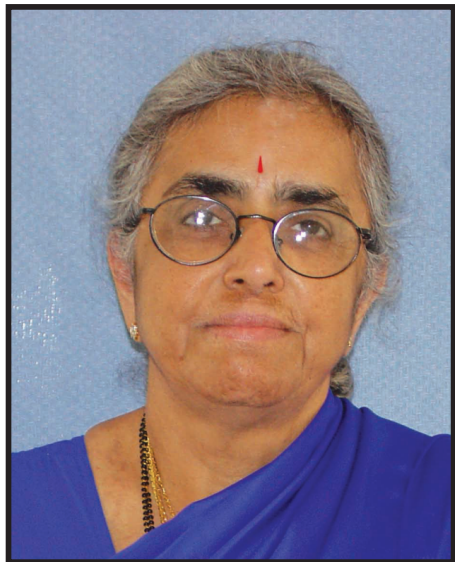


# Dr. Uma Mysorekar: Impacts of COVID-19 on the Community



When the Coronavirus was first detected nobody expected it to blow up the way it did. The seemingly unpreventable spread of the virus incited fear among individuals, instilling a sense of panic all over. Actions such as panic buying and hoarding reflect the fear we had in thinking that this pandemic will never end. In spite of all this, community stood together with utmost faith and hope trying to help the needy including first responders, elderly and the sick. These thoughts and deed are demonstrative of one's faith in the God who is worshipped in many different ways.

Lockdown forced people to stay home resulting in them to turn towards God and spend more time in prayer than ever. Communities stayed away from each other for survival. It is easy to lose hope while battling against global pandemic. People realized that God's grace and blessings are important, as it enabled one to lead a peaceful life. Spending more time in Prayer and worship gave them mental peace apart from excess time being spent with family members and loved ones at home or else everyone would have been held up in busy schedules running around. This situation helped in improving relationship with loved ones and reconnected with the faith they belong to.

Houses of worship innovated new

ways reaching the devotees using digital technology. Prayers were offered through live-streaming and due to this facility the reach became global. People were able to connect with any temple of their choice and join the mass prayers. The Hindu Temple Society of North America, New York played a leading role in adapting innovative digital way of prayer system. People from across the globe were able to connect to our Temple, offering their prayers and worship.

Social distancing does not have to mean social disconnecting and we can still find ways to connect with friends, family and others who inspire us or make us laugh with the mutual potential of the interest. People's lifestyle changed towards better hygiene. Shaking hands culture changed to "Namaste" greetings, which has always been the Hindu way of greeting.

Learning trend shifted to digital approach. Due to current circumstances it helps to remind ourselves of this commitment to the care of others. When we think about our own actions in the light of impact on others, we can find purpose and hope - a hope that together we can and will get through this.

The ultimate goal of Hinduism is to establish peace. All Hindu prayers end with a special prayer for peace "*Aum Shantih, Shantih, Shantih*" meaning Peace, peace & peace. These include prayers for individuals, natural disasters, pandemics and wars.

*"Look to this day, for it is life, the very breath of life. In its brief course lie all the realities of your existence; the bliss of growth, the glory of action, the splendor of beauty. For yesterday is only a dream, and tomorrow is but a vision. But today, well lived, makes every yesterday a dream of happiness, and every tomorrow a vision of hope. Look well, therefore, to this day."*  
(Ancient Sanskrit)

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