

# Jeena - A Bond to Cherish

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(mom to Arnav and Aarav Kalra)

Jeena – a message to live, to live life to the utmost despite all the odds against us and our children. A very difficult phase in my life brought me face to face with Jeena almost six years ago and even though I wish I was never sailing the boat I am, I am honored and proud to be an associate of Jeena.

True to its name, Jeena has a lot to offer. In fact it offers whatever you need from it – a friend to confide your fears in, a support group to cheer you when you are down, professional, medical, and expert help when you need it most, parental experience and advice when medical answers make no sense, a platform to showcase your child's talent to the world, a fun place to hang out with courageous and determined people, a place to nurture dreams that would otherwise be quashed in the harsh realities of the world.

I am guilty of being a very passive member of Jeena, a true observer and follower, who is constantly amazed by the courage and strength of both parents and kids who are part of Jeena. My fondest association with Jeena are the very special bonds of friendship I have formed with some of its members – bonds that last a lifetime.

We meet very occasionally but meet with such gusto as if we have not missed a single day of each other lives, we talk in a manner that lightens the heart, we confide without the fear of being judged, we exchange emails uplifting each other's spirits, we motivate each other to be our best. In each example above, I use "we" hoping I

reciprocate everything my Jeena friends do for me.

I am on the very outskirts of Jeena, yet I am always inspired by the strength and determination of the people and the spirit of Jeena. I also wonder how things would be if I were truly on the inside of Jeena – a hope I am hoping will come true in due course. In the mean time, I will continue to cherish my friends and my special bond with Jeena.

"Here is a humble attempt to capture the intense spirit of Jeena in words:"

जीना यहाँ,  
खुल के जी,  
कडवा घूंट ही सही  
हिम्मत से पी.

हौसला बुलंद रख  
दोस्तों की कमी नहीं  
हर कदम निडर हो कर उठा  
तेरा रास्ता है सही

हर मुश्किल मोड़ पर  
तेरे दोस्त तेरे साथ है  
डटे रहो अपनी राह पर

ज़िन्दगी से घबराना नहीं  
निराशा में तुम्हारी हार है  
जीना है, जीना है यहाँ  
यही मेरा पैगाम है.