

Mentor's Energizer

June. 2014
Volume 2 Issue 3

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Picture gallery:

Service Learning Activities



"Inspiring hope for a better day!"



"We promise not to chew tobacco!"



"We need more community unity!"

Send your photos for inclusion in the Energizer.

The Bahá'í Academy wishes to thank our mentor of the month, Prof. Umakant Deshmukh, for sharing his insights.

Our Common Endeavor

Six months have passed since we began the Mentor Energizer and the feedback has been heartwarming. Mentors from many universities and colleges have told us that they look forward to the arrival of this bulletin in their e-mail box each month and eagerly use the resources offered. We are all bound in a common endeavor—mobilizing and releasing the energy and motivation of youth to acquire and implement universal human values in practical aspect of their lives. How glad we are that this endeavor is being vigorously advanced in cities, towns and villages. The diversity of situations and settings continues to amaze us. Starting with simple lines of action such as the practicals and home activities, we see an increase in the number of individuals taking initiative in their own lives. Likewise, a similar increase is taking place in the number of teams and groups that take initiative through Service Learning Activities and report on their successes. Visits, Seminars and ongoing trainings have added to the quality of the programme, and enhanced greater participation by the students. From time to time, there may be a lull in some activities or an obstacle in the path, but consultation, courage and perseverance enable the momentum to be regained. The programme is commensurately increasing in scope and complexity as batches of students complete the four levels of the FPDSP Course or take the ASHA Programme as postgraduates. All the contributors in this endeavor—the Bahá'í Academy, the institutions, the mentors, the students and their extended families, the communities and the society at large are creating a mutually supportive environment. We are delighted to be only a small part of this transformative tapestry woven with colorful strands of unity, values, positivity and love and we thank you for being strong threads in its construction.

Meet The Mentors

Meet Umakant Deshmukh, Assistant Prof. (Education),
Mentor, Chembur Sarvanksh Shikshanshastra Mahavidyalaya



How has the experience of taking the training affected you?

This is one of the most interactive training programmes and based on hands-on experience, mentored by well known personalities of the Bahá'í Academy as well as YCMOU Nashik and others. It has energized me for doing better work as a mentor and contribute to the future of society.

What are some of your positive experiences about being a mentor?

As a mentor the first reward I got was the support from my principle and colleagues and other college staff members and students. Through this mentor-ship students began discussing on value education that has influenced the college and their personal life also. Being a mentor has been helpful to me in my personality development and I use of it for my student and my family members too.

What kinds of transformations have you seen in your students?

Students get serious about value education; they also conduct various activities and games included in the modules for better development of their self and school. They share with me various problems they have solved related to their students, teachers, schools; even some extend their efforts to the society by addressing the problems in the places they live.

Do you have any advice for other mentors?

We all are engaged in cultural development through the value education modules. Now-a-days it is a must to have value based society. In our so called modern society where un-ethical activities are practiced by both children and adults, it is very essential to live our life according to high moral values. Thanks for this opportunity given to me.

Using the above model, please send your comments and pictures to:
energizer@bahaiacademy.org



Announcement:
Bahá'í Academy
Energizer Compilation

We've compiled a small booklet of Classroom energizers to keep your students active and learning. Drop an email to ask for a copy!

Studying from home—The Independent Learner

Many of our students of B.Ed Distance Education see their mentors only a few times per year and do most of their studying, planning and implementing the practicals on their own at home. These students are usually fulltime employees seeking advancement in their careers by obtaining a B.Ed. or other degrees. They often are short of time to spare, no matter how interested they may be in the topic. How can we encourage these students, and all of our students, to enhance and enjoy their study experience?

Motivation

Ask the students to take some time to think about why they want to learn something and what goals they want to achieve through such learning. If you don't know why you want to learn, then distractions are far more enticing. Help them set SMART goals. "Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound" goals help students know not only what they have achieved, but when they have achieved it.

Organizing

Learning is only one facet in the lives of such busy student/workers. Using time-management techniques as well as organizing a learning space to effectively keep track of tasks, projects, tools and materials is essential. For many students, this includes organizing their homes and family responsibilities as well. Every skill is learned, so family members can become part of the process and gain valuable knowledge about how to prevent distractions and how to stay focused.

Learn Diplomacy

Not everyone will be a well-wisher of the person seeking self-improvement or trying to serve the community. They may intentionally or subconsciously distract a person from goals and study plans. Consulting honestly about needs and negotiating time to study may seem daunting at first, but these conversations could be role-played in the classroom and part of the practicals.

Back issues of the Mentor Energizer are available on the website. If you've missed an issue, please feel free to download it at www.bahaiacademy.org

How can we address all the learning styles in the classroom?

We each have our own strengths and weaknesses. The mentor's joy is to address them all. We've heard of visual, auditory and kinesthetic learners and understand that people take in information in a variety of ways—usually by seeing, hearing, doing or a combination of these three. Here are some ideas for touching the brains of the students in your classroom. Try many of them to appeal to all.

Visual Learners: Turn out the lights periodically—it shifts focus. Speed read—it filters irrelevant information. Use acronyms and mnemonic devices to increase memory. Draw on the board, draw your vision of effective Service Learning Activities, draw a mind map or map your task flow. Give a slide show of pictures taken during SLAs. These are ways to change perspective and stimulate thoughts.

Verbal and Auditory Learners: Play rhyming games or listen to music to loosen the atmosphere and make students more receptive to learning. Instead of brainstorming, offer a period of silence before students begin offering thoughts—scientists have proven this enhances creativity. Have students read the textbook aloud into a recording device and listen to it later or while sleeping. Laugh—laughing relaxes the body and a relaxed body is more receptive to new ideas.

Kinesthetic Learners: Write, don't type—holding a pencil stimulates acupressure points in the hand which stimulate ideas. Think while walking. Always carry a notebook to take down ideas that come to you. Organize with colors—pens, sticky notes, etc. Play games, build a model, give a presentation.

Health is important: Exercise increases concentration. Blood flow sharpens concentration and recall. Eat breakfast for better creativity and a light lunch to prevent drowsiness. Reduce stress and depression, both of which inhibit learning. Sleep well at night and take power naps to help with problem solving.

Next month: What is the difference between theory and skill?