

01

For a 'Nobel'  
Cause: Part 2  
Kailash Satyarthi  
Nobel Peace Laureate

07

Importance  
of Etiquette  
Asha Fenn

09

Education News

Cover Story

05



Virtual and Augmented  
Realities in Empowering  
Learning  
G. Balasubramanian

11

M.K. Gandhi  
as a CEO!  
Giri Balasubramaniam

19

Addressing  
Women's Health  
Dr. Krishnamurthy

13

Traits of Successful  
Teachers  
Leah Davies

17

Our Innovative  
Classrooms  
Reetu Varma and  
Revathi Sundaresan

15

The  
Student-Teacher  
Buddy  
Vinoda Harikrishna Rao



You can scan the code by using any free-to-download  
QR reader available on the App Store, Play Store and  
Windows Store. Wifi/Mobile data will be required.

# Happy energy is real!

**RASHMI MARIAN FURTADO |**  
Senior Editor, TheTeacher.in



During my schooling, my friends and I would often spend some time with the kindergarten kids, helping the teachers with some activities they would conduct for them. Those kids made us smile and laugh, with their innocent doubts and curious questions. The first time we did this, I realised it is real, happy energy does exist! Every time we spent some time with those kids, our entire day would turn out to be upbeat, happy and positive.

The narrative above is a very small example of what I call 'happy energy'. Starting our day with a smile, going on a morning walk and listening to the birds chirping, watching the sun rise, sitting by the beach and watching the waves, pursuing a hobby are some other ways of increasing the flow of happy energy in our lives. What can we as educators do to keep up the positivity in our lives and around us?

We educators have so many things to do in our everyday lives, most of which are for the people around us and not for ourselves. In doing so, we can at times be consumed with the everyday routine. If that's true in your case, take a break, take 20 minutes out for yourself every day and do something that makes you happy. By practising this, in a day or two, you will see the change in your energies.

We teachers, are in a role that has the potential to make an impression on many individuals at one go. It is important that a person in such a role, keeps himself or herself happy and positive. Any situation that's approached in a positive manner, will help solve the situation.

Guide your students in approaching a situation and problem in a positive manner. They will be able to contribute with many creative solutions, the moment they take a positive approach towards situations.

Spread smiles, joy and hopefulness! Anytime a child faces failure, get him or her to see the positive side and learn the lessons from the situation. It's heart-warming to see so many teachers in the many events that we are a part of, encouraging and lifting the spirits of the students who would have lost the event.

*“Students may not always remember what their teachers taught them, but they will always remember how their teachers made them feel.”*

Be positively contagious! Your positive or happy energy has a positive impact on your students, on your colleagues and ultimately on the school culture. Students may not always remember what their teachers taught them, but they will always remember how their teachers made them feel.

**Yours Positively!**



**Rashmi**  
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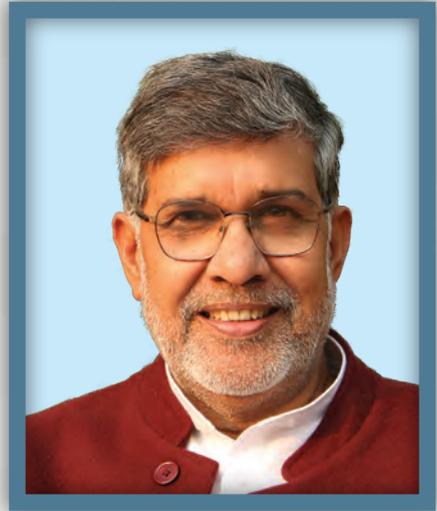
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 Rashmi Furtado

*A natural writer, teacher and a passionate content creator, Rashmi has authored the Cu and Rio series and created the Keystones program on Values Education from Greycaps. She is one of the founders of TheTeacher.in. She is a sought after speaker at educational conferences, facilitator programs and for motivational talks to students at schools across India. She holds a Master's Degree from the prestigious NIT Suratkal where she also taught before joining Greycaps. Rashmi is also a popular quiz host for schools, colleges and large corporate audiences. She has co-hosted the Tata Crucible quiz and Travel Quest by Thomas Cook.*

# For a 'Nobel' Cause

## Part 2



**KAILASH SATYARTHI** | Nobel Peace Laureate



*Kailash Satyarthi is an internationally acclaimed child rights activist. He has been at the vanguard of the global fight to end violence against children for close to four decades now.*

*Bachpan Bachao Andolan (BBA), the brainchild of Kailash Satyarthi, was formed in 1980 to create a child-friendly India where all children are free from exploitation and abuse, and enjoy their rights to the fullest. Through his sustained policy advocacy efforts in India, he played a pivotal role in mobilising support ensuring the passage of the Child Labour Act in the year 1986. Under the aegis of Kailash Satyarthi, BBA has rescued over 87,000 children from the scourge of bondage, trafficking and exploitative labour over the last four decades.*

*Kailash Satyarthi was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2014 for his struggle against the suppression of children and young people, and for the right of all children to education.*

### What led you to create the 'Bachpan Bachao Andolan'?

One day in early 1981, while I was working on the next issue of Sangharsh Jaari Rahega, there was a desperate knock on my office's main door. I opened the door to find a scantily clad bearded man in absolute helplessness and despair. He had managed to escape from a brick kiln in Sarhind, Punjab, where he was held in bondage along with his entire family. His name was Wasal Khan. He and his newlywed wife were lured away seventeen years ago from Aligarh

in Uttar Pradesh, to work at a brick kiln in Punjab. His children were born in slavery at the brick kiln itself. His daughter who was fifteen years old, was about to be sold by the brick kiln owner to a brothel. Wasal Khan somehow grabbed a copy of Sangharsh Jaari Rahega at the bus stand after escaping from the place. Seeing my office address in the journal, Wasal came to Delhi searching for me and reached my office. I could see that exasperation on the face of that man whose family was still enslaved; a father whose daughter was

on the verge of being sold to a brothel. He requested me to write about his plight in Sangharsh Jaari Rahega so that police reads it and helps him save his daughter. The word trafficking (that we know now) had not even been coined at that time, let alone any law or enforcement.

For a moment, I thought, had I been in Wasal Khan's place, could I have afforded to wait for my plight to be written, published and circulated so that the police could save my sister or my daughter for that matter? Clearly Wasal Khan's daughter needed help immediately. I was twenty six years old and my son was barely one month old at that time. I, along with a few of my colleagues, decided to rescue Wasal Khan's family all by ourselves. We did not have any police, any protection by our side. We were running a grave risk.

I did not have much money to hire a truck for taking it all the way from Delhi to Punjab and bringing the rescued people back. My wife had some wedding jewellery, which she did not think twice before giving to me. I sold the jewellery and managed to get enough money to hire a truck. Wasal Khan and I, along with my colleagues, boarded the truck and left for Sarhind, Punjab. We raided the brick kiln and fought with some goons. The owner of the brick kiln was not there, but somebody from his gang ran to inform him. We quickly asked all the enslaved children, women and men, (36 in number) to get on to the truck so that we could leave from there at the earliest. It was extremely risky to remain there even for a minute. We, in the truck

*In a bid to emancipate them from slavery, somehow I had liberated myself for the first time ever.*

carrying all the rescued people, left from the brick kiln and came on to the highway towards Delhi. Suddenly we saw some people chasing us. They waylaid our truck and stopped it. As we would have imagined, it was the brick kiln's

owner and his gang. Everybody was taken off the truck. The goons thrashed us mercilessly. They were also carrying pistols and knives. Luckily, they didn't kill us. They snatched all the 36 brick

kiln slaves away, leaving me and my friends battered and wounded on the road.

We gathered ourselves and somehow managed to return to Delhi dejected and disappointed. Upon our return, one of my friends who was an advocate but not a part of the daredevil rescue operation that had just failed, suggested that we could still rescue all those people who were enslaved in the brick kiln through Habeas Corpus petition. I filed the petition in the court and was able to rescue all the 36 people on the order of the court. I can never forget that day. It was 22 March, 1981. I saw the children, women and men walking out from slavery and embracing freedom. Everybody had tears of joy running down their cheeks. They were hugging each other in joy and disbelief. Children who were all born in slavery in that brick kiln had not seen basic things like roads, cars, scooters or buses. They were all jumping like cute little rabbits. It was a sight that I can never ever forget. In a bid to emancipate them from slavery, somehow I had liberated myself for the first time ever. That day I had sown the seeds of Bachpan Bachao Andolan.

## Given the efforts you have been putting in, has passing of the Anti-Trafficking Bill comforted you (or is it just the beginning)?

After personally rescuing tens of thousands of children, I can vouch that our children cannot wait any more.

I had heard rescued young girls talking about how they had been sold for price much lesser than that of a buffalo.

Recently, some children who were freed from the dark dungeons of a jeans factory in Delhi, could barely open their eyes because they had not seen the sun for the last three years! These are not isolated stories and should be looked at against the overarching backdrop of a national emergency where eight children go missing every hour; four are sexually abused and two raped.

After four decades of my crusade for ending violence against children both in India and other countries; having led several marches across the length and breadth of the globe, demanding a safer world for children; having knocked at the doors of Parliaments and Judiciary for restoring lost childhoods, I am hopeful.

The Trafficking of Persons (Prevention, Protection and Rehabilitation) Bill, 2018 was cleared by the Union Cabinet in February 2018 and was passed by Lok Sabha on 26 July, 2018. The bill is yet to be discussed in Rajya Sabha and passed. This piece of legislation, if enacted, has the potential to break the backbone of the organised crime of trafficking. The drafting and tabling of the Bill in Lok Sabha has been a moral

victory of 12 lakh Indians who had marched with me in the 12,000 km Bharat Yatra earlier last year, declaring a war on child trafficking and sexual abuse of children. The proposed bill deals a solid blow to the very economics of trafficking as an illicit trade that fuels black money and corruption.

*The Bill calls for creation of a Central and State Level Rehabilitation Funds for the survivors of trafficking, for the first time ever.*

The Bill proposes foundation for time-bound completion of trial against perpetrators with strong economic deterrents like attachment and forfeiture of property

and also the proceeds of crime. Further, rigorous imprisonment and massive fines will cripple this organised crime.

The second very important reason why I support the anti-trafficking bill is that it provides a comprehensive framework for rehabilitation in a time-bound manner, irrespective of conviction. The Bill calls for creation of a Central and State Level Rehabilitation Funds for the survivors of trafficking, for the first time ever.

By the time this interview went to print, the monsoon session (2018) of Parliament was already over and the anti-trafficking bill was not taken up for discussion in Rajya Sabha. It was extremely disappointing and disheartening for the most marginalised children of our country who are at an unprecedented risk of slavery, exploitation and sexual abuse. Our law makers in Rajya Sabha once again failed the most vulnerable and marginalised children during the monsoon session. Now, we will have to wait till the winter

session of the Parliament for the passage of this very important bill. Let's hope that this law becomes a reality by winter.

Enactment of this law will just be a comma in our collective fight against human trafficking. Once the law comes into force, all of us will have to get ready to stretch our capacities and go beyond the call of our duties and parochial mindsets, to assist our law enforcement agencies and judiciary in whatever way we possibly can to effectively implement it.

### **As common citizens, what are the small steps people can take to contribute in their own way?**

I would beg to differ over here. Citizens are never common. They cannot be common. Can the force and collective will of 1.3 billion people be called common? Not at all! You can do a lot to prevent our children from being exploited in your individual capacity. Some of the very many ways are:

- Do not accept anything from a place where you find a child working, not even a glass of water.
- End all kinds of relations with these people, if they are not listening to your request to safely send the child back to his or her family.
- Inform child helpline on 1098 whenever you see a child in distress.
- Use your social media platforms responsibly for promoting messages related to child rights, particularly right to be free from all forms of exploitation and getting quality education.
- Have the courage to raise a voice against any form of exploitation and

ask your MPs and MLAs as to what are they doing for such children. Write letters, emails, tag them on Twitter and Facebook to ask questions related to their clear plan for promoting children's well-being. A responsible citizen will certainly do this for a better future for our children.

*Shed your inhibitions and inertia and break your silence whenever you see a child in need.*

Shed your inhibitions and inertia and break your silence whenever you see a child in need. Do not shrug off your

responsibility by saying, how am I concerned? We all should be very much concerned, because they are all our children. Your little help, alertness and will for doing something for them can give these children the most precious gift of freedom and well-being.

You may ask: what can one person do? Let me tell you a story I remember from my childhood. A terrible fire had broken out in the forest. All the animals were running away, including the lion, the king of the forest. Suddenly, the lion saw a tiny hummingbird rushing towards the fire.

He asked the bird, "What are you doing?" To the lion's surprise, the bird replied "I am on my way to extinguish the fire." He laughed and said, "How can you douse the fire with just one drop of water in your tiny beak?" The bird was adamant and said, "I am doing my bit." Similarly, all of you should do your bit for the most vulnerable children who are the future of our great motherland and the world. ■

*To read Part 1 of this interview, refer to the September edition of TheTeacher.in magazine.*

# Virtual and Augmented Realities in Empowering Learning

## G. BALASUBRAMANIAN

*G. Balasubramanian is a doyen of school education in India. He has held several positions of leadership at CBSE, including Director Academics. He was the brain behind the introduction of several innovations at CBSE which included frontline curriculum, Communicative Approach to Language Teaching, Information Technology, Alternatives to Homework, etc. He is also an author, poet and a sought-after speaker at educational conferences world over.*



The debate whether technology should be brought into the corridors of the classroom is already over. The role of technology as an empowering tool in furthering learning has been widely acknowledged to a differing degree of their intervention, depending upon the social and the personal psyche of the teachers in the classroom and their geographical locations.

From a simple screen-based, desktop supported learning tool, several generations of technologies have evolved which provide a real-time experience to the learner, thus enabling experiential learning. At present, we are in a world gearing up at an unimaginable speed by providing virtual and augmented reality support to the classrooms. Like any other technology, their cost is also bound to come down soon with an increasing volume of consumption.

I have, several times addressed a question to my own self, whether we can survive without these technologies. Though one can find several statements to support this perception, I am presently convinced that these technologies are likely to transport learning to an entirely different universe of understanding and comprehension.

The more we negotiate on its relevance, the more we delay its implementation – possibly doing an increasing injustice to the future learners.

Without making any over-statement, let me put across the points for advocacy:

**Content clarity** – The visual inputs and the 3D facilitation do give a holistic view in putting across the content with extreme clarity, giving no scope for any ambiguity that could usually result from a simple verbal communication. It does open the visual domain of content, coupled with an audio interpretation, the content stands clarified without any misgiving.

**Pedagogical clarity** – Imagining a three-dimensional view of many inputs on a single dimension presentation has often resulted in confusion. Sometimes it has also resulted in misinterpretation of the concepts. The gap between teaching and learning depended largely on the competency levels of the teachers or the learnability of the students. With technology in place, it has become easy to share on the screen, such abstract concepts which would not have otherwise been possible to comprehend.

**Learnability** – The opportunities for effective and productive learning along with experience and exploration could be triggered using virtual and augmented realities. Further, this also meets the challenges of differentiated learners and the learning styles in a classroom. Increased ‘learnability’, also impacts quality of learning and its depth.

**Standardising learning** – With these tools in place, there is adequate scope for standardising learning in a classroom situation by facilitating reach for the content to all, both individually and collectively. Many concepts of Science, Biology, Mathematics or Social Sciences can be illustrated with ease and insight. Concepts, which were left to imagination, can be supported through illustrative pictorial representations.

**The ‘Aha’ Experience** – Many of the virtual or augmented reality inputs do provide the ‘Aha’ experience to the young learners. Learners are transported to an ‘imaginary world’, looking and experiencing things in a concrete manner which were so far at the abstract level. Experiences which would otherwise have been ethereal, when reduced to cognizable visual experiences, transports the learner to a ‘dream land’, thus providing opportunities for experiencing a set of fantasies as real-time learning experiences.

The emergence of virtual and augmented reality experience is likely to re-engineer the classroom experience. Teachers would be required to reconstruct learning in more a theatre format as compared to the present unidirectional model. Experiences of such nature are likely to create more questions in classrooms, which could be challenging to the teachers yet triggering curiosity in learning. The technology could walk into the classrooms soon, without knocking the doors of the traditional classrooms.

Let us keep a vigil! ■



# IMPORTANCE OF ETIQUETTE

## ASHA FENN | Academician

Asha Fenn is an education & training industry veteran with 33 years of fruitful experience as an academician, trainer, educational consultant and corporate relations manager. She has also been an academic advisor to various schools.



It is essential for teens to learn how to get along positively with others and show respect when interacting. A solid foundation in good manners and proper etiquette is key when it comes to developing strong social skills. As a parent or teacher, you'll want to ensure that your teen understands the importance of appropriate behaviour as it can directly contribute to his or her success in young adulthood and beyond.

### Definition and Purpose of Etiquette

The word 'etiquette' is French and means 'little sign' or 'ticket', according to Cindy Post and Peggy Post, authors of 'Teen Manners'. As a literal translation, etiquette simply means a collection of little reminders to help people understand how to behave in various situations. Etiquette ensures that people know what society in general expects; it provides standard rules for appropriate behaviour. The purpose of etiquette isn't to put on a show for the benefit of others with appearances and facades. Instead, it involves an attitude of respect and concern towards others to ensure that everyone feels valued and comfortable.

Success



## Basic Etiquette

As a parent or teacher, you want to provide guidance about basic etiquette to your children as they grow, as well as teach them how to treat others respectfully. Basic etiquettes include table manners, phone etiquettes, greeting others, thanking people and computer etiquettes. Even a young child can understand simple table manners like placing a napkin on his or her lap, talking politely, and eating neatly.

By adolescence, your children should practice cellphone etiquettes, which includes setting a cellphone to vibrate when in public or with others and, conducting both texting and voice conversations in private. Ensure that your teens understand that properly greeting someone includes smiling, making eye contact and shaking hands. Explain that proper gift etiquette involves writing and sending thank you notes promptly when someone sends a gift. Also explain that computer etiquette includes communicating respectfully with others, despite the lack of face-to-face contact. Demonstrate proper etiquette and respectful behaviour for your teens in daily life to help them learn from your example.

## Lacking Etiquette

If a teenager lacks an understanding of basic etiquette, he or she might feel uncomfortable in social situations. According to information provided by the New Rochelle City Schools, with this discomfort, the adolescent might experience embarrassment or timidity that puts him or her at a disadvantage. It is also possible that a teen could attempt to compensate for his or her discomfort by acting in inappropriate or offensive ways.

## A Solid Foundation

With a solid foundation in etiquette and manners, a teen should feel strong and confident, even in new or unfamiliar situations. This can be particularly important for adolescents who often feel self-conscious and anxious, having trouble acclimating to new situations to which they are unaccustomed. When a teen has strong social skills and understands how to treat others respectfully and politely, he or she can navigate virtually anything from a college or job interview to a conversation with a teacher. ■



Thank You

# EDUCATION NEWS

## CBSE's proposal to accommodate differently-abled children

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) is planning to provide certain exemptions to differently-abled students in the board examinations, based on a policy formed to address the challenges faced by them. The board is also considering shifting to an online mode of examination, to help the children.

According to the board, students with physical disabilities, visual and hearing impairment and, speech and language disability, intellectual disabilities like autism, certain other learning disabilities, mental illnesses leading to emotional problems and disabilities due to neurological disorders will be provided exemptions.

The exemptions include:

- Flexibility in choosing the subjects
- Computer-based exams
- Examination centres around the area where the student resides
- Relaxation in attendance
- Waiving registration fee for class X and XII

By adopting measures to accommodate the needs of differently-abled children, the educational institutions will soon become more inclusive.



## Centre issues advisory to parents and teachers on Momo Challenge

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology has issued guidelines to parents and teachers on how they can look out for the signs and symptoms of the Momo Challenge.

The Centre has listed down certain signs like the child being aloof from the family, having mood swings, looking worried, visible wounds and cuts, and having a loss of interest in activities.

The ministry has also suggested measures that can be taken to protect the child.

- Talk to the child and ask if anything is bothering him or her.
- Do not broach the topic unless it appears that the child already knows about it, as this may make the child more curious.
- Monitor the child's online activities.

The guidelines help teachers and parents tackle the increasing threat faced by the new challenge in a better way.

Guidelines issued by Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology can be found in the link provided below:

[meity.gov.in/writereaddata/files/](http://meity.gov.in/writereaddata/files/)

Read more about the Momo Challenge:

[greycaps.com/theteacher/Community/Momo-Challenge](http://greycaps.com/theteacher/Community/Momo-Challenge)



## 90% of the urban kids barely know how to read: Survey

**S**tones2Milestones, a non-profit organisation that aims to address the learning levels in students across the country, conducted a survey to understand the position of India with regard to readability among students. The survey found that 9 in 10 students from urban private schools were unable to read English. This accounts for 90% of the urban kids in private schools.

The report was also reviewed by the Australian Council of educational Research (ACER). The study drew its inference based on the reading abilities of nearly 19,770 students, between

grades four and six, from across 20 different Indian states. The students were required to take a 40-minute long multiple-choice test on comprehension and vocabulary.



Image credit- Pixabay

The report concluded that a child must be an independent reader by the time he/she reaches class three. However, a child becomes an independent reader only in class six, as far as India is concerned.

The study highlights the dearth of reading abilities in children and indicates that reading should be given equal weightage and focus like any other academic activity. ■

# M.K. Gandhi as a CEO!

**GIRI BALASUBRAMANIAM** | Quizmaster and CEO, Greycaps

*Giri Balasubramaniam is a noted Quizmaster and CEO of Greycaps. Affectionately known as Pickbrain, he has presented over 2000 shows across nine countries of the world and has authored several GK books. He is a popular speaker, educator and a youth mentor. An alumnus of the prestigious Harvard Business School, he is the driving force behind several educational and knowledge initiatives of Greycaps. He is also a TEDx speaker.*



We are a nation which sees many carry gods, goddesses and godmen in their wallets. The one person though, who is found in every wallet across this nation is Mahatma Gandhi. As we see the Mahatma every day and remember him even more in October, it made me ponder over what it would be like if he were the CEO of a modern corporation. The thought led me to pen the values his corporation would have stood for.

### **Truthful and Transparent:**

Gandhi had once said 'Even if you are a minority of one, the truth is the truth'. His corporation would have stood for trust, fair play and would have strived to be a company which is very transparent to both its employees and customers. It is a value that many corporations across the world struggle to uphold. It is an intangible asset that would enhance the value of any corporation that upholds it truly, in practice.

### **Quality Conscious:**

Gandhi as a CEO would have laid great emphasis on quality. He always

looked at details and perfection. He also believed strongly in the way you do things, which reflects on the importance of process rather than results. Where the means are as important as the end, the process yields the result and the quality of the result.

### **Continuous Learning:**

As the head of the corporation, Gandhi would have focussed a lot on this aspect. He advocated that we must 'learn as if we were to live forever'. His employees would be a part of regular training programmes and he would have fostered a learning environment. His corporation would logically have been an innovative company driven by R&D, which would always look to do things differently and keep a focus on the future.

### **Collaborative Decisions:**

Debate and dialogue based decision making would have been the order of the day. He often wanted 'honest disagreements' and saw it as a 'good sign of progress'. It would have been a company that certainly would have been driven by team decisions, where everyone would have a fair share of voice. It would have been a corporation where the products and services would have spoken more than its people or management.

### **Change – Inside Out:**

'You must be the change you wish to see in the world'. This would have been his permanent message to his colleagues. Change at his enterprise would have unfailingly been something the company would have clearly adopted and not merely advocated.

### **Thinking Beyond Profits:**

While Gandhi was astute with his economics and the need for any enterprise to be profitable, he would have got his company to clearly think through what they want to do with those profits. It would quite naturally seem like an organisation which would have made serving the larger good of society and touching the lives of people with what they do, a mandate.

If we look at these six pillars that a Gandhi would have possibly focussed on had he been a CEO it turns out, these are quite simple, yet valuable pillars that all of us wish a corporation to have.

Maybe, Gandhi would have been too valuable to just serve as the CEO of one enterprise. He probably would have then been one of the best management gurus of our time! ■

# Traits of Successful Teachers

**LEAH DAVIES** | Educator

*Leah Davies is a certified teacher and a counsellor for over 44 years. She received her Master's Degree from the Department of Counselling and Counselling Psychology, Auburn University. Her professional experience includes teaching, counselling, consulting, instructing at Auburn University, and directing educational and prevention services at a mental health agency.*



Teachers set the tone in a classroom and can affect children's lives in profound ways. What teachers do and say encourages or discourages their students. When teachers model acceptance and caring for all children, the students are likely to follow their example. The resulting classroom climate is conducive to children's growth and development. Children thrive when teachers:

- Sincerely like them and believe in their worth
- Are dedicated to helping children learn
- Are enthusiastic about teaching and inspire their students
- Are prepared, consistent and firm
- Provide a nurturing, safe environment
- Accept themselves as imperfect and freely admit to making mistakes
- Model fairness, honesty and dependability
- Listen carefully and give recognition freely
- Are sensitive and respectful of children's individual differences
- Provide an opportunity for children to help formulate classroom rules
- Help children feel important by allowing them to make choices

- Have clear, high, reasonable expectations for children's work
- Acknowledge children's efforts and successes no matter how small
- Stress that it is okay to make mistakes because they are a natural part of learning
- Avoid threats, sarcasm, favouritism and pity
- Focus on solutions to problems rather than on punishment
- Teach children how to solve their problems peacefully by listening to each other and by compromising
- Provide opportunities for children to encourage and applaud one another
- Involve parents or guardians as partners in their children's education
- Invite them to dream, share goals, and to think of themselves as being successful ■

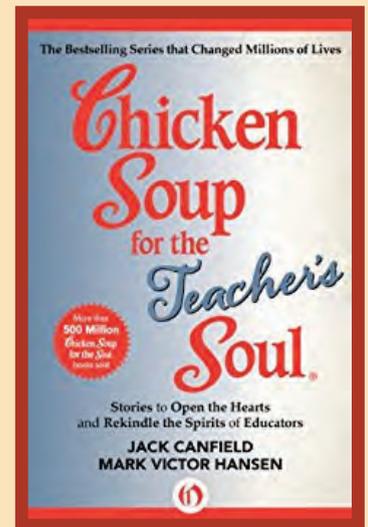
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# WE RECOMMEND

## Chicken Soup for the Teacher's Soul

Chicken Soup for the Teacher's Soul is recommended to all the people who have been through the cycle of school life and have encountered mentors at various stages.

This book serves as a much-needed inspiration to teachers. It carries stories about teaching, from teachers' point of view and students thanking teachers for their effort. It talks about funny, inspiring and heartfelt stories that happen within and outside the classroom. Favourite memories, long-lasting lessons and cherished moments encourages teachers to appreciate and value the profession much better. Authors Jack Canfield and Mark Victor Hansen have compiled stories that have made a difference in the lives of people. Executives, cab drivers and literary agents recollect memories of their teachers, who inspired them the most. The '2009 National Teacher of the Year', from the United States, has also penned down a short story from his experience. It is a good read, especially for teachers, which escalates and values the work they do.



The readers will encounter stories which highlight the importance of encouragement, love, risks, and the need for mentors. Teachers will also be able to draw parallels from the stories penned down in the book.

In a nutshell, this book, like many others under the Chicken Soup series, proves to be a heart-warming read. ■

The

## Student-Teacher

## Buddy

**VINODA HARIKRISHNA RAO** | Vice Principal, The Brigade School,  
Malleswaram, Bengaluru

*Vinoda has been a teacher for 21 years and believes that teachers should constantly strive for adopting innovative methods in teaching, to make learning approachable and desirable for students.*

“Hey, she is a cool teacher bro!” This was the statement made by one of my standard 9 students as I entered the classroom. The sentence amused me and left me pondering over the fact that I needed a transformation from a conventional teacher to a ‘cool facilitator’.

A teacher is better known as the facilitator of the twenty-first century empowering the learner to learn independently with adequate guidance. In such a scenario of the child-centered curriculum, the facilitator has to keep abreast of the contemporary topics, teaching methodologies, learning patterns, interests, hobbies, games and jargon of the Gen Z.

Gone are the days where students used to discuss their favourite books and authors and sports with their friends. These are the days wherein the discussions are based on video games - the kills they get in solo squads, music, movies, social media websites, gadgets and trending fashions with peers and teachers too. As a matter of fact, teenagers are eager to impart the knowhow and benefit of video games to their teachers when advised not to play the same.

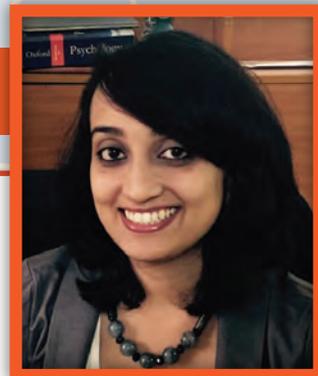


The Gen Z students are uninhibited to share with their teachers their innermost feelings, interests, desires, ambitions and likes-dislikes. The teacher has to play the role of a 'buddy' and be a 'cool dude' to be sensitive and empathise with them. With a nuclear family set up and busy, working parents, children often feel neglected and yearn to be listened to. They find their 'homies' in their teachers who are active and patient listeners and interact with them wholeheartedly.

Nonetheless, the Gen Z teacher should be aware that he or she may be friendly with students but he or she cannot be their friend. The onus is on the facilitator to keep up his or her dignity and maintain the healthy distance between the teacher and the student in the journey of effective education. A teenager seeks to obtain a 'victory royale' in the game, whereas a teacher seeks to obtain a 'victory royale' in his or her heart in the process of education. ■

## EXPERTS SPEAK

*Sudeeptha Grama is a Counselling Psychologist and the founder of 'The CoffeeShop Counsellor'.*



**I handle primary sections in school. I have noticed students being aloof sometimes. Does family situation affect the behaviour of a child? How to help a child during such times?**

Every child is different. There are some children who do prefer their own company as opposed to being a part of a larger group. It is essential to note their interactions with others when they are required to be a part of a larger group. Are they able to function normally as a part of a larger group but prefer to be by themselves or in the company of a smaller group when not required? If so, this need not be a symptom of something bothering them. However, if a normally outgoing or gregarious child suddenly becomes withdrawn or aloof, then it is important to have a frank conversation with the child to see if something is bothering them and understanding what has caused this sudden change in behaviour.

# Our Innovative Classrooms

*Teachers share the unique teaching methodologies that they have developed and incorporated in school, to make the class engaging and fun.*

## **REETU VERMA | Delhi Public School, Etawah (UP)**

Students are not easily captivated by the colourful images in textbooks. Crafting an environment that is holistic and effective is vital for student learning.

The following are some of the innovative methods I use to engage students in my class.

### **I start my class with a 'Mind Warm-Up'**

I ask students to find mistakes in a material written on the board. I use a mix of collaboration and competition to eliminate what could potentially become dead time.



### **I use 'Movement' to help students focus**

I ask all students to stand behind their desks and join in a simple-choreographed physical movement.

### **Students learn better when engaged**

Activities allow students to connect differing pieces of information, build upon new knowledge, evoke questions and apply new information to real world circumstances.

### **I use storytelling as a powerful method to impart knowledge, values and life skills**

I invite children to act out the story as I tell it. I sometimes dress in costumes of characters or let students dress up as characters, while repeating the dialogues I say.

### **Teaching with sense of humour**

Humour is an effective medium of teaching. Looking at the lighter side of life fosters cordial relation between the teacher and the students.

### **I mix up my teaching styles**

To keep students involved and on their toes, I try to move from teacher-centred learning to student-centred active learning, and vice versa. By doing so, I encourage and inspire the students to do their best at all times.

### I create teamwork tactics that emphasize on accountability

I include some teamwork exercises in my weekly curriculum. These group activities can be beneficial on a personal, group and class-wide level.

### I encourage self-directed learning

A supportive learning environment helps children take risks and dive into subject matter that may seem overwhelming to them. A self-directed learning that is aligned with appropriate classroom goals helps students feel involved in their education.

I strive to make every single student in my class feel special. I make time for creativity and use it to make the learning process fun. As a result, students find the classroom to be a happy place.



### REVATHI SUNDARESAN | National Hill View Public School, Bangalore

It is up to the teachers to make learning and discovery of new concepts as interesting and as memorable as possible.

I have created a game called 'Geography Bingo' based on the number game, Bingo. This is a unique and innovative educational game devised for students to learn and remember geographical terms and their definitions.

### METHODOLOGY

**Step 1:** Ask the students to list down all the geographical terms they have come across and find their definitions. (The teacher can add new terms as well.)

**Step 2:** The terms and definitions can be put up on the classroom information board for visual learning by students.

**Step 3:** Prepare the Bingo board with at least 100 terms, the booklet with the corresponding definitions and the slips with at least 20 terms in each slip. (The students can be involved in this exercise as they will enjoy doing it creatively.)

**Step 4:** Distribute the slips and read out the rules of the activity.

**Step 5:** Pull out one term from the lot and call out the definition from the booklet. The students will have to find if the term is there in their slip and circle it.

**Step 6:** Note the names of and reward students who finish ten terms first, then fifteen terms and finally all twenty terms.

**Step 7:** Strike out the definition term that has been called out in the score sheet.

This game also helps develop skills like critical thinking, decision making and problem solving, along with improving memory and retention.

The most interesting aspect about this BINGO game is that this concept can be applied and implemented across any subject like Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Astronomy, and so on. ■

# Addressing Women's Health

**Dr. KRISHNAMURTHY**

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*Dr. M. R. Krishnamurthy is a primary care physician with 42 years of experience. After completing his MBBS, he has worked in the U.K. and Canada.*

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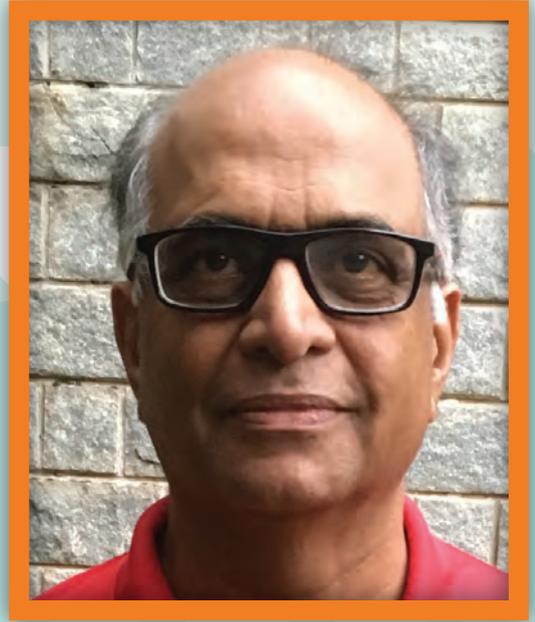
Hello again!

In this article let us discuss women's health issues.

There are a few problems that are seen more often in women than in men. For example, osteoporosis, a bone condition where the bones become weak, especially after menopause. One needs to be physically active to maintain adequate bone and muscle mass to prevent this very painful and debilitating disease later on. One also needs adequate Vitamin D intake. It is a myth that sun exposure ensures adequate Vitamin D levels. For one thing, we don't expose enough body area, and other factors like skin colour, obesity and air pollution also affect Vitamin D levels (dark skinned people make less Vitamin D and being obese makes the body store Vitamin D in fat cells where it's not useful). As a rule, one can take a long acting Vitamin D preparation of 60000 units once a month (many such products are available on prescription). Calcium supplements are not necessary except in pregnancy, lactation and established osteoporosis.



Thyroid problems and varicose veins are also more common in women. Underactivity of thyroid can cause menstrual irregularities (usually heavy and prolonged bleeding causing anaemia), constipation, increased hairfall, dry skin and lethargy. To prevent varicose veins, avoid standing or sitting in one place for long periods of time. Pacing up and down instead of standing, helps blood to get back into the circulation instead of getting pooled in the legs. Likewise, keeping the legs on a footstool while sitting does the same.



Women are protected from heart disease to some extent until menopause. After that, they are prone to the same extent as men. So, an yearly check-up is necessary, with lipid profile and an ECG. Symptoms of a heart attack can also be different in women. They need not have chest pain; it can be pain in the jaw, neck or arm, or just unusual tiredness.

Any persistent abdominal discomfort needs to be investigated with an ultrasound exam. It should not be dismissed as 'gas problems'. Cancer of the ovaries can sometimes present as vague abdominal discomfort.

That's all for this issue. ■

**Until next time,  
Dr. Krish**

# L E I S U R E

## What's the Phrase?

Here are some jumbled letters related to different professions. Rearrange the letters to form meaningful words. Each word has a box highlighted in pink. Make a note of these alphabets to complete the phrase given in the end.

COTROD

HEFC

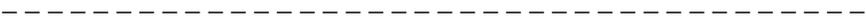
YALWER

TERINAP

KERROWIALCOS

### Phrase:

This means 'something that is very easy to do'



KERROWIALCOS

S O C I A L W O R K E R

TERINAP

L A W Y E R P A I N T E R

HEFC

C H E F

COTROD

D O C T O R

Answer

Phrase: A PIECE OF CAKE

This means 'something that is very easy to do'