Tamar Conference 2018

In November 2018, *Initiatives of Change*, Let's Make A Difference was invited to do a program in Eklavya Model Residential School, which is located in Tamar, a backward region close to Ranchi, Jharkhand. This school is one of many such schools all over India. It is a boys-only residential school that is reserved for the Scheduled Tribes (ST). The students not only receive free education, but the stay and food are also taken care of for them. The government of India allows a certain amount annually to maintain the school and take care of the needs of the students. LMAD, through its three-day program aimed to motivate the students and make them realize that external factors such as money are not the deciding factors in a person's career. Twelve volunteers from all over India including places like Pune, Nagpur, Ahmednagar, Yavatmal, Katni, Jamshedpur, Coonoor, Chennai, and Delhi had come to help run the program along with the course convener. The program was attended by 535 people including 504 students and 17 teachers.

The program was inaugurated post lunch on the 26th of November in the main hall of the school where all the students had gathered. A brief introduction of Initiatives of Change (IofC) and Let's Make A Difference (LMAD) was given to the participants after which the LMAD team came forward to sing the song *Chaliye Na*, which speaks about how we can make a difference by helping each other. The auspicious lighting of the lamp was done by the director of the school, the principal and the course convener together. A few students then performed a song in their local language that was energetic and helped capture everyone's attention. Two volunteers addressed the crowd, telling them about how LMAD has brought about change in their lives. The director of the school spoke to the participants about how lucky the Eklavya institution was to have this program conducted and thanked LMAD for taking the time out to conduct it. The inauguration concluded with the singing of the national anthem. The students were then divided into eight groups: Awareness, Harmony, Health, Nature, Governance, Discipline, Happiness, and Development. The course convener then spoke about how days at LMAD start early and instructed the participants to gather in the hall early the next morning.

The second day started on time with the course convener introducing the crowd to the concept of quiet time and how it plays a vital role in his day-to-day life. The participants listened with genuine interest as this was something that they had never heard of before. Quiet Time, the process of being with oneself, introspecting the many choices that one makes in life was quite well received by the participants. The importance of doing this consistently every single day was emphasized by the course convener. The students were given time to spend some time with themselves. They spread across the campus, introspecting and jotting their thoughts in the diary that was given to them. Three students built up the courage and shared their experience of Quiet time with the larger crowd. One of them spoke about how he felt torn between his father wanting him to become a bank manager and his mother not giving him enough attention. He realized that he did not want to depend on them at all and would not receive anything for free from then on. He went on to share that he had decided to work very hard in the few months that he has left in the school, do something worthwhile and make his parents proud. Another participant shared a very personal incident that left everyone present there shocked. During the speaker's summer holidays, he had asked his friends to go along with him to a place to spend some time together. His friends were reluctant but after a little persistence, they agreed. The friends hitched a ride with a passing truck as they did not own bicycles. The speaker rode his bicycle. The truck that the friends were on met with an accident. There were no survivors. This left the speaker in a situation where he did not know what to do. He did not even contact the parents of this late friends. He spoke about how he blamed himself for the incident and how this has been eating him up for the past two years. He poured his heart out and this in itself was the first step to his recovery.

The next session was about the four values that LMAD revolves around; Purity, Honesty, Unselfishness, and Love. The volunteers came forward, expressing their thoughts and narrating their experiences related to the value that they connected with most. The variety of stories narrated to the crowd definitely helped get the essence of what the four values are about. One volunteer spoke about a situation he encountered which tested his patience with a customer who was rude in getting his point across. The volunteer felt that no good would come from giving a taste of the same medicine back to the customer. Which is why he kept his calm, handling the situation with unconditional love. The

kindness shook the customer as this was clearly not what he was expecting. The customer apologized for his words and all ended well. Another volunteer spoke about his high school friend who got himself addicted to pornography, spending his money, time and energy on the same. This allowed him to concentrate on little else, bringing his grades down. He spoke about how pure intentions are the best way forward and how not keeping your thoughts pure can bring nothing but harm, not only to oneself but to others as well. The course convener then stitched the whole session together, adding on to what the volunteers had shared. He spoke about how important it was that everyone not only thought about these values but also *lived* them by performing all day-to-day activities against these four values.

The following session aimed to motivate the students of Eklavya, to broaden their horizon and make them aware of how many options the world provides. The course convener did this with the help of a presentation that depicted the journey of students not unlike them who are born into extremely poor families. He explained how it's important to give back to society after how many amenities the government was providing them with. The students listened with rapt attention as the course convener

gave examples of successful people who started off with almost nothing. Mahendra Singh Dhoni, who was a ticket collector in the Indian Railways is now known as one of the most successful captains of a cricket team, not only in India but in the world. He had believed in himself and taken the risk of leaving a stable income to pursue his dream. If he hadn't done that, his future would've been quite different. The example of Narendra Modi, who sold tea in a rural area in Gujarat and how he went on to become the chief minister of Gujarat and now, the prime minister of India had a positive effect on the students seated there. He spoke about how keeping oneself aware of the happenings of the world makes a huge impact in the long run. About how the small habits that we inculcate play a big role in how productive we are. Two motivational videos were shown to the participants that piqued their interest further. One was about this young kid who collected scrap for a living and how he used the old books that he got as a source of knowledge. This showed that if there is a will, there is a way. The second video was about Sundeep Dutta, Founder, and Chairman of Ess Dee Aluminium Ltd., India's largest manufacturer of aluminum foil based packaging material. He had lost his father and elder brother at a very young age. This automatically put the responsibility of his many brothers and sisters on him. He worked as a laborer in a factory in Mumbai for two years. When the owner of the factory he worked at, decided to close the factory down, Sudeep Dutta decided to buy the factory from him with borrowed money. Taking this opportunity, he worked really hard and the rest is history. The students seemed to be pumped and motivated after this incredibly important session. This clearly reflected in the enthusiasm that they showed in the following group discussion. They were very inquisitive and actually started thinking about their futures. The students were asked to write on a sheet what they where they saw themselves in five years and how they would go about achieving their goals. The students thought about this long and hard after which they came up with goals and means to achieve them. These sheets were put up for everyone to see. Postcards were distributed to the students for them to write down a letter to their loved one, family or friends. The students were seen writing very intently. They dispersed with so many possibilities and ideas in their head after a long day.

The third and last day of the conference started off with the course convener explaining to the students more about quiet time, more about how it makes a person feel better mentally. Acting on one's thoughts, putting them down can give one clarity as to what to expect and do in a situation. With a better idea of Quiet time, the students headed out in the campus once more to be with themselves, their thoughts. The sharings were quite profound and definitely reflected how much they had absorbed

in terms of what had been spoken about on the previous day about their vision. Another group discussion took place where the students got a chance to share what they had written in a smaller group. Many more people opened up in this session, making the discussion very interactive. The students then gathered in the ground to get a group-wise picture taken. The students were then asked to write down one positive commitment that they would bring to effect from that moment on. The conference came to an end after the students received certificates for being part of the LMAD Tamar Conference, 2018.

Treats and snacks that was sponsored by the LMAD team were given to every student. The students were delighted. They expressed how they benefited from the program and were eager to work hard and achieve the goals that they had set for themselves.

Annexure 1

A few chosen highlights of the answers to the question, "Where do you see yourself after five years?", is given below:

1. मैं आने वाले 5 सालों में अपनी पढ़ाई पूरी करके नेवी ऑफिसर बनना

चाहता हूं और अपनी जिंदगी को बेहतर बनाना चाहता हूं

2. आने वाले 5 सालों में मैं फिजिक्स की डिग्री प्राप्त करके मैं वैज्ञानिक बनना

चाहता हूं

3. मैं आज से 5 साल बाद अपने आप को इंडियन क्रिकेट टीम में देखना

चाहता हूं और मैं एक महान क्रिकेटर बनना चाहता हूं

4. मैं खेल के क्षेत्र में जाना चाहता हूं मेरा प्रिय खेल और चली है और मैं और

मैं भारत के लिए ओलंपिक में खेलना चाहता हूं

5. मैं एक सफल एथलीट बनना चाहता हूं

6. मैं एक अंतरराष्ट्रीय फुटबॉल खिलाड़ी के रूप में अपने आप को देखना

चाहता हूं

7. अगले 5 सालों में मैं अपने आप को एक सफल बिजनेसमैन के रूप में

देखना चाहता हूं ताकि मैं अपने परिवार की आर्थिक स्थिति सुधार सकूं

8. आने वाले 5 सालों में मैं एक कार शोरूम खोलना चाहता हूं और उसके बाद

उस बिजनेस को बड़ा करके मैं देश विदेश घूमना चाहता हूं

9. 5 साल बाद अपने आप को चित्रकार के रूप में देखना चाहता हूं

10. मैं अपने आप को कार्टून एनीमेशन के क्षेत्र में देखना चाहता हूं

11. मैं अपने डांस सीख कर दूसरों को डांस की ट्रेनिंग देना चाहता हूं

12. मैं अगले 5 सालों में पढ़ाई खत्म कर अपने समाज के प्रति कर्तव्य को

निष्ठा पूर्वक करूंगा और एक ईमानदार सामाजिक कार्यकर्ता बनूंगा मैं गरीबी को दूर करूंगा और एक इंग्लिश मीडियम स्कूल खोलूंगा

13. मैं आने वाले 5 साल के बाद एक अच्छा टीचर बनना चाहता हूं और गरीब बच्चों को पढ़ाना चाहता हूं

14. मैं आने वाले 5 सालों में एक वनरक्षक अधिकारी बनना चाहता हूं और और पेड़ों की कटाई में रोक लगाना चाहता हूं

15. मैं आने वाले 5 सालों में इनकम टैक्स ऑफिसर बनना चाहता हूं

16. मैं अपने आप को आने वाले 5 सालों में चार्टर्ड अकाउंटेंट रूप में देखना चाहता हूं

17. मैं एक आईपीएस ऑफिसर बनना चाहता हूं

18. मैं एक आईएएस ऑफिसर बनना चाहता हूं

19. मैं बड़े होकर के एक ईमानदार व सच्चा डॉक्टर बनूंगा और अपने गांव में डॉक्टर की कमी को दूर करूंगा और मैं गरीबों का इलाज मुफ्त में करूंगा

20. मैं आने वाले 5 सालों में पढ़ाई कंप्लीट करके एक रेलवे पायलट बनूंगा

21. मैं बड़े होकर अपने आपको ब्लॉक डेवलपमेंट ऑफिसर के पद में देखना चाहता हूं

22. मैं आने वाले 5 सालों में अपने आप को एक पायलट के रूप में देखना चाहता हूं

23. मैं रेलवे की नौकरी करना चाहता हूं

24. मैं आने वाले 5 सालों में अपने कॉमर्स की पढ़ाई खत्म करके बैंक मैनेजर के रूप में अपने आप को देखना चाहता हूं और अपने परिवार को आर्थिक रूप से सहायता करना चाहता

25. मैं एक नौकरी करना चाहता हूं ताकि अपने माता पिता की सहायता कर

सकूं

26. मैं आने वाले 5 सालों में सॉफ्टवेयर इंजीनियर का पढ़ाई कर एक सॉफ्टवेयर इंजीनियर बनना चाहता हूं

27. मैं अगले 5 सालों में मैकेनिकल इंजीनियर का पढ़ाई कर निकल इंजीनियर बनना चाहता हूं

28. मैं एयरोनॉटिकल इंजीनियर बनना चाहता हूं

29. मैं इलेक्ट्रॉनिक इंजीनियर बनना चाहता हूं

30. मैं सिविल इंजीनियर बनना चाहता हूं

31. अगले 5 सालों तक मैं पूरी मेहनत कर एक सफल इंजीनियर बनना चाहता हूं

32. मैं अपनी जिंदगी के आने वाले 5 सालों में आर्मी ऑफिसर की पढ़ाई कर आर्मी ऑफिसर बनना चाहता हूं

33. मैं अगले 5 सालों में अपने आप को कमांडो के रूप में देखना चाहता हूं

34. मैं बड़ा होकर पुलिस ऑफिसर बनना चाहता हूं

35. मैं बड़ा होकर बीएसएफ का जवान बनना चाहता हूं

36. मैं बड़ा होकर इंडियन एयर फोर्स में कार्य करना चाहता हूं

37. मैं बड़ा होकर रेलवे ऑफिसर बनना चाहता हूं

38. मैं अगले 5 वर्षों में अंग्रेजी बोलना सीखना चाहता हूं

39. मैं अभी तक अपने जीवन के लक्ष्य को निर्धारित करने में असफल हूं

40. मेरे मन में बहुत से सपने हैं परंतु मैं किसी एक लक्ष्य को निर्धारित नहीं कर पा रहा हूं

41. मैं अगले 5 सालों में पॉलिटेक्निक का पढ़ाई करना चाहता हूं

Annexure 2

Some of the positive commitments that the students wrote down:

1. मैं सुबह जल्दी उठूंगा |

2. मैं पढ़ाई में मन लगाऊंगा ।

3. बुरी आदतों को छोड़ दूंगा ।

4. मैं आज से कभी गाली नहीं दूंगा ।

5. सब के साथ अच्छा व्यवहार करूंगा ।

6. दूसरों की सहायता करूंगा ।

7. मैं अपने तन मन में ईमानदारी सच्चाई निस्वार्थ भाव रखूंगा ।

8. सभी कार्य समय पर करूंगा ।

9. गंदा गाली नहीं दूंगा और लड़ाई नहीं करूंगा ।

10. LMAD के 4 सिद्धांतों पर चलूंगा ।

11. अच्छा इंसान बनूंगा ।

12. मैं नियमित शांत समय का अभ्यास करूंगा ।

13. किसी को गलत नजर से नहीं देखूंगा ।

14. कभी झूठ नहीं बोलूंगा ।

15. दूसरों को तंग नहीं करूंगा ।

16. मैं आज से पेट्रोल बिजली एवं पानी पर्याप्त मात्रा में खर्च करूंगा ।

17. किसी को बुरा भला नहीं बोलूंगा ।

18. अधिक नहीं घूमेंगे|

19. आलस नहीं करूंगा ।

20. कोई भी फैसला लेने से पहले मां-बाप से सलाह लूंगा।

21. ईर्ष्या भाव नहीं रखूंगा।

22. दूसरों का मजाक नहीं उड़ाऊंगा।

23. किसी के साथ भेदभाव नहीं करूंगा।

24. बड़ों का आदर करूंगा।

25. आज से ध्यान लगाकर पढ़ेंगे।

26. मैं अंग्रेजी सीखना चाहता हूं।

27. मैं आने वाले दो LMAD कांफ्रेंस में भाग लूंगा।

28. अपने अंदर से डर और शर्म को त्याग दूंगा।

29. मोबाइल का उपयोग कम करूंगा।

30. मैं कठिन परिश्रम करूंगा।

31. पढ़ाई के लिए दूसरों पर निर्भर नहीं रहूंगा।

32. गंदी आदतें छोड़ दूंगा।

33. बहाने नहीं बनाऊंगा।

34. अच्छी आदतों में सुधार करेंगे।

35. आज से मैं लालच नहीं करूंगा।

36. गलत शब्द का प्रयोग नहीं करूंगा।

37. कर्तव्य को निष्ठा पूर्वक पालन करूंगा।

38. मैं आज से ईमानदार बनूंगा।

39. किसी लड़की को नहीं छेड़ेंगे।

40. मैं पानी बर्बाद नहीं करुंगा।

41. किसी के बारे में गलत नहीं सोचेंगे |

42. मैं किसी को नजरअंदाज नहीं करूंगा।

43. मैं मोबाइल में गंदी फोटो और वीडियो नहीं देखूंगा।

44. मैं नशा नहीं करूंगा।

45. मैं शिक्षण कार्य एवं बच्चों के सर्वांगीण विकास के लिए कार्य करूंगा।

46. मैं अपने काम को व्यवस्थित रूप से करूंगा।

47. मैं स्कूल नागा नहीं करूंगा।

48. किसी के बारे में गलत नहीं सोचेंगे |

49. अपने लक्ष्य को पूरा करूंगा।

50. फिजूल पैसा खर्च नहीं करूंगा।

51. समय का सदुपयोग करूंगा।

52. अपने जीवन में अनुशासन लाऊंगा।

53. किसी भी काम को ईमानदारी से करूंगा।

54. गुस्सा कम करूंगा।

55. सकारात्मक सोच रखूंगा।

56. बुरी कामों को छोड़ दूंगा।

57. गंदे शब्द का प्रयोग छोड़ दूंगा।

58. अंतरात्मा की सारी बुराइयां निकालूंगा।

59. माता पिता की बात सुनूंगा।

60. लड़ाई झगड़ा नहीं करूंगा।

61. लक्ष्य प्राप्ति के पथ पर चलूंगा।

62. सही कार्य के माध्यम से दूसरों को प्रेरित करूंगा।

63. अंतरात्मा की आवाज सुनूंगा।

64. मैं बीड़ी/ सिगरेट पीना छोड़ दूंगा।

65. बड़ों का आदर करूंगा एवं उनकी बात सुनूंगा।

66. सही समय पर कार्य करूंगा।

67. खाना नहीं बर्बाद करूंगा।

68. अपने मन के गंदे विचार को दूर रखूंगा।

69. दूसरों को तकलीफ नहीं पहुंच। ऊंगा।

70. किसी व्यक्ति से नी संकोच बात करूंगा।

71. आज से मैं रियालिटी से परे हटकर बात नहीं करूंगा |

Annexure 3

A one day follow up conference was organized for the students of classes 10, 11 and 12. Four members from the LMAD Jamshedpur team helped conduct the same. Eighty-seven students participated in the conference; most of them bringing their diaries and Identity cards from the conference held in November. The session started with the prayer, "Aye Malik Tere Bande Hum". The volunteers were introduced to the gathering after which, the course convener gave a recap of the November conference. The four values; Purity, Honesty, Unselfishness and Love were spoken about along with the importance of quiet time in one's life. A short video about the importance of commitments was shown which was soon followed by reminding them of the commitments that they had made in the month of November by displaying some of them on the screen.

A few questions like, "How are you setting your goals?", "If your exam starts next Monday, are you prepared for that?", and, "If not what is your plan?" were put forward to the students to contemplate before sending them for a session of quiet time. The students were seen seated all around the campus, writing into their diaries. A session of sharing by the students followed. Most of the students seemed to have the same problem of not able to concentrate while studying. They all felt that they needed a bit more guidance from their teachers. Social media platforms like Facebook and WhatsApp were big distractions. The gathering was divided into four groups; group discussions took place where the students further shared what they experienced in their quiet time. Some even felt that they lacked concentration in the short session of quiet time that they had. They also felt that if they practiced it more regularly, they would improve at it. The day ended with the recitation of the national anthem and a group photograph.

Annexure 4

On the 2nd of February 2019, Initiatives of Change-Let's Make A Difference along with the active support of Mr. Sharat Chandran organized a one day follow up session of the conference that was held in November, 2018. Apart from reminding the students about the values and quiet time that was introduced to them in the conference, the follow up session was especially organized for the students of 10th and 12th grades whose board exams were only two weeks away. Volunteers from all over India including places like Yavatmal, Nagpur, Pune, Delhi and Jamshedpur had come to help conduct the session. The attendance of the session was 150.

The session was inaugurated in the presence of Mr. Sharat Chandran, the principle of Ekalavya shool, the course convener, the volunteers and the students. Mr. Sharat Chandran addressed the students and thanked the team of LMAD for taking the time out and conducting the session. The session started with the morning prayer, 'Aye Malik Tere Bande Hum'. The course convener then took over, reminding them of the importance of Quiet Time and the four values. He posed a question for the students to ponder over in their morning session of quiet time, "How can I achieve what I want through education? What are the steps to achieve the same?". Some of the students came up and shared their thoughts on the question put to them. All of them seemed to have their education as their priority. One student shared how he could focus on his studies despite the troubles of his families. He said that this was possible only after the conference. Another student shared about how quiet time made him realize the importance of quiet time. He wished to spread this realization with the other children of his village after the completion of his education. On that note, the course convener marked the importance of studies in his life and the struggle he had gone through to become what he is.

The importance of hard work and self discipline was highlighted to the students. All the volunteers came forward and shared their journey with education and mentioned how studies played an important role in their upbringing. The students were divided into six groups. They spread across the campus in their groups for a group discussion. The discussion about their thoughts in that morning's quiet time continued in their groups. The students got a chance to ask various questions from the volunteers.

Followed by the lunch break, the course convener took a session on the exercise, "Pyramid of Life" which explained how important it is to have a road map to achieve one's goals. It also emphasized how important it was to put in hard work consistently. The students were seen participating enthusiastically.

Everyone gathered in the main auditorium in the evening for the final part of the session. A motivational short film was shown to the students which made them rethink their attitude towards education and how important it is to keep oneself updated. Everyone then stood up for the singing of the national anthem. The LMAD team wished the students best of luck and encouraged them to give their best in their upcoming exams.