

# PEER TREASURE



**CHRIST**  
UNIVERSITY

BANGALORE, INDIA

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Communication. Relationships. Safety.

From the peer educators of 2014-15



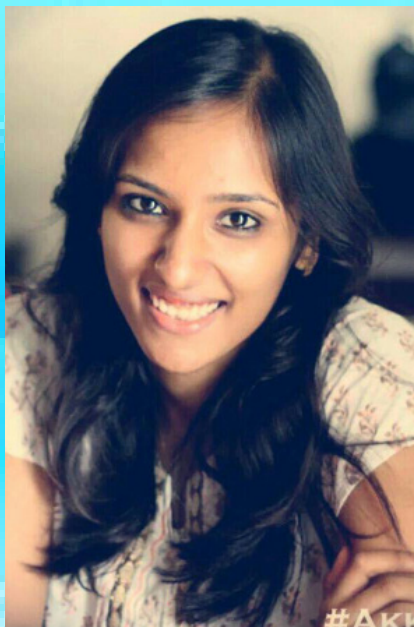
Volume III 2014-'15

# FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

I would like to convey my gratitude to all those who worked immensely hard to make the Peer Education program, a vital success. Firstly, I'd like to thank Col. Dr. Fr. Thomas C. Mathew for giving us a tremendous opportunity to seek guidance and knowledge through this program.

I can say, without hesitation, that the lectures that we witnessed were of conspicuous aid. I would like to thank Fr. Viju for providing us with his unceasing support. I would like to thank all the counselors who put in their persistent efforts to help the students comprehend the realm of peer influence and education. I would personally like to thank Ms. Medonna Milton, Ms. Ashley George and Dr. Asha Pinto for constantly encouraging us to create this magazine and for supporting us throughout this journey.

I would also like to thank all the peer educators for extending their ceaseless help in contributing to the magazine. I would especially like to thank Kathelene Reena, from 4 JPEng, for her massive contributions to Peer Treasure and for helping me throughout. Travelling 20 kilometers to college early in the morning and staying back after class, she did not complain a single day. My work would not have been complete were it not for all the people that I mentioned.



Apoorva S.  
Editor



Kathelene Reena  
Designer



# DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Fr. Viju P.D.

As another academic year draws to a close, it is heartening to see the culmination of the Peer Education Programme into a tangible compilation of thoughts, information and anecdotes – The Peer Treasure Magazine. We thank Almighty for the steadfast blessings that we have received in this humble endeavour of ours.

Peer Education, in concept, is the dissemination of information- health, values, behaviour, concepts- and through it edifying peers for a relevant cause. Having recognized the impact of Peer Education, especially in the context of peer pressure, safety in relationships, communication and the ill effects of tobacco & substance abuse, the Department for Counselling and Health Services introduced the Peer Education System – the PES Programme in 2009. The subsequent years have seen the programme grow from strength to strength, with respect to the number of graduates per year as well as the quality of the programme itself. In addition, it has the added attraction of being a Certificate Course carrying two credits. The programme is also available in the curriculum of the Kengeri Campus.

It has been truly rewarding to see our young graduates take on a whole new role on the other side of the classroom bench and wax eloquent on all the values, strengths and concepts that have now become an integral part of their new vocabulary.

With the PES Programme, education has come full circle, bringing a whole new meaning to the phrase “holistic education”, a concept very dear to the values of this great institution. I would like to congratulate my colleagues in the Department for Counselling and Health Services, the PES Batch of 2014-2015, the Editorial Team of the Peer Treasure.



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# AN EXPERIENCE OF A LIFETIME

It was not long ago, when I stumbled upon a piece of paper stuck on our notice board. It invited second year students from across the deaneries of Christ University to be a part of a program organized by our very own counselors. The program promised us credits and exemption from one of the two mandatory certificate courses offered by the University.

The program was giving us an opportunity to understand ourselves better. It would impart basic life skills that are required in every sphere of life. More importantly, it would allow us to share whatever we would learn with our fellow peers.

Peer education not only deals with life skills but it is also a form of health promotion through which health information, values and behavior are brought into the limelight. We as peer educators learnt the skills that help the youth to reduce the distressful life experiences and to resolve stressful situations if they arise.

We as peer educators learnt the skills that help the youth to reduce the distressful life experiences and to resolves stressful situations if they arise. Latest research has proven that people are more prone to listening if the messenger is similar to them. If the messenger belongs to the same age group as the group of people, it has been proven that the impact is greater, thus helping in changing the people's attitudes for the better. Numerous studies have demonstrated that their peers influence youth's health behaviors—not only in regard to sexuality but also in regard to violence and substance use. Thus we see the need for educators of life skills amongst students.

Studies that have shown the credibility of Peer Educators:

Trained peer educators are a more credible source of information for some youth than are adult educators because they communicate in readily understandable ways and serve as positive role models while dispelling misperceptions that most youth are having sex(1,2)

The same study indicated that adolescents who were counseled by peers were more likely to engage in interactive discussion following the education curriculum than those counseled by adult health care providers.

This program helped me to make decisions, understand values and act according to those values. The experience of taking classes on life skills helped me find the leadership skills within me and gave me a better understanding of relationships. The program also provides with opportunities to increase self-discipline and self-esteem and to gain positive stature in the community, broader career choices, and a better understanding of diversity.

Peer education is a rare opportunity for young people to develop and sustain leadership and facilitation skills that will serve them well in both the short-term and the long-term. Peer educators model positive youth behavior, affecting social norms, as well as model constructive relationships between adults and young people — qualities which are all too rare in our society. I would encourage all those people who are looking to delve deeper into their inner selves to understand life better, to take up this program. The memories of working under the wonderful group of counselors of our University will always stay with me. It is one opportunity that you would not want to let go of.

## References:

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by Avishek  
EMS



# OPTIMISM-THE SCIENCE OF BELIEVING

What is optimism? Optimism in my opinion is the art of looking at the brighter side of things. It is when the entire world says “No you can’t” and you say “Yes I can”. Every New Year’s eve, people all over the world make resolutions to lose weight, to quit a low paying job and so on. How many of us are able to hold onto these resolutions? Resist that delicious looking blueberry cheesecake? Not so many. Regardless, we make newer resolutions the forthcoming New Year. How come we don’t give up? Optimism. Research by neuroscientist Tali Sharot and her team has found that there are special areas in your brain that hold the Optimism bias and make your brain overestimate the likelihood of good things happening in our life and underestimating the bad things. We are more optimistic to realistic but oblivious to the fact. Then how do pessimists work? They believe in low expectations. They are convinced that by not expecting good things to happen, they are not disappointed when they don’t happen and are pleasantly surprised when they do. This is actually a really good logic except that it is flawed. A study shows that people who have high expectations are happy. This is because of the way an optimist interprets an event. Another reason is anticipation. According to Tali Sharot, “Optimists are people who expect more kisses in their future, more strolls in the park. And that anticipation enhances their well-being.” Controlled experiments have proved that optimism is not only related to success, leads to success.

The most important result of optimism however is health. Yes, positivity can help you get through rough patches in your life but can it really have an effect on long term health? The answer is yes. Optimism appears to protect the heart and circulation — and it’s pleasing to learn that it can have similar benefits to overall health. It’s obvious that healthy people live longer than sick people. If optimism actually improves health, it should also boost longevity and according to two studies from the U.S. and two from the Netherlands, it actually does.



Although the belief in a better future is often an illusion, optimism has clear benefits in the present. Hope keeps our minds at ease, lowers stress, and improves physical health. This is probably the most surprising benefit of optimism. All else being equal, optimists are healthier and live longer. It is not just that healthy people are more optimistic, but optimism can enhance health. Expecting our future to be good reduces stress and anxiety, which is good for our health. Researchers studying heart attack patients have found that optimists were more likely than nonoptimistic patients to take vitamins, eat low-fat diets, and exercise, thereby reducing their overall coronary risk. A study of cancer patients revealed that pessimistic patients under the age of 60 were more likely to die within eight months than non pessimistic patients of the same initial health, status, and age.

So instead of worrying about that waist size, how you cannot have that cheesecake and why you fail at everything, set high expectations for yourself. Believe in yourself. Take risks. Jump! Don’t be foolish and not take a parachute though. The result will be unreal. And actually, eat that cheesecake. Go for it! You deserve it.

by Kathelene Reena

# SHADOWS

Happiness is a state of mind and the only way out is to pursue it. Nobody said life is going to be easy but it is going to be worth it, it is just a matter of perspectives. Life is like a roller-coaster ride where we often misjudge it by just seeing the wild zigzag railings and assuming that it will be dicey and you will probably end up with a heart attack. What we don't realize is the thrill, the speed, the adventure and the excitement it promises. Most of the time, we are afraid of taking on challenges or chasing new goals because we waste too much time thinking about the consequences of our actions and become cynical. Even before trying, we give up, thinking that we will never make it. I remember I was 16, faint hearted, even though confident, but surrounded by terrified thoughts, like a bird who knows how to fly but is afraid of flying because it is afraid it would fall and would never be able to fly again. Slowly, things changed and I started channeling my thoughts and made way for optimism. I began to realize that I can perform much better in every field of my life and all it's going to take is one equitable choice and that is to stop worrying about the consequences and start living. I could sense my self-esteem shoot up I no longer felt being bound in a protective cage. Positivity was a big booster in my life, it changed my outlook towards everything in life, it made me value even the minutest of things that were never paid attention to before.



It isn't easy but it's not hard at all- a mere matter of a choice and dedication to remain committed to that choice. Looking at brighter side of life is really important for personal growth and I strongly believe that 'Peer Education' helped me to a great extent. Everyone is dealing with different levels and kinds of problems, which may or may not be greater than ours but again we cannot forget that people are braving it and others have done it before. So we have to keep going and keep learning that absolutely nothing in life comes for free. The day we start appreciating the small little things in life, we will start valuing every second of our lives.

How often we are grateful?

Philosophies are good on paper but when it comes to practicality and implementation we barely get through. So this is the message, my message to you – don't forget to get up no matter how many times you fall. Mistakes are proof that we are trying, so do not be afraid to fail - you might end up discovering yourself. Don't be afraid of what the world thinks of you, because no matter what you do they will have something to say.

So smile, not for the world, but for YOU, pat yourself on the back every day to encourage and boost yourself. Keep reminding yourself that you don't own all the problems of the world and life will become much easier. It is okay to feel bad sometimes because it is then that we start valuing happiness. So, "if you're still looking for someone who can change your life, take a look in the mirror".

by Geeta Khetarpal

PSEco



# SELF ESTEEM - AN INSIGHT

“Nobody can go back and start a new beginning, but anyone can start today and make a new ending.”

- Maria Robinson

The vast majority's stance and contemplations about themselves falter based on their quotidian experiences. The marks you score in an examination, ups and downs in a relationship and the manner in which your associates treat you, can all have a fleeting influence on how you feel about yourself. Your self-esteem, however, is rather more fundamental than the normal ups and downs associated with situational deviations. For people with virtuous self-esteem, exemplary ups and downs may lead to transitory fluctuations in how they feel about themselves, but only to a narrow extent. In contrast, for people with poor self-esteem, these ups and downs radically influence the way they perceive themselves. Low self-esteem in adolescence and young adulthood is a menace for adverse consequences in imperative life domains.

In psychology, the term self-esteem is used to pronounce a person's overall sagacity of self-worth or individual worth. Self-esteem is habitually seen as a personality trait, which means that it tends to be steady and enduring. Self-esteem can implicate a range of beliefs about oneself, such as assessment of one's own appearance, opinions, sentiments, and conduct. The beliefs you have about yourself frequently appear to be proclamations of fact, although in reality they're only mere opinions. They are constructed on the experiences you've had throughout your life, and the message that these experiences have given you about the kind of person you are. If your experiences have been destructive, your opinion about yourself is also anticipated to be delirious.

Decisive experiences that aid us form beliefs about ourselves (although not always) early in life. What you have seen, heard and experienced in your childhood or in society has somewhere inclined the way you appreciate yourself in one aspect or the other.



As we grow up we take note of voices raised by people who form a significant part of our life. We may disparage ourselves in their sharp tones, and make the same comparisons with other people as they did. Our experiences shape the foundation for common assumptions about ourselves. We can call these assumptions 'the Bottom Line'. The Bottom Line is the negative view of the self that lies at the core of low self-esteem. Since the Bottom Line is generally molded in childhood, it is usually influenced and erroneous, because it is built on a child's view. It is likely to be designed on the basis of misinterpretation of experiences due to lack of adult knowledge exhausting which would have made it easier to comprehend the solitary purpose of these experiences in our life. Although these beliefs may be contrary or archaic now, they come from a spell when they made perfect sense, given what you were experiencing then. Negative beliefs about oneself are hazardous, as these beliefs do not take account of all the facts but rely on biased evidence for their sustenance. Therefore, it is essential for an individual to look at oneself from their own eyes. They should learn to appreciate their abilities and accept their blemishes. Every individual is unique, all we need is a small push to realize our worth and do wonders.

by Anurag Singh,  
BBA LLB



# VANILLA MILKSHAKE ADDICT



“Sidharth Malhotra, get abs like his!” she said. “Get biceps like him!” she said. “Stop eating that cake you’ll get a belly!” she said; ruining my dreams with girls since “Student of the Year” came out.

So I joined the gym, two days later I discovered the vanilla milk shake booth near the gym and slowly trips to the gym reduced as my love for vanilla milk shakes increased (so did my belly and fat in all the wrong places). And then I decided that nothing’s going to stop me from things I love, especially not a few girls who want me with abs. Since when did 6 packs become sexier than a guy who went after his dreams of vanilla shakes? Well, the answer dates back to the time when we played with the little GI Joes and Superman action figures and Barbie and Ken dolls. All of them ripped with abs, biceps, triceps and what not. And Barbie dolls? - Those legs that went on for miles and that perfect figure. Those little ‘toys’ planted that ‘perfect’ image we subconsciously began to desire.

And then I realised after many hours of thinking and a countless number of vanilla shakes; that I’m happy with the fun-loving shake-addict guy that I am and I’ll meet someone who actually will like that instead of making me go to the gym every other day.

And so I developed a positive self-image and I became happy the way I was. I’m pretty sure all of us need to develop a positive self-image.

We see the number of people going under the knife increase by the day! And guess what! -even after girls win the title of Miss Universe; which means getting the approval of the whole universe (Earthlings, Martians and maybe even Spock!); some go under the knife to try and look even better, I’m wondering why. Well let me tell you something, when a girl wants a guy with abs she’ll obviously dump the guy when he loses his abs to the amazing taste of vanilla shake that none can refuse. So next time she tells you she isn’t happy with your body, even though you are happy with it, walk away brother, walk away! I’m not saying die of diabetes, stay healthy for yourself because your-self image is what you think about yourself not what the girl next door thinks or the guy on your neighbouring balcony thinks of you.

by Arjun Raj  
BTME, Kengeri

# PEER EDUCATION JOURNEY

“Pressure can help us in many ways and also destroy us in the same ways. Most of us at some point have been subject to Peer Pressure. The problem is that it can be hard to differentiate between good and bad peer pressure. Everything seems appropriate at the moment and later on you realize that peer pressure can make you do either the most brilliant or the most detestable things. Hence it up to us to be careful and succumb to only ‘good peer pressure’ ” **Priya, CEP**



“As Peer Educators, we had a unique experience. We spoke to our peers about Communication, Relationships and Personal Safety. We did this with the help of role plays, games and the sharing of our experiences. The interaction of the class during the Personal Safety session was tremendous. Everybody shared their experiences and even came up with ideas to increase their own safety. In all, it was a great learning experience.”

**Joanne Paulson and Vishal Chhabria, BBA Travel and Tourism**

“I was someone who would look at myself in the mirror and would feel that I’m fat! But through the module of body image in class, I realized that everyone is imperfect and each one’s imperfection is what makes us so unique and perfect in our own way. All we need to do is believe and accept ourselves. Nobody’s perfect, and that has helped me love myself more, accept and appreciate myself.



One of the things I feared the most was the fact that I had to conduct three sessions as Peer Educator. The first session was horrifying, as I had a huge fear of talking in front of a crowd, but as we came to the third session, we were more relaxed, I was able to deliver the concepts in a better manner. At the end of the course, I was not only able to deal with talking in front of a class but have also reduced the amount of stage fear I experienced before. It has helped me increase my self-confidence. Peer Education has got me to do and realize something that lacked in me – accepting and believing in myself.”

**Mohitha Anand, PSEco**





# HIDDEN PATHS

Trying to search under the hills,  
A weary smile that seems to kill;  
For even the easing melodies are skeptical about my dream,  
And teardrops from the eyes begin to stream.

Weeping sorely as those little promises provoked pain, W  
Striving hard to wake up again.  
It's time! I ought to find the abandoned happiness,  
For he has drowned in an ocean of sorrow.

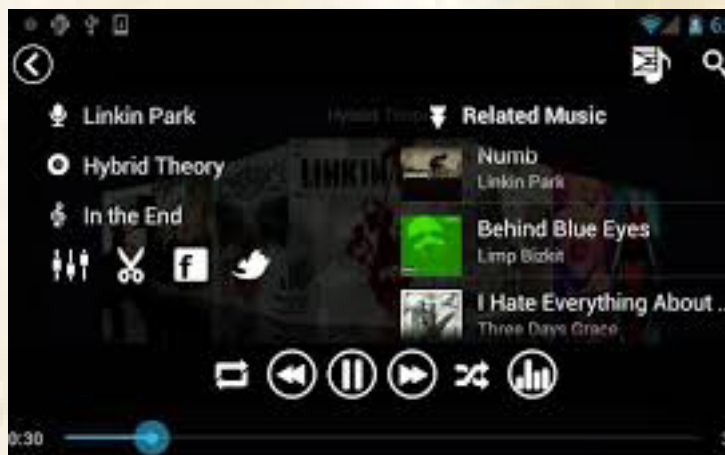
It's time!  
But, an oblivious thought swiftly passes by  
'How can I find him?'  
For he hides beneath my sigh.  
An unforeseen revelation is now buried deep

The day begins again with a gentle smile.  
The trees and the seas while away with fervor  
I walk out of the woods  
My heart filled with exuberance  
This prolonged journey shall never end.

by Apoorva S.  
JPEng



# MAGIC OF MUSIC



*"He took his pain and turned it into something beautiful. Into something that people connect to. And that's what good music does. It speaks to you. It changes you."*

□ Hannah Harrington, *Saving June*

The famous reggae singer and songwriter, Bob Marley, said that he does not sing about how peace comes easily on Earth, instead he sang about how hell on earth comes too easily to a lot of people. An attempt on his life was once made, and he was injured but the next day he performed in a concert. When asked why, Bob Marley replied, "The people who are trying to make this world worse aren't taking a day off. How can I?"

It is said that you are what you listen to. Your taste in music represents what your mood would sound like if you could hear it. Music helps people express and give words to that which they cannot talk about and that which cannot remain silent. Music commences where speech ends. It can bring back sad memories but at the same time, it can make us feel good all at once. Music can bring together people who have nothing in common other than a similar interest in music. Music has the power to change the world, make it a better place, because it can change people. Nick Hornby spoke about how it is surprising that people are always concerned about children who play with toy guns and teenagers who watch violent videos, but they aren't concerned when children listen to songs about broken hearts, pain, loss or rejection. Albert Einstein said that if he wasn't a physicist, he would probably be a musician.

So when someone asks me what inspires you, I say music. Like Friedrich Nietzsche put it, without music, life would be a mistake.

by Nirali Doshi  
PSEco



# PERSONAL SAFETY

This article will give you ideas that may help prevent you from becoming a victim of violence. It is important to remember that attackers rarely target their victims at random. A few simple tactics will enable you to travel with confidence and a new feeling of personal empowerment. The reason we choose to explore the world around us is to learn about ourselves and the cultures we travel through.

## BE AWARE

Awareness of your surroundings and the people around you is the most important skill to develop. When you enter a train carriage, note who is sitting where. What is the atmosphere? Listen to your instincts - if it feels wrong then it probably is wrong! We humans have a highly developed sense of survival. Our awareness triggers our flight or fight mechanism.

## PLAN

“Proper Planning Prevents Poor Performance.”

Tell someone responsible where you are heading and let them know you have arrived or decided to change plans. Rescue services are sought out needlessly every year because people forget to let others know they have arrived safely or have altered their plans.



## LOOK

Look confident and walk boldly. Do not appear lost and vulnerable. Predators are looking for an easy prey.

## ALWAYS

Avoid taking unnecessary risks. Arriving home late is better than not at all.

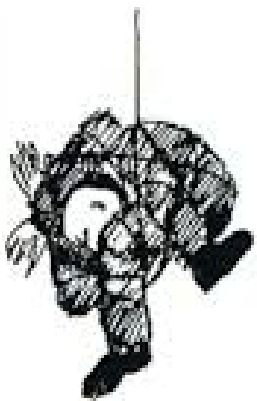
Never assume that it will never happen to you. Be prepared and have a plan ready to be put into action. You are in control of your own destiny.

## SING AND RUN

When we spoke to our peers as Peer Educators, we advocated the SING and Run Technique.

SING is an acronym for: Solar Plexus-Instep-Nose-Groin, the four attack points you should focus on if grabbed from behind. Elbow them in the solar plexus, stomp on the instep of the attacker's foot as hard as you can, and when they let go, turn around and jam the palm of your hand into their nose in an upward motion, then finish with a knee to the groin. This may disable your assailant long enough for you to RUN away.

*I learnt some of it at  
self-defence and the rest  
I made up myself*



By Rosina and Romario  
BBA, Travel and Tourism

# WHAT DID I LEARN?

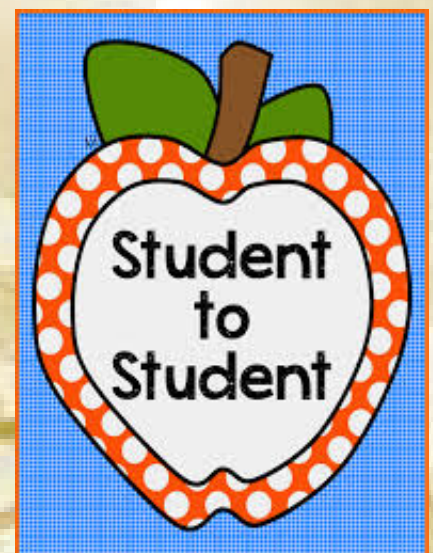
Being a part of peer education programme is one of the best things I have done for myself. The priceless and simple things I have learned, makes me a better and confident person than I was earlier. If today I have broadened my horizon of thinking, if I am respecting my body and if I am self-aware, this is all because of peer education. It is a journey without judgements along with counsellors and trainers where we get to introspect and obliterate all unhealthy ways of living.

I have learned well on how to making use of great tools like anger, patience and kindness in times of trouble. My knowledge in topics like sexuality, drugs and peer pressure increased rapidly with this programme. I practise the techniques I have learned to boost my morale on a daily basis, one of which is standing in front of mirror and appreciating my beauty and telling myself what I am going to do today. Last but not the least I have learned a few self-defence techniques in times of trouble. With the help of the PES Programme, I am able to identify different levels of relationships, I am aware of personal rights in relationships and most importantly I have learned to set boundaries in relationships. I learned how trust, commitment, respect and communication played vital roles in relationships and how they can be taken care of on a daily basis. I discovered a lot of qualities in me, for example Spatial Intelligence, Musical Intelligence, good control over body movements, good with numbers and good with people. I realized how blessed I was to have all these qualities that I was unaware of for such a long time! I explored what was most important to me which guides me on how to behave, or what I value most.

I learned how important it was accept myself and all feelings which arise in me. Only after accepting them will I be able to deal with them effectively. One of the few good habits I have inculcated are: eating nourishing food, avoiding things that harm my body, exercising and vigorous outdoor games, and taking precautions to avoid accidents. I started seeing my body as a collection of tools: patient, humble, clever, decisive, efficient, logical, open minded, honest and obedient. In times of trouble all I have to do is take a short break to think which tool to make use of. These qualities are aspects of our behaviour. They help us stay alive, help each other and be happy. They also play a vital role in helping us achieve our goal.

I learned that outer beauty is not important in human beings and how not to be judgemental.

Peer education helped me become the new me.



by Joel James

BTME, Kengeri



# GENDER STEREOTYPES

Gender? What is gender? Gender is the range of characteristics pertaining to, and differentiating between, masculinity and femininity. Ever since I was a kid, I have been schooled to act in a certain way. Don't get me wrong... schooling here doesn't mean picking up a bag with books and heading towards a building where education is imparted. No. That's schooling in literal the sense. When I talk about schooling, it's about how I have been trained in life unknowingly or knowingly by society, so that I fit into the norms laid down by our social order. But is that how I want my life to be? Most of us might have noticed that whenever we gift kids some toys, we somehow end up gifting boys with cars & girls with dolls. My father painted my bedroom blue & my sister's pink. When I said I wanted a pink wall in my room they tried to change my mind by giving me bribes of chocolates & muffins. Now, doesn't that signify something? Isn't it stereotyping? This might not be always visible in nature. For example, my mom used to tell me stories where the husband used to go out hunting and the wife used to cook. Even stories she used to make up (even her bowl of stories got exhausted as she had to tell me a story every night to put me in bed) had one line common - the male goes hunting or goes to work, etc. while the female counterpart cooks. She might not have noticed it but, unknowingly she did put up a seed in my mind that belonging to a particular gender we are expected to behave in a certain way. This happens with TV shows and cartoon characters also. Superman, Batman and Spiderman are shown to male kids where as Snow White, Sleeping Beauty are shown to the girl child.

There was a time when I used to babysit when the kid came and told me he loved batman but, he didn't have wings to fly like a fairy. I made him happy by giving him fairy wings for his birthday because let's face it, it's too young to be imposing gender. What I want to convey from this article is that our physical construct doesn't define our mental construct.



I used to listen to songs by female artists but, when a friend found out he told me that if a girl is found to be listening to a song by a male artist, she would be called a music lover but, if a boy is found to be listening to songs by female artists he is pansy. I disagreed. It doesn't mean that I am not a boy but, it defines that I am not like the rest having monotonous likes and dislikes. As Professor if we want change to occur we need to be that change. Let them grow, because there can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children. Dumbledore of Harry Potter fame, said: "It is not our abilities that show what we truly are. It is our choices..."

Why do we want to impose rules laid down by society on the shoulders of our children? It is us who make this society and if we want change to occur, we need to be that change.

Let them grow, because there can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way it treats its children.

Aneesh Das  
CMS

# HOW PES HAS CHANGED ME



**PEER SUPPORT IS A  
NATURAL WAY OF SUPPORTING  
OUR PEERS THROUGH DIFFICULT  
TIMES BY SHARING EXPERIENCE AND  
BEING ABLE TO SAY...**

**"I'VE BEEN THERE"**

All those who know me would tell you that I am a bit too playful and fun-loving and maybe because of that, I made friends easily. I was quite comfortable moving around in campus managing with my 'Mallu English'. Even though I was part of proscenium theatre due to my fondness for drama and theatre, I faced a big problem with my language, with which I was not confident at all to use on stage.

That's when I came to know about the Peer Education System with the most brilliant concept of getting trained in the most interesting subjects in life. I decided to give it a try and filled in the application. To my surprise, even after the interview, I was selected.

What happened to me during the training is the strangest of all. I found myself clearing doubts and raising questions sometimes even arguing with the facilitators and mentors. Oh my God! I was conversing in English. It happened so naturally and I realized it only when my friends asked where I got this confidence from? Where was it all hidden? Of course, it was from the soft, reassuring face of Manisha and her sessions on Self-Esteem and Self-Confidence. I did not realize that her magical words- "Guys, each one of us is special and unique and we are not less than anyone "- were so powerful and could impact me so much. Believe it or not, I have chosen a role in the theatre with lot of dialogues and am doing it well.

It has been two months since our PES course, but I had not realized how strong its impact was on me until the day I picked up an argument with my friends. As usual hot girls, movies, music, sports, were the topics of discussion. I realized that I was able to put my point across calmly and with confidence and I could see that they respected me for it.

Another thing that influenced me was the subject of pornography. I can't say I was addicted to porn, but I didn't see the harm in it. After the PES sessions, I began to realize how true it was about the brain actually being re-wired in such a way that porn could become an addiction. I decided it was time to stop. Steadily, my life has begun to change. I am no longer weighed down by thoughts of what others thought of me. I know who I am and I am proud of myself. PES started off as just another course, but you know what, PES has changed me!

by Abhishek C  
BTME, Kengeri



# PEERS AND THEIR INFLUENCE

The word 'Peer' is defined as something or someone of equal worth and quality whereas 'Pressure' is defined as an exertion of force. When you bring the two words together, it would mean social pressure to conform to particular values. Pressure is usually used in the negative connotation making us forget that Pressure can help us in many ways and also destroy us in the same ways.

Most of us at some point have been subject to Peer Pressure for the good or for the bad. It can start as early as in childhood wherein an inferiority complex may begin to develop when the child knows his friend has something that he doesn't have. At some point in time, we have all bragged about our fathers' jobs to our friends or brought expensive chocolates to impress our peers. Small children are now conscious of what brand they are wearing because of their friends or the constant pressure of society to be thin is always running through their minds. In the midst of all this, some of them forget to enjoy the pure essence of childhood which never returns. We all love our parents but why do we refuse to acknowledge them around our peers? We are not clear about it ourselves. If we concentrate on what we don't have, we will never have enough.

Hence when we can learn to overcome the complex and be satisfied with what we have,



If, on the other hand, we didn't have competition in school, would we ever be motivated to study the long essays or solve the mathematical problems faster than our friends? I don't think so. We all want a happening life but also wish that among the 7 billion people in this world, there will at least be one friend who will guide us to the right path. Some people are fortunate enough to have that and some take that for granted. These are the friends who would tell you that being 'cool' is not what it takes to be respected among peers but being yourself is what matters. The few peers who actually care about you would help you look after your health but will not let you be anorexic or become addicts.. This kind of pressure only helps you in the long run. The problem is that it is hard to differentiate between good and bad peer pressure. Everything seems appropriate at the moment and later on you realize that pressure can either make you do the most brilliant or the most detestable things. Hence it is for you to decide which pressure to take in and once you do, you've got your life back on track and sometimes that's all you need.



"I don't know what 'peer pressure' is, but it makes a *great* excuse!"

# A JOURNEY OF SELF EXPLORATION

I know 'Peer Education' sounds ridiculously cool but guess what?

It is! And in fact, I can't use enough adjectives to describe how amazing this course really is. Well of course I have more personal reasons to say so, but the things you can learn and experience can change your outlook on life completely. And if you can inspire other people to think differently about life, society and stereotypes, then let's just say you've become a quarter of Barack Obama already. No kidding.

Well, I'm not going elaborate on the various topics that were covered during our training sessions, but just to name some of them- The Need for Communication, Body Image, Gender Stereotypes, Relationships, Sexuality, Reproduction, Personal Safety, etc.

I think Peer Education classes really forced me to introspect. To think deeply about my own issues and find out ways to resolve them, which is why I said I had more personal reasons for enjoying this course. The fact is, I have in reality become a much more confident and happier person after doing this. Like all other girls, I too had issues with my body image and self esteem and I too had a heartbreak once which had caused a major setback in my life. But the wonderful thing that I learnt was-

- a. I need to develop more self-respect and start appreciating myself because the way I look, the way my body is, is a gift from God.
- b. It takes the right kind of people to look through your outer appearance and like you for who you really are on the inside. And probably I haven't met a lot of people like that but that doesn't upset me because now I know the right person will come along soon.
- c. And lastly, I think I realised that I have amazing potentials and I'm not going to deny the pleasure of being happy and proud for all that I am and all that I have.

I know that I'm sounding a little philosophical, but the whole point of writing this article is to tell you that my entire peer education journey has been one of self-exploration and identifying and accepting myself as an Individual.

And the amount of confidence I have developed in myself is just immeasurable. The biggest task for us was to conduct those 3 classes on any of the 3 topics that had been taught to us during the training sessions. I should tell you that it is no game to conduct classes for fifty minutes in front of 70-80 students of your age, who have all the courage and guts to make you cry if they can through bullying. But it's surprising to know that nice people do exist, and the class that we were allotted did help make our job seem easier (Thank God they didn't bully us!)

But what I observed from conducting these classes is that our peers are still not very open to discuss issues about sexuality or reproduction or even something as common as intimate relationships, which is why I think Peer Education should not just be a certificate course but should be made mandatory in all classes because there are a lot of misconceptions people have about sexual orientations and safety in intimate relationships and etc. We did try our best to put some clarity in those grey areas for them but we can only hope that they also implement it in their lives.

I think this is a highly recommended course for all students of our age. In the end all I can say is that for me this has been beyond a certificate course, its impact on my life has been highly effectual and I cannot thank my counsellors and my mentor enough for making this change in my life. I think it came along in my life at the right time and just the fact that now I have so much clarity in my thoughts and my goals for life make me elated.

This has by far been the best experience of my life

by Ankita Sinha

EMS



# NO WRONG ANSWERS

“No wrong answers!” sounds beautiful, doesn’t it? Students of Peer Education were lucky enough to hear the sound of those words in almost every class. We would sit in the class and it had become a ritual for every guest speaker to throw a question at us as the class commenced. I would turn around and see hands half up, a few people avoiding eye contact with the speaker and a few whispering into their friend’s ear, what I assume, was the answer to the question asked. No one would really answer, though everyone had a lot to say. Then the lecturer would speak out those magical words and the awkward silence of the class would break and a few hands would rise and answers would flow. This would make me ponder, every single class. I would transcend into a philosophical state and wonder whether life could be the same? Life, like this classroom, where everyone’s opinions were right and there is no such thing that one could say or do that would embarrass them?



We did not have this kind of liberty in our regular college classes. I think that is what motivated people to speak and overcome their fear of being laughed at. In my peer education class I would take full advantage of this opportunity and speak up every time I had anything to say. No one would laugh at me, instead everyone would listen to what I had to say and the speaker would also take my point into consideration and would continue the talk further. I felt good. I felt important. I felt heard. I’m sure everyone else in class did too.

I tried to make my peers feel the same way I did when I went to their classes to teach. I found so many people talking openly to me. It was a delightful experience! If I had to put a message across to anyone who was reading this article, I would say this: What is wrong and what is right are really subjective. So whenever life throws a question at you, know that there is no wrong answer. Believe in yourself, and go ahead. No one will laugh at you because, in this big classroom of life, everyone is trying to lift up their half raised hand and are trying to speak out what they are afraid to voice.

By Nikhil Shankar  
PSEng

# FIVE KEYS TO RELATIONSHIPS

The way in which two or more people or groups regard and behave towards each other is known as a relationship. Relationships can be with various people, such as with friends, at work, dating and marriage, family relationships. As we go through life, we come across different people and build relationships with them. Some relationships last, while others don't, depending on the kind of relationship and its nature. A healthy long lasting relationship has four basic pillars that help keep it strong.

## TRUST

At a basic level, trust can be described as the absence of fear in a relationship:

knowing that you won't intentionally hurt the other. It has a major impact on a person's well-being and his/her self image. Without trust, relationships will fail.

## COMMITMENT

Commitment is considered as the Second Pillar. In a relationship, two people commit to share and exchange. Marriage is a commitment in a relationship between a husband and wife. When you commit, it helps you become resilient during low times and disappointments, despite tough times; while at the same time respecting each other's freedom and individuality.

## RESPECT

The best way to be respectful is by making sure you are respecting yourself. You should have opinions, express your opinions, and feel good about a relationship. People who respect each other trust and support each other and value each other's independence. They also have the freedom to be themselves, talk honestly and freely, and make decisions and compromises together.

## COMMUNICATION

Communication or talking to other people and understanding what others say is very important in your life.



If people did not communicate, we wouldn't be able to know what others wanted, what to do, or where to go.

Therefore in a relationship, communication is of utmost importance in order to relate to one another. Communication involves talking and listening – they go hand in hand. Relationships are two-sided: each person has a responsibility to make themselves heard and to hear other people. If one is always listening, or always talking, the relationship is not balanced.

## BOUNDARIES

Creating boundaries is a good way to keep your relationship healthy and secure. By setting boundaries together, you can both have a deeper understanding of the type of relationship that you and your partner want. Boundaries are not meant to make you feel trapped. Creating boundaries is not a sign of secrecy or distrust -- it's an expression of what makes you feel comfortable and what you would like or not like to happen within the relationship.

by Rosina & Romario,  
BBA Travel and Tourism



# S'AMUSER

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T P C N D K P K C O H S L X Z Y L T O U T Y O Q  
O E M N E L E T G U R U I A F L N Z P U W O S E  
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E A W S A L S S E N S R S K W S T N E I T A P H  
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S U N R S X E I N E W G N I Y R C E E N Y A X O  
C I U E V W D N A H H D E K C O L F Q A I A C P  
P L N A K I A F D R S A M W N B D T F Y M Q W H  
C I A T S T N E B E T Y V F L E B I O V U S X R  
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ABUSED  
DANGEROUS  
SHOCK  
BEHAVIOUR  
DARK  
BROKEN  
BLINDNESS  
SORROW  
GUILTY

REJECTED  
HOPELESS  
CONFUSION  
SCREAMS  
SUICIDAL  
WORRY  
FEAR  
SECLUSION  
WITHDRAWN

# DID YOU KNOW?

>> Romantic love is biochemically indistinguishable from having severe obsessive-compulsive disorder.

>> The Truman Syndrome is a psychological disorder in which patients believe they're living in a reality TV show.

>> 68% of the people suffer from Phantom Vibration Syndrome, the feeling that one's phone is vibrating when it's not.

>> The act of falling in love is known to have a calming effect on a person's body and mind. This, in turn, will raise levels of nerve growth for about a year.

>> Heartbreak is real. This is an actual condition known as the Broken Heart Syndrome. Broken Heart Syndrome occurs when deep emotional triggers cause distress in the brain and significantly weaken a person's heart, causing such symptoms as chest pain or shortness of breath.

>> In a lifetime, you go through approximately good 396 friends but only around 1 in 12 friendships last.

>> Loud music can make a person drink more in less time.

>> A song that gets stuck in your head is called an "earworm".

>> Almost half of all women smokers acknowledge smoking as one of the best ways to control their weight. Of these women, 25% will die of a disease caused by smoking.

>> Nearly 11.7 million cosmetic surgical and nonsurgical procedures were performed in the United States in 2007. Women had nearly 10.6 million cosmetic procedures, 91% percent of the total.

>> Girls are selective in their use of social media. They are using Facebook to connect with friends, Tumblr as a creative outlet and Instagram as an artistic form of self expression.



Peer Education did exactly  
what it promised to do!

INTERESTING  
CLASSES!

They had many  
activities.

IT WAS  
FUN!

It was a learning experience!

Good Activities!

PEER EDUCATION HAS HELPED ME IMPROVE  
MY PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS ☺

Helped me build  
my self-esteem

Peer educators taught us  
very well about personal safety

Peer Education  
has helped me improve  
my communication  
skills! ☺

It was fun to listen!

I'm more  
confident now!

Helped me understand  
myself better.

# OUR TEAM

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