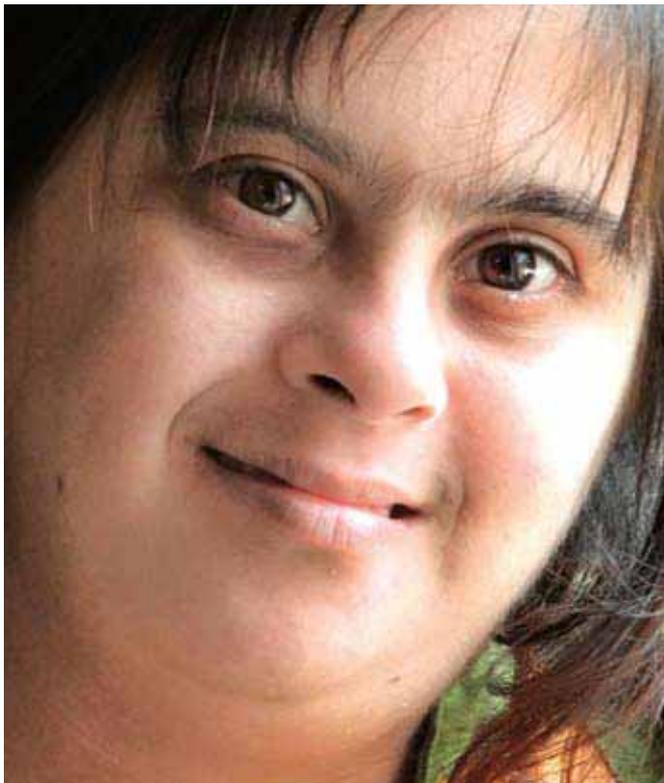
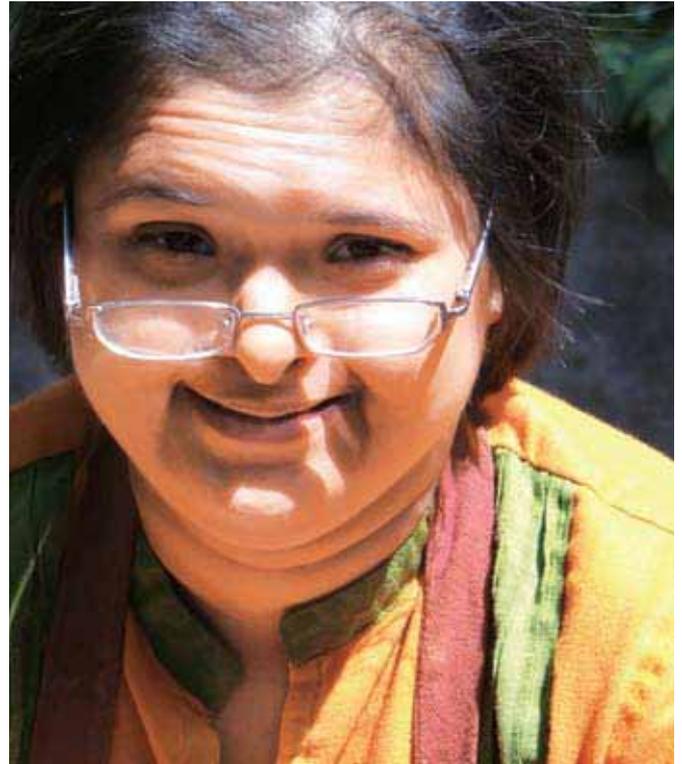
“
For an oil lamp to burn, the wick has to be partially immersed in the oil. If the wick is completely drowned in oil, it cannot bring light. Life is like the wick of the lamp, you have to be in the world and yet remain untouched by it.
 ”

Some of Our Beneficiaries



Shruti Hatamsaria

Shruti is bright, cheerful and enthusiastic, with a ready smile for everyone. Apart from her painting skills, she loves working with clay and does amazing pieces of sculpture. Shruti enjoys her work tremendously and is very creative and hardworking. She tends to become emotionally attached to anyone who is kind to her and is very affectionate herself. The sculpture 'Shlok' depicts purity of mind, body and soul, and Shruti recites the *shlokas* (Gayatri Mantra), which she encrypted in the book, regularly.



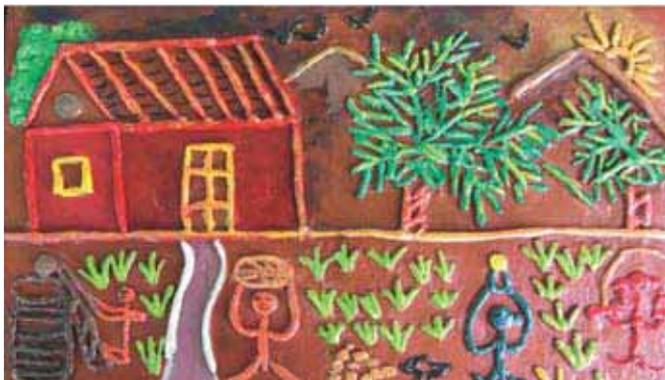
Natasha Hamirani

Natasha is an enthusiastic Down syndrome individual, prone to mood swings. This particular painting 'Movement' is unique as Natasha has not used a brush, but has used her fingers to create this amazing work of art. The vibrant colours show Natasha's bright nature, and her innate love for dancing is depicted in the movement of the butterflies.



Manali Padhye

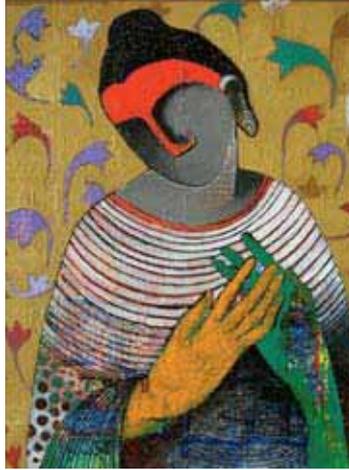
Manali is a quiet, good-natured girl. She is very focused and completes her work with determination. She bonds very well with the other students too. Being very close to her mother, Manali decided to draw the painting 'Mother and Child', keeping in mind her bonding and caring for her mother.



Vahishta Major

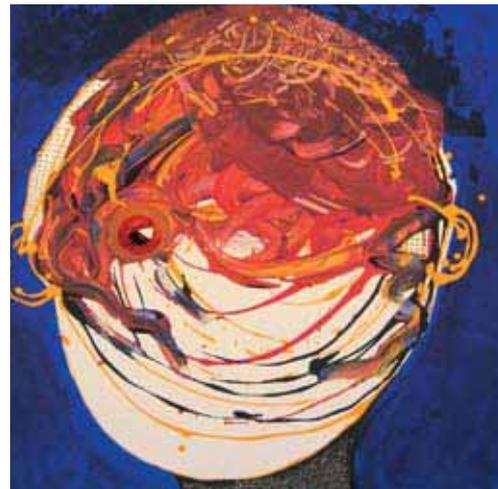
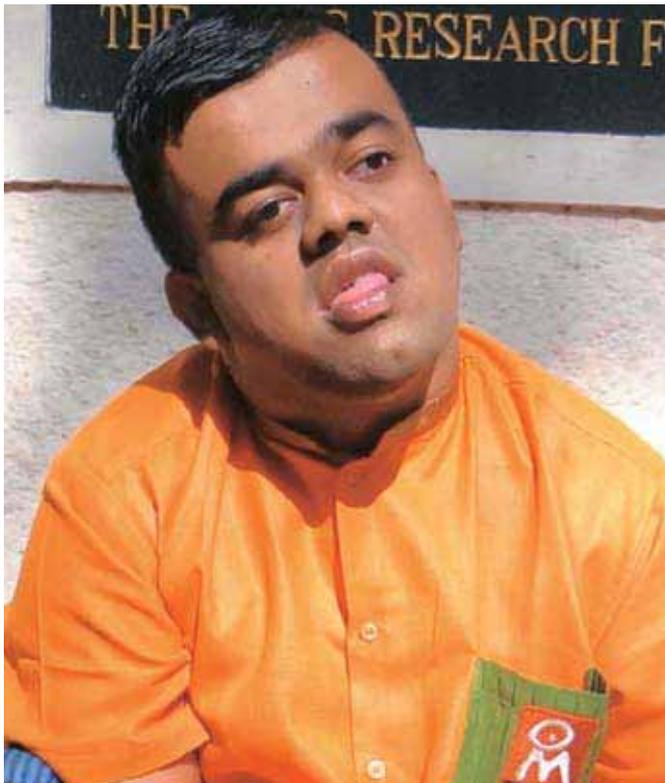
Vahishta's ability for inferential and abstract thinking enabled her to produce a painting, which brought out the fantasy of her 'Dream House'.





Mita Shah

Inspite of her own mental disabilities, Mita has learnt to smile through all odds and also tends to her ailing mother with tender love and care. Unfortunately, she also has two siblings with mental disabilities. Despite all these difficulties, she is a very warm and helpful person. At Om Creations, she feels the 'serenity' that she misses at home, which is depicted in her painting 'Serene'.



Omkar Shewale

Omkar had a mysterious escape from a near-death experience. He is wheel chair-bound since then and has also lost vision in one eye. His painting 'Mystery of the Mind', depicts the positive energy he wishes to spread around.



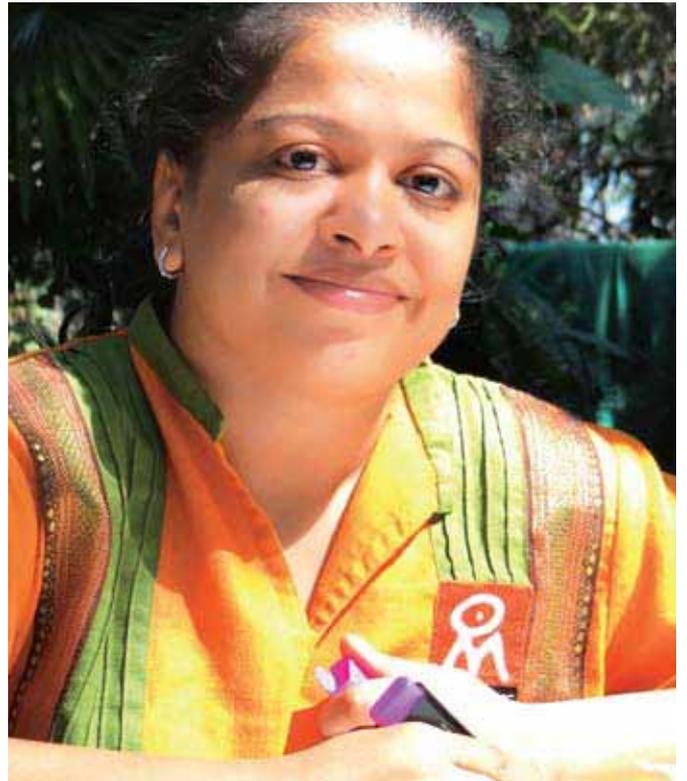
Nikita Shah

Nikita is on the ASD spectrum and has also overcome her schizophrenic traits. Nikita lost her mother a few months ago, and through her painting 'Cosmic Energy', is expressing her longing for her love every day. She says, "All I am, I owe to my mother." She has, however, learned to immerse herself in her work and is very good in crochet, apart from painting, for which she has a natural flair. Through universal energy, Nikita is connecting with her mother.



Preeti Jain

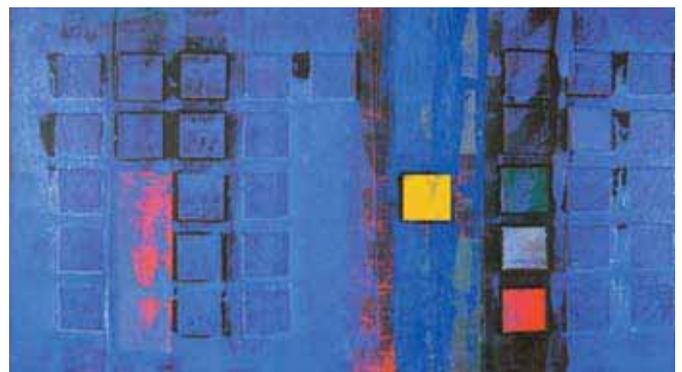
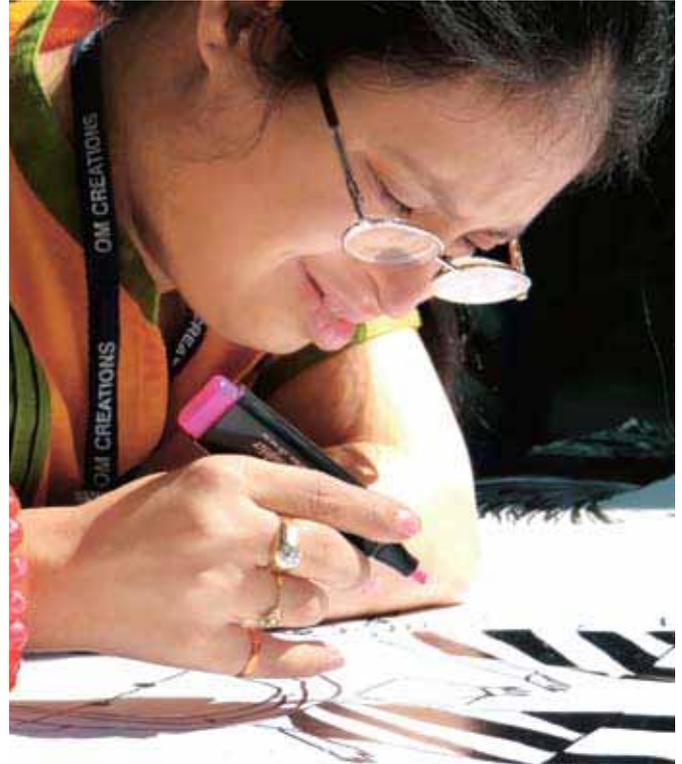
Preeti is verbally impaired, suffers from epilepsy, moodiness and severe mental disability. Despite her disabilities, she is an enthusiastic learner and achieves what she sets out to do. Her painting 'My Brother' (*Bhaiyya*) expresses her emotions for her brother.





Vinati Javeri

Vinati, despite problems with her vision, is very observant. She is friendly and, on her way to Om Creations, observes people (who please her eye) and inks them live on the paper. Her sketches 'Live Images' portray people from different walks of life, which she imagines could have been herself.



Sushma Bhagwat

Sushma Bhagwat comes from a very economical background and her income supports her mother, as she lost her father three years ago. She loves painting and expresses herself through her art. Her painting 'The Village' was selected by the Art Society of India for an exhibition held at the Jehangir Art Gallery. Whilst painting 'The Village', she recalled her life in the village, where in the night, the only light burning in the village was that of her house. Her work was selected by the Bombay Art Society in January 2012.



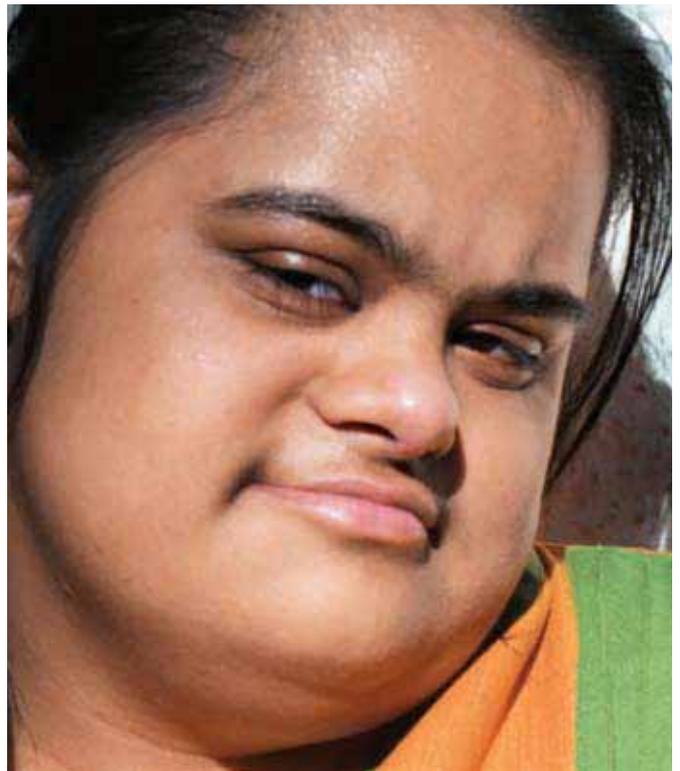
Vasant Solanki

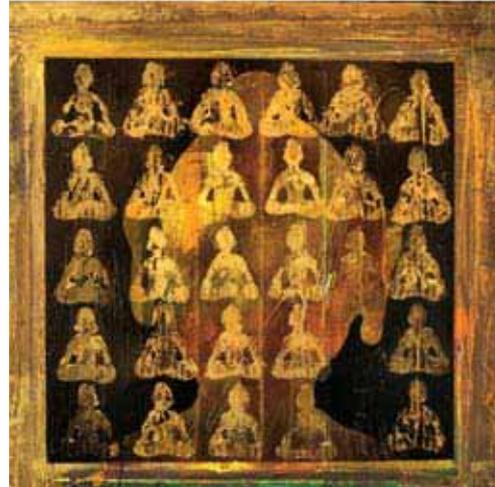
Vasant was orphaned early in life and is a paraplegic from birth, but his gift for painting is amazing. He has a natural flair for painting as well as sculpting and is not content till he feels it is perfect. His friendly nature and lovely, ready smile has endeared him to all at Om Creations. Vasant has been blessed to find a home at Om, thanks to Dr. Radhike Khanna. In this painting, 'Love for Parents', he is writing to God to convey his innermost feelings.



Shreya Garodia

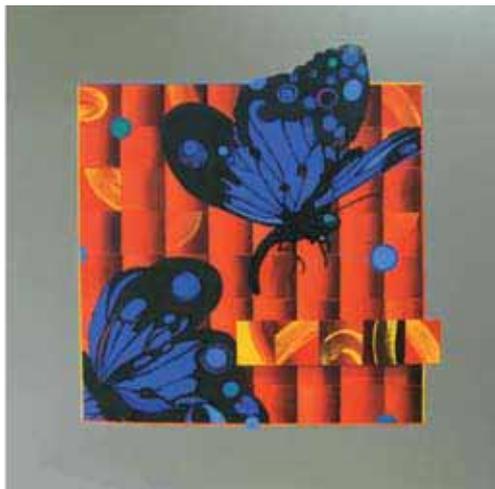
The title of her painting, 'Moods', is a perfect description of Shreya. Her bossy self sets the mood to produce the finest paintings, which are marked with precision and accuracy.





Shakti Varma

Shakti is on the ASD spectrum but has excellent language and communication skills. He is a successful case of the FACE Programme. Shakti was inspired by the ethos of Buddhism and its calm, content and celestial form of being for his painting 'Nirvana'.



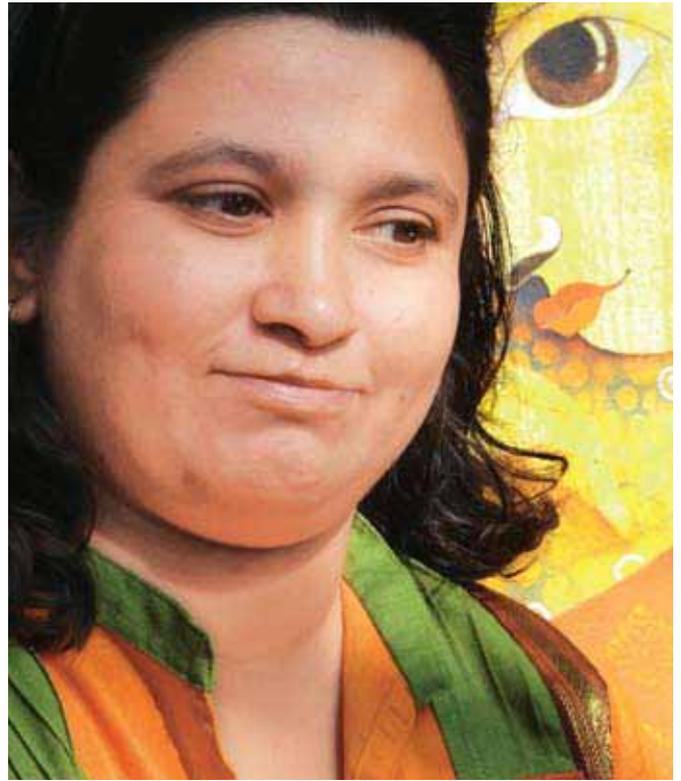
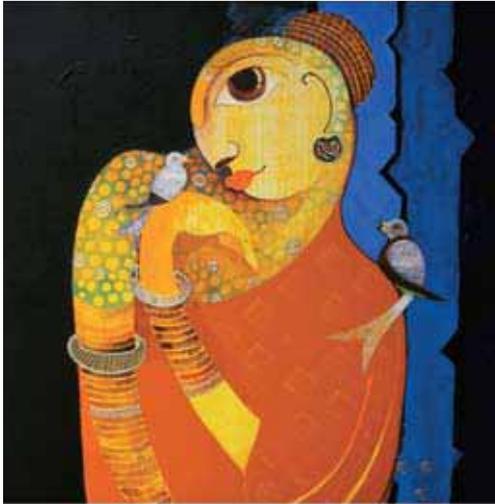
Shraddha Sharma

Despite multiple challenges, Shraddha has created this painting, in spite of being without any sense of colour; the final creation is commendable. For her painting 'Blue Butterfly', she has not used any tools like a brush, but has done the painting with her fingers. Shraddha is a woman of few words, but is very creative.



Alifia Merchant

Alifia has a quiet and mild persona, and she is extremely fond of painting in which she immerses herself completely. Her painting 'Meera' brings out the spiritual side of Alifia.



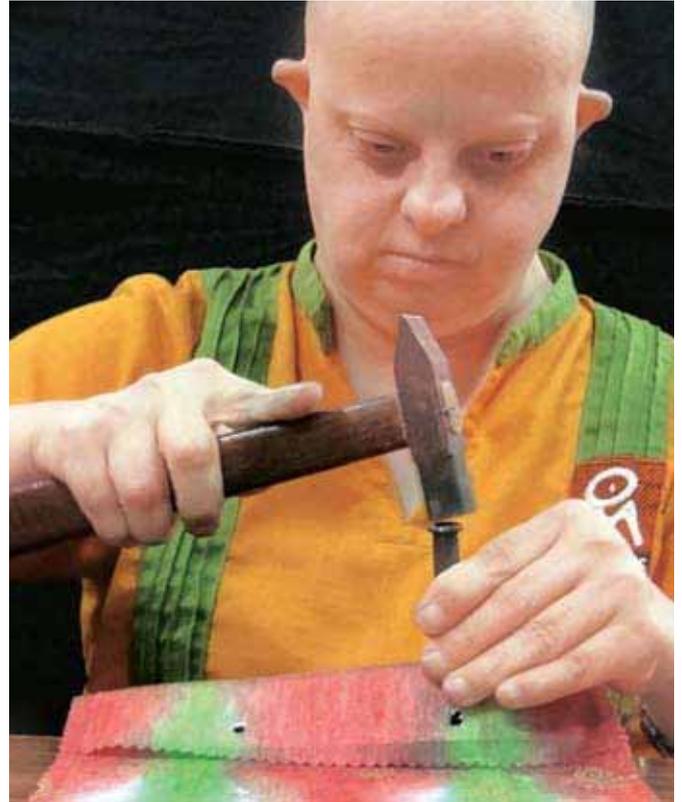
Bulti Das

Interacting with each other makes a world of difference when one is in low spirits and uplifts the person completely. Bulti has a hearing problem along with other problems. She has a very charming personality with a sunny smile for everyone. She is very intelligent and hardworking and uses her imagination to create amazing pieces. This sculpture 'Gossip' is Bulti's way of expressing her emotions.



Nilufer Shastri

Nilufer is a focused and soft soul. She works with precision and care. She looks into each detail of her work with intelligence and thought. A beautiful Down syndrome individual with an extraordinary zeal for work, sitting idle even for a minute is not on her agenda. Though Nilufer is a woman of few words, her sculpture 'Freedom of Speech' depicts a silent worker who, when prodded without reason, will not be suppressed.



Darshi Shah

Darshi is severely handicapped along with mental disabilities. Since we have introduced pottery at Om Creations, she enjoys working with clay and has created many beautiful pieces of sculpture. Her sculpture 'Fountain of Life' reminds one of the calmness and strength of the water.



Afrin Shareef

Afrin has a lack of vision in one eye, has spasticity in her foot and is also developmentally challenged. This has not deterred her in any way. She has overcome her disability with Brain Gym, which helps her concentration level. She is very cheerful and charming and has lots of friends. Although she has so many disabilities, she has come out a winner and her sculpture 'Stack of Emotions' represents the different emotions she has faced.



Rekha Kripalani

Rekha is a very quiet and reticent personality. She is content with being by herself and immerses herself in her work. She can follow instructions and work according to them. Her sculpture 'Simplicity' depicts the simplicity of her thoughts.





Purvi Shah

Purvi enjoys her day at Om Creations and helps teachers and students alike. We fondly call her the 'boss of Om Creations' as Purvi is meticulous in her work. She is very talented, not only in creating murals, but is a great artist too. She loves painting and has a natural gift for art. This mural of 'Radha Krishna' shows the religious side of her talent. She thoroughly enjoys the company of visitors and introduces herself as 'my name Purvi'.

Here is the CD

CD contains a PowerPoint presentation and videos on
Integral Management at Om Creations.





■ Om Creations Trust – location map
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You can help us grow...

- By understanding our cause and spreading awareness amongst family, friends and colleagues.
- By buying our products regularly.
- By introducing our products to food shops and boutiques in your neighbourhood.
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- By volunteering your time and skills.
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Om Creations Trust, Anand Niketan
King George V Memorial Project
Dr. E. Moses Road, Mumbai - 400 011
Tel: 91-22-2497 2294 Telefax: 91-22-2492 3635
Mobile: +91-98194 70544

www.omcreationstrust.org
e-mail: omcreationstrust@gmail.com

Om Creations Trust, Visual Arts & Crafts Workshop
B M C School, Ground Floor, Room No. 17, 70 & 71
Gilder Lane, Opp. Navjeevan Society
Mumbai Central, Mumbai - 400 008
Tel: 91-22-6452 4739