

Transforming education and the new role of teachers

Karthik Krishnan

Britannica, Global CEO

With NEP 2020
it is time to
move on

A tribute to
Sir Ken Robinson
by Pickbrain

Shy children in
class and how
to handle them



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The TEACHER TRIBE is here!

■ **RASHMI MARIAN FURTADO**
Senior Editor, TheTeacher.in



Like any other child, my reading habit started with short stories and comics, slowly progressed to novels. Just like any other person with the love for books, I developed a habit of re-reading the books I had read earlier. As I did this, I made an interesting observation. The same story or book when read at different ages, offered different learnings and perspectives. The takeaways were different as I matured in my thought process. I am sure many of you have had a similar experience. One of my favourite stories of all time is Jonathan Livingstone Seagull. A beautiful story with so many lessons for readers of all ages.

Focus Forward and Aim Higher are the two most important lessons that I learnt from the story, that have today become my mantra. Like Jonathan Livingstone Seagull, it was time for TheTeacher.in to focus forward and soar higher. TheTeacher.in has embraced a global identity and has now become TeacherTribe.world.

All of us wish for growth in our lives, be it professional or personal. We also have our own secrets or mantras that work for us. Although, what is ironic about growth is that it comes fair share of what I call 'positive discomforts'. To grow, we have push ourselves beyond our comfort zones into new areas, responsibilities, audience and so on. Former CEO of IBM, Ginny Rometty said, "**Growth and comfort do not co-exist.**"

Growth for TheTeacher.in could have very easily been more projects within India. However, in today's day and age there's nothing in education that cannot be implemented all over the world with a bit of personalisation.

Of all the blessings that this pandemic has in store for us, having the courage to take the leap has been the most valuable one. Let us face this reality that even pandemics are going global!

TeacherTribe.world is an initiative to bring together teachers and educators from all over the world on a platform where they can share their unique teaching

methodologies, experiences, talents, skills, and support each other. We have had teachers from all over the world writing to us about their experience and thoughts. Others on the platform who read these articles, feel very connected, as most of the educators face similar situations. With education going digital, it is time for us to broaden our horizons and explore interesting ways in which we can engage children.

“Overcome space, and all we have left is here. Overcome time, and all we have left is now!”




Coming up with new teaching methods that ignite the curiosity of young minds, pushing them to beyond the box and engage them in a manner that help develop their skills and learning abilities is of utmost importance. The geography defining this has become redundant.

“Overcome space, and all we have left is here. Overcome time, and all we have left is now!” A famous quote from Jonathon Livingstone Seagull, seems to be the way forward for all of us.

Time to spread your wings, focus forward and soar higher!

Yours Positively!



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 Rashmi Furtado

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A natural writer, teacher and a passionate content creator, Rashmi has authored the Cu and Rio series and created the Keystones program on Values Education from Greycaps. She is one of the founders of TheTeacher.in. She is a sought after speaker at educational conferences, facilitator programs and for motivational talks to students at schools across India. She holds a Master's Degree from the prestigious NIT Suratkal where she also taught before joining Greycaps. Rashmi is also a popular quiz host for schools, colleges and large corporate audiences. She has co-hosted the Tata Crucible quiz, Canara Bank National School Quiz and Travel Quest by Thomas Cook.

With NEP 2020 it is time to move on!

■ G. BALASUBRAMANIAN

G. Balasubramanian is a doyen of school education in India. He has held several positions of leadership at CBSE, including Director Academics. He was the brain behind the introduction of several innovations at CBSE, which included frontline curriculum, communicative approach to language teaching, Information Technology, alternatives to homework, etc. He is also an author, poet and a sought-after speaker at educational conferences world over. This article has been taken from G. Balasubramanian's official website balaspeaks.in



The National Education Policy is on the table. It has taken its own time for deliberations, discussions, meetings, conferences, opinions, viewpoints, perceptions, priorities and what not! It has accommodated all of the above, to the extent possible, to carry people and their interests together. Let us acknowledge, that a policy of such nature in a country with diverse interests, diverse cultures, diverse languages and diverse thought architectures cannot really meet the personal and social interests of all individuals and communities. Somewhere it has to strike a balance, somewhere it has to define its pragmatic

IMPACT PREVIEW

- » The National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020)
- » The Importance of languages
- » The focus on AI and VR

Education, has to focus on developing self-esteem, self-confidence and self-actualisation both at the individual level and at the national level.

existence and somewhere it should become administratively feasible. I think it has done enough. It is time to move on.

Here are a few highlights which we need to focus and work on:

1. It is India centric

This policy has made its focus very clear-being India centric. If one had been working with earlier policies of 1986 and 2005 NCF, they will understand the focus was on globalisation. I think the context demands a repositioning, and rightly so. With India trying to seek its place and status as a competitive global leader in various dimensions of political, economic, industrial and social designs, unless the policy focuses on an India-centric approach, the passion for local enterprises, opportunities for exploring our skills, the efforts for seeking global markets would slowly vanish. Further, it rehabilitates the Indian mind and knowledge assimilated over thousands of years, as an opportunity to a fast-changing world seeking to rediscover itself with Peace and prosperity. Education, has to focus on developing self-esteem, self-confidence and self-actualisation both at the individual level and at the national level. So be it!

We need to move from systems of 'mistrust' to systems of 'trust', simultaneously empowering the stakeholders.

2. Focus on ECCE

While the earlier policies have certainly addressed the issues of universalisation of primary education and further to universalisation of school education, the gap between goals and achievements has continued to exist, thanks to wastage in our efforts in our designs, actions and priorities. This policy has, I must appreciate whole heartedly, focused on development from 0-3 years which was never considered in earlier policies. Extensive researches in cognitive development, both at the pre-natal stage and post-natal stages, clearly indicate the importance of its nurture as vital to the futuristic intellectual, emotional and social profile of the individual. Education of the families, parents and society with regard to the physical, emotional and developmental profiles in these years of growth has to be taken up extensively through mass media as a priority. Sequencing early

education in a package of 5-year scheme is in tune with the psychological development processes. Further, there is also evidence to show that brain development is faster, intensive, extensive and larger up to the age of 8- enabling curiosity, search and skills. Research also indicates the opportunities for extensive language skills and competencies during this period of growth. No wonder, the post 5 years of curriculum addresses to the issue of foundational literacy and numeracy. One of the major drawbacks of our system at the early levels of learning has been thrust on too formal systems of learning, which is basically against the way the brain learns. We need to informalise learning content, processes, structures and opportunities. Also, the fear of competitive testing has to be replaced by self-assessments and peer assessments reducing the authority and fear of the teacher. The new NEP does speak of such initiatives. We could only wish that our boards and educational administrators are willing to 'liberalise' education from the clutches of the 'licence raj' - walking into the nooks and corners of schools. We need to move from systems of 'mistrust' to systems of 'trust', simultaneously empowering the stakeholders.

3. Multi-lingualism

While one should acknowledge that the language has a very strong emotional and cultural content, thereby creating a positive ownership and belongingness to the motherland and its tongue, it is equally important to create a social fabric both at the national and global level for co-existence. The socio-political and economic growth dimensions do call for skills and abilities in multiple languages, the learning at the formative level in mother tongue is to be encouraged to keep the learners in comfort zones for purposeful and extensive learning. Bilingual approaches to pedagogy in classroom are indeed a welcome step. With making three language formula more flexible accommodating study of any modern Indian language as an opportunity, the decision of the government appears to be much broader based and appeasing to all linguistic segments. 'Freedom to learn' calls for saner approaches based on the selective priorities of the learners rather than policy makers. Any suggestion to downplay the important language as against science and technology is an outcome of turbid thought designs.

Focus should shift from 'achievement' to 'pursuit of excellence'.

4. Reforms in curriculum

Many reforms have been suggested in approaches to curriculum – like focus on experiential learning, technology enabled learning, integrated learning, inclusive approaches to content with co-scholastic inputs, suggestions on use of Artificial Intelligence, Virtual Reality, Coding and Blended learning. These suggestions are indeed forward looking and harmonious with the transformations in our knowledge systems and knowledge processing. They are essential to make our younger generation to stay in tune with their contemporary systems. However, all these call for two support systems to schools – teacher empowerment, trustworthy localised assessment systems. The educational authorities, both at the state and the central level, should focus more on developmental perspectives of education rather than control systems, while mentoring and monitoring has to be essential. Optimisation of their approaches is important so that balance is maintained between education and enforcements.

5. Revisiting assessments

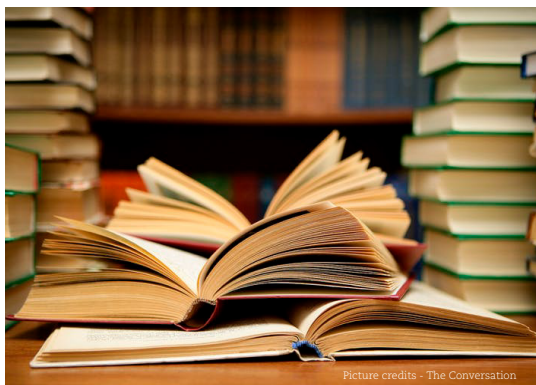
The NEP has certainly recommended revisiting assessments patterns to make them more credible, valid, realistic and localised.

The focus on self-assessment, peer assessment and teacher-led assessment, I think, is indeed a blended recipe, if both strategies and systems are put in place.

The fear of learning because of assessments can largely

be diffused through technology driven digital assessment patterns.

The governments, both at the state level and the central level should take initiatives to make the government schools and its students technology sensitive and competent. Focus should shift from ‘achievement’ to ‘pursuit of excellence’, lest the purpose of the policy would stand defeated.



Picture credits - The Conversation

6. Focus on improving the quality of government schools

There is a recommendation of spending about 6% of the GNP on education. Personally, I feel it is not how much we spend, but how effective and productive is what we spend. That indeed implies on the compromises in quality education at schools run by the government. While I do admit that there are a number of good government schools with track records of academic performance, they are only far and few in comparison with the total population. Political interventions in appointments, appointment of persons with no aptitude for teaching, use of government teachers to various non-professional activities, lack of motivation due to low professional esteem and various other considerations haunt the quality pursuits of government schools. While 'subsidy' and 'free' education is vital for social justice and to ensure the deprived to be active and engaging participants in social architectures, non-provision of good quality education will be roadblocks to these glorious goals. Conscious efforts with accountability need to be put in place. Suggestions of NEP to have school clusters for administration is indeed a wise and pragmatic suggestion to weave confidence through collaborative efforts.

7. Teacher empowerment

Critical to successful implementation of the vision of the NEP, is teacher empowerment. The NEP in its draft has acknowledged without reservation, the evils that exist in our teacher education alongside the poor quality of the curriculum, fake colleges, unethical practices of certification and others. The government needs to put in place some fresh thinking, by experts, drawn from different fields to re-articulate the curriculum liberating it from the controls of the dogmas in which they are imprisoned. The Indian Teacher Education system and their produces have been one of the outstanding features in global platforms. It is important to regain the status. The belief in ancient thought processes in defining and empowering the teacher are not alien to modern education. The teacher development processes should be akin to developing belief in Indian ethos, competence and wisdom. With several new gateways to open education to more pragmatic and sensitive purposes, the new National Education Policy has indeed done a respectable job. If there are certain inadequacies, let us acknowledge that scientifically perfection is just another Utopia. ■

Transforming education and the new role of teachers

■ KARTHIK KRISHNAN

Global CEO, Britannica Group

Karthik Krishnan, as the Global CEO of Britannica Group (Britannica, Merriam-Webster, Britannica Knowledge Systems, and Melingo), is focused on elevating trustable information in the digital universe and transforming learning both inside and outside the classroom. He is also an Adjunct Professor (since 2012) at New York University Stern School of Business. He has been invited to the World Economic Forum Expert Network and is recognized as an expert on Education, Healthcare and Information Media. He is also a Top 100 global influencer in Education Technology.



Karthik has an MBA from New York University Stern School of Business and a bachelor's degree in engineering from Coimbatore Institute of Technology. He received the distinction Stern Scholar and was inducted into the Beta Gamma Sigma honour society. He also earned a certificate in Design Thinking (Human Centered Design) from Stanford University. He is a National Association of Corporate Directors (NACD) governance fellow.

“Excellence in education is when we do everything that we can to make sure they become everything they can.”

- Carol Ann Tomlinson

“A teacher affects eternity. He can never tell where his influence stops.”

- Henry Brooks Adams

IMPACT PREVIEW

- » Limitation of the current education system
- » Shift from education to learning
- » Skills and experience
- » IQ + EQ + RQ

Historically, education has been the shortest bridge between the haves and have-nots, and one of the greatest social equalizers. It has been the key to prosperity of individuals, families, communities and countries.

But the education system that has served us well for decades is losing its transformative power. Based on the needs of the 19th century and the Industrial Revolution, the ability of today's curriculum to meet 21st century demands is waning. And since at the same time the cost of this dysfunctional

system is rising, leading to a poor return on investment, it indicates that we are burning the candle at both ends. A lose-lose situation.

Most students leaving school today are not prepared for the demands of today's and tomorrow's workplaces.

Most students leaving school today are not prepared for the demands of today's and tomorrow's workplaces. In the 21st century, where most of us have to upskill, reskill and reinvent ourselves multiple times through our professional career, most students walk into the working world with a fixed mindset (defined by Carol Dweck) and with less of a propensity for lifelong learning.

Limitations of current education model and mindset:

a. Education system lacks the ability to help students transition from studying to working.

» 47 per cent of today's students believe their schools are not preparing them for success in the job market. Because our education systems have not changed for decades, they are no longer providing the learning skills students need for tomorrow's jobs, including those that haven't yet been created, as well as entrepreneurial skills.

b. According to the World Economic Forum – Future of Jobs report:

» It's estimated that 60% of the jobs of the future don't yet exist. (Some estimates are even higher.)

» 40% of the today's 5 year-old students will have to be self-employed to support themselves.

TWO MINDSETS

CAROL S. DWECK, Ph.D.

Graphic by
Nigel Holmes

Fixed Mindset

Intelligence is static

Leads to a desire
to look smart
and therefore a
tendency to...

Growth Mindset

Intelligence can be developed

Leads to a desire
to learn and
therefore a
tendency to...

CHALLENGES

...avoid
challenges

...embrace
challenges

OBSTACLES

...give up
easily

...persist in the
face of setbacks

EFFORT

...see effort as
fruitless or worse

...see effort as
the path to mastery

CRITICISM

...ignore useful
negative feedback

...learn from
criticism

SUCCESS OF OTHERS

...feel threatened
by the success
of others

...find lessons and
inspiration in the
success of others

As a result, they may plateau early
and achieve less than their full potential.

All this confirms a **deterministic view of the world.**

As a result, they reach ever-higher levels of achievement.

All this gives them a **greater sense of free will.**

C. Education systems aren't preparing them to compete with artificial intelligence (smart machines) and automation as they continue to be growing global trend.

» In Fortune magazine AI expert Kai Fu Lee estimated that **technology could replace 40 per cent of jobs in 15 years.**

» MarketWatch reported that **over 30 million US workers will lose their jobs because of AI technology**

At a time when quality education and learning are arguably more vital to one's life chances than ever before, how do we reset and reshape education: from 'Path to Disappointment' to 'Path to Prosperity'?

If we kill curiosity in the school system, how will young adults become lifelong learners?

A number of things will have to change, and the role of teachers in driving this change will be crucial. Let's look at what will need be different.

1. Shift from education to learning

There is a significant difference between education and learning. Education is extrinsic and driven by a curriculum. Learning on the other hand is intrinsic and driven by curiosity. While education is delivered, learning is discovered. Education involves consumption and repetition while learning invites construction and creation. Learning agility (the ability to constantly learn and evolve – 'learn it all' versus a 'know it all' mindset) is one of the key 21st-century skills. Curiosity is the seed for lifelong learning. If we kill curiosity in the school system, how will young adults become lifelong learners?

2. Focus more on 'skills and experience' than on 'grades and certificates'

While grades and degrees/certificates are good indicators of one's IQ and abilities to do well in a standardised setting characterised by consume, repeat and memorize, they are less of an indicator of success in a VUCA

world (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, Ambiguous). Success require one to convert Volatile to Vision, Uncertain to Understand, Complex to Clarity, Ambiguous to Agility.

The well-known futurist Alvin Toffler said back in 1970, “the illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn and relearn.” As he so eloquently stressed, today’s education requires a new kind of mindset.

3. Focus on the whole student not just IQ. IQ + EQ + RQ

In a emerging world where anything that is repetitive and standardised can be performed much better by machines than humans, IQ alone will not be sufficient for humans to succeed.



Learning, literacy and life skills are key factors that will shape success.

Emotional intelligence, the ability to engage with others and resilience are key traits for navigating the VUCA world. In the 21st century it’s not how hard you fall that matters; it’s how fast you get up, reset and re-shape.

4. Switch from mass production to mass personalization of learning

Digital substitution isn’t digital learning. The quality of learning doesn’t

change whether the student is reading a book in print or on an iPad. Edtech solutions need to

- » Amplify curiosity and enhance learning. Example: Videos
- » Help students go from understanding to experiencing to applying. Example: Augmented reality (experience); Project-based learning (apply)
- » Leverage leveled and differentiated learning. Example: Ability to move up or down reading levels, similar to a video game, to understand the concept
- » Enable teachers to reorient their own role from the 'sage on the stage' disseminating knowledge to the coach who inspires learning through facilitation of a knowledge discovery process.
- » Empower parents to play an active role in their children's learning by bringing them into the learning ecosystem.

Every educator can put the world on a better path.

This will not be an easy journey. Each one of us have an opportunity to break the shackles holding students and teachers back one shackle at a time. Let's remember that every educator can make a difference.

- Every educator matters in resetting the world.
- Every educator can put the world on a better path.
- Every student is an opportunity to make a significant impact.

Let us blend the best of what we have and integrate with best of what new technologies and the world have to offer to develop an education and learning experience that will help students – **Think** ➡ **Learn** ➡ **Evolve Continuously** and in doing so **unleash the future.** ■

Goodbye to the man who made teachers think.

A tribute by Pickbrain to Sir Ken Robinson, who championed the cause that schools should foster creativity and not become testing factories mass producing minds that are lost on imagination.



My first introduction to Sir Ken Robinson was a TED talk of his that was forwarded to me by a professor of mine. He spoke of how schools kill creativity. It is perhaps one of the most watched TEDs of all time. The talk made me think. The talk made me talk to people about what they think. It amazed me as to how most teachers and institution builders agreed with him on his views. His talks, over time, were my companion over my morning walks.

His passing, recently, came as shock to many. It again made me think. Why would a man who most of us have never seen or met in life impact us in a manner that the news of his passing would leave us in grief?

Here are four things to learn from him and apply.

1. Should we rethink and reimagine our schools?

India has just unveiled its New Education Policy. To me, that brings with it the opportunity to blend (as the buzzword suggests) the creative schools that Sir Ken advocated and the new structure of learning we are considering.

The future needs thinkers and creators, not those who recount facts with precision.

There is no better time than now. The future needs thinkers and creators, not those who recount facts with precision.

2. Understanding the importance of art in education

Sir Ken dreamt and always spoke passionately about this. If we look at great thinkers who outline the needs of the modern world, we find them commonly address the need for decision-making, risk-taking and inventiveness. All these come from the pursuit of art. The world became a better place with far more inventions every time an era of art flourished. It is time we took this thinker's words seriously and germinated an artistic mindset that can help script a new world order.

"In a world deluged by irrelevant information, clarity is power".

-Yuval Harari

3. The vision to go for a blend

Sir Ken was never against the basic skills needed for employment, say numeracy and so on. All he pleaded, at times passionately, at times poetically, was to blend it with a dash of art and creativity in our curriculum. He looked at art as an inherent definition of humankind. We normally look at new to replace the old, but he was a master who told us how to blend in the new without disrupting the old.

4. Clarity is power

He was arguably one of the most simple, eloquent and popular thought igniters of the modern world. He always left you thinking after you heard him. What was amazing about his talks was his ability to bring clarity to your mind. He delivered it with simplicity and that made his thoughts so easy to consume. To borrow from Yuval Harari, "In a world deluged by irrelevant information, clarity is power". Sir Ken was a live example of that.

He was a teacher with simple lessons who reminded the world "If you're not prepared to be wrong, you'll never come up with anything original". Truly profound. He shall be missed dearly, by you, me and many like us, who never knew him in person. His life was a silent revolution in education that will live, long after. ■

Why yoga should be a part of your daily routine

■ DR. VIVEK BALIGA

Cardiologist and Consultant Physician

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Yoga is an ancient discipline that has been around for centuries. It is designed to bring balance and wellness to the various dimensions of an individual that include physical, emotional, spiritual and mental health. Metaphorically, yoga has been depicted in the form of a tree that has got eight limbs - yama (universal ethics), niyama (individual ethics), asana (physical postures), pranayama (breath control), pratyahara (control of the senses), dharana (concentration), dyana (meditation) and samadhi (bliss).

There is now a plethora of research that supports the belief that certain types of yoga can improve both physical and mental health by working through the nervous system and regulatory brain centre of the body called the hypothalamic-pituitary adrenal axis.

IMPACT PREVIEW

- »» The eight limbs of yoga
- »» Benefits of yoga
- »» The biochemical effect
- »» The best asanas

Yoga has now gained notoriety as an excellent way of handling stress.

Normally, this axis is triggered by stress and can lead to the release of numerous hormones such as cortisol and glucagon, all of which can elevate blood sugar levels and blood pressure and worsen atherosclerosis. In addition to this, stress can also stimulate a part of the nervous system called the sympathetic nervous system. Stimulating this system leads to an increase in the heart rate and increased thickness of the blood.

This can again increase blood pressure and increase the chance of developing blood clots within the heart arteries, leading to heart attacks. In simple terms, stress can be rather debilitating and can have several negative effects on our body.

The most important psychological benefit that is seen in yoga is an improvement in mood and an enhanced sense of well-being.

It is for this very reason that yoga has now gained notoriety as an excellent way of handling stress. Now let us take a look at how yoga has numerous health benefits if performed regularly.

1. Physiological benefits

In this section, I will talk about how yoga helps alter the human physiology and makes changes that promote the betterment of health. Firstly, yoga can alter the functioning of a part of the nervous system called the autonomic nervous system. By doing so, it can help regulate blood pressure a lot better, lower the heart rate, lower the breathing rate and improve the overall health of the heart. Breathing exercises that form a part of regular yoga can help build up immunity within the lung and can improve the smoothness of breathing, the quantity of air that is exchanged within the lung and breath holding times.

If one were to look at the digestive function, regular yoga (certain asanas) can help improve and normalise gastrointestinal function. The flexibility of the joints and tissues also improves as time passes. An individual can maintain a better posture and will also notice a reduction in joint aches and pains when they perform yoga regularly. As a part of a weight reduction strategy, adding yoga to cardiovascular exercise routines can greatly help in losing that additional weight you are having difficulty getting rid of. Finally, regular yoga can also improve sleep and allow

your body to get the rest it requires for your daily activity onslaught.

2. Psychological benefits

The most important psychological benefit that is seen in yoga is an improvement in mood and an enhanced sense of well-being. Many individuals reach a state of self-acceptance and self-actualisation. Those who are struggling with anxiety and depression may find elevated mood levels and an improvement in symptoms. Hostility towards others reduces and so does anger.

If one were to look at cognitive benefits, regular yoga has been found to improve attention spans and increase concentration levels. Memory also improves, and the efficiency of learning is increased manifold, making yoga an essential part of an exercise routine even for younger, budding minds.

3. Biochemical effects

Some studies have found that regular yoga can improve the antioxidant effects and lower stress effects on certain parameters within the blood. For example, yoga can reduce blood glucose levels in patients with diabetes. A lower level of bad cholesterol i.e. LDL and an improvement in HDL (good cholesterol) levels have been found. In women, regular yoga may enhance oxytocin levels and increase the levels of prolactin as well. Certain other hormonal imbalances may be corrected through yoga alone.



4. The best asanas

There are numerous asanas that can provide benefit in a variety of ways. It is usually worthwhile seeking the advice of a yoga instructor who can help guide you on how to perform each of these asanas.

As is clear, there are numerous benefits to performing regular yoga. Make sure you include it in your regular exercise routine! ■

Shy children in class and how to handle them

LEAH DAVIES

Early Child Educator, Kelly Bear Author and Educator

Leah Davies received her Master's Degree from the Department of Counselling and Counselling Psychology, Auburn University. Her professional experience includes teaching, counselling, consulting, instructing at Auburn University, and directing educational and prevention services at a mental health agency. The article has been taken from www.kellybear.com.



Shyness is often misunderstood because it is not one emotion, but a mixture of fear, tension, apprehension and/or embarrassment. Shy children seem to lack confidence and are self-conscious especially in new surroundings or when they are the center of attention. Changes in the environment and school pressures are also factors that affect a child's demeanor. Symptoms of shyness may include gaze aversion, a soft tone of voice, and/or hesitant or trembling speech. It is noteworthy that shyness is not necessarily a negative attribute. Many shy

IMPACT PREVIEW

- »» Role of heredity and culture in child's shyness.
- »» Development of a shy child's social skills.
- »» The process of socialization.
- »» Role of being a good listener.

With few friendship or communication skills, shy children may become lonely and depressed, which can interfere with reaching their full potential.

children exhibit an ability to please and think for themselves. Being reserved can also be a worthy personality trait. It is when shyness is severe that educators need to be concerned.

Heredity, culture, and environment can each play a role in a child's shyness. If a child's family tends to be aloof and sequestered, there is a likelihood that the child will be somewhat inhibited. In addition, if the adults in a child's life constantly call attention to what others think of the child or allow him or her little autonomy, shyness may result.

Help the child see that everyone makes mistakes and that no one is perfect.

The problem with a child being extremely shy is that he or she may be perceived by peers as unfriendly and disinterested. Children may avoid playing with a shy child, thus hampering his or her social development and increasing the chances of a child having low self-esteem. With few friendship or communication skills, shy children may become lonely and depressed, which can interfere with reaching their full potential. Educators can assist children, whose shyness interferes with their social development and learning, by helping them relate comfortably with others. If no assistance is provided, shyness may worsen.

It should be noted that the process of socialization takes time. In order to feel safe, shy children often stand back and watch an activity. They begin the socialization process by observing and listening to the interactions of others. When they feel comfortable, they move closer. Later, they may speak to a teacher or peer, and after time begin to relate to other children.

What can educators do to facilitate the development of a shy child's social skills?

1. Create a caring relationship with the child by attempting to understand his or her thoughts, fears and other emotions. Reassure the child that all children feel inhibited at times.

2. Since a shy student may become more self-conscious when confronted with a loud voice, speak softly and clearly. Be prepared to wait patiently for a reply to a question because the child may need time to respond.

3. Be accepting of a shy child's reticence to participate. Allow the child time to adjust to a situation.

This will increase his or her sense of security and self-confidence.

4. Refrain from forcing a child to participate in group activities. Instead, provide nonthreatening ways for the child to interact with peers. Sometimes pairing a quiet child with an extroverted child can produce a positive learning experience for both students.

5. Notice and comment on a child's strengths including qualities such as kindness and athletic or academic ability. If you feel the attention will embarrass the child make the compliment in private.

6. Help the child see that everyone makes mistakes and that no one is perfect. Encourage him or her to keep trying by emphasizing that making an effort is what you consider important.

7. If you label a child as 'shy,' your description may become a permanent characteristic of the child. Instead, say something like, "Everyone is different. Melissa is a thinker. She watches and learns about what's happening before participating."

8. Teach specific social skills through various means including role playing, and/or using dolls or puppets. Have the children practice:

Holding their heads up, smiling and making eye contact when they are speaking. Say, "If you look at me while you are talking, I will be able to hear what you have to say."

Encourage the parent to help the child do things for him or herself.

Greeting a peer with enthusiasm. For example, have the children say things like, "Hi, my name is Tommy! What's your name?"

Beginning a conversation by saying, "What school did you go to last year?" or "What do you like to play?"

Listening, smiling and enjoying social interactions. Have them smile and say things such as, "It's fun to play this game with you!"

Making simple conversation about school work, sports or television shows. Comments the children may make are: "I like reading too." "What sport do you like?" or "What's your favorite TV show?"

Help the parent recognize that every child is different and that it's okay for a child to take time before responding or participating.

Being good listeners and not interrupting.

9. Meet with the parent or guardian. Ask the parent to reinforce the social skills listed above. Encourage the parent to help the child do things for him or herself. Brainstorm ways to increase positive peer interactions for the child so that he or she can become more outgoing and independent. Stress that the parent should not label their child 'shy' or call the shyness a 'problem'. Instead, have the parent call the child a "thinker." Help the parent recognize that every child is different and that it's okay for a child to take time before responding or participating.

If the above measures are unsuccessful and extreme shyness and/or anxiety persist, refer the child for additional professional help. ■

Education news

CBSE launches 'Teacher Energized Resource Manuals'

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has recently launched 'Teacher Energized Resource Manuals' (TERM) to help teachers introduce productive training classes. The manuals are made especially for teachers of classes VI to X.

Primarily meant for teachers, parents can also access the manuals and help their children. The manuals can be downloaded from Diksha portal of the from the official website of CBSE.



CBSE has dedicated the academic session 2020-21 to competency-based learning where the educators are advised to focus on the outcome.

The director of CBSE said that TERM is suggested for teachers to develop pedagogical plans while implementing competency-based learning in the classroom.

TERM suggests certain activities, which can be performed by teachers along with the learners to explain the concept of competency-based learning. According to the director, completing the academic syllabus and evaluating students through a set of question papers has been in practice since decades and it needs to be changed now. CBSE is currently trying to look beyond the textbooks and focus on developing competencies of a child rather than only knowledge. Through the approach of TERM, CBSE is hoping to increase the curiosity among students.

'Transformational Training Week' conducted by CBSE

For ensuring the professional development of school leaders, teachers and counsellors, CBSE conducted the 'Transformational Training Week' in August 2020. The sessions witnessed a series of virtual workshops, designed to provide the participants with a holistic approach to student achievement.

Reputed academicians like Dr. Yong Zhao from University of Kansas, U.S.A., Dr. Amita Gupta from City University of New York, Dr. Ezequiel Molina, Economist at the World Bank, Karthik Krishnan, Global CEO of Britannica, Sir Mark Grundy, CEO Shireland Collegiate Academy Trust, U.K., Dr. Susan Rivers from iThrive Games Foundation, U.S.A., Dr. Christopher Liang from Lehigh University, U.S.A, Dr. Cyndy Scheibe and Mr. Chris Sperry from Ithaca college, U.S.A., were the key note speakers of the workshops.



A few of the topics that were discussed in workshop were, 'Global Best Practices in Using Technology and Digitisation to Enhance Student Outcomes', 'Experiential Learning And Pedagogy In The Primary School Years', 'Continuous Professional Development For Educators', 'Prescription For The Current Infodemic: Engaging And Empowering Students Through Media Literacy', etc.

These sessions aimed at assisting educational institutions in adopting appropriate policies, strengthening technology infrastructure, understanding the need and opportunities for educators to engage in professional development, acknowledging the importance and interlink between experiential learning and skill development and much more, which would help the educators transform and excel. ■

We Recommend App

Socratic

Technology has improved the education sector that it makes it easy for the students to not only refer to online materials but also ask doubts on the internet, like as it were a person. With such advancement, it is bound to make the lives of educators, parents, and students easy. Educational apps, such as Socratic, not only help to provide information and course material on various subjects but also enables the user to ask doubts.



1. What is Socratic?

Socratic by Google is an education tech company that offers a mobile app for students. The app uses Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology to help students with their homework by providing educational resources like videos, definitions, Q&A and more. Socratic's main aim is to 'Make Learning Easier'.

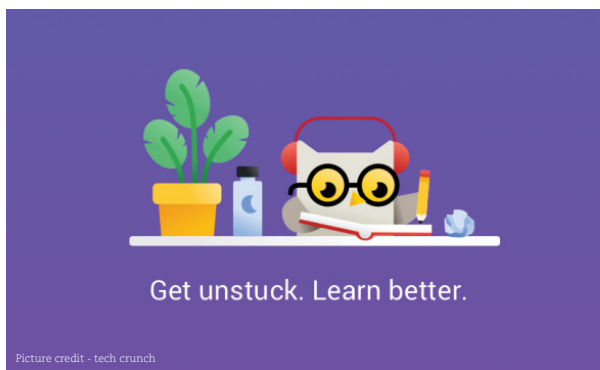
2. How does it work?

The Socratic app utilises AI technology to accurately predict which concepts will help a student solve their question. This research was created over the months when millions of real student questions were analysed and classified. Then the app uses this data to guess what the future questions will be asked by a particular student and provide specific educational content.

The app works by letting students take a photo of questions. Using OCR (Optical Character Recognition), the app is able to read their photo and classify them using the technology described above. Students receive

various 'cards' in the app with different learning resources such as definitions, YouTube videos, Question & Answers and, original content and illustrations written by the socratic.org web community.

In 2017, Socratic added additional math features to the app, including step-by-step equation help and graphs.



3. What are the subjects offered?

There are in total 4 main groups of subjects that are offered on the app which have then been divided into sub-branches:

- »» Anatomy and Physiology
- »» Astronomy
- »» Astrophysics
- »» Biology
- »» Chemistry
- »» Earth Science
- »» Environmental Science
- »» Organic Chemistry
- »» Physics

Socratic is freely available for download on the Apple store and Google Playstore. ■

We Recommend Book

What Teachers Make

In Praise of the Greatest Job in the World

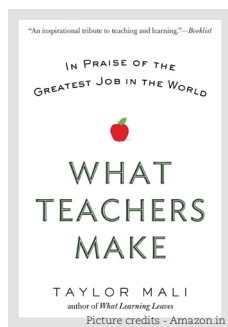
‘What Teachers Make’ is a book by Taylor Mali based on his poem by the same name. Readers get to notice Mali’s reflective, funny, sharp, critical call to arms about the happiness that comes along with teaching and the reason behind why teachers are so important to the world today.

Even though Mali, a former teacher, doesn’t ignore the problems with the educational system in modern society, he also does not dwell on issues not soon resolved. In both his poem and his novel, he focuses on the lost art of respecting teachers and the job they do every single day. Many of the incidents and memories mentioned in this book are simply meant as examples of what students can do and who they can become when they are instructed by dedicated, creative and invested teachers.

The way he describes both the challenges and rewards of the career is phenomenal. The people Mali touches already have the teacher gene in their DNA; his words speak to that part of us and makes us even more excited to teach others.

Taylor Mali wrote the poem ‘What Teachers Make’, after a party where he came across a lawyer who was talking down upon teachers. It just spread from there and went viral. He began doing presentations, and later wrote this book. Mali includes facts with humorous anecdotes about the risks and pleasures of teaching. This book sheds light on the field of teaching and its merits as well as its hardships, but Taylor Mali constantly reinforces the idea that teachers do make a difference.

If you want to change a student's life or have had a teacher change your life, this book is worth reading. ■



Learning, unlearning and relearning

■ **VARSHA PRASAD**
Editor, TheTeacher.in



‘Aano bhadra krtavo yantu vishwatah’ is a popular line from Sanskrit which means ‘Let noble thoughts come to me from all directions’.

We come into the world as blank slates. As we grow, we begin learning from our parents and family. This learning gradually increases as we reach school, where we interact with people from different backgrounds. As learning never ceases, our mind absorbs more information from the world and the different type of people around us when we begin to work. This helps us get exposed to different thoughts, ideologies and outlooks towards life. In the process of ‘growing up’, we learn and understand newer things, adding to our experiences. These experiences encompass our ‘life learnings’.

The best example we can take from nature, for expanding one’s horizon, is the banyan tree. These trees start their lives like any other tree, a seed. But as they germinate, the roots start growing outwards, extending its reach. The roots then give rise to more branches, expanding its ‘footprint’. Many cultures across the world, including India, consider this tree as the ‘tree of knowledge’, due to the ability of its roots to come together and spread out, symbolising expansion of knowledge.

But why are these life learnings and experiences important for us? To quote an example, a person with

It is particularly important for us to ‘learn, unlearn and relearn’, along with widening our horizon.

a degree in chemistry might know the ingredients that go into making an elixir. But the knowledge becomes incomplete if the person cannot understand the uses of it. Similarly, a person with the knowledge of what goes into making fire, will be of no use if he/she cannot use this knowledge to create one, when stranded on an island. So, it is essential for us to 'learn' than just to remain 'educated'.

In the constantly evolving world we live in today, it is just not enough if we have the basic knowledge of things. It is particularly important for us to 'learn, unlearn and relearn', along with widening our horizon. Like the story of the frog in the well which thought it knew the whole world, we cannot limit our learnings and should move beyond our cocoon. This will help our experiences reach further and wider.

For teachers especially, pushing themselves and moving beyond their comfort zones become important to stay abreast with the changing world. It is very crucial to 'stay updated' to interact better and understand the Gen Z we interact with on an everyday basis. Children are very curious and know everything that is happening around them, thanks to the internet and social media. So, when teachers are up to date and well-informed, it becomes easy to relate with children and work together. It also adds to our knowledge base and makes us more relevant.

Educators can effectively use their life experiences and learnings to their advantage. They can **learn** the newer/latest things that are trending to make their classrooms better, they can **unlearn** methodologies and techniques that are slowly becoming outdated and **relearn** a few concepts that are sure to make the teaching experience better.

With TheTeacher.in becoming TeacherTribe.world and reaching newer horizons, 'let noble thoughts come to us from all directions!'

Let us together build a 'Teachers' Tribe'!

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#ProudToBeATeacher



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Varsha Prasad is leading THETEACHER.IN initiative from Greycaps, exclusively for teachers, as its Editor. She is also the Editor of TheTeacher.in magazine. It is created by Greycaps to celebrate the contributions of our teachers. She has played a vital role in creating many products, which ignite the curiosity of children, including the Global Awareness Program, also known as GAP in schools.