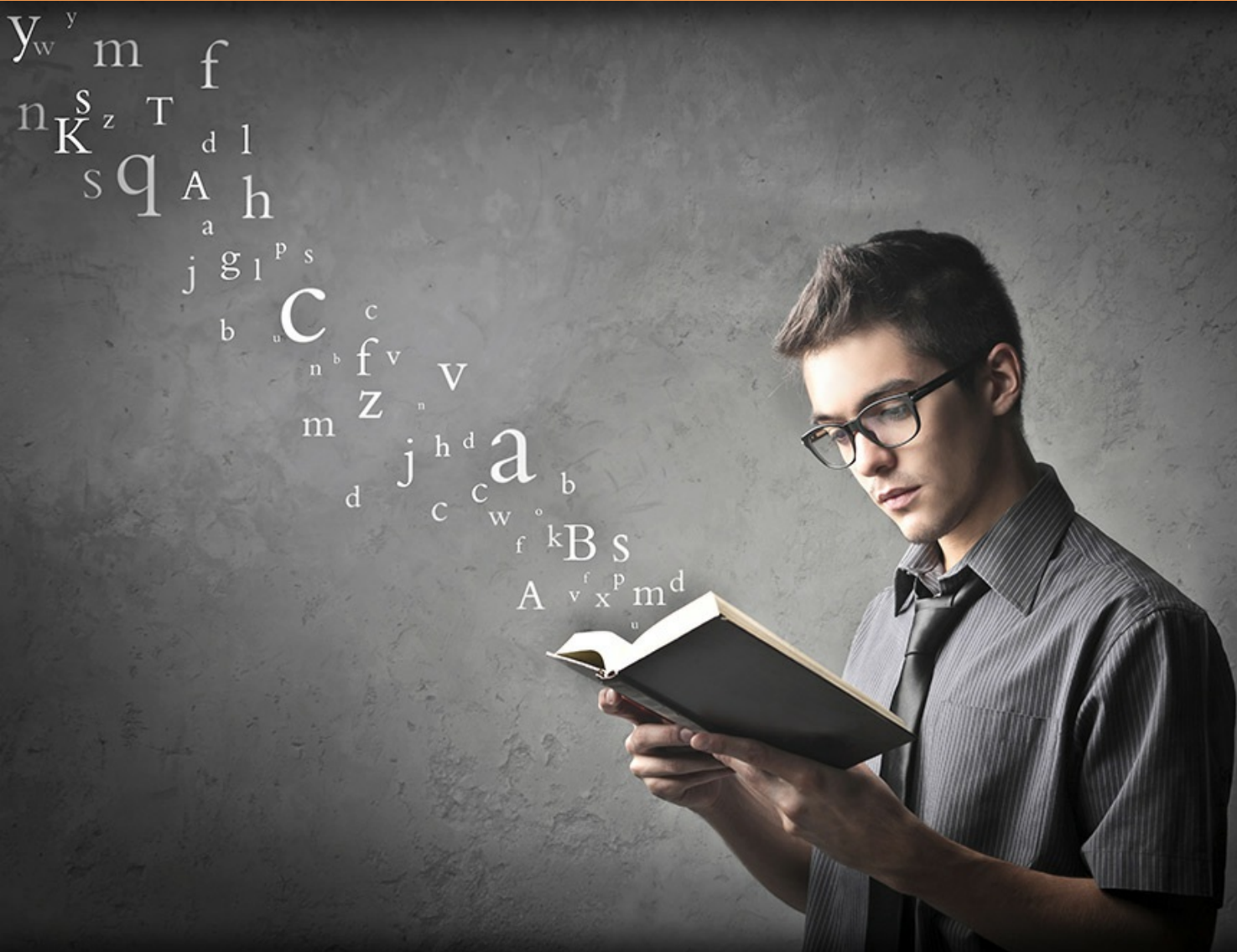


Towards Excellence...How to Study

A Guide book for Students

Dr. M. Thirumaleshwar



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Dr. M. Thirumaleshwar

Towards Excellence...How to Study

A Guide book for Students

Towards Excellence...How to Study: A Guide book for Students


2nd edition

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Dedication

This work is lovingly dedicated at the lotus feet of:



Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

The end of Wisdom is *Freedom*;
The end of Culture is *Perfection*;
The end of Knowledge is *Love*;
The end of Education is *Character*.

...Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Message from Fr. Valerian D'Souza, Former Director, SJEC

'Towards Excellence...How to study', a booklet written by Dr. M. Thirumaleshwar, is an excellent reference book specially designed for the use of the student community. With his immense experience in teaching and interacting with a variety of students both in India and abroad, the author is able to diagnose the problems faced by the present day students. He has proposed innovative solutions which will help to remove the strain and anxiety that most of the students experience. The ideas found in the booklet are a ray of hope to those who want to achieve their objectives with determination and hard work. I am sure that these compiled lectures have successfully guided and transformed hundreds of students in the institutions where Dr. Thirumaleshwar had served.

The beauty of the book lies in its power of motivation to students to combine their intellectual knowledge with human values, helping them to become more and more human and good citizens of the world. A good academician, a good engineer, a good doctor, first and foremost has to be a good person. I am sure this booklet will awaken in them their hidden strengths to channelise their energies, thus becoming good persons and build a society of love, peace and brotherhood.

Learning is an art. Dr. Thirumaleshwar has scientifically analysed the learning process for the students of professional courses. The remedies proposed by the author are time tested. He has made use of several apt quotations of great personalities which are like vitamins to sustain them on the road to excellence.

Holding a booklet in your hand itself is a sign that you are ready to walk the path of excellence. It is my earnest desire and hope that those students who will come in touch with this book will be fired by its contents to achieve great things in life. I wish all the best to the readers of this book.

May this booklet transform the personality of students and convert them into builders of the future society!

Fr. Valerian D'Souza
former Director – SJEC

About the Author

Dr. M. Thirumaleshwar graduated in Mechanical Engineering from Karnataka Regional Engineering College, Surathkal, Karnataka, India, in the year 1965. He obtained M.Sc (cryogenis) from University of Southampton, U.K. and Ph.D. (cryogenics) from Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, India.

He is a Fellow of Institution of Engineers (India), Life Member, Indian Society for Technical Education, and a Foundation Fellow of Indian Cryogenics Council.

He has worked in India and abroad on large projects in the areas involving heat transfer, fluid flow, vacuum system design, cryo-pumping etc.

He worked as Head of Cryogenics Dept. in Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC), Bombay and Centre for Advanced Technology (CAT), Indore, from 1966 to 1992.

He worked as Guest Collaborator with Superconducting Super Collider Laboratory of Universities Research Association, in Dallas, USA from 1990 to 1993.

He also worked at the Institute of Cryogenics, Southampton, U.K. as a Visiting Research Fellow from 1993 to 1994.

He was Head of the Dept. of Mechanical Engineering, Fr. Conceicao Rodrigues Institute of Technology, Vashi, Navi Mumbai, India for eight years.

He also worked as Head of Dept. of Mechanical Engineering and Civil Engineering, and then as Principal, Vivekananda College of Engineering and Technology, Puttur (D.K.), India.

He was Professor and coordinator of Post-graduate program in the Dept. of Mechanical Engineering in St. Joseph Engineering College, Vamanjoor, Mangalore, India.

A book entitled “**Fundamentals of Heat and Mass Transfer**” authored by him and published by M/s Pearson Education, India (2006) **has been adopted as a Text book** for third year engineering students by the Visweswaraya Technological University (V.T.U.), Belgaum, India.

He has authored a *free e-book* entitled “**Software Solutions to Problems on Heat Transfer**” wherein problems are solved using 4 software viz. Mathcad, EES, FEHT and EXCEL. This book, containing about 2750 pages, is presented in 9 parts and all the 9 parts can be downloaded *for free* from www.bookboon.com.

He has also authored *free e-books on Thermodynamics* entitled “**Basic Thermodynamics: Software Solutions**” and “**Applied Thermodynamics: Software Solutions**” wherein problems are solved using 3 software viz. Mathcad, EES, and TEST. Each of these titles is presented in 5 parts and all the books can be downloaded *for free* from www.bookboon.com.

He has also written and published three booklets entitled as follows:

1. Towards Excellence...How to Study (A Guide book to Students)
2. Towards Excellence...How to teach (A guide book to Teachers)
3. Towards Excellence...Seminars, GD's and Personal Interviews
(A guide book to Professional and Management students)

Dr. M. Thirumaleshwar has attended several National and International conferences and has more than 50 publications to his credit.

Preface

This booklet for students is the *first of the three books* in the “Towards Excellence...” series. These books were first authored and published by me with generous financial help from the Director, St. Joseph Engineering College, Vamanjoor, Mangalore, India, and distributed *for free* to schools, Pre-University, Degree and Professional colleges in Mangalore Diocesa area. The books were received very enthusiastically by students (and parents and teachers too) and there was great demand/suggestion to put them on the Internet so that a larger number of readers can take benefit of these books. So, the first book for students, viz. “**Towards Excellence...How to study**” is now being put on the Internet, by courtesy of Bookboon. Other two books, viz. “**Towards Excellence...How to teach**” and “**Towards Excellence...Seminars, GD’s and Personal Interviews**” will follow very soon.

This booklet is the outcome of the lectures delivered by the author over the years to First year Engineering students to motivate them to study as they entered the college.

It was generally observed that nearly 50% of the First year students failed in their exams, even though they were basically intelligent and gained entry to engineering courses after writing Competitive Entrance Test. So, these lectures analyzed the psychology of the students, their dreams and fears, their worries, pressures and anxieties; and, correct attitudes in attending the lectures in the classes, proper methods of studying, preparing for the exams and techniques of writing the exams etc were explained to them. Feedback from the students about these lectures was consistently ‘excellent’ and the students freely expressed as to how greatly they were benefited from these lectures. It was felt that a larger cross-section of students would get benefited if the matter contained in the lectures was brought out in a book form, and that was the motivation for this work.

The book is divided into sections: after giving an introduction in the first two sections, (i.e. in sections 0 and 1), students are warned about the possible pit falls and the reasons for these set-backs, in the next two sections. In section 4, we quote Greek Philosopher Socrates to exhort the students to excel: “...*by making sure that you take every step in that direction*”, and in sections 5 and 6, we analyze the pressures faced by the students as they join the college. Various fears and the academic and personal difficulties experienced by the students, are enumerated in section 7. In section 8, we consider the very important topic of dealing with ‘*stress*’ generated in the students and the methods of overcoming the same. *Section 9 is the most important section* of this book. This section explains the techniques to sharpen the mind and the various ways of gathering and consolidation of knowledge; also, ‘*memory techniques*’ and different types of ‘*mnemonics*’ to help students remember things are described. Further, topics such as ‘exam fear’ and the ways of getting over it, preparing for exam, exam strategies, time management and effective methods of writing the exam are explained. Section 10 summarizes the matter described earlier and states succinctly the ‘seven steps’ to success. Finally, in section 11, inspirational quotations from Saints and great personalities in history are given, which should certainly motivate the students **to become good human beings, in addition to excelling in academics.**

Section 12 gives references for further reading.

Three important Appendixes have been added in section 13: Appendix-I gives a few inspirational quotes to ponder over; In Appendix-II, excerpts from ‘110 Rules of Civility’ by George Washington, the First American President, are given. It is said that George Washington copied these Rules in his own hand when he was a student, and that these Rules had the earliest and most profound impact on his character. In Appendix-III is given excerpts from the famous letter written by Abraham Lincoln to his son’s teacher, saying how the boy should be educated. I am sure that these Appendixes will enhance the value of the book, and will be appreciated by the readers.

Thus, even though the lectures were originally directed towards engineering students, this booklet should be **useful to all students**, since the analysis of difficulties, and hints towards gathering of knowledge, methods of study, exam preparation, writing the exam etc. are common to all branches of study.

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Acknowledgements: Firstly, I would like to thank all my students who motivated me to give these lectures, encouraged me by their love, support and positive feedback.

My cousin, Mr. A.R. Bhat, Retd. Teacher, Ganapathy P.U.C. College, Mangalore, greatly enthused me by his words of advice and encouragement; I express my sincere gratitude to him.

I would like to thank Fr. Valerian D'souza, former Director, St. Joseph Engineering College, Mangalore, for his continued encouragement and for supporting the publication of this book.

I express my appreciation to Kala, my wife, for always being sympathetic and supportive in my academic efforts.

Finally, my sincere thanks to Ms. Karin Jakobsen, Ms. Sophie Tergeist and their team at Bookboon.com for their excellent editorial support and cooperation.

M. Thirumaleshwar
Email: tmuliya@rediffmail.com
December 2014

Introduction:

My dear young friends! In this booklet, I would like to enumerate the various aspects of achieving academic excellence. We will keep the narration simple; the style adopted is conversational, language – easy, and I would like to ‘speak’ to you directly.



I am sure that every one of you who has got admission to Engineering course, would like to achieve excellence in your studies and get a first rank. But you know very well that every one in the class does not get the first rank! Does it mean that one should not make efforts to excel? No, not at all. My friends, know that glory lies not in achievement or reaching the goal, but *glory lies in making efforts to reach the goal*. If you make sincere efforts to score say, 80%, perhaps, you will end up scoring 70%; but, if you don't have a goal, and don't make any effort to achieve it, where is the question of reaching anywhere?

I would like to place myself in the position of a student who has worked very hard and secured admission to a good engineering college. When he attends college on the first day, what are his thoughts and anxieties? We shall discuss about the initial pit falls and pressures and fears of students when they join a professional college, ways of reducing the resulting stress, steps in gathering of knowledge, tips for effective listening and studying, memory techniques, tackling ‘exam fear’, time management, tips for preparing for exams and writing exams etc.

1 Congrats!



Let me, at the outset, congratulate you on getting admission to a good Professional or degree college. For the past two years, you have worked extremely hard preparing for your 12th final exam burning midnight oil, attending special classes and tutorials, preparing for the competitive exams (such as CET and/or COMED-K etc.). All your hard work has borne fruit and now you have entered the portals of a good college. Indeed, you deserve to be congratulated! However, my friends, without frightening you, let me give you a word of caution...



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2 Beware!



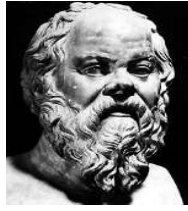
You will be surprised to know that a large percentage of students who join college fail in the first year. For example, nearly 50% of the students who join engineering fail in the first year. All these students had worked very hard for previous two years to get admission to a good engineering or other college and succeeded. Then, why do they fail? Simply because of a few mistakes, and perhaps due to the lack of some timely words of advice and guidance. Please note and guard against the following *four likely reasons for failure*.

3 Four likely reasons....



- 1) One becomes **complacent**...i.e. having worked very hard and got admission to the college, one feels that his/her aim in life is fulfilled and relaxes. *This is a great mistake.* You have just taken the first step. Never relax till you reach the goal.
- 2) One becomes very **proud**...yes, while many of your friends also attended the classes with you and wrote the exams, they were not successful like you in getting admission to a good professional or degree college. However, there is no reason for you to be proud since getting admission to a good college is not an end in itself.
- 3) One **imagines** that he is great! For example, after joining the engineering college, some feel that they are already engineers...yes, it is simply 'day dreaming' to think that you are already an engineer and behave as such in your dealings with others. Guard against this. Remember with humility that there is a long way to go.
4. **Inability to adapt** to new situation...yes, this is a genuine difficulty. Now, you have been in new surroundings, in the atmosphere of a professional college; you have to adjust and adapt to new surroundings, friends, weather, food, and method of study. Perhaps, some of you are coming away from your parents for the first time, and it is natural that you may feel depressed or 'homesick'. But, remember, every one has to leave his home, parents and surroundings some time or other in the interest of his profession. So, get over this mood soon. Don't brood over the absence of your parents or friends; instead, keep your self occupied with study or games or music, debates or other useful activities; make new friends, speak to your professors and well-wishers, and 'get into the groove' as early as possible.

4 How do I reach Mount Olympus?



You wish to achieve excellence in your studies. Every student wants to get a distinction or first class; in fact, no one wants to be known as a 'failure'. To achieve this objective, it is necessary that one should cultivate the 'proper attitude' from the very beginning.

Let me illustrate this point with a story:

It seems that, once, in ancient Greece, a traveler going to Mount Olympus, lost his way in a town. He asked an old man whom he met on the road: "Sir, how do I reach Mount Olympus?". The old man happened to be **Socrates**, the great philosopher. You see, philosophers do not give an ordinary answer; their answers will be valid for all times! Socrates thought for a moment and replied: **"...by making sure that every step you take is in that direction!"** My friends, it is debatable if this answer helped the traveler, but certainly we can get benefited by this answer. If you want to achieve excellence in your studies, **it is important that you never forget the goal and take every step in that direction.**

Now, I would like to discuss as to what happens to a student's mind when he joins an engineering college, what pressures and difficulties he goes through etc.

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5 When you join college...

When a student joins engineering or degree college, typically, he goes through the following stages:



- **Euphoria:** Yes, you are very happy that after doing very hard work for over two years, finally you got admission to a good (engineering or other) college. Your parents and relatives are happy, friends and well-wishers are happy and they all speak very high of you and shower praises on you. Yes, it feels very good. Perhaps, you think that studying in a professional or degree college is all smooth sailing, singing and dancing.
- **Dawn of reality:** Within a week, you will realize that lessons are in full swing, you are yet to adjust to your new surroundings and if you 'slip' in your studies, you may find that you are left far behind. You will slowly get a feeling: "this is not what I thought"!
- **Increased pressure:** Within 2 or 3 weeks, you will find that lectures continue with no let up; in addition, there may be assignments and submissions to be completed. Again, if you do not catch up with the work, you find yourself very much out of place.
- **Loneliness:** If you do not catch up, it will result in loneliness and a doubt may arise in your mind: "...after all, is this the right course for me? Did I commit a mistake in coming here etc." You may further find that there is no friend to whom you may look for support, since, firstly, you are yet to make new friends, and secondly, every one is busy with his own assignments, submissions etc.
- **Depression:** Obviously, this will result in depression, anger and self-pity.
- **Poor results:** As a result, your concentration in studies will be further affected, leading to poor performance or failure in the exams.

Of course, don't get frightened thinking that every one will go through these stages. I have only depicted the worst case scenario, my only point being that you should not relax, but *be serious and careful about the studies from the very beginning.*

6 Pressures on Students:

As a student joins the course, he is subjected to psychological pressure from following sources:



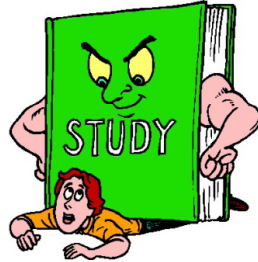
- 1) **From Parents:** Parents may be poor, might have taken loan for the student's studies; or, they may be in poor health and may be living far away. Remember, parents will never consciously exert pressure on their child since they want him/her to excel. But, since the student is an adult and is aware of the situation, this will cause a conscious or unconscious pressure on the student, affecting his/her studies.
- 2) **From teachers:** If you do not attend lectures regularly or lag behind in studies and submission of assignments etc., automatically study-related pressures will be generated. It is better to prevent this rather than look for a cure later; it may be too late.
- 3) **From peers:** Yes, this also can happen. Your friend, with whom you stay or play, might not have scored as high marks as you scored in the twelfth standard exam or CET or other competitive exam; but, now, he may be far ahead of you in the class. This 'comparison' will automatically generate a pressure on you.
- 4) **From society:** There is always a fear that those very friends and relatives, who spoke so highly about you when you got admission into a good course, will speak mockingly at you if you do not perform well now. This is only natural, but the pressure is real.

How to guard against these pressures? Yes, be aware of these pressures first. That awareness itself should induce you to take necessary action to prevent the causes of these pressures. Never forget your aim, and remember the direction given by Socrates to reach Mount Olympus: "...by **making sure that every step you take is in that direction!**"

7 Fears and difficulties of students:

Fears of students:

As they start their course, students may be assailed by one or more of the following fears:



- **Fear of new environment:** This fear is very real for the students who leave their home for the first time. Having been under the care and guidance of their parents all through, now when they have to stay away from their parents, brothers and sisters, these students feel insecure and experience a 'vacuum'.
- **Fear of failing:** Yes, this is an imagination. Even before the course begins, you start imagining what will happen if you fail and brood over the possible consequences of failing. Realize that this is caused by weakness of mind and get over it.

An advertisement for Linköping University, Sweden. It features three students (two women and one man) holding up a large globe. The students are smiling and looking at the camera. The globe is positioned above their heads, and they are all reaching up to support it. The background is a light blue and white gradient. On the right side, there is a yellow speech bubble with the text '#1 in eco-friendly attitude'. Below this, the text reads 'STUDY AT LINKÖPING UNIVERSITY, SWEDEN RANKED AMONG TOP 50 UNIVERSITIES UNDER 50'. Further down, it says 'Interested in Strategy and Management in International Organisations? Kick-start your career with a master's degree from Linköping University, Sweden.' At the bottom right, there is a yellow button with a right arrow and the text 'Click here!'. The Linköping University logo and name are at the bottom right corner of the ad.

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- **Fear of letting down parents and family:** This is an extension of fear of failing, mentioned above. Surely, you love your parents and family, and they will naturally be disappointed if you fail. But, you have not failed yet! So, why to worry now itself? Be bold.
- **Fear of 'loss of face' in front of friends:** This fear is the result of comparison with others. Who are friends, after all? Are they not human beings like you? A 'real, good friend' will never mock at you, even if you fail; instead, he will support you and stand by you and help you in times of difficulties. Ah, yes, choose your friends wisely, and, remember, you have not yet failed!
- **Fear of being 'dumped' by society:** Yes, society worships *achievers*. Same people who make fun of you when you fall will clap their hands in admiration when you go to the stage to receive the trophy. It is the nature of society...nothing strange in it. You do your work honestly, i.e. study hard and put in your best efforts and prove your mettle. Let society take care of itself!
- **Fear of loss of health due to hard work:** Enjoy your studies. Have nourishing food, good exercise, sleep and relaxation. One falls sick not by hard work, but by improper food habits, and lack of proper exercise, sleep and rest. If there is any seasonal sickness due to change of weather or food etc. go to a doctor and take suitable medicines. However, if you suffer from any hereditary or chronic disease, it is necessary that you take extreme care and place yourself under the constant guidance of a doctor, because, for a student, there can't be a greater misfortune than falling sick during study periods or exam time. Indeed, 'health is wealth'!

Difficulties of students:

At the beginning of the course, it is possible that some of the students may face one or more of the following difficulties:

A. Academic difficulties:



- **I don't understand anything:** Yes, this happens to many. May be, you do not understand the language of the teacher, or, may be, you don't understand the subject. If you did not study in English medium, you may find it a little difficult to follow the lectures. Don't give up! Take steps to become proficient in English language, e.g.: read the editorial of a good English daily news paper every day, converse with your friends in English etc. After all, English is the language used mostly all over the world for communication, and should you not be very good in this language to communicate with others and impress them? If you don't understand the subject, it is wise to put in extra efforts to follow the lectures, ask your teacher or friends, go to library etc.

- **I don't like this subject:** Well, this is an attitude problem. Why don't you like that subject? Do you think that the subject is not interesting? Or, is the lecturer no good? Remember, it is YOU who have a stake and it is in your interest to like the subject and the lectures. Make some positive effort and try this well proven psychological method: before attending the class, affirm to yourself strongly: *'I like this subject and I will attend the lecture with full concentration'*. If you persist, you will find to your surprise that you are changing!
- **I don't like this lecturer:** Let me tell you straightaway that this is an unhealthy attitude. Surely, we are not here to make judgment on others. Instead, know that everyone in this world has his or her own limitations; your lecturer may have his limitations and shortcomings, but, so have you. So, it is wise not to be distracted, but accept the lecturer as he/she is and move ahead with your studies.
- **That lecturer does not like me:** How do you know? It may not be a fact; it may be your own imagination. Even if it is true, it is your bounden duty to pause and do some introspection and ask yourself: *'what is wrong with me?'* Perhaps, you will find it more beneficial to ask this question than brooding over *'what is wrong with him/her?'*
- **I am not going to pass:** To think like this is a wrong and negative approach. It is pure escapism. Be a hero; don't accept defeat without even giving a fight. Be bold; don't give up without even running the race. Be peaceful; do your duty, i.e. attend all lectures, study hard, and leave the result to God.



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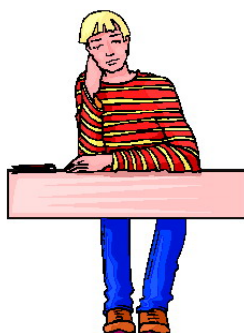
Jane, Chinese architect

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- **I have a lot of difficulties:** If you think a little, you will find how ridiculous this statement is! Is there any one in this world, who has no difficulties? Difficulties, by themselves, can't do anything to you since they are just material situations; it is your attitude to those situations that matters and affects you. Welcome the so-called difficulties with both arms, since they give you an opportunity to show your mettle and triumph over them. Remember the statement of Sir Winston Churchill, the war-time Prime Minister of Great Britain: *'Kites rise highest against the wind; not with it'*.

B. Personal difficulties:



- **Feeling lonely, depressed and homesick:** It is natural to feel lonely and homesick when you are away from your parents, brothers and sisters and friends. However, let this not make you depressed and affect your studies. Eliminate this tendency with proper discrimination: after all, is it possible that your parents, brothers and sisters and friends will be with you for ever? When you look around, don't you see that most of the people have left their homes to pursue their studies and careers? If you feel lonely or homesick, arrange for your loved ones to speak to you on phone regularly; engage yourself in sports or debates; do jogging or walking or watch nature...keep yourself occupied. Most importantly, make efforts to take positive interest in your studies without getting distracted.
- **Nobody likes me, nobody speaks to me:** How is it possible that nobody likes you? Why nobody speaks to you? It may be, simply, your imagination. Look, why don't you take initiative and speak to somebody? If you present a smiling face and show friendly demeanor, surely every one will like you and come forward to make friendship with you. Remember, two hands are required to clap; this is true for making and maintaining friendship too. Of course, you must *exercise caution while making friendships*; go with those who are studious and of good character. Friendship with them should help you to become a better student.
- **I don't like the weather, food and environment:** Again, don't complain. Can you do anything about the weather? If the weather affects your health, certainly you should take precautions. Food depends upon the local conditions and traditions. Make sure that you get adjusted to the food soon; also make sure that, if required, you supplement the food with enough nourishment by having milk, fruits and juices. By your positive approach, create an environment of peace and joy around you and maintain one pointed concentration in your studies.

8 How to overcome stress?:

Some of the fears and difficulties enumerated above may cause certain 'stress' in some students. It is important that if you find yourself to be stressed, you should promptly tackle it and take necessary corrective action. Consider following suggestions:

- **Share your problem:**



Yes, share the problem with some one close to you...may be, to a close relative or friend or teacher or a counselor. There is a saying: "A problem shared is a problem halved!" But, be careful; don't tell the whole world about your problems...use your discrimination! Still, if your problem is not solved, and if it is becoming a mental drag on you, do not hesitate to consult a doctor or psychologist. Remember, in the early stages of your study, such unnecessary worries should not distract you; set them right as early as possible and get yourself ready for a long, hard study.

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- **Organize:**



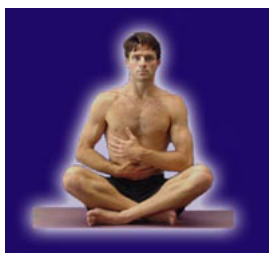
Think for yourself honestly about the causes of your stress. Is there anything wrong with your methods of study, recreation and personal habits? If so, without looking for any excuses, organize your activities immediately. Systematic, organized approach will help you solve most of the problems.

- **Diet, exercise and sleep:**



Make sure that you get good, nourishing food i.e. enough calories, proteins and vitamins. It is important to ensure that your body is healthy. Keep away from cigarettes, alcohol, drugs and other intoxicants. As they say, '*a healthy body contains a healthy mind*'. You also need enough exercise to keep you fit. Participate in sports, go to a gym, do jogging or running. You also need a minimum of six hours of regular sleep. Deep sleep makes you feel fresh in the morning; body gets relaxed and brain cells get rejuvenated by good sleep. Remember, all these activities must be done on *a regular basis* and not once in a while. So, draw up a suitable time table for all these activities and strictly adhere to the time table.

- **Yoga and meditation:**



Yoga and meditation are being recognized as the best ‘stress busters’ all over the world. Many corporate offices encourage their executives to practice yoga and meditation during lunch break and provide suitable facilities. It is not correct to think that yoga and meditation are to be adopted only in old age or that one has to retire to Himalayas to practice yoga and meditation. On the contrary, yoga and meditation are very much required for young people who work extremely hard to achieve excellence in their chosen vocations and, in the process, get subjected to some stress and tension. It is observed that our breathing is connected to our mental state, i.e. we breathe deep and slow when we are peaceful and our breathing becomes shallow and fast when we are disturbed or angry. This is the principle of ‘breathing exercises’ or ‘*pranayama*’ taught by many Masters. Of course, yogic postures, breathing exercises and meditation have to be learnt personally from experts; however, it is safe to do deep breathing (i.e. take a deep breath, filling the lungs fully and breathe out completely exhaling the air) a few times in the mornings and evenings. Yes, I can see a smile on your face; Many will tell me ‘we have so much to study and we have no time even to breathe...and, you are asking us to do breathing exercises’! My young friends, let me assure you that time spent for about 10 minutes each in the morning and evening for these exercises will be an extremely useful investment throughout your life, to remain energetic, active and focused for the whole day. Don’t consider it as a waste of time; after all, if you are starting on a long journey by your car, is it a waste of time to spend a few minutes in filling up the petrol tank before you start? No, not at all. Instead, it is an ‘absolute must’ to complete your travel and reach the goal.

- **Laughter:**



Yes, laughter is the best medicine! Perhaps, man is the only animal who is blessed with the faculty to laugh. And, how rarely he uses this faculty! Take it easy, look at life and the unfolding events as an observer and laugh...laugh, not *at* others, but *with* others! More importantly, *learn to laugh at yourself!* Laugh with abandon, without any inhibitions so that your whole body reverberates with laughter and becomes a bundle of joy! Join a ‘laughing club’ or, start one in your campus! Surely, laughter is the best medicine to drive away your ‘blues’.

9 Our education system



'Semester system' of education is followed in our professional colleges. A semester may be of 13 to 15 weeks duration. There may be about 6 theory subjects and 2 or 3 practicals. Each theory subject has a prescribed syllabus and 50 to 55 hrs of lectures are provided in the time-table to cover each syllabus. At the end of the semester, there will be 'university exam.' The question paper will generally have 8 questions and students have to answer 5 questions in 3 hrs. for 100 marks. Also during the semester, there will be 2 or 3 'internal tests' to award 'internal assessment marks' and for each subject internal assessment marks of 25 are allotted. Usually, in the semester system, teachers are under great pressure to complete the syllabus, and the students are under 'greater pressure' trying to follow the teacher and figure out what is going on. Under these circumstances, it is necessary that you are very careful and prompt in your studies from the very beginning, so that you don't lag behind and regret later.

Now, this entire process can be reviewed under the following headings:


1. **Gathering of knowledge**...through lectures, practicals, referring to books, journals, etc.
2. **Consolidation of knowledge**...by repeated reading, memorizing etc.
3. **Preparing for exams**...by effective reading, studying previous exam papers, adopting memory techniques etc.
4. **Writing the exams**...what are the correct techniques?

Let us review all these points in some detail:

9.1 Gathering of Knowledge:



We gather knowledge through our five senses. For example, we see through our eyes, hear through ears, smell through the nose, taste through the tongue and touch through the skin. If you think a little, you will realize that even if these senses are functional and sharp, if the mind is not connected to these senses, knowledge is not carried to the brain. For example, you may have a beautiful sunset occurring in front of you, but if you are worried and distracted, you may never notice it! **So, mind is an important instrument in gathering of knowledge.** Verily, mind is the tool to unearth the treasure of knowledge. Therefore, sharpen the mind.



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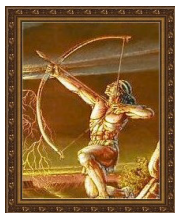
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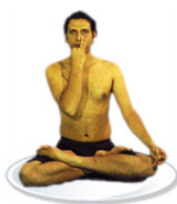


9.1.1 Sharpening the mind:



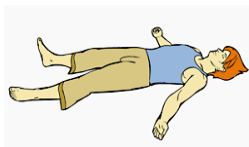
Remember that mind is only an instrument; therefore, it can be influenced, modified and changed by adopting suitable procedures. Also remember that mind affects the body and vice-versa. Our aim is to have a quiet, sharp and receptive mind, eager to collect and assimilate knowledge. Towards achieving this aim, following procedures are suggested:

- **Do breathing exercises:**



We discussed this topic a little earlier, in connection with tackling stress. But, it is worth emphasizing the importance of breathing exercises once again, in connection with increasing mental concentration. About two thousand five hundred years ago, sage Patanjali gave the world his '*Yogasutras*' (i.e. aphorisms on Yoga). It is a well-recognized classic on Yoga wherein an individual's mind and psyche are scientifically analyzed thread-bare with great clarity and guidelines and procedures to attain the highest mental tranquility (i.e. Samadhi) are explained step-by-step. It is known as 'Ashtanga Yoga' or 'Eight-fold Yoga', wherein sage Patanjali has recommended eight steps to achieve the highest state of Super consciousness i.e. Samadhi. Briefly, the eight steps are: 'Yama' (sense control), 'Niyama' (mind control), 'Asana' (posture), 'Pranayama' (breath control), 'Prathyahara'; (withdrawal from sense objects), 'Dharana' (holding on or concentration), 'Dhyana' (meditation) and 'Samadhi' (super conscious state).

- **Physical and mental relaxation:**



Physical relaxation will cause mental relaxation and vice-versa. To have a sharp and receptive mind, it is necessary that one is absolutely relaxed physically and mentally. Observe that in the eight-fold yoga mentioned above, the very first steps are sense control and mind control. These are facilitated by physical and mental relaxation. One can practice this while lying down (or, sitting in a comfortable posture) and consciously letting free and relaxing each part of the body from head to toe, simultaneously affirming strongly that, that particular part of the body is perfectly relaxed. In fact, the next step, viz. Meditation, elaborates on this.

- **Jyothi meditation:**



This involves meditation on a candle flame. This is an *extremely effective* method which not only increases the concentration of mind, but also entirely changes the psyche and improves the outlook and character of the individual. It is well known that the tendency of the mind is to 'jump' from object to object. *This very nature of the mind is used to increase the concentration of mind!* This ancient method has been described very effectively in modern times by Sri Sathya Sai Baba, as follows:

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“As regards the technique of meditation, different teachers and trainers give different forms of advice. But I shall give you now the *most universal and the most effective form*. This is the very first step in spiritual discipline. At first, set apart a few minutes every day for meditation, and extend the time as you feel the bliss that you get. Let it be in the hours before dawn. This is preferable because the body is refreshed after sleep, and the dealings of daytime have not yet impinged on you. Have a lamp or a candle before you with an open, steady, and straight flame. Sit in front of the candle in the lotus posture or any other comfortable sitting position. Look on the flame steadily for some time, and closing your eyes try to feel the flame inside you between your eyebrows. Let it slide down into the lotus of your heart, illuminating the path. When it enters the heart, imagine that the petals of the lotus open out by one, bathing every thought, feeling, and emotion in the light and so removing darkness from them. There is no space for darkness to hide. The light of the flame becomes wider and brighter. Let it pervade your limbs. Now those limbs can never indulge in dark, suspicious, and wicked activities; they have become instruments of light and love. As the light reaches up to the tongue, falsehood vanishes from it. Let it rise up to the eyes and the ears and destroy all the dark desires that infest them and which lead you to perverse sights and childish conversation. Let your head be surcharged with light and all wicked thoughts will flee there from. Imagine that the light is in you more and more intensely. Let it shine all around you and let it spread from you in ever widening circles, taking in your loved ones, your kith and kin, your friends and companions, your enemies and rivals, strangers, all living beings, the entire world. Since the light illumines all the senses every day so deeply and so systematically, a time will soon come when you can no more relish dark and evil sights, yearn for dark and sinister tales, crave for base, harmful, deadening toxic food and drink, handle dirty demeaning things, approach places of ill-fame and injury, or frame evil designs against anyone at any time. Stay on in that thrill of witnessing the light everywhere. If you are adoring God in any form now, try to visualize that form in the all-pervasive light. For Light is God; *God is Light*. Practice this meditation as I have advised regularly every day. At other times repeat the name of God (any Name fragrant with any of His many Majesties), always taking care to be conscious of His might, mercy, and munificence.”

...from: Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol X (Old edition), pages 348–350

- **Positive auto-suggestion:**



Yes, affirm to yourself strongly that your mind is pure, sharp and receptive. As you get up in the morning, sit on the bed and say to yourself with conviction: “Today, I am going to attend all the lectures with full concentration and will understand everything that is taught”; do this with *full conviction and faith* and believe me, this will happen. Have faith in yourself and your abilities. Remember, it is said: “***Faith can move mountains!***”

9.1.2 Steps in gathering of Knowledge:



Sharpening the mind, described earlier, is an essential, preliminary step. However, traditionally, actual gathering of Knowledge is said to involve the following steps:

- ‘**Shravan**’: i.e. Effective listening
- ‘**Manan**’: i.e. Effective recollection of whatever is heard, and
- ‘**Nididhyasan**’: i.e. Effective rumination on that or, recollecting and meditating on that.

Note that in the above steps, ‘*effective*’ is the key word. Listening, recollection and meditation on what is heard can possibly be ‘effective’ only if you have one-pointed concentration to immerse yourself in the subject; and, this is possible only if you have deep love for the subject and respect for your teacher. Now, let us study a little more about what is involved in these steps:

Effective listening:



Listening is different from ‘hearing’. In ‘hearing’, words come from outside and impinge on your ear drums. However, in ‘listening’, ears ‘go out to catch the words’, so to say! For effective listening, you should:

- Be **present** in the class. What does it mean? It simply means that you should be ‘present’ in the class not only physically, but mentally also! Observe yourself – and, you will yourself find out how often the mind strays outside the class even if you ‘pose’ to be listening to the lecture with attention. So, when you answer the roll call and say ‘present, sir’, remind yourself that you should *be present in the class both physically and mentally*.
- Be **deeply interested**. Yes, nobody can ‘give’ you concentration of mind or attention on the subject being taught; these are to be developed by yourself. And, it is possible only if you are deeply interested in the subject and have respect for the one who teaches you. Make a positive effort to affirm to yourself ‘*I like this subject and I respect this teacher*’ before the lecture begins, and you will be surprised to see how effectively your mind gets transformed.

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- **Come prepared to the class.** Don't think that it is only the teacher who should come prepared to the class. The student also has a responsibility to go prepared to the class. i.e. read the earlier notes, do the home works or assignments before attending the class. If the teacher has given a hint earlier as to what he is going to teach on that day, then make an effort to read that topic before attending that class. This will greatly help you in 'being in tune' with the lecture in the class and in clearing your doubts.
- **Have a quiet, uncluttered mind. Give total attention!** How many times can we emphasize this? But, there is no alternative to this (i.e. attention) to gain knowledge. Have a clear mind,... have a quiet mind...have a mind free from prejudices or pre-conceived ideas about the subject or the teacher...and, you will be able to give 'total attention.' Quietly, take a few deep breaths before the lecture begins and be ready to listen with loving, eager expectation.
- **Be focused.** Yes, just as Sun's rays are focused through a lens, let the thoughts passing through your mind be focused on the subject. Let the thoughts not stray here and there. Maintain eye contact with the teacher; but, take care to see that you don't stare at him/her and divert his/her attention.
- **Don't give up if you do not understand.** Yes, this is great mistake committed by many a student, saying: 'I give up; I don't understand this.' Why do they do it? Simple...it is the easiest thing in the world to 'give up'! Instead, you should take up the challenge and listen to the lectures even more carefully.
- **Don't hesitate to ask questions.** If you have not understood the topic being taught, don't hesitate to ask questions. Many times, a student does not ask questions because he is afraid as to what the teacher may think about him, or more often, he is worried that his friends in the class may think that he is 'dull or stupid'. Let me tell you this: no teacher will ever get unhappy if a student asks questions with the intention of clearing his doubts. After all, teacher's very purpose of coming to the class is to teach the students. But, remember that teacher is also a human being with his own style and some teachers may not like to be interrupted when they are lecturing and may expect you to ask questions only during 'question time'. Then, you should respect your teacher's feelings and get your doubts cleared at an 'appropriate time'. Regarding the fear that your friends may laugh at you thinking that you are dull or stupid, let me tell you: **be bold**. No coward has ever achieved any thing. What is your aim in coming to the class? Is it not to gain knowledge? Then, if there is a willing teacher, why do you hesitate to ask questions? Friends who laugh at you now, will come to congratulate you when you score high marks in the exams.
- **Master the art of Note-taking:** It is important that you should take notes in the class to help you study later. For this purpose, you must master the art of note-taking. The teacher may not have time in the class to dictate complete notes on the topic being taught; he may just write a few points on the black board. However, if you are good at note-taking, you will not find it difficult to revise the subject later. Note this: it is not necessary that you write each and every word the teacher says. But, listen to him carefully for two or three sentences and grasp the important idea he is trying to convey and jot it down. This will keep you alert and make you think simultaneously when the lecture is going on and will be highly beneficial.

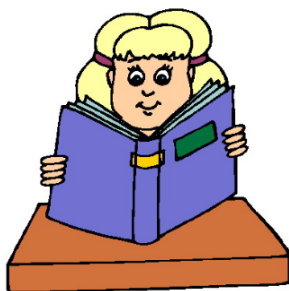
- **Watch out against 'daydreaming'**. Many times, while listening to the teacher attentively, you may get attracted or 'hooked' to certain words, phrase, idea, incidents, anecdotes or jokes that the teacher says; then, without your knowledge, you may get carried away with those words or incidents into your own world, and this is 'daydreaming'. When you wake up and realize that you have been 'daydreaming', the teacher might have gone far ahead with his teaching and you may find it difficult to follow the lecture. So, watch out against daydreaming. Be alert.
- **Be positive**. In the real world situation, it is possible that some times, the class may be noisy, crowded or dark, the weather may be too hot or cold or humid. But, let this not become an excuse for your attention to waver. Be positive and say to yourself: 'none of these inconveniences can ever divert my attention or goal'.

Thus, to repeat: traditionally speaking, 'effective study' involves 'Shravan' (i.e. effective listening), 'Manan' (i.e. effective recollection), and 'Nididhyasan' (i.e. effective rumination).

In modern terminology, this method is called as **SQ3R method of study**. It is explained as follows:

- **S**...Scan...i.e. scan or read the chapter or subject
- **Q**...Question...mentally ask questions as you read the chapter (or, collect the questions asked in the previous exams)
- **R**...Read...and underline the key words
- **R**...Recite...i.e. recollect
- **R**...Review...i.e. re-read or ruminate again and again

9.2 Consolidation of Knowledge:



After gathering Knowledge, the next step is to consolidate the same. This involves hard study. For the study to be effective, certain principles have to be followed. Based on the ideas recommended by educationists, thinkers and psychologists, we give below some **practical tips for effective study**:

- **Study in short, frequent sessions.** Psychologists say that brain can absorb and retain better, if one studies in short, frequent sessions, rather than in continuous, long spells. Then, the brain gets the required relaxation in between sessions and is fresh for the next session. Follow this suggestion, i.e. read with attention, say, for 30 min. and close the book and relax and recollect, say, for 10 min. Then, read further for next 30 min., relax for 10 min. etc.
- **Have a time-table for study.** Yes, in a professional course, you have to study a lot. There are many subjects to study and, naturally, you may find some subjects easier than others. So, depending upon your need, you have to suitably apportion time for each subject, taking care to see that no subject is neglected. To do this, it is important to make a proper time table for every day study and then strictly follow the same.
- **Review day's lessons on the same day.** This is the '*golden rule*' for engineering and other professional students. Psychologists emphasize that more than 80% of the matter taught in the class is consolidated and stored in the brain if it is reviewed on the same day. So, make it a rule for yourself that you will review the day's lessons on that day itself. Once this becomes a habit with you, it will stand in good stead for you and success is guaranteed.
- **Don't study when you are tired, angry, worried or distracted.** This is obvious, but generally neglected by students! When you are tired, angry, worried or otherwise distracted, you will not be able to concentrate on what you read and, consequently, the brain will not be able to grasp what is read. So, it will be a waste of time; instead, do attend to the cause of distraction, and after solving it, study peacefully.



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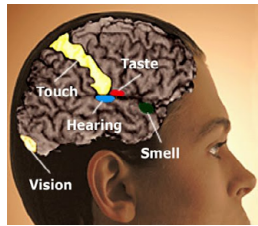
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- **Have a proper study environment.** This is an important requirement for effective study. If possible, have a separate study room where you can study uninterrupted. Let there be good ventilation and lighting in the room. Let there be some photos and sayings of some saints or leaders of humanity on the walls of your room to motivate you and to give a suitable 'atmosphere' to the room. Let the chair be such that you sit with your back straight. When you read, let the light be behind you from the left and hold the book comfortably at a distance of about a foot. Some people concentrate better if there is light music when they study or work; if you belong to that category, do have some light, soothing music in the background. Certainly, not that loud, exploding or screeching type of music!
- **Go from 'larger picture' to 'smaller details.'** i.e. have a proper perspective when you study. First, grasp the overall picture or area or idea or concept that you are going to study; next, go into its details systematically. This requires an analytical approach and some mental clarity, which in turn, will make the subject clearer to you.
- **Enjoy some 'off time', without feeling guilty.** Yes, when you study hard, you need some relaxation. Take some 'time off' deliberately to go for a walk, jogging or playing. Stroll on the sea shore, look at the vast expanse of water or the beautiful sun set; or, watch a beautiful scenery or a wonderful, blooming flower. There is no limit to the wonders in God's creation, if you have the eyes to 'see'. And when you relax, do relax completely, and don't feel guilty saying 'I should have been studying now'! However, one caution: let your 'off time' be determined by you, and you only, (i.e. not by your friends!) according to a time table.
- **Set reasonable goals and avoid frustration.** Many students, in their enthusiasm, set unachievable goals and then become frustrated when such goals are not achieved. For example, during the revision for exams, if a subject requires two days for revision, and you allot half a day due to whatever reason, you may not be able to do justice to the subject, and certainly, you will feel frustrated. So, be reasonable in setting your goals.
- **Don't be over-critical of yourself.** Many times, students become overcritical about themselves. It is, perhaps, a psychological game one plays on himself, perhaps with a motive of escaping responsibility or passing on the blame to others. 'I don't understand', 'I will never be able to finish this', 'this is beyond my capability' etc. are some of the ways in which one criticizes himself. What is the use of criticizing yourself and thereby getting demotivated? Instead, do some thing positive about it, if you can! 'I read so much; but, I forget every thing and can't remember anything' is a common refrain from students. Now, think it over: why don't you remember? This takes us to the next important topic of 'memory techniques'.

9.3 Memory techniques:



Every student aspires for good memory to succeed in the exams. Since our present exam system is based on reproducing from memory what is read earlier, having a good memory is certainly desirable. As stated earlier, 'I don't have a good memory' is a common grievance and complaint from students. Surely, genes and hereditary factors have something to do with the natural memory of a person; however, you will be surprised to know that good memory can easily be cultivated by adopting a few, well-proven, scientific memory techniques, known as **Mnemonics**.

9.3.1 What are Mnemonics?

Mnemonics are creative aids to memory.

You may observe that, generally, committing to memory or recalling from memory involves:

1. Repetition, or
2. Association, or
3. Picturization, or
4. Combination of the above

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Committing to memory by **repetition** is a well known technique. This is, in fact, the method used by us all, while learning nursery rhymes.

Association involves associating the thing to be remembered with any one of the senses such as sight, word, smell, taste, or touch. Association can also be related to a person, incident or situation. You can also associate the thing to be remembered with any of the human feelings such as love, hate, affection, fear, shame, surprise, wonder, peace, anger etc. Color, humor, drama, exaggeration etc. also can be associated effectively with items to be remembered.

Picturization involves connecting the thing to be remembered with a mental picture, which is unique. That means: recalling the mental picture will instantly bring to your mind the thing to be remembered. Many times, a **combination of all the above methods** is employed to devise a good memory technique.

9.3.2 Mnemonic types:

- **First letter technique:**



In this technique, first of all, make a list of things or items to be remembered. Then, considering the first letter of each item or thing, you can do any one of the following:

- 1) **Form an acronym** i.e. some word (with or without meaning) which can be remembered easily. For example, we have the well known acronym **VIBGYOR** for the seven colors of the rainbow. Here, each letter indicates a color i.e. V-Violet, I-Indigo, B-Blue, G-green, Y-Yellow, O-Orange, and R-Red.
- 2) **Form a funny sentence**, which again, can easily be remembered. Now, taking the above example for remembering different colors of the rainbow, consider this funny sentence, where each word of the sentence starts with the first letter of each color: **Run Off Young Girls, Boys In View!** Surely, it is very easy to remember this funny sentence.

As another example, consider the following sentence to help remember the spelling of the word **BECAUSE: Big Elephants Can Always Understand Small Elephants.**

- 3) **Form a quirky rhyme** with each word starting with the first letter or word of each of the items to be remembered. Following rhyme to remember the number of days in each month is very popular:

*Thirty days hath September,
April, June, and November;
All the rest have thirty-one
Excepting February alone:
Which has twenty-eight, that's fine,
Till leap year gives it twenty-nine.*

- **Peg System:**



Here, the principle is as follows: If the items have to be remembered in a sequence, say, 1 to 10, then these items are associated or 'pegged' to the numbers 1 to 10, by adopting the following 'tricks':



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- 1) **Number and Rhyme method:** Here, numbers 1 to 10 are associated with words that rhyme with the respective number. For example, 1 for Sun (i.e. **one** rhymes with **Sun**), 2 for Shoe, 3 for Tree, 4 for Door...etc. So, we write: 1-Sun, 2-Shoe, 3-Tree, 4-Door, 5-Hive, 6-Sticks, 7-Heaven, 8-Gate, 9-Line, and 10-Hen. Note that each word chosen rhymes with the respective number. It is not necessary that you should use these words only; you can choose any suitable word that rhymes with the number concerned. But, you should remember that association well. Next step is to link the objects to be remembered to these words in that order. Association can be done by connecting the items to be remembered to these words by a bold or funny or shocking imagery.
- 2) **Number and Shape method:** Like the previous method, this method also helps one to remember items sequentially from 1 to 10. Here, each number is remembered by a shape resembling the shape of the number. For example: 1-Candle or Flagpole (i.e. number 1 resembles a candle or a flag-pole), 2-Swan, 3-Pair of mountains, 4-Sail, 5-Square S, 6-Golf club, 7-Cliff edge, 8-Eggs, 9-Tadpole, 0-Hole. Next step is to associate the items to be remembered to these shapes.
- 3) **Alphabet Pegs method:** This method is used to remember long list of things. Here, link each letter of the alphabet to a memorable, phonetically similar image and fix these connections firmly in your mind. For example, A may be linked to Ace of cards, B to Bee, C to Sea, D to Deer, E to Ear, F to Effort, G to Jeans, H to HP, I to Eye, J to Jail, K to care, L to Lion, M to Empty, N to Engine, O to Organ, P to Pea-nuts, Q to Question, R to Arch, S to Escort, T to Tea-cup, U to Eureka, V to Valor, W to WC, X to X-ray, Y to Yoga and Z to Zebra. (You can use any other suitable words to link to each alphabet; however, let each letter of the alphabet and the linked image-word be firmly fixed in your mind). Next, associate each of the items in the list to be remembered to these images in order. As suggested earlier, you may use a story, humor, shock or exaggeration to do this.

- **Journey Mnemonic:**



This method is simple and extremely flexible and is used to remember not only lists of items, but also to recall more complex information. In this method, you take a mental journey through a route familiar to you and vividly identify all the land-marks. Then, associate the items or things to be remembered with these landmarks. That is why you should take a familiar route, such as the route from your house to school or college, or from house to the shopping centre or post office or bank or hospital etc. There is lot of freedom and flexibility in this method and you can combine the previously mentioned methods also with this method. Another advantage is that you need not remember the connection between the numbers (1 to 10) and the image words or symbols. Only requirement is that it must be a route familiar to you so that, without any effort, you can recall all the land-marks in order as you 'progress' through the route.

- **Remembering numbers:**



In many exams, you may need to remember numbers.

As an example, consider the following: Ratio of the circumference of a circle to its diameter is known as Pi and is always a constant. $\pi = 22/7 = 3.1415926\dots$ Now, we would like to have a mnemonic to remember this number. So, a sentence is formed with each word having number of letters equal to the number in the sequence. The sentence need not have any particular meaning, but must be easily reproducible; you can adopt the usual technique of using drama, humor, shock, surprise etc in forming the sentence. In this example, consider the sentence: “**May I have a large container of coffee?**” Here, first word has 3 letters, second word has 1 letter, third one has 3, fourth one has 1 letter, etc. So, the sentence represents, in order: 3.1415926.

There is another popular mnemonic to remember π : “**How I want a drink, alcoholic of course, after the heavy lectures involving quantum mechanics**”, which gives $\pi = 3.14159265358979$. Now, in modern calculators, since π is a readily available, stored constant, you may not need to remember it at all. However, the point here is: *note the technique* that can be followed to store numbers in your memory.

Take two more examples: (i) ‘e’ is the base of natural logarithm, and $e = 2.7182818284$. This can be remembered with the aid of the sentence: “**We require a mnemonic to remember e whenever we scribble math**”. Check that this sentence represents ‘e’: i.e. each word has number of letters equal to the numeral in the respective place in the value of e. (ii) Speed of light is given by: $c = 299792458$ m/s. Consider the following mnemonic to remember this value of ‘c’: “**We guarantee certainty, clearly referring to this light mnemonic**”.

Finally, remember this: while there may be several methods to memorize, it is, firstly, very important that **you** have a very strong desire to remember; then, you should apply yourself with zeal and use your intelligence and originality to adopt the technique suitable to your particular situation.

9.4 Preparing for the exams:



For some students, the very thought of exams sends shivers down their spines and their minds go blank! So, preparing for exams involves not only making a systematic, hard study, and thinking of exam strategies, but also preparing mentally to face the exams and get over this 'exam fear'. Let us understand the reasons for this 'exam fear', and, perhaps, in the very process of understanding, we will get a clue to get over this fear.

9.4.1 Reasons for exam fear:



- **Poor preparation:** Yes, this is one of the main reasons for exam fear. Preparation does not mean reading just before the exams. It means steady effort throughout the year. A good student starts preparing for the exams from the very first day of the classes. i.e. he is punctual and regular in his attendance to the classes, revises the lessons every day, does his assignments and home works promptly, has good study habits etc.
- **Lack of love for the subjects:** Once you have chosen a course, you should excel in it. So, even if some subjects may look difficult, it is necessary that you cultivate 'love' for the subject and affirm to yourself every day before the classes: 'I like this subject; I shall do well in this subject'.
- **Unclear about the purpose of exams:** Be clear about the purpose of exams. Exams are not conducted to trouble you or to humiliate you. Purpose of exams is to know how much of the subject you have understood and to promote you to the next higher class if you meet certain minimum requirements. Therefore, in order to progress, you should welcome the exams and strive to do your very best.

- **Unclear about the goal and the path:** Why did you join this course? Is it with a desire to excel in the chosen field or due to some one else's compulsion? What is your goal in life? Be clear about this. Then, the path will open itself. We say again: *there is no short cut to excellence*. You reach the top successfully only if you climb each and every step systematically, without slipping or falling.
- **Lack of initiative to get the doubts cleared:** If you have not understood the subject during a lecture, you should not hesitate to get it cleared as soon as possible. Since there may be 40 to 60 students in a class, it may not be possible for the teacher to give personal attention to each and every student. So, if you have not understood something, you should take initiative to get it clarified; however, be polite and be sensitive to the style of the teacher, i.e. the teacher may not like to be interrupted when he is speaking, or the teacher may allot a separate question-time at the end of lecture, or the teacher may ask you to approach him later, etc. By all means, follow his instructions, but never give up your attempts to get your doubts cleared.
- **Preparation at the last moment:** This is nothing but poor, unplanned method of study, and you pay the penalty. As mentioned earlier, adopt a planned, systematic study from the very beginning of the course.

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- **Confused reading:** This happens due to lack of alert concentration. Many students have the habit of 'last minute reading' for the entire night, consuming tea, coffee or drugs to avoid sleep. Surely, you will feel tired and fatigued by such methods and will not be able to understand/assimilate whatever you have read. Or, some students think of guide-books, notes or 'likely questions' etc when they study, which, in turn, means lack of attention on what is read at the moment. Some, even adopt the method of preparing for 'selected' questions! All these things make you end up in confusion and the result is: tension and fear of exams.
- **Other reasons:** Previous personal experience of failure, high expectations from self, parents, relatives or friends, fear of being judged by 'superior' people, having a naturally timid and nervous personality etc. are some other reasons for exam fear.

9.4.2 How to get over exam fear?



Once you know the reasons for exam fear, it should not be difficult for you to tackle them. Briefly, let us reiterate the ways of doing it:

- **Discipline and hard work:** Indeed, there is no substitute for these two qualities. Look at any one who has excelled in his/her chosen field – and, you will observe that his/her success is only due to these two qualities: discipline and hard work.
- **Study regularly:** i.e. study as per a time table; study calmly, with short breaks after about every half an hour or so – this will give the required relaxation to the eyes and the brain.
- **Set clear, realistic goals:** These should help you to motivate yourself and focus all your energy and talents on the tasks on hand.
- **Let study be your priority:** Don't forget your ideal, aim or goal. There may be several other things that attract or engage you; but, study must be your priority and never compromise on it. Remind yourself that education and degree is going to help you get a good job, money, status and respect in society.
- **Have a positive attitude:** Yes, you should enjoy your studies with passion as you enjoy your favorite game or music. Have a positive attitude to your life and studies. Let not exam anxiety overwhelm you and rule over you; instead, prepare to face the exams with confidence and with a smile.

9.4.3 Exam strategies:



Remember the **four P's** for successful study: **Planning, Preparation, Positive attitude, and Prayer**. Just as one should have a proper strategy to win a war, you should plan your strategy to prepare for and write the exams. Give thought to the following points in planning your exam strategy:

- **Know what to expect:** This means: you should know the extent of subject covered for that particular exam, pattern and structure of the question paper (i.e. whether it is an essay type or 'multiple choice answer' type, 'yes-or-no answer' type or 'problem oriented' type etc.). You should also know the number of questions to be answered and the time allotted. Also, find out if you have to take any material to the exam, such as: hand books, graphs or calculators.
- **Be well prepared:** Be regular in your studies from the very beginning of the course. Know the exam time table in advance and prepare a suitable study-revision time table. Ensure that you revise all the subjects on time.
- **Avoid cramming:** Writing is the best way to revise. Write answers to likely questions. Collect previous question papers and write down the solutions to questions in a separate file or book.
- **Review often:** As you progress through your revision, review what you have studied; i.e. close the book and try to recollect what you have studied till that time. This will be of great help in recalling from memory what you need during the exams.
- **Use Memory techniques:** Depending on the subject you are studying, apply one or more of the memory techniques explained earlier, to memorize the material you may need in the exam. Use your intelligence and originality to select or devise a suitable memory technique. Memorize essential facts and formulas.
- **Stay motivated, but relaxed:** Many students get overwhelmed while revising the subjects for exams, just by thinking of the number of subjects or the amount of material to be covered in each subject. Do not allow this to happen to you. Instead, be strong, calm and highly motivated. Let a 'burning desire' to excel be the fuel for your motivation.
- **Be positive:** Yes, this is very important; have a positive attitude towards the exam and welcome it; let it be a stepping stone for your further progress.

- **Don't compare:** Do not commit the mistake of comparing yourself with any of your friends or peers. Remember: each one is unique in God's creation and every one is blessed with one or the other unique talent or capability. Then, why should you compare yourself with others? It may have a negative effect on your mind, or, it may demotivate you. Instead, be confident and dwell on your positive qualities.
- **Take care of your health:** Revision for exam does involve very hard work and, will, indeed, induce some stress. But, it should certainly not affect your health. So, take care of your health. Follow regular time table for your food, recreation and study. Eat nourishing food; have regular exercise such as jogging, running, yoga etc. Go for a walk, watch a sunset or listen to the chirping of birds, light music etc. to relax yourself. As the exam approaches, you should be absolutely fit, not only mentally, but physically also. To keep good health is a duty you owe to yourself.
- **Attend to 'Time management':** 'Time management' is important not only when you are a student, but also later in your life when you become a professional. As a student, you should be an adept in managing your time while attending the classes, during every day studies, during revision for exams and even while writing the exams. Since this topic is very important, let us explain it in some detail in the next section.



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9.4.4 Greatness of 'Time':



'Time' is a great mystery to man. From time immemorial, 'Time' has been a subject of discussion and speculation for scientists and philosophers. Time is equal to all, partial to none, and flows irresistibly leveling all things in its course. Therefore, approach time with 'reverence' i.e. give it the importance due to it and plan and use your time properly and intelligently. Consider the following in connection with Time:

- **Time is irreversible:** This is an all-time truth. Time moves only in the forward direction. You have not heard of any one getting 'younger' with time! Therefore, utilize the 'present' time well for your benefit and don't postpone the works to be done now to a 'future' time.
- **Time (and youth), once lost, can never be recovered:** As a student, realize the importance of this statement. Now, when you are young and in the 'pink of your health', and the 'present time' is available to you, use it with care and discipline to achieve your ambitions and goals of life.
- **Time waste is life waste:** This is the exhortation given by Sri Sathya Sai Baba to young students. He has also said: "...Every moment is the right moment". See the truth of these statements and make your life worthwhile by utilizing the present time beneficially.
- **There is no substitute for Time:** Have you ever thought of this? Just as there is no substitute for blood, there is no substitute for Time. However, blood of the same group can be 'bought' from a blood bank to be given to a patient; but, you can not 'buy' time to compensate for the time wasted!
- **Time is 'relative':** i.e. Time is not an 'absolute thing' being experienced by all in the same manner. Time passes 'very quickly' during happy times, but even one minute seems to 'extend to infinity' during times of intense grief. Indeed, Time has a mystical quality about it. Therefore-
- **Time is God!** Pondering over the greatness and incomprehensible mystery of Time, our ancients pronounced in wonder: 'Time is God, and salutations to Time!'. Even to the God of death, they gave another name, 'Kala', which means: Time! It is, of course, a very appropriate name, since everything in this world, without exception, is swallowed away by Time, sooner or later.

9.4.5 Tips for Time management:



Now, in this real world, 'Time management' is very important, whether you are a student or a high flying executive or a business man or an ordinary citizen. Therefore, many 'management gurus' and educationists have given many suggestions to manage time well:

- **Make an honest personal time survey:** List all your activities under different categories and then, write down the time you spend on each of these categories, on a weekly basis. i.e. list down the weekly time spent in the class, for meals, sleep, travel, play, relaxation, socializing, personal works etc. Let this be equal to 'x' hrs. Then, as of now, *time allocated* for study = $(168 - x)$ hrs., 168 being the no. of hrs. available in 7 days. (i.e. $7 \times 24 = 168$). Compare this with the time *absolutely required* for study. If the time allocated by you is less than the time absolutely required, you should immediately **adjust**, by cutting down some of the activities or reducing the time spent on some activities.
- **Set realistic, achievable goals:** While setting your goals, be realistic. Your goals must be in tune with your background, capacity, ambitions, skills, motivation, tools and equipments you have. Setting unachievable goals will only make you frustrated and unhappy.
- **Fix your priorities:** There may be a hundred things to do. But, some of them may be urgent, and may have to be done on priority. So, don't attempt to do all the things at the same time. Instead, every morning, you should make a list of things to be done on that day, *in order of priority*. Then, stick to that list and finish the tasks one by one, as per that list. '*Prioritizing*' is one of the best methods to achieve results.
- **Learn to say 'NO':** It is a common weakness, not to be able to say 'No'. It is an experience with many – when you have just started to do an important work or assignment, some friend or acquaintance drops in and invites you to accompany him for a cup of tea, or to go to watch a movie, or simply to go for a walk; and you, to be polite, don't refuse his invitation and accompany him; however, all the time you will be thinking: 'I am wasting my time, my work is getting delayed'. Instead of thus feeling miserable, you should straightaway say 'No'; of course, this does not mean that you have to be rude or impolite to your friend. You can tell him politely: 'Now I am busy with some urgent assignment which should be completed within the stipulated time; but, I can certainly accompany you after this work is done'. Learning to say 'No' is a great time saver.

- **Be creative:** Look for ways to save time...and, you will find some. You can read while waiting for the bus or train, or while traveling, or while waiting for the elevator. You can visit the laundry and give your clothes for washing while going for a walk. You can arrange your table or room while listening to music. There are a myriad ways of saving time, but you must be looking for them. So, be creative and find ways to save time.

9.5 Writing the exam:



Writing the exam is a skill. Within the given time, you have, not only to answer the stipulated number of questions correctly, but also ‘impress’ the examiner to get the best grade. Remember that the examiner is a human being with his own idiosyncrasies; so, you should ‘impress’ him by the correctness of your answers, and also by the ‘style’ of your answering. However, you have to plan well in advance to face the exams: i.e. you should study hard and scientifically throughout the year and be well prepared to face the exam. In addition, you should note the following points:

- **On the day before the exam:**
 - **Be well prepared and confident.** Get a good night’s sleep and be *well rested*.
 - **Know the location of exam hall and how to reach there.** If possible, visit the exam centre and familiarize yourself with the location, so that when you write the exam you will ‘feel at home’ in the familiar surroundings.
 - **Know well about the exam** you are going to face the next day: Is it a theory exam or practical exam? If theory exam – is it an essay type of exam or problem oriented type? Are the questions of multiple choice type, yes/no type type?
 - Know about the **pattern of the exam question paper**: Duration of the exam, no. of questions to be answered etc.
 - **Organize your things**: i.e. keep the hall ticket, pen, pencil, eraser, scale, calculator, data books or hand books (if required) for the exam in your bag on the previous night itself.
- **On the day of the exam:**
 - **Have a good breakfast**: Remember that brain ‘runs’ on sugar. So, have a breakfast consisting of fruit juices, carbohydrates and proteins.
 - **Revise only the important notes**: Don’t indulge in last minute preparation and panic or confuse yourself. Ensure that you have already done thorough revision earlier.

- **Check that you have organized every thing properly in your bag.**
- **If you tense and stressed up**, practice some deep breathing.
- **Eat carefully** and drink lot of water.
- **Reach the exam hall early**, at least 30 min. before the scheduled commencement time of the exam.
- **Maintain a positive attitude throughout** and look forward to write the exam.

- **During the exam:**
- As soon as the blank answer papers are distributed, **read the instructions** and fill in the relevant information such as: name or code of the paper, exam seat no. of the candidate, name or code of the exam centre etc.
- **Wait calmly** as the question paper is distributed. Fill yourself **with positive attitude**, and repeat to yourself **“I can do it”**.
- Take a few **deep breaths** after you receive the question paper.
- If you still feel nervous, stretch yourself to keep the spine straight and try the psychological ‘trick’ of **focusing your full attention** somewhere else for a couple of minutes, say on the clock on the wall or on some object seen through the window. As you breathe in and out deeply, imagine that you are filling yourself with courage and positive attitude, and repeat to yourself **“I can do it, it is easy”**.



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- Don't start writing the answers immediately; instead, **read the instructions** at the top of the paper carefully.
- Read the question paper fully and **mark the questions** you are confident about, and the order in which you will answer them.
- Quickly **estimate the time** available to answer each question, and plan your time schedule depending upon the complexity of the answer. Keep at least 10 min. for revising all the answers at the end.
- Answer the **easier questions first**, to the best of your capacity – this gives a *good impression* to the examiner, and also boosts your confidence.
- Be careful **not to write wrongly or illegibly** at the very beginning of your answer paper and then strike off the written matter. This gives a very *bad impression* to the examiner.
- **Answer the sub-questions of a given question contiguously**, i.e. if there are parts (a), (b) and (c) for a given question, answer them continuously; don't write answer to part (a) in the beginning of the answer paper and then part (b) or (c) at the end. This *irritates* the examiner.
- **Write legibly**; remember, someone has to read your answers and evaluate them!
- **Don't get 'stuck' on one question**, and waste time; i.e. if you are not able to proceed with the answer, don't panic, but leave the required space and proceed to answer the next selected question. You can return to the unfinished answer and complete it later. Many times, the answer to that un-finished question may flash in your mind when you are answering some other question.
- **Manage the time well**; have a look at the clock, often.
- Let your answers be clear, brief, and to the point. **Don't 'beat about the bush'**, or unnecessarily make the answer long and complicated.
- While answering **multiple choice questions**, form an answer in your mind first, and then look at the choices given.
- Don't give an impression to the examiner that you are **'guessing'** the answers.
- Never be in a hurry; **don't confuse yourself**. Many times, clues to a correct answer may be available in the question itself, or somewhere else in the question paper.
- Use **'mnemonics' or memory techniques**, wherever applicable, depending upon the question paper.
- If you need **additional papers** (supplements) or graph sheets or data books while writing the answers, stand up calmly and draw the attention of the exam supervisor, and politely ask for the same.
- **Revise your answers** in the last 10 min. of the exam and correct the mistakes, if any. You should positively do this, since it is quite possible that you might have committed some errors or mistakes while answering in a hurry.
- When the exam supervisor announces to tie up the answer paper and the supplements, do so immediately; however, **check carefully that you have tied up all the papers in correct order**. Just tying up all the answer sheets at random will be annoying to the examiner and will be counter-productive.

- Don't panic when the final bell rings. **Wait for the exam supervisor to come to you to collect the answer paper**, and while waiting, once again check that you have written your exam seat number and the title of the exam paper correctly on the front page of the answer sheet.
- When the supervisor approaches you, hand over the paper to him.
- Remember: **ABCDE of a good student**: Alert, Bold, Creative, Disciplined and Enterprising.
- Remember: **ABCDE of a good answer**: Accurate, Brief, Clear, Direct and Effective.

- **After the exam is over:**
- **Don't indulge in 'post-mortem' of the exam**; it will only result in waste of time.
- **Don't compare yourself with your friends**: it will only result in depression or heartburning.
- **Introspect about your performance**: This will help you in realizing where you did well and where your performance was not up to the mark. Learn from your mistakes and determine not to commit those mistakes again and plan to perform better in the next exam.
- **Relax...and, Trust in God!** You have done your best; now, don't unnecessarily worry, but, relax. Have faith in the law of Nature (or, God) that sincere and hard work will certainly be rewarded with success.

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10 Steps to Success:



My young friends! In the foregoing, we have explained sufficiently about the psychology of students, their fears and dreams, the pit falls during the course, methods of effective study, preparation for the exams and writing the exams. We have also stressed throughout on the importance of having a positive attitude and a disciplined life. Now, ponder over the following:

10.1 How to use this book?

Now, a question may arise whether you will get a first class or distinction in the exams, just by reading this book. My answer is: “certainly not!”. Remember: a sick man does not get well just by keeping the medicine in his hand; he has to swallow the medicine and allow the body to assimilate the same. He should also follow the advised regimen and restrictions regarding food, drink and recreation. To give another example, to get the benefit of nourishing food, it is not enough just to keep it in front of you; instead, you should take the food to your mouth, taste it, chew it and swallow it, and let the body assimilate it; then only you derive strength from that food. Of course, basically, you should have a good appetite and feel hungry. Similarly, here also, you should ‘feel hungry for knowledge’, ‘taste it and chew it’ with a positive attitude, ‘assimilate it’ by repeated reflection, follow the ‘regimen and restrictions’ regarding your mental attitude, food, study and recreation, and then get the ensuing benefits. Read this story:

It seems that Buddha had a wonderful, magnetic personality; one would feel like bowing to him, as soon as seeing him. Once, a young man saw him, felt greatly influenced by his personality, and asked him in wonder: ‘Sir, who are you? Are you God?’. Buddha smiled and answered “No, my child”. Then, the young man asked again: “Sir, are you an angel from another planet?”; Buddha smiled again and said: “No, my son”. “Sir, then are you a holy man from our own planet, earth?” the young man wondered. Buddha again smiled and replied: “No, my dear!”. Now, this young man got confused and asked: “Sir, then, pray tell me who you are!”. A smiling Buddha looked at this man with compassion and gave one of his famous replies: **“I am only a mirror!”**

Friends, understand the significance of this story. Likewise, **use this book as a mirror**, which reflects your own fears and ambitions, abilities and weaknesses. Put into practice the methods suggested therein, and you will surely get benefited.

May I give a suggestion? In your study timetable, insert a slot of half an hour per week to read this booklet; read either the whole book, or the topics which you need to refresh. It will surely help you to boost your confidence and morale.

10.2 How to be successful?:

To achieve success you should:



- **Dream a 'big dream':** Yes, you should dream...and, dream 'big'. Don't be ashamed to dream big. All great achievers started with their 'big dreams'. But, your dream must be very strong and not just a 'day dream' with no foundation of a strong will. Remember: to dream is far better than to sleep, since a dreamer flies in the sky whereas a man in deep sleep remains firmly on bed only.
- **Visualize strongly:** Yes, believe in your dream, which only means *believe in yourself*. Visualize very strongly yourself winning or going to the stage and receiving the 'trophy'. Strongly visualized desires have a strange way of getting materialized and become a reality.
- **Motivate yourself:** Strong motivation is the fuel to take you to your destination. Be self motivated. Strong motivation gives you an undiminished energy, enthusiasm, drive and vision required to achieve success.
- **Put appropriate, intelligent efforts:** Yes, you should have necessary 'tools' to execute any job efficiently. Here, as a student, you should put necessary, intelligent efforts to enhance your skills in listening, reading, revising, writing the exams etc.
- **Relax, and be calm:** Have a peaceful composure. Let your mind be calm, collected, sharp and receptive. Nothing much is achieved by a person whose mind is confused. As said earlier, mind is only a tool; but, keep it clean and sharp to use it efficiently and achieve maximum results.
- **Trust in God:** Realize that there is a Power superior to man, which controls the universe. Once you know that you have put in your sincere and best efforts towards achieving the goal, surrender yourself to that Power and be at peace. It is well said: 'God helps those who help themselves!'. So, success is sure to follow.

10.3 Seven Steps to success:

So, to summarize, we may enumerate the seven steps to success as follows:

- **DREAM or DESIRE**...strongly
- **DETERMINE**...firmly
- **DISCRIMINATE**...wisely
- **DISCUSS**...humbly
- **DEVOTE**...fully
- **DEDICATE**...completely
- **DO IT**...whole-heartedly.

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11 Get Inspired!

From very early days, world has seen many 'Avatars', prophets, messengers of God and Saints; there also have been several great leaders of men. India, in her long history, has had a fair share of these great personages. They are like lamp posts for humanity. Their words and deeds act as advice and examples to others. When we are in difficult situations in life, or when the mind is confused about the future course of action to be taken, depressed by failures and calamities, words of these great men and women instill courage and forbearance in us and inspire us. Friends, have the words of some of these 'inspirers of humanity' firmly imprinted in your heart; keep in front of you some of the sentences which inspire you, when you study. These words will greatly help you to motivate you and keep your spirits high.



- **Politics without principles,**
- **Education without character,**
- **Science without humanity, and**
- **Commerce without morality**
- **Are not only useless, but also positively dangerous...**

Sri Sathya Sai Baba



- **"Arise, Awake and stop not till the goal is reached"...**

Swami Vivekananda



- **"Do unto others what you would have others do unto you"...**

Jesus Christ



- Everyone is equal in the eyes of God; there is no rich, poor, male, female, black nor white...

Guru Nanak



- When I had ego, guru was not there. I attained a guru, ego vanished...

Kabir



- A man's true wealth is the good he does in the world...

Prophet Mohammad



- Thou art the beginning and the end of everything,
- Thou art the source of wisdom and thinking,
- And Thou art the real Creator of truth and piety,
- And the just judge of the actions of all the people...

Zarathustra



- "Yesterday is gone, tomorrow has not yet come, we have only today; let us begin"...

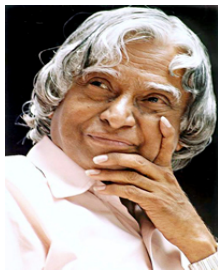
Mother Theresa

- **“Failure is not a mistake; greatest mistake is to give up”...Anonymous**



- **“It is not God that is worshipped but the group or authority that claims to speak in His name. Sin becomes disobedience to authority not violation of integrity”...**

*Dr. S. Radhakrishnan
(Academic, Philosopher and
former President of India)*



- **“Dream, Dream, Dream**
- **Dreams transform into thoughts**
- **And thoughts result in action”...**

*Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam
(Scientist and former President of India)*

The background of the advertisement is a complex, geometric structure made of red and orange beams, resembling a dome or a large-scale architectural framework. The beams are interconnected in a way that creates a series of triangular and quadrilateral shapes, creating a sense of depth and complexity. The overall color palette is dominated by warm tones of red, orange, and pink, set against a dark background.

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- “For a Nation nothing is more rewarding than education in human values”...

Nani Palkivala
(Well known Indian Jurist)



- “You must select the books that are best for you and take them absolutely”...

Sir Arthur Thomas Quiller-Couch
(English literary critic)



- “A man can be destroyed, but not defeated”...

Ernest Hemingway
(American Author)



- “Either find a way, or make one”...

General Hannibal
(Carthaginian commander)

- “If you do not believe in yourself, very few other people will”...*Anonymous*



- “A pessimist makes difficulties of his opportunities, but an optimist makes opportunities of his difficulties”...

Harry Truman
(Former American President)



- “The only place ‘success’ comes before ‘work’ is in the dictionary”...

Vidal Sassoon
(American Hairstylist)



- “Reflect upon your present blessings, not on past misfortunes”...

Charles Dickens
(English Author)



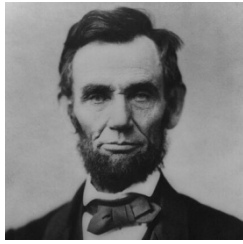
- “Patience, Persistence and Perspiration make an unbeatable combination for Success”...

Napoleon Hill (American Author)



- “Kites rise highest against the wind, not with it”...

Winston Churchill
(War-time Prime Minister of Great Britain)



- Always bear in mind that your own resolution to succeed is more important than any other...

Abraham Lincoln
(Former American President)



- “There is only one time when it is essential to awaken; that time is...NOW!”...

Buddha



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Appendix-I

Points to Ponder over:

- God always gives His best to those who leave the choice with Him.
- Anger is a condition in which the tongue works faster than the mind.
- For every minute you are angry with someone, you lose 60 seconds of happiness that you can never get back.
- You can't change the past, but you can ruin the present by worrying over the future.
- All people smile in the same language.
- A hug is a great gift...*one size fits all*. It can be given for any occasion and it's easy to exchange.
- Laughter is God's sunshine.
- **Thank God** for what you *have*, **TRUST GOD** for what you *need*.
- Take time to laugh, for it is the music of the soul.
- The best thing parents can do for their children is to love each other.
- Harsh words break no bones but they do break hearts.
- Love is the only thing that can be divided without being diminished.
- Education is an ornament in prosperity and a refuge in adversity.
- Education is what survives when what has been learnt has been forgotten.
- Be like a postage stamp. Stick to one thing until you get there.
- Nature is painting for us, day after day, pictures of infinite beauty.
- Money comes and goes; morality comes and grows.
- Nature is a preacher, Life is a teacher.
- Work is Worship, Duty is God.
- Help Ever, Hurt Never.

Appendix-II

Excerpts from George Washington's '110 Rules of Civility'



As a young schoolboy, George Washington, America's first president, copied out by hand a list of '110 Rules of Civility & Decent Behavior in Company and Conversation'. These are the 16th-century set of precepts compiled by Jesuit instructors. It is believed that these Rules of Civility made the earliest and most profound impact on the character of George Washington.

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These rules give not only details of etiquette, how to dress, eat, walk, and talk in public and address one's superiors, but also advise on moral issues.

Excerpts from the set of '110 Rules of Civility' are given below:

1. Every action done in company ought to be with some sign of respect to those that are present.
14. Turn not your back to others, especially in speaking; jog not the table or desk on which another reads or writes; lean not upon anyone.
22. Show not yourself glad at the misfortune of another though he were your enemy.
28. If any one comes to speak to you while you are sitting, stand up, though he be your inferior, and when you present seats, let it be to everyone according to his degree.
35. Let your discourse with men of business be short and comprehensive.
38. In visiting the sick, do not presently play the physician if you be not knowing therein.
40. Strive not with your superior in argument, but always submit your judgment to others with modesty.
44. When a man does all he can, though it succeed not well, blame not him that did it.
45. Being to advise or reprehend any one, consider whether it ought to be in public or in private, and presently or at some other time; in what terms to do it; and in reproving show no signs of cholor but do it with all sweetness and mildness.
50. Be not hasty to believe flying reports to the disparagement of any.
56. Associate yourself with men of good quality if you esteem your own reputation; for 'tis better to be alone than in bad company.
58. Let your conversation be without malice or envy, for 'tis a sign of a tractable and commendable nature, and in all causes of passion permit reason to govern.
63. A man ought not to value himself of his achievements or rare qualities of wit; much less of his riches, virtue or kindred.
65. Speak not injurious words neither in jest nor earnest; scoff at none although they give occasion.

68. Go not thither, where you know not whether you shall be welcome or not; give not advice without being asked, and when desired do it briefly.

70. Reprehend not the imperfections of others, for that belongs to parents, masters and superiors.

71. Gaze not on the marks or blemishes of others and ask not how they came. What you may speak in secret to your friend, deliver not before others.

73. Think before you speak, pronounce not imperfectly, nor bring out your words too hastily, but orderly and distinctly.

78. Make no comparisons and if any of the company be commended for any brave act of virtue, commend not another for the same.

81. Be not curious to know the affairs of others, neither approach those that speak in private.

84. When your superiors talk to anybody hearken not, neither speak nor laugh.

85. In company of those of higher quality than yourself, speak not 'til you are asked a question, then stand upright, put off your hat and answer in few words.

89. Speak not evil of the absent, for it is unjust.

98. Drink not nor talk with your mouth full; neither gaze about you while you are drinking.

108. When you speak of God or His attributes, let it be seriously and with reverence. Honor and obey your natural parents although they be poor.

110. Labor to keep alive in your breast that little spark of celestial fire called conscience.

Appendix-III



Abraham Lincoln's letter to his son's Head Master

Abraham Lincoln, the famous American President, wrote a letter to his son's teacher on educating the boy.

This letter, like many other writings and speeches of Lincoln, has become very famous because of its sincerity, simplicity, sensitivity and beauty of expression.

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Respected Teacher,

My son will have to learn I know that all men are not just, all men are not true. But teach him also that for every scoundrel there is a hero; that for every selfish politician, there is a dedicated leader. Teach him that for every enemy there is a friend.

It will take time, I know; but teach him, if you can, that a dollar earned is far more valuable than five found.

Teach him to learn to lose and also to enjoy winning.

Steer him away from envy, if you can.

Teach him the secret of quite laughter. Let him learn early that the bullies are the easiest to tick.

Teach him, if you can, the wonder of books; but also give him quiet time to ponder over the eternal mystery of birds in the sky, bees in the sun, and flowers on a green hillside.

In school teach him it is far more honourable to fail than to cheat.

Teach him to have faith in his own ideas, even if everyone tells him they are wrong.

Teach him to be gentle with gentle people and tough with the tough.

Try to give my son the strength not to follow the crowd when every one is getting on the bandwagon.

Teach him to listen to all men but teach him also to filter all he hears on a screen of truth and take only the good that comes through.

Teach him, if you can, how to laugh when he is sad. Teach him there is no shame in tears. Teach him to scoff at cynics and to beware of too much sweetness.

Teach him to sell his brawn and brain to the highest bidders; but never to put a price tag on his heart and soul.

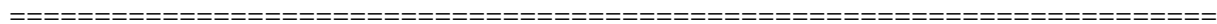
Teach him to close his ears to a howling mob...and to stand and fight if he thinks he's right.

Treat him gently; but do not cuddle him because only the test of fire makes fine steel.

Let him have the courage to be impatient, let him have the patience to be brave. Teach him always to have sublime faith in himself because then he will always have sublime faith in mankind.

This is a big order; but see what you can do. He is such a fine little fellow, my son.

Abraham Lincoln.



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