

Teachers Voice...

A World of Delight

A few days back I was checking my updates on Facebook. The status of my favourite teacher Mr. Chacko Sebastian caught my eye, the status stated: "Once you learn to read, you will be forever free." The status made me recollect my school days. It made me reminiscence the time when I was in Std 8 and Sir Chacko was my class teacher. I owe him a lot; he was the one who taught me how to be free forever, how to soar high with my feet deeply rooted to the ground, how to escape into the world of fantasies, how to find paradise amidst books. He taught me to develop the passion of reading. Books became my runway to personal freedom. As I learned to read I discovered there was a whole world to conquer that went beyond my imagination. I discovered that the habit of reading is the only pleasure that remains when all others fade.

I started saving all my pocket money only to buy the latest editions of Enid Blyton and Nancy Drew books. Patricia ("Pat") and Isabel O'Sullivan became my best friends. I started solving mysteries with Julian, Dick, Anne and Georgina— and their dog Timothy. I had a world of my own. From then, books have been my resource to learning, laughter, solace, excitement and inspiration.

I still remember and retain the splendid book that Sir gifted me on my birthday, "To Sir, With Love" written by E.R. Braithwaite. Till date, it's one of the best books that I have read. If only I could show him today the small library that I have because it's he who ignited that spark within me. If only I could tell him, "Sir, you are the one who taught me how to bloom." No words are enough to thank him for the indelible imprint that he has left in my life. I was fortunate to get a teacher like him who takes a lot of pain to see that students reach the threshold of their minds.

What troubles me today is how I pass on the same learning to my students in this world of IPod, computers and X-box which have overtaken the humble Hardy Boys or Tom Sawyer in managing to catch the attention of the young kids. A frail book finds it difficult to battle with the e-world. Still I don't lose hope as I have seen a handful of my kids developing the passion for reading, I smile to myself when I see one of my students completing any work given in a hurry just to read a book kept under the desk. This is passion! I would be most content if my students grew up to be the kind of people who think decorating consists mostly of building enough bookshelves.



Ms. Moumita Choudhury
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Secondary Section

A Sense that is Rare to See

Civic sense, or rather the lack of it, is a topic that has been widely discussed and argued in India. Somehow, most Indians do not care much for civic sense. And this attitude is prevalent across all sections of society. People today are so driven towards their personal goals that civic sense as an ethic has become a low priority; almost a trouble. This attitude could be harmful for India in the long run.

Civic sense is nothing but social ethics. It is consideration by the people for the unspoken norms of society. A lot of people assume that civic sense is just about keeping the roads, streets and public property clean. But civic sense is more than that; it has to do with law-abiding, respect for fellow men and maintaining decorum in public places. A lot of foreign countries function in a smooth manner because of the strong civic sense amongst their people.

We teach our children about the importance of civic sense and how it could make a difference to the country as well as the quality of their lives. But, with the exception of a couple of lessons in school, not a lot of attention is given to civic behaviour.

India has a diverse population and the need of the hour is general civic sense. It is not uncommon to read or hear about communal friction. Even living in the city has become difficult because people have no consideration whatsoever for fellow city-dwellers.

When civic sense is absent in a society, it leads to a lot of problems. Disregard for the law is a primary cause for lacking civic sense. A person who has high civic values does not resort to shortcuts and unethical tactics to get his work done. And being unethical in daily activities does not benefit anyone, as the behaviour only gets emulated by other members of society. Ultimately, the situation will reach a point where hardly anything can be done to restore it.

For example, being inconsiderate towards fellow society members will only come right back at you. You have to be social, mature and unbiased when it comes to situations in public. The current state of public transport, for example, is disheartening. And we have no one to blame but ourselves for this condition.

There are spit marks, urine, vulgar graffiti, random garbage and overflowing sewers at every nook and corner of India. NO city in this country has managed to fight the menace. It is easy to pin everything on the government, but people must first question themselves and their own civic sense. Roads are not dirty because nobody cleaned it, but because somebody dirtied it in the first place.

And such dirt and grime is not acceptable to anybody; it exists only because everybody does it. Even swine flu, which quickly spread across the country, was caused by the absence of hygiene. It does not help that people are irresponsible with the disposal of bio-waste. And people continue to indulge in such behaviour in spite of knowing the harmful effects.

Using 'everybody does it' is an excuse and only an excuse. In India, even prominent personalities indulge in proud displays of lack of civic sense. People littering local train compartments, buses or the stations is all a common sight.

When children are taught about civic sense, they are also taught about civic responsibility. Children need to be taught civic sense early because unlike a specific skill, civic sense is a school of thought in itself. It is belief in hygiene, respect for other members of society, and humane behaviour above all which is of prime importance.

One may begin by keeping one's immediate surroundings clean and tidy. If one learns to appreciate cleanliness, it will be practiced outside one's home as much as at home.

Children must be encouraged to mix with people from different backgrounds and not harbour prejudice against them. India is a mix of a variety of people and patience and tolerance in our children will make them more accepted and respected. We can also tell our children about the relevance of different festivals and explain to them the spirit behind each. This way, he will not see the differences but the similarities between our religion and another's.

With such small steps we can teach our children about civic sense and the importance of it in their life. And by teaching them about civic sense, we are not only making them better human beings but also doing our bit for the future of the country.

Just as the golden rule goes – 'You can judge one by the shoes one wears.' Similarly, a city is judged by the cleanliness it portrays.



Ms. Sneha Desai
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Secondary Section

The Main Purpose Of Education

- E - Essential for
- D - Developing
- U - Unique
- C - Ceaseless
- A - Attempt
- T - To abolish
- I - Ignorance and
- O - Open new channels to
- N - Nurture knowledge

The acronym of EDUCATION says it all. Educating oneself does not just mean learning to read and write one or two languages. It means learning new skills and using these skills for the welfare of masses or a company or a state or a nation.

If each and every person thinks in a similar fashion, this world would have been a better place to live in. The main purpose of education is to implement what one has learnt. If you would go on filling a tank with water, it would soon begin to overflow. This would result into wastage of resource. On the other hand if you would have used it effectively for various tasks, your purpose of filling up the water tank would have been achieved. Someone has rightly said – ' Education is the weapon for survival . and I would like to add on – if used effectively.

Knowledge acquired can flourish. It`s influence on people and their behaviour is tremendous. Education can change an entire nation`s point of view. It`s effect is phenomenal. Keep on swimming in the vast ocean of knowledge and make sure that every opportunity to impart or use knowledge is well – utilized.

Education has changed the world`s outlook. New technologies, new inventions, new ideas are the results of education. People have explored not only each and every part of the Earth but also the universe. Newer ideas have given rise to newer possibilities. People have started defying the laws of nature. They have empowered themselves only through education.

It is believed that an educated person knows what he speaks, what he does and how to behave with everyone. That's why when a person uses inappropriate words he is deemed as an uneducated person. Thus education changes the overall persona of an individual who in turn has the potential to take part in a major makeover of our society. Let the best intellectual prowess rule the world for the well-being of humanity.



Ms. Ramya Vettath
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निसर्गाचा प्रकोप

'निसर्गाने दिले धन । दयावे दुस-यालागोनी ।
झाली छपरे उदार । सावल्या आल्या अंगणी ।।'

आपल्या कृतीद्वारे मानवाला बहुमोल शिकवण देणा-या निसर्गाचा महिमा श्रेष्ठ संतकवी तुकाराम महाराज यांनी या शब्दांत गायला आहे . खरोखर, निसर्ग मानवाचा खरा मित्र असतो . निसर्गाचा प्रत्येक कण नकण हा माणसाच्या सुखासाठी असतो . अगदी अनादिकालापासून मानव निसर्गाच्या सानिध्यात वृद्धीगत झाला आहे . निसर्ग मानवाला अन्न, पाणी, लाकूड, वारा व इतर अनेक गोष्टी पुरवितो . थोर विचारवंत अॅरिस्टॉटल यांनी म्हटले आहे की, 'प्रत्येक व्यक्त्याच्या गरजांची पूर्तता करण्यासाठी निसर्गाने मानवाशी कुटुंबाद्वारे साहचर्य निर्माण केले आहे . सुभाषितकारांनी म्हटल्याप्रमाणे , 'रक्षये प्रकृति पांतुलोका '

तथापि मानव मात्र उन्मत्त होऊन निसर्गाचा नाश करू पाहत आहे . प्रचंड वृक्षतोड, कारखान्याचे मलीन, रासायनिक द्रव्य नदयात सोडून होणारे प्रदूषण, कचरा, वाहनातील धूर या मुळे होणारे हवा प्रदूषण या सर्वामुळे निसर्गाचा समतोल बिघडला आहे . अशावेळी माणसाचा सखा क्षुब्ध होतो . तेव्हा असे वाटते की निसर्ग मानवाचा मित्र की शत्रु ?

नेहमी प्रशांत असणा-या सागरात अचानक चक्रीवादळ आले की, त्याचा वेग माणसाला घाबरवून सोडतो . माणूस या वादळाला थोपवू शकत नाही . या वादळात अतोनात नुकसान होते . खवळलेला वारा आजुबाजूच्या माणसांना क्षुद्र कस्पटाप्रमाणे उडवून लावतो . या उन्मत्त झालेल्या तुफानात मच्छीमारांच्या बोटी उलट्या होतात . वादळाबरोबर कोसळणारा पाऊस व कडाडणा-या विजा असतात . काही क्षणांचा प्रक्षोभ होत्याचे नव्हते करतो . अशा वेळी कवी ग्रेसच्या कवितेतील ओळी आठवतात,

'थांब जरा हृदयी माझ्या , ढगांत लपल्या देवा
काठावरती जरा आणू दे, पुरात फसल्या नावा . '

निसर्गाच्या रौद्ररूपाला पाहून कवी परमेश्वराकडे आळवणी करतात . निसर्गाच्या प्रकोपाचा अविष्कार म्हणजे भूकंप . काही वर्षापूर्वी महाराष्ट्रातील कोयना व लातूरचा भूकंप आणि गुजरातमधील भूजला झालेल्या भूकंपात पत्त्यांच्या बंगल्यासारखी दगडा मातीची घरे कोसळली . राष्ट्रगीत गात असणारी मुले काही क्षणातच भूमातेच्या गर्भात गडप झाली . काही क्षणात कोटयावधी रूपयांची मालमत्ता आणि हजारो लोक मातीत विलिन झाली .

'तुझ्या हातातील काठी तू उगारतोस,
आणि धरणी कापून उठते . '

जपानमध्ये झालेल्या भूकंपाचे चित्र पाहिले की मन हळहळते . तेव्हा असे वाटते की निसर्ग माणसावर एवढा का कोपतो? याचे कारण मात्र अजून आपल्याला उमगलेले नाही .

निसर्ग कधी रूसला तर वर्षामागून वर्षे आपले पावसाचे भांडार खोलतच नाही . मग अवर्षणाचे संकट ओढते . तर कधी नको तिथे, नको त्या वेळी कोसळतच राहतो . सर्वत्र ओला दुष्काळ पडतो . फळ, धान्य, भाजीपाला नासून जातो . शेतकऱ्यांच्या डोळ्यात आसवांचा पूर वाहतो . कधी कधी जीवनदात्री नदी चिडते व गावेच्या गावे वाहून नेते . अलीकडेच जपान सारख्या मोठ्या देशाला त्सुनामीचा धक्का बसला तेव्हा मागे भारताच्या दक्षिणेकडच्या भागात त्सुनामीचा बसलेला फटका आठवला . किती भयानक चित्र होते ते ! २६ जुलै २००६ मधील मुंबई च्या महापूरात संपूर्ण शहर असेच बुडून गेले होते . कधी कधी ज्वालामुखीचे धक्केही बसतात . ग्लोबल वॉर्मिंगचा प्रश्न उद्भवला आहे . आज हवामान व पावसाचा अनियमितपणा वाढला आहे . अशा नानाप्रकारे माणसाला निसर्गाचा प्रकोप पत्कारावा लागतो . माणसाने स्वकृतृत्वाच्या कितिही गमज्या मारल्या तरीही निसर्गाच्या राक्षसी रूपासमोर तो हतबल आहे म्हणून त्याने निसर्गातील सर्व घटकांचे संरक्षण व संवर्धन केले पाहिजे . केवळ आपला स्वार्थ न पाहता हिरवा निसर्ग टिकवून ठेवला पाहिजे . निसर्गातील प्रत्येक घटकाचे महत्त्व लक्षात घेता 'जगा व जगू दया ' ही निसर्गाची शिकवण प्रत्येकाने अमलात आणली पाहिजे तरच, निसर्ग व मानवात मित्रत्वाचे नाते टिकू शकेल .



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