



IN Focus

VITAMIN 'H' - THE HAPPINESS PILL

Education with **HAPPINESS** is more important than ever as we struggle to engage constructively with the world and its digital inhabitants. As teachers and facilitators, the idea of creating a **'happy'** classroom is normally at the top of our agenda. Apart from the staffroom camaraderie and the satisfaction of finishing a pile of marking, what teachers simply want *is for children to be happy*. But how can one create a happy classroom? What can one put in place to ensure that the happiness of everyone, you included, is central to the learning experience? We want students to come in every morning full of excitement, ready and eager to start the day ahead. And leave at the end of the day with smiles on their faces, inspired by the lessons we've taught. But it's not always that easy. There are so many domestic, social and emotional factors that can stand in the way. Our education system, and our societies more broadly, **must** look

beyond knowledge and facts, and address how to manage the experience of life. Life is complex and often difficult to understand, and we (ourselves and the students), need the self-awareness, confidence, and social-emotional skills to navigate it. We need young people who are emotionally stable, focused, and who contribute with passion and joy. **Creating a happy classroom, therefore, becomes crucial.** Thus, a classroom should be a space where happiness takes precedence, where children are always met with a smile and with positivity. It's a space where their well-being is as important as their academic achievements. It's a space where it's okay to : *make mistakes, to trip & fall, to be & feel differently from the rest of the world, to day-dream and talk about inconceivable ideas and solutions, to be one's self, with one's own interests, explore & learn at one's own pace, style & interest area.*

*Delhi's **HAPPINESS CURRICULUM** - started in July 2018, was designed to strengthen the foundations of happiness and well-being for all students. The learning outcomes mainly targeted mindfulness, critical thinking, reflection, and a cluster of social-emotional skills.*

WONDER WORDS

* HAPPINESS

Happiness, in psychology, is a state of emotional well-being that a person experiences either in a *narrow sense*, (when good things happen in a specific moment), or *more broadly*, as a positive evaluation of one's life and overall accomplishments. In life, happiness means different things for different people; do read some students' and teachers' responses in the inner pages.

* EMPATHY

Empathy is the ability to emotionally understand what other people feel, see things from their point of view, and imagine yourself in their place. Essentially, it is putting yourself in someone else's position and feeling what they are feeling. **Cognitive empathy** involves being able to understand another person's mental state and what they might be thinking in response to the situation. **Somatic empathy** involves having a physical reaction in response to what someone else is experiencing. **Affective empathy** involves the ability to understand another person's emotions and respond appropriately.

“Knowing if you are happy from within or not, is very important because when your actions are driven from this state of happiness, nothing seems to be a burden.”

– Manish Sisodia, Deputy Chief Minister of Delhi, Government of Delhi

QED Talk

NEP 2020's focus on HAPPINESS IN CLASSROOMS

KIRAN BIR SETHI

Indian designer, Educationist, Education reformer & Social entrepreneur
Founder : The Riverside School (Ahmedabad) and *Design For Change*, India



■ *As a designer, educator, founder of novel reforms in education, what brings you Happiness?*

The term Happiness is overrated because it's a fairly transactional emotion. *JOY* is a far deeper emotion. Happiness is when you give me an ice cream, I'd be happy and then I'll sulk the next moment. So, I think joy comes from a much deeper pool of meaning. So I'm more inclined to asking whether we have *joy* in our schools. And sometimes joy is not happy, you know? It's like parenting; if you ask a parent would you rather go for a spa treatment or will you look after your child... so for that moment, I'd rather go for a spa treatment because it just makes me happy. It means much more to be *JOYFUL* as a parent. And it comes from all the trials and tribulations, but it builds a deeper pool of meaning, a deeper core. So, I think I would be looking at whether we have *joy* in our schools.

■ *What brings you immense JOY with kids?*

I think it is that connection of trust and wonder, and listening and shared togetherness, . . . it's just amazing. You know, when you create those ingredients that come together, it just is so rich with possibilities.

■ *You must have heard about the "Happiness Curriculum" that was started in 2018 in schools in Delhi. Do you think it really has relevance when we are talking about so many other aspects of education, bringing joy in learning? Why do we have to have a happiness curriculum? Why can't anything in the curriculum bring happiness? Are schools following it?*

Well, it was so deeply missing in all education. This was a massive plug point that happened and it was much needed. I think, framing it as *Happiness* at that point, was a useful title to have because it was just so focussed on everything else, that education is focusing on, you know, achievement gap and learning gap, STEM and all of that. Here we are talking about emotions, and I think it was easy to understand that happiness is an emotion. So, for that context, for that moment, for this particular program, I believe it really allowed everybody to capture the fundamental emotion of this particular program. It was about bringing an ingredient into the curriculum, that should provide some happiness.

I don't think it's being followed in schools in Gujarat. Having said that, whatever they were able to achieve in terms of putting certain processes and structures into a daily program that allows for well-being circles and leadership etc., I believe it definitely provided the children in government schools a way to *want* to go to school, which I feel was a great starting point.

■ *It is often believed that as students progress academically from K to 12, there is a corresponding deficiency in the 'Happiness' quotient. Do you think in most schools today, this IS the scenario? Why?*

I guess the perception is that learning must be serious. And if they're having fun or they are just sitting at a place, the perception is so deeply ingrained in the adult world, that then it's not considered learning. So, there's a component of tediousness and it should be heavy and it should be tough. People forget that it should have *meaning*, and it should be collaborative and it should be purposeful. So, I think we misunderstood that achieving deep rigorous learning doesn't have to be tedious. That perception we've not been able to remove; it's so deep rooted, even intellectually. Maybe the young parent understands that because they've gone through that. But it is so ironical that when they come for an interview, they will say something like, "*Oh, my child should learn with the body and mind experience*", etc., but then move forward and say, "*They're not studying*". Intellectually, there is this understanding that the body must be involved in the learning; but that intellectual understanding doesn't really necessarily convert into action. So, I think that perception that learning must be hard and tedious to be useful (or to be relevant)...is something we've not been able to shake off. There are enough models now that have given ways to include growth and suggest that if learning is meaningful, purposeful and collaborative, it stays longer and files-in deeper into the mind. And, there's enough research that backs this.

It's just this perception of time as well. You know, this whole thing about "*Where's time for that. I have to finish quadratic equations. Where's the time?*" I have to say that there has been some sort of an awakening of the amount of information that is necessary to move forward. I also think there is a



Happiness is when
what you think,
what you say,
what you do
are in perfect
harmony

- Mahatma Gandhi



measure of understanding that, that body of knowledge (which everybody thought was important), is now being chunked into smaller pieces. 20 years ago, when I started Riverside, these conversations were not even happening. 20 years later, at least these conversations are happening. Whatever you say, the NEP 2020 is now shaping some of those possibilities for children to select and choose, so it's taken this much time and it can just get better.

■ **We often hear, even in TED Talk across many other platforms, a lot of stalwarts in education or a lot of very successful business leaders. They made this comment, "We got richer but I wonder if we got happier." Why?**

I'll reverse it because there was an interesting study that asked 15-year-olds, "What do you want to be when you grew up?" And they said, "famous." I mean, famous and rich of course, but that's the understanding of success. Right? That idea is so now the mood of the nation; for all these youngsters (because of the fact that there's Instagram, YouTube, etc), there's an influencer, so, it's such a lure to consider that being famous means being rich, but competency or depth is not necessarily the motivating factor to learn. You see young people these days some of them make it big, they become famous, but it gives a youngster the possibility to say, "Ah, I don't really have to go through the education stream. I can just be on YouTube and make up tutorials," or whatever, and pretty much earn a living. So those are unique and new avenues. We never had that before. All that you study, you go to college, all of those have been disrupted. That linear path to achieving or going where you're dreaming of going has been disrupted. So good or bad, what I can say is that.... for those who can and will have the competencies, there's a possibility now that that linear path no longer is the way to go. So yeah, the linear path is not the only path.

■ **Finland is in the top position in the world happiness report in 2022, followed by Denmark & Iceland. What's your perspective on Scandinavian countries ruling happiness? Does their education system contribute to this? If so, how?**

I think it is a combination of things. Look at the size... the entire population of Finland is like the Satellite area in Ahmedabad. Everyone must understand the context and size, sort of population. They've already got a head-start. The basic living standards are already higher, because the equitable distribution has been there in terms of money. So I think it is unfair to assume that those are the benchmarks. You should look at a complex, rich, diverse country like India. It just has its own unique set of challenges, unique opportunities. I feel we should stop looking at Finland and Scandinavian countries as "Oh my god, how happy they are!" It's a silly way to measure. I think, you can find MEANING in anything... I mean, MEANING should be the defining factor. Are we giving children the possibility of finding meaning? If you do that, believe me, everybody will be happy. Our education system is not built on 'meaning making', it's built on passive accumulation of information, not even knowledge.

It's not the *measurement* of those metrics, right? There are so many other reasons for how you exist. So I think it's just *what is enough*. What does it mean to have *enough*? What does it mean, to be hungry? What does it mean to have family? What does it mean to have dreams? There's so many different ways in which one understands one's life. And therein lies that moment. So you could be happy today; you could be miserable tomorrow. But that's why I keep saying *happiness is NOT a measurement. It really is JOY*. It has to be deep and though some days are good some days not! But if you have purpose, you don't give up. You go on, you take that step forward, you show up. All of these are important, but we don't give enough credit for that. If you look at the lower metric you've got survival. Survival itself is worth waking up for.

■ **As a school, how do you also bring in awareness among the parents about 'joy in learning'? Have you had to work with parents for this awareness?**

You can't do it without the parents. It's kind of like *Namaste*; you have to use both hands, right? It has to be *collaborative*. So yes, of course, you have to at least present enough and more ways and show evidences, of why this matters. While sometimes a pen might not necessarily understand it, it's important to keep presenting the evidence and ensure that parents come on board.

READ TO SUCCEED

FOR TEACHERS

THE HAPPY TEACHER HABITS

11 Habits of the Happiest, Most Effective Teachers on Earth

- by **Michael Linsin**

Based on the latest research, and drawing on experts from the world over, you will learn simple, actionable strategies that will eliminate your teaching stress, supercharge your ability to motivate and inspire your students, and empower you to really love being a Teacher. No ordinary teaching book this; it is a success roadmap that exposes the falsehoods and misinformation teachers are bombarded with every day, and reveal the secrets to what really matters in creating a happy and fulfilling career.



FOR STUDENTS

GAJAPATI KULAPATI

- by **Ashok Rajagopalan**

After the wildly famous Walt Disney feature 'Jumbo', the classic combination of an elephant and humour are back to sizzle up some great chemistry, this time with a *desi* touch. A big temple elephant catches a cold and hilarity ensues as every time he sneezes, absolute *hullabaloo* is created. This book stands as testimony to the vivid imagination of little children as well as their naïve and endearing attribution of humanistic characters to animals. This story, infused with a sense of humour that will resound with absolutely anyone / any age, puts the zing right back into storytelling and happiness!

Finally, this is the *WORLD* that you inhabit, right? There'll be a school, and there will be a whole world; but unfortunately, now there's also the individual *social media* world, that nobody has access to. We're not privy to what's happening on social media, what kids see. The whole social media world is actually messing up happiness at home and in school. It is causing so much of anxiety, fear and loneliness. That world, my God, it is massively liberating, at the same time, massively devastating, and it's scary. Half the curriculum nowadays is really to help mitigate that loneliness. It is becoming more imperative, that *joy, purpose, meaning, happiness* - becomes the *CORE* curriculum.

■ **Where does 'Teacher Happiness' feature in the Happiness scenario in Education and what affects this?**

It is absolutely critical! In fact, I was on some panels two days ago and they kept talking about well-being of children. I said you just cannot have it without the *well-being of the adult*. What happens to the well-being of the parent or the teacher? Because kids role model all of us right? What do they role model? They role model joy, kindness, justice, equity, all of that. If I have an adult who's always losing it, who's always stressful, who's always anxious, . . . it's unreasonable. Kids are picking up such social cues from the adults they see around.

Unfortunately, the pandemic didn't make it easier. Anxiety, grief, loss in our homes, we saw it first-hand. The news didn't get easier. And now just the stress of returning to schooling is not making it easier either. So it's so much more important to understand that if a teacher's well-being is NOT an absolutely key component in your development and culture; then you will *not* be able to give any credit nor have any well-being programme in your school.

■ **If you were to give your kids a choice - of being with nature and learning vs learning with some hi-tech digital gadget, which do you think will bring more JOY?**

Well, I will not give them the choice, I would have to say both. It's not a question of either/or. It *has* to be both. It's unfair to assume we can decide their 'elements' of joy. At times I've seen them super-excited about being in nature and super excited during the most kickass presentation, because in both cases it is unleashing that part of their creative being. Being creative is naturally engaging. As long as there is meaning in that action, there is greater joy.

■ **Your final comments about Vitamin 'H' - "Happiness & the Humane" pill!**

In terms of the tips and guidelines, one thing I keep saying more and more, is that happiness just comes from the idea of *who you are* and NOT what you do. I say this to teachers, leaders, and even to parents, "*While children might not listen to you, they will always mimic you,*" a quote by Rayman Birk. If that were true, *our BODIES are our curriculum... WE are a living curriculum*. Our bodies, the way we smile, the way we move, the way we sit down, the way we lean in; that's the biggest curriculum we have. We don't understand that. We don't leverage that. Children are learning what you're *not* teaching them, they're learning about body, they're learning about justice and equity with the way you smile, the way you listen, the way you nod, the way you *don't*, the way you look at one child versus another. So I think, THAT is really the curriculum. I keep telling parents that we must be *worthy of being mimicked*, and therefore, live your life in the manner that your children pick up those stories of *who you are* and not what you do.

As far as being *humane* is concerned, I think it is the purpose for why we exist...we are *human* by chance, but we become *humane* by design; I'd like to think about it like that. What it means is that the ease and the value proposition of choosing to be *Empathetic* (the 1st 'E'), that makes us humane... choosing to be *Ethical* (the 2nd 'E'), choosing to work for *Excellence* (the 3rd), choosing to *Elevate Each Other* (the 4th) and finally choosing to *Evolve*, (the 5th 'E'). These 5 'Es' became Riverside School's value propositions of WHY we exist; how we can get children to use these 'Es' to CHOOSE to be *Humane*. "*Insaan aur Insaaniyat ke beech mein bahut farak hai.*" This is the massive opportunity we have, of instilling these into our children for 15 years and how it gets implemented through timetables & taken from theory into practice. ***

CREATING A HAPPY CLASSROOM

-Ways to bring in & spread Happiness

Happiness is often used as a term of *subjective* well-being in psychology. Through another lens, happiness is an *emotion* combined with other *positive emotions*, resulting in *subjective well-being* - when the positive emotions of a person are much *more* than his negative emotions, and life satisfaction is high (Diener 2000).

It is widely believed that *happiness has an important and essential role in the well-being and motivation of school children*. The absence of happiness and joyfulness can adversely affect their intelligence, thinking skills, creativity, and educational achievements. The absence of something so sacred, innate and essential in the life of a child, is a major problem in many education systems, and sadly, is rarely considered in a careful manner. The data regarding the happiness of school children should be analyzed and attention to happiness should be stressed as early in childhood as possible; but no later than adolescence, given the importance of the cognitive, emotional, personality, and social development features and skills that occur during this time period. Educators can be influential in building positive resources for children to build and teach happiness. Apart from the school and classroom, the role of family, home, and friends become vital for ensuring happiness.

The encouraging news is that, just like good manners, *you CAN teach mindsets and habits that lead to happy children*.

“As a society, we have to start taking children’s well-being more seriously, and as educators we’re in a prime position to do this.”

Some skills to develop to nurture HAPPY lifelong learners:

A classroom should be a space where happiness takes precedence, where children are always met with a smile and with positivity. It’s a space where their wellbeing is as important as their academic achievements. So how can we create one?

1. **Providing Support** - Feeling lonely and with nowhere to turn can do much to damage a child’s mental health and wellbeing. Creating a support network can help to build happiness in the classroom. From friends, family and the adults within the school, children soon realise that they have important people to turn to when they need them. It’s not easy for all *children to understand how to support others* within the classroom either – *it’s a skill that needs to be explicitly taught to some*. Working together to establish what that support looks like within your classroom, can help those who struggle with this aspect of personal relationships and confirm your expectations to the rest. By creating a classroom with a clear support system in place, children’s overall happiness and confidence can increase.

2. **Celebrating Achievement and Success** - Celebrating individual and group achievements can do much to enhance the happiness in your classroom. Studies have shown that reward and recognition can go a long way to boosting people’s confidence and morale. When we achieve our goals, our brain sends messages to our body to say, ‘Well done you!’ We release neurotransmitters such as serotonin (the happy chemical) and dopamine (the motivation and reward chemical), which help us to feel great. In both children and adults, the levels of dopamine and serotonin that we have in our bodies play a part in our overall well-being, digestion and sleep. The more serotonin and dopamine, the happier we tend to be. *Celebrating mistakes can help here too*. Creating a happy classroom starts with an understanding of the importance of growth mindset and of learning from our mistakes.

STUDENTs' responses to:

"For me,
HAPPINESS IS..."

- ... a sense of belonging." Dipankar S
- ... having food at my favourite restaurant with my friends and family." Aaditya P
- ... when I and the people close to me are in a positive state of mind." Arnav T
- ... playing football!" Ayaan H
- ... spending time with my family and doing activities that I like." Nairit & Emily
- ... not about getting all you want, it is about enjoying all you have." Vanshika MV
- ... a feeling of emotion where I sense extreme peace within myself." Niranjan P
- ... family bonding and cultural events." Prarthana S
- ... the key for a better living." Harshita & Ria
- ... being & playing with my dog / dogs." Anya & Amodini
- ... making others happy." Remanika T
- ... being a better version of myself." Khushi C
- ... to see a smile of pride on the faces of my parents." Tasmaiy U
- ... following my passion." Kabir T
- ... is dancing." Tisha
- ... listening to music." Ayesha
- ... gaming!" Ajay

3. **Teaching Self-Confidence** - Confidence can increase happiness, but it's not something we're all naturally born with. For many of us, it is a learned skill that improves with age, experience and practice. A happy classroom embraces this journey and provides opportunities for children to *learn this skill in their own time*, with the support of those around them. For children to be successful, they need to be able to manage and overcome their fears, worries, limiting beliefs and problems.



Give children a wide range of vocabulary to indicate confidence. Talk about inner belief, optimism, courage and determination, so that children understand what these traits are and the importance of them. Make it part of your everyday classroom discussions and model what it's like to struggle with something, persevering until you get the hang of it. Share any relevant experiences from outside of school or your own childhood that can show them what happens when you have the confidence to continue. *Gentle encouragement and recognition of their efforts* can be the most important thing children need to slowly build their confidence.

4. **Building Positive Relationships** - Having positive relationships with peers and adults within the school can do a lot when creating a happy classroom. Teaching and modelling what positive relationships look like will help children as they learn how to build their own. Some may not have the confidence or the understanding and will, therefore, learn a lot from how you build positive relationships (by modelling & mimicking you) with each pupil and other adults



in the classroom or school. As children begin to build new and positive relationships, it will not only improve their overall happiness, but it will *give them a sense of belonging and feeling valued*. It will help to develop their self-confidence and give a sense of security and comfort.

Most importantly, it will teach them how to communicate openly, trying out new ideas *without fear of judgement*, as they make new positive relationships later in life. It will also help them identify when a relationship is not a positive influence and how this can impact their wellbeing.

5. **Developing Coping Skills** - Life isn't fair. Decisions and situations rise up and are out of our immediate control; out of our circle of influence. Children (and adults) can find this one of life's toughest lessons. What is in our control, however, is *how we cope and react* when times get tough. In order to feel happy, we need to feel in control. If children develop core strategies early on, they can apply them throughout their life and adapt them to suit any situation. If we're able to teach children to understand their emotions, as well as how their body may feel and react during times of stress, they will be able to identify what they need to do to feel better.

Happiness is all about *accepting what is* and about *being grateful* for where we are, what we have, what we are... everything! You may like to show the students this beautiful film on the **2 MAGIC WORDS** advocated by the Japanese, which can help in building the core of Happiness : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OGExmgD-9XY>

6. **Being and Bonding in a Digital World** - For most of us, we figure that what really makes our children happiest is playing together for hours on end with water balloons, sidewalk chalk and soccer balls, often until the sun goes down. Does the key to the happiness of children really rest in playing simple activities with friends and not the obsession with the latest trendy electronic toy? Research seems to indicate that it does. Although, video games, iPad's, iPod's and cell phones still compete for our children's attention, must we limit the exposure to these items for a variety of reasons; chief among them being our desire to have socially and emotionally *healthy, happy* children.



Also, try not to make a big deal about fitting each minute of the day with some task! A child does not always need to *DO something*, like - study, play, read, draw! We need to *just let children BE...they also need time to connect with themselves*. An inner connect, peace and just loving who they are, can lead to immense joy.

Finally, creating a happy classroom, with joy in learning, isn't just about smiling every day. It's about developing an *environment that looks after the WHOLE child* and helps them build strategies to feel happier about all aspects of their lives. As teachers we are in the privileged position to be a constant, positive influence in the lives of our pupils and this is a position we should feel proud of. **Creating a happy classroom is just the beginning.** ***

MYSTERY, NEWNESS & JOY !

-5 ways to keep your students excited and happy!

Many of us have experienced being in the middle of teaching a class, glancing at our students, and catching them staring into space. Just when we thought we've created the perfect lesson plan/engaging activity, we find that our students are unfocused and drifting. Yet, as educators we need to find ways to keep the class 'interesting', so that students absorb and retain what we have painstakingly planned. For decades, educators have been trying varied strategies to keep their students on their toes, to keep them happy & excited about learning. Some haven't worked, while many methods were found to be quite effective. The idea is to *inject fun, humor, and playtime* while ensuring *focussed learning* takes place too. Students need to feel *safe, valued, and successful*, and being *challenged with achievable goals* also excites them.

Here are **5 teacher-tested ways** to *Magic into the Class*, so your students will stay engaged. Try them out!

1. Tip from Sherlock Holmes

Learning may be the most fun for your students when there is a sense of surprise and mystery. When you're about to unveil a new lesson, give students *a new clue each day*, up until the last day before the start of the lesson. This is a fun way to make your lesson mysterious, and you may find that your students are excitedly looking forward to finding out what they'll be learning about next.

2. Avoid Deja vu

It's important to review classroom material, and ensure that you do not repeat it verbatim, since it makes the session less interesting for students. In the next lesson review, try playing a review game during which you present the information in a way that's different from entry slips or quizzes. The *3-2-1 strategy* is a fun way to review and not repeat material. For this activity, students draw a pyramid in their notebooks and write down three things they learned, two things they thought were interesting, and one question / doubt they still have.

3. My Choice Matters

One strategy that teachers have found to be effective is offering their students the *ability to make their own choices* when it comes to learning. Choice can be a powerful motivator because it helps to foster student interest, independence. and promotes happiness, because children feel they are a part of big decisions. One way is to make a *choice board*; print out a *tic-tac-toe* board and write down nine different tasks for students to complete. The goal is for each student to choose three tasks in a row.

4. Do a 'De Bono' - Think Outside the Box

Lesson plans don't have to include worksheets or lectures during which students sit and take notes time and again. Do things differently and creatively! Plan a lesson that's completely out of the ordinary - invite a guest speaker, go on a field trip, or take learning outdoors, or arrange a virtual trip with a large display! When you try something new and different, there's a good chance that your students will respond positively. Learning that *engages* students is the most effective. Your students will find it more interesting to learn when you present the material to them in a variety of creative ways.

5. Lighten up! Teaching isn't just hard core serious stuff!

Being an effective teacher is an important job, but that doesn't mean that you have to remain serious in class at all times. Try to *loosen up a bit* and it's OK to laugh at yourself at times, add a funny joke to stimulate energy and laughter, and to have some fun. Students are more interested when YOU are a more relaxed, happy, and engaged with them with joy. They find true happiness while working and thinking with peers, learning something new, finding a purpose, doing things with their hands, seeing themselves grow and simply,....*enjoying* their time while learning! ***

ADULTs' responses to :

"For me,
HAPPINESS IS...

...having some ME time." Dr. Anuradha S

...spreading knowledge." Hitarth P

...being in HARMONY." Ulupi P

...witnessing sadness / unhappiness getting obliterated from our planet." Vaishali S

...my inner peace, my health and my family." Pratibha M

...when my students shine!" Binita A

...sharing a laugh with my near and dear ones." Prashantini P

...sitting alone, reading books, walking while it drizzles." Jancy S

...inner solitude." Shilpa A

...to Live and Let others Live." Neha Ma'am

...a state of mind which results from one's own actions." Aparna S

...a CHOICE." Nidhi K

...to sit alone and think for yourself." Parent

...feel the ocean breeze AND contagious laughter with friends." Simmi C

...watching the moon on a full moon night. Mrs Shukla

...my ex-students calling up, keeping in touch, recalling the joyful times in school." Ishita V

Other sources related to fostering Happiness & Joy

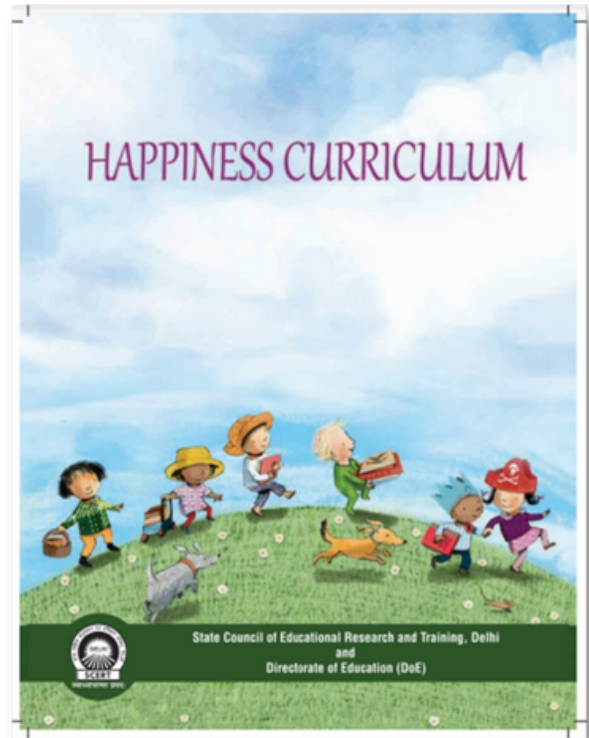
HAPPINESS CURRICULUM (Grade-wise)

Link : <http://scert.delhi.gov.in/resourceschvtl>

Resources	
CLASS	Manual
Nursery / KG	Class Nursery / KG Teachers Manual Happiness Curriculum.pdf Format - PDF Size - 6.17MB Language - English
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HAPPINESS CURRICULUM - pdf manual

Link : https://www.edudel.nic.in/welcome_folder/happiness/HappinessCurriculumFramework_2019.pdf



Speaking from the heart

Kirithi Jayakumar

Children are highly impressionable. Think of them on the lines of a sponge: the propensity for absorption of influences from around them is exceptionally high. They, therefore, emulate and incorporate behavioural proclivities through observation. If a parent is irritable, the child picks up on the mannerisms and language. If a parent chooses to use harsh language, the child invariably begins using foul language too. A child of impressionable age is bound to spend most of his time between school and home. This leaves the child equally exposed to his teacher; and the teacher's ways of communication make an impact on the child, just as much, if not more. Except, such impacts are mildly variant.



A teacher is a child's guide: from a young age, the child understands this, although not necessarily capable of cognitively expressing what a teacher means. The child comprehends that a teacher is an approver of sorts, an authority figure who sets thresholds and standards for him to adhere to, and decides how well he performs or does not. To this end, what a teacher says to a child about his capacity goes a long way. Therefore, it is easy for a teacher to write off a child, and leave that lasting impression on the child's psyche about what he can and cannot do.

The act of being harsh, rough, unkind and hurtful with communication is an act of violence – for it leads to hurt and pain. Non-violent communication, on the other hand, as Marshall B Rosenberg and Arun Gandhi explain, is a way of communicating that leads us to give from the heart. Non-violent communications help reframe our mode of expressing ourselves in a way that our words do not hurt, or cause pain, but rather, become conscious responses that are beneficial to the recipient.

One of the common ways of enforcing discipline and a certain kind of thinking is to instill fear of reprisal for non-compliance. Most teachers tend to do this – and it is a natural tendency, for we are brought up in an environment that fosters and encourages such a mindset. The proclivity towards violent communication is what encourages us to compare siblings who are our students, it goads us to write off a student and determine what his skills should or shouldn't be.

Adopting values of non-violent communication is a conscious choice. To tell a child to focus on a skill that he has going for him and hone it rather than to struggle with something he isn't going to use, as opposed to writing him off, is non-violent. To tell a child to be disciplined so that he has benefits to derive from it, is a non-violent option rather than to instill fear and encourage discipline. To tell a child that he can do a lot better because he has the potential, and not because he deserves to be compared with his older sibling, is non-violent.

If a teacher adopts values of non-violent communication, there is a sense of compassion in the interaction between the teacher and the student. There is an enabling environment created for the child, and the child imbibes far more than he is taught – which means that he learns more than just his lessons. He also imbibes values significantly. Non-violent communication opens doors to fewer conflicts, increased skills in mediating conflicts, encourages more listening and fosters mutual respect among all school members, more engaged learning, and the creation of safe spaces at school.

The author is a lawyer and writer by profession. She runs The Red Elephant Foundation. She can be reached at kirithi.jayakumar15@gmail.com.

Source - TEACHER PLUS, March 2017 (Last Word)

THE SPEAKING TREE

Making World Happier



Pramukh Swami Maharaj wouldn't just say 'in the joy of others lies our own', he lived it a thousand times first,

WRITES MAHANT SWAMI MAHARAJ

In the joy of others lies our own; build character in oneself and inspire character in society; dharma is that which promotes bonds of mutual love. These universal teachings of Pramukh Swami Maharaj, his life and humanitarian work were some of the reasons why he was looked up to by millions worldwide.

Pramukh Swami Maharaj was the fifth spiritual successor in Bochasanwasi Shri Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha. BAPS, a socio-spiritual organisation that has its roots in the life, teachings and philosophy of Bhagwan Swaminarayan.

I first met Pramukh Swami Maharaj in 1951. He was 29, and I was just 17. What I distinctly remember was his simple, unpretentious demeanour. He made no effort whatsoever to impress, and yet he left a deep, indelible impression. "Yes, I remember saying to myself, 'this is what I call a sadhu'."

For the 65 years that followed, I was blessed with Pramukh Swami Maharaj's proximity. I saw him in mass assemblies and sat alongside him in meetings. I accompanied him on many of his travels around India and the world, visiting village huts as well as meeting world leaders. I saw him eat, walk, talk, pray. In every

situation, wherever he was with, wherever he was in the world, I found him to be the same. He was utterly devoid of pretence and had no sense of self-importance. No self-interest. His only focus was serving God and helping others. For

more than 1,200 magnificent temples, the magnanimous being Akshardham, New Delhi; the creator of more than 1,000 spiritual gurus. From that day more than 70 years ago when I first met him, to this day today and every day forever after, Pramukh Swami Maharaj will always be with me, just as millions of others also feel his presence, because his abiding legacy is not who he was, but what he made all of us become – kinder, better, happier. ■

Millions around the world have been celebrating Pramukh Swami Maharaj's centenary during 2022-23. A month-long centenary celebration, dubbed as the festival of inspirations, began in Ahmedabad on December 14, 2022. To the world, Pramukh Swami Maharaj was a global ambassador of love, peace and harmony; a worldwide torchbearer of Sanatan Hindu Dharma; the creator of more than 1,000 spiritual gurus. From that day more than 70 years ago when I first met him, to this day today and every day forever after, Pramukh Swami Maharaj will always be with me, just as millions of others also feel his presence, because his abiding legacy is not who he was, but what he made all of us become – kinder, better, happier. ■

The writer is the present guru of BAPS. January 15 marks the grand finale centenary celebration of Pramukh Swami Maharaj. For more, visit www.psm100.org. www.baps.org

Source - The Times of India, 16/01/2023; Ahmedabad Edition

DOWN MEMORY LANE...

Sacred Heart School, Siliguri



WEF (Indian Section), Mumbai



Nalanda International School



Nalanda International School



JML & Bloomingdales, Khar(W)



JML & Bloomingdales, Khar(W)



Unaided School Forum, Maharashtra



Unaided School Forum, Maharashtra



SSRVM, Mulund (W)



SSRVM, Mulund (W)



Alchemy School, Surat



Pathshala Hostel, Vadodara



TEACHER TRAINING

As 2023 unveiled its first month, it provided us with the opportunity to sit back and reflect on the year gone by - a year full of meeting many stalwarts and educators across the country, and learning about so many shared insights regarding addressing gaps and solutions for a revamped educational system.

For this we say - "ARIGATO", grateful for and humbled by all that has come Team QEDRAK's way! New and continuing associations, new learning, new strategies; newness in how we look at life & things around us. And, of course, *new hopes* to make education a joyful, lasting experience and a better world for our students - *the future global citizens!*

MATH RIB TICKLER

1. Parallel lines have so much in common. *A shame they'll never meet.*
2. There's a fine line between a numerator and a denominator. *Only a fraction of you will get this.*
3. Why is the corner always the hottest part of the room? *Because it's 90 degrees.*
4. Why was the fraction skeptical about marrying the decimal? *Because he would have to convert.*
5. Why is the obtuse triangle upset? *Because he's never right.*
6. What do you call a group of friends who love math? *AlgeBROS.*
7. In the Periodic Table class, teachers have been warned not to let iron and carbon sit beside each other *due to their tendency to steal.*
8. Why don't mathematicians sunbathe? *Because they can use sin and cos to get a tan.*
9. My math teacher asked me why I was doing my sums on the floor. *I said: "You told us to do them without using tables."*

(source:boredteachers.com)



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