

# Diversity Calendar

## October 2023

Gibson Chowdhury Mediation  
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### October 4th Catholic St. Francis Day

St. Francis is the Patron Saint of animals and the environment. He was known for caring for the sick and the poor as well as showing a great appreciation for all God's creation including animals and nature. Many Catholic Churches celebrate through prayers and offer food donation services.

### October 6th- 7th Jewish Shemini Atzeret

Signifies the end of Sukkot and the welcoming of the fall harvest.

### October 7th - 8th Jewish Simchat Torah

Simchat Torah, marks the end of the reading cycle of the Torah and immediately beginning a new one to signify a never ending circle.

### October 9th Canada Thanksgiving

A national day of giving thanks for the past year's harvest, often spent with family and friends with traditional North American feasts. The Thanksgiving tradition started in 1621 during colonization of the "new world". This Thanksgiving, let's remember our Indigenous friends who share their lands with us and the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action.

### October 15th- 24th Hindu Navaratri / Durga Puja

Navaratri is a nine-day celebration, commonly known as Durga Puja. It is a time to celebrate good over evil. Depending on local customs, the days are celebrated in fasting and religious prayers. Others celebrate, through street parties filled with dance and feasts. The last day, is celebrated by giving special recognition to the goddess, Durga.

### October 15th - 17th Baha'i Birth of Báb & The birth of Bahá'u'lláh

Celebrating the birth of the Prophet Báb and there after the the birth of Bahá'u'lláh who created the Baha'i religion. Often seen as a twin holy holiday. The days are commemorated through prayers and family gatherings.

### October 20th Sikh Holy Day – Guru Gaddi Day

In 1708, after the passing of Guru Gobind Singh, the mantle of guruship was passed to Siri Guru Granth Sahib, which holds 1430 page of sacred teachings and songs. Guru Gaddi Day is celebrated as a remembrance of this event.

### October 31st Christianity All Hallow's Eve/ Samhain

Commonly known as Halloween, this is holiday originated as a Celtic festival known as Samhain. Followers of the festival wore costumes and lit bonfires to ward off evil spirits.

# October

## **Global Diversity Awareness Month**

Global Diversity Awareness Month was adopted after the second world war through The Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations General Assembly at the Palais de Chaillot, in Paris. October is a month to celebrate all human beings and their inherent rights to practice their culture, beliefs and traditions.

## **October is Black History Month**

United Kingdom, Ireland, and The Netherlands celebrate Black History Month to raise awareness and celebrate the contributions by African and Caribbean citizens.

## **About the Calendar**

This calendar shows some of the multicultural celebrations for the month of October 2023. There may be some celebrations that have not been included in this calendar and customs may vary. If you would like Afsana to add a special holiday or vary the customs, please send an email to [afsana@gcmediation.com](mailto:afsana@gcmediation.com).

This calendar was produced by, Gibson Chowdhury – Clear Collaborative Mediation, through careful research and references to various sources and materials.

## **About Afsana**

Afsana is a lawyer and a Qualified Mediator. She is the founder of 'Gibson Chowdhury', a Toronto-based mediation boutique, specializing in workplace discrimination, civil and commercial disputes. Afsana is an Adjudicator at the Property Standards Committee for the City of Toronto. She is a past Chair of the OBA's ADR Section Executive board where she co-chaired a groundbreaking report as part of an OBA Working Group called "Neutral Diversity in Ontario". She has written several CLE programs on Equity Diversity and Inclusion and intercultural communications. She is a member of the International Academy of Mediators' DEI committee where she continues to build helpful tools for lawyers and mediators to help break down gender and racial barriers. Afsana is often asked to attend speaking engagements globally to present on issues concerning dispute resolution and Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in ADR. Afsana is the recipient of the ADR Institute of Ontario, Star Award.

Afsana is a British-born national and daughter of British Muslim Immigrant parents from Bangladesh. She is now a Canadian immigrant where she enjoys the company of her husband and three children, living in the traditional territories of the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples, also known as Toronto.

To book a mediation, contact Afsana at [afsana@gcmediation.com](mailto:afsana@gcmediation.com) or via her online calendar <https://gcmediation.com/calendar-and-fees/>