

Mentor's Energizer

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Picture gallery



Personality Dev. Workshop for Girls, Sangamner



Education For Development Workshop for PG Students, Nashik

Please send your photos for inclusion in the Energizer.

The Bahá'í Academy wishes to thank our mentor of the month, Dr R S Patil, for sharing his insights.

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

"Best Environment" in Practice

Every society needs to be bound together with common values so that its members know what is expected of them and what to expect from each other; and to have some shared principles in order to manage their differences without resorting to violence. This is equally true of local communities, national communities and our global community. As global processes bring us all closer, our lives are affected almost instantly by the things people say and do anywhere around the world. Recent tragedies have shown that we cannot take for granted the practice of human values by all. With one year ending and the New Year beginning, as mentors, we must reaffirm the values we believe in, and look at our classrooms and communities with new eyes, create "best environments" for learning, growing and serving. Universal human values require us to recognize the characteristics that we have in common with all our fellow human beings and to show respect, human dignity and sensitivity to people from all walks of life. Starting with our classrooms, we have to affirm the validity of gender equality and treat our students equally, regardless of their background, hometown or any perceived "status" or "level" assigned or promoted by society. In our classrooms, the "best environment" means justice for all, that all have equal right to learn, to be listened to, worked with and given the opportunity to develop their abilities and achieve their aspirations. When entering communities to do service learning activities, we also see the community members as embodying the same hopes, dreams and goals as we do and treat them with respect and care. The "best environment" is that which we practice—one of unity in diversity.

Meet The Mentors

Meet Dr R S Patil, Kolhapur



How has the experience of taking the training affected you?

It was really a path setting experience for me when I joined Education in Universal Human Values Programme by replacing Dr. P. K. Patil (who was the Mentor at my College) because of his health problem in 2005. Though initially I was not trained for mentorship at Baha'i Academy, I found the theme of inculcating value education at higher education level very close to my inner personality. My smooth adaption to this system made me the Regional Coordinator and Resource person for Module 1- Moral Capabilities in Kolhapur. The journey is destined to be continued.

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

Mentorship brings several changes in one's personality, making one capable of delivering to others. This has proved to be so true for me. I started experimenting with my regular teaching, mixing ideals of living with the course material, understanding the problems of students, etc.-- in short bringing the students in a self-learning mode.

What kinds of transformations have you seen in your students?

Mentor's role was really a motivating factor for my students. The changes were really visible in the behavior of my students. Majority of my B.Sc. students come from rural areas close to Kolhapur city. I have successfully changed them to be bold, expressive, open-minded and well behaved citizens.

Do you have any advice for other mentors?

Go on working, be honest and innovative, and start distributing to others what they lack to build of a harmonious, peace loving and progressive society.

Vision Statements lead to better goals

In the Universal Human Values program, students are encouraged to create personal vision statements. They are asked to think about what they believe about themselves and the world and to think about how they plan to live their lives according to human values. Here's a step-by-step method for envisioning a purposeful and valuable future.

- 1. Meditate and reflect**—Think about your past and current thoughts, words and deeds. Consider the abilities, skills and healthy attitudes that you associate with the kind of person you want to become.
- 2. Divide your life into facets**—We each have many areas of responsibility and care. We want to improve these areas such as: economy, spiritual life, education, family, health, community and service.
- 3. Imagine a meaningful and fulfilling life with all of the facets balanced**—If we work all the time and neglect family, our lives are without meaning. If we pray all the time, but never act, our lives are also out of balance. However, if we are true to ourselves in all areas, we will find that we make extraordinary progress.
- 4. Create praiseworthy goals**—Upon reflection identify your strengths in each facet and where you need to improve. You'll find areas of imbalance and this is the time to create goals, which will help you make progress in all facets. Remember that facet goals can be combined such as spending time with family while exercising together (family and health facets) or learning something while serving others (education and service facets) or attending devotional meetings in the community (spiritual life and community).
- 5. Regularly revisit your facet visions**—Choose a regular time each day, each week, each month and each year to review your progress. Writing a daily journal will help you keep track of your growth. You might want to make a poster with pictures that help you envision your balanced life.
- 6. You are living your vision now**—Even though goals are set in the future, our daily process is what helps us make progress. Your visions should be in the present tense so that you can live the "now" instead of waiting for some future time to be happy.



FDP at Gokhale Edu. Society, Nashik



FDP at Gokhale Edu. Society, Nashik



MKCL B.A. in Service Admin Interns attending Workshop at the Academy

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

How do we combat complacency with true satisfaction?

Each person may have a slightly different definition of satisfaction. Our very materialistic and consumer oriented world defines satisfaction as having all of the things that you want. Others might say that it means doing whatever you want to do, having a lot of money, traveling around the world, etc. In the Universal Human Values programs, you'll find that terms such as happiness, moral behavior and spirituality have taken on concrete meaning on the path toward raising our capabilities for personal development and social progress. The modules talk about walking the moral path with practical feet and developing a sense of humor as a requirement for a balanced life. What we've come to realize is that happiness and satisfaction come when your work and words are of benefit to yourself and to others. Below, we'll share some of the insights from the module "True Happiness, Social Harmony and Peace".

Complacency: Some people embrace everything that happens, learn to deal with difficulties and move on. Others waste their lives not caring, not taking action toward goals, not reaching out to others, and being "okay" with a substandard or mediocre state of being. It's like the dog that sits on the nail, complaining and whining every day, but never caring enough to move to a better spot. Complacency is the enemy of progress, both physically and spiritually.

Satisfaction=Self-Actualization—Self-actualization is the act of doing what makes one feel fulfilled. It's not the same thing as success or personal growth or improvement, which imply movement from a lower state to a higher state. Self-actualization is the higher state. For example, a musician must make music, an artist must paint, a poet must write, if he/she is to be at peace with him/herself. What a person can be, he/she must be. This state may be defined as self-actualization. It refers to person's desire for fulfillment, namely to the tendency for him/her to become *actually* what he/she is *potentially*—to become everything that one is capable of becoming.

Happiness—Happiness cannot come from without. It must come from within. It is not what we see and touch or that which others do for us, which makes us happy; it is that which we think and feel and do, first for the other fellow and then for ourselves. There is hardly a moment of our lives when we do not benefit from others' activities. As a result, it is hardly surprising that most of our happiness arises in the context of relationships with others.

True satisfaction is intertwined with true happiness, morality and spirituality—As mentors, we must first be examples of human beings living lives with true happiness, and then we must work on helping our students realize for themselves that a life of complacency is boring at best and destructive at worst. We have to help them get off the nail of inactivity and move into the realm of living meaningful, valuable, moral and truly satisfying lives. Again, as mentors, we have to be the change we want to see in our students. What a reward to be teaching this Programme!

Next month: What does it mean to have a lifelong attitude of learning?