

Let's Make A Difference Conference at Usha Martin University



Date: 9 - 10 January, 2026

Location: Usha Martin University, Narayansoso,
Ranchi

Introduction

The Usha Martin University Conference was organised by the team of Let's Make A Difference on 9th and 10th January 2026. It was a comprehensive, value-based programme, carefully curated a space for personal transformation, harmony, and cooperation among the various departments of the university. The two-day conference, themed "Ethics – Trust – Relationships," was conducted under the auspices of the Centre for Ethics.

The conference brought together both teaching and non-teaching faculty under one roof, building a safe, respectful, and positive environment where participants could reflect and share their thoughts freely, without fear of judgement. The participants included highly accomplished professionals, doctorates, deans, heads of departments, associate and assistant professors, along with administrative staff. Their ages ranged from the late twenties to the mid sixties, reflecting a rich diversity of experience and perspective. A total of 210 participants registered for the conference.

Volunteers from the Let's Make A Difference movement travelled from various parts of the country to facilitate this unique initiative, like, Delhi, Bombay, Nagpur, Pune, Bhandara, Indore, Sambhaji Nagar and Jamshedpur.

The teachings of Let's Make A Difference are universal in nature and resonate across age groups, as they centre on one fundamental idea: change. Change often brings discomfort, yet it is ultimately rewarding. Human beings tend to resist change within themselves while wishing for change in others. Through introspection and attentive listening to one's inner self, participants begin to realise that when "I" change, my family changes and gradually, this transformation extends to society and, ultimately, to the nation.

The team of Let's Make A Difference invested more than 15 hours in the virtual space to discuss and design this conference over a period of six weeks.



Entire participants of the Usha Martin University Conference for Teaching and Non-Teaching Faculty and the volunteer of Let's Make A Difference

Day 1 (9 January, 2026) - Quiet Time, Values and Trust:

The Centre for Ethics introduced to the participants about the conference and passed on the dais to Mr. Viral Mazumdar, the founder and course convener. The day started with inner listening. Silence is an integral part of Let's Make A Difference's teaching and philosophy. A presentation was shown to the seated participants in the auditorium, which acquainted them with the human values and inner voice. It also emphasized on writing the thoughts in the diary. The participants were given a diary to reflect on and listen to their conscience followed by a short sharing session.

After the tea break the participants again gathered in the auditorium for a session on human values. Mr. Viral talked about the human values. He spoke not from his lived experience, how core human values show up in everyday life, we often fail to do what is right and we settle for what is easy. Everyone knows about the values, but what lacks is its application in daily life. There was resistance among the participants at first. A few participants openly questioned whether such values had any real place in a professional environment shaped by deadlines, hierarchies, and performance metrics. The room carried skepticism.

Manas, a volunteer shared his story. Manas spoke about a deeply personal struggle he had carried for a long time, the fear and hesitation of admitting the truth about his addiction to pornography to his mother. He shared how the moment of confession was filled with trembling and uncertainty, yet what followed surprised him. For the first time, he felt lighter and his mother took it in a positive way, embraced and understood him.



*Sharing during the session on Human Values by volunteers and participants.
From (L) to (R): Manas Raheja, Sujit Roy (volunteers) and Dr. Anil Mishra (Registrar)*

The post-lunch Group Discussions created a different kind of space. Each participant was invited to reflect and respond to carefully framed questions. The process was not seamless. Although the participants were informed that mobile phones were not allowed and punctuality was expected, yet mobile phones buzzed and a few participants walked in late.

We began by forming a circle of trust, where participants were assured, “*We are here to listen to you.*” Every question raised, would be responded to with care. The discussion opened with a question that set the tone for everything that followed: *Have my values ever placed me in a situation that was challenging, compromising, or deeply uncomfortable?*

The first reflection invited participants to look inward: *Do I truly subscribe to ethics, not in words, but in practice?* This was followed by a question that did not require an immediate answer aloud: *Where in my life did I not choose what was right, but instead chose what was easy?* Participants were asked to leave these thoughts anonymously on rough chits.

Towards the end of day one, the participants were once again asked to gather in the auditorium. We began with a unique session on **Trust and Team Building**. A skit was performed under the guidance of Mr. Brijesh Arora. It portrayed two groups of cows fighting over fodder, each determined to secure more for themselves. Only after exhaustion set in did they realise a simple truth—that cooperation was the only way both groups could survive.



Lively discussions during the Trust and Team Building Session

Following the skit, the convenor addressed the gathering. He spoke of Let's Make A Difference as a space without age barriers, rooted deeply in togetherness. This thought flowed naturally into a session on gender equality and the shared responsibility of the male community in building a more inclusive society. Drawing from the example of Air India and Indian Airlines, he highlighted how emotional connection and trust form the backbone of any effective team.

The interactive sessions on teamwork highlighted that while India excels in individual brilliance, national progress is stalled by a lack of collective effort. Participants identified key traits for a successful team, such as being non-judgmental, creating accountability, and having a shared vision. At the end, the team took questions from the participants.

After the convenor spoke, he offered the remaining time to be a forum for open and honest discussion which will facilitate trust and team building.

The shift became visible when one participant spoke with unexpected honesty about feeling neglected and unacknowledged within the system. The room filled with murmurs, head nodding in agreement. That single sharing opened the door to deeper conversations about unspoken frustrations, invisible roles, and the communication gaps that quietly exist between teaching staff, non-teaching staff, and support personnel such as lab in-charges. The first day ended on a very high note.



Vice Chancellor Prof. Madhulika sharing during Trust and Team Building Session in presence of Mr. Viral Mazumdar, founder and course convenor

Day 2 (10 January, 2026) - Mind, Ego and Relations:

The day began with the prayer "Ae Malik Tere Bande Hum".

Then, we began with the morning quiet time on Mind, Ego and Consciousness. The course convenor showed a presentation and took the participants on the journey, as how we all are born happy and gradually collect pain, hurt, ego, bad habits along the way. We encounter dead end when listening to ego, yet we listen to it to avoid momentary discomfort. At the end of the presentation, a music was played and all the participants remained quiet with their eyes closed. They were asked a question, "What have I lost due to my ego?" The participants remained in the auditorium quietly reflecting on the question. They later one-by-one shared their thoughts from the stage.



Quiet Time on Mind, Ego and Consciousness. People reflecting and writing their thoughts in their diaries (top images), Participants observing silence (bottom left), Prof. Dr. Milind sharing during Quiet Time (bottom right)

We wanted everyone to leave behind something bad or unwanted or negative and asked each one to write on a chit of paper, there was enthusiasm and many wanted to write more than one negative aspect on the chit, latter each one stepped out and experienced the burning of negativity.

After burning the negative, the gathering broke for a sip of tea and snacks. Following the little break, the participants went back again to the auditorium for yet another important session on Relationship. The session began with showing of a video of father and son. The course convener gave examples from his life to show what it means to have good relationship with family and left the forum open for sharing.

One powerful sharing came from the participant about two brothers, both had one boy each. One day from a distance in the living room, the elder brother's son and the younger brother's son came running toward the elder brother. He was holding ice-creams in both the hands - one large, one small. His son was running toward the hand with the larger ice cream, while his younger brother's son was heading toward the hand with the smaller one. Seeing this from afar, he quietly switched the ice creams. He handed the bigger one to his own son and gave the smaller one to his younger brother's child. The younger brother was sitting at a distance, watching the entire scene unfold. In that moment, he realized that the time had come for him and his elder brother to separate their families to preserve the love they had between them. Nipping things in bud.

Everyone went for lunch, after which was the group discussion on relations. During the group discussion, towards the end of it the participants along with the volunteers wrote their Letters to Self. Writing letter in today's time is antic, but we at Let's Make A Difference have preserved letter writing and encouraged each one to write a letter to themselves towards their realisations, learnings and takeaways, which helped them process internal barriers.

Everyone gathered in the auditorium for the closing part. The volunteers were introduced to the gathering, highlighting their academics, work, association with the work of Let's Make Difference and their sacrifice to be present in the conference. The team of Usha Martin University handed over to each volunteer a flower pot as a token of appreciation. The volunteer team, then distributed certificates to the deserving candidates, marking the conclusion to the conference.



Participants writing their Letters to Self



Mr. Viral Mazumdar (far left) with the management of Usha Martin University during a brief introduction with the team of Let's Make A Difference



Department of Pharmacy, Usha Martin University on the stage



Positive Commitments:

- Spending money judiciously
- I realized that I have an ego, I know that it was in me and I will make sure to not do something that I regret because of my ego.
- To improve my relations with my family.
- I will not shout at anyone.
- I will reduce my anger. (2)
- Consistency
- Stop overthinking
- I will start working for my parents in the best possible way
- I will work on myself to let go of procrastination.
- I will support others.
- Ego free.
- Non- judgemental
- Honesty
- Minimize my expectations from people around me.
- Discipline.
- Optimism
- I will eat mindfully.
- I will be more vocal. I will try to express my opinion with words.
- Have quality time with my wife and son.
- I will try to reduce Hb1Ac to normal.
- Love
- I will try to wake up early in the morning and do 20 minutes of Quiet time daily for me

Questions asked by the participants:

1. Thoughts that I might have inflicted pain does not let me sleep, neither the thought of someone doing the same to me let's me sleep.
2. What is this "change" which is being discussed here in the conference?
3. People perceive helping a female in a negative way.
4. Being a working mother, giving 20 minutes of time to self is challenging when I give time to my work I feel giving time to my child or family and vice versa? Sometimes, it becomes so long before I even speak to my parents.
5. Which should be a priority duty/ responsibility or selfless service (should I do more than my assigned work)?
6. Why is good work rewarded late?
7. If I live a disciplined, virtuous life does it not inflict moral superiority over people entangled in socio-economic problems?
8. Values like selflessness is subjective, it is different in different peoples eyes, how to understand these values clearly in an objective manner?
9. What is detachment? If I love everyone unconditionally that means I am getting detached?
10. Is saying that I have no ego is also a kind of ego?
11. What is the difference between self respect and ego?
"Swabhiman (Self-respect/ dignity), Atma samman (Self-esteem/ self-worth), Ahankar (ego)" how to distinguish them, where to draw line?



Thoughts shared during Group Discussions by the participants:

- These four values have affected my life positively. Kindness helps me connect easily with others. Honesty keeps my life pure, allowing me to speak and act freely. Happiness gives me comfort and helps me live joyfully in any situation. Unselfishness has taught me that life is not only about ourselves; we should try to do things selflessly.
- Purity helps a person grow in life and makes them active in daily activities. Honesty helps us survive better in society; an honest person respects and cares for everyone. Unselfishness teaches us not to think only about ourselves but also about others when we think of others, they think of us too. Love is the key to survival in society; it is very important in life. When you ask for things lovingly, you receive them.
- Love has changed me. I accept my faults, and this time I am trying to change myself. I realize that I have not been honest with others or even with myself, especially with my inner voice. My love for my puppy is pure because I love without any reason. I feel a special purity in my bond with dogs.
- These values have given me good habits, a free mind, good language, and a good nature.
- I practice all four values in my life and believe they are the foundation of humanity. Sometimes it is easy to follow them, and sometimes life tests you harshly. I have suffered a lot while holding onto these values, but ironically, they have helped me develop immense courage and strength to face adversity. I have strong faith in divine blessings and God's protection.
- These four values have opened my mind to introspect more deeply into my personal, family, professional, and social life. I think about the people who instilled these values in me from childhood; especially my parents, whose love and sacrifice I now value more than ever. This experience gave me the opportunity to pause in my busy life and reflect on these memories. I have also realized my own faults and will try my best to correct them and bring positivity into my life.
- These values guide me to respect everyone, value others' decisions, work hard with honesty and modesty, and enjoy my profession.
- I believe most people in my life love me because I am kind to everyone. I respect everyone, and that makes me feel good. As a teacher, my students give me love and respect. I am open with everyone and believe in one principle: be happy and make others happy. I never judge anyone based on their habits.
- Happiness motivates me to contribute good things to society. I feel grateful and happy because I survived two major accidents without any physical injuries.
- Being polite and unable to say no to anyone, valuing my family's decisions, and being unable to vent my feelings have been challenging for me.
- It becomes especially difficult to judge such situations when you are in a relationship. It is hard to know what to say, whom to talk to, or how to express yourself. Overall, it is a very challenging position to be in.
- As they say, the first layer of soil is always the hardest to break before reaching water. But when the intent is pure and the conviction in the process is strong, the water is inevitably found. In the GD, the beginning took time for many reasons: peer pressure, professional identities, social conditioning. Yet, as the process unfolded, I was deeply moved to witness a few participants slowly open up the long-suppressed corners of their hearts spaces that had quietly been yearning for healing, care, and simply to be heard. Those moments reaffirmed my belief in the work that Let's Make a Difference continues to do.
- In my previous job, I have been a part of asking the rich, well to do person pay double the medicine without their knowledge and giving the extra medicine to the poor to save a life. This moral dilemma is one I still struggle to understand, is it good or bad?
- I have seen scholarships being given to a poor kid, but not to a deserving kid from a well to do background.



Thoughts from the volunteers:

"I could not have hoped for a more illuminating start to the new year. This conference was in equal measure, a learning experience and one that I felt would be challenging given the profile of participants. However, from the onset, I felt a renewed sense of confidence and assurance that the conference would have an impact, both for the participants and volunteers. I was particularly assured by the energy and confidence of the team even though this was first conference of its kind for Let's Make A Difference." - Bhisham Mansukhani

"I witnessed senior university authorities engage openly with Let's Make A Difference values despite initial challenges and hierarchy." - Brijesh "Sonu" Arora

"Being part of a well-organized conference and realizing that even a supportive role contributes to a larger purpose." - Danish Kumar

"I realized that true education is not about positions, authority, or intellect, but about inner awareness, humility, and conscious living." - Harshal Thakare

"The most moving moment was seeing experienced educators listen with humility, reflect deeply, and appreciate one another during discussions. The openness to self-improvement and the acknowledgment that personal change leads to institutional change left a strong impact." - Manas Raheja

"The unexpected warmth and receptiveness of teaching and non-teaching staff. Despite time limitations, participants listened attentively and welcomed new ideas with curiosity, reinforcing the belief that learning and growth have no age or position." - Mudit Surana

"A thought-provoking question raised by one of the professors stayed with me: how can a person balance pursuing self-awareness and inner growth with their responsibilities towards family and dependents who rely on them? The discussion around this question emphasized the importance of finding a middle path, communicating one's needs honestly, and being authentic in relationships." - Neha Vehan Jain

"Deeply touched when senior teachers and staff shared honestly, especially during reflective activities like writing a letter to self. Initial hesitation transformed into sincerity and emotional openness, creating a safe and powerful space for inner reflection." - Rashesh Doshi

"This was my first time volunteering in any conference apart from Jamshedpur Youth Conference. This was a whole new experience for me to volunteer at Usha Martin University. Also I had an all new experience as this conference was specially designed for teaching and non-teaching staff of the university, that means every participant was elder age than me." - Sahil Kumar

"It is not always that we interact with people of such educational background, I was nervous and excited for the unique challenge that was abound. The thought of being a facilitator to a room full of professor was daunting. A sliver of motivation from Viral bhai was enough, that we are here to deliver what we know best, they maybe PhDs in their own field. That stuck with me, that gave me courage. I needed that, in fact, when I spoke with conviction to the seated professor sharing my thoughts, they listened and something in their body language spoke that they received the answers they were looking for. I am grateful for this." - Sayok Sarkar

"The most touching experience was witnessing participants—especially senior faculty—drop their official titles and speak from the heart during group discussions. People shared personal struggles, reflections, and vulnerabilities, showing that beneath professional roles, everyone carries similar inner questions and emotions." - Shraddha Agarwal

"Quiet Time sessions triggered in me deep self-reflection, bringing back memories of loved ones no longer present and leading to a renewed understanding of relationships and values." - Suman Sarkar

"When a senior lady professor found her own answer to a question on unselfishness through quiet reflection rather than being given a direct reply." - Tanu Kumari

"As a course convener, what touched me the most was openness and frank-honest sharing; they showed their vulnerability in spite of being a dean or HOD, to that matter even VC expressed, open ends in her own personal relations which needs closure. This set a context where the professors also expressed their frank opinion of dissatisfaction in some areas of work at the higher level of the university. The grace was visible and listeners listened with apt attention as introspection and not reaction." - Viral Mazumdar



Working team of Let's Make A Difference



Working Team of Let's Make A Difference at Usha Martin University Conference

Bhisham Mansukhani	Brijesh Arora	Danish Kumar
Harshal Thakare	Manas Raheja	Mudit Surana
Neha Vehan Jain	Rahesh Doshi	Sahil Kumar
Sayok Sarkar	Shraddha Agarwal	Suman Sarkar
Sujit Roy	Tanu Kumari	Viral Mazumdar