Conversations Today

Your journal about the world of NGOs and Social Enterprises

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Wholesomeness in Living

"There is a light in this world, a healing spirit more powerful than any darkness we may encounter. We sometimes lose sight of this force when there is suffering, too much pain. Then suddenly, the spirit will emerge through the lives of ordinary people who hear a call and answer in extraordinary ways." — Mother Teresa

From the Editor

Dear Friend,

February is connoted with Valentine's Day, a day set aside to celebrate love — the most powerful human emotion. We are at a loss for words when we try to express something as complex, and confounding, as love. We do not know for sure where love comes from, but we know that it is timeless. And it seems inexplicable that something so precious and powerful could exist in such abundance.

To value oneself is to value others. To like oneself is to accept others as they are. To trust oneself is to allow others to be as they are. A strong and steady relationship with oneself opens the gateway for loving relationships with others and with all of life.

If you love someone because you have it in your heart, it won't matter if the other person is smart, makes you feel good, is good looking, or is a hard worker. You'll love that person because your heart is filled with it. This is true unconditional love.

All our change makers featured in this edition have exhibited love without need or without expectation of restitution with whoever they are working with. This unconditional love has been their mantra of success and this is how we ought to love.

Take a long look at yourself to find if you have unconditional love or not. Can you give it to the unlovable? Can you give it to someone when they hurt you? Can you give it your enemies? This is the true test.

Let us pledge to practice unconditional love from this Valentine's day and make the world around us lovable!!

Happy Valentine's Day!

Latha Suresh & Marie Banu

The Positive Energy framework presents four dimensions to energy management, namely, physical, mental, emotional and spiritual. The first three dimensions are fairly well understood by most people. However, the fourth dimension, spiritual energy is either confused as being religious, or is thought to be something one pursues later in life.

Going back to the Positive Energy framework, one needs to understand that all four dimensions of energy need to manifest in tandem, for wholesomeness in living. Therefore, understanding what is spiritual energy and also exploring how this energy dimension can be expressed, is helpful.

Spiritual energy is expressed by not doing more, but by stopping to do many things that we compulsively do in our lives. Do you postpone your spontaneity, are you managing risks (read as doubts, worry, fear) all the time, are you waiting for a 'golden moment' to arrive to do things differently, are you constantly looking for external appreciation and acknowledgment, do you give because you want to receive, are you comparing yourself to others in your environment and so on. The list of such actions is endless.

Spiritual energy gets released from the day-to-day choices we make. It is letting go all actions that are done to receive abundance with the thought that the current state of life is incomplete. It is making the choice to be deeply aware of the presence of our 'spirit' that is abundant, and celebratory as that is its true nature.

My spiritual journey

Recently, on a long flight, I found myself recounting my spiritual journey thus far in life. Although we are all born spiritual beings, this realization only dawns on us at some point in our life.

Well, I distinctly remember that stage of my life when this realization dawned on me. I had just come out of a major setback in my life; a period of intense suffering, pain, and anguish. During this period there was a transformation that happened in my life. From living a life on the surface, I began going deeper within myself. I was dwelling on life and its purpose. And the deeper I withdrew within me, the more I came in touch with my core. This was the time when my understanding of the spiritual nature of our being came to my realization. And it aroused an intense desire to explore more of that dimension and thus I set off in this journey. I searched everywhere, seeking to know the truth – in books, meeting 'religious gurus', taking all forms of courses in my

spiritual pursuit. I was completely externalized, where I was looking for a 'Guru' in the world around me. While I did not find all the answers, this pursuit certainly left me more enriched – providing knowledge and understanding that the 'Guru' is within me and I should journey inside to find it. However, I knew not how to journey inside. So, I kept at it, attempting to meditate, read spiritual books, attend religious and spiritual lectures, take courses in meditation, healing, pranayam, etc. All these continued to enrich me, but they didn't show me the direction for the inward journey.

Then, after years of this pursuit, I began to realize from my own experience, that life is lived in the present moment. Initially, this only meant the dimension of time to me. And I began practicing it –

attempting to live in the moment, without worrying about the future or delving and living in the past. I released my past, forgave all those who caused me pain, deeply thanked all who touched my life positively, and most of all forgave myself. This helped release the ghosts and pain of the past from my consciousness. Then some situations suddenly placed me in a situation that made me evaluate 'what is the worst that can happen to me' in the future. In that moment, I realized that there is no way to know but I somehow felt like I would be taken care of in the future. And suddenly I felt a wonderful sense of freedom – breaking all shackles of future anxieties. However, it wasn't that I never

worried about the future or pained over a past event. Only their frequency and intensity had considerably reduced. The digression from the present moment was minor – such as, I have to get these things done next, I am not sure I did that well, I should have done like that, I need to do that in this way, etc. The digressions were in short time deviations – in days and hours. However, as I continued to practice being in the present moment, one thing dawned on me – in addition to the dimension of time, being in the present moment meant 'being fully present' to whatever I am doing, whoever I am with, wherever I am, etc. I realized that it was the act of bringing my hundred percent to the activity of the present moment. This eased my ability to be in the present moment. I found myself very capable of giving my complete attention to one thing at a time. And what

I also soon began to experience is that when I was fully engaged in each present moment, the future took care of itself. Life unfolded in amazing ways – and I always felt that the tapestry of life unfolding perfectly, each and every time. This was my lesson in being in the present moment.

I still did not realize that my inward journey had begun and progressed. I had begun to meditate regularly. I was practicing yoga and experienced balance and centeredness. I began to notice that I intuitively knew things, I was able to look beyond the physical vision, I sensed things, I received messages during my meditation and dreams; I was feeling like I was in touch with a much larger consciousness. I experienced loving guidance and care. I began to feel part of this consciousness – a kindred sense of oneness. And then people who were on a similar journey began to come into my life and pursuits that were aligned with this journey began to unfold as my work. I felt people were more loving and supportive now and I felt great sense of love and compassion for others even in most difficult situations. I am enjoying being in this journey and being in this space – I am truly experiencing how the journey can be so wonderful that the destination ceases to matter.

The essence of Spiritual Energy is:
1. 'Being in the present' as it is the most authentic way to live life – it aligns our core with the external world, it enables us live life fully, and it teaches us to exercise free will and do our actions while we also live in total surrender, allowing life to unfold in ways most fitting for us
2. And To 'be' and not 'do', that brings us in touch with the universal consciousness and thus the experience of oneness

—Bhuvaneshwari Ravi & Bhulakshmi

Raising Voice to the Ear

Babu is a veteran whose contributions over the last 17 years in the field of Hearing Impairment has been of enormous significance for hundreds of children and youth with hearing impairment in the city

Behind the running of three successful centers for education, rehabilitation and skill-development for the hearing impaired in Hyderabad, is the highly qualified yet utterly unassuming Mr. D.P.K. Babu. An alumnus of the celebrated first batch of CSIM's certificate program on Social Entrepreneurship, Babu is a veteran whose contributions over the last 17 years in the field of hearing Impairment has been of enormous significance for hundreds of children and youth with this disability. In conversation with him, we find out what inspired him to choose this field.

He says, "My younger brother is hearing impaired. Growing up, I had the urge to help him be independent, but had no means to do so in his formative years. At the time, there were hardly any organizations that supported the rehabilitation of the hearing impaired. As soon as I graduated, I took up a few courses to learn as much as I could about this kind of disability. By then, my brother was a grown man himself. I was barely able to teach him some functional sign-language, in English as well as Telugu. Although I do not blame the system for lack of institutional help, I did feel the pang to do something about it."

With this angst to help children and youth who had similar challenges as his brother did, Babu started Ashray Akruti, an NGO based in Hyderabad that works towards rehabilitation, education and empowerment of persons with hearing impairment. The founding trustees of Ashray Akruti include several parents of hearing impaired children, some of whom are also engineers whose ideas and volunteerism has helped the organization reach out to the community in volume and through quality of services. At Ashray Akruti, over the last 17 years, more than 315 children and youth have been trained in sign-language, multimedia and animation, and have successfully been mainstreamed in the society. The organization encourages the community to begin interventions for children from their infancy onwards. Interventions include teaching sign-language, assistance for cochlear implants and hearing aids, and counseling.

"Hearing impairment, to a large extent is still being viewed as a medical issue rather than a social issue in India," laments Babu, adding that, "Although WHO studies have identified far many more incidences and complications with respect to hearing impairment, it has not been accorded due priority at the national level as visual impairment. I wonder when we will start viewing a hearing aid just as casually as a pair of spectacles sans the social stigma

"CSIM has helped me to take off on the subject that I am most passionate about and for that, I'm very thankful."

and with total acceptance in society."

Speaking of some of the challenges that are faced by institutions today Babu says that there is no common forum to bring organizations together. As a country, he feels that India is still evolving new methods to prevent, treat and make socially acceptable, all kinds of disability. The media-portrayal of disability is skewered. While the blind are viewed with sympathy, the hearing impaired are made a laughing stock, imitated, and talked down to. "People tend to think that a deaf and mute person is probably unintelligent, whereas clearly it is

not the case," says Babu.

With such ignorance, it becomes difficult to change people's mindsets. However, Ashray Akruti works closely with parents of children and local communities to spread awareness and elicit empathy in order to overcome social taboos around the hearing impaired. The "rights-based approach" has been adopted in their every intervention. On a personal level, Babu's family supports his every cause and most importantly, his brother always joins him in his endeavours.

While discussing the merits of sign-language training, Babu says, "Sign

language is most essential for communication with a hearing impaired person. Unlike American Sign-Language system, in India, different signs are used for different regional languages. Therefore, a Telugu-speaking person's sign-language may be hard for a Tamil-speaking person to understand and vice-versa. Moreover, 70% of all disabled individuals hail from rural areas, where sign-language training is not even within their grasp. As much as the training in sign-language should reach out to the rural population, Babu is of the opinion that even the non-hearing impaired should try learning sign-language. "It is not very different from acquiring a hobby, such as music or a foreign language", says he.

Interesting and thought-provoking as his views are, the interview comes to an end and D.P.K. Babu reminisces his association with CSIM. Having attended several educational programs over the course of his journey, Babu finds a special attachment towards his relationship with CSIM. He says, "I joined the program in the very first batch. As a young entrepreneur, I imbibed every lesson that they taught us back then. CSIM has helped me to take off on the subject that I am most passionate about. For that, I'm very thankful."

To this unsung beacon, we salute!

—**Archanaa R.**

Bridging the great divide

Edubridge's training curriculum is based on the requirements of potential employers and as most of these training courses are driven by prospective ployers, they come with a job guarantee

Judging the potential that rural India holds, Girish Singhania started Edubridge, to bring rural youth up to speed in finding employment opportunities in the service sector

That rural India's potential is untapped is old news. Just as old as the fact that there is a burgeoning number of young rural residents who could fill the surging need of various industries. Only, they do not have the requisite skills to actually be able to do so effectively.

Girish Singhania, founder-CEO of Mumbai-based Edubridge, witnessed this demand-supply gap while working for Procter & Gamble and with investors during his stint at Edelweiss. He decided to do something that would increase rural India's chance helping its people find good employment. He quit his job in 2009 and spent time in 100 villages across five states to understand what kind of service would be meaningful to the rural people. "I initially thought that I would deliver information to farmers, but realised that they would not be willing to pay for it," he says.

He was clear that he wanted his venture to be self-sustaining. So, he looked to tap the potential that lay in readying rural youth for corporate jobs. Of course, there were others operating in this segment, but they followed the NGO model. In July 2010, his venture, Edubridge was started off, with savings and capital from his friends and family. He had also started talking to the National Skills Development Corporation, a Public Private Partnership established to promote skill development in the country through for-profit vocational institutions, and got funding from them in January 2011.

The first two training centres were setup in Jalgaon in north Maharashtra and Tiruvarur in Tamil Nadu. "They had captive jobs in the neighbourhood. While Tiruvarur had a BPO, Jalgaon was close to an industrial sector," he explains.

In 2012, the company was funded by Acumen, to the tune of Rs. 1.5 crore. This will be used to expand its presence from the current three states to six states, including Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Meghalaya, Bihar and Gujarat, before the end of the year. At present, the company operates 15 centres in the first three states and will add 15 more. While the current centres are its own, in Bihar and Gujarat, it will look to implement a franchise model.

Getting off the ground

Edubridge trains youth in the age group of 18 years to 23 years with varied education backgrounds. Typically, those they work with have completed graduation (25 per cent -30 per cent), plus two (50-60 per cent) and class 10 (10 per cent). Basic training is imparted in communication and entry-level skills for the service sector, including banks, BPOs, ITeS and retail. If a candidate is promising, then he/she is given job-specific training to move up the ladder, to undertake tasks such as call-handling at BPOs.

The company recruits trainers through advertisements in the local newspaper. The central office has trainers to train these local trainers. "At first, we outsourced the curriculum development but were not happy with the quality. So, we hired in-house developers," says Singhania. Today, its training curriculum is based on the requirements of potential employers and, as most of these training courses are driven by prospective employers, if the learner picks up the essential skills, there is a very good chance he'll find a job.

Currently, the company has 60 people on rolls for content development, quality, training and marketing in the central office and at the state and district levels.

Today, Edubridge's training curriculum is based on the requirements of potential employers and as most of these training courses are driven by prospective employers, they come with a job guarantee.

Edubridge uses NGOs who help in marketing and mobilising the youth. It has tie-ups with financial institutions to provide collateral free loans to students and also partners with state governments to mobilise the youth as well as subsidise their training.

Tackling many a challenge

Several NGOs in partnership with state and central governments run similar training programmes, some even free of cost. Even if the quality of such programmes is not high, the fact that they barely charge anything makes them more attractive. To compete with them, Edubridge had to offer its training courses at subsidised rates and partner with corporates to make the difference. Corporates hand out sponsorships under their CSR programmes. Or, if they are seeking youth for employment, they bear the cost and recruit the candidate, if found suitable.

Another challenge Edubridge faces is in finding the right people, especially at the district level. Increasing the management bandwidth has also been difficult since it cannot pay on par with market rates. "But now we have some passionate people who have given up more lucrative jobs to be part of this venture," says Singhania.

And the gap persists

Edubridge has trained 8,000 youth so far, through its six to eight weeks programme, that runs for five hours a day. Singhania is frank in admitting that in real terms, only 65 per cent to 70 per cent of the participants have been placed. But that is because; many opt out of the programme and sometimes, quit right after being placed.

"The aspirations of the youth are contrary to our expectations. We think that once they have a secure job and a regular income, they will settle down. But that is not necessarily the case," he explains. On the one hand, many of them may not be academically inclined and so sitting through the sessions itself may pose a challenge. Once they are placed, they have to relocate and may be unable to adjust, because of which they quit. Further, a gap in skill and employability has led to a slower than expected pace of development in Tier-II and Tier-III towns.

"But, the outlook is not all bleak. A lot of the candidates we have trained have also moved up the ladder," says Singhania. And corporates are coming back to seek out more potential for entry-level jobs.

Concept in brief:

India's population is young with over 50 per cent being under 25 years of age. Just a glance at rural India is telling, the numbers exist but so does a gap in skill levels and employability. The level of education here is also poor, making these youth ineligible for corporate jobs. Girish Singhania, founder-CEO, Edubridge, started a programme to impart relevant training to rural youth in the age group of 18 years-25 years. He has touched 8,000 lives, of which close to 65 per cent-70 per cent has found placement in the corporate sector. Even so, this is just the beginning in reconciling the great divide between the rural and urban areas of India. With the right curriculum and immediate feedback from its customers, Edubridge is playing a large role in pushing up the percentage.

—**S. Meera**
This article was first published in The Smart CEO Magazine (www.thesmartceo.in)

Management Development Programme on CSR

CSIM partnered with Business & Community Foundation and offered a unique Management Development Programme on Corporate Social Responsibility. BCF is a pioneering civil society organization in New Delhi that advocates responsible business practices and accountability, and works with business communities in India.

The workshop was conducted on 10th and 11th January at YWCA International Guest House, Poonamalee High Road, Chennai. Participants from corporate houses as well as NGOs benefited from this programme

Shri. D. N. Kar, IRS, Director of Income Tax (Exemptions) inaugurated the programme and addressed the participants. Eminent speakers across India were invited as resource persons. They were: Prof Sriram Khanna from Delhi School of Economics, Mr. Birjendra from Emergent Ventures, Mr. Subash Bhaskar from MMTC, Mr. Sandilya from EICHER, Prof. Prabhakar from SRM, Dr Abraham from Binani Kerala and Archana Raghuram, Outreach - Cognizant Technology Solutions shared their experiences apart from resource persons of CSIM and BCF.

Editorial

**Latha Suresh
Marie Banu**

CENTRE FOR SOCIAL
INITIATIVE AND MANAGEMENT

CSIM

to learn • to heal • to raise

Centre for Social Initiative and Management (CSIM) is a unit of Manava Seva Dharma Samvardhani. It is a learning centre that promotes the concept of social entrepreneurship. **CSIM offers training and consultancy to social enterprises – for-profits and non- profits – to facilitate**

them to apply successful business practices and yet retain their social mission. It also offers training and hand holding support to prospective social entrepreneurs and enable them to launch their social initiatives. CSIM operates in Chennai, Coimbatore, Hyderabad and Bangalore.

Contact Persons:
Ms. **Marie Banu**, Director, Chennai @ 9884700029
Dr. **Madhuri. R**, Head, Coimbatore @ 9840222559
Mr.**K L Srivastava**, Director, Hyderabad @ 9912656112
Ms **Aruna Subramaniam**, Director, Bangalore @ 9886833665.
Please visit: www.csim.in.

CSIM also facilitates Social Audit for social enterprises through Social Audit Network, UK and SAN, India.
For more information, please contact Ms.**Latha Suresh,** Director @ 92822 05123 or visit www.san-india.org.

Reaching out

"Our Founder Shri N.S. Iyengar believed that Social Responsibility of Business is not Optional, but Obligatory. He set up the Thirumalai Charity Trust in 1970 to put this belief into action."

Rani was waiting to meet the duty doctor at Thirumalai Mission Hospital. She was cheerfully chatting with her daughter Priya while she awaited her turn. Noticing me with my camera, she spontaneously engaged in a conversation. "I was suffering from knee pain for over three years. It was tough for me to carry out the household chores and the pain was getting unbearable. It was then a lady who worked in this hospital visited my village. She asked me to consult the specialist in this hospital and undergo treatment. I have now come to tell the doctor that I am feeling much better."

Rani hails from Ammapudur village which is 18 kilometers from Ranipet. She has to change three buses to reach the Bharti Nagar bus stand which is located two kilometers away from the hospital.

After enquiring about her family, I asked her if she could walk the distance from the bus stand to the hospital with ease. Moving her head from side to side she said, "I called the hospital as soon as I reached the bus stop and within a few minutes the hospital van picked me up. I was tired and so chose the van service."

As soon as the nurse called out Rani's name, she sprang from her seat and went to meet the doctor. I looked around and noticed that several patients were seated at the waiting hall. This is a similar scene every day at this Hospital that has been started by Thirumalai Charity Trust (TCT) in 2010 to offer accessible, affordable and quality health care.

Started 43 years ago, this NGO works in 315 villages in Vellore District, and providing services in community health care, women empowerment, disability, de-addiction, and village development.

Dr. Bhooma Parthasarathy, the Director of Thirumalai Mission Hospital welcomed us and took us around. A social worker, she has been instrumental in establishing this hospital.

"Our Founder Shri N.S. Iyengar believed that Social Responsibility of Business is not Optional, but Obligatory". He set up the Thirumalai Charity Trust in 1970 to put this belief into action. Since then, we have implemented and supported a number of projects in Health, Education and Rural Development," she said.

"Villagers had to travel some 25 kilometers to access health care services. We conduct awareness camps in villages around Ranipet. Women screening camps are organized every Wednesday and Hindu Mission hospital conducts eye camps every month and cardiac camps every alternate month. On World Diabetes Day, the hospital organized camps in two villages where people were screened with the help of family care volunteers. It was found that a majority of them had blood sugar in the range of 400 to 500," she added.

The lab is fully equipped and technicians were busy. Talking about the lab, Dr. Bhooma said: "Cognizant Foundation has donated few equipment. We take a conscious call on what we need to invest our money in. We have recently added an auto analyser; hormone analyser; automatic analyser, and Vitamin D analyser. Most of our staff are from the local villages. We offer training to our technicians to enable them operate the equipment effectively. The lab has been the focus of our Medical Director right from the day he joined it. It is something that he felt is a must of the hospital."

She took us to Dr. Seshadri who was busy with his patients. It was our turn to wait.

Speaking about the support offered by Cognizant Foundation, he said: "All equipment provided by Cognizant Foundation has been put to good use. I feel that we need to upgrade the equipment in the laboratory. Osteoporosis is a common problem amongst our patients and we have a Dexa machine and we carry out free dexa scan for our rural people. Our objective is to provide services on need basis. We have not gone for a CT scanner or MRI, because that is not our priority. We do need an immune assay analyzer for the lab, laparoscopy equipment, ophthalmic equipment, a c-arm and intensive medical equipment at the right time as these are in our list of priorities."

TCT created the cadre of Family Care Volunteers in 2009, recognizing the need to have close contact with the families to ensure access to health, awareness for early detection, and seeking health care. These community selected volunteers are the first point of contact for social and health care needs and they are offered a 2-day training programme every month on Health and Development.

Topics for Training include Hygiene & Sanitation, Water borne & Air borne diseases. Safe drinking water, Nutrition & Nutritional disorders, Alcoholism, Dowry, Domestic Violence, Legal rights of Women, Mother and Child care, HIV / AIDS, Mental illness, Disability, and Suicide. They carry the messages given to them in the training to the families in the villages and give feedback to our staff on the problems in the families. As a pilot project this was implemented in 30 villages, training 100 volunteers

Thirumalai Mission Hospital networks with Hindu Mission Hospital, TTK hospital, Rotary clubs, Andhra Mahila Sabha, WORTH Trust, Sundaram Medical Foundation and several other organizations to ensure the benefits reach those who deserve them.

In June 1994, in response to a long felt need of the Ranipet and Walajapet community, TCT established Vedavalli Vidyalaya, a co-educational school affiliated to Central Board of Secondary Education, at Walajapet. Two more schools were added on in 1999 with state syllabus in Walaja and in 2003 with CBSE to meet the growing demand. With the belief that a child-friendly atmosphere is essential for learning, the school's teaching methods and procedures blend the traditional with modern ideas that provide for the all-round development of the child, preparing him for responsible adulthood.

Thirumalai Mission hospital conducts regular medical camps for the school students. "This is one of the hospitals which is closer to our home. They have the best facilities and offer 24 hour service. My parents also visit this hospital for treatment as this is the biggest hospital here," said Vijay who was studying in tenth standard.

As the village volunteers provide local support to mobilize the people, TCT's projects are now functioning in 40 Panchayats, 315 villages at Walaja and Katpadi Taluks of Vellore District to serve a population of about 1,60,000 people. TCT through all its community initiatives has facilitated development through Volunteerism, Women empowerment and Community action.

"While looking back at our own journey, we realize that we have been able to deliver our programmes only through networking. The mission for the participating hospitals is also very clear wherein they also want to reach out to the poor. If doctors feel that the patients can't afford to pay the treatment costs, they are recommended for concession. As much as possible we try to establish links between the need and the resources available. We make sure that people who need the most are reached in one way or the other," concluded Dr. Bhooma.

—Marie Banu

For more information, please contact Dr. Bhooma Parthasarathy at bhooma.p@tmhospital.org or write to Thirumalai Charity Trust, Vanapadi Road, Ranipet 632404. Web: thirumalaicharitytrust.org .

Photos: Marie Banu

Rain Centre

"In a lay person's language what this does is use a compressed and space efficient solar panel that continuously absorbs the solar light and converts it into energy."

After negotiating the impossible Chennai traffic and getting lost, I finally arrive at the Rain Centre. This rather nondescript building is at the forefront of rain water harvesting in Chennai. And now, it is the venue of a breakthrough experiment in alternative energy.

Dr. Ram and Ram, as I call them, have just put together an integrated workable solar energy system, working on both DC and AC current that homes and industries can use at half the cost of existing technologies. Dr. Ramarathnam created the system after few years of R & D, while the other Ram, S. Ramakrishnan, enabled the system to be installed in the Rain Centre. The company, Basil Energetic Pvt. Ltd., has been recently formed to take the invention to market.

As the country is attending another round of talks at COP 19, the Minister of Environment and Forests in an interview said, "I don't think I would be wrong in saying that India has taken far more initiatives than many, and are internally very proud of these. We are by no means a naysayer. We only object to any prescriptive policies that are dictated to us by others, who are actually not doing anything to combat climate change. We have a great deal to show. We have initiatives to enhance building efficiency and we are doing studies on the issue of black carbon."

It is innovation, the likes of which Dr R and his team have delivered, that are the real solutions that are changing the scenario, amid the many COP meetings that have happened over the years.

After meeting Dr. Ramarathnam and looking at his invention, I can say that at this point of time there is no building anywhere in this world that has the kind of system that harnesses, harvests sun energy to give light and cooling, saves expenses, and provides efficient appliances cost effectively. At a household level, the application of this innovation has critical use across a wide variety of users.

In a lay person's language what this does is use a compressed and space efficient solar panel that continuously absorbs the solar light and converts it into energy. The electrical energy goes directly into appliances such as the ceiling fan, an air conditioner and a refrigerator, as well as other appliances such as computers. This set up can be used in a household as well as for industrial use.

How it works?

Existing rooftop solar systems
- Consist of Solar Panel, Battery with Charge Controller and Inverter
- Uses existing inefficient appliances – Air Conditioner, Fridge, Fan, Light

Inside homes, it is difficult to handle larger motor driven loads like AC and fridge due to a high in rush starting current and the need for a higher power rated panel, battery and inverter. Due to the above the size and cost of the system goes up and hence has not been deployed in a wide manner. The roof top area required is high and hence deployment in apartments becomes an issue. Battery maintenance and replacement costs are also a deterrent.

The new system

No inverter. Hybrid application which can work on AC Mains or DC from Solar panels.
- Soft starting of motor loads – no *in*-rush current
- A Central grid controller does the following:
- Continuously monitors the power availability and load requirements
- Switches the appliances from DC to AC or vice versa
- Ensures maximum utilisation of solar power at all times
- When generation is more than the load requirement, the excess energy can be fed back to the grid, if allowed, like in a smart grid.
- All the above result in the drastic reduction of the panel power rating, which comes down to a third of the conventional system
- The roof top area is also reduced correspondingly. Hence applicable in multi-storeyed apartments easily.
- The overall cost of the new system,

We have initiatives to enhance building efficiency and we are doing studies on the issue of black carbon

including the appliances is less than that of the existing system even after excluding the cost of the appliances
- When there is no sun shine and solar energy production, the system runs from AC Mains. Even in this case, the energy consumption is cut by half
- The power factor presented to the grid is near unity at all times.
- There is no need to store the energy in batteries. However this can be done if back up power is needed. Even here the KWHr rating of the battery is drastically reduced, resulting in smaller floor space.

Model Installation in Chennai

Load consists of One 1 Ton Air conditioner, One 330 Litre Refrigerator, Three 1,200 mm Ceiling Fans and Nine LED lamps.

A conventional system needs a 5 KW solar panel, battery with charger and a 6 KVA inverter with a roof top area of around 40 sq.m. The new system uses only a 1.44 KW solar panel, no battery and inverter and the roof top area used is only 11 sq.m.

The cost of the new system including the hybrid appliances is only about half of the present system without accompanying appliances.

Model costs

- 600W – One 300 litre fridge, Three 1200mm Ceiling Fans & Nine LED lights. – Rs 2 Lakhs
- 1440 W – One 1 Ton Air Con, One 300 litre fridge, Four Ceiling Fans and 10 LED lights – Rs 4 Lakhs
- 1920 W – One 1.5 Ton AC, One 300 Litre Fridge, 12 LED lights and Four 1200 mm ceiling fans – Rs 5 Lakhs

Possible Application Areas

The new system can be deployed in homes, offices, shops, etc without any change in the wiring. It is ideal in remote areas where electricity is not available but sunshine is. Additional new energy sources like Roof Top Micro Wind, PICO Hydel, Biomass/Biogas generation systems can be easily added to the smart micro grid. Depending on the site conditions and availability of the renewable sources we can install a local smart micro grid for a hamlet, village or a set of homes.

Even as the technology is travelling to urban centres, from health establishments to businesses, buildings and IT complexes, it is the 400 million people in India still do not have access to electricity and use kerosene for lighting that Basil wants to take the technology out to.

The Energy Centre is to be formally inaugurated on Feb 26, 2014 by Dr M S Swaminathan, the renowned agricultural scientist. Ms Shanta Sheela Nair, IAS, Vice Chariperson, Tamilnadu State Planning Commission, will preside over the function.

"Regarding our solution we are taking up a pilot batch installation of around 15 homes/offices in the suburban area of Chennai. Everything is line up now as far as the appliances and panels. The system is working very well in the Energy Centre, automatically controlling the loads between the AC Mains and Solar Panels. We expect a rush of enquiries after the formal inaugural. Only thing is we have to gear up on the working capital in case a rapid ramp up of deliveries are required. I am still searching for help from green funds," says Dr. Ramarathnam.

—Pushpanath Krishnamurthy

You can find out more about this Rooftop Solar system with hybrid appliances by writing to:
rramarathnam@basilenergetics.com

Creating a supportive ecosystem for social enterprises

Shri. P N Devarajan, founder CSIM, felt that nurturing socially conscious citizenry is the only best solution to realize equality.

Moved by the wide spread inequality in the society, Mr P N Devarajan, founder CSIM, felt that nurturing socially conscious citizenry is the only best solution to realize equality. Interactions with people from the social sector gave him new lessons. Most of their work going unnoticed and their inability especially that of women, to think in entrepreneurial terms prevented their scope of reach. In 1999, Manava Seva Dharma Samvardhani (MSDS), a charitable Trust, was launched in Chennai, to provide professional hand holding to socially conscious individuals. The Trust's 'multipronged approach of recognizing social change agents with the annual Sadguru Gnanananda Awards, grooming prospective social entrepreneurs to launch new initiatives, providing educational opportunities for the marginalized, added value to the efforts made by many such socially conscious personalities and institutions.

CSIM was launched by MSDS in 2001 as a Business School for Social Entrepreneurship and Social Work. As a pioneer in offering training programmes in social entrepreneurship, CSIM encourages persons or institutions to operationalise their service missions by applying business principles, making the impact more visible. The curriculum therefore, was supported by modules that helped candidates to contextualize their ideas without any room for second thoughts or ambiguity.

Given below are the list of courses offered by CSIM:

- Post Graduate Diploma in Social Initiative and Management (PGDSIM)
- Post Graduate Diploma in Social Enterprise and Management (PGDSEM)
- Social Entrepreneurship Outlook Program (SEOP)
- Online – Social Entrepreneurship Program (e-SEOP)

The most enlivening part of the post graduate courses is the one month block placement and project presentation. During the block placement in an NGO, the candidates get hands on experience in NGO management. Project Presentation is a component that encourages candidates to pen down ideas of their social enterprise.

As an institution desiring to work as a catalyst for social change, it becomes imperative for CSIM to create a 'supportive eco-system for social entrepreneurs to evolve and thrive'. This requires CSIM 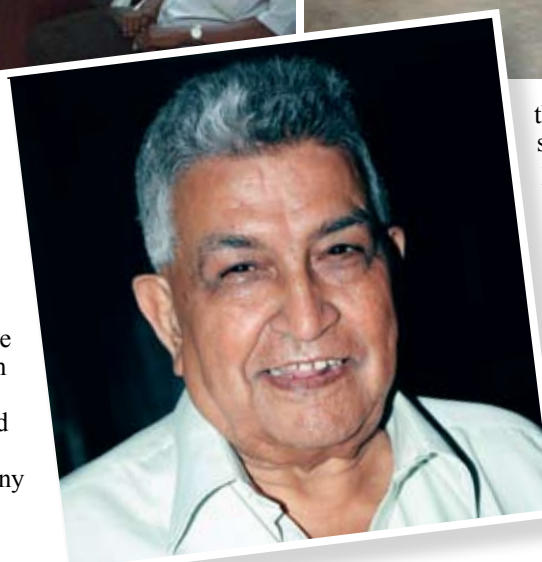to spread the message of social entrepreneurship through customized workshops for various stake holders (not just the enrolling students), especially those from corporate and social work circles, whose endorsement and application of the same will promote a conducive atmosphere for the small and medium social enterprises. The training programmes organized for this purpose focus on multiple themes ranging from financial management to fundraising, documentation to group dynamics, and social audits.

Interaction and networking with many groups made CSIM realise the need to incorporate social audits as part of its regular work. In an atmosphere where sustainability and social responsibility greatly influence each other, the equation requires social audits to authenticate good work, and offer lessons to those that have derailed.

CSIM partnered with Social Audit Network (SAN), UK to establish a support system that will encourage the practice of social accounting and audit among NGOs, social enterprises and corporate social responsibility departments in the corporate sector. CSIM is SAN UK's knowledge partner in India and has established its Indian chapter – SANIndia. So far, 39 organisations have been audited and 8 more are under review by social auditors of SAN India, and this includes for profit, CSR projects and NGOs.

As part of creating a supportive eco system for social enterprises, Centre for Media and Development Communication (CMDC) was launched in 2009 as the communication wing of CSIM. Besides teaching principles of development communication in regular courses, CSIM also conducts short term courses on media and development communication for students and development workers. As the need emerged, CMDC soon introduced consultancy services for NGOs to manage their websites, prepare annual reports, newsletters, brochures, magazine and tabloids.

The growth of our students as social entrepreneurs and their perspectives, influencing lives of many more has been an inspiration for them. Vanitha Chinnaswamy, Founder, Aanand Charitable Trust & CSIM Alumni remarks, "CSIM has given us that visibility which we ourselves might not have been able to create. Wherever we go, donors and other friends know about us and come forward to devise programmes for our beneficiaries".

CSIM has collaborated with many likeminded groups to reach potential social entrepreneurs pan India. Currently, there are five centres – Chennai, Hyderabad, Mumbai, Bangalore and Coimbatore being the latest in this lineage. And the objective is to establish 100 CSIMs by 2020 so that a potential social entrepreneur from anywhere will be able to access the programmes and services.

CSIM has persistently looked for areas to improvise their work. On this lookout, they identified groups of people suggesting that regular training programmes were not enough and that they needed more specific and tailor made curriculum giving a wider scope to explore their area of work. A group of five parents who approached CSIM for guidance to start a bakery unit that will employ their challenged children encouraged them to start the Courses on Social Entrepreneurship for Vocational Rehabilitation. It targets parents of differently abled children and organizations working on similar lines. "With friends approaching us with different needs, CSIM has now embarked on the path of providing customized course curriculum.

"We desire to begin Social Entrepreneurship programme for School Teachers, convinced that reaching the school students will be a constructive step in promoting sensitivity towards the concept of social entrepreneurship. One programme also targeted at organic farmers, who require assistance and guidance in accessing markets, establishing market linkages and means of support during transition from chemical to organic farming, is on the cards," says Latha Suresh.

42 individuals across Tamilnadu, 23 differently abled change agents, 19 transgender entrepreneurs, 15 housewives involved in social causes, 23 self help group federation leaders and many more have used the platform provided by CSIM Chennai to launch their social enterprises and incorporate social entrepreneurial principles in their work.

The journey continues with its own moments of surprises and challenges, learning with the social entrepreneurs groomed here.

—Shanmuga Priya.T

Conversations with Shri Ramana Maharishi

An inspiring conversation with Shri. Ramana Maharishi and his disciples on ignorance

M.: Ignorance - *ajnana* - is of two kinds:

(1) Forgetfulness of the Self.

(2) Obstruction to the knowledge of the Self.

Aids are meant for eradicating thoughts; these thoughts are the re-manifestations of predispositions remaining in seed-form; they give rise to diversity from which all troubles arise. These aids are: hearing the truth from the master (*sravana*), etc.

The effects of *sravana* may be immediate and the disciple realises the truth all at once. This can happen only for the well-advanced disciple.

Otherwise, the disciple feels that he is unable to realise the truth, even after repeatedly hearing it. What is it due to? Impurities in his mind: ignorance, doubt and wrong identity are the obstacles to be removed.

(a) To remove ignorance completely, he has to hear the truth repeatedly, until his knowledge of the subject-matter becomes perfect;

(b) to remove doubts, he must reflect on what he has heard; ultimately his knowledge will be free from doubts of any kind;

(c) to remove the wrong identity of the Self with the non-self (such as the body, the senses, the mind or the intellect) his mind must become one-pointed.

All these things accomplished, the obstacles are at an end and *samadhi* results, that is, Peace reigns.

Some say that one should never cease to engage in hearing, reflection and one-pointedness. These are not fulfilled by reading books, but only by continued practice to keep the mind withdrawn.

The aspirant may be *kritopasaka* or *akritopasaka*. The former is fit to realise the Self, even with the slightest stimulus: only some little doubt stands in his way, it is easily removed if he hears the truth once from the Master. Immediately he gains the *samadhi* state. It is presumed that he had already completed *sravana*, reflection, etc. in previous births, they are no more necessary for him.

For the other all these aids are necessary; for him doubts crop up even after repeated hearing; therefore he must not give up aids until he gains the *samadhi* state.

Sravana removes the illusion of the Self being one with the body, etc. Reflection makes it clear that Knowledge is Self. Onepointedness reveals the Self as being Infinite and Blissful.

—Excerpted from talks with Shri Ramana Maharishi
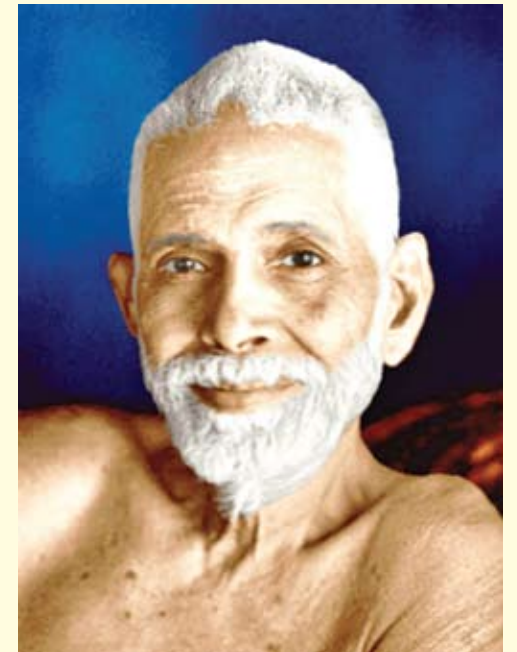
Belongingness Dimensions – Competency Management Enigma

Mapping and managing competence has been rewarding as well as a challenging feature of HR in the last decade. There is a realization that every task and position in the organization requires certain competencies. There is an inherent belief that people have certain competencies and are capable of developing other required competencies through learning and education. Hence there is a hue and cry on competency mapping in the last five years. Yet the issue of non-alignment between competency and delivery of the task is still seen existing in organizations. The challenge lies in the fact that in-spite of the competency being taught and developed yet on the ground it does not show up many times or it shows up in personal space and not in the work space or vice versa.

What is the real issue and where should HR focus?

'It is important to know what I am capable of,

It is even more important to know what I am using my capabilities for' (Sampath 2003)

Employees may have many competencies, but we cannot forget that they live in a state of choice making all the time in life. We may have capability to handle a certain situation, but may not be willing to do the same in another situation due to several other considerations. Further there are baggages of beliefs that are continuously controlling the usage of these competencies. Also, the extent to which we identify with the task, organization and team and feel belonging is a deciding factor on the usage of competency. While HR is focused on mapping and management, not enough focus has gone into the stimulants and catalysts that will enhance the usage of the competencies.

In competence management it is not the skills alone that are important to be developed, but it is education that will make employees want to make the choice of using the skill which is more important. The competence building activity should involve both education and skill development. Usually, it is easier to focus on skills to be developed and design programs that will impart the skills to employees. The employees having the additional new skills still continue to make the choice of where and how much they want to employ those skills. There are times when employees feel that using the skills will attract more work and responsibility and choose not to use it in organizational context. The skills many a time do not get aligned or connect to the organizational and personal vision of the employee.

The employees have to be given the education to deep dive on the importance and gain clarity on the competence and its usage; they will realize the need to develop certain competencies and skills. Then the skill that they acquire will be meaningful to them, which will further make them decide to use the same. The employees should not see competence enhancement from merely an employability perspective, but from being an asset and contribute wherever they are in life. These competencies will then be seen as a part of evolution in life and a maturity process. They will not be perceived as something that the organization is giving to enhance employability and extraction.

There are several factors that influence the usage of the competencies. These include –

- The beliefs that control the behaviour
- The differing personal vision vs organizational vision
- The ego that brings the 'I know' attitude stopping application of learning
- The non clarity on life vision and consequently non alignment towards life goals
- Low feeling of belongingness to the organization and job
- Disparity in rewards and recognition or non clarity in measures of competence
- High connection of competence to materialistic gains within the organization
- No clear measurement strategies and not aligned to organizational growth

In social organizations the issue of competence mapping is extremely challenging. It is difficult to demarcate specific jobs and specific competencies since employees will have to do multiple jobs and play multiple roles. They will have to anchor strongly in the vision and see their role from a holistic point of view. The competency has to be aligned to the vision and uphold the values the organization lives. The HR will have to identify the key foundational orientations that employees need to posses to be a part of the organization. The focus on competency development and management has to become a part of the organization right from recruitment, work plan, rewards and recognition, performance management, career development and so on

Further the HR has to focus on building the capacity of the employees to integrate the skills making it a part of their personality. They also need to be matured to continuously be more context sensitive and have the capacity to quickly discern the choice of using the most appropriate competency in handling various situations in their life. A true work on competency is a highly integrated, deep and continuous process that will evolve the human beings rather than as mere employees. A competency development activity of this kind will then be a contribution to the individual and become an activity to enhance the consciousness of the world.

Reflections:

1. What are the foundational competencies that my employees need to posses to fulfill the organizational vision?
2. To what extent are the employees aware of their own competencies and the gap between what is required and what they posses?
3. To what depth does my organization do competency mapping and management?
4. What methodologies are adopted to ensure there is education and not mere skill development in enhancing the competencies?

— Dr. Kalpana Sampath, PhD

Kshitij Marwah: From third last in his IIT- Delhi class to head of MIT Media Lab India Initiative

Marwah, who works with the Camera Culture group headed by Ramesh Raskar, Associate Professor, MIT Media Lab has been combining his love for photography, technology and art to come up with new innovations.

By his own admission, Kshitij Marwah was an average student. At IIT-Delhi, where he studied, he was third from bottom. This was not because he wasn't bright. His mind was not into regular studies. Here's why it happened. In the last year of his course, he got an opportunity to go Harvard Medical School (HMS) and apply his computer science knowledge by working with doctors and do a thesis. This experience, which Marwah describes as 'fundoo' work, was a life-changing experience.

Culture difference in IIT- Delhi:

When he communicated his intention to go to HMS, IIT-D wanted him to follow procedures but he worked his way out to fly to HMS. "This was my first foray into creating something awesome, the project had designers, scientists and engineers," recalls Marwah. But that joy was short-lived, he received a mail of suspension from IIT-D, and within a few days, he came back "IITs are great, but there is a culture difference between how I was learning at HMS and what was happening in India," adds Marwah.

Stanford, graduating and exploring:

A semester before he was supposed to graduate, Stanford Univeristy offered him a 7-8 month fellowship, which he took up.

His two stints at HMS and Stanford taught him a lot about innovation, collaboration and working with multidisciplinary teams. But it did not help him with his academics. When he was back for his graduation ceremony, every student was lined people on basis on their GPAs (grade point average), and Marwah found himself third from last, but he told his Dad that it was based on alphabetical order. His Dad still doesn't know.

Marwah biggest learning was that there was a huge cultural shift, the gap between him and his father was greater than his father and grandfather. He continued to be different, instead of living the IIT dream of a great job with big pay, he spent six months traveling in Europe and doing photography.

Tryst with MIT Media Lab:

Around this time Marwah heard about MIT Media Lab, but the impression he got was that it was for nerds. Following the advice of one of his friends, he applied. He was high up in the mountains in North India when he received an interview call from an MIT professor in early 2011. Marwah was not sure about what he said, but he was accepted. "When I first came into lab, it was a beautiful experience: the first five people that I met were a designer, doctor, photographer, material scientist and engineer, my whole life I used to ask myself whether photography was an art or a science, over here everything was mixed. The question on my mind was: why can't we have this in India? Why go to other places in the West to meet these people?," recalls Marwah.

More importantly, he felt he was finally at home, MIT Media Lab was full of people like him, who did not put a lot of emphasis on academics, including the head of the institution, Joichi Ito, who had dropped out of college. Everybody there wanted to dabble and create new stuff. Marwah, also thought to himself that he did not want to wait till he was 50 years, made a lot of money, and then do some some philanthropy. India, he thought, will connect with a young Marwah rather than when he was 50 years old. The time was now.

Setting up the MIT Media Lab India Initiative:

He returned back to India, as Head, MIT Media Lab India Initiative, and launched the first design workshop. The goal was not to open a MIT Media Lab in India, but have a more bottom-up approach. For their first workshop in Mumbai, they received 3,000 to 4,000 applications, and they selected 200 students.

"The idea was to give these students a platform to express themselves and embed the MIT Media Lab DNA in them. There is a saying at MIT Media Lab, if you don't fit in anywhere you will fit in here," remarks Marwah. Over a period of five days, they had a mix of engineers, artists, designers who worked on 30 projects One of them Anirudh Sharma, took his project forward and created a new company called Ducere in 2011 to make intelligent/sensorial assistive devices for the visually impaired. Sharma is currently studies at the Fluid Interfaces Group at MIT Media Lab.

Even though the original intent was not to use the design workshop to find student talent, there have been several more examples like Sharma, who have followed up the workshop by gaining admission to MIT Media Lab.

Marwah followed up the workshop in Mumbai with a workshop in Delhi and Bangalore. The difference between the many hackathons that are conducted in India, and the design workshops that MIT Media Lab organizes is that they have a multidisciplinary approach and have a longer duration.

"Designers, technologists and final users get together to collaboratively identify problems and come up with a solution," says Marwah.

Taking stock and the future:

Marwah, who works with the Camera Culture group headed by Ramesh Raskar, Associate Professor, MIT Media Lab has been combining his love for photography, technology and art to come up with new innovations. The one with the most recognition is a new camera design called Light Field Camera technology, which when fitted inside a mobile camera, gives users the ability to capture single-shot 3D photos in high-resolution and also the ability to refocus a shot after it has been taken.

"The existing solutions are expensive or bulky, I wanted to democratize it and make any DSLR camera be able to do it. It is much like what photographs did to painting, my pitch is just take the photo and the rest can be taken care of by technology," offers Marwah. He's currently in the process of pitching his technology to HTC, Samsung, Apple and big Indian manufacturers, and is also in the process of launching his own company to take it to market. Marwah has informed Joichi, that he wants to stay in India and scale the current work that he's doing.

"We can't keep just keep creating creating accelerators and incubators without having innovation. In India we tend to look westward for the next technology innovation but we need to create a culture that fosters this habit in India at every level. My 3D Instagram like technology could have been developed in Silicon Valley, I was even offered money to do that, but I wanted to set an example and therefore developed it in India even though it cost me twice as much in terms of effort and investment," adds Marwah.

—Nelson Moses
The story was first published on www.social.yourstory.in

Disclosure: The author first met Marwah at the INK Conference, in Kochi, where was hosted by the organizers. Marwah is an INK 2013 Fellow.

"What is essential is attitudinal change!"

Rev. Dr. Joseph Antony Samy shares with Marie Banu his passion for education.

Rev. Dr. G. Joseph Antony Samy, SJ is the Principal of Loyola College in Chennai. He holds a PhD in History and a Theology degree with an overall teaching experience of over 20 years. He is also the Director of Jesuit Madurai Province Archives, based at Kodaikanal.

Dr. Joseph Antony Samy SJ has published articles in six books, and has participated and presented papers in several National and International Conferences. His doctoral thesis is on "women of Tamil Nadu gleaned through the missionary records".

In an exclusive interview Rev. Dr. Joseph Antony Samy shares with Marie Banu his passion for education.

Can you tell us about your childhood?

I hail from Nagarigathan, a village in Ramnad District which is near Oriyur where St. John Britto was beheaded because he stood for truth. My father was a farmer and an honest man. He was one among the four Panchayat members in our village and I have seen him suffer because he stood for truth. My mother is a dutiful housewife and a disciplined lady. She is hardworking and used to go along with my father to work in the field. Being the eldest son; I used to take care of my sister while my mother was away.

I helped my father to plough the field and after school I gathered fodder for our cattle. I used to collect water from a pond that was 300 yards away, and prepare rice and keep the oven ready for my mother to cook dinner soon after she returned from the field.

Late evening, I played games like *kabadi* and *nila vilayatu* and joined my peers for a swim at a lake which was 264 acres wide. I would spend hours gazing at the stars and would return home only around 10 pm.

Until ninth standard, I studied in a government school that was five kilometers away from home. I went by walk carrying my lunch pack. I then shifted to a school at Oriyur and studied until eleventh standard. I was very much influenced by Saint John Britto.

How important is sports for holistic development?

I will start by talking about our Government as this value should be passed on from the top. In every ward, there should be a place for walking and playing so that the public can enjoy good health. In Chennai, I would expect several hundreds of parks and playgrounds with all facilities. We do have parks in our city, but amenities need to be improvised.

I feel that everyone should spend time to exercise. Parents should take their children for a walk and share their day's experience with them. Physical exercise is very important for the health of an individual. When parents teach, their children learn.

What are the values that you believe is most important for an individual?

I believe in discipline and punctuality, because I respect others and believe that everyone should care and respect one another. I have introduced a system where the staff arrive ahead of time and start the class on time. More than 99 percent of our staff are positively responding to this system which indicates that right leadership can influence good behavior.

We have planned to launch a system where students or staff, riding a two wheeler, will be allowed into the college only if they wear a helmet. I believe that one should adhere to the norms laid out by the government. The future of the nation is here! Control by using technology would not be as effective as systems that would help Individuals develop inner strength and character.

I learnt all these values in the Society of Jesus.

About the caste system. Your thoughts?

In my opinion caste system only divides the society and oppresses the poorest of the poor. People who work towards liberation of their caste should instead lobby with the government to provide a category NC – "No Caste". This would lead to no certificate issued from birth to death revealing the caste of an individual.

As a remedial measure, we should strengthen the Panchayat Raj system where the marginalized people are identified and empowered. The village Panchayat should nominate a group to identify deserving children based on their need and such children should be given priority for education.

Religion is contaminated and has become a de-humanizing factor because of caste. Some argue that by removing the caste system, few communities will get affected. They may not benefit from scholarship or reservations. What is essential for a human being is attitudinal change! If our neighboring state does not have a caste system, why not Tamil Nadu? We have religious structures to show that there is God. Therefore religion is important and cannot be bypassed. But, is there a tangible structure for caste to prove its roots?

It may probably take 10 or 15 years for one to realise what I am saying. If appropriate actions are not taken now, the caste discrimination and related issues will continue forever causing more misery for the marginalized.

About the launch of School of Commerce and Economics by our Hon'ble President of India?

There is great demand for commerce related subjects and Loyola College is known for its quality education. We receive thousands of applications every year for hundreds of seats. Due to the increasing demand we felt that we should have an exclusive School of Commerce and Economics.

It took more than two years to construct the building as we did not have sufficient funds. Our alumni mobilized 3.5 crore rupees. We could construct only 44 class rooms against the need of 100 class rooms and hostel facilities for thousands of students.

Our alumni also took the effort to invite the President of India to launch the School of Commerce and Economics on 20th December, 2013. The President of India being the first citizen is a symbol of our nation. Dr. Pranab Mukherjee is an educationist and a great leader. During inauguration he appreciated Jesuits contribution to education and it was an encouraging moment for our staff and students to commit ourselves to quality education.

Our honorable President shared his concern that none of the Universities in our country rank within the top 500 Universities across the globe. I take it as a challenge for Loyola College to achieve that position as our symbol of respect to fulfill the wishes of our honorable President.

Loyola College is capable of educating 25,000 children. For this, our Government should provide us with infrastructure and scientific instruments to enhance reach and research. We receive more than 30,000 applications every year, but the system allows us to admit less than 3000 students. We may have the poorest of the poor students studying, but we have the best of teachers.

Education should continue to be treated as service sector and not a business sector. Loyola College continues to be a beacon at that. Let your light shine!

Photo: Marie Banu