



# Between Friends

## Maitri Quarterly Newsletter

January - 2020

*One of the most important things  
you can do on this earth is  
to let people know they are not alone.*

SHANNON ALDER

## Your Support Matters!

We begin 2020 with gratitude and hope. A heartfelt thanks to all of you in the community that have walked with us on this journey and supported our efforts, and to our institutional funders ([list here](#)) that have placed their trust in us to do this work. We also continue to hope that this New Year will allow us to bring positive change for those we serve, and help move us all towards our vision of a society where relationships are built on dignity, equity and compassion.

### Your support inspired and enabled us to do the following in 2019

- \*Answered 3,830 Helpline Calls
- \* Handled 373 Crisis Calls
- \*Provided 1,449 Legal Advocacy Sessions
- \*Offered 55 Court Accompaniments
- \*Offered over 150 hours in therapy & support groups
- \*Served 34 Clients at our Transitional House
- \*Helped 22 Clients find jobs

## Messages from our clients— YOU helped us help THEM!

“I would say I got rid of the fear in me. Understood the law to the extent I needed. Gained more confidence and power within me . My inner health is improved.”

“I have had a great experience working with Maitri. I had no idea how to come out of my situation and get my life together, starting from managing my finances to helping me plan my career, they have helped me throughout. I am very grateful to them.”

“The stay at the TH made me strong.... And I gained enough confidence to move on with my future goals; completely satisfied with the services & I really appreciate the great things they have done for me. Thanks a lot for everything. It was an awesome journey and I now understand why this is called as "transitional housing”



## Last Quarter at a Glance

### A year in Policy Advocacy

Policy Advocacy has always been part of Maitri's endeavors towards helping immigrant survivors integrate into mainstream American society. We continue our effort each year in a bigger and better way. Our core demands remain the same: language access at various points of contacts for the LEP survivors, support for comprehensive immigration reform, condemning sex selective abortion targeted towards the Asian community, universal background check for Firearms purchase, and trauma-informed care for service providers. We find new avenues to advocate for our priorities. Read the [blog here](#).



## Maitri in Prevention



## Children and teens

In our work, we have realized that intervention services are not enough to reduce the prevalence of domestic violence. We need to move upstream and begin building awareness and education at an early level to enable healthy relationships. Towards that goal, we organized our Art Fest to motivate youngsters to use their imagination in upholding peace, love and compassion. Check out their heart-warming work [here](#). We also co-organized a teen forum with a student organization to educate and empower youth in identifying relationship abuse and internalizing healthy behaviors. [More here.](#)

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## Young Adults

Research makes it clear that intimate partner violence (IPV) on college campuses is a pervasive problem. The first step in raising awareness to reduce and ultimately eliminate IPV can be as simple as starting a conversation with students. That's what we did at Mission College, San Jose State University, Evergreen Valley College and Golden Gate University.

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## Community Engagement

We conducted an educational workshop on intimate partner violence at Dell EMC and a presentation on the topic of elder abuse prevention at a seminar organized by



**BWEN**, a Bangladeshi community group. While appropriate services and responsive institutions are important components in the effort to counter family violence, community engagement is imperative in generating and sustaining real change.



## Cultural Responsiveness Training

Last quarter Maitri was invited by Kaiser Permanente, San Jose, Community Solutions and Tri-Valley Heaven to present on the topic of culturally responsive advocacy. We shared our experience working with immigrant communities, especially South Asian communities with medical professionals and advocates to help them in understanding the challenges immigrant survivors face so that they can provide the right help.

## Engaging Men

Maitri held its 1st ever male focus group in December, 2019. We invited a small group of South Asian men to have a thoughtful conversation around prevention of domestic violence and gender based violence. Our goal was to gather an understanding about what men can do in raising awareness and in creating a culture that makes domestic violence and gender violence unacceptable. We had a great discussion around community expectations on gender roles, correlation between harmful social or cultural norms and gender abuse / partner abuse. All attendees committed in taking the message to their networks.

## Social Gatherings

### Maitri Open House



We had our Open House in October. Representatives from our sister agencies, Govt. officials and longtime supporters came and showed us their support. Client testimonies, colorful displays, art activities and refreshments made the event cozy and special. [Photos.](#)

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## Benefit for Maitri



Renowned author and a Maitri co-founder [Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni](#) did two book-

readings of her latest book "*The Forest of Enchantments*" as a benefit for Maitri in November. The book is the story of the Ramayana told through Sita's eyes. We gained a lot of insights as Chitra drew parallels with our society around existing cultural and gender norms, while also recognizing the struggles and the resilience of many survivors and single mothers that face so much adversity but still try to build a life of dignity for themselves. We are grateful to Divakaruni for her continued support of Maitri and for inspiring many community members to engage with our cause.

A big shout out to Tilu Arora and Vinita Belani who generously opened up their homes, creating a beautiful and intimate setting for the two events.

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## CRDVN Gathering

Maitri is a proud partner at the CRDV [network](#) which brings together organizations that are developing their culturally responsive practices in addressing the common issues impacting survivors across different immigrant communities. In November, we hosted our [CRDVN](#) partners at the Maitri Boutique as part of our two day annual gathering. With delicious food, thoughtful discussion and activities the evening became a memorable one.

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## Peer Networking

We had the privilege of hosting a luncheon presentation for Usha Choudhary, co-founder of [Vikalp Sansthan](#) in Rajasthan, India at our office. Usha shared her work, challenges and accomplishments with us that made us realize how similar our work is. Kudos to Usha and her team for their relentless battle in challenging patriarchy, misogyny and in promoting gender equity



## Announcements

### Award & Recognition



In October, Maitri co-founder Roma Majumdar was bestowed a Certificate of Recognition from the California State Assembly for her unstinting commitment and major efforts to combat domestic violence and helping South Asian families in the San Francisco bay area. Assemblymember [Kansen Chu](#) graciously delivered this recognition at Maitri's Open House.

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## Updated Website!

Maitri has launched a new and improved website with the help of our wonderful volunteer, Sonali Dujari, Maitri staff Jaya Suresh and Vinodhini Krishnan. Take a moment out of your busy schedule and check out Maitri's new [Website](#). Disseminate the information so that together we can help and empower survivors of domestic violence.

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## Maitri Radio Show

Tune in every Saturday from 3 - 4 pm on Radio Zindagi, 1170 AM to listen to the Maitri radio show, *Between Friends*. All the episodes will be available on [Sound Cloud](#) and on Apple podcasts, Spotify, Google podcasts and other channels—search for '*Between Friends, Conversation with Maitri*'.

On this show, we will be talking to field experts and community members (both adults and youth) on various topics related to domestic violence, partner violence and gender abuse. We hope, our show will mobilize our community in working toward prevention.



## Boutique Update

Our big semi-annual SALE at the Maitri Boutique is from Jan 24 -Feb 9. Excellent merchandise at affordable prices, items as low as \$5. Do not miss this opportunity to pick up lovely items at a great price. All proceeds will help survivors of domestic violence and their children.

Keep an eye on our Boutique's [Facebook](#) page for more information on upcoming sales, trunk shows and best deals. Visit, donate , volunteer and support!

## Welcoming New Staff

Please join us in welcoming our new Boutique Coordinator, Banu Kumaraguru. Banu is very much interested in fashion, design, and artistic presentation and also deeply committed to Maitri's cause.

Keep up to date on our activities by following our social media platforms



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