19

A Glimpse of Motivation & Personal Effectiveness for Professional Excellence

Vipinkumar V P
Socio Economic Evaluation and Technology
Transfer Division, CMFRI

Let's start the topic of behavioural dimension for this Vocational Higher Secondary Education Curriculum with a quotation on motivation. '*A great man is the one who can make a small man feel great, and perform great.* The man greatness is simply determined based on his motivational skills. Motivation is the word derived from the word 'motive' which means needs, desires, wants or drives within the individuals. It is the process of stimulating people to actions to accomplish the goals. In the work goal context the psychological factors stimulating the people's behaviour can be the desire for money, success, recognition, job-satisfaction, team work, etc.

One of the most important functions of management is to create willingness amongst the employees to perform in the best of their abilities. Therefore the role of a leader is to arouse interest in performance of employees in their jobs. The process of motivation consists of three stages. A felt need or drive, a stimulus in which needs have to be aroused and when needs are satisfied, the satisfaction or accomplishment of goals. Therefore, we can say that motivation is a psychological phenomenon which means needs and wants of the individuals have to be tackled by framing an incentive plan. In the general motivational process, there is a need, drive and a particular goal.

There are two types of motivation. Extrinsic motivation from outside, often from rewards and Intrinsic motivation within the

individual based on sense of achievement, curiosity, interest and pride.
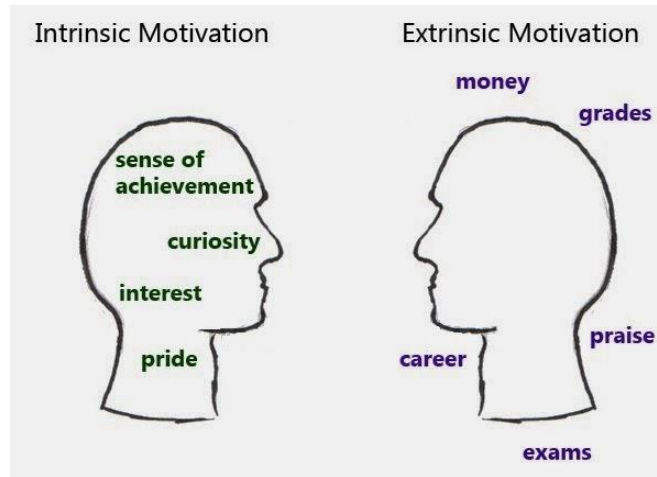
Personal Effectiveness

The motivational sills of a person give rise to his effectiveness. Let's look into what effectiveness means? The word 'effectiveness' differs significantly from the word 'efficiency'. Effectiveness means 'doing the right thing' and efficiency refers to 'doing things rightly'. Both are almost appearing to be synonymous, but indeed there are a couple of differences. Any way for human beings, we normally use the terminology of effectiveness. Efficiency is a terminology generally used for machines. Here are some glimpses of personal effectiveness. Have a glance of the following remarks and the corresponding persons who really created a difference and made their presence remarkable due to their personal effectiveness.

- *A small boy-the fifth amongst the seven siblings of a poor father, as selling newspapers in a small village to earn his living. He was not exceptionally smart at school nut was fascinated by religion and rockets. The first rocket he built crashed. A missile built crashed multiple times and he was made a butt of ridicule. He was the person to have scripted the*

space Odyssey of India single –handedly and later who became the honorable Indian President……. He was **Dr. A.P.J Abdul Kalam.**

- *A man failed in business at age 21; was defeated legislative race at 22; failed again in business at 24; Overcame the death of his sweetheart at 26; Met with a nervous breakdown at 27; Lost congressional race at 34; Lost senatorial race at 45; failed in vice-president contestation at 47; Lost senatorial race at 49; finally won to be President of United States at 52 ……..and he was …..........* **Abraham Lincoln**

- *A candidate for a news broadcasters post was rejected because of his voice. He was also told that with his obnoxiously long name, he would never be famous……………He is* **Amitabh Bachan**

- *When a gentleman invented a communications machine in 1876, it did not ring off the hook with calls from potential backers. After making a demonstration call, President Rutherford Hayes said, "That's an amazing invention, but who would ever want to see one of them? He said this to a person who made maximum inventions in the world and was none other than…………* **Alexander Graham Bell**

- *An ordinary man took up a number of odd jobs including being a carpenter and a coolie. He was later employed as a bus conductor. He then began to take part in stage plays. A famous Tamil film director accidentally noticed him and gave a chance in a Tamil cinema where he played a supporting role. The movie was well received and went on to win three National Awards. Later he became the evergreen superstar in Tamil…………….* **Rajinikanth**

- *A 4 year old girl, the 20th of 22 children, contracted double pneumonia and scarlet fever at a very early age, which paralysed her left leg. Thereafter at 9 years of age she removed her leg braces and started walking without them. At 13, she decided to become a runner but kept failing miserably in all races that she entered in. She kept trying in spite of several detractors and finally started winning every race she entered and*

*became the winner of 3 Olympic gold medals. She is ………………………….***Wilma Rudolph**

- *Born in India. His father was a teacher and his family didn't have money. He travelled with his family to Yemen at the age of 16 where he started his first job. After some time, he returned to India and founded his first company but things didn't go well. He was above thirty when he started his second company. Shortly his new brand became popular and within years he became a billionaire chosen to be among the top business men in Asia and his financial empire today is worth more than 60 billion dollars………….***Dhirubhai Ambani**

- *A school teacher scolded a boy for not paying attention to his mathematics and for not being able to solve simple problems. She told him that he would not become anybody in life. His mother however believed in him and coached him Maths. The boy went on to become ……………..............***Albert Einstein**

The above motioned magnificent personalities were the ones who never failed, but who never quitted and proved themselves to be personally effective. The average life span of a human being is 70 years i.e. 26, 500 days and in this period he consumes 60 tons of food and he breaths 23,800 times a day on an average. After finishing every breath we have to realize we are approaching graveyard. So can't we think of something productive to be done by creating a difference to improve our personal effectiveness? The most important prerequisite for improving personal effectiveness is the necessity for a self-change.

Let's quickly have the essence of education. Education is a social process or growth in the sense of producing desirable changes in the behavioral components of human behavior, the behavioral components include knowledge, skill and attitude. There are three things to be changed for a self-change, inevitably and they are our attitude, thinking and behavior. Components of education are

teaching and learning. How we are learning? We know it is by sensory techniques. It has been proved that the comprehension though learning is like this. Reading 10 %, Hearing 20 %, Seeing 30 %, Seeing and Hearing 50 % and Doing 90 %.

Being positive in a tough work environment

We have to be aware of a couple of bullets in the surrounding environment. They are Negative work environment, other people's behavior, Negative world view, changing environment, past experience and Determination theory. Let's look into each of these bullets.

A Totally Negative work environment

In a negative work environment, we can encounter these sorts of experiences.
- Dog eats dog . . . everyone fighting to get ahead
- No one appreciates your contributions
- Too much work . . . not enough help
- Deadlines are unrealistic
- Longer hours . . . additional work
- Budget Constraints
- Competition is eating us alive
- Poor management / direction
- Job insecurity
- Donkey Works

Behaviour of other People

We can observe these types of personalities around us. Bulldozers, Complainers, Gossipers, Patronizes, Whiners, Snipers, Backstabbers, Controllers, Snuffers, Exploders, Hypocrites etc. who make out daily routine miserable.

Changing environment

There is a widely accepted quotation that *"The only person who always likes change is a wet baby"*. This is essentially because of the following aspects concerned with change. The change challenges our paradigms. It alters the way we think. It makes life more difficult for a while. It causes Stress. But we have to realize and accept an inevitable truth that Change is an ongoing fact of life.

Past experience

The past experience also might have created a story in our mind. This story will lead to another story and that will lead to another one which in turn makes everything a confusing mesh, which won't make realize the difference between fact and interpretation. Past is only to be refereed for future prospects and never live in the past.

Negative world view

Speaking the context of negative world view, a recent Statistic says crime down 20% in America is being reported up to 600%. Because the trend is to create sensationalisation. Look at what you are looking at! People are bothered on sensational news as the general view of the world itself has become negative. The front page of the newspapers gives the indication that to what extent people are bothered on sensational items.

Determination theory

The determinism theory makes us conclude certain items that it is none of our faults and we find excuses of our own mistakes with justification that those are due to these genetic, psychic or environmental aspects.

221

- **GENETIC:** My Grandparents did it to me. (Inherited traits)

- **PSYCHIC:** My Parents did it to me. (Upbringing)

- **ENVIRONMENTAL:** My Teacher, My Spouse, My Boss, the Company, the Economy, etc.. is doing this to me. (Surroundings)

A pertinent question arsing concerned to Life:

"Are some people just born positive thinkers………..or is it their CHOICE?" We have two luggage here. Our task is to choose the Choose the Right Luggage: We have to either dodge bullets or wear the bullet proof armor. The problem with dodging bullets is 'You*'re definitely going to get hit!* Choice 2 is wearing a bulletproof armor. Wearing the bulletproof armor comes from 'SELF CHANGE'. So while putting on the armor. We have to change 3 Things! Attitude, Behaviour and Thinking.

How can we change our Attitude?

Now comes the relevance of the major crux of the topic: the 'Attitude.' Attitude is the positive or negative affect towards a psychological object. Attitude change happens personally from the inside out. So we have to accept our responsibility that I am responsible for who I am, for what I have and for what I do. Second step is to take control over our ownerships, values, mission and discipline.

How can we change our Thinking?

Changes in thinking come from observing logically in every situation. For that we have to observe our thinking and manage our self-talk. Henry Ford's quotation is 'If you think you can, or you think you can't…you're right'. When you get up in the morning,

222

just feed your sub-conscious mind that, this is going to be a wonderful day! Automatically it can be ensured that entire activities will lead to a positive mental stage bringing about a fruitful day. Instead, when you get up and feed your sub-conscious mind that this is going to be a crappy day!, entire activities will become negative leading to a totally embarrassing situation.

How can we change our Behaviour?

This is a million dollar question. Telling how to change is easy, but very difficult to practice. Behaviour changes take true assessment, determination & discipline. For this we have to go for a paradigm shift from the normal reactive behaviour to a proactive/ responsible behavior. Reactive behaviour is just the normal stimulus-response behaviour. But in Proactive behaviour, in between the stimulus and response, there is 'our choice'. Untiring perseverance is required to change our habits and behaviour. Four unique human endowments are Self-Awareness, Imagination, Conscience and Independent Will.

What are the Steps towards Changing Behavior?

This can be explained with an example of learning Car Driving.

1. Unconscious Incompetence: A boy in his childhood doesn't not what a car is and what driving is. He is unconscious and incompetent to drive a car.
2. Conscience Incompetence: As the boy grows, he knows what a car is. But not competent to drive.
3. Conscious Competence: Slowly when he learns driving skill, he is conscious about car driving and is very careful in driving without any distraction as he is consciously competent.
4. Unconscious Competence: In the final stage after expertise in car driving, he drives systematically while he talks or wave as if he is unconsciously competent in car driving. Out entire deeds and

activities should reach to this stage for personal effectiveness to emerge as a new personality.

So influence your environment by adding positive behaviour.

- Replace the bad habits!
- Spread a SMILE around
- Sprinkle some "positive" on the "negatives"
- Focus on the good of each day
- Stay out of the "feeding frenzies"
- Say "please" and "thank you"
- Practice *EMPATHY*
- Evaluate *YOUR* behaviour
- Never miss an opportunity to complement
- Before you say anything to anyone, ask yourself three things: Is it true? 2. Is it harmful? 3. Is it necessary?
- Keep promises
- Have a forgiving view of people
- Keep an open mind with changes
- Count to 100 if necessary
- See criticism as opportunity to improve
- Cultivate your sense of humour

Relationship between Attitude and Behaviour

The effect of attitudes on behavior is a growing research enterprise within Psychology. Icek Ajzen has led research and helped develop two prominent theoretical approaches within this field: the theory of reasoned action and, its theoretical descendant, the theory of planned behavior. Both theories help explain the link between attitude and behavior as a controlled and deliberative process.

Theory of reasoned action

The theory of reasoned action (TRA) is a model for the prediction of behavioral intention, spanning predictions of attitude and

predictions of behavior. The subsequent separation of behavioral intention from behavior allows for explanation of limiting factors on attitudinal influence. The theory derived from previous research that started out as the theory of attitude, which led to the study of attitude and behavior. The theory was "born largely out of frustration with traditional attitude–behavior research, much of which found weak correlations between attitude measures and performance of volitional behaviors".

Theory of planned behavior

The theory of planned behavior was proposed by Icek Ajzen in 1985 through his article "From intentions to actions: A theory of planned behavior." The theory was developed from the theory of reasoned action, which was proposed by Martin Fishbein together with Icek Ajzen in 1975. The theory of reasoned action was in turn grounded in various theories of attitude such as learning theories, expectancy-value theories, consistency theories, and attribution theory. According to the theory of reasoned action, if people evaluate the suggested behavior as positive (attitude), and if they think their significant others want them to perform the behavior (subjective norm), this results in a higher intention (motivation) and they are more likely to do so. A high correlation of attitudes and subjective norms to behavioral intention, and subsequently to behavior, has been confirmed in many studies. The theory of planned behavior contains the same component as the theory of reasoned action, but adds the component of perceived behavioral control to account for barriers outside one's own control.

Have a look at a very interesting quotation '*Watch your definitions……they become thoughts, Watch your thoughts……….. They become words, Watch your words ………. they become actions, Watch your actions………..they become your destiny.*'
The choice is yours, i,e with a bad attitude, we can never have a positive day and with a positive attitude, we can never have a bad day.

225

Choose POSITIVE Living.

When you have two choices in a natural motivator's case study, the choice you opt will decide your behaviour.

"Each morning I wake up and say to myself, I have two choices today. I can choose to be in a good mood or I can choose to be in a bad mood."

"I always choose to be in a good mood."

"Each time something bad happens, I can choose to be victim or I can choose to learn from it".

"I always choose to learn from it."

'Every time someone comes to me complaining, I can choose to accept their complaining or I can point out the positive side of life'.

'I always choose the positive side of life'.

So 'Life is all about choices. When you cut away all the junk every situation is a choice".

- You choose how you react to situations.
- You choose how people will affect your mood.
- You choose to be in a good mood or bad mood.
- It's your choice how you live your life.

I chose it, because I chose it … … Be happy… … …

These positive changes in thinking, attitude and behaviour are inevitable for leadership. Leadership is to be observed in a broader perspective compared to management. Because management consists of planning, organizing, leading and controlling and is obvious that leadership is one of the functions of management. It is the degree to which a person can influence other people's behaviour in a desirable way. Inculcating this leadership quality is of paramount significance for personal effectiveness. For that a paradigm shift to a proactive behaviour is mandatory. In the proactive model, our choice is there between the stimulus and

226

response and this freedom to choose is based on our self-awareness, imagination, conscience and independent will.

Here are some of the habits of highly effective people.

- **Be Proactive**: Proactive people take responsibility for their own lives. They determine the agendas they will follow and choose their response to what happens around them. On the contrary, Reactive people don't take responsibility for their own lives. They feel victimized, a product of circumstances, their past, and other people. They do not see as the creative force of their lives.

- **Begin with the End in Mind**: These people use personal vision, correct principles, and their deep sense of personal meaning to accomplish tasks in a positive and effective way. They live based on self-chosen values and are guided by their personal mission statement. But those beginning with no end in mind, lack personal vision and have not developed a deep sense of personal meaning and purpose. They have not paid the price to develop a mission statement and thus live life based on society's values instead of self-chosen values.

- **Put First Things First**: These people exercise discipline, and they plan and execute according to priorities. They also "walk their talk". On the other hand, those putting second things first are crisis managers who are unable to stay focused on high-leverage tasks because of their preoccupation with circumstances, their past, or other people. They are caught up in the "thick of thin things" and are driven by the urgent.

- **Think Win-Win**: These people have an abundance mentality and the spirit of cooperation. They achieve effective communication and high trust levels in their emotional bank accounts with others, resulting in rewarding relationships and greater power to influence. But those thinking Win-Lose or Lose-Win, have a scarcity

227

mentality and see life as a zero-sum game. They have ineffective communication skills and low trust levels in their emotional bank accounts with others, resulting in a defensive mentality and adversarial feelings.

- **Seek First to Understand, then to Be Understood**: Through perceptive observation and empathic listening, these non-judgmental people are intent on learning the needs, interests, and concerns of others. They are then able to courageously state their own needs and wants. But those seeking first to be understood, put forth their point of view based solely on their auto-biography and motives, without attempting to understand others first. They blindly prescribe without first diagnosing the problem.

- **Synergize**: Effective people know that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. They value and benefit from differences in others, which results in creative cooperation and team-work. . Ineffective people believe the whole is less than the sum of the parts which ultimately results in compromise, fight or flight. They try to "clone" other people in their own image. Differences in others are looked upon as threats.

- **Sharpening the Saw**: Effective people are involved in self-renewal and self-improvement in the physical, mental, spiritual, and social-emotional areas, which enhance all areas off their life and nurture the other six habits. Ineffective people fall back, lose their interest, and get disordered and they wear out the saw. They lack a program of self-renewal and self-improvement and eventually lose the cutting edge they once had.

A glimpse on motivational skills and personal effectiveness are given in this article as tips and by inculcating these habits through untiring perseverance, our intrinsic and extrinsic motivational skills and personal effectiveness can be improved to a great extent.

However, it is purely in our hands to make use of our potential to the optimum possible extent.

Relevance of Sub-conscious Mind; Crux of the subject

Now it's time to straightaway proceed to another main crux of the topic i,e the relevance of subconscious mind. It is an unequivocal proposition to proclaim that 'with a bad attitude, we can never have a positive day, and with a positive attitude, we can never have a bad day'. It essentially depends on the mind- set of a human being. There is distinct demarcation between the conscious and sub-conscious mind of a person**.** The conscious mind is the part of our mind that is responsible for logic and reasoning. It also controls all the actions that we do on intention while being conscious. For example, when a person decides to make any voluntary action like moving his hand or leg it is done by the conscious mind. So whenever we are aware of the thing we are doing, we can be confident that we are doing it by our conscious mind. The conscious mind is also known to be the gate keeper for the mind. In the meantime, the subconscious mind is the part of the mind responsible for all involuntary actions. Our breathing rate, heart beats and emotions are controlled by the subconscious mind. It would be pertinent to have a look into the power of subconscious mind and explore its immense potential and possibilities as a character building tool. In the book of Joseph Murphy regarding the 'Power of Subconscious Mind' there are essentially 6 points to memorize and learn.

1. You Receive Answers to Prayer Because Of Mental Acceptance About What You Pray

Joseph Murphy in his famous publication entitled 'The power of sub-conscious mind' proposes that, your religious affiliation is not what makes prayer effective. Rather, it is based on your ability and willingness to accept what you pray. It makes sense that whatever you can accept on a conscious level has to be accepted by your subconscious as well. Another statement that expands on

this idea is this one: "the subconscious mind is subject to the conscious mind." What Murphy is saying is that you can train your subconscious mind to believe what you can accept on a conscious level.

2. Your Subconscious Mind Has the Answer to All Your Problems

This statement makes perfect sense if you don't have any problems with the idea that your subconscious mind = God. Even if not for that, though, it speaks to the power of the subconscious mind. You don't need to go looking outside for the answers you seek – Murphy is saying – you can look inside, and pose questions to your subconscious. The answers may not come immediately, but your mind is always working on problems you submit to it even when you're doing other things, and it will eventually present to you a workable solution.

3. Faith is The Only Universal Healing Principle Operating Through Everybody

I firmly believe the implication here is that, faith is created by accessing and harnessing the power of our subconscious minds. Illness, physical ailments, and even traumatic experiences can be healed by repeatedly submitting thoughts of healing to our subconscious minds. Can we be healed by any other means? According to Murphy, no. Faith is the universal healing principle. Of course, I don't think he would discount the importance of medicine and other orthodox cures, but I have to guess that in this case he is referring to instances of healing that have occurred in so-called "healing services", churches, or religious gatherings.

4. If A Prayer is Answered, it is Answered Scientifically

What Murphy is suggests is that, there is a formula to prayers that are answered. He explains that "science" means knowledge that is coordinated, arranged and systematized1, so the idea here is that we can cooperate with our subconscious minds to see more of our prayers answered. If anything, the entire book sheds light on how

little attention and thought we give to our subconscious minds, and what fantastic tools they are in helping us achieve ends that we desire to see in our lives.

5. *Don't Compel Your Subconscious Mind to Accept Your Idea By Willpower*

Although Murphy does talk about presenting positive thoughts and images to our subconscious minds, he is also quick to caution us that we can't force things. Our willpower is limited, and it continues to decrease and diminish throughout the day. Can you imagine how tiring it would be to force yourself to think the same things and visualize the same images all day long? The idea is that we can plant seeds and nurture them, but we shouldn't be constantly uncovering the soil to see how our seeds are doing. We have to keep pulling the weeds and watering the seed, and while that may require a daily investment, it shouldn't take more than a couple of minutes.

6. *The World You Live in is Determined By What Goes in Your Mind*

Whether or not you subscribe to Murphy's theology this is something we can all agree on. What goes into your mind is hugely important**.** If you choose poorly, you'll assimilate bad attitudes, behaviors, and thoughts. If you choose well, you'll begin to see positive changes within yourself. What world do you want to live in? Have you thought about it? If you aren't sure what you want to achieve in your lifetime, it makes it much harder to select input that will assist you on your journey. If you are fully in alignment with your objectives, choosing the right input becomes much easier.

It is a truth that, all of us are born to lead successful lives but our conditioning actually leads us to failure. We are born to win but are conditioned to lose. Most often we hear statements like, that person is just lucky, he touches dirt and it turns to gold or, he is

unlucky, no matter what he touches, it turns to dirt. This is not at all true. If we make a real practical analysis, it can be observed that the successful person is doing something right in each transaction and the person who fails is repeating the same mistake in each transaction. In the real sense, practice does not make perfect. Only perfect practice makes perfect. Practice makes permanent whatever we do repeatedly. Some people keep practicing their mistakes and they become perfect in those mistakes. So their mistakes become perfect and automatic. The real professionals make things look easy because they have mastered the fundamentals of whatever they do. Many people do good work with ulterior motives like promotions in mind. But the person to whom smart work becomes a habit is quite deserving. Cultivating a habit is like plowing the field. It requires time. It has to grow from within. Habits actually generate other habits. Inspiration is what gets a person started, motivation is what keeps him on track and habit is what makes it automatic. The ability to show courage in the face of adversity; show self-restraint in the face of temptation; choose happiness in the face of hurt; show character in the face of despair; see opportunity in the face of obstacles. Strictly speaking, these traits are not coincidences; they are the result of constant and consistent training, both mental and physical. In the face of adversity, our behavior can only be the one we have practiced, regardless of whether it is positive or negative. When we practice negative traits such as hatred, dishonesty or cowardice in small events, hoping to handle the major ones in a positive way, the latter wouldn't happen because that is not what we have practiced. When we permit ourselves to tell a lie once, it is a lot easier to do it a second and a third time until it becomes a habit. Success lies in the philosophy of sustain and abstain. Sustain what needs to be done and abstain from what is detrimental until this becomes habitual. It is a reality that human beings are generally more emotional than rational. Honesty, integrity, probity and uprightness are the results of our belief system and practice. Anything we practice long enough becomes

ingrained into our system and becomes a habit. A person who is honest most often gets caught the first time he tells a lie. Whereas a person who is dishonest most often gets caught the first time he tells the truth. Honesty and dishonesty to self and others both become habits. Our thinking pattern becomes habitual. We form habits and habits form character. Before we realize that we have got the habit, the habit has got us. We need to form the habit of thinking right. There is frequently used quotation in Behavioral sciences that, "Our thoughts lead to actions, actions lead to habits, and habits form character and our Character ultimately leads to our destiny". So thoughts ultimately lead to destiny.

It is a truth that, most of our behavior is habitual. It comes automatically without thinking. The sum total of our habits is our character. If a person has positive habits, he is considered a person possessing positive character. Similarly a person with negative habits is a possessing a negative character. Habits are a lot stronger than logic and reasoning. Habits start by being too weak to be felt, and end up becoming too strong to get out of. Habits can be developed by default or determination. That is the major essence of our parents' advice in our early childhood, to cultivate good habits because habits determine our character.

How do we cultivate our habits?
Whatever we do repeatedly becomes a habit. We learn by doing. By behaving courageously, we learn courage. By practicing honesty and fairness, we learn these traits. By practicing these traits, we master them. Similarly if we practice negative traits such as dishonesty, unjust behavior, or lack of discipline, that is what we become good at. Attitudes are the reflections of habits. They are behavioral patterns. They become a state of mind and dictate our responses. It is interesting to observe that most of our behavior comes as a result of conditioning-it is habitual. If we want to do anything well, it must become automatic. If we have to consciously think about doing the right thing, we will never be

233

able to do it well. That means we must make it a habit. We are all being conditioned continuously by the environment and the media, and we start behaving like robots. It is our responsibility to condition ourselves in a positive manner. It can also be observed that, the trained classical musicians often practice the basics of '*sa ri ga ma*' and in martial arts even the black belts use to practice the block punch, the basics, because if they needed to use these skills, they should come automatically. Because good habits are hard to come by but easy to live with. Bad habits come easy but are hard to live with.

Conditioning the habits

Regarding conditioning of habit, a simple example of an elephant which is tied up in a weak rope and stake can be explained. Just think of the mighty elephant who can lift in excess of a ton of weight with just its trunk. How do the people condition the elephant to stay in one place with a weak rope and a stake? The elephant, when it is a baby, was tied to a strong chain and a strong tree. The baby was weak but the chain and tree were strong. The baby was not used to being tied. So it kept tugging and pulling the chain, but all were in vain. On a fine day, it realized that all the pulling and tugging will not help. It stopped and stood still. Then it was conditioned. When the baby elephant becomes the mighty giant elephant, he is tied with a weak rope and a small stake. The elephant could, with one tug, walk away free, but it goes nowhere, because it has been conditioned. Human beings are constantly being conditioned, consciously or unconsciously, by exposure to: the kind of organization we keep, the kind of literature we read; the kind of films and TV programs we watch; the kind of music we listen to; etc. Insanity is defined as doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results. If we keep doing what we have been doing, we will keep getting what we have got. The most difficult thing about changing a habit is unlearning what is not working and learning positive habits.

The relevance of 'GIGO' Principle and its effect

If we examine the computer phrase GIGO (garbage in, garbage out) Negativity in; negativity out. Positivity in; positivity out. Good in; good out, it would be interesting to note that, our input equals our output. Our subconscious mind does not discriminate. Whatever we choose to put into our subconscious mind it will accept and our behavior will reflect that accordingly. The television has a considerable impact on influencing our morals, thinking, and culture, for good or bad. TV, while bringing in substantial useful information, has also made an outstanding contribution to degrading our tastes, corrupting our morals, and increasing juvenile delinquency. That is a pretty high price for so-called free speech or free television. Advertisers are good at conditioning their audience. Obviously, advertisements sell products, otherwise why would companies advertise? When we watch TV or listen to a radio advertisement, our conscious mind is not listening, but our subconscious is open and we receive whatever is being dumped in. We can never argue with the TV. When we watch the movies, we laugh and we cry. It is not because they put something in the seats. The emotional input has an immediate emotional output. When we change the input the output automatically changes.

Conscious and Sub-conscious mind: The Relevance

Let's go back to the beginning phase of the article, i,e. looking the true perspectives of the introductory remarks of this article on the conscious and sub-conscious mind, it was already revealed that, our conscious mind possesses the ability to think. It can accept or reject. But the subconscious mind only accepts, it makes no distinction regarding input. If we feed our mind with thoughts of fear, doubt, and hate, the auto-suggestions will activate and translate those things into reality. The subconscious mind is the data bank. Of the two, the subconscious mind is more powerful. The subconscious is like the automobile while the conscious is like the driver. The power is in the automobile but the control is with

the driver. The subconscious mind can work for or against us. It is not rational. When we are not successful we need to reprogram the subconscious. The subconscious mind is like a garden; it doesn't care what you plant. It is neutral; it has no preferences. But if we sow good seeds and grow good plants, we will have a good garden; otherwise we will have a wild growth of weeds. Speaking a step further, even when we sow good seeds and grow good plants, weeds still grow and the weeding process must continue constantly. The human mind is also is exactly like this. The positive and negative thoughts can't occupy the mind simultaneously. Big companies spend millions of rupees for a 30 second advertisement, during a major event. Obviously, they do get results. We see an advertisement, for a particular brand of toothpaste or hair oil and we go to the supermarket and buy that brand. We don't want any tooth paste or hair oil or soft drink but only that brand. Why? Because, we are programmed and becoming liable to act accordingly. In order to succeed, it is inevitable that we need to get programmed in a positive way.

Getting programmed by ourselves…the How part?

How do we get programmed by ourselves? The simple answer for the query is that 'we get programmed by a continuous activity being repeated'. We can think in terms of learning how to drive a car. There are four stages: The first stage is 'unconscious incompetence stage'. This is a stage where we don't know that we don't know. The person doesn't know what it is to drive a car (unconscious) nor can he drive a car (incompetence). This is the stage of unconscious incompetence. The second stage is called 'conscious incompetence stage'. This is the stage where the person grows and becomes conscious of what he is to drive a car but cannot drive one himself, so he is consciously incompetent. But then he starts learning and now comes a third stage which is called 'conscious competence stage'. Now he can drive a car but has to think every time to do it. So with all the conscious thought and effort, the person is competent to drive a car. The fourth stage

is called 'unconscious competence stage.' It comes when the person has practiced consciously driving the car so much that he doesn't have to think. It becomes an automatic process. He can talk to people and wave to others while driving. That means he has reached the stage of unconscious competence. At this level, we don't need the concentration and thinking because the behavioral pattern has become automatic. This is the level that we want all our positive habits to reach. Unfortunately, we have some negative habits too which are at the unconscious competence stage and are detrimental to our progress. Some conspicuous international studies have shown that approximately 90% of all smokers became smokers by the age of 21. If a person has not become a smoker by the age of 21, then there is a very small chance that that person will ever become a smoker. This only proves that smoking is conditioned subconsciously and our conditioning starts at a young age.

How a vacuum gets abhorred by nature?

It is inevitable that, we have to realize the significance of keeping us involved in positive activities. Otherwise they would be attracted to the negative because nature abhors a vacuum. Either, we have a positive or we have a negative; there is no possibility of neutral or passive ground here. Character building becomes a habit. If we want to build a pleasing personality, we have to examine our habits closely. What begin as an occasional indulgence turns into a permanent flaw. We have to examine ourselves with the queries such as 'Do I let the quality of my work deteriorate?', 'Do I indulge in gossip?, 'Are ego and envy the constant companions of me?' and 'Is empathy in short supply?' We are the creatures of habits. It is good that it is that way because if we have to constantly think before doing anything, we would never get anything done. There is just not enough time. We control our habits by exercising control and self discipline over our thoughts. It is high time that we need to harness the power of the subconscious mind. We need to cultivate the habits during

childhood which build character in adulthood. Plant the right things early in life. But it is never too late to start. Every exposure to a positive or negative makes a difference. Learning new habits takes time but positive habits, once mastered, give new meaning to life. Optimism or pessimism is a habit. Habits are a matter of the pain and pleasure principle. We do things either to avoid pain or to gain pleasure. So long as the gain is more than the pain, we continue with the habit. But if the pain exceeds the gain, we drop it. For example, when the doctor tells the smoker to stop, he replies "I can't! It is a habit and I enjoy it!" and he goes on smoking. Here the pleasure is greater than the pain. Until one day, he is faced with a major medical problem, and the doctor says "You better stop smoking immediately if you want to live" and he stops. Here the pain is greater than the pleasure.

What is the reason that, we impose resistance to change?

Change is always something uncertain. Change challenges our paradigms. Even when people recognize or become aware of their negative habits, most probably they don't change. This is essentially because they refuse to accept responsibility. Besides, the pleasure of continuing is greater than the pain. They may lack the desire to change, discipline to change, the belief that they can change and the awareness for the need to change. All these factors prevent us from getting rid of our negative habits. We all have choices. We can ignore negative behavior and hope it will go away-the ostrich approach-or face up to it and overcome it for life. Behavior modification comes from overcoming irrational fears and getting out of the comfort zone. Remember, fear is a learned behavior and can be unlearned. These excuses are generally the most common explanations for not changing negative habits such as: 'I have always done it that way', 'I have never done it that way', 'that is not my job,' 'I don't think it will make any difference' and 'I'm too busy.'

The Positive habit formation, the genuine need of the hour

It is imperative for a paradigm shift for a change right now. It is never too late to change. Regardless of our age or how old the habit has been, this can be done by awareness and using techniques that modify our behavior. Often we hear that, we can't teach an old dog new tricks. We are human beings, not dogs. Neither are we performing tricks. It is possible that we can unlearn self-destructive behaviour and learn positive behaviour. The secret of successful people is that they form the habit of doing things that failures don't like to do and won't do. When we think about the things that failures don't like to do, it can be realized that, they are the same things that successful people don't like to do but they do them anyway. For example, failures don't like discipline, hard work, or keeping commitments. Successful people also dislike discipline, hard work (an athlete doesn't like and want the discipline to get up and train every day but he does it regardless), but they do it anyway because they have formed the habit of doing things that failures don't like to do. All habits start small but end up eventually being very difficult to break. Attitudes are habits and can be changed. It is a question of breaking and replacing old negative habits with new and positive ones. It is easier to prevent bad habits than to overcome them. Good habits come from overcoming temptation. Happiness and unhappiness are habits. Excellence is the result of repeated conscious effort until it becomes a habit. It needs sufficient practice to become a habit. We all have some negative habits that are pulling us down. We have to analyze ourselves by sparing some time alone keeping the mind undisturbed to make a list of all the negative habits those are pulling us down.

The need of Forming positive habits and Peculiarity of Auto-Suggestions

Now we reached the final part of the topic i,e Autosuggestions. The most exquisite part of this article to understand the relevance of what an auto-suggestion is. An auto-suggestion in simple

239

terms, is a statement made in the present tense, of the kind of person we want to be. Auto-suggestions are like writing a commercial to ourselves about ourselves for ourselves. They influence both your conscious and subconscious mind which in turn influences attitude and behavior. Auto-suggestions are a way to program our subconscious mind. They can be either positive or negative. Examples of negative auto-suggestions are: 'I have a poor memory', 'I get angry easily', 'I am tired', 'I'm not an athlete' 'I'm not good at Maths' etc. When we repeat to ourselves a negative auto-suggestion, our subconscious mind believes it and it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy and starts reflecting in our behavior. For example, when I am talking to someone and I forget what I had to say, I tell the other person, "See, I forgot what I wanted to say. I have such a poor memory."

It can be re-iterated that, auto-suggestion is a powerful self-help technique. Long before affirmations and the 'Law of Attraction' became common talk, auto-suggestion was used for many purposes, either consciously or unconsciously. The subconscious mind receives all kinds of information from the conscious mind. These bits of information come through our five senses and are related to how we see and perceive the world around us. When these experiences are repeated continuously, they sink into the subconscious mind and become an intrinsic part of who we are, what we believe and how we behave. We can condition our subconscious mind to hold certain beliefs those enhance our living experience; thus, through repetition, they become the reality we experience on a regular basis. The auto-suggestion technique when learned and applied correctly, has the power to influence the subconscious mind according to our instructions. In other words, auto-suggestion helps the subconscious mind believe a specific affirmation with an intended goal. An interesting fact is that auto-suggestion goes one step beyond positive affirmations. This is because affirmations are broader in structure while the auto-suggestion technique bypasses our thinking mind and

awareness of our material body and goes to affirm our unique human spirit identified with the words: 'I AM.' This fact alone makes it a more powerful statement directed precisely to the subconscious mind.

Shall we look into a comparison? The first statement is a positive affirmation; the second is an auto-suggestion: "I enjoy happiness and wealth" and "I AM happy and wealthy". By reading both statements out loud, we can feel the difference while stating out loud "I AM". Use of "I AM" to state our suggestion in the present moment and in the first person. There is something intrinsic and very powerful in those two words. It centers us right at that precise moment. As stated above, one simple example of this is "I AM happy". When this self-affirmation is stated on a regular basis, it becomes an auto-suggestion which eventually sinks into the subconscious mind where it will be taken at face value. Moreover, this practice will help us to focus on happy moments on a more regular basis versus the sad, anxious driven or depressed moments we may be encountering in our life. An interesting thing to notice is that those sad, anxious moments don't just disappear; however, our subconscious mind is being trained to focus on "happy" moments instead; thus, bringing more of those experiences to our life. Mohamed Ali, the boxing champion always gives auto-suggestions while he practices boxing, that 'I am the Champion and I am the winner'. He doesn't lay idle and give auto-suggestions. The positive affirmations with practice will ultimately make him win in every encounter,
The people who come into contact with crime the first time, hate it. With constant exposure, they get used to it and if the exposure is long enough, they may embrace it. And they become creators of their own misfortune. When a person repeats a belief long enough, it sinks into the subconscious and becomes reality. A lie repeated long enough becomes accepted as the truth. Positive auto-suggestions are being widely used in the field of sports and medicine. Why do we make positive statements? Because we want

to create a picture in our minds of what we want to have rather than what we don't. Any picture that we hold in our mind becomes reality. Auto-suggestions are a process of repetition. A person who repeats a statement long enough lets it sink into the subconscious mind. For example, I am relaxed. I am cool, calm and collected. Auto-suggestions should not be practiced in a negative way 'I am not' tense, I won't be angry etc. Positive statements are made because we think in pictures and not in words. If we say ourselves "don't think of a red elephant," the first picture that comes to our mind is that of a red elephant. If we think of "mother," the thing appearing in our mind is a picture of our mother. We never start spelling m-o-t-h-e-r. That means, when a negative word comes in the auto-suggestion, it forms a negative picture which we want to avoid. There is also a necessity to put it in the present tense. Because, our sub-conscious mind can never tell the difference between a real experience and an imagined one. For example, when the parents are expecting their child to come home at 9 p.m. but the kid is not at home by 1 a.m. then what is going through the parents' mind? They are probably hoping everything's okay. "I hope the kid didn't get into an accident." But it is definite that, their blood pressure level goes up! This is an imagined experience. The reality could be that the kid might be having fun at a party, and is irresponsible, and did not get home when he was supposed to. Let's look into the reverse scenario. Suppose the kid was very responsible and was actually coming home at 9 p.m. but got into an accident, and still didn't get home at 1 a.m. then also the parents' blood pressure naturally goes up! The first scenario was an imagined experience. The second one was a real experience but the body's response in both cases was identical. Our subconscious mind cannot distinctly differentiate between a real and an imagined experience.

Subconscious mind tuning up with Auto-suggestions
We know yesterday if history. Tomorrow is mystery. But today is a gift. Why can't we use this gift in the appropriate way to tune up

242

out subconscious mind with auto suggestions? It is quite necessary to think how we can use auto-suggestions to eliminate negative habits and develop positive ones. We have all used auto-suggestions unconsciously. For example, when we have to catch an early morning flight, we automatically tell ourselves that we have got to get up. And invariably, we do (sometimes, even without an alarm clock). A prepared subconscious mind has hunches and gut feelings. Auto-suggestion is a way to program and condition our mind to make a statement into a self-fulfilling prophecy. Auto-suggestion is a repetitive process through which we feed our subconscious mind with positive statements which translate into reality. Repetition alone is not enough, unless it is accompanied by emotions and feelings. Auto-suggestions without visualization will not produce results. The first time, when our mind receives auto-suggestion, it rejects it. Because it is an alien thought, contrary to our belief system. Success would depend on our ability to concentrate and repeat the process.

Trainees' Practical Session: Case studies / Develop games / practical exercise
The practical session was focusing attention on systematic Steps to follow on auto-suggestions

The first requisite to follow an auto-suggestion is going to a spot where we won't be disturbed and writing down peacefully our suggestions. The self-discipline to finish what one starts, is imperative. Auto-suggestion is a powerful character building tool. Translating auto-suggestion into reality requires the following steps:
1. Making a list of our auto-suggestions in the present tense.
2. Repeating auto-suggestions at least twice a day: first thing in the morning and at the end of the day. This is because in the morning, the mind is fresh and receptive and at night you deposit the positive picture into your subconscious overnight.
3. Repeating it consecutively for 21 days until it becomes a habit.

Auto-suggestions alone will not work. They need visualization. Let's come to final paradigm of visualization.

The Visualization Process

Visualization is simply the process of creating and seeing a mental picture of the kind of thing we want to have or do, or the kind of person we want to be. Visualization goes hand in hand with auto-suggestion. Auto-suggestion without visualization is mechanical repetition and will be ineffective. In order to see results, auto-suggestion must be accompanied by feelings and emotions (visualization). The important caution regarding the auto-suggestion is that it may not be acceptable to the mind the first time you do it because it is an alien thought. For example, if for the past few decades I have believed that I have a poor memory and now all of a sudden, I tell myself, "I have a good memory!", my mind will throw it out, saying, "You are a liar! You have a bad memory!" Because that is what it has believed up to this point. Behavioural experts through experiences and observations proclaim that it will take 21 days to dispel this notion. Because it takes a minimum of 21 days of conscious, consecutive practice to formulate a habit. The big question which may arise here is: Is 21 days of conscious effort a heavy price to pay to change a lifetime for the better? It all sounds simple but it is not easy.

Immense examples have been observed in many case studies, how auto-suggestions and the subconscious mind have been utilized to the fullest potential as a powerful character building tool. The imaginary craziness imposed through auto-suggestions made in present tense on positive habits made astonishing changes in the character of very many people through conscious efforts and untiring perseverance. It is never too late or better late than never for a positive change by realizing the power of subconscious mind and auto-suggestions. Whether you realize it or not, you have probably been using auto suggestion techniques your whole life. If you have ever told yourself to wake up at a certain time, "relax," "sleep," "concentrate," "smile," "breathe," or whatever -

244

- you have used auto suggestions. In truth, auto suggestion is the simplest and arguably, the most powerful of mind programming tools. It is one of those simple mind power techniques that is easy, always accessible, can be done anywhere any time (even while driving) and requires no special skill or training. We do it naturally.

The problem is that, most people use autosuggestion UNCONSCIOUSLY– and often in a way that holds them back from accomplishing what they want. For example, people talk about being "sick and tired" of this or that. Then, they wonder why they feel low and lethargic. Or they bitch that, their boss is a pain in the rear, and then they begin to have problems with their lower back. They fail to realize that mind power techniques, used unconsciously also have consequences. Auto suggestion techniques can be used to improve performance at work, to combat anxiety while driving, in sport, in meditation, dance, even in bed. It can boost your confidence, help you relax, improve concentration, energy and help you sleep. Used negatively, or in ignorance, it can do the opposite as well and it does.

Suggested Reading:
Reference: Qualified Learning Systems Inc., USA.Murphy Joseph. 2010. *The Power of Your Subconscious Mind*. Amazone India, p170.