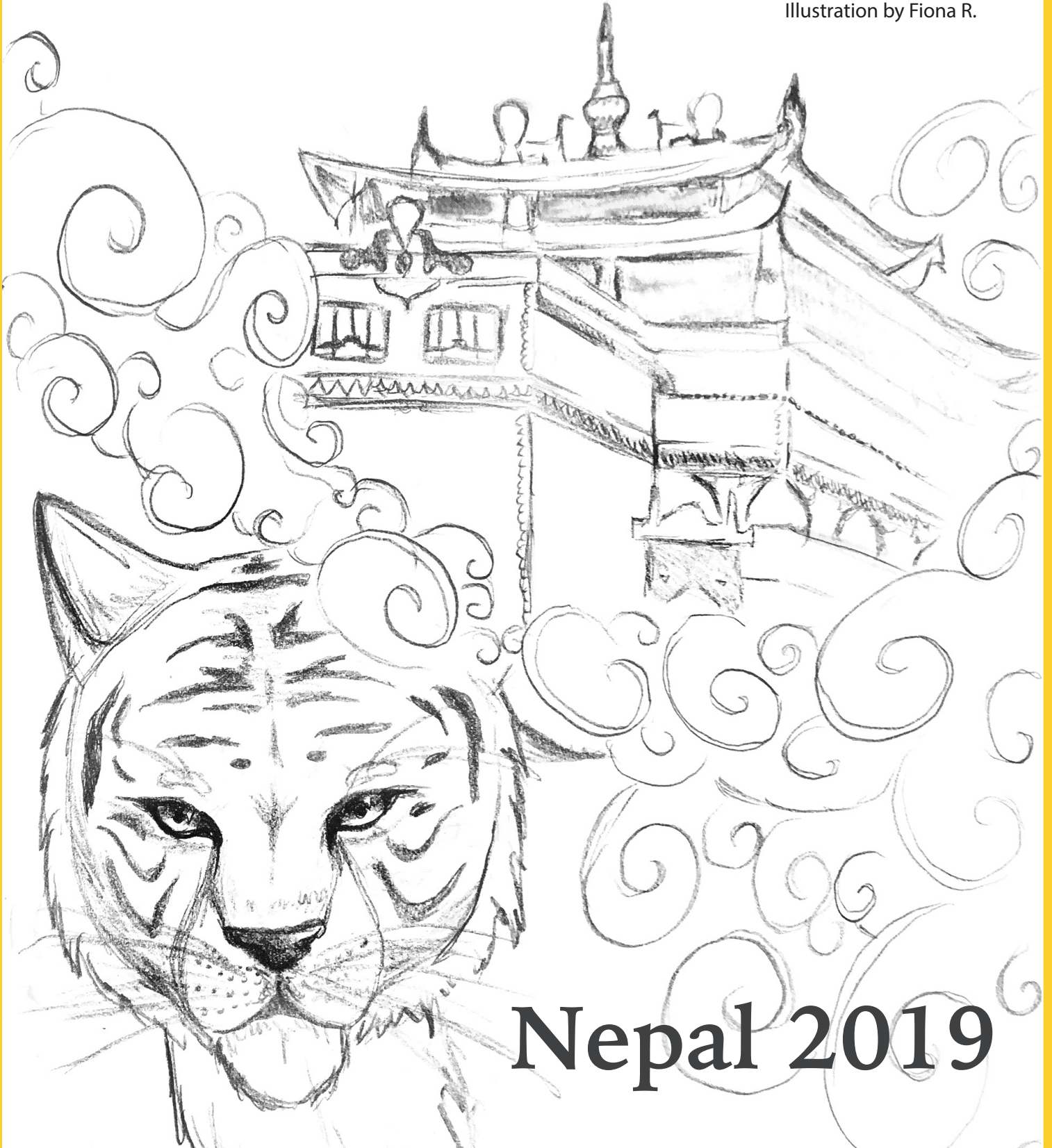


 NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

# student **EXPEDITIONS**

Illustration by Fiona R.



## Nepal 2019



To view Quinn B.'s video, visit our trip blog at <https://www.ngstudentexpeditions.com/nepalcsa2019>

## A Letter from your Leaders

Dear families,

This June, your students participated in an incredible adventure in a country that is very special to our hearts: Nepal. We hope they will look back on their experience as a transformative time in their lives as students, adventurers, and global ambassadors. Over the course of two weeks, in addition to completing more than forty hours of physically demanding community service activities, they also learned about the culture, history, and customs of one of the world's most beautiful and remote countries. They built relationships with our incredible local team, hiked through the foothills of the Himalayas, and ate a wide array of delicious Nepali cuisine. They taught English to student monks at one of the most important and sacred Tibetan Buddhist pilgrimage sites in the

world, completed service projects at a rural and remote school that was destroyed in the 2015 earthquakes, and pursued independent projects related to human trafficking, Buddhist philosophy, and meditation.

Over the course of the last two weeks, we explored complex and challenging topics related to colonialism, global development, and community service. We explored not only our own perceptions about community service and the way we want to support projects and organizations we are passionate about in the world, but we explored the history, culture, and issues that influence the impact of travelers in Nepal. While it may seem counter-intuitive, our

hope is that these discussions left your students feeling uncomfortable. It is through discomfort that we experience the greatest possible growth.

We remind our students that their decision to spend a part of their summer volunteering in a developing nation indicated a promising desire to leave a positive trace in the world. We are impressed and proud of the students who embarked on this adventure with us and we encourage everyone who took part in this trip to view their time in Nepal as one step on the path to becoming more engaged and thoughtful global citizens. There are no easy answers to complex issues we face globally today: environmental destruction, political instability,

development, immigration, climate change, equality, and injustice. It is our role as leaders to challenge our intelligent and capable students to reflect on their own privilege, perceptions about people and places, and impact on the countries they visit. It is our hope that these conversations instilled in them a desire to continue exploring why and how they can make a difference in the world. As Margaret Meade famously said, "never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." It only takes one person, and we are sure that this group of students are capable of just that, changing the world.

Sincerely,  
Alex Basaraba and Kiki Baxter

# KALYAN GURUNG

Essay and photo by Kate Z.



Thulung Dudhkoshi Rural, municipality 1, far away from all other life and most people there Solukhumbu, Nepal is the the birth place of Kalyan Gurung. Solukhumbu is a small mountain village in the Mount Everest area. This destination is located have to walk hour and even days to get to school, work and other places that are necessary for their life.

In the case of Kalyan, he said that he was one of the lucky ones who got to go to school. In the morning, before school, Kalyan would help his parents with farming and around the house. His father was in the British military and has retired in the 1970s. Kalyan's school was far away as there was nothing close to his village. The walk from his village to school was 1.5 hours one way and that path was crossed by many, ranging from young children to elderly villagers. The younger and elderly population would also have to take longer to complete this walk, which would range from 2 to 3 hours. That school had around 70 students in total but only 6 of those students were able to compete and pass it. Kalyan was one of those 6 finishing school in 2002.

It is also not common to pass and move on past grade 10 in Nepal. Kalyan said that only 33% of the students are able to achieve those levels and move on to get a higher education. That especially applies to Solukhumbu village as it was very isolated from the rest of Nepal.

That was a very risky area and Kylan said that he has never seen a car before until his father took him to Kathmandu in order to seek higher education. Kalyan and his father had to walk 2.5 days in order to get to a bus station which would later take them to Kathmandu. This was the first time Kalyan had seen a vehicle in his whole life. He said "it was very exciting moment to ride a bus for the first time and came to Kathmandu, which was 9 hours long." Upon his arrival in Kathmandu, he refused his father's money because he decided

that he needs to learn how to provide for himself while he was in high school and university there. His brother showed him around and taught him the ways of the city: how to cross the road, how to travel around by bus and many other things.

Kalyan finished his last two years of high school, focusing his studies of physiology, English, culture and history. After that, he joined university in 2004 where he finished his Bachelor's degree in Physiology, Philosophy and English in 2008. After university, Kalyan began working as a guide for students who visit Nepal.

As can be determined from Kalyan's story, the village of Solukhumbu has been struggling with education and that is the main problem that they are currently facing. Along with education difficulties, the village lacks electricity, access to water and roads. This drives those who have graduated away and now the main population of this village is younger children and elderly people, since no one comes back after finishing university in Kathmandu. Due to this population, it becomes harder for these ages to develop the village because of their abilities.

In conclusion, it can be determined that Kalyan Gurung has been one of the successful and lucky people in the village of Solukhumbu, who is hoping to see further change in his community towards positive change that would allow more kids to follow his steps towards education.

# THE POWER OF EDUCATION

Essay and photos by Alessandra D.

Ever since my first day spent in Talamarang at the childrens' home, I have been wholeheartedly consumed with the impressions of the children I just met. Meeting girls younger than me who told me that they are among not many others who attend school was personally very unsettling to hear. Education and advocating for women has always been a passion of mine and something I knew I would always dedicate my life towards. However, it wasn't until meeting some of the most special and strong women that I realized how urgent my need to take action is. The way that I have felt in Talamarang forced me to the conclusion that I will work as hard as I need to help as many girls as possible recognize the unequivocal potential within them. I don't find statistics to be of extreme substance within this conversation, even if two girls were not given the right to an education, that should be enough to provoke rage and welcome change.

While in Nepal, I had the honor of interviewing one of the most resilient and empowering women that I have ever met. Sonam Sherpa co-founded the Himalayan Hope Home in Kapan, Nepal for children. She also cofounded The Small World organization with her husband, Karma. During the short period of time I had with Sonam, I was able to have a very

remarkable conversation with her regarding the value of education. She explained to me that the main reason she does the work she does is because she believes in the power of education, which is often denied to girls throughout Nepal. Sonam recognizes her life as substantially different than that of her friends who lack an education and were never allowed to explore their own potential.

"Without education you are blind. With education, you get your power and your voice and you know what is right and what is wrong. You can have the courage to say 'no' to the things you don't want to do."

Sonam explained to me that the people of Nepal still don't appreciate schooling for girls as they do for boys. One of Sonam's ultimate goals is to close all the institutions in Nepal, such as orphanages, because she believes we need to accept orphan children into our own community and raise them like all other children. If you don't have your mother and father, you have your uncle and aunt or maybe even your grandparents. She believes that what needs to change is the concept that orphan girls are still worthy and that they are still our children so that they don't send them away to



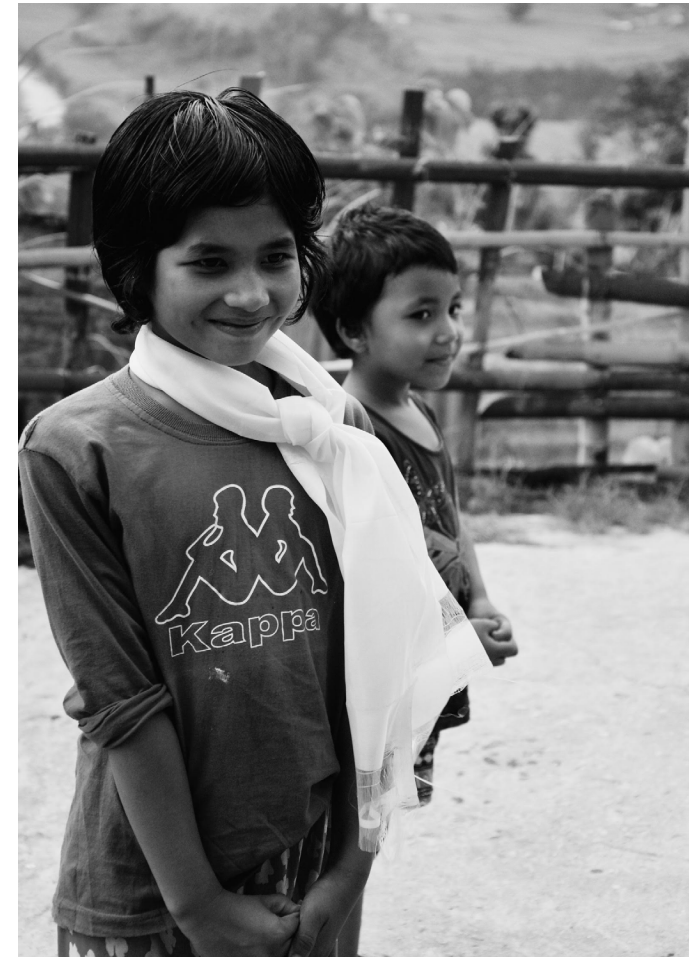


of them. These uneducated orphan children have nowhere to go and no one to take care of them. Sonam works continuously to educate her community and others to tell them how crucial it is to take care of these children and educate them. Boys education in Nepal is still valued more than girls because educating a boy is known to also help the family. When a family spends money on their daughter's education, it is known to be wasteful because she will inevitably marry and leave the family, therefore contributing nothing back.

The best thing we can do is share our experience and be the voice for those who aren't being heard. People have been hearing the same mundane facts regarding this topic repeatedly. If we can find a way to use our voice to present the information adequately,

we can inform the world how much of a crisis this truly is. The mindset present while thinking about the change you can contribute is critical. It is worthwhile to note that when you educate one girl you are also educating her children and that ripple will continue infinitely.

The only difference between me and the girls I have met is where we were born. Educated women act as role models for girls in their own communities. We have the same innate potential for success and deserve a chance at a brighter future than our past. Why should these girls be denied a fundamental right because of their gender or their birthplace? Words are incredibly powerful and therefore need to be used to advocate for every strong young woman I have yet to meet in Nepal.



# NEPALI DANCE: A THRIVING CULTURAL OASIS IN A DESERT OF GLOBALIZATION

Essay and photos by Sophie S.



Throughout our stay in Nepal, I grew increasingly aware of the importance of dance in Nepali culture. Although there were hints of this importance in the bustling capital city of Kathmandu, dance was really emphasized in the more rural village of Talarang. The night our National Geographic team arrived there for

our six-day community service stay at the Team Nepal Children's Home, we were welcomed with a series of dances performed by the girls who lived there. Everyone was extremely impressed, to say the least. Therefore, for my independent project, I decided to examine how dance is embedded in Nepali culture.

To find such a complex answer, I was fortunate enough to talk to Jamuna, the woman who choreographed and taught all of the children their fabulous dances, and her twin sister, Ganga. They described many of the specifics of dance in Nepal, some of which were quite surprising.

The girls started dancing formally when they were eight or nine, an age that was a bit older than many of the girls that had performed at opening night. Dance was first introduced to them and mainly learned in their home, though sometimes teachers would also choreograph and teach kids dances. However, despite the emphasis at home on first learning the dances, they are mainly performed at school programs, or to compete at other schools. Therefore, dance is not greatly related to their religious traditions, as kids of many different religions attended the school that Jamuna and Ganga attended.

Also, in contrast to what I saw during the welcome performance, boys are engaged in Nepali dance too, just on a smaller scale than the girls.

After observing the dances performed by the kids in Talarang, I was also curious to know whether dances learned in the city were different from those in the country, but the girls clarified that urban and rural dances were pretty much the same. Nonetheless, it

really depends on who is choreographing the dances, as there is no set standard of pre-choreographed dances for children to learn.

Dance is not a mandatory activity either, as children who don't enjoy the art are allowed to stop. Those who really love it, however, are allowed to pursue it, as there are some careers available in Nepal for dancers. Actually, Jamuna articulated that she'd enjoy one such career someday.

Finally, when I asked the girls to explain their favorite part about dancing, they quickly proclaimed that they just loved moving to the music, which was usually a mixture of Nepali and Hindi songs.

Clearly, dance is essential to many Nepali lives. It not only supplies an outlet for creativity and exercise but enables children to explore their cultural identity. In a time when popular culture is rapidly spreading due to globalization, this fact could not be more important.

Hopefully, into the future, the uniqueness of Nepali dance will continue to persist in this extraordinary cultural hub. Too many others have been infected by the American dances embedded in popular culture. We should continue to see Nepalis performing the "Rodhi Nach," not the Harlem Shake.

# RELIGION AS IT AFFECTS THE DAILY LIVES OF THE NEPALI PEOPLE

Essay by Isabelle T.

Religion is such a huge part of the lives of the Nepali people. No matter what religion they practice, it still influences their thinking and their way of life.

I spoke with one Nepali woman, who lives in Tamarang and practices Hinduism. This religion is the most widely practiced one in Nepal with 80.62% of the population practicing in 2001 and estimated 81.3% in 2011. She mainly worships the Hindu gods Vishnu, the protector, and Shiva, the destroyer, spending about 60% and 40% respectively, of her time worshipping these two gods.

Hinduism belongs to the latter God, Shiva. She fasts every Monday in honor of Shiva. Shivaratri, a day in honor of Shiva, takes place on the 13th or 14th day of every month. The woman whom I talked to said that for this event her and her family smoke, drink, and make offerings to a statue of Shiva. Once a year a festival called Maha Shivaratri takes place. It is the magnification of Shivaratri. This festival is a solemn one that includes things such as fasting, prayers, and vigils.

Practices that she does more often include fasting two times a month for approximately 12 hours a day. She also made her own temple so she has access to a place where she can pray every day. It was clear to see just from talking to her what a consistent and important part of her daily life her religion is.

Buddhism is the second most popular religion in Nepal, but from what I am told it is more of a way of life than a religion. In 2001 approximately 10.74% of the population identified as Buddhists, in 2011 that number became 9%.

I was fortunate enough to talk to someone who is dedicated their whole life to the Buddhist way of life, a monk. The goal of a monk is generally to accumulate good karma, achieve Nirvana, and follow the path of Buddha.

This is why I was surprised when the monk I met told me that he did not become a monk due to spiritual reasons. Growing up his father was unkind to him and would beat him, so when his cousin, who was a monk, came over and was treated with respect

by his father, he decided he wanted to be a monk.

This meant that he had to wear certain clothes, and shave his head, as all monks do. Becoming a monk influenced the way he lives as he was not allowed to do things such as kill or steal. He couldn't have alcohol or anything that alters his mind. There's to be no sexual misconduct, and he could not get married.

The monks spend their days dedicated to this way of life, learning about things such as divination, memorizing divination books, meditating and performing Pujas, ceremonies in which they pray to the Buddhas for things such as blessings or help. Every year for a month, during the season where there are bugs, the monks do not go outdoors. They stay inside as not to accidentally kill any life, thus performing bad karmas. This way of life is a dedicated one affecting those who chose this path throughout their lives.

Not everyone chooses one specific religion to follow, some pick and choose what they want to believe and live by. I was able to speak to someone like this Kaylan, who, like his family, believes in aspects of both Hinduism and Buddhism.

Kaylan believes in respecting all religions because no religion is superior to another.

He chooses not to blindly follow anyone religion as he believes this is not a good thing he's not beholden to any customs or rules of those religions, though he has certain aspects that he keeps close to his heart. For Buddhism these aspects are being at peace, valuing good karma, honesty, and respect. For Hinduism these aspects are being cultural, respectful, and friendly.

But with the good aspects comes the bad ones and for Buddhism he believes one of these to be their priorities when it comes to funding. For instance, investing so much money on the monastery that could've gone to those in need. For Hinduism this bad aspect is sacrifice, which Kaylan believes to be unnecessary. While he can choose aspects of believe in, sometimes he must choose one religion to follow, for things such as weddings and funerals. When it comes down to this he chooses to follow the customs of Buddhism. Kaylan is very open minded when it comes to religion, but his ideal still influence his life.



# POTTERY: AN ANCIENT CRAFT

Essay and photos by Gilda M.

Today, we learned about Nepalese pottery. Our pottery teacher taught us to use the wheel and showed us many design techniques. Although having taken ceramics for a year in high school, the techniques he taught us were foreign to me.

He helped us all tame the speed of our wheels so that the clay did not get out of our control. The wheel was somewhat the easiest part of the whole pottery making process. He then guided us down to his show room where all his finished pieces waited.

While we were there, he described and amazed us with all his glazing and burning techniques. One burning technique created a glass sounding noise to the piece when it was tapped on. This technique involved putting the piece in an excessive amount of times in order for it to harden enough and make a more high pitched noise rather than the low noise of a normal ceramic piece.

Another technique which he showed us on the wheel was to make it seem more of a marble material rather than smooth plain clay. After making the piece on the wheel, he slowly turned the wheel while using a carving tool to scrape off the top layer all around the vase. This creates an impression of marble.

Along with the wheel method of making pottery, he also had many sculptures on display. My favorite sculpture was of a pair of parents holding a baby. We did not get to see how he made this particular sculpture, but he told us how he carves it out of a slab of clay.

Seeing all his different pieces amazed me. He creates specific pieces that get shipped off to different countries and when looking in the kiln at them all being fired they were amazingly all the same. Watching him on the wheel, his talent was evident, but the ability to make hundreds of the same exact vase expressed the presence of a unique talent.



# NEPALI RECIPES Collected by Hu



1 ½ cup flour  
2 teaspoons yeast  
Water  
½ tablespoon dietary alkali

## Ting Momo

Pour yeast into a large bowl with ½ cup warm water, stir, and let sit for 10 minutes. Add flour and mix with hands; there shouldn't be extra water nor flour sitting in the bowl. Rub and mix until the surface of the dough is smooth. Cover the bowl with a piece of cloth or a plate and leave covered in a warm environment. Let sit for 1½ to 2 hours. Add dietary alkali to 2 tbsp water. Pour over and mix it into the dough. Spread flour over a cutting board and set the dough on it. Roll dough into a long strip and cut. Work the dough into desired shapes (round, twisted, etc.). Add a few cups of water into a pot and boil for 15 minutes. Place steamer over the pot and heat. Place the dough into the steamer for 15 minutes.



2 tablespoon dried black tea leaves  
1 ½ tablespoon sugar  
5 pieces numb pepper  
1-pint water

## Black Tea (Neel's Recipe)

Add black tea leaves to water in a pot. Add sugar and numb pepper. Boil on high for around 5 minutes.



Rice  
1 cup red, brown, and/or green lentils  
1 tablespoon oil  
½ onion  
2 cloves garlic  
1 tablespoon ginger  
Coriander  
Pepper  
Butter  
¾ teaspoon salt  
½ teaspoon brown mustard seeds

## Dahl Baht

Put rice on to cook. Wash and chop onion, garlic, and ginger into small pieces. Wash and chop coriander for garnish. Heat oil on high in a pan. Add onion, garlic, and ginger and stir for 2-3 minutes. Turn heat down to medium. Add salt, brown mustard seeds, desired amount of pepper and stir for 3 minutes. Add lentils and butter, if desired, and cook for 5 minutes. Add water as needed and let it reduce. Add coriander. Cook for a couple minutes more. Serve over rice.



Illustration by Fiona R.

# DICTIONARY

Translations and photos by Ashley A.

## COUNTING

1 - Eka                      6 - Cha  
2 - Dwui                    7 - Saht  
3 - Tien                     8 - Aat  
4 - Char                    9 - No  
5 - Pahtch                 10 - Dos

## GREETINGS/NECESSITIES

Hello - Namaste  
Hello (formal) - Namaskar  
Hello, my name is - Mero nam (name) ho  
See you again/goodbye - Fern betaula  
Thank you - Dani baad  
No thank you - Pugyo  
Good - Ramro  
Not good - Naramro  
Sorry - Maaf garnus  
Yes - Chha/ho  
No - Hoina/chaina

## IMPORTANT PHRASES

Let's go - Jaaun  
Let's rest - Aaram garne ho  
I am sick - Ma birami chhu  
I can not do it - Sakidaina  
Please sit - Basnus  
Just a little bit - Aliali

## FAMILY

Mother - Aama  
Father - Bubaa  
Younger sister - Bahini  
Older sister - Didi  
Youner brother - Bhai  
Older brother - Dhai  
My friend - Mero saathi  
Baby - Bacca

## FOOD

Hungry - Bok lagyo  
Delicious - Mitho  
I will eat - Ma Khanchhu  
I won't eat - Ma kandhi na  
Lunch/dinner - Khana  
Snacks - Khaja  
Bread - Roti  
Water - Paani  
Dumplings - Momos  
Tea - Chiya  
Hot - Taato  
Cold - Chiso

## ANIMALS

Goat - Bakra  
Sheep - Bheda  
Yak - Yaka  
Leaches - Jukaa  
Dog - Kukura  
Cat - Biralo  
Butterfly - Putali  
Penguin - Penguina

## NATURE

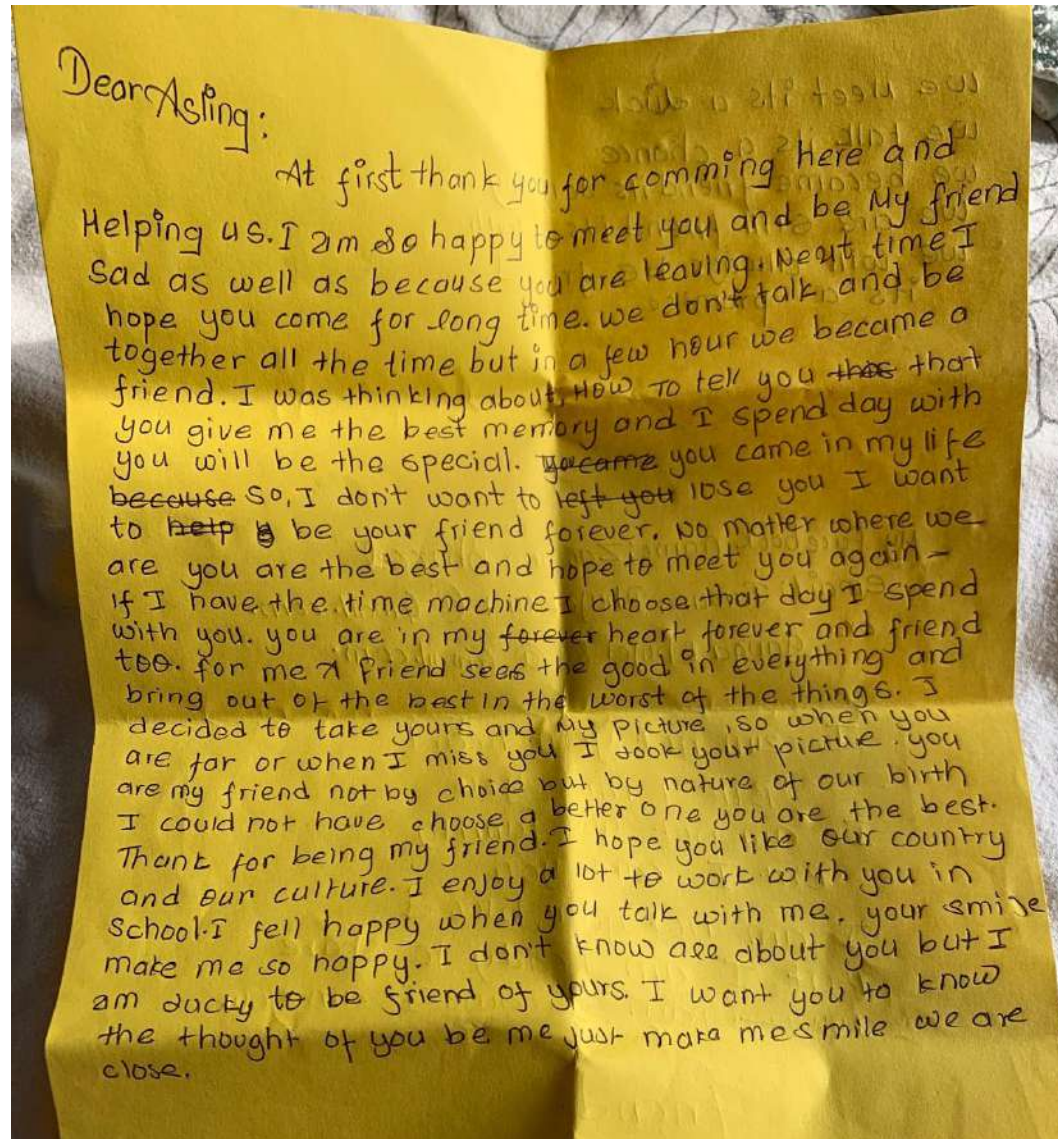
Tree - Rukha  
Nature - Prakiti  
Lotus flower - Kamala  
Waterfall - Jharana  
Sunshine - Prakash  
Mountain - Pahada



# FRIENDSHIP

Essay and photos by Leila R.

*Upon arrival in Nepal for a fifteen day community service trip, I was immediately told of culture friendliness. During my stay, this genuine friendliness and compassion in between people was omnipresent. Below are the views of Nepali people on friendship.*



*A letter from a TEAM Nepal child to NGSE student, Ashley.*

## *An interview with Karma Tobden*

Q: What would you say makes a friend?

A: A good friend should be in every situation. Not only in enjoyment situation, every hard situation you get

through a friend is needed by every moment.

Q: Do you think that friends have to be in constant contact?

A: No.

Q: Do you think that men and women can be friends?

A: Men and women can be friends actually. They say that men and women can't be best friends, but this is wrong actually. You have attachments through women so friendship should be limited.

Q: Would you say that being a monk changed the way that you are friends with people.

A: Yeah, if you want to know the full meaning of friendship. In monastery, when we get vows that's a promise that we take. If we try to [break] the promise we are surely going to hell. When we take vows we have three friends, they will be your friends for all of your life, in good moments and in difficult moments. Like a father even though they won't be like monk they will be in touch with you every moment. Friends indeed they are needed.



Q: Would say the friends you have made here [at the monastery] are different than other friends you have made?

A: No, but friends here you can see much. We take vows with each other, we take promise [...] we can't try to misjudge. We can't judge actually. At the monastery we have different department. Right now I am a teacher so my friends are in the other institutes like in India's. We are not connected every moment.

Q: Do you think that the love between friends is as important as romantic love?

A: Romantic love is insane, it is a period, teenagers like that for a moment. Friends are not like that. Friends are long life, all your life. Even in childhood you need friend, but do you need romantic love? No.



### ***An interview with Kalyan Gurung***

Q: Can you speak about the culture of friendship in Nepal?

A: The culture of friendship in Nepal is by that by virtue we are very friendly. We love to make friends, and besides the family we have much more important things in the friendship. Without friends, it is very hard to live here. In college, in family, or with neighbors, for the first time you meet and have an introduction to each other. By the next day or the third day we will be very good friends. Being a friend is not one day "hi" and "hello," but being a friend is if some day they have some difficulty; it is

sharing money, it is sharing food, it is all these things. A friendship like this is going to be forever and ever. But another part of the culture of friendship is what destroys the friendship. If they have some misunderstanding, borrowing money, for example. But friendship is the most important thing.

Q: Do you think that all friendships happen for a reason?

A: We didn't know you, you didn't know me. [...] coincidentally or luckily, we had preset that in 2019 on June 16th we meet in Kathmandu [...] that was all set out by fate. [...]

Q: Do you think that anybody can be friends with anybody else? No matter age or gender?

A: Anybody can be friends with anyone. No matter of the age, no matter of the caste, no matter of the which part - not only humans, but also animals. Or trees, or plants, or nature. This all can be a friendship. So, it doesn't matter, any caste, any height and weight, rich and poor, beauty and ugly, it doesn't matter.

Q: Do you think that culturally in Nepal is it easy for men a women to be friends?

A: In Nepal now it is going to be easier than before to be a man and woman as friends. Still in the village there are those who depends on the following of traditional customs [...] still they are culturally not acceptable... not easy the be a man and a woman friends, they can be a fiend after marriage.

Q: Can you tell me more about your personal friendship with nature?

A: I have lots of friends in animals but the nature itself is my friend. When I have been one place, for example Talarang, I have been before. Each and every year the same times, and I would like to go there again. I am always hunting that beauty I see in my mind. Yearly once or twice I go to Everest. It is a very beautiful mountain with beautiful nature. I would like to [go] when the time comes. Even though my body is here, my soul is already there and enjoying that nature.

Q: Tell me about a specific friendship in your life that meant a lot to you.

A: In 2002 I finished high school, I came to Kathmandu. I was one of the mountain boy, the village boy who came to the city. [...] In the very beginning days it was little bit difficult to speak with the friends and to be able to make friends. But slowly, gradually we were so open and we started talking. During the winter we know it is going to be very cold, and used to go to cafe have a cup of coffee and tea. Talking and laughing was very [enjoyable] moment with the friends. And those friends continue to the Masters level and after that we just departed on our own. We didn't have time to meet specifically, but still we are friends on Facebook, and we keep on talking with each other. And when we talk with [our] friends, we feel for a moment as if we are still in the city. It doesn't feel very long ago, just a couple of days [ago.]

Q: Do you think that love in between friends is as important, less important, or more important the romantic love?

A: The romantic love and the love between the friends are different. Love between friendship is open, very open. They are very friendly love, but the love in the romantic is totally the other, it is love relationship. It is most important is for it to be real love. A fake love is not going to be long lasting, and those who have a love from the heart, it will be long. A long love does not matter if it is romantic or friendship.

### ***An interview with Sonam Sherpa***

Q: Can you speak about the culture of friendship in Nepal?

A: I can not talk about the whole Nepal how everybody does it, but in general to be someone's friend, it's really something. It's not just you have it and you forget it. For example, you meet for a couple days and immediately people start calling you "sister" or "brother," so it's like you are already apart of family. We are taught from school that guest or new people who come into our lives are from gods and there is a place for us to meet. It's not just random. It's already planned and we have reason and connections to meet.

Q: What does a good friend do?

A: Mostly there is not expectations from friends. It is mostly sharing and being there for them when they need it, happy and sad moments.

Q: Would you say that friendship in Nepal is different from friendship elsewhere in the world?

A: As a human, I think it is the same everywhere. Where ever we go even if we are traveling solo, we don't go alone the whole time, we meet people and we make friends, then we go on our own way. So, I don't think it's so different, it's maybe the same.

Q: Do you think that anyone can be friends

A: So my personal view is that anyone can be friends with anyone. It's just it's a feeling, it's how you look at that person, despite their physical appearance, despite their interests. Its a connection from heart it's a special bond. It doesn't nesslerly discriminate [saying] "you are this and I am this so we cannot be friends." It's mostly that if we are sharing similar interests, something similar we work for. In Nepal it does not nesslerly mean boys and girls are like this, but culturally even if you are friends, in public spaces [...] people don't hold hands between the different sexes. Boys and girls they are friends, but no touching, no hugging, these things are not seen on the streets. Otherwise you can be any age or gender and be friends.

Q: Do you believe that animals and humans can be friends?

A: Of course, I believe that bacuse I come from a Buddhist family, a Buddhist background. So for us every sentient being is friend or related to us in some way. We believe in reincarnation. The ant can be your master in a past life or the monkey that you see can be your uncle. So we respect every sentient being equally.



Q: Would you mind telling me about a particular friendship in your life that has stood out to you?

A: So I work with many different age groups of people for my work. I work with many people from different backgrounds and walks of life. Everybody is very special to me. I have one friend, she is eighty six years-old and her name is Ms. Marry Miller. I love her

and ...I want to be like her. She travels the world and she has been all over serving people. Going around and teaching people. She is so strong and always happy. I ask her "what keeps you going so strong?" and she say "beer." So she's my special friend. Besides her I have a lot of other friends who are very special to me and dear to me, [...] all of the girls who I take care of; we all seek happiness and love from others



Photos by Trip Leaders Alex Basaraba and Kiki Baxter



Stupa lies on an ancient  
route from Tibet to Kathmandu  
and was a popular stopping  
for trading merchants.  
Stupa itself is said to  
be the remains of Kossapa  
by a prominent figure in  
Buddhist teachings

