



GURUJI EDUCATION FOUNDATION

November 2024

DISHA

This issue's theme
Cycle of Giving

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ABOUT GEF

Guruji Education Foundation (GEF) is a registered trust, which works with underprivileged students to enable their holistic education, and thus provide them with a more equitable access to opportunities and success. As part of its mission of “**Education for All**”, GEF provides support for holistic education of underprivileged students, based on the principles of:

- Inclusivity
- Quality over quantity
- Cycle of giving
- Customized career planning
- Holistic development
- Collaboration

GEF runs 2 broad flagship programs:

i) Holistic Higher Education (HHE), where high-potential college students from underprivileged sections are identified to catalyze their all-round development by providing them with resources that they may need. The resources could include interest-free loans (to be paid after they start earning), personal mentoring, career counselling and more.

ii) Adolescent Development Program (ADP), which aims at enabling schools, especially those catering to underprivileged children, to provide holistic education spanning physical literacy, psychological strength, intellectual prowess, life skills, and entrepreneurial thinking.

GEF accords special attention towards education of orphans, divyang (differently-abled), and those from distressed backgrounds such as single parent families and families impacted by cancer, covid, etc. More than academic brilliance, the emphasis is on providing these students an education that is appropriate to their abilities and can help them in getting meaningful employment.



FOUNDER'S MESSAGE

Holistic development has multiple dimensions - the most significant being the "Cycle of Giving". A lot has been written about it in different forms, such as giving, gratitude, gratefulness, responsibility, etc.

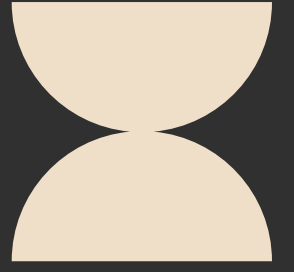
What can you give? Anything that you can - material things in cash or in kind, and non material things like knowledge, time or even an affectionate or loving glance at someone, especially to someone who needs it.

I am sure you have experienced happiness through giving and have also realised that when you give without any expectations, your happiness rises manyfold. This is not easy, but then who says that things that give more returns / benefits are easy?

You start giving when you realise or pay attention to how much you have gotten, unasked. We have the most beautiful system that can be ever designed ie. the human body. If you have to replace a cornea, you have to pay a few lakhs of rupees and still it may not be the same that the Nature had provided. There are the sun and moon that shine for you, mountains, jungles, and oceans that are a joy to behold, chirping of beautiful birds to please your ears. The list is endless. As a Marathi poet says - while taking all these gifts from nature, we should also take the 'giving attribute' of the nature.. घेता घेता घेण्याऱ्याचे एक दिवस हात घ्यावेत

With sincere wishes that all of you develop and grow the mindset of giving and enjoy your life like never before.

DR. PRADEEP WAYCHAL



"The thrill of taking lasts a day. The thrill of giving lasts a lifetime."

- Joan Marques





FROM TEAM DISHA

DEAR GEF FAMILY

It is our privilege to present the November 2024 issue of Disha.

The theme of this issue is “Cycle of Giving” - one of the 6 GEF principles that guide each one of us as we work towards our mission of “Holistic Education for All”. The issue includes all our regular features, and we hope that all of you enjoy going through this issue, as much as we enjoyed putting it together for you.

While on the positive side we did receive a few contributions from you in response to our appeal for sharing content, we would definitely be happier to receive much more. Our Contest in the last issue failed to generate much interest and we did not receive any response. While it was a bit disappointing, we realize that it could be because of the substantial effort expected in responding to the Contest. We have taken that as a learning, and starting with this issue we hope to put forth Contests that are fun and easy to respond to.

As we have been communicating, we would be happy to receive more content from all our readers, and also welcome anyone who would like to volunteer their time and talent to actively contribute to the making of Disha.

TEAM DISHA
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Let's meet

Madhur Bajpai

Widening horizons.
With gratitude.

An interview with Team Disha

GEF alumnus **Madhur Bajpai**, currently works with Pocket FM, where he heads the Content for US business. Along with academic credentials from CoEP, Pune and IIM Bangalore, and a career profile that includes marquee names such as DE Shaw, Ola and Tata Digital, Madhur has also been an epitome of GEF's principle of "Cycle of Giving".



Team Disha: Hello Madhur. Let's start by hearing a bit about your background. Could you tell us about your family background and your early education?



Madhur: I grew up in a place called Ghatanji in Yavatmal, Maharashtra. I come from a third-generation migrant family, i.e., my great-grandparents came from UP and settled in Maharashtra. My father practiced law in our town back then and he was also sort of an entrepreneur. He brought computers to our place back in 1994-95, when they were not as commonly used as they are today. We were from a humble background, not extremely rich. My mom is a homemaker. Although she was from a conservative family, her family supported her education, and she did her M.A. in Literature and B.Ed. She used to teach subjects like Hindi and English at a junior college, but then she chose to become a homemaker to raise and teach us. I also have a younger sister.

I studied in Ghatanji till 12th standard. Till 8th standard I studied in a Marathi-medium school which offered free education, and grew up learning Marathi as my first language. Although the teachers were not highly qualified, they were very supportive and helpful. After 8th, until 10th it was semi-English, where English and Mathematics were taught in English, and other subjects were taught in Marathi.

The fear of dealing with new concepts being taught in what was my third language, resulted in me putting a lot of effort in self-study. I used to study chapters from both English and Marathi books to understand better. There also was an uncle of mine, who used to teach Science and English. So, every vacation, my mother would send us to our Mama's place to study. Looking back, I think those years helped me in building a lot of self-reliance and an attitude of finding solutions to challenges.

Team Disha: At what point did you decide to pursue engineering. How did that come about?

Madhur: For 11th and 12th, I joined an English-medium junior college at my native place, where I studied science. I actually enjoyed studying and was a decent performer. In the 12th standard I topped my college, but honestly I had no idea what I wanted to do. I didn't even know the full form of IIT back then. Just because everyone around was applying for CET, I too decided to fill the form, but I didn't have a clue about what and how to prepare for the exams. To cut a long story short, I managed to do well in my 12th standard and CET, without attending any tuition or coaching classes. This experience again reinforced my self-belief and my faith in my preferred method of reading and studying on my own.

Not knowing too much about the exam and the challenges that lay ahead, in some ways turned out to be a blessing in disguise. Because I did not know much about CET, I also did not have the fear of not being able to clear it. Sometimes when we overthink, we create a barrier within ourselves. We were always told to make the best use of whatever resources we had, not to worry about what we didn't have, take every challenge as an opportunity and learn. Remain focused on your goal, do whatever you can do, and don't worry about the outcome.

With a CET state rank within 500, I got into engineering at CoEP, one of the best colleges in Maharashtra, with IT as my branch. At the end of 4 years, I ended up being the gold medalist of my branch.

Team Disha: That's quite an achievement. Could you tell us more about your experience with GEF and how it impacted your life?

Madhur: During my time at CoEP, I had met Pradeep Sir, who taught us Software Testing and Quality Assurance. However, my association with GEF started a bit later.

Many times, students take it easy in their final year of Engineering as they are



almost done with their course and in most cases been placed as well. I too had a placement offer from DE Shaw, a multinational investment management company. Even so, I and a few other like-minded students, we decided to go the extra mile and give our best in the final year as well.

We worked on an interesting project related to process migration in cloud computing, under the guidance of our Dean, Prof. Jibi Abraham. Our project paper got accepted at the IBM Cloud Conference and we were invited to present at the Conference at Research Triangle Park in USA. To be invited to the conference was a big achievement, but the hurdle was the expense involved in registering for the conference and traveling to the US. Knowing our family's financial situation, it was not an amount that I could ask my parents to fund, and neither did I personally have any source of income. I had two choices - either accept it as fate and decline the invitation, or find ways to overcome the challenge and attend the conference. I chose not to give up.

We asked our HOD to request IBM to sponsor a part of the expense, which they did, but it still wasn't enough. This is where GEF came into my life as a godsend. As the news of our paper getting accepted spread across the college, Pradeep Sir reached out to me to offer GEF support in the form of an interest free loan that could be paid back within a few months of starting our jobs.

The support I received from GEF had a two-fold impact. First of course was that a part of our team could attend the Conference. The second impact was more significant and long-term. There was a deep realization that GEF enabled me to pursue my dreams, and the least that I could do is help others in pursuing theirs.

Team Disha: A bit about your professional journey - how has your career shaped up post your graduation?

Madhur: I started my career with DE Shaw at Hyderabad, as a Developer in the Risk Management domain. As I continued working, I was curious to know why I was coding and for whom. It is then I realized that there was a business team sitting somewhere in New York, racking their minds to create business models. While I could code well, my aspirations grew, and there was this burning desire to know more about business.

With this new aspiration of expanding my skill set horizontally, I started preparing for CAT. As I was also working, I used to study from 12 to 2 at night, attempting mock tests, analyzing my mistakes, and improving. After clearing CAT and the interview round, I got a seat at the prestigious IIM Bangalore. While doing my MBA, I had an opportunity to intern with Goldman Sachs in the sales and trading areas, and I realized that this kind of work did not really align well with what I wanted to do. My goal in life was not to only make money, but to grow holistically, and also create something for the betterment of people.

Around that time a lot of startups were coming up, and in 2017 I joined Ola, which was reasonably big back then, although not as big as it is today. I ended up working there for 6 years, over which I got opportunities to work with the Founder, Co-founder and CEO on interesting assignments including new products, strategic planning, international launches, etc. Following Ola, I also had a short stint with Tata Digital, before moving to Pocket FM, an audio series platform, where I head the content for US markets.



Team Disha: You are someone who has made multiple transitions in your life - Engineering, Coding, MBA, Finance, Business. There are many of us who too are faced with career choices and have thoughts about making career switches. So, what exactly has been your thought-process that helped you make some of these decisions?

Madhur: Firstly, I believe that when you are working on anything, you need to do it with full commitment. Simultaneously you need to make efforts to understand the larger picture and what is happening around you. In my case, when I was working as a coder, I coded with full diligence and to the best of my ability. Simultaneously, I was interacting with others from the business team and understanding what they were doing. That is what gave me the realization that I could probably do a good job on the business side of things too, and it might be something that I would enjoy while creating greater impact as well. That was the trigger, and then I kept getting this feeling repeatedly. So, I started exploring more, talking to people, reading about it.

Some people might advise you to squash those thoughts, remain focused on the job at hand, and not get distracted. My thoughts are different. You need to ask yourself “where did this desire come from?” Did it come from within, or are you doing it because everyone is doing it or because someone advised you to do it? Regardless of where it is coming from, you need to analyze the options thoroughly and make your choices. Here being authentic and following your own compass helps.

Team Disha: “Being authentic” - Can you elaborate a bit on that?

Madhur: There is something called “imposter syndrome.” If you go to a new place or a totally new job, you sometimes feel that you are an imposter and that you don’t really belong there or you don’t have the capabilities to be there. So, you start pretending to be someone else that you are not, just to appear that you belong, and that is when you lose authenticity. Especially happens with people who have experienced a lot of growth in their life. Like I went from a village school, to a city college, to the corporate world, and then kept growing through the ranks. The

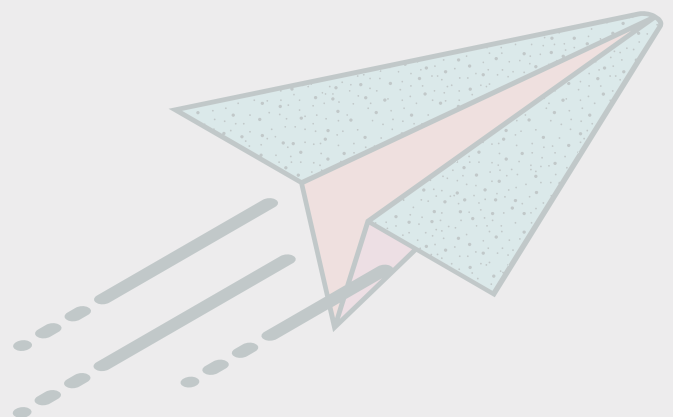
question “do I really belong here” comes up in your mind, and I don't think that should be disregarded. But the self-doubt should not become a burden and instead needs to be harnessed positively. This is very authenticity helps.

Authenticity means that you need to first accept your story, your history and your life, and you need to be secure about where you come from. So, it doesn't matter what the history has been, but you need to accept the history, you need to learn from history. You need to protect your dream, your aspiration. You cannot let your story be written by somebody else.

Many times you will have choices to make – both in your personal lives and at work. You need to be clear about your principles, your values, your strategy, instead of going by what others are saying or following a path somebody else has suggested for you. When you are bombarded with social media posts on how well others are doing, being true to yourself is the best thing you can do to for yourself. It will create more self-confidence, and result in others supporting you because they see that you are true to yourself. And you will end up achieving what you want.

Team Disha: You have worked with startups. In GEF too we are trying to get students to develop an entrepreneurial mindset. Any thoughts related to entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial mindset?

Madhur: Entrepreneurial mindset does not just mean leaving your job and starting your own company. An employee can also be entrepreneur. It is a way of living and thinking. An entrepreneurial way of living means you are resourceful. When you are faced with constraints and challenges, you look around and figure out ways to make larger impact with lesser resources. Entrepreneurship is also about being decisive. Those decisions can be ugly, they may turn out to be wrong in the long run, but it is necessary to make take those decisions and keep moving.



Team Disha: The support that you received from GEF at the right time has obviously had a profound impact on your life, and you have been living the principle of “Cycle of Giving”. A few closing words on what it means to you and your experience of giving back, would serve as a motivation for our readers.

Madhur: Having received support from GEF at the right time, I have experienced the difference it made to me. Since then, and it has been over a decade now, I have tried to give back regularly, so that GEF can continue to make a difference to countless others who may need such support. My belief in GEF’s cause and the principle of “Cycle of Giving” has only grown with the passing of time. Nothing makes me happier than the feeling that in my own small way, I too have hopefully made a difference to someone’s life and helped them realize their aspirations.

Another dimension of “Cycle of Giving” is giving back as a Volunteer in whatever capacity one can. It could be to GEF, or your alma mater or to the society at large. In my case it has been in the form of sharing my journey and experience with my junior batches at college, and helping individual students who approach me for career related guidance. From my personal experience back then, when I used to talk to Pradeep Sir, with his vast experience in I.T industry, his inputs used to bring about a great deal of clarity and perspective. Now I consider as my responsibility to propagate that to others and I get a lot of joy out of that.

Team Disha: Thank you, Madhur, for sharing your journey with us. That was an inspiring story. We wish you abundant success in your career ahead.





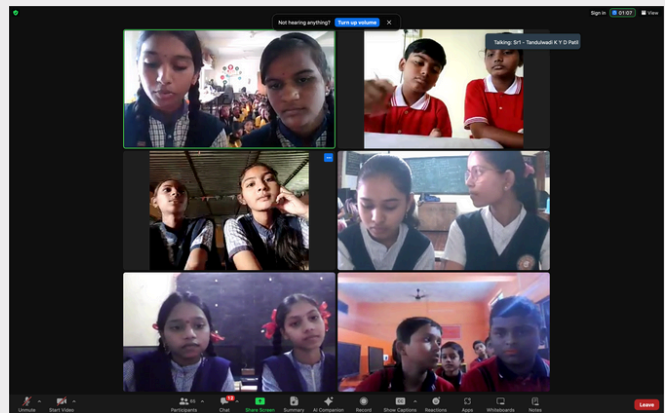
Highlights of the Quarter

1 GRAND FINALE OF SCRATCH FESTIVAL 2024

Scratch Festival 2024 concluded with the 3rd Scratch Day held on 10 August, 2024, marking a grand finale commensurate to the scale and vision of the Festival.

Leading to the Scratch Day, GEF had organized the Scratch Festival 2024, featuring a variety of events. The highlight was the Scratch Projects competition, showcasing projects developed by beneficiary students. Other notable events included a Hackathon, where students coded a mini project based on a given topic within a set timeframe, and a Scratch Quiz for newly enrolled schools. To enhance critical thinking and interpersonal skills, a Debate Competition was also held.

The Scratch Day event was conducted online via Zoom, with a live broadcast on YouTube. The Chief Guest for the program was Dr. Anand Nadkarni, a renowned psychiatrist, thinker, dramatist, musician, poet, sketch artist, and senior social worker. The event included the final round of the debate competition, screening of the award-winning projects, and announcement of the winners. A recording of the final day of the Scratch Festival can be viewed at [Scratch Festival 2024 Recording](#).



Vipula Abhyankar and Dr Lalita Deshpande from GEF conducted a 2-day Math workshop, which was specifically organized for Maths teachers from 8 schools run by the Koregaon Education Society. The objective of the workshop was to demonstrate simple, creative and practical methods for teaching Math at schools, which could make it easier for the students to understand Math fundamentals. Concepts covered were Numbers and Operations, Positive & Negative Numbers, Fractions, and Algebraic Expressions.

Competency in Mathematics, at conceptual levels, is a critical requirement for any successful STEM (Science Technology Engineering Mathematics) career. GEF efforts towards designing more effective content and exercises for Math, were triggered by the findings from our interactions with schools and students, especially those from rural areas, over the last many years. Similar findings were also highlighted in the Pratham ASER Report 2022, which reported that 80% of Class 5 could NOT do Subtraction, and 62% of Class 8 students could NOT do Division.



सुकारळ

जळगाव हायस्कूलमध्ये गणित कार्यशाळा

कोरेगाव एज्युकेशन सोसायटी, गुरुजी एज्युकेशन फाउंडेशनचा उपक्रम

कोरेगाव, ता. ३० : उभे वेवोल गुरुजी एज्युकेशन फाउंडेशन आणि कोरेगाव एज्युकेशन सोसायटीच्या वतीने जळगाव (ता. कोरेगाव) वेवोल हायस्कूलमध्ये गणित कार्यशाळा उरवाहल पार पाडली.

कार्यशाळेत गणित विषयातील मूलभूत संकल्पना अंक संबोधकृत्यांयुक्त पद्धतीने मुल्लंका कर्तो रमजावी, याबाबत डॉ. ललिता देशपांडे व डॉ. विजय अर्पेकर यांनी मार्गदर्शन केले.

पहिल्या दिवशी संख्या ज्ञान, एकक, दहाक व शतक याची गोडणी, त्याची शब्दिक परिभाषा, अपूर्णाक ही संकल्पना, एक बाल समीकरण यांचे प्रात्यक्षिक, तसेच दुसऱ्या दिवशी बलुचा बावर करणे, विस्तार सूत्रे व चिन्हकिंत संख्येच्या क्रियांचे प्रात्यक्षिक शिक्षकंकडून



जळगाव : हायस्कूलमध्ये आयोजित गणित कार्यशाळेसाठी उपस्थित मान्यवर मार्गदर्शक व शिक्षक.

करून घेण्यात आले. गणिती कोट्टी, रोज अंकी संख्या ओळखणे, विविध कौशल्य वापरून आकृत्या काढणे, मिश्रलेख्या ज्ञानाचा व्यवहारगत उपयोग करणे व अभ्यासनामधे आनंददायी शिक्षण निर्माण करण्यासाठी सर्व मार्गदर्शकांनी प्रयत्न केले. एवढाच आनंददायी पद्धतीने गणित कार्यशाळा पार पाडली. कार्यशाळेसाठी श्री. डोंगरे, ज्योती मुलाखे, रेकती गोरे यांचीही प्रशिक्षक

महत्त्वा उपस्थित होती. गुरुजी एज्युकेशन फाउंडेशनचे सातारा जिल्हा समन्वयक विष्णू निरुम पदुगळे, 'फाउंडेशन एक टुट अस्तू, फाउंडेशनच्या वतीने शैक्षणिक क्षेत्रामध्ये मुल्लंका स्वर्गीय विकाससाठी अनेक शिक्षकांनी उपक्रम सुरू आहेत, तद्द्वारा कोरेगाव एज्युकेशन सोसायटीत विविध प्रकारचे उपक्रम सुरू असून, त्यांना चालता प्रतिमाद मिळत आहे."

संस्थेचे उपाध्यक्ष भीमराव पाटील, प्रगारी सचिव श्री. महाजन, सहसचिव श्री. खोकर यांनी ही कार्यशाळा कोरेगाव एज्युकेशन सोसायटीच्या अग्र्या सा तुनीतगाई जगाबा यांच्या प्रयत्नातून विद्यार्थ्यांच्या सर्वांगीण विकाससाठी होत असल्याचे सांगून कार्यशाळेस शुभेच्छा दिल्या. कार्यशाळेस कोरेगाव एज्युकेशन सोसायटीचे शिक्षक आदी उपस्थित होते.

SESSION ON DEVELOPING AN ENTREPRENEURIAL MINDSET

Developing an Entrepreneurial Mindset is a vital component of our Adolescent Development Program framework which seeks to provide holistic education to school children.

A session aimed at this objective was organized for the students of Kai. Yadav Dagdu Patil School at Tandulwadi. The session was conducted by Prof. N. Venkataramani from IIT Bombay. In addition to speaking about entrepreneurship and the attributes needed for entrepreneurship, Prof. Venkataramani interacted with the students on a wide range of topics including conversational English, and various new technologies & tools such as AI, chatbots, Bhashini, etc

As this coverage in the Marathi newspaper Divya Bharati aptly captures – the students were

highly enthused by this learning feast provided to them at their own school - an opportunity that they would have otherwise struggled to get, even if they were to visit a city.



चाळीसगाव 18-07-2024

आयआयटीयन डॉ.एन.व्यंकटरमणींचा तांदुळवाडीत विद्यार्थ्यांशी मुक्त संवाद

आयआयटी पवईच्या प्राध्यापकांनी यादव दगडू पाटील शाळेस दिली भेट
प्रतिनिधी | चाळीसगाव



विद्यार्थ्यांशी चर्चासत्राद्वारे संवाद साधताना प्रा.डॉ.एन.व्यंकटरमणी.

कै.यादव दगडू पाटील माध्यमिक व उच्च माध्यमिक विद्यालय तांदुळवाडी येथे दोन दिवसीय चर्चासत्र आयोजित करण्यात आले होते. आय.आय.टी. पवई येथील डॉ. एन व्यंकटरमणी यांनी उद्योजक होताना व्यक्तीच्या अंगी कोणते गुण व कौशल्ये हवीत याची माहिती दिली. त्यांनी विद्यार्थ्यांना सांगितले की, इंग्रजी भाषेला न घाबरता इंग्रजीतून संभाषण कसे करावे, याबाबत मार्गदर्शन केले. एआय टूल्स, जेमिनी, चॅट बोट, मेटा यांच्या वापराविषयी माहिती सांगितली. भाषिणी अॅपच्या माध्यमातून कोणत्याही भाषेचे भाषांतर आपल्याला हव्या त्या भाषेत करता येते याबाबत प्रात्यक्षिकासह विद्यार्थ्यांना मार्गदर्शन केले. डॉ.एन. व्यंकटरमणी सभा

मुंबई येथे फाउंडेशन मुंबईचे प्रदीप वायचळ कार्यरत असून, त्यांनी बी.टेक. यांच्या माध्यमातून व संस्थेचे सचिव डॉ.आर.डी. निकम यांच्या प्रयत्नांमुळे आज डॉ.एन. व्यंकटरमणी विद्यालयात आले होते. प्राचार्य स्वप्निल निकम, जे.जी.वराडे यांनी डॉ.व्यंकटरमणी यांचे स्वागत केले. ग्रामीण भागातील ज्या विद्यार्थ्यांना महानगरात जाऊन जी माहिती घेता येत नाही, ती माहिती शाळेतच मिळाल्यामुळे एक मेजवानीच मिळाली. गुरुजी

4**ON-BOARDING OF NEW SCHOOLS FOR AKTIV**

With the introduction of our AKTIV (Amit Khare Training for Indian Villages) program at schools in Satefal, Vadner, Nigadi, Borgaon and Achara, our count of schools, hostels and community centres on the AKTIV list has reached 48, and Wardha has become the 17th in the list of districts with AKTIV schools and institutions.

Dr. Pradeep Waychal, accompanied by Pavan Mahajan and Krishna Patil, both student trainers from Tandulwadi school, trained 20 student trainers each over 4 days at Satefal & Vadner schools to enable them to start training other students of the schools. At Nigadi and Borgaon too, 20 student trainers were trained over 4 days by Mrs, Dnyanada Wagh, while Omkar Rasal initiated 6 student trainers at Achara.



Memories from Satefal, Vadner, Nigdi and Borgaon

In addition to the 5 new schools above, follow-up sessions for student trainers were conducted at the Trimbak and Ramgad schools,



Special call out for Omkar Rasal (right corner) for becoming the first student-trainer to onboard a school single-handedly

5

NEW INITIATIVE: DEVELOPING THINKING & TEAMING SKILLS USING CHESS

After successfully scaling our initiative of using Scratch for developing thinking and teaming skills across 43 schools, hostels and community centres, we have taken a step forward by introducing Chess as another medium for developing these skills among school students.

Vijay Khare, sponsor of GEF's AKTIV (Amit Khare Training for Indian Villages) program, and a key force behind our Thinking and Training Lab, launched the pilot effort by conducting Chess training sessions for 25 students from 4th and 5th standards at Dnyanamandir High School, Ghatkopar.



6

ENSURING READINESS TO SCALE SCRATCH TRAINING

With continuing growth in the demand for Scratch teachers, we are focusing attention towards building a larger pool of Scratch teachers. As part of this effort, an online Orientation program for prospective Scratch teachers was conducted on 24 - 25 August, 2024.



7 TOWARDS ENABLING FINANCIAL LITERACY

As part of our efforts to develop financial literacy among our students, 2 online sessions were conducted during this quarter.

The first such session was NSDL's "Market Ka Eklavya" program, specifically conducted for GEF, thanks to Mr. Jigar Shah, CTO, NSDL, who took the lead in organizing the program and Mr. Suhas Rajput who was the faculty. The program, which had 100 participants, covered various aspects of creating personal wealth, expense management, and investing avenues such as Mutual Funds and Stocks.



Aarti Rathi

The second session, titled "Empowering Your Financial Future", was conducted by Mrs. Aarti Rathi of Aarvia Fintech Advisors, and covered various aspects related to Financial planning, Investment options, and Long-term growth for a secure financial future.

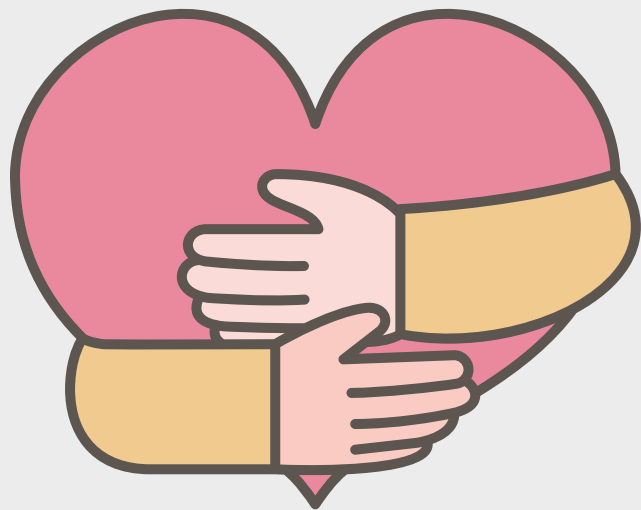
8 GEF STUDENT LEADERSHIP TEAM (GSLT) MEET

GEF Student Leadership Team's first meeting for the year 2024-25 was held on 11th August at Pune, and was attended by alumni, students and mentors from all over Maharashtra.

In his opening remarks, Dr. Pradeep Waychal outlined the objectives of GSLT and how these relate to the GEF Principles. This was followed by various ice-breaking activities conducted by Dr. Lalita Deshpande, which set the stage for open discussions and constructive dialogue among the participants. Discussions covered a vast range of topics such as Challenges faced by students, Strengthening mentor-mentee relationship, Feedback on Monthly Thinking Exercise, Role of GSLT, etc. and resulted in very useful feedback and suggestions.



All smiles after the GSLT meet



Mr. Venkatesh Kuppaswamy, Chennai GEF Centre Head, visited Sri Sri Gnan Mandir Matriculation School (SSGMMS) at Vadakkur in Thanjavur District of Tamil Nadu, to meet and congratulate the Scratch Day winners from the school.

Venkatesh also carried out a pilot evaluation for the Spoken English program, to test the reading, listening, speaking and writing skills of the students. He also had discussions with the school management to identify solutions for infrastructural problems.



6

MALAVIKA VENKATESH SELECTED AS UNITED NATIONS MILLENNIUM FELLOW

Malavika Venkatesh, a student of Biosciences at IIT Madras and one of our dedicated supporters, has been selected as a United Nations Millennium Fellow. She is one among the 4000 selected out of 50000 applicants globally.

As part of this fellowship, Malavika plans to introduce Scratch programming to villages in Tamil Nadu, aiming to equip students with essential digital and critical thinking skills. We look forward to seeing the outcomes of her initiative.



MRS. SHARAYU GHADI AWARDED THE NATION BUILDER AWARD

Mrs. Sharayu Ghadi, a long time GEF supporter was awarded the Nation Builder Award 2024-25 by the Rotary Cub of Millenium City, Navi Mumbai in recognition of her outstanding dedication to social work, children's education, and supporting children with special needs.

PRINCIPAL SWAPNIL NIKAM AWARDED "ROTARY DEEPSTAMBH"

GEF supporter, Principal Swapnil Nikam was among the model Principals and Headmasters recognized by the Rotary Cub of Chalisingaon, and honoured with the "Rotary Deepstambh" award in recognition of his contribution and services in the field of education.



The first meeting of GEF Pune Center was held on 28th of July 2024, at the Club House, Kumar Parisar Society, Pune was a great success with 20 students and 8 mentors wholeheartedly participating in the meeting.

The Meet started with an icebreaking session to help the attendees relax and also get to know each other better. This was followed by a chat session with Amrut Deshmukh, popularly known as the “Booklet Guy”. Amrut's name is almost synonymous with book summaries in India, as he shares 20-minute book summaries in text and audio formats, every week, via his Booklet app. The chat session was high interactive, with great audience participation and Amrut candidly answering all questions. All the attendees, especially the students, were deeply influenced and motivated by Amrut’s views on reading and books. The Meet ended with a group activity where the students shared and discussed thoughts and ideas on topics such as Importance of Mentors, Difficulties faced while Studying, etc. The students found this immensely useful as it helped them in getting different perspectives on such relevant and important topics.



Our Mumbai centre get-together was held on 25th August, and was attended by 32 students, alumni and mentors.

Like at Pune, the highlight of the get-together was an exhilarating and deeply inspiring chat session with the “Booklet Guy”, Amrut Deshmukh. The audience was totally mesmerised with Amrut’s engaging narration of his life story – from his introduction at an early age to the fascinating world of books, thanks to his brother - to someone who is now on a mission to “Make India Read”:. While the main focus of the chat was about kindling the habit of reading, there were multiple bonus learnings as well! His candid discussion covering the multiple setbacks in his life, overcoming them, finding his purpose in life, dealing with technical challenges, etc. were masterclasses in resilience, persistence and problem-solving. The session was moderated by Meghana Karlekar, a GEF alumna and Manaswi Shirke, a current GEF student.

The get-together started with an ice-breaking session, superbly conducted by Archana Rohane. The event ended with a few impromptu performances by Amruta Raut, Vishwa Shetty, and Archana Rohane.



WHAT'S NEW IN THE WORLD?

Robotic Surgeries

Om Moharkar

2nd Year MBBS, Govt Medical College, Latur



Robotic Surgeries make it possible to undergo surgeries with minimal cuts, lesser pain, quicker recovery, and lower complications. OM tells us about this advancement in the medical domain.

Surgery! Operation! For most of us, the very thought of these terms is enough to raise a scare in our minds! The cuts that would be made in the body, pain, the recovery process, and the complications that may arise all contribute to this sense of fear.

But what if I tell you that all these can now be minimized? Well, thanks to Robotic Surgery, it is now indeed possible to undergo surgeries with minimal cuts, lesser pain, quicker recovery and lower chances of complications.

Unlike what the term suggests, Robotic Surgery does not mean that a robot carries out the entire surgery on its own - making its own decisions and performing incisions. Robot-assisted Surgery might actually be a more appropriate term. The surgery is performed by a skilled surgeon along with a team of doctors, using robotic arms that are controlled by the surgeon sitting next to the patient.

Like any other surgery, the process starts with the patient being given anaesthesia. This is followed by a small incision being made, which is much smaller than the incision made for traditional surgeries. For e.g. in a knee replacement surgery, an incision of only around 4-6 inches is required as compared to the 10-12 inches required in a conventional surgery. The surgeon then inserts miniature robotic instruments and a powerful camera through this incision. Robotic devices,

which have a wider range of motion than a human, allow the surgeon to successfully perform delicate surgeries in hard-to-reach places with precision. Robotic arms are equipped with surgical instruments, and a tiny camera and light which provide a 3D view of the internal structures. These robotic arms exactly replicate and respond to the movement of the surgeon's hand and fingers.

Increasingly, Heart, Head and neck, Joint replacement, Thoracic, Colorectal, Gall bladder, Prostrate, and Gynaecological surgeries such as Hysterectomy and Endometriosis are routinely being performed with the assistance of robots. Recently, in China trials of robotic surgery have been successfully carried out over long distance, with the patient and the surgeon being in 2 different cities!

Following are a few of the advantages of robotic surgery as compared to conventional ones:

1. Very small incision required, as the robotic arms require very little space to reach surgical site
2. Faster recovery
3. Less Chances of injury to surrounding vessels, nerves, etc.
4. Minimal bleeding
5. Low risk of infection and complications
6. Early discharge from hospital

On the flip side, the cost for setup and maintenance is still comparatively high, as a result of which the cost of surgery is around 1.5 to 2 times higher. In future it is expected that the cost of surgery will come down as the number of setups and trained surgeons increases. As per 2021 data, India had a total of 76 surgical robots and around 500 specialist robotic surgeons, indicating the progress that India has made and continues to make in this field of medical advancement.

MENTORS' SPACE

Views . Reflections . Experiences . Life Stories

TO LIVE IS TO GIVE

Human life is the greatest gift of nature, and one must not let this precious gift go to waste in mundane pursuits. There is a longing in every heart to understand the true purpose of life and to act in fulfilment of that purpose.

Selfless service to mankind is a very important means for making our life more meaningful. Any happiness that you can give to others will result in happiness for yourself. The cycle of giving is thus a holistic concept of giving and receiving, where the selfless giver always experiences joy, fulfilment and peace.

The act of giving is both an art and a science. Mindless giving under emotion and temptation to earn a name is always counterproductive. Charity must be given just as a tree gives its fruits. The fruits on a tree are available to all who come under its shade — irrespective of their race, status or sex.

“That gift which is given out of duty, at the proper time and place, to a worthy person, and without expectation of return, is considered to be charity in the mode of goodness.” [Bhagwad Geeta Ch 17 V 20]

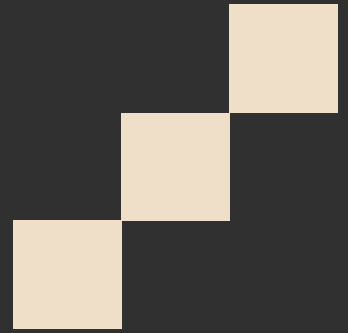


**ANIL
SOMAIYA**
Distinguished
GEF Supporter

GEF is deeply thankful to Anil Somaiyaji for his exceptional and continuous support to our mission, and for being there for us

MENTORS' SPACE

Views . Reflections . Experiences . Life Stories



TO LIVE IS TO GIVE (Contd. from previous page) ...

One must hence use his faculty of discrimination and see whether his charities are reaching the deserving members in the community. A proper act of giving must pass through the following test:

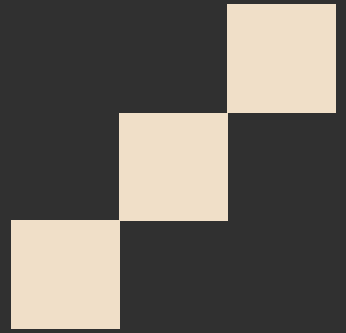
- It must be filled with love, compassion and humility
- It should be in any form, which one can afford ; money, time, knowledge or service
- It must be done as a sense of one's duty, not for gaining honour and fame in the world
- It should come naturally to us, and not because someone has asked us to do it
- It should be serving a useful purpose reaching the deserving members in the community
- It should be done silently. It is said that you should not let your left hand know what your right hand is giving
- It should be done selflessly without expectation of any benefit in return

You give but little when you give of your possessions. It is when you give of yourself that you truly give.

~Kahlil Gibran

MENTORS' SPACE

Views . Reflections . Experiences . Life Stories



Mohan Varadpoande
Nagpur Centre Head

As per the laws of karma in Bhagwat Gita, the results or “fal” we get, depend on our actions or “karma”..

If you are involved in bad karma, the result in returns will obviously be bad, and if you are involved in good karma, result in returns will obviously be good..

The same principle is also reflected in the “Cycle of Giving”.

When you help someone in any way, whether physically or financially or psychologically, he/ she will be motivated to help others in the same manner. This chain of receiving and giving then continues as the “Cycle of Giving”..

We have experienced this cycle of giving while working with Gurujee Education Foundation..

STUDENTS SPEAK

Views . Reflections . Experiences . Life Stories

★ Varsha Bansode BE (Civil)

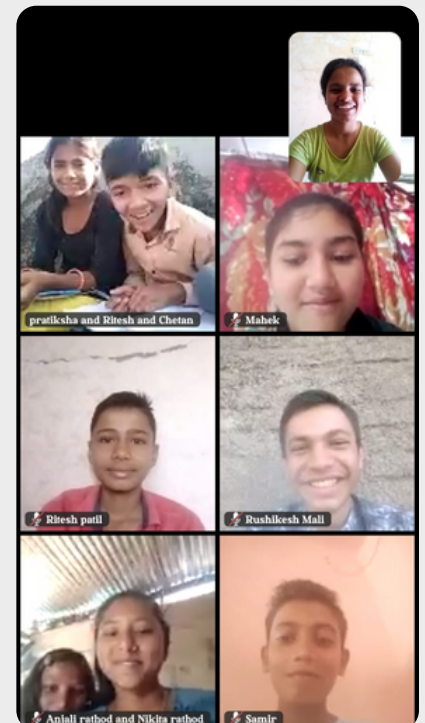


I am Varsha Dattatray Bansode, from the small village of Ter in Dharashiv District. I graduated with a degree in Civil Engineering last year and am currently preparing for related exams.

During my school years, I struggled with English and even disliked the subject. However, during my diploma studies, I realized the importance of English and started seeking ways to improve my speaking skills.

Initially, I tried watching various videos and lectures, but they didn't make a significant impact. Then I joined the GEF Spoken English course and put in considerable effort to get knowledge of tenses, sentence structure, and grammar. Despite this, I struggled with implementation until I realized the importance of speaking with confidence. Teaching English to GEF school students was a turning point. Although Harshita Ma'am suggested I teach only one day a week, my enthusiasm and the students' eagerness led me to teach daily. By focusing on small, incremental steps, I not only helped my students, but also significantly enhanced my own confidence and language skills.

Spending time with students has been an incredibly rewarding experience for me.





Kalyan Garde BE (Mech). 2nd Year MA (Education), TISS



Although I had studied in an English medium school, I didn't have the right environment or any platform to practice spoken English. As a result, even after completing my graduation, I was still not confident about my English speaking skills. Fortunately for me, Spoken English classes provided me a platform to practice English at GEF after my graduation.

In the class I was able to speak without any pressure of expectations or speed. It enabled me to practice and learn English in the class very smoothly, and after a few months, I very naturally started practicing the same in my daily life. Following were some of the positives of Spoken English classes that made a difference to me personally:

- the opportunity provided to practice English speaking in front of others
- the homework assignments that made me think and practice
- the very thoughtfully planned syllabus which was crisp, without getting into complexities of grammar
- continuous and consistent efforts of my GEF teachers and colleagues which motivated me to participate more

Looking back, I realized the difference that Spoken English classes had made to me personally, and that triggered the thought of supporting GEF as much as possible, so that others could benefit as well. That is how I decided to start teaching Spoken English to others. Teaching English to school children is not only providing me with an opportunity to give back, but it is also helping me practice and learn more in the process.

Unfortunately due to my post-graduate studies, I have been struggling to manage my time and be consistent in conducting my classes. However, I am trying to contribute as much possible within the constraints. I sincerely believe that the **CYCLE OF GIVING SHOULDN'T STOP**. Each one of us contributing to the best of our abilities can make a huge difference. Thank you!



Kapil Patil

B. Tech (IT), Lloyds Technology Centre



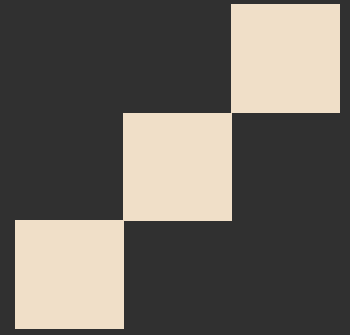
Being a part of Guruji Education Foundation (GEF) has been a life-changing experience for me. GEF support has helped me grow both personally and professionally. The guidance and opportunities I received from GEF gave me the confidence and the skills that I needed to succeed.

My own experience of learning and growth motivated me to try and start helping other students in my own small way, so that they too could learn and grow just the way I did. That is how I decided to start conducting Spoken English classes for other students. Having started as a learner in the same class, I feel proud and happy to be teaching others.

It reinforces my belief in the cycle of giving, where each student can give back – financially or by propagating what they have learnt – to help others grow, just like the way GEF helped them.



A UNIQUE WAY OF GIVING BACK



Amruta Raut, GEF alumnus, who has been living the principle of “Cycle of Giving”, now wants to channelize her passion for dance to give back in a truly unique way! Read on ...

Hello GEF family,

I am Amruta Raut, alumnus of GEF, an Engineer and a dancer/ instructor/performer by profession. I am starting regular dance training classes in Chembur.

I am currently doing a lot of things so unable to give enough time to GEF, but still wanted to do something for our GEF students. On that note, I would love to offer FREE DANCE CLASSES to all our current GEF students.

We will start from scratch, learning Jazzfunk, with

progressive classes which will include:

- Warm up
- Body conditioning exercises
- Strength training (body weight)
- Jazz techniques and theory
- Grooves and vocabulary
- Choreography

While the regular charges for 4 sessions of 1.5 hours each is ₹2500/-, the classes will be totally free for all interested current GEF students.

Please feel free to reach out to me for the same.

34 A unique way of giving back



Amruta's story in her own words

I am a 2013-2016 alumnus of GEF. I completed by Instrumentation Engineering from VESIT, Chembur in 2016 and got absorbed as a trainee in Tecnimont Pvt Ltd. where I worked as an Engineer for 6 years. Having discovered my passion towards dancing and performance, I took a 2 year break from work to undergo intensive training courses to learn different dance styles and to complete my Diploma in Dance from Nrityashakti, Goregaon.

I have worked with Shah Rukh Khan, Madhuri Dixit, Vaani Kapoor, Shakti Mohan, Neeti Mohan and Mukti Mohan in the span of these two years and am currently a part of Shakti, Mukti, Neeti Mohan's performance team (MSL- Mohan Sisters Live). My passion for dancing has even gotten me the opportunity to perform in London, Mysore, Hyderabad, Bangalore, Kochi, Kolkata and ofcourse Mumbai. I recently performed at Youtube Fanfest with an all girl music band, W.i.S.H.

It still feels unreal to be living this life which was once just a dream.

I went back to my engineering job in October 2023 and am now working as a Senior Engineer, while managing my passion for dance alongside. I started my own regular training classes in Chembur in August 2024, and hope that a lot of you would reach out to me.

I am hoping to give back as much as possible to the Foundation, which has helped me, my sister, and thousand of students like us, to lead a great life, fulfil our ambitions and enable a better life to our families.

Forever Grateful to Pradeep Sir and GEF 🙏. Thank you for giving our dreams the wings to fly♥

Amruta Raut



Amruta Raut

Senior Instrumentation
Engineer Tecnimont Pvt Ltd

PERSPECTIVES

Sustainable Livelihoods, Safer Communities



**Shubham Kamble,
2nd Year, MA , TISS**

PERSPECTIVES is an open forum for our GEF family members (Students, Alumni, and Supporters) to express their thoughts on issues that they deeply care about, as well as any topic of interest to them.

The views expressed in PERSPECTIVES are the author's views and GEF may or may not subscribe to the views in whole or part.

Livelihood is not merely about earning a living; it is the foundation upon which the entire structure of society is built. In every aspect of life, livelihood forms the core of human existence, driving behaviors, shaping communities, and influencing societal norms. The lack of sustainable livelihoods can lead to adverse social outcomes, including crime, marginalization, and perpetuation of inequality. The essence of livelihood and its alternatives, particularly for marginalized communities, is critical in addressing socio-economic challenges and preventing crimes that arise from deprivation and desperation (Sen, 1999).

In traditional rural societies, specific communities were historically assigned degrading and inhumane roles. For instance, in many Indian villages, Dalits, particularly those from the Mahar community, were compelled to perform tasks such as disposing of dead animals (Ambedkar, 1948). This task was not only stigmatizing but also stripped them of their dignity. They were forced to consume the flesh of these dead animals, while the bones and skin were sold in the market

for meager earnings. This cycle of indignity and poverty was perpetuated through a lack of alternative livelihoods. It raises the fundamental question: what if these communities refused to perform such roles? This would not only challenge the deeply entrenched caste-based occupational hierarchy but also highlight the urgent need for alternative livelihoods that are equitable and humane.

The Gandhian philosophy, which emphasizes self-reliance and the dignity of labor, provides a critical lens through which we can analyze this issue. Gandhi believed that individuals must first transform themselves before they can change society (Gandhi, 1938). Applying this perspective, if individuals had access to dignified and sustainable livelihoods, they would be less likely to engage in illegal activities or social deviance out of desperation. However, when such opportunities are absent, the socio-economic vulnerability, or "majboori," forces individuals into a life of crime or illegal activities (Banerjee & Duflo, 2011). This vulnerability is not just a personal failing but a systemic issue that requires a comprehensive and equitable approach to livelihood creation.

Government intervention is crucial in this regard. Through innovative ideas, startups, schemes, skill enhancement programs, and youth engagement in the social sector, the government can create job opportunities that not only provide income but also restore dignity (Sengupta et al., 2008). Programs like MGNREGA (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act), which was designed to provide employment in rural areas, are meant to address these issues. However, the reality on the ground often tells a different story. During my fieldwork in various villages, I observed that while MGNREGA appears successful on paper, the implementation is fraught with corruption. In many instances, work that should have been done manually by laborers was completed using machines. The names of laborers were fraudulently listed on official documents, with their bank details provided, yet these individuals received no actual benefit. This is, in essence, the "Biggest Scheme with the Biggest Scam," a phenomenon that needs urgent attention and rectification.

The failure of such schemes to deliver on their promises necessitates a new approach to livelihood creation and poverty alleviation. We must ensure that

policies are not just enacted but effectively implemented, with robust mechanisms for monitoring and accountability. The equitable distribution of resources and opportunities, especially for marginalized communities, is imperative. Additionally, fostering a culture of self-reliance and innovation can help individuals identify and pursue livelihoods that align with their skills and interests, thereby reducing their dependency on exploitative or degrading occupations (Gupta, 2012).

The link between livelihood and criminal activity cannot be overlooked. The absence of viable livelihoods often leads to an increase in crimes such as theft, situational crime, and other forms of illegal behavior. These activities are not inherently driven by criminal intent but are often the result of economic desperation (Becker, 1968). Providing sustainable livelihoods can thus act as a preventive measure against crime, contributing to a more stable and equitable society.

At the end, livelihood is not just a means of survival but the cornerstone of social and economic stability. Addressing the issues surrounding livelihood, particularly for marginalized communities, is crucial for preventing crime, promoting dignity, and ensuring social justice. This requires a concerted effort from individuals, communities, and the government to create and implement policies that provide equitable and sustainable livelihoods for all. The Gandhian principle of self-reliance and the equitable approach to livelihood creation must guide our efforts in building a society where everyone has the opportunity to live with dignity and contribute positively to the development of the country.

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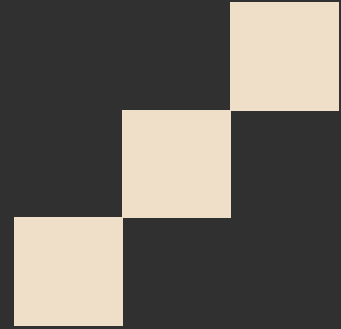
CONTEST

Views . Reflections . Experiences . Life Stories

N	A	D	R	A	S	E	M	P	R	A	S	O
O	O	E	L	B	A	N	I	A	T	S	U	S
A	X	I	E	U	P	O	C	H	A	A	N	K
G	I	H	T	N	A	B	O	O	K	L	E	T
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N	G	E	L	D	R	A	S	A	L	I	K	A
V	A	R	S	H	A	V	E	P	A	L	M	N
E	H	U	I	U	U	I	T	H	R	S	O	I
I	B	R	Q	R	T	N	O	S	S	E	H	C

CONTEST

Views . Reflections . Experiences . Life Stories



Clues

1. One of GEF'S 6 Principles
2. Chief Guest for the Scratch Day Dr. Anand _____. (Surname only)
3. Teacher Workshop for Math was conducted for 8 schools run by _____ Education Society
4. First GEF student to become a Chartered Accountant _____ (First name + Surname)
5. Boardgame being used to develop Thinking Skills
6. Amrut Deshmukh is the “_____ Guy”
7. Is she an Engineer? Is she a Dancer? She is _____ (First name + Surname)
8. First student-trainer to onboard a school singlehandedly - Omkar _____ (Surname only)
9. She has been giving back as a Spoken English trainer _____ Bansode (First name only)
10. Interviewee and GEF Alumni featured in this issue _____ (First name only)
11. The Mirror Mosaic girl _____ (First name only)
12. _____ Livelihoods, Safer Communities.

The Contest is open to all our readers - Students, Alumni, and Supporters.

The first **20** all correct entries received will be recognized in the next issue of Disha. So hurry and send in your entries by mail to disha@gurujifoundation.in OR by WhatsApp to [+91 9820328943](tel:+919820328943).

Entries should be received no later than **01 December 2024**.

Student Stars



Omkar Mane has the distinction of becoming the first student from our GEF family to become a Chartered Accountant.

Omkar is now working as Assistenat Manager - Internal Controls, with Holcim, a Switzerland-based group.

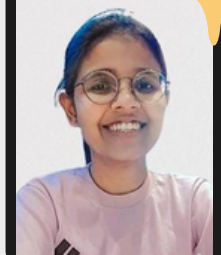
Sakshi Barangule has secured a seat for pursuing post-graduation at the prestigious National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research (NIPER, Raebareli). Around 70,000 B.Pharm graduates from all over the country appear for the qualification exam for around 1000 seats across 7 NIPERs.

Sakshi has a B.Pharm from Savitribai Phule Pune University.



Samiksha Indalkar has secured placement with SoftTech upon successful completion of internship in the same organization. Samiksha has done her B.Tech (IT) from SGGSI&T, Nanded.

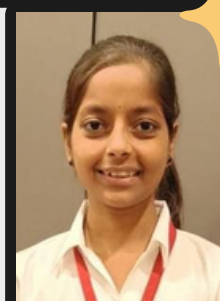
Shreya Gawli completed her MCA from PES Modern Collegse of Engineering, Pune, topping her batch with a CGPA of 9.2. Shreya has also secured placement at SoftTech, after successfully completing her internship in the same company.





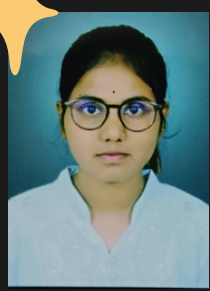
Ravindra Rathod, who is currently doing his post-graduation from NIPER, has been selected for a project internship in Analytical Development at Sun Pharma, Vadodara

Sanskruti Jadhav has joined Tata AutoComp - Gotion, Pune as Quality Engineer. She has completed her B.Tech (Electronics & Communication) from Shri Guru Gobind Singhji Institute of Engineering & Technology (SGGSIE&T), Nanded, and had earlier done an internship at Krishna Electronics, Pune.



Kapil Patil who has completed his B.Tech (IT) from Shri Guru Gobind Singhji Institute of Engineering & Technology (SGGSIE&T), Nanded, has received a placement offer from Lloyds Technology Centre, Hyderabad.

Komal Chavan has joined Tata AutoComp - Gotion, Pune as Quality Engineer. She has completed her B.Tech (Electronics & Communication) from Shri Guru Gobind Singhji Institute of Engineering & Technology (SGGSIE&T), Nanded,

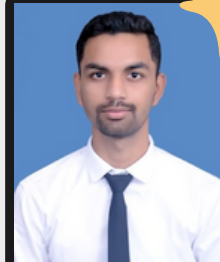


Payal Latelwar who is currently pursuing BA in Social Work in Rural Development, successfully completed her internship with Eklavya Foundation and was awarded a certificate for her achievement as a “First Generation Learner”. She was also the leader of her fieldwork team.



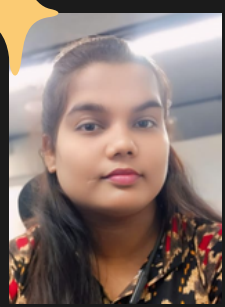
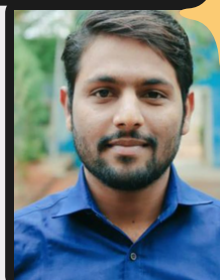
Sukanya Vyavhare who recently completed her B.Pharm from Savitribai Phule Pune University, has been selected as a Chemist in the Quality Control Department of Omni Protect Drugs Pvt Ltd, Pune.

Harshal There has joined Global Logic, Noida on completion of his B.Tech (Information Technology) from Yeshwantrao Chavan College of Engineering, Nagpur.



Sayali Kelkar has joined Blueberry Semiconductors Pvt Ltd as a Validation Engineer. Sayali has done B.Tech (ETC) from Yeshwantrao Chavan College of Engineering, Nagpur.

Prashant Sapkal has joined Haqdarshak, after completing his Master's in Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship from Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Tuljapur.

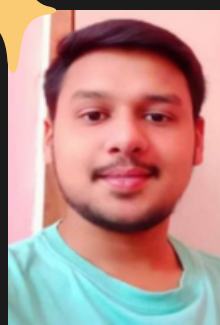


Shrutika Kambale has started working at NEPRA Foundation, Ahmedabad, upon completion of her M.Sc in Social Sciences (Sustainable Livelihood & Natural Resources Governance) from Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Tuljapur.



Mohit Yadav has started working with UHP Technology, Bangalore after completing his B.Tech in Chemical Engineering from Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Technological University, Lonere.

Saloni Gharpende has been selected as Vice President of Chemical Engineering Students Association (ChESA). She also stood 3rd at the DWSIM Software Workshop, conducted as a part of the National Conference on Recent Trends in Chemical Engineering (REACT 2024) held at Laxminarayan Innovation Technology University, Nagpur. Saloni is currently pursuing B.Tech (Chemical Engineering) from SGGSI&T, Nanded.



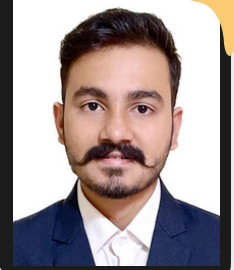
Harsh Bhadange has been selected for the Anant Fellowship in Sustainability and Built Environment Program at Anant National University, Ahmedabad. He is among 17 fellows selected out of more than 350 applicants worldwide. Harsh has a PG Diploma in Water Science & Policy from Shiv Nadar University, and is currently also preparing for UPSC exams.

Nikita Dhuppe has joined Chipspirit, a VLSI product and services company, and will be working in the area of Design Verification. Nikita has completed her B.Tech (Electrical Engineering) from Shri Guru Gobind Singhji Institute of Engineering & Technology (SGGSIE&T), Nanded,





Gopal KG has joined TVS after completing his MA in Community Organization and Development Practice from TISS, Mumbai



Aaryan Daiv has started working in Clod4C, Hyderabad. He has a B.Tech in Computer Science from Kolhapur Institute of Technology's College of Engineering.



Shubham Kale has joined Ground Zero Research Consultancy, after completion of his MA in Public Policy & Governance from Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Hyderabad.



Gaurav Majare has joined Development Alternatives, Delhi-upon completion of his MA in Social Innovation & Entrepreneurship from Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Tuljapur.



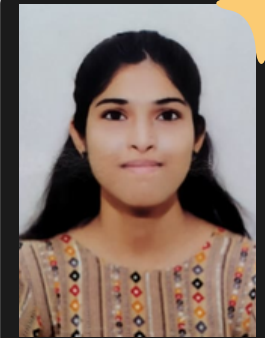
Sharvari Halmare has started working with Morgan Stanley. Sharvari who had also received offers from Persistent Systems, and Deloitte, has completed her B.Tech (Information Technology) from Yeshwantrao Chavan College of Engineering, Nagpur.

Alumni Stars



Rahul Patil who is working as a Senior Engineer with L&T Technology Services, was selected as the Star of the Month in recognition of his outstanding performance. Rahul is currently deputed to Offenburg, Germany.

Pratiksha Vaidya who completed her Civil Engineering in 2022 and was preparing for Government recruitment exams, successfully cleared Government of Maharashtra's Water Resources Department Direct Recruitment Exam 2023. She is now working as an Assistant Civil Engineer in the Bhima Canal Circle of the Water Resources Department.



Amruta Raut who had taken a break from her engineering career to pursue her passion for dance, has resumed her technical career and is now working as a Senior Instrumentation Engineering with Tecnimont Pvt Ltd, Mumbai. In parallel, she continues to keep her passion for dance alive by performing with reputed troupes and has also started her own dance classes.

Dr. Pooja Lokhande who had completed her MBBS in 2023, has cleared the NEET exam with a All India rank of 4897. She is currently participating in the counselling process for seeking admission to post-graduate studies



Congratulations to all our students and alumni for their remarkable achievements. May you all continue to reach greater heights and inspire many more on your journey!

REVIEWS & COMMENDATIONS

BOOKS THAT YOU MAY WANT TO READ

MOVIES THAT YOU MAY WANT TO WATCH



DON'T BELIEVE EVERYTHING YOU THINK By Joseph Nguyen



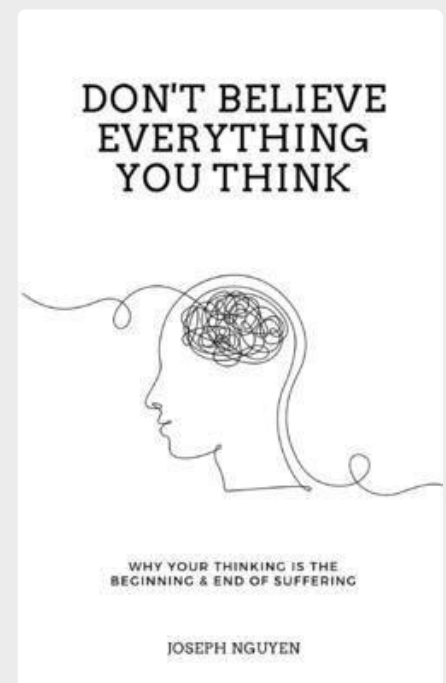
Don't Believe Everything You Think by Joseph Nguyen. This book is a powerful guide for those who want to understand the power of our thoughts. It beautifully explains how we are slaves of our thoughts, and how negative thinking can result

in problems such as stress, anxiety and depression. The book strongly suggests how becoming aware about our thoughts can help us break this cycle of negative thinking.

Of the many points that I liked in the book and found useful, here are a few:

- Our thoughts give shape to our reality. Our thoughts and beliefs determine how we feel and experience about various events.
- Negative thinking can lead to suffering. Most of the time constantly being in a state of negative thinking creates problems such as anxiety, stress and depression.
- Mindfulness and self-awareness is the key to eliminate these problems. Just by paying attention to our thoughts without any judgement we can identify these negative patterns.
- Questioning our thoughts and beliefs can help us to break this cycle of negative thought pattern.

In essence, the book encourages us to take the control of our mind and choose our thoughts carefully, thus leading to a peaceful and fulfilling life.





Molika Sharma

FIVE POINT SOMEONE

By Chetan Bhagat

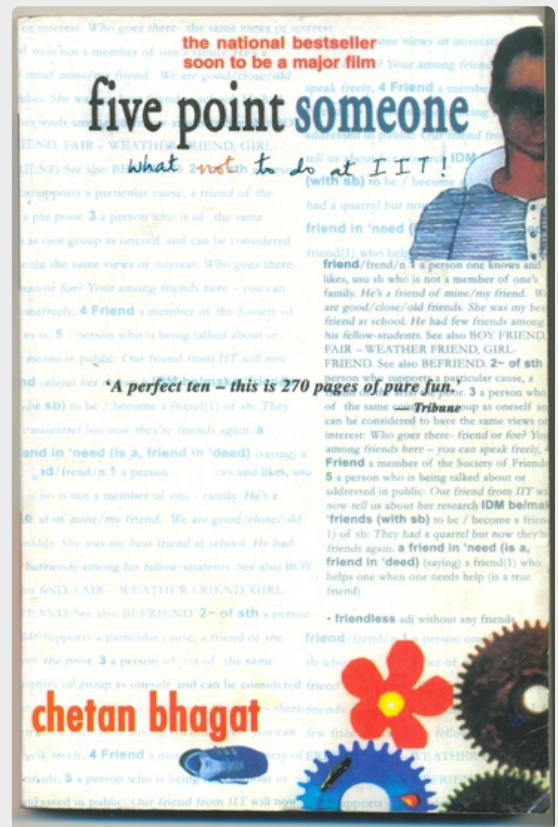


I found Five Point Someone by Chetan Bhagat a mindblowing read - easy, free flowing, and with numerous twists and plots. The book follows the lives of three college friends through various ups and downs.

This book gives an amazing view into their fears about the future and their different mindsets in different situations. One of the three main characters is a lower-middle class student and is burdened by responsibility and tries to maintain a strong GPA as he knows he is responsible for his parents. Another, has rich parents but doesn't have a good connection with them and so becomes rebellious. He doesn't really have any responsibility and his only agenda seems to be to expose the shortcomings of the IIT system. The third character comes from a middle class family, and being an average student, is stuck between both these extreme ends of the spectrum. Chetan Bhagat's narration gives you a feeling of being physically there with the protagonists as a part of their lives.

Reading the book was not only an incredible experience, there were a few learnings as well.

- Everyone handles their adversities in their own way because of their circumstances and situations, so a person should never judge another because of the way they deal with adversities and life in general. However, if their way is morally or ethically wrong and harms oneself and others, we can try and help them
- Everyone has their own goals, no matter how big or small. They are their own goals. We shouldn't compare our goals to others nor should we judge.
- Everyone goes through life differently. Some have it the hard way and some have it easy.



We shouldn't discriminate on the basis of that.

- To enjoy the little things in life. To be happy and take life easy. Sometimes, it is we who make life difficult.

I have read Chetan Bhagat before and this is one of my favourites. The story gets you totally involved, and the overwhelming feeling of wanting to know what happens next, makes it a book that you do not want to put down.





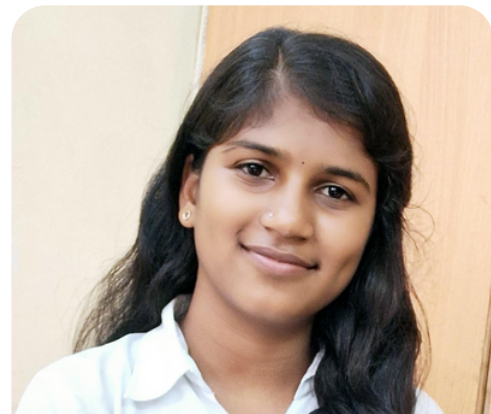
Talent++

Our Students and Alumni not only excel in academics and at work, their talents cut across drawing, painting, photography, literature and more.

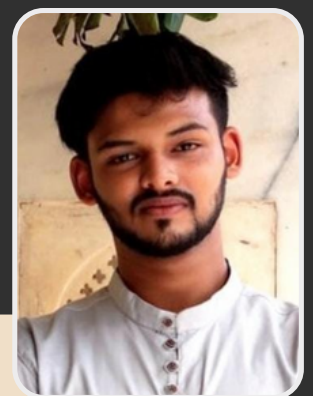
We are proud to showcase some of their amazing talent



From playing Dhol to dancing, Bhagyashri is multi-talented. Here are collages made by her from irregular pieces of a mirror that broke accidentally



MIRROR MOSAIC
by Bhagyashri Bahirat



Absolute Masterpieces

No words can do justice to these amazing pieces of art by Govind Atmaram Sawant, a GEF Alumni who did his Bachelor of Fine Arts in 2022.

Upcoming Events

****Watch out for dates and further details!**

○ Mini Scratch Festival (MSF)

Academic Year 2024-25

Project Topics

- Emotional Quotient
- Positive Attitude
- Achievement Orientation
- Resilience
- Gratitude
- Sophophilic (Knowledge Orientation)

Instructions:

- The project topics will be the same for both Junior and Senior groups.
- Students from a single school shall work as a single team and submit 1 or (not more than 2) stories based on each topic mentioned above
- The stories should be based on some real life incidents and not copied from 'Panchatantra', 'Amar ChitraKatha', 'Vikram & Vetaal', or from the internet. There would be many interesting real life stories from your parents, family, friends, neighbours, etc. As an example, our GEF and our alumnicould inspire many stories for the 3rd topic – ACHIEVEMENT ORIENTATION
- Designing and coding should be started only after approval of the story by GEF
- The 'Design Journal' should be submitted along with the project

We would love to hear your feedback on this issue of Disha

Write to the Team Disha at
disha@gurujifoundation.in

Team Disha

Abhijeet Waghchaure

Bhagyashri Bahirat

Molika Sharma

Nimisha Dalvi

Om Moharkar

Sharvari Patil

Shubham Lingayat

Vidyut Navelkar

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Please visit: <https://www.gurujifoundation.in/donate>



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To volunteer

Please visit: <https://www.gurujifoundation.in/supporters>



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