

# The NUSTIAN

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## **Editorial**

I feel privileged to present to the readers the fresh ( and overall 5th) issue of The Nustian, the annual bilingual literary magazine of the University. Despite the fiercely competitive academic environment, our students were able to squeeze some time from their busy schedules and contribute their essays, short stories, and poems for the magazine. Their ideas are fresh, illuminating, candid and positive. There is energy, exuberance and hope in their writings. One will find in this issue something about everything, i.e., ethics, humour and stray thoughts on a variety of topics. As a pleasant surprise, our prospective engineers, scientists, doctors and corporate leaders have written short stories and composed verses as well. The Nustians have manifested the potential that they “can do it well” even when it comes to writing.

The present issue of The Nustian is a happy mix of contributions from veterans and novices. It is heartening to note that the students’ contributions account for as much as 80% of the content. Veterans like Mr. Aslam Bazmi led from the front and contributed both in prose and poetry. There are significant contributions of students and faculty from Military College of Signals (MCS), which I acknowledge with gratitude. I urge upon the other NUST institutions also to send their contributions for the upcoming editions of The Nustian. All these endeavours are intended to make The Nustian a representative magazine of the University.

I owe my profound gratitude to the writers, poets and student editors who helped me a great deal in preparing the draft. Student Editor Ramsha Khuram did a fine job by meticulously proof reading the content. She has made her mark as a responsible student and a sound editor. I am also indebted to our diligent composers, Ahmad Raza and Nadeem Shahzad, for their assistance and a job well done.

Editorial Board gratefully bids adieu to student editors Usman Akhtar, Asad Tariq and Owais Aziz from NUST. We hope they will stay in touch, and keep contributing to the magazine with the same zeal. I lean on the enthusiastic support of the students and faculty of all NUST campuses in future too, and hope they will keep sharing with our readership their creative thoughts, views and reflections on various themes and issues. Your feedback for improvement of the magazine will be highly appreciated.

***Editor***

## Academic Institutions

(CAE) — College of Aeronautical Engineering, Risalpur

(C of E&ME) — College of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering, Rawalpindi

(MCS) — Military College of Signals, Rawalpindi

(MCE) — Military College of Engineering, Risalpur

(NIPCONS) — NUST Institute of Peace & Conflict Studies, Rawalpindi

(PNEC) — Pakistan Navy Engineering College, Karachi

(ASAB) — Atta-ur-Rahman School of Applied Biosciences, Islamabad

(USPCAS-E) — U.S Pakistan Center For Advanced Studies In Energy

(NBS) — NUST Business School, Islamabad

(RCMS) — Research Center for Modelling & Simulation, Islamabad

(SCME) — School of Chemical & Materials Engineering, Islamabad

(SCEE) — School of Civil & Environmental Engineering, Islamabad

(SNS) — School of Natural Sciences, Islamabad

(SEECs) — School of Electrical Engineering & Computer Science, Islamabad

(SMME) — School of Mechanical & Manufacturing Engineering, Islamabad

(S<sup>3</sup>H) — School of Social Sciences and Humanities, Islamabad

(SADA) — School of Art, Design & Architecture, Islamabad

## Attaining Peace in a Pace-Hungry World

Aslam Bazmi, SEECs

Now, the world so desperately needs peace  
We all need endlessly to learn and teach  
And teach and learn, as far as we can reach  
To make cruel war decline and peace increase  
For peace with all blessings in its train  
Comes from unused potential in our brain

—Kenneth Boulding

Peace is a universal aspiration today but unfortunately it continues to elude a large section of mankind around the globe. Sadly, inspite of passionate appeals of divine messengers, moralists, scholars and sages over the years, peace and stability are still a far cry for many nations in different parts of the world. Major hotbeds of instability are spread all over the globe. One out of six nations is plagued by the scourge of war and violence in one way or the other, with cumulative costs running into trillions of dollars, apart from the long-enduring adverse psychological and emotional effects stemming from traumatic dislocations, grave injuries, incapacitations, diseases, destruction of infrastructure, debts and poverty which cannot be calculated even remotely.

War alone is not the enemy of peace. Rather paradoxically, in certain circumstances, war becomes the only inevitable option to combat violence and secure peace. Humans tend to sour their lives in a myriad of ways and manners, manifesting in acts of violence starting from home—arising from internal strife, strained relationships, injustice, greed, anger, envy, hate, arrogance, bigotry and extremism. Ethnic cleansings and genocides in various parts of the world—Myanmar,

Bosnia, Sri Lanka, Chechnya, Indonesia, Sudan, Iraq, Niger, and South Africa, for instance—have been equally disruptive to peace and stability on this planet. Ironically, while all religions preach harmony and peaceful co-existence among people, misguided religiosity and sectarian extremism have done untold harm to peace and stability by fanning hatred and causing bloodshed in the garb of a holy cause.

### Peace dividends and blessings

In her book, *The Psychology of Peace* (2012), Rachel M. MacNair describes peace as “a positive societal state in which violence, whether direct or structural, is not likely and in which all humans, animals and ecology are treated with fairness, dignity and respect.” A state of peace is central to man’s personal, social, emotional and intellectual development. Human genius flourishes best in peace and serenity. Peace and security, characterized by fairness with all stakeholders, including environment and ecology, promote a culture of harmonious co-existence. Peaceful environment in a society provides ideal opportunities for scholastic pursuits, promotion of art and culture and developments in the fields of science, technology and commerce. Peace helps nations build bridges of understanding and collaboration with other states across the globe. Wars and conflicts, on the other hand, instill in people fear and insecurity, the arch-enemies of human happiness and fulfilment. War and crises devour the wealth of nations, destroy ecology and bleed their economies white, strangle creativity and innovation, multiply pov-

erty, and spread hunger, homelessness and diseases—the scars that may not heal even in decades. A look at the amazing progress and prosperity made by nations at peace with themselves and others provides substantial evidence, among other factors, of the efficacious role of peace in their success stories in diverse fields of life. This factor is clearly visible in the prosperity of nations such as, Norway, Australia, Germany, Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland. In the opinion of the Institute for Economics and Peace, as reported by Ian Morris and Mary Morrison, authors of *Peace Education* (2012) “Peace is cheaper and that the economic benefits of creating peace are measurable.”

### **Peace through non-violence**

Far from an abstract idea, peace through non-violence is a vibrant phenomenon. In recent history, the efforts of the US citizens committed to the cause of peace in the 1960s and 1970s eventually led to the end of the Vietnam War. Similarly, espousing the principles of non-violence, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and other civil rights leaders helped minority people gain dignity and civil rights. In the 1950s and 1960s, citizen protests against atmospheric testing of nuclear weapons led to a partial test ban treaty. In 1986, the Philippines people used non-violent tactics to depose Ferdinand Marcos. So did peace protests in Eastern Europe in 1989 led to collapse of the Iron Curtain. In 2011, protests across the Middle East, known as the Arab Spring, overthrew repressive governments with peoples’ protests.

### **Promoting peace through education**

Man is said to be pugnacious by nature. However, by exercising good judgment and self-restraint-

tempered with values of justice, compassion, empathy, fairness-tendencies to violence can be reduced, tamed and controlled to a great extent. Living in peace implies living harmoniously with one’s own self, others, and all sentient souls around. It is both an outward and an inward process. Outwardly, living in peace is a way of life showing respect and love to one another regardless of one’s cultural, religious, and political differences. Inwardly, it requires of people to search their hearts and minds and discover and diagnose the fear that causes the impulse to violence; ignoring the storm within will only keep the storm outside raging. Immanuel Kant in his essay translated and published as “To a Perpetual Peace-A Philosophical Sketch” (2013) asserts that humans are capable of and owe it to mankind to pursue strategies that will preserve and promote peace. In his view, what is morally obligatory must always take precedence over mere prudence. This section contains a set of random thoughts, suggestions and strategies to internalize peace in human psyche and create conditions for promotion of peace and stability in the world.

### **Peace education**

Preamble of the Constitution of the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) underscores: “Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defence for peace must be constructed.” The new paradigm shift of education with its overwhelming focus on science and technology has gravely diminished the value of character and core ethical values in societies across the world. In the post-modern world, it seems that people are neither aware nor appreciative of the power

of non-violence. Education for peace is needed to supplant the culture of violence that looms the media, entertainment industry, politics, national policy, academic institutions, community, family and the world at large. Ian Morris and Mary Morrison, authors of *Peace Education* (2103) rightly point out:

By the time children become adults, if they have neither learned how to resolve conflicts peacefully nor how to treat living things in a peaceful manner, they may become violent citizens, further promoting dysfunctional social behaviours.

They argue that while societies spend money and resources to train physicians to heal the ill, they should also pay heed to educate citizens to conduct their affairs nonviolently. In the view of Rachel M. MacNair, author of *Peace Psychology* (2012), an understanding of what causes human mind to violent behaviour is crucially important for the societal health of a nation or community. In 1910 William James, the distinguished American philosopher advocated in his essay captioned “The Moral Equivalent of War” the need for educators and leaders to wage a campaign against the militaristic thinking that was perverting civilization at that time. Such campaign needs to be pursued with added vigour and commitment in all societies in order to transform citizens charmed by war as an instrument of displaying bravery and heroism. Since the true aim of education is to enable the full development of human potential and well-being as well as contribute to the common good, the goal of peace must be embedded in all formal and non-formal learning experiences. Peace education aims to engage the community of students and educators in a commitment to create a more

just and peaceful world order, embracing individuals’ quest for inner peace and concern for family, community, nation and the world. It equips and empowers people with requisite skills, attitudes, as well as knowledge so as to build their capacity to solve problems non-violently and help create a sustainable environment. Judiciously designed peace courses highlighting the critical value of peace and harmony are, therefore, the need of the hour, and should find place in our study schemes at all levels.

### **Peace literature**

All nations need to strive to develop a body of peace literature. Learned people, leading scholars, sages, literary figures, poets, playwrights and film-makers can contribute a great deal towards promoting peace through their messages of love and harmony and raising voice against violence of all kinds. Stirring poetry and prose deeply touch the chords of people’s hearts. It would be beneficial for societies and nations to institute poetry and essay competitions to glorify the blessings and boons of peace. Besides affording literary figures and scholars a forum to share their lofty thoughts and feelings on peace, such activities will serve the purpose of motivating and inspiring the audience and help them shun negativity and cherish peace.

### **Eradication of hate literature**

Hate-mongering continues to eat into the cohesiveness of societies and nations. Respect for others’ views, opinions, beliefs and eschewing bigotry and prejudices are the basic tenets of promoting peace among various segments of society. The venom of hate can potentially poison human minds to the extent of brazen killings of innocent

lives with no scruples or qualms of conscience. All steps ought to be taken to arrest and contain the spread of hate literature in any form or genre, both at national and international levels. The abuse of freedom of speech should be bridled and tamed with reason, and moves like publishing profane material and releasing libelous and blasphemous videos and cartoons targeted at a particular religious community must be viewed as acts of unprovoked violence. World leaders and the UNO should consider legislating ban on literature provoking religious sensitivities of the followers of all faiths and religions. All faiths and religious denominations should be respected and no one should be allowed to indulge in sacrilegious and blasphemous activities against any faith, religion or sect.

## **Tolerance**

Cultivating and practising tolerance is the heart of living peacefully. Tolerance in all that we think and do makes a difference not only in our lives but also in the lives of others. Tolerance for others is about appreciating diversity, the plurality of modern society, the readiness to live and let others live. Failure to tolerate others' beliefs and opinions causes friction, discrimination, repression, dehumanization, and ultimately violence. Rather than being judgmental about others, we should change our own perspective and help nourish the good in others.

## **Peace with oneself**

Absence of inner peace drives people to a constant state of conflict. In the bid to raise possessions on the way of social climbing without ever pausing to value their inner worth, people are likely to become perpetually unhappy. When we

crave something and we cannot have it, we are in a state of conflict. It's easy to forget to be grateful for what people possess when they are madly in the race to build their possessions, career, estate etc. People should make conscious choices about what improves and beautifies their lives rather than exhausting themselves in the rat-race. It is worthwhile going out into nature or taking a good walk and listening to some soft music to calm one's anxiety. Living in peace means more than living in the absence of violence. It is important for people to cultivate peace in all dimensions of their lives.

Peace with oneself relates to inner peace that is achieved through the psyche. In the view of Dalai Lama and Thich Nhat Hanh, "inner peace" and "outer peace" are interrelated. Those who aspire to work for peace in the world must themselves be striving to acquire a measure of inner harmony. Lack of peace and contentment arising from obsessive concern for worldly gains would be found at the core of most of human conflicts. Discontentment brings with it a battalion of physical, emotional and psychological problems. By our own negative attitudes, we tend to heckle our nerves with anxiety, despair, fear and frustration. The cumulative adverse effect tells on our efficiency, sours our dispositions and turns existence into futility. In other words, chaos and disorder in the human society are the inevitable corollaries of absence of inner peace in the psyche of modern man. Plagued with high ambition and little faith in the betterment of things, people tend to turn hostile even to their own well-being. We cannot change the nerve shattering pace and tenor of the whirligig of life in this cyber age. Yet, with a little healthy attitudinal change, it is possible to cope

well with the challenges of modern life. The secret lies in developing a conscious belief and faith in the goodness of life in all its hues and shades. Faith is the conviction that there is a mystery, and that it is greater than us. Let us admit honestly, all humans have their share of misfortunes and failures. The test of courage and patience lies in accepting the harsh realities of life.

## **Reflection**

Hasty decisions with tragic outcomes can be avoided by thinking through all important issues and angles of a problem. Of course, at times fast action is essential to ensure safety but in normal circumstances reacting with care and consideration will result in much better outcomes for all concerned. When we feel like the need to respond to something in a manner that betrays our anger, frustration, or irritation, we should remove ourselves from the situation that is causing confusion and inability to reflect. This will allow us space to overcome the initial angry feelings and replace them with thoughtful solutions. It pays to practice reflective listening. Spoken language is imprecise, particularly when people are stressed. According to John Powell, British composer and conductor, "In true listening, we reach behind the words and see through them to be able to find the person who is being revealed." Listening is a search to find the treasure of the true person as revealed verbally and non-verbally." The importance of reflective listening to living a peaceful life consists in its contribution to stop people seeing things purely from their perspective and start trying hard to dig down into what another person is really saying and means. Nothing should be taken on the face of it.

## **Forgiveness**

In the profound words of the British poet and playwright, Hannah Moore, "Forgiveness is the economy of the heart... forgiveness saves the expense of anger, the cost of hatred, the waste of spirits." No matter where people live, what religion they follow or what culture they belong to, at the heart of everything, they are all essentially humans, with the same ambitions and aspirations to raise family, and to live life to its fullest. Our cultural, religious, and political differences should not become a cause of hostility and conflict that can lead the world to sadness and destruction. By feeling compelled to harm a person out of a perceived damage to one's reputation or contemplating an equally abhorrent reaction, people only perpetuate anger, violence, and sorrow. Forgiveness will help to seek the way of living. Dwelling on what should have been and reliving past hurts will only keep the negatives of the past ablaze and bring constant internal conflict. Forgiveness allows people to live in the present, to look forward to the future, and to let the past settle gently. It is the ultimate victory as it lets people relish life again by making peace with the past, thus lifting them up and freeing them of rancour. Forgiveness is about learning to cope with the negative feelings. And in forgiving, we empathize with the offenders and this leads us to understand what motivated them to cause us harm. When it is perceived that someone else's honour has been hurt, allow the purported victim to speak his or her own mind, and be willing to seek resolution through forgiveness and greater understanding. Even when one feels forgiveness cannot be given, there is no cause for violence. Instead, one should choose to distance and be the better person.

## **Self-change**

Violence starts with one's acceptance of its possibility—often its inevitability—as a solution. In seeking not to harm living beings, live peacefully, and change the world, first people need to change themselves. It requires cultivating an attitude to love and care for people for what they truly are. It is important to make people comfortable around us. This will promote environment of mutual respect and amity. We need to share our ideas about ways to help create a more peaceful world and ways to embrace differences without falling into conflict. We should be willing and ready to make sacrifices to help others. A worthwhile contribution would be to make videos, write stories, poems or articles to share with everyone about the importance of peace. Certainly, the greatest noble cause is to demonstrate in all possible manners and ways our desire to bring about peace in the world. People's hearts can be won only by showing our willingness to serve causes higher than ourselves.

## **Interfaith Harmony**

Inter-faith harmony is sorely needed to curb and eliminate religious extremism in various parts of the world. Fortunately, all three of the Abrahamic faiths—Christianity, Judaism and Islam—contain strong exhortations to protect human lives and create conditions for the living in peace and harmony. Islam is credited with showing unprecedented tolerance towards non-Muslims right from the conquest of Mecca in 630 AD. In Moghul India, in Umayyad Spain, in the Ottoman Empire and in Egypt and Syria, Muslim rulers treated non-Muslims amicably, allowing them to practise freely their religious beliefs.

During the last four decades, we find some

good examples of mediation and peacemaking by religious leaders and institutions, including the short-lived 1972-peace agreement in Sudan; the leading role of various churches against apartheid in South Africa and the peaceful transition; and the most frequently cited successful mediation achieved by the Rome-based Community of Sant'Egidio to help end the civil war in Mozambique in 1992. All religious leaders and preachers should demonstrate the true spirit of their respective faiths and denominations and promote harmony and peace. All revealed religions, as well as other faiths like Buddhism, Hinduism, Taoism, and Jainism are strong proponents of love and peace. The teachings of love, compassion and tolerance common to various religions and faiths can be a strong basis to promote inter-faith harmony as a goal of world peace.

## **Saints and mystics**

In all religious streams, there is a section of spiritually evolved individuals, the true devotees and apostles of God. They are embodiments of our love and compassion-incarnate with hearts of gold. Their hearts and souls radiate peace and serenity with hardly any taint of envy, hatred, arrogance and malice. Their edifying teachings will enrich masses both morally and spiritually. Their sublime thoughts and noble deeds are worth preserving and disseminating to spiritually starved souls around the globe. Unlike religion acquired as a socially-learned behaviour, which may precipitate into fanaticism or extremism, mysticism is based on direct inner spiritual experiences. Such spiritual experiences have occurred in mystics from all the world's religions throughout the ages. Interestingly, mystics of all religions are generally able to communicate with one another

and appreciate the spiritual or God force operating within others, regardless of their religious tradition. Mystics respect cultural and religious diversity. Rigid followers of a religion are likely to face difficulties in dealing with diversity in a tolerant

manner. It is rightly said that if the whole world were mystics, world peace would not have been far cry in present times, because mystics ungrudgingly honour the mystical experiences of others.

## A Society's Responsibility

Muhammad Abubakar, MCS

The standard of life has changed in such a manner that people have become enslaved by their own wishes and habits. A materialistic approach in every niche and corner and superfluity of the amenities of life have caused a potential threat to the sanctity of moral values that just being the wealthy suffices to be respectable, righteous and honorable. So, the paradigms of relationships among people in society have changed terribly. The earlier Muslims were successful in their expeditions because they were simple in daily life and resolute in divine commandments; they were not enslaved by their habits and wishes. The study of history reveals that even during the best practices of democratic values, the governments and states were devastated because of corrupt social values. Had there been the healthy society and moral values among the masses, the states would not have perished. Societal values determine the type of government and rules. The best governments and finest administrations and bureaucracies can be formed provided the society is vibrant, receptive, lively and responsible. But, miserably, in our type of society even if Junaid Baghdadi becomes the head of the state, the prospective change will not occur. It is the duty of the society to produce ca-

pable, proficient and consummate leadership according to their demands and necessities but we only want to talk about the effect and not the principal cause. The current crisis of leadership that we see is because of our lethargic social values.

When back in 1258 AD, Tartars of Mongols demolished Muslim states, Islam re-emerged just because of some spirited people who were vigorous in the revival of spiritual and moral ideals in society. The Tartars beat Muslims on political, military and administrative fronts but surrendered before moral, educational and spiritual values of Islam. Nonetheless they became the caretakers and custodians of Islam.

Renowned English historian Arnold Taibu says, "This was unbelievable that Tartars would embrace Islam because in case of choosing religion, the Christians were closer than Muslims. Islam just emerged from the remnants of its burns and conquered the hearts of Tartars." Thus governments and authority are not permanent things. The primary thing is the norms of society. If the society is producing righteous, virtuous, just and capable people, there is no perplexity.

Revival of society means that the society must be standing on some values and principles. We

must primarily take care of building these values, as when these values are ascertained, they emanate and prevail in the society. The resulting social, political and financial institutions will rest on such values and principles. For instance, the western society has some values and principles and the institutions there owe and oblige them. The West was at a time not civilized, so some intellectuals and conscious people started the movement of following certain values. When the society accepted them, they also became part of their institutions. For example democracy is a western value. It says difference of opinion will be accommodated as a basic right and the majority votes will be considered in decision making. When society accepted it as a social value, it also became part of institutions and corporations. Thus parliamentary democracy originated.

An Islamic society has some values and principles. Unless we practice and establish them in our society, they will never become part of our institutions. For example, the Muslim society is founded on the belief of judgement on the doomsday. When

this belief is firmed up in the daily practices of society, it will also become part of our institutions leading to the sense of responsibility and fear of impeachment on doomsday. This will help us in eradicating corruption. The institutional policies will emanate from this color of belief and value. The people at work in shops and corporate institutions will not be able to neglect this factor that they will be answerable on doomsday. We must now promote our social values and practice them in our lives. We sometimes feel hesitant to follow our Islamic values. This sense of shyness is leading to gradual elimination of moral and ethical values which, if become norm of society, would in effect eliminate lots of potential problems and dilemmas that we are facing now. Therefore, revival of such values should be promoted and be practiced in not only private but public and corporate life too. This will ensure the actual change that we aspire to occur, although it is an evolutionary process, we must not get tired of practicing these values.

## Perfection is a Myth

Warda Batool

We have always been told to adapt to the surroundings and evolve. That is one of the primitive rules of surviving on this planet. Society tells us that we have to be “fit” for its ways in every way possible. If I had to give a word to what everyone wants us to be, that would be “perfect”. Yes, perfect. Not suitable or befitting but perfect. That’s what parents want their children to be, a teacher

wants the students to be and a boss wants the employees to be.

Perfection is an illusion, change what you can, accept the rest and move on. Setting aside this widely agreed upon concept, I would like to say that perfection is unattainable; it is nothing but a myth. Nobody leads a perfect life or has a perfect personality. All have flaws hidden underneath

their presentable exterior. The person closest to perfection in a field would actually be the one who is 'better' than others but not 'perfect'. The people around us and, may I say, we ourselves have programmed ourselves to strive for the unattainable, i.e., perfection. Somebody once said, "Perfection is an illusion: change what you can, accept the rest and move on". I would not challenge even a syllable of this sentence. Undoubtedly, being able to fit into everyone's definition of perfection is not only difficult but somewhat impossible. The best each one of us can do is to find errors in our ways, correct it where it's possible, let it go when it cannot be done and live with it.

Has anyone of you ever stopped to wonder as to who developed the criteria of perfection? Who classifies us as being perfect or imperfect? Well, the answer is nobody. Nobody knows what perfection is, so why not build a definition of our own? Every person perceives perfection in a different manner and, therefore, must have the right to be perfect according to one's own standards and not that of their boss, teacher or parents.

In our society parents have great expectations from their children. Parents dream of their children to be 'perfect', in the eyes of the society, by either pursuing the career of medicine or engineering. I do not in any way think of these careers as being unacceptable but what I am saying is that everyone must have a liking and opinion of one's own as to what one wants to become, when one grows up. We should stop labeling people from the day they are born. Dreams of becoming a guitarist, an entertainer, a comedian, an actor, a scientist, an astronaut, or an entrepreneur should not be scrutinized and thought of as absurd ideas generated as a result of westernization or watching too

much television. We ourselves listen to, watch, get entertained by and appreciate these artists but we don't let our children be one of them. I believe we can prosper as a community when we let go of these labels and stop judging, not only people, but also their careers. So what if we don't get to be the perfect individuals with the perfect jobs? At least we would be content with what we are doing. This is your life and your life story should have your mistakes, your choices and the inevitable outcomes. There should be no one to blame or appreciate for what your life turns out to be, but you.

I believe I can explain this better with an example from a Hollywood movie, *The Black Swan*, the leading star tries to perfect her ballet moves to such an extent that she herself turns into the 'black swan' in the end. Thus, if you're trying to live up to somebody else's expectations, you may end up being someone you are not. And losing yourself is definitely not worth it.

The key is to keep experimenting and striving for betterment. It is important to be better than you were the day before. This would help you in being motivated and therefore excel in both your personal and professional life. So let's stop fussing about attaining perfection and happily live our imperfect lives.

One crazy day in our pediatric clinic saw me hand a young patient a urine sample container and tell him to fill it up in the bathroom. A few minutes later, he returned to my nurse's station with an empty cup. "I didn't need this after all," he said. "There was a toilet in there."

— Linda Feikle

## The Clock Just Doesn't Stop Ticking

Aiman Farzeen

Every single particle in this universe follows an explicit pattern without fail. From the enigmatic celestial bodies to the creatures inhabiting the deep, dark depths of the ocean floor, everything is slave to the innate periodicity bestowed by nature. All these ways of conduct seem to follow time religiously. Among all this flawlessness, there exists an aberration we call the human race. We do not give time or the value that it deserves. Pondering over the fact that at a particular moment that we're living is never going to come back: I see the moment as all the more unique and squandering it foolishly never seems to end well.

People are more important than they realize! Man was not designed to live in isolation, implying that he shoulders some responsibility for others around him. Think of all the great minds who worked selflessly to improve the quality of life. Considering they gave into their wishes of slacking off, life as we know it would have never existed. So the next time you think of abandoning your responsibilities, think again! You will never

find time for anything. If you want time, you must make it.

In the course of our brief lives, we've been repeatedly lectured on how wasting time may leave us in an appalling predicament. Growing up, the trite statement, 'You will never find time for anything. If you want time, you must make it' haunted me like some ghost of an octogenarian. I might be going out on a limb saying this but I think wasting time is something that can't be helped. For obvious reasons, human beings are far from perfection. There are limits to what they can pull off and once in a while letting go off is the only remedy. Even then we should try to manage skilfully and try to make up for the lost time.

There is no match for a soul driven by purpose. We can make every tick of the clock count if only our mind can comprehend our true potential when purpose comes into the equation. Understandably, we can't make the flow of time come to a halt, but we sure can use and bend it the way it suits us best.

## Decisions in the Mid-air

Fazeel Ahmed

He stood at the edge of the cliff, looking down at the world below, the world which he judged to be cruel, unjust and not worth living. He hated what he saw for the world had given him nothing in return. What he wanted he never got and what he loved was taken away from him. His job,

his friends and his everything were in a downward spiral bound to hit rock bottom. Thus here he was, standing at the top of the cliff. He took a deep breath.

"Good-bye cruel Earth", he said. "Good-bye you just Nature, for far too long have you pried on

the weak and the helpless". And then, he jumped.

Going down, falling faster and faster, he saw the world coming up to meet him in the air. He felt the rush of air, he spread his arms and there he was flying. For the first time in his life he was free and he was happy. Why would he not be happy? He was flying and everybody wants to fly. But like all things, happiness must also pass. The ground got closer and closer and his thoughts changed.

He could only think about the fact that once the ground hit him, it would all be over. He would never ever have the chance to improve his life. He would never be able to take his revenge on those who had wronged him. And more and more fears came up to him. What if this life is all there is in his fate? What if there is no afterlife and no heaven and hell, but only dark oblivion? What if he only has this life to make the best of and nothing else?

The thought came to him that he was wasting the only thing good about him. He was to extinguish his spirit, his life force. It was then that he decided if given another chance, he would make the best of what he has. If given another chance to live and breathe in this world, he would work as hard as he can and succeed. He would not let anything stand in his way and he would be the best there ever could be.

Such were his thoughts and decisions while he was flying. You may think that his time is now over. It was over as soon as he jumped and forsook the world. And everything he thought or decided after that moment would not alter his destiny; it would not change the fact that he would hit the ground.

You are right to do so. But is there no chance that he would survive? And if he survives will he not keep his resolve to be better and best?

The answer to that is that he will keep his resolve and he will work as hard as he can. So I say to you, why does someone need to jump from a cliff to understand that he matters in this life and he can succeed in this life if he works hard?

I would like to see you try to jump off a metaphorical cliff. Think about all the things that you never achieved. Think about all the things that you want to achieve. Think of the glory that awaits you after those achievements. Think and remember your mistakes. Now that's enough thinking. It's time for a promise, an oath. Take an oath to learn from your mistakes, you will keep your goals clear in your mind till your last breath you will never lose hope. Work towards success and continue to set new goals as you go. And keep that promise till the end. Success will come. It will.

## Straying from Reality

Ramsha Khuram, SEECs

I've lived on this earth for 19 years. 19 years isn't quite a lot to see the world and understand it; for in the first 6 or 7 years you're alive but you're indifferent. You know well what you want but re-

fuse to see what this world has to offer. In fact, you're an embodiment of selfishness. You cry when you feel hungry, oblivious to whether all those who starve in this mundane world are fed

when they are tearful and yearn to fill their lean bellies with only as much as can help them stay alive. When drowsiness and tiredness overcomes you, you tend to get all cranky and your mother cradles you in her warm arms. Of course, you do not know that the servant that works in your house can't even imagine throwing tantrums like yours when he is drowsy and exhausted after a day's labor. In other words, you are young and innocent and God didn't want to disappoint you with what this world has to offer so he gave you a mother and she is responsible for everything! She supplies it no matter how meager her means may be and the world seems all so perfect - a utopia where your wish is her command.

Quite frankly I feel as if I still thrive in a utopian world but much often this impression gets fogged- all hazy and vague. This is but a consequence of flashes of reality that occasionally tap my shoulder and manage to seek my attention. Even though I endeavor to be indifferent like before; this world does not let me live in my Utopian shell anymore. I'm grown up enough to see beyond the veil my mother had once protected me with. Here are a few times that really shook me and I realized I wasn't only in some Utopia but in fact God had held me in His own lap. Will they shake you? Well, only if you are human enough!

We, especially girls, are so demanding. Only our parents can fully bear witness to how expensive we can be. We turn a blind eye towards those in need and, well, it is something we all need to be ashamed of. Let me not digress from the topic and instead admit that we tend to adopt this highly unforgiveable attitude of complaining about what accessories we don't have that others do. Do we care about those who possess nothing? The answer

lies in the question itself. Ever thought of the girl who was born without any hands? Measure your needs against hers. Back in school, during my A level papers I saw a girl sitting in the hall with the students who are given the leniency of extra time because of some disability. She seemed perfectly normal. In fact, I thought she was quite pretty for her skin had a glow to it. As she raised her arms, I realized that she had no hands. How awful did I feel, for while I was measuring how good looking she was compared to most of us in the hall, I had failed to see that she lacked something so fundamental, something I had assumed had to be there in every human and had taken it for granted. Not once in these 19 years had I thanked God for mine but rather assumed, quite shamefully, that it was binding on Him to give me a pair to thrive on earth.

Similarly, waiting in a jam packed elevator at the Centaurus mall, I heard the voice of a young boy. "How cute and innocent," I contemplated as I heard him pretend to be Superman. I heard a girl trying to tell him to stop talking and guessing it was an older sibling, I turned. Reality shot through me-searing my heart. The beholder of the cute voice was a 5 year old albino-oblivious to how different he was from others. He was lost in his own world. His sisters, however, were trying to make him quiet so he could avoid drawing attention. They apparently seemed to be embarrassed about his disability and tried to conceal it. I instantly became teary eyed, and my heart became filled with gratitude to the brim. Oh how innocent this child was! Not once had I valued how my sisters were normal. They just seemed to be a part of my life and the thought of "what if God had put me through this test?" made me shudder. This young

albino boy did not know how differently the world would see him. Perhaps kids would mock at him for being so different but to me this young boy was an allegory of the verse “Then which of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?” His discolored body roared of it. But I, with grief, must say few in this world would hear this scream and respond to it by thanking God.

These people with disabilities are more blessed than us. They are like chess pieces that God Himself gave purpose while we struggle to discover our own. Their every action is meaningful, and their disabilities a message. We are far beyond handicapped than the blind man when we refuse to see the message that these people behold.

I am 19. Not too old and not too young. I wouldn't say I've seen the real world. Saying I've seen a fraction of it would also still be an exaggeration. Nevertheless, an occasional glimpse reminds me of who I am. This keeps me close to God and I'd say I'm still more fortunate than many who have to struggle to see God's bounties and be grateful to Him. We can never be grateful enough so we are still and will always remain indebted to Him. May we realize and repent before our circumstances force us to. And may we clear this debt as much as possible before we meet God. Aameen.

## Truth

Isha Lodhi, SE ECS

Truth is strong, and she is infallible. But naïve too. And almost always bitter. What mesmerizes me is not truth, but it is the length humans go to kill her. Truth is the letters written on a beach by simplicity. She has no voice, no meaning, no purpose. She's just there because she's there. And time after time, she's washed over by humans. Either by human weakness, or by their cleverness, or by their never-ending desire to stay cozy in their skins.

Why do people not speak to themselves about the bad that happened to them? Why don't they speak about the wrong they knew happened? Sometimes, we think it doesn't matter. Sometimes, we're too lazy or afraid to face the consequences of truth being exposed. Sometimes we want to forget. So, we stop thinking about her, and tell ourselves she's not there. And truth, she's not

like a monster. She doesn't stay no matter what. She goes away if we stop seeing her. With every wave, she washes out, and fades a little more. All she leaves is faint traces in the wet sand. Visible enough to be retraced if we want to remember her. Yet so light that she stops mattering to us. Sometimes, seeing the letters in the sand even once changes us forever. And truth finds something else to live in, apart from the sad beach.

Truth is bitter. She's not comfortable. She's not happy. She can't be changed. You cannot make her smile. You cannot make her beautiful. But she's always there. Somehow, I think that even though she's not pretty, and not sweet, and not cozy, embracing her would make the world more happy, much prettier, and more comfortable than it is now.

Truth is rugged and thorny but very powerful. It is disfigured but it survives like cactus despite scanty water in the desert. It is not transient but long-lasting and durable.

Truth is steady, and falsehood is soft and dusty. Truth stands motionless while falsehood withers, and disappears. Truth is bitter in the beginning but tastes sweet later. Falsehood tastes sweet in the beginning but bitter later on. Truth makes us happy but late. Man is born short sighted so looks for instant pleasures. Man looks for cash and lets the credit go. That's why truth goes unwanted and finds few customers.

Truth stands the test of time while a lie avoids the moment. A lie makes you a coward and dissatisfied person. One lie leads to many more lies. Then a time comes that telling lies becomes your

way of life. Truth kills you once while a lie kills you time and again. Lies weaken the spirit while truth strengthens it. People who listen to our lies immediately make out that we are lying but out of courtesy or some other consideration they may keep quiet. Truth is brief, pointed and sharp. A lie is elaborate, disjointed and long. Truth is either 'yes' or 'no' but a lie is verbosity.

Truth is iron, and lie is rubber, flexible and adjustable. Truth is a hard nut to crack while rubber needs not crack. It just moulds itself as per pressure exerted. Iron is noisy but rubber works softly and quietly. Iron leaves permanent scars and prints on the surfaces it touches, while rubber erases all prints and impressions. Rubber is impressionless. The choice is yours. You want to leave any impression or erase it.

## Truth

Rizwan Ahmed, MCS

Life is often described as a constant battle against the afflictions encountered upon. Man is always susceptible to infirmities throughout the course of his life. In the quest to negotiate one of the challenges, he's prone to many others. And in this way, the battle goes on till the very last day. Perhaps, the only people without worldly problems are found in the cemetery. Thus encountering the problems is an indication of life and being alive. Does it mean everybody leads a life full of problems only? No. Allah, the Almighty, mentions in the Holy Quran, "Verily, with every hardship there is relief (94:6). A very interesting phenomenon of life reveals that we appreciate relief only after having faced the misery; just

as health is treasured when we meet ailment. So, why not contemplate the adversities of life positively? The happenings that are meant to make us feel stronger when we overcome any of these. As a matter of fact, we learn courage when we face danger; we learn patience when we endure suffering; we learn tenderness when we taste pain; we learn to prize true friends when false ones forsake us. Hazrat Ali (Karamullah Wajjhu) says: "Do not let your difficulties fill you with anxiety; after all it is only in the darkest nights that the stars shine more brightly."

We don't just get the sweet out of life without the bitter - we'd like to, but we don't. The sun doesn't always shine; sometimes there are storms,

tornadoes, earthquakes, car accidents, fires and death. No one escapes the problems of life. If it doesn't happen sooner in life, it will happen later. We can overcome just about any problem, obstacle, or adversity that life hurls at us - if we have a willpower; because where there is a will, there is a way. An old Chinese saying goes, "If you live with a problem long enough, it could eventually become a blessing." Within every adversity in life, there is always a seed of an equivalent or greater benefit. We have to look for it - find it - and act on it. When we see a highly decorated military person, all dressed up with battle ribbons and awards on his chest; we are actually looking at those who audaciously faced and conquered hardships, dangers, life-threatening situations, injuries, and heartbreak watching their buddies die terrible deaths. Yes, there must be the times when they bite off more than they could chew; the moments when the frailties pose much stronger challenges than they could probably respond. Yet they stand valiantly for the cause and bear the brunt;

and the records show, they took the blows - and made their way. Charles Lindberg says: "Success is not measured by what a person accomplishes, but by the opposition they have encountered, and by the courage with which they have maintained the struggle against overwhelming odds".

Without trouble we would be like plants that have sprouted, grown, and been nurtured in the overprotected shelter of a greenhouse - too tender to live in the open. How can we possibly become a strong person, if we have an easy life? We must realize it, no matter what problems we have to face today there is always a solution, because we have nothing to deal with but our own thoughts. As long as we think that our destiny is in the hands of other people, the situation is hopeless. We will have to confront our problems with courage, self-assurance and action; with a firm belief that tougher the life is, the tougher we have a chance to become-because with every hardship there's a relief.

## Yellow Journalism

Arslan Naseer, MCS

### Definition

The practice of seeking out sensational news for the purpose of boosting a newspaper's circulation or if such stories are hard to find, trying to make comparatively simple news appear sensational is called yellow journalism. It is also called sensationalism.

### Historical Background

The beginning of yellow journalism is attributed

to William Randolph Hearst and Joseph Pulitzer. The industrial revolution brought about a printing press that could create thousands of copies of a newspaper overnight. In 1895, Pulitzer's paper, New York World, was the top paper in New York City and the surrounding area. Then Hearst bought the New York Journal, and quickly became Pulitzer's main competitor.

The term yellow journalism came from a fight between the two papers over a cartoonist, who

created a strip called the “Yellow Man.” The comic strip used a special no-smudge yellow ink. Hearst took the cartoonist away from Pulitzer to create the comic strip in his paper. Pulitzer then hired a second cartoonist to duplicate the work of the first. This competition between the two papers quickly spiralled out of control. Yellow Journalism has the following characteristics:-

- a. Frightening headlines in huge print, often of minor news
- b. Massive use of pictures, or imaginary drawings
- c. Use of fake interviews, misleading headlines, pseudoscience, and a parade of false learning from so-called experts
- d. Emphasis on full-color Sunday supplements, usually with comic strips
- e. Dramatic sympathy with the loser against the system.

### **Impact of yellow journalism in Pakistan**

The rise of sensationalist media and yellow journalism in Pakistan has led to the emergence of a debate in various circles in the country about the accountability of the media and the journalistic profession. The media is ideally perceived as the fourth pillar of the state; the original three are Judicial, Legislative and Executive, but in Pakistan, most people have come to distrust the media and those who practice journalism.

Presently, Pakistanis are demanding that star anchors of various current affairs programs and other journalists be held accountable for their actions. The media in general and yellow journalists are criticized on various platforms, internet forums and television programs. People also resort to wall chalking against the practice of yellow journalism and media exaggeration in the streets of major cities. Since 2002 media has been projecting Pak Army as if they are fighting

against their own innocent people in Wana and other tribal areas by publishing headlines against this operation of Govt and Army and criticizing by giving false news. But later on when the facts were revealed, everyone was in favour of Army’s operation in these areas. So here Pakistani media was exercising yellow Journalism.

### **Causes of yellow journalism**

A few causes of Yellow Journalism are:-

- a. **Bribery.** Bribery is the root cause to get any thing published even false stories.
- b. **Independence of media.** It is also a cause of publishing fake news when there is no check of Govt on publications, there will definitely be yellow journalism.
- c. **People’s interest.** Media gives news which public wants to listen to and our public unfortunately loves to hear sensational news even if it is based on false stories.
- d. **Competition.** These days there is a competition between different channels to attract the public toward their channel. Most of the newspapers give false sensational headlines.

### **Recommendations**

There are a few recommendations to eradicate yellow journalism:-

- a. There is a need for strong initiatives for the promotion of positive journalism, its ethics and values.
- b. Journalists should realize the importance of having a healthy profession. They should be reminded of their social responsibility and be discouraged from practicing yellow journalism and publishing dubious news items.
- c. There is a need for proper professional journalistic training in this part of the world, carried out by objective and renowned organiza

tions in the media industry.

- d. Finally, there should be a code of conduct that binds all journalists and journalistic bodies, as well as strict defamation acts and

laws.

- e. The authorities should take steps to control and punish yellow journalists.

## Make Things Happen

GC Danish Iqbal, MCS

A champion is a person who keeps on going even when he has nothing left in his vat, and that's what separates him from those who do not. There's no comparison to human energy and power. He could wrestle with a whale and still beat it, and he could kill a rock and still stand straight and he could tear down mountains and could still jump. It all comes down to us and how we take things. There's no 'I can't take anymore' or 'That's enough for today. Life is a game, and indeed a tough one! And we know that in every game the margin for error is so small that one moment too late or too early and we don't quite get it, one step too fast or too slow and we don't quite make it.

There's a possibility, that you don't work it up and could still survive but there's no pleasure in living a life without success. Nobody has ever appreciated an easy living. Take risks, take challenges, bear the hardship and be strong. Nobody's going to come down to you and share your pain, and I wish I could tell you that things will get better automatically but I can't because that's not the truth. At the end of the day, success is what we all want; we all want to win. And the truth is that you need to find something within you that elevates you and motivates you, inspires you, stimulates you and fuels you up.

You have to define a motive to yourself and

then stick to it. Never give up on it. After every morning you wake up and before going to bed every night, analyze your daily progress. Question yourself if you were able to succeed, if yes, then to what degree and if no then why not. Remember that good luck does not bring itself to your door step. If you are waiting for that perfect moment, perfect timing, let me tell you that's not going to happen. In order to stay up, you have to challenge your will; you have to create that perfect timing and perfect moment. If you think you are good enough to fight, to work day and night, gladly sweat for it with all your will and think you will make it. Then never waste a single moment. Never let a minute go discarded. Make every day count. Make things happen.

When I worked as a medical intern in a hospital, one of my patients was an elderly man with a thick accent. It took a while before I understood that he had no health insurance. Since he was a World War II vet, I had him transported to a VA hospital, where he'd be eligible for benefits. The next day, my patient was back, along with this note from the VA admitting nurse: "Right war, wrong side."

— M. Murray

## The Doors of Sadaqah

Mughees Ahmad, MCS

Abu Dhar-AI-Ghafari said: “The messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: “Sadaqah is prescribed for every person, everyday the sun rises”, I said: “O Messenger of Allah, from what do we give Sadaqah if we don’t possess property?” He said: “The doors of Sadaqah are Takbir (Allahu Akbar), SubhanAllah, Allahamdulillh, La-illaha-illaAllah, enjoying good, forbidding evil, removing thorns, bones and stones from the paths of people, guiding the blind, listening to the deaf and dumb until you understand them, guiding a person to his

objects of need if you know where it is, hurrying with strength of your leg to one in sorrow, who is appealing for help and supporting the weak with the strength of your arms. These are all doors of Sadaqah.” (Masnad Ahmad)

In other words one does not need to have financial resources to earn the reward of Sadaqah. There are many deeds that qualify as Sadaqah with Allah. In addition to those listed above the ordinary courtesies are also Sadaqah if we do them with the intention of pleasing Allah.

## Never Back Down

Muneeb Hassan Khan, MCS

There comes a point in life where it seems as if nothing is going your way. It appears that all odds have finally defeated you and you are check-mated. The joys around seem to have no meaning for you. The atmosphere seems to have lost its equilibrium, the winds of pleasure seem to have forgotten their duty, and the peace of winds seems to be gone somewhere far, very far from you. Life simply sleeps.

Yes, there comes a point in life when you fall down, and when you are down you are going to be stepped on. Life is hard, incredibly hard. Nobody has praised in living it easily. Sometimes you get pushed, you get hurt, and you stumble, cry, shout, sob, and throb. But every time that happens, you get back on your feet again. You get up just as fast as you have never been before, you feel more con-

fidant than before. Vengeance ignites you from within. You stand back again, more motivated and more inspired. You start believing in your abilities again.

You have got to know that disappointments, failures, despair are all tools God uses to help us learn and succeed eventually. You have to show the odds that this breakthrough was just a pause, a mere ‘warm up again’ thing. Tell them the game is not over yet, somewhere around the corner of the board lies your knight, alive. Believe that every moment in life is an act of faith and belief. Life is an unending race. No matter how bad things go, each one of us has to win the race, and at the end of the day success is what we all want. We all want to win and the race will be won, there’s no question about that.

So, come on. Call out to yourself, wake up, if you are asleep. Get up, if you are still sitting. Run faster than before, dream bigger. Start working out on your goals again for it's never too far and never too late and nothing's impossible. Say to yourself 'No one can deny me, yes, no one can defy me. Say to yourself 'Defeat, retreat, these words are not in my world, I don't understand these definitions.

Say to yourself "I don't understand mistakes, I don't understand quitting but what I do understand is victory; I understand never surrendering

and I understand never giving in and never giving up."

Be a champion for yourself, be your own ideal, your very own role model. History must not forget you for what you do is never done before. You do extraordinary, you make records, and you create miracles. Vision beyond horizons. And only then, beyond any shadow of doubt, you'll recover your game, you will write your own praises; you'll be great; you'll feel awesome; you'll be what you want to be; what you've got to be. Just keep in mind: 'Never Back Down'

## Negative Body Image

Izza Faheem Tahir, MCS

Growing up in today's world, we cannot deny the effect media has on us. Whether you turn on the television, grab a newspaper or open up your computer, the images we see subconsciously affect us, and amongst some of us, they paint an ideal we strive to achieve.

The same can be said about magazines, film and television influencing young people, especially girls to not only think of physical attractiveness as something of utmost importance, but also what constitutes as 'good looks. Unfortunately, a lot of this is tied to an individual's weight, and girls are constantly putting themselves under pressure to achieve a super model thin body.

With sentences such as '10 ways to get in shape this summer' or 'best desi *totkas* for weight loss' emblazoned across magazines, there is a bigger stress; one changing one's look into a narrow idea of beauty, rather than loving and embracing oneself in all the different ways everyone is uniquely

beautiful. Sadly, instead of depicting women in all shapes and sizes, fashion magazines tend to photoshop models into unbelievable and almost unnatural proportions. Plus size models are a rarity on the runway, compared to their thinner counterparts.

Watching our dramas, things seem to be no different. It doesn't matter if they're simply doing household chores or even going to a beloved relative's funeral, our heroines are all ready, with their makeup perfectly applied. While I'm not against makeup, I know most of us like our comfy clothes and messy buns when we are relaxing at home after a hard day's work. This seems to show that women need to always look 'perfect' and 'ready, as their looks matter a lot.

Looking at the diversity of lead female roles, again, they tend to adhere to conventional ideas of beauty. Characters of larger sizes, are often sidelined and shown as supporting characters, or

worse, serve as comic relief where the humour hinges on their never ending love of food.

As I see the rising prevalence of eating disorders, it's obvious we need to change what we see

in the media and start portraying a more positive body image, so we can help others feel more comfortable in their own skin and learn to love themselves the way they are.

## When you Smile, the World Smiles Back

Novera Tahir, MCS

According to Phyllis Diller, “a smile is a curve that sets everything straight;” I pondered upon this statement for a moment then decided, it could not have been more aptly put. As stated, a smile really has the capability to dissolve hatred and enmity. It means as if to say ‘Let bygones be bygones’ or simply ‘Let’s have a new start. It can portray forgiveness, acceptance, gratitude or simply a gesture of love.

So I am justified to say a small smile carries in itself a plethora of emotions. Some have the belief that you need a reason to smile and smiling without a reason, as per such people, is sheer absurdity, maybe a social discourtesy but for them only this will suffice “a smile confuses an approaching frown” — Anonymous

People smile for many reasons, some because they are happy, some because it looks beautiful on them, some because its feels good to smile and some simply because it’s free. It is generally said that “Love is in the air” (my elementary chemistry

taught me something on the line of oxygen and nitrogen) but let me introduce you to another such love-type of gas—smile—this when goes into the air effects all and sundry.

An anonymous poet rightly wrote;

Smiling is infectious  
You can catch it like the flu,  
Someone smiled at me today  
And I started smiling today

A great many poets have spent ages characterizing the smile of their beloved. If one likens it to the blooming of a rose then another to the bright shining day and another to the full moon. People ask me why do you smile so much and quietly reflect: “The robber that smiles, steals something from the thief” —Shakespeare

So I am justified to say that this five letter word is so deep and so vast that I actually made it into an article for the Literary Society. Hence, smile, so the world can smile back at you.

## To Study or not to Study

Ahmed Raheeq Sultan, MCS

On the threshold of the seventeenth century, a young prince was perplexed and questioned; “To be or not to be?”

Fast forward a few centuries and another young prince, baffled, has somewhat similar thoughts; “To study or not to study?”

The difference is that prince was seeking revenge, and I am seeking redemption; redemption from having to face my books.

Sitting idly in front of me, they beckon me to open them, promising a new light, enlightenment, but then threaten to gnaw at my small brain with equal fervour. In such circumstances, what can one do rather than call for help from above.

“O Lord! Let the lightning strike and grant me wisdom.”

But this light is reserved for only a few lucky ones those who study all day all, night long and those who don’t study and still conjure the so called “*Chauka*”.

And what I say to this “*Chauka*?”

It was not in my fate to meet you. Had I lived any longer, I would have waited for you. And

with these thoughts I gaze for a last time at my unopened books and I am alas, reminded what I read somewhere; “Love is for the brave hearted”.

A sly smile crosses my face as I think. That guy wouldn’t have been an engineering student otherwise he wouldn’t have made such an empty proclamation.

Love can be encountered by even the faint-hearted, but facing one’s books is only for the valiant; the brave-hearted.

With another glance, I stack away my internal damnation for the final night before what we call; Oh!, the “one hour torture”.

And, hence, another semester withers away right in front of my eyes and I find myself again standing at another crossroad of my degree, thinking what went wrong. Finally, I have reached this conclusion that the only one at fault here is the over-achiever who is destined to ruin my degree. Once again, equally baffled and puzzled I am asking myself;

“To study or not to study, that is the question”.

## Carve Your Names on Hearts

Muneeb Ur Rehman, MCS

To conquer the world is not victory; to conquer hearts is the real victory. Heart is the place where God lives. So, what a blessed place to dwell in! “Rulers of hearts live in hearts even after bodies perish. What makes people immortal is not wealth but their decency and hospitality by which they

influence the lives of others.

Kindness is the noblest weapon to conquer hearts with. Good behaviour is the best asset one can have in order to win hearts. Being happy and making others happy is a key to it. Only a happy person is good to himself and to others. But hap-

piness is not just the absence of problems; it is rather, the ability to deal with them.

Live in hearts, develop your personality and try to make yourself a better person. Always be cheerful and smiling; that's the beauty of your outlook. Always keep away from anger and pride because these not only spoil the character but also your outward appearance. Wishing good for everybody will give a sparkling luster to your face. What you don't wish to be done to yourself, don't do it to others. The people who spoil the lives of others collect no good for themselves; they always end up in tangles of problems and are caught in worries and tensions. We have no right to form opinions about others without evidence.

Hatred injures the heart. Never hate; be sure to

get rid of it completely. We should never hurt others where the shoe pinches. If you understand others you will be understood. Similarly, if you love others you will be loved truly. Always be thankful, because being thankful to a person is being thankful to God.

Never be too busy to say, 'please, 'sorry' and, 'thank you. These little words cost nothing but have a great impact. They reflect the kind heart of a person, if uttered with sincerity. Laugh and make others laugh. Humour to life is what salt and spice are to food. Never trouble others and in turn you will always be loved and admired. Give love and affection and God will bestow His blessings upon you. Carve your name on people's hearts that's where you will remain alive, forever.

## A Word about Attitude

Anoosha Masood Keen

Attitude, as we all know, is everything. It is the thing we all need to monitor in our lives. We should use the ABC formula where A stands for attitude, B for behavior and C for the consequence. We can't change our behavior unless and until we change our attitude. By shifting our attitude we can change our behavior and can also control the consequence. In this way we can control what is going to happen to us.

Human mind is a software which can be programmed. It is totally up to us whether we want to install a productive or an unproductive software. Our inner thought is the thing which programs the software of our attitude.

Attitude comes from the core of a person. Attitude reveals the real you e.g. if you have a glass of water with a loose lid on it and you shake it then

what comes out of it? The answer is that water comes out of it. Why? Because it was actually in it. Same is the case with a person's attitude.

Attitude decides the strengths of relationships in life. It is everything needed for joy. In order to have a good attitude we need to replace:

Anger with love  
Complain with gratitude  
Fear with faith.

Someone has said about power of attitude that:

It can heal you or hurt you  
Make you or break you  
Make you feel happy or make you feel sad  
Make you friends or make you enemies

## Education System

Sheheryar Zafar Ch., NBS

This article is based on a TED Talk by Sir Ken Robinson about Schools and Creativity that addresses why the education system is starting to fail; why there is high unemployment; why are people no longer satisfied and happy with their jobs and what actually is creativity.

Are Creative Inner abilities and talents linked with the education we acquire? In my opinion, it isn't linked so much. Abilities, creativity, imagination and talents are already in all of us and they are waiting for the right moment for us to discover them, explore them, nurture and grow them and finally develop them in the way we want to utilize them. These cannot be taught by education. Obviously you can teach a person to paint, but you cannot teach him to paint a masterpiece as it would require his abilities and imagination as well as the creative process of thinking and applying.

“Creativity, as defined by Sir Ken Robinson, is the process of having original ideas that have value.” So in other words, all content that is original can be defined as to be creative, not as an extension of something that exists already in our environment.

He further argues that our modern schools have become tools of destruction of our children's creative abilities. This is because the system was developed by keeping one thing in mind – Standardized Education for all. This is obvious because the public system of education was first conceived in the 18th century by the then intellectuals who later on developed and implemented the idea in the 19th century as public education. This system involved the revolutionary idea of using tax

payer's money towards providing standardized education to everyone. It didn't matter if a person was rich or poor, it was meant to educate everyone with the principles of standardization in transfer of knowledge as well as the testing and examinations. The whole system was based on the fulfillment of needs of the industrialized economy.

The schools operated as large scale factories with standardized assembly lines. The input or the raw materials were the uneducated children and the output were the children that were educated along the lines of and were fully in accordance with the needs of the society. The students are taught in batches which are known as classes. Classes have a definitive age group restriction. There are separate facilities, bell rings, specialized subjects and standardized tools and tests that measure the ability of the children on the basis of academics alone. The testing is focused on one thing alone; how well the student is able to retain the information in his mind and reproduce when required.

However, the trends are changing slowly in the 20<sup>th</sup> and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The old perception was that hard work leads to a good college which leads to a degree which in turn provides a job. This is however no longer true as we see a lot of unemployed graduates and employed/self-made entrepreneur dropouts. Most of the employed graduates also are earning salaries that could've been earned without earning that specific degree. In this modern century, people invest in education by assessing its expected Return on Investment for their children. There is this belief that a good degree will provide social mobility towards

the upper middle class segment and even beyond. Some also believe that a mere association with a prestigious institution will increase their chances of positive/upward social mobility.

Another problem is that the education system is updated very slowly as compared to the students who will enter the economy and workforce in a mere 20 years and work for another 30-40 years. Education is meant to take us in the future that we cannot yet grasp. This is because the unpredictability for the future is huge. We are unable to forecast what the economy will look like at the end of the month, yet our education system hasn't been updated for years.

Due to the change in economics, we see that education has become very costly and people are finding it difficult to get their children educated to the same level of education they once received. Many schools are now introducing the concepts of differentiation and better value proposition where they say they are providing their students with access to facilities like performing arts, physical education and better career counselling but all this does not directly affect the life

According to the current system of education, there are two kinds of people that are produced, academic and non academic. The academic people are the ones who are classified as smart, the ones who pay attention in class and remember everything and reproduce it properly on the exam. Non-academic ones are those that are classified as not-smart, the ones who fail to do so. They both enter into different parts of the society where one thrives and the other struggles to make ends meet. Why is it that some people are academic and some are not? The answer lies in the methods of the education provided and assessed. If the same lot was taught in a different way where each and

every student had opportunities to discover and experiment with his or her abilities without any fear of the societies' definition of successful careers and successful lives, they would have discovered something in which they are good at. It can be anything from performing arts, debating, mathematics, business running skills or literature. If they were further given a chance to appear in a methodology that creatively assesses each of their unique skills or abilities and allows them to make mistakes in order to learn from it, they will have developed and grown their abilities on their own. Children are frightened to make mistakes and mistakes are dealt with punishments. This takes away their confidence to try something new and reduce their uncertainty. If you are not prepared to be wrong, you will not be able to create something original. As we grow older we stigmatize mistakes.

Thus we can safely assume that we require to re-build the education and examination system if we are to succeed not only in this world for ourselves but also if we want our children to be successful at what they do and what they believe in. We need to give more importance to the discovery of creative abilities and talents from an early age of students. This way we can avoid career and education field switching as well as eliminate the uncertainty that is carried by many students when they have to make a decision. This will in turn help the students realize that the career paths they have chosen is according to their own abilities and later in life they will still be passionate about them.

I would like to end my article with this quote by Picasso: All children are born artists, the problem is to remain artists as we grow up.

## Slow Learners

Ehsan Ul Haq, DD PSA

### Introduction

An old man was sitting under a shady tree and watching his son plough the fields on a hot sunny day. The old man was feeling uneasy seeing his son working hard in scorching heat. He asks his son to take a break as it was mid-day and very hot. He suggested that he could do the remaining work in the late afternoon when the temperature fell and became more tolerable. His son did not pay any heed to the old man's suggestion and continued working in the field. The old man appealed to the young and headstrong son many times to take a break but to no avail. Finally he does a trick which works. He saw his grandson playing under the same tree. He picked up the child and placed him in the burning sun where there was no shade. Seeing his son exposed to the sun, the farmer left his plough and ran to the child to take him to a shady place complaining to his father why he wanted to expose his son to the sun and make him sick. Upon hearing this, the old man said that he just wanted to make him realize that the way 'you could not see your son in the discomfort of the sun, the same way I also could not see my son in the scorching heat'. So is the law of nature. All parents want to provide a comfortable and secure future to their children even at the cost of their own comfort.

It is profound desire of every parent to have brilliant children who outclass all others in the school. Children are no doubt the biggest asset the parents, society and a nation have. Extremely lucky are the parents who are blessed by Almighty Allah with physically, mentally and morally healthy children. One can say about such children what Mirza Ghalib said about the mangoes that they should be sweet and in plenty. Such children are like desert plants (cactus) which survive and

flourish despite scanty water. They are tough and hardy. Healthy and balanced children are resilient and focused while slow learners are prone to lose focus even by minor diversion. Future of a nation depends upon its youth who have to lead the nation in the times to come. If the youth is brilliant and healthy, the nation will successfully negotiate all the challenges that will come its way and make progress. If the youth is sloth, sick and clumsy, the nation would always be fighting for mere survival. The old adage, survival of the fittest, applies to it. Weakness is a crime in today's competitive world. Poor grades of the children at school frustrate the parents and children understandably. Repeated poor grades of the children may sound alarm bell for teachers, parents and children. It is the beginning of a battle which the three have to fight all their lives. All the affected parties must remain patient and positive which is easier said than done. It is a malady which needs to be identified carefully, consistently and objectively, spread over months and may be years. There are no medical or scientific tests to determine whether the child is a slow learner or a normal one. However, the school achievement scores, IQ tests and careful observation of the peers, teachers, and parents can serve as reliable indicators. One should not hurry to label a child as slow learner unless the performance remains unsatisfactory over an extended period. Such children need more time to comprehend the concepts and relations than peers. They need more time to complete their homework than their classfellows. They tend to make friends with children younger than their age. They tend to remain quiet and unnoticed in the classroom; avoid voicing their queries even if they have any; feel shy and insecure. Such children go to school reluctantly. They don't feel like getting up early

in the morning for school. They pretend to be sick and cause a lot of trouble to the mothers at school time. They are either timid or aggressive in the classroom. Their handwriting has gaps. They tend to leave a lot of space at the top, bottom and sides of the page. They are not only slow learners but also slow thinkers.

Parents should remember one thing that their children can definitely learn but they need more time to learn. Their progress may be slow but it will surely be there. They need to work harder than their more fortunate colleagues. Their parents and teachers need to pay them personal attention. They can learn better from peers and in small groups where they remain connected and attended. Their teacher has to be kind and considerate to them. They need to be pushed and pulled with affection and understanding. They are fragile and need to be handled with care. If they are dealt with sternly they may lose confidence and feel hurt. They need to be involved in the learning process.

### **How to identify a slow learner**

According to G. L. Reddy (1999), the handicap of those children who are blind, deaf or physically handicapped are readily apparent to the observer but the handicaps of a slow learner are usually not so obvious. Their difficulty is related to their ability to think and learn. Many of them will be absorbed into the society and contribute without being conspicuously noticed. A slow learner doesn't require diagnostic investigations and needs not be labeled as such hurriedly. He has the ability to learn in a normal school from a normal teacher yet requires a little more time to internalize the complex concepts and relationships than a normal child. The teacher has to pay him/her a little extra time without hindering the progress of the rest of the class. The teacher has to be more resourceful and patient towards these children as they need

additional support. They may lag behind their peers and need repetitions while learning new ideas. If we describe these children in terms of IQ levels they may fall in the range of 70-85. They don't fall in the category of intellectually disabled children having special needs with IQ levels below 70.

To teach the slow learner the teacher has to go step by step from easy to difficult. Such students face difficulty learning higher concepts and reasoning skills. Move over from easy to difficult has to be gradual and slow otherwise these children lose track and are left behind. The teacher must be conscious of the fact that to keep these children on board connecting with their previous experience is vital. Slow learners may give up if they are treated sternly or humiliated in front of peers. They are mentally softer than their age fellows and prone to lack of confidence. They need encouragement doing other activities where they are strong and feel sense of achievement. It will help them gain their lost esteem. They feel clumsy in public and prefer the company of much younger children or no company at all. They may start hating the school. They should not be allowed to slide into the shell of aloofness or school run-aways.

### **What to do**

The teacher of a slow learner has to be more resourceful and able to experiment different teaching methodologies. Sometimes mere repetition works. The teacher should not be shy of repeating to the slow learner what has been taught and learnt by other children with better learning ability. There is no escape from repetition because drill method is useful for slow learners. It may be boring for the teacher and other students but it will be useful for the slow learner. While teaching concepts the teacher may explain with homely examples which facilitate the students with less learning rate.

Teachers and parents should understand that every human being needs appreciation, so do slow learners. Don't let any opportunity to say a kind word to them go unutilized. It may mean a lot to them. It may be related to their dress, appearance, cooking etc. Every kind word matters. It will revitalize them and their vigor to do even better in future. If the teachers and parents lose patience with their children then the children feel further neglected and lower in self-image. It may tarnish their personality for the good. Help them get out of the shell, don't push them into it. Their choice and opinion should be respected. They need to be given importance. Parents should not feel shy of introducing them to their friends and relatives.

These children require additional support which should be arranged for them where they get personal attention and help in doing their homework or understand the grey areas left at school. School teacher may not have adequate time to give to this particular child as she has other children to take care of. Additional after-school support is essential for such children to keep them with other children.

### **Social dimension of slow learner**

Most slow learners find it hard to establish strong social relations because of their low IQ or under developed social skills. They may be awkward at the dining table and may spill the tea or beverages on the table out of nervousness. They are shy and lack initiative in approaching the people and making new friends. They respond nicely and feel elevated if they are approached by the others for a conversation and socialization. This shyness may be due to lack of adequate communication skills, immaturity in social mannerism or just initial hesitation. They like to talk to the other children but cannot start the conversation with ease. They talk to the strangers only if they are talked to.

### **Passive behavior**

Slow learners are not unwilling learners. They are usually docile and cooperative. But learning at a fast pace is difficult for them. They need personal attention and support from teachers and parents in doing their homework. They need a word of encouragement from parents, teachers and peers for their hard work. They don't have time management skills; lack long term goals; are easily distracted. They lack focus and lose sight of their goal if there are sound interruptions, guests around or an engaging TV program being screened. They may be quite good at sports.

### **Empathy**

Parents, teachers and peers of the slow learner need to have some empathy for the child to understand the things from his perspective. No child should be degraded in front of the entire class particularly the slow learner. His / her mistakes should be communicated by the teacher in one to one sessions. Start with a positive note and then point out the areas which need improvement.

### **Fast learning may be superficial**

Ian Leslie, (2014) in her article 'Why you should want your Kid to be a Slow Learner' argues that fast learning may be superficial learning. She aptly quotes Abraham Lincoln's famous dictum, 'Slow to learn, slow to forget' to support her argument. She thinks that the materials or concepts learnt the harder way are difficult to forget. Things learnt easily may not be learnt at all. Those who learn slowly are usually good at application of knowledge to problem solving stage. Quick learners may be slow in application tasks.

### **Difference between slow learners and under achievers**

Slow learners are the children who find it hard to keep pace with other normal children due to less-

er mental resource or intelligence levels. But the under achievers are the children who lag behind their peers due to some illness, deformity, handicap or personal circumstance like broken families etc. Under achievers have the potential but due to peculiar circumstances or handicaps they cannot make optimum benefit from their talent.

### **Learning disabled**

Kirk (1963) opines that the learning disabled are those children who cannot perform like their more fortunate peers due to deficiently developed communication skills having speech impairment, reading difficulties etc. Kirk did not include the blind and the deaf in this category. A slow learner is born as such with his mild handicap but the learning disability may be due to some injury, illness or other causes. Executive function of the cognitive domain of some children i.e. retrieval of information from long term memory is slow. That's why they may be termed as slow learners. Slow learners normally have poor memory and find it difficult to retrieve information from long term memory. This difficulty arises due to their shorter attention span. Burt (1946) opines that of all the special mental disabilities that hamper educational process, the most common is the weakness in long term memory. Effect of initial learning is quite strong and difficult to erase. Not only learning but correct learning is also very important, otherwise the learner has to exert twice; first to reconcile that he learned something incorrectly and secondly that he is learning correctly the second time.

### **Traits of slow learners**

G. L. Reddy (1999) states that attention is of two types, a. selective attention b. sustained attention. Scanning is the ability to survey all available information in the environment. Searching on the other hand is related to selecting and adding to the

relevant information in the light of the previous experience of the learner. Sustained attention is related to focusing on the goal oriented processing and sifting of the information and separating the relevant from the irrelevant information. Due to individual attitudinal and cognitive style differences response of the learner will vary to the new information. Individual differences also include coping with emotional and reflective stimuli while responding to the task demands. If distracted easily by the irrelevant stimuli the learning process will slow down. If a learner overcomes this difficulty of not being attracted by the irrelevant stimuli he will cease to be a slow learner. Poor comprehension may be due to lack of motivation; very difficult input; information outside the sphere of the learner's experience. Unfriendly environment i.e. too hot or too cold may also affect the attention span of the learner. Presentation of the material to be learnt may be too poor and confusing which may adversely affect the comprehension of the learner. One way the attention span and comprehension can be made easy for the children is through associations. Apt associations make the material easy to grasp and be retained. Teachers of slow learners must know that. Correct perception translates the data into meaningful information. Schonell (1942) describes general intelligence as inborn all round mental power which is but slightly altered in degree by environmental influences although its realization and direction are determined by experience. Abstract reasoning is challenging for the slow learners.

### **Memory of slow learners**

Learning is directly related to perception of the data transmitted. The data will become meaningful information only when it is correctly perceived and retained in the memory. Before the data is sent to short or long term memory it is initially stored in the sensory register. Perceiving is a process

which comprises discrimination, coordination and sequencing. As the term indicates discrimination enables the child to differentiate the data of various kinds from one another. Coordination allows the learner to integrate the relevant data from different sources into one body. Sequencing allows the learner to present the data in a logical and rational manner.

### Communication Skills of Slow Learners

Slow learners feel hesitation in expressing themselves properly. They don't know what to say and how to say. Tansley and Guilford (1962) opine that schools pay much attention to reading and writing which are secondary skills in language and lay less emphasis on speech which is primary skill. Teachers must be conscious of the fact that students must be able to speak effectively and understand correctly what is said to them. This is where the slow learners are lacking. It is difficult for them to choose the correct words and then express themselves properly. As a result they resort to gestures or practical manifestation of what they want to say. They usually have small vocabulary. Their speech lacks in coherence and order. They express things in roundabout way. Effective speech involves both good listening and effective talking. This is how the dialogue takes place. Slow Learners are poor at listening to messages and instructions. As a result they develop inhibition and avoid speaking where possible.

### Principles of Learning

There are eight principles of learning also called the laws of learning. Thorndike (1913) gave the first three principles i.e. readiness, exercise and effect, while five more were added later by other educational psychologists. Remaining five principles were: primacy, recency, intensity, freedom and requirement.

a. **Readiness.** You can take the horse to water but

cannot make it drink. Same holds true about teaching and learning process. Mental preparedness and cooperation of the learner is mandatory for effective meaningful learning. Otherwise the response will be like the one given by unwilling students of a math teacher who told the teacher to give them a class off. The smart teacher agreed. The teacher refreshed the students with a pleasant discourse for some time and then asked the students two plus two make how many breads? One of the students shouted to the others, 'comrades! The teacher means to teach us. Don't give him any reply'. Students learn the best when they are adequately motivated to learn and have clear objective in front of them.

b. **Exercise.** The teacher should be aware of the fact that the things oft repeated are easy to remember. He should not be shy of repeating the things. Students' long term retention enhances if the material taught to them is frequently repeated. Success breeds success and students become eager to learn more when they have learned the previous lesson fully. Positive reinforcement from the teacher is also very important to raise the spirits of the students. No opportunity to appreciate the students should be wasted by the teacher. The mind can rarely apply in practical terms what has been learnt in a single exposure. Initial learning may be superficial and short term. Practice makes a perfect man. New vocabulary does not belong to you unless you master it by using the same in meaningful sentences of your own. Math problems need to be solved frequently and repeatedly otherwise the students forget the steps and formulas.

c. **Effect.** Successful learning has a good effect on the learner especially if it is positively reinforced by the teachers, parents and the peers. It is the change within and improvement that the

learner experiences after successful learning in him. He will feel empowered with the acquisition of new knowledge. Success is a pleasant experience while failure is an unpleasant experience and so is its effect. The teacher should not let go off any opportunity to appreciate the student if he does well in a learning task. It will encourage him to replicate his good conduct and behavior in future too.

- d. **Primacy.** First impression is the last impression. First learning experience is long-lasting and difficult to erase from the memory. If a student perceives a concept vaguely or incorrectly the first time it is presented to him becomes difficult to change with the passage of time. Double effort is then required to unlearn what has been incorrectly learned. Then it requires to be learnt correctly. It is also observed that the first and last parts of a speech are better understood and recalled by the audience. To avoid monotony the teacher may like to use a distractor to nullify the effect of Recency.
- e. **Intensity.** Newspaper reporters are always running after thrilling stories to present to their audience. Why do they do so? It is to create thrill and excitement. Readers read such stories with great interest. A teacher will be more successful if he learns the art of creating thrill and excitement in his lecture. This thrill and excitement is intensity of the matter. More intense the matter better will be the learning experience. Instructor should employ various instructional techniques in order to teach specially to the slow learners. Multimedia can immensely help the students learn what they can see in real time situation. Good communication skills interspersed with useful gestures can enhance the effectiveness of the teacher to a good extent.
- f. **Freedom.** Coercion in education is counterproductive. Students should be free to choose what they want to learn and also be made responsible for its consequences. Learning takes place

at a better pace if the environment gives greater freedom to the learners and there is less stress on them. Stressful environment adversely affects learning.

- g. **Requirement.** Learning is need-based. Without need, learning cannot take place. Greater the need, greater will be the motivation for learning. Learner must know what he wants to learn and what all is required to learn that. In order to become a medical practitioner you need an MBBS degree. You need money, time and good High School grades to get admission in a medical college. If you have all this it means you are ready for the MBBS degree program. You have met all the requirements for the degree program.

### **Intervention methods for slow learners**

Mark (2005) suggested following methods of intervention for slow learners in mathematics.

- a. Teacher should be aware of the learning style of the student so that input may be given keeping in view the learning style of the student.
- b. Visual tools, hands-on lessons interspersed with cultural connections may be used suited to the multiple intelligences of the students. Gaming pedagogy be encouraged inside and outside the schools.

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## The Ghost Dam

Abdullah Ashfaq Solehria

A dam has mainly two purposes, i.e., water storage (for agriculture / flood protection) and electricity generation. Kalabagh dam is one of the most easily conceivable proposed multi-purpose large dams in Pakistan. Its location is ideal as the site is not far from the major industrial centers of Pakistan which will supply construction material and thus cutting down the cost of the project as compared to the Diamer Bhasha dam which is located at an altitude of about 1.5 thousand meter above sea level and will also cause a substantial portion of the iconic Karakoram Highway to be submerged. The latter will cost almost \$14 billion, which is \$8 billion more than the Kalabagh. The Kalabagh is also located at a relatively lower altitude. As the dam is located downstream of the confluence of the Kabul and The Indus rivers, it will also be able to store excess flood water from the Kabul as well which is one of the largest of Indus' tributaries.

The dam will help irrigate lands of KPK which are above 100 to 150 ft of the normal water levels of the Indus. The dam will generate 2 to 3 billion dollars of annual revenue and thus, pay its cost in around 3 to 4 years and then start making profit. The dam will generate 3,400 MW of electricity which will be a substantial uplift in the generation capacity of the national grid which is already suffering from excessive shortage in electricity production. The more downstream a dam is built, the more catchment area it has from where water enters the reservoir. As this dam is the most downstream dam that can be built on the river so it has the maximum chance of capturing the maximum

quantity of water during high summer flows. Geographically speaking, this dam is at a perfect location for supplying water through its irrigation canals to Balochistan, KPK and Punjab, while Sindh only needs its fair share of water from the dam as it already has very large headworks downstream for irrigation.

The Kalabagh dam will only be able to best serve its purpose when upstream projects like Diamer, Bhasha, Skardu, Tarbela, Akhori, etc are also completed as per schedule. In this way, these dams will store water from the main stem of the Indus during peak floods, while the Kalabagh can bear the force of the Kabul so as to help the flood situation downstream where the other five of the Punjab rivers will be showing their wrath, as there are no viable dam sites on these rivers except Mangla dam on river Jhelum.

Kalabagh dam will have one shortcoming. This is due to the fact that the dam has a small water storage capacity as compared to the annual inflow of the Indus at the dam site. During the disastrous 2010 floods, 60 Million Acre Feet of water flowed through Kalabagh in a matter of weeks as compared to a design capacity of 6.1 MAF. This shortcoming is in fact due to shortage of dams upstream except Tarbela. If dams like Diamer, Bhasha, Skardu/Katzarah, Kalabagh, Akhori, etc, had been there during the 2010 floods, the water stored then would have been available to this day or could have been slowly released to the sea and floods could be avoided.

But all these shortcomings can only be overcome if the politicians stop using the dam as their

trump card during election campaigns. Surely there are unfair things that happen with weaker/smaller provinces but that doesn't mean you jam the wheel of a country which is already trying to move a truck on a single wheel. Then there is the covert interference by countries as the likes of India which bribe some politicians to oppose the construction of the dam by issuing emotional

statements. More importantly, the populace needs to be educated so that they are not misguided at the hands of politicians. People will need to be taught that "National Interest" should always come first. In the end, a large but steady amount of funds needs to be allocated and corruption uprooted, to resolve the power crisis in the country.

## The Bookworms and Introverts

Fazeel Ahmed,

I would like to discuss two types of people in this article. They are the introverts and the bookworms. First of all they are all different in their habits, hobbies and ways of living. Don't ever confuse them with each other. Introverts are defined as shy and reticent persons. They tend to avoid conversations and large groups of people. They are happy and content in solitary activities. Bookworms are people who like reading. Nowhere it is mentioned or said that bookworms tend to avoid large groups of people or conversations. Nowhere is there any proof that bookworms are just another form of introverts. And then there are introverts who happen to be bookworms. They are shy, tend to remain to themselves and in their free time read books.

Now that we are clear on what we are about to discuss, I would like to share the reason I have written this article. Majority of our society thinks of book reading as a boring and dull activity which only attracts fools and losers. Furthermore, there is also a misconception that a person who reads books is unsocial. And the third reason is that a person who is an introvert is unhappy, sad and wrong in his way of life. Books have the ability to

take us out of our physical bodies and transcend into a world of infinite possibilities.

I don't know how and why book reading was marked to be dull. People don't seem to understand that books enable us to open doors to a new universe. Books help build dreams and make those dreams come true.

A person who understands the importance of books realizes that it is better to pick up a book, go snuggle in a blanket and read till you can't stay awake. That person realizes that what he has learnt through years of experience, he can learn it all through the flips of pages. These people swim in the black inks of paper. These people trust the words on the pages and follow it.

They are not unhappy or sad or unsocial. Bookish people can be and actually are social. They do have lives outside their books and are happy either way. Don't think or assume that they need some kind of help getting back in society, because they are not out of society. They are a very important part of society, which sets people on the path of education.

I would also like to shed some light on the matter of how people treat introverts. I have seen

many a time how introverts are being treated wrongly. They are judged, frowned and even pitied. Well I say on their behalf that introverts have a psychology of their own. They have their own way of life. Everyone should respect their freedom. They must also realize that being an introvert does not bring any harm to a person's life. There is nothing wrong with preferring solitary activities over group activities. There is nothing wrong with keeping to yourself and not taking part in gossips. There is nothing wrong in keeping quiet and silent and speaking only when addressed to or necessary.

In the end, I insist not to confuse, intermix and attribute one type with another. Not every introvert is a bookworm nor every bookworm an in-

trovert. There are some introverts who share the delight of reading for fun. They are both introverts and bookworms, and they are my favorite.

For myself, I prefer being all alone in a cabin in the woods . With clear blue sky in a winter's morning and cool breeze blowing, giving a feeling of a mother's love, I sit covered in a quilt with hot chocolate in one hand and a book in the other. I wish to be there, I wish to flip the pages of books as I get deeper into the story and the words. I wish that I have a chance to sit with a book while the world carries on its dull and boring activities not knowing the wonderful life I have in that cabin in the woods.

## Are you a Pessimist or a Realist?

Moatasim Farooque,

You want to take a big decision that will make or break your life. What should be your approach? Sitting around thinking all the bad things that could happen or rating yourself and telling your inside how much incapable you are for this? And, that whatever decision you take, the result is going to be total fiasco? Humble as it sounds, this attitude is beautiful in its true philosophical sense except for one fallacy: it fails to address the situation at hand. It is not going to help you in your decision making process.

People who think negatively about every situation and always anticipate the worst are what we call pessimists. They magnify the negative side of the truth. They pay more attention to their limita-

tions and less to their problems. It is always best to look for your weaknesses and prepare yourself for the worst outcomes of your decisions. But it should not hold you back from achieving your goal. A pessimist concludes from a few failures that bad things are bound to happen to him and that no matter how hard he tries he is never going to accomplish his objectives.

A realist, on the other hand, not only looks for possibilities but also opportunities. A realist knows that no matter how bleak the future looks there is always a chance that things will turn around and that he and only he holds the power to turn undesirable outcomes to his favor. A realist recognizes that if things fail there is always a logical reason

to why. He doesn't put the blame of his failure on bad luck but rather he focuses on the causes of his failure and tries to amend them, so that he would not make the same mistakes again.

Let's elaborate it with an example. Suppose a pessimist and a realist both go to take a driving test. A pessimist would say (after failing his driving test) "I have just failed my driving test. I am a failure for life, there is no point in me attempting the test again" and a realist would say "I failed my driving test because I failed to execute two manoeuvres, the three point turn and reversing around a corner. I shall practice these both next week and take my test again when I become proficient at them." Who is more likely to get the license? Obviously the realist who looks at things from practical aspect. This quote from the man

who defied every hardship he encountered sums it all up:

"However bad life may seem, there is always something you can do, and succeed at. While there's life, there is hope", Stephen Hawking. Hawking arguably the greatest scientist alive was diagnosed ALS in his early twenties and lost the power to move his body. He was given by doctors less than a year to live. He is now 72 and still alive, and is responsible for some of the greatest discoveries in the field of Quantum Physics.

Your limitations and failures cannot be made the reason for your staleness. You must keep trying no matter what hurdles come your way. You must confront your difficulties and realize they are part of life. Once you recognize this fact you will become a realist.

## Tackling Interview Questions Effectively

M. Raheem, Assistant Director HR

Have you ever thought why some people are more successful than others in tackling interview questions? Why some people are more proficient in interviews while others linger their careers? Why some people end up getting selected while others lose a job?

Knowing how to put together strong points by answering the most common interview questions is obviously the secret that can get you a job. It is of utmost importance to know what to answer and how to answer a specific question that has been asked. Knowing your strong points is an art. Successful people never put everything on luck, but

they spend much time mastering the art of handling and answering the most common interview questions because they know how important those few moments are in their lives. If you do well in those few minutes it will make your entire career. There are different interview questions that are being asked from candidates during interview but most of the interviewers start their interview by asking "Tell me about yourself".

Many candidates don't know the basics of this question and start telling a story of their life which is totally inappropriate. In order to excel and shine in an interview, here is the secret by answering

this simple question.

## **How to Answer: “Tell me about yourself”**

This question will be asked in most of the interviews regardless of job you applied for, qualification and the industry you have applied in. Personally I think it is the easiest question to answer, provided you know how to tackle it. In fact it is an opportunity for the interviewee to set the tone according to the environment and boost up self confidence so that he can start conversation confidently. It’s good to be prepared for such type of questions.

This question is all about you-who are you? By you I mean your skills and expertise that one requires for the particular job you have applied for, not about your personal life. Most of the people start telling stories about their personal life or their favorite celebrity or ideal of life. It is always important to know what you are going to talk about. Start by talking about your current designation and the objective that you have written in your resume. Talk about your career development briefly but don’t say out the whole resume.

Secondly, talk about your most recent achievements. Think at it as your elevator pitch; you have to impress upon the interviewer that you are the best match for the job; you have got all the expertise and skills that the employer is looking for. If

you are a fresh graduate just focus on something extraordinary that you have done. Or if you have received any medal or certificate in co-curricular activities that can grab the attention of interviewer to listen to more from you.

Finally talk about your future plan/job role: What you want to do in your career or what best you can do for the particular job that you have applied for? Remain focused and brief. This could be number of years of experience in a particular industry or area of specialization. If you are a fresh graduate, just mention that you have done specialization in a particular field and want to pursue your career in the same field or mention if you have published articles but be specific.

A lot of smart candidates totally confuse this question because of over-thinking. Many candidates start narrating story about their life. It’s an opportunity to sell your candidature to the interviewer. Don’t repeat what you have written in your resume again and again; just express your points by showing why you would be an asset to the organization. So just sit down and take a few moments; you will find a way to present yourself to your full advantage. Nowadays, the competition for any good job is fierce. Dive right in with the approaches that are outlined for you and plan how you would respond in your next interview.

The minute I walked into the post office, the postmaster noticed the new earrings my husband had given me. “Those must be real diamonds,” she said. “Yes,” I said. “How could you tell?” “Because,” she said, “no one buys fake diamonds that small.”

— Deborah Caudell

Watching a movie recently, I couldn’t hear the dialogue over the chatter of the two women in front of me. Unable to bear it any longer, I tapped one of them on the shoulder. “Excuse me,” I said. “I can’t hear.” “I should hope not,” she answered. “This is a private conversation.”

— David Carver

## Programming – A Passion

Ramsha Khuram, SEecs

When we are young, we are taught to do so many things that we now do effortlessly. For instance, we can all relate to how we were taught the “Greater than” and “Lesser than” concept in Mathematics by associating the symbol to a crocodile’s mouth. Now we are capable of comparing numbers and sorting long lists with such ease that we do not even realize how complicated the same task had seemed once. It seems like intuition and we fail to realize the genius with which God has engineered our mind, and adorned our thought process with delicate intricacies. It was the act of programming that made me marvel over the complexity of the human mind and appreciate how calculated it is to the letter.

To someone who lacks the interest and skill to program, programming seems like an acquired skill: shuffling of logic and playing with the syntax. To me it means hours of pondering over the human thought process and extracting how the human brain solves the simplest of problems in the most calculated ways. Programming actually de-

velops awe in the greatness of God and the perfection with which he has created and programmed the human brain.

Like our parents teach us how to walk, count etc, we are meant to teach the computer to perform the task we intend for it to carry out. And of course, it is a machine so it cannot emulate our actions like we imitate our parents’ actions. It cannot be taught. It is simply ‘fed’ with what we provide it with. In order to do so, we not only need to lay the foundation of how it thinks, but also ensure that we cater for every possible situation in the scope of the application. And in feeding the computers brain with logic, I see the role of creativity to be pivotal. I wish to employ my creativity in the field of Information Technology and become a part of the only discipline that is revolutionizing all other disciplines in the world - Information Technology. Programming is an art. True, but it is also my passion and that is the reason I intend to pursue it as a career in the future.

## The Challenges of Today

Muhammad Mustafa Masud, College of E&ME

The youth in Pakistan today is facing more problems and challenges than ever before. There is an enormous rate of increase in the population. Private and public companies are trying to copy

western practices regarding rules, regulations and job environments. There is a severe deficiency of proper planning about the use of human and capital resources, by our leaders. The inevitable

fallout from these factors is a collapse of psychological health in our young people in addition to making the life of an average young aspiring individual very hard and complicated. It is therefore very important to first quantify these problems and then to plan accordingly in finding a solution.

The population explosion in Pakistan has led to a massive decrease in job opportunities. This increase in populace has been asymmetric, with already heavily populated cities of Pakistan bearing the brunt. A little planning from our leaders on developing new cities, uniformly across the country, would have made things a lot less difficult. The competition for resources, getting thinner by the day, is quite hard. Saturation has already sunk in. Today there are more people looking for a job than jobs available. The private sector in particular has started exploiting this situation by hiring young, inexperienced resources on extremely low salaries and demanding excessive and inhumane levels of labor from them.

There is an inclination in the public and private sector to follow western work environments. The working hours have been increased from six to eight in public sector companies and from nine to twelve in private companies. All the public sector seems to be gaining from this is an additional wastage of energy and human resource in office timings. The private sector seems to be capitalizing by putting more workload on its employees on a per week basis while paying them peanuts in proportion. The number of leaves per year has been cut down extensively and today the total number of holidays given for Eid in a year are less than those given for Christmas in the West. While employees in the West are encouraged to take a month off, in a year, from office to revitalize their

energies, this trend is discouraged in Pakistan. So companies seem to be reaping all the advantages, while their workers are getting none of the benefits of the western work environment. The reason why such injustices are present in Pakistan is that labor laws are either too feeble or there is an absence of authorities that can challenge and combat this exploitation. Also because of the absence of the above, employees are made to sign biased clauses on job contracts of public and private companies and, thereby, adhere to company rules that completely favor the employer and treat the employee unfairly during and after employment. One of such notorious rules is the sacking of a worker on a day's notice with no social security backup.

It is the job of planners in the government and private sector to enhance the opportunities of employment in a country. Sadly, this sector, like everything else in Pakistan is not being handled appropriately. While there is almost no effort to boost prospects and provide more jobs to skilled workers, there is also no check on institutes that provide training in an area. Some institutes keep producing trained personnel in an area, just as a means to mint money, where jobs have already gone scarce. This causes saturation and ultimately a waste of human and capital resources, not to mention the anguish the youth of this country have to face after going through extensive trainings and then have to learn that there were no opportunities in that area. It also indicates the lack of centers that provide career counseling.

All of the factors discussed above, along with other problems in the society have a negative psychological impact on today's youth. It is solely because of these problems that psychiatric disorders

like depression and anxiety, are at a rise, particularly in the young people of Pakistan. Just to emphasize, the sole purpose of highlighting all these issues is to create awareness in the young lot before they enter the practical world.

Also identifying, quantifying and understanding are the first steps in solving problems.

## I Need some Moderate People to Answer

Mutayab Khalid,

This essay is going to be a challenging question to its audience. I live in a world where tolerance has almost faded away either due to the conventional mindsets or modernism as we call it now-a-days. It seriously intrigues whenever I am stuck up in a situation, I am going to write about a few lines later. After watching the videos of wedding parties on Facebook and pictures on other social media websites and on the other hand the shenanigans of the religious clerics mouthing out their Fatwas on petty issues making them a serious problem for the world out there, one starts feeling lonelier when one tackles with such problems.

The person today is either “My views are damn correct you better get hell out of here” by liberals or “We’ll heck your head if you did any blasphemous act without any prior research” by religious fundamentalists. There are no in betweeners now a days. In this dichotomous and biased world we cannot practice to be mid-Yorker of it. We have to completely give up one thing in order to follow the other otherwise either you’ll be called an extremist by a liberal or infidel by a vehement religious person. Or if there is any petulant mulla debating with you, then you will seriously be left with only answer to be sentenced to death for being blasphemous or to be dragged, stoned, and then finally cremated.

It is either black or white – no greys.

But really, what about all of those people who want to live in a world which gives them a little bit of both? What if they want both, religious values and freedom? My question is who is giving us voice? No one. No newspaper. No TV channel. No magazine. No influential person.

I think most of people daily suffer from this dilemma of being called *molvi* I or *Yahoodi* sytle *Apnaya hua hai*. ( You have adopted Jewish culture). Both groups have constantly been seen attacking each other creating hype on such not-so-important issues. We need to think more critically on this issue. If there is someone in-between like me who can answer this question, please do. I am still vacillating to which side I should lean or should I stay an inbetweenner.

We were really confused. While transcribing medical audiotapes, a colleague came upon the following garbled diagnosis: “This man has pholenfrometry.” Knowing nothing about that particular condition, she double-checked with the doctor. After listening to the tape, he shook his head. “This man,” he said, translating for her, “has fallen from a tree.”

— Patricia Longbottom

## Nature in Romantic Poetry

Alia Razia Malik, MCS

The movement of Romanticism brought a paradigm shift in the genre of poetry in 19<sup>th</sup> century. In England, the movement took its gear with the emergence of famous lake poets like Southey, Wordsworth and Coleridge. Among these, Wordsworth is much appreciated in Pakistan. These romantics reject the old Neo Classicism and foster the concept of rhythm, melody and love of nature in their verses. Neo Classical poetry illustrates the moral values in good taste, good manners and strict social regulations prevalent in contemporary aristocratic class of England. In contrast, romantics stretch poetic imagination to the common masses. They envisage morality as recognition of human nature itself. They propagate the new wave against artificialities of the industrial society and sought nature as an antidote to all miseries of humanity. We can see Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats and Shelley among the popular reading circle in Pakistan.

Wordsworth harvests the concept of nature in connection with human beings. His emotional response to the perfection and elegance of nature sets forth the relationship which binds nature with human soul. His impressions for environment are to console the despairs and distress of his fellow beings:

Knowing that Nature never did betray  
The heart that loved her;

He seeks supernatural element in nature and perceives very presence of God in all the phenomena of nature.

And the blue sky, and in the mind of man  
A motion and a spirit, that impels  
All thinking things, all objects of thought  
And rolls through all things.

Coleridge exploits the nature with a sense of awe and mystery. In his view, God has manifested Himself in multifarious forms of nature, so all the forms of nature carry their own distinct spirit. When one is conscious of his own self that is in harmony with the nature, then one is aware of the Divine Presence too. For Coleridge the love of nature is the utmost form of prayer.

He prayeth well, who loveth well  
Both man and bird and beast  
He prayeth best, who loveth best  
All things both great and small  
For the dear God who loveth us  
He made and loveth all

These poets discern the value of Nature and rejoice in it. Nature takes them to the glorious, aluminous aura; a sweet and potent voice, the echo of God in their own souls that turns the universe into music. As Keats says:

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard  
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;

When Keats tries to search the human purpose in this world he finds the deepest meaning in the appreciation of natural beauty. The pleasure which man seeks in nature would unlock new vistas of wisdom and astuteness in life as he claims that:

Beauty is truth, truth beauty, - that is all  
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know

Shelley turns to nature and gets the muse from a little skylark. The cheerful song of the sky lark in spring season has a special focus in English folk. The lark is a little brown bird that builds its nest on the ground. The male bird, especially in the spring season, rises in spiral flight up to the sky, singing ceaselessly its blissful song. It goes up and up till it is lost to sight in the sky and becomes what Tennyson calls “a sightless song”; as it is heard though not seen. Lark still sings as it descends and is not silent until it alights on the ground near its nest. It was the delight of one of these cheerful little birds that inspired Shelley to compose his melodious poem. He calls the bird “blithe spirit” and asks to teach:

What sweet thoughts are thine  
I have never heard praise of love or wine  
That panted forth the flood of rapture so divine

The endless ecstasy of the little bird reminds Shelley of the perplexity and melancholy of human life. What a contrast! The bird is full of bliss

but Shelley wants to learn the lesson of happiness from this tiny spirit. He wishes to spread this message to all humankind to lessen their sufferings. Because Shelley senses:

Our sincerest laughter  
With some pain is fraught  
Our sweetest songs are those  
That tell of saddest thought

Shelley’s own life was gloomy. He was an eager spirit, seeking perfection; his head was full of stunning dreams of impossible utopias. His health was frail and he was sensitive to criticism and ridicule. To such a person it was natural to think that the saddest songs are the sweetest. There is, however, a peculiar sweetness in sad music for most of us. The sad is still the music of humanity.

Yet it is not the end. Shelley is not doomed to despair; he lives on a ray of hope. He overwhelms in his exalted tone and preaches:

The trumpet of a prophecy! O Wind, if winter comes, can spring be far behind?

## Emotional Bank Account

Musharaf Aslam, MCS

We all know what a financial bank account is. We make deposits into it and build up a reserve from which we can make withdrawals when we need to. An Emotional Bank Account is a metaphor that describes the amount of trust that’s been built up in a relationship. It’s the feeling of safeness you have with another human being.

If someone makes deposits into an emotional bank account with another person through courtesy, kindness, honesty, and keeping his commitments to other, he builds up a reserve. Other

person’s trust toward him becomes higher and he can call upon that trust many times if he needs to. He can even make mistakes and that trust level, that emotional reserve, will compensate for it. His communication may not be clear, but the other person will get his meaning anyway. When the trust account is high, communication is easy, instant, and effective.

But if someone has the habit of showing discourtesy, disrespect, overreacting, ignoring others, becoming arbitrary, betraying others’ trust,

threatening others, eventually his emotional bank account is overdrawn. The trust level gets very low.

If a large reserve of trust is not sustained by continuing deposits, a marriage will deteriorate. Instead of rich, spontaneous understanding and communication, the situation becomes one of accommodation, where two people simply attempt to live independent lifestyles in a fairly respectful and tolerant way.

Our most constant relationships, like marriage, require our most constant deposits. With continuing expectations, old deposits evaporate. If you suddenly run into an old high school friend you haven't seen for years, you can pick up right where you left off because the earlier deposits are still there. But your accounts with the people you

interact with on a regular basis require more constant investment. There are sometimes automatic withdrawals in your daily interactions or in their perception of you that you don't even know about. This is especially true with teenagers in the home. Remember that quick fix is a mirage. Building and repairing relationships takes time. If you become impatient with someone's apparent lack of response, you may make huge withdrawals and undo all the good you've done. It's hard not to get impatient. It takes character to be proactive, to focus on your circle of influence, to nurture growing things, and not to "pull up the flowers to see how the roots are coming." But there really is no quick fix. Building and repairing relationships are long-term investments.

## A Global Challenge

Usama Bin Sana, MCS

After the atrocities of 9/11, the most burning issue on the international media is, "who are the Global Terrorists and what is terrorism?"

These days, terrorism is a global problem and it has entangled the whole biosphere. It has manifested itself in different dreadful forms which include suicidal attacks, bomb blasts, hijacking and massacre on a massive scale.

According to the opinion of many national and international analysts, terrorism began after the atrocities of 9/11 when the victims declared "war on terrorism", targeting not just the suspected perpetrators but also the country where they were located. Former US President George W. Bush pledged to "Rid the world of evildoers" and "not let the evil stand".

In this reference of war on terrorism, Floward

Zinn said: "How can you have a war on terrorism when war itself is terrorism?" Everyone, living in the world condemns terrorism but they leave some questions unanswered for instance, What do we mean by "terrorism" and who are global terrorists?

The problem of definition is vexing and complex. There are, however, proposals which seem straightforward, for example, "The calculated use of violence or threat of violence to attain goals that are political, religious or ideological in nature through intimidation, coercion or instilling fears". If we turn the pages of history, for the grind up of terrorism, we find out that the struggle between G-8 countries for the supremacy over rich Central Asia to grab its natural resources encouraged terrorism a lot. During Afghan war in 1979, militant

groups were used by US for the destruction and downfall of USSR to convert the bipolar world into a unipolar one.

Terrorism has affected the socio-economic and geo-political scenario of this planet, and it has acquired its peak and the future of endeavour to overthrow it seems still dark. Noam Chomsky said, "Policy of war on terrorism has also charged innocent people"

Similarly, Martin Luther King said in this regard,

"War is the greatest plague that can afflict humanity. It destroys religion, it destroys states and it destroys families. Any scourge is preferable to it."

In our case, we are concerned with national terrorism which is diverse and varied. It is a matter of fact that our world has now become a global village and Pakistan is the frontline ally of ISAF and NATO forces to bring peace and stability in

the region. In doing so, it has been influenced much more than any other country in the world after Iraq and Afghanistan at the hands of extremist elements. Yet Pakistan stands firm in its resolve to promote peace and prosperity despite different challenges. Pakistani armed forces are utilizing all available resources to uproot terrorism in all its forms across the country through operation Zarb-e-Azb. The military and democratic leaderships are in sync to provide the people a stronger and prosperous Pakistan. Therefore, together we must support each other and take radical steps to eliminate any form of terrorism which may cause hindrances in the smooth flow of life.

We firmly resolve to invest our physical and mental energies in eradicating the wild roots of terrorism from our sacred Homeland. It is not very far when our country will become symbol of global peace.

## Managing Life's Issues

Shahid Aziz, MCS

How regularly have you been living joyfully and peacefully when all of a sudden life slaps you in the face with something startling? Everyone of us has issues, and the truth is that issues will never go away. They will simply change structure.

### Behind-the-scene problems

Nothing turns into an issue until you make it so. You've most likely perceived that diverse individuals have distinctive assumptions of what issues are, and the amount of consideration ought to be given to any one thing. This implies that issues exist in our heads, and that we create them, char-

acterize them, and alarm them.

### The most overlooked secret

The key to managing life's issues is to understand that they are illusions of our creative energy. Indeed, they feel genuine. Life will dependably have "issues" and the best approach to manage them is to give them a chance to be. You don't need to attempt to break down, fantasize, or evaluate your issues. Give them a chance to evaluate themselves. The more you attempt, the more you fuel the issue, and the more hopeless you become. This doesn't mean you quit taking care of issues.

It implies you stop the urgent stressing and dread mongering inside your head.

### **How to stop the compulsive worrying?**

You can stop the franticness by basically staying present, and let whatever happens as it is. This could be greatly hard on the off chance that you find an issue that is paramount to you, however it is through those enormous issues that the greatest

progressions happen.

### **Why is life so hard?**

Life can appear intense now and again, however it is through these extreme times that you develop as an individual. It's uncomfortable, however that is life. It's an exciting ride with both highs and lows, which we all need to survive, so you should figure out how to manage the lows.

## **Self-knowledge**

Fatima Nasim, MCS

Trusting ourselves is often underestimated or neglected by us. Most of us even don't know about our abilities; we are not aware of our calibre and above all, we don't even try to improve ourselves. Man is a wonderful creature. We are the crown of creation and can do wonders. The only thing we need is knowledge of our own selves which is one of the basic factors of getting success. A person cannot get success if he/she is not self-aware. Self-awareness is very necessary to attain some goals. If you want to be a champion then you must know yourself. First of all you should know that at what point you are standing, what is your actual goal, what abilities are required for achieving the goal, and how to develop these abilities or how to improve your abilities.

If you have fear of failing then take it positively because that fear could be your most powerful strength but remember that it could also be your most horrible weakness. Never allow your fears to occupy you, make them your strength and you can only do this if you know and trust yourself. I would quote Marilyn French here that:

“Our fears are a treasure house of self-knowledge if we explore them.”

After knowing yourself, the next step is trusting yourself. Trust that everything is possible in this world. If you think that you don't have sufficient inborn abilities then do not panic or be disappointed. You just need to calm yourself and say to yourself that you can easily develop this thing in yourself, then work hard for that purpose and Insha Allah you will end up developing that quality.

If you see a person with a lot of guts and abilities and he is doing a wonderful job then don't start underestimating yourself; instead say that if he can do that then so can you. And if a task seems to be impossible then you should say that I will definitely do that!”

Faith in yourself and your Creator is also a part of discovering yourself. It is one of the main factors of establishing trust in yourself. If something is not happening for you right now, that doesn't mean that it will never happen. Don't give up, and never say never. There is always a light in you that can lighten darkness. Remember that even miracles take time to happen so never lose hope if you are not getting to your goal. I would quote Robert H. Schuller here that “Let your hopes, not your

hurts, shape your future?’

Look at history, the great names in history, were not the people with extraordinary minds. Most of them were average. It was their devotion and enthusiasm that carried them to heights of success. A big example is Stephen Hawking, a great scientist, who was a very weak student and was rusticated from the school with a note that he could not study. Another recent example is of Bill Gates, owner of Microsoft and second richest person in the world, dropped out from the university. Steve Jobs, one of the pioneers of Apple company, did not even graduate. We could also take examples of our heroes like Quaid-i-Azam, Al-lama Iqbal etc. They were not the super humans, they believed in themselves and their Creator and after trusting their abilities they also trusted the abilities of Muslims of the subcontinent, and with that trust they started Pakistan movement and after an immense struggle they achieved their goal. These were just a few examples; there are a lot

of other examples. Famous millionaire, Carlos S. Hello, was a shopkeeper. Warren Buffet, one of the richest people today, was a mere newspaper hawker. Famous footballer, Messi, was a waiter. If you look around yourself, you will easily find such people.

Remember that nothing in this world is impossible and at least for a human being nothing is impossible. Allah Almighty created us and He hid treasures in us, we just need to find them out. If a person succeeds in knowing himself, then he would know his Creator. It is an Arabic proverb that, “Self-knowledge is a way of knowing your Creator”

Don’t underestimate yourself. Your biggest power is your own-self. Use your power, never lose hope. Self-knowledge has no limits and it is not possible to explain it in two to three pages because knowledge of everything climaxes at knowing yourself. So, continue discovering yourself throughout your life.

## Rebound

Hassan Kamran, College of E&ME

After a devastating failure, accept what happened. Wishing won’t change anything; you have to move forward. Even major setbacks can be springboards to success.

- a. Determine why you lost
- b. Identify new path.
- c. Seize the right opportunities when they are within your grasp. Why? Focus on your role rather than the circumstances that caused you to failure. Ask for candid feedback from the people involved, sympathy will only reinforce your biases. You won’t learn anything without accurately determining where you went wrong. What now?

Don’t avoid the issues, a focused exploration of all options will lead to a more productive transition. Try reframing the situation into a win. Revisit your goals, values, needs and priorities. Look for and test out new opportunities. It may be difficult but it is necessary to let go of your current expectations and identity. Do it! Choose a path. It may be frightening but you still have your skills and expertise, the lessons you’ve learnt and your redefined vision of success. The right opportunity depends on the moment you happen to be looking for it. We change dramatically as we transit through life.

## Say No to Self-pity

Safdar Ali Khan, DD SCME

Self-pity is a defeatist mindset. When one thinks that he is a pitiable object and devoid of any virtue he indulges in pitying himself. Unfortunately, as a nation we have gone in self-pity mode, thanks to our intelligentsia and mullahs, who have made us believe that we can neither be good Muslims nor good people, despite the fact that people living in Pakistan form the best racial and cultural blend in the world. We possess the best racial stock and brains comparable to anyone in the world and still people propagate that we are a mob not a nation. We find all the faults in ourselves and decree that we are incorrigible people who cannot become a nation. Contrary to this, let us have a look at the world map racial, cultural, religious, lingual, regional diversities are found all around. Are, Americans, Russians, Germans, Chinese, Arabs, Persians, Indians, homogenous? Every nation has communal problems. So, why are we over-apprehensive about these minor issues, whereas all other nations feel proud with all much. From day one, we faced an enemy five times larger than us, but we got half of the Kashmir liberated, defeated the same enemy in 1965 war. 1971 is haunting us still because of our political/ military leadership, which were over a period of time going on separate paths. Motives of RAW and inept leadership purposely let one part slip out of our hands. We possess a valiant and highly professional Army, which has never let anybody threaten our external / internal security. Above all we are a nuclear power with ability to reach out to the enemy as far as 47000 kms away. We have the largest irrigation system with a very strong agri-sector, which is producing abundant wheat, rice, sugar and cotton enabling us to earn hard cash by exporting the

surplus produce. Despite our lackluster performance in the education sector, we are endeavoring to make up for the deficiencies. Imagine the new universities and research centres coming up in a decade.

Best of all we have a highly valuable strategic location on the world map, completion of Pak-China, commerce corridor will put us in riding seat economically. No country in the world can ignore us as a non entity, as we are a regional stabilization force. Even a superpower like America cannot ignore us and would like to stay with us to ensure regional stability. Chinese will stay indebted and Russians are vying to join us to trade in the Indian Oceans.

We possess tremendous national spirit, whether war or peace; as a nation, we stood united against any external threat or internal calamities. Attack on APS or floods, earthquakes etc, we stand united to face the challenges. Our valiant forces are the only one in the world which have taken on terrorism head on, irrespective of the cost in money or blood. Last of all, I want to assure Pakistanis that, we are a great nation, irrespective of minor irritants. We should not become desperate and display resolve by showing strength to fight challenges like terrorism, religious intolerance, corruption etc, by singling out and disrespecting those who bring shame to us. The concept of *Khudi*, by Iqbal is not meant to convert us into hermits, but people with self-respect having courage to live a gutsy life of superb character and tell the world that, we are a great nation, better than all. A bit of social responsibility and sense of ownership will put us in the lead. Thus be a 'proud Pakistani'.

## Recent Advancements in Technology

M. Awwab Tahir, MCS

Computers are the best invention of 20<sup>th</sup> century. They have great impact on the life of humans. Advancements in computers have brought about revolutionary changes across the world and new things are being invented on a regular basis with new ideas to make human life more comfortable and enjoyable.

In this article, I will be discussing the recent advancements in the technology and what are its benefits in our daily life. Some of the best advancements in the technology sector are given below:-

- **Drone technology has become widely used:**

We have seen a great advancement in the drone technology in the recent past. These are best used in wars and spying enemies without loss of lives.

- **Advancement in 3D Printers:**

3D Printers are nowadays very popular in movies and art field as they create life-like pictures.

- **Flying cars are now a reality:**

Flying cars are a type of aircrafts for daily use. They provide you transport like your car but you don't have to use any type of road. It flies and helps you reach your destination.

- **Voice can now be recognized easily:**

In recent past, progress has been made in voice recognition. Now it is very easy to control the computer or search on Google by just speaking.

- **Brown Burger is grown in lab:**

There are many efforts going on to control the hunger of the world. In this perspective, after 5

years and \$330,000 worth of research, brown burger is being made in labs which is as tasty and healthful as the real one.

- **What was virtual is now reality:**

The Oculus Rift are virtual reality headsets which allow users to step inside their favourite game and virtual world.

- **Technology is now wearable:**

Wearable technologies are considered to be next big thing.

- **Now you can see more than HD:**

Do you think 1080p is the best quality you have ever watched?

- **Hard Disks are now made of Helium:**

Besides simply sounding cool, the new helium-filled hard drives introduced by Western Digital this year are a game-changer in storage technology.

- **The Bionic Eyes:**

Great technology advancement: The Argus Retinal corrective is the 1st of its kind-a bionic retinal implant that helps individuals see within the same approach a hearing aid helps individuals hear.

- **How computers are changing way of learning:**

Computers have made much progress in helping students and people who want answers to their questions.

## Lahore is Lahore

Aslam Bazmi, SEecs

“Where are you from, *Daddu* (frog)?”

“From Gujrat, sir.”

“What a terrible place to live!”

“And *Kaddu* (pumpkin) where are you from?”

“Me, sir? I am from Sahiwal.”

“Well, not a bad place for a sheep like you!”

Right, sir.”

“And what about you, Mr. Kojak?”

“Sir, I hail from Karachi”. “Don’t try to be smart, idiot. Tell me plainly where you have disgraced from.”

“Sir, from Manghu Pir, to be precise.”

“Yes, that shows very much in your crooked personality.”

“OKay, Einstein, where are you from?” “You mean, sir, me?”

“Who the hell do you think I am talking to? I must sort out all your notions but tell me first where you have disgraced from.” “Sir, I belong to Lahore.”

“That’s great. Lahore is Lahore, a city of gardens, a land of brave people, a great city of great people, ready to receive with open arms any Tom, Dick and Harry-and can tolerate even a goofy like you.” All said in loud chorus, “Yes, sir!”

I was intrigued to eavesdrop on this historic conversation between a batch of newly inducted cadets and their course supervisor, Flight Lieutenant Malik, nicknamed Brilliant. He hailed from the downtown of Lahore and considered other than Lahorites a lesser breed. His face beamed with rare excitement whenever someone introduced himself as the resident of Lahore. Brilliant strongly maintained that only Lahorites enjoyed in plenty pure and delicious food. The rest were

eating insipid meals, and maybe grass or fodder. I had the singular honour of having savoured his rich hospitality only once, and I must say the home offered the best cuisine. I had to pay for it only through profuse praise now and then. Brilliant was extremely pleased to meet a visitor in my office, Mr Akbar, born and bred in Lahore, who was coincidentally living in Lahore in the same area from where hailed the Great Brilliant. He asked the gentleman if he knew Gullu barber. When Akbar nodded affirmatively, Brilliant whispered in his ear that Gullu had the honour of circumcising him when he was a school-going child. Akbar whispered back gleefully in Brilliant’s ear, springing surprise that he too had the agony of undergoing that butcher-barber’s surgery and it took his cut several months to heal due to the infectious razor. At this point, both burst into a hysterical laughter, startling everyone around.

For several years, Brilliant jealously held the Eating Championship, beating every glutton in the air force at various dinner parties - setting the once hitherto unbeaten record of devouring in minutes one quarter of a roasted lamb, besides guzzling several chicken legs and half a dozen *Shami Kebabs* with a large bowl of *raita*. Just an hour after taking such a huge meal, he was found prowling around the deep freezer at home in search of *gulab jamins*. According to his truthful lady, he was caught red-handed by none other than his own watchful children. However, by that time Brilliant had wolfed down all the *gulab jamins*. The thief-papa barely escaped the kids’ wrath and had to treat the children to their favourite ice-cream

the following day.

There are countless tales about Brilliant's naivety, gluttony, absence of mind and foolhardiness. He was indeed a walking source of fun and amusement of all kinds. We all looked forward to seeing him in some act of superb stupidity.

On a very fine morning as I was about to drive to Peshawar Saddar with an urgent shopping list, I was waylaid by Brilliant. A great window-shopper since his youthful days, Brilliant latched on to me for the next two hours. After sauntering around for well an hour, he rejoined me in a bookshop. As we were returning to our car, Brilliant recalled he had to buy some samaosas for his wife. He asked me to wait for him in the car, and he would be back in a short while. It was already very late but Brilliant was visible nowhere till I saw him emerge, with a confused smile and dishevelled hair, from a neighbouring car similar to ours. Probably, he was overly engrossed in his old pastime of ogling at beautiful women which inevitably led to a highly embarrassing situation. Absent-minded, Brilliant jumped into the neighbouring car with a lady ensconced on the driving seat who was feasting on a platter of hot crispy potato chips. Seeing Brilliant, she began to scream hysterically. Luckily, finding his otherwise truant wits around, the Brilliant quickly apologized wearing all innocence on his face. While exiting, his greedy hand couldn't help pinching instinctively a handful of potato chips from the lady's platter. On the way, he collided with a policeman to whom he gave his piece of mind there and then. On spotting me, he also gave me a sharp rebuke for negligently not standing by the car and letting him go astray.

Brilliant's motorbike was in shabby shape and badly needed re-painting. The paint bill appeared to hurt mortally his stingy pocket so he focused

on cheap solutions. One of our friends suggested to him that some tins of black and red paints were lying surplus in the compound of an air force store close to his house. The very next morning, Brilliant approached the store in charge, requesting him to dole out a modicum of black and red paint. Getting hold of the complimentary gift of the paint, he proceeded to undertake the artistic task of repainting his motorbike. An old brush lying in the kitchen came in very handy. He parked the motorbike in the backyard and then, rolling up his sleeves like Michaelangelo, he wielded the brush with masterly strokes on the motorbike with the assistance of his maid-servant. In just half an hour, the bike stood clumsily painted red and black with blobs of paints stuck to silencer and elsewhere. The poor two-wheeler wore a grotesque appearance for all to see and behold.

When I rode pillion on Brilliant's clumsily painted motorbike next morning, some naughty colleagues in the office mischievously greeted Brilliant on purchasing a new motorbike. Some had the audacity to demand sweets. They feigned extreme amazement when Brilliant revealed that it was entirely the magic of his artistic touch. The glib-tongued *Chacha*, an ace sycophant, advised Brilliant to sell the motorbike in such immaculate condition on a price of his own choosing and go for an old Suzuki 800 cc car. Brilliant had invested some money in a Ponzi scheme which promised to return his savings three-fold in two months' time. The investment was about to mature in a few weeks. This greatly bolstered Brilliant's dream of buying a car soon. Sadly, his aspiration shattered and crashed on his hearing the news that the investors had fled to Dubai for good.

Brilliant claimed he was a great catapult shooter and, in boyhood, was credited with shooting

many raw mangoes. One evening at his home city, Lahore, we both were strolling in a park in DHA. The place was humming with all kinds of fun and recreation. Standing yonder was a Khan Sahib with an air gun and a balloon-studded board hung over his shoulder. Brilliant showed unusual interest in testing his shooting skill. The Khan was a very intelligent person. He was quick to judge that Brilliant was pretty confused and dim. As a safe bet, he challenged Brilliant to shoot a balloon and claim 10 Rupees for each kill or hit just 10 balloons in any sequence and take away his gun, concluding, "Sir, the choice is entirely yours!" Brilliant greedily opted for the gun, pinning high hopes on his good marksmanship. Following the deal, the stage was set and many children flocked to the scene in no time. After gulping a tin of coke, followed by a few mock exercise-like jerks, Brilliant started off heroically, holding the gun firmly. He fired as many as 30 slugs, all unmistakably quite off the target, except the one odd fire that accidentally claimed a single balloon. Finding the game unfair, Brilliant asked the Khan Sahib to hand him a catapult so as to complete his mission with a big bang. The Khan laughed off the demand over a cup of Qahwa, with some taunting remarks in Pushto.

One night at PAF Base Lower Topa, Brilliant was on Orderly Duty Officer. Someone mischievously leaked to him the fake news of Mess Secretary dating with a eunuch in his room. Considering it an act of violating the sanctity of mess premises and a grave breach of officers' code of conduct, Brilliant acted post haste. Taking along a provost NCO, he launched a sudden raid on the Mess Secretary's room. The room was bolted from inside which heightened Brilliant's suspicion all the more. He desperately banged and kicked the door,

shouting "open the door, damned" at the loudest pitch of his voice. The poor secretary, acclaimed for his pristine nobility, was taken aback to hear all this fuss. Brilliant switched on the lights and frantically started searching the eunuch in every nook and corner, even in the cupboard which couldn't hide even a small child. The next morning, Brilliant's 'abortive raid' became a big gossip headline among officers on the Base. Even the Base Commander was greatly amused.

In 1978, Brilliant was one of the avid listeners during the farewell address of Air Chief Marshal Zulfiqar Ali Khan at PAF Base Kohat. Finally, he succeeded in poking his nose by interrupting the dignitary on a point of 'disorder.' However, he was asked to wait for the question-answer session. As soon as the address was over, Brilliant leapt like a leopard and was the first one to shoot the first question, which sent the whole gathering to chorus laughter: "Sir, India is purchasing hi-tech Jaguars from America while we are sleeping. Don't you think this is a grave threat to our national security? What would be, Sir, your strategy to cope with the threat?"

Gracefully smiling, the Air Chief replied: "Well, Flt Lt Malik I quite share your concern. We do have a strategy to deal with the threat which, I am afraid, I cannot disclose at this forum. By the way, gentleman, Jaguar is an Anglo-French jet ground attack aircraft, and it has nothing to do with America."

Despite Brilliant's retirement 15 year ago, his wonderful memories never seem to retire or fade away. I often find in these reminiscences ample comic relief and some of the finest tickling tales to be shared with readers from time to time.

## Rozi and I

Safdar Ali Khan, DD SCME

A wonderful man of short height, long grey beard and subtle sense of humour, great intellect, yet simple in manners, Rozi Khan, is a good company. His very name has embarrassed me at times, while talking to him on telephone and pronouncing his name as “Rozi,” because my old wife would suspect me of my involvement with some Rozi. One day he surprised me by disclosing that Shakespeare was from his area, a revered Pash-tun. Once questioned by me, he narrated that, actually, there was a Pashtun poet by the name of Wali Muhammad Shaikh Peer. He was a great philosopher as well. Brits, stole his work and published it by the name of William Shakespeare. Incidentally Shakespeare has not written anything original, rather re-wrote works of others. So to change the topic, I interrupted Rozi, “tomorrow you may claim that George Bush was from your village.” He laughed and said, *yaara* (friend), his name and actions both are similar to us. Look, at the name, Bush, means ‘*Jharri*’ in our language, so we do have, Jungal Khan (Forest head), Mangal Bagh (Tuesday garden) Pathar Khan (Stone Khan), Talwar Khan (Sword Khan), Azab Khan etc. George Bush even behaves like our people. He is a brave man like our Khans, who do similar actions to maintain their supremacy. He can get us killed, destroy our property and in turn help us once we are at his mercy after total submission to his authority. But Rozi, he is president of an entire continent and your khan is head of a tribe, I quipped. Rozi again laughed while taking another dose of snuff, his favourite timepass and my worst punishment, which I undergo from time to time.

Rozi in his typical style said, “*Yaara!* Presidents, Khans, Chiefs, have same mindset. He has a vast country, large resources at his beck and call, destroys countries, controls their resources, kills their people to discipline them in the name of humanity while our Khans do the same at smaller scale and call it tribal traditions.” His comparison and analysis made me speechless. A simple, straight and trustworthy friend, who talks sense, but makes you mad sometimes, by mixing, ‘he’ and ‘she’, so profusely that sometimes the other fellow may get suspicious of his gender. Normally he refers to his wife as ‘Jatta hey,’ but his brother ‘aati hey.’ This is peculiar to these wonderful people who are close to Arabs in eating habits, trade, treatment of women and weaker ones. Money minded like Jews, and brave, like themselves. Rozi and I were sipping tea, once, and another friend who had never met Rozi Khan rang up and, after exchanging pleasantries, asked me as to what I was doing. I told him that I was having tea with Rozi at home. This news surprised him. He immediately questioned my character, taunted me and said ‘*hoon*’ to which I replied him to join us. To arouse his curiosity, I requested him to bring some eatables for Rozi so that we could enjoy the evening. He joined us within half an hour and was stunned to see Rozi (Khan). He abused me for wasting his money by asking him to bring edibles for Rozi. Rozi and I had a lungfull laugh and still, I teased him on this issue. So my advice is that to never go after the names only. Pathar Khan may be very smart and handsome, and Rozi, totally deceptive.

## The Haunted House

Zafar Abbas Naqvi

After the partition, my grandparents migrated to Pakistan from India, leaving everything behind. Since there was no proper governance, management or a plan on how to accommodate those migrants, my grandparents were simply asked to find and settle down in any home vacated by Hindus who had migrated to India just like my grandparents. My grandparents found an abandoned house in Rawalpindi and settled in. The house probably belonged to a family of lower caste Hindus of lesser means and was a very modest one. Keep in mind that we are talking about the 1940s, when having a TV or a camera in the house was similar to owning a rare Bengal tiger in Canada or having Wi-Fi in a village in Thar Desert. My grandfather was a school teacher and there weren't many educated people around at that time so he quickly gained respect among his neighbors who started calling him Master *Sahab* (Mr. Teacher).

So a few weeks passed and winter started to settle in. One day a neighbor knocked at the door and called for my grandfather and told him that he suspected that his house was haunted and he needed my grandfather's help to get rid of the evil ghost. He explained that there was a strange ghost hanging from his room ceiling and moving in circles, making strange noises. He further explained that in summer it was alright because the ghost didn't harm him but now that it was winter the ghost was killing him, as it was blowing cold, chilling air at him. The guy wanted my grand-

father's help, knowing that he was an educated man who might be able to talk the ghost into not bothering him. My grandfather didn't realize what seemed to be the problem until he agreed to go and see the ghost himself. As he entered the guy's house he saw the obvious ceiling fan switched on. Instantly my grandfather realized that the poor guy never had seen a ceiling fan or even heard of it because the technology wasn't very common in those days like it is now. The house this guy was living in probably belonged to some well-off Hindu person because it was a big house and even had ceiling fans which were considered a luxury. The guy got his hands on that nice big house just randomly like any other person who moved into an abandoned house. This guy lived in that house alone and had no family.

My grandfather came up with a cunning plan and told the guy that the ghost (ceiling fan) was a very evil one and would not leave him alone. He suggested to him that if he would like they could swap the houses as he could cope with the ghost somehow. The guy happily agreed and soon my grandfather moved into the big, lavish house and all he had to do was switch off the button of the ceiling fan which was right there on the wall and the poor guy had no clue what it was there for. The guy on the other hand, was also pretty happy with the deal he made with my grandfather since in that house there was no icy air-throwing ghost to haunt him.

## The Weird Sorrow

Ahmad Fahad, SEecs

I was ready. It had been so long since I met him. He had come after 8 years. The excitement overwhelmed me. We were best buddies; the thrill of seeing him again overwhelmed me. I kept staring at the clock. It was 7 pm. He would arrive any time. I saw my cellphone: the battery was full and signals were strong. Curiosity and fear mixed up into a sweet mixture.

The door bell rang. I ran to check it. And as I opened the door I saw a person wearing a long coat, with a small beard and questioning eyes. He inquired, "Is this you?" Yes, it was me. He knew it and we went out wandering here and there. We shared the old memories and laughed our head out. It felt so unreal. We didn't eat dinner but time flew so quickly. We were preoccupied.

Unfortunately, good things don't last long. Who knew the walk on the road would result into something I hadn't even thought about. Yes, I heard a sound of a tyre scratching against the road and before I could interpret it, the car hit me with a force which made me go in a gloomy, dark place. I couldn't see but I could hear. I heard the siren of the ambulance. I could hear them and they really cared for me. I was in the arms of my father. I tried to wake up for some time but my body was much more attracted to the dark place. I resisted. The rain started, and it was scary. I didn't know if I would survive but there was something that made me fight; something that had been there with me all this time. There was hope, hope to fight back. So I didn't let myself down. I opened my eyes. Everyone told me that I was alright but I knew they were lying. I have been through all this.

The doctor told me of the hospital and his name. I wondered why he did so. Until next day the same doctor came. He asked me the things he told me. I replied as consciously as I could. And then the smile on his face was fanatic.

Then doctors came and checked my eyes. There was blood in my eyes and it would take some time to heal. I was told not to worry. He also told my father the same who was standing anxiously looking by me. People were eyeing me up and down. I know him; he used to come to offer prayer, and the guy with him was his father. There were more people too: the whole neighborhood was here. But there was someone missing. I remembered, but before I could figure it out the doctors came for examination.

This won't take long; I will be on my feet and be able to score a century in cricket again much hope, much happiness. The good part is that I am alive but there is something missing in all this happiness. Where is he? I questioned myself. I looked here and there but couldn't find him. I asked my dad, but kept silent. Waves of horror swept across me. I started to think the worst. What happened to him? Was he alive? I didn't know.

After 4 days I came home. 'Get well soon' was written on a card attached to my cupboard. My room was decorated; it was all fine and good. But I went to find someone. I went to the place of the accident. I shouted his name. I cried. I couldn't find him. He was nowhere to be found. I would be the one who survived but it didn't matter if we both hadn't survived. I knew he would survive. I kept waiting when a car came and I could hear

my father calling me. I stopped. The car came and my father opened the rear door. Here he was, I couldn't believe he was alive. He stepped out, but he couldn't walk. I grabbed him by his arm. He had a fractured leg and a torn thigh muscle but he

was smiling. His smile brought tears in my eyes. That was the same smile he used to give me when we were both caught in detention by the teacher. It was raining and he said nothing but his action had conveyed enough for me to interpret.

## Fishing with Robin

Aslam Bazmi, SEecs

A widower with a rapidly greying head, Robin was a fickle-minded hero in his early-fifties. Actually named Ruban, he came to be popularly known as Robin, although he did not have even the remotest kinship, affinity or similarity with the legendary character Robin Hood, Robin Ghos or the poor Robin in the woods. With his good build and loud sonorous voice, he looked quite impressive. Robin sought voluntary retirement from military at the age of forty-five, aspiring to do something big in life with small half-hearted efforts. Initially, he chose to write a few odd stories in the hope to become a great writer of the stature of J K Rowling, the author of the celebrated Harry Potter series. Sometimes, he would grieve quietly, complain of the vagaries of fate and blame the world for callously ignoring his great work. Eking out livelihood was not a problem for Robin; he had inherited good land property from his late father. He was proverbially frugal in habits.

Mohsin alias Mithoo was quite good at knitting friendship with freaks and eccentrics because they are a proven source of great fun and amusement. So, Robin was an obvious choice whom he instantly welcomed as a valuable addition to the wonderful galaxy of his friends.

Robin tried to cultivate several hobbies and pastimes but he could pursue none as a life-long passion. First, he tried his hand at painting but after attending a few lessons in painting, he got fed up with this fine art-of-course, not without producing some clumsiest paintings. One of these paintings alleged to be portraying a group of young children at play still hangs in Robin's sparsely furnished drawing room. The great Picasso exuberantly shows it to every visitor, including Mithoo on his very visit to his home. The aviator in him urged Robin to become a flyer and he excitedly joined a flying club. Thankfully, his poor psychomotor skills hindered all his attempts to fly solo and he was grounded for good. A bit heartbroken, he then turned to gardening but soon developed an acute allergy to everything green, including his green blazer that he would proudly wear as the former captain of the hockey team of his school.

When an old friend suggested to Robin to take up fishing as a good pastime, he took no time to hug the friend and this great idea together. The next day saw Robin feverishly engaged in making preparations. After having purchased two high-quality fishing rods, one for himself and the other for Mithoo, he got down to preparing some tempt-

ing bait balls. Mithoo was amused to hear his excited soliloquy: “Beef would not be the right thing. Mutton also smells bad. Chicken chunks should be fine. Maybe, modern-day fish are also diet-freaks, so let it be chicken meat to be on safer side,” he concluded prophetically. Mithoo helped him shape meat slugs to attract a large school of fish.

On the D-day, as Mithoo rose to accompany Robin on their first date with fishing, Robin quickly suggested to change over as befitted the occasion... In a few minutes, Mithoo was there wearing mufti trousers, a new pair of joggers, and a green sweat shirt (which made Robin sneeze suddenly). Robin lent Mithoo a pair of his old ankle shoes, a loose fit for the latter’s feet, but neither of the two minded it in great exuberance. Then, with his nose and mouth cupped in his left hand, Robin asked Mithoo to wear a shirt of different colour which he did in no time to spare Robin the further agony of colour allergy. In about 20 minutes, the two great fishers were at the bank of a dead stream on their maiden fishing mission. Like an expert angler, Robin minutely studied the place and then they selected a point which Robin’s good instincts suggested to be a bountiful abode of fish. Losing no further time, they lowered their baits with high hopes and earnest prayers, manipulating their respective fishing rods like great anglers.

Hours went by inconsequentially. Then, suddenly Robin felt something tugging at his bait; his face glowed at the thought of some big fish in the trap. Together, they beamed and smiled in tandem, crooning some favourite song incoherently while pulling up the game. To their utter amazement, it turned out to be a big frog. They would have spent the whole day without catching any fish, had not

a kind, elderly person passing by revealed that the stream had no fish and they should try their luck somewhere else instead of choosing to amass a variety of frogs, tadpoles or tortoises. There was a small dam not very far away, so they drove to that point in Robin’s 1970 model Datsun car with an ample trunk.

No sooner than Robin and Mithoo had lowered their fishing rods in the lake, an official on duty rushed to warn that fishing was not allowed without a proper licence, for which they showed instant keenness. Once they had greased the palm of the guard on duty, the matter was amicably settled. Robin had already emptied the car trunk to its full capacity, ambitiously hoping to stack it with a good fish-load for a fabulous barbecue. They hurriedly lowered their fishing rods at two different points. As if all the fish were on a collective dieting session or had been summoned to some catwalk, none bothered to look at the chicken-meat baits. The sun was about to set, and one could see gnawing frustration writ large on Robin’s face. Then, all of a sudden something got hooked to Mithoo’s rod. He thought it was now his turn to receive the gift of a frog. Lady Luck finally pitied them. At last, they were able to catch a medium-sized fish, good enough to enact a small barbecue.

Being a great chef himself, Robin chose to prepare the game for the barbecue party on the following day. Back home, there was a short photo session with various poses of Robin, Mithoo and the fish. In one picture, Robin was seen parading the fish in his right hand and forming a victory sign by his left hand. Minutes after, Mithoo saw Robin devoutly massaging the prized fish with his choice condiments. Then, it was left to marinate in

the fridge for the whole night. Robin had several greedy glimpses of the tantalizing fish in different phases of the night, and so did surreptitiously his servant, Jugnoo.

There was already some hot row between Robin and Jugnoo when the latter had the audacity to ask for an increase in his salary. Robin's persuasion helped little to put Jugnoo's concern at rest. It seemed Jugnoo had taken the matter to his heart, and revengefully set the agonized heart on the fish. During the greater part of the following morning, Robin kept sleeping to make up for the wakeful hours of the vigil last night. This afforded Jugnoo a golden opportunity to make away with the marinated fish. A strange note that he left behind said, "I have collected my due pay-rise by taking

away the marinated fish, ready to be roasted and savoured with my spouse. Thank you, Robin, and Allah Hafiz!"

Robin was devastated and remained drowned in deep grief for quite a few hours. When Mithoo broke the news of this theft to one of Robin's friends, Khan Baba, the latter came wearing a glum face to express commiseration and solidarity with a parcel of crisp fried fish. Robin pretended to be brave but his usual liveliness was conspicuously missing. Then, in a move unexpected of him, he decided to shift to Karachi, brushing aside everyone's persuasion to drop the idea. Mithoo has since lost every contact with Robin. Maybe, Robin held Mithoo equally culpable for the broad day theft of his prized trophy—the marinated fish!

## Anguish

Muhammad Sohaib Tariq, SEECS

The alarm rang, shattering the monotony of the room. The old, deformed body on the bed twitched slightly. The rumbling snores gave way to a low guttural breathing, like water rushing through a blocked drain. The alarm continued to ring, tearing up the last remnants of the stillness that ruled the house. Finally, with the aura of an ancient machine coming to life after a very long time, Bashir's hand reached for the clock, its wrinkled form coming to rest on top of it. Then, silence.

Bashir peered at the ceiling through his dull eyes. They had once twinkled like the stars; now they were dead and sunken into their sockets, the

eyes of a defeated man.

It was the beginning of a new day, a new page in the life of an old man. Yet, there was no anticipation, no excitement, no happiness. For he knew exactly what the day had in store for him. He got up, raising his body ever so carefully off the bed. He sat on the edge for a moment and stared at his deformed feet. The years of ploughing fields and watering crops had taken their toll. Bashir had toiled through rain and snow, knowing that one day he would rest, one day his children would prosper.

No, that topic was painful. He had resolved

not to think about them anymore and not to shed any more tears in remembrance of his children. He had not seen his children since they moved to the city. That was twenty years ago. Despite his failing memory, Bashir was able to recall how long it had been since he had last seen them. He had come to terms with it now. He had accepted defeat. He had accepted that he was an illiterate farmer whose children had no use for him.

All those nights he had dreamt about sending his children to the city for good education and all those days he had shed blood and sweat to realize his dreams. They had not been in vain. His children had all gone to the best university in the city. They had left behind their village. And their old father.

As the thoughts raced through Bashir's mind, a lump began to rise in his throat. He coughed. The cough brought a searing pain to his heart. Was that heartache? Or was it his illness?

What did it matter anyway. Pain was pain, no matter what caused it. He had grown used to it now; a constant companion, reminding him that he was still alive.

Ah life! It seemed he no more had any use for it. He had contemplated ending it; once and for all. But the thought of his children always stopped him. Some day, maybe someday they would return for him. No he mustn't get his hopes up. They were never coming back. And with that final thought Bashir got out of bed.

Eat, sleep, think. That was all he ever did. That was all he could do. Sometimes, if the weather was particularly good, he would go out into the fields, leaning heavily on his walking stick. He would sit by the river and watch the swans drift ever so gracefully in the water. He would watch

as the birds chirped and the sun shone through the trees. He would watch the clouds sailing by. As he sat there surrounded by nature, he would forget his pain for a moment.

But not today. Today Bashir's heart felt heavy. So he took his medicine and went to bed again. He woke up in the evening and had a few bites to eat. He felt much better now.

Bashir noticed the shriveled flowers in the vase by his bed. He would put in some fresh ones in the morning. With that final thought, Bashir set the alarm and went back to bed.

The alarm rang through the silence of the room. The sun was unusually bright. The birds chirped and the swans waddled through the water. The alarm rang and rang, but Bashir did not get up that day. The flowers just outside the window bobbed in the breeze. But inside, the flowers lay dying in the vase. And next to them, lay Bashir.

Hospital regulations require a wheelchair for patients being discharged. However, while working as a student nurse, I found an elderly gentleman already dressed and sitting on the bed with a suitcase at his feet-who insisted he didn't need my help to leave the hospital. After a chat about rules being rules, he reluctantly let me wheel him to the elevator. On the way down, I asked if his wife was meeting him. "I don't know," he said. "She's still upstairs in the bathroom changing out of her hospital gown."

— Patsy R. Dancey

## The Pressure of Proving One's Gender

Shabih-e-Zainab, MCS

Our society revolves around norms. Norms are the bases of culture but when they start to get on one's nerves, they are meant to be forgotten and buried deep in the past.

One of the norms is our perception of masculinity and femininity. Orthodox definition of masculinity is the ability to keep a lid on one's emotions, have an ego higher than Mount Everest, and to resolve matters at gun-point, and to adopt an authoritative role even when it's not necessary. On the other side of the fence, femininity is defined as keeping one's emotions on the verge of overflow in every situation, lacking physical strength, staying at home and always looking for a husband.

In the modern world, many people do not agree with the traditional definition of femininity due to the women's rights movements. The definition of masculinity still remains valid and causes mental stress as men are always struggling to prove they are masculine enough.

And anyone not quite according to the set definition is bound to live his or her life as an out-cast. Face the negative criticism or simply face the peer pressure causing stress and loss of self-confidence.

But why does anyone in this world have to prove

their gender? Why can't a man cry or why is a woman considered most feminine at home? The peer pressure does not let them be their true selves.

Many people find lame excuses for this peer pressure and relate it to religion or that these are all "built-in features." Prophet Muhammad (SAW) shed tears when Hazrat Hamza (RA) was martyred. Hazrat Zainab (sister of Imam Hussain (RA) preached the message of Karbala going from city to city as a prisoner even though there was a man among them. Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was never involved in a heated argument and never did he show any sign of anger. Hazrat Khadija (RA) was a businesswoman, and made important trade decisions on her own.

Going through history, Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah is an example. He resolved matters with brains rather than brawns. Razia Sultana led her own army. These people never followed the orthodox definitions of masculinity or femininity. They didn't find it worthwhile to have to prove their gender to people around them.

And it's time we leave these practices too, so that we can move to a better tomorrow, where we don't have to prove our gender.

## Old Man's Wife

Safdar Ali Khan, DD SCME

On a bright, sunny and equally humid day, I was sitting in my makeshift office, under a forty pounder tent sweating from all pores to discharge my duties, in martial law headquarters in Sahiwal as a member of complaint cell. Myself and the complainants were braving this hot and humid day

in a small, semi-green lawn beside the canal rest house. A military jawan was disciplining the little mob and, being at the receiving end, they were behaving very nicely. Everybody walked up to me with his application which I could hardly read. It was during this exercise that I learnt that doctors

and *Arzi Navees* (those who write applications in the courts for money) have similar handwriting which could be understood only by druggist and munshis (court clerks). Thus to fully understand the applicants' problems, I had to ask them a few questions, which meant five to seven minutes for each individual applicant; in the end, forcing me to write NFA (no further action) sign and handover to the applicant. To my astonishment, even educated lot left happily after these remarks. Once, I was through with half of the applicants I saw an elderly man, stooped forward and standing with the help of a stick, wearing a small white turban, dhoti and no shirt. Feeling pity on this fading soul, I requested all complainants to excuse me if I called the old man first, being very weak and old. Everybody agreed willingly to break the rule of first come, first served basis. I was contemplating that, his rude sons and daughters-in-law may have thrown him out of the house or some of his close relative or ruffian must have deprived him of his land or something. While I was forecasting his problem, he reached me. I got his application and without wasting time I asked him as to what his problem was, He said "puttar, meri swany murwa deo" (son, get me my wife back). My already heightened temperature due to insipid, false and fabricated applications spurred very high. How-

ever, controlling myself and thinking his wife may be of his age and gone to her sons / parent's house on some dispute of wards' marriage, as is normal in village, I said, "*Baba, Tuon es Umar Vich Savani Keh Karni Aey*" (What have you to do with your wife at this age). I heard a giggling sound as every one was trying to control loud laughter. By now my wit overrode my temper. I asked him "*Tery umar kitny hay?*" (What is your age?). He replied, (*Pachanvey sall hosi*) (Should be around 95 years). My next question was, "what is the age of your wife?" He said, "*Solan sall hosi*" (Should be around sixteen years). It stunned everybody, because, she could be of the age of his grand, grand daughter. I said, if she had consulted me before leaving you, I would have advised her to poison you. This old man started begging me "*Puttar, meen cheeh Hazar dittay haey, maandi sawany mangwa day*" I felt pity for the poor girl, cursed her parents, for selling their young girl to this old clown, and society for letting it happen, as well as responsible for marketing of daughters. I had no pity, tore his application, reprimanded and turned him away because I could not do anything more than this. If you have the sympathy with the old dragon and parents of the girl, you may help him, if you like, because I could not get his wife returned.

My husband decided to install a light switch in our master bedroom. Cutting into the wall, he discovered a stash of bottles and boxes. "Honey!" he called excitedly. "Come see what I found!" I ran in and quickly realized that his next task would be to fix the hole he had made in the back of our medicine cabinet.

— **Nola Pirart Wedded Blitz**

We rushed our four-year-old son, Ben, to the emergency room with a terrible cough, high fever, and vomiting. The doctor did an exam, then asked Ben what bothered him the most. After thinking it over, Ben said hoarsely, "I would have to say my little sister."

— **Angela Schmid**

## My Teachers

Syed Babar Ali

I was very fortunate that throughout my stay at Aitchison, Mr. C.H. Barry was the Principal, infusing new life into the College when he took over in 1933 until his retirement in 1946. He was an excellent teacher, a great disciplinarian, and a rabid Tory. I remember my father had brought me a felt hat from England and I wore it to a cricket match at Aitchison. Mr. Barry came up to me and asked, 'What is your nationality?' I said, 'I am an Indian' and he said, 'Why are you wearing a hat that is not Indian?'

In 1941, my friend Harcharan wrote a letter to Mahatama Gandhi, who was on a fast unto death in jail, that he was praying for his life and he fully supported his cause. The letter was intercepted by the CID and sent back to Mr. Barry. I remember we were sitting in our class and the peon, a short Muslim fellow, whom we called the Angel of Death, came and asked for Harcharan Singh to see the Principal. Mr. Barry asked him, 'Harcharan, did you recently write a letter to anybody?' Harcharan replied, 'Yes, I regularly write to my mother.' Mr. Barry said, 'No, anybody in politics?' Harcharan said, 'Yes, I wrote to Mahatama Gandhi.' Mr. Barry asked him what he had written. Harcharan told him and Mr. Barry said, 'You are a student here, you should not be bothered by these things. You should concentrate on your studies. Politics will come later.'

After Partition in 1947, Harcharan was elected to the East Punjab Assembly and was a Deputy Minister. On a visit to his village, the Inspector of the Police Station in the village came to pay his respects to Harcharan and brought his file, which was in the Police Station. Harcharan was very sur-

prised to find in the file a letter from Mr. Barry to the Deputy Commissioner (D.C.) of Ferozpur saying 'Harcharan Singh Brar is a student of Aitchison College. He is a snake in the grass. You have to watch him!' That letter went to the D.C. and was then passed on to the Police Station in Harcharan's village. This was before Partition and shows how the British kept an eye on their political opponents. Harcharan told me that he could use that letter as a certificate of distinction in the Congress Party!

I was once nearly caned at Aitchison. Mr. Gwynn was the Games Master. I was very keen on tennis and I went up to him and said, 'I want to see the tennis match between Iftikhar and Ghaus at the Carson Institute.' It was probably a long day and he said, 'No, you have to play games.' I still went to see the match and found that Mr. Gwynn was also there! He gave me a dirty look and the next morning he said to me, 'You disobeyed me. I am going to recommend that you be caned by Mr. Barry.' It was winter and I wore shorts under my trousers so that the caning would not hurt me. When I got to school, the Principal's peon came and called me to his office. Frightened, I went there. Mr. Barry was sitting along with Lala Dhani Ram, the Head Master, and Mr. Gwynn. Mr. Barry said, 'You disobeyed Mr. Gwynn.' I apologised and he said, 'You are very lucky. Today I have a bad pain in my back. You see this cane: I would have used it on you but I will spare you.' He thus let me off and that was the nearest I got to any punishment.

*(Excerpt from autobiography of Syed Babar Ali, with thanks)*

## 14 August

Mutayab Khalid

The 67<sup>th</sup> Independence day of Pakistan! Happy Birthday Pakistan! Long Live Pakistan! Prosper Pakistan! The 67<sup>th</sup> Birthday of Iqbal's dream! The 67<sup>th</sup> Birthday of Jinnah's struggle! The 67<sup>th</sup> Birthday of Sir Syed's Ideology! And all those other exclamatory sentences we see, write, send, update on our status on Facebook, tweet, and including the leftover social media websites, will face the influx of.

But this is not enough for Pakistan to show our love. How much we care for it. How deeply rooted is our love for this country. Actually, this is not the need of Pakistan. Pakistan does not need our love instead. Shocking but correctly said.

The love for your homeland must be the reflection of your character, your attitude, your living style, your behaviour towards others, your services for your country, and most important of all, your education. All these things matter a lot on the way to a successful and prosperous hometown. If you lack in your good behaviour or attitude, then really it is a spit on the face of Pakistan because the way you act is being noted by all other nations and what they will say, "Oh are these Pakistanis?? These people love their country...??" Seriously don't. This is really the bad impression on the minds of other country dwellers.

In fact, what we do with motorbikes by removing baffles of silencers, and the irritating voice of scores of bikes when united together just leave others abusing naughty boys. Not only the bikes, 10-15 persons seated in a single car with the capacity of at-the-most six people. Loud music, na-

tional anthems and songs in cars driven on roads is not love for Pakistan but contemptible behaviour.

The state which has given us the identity, we feel proud to present ourselves as a Pakistani, our green passport, the crescent and star all are pride of us. The homeland where we can live without any sort of slavery, can breathe in the air of freedom, can smell the fragrance of brotherhood and unity, can taste the sweet dessert of prosperity and can feel and enjoy everything that can enrapture us. All these opportunities are, in fact, the blessings in disguise of our Almighty bestowed upon us. But it is a pity that this day is red blooded for the heart of Pakistan i.e. Karachi. The dilapidated situation of law and order is really embarrassing and we have failed to relieve the pains and groans of Karachites as the metropolis has been bathed in human blood. The city of lights is now somewhat a haunted place for inhabitants. The locality is bristling with crimes, and law makers have unsuccessfully given up trying to reconcile the peace and tranquillity of the city.

"We people want immigration for Australia, want jobs in America, want to settle in Dubai, want to have scents of Paris, want to put on the fabric of French brands, and want to eat Italian and Chinese cuisines. We want to speak English and want to watch Hollywood movies." This is us Pakistanis.

Now, coming to main point that today, still there are many people around us who lost their parents, some lost brothers, and some of the peo-

ple lost their sisters. How tiresome and burdensome it would be for them to swallow the bitter pill of separation, knowingly that their family is still there. How difficult it was for a mother to see her son being slaughtered in front of her by Indian cops. The remarks after this tyranny were “This Is your Pakistan (*Yeh hai Tumhara Pakistan*).” How troublesome it would be for a brother to see his sister being humiliated and dragged in the streets of the subcontinent. What about the massacre of Muslims in the train on board to Lahore when, in the middle of journey, Sikhs shed the blood of innocent Muslims and then the whole train was set on fire? Many girls jumped into the wells just to save themselves from being raped and killed by the oppressors. The lakes of blood, the roads and streets dressed up in red clothes, the heaps of Muslims’ dead bodies were all around.

Lord Robert said,

“When I passed through Chandni Ckawk in Delhi, there were heaps of departed souls lying here and there.”

The foundation of Pakistan is laid not only on the basis of “two-nation theory” but the blood, bones

and flesh of our ancestors served as the mortar ingredients. This is what we value. This is what we have to take care of. This is what we have to pay the debt for. Indeed it is a debt which is still to be paid. We have to pay it. Have a look at today’s Pakistan. Is this the dream of Iqbal? Is this the struggle of Quaid? Is this that state for the sake of which millions of Muslims put down their lives?

So, this day is not a celebration only but it has its own demands and purposes. The foremost purpose is to follow the rule “believe in yourself.” Secondly, the change about which we had long gossip sessions with our mates is the change which we people will bring. This is possible by just focusing on our responsibilities as a citizen. Just have a look on other nations and the difference will be conspicuous. The rule is “God helps those who help themselves.” So, help yourselves, otherwise we will only be a crowd leading towards a mysterious place or a boat heading towards an unknown seashore. No one knows about it. Instead of relying on others to come to help you, start off with something that is productive for you and your country also.

## A Letter to Father of the Nation

Sohail Farid, MCS

Respected Sir,

I know you wish to see the prosperity and progress of Pakistani nation. Also you wish to see unity, faith and discipline in our nation. You want

to see the Muslims of subcontinent as a united and strong nation. Sir, our nation has witnessed many events since you left us.

Being Pakistani, we strongly believe in de-

mocracy and its potential to remarkably change the fate of our people through justice, peace, and equality. Our government is trying its best to augment the living standards of the economically underprivileged segment of the society, which constitutes the vast majority of the population.

Dear Sir! We have tremendous potential of progress, and possess excellent natural and human resource so some people happen to have mala-fide intentions towards us. Many extremists try to disrupt the peaceful lives of my fellow Pakistanis. You taught us to work hard and get education but extremists killed over a hundred students in Peshawar on 16 December 2014, just to stop us from making our country stronger. But Sir! No cowardly action can ever put down our resilience and we always remember your words that Muslims are never afraid in testing times.

Mr. Mao and Mr. Washington's states are developing fast whereas yours is still on its way to meet all challenges of today's world. It's all about time. The darkest hour is just before the dawn. We are doing all which is needed to move ahead. We

have adopted the modern educational system. We remember the meaningful poetry of Iqbal and we respect him a lot. We have hung his photos with yours in every office and have composed his poems into songs so they may prove to be more heart touching to the youth.

The Quaid taught us that we are one nation irrespective of religion, caste and language. We have your words engraved on our minds and hearts and we are slowly approaching our goal of being the world's developed and strongest nation. But we are just 65 years old on the map of the world; we are just new. So we need a little more time to manage our problems and you know this nation can do wonders.

Being the only Muslim atomic power of the world, nations of the world and Muslim Ummah in particular look up to us for guiding them to maintain peace in troubled parts of the world. Keeping in mind your golden words and eternal message, we assure you that we will make your nation proud by overcoming all hurdles in our way. *Pakistan Paenda Baad.*

## Terrorism in Pakistan—How to Eradicate it?

Muhammad Uzair, MCS

Terrorism is the biggest threat to Pakistan's progress. Its roots can be traced back to 1979, when there was an effort to kick out Russia from Afghanistan. But the problem became severe after 9/11. And now in 2015, it's become a menace for our motherland. I do not want to go into detailed history of terrorism in Pakistan. But the million dollar question is: what are the ways to eradicate or to overcome this most dangerous problem? The

right answer to this question can bring our nation back to the road of progress in all fields of life.

The most important factors are unity and commitment. These are very important to achieve any objective. All stakeholders of the society need to unite and become committed to this one agenda: to eradicate terrorism from every nook and corner of the country. But after a bloody war, we still see some of the stakeholders of the society who are

supporting the extremist designs of the terrorist groups. I do not clearly know what their intentions are but one thing is very clear: they are working against the country's betterment. First, we need to bring back these people to the right direction using the process of dialogue.

Parliamentarians can play a very constructive role in this regard. They can use their influence in the right direction to convince the people of their constituencies to say no to all sorts of terrorist activities. They can easily inculcate in the minds of people the vision of a terrorist-free society and a progressive Pakistan. But it is also a fact that we do not see any useful role from these so-called representatives of the people. It is high time they came forward to save the future of Pakistan.

Religious leaders in any society can play an effective role in the times of crises. But the case of Pakistan is different regarding war on terror. These influential leaders were in some respects close to the terrorist organizations and to their self-professed ideology in the past. But it is the requirement of time that these leaders must come forward to use their influence in the society against all types of terrorism. They can play their effective role using mosques, speeches and writings to guide the ignorant masses of the country. There is still a large section of the society in Pakistan who prefers to listen to these religious leaders at any cost. So why are we not utilizing the influence and potentials of these leaders in true sense?

Civil society is another major stakeholder. It is not playing its due role against war on terror. The close observation of this modern world demands that, in times of crises, civil society must come to the forefront to help the state machinery. But in Pakistan, the civil society is yet to exert its full influence. A mass movement is required to defeat

the ideologies of terrorist organizations. Civil society can lead this mass movement very effectively. But this should be a collaborative effort from all stakeholders of the society. Because working alone against the threat of terrorism can't bring the desired results as required. Education is another very important way to eradicate the root causes of terrorism. The first step should be to provide a uniform system of education to the masses. This system of education must be free from prejudices and sectarian violence. It also includes both religious and modern education at equal ratios. This will help create citizens with a balanced approach towards life. Although it is a very lengthy process, it is very important. Because we need to clear the minds of young generation about the extremist designs of terrorist organizations.

Good governance is another area which needs more attention. The only important step taken so far is to equip security personnel with latest weapons and to increase their salaries, and compensation in case of casualties. But the policy-makers of Pakistan (after entering into the dangerous war on terror) did not create a suitable mechanism through which terrorism could be checked effectively. For example, there is no accurate data of people residing in the country. There is no check and balance on foreigners' activities in the country. There is no effective way to check cross border terrorism from Afghanistan and India. There is not sufficient training mechanism for security personnel to counter terrorist organizations' plots. Our intelligence and law and order agencies can start door-to-door campaign for checking and registration of population. Also, institutional working should be done according to rules and regulations. This will convey a message to people that Pakistan's future largely depends on good governance,

and ultimately they will participate in development of their country.

Also, there is an urgent need for the military to come forward and state explicitly the present situation regarding the war on terror to all citizens of the country. This strategy will clear the confusion present in the minds of many people. Because Pakistan is the most affected country in the world in war against terrorism.

The role of parents and teachers can't be denied in times of crises. Because they are the main architects of nations, but we see no efforts from any side to utilize their full potential regarding elimination of terrorism. We are not carrying out any type of collective efforts within homes,

schools, colleges and universities against terrorism. It is about time that the builders of nation came forward to save the country's future. After all, terrorism is our common enemy, and we can't see a prosperous Pakistan without eradicating it.

All these major efforts must be initiated simultaneously and must be communicated to all citizens through electronic and print media. This is also one of the most demanding area for the media to work on. The media needs to channelize their efforts in a constructive manner to inform people how they can beat terrorist designs. After all, a united approach and combined efforts for a good cause can only make a nation strong and prosperous in all respects.

## The Way Towards Change

Areeba Farooq, MCS

So today I woke up feeling all glum about what's happening in our country. Being a staunch supporter of the recent protests in the country, it was quite dismaying that still there was no outcome, and that it was going nowhere, but then this thought occurred to me: How did we expect that the sit-ins/ protests would bring a "revolution" in a country where we do not really hesitate before telling harmless little lies for our petty benefits? We need to do our own thinking independently and know what's right, rather than following what the majority does and then wanting a "revolution" overnight, that's like living in a fool's paradise. Here I would like to quote an Anglo-Saxon Bishop:

"When I was young and free and my imagi-

nation had no limits I dreamed of changing the world. As I grew older and wiser I discovered the world would not change, so I shortened my sights somewhat and decided to change only my country. But it too seemed immovable. As I grew into my twilight years, in one last desperate attempt, I settled for changing only my family, those closest to me. But alas they would have none of it. And now as I lie on my deathbed I suddenly realized: If I had only changed myself first, then by example I would have changed my family. From their inspiration and encouragement I would have been able to better my country and, who knows, maybe even change the world."

So the point is, how can the "*tabdeeli*" take place in a country where every individual's blood

contains the essential components of lies and deception? Revolution is not about changed leadership, it's about changed heart and mind. Hence, the change always begins from within a person and once we change our own selves, the surprise is that others may change as well.

“Indeed, Allah will not change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves.”

—(Al-Qur'an)

In the end, even though we Pakistanis have a lot of shortcomings, our brighter side cannot go

unnoticed; a country which is known for spending so much on charity, a country which has been badly affected by terrorism, yet never backs down; a country whose people are known to be the most hospitable ones, and the list is never ending. Still, on an individual level we need to better ourselves to reach our true potential, because Pakistan's real charisma has not been witnessed by the world yet.

“Yesterday I was clever, so I wanted to change the world. Today I am wise, so I am changing myself.” (Rumi)

## Visit to Northern Areas

Muhammad Usama, MCS

It was Eid-ul-Azha, when all our family gathered in my grandfather's house. All my cousins, uncles, and aunties were there. We all wanted to go out on a picnic somewhere. So it was decided that we would go to Naran Kaghan valley on the second day of Eid. The program was made according to which we were supposed to leave at 8 o'clock in the morning on the second day of Eid, but as usual, everyone was late. With minimum delay we were able to leave at 12 o'clock. We left Chakwal in the afternoon and journeyed by motorway to Burhan. From there we set off to Abbottabad. There was a huge traffic jam near Abbottabad, thousands of cars were stuck in that traffic jam. We reached there at almost 5 o'clock and stayed in that traffic jam till almost 10 o'clock. Then it was decided that it was a waste of time to stay in that traffic jam and we should come some other day. The traffic was stuck because it was Eid day and everyone was out for a picnic, like us. We all were very disappointed and unhappy with the de-

cision but we couldn't do anything. So we came back to Chakwal and there was no picnic that day. The program was shifted to the next weekend and postponed. There also was a change in the plan that only male family members would go for the excursion.

Next Saturday we all got ready to go to Naran-Kaghan valley. Last time there were three cars but this time there were only two. My two cousins, uncles and father were going with me. The weather was very pleasant that day. We journeyed through Haripur, Abbottabad, Balakot and many other beautiful cities. The scenes were magnificent and very beautiful. There was lush green grass on the hills; water was rushing down the hills. There were pine trees everywhere. Houses on top of the hills looked beautiful. All the houses had almost the same design suitable for local climate. People were cutting wood from trees. The houses were mostly made up of wood. We reached Kaghan at 5 o'clock, but didn't stay there. We reached Naran

valley at almost 6 o'clock. It was a beautiful valley, surrounded by very high hills. There was a bazaar in which there were many hotels and shops selling cloth, souvenirs and dried fruit. We hired a jeep from Naran to take us to the Saif-ul-Malook Lake. The road to the lake was very narrow and went to the top of the hills. The road was broken and no car other than a jeep could be driven on it. We reached Saif-ul-Malook Lake at 9 o'clock. We hired a room in the hotel; there was only one hotel on top of the hills near Saif-ul-Malook Lake. We slept well that night and in the morning we saw one of the most beautiful scenes we had ever seen. Saif-ul-Malook Lake was all surrounded by very high hills and the scene was magnificent. We spent that day admiring the beautiful nature Allah

had created. The next day we hired a guide from there and we set off on foot to Ansoo Lake which was even higher than the Lake Saif-ul-Malook. It took us 5 long hours to climb up to such a height. Climbing up the hills was very difficult and tiring but in the end when we saw Lake Ansoo, our tiredness was gone. It was one of the most beautiful scenes of the world. It was very exciting, standing above the hills in cold wind and looking upon the half-frozen lake. It took us another 5 hours to climb down the hills. We went to the hotel, stayed there for the night and, early next morning, we were off to Chakwal. This was the best picnic I ever had, because I admired the beauty of nature and came to know that our country Pakistan was a very beautiful piece of land.

A male friend of mine, an engineer at an aircraft company, works for a woman supervisor. An active member of women's lib groups, she often shows up at work wearing buttons featuring feminist slogans. One day, her latest button, "Adam was a rough draft," proved too much for my friend. The next day, he showed up at work sporting his own button: "Eve was no prime rib."

— **Phyllis Reely**

The teacher in one of our local grade schools was showing a copy of the Declaration of Independence to her pupils. It passed from desk to desk and finally to Luigi, a first-generation American. The boy studied the document reverently. Then, before passing it on, he gravely added his own signature.

— **Katherine T. Floyd**

Driving with my two young boys to a funeral, I tried to prepare them by talking about burial and what we believe happens after death. The boys behaved well during the service. But at the gravesite, I discovered my explanations weren't as thorough as I'd thought. In a loud voice, my four-year-old asked, "Mom?" "Yes," I whispered. "What's in the box?"

— **Ginny Richards**

A family was celebrating their daughter's fifth birthday at a local restaurant when the little girl's father noticed her looking sadly at a moose head on the wall. Someone had placed a party hat on its head. Her father knelt beside her and explained why some people hunt animals. "I know all that," the child sobbed. "But why did they have to shoot him at his birthday party?"

— **Jerry Bundick**

## We Shall Rise Again

Mahnor Amir, AM College

One religion, one God, one Prophet and one faith  
Our sacred soil fraught with blood, valour and sacrifice  
Courage, bravery, resilience our forte  
Selfless efforts that would never abate  
Tormented are the hearts, agonizing is the pain  
But by the Divine Decree, we shall rise again!

Times are low, asperities multitudinous  
Challenges are many, adversities innumerable  
Yet faith is adamant, devotion unshakable  
Valour so dauntless, gallantry so vicious  
Tormented are the hearts, agonizing is the pain  
But by the Divine Decree, we shall rise again!

It takes centuries for nations to rise  
We're just a child, so frail and candid  
Seventy years is not much, just the first step  
The triumphs of the future, the coups, the successes would suffice  
Tormented are the hearts, agonizing is the pain  
But by the Divine Decree, we shall rise again!

Hope is what we never lose  
Honesty our policy, fearlessness our differentia  
Grace our criterion, respect our hallmark  
Time passes by, but the fidelity never goes  
Tormented are the hearts, agonizing is the pain  
But by the Divine Decree, we shall rise again!

Fighting all odds, making our way through  
Our life, blood and flesh for our country alone  
Love for the motherland in our hearts and souls  
Stormy is the sea, but stronger is the ship's crew  
Eased will be the torment, abated will be the pain  
By the Divine Decree, we shall rise again!

## Untimely Departure

*(Peshawar School Incident)*

Furqan Khalil

Why must I go to school  
Oh Mother!  
Why can I not sleep?  
But child no good can come  
To lie at home forever  
And so I must embark  
To face another dreary day  
Not knowing what beholds,  
The future, today  
Bells toll and lessons begin  
But flapping winds I hear  
Not a bird  
And not a bat but Death's angel  
Nears for me, he comes, I fear.  
A crimson sky above me floats  
Below a river flows  
Of blood and fire  
And forlorn desires,  
And so Death's hand

I take to depart for the world above  
Below I glance;  
The world fades  
What was so important  
I cannot remember  
All I hear are a woman's cries:  
"Why oh, why?"  
Must I go on in a world without my child?"  
And now we pray  
A solemn prayer  
For those departed souls  
Peace be upon them  
And peace for us  
May the black winds abate  
And a glimpse of light,  
A glimmer of hope  
Bow before terror, we say "nope."

## Veiled Creature

Ramsha Khuram, SEECs

O, veiled creature  
Hear me out  
You're no son of Adam  
I know without doubt  
Devoid of a heart  
You're utterly brainless  
Blood stained hands  
You're pathetically shameless  
Their tears bring you joy?  
Their corpses relief?  
They're no toys!  
In humanity have belief.  
For God's sake open your eyes,  
Ears and hear me out.  
Listen considerately to their grievous cries  
You'll realize you're a monster, no doubt

## The Flower Bed

Ramsha Khuram, SEECs

I sat amidst lights painted gold  
As the fragrant orange flowers stared blankly at me  
Wondering if their beholder would be strewn  
They seemed to be hiding, invoking my mercy  
For they knew not that while I admired them  
I needed not a souvenir of their beauty  
I had finished my poem appreciating them  
And I was leaving them there for others to see!

## The Better Love

Muhammad Makhshif Tanvir, SEecs

I am late in telling you this  
You are the reason for my bliss  
The day starts full of joy  
Thinking like I am that boy  
Who got the love which you had  
Had my shoulder when you were sad  
The memories all which I find  
Blossom a niche in my mind  
When arguing over trivial matter  
And wishing you to be better  
Playing with your hand in my hand  
Being the Romeo of my land  
Bothering high when you complain  
Acting like now all in vain  
Hugging you at times you have pain  
Thinking like it's all my gain  
I love the pain which you feel

When I have wounds, you can't heal  
Laughing tight on my joke  
Hearing heartily, my stupid talk  
Teasing me, when I am sad  
Then taking shelter of your dad

We are away, now missing those times  
I miss you, now just in rhymes  
Believe me we still are near  
When you weep, I shed tear  
I am shy in my love  
Never could say to my dove  
Sorry people, poem is twister  
I am talking, about my sister  
Don't drop your jaws, I am fine  
I love the sister most, who is mine!

## I Closed My Eyes

Ummul Baneen Fatima, SNS

I closed my eyes  
I was distracted while they stabbed  
They bled my heart out, and I was unaware  
They broke me into pieces and I stared  
They left the battlefield, feeling victorious  
But then, I had not even joined the battle

Let them celebrate, let them feast  
For I am still breathing and not dead  
It's my heart they have taken  
And to me it will always belong  
I will fight, I will raise hell  
For God is mine from beginning till end

## We Are Over

M. Abdullah Nawaz, SEecs

You know I miss you more  
You'll be back, I'm sure  
The moments we have spent together  
Never easy to forget them either  
When your name I ever hear  
Your vague image becomes clear  
Whenever I walk on roadside alone  
I blame myself for why you've gone  
It took years for a relation to build  
But in a few seconds, I got it killed  
Oh, you never think of the pain you give  
How tough it will be for me to live  
The place where you left me, mate  
I can't stop myself to go there and wait  
I am hopeful that you will come  
To awaken my nerves that are numb  
That rain reminds me of promises you made  
It also reminds me, that they were fake  
How hard it can be, think for a while  
Don't snatch from me the reason to smile  
Ah, I did my best for this gap to cover  
Alas! I have to accept, "We are over."

## Let's Renew the Friendship

Muhammad Makhshif Tanvir, SEecs

I am not as bad as you think  
I never thought of myself a king

Going to school late  
Waiting outside closed gate

I couldn't be a good friend but I am sincere  
How do you think I didn't care?

Making lame funny excuse  
Winking when going to amuse

I wish you all could have got the art  
Your eyes could see in my heart

Making fun of a troubled friend  
Feeling sorry in the end

I miss that zeal as well my zest  
Part I spent with you really was the best

Making fun of teacher's gait  
Childlike cursing our own fate

I remember the time when we met  
Huh! My eyes again are getting wet

Feeling like a hero on a girl's smile  
Then acting stupid for a while

It's a cute life we spent together  
How beautiful was every get-together!

Let's move back on that land  
Let's not be friends, a "castle on sand"

Having a hundred in the pocket,  
Driving the bike like a rocket

Many are the memories we have now  
We grew apart I don't know how

Thinking us as best  
Having broadened our chest

## A Man of Great Sanity

Amna Khalil

I am not a speaker of good eloquence  
But still can give you some words  
Words of greatness, within you  
A gem and Samaritan, you are  
Your calm and cheerful demeanor  
Makes everyone feel delight  
I know...  
Every encounter teaches us  
And some leave fingerprints on someone's heart  
Ours was such an exciting one  
You know...?  
I was ordinary  
Until you made me extraordinary  
You are the illustrious one  
In the city of my heart  
Soul of mine, has drenched  
By your teachings of positivity  
I know..  
My impact won't affect  
After my departed...  
And I still want to give you more words  
Words of eternal happiness  
Words of unprecedented success  
And the last words of mine  
Yes..  
You are a man of great sanity!

## **A Man who Lost his Soul**

Faran Ahmed Hameed, CAE

Alas, the man lost his kith and kin  
Cared for hoots, indulged in all kinds of sin  
Just wanted praises for his rendition  
For the man was given to a life of ambition

Slowly he made a mess of his very own self  
Nothing could quench his thirst, ate like an elf  
Only money mattered, no caste, colour or creed  
For the man was given to a life of Greed

At last, there were none to love or care  
Selfish ways led him into this snare  
No one to share or stoke a tender fire  
For the man was given to a life of Desire

Eventually, the man gave up his soul  
Gave up light, embraced the ghoul  
All his possessions, turned ash and dust  
For the man was given to a life of Lust

## When I Cry

Mutaher Ijaz, MCS

Who cares when I cry  
Unnoticed I am like the blue sky  
To whom shall I complain?  
World at peace, I am in vain  
No one knows what sorrows are  
Like the soldiers from a tragic war  
Life is a burden of heavy loan  
Helpless I am standing alone  
A selfish place this is I tell you  
Every man for himself, the saying is true  
The expectation of people from you so high  
Yet no one cares when I cry.

## The Human

Mehar Mushtaq, MCS

To melt in the sun  
Or reflect the heat  
To drift with the winds  
Or to stand strong  
To be an autumn tree that waits until death  
Or be the one that hopes again to grow  
To be as hard as a stone that can never be crushed  
Or be a candle wax in playful hands that moulds  
To be as bold as rocks that gives away the fears  
Or is a coward being able to love  
To be a desert sky that has no rain to fall  
Or to be the weeping eyes that hide in the dark  
To be the sun in sky which brightly shines alone  
Or be the stars that watch their company fade  
To be an object that would break just once to death  
Or be human being that breaks to live again

## Spread the Wings!

Tasmiya Sheikh, MCS

Now that I am planning to spread my wings  
I won't be heeding to spoken things

I will aim high, as I can  
I won't let anyone ruin my plan

The breeze herself will take me high  
I will try to kiss the sky

I won't try to desist you down  
Instead I will ask you to come along

Be strong to rip the dud label  
You need no wings to be an angel

We shall all soar in grace  
Making this fey land a tranquil place.

## Suicide Bombers

Saad Ahmad, MCS

It's hard to think at first  
How they can stoop so low?  
In quenching their egos' thirst  
Give humanity a death blow  
In shedding blood, in taking lives  
They find some sort of unique joy  
Like rotten zombies, with beastly drives  
They love the tears; make humans cry  
Their spiritual decadence, their moral destitution  
Tets fuelled under guidance of their pseudo-gods  
With guns, with bombs, with power of swords  
They want to change the world for sure  
They themselves are victims of a complex fraud  
They want no love, no peace, yet battles more  
And continue to murder in the name of God.

## Recovering

Saad Ali Khan, MCS

As I walk down this road  
This new road I have taken  
I glance back over my shoulder  
Perhaps I am mistaken  
Yet I see once again  
As I've doubted before  
That those days are behind me  
I'm not hers anymore  
Sometimes the images  
Creep into my head  
Of the smoke swirling and whirling  
As I looked almost dead  
A shiver slips  
And crawls up my spine  
I again reassure myself  
That this life is mine  
It surprises me to see  
That I've done so well  
I almost don't believe  
I've escaped that living hell  
She had a grip on me  
Like nothing ever has before  
She burrowed in to my brain  
So that I could think no more  
Now I am my own  
Steering my own way  
Turning to God, not her  
To be sure not to stray  
I don't have to be weak  
I don't have to give in  
She is powerless to me  
No longer will she win

## Crossroads

Nawal Bate Aamer, MCS

At crossroads  
My footsteps falter  
As a thousand thoughts cross my mind  
I take a deep breath, hoping for them to falter  
Need a desperate break from this daily grind.

At crossroads  
With passion that wildly burns  
And uncertainty that's ever so vast  
A storm inside of me churns,  
Stirs up the unending abyss of my dark past.

At crossroads  
I need to take a stand, give all the possibilities a  
Thought  
Make a choice, it's mind over matter  
I have all that by people is well sought  
Yet I lack that one element that makes the rest  
Simply shatter

At crossroads  
I take a leap for it  
I'm sure there's something on the other end  
Jumping, I'm scared just one bit  
I breathe my last breath before I finally take that  
One turn around the bend

At crossroads  
I meet my fate  
There's no sadness, no despair, I've had my share  
So goodbye to all the people that gave me nothing  
But hate  
To the people that cared, life's never been fair.

## Yes I Love Things More

M. Abdullah Nawaz, SEecs

I admit that I am materialistic  
Coz I think I am quite realistic

Yes, quite easy for things to replace  
Got fed up, or they are broken in case

I don't care about others' feelings  
When I know they are with no meanings

It's painful when you are left by someone  
When one has surely decided it to be done

The car, I'd love very much  
Than the companion, with no touch

You keep things with you till you want  
To stop from someone going, sorry! You can't

The house I must prefer to take  
Over the person whom I know is fake

You won't agree with this I know  
Get yourself hurt by letting someone go

I want to listen to songs when in leisure  
Instead of word whose futility, can't measure

The pain at that time you feel  
You'll see it's difficult, this wound to heal

I pass my time in games to play  
Because you broke my heart no one could say

I am happy with things for which I care  
But no one is around with whom I can

### Note:

*The basic theme of this poem is about a person who started loving material things after getting hurt by people. So he at once decided to reserve his love for such things. But in the end he gets to realize that he needs people around him too.*

## The Colour of Thine Heart

Novera Tahir, MCS

Thou feels an outcast  
Due to the colour of thy skin

Thine spirits go down  
Whence the works call it a sin

Hath thou forgotten  
What matters is inside

Thou shalt not grieve  
Thine heart should take pride

The colour of thy skin doesn't matter  
When thy heart is pure

The indifference of this world  
Thou shalt not have to endure

To bequeath thee with this virtue  
He had to take something away

It was only colour of thy skin  
Thine heart should be gay

## We Don't Care

Huma Razzaq, MCS

We are so deaf and really blind  
We sit at home, we waste our time

We scoff at those in need  
I wonder how we could do these deeds

We are cowards on a colossal scale  
When of helping others, we always fail

We sit at home, waste opportunities  
Never help those in difficulties

People get killed here and there  
Floods and corruption but we don't care!

Allah, we always forget  
And when we do, we soon regret

Forever becoming unkind and cruel  
By helping others we could become gems and  
jewels

We could shine like stars, go past Mars  
If we help those with problems to solve

We could educate the illiterate  
Be more considerate

Hear my words, save Pakistan from this curse  
Stop it going from bad to worse

If we follow Islam, be level-headed and calm  
If we stop becoming atomic bombs

Pakistan's future could be really bright  
And our nation's progress will take flight.

*(In sha' Allah)*

## The Fog

Hira Binte Asim, MCS

The frost returns, the chill wind calls  
Wearing heavy white her delicacy gone

Inching forward she knows it's time  
The greeting wind lost in her embrace uttering only faint chimes

Her prancing feet rest assure  
With thirsty eyes she looks for more

Tapping feet she merely waits  
To swallow victims she has the bait

Those far oft steps, she's heard him now  
Her wandering eyes no furrow in brow

Lost in thought he carelessly marches on  
With no idea what fate he has called upon

He's captivated by her white dress, mind locked in cold reins  
He walks towards her, blood rushing through his veins

Mounting desires, he's ignorant of the chimes warn  
His clouded senses lead him on, demons calling towards the fall

She closes on drawing his breath  
He's trapped now sketched in wrath

His heart wrenching screams bear no sound  
His wide open eyes lifelessly bound

A terrified witness, the leaf falls  
Nobody knows he's lost, forever gone

A smirk builds up her smug facade  
Gracefully tugging her dress in a singing ballad

She strolls in arrogance crossing the graveyard  
Little playful laughs, she's headed for the park

She's the fog, the lady in white  
She's thirsty for more, run for your lives!

## Story of a Back Bencher

Muhammad Badar, MCS

No matter what happens in the class  
I am always upto my own tasks

Sitting on the last bench I always sleep  
But when exams are near I always weep

The teacher had come and he has gone  
Sitting on the last bench I always yawn

On the last bench come sweetest dreams  
But they always end when teacher screams

Looking at the situation I wonder and dream  
Will I be at front like the nation's cream

Even then I love this sorrowful trench  
Because I am writing this poem still on the last bench

## **I am the Soldier**

*(Dedicated to a Martyr Friend)*

Zohaib Nazir, MCS

I am the soldier, the passionate, the bold  
Always prepared no matter it's hot or cold  
Defending the borders of the land of pure  
I am standing alone  
Always ready to sacrifice for my home  
I am the soldier, the fighter, the warrior  
I am the one who never compromises an attack on my borders  
I stand in hot days  
I stand in dark nights  
To let my countrymen enjoy their sleep  
And yet some people berate the soldier  
For they don't know the vigilant, brave soldier  
Giving all he has  
For this country I am a soldier  
Who never lives but never surrenders  
Never ask what this country gave you  
If you do, then should a soldier die for you?

## For My Beloved Mother

Muhammad Kashif, CAE

If you were water then I would have become a  
swan that never left even if it dried

If you were the sun, I would have become the sand  
to face every heat that you reflect

If you were a sea, I would have dived in you to  
measure your depth

If you were the rain, I would have been a river  
where you could fall to add to my might,

If you were a flower, I would have been the tears  
to water you always,

If you were the wind, I would have been the cloud  
to walk with you always wherever

If you were a spark, I would have been a melting  
candle to keep you shining

If you were a bird, I would have become the  
strongest nest to shelter you from the world,

If you were in pain, I still would have taken you  
inside to break myself away

If you were a dream then I would have slept si-  
lently to death,

If you didn't remain, I would have turned myself  
into nothing!

## Remedy, O Remedy!

Affan Bin Usman, SEecs

Walls of delusional existence  
Lights of framing reference  
Reflections of darkened solitude  
Loneliness of awakening realities  
Agitation of provoking sorrows  
Sorrows filled with failure  
Failure of achieving the achievement  
Achievement of disturbed ventures  
Roof without a base  
They asked for a roof without a base  
Roof they got, base was just a ploy  
Vague was the base, meager was the skeleton  
Failure it was, as it should have been  
For success comes with intrigued scope  
Scope originated from disoriented beliefs  
Beliefs that were compiled intuitions  
Lost they were, lost they shall be  
They were allies with dreaming  
Awakening sorrows, resulting invisible wounds  
Whilst solitude was their only remedy  
Solitude, was their only remedy

**The Dream Catcher** (*A tribute to Roald Dahl*)

Maira Yasir, SADA

Beyond the coal seams  
Past the purple skies  
A single solitary peak lies  
The Peak where the Dream Catcher can catch dreams.

Dreams fly around the Peak  
Like fireflies, shining but meek  
Dreams fly around the Peak  
Dreams, Dreams, and nothing but Dreams  
Like fireflies, light and sleek  
Dreams fly around the Peak  
The Peak where the Dream Catcher can catch dreams.

Dreams of success,  
Dreams of joy  
Of sailing past the tides of Troy  
You only need to try, to seek  
The Peak where you can catch dreams.

The dreams increase by the passing day  
And the dying night  
Everyone dreams, but no one tries  
To summon the will, the might  
To come thither to the Peak,  
The Peak where they can catch their dreams.

Dare the barren plains,  
Dare the burning blaze  
And make your claims  
Find your dream among the swirling nest  
A nest of the World's dreams.  
Find your dream hidden on the Peak  
Take your dream and hold it tight  
Lock it in a glass jar, full and bright  
And remember the Peak where you caught your dream.

The little glass jar hold dear and tight  
Believe in it, even when the dream begins to lose its light  
Believe in it and hold it tight  
Treasure it and give it life  
Nurture it so it may grow  
Reality will emerge from the dream you sow  
And remember the Peak  
The Peak where you were the Dream Catcher  
And where you found your dream.

## **All Praises be to Allah**

Waleed Umer, MCS

All praises be to Allah  
When God's true love fills the soul  
Man is content, happy and whole

He can see his one true goal  
And is not hesitant to walk on coal

No thought but good enters the mind  
Love, harmony and peace are intertwined

All ambitions are lined  
Every urge to him does bind

For God is giving and mercy divine  
The mighty Creator of all mankind

His are the most beautiful names  
Before Him, the universe wanes

All praises be to Allah, Master of creation  
In the end, He is our final destination