



## NOTHING IS GREATER THAN MEETING YOUR GURU

AMEYA | Dreamt of meeting Swami Radhanath, a spiritual leader of the ISKCON.

Wishes are special and unique and they mean a lot to our children. Some wishes are so distinctive that the contentment of the heart is far superior to the fulfilment of material desires. One such wish unfolds through a very special child, Ameya Chavan.

At the young age of 17, Ameya was moved from one hospital to another for his treatment. His illness brought on severe vomiting and headaches but that did not hamper his spirit. Ameya had lofty dreams and was different from other patients.

Spurred on by a desire to study, he completed his HSC an excellent score of 66% and didn't stop there. He took up a three-year graduate course in science (B.Sc) in Ruia College, Mumbai and began his first year with gusto. Against all odds, his innate desire to learn pushed him to take up physics, mathematics and statistics as his subjects.

When Sunita, a Make-A-Wish India volunteer of the Mumbai division, met Ameya and asked him what his wish was, his reply took her by surprise. Any teen of Ameya's age would wish for a bicycle, a cricket set, a laptop, or a mobile phone, but Ameya seemed to be from a different world. He pondered for a while and then expressed his wish to meet Swami Radhanath, a great spiritual leader of the ISKCON. Sunita was taken aback and filled with admiration for Ameya and his unique dream.

Ameya, being an ardent follower, was aware of the Swami's schedule and details and even kept track of all his visits to Mumbai. He knew that Swami Radhanath travelled to Mumbai once a year and informed the Make-A-Wish India team of the same. The team wasted no time in getting in touch with Swami Radhanath and informed him of Ameya's cherished wish. Impressed by the devotion of such a young child, the spiritual leader who in general does not meet with his disciples accepted the request put forth by the organisation. Young Ameya's joy knew no bounds when he was informed that he would finally have his wish.

October 18, 2012 was the day Ameya was to finally meet his role model, his guru! He was so full of excitement that he had butterflies in his stomach and he couldn't sleep the previous night.

He shared that although his father religiously worked at the ISKCON temple, he had never been able to fulfil his wish, and so he always thought that his wish would remain unfulfilled. But, due to the efforts of the Make-A-Wish India team, Ameya spent precious moments with Swami Radhanath, received autographed books and created memories that would last a lifetime. In essence, the experience was akin to a lost soul attaining fulfilment. Ameya was spellbound and imbibed positive energy from Swami Radhanath and was convinced that he would soon recover from his illness.

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He expressed his heartfelt gratitude towards Make-A-Wish India by writing a letter full of genuine emotion and sincerity. It expressed his personal feedback on the work done by the organisation for him. His letter evocatively brings out his feelings when embraced by his icon, Swami Radhanath. "I cannot explain my happiness in words. I am very thankful to you because I think I won't get this chance again in my life. Your work is so wonderful, not only for me but many patients like me. I forgot my pain only because of you," he wrote.

In a Bengali novel known as Chaitanya Charitamrita, a beautiful quote reads, '*Lavamatra sadhu sange sarv sidhi hoye*' meaning 'Simply by a moment's association with a sadhu, one can attain perfection.' Although, Make-A-Wish India has not healed Ameya physically, the organisation's simple act has encouraged Ameya spiritually. His willpower was boosted by the fulfilment of his wish and he is now equipped to face life's obstacles.

Ameya's life has a deeper meaning for him with the inner peace he acquired from his guru. Today, he teaches mathematics to young students and hopes to be a mathematics professor one day. We truly hope the best for our dear Ameya.

