

18th International Inner Wheel First Virtual Convention

Inaugural Address by Dr Bina Vyas,

International Inner Wheel President 20-21

April 17, 2021

International Inner Wheel Executives and Board Directors

National Presidents

National Representatives

District Chairmen

Past International Inner Wheel Presidents

Past Board Directors

Past National Presidents & Past National Representatives

Convention Coordinator & Convention Committee Members

Club Presidents & My very dear Inner Wheel Members all over the world.

Namaste Friends

It is with immense pleasure and happiness that I welcome you all to the 18th International Inner Wheel First Virtual Convention 2021 – “Friendship Turns Digital”.

The pandemic has forced us to cancel the physical Convention which had been planned to be held in the most glamorous Convention Centre of Jaipur. Jaipur the historic, Pink city and the heritage city of India.

However, this Virtual Convention is distinctive in more ways than one. India is hosting a Convention for the first time and that too - the first Virtual Convention which will go down in the annals of Inner Wheel history.

I am happy to give an insight into the Sessions of this Virtual Convention. There are Business Sessions, Keynote speakers, Sessions on Constitutional Changes through Proposals and Reports of IIW Executives and Editor. We have added many attractions in this Convention. For the first time we are bringing 2 Talk Shows - one with the Inner Wheel Representatives in the United Nations and the second with the Presidents & Members of the Non Districted Clubs.

There are also two major Presentations on International Covid Fund and Lebanon’s Success story.

For the first time, there are 4 enchanting Channels which you can turn on whenever you desire – An Exhibition of wonderful, Innovative Projects being done by countries and displayed through collages with fascinating photos of projects and eye catching captions; Entertainment Channel where you can watch beautifully choreographed dance videos by Inner Wheel countries ; Dances by professionals in India depicting the diverse cultures of India ; The third Channel to showcase excellent projects as success stories of clubs in various countries which can be replicated by other countries . The 4th Channel to give you a glimpse of the most attractive sightseeing places in Jaipur and other major cities of India along with an insight into the art, culture, and handicrafts of India.

Friends, Virtual convention, Virtual technology has enhanced our abilities. We are learning innovative ways to manage our work and we are able to accept challenges of any magnitude and accomplish them with perfection. International Inner Wheel and the host country, India have accepted this great challenge and have strived to bring to all Inner Wheel Members in the world – an alluring newness to the Virtual Convention and thereby achieve all that we have been desiring.

My compliments to the Inner Wheel Executive, & Governing Body and the Convention Coordinator, Past Association President & Past Board Director Renu Baljee. & the 3 Committee Members –

Treasurer of the Virtual Convention Gomathi Vishwanathan, Past Association Presidents Shailaja Bhat & Pushpa Suryamurthy.

Our sincere appreciation for the Promotion Committee members who voluntarily came forward and very enthusiastically contributed to the Promotion of our 18th International Inner Wheel First Virtual Convention in their respective countries.

My dear friends.....being in Inner Wheel since 35 years, I have been visualising for years now, how our Clubs should evolve, grow and progress in the coming years.

So I thought of the International Inner Wheel Theme –

“ LEAD THE CHANGE ”.

Innovation and Change are happening at many levels in the world and Inner Wheel is no exception. We have already adopted the digital culture never seen before. The Virtual and Zoom platforms have now opened up a plethora of new experiences for all of us.

Friends, Change is the law of nature and it is for us to usher in change and demonstrate to the world the capabilities we have and our strengths.

In spite of the pandemic, we have had a great year in keeping with the perfectly timed Theme – LEAD THE CHANGE – best suited to the

current situation in Inner Wheel. It is for us friends, to meet the challenges and give a facelift to Inner Wheel.

Challenges are plenty my friends, challenges are plenty in Inner Wheel. Keeping in mind the fact that we are approaching our centenary year in 2024, we need to address innumerable issues before us if we want to bring in Change for a better Inner Wheel world.

We will need to Plan and Develop a positive VISION for the growth of our Organisation. We need to Accelerate our efforts to increase Membership of all age groups and increase the No. of Clubs.

We need to make Inner Wheel financially strong & independent through proper investments in the growth & development of our Members. Instead of just growing a Corpus, we need to invest and utilise our Corpus in initiating International Corporate Projects.

This will build and project the brand image of Inner Wheel everywhere in the world and attract more and more professional women in our Organisation. The Corpus value however strong, declines due to inflation and cost. We need to keep up a constant growth of our members. And Spending on the growth of Members, will keep increasing the financial stability of International Inner Wheel.

Friends, we have to Work collectively on common Goals and on huge, massive projects for the world. We need to have International

Corporate Projects – benefitting thousands of beneficiaries in the world. This will involve Members across the globe to demonstrate the internationality of Inner Wheel.

We need to Empower leadership at all levels friends – Clubs, Districts, National & International and motivate good, aspiring, ambitious leaders so that we have a wonderful leadership plan.

We have to provide transparency and avoid hidden agendas.

We need to have Zones in Inner Wheel countries based on their Membership strength to ensure the deserving stake in the Executive and Governing Body.

Friends Our efforts should be directed to Working closely with the United Nations and its programs. We have to Maintain Consistency in our efforts to achieve our desired goals.

Friends, Our priorities need to change. Our Priority should be now focused on YOUTH Build leadership skills & abilities in them & develop them for our future because young girls are the only sustainable assets for us.

It is also necessary friends to bring in Constitutional Changes at least once in 2 years. Meeting of Voting Delegates and visionary positive people can introduce changes rapidly. A visionary Proposal in the 2012 Istanbul Convention suggested the introduction of a Council on Legislation. We need to adapt this even more now.

We cannot wait for 3 years to incorporate changes in our Constitution since we have to keep pace with the changes taking place rapidly.

To bring in young girls at a tender age, we should introduce Clubs for age Group 12 to 18 as Angel Clubs to build our youth and prepare them as our future leaders – thereby ensuring that they would be our prospective members. If we need young leaders, we have to start clubs for school girls. They have the potential and we need to catch them young. We need to accelerate our growth and service by inducting young members who can bring in new fresh energy and new vision to Inner Wheel.

Friends To generate financial sufficiency, to fund Corporate Projects, we need to have our own Inner Wheel Foundation, which will collect & accept charity funds from Members, Governments & other Institutions. This will bring plenty of opportunities for us to serve the world community and will give us the feeling of internationality of Inner Wheel.

Friends at the same time , there are Small countries which do not have enough resources and they need backing from International Inner Wheel, if we have to retain them and absorb them in our fold. This can be done by way of Corporate Projects.

Friends, we need to be target oriented in Inner Wheel especially, because otherwise it will be a directionless year. Uniform Goals need to be given to all Clubs for direction & clarity. When all Clubs in the world achieve extraordinary results, the impact will be prominently visible, noticeable & appreciable. This will demonstrate our solidarity in addressing the issues of the world and it will also build the much-needed brand image of Inner Wheel.

Friends, time has come when our Clubs cannot work in isolation , cannot work in isolation anymore. Collaboration and Cooperation are the key words today – Collaboration with other NGOs, with Government Agencies and with other Organisation for community development projects and Cooperation in our projects with other Clubs, Districts, Countries and International are the only ways to move ahead in the coming decades.

Friends at the same time We also need cooperation, support and involvement of our family members, which will enhance our activities and projects.

Friends If we want to Lead The Change, if Changes have to come rapidly in Inner Wheel... if we have to grow and serve..... we need to come out of our stagnated figures of Membership as well as the No of Clubs.

We need to bring in Young Professionals, Young Professional leaders Open minded, flexible and resourceful leaders at all levels in Inner Wheel to help in the growth of our Organisation in every way... We need to professionalise Inner Wheel now. This is the right time to professionalise our organization. This is the acute need of today. Our leadership must be Organisation centric, unbiased and without any prejudice.

Friends, Pandemics come and go But it is time we need to look within our Organisation and get rid of the pandemic in Inner Wheel. If we have to avoid stagnation and strengthen our Membership, we need to keep away from negativity, negativity in every way – negative attitudes, negative behaviour, false ego and cliques at all levels to create a majority and lack of continuity and consistency in our programs. We have to rise above our personal biases and prejudices and demonstrate a disciplined, rule based Organisation.

Friends... it is sad that We are losing the values of life - the very essence of friendship and fellowship and harmonious working with each other. We are forgetting the Objectives of Inner Wheel – Friendship, Service & International Understanding. These are the strong, solid foundation on which our beloved is standing tall even today.

To keep pace with the changes, we should keep changing our modus operandi for our community services and we have to be flexible in our approaches.

We have to bring in the internationality of Inner Wheel , broaden our thinking and encourage global voice.

We should love and meet challenges. We cannot rest any more in the comfort of safety of our homes but we need to grab every opportunity to grow, to serve & change..

As we serve, we change the lives of others and thereby, we change our lives too.

Albert Einstein has said “ Only a life lived for others is a life worthwhile “

Resistance to change friends is a universal truth and that is why change takes time but when it ultimately happens, it brings joy and happiness to all of us.

My dear friends, We women have the power to change the Organisation and the world. Women have always been accommodating changes all the time and leading from the front as Global Leaders with a Vision for tomorrow.

We have to usher in many epoch making, historical changes..... To bring in a proper Planned New Inner Wheel A New Method of Working...and this is possible if we can give a facelift to our Organisation.

To bring about a positive transformation, it is for our Members to take charge, voice opinions, give suggestions and demand changes for our Organisation so that we can lead the change for a better Inner Wheel world... which we are all eager to establish.... Inner Wheel of a New Order ... to fulfil the aspirations of our society, community and particularly, women & girls.

Friends, We need to remember that it is only with sensitivity, empathy and compassion that we can develop & achieve a Common Vision and Mission for the upliftment of under privileged women and girls.

To achieve this Mission, we have to change ourselves – in our thinking, in our working, in our beliefs, in our pre conceived notions of people, in our interpersonal relations, in our behaviour, in our communications, in our attitudes and in our entire approach to Inner Wheel.

I would like to convey my best wishes to all the creative and innovative women who will ignite the CHANGE & LEAD THE CHANGE for the betterment of family in particular, and humanity in general.

God has gifted and blessed we women with qualities like loving, caring, sharing, understanding, generosity, patience, tolerance, kindness, compassion, and benevolence. We need our Organisation to adapt these changes, adopt these changes as our Corporate Values.

Friends There is a popular saying...

People who change after change.... Will survive

People who change with change Will succeed

People who ignite the change Will Lead

So friends.....

This year marks the beginning of CHANGE

Let us then all together LEAD THE CHANGE with a great deal of humility, sensitivity and integrity to Change lives so that someone, somewhere, sometime, someday will thank us for whatever little we are able to contribute for the welfare of the community.

Thank you

Namaste