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Every Day Is Worth Celebrating

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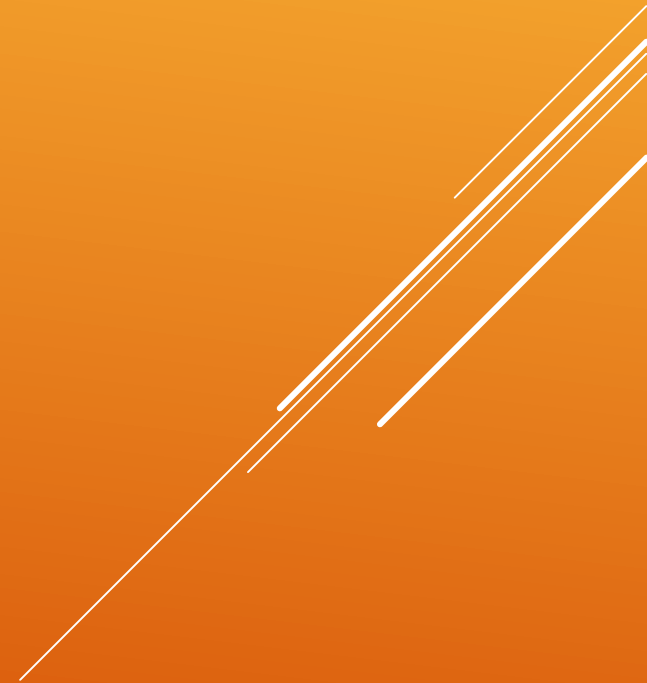
Every Day Is Worth Celebrating

Celebration means a coming together as one to promote a common goal and appreciating the outcome. My time in Ahwa, Gujarat embodied this definition. As a part of a mission trip to India, I had the pleasure of working with a wonderful community in a beautiful country and meeting a group of people that welcomed us with open arms. Over the course of our journey, we went from being strangers from a distant land to becoming close friends, developing a bond that I will cherish forever.

Under the guidance of physicians, pharmacists, and many other healthcare workers, we were able to work with this community and improve their health to the best of our ability. Whether it was utilizing osteopathic techniques to alleviate musculoskeletal ailments, using breathing and behavioral techniques to aid patients suffering from psychiatric issues, or simply discussing preventive medicine and lifestyle tips, we did our very best to promote general wellness, health, and happiness among the locals of Ahwa. Together we were able to come together for a common goal- improving public health- and celebrated at the end of the trip the many strides we made.

However, as a gift, the community provided us with something much more meaningful- an open look at their way of celebrating life. They danced, sang, cooked us wonderfully tasting meals, took us around their beautiful land, and most importantly showed us that it matters not how much money one has, but rather how to make the most of one's time on this Earth. For me, this was the true celebration- a celebration of health promotion, of course, but additionally a celebration of culture, camaraderie, and community.

From the moment we walked into the medical center until the day our bus drove away as we waved goodbye to the many smiling faces, the locals provided us with the utmost hospitality and respect, and an intimate look into their lives. Together, we celebrated the art of medicine one interaction and one experience at a time. But most importantly, we celebrated life. The people of Ahwa are celebrating life in their own way, despite not having access to the same resources we take for granted every single day. That does not stop them from celebrating life, and this just goes to show that no matter how you live it, where you live it, or who you live it with, life is always worth *celebrating*.



Sundeep Gidugu enjoys writing about his life experiences and opinions as a third year medical student. He is interested in public health, health education, and working with underserved populations.

In his spare time he enjoys reading, writing, and spending time with friends and family.

ABOUT THE ARTIST: SUNDEEP GIDUGU

