



# Peer Treasure

A PES Publication

February 2013



# From the Editor's Desk

We are proud to be the first group to have come out with the first PES newsletter. It always existed as a concept but at last it has materialized from a concept to a product. It has taken a lot of effort and fun to get this to materialize. Initially, we did have some glitches but as a team together we managed to pass through all the hurdles. It is our first experience and it was fun, exciting and challenging.

This edition of Peer Treasure serves as an introduction to the course offered by the Department of Counseling, Christ University – Peer Education System. PES is a program that covers a range of topics that plague our everyday life from communication to relationships to personal safety. As this is the first edition of the magazine, the articles will focus on the necessity of breaking social taboos, the need for paying attention to relationships and our experience with the course. We are hopeful that our peers, the younger and the older generations will benefit from this revolutionary concept of Peer Counseling.

Since Peer Education System is a young course most of the students are not aware of what it is, how useful it is, how relevant it is and what all we can expect by doing this course we have seized the opportunity to have

our voice heard by means of Peer Treasure since we have first hand experience with the course, It was indeed memorable and if permitted we would like to go back and experience all over again, for this very reason we are spreading the word.

At this point we would like to extend our gratitude to Fr.Viju for inspiring us with the idea of publishing a magazine exclusively for PES. We would like to thank The Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences, Ms. Mallika for being patient in guiding us through the process of publishing Peer Treasure. This magazine could not have taken form without the valuable support and guidance of Ms. Medonna Milton and Ms. Ashly who have given us moral and logistical support to work on this magazine. We would also like to extend our thanks to all the facilitators who taught us in Peer Education System. Finally, we would like to congratulate and thank all those on the editorial board for making the experience of publishing this magazine a pleasant one.

Happy reading!

Sayotan Ghosh & Kiriti Mortha

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# Message



## **Col. Dr. (Fr.) Thomas C. Mathew** Vice Chancellor

Christ University has always pioneered and has been open to innovative ways to transform education into a meaningful endeavour in life. In the current urban scenario, with the so called generation gap and evolving family structure, Peer Education System becomes a strong tool to connect with young adults and touch their lives. PES is an exceptional programme with its well deliberated, tailor made curriculum which envisages the unique needs of the student community. The students have been very receptive to the student centered methodology and the appealing curriculum. The Peer Educators adorning the teacher's hat were successful in transmitting the newly acquired knowledge to their peers unmindful of the challenges involved. Subsequent to the success of the previous two batches, Peer Education System has now become an expert validated Certificate Course, carrying two credits, offered exclusively to the Second Year students. What the young Peer Educators have learned through this course is for life and would enable them to rise up to the challenges and take the right decisions in life. We have confidence that they will take this learning further and build nourishing and fulfilling relationships in life. I congratulate the Centre for Counseling & Health Services for their brave endeavor for not only experimenting on a rather new concept like Peer Education but making it successful too.

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## Peer Education Programme of Christ University

By Fr. Viju P. Devassy,

Christ University with its vision of “Excellence and Service” strives to be a nurturing environment for the student’s holistic development. We at our University we believe and practice in five core values: Faith in God, Moral Uprightness, Love of Fellow Beings, Social Responsibility and Pursuit of Excellence. With the aim of holistic development of our students the University established the Centre for Counseling and Health, a student support service to help students adapt and make the best of their learning environment. Owing to the social changes, family structure, the premature explosion of information and many more factors, our young adults undergo lot of troubles which disable them from developing balanced personalities. Parallel to the academic progress, we at Christ University target on the student’s emotional and personal wellbeing, so that in the long run they succeed in life. With the aim of fulfilling the mission and core values of our University we try to help our students balance the academic & social pressures. We empower them to develop healthy self-esteem, which would help them realize their goals in life. They are encouraged to build nurturing relationships and lead creative fulfilling lives. We recognize the unique needs of the student community and accompany students in the various phases of their life to support the students in their academic and social pressures.

The first year Undergraduate students are given Three to five conduct interactive Psycho Educative Sessions in order to equip them to handle their new phase of life and prominent issues of youth like managing relationships, self esteem, body image and also to create awareness on reproductive



Fr. Viju P Devassy is the Director of The Centre for Counseling and Health Services.

health, addictions, etc. As a follow up of this, Peer Education Program (PEP) was designed with the help of Enfold Proactive Health Trust to Promote Awareness amongst youth through their peers in 2009.

### Why Peer Education?

The aim of peer education was to reach out and address the youngsters through their peers. This course breaks all stereotypes and teaches students the true meaning of a holistic approach in the various perspectives they deal with. Student volunteers are selected and trained to address the common issues of taboo in the Indian scenario like reproductive health, sexuality, gender orientation, relationships, addictions etc. These trained volunteers go back to their classes to share their information gathered. This also declares their presence in the campus as peer supporters whom the needy can count on for guidance.

Adolescence is a period of transition & confusion—physically, emotionally and socially. Youth turn to their peers rather than adults for knowledge and guidance especially in areas relating to sexuality and reproductive health. Social taboos often prevent teachers, parents and other significant adults from

speaking to them about these topics. Student Community at Christ University is a cross national & international population, hailing from diverse cultures & socio economic back grounds. Around 60% of our students are outstation scholars who are unequipped to handle the luring & frivolous urban life. City of Bangalore has become a hub for unrestricted use of alcohol & other addictive substances. Student population of 11,000 on same campus & the metropolitan culture offer anonymity and which makes it easy for them to get misled. Sudden taste of freedom and exposure to the adversities of urban lifestyle make youngsters the easy victims of addictions and irresponsible sexual behavior. It is imperative to access them through some feasible means and create awareness so that they abstain from these concealed risks and manage their lives more productively.

### What is Peer Education?

“Peer education is based on the reality that many people make changes not only based on what they know, but on the opinions and actions of their close, trusted peers. Peer educators can communicate and understand in a way that the best-intentioned adults can't, and can serve as role models for change”. (UNICEF, 2012). Peer education originated in British schools in the 19th century, with pupils appointed as monitors to pass on what they had learned from their teachers to younger classes. Peer education as a form of health promotion among young people seems to have originated in US campus health education campaigns in the late 1950s (Parkin and McKeganey, 2000). UNICEF’s qualitative evaluations of school-based peer education showed that young people appreciate and are influenced in positive ways by a peer-led intervention if it is well-designed and properly supervised. Peer educators often change their

own behavior after becoming a peer educator. Peer educators have shown in some cases to be more effective than adults in establishing norms and in changing attitudes related to sexual behaviour. However, they are not necessarily better in transmitting factual health information. Peer educators and adult-led education can thus complement each other. One study showed that a mixture of classroom-based and peer-led education is more effective than one or the other in isolation. The combined condition showed the greatest gains in information, motivation, behavioural skills, and behaviour.

Peer education as a behavioural change is based on several behavioural theories. Social Learning theory of Bandura, the theory of Reasoned Action by Fishbein & Ajzen, the Diffusion of Innovation Theory by Rogers, 1983, the Theory of Participatory Education proposed by Freire, etc.

### Impact of **Peer Education**

Neil & Sarah (2009) Conducted a study to find out how effective is Peer Education in addressing young people's sexual and reproductive health needs in Developing Countries. Starkey, Audrey, Holliday, Moore, & Campbell (2009) conducted a survey to identify the influence of young people to undertake effective peer-led health promotion (A Stop Smoking In Schools). Carefully designed and developed peer-led interventions have potential for delivering smoking prevention among adolescents. Li, Chow, Griffiths, Zhang, Lam, & Kim (2009) found that in a University based Peer health Education in China, all peer educators and the majority of student respondents positively evaluated the program. Peer educators cited acquiring factual information and medical skills, rather than personal development, as the most important things learned from the program.

### Curriculum of the training of **Peer Educators**

Peer Education Program of Christ University follows a systematically designed and expert validated curriculum. The book of curriculum includes the materials on modules for self reading and worksheets. The curriculum of Peer Education at Christ university included an introduction to the nature and aims of PEP and modules on Communication, Evolution of human body, Why two sexes?, Changes in puberty, Pregnancy/delivery, infertility, Sexual Orientation, Sexual Identity, Gender bias, Self awareness, Relationships, Personal safety, Child sexual abuse, Body image, Self Esteem, Values & intelligences, Goal Setting – Decision Making.

### The **Process**

In phase one, counselors and students volunteers speak to different streams of 2nd Yr Undergraduate students and invite them to join the Peer Education Programme at Christ University

through application process. The applicants are selected for the programme based on an essay they write and an interview which tests their motivation, interest and commitment of the students. Selected students were given 13 training Sessions. Students were divided into small groups and were mentored by Counselors & mentors throughout the Program. The methodology of training is through group and individual activities, role plays, lectures, interactive sessions, group discussions, multimedia presentations, etc.

In the second phase of PEP, i.e. after finishing their 13 sessions of training & the mock sessions with mentors, all the Peer Educators conduct 3 sessions on various topics like emotions, communication, relationships, self esteem, body image, personal safety for the 2nd yr Undergraduate students. In the third phase, all the Peer Educators are led to the Focused group discussion. Feed back is taken for all the Peer Educators and Mentors and from students. All the past four years the Peer Educators observed that their knowledge about the topics covered increased and confidence levels in talking about the subject after PEP.

### **Conclusion**

The Peer Education Programme implemented at Christ University is found effective in multiple ways. It helped the trained Peer Educators increase their knowledge level and have a clear understanding on the topics covered. Further it enhanced their interpersonal relationships, communication skills and most all the confidence to interact with cross-section of people. The students who attended the Peer Education classes were receptive and found it relevant and effective. It also helped them develop positive attitude and have clarity on the topics covered. The two credits awarded to the Peer Educators have enhanced their motivation and commitment to the program.

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## Taboos

By Kiriti Mortha , II PSECO

The world over, India is celebrated for its rich culture and firm grounding in its family values. Right from when we are kids, these values are instilled in us and they ultimately become our moral compasses. An average Indian would be a practitioner of such values whether it is respecting adults, loving the family, or not asking questions. Yes, not asking questions. While we are home to rich tradition and culture, we also indulge in the evasive act of sweeping certain “taboo” topics under the rug. Innocent questions like “How are children born” or “Why are boys and girls different” are most often than not hushed away by a cock and bull story.

The age of growing could not have been termed better than “troubled teens” we experience so many changes, which lead to confusion. We move into more complex areas of study, we encounter social problems such as peer pressure for the very first time; we begin to view the world from a frightening angle. Luckily we have our family and friends to help us in shaping these cognitive changes in order to make us achievers. But there are other changes that barely get any attention-bodily changes. The chapter on puberty was a sensation in many of our biology classes,. For that one year in school my entire class knew the exact page numbers that had the scandalous content. So puberty changes are many in both sexes and need elaborate explanation in order for 13 and 14 year old students to understand them. However, the textbook that we used in a CBSE school had this in all of two pages, of which our teacher skipped half of it. I could not stress more on the fact that our society condemns such curiosities. Its time to change now.

At PES we learn in great depth about such issues that are certified as taboos. Moving away from the chalk and board method, we have light-hearted discussions about these heavy topics and end up having a good laugh. It is easy to achieve a good understanding of sexual processes that occur while we discuss with peers about the various changes and are guided by the well experienced mentors. However there are still difficult topics like Homosexuality and the LGBT community that are further put away from the reach of young adults by families. It goes without saying how discussion of such issues itself is an unthinkable taboo. In focusing on how “wrong” (social construct) these things are we seldom check our facts. That’s what PES does- gives us a reality check.

Once the class is more relaxed, we are able to talk about our fears and encounters on the same themes. Debates and discussions are often gripping and sometimes we are disappointed that a certain PES class had to come to an end. The experienced facilitators always have an example or a true-life story about that is less spoken of. By listening to real life stories and experiences, it becomes easier for us to connect to people who are different from us. The course has taught us a lot about topics that are essential for daily existence and given us the confidence to spread the word. Since change is an inevitable thing, why not be the change? Enroll in PES!



Photo Credit: Google

# Transformation

By Sanju S, II BCom D

Two months, I guess that should account for my peer education classes. A journey last- ing long is bound to be a wondrous tale of epic proportion. In me, the program led to an overall personal growth and helped me to move ahead from an unknown to a knowing world. It was that I broke through the shell and saw the other side of the world in a more practical way.

The utmost extreme expression was that it made me understand “sexuality and sensuality” in a broader sense than a taboo, where people were not ready to talk otherwise in reality. It pushed me forward in breaking my comfort zone, not a growing wall, and to make myself more available to reality. I could say that this was a cultural stereotype in PES.

The uniqueness of the program was its environment and nature, unlike academics. It was more of a fun learning. The progress of learning the course was important to actually grow as a peer among peers. It enhanced my visibility in and around the environment. This program also had content and vast variety in presenting facts, which was unusual. The aspect of expressing my thoughts in day to day relationship enhanced betterment in me through a positive attitude which in turn extenuated my self-esteem and brought about my self-respect to a higher order which itself helped me to act as more of a transparent personality.

The only fear I had about PES was the fear of unlearning; which, after the program, changed unconditionally and paved the way for my “new self”. The other hurdle that I faced was the fear of disclosing facts regarding sexuality and other addictions which I overcame by actually sharing and discussing in an open environment to my own peers.

It was very touching to see the sufferers coming up and sharing their own personal experiences before and after the midst. It gave me an immense opportunity to change the stereotypical thoughts about them. This education is unlike any other education I ever had before. Peer education means a lot to me now. It has helped me in breaking the barriers to view my life in a better way. Perceptions changed, outlook changed, friends changed, teachers changed and I changed. The fact which amazes me the most is that, besides Christ

University having a systematic order it gave me a varied opportunity for an enlightening experience. Over all, it was like a mixed bowl of sundae!

Now, after the program, I have started respecting people for what they are and not for what I want them to be. Thus, PES was “THE RIGHT TIME TO LEARN AND SHARE”.

It paved the way for my  
“new self”

**T R U S T**  
**yourself.**  
You know more  
than you think  
you do.

~ Benjamin Spock

**“Peer Treasure, not Pressure!”  
NO MORE LETTERS TO THE AGONY AUNT.**

**By Alekha Acharya, II CEP**

Hormones can create havoc in a teenager’s life. So can a lot of other things. What’s important is, who do these teens go to, to seek respite, to vent, to ask, to guide, to share?

If you’re a teen, chances are that you listen to your peers more than your adult care takers. It’s practical, of course - my peers WILL understand me more than a bunch of senior citizens born in an era long gone. “What do they know?”, “They don’t get me!”, “Live and let live, man!” - sound familiar to you? No more letters to the agony aunt. PES to the rescue!

The Counseling Department of Christ University came up with what I would term as a unique initiative- if adults can’t get through to the raging hormones of teenagers, get their partners in crime to help them out. But to make sure that these teens are on the right path, they got the partners in crime to counsel them, train them and made sure they have



fun along the way so that the community of these teen guides grew, making teenage hell easier, even if it’s a teensy bit.

Peer Education System (PES) kicked off as a certificate course, and went on to become valuable life lessons. We were trained to improve our life skills, communication skills and knowledge on sexuality and not just stop at that, but to spread the message to our peers. With positive feedback from our fellow University students, I think it’s safe to say that it was an effort that paid off. In the words of a (in)famous professor Peer TREASURE, not PRESSURE!”, The best part? Now We KNOW, that our counselors are not just a bunch of attendance monitors, but

are there for us- fun, approachable and open minded, there just around the corner to make things better.

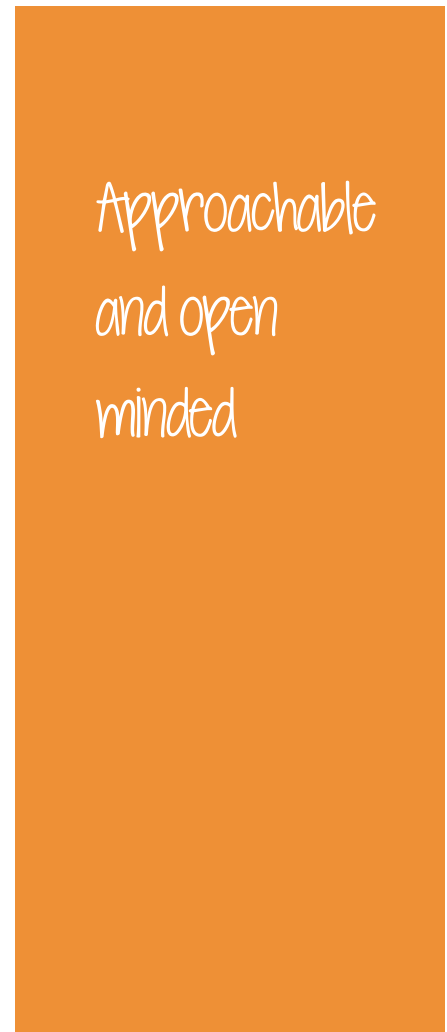


Photo Credit: Google

**The Power of Peer Pressure**

Tips on resisting pressure  
Say no and let them **no** you mean it

- Stand up straight
- Make eye contact
- Say how you feel
- Don’t make excuses
- Stick up for yourself



Problems are not  
the problems



## Facing The Peers

By Anketha Arun, II CEP

I remember walking into the one of those rooms in Central Block, all ready to be loaded with lectures, notes and painstakingly long hours. Peer education system at that point didn't mean much to us besides just another certificate course.

But in 11 short weeks, we became peer educators. Apart from helping out and informing our own peers we also took back vital knowledge to develop ourselves.

Out of the many things I enjoyed in this course, that tops my list is the part where after our training and classes, we had to speak about everything we had learnt to a certain class given to us just like what our facilitators did. All of us had three sessions with a particular class, where in the first class we talked about communication, the next relationships and finally in the last class we dealt with personal safety. I still remember how my group members and I tried to come up with different activities in order to make the class more interesting. What worried us the most was the fact that the tables were turned and we weren't students anymore, we were the teachers and what we learnt was that it wasn't an easy thing to do!! Heart pumping, sweaty palms, feeling the rush of blood in my veins, I walked towards my

classroom with a smile on my lips acting like there was nothing which was making me nervous.

All eyes were on me. It was an intense and exciting experience. An experience which cannot be described in words. Something which you can only feel. The first class was the most important and the most difficult, as we had to make a good impression on the students and also "get through to them", create a rapport with them, something elders usually can't always do. By the third class, all the students got more comfortable with us and we also became more relaxed. We were also able to get people to come out with their problems and I must say it's true that there is a huge satisfaction which one gets when you help out a person in need.

I have seen myself change for the better through the PES and if given a chance, I would go back and do it all over again - the classes, the meeting, the fun and the seriousness of it.

Problems are not the problems, coping is the problem and PES was made exactly for that, so that we as peer educators can help other students cope with their problems.

# A Lot Can Happen Over Chocolate Ice Cream.

By Priyanka Bhaduri, II JPENG

Relationships? Being a girl of the 21st century I would say the term “relationship” is completely over hyped. I mean, how many times do we log into Facebook and see “X is in a relationship with Y” which may have received 100 likes but which did not last even a 100 days? Or how many times have you seen two “chaddi buddies” whose forever friendship has only lasted the length of a Karan Johar melodrama. Yes! Undoubtedly there are such fascinating phenomena in the mysterious world of love, bonds and relationships. I would like to term such relationships as the shiny attractive packets of mouthwatering chocolate ice-cream, where when unwrapped, offers promising bliss. But sadly, people never really get to the inside before the yumminess melts and becomes a blob of disgusting brown mess. So our problem here is getting to the ice cream before it melts or getting to the best part of the relationship before it ends. How can that be done? Peer Edu- cation is a brilliant course which offers an insight on how relationships can be maintained and relished upon rather than wasted over petty issues. There are four main pillars upon which any relationship builds its foundation:

- Trust
- Commitment
- Communication

- Respect

Just like every ice cream needs its chocolate sauce, wafers, sprinkles and cherries, every relationship needs its add-ons as well for it to be more fruitful. And the Peer Education Certificate Course provides a person with the right amount of information to ensure that they realize how much more their relationships are worth and how to value them and to make them last a long time.

Also peer education has opened our eyes to the diverse possibilities a relationship can offer. We share a different kind of relationship with every one we know. Helping our parents, friends and teachers, all in some way squeeze them- selves into the ice cream packet to make the overall delicious treat. So finally, having undergone the Peer Education Course, I can say that I have not only managed to get the ice-cream out into a bowl but I am able to relish every bit of it.

*We share a different kind of relationship with every one we know*



## I'm Not Fat, I'm Just An Elephant.

By Sayontan Ghosh, II JPENG

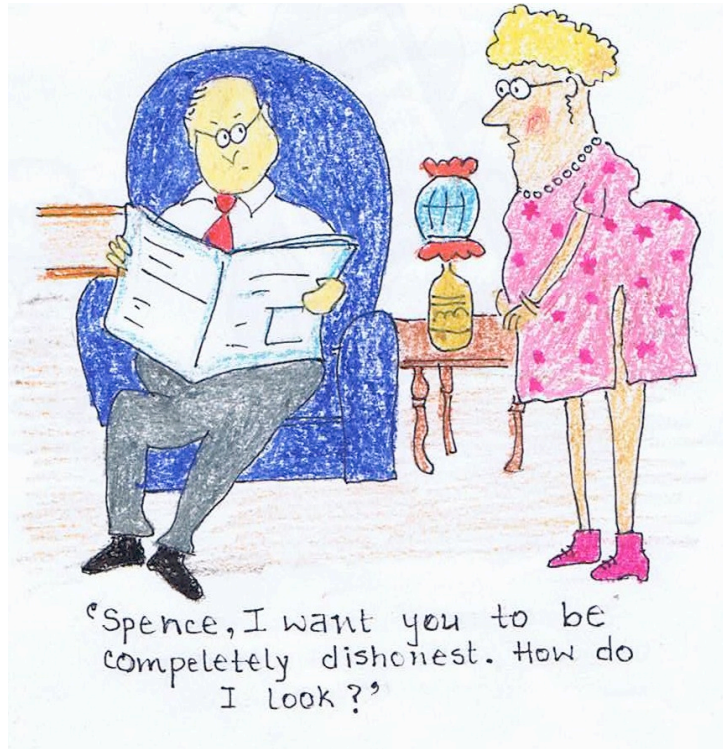
"I'm too tall.", "I'm too short."  
"I'm too skinny." "If only I were shorter/taller/had curly hair/straight hair/a smaller nose/longer legs, I'd be happy." Sounds familiar?

**"You are imperfect, permanently and inevitably flawed. And you are beautiful."** -Amy Bloom

A person's psychological factors (low self-esteem) and personality factors (a greater level of perfectionism) also influences body-image. Studies report that the need for high-achievement is positively linked with the increased risk for disordered eating. No matter what your scale says, being comfortable in your own skin is up to you. It can be tough, in a society that prizes unrealistic images. But it's possible, and it starts with what you say when you look in the mirror.

One of the first rules of achieving a healthy and happy body image is to stop allowing "put-downs" in front of the mirror. Telling yourself that you're awesome, even if you don't believe it at first, will improve your confidence. Posting notes with positive messages on your mirror to remind yourself of your good qualities. Those notes don't always have to be about your looks. Jotting down things about your character will help you develop a more positive attitude toward your reflection. Forget perfection or rigid rules. It's OK to splurge once in a while even if you're trying to lose weight. Never resort to unhealthy measures, such as not eating or taking potentially dangerous supplements, to fit society's idea of what looks healthy.

Most people are aware that the



average television show is peopled by actors considered good looking to a degree far out of kilter with reality. Women, especially, are objectified by an unrealistic expectation of beauty put forward by models and actresses who do not reflect the average appearance of women in society, but men are affected as well. The average man and woman are subjected by the media to a constant onslaught of imitations of reality which bear little or no resemblance to actual reality. From sitcoms to so-called "reality shows," the society that is reflected on television and in movies is populated almost

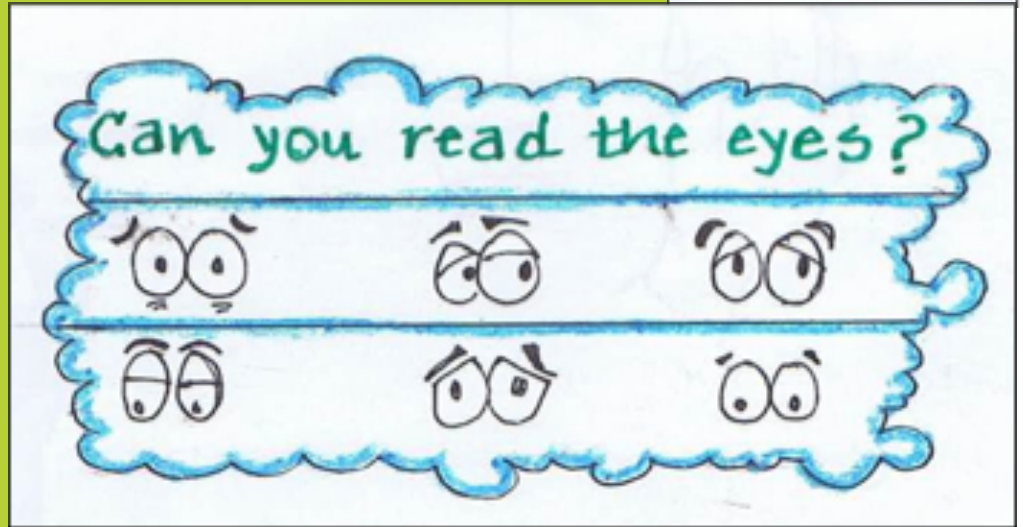
exclusively by actors who are, if not physically fit, then at least far from out of shape.

**"To lose confidence in one's body is to lose confidence in oneself." — Simone de Beauvoir**

"This is a call to arms. A call to be gentle, to be forgiving, to be generous with yourself. The next time you look into the mirror, try to let go of the story line that says you're too fat or too sallow, too ashy or too old, your eyes are too small or your nose too big; just look into the mirror and see your face. When the criticism drops away, what you will see then is just you, without judgment, and that is the first step toward transforming your experience of the world."

Oprah Winfrey

The spotlight is getting ready to shine on you; you just need to step into it.



## Shine That Spotlight

By Rhea Mathew, II CEP

She spent her childhood drifting through the dream of having the “perfect man” by her side, and while she did eventually end up with the man of her dreams, it wasn’t too far away in the future that she spent the night crying over the phone. Next thing you know, she’s writing her suicide note with that last tear flowing down her cheek. Love and loss, they say, go together.

A RELATIONSHIP, as defined by the Oxford Dictionary is the way in which two or more concepts, objects, or people are connected, then why is it that as we look to our surroundings, we frequently get acquainted with the “world’s best couples” as well as people in complete isolation? Why does that happen? The answer is simple – Do you want to make it work? Because if you do, you’re back with the people who make you smile and the world is a happy place again.

The main issue that all of us as simple individuals with a heart and mind face, is the issue of commitment and the constant need for comfort. We need our

families, our friends, our close colleagues, someone to talk to and who you believe can lift you up when you fall. It can even be a close relationship with your God. Whatever the situation, always remember one thing – Keep your chin up and realize that you are blessed! You are blessed with the smallest thing that your neighbor may not have. You just have to open your eyes and search for it. Right now, you are the luckiest person among all others and do you know why? Because regardless of the problem, the issue or the period of intense pain to the moment where you know you’re about to collapse, there’s a little star somewhere in your heart that’s holding you up – It’s YOU! You are special, and you should never forget that. Relationships may come and go, but never lose yourself. The spotlight is getting ready to shine on you; you just need to step into it.

# Relationships

By Kiriti Mortha, II PSEco

Today's youth lives in an era of transformation, being witness to technological changes that enhance our lives and make it simpler—specifically in communication technology. With all the breakthroughs in communication technology and innovations in the way we use this technology, it has only become hard to keep up any kind of relationship. From the relationship with family and friends to that relationship we share with our support staff, they all influence our psychological being. Therefore it becomes vital to ensure the smooth functioning of all the relationships in our lives however big or small.

With competition on the rise, the fear of losing out or falling behind has gripped the parents of today. In some cases it is more important to parents how much their kid scored over how happy the kid is. And then there is busy lifestyle that our parents generation leads meeting after meeting dealing with daily problems are a few reasons why parents and children are unable to hold a meaningful relationship. For various such reasons there is friction between the two generations leading to unhappiness. Parents have the pressure of giving their children the best of every-thing and children face the pressure of living up to the high expectations set for them. We seldom work on these relationships and just allow things to take their course and ultimately become complacent. It is high time we pay attention to these problems and work on them and let that relationship transform into a happy, healthy one.

From the advent of Indian Cinema, “friendship” is an evergreen theme for moviemakers; right from ‘Sholay’ to ‘Rang de Basanti’ they all reinforce the importance of friendship in our daily life. Despite the fact that we value our friends we still face the problem of maintaining such relationships. The good news is we just need to make minute changes in the way we react in times of strain, express ourselves better when we feel victimized, and we can fix up these monumental relationships. Instead of moving from friend circle to friend circle we must learn to make relationships that we consider valuable, work. At the same time, it is important to know when to walk out of a relationship or when to let your walls up.

“Relationships” are a field of expertise for PES facilitators who take great joy in guiding young minds to evaluate their relationships and work on them appropriately. Before we can venture out into the treacherous terrain of relationships we need to understand ourselves in terms of our strengths, weaknesses, boundaries, expectations and so on. The essence of this topic is brought to light by anecdotes

shared by fellow classmates and mentors. On completing the course we feel confident about the relationships in our lives and are always on the pursuit to making them better!

“No human relation gives one possession in another—every two souls are absolutely different. In friendship or in love, the two side by side raise hands together to find what one cannot reach alone.”

Kahlil Gibran

It is high time we pay attention to these problems and work on them and let that relationship transform into a happy, healthy one.

# Why Me??

By Rubina Daniel

Imagine a day you wake up, look in the mirror and have no clue who the figure standing right in front of you is. Scary, right! Now imagine you do recognize the physical being but fail to recall his internal self. Well, this is one aspect that all of us should think about when every morning we admire just our physical attributes in the mirror. More than anything else, we are concerned about how we look or rather how people might look at us but do we really care to know who we actually are!

Here's a list of questions to which most of us take a long pause to answer for a very simple reason that we never gave them so much importance that we can have instant answers for them. Like for example "what are our strengths or weakness?" or "what are our beliefs?" Or "are we aware of our personal space" or "what are our boundaries in life?". These are the true parameters that define who we really are and it's unfortunate that we don't have time to explore them.

Why self-awareness? What's the harm in not knowing the answer to the much deeper questions of life and live our life just the way we are living right now? This question is sure to rise in some of your minds but just imagine, you eat something really delicious and when you ask the chef the recipe he simply does not know. Strange right! You are similar to that chef if you are not aware of what the ingredients of your own body are. Self awareness is the first step in creating what you want and mastering that. Where you focus your attention, your emotions, reactions, personality and behavior determine where you go in life. Having self awareness allows you to see where your thoughts and emotions are taking you. It also allows you to explore the level of control of your emotions, behavior and personality so that you can make the changes you want. Until you are aware and in control of your thoughts, emotions, words, and behavior, you will have difficulty in making changes in the direction of your life.

So what exactly should be done? Self awareness is developed through the practice of focusing your attention on the details of your personality and behavior. It isn't learnt from reading a book. When you read a book you are focusing your attention on the conceptual ideas in the book. With your attention in a book you are practicing but not paying attention to your own behavior, emotions and personality. Think of learning to be mindful and self aware as learning to dance. When learning to dance we have to pay attention

**"We are each gifted in a unique and important way. It is our privilege and our adventure to discover our own special light."**

**- Mary Dunbar**

to how and where our feet move, our hands and body motion, what our partner is doing, music, beat, floor space and other dancers.

Self awareness isn't learnt from books and tango isn't either. Making changes in your behavior is much easier to do when you catch them early in the dynamics, before the momentum of thought and emotion has gathered steam. The changes in your mind and behavior become simple and easy steps when you develop self awareness.

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# The Peer Educators Speak

## Sahitya Maiya, II CEP

They say a little perspective like a sense of humour comes a long way in life. We all have re- strained attitudes and inhibitions towards certain things in life. What's more, we are always look- ing to break them down. The topics discussed are broad ranging from self concept to relationships to sex education. You are expected to voice any question or opinion you have about the topics dis- cussed, without holding back. Rest assured, you will be learning something new. It is like a slow deconstruction of misconceptions into newer, more sensible and happier beliefs about yourself and life in general. At the end of the course, you overcome one of the most common fears-stage fear. You go share whatever you have learnt to your peers in a formal classroom setting; and you pass the final test. The strength of peer education lies right there-in sharing and having fun all the way, while doing so.

## Sanjeevini Singh II CEP

Walking into Christ College, one look at the sea of people swarming in through the main gates. We quickly make our judgments against the appearances we see. In PES, those appearances fall. People from all walks of life attempt to involve themselves into everyone's everyday issues to find that one solution we all long for no matter how mundane it might be. Before the Peer Education Program, I honestly felt that I might have been the most mentally unstable person I must have known.

But these sessions with different incidents gave a whole new perspective which really helped me break out of my little bubble and step out. I learnt to like myself immensely so much, that now I would like to believe that I am God. But only as a joke. PES got me to do something that I haven't been able to do for the past 11 years of my life: Believe in Myself. For which, I will eternally be grateful".

## Lavanya Bhatt II BCom ( K )

Peer Education was an interactive and effective way for me to change my stereotypical views. I am delighted that I took up PES as a certificate course because without it may be I would have lived my life with false notions and spread the same ideas to others.

## Chirag Mukherjee II BCom

You rarely come across a course with such likeable timings, mentors and which gives you two credits. Peer Education System had a massive impact on my life.

## Suman K.Anand II PSECO

Thanks a ton to all mentors, counselors, teachers who taught me two very valuable lessons i.e. how to overcome my stage fright and secondly how to become comfortable with people when they crack adult jokes.

## Vijesh Pai II BCom

The journey of Peer education classes has been extraordinary .It has improved my knowledge on subjects like alcoholism, self-confidence ,child abuse and emotional stability.

# Student's Feedback on Classes by Peer Educators

- “It’s good for a change from the usual teaching”
- “I wouldn’t have listened to a teacher talk about the same issues”
- “It exposed me to effective ways of dealing with the issue rather than creating a big thing out of it”
- “Some issues which I were facing were solved easily and because of the frankness in the discussion there was no fear”
- “It helped in looking at things from a different perspective and created an awareness inside me about day-to-day life events which are generally not considered seriously”
- “It helped me to think differently and made me believe in myself “
- “It made me realize everyone goes through the same things as me and because they had a clear picture of the current situations therefore could easily connect our lives to them”
- “Examples were very realistic and were about things which occur in day-to-day lives. Moreover, with the same age-group between learner and lecturer makes it comfortable and frank, with more interaction.”
- “They were frank to talk about anything under the sun and hence we could express our issues more openly “
- “They talked about those issues which we ourselves are sometimes ashamed to speak out ourselves with our own friends”
- “It’s a nice platform for young people to express themselves shedding all inhibitions”
- “It opened my eyes on various things , especially the things in which I always considered myself to know-it-all”
- “Now a whole lot of myths that I had about certain things were cleared all thanks to Peer Education System”
- “It’s a different kind of learning altogether”
- “It’s unique in it’s approach and that is the best part of the entire program”
- “ An extremely innovative method for teaching “
- “Made me realize a variety of things about life which will be very useful in future”
- “The games, puzzles, quizzes were extremely fun and educative at the same time”



Peer Education Program Convocation of 2010

Peer Education Stall At Daksh : The Guidance Fair in January, 2013



Christ University organised "DAKSH - unlock your future" - A Guidance Fair on 23rd January 2013 at Christ University.



Convocation of Peer Education System was held on 12th December 2012 at Christ Univer

Peer Education Program Convocation of 2012

Peer Education Program Convocation of 2011





# Peer Treasure

A PES Publication

February 2013

