

# **Life Skills Education Training Package**

**PART - A**

## **Training Modules**

*Edited By*  
**Dr. C.G.Venkatesha Murthy**  
**Prof. A.V. Govinda Rao**



**Regional Institute of Education**  
**Mysore -570 006**  
**2005**

Life Skills Education Training Package is Produced as a part of a PAC training programme under the coordinatorship of Dr.C.G.Venkatesha Murthy, Regional Institute of Education, Mysore, (NCERT).

Year of Publication 2005

© Regional Institute of Education, Mysore (NCERT)

No part of the Training Package should be Printed or photocopied without the permission of the Regional Institute of Education, Mysore. However, a part of the Training Package not exceeding twelve to eighteen lines could be cited for research purposes.

Printed at:  
Udayaravi Offset Printers  
1354/1, Krishnamurthypuram  
Mysore 570 004

☎ 2332971

## ***Foreword***

Education intrinsically focuses on all-round development of children. This alone can provide fully functioning citizens to any society. Such citizens can contribute to the development of society, which in turn contributes to the development of the nation. The focus of education is empowering and enabling children to face life boldly and facilitate qualitative transformation of personalities. In this direction, school education has a significant role to play in which we all are partners at different levels.

The 21<sup>st</sup> century has been witnessing an unprecedented growth and development in terms of information communication technology, globalisation, liberalisation and privatisation leading to quick socio-economic changes worldwide. On the other hand, present day children are able to adjust to many such changing scenarios, while paradoxically the gap between haves and have-nots is also widening. The elite and the affluent in society are grabbing all the advantages and those with lesser privilege continue to develop complacency though they do have dreams. These differences can lead to severe imbalance and can be a potential danger to any society. There is a need to develop systemic mechanisms, which can take care of reducing these gaps. Perhaps one such strategy could be to provide quality education to all children and by supplementing them, provide insight into life skills and develop them among all children.

Life skills education has been advocated by WHO from the health perspective. Indeed it is a laudable attempt. To carry forth the intent, schools need to impart life skills to all children and enable them to handle their social and personal situations as effectively as possible. This can definitely have a telling effect upon the 'quality of life' of prospective citizens of the world. Life skill education is gaining momentum in different countries of the world, of which India is one. There are certain attempts in this direction. But, the spread of such messages needs to be much wider. It is high time we took life skills education programme in schools seriously.

The present training package is an attempt to enable and empower school teachers at secondary level to understand different issues related to life skills education. The present life skills education training package covers (i) theoretical issues in the form of modules on all the ten life skills,

(ii) interventions for all the ten life skills that could be used among students by teachers, and (iii) a trainers' manual to enable master trainers/ Key Resource Persons to plan and organise training programmes effectively for other teachers at secondary level.

I wish to congratulate Dr. C.G. Venkatesha Murthy, Reader, Department of Education for having elaborately planned different activities leading to the development of this training package. The professional commitment he has demonstrated is to be admired. Apart from coordinating the material development, Dr. Murthy has also edited the materials professionally. Supporting Dr. Murthy in editing the entire training package, Prof. A.V. Govinda Rao, retired Principal, Somani B.Ed Teachers' College Mysore has also done a commendable job. Apart from that, Prof. Rao is also instrumental in the conceptualisation of the training package layout. I thank him for supporting us. Aply supporting them are the members of the Core team who planned the training package, read the drafts of modules and discussed them in every detail thereby enabling the coordinator to give a shape to the training package. Apart from this the core team also finalised the trainers' manual professionally. The responsibility of developing modules was with the module writing team comprising psychologists and educationists who have done an excellent job of developing these modules in such a short span of time. The efforts put in by the module writers, the time they have spent on long discussions, and deliberations all put together has culminated in this present trainers' manual. All of them deserve our sincere appreciation and we thank them profusely.

The school system needs to realise the importance of life skills education in schools and provide slots in the school timetable for the development of these skills. Once, understood clearly by all the teachers, these life skills need to be slowly integrated into curricular activities wherever possible so that they reach students in an integrated way. One hopes and wishes that one-day life skills education becomes an integral part of school education programmes and that all children benefit from this.

It is hoped that the present training package will be found useful by all the teachers for whom this is intended. We welcome suggestions to improve the present training package.

November,2005  
Mysore

G. Ravindra  
*Principal*  
RIE, (NCERT)  
Mysore

## *Preface*

The entire world is now moving in a direction of enhancing the quality of life. Students have to be provided very many skills which can enable them to keep in pace with the progress of the world. The human potentiality is to be nurtured fully in order to facilitate self-actualisation. Education has a special role to play in it. In this direction life skills education can do a-lot-of-good to students.

The World Health Organisation has done an excellent job of advocating Life Skills Education to school students from the health perspective. It has identified 10 different life skills such as Decision Making, Problem Solving, Creative Thinking, Critical Thinking, Effective Communication, Interpersonal Relationships, Empathy, Self Awareness, Coping with Emotions and Coping with Stress. Taking the lead from the WHO's document, an attempt has been made to provide life skills to all school students from social and personal perspectives.

The present Life Skills Education Training Package is brought out in response to the request of Andhra Pradesh, to the Regional Institute of Education, Mysore (NCERT) for a training programme for the teacher-educators' of Andhra Pradesh working at secondary level. A core committee was constituted to advise the coordinator in conceptualising the training package and develop the trainers' manual. At two different points of time the core team met and did its job. The core team comprised Prof. A.V.Govinda Rao, Prof. G. Mohan Kumar, Prof. S.Kiran Kumar, Dr. M.D.Usha Devi, Dr. Y.N.Sridhar, Sri C.G.Nagaraj and the coordinator. In the initial meetings, Prof. Sudha V.Rao, and Dr. Premalatha Sharma from the Department of Education also participated. The coordinator is thankful to each one of them.

A team of module writers was also constituted which took upon itself the responsibility of developing modules based on a particular format. Different experts representing Psychology and Education were inducted. They included, Prof. A.V.Govinda Rao, Dr. P. Marutham, Ms. Kusum Mary George, Sri H. Kumara Swamy, Ms. Dhanya Ram Kumar, Mrs. Naina Herle, Sri C.G. Nagaraj, and Dr. S.Venkatesan. The entire team did a commendable job of developing modules professionally in such a short span of time. The coordinator sincerely expresses his deep sense of gratitude to each one of them.

The task of editing, trimming and finalising the manuscripts has been an important job. In this, Prof. A.V.Govinda Rao has provided a great

support to the coordinator from the word 'go', till the very end. Without his involvement and professional support, things would have become very difficult for the coordinator. Apart from this Prof. Rao has also designed the page lay-outs, brought uniformity to the manuscript and worked for designing of the training package. The coordinator falls short of words to thank Prof. Rao for all that he has done for the present training package. His support, help and collaboration are ever remembered. The coordinator has benefited a lot through his collaboration.

The training package has been a product of collective thinking of more than a dozen experts. A lot of debate and discussion has taken place. The personal discussions were as exciting as the discussion experts had on the net. The Internet medium brought all the experts together from different parts of South India continuously. The coordinator enjoyed the process of developing and finalising the training package. The coordinator once again thanks all the resource persons associated with the finalisation of the training package.

The Coordinator is deeply grateful to Prof. G. Ravindra, Principal, Regional Institute of Education, Mysore for having constantly provided all support and encouragement in bringing out the present training package. He also has been kind enough to write a foreword to the present training package. The coordinator is thankful to him for all the support and help. The support extended by Prof. L. Srikanthappa, Dr. P. Veerappan, Sri C.S.S.Kashyap, and the entire Extension Education is sincerely acknowledged. The drafts of the entire training package were read by Smt. S.K. Shyamala, PGT, DMS, which helped the coordinator in finalising the drafts. The coordinator expresses his thanks to her.

The coordinator is thankful to Ms. Mamatha for designing the cover pages of the training package. The final print outs were taken by Mrs. Imavathi and Sri Prabhakar on our state-of-the art machine. They did the entire job with a smile. The coordinator is thankful to them. The printing and binding of the training package has been done well by *Udayaravi Printers, Mysore* who has completed the job in a record time. The coordinator is thankful to them.

It is hoped that the users of the training package will find it useful. If they wish to provide any feedback and suggestions to make this package more useful the coordinator would like to hear from them.

November, 2005  
Mysore

C.G.Venkatesha Murthy  
*Coordinator*

## Core Group Members

1. Prof.A.V.Govinda Rao  
*Retd. Principal*  
Somani B.Ed College  
Mysore-570009  
  
201,10<sup>th</sup> Main, 2<sup>nd</sup> Cross,  
Kamakshi Hospital Road  
Mysore-570009
2. Prof. G. Mohan Kumar  
Dept. Of Psychology  
Bangalore University  
Janana Bharathi  
Bangalore
3. Prof. S. Kiran Kumar  
Dept. Of Psychology  
University Of Mysore  
Manasa Gangotri  
Mysore-570 006
4. Dr. M.D.Usha Devi  
*Associate Professor*  
Education Unit  
Institute Of Social &  
Economic Change  
Nagarbhavi  
Bangalore
5. Dr.C.G.Venkatesha Murthy  
*Reader*  
Department Of Education  
Regional Institute Of Education  
Manasagangotri  
Mysore-570006 (*Coordinator*)
6. Sri C.G.Nagaraja  
*Retd. Head Master*  
DMS  
Regional Institute of  
Education,  
Mysore-570 006  
  
C.ho.5/4, 3<sup>rd</sup> Main  
5<sup>th</sup> Cross, Jayanagar  
Mysore-570 014
7. Prof. Sudha V.Rao  
*Head, Dept. Of Education*  
Regional Institute Of  
Education  
Manasa Gangotri  
Mysore-570 006
8. Dr. Premalatha Sharma  
*Reader, Dept. Of Education*  
Regional Institute Of  
Education  
Manasa Gangotri  
Mysore-570 006
9. Dr.Y.N.Sridhar  
*Reader*  
Department Of Education  
Mansa Gangotri  
Mysore-570 006

## Module Writers

1. Prof.A.V.Govinda Rao  
*Retd. Principal*  
Somani B.Ed College  
Mysore-570009  
  
201,10<sup>th</sup> Main, 2<sup>nd</sup> Cross,  
Kamakshi Hospital Road  
Mysore-570009
2. Dr. P. Marutham  
*Clinical Psychologist*  
Human Growth & Research  
Institute  
8-9/1055, Bogadi  
Mysore Main Road  
Bogadi Village  
Mysore-570 026
3. Ms. Kusum Mary George  
*Lecturer In Psychology*  
Dept. Of Social Sciences  
Lady Doak College  
Madurai
4. Sri Kumara Swamy  
*Lecturer*  
District Institute Of  
Education and Training  
Kudial Bail  
Managalore
5. Dr.C.G.Venkatesha Murthy  
*Reader*  
Department Of Education  
Regional Institute Of Education  
Manasa Gangotri  
Mysore-570 006
6. Ms. Dhanya P. Vasantha Kumar  
*'Kripa'*  
Shivaji Nagar  
Kallayam p.o.  
Thiruvananthapuram-695 043
7. Sri C.G.Nagaraja  
*Retd. Head Master*  
DMS  
Regional Institute of Education  
Mysore-570 006  
  
C.ho.5/4, 3<sup>rd</sup> Main  
5<sup>th</sup> cross, Jayanagar  
Mysore-570 014
8. Mrs. Naina Herle  
1382, C & D Block  
Kuvempu Nagar  
Mysore-570 023
9. Dr. S. Venkatesan  
*Prof. & Head*  
Dept. Of Clinical Psychology  
AIISH  
Manasa Gangotri  
Mysore-570 006

## Modules & Authors

Sl. No.	Module	Author(s)	Page No.
1.	Introduction to Life Skills Education : Training Package	Dr.C.G.Venkatesha Murthy	1-18
2.	Decision Making	Prof. A.V.Govinda Rao	19-46
3.	Problem Solving	Dr. P. Marutham	47-68
4.	Creative Thinking	Ms.Kusum Mary George	69-100
5.	Critical Thinking	Dr.C.G.Venkatesha Murthy	101-138
6.	Effective Communications	Sri H.Kumara Swamy	139-156
7.	Interpersonal relationships	Ms. Dhanya, P. Vasantha Kumar Prof. A.V.Govinda Rao	157-176
8.	Self Awareness	Dr.C.G.Venkatesha Murthy	177-196
9.	Empathy	Mrs. Naina Herle Sri C.G.Nagaraja Dr.C.G.Venkatesha Murthy	197-226
10.	Coping with emotions	Dr.S.Venkatesan	227-258
11.	Coping with Stress	Dr.S.Venkatesan	259-298
12.	Epilogue	Dr.C.G.Venkatesha Murthy	299-302

*Introduction To  
Life Skills Education:*

*Training Package*

## *Contents*

<b>1.00 LIFE SKILLS: WHAT AND WHY</b>	<b>3</b>
1.01 What and Why of Life skills education?	3
1.02 What are the life skills?	3
1.03 What are the different components proposed for each skill?	4
1.04 What are the different techniques of developing life skills?	12
<b>2.00 LIFE SKILLS: HOW</b>	<b>13</b>
2.01 How to approach the Training Package?	13
2.02 How are the training modules organised?	15
2.03 How to understand the trainer's manual?	15
<b>3.00 EXPECTATIONS FROM THE PARTICIPANTS</b>	<b>16</b>
3.01 KRPs' Role	16
3.02 Training	16
3.03 Follow Up	16
3.04 Evaluation of the training programme	17
3.05 Feedback to RIE	17
3.06 Summing up	17

---

## **1.00 LIFE SKILLS: WHAT AND WHY**

---

### **1.01 What And Why Of Life Skills Education**

The World Health Organization has advocated the promotion of psychosocial competence among children. It has defined psychosocial competence "as a person's ability to maintain a state of mental well being and to demonstrate this in adaptive and positive behaviour while interacting with others, his/her culture and environment."

It further states that "The most direct interventions for the promotion of psychosocial competencies are those which enhance the person's coping resources and personal and social competencies. In school-based programmes for children and adolescents, this can be done by the teaching of life skills in a supportive learning environment. .... Life skills are abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable us to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life." (WHO, 1994).

Though WHO's primary concern to promote life skills is in the direction of preventing HIV and AIDS among school children, school education can profitably use the skills in relation to the real life situations, thereby enabling all children to develop life skills as a part of schooling programme. As such it is desirable to include all school going children in the life skills development programme. Therefore, no sector/level of school education need to be excluded from this programme. All children starting from class I to Class XII need to be included.

### **1.02 What Are The Life Skills?**

The World Health Organisation has advocated 10 life skills. They include;

- (a) Decision Making
- (b) Problem solving
- (c) Creative Thinking
- (d) Critical Thinking
- (e) Effective Communication
- (f) Interpersonal Relationships
- (g) Self awareness
- (h) Empathy
- (i) Coping with emotions
- (j) Coping with stress

These life skills are defined as the abilities of adaptive and positive behaviour, that enable us to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of every day.

### **1.03 What Are The Different Components Proposed For Each Skill?**

Different components of life skills enumerated below are the contribution of the core team as well as the module writers. Different components of each of the life skills are defined as follows.

#### ***Decision Making***

**1. Emotional Stability:** *is the ability to manage emotions and remain calm in any decision-making situation.*

**2. Objectivity:** *is the ability to describe decision-making situations/problems exactly as they are without being influenced by one's own or others' feelings, opinions and beliefs.*

**3. Self-knowledge:** *is the ability to make a realistic analysis of what one is capable of doing and what one is not capable of doing before making a decision.*

**4. Knowledge of the situation:** *is the ability to describe the context of the decision-making situation as well as its elements and their inter-relationships.*

**5. Analytical Ability:** *is the ability to identify elements of the given decision-making situation by analysing it.*

**6. Divergent Thinking Ability:** *is the ability to think of diverse courses of action in any decision-making situation.*

**7. Synthetic Ability:** *is the ability to synthesise different available possible courses of action and to generate one's own course of action in decision-making situations.*

**8. Anticipation of consequences:** *is the ability to predict the possible consequences of choosing a possible course of action.*

**9. Logical Thinking:** *is the ability to think systematically and sequentially using valid principles of logic.*

**10. Rationality:** *is the ability to take decisions or arrive at a conclusion on the basis of valid reasons or logic and NOT impulsively or by trial and error or on the basis of one's own feelings, opinions and beliefs.*

**11. General Intelligence:** *is the general mental ability to understand, think, learn and apply relevant procedures in decision-making situations.*

### **Problem-Solving**

**1. Self knowledge:** *is the ability to understand and learn about one's own capacities, emotionalities, and actions in dealing with problems in various situations of life.*

**2. Positive attitude:** *is the ability of being hopeful and confident of approaching the problems in life.*

**3. Divergent thinking:** *is the ability to think in multiple ways, views and manage a problem from different perspectives.*

**4. Objectivity:** *is the ability to view one's own problem from a third person's perspective as they are.*

**5. Rationality:** *is the ability to solve problems based on reasons and logic than using crude methods or trial and error.*

**6. Logical thinking:** *is the ability to understand and deal with the problem in a systematic and orderly fashion.*

**7. Analytical ability:** *is the ability to break down and understand various aspects / components of the problem.*

**8. Synthetic ability:** *is the ability to put together and understand various aspects / components of the problem.*

**9. Anticipation of the consequences:** *is the ability to infer/foresee the after-effects of the problem and / or the possibilities of the success/failure of the strategies used in the management of the problem.*

### **Creative Thinking**

**1. Divergent Thinking:** *is the ability to think in different ways on one issue.*

**2. Innovativeness:** *is the ability to think in new ways of doing things, different from the routine ways, which is cost-effective if implemented, and worthy of emulation.*

**3. Novelty:** *is the ability to generate new ways of thinking which the individual /group had not used in the past.*

**4. Fluency:** *is the ability to generate fluently many ideas about a situation without any discontinuity of thoughts.*

**5. Flexibility:** *is the ability to shift perspectives while thinking and generate as many as ideas as possible.*

**6. Originality:** *is the ability to think very differently from the large majority of people on different social situations, disregard of their social approval.*

**7. Elaboration:** *is the ability to think in such a way where one is capable of expanding different issues to different proportions in a connected manner.*

**8. Unconventionality:** *is the ability to think very differently from the practiced conventional ways of thinking by the group on any issue of social life.*

**9. Independence:** *is the ability to think without being influenced by the views of others.*

### **Critical Thinking**

**1. Analytic and synthetic abilities:** *are the abilities to analyse different components of a social and personal situation and put them together meaningfully in order to understand the situation better by weighing different pros and cons.*

**2. Objectivity:** *is the ability to analyze social and personal situations based on pros and cons dispassionately by delinking personal feelings and subjectivity.*

**3. Anticipation of the consequences:** *is the ability to anticipate the consequences of any line of thinking in social and personal situations.*

**4. Intelligence:** *is the general ability to weigh the strengths and weaknesses of any situation in the process of its understanding.*

**5. Logical Thinking:** *is the ability to think and reason systematically on all social and personal situations of life based on objective principles. The two methods of reasoning include inductive and deductive modes.*

### **Effective Communication**

**1. Analytic ability** – *is the ability to analyse different components of a piece of information, in order to understand its content.*

**2. Synthetic ability** - *is the ability to integrate different pieces of information available in different domains, thereby creating a meaningful picture of different sets of information into an organized whole.*

**3. Expressive Skills** – *Refers to the ability to present one's thoughts / ideas / feelings as effectively as possible through the use of spoken or written language apart from/along with the use of gestures.*

**4. Non-verbal Skills** – *Refers to the ability to express and understand thoughts/ideas/feelings through body postures, facial expressions and actions without the use of language.*

**5. Postures** – *Refers to the general way of holding the body, especially back, shoulders and head when standing, walking or sitting which keep conveying some meaning.*

**6. Gestures** – *Refers to the ability to use the movement of the body appropriately, especially hands and arms to enhance the intent of communication.*

**7. Presentation** – *is the ability to express thoughts /ideas /feelings formally as suitable to the demands of different types of situations.*

**8. Assertiveness** – *is the ability to put across one's views persuasively with a strong sense of conviction.*

**9. Creativity** - *is the ability to use different alternative ways to reach out to people suitably and successfully.*

**10. Objectivity** - *is the ability to participate in a communicative situation without any preconceived notions about persons involved or the content of communication.*

**11. Sensitivity** – is the ability to be sensitive to the feelings of others in social situations in order to communicate effectively.

**12. Patient Listening** – is the ability to receive auditory inputs with full respect in a sustained manner in any conversation, without interrupting others until they are completed.

**13. Imaginability** – is the ability to foresee consequences of a communicative situation, which enables one to modulate the communication suitably.

**14. Reacting on the spur of the moment:** is the ability to react to any situation instantaneously, making sense.

### **Interpersonal Relationship**

**1. Empathy:** is the ability to feel with others in social situations which can lead to the development of good interpersonal relationships.

**2. Sympathy:** is the ability to feel for others in social situations which can lead to the development of good interpersonal relationships.

**3. Sensitivity:** is the ability to be sensitive to the feelings, emotions and needs of others in social situations which can lead to the development of good interpersonal relationships.

**4. Tolerance:** is the ability to endure and respect feelings, views, attitudes etc, of others in interpersonal interactions irrespective of our agreement or disagreement on them.

**5. Positive Attitude:** is the ability to see the positive aspects in others and appreciate them in interpersonal relationships.

**6. Accepting others as they are:** is the ability to accept others with their strengths and weaknesses as it exists without showing any personal bias or prejudice about them in interpersonal relationships.

**7. Reciprocity:** is the ability to demonstrate a healthy attitude of give and take in social situations with others while interacting.

**8. Etiquette:** *is the ability to show behaviour that is appropriate to different social situations which can earn respect and facilitate good interpersonal relationships.*

**9. Healthy Distance:** *is the ability to take only that much of liberty as the relationship empowers and demands and not misuse the liberty between any two individuals in any social situation.*

**10. Lack of Prejudices and Stereotypes:** *is the ability to interact with people without being governed by preconceived notions about individuals /groups in any social situation.*

**11. Effective Communication:** *is the ability to express the thoughts and feelings in non-threatening ways.*

### **Self Awareness**

**1. Identifying strengths and weaknesses:** *is the ability to identify one's own strengths as well as weaknesses without any personal bias or prejudices.*

**2. Objectivity:** *is the ability to understand one's own strengths, weaknesses, emotions and feelings against a set of criteria.*

**3. Introspectionability:** *is the ability to assess one's own behaviour for their appropriateness or inappropriateness /adequacy or inadequacy shown in different life situations.*

**4. Accepting self as it is:** *is the ability to accept one's own self as a whole, in terms of his/her strengths and weaknesses, which makes the person unique.*

**5. Openness:** *is the ability to welcome thoughts or opinions from others if they are useful, despite they being contradictory to one's own initial conviction or belief.*

**6. Reflectivity:** *is the ability to use processes of seeing, understanding, pausing and evaluating one's own self in relation to his strengths and weaknesses in order to improve one self.*

### **Empathy**

**1. Sensitivity:** *is the ability to sense the feelings, needs, emotions and actions of other people in social situations.*

**2. Objectivity:** *is the ability to assess the requirement of assistance to others in need, in society, excluding ones own personal biases and prejudices towards the individual or the group.*

**3. Social Inclination:** *is the ability to develop and show the attitude that as a member of the society one has to do some thing for the welfare of the society and its members as and when situation arises.*

**4. Social Responsibility:** *is the ability to feel responsible for the society by way of understanding the feelings, needs, emotions and actions of people in a social situation and also contribute to the welfare of society and its members.*

**5. Social Obligation:** *is the ability to feel that it is one's duty to understand the feelings, needs, actions and emotions of people in society where one lives and extend help voluntarily in different situations without even being asked for.*

### **Coping With Emotions**

**1. Recognising:** *is the ability to identify or become aware of one's own feelings, the course or origins of those feelings*

**2. Empathy:** *is the ability to feel with others in different emotional situations.*

**3. Sympathy:** *is the ability to feel for others in different emotional situations.*

**4. Objectivity:** *is the ability to understand the emotions as they are and not based on personal biases.*

**5. Emotional Intelligence:** *is the ability to identify one's own feelings, feelings of others, regulate one's emotions and handle situations involving different emotions.*

**6. Self-Awareness:** *is the ability to be aware of internal changes and different reactions given to different emotional situations in social and personal situations.*

**7. Analytic and Synthetic ability:** *Analytic ability refers to evaluating the situation in terms of what has led to the emotional situation, and what would be the likely result. Synthetic ability refers to the ability to organise and use the appropriate emotions in response to the emotional situations.*

**7. Sense of Proportion:** *is the ability of an individual to be aware of the intensity of his emotional reaction and be able to sense whether the same is required for the situation.*

**8. Emotional Shock Absorbers:** *is the ability to withhold any emotional shock potential of disturbing the individual directly, by trying to be non emotional, rational and capable of understanding the sources and meaning of emotionally disturbing news.*

**9. Resilience:** *is the ability to recover quickly from any emotionally disturbing situation and get back to mental cheerfulness.*

### **Coping With Stress**

**1. Recognisability:** *is a group of abilities to identify or become aware of ones own feelings of stress, the course or origins of that experience of stress, an appraisal of the barriers or obstacles that seemingly impede resolution of the stress as well as setting of goals appropriate and adequate for bringing about a relative end to ongoing stressful experiences.*

**2. Planning ability:** *is a group of abilities to draw blueprints or schemes for enabling short term or long term future courses of action by including effective consideration towards the act, manner or practice of handling time constraints within the gamut of planning for coping or bringing about a relative end to ongoing stressful experiences.*

**3. Objectivity:** *is an ability to be in a state, quality or an attitude of being impersonal, external or uninvolved to a problem or situation being examined or under focus.*

**4. Empathy:** *is an ability to develop identification with or understanding of another person's situation, feelings and motives.*

**5. Resilience:** *is the ability to maintain mental cheerfulness by recovering quickly from change or misfortune.*

**6. Reality Orientation:** *is the ability to perceive or be aware of the objective world in relation to one's self across place, time or person.*

**7. Self-awareness:** *is the ability to develop realization of oneself as an individual entity or personality, including one's feelings, traits or behaviours covering both good and bad.*

**8. Relaxationability:** *is the ability to rejuvenate or refresh one's body and mind so as to bring it back to an optimal state of functioning.*

**9. Entertainability:** *is the ability to amuse, please or indulge in diversions that enables the individual to get back to optimal state of functioning.*

**10. Stability:** *is the ability of being constant, firm, steadfast and resistant to change.*

#### **1.04 What Are The Different Techniques Of Developing Life Skills?**

Development of life skills can be effectively done using different techniques. WHO recommends two important techniques. They include brainstorming and Role-play. Both need to be followed by discussion.

**(A) Brainstorming:** is a technique widely used in different contexts and one such is in the development of life skills. It is a technique, where, all the members of a group will have a common topic on which, they can discuss freely. There is an initiator for this. In a school context, it could be a teacher. While different ideas are being given out by participants, no value judgement is made, no comments are passed, no agreements or disagreements are suggested, and no appreciation is shown to any of the issues. The task of the facilitator is only to pool as many ideas as given by members. After, the group feels that it has exhausted the entire set of issues expressed could be put to discussion. For example, there is a problem for which a group might feel like subjecting it to brainstorming to pool all possible solutions. In this process;

- (a) Identify all those issues, which are not realistic and possible in practical situation.
- (b) Rearrange ideas so that it gives some order, sequence or trend about an issue.
- (c) Arrive at the consensus of all the members on the rearranged set of issues.

**(B) Role Play:** Role play is yet another activity used in different contexts and one such is in the development of life skills. Role play is a technique where a group of people or students in a school context are encouraged to enact a small skit based on a theme or script. In this process children develop certain views about the worth of the context. When the role-play is enacted, the entire class watches the play. A specific situation is depicted. After this enactment, involve all the students in discussion. Discuss the content and central feature of the role-play, focus discussions on the skill and the specific component of the life skill. This enables the students to understand the importance of the skill. It makes them think about the concern of the skill and enables them to work towards it. Therefore, it not only sensitizes one to skill but also provides opportunity to develop when students are exposed to many such role-play situations.

---

## **2.00 LIFE SKILLS: HOW**

---

### **2.01 How To Approach The Training Package?**

The Training Package is a comprehensive package covering three parts.

***Part A covers training modules on all the ten life skills.***

***Part B covers interventions for all the 10 skills.***

***Part C covers trainers' manual.***

It is desirable to understand how the entire package has been developed in order to take the best advantage of it. From this angle all the three parts, Part A, Part B, and Part C are elaborated as follows.

**Part A** of the training package covers training modules, which mainly focuses on the theoretical understanding of all the ten life skills. It covers the meaning, definitions, components, and basic processes, apart from a measure or a test. This test is to be used before providing interventions. Then it needs to be followed by interventions. At the end of interventions the same test/measure is to be used. The difference between the pre-test and post-test scores is to be considered to assess the effectiveness of the intervention. These modules are developed and presented in self-instructional style. It is hoped and

expected that a reader would understand different issues presented in the modules on his own. A secondary school teacher is kept in mind while writing them, as ultimately it is he/she who has to benefit from the module.

As regards the style of presentation, there is an attempt to maintain uniformity. However, since the nature of skills are such that they read differently in different skills. We hope that the reader appreciates this point. All the content that has been written in the modules is to be read by the reader. There are certain inputs, which are put in a box. These box items are in fact, in our assessment, extra materials and inputs for secondary school teachers. They are still given here because; some enthusiastic teachers may like to know more about each of the skills. Keeping such teachers in view, these box items are included. At the end of every domain some evaluation activities are given. These are to be answered by the reader to ensure that he/she has understood the content. Then s/he is to proceed to the other domain. Even at the end of the module, there are some questions. They need to be read and answered.

The **Part B** of the training package covers the interventions. Interventions are the activities, which are used to sensitise the beneficiaries, in this case secondary school students. These interventions ultimately lead to the development of skills. The two important interventions used in the present training package are brainstorming techniques and Role plays. These two techniques are explained in the previous part. In Part B of the package, interventions are planned for every skill separately. It means, for all the 10 skills, based on different components, different interventions are suggested. These are neither exhaustive nor prescriptive in nature but they are exemplars only. It is wished and hoped that on similar lines of clarity, the trainers at different levels understand the method of developing different interventions and many more of such need to be developed.

While developing interventions, they are done based on different components. In many cases interventions are developed for different components separately. In some interventions, they are done on a cluster of components. Since a series of interventions are necessary to develop one skill, one can understand the importance of very many interventions. Part B of the training package focuses only on them.

**Part C** of the training package is the Trainers' Manual. Ideally, along with training modules, a manual for master

trainers to train others, also becomes important. Keeping this logic in view a manual has also been developed. This manual covers the following.

### **Part I Conceptualizing Life Skills Education**

- Introduction
- Life Skills: Concept and Components
- Developing Life Skills Programme

### **Part II Organisation of the Training Programme**

- Goals of the training Programme
- Objectives of Training Programme
- Training Schedules
- Planning for the Training Programme
- Preparation of Training materials
- Evaluation of the training Programme
- Follow up
- References

The ultimate purpose of this manual is to enable and empower trainers to provide training with a good planning and preparation.

## **2.02 How Are The Training Modules Organised?**

Training modules are organised in the same order, as has been presented above. It has been an attempt to follow the self-instructional module style. It is expected that the reader is able to read and understand on his own. Other details of modules are explained above.

## **2.03 How To Understand The Trainer's Manual?**

The trainers' manual is a deliberately planned document wishing to provide all relevant information that a trainer may like to remember before any training is organised. The details of its coverage are given above. In the manual, the first part consists of conceptual issues while the second part relates to organisation of training issues. Both are necessary for a prospective trainer.

## **3.00 EXPECTATIONS FROM THE PARTICIPANTS**

### **3.01 KRPs' Role**

The Key Resource Persons (KRPs) have a special role to play and have a responsibility in the entire scheme of things. They act as trainees at RIE Mysore, and act as Resource Persons when they have to train secondary teachers in their own state.

In this light, their level of involvement must be of different order. In order to train secondary teachers, one must develop required adequacies and competencies. Though all-out efforts would be made at RIE, Mysore to provide opportunities by which the KRPs must feel quite comfortable, on their own also, they need to put in efforts to develop clarity by way of active participation and involvement. KRP's have to read the theory part given under Part A of the training package and understand clearly the underlying issues. This will enable them to be confident while coordinating or conducting training programmes.

### **3.02 Training**

As the KRPs are expected to provide training to the secondary teachers of their state, they need to develop complete insight and understand Part C, the trainer's manual in detail. This will help them to organise training programmes at their level. Since each KRP would be involved in subsequent training programmes every one is expected to develop utmost clarity. There is no scope for any ambiguity, as it would destroy the very spirit of the training.

### **3.03 Follow Up**

This is perhaps the most crucial stage at the state level as the secondary teachers are going to be trained, who in turn will undertake life skills activities in schools. The problems that may be faced by teachers need to be understood and on site support needs to be provided. This is not possible if one is not clear or has no conviction. The success of this programme depends upon the follow up and providing onsite support to teachers.

The RIE, Mysore would also be interested in the follow up concerning the trained batch. Therefore, it is requested that if need be, RIE, Mysore could be consulted while planning to organise training programmes. Any problems faced by the state may also be brought to the notice of RIE, Mysore. This will enlighten RIE, Mysore about the difficulties faced by the state.

### 3.04 Evaluation Of The Training Programme

At every stage of the training programme, RIE, Mysore would be interested in evaluating its own performance. Participants are requested to cooperate. On similar lines, may be with slight changes, they may also do evaluation of their training programmes too.

### 3.05 Feedback to RIE, Mysore

The RIE, Mysore would be looking forward to getting feedback periodically from the state about the ease or difficulty with which training programmes are conducted.

### 3.06 Summing Up

It is hoped that the training programme will help the teachers to develop clarity about life skills education the content, as well as methodology of imparting it to school students. In this endeavour, let us think that it is our collective responsibility to introduce and sustain life education programmes in schools. In this direction, there is a need to assure ourselves that the collaboration is to be maintained continuously.



*“What you make of your life is up to you. You have all the tools and resources you need. What you do with them is up to you. The choice is yours”.*

*Cherie Carter-Scott*

### *What is Maturity?*

- *Knowing myself.*
- *Asking for help when I need it and acting on my own when I don't.*
- *Admitting when I'm wrong and making amends.*
- *Accepting love from others, even if I'm having a tough time loving myself.*
- *Recognizing that I always have choices, and taking responsibility for the ones I make.*
- *Seeing that life is a blessing.*
- *Having an opinion without insisting that others share it.*
- *Forgiving myself and others.*
- *Recognizing my shortcomings and my strengths.*
- *Having the courage to live one day at a time.*
- *Acknowledging that my needs are my responsibility.*
- *Caring for people without having to take care of them.*
- *Accepting that I'll never be finished -- I'll always be a work-in-progress.*

*Veronica A. Shoffstall*

*Module 1*

*Decision Making*

## *Module Contents*

<b>1.00 OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>2.00 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>21</b>
2.01 Importance and need	21
2.02 Operational definition	23
2.03 Let us check our progress	24
2.04 Decision making styles	25
2.05 Let us check our progress	26
2.06 Common strategies of decision making	26
2.07 Let us check our progress	27
2.08 Common decision making mistakes	27
2.09 Let us check our progress	28
2.10 Let us sum up	28
<b>3.00 COMPONENTS OF DECISION MAKING</b>	<b>28</b>
3.01 What is meant by components of decision making?	28
3.02 Components of decision making defined	28
3.03 Inter-relatedness of the components	33
3.04 Let us sum up	34
<b>4.00 PROCESS OF DECISION MAKING</b>	<b>34</b>
4.01 A brief survey of different processes of decision making	34
4.02 Decision making process for training students	37
4.03 Let us check our progress	39
4.04 Student training strategies	40
4.05 Let us sum up	40
<b>5.00 SELF EVALUATION</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>6.00 DECISION MAKING: SELF ASSESSMENT TOOL</b>	<b>43</b>
6.01 Decision Making Scale	43
6.02 Decision Making Scale-Scoring key	44
<b>7.00 REFERENCES</b>	<b>44</b>

---

## 1.00 OBJECTIVES

---

To enable the reader of this module to;

1. Explain the need and importance of training students in decision making skill.
2. Describe different ways in which decisions can be classified
3. Define decision making skill.
4. Describe different decision making styles.
5. Describe common decision making strategies.
6. Describe common decision making mistakes.
7. Name, define and explain the components of decision making skill.
8. Explain the inter-relatedness of components of decision making skill.
9. Explain the essence of decision making process with examples.
10. Explain decision making process in which students are to be trained.
11. Identify contexts and develop scripts for role-play to sensitise students to the importance of already listed components of decision making.
12. Identify issues relevant to development of decision making skill that can be utilised to expose the students to the advantages of brain storming technique.

---

## 2.00 INTRODUCTION

---

### 2.01 Importance And Need

Decisions, Decisions, Decisions; life appears to be a never ending process of making decisions. Sometimes there may be so many decisions to be made that one is likely to be overwhelmed by the number of decisions to be made. Did we not, sometimes in our life, make decisions which had far-reaching consequences not only to our life, but also to the lives of others? We all make decisions of varying importance every day, don't we? Sometimes we might have made '*whether*' type of decisions (e.g. whether to buy a new TV or not?), sometimes '*which*' type of decisions (e.g. which TV to buy?), and sometimes, '*if-then or conditional*' type of decisions (e.g. I will buy only if I get the expected pay hike). However, we do not consider some of them as decisions, because we make them as a matter of routine. They make little impact on our life-style. They just happen. We do not think of these ROUTINE decisions as decisions because they are repetitive and are made in

*structured situations*. We are certain of the procedure and are sure of the results. We are conditioned to make those decisions. But, there are some situations which are not so structured or *semi-structured*, wherein involves certain amount of risk. Also, there are some which are completely *un-structured* and unique, requiring decision making as in the case of solving unexpected problems, or as in facing a crisis situation or as in the case of utilising unexpected opportunity. These are NON-ROUTINE decisions. Some of the decisions that we make may appear to be 'trivial' or 'unimportant', but they might be important. In fact, the cumulative effect of millions of such decisions determines the outcome of our lives.

Another way to classify decisions is by considering the content of the decision. 1. *Social* or *human* decisions involve setting goals and priorities that determine the general roles of individuals and relationships among individuals within a group. 2. *Economic* or *allocation* decisions involve the availability of resources and ways of allocating or distributing these resources among various goals. 3. *Technical* or "*what, when, how, who, why*" decisions involve allocating specific amounts of given resources to most efficiently attain a single goal, accomplish a specific task or make a specific consumer purchase. 4. *Coordination* and *interaction* decisions relate to social, economic, and technical decisions. They deal with communication within the family and with the larger community, the kinds of information needed to make other decisions, criteria for evaluating decisions and ways of motivating family members to carry out their roles.

Decisions can also be classified on the basis 'who makes them', i.e. *Individual* or *Group*' as well as 'how they are made', i.e. *Authoritarian* or *democratic*. While many decisions are primarily a personal or individual concern, others involve the whole family, club or group, the community and the broader society.

Of course, whatever may be the type, decisions have to be made in order to achieve certain objectives and hence are inevitable. However, it should be noted that many a times, decisions are made by moving back and forth between our objectives and alternative courses of actions. In other words, decision making, many a times, *is a non-linear recursive process*.

In order to realise the importance of decision making in life, let us ponder over the following statements: (a) By effective

decision making one can 'make things happen' instead of 'letting things happen', and (b) Only by making rational decisions we can take full charge of our lives. Since decision making plays a crucial role in one's life, should we not train our children in decision making, especially when it is a skill that can be learnt? The answer is bound to be an emphatic 'yes', since we all know that even children are required to make a lot of personal decisions. Of course, the nature and complexity of the decisions which they have to make changes as they grow older. E.g. 'Should I share this toy with the other child?', 'I know that Mother has prepared just enough sweets for sharing among all the family members. Since I like this sweet very much, shall I eat just one piece without telling any one?' 'Some of my friends smoke cigarettes. Shall I try once?'

Decision making is a critical component of, not only personal life but also of many professions, where specialists apply their expertise in a given area to making informed decisions. We, the teachers, also belong to such a profession and knowledge about decision making processes help us to become better professionals? Are we not?

In fact, the idea of decision making as a sophisticated skill may appear to be strange. But, studies indicate that wise decisions are decisions that are made using a definite process involving careful consideration of alternatives or options. They also depend on the values, perceptions, experience and intelligence of the decision-maker. Let us think back on a decision we made in the past which caused considerable pain to us. We are likely to realise that we could have made a better choice, had we applied our mind to it. Now, let us think back on a decision which yielded the desired results. Did we not follow, knowingly or unknowingly, a definite procedure? Hence, we may conclude that one could be a better decision maker if he or she is trained (at least) in the basic processes of decision making?

## **2.02 Operational Definition**

Various arguments presented hitherto have emphasised the need for and importance of training children in decision making skill. What exactly is meant by Decision making? Let us study the definitions given below which have been culled out from the literature on decision making. They will enable us to form an operational definition based on which a training programme for school children can be designed.

- Decision Making is the process of identifying as many alternatives as possible and choosing the one that best fits the decision maker's goals, desires, values, lifestyle etc.( Harris, R. 1998)
- Decision Making is the process of sufficiently reducing uncertainty and doubt about alternatives to allow a reasonable choice to be made from among them. (Harris, R. 1998)
- Decision Making is the process of selecting one course of action from several alternative actions. (Walker, D.S. 1987)

Let us now cull out the specific features of Decision Making from the above listed definitions.

1. A situation which requires the individual to decide upon a course of action must exist.
2. Individual must be aware of the fact that a decision has to be made by him
3. Individual must be clear about his goals, desires, values etc.
4. Individual must be intelligent and creative enough to identify various available options.
5. Individual must possess or be capable of procuring information needed to choose a course of action from among the available ones.
6. Last but not least, it is a cognitive process.

In the light of this analysis, we can define Decision Making as '***a process of making an informed choice of a particular course of action from among the identified options in order to achieve the objective***'.

### 2.03 Let Us Check Our Progress

Now, it is time to take stock of the essence of what has been presented in 2.1 and 2.2. To make sure that we have grasped it, we will fill up the blanks in the following statements. We can find out whether our answers are correct or not by reading the sections once again.

1. Everyone should acquire decision-making skill, because one can \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

2. Decisions can be classified in many ways, such as \_\_\_\_\_ decisions, \_\_\_\_\_ decisions, and \_\_\_\_\_ decisions OR \_\_\_\_\_ decisions, and \_\_\_\_\_ decisions OR \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ decisions OR \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ decisions.

3. Operational definition emphasises two actions on the part of the decision-maker. They are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

## 2.04 Decision Making Styles

Having understood what decision making is all about; let us turn our attention to different styles of decision-making. Not all individuals approach decision making in the same manner. There are different styles of decision making. There are decision makers who take responsibility for their decisions as well as those who try and transfer the responsibility to others for their decisions. The following list (Rutgers University Career Services, 2005) identifies a number of different decision-making styles. While studying them we can also examine our own style of decision making.

- *Fatalistic Decider*: One who leaves the resolution of the decision up to the environment or fate: "Whatever will be, will be" type.
- *Compliant Decider*: One who goes along with someone else's plan rather than making an independent decision, especially when that plan doesn't agree with one's own beliefs: "If it's OK with you, it's OK with me" or "Anything you say" type.
- *Delaying Decider*: One who delays thought and action on a problem: "I'll think about it later" type.
- *Agonising Decider*: One who spends much time and thought in gathering data and analyzing alternatives only to get lost amidst the data gathered: "I can't make up my mind. I don't know what to do" type.
- *Intuitive Decider*: One who decides based on what is felt, but cannot be verbalized: "It feels right."
- *Paralytic Decider*: One who accepts the responsibility for decisions, but is unable to do much toward approaching it: "I know I should, but I just can't get with it. I can't face up to it."
- *Escapist Decider*: One who avoids a decision or makes up

an answer to end the discussion, such as "I'm thinking about it." This allows the escapist to give a socially acceptable answer without taking responsibility.

- *Play-it-Safe Decider*: One who almost always picks the alternative with the perceived lowest level of risk: "I like anthropology, but I can get a job in accounting" type.
- *Planner*: One whose strategy is based on a rational approach with some balance between the cognitive and emotional: "I am the captain of my fate; I am the master of my soul" type.

We should also remember that as a leader, one may have an authoritarian ('without involving others in decision making processes) or democratic ('involving others in decision making processes') style of decision making.

### 2.05 Let Us Check Our Progress

Before going further, let us think for a moment and answer the following questions:

1. What type of decision makers should our students be?  
\_\_\_\_\_ .
2. What is the major difference between authoritarian and democratic style of decision making?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ .

### 2.06 Common Strategies Of Decision Making

According to the operational definition, the essence of decision making is '*making an informed choice of a particular course of action.*' What can be the general criterion for making such an 'informed choice'? Below are listed most commonly used strategies of making an 'informed choice'.

Discover as many choices as possible and

1. Choose the very best depending upon the importance of the problem, time available, resources available, personal values etc.
2. Choose the first 'satisfactory' alternative instead of the best from all the available alternatives.
3. Choose the best one without considering risks involved.
4. Choose one with least risk.

Of these, we should recommend the 1<sup>st</sup> one to our students.

## 2.07 Let Us Check Our Progress

1. Which one of these strategies are we likely to choose, when we are—

- a) In a 'do or die' situation \_\_\_\_\_
- b) To make a most major decision: \_\_\_\_\_
- c) We want a guaranteed result \_\_\_\_\_
- d) To make many small decisions such as 'where to park or vehicle?' \_\_\_\_\_

## 2.08 Common Decision Making Mistakes

Let us think of decisions we made in the past which turned out to be unsatisfactory ones. Did we, at that point of time try to analyse why we could not make wise decisions? Perhaps some of would have, some not. Here is a list of some common decision making mistakes which people commit. It will help us not only to be wiser in future, but also train our students better. However, let us not assume that these are the only mistakes that can be committed. Let us also remember that 'deciding not to do anything' is also a decision.

- Relying too much on 'expert' opinion
- Overestimating/ Underestimating the value of information received from certain individuals
- Accepting information without verifying
- Misrepresenting the facts when seeking information
- Not being honest to oneself
- Not having confidence in one's ability to make good decisions or being overconfident
- Hearing only what one wants to hear or seeing only what one wants to hear
- Unwillingness to change
- Not looking beyond the scope of our experiences and rejecting the unfamiliar/unconventional
- Conforming to the accepted ways of doing things
- Relying too much on 'latest/recent' information
- Relying too much on one's own initial reactions
- Not considering different options
- Not knowing what exactly one wants to achieve or what the real problem is
- Hoping that something/someone will take care of our problems
- Relying only on 'commonsense' or 'gut feeling'

## 2.09 Let Us Check Our Progress

Having obtained a fairly good idea of different types decision making mistakes that one can commit, let us attempt to identify a few more that can be added to the list (at least 5)

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

## 2.10 Let Us Sum Up

In this section we have understood the need and importance of training our students in Decision making skill, formulated an operational definition of Decision making skill, and studied some common strategies and styles of decision making as well as common decision making mistakes.

---

## 3.00 COMPONENTS OF DECISION MAKING

---

### 3.01 What Is Meant By Components Of Decision Making?

While studying section 2.0, most of us might have felt that to carry out the actions mentioned in the operational definition of decision making as well as avoid committing common decision making mistakes we thought of, the individual needs to possess 'some minimum number of abilities'. In this section we will find out whether we were justified in feeling so or not. As we already know, none of the life-skills can work in isolation. Practice of a particular life-skill involves the use of a number of abilities. Some of these abilities may be required for more than a life-skill; some may be specific to a particular life-skill. We call these as *components of the skill*. Let us now try not only to enumerate and define the components of decision making skill operationally, but also to relate them to already discussed operational definition of decision making skill.

### 3.02 Components Of Decision making Skill Defined

**Emotional Stability:** *is the ability to manage emotions and remain calm in any decision making situation.*

When one is emotionally involved in a situation, he/she will not be in a position to be objective or to think logically. They

lose their reasoning power. This is also true when one is under the sway of an emotion. Hence, in order to be a good decision maker one should learn to control his/her emotions and remain calm in emotionally disturbing decision making situations.

Imagine a teen-aged boy who is infatuated with a girl who unfortunately appears to be not interested in him. Or, imagine an adolescent girl from a conservative family who feels humiliated in the school because her parents are not allowing her to wear 'in fashion' dresses like her classmates. Can we expect these children to make reasonably good decisions with respect to their problems as long as they are emotional about it?

**Objectivity:** *is the ability to describe decision making situations/ problems exactly as they are without being influenced by one's own or others' feelings, opinions and beliefs.*

In order to be a good decision maker, it is essential that one should look at the decision making situation dispassionately, understand the situation as it is and identify the real issue on which a decision has to be made. The most common tendency is to interpret the situation based on one's own feelings, beliefs, values etc. and then describe it to his/her satisfaction and identify the issue as he or she would like it to be. Many a times, one may try to collect information or seek the opinion of others before making a decision. However, an individual who lacks objectivity is likely to seek or consider the information which is to his/her liking only. Accepting information given by persons whom one trusts or by persons considered as 'experts' blindly, being over-influenced by information received first or giving disproportionate importance to some information, misrepresenting the situation while seeking opinion of others, making a choice because of some obligations or because 'it feels good' etc. indicate lack of objectivity. Mistaking one's 'desires' for 'needs' also hampers making of decisions objectively.

Consider a teenager who is perennially short of pocket money even though he/she is given a very liberal amount every week. Assume that it is so because of the spending habits. Will it be easy for the teenager to be objective in stating the decision he/she wishes to make? Consider a girl who has a talent for painting and can paint well. In the same school there is another girl who sings beautifully and is praised by everybody. The 1<sup>st</sup> girl feels that nobody is recognising her talent in the school and the entire school is prejudiced against her because she comes

from a poor family. Will it be easy for the 1<sup>st</sup> girl to be objective in stating the decision she wishes to make?

**Self-knowledge:** *is the ability to make a realistic analysis of what one is capable of doing and what one is not capable of doing before making a decision.*

Awareness of one's own strengths as well as weaknesses or what one is capable of doing or not doing and one's own beliefs, values, aspirations, desires, emotions etc. go a long way in clarifying objectives and making appropriate choices in decision making situations. Such realistic self-knowledge not only enables one to be objective but also to take wise decisions. An individual who has sound self knowledge is not likely to mistake the desires for needs and is not likely to make choices which are beyond his capacity to implement though they are sure to achieve the goals. Lack of self-knowledge may result in being over-confident or being over-cautious. Realistic self-knowledge enables one to rate one's achievability of options keeping in view what he/she is capable of doing as well not capable of doing, his/her strengths and weaknesses after carefully weighing the 'pros' and 'cons' of each option.

**Knowledge of the situation:** *is the ability to describe the context of the decision making situation as well as its elements and their inter-relationships.*

Will a person who has no realistic knowledge of the problem situation be in a position to make a decision which has a fair chance of solving the problem? Unless one has full knowledge of the context in which the decision has to be taken as well as various socio-cultural or economic or psychological 'pulls' and 'pressures' operating in the situation which have a bearing on decision making, wise decisions cannot be made. The decision to any problem has to be relevant to and practicable in the situation in which it has arisen. What was a wise decision in one situation or context may turn out to be a bad decision in another context or situation. Such knowledge cannot be obtained only by knowing various elements but also by being able to understand the existing inter-relationship among them. In short, one who knows the context in which the decision has to be made and has a holistic perspective of the situation can be said to have the correct knowledge of the situation.

Consider the example of an adolescent girl from a conservative family who feels humiliated in the school because her parents are not allowing her to wear 'in fashion' dresses like her classmates. Will it be possible for her to solve her problem

without the knowledge of the situation in its totality?

**Analytical Ability:** *is the ability to identify elements of the given decision making situation by analysing it.*

In order to obtain an accurate knowledge of the decision making situation, one has to analyse the situation and identify various elements which have a bearing on decision making. In other words, one who has this type of analytical ability is likely to gain accurate knowledge of the decision making situation. Lack of this ability may also result in accepting invalid information.

Problems do not arise by themselves. They arise due to the interaction between different elements/forces operating in any given social environment. Of course, apart from the individual and his aspirations there are 'others' with their aspirations as well as social norms, conventions etc., which will also be operating in any social situation. One cannot make a good decision without knowing all the elements/forces operating in the situation which have a bearing on his/her problem. Only a person with good analytical ability and objectivity can identify all the relevant elements and their inter-relationships. As a product of this activity one is likely to possess a reasonably good *knowledge of the situation* which is another important component of decision making.

This the ability which will help the girl mentioned in the last example to gain the knowledge of the situation in its totality.

**Divergent thinking ability:** *is the ability to think of diverse courses of action in any decision making situation.*

Can a person who always thinks in terms of 'one correct solution to a problem' (i.e. a person with only convergent thinking ability) think of options/alternatives? This is the ability which enables the individual think in terms of a number of alternative ways of doing something, however unconventional they may be. An individual having this ability does not believe that there can only be 'one correct method' of doing something but believes that it can be done in a variety of ways. Such a person will always search for or try to think of various options or courses of action in any decision making situation. Imagine a decision making situation wherein one can think of only one course of action. In the absence of choices, he or she is forced to implement that course of action or not do anything at all.

In fact, the opportunity for decision making arises only when there are choices to choose from. Therefore, it is evident that a person having divergent thinking ability can make a wise choice because he has thought of many options.

**Synthetic Ability:** *is the ability to synthesise different available possible courses of action and to generate one's own course of action in decision making situations.*

As a result of seeking advice from others one is likely to have a long list of options to choose from in a decision-making situation. It may so happen that none of them are totally satisfactory in the decision maker's point of view. However, there maybe a few which if synthesised into one option will meet the decision maker's requirements. A person with synthetic ability may cull out certain useful ideas from the suggestions offered by others, synthesise them to formulate a new option or generate a new option by synthesising available options. Hence a person with this ability is likely to be a better decision maker than the one without it. While thinking of options available, one may seek the opinion of friends, experts etc.

**Anticipation of consequences:** *is the ability to predict the possible consequences of choosing a possible course of action.*

Choosing the best one from the available courses of actions / options is the centrality of the process. However, it can not be done on the basis of 'it sounds good' factor or because it was recommended by majority of trustworthy people or because it appeared to be the easiest one. Once the options have been listed, they have to be rated based on a set of pre-determined criteria.

One of the criteria is the consequences of choosing an option. One has to think of what is likely to happen if a particular course of action is implemented. This exercise is to be repeated with respect to each one of the available options. In other words, one has to think of possible consequences, both positive (pros) and negative (cons), for each one of the options. A choice has to be made only after comparing the consequences. A person makes a decision without doing this exercise is likely to 'pass the buck' to someone else or grieve over his 'bad luck' in case the result happens to be unexpected one. It should be remembered that the sole responsibility for what happens after the choice is made rests only with the decision maker. Hence, this is an essential component of decision making.

**Logical Thinking:** *is the ability to think systematically and sequentially using valid principles of logic.*

Of course, one can not analyse the problem or the situation, or determine the validity of the information received or anticipate consequences if he does not possess the logical thinking ability as defined above. Valid principles of logic imply employing the principles of deduction or induction depending upon the purpose, not indulging in rationalisation, avoiding over-generalising/over-simplifying, avoiding fallacies. In short, this component runs through the entire process of decision making.

If the 'infatuated boy' mentioned earlier has this ability, he may find out that solving his problem is not all that important. The girl worrying about dresses mentioned earlier may redefine the meaning of 'in fashion' dresses. The boy worrying about pocket money is likely to redefine his problem as that of modifying his spending habits.

**Rationality:** *is the ability to take decisions or arrive at a conclusion on the basis of valid reasons or logic and NOT impulsively or by trial and error or on the basis of one's own feelings, opinions and beliefs.*

This component whose definition is self-explanatory also operates throughout the decision making process. It is a fact that without rationality, one can not make a wise decision. One who chooses a course of action based on valid reasons is more likely to achieve his objective than others who choose on the basis of 'commonsense' etc.

**General Intelligence:** *is the general mental ability to understand, think, learn and apply relevant procedures in decision making situations.*

As a rule any human endeavour requires some degree of intelligence. Decision making can not be an exception to this rule. The definition states the least that is expected of good decision maker.

### **3.03 Inter-Relatedness Of The Components**

After having studied the previous sub-section we cannot ignore or deny the importance of these components in decision making process. We can be rest assured that one or more of these components will definitely have a role to play in every step of the decision making process. Of course, we may find it

difficult to find one-to-one relationship between these components and steps of decision making process as more than one components are likely to be involved simultaneously at any step. Of course, we can say that one or two will play a dominant role in any one step while others may be playing a supporting role.

### 3.04 Let Us Sum Up

We have been able to identify most important components of as well as understand their importance in . We have also understood that they do not operate in isolation.

---

## 4.00 PROCESS OF DECISION MAKING

---

### 4.01 A Brief Survey Of Different Processes Of Decision Making

Having formulated an operational definition of decision making skill; identified the components of decision; identified some of the common decision making mistakes let us move on to understand the process of decision making. We need to do so in order to think of a decision making process in which our children are to be trained.

Decision making process is normally described in terms of a series of steps. There are a number of descriptions which vary in details but not in essence. Let us study some of the examples of decision making processes delineated in the relevant literature in order to understand the essence of the process.

#### Example 1 (USSBA. 2003)

1. Define as specifically as possible, what the decision is that needs to be made.
2. Write down as many alternatives as you can think of.
3. Think where you can find more information about the possible alternatives.
4. Check out your alternatives.
5. Sort through all your alternatives.
6. Visualise the outcomes of each alternative.
7. Do a reality check.
8. Think which alternative fits you.
9. Get started.
10. Check how it is going.

#### Example 2 (Robert, H. 1998)

1. Identify the decision to be made together with the goals it should achieve.
2. Get the facts.
3. Develop alternatives.
4. Rate each alternative.
5. Rate the risk of each alternative.
6. Make the decision.

<p><b>Example 3</b> (Debord,K. and Canu,R.F. 1997)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify the problem.</li> <li>2. Gather information about the problem and your options.</li> <li>3. List your options.</li> <li>4. Write down the things that are not important to you in making your decision.</li> <li>5. List 'pros &amp; cons about each option.</li> <li>6. Compare your list of 'pros' &amp; 'cons' for each option with the things most important to you. Decide on the best overall solution.</li> <li>7. Make your decision.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Example 4</b> (Mahalingam. 2004)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Define the problem.</li> <li>2. Re-evaluate the situation.</li> <li>3. Gather information.</li> <li>4. Think of alternatives.</li> <li>5. Choose an alternative.</li> <li>6. Put your decision to work</li> </ol>
<p><b>Example 5</b> (McREL Institute. 2004)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify the decision you wish to make.</li> <li>2. Write the decision question in a number of ways until it accurately reflects the situation</li> <li>3. Identify different alternatives you are considering.</li> <li>4. Identify the criteria you consider important to a good decision or things you want to accomplish as a result of your decision.</li> <li>5. Assign each criterion an importance score.</li> <li>6. Determine the extent to which each alternative possesses each criterion.</li> <li>7. Multiply the criterion scores by alternative scores.</li> <li>8. Determine which alternative has the highest total points.</li> <li>9. Based on your reaction to the selected alternative, determine whether you want to change importance scores or add/drop criteria.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Example 6</b> (Arshram,H. 1994)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identification of the problem.</li> <li>2. What is the goal?</li> <li>3. Possible actions.</li> <li>4. Predict outcome.</li> <li>5. Pick the best alternative.</li> <li>6. Implement the decision</li> </ol>

<p><b>Example 7</b> (Health Teacher. 2005)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Define the problem including thinking about the facts of the situation as well as the feelings of the people.</li> <li>2. Generate at least three alternatives.</li> <li>3. Think about positive and negative consequences of each</li> <li>4. List others affected by these options and describe any feelings, emotions or values that may be in conflict with the options you have.</li> <li>5. After weighing all the options, choose the best one.</li> <li>6. Design a plan of action to carry out the decision.</li> <li>7. Evaluate your decision (with ref. to result).</li> </ol>	<p><b>Example 8</b> (Walker, K; Torres, N.I. and Turner, J. 2003)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Recognise the problem</li> <li>2. Analyse the problem.</li> <li>3. Consider your goals.</li> <li>4. Look for alternatives.</li> <li>5. Select the best alternative.</li> <li>6. Put your decision into action.</li> <li>7. Accept the responsibility.</li> <li>8. Evaluate your results.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Example 9</b> (Time-Management-Guide. 2002)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify the purpose of your decision.</li> <li>2. Gather information.</li> <li>3. Identify the principles to judge the alternatives.</li> <li>4. Brainstorm and list different possible choices</li> <li>5. Evaluate each choice in terms of its consequences.</li> <li>6. Determine the best alternative.</li> <li>7. Put the decision into action.</li> <li>8. Evaluate the outcome of your decision and action steps.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Example 10</b> (Roberts, R.)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify the decision to be made.</li> <li>2. Know yourself.</li> <li>3. Identify the options.</li> <li>4. Gather information and data.</li> <li>5. Evaluate options.</li> <li>6. Design a course of action to implement the decision.</li> </ol>

*All these examples have a few things in common. They are: (a) identify the problem objectively, (b) analyse the problem and the situational context (c) think of as many alternative courses of action as possible, (d) list the 'pros' and 'cons' of each in terms of its consequences, keeping in view the 'situation', 'self' and 'goals', (e) compare the lists and choose the one which meets the requirements, and (f) implement the chosen one and (g) evaluate the result or actions to enable one to make better decisions in future. In fact, this is the essence of decision making skill.*

## 4.02 Decision Making Process For Training Students

Let us now try to analyse the essence mentioned above into smaller 'steps' or 'actions' prosecutable by our students. We will do so in a format which can be communicated to the students 'as it is'.

1. *State the decision you wish to make in a precise sentence.* It is better if the decision you wish to make is stated in the form of interrogative sentence. i.e. 'how do I.....' or 'what do I.....' or 'should I ----- or not' or 'when do I .....' question format. This will help to clarify what decision you want to make.
2. *Think about why making this decision is important to you.* One way of doing it is to think in terms 'what is it I want to achieve' by making this decision. In short clarify your objective/s. Then reflect upon how important it is to you or ask yourself 'why do I want to do it?' or 'what am I going to lose if I do not make a decision now?' This step will not only prevent you from making a hasty decision, but also from making unnecessary decisions.
3. *Analyse the situation which has necessitated the making of a decision.* Problems do not arise by themselves. They arise because of interplay between various 'factors' in the particular situation you are in. You can make better decision if you are aware all these factors as well as your own strengths an weaknesses or what you can and cannot do. Describe the context, in which the problem arose, what caused it, who are the persons involved in it etc.
4. *Think of as many options/alternatives as possible.* You can do it yourself or by conducting a brainstorming session along with your 'close' friends or by consulting 'elders/experts'. Collect as much relevant information as is required to generate options. If you do not have at least two options the question of making a decision does not arise at all!
5. *Think of possible consequences, both positive (pros) and negative (cons), for each one of the options.* For each option think of all possible consequences, both positive and negative. In other words, anticipate what is likely to happen if a particular option is chosen. You can also think of how each option, if chosen will affect not only you but also others around you. These anticipated effects also are to be considered as consequences. This exercise must be

repeated for all the listed options. If necessary, gather required information from different sources for carrying out this task.

6. *Make the decision. In other words, select the option which meets your requirements.* Keep in view, what you have thought of in step 2 and 3 while choosing an option. Note that the choice is made by you and you alone. If your decision turns out to be 'a bad one' you alone are responsible. You cannot shift the blame to 'somebody or something else'.

That completes the process of decision making. Of course, one can extend it by adding a few more steps to enhance its utilitarian value. E.g. *Design an action plan to implement the decision. Reflect upon the effectiveness of your decision, as well as its implementation to enrich your experience.* One can even reduce the number of steps by synthesising two consecutive steps depending upon the nature of the decision to be made. However, in this module, we will concentrate on the 6 enumerated steps.

Please note that in step 5 a specific strategy for choosing the most appropriate option has been stated. But, you should be aware of the fact that there are other strategies also. Which strategy is to be employed is dictated by the purpose or the type or context of the decision. We feel that the simplest of all strategies is what has been stated in step 5 and we will be doing an excellent service to our students if we can train them in practising the enumerated actions. This training can also be considered as an 'initiation' into the world of 'professional' decision-making. However, those of you who would like to be aware of some of the other strategies are requested to read the content in the following box.

**Pareto Analysis:** A technique which helps to choose the most effective changes to make in the existing scheme of things or a technique of identifying the most important problem to solve.

**Paired-Comparison Analysis:** A technique which helps to judge the relative importance of a number of options. Very useful, especially in the absence of objective data to do so.

**Grid Analysis:** A useful technique when one has a number of apparently good options and many factors to be considered.

**Decision Tree Analysis:** An excellent technique for choosing between several options after investigating the possible outcomes, as well as forming a balanced picture of the risks and rewards associated with each option.

Continued in next page.....

....Continued From previous page

**PMI (Plus/Minus/Implications):** A technique of writing down 'all the positive outcomes', 'all the negative outcomes' and 'all possible implications/outcomes' of each option and choosing the one which meets the requirements. It is also a useful tool for deciding the usefulness of a single course of action available at any point of time.

**Force Field Analysis:** It is a specialised method of weighing 'pros' and 'cons' by looking at all the forces for and against a decision.

**Six Thinking Hats:** A powerful technique for looking at decisions from a number of important perspectives, forcing one move out of his/her habitual style of thinking. One is supposed adopt a particular style of thinking at a time. Wearing of hats has only symbolic value. The six hats are: Focusing on the data available to detect flaws (White hat style), depend upon intuition, gut reaction and emotion (Red hat style), focusing on the bad points only and try to see why decision may not work (Black hat style), focusing on positive aspects of the decision only (Yellow hat style), focusing on developing creative solutions (Green hat style), and focusing on control process (Blue hat style).

**Cost/Benefit Analysis:** A technique of evaluating the options quantitatively.

#### 4.03 Let Us Check Our Progress

Let us take stock of the essence of what has been presented in this section. To make sure that we have grasped it, let us try to answer the following. We can find out whether our answers are correct or not by reading the sections once again.

1a. Assume that you are asked to write the essence of decision making in four simple sentences. Which of the five sentences listed as essence of decision-making would you abandon? (Write the serial No. only) \_\_\_\_\_

1b. Justify your choice in one sentence.

---



---



---

2. "Which one of the proposed 6 steps is redundant?"- What is your answer to this question? \_\_\_\_\_ .

3a. Decision-making Model prescribed in this module for use with your students resembles one of the standard models mentioned in the box. Which one is that? \_\_\_\_\_ .

3b. Write in one or two sentences the difference between the prescribed one and the standard one.

---



---



---

#### **4.04 Student Training Strategies**

Now let us try to chalk-out a workable training strategy to train our students in decision making skill. You now that to acquire any skill one has to go on practising the skill in a systematic way till one acquires it. Mere knowledge of decision-making process will not make one a wise decision maker. The process of decision-making appears to be simple. One is likely to conclude that we should train our students in each of the enumerated steps as we normally do while training students in psycho-motor skills. However, we have seen that there are different components that will influence actual carrying out of the process. Therefore, it is envisaged to sensitise students to the importance of these components in decision making through role-play in combination with decision/discussion. Brainstorming together with discussion will also be used as pre role-play activity not only to develop divergent thinking ability etc, but also to impress upon the students usefulness of this technique in different situations as well as prepare them to catch the essence of the role-play. Since we have already acquired knowledge-base for using these strategies in the Introductory Module we will not discuss it in this module.

#### **4.05 Let Us Sum Up**

We have looked into different types of decision making processes, understood their essence and generated one to be used in training our students. We know why we have to sensitise our students to the importance of different components of decision making instead of training them in following a predetermined procedure. We also have thought of strategies to be employed to sensitise our students. We have understood that training students in the actual process of decision making is in no way different from techniques normally followed in developing a skill.

---

#### **5.00 SELF EVALUATION**

---

Now it is time to reflect upon what we have understood about Decision Making skill. We will do so by assessing our understanding by answering the following questions.

1. Which of the following statements are true? Which of them are false and why?

- a) Wise decisions are made intuitively.
- b) Decision Making is a critical component of specialised professions only.
- c) As far as personal life is concerned, the idea of decision making as a sophisticated skill is ridiculous.
- d) Only by making rational decisions we can take full charge of our lives.
- e) Decision Making depends on the values, perceptions, experience and intelligence of the decision-maker.
- f) The question of decision making does not arise when there are no choices.
- g) Wise decision making means choosing the very best course of action depending upon the importance of the problem, time available, resources available, personal values etc.
- h) When in doubt, accept expert opinion without questioning it.
- i) Opinion of a trustworthy person can be accepted as it is.

True statements (Write the serial numbers only):

\_\_\_\_\_

False statements (Write the serial numbers and the reasons)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Write in two sentences the implication of the phrase '*informed choice*' found in the operational definition of decision making.

---



---



---



---



---



---

3. Match the decision making styles in list A with the statements given in list B. Write the serial number of the style that matches with the statement in the space provided on the right side of the statement

List A	List B	Answers
1. Fatalistic	"I need time to think"	
2. Play-it-Safe	" Don't think too much, just do something"	
3. Impulsive	"I will choose the one which has least risk"	
4. Escapist	" I do what I feel is right"	
5. Planning	"What has to happen, will happen"	
6. Compliant	" Let us wait and see"	
7. Delaying	"Whatever you say will be done"	
8. Intuitive	"Think twice before doing anything"	

4. Read the pair of statements and then answer the questions by indicating 'i' or 'ii'

a. Which of the following statements indicate objectivity?

(i) "He did not come to school in time on 9 working days out of 60"

(ii) "He/she appears to be very irregular with regard to attending the school in time"

b. Which of the following statements indicate what is to be decided?

(i) I wish I knew how to do this.

(i) I want to do this.

c. Which of the following statements are likely to have been made by an emotionally stable individual?

(i) "He/she has cheated me. I am going to teach him a lesson which he/she will never forget"

(ii) "He/she has cheated me. I would like to find out why he/she did so and then think of an appropriate action"

5. If you are asked to describe decision making process in three sequential steps which of the following would you choose. Mark 1, 2, 3 against the ones you choose.

- a) Identifying the problem \_\_\_\_\_  
 b) Understanding the problem \_\_\_\_\_  
 c) Defining the problem \_\_\_\_\_  
 d) Thinking of options \_\_\_\_\_  
 e) Listing the pros and cons of each option \_\_\_\_\_  
 f) Choosing the most viable option \_\_\_\_\_

## 6.0 DECISION-MAKING: SELF ASSESSMENT TOOL

### 6.01 Decision Making Scale

Dr.C.G.Venkatesha Murthy

#### *Directions*

The following are the statements, which relate to taking decisions in life. Different people take different decisions in life differently. The present measure helps us in understanding how you take decisions in your life. Kindly answer the following by way of ticking in the available three columns as 'Always', 'Sometimes' and 'Never'. Read each of the statements and tick any one of the three alternatives, as it is applicable in your case. This will help us in understanding how you think and act. There is nothing right or wrong about answers. Respond to all the statements. Do not leave any statement unanswered. Your response will be kept confidential.

Sl.No	Statements	Always	Sometimes	Never
1	I do not take decisions when I am emotional.			
2	I try my best to understand the situations before I take any decision.			
3	Decisions made by me have created difficulties for me			
4	My decisions put me to lot of embarrassments.			
5	I am very impulsive in taking decisions.			
6	I understand what I can do and I take decisions accordingly.			
7	I try my best to arrive at a decision with logical reasoning.			
8	I take vows when I am upset.			

*Continued in next page...*

Continued from the previous page...

9	I do not believe it to be necessary to analyse the pros and cons of a decision.			
10	I do not care for the consequences of my decisions.			
11	I am concerned about achieving my objective and nothing else.			
12	I try my best to identify different options available to me before I take any decision.			
13	I act according to the advise of my best friends.			
14	I choose to do only those things, which are acceptable to my family.			
15	I try to learn from every experience.			
16	I make a comparison of different alternatives available to me before I take any decision.			
17	I believe in being non-emotional in decision-making situations.			
18	I do the same mistake, which I had done in the past.			
19	My decisions are appreciated by others.			
20	Once I make a decision I do not change it irrespective of consequences.			
21	I take into consideration all issues before I take a decision.			
22	I take decisions keeping in view my strengths and weaknesses and.			
23	I feel confused when it comes to situations, where a number of alternatives are available.			
24	I am clear about the possible consequences of my decisions.			
25	I never regret for the lapses of my decisions in life.			

## 6.02 Decision Making Scale-Scoring Key

Max Possible score = 75

Min Possible score = 25

### Norms

68-75 = Good decision maker

33-67 = Average decision maker

25-32 = Poor decision maker

For question numbers 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 18, 23, and 25 give scores of 1, 2, 3 for 'Always', 'Sometimes' and 'Never' respectively and reverse the order for all other questions.

## 7.00 REFERENCES

Arshram, H. (1996). *Leadership decision making: Ethics and decision making*. <http://home.ubalt.edu/ntsbarsh/opre640/partXIII.htm#rethics>

Debord, K. and Canu, R.F. (1997). *Decision making: It's a skill*.  
<http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/fcs/human/pubs/wfdecision.html>

Harris, R. (1998). *Introduction to decision making*.  
<http://www.virtualsalt.com/crebook5.com>

Health Teacher. (2005). *NHESSkills: Decision making/Goal Setting Skills*. <http://www.healthteacher.com/teachersupport/skills5.asp>

Mahalingam. (2004). How to develop your decision making skills. In, *Good decision makers are successful people*.  
<http://www.hooah4health.com/spirit/decisions.htm>

McREL Institute. (2004). *Teaching a thinking skill*.  
<http://www.aca267.k12.ia.us/cia/framework/thinking/decisionmaking/index.html>

Roberts, R. (YEAR MISSING). *7 steps Decision making model*.  
<http://www.unf.edu/dept/cdc/services/decision.htm>



*By preserving over all obstacles  
and distractions, one may  
unfailingly arrive at his chosen  
goal or destination.*

*Christopher Columbus*

*It is in your moments of decision that your destiny is shaped.*

*Anthony (Tony) J. Robbins*

*Decide not rashly. The decision made can never be recalled. The gods implore not, plead not, solicit not; They only offer choice and occasion, which once being passed returns no more. Dost thou accept the gift?*

*Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*

*No sensible decision can be made any longer without taking into account not only the world as it is, but the world as it will be.*

*Isaac Asimov*

*Module 2*

*Problem Solving*

## *Module Contents*

<b>1.00 OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>2.00 INTRODUCTION:</b>	<b>49</b>
2.01 Meaning and importance	49
2.02 Definition	50
2.03 Problem solving and school education	51
2.04 Let us check our progress	51
2.05 Let us sum up	51
<b>3.00 COMPONENTS OF PROBLEM SOLVING SKILL</b>	<b>52</b>
3.01 Meaning of component	52
3.02 Components defined	52
3.03 Let us check our progress	55
3.04 Let us sum up	55
<b>4.00 PROCESSES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF PROBLEM SOLVING SKILL</b>	<b>55</b>
4.01 Steps of problem solving: different formats	55
4.02 Commonly employed problem solving techniques	56
4.03 Other techniques of problem solving	60
4.04 Let us check our progress	61
4.05 Let us sum up	61
<b>5.00 SELF EVALUATION</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>6.00 PROBLEM SOLVING SKILL: SELF ASSESSMENT TOOL</b>	<b>62</b>
6.01 Problem Solving Scale	62
6.02 Problem Solving Scale – Scoring key	66
<b>7.00 REFERENCES</b>	<b>67</b>

---

## **1.00 OBJECTIVES**

---

To enable the reader of this module to;

1. Explain the meaning of problem-solving in daily life.
2. Recall the importance of problem solving skill in every day life.
3. Recognise various dimensions that are related to a problem situation.
4. Identify different problem solving techniques, in relation to the nature of the problem.
5. Solve or manage the problem, using appropriate techniques and strategies.

---

## **2.00 INTRODUCTION:**

---

### **2.01 Meaning And Importance**

Life is full of problems and challenges. Problems are inevitable in life. Handling a problem is a skill. It is a life skill since it is part and parcel of life. Every step in our lives, every moment in our lives we have to face problems. The problems may be small or big. Different problems are faced in different stages of life. Also the problems can be of different degrees and intensities.

Problems in life cause tremendous amount of stress. It may interfere with the normal functioning in life. These problems may lead one to have negative thoughts, feelings, and actions resulting in complications in life. D’Zurilla and Goldfried (1971) say that “... individual is unable to resolve certain situational problems in his life and his inadequate attempts to do so are having undesirable effects, such as anxiety, depression, and the creation of additional problems”.

Garfield and Bergin (1978) have quoted examples of studies where they have found differences between normals and deviants in their problem solving skill. It was also found that those individuals labelled as ‘emotionally disturbed’ were often significantly inferior to normal peers in the sheer number of possible solutions that they perceived in hypothetical problem situations. It was also found that the solutions that they suggested were anti-social in nature like being physically aggressive. In addition they also had inaccurate expectancies about the probable consequences of different options.

An individual's adaptability is indicated in the ways he solves the problems in his life. Life is a process of solving /managing/dealing with problems. Those who can manage problems efficiently do well in life, than those who have difficulty in managing problems. The theoretical understanding given here about problems, problem solving and the related issues are not very technical, rendered for easy understandability, though, this is based and derived from highly technical theories.

## 2.02 Definition

"Problem solving skill" is operationally defined as "*the skill to understand and deal effectively with problems in day to day living*".

The words used in this definition have to be discussed in detail so as to achieve the above objectives. Let us begin with understanding the term 'problem'. The dictionary meaning of problem is trouble, difficulty, and crisis, puzzle, set back. Understand means to know the nature, complexity, and the elaboration of the problem in hand. Dealing effectively means to have a program to manage a problem, which can bring about the result intended – either to manage or arriving at a solution to the problem. Day to day living means, managing life issues that happen on a daily basis. To recapitulate, problem solving skill means the skill to know the nature, complexity and the elaboration of the problem of daily life, and to develop a program to deal with the problem with the intention of solving or managing it.

There is one important issue that needs to be recognized and clarified here with regard to the concept of problem-solving skill. That is, can all problems be solved? And is the term problem solving appropriate? To do this one should know the meaning of 'solution'. As per the dictionary 'solution' means the process of finding an answer or explanation. The term solution is dealt with separately because of the relevance and its importance to the term 'problem'. Taking real life into consideration, many problems are not solvable. There are certain problems, which can be solved completely. There are certain other problems, which can be solved partially. So, the term solving problems does not seem to be apt. Problems can be and should be managed. One should train oneself to manage, i.e., handle ones problems in life. Those problems, which can be solved, should be solved and those, which cannot be solved, should be

lived with. This is where the term managing problems comes in. One should be able to find ways and strategies to live with problems without causing much of damage to oneself and/or others, and within the socio-culturally reality that the individual lives in. In the process one should also get trained to analyse and understand the difference between the problems that can be solved and those that cannot be solved and the appropriate choice of action.

### **2.03 Problem Solving And School Education**

In school, we have seen that the teachers have problems. Likewise the children also have problems. May be the intensity, degree, and nature of the problems may vary. But problems are there. School being the centre where the children get their basic training in life, and life skills training becoming a part of their schooling process, makes a fertile ground where they can develop the skill of problem solving. School has changed its purpose from just academic empowerment to life skills empowerment which is much more comprehensive and useful in the world today. The schools have realised the importance of non-academic activities in the success of pupils' lives. And so, the children have to be formally and scientifically trained to face life using life skills appropriately. Problem solving being one of the important life skills can also be developed at the school level. They can be trained to understand various components of problem solving during their schooling years. This would go a long way in dealing with problems in life. Even the serious ones, high intensity and degree, more effectively and successfully – either solving or managing problems. This module gives details of how this can be done in practicality.

### **2.04 Let Us Check Our Progress**

Please answer the following (in a separate sheet of paper):

1. Define a problem.
2. What are the various types of problems discussed here?
3. Differentiate between problem solving and problem management.

### **2.05 Let Us Sum Up**

We have understood the meaning and importance of problem solving skill and its relationship with school education.

---

### 3.00 COMPONENTS OF PROBLEM SOLVING SKILL

---

#### 3.01 Meaning Of 'Component'

As seen earlier, the concept of problem solving skill has been operationally defined as "*the skill to understand and deal effectively with problems in day to day living*". Problem solving could be understood better by understanding its different components that surround the skill. Component means a dimension or aspect of the concept of problem solving. The components of problem solving skill are subtle psychological phenomena. These psychological phenomena are present in every individual in some degree. Being psychological phenomena, these components can also be developed in terms of degree and refinement. These components together make the problem solving skill. One or more of these, in isolation or in combination work in the process of problem solving. In the process of problem solving one of them may get highlighted and the others may remain dormant. These components of problem solving skill have to be understood in some detail to develop the skill.

#### 3.02 Components Defined

**Self Knowledge:** *is the ability to understand and learn about ones own capacities, emotionalities and actions, and in relation to the socio-cultural milieu that one lives in, in solving the problem.*

It is necessary to know about ones own capacities, strengths, weaknesses, behaviour keeping ones own social background and the context of the problem in mind while managing problems. The way one behaves in various situations may be different, some known to the individual and some the person may not even be aware of ones own nature in relation to various problem contexts. It is quite common in day to day living to face situations where the expression "It was surprising that I reacted like that!"; "I didn't know I could do that!"; "I realized that I also will end up behaving like that!" etc. So, the knowledge that we have about ourselves is limited and every moment we are doing things, which are new and known to ourselves, or new and unknown to ourselves. Also, there are times when we are surprised /shocked, when someone says "you seem to be like this/that", and many others join that. This is only to say that self knowledge is quite limited and it is necessary for us to realize what we are – our strengths, weaknesses, likes, dislikes,

feelings, thoughts, and our behaviour at large in various problem contexts of our lives in relation to the problems that we are facing at a given point of time.

**Positive attitude:** *is the ability of being hopeful and confident in the way of approach to the problem.*

It is well known and accepted both by the lay individuals as well as among the professionals and all those belonging to different walks of life that being positive – positive attitude, goes a long way in managing problems. Those positive qualities like hope, success, happiness, joy, contentment, love and affection, liking, optimism etc., make a major impact on one's life in general and problem solving in particular. Unless one has a positive attitude towards managing the given problem, even understanding the problem is impossible, managing the problem is far away. This also makes us more open to possible solutions and suggestions given by others. It is absolutely necessary to develop the skill of facing a problem with a positive attitude for effective and successful problem solving.

**Divergent thinking:** *is the ability to think in multiple ways, to view and manage a problem from different perspectives.*

Life has multiple facets. Any problem that is in life, be it personal, social, interpersonal, person in interaction with the society, has a different origin, cause, management, and solution. The ability to view a problem from different perspectives for a better understanding of the problem - of its origin, cause, people involved, set ups involved, the context, and to choose a solution (if any) from many alternatives, or to manage it, given various alternatives, the ability to think divergently, from multiple perspectives is essential. One has to train oneself to think from multiple perspectives.

**Objectivity:** *is the ability to view ones own problem from a third person perspective as they are.*

Problem solving is a cognitive activity. It is found that when cognition is working, emotionality reduces and when emotionality is at work, cognition reduces. When an individual is emotionally overwhelmed, he has difficulty in analyzing and understanding the problem. Given a problem situation one should be able to view, analyse and understand the problem without becoming emotionally overwhelmed. Emotion cannot be removed totally, but one should know to detach oneself and view his problem as though it is somebody else's. This is what

objectivity is. In problem solving objectivity is very important for it to be effective and successful. This is an ability, in which one can be and must be trained.

**Rationality:** *is the ability to solve problems based on reasons and logic than using crude methods or trial and error.*

One can attempt to solve a problem in many ways. Sometimes, one might have tried to solve a problem impulsively or by trial and error method and by chance succeeded. The person solving the problem by such methods will neither be able to explain why or how he succeeded, nor the reasons for what he did to solve the problem. But, unfortunately such crude methods do not always help us to solve the problems. Only when one adopts a method based on sound reasoning and logic he/she has better chances of solving or effectively managing the problem.

**Logical thinking:** *is the ability to understand and deal with the problem in a systematic, orderly fashion.*

There is an order, system, and logic in any situation. One has to understand that systematic approach to the problem, which many of the problems solving strategies also suggest is very important in problem solving. The system involves various aspects from realising that there is a problem to solution to the problem. There is a logical order in understanding the problem, analysing the different aspects of the problem, finding various alternatives to managing the problem, and the implementation of the strategy chosen to manage the problem. Logical method of approaching the problem will for sure lead to successful management of the problem. One has to train oneself in thinking logically if one has to develop the skill of problem solving.

**Analytic-synthetic ability:** *is the ability to breakdown and understand, and put together, the various aspects of the problem and dealing with the problem.*

A problem will have different aspects, levels, and perspectives, to be understood. Also, the given problem will have multiple alternatives, which can be used for managing it. These alternatives will have different aspects, levels, and perspectives, which need to be in relation to the understanding of the problem. These need one to breakdown the problem according to different aspects and levels, and put together the various aspects of the problem to understand and manage successfully.

**Anticipation of consequences:** *is the ability to infer or foresee the after effects of the problem and /or the strategies used to manage the problems.*

Any problem has after effects, whether solved or unsolved, managed or not managed, ignored or taken up. When a problem context occurs one should be able to think of the consequences of the problem situation given the above-mentioned alternatives. If different alternative solutions or managing strategies are used, or totally ignored, what could be the outcome of the different solutions, strategies or ignorance, has to be thought out in detail and in its intricacies. Anticipation of consequences is the ability, which can guide one to choose the appropriate alternative to manage the problem cost effectively. If one neglects the consequences of any action towards management of the problem one may have to pay a heavy price. Anticipation of consequences is an ability which one can and should train oneself in.

### **3.03 Let Us Check Our Progress**

Please answer the following:

1. List and define the various components of problem solving.
2. Describe the relevance of various components to problem solving.

### **3.04 Let Us Sum Up**

We have understood the meaning of term 'components' in relation to problem solving skill, studied the meaning of different components of problem solving skill.

---

## **4.00 PROCESSES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF PROBLEM SOLVING SKILL**

---

### **4.01 Steps Of Problem Solving: Different Formats**

Any life skill needs are to be developed. The development of a skill happens in the process of socialization itself. However, there are certain skills and situations for which one has to be consciously trained. Also the existing skills can be improvised and refined by training.

Problem solving is to do with pragmatism where the focus is on helping the individual to discover and implement whatever adjustment strategies are effective in a given situation. To do this many psychologists have suggested, tried and tested various techniques. A few are described in brief here.

Mahoney and Mahoney (1976a, 1976b) have tried a format in which one can develop complex problem solving skills in a progressive way. Here the personal problems are treated like research problems and the similar skills necessary for a researcher in solving research problems are treated to be fit in solving personal problems also. This is called the personal science approach. This contains 7 sub skills represented by mnemonic 'SCIENCE'.

- S Specify general problem
- C Collect information
- I Identify causes or patterns
- E Examine options
- N Narrow options and experiment
- C Compare data
- E Extend, revise or replace

Powell (1992) has suggested 5 stages of problem solving. Firstly, identifying and defining clearly what the problem is. Secondly, Brainstorm. That is spending time generating a list of as many possible options as one can without censoring for any reason. Thirdly, decide which options are realistic and unrealistic from the list made in stage 2. Fourthly, choose the option that is both most rewarding and feasible. Fifthly, prepare and plan strategies for the accomplishment of chosen option.

The other techniques as described in the website 'mind tools' include, appreciation – Extracting all most information from facts; drill-down – breaking problems down into manageable parts; cause & effect diagrams – identifying likely causes of problems; systems diagrams – understanding how factors affect each other; SWOT analysis – analyzing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats; forecasts with spreadsheets – analyzing whether an idea is financially viable; and risk analysis – evaluating and managing the risks.

#### **4.02 Commonly Employed Problem Solving Techniques**

In our lives, on day to day basis, we have been solving problems or managing problems. There are several techniques

by which we try solving our life problems, without even being aware that they are 'specific techniques'. Some of these techniques are as listed below, though the list may not be complete.

- Sharing the problem with some one. Usually, we share our problems with someone with whom we feel close like a friend, mother, father, sibling, cousin or it may even be a teacher. Sharing of the problem may or may not lead to a total solution to the problem. However, sharing of a problem will yield certain benefits – getting clarity about the problem, feeling lighter, in the process one may also find a solution for the problem. For example, a student sharing his problem of choice of career with his teacher. The student in the process of sharing would make himself clear about what career would suit him, how he can proceed, without the teacher telling him anything. Also, the teacher could guide him to solve his problem of career. Technically, this is called *Ventilation*; in which the person just talks out about his feelings, emotions, ideas, problems, etc. to someone.
- Getting suggestions from some one regarding dealing with the problem. We interact with many people in different walks of life and we do get to discuss our problem situations with the relevant people. Many of these people do give suggestions on the alternatives to solve or manage the problem. Depending up on the feasibility we choose the appropriate alternative solution. For example, a father tired of his teenage son's problem behaviour shares with his friend with the intention of getting some suggestion in handling the boy. The friend does tell him about the boy's behaviour and the way it can be handled. He suggests that the father can be little more considerate; he can be friendlier; if he is not able to handle a particular situation, he could leave it with his wife to handle; not to punish him or yell at him; and the like. The father would probably take up one or more suggestions and try on the boy and his interaction with the boy.
- Reading regarding the problem with the intension of getting some solution. This is another technique that we follow in situations, which are necessary and do not want to discuss with some one. For example, sexual problems. Many of us find it easier to find a solution to a problem in initial stages with regard to sex. One may read sex education books, articles on sexual problems, and the like, to find solution and manage a problem related to sex. Many of

us don't even go to a professional for help even if the problem is serious. We read and read whatever is possible to find a solution to a problem of this kind.

- Telling oneself about different issues in the problem and the relevant possibilities of solution. Here the individual tells oneself about various aspects of the problem, which would lead oneself to some clarity about the problem, and the possibilities of some solution to the problem also can flash to the person and tells it to oneself. Another dimension to telling oneself is, telling oneself that he will do. For example a student has the problem of blocking thought flow in the examination hall. He will tell himself that he will be relaxed and that he will be able to write well with free flow of answers. This he keeps on telling himself repeatedly for a few weeks or months prior to the exam and he will really be able to do well in the exams. This is something, which the students normally follow. Even adults during their presentations in life, be it official, or personal, do tell themselves before actually implementing. This goes a long way in solving our day-to-day problem. This is technically called *autosuggestion*. This is a behaviour therapy technique implemented formally in a therapeutic set up. However, this is commonly used in our day-to-day problem solving.
- Observing oneself, ones own experiences, feelings, ideas, and outcome in relation to the problem situation. We have to observe ourselves, our ideas, feelings, emotions, likes and dislikes, and our reactions to any problem situation. This is technically called *introspection*. This will help us to know and understand ourselves in various contexts in life, which would in turn help, us in managing problem situations. For example, choosing a job. One thinks and observes about him in relation to the job that he has to take up. He may be unemployed. The solution that is assumed is employment. But, is any job ok? The person thinks of himself in this context - the kind of person that I am, will I have job satisfaction; is the salary adequate - for the job, to manage the home; what will be my social status; will I be happy on the job; what kind of colleagues will I get; will I be able to make friends, etc. These help the individual to solve the problem of getting into employment and adjusting there.
- Writing the problem to get clarity of the problem so as to find an effective solution. This is a wonderful technique which many people use. Some one has an emotional problem. He is totally disturbed. He does not want to reveal

to any one that he is emotionally disturbed. Something is causing him this disturbance. He writes about what he is feeling, the thoughts associated with the feelings, etc. This would bring clarity to the problem that is causing him distress, and the distress itself. This clarity will help him to solve or manage the problems.

- Discussing the different solutions and management strategies, which you have thought, with some one whom you think can help. One of us may have the ability to find alternatives to manage a problem. But we may feel that it would be better if these were discussed with someone who is more knowledgeable or experienced, so that he or she could help you to choose the right alternative technique. For example, a student in 10<sup>th</sup> Class is not sure what branch he has to take in PUC. He thinks that he can take up science or commerce or not even go for PUC, but do a Diploma course. He discusses this with his father about all that he is thinking. The father can guide him to narrow down to one specific solution to the problem.
- Observing some one who has had similar problem and the process that, that person follows in solving the problem. Many of us have problems of similar nature since all of us have similar situations in life at one point or the other. So observing people, who have already experienced similar problem and the way they have managed it, can help us to choose the appropriate alternative solution. Certain strategies that one follows would be really effective and successful. Certain other strategies probably would be moderate in dealing with the specific problem. There may be certain other strategies, which would be absolutely ineffective. Interestingly, there also could be a strategy, which would have been tried which could have caused more confusion adding to the problem. So, if we observe the experienced individuals in managing problems we could be finding it easy to choose a strategy, which is more appropriate in solving the problem.
- Putting across the problem to a group and getting their feedback about the problem issue and the possible solutions. This is very commonly practiced in many of the Indian family situation. For instance, the problem of marriage comes up in a family. The girl in that family is the one to be married. The elders in the family would talk to her regarding her marriage. The girl is hesitant and tells them that she has chosen the boy whom she will live her life with. The family members

discuss among themselves and with the girl about different issues involved and arrive at the solution of settling for the boy and the further course of action. This is a classic example, which goes on commonly in the Indian scenario. This is found to be effective. There are many instances of this kind within the context of family. Also in offices discussion of this kind works. Technically this is called *group discussion*, which is an effective way of arriving at strategies for managing the problem

- Professional help with the specific problem related professionals. We also have circumstances where these methods fail and we have to go professional help. Professional help for problems could be going to tuition for solving academic problems, to a lawyer for legal problems, to religious leaders for emotional and social problems, social forums for social problems, etc.

#### **4.03 Other Techniques Of Problem Solving**

In addition to the problem solving methods mentioned above - both technical as well as those used commonly, some specific techniques are mentioned here under:

1. Role-play: two or a group of individuals playing / acting the roles as in real life situation.
2. Role reversal: two individuals playing / acting the reverse roles of the partner. It could be teacher – student; husband – wife; brother – sister; two friends; boss – subordinate; etc.
3. Brainstorming: listing as many alternatives, ideas, options as possible, with out criticizing, cutting short, or laughing.
4. Group discussion: Discussion about the problem issue or different aspects of a problem by one or more groups.
5. Dual discussion: Discussion by two individuals about a problem issue or various aspects of a problem.
6. Introspection: Active observation of oneself – ones feelings and emotions, thoughts, actions, reactions, relationships, performance, and the like.
7. Introspective brainstorming: It is brainstorming done by one individual of oneself without cutting short or criticizing for any reason.
8. Auto suggestion: Suggesting oneself by oneself on any issue which one wants to think, feel, or do.

9. Rehearsal in front of the mirror: Practicing to behave in a particular way, with appropriate body language and voice modulation in front of the mirror (to check and learn by self feed back).
10. Reflection: Reflecting on the thoughts, feelings and actions of ones past behaviour.

People with or without much of technical expertise can use these techniques – both the ones commonly used by the people as well as the techniques listed above effectively. However, in this module, an attempt is made to train and develop sub-skills of problem solving, and consequently the life skill of problem solving by using 3 major techniques. The activities that are used in this module are role-play, discussion and brainstorming. These techniques in relation to the various components of problem solving are dealt with.

#### **4.04 Let Us Check Our Progress**

Please answer the following:

1. List various techniques developed by scholars for problem
2. List various methods of problem solving used commonly in society.
3. List various techniques of problem solving given in this module.
4. What is the procedure followed in training for problem solving skill?

#### **4.05 Let Us Sum Up**

In this section we have studied techniques – both the ones commonly used by the people as well as other techniques of problem solving.

---

### **5.00 SELF EVALUATION**

---

1. Can all problems in life be solved?
2. What if some problem cannot be solved?
3. List 5 problems that can be solved.
4. List 2 problems that cannot be solved.
5. Are these components of problem solving skill comprehensive and complete?
6. Please add some more components for problem solving skill.
7. Describe an interesting problem solving context in your experience.

**6.00 PROBLEM SOLVING SKILL: SELF ASSESSMENT TOOL**

**6.01 Problem Solving Scale**

**Name:**

**Date:**

**Sex :**

**Grade or class:**

**Age :**

(if you are a student)

**Directions**

People respond to personal problems in different ways. The statements on this inventory deal with how people react to personal difficulties and problems in their day-to-day life. The term "problems" refers to personal problems that everyone experiences at times, such as depression, inability to get along with friends, etc. Please respond to the items as honestly as possible so as to most accurately portray how *you* handle such personal problems. Your responses should reflect what you *actually* do to solve problems, not how you think you *should* solve them. When you read an item, ask yourself: Do I ever behave this way? Please answer every item.

Read each statement and indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with that statement, using the scale provided. Mark your responses by circling the number to the right of each statement.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5                      6

**Strongly    Moderately    Slightly    Slightly    Moderately    Strongly**  
**Agree       Agree       Agree       Disagree    Disagree       Disagree**

1	When a solution to a problem has failed, I do not examine why it didn't work.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
2	When I am confronted with a complex problem, I don't take the time to develop a strategy for collecting information that will help define the nature of the problem.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
3	When my first efforts to solve a problem fail, I become uneasy about my ability to handle the situation.....	1	2	3	4	5	6

4	After I solve a problem, I do not analyze what went right and what went wrong.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
5	I am usually able to think of creative and effective alternatives to my problems.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
6	After following a course of action to solve a problem, I compare the actual outcome with the one I had anticipated.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	When I have a problem, I think of as many possible ways to handle it as I can until I can't come up with any more ideas.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
8	When confronted with a problem, I consistently examine my feelings to find out what is going on in a problem situation.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
9	When confused about a problem, I don't clarify vague ideas or feelings by thinking of them in concrete terms.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
10	I have the ability to solve most problems even though initially no solution is immediately apparent.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
11	Many of the problems I face are too complex for me to solve.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
12	When solving a problem, I make decisions that I am happy with later.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
13	When confronted with a problem, I tend to do the first thing that I can think of to solve it.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
14	Sometimes I do not stop and take time to deal with my problems, but just kind of muddle ahead.....	1	2	3	4	5	6

15	When considering solutions to a problem, I do not take the time to assess the potential success of each alternative.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
16	When confronted with a problem, I stop and think about it before deciding on a next step.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
17	I generally act on the first idea that comes to mind in solving a problem.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
18	When making a decision, I compare alternatives and weigh the consequences of one against the other .....	1	2	3	4	5	6
19	When I make plans to solve a problem, I am almost certain that I can make them work.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
20	I try to predict the result of a particular course of action.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
21	When I try to think of possible solutions to a problem, I do not come up with very many alternatives.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
22	When trying to solve a problem, one strategy I often use is to think of past problems that have been similar.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
23	Given enough time and effort, I believe I can solve most problems that confront me.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
24	When faced with a novel situation, I have confidence that I can handle problems that may arise .....	1	2	3	4	5	6
25	Even though I work on a problem, sometimes I feel like I'm wandering and not getting down to the real issue.....	1	2	3	4	5	6

26	I make snap judgements and later regret them.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
27	I trust my ability to solve new and difficult problems.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
28	I use a systematic method to compare alternatives and make decisions.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
29	When thinking of ways to handle a problem, I seldom combine ideas from various alternatives to arrive at a workable solution.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
30	When faced with a problem, I seldom assess the external forces that may be contributing to the problem.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
31	When confronted with a problem, I usually first survey the situation to determine the relevant information.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
32	There are times when I become so emotionally charged that I can no longer see the alternatives for solving a particular problem....	1	2	3	4	5	6
33	After making a decision, the actual outcome is usually similar to what I had anticipated....	1	2	3	4	5	6
34	When confronted with a problem, I am unsure of whether I can handle the situation....	1	2	3	4	5	6
35	When I become aware of a problem, one of the first things I do is try to find out exactly what the problem is .....	1	2	3	4	5	6

### 6.02 Problem Solving Scale – Scoring Key

Name:

Roll No:

Approach Avoidance Scale				Problem Solving Confidence		
Q. No.	Scoring Pattern	Score		Q. No.	Scoring Pattern	Score
01	6 →			05	1 →	
02	6 →			10	1 →	
04	6 →			11	6 →	
06	1 →					
07	1 →			1	1 →	
08	1 →			19	1 →	
13	6 →			23	1 →	
15	6 →			24	1 →	
				27	1 →	
16	1 →			33	1 →	
17	6 →			34	6 →	
18	1 →			35	1 →	
20	1 →			PSC	Total	
21	6 →			<b>Personal Control</b>		
28	1 →			Q. No.	Scoring Pattern	Score
30	6 →			03	6 →	
31	1 →			14	6 →	
AAS	Total			25	6 →	
				26	6 →	
	Total Score			32	6 →	
AAS				PCS	Total	
PSC				Scoring Pattern		
PCS				1 →	1 → 1, 2 → 2, 3 → 3, 4 → 4 5 → 5, 6 → 6	
<b>Total</b>				6 →	1 → 6, 2 → 5, 3 → 4, 4 → 3, 5 → 2, 6 → 1	

The maximum Possible Score is 192  
The minimum possible score is 32

Norms :  
32-85 = Good problem solver  
86-139 = Mediocre Problem solver  
140-192 = Poor Problem Solver

	AAS	PSC	PC	Total
Score	-----	-----	-----	-----
Total Average score	-----			

**Note:**

1. Q. No.9, 22, 29 not to be valued.
2. Low total score means good in problem solving.

---

**7.00 REFERENCES**


---

Garfield, S.L. & Bergin, A.E (1978). Handbook of psychotherapy and behaviour change. An empirical analysis. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Mahoney, M.J., & Mahoney, K. (1976a). Permanent weight control. New York: W.W.Norton.

Mahoney, M.J., & Mahoney, K. (1976b). Treatment of obesity: A Clinical Exploration. In B.J.Williams, S.Martin, and J.P.Foreyt (Eds)., Obesity: behavioural approaches to dietary management. New York: Brunner / Mazel.

Ogden, J. (2003). Health Psychology. Philadelphia: Open University Press.

Powell, T.(1992). The Mental Health Handbook. Oxon: Winslow Press.



*He who asks a question may be a fool  
for five minutes, but he who never  
asks a question remains a fool forever.*

*Tom Connelly*

*How you think about a problem is more important than the problem itself - so always think positively.*

*Norman Vincent Peale*

*No problem can stand the assault of sustained thinking.*

*Voltaire*

*Have you got a problem? Do what you can where you are with what you've got.*

*Theodore Roosevelt*

*Module 3*

*Creative Thinking*

## *Module Contents*

<b>1.00 OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>2.00 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>71</b>
2.01 Defining creativity	71
2.02 Let us check our progress	72
2.03 Why do we need to develop creative thinking ability?	73
2.04 Let us check our progress	74
2.05 Characteristics of creative individuals	74
2.06 Positive attitudes enhancing creative thinking	77
2.07 Let us check our progress	78
2.08 Let us sum up	79
<b>3.00 COMPONENTS OF CREATIVE THINKING</b>	<b>79</b>
3.01 Components defined	79
3.02 Let us check our progress	83
3.03 Let us sum up	83
<b>4.00 CREATIVE PROCESS</b>	<b>84</b>
4.01 Stages of creative thinking	84
4.02 The development of creative thinking	84
4.03 Can we teach people to be creative?	85
4.04 Techniques to enhance creativity	86
4.05 What can teachers do?	91
4.06 Student training strategies	92
4.07 Let us check our progress	92
4.08 Let us sum up	93
<b>5.00 SELF EVALUATION</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>6.0 CREATIVE THINKING: ASSESSMENT TOOL</b>	<b>94</b>
6.01 Creative Thinking Test	94
6.02 Creative Thinking Test -Scoring pattern	97
<b>7.00 REFERENCES</b>	<b>98</b>

---

## **1.00 OBJECTIVES**

---

To enable the reader of this module to;

1. State the meaning of creative thinking.
2. List the benefits of being creative.
3. Describe the stages of creativity.
4. List different characteristics of creative people.
5. List the positive attitudes that enhance creativity.
6. Enumerate techniques to enhance creativity.
7. Discuss components of creative thinking skills.
8. List the benefits of developing creative thinking.
9. Analyse the role of teachers in enhancing creative thinking skills among school children.
10. Identify different issues for brainstorming sessions.

---

## **2.00 INTRODUCTION**

---

All of us are familiar with the word creativity as we keep using this in our every day life. We call some one a creative writer, some one a creative composer, a creative poet etc. A common man's understanding of creativity is correct, but technically, it can be defined more clearly. The creative ability needs to be understood by all of us in order to apply certain principles of developing creativity in our lives.

However, believe it or not, everyone has substantial creative ability. Just look at how creative children are. In adults, creativity has too often been suppressed through education, but it is still there and can be reawakened. Often all that's needed to be creative is to make a commitment to creativity and to devote time for it.

### **2.01 Defining Creativity**

Basically, creativity is about producing new ideas or combining old ideas in a unique way. Creativity is only constrained by imagination. It goes through from idea or vision ('the eureka!' moment) through to a description that expresses the organisation and structure of the concept held in the mind to a third party. The idea may not be expressed in a way that is easily understood or assumptions in the description may not be obvious to the third party. Basically, creativity is about producing the ideas. The words 'Creativity' and 'Innovation' are often used together.

Creativity necessarily involves the ability to recognise and develop a novel approach; the ability to consider a problem from multiple angles and to change points of view repeatedly; and the ability to develop a simple idea in different ways. Creative thought can be applied to practical problems (such as raising money), intellectual tasks (making new connections in a term Paper) or artistic work (writing a poem)

A simple definition is that creativity is the ability to imagine or invent something new. As we will see below, creativity is not the ability to create out of nothing but the ability to generate new ideas by combining, changing, or reapplying existing ideas. Some creative ideas are astonishing and brilliant, while others are just simple, good, practical ideas that no one seems to have thought of yet.

Creativity is also an attitude: the ability to accept change and newness, a willingness to play with ideas and possibilities, a flexibility of outlook, the habit of enjoying the good, while looking for ways to improve it. We are socialized into accepting only a small number of permitted or normal things, like chocolate-covered strawberries, for example. The creative person realises that there are other possibilities, like peanut butter and banana sandwiches, or chocolate-covered prunes.

Creative people work hard and continually to improve ideas and solutions, by making gradual alterations and refinements to their work. Contrary to the myths surrounding creativity, very, very few works of creative excellence are produced with a single stroke of brilliance or in a frenzy of rapid activity.

Creativity is essentially the art of discovery and an act of faith. When one creates something--- a work of art, book, software program, dance routine, or role for a play, he/she discovers parts of his/her-self that he/she never knew existed.

Keeping in view all these, we can operationally define Creativity as *the ability to produce something original of high quality or to devise effective new ways of solving a problem.*

## **2.02 Let Us Check Our Progress**

Mark the following statements either as true or false.

- i. There can be creative carpenter.
- ii. All literary masterpieces are the products of creative mind
- iii. Improving an existing product is a creative act
- iv. Synthesising existing things to produce a new thing is not creativity

### **2.03 Why Do We Need To Develop Creative Thinking Ability?**

Creative thinking enables us to look beyond our direct experiences to explore alternate solutions to our problems as well as consequences of our actions or non-action. Creative thinking can help us to respond adaptively and with flexibility to the challenges of our daily lives.

Students can benefit from creativity exercises, showing greater self-efficacy and improved ability to identify and express creativity within him/ or her-self (Slavkin, 2004). Findings from a pre/post-creativity exercise survey indicated that an overwhelming majority of students felt that the coursework gave them greater insight into themselves and their abilities to tap into unappreciated and underutilized aspects of self. This newly-recognized part of their personality carried over into other classes, into the workplace and into their personal relationships (Livingston, 1999; Stokes, 1999). In addition, students believed that their leadership abilities were enhanced (Tierney, Farmer, and Green, 1999).

Creative people are in high demand in today's world (Stevens and Burley, 1999). If adults are to be successful and prosper, innovative thinking and behaving must be encouraged. Therefore it is imperative that students continue to receive opportunities to develop divergent thinking skills (Slavkin, 2004).

Creativity is an important component of problem solving, other higher cognitive abilities, social and emotional well-being, and academic and adult success (Slavkin, 2004).

Our children, needs to develop creative thinking because, it helps them

1. to expand their abilities beyond the boundaries of intelligence
2. in coping up with rapid growth of competition in all walks of life.
3. in effective use of human resources
4. in discovering new and better Ways of solving problems
5. in the formulation of intellectual members of a society leading to an intellectual society,
6. to use their natural creative talents
7. to develop effective leadership
8. to remain mentally alert and healthy leading to self growth and self actualisation

## 2.04 Let Us Check Our Progress

State in 1 or 2 sentences why creative thinking is to be considered as a Life skill.

---

---

---

---

## 2.05 Characteristics Of Creative Individuals

Human beings share an innate need to create. There is a continuum of creativity, ranging from being slightly creative to highly creative. The good news is that one can learn to be more creative by observing creative people and modelling yourself after them. Artists, writers, and creative types seem to have similar characteristics. Some of the personality traits listed below may seem eccentric, odd, even 'out there' - but that is where creativity lies - in the outreaches of our consciousness, in the depths of our souls.

- **Unconventional:** Creative people do not feel the need to conform to society's standards. They often swim against the current and flow with their own way of thinking and living. They have original ideas that literally turn the world upside down and right-side out. Take for example, Galileo who proved that the earth revolved around the sun (instead of the other way around), which was revolutionary in his time.
- **Individualistic:** Creative people want to find out what the truth is, and they have a strong need to decide for themselves what works and what does not. Often they are ahead of their time, and much of their work is appreciated or acknowledged after they are dead and gone.
- **Inventive:** Creative people live in the world of ideas, and don't always have the best interpersonal skills. Because they are so highly intelligent, and live in the realm of possibility, they are constantly coming up with bright ideas. They also take notice of what is missing in the world and/or what could be improved. Take for instance, Thomas Edison, who invented hundreds of things in his time, his most famous invention being the light bulb. He saw that there was darkness and created light.
- **Driven:** Creative people are almost compulsive until they can bring their internal vision into fruition. They have that 'fire in their belly'---a passion to contribute to the beauty and betterment of the world. Because of their high drive, they can produce a lot in a relatively short period of time.

- **Visionary:** Creative people have a guiding vision in their head, heart, and soul that they are often called to bring to life.
- **Intuitive:** Creative people are very much in touch with their inner selves. They pay attention to the signs, synchronicities, symbols around them, and make use of that information in their work. They often act as a channel, where ideas and inspiration come from a higher plane. They allow the work to guide them to where it needs to go. The work clearly originates in their soul, not from their ego. Talk about ideas coming from out of the blue, remember how Isaac Newton 'discovered' gravity? He was sitting under a tree and an apple fell on his head!
- **Curiosity:** Display a great deal of curiosity about many things; are constantly asking questions about anything and everything; may have broad interests in many unrelated areas. May devise collections based on unusual things and interests.
- **Fluency:** Generate a large number of ideas or solutions to problems and questions; often offer unusual ("way out"), unique, clever responses.
- **Uninhibited:** Are often uninhibited in expressions of opinion; are sometimes radical and spirited in disagreement; are unusually tenacious or persistent -- fixating on an idea or project.
- **Risk taking:** Are willing to take risks, are often people who are described as a "high risk taker, or adventurous, or speculative."
- **Imaginative:** Display a good deal of intellectual playfulness; may frequently be caught fantasizing, daydreaming or imagining. Often wonder out loud and might be heard saying, "I wonder what would happen if. . ." or "What if we change ... .." They can manipulate ideas by easily changing, elaborating, adapting, improving, or modifying the original idea or the ideas of others.
- **Sense of Humour:** Display keen senses of humour and see humour in situations that may not appear to be humorous to others. Sometimes their humour may appear bizarre, inappropriate, and irreverent to others.
- **Sensitive:** Exhibit heightened emotional sensitivity. May be very sensitive to beauty, and visibly moved by aesthetic experiences.
- **Non conformity:** Are frequently perceived as nonconforming; accept disordered or chaotic environments or situations; are frequently not interested in details, are described as individualistic; or do not fear being classified as "different."

- **Inquisitiveness:** Creative people want to know things--all kinds of things-- just to know them. Knowledge does not require a reason. The question, "Why do you want to know that?" seems strange to the creative person, who is likely to respond, "Because I don't know the answer." For example, an individual was once attempting to repair something, without apparent success, when an onlooker asked testily, "Do you know what you're doing?" The person replied calmly, "No, that's why I'm doing it." The curious person's questioning attitude toward life is a positive and not destructive, reflecting scepticism or negativism. It often seems threatening because too often there is no good reason behind many of the things that are taken for granted--there is no "why" behind the status quo.
- **Constructive discontent:** This is not a whining, griping kind of discontent, but the ability to see a need for improvement and to propose a method of making that improvement. Constructive discontent is a positive, enthusiastic discontent, reflecting the thought, "Hey, I know a way to make that better." Constructive discontent is necessary for a creative problem solver, for if we are happy with everything the way it is, we won't want to change anything. Only when we become discontented with something, then we see a problem and want to solve the problem and improve the situation. One of the hallmarks of the constructively discontented person is that of a problem-seeking outlook. The more problems we find, the more solutions and therefore improvements we can make. Even previously solved problems can often be solved again, in a better way. A constructively discontent person might think, "This is an excellent solution, but I wonder if there isn't another solution that works even better (or costs less, etc).
- **The ability to suspend judgment and criticism:** Many new ideas, because they are new and unfamiliar, seem strange, odd, and even repulsive. Only later do they become "obviously" great. Other ideas, in their original incarnations, are indeed weird, but they lead to practical, beautiful, elegant things. Thus, it is important for the creative thinker to be able to suspend judgment when new ideas are arriving, to have an optimistic attitude toward ideas in general, and to avoid condemning them with the typical kinds of negative responses like, "That will never work; that's no good; what an idiotic idea; that's impossible," and so forth. Some of our everyday tools that we now love and use daily, were opposed when they were originally presented: Aluminium cookware? No one wants that. Erasers on pencils? That would only encourage carelessness. Computers? There's no market for more than a few, so why build them? Perhaps this proverb:

*"A crank is a genius whose idea hasn't yet caught on."*

- **Perseverance:** Most people fail because they spend only nine minutes on a problem that requires ten minutes to solve. Creativity and problem solving are hard work and require fierce application of time and energy. There is no quick and easy secret. You need knowledge gained by study and research and you must put your knowledge to work by hard thinking and protracted experimentation. You've surely read of the difficulties and setbacks faced by most of the famous inventors--how many filaments Edison tried before he found a working one, how many aircraft designs failed in the attempt to break the sound barrier. But planning to persevere is planning to succeed.
- **A flexible imagination:** Creative people are comfortable with imagination and with thinking so-called weird, wild, or unthinkable thoughts, just for the sake of stimulation. During brainstorming or just mental playfulness, all kinds of strange thoughts and ideas can be entertained. And the mind, pragmatist that it is, will probably find something useful in it all.

## 2.06 Positive Attitudes That Facilitate Creative Thinking

- ✓ **A belief that most problems can be solved:** By faith at first and by experience later on, the creative thinker believes that something can always be done to eliminate or help alleviate almost every problem. Problems are solved by a commitment of time and energy, and where this commitment is not present, few things become impossible. The belief in the solvability of problems is especially useful early on in attacking any problem, because many problems at first seem utterly impossible and scare off the fainter hearted. Those who take on the problem with confidence will be the ones most likely to think through or around the impossibility of the problem.
- ✓ **Seeing the good in the bad:** Creative thinkers, when faced with poor solutions, don't cast them away. Instead, they ask, "What's good about it?" because there may be something useful even in the worst ideas. And however little that good may be, it might be turned to good effect or made greater.
- ✓ **Problems lead to improvements:** The attitude of constructive discontent searches for problems and possible areas of improvement, but many times problems arrive on their own. But such unexpected and perhaps unwanted problems are not necessarily bad, because they often permit solutions that leave the world better than before the problem arose.

- ✓ **A problem can also be a solution:** A fact that one person describes as a problem can sometimes be a solution for someone else. Above we noted that creative thinkers could find good ideas in bad solutions. Creative thinkers also look at problems and ask, "Is there something good about this problem?" For example, soon after the advent of super glue (cyanoacrylate adhesives), it was noted that if you weren't careful, you could glue your fingers together with it. This problem--a permanent skin bond--was soon seen as a solution, also. Surgeons in Vietnam began to use super glue-to-glue wounds together.
- ✓ **Problems are interesting and emotionally acceptable:** Many people confront every problem with a shudder and a turn of the head. They don't even want to admit that a problem exists--with their car, their spouse, their child, their job, their house, whatever. As a result, often the problem persists and drives them crazy or rises to a crisis and drives them crazy. Creative people see problems as interesting challenges worth tackling. Problems are not fearful beasts to be feared or loathed; they are worthy opponents to be jostled with and unhorsed. Problem solving is fun, educational, rewarding, ego building, and helpful to society.
- ✓ **A belief that mistakes are welcome:** Modern society has for some reason conceived the idea that the only unforgivable thing is to fail or make a mistake. Actually failure is an opportunity; mistakes show that something is being done. So creative people have come to realize and accept emotionally that making mistakes is not negative. One chief executive of an Indian corporation warns all his newly hired managers, "Make sure you make a reasonable number of mistakes." Mistakes are educational and can lead to success--because they mean you are doing something.

### 2.07 Let Us Check Our Progress

Match the items in list A with the statements given in list B. Write the serial number of the item that matches with the statement in the space provided on the right side of the statement

List A	List B	Answers
1. Positive attitude	A child dissecting a toy to see what is inside	
2. Perseverance	Not giving a judgement in the absence of sufficient data	
3. Curiosity	Dreaming about what many people think as impossible	
4. Suspended judgement	Seeing every problem situation as an opportunity	
5. Constructive discontent	Will not rest till the solution is found	
6. Unconventional	Wanting nothing less than perfect	

## 2.08 Let Us Sum Up

We have not only understood the meaning of creative thinking but also characteristics of creative individuals and the positive attitudes they have.

---

## 3.00 COMPONENTS OF CREATIVE THINKING:

---

### 3.01 Components Defined

**Divergent Thinking:** *is the ability to think in different ways on one issue.*

The divergent abilities are those, which enables the individual to go off in many different directions, generating new information from given information and arrived at varied and unusual solutions to problems. In the educational programs, we should integrate divergent thinking abilities. Creativity requires on the part of the individual to use the given information in different ways and find new relationships, which no one else has thought before. Brainstorming, keeping a journal, free writing, and mind mapping are some of the techniques of stimulating divergent thinking.

**Innovativeness:** *is the ability to think in new ways of doing things, different from the routine ways, which is cost effective if implemented, and worthy of emulation.*

The description of creativity that is now generally accepted identifies it as the ability to create products or ideas which are original and which possess a strong social relevance. It includes, finding new uses for existing things, new better ways of doing things etc. Frank Barron, one of the most authoritative researchers in this field, notes that a creative product or idea should be new or original and be acknowledged as such by social consensus: a criterion of usefulness is implied by, although not essential to this definition. In this view "Creations" are products, which appear new and are also considered valuable by consensus. To introduce an innovation requires the comparison of the new idea or product with the pre-existing alternative, and the evaluation of the innovative product with respect to existing needs. A creative result can serve to resolve a problem, though this can be experienced at an individual level, in the majority of cases the problem operates on a social level, and the creative solution must be communicated to others if it is to produce some effect.

We should note that Innovation is not the same as innovativeness. Innovation is the result of Innovativeness, of being innovative. Innovativeness is a process; Innovation is the result of that process.

In other words, creativity is having new ideas; innovativeness is the process of implementing and using these new ideas. That is to say, innovativeness is a transformation process: transforming a new idea into an innovation i.e. a new way of doing things.

**Novelty:** *is the ability to generate new ways of thinking which the individual /group had not used in the past.*

Novelty can be explored from the instructor's perspective and/or the student's perspective. There are many researchers and educators who have developed unique ways to generate creativity in the student or adult learner. Following are a few tips to help students develop a different way of looking at the presented problem in the online course.

- **Multiple perspectives.** Da Vinci espoused that until a problem was looked at from three perspectives, a basis for understanding was truly not in place. (e.g. when designing the bicycle, he looked at the problem from three perspectives: inventor/investors, rider/consumer, and municipalities where the bicycles would be used.)
- **Take on a different role.** Ask online students to respond to questions such as: "How would you run your school if you become the principal? Novelty in thinking and doing needs to be encouraged among students in schools. This personality virtue needs to be carefully nurtured. Students must be enabled to develop this. Schools therefore have a significant role to play. This needs to be underscored and understood by all those who matter in school education.

**Fluency:** *is the ability to generate fluently many ideas about a situation without any discontinuity of thoughts.*

Fluency means richness in production, being more than the others, plentiful in quantity, fertilized ideas, a lot of work. Fluency is producing more ideas, answers and alternatives that can be accepted by other specialists in a defined period of time. The student who can give 15 topics for a script is more fluent and creative than the one who can give just 10 topics within the same time. The latter is more fluent and creative than the one who can give just 5 topics for the same script within the same time.

The fluency training should be started from kindergarten and the first years of primary school. The pupils can be tackled by variety and different exercises. Giving topics for scripts is useful exercise in this field. Asking questions on a script, expecting what may happen from existence of some conditions, giving different reasons of some conditions, listing alternatives for any situation; defining familiar things in different ways are all good exercises that develop fluency of students.

**Flexibility:** *is the ability to shift perspectives while thinking and generate as many ideas as possible.*

Flexibility is a way of looking at things from different points of view. It means variety in thoughts. It also means adopting ideas, answers and alternatives that have been produced in different groups, classes, families, ranks and categories.

Rigidity in thinking or unwillingness to change one's line of thinking even when compelling evidences to do so are available is not preferred in creativity. Instead, the differences are important and are always investigated. This is an important attribute of creativity. In school context, teachers have to encourage their students to think in different ways. For the purpose of flexibility the formalities and regularities may have to be changed. Reading different books, journals and newspapers, listening to different broadcastings, seeing different television channels, having different meals, meeting different people, changing the place of residence, visiting other places and bookshops, being a member of different organisations, participating in conferences, panels and scientific discussions, all can lead to a new flexible perspective in life as individuals and situations differ.

**Originality:** *is the ability to think very differently from the large majority of people on different social situations, disregard of their social approval.*

Originality is doing some thing new which large majority does not do. Originality represents uniqueness. There is a very great difference among the people in there original thoughts. The originality of creativity is a hidden capability. The original ideas are not inherited by special people. Everyone can produce original ideas if he or she gets enough training, spends enough time to demonstrate.

It is unknown when and where, how many and what original ideas that can jump into mind. It is also known that original

ideas appear very fast as glances then disappear immediately. So if it is not caught quickly it might disappear forever. Thus, it is vital to catch these original ideas before they disappear. It is also unknown how long it takes to produce an original idea. Creative ideas are a mixture of reality and imagination. The percentage of the imagination to reality is unknown and it differs from one idea to another. Thus, the imagination of children should not be forbidden, but it has to be encouraged from the first years of schooling. It is also known that creative ideas increase in an environment where the games, fun and more stimuli are available. Thus, it is useful to offer facilitating environments for one to grow. This has implications for schools and teachers.

**Elaboration:** *is the ability to think in such a way where one is capable of expanding different issues to different proportions in a connected manner.*

Elaboration is a measure expanding on a single idea to create others. Many a times it is not the idea itself, or even the question or problem that a student is posed with, that ultimately provides a solution, or resolution, but rather the ruminations upon particular parts of an idea or by changing one aspect of an idea and speculating on how this single change would have a ripple effect on other aspects of the problem at hand. It is something like painting a more vivid word picture, adding details such as how or where.

**Unconventionality:** *is the ability to think very differently from the practiced conventional ways of thinking by the group on any issue of social life.*

Unconventionality lets one to be less ordinary and more original in thought and deed. It enables one to accept unexpected occurrences as a bonus for they can heighten his/her awareness level when allowed to enter the base of experiences. To be unconventional needs a number of supportive factors like, optimism, open mindedness, open for criticism. If children are allowed to practice these qualities it is certain that their creative thinking skills will develop.

**Independence:** *is the ability to think without being influenced by the views of others.*

It is the state or quality of being free from subjectivity or from the influence, control, or pressure of individuals, things, or situations. An independent individual arrives at his own

conclusions after careful consideration of all relevant material. He/she will not be influenced by any consideration other than validity, reliability of data. Such an individual will neither be a 'yes' person or a 'no' person; but, will be a person who can take his/her own stand on issues

Children must be given the freedom to exercise their ideas. The courage to put their thoughts into actions irrespective of what others think and what others say is the most important aspect of being creative.

People who are considered independent in their thoughts and actions have proved to be great artists, scientists and poets. Training the children, by giving them a variety of opportunities and exercises to put forward their novel, unconventional ideas, can enhance this quality.

### 3.02 Let Us Check Our Progress

Name the component described by each of the following statement

- (i) Describing an idea in detail: \_\_\_\_\_
- (ii) Producing a series of ideas continuously: \_\_\_\_\_
- (iii) Thinking of a large number of alternatives: \_\_\_\_\_
- (iv) Thinking of something which no one else had thought of: \_\_\_\_\_
- (v) Moving away from the 'beaten track': \_\_\_\_\_
- (vi) Doing something in new way using existing materials: \_\_\_\_\_
- (vii) Making informed changes in one's ways of thinking: \_\_\_\_\_
- (viii) Taking an informed stand on an issue: \_\_\_\_\_
- (ix) Presenting an idea in a new unique way: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3.03 Let Us Sum Up

We have understood that divergent thinking, innovativeness, originality, novelty, flexibility, fluency, originality, elaboration and independence are the most important components of creative thinking.

---

## 4.00 CREATIVE PROCESS

---

### 4.01 Stages Of Creative Thinking

Creative thinking is a process as well as a product. There are many theorists who have suggested that creativity involves multiple stages. Wallas (1926) described a four-stage theory of creativity.

**Preparation:** Is the phase during which information is gathered on the subject; the hard grind part of the process requiring one to become very knowledgeable about the area of concern.

**Incubation:** Is the period following the gruelling process of preparation in which one engages in other activities not consciously working on the problem but permitting consideration of the problem in the subconscious mind.

**Illumination** (Sometimes called 'Aha!' or 'Eureka!' experience) Is that moment when a possible viable solution to the problem occurs to one.

**Verification:** Is the period where the testing of the solution takes place. It involves the organisation of data and conducting experiments.

Many variants of this idea have since been proposed (Sapp, 1992). Support is strongest for a simpler, two-stage process in which in the first stage you generate a variety of possible solutions to a problem; in the second stage, you interpret and select among them (Campbell, 1960; Martindale, 1990; Simonton, 1995, 1997). Thus, creativity as a process involves certain processes. What is seen as a product is an outcome of this process. This is applicable in any educational situation too.

### 4.02 The Development Of Creative Thinking

Considerable research evidence suggests that both genetic and environmental factors are involved in the development of creativity or creative thinking. At this time, little can be done in the way of manipulating genetic material. We can, however alter behaviour through manipulation of the environment in which the individual lives. Consequently it is of importance to understand something of the type of environment in which creative people live and in which their creative talents have developed. We need to know as much as possible about the life history of such individuals, the CULTURE or cultures in which creativity

flourishes, the role of the FAMILY, and finally the part played by formal education in the whole process.

According to Torrance, 'One of the ways by which a culture honours creative talent is reflected in the ideals of the teachers of that culture and the kinds of behaviour that they encourage and discourage among children'

Another way in which creative talent is honoured in a particular culture is in the availability of creative occupation outlets for its members.

#### **4.03 Can We Teach People To Be Creative?**

The creative thinking abilities can be developed to different degrees among different individuals through systematically organized program of instruction. Creativity is not a unitary trait, but a complex of so many discrete abilities and personality qualities. We cannot turn every child into highly creative person, but we can make each child think in a creative manner, so that he or she is able to use his or her abilities in one or the other field.

In our Indian education system, we have seen that we have arranged everything systematically ready made knowledge in form of neatly organized lessons, units and textbooks. The entire syllabus is prescribed and child is required to follow it rigidly. The course is generally so heavy that the child does not feel easy with the text. So we have to plan our teaching strategy in such a way that creative teaching and learning are also emphasized in the regular course.

Probably without exception, all educators would agree that development of creativity in children is one of the prime goals of the school. In many instances however schools not only fall short of this desirable aim but also actually frustrate or impede creative impulses in their pupils. Dehan and Havinghurst (1957) have listed a number of factors that tend to stifle creative work in the school. These include high standards of achievement for low levels of work, inflexible assignments and methods of work, impatience of adults, conformity to group standards of mediocrity, and the teachers' attitudes.

After analysing the creative process, the creative personality, and environmental factors that facilitate creativity, Gold (1975) has formulated a number of guidelines that may be utilized by school personnel in fostering creative effort.

- Providing a rich environment that stimulates creative thinking
- Maintenance of considerable spontaneity
- Giving recognition to the creative child and reinforcing his creativity
- Emphasise on helping children see relationships contrasts and sequences.
- Encouragement of group contributions to individual creativity.
- Recognition of self-discovery in creativity.
- Recognition of readiness for creativity
- Realising the importance of the whole community as a stimulus to creative effort.
- Access to creative persons in the community
- Access to farms, manufacturing plants, libraries and museums.

#### **4.04 Techniques To Enhance Creativity**

There are innumerable techniques to develop creative thinking in children. However, below are given a few practical techniques that can be implemented in schools.

##### **(A) Brainstorming**

Alex Osborn, advertising writer of the fifties and sixties, has contributed many very powerful creative thinking techniques. Brainstorming is probably the best known and certainly one of the most powerful. For a fuller treatment, see his book, *Applied Imagination*.

Brainstorming is an idea generating technique. Its main goals are (1) to break us out of our habit-bound thinking, and (2) to produce a set of ideas from which we can choose. (No one wants to have a choice of only one product when buying detergent or cars, so why have a choice of only one solution when working on a problem?)

##### ***Basic Guidelines for Brainstorming***

Brainstorming is useful for attacking specific (rather than general) problems and where a collection of good, fresh, new ideas (rather than judgment or decision analysis) are needed.

Brainstorming can take place either individually or in a group of two to ten, with four to seven being ideal. (Alex Osborn, brainstorming inventor, recommends an ideal group size of

twelve, though this has proven to be a bit unwieldy.) The best results are obtained when the following guidelines are observed:

***Suspend judgment.*** This is the most important rule. When ideas are brought forth, no critical comments are allowed. All ideas are written down. Evaluation is to be reserved for later. We have been trained to be so instantly analytic, practical, and convergent in our thinking that this step is very difficult to observe, but it is crucial. To create and criticize at the same time is like watering and pouring weed killer onto seedlings at the same time.

***Think freely.*** Wild thoughts, impossible and unthinkable ideas are fine. In fact, in every session, there should be several ideas so strange, that they make the group laugh. Remember that practical ideas very often come from silly, impractical, impossible ones. By permitting yourself to think outside the boundaries of ordinary, normal thought, brilliant new solutions can arise. Some "wild" ideas turn out to be practical, too.

***Tag on.*** Improve, modify, and build on the ideas of others. What's good about the idea just suggested? How can it be made to work? What changes would make it better or even wilder? Use another's idea as stimulation for your own improvement or variation. As we noted earlier, changing just one aspect of an unworkable solution can sometimes make it a great solution.

For example, how can we get more students at our school? Brainstorm idea: Pay them to come here. That sounds unworkable, but what about modifying it? Pay them with something other than money--like an emotional, spiritual, or intellectual reward or even a practical value-added reward like better networking or job contacts?

***Quantity of ideas is important.*** Concentrate on generating a large stock of ideas so that later on they can be sifted through. There are two reasons for desiring a large quantity. First, the obvious, usual, stale, unworkable ideas seem to come to mind first, so that the first, say, 20 or 25 ideas are probably not going to be fresh and creative. Second, the larger your list of possibilities, the more you will have to choose from, to adapt, or to combine. Some brainstormers aim for a fixed number, like 50 or 100 ideas before quitting the session.

### **(B) Block Busting Techniques**

**Uses for:** This is a simple technique that can be used for mental stimulation or practical application, depending on what

you have in mind at the time. It is an excellent tool for breaking you out of a functionally fixated mindset. To use this technique, think of an item or object, usually a common one like a brick, toothpick, pencil, or bucket, and set the task of thinking of all the possible uses for that object, without regard to what the object is normally used for, what it is named, or how it is usually thought of.

Sometimes a time limit, like three to five minutes, is given. Other times a quantity limit, like 25 to 100 is given. All the techniques of idea generation are used, from checklist to attribute analysis to random stimulation.

For example: What are the possible uses for a brick? Possible ideas are: doorstop, boat anchor, build a wall, build a walk, ballast, sanding block, powder and make dye, put on white background and make a sign (red letters), nut cracker, shoes, straightedge, red chalk, stop signal (use something green like a cucumber for go), heat reservoir, leaf press, paper weight, step stool, target for shooting, children's toys, scale weight standard, distance standard, definition of red, water holder (soaked), tamper, pattern maker (in soft material), pendulum weight, bell clapper, roofing material (crushed) etc.

**Improvements to:** "Improvements to" is the counterpart of "uses for." Whereas "uses for" concentrates on using a given item, often unchanged, for multiple purposes different from the item's original purpose, the "improvements to" technique focuses on altering an item to enhance its original, given purpose. The item in question can be any of several kinds and is not limited to objects.

*(a) Objects.*

The first and most obvious "thing" to improve is an object, usually something common that most people would never think of changing. The improvements ideally should move away from obvious bolt-on things, however. For example, in the problem, "Think of several ways to improve books," the first things that come to mind might be the addition or repair ones like

- better binding
- lighter weight
- lower cost
- clearer type
- more colour pictures
- better indexes

We might also think about more imaginative improvements like

- books that read themselves (talk to you)
- books with three dimensional pictures
- books with multiple reading paths
- books that explain their hard parts (better glosses?)
- books that project on the wall so you don't have to hold them

*(b) Places, Institutions, Things*

In addition to the object, a second kind of thing that improvements for can be applied to is a place, institution, or thing. For example, list ten ways to improve a college, or a marriage, or a shopping mall, or the local church, or the road system, or communications channels (telephone, TV, radio). Improvements to these areas require more thoughtful and elaborate proposals, often involving improvements in attitudes, beliefs, behaviour, relationships, or other non-tangible things, as well as changes in physical technology.

➤ *Aspects to be considered while improving something*

Simplify, Apply to new use, Automate, Reduce Cost, Make easier to use, Reduce fear to own, Make safer, Give more performance, Make faster, less waiting, Provide more durability, Give better appearance, Create more acceptance by others, Add features, functions, Integrate functions, Make more flexible, versatile, Make lighter weight--or heavier, Make smaller--or larger, Make more powerful, Reduce or eliminate drawbacks, bad side effects, Make more elegant, Give better shape, design, style, Provide better sensory appeal (taste, feel, look, smell, sound), Provide better psychological appeal (understandable, acceptable), Provide better emotional appeal (happy, warm, satisfying, enjoyable, fun, likable, "neat"), Aim toward ideal rather than immediate goals, Give larger capacity, Make portable, Make self-cleaning, easy to clean, and Make more accurate are some of the possibilities.

**(C) What-Iffing.**

A major block to creativity for many of us is the mind's fierce grasp on reality. This very factor that keeps us sane also keeps us from thinking beyond what we know to be true. What-iffing is a tool for releasing the mind, for delivering us from being blocked by reality.

In its simplest form, what-iffing involves describing an imagined action or solution and then examining the probable associated facts, consequences, or events. Instead of quickly saying, "That sounds dumb," or "That would never work," and leaving our criticism vague, we trace as exactly as our reasonable minds can generate the specific implications or consequences of the newly imagined fact.

On another level, what-iffing allows us to create a completely new reality, to establish a new chain of being or relationships, to change the unchangeable in hope of generating a new perspective on a problem or a new idea.

For example: What if rocks were soft? We could put big ones in our houses like pillows to lean on in the living room. We could use them like "medicine balls" to toss to each other for exercise. We could line roads with piles of rocks to keep cars from damage when control was lost on dangerous corners. We could jump off high buildings onto rock piles. Crushed rock pits could be used to jump into by athletes. On the other hand, rock grinding wheels wouldn't work anymore.

#### **(D) Attribute Analysis.**

Attribute analysis is the process of breaking down a problem, idea, or thing into attributes or component parts and then thinking about the attributes rather than the thing itself.

For example: How can we read and remember better?

- First, what are the attributes of reading and remembering?  
Possibilities: books, repetition, visualization, understanding (comprehension), quantity of material and number of details, length of time desired to remember (short or long or permanent).
- What are the attributes of visualization? ... Solution: draw pictures of what you read.
- What are the attributes of understanding? ... Simplify text by rewriting it or summaries of it into your own words

#### **(E) Morphological Analysis.**

Morphological analysis builds upon attribute analysis by generating alternatives for each attribute, thereby producing new possibilities.

The rules are simple:

- List the attributes of the problem, object, or situation as you would in a standard attribute analysis
- Under each attribute, list all the alternatives you can think of.  
Choose an alternative from each column at random and assemble the choices into a possibility for a new idea. Repeat the choosing and assembly many times.

For example, 'improve the text book'

What are the current attributes of a textbook?

<b>size/ shape</b>	<b>binding</b>	<b>cover</b>	<b>pages</b>	<b>type</b>	<b>pictures</b>
<i>Small</i>	<i>perfect</i>	<i>hardback</i>	<i>large</i>	<i>Roman</i>	<i>photos</i>
<i>Large</i>	<i>sewn</i>	<i>paper</i>	<i>small</i>	<i>varied</i>	<i>drawings</i>
<i>Long</i>	<i>spiral</i>	<i>plastic</i>	<i>glossy</i>	<i>colour</i>	<i>colour</i>
<i>Round</i>	<i>left</i>	<i>none</i>	<i>thick</i>	<i>highlighted</i>	<i>holograms</i>
<i>Micro</i>	<i>top</i>	<i>thin</i>	<i>large</i>	<i>vertical</i>	<i>U-draw</i>

#### 4.05 What Can Teachers Do?

Wise teachers can create and provide plenty of opportunities for creative behaviours of children. They can make assignments that call for original work, independent thinking and learning, self-initiated projects, and experimentation. Teachers can provide progressive warm-up experiences, procedures that permit one thing leading to another, and other activities that make creative thinking both entertaining and rewarding. A clear understanding by teachers can make it easier for teachers to provide opportunities for creative learning, thinking and expressions.

The following are some of the things caring teachers and adults can do to foster and nurture creativity:

- We can teach children to appreciate and be pleased with their own creative efforts.
- We can be respectful of the unusual questions children ask and attempt to answer them.
- We can be respectful of children's unusual ideas and solutions, as children will see many relationships that their parents and teachers miss.

- We can show children that their ideas have value by listening to their ideas and considering them. We can encourage children to test their ideas by using them and communicating them to others. We must give them credit for their ideas.
- We can provide opportunities and give credit for self-initiated learning.
- We can provide chances for children to learn, think, and discover without threats of immediate evaluation. Constant evaluation, especially during practice and initial learning, makes children afraid to use creative ways to learn. We must accept their honest errors as part of the creative learning process.

#### **4.06 Student Training Strategies**

Now let us try to chalk-out a workable training strategy to train our students in creative thinking. You know that to acquire creative thinking ability one has to go on practising in a systematic way till one acquires it. Mere knowledge of the process will not make one a creative thinker. The process of creative thinking appears to be simple. Therefore, one is likely to conclude that we should train our students in each of the enumerated components as we normally do while training students in psycho-motor skills. However, we have seen that there are different components that will influence actual carrying out of the process. Therefore, it is envisaged to sensitise students to the importance of these components in creative thinking through role-play in combination with decision/discussion. Brain-storming together with discussion will also be used as pre role-play activity not only to develop divergent thinking ability etc, but also to impress upon the students usefulness of this technique in different situations as well as prepare them to catch the essence of the role-play. Only then, let us then provide specialised exercises described in this module. Let us also remember that surveillance, evaluation, rewards (if overused, deprive intrinsic pleasure of creative activity), competition (win-lose situations), over-control, restricting choices, pressure kill creativity.

We can establish creative relationships with children--encouraging creativity in the classroom while providing adequate guidance for the students.

#### **4.07 Let Us Check Our Progress**

1. Name the four stages of creativity: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. What type of learning environment is to be provided for nurturing creative thinking?

\_\_\_\_\_.

3. Mention the techniques that can be used to foster creative thinking.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### **4.08 Let Us Sum Up**

In this section we have studied about stages of creativity and how it can be nurtured in the classroom.

---

#### **5.00 SELF EVALUATION**

---

Answer the following questions in a separate sheet of paper.

- (1) Define creativity and explain its uses?
- (2) What are the different stages of creative Thinking?
- (3) How can creative thinkers be characterized?
- (4) How can positive attitudes enhance creative thinking?
- (5) What kinds of environment would be appropriate to nurture creative thinking?
- (6) What have you understood about different techniques of developing creative thinking skill?
- (7) Discuss the significance of different components of creative thinking skill.
- (8) What are the benefits of being a creative thinker?
- (9) What can teachers do in schools to develop creative thinking skills?

---

**6.0 CREATIVE THINKING: ASSESSMENT TOOL**

---

**6.01 Creative Thinking Test**

Dr.C.G.Venkatesha Murthy

**General Directions**

This is a test to assess your ability to see how creative you are in your thinking. There are three sections. In every section specific directions are given. Read them carefully and answer them. Attempt all the three sections.

**Section 1**

**Directions:** Answer the following one by one as quickly and differently as you can. Follow the example given below to understand how you have to answer.

**Example: Question:** Write as many uses as possible from the word 'Water'.

**Answers:** Drinking, Washing, Bath, Cleaning vehicles, Cleaning vessels, Generation of electricity, gardening, as thinner, cooking, etc.

**On similar lines answer the following four questions.**

a. Colours

b. Sand

c. Rock

d. Wood

**Section 2**

**Directions:** Answer the following one by one as quickly as you can.

**Example:** Write as many words as possible from the letter 'C'  
**Answers:** Cat, Cotton, Creation, Cult, Corrupt, Coat, Cover, Cupboard, Cloth, Cute, Curry, Clean, Cup, Comb, Cut, clay, Convert, Contrast, etc

a. Write as many words as possible from the letter, 'A'

b. Write as many words as possible starting with 'A' and ending with 'G'

c. Write as many words as possible using 'A' and 'D' at any point of the word.

d. Write as many words as possible ending with 'T'.

### Section 3

**Directions:** There are four situations. Read them carefully. You have to give as many solutions as you can. More number of solutions of different perspectives suggests your creative abilities.

**Situation 1:** There is a fire in your neighbour's house. What should you do?

*Solutions:*

**Situation 2:** A child had fallen in to an open well. What should you do?

*Solutions:*

**Situation 3:** In a road accident, your school mate is hurt. What should you do?

*Solutions:*

**Situation 4:** One of the poor students of your school has been diagnosed as a heart patient, who requires immediate hospitalization and he needs to be operated upon. What should you do?

*Solutions:*

## 6.02 Creative Thinking Test-Scoring Pattern

### Measure of Flexibility: (Section 1)

The number of responses which fall in to different train of thoughts indicate one's flexibility score. All responses belonging to one train of thought will get only one mark. Different trains of thought get one mark each. For example, the answers, *Drinking, Washing, Bath, Cleaning vehicles, Cleaning vessels, Generation of electricity, gardening, as thinner, cooking*, can be scored as follows.

**First Train of thought** is *human Consumption*: This includes Drinking and Cooking.

**Second Train of thought** is *Cleaning*: This includes, Washing, Cleaning vehicle, Cleaning vessels.

**Third Train of thought** is *Generation*: This includes Generation of Electricity.

**Fourth Train of thought** is *Production*: This includes Gardening.

**Fifth Train of thought** is *Dilution*: This includes using it as thinner with any powders etc.

In this situation, the **individual gets 5 marks** as he has responded with five different trains of thought.

### **Measure of Fluency: (Section 2)**

The total number of responses given by the respondent indicates ones fluency scores. In the Example: Write as many words as possible from the letter 'C' The answers indicated are; Cat, Cotton, Creation, Cult, Corrupt, Coat, Cover, Cupboard, Cloth, Cute, Curry, Clean, Cup, Comb, Cut, clay, Convert, and Contrast.

Since the total number of correct responses is 18, **one gets 18 marks.**

### **Measure of Originality: (Section 1 and 2)**

For assessing the originality score combine all responses of section 1 and 2 of all the respondents. List all the responses one by one. Start putting a tally to all the responses of the group. Invariably, there will be many items for which most respondents will have responded. Identify those responses, which are answered only by 5% of the group. Add those scores and indicate the originality score.

### **Measure of Elaboration: (Section 3)**

For assessing the elaboration, count the number of solutions given for each situation and add them.

### **Creative Thinking Scores**

Keep the scores of Flexibility, Fluency, Originality and Elaboration scores separately. Every subject can be compared on all the four components of creativity at any point of time. Since, this is not a standardised test, going in for aggregation is not desirable. Individuals can be compared on all the four components of creativity.

---

## **7.00 REFERENCES**

---

Atkinson. R. L; Atkinson, R. C. & Hilgard, B.C. (1983). *Introduction to Psychology*, USA: Harcourt brace, Eighth edition.

Baron, R.A. (1996). *Psychology*, New Delhi: Prentice Hall, Third edition.

Bootzin, R. C; Bower, G. H. & Crocker, J. (1991). *Psychology Today*, New York, Elizabeth Hall, Seventh edition

Lefton, L. A. (1994). *Psychology*, Allyn & Bacon.

Morgan, T. C; & King. A. R. (1966). *Introduction to Psychology*, New York: Mc Graw Hill.

Morris, C.G. (1998). *Psychology an introduction*, Eaglewood Cliff: Prentice Hall, Sixth edition.

Munn, N. L; Fernald, P.J. (1978). *Introduction to psychology*, New Delhi: Oxford & IBH.

Schaefer. (1991). *Creative Attitude Survey*, Jacksonville, IL: Psychology and Educators, Inc.

Wayne, & Weiten. (2001). *Themes and variations, USA*: Thomson Publishers, Fifth edition.

Zimbardo, G. P. (1988). *Psychology and life*, Harper Collins Publishers, Twelfth edition.

- <http://www.iss.edu/GovSch/shekou.html>
- [fsmpublicauditor.fm/hotline/glossary.htm](http://fsmpublicauditor.fm/hotline/glossary.htm)
- <http://lro.cwrl.utexas.edu/help/course.html>
- [http://www.creativeideasforyou.com/creativity\\_testing.html](http://www.creativeideasforyou.com/creativity_testing.html)
- [http://www.kidsource.com/kidsource/content/academic\\_creativity.html](http://www.kidsource.com/kidsource/content/academic_creativity.html)
- <http://pluto.fss.buffalo.edu/classes/psy/segal/416f2001/creative/Creativity.htm>
- <http://www.vtaide.com/lifeskills/creativity.htm>
- <http://www.mum.edu/>
- <http://www.virtualsalt.com/crebook1.htm>
- <http://www.creativethink.com/>
- <http://kycreative.mis.net/creativity.htm>
- <http://www.teachers.ash.org.au/researchskills/thinking.htm#Creative>



*"True Creativity and Innovation consists of seeing what everyone else has seen, thinking what no one else has thought, and doing what no one else has dared!"*

*"There are no problems - only opportunities to be creative."*

*Dorje Roettger*

*"Creativity is inventing, experimenting, growing, taking risks, breaking rules, making mistakes, and having fun."*

*Mary Lou Cook*

*"If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be. Now put the foundations under them."*

*Henry David Thoreau*

*Module 4*

*Critical Thinking*

## *Module Contents*

<b>1.00 OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>103</b>
<b>2.00 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>103</b>
2.01 Defining critical thinking	103
2.02 Let us check our progress	104
2.03 Importance of critical thinking	104
2.04 Let us check our progress	106
2.05 Virtues of critical thinkers	106
2.06 Let us check our progress	110
2.07 Critical thinking and school education	110
2.08 Different strategies which can potentially contribute for the development of critical thought	112
2.09 Let us check our progress	113
2.10 Let us sum up	113
<b>3.00 COMPONENTS OF CRITICAL THINKING</b>	<b>114</b>
3.01 Components defined	114
3.02 Let us check our progress	116
3.03 Let us sum up	116
<b>4.00 THE PROCESS OF CRITICAL THINKING</b>	<b>116</b>
4.01 Steps involved in the critical thinking process	116
4.02 Student training strategies	118
4.03 Let us check our progress	119
4.04 Let us sum up	120
<b>5.00 SELF EVALUATION</b>	<b>120</b>
<b>6.00 CRITICAL THINKING ABILITY: ASSESSMENT     TOOL</b>	<b>121</b>
6.01 Critical Thinking Scale	121
6.02 Critical Thinking Scale-Scoring Pattern	128
<b>7.00 SUGGESTED FURTHER READINGS</b>	<b>130</b>
<b>8.00 REFERENCES</b>	<b>136</b>

---

## **1.00 OBJECTIVES**

---

To enable the reader of this module to;

1. State the meaning of the term critical thinking.
2. Compare different definitions of critical thinking in order to arrive at its central feature.
3. Explain the importance of critical thinking in our life.
4. List the virtues of a critical thinker.
5. Recognise different possible ways to develop thinking ability among students.
6. List different components of critical thinking.
7. Enumerate different steps involved in critical thinking process.
8. Recall different techniques that could be used to develop critical thinking.
9. Write a script for role-play based on the Context, essence and the background given.

---

## **2.00 INTRODUCTION**

---

### **2.01 Defining Critical Thinking**

We all know that as human beings we differ from each other in terms of how we behave, how we live, how we think, how we take decisions in life, how we communicate, how we develop friends around and so on. Therefore, it is needless to say that as individuals we differ from each other. It would be interesting to understand as to why human beings differ on different attributes. One of the significant aspects among them is the way one thinks about almost every thing one is surrounded with. Our thinking reflects on our own quality. One of the life skills that has focussed on this is what is called "Critical Thinking". Different people have attempted to define Critical-thinking ability as follows.

Critical Thinking is defined as an ability to analyse information and experience in an objective manner.

Bayer, (1985), defined Critical Thinking as the 'ability and tendency to gather, evaluate and use information effectively'.

According to Jones, (1996), Critical thinking is generally agreed to include evaluation of the worth, accuracy or authenticity of various propositions, leading to a supportable decision or direction for action.

Critical Thinking is defined by Robert Ennis (quoted in Presseisen) as Reflective and reasonable thinking that is focussed on deciding what to believe or do.

According to Hudgins and Edelman (1986) critical thinking is 'the disposition to provide evidence in support of one's conclusions and to request evidence from others before accepting their conclusions.

According to Wikipedia, (2000), 'Critical thinking is a mental process of analysing or evaluating information, particularly statements or propositions that are offered as true. It is a process of reflecting upon the meaning of statements, examining the offered evidence and reasoning and forming judgements about facts.'

According to Sumner, (1940), 'Critical thinking is the examination and test of propositions of any kind which are offered for acceptance, in order to find out whether they correspond to reality or not.'

If one analyses all the above definitions, one could define *critical thinking as the process of determining the authenticity, accuracy, or value of something; characterised by the ability to seek reasons and alternatives, perceive the total situation and develop one's views based on evidence. Or critical thinking is a way of thinking where one verifies and reaches conclusions about a statement/view based on facts and objective assessment.*

## 2.02 Let Us Check Our Progress

It is time we quickly recall what we have understood so far. Sum up what is critical thinking in your own words.

---

---

---

---

---

## 2.03 Importance Of Critical Thinking

In recent years more and more people have started recognising the importance of critical thinking. This could be attributed to the realisation of the fact that it is crucial in many decision-making contexts. Management disciplines and psychology are using it to its fullest extent while Education has

been showing keen interest in taking the full advantage of it for children in schools. It is worthwhile to understand the significance of Critical thinking in our daily life. It can be understood in terms of the following propositions.

- (1) All intelligent people want to make judgements and take decisions in life, which can yield the best possible results. In this process, one wants to be sure that he/she does not make mistake. So, one wishes to understand the situation from all possible angles, analyses pros and cons of taking the decision and then proceeds. This is what critical thinking does. Therefore, critical thinking becomes a crucial component of an intelligent life.
- (2) Irrespective of our age, we all want to understand why we are behaving the way we are behaving. In this process, willingness to question everything is almost becoming a way of life. This is a happy thing. The present younger generation is moving far ahead of the generations of the past on this aspect. Therefore, the 'reasoning mind' is overpowering a 'following mind'. This is what the paradigmatic shift we are seeing in the present society. Uncritical acceptance of ideas is slowly fading out in a common man. The entire upbringing is undergoing a shift worldwide. In this context, it becomes imperative that we understand the significance of critical thinking and provide opportunities for this to grow among children.
- (3) The entire world is moving so fast that people are becoming specialised and super specialised in their own areas of interest and profession. In order to compete and catch up with the advancement, others are also attempting. In this process the weak brains fail and strong and versatile will survive. The successful people use all possible dexterity and skills to promote themselves. For these things to happen, ability to use critical thinking is a prerequisite. Realising the responsibilities of schools in the changing context, it becomes an important agenda for schools to pay attention to the development of critical thinking among school going children.
- (4) Those of our people who do not use critical thinking in their lives are quite at a disadvantage and may start believing other people, advertisements, hearsay, blind faiths and beliefs, and some source as significant one even though the credibility of the source is doubtful. The present day society is much more alert than what it used to be in the

past. It implies that it is not desirable for any society to have its members amenable for any exploitation and suffer any disadvantage if at all it has to be progressive. Therefore, paying attention to the development of critical thinking becomes important.

While commenting on critical thinking, Bayer, (1985) says, "Critical Thinking has two important dimensions: a frame of mind and a number of specific mental operations" (p.271). Norris, (1985) agreeing on Bayer, says, "having critical spirit is as important as thinking critically. The critical spirit requires one to think critically about all aspects of life, to think critically about one's own thinking, and to act on the basis of what one has considered when using critical thinking skills" (p.44). Sumner (1940), holds that the critical faculty is a product of education and training. It is a mental habit and power. It is a prime condition of human welfare that men and women should be trained in it. It is our only guarantee against delusion, deception, superstition and misapprehension of our-selves and our earthly circumstances."

#### 2.04 Let Us Check Our Progress

*Why is critical thinking important in our lives? Give reasons.*

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

#### 2.05 Virtues Of Critical Thinkers

Almost all-successful people can be expected to be good in their ability to think critically. It would also be appropriate if we could picturise the virtues of people who excel in critical thinking skill. They would have the following qualities;

- (a) Open minded nature:** A successful critical thinker can never be rigid or close-minded in his/her thinking. S/He can think of any issue from all possible ways and take a decision, without being emotional to the extent that it impedes a good decision making. Open mindedness also means receiving the valid ideas etc. from others even when it contradicts the opinion one held till then. Critical thinkers are open-minded and thus it is a biggest virtue.

- (b) Habitually inquisitive-minded:** A successful critical thinker is eager and habitually inquisitive about understanding different things that may matter him/her how-so-ever remotely connected it could be to his/her immediate life. He/she is a person with inquisitiveness about everything in his/her life. Inquisitive mind is indeed a big virtue of a critical thinker.
- (c) Truth seeker:** A successful critical thinker is one who is interested in seeking the truth. The ultimate objective for all critical thinkers to seek truth and live in tune with this. The truth for them is any issue, which is based on factual correctness. They attempt in all fairness to verify facts based on certain reliable sources. They seek truth before they form a conclusive opinion about anything. Because of this nature, it is easy for others to communicate and obtain predictable response, which can enhance good interpersonal relationship. They are the people who attempt to convince others in a conversation and they can also be convinced easily if others have much stronger logic and facts. Therefore transactions with them become easy and rewarding. Perhaps this is a great virtue that could be seen in any civilised society.
- (d) Well Informed:** A successful critical thinker is a person who is well informed. His/her inclination to remain well informed is not a matter of habit for him/her, but a way of life itself. They are interested in understanding different issues related to their life. In this process they wish to acquire a wealth of information and thus they become well-informed people. They keep on acquiring more and more information about all those, which interest them. In this process they enhance the repertory of their information pool, revise old information and update new ones. This entire cycle of activities becomes a way of life for them. It is easy for us to understand the consequences of such a way of life.
- (e) Trustful of reason:** Successful critical thinkers trust any argument based on reasons. They believe in being those who talk sense based on reasons and logic. They attempt to convince others based on logic and they in turn can also be convinced based on reason and logic. They are less emotional and more rational and logical when comes to assessing a situation. They cannot be convinced based on illogical reasons or rumours.

- (f) **Flexible:** Critical thinkers are not rigid in their thinking and they cannot afford to be so either. They attempt to understand a situation from different possible angles, weigh the strengths and weaknesses of every alternative, attempt to understand the pros and cons of taking a decision from different perspectives. To all these, we all need to agree that one needs to be flexible in nature.
- (g) **Fair-minded in evaluation:** Since they are truth seekers and logical driven in nature, they have to be obviously fair-minded in evaluating anything. They cannot afford to be either biased or prejudiced in evaluating any situation. Their evaluations cannot be based on either emotions or gut feelings. Therefore, they are fair-minded in their evaluation.
- (h) **Honest in facing personal biases:** Since critical thinkers are fair-minded in evaluation, they have no hesitation in accepting and admitting their inadequacies and seeking advice from the specialists in case of necessities. Therefore, it becomes easy for them to be honest in facing personal biases. This is a sign of a developing and reflective mind. Hence, this is a great virtue of critical thinkers.
- (i) **Willing to reconsider:** Due to their flexible nature, they are amenable to reconsider their views on any issue. This is a sign of learner's attitude. This ability can take them to greater heights. Even after a person is said to have concluded on an issue, one can revise his thinking and he will be willing to reconsider the issue afresh in another perspective based on other set of facts and logic. Therefore, there is no rigidity or stagnation in them. They are always willing to reconsider issues if need be.
- (j) **Clear about issues:** The successful Critical Thinkers are clear about handling different issues that surround them. They do not suffer from conflicts for long as they are competent enough to resolve them quickly. In this process too, their conclusions are based on factual truth and logic only, not on emotions.
- (k) **Not impulsive:** From the above-explained virtues, it is evident that critical thinkers cannot afford to be impulsive. In their thinking process, emotions can not hijack logic. They conclude on different things based on sound logic and facts. Therefore, they are not impulsive in nature. They are not in a hurry to conclude their views.

**(l) Logical minded and do not lose temper in discussions:**

As said above, they are logical-minded people and they do not lose temper in discussions easily. They try to convince others if they think they can without losing their cool easily. Therefore, in discussions too, they can be convinced easily if the other person is logical. This is a great virtue of a critical thinker.

**(m) Orderly in complex matters:** The strength of critical thinkers is their ability to organise and arrange even the complex issues systematically so that they can handle them well. In approaching them also, they are orderly in nature.

**(n) Diligent in seeking relevant information:** They are hard working, painstaking and intelligent enough to seek relevant information from authentic sources. This they do when they realise that they need to consult the right source. It could be books, people, newspaper or any source.

**(o) Do not hesitate in consulting expert opinions:** Successful critical thinkers do not hesitate to consult experts on seeking expert opinions.

**(p) Reasonable in selection of criteria:** Critical thinkers weigh pros and cons based on a set of criteria, which they develop for themselves. While developing this set of criteria they are quite objective and reasonable. They do not wish any biases to contaminate their thinking.

**(q) Focussed in inquiry:** In their process of inquiry of thinking about any issue they are not casual, but serious and in order to do that they need to be focussed.

**(r) Do not act without being convinced:** Critical thinkers do not act on any thing without being convinced. They are not the people who would act half-heartedly.

**(s) Cognitive maturity:** On the whole, critical thinkers show intellectual maturity in verifying any fact of life and thus, they become successful in life.

The above list of virtues of successful critical thinkers is sufficient a picture to depict how they think and act. Such a set of virtues can obviously lead to success in life. Realising the advantages of critical thinking ability, different sectors have attempted to understand from the standpoint of their own perspectives. In this light, the WHO needs to be complimented

for having thought about introducing life skills in school educational context.

### 2.06 Let Us Check Our Progress

Name each one of the virtues of the critical thinking described below.

(i) Amenable to change their views on any issue:  
\_\_\_\_\_

(ii) Painstakingly seeks relevant information from authentic sources: \_\_\_\_\_

(iii) Show intellectual maturity in verifying any fact of life:  
\_\_\_\_\_

(iv) Accept and admit their inadequacies:  
\_\_\_\_\_

(v) Accept any argument based on reasons:  
\_\_\_\_\_

### 2.07 Critical Thinking And School Education

On a larger base in school education sector, Critical Thinking has captured the imagination of educators at large and has become an important input in education process since school stages. Critical Thinking emphasises the mental attitudes or dispositions and the application of reasoning to everyday situations. Therefore, it gets justified that Critical Thinking be made an integral part of school education. Every child has a right to be educated on this.

Critical thinking across the disciplines share certain common features, says Jones,(1996) based on extensive analysis and synthesis of material available on net. They are as follows.

- (1) Critical thinking is a learnable skill with teachers and peers serving as resources.
- (2) Problems, questions and issues serve as the source of motivation for the learner.
- (3) Courses are assignment-centred rather than text or lecture-oriented.
- (4) Goals, methods and evaluation emphasise using content rather than the simply acquiring it.

- (5) Students need to formulate and justify their ideas in writing.
- (6) Students collaborate to learn and enhance their thinking (Meyers, 1985).

The schooling process has to enable students to develop thinking skills and questioning abilities. Based on these, other higher order learning is possible. It implies that thinking is one of the basic abilities that need to be developed. The thinking processes can be developed if a teacher is sensitive to the fact that he/she has the responsibility to work for the all round development of the personality of children. Pierce, W. (2004), gives a set of ways by which students' thinking potentials can be enhanced.

Critical thinking is gaining importance in education. Education has a role in working towards all-round development of personality of children. Thus, a good schooling process must be capable of preparing good citizens who are productive in society and in turn contribute for the development of a nation. Thus, training children for critical thinking will go a long way. People who demonstrate good critical thinking show certain dominant approaches to life. These have been captured by Messina, and Messina, (2005) as follows.

#### ***Approaches To Life Characterising Good Critical Thinking***

- Inquisitiveness about wide range of issues
- Concern to become and stay well informed
- Alertness to opportunities to use critical Thinking
- Self-confidence in one's abilities to reason
- Open-mindedness about divergent world views
- Flexibility in considering alternatives and opinions
- Understanding the opinions of other people
- Fair-mindedness about appraising reasoning
- Honesty in facing one's own biases, prejudices, stereotypes, egocentric tendencies
- Prudence in suspending, making, altering judgements
- Willingness to reconsider and revise views
- Clarity in stating question or concern
- Orderliness in working with complexity
- Diligence in seeking relevant information
- Reasonable in selecting and applying criteria
- Care in focusing attention on the concern at hand
- Persistence through difficulties
- Precision to the degree permitted by subject and circumstances (Messina, and Messina, 2005)

## **2.08 Different Strategies Which Can Potentially Contribute For The Development Of Critical Thought**

There are attempts to identify different possible strategies, which can be used in developing critical thinking. According to Paul, Binker, Jensen and Kreklau, (1990) Thirty-five different dimensions of critical thought could be developed. They could be understood under affective strategies, Cognitive strategies-Macro abilities and Cognitive Strategies-Micro abilities. They are listed as follows.

### **A. Affective Strategies:**

- (1) Thinking independently
- (2) Developing insight into ego-centricity or sociocentricity
- (3) Exercising fair-mindedness
- (4) Exploring thoughts underlying feelings and feeling underlying thoughts
- (5) Developing intellectual humility and suspending judgement
- (6) Developing intellectual courage
- (7) Developing intellectual good faith or integrity
- (8) Developing intellectual perseverance
- (9) Developing confidence in reasoning.

### **B. Cognitive Strategies: Macro abilities:**

- (1) Refining generalisations and avoiding over simplifications
- (2) Comparing analogous situations: transferring insights to new contexts
- (3) Developing one's perspectives: Creating or exploring beliefs, arguments or theories
- (4) Clarifying issues, conclusions or beliefs
- (5) Clarifying and analysing the meanings of words or phrases
- (6) Developing criteria for evaluation: Clarifying values and standards
- (7) Evaluating the credibility of sources of information
- (8) Questioning deeply; Raising and pursuing root or significant questions
- (9) Analysing or evaluating arguments, interpretations, beliefs or theories
- (10) Generating or assessing solutions

- (11) Analysing or evaluating actions or policies
- (12) Reading critically: Clarifying or critiquing texts
- (13) Listening critically: The art of silent dialogue
- (14) Making interdisciplinary connections
- (15) Practising Socratic discussion: Clarifying, and questioning beliefs, theories or perspectives
- (16) Reasoning dialogically: Comparing perspectives, interpretations or theories
- (17) Reasoning dialectically: Evaluating perspectives, interpretations or theories

#### C. Cognitive Strategies: Micro Skills

- (1) Comparing and contrasting ideals with actual practice
- (2) Thinking precisely about thinking: using critical vocabulary
- (3) Noting significant similarities and differences
- (4) Examining or evaluating assumptions
- (5) Distinguishing relevant from irrelevant facts
- (6) Making plausible inferences, predictions or interpretations
- (7) Evaluating evidence and alleged facts
- (8) Recognising contradictions  
Exploring implications and consequences

### 2.09 Let Us Check Our Progress

Identify the skill described by each one of the following statements

- (i) Checks the reliability and validity of facts given by friends  
\_\_\_\_\_
- (ii) Accepts his mistakes when pointed out:  
\_\_\_\_\_
- (iii) Predicts consequences of an action:  
\_\_\_\_\_

### 2.10 Let Us Sum Up

Apart from defining 'critical thinking', we have understood the importance of critical thinking, listed the virtues of a critical thinker, understood why critical thinking should be nurtured through education and different strategies of developing critical thinking.

---

### 3.00 COMPONENTS OF CRITICAL THINKING

---

#### 3.01 Components Defined

Critical thinking can be better understood if its components are understood. Some of the components that could be considered are as follows. The following components are operationally defined and explained in relation to the skill i.e., Critical Thinking.

**(1) Analytic and synthetic abilities:** *are the abilities to analyse different components of a social and personal situation and put many other issues together meaningfully in order to understand the situation better by weighing different pros and cons.*

In any critical thinking activity, one uses analytic and synthetic abilities. Different situations are understood by analysing different components threadbare. They are assessed for their worth. The critical thinkers also will have the ability to relate many different issues and components related to a situation and make a meaning out of it. By so doing, they would be able to understand and appreciate the situation much better.

Apart from defining 'critical thinking', we have understood the importance of critical thinking, listed the virtues of a critical thinker, understood why critical thinking should be nurtured through education and different strategies of developing critical thinking.

After the analysis of different issues of the situations, he is also interested in understanding the life success rate of those people and friends whom he knows in order to predict his chances of success in life because of selecting one option. He will also see things from the viewpoint of his affordability, parental aspirations, parental affordability etc. So a decision which is based on these very many perspectives, which is made to be connected / linked to the basic conflicting situation is the ability of synthesising different factors which are directly and indirectly going to be affected. Therefore, ability to analyse and ability to synthesise are two important twin abilities that are found among critical thinkers.

**(2) Objectivity:** *is the ability to analyse social and personal situations based on pros and cons dispassionately by delinking personal feelings and subjectivity.*

A successful critical thinker is one who has the ability to

analyse social and personal situations de-linking any of his subjective feelings and emotions. It means, he/she can think clearly weighing the merits and demerits/ pros and cons of any situation against some external criteria. They are not guided by emotions but they are guided by logic and reason. Therefore, they are rational and not emotional in nature while thinking critically on any issue. This is the quality of intelligent and balanced individuals. This ability is dominant among critical thinkers.

**(3) Anticipation of consequences:** *is the ability to anticipate the consequences of any line of thinking in social and personal situations.*

A successful critical thinker is one who has the ability to anticipate the consequences of different actions and decisions. This is possible because of the past experiences or their ability to foresee things. This is sufficient to explain how intelligent these people are in understanding different situations. Therefore, this is an important component of critical thinking.

**(4) Intelligence:** *is the general ability to weigh the strengths and weaknesses of any situation in the process of its understanding.*

Critical thinkers are competent enough to use their intelligence in understanding different situations by the application of weighing every situation to its pros and cons/advantages and disadvantages/ merits/demerits and arrive at an inference as to which course of action is quite likely to be more beneficial and productive. Therefore intelligence is an important component of critical thinking.

**(5) Logical Thinking:** *is the ability to think and reason systematically on all social and personal situations of life based on objective principles.*

Critical thinkers are not illogical and cannot afford to take decisions based on emotions. Their entire thought processes are regulated and controlled by reasoning. For them, logical thinking is not a forced act, but a way of life. The two methods of reasoning, which they use, are either inductive or deductive reasoning.

Reasoning is the act of using reason to derive a conclusion from certain premises. In *inductive reasoning* when the premises are true, then the conclusion follows with some degree

of probability. In this method, it gives more information than what was contained in the premises. A classical example is as follows. "The sun rose to the east every morning. Therefore, the sun will rise to the east tomorrow."

While in *deductive reasoning*, given the true premises, the conclusion must follow. It does not increase one's knowledge base, since the conclusion is self-contained in the premises. A classical example of deductive reasoning is as follows. "All humans are mortal. Shekhar is a man. Therefore, Shekhar is mortal."

The above-explained components of critical thinking can further clarify the essence of critical thinking. These components are present in any critical thinking process.

**3.02 Let Us Check Our Progress**

Match the items in list A with the statements given in list B. Write the serial number of the style that matches with the statement in the space provided on the right side of the statement

List A	List B	Answers
1. Objectivity	"I would like to find all the factors that are likely to influence"	
2. Logical thinking	" I think we can club together these to ideas into one"	
3. Predicting consequences	"Of course I am angry. But, let me see the facts"	
4. Analytical ability	" If it is true then this must also be true"	
5. Synthetic ability	"If I do this then it is bound to happen"	

**3.03 Let Us Sum Up**

We have enumerated, defined and understood the importance of different components of critical thinking.

---

**4.00 THE PROCESS OF CRITICAL THINKING**

---

**4.01 Steps Involved In The Critical Thinking Process**

There are a few steps involved in any critical thinking process. They include the following.

- (a) Perception of the situation
- (b) Analysis of the situation (logical)
- (c) Evaluation of situation for merits and demerits/ Pros and cons
- (d) Anticipate consequences
- (e) Reaching a conclusion

**(a) Perception of the situation:** The first step in critical thinking is to perceive the situation. Here, the thinker focuses his/her attention on the issue and tries to understand the context of the situation. This is very important because, there are so many issues surrounding us every moment. We will not be able to pay attention to all of them. Therefore, recognising an issue of importance and preference is basic. Normally, the issues, which get subjected to critical thinking, are not casual issues, but they are of serious nature in life. While, ideally, it would be nice if one makes it a way of life to think critically in all situations.

**(b) Analysis of the situation:** Here, a critical thinker attempts to analyse the situation understanding different components of an issue. Different issues and implications that surround the issue are recognised and the situation is analysed. In this analysis, one succeeds in identifying different components and their possible role. Therefore, understanding of the situation is clearer here.

**(c) Evaluation of the situation for merits/demerits or pros and cons:** A successful critical thinker evaluates the merits and demerits or pros and cons of the situation. Here, objectively, one attempts to count the number of points towards merits and demerits. They will be further subjected to different weightages and accordingly they will be again evaluated from among the merits and demerits. At this point, one will be clear as to what one should do based on the strengths of the situation. But, one does not jump to conclusions here.

**(d) Anticipate the consequences:** After getting a clear picture of possible strengths and weaknesses, one wishes to foresee or anticipate the consequences of the possible action. This is an intelligent act. This may be possible because of experiences of the past or the ability to foresee the consequences based on assumptions. With this, one will be in a position to understand clearly the situation. With this he/she will reach the last stage.

**(e) Reaching a conclusion:** A critical thinking process comes to a concluding phase when it completes the earlier four stages successfully. This conclusion is a tentative conclusion. It means, at that point of time, one wishes to conclude as he does. If one gets more evidences, one may think further too.

#### **4.02 Student Training Strategies**

Apart from sensitising the students to the importance of critical thinking through the usage of brainstorming, role play and discussions the following list of '**Ways to improve students' thinking' may be adopted by the teacher.**

**a. Improve students' metacognitive abilities**

- Model thinking processes
- Ask students to unpack their thinking
- Ask for monitoring and reflection by informal writing

**b. Use effective questioning strategy**

- Ask for clarification, evidence, reasoning--not just recall, not just the one correct answer
- Ask questions with more than one correct answer
- Ask questions requiring several kinds of thinking

**c. Have students use oral and written language often and informally**

- Have students write answers to questions, before speaking up in class
- Use small-group tasks
- Teach students reading and note-taking strategies
- Use personal response and academic journals

**d. Design tasks that require thinking about content as a primary goal**

- Use active-learning strategies that require students to process information, not just recall it
- Sequence the tasks developmentally

**e. Teach explicitly how to do the thinking needed for the tasks**

- Practice is not enough
- Model the cognitive processes required
- Give feedback to students as they apply the steps in the needed cognitive processes

**f. Create a classroom atmosphere that promotes risk taking and speculative thinking**

- Arrange physical space to promote student-student interaction
- Avoid competition
- Foster interaction among students

**g. Create a classroom climate conducive for development of critical thinking**

- Setting ground rules well in advance
- Providing well planned activities
- Showing respect for each student
- providing non-threatening activities
- Being flexible
- Accepting individual differences
- Exhibiting a positive attitude
- Modelling thinking skills
- Acknowledging every response
- Allowing students to be active participants
- Creating experiences that will ensure success at least part of the time for each student
- Using a wide variety of teaching modalities (Thacker 2001).

It is evident from the above that teachers at school level can do many things by which they can enhance the thinking ability among their students. This has to be a way of teaching-learning process itself. For this all teachers need to be prepared. This has far reaching implications for the lives of students not only for their schooling but also for their future life.

**4.03 Let Us Check Our Progress**

1. Describe at least five different ways in which you can develop thinking ability among your students using the strategies proposed above?

i

ii

iii

iv

v

2. Mention the steps involved in critical thinking?

- i.
- ii.
- iii.
- iv.
- v.

#### **4.04 Let Us Sum Up**

In this section we have analysed the steps involved in critical thinking and listed steps that can be taken in the classroom to develop critical thinking ability.

---

#### **5.00 SELF EVALUATION**

---

Let us now attempt to evaluate what we have learnt by answering the following in a separate sheet of paper.

1. How can Critical Thinking be understood?
2. What is likely to happen if members of a community do not possess critical thinking ability?
3. What kind of a society can be built if its members use critical thinking successfully?
4. Justify different virtues of critical thinkers studied.
5. Elaborate different possible ways of developing thinking process among your students.
6. Explain with examples different components of critical thinking.
7. Elaborate different steps involved in the critical thinking process.
8. Elaborate different approaches to life of critical thinkers.
9. Explain what secondary school teachers can do to develop critical thinking among students?
10. Develop a detailed role-play script to any one of the components of critical thinking based on the 'Context, essence and background' already given in the module.

---

## 6.00 CRITICAL THINKING ABILITY: ASSESSMENT TOOL

---

### 6.01 Critical Thinking Scale

Dr.C.G.Venkatesha Murthy

Name:

Date of Birth:

Gender: Male / Female

Class:

School:

Place:

Date

*Instructions:* Read the following situations given below. Imagine that you are in that situation. For each situation, write different advantages and disadvantages as you see. Also write how you would conclude your opinion on every issue. Give reasons.

Kindly read the example given. This will clarify how you need to understand and answer.

Example: *Situation:* Imagine that there is a school 'A' at a walking distance. But, it does not have good facilities. There is another school 'B'. It is far away from your house and you have to travel by bus. But, the school has good facilities. Now you have to list out the advantages and disadvantages of joining school A and B. Also you need to conclude as to which school you decide to join under the circumstances. You have to also give reasons for your conclusion.

The response could be as follows.

**School 'A' advantages:** (1) Walkable distance. (2) Less tiresome to reach school. (3) More leisure time available. (4) Could have lunch also at lunchtime. (5) Can attend to all the school activities comfortably after school hours too. (6) Parents can also attend to Parent Teacher Association meetings. (7) Can play in school premises too in the evenings. (8) Can comfortably attend to schoolwork after school hours.

**School A Disadvantages:** (1) Bad set of students. (2) Bad school facilities. (3) Not exciting to attend. (4) Disinterested teachers. (5) Uninviting school environment. (6) Less chances for further healthy growth.

**School B Advantages:** (1) Good set of students. (2) Good school facilities. (3) Exciting to attend. (4) Talented teachers. (5) Attractive school environment. (6) More chances for further healthy growth. (7) Possibility of having good friends.

**School B Disadvantages:** (1) Far way from home. (2) Tiresome to reach school. (3) No leisure time available. (4) Lunch at school only. (5) Can not attend to all the school activities after school hours. (6) Parents find it difficult to attend to Parent Teacher Association meetings. (7) Can not stay on after school hours to play in school premises in the evenings. (8) Feel tired after reaching home. (9) Becomes difficult to do school work at home due to tiresomeness. (10) Becomes difficult to be cheerful the subsequent days. (11) Life becomes dull. (12) Routine is stressful.

**Conclusion with reasons:** In a situation like this, I would like to join School 'A'. This is because school B has more disadvantages than school A. The consequences of school B can be more harmful and stressful than that of School A. The negative points of school A can be made up supplementing through extra reading and if need be through joining tuition classes. It is convenient even to my parents. Therefore, it is more advantageous to join school A, though it has some serious disadvantages.

*Note:* There are five situations given. For each of them, you are required to give advantages and disadvantages apart from your conclusions with reasons. Though there is no time limit, normally less than 60 minutes are sufficient to attempt all the five situations.

**Situation 1:** Imagine you have a situation where, you are a class X student. You have been given an important assignment at school which should be covered tonight spending 4 hours after 8 o'clock and submit the same by next morning. The same night, you also have an interesting cricket final match between India and Pakistan, which will go on till 12 mid night. You are a lover of cricket. You cannot see match also and work for your project as one will interfere in the other.

Now discuss the merits and demerits of completing assignment and watching final cricket match between India and Pakistan.

**Merits of watching cricket match:**

**Demerits of watching cricket match:**

**Merits of completing project work:**

**Demerits of completing project work:**

**Conclusion and reasons:**

**Situation 2:** Imagine you are in a situation, where your parents want you to join your sister for a marriage which you do not want to attend as you know that it is a boring one. Alternatively, your parents have given you a chance to spend your weekend with a set of relatives, all elderly people. You are equally

disinterested in them. You have to choose any one between the two of them. Both are equally unattractive to you. Which one you think you should prefer and why?

**Merits of going to marriage: with sister:**

**Demerits of going to marriage:**

**Merits of staying at home entertaining old relatives:**

**Demerits of staying at home entertaining old relatives:**

**Conclusions with reasons:**

**Situation 3:** Imagine you have got a unique opportunity of seeing a good drama of your favorite actor/actress on stage. On the same day, you have also got a chance of attending a quiz competition of your best friend who has reached the finals. Both are going to start at 7 pm and end at 9.30 pm. They both are held in your own town but at two different places. You have to choose between the two. Both are equally attractive to you. Only one can be selected and you have no choice but to select one. List the merits and demerits of attending either of them.

**Merits of attending Drama:**

**Demerits of attending Drama:**

**Merit of attending friend's Quiz competition:**

**Demerit of attending friend's Quiz competition:**

**Conclusions with reasons:**

**Situation 4:** Imagine you are in a situation where your school is playing a cricket match against another school, which has come to quarter finals. On the same day and time, your class has to play its semi final match with class X of your school. Though you are not a player of any one of the teams, you are equally interested in watching and cheering both the teams. Now you count the merits and demerits of watching both the matches.

**Merits of watching Cricket match:**

**Demerits of watching Cricket match:**

**Merits of watching Basketball match:**

**Demerits of watching Basketball match:**

**Conclusions with reasons:**

**Situation 5:** Imagine a situation, where, you have to now come to Class VIII., where you have to decide on selecting your medium of instruction. Your parents have given you full freedom to select either Kannada medium or English medium. You have to now think from all angles and arrive at a conclusion. How do you do it?

**Advantages of studying in Kannada /Telugu Medium:****Disadvantages of studying in Kannada/Telugu Medium:****Advantages of studying in English Medium:****Disadvantages of studying in English Medium:**

**Conclusions and Reasons:**

**6.02 Critical Thinking Scale-Scoring Pattern**

The number of advantages and disadvantages one can write is an indication of ones ability to think in different ways. Therefore the more points one can count is an indication on one’s critical thinking. Added to it, if one can conclude by giving reasons, which are justified, can fetch more marks. For every situation give scores. Add all the scores and take the average. Refer the average score to the norm given below.

**Norms:**

**Part A: Process of Thinking**

Only one advantage and one disadvantage for each situation or less	= Poor thinker
Between 2 and 5 advantages and disadvantages	= Average thinker
More than 5 advantages and disadvantages	= Good thinker

**Part B: Product of thinking.**

Read the conclusion and verify from the reasons given. Based on the reasons given and the logic one has used, one can be assessed as follows.

If the reasons given are illogical in nature	= Poor on ability to conclude
If the reasons given are moderate in nature	= Average on ability to conclude
If the reasons given are logical in nature	= Good on ability to conclude

**Composite Norms:** Based on both the process and product of thinking one can be concluded on different levels of critical thinking.

Product of thinking (Ability to conclude)	Process of Thinking (Ability to think from different angles)		
	Poor	Average	Good
Poor	Very Poor Critical Thinker (1)	Poor Critical Thinker (2)	Good Analyser & Poor Synthesiser (3)
Average	Impulsive and risk taking type Thinker (4)	Dwarf Thinker (5)	Good Analyser and Mediocre Synthesiser (6)
Good	Quick Thinker (7)	Matured Thinker (8)	Very Good Critical Thinker (9)

**Note:** Classify every respondent for one's process of thinking and product of thinking. Based on the levels refer to the above composite norms and describe the individual.

- (1) **Very Poor Critical Thinker:** is one who is poor in both process and concluding a thought.
- (2) **Poor Critical Thinker:** is one who is average in process and poor in concluding a thought.
- (3) **Good Analyser and Poor Synthesiser:** is one who is good in listing out different arguments but poor in putting them together and concluding.
- (4) **Impulsive and Risk-taking Type Thinker:** is one who is poor in the process of thinking yet he concludes quickly. This may lead to risk too.
- (5) **Dwarf Thinker:** is one who is neither good in the process of thinking nor is s/he good in product.
- (6) **Good Analyser and Mediocre Synthesiser:** is one who is good in the analysis of the event but not equally good in synthesizing issues leading to good conclusion.
- (7) **Quick Thinker:** is one where one is not elaborate in analysing the issue but quick in concluding issues correctly. S/he does not need a lot of new information to conclude.
- (8) **Matured Thinker:** is one who wishes to take new information cautiously and concludes smartly. He/she is not impulsive at all in concluding on any issue.
- (9) **Very Good Critical Thinker:** is one who is elaborate on both the process and product. He analyses elaborately and synthesizes them realistically. Such people are not in a hurry for concluding on any issue at all. They possess virtues of good critical thinkers.

## 7.00 SUGGESTED FURTHER READINGS

Anderson, R. N.; Greene, M. L.; and Loewen, P. S. (1988). Relationships among teachers' and students' thinking skills, sense of efficacy, and student achievement. *The Alberta Journal of Educational Research*, 24, 2, 148-165.

*Examines relationships among teachers' and students' sense of self-efficacy, reasoning abilities, and student achievement. Twenty-four teachers and their third and sixth grade students participated. Several types of relationships were noted, but causal links were difficult to determine.*

Bass, G. M., Jr., and Perkins, H. W. (1984). Teaching critical thinking skills with CAI. *Electronic Learning* 14, 2. 32, 34, 96.

*Investigates the relative effects of CAI and conventional instruction in enhancing the critical thinking skills of seventh grade students. Of the four kinds of skills taught and tested, students performed better after CAI instruction in two and better after conventional instruction in the other two.*

Baum, R. (1990). Finishing touches--10 top programs. *Learning*, 18, 6, 51-55.

*Identifies ten thinking skills programs that have proven effective in increasing students' cognitive performance. Programs are organized by whether they involve infusing thinking skills into the established curriculum or provide a separate thinking skills course. All programs include teacher training.*

Beyer, B. K.(1985). Critical thinking: What is it? *Social Education*, 49, 4, 270-276.

*Addresses the confusion experienced by educators and others as to what constitutes critical thinking. Offers a brief history of views of critical thinking, information about what critical thinking is NOT, and a current definition agreed upon by many specialists in the field.*

Beyth-Marom, R.; Novik, R.; and Sloan, M. (1987). Enhancing children's thinking skills: An instructional model for decision-making under certainty. *Instructional Science*, 16, 3, 215-231.

*Presents a rationale for providing students instruction in thinking skills and offers a model to be used in teaching*

*students the particular skill of decision-making under certainty, i.e., when full information about each choice is available.*

Bransford, J. D.; Burns, M. S.; Delclos, V. R.; and Vye, N. J. (1986). Teaching thinking: Evaluating evaluations and broadening the data base. *Educational Leadership*, 44, 2, 68-70.

*As a follow-up to Sternberg and Bhana's article in the same issue (see below), these authors cite data indicating that approaches which involve teaching from a metacognitive or problem-solving perspective enhance skill transfer in reading comprehension, mathematics, and writing, thus producing gains in student achievement.*

Costa, A. L. (1985). How can we recognize improved student thinking? In A. L. Costa (ed.). *Developing minds: A resource book for teaching thinking*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 288-290.

*Identifies student behavioral indicators that teachers can observe and record to determine whether instruction in thinking skills is having a beneficial effect on students' intellectual development. The author claims that attention to these indicators often provides more useful information than do typical standardized tests.*

Cotton, K. (1988). Classroom questioning. *Close Up*. 5. Portland: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.

*Synthesises findings from 37 research reports on the relationship between teacher's classroom questioning behavior and a variety of student outcomes. Found that, when teachers ask higher cognitive questions, conduct redirection/probing/reinforcement, and/or increase wait time, the cognitive sophistication of student responses increases.*

Crump, W. D.; Schlichter, C. L.; and Palk, B. E. (1988). Teaching HOTS in the middle and high school: A district-level initiative in developing higher order thinking skills. *Roeper Review*, 10, 4, 205-211.

*Presents results of an evaluation of the effectiveness of training nearly all teachers and administrators in an Alabama school district in the Talents Unlimited model for teaching higher-order thinking skills. Teacher self-reports were positive and the performance gains of middle and high school students*

*on thinking skills assessments indicated that the program was successful.*

Eriksson, G. I. (1990). Choice and perception of control: The effect of a thinking skills program on the locus of control, self-concept and creativity of gifted students. *Gifted Education International*, 6, 135-142.

*Compares the effects of two thinking skills programs on the affective variables of locus of control and self-concept, and on the creativity measures of originality, fluency, and flexibility. Thinking skills instruction had a significant, beneficial effect on locus of control and creativity, but no significant effect on self-concept.*

Freseman, R. D. (1990). Improving higher order thinking of middle school geography students by teaching skills directly. Fort Lauderdale, FL: Nova University.

*Examines the outcomes produced by a geography curriculum which included direct instruction in visualizing, prioritizing, summarizing, making inferences through drawing analogies, and problem solving using divergent thinking. Effects on the achievement and self-concepts of participating seventh graders were generally positive, though below predicted levels in some areas.*

Gore, K. (1991). Diskovery: Computers and thinking skills: The HOTS program. *Language Arts*, 68, 2, 153- 158.

*Describes the HOTS (Higher Order Thinking Skills) program in relation to the learning needs of at-risk students, and argues that the close match between learning needs and program provisions has made possible the considerable success of the HOTS curriculum.*

Gough, D. (1991). *Thinking about thinking*. Alexandria, VA: National Association of Elementary School Principals.

*Summarises five study reports concerning the nature of higher-order thinking skills and the most effective methods for teaching them. While focusing on different aspects of the topic, the authors of these reports are in agreement that thinking skills should be integrated across the curriculum rather than taught in isolation.*

Haller, E. P.; Child, D. A.; and Walberg, H. J. (1988). Can comprehension be taught? A quantitative synthesis of 'metacognitive' studies. *Educational Researcher*, 17, 9 5-8.

*Synthesises findings from 20 studies on the effects of teaching students the metacognitive skills of awareness, monitoring, and regulating of their own understanding of material read. Findings indicate a substantial effect of such instruction on students' reading comprehension.*

Heiman, M., and Slomianko, J., (eds.) (1987). *Thinking skills instruction: Concepts and techniques*. Washington, DC: National Education Association.

*Presents a series of 35 essays on the importance of teaching thinking skills and on instructional strategies for developing these skills in students. The essays address thinking skills instruction within and across disciplines*

Herrnstein, R. J.; Nickerson, R. S.; de Sanchez, M.; and Swets, J. A. (1986). Teaching thinking skills. *American Psychologist*, 41,11, 1279-1289.

*Investigates the effects of a year-long thinking skills course on the general mental abilities and specific cognitive skills of Venezuelan seventh graders. Experimental students significantly outperformed controls on both general and special measures.*

Hudgins, B., and Edelman, S. (1986). Teaching critical thinking skills to fourth and fifth graders through teacher-led small-group discussions. *Journal of Educational Research*, 79, 6, 333-342.

*Investigates the effects on both teacher and student behavior of a teacher training program in teaching critical thinking skills to small groups. Students exhibited increased critical thinking behavior in some areas after their teachers received training.*

Kagan, D. M. (1988). Evaluating a language arts program designed to teach higher level thinking skills. *Reading improvement*, 25, 1, 29-33.

*Reports on the effects of a language arts program with a strong focus on developing high-order thinking skills in sixth graders. Lessons were developed using portions of two commercial instructional packages. Participating students made significant gains, as measured by four different divergent thinking skills instruments.*

Matthews, D. B. (1989). The effect of thinking-skills program on the cognitive abilities of middle school students. *Clearing House*, 62, 5, 202-204.

*Reports findings of a study of the effects produced by a nondomain-specific thinking skills program upon the Cognitive Abilities Test scores of eighth and ninth graders. Post-test students outperformed pre-test students on all sub tests except one.*

Norris, S. P. (1985). Synthesis of research on critical thinking. *Educational Leadership*, 42, 8, 40-45.

*Reviews research on the elements of critical thinking; the nature, merits, and flaws of various critical thinking tests; and frequently encountered errors in reasoning. Argues that critical thinking must be coupled with content knowledge and that better assessments are needed to determine accurately the effectiveness of critical thinking instruction.*

Onosko, J. J. (1990). Comparing teachers' instruction to promote students' thinking. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 22, 5, 443-461.

*Compares the classroom practices, instructional materials, and assignments of teachers who place a great deal of importance on students' development of higher-order thinking skills with those of teachers who place less value on such skill development.*

Orr, J. B., and Klein, M. F. (1991). Instruction in critical thinking as a form of character education. *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision*, 6, 2, 130-144.

*Argues that the development of critical thinking capabilities results less from being taught disembodied "skill bits" than from being "initiated into school communities that grant importance to critical reasoning." Claims that, ideally, instruction in critical thinking should be aimed at fostering the character trait of a "critical spirit."*

Orton, R. E., and Lawrenz, F. (199). A survey and analysis of factors related to the teaching of critical thinking in junior high mathematics classrooms. *Journal of Research and Development in Education*, 23, 3, 145- 155.

*Presents the results of a survey of the classroom practices of 146 junior high mathematics teachers to determine the incidence of activities, which tend to foster critical thinking skills and those which tend to impede development of these skills. Outcomes were mixed; implications for teacher education are cited.*

Paul, R. W. (1985). Critical thinking research: A response to Stephen Norris. *Educational Leadership*, 42, 8, 46.

*Identifies research sources beyond those identified by Norris' article (see above) that can be helpful in understanding critical thinking and designing instructional programs. Also argues that educators should concentrate on the kinds of thinking and thinking problems that are most common in our everyday lives and address the many obstacles to rational thought.*

Riding, R. J., and Powell, S. D. (1986). The improvement of thinking skills in young children using computer activities: A Replication and Extension. *Educational Psychology*, 6, 2, 179-183.

*Offers results of a replication study of the effects of computer-presented thinking skills activities on the reasoning test performance of four-year-olds. As in the original study, treatment students outperformed controls, but to an even greater degree.*

Ristow, R. S. (1988). The teaching of thinking skills: Does it improve creativity? *Gifted Child Today*, 11,2, 44-46.

*Determines the effects of locally developed creative thinking program on the creative thinking test performance of third graders. Program participants outperformed controls on two of the three areas assessed--flexibility and originality--but not on the third--fluency.*

Sadowski, B. R. (1984-85). Research notes: Critical thinking and CAI. *Journal of Computers in Mathematics in Mathematics and Science Teaching*, 4, 2, 12-13.

*Reviews three studies on the effects of using CAI programs to improve students' critical thinking skills. Results were generally positive among the research surveyed.*

Schmidt, P. (1991). A concern about...restructuring learning to improve the teaching of thinking and reasoning for all students. *Concerns*, 22, 24-31.

*Discusses issues related to higher-order learning, including definitions, relevance in contemporary life, principles to guide educators as they restructure their approaches to include greater focus on higher-order learning, teacher training needs, and recommended steps for state education agencies.*

Tierney, R. J.; Soter, A.; O'Flahavan, J. F.; and McGinley, W. (1989). The effects of reading and writing upon thinking critically. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 24, 2, 134-173.

*Seeks to determine the learning conditions under which college students are most likely to think critically. Those who read an editorial passage about the specified topic before writing a letter to the editor exhibited more critical thinking than students in other learning conditions.*

Whimbey, A. (1985). Test results from teaching thinking. In A. L. Costa (ed.). *Developing minds: A resource book for teaching thinking*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 269- 271.

*Reviews studies of the effects thinking skills instruction on test performance and on the transfer of cognitive skills to new and different situations. Found that thinking skills instruction both improves academic performance and enables students to become better problem solvers in other situations, both in and outside of school.*

Worsham, A. W., and Austin, G. R. (1983). Effects of teaching thinking skills on SAT scores. *Educational Leadership*, 41, 3, 50-51.

*Investigates the effect of THINK, a thinking skills program, on the SAT verbal scores of low-performing high school seniors in Baltimore. Participants outperformed controls to a "highly significant" degree on all three SAT verbal measures: vocabulary, reading comprehension, and total score.*

---

## **8.00 REFERENCES**

---

Bayer, B.K. (1985). Critical thinking: What it is? *Social Education*, 49, 270-276.

Jones, D. (1996). Critical thinking in an online world.  
[Webmaster@library.ucsb.edu](mailto:Webmaster@library.ucsb.edu).

Mayers, C. (1985). *Teaching students to think critically*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Messina, J.J. and Messina, C.M. (2005). Improving your critical Thinking. <http://www.coping.org>

Norris, S.P. (1985). Synthesis of research on critical thinking. *Educational Leadership*, 42, (8), 40-45.

Paul, Binker, Jensen and Kreklau. (1990). *Critical thinking skills*. North Central Regional Educational Laboratory.

Pierce, W. (2004). *Ways to improve students' Thinking*. <http://academic.pg.ccmd.vs/wpeirce/MCCCTR/improv I.html>

Sumner, W.G. (1940). *Folkways: A study of the sociological importance of Usages, Manners, Customs, Mores, and Morals*. New York: Ginn and Co., pp. 632-633.

Thacker. (2001). In, North West Regional Educational Laboratory. *Teaching thinking skills*. USA: Office of Educational Research and Improvement.



*Intelligence is something we are born with. Thinking is a skill that must be learned.*

*Edward de Bono*

*Reason does not work instinctively, but requires trial, practice, and instruction in order to gradually progress from one level of insight to another.*

*Immanuel Kant*

*He who will not reason, is a bigot; he who cannot is a fool; and he who dares not, is a slave.*

*Sir William Drummond*

*Reason shapes the future, but superstition infects the present.*

*Iain M. Banks*

*Module 5*

*Effective  
Communication*

## *Module Contents*

<b>1.00 OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>141</b>
<b>2.00 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>141</b>
2.01 Meaning and importance	141
2.02 An operational definition	142
2.03 The mechanics of communication	142
2.04 Let us check our progress	143
2.05 Let us sum up	143
<b>3.00 COMPONENTS OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION</b>	<b>144</b>
3.01 Components defined	144
3.02 Let us check our progress	149
3.03 Let us sum up	149
<b>4.00 PROCESSES OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION</b>	<b>149</b>
4.01 Communication skills	149
4.02 Steps of communication process	150
4.03 Qualities of a good communicator	151
4.04 Let us check our progress	152
4.05 Developing effective communication skills among learners	152
4.06 Let us check our progress	153
4.07 Let us sum up	153
<b>5.00 SELF EVALUATION</b>	<b>153</b>
<b>6.00 EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION: ASSESSMENT TOOL</b>	<b>154</b>
6.01 Effective Communication Scale	154
6.02 Effective Communication Scale-Scoring pattern	154
<b>7.00 REFERENCES</b>	<b>156</b>

---

## **1.00 OBJECTIVES**

---

To enable the reader of this module to;

1. Define communication.
2. Explain salient features of a communicative situation.
3. Identify different components of effective communication.
4. Justify the need to train students in communication skills.
5. Make personal communication more effective by employing different components of the skill of communication appropriately.

---

## **2.00 INTRODUCTION**

---

### **2.01 Meaning And Importance**

Can you think of a society where there is no need for communication? In day-to-day life we keep communicating with people around us. In communication we share the information we have and get information from others. This 'give and take' relationship will be successful and effective if we know how to convey our thoughts to others. In every communication, there is some loss of information. Hence effective communication implies two things: first, the clarity with which we organise our ideas for presentation and second, the force with which we put across our thoughts to others. Thus effective communication simply means the reduction of loss of information in transmission of the message. Let us say, you want to convey something to a friend. If you are able to convey all the information and get the expected response, your communication could be said to be successful. But that is not always the case. The listener may miss some aspects and still feel that he/she has got everything. You will know the missing links only when you get the response. Let us, for example assume that we entrust our ward with ten tasks for the day. At the end of the day, the child completes only six and still feels happy that all the tasks are attended to. That the four tasks are yet to be completed does not become important for the child at all. Perhaps it reflects on our own communication skills. We have not been able to convey the idea that all the ten tasks needed to be completed before the end of the day. Mere uttering of the message does not mean comprehension on the other end. We cannot assume that our responsibilities are over once we utter the message. It is also our duty to ensure that they are understood the way we want them to understand.

## 2.02 An Operational Definition

Communication is *the act of conveying our ideas to others, modifying the messages depending on the feedback of others and responding appropriately to the messages sent by others.*

## 2.03 The Mechanics Of Communication

A communicative situation has the following participants in it:

- The sender of the message
- The receiver of the message

The sender encodes a message in some language or medium, either verbal or non-verbal and transmits it to the receiver. The receiver receives it, comprehends it after decoding the message and gives feedback to the sender. Now the person giving the feedback becomes the sender of the message. Thus the senders and the receivers keep changing their roles as the situation demands. However, what needs to be noted is that there could be some disturbances in the process of communication. Technically this is called *NOISE*. Due to this *NOISE*, the message may not be understood as intended. There could be some disturbing sound, which does not allow intelligible listening; the listener could be mentally distracted and so on. The challenge before the sender of the message is to convey the maximum meaning with minimum effort. So he/she will have to plan the mode of communication, i.e., encoding, to suit the needs of the listener/receiver. If a teacher has failed in reaching out to his/her students, he/she has failed in communicating; if a student fails in an examination, she/he has failed in either organising the information or presenting it; if a child does not follow the instructions given, either we have failed in conveying our intent or the child has failed to get what is communicated. Thus even the inability on the part of the receiver may hamper communication. But as communicators we do not have any direct control over the listeners. All that we can do for ensuring successful communication is to make use of all the facilities available to us to match the content of communication and the ability of the listener. So when we think of effective communication, we are essentially thinking of enhancing our own communicative abilities, using the tools available to us to make our communication as effective as possible. Thus the focus of any training programme on effective

communication is the trainee himself/herself. It is from this angle that the components of effective communication are discussed in this module.

*A communicative situation involves*

- *the sender of the message*
- *the receiver of the message*
- *encoding in some medium*
- *decoding*
- *feedback*
- *NOISE or disturbances*
- *restructuring of the message*

To make the main concern simpler, we can say that the basic objective of the sender of the message is to reduce the effect of disturbances by planning the encoding process appropriately. Hence, there is a need to understand what the main components of effective communications are.

## **2.04 Let Us Check Our Progress**

***Say if the following statements are true or false.***

1. Communication is a one way process.
2. Communication can take place if there is only one person.
3. Communication is over if we send our message.
4. Feedback is an essential feature of a communicative situation.
5. *NOISE* is anything that disturbs a communication.
6. Successful communication requires repeating the message.
7. Communication needs some medium.
8. The sender modifies his/her message based on the feedback.
9. Senders and receivers of messages do not change their roles.
10. The essence of effective communication is to make the receiver get maximum message in minimum effort.

## **2.05 Let Us Sum Up**

We have understood the importance, meaning and mechanics of communication process.

### **3.00 COMPONENTS OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION**

#### **3.01 Components Defined**

**Analytic Ability:** *is the ability to analyse different components of a piece of information, in order to understand its content.*

The moment we hear some information, we think about it. Let us say we are waiting for a bus. We need to reach some place by about 10:30 am. It is already 10:00 am. It is announced that the bus has been cancelled. What do we do? We need to take a quick decision about the mode of transport. We have the options of engaging a taxi, an auto, walking and asking some one to drop us there. Unless we think of the urgency of the situation and the likely result of taking a particular mode of transport, we may not be able to take a decision. Suddenly we realise that we may not be able to reach the spot by 10:30 am. If we do not reach in time, we may be making someone wait for us. Instead, we take a decision to communicate to the people waiting for us that we are likely to be delayed by half an hour or so.

In the above example, a small piece of communication came as the result of a large amount of thinking. We analysed the announcement made in terms of its consequences and made some communication. Every response has some analysis in it. When we enter into a bargain with the vegetable seller, we keep analysing every utterance of the shopkeeper, in order to impress upon him the need to reduce prices. Analysis has in it aspects of critical thinking and decision making. While analysing we ask typical questions like 'what does this mean to me?', 'what will be the result of this?', 'what could be the most effective response to the message received?' etc.

**Synthetic Ability:** *is the ability to integrate different pieces of information available in different domains, thereby creating a meaningful picture of different sets of information into an organised whole.*

Let's say we hear news about an accident of a bus that has left your city late night. You also know that one of your friends was travelling in that bus. What does your mind do now? It automatically connects the well being of your friend and the accident. In other words, the mind synthesises two pieces of information to understand the reality. Whatever information we hear gets integrated into the already existing information.

The act of synthesising helps us in understanding different dimensions of an issue or some happening. Think of the advertisements that have attracted you. What do they do? They simply synthesise seemingly unconnected things to create a meaningful picture of their message. When we listen to speeches, we keep on synthesising the information that we receive to create meaningful pictures of what we hear. If a speaker does not allow his audience time to synthesise, the interested audience may feel strained and stressed while the disinterested audience may feel bored.

**Expressive Skills:** *Refers to the ability to present one's thoughts/ideas/feelings as effectively as possible through the use of spoken or written language apart from/along with the use of gestures.*

Every act of communication is an effort at presenting whatever we have in our minds to others. We use the language either in the written form or oral, we also make use of body movements to convey our intent. The success of communication depends on the mastery of the communicator over the expressive skills.

**Non-verbal Skills:** *Refers to the ability to express and understand thoughts/ideas/ feelings through body postures, facial expressions and actions without the use of language.*

Non-verbal skills are also meant for enhancing the effect of communication. But here the language is not used. Many a time we may have to express our thoughts through body postures, facial expression or actions. When we talk to people who are hard of hearing, we use non-verbal skills. Sometimes non-verbal communication may prove to be more effective than verbal communication. When a teacher is unhappy with the work of his/her students, silence and a grim facial expression can speak more than an outburst.

**Postures:** *Refers to the general way of holding the body, especially back, shoulders and head when standing, walking or sitting which keep conveying some meaning.*

Just think how you stand before your elders or higher ups or before people that you respect. Also think of the way you move with your close friends. Compare and think how you conduct your body in these two situations. The way we hold the body, back and shoulders is called the posture. Recall the body postures of the players of a winning team and the team

that is defeated. Think of a bowler who is totally demoralised by the batsman. Recall his body postures. The moment we see the posture we know that he has accepted defeat. But think of the same person when the team is winning. The body posture changes. Whether we consciously think of it or not, our body keeps communicating some meaning to others. Our boredom, enthusiasm, concern, diffidence, confidence, involvement, anger, happiness are all conveyed through our body without we intending it. In order to enhance the effectiveness of communication if postures serve as impediments one needs to be conscious of that and deliberately make efforts to change. In order to do this, one needs to be sensitive to this and attempt to change his/her postures.

**Gestures:** *is the ability to use the movement of the body appropriately especially hands and arms to enhance the intent of communication.*

Have you seen people moving their hands and arms while they speak? Your hands try to make a visual presentation of what you have in your mind. When you shrug your shoulders, others know that you are not interested / least interested. Movements of the hands should synchronise with the thoughts that are expressed through language. Mismatched verbal expression and gestures will lead to confusions among your audience and make communication ineffective.

**Presentation:** *is the ability to express thoughts / ideas / feelings formally as suitable to the demands of different types of situations.*

Let us say we are talking about the issue of communalism in our country. What we talk with our friends and what we talk to a group of strangers on the same topic would be different. Also, if we were to give a talk on the subject, our presentation would be entirely different. It would be more formal, quoting many evidences to justify the statements we make. But when with friends, we may not be very keen on quoting evidences. Presentation changes from situation to situation. We should be able to judge the demands of the situation that we are a part of.

**Assertiveness:** *is the ability to put across one's views persuasively with a strong sense of conviction.*

Assertion is standing up for personal rights and expressing thoughts, feelings and beliefs in direct, honest, and appropriate ways that do not violate another person's rights. While asserting

we are keen on making our stands very clear. Others may or may not follow what we say. But they will definitely know what we mean. The ideal of an assertive communication is that it is followed or accepted. In any assertive communication, there is logic, evidence, conviction, firmness and use of choicest words. Assertion skills help you stand up for yourself, express feelings directly, improve relationships, give compliments, give criticism, make requests, say no and set limits. Assertive body language includes: (a) maintaining direct eye contact, (b) maintaining an erect posture, (c) speaking clearly and audibly, (d) not using a soft, whiny, or muffled voice, and (e) using facial expressions and gestures to add emphasis to your words.

**Creativity:** *is the ability to use different alternative ways to reach out to people suitably and successfully.*

The purpose of communication is to establish links with others. We must be able to convey our ideas to others and receive ideas from others. Sometimes, there could be some disturbance. In such situations we need to think of alternative ways of communicating. A creative teacher makes use of teaching aids to make classroom communication more effective. Avoiding stereotypes, not repeating the same ideas/jokes, acting on the spur of the moment, using analogies, examples, stories in talks are instances of creativity in communication.

**Objectivity:** *is the ability to participate in a communicative situation without any preconceived notions about persons involved or the content of communication.*

It so happens that we have impressions of people in us. When we talk to them, we tend to draw conclusions based on our impressions. This might seriously affect communication. Can we listen to the communicator, without being bothered by our impressions of him/her? A politician that we do not like much comes to our area and takes up some rainwater harvesting projects. He keeps meeting people to develop awareness among them. He meets you. Are you going to listen to him or not? If your mind thinks that he is after all a politician/a professional liar etc., you may not listen to him. But if you forget all those impressions and listen to him for the worth of what he is talking about at the moment, you will not only receive his ideas, you may even give him some ideas. This is being objective. Communication is more beneficial when we are objective while receiving or sending messages.

**Sensitivity:** *is the ability to be sensitive to the feelings of*

*others in social situations in order to communicate effectively.*

Assume that you are the last speaker in a programme that has dragged on till late evening. Everyone is eager to go. However, you have something important to tell the audience. You need at least 60 minutes to present your ideas. You were given 60 minutes time. You are well prepared. But the audience are bored and they want to leave. What are you going to do? Well, what you will do depends on how sensitive you are to their feelings and to what extent you are compelled to present your ideas. If you are very keen on completing your presentations, you may think of different ways of making your talk lively. You may even think of some activities for them. If you do not have any compulsions to complete your talk, you may even drop it or finish your talk within five minutes. In both these cases, you are considering your audience and their receptivity. Those who are insensitive will continue with the presentations they have prepared, whatever the feelings of their audience. Sensitivity to the audience brings success to the communicator. It is important that we consider the feelings, needs and preferences of our audience while communicating.

**Patient Listening:** *is the ability to receive auditory inputs with full respect in a sustained manner in any conversation, without interrupting others, until they are completed.*

Patient listening implies listening with full respect or sustained listening, not interrupting the speaker. It may so happen that those who are talking to us may be very repetitive. We may be getting bored. Still, we need to respect their ways. We can not afford to offend them by just walking away or showing disgust on our face. There is always a possibility that some useful point will come through in between. We need to listen to people. We need not jump into conclusions the moment we get some ideas of what the other person is saying. Let him/her complete. Patient listening increases our acceptability as participants in a communicative situation.

**Imaginability:** *is the ability to foresee consequences of a communicative situation, which enables one to modulate the communication suitably.*

A close friend of yours calls you over phone and invites you for tea. You are very happy and receive the invitation immediately. After sometime you remember that you have another appointment at the same time. Now you are compelled to skip one of the programmes. Instead, if you had

asked just one question the moment your friend uttered his/her invitation the problem would have been over. You could have imagined what work you have at that time or how would the time spent at your friend's place affect your routine. Successful conversationists are good at imagining the consequences of their utterances or the utterances of others. That is why they are able to change their strategies to suit the demands of the situation. Imaginability gives them flexibility. They can always think of alternatives. They are confident because they can foresee their future.

**Reacting on the Spur of the Moment:** *is the ability to react to any situation instantaneously, making sense.*

When you are listening to a lecture, you hear some adverse comments on the issue of gender discrimination. You immediately stand up and oppose the idea. This small act of opposing can have different dimensions. You could just register a protest, you could draw the attention of others to the issue, you could present evidence and present in such a way that everyone has to accept what you say. In any case, you let everyone know that you are not with the idea. All these depend on your ability to react on the spur of the moment. If you do not react immediately, there is a possibility that the speaker will take your opinion for granted. Think of a speaker who gives many examples and says analogy stories to support his stream of thinking. All that he/she is doing is to act on the spur of the moment. The more we develop this ability, the more acceptable are our spur of the moment reactions.

### **3.02 Let Us Check Our Progress**

Explain different components of effective communication with an example each (Write your answer in a separate sheet of paper)

### **3.03 Let Us Sum Up**

We have identified the components involved in communication and understood their importance with the help of examples.

---

## **4.00 PROCESSES OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION**

---

### **4.01 Communication Skills**

Hargie, (1986) prefers identifying communication as a social

skill. Hargie, and others define that a social skill is *a set of goal-directed, inter related situationally appropriate social behaviours which can be learned and which are under the control of the individual*. Hargie also quotes Rinn and Markle, (1979) who define social skill as *a repertoire of verbal and non-verbal behaviours*. These definitions emphasise six main features of the communication skill. Social/communication skills are:

- goal directed and intentional
- inter-related
- appropriate to the situation
- identifiable units of behaviour which the individuals display
- learnt (Bandura, 1971 says this involves modelling and imitation)
- under the control of the individual displaying them.

#### 4.02 Steps Of Communication Process

Let us now try to list the actual process of communication based on its features listed above.

Any act of communication involves the following steps.

1. **Identifying the need for communication** – it could either be a result of our listening to others or we may have to say something to others.
2. **Thinking of suitable medium for communicating** – it could be the language to be used, the gestures, the audio-visual support etc.
3. **Encoding the messages in the medium identified** – this should be easy enough for the listener to decode. So encoding really depends on our assessment of the listeners' abilities to decode and comprehend.
4. **Planning support system** – like non-verbal behaviour or material that would strengthen the effect of communication. We would like to overcome disturbances. So effective communication tries to appeal to all the sense organs, making perception of our message a holistic experience.
5. **Presentation** – actual conveying of our message in the medium chosen.
6. **Observing and looking for feedback** – Observing the verbal and no-verbal responses of those who we are communicating to. This is actually a feedback to us on the effectiveness of our own communication.
7. **Modifying the encoded message so as to overcome**

**the gaps observed in the first attempt at communicating** – sometimes we may realise that our attempt at communication is not achieving its goal. It is time we re-encode the message. Look at the following example.

*Mechanic:* Look, it's working fine now.

*You:* What?! What's working fine?

(Now, the mechanic has to understand that the word 'it' has not conveyed the required meaning. He/She will have to now explain it)

*Mechanic:* I am talking about the pump. It has started lifting water.

*You:* Oh! Good!

(Supposing you understood what the mechanic meant by 'it' right in the beginning, he need not have modified the message.)

8. **Presentation of the modified message** – This act of modifying and re-presenting will continue until the intent of communication is achieved.

These steps are almost self explanatory. You will notice that these steps go with the model that we had discussed in the beginning of this unit: i.e., the sender encodes the message, transmitting it through some medium, the receiver decoding the message and giving feedback and the sender modifying the original message. Messages need to be restructured because of the disturbances in communication, which is called NOISE.

The basic question in any act of communication is '*how to overcome the effect of NOISE?*'

It is in this regard that we need to consider different components of communication and see how best we can make the skills related to those components a part of our communicative behaviour.

#### **4.03 Qualities Of A Good Communicator**

A good communicator is one who possesses the following qualities. She/he;

- is confident
- is clear about his/her goals
- is clear about the message
- has a good command over the medium chosen for communication, including language
- makes use of support system like body postures, gestures to strengthen his/her presentation
- has patience to listen to others and understand what they say
- does not dominate, though assertive
- builds communication based on the situation
- has respect to people he/she is communicating to
- can find suitable alternatives to make communication more effective
- can understand the point of view of others
- can think of consequences of a situation
- can react quickly to a message, if required
- receives feedback from others without any hesitation
- is polite and considerate

#### **4.04 Let Us Check Our Progress**

- (1) What are the different steps of communication?
  - (2) What are the qualities of a good communicator?
- (Answer in a separate sheet of paper)

#### **4.05 Developing Effective Communication Skills Among Learners**

Developing effective communication skills necessarily involves the creation of communicative situations either real or simulated. This helps the learners develop insights into the processes of communication. Giving appropriate feedback to the learners would be an important aspect. For giving a good feedback, we will have to observe the act of communication at its delivery points. Let us now ask questions like this: How did he/she approach the stranger? What was his/her instant remark? Was he/she polite? Did he/she restructure his/her presentation to make the communication more meaningful? We will get answers to these questions only when we observe the very act of communication. Many of the components listed above are internal processes, preparing a person to communicate. The act of communication is a cumulative result of all those processes. This has to be kept in mind while giving feedback to the learners.

#### 4.06 Let Us Check Our Progress

Do you really think it is necessary to develop effective communication among children? Discuss. (Answer in a separate sheet of paper)

#### 4.07 Let Us Sum Up

In this section we have identified communication skills, understood steps involved in the act of communication, listed the qualities of a good communicator and thought about developing communication skills in our students.

---

### 5.00 SELF EVALUATION

---

1. What is the purpose of communication according to you?
2. Explain salient features of a communicative situation.
3. What are the different components of communication skill?
4. Justify the need for developing effective communication among our learners?
5. How are different components of communication relevant and useful?
6. Who is the better communicator among the three? Why? List your views.

<b>Manju</b>	<b>Bhaskar</b>	<b>Ramarao</b>
Good language	Language okay	language lacks
language lacks	very pleasing	happy type
Does not care	has concerns	self centred
Thinks he is very good	assertive	loves speaking

## 6.00 EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION: ASSESSMENT TOOL

### 6.01 Effective Communication Scale

H. Kumara Swamy

#### Instructions

1. Give one of the following situations to be enacted by each person.
2. Observe the ability to communicate and assess it using the scale given below
3. If a given trait exhibited leads to successful communication give 5 marks. On the other hand if the required skill is not exhibited give 1. Depending on the force with which a skill is observed in use give marks ranging from 1 to 5.
4. Please note item number 9 should get 1 and all other skills should be rated 5 to say that a person is excellent in communication.

The Contexts/activities are given below.

- pick and speak activity
- a group discussion on gender discrimination
- a role play – son asks mother for money to go to the class picnic
- friends talking about their school

### 6.02 Effective Communication Scale-Scoring Pattern

You can evaluate the effectiveness of the speaker on all the four activities suggested above on a five point rating scale as follows.

1	2	3	4	5
Very Good	Good	Just OK	Poor	Very Poor

Covering all the four activities, every student can be evaluated on the basis of the criteria given below. For certain activities, certain criteria fit in and all may not be appropriate. Use your discretion in using criteria and evaluate. Items indicated from 1 to 15 are the criteria, while columns 1 to 10 indicate students who would be evaluated.

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	Confidence										
2	Clarity of thoughts										
3	Clarity of the message										
4	Command over the language										
5	Use of body postures										
6	Use of gestures										
7	Listening to others										
8	Courtesy										
9	Respect for people he/she is communicating to										
10	Use of suitable alternatives to make communication more effective										
11	Understanding the point of view of others										
12	Effective use to tonal variations										
13	Quickness in reaction										
14	Ability to receive feedback from others										
15	Overall effectiveness										

---

**7.00 REFERENCES**

---

Bandura, A. (1971). *Social learning theory*. New Jersey: General Learning Press. ( as quoted in Hargie, 1986)

Hargie, O. (1986) (ed.). *A handbook of communication skills*. New York: University Press.

Kennedy, P. J. (2005). *Assertive Communication: An Introduction*. By UW-Eau Claire Counselling Services, accessed from Internet on 21.9.05



*The way we communicate with others  
and with ourselves ultimately  
determines the quality of our lives.*

*Anthony (Tony) J. Robbins*

---

## **1.00 OBJECTIVES**

---

To enable the reader of this module to;

1. Explain the importance of interpersonal relationships in every day life.
2. Explain healthy and unhealthy interpersonal relationships.
3. State an operational definition of Interpersonal relationship skills.
4. Define different components that are involved in developing good interpersonal relationship.
5. Explain the significance of different components of interpersonal relationship skill.
6. Describe different techniques that can be used in developing good interpersonal relationship skill.

---

## **2.00 INTRODUCTION**

---

### **2.01 Meaning And Importance**

Relationships are vitally important in all spheres of life and people create relationships for all sorts of reasons. The most basic reason is we need to. Though we think of ourselves as independent and self-reliant, the fact is that each one of us is a point in a vast network of interdependent relationships. We create relationships because we are social by nature and value relationships as ends in themselves. We establish relationships at school, place of work, place of worship, next door, the health club i.e. at any place or in any activity where common interests bring people together. We do so because of our inner urge to be with others. This urge is strengthened by voices of authority and tradition. But sustaining a healthy bond in our relationships depends largely on our interpersonal relationship skills.

Interpersonal relationship skills help us to relate in positive ways with our family members and others around. This may mean being able to make and keep friendly relationships as well as being able to end relationships constructively.

People who are well versed in interpersonal relationship skills succeed in life. They appear to possess pleasing and magnetic personalities, which is what makes them charismatic. Some people never lose their attractiveness regardless of age because of their ability to build healthy interpersonal relationships.

Of course, relationships based on application of certain skills and pleasing personality alone, without character, will be short-lived and make life miserable. In short a lasting, winning combination requires pleasing personality, character, and ability to establish as well as sustain good inter-personal relationships. Such people are likely to be good at making and keeping healthy relationships.

Relationships are like bank accounts: the more we deposit the greater they become, therefore, the more we can draw from them. However, if you try to draw without depositing, it leads to disappointment. The consequences of 'poor depositing' in interpersonal relationships leads to stress, lack of communication, suspicion, isolation, prejudices, conflict, frustration, lack of sympathy and empathy, poor health etc.

Everyone has many different types of relationships. Some relationships are with family members, some are with friends, some are business relationships and some are love relationships. Each relationship is different, and all relationships change over time as the people within them grow and develop. Most relationships contain a combination of healthy and unhealthy characteristics.

### ***Importance Of Interpersonal Relationship***

"I will pay more for the ability to deal with people than for any other ability under the sun."

-John Rockefeller

"Be courteous to all, but intimate with a few and let those few be well tried before you give them your confidence. The friendship is a plant of slow growth, and must undergo and withstand the shocks of adversity before it is entitled to the appellation"

-George Washington.

"When you are good to others, you are best to yourself."

-Benjamin Franklin

"It is one of the most beautiful compensations of life that no man can sincerely try to help another without helping himself."

-Ralph Waldo Emerson

## *Module Contents*

<b>1.00 OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>159</b>
<b>2.00 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>159</b>
2.01 Meaning and importance	159
2.02 Healthy interpersonal relationships	161
2.03 Unhealthy interpersonal relationships	161
2.04 Operational definition	163
2.05 Let us check our progress	163
2.06 Let us sum up	164
<b>3.00 COMPONENTS OF INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS</b>	<b>164</b>
3.01 What is meant by components of interpersonal relationships?	164
3.02 Components of interpersonal relationship defined	164
3.03 Let us check our progress	170
3.04 Let us sum up	170
<b>4.00 PROCESS OF DEVELOPING HEALTHY INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS</b>	<b>170</b>
4.01 Interpersonal relationship building process	170
4.02 Student training strategies	171
4.03 Let us sum up	171
<b>5.00 SELF EVALUATION</b>	<b>171</b>
<b>6.00 INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIP: SELF ASSESSMENT TOOL</b>	<b>173</b>
6.01 Interpersonal Distance Scale	173
6.02 Interpersonal Distance Scale-Scoring Pattern	174
<b>7.00 SUGGESTED FURTHER READING</b>	<b>174</b>

*Module 6*

*Interpersonal  
Relationships*

---

## 7.00 REFERENCES

---

Bandura, A. (1971). *Social learning theory*. New Jersey: General Learning Press. ( as quoted in Hargie, 1986)

Hargie, O. (1986) (ed.). *A handbook of communication skills*. New York: University Press.

Kennedy, P. J. (2005). *Assertive Communication: An Introduction*. By UW-Eau Claire Counselling Services, accessed from Internet on 21.9.05



*The way we communicate with others  
and with ourselves ultimately  
determines the quality of our lives.*

*Anthony (Tony) J. Robbins*

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	Confidence										
2	Clarity of thoughts										
3	Clarity of the message										
4	Command over the language										
5	Use of body postures										
6	Use of gestures										
7	Listening to others										
8	Courtesy										
9	Respect for people he/she is communicating to										
10	Use of suitable alternatives to make communication more effective										
11	Understanding the point of view of others										
12	Effective use to tonal variations										
13	Quickness in reaction										
14	Ability to receive feedback from others										
15	Overall effectiveness										

## 6.00 EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION: ASSESSMENT TOOL

### 6.01 Effective Communication Scale

H. Kumara Swamy

#### Instructions

1. Give one of the following situations to be enacted by each person.
2. Observe the ability to communicate and assess it using the scale given below
3. If a given trait exhibited leads to successful communication give 5 marks. On the other hand if the required skill is not exhibited give 1. Depending on the force with which a skill is observed in use give marks ranging from 1 to 5.
4. Please note item number 9 should get 1 and all other skills should be rated 5 to say that a person is excellent in communication.

The Contexts/activities are given below.

- pick and speak activity
- a group discussion on gender discrimination
- a role play – son asks mother for money to go to the class picnic
- friends talking about their school

### 6.02 Effective Communication Scale-Scoring Pattern

You can evaluate the effectiveness of the speaker on all the four activities suggested above on a five point rating scale as follows.

1	2	3	4	5
Very Good	Good	Just OK	Poor	Very Poor

Covering all the four activities, every student can be evaluated on the basis of the criteria given below. For certain activities, certain criteria fit in and all may not be appropriate. Use your discretion in using criteria and evaluate. Items indicated from 1 to 15 are the criteria, while columns 1 to 10 indicate students who would be evaluated.

#### 4.06 Let Us Check Our Progress

Do you really think it is necessary to develop effective communication among children? Discuss. (Answer in a separate sheet of paper)

#### 4.07 Let Us Sum Up

In this section we have identified communication skills, understood steps involved in the act of communication, listed the qualities of a good communicator and thought about developing communication skills in our students.

---

### 5.00 SELF EVALUATION

---

1. What is the purpose of communication according to you?
2. Explain salient features of a communicative situation.
3. What are the different components of communication skill?
4. Justify the need for developing effective communication among our learners?
5. How are different components of communication relevant and useful?
6. Who is the better communicator among the three? Why? List your views.

<b>Manju</b>	<b>Bhaskar</b>	<b>Ramarao</b>
Good language	Language okay	language lacks
language lacks	very pleasing	happy type
Does not care	has concerns	self centred
Thinks he is very good	assertive	loves speaking

- is confident
- is clear about his/her goals
- is clear about the message
- has a good command over the medium chosen for communication, including language
- makes use of support system like body postures, gestures to strengthen his/her presentation
- has patience to listen to others and understand what they say
- does not dominate, though assertive
- builds communication based on the situation
- has respect to people he/she is communicating to
- can find suitable alternatives to make communication more effective
- can understand the point of view of others
- can think of consequences of a situation
- can react quickly to a message, if required
- receives feedback from others without any hesitation
- is polite and considerate

#### **4.04 Let Us Check Our Progress**

- (1) What are the different steps of communication?
  - (2) What are the qualities of a good communicator?
- (Answer in a separate sheet of paper)

#### **4.05 Developing Effective Communication Skills Among Learners**

Developing effective communication skills necessarily involves the creation of communicative situations either real or simulated. This helps the learners develop insights into the processes of communication. Giving appropriate feedback to the learners would be an important aspect. For giving a good feedback, we will have to observe the act of communication at its delivery points. Let us now ask questions like this: How did he/she approach the stranger? What was his/her instant remark? Was he/she polite? Did he/she restructure his/her presentation to make the communication more meaningful? We will get answers to these questions only when we observe the very act of communication. Many of the components listed above are internal processes, preparing a person to communicate. The act of communication is a cumulative result of all those processes. This has to be kept in mind while giving feedback to the learners.

**the gaps observed in the first attempt at communicating** – sometimes we may realise that our attempt at communication is not achieving its goal. It is time we re-encode the message. Look at the following example.

*Mechanic:* Look, it's working fine now.

*You:* What?! What's working fine?

(Now, the mechanic has to understand that the word 'it' has not conveyed the required meaning. He/She will have to now explain it)

*Mechanic:* I am talking about the pump. It has started lifting water.

*You:* Oh! Good!

(Supposing you understood what the mechanic meant by 'it' right in the beginning, he need not have modified the message.)

8. **Presentation of the modified message** – This act of modifying and re-presenting will continue until the intent of communication is achieved.

These steps are almost self explanatory. You will notice that these steps go with the model that we had discussed in the beginning of this unit: i.e., the sender encodes the message, transmitting it through some medium, the receiver decoding the message and giving feedback and the sender modifying the original message. Messages need to be restructured because of the disturbances in communication, which is called NOISE.

The basic question in any act of communication is '*how to overcome the effect of NOISE?*'

It is in this regard that we need to consider different components of communication and see how best we can make the skills related to those components a part of our communicative behaviour.

#### **4.03 Qualities Of A Good Communicator**

A good communicator is one who possesses the following qualities. She/he;

skill. Hargie, and others define that a social skill is *a set of goal-directed, inter related situationally appropriate social behaviours which can be learned and which are under the control of the individual*. Hargie also quotes Rinn and Markle, (1979) who define social skill as *a repertoire of verbal and non-verbal behaviours*. These definitions emphasise six main features of the communication skill. Social/communication skills are:

- goal directed and intentional
- inter-related
- appropriate to the situation
- identifiable units of behaviour which the individuals display
- learnt (Bandura, 1971 says this involves modelling and imitation)
- under the control of the individual displaying them.

#### 4.02 Steps Of Communication Process

Let us now try to list the actual process of communication based on its features listed above.

Any act of communication involves the following steps.

1. **Identifying the need for communication** – it could either be a result of our listening to others or we may have to say something to others.
2. **Thinking of suitable medium for communicating** – it could be the language to be used, the gestures, the audio-visual support etc.
3. **Encoding the messages in the medium identified** – this should be easy enough for the listener to decode. So encoding really depends on our assessment of the listeners' abilities to decode and comprehend.
4. **Planning support system** – like non-verbal behaviour or material that would strengthen the effect of communication. We would like to overcome disturbances. So effective communication tries to appeal to all the sense organs, making perception of our message a holistic experience.
5. **Presentation** – actual conveying of our message in the medium chosen.
6. **Observing and looking for feedback** – Observing the verbal and no-verbal responses of those who we are communicating to. This is actually a feedback to us on the effectiveness of our own communication.
7. **Modifying the encoded message so as to overcome**

asked just one question the moment your friend uttered his/her invitation the problem would have been over. You could have imagined what work you have at that time or how would the time spent at your friend's place affect your routine. Successful conversationists are good at imagining the consequences of their utterances or the utterances of others. That is why they are able to change their strategies to suit the demands of the situation. Imaginability gives them flexibility. They can always think of alternatives. They are confident because they can foresee their future.

**Reacting on the Spur of the Moment:** *is the ability to react to any situation instantaneously, making sense.*

When you are listening to a lecture, you hear some adverse comments on the issue of gender discrimination. You immediately stand up and oppose the idea. This small act of opposing can have different dimensions. You could just register a protest, you could draw the attention of others to the issue, you could present evidence and present in such a way that everyone has to accept what you say. In any case, you let everyone know that you are not with the idea. All these depend on your ability to react on the spur of the moment. If you do not react immediately, there is a possibility that the speaker will take your opinion for granted. Think of a speaker who gives many examples and says analogy stories to support his stream of thinking. All that he/she is doing is to act on the spur of the moment. The more we develop this ability, the more acceptable are our spur of the moment reactions.

### **3.02 Let Us Check Our Progress**

Explain different components of effective communication with an example each (Write your answer in a separate sheet of paper)

### **3.03 Let Us Sum Up**

We have identified the components involved in communication and understood their importance with the help of examples.

---

## **4.00 PROCESSES OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION**

---

### **4.01 Communication Skills**

Hargie, (1986) prefers identifying communication as a social

*others in social situations in order to communicate effectively.*

Assume that you are the last speaker in a programme that has dragged on till late evening. Everyone is eager to go. However, you have something important to tell the audience. You need at least 60 minutes to present your ideas. You were given 60 minutes time. You are well prepared. But the audience are bored and they want to leave. What are you going to do? Well, what you will do depends on how sensitive you are to their feelings and to what extent you are compelled to present your ideas. If you are very keen on completing your presentations, you may think of different ways of making your talk lively. You may even think of some activities for them. If you do not have any compulsions to complete your talk, you may even drop it or finish your talk within five minutes. In both these cases, you are considering your audience and their receptivity. Those who are insensitive will continue with the presentations they have prepared, whatever the feelings of their audience. Sensitivity to the audience brings success to the communicator. It is important that we consider the feelings, needs and preferences of our audience while communicating.

**Patient Listening:** *is the ability to receive auditory inputs with full respect in a sustained manner in any conversation, without interrupting others, until they are completed.*

Patient listening implies listening with full respect or sustained listening, not interrupting the speaker. It may so happen that those who are talking to us may be very repetitive. We may be getting bored. Still, we need to respect their ways. We can not afford to offend them by just walking away or showing disgust on our face. There is always a possibility that some useful point will come through in between. We need to listen to people. We need not jump into conclusions the moment we get some ideas of what the other person is saying. Let him/her complete. Patient listening increases our acceptability as participants in a communicative situation.

**Imaginability:** *is the ability to foresee consequences of a communicative situation, which enables one to modulate the communication suitably.*

A close friend of yours calls you over phone and invites you for tea. You are very happy and receive the invitation immediately. After sometime you remember that you have another appointment at the same time. Now you are compelled to skip one of the programmes. Instead, if you had

we are keen on making our stands very clear. Others may or may not follow what we say. But they will definitely know what we mean. The ideal of an assertive communication is that it is followed or accepted. In any assertive communication, there is logic, evidence, conviction, firmness and use of choicest words. Assertion skills help you stand up for yourself, express feelings directly, improve relationships, give compliments, give criticism, make requests, say no and set limits. Assertive body language includes: (a) maintaining direct eye contact, (b) maintaining an erect posture, (c) speaking clearly and audibly, (d) not using a soft, whiny, or muffled voice, and (e) using facial expressions and gestures to add emphasis to your words.

**Creativity:** *is the ability to use different alternative ways to reach out to people suitably and successfully.*

The purpose of communication is to establish links with others. We must be able to convey our ideas to others and receive ideas from others. Sometimes, there could be some disturbance. In such situations we need to think of alternative ways of communicating. A creative teacher makes use of teaching aids to make classroom communication more effective. Avoiding stereotypes, not repeating the same ideas/jokes, acting on the spur of the moment, using analogies, examples, stories in talks are instances of creativity in communication.

**Objectivity:** *is the ability to participate in a communicative situation without any preconceived notions about persons involved or the content of communication.*

It so happens that we have impressions of people in us. When we talk to them, we tend to draw conclusions based on our impressions. This might seriously affect communication. Can we listen to the communicator, without being bothered by our impressions of him/her? A politician that we do not like much comes to our area and takes up some rainwater harvesting projects. He keeps meeting people to develop awareness among them. He meets you. Are you going to listen to him or not? If your mind thinks that he is after all a politician/a professional liar etc., you may not listen to him. But if you forget all those impressions and listen to him for the worth of what he is talking about at the moment, you will not only receive his ideas, you may even give him some ideas. This is being objective. Communication is more beneficial when we are objective while receiving or sending messages.

**Sensitivity:** *is the ability to be sensitive to the feelings of*

that is defeated. Think of a bowler who is totally demoralised by the batsman. Recall his body postures. The moment we see the posture we know that he has accepted defeat. But think of the same person when the team is winning. The body posture changes. Whether we consciously think of it or not, our body keeps communicating some meaning to others. Our boredom, enthusiasm, concern, diffidence, confidence, involvement, anger, happiness are all conveyed through our body without we intending it. In order to enhance the effectiveness of communication if postures serve as impediments one needs to be conscious of that and deliberately make efforts to change. In order to do this, one needs to be sensitive to this and attempt to change his/her postures.

**Gestures:** *is the ability to use the movement of the body appropriately especially hands and arms to enhance the intent of communication.*

Have you seen people moving their hands and arms while they speak? Your hands try to make a visual presentation of what you have in your mind. When you shrug your shoulders, others know that you are not interested / least interested. Movements of the hands should synchronise with the thoughts that are expressed through language. Mismatched verbal expression and gestures will lead to confusions among your audience and make communication ineffective.

**Presentation:** *is the ability to express thoughts / ideas / feelings formally as suitable to the demands of different types of situations.*

Let us say we are talking about the issue of communalism in our country. What we talk with our friends and what we talk to a group of strangers on the same topic would be different. Also, if we were to give a talk on the subject, our presentation would be entirely different. It would be more formal, quoting many evidences to justify the statements we make. But when with friends, we may not be very keen on quoting evidences. Presentation changes from situation to situation. We should be able to judge the demands of the situation that we are a part of.

**Assertiveness:** *is the ability to put across one's views persuasively with a strong sense of conviction.*

Assertion is standing up for personal rights and expressing thoughts, feelings and beliefs in direct, honest, and appropriate ways that do not violate another person's rights. While asserting

The act of synthesising helps us in understanding different dimensions of an issue or some happening. Think of the advertisements that have attracted you. What do they do? They simply synthesise seemingly unconnected things to create a meaningful picture of their message. When we listen to speeches, we keep on synthesising the information that we receive to create meaningful pictures of what we hear. If a speaker does not allow his audience time to synthesise, the interested audience may feel strained and stressed while the disinterested audience may feel bored.

**Expressive Skills:** *Refers to the ability to present one's thoughts/ideas/feelings as effectively as possible through the use of spoken or written language apart from/along with the use of gestures.*

Every act of communication is an effort at presenting whatever we have in our minds to others. We use the language either in the written form or oral, we also make use of body movements to convey our intent. The success of communication depends on the mastery of the communicator over the expressive skills.

**Non-verbal Skills:** *Refers to the ability to express and understand thoughts/ideas/ feelings through body postures, facial expressions and actions without the use of language.*

Non-verbal skills are also meant for enhancing the effect of communication. But here the language is not used. Many a time we may have to express our thoughts through body postures, facial expression or actions. When we talk to people who are hard of hearing, we use non-verbal skills. Sometimes non-verbal communication may prove to be more effective than verbal communication. When a teacher is unhappy with the work of his/her students, silence and a grim facial expression can speak more than an outburst.

**Postures:** *Refers to the general way of holding the body, especially back, shoulders and head when standing, walking or sitting which keep conveying some meaning.*

Just think how you stand before your elders or higher ups or before people that you respect. Also think of the way you move with your close friends. Compare and think how you conduct your body in these two situations. The way we hold the body, back and shoulders is called the posture. Recall the body postures of the players of a winning team and the team

### **3.00 COMPONENTS OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION**

#### **3.01 Components Defined**

**Analytic Ability:** *is the ability to analyse different components of a piece of information, in order to understand its content.*

The moment we hear some information, we think about it. Let us say we are waiting for a bus. We need to reach some place by about 10:30 am. It is already 10:00 am. It is announced that the bus has been cancelled. What do we do? We need to take a quick decision about the mode of transport. We have the options of engaging a taxi, an auto, walking and asking some one to drop us there. Unless we think of the urgency of the situation and the likely result of taking a particular mode of transport, we may not be able to take a decision. Suddenly we realise that we may not be able to reach the spot by 10:30 am. If we do not reach in time, we may be making someone wait for us. Instead, we take a decision to communicate to the people waiting for us that we are likely to be delayed by half an hour or so.

In the above example, a small piece of communication came as the result of a large amount of thinking. We analysed the announcement made in terms of its consequences and made some communication. Every response has some analysis in it. When we enter into a bargain with the vegetable seller, we keep analysing every utterance of the shopkeeper, in order to impress upon him the need to reduce prices. Analysis has in it aspects of critical thinking and decision making. While analysing we ask typical questions like 'what does this mean to me?', 'what will be the result of this?', 'what could be the most effective response to the message received?' etc.

**Synthetic Ability:** *is the ability to integrate different pieces of information available in different domains, thereby creating a meaningful picture of different sets of information into an organised whole.*

Let's say we hear news about an accident of a bus that has left your city late night. You also know that one of your friends was travelling in that bus. What does your mind do now? It automatically connects the well being of your friend and the accident. In other words, the mind synthesises two pieces of information to understand the reality. Whatever information we hear gets integrated into the already existing information.

communication is the trainee himself/herself. It is from this angle that the components of effective communication are discussed in this module.

*A communicative situation involves*

- *the sender of the message*
- *the receiver of the message*
- *encoding in some medium*
- *decoding*
- *feedback*
- *NOISE or disturbances*
- *restructuring of the message*

To make the main concern simpler, we can say that the basic objective of the sender of the message is to reduce the effect of disturbances by planning the encoding process appropriately. Hence, there is a need to understand what the main components of effective communications are.

## **2.04 Let Us Check Our Progress**

***Say if the following statements are true or false.***

1. Communication is a one way process.
2. Communication can take place if there is only one person.
3. Communication is over if we send our message.
4. Feedback is an essential feature of a communicative situation.
5. *NOISE* is anything that disturbs a communication.
6. Successful communication requires repeating the message.
7. Communication needs some medium.
8. The sender modifies his/her message based on the feedback.
9. Senders and receivers of messages do not change their roles.
10. The essence of effective communication is to make the receiver get maximum message in minimum effort.

## **2.05 Let Us Sum Up**

We have understood the importance, meaning and mechanics of communication process.

## 2.02 An Operational Definition

Communication is *the act of conveying our ideas to others, modifying the messages depending on the feedback of others and responding appropriately to the messages sent by others.*

## 2.03 The Mechanics Of Communication

A communicative situation has the following participants in it:

The sender of the message  
The receiver of the message

The sender encodes a message in some language or medium, either verbal or non-verbal and transmits it to the receiver. The receiver receives it, comprehends it after decoding the message and gives feedback to the sender. Now the person giving the feedback becomes the sender of the message. Thus the senders and the receivers keep changing their roles as the situation demands. However, what needs to be noted is that there could be some disturbances in the process of communication. Technically this is called *NOISE*. Due to this *NOISE*, the message may not be understood as intended. There could be some disturbing sound, which does not allow intelligible listening; the listener could be mentally distracted and so on. The challenge before the sender of the message is to convey the maximum meaning with minimum effort. So he/she will have to plan the mode of communication, i.e., encoding, to suit the needs of the listener/receiver. If a teacher has failed in reaching out to his/her students, he/she has failed in communicating; if a student fails in an examination, she/he has failed in either organising the information or presenting it; if a child does not follow the instructions given, either we have failed in conveying our intent or the child has failed to get what is communicated. Thus even the inability on the part of the receiver may hamper communication. But as communicators we do not have any direct control over the listeners. All that we can do for ensuring successful communication is to make use of all the facilities available to us to match the content of communication and the ability of the listener. So when we think of effective communication, we are essentially thinking of enhancing our own communicative abilities, using the tools available to us to make our communication as effective as possible. Thus the focus of any training programme on effective

---

## **1.00 OBJECTIVES**

---

To enable the reader of this module to;

1. Define communication.
2. Explain salient features of a communicative situation.
3. Identify different components of effective communication.
4. Justify the need to train students in communication skills.
5. Make personal communication more effective by employing different components of the skill of communication appropriately.

---

## **2.00 INTRODUCTION**

---

### **2.01 Meaning And Importance**

Can you think of a society where there is no need for communication? In day-to-day life we keep communicating with people around us. In communication we share the information we have and get information from others. This 'give and take' relationship will be successful and effective if we know how to convey our thoughts to others. In every communication, there is some loss of information. Hence effective communication implies two things: first, the clarity with which we organise our ideas for presentation and second, the force with which we put across our thoughts to others. Thus effective communication simply means the reduction of loss of information in transmission of the message. Let us say, you want to convey something to a friend. If you are able to convey all the information and get the expected response, your communication could be said to be successful. But that is not always the case. The listener may miss some aspects and still feel that he/she has got everything. You will know the missing links only when you get the response. Let us, for example assume that we entrust our ward with ten tasks for the day. At the end of the day, the child completes only six and still feels happy that all the tasks are attended to. That the four tasks are yet to be completed does not become important for the child at all. Perhaps it reflects on our own communication skills. We have not been able to convey the idea that all the ten tasks needed to be completed before the end of the day. Mere uttering of the message does not mean comprehension on the other end. We cannot assume that our responsibilities are over once we utter the message. It is also our duty to ensure that they are understood the way we want them to understand.

## *Module Contents*

<b>1.00 OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>141</b>
<b>2.00 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>141</b>
2.01 Meaning and importance	141
2.02 An operational definition	142
2.03 The mechanics of communication	142
2.04 Let us check our progress	143
2.05 Let us sum up	143
<b>3.00 COMPONENTS OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION</b>	<b>144</b>
3.01 Components defined	144
3.02 Let us check our progress	149
3.03 Let us sum up	149
<b>4.00 PROCESSES OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION</b>	<b>149</b>
4.01 Communication skills	149
4.02 Steps of communication process	150
4.03 Qualities of a good communicator	151
4.04 Let us check our progress	152
4.05 Developing effective communication skills among learners	152
4.06 Let us check our progress	153
4.07 Let us sum up	153
<b>5.00 SELF EVALUATION</b>	<b>153</b>
<b>6.00 EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION: ASSESSMENT TOOL</b>	<b>154</b>
6.01 Effective Communication Scale	154
6.02 Effective Communication Scale-Scoring pattern	154
<b>7.00 REFERENCES</b>	<b>156</b>

*Module 5*

*Effective  
Communication*

*Module 7*

*Self Awareness*

## *Module Contents*

<b>1.00 OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>179</b>
<b>2.00 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>179</b>
2.01 Self awareness: Meaning	179
2.02 What is self-esteem?	180
2.03 Importance of self-esteem	180
2.04 Boosting self-esteem	181
2.05 Let us check our progress	182
2.06 Qualities of people who possess self-awareness	183
2.07 Let us check our progress	183
2.08 Key areas of self-awareness	184
2.09 Let us check our progress	185
2.10 Self awareness: Importance	185
2.11 Let us check our progress	187
2.12 Methods that could be used in developing self awareness	187
2.13 Let us check our progress	188
2.14 Let us sum up	188
<b>3.00 COMPONENTS OF SELF AWARENESS</b>	<b>189</b>
3.01 Components defined	189
3.02 Let us check our progress	191
3.03 Let us sum up	192
<b>4.00 BASIC PROCESSES INVOLVED IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF SELF-AWARENESS</b>	<b>192</b>
4.01 The process	192
4.02 What can teachers can do?	194
4.03 Let us check our progress	194
4.04 Let us sum up	194
<b>5.00 SELF EVALUATION</b>	<b>194</b>
<b>6.00 SELF AWARENESS: SELF ASSESSMENT TOOL</b>	<b>194</b>
6.01 Self Awareness Inventory	195
6.02 Self Awareness Inventory-Scoring Pattern	196
<b>7.00 REFERENCES AND SUGGESTED FURTHER READINGS</b>	<b>196</b>

---

## **1.00 OBJECTIVES**

---

To enable the reader of this module to;

1. Recall what is self awareness.
2. List the qualities of people who are self aware.
3. Explain key areas for self-awareness.
4. List the importance of self awareness.
5. Enumerate the tips for enhancing self-awareness.
6. Enumerate common defeating thoughts detrimental to self-awareness.
7. Explain different methods that could be used in developing self awareness.
8. Explain the components of self awareness.
9. Explain the basic process involved in the development of self- awareness.

---

## **2.00 INTRODUCTION**

---

### **2.01 Self Awareness: Meaning**

We all think we are aware of ourselves, our strengths, our weaknesses, our assets and our liabilities etc. Still, many a times, we make mistakes while taking many decisions. We think we can do it, but actually we will not be able to do certain things and we will not be capable of taking certain responsibility. Some of us may learn from our mistakes too well while some of us learn very little. This is how as individuals we differ from one another. Due to very many reasons including the above, some succeed very well while some do not. Therefore, in order to succeed in life we have to learn to be realistic. For this to happen, one needs to understand himself/herself as objectively as possible. This is what is called self-awareness.

Self-awareness refers to being aware of oneself. 'Ourself' includes our strengths- weaknesses, assets-liabilities, positive-negative elements, etc. According to Wikipedia, "Self-awareness is the ability to perceive one's own existence, including one's own traits, feelings and behaviours. In an epistemological sense, self-awareness is a personal understanding of the very core of one's own identity. It is the basis for many other human traits, such as accountability and consciousness, and as such is often the subject of debate among philosophers. Self-awareness can be perceived as a trait that people possess to varying degrees beyond the most basic sentience that defines human awareness."

Self-awareness is so basic to our lives because our performance in life to a great extent is dependant upon what we do and how we do. To do a quality job awareness about oneself, especially one's capabilities is indeed a pre-requisite. Thus, it assumes a great importance.

Understanding self-awareness could be done effectively, if we understand the concept self-esteem and related issues.

### **2.02 What Is Self-Esteem?**

To understand self-esteem, it helps to break the term into two words. Let's take a look at the word esteem first. Esteem is a word for thinking that someone or something is important or valuing that person or thing. For example, if you really admire your teacher because he cares for all students, it only means you hold him in high esteem. Self means oneself! So put together, it means, 'it is how much you value yourself and how important you think you are'.

Self-esteem isn't bragging about how great one is. It's more like quietly knowing that one self is worth a certain measure. It's not about thinking of oneself as perfect, but knowing that one is worthy of being loved and accepted.

### **2.03 Importance Of Self-Esteem**

Good self-esteem is important because it helps one to hold one's head high and feel proud of oneself and what one can do. It gives one the courage to try new things and the power to believe in oneself. It lets one respect oneself, even when one makes mistakes. And when one respects oneself, others also respect him/her.

Our self-esteem develops and evolves throughout our lives as we build an image of ourselves through our experiences with different people and activities. Our childhood stages are very important in developing healthy self-esteem. All the agencies of socialization, i.e., family, friends, school, significant persons, the books we read, the people we come across, etc all will have their own influence on shaping and maintaining our self-esteem. Therefore, the environment one gets in life and the quality of one's life will determine the health of self-esteem. What is most important is every individual will have to have one's own healthy self-esteem.

<u>Healthy/High Self-esteem</u>	<u>Low Self Esteem</u>
<p>Childhood experiences that lead to healthy/high self-esteem include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being praised</li> <li>• Being listened to</li> <li>• Being spoken to respectfully</li> <li>• Getting attention and hugs</li> <li>• Experiencing success in sports or school</li> <li>• Having trustworthy friends</li> </ul>	<p>Childhood experiences that lead to low self-esteem include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being harshly criticised</li> <li>• Being scolded or beaten</li> <li>• Being ignored, ridiculed or teased</li> <li>• Being expected to be 'perfect' all the time</li> <li>• Experiencing failures in sports or school</li> </ul>

(CMHC, 2002)

Imagine, you have good self-esteem, and then you know that you're smart enough to make your own decisions. You value your safety, your feelings, and your health - your whole self! Good self-esteem helps you know that every part of you is worth caring for and protecting.

Sometimes some children will have low self-esteem if their mother or father does not encourage them enough or if there is a lot of yelling at home. Other times, a child's self-esteem can be hurt in the classroom. A teacher may make a child feel dumb. For some children, classes at school can seem so hard that they can't keep up or get the grades they'd hoped for. This can make them feel bad about themselves and hurt their self-esteem. Their self-esteem will improve when a teacher encourages them, is patient, and helps them get back on track with learning. There are many factors which can facilitate or impede development of self esteem.

### **2.04 Boosting Self-Esteem**

It's OK to have ups and downs in one's feelings, but having low self-esteem isn't OK. The following tips can help in boosting the self-esteem. Sheslow, D. V. (2005) advocates a few tips. They can be re-rendered as follows.

- Make a list of things you're good at. It can be anything from drawing or singing to playing a sport or telling a good joke.
- Then add a few things to the list that you'd like to be good at.
- Give yourself three compliments every day. Don't just say, "I'm so great." Be specific about something good about yourself, like, "I was a good friend to Ram today" or "I did better on that test than I thought I would." etc.
- While you're at it, before you go to bed every night, list any three things in your day that really made you happy.
- Remember that your body is your own, no matter what shape, size, or colour it is. If you are worried about your weight or size, you can check with your doctor to make sure that things are OK.
- Remind yourself of things about your body that are good, like, "My legs are strong and I can walk well or play well."
- Remember that there are things about yourself you can't change. You should accept and love these things - such as skin colour, face formation, - because they are part of you.
- When you hear negative comments in your head, tell yourself to stop. When you do this, you take the power away from the voice inside that discourages you.

By focusing on the good things you do and all your great qualities, you learn to love and accept yourself - the main ingredients for strong self-esteem! Even if you've got room for improvement (and who doesn't?), realising that you're valuable and important, helps your self-esteem to shine.

It is indeed important to note that self-esteem needs to be carefully built by every one. The healthier the self-esteem, the better is the mental health. This also enables one to understand one self better in comparison to those who are poor in their self-esteem.

### **2.05 Let Us Check Our Progress**

1. State the meaning of self-awareness in your own words.
2. What is self-esteem? How to boost it?
3. Which of the following teacher behaviour is likely to help in developing healthy self esteem?
  - a Always insisting upon 'perfection'
  - b Pointing out mistakes 'only'
  - c Setting unrealistic goals
  - d Praising the achievements however small they may be.

## 2.06 Qualities Of People Who Possess Self-Awareness

People who are aware of their own self possess the following functional qualities.

### **(1) Possess a sense of being aware of who they are:**

People who possess self awareness are aware of who they are. It is important for all of us to be aware of who we are in terms of what are we, what are our personal assets and liabilities, where we are good at and where we are bad etc, etc. This enables one to wish and aspire for some thing. This enables one to plan certain things and ultimately helps one to prioritize one's own life goals.

**(2) Allows for an understanding of the issue of self-control:** Self aware people can understand what they should do and what they should not do. This is because they are aware of their capabilities. They are not emotionally blind but clear about their real strengths and weaknesses. Thus, self-awareness allows one to understand the issue of self-control. This is a very important quality.

**(3) Helps them to express themselves clearly:** People who are self-aware can express clearly, as they do not suffer from any conflict about knowing themselves.

**(4) Self aware people function fully under their known limits of personality:** Indeed, they can function fully under their known levels/ limits of abilities and potentialities. All their emotions, needs and feelings are rooted in a framework of their own limits of personality. Under this delimiting framework they function to their best.

**(5) Self-aware persons are able to appreciate their own limitations:** The people with self-awareness are those who are capable of appreciating their own limitations. They do not rush to any activity or assignment if they are not capable of undertaking. Therefore, they are competent to recognise their own limitations. This quality is prominent in them. Because of this, they mess up life much lesser than others who do not have self awareness.

## 2.07 Let Us Check Our Progress:

Which of the following behaviours indicate realistic self awareness?

- a Always speaking of his/her strengths
- b Believing that he/she can do anything
- c Admitting his/her weaknesses
- d Attempts to choose activities based on his/her abilities

## 2.08 Key Areas Of Self-Awareness

Self-awareness is difficult to achieve, as human beings are complex in nature. To become more self-aware, we should develop an understanding of ourselves in many areas. Key areas for self-awareness could include our personality traits, personal values, habits, emotions, and the psychological needs that drive our behaviours. These areas are indeed crucial for self-awareness.

**Personality:** Self-aware persons need to understand themselves as realistically as possible. An understanding of our personalities can help us find situations in which we will thrive, and help us avoid situations in which we will experience too much stress. Personality is a sum total of all our qualities and abilities. An understanding of our own personality is the basic essence of self-awareness. If one succeeds in it he/she will be able to conduct in tune with their abilities and will suffer from very less tensions in life. Therefore, personality is the most crucial area for self-awareness.

**Values:** It's important that we each know and focus on our personal values. People who are clear about their values and convictions in life tend to be clear about their life goals. This makes life easier than a situation where, one is confused and does not know what one has to do in life. If we become aware of our own values in life, it helps us in handling ourselves in selecting life goals. Thus, values are an important area for self-awareness.

**Habits:** Our habits are the behaviours that we repeat routinely and often automatically. Although we would like to possess the habits that help us interact effectively with and manage others, we can all probably identify at least one of our habits that decreases our effectiveness. Likewise, we also need to identify those habits, which can enhance our effectiveness. Therefore understanding our habits, both enhancers and impeters, can help us in developing self-awareness. Thus, this is also an important area of self-awareness.

**Needs:** Psychologists have identified a variety of psychological needs that drive our behaviours such as need for esteem, affection, belongingness, achievement, self-actualization, power and control. One of the advantages of knowing, which needs exert the strongest influence on our own behaviours is the ability to understand how they affect our interpersonal relationships. For instance, most of us have probably known people who have a high need for status. They're attracted to high status occupations, and they seek high status positions within their organizations. Such people also want the things that symbolize their status. They insist that they be shown respect, and they want privileges and perks that people of lower status can't have. Sometimes these people fight for things that others see as inconsequential--like a bigger office. Needs cause motivation; and when needs aren't satisfied, they can cause frustration, conflict and stress. Understanding needs of self becomes an important area of self-awareness.

**Emotions:** Emotional self-awareness has become a hot topic of discussion recently because it's one of the facets of emotional intelligence. Understanding your own emotions, what causes them, and how they impact your thoughts and actions is emotional self-awareness. Most of our behaviour is related to our emotional reactions. If we are aware of our emotional strengths and weaknesses most of our interpersonal problems get sorted out. The present day world holds this attribute a high premium in life. This is a very important area of self-awareness.

## 2.09 Let Us Check Our Progress

- a What is meant by emotional self awareness?
- b Why is 'Needs' considered as a key area of self awareness?

## 2.10 Self Awareness: Importance

Self-awareness can help us make us more effective in our life. Irrespective of whether we are students, teachers, parents, literate, illiterate, male, female etc, it can enable us to handle ourselves more effectively. Therefore, developing self-awareness is important. Personal Effectiveness is achieved through; the following.

**Self development:** A self aware person is expected to be one who is conscious of his own strengths and limitations and by so being, wishes to improve his strengths and bring the limitations to a manageable level so that he/she can handle him/herself better. Since man is a progressive animal, one's self-awareness will certainly help for one's self-development.

**Knowing our strengths and weaknesses:** Self-awareness helps us to exploit our strengths, and cope with our weaknesses. This is perhaps the most important advantage of being self-aware. If one has this, it is understandable that one works towards one's growth. Though this is difficult to achieve, on achieving this, one is sure to move towards self-growth. This in turn enables one to be more effective in life.

**Stress management:** Self-aware people have an understanding of what can cause stress for them. Therefore, they either avoid such situations or they develop counter-situations to manage stressful situations. Perhaps, this is the biggest benefit of self-awareness. Thus, self-aware people learn to manage their stress much better than those who are not aware of themselves. Thus, it enhances the effectiveness of individuals.

**Being objective and realistic in nature:** Two virtues of 'self-aware' persons are: being objective, and realistic in their dealings. Since self-aware people are objective and realistic in nature, these two attributes can make a person qualitatively much better in dealing with different situations of life. Thus, the personal effectiveness is enhanced.

**Enhancing motivation:** Self-awareness is empowering because it can reveal where the performance problems are and indicate what can be done to improve performance. In addition, awareness of our psychological needs can increase our motivation by helping us to understand and seek out the rewards that we really desire.

Thus, developing self-awareness is of great value to human beings. This is the ability seen only among human beings.

### Tips To Enhance Self-Awareness

- Be objective in understanding oneself and others.
- Be practical in life.
- Be bold to accept realities of life.
- Attempt to understand your strengths and weaknesses dispassionately.
- Attempt to understand the total personality objectively.
- Accept yourself as you are.

### Common Self-Defeating Thinking Styles

#### Examples

- I **must** never quit
- I **must** be always successful
- I **can't** let anybody beat me
- I **can't** be alone
- I **am not** competent
- I **must** be different from others
- I **must** be like others
- I **cannot** survive arguments or disagreements
- I **cannot** be happy when others close to me are not
- I **cannot** break the rules
- I **cannot** tell a lie
- I **cannot** get caught in a lie
- I **cannot** be bored
- I **cannot** openly ask for what I want

*These styles can be dangerous and detrimental to self-awareness.*

### 2.11 Let Us Check Our Progress

- Give any two reasons to justify the importance of self awareness.
- Why self-defeating thinking styles are considered as detrimental to self awareness?

### 2.12 Methods That Could Be Used In Developing Self Awareness

Self-awareness could be developed effectively by practising the following methods.

**Ask somebody:** If you have open, trusting relationships with the people who know you, you can ask them for feedback about your personality, habits, needs and values. Our experience tells us that teachers, friends and family members can provide proper assessments of our personality. Even when they give feedback, sometimes, it may be related only to the role of ours, which they have seen. For instance, our teachers might have seen us as only students. Therefore, their assessment of me as a student only may hold good, if at all it is objective. In another situation, a friend of mine who plays cricket with me may see me as a fellow player only and give me his feedback as a player. Therefore, different people might be observing us differently in different contexts. Yet, it may be useful for us. In such a situation, we may need to consult one such trustworthy person in each domain who knows us well in different domains of our life.

**Psychological Tools:** Another method of developing self awareness is by responding to psychological tools related to self-awareness. Some of these tools are self administered too. They can reveal the extent of self-awareness and accordingly one can work towards knowing one self through different interventions such as being a part of brainstorming sessions and role plays.

**Seeking professional help:** By seeking professional help from counsellors and psychologists too, one can develop self-awareness. Professional counsellors, such as guidance counsellors and clinical psychologists, are of a great help. Guidance counsellors and Clinical psychologists can also help us understand and work on aspects of our personality and habits. Thus, seeking professional help for assessment is a very important method.

### 2.13 Let Us Check Our Progress

If you are free to implement one method that can help your students to develop healthy self awareness which one will you choose? Give reason for your choice.

### 2.14 Let Us Sum Up

In this section we have tried to understand the meaning of Self awareness as well as that of self esteem, their importance, qualities of a person who possesses self awareness, key areas of self awareness and possible methods of boosting self esteem and developing self awareness, as well as thinking styles that are detrimental to development of healthy self awareness.

### 3.00 COMPONENTS OF SELF AWARENESS

#### 3.01 Components Defined

Let us now understand the different components of self awareness. As a skill, it can be understood as a group of components, which together operate as self-awareness skill. The different components are as follows.

**Identifying Strengths and Weaknesses:** *is the ability to identify one's own strengths as well as weaknesses without any personal bias or prejudices.*

Perhaps this component is central to self-awareness and self-awareness, as a skill is central to all other life skills. Identifying one's own strengths and weaknesses means that one is able to objectively assess one's own positive and negative attributes or qualities. By so doing one can be cautious in accepting responsibilities, plan things properly in handling an assignment and be realistic in all his activities. This will lead the individual towards success in whatever one does. Therefore, ability to identify one's own strengths and weaknesses becomes an important virtue and a component of self-awareness.

The sooner one realises this in life, the less tensed the individual will be in life. Therefore, Education has an important role to play in developing this ability among school students. This can lead to solving many problems and confusions in life.

**Objectivity:** *is the ability to understand one's own strengths, weaknesses, emotions and feelings against a set of criteria.*

As said above, 'developing objectivity' in life becomes a pre-requisite condition for self-assessment. Self-awareness becomes impossible without this. A person who is not willing to understand himself/herself objectively cannot develop self-awareness at all. It is because trying to judge things against a set of external criteria alone can enable one to understand one self.

School education has a great opportunity of developing objectivity in life. If this is done well, then it becomes easy for children to generalise this to other spheres of life. A different intellectual perspective will set in. This needs to be developed in all students.

**Introspectionability:** *is the ability to assess one's own behaviour for their appropriateness or inappropriateness /adequacy or inadequacy shown in different life situations.*

Introspection is a process of seeing within. This will enable one to understand oneself. This is one of the oldest methods used in psychology. Developing ability to introspect one's self, developing ability to analyse one's own behaviour in different life situations can enable one not only to understand one's adequacies and inadequacies, but also to change himself for the better. Therefore, it is highly desirable that this ability is developed among students. Schools can do a good job in this area. Conscious efforts need to be made in this direction.

**Accepting Self As It Is:** *is the ability to accept one's own self as a whole, in terms of his/her strengths and weaknesses, which makes the person unique.*

It is not just sufficient that one understands one's own strengths and weaknesses, but it is equally necessary that one learns to accept one's self in spite of one's own limitations. Put together any one is a combination of one's assets and liabilities. This one must be willing to accept himself / herself as they are. This is also an important quality in order to remain healthy. This is an important component of self-awareness.

In present day society, there are a lot many masks that people use to project themselves as most competent in order to earn recognition and many other goals in life. In such a mad rush for unreal world, perhaps, children also will be groomed by society to imitate elders. This can act as detrimental in realising one's own real self. Therefore, on this component, schools will have to work hard. Life can become less threatening if one plainly accepts one's own assets and liabilities straightforward. Therefore, schools have a big challenge before them.

**Openness:** *is the ability to welcome thoughts or opinions from others if they are useful, despite they being contradictory to one's own initial conviction or belief.*

This too is a great virtue of self-aware people. In the process of understanding ourselves, most of the times, we have to get cues from others through their reactions to us. We should be sensitive to the reactions of others about our views, behaviour and our conduct. Many a times, it is possible that some of us have certain views rooted so strong in our convictions that we continue to think they are appropriate.

When our views are contradicted by others, an open-minded person will try and understand others' views objectively. If the views or reactions of others towards us can lead us to a better path, an open-minded person will be ready to alter his views and change for the better. This is how a personality has to conform to group expectations and grow. Therefore, *open-mindedness* is an important component of self-awareness.

Children in schools can be enabled to develop this. In fact, all developmental programmes cover this component. Without this, development becomes lopsided. Schools have an important role to play in this.

**Reflectivity:** *is the ability to use processes of seeing, understanding, pausing and evaluating one's own self in relation to his strengths and weaknesses in order to improve one self.*

Persons who are self-aware are those who are reflective in nature. Here, one understands one's own positive and negative attributes, evaluates one's condition and attempts to remedy the condition leading to development. As explained above reflection involves all the elements that are necessary for personal growth. Self-awareness is a pre-requisite of personal development. For development to take place, reflection becomes a necessity.

Children need to be trained to develop the ability to reflect about themselves in terms of what is good, what is bad, what is desirable and what is not desirable. In this process teachers need to be sharp in schools and be sensitive to the need for developing reflectivity among learners.

### 3.02 Let Us Check Our Progress

Match the items in list A with the statements given in list B. Write the serial number of the item that matches with the statement in the space provided on the right side of the statement

List A	List B	Answers
1. Reflectivity	Welcoming ideas which may not be to one's liking	
2. Self acceptance	Assessing one's own self by looking within oneself	
3. Introspectionability	Judging one's own self using a set of pre-determined criteria	
4. Openness	Evaluating one's own self	
5. Objectivity	Accepting one's own strengths and weaknesses	

### 3.03 Let Us Sum Up

In this section we have identified and described the components that go into developing a healthy self awareness.

---

## 4.00 BASIC PROCESSES INVOLVED IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF SELF-AWARENESS

---

### 4.01 The Process

The basic processes that are involved in developing self-awareness are as follows.

**(a) Develop objectivity in life:** Stop taking decisions about people and about self too, subjectively. Develop an intelligent dimension of being objective in life. Here, one has to assess situation and take decisions based on a set of criteria, which society accepts. This is what objectivity constitutes. Developing objectivity in life is the basic step towards developing self-awareness.

**(b) Avoid being narcissistic:** There is a tendency among every one of us to fall in love with one's own abilities, looks, strengths, positive aspects of personality. In some people, this becomes too much. That excessive self-love is what is called narcissism. It can be dangerous. It is detrimental to the development of self-awareness. By developing excessive self-love we become blind to our own real drawbacks. Thus, it is important that we avoid being narcissistic.

**(c) Learn to be realistic in life:** One must learn to accept the social reality of which one is a part. Therefore, it is desirable that an individual does not contradict the group norms. Based on the group norms, one need to be realistic. Therefore, the opinion of the society/community about us is also to be accepted by us seriously. This can enable us to remain realistic in life.

**(d) Assess your own strengths and weaknesses:** Develop the ability to assess your own strengths and weaknesses as objectively as possible. It may appear to be difficult to do. But, if one attempts to do it, one can. For this to happen, one must be willing to keep one's eyes and ears open to get judgements from others in society. Invariably in all our interpersonal interaction situations, we do get reactions of others. This must be a sufficient a feedback for an intelligent

person. With these situations, one should be able to assess one's own strengths and weaknesses.

**(e) Shun developing complexes about yourself:** There are different kinds of complexes people suffer from. These complexes are a kind of mask each one wears to show a different desirable face to society. For instance, there is a tendency among some people to show off when they are amidst a group. This is only to get the attention of others in the group. Trying to show off with jewellery, wealth, dresses etc are all examples of complexes.

**(f) Verify your traits based on different evidences:** It is important that we maintain learner's attitude in life and want to grow constantly. If this can exist, then it becomes easy for one to grow. To do this one needs to be reflective in life. Through reflection, one needs to verify one's traits based on different evidences one gets in different interaction situations.

**(g) Accept yourself with all positive and negative attributes:** Perhaps the last leg of self-awareness is to accept oneself with all positive and negative attributes as belonging to oneself. Accepting that the self is a composition of all good and bad attributes is healthy. Ability to be conscious of one's bad qualities is as important as being conscious of good qualities. Put together, one has to become aware of one self.

To sum up, self-awareness development can follow certain processes and the result leads to maturity in life. From here, one needs to work for improving one's strengths and work towards taking weaknesses to a manageable level. With this one will be able to move towards realisation of one's potentialities, which is technically called 'Self-actualization'.

One needs to be aware of oneself throughout one's life. Therefore, this is not an activity, which has a terminal point. Self-awareness is a virtue of intelligent people who are not only capable of understanding others but also capable of understanding themselves. It is also a virtue of matured people. Perhaps all other skills develop from self-awareness, as this is the foundation for other skills. Though it is difficult to achieve, this should be seriously attempted by all.

In this process, schools have a serious role to play. If all teachers understand the importance of self-awareness, it becomes easy for them to develop the same among students.

### **4.02 What Can Teachers Do?**

Teachers can help their students to develop realistic self awareness by sensitising them to the need for developing self awareness, helping them to evaluate their own strengths and weaknesses, helping them to boost their self esteem.

### **4.03 Let Us Check Our Progress**

Enumerate the basic processes involved in the development of self-awareness.

### **4.04 Let Us Sum Up**

We have studied the processes involved in developing self awareness and what teachers can do to help their students to develop self awareness.

---

## **5.00 SELF EVALUATION**

---

Now it is time to reflect upon what we have understood about self-awareness. We will do so by assessing our understanding by answering the following questions.

- (a) Explain self-awareness as a skill.
- (b) Describe self-aware people.
- (c) What are the key areas of self-awareness?
- (d) Why is self-awareness important in your understanding?
- (e) How can self-awareness be developed and what can impede it?
- (f) What are the different methods that could be used in developing self-awareness?
- (g) What are the different components of self-awareness? Elaborate them.
- (h) Discuss the basic process of development of self-awareness.

---

## **6.00 SELF AWARENESS: SELF ASSESSMENT TOOL**

---

The following test can be used to assess the self-awareness level of students. It is a simple test, where, the respondents are asked to write the strengths and weaknesses of the respondents in different situations. Different situations, such as 'family situations', 'school situation', 'with friends', 'with relatives', 'with elders', and 'when confronted with problems' are listed. If the

self-awareness is clear, then one is expected to write many strengths and weaknesses. In fact this is a test which cannot be evaluated by others as is the case with normal tests. Therefore, whatever one reports is to be accepted.

After one gives interventions, one may again administer the same test. If the interventions have succeeded, then the number of strengths and weaknesses one writes under different situations will be much more. This is a test to assess the impact of the effectiveness of the intervention.

### 6.01 Self-Awareness Inventory

Dr.C.G.Venkatesha Murthy

#### *Directions*

As human beings each one of us is different from the other. All of us are good in something and are not so good in something else. We call them strengths and weaknesses of our personality. Now I want you to identify your strengths and weaknesses on different situations as indicated below.

The responses you give will be kept confidential. It will not be discussed with anyone. Generally students of your age take about 10 minutes to respond to it. You may take your time and write as many strengths and weaknesses as you have. There is nothing like right or wrong answer here.

Sl.No	Situations	Strengths	Weaknesses
1	Family situations		
2	School Situations		
3	With Friends		
4	With Relatives		
5	With Elders		
6	When confronted with problems		

## 6.02 Self-Awareness Inventory-Scoring Pattern

The number of strengths and weaknesses has to be counted before the intervention and after the intervention. The mere number and the nature of strengths and weaknesses indicate whether the individual has been able to be more aware after the intervention.

---

## 7.00 REFERENCES AND SUGGESTED FURTHER READINGS

---

Brockner, J. (1988). *Self-esteem at work: Research, theory and practice*. Lexington Books.

Burns, D.D. (1999). *Ten days to self-esteem*. New York: Quill.

Mc Kay, M. and Patrick, F. (2000). *Self-esteem: A proven Program of cognitive Techniques for assessing, improving and maintaining your self-esteem*. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications.

Seligman, M. (1998). *Learned Optimism: How to change your mind and your life*. New York: Pocket Books.

Sheslow, D.V. and Colleen Taylor Lukens, C.T. (2005). *The story of self-esteem*. The Nemours Foundation.

CMHC. (2002). *What is self-esteem?* Texas: The University of Texas.



*"To see what you are not is most important. Then what you are will naturally emerge."*

*Dick Olney*

*Module 8*

*Empathy*

## *Module Contents*

<b>1.00 OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>199</b>
<b>2.00 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>199</b>
2.01 Importance	199
2.02 Definition	200
2.03 Need For Empathy Education	201
2.04 Let us check our progress	202
2.05 Benefits of empathy	202
2.06 Empathy training	203
2.07 Let us check our progress	204
2.08 Levels of empathy responding	204
2.09 Characteristics of an empath	205
2.10 Practices that fosters empathy	206
2.11 Practices that hinders empathy	207
2.12 Let us check our progress	208
2.13 Let us sum up	208
<b>3.00 COMPONENTS OF EMPATHY</b>	<b>208</b>
3.01 Introduction to components of empathy	208
3.02 Components of empathy defined	209
3.03 Inter-relatedness of the components	211
3.04 Let us check our progress	211
3.05 Let us sum up	211
<b>4.00 THE BASIC STEPS INVOLVED IN THE PROCESS OF EMPATHY</b>	<b>212</b>
4.01 The basic steps explained	212
4.02 Principles of teaching empathy	212
4.03 Let us check our progress	213
4.04 How to teach empathy to children	213
4.05 Empathy teaching strategies	213
4.06 Let us check our progress	215
4.07 Let us sum up	215
<b>5.00 SELF EVALUATION</b>	<b>216</b>
<b>6.00 EMPATHY: SELF ASSESSMENT TOOL</b>	<b>216</b>
6.01 Empathy Assessment Scale	216
6.02 Empathy Assessment Scale -Scoring key	219
<b>7.00 REFERENCES FOR FURTHER READING</b>	<b>220</b>
<b>8.00 REFERENCES</b>	<b>225</b>

---

## 1.00 OBJECTIVES

---

To enable the reader of this module to;

1. State the definitions of empathy as given by different authors and sources.
2. Explain the need for empathy education in schools.
3. List the benefits of developing empathy among students.
4. Explain how empathy training could be thought about.
5. List different levels of empathy responding.
6. Explain the characteristics of an empath.
7. *Explain* those practices that can foster, and those that hinder empathy development in children.
8. Explain different components that surround empathy.
9. List the steps in the process of developing empathy.
10. Explain how to teach empathy to children.

---

## 2.00 INTRODUCTION

---

“Moral imagination is the capacity to empathise with others, i.e., not just to feel for oneself, but to feel with and for others. This is something that education ought to cultivate and that citizens ought to bring to politics.”

McCullough, 1992

### 2.01 Importance

The world we are living in today is very different from the world that was a decade ago. The advancements made in the field of Information Technology combined with other discoveries including cellular phones have completely changed the life styles all over the world. The challenges facing young people today have changed significantly from those affecting previous generations; some simply did not exist before, and others have intensified and become more complex, for example; HIV/AIDS, use of alcohol, tobacco, drugs, war, terrorism, political instability, sexual and other forms of exploitation, discrimination and others are creating much concern to the people. The schools and other educational institutions are gearing their systems to meet such challenges. The fast changing scenario is demanding different types of inputs in the educational systems. Information acquiring educational paradigm has to give place to skill-based education, especially skills, which help the younger generation to cope up with the challenges to be successful in life. In this regard many International bodies have suggested that psycho-social skills are to be integrated with the regular cognitive skills.

In today's world, education worthy of name is character building. Educational institutions should aim at producing good people. The schools should design programmes to develop young people with character traits such as kindness, generosity, love, compassion, non-violence and helpfulness. Good people show concern to others by understanding them. Empathy is one such skill, which has to be nurtured in the schools to create good students with character.

## 2.02 Definition

Different authors define Empathy in different ways. It is therefore necessary to examine some of the most commonly quoted meanings to arrive at an operational definition for this module.

Empathy was coined by the American Psychologist, Edward Titchener, as translation of the German 'Einfhlung'. He gave a meaning as "feeling with". But others gave the meaning as "feeling into" or "in-feeling". The origin of empathy seems to come from the physical "mirroring" that parents and adults show to children.

The Encyclopedia Britannica (1999-edition) defines empathy as "The ability to imagine oneself in another's place and understand the other's feelings, desires, ideas and actions."

The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language defines empathy, as "Understanding so intimate that feelings, thoughts and motives of one are readily comprehended by another."

Carl Rogers (1975) wrote..."the state of empathy or being empathetic is to perceive the internal frame of reference of another with accuracy and with the emotional components and means which pertain thereto as if one were the person".

Haynes and Avery, defined empathy as, "the ability to recognise and understand another person's perceptions and feelings and to accurately convey that understanding through an accepting response".

Lawrence Kolb defines empathy as "Healthy form of identification which is limited and temporary but which enables one person to feel for and with another and to understand his experience and feelings."

Kenneth Clark described empathy as "The capacity of an individual to feel the needs, the aspirations, the frustrations, the joys, the sorrows, the anxieties, the hurt, indeed the hunger of others as if they were his or her own."

Gallo, describes that empathy includes both the cognitive processes and affective experiences. As he says....an empathic response is one which contains both a cognitive and an affective dimension.....the term empathy is used in at least two ways; to mean predominantly cognitive response, understanding how another feels, or to mean an affective communion with the other.

In short, Empathy refers to '*the ability of an individual to feel with others*'.

### **2.03 Need For Empathy Education**

Now a days people seem to have a lot of things which engage them. Children are very interested in computer games and watching fun in TV programmes, adolescents and adults are interested in mobiles, games, tuitions, in buying stylish clothes, eating in joints and finally getting admissions in money making courses. Young parents spend much time in earning money, admitting their children to quality schools, dropping them to schools, to tuitions, to training programmes to make their children perform better. Business people are busy in advertisements and promoting their business to get more profit. You and I also are in the same rat race.

Have we taken time to care about other's feelings when they are unable to accomplish their goals? Have we ever had time to sympathise with the old and disabled people? Have we ever taken time to feel about the job-less and hungry people who are next to our house? Have we ever had time to think of old and sick people? One may not be surprised to get answers to these questions in different ways, and finally conclude saying that we don't have time to think on these situations as we are busy in our own activities. We rush to develop our minds and acquire skills to chase our success and do not even think of developing our abilities to empathise with others.

We have no difficulty in learning most difficult subjects when taught in classrooms. Think of learning computer, driving, handling a TV etc., which were once thought to be difficult have been made available to a kid of primary school now. But, have we cared to enable our children to care for others? As the

purpose of education is to develop a good and caring human being, it should not be difficult to promote the same. Therefore the ability to empathise should be made an important life-skill and be taught in our classrooms so that, children can practise these things and become empathists. Often the importance of empathy is underestimated. It should be taught in schools by teachers in cooperation with the families and other social agencies. Children are encouraged to learn new computer programs to solve tough mathematics problems, learn how to use mobiles, learn driving their vehicles etc., likewise, they should also be encouraged to become empathists who empathise with the problems of the family members, their classmates, and their acquaintances. By doing so, we would make our lives much more meaningful and joyful. On the contrary, our insensitivity and indifference towards others' agony and sufferings will end up in a society, which is tending towards callousness.

Empathy concept has captured the imagination of educators over the world and it has become an important input in education. Empathy education should develop the innate mental attitudes and train students to apply the same in life situations. Therefore, it gets justified that teaching of empathy be made an integral part of school education. Every child has the right to be educated on this.

### **2.04 Let Us Check Our Progress**

After having read the different views about empathy, we must be in a position to answer the following:

- (a) Recall that empathy is recognising ----- in other persons and understanding their----- in a given situation.
- (b) Recognise one difference between sympathy and empathy.
- (c) Read today's news paper and identify one situation where you need to empathise.
- (d) Write in your own words what empathy means to you which you will use to teach your students.
- (e) Identify at least 2 situations where you need to be an empath (In regular classroom situations)

### **2.05 Benefits Of Empathy**

Empathy is currently one of the most discussed topics in psychology and education. Psychologists have mentioned that development of empathy can help lay groundwork for the growth of other positive traits, including skill in reasoning and

communication, inter-personal skills, etc. Teachers today have also faced a lot of problems with disrespect and bullying amongst students. The importance of development of Empathy could be listed as follows.

**Empathy connects people together:** When you empathize with me, my sense of identity is connected to yours, as a result I feel better in some way and less alone. I may as well, as a result, also start to empathize more with you.

In a therapeutic situation, having someone else really understand how you feel can be a blessed relief, as people with emotional problems often feel very much alone in their different-ness from other people.

**Empathy builds trust:** Empathy displayed can be surprising and confusing. When not expected, it can initially make you suspicious, but when sustained it is difficult not to appreciate the concern. Empathy thus quickly leads to trust.

**Empathy closes the communication gap:** Consider what happens if you had no idea what the other person felt about your communications to them. You might say something, they hated it, and you continued as if they understood and agreed. Not much persuasion happening there! The more you empathize, the more you can get immediate feedback on what they are experiencing of your communications with them and as a consequence, you can change what you are saying and doing to get them to feel what you want them to feel.

**Empathy is the building block for other kinds of “pro-social behaviour”** – that is, helping, sharing and comforting – and one of the cornerstones of later social competencies. Children who are more empathic tend to develop better friendships and get along better with other children, with less fighting and more sharing.

## 2.06 Empathy Training

Training instructions that enhance affective and cognitive empathy in both children and adults are as follows:

- Training in interpersonal perception and empathetic responding: what empathy is, how it develops, how to recognize and respond to other’s emotive states, etc.

- Activities which focus initially on one's own feelings as a point of departure for relating to the feelings of others.
- Role taking/ role-playing activities in which one imagines and acts out the role of another.
- Sustained practice in imagining/perceiving another's perspective.
- Exposure to emotionally arousing stimuli, such as portrayal of misfortune, deprivation or distress.
- Expressions of positive trait, attribution / dispositional-praise; that is, reinforcing to children that positive, pro-social traits are a part of their nature.
- Modelling of empathetic behaviour by teachers, trainers, experimenters and other adults with whom the child comes in contact with.
- Activities that focus on the lives of famous empathetic persons (e.g. Mother Theresa, Mahatma Gandhi, Baba Amte, etc.)

### **2.07 Let Us Check Our Progress**

1. Discuss how development of empathy is beneficial to us?
2. List any six different aspects of empathy training.

### **2.08 Levels Of Empathy Responding**

You must have a clear conception of empathy before you can use it effectively. The following scale will illustrate poor empathy responses and good ones (a good response include accurate reflection of what the talker just said and tentative comments that help the talker understand him/herself). So study this scale well:

#### **Level 1.0: Inaccurate reflection or distracting comments.**

- Changing the topic responses: A friend is complaining about a school assignment and you say, "There was a good movie on channel 3 last night."

#### **Level 2.0: Correct understanding of some of the other person's feelings and circumstances, but other significant factors are misunderstood or overlooked.**

- At this level, the listener doesn't entirely understand the speaker's feelings. This may discourage the speaker from expressing more feelings unless the listener clearly indicates an interest to clarify exactly what the speaker is experiencing.

**Level 3.0: An accurate empathy response captures the essence of the speaker's feelings.**

- You have put yourself "in their shoes." Your comments reflect exactly what the speaker has told you. Be brief. Use simple words and your own words and give a feedback of the content called paraphrasing; otherwise, it may sound like you thoughtlessly "parroting" him/her. In this way, the speaker knows you are listening attentively and that you care. It is important to realize that no one can be an accurate empathizer every time he/she responds. Be tentative, because empathy statements are really questions. For example when you say, "You are feeling down" you are really asking "You are feeling sad, right?" When you are slightly off the mark, it isn't awful; it gives the speaker a chance to immediately "set the record right."

**Level 4.0: Adding to the speaker's self-understanding.**

- It is possible for an astute empathizer to understand (guess) what the speaker is feeling even before the speaker has recognized and /or expressed his/her own emotion. As soon as the empathiser questions if the speaker is feeling in a certain way, the speaker might readily recognize the underlying emotion and accept the interpretation. This can add to the speaker's insight, awareness or understanding of his/her feelings and the situation. It takes a while to know anyone well enough to give an insightful response. If you give an interpretation too soon it may seem too personal or critical and turn the speaker off. Interpretations are always guesses, so be tentative: "Could it be..."

**Level 5.0: Fantastic insight**

- After knowing a person well for a long time, one may be able to provide some brilliant insight occasionally. Great insight is a rare event.

**2.09 Characteristics Of An Empath**

- Highly sensitive, compassionate, and considerate

- Broadminded
- Affectionate and good listener
- Love for nature, animals and human beings
- Non-violent and non-aggressive
- Uncomfortable with disharmony
- Moved easily by others' emotions
- Problem solvers
- Thinkers
- Capable of attracting people
- Emotionally expressive
- Talks openly and frankly
- Altruistic in nature; Ignore and sacrifice their comforts

#### **The Keys Of Empathy Are As Follows:**

- Put yourself in other person's shoes and think what he might be feeling.
- Pay attention to what other person is doing, saying to you and tone of voice.
- Pay attention to body language.
- Pay attention to your own feelings as you observe and put these feelings into words keeping the other person in focus.
- When you respond empathetically, you show other person that you are paying attention and that you care for the other person.
- By trying to be an Alter, one must not lose objectivity in assessing the requirements of an empathetic situation and become vulnerable for exploitation.

### **2.10 Practices That Foster Empathy**

- a Responsive, caring, non-punitive, non authoritarian behaviour of mothers towards children:** Brining up is an important aspect that matters in childhood. The attitude of mothers especially plays a very important role. If mothers are responsive, caring, non-punitive and non authoritarian children are more likely to develop empathy.
- b Explaining to children the effects of their behaviour on others:** It is equally important that parents explain to children the effects of their behaviour towards others from the very beginning, ever since a child is able to understand. This background will provide a clear understanding about one's behaviour and enable them to understand the consequences of one's behaviour vis-à-vis other people.

- c Pointing out to children that they have the power to make others happy by being kind and generous to them:** If parents are broadminded, sensitive, and concerned about other fellow beings, they can teach their children that they have the power to make others happy. This teaching will go a long way for children.
- d Encouraging children to discuss their feelings and problems with parents:** Indeed, children can develop themselves in to very good human beings if parents encourage them to discuss their feelings and problems with parents. This very environment will enable children to be free of tensions as well as enable them to understand that by understanding and sharing others' problems, one comforts others. This can be a solid background for developing empathy in children.
- e Parental modelling of empathetic caring behaviour:** If parents are a model to be an empath, nothing can match that for a young boy or girl. Children imitate elders, especially the parents at formative years. Hence, the parental influence at formative years can be very useful in one's life.

### 2.11 Practices That Hinder Empathy

- a Threats and physical punishments aimed at inducing children to behave properly:** There are authoritarian upbringing styles, where children are punished in the name and pretext of discipline and good manners. One can imagine how such an up bringing leads to tension and fear. It hinders development of love, compassion and understanding for others. The above situation leads to insecure feelings among children. This can be detrimental to the development of empathy in a child.
- b Inconsistent behaviour toward children's expression of emotional needs or rejection / withdrawal in response to those needs:** The other set of circumstances which are detrimental to the development of empathy feelings for others is the expression of inconsistent behaviour towards children's expression of emotional needs. If parents fail to respond to the emotional needs of children, they are quite likely to develop apathy in life. This can also lead to the development of emotional imbalance among children. If one suffers from emotional imbalance he/she can not develop empathy for others. Therefore, a healthy parenting is very important where, children's emotional

needs are understood, they are responded to suitably and the emotional life of children is respected and channelled healthily by parents.

- c Provision of extrinsic rewards or bribes aimed at eliciting good behaviour from children:** Among different forms of faulty upbringing; one important form is the use of extrinsic rewards for showing good behaviour. Many parents may not realise the implications. Good behaviour is not to be intended as a response to any extrinsic reward, while it has to be intrinsically made a part of one's development. This point must be clear to parents and they in turn have to work towards its realization in their children. If all good behaviours are externally rewarded, then showing good behaviour becomes an artificial attribute. When one does not make it part of one's personality, it obviously becomes difficult for one to show good behaviour without any external reward in one's later part of life. This is thus, detrimental to the development of empathy. Therefore, it hinders development of empathy.

### 2.12 Let Us Check Our Progress

1. Explain five levels of empathy responding.
2. Describe an empath in terms of different characteristics.
3. Discuss different practices that facilitate or debilitate the development of empathy.

### 2.13 Let Us Sum Up

We have studied the meaning and importance of empathy as well as the need for empathy education. We have also discussed about benefits of empathy and different aspects of empathy training. We have analysed different levels of empathy responding and identified characteristics of an empath. We have also identified practices that foster empathy as well those which hinder empathy.

---

## 3.00 COMPONENTS OF EMPATHY

---

### 3.01 Introduction To Components Of Empathy

Empathy is one of the traits that human beings are bestowed with. But this personal quality has to be developed like any other ability. Persons can get trained to acquire the abilities to become a good empath. (A person who is very sensitive to the feelings of others, in other words one who can scan the

psychological feelings of other person). Empathy is very inclusive concept. It includes many traits that are basic to a successful individual. To make things work we will identify such critical traits as components of empathy.

### 3.02 Components Of Empathy Defined

In order to understand these components, we will try to examine each of these components in different contexts. We can analyse these components with reference to other life-skills, which will be explained elsewhere in the teaching module.

**Sensitivity:** *is the ability to sense the feelings, needs, emotions and actions of other people in a social situation.*

We communicate and interact with people everyday, we have to *be* sensitive to what is going on in the minds of others, and *this* will help us understand their actions, thoughts, feelings and emotions. People often are not very 'open' with their feelings; we have to try to catch the underlying emotions and feelings that accompany words and actions. This will put the other person at ease and help him/her to be more forthcoming with one's emotions.

One way of trying to find out the emotions of the other person is through bodily movements, facial expressions and tone of voice. This will let you sense how the other person is feeling. You can instinctively know when a person is stressing on a particular word or phrase and if there is a slight change of facial expressions like grimace, angry look, etc. this will also be accompanied with bodily movements like tensing up, etc. One has to be extremely vigilant to catch these minute changes that convey a lot more than verbal communications.

**Objectivity:** *is the ability to assess the requirements of assistance to others in need, in the society, excluding one's own personal biases and prejudices towards the individual or group.*

When being empathetic with another you have to be affectionate and compassionate. You as an empath must be able to distinguish if the emotions you are sensing are yours or the other person's emotions. One way of doing this is detaching yourself from the 'mix-up' of emotions from all parties concerned. When you are aware of whose emotions you are sensing, you will be learn to remain calm, focused on the other person's plight. A successful empath is one who has the attitude of helping all people in need. He has a strong sense of belief that he is a part of a greater society and therefore he should

contribute as much as he can towards the welfare of others and to their needs. Needs constitute not only people who have a problem and require another to share this, but it can also include a person who is happy and wants to share this event and emotion with others.

**Social Inclination:** *is the ability to develop and show the attitude that as a member of the society one has to do some thing for the welfare of the society and its members as and when the situation arises.*

An empath is always willing to do what he is capable of doing for the welfare of the society of which he is a member. He is obliged to do this as the society has given him an opportunity to develop and achieve something in life. This one does by being a part of a society. It does not mean that he has to act as a full-time social worker. While pursuing his vocation he should not hesitate to do whatever he can when a need arises in the society. This attitude is what is referred to as social inclination. Or in other words, every member of a society need to think that s/he is expected to develop inclination to the welfare of the society of which he is a member.

**Social Responsibility:** *is the ability to feel responsible for the society by way of understanding the feelings, needs, emotions and actions of people in a social situation and also contribute to the welfare of society and its members.*

An empath feels responsible to the people of the society; he believes that as a member of the society it is his responsibility to understand the needs, emotions and actions of others. This responsibility leads to a more tolerant environment where people are at more ease with the empath and can share their emotions and feelings freely.

**Social Obligation:** *is the ability to feel that it is one's duty to understand the feelings, needs, actions and emotions of people in society where one lives and extend help voluntarily in different situations without ever being asked to do so.*

A successful empath is one who feels that it is his duty to help others in need and understand the other person completely. Empathic persons will voluntarily offer their help to anybody in need and understand the emotions he/she is going through even without the other person asking for the empath's help. According to him/her (empath) it is his responsibility and duty as a citizen to help others.

However an empath should not over-concern oneself with a person's issues, emotions or feelings too often unless one is approached or it is deemed necessary, (experience and awareness teaches one this), because it can blow something trivial out of proportion, if not, damage the relationship. Moreover, it might lead you to try help 'bail' out a person from trouble when that person does not need this kind of help or is he/she is not yet ready for it.

### 3.03 Inter-relatedness Of The Components

Each of these components that we have seen here do not work alone in order to bring about empathy. There is some amount of combination of all the components especially when the event of empathy is taking place. However, the degree to which this permutation and combination occurs, varies from event to event. In a particular act of empathy one of the components is more prominent than the other.

### 3.04 Let Us Check Our Progress

Match the empathy components given in list A with the descriptive statements given in list B. Write the serial number of the component that matches with the description in the space provided on the right side of the statement.

1. Social obligation	Obligation to do whatever one can, when a need arises in the society.	
2. Social responsibility	Catch the underlying emotions and feelings that accompany words and actions.	
3. Social inclination	Believes that it is his/her responsibility to understand the needs, emotions and actions of others.	
4. Objectivity	Voluntarily offer his help to anybody in need.	
5. Sensitivity	Detaching oneself from the 'mix-up' of emotions from all parties concerned.	

### 3.05 Let Us Sum Up

In this section we have identified the components of empathy, understood their meaning and significance in empathy. We have also understood their inter-relatedness.

## 4.00 THE BASIC STEPS INVOLVED IN THE PROCESS OF EMPATHY

### 4.01 The Basic Steps Explained

There are a few basic steps involved in the process of empathy, they are

1. Perception of the situation
2. Analysis of the situation
3. Action / Decision about the involvement

**1. Perception of the situation:** The first step in empathy is to perceive the situation. It involves focusing of one's attention on the situation at hand. In our daily life there are a number of events that take place. However some of them would require our immediate attention. This focusing of attention to a particular situation allows the empathy to understand the situation and its context better.

**2. Analysis of the situation:** After perceiving the situation the empathy needs to analyse the situation in order to understand the feelings, needs, etc., of the person in that situation. These understandings involve both the outwardly visible ones and those that are not visible, which are inside the person. The empathy has to decide what to do in such a situation.

**3. Action/decision about the involvement:** The course of action has to be decided by the person who is an empathy. The action may be of caring type or involving through verbal or physical action type. Though the form of involvement action may differ from person to person or situation to situation an empathy voluntarily gets involved in the process.

### 4.02 Principles Of Teaching Empathy

Though the number of steps explained under empathy is barely three, achieving the third level is not very easy. However, efforts must be made to develop this among school children. Empathy is a psycho-social skill which can be learnt in a regular classroom. To teach this life-skill, teachers should create an environment conducive to learning. Different contexts of day-to-day life are selected to focus learning on empathy.

- Empathy is a learnable skill, which can be taught at any level.
- Day-to-day life situations can be used as source of information and can be focus of motivation.
- Empathy lessons should be context/event-oriented rather than text-determined/ content oriented.
- Students, teachers, families and acquaintances of all are to be collaborated in this process.
- Class room learning atmosphere should be of democratic mode not directive mode.
- Students are to be treated as active participants but not as passive participants.

#### **4.03 Let Us Check Our Progress**

- (1) What are the steps involved in the process of developing empathy?
- (2) List out the tips you may like to give to teachers who may like to develop empathy among their students.

#### **4.04 How To Teach Empathy To Children**

Children do not have the cognitive skills to truly understand the concept of empathy until they are 8 or 9 years. Here's how to nurture empathy in younger children:

- Label the feeling
- Praise empathic behaviour
- Encourage your children to talk about her/his feelings
- Focus on other person's behaviour
- Teach non-verbal cues
- Teach basic rules of politeness
- Don't use anger to control your child
- Give your children tasks
- Ask her/him to think of others
- Pay attention to your child's social life
- Involve your child in charitable activities
- Expect the same behaviour from boys and girls equally

#### **4.05 Empathy Teaching Strategies**

It should be noted that empathy as a teaching subject is not well focused in the traditional learning situations. Moral education, spiritual education, story telling and other interventions might touch the concept of empathy as a fringe subject-, so we have to plan exclusively the teaching methodology and content base for empathy lessons.

Since the concept of empathy cannot be tested on the usual examination paradigm, we have to think of different strategies to teach this skill. Therefore it is suggested that teachers might adopt experiential learning strategy while teaching the skills involved in empathy. Role-playing, brain-storming and structured debate are the natural vehicles for the experiential learning. Role-playing is a natural mode of learning because it's an extension of the imaginative, pretend play of childhood (Blatner & Blatner, 1997). Please note that this type of learning is totally neglected in our classrooms because it addresses a different type of learning than that which can easily be tested in exams. Role-playing builds a deeper layer of understanding and a more flexible type of thinking, qualities, which will become increasingly important in the later years of child's development.

Role-playing, to begin with should associate with elementary themes and students are invited to associate to the components of the roles. Role taking is a skill that has to be built up just as playing any game or learning computing skills. Students should be taught how to go about in role playing as real characters or heroes of the situation.

During role play the participants (actors) will have to interact spontaneously, that is a gradual warming-up, meaningful build-up of sense-images, associations, physical connections and feelings so that the complexity of a character can be brought to life.

Essential materials required for empathy lessons:

- (a) Vocabulary list related to empathy: Feelings; emotions; human -relations; interests; needs; integrity; honesty; etc, these themes need to be analysed and expanded and a list of words to be made available to the class.
- (b) Social context related pictures, plays, scripts, news items, news clippings, etc.

**Lesson plans:** To begin with, lessons are to be simple and the themes should be easily comprehensible. In other words, the social context to be selected in the classroom or school settings should be within the preview of child's experience.

Situation, Empathy elicitation, and Action, (SEA) is a three step advanced listening approach that teaches students how to respond to others empathetically. It can be easily followed in the preliminary lessons and later on advanced role playing can be adopted. SEA suggests three questions in each situation;

what happened? (Situation); How is that person feeling? (Empathy); what one should do? (Action/response) Children should be lead into a discussion using the questions as anchors.

**Situation:** Your principal comes to your staff room and comes to your table and stares at a paper he is holding. Principal knows that you are paying attention.

**Empathy elicitation:** You closely observe the principal's face and body movements and you imagine that there is some disturbing situation. And you say "You look very upset sir" or you may say "Oh I am in trouble".

**Action/Response:** The second response is fine guess but not an example of empathy. The first response is a good example of empathetic response because you are trying to feel what the other person's feeling is about i.e., worry/upset.

#### 4.06 Let Us Check Our Progress

1. What strategies would you adopt for developing empathy in your students?
2. How will you prepare for teaching an empathy lesson?

#### 4.07 Let Us Sum Up

We can sum up the message of the module as follows.

- Empathy development is very much needed in our educational programmes.
- Along with knowledge, self-determination, and strategy utilization, empathy is regarded as a key attribute of a successful learner who exhibits quality education.
- Responsive, non-punitive, non-authoritarian behaviour of teachers towards their students increases the chances of learning empathy.
- Teachers are to explain the effects of their behaviour on others.
- Pointing out to children that they have the power to make others to be happy by being kind and understanding.
- Teachers to be models of empathy and caring behaviour.
- Encourage school children to discuss their feelings and problems with parents and teachers.
- Empathy instruction and training can enhance affective and cognitive skills.
- Role-taking/role-playing activities in which one imagines and acts out the role of another is inexpensive but very productive in nurturing empathy.

## 5.00 SELF EVALUATION

Encircle the most appropriate choice:

- 1 When you never use the skill empathy.
  - 2 When you seldom use the skill empathy.
  - 3 When you some times use the skill empathy.
  - 4 When you often use the skill empathy.
  - 5 When you use almost always the skill empathy.
1. I listen when someone is talking to me.  
**1    2    3    4    5**
  2. I ask open-ended questions when I need or want to know more.  
**1    2    3    4    5**
  3. I summarize what I hear when someone is telling me something.  
**1    2    3    4    5**
  4. I understand how other people are feeling.  
**1    2    3    4    5**
  5. I help other people who need or want help.  
**1    2    3    4    5**
  6. I say nice things to others after a game about how they played.  
**1    2    3    4    5**
  7. I let people know when I feel a friend has not been treated fairly.  
**1    2    3    4    5**
  8. I offer to share what I have with others.  
**1    2    3    4    5**
  9. I let others know when I care about them.  
**1    2    3    4    5**

## 6.00 EMPATHY: SELF ASSESSMENT TOOL

### 6.01 Empathy Assessment Scale

Adaptedby: Dr.C.G.Venkatesha Murthy  
Ms. Lekshmi Prasad

#### Directions

The following statements relate to how we feel for others in life. Different people have different ways of responding to other situations. Kindly answer the following items and help us understanding how you respond to others' problems. All that you have to do is to read every statement.

See if you agree or disagree in different levels and indicate your answer by way of putting a tick mark. There is nothing like right or wrong answer here. It only helps us in understanding your ways of responding to others in life. Your responses will be kept confidential.

Sl. No.	Statements	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree
1	When I am upset, at times I usually try to put myself in his/her situation for a while.			
2	I am often quite touched by things that I see happen.			
3	I sometimes find it difficult to see things from other person's point of view.			
4	Other person's misfortunes do not usually disturb me a great deal.			
5	Sometimes, I do not feel very sorry for other people when they are having problems.			
6	Before criticizing anybody, I try to imagine how I could feel if I were in their place.			
7	I feel like crying when watching a sad movie.			
8	Certain pieces of music can really move me.			
9	Seeing a wounded animal by the roadside is disturbing /upsetting.			
10	I do not give much thought to others' feelings.			

11	It makes me feel nice when I see people being nice to each other.			
12	The suffering of others deeply disturb me.			
13	I always try to tune in to the feelings of those around me.			
14	I get very upset when I see a young child who is being treated badly.			
15	I get easily moved by others' emotions.			
16	I can easily join a group which is happy and joyful.			
17	It makes me mad to see some one treated unjustly.			
18	I rarely take notice when people treat each other warmly.			
19	I feel happy when I see people laughing and enjoying themselves.			
20	It is easy for me to get carried away by other people's emotions.			
21	If a crowd gets excited, I too can get into excited stage.			
22	I feel nice when I do something nice for some one.			
23	I feel deeply for others.			
24	I do not cry easily.			
25	I can feel the pain of others.			

26	Seeing other people smile can make me smile.			
27	Being surrounded by happy people makes me feel happy too.			
28	TV/News, stories about injured or sick children greatly upset me.			
29	I cry at sad parts of the books I read.			
30	Being around those people who are depressed brings my mood down too.			
31	I find it annoying when people cry in public.			
32	It hurts me to see another person in pain.			
33	I get a warm feeling for someone if I see them helping another person.			
34	I can be a part of others' joy easily.			
35	I try to be aware of the feelings of people around me.			

### 6.02 Empathy Assessment Scale-Scoring Key

<i>Sl.No</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Uncertain</i>	<i>Disagree</i>
1	3	2	1
2	3	2	1
3	1	2	3
4	1	2	3
5	1	2	3
6	3	2	1
7	3	2	1
8	3	2	1
9	3	2	1
10	1	2	3

11	3	2	1
12	3	2	1
13	3	2	1
14	3	2	1
15	3	2	1
16	3	2	1
17	3	2	1
18	1	2	3
19	3	2	3
20	3	2	1
21	3	2	1
22	3	2	1
23	3	2	1
24	1	2	3
25	3	2	1
26	3	2	1
27	3	2	1
28	3	2	1
29	3	2	1
30	3	2	1
31	1	2	3
32	3	2	1
33	3	2	1
34	3	2	1
35	3	2	1

Max Possible score is = 105

Min Possible score is = 35

Norms

35- 45 = Non Empathic persons

46-93 = Average

94- 105 = True Empathic person

---

## 7.00 REFERENCES FOR FURTHER READING

---

Barak, A.; Engle, C.; Katzir, L.; and Fisher, W. A. (1987). Increasing the Level of Empathic Understanding by Means of a Game. *Simulations and Games* 18, 4. 458-470.

*Reports the results of a study to determine whether participation in an empathy training game would increase participants' empathic understanding. Participants exhibited more empathic understanding than controls.*

Barnett, M. A.; Howard, J. A.; Melton, E. M.; and Dino, G. A. (1982). Effect of Inducing Sadness about Self or Other on Helping Behaviour in High- and Low-empathic Children. *Child Development, 53, 2*, 920-923.

*Compares the altruistic behaviour of sixth graders in different experimental conditions. One finding: highly empathic children who were invited to reflect upon a sad incident involving a friend engaged in significantly more helping behaviour than children in other cells of the experiment.*

Barnett, M. A.; King, L. M.; Howard, J. A.; and Dino, G. A. (1980). Empathy in Young Children: Relation to Parents' Empathy, Affection, and Emphasis on the Feelings of Others. *Developmental Psychology, 16, 3*, 243-244.

*Examines relationships between the empathy scores/behaviours of parents and the empathy scores of their 4-6-year-old children. A positive relationship was found between parents' and daughters' empathy scores.*

Barnett, M. A.; Matthews, K. A.; and Howard, J. A. (1979). Relationship Between Competitiveness and Empathy in 6- and 7-Year-Olds. *Developmental Psychology, 15, 2*, 221-222.

*Tests the hypothesis that preparing first graders to play a game in a competitive manner would result in lower empathy scores than orienting them to play a game in a cooperative or neutral manner. No relationships were observed between kind of orientation and level of empathy.*

Bonner, T. D., and Aspy, D. N. (1984). A Study of the Relationship Between Student Empathy and GPA. *Humanistic Education and Development, 22, 4*, 149- 154.

*Reports on a study comparing the scores of secondary students on measures of empathy with their grade point averages. A significant and positive relationship was found.*

Brehm, S. S.; Fletcher, B. L.; and West, V. (1981). Effects of Empathy Instructions on First-Graders' Liking of Other People. *Child Study Journal, 11, 1*, 1-15.

*Examines, in two experiments, the effects of "empathy instructions" on the attitudes of first graders toward characters in a story tape. Results were mixed. One finding: empathy increased when a story character experienced a negative outcome.*

Clarke, P. (1984). What Kind of Discipline is Most Likely to Lead to Empathic Behaviour in Classrooms? *History and Social Science Teacher*, 19, 4, 240-241.

*Reviews research on home- and school-based disciplinary practices which are associated with greater and lesser expressions of empathy on the parts of children and older youth. Draws implications for classroom practice based on findings about the efficacy of empathy training.*

Dixon, D. A. (1980). The Caring Curriculum. *School and Community*, 67, 4 13-15.

*Describes the purpose, activities, and outcomes of The Caring Curriculum, a program intended to foster the development of empathy in elementary students, following its implementation in schools in St. Louis and in the province of Quebec. Several beneficial effects were noted.*

Eisenberg-Berg, N., and Mussen, P. (1978). Empathy and Moral Development in Adolescence. *Developmental Psychology*, 14, 2, 185-186.

*Compares the empathy ratings of 72 senior high school students with their ratings on two moral development measures (moral reasoning and helping) and with parental socialization practices. A positive relationship between empathy and moral reasoning were noted for both sexes; and warm, supportive, non-authoritarian maternal behaviours were positively related with high empathy in boys.*

Haynes, L. A., and Avery, A. W. (1979). Training Adolescents in Self-Disclosure and Empathy Skills. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 26, 6, 526-530.

*Compares scores on measures of self-disclosure and empathic understanding of high school juniors who participated in a training program in these areas with the scores of those who did not. Experimental students significantly outperformed controls.*

Hinchey, F. S., and Gavelek, J. R. (1982). Empathic Responding in Children of Battered Mothers. *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 6, 4, 395-401.

*Compares the empathic responses of preschoolers whose fathers physically abused their mothers with the responses of children from non-abusive homes. Children of non-abusive fathers exhibited greater empathy on three of four measures.*

Howard, J. A., and Barnett, M. A. (1981). Arousal of Empathy and Subsequent Generosity in Young Children. *Journal of Genetic Psychology*, 138, 2, 307-308.

*Compares the altruistic behaviour of children in preschool through second grade in two experimental groups--those who were encouraged to think about the feelings of other, needy children and those to whom the other children's feelings were not mentioned. Children who were encouraged to think about feelings were significantly more generous.*

Hughes, R., Jr.; Tingle, B. A.; and Sawin, D. B. (1981). Development of Empathic Understanding in Children. *Child Development*, 52, 1, 122-128.

*Compared kindergarten children with second graders in terms of their responses to slide stories of children in emotion-provoking situations. One finding: younger children's understanding of the story-children's emotions was improved if they were first encouraged to focus on their own emotional responses.*

Iannotti, R. J. (1978). Effect of Role-Taking Experiences on Role Taking, Empathy, Altruism, and Aggression. *Developmental Psychology*, 14, 2, 119-124.

*Examines the effects of role-taking experiences on future role taking, empathy, altruism, and aggression among boys 6 and 9 years of age. The experiences improved the role-taking ability of boys in both age groups. Altruism was increased with the 6-year-olds. Neither aggressive nor empathic behaviours were affected for any of the subjects.*

Kalliopuska, M. (1983). *Empathy in school students*. Finland: University of Helsinki, Helsinki.

*Compares outcomes on measures of empathy of three experimental groups and a control group of Finnish students, ages 11-18. The students exhibiting the greatest empathy were those who participated in the most intensive of three kinds of "empathy campaigns."*

Ladd, G. W.; Lange, G.; and Stremmel, A. (1983). Personal and Situational Influences on Children's Helping Behaviour: Factors That Mediate Compliant Helping. *Child Development*, 54, 2, 488-501.

*Explores, in three experiments, relationships among several variables--age and sex of subjects, different kinds of need for*

*for help, knowledge of how to help, adult exhortations to help, etc. One finding: adult encouragement to help increased helping behaviour.*

McDevitt, T. M.; Lennon, R.; and Kopriva, R. J. (1991). Adolescents' Perceptions of Mothers' and Fathers' Prosocial Actions and Empathic Responses. *Youth and Society*, 22, 3, 387-409.

*Looks at adolescents' views regarding their parents' encouragement of prosocial and empathic behaviour in relation to those adolescents' scores on measures of pro-social behaviour and empathy. Children of highly prosocial/empathic parents were themselves more pro-social/empathic than other adolescents.*

Morgan, S. R. (1983). Development of Empathy in Emotionally Disturbed Children. *Humanistic Education and Development*, 22, 2, 70-79.

*Compares the behaviour of elementary-level emotionally disturbed children in classrooms utilizing a humanistic/psycho educational model with the behaviour of those in classrooms utilizing a behavioural/learning model. Children in the former exhibited significantly greater empathy, responsibility, and self-control.*

Pecukonis, E. V. (1990). A Cognitive /Affective Empathy Training Program as a Function of Ego Development in Aggressive Adolescent Females. *Adolescence*, 25, 97, 59-76.

*Examines the relationship between the ego development and empathy in aggressive adolescent girls, and then reports the effects of an empathy training program on these girls' levels of empathy.*

Perry, D. G.; Bussey, K.; and Freiberg, K. (1981). Impact of Adults' Appeals for Sharing on the Development of Altruistic Dispositions in Children. (1981). *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology*, 32, 1, 127-138.

*Compares the sharing behaviour of second and third graders after three different kinds of appeal: a "power-assertive" appeal emphasizing punitive consequences, an "inductive" appeal emphasizing the good feelings one gets from sharing, and a neutral appeal to share with no further commentary. The inductive appeal produced the greatest amount of sharing.*

Siegal, M. (1985). Mother-Child Relations and the Development of Empathy: A Short-Term Longitudinal Study. *Child Psychiatry and Human Development*, 16, 2, 77-86.

*Examines relationships among gender constancy (awareness that one's gender is unchanging throughout life), gender identification, and empathy among children in first grade at two points in time. A positive correlation was noted between identification with one's mother at Time 1 and empathy score at Time 2 for both boys and girls.*

---

## 8.00 REFERENCES

---

1. Listening and Empathy Responding:  
<http://mentalhelp.net/psyhelp/chap13/chap13c.htm>
2. Kathleen Cotton. Developing Empathy in Children and Youth  
<http://www.nwrel.org/scpd/sirs/7/cu13.html>
3. Christel Broederlow. What is empathy- Empath the Report.  
<http://www.beyondthedoors.co.uk/listenersguild/empaths.html>
4. Allison Barnes and Paul Thagard. Empathy and Analogy.  
<http://cogsci.uwaterloo.ca/Articals/Pages?Empathy.html>
5. Lawrence J. Bookbinder. Empathy and Listening skills and Psychological hugs.  
<http://www.psychological-hugs.com>
6. Wikipedia on Empathy.  
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Empathy>
7. Empathy.  
<http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/egi-local/DHI/dhi.cgi?id=dv2-09>
8. The caring Child: how to teach Empathy.  
<http://parentcenter.babycenter.com>
9. Empathy.  
<http://changingminds.org/explanations/emotions/empathy.htm>
10. Empathy/Emphatic:  
<http://www.angelfire.com/realm2/amethystbt/Empathy.html>
11. Stephan Montana. Understanding Empathy. [www.sli.org](http://www.sli.org)

13. Nancy, Mullin-Rindler; Maureen, Crowley; Ann Marie, White; Nancy, Kerfe; et.al. Research, Education and Action – Current Projects – Empathy Project  
<http://www.wcwoonline.org/empathy/index.html>
14. Judy Harrow. Empathy: The Spirituality of Counselling.  
<http://www.darknet.com/proteus/empathy.htm>
15. James J. Gill, S.J. Empathy is at the heart of love.  
<http://www.regis.edu>



*Empathy feels these thoughts; your  
hurt is in my heart, your loss is in my  
prayers, your sorrow is in my soul, and  
your tears are in my eyes.*

*William A. Ward*

*Remember, we all stumble, every one of  
us. That's why it's a comfort to go  
hand in hand.*

*Emily Kimbrough*

*Module 9*

*Coping  
With Emotions*

## *Module Contents*

<b>1.00 OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>229</b>
<b>2.00 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>229</b>
2.01 Importance	229
2.02 Emotional intelligence	230
2.03 Let us check our progress	232
2.04 Use of emotions	232
2.05 Types of emotions	234
2.06 Let us check our progress	235
2.07 Managing negative emotions	235
2.08 Let us check our progress	243
2.09 Let us sum up	243
<b>3.00 COMPONENTS OF COPING WITH EMOTIONS</b>	<b>245</b>
3.01 Components defined	245
3.02 Components explained	246
3.03 Let us check our progress	249
3.04 Let us sum up	249
<b>4.00 BASIC PROCESSES INVOLVED IN COPING WITH EMOTIONS</b>	<b>249</b>
4.01 Basic processes	249
4.02 What the teachers can do	252
4.03 Let us check our progress	252
4.04 Let us sum up	252
<b>5.00 SELF EVALUATION</b>	<b>252</b>
<b>6.00 COPING WITH EMOTIONS: SELF ASSESSMENT TOOL</b>	<b>253</b>
6.01 Differential Emotion Scale	253
6.02 Differential Emotion Scale: Scoring pattern	255
6.03 Shyness Assessment Scale	255
6.04 Shyness Assessment Scale: Scoring pattern	256
<b>7.00 SUGGESTED FURTHER READING</b>	<b>257</b>

---

## 1.00 OBJECTIVES

---

To enable the reader of this module to;

1. Explain the meaning of emotions.
2. Explain emotional intelligence and its components.
3. List out the uses of emotions.
4. List out emotional needs of human beings.
5. Discuss different types of emotions.
6. Explain ways of managing negative emotions.
7. Explain various components of coping with emotions.
8. Explain the process of developing balanced emotions.
9. Measure emotional well being using self appraisal questionnaire.

---

## 2.00 INTRODUCTON

---

*Anyone can become angry-that is so easy. But to become angry with the right person to the right degree, at the right time for the right purpose, and in the right way-that is not so easy.*

Aristotle

### 2.01 Importance

Man has been long recognised as a rational animal. He is also an emotional creature endowed with sentiment and feeling. In other words, man has intellect and affections. He has a head as well as a heart. The head reasons, debates and works out logic. The heart feels and experiences the inside and outside world. This module deals with all feelings, sentiments, experiences and emotions. Where do they come from? How do they come? Why do we feel what we feel? How to regulate/ modulate our emotions in daily life?

Emotions are recognised and defined in terms of feelings. Emotion is a mental state that arises spontaneously rather than through conscious effort. It is accompanied by physiological changes. Emotions mobilize the organism's resources. They energise organisms to a very high degree in order to meet the emergency situations. For example, fear makes available to the body enough energy to get away from the feared object or stimulus.

How we recognise and manage our feelings from time to time plays a critical role in development of life skills for any person. One must learn to experience or develop positive feelings like warmth, love, compassion, humour, gratitude, curiosity, joy, or

happiness. At the same time, one must also learn to control or regulate negative emotions like sorrow, fear, tension, anger, hate, envy, jealousy, resentment, repulsion, hostility, depression, grief or insecurity. These positive and negative emotions are two dimensions along the same continuum. The notion of *subjective emotional well being* and *emotional intelligence* is gaining momentum these days to highlight the importance of feelings in successful living.

## 2.02 Emotional Intelligence

The importance of feelings is recognized in the recent concept of emotional intelligence (EI). It is defined as a constellation of non-cognitive skills resulting in the ability to process emotional information particularly as it involves perception, assimilation, understanding and management of emotions. EI is about recognising joy and pain in others. It is about being angry at the right time, in right manner and for the right reason. It is about authentic use of emotions. It is analogous to the ability to read a map. EI competencies are not innate talents. They are learned abilities. They are competencies, which can be developed by training. EI refers to the emotional, personal, and social or survival dimensions of intelligence rather than the strictly cognitive IQ skills related to learning memory, recall, thinking and reasoning.

EI describes the ability of a person to understand his or other's emotions. It enables us to act appropriately based on this understanding. It is increasingly recognized that rational intelligence (IQ) has only a small influence in the success of individuals in their chosen areas of private or public life. More important are the emotional, interpersonal and social skills. The EI of a person is measured in terms of an emotional quotient (EQ). The EQ, rather than IQ, has been found to be greater predictor of success in life and work.

An individual's IQ or cognitive ability remains relatively fixed throughout life. On the other hand, EQ develops with age and experience. Through effort, EQ can be improved at any age. For most people, EQ increases with advancing maturity. This is particularly true as increasing age enable people to become more aware of their emotions, become more empathetic with others and learn how to handle difficult relationships and social situations. It is quite possible that a person starts out with high EI. He gets emotionally damaged in early childhood thereby causing low EQ later in life. It is also possible the other way round. An individual starts out with relatively low EI, but receives healthy emotional modelling or nurturing-which results

in moderately high EQ. It is easier to destroy EQ than to create or build on them in individual cases. These observations bring to focus the importance of parents, teachers, television or other means of socialization when it comes to teaching emotional lessons in young children. The four major domains and associated competencies of EI are:

(i) **Awareness:** This involves becoming aware of one's own emotions, understanding how you feel and knowing your strengths/weaknesses. It enables one to decide for life based on one's own emotions.

(ii) **Management or Control:** This involves ability to balance emotions against set goals, create plans and motivate self to achieve them. It helps to use emotions in a situation rather than hinder one's progress. It includes ability to delay gratification and reward to focus on the task at hand. The ability to delay gratification is a master skill. It shows a triumph of the reasoning brain over the impulsive one. It is a sign, in short, of emotional intelligence.

(iii) **Social Awareness or Empathy:** This involves ability to understand emotional nature of those around you—friends, parents, partners, teachers, or your children. It also implies that you use that knowledge to create better relationships.

(iv) **Social Skills:** This involves skills to work with others, understand their emotions, read signals, handle social situations, solving relationship problems, motivate others, and create conditions for cooperation and teamwork. The specific strategies in this include inspiring leadership, conflict management, building bonds, teamwork and collaboration.

The four aspects of EI are, (i) Perception, appraisal and expression of emotion; (ii) Emotional facilitation of thinking; (iii) Understanding and analyzing emotions; and, (iv) Reflective regulation of emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth respectively. *Perception appraisal* is the ability to identify emotion in one's own or others physical states, feelings and thoughts. *Expression of emotion* involves ability to express emotions and needs related to those feelings accurately along with proper discrimination between accurate and inaccurate or honest and dishonest expressions of feeling. *Emotional facilitation of thinking* refers to the fact that emotions prioritize thinking rather than the other way round. Emotions direct attention to important information, aid judgment and memory concerning feelings. Emotional mood swings change the

individual's perspective from optimistic to pessimistic (or vice versa) encouraging consideration of multiple points of view by the individual. It also differently encourages specific problem solving approaches such as when happiness facilitates inductive reasoning and creativity. *Understanding and analysing emotions* refer to ability to label emotions and recognize relations among words and emotions themselves, such as, relation between liking and loving. It is the ability to interpret meanings of emotions, such as, sadness accompanies a loss. It is to understand complex feelings, simultaneous feelings of love and hate or blends such as awe with fear and surprise. It is to recognize likely transitions among emotions, from anger to satisfaction or from anger to shame. *Reflective regulation of emotions promote healthy living in an individual*

- a to stay open to feelings (pleasant or unpleasant)
- b to reflectively engage /detach from an emotion depending on its judged information or use;
- c to reflectively monitor emotions in relation to oneself and others, such as, recognising how clear, typical, influential or reasonable they are; and,
- d to manage emotions in oneself and others by moderating negative emotions and enhancing pleasant ones, without repressing or exaggerating information they convey.

Some people handle anger well but can't handle fear. Some people can't take joy. So each emotion has to be viewed differently.

### 2.03 Let Us Check Our Progress

1. What are emotions? How are they important in our lives?
2. What is emotional intelligence? Explain its different components.

### 2.04 Use Of Emotions

Emotional facet of human nature is as important as the logical or rational makeup of any individual. Emotions help us in many ways:

**1. Survival Value:** Nature has developed emotions over millions of years of evolution. Our emotions serve us today as a delicate and sophisticated internal guidance system. They alert us when natural human needs are not met. For example, when we feel lonely, our need for connection with other people is unmet. When we feel afraid, our need for safety is unmet. When we feel rejected, our need for acceptance is unmet.

**2. Enables Decision-Making:** Emotions are valuable sources of information. They help us make decisions. Studies have shown that when a person's emotional connections are severed in the brain, he cannot take even simple decisions because he does not know how he will feel about his choices.

**3. Set Boundaries:** Emotions help set our goals or boundaries needed to protect our physical and mental health. When we feel uncomfortable with a person's behaviour, our emotions alert us. If we learn to trust our emotions, and feel confident expressing ourselves, we can let the person know. Take the example of a person who feels that he has been hurt by somebody's behaviour. He may set a goal to become vindictive—a specialized category of anger—against the offending party.

**4. Communication:** Emotions help us communicate with others. Facial expressions, for example, can communicate a wide range of emotions. If we look sad or hurt we are signalling to others that we need their help. If we are verbally skilled, we are able to express more of our emotional needs and thereby have better chance of satisfying them. If we are effective at listening to feelings of others, we are able to help them better.

**5. Colour & Spice of Life:** The only real way to know that we are happy is when we feel happy. When we feel happy, we feel content and fulfilled. This feeling comes from having our needs met, particularly emotional needs. We can be warm, dry and full of food, but still be unhappy. Our emotions and our feelings let us know when we are unhappy or when something is missing or needed. The better we can identify our emotions, the easier it will be to determine what is needed to be happy. Emotions add variety to our living.

**6. Unifying Force:** Emotions are probably the greatest potential source of uniting all members of human species. Emotions are universal. The emotions of empathy, compassion, cooperation and forgiveness, for instance, have the potential to unite us as one species. It seems fair to say that '*Beliefs divide us, emotions unite us*'.

**7. Emergency Reaction:** Emotions are basically emergency reactions of organism in the face of any threatening or dangerous stimuli. It prepares us to get ready to face the onslaught of menacing stimuli. Fear, for example, is a preparatory emotion for the threat of possible stalking by an enemy. The associated body changes like increased heart beat, blood pressure, pupil dilatation, breathlessness, and the like are

alarm reactions to get ready for the possible onslaught by looming stimuli.

**8. Signal Mechanism:** Emotions work as cues or signals for us during various events or life experiences. For example, a low blood sugar signals a depleted nutritional state. There are times when one may be placed in a state of conflicting needs. A person may be hungry and driven to steal food. At the same time, his moral code may be preventing him from doing so. Under such circumstances, emotions are meant to facilitate selection of priorities for behaviour actions. Thereby, emotions are, both, facilitating signal detection as well as playing the role of a supervisory system operating over all other systems.

#### A List Of Emotional Needs

Acknowledged	Heard	Recognised
Admired	Helped	Respected
Appreciated	Important	Secured
Approved	Included	Supported
Capable	In control	Treated fairly
Challenged	Listened	Understood
Competent	Loved	Useful
Forgiven	Needed	Valued
Freedom	Noticed	
Fulfilled	Reassured	

### 2.05 Types of Emotions

Some authors distinguish between primary and secondary emotions. A primary emotion is what we feel first. The secondary emotion is what it leads to. Anger is a good example of secondary emotion. There are many possible primary emotions which, when they are intense enough lead to anger. We might feel insulted, cheated, or pressured. If these feelings are at low level, we are not likely to say that we feel angry. But if they are intense, we commonly say we feel angry. Depression is another example of secondary emotion. Or we might call it a 'catch-all term'. Depression can include feeling discouraged, hopeless, lonely, isolated, misunderstood, overwhelmed, attacked, invalidated, unsupported, etc. Normally it includes several feelings. These more specific feelings are what are called primary emotions.

Some examples of emotions are interest-excitement; enjoyment-joy; surprise-startle; distress-anguish; disgust-contempt; anger-rage; shame humiliation; fear-terror. It has been severally found that non-verbal aspects communicate over 90% of emotion expressions between individuals. They are

expressed in vivid forms like changed facial expression, voice change (screams, groans, sobs or laughter) and gestures. The facial expression of emotion cover three dimensions, viz., pleasantness-unpleasantness, attention-rejection (characterized by wide open eyes, flared nostrils, open mouth or closed eyes, lips or nostrils) and sleep-tension. Studies have shown that people with higher abilities to read or understand nonverbal cues of emotional expression are more successful in their school, work or relationships with other people.

### **2.06 Let Us Check Our Progress**

1. List the uses of emotions.
2. List the emotional needs of human beings.
3. List some of the common emotions seen among students in schools.

### **2.07 Managing Negative Emotions**

Emotions can be classified as positive and negative. Emotions, which can be used for successful adaptation or adjustment with others, are deemed positive and those, which become a source for maladjustment with others, are considered as negative emotions. Most emotions are adaptive when they are in moderation. They become negative or maladaptive only when carried to excess.

**(a) Managing Fears:** Fear is one of the primary emotions. It is a feeling of agitation caused by presence of imminent danger. Fear is when we recognize what causes it. We know what we are afraid of. Mild fears in presence of dangerous stimuli are common and acceptable. Fears can turn abnormal or irrational when the person realizes that a specific stimulus or situation elicits fright responses.

**(b) Managing Anger:** Adrenaline (called fight or flight hormone) increases when you are angry. High level of adrenaline is dangerous for your body. If you find that you are using anger as general pattern of your response, remember that it will leave you feeling foolish and sorry in the end. In mild forms anger is helpful in mobilizing resources. In excess, it is harmful and destructive. If you feel like bashing someone, try holding off until tomorrow. Meantime, throw yourself into some physical activity like gardening, carpentry or game of tennis or you can even go for a long walk. Working the anger out of your system will leave you better prepared to handle your problem intelligently.

**Learning to be less angry**

- Change your expectations of self or others
- Do not hope for the best or expect the worst. Don't expect immediate gratifications.
- Expect what you are most likely to get based on your past experience.
- Do not mistake that not getting angry is a sign of submission or weakness
- Stop telling yourself that it is awful or terrible to wait, get caught in traffic, get treated unfairly, receive inferior service at a restaurant, etc. They are merely unavoidable, if unfortunate, facts of life.
- Few people seek help for their anger, as they rarely consider it their own problem.
- Breathe deeply and slowly to relax your anger.
- Use imagery and visualize a relaxing experience to overcome anger
- Avoid giving verbal instructions like 'never' or 'always'. Do not swear.
- Remind yourself that getting angry does not fix anything. It makes things worse.
- Don't say the first thing that comes into your head. Slow down and think carefully about what you want to say.
- Listen carefully to what the other person is saying and take your time before answering.
- "Silly humour" can help defuse rage. There are two cautions in using humour. First, don't try to just "laugh off" your problems; rather, use humour to help yourself face them more constructively. Second, don't give in to harsh, sarcastic humour; that's just another form of unhealthy anger expression.
- Change your environment. Give yourself a break.
- Try changing the times when you talk about important matters so these talks don't turn into arguments.
- Truly forgive the person who wronged you as well as to truly forgive yourself.
- Minimize your expectations from your various interpersonal relationships and maximize on your yields or contributions to the relationships.
- Learn to appreciate differences and divergences in the nature, temperaments or behaviours of people around you.
- Understand that relationships are meant to give mutual freedom and opportunities for individuals to grow. Healthy relationships are not meant to be scheming, exploitative, possessive or demanding on one another.
- Human relationships may begin sometimes on a biochemical basis with mutual attraction and affections at first sight. Understand that intimate relations cannot sustain for very long only on a physical basis. It requires great effort, hard work, hope, optimism, good cheer, sharing, mutual interests, and compromises, giving than receiving, and such other qualities to sustain any relationship.

The specific things or events that make one angry vary from person to person. Nevertheless, anger is always a reaction to frustration generated from injuries, insults, threats, motives and needs. For infants, the source of frustrations may be simple, such as, going to bed, having things taken away, having their face washed, being left alone, losing attention, or failing to achieve something they are attempting. Adolescents are infuriated by, more than physical constraints, to sarcasm, bossiness, shunning or thwarting. Adults express anger through annoyance, spitting, smelling bad or cheating. The expression of anger changes with age. Kids throw tantrums, show surliness, bullying and fighting. Adolescents become subtle, sarcastic, swear, gossip, plot or at an extreme even become argumentative and hostile.

A specific form of anger is resentment. It is usually a reaction towards authority-when one feels repeatedly controlled and forced by authority figures. A child, who feels controlled, pressured and forced by his mother, father and then by his teachers, and school authorities, may later feel resentful of anyone in a position of power.

Most of us feel resentful when,

- Others try to tell us what to do, how to run our lives, what we need or what they think is best for us;
- Others tell us what they think we should do how they think we should feel or act;
- Others feel and act superior to us;
- Others act in hypocritical ways;
- Others deprive us of our needs;
- We see those in power abusing their power and hurting others who are less powerful;
- We are falsely accused, judged, prejudged, discriminated, labelled, ignored, attacked, hunted, persecuted, underestimated or invalidated.
- Others tell lies to us or lies about us.

**(c) Managing Jealousy:** Jealousy appears somewhere between 12-18<sup>th</sup> months during a child's life. It is usually in the context of birth of a new child and the resulting rivalry between siblings. Jealousy results from a felt or perceived lack of attention/approval from others in the family or surroundings. Jealousy is an irrational reaction compounded of grief, loss of self esteem, enmity against the rival and self criticism. Jealousy can be expressed in subtle or idiosyncratic ways. There are two possibilities for this emotion. You could be a target of someone else's jealousy or you could be targeting someone due to your jealousy. In either case, it is a negative emotion that needs to

be understood and managed effectively. When you are jealous about someone it means that you perceive as if that someone is taking away a share of attention, which you feel, is deserved or reserved for you. It means that you feel that you are not in the spotlight or limelight. Jealousy gets expressed as scorn, sarcasm, pungent remarks, disparaging comments, criticisms, belittling, or taunts.

**When you are a victim of someone's jealousy:**

- Don't react to the signals of their pungent remarks.
- Practice to take them in your stride.
- Tell yourself that the offender is probably reacting to some of your qualities-which he perceives as threatening and not you as a person.
- Understand that his jealousy is a reflection of his weakness rather than an onslaught on your strengths.
- If you can be more magnanimous, try being modest. Reflect casually that there are no special or extraordinary qualities in you. The things that have been achieved by you could have been achieved by just about anyone in the same position or circumstances that you were or are in.
- Neutralise or balance out the extremes of these emotions.

**When you yourself develop feelings of jealousy against someone:**

- Changing yourself is even more difficult task. Begin by having the will to change.
- Remember that Rome was not built in a day. It takes time to change your self.
- Make a beginning realization and acceptance that you have feelings of jealousy.
- There is always a risk that at an extreme, jealousies go astray to manifest as hate, wishing evil, spite, resentment or revenge.
- Nip feelings of jealousy at the bud.
- Indulgence in negative emotions can harm you more than the person that you are targeting as victim of your jealousies. This is called the boomerang effect.
- Don't act impulsively without thinking, reflecting or weighing on the feelings.
- Postpone the expression of your jealous feelings. Procastination dilates the intensity of the emotions. When an emotion is spread out, its depth decreases.
- Try to analyze and understand your feelings of jealousy. Try to look at the qualities in the person about whom or which you are feeling jealous. If possible, try to achieve them step by step. Don't imitate, just try to emulate.
- Don't waste time grudging that person or finding faults about him or her. Don't dissipate energies on such things. Sublimate them for your own self improvement.

**(d) Managing Grief or Depression:** Grief is the result of a loss. It is a deep mental anguish arising from bereavement. The grieving process continues usually till the loss is acknowledged by the aggrieved person. Almost everyone experiences grief at some point or the other in ones life. The passing of time, social supports, talking it over with others, repeatedly relating the grieving incident and such other measures usually helps overcome grief. Depression is a more prolonged state of sadness even after the precipitating event/s has subsided. It is contagious. It can lead to pessimism. There are no ideas of worthlessness or inadequacy in grief as seen in depression. Grief is in fact beneficial. It improves by others trying to console.

#### **Handling Grief & Depression**

- Become aware of the cause of your feelings of grief or depression.
- List you negative or pessimistic thoughts by writing them down on a piece of paper.
- Make a separate, but related list of positive or optimistic thoughts and accomplishments.
- Focus on your positive experiences more than on the negative thoughts or feelings.
- Get socially active.
- Make a weekly schedule of you daily activities by including positive elements in them.
- Find a hobby or two. Spend some time at your favourite activity or hobby. It could be surely helpful.
- Exercise daily. Get plenty of rest and eat properly. When you are depressed your immune systems are also weakened. You may find yourself more susceptible to colds and flu,
- Use self relaxation exercises especially when you are feeling stress or tension. This could be even a simple breathing exercise involving slow inhaling and exhaling for few minutes until your whole body feels relaxed.
- Set realistic short term and long term goals.
- Accept that everyone has different abilities and interests. Focus on your unique characteristics and positive accomplishments.
- Avoid comparison of yourself with others.
- Be assertive, not aggressive, when you are expressing your anger.
- Realise that you could have few automatic thoughts. This means there are some thoughts (especially negative ones) that enter your mind during several common life situations.
- Negative or automatic thoughts lead to sad feelings. Look for them and eliminate them.

..... *continued*

- Talk it over with a friend or confidant.
- Avoid isolation and withdrawal even though your depression makes you to assume that others don't like you. The isolation worsens the depression as you lose the positive feedback you can get from friends or family.
- Depression sets in a vicious cycle. The sadness, hopelessness, loss of interest, or grief leads the depressed person to withdraw from social contacts which in turn add on to these negative feelings.
- At an extreme, depression can bring thoughts on suicide. If one is contemplating on suicide as means to get back on someone, remember that you are not going to be around to enjoy your revenge. Virtually all problems are temporary. Suicide is a permanent irrevocable action. It is not a solution.
- Merely the thought of suicide or wish to die does not mean that you have gone mad. Suicide may seem as the only option to end pain or escape the situation. But, surely, that is not the answer!

Most people who attempt suicide do not want to die. They want to be heard and helped through their pain. But, often, they are not thinking rationally or do not know where or how to seek help. Instead of thinking "I need to talk to someone", they tell themselves "I wish I was dead". Having a friend talk about suicide may be upsetting and frightening. Don't brush her off by saying: "You must be joking!" Avoid statements that deny her feelings, like: "I can't believe you" or "It can't be as bad as that, so cheer up". Offer sympathy and concern. Do not be afraid to talk about it. Insist that your friend seek professional help. If necessary, make the appointment yourself and see a counsellor and go with her. Remove excess pills or any other thing that you consider dangerous from her room. Many suicides are preventable because suicidal thoughts are temporary.

It is equally important to deal with tact when you come across someone recovering from a suicide attempt. He may be embarrassed and unable to explain his actions to you. The important thing for you is to be honest and express your concern by being non-judgmental and letting him know that there are people around who care for him. You might say, "I heard that you have been having a rough time. I'm sorry I didn't know you were having trouble. But, I am glad you're fine. You have lot of friends here who care about you. Do you feel like talking about things?"

### **Warning Signs for Someone at Risk for Suicide**

*People contemplating suicide may exhibit one or more of the following warning signs:*

- Shows change in behaviours: withdraws from friends and seems depressed.
- Shows a decrease in energy and enthusiasm.
- Talks about death: "I'd be better off dead!" or "I'm tired of living" or "My family or friends would be better off if I were dead!"
- Writes poems or letters about death.
- Has had a recent loss or failure and is not recovering.
- Is preoccupied about reading or writing about death or reading about famous people who have killed themselves.
- No longer cares about school, work, or personal appearance.
- Is accumulating pills or making enquiries about ways to kill one self.
- Gives away prized possessions.
- Shows a big change in weight.
- Begins to drink heavily, smoke or use drugs.
- Spends large amount of time alone.
- Changes physical appearance, Dresses in black.

**(e) Overcoming Shyness:** Shyness is experienced as discomfort and/or inhibition in interpersonal situations. It involves drawing back from contacts or familiarity with others. It tends to hinder interpersonal or professional goals. It is a form of excessive self-focus. It is a preoccupation with one's thoughts, feelings and physical reactions. It varies from mild bashful or social awkwardness to totally inhibiting social phobia. Shyness may be chronic and dispositional. It may be a personality trait central in one's self definition. Shyness is not to be confused with modesty. A modest person is unassertive and shows no pretensions or vanity.

Shy people are ever self conscious, blame self, expect negative outcomes, or remain fearful. These feelings maybe expressed internally or expressed verbally. Ordinarily people take credit for success and externalise the cause of their failures. It is reverse in case of shy people. They often see failure in stable, global, or uncontrollable terms. This leads of feeling of shame. They have self abusive cognition which lowers their self esteem. They feel insecure in social situations, feel others have more fun in social situations than themselves, feel

that others are rejecting them, find it difficult to approach people having a conversation, feel lonely most of the time, tend to be more critical of others, find it difficult to ask for favours from others or say 'no' to unreasonable requests, tend to be suspicious of other peoples intentions towards them, cannot participate in group discussions, worry about too many things, judge themselves negatively, feel embarrassed in social company, feel disappointed or ashamed of self most of the times, etc.

#### **Overcoming Shyness**

- Take initiatives to begin conversation with others.
- Make physical contacts like hugs or touches with close friends or in intimate relationships.
- Don't pause to call others by their name.
- Smile at others.
- Don't hesitate to ask queries to strangers or say 'please' or 'thank you'.
- Make positive eye to eye contact when in conversation with others.
- Never say 'YES' when you want to say 'NO'. Be assertive in refusing to others when you are in genuine inconvenience.
- Feel free to seek favours or help from others where you need it most.
- Try telling a joke or narrating a humorous event to others.
- Feel free to perform an act of kindness if you really want to do so.

**(f) Regulating positive emotions:** While one may give endless counsel on overcoming negative emotions, it is equally important to regulate positive emotions in our daily lives. Even with happy emotions, we may inadvertently step on feelings of others as we revel in our success. The sheer intensity of emotions becomes so self-absorbing that we lose touch with our surroundings. We stop paying attention and when that happens we make mistakes. We need to find a way to work with these intense emotional outbursts when they occur. Don't be swept away by the emotions. Learn to minimize their impact or express your feelings constructively. Many of us think, "But I'm already doing that! I keep myself under control almost all of the time". Repressing emotions is not the same as learning to work with them. Even if emotions are kept under control, there will be times when they come rushing to the forefront especially during times of trauma, such as, failure in examination, experiencing a death or when dealing with a break-up.

From biology, we learn that there's nothing inherently harmful in our emotions by themselves. Any harm comes about because instead of making productive use of our feelings, we allow them to rage through us like a forest fire or repress them until they burn us out. In reality, our emotions are as natural and as vital as breathing, digesting, eating or sleeping. Instead of trying to hide them, deny them, ignore them or avoid them, we can learn to consciously utilize them, just as man has learned to use fire to light darkness and fuel the engines of industry.

### **2.08 Let Us Check Our Progress**

1. What do we mean by managing emotions?
2. List three tips for managing negative emotions.
3. List three tips to be less angry.
4. List three tips to overcome jealousy.
5. List three tips for handling grief and depression.
6. List 4 important warning signs of possible suicide.
7. List three important steps of overcoming shyness.
8. What do you understand by regulating positive emotions?

### **2.09 Let Us Sum Up**

In this section of the module we have covered the meaning of emotions, explained emotional intelligence and issues surrounding that. Then on we discussed the uses of emotions in life and listed out the emotional needs and emotions. A number of tips to handle and manage different negative emotional situations are also listed out.

#### **Tips to Cope with Negative Emotions**

- Begin by identifying the negative feeling or emotions like anger, hostility, resentment, envy, jealousy, or rage in your body.
- Take good self care by including adequate sleep, rest, appetite, nutrition & regular exercise.
- Take a ten minute walk. When the situation comes to a boiling point or when it becomes almost imperative for you to give vent to your emotions take a break. The break could be an activity like walking in neighbourhood or outside the charged situation. This helps to clear your mind. It saves you from losing your temper. If the other person is not agreeable for the break, excuse yourself to the bathroom. Stay long enough to go over your options and cool down. While you are cooling down, remember that the other person is also cooling down.

- Vent to a mentor, coach or trusted colleague. The act of sharing frustrations and fears will calm you down. Take the support of people and help yourself to move forward.
- Ask yourself: 'What am I afraid of?' Most of our negative feelings appear when one of our fears gets activated. By going directly to the source of your feelings, you may be able to short circuit them.
- Make an exhaustive 'do not want' list. Write down everything you do NOT want in the situation, such as, 'I don't want to look foolish', or 'I don't want to be unprepared'. Once you write it down or all of it, your mind will be clear to generate productive solutions.
- Distract yourself. Some times getting your mind off your upsetting subject is enough to calm you down. Consider closing your door and playing some game or some mindless or absorbing activity. Shifting your focus will shift your attitude.
- Ask 'what's working?' rather than 'what's wrong'. It may be a communication breakdown. Ask what is it you want to destroy. Is it a person? Or is it a relationship? Or is it myself? Instruct yourself that it is none of these.
- Ask whether what is happening is healthy. What would help me feel better, that I can control. Take a deep breath. Exhale slowly. Relax.
- Understand relationships. A relationship is a series of compromises. The compromises may be made due to fear, anger or even threats. Marriage, friendships and family life is no exception. Emotions may sometime get you what you want in your relationships. Often, they do not. Probably, the best way to get what you want in any relationship is by compromise and negotiation. Not by control, confrontation or authority. If it is so, you must be able to maintain control on your emotions. Remember that you cannot control the behaviour of others. On the contrary, it is your own behaviour that needs or can be controlled.
- Avoid pushing your hot buttons. Every transaction between two or more human individuals has its own 'boiling' or 'melting' points. It is when matters get to that extreme boiling point-so to say, that emotional outbursts occur. Do not allow yourself or others to be pushed to that point of no return.
- At the point of no return, there are four ways in which you or people react to emotional distress.
  - (a) Attack behaviours (such as, hits self or others, pulls or pushes).
  - (b) Intimidation behaviours (such as, insults, harassment or making obscene comments).
  - (c) Refusal behaviours (such as, stony expressions, unyielding or unfeeling actions).
  - (d) Deceiving behaviours (such as, telling lies, manipulation, acting, making interim demands).

*If you can recognise the tactic being employed by the opposite person/s during the emotional transaction, you can avoid the calamity of allowing yourself or others to be pushed to that point of no return.*

- Disconnect physically or mentally. Even in case, you are pushed to that point of no return during an emotional interaction that you feel like forced to make an outburst, try to cut off yourself immediately. It does not do any good to respond when you are angry or frustrated.
- Don't pressure yourself or others to make quick decisions. Quick or emotional decisions can often lead to mistakes. Don't decide in haste. Whenever possible take time to sleep on your decisions.
- Get curious, not furious. Reframe your negative emotions into ones of curiosity. Ask the questions: "Why?" Why is it happening to me or others? In seeking to understand, you neutralise the negative emotions.

### **3.00 COMPONENTS OF COPING WITH EMOTIONS**

#### **3.01 Components Defined**

- 1. Recognising:** *Ability to identify or become aware of one's own feelings, the course or origins of those feelings.*
- 2. Empathy:** *Ability to feel with others in different emotional situations.*
- 3. Sympathy:** *is the ability to feel for others in different emotional situations.*
- 4. Objectivity:** *is the ability to understand the emotions as they are and not based on personal biases.*
- 5. Emotional Intelligence:** *is the ability to identify one's own feelings, feelings of others, regulate one's emotions and handle situations involving different emotions.*
- 6. Self Awareness:** *is the ability to be aware of internal changes and different reactions given to different emotional situations in social and personal situations.*
- 7. Analytic And Synthetic Ability:** *Analytic ability refers to evaluating the situation in terms of what has led to the emotional situation, and what would be the likely result. Synthetic ability refers to the ability to organise and use the appropriate emotions in response to the emotional situations.*

**8. Sense of Proportion:** *is the ability of an individual to be aware of the intensity of his emotional reaction and be able to sense whether the same is required for the situation.*

**9. Emotional Shock Absorbers:** *is the ability to withhold any emotional shock potential of disturbing the individual directly, by trying to be non-emotional, rational and capable of understanding the sources and meaning of emotionally disturbing news.*

**10. Resilience:** *is the ability to recover quickly from any emotionally disturbing situation and get back to mental cheerfulness.*

### 3.02 Components Explained

Coping with emotions is a fundamental life skill wherein stress is understood as a condition or feeling experienced when a person perceives that demands exceed the personal, and social resources of the individual is unable to mobilize; it is important to unravel the components that goes into the skill for mastering or managing stress. The following components for coping with stress are given along with their operational definitions:

#### 1. Recognising

- a. *Felt Emotions.*
- b. *Sources of Feelings (Internal and External)*

This cluster refers to a group of abilities to identify or become aware of ones own feelings, the course or origins of those feelings, an appraisal of the barriers or obstacles that seemingly impede resolution of those feelings.

#### 2. Empathy & Sympathy

- a. *Other Perspective*
- b. *Feeling for Others*
- c. *Feeling with Others*

Empathy refers to an attitude of identification with or understanding of another person's situation, feelings and motives. Compare and contrast with sympathy which refers to a relationship or affinity between people or things in which whatever affects one correspondingly affects another. In short, empathy is feeling for others as sympathy is feeling with others.

### **3. Objectivity**

- a. Depersonalising*
- b. Distancing*
- c. Outsider Perspective*
- d. Specimen Study*
- e. Avoiding Magnification & Minimization*

This cluster refers to a state, quality or attitude of being impersonal, external or uninvolved to a problem or situation being examined or under focus. It includes a cultivated sense of maintaining distance from the object under observation or study. It provides an outsider perspective on the matter of study. It also avoids the pitfalls of magnification or minimization of observed details or experiences.

### **4. Emotional Intelligence**

- a. Awareness*
- b. Management or Control*
- c. Social Awareness or Empathy*
- d. Social Skills*

This cluster refers to a constellation of non-cognitive skills resulting in ability to process emotional information particularly as it involves perception, assimilation, understanding and management of emotions. For a more detailed description on the above mentioned components read section 2.02

### **5. Self Awareness**

- a. Know Thyself*
- b. Knowing own strengths & weakness*
- c. Knowing about available or surrounding resources*

Self awareness refers to realization of oneself as an individual entity or personality, including ones feelings, traits or behaviours.

### **6. Analytic & Synthetic Ability**

- a. Analysis*
- b. Synthesis*

This cluster refers to the ability to evaluate in terms of what has led to a given emotional situation. It involves foreseeing what would be the likely result or consequences thereof. Analysis is separation of a whole into its constituent parts and

study of their interrelationships in making up a whole. This is called de-compositional or resolution concept of analysis. Sometimes analysis is viewed as working back to earlier threads of a problem. This is called regression concept of analysis. The third is called interpretative or transformational concept of analysis which involves giving meaning to the entire problem of emotional experiences.

Synthesis refers to the facility to combine the separate elements to form a coherent whole. It involves organizing and use of the appropriate emotions in response to the emotional situations. Usually analysis and synthesis go together.

### **7. Sense of Proportion**

Proportion refers to the relationship between things or parts of things with respect to comparative magnitude, quantity or degree. The relationship is usually such that when one varies then another varies in a manner dependent on the first. Samuel Johnson rightly observed: "We do not always find visible happiness in proportion to visible virtue". Proportion also refers to an agreeable or harmonious relation of the parts within a whole. It denotes balance or symmetry of feelings.

The meaning of proportion may be better understood when contrasted with often-used phrase 'out-of-proportion'. This refers to things or situations not in proper relation, especially by being wrong size or amount. For example, her emotional response was out of all proportion to the circumstances.

### **8. Emotional Shock Absorbers**

- a. Impacting*
- b. Padding*
- c. Reprisal or Retaliation*

A shock absorber is usually referring to a mechanical device used to absorb sudden impulses. It is usually a pad or pillow with a soft filing used for being resilient to shocks. The emotional shock absorbers mentioned herein refer to psychological devices in an individual that offers resistance to stress, strain or similar struggles and sufferings experienced in daily lives. They aid in continuing to maintain ones emotional equilibrium and equipoise even in the face of difficult or trying experiences.

## 9. Resilience

- a. *Overcoming Functional Fixedness*
- b. *Developing Divergent Thinking*
- c. *Conquering Rigidity of Thought*

Resilience refers to the ability to recover quickly from change or misfortune. It involves flexibility of the person to get back to original shape despite onslaught by adversities. Obviously, this implies that the person must have flexibility in thinking and problem solving. He must be capable of thinking in diverse ways, overcome rigidity of thinking or stereotyped manner of thought or action.

### 3.03 Let Us Check Our Progress

- (a) Explain the different components of coping with emotions.
- (b) Give one example for every component.

### 3.04 Let Us Sum Up

In this part of the module, we have identified different components of the skill of coping with emotions. We have defined every component and also explained. This helps us in understanding the skill, coping with emotions in relation to its different components.

---

## 4.00 BASIC PROCESSES INVOLVED IN COPING WITH EMOTIONS

---

### 4.01 Basic Processes

Coping with emotions begin with *recognition that an emotion has effected an impact* on the individual. You should first become aware of the emotion. What are the feelings being expressed by others? What are the feelings inside yourself? What do the facial expressions of others tell us? What does their body language convey to us? You should be able to read their posture, eye contact, voice, dress or appearance. All these things apply to yourself as well. What am I reflecting back to others in my expressions? Am I mirroring the right feelings or emotions to others? Does my face show up the joy, warmth, love, compassion, humour, gratitude, curiosity, or happiness that I intend to show to others? If they are negative emotions, does my manner show up sorrow, fear, tension, anger, hate, envy, jealousy, resentment, repulsion, hostility, depression?

*Empathy and sympathy* emerge as one of the basic elements in any emotional exchange between two or more persons. You need to be able to identify and understand another person's situation, feelings and needs as much as you expect the something to happen to you during an emotional interaction. There is feeling for others as much as feeling along with others. Like other emotional skills, empathy is innate quality that can be shaped by experience. Infants, as young as three months, exhibit empathy when they get upset at the sound of another baby crying. Even very young children learn by imitation; by watching how others act when they see someone in distress. These children acquire a repertoire of sensitive responses. If, on the other hand, the feelings they begin to express are not recognized and reinforced by adults around them, they not only cease to express those feelings, but also, become less able to recognise them in themselves or in others.

Empathy can be seen as a survival skill. It is found that children from psychically damaged families frequently become hyper-vigilant, developing an intense attunement to their parents' moods. There is an instance of a child, who had a horrible habit of approaching other kids in his nursery as if he were going to kiss them, then would bite them instead. The family history showed that his psychotic mother responded to his expressions of anger or independence with compulsive kisses.

The very nature of an emotion is to make the person feel and not to think. It is meant to alert and energize us. It is a signal mechanism and an emergency reaction when one is faced with the onslaught of an approaching stimulus experience. It is a very subjective experience. Therefore, achieving *objectivity* during an emotional experience is a difficult or challenging proposition. Nonetheless, one needs to develop a state, quality or attitude of being impersonal, external or uninvolved to a problem or situation being examined or under focus. One needs to cultivate a sense of distance, outsider perspective as well as the ability to procrastinate certain emotional expressions especially the negative or maladaptive ones. This is needed for a long term gain for the individual rather than their short term satisfactions.

The balance of feelings and thought is critical for the successful adaptation or adjustment. *Emotional intelligence* is all about this intricate ability to use emotions constructively along sides with cognitive skills like perception, memory, thinking, problem solving, comprehension, etc.

A major part of emotional intelligence is one's *self awareness*. It is about knowing oneself, one's feelings, sentiments and emotions. It is about knowing what are one's own emotional strengths and weaknesses. It must be acknowledged that every one of us has both positive and negative emotions. Emotions do not inherently possess any intrinsic goodness or evil about them. There is no such thing as innately good, bad or ugly feeling. A feeling is a feeling. It is meant to be experienced by the individual. However, it makes a lot of difference when one chooses to direct or deflect the feelings for one's own or others' benefits. One needs to regulate, control or manage them according to one's circumstances, time, place or persons in one's surroundings. Angry tantrums by a two year old add to his good looks occasionally. But, the same expression by a ten year old makes him uncouth and uncivil.

Another part of judicious emotional intelligence is *analytic and synthetic ability*. Obviously, when one is in the grip of an emotion, one cannot be expected to be making cool or calculated analysis of himself or the situations around. It cannot be a rational response. If it were so, then it is not an emotional response at all. It becomes a well thought-out, pre-meditated and considered intellectual response. This does not discount the value of incorporating analytical and synthetic elements inside emotional responses. As social human beings, we need to temper emotional expressions. We need to foresee consequences of our words or actions. We need to ponder on our past, prize the present and foresee the future.

There should also be a *sense of proportion* in the expression of our feelings. Too much or too little of feelings can become unproductive. Excess love can be as hurting as hatred. Whether good or bad feelings, joy or sadness, pride or prejudice, guilt or innocence, compassion or coldness, anger or calm, repulsion or attraction, sympathy or antipathy—all feelings will have to be tempered in the right proportion. The magnitude, quality or degree to which one feels a particular emotion obviously varies with one's inner needs, opportunities for their expression, prevailing situations, one's short term and long term objectives, and a host of several factors. Nevertheless, one must balance the feelings.

All said and done, everyone needs to build on emotional shock absorbers. Beginning from the stage of impacting of an emotion, you must be sufficiently padded to receive the onslaught of emotions from within as well as outside. You must

be able to give back in the right token and by the right measure. The maintenance of one's emotional equilibrium and equipoise even in the face of difficult or trying experiences is the ultimate yardstick for coping with emotions. Calamities, catastrophes, crises, devastations, disasters, hassles, misfortunes, strain, stress, tensions, turmoil, upheavals, worries and the like are part and parcel of any ones living. It is unrealistic to expect of tension free life. One must learn to accept the inevitability of their existence. Rather, one must also develop the ability to recover quickly from them. It involves flexibility of the person to get back to original shape despite adversities. Obviously, this implies that the person must have flexibility in thinking and problem solving. He must be capable of thinking in diverse ways, overcome rigidity of thinking or stereotyped manner of thought or action.

#### **4.02 What The Teachers Can Do**

Sensitise the students to the need for learning to cope with emotions through role plays and brainstorming sessions. Expose them to various techniques of managing emotions. Provide counselling services wherever needed.

#### **4.03 Let Us Check Our Progress**

- (a) List out different aspects that are involved in the process of developing the ability to cope with emotions?
- (b) What are the emotional intelligence components that need to be developed?

#### **4.04 Let Us Sum Up**

In this part of the module we have discussed the process of developing the ability to cope up with emotions.

---

### **5.00 SELF EVALUATION**

---

#### **Choose the correct answer**

1. Man is a
  - (a) rational animal
  - (b) emotional creature
  - (c) biological animal
  - (d) rational as well as emotional creature
2. Emotions help us to
  - (a) energize our behaviors
  - (b) alert us about our needs
  - (c) communicate with fellow beings
  - (d) all of the above

3. The ability of a person to understand his or other's emotions is called

- (a) emotional well being
- (b) emotional intelligence
- (c) emotional empathy
- (d) altruism

4. The ability of a person to identify emotion in one's own or others physical states, feelings and thoughts is called

- (a) Emotional Facilitation
- (b) Social Intelligence
- (c) Perception Appraisal
- (d) Reflective Regulation

5. The ability of a person to identify emotion in ones own or others physical states, feelings and thoughts is called

- (a) Emotional Facilitation
- (b) Social Intelligence
- (c) Perception Appraisal
- (d) Reflective Regulation

---

## **6.00 COPING WITH EMOTIONS: SELF ASSESSMENT TOOL**

---

### **6.01 Differential Emotional Scale**

Dr.S.Venkatesan

#### ***Directions***

The following Scale helps us in identifying / measuring your current emotional status. Read each item carefully and mark as "almost never" (0), "occasionally" (1), "sometimes" (2), "frequently" (3) and "very often" (4). There is no right or wrong answers. The scale sums your current emotional state.

<b>No</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>A.</b>	<b>Interest Items:</b>					
1	Attention Problems					
2	Concentration difficulties					
3	Loosing alertness					
<b>B.</b>	<b>Enjoy Items:</b>					
1	Feel unhappy					
2	Feel discontented					
3	Feel unpleasant					
<b>C</b>	<b>Surprise Items</b>					
1	Feel Surprise					
2	Feel Amazed					
3	Feel Astonished					
<b>D</b>	<b>Distress Items</b>					
1	Feel Downhearted					
2	Feel Sad					
3	Feel Discouraged					
<b>E</b>	<b>Anger Items</b>					
1	Feel Enraged					
2	Feel Angry					
3	Feel Mad					
<b>F.</b>	<b>Disgust Items</b>					
1	Feel distaste					
2	Feel Disgusted					
3	Feel Revulsion					
<b>G.</b>	<b>Contempt Items</b>					
1	Feel Contemptuous					
2	Feel Scornful					
3	Feel Disdainful					
<b>H</b>	<b>Fear Items</b>					
1	Feel Scared					
2	Feel Fearful					
3	Feel Afraid					
<b>I</b>	<b>Shame Items</b>					
1	Feel Sheepish					
2	Feel Bashful					
3	Feel Shy					
<b>J</b>	<b>Guilt Items</b>					
1	Feel Repentant					
2	Feel Guilty					
3.	Feel Shame					
<b>K.</b>	<b>Anxiety Items</b>					
1	Feel Apprehension					
2	Feel Worry					
3	Feel Nervous					
	<b>Total</b>					

## 6.02 Differential Emotional Scale: Scoring Pattern

The maximum possible total score on this scale is 132.

Norms:

- Below 25: Emotions do not seem to move you at all.
- 26-50: Emotions move you within average limits.
- 51-75: You are quite an emotional person and need to control / guide your feelings for your optimum benefit.
- Above 75: You are in a serious emotional problem.

## 6.03 Shyness Assessment Scale

Dr. S.Venkatesan

### *Directions*

Given below is yet another 'Shyness Scale' (SS) for knowing the extent of your shyness within yourself or in various social situations. Read each item carefully and mark as "almost never" (0), "occasionally" (1), "sometimes" (2), "frequently" (3) and "very often" (4). There is no right or wrong answers. The scale sums your shyness score.

No	Item	0	1	2	3	4
1	I feel insecure in social situations					
2	I feel others have more fun in social situations than I do					
3	If someone rejects me I assume that I have done something wrong					
4	It is hard for me to approach people when they are in conversation					
5	I feel lonely a great deal of time					
6	I tend to be more critical of other people than I appear to be					
7	It is hard for me to say 'no' even to unreasonable requests					
8	I do more than my share of work for others as I can't say 'no'					
9	I find it difficult to ask favors or request others					
10	I try my best not to let others know when I am frustrated or angry					
11	I feel let down by most of my friends or acquaintances					
12	I find it hard to ask someone to go out for my sake/entertainment					

13	I find it difficult to express my real feelings in front of others					
14	I feel suspicious of other people's intentions towards me					
15	I feel bothered when other people make demands on me					
16	It is easy for me to sit back & observe others in a discussion					
17	I find myself unable to enter a new situation without fearing rejection or not being noticed					
18	I worry about being a burden on others					
19	Personal questions from others make me feel anxious					
20	I think I let others take advantage of me					
21	I judge myself negatively when I think others have negative reactions towards me					
22	I try to figure out what is expected in a given situation and try to act accordingly					
23	I feel embarrassed when I look different from other people					
24	I feel disappointed in myself					
25	I blame myself when things do not go in the way I want them to					
26	I feel ashamed in many social situations					
27	I am usually aware of my feelings even if I do not know what prompted them					
28	I am frequently concerned about others approval					
29	I like taking risks in social situations					
30	If someone is critical of me I assume that they are having a bad day					
31	If I let too much about me to people they will gossip about me					
32	I think it is important to please others					
33	I dislike people who feel superior and show off themselves					
34	I spend a lot of time thinking about my social performance even after the event is over					
35	I am satisfied with my level of social supports					

### 6.03 Shyness Assessment Scale: Scoring Pattern

The maximum total score on this scale is 140.

*Norms:*

- Below 35: Shyness does not bother you at all.
- 36-70: You are shy. But, you can overcome it with special efforts.
- 71-105: You are quite a shy person and need to really work hard to get over it.
- Above 105: You need to seek help to come out of your shell.

---

**7.00 SUGGESTED READINGS:**

---

Goleman, D. (1998). *Working with emotional intelligence*. New York: Bantam.

Goleman, D; Boyatzis, R, and McKee, A. (2002). *Practical leadership: Realizing the power of emotional intelligence*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.  
Boston



*Those who do not know how to weep with their whole heart, don't know how to laugh either.*

*Golda Meir*

*How much more grievous are the consequences of anger than the causes of it.*

*Marcus Aurelius*

*"The sign of an intelligent people is their ability to control their emotions by the application of reason."*

*Marya Mannes*

*"You can't expect to prevent negative feelings altogether. And you can't expect to experience positive feelings all the time. The Law of Emotional Choice directs us to acknowledge our feelings but also to refuse to get stuck in the negative ones."*

*Greg Anderson*

*"Emotions have taught mankind to reason."*

*Marquis De Vauvenargues*

*Module 10*

*Coping  
With Stress*

## *Module Contents*

<b>1.00 OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>261</b>
<b>2.00 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>261</b>
2.01 Meaning of "stress"	261
2.02 Types of stress	262
2.03 Let us check our progress	263
2.04 The stress response	264
2.05 Let us check our progress	268
2.06 Let us sum up	269
<b>3.00 COMPONENTS OF COPING WITH STRESS</b>	<b>269</b>
3.01 Components defined	269
3.02 Components explained	270
3.03 Let us check our progress	273
3.04 Let us sum up	273
<b>4.00 BASIC PROCESSES INVOLVED IN COPING WITH STRESS</b>	<b>273</b>
4.01 Process of coping with stress	273
4.02 Stress management techniques	277
4.03 What can teachers do?	292
4.04 Let us check our progress	292
4.05 Let us sum up	292
<b>5.00 SELF EVALUATION</b>	<b>294</b>
<b>6.00 COPING WITH STRESS: SELF ASSESSMENT TOOL</b>	<b>294</b>
6.01 Stress Scale for Youngsters	294
6.02 Stress Scale for Youngsters-Scoring key	296
<b>7.00 SUGGESTED FURTHER READING</b>	<b>296</b>

---

## 1.00 OBJECTIVES

---

To enable the reader of this module to;

1. Recall the operational definitions or meanings of related terms: 'stress-coping-conflict-stress appraisal-stress management', etc.
2. Delineate meanings and definitions of various components of stress.
3. Recognise/measure stress experience using a self appraisal questionnaire.
4. Identify source/s of stress experience.
5. discover inner / outer resources or mental strengths / weaknesses.
6. List various alternative and available ways of handling stress.

---

## 2.00 INTRODUCITON

---

*"I cannot and should not be cured of by stress, but merely taught to enjoy it"*

-Hans Selye

### 2.01 Meaning Of "Stress"

The word "stress" used in English language means '*emphasis/force*'. The word originates from Middle English meaning '*adversity or hardship*'. There is a problem in defining as various disciplines view stress differently. In physics, it is used as '*application of force or a system of forces that tend to strain or deform a body*'. Biologists view stress as '*application of heat, cold, and inadequate supply of food source*' for living organisms.

In this module, we use "stress" as applied to human experience. We are dealing with 'psychological stress'-even though that prefix is avoided at every mention. As applied to human behaviour, we must distinguish between 'stress' and 'stressors'. When used to identify events or circumstances that are perceived adversely, the better term is '*stressor*'. When we describe the state induced by such events or circumstances, it is called '*stress or stress reaction*'. A stressor is an objective event that is felt difficult-either short or long lasting. Stress is subjective perception. It is a recognition that an upset has occurred. It is mentally or emotionally troublesome. It is a displeasing condition occurring in response to difficult external influences. It is a negative mental state of extreme difficulty, pressure or strain.

Indian scholars view stress as absence of inner peace. Western science considers stress as loss of control on oneself or on influences from environment. Stress is sometimes viewed as anxiety. Somewhere between stressor and stressed, lies subjective phenomenological perception or experience of the individual. Psychological stress requires judgment that environmental and / or internal demands far exceed the individual's resources for managing them. In this sense, stress is a perception. Stress results from a negative view of oneself as being incapable to cope with a perceived, real or imagined threat to ones mental, physical, emotional or spiritual well being. It is the also response of the person to a noxious or threatening condition. Stress induces a state of anxiety when events, responsibilities exceed coping abilities of an individual. Stress has a cumulative effect as it adds to itself. It is also the result or cause of itself!

Anxiety refers to a state of painful unpleasant uneasiness and apprehension about future uncertainties resulting from anticipation of a realistic or fantasised threatening event or situation, often impairing physical and psychological functioning of the individual. Worry, another commonly used term, refers to persistent doubt or fear. It is something on which you would end up spending, as they say, several 'sleepless nights'!

Stress is capable of affecting physical health. It is usually characterized by physiological responses like increased heart/blood rate, rise in blood pressure, hyperventilation, vasodilatation of arteries, increased serum glucose levels, free fatty acid mobilization, blood coagulation, muscular strength and tension, decreased gastric movement and clotting, greater than before perspiration to cool body temperature, irritability, and depression. In short, stress is a stimulus or circumstance causing such a condition. Muscular contraction is probably the most commonly encountered body symptom leading to signs or symptoms like increased or irregular breathing, hot or cold flushes, stomach upsets, headaches, vomiting, giddiness, sweating, palpitations, increased heart beats, tingling sensations across various parts of the body.

## **2.02 Types Of Stress**

Not all stress is damaging, dangerous or difficult experience. Neither one can or should aspire for a stress free existence. Some stress is ever present in all individuals. It is also functionally required or necessary for better adaptation and performance in real life experiences. It is only when stressing

crosses certain prescribed limits or boundaries it becomes malicious, malevolent and maladaptive. Stress is not always necessarily something bad. It depends on how you take it. The stress of exhilarating, creative successful work is beneficial, while that of failure, humiliation or infection is detrimental. There are two types of psychological stress:

(a) **Eustress or positive stress** contains feelings of physical or psychological arousal and a sense of preparedness to receive oncoming adversity or difficult event. It motivates, excites and energizes an individual into action.

(b) **Distress or negative stress** contains feelings of physical or psychological over arousal and consequently a sense of oppression, overpowering and overwhelming that goes beyond optimal resources within an individual.

These two types of stress are better understood as two extremes falling along a continuum of what is explained by Yerkes-Dodson Curve. A very low or under aroused Eustress or high over aroused psychological state can both contribute to poor performance. The curve clarifies that an optimum level of arousal (at neither extremes) is necessary for maximizing performance.

### 2.03 Let Us Check Our Progress

1. The word stress in English language means
  - (a) force
  - (b) hardship
  - (c) emphasis
  - (d) all of the above
  
2. The events or circumstances that are perceived adversely are called
  - (a) stress
  - (b) stressor
  - (c) strain
  - (d) tension
  
3. Stress is
  - (a) absence of inner peace
  - (b) loss of control on oneself
  - (c) loss of control on ones environment
  - (d) all of the above

## 2.04 The Stress Response

*Human beings are a bundle of wants, desires, needs, drives, motives and wishes.* Some of them are internal, while others are external. Examples of internal or physiological human needs are food, water, air, sleep, sex, etc. These needs impel human beings to develop drives for seeking water, food, self preservation, security or maintenance of optimum body temperature. Some needs are psychological, such as, need for self assertion, socialization, love, approval, etc. All needs and their respective drives in living organisms are cyclical in nature. This means that they occur and reoccur again and again despite their periodic fulfilment.

*The general schema of need fulfilment* involves development of a drive for that particular need or set of needs. This is followed by initiation of certain behaviours that become means for their gratification. For example, if a person develops a need for water, it leads to formation of a thirst drive to seek fulfilment at a water fountain. Usually the scheme is not as simple as a need and its direct realization. There is always an obstacle that comes in the way of achievement of human wants. There is a struggle, effort, toil, tussle and labour before one can realise attainment of ones wants. This means that the individual requires putting that extra effort, and possibly, even surmounting minor or major obstacles in the way of such fulfilment before realization of satisfaction for that wants. Whenever and wherever this process happens in relatively smooth or efficient manner, the individual is easily relieved of having adjusted or adapted well to need-satisfaction course of action.

In most instances, human wants are not so easily achieved as they seem in the above explanation through words. At every step in the journey of life, human beings have to constantly fight and struggle for success or fulfilment of needs. Despite all this, failure more than success, may be only in store. Such failures lead to a psychological state of mind called frustration.

*Frustration* is subjective experience of serious threat of non-gratification of individual needs due to environmental or intrapsychic obstacles. A disappointed desire or denied drive leads to feelings of frustration. The resultant feelings of blocking an individuals path towards a goal-whether the goal seeking is conscious or unconscious, is called frustration.

The common *reactions to feelings of frustration or stress response* can be described as falling into three types.

- (a) Fight, Aggression or Attack Behaviours
- (b) Flight, Submission or Withdrawal Behaviours
- (c) Conciliation or Compromise Behaviours

#### **Sources of Frustration**

##### *External:*

- 1. Natural Obstacle
- 2. Social Expectancy

##### *Internal:*

- 1. Distancing of Goals
- 2. Unrealistic Goal Setting
- 3. Absence of Goals
- 4. Intensity of Need
- 5. Ambiguity on Needs
- 6. Faulty Problem Evaluation
- 7. Ambivalence or Inability to make Choices
- 8. Anticipatory Anxiety
- 9. Deficient Risk Taking Skills
- 10. Poor Self (Time) Management Skills

*Fight, aggression or attack behaviours* are characterized by impulsive attempts to removal or surmounting of perceived obstacles in order to achieve satisfaction or fulfilment of needs. These behaviours are usually reinforced by emotions like anger, rage or hostility. Anger in specific situations and in right amount or correct mixture is a healthy and useful facilitation emotion. They aid attack behaviours in overcoming obstacles towards gratification of needs. However, when they are overused or habitually employed in all situations or across all persons, they can become dangerous, destructive and unprofitable. Children who are repeatedly frustrated are found to develop such aggression behaviours like disobedience, fighting, pushing, kicking, quarrelling, tripping, destruction, etc. They get directed towards elders in the form of defiance, negativism and obstinacy. When directed at themselves, they manifest as self criticism, abstinence, self denial, self pity, etc.

*Flight, submission or withdrawal behaviours* are characterized by physical or psychological retraction from scheme of need-satisfaction course of action itself. On being severely reprimanded and warned against meeting a friend, for example, a person may withdraw his ego involvement completely in a given relationship. Withdrawal can manifest as lowering of ones aspirations, change of goals, apathy, guilt, anxiety, resistance or protective inhibition. A situation wherein an individual once failed will likely elicit withdrawal behaviours in consequently similar situations.

*Conciliation or compromise behaviours* are characterized by changing ones mode of operating upon a problem like changing ones level of aspiration, accepting substitute goals, lowering of goals, etc.

When none of the above mentioned reactions to frustrations work, it is seen that individuals also resort to yet another device of overcoming frustrations called defence mechanisms. When things cannot be changed to suit our needs in outer world, it is adaptive to change our inner world of subjective reality. A student who has failed in his examination may end up *day dreaming* that he secured first division in next attempt. Another male student, criticized by his teacher for bad handwriting may end up excusing himself that his teacher is partial to girls or has a grudge against boys!

Defence mechanisms are normal and natural human tendencies to answer failures and frustrations in daily living. They are unconscious devices of human mind to deny or distort external reality to suit our needs and enable us not to feel fears, frustrations or felt anxiety. When used minimally, they aid the adjustment process. When overused or abused, they cause more maladjustment and stress on the person.

When defence mechanisms are used minimally, they help to ease adjustment to various stress experiences. They protect the failing ego of a person from frustration experience. They also facilitate in distorting or denying the reality. They construct a reality of their own or even contrary to the external reality. The commonly used defence mechanisms are briefly explained in the box below:

**1. Repression:** This defence involves spontaneous dismissal of frustration feelings or negative experiences from conscious awareness of the individual. For example, we easily forget past painful experiences more than pleasant ones. We forget names or birth dates of enemies more than friends.

**2. Day Dreaming:** This defence involves spontaneous recreation of an inner world of imagination to satisfy frustration feelings or negative experiences of the outer world. The adolescent who has lost in a game of tennis may sit and day dream that he has won success with many opponents.

**3. Rationalization:** This defence involves spontaneous invention of consciously acceptable reasons or excuses to cover up a failure or frustration experience in the outer world. For example, a student who has scored low marks in a subject may rationalize his failure as due to partiality of the teacher towards girls more than boys like himself.

**4. Regression:** This defence involves spontaneous retreat of the failing or frustrated individual into primitive behaviours that were present before the occurrence of the negative experience. For example, an older child regresses to behave like his baby sister to wet bed or suck thumb unable to cope with the stress of not being able to accept the birth of a younger sibling.

**5. Sublimation:** This defence involves spontaneous transformation of the failing or frustrated individual to take up alternate behaviours considered to be socially acceptable and meritorious. For example, the anger or aggression on receiving a severe scolding from a teacher may lead the student to sublimate his feelings by doubling his efforts to prove the teacher wrong.

**6. Substitution:**

This defence involves spontaneous transformation of the failing or frustrated feelings to substitute or surrogate objects. The anger on a younger brother or sister may be substituted by hitting the doll or ones teddy bear.

**7. Identification:**

This defence involves spontaneous adoption of the personality or behaviour characteristics of another object or individual deemed to be fulfilling for the frustrated individual. For example, a short stature person may identify by adopting the hairstyle and mannerisms of a film actor or sportsperson who is tall.

**8. Projection:** This defence involves spontaneous attribution of the unfulfilled wishes onto external objects or persons in the outside environment. By externalizing ones own weakness the failing ego turns a blind eye to its own shortcomings.

**9. Negativism:** This defence involves spontaneous rebellion against an overpowering control from either the inside or outside world of an individual. The negativistic individual does just the opposite of what is dictated by an authority. Where it is marked to maintain silence, he reads the notice aloud. By doing the opposite, the failing individual feels a satisfaction of having trounced the authority.

**10. Denial:** This defence involves spontaneous rejection of the whole situation that has seemingly threatened the failing individual. For example, when a student is caught red handed stealing from another, he may resort to the defence of outright denial-of having never done so!

**11. Reaction Formation:** This defence involves spontaneous repression and thereafter elaboration of a diametrically opposite pattern of behaviour almost contradictory to the experience of frustration by an individual. For example, excess hate may be expressed as over concern, possessiveness and over worry for a person.

In other words, stress reaction is an arousal response in proportion, preparation or anticipation of perceived danger or threat stimuli which is intended to be overcome by the individual. The source of stress can be biological, ecological, psychological, intra-psychic, social, spiritual, interpersonal, etc. The end expectancy of the stress management strategy is the holistic well being of the individual.

### 2.05 Let Us Check Our Progress

1. Things or events that come in the way of achievement of human wants
  - (a) Need
  - (b) Drive
  - (c) Obstacles
  - (d) All of the above
2. Experience of serious threat of non-gratification of needs
  - (a) Frustration
  - (b) Obstacle
  - (c) Dissatisfaction
  - (d) Anxiety
3. Common reactions to frustration are
  - (a) Fight reactions
  - (b) Flight reactions
  - (c) Compromise reactions
  - (d) All of the above

## 2.06 Let Us Sum Up

We have studied the meaning of stress, what causes it and the different ways in which an individual is likely to react to stress. We have also understood the importance of the skill of coping with stress to manage well in life. For acquiring this skill we need to understand different issues related to stress.

---

## 3.00 UNDERLYING COMPONENTS OF COPING WITH STRESS

---

### 3.01 Components Defined

**1. Recognisability:** *is a group of abilities to identify or become aware of ones own feelings of stress, the course or origins of that experience of stress, an appraisal of the barriers or obstacles that seemingly impede resolution of the stress as well as setting of goals appropriate and adequate for bringing about a relative end to ongoing stressful experiences.*

**2. Planning ability:** *is a group of abilities to draw blueprints or schemes for enabling short term or long term future courses of action by including effective consideration towards the act, manner or practice of handling time constraints within the gamut of planning for coping or bringing about a relative end to ongoing stressful experiences.*

**3. Objectivity:** *is an ability to be in a state, quality or an attitude of being impersonal, external or uninvolved to a problem or situation being examined or under focus.*

**4. Empathy:** *is an ability to develop identification with or understanding of another person's situation, feelings and motives.*

**5. Resilience:** *is the ability to maintain mental cheerfulness by recovering quickly from change or misfortune.*

**6. Reality Orientation:** *is the ability to perceive or be aware of the objective world in relation to one's self across place, time or person.*

**7. Self-awareness:** *is the ability to develop realization of oneself as an individual entity or personality, including one's feelings, traits or behaviours covering both good and bad.*

**8. Relaxationability:** *is the ability to rejuvenate or refresh one's body and mind so as to bring it back to an optimal state of functioning.*

**9. Entertainability:** *is the ability to amuse, please or indulge in diversions that enables the individual to get back to optimal state of functioning.*

**10. Stability:** *is the ability of being constant, firm, steadfast and resistant to change.*

### **3.02 Components Explained**

Coping with stress is a fundamental life skill. Wherein stress is understood as a condition or feeling experienced when a person perceives that demands exceed the personal, and social resources of the individual is unable to mobilize; it is important to unravel the components that goes into the skill for mastering or managing stress. The following components for coping with stress are given along with their operational definitions:

#### **1. Recognising:**

- a) Impact of Stress.
- b) Sources of Stress (Internal and External)
- c) Appraisal of Obstacles
- d) Goal setting

This cluster refers to *a group of abilities to identify or become aware of ones own stress, the course or origins of that experience of stress, an appraisal of the barriers or obstacles that seemingly impede resolution of stress as well as setting of goals appropriate and adequate for bringing about a relative end to ongoing stressful experiences.*

#### **2. Planning:**

- a) Short Term Plan
- b) Long Term Plan
- c) Time Management

This cluster refers to *a group of abilities to draw blueprints or schemes for enabling short or long term future courses of action by including effective consideration towards the act, manner or practice of handling time constraints within the gamut of planning for coping or bringing about a relative end to ongoing stressful experiences.*

**3. Objectivity:**

- a) Depersonalising
- b) Distancing
- c) Outsider Perspective
- d) Specimen Study
- e) Avoiding Magnification & Minimisation

This cluster refers to *a state, quality or attitude of being impersonal, external or uninvolved to a problem or situation being examined or under focus. It includes a cultivated sense of maintaining distance from the object under observation or study. It provides an outsider perspective on the matter of study. It also avoids the pitfalls of magnification or minimization of observed details or experiences.*

**4. Empathy:**

- a) Other Perspective
- b) Feeling for Others
- c) Feeling with Others

Empathy refers to *an attitude of identification with or understanding of another person's situation, feelings and motives.* Compare and contrast with sympathy which refers to a relationship or affinity between people or things in which whatever affects one correspondingly affects another. In short, empathy is feeling for others as sympathy is feeling with others.

**5. Resilience:**

- a) Overcoming Functional Fixedness
- b) Developing Divergent Thinking
- c) Conquering Rigidity of Thought

Resilience refers to *the ability to recover quickly from change or misfortune. It involves flexibility of the person to get back to original shape despite onslaught by adversities.* Obviously, this implies that the person must have flexibility in thinking and problem solving. He must be capable of thinking in diverse ways, overcome rigidity of thinking or stereotyped manner of thought or action.

**6. Reality Orientation:**

- a) To Person, Place & Time
- b) Discrimination of Fact & Fancy
- c) Illusory Perception

Reality orientation is *the ability to perceive or be aware of the objective world in relation to ones self across place, time or person.*

### **7. Self Awareness:**

- a) Know Thyself
- b) Knowing own strengths & weakness
- c) Knowing about available or surrounding resources

*Self awareness refers to realization of oneself as an individual entity or personality, including ones feelings, traits or behaviours.*

### **8. Relaxation Ability:**

- a) Activity Scheduling
- b) Time Tabling
- c) Sleep & Appetite
- d) Physical Activity
- e) Leisure & Hobby Skills

*This refers to the ability to rejuvenate or refresh ones body and mind so as to bring it back to an optimal state of functioning.*

### **9. Entertainment Ability:**

- a) Balancing work & enjoyment
- b) Developing edutainment skills

*This refers to the ability to amuse, please or indulge in diversions that enables the individual to get back to optimal state of functioning.*

### **10. Stability:**

- a) Persistence of Pursuits
- b) Steadfastness of goal seeking

*This refers to the state or quality of being constant, firm, steadfast and resistant to change.*

### 3.03 Let Us Check Our Progress

Match the items in the two columns given below

1. Identifying barriers	a. Relaxation Ability
2. Refreshing body and mind	b. Objectivity
3. Discriminating fact from fancy	c. Stability
4. Conquering rigidity of thought	d. Recognising
5. Perseverance in one's efforts	e. Reality Orientation
6. Not over/under-estimating	f. Resilience

### 3.04 Let Us Sum Up

We have identified ten components that go into building of the skill of coping with stress and defined them.

---

## 4.00 BASIC PROCESSES INVOLVED IN COPING WITH STRESS

---

### 4.01 Process Of Coping With Stress

Coping with stress begins with *recognition that a stressor has impacted* on the individual. You should first become aware of the stressor. What are the events and circumstances that are impacting on me to make me feel the stress experience? As discussed earlier, there can be both, internal and/or external sources of stress.

A few examples of life events that can be perceived as *sources of stress* are: Detention in a class, death of pet, death or separation from parent/s, sibling conflicts, robbery or theft, excessive alcohol or drug abuse by family member, chronic illness, disease or disability of self or another family member, major personal illness or injury, leaving home, financial problems at home, lack of teaching supports, break up with friend, failure in examination, appearing for viva or examinations, awaiting for results, showing up the results to parents or guardians, school assignments, deadlines, too many family functions, guests at home, lack of privacy, too much supervision, etc. Refer to enclosed 'Life Events Inventory' for more details.

It is necessary not only to *locate the source of stress*, but also, *gauge the extent of its impact* on your self. Write down the

thoughts, feelings or behaviours that come along with your preoccupation with the stressful event or experience. Do not weigh as good or bad thoughts. Do not judge as either decent or dreadful thoughts. Do not view them as moral or immoral, pure or sinful, good or wicked, beautiful or ugly feelings. It is just important that you note down every thought or feeling as they appear inside you. For example, break up with a friend may lead to stressful thoughts or feelings in you. It could be noted that there might be several events or circumstances that would have led to the break up. What are the things I have done or said? What are the things that my friend has said or done?

Go ahead and *spot the barriers or obstacles* that appear to come in the way of your need fulfilment. Once again, note that perceived barriers and actual barriers may or may not be the same. For example, failure in examination may be the source of your stress. You may perceive the impediment for this failure either as your own insufficient hard work or that your examiner is unfair.

You may have to *review your goals* too. Have I set the right goal? Is it worth achieving? Are they realistic? Are they achievable within the time frame placed for them? Have the goals been split into convenient parts for their easy achievement? This is where short and long term perspective planning and appropriate time management becomes useful.

#### **How To Know That You Are Stressed?**

- Do minor problems and small disappointments throw you into confusion?
- Do you feel it is difficult to get on with people?
- Do other people have trouble getting along with you?
- Do the small pleasures of life fail to satisfy you?
- Are you unable to stop thinking about your worries and anxieties?
- Do you fear people or situations that never used to bother you?
- Are you suspicious of people, mistrustful of your friends?
- Do you feel inadequate and suffer the tortures of self doubt?
- Do you frequently suffer from bouts of headache, indigestion, excess heart beats, increased sweating or such other body symptoms?
- Do you frequently find yourself running out of time in most of your daily engagements?

*If your answers to most of these questions is 'YES', it is an indication that you are under negative stress.*

It is also important to *cultivate an attitude of objectivity*-an impersonal and uninvolved ability to observe stressful events around you or others. Do not get emotionally over involved or carried away by the things or events happening around. Imagine that the difficult events happening to you are not happening to you but to someone else even though that someone else is temporarily residing in your body. Such imagination gives you a sense of detachment from the whole scheme of things around you. It will give you an outsider perspective-as though you are observing someone else or a specimen under a microscope. During this not-so-easy process or attitude of viewing stress problems, you must also learn to avoid a tendency to magnify or minimize events, problems or persons. One is generally in the habit of making sweeping statements or conclusions. "Oh! That teacher is always like that....He hates boys" is a common refrain. "I will definitely end up into a failure, flop and fiasco. I can never be able to learn to speak on the stage!" Such self statements have a flavour of over-evaluation. They need to be immediately curbed.

Inherent in the process of developing or cultivating objectivity is also the need to *develop empathy*. Build feelings for others and feeling with others. Tell yourself that I must put myself in their position and see why they have done what they have done. Try to see why he or she should have behaved in that way. What could have made him to react the way he did with me? Allow yourself to be placed in their shoes. Try to see the world as they would have seen it. Such attitudinal reallocation is bound to assuage your own feelings and help you minimize the burden of stress experience. You must at least temporarily develop an attitude of something like Spinoza once declared: "I decide not to laugh nor cry at the actions of people-I seek to understand them!"

There is a general tendency in all of us to look for quick fixes to all problems encountered in life. There are routine problems and there are habitual solutions. If it were to be so, there is little scope for stress. Everything would go smoothly. However, under the surface of apparent calm, there is also the danger of inactivity and inertia. You fail to think beyond routine solutions. This tendency is called in human thinking as functional fixedness. It is only when routine or readily available solutions fail, you get perturbed. You become anxious and stressed out. You somehow want to solve the problem quickly. You excite, fume, fret, become anxious and stressed. You now need to get out of your functional fixedness. You need to think in different ways. You have to come out with alternative responses. The routine ones are failing. They are ineffective. You need to

*diversify your thinking by conquering rigidity of thought or actions.* This is a critical component of stress management.

#### 20-Point Program to Manage Stress

- Find out what causes stress in your life.
- Notice your spontaneous reactions to stress.
- Identify areas in your life you can change to reduce negative stress.
- Teach yourself to control your physical reactions to stress
- Exercise regularly, to control you physical capacity to deal with stress.
- Build up your positive strengths and emotional ability to deal with stress.
- Learn to control your feelings to stress instead of allowing it to control you.
- The goal of stress management is not to eliminate stress, but to use it to our advantage.
- Discover the optimum level of stress you can tolerate before working in that range.
- Avoid use of drugs or medicines as means for achieving quick stress relief.
- Minimise your needs. Learn to lead a simple and contended life
- Become wise /prudent in earning and spending money.
- Maintain minimum expectations on others.
- Give importance to today rather than brood on past and dream about future.
- Avoid loneliness or learn to live with it in a productive manner.
- Get adequate amount of sleep.
- Learn and practice relaxation techniques.
- Take periodic breaks from work. Spend quality time with people you enjoy.
- Try to work with your hands. Avoid too much of passivity in living styles.
- Develop healthy eating habits by avoiding over eating, fatty food, junk food, etc.

In your attempts to identify or manage stress, reality orientation is possibly the one component that is always under threat. The nature of stress itself is such that it displaces reality contact of the affected individual. The heightened emotions, increased body arousal, amplified sympathetic systems, and greater vigilance often associated with stress feelings

simultaneously alter perception of reality around us. The affected individual tends to see the world around in a manner than as they are actually existing. Sometimes, the changed *reality orientation* and feelings of the affected individual can become so overwhelming that the person fails to distinguish between real and unreal inside or outside in the world around. For example, a person in stress may feel self conscious that everyone around is watching or talking about him.

You need to cultivate *self awareness* to handle psychological stress. You must attempt to know yourself-your true self. You must try to understand your own strengths and weakness. What are the things I can do or achieve? What are the things I cannot do? What are my resources? What are my limitations? What is available with me? How much can I do? How much can I or cannot I aspire? All these questions will help you to know yourself-as prelude to management of stress.

The *ability of an individual to relax* or calm himself against odds is another critical component in stress management. You must be able to unwind yourself. You must know to uncoil, undo or unlock your self from felt travails of stress experiences. This can be done through several ways, such as, scheduling or making time table of daily activities, consuming healthy food, exercise, sleep, developing leisure and hobby skills, etc. A more detailed account on techniques of managing stress is given under a separate section.

Relaxation comes alive when you *convert work into enjoyment or entertainment rather than effort or exertion*. Work must be a delight rather than a drudgery. One must learn to enjoy the work one does. Explore the importance and value of your contribution in the scheme of prevailing things. Above all, persistence across all situations and times is another important ingredient in overcoming stress experiences. One must remain steadfast until achievement of ones goals.

## **4.02 Stress Management Techniques**

### **A. Autogenic Training:**

All of us are equipped with regulating systems or mechanisms that work automatically, such as, the heart, breathing, digestion, etc. In autogenic training techniques, the individual learns to use certain simple phrases to support or reinforce cooperation between self and his automatic regulating systems. This is not done by force or will. It is to be done by

focus of attention, visualization and imagination during relaxation. It is important to have a casual, expectant or detached attitude-towards the change we are attempting. We simply visualize and feel or 'let it happen'. We do not interfere with the body's tendency to cooperate. Close your eyes gently. Either you sit down or lie on a bed and visualize, and feel the relaxation of each part of your body as you proceed in the following manner.

(a) *Relaxation phrases* to be instructed within yourself: "I feel quiet...I am beginning to feel quite relaxed...My feet feel heavy and relaxed...My ankles, my knees, my hips, feel relaxed and comfortable...My abdomen, my chest, and the whole central portion of my body feels calm and relaxed....My neck, my jaws, my forehead feel relaxed....My hands, my arms, my shoulders feel relaxed and comfortable. My whole body feels quiet, calm and relaxed". Continue visualizing and repeated he phrases silently within your mind for at least five to ten minutes.

(b) *Warmth phrases*. While you remain relaxed and quiet with your eyes closed, visualize your hands and repeat each of the following. Concentrate in a passive way and just let it happen. "I am quiet and relaxed... My arms and hands are relaxed...I feel quiet...My whole body is relaxed...My hands are warm...Warmth is flowing in my hands...they are warm and relaxed". ". Continue visualizing and repeat the phrases silently within your mind for at least five to ten minutes.

(c) *Reverie phrases*. While you remain relaxed and quiet with your eyes closed, repeat the following. Again, concentrate in a passive way and just let it happen. "My whole body feels quite comfortable, calm and relaxed...My mind is quiet...I withdraw my thoughts from the surroundings...I feel still and serene...My thoughts are turned inwards and I am at ease... Deep within myself I can see myself as calm and relaxed...I am alert, but quiet and relaxed inside me...My mind is relaxed...I am relaxed inside my mind..." Continue such thoughts directing your mind inward and paying attention to your inside self. This stage continues for another five minutes.

(d) *Activation phrases*. In this last part of the session, the whole body is activated with a stretch and deep breath and the following phrases. "I feel life and energy flowing through my legs, hips, abdomen, chest, arms and hands, neck, shoulder, face....The energy makes me feel light and active". The last phase concludes in another five minutes.

**B1. Breathing Exercises:**

Breathing is one of the first things that are affected during stress. Deep breathing exercises for at least five to ten minutes can help regulate and control this activity. The steps involved in this exercise are:

- Select a comfortable sitting position
- Close your eyes and direct your attention to your own breathing process.
- Think about nothing but your breath as it flows in and out of your body.
- Say to your self something like this: I am relaxing. I am breathing smoothly and rhythmically. Fresh air is flowing into my body. I feel calm, renewed and refreshed.
- Continue to focus on your breath as it flows in and out, in and out, thinking of nothing else but the smooth, rhythmical process of your own breathing.
- After five minutes stand up, stretch, smile and continue with your daily activities.

**B2. Mental Relaxation:**

In this form of relaxation, you need to focus on various thoughts and feelings inside your mind. The steps involved in this procedure are:

- Select a comfortable sitting or reclining position
- Close your eyes and think about a place that you have been before. The place or event should represent your ideal situation of physical or mental relaxation. It could be a quiet environment. It may be your earlier visit to seashore, the mountains or even your own backyard. It may be the prayer room. If you cannot think of any ideal relaxation place, you can create your own with imagination.
- Now imagine that you are actually in your ideal relaxation place. Imagine that you are seeing all the colours, hearing all the sounds, smelling the fragrance, or feel just as if you are in that place or situation. Just lie back and enjoy your soothing refreshing environment.
- Feel the peace and calm. Imagine your whole body and mind is renewed and refreshed.
- After five to ten minutes, open your eyes and stretch. You have the realization that you may instantly return to your relaxation place whenever you desire. Experience the peace and calm in your body and mind.

### **B3. Muscle Relaxation:**

In this technique of relaxation, individual and groups of muscles in your body need to be tensed and relaxed alternatively. At every step, try and build up tension in the specified group of muscles. At each step, feel the tension and then relax gradually. Also, feel the difference between tension and relaxation. The steps involved in this procedure are:

- a) Select a comfortable sitting or reclining position. Close your eyes as you carry out these procedures.
- b) Loosen any tight clothing.
- c) Clench your fists tightly and alternatively, then together one at a time to tense and then relax them slowly.
- d) Clench your fists tightly and press the thumb against the shoulder alternatively and then together one at a time to build tension and then relax them slowly.
- e) Close your eyes tightly. Try and develop tension in and around your eye muscles. Feel the tension and then relax gradually.
- f) Close your lips tightly. Press them on one another firmly. Try and build up tension in the muscles around your mouth.
- g) Open your mouth. Press the tongue to the roof of upper palate. Try and build up tension in the tongue.
- h) Bend your head downward. Stretch your neck muscles. Build tension in the surrounding areas.
- i) Bend your head backwards. Repeat as in eight.
- j) Take a deep breath. Hold your breath as long as you can. Build up tension in and around the chest muscles.
- k) Draw in air into your stomach. Expand it like a balloon. Hold your breath as long as you can. Strain the muscles in and around your tummy.
- l) Strain the muscles in your thighs. Make them tight and tense.
- m) Stretch the muscles in your calves.
- n) Flex your toes inwards. Try and build up tension in the muscles around your toes.
- o) Flex your toes outwards. Try and build up tension in the muscles around your toes.
- p) In the last step, try and build tension by stretching and straining each and every muscle in your body. Take a deep breath and hold it as long as you can. Close your eyes tightly. Press your lips firmly on each other. Clench your fists. Turn your head backwards. Stretch your legs and arms. Try to develop tension throughout the body. Feel the tension and then relax gradually. Feel the difference between tension and relaxation.
- q) After the last step, just allow yourself to relax for another fifteen minutes. Think about various body parts. Tell yourself: "I am going to relax completely. My hands are relaxed. My legs are relaxed. My eyes are relaxed. My chest is relaxed. My thighs are relaxed and so on. Go over each and every part of your body. The whole procedure is likely to take half an hour.

**B4. Number Countdown Technique:**

In this procedure of relaxation, close your eyes and visualize the number three (3) as a 'symbol for complete body relaxation', number two (2) for 'brain and nervous system relaxation' and number one (1) for 'complete oneness within yourself'. Instruct yourself: "Three-my body is completely relaxed! Two-my my brain and nervous system is completely relaxed! One-my body as well as mind is fully calm and relaxed". This procedure completes in five minutes. Towards the end of this procedure tell your self: "I shall now count from 1 to 5. I shall feel fully relaxed after I have finished counting five. 1...2...3...4...5. Now I am fully relaxed". You can then open your eyes slowly.

**B5. Positive Thinking & Imagery Technique:**

A great deal of relaxation is achieved by ones own positive thoughts about oneself. This technique involves giving positive suggestions to oneself during deep stages of relaxation. After you have used one or other of the above techniques to achieve relaxation, you are advised to use this technique of positive thinking and imagery. This involves telling yourself:

- I have a healing power.
- My mind is in every cell of my body. I can build up the desired state of health by thinking positively about my own mind or body.
- My mind and body is fluid and pliable.
- I can create positive and healthy thoughts or feelings in myself.
- The problems I face now are testing times. They shall pass soon. They are opportunities for my personal growth.
- There are still better times to come in my future
- I am still in control of my own life.
- I will succeed soon.

All these techniques of relaxation foster and facilitate alpha state of brain wave functioning. Additional practices, such as, use of meditation, prayer, listening or playing music have also been found to be effective in producing mental/physical relaxation or decreasing stress and anxiety without inducing drowsiness. The relaxation response are designed to evoke opposite body reactions to stress response (fight or flight reactions). These methods carry no religious or spiritual overtones. Its value has been documented in reduction of blood pressure and other bodily stress responses. Like other forms of

meditation, it can be learned on ones own even though time and practice is required to elicit the desired state of relaxation.

### **C. Cultivating Hobbies:**

Hobbies refer to an interest or activity pursued by an individual outside one's regular occupation and engaged in primarily for pleasure. It is a spare time recreational pursuit. Hobbies are practiced for interest and enjoyment rather than for profit or financial gains. The range of hobbies vary from animal keeping, art and craft (drawing, embroidery, knitting, painting, pottery, philately, or weaving), collecting things (books, currency or coins), cooking, card games, reading, writing, model building, music, bird watching, hiking, solving puzzles, sports like cricket, football, volleyball, or shuttle badminton, etc. The list can be endless. The serious pursuit of a hobby has been found to have a calming and therapeutic effect on stress. It is not the amount of time actually spent in pursuit of a hobby that matters as much as quality time one spends on them. Quality time refers to the intensity with which one spends time and not the amount of time spent on a particular activity or relationship. The art of cultivating hobbies for your self is an effective solution to stress. Look around to see what kind of hobby excites you. It could be 'collecting' hobby, 'inventing' hobby or just about a 'doing' hobby. Make it your life-time friend or associate on whom you could fall back for all your difficult or trying times.

### **D. Diary Keeping:**

Diary is a daily record, especially personal record of events, experiences and observations. Cultivate the habit of writing out your daily diary or, at least, regularly. The diary can contain reports and descriptions on what has happened over the course of a day or other period. Such logs are helpful in many ways. It will improve your writing skills, enable inner explorations of your feelings, thoughts or psyche. Some diarists think of their diaries as special friend. They even give it a friendly name. There are various things that can go into your diary writing. You could record events, persons, make character sketches, list dialogues, exchanges, reflections, etc.

### **E. Entertainment:**

Entertainment refers to something that amuses, pleases or diverts your attention or mind, such as, a performance, movie or show. Different people find different things or events interesting or pleasing. It could be a soap opera, dance drama,

comedy show or plain watching of other people at play. "All work, no play makes Jack a dull boy" - this proverb highlights the perils of overwork and stress experiences of workaholics. Each one of us must definitely find some time in our daily routine to indulge in ourselves, our own likes and dislikes, interests and pursuits.

#### **F. Foster Healthy Food Habits:**

Regular food habits neutralize several body symptoms originating from stress. Eat a well balanced diet. Avoid overeating. Eating out has become a common fad for youngsters these days. Fast foods, one-minute preparations, and fatty edibles lead to obesity even in young children. Most overstressed people show poor dietary considerations. They blood sugar goes up and down wildly. Eating frequent small meals, instead of a few large ones, helps keep your blood sugar levels stable. Learn to eat more vegetables.

#### **G. Gardening, Pet Keeping & SUPW:**

Tending plants or animals can be an absorbing activity. The mere act of watching them grow under your care is rewarding. It gives you selfless and altruistic satisfaction that answers your stress. Keeping pets is carried out for companionship and enjoyment rather than for economic reasons. Pets are recognized for their loyalty, playfulness or beautiful appearance or song. Dogs, birds, turtles and cats have been most common pets. An aquarium for fishes is an attraction for everyone. The keeping of pets is proven to remove stress. Walking a dog provides its master as well as the animal a good exercise every day. It is also an opportunity for useful social interaction. Keeping pets is not simply having an animal around and getting dispensed with left over or junk food to the poor creature. The animal must be tended and respected as a full time toddler or individual in its own right. Pet etiquette demands you give as much as you expect of the animal. Remember not to lock him away when you are on a vacation.

#### **H. Humour:**

Humour, laughter, good cheer and being funny can relieve stress. Take laughter seriously. The person with sense of humour is not just relaxed in the face of stress, but also, more flexible in his approach. Even amidst adversities, his imagination and innovation will help keep him out of distress. It will allow him to enjoy himself and prevent boredom, anxiety and depression. Humour is not just laughing at a joke. It is a

perspective about life. It is an emotional release that allows you to continue to function smoothly even under stress. The next time you are in stress: (i) say or do something funny; (ii) think of something funny; and, (iii) just start laughing. You will soon discover how much it helps. It cannot even hurt! Laughter is the best medicine for stress. You could start a humour collection. Stock up on whatever makes you laugh. They can be humorous anecdotes, books, joke books, etc. After a tough day, get them out and use them. Try to see a problem from a different point of view. Find humour in the problem or situation. Adapt humour to suit your problem or situation. Be the target. Poke fun at yourself by telling jokes, stories or quips. Share your humour. You can make almost any difficulty better by seeing humour in it. You can also help others see things in a new light.

### **I. Imagery:**

Sometimes we are unable to change our environment to manage stress. This may be the case when we do not have the power to change a situation or when the situation is not fully in our hands. Under such circumstances, imagery becomes handy technique for stress management. Imagery (also called guided imagery) involves use of your power for imagination, to recreate and enjoy a situation that is very relaxing. The more intensely you imagine the situation, the more relaxing the experience will be. It has been proved that by imagining pleasant and relaxing scenes, you can objectively measure less stress on a biofeedback machine. Conversely, it has been seen that by imagining unpleasant and stressful scenes, the physiological indicators of stress change at once. You can use imagery in combination with relaxation or meditation techniques too. You can use it for or before preparation for a big event or stage show. Guided imagery is a proven body-mind intervention aimed at easing stress and promoting a sense of peace and tranquillity during difficult times in one's life. It involves using the power of mind to assist the body to heal, maintain health and relax by way of inner communication involving all senses. It forms a balance between mind, body and spirit. The mind does not know the difference between thought and actual event. It is possible for a person to 'feel' that they are in their place just by imagining it. Using the power of imagination is one of the simplest and oldest techniques known for stress management.

### **J. Join Painting, Art or Sculpture Course:**

The cultivation of hobbies like painting, art or sculpture has

therapeutic effects on stress. It becomes a medium of expression for pent up thoughts, feelings or emotions. The act of creating a piece of art triggers an internal activity that helps us to heal in both an emotional, physical and spiritual manner. Even going to museum or looking at an art book can trigger this process. Art uses a language other than words. This language can act as an important agent in helping us to reduce stress levels. It feels good to create something.

### **K. Keeping Fit:**

Keeping fit is another name for regular exercise and maintenance of good habits. While maintaining good health habits may not guarantee longer life, it can certainly improve the quality of your life. Fitness tips need to be practiced regularly since it minimizes the risk for illness and enriches life. The things to do include daily exercise, avoidance of smoking and drug abuse, refraining from alcohol use, weight control, balanced and healthy diet, tooth care, control of high blood pressure and good safety practices.

### **L. Leisure Pleasures:**

There are several local holiday packages made available by tours and travel agencies. There are several ways of seeking leisure time pleasures, such as, getaways, short tours, picnics, get-togethers, partying, group discussions, brain storming, chatting, etc. These are meant to give you a break and not to escape from the main course of your stress management. Otherwise, there is always the risk that this side track itself becomes your main course of life!

### **M. Music:**

The structured use of music has been found to assist people of all ages in times of need. Musical interventions address physical, emotional, cognitive and social needs. It may not cure problems directly. But, it can help listeners to develop positive coping skills or express difficult feelings and emotions, supporting feelings of self confidence and security. It provides a safe and neutral environment for relaxation. Music is shown to have significant effect on an individual's relaxation, respiration rate, self-reported pain reduction and anxiety levels. In addition, music allows for developing emotional intimacy with peers, families and caregivers. It becomes a meaningful way for spending quality time with others in a positive and creative way.

**N. "No!" to Negative Thoughts, Drugs, Smoking, Alcohol & Substance Abuse:**

Cortisol, a hormone, is released when you are stressed. In large quantities, they are inimical to your body. They raise your blood pressure and cholesterol-both factors for heart disease. They damage your heart directly and cause you to engage in unhealthy habits like smoking, drugs, use of alcohol-eventually leading to heart attack. Therefore, make sure that you do not get into the trap of these addictions. Make appropriate life style changes to minimize negative stress.

**O. Optimistic Thinking:**

What or how you think makes a lot of difference in your stress experience or even on how you end up handling it effectively. It is all up in your attitude. Over estimation or underestimation are, both, dangerous. Some people get into a state of anxiety because they think they are not achieving as much as they can or they should be doing. They try for perfection in everything. Such an ideal is an invitation for failure. The matter of the fact is that one cannot be perfect in all things or at all times. Discover which things you can do well. Put your major efforts into them. Give other things the best of your ability. But, don't take yourself to task if you cannot achieve perfection.

**P. Prayer:**

Prayer involves a form of self communication back and forth with ones own inner conscience. It involves supplication, meditation, seeking and expression of desires. In the process, it enables us to reduce stress.

**Q. Queue with buddies:**

Real friends can be a great source of support and relief from stress. However, friendships involve a relationship with lots of give and take attitude. You cannot be always demanding from them and not give them anything in return. Human relationships do not happen just that way. There is lot of hard work involved in developing any relationship. Otherwise, you will find yourself frequently getting into quarrels with people.

Queuing up with friends also means that you do something for somebody else. You cannot be worrying about yourself all the time. This will take the steam out of your worries. It will give you a warm feeling of having been good to others.

## **R. Release Bottled Feelings**

This refers to a process of release for all pent up emotions. Do not keep your thoughts or feelings locked within your self. They are bound to worsen your feelings of stress. Release them by talking over with a friend or confidant. Write them down in a diary. Jot it down on a piece of paper. Prepare decision trees to enable you to decide on things.

## **S. Sleep & Rest:**

Most people have trouble sleeping some time and some people have trouble sleeping most of the time. Sleeplessness is called insomnia. Many people who complain of insomnia actually sleep more than they think they do. The body needs to sleep varies from one person to another. About 7-8 hours of sleep in a day is adequate. Sleeplessness is not usually caused by a dripping tap, a barking dog or a sultry room as most people imagine. They are simply the things you notice when you are awake. Sleep difficulty is the hall mark of overstress. Or conversely, you may feel sleepy all the time. Avoid irregular bedtimes. Do not get into the habit of taking sleeping pills.

### ***Few Tips for Effective Sleeping***

- ❖ Avoid irregular bed times. Establish a routine or regular time to go to bed and wake up.
- ❖ Don't drink beverages containing caffeine in the afternoon.
- ❖ Avoid day time napping, particularly an after lunch snooze. Day time sleep can cut down night time sleep.
- ❖ Take to exercises every day. Physical activity is conducive to longer and deeper sleep.
- ❖ Establish a regular bed time ritual for an hour or before retiring such as a warm bath, reading in bed or anything else you find relaxing.
- ❖ If you are not sleepy, get out of bed. Tossing and turning in bed or worrying about falling asleep can only make your sleeplessness worse.

## **T. Transcendental Meditation:**

Meditation is an effective method of relaxation. The idea of meditation is to focus your thoughts on one relaxing thing for a sustained period of time. It gives your body time to relax and recuperate. It clears away toxins that may have built through

stress and mental tension. Meditation is particularly useful when you have been physically active or you have been worrying about problems for long time. Meditation lowers blood pressure, slows breathing, helps muscles relax, gives body time to eliminate lactic acid and other waste products, eliminates stressful thoughts, help clear thinking, help focus and concentrate, reduce stress headaches. The technique of meditation requires you to focus all your thoughts and images on a particular thing or event. It should be done in a position that you can sustain and remain comfortable at least for 20-30 minutes. The lotus position is most appropriate. Otherwise, sitting in a comfortable chair or lying on bed may be also equally effective. A number of focuses for concentration may be used. Which one you choose is a matter of personal taste. You could be simply breathing slowly and counting numbers 0-9. You can visualize numbers changing with each breath. You could visualize relaxation flowing in as you inhale and tension going out as you exhale. You could focus on a sound, such as, the classic Sanskrit word "OM" meaning "perfection".

#### **U. Unwinding:**

Sometimes it helps to escape for a while from routines of all things, people or activities around you. Permit yourself to get lost in a book, film, game or even a short trip elsewhere. Making your self stand there and suffer is one form of self punishment. It does not solve the problem. But, be prepared to come back and deal with the difficulty when you are calm. Unwinding does not mean you escape from the stress situation. It means that you come back with renewed vigour to attack the problem once again and find the solution that you have to do by yourself. Unwinding gives your body adequate time to repair self and regenerate out of the symptoms of overstress.

#### **V. Ventilation:**

'Talk it out!' seems to be the perfect dictum for stress management. When something worries you, don't bottle it up. Open up your ventilators. Confide your worry to some level headed person you can trust. Talking things out helps relieve the strain. It helps you to see your worry in a different perspective or under clear light. It can help you see or decide what you can do about it.

#### **W. Work Off Your Anger:**

Adrenaline (sometimes called as fight or flight hormone) increases when you are angry. Like cortisol, higher level of

adrenaline is dangerous for your body. If you find that you are using anger as general pattern of your response, remember that it will leave you feeling foolish and sorry in the end. If you feel like bashing someone, try holding off until tomorrow. Meantime, throw yourself into some physical activity like gardening, carpentry or a game of tennis or you can even go for a long walk. Working the anger out of your system will leave you better prepared to handle your problem intelligently.

Angry people have been identified as Type A personalities. When the question was asked about what specific personality characteristic of the type A personality causes physical illness—the answer found was: Anger! It was also found that when anger is reduced or controlled, their physical symptoms also decreased.

#### ***Learning To Be Less Angry***

- Change your expectations of self or others
- Do not hope for the best or expect the worst.
- Expect what you are most likely to get based on your past experience.
- Do not mistake that not to get angry is a sign of submission or weakness
- Stop telling yourself that it is awful or terrible to wait, get caught in traffic, get treated unfairly, receive inferior service at a restaurant, etc. They are merely unavoidable, if unfortunate, facts of life.
- Few people seek help for their anger, as they rarely consider it their own problem.
- Breathe deeply and slowly to relax your anger.
- Use imagery and visualize a relaxing experience to overcome anger
- Avoid giving verbal instructions like 'never' or 'always'. Do not swear.
- Remind yourself that getting angry does not fix anything. It makes things worse.
- Don't say the first thing that comes into your head. Slow down and think carefully about what you want to say.
- Listen carefully to what the other person is saying and take your time before answering.
- "Silly humour" can help defuse rage. There are two cautions in using humour. First, don't try to just "laugh off" your problems; rather, use humour to help yourself face them more constructively. Second, don't give in to harsh, sarcastic humour; that's just another form of unhealthy anger expression.
- Change your environment. Give yourself a break.
- Try changing the times when you talk about important matters so these talks don't turn into arguments.
- Truly forgive the person who wronged you as well as to truly forgive yourself.

Research in the past few years suggests that anger presents a serious threat to one's health. It is detrimental to one's mental well being. The conventional wisdom is that if anger is used constructively and expressed rather than held in, it is a healthy emotion. While it may sometimes look good and play well with our friends, anger is now known to be quite detrimental to us physically and psychologically. It has been shown that men who are controlling, workaholic and intense are more likely than others to suffer from heart

#### **X. X-Posture to Good Friends:**

Some people expect too much from others. They feel let down, disappointed or frustrated when someone does not measure to their expectations. The other person may be a good friend. Perhaps, they are also trying to remake to suit your requirements. Remember that each person has a right to develop as an individual. People who feel let down by shortcomings of others, whether real or imagined, are really let down about themselves. Instead of being critical about them, search out their good points and help them to develop better. This will give both satisfaction and improve on the relationship.

#### **Y. Yoga:**

Yoga is unique Indian contribution to the field of stress management. It is found that performance of certain yogasanas on regular basis help keep stress at bay. The practice of asana is always coordinated with breathing movements. *Pranayama* is a conscious regulation of breath, replacing automatic breathing. It is practiced in relaxed, comfortable and seated posture. Normal breathing occurs through nostrils in quick and automatic fashion. Breathing during *asanas* is different. It is carried out by making a hissing sound in throat during inhalation and exhalation. Usually, *asanas* are not practiced in single. It is done as part of a course or series of *asanas* put together. This therapy must be used only under supervision.

#### **Z. Zero Hour to Manage Time with Yourself:**

Time management is a skill that can be learned and perfected. If you are one of those who keep complaining that there is 'no time' for doing this or that, and if you frequently have problems in getting within deadlines, fixing appointments, schedules, make others wait for you, feel that you have wasted time at the end of a day, need to struggle to be punctual, and so on-surely, you need to do a lot of thinking on your prevailing practices or strategies at time management. You certainly have

problem in managing time. There are many ways to get over your problem.

### ***Few Tips for Time Management***

- ⇒ Draw your daily, weekly, monthly, and if possible, annual schedules.
- ⇒ You could preferably write the schedule down on a piece of paper rather than merely committing them to memory. It will be there right in front of your eyes to see.
- ⇒ Make sure that your time table is broken down into small or convenient parts such that each objective is within reach.
- ⇒ Prioritize your commitments and responsibilities.
- ⇒ Take up one thing at a time. Pitch into a few of the most urgent tasks first-one at a time by temporarily setting aside the rest. Once you dispose the first matters, the others will follow suit more easily
- ⇒ Don't waste waiting time. Sometimes when one is forced to wait, make productive use of that waiting time by having small fillers or things to do.
- ⇒ Save time by stocking up on small items. If you care to observe yourself, you are sure to find several small things you seem to be doing and wasting time. Save on them and you would have piled up quite an amount of time over the day.
- ⇒ Make appointments in advance. Friends calling, visit to their homes, helping out others or doing things for others can be scheduled.
- ⇒ Understand your body rhythms. Learn to understand when or where you can perform the best. Use the regular study room, timings, sleeping or eating timings.
- ⇒ Keep reminders in front of you. Always carry a 'Things to Do' pocket book with you. The 'To Do' list may be long, but organized in one place.
- ⇒ Organize your things or books in such a way that are easily retrieved. Put them back in the same place after their use. It saves a lot of time on searching for them when you need them again.
- ⇒ Learn to say "No!" politely but firmly when you are hard pressed for time and have other work priorities to attend to.

### 4.03 What Can Teachers Do?

Teachers can develop awareness in the children about the importance of this skill and its components through role plays and brainstorming sessions. Later on they can develop specific training programmes to expose the children to specific techniques of coping with stress. This will enable children to adopt a technique that suits them best.

### 4.04 Let Us Check Our Progress

Match the following:

	Statement A		Statement B
1.	Ability to draw blue prints	A.	Hobbies
2.	Quality of being impersonal	B.	Cortisol
3.	Feeling for Others	C.	Diary Keeping
4.	Ability to recover quickly from misfortune	D.	Prayer
5.	Realization of oneself as an individual entity	E.	Adrenaline
6.	Feeling with Others	F.	Stability
7.	State or quality of being constant	G.	Resilience
8.	Activity pursued outside ones regular occupation and engaged primarily for pleasure	H.	Objectivity
9.	Personal record of events and observations	I.	Self Awareness
10.	Form of personal communication with ones own conscience	J.	Empathy
11.	Hormone released when one is angry	K.	Planning
12.	Hormone released when one is in stress	L.	Sympathy

### 4.05 Let Us Sum Up

To recapitulate, stress experience falls under three stages. The first stage is (A) awareness of or by the individual that s/he has a stress. This is followed by (B) attempting to develop a *balance* between felt stress and exigencies on the individual and (C) *coping* with stress. A summary of stress management techniques which we studied is given below:

***A To Z Of Stress Busters***

**A**utogenic training

**B**reathing exercises

**C**ultivate hobbies

**D**evelop habit of diary keeping

**E**ntertain yourself periodically

**F**oster healthy food habits

**G**ardening, pet keeping and SUPW is a good diversion

**H**umour keeps you relaxed

**I**magery of success events and experiences

**J**oin a painting, art or sculpture Course

**K**eeP Fit through Drill, Sports, Exercises & Physical Training

**L**eisure pleasures like dance, drama & theatre are needed

**M**usic & muscle relaxation

**N**o to anger, negative thoughts, drugs, smoking, alcohol and substance abuse

**O**ptimistic thinking and cognitive restructuring helps

**P**rayer

**Q**ueue up with buddies

**R**elease your bottled up emotions and feelings

**S**leep and rest adequately

**T**ranscendental meditation

**U**nwind with friends

**V**entilate your thoughts, feelings and ideas

**W**orkouts and aerobics

**X**-pose to good friends

**Y**oga Asana (Pranayama, Shavasana, Yoganidra)

**Z**ero hour to manage time with yourself

## 5.00 SELF EVALUATION

1. What do we mean by the term 'stress'?
2. What is meant by 'coping with stresses'?
3. Describe some of the normal sources of stress.
4. As a teacher how would you identify 'stress reactions' in your students?
5. How will you enable your students to cope with stress?
- 6.

## 6.00 COPING WITH STRESS: SELF ASSESSMENT TOOL

### 6.01 Stress Scale For Youngsters

Dr. S. Venkatesan

In this section, a sample 'Stress Scale for Youngsters' (SSY) is included for your use in identification and measurement of your own current levels of stress. The scale has listed some common life events seen in people around us. Read them carefully and mark "YES" against items that have been stressful event in your past twelve months of life. If "YES" also score out of ten how much marks you would give to that particular event in influencing the course of your life. Ten marks means 'Maximum Influence', zero means 'No Influence At All' and five marks means 'Average Influence' on your life so far. This is not an intelligence test. There is no right or wrong answers. Please answer all questions without brooding too much on them. There is no time limit.

Sl. No.	Items	Yes/No	Event Value
1.	Death of parent		100
2.	Divorce in parents		75
3.	Teenage pregnancy		55
4.	Separation in parents		50
5.	Suspension or dismissal from school		50
6.	Detention in jail of self		50
7.	Death of friend		50
8.	Quarrels or marital conflict in parents		45
9.	Property or crops damaged		45
10	Death of close family member		45
11	Major personal illness or injury		40
12	Excessive alcohol or drug abuse by family member		35
13	Trouble at work with colleagues, classmates or juniors		35
14	Break-up with friend/s		35
15	Working while attending school		35
16	Large unpaid loans		30

17	<i>Conflict with grandparents or older generation</i>		30
18	<i>Broken engagement or love affair</i>		30
19	<i>Sibling leaving home</i>		30
20	<i>Unemployed parent/family member</i>		30
21	<i>Puberty</i>		30
22	<i>Jail Term for close family member</i>		30
23	<i>Marriage or wedding celebrations at home</i>		25
24	<i>Lack of friends</i>		25
25	<i>Robbery or theft at home</i>		25
26	<i>Financial loss</i>		25
27	<i>Marriage of sibling</i>		25
28	<i>Illness of family member</i>		25
29	<i>Lack of male member at home</i>		25
30	<i>Troublesome sibling</i>		25
31	<i>Likelihood of marriage or engagement</i>		25
32	<i>Retirement of parent/s</i>		25
33	<i>End of School</i>		25
34	<i>Beginning next level school/college</i>		25
35	<i>Drug Use in self</i>		25
36	<i>Alcohol Use in self</i>		25
37	<i>Chronic Allergies in self</i>		25
38	<i>Going in debt for self</i>		25
39	<i>Over expectant, complaining or carping parents</i>		25
40	<i>Death of pet</i>		25
41	<i>Failure in examination</i>		25
42	<i>Difficult teachers</i>		25
43	<i>Negative prophecy of astrologer or palmist</i>		20
44	<i>Sexual problems</i>		20
45	<i>Conflict with extended family members</i>		20
46	<i>Disability in family member</i>		20
47	<i>Fired by teacher or head master</i>		20
48	<i>Major purchase or construction of house</i>		20
49	<i>Change or expansion of business</i>		20
50	<i>Poor personal health or illness</i>		20
51	<i>Frequent family get together</i>		20
52	<i>Smoking ins self</i>		20
53	<i>Change of School</i>		20
54	<i>School overload</i>		20
55	<i>Long Distance travel to school</i>		20
56	<i>Minor violation of law</i>		15
57	<i>Appearing for an examination or interview</i>		15
58	<i>Trouble with neighbour</i>		15
59	<i>Outstanding personal achievement</i>		15
60	<i>Change of neighbourhood</i>		15

61	Change in working condition or transfer		15
62	Change in eating or sleeping habits		15
63	Birth of sib		15
64	Gain of new family member		15
65	Reduction in number of family functions		15
66	Change in social activities		15
67	Going on pleasure trip or pilgrimage		15
68	Arguments with friends		15
69	Examination dates announced		15
70	Awaiting for Results		15
71	Teasing peers		15
72	Roadside Eve teasers/Disturbing fellow passengers		15
73	Unfulfilled commitments		10
74	Change of residence		10
75	Vacations		10
	<b>Total</b>		<b>2000</b>

### 6.02 Stress Scale For Youngsters-Scoring Key

Add up the number of items you have answered in affirmative. Multiply that number with ten. That becomes your maximum score. Now add your ratings out of ten for each of the affirmed items. If the total of this rating is more than 70 % of the maximum score, it means that you are definitely under stress. You need to learn managing your stress at once.

### 7.00 SUGGESTED READINGS

Asterita, M. (1984) *The Physiology of Stress: With Special Reference to the Neuro endocrine System.* United States, Human Sciences Printing.

Bassey, E. et al. (1990) *Benefits of Exercise: The Evidence.* New York, Manchester University Press.

Braverman, S. "Healing with Humor." <http://www.laughter.com/heal.html>. May 1998.

Colton, Mary and Gore, Susan. (1991) *Adolescent Stress: Causes and Consequences.* New York, Walter de Groyter, Inc.

Funkenstein, S. et al. (1957) *Mastery of Stress.* Harvard University Press.

Gherman, E.M. (1981) *Stress and the Bottom Line*. United States, Amacom.

Griskell, James and Salas, Eduardo. (1996) *Stress and Human Performance*. New Jersey, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

Hauenstein, E. (1999) *The Effects of Stressors*. MA, Harvard University Press.

LaRoche, L. (1998) *Relax, You May Only Have a Few Minutes Left*. New York, Villard Books.

Lovallo, W. (1997) *Stress and Health: Biological and Psychological Interactions*. California, Stage Publications.

Mattson, R. "Are You a Reluctant Relaxer?" Dec, 1997. <http://www.fitnesslink.com/mind/relaxer.htm>

Seiffge-Krenke, I. (1995) *Stress, Coping, and Relationships in Adolescence*. New Jersey, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Seraganian, P. (1993) *Exercise Psychology: The Influence of Physical Exercise on Psychological Processes*. New York, John Wiley and Sons.

Texas Medical Association "What are Stressors?" [wysiwyg://92/http://www.texmed.org/education\\_cme/phr\\_cme/ec\\_phrstressors.htm](http://www.texmed.org/education_cme/phr_cme/ec_phrstressors.htm). Feb, 1999.

Townsend, J. "Feeling Stressed???" *Stress and Stress Management*. "<http://www.gdaymate.com/stress.article.htm>. Feb, 1999.

Vishnu-devananda, S. (1998) *The Complete Illustrated Book of Yoga*. New York, Harmony Books.

Ward, S. "Yoga for the Young at Heart." <http://www.yogaheart.com> 1999.

Winters, P. "A Healthy Diet Helps to Reduce Stress." <http://www.fitnesslink.com/mind/diet.htm> Sept, 1996.

Yates, J. (1979) *Managing Stress*. New York, Amacom.



*"A thousand reasons for worry,  
A thousand reasons for anxiety  
Oppress day after day the fool,  
But not the wise man."*

*Hitopadesa of Narayana*

*"Do your best. Then, don't worry, be  
happy."*

*Meher Baba*

*"As a rock on the seashore he standeth firm,  
and the dashing of the waves disturbeth  
him not. He raiseth his head like a tower  
on a hill, and the arrows of fortune drop at  
his feet. In the instant of danger, the  
courage of his heart here, and scorn to fly."*

*Akhenaton*

*Epilogue To  
Life Skills Education:*

*Training Package*

*Our greatest glory is not in never falling,  
but in rising every time we fall.*

*Confucius*

*Success is to be measured not so much by  
the position that one has reached in life as  
by the obstacles which he has overcome.*

*Booker T. Washington*

*Not life, but good life, is to be chiefly  
valued.*

*Socrates*

*"If I feel depressed I will sing. If I feel sad  
I will laugh. If I feel ill I will double my  
labour. If I feel fear I will plunge ahead. If  
I feel inferior I will wear new garments. If  
I feel uncertain I will raise my voice. If I  
feel poverty I will think of wealth to come.  
If I feel incompetent I will think of past  
success. If I feel insignificant I will  
remember my goals. Today I will be the  
master of my emotions."*

*Og Mandino*

Dear Teacher,

With the tenth module, we come to the end of our discussion on theoretical issues related the ten different life skills. I hope you have understood different life skills theoretically. I also hope by now you understood that the present level of a skill could be assessed through some self-administered tests.

We have attempted to make our modules user friendly, using self-instructional mode. I hope you have found them useful. In our organization of contents, we have attempted to maintain uniformity in organizing sections in the modules in order to facilitate a reader to have a common approach to different modules. In every section we have used Self-check Exercises. I hope you have checked your own understanding of the content before you have come to this last part of the modules.

As a part of the module, as we have said above, we have given a tool which could be administered by you to your students / trainees. We have also given you the scoring key as well as norms. We hope you are able to handle the tests. As a part of our training programme, we will make it a point to clarify and enable you to handle the test we have given at the end of our modules. After the training programme, In case if you still have any doubt, you may kindly go to Department of Psychology or Education of a University which is close by to you and get yourself familiarised with the administration and scoring of the tests. Alternatively, you can contact us.

You may also see that in certain modules we have attempted to give certain references for further reading. This is done keeping in mind that you would be able to do supplementary reading if necessary.

The material we have given to you in English is meant for your consumption. When you organise training programmes for your teachers, kindly ensure that you : (a) give them theoretical orientation in your own regional language, and (b) provide material translated in regional language.

For your convenience, we have developed part B of the training package, which relates to different interventions. This can be tried out by teachers in their schools. Similar interventions have been tried out by students of our institute as a part of their school based practical activity.

Our experience tells us that the interventions we have given in part B, work very well. The two principal methods of interventions which have been elaborately given are 'Brainstorming technique' and 'Role Play'.

In Part B of the training package, covering training interventions, we have attempted to develop interventions for different components of 'each of the' skills. If you are able to understand the logic of developing an intervention, you will be able to develop many interventions on your own. This is what our wish is. The interventions given are only to familiarize a trainer to get a hang of it. With a little more effort you will be able to develop many interventions and be a promoter of life skills independent of any external support.

With this optimistic note, let us move to Part B of the training Package, 'Interventions'.....

*Coordinator*



*Never be bullied into silence. Never allow yourself to be made a victim. Accept no one's definition of your life; define yourself.*

*Harvey Fierstein*