



**HEALTH TIPS**  
Most types of fishes are loaded with Omega-3 fatty acids, which help in burning fat quickly

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## Relative

SHARING PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL SPACE **Meher and Pheroze Pudumjee**

# IN PERFECT COMPANY

Pheroze and Meher Pudumjee of Thermax find themselves most connected and in sync when they are taking care of their successful business empire

Mrunmay Alnapure

It's been an eventual 22 years for Pheroze and Meher Pudumjee as a couple who fell in love over shared interests that haven't changed with time, but the energy and environment engineering company Thermax remains unequivocally the apple of their eyes. Despite hectic schedules, the Pudumjees manage their personal lives with style. Meher who is quite the music aficionado heads off to choir sessions while Pheroze catches up with his friends and when they are together, Thermax takes precedence over every conversation.

"Pheroze and I started working together at Thermax as rainees in sales and service. Around that time, Thermax had this small business in the UK which was not doing well and we were sent there to turn it around. So it was in the UK where we actually became professional colleagues. We had already gotten married a year before that. While Pheroze managed sales, I took care of operations. However, being a small set-up with just six members in the team, we helped out with everything, from service to manufacturing, finance and administration — while trying not to get in each other's hair in the process! The experience there was basically a trailer of how our life together was going to be in the future," Meher smiles.

The Pudumjees have wisely departmentalised their work in the company; however, there are still areas of commonality. Pheroze says, "After returning to India, I was involved with our international operations, while Meher worked in finance and in a few other divisions. Presently, both of us have assumed non-executive roles in the company. We are both on the strategy committee, the innovation council and being on the board of the parent company, we basically end up working together most of the times." The fact that they have some common and some different areas of expertise has only enhanced their professional relationship. "For instance, we both enjoy understanding how new technology works, but I like to interact with the HR aspect of the company more than Pheroze, who still takes a keen interest in overseeing the overseas operations of Thermax. (I joke) as it may sound, we do complement each other," Meher says.

Running a conglomerate together means work is bound to seep into



their personal lives. Pheroze admits, "Yes it does — we live, breathe, sleep the organization, so at times our kids get put off." Besides, there are the ideological clashes to deal with. "Pheroze is more direct in his approach as he does not mince words. On the other hand, I am more diplomatic. So we often disagree in our approach. That apart, he likes to take decisions with one or two trusted people, whereas I am more consultative which also leads to disagreements, which we usually talk out or sometimes vociferously argue out. We also use my mother, Anu or our MD, Urmy as a sounding board," Meher chuckles.

Anu, they say, is still a big part of Thermax even at her retirement.

"When mother retired, she always decided to be there for us. She has taught me humility, to have courage of one's conviction, the ability to confront any situation with equanimity, working hard as also playing my different roles with ease," Meher smiles. This reverence is shared by Pheroze, who tells us, "She can be extremely objective and takes very difficult and tough decisions, which I appreciate."

Working with your partner, the Pudumjees agree, has its set of pros and cons. A rather doting Pheroze says, "I consider my wife to be my best friend and therefore I can discuss issues, personal or professional, in great

depth and granularity, knowing that one can take liberty with the other's feelings. However, the flip-side of this openness is that we can tend to hurt each other at times." Besides, Meher says, working with your spouse is an inescapable 24/7 deal. She explains, "At times, I really need my space. But there's no denying that I need my husband at work. He has a keen sense of empathy, especially when there are challenges. Since we work together, he helps me to take decisions. In the end, despite all the trials and tribulations, working with Pheroze has only been a positive influence overall since we understand each other inside out and therefore, enjoy working together."

## h e a r

TUNE IN TO THE TOP FIVE ALBUMS

### HIDE POP

**JULIA HOLLER EKSTASIS**

Julia Holler takes her experiments with music a notch higher in the LP *Ekstasis*. She uses pop hooks generously to sculpt a sound that's unique in every sense. This time around, her music is abstract and almost meditative.

**JULIA HOLLER**

### METAL

**PILGRIM'S SORROW AND EXTINCTION**

Tired of listening to traditional doom metal? Fallbear'er's debut album *Sorrow and Extinction* has injected fresh life into the genre with this release. Extremely innovative riffs and brilliant vocals also add to the magic.



### INDEE POP

**PEPELINE GEMINS PUT YOUR BACK N2 IT**

Mike Hadreas talks about personal issues in *Your Back N2 It*. The tracks in the album are very personal — the wonder of it all is how Mike with class and sophistication can draw his listeners into his world without drowning them in his sorrow.



### POP

**WHITNEY THE GREATEST HITS**

You can add this to your collection in memory of the late Whitney Houston who once rocked the pop charts across the globe. The set consists of Whitney's ballads, uptempo numbers and remakes.



### HIP-HOP

**CHIDDY BANG BREAKFAST**

The MCs of hip-hop duo it seems has run out of words to add to the lyrics of *Breakfast*. However, the album is salvaged from potential doom by some tracks like *Handclaps & Guitars*, their infectious beats are worth a listen.



COMPILED BY ASHWINKHAN