

# Newsletter

## July 2016

### Editor's desk

Dear friends,

From a long time a question kept lingering in my mind, does our society propagate inclusive culture or not? I kept searching for answers and in the process realized that maybe we do not know what inclusive culture is.

An inclusive culture is the one which has absolute belief in respect, equity, and positive recognition of differences. We go an extra mile & feel proud to have friends from diverse backgrounds, diverse co-workers and neighbors. But why is this diversity not extended to disability. Isn't it high time we look at disability as diversity?

ConnectSpecial is taken on itself to demystify inclusive culture. A number of creative initiatives to work with citizens have been taken up and as subscribers you have been my first believers in this inclusive society initiative. Henceforth a column is being dedicated in the newsletter for this. I would deeply appreciate if you add in more ideas to take this movement forward.

Thanks & Regards,

Bhavna

[botta.bhavna@gmail.com](mailto:botta.bhavna@gmail.com)

[www.connectspecial.com](http://www.connectspecial.com)



### Straight from the heart

Meet Anjana, author of *Evolving Angels*, a collection of short stories with disability theme. Anjana's dream of writing short stories for children has finally become true. In her first book, the *evolving angels*, she brings out the issues and challenges of people with disability in a simple lucid manner. Anjana's work has touched the thinking of many, because, it is a first person narration. These short stories would definitely go a long way in changing the attitudes and mind set of people.

1. How do you feel over the book release

-I feel very happy that my first book has taken me to the heights. I didn't expect that. This kind of recognition has given me immense pleasure.

2. What inspired you to become an author

-My college experience has pulled me to become a writer.

3. How has technology helped you in becoming independent

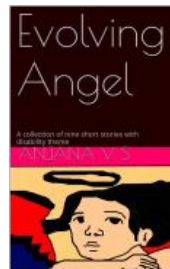
The first few stories were told by me and typed by my parents. Then I used the SPEECHNOTES a web page I found it very easy to speak out my thoughts which were noted by the system. This is the independence, I was looking for, and I felt elated.

4. Are you influenced by works of any other writers

The most influencing person in my life is J. K. Rowling. I have read some of the stories only but influenced by the way she writes.

5. Share with us your future plans

I will write children's books in the near future. I also have to hone my skills as a writer.



Available on  
Amazon.in

## iScribe, do you ?

When Sage Vyasa set about narrating the greatest Epic of all times, The Mahabharata, he needed someone to write his thoughts down as he narrated them at the same speed. Who better to rise up to the task than Lord Ganesha himself? He immediately broke off a part of his tusk and penned down the words of the great sage with speed and accuracy. Cut to modern times, it is an exam hall with a student appearing for a paper that would turn the fate of his life. All he needs to succeed is the knowledge of the answers. But that isn't enough. He needs a person to be the Lord Ganesha to his Mahabharata. We aren't talking about regular exams and students, but about ones with special needs. Students with visual impairment or motor disabilities are as smart as their counterparts, but need a shoulder, read hand, to sail them through the toughest of papers. Here is where scribing comes to play. Just as an injured batsman gets a by-runner to run for him, a student with special needs can call for a scribe, to write down his answers, which he himself cannot. This service of scribing has caught the attention of many in the past years and has helped several hundreds of differently abled students achieve their dreams without too many an obstacle. Realizing the need for one roof to bring the two parties together, the students and the

scribes, iScribe was initiated by Vidya Sagar. iScribe, an initiative by Vasavi Sundaram and Rajiv Rajan and the efficient manouvouring by the co-ordinator Maheswari Narasimhan, this has grown multi folds in the past nine year and is proudly marching towards its goal, to serve the seeking. A house wife at 40 with a flair for Tamil might just have been recollecting her times when she could write pages together, but little did she know that this very thing that she possesses would help a Raju or a Shoba get a centum in Tamil. That is what iScribe does, bring people together for a cause scribing.

How does all of this work? All you need is a good listening and writing ability of course with a want to help and iScribe is just a click away waiting to connect you to a child whose worries could be halved by you. [www.iscribe.com](http://www.iscribe.com) might just look like any other website but the 1800 large member strength behind it gives a totally different story. In an age where anything is just a click away, your willingness to help isn't far behind. All one has to do, is log onto the website and register oneself and then wait for the co-ordinator to get in touch. With this powerful tool in hand, it'd be unfair of us to not spread this far and wide, which is why iScribe will soon be national therefore enabling this noble cause to be a part of every special child across India.



As a service, iScribe looks at its members for its growth and the will to come forward and make oneself available not only for scribing in Hindi, English or Tamil but also in languages such as Sanskrit, French, has indeed shown that we are on the right track. With a strong chain of individuals who are ready to help, the next step is to bring the schools and institutions into a comfortable zone where arranging for or getting scribes is as easy as calling out the roll call in a class. It is not a two way but a three way road for us with Us, the Schools/Institutions and the Scribes joining hands and bridging the gap to ensure the future of a child, in a way best affordable to us.

It's fun to meet people and to celebrate differences.

## ConnectSpecial on the ground

Connectspecial has been conducting events to create awareness about inclusion at grass root level. The chiro dance (chiro means sign language) Cross Connect (cross word on people first language), Selfie on the ramp challenge and Inclusion - ArtSolution were well received.

Follow us on facebook and twitter to get updates on events.

Facebook page - <http://bit.ly/29ZmY65>

Twitter - @connectspecial



DOWN

The study of hearing

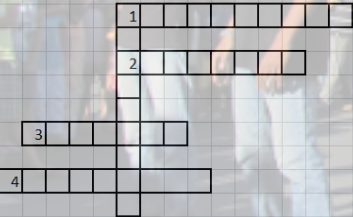
ACROSS

1 A change in how a person can access and demonstrates learning or skill, but it does not substantially change the instructional content or work

2 A specific learning disability that is neurobiological in origin.

3 A point system of writing in which patterns of raised dots represent letters and numerals

4 A constant, involuntary, more or less cyclical movement of the eyeball



## 3 pillars of inclusive culture in work



Universal Design i.e-creation of work spaces and structures that fully include people with disabilities,

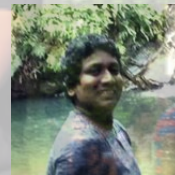


Sensitivity in recruitment, training and advancement Opportunities



Incorporate the Inclusive Policies and ensure practice of workplace accommodations and accessibility

## Inclusion Champion - Selfie-on-ramp challenge



In our first ever #ConnectSpecialPhotoChallenge, we asked you, yes YOU, to post selfies taken on ramps (along with some details on location) in and around Chennai, using hashtags – #ConnectSpecialPhotoChallenge

and #selfieonrampchallenge on facebook. Meet Madras Gomathinayagam Raja, our Inclusion Champion who posted the highest selfies. Selfie-on-ramp challenge is still on and more selfie you catch any where in the country, more data we build on access.



Connect Special also has a print magazine, a platform to promote awareness and create an inclusive society.

To subscribe to our monthly magazine and / or to contribute to content, please write to [botta.bhavna@gmail.com](mailto:botta.bhavna@gmail.com)