

# NAVRATRI CHEER

Bodhi Tree



# INTRODUCTION

Durga means “She who is difficult to reach.”

Devi Durga is a form of Shakti. She is also called by various other names like Parvati, Ambika, Santoshi Mata etc.

Destroyer of the demons, she is worshiped during an annual festival called Durga Puja especially popular among Bengalis.

Durga is one of the most popular goddesses among the Hindus.

Devi represents strength, morality, power and protection.

Goddess Durga is the divine mother, who protects people from evil forces of selfishness, jealousy, hatred, anger and ego.



# ORIGIN OF MAA DURGA

In Hindu mythology, Durga is the fierce form of Devi, the Mother Goddess, the powerful almighty goddess.

According to a legend the gods could not defeat the buffalo demon Mahish, who was threatening the existence of the universe. They begged Shiva for his assistance and Shiva advised all the gods to release their shaktis.

The shaktis of the gods emerged in female form. These goddesses fused together in blinding light from which rose a magnificent goddess with many arms. She was as beautiful as she was deadly. Durga was born fully grown and is depicted as extremely beautiful and full of rage.

The gods called this goddess Durga, the invincible one, and they armed her with all their weapons. Thus armed, Durga rode to the top of a mountain on a lion.

In a bloody battle, she defeated Mahish and his army of demons and thus saved the Universe from this demon's menace.

# LEADERSHIP LESSONS FROM GODDESS DURGA



## **Multi-Tasking**

Durga Maa with her eight hands epitomizes the word 'multi-tasking.' Multi-tasking not only saves time, but it also keeps us mentally active and agile plus it makes us independent of the vagaries of time and resources.

## **Fearlessness and Inner Strength**

The word Durga, from the root word 'durgam' itself, embodies fearlessness. Goddess Durga rides a tiger - it's a metaphor showing - a fearless being can go on to tame problems and situations even as fierce as a tiger and come out as the winner. Remaining true to our convictions in the face of each adversity, however, big or small it may be, gives us an unshakeable inner strength. The stronger we are from inside, the more fearless we are perceived on the outside.

## **Vision and Equanimity**

The most prominent feature that arrests our attention is her beautiful, calm and serene visage which sports big yet watchful eyes. Big eyes are a symbol of having a 360 degree vision so as to know where one needs to reach. The watchfulness symbolizes a constant eye on your journey to your goal. While watchfulness is desirable, the goddess' serene visage also cautions to bear equanimity within us. A composed leader-manager can accomplish much more than an agitated one.

## **Adaptability**

Goddess Durga comes to us in 9 different avatars (forms) on the 9 days of Navratri. There is a very simple management lesson hidden here. Leader managers should be themselves but adapt their style, tone, stance, manner and involvement as per the situation on hand.

# NINE FORMS OF MAA DURGA

Goddess Shailputri is the first manifestation of Goddess Durga. She holds a Trishul in one hand and a lotus in the other and rides a bull called Nandi. What to offer: Devotees offer pure ghee on the foot of Goddess Shailputri.

Devi Kushmanda is the creator of the universe. What to offer: Devotees offer Malpua to Maa Kushmanda to improve their intellect and decision-making ability.

Goddess Kaalratri sacrificed her skin colour and embraced a dark complexion to kill demons. She is a four-armed deity who rides a donkey, carries a sword, a trident, and a noose. She has a third eye on her forehead that is believed to contain the entire universe. What to offer: Offer Jaggery as prasad to Devi Kaalratri for relief from pains, obstacles and bring happiness.

Goddess Brahmacharini walks bare feet with a rudraksh mala in one hand. What to offer: Goddess Brahmacharini is offered sugar for the longevity of the family members.

Goddess Skandamata who is worshipped on the fifth day is also known as Panchami. Skandmata is a four-armed deity, who carries a lotus in two of her arms and is seated on it as well. What to offer: Bananas is the favourite fruit of Goddess Skandamata.

Durga Ashtami or the eight-day of Navratri is dedicated to Goddess Mahagauri. She is a four-armed deity who rides on a bull or a white elephant. She carries a Trishul and a damru in her hands. What to offer: Goddess Mahagauri is offered coconut by devotees.

Goddess Chandraghanta is a fierce 10-armed goddess with a crescent moon on her forehead, which gives her the name Chandraghanta. She rides on a tiger to destroy all evil and wicked. What to offer: The ferocious goddess is pleased with Kheer. She is known to drive away all pains.

Goddess Katyayani is a form of Shakti. Also known as the warrior goddess, Katyayani is considered as one of the most violent forms of Goddess Parvati. She has four arms and carrying a sword she rides a lion.

The ninth or the final day of Navratri is of Goddess Siddhidatri. She is projected as a four-armed deity sitting on a lotus, holding a mace, discus and a book and lotus in her hands. This form of Goddess Durga signifies perfection. What to offer: Sesame Seeds are offered to Devi Siddhidatri for safety and security from unnatural events.

# IMPORTANCE OF NAVRATRI

Navratri is a festival of the Hindus celebrated with great devotion, love and fervor all over our country.

Navratri specifically means “nine nights” devoted to the goddess Maa Durga.

It is celebrated twice a year, first in the month of March/April and second in the month of September/October.

It is a festival of worship, dance, singing prayers and offering your sincere prayers to the Goddess.

The nine days and nights are totally dedicated to the mother goddess and includes observing a fast to please Maa Durga, chanting of mantras and religious hymns, prayers, reciting the sacred texts in honor of the goddess.

However Maa Durga lays no compulsion for her devotees to observe a fast, they could spend time chanting her name and doing good deeds as well.

The first three days of Navratri are dedicated to Goddess Durga (goddess of power), next three days to Goddess Lakshmi (goddess of wealth and prosperity) and the last three days to Goddess Saraswati (goddess of knowledge)

# CELEBRATING NAVRATRI

Garba is a form of dance which originates from the state of Gujarat in India. The name is derived from the Sanskrit term *Garbha* and *Deep*. Many traditional garbas are performed around centrally lit lamp or a picture or statue of the Goddess Shakti.



The auspicious occasion is characterised by the indigenous cuisine especially fashioned for those who are fasting on all or some of the nine days of the festival.

THANK YOU!

JAI MATA DI