

The **Search** May - June - 2020
YCS/YSM National Newsletter

Book 40

Vol: 3



#EndTheStigma

**Mental
Health Problem**

Hope
& PATIENCE
at the time of pandemic

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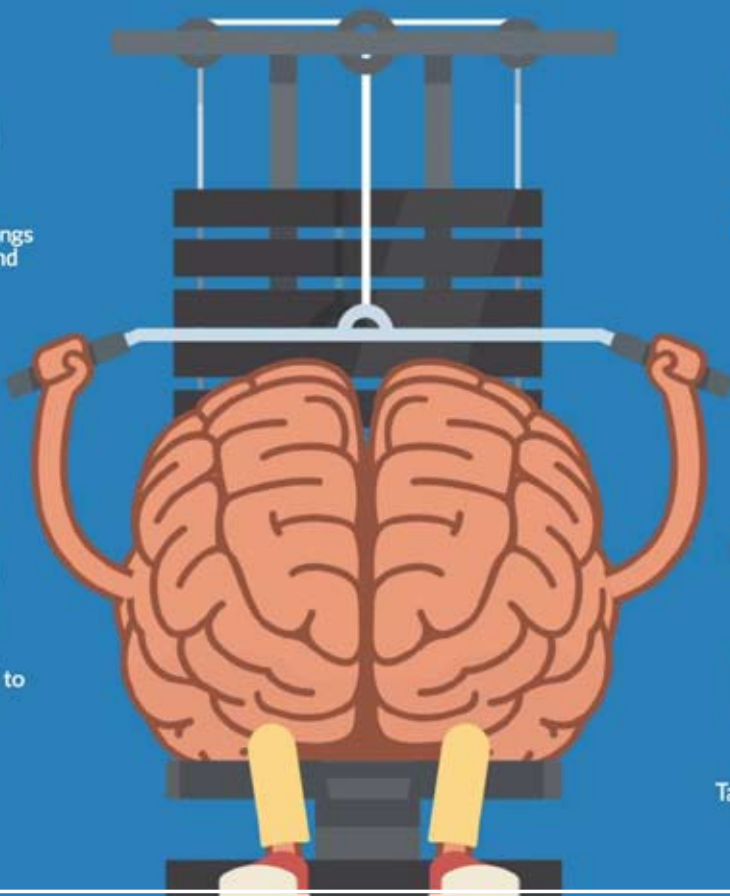
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EDITORIAL



HOPE

**is the only bee
that makes honey
without flowers.**

Greetings from the YCS/YSM family

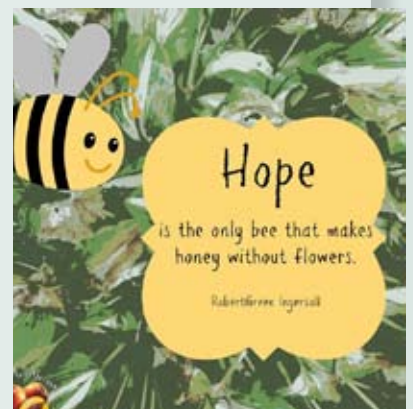
HOPE is a simple word but in life gives light in complete darkness. It gives us a reason to live and strength to overcome difficulties. Without hope not a single person can live a life meaningfully. It is an important aspect of one's life and means a lot in life because it gets you a true sight towards the future. A tiny virus has shattered the way humans live in spite of all our technological advancements. At the moment without any vaccines, the only thing we can rely on is Hope. It is something that we require the most sometimes more than food to eat or water to fulfill our thirst. It is well known that a person can live up to 3-4 weeks without food and 1-2 weeks without water, but it is really hard to think of a moment without hope. Each and every person on earth lives on hope that tomorrow would be a brighter day.

Hope is something that is naturally there inside us but we never realize it. For example, we never know what future holds for us but still we plan our time table the whole day accordingly and before the night begins, we plan everything we need to do the following day. In fact many of us set the time and alarm to wake up the next morning. That is hope and it lays a foundation to all the things that exist today.

A man without hope is a man without meaning in life. It is easy to be discouraged, afraid, or angry these days, but we need to remain hopeful. Every religion teaches us about hope. There is light at the end of the tunnel. Though we are experiencing darkness these days due to COVID-19, there is a ray of hope because countless people are working hard to help people all over the world. Doctors, police, medics, administration is working hard to give us the hope. There are many volunteers who are working selflessly to give us hope. Scientists and researchers are working to find a vaccine. God is working through them.

Dear friends, let us find that hope within us at this time of covid 19 pandemic and help someone who has lost hope. Let us believe that change is possible, and God is the only and ultimate hope that we have and does not change at any point of time. Finally, I repeat one of the messages by Robert Green Ingersoll, "**Hope is the only bee that makes honey without flowers.**" So don't ever lose HOPE in your life.

Let the YCS/YSM light shine
- **Ashita Jimmy**
Editor - *The Search*





■ PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE ■

GOD WON'T LET HIS PEOPLE DOWN

HOPE is expectation or assumption that something positive will happen in our lives. We live in this world where nothing is predictable, yet we hope for a healthy and successful life. Whenever we experience hardships or difficulties in life, hope helps us to overcome it by being mentally strong. Our inner voice or conscience is the most powerful thing through which we can ease any difficult situations. "Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness". This quote perfectly matches the current situation of the people that are filled with fears, anxieties and depressions. I am sure all of us are hoping that this darkness will come to an end and our lives will soon get back to normal.

Talking about hope I also remember the plight of migrant workers, tourists and people stranded in different places that are hopeful to reach back safely to their own homes. Many people, NGO's, celebrities and governments have been a ray of hope for these people and have helped many reached home safe and sound. This was an unpredictable situation and many were suffering. But they were hopeful, they believed and they will be helped. As hope is always sweet, it is an inspiration to live our life the best way possible. Let us build and enhance our hope especially during this situation where many have lost hope and have become helpless. As YCS/YSM members, we can help the hopeless through our caring hands, kindness and most importantly praying for them to regain their strength and hope.

Having a positive attitude will always lead us towards spiritual development as well. I believe that God won't let his people down whenever we come to him with true faith and hope in him. Let us be hopeful and have the courage to achieve our dreams. If we have a right desire, hope and faith, nothing can let us fail but help us to achieve success. In this unpredictable time, be helpful and hopeful towards one another. In this way we help ourselves and others to change their lives in a positive way.

Let the YCS/YSM light shine

- Deril Dsa, National President

Dear Readers of The Search!

This bimonthly newsletter is published by YCS/YSM India. Articles are written by the students. The editorial team allows students to voice their opinion on given topics. We publish articles as we receive and do very basic editing of language and other errors and not the thoughts of our students. This is a platform provided to our budding writers to publish their articles, poems, news reports and even art work.

We request you to send original articles. If you are sharing an article from the internet or from other people, kindly acknowledge.

- Editorial Team

(Kindly send your reports and articles to : thesearchycsystmindia@gmail.com)

HOPE | Never Give Up



Derek Clark shares a part of his life in an effort to **inspire others to never give up** and to never let the past infect their future. He is a popular motivational speaker and an author of six inspirational books. He narrates this story in one of his talks.

This is the true story of his life. A life in which abuse, loneliness, and dark nights of despair rattled him, drained the tears of his spirit, shattered his mind into a million fragments, and left him for a while plodding through life as an empty shell, a lost and helpless soul. He has breathed the air of the unloved, and suffered deep psychological and spiritual wounds due to abandonment at an early age by his mother and father. He has blamed himself for a past over which he had no control. His trust in people was displaced with hostility and anger. And yet, his spirit would not be broken. He has fought for survival in the name of love, powered by a dogged will whose voice never stopped telling him to NEVER GIVE UP!

He was a five year-old kid, and already a survivor of appalling events. He had never known his father. His mother, having given up on him, placed him in a Care System. She was desperate to be rid of him. The saddest, most inexplicable part of this was that she kept his younger brother and older sister. He was devastated knowing he had been deleted from his family. He was now motherless and fatherless. He loved his mother, brother and sister, but his love for them wasn't enough for mother to keep him in the family.

She claimed she could not control him, and that he was a "devil," but Derek now knows that she was the one out of control. He was the child and she was the adult. He was not to blame for the predicament he found himself in. That is life; it is unfair.

There are millions of little kids who have been given up on, and their parents are completely responsible. The ignoble actions of parents will always be remembered by their children. He



knows, because that five year-old foster child still lives within him, constantly striving to be empowered, to make his insecurities his own. But he refuses to be a victim; He is a conqueror. he is stronger than his unworthy parents!

There is no question; the mental and physical struggles of his life have proved very difficult to overcome. They say the first five years of a child's life are the most critical to his or her development, and that children soak up everything they experience like a sponge. Kids watch their parents, and mimic what they observe. The influence



of his first five years contributed to many destructive behaviors throughout his life. He often wished he had been given away at birth, so that he wouldn't have had to endure the memories and nightmares which have haunted him these many years.

There is always a lesson to be learned from adversity. He has learned many such lessons the hard way, but have found there is a light at the end of the tunnel. The light that leads us out of the darkness is the positive energy that comes to surround those who continually search for what life has to offer. The answer is always within. By harnessing this positive energy you can accomplish anything. Nothing has ever held him back from "going for it." He has not let anyone or anything stop him from making his dreams a reality. He is an unstoppable force. He is headstrong and know exactly what he wants. He has always trusted his intuition.

His search for life's meaning eventually brought him through a baptism by fire, which cleansed his soul. He is like the mystical "Phoenix" that has risen from its own ashes, a resurrected soul, a lost boy who evolved into a man. In life's journey, He was meant to shine.

It is this journey in which fractured souls are made whole again. It is this journey in which wounds are healed and pain is finally replaced with love and peace. This story is a story of hope in the darkness.

Pope Francis said, 'Hope is a humble and strong virtue that supports us, so that we do not drown under the many difficulties we face in life.' Hope in the Lord never disappoints us; it's a font of joy and peace in our hearts.

It is God who, in the fullness of time, ensures that the promise would become a reality for all of us. And what unites that first moment to this last moment is the thread of hope. And that which unites from one moment to another, in order to always go forward — sinners, but going forward — is hope. And what gives us peace in bad moments, in the darkest moments of life, is hope. Hope doesn't disappoint: it's always there: silent, humble, but strong.

Dear YCS/YSMers, we hear a lot of of sad stories or hopeless stories of young people. We see young people ending their life for silly failures in exams, relations and career. Some of them find no one in life to give them hope. Lets work honestly in our cells, meet - share - express and help each other.

- Fr. Chetan Machado
National Chaplain





Lockdown...Lockdown. Lockdown...Covid 19...Stay home #stay Safe became the slogan everywhere. It was March 23rd 2020 the sudden announcement of Lockdown from the Prime Minister of India brought a fast moving life to standstill and made everyone stay at home.

It was a sudden nightmare and I never thought so seriously about Covid 19 situation in India before the announcement. As per dictionary “Lockdown is a state of isolation or restricted access instituted as a security measure.” I was always thinking that the world has survived different kinds of crisis. People have seen world wars and the economic despair, but the human spirit had endured and survived. In the same manner this pandemic also will not trouble the world for so long because world is advanced in medical research and in scientific field. Reading about the increase number of cases, initially I thought it’s only in China and we are safe but gradually hearing about the rising number of death rates in Italy and other parts of European countries and USA gave me an immense fear. Eyes and ears were glued to the news channel initially and mixed feelings of fear and hope made me realize what is ahead of my life. Immediate thought was to buy Groceries from shops and to keep a stock of all the essentials. There was a paradigm shift in the way of life. Life started revolving around wearing masks, using sanitizers, after shopping cleaning the food items and keeping stock of everything became a conscious effort. Shopping for essentials also was a herculean task. I had to wait in long queues with social distancing to purchase essential items. Initially it was strictly followed but as days passed, people also got accustomed and I was surprised to see the crowds gathering for purchasing the essentials in large number as though there would be no food items available to buy in next few days. Being in the health care field, there was more concern for safety, spread of the virus so was the obsession about placement of hands on surfaces and placing any items brought from shop at home. My obsession gave a feeling to my children that I was too overprotective and they often expressed that, “more than the virus the fear you create will kill us”. Gradually I got used to the feeling of lockdown and as days passed and realizing how important each day is for me to be free from getting infected by the virus.

The initial weeks of total lockdown made life tedious and boring and the first few days felt like we were secluded from the outer world. The empty roads gave a feeling that life was on a standstill. The sudden empty roads, calm and quiet surroundings, animals and birds in our surroundings moving happily and the freshness in the air made me realise the importance of nature and how we destroyed it with our fast moving life. We used to move around freely in the polluted crowded environment but I feel we were not always mentally prepared to move around freely in a calm serene peaceful environment.

Lockdown gave me immense time to spend with my family and mostly have more close interaction with our friends. Sharing of messages, videos of creative hidden talents was something I appreciated. Videos on workouts sent by my friends gave a feeling that exercise

can elate our mood. The endorphins released definitely give a happy feeling for the moment to overcome minds impulsive sadness feature. I had time to watch old classic and new movies on YouTube and Netflix. After two weeks of lockdown, universities decided to switch on to online mode of teaching. Then there was a sudden switch over, life seemed to be busy from morning to evening and some days even till late nights in front of the computer screen. The usage of zoom, Microsoft teams for lectures, listening to series of webinars on Covid 19 issues, sharing our viewpoints made me feel that the entire 60 days of the lockdown passed immediately. The greatest happiness was to see the creative talents of my children and brothers drawing, painting, trying and learning to cook, downloading videos of different experts about recipes. Seeing the posts of friends and relatives and their new cooked food items on social media gave us an interest to try new recipes.

I felt the lockdown taught me many new lessons. It specially brought me closer to God. I realized that God can take away my fears. I spent more time with family praying together and participated in online masses. This period gave me chance to appreciate the importance of time to be utilized for things which I have never ever tried before. I have more time for my own family, we learnt to do things together, spending time with friends and relatives through social media platforms, revive my hidden talents especially cooking, and searched our old photographs that took my memory back to childhood days. As days passed with many episodes of happiness, unhappiness, uncertainties, fear and anguish. It was on June 1st the complete lockdown was unlocked, we were called back to work but still the practice of social distancing and wearing masks gave a different feeling of the work atmosphere. We are waiting everyday to hear a news about the cure for Covid -19, when God show his mercy on us and save us from this situation. As for now we need to adjust our life with Covid 19 and wait patiently to see when everything returns to normal as before. Let us not get tired of social distancing, usage of masks, washing our hands and be hygienic.

-Dr. Judith A Noronha

YCS Animator, St. Lawrence Church Moodubelle



HOPE is an optimistic state of mind that is based on an expectation of positive outcomes. On the other hand hopelessness is the emotion of hell. It makes us feel unworthy and depressed. Hopelessness may happen when an individual is discouraged due to certain events or could be a symptom of depression and mental health conditions. Nowadays many people



have turned into hopeless beings due to depressions and various mental problems. Dear friends, I would like to request all of us to have a strong feeling of achieving things that will keep us going ahead towards a happy life. Remember that God is the God of hope in hopeless circumstances. Don't give up and let us trust in Him.

-Eric.L. Ronghang

YCS/YSM REXCO, Northeast region.

RELIGIONLESS SPIRITUALITY will prevent virus of racism, communalism



Fr Varghese Alengaden
USM, Indore

George Floyd, 46-year-old African American, was the latest victim of racial atrocity in America. A white police officer in Minneapolis caught Floyd, locked his hands behind, pushed him on the ground and pressed his knee on his neck. It was reported that the policeman went on pressing for 8 minutes and 40 seconds.

With pain and suffocation, Floyd went on crying for life, "I can't breathe; take your knee off my neck." The white policeman went on pressing his knee until George Floyd became motionless. Two policemen who were watching the cruelty did not interfere. This tragedy happened on May 25.

The murder, which took place in full public view, caused the nationwide protest. Thousands of protesters poured into the streets of all cities of United States. The protests also spread to many cities in other countries in Europe, Canada and Australia as an expression of solidarity.

Thousands of protesters marched to White House which forced the security officers to

shift President Donald Trump into a bunker in White House for safety. Each day protest spread to more and more cities in America.

Though racism was abolished by law many years ago a large number of white people still nurture it in their minds. Exclusion, discrimination and violence against the African Americans and outsiders are common in America and in other developed countries which had the history of the slave trade.

Millions of Africans were kidnapped and killed by the European colonizers. They had murdered 56 million indigenous people as they plundered America. The oppressed and the exploited people are shouting today, "Get your knee off our neck. We want to breathe,"

Many celebrities and writers in India protested against the murder of George Floyd in America. In our own country, several persons were brutally murdered by mob lynching in different parts of India over the last few years. The mob lynching is still common in many parts of India. Many innocent girls and women are raped and killed every day in different parts of India. We had witnessed the biggest exodus of migrant workers after the untimely and unplanned lockdown by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to prevent Covid 19. We had seen the poor



people walking hundreds of miles to reach their homes and died of hunger and accidents due to lack of public transport. The whole nation remained indifferent with frozen conscience.

We had witnessed a massacre of millions in the name of religion from the time of partition. Murder of innocent people is taking place often in this country in the name of religion and caste. With the exception of a few activists hardly anyone speaks up. The media and the religious leaders have sold their soul either for receiving benefits from the government or avoiding trouble. We are following the tradition of Bhisma Pitamah who kept silence when Dhraupadi was insulted publically. Indifference is the worst sin people, especially those in responsible positions, commit today.

The celebrities, industrialists and politicians who never

uttered a word of concern when hundreds of migrant people were killed on the roads and railway tracks are eloquent in protesting when an elephant died by accident in Kerala and trying to politicize and communalize the issue.

When the whole world is attacked by pandemic Coronavirus infecting millions of people and killing thousands daily in every country, some politicians and a number of fanatics are busy spreading virus of hatred, communal polarization and indulging in racial violence.

The Church leaders in America were prophetic in speaking out against President Donald Trump for making provocative statements against protesters. They criticized him for misusing the Church for a photo session exhibiting a Bible instead of making an apology. The leaders of all religions in India remain silent when

human rights are violated, poor people suffer injustice and exploitation. Their priority is to unlock the worship places to run their business of religion.

The absence of genuine spirituality is the cause of the virus of communal polarization, hatred, racial and caste discrimination, insensitivity to the poor who are dying of starvation, millions who are deprived of their livelihood and exploitation of women.

The religions and the priestly class who are expected to educate people to practice spirituality of values to be proactive and sensitive are indulging in safeguarding the cult of religious industry. Spirituality promotes universal values of justice, peace, equality, liberty, fraternity and dignity of individual. If these values were inculcated from childhood there is no room for hatred, discrimination, exclusion, exploitation, violence and slavery.

Spirituality is the foundation of Indian Constitution. This is well expressed through the universal values enshrined in the preamble of the Constitution. The spiritual values of all sacred scriptures are included in it. Values enshrined in the Preamble of the Constitution should be



the content of our value education in the schools and the subject of preaching in all worship places.

The maxim, "Aham Brahmasmi" reminds us that God is dwelling in each one of us. As God is present within me He is also present in every human being irrespective of one's color, creed, nationality, race or sex. This brings an important spiritual revelation that God is to be worshiped in flesh and blood. Every human being is made in the image and likeness of God. This realization will prevent all kinds of violence, discrimination, exploitation, rape and oppression against the other.

Religions teach people to see God in worship places and promote religious tourism. They teach human beings to worship the man-made statues, animals and birds. In their obsession to these statues and animals they fail to see the living God in human beings.

Hence they do not hesitate to murder the living God fully present in human being and rape living goddess present in women and girls. They do not realize that God has no uniform. He arrives in various forms and speaks innumerable languages. The problem is with the people who have stereotyped notions of God; they fail to

recognize Him when He comes with a different face, color and sex.

Similarly, spirituality promotes pluralism; God cannot be limited to one culture, religion, color, caste, race and belief. Religion and religiosity do not promote this diversity. They promote uniformity and nurture prejudice and exclusion against all which are different from them.

Experiencing corruption, hypocrisy, complicated ritualism promoted by priests and high priests in nexus with politicians Jesus defined God in the simplest terms. He said GOD IS LOVE and true worship is expressing love for one another.

Jesus wanted His disciples to experience God in their love for fellow human beings irrespective of their caste, race, color, social status and sex. He promoted a RELIGIONLESS SPIRITUALITY which did not require priests, rituals and worship places. This is "worshiping God in truth and spirit".

If humanity follows this religionless spirituality then they would worship God by respecting the dignity of individual, ensuring justice, equality and liberty promoting fraternity with all human beings and to the whole creation. There is no place for violence, murder,

exploitation, discrimination, prejudice and greed. There will be no room for misusing religion, caste and race by middle men and contractors of religion.

Christ proved by His life that this way of life is possible; Saints and sages of all religions followed this path of spirituality. Prophetic persons like Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr, Budha, Mahavir Swamy, Kabir and many others taught their disciples to follow this path of spirituality. Politicians, priests and business people who wanted to establish their industry misused spirituality and converted it into cultic religion to supply people opium/drug which is deadlier than the Corona virus.

Organized cultic religions have been part of mass murders, slave trade, exploitation and imperialism. They have not allowed the helpless people to breath because their "knee was on their neck". Adopting a religionless spirituality and worship of God in love alone can stop the virus of discrimination, hatred and communal polarization and enable everyone to breathe freedom and fresh air.♣



Hope lives till the end - Fear is real, so is hope!

Hope is a beautiful feeling, which keeps you motivated even in the most difficult time. There are a lot of people going through mental and emotional trauma right now due to Covid-19 pandemic that has chained our arms and made us unable to do anything except to sit at home. Hence, in this difficult time we should accept the reality and be positive at everything that happens every day and keep cheering and helping each other. It is up to us to utilize our time and energy in a positive manner during this uncertain time. There are people who spend their time in spreading rumors and fake news, creating fear, confusion and tension. A friend of mine sent me a message regarding COVID-19 assessed by WHO. I immediately verified and found that no such news was ever shared by WHO. It was a fake. Fake messages/ news has made our lives more difficult and confusing. There are many people who are on the edge of losing hope by reading and watching fake news and videos.



YCS/YSM India has a beautiful Methodology- SEE, JUDGE AND ACT that helps us to deal with issues like this. As responsible students, let us not share fake messages without confirming the authenticity and prevent others from doing so. Attempts like these create a sense of fear. There's fear of death, losing people, economic crisis, losing jobs, disturbed career, sickness and so on. None of us have any idea of how the coming months are going to be. The only thing that keeps us going ahead is HOPE! I'm sure most of us have already planned what all we're going to do when everything gets back to normal. This is because there's hope, hope to see a better tomorrow, to be able to go to colleges/schools, to meet our friends, travel again, live freely again. In this difficult time we should be kind and helpful to each other to fight these fears and let us hope for the best.

These few words of hope and encouragement will boost your morale and hope to live a better life.

-Vanshika Paul, Former Nexco- Delhi

MY TESTIMONY

I am Chelsea Daniel, a college student from Hyderabad diocese, Telugu region. My journey in YCS/YSM started when I was in 7th standard. YCS/YSM has taught me many things that no other institutions or associations could. This movement has taught me that students have the responsibility and power to build a new and peaceful society. I have learnt many life lessons from this movement.

It has given me a platform to expose his talents and helped me to change and become a better person. Today, I don't have stage fear or shyness to talk in front of a big crowd. The movement helped me to overcome my shyness, fears and helped me in my leadership skills and public speaking skills. As years go by, I am looking forward to participate in programs, learn new things in life and cherish the years that I still have in this movement.

Once a YCS/YSMer forever a YCS/YSMer



-Chelsea Daniel, Hyderabad Diocese

Hope is like a candle in darkness

Hope is the feeling of expectation and desire for a particular thing to happen. And with no doubt, we can say that hope is a part of everyone's lives. Life is not easy, but hope gets us going on in life. Hope is like a candle in darkness. We face innumerable difficulties and struggles in different phases of our lives. Hope gives us a positive mindset to face the problems and motivates us to do things in our life. The end of hope means end of life.



'My grandfather was diagnosed with cancer and has recently passed away. Inadvertently, he had shown me the role of hope in our lives. In the later stages of the disease, his health had deteriorated, and he was completely on bed, but he still managed to maintain his calm and cheerful persona. Although he knew he was suffering from an incurable disease, his hope and determination to win over it was remarkable. He never refused to take any medication or therapy but took it all with a smile and hope to get better.' Similarly even though we knew there was no cure for it, hope helped us to bear and see his suffering lesser than the actual pain. Hope doesn't make our problems go away instantly, it just makes things bearable. It is only because of hope that we are making so many efforts to achieve things in our life.

Presently, the whole world is dealing with corona virus, doctors and scientists are working hard to find a vaccine and end this pandemic. All we have to do is to support them and have hope in their capabilities. Moreover, hope and a cheerful mind helps in secretion of beneficial hormones in our body and thus improves our immune system in fighting against pathogens. So we can hope for the better future and things going back to normal once again, instead of letting depressing thoughts invade our minds.

*-Manyata Goswami
DEXCO, Archdiocese of Guwahati*

We need to have hope in God, our creator

In this period where the whole world is disturbed by a dreadful virus "COVID19" or Corona virus, what I feel is we need to have hope and help people in need. All need to prepare their minds and hope that we will survive through this pandemic. If the world can survive World Wars, different kinds of virus like Spanish flu, Asian flu etc that took away millions of lives, why can't we, survive through this pandemic. We need to have hope in God, our Creator. We believe that he is there with us and is helping us through doctors, nurses, scientists and others. However, as the saying goes 'prevention is better than cure' we shouldn't forget that first and foremost, we need to follow discipline in life, obey the laws and guidelines put forth by the government to contain the spread of COVID-19. Let us prepare our whole mentality to adjust with this new normal. Let us pray and believe that God is there with us.



*-Dominic Lalruatsanga,
Regional Vice- President , North East Region*

Real Hope is Unbreakable

A famous quote says *“Yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery, today is a gift of God, which is why we call it the present.”* I know it's very hard keeping up with the inner faith during the most critical times, but, those who never leave hope, actually make it till the end. Hope is optimism. I hope I will keep telling you that tomorrow will be better than yesterday. Be hopeful for anything and everything, and think that difficulties of today will soon end. Hope helps to ignore your sufferings of present, makes you strong, positive and fearless. The feeling “HOPE” can change your current and future.



I've seen my family and many other people fighting against corona virus. They never give up and are always positive that can overcome the virus. That is hope! Real hope is unbreakable. It allows us to approach problems with a proactive, positive mindset and success. The capacity to hope is an indispensable human quality, and even in times of crisis when confidence and trust have been broken, hope sustains us in our living. I encourage you to be hopeful and helpful towards one another. You never know just how much you may change someone's life.

-Sneha Regina Bara, Delhi Archdiocese

Everyone has a Unique way of Finding Hope

In life, everyone has their own struggles and reasons to physical, mental or emotional agony and anguish at times. This can create more tension and anxiety in our lives. Many find themselves in a situation of hopelessness, and unable to overcome. I believe the only thing everyone wants is the strength to overcome that unfortunate situation of helplessness. What is the origin of that strength? Maybe, it comes from above, perhaps it comes from someone else or perhaps it is present within us.



It is fine to find yourself in this unfortunate situation sometimes as part of our normal life. But know that every bad situation will teach you something, and you will gain experience from it. Different people have different ways to find hope. Some people prefer to listen to music or watch motivational videos, some wait for the possibility of the situation to get over by itself and see a better tomorrow while there are some who share their agonies and get the support of the people who listen to them. There are indeed many ways to find strength and hope and everyone may have a unique way to find it. However, most of the people believe that the greatest source of strength and hope comes from God through prayers and his blessings. I believe that we receive a divine power to face problems and anxieties when we share with God. We may not be able to solve tough situations immediately, but prayer gives us the strength to overcome it. We feel much better than before when we pray.

-Binit Ekka, Delhi Archdiocese

**YCS/YSM
Movement –
Fond Memories
and Life Lessons**

Part - 1

*Irudayam, New York
Former National Chaplain*

[This narrative is a re-write of an article submitted in Tamil to a publication by past Tamilnadu YCS/YSM student leaders and animators in 2009.]

Let me introduce myself...

Young Christian Students/Young Students Movement is God's gift to young people In India. I was one of the fortunate people to whom this gift was given in order to share with thousands of young people in India, live joyfully its spirit, and learn much from the young and vibrant hearts. From 1980 to 1983, I served the movement as national chaplain. Some years before and after this period, I was part of the grassroots movement of the young in India; many students, leaders, and animators walked with me to learn, to serve, to live and love together. Our voice was heard in schools, churches, and streets; our voice was simple, childlike, truthful and so spontaneous that sometimes we surprised ourselves. With

YCS/YSM India is grateful to Irudayam, our former chaplain for sharing memories with us. We will publish these memories of former Chaplains in the coming issues

all the differences of language, culture and religions, we stood together as one young force in India.

In these few pages, let me reflect with you, the blooming generation of the young leaders in India: how I was called to the movement; how I responded to the task; what impact of the movement had on me; and how the movement may face the challenges of India today and tomorrow.

I was adopted by the movement...

I feel that I was adopted by the YCS movement at my father's death. In 1972, when my father died in Chennai, I went to bury my father. He was a good man; he worked as a carpenter in the Blind School run by the ICM sisters. He used to pedal his cycle ten miles up and down to the Blind School every day. One day early before dawn, he was hit by a bus on his way to work and died on the spot. The police could not identify him, because in those days, we did not carry ID cards. The only identity the police found on my father's body was a black thread on his neck with a medal of Mary. They knew it was a Christian who died. The body was taken to the government hospital for autopsy as 'unknown'. After three days, we received the body bundled up. At his death I could not even see his face. All that I had from him was his extraordinary faith, hard work and simple dedication.



As I stood there at the grave blessing the body, I felt alone. As I looked around, I saw next to me two ICM sisters from the Blind School, who came for the burial: Sister Jeanne deVos, and Sister Jose Clemens. Both of them were foundational pillars of YCS groups in Chennai at that time. When God strikes you with one hand, the other is ready to embrace in love. At my father's departure YCS was there to adopt me into the movement.

In life's journey, we encounter many people; and things happen in our lives. We are conscious of certain events that impact us. Many things we don't even see; we just walk away as if nothing there is worth seeing. They do not touch us, nor move us. Our lives move on untouched, uninspired, and sometimes empty. But one day, when we make a stand and look back, those little unseen things of our life rise up in front of us, in our minds and hearts as a colossal force that impacted our lives. When we put ourselves in God's presence, we see the immense blessings he was showering on us, though we were not conscious of them in those times. In the same old memories, we then discover new patterns of life gifted to us.

Sisters Jeanne and Jose both were great sources of inspiration, guidance and strength to me not only in my life in the

movement, but also in my personal growth, priestly ministry and sustaining spirituality. Sister Jeanne is the founder of YCS in India and Asia; Sister Jose was one of the pioneers in YCS Chennai. Both the Sisters from Belgium, friends from early on, chose to serve youth and families in India. It is no wonder that they both had same ideologies and dedication to life and service.

When I was working in the movement, I had many opportunities to meet with these Sisters, pray with them and learn from them. Sister Jeanne is a remarkable leader and genuinely human; a person of integrity with no compromises; a Christian of faith and deep spirituality. I never saw her hesitate or stumble in her way; she was never impulsive and unthinking. She was a thinker and doer, but always following her spiritual instincts. I thank God for her gift of friendship to me; as a guru and animator to me in the movement, she stood by me and encouraged me to grow.

Sister Jose is a great person of motherly tenderness and kindness. Her look and words carried her heart; her very being was so magnetic and inspiring that she was asked to lead the ICM novices in Bangalore. I loved the occasions when we gather around the 'Eucharist' with her family of novices; those were God-given moments for me to grow in my spirituality and ministry. As YCS leader, I learned from Sister Jeanne how to be a strong leader to lead with uncompromising ideals and life witness. Sister Jose taught me her loving and charming tenderness with which a leader should bond with the people. I thank God for them; they are my friends always. ♣

...to be continued





JIMMY PDANG
YCS Coordinator

The story of Four Candles



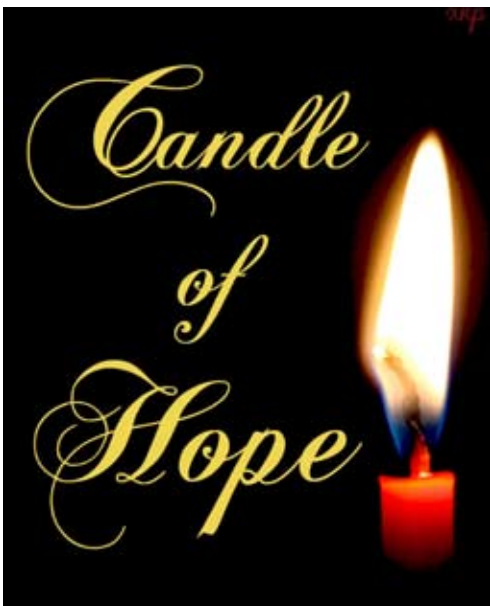
MOST of us have heard a famous story about four candles. In a small room, four candles slowly burned. The ambiance was so soft that one could almost hear them talking. "I am Peace", the first candle began the conversation. "The world is full of anger and fighting. Nobody can keep me lit" peace went on saying and its flame went out completely. The second candle said, "I am Faith. I am no longer indispensable. It doesn't make sense that I stay lit another moment". Few seconds, a breeze softly blew Faith's flame. Sad by the disappearance of its two friends, the third candle began to speak: "I am Love! People don't understand my importance so they simply put me aside. They even forget to love those who are nearest to them." Just then, Love's flame went out. Suddenly, a child entered the room and saw the three unlit candles. "Why aren't you burning? You're supposed to stay lit till the end." Saying this, the child began to cry. Then the fourth candle answered: "Don't be afraid, I am Hope! While I am still burning we can re-light the other candles." With shining eyes the child took the candle of Hope and lit the other candles.

Almost all of us want to live in peace. However, humans as we are with unlimited wants are driven by greed, self

interest, money, fame and power. Often we associate success and happiness in terms of wealth, popularity and power. In our opinion, life would be peaceful when we achieve them. But this peace is something else. It goes beyond. It is a state of being. There are countless rich, famous and powerful people who on the outward appearance, we could see them living a luxurious and peaceful life. But in reality, they feel an endless emptiness deep in their hearts. On the other hand, we must have encountered poor and humble people. Our instant perception of them was that they live a low quality and difficult life with no proper place to sleep, no money to raise their standard of living, uncertain about their meals, there is no peace, love and hope. On the contrary, they are actually so alive that their inner light shines ineffably. I am not trying to compare who is living a peaceful life. Life itself is tough, none of us can avoid its challenges and challenges are different from person to person. Our inner peace is struck by the challenges, unhappiness and factors like fear, anger, conflicts, competitions, regrets, self degradation, isolations, anxieties and depressions. It is hard to maintain our calmness and peaceful nature when the world we are living is full of conflicts, hardships, bitterness and

annoyance. Our expectations most of the time kill us. It raids our inner peace when those expectations aren't met. When we are longing for more and more and not satisfied with what we have, we end up spiraling negative emotions and depressions. At the end, we give up and surrender to this annoyance, disturbed, stormy, hustle and disordered life and the moment we give up, the growing flame of the candle of Peace slowly disappears from our life.

Similarly, the candle of Faith in our life represents our trust and confidence in someone or something that can shape our life or at least influence our actions towards a desired outcome. Faith gives meaning to our life and expectations. As a Christian, my faith is in Christ, whom I believe, died for my sake to give me eternal life and as a subject, I am designed to worship him as my God. For others, the objects of faith can be something else. When we are constantly confronted by difficulties, conflicts, regrets, loneliness, blind trust, insecurity, misunderstanding, failures, diseases and evil, personal



trauma, unanswered prayers, etc, we lose faith. While some hold on and recover, others just let it go. There are also times when we feel that faith is no longer important in our life. It is rightly said, ***“The easier it becomes to live in this world, the easier it is to lose faith”***. Budha said, ***“When our life becomes so convenient, most of the time we become arrogant and forget the existence of faith”***. Stimulated by the convenient and luxurious life, we are no more consistent and sincere to our relationship with God. The need of reflection, prayers, and other spiritually strengthening activities are no longer felt. Thus, slowly, the second candle went out. We lose faith not only in ourselves but lose faith and trust on our parents and God.

The third is the candle of Love. Love is the most important but often neglected when we are caught in a busy life. In a race towards career, jobs, wealth, power and success, we ignore to love and spend time with our parents, family, friends and colleagues. We forget that without love, all our achievements in life will be meaningless. When we put love and relationships aside, we slowly disintegrate ourselves from others and soon we begin to part from ourselves. Thus, the flame of the candle of love too went out.

Finally, the last candle remaining in our life is the candle of hope. As long as there is flame in it, light remains even in the darkness. Hope is the one thing that we can hold on when there's nothing more we have, and it is stronger than fear. It gives us courage and strength to live our life passionately. It helps us to fight our fears and despair with faith, endure all hardships and struggles with patience and optimism. When things don't go our

way, hope gives us the strength to try harder and harder. Life is tough at the same time full of surprises. We do not know what is going to happen tomorrow but we are still hopeful for it. Hope gives us an opportunity to enjoy the journey and not focusing on failures. The greatest strength of hope is God alone. We must rely on God's power surrendering all our weaknesses to him. Let us not wait for him to be on our side, instead be on his side. Love can go away, we may lose faith, but we shouldn't lose hope. Love maybe the greatest of all but the flame of hope should never go out of our life. With hope, each of us can live in peace, faith and love. When we are hopeful, we can bring back peace and happiness, our faith can be made stronger again, love can be valued afresh. Moreover, when we are hopeful,

we can also be an instrument that can light others life. All of us are capable to help others and give them hope. Sufferers of hopelessness need to believe and trust in us. This can happen when we open ourselves to little friendship for them to have faith and be close to us. We can light their flame of hope only when we accept them and acceptance means we honour the value and dignity of the person from the heart irrespective of that person's behaviour. Once we accept them, we listen to them and receive them without judgements.

Finally, let us always be grateful, accept who we are and what we have. Let us consider ourselves as the luckiest people on the earth and fight battles with prayers and hope in God. ♣

HOPE

“Hope is being able to see that there is light despite of all darkness.”

In the past I was very happy with what I had. I was living a very comfortable life. I got everything that I wanted. My family and I were having a perfect life. But after my father's death everything changed. My family was covered with a shadow of sadness. After his death our family had to deal with many financial and other problems.

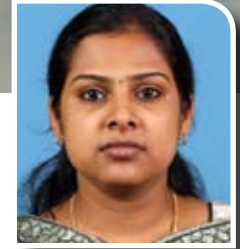
After my father passed away, I used to be sad all the time, all my laughter had gone and I used to stay alone. I used to feel depressed and didn't want to talk to anyone for several days. But deep inside my heart, I always had the hope that things would be normal soon. Few years later all our family problems were solved and we were financially stable although my father's absence can never be forgotten but life has to go on. Life is not a bed of roses. People have to face difficulties in life and hope is the only thing that a person must have to overcome difficult situations

At present the entire world is facing the tragic consequences of corona virus. The number of people being infected by this virus is increasing day by day but often we forget to see to the other side of it, i.e., many people have recovered from this virus too. Doctors and scientists all over the world are trying very hard to come up with a vaccine and people should not panic. They should have hope that the situation will be back to normal and all will be able to live a happy and comfortable life once again.

-Aparna Thakuria, Secretary, YCS/YSM Guwahati



MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEM



Introduction:

No one ever dreamt that year 2020 what it has instore for us. All of us had lots of plans and dreams for ourselves and our dear ones. Is 55:8 *“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,”* declares the LORD. *“As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.”* reminds us thathuman your ways are not Gods ways. Yes, unknown disease, invisible virus took hold of the entire universe. And filled us with fear and anxiety, we lost control of ourselves because we were not prepared to face the unknown, the unexpected, the uncertainties. Everyone of us experienced mental instability in one way or the other, all of us are moved at the suffering of the infected the dying and the refugees. Most of us have gone through these feelings at one day or the other of these days of pandemic, lockdown, fear, anxiety, guilt, helplessness, sadness.

COVID-19 has created an unprecedented health crisis, disrupting thousands of lives globally. As our nation introduced measures to restrict movement as an effort to reduce the number of people infected with COVID-19, more and more of us are making huge changes to our daily routines. The new realities of ‘E life’ of working from home, home-schooling of college and school children, and lack of physical contact with other family members, friends and colleagues is taking time, to be a part of routine life. Adapting to theses massive lifestyle changes, and managing the fear of contracting the virus, are challenging for all of us. All of this is taking toll on our mental health in an unprecedented way. It is the need of the hour, to do all we can to protect our mental health and the mental health of those we love.

Here are some tips and advice that we hope you may find useful during these uncertain times. Remember we are all in this together!!!

Remember anxiety can be good too

Remember that ‘YOU’ are not alone in being anxious, in fact anxiety can be viewed as a normal and healthy function that alerts us to threats and helps us to take measures to protect ourselves. Each one of our anxiety is making us to take the right decision of maintaining social distancing and practicing safe hygienic techniques which not only protects you alone, but others too.

When your feelings become overwhelming and you are not able to think clearly do not hesitate to seek help.

Here are some practical guidelines for you:

- Recognize the fear. (its not unusual in present days!!!)
- Remember that you are not isolated in feeling insecure.
- Planning the daily routines helps in adapting quickly and managing anxiety.
- Divide your time clearly as work and nonwork times.
- Make the same division in your headspace too. Pen down your thoughts and emotions regularly.
- Identify an activity/hobby that brings you joy and perform it. (be it a tik tok or a cooking challenge)
- Working in short bursts with clear breaks will help to maintain your clarity of thought.

Create constructive distractions

A distraction can be an effective short-term tool to help you regain control of your feelings. It is important to remember to make use of distractions in a healthy way.

- Listen to soothing music
- Playing with pets
- Eat your favourite snack or have a cup of tea (u can cook one too)
- Take a short walk
- Exercise/ practice yoga
- Play some sports/ (its best time to have some family fun games)
- Read a book or magazine
- Writing and journaling (it's time to be creative, just like us!!)
- Draw or sketch
- Watch Netflix or other entertaining programs (remember time and tide waits for none)
- Practice positive thoughts and visualization (Rather than worrying about an uncertain future)
- Clean and rearrange you house
- Humour and laughter
- Nap, or lay down for a while

Be aware of what you watch in the MEDIA

Under these unusual circumstances, all our screen time has likely to be increased. Listen to advice and recommendations from your national and local authorities. Follow trusted news channels and reliable resources in any platform of media.

Try to reduce how much you watch, read or listen to news that makes you feel anxious or distressed. Seek the latest information at specific times of the day, once or twice a day if needed.

Be calm and yet cautious

Do your best to remain calm and be mindful not to contribute to the widespread panic through your action, words or act. (any bible quote)

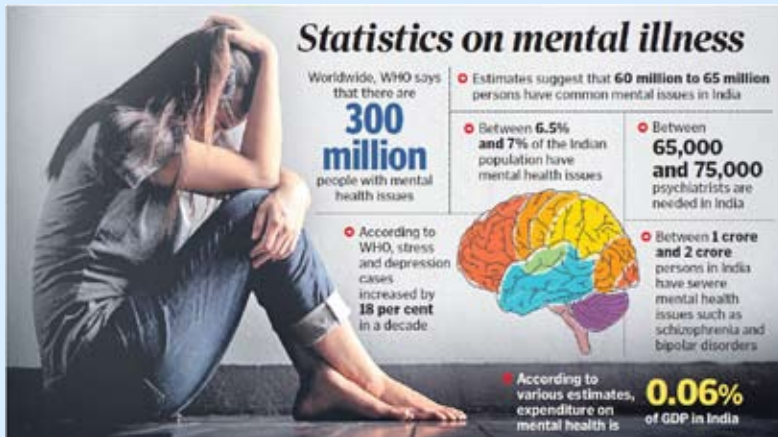
Be kind to self and one another

these are times where we have to strengthen our sense of community by connecting with and supporting each other. Remind ourselves that we can manage this much better together in solidarity, and that COVID-19 doesn't discriminate – it can affect anyone regardless of age, gender, colour, nationality or ethnicity.

- Use simple social distancing tactics like replacing hugs and handshakes with alternatives, for instance a namaste, a wave or a Hi Brow (less explored ideas, so in future we may see creative practices. ...)
- Reach out to people in self isolation: Text, phone call, email or, if needed, in person (taking the proper safety measures). It gives them the strength and courage to fight the quarantine days.
- Fundraise/ give donation for people financially impacted by quarantine measures: If you have the resources, consider making a donation to organization or raise a virtual fund raiser for a good cause. Each rupee will make a huge difference in someone's life.
- Give blood: The need for blood is constant, and volunteer donors are the only source of blood for those in need of transfusions. Donating blood is a safe process and helps to maintain a sufficient blood supply and avoid any potential shortages.

Take care of yourself: As a common saying nowadays, secure your own mask before assisting others. In other words, self-care is incredibly important at a time like this, and

ensuring that you're making safe and smart choices is a civic duty of the utmost importance. Introspection of self as to Where am I going? what have I done so far? what do I want to be in future? can be done. Embrace the new 'YOU' and make NEW strategies for success in par with post COVID era. Consider this as a turning point to refrain/ reduce the habits



of smoking or alcoholism, and if you are not, please don't think for novelty.

Remember, humanity has seen worse, and every time we have bounced back. We will, again. Being hopeful is the key. Let us not forget that the one who created us will take care of us Awareness that I'm secure in the hands of GOD that nothing can happen to us unless it is willed by the Lord. Let us not lose out hope and trust in our creator.

Ms. Bibi Augustin MSc (N)
Faculty, Father Muller College of Nursing

MENTAL HEALTH AND WAYS TO MANAGE YOUR DAY-TO-DAY STRESSORS



The WHO constitution states: "Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity." An important implication of this definition is that mental health is more than just the absence of mental disorders or disabilities.

It is a state of wellbeing in which an individual can realize his potentials, weaknesses, so that he can work productively to make some contribution towards his or her society. Hence only when a person is able to cope up with the normal stressors of the life will be able to lead a satisfactory life.

As we observe our society, it is clear that the youth or the current generation are facing difficulty in overcoming the simple stressful situations such as his studies, work pressure, family matters etc. Instead of choosing healthy way of management many of the people are following negative coping mechanisms which will in turn worsen the situation and can



even lead to self-immolation. Some of the common negative coping mechanisms which I have seen around me were addictions or excessive use of alcohol and drugs, fighting with relatives and friends, burial of emotional issues with in self, etc. Many of these are able to make a person mentally sick temporarily or permanently. My observations gave me an insight that our youth are unaware about the positive coping mechanisms even though they are well educated. Here I am sharing few tricks and tips to manage the daily stressors which will help you to cope up in your life. As the severity of the stressful events differ for each individual the measures also will be different. Each person has to try all the measures to find out which one will best suit their situation.

- Identify the source of the stress
- Practice 4 A's (avoid, alter, adapt and accept)
- Avoid people who stress you out
- Express your feelings
- Look up the big picture
- Accept what you cannot change
- Forgive
- Play games
- Deep breathing – if you feel that you are really stressed up with lot many work or

study materials, take some time to do deep breathing exercises. You can have a search on YouTube to access any kinds of deep breathing exercises. Simply when you feel really stressed up, just take a deep breath and release it very slowly. Repeat it for 3-4 times. You will feel really refreshed.

- Have a cup of coffee with your best buddy- relax by sipping a coffee and open yourself with whom you are comfortable with
- Take a long shower with some relaxing aromas like lemon body wash
- If you love to read, curl up with a book
- Go out for a walk
- Listen to music
- Take a break from your work
- Take a coffee break in between your work
- 30 minutes of exercise per day
- Write about your issues
- Dance your self
- Be assertive – learn to say NO when you can't handle some situations or work assigned to you
- Avoid using alcohol and drugs or addictive's to cope up, you may be able to forget about your issues, but no resolution
- Do prayers, communicate with god
- Spend quality time with yourself, enjoy your company, accept you as a worthy individual
- Practice meditation or yoga (mindfulness meditation can do wonders)
- Practice guided imagery
- Rest if you are ill
- Mange your time
- Take control over your problems
- Keep a stress diary
- Get adequate sleep
- Find time for fun
- If you really feel that you can't handle the situation approach a counsellor (online or face to face)

Always keep in mind that nothing is permanent, your problems too. And obviously there are no problem without a solution. As a human being understand your limits and within your limits enjoy your life. Be yourself. Carry a smile on your face. At times be like a child and let the things pass.

SABEENA M T P. MSc (N)
Faculty,
Father Muller College of Nursing

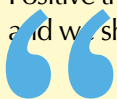
A Hopeful Young Life !



Teenage is an extremely important phase in one's life. The whole process of how we mature, what experience we have in our teenage lays the foundation for adult life. It is filled with exciting things but being young has its own pros and cons, as youngsters easily tend to descend in a hopeless situation. We usually give up and our hopes die when efforts don't work.

Martin Luther King said, "If you lose hope, somehow you lose the vitality that keeps life moving, you lose that courage." In our society today, youth have a positive and negative influence from their peers and some of the common triggers of teen stress are consumption of drugs and alcohol, insecurities, academic stress; a competition to keep up with their classmates, unhealthy relationships, bullying, family discord, social media, traumatic incidents, unemployment and many other issues. We witness this in the world today among the youth that lost hope and make unfortunate choices like suicide. When you feel hopeless it is difficult to take any steps towards change. When you are hopeless you have no energy or motivation for therapy or for any effort to change your situation. The best way of finding hope is to turn towards our faith firstly because Christ is higher than anything that causes us to feel hopeless as Psalm 147:11 says " But the Lord takes pleasure in those who fear me, in those who hope in his steadfast love."

Hope allows people to approach problems with a mindset and strategy suitable to success, thereby increasing their actual chances to accomplish their goals. To love and to be loved is the most powerful feeling a human being can experience. It is true feeling that gives the purpose to our life and gives us strength and that give us hope. In the same way we need to spread some sunshine and bring hope to the lives of others through appreciation and acceptance, make them feel that they deserve happiness and help them find their passion. Hope can help us manage stress and anxiety and cope with adversity when we fail in life. We should nurture more hope in our life by making the most out of self reflection and to surround ourselves with positive people. "Where there is hope there are always trials" - BTS and hence our choices should reflect our hopes and not our fears. Positive thinking and believing in good would give us hope in life. Everything happens for a reason and we should believe in ourselves, never give up and always have hope in life.



-Neldria Crasto
Dexco member, Udipi diocese

"There is neither happiness nor misery in the world; there is only the comparison of one state with another, nothing more. He who has felt the deepest grief is best able to experience supreme happiness. We must have felt what it is to die, Morrel, that we may appreciate the enjoyments of life.

" Live, then, and be happy, beloved children of my heart, and never forget, that until the day God will deign to reveal the future to man, all human wisdom is contained in these two words, 'Wait and Hope.'"

— Alexandre Dumas

Change our minds, respect every life

Amidst the pandemic fear of corona virus, I pine for the Black lives matter that is in the air from a few weeks. It's about bringing change to a system that has been unfair to black people for over 400 years. I would like to discuss things what happened a couple of days back in the United States.

On May 25, 2020, George Floyd, a 46 year old black man was killed in Minneapolis, US by a white police officer, who knelt on Floyd's neck for almost nine minutes while Floyd was lying face down in the street begging for life. He repeatedly said, "I can't breathe" and within few minutes he breathed his last. It is said that officers reported to a call from a store worker who alleged that Floyd had used a forged \$20 bill.

Giving a short and brief note about the incident I really want to know whether death is a punishment for an offense like that. Yes, people all over the world are protesting for justice. But this may be the only incident we know; there may be more similar cases which we are unaware, there are number of discriminations and racism around us that are based on color, race and religion, etc.

During a crucial period like this, apart from corona virus we suffer from many types of diseases like racism. A person shouldn't be judged based his religion or race. I firmly desire and hope to enlighten the minds of people who give rise to these terrible diseases. As it is written, "Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us" (Romans 5:5). Let's all change our minds, respect every life, spread love and happiness. "Be of good courage and he shall strengthen your heart, all you who HOPE in the LORD" (Psalm 31:24).- *Jessica Rodriguez*

YCS/YSM DEXCO, Udupi diocese



My YCS/YSM Journey

When I was in class XI, I attended a YCS/YSM summer camp. Initially, I attended the camp just for the sake of spending my holidays and have fun with my friends. However, the camp ended for me with beautiful experiences and memories.

I met new friends from different schools. I learnt new action songs and other fun activities. With this experience, I attended another summer camp the following year where I met new people again, making new friends and enjoyed all activities during the camp. These two camps were actually the beginning of my journey in YCS/YSM. After the second camp, I began to develop an interest in the movement and attended every cell meetings and programs of YCS/YSM conducted in our diocese. As days went by, I learned the actual meaning, purpose and the relevance of the movement in the students' community. Later my parish took initiative to establish YCS/YSM group and was successful in doing so. When I was in 10th standard I participated in a program held for the beginners of YCS/YSM. From there I got an opportunity to attend the National Students Leadership Training Program (NSLTP) in Hyderabad. This further gave me a privilege to become a part of Delhi Diocesan Team working for the betterment of the society through self transformation and helping others to transform. Now, I am proud being a member of YCS/YSM.

MY TESTIMONY

- *Priyanka Tigga*
Delhi Archdiocese

HOPE

Search



Hope is an Indication of Certainty

According to the dictionary, Hope means “to wish for; to expect but without the certainty of the fulfilment; to desire very much but with no real assurance of getting your desire”. But hope in scripture means “strong and confident expectations”. In Biblical usage, it’s an indication of certainty.

In this critical and harsh situation, I know it’s difficult to hold on with our hope. Still, we should always remember that he who does not give up will make it till the end. I believe that joy, peace and hope are three-wheels of a vehicle, interconnected to each other. If one of these is absent in our lives automatically, we will not be able to experience the other two. There will be a breakdown!

Do little things which add to your inner joy and peace so that your hope automatically increases. Make a list for yourself of things which makes you happy. Honestly, I don’t have a list of things, but one thing which I found during lockdown that makes me happy, fills me with joy and helps me to deal with inner peace is dance. And not to forget the family prayer! It is the medium my family fills me with optimism. My parents always taught me that hope is not what the dictionary describes. Hope is full of certainty, and God will grant us what we ask if it is healthy for our spiritual as well as for our earthly life. As a YCS member, I have always practiced changing myself first and then change others. I believe that once we are full of positivity, joy and happiness, our surroundings will always be full of optimism. In short, we will be able to share our happiness with everyone.

Before concluding, let me narrate a story. Once a professor took an orange with him to the class and asked a bright young man “If I squeeze this orange, what will I get?” The young man answered “juice, of course!”. The professor said, “Don’t you think I could squeeze apple juice from this orange?” “No” “What about grape juice?” “No” “what would I get from this orange?” “Orange juice, of course” the young man answered. Why would I get orange juice from an orange?”. “Well it’s an orange, that is what it has inside.”

The professor nodded and said, “Let’s think this is not an orange, but it’s you. Circumstances put pressure on you, and your surrounding is full of negativity and sadness. Fear, bitterness and negativity comes out of you. Why did this happen?” The boy answered, “because those things are inside me.”

Now, we need to consider what’s inside of you and me. Are we filled with joy, peace and hope, or are we filled with all the negativeness? Let’s evaluate what comes out of us personally when we are faced with a harsh situation

*-Anjalina Ekka
NEXCO, Northern region*

HOPE

Have hope in God

Search



Hope is an expectation of a particular thing to happen or not to happen. Hopeless is the opposite of hope, it is a feeling of unhappiness. I remember stories from the Bible and one of these is about a fisherman named Peter; he comes in from a long hard work without any success. When Jesus tells him to put out in deep water and lower his nets for a catch, Peter replies, "Master, we worked all night and caught nothing". However, when they did, they caught a large number of fish and their nets began to break. In another story, Jesus and his disciples were preaching to a large crowd of people and his disciples said to him to send the people away to buy something for themselves to eat. When Jesus told them to give them something to eat, they answered, "We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish". At the end we hear after Jesus multiplied the bread and fish, five thousand men not counting women and children ate and the disciples gathered leftovers filling twelve baskets. The third story I would like to share is about the resurrection of Jesus. We hear that early on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to visit the tomb of Jesus with perfumes and ointments. Seeing the stone rolled away from the tomb, they did not find the body of Jesus. However, as they stood, the angels appeared and told them that the Lord is risen. Dear friends, I am reminding you about these stories to encourage you, others and myself that when we see and receive nothing, when we are facing darkness in our life, God is about to do something. Everything is possible to God and he can bring us something out of nothing. So never ever lose hope in him. Life isn't about waiting for the storm to pass, but it's about learning how to dance in the rain.

- *Abolon Taro, Nexco, North East Region*



"HOPE" is commonly used to mean a wish: it is the strength of the person's desire. But in the BIBLE hope is the confident expectation of what God has promised and the strength in His faithfulness. I have always been a very happy and cheerful person. Touch wood, I have never gone through any kind of serious depression or mental traumas. But, definitely as a student I have witnessed a lot of people as well as friends gone through that pain. The one thing that I have done and all should do is to be with them and assure that they are not alone in bad times and most importantly motivate them to never give up, stop over thinking and start planning and choosing what is best ahead for them.

Speaking of Covid-19 pandemic, it is undoubtedly an unprecedented experience for everyone around the globe. Almost every person is going through a rough phase and finding it challenging to deal with the abrupt change in lifestyle while others may have just adapted themselves to deal with the change. But, even in the hardest times we have people working day and night so that we stay safe and healthy. These people give us hope. They are the ultimate real heroes and our inspiration to never give up. Our scientists have been performing experiments with the hope to create a vaccine for this deadly disease. Even after multiple attempts of trying and failing, they are working hard. Thus, we too should never give up, and keep our hearts and soul refreshed with positivity.

- *Arpita Kar, YSM Regional Rep., North East Region*



Accept finite disappointment, but never lose infinite hope

It's okay to be not okay! It's okay to not have a plan, but it's not okay to lose hope. It is rightly said that our mind is a loyal servant when it is controlled, but a dangerous master when it controls. It is all in our mind. The way we perceive and judge a situation can either make us or break us. Success and failure, expectation and reality, joy and sorrow are a part of our life. It is necessary to go through the worst for one to grow and this is not a cake walk.

'Stay strong' or 'do not take stress' is easier said than done. It takes years of hard work to achieve success and we all have rosy future imagination towards which we invest almost everything. But what if we fail? What if our plans don't work? Do we have plan B, C, D...? Are we willing to go back to square one? We've been programmed to win, to get gold medal, to stand first. We've been part of rat race, and day and night we fight all odds to make our future bright. Well, this draws me towards one conclusion on how we have misunderstood our lives.

According to National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) reports, daily 28 lives are lost and youth populations of age group 15-19 are the most vulnerable one. Adolescence is the age where emotional development takes its shape. If a child is brought up by protective parents, it prevents them from handling situations and making choices. In order to gain emotional stability one can build confidence by making use of various opportunities and by stepping out of comfort zone. Adults giving guidance, providing set of rules and laying impositions builds roadblocks to make mistakes and to learn lessons from failure. It avoids pain or trouble. But this leads to lack of mental preparedness in the face of adversities.

Always have discussions on the issues that are challenging. Avoiding comparisons and being a better version from yesterday builds intrinsic motivation. Worrying about what is done can engage you with something but will not lead you anywhere. Instead have a self talk regularly, nobody knows you better than yourself, look at the mirror and have a talk. Accept your flaws, shortcomings and critically analyze your emotions and actions. Get constructive feedbacks and formulate strategies to move ahead. This will help you to accept yourself and at the same time in making better choices. Create a smile file and write down everything that makes you happy. Read it weekly or when you feel low. This helps you to recall good things and releases positive emotions. Stress is an unwanted companion but when the mind is emotionally and mentally strong in retrospection it is easy to neglect negative thoughts. When life knocks you down, lie there and take a nap. Have patience, let life throw lemons at you. But, know when to wake up and not to lose hope during downfall.

*-Vinora saldhana
Former Dexco, Udupi Diocese*

There's hope that's waiting for you in the dark

Every creature on this planet has a hope in someone or something. At this situation many students are filled with fear, i.e., fear of our own future. Being fearful is not harmful for us but, being hopeless is our biggest failure. We can even say that fear is sometimes good for human beings because this fear can also stop us from doing bad deeds or take wrong steps. Hope strengthens us and provides us the spark to live an enthusiastic life. Even God tells us, *"I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and future"* (Jeremiah 29:11). This verse clearly mentions that God provides us hope so that we can be full of life. Thus, all of us should live our life with hope in God and in ourselves.

Most of the times, being hopeless leads us to depression. Many youngsters are depressed because they don't have any hope in them and this is one of the main causes of a destructive mentality of youth. Finally, it is my wish that you have hope! Remember that we are the finest creatures of God and nothing is impossible for us because Jesus said, "Everything is possible for one who believes". #stay positive

-Oscar Martin , Nexco, Agra region



Believe that you can do it

HOPE is the one word that can change your world. When everything seems to come to an end, when there's no one we can rely on for our tomorrow and when nobody seems to care and nothing seems to get better, we have just one friend to hang on, that is HOPE. Hope is a ladder or a bridge we climb to our tomorrow especially when we experience dark days in our life. If we lose hope we break the bridge and quite possibly we fall. So let us not lose hope, it costs you nothing to have it and it can give you everything if you hold on to it.

Often, we feel that we should fight our external enemies who cause a lot of harm to us. But, we ignore the enemies inside us, against whom we should fight. The enemies that are inside of us are our fears, anxieties, guilt and regrets that always put us down and does not let us see the positivity of things around us, they push us deeply that we forget to look up again. We are all in this battle but do we fight? Do we even bother to know our enemies or instead do we choose to be on their side forgetting the fact that all they want is our "downfall" and not our "rising". Dear friends, take a moment to recall who is on your side and who is not. Choose those who chose you and neglect those who neglect you. You're the master of your own life. Don't let your enemies conquer your life but defend it at any cost. Don't give up, fight your own battles and don't wait for somebody to be there for you. Believe that you can do it; you can face and win it.

-Lily Mary lawphniaw, Former REXCO, Northeast region



The door of Hope, Faith and Prayer will always remain open for us



Has anyone ever dreamt of occurrence of a time like this! Where one has to stay within the four walls of his home to save himself and everyone else around him? Of course not! When everyone was busy blaming one another, differences in opinion existed, people had forgotten the importance of the only life one has, there came a Virus 'Corona Virus' (Covid-19) which could neither see, hear, nor talk, but could do things that MAN couldn't. The Virus put people in trouble, leaving them speechless and clueless. People are facing a tough time. While we are waiting for researchers to develop a vaccine we witness the rising number of active cases and deaths due to Covid 19. Businesses and economies are crashing, schools and colleges are still closed and many people are losing their loved ones.

Each and every one of us is affected either directly or in an indirect way. We will be lost if we lose faith. We must be hopeful that there is definitely a way through. Our belief in the power of the one who created us should be firm, believe that the Lord has the power to heal and protect us from this deadly virus. There is a saying, *"When all the possible doors are shut, the door of Hope, Faith and Prayer will always remain open for us"*. So, let our connections with the lord be strong through prayer especially during this hopeless time. During this period of lockdown, we should remain positive and find ways to use our time effectively. Remember, *'an empty mind is a devil's workshop'*. Therefore, you must keep your minds always occupied. Try to find joy and happiness in every little thing that you do. Work on things that fascinate you and try to make them your strength. For students, these can be drawing, crafts, playing musical instruments, cooking, etc. Apart from this, learn to develop new skills. We are definitely not going to have an excuse because we have enough time during this pandemic lockdown. There are many sites on the internet that are offering free courses during this time, make good use of the opportunity that you have. In addition, I would say be kind to people. Kindness is a gift everyone can afford to give. We may have families and friends stranded in various places and may not be able to travel to meet us or their dear ones. They might feel very lonely at this point of time. Let us be kind enough to spend some times talking and sharing with them through phone calls or by any other means. You may not realize that our sharing can make them feel better. Who are we as humans if we ignore the sufferings of the other? We should remember that, *'Kindness is the best form of Humanity'*.

It is true that the virus has left most of us hopeless. As a mean to boost up our hope, I would like to give a few glimpses on the positive impact of the virus. Firstly, Pollution levels are under control, we are now breathing clean air, our mother earth is healing. However, the question we should ask is do we really need a virus like this to heal our nature? The obvious answer is definitely a big No! Humans should learn to co-exist with nature and this is the most important lesson this virus has taught us. Secondly, people have learnt the importance of life and living. They are now spending their time with their families, realizing and appreciating its importance. We have no idea for how long this pandemic will go on, nevertheless, let us not lose hope and pray for it to end soon. Until then let us try to spread the joy and hopefulness to others in every way possible. We just need to believe that God will make a way for us. Stay Safe.

-Lizan Meryl Pereira, St. Dominic Church, Udupi Diocese

The birth of Jesus brought a special sort of hope to mankind, the same hope is what we are looking for now. Hope keeps us to ignore the sufferings of the present. When we stay positive about our future and feel that we have to fight to win the problem, our probability to succeed increases. It happens because we fight trying to stay mentally strong and give our best effort.



Around the world all eyes are on the spread of Covid-19. The pandemic is challenging families, communities, health care systems and governments in various ways. It also affects our YCS/YSM students in an unprecedented way. But responding to crisis like this is what the movement is teaching us. It might seem a little frivolous to talk about joy in the present time of hustle stress and survival. But, this could also be the reason to realize why we need it most than ever before. Joy is not optional, it is non-negotiable for us, and right now we need it to nourish our spirit, our families, community, and movement in every possible way.

During this pandemic lockdown, joy is not something that will come to us easily. We need to work hard to achieve it and live with it daily. When there is love and joy in our minds towards each other, we can say that hope has really done its work. The people who are not infected by Covid 19 need not stay in a fear or fear that they will be infected by the virus in the coming days. It's just a false fear. Have hope in yourself, in your partner and family. Live in the spirit of positivity and follow the health guidelines for your hygiene to prevent yourself and others from Covid 19.

-Joston D'Silva , Udupi Diocese

REPORT

Madhya Pradesh - WEBINAR

We are very happy to share that Madhya Pradesh region has conducted a successful webinar on 23rd May 2020 on the topic "social media" for YCS/YSM members of the region and country with the help of Fr. Alexander, Regional Chaplain. Prior to that, on 22nd May 2020, REXCOs of Madhya Pradesh organised a pre-webinar for each dioceses of Madhya Pradesh to make the delegates familiar with the use of technology and online meeting platforms.



Fr. Chetan Machado, National Chaplain was the main speaker. He shared the statistics of social media users, valuable information, advantages and disadvantages of social media and social networking sites to make the participants understand and aware of the importance and impact of social media. After the input session, participants were allowed to ask and clarify their doubts. A lively interaction took place for more than 30 minutes and students took maximum advantage of this session. At the end of the webinar, feedback forms were circulated.

The organizing committee thanks Fr. Chetan Machado for spending his valuable time with us, Mr. Percival Holt and Mr. Jimmy Pdang for their guidance, Fr. Alexander for his constant support and finally all the participants for joining us and making this webinar a successful one.

-Muskan Bhagorem, Secretary, YCS Madhya Pradesh

HOPE

Search

During this Pandemic many people have been affected by depression, anxiety and hopelessness. Feeling hopeless can stop us on our tracks. It can turn down our happiness, growth, energy and love. It can be dangerous and at times destructive to our health and life. These days, many young people are going through mental traumas, depression and finally ending up their life. There can be many reasons for wanting to end our life but that is never an option. If thoughts like this come to your mind, I recommend talking or sharing your feelings with your close ones or someone who may not be involved in your life can also help. There are many unpredictable obstacles in our life but that doesn't mean we end up our valuable life that God has given us. We should remain positive and say 'no matter what happens I will be strong, I will fight through difficulties and believe that God gives his hardest battles to his strongest soldiers.'



Always have hope. It is a feeling of trust and expectation which we desire to achieve. Everyone should have a goal in life and the eagerness to achieve it no matter what comes on our way, and hope will keep us going through. It is the main source of motivation in our life and it keeps us going. Whenever I feel low in life, I think about my dreams, goals, interests, beloved mother, well wishers and friends. These people care for me, and I believe they will always stand by me in any circumstances. They may criticise and scold me, but I know that they do this because they want me to be the best of all. Remember, even though some of us are going through worst financial, physical or mental problems there is always hope, there is always a way out of it and it is up to us to choose either to be Hopeless or to Hope for the best.

-Abhishek Bhattacharjee

YSM Student Regional Coordinator, North East Region



Hello everyone! I am Nancy Kujur from Northern region. My covid 19 pandemic and lockdown life experience was initially quite boring and I guess many find it similar. Later, I thought that this might be the best time for us to analyse ourselves by utilizing our time in studying or learning new things. During this lockdown period I spent time finishing practical works, making new dishes, baking, preparing chowmein, momos, and cupcakes. I also sing and record songs. I like to record gospel songs because I feel good and happy praising God through singing. Recently, I started working in a hospital as a nurse. This helps me pass time and throw away boring quarantine days. There is no doubt that nursing is still one of the most inspiring and fulfilling careers. We also know that some of us are not satisfied being a nurse all day at work. However, this pandemic taught me that nursing is a service to humanity. Discouragement, disappointment, failure, and setbacks are things that we have to deal with at some points in our life. Working as a nurse means signing up to a life that barely pauses. While nurses are strong and hopeful people, there are challenging times that we find ourselves exhausted and need encouragement to keep us going. I'm glad that in some way or other I got a chance to serve the people and the society. Now, I am enjoying it but I hope this pandemic will end very soon.



-Nancy Kujur, Animator, Delhi Archdiocese

HOPE

Search



There should be a hope in every individual. A hopeful mind always keeps on trying to do the things, in spite of countless failures with a hope that success awaits in the future. A person with a hopeful mind always finds or creates something positive and even at the worst condition things can be made better by imagining something good. Many people around the world feel hopeless; they see the world negatively because of media, politics and other factors in their country, their lives, or a particular situation and a helpless feeling of not able to change anything. Their senses of powerlessness lead them to hopelessness.

However, we can choose differently. Whatever little things we want to do and achieve in life, we need to have hope, because hope has the power to move us forward. No matter what or how the situation is, hope will drive us forward. It makes us feel that there is something better in the future. We all have different problems and struggles, how we deal with them makes the difference. When someone is in the state of hopelessness, they can be depressed and may not be able to make good choices. Our efforts to spend our time and attention to them may help them develop and restore a higher level of hope. There is beauty and goodness around us. We should not lose hope instead be hopeful for a better future in our lives and of others.

-Merelin Hensapi
REXCO Member, North East Region



The day always begins with an alarm at 7AM when I wake up, shut down and go back to slumber. The second time I wake up when my mom reminds me to put out our dustbin outside before it is late. After freshen up in the morning, I am left dazed and confused what to prepare for the breakfast. However, I do manage to cook something decent for breakfast. Every day I pack lunch tiffin box for my mother and a flask of hot water. From 10AM, I spend time at home alone cleaning our small apartment and other works. My mom always reminds me to open the windows and doors until evening before mosquitoes could enter. As an introvert I like indulging myself on the internet and finishing works, studies and read books that I have not finished at home. My mouth hardly opens at home although I smile and laugh when I come across memes or jokes. I share them with friends and my younger brother who is living in the countryside and hardly replies back perhaps because of network issues. I do not know when schools and colleges will resume but I feel I have to be prepared for it always. I am happy attending online classes everyday about 2 to 3 hours. It is scary to think about schools reopening when you hear about the rise in Covid-19 cases. In the evening, I prepare for dinner. Together with mom, I spent sometimes watching Master Chef or any Leonardo dicaprio's movies. Days end when we both go to sleep after our night prayer.

-Thangni
National Secretary, YCS/YSM India

WHEN SERENDIPITY GIVES YOU A SURPRIZE!



Ebin Navis
Former NEXCO, TN

Have you ever experienced luck or fluke which turned out to be an eye-opening event? Ever wonder freedom under the sky and the stars? Can you picture serendipity in your mind? Or discovering an astonishing idea after a satiation? Yes, something's do happen...

In 2019 September, I was selected for an experiential learning program organized by my college to Wayanad, Kerala for eight days. I was asked to coordinate a group of 17 students. We totally enjoyed our session and outreach activities around the wild forest of Wayanad district. We reached out to tribal communities in the locality which pushed our training to reach a greater height of adventure. On the sixth day we had a plan to visit a 120-year-old tribal museum. We boarded a bus and began our journey. This journey was quite long, driving across high mountains with winding roads and deep curves. Our drivers had to drive slow. On the way, I saw two luxury cars overtaking our bus. Oh my god! Vroom... vroom... sounded engines with great speed. Yes, of course it appeared to me like a risky race game and in a quiet ambience inside the bus these cars' noise stopped our heart beat for a second.

After half an hour of driving we were held up in a mad traffic. It looked like there was a reason for the traffic so couple of my friends got down from the bus and along with them I started walking to see the cause of the traffic jam. The luxury cars which overtook us have bumped into each other, but that's not the only issue here, both the drivers were blaming each other for the crash. Other by-passing travelers parked their vehicle and turned themselves into audience. One of the car drivers became furious and started to attack the other driver, it turned out to be a live wrestling.

This is where our training team who were on the way to see a 120-year-old tribal museum got involved, now two of our boys tried to stop one driver and other two boys attempted to cool down the other. The drivers were so mad at each other that we were not able to control them. Ten students from my team began to control the traffic in a zigzag road which was on the top of a hill. After few minutes of fighting, there came a sound just like

Serendipity
the art of making happy discoveries

someone opening the luxury car's doors. What? Really? Yes, both the drivers also brought their friends. We were then clear that there is going to be a group clash where my team won't be able to handle both the groups, so we called the police. Once the police arrived, we explained the matter and the inspector thanked us for helping the public to cross this area safely and also for our team who managed to clear the traffic. Once we got back into the bus, the other passengers as well as passengers from other vehicles clapped hands as a sign of welcome and appreciation.

Well, apart from this incident our day was amazing. Yet it always made me to think about those two drivers on the road. What really happened? Here are a few things which I think that could have happened, and I'm pretty sure you may totally agree with me!

In our day today life we have two styles of handling a situation. One is like the driver and other like the students. Let me explain, because of the crash of their expensive cars both the drivers started reacting towards each other and slowly it turned into a competition of who is going to react. They used their aggression, loud voice to fight, abusive language to hurt, physical violence to harm just out of reaction. Majority of the people simply express "Reaction". On the other hand, these students expressed "Action" and tried to reduce public disturbances. Understanding the situation, each student expressed small action which turned out to be a noble action of helping strangers. This proves that each one has an option to choose whether to "Act" or "React" to any situation in life.

Of course, I'm pretty sure we all must have expressed "reaction" to various situations in life instead of "action". Life changes so do you and me! Let us imagine that we are going to be careful upon what we are going to choose using the formula $F+O+C+U+S = \text{AWARNESS}$ which you can surely give a try. Yes, to choose action rather than reaction requires $F+O+C+U+S = \text{AWARNESS}$ and both are interdependent. What else can help you and me to make things better in life? I think being responsible can make a huge impact on our well-being. What I mean by saying responsible is, you take full authority and authenticity of who you are and your action instead of blaming friends, family, government and social institutions. Are you confused? There is something called 'freedom', freedom to be aware and authentic, freedom to be responsible by being aware and authentic in your action. At last if you want to be free under the sky and the stars, then you really have to set your mind to be responsible by being aware and authentic in your every single action. Dear readers, for thousands of years humans get into traps. Traps like harmful habits, unwelcoming behavior, negative personality and the list goes on... And to come out of the trap they create a strong mindset, they enjoy success for coming out of the trap however they fall inside a new trap, and this has become a cycle for centuries.

If you take his version of responsibility by being aware and authentic, then don't set a mindset just to come out from something. I welcome you to set a mind for something that includes awareness and authenticity in it. Make this as a cycle. Let's create a healthy cycle of accepting the freedom to be aware, authentic about our action and manage our responsibility. Let's be free under the sky and the stars.

AWAKENING



OH WHAT A WORLD WE'RE LIVING IN
A PLACE OF CHAOS AND TRAGEDY,
EVERYBODY'S FILLED WITH SELFISHNESS AND GREED;
WE WANT MORE THAN WHAT WE NEED.

HATRED AND JEALOUSY ARE OUR COMMON TRAITS;
FORGETTING THAT GOD NEVER WANT THIS AND THAT HE NEVER
MADE
WE'VE INHABITED THEM AND MADE THEM OUR CHARACTERS
WHICH IN TURNS MAKE OUR WORLD A DISASTER.

EVERY TREE IS BEING CUT DOWN,
TO TURN EVERY BEAUTIFUL FOREST INTO A CROWDED TOWN.
MOTHER NATURE IS ASKING FOR HELP,
CRYING FOR HER DYING CHILDREN, IN WHICH SHE PLEADED AND
KNELT.

NEW DISEASES ARE GROWING DAY BY DAY,
THIS IS BECAUSE WE HAVE LED OUR FAITH ASTRAY.
WE FORGET GOD OUR CREATOR
AND TRY TO DEPEND ON MAN AS OUR INVENTOR.

~DADEI~



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