

Jamshedpur Youth Conference 2013

29th November - 01st December, 2013

On 29th Nov 2013, the Jamshedpur Youth Conference began with around 160 participants from more than 15 different schools of Jamshedpur in the first regional effort by the local team. The team wanted to make a beginning and show the students that their small efforts of change would bring about a major change in the India they live in. The conference began with a prayer and lamp lighting followed by a Santhali tribal dance. Jamshedpur lies in the tribal heartland of Jharkhand and local dances are always a treat to watch. This dance was made even more enjoyable by all the dignitaries who joined in to shake a leg as well.



Day 1

The honourable Chief Guest Mr. Biswajeet Rai Chaudhary gave a motivating speech. He was been aware of this philosophy from the last 30 years. He shared when he went for a conference; there he had heard about powerful and meaningful words that were compassion, truth, love, unselfishness which he remembered till date. The Chief Guest also shared that we as a species are different from the other species on this earth only because we can think and how these standard i.e. compassion, truth, love and unselfishness helps us in transforming into a better human being. And apart from this he focused on most important and relevant question for which we always struggle and do every act in order to prove to you "Who am I?" This question takes us to a deep journey within to find the pearl hidden in us from the oceans of sorrow, selfishness, betrayal, jealousy.



After the Chief Guests' insight into his meeting with MRA- IofC's principles, Rajiv Agarwal spoke on the behalf of the youth team to welcome all the participants into this journey of self-discovery and learning. He reflected back on his journey of 17 years of long association with the Let's Make a Difference Conferences. He talked about how he was at the very age that most of the participants were when he first went to these conferences and how over time these principles and values have not only helped him become a better person but create a better life for himself. This was followed by Mrs. Vijayam Kartha giving the vote of thanks on behalf of the Kerala Public Schools Trust. She was a key person who initiated the thought process behind this regional youth conference.



The inaugural session was immediately followed by Viral Mazumdar (Director, LMAD) revealing the participants about the time, effort and months of planning and thought process gone in arranging LMAD Conference. This time was also utilized in dividing the participants into eight groups led by Group Coordinators. The group coordinators were a mix of past youth conference participants and senior members of the local MRA-IOFC team.

Post lunch the first session for the participants was on the 4 pillars of MRA-IOFC. Mr Viral Mazumdar narrated and explained the importance of the four values with his life's live examples which he encountered while he was in association with MRA-IOFC and LMAD'S youth conference since last 19 years. He spoke about leading a life built around these 4 values and talked about experiences when, using these values, he was able to have better results rather when he would have taken short cuts.



This followed by a Group Discussion where each participant introduced herself/himself to the group. Every group played a small game to make sure each participant was comfortable. Each one was given a diary, pen and badge which they supposed to keep with them at all times during the conference. In this Group Discussion, participants accepted that these 4 principles can be practiced in life though it is difficult but it is not impossible and we can make a life better by adopting such moral value in this organised course, upgrading the society of India. Day 1 ended with this thought and students went home mulling over how adopting these values would help them change their course of life.

Day 2

Day 2 was a day for connection, correction and direction. As usual the participants came with anxiety and curiosity, desperate to know what this conference was going to unfold today. We started our day praying to the Almighty as there was a session for knowing more about quiet time, its significance in life and how it helps a person to become a better human being. It started early with introduction to Quiet Time and input on how to take it effectively. The JAR exercise was done for the students where they successfully saw how inner cleansing would bring about an outward change in them.



This journey of a common student started with a presentation followed by Viral bhai's sharing. When he connected himself with his inner self how his own self was been reflected, how was his behaviour towards his surrounding people. He started talking about a moment when participants started being quiet, and in flow with him as he narrated his life incidence right from his childhood days to his college life to he becoming a businessman. Audience could easily connect to him, the thought process rolled the way the teenager sees their life being sailing on the scene boat, speaker's deeds were very similar to what they do and think in their daily life.

Some participants came and shared about the quiet time experiences they had. The first quiet time most of them experienced was shaking them to the core as they realized their faults, their mistakes and viewed themselves first time in the mirror of quiet time. The image they saw was unclean and not likeable. They realized they had to clean it up, view themselves more clearly and keep looking at it to realize their own mistakes.

One participant shared how her ego was stopping her from apologizing to her teacher for the mistake that she had made. She called her teacher from the conference and had said sorry which had made her happy from inside.

Connection to self was made deeper as the family session started where Viral bhai shared his life's most priceless moments he spent with his mother in the Leelawati hospital when she was certified that she had a throat cancer and every minutes, every warmth, every affection he felt with his mother at that point of time and his life, made children realize the importance of relationship in their life, their mistakes, their behaviour, their love and the saga of emotions flowing in them. The correction of self started when they talked for months and years. Some desperately missed their lost ones while other missed their affection and care. They took the quiet time very seriously and thought about the ones they lost and the ones they still had but had differences and conflicts with them.

One girl shared about how she had lived in the same house with her elder brother and had not spoken to him for more than 5 years. She cried because she missed him and because she had actually forgotten about what they had actually fought about so many years ago. She called up her brother and they reconciled with each other.

Another participant shared how she had differences with her own mother over jealousy with her sister. She had always treated her sister badly because of it and never talked properly to her sister. This session made her realize her faults and she made a resolution to fix both the relationships.



Many participants still felt the pain but lacked courage to correct, so Viral bhai showed the "I" exercise so that children would dive deep into their relationships and make efforts to rectify it. This was an effective tool for everyone to realize where they were lacking in their personal relationships. The participants were divided in groups and asked to share their "I" exercise results within their own groups. The group sharing was intense as almost everybody realized the gaps and distances they had with their own family members.



Day ended with lots of self-diving and understanding the essence of life is just a relationship which can be made better while following these 4 principles and a daily quiet time.

Day 3

3rd day was final day of the journey of realisation and revelation of inner soul of participants. By this day everybody had already found a path to their conscience. The day started with magical multi faith prayer. Then followed by sharing of participants in which they opened their heart out. They shared that on this journey of 3 days they had learnt for a lifetime. They had been touched and vowed to make a change within themselves.



After the sharing they were given the pledge to sign and they were asked not to sign the pledge if they did not believe they could not follow it. Many returned it saying they were not ready but many more took up the challenge to follow the pledge to the core.

The last and final Group Discussion was touching where participants discussed their dreams and ambitions. They talked about the changes they were going to bring in their own lives. They talked about the pledge and how they planned on following it. Post lunch participants were surprised by the concept of "letter to self". In which they wrote a letter to themselves reminding them about all the value learnt which they wanted to carry throughout lives. They took a long time write the letter, seal it and hand it over to the coordinators, who would be mailing the letter back after six months or so. As the day was coming to an end restlessness of the participants was building as they realised it was time to bid farewell.

The closing ceremony started at 04:00 pm. The parents had been invited for the closing ceremony and they were touched with the changes they saw in their children. A participant came forward and thanked his parents and apologized for his ill-behaviour towards them. This shocked and surprised the parents who thanked LMAD organizers for making their child realize his faults. Another coordinator came forward on the stage and thanked her parents for giving her the sheltered life she had and for supporting her all throughout this journey. In turn her father was in tears when he thanked the KPS schools and MRA-IofC for the immense support to his daughters in her journey of self-discovery. The stage was opened for sharing. Emotions were spilled, parents joined their kids in the journey of love. The day closed on a happy note with Mr. Amit Mukherjee reciting the poem Oswald the Ostrich. The certificates were distributed along with photographs and contacts of the local team. Viral bhai himself gave out certificates to the coordinating team thanking them for their relentless efforts in making this conference a success.

We this happy note we resolved to have this annual conference regularly and give it our best in the years to come.