

LIFE MORE IMPORTANT THAN EXAMINATION

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I was shocked with the news. About 2500 students commit suicide every year in India due to the tension or the fear of examinations! From time to time we read in the daily newspapers that a student committed suicide by jumping into the deep waters of Kankaria Lake, Samarmati River or Narmada Canal. In the whole country the situation is really frightening. Every year during examination time the number of suicides grows up fast like a contagious disease!

There is need today to take into consideration the cases of students' suicides and look for solutions not only by the students themselves but also by the parents, the teachers and all the well wishers of our human society. We need to find solutions to the problems of suicides as well as for examination related sickness and tensions of body and mind. Today even if they do not commit suicide a large number of students both boys and girls suffer from examination related problems. They often feel that they are left out and that they are alone. Many are frightened to death to face their examinations. They worry a lot about examinations and they feel tensed and experience sicknesses like headache and fever.

We all accept that the present education and examination systems are not satisfactory. Today most boys and girls go for degree courses irrespective to their skills and interest in them. The system of education is also examination oriented. The hard work of all year around is evaluated by an examination of 2 or 3 hours! And the career of a student depends on the performance in the examinations at 10th and 12th standards or at graduation level!

Because of this examination oriented system, every parent and teacher want their ward to secure the highest marks, if not hundred marks out of hundred! Also they put pressure on students for the same. Ignoring the interests of their wards, they harass them with calling him/her names like 'foolish', 'idiot' and 'stupid' and comparing them with other students who secure good results. The parents also force their wards not only to do study without sufficient rest and sleep but also to go out to attend extra tuition classes.

Under such mental and physical pressure students take to suicide as their last option to save themselves from the fear of examinations or from the expected bad results.

Parents' disappointment and also displeasure are another reasons for the suicide of students. The parents sometimes expect their wards to do more and better than their abilities. They also put pressure on them to fulfill their own expectations and dreams. As a result, their wards commit suicide to be free from the critical situation when they find themselves unable to fulfill the dreams of their parents. They see their parents as ideal and love them, but they are disappointed with themselves when they realize their strength and limitations and they commit suicide!

But the people can take some concrete steps to avoid the suicides the during time of examinations. One of them is to change our education system and examination method. But such steps are not possible quickly. They are not in the hands of today's parents or teachers.

But some concrete things are certainly in the hands of parents, teachers and students. First, to understand that the importance given today to the examinations is exaggerated. The examinations should be seen in their proper perspectives. The human life is hundred times more important than the examinations. Every student should realize from the behavior of the parents and teachers that an examination is not the entire life. Human life is much more important than any examination.

One question might arise here, how to explain to today's students the importance of life more than the examinations. A very important aspect of human life is the relationships between people. The parents should spend a lot more times in maintaining good relationship with their child than the times and they spend and the interest they take in their studies. That relationship could be maintained by engaging in dialogue with their each child and remaining constantly vigilant to do so.

The parents have the unique relationship with their child to give birth and nurture a child and look after the child's education by sending him/her to school and college. But the most important relation is a heart to heart relation between parents and child. It is important to make and to develop the true and enthusiastic relation between father-son, father-daughter or mother-son, mother-daughter. Informal dialogues between parents and child can help to make and develop such relationship. There is also a need to behave with a child with respect after accepting him/her as an independent human being. It also means that parents cannot treat a child without respecting his/her rights. A child is not instrument or a thing to fulfill the parents' dreams or ideals.

The students of the teenage and adolescent age group of between 15 and 20 years commit most of suicides. When a boy or a girl finds that nobody is there to understand him/her and that there is no solution of their questions and problems, then they take the step of suicide. But I am sure that they would not take any such step if they have someone to understand them like a parent, a teacher or someone else who could understand them.

One concrete step to meet today's education system and examination method is to work hard regularly with discipline in studies from the beginning of an academic year. A student could prepare well to his/her capacity for examination without going to tuition classes. If he/she pays attention to the topic taught in the class, if he/she ask clarifications of something which is not understood, if he/she completes the homeworks regularly, then there is no need to be afraid of examinations. Also a son or a daughter would not attempt to commit suicide because he/she done badly in examination or faced with awful problem if he/she finds the parents understanding and loving.

On the other hand, some students also could feel 'exam fever' or frustration even if they have studied regularly during an academic year and are well prepared to face the examinations. We could be able to control the 'exam fever' taking some concrete steps. It is not good that some students attempt to study more with the help of tea or coffee or other intoxication during the examination times. The need during examination times is not to study much more than usual but to take more rest and to take more sleep to be able to enter in the examination hall with freshness and to maintain the healthiness of body and mind.

An another way to control the examination stress is to make body and mind fresh with the help of different “yoga” exercises. The students could become fresh with the help of different yoga exercises. One can do yoga exercises and get rid of tiredness and fatigue when stomach is not full. I can feel physical and mental freshness with deep breathing exercises when I feel tired or sleepy.

Still another way to be free from the examination stress is to give rest to the mind. For instance, give rest to the mind by listening to your favourite music or by doing something of your hobby or interest instead of continuous reading even when there is much to study for the examinations.

But the most important thing is to see both study and examinations in their proper perspectives without giving too much importance to them both. Examinations may come and go. Examinations are not everything in life. Life is more precious than the examinations. It is an ignorance to shorten one’s life by suicide without admiring the life and without understanding the value of our lives.

Every student and any man or woman could overcome any kind of difficulties and problems with understanding the importance of life and maintaining its importance. The proof of this thing is that the successful and happy lives of those who returned from the path of suicide. How true the words of Thomas more who said, “Earth has no sorrow that heaven can’t heal.”(contact the author: ciss@satyam.net.in)