

## Did They Meet Online? Well, Their Parents Did.



The first time Dr. Sunpreet Singh Tandon and Dr. Shalini Moningi spoke, they already had their families' approval.

Their parents first connected in 2022 on Shaadi.com, an Indian matchmaking website where relatives can create accounts on behalf of single family members. After speaking on the phone a year later, Dr. Moningi's and Dr. Tandon's parents felt confident in their matchmaking skills and exchanged their children's phone numbers. Then, it was up to the children what to do next.

"I'd been set up before and gone on these first dates, and I was just tired and irritated that evening, so I saw a text as an item on my to-do list," said Dr. Moningi, who, nevertheless, reached out first with a short greeting.

After Dr. Tandon responded, they began texting regularly, then moved to phone calls, and a connection soon developed. But there was one not-so-minor challenge: They lived a two-hour flight apart, with Dr. Moningi in Boston and Dr. Tandon in Cleveland.

Dr. Moningi, 36, is an assistant professor at the department of radiation oncology at Harvard Medical School — specifically, in the Department of Radiation Oncology at Brigham and Women's Hospital and Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. She was born in Cuttack, India, and raised in Al Bukayriyah, Saudi Arabia, then Philadelphia, and, finally, Charleston, W.Va. She has a bachelor's in chemistry and philosophy from West Virginia University and a medical degree from the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. In April, Dr. Moningi will start a new role as an assistant professor in the department of radiation oncology at the Cleveland Clinic.

Dr. Tandon, 37, was born in Christchurch, New Zealand, and spent his childhood in Grand Falls-Windsor, Newfoundland, before moving with his family to Mankato, Minn.; Andalusia, Ala.; and Kent, Ohio. He earned a bachelor's degree in integrated life sciences from Kent State University and a medical degree from Northeast Ohio Medical University. He is a staff radiologist at Fairview Hospital in the Cleveland Clinic system.

In January 2024, Dr. Tandon flew to Boston from Cleveland for his first date with Dr. Moningi.

"I was hopeful but I didn't want to get crushed," Dr. Tandon said.

They had brunch at Buttermilk & Bourbon, where Dr. Moningi discovered that Dr. Tandon doesn't drink coffee or alcohol.

"My grandma would have loved him," she said. "What a good boy."

They walked to the Massachusetts State House afterward — one of Dr. Tandon's goals is to visit every state capitol in the United States — and visited the Museum of Fine Arts.

At the end of the 24-hour trip, Dr. Tandon invited Dr. Moningi to visit him in Cleveland. She thought he was being polite until he called her as soon as his plane landed. From that point on, the two spoke on the phone daily.

"We connected on our Midwest values, our love for our friends and family and home and our community," Dr. Moningi said.

"My cellphone usage has skyrocketed," Dr. Tandon said.



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In September, Dr. Tandon proposed during a hike at the Rocky River Reservation in Cleveland.

"She didn't say yes initially," Dr. Tandon said. "I was holding her hand, I gave my spiel, and she just looked at me. She was waiting until I got on the ground."

After, they met both of their families in Richfield, Ohio, to visit the Gurdwara Guru Nanak Foundation, a Sikh place of worship, and then the Sree Venkateswara Temple, a Hindu temple, to receive blessings for their union. Dr. Tandon's family practices the Sikh religion and Dr. Moningi's family is Hindu.

Dr. Moningi and Dr. Tandon were married on Feb. 22 at the Sawgrass Marriott Golf Resort & Spa in Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla., in a Hindu ceremony led by Srinathan Kadambi, the head priest of the Hindu Society of North East Florida, in front of 230 guests.

On the morning of their wedding, the couple also participated in a Sikh marriage ceremony at the Jacksonville Gurdwara, led by the gyani, or congregation leader, Amandeep Singh.

"In a gurdwara, it's all about equality, so whether you're a king or pauper, everyone sits on the floor," Dr. Tandon said.

Dr. Moningi and Dr. Tandon chose the wedding location because it is close to Dr. Moningi's parents' home in Jacksonville, Fla., and because the city holds a deeper meaning for the family. Dr. Moningi's younger brother, Sanat Moningi, died in San Francisco in 2018. After several years of mourning, Dr. Moningi's parents moved to Jacksonville from Charleston, where Sanat grew up.

The new city, Dr. Moningi said, "represents a lot of the strength of our family and moving forward and being strong and surviving something we never could have imagined happening. It's about having Sanat with us but moving forward."

They honored Sanat at the reception with a memorial during which Dr. Moningi's and Sanat's friends talked about his life and accomplishments.

"There were so many people who supported me and my family through a really bad time that were there with us," Dr. Moningi said. "Every person from different stages of my life was in the same place, which was very cool and meant a lot."

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