



Sheila Kirpalani - 1934 – 2009

It is with a heavy heart that I write to you to share the news that I have lost the guiding light of my life. My beloved Mom - devoted mother, passionate educator, and talented artist - passed away peacefully last Monday, July 13 at the age of 75. She succumbed to complications from pancreas cancer, a disease she fought valiantly for almost 1.5 years. She will be missed by many family members and friends around the world, but by none more than me.

Born in Hyderabad, Sind, in 1934, the third eldest of 6 children, she grew up in Ajmer, India and then in Mumbai, India, and completed her Master's degree in Botany. Always the risk taker and pioneer in her family, she was a lecturer at K. C. College in Mumbai and was responsible for her entire family migrating to Mumbai. She left India for a life abroad, first to London, in 1965, where she taught high school and enjoyed life as a ravishing young socialite. In 1967, she moved to Toronto, single and adventurous, where she arrived to pursue further graduate studies at the University of Toronto. She made many friends, married in 1969, again brought her family members and friends to Canada, and established her roots here, where she lived for over 40 years.

She lectured at the University of Toronto and taught senior biology with the Toronto District School Board. She entertained lavishly, was well known as an outstanding singer, and became well known in the Indian community in Toronto. But she defined her life as the world's most amazing mother. She devoted her entire life from 1974 onwards to me and making sure I turned out okay. The sacrifices she made for me will be and should be talked about for years. Her love of life, strength of character, artistic ability, attention to detail, modern outlook, love for India, and work ethic are virtues I continue to admire and aspire to.

Her spirit will live on in me, through her music, and through the newly established **Sheila Kirpalani Foundation**. Please say a prayer for my Mom as her soul travels to rest peacefully and join her beloved parents and sister Leela in heaven. My heart is aching, but at the same time, I smile with pride and gratitude for having been blessed by this amazing soul.

Anish Kirpalani