

REPORT

PART 1

The December Workshop of LMAD has been consistently running at the Asia Plateau, Panchgani for the last 15 years. The entire workshop has been structured in a way that it is like a cleansing procedure for the mind, body and the soul. The objective of the workshop is to make 'quiet time' a go-to for each and every participant and to listen to one's conscious and make the right decisions in life.

The participants travelled from various parts of the country to be able to mark their presence in the December Workshop 2017. Participants came from places like Aurangabad, Allahabad, Coonoor, Pune, Mumbai, Indore, Jamshedpur, Chicago, Gurugram, Surat, Katni, Bangalore, Baramati, Delhi, Nagpur, Hubli and other such far-off towns, so as to become a better version of themselves.

Almost everybody reached by dinner time. Post dinner, everyone assembled in a cosy room. The participants sat across Viral Mazumdar, who was going to lead the entire workshop. (The report that follows will refer to Viral Mazumdar as moderator). At Asia Plateau, discipline is extremely crucial. One of the biggest take-aways of the December workshop is that the participants learn to base their lives on it. So the first discussion had to be about it.

The participants were made aware of the following Dos and the DONTs.

- The December Workshop is an intense one and even the slightest of distractions have the power to disturb anyone's long haul zone. So, all the participants were requested to have this sense of thoughtfulness towards their co-participants.
- Phones were prohibited. The participants were allowed to have their phones with themselves unlike the Youth conference that happens in June but they were expected to practice self control.
- Not to forget the objective of being present there.

- Not to focus on any personal agenda.
- To have an open mind about the workshop

The instructions went on and everybody sincerely paid attention to what was being discussed.

The participants were discouraged from talking to their roommates as well. They were expected to share the room with other participants but treat them like strangers. The reason behind this was to not let even the slightest of the distractions, deviate them from the purpose of coming to the workshop.

The workshop is all about introspection and to remain quiet for long hours and go within to find an answer which aligns with conscious. The entire workshop is question and introspection focused. 'Question based' is also one form of quiet time, where one goes within to find the real answer and also through this question one focuses within to find the real traits of one's personality to know actually how one has made her/him in the process of growing up - Viral Mazumdar.

The workshop has been structured on quiet time. The idea is so find a friend and answers in silence, in quiet time. The objective was to let the powerful zone thus created to prevail. The workshop has been well thought and planned. It has an uninterrupted flow to it. Every question smoothly flows into another, paving way for a deeper understanding.

PART 2

The workshop began on a light note.

"Why have you come for this workshop?"

All the participants had their own reasons, because of which they were sitting across each other in the cosy room, where the entire workshop was going to be conducted.

And it was time for everyone to have their quiet time and find answers in silence.

The following things came to the table; a break, introspection, for Asia Plateau, to sort a specific problem and so on. Elaborate sharing took place. The participants got to know about what others had come for. This sharing helps participants to get new perspectives.

Everyone shared their reasons with other participants at the table. A variety could be seen. Although, all the reasons had one thing in common: 'I'. In simple words, everyone's motive for coming to the workshop could be traced back to their self improvement. All the reasons revolved around the participant itself. The moderator, after listening to all the responses explained how everyone's reason of being there was about their own betterment and not one of them mentioned doing something for the society or the nation. All the participants realised that they were only thinking about improving themselves.

And that was the time when the moderator added the element of 'I to WE' to the discussion. He explained how important was the transition from I to WE. He helped the participants broaden their vision and think beyond their own selves. He explained how one should satisfy himself at the earliest and be all charged up to contribute to the society and the nation for a better tomorrow. All the participants really enjoyed this moment of realisation wherein they absorbed a new outlook, a new approach. It was an eye-opener for everyone present. Having broadened visions, it was time to move ahead.

What makes us?

Habits.

Habits maketh a man. Habits make us who we are. Habits are an integral part of us. They contribute to both, our success and failure. We don't even realise that some habits can be really fatal. They can steal away some of the most remarkable opportunities from us. At the same time, they can help us achieve what we never imagined. Point being, it's important to keep a check on our habits. Both, good and bad but more importantly, bad. Why? Because after all, it's easier to develop bad ones. The moderator initiated the discussion on habits. He suggested that the participants utilise 'question based' quiet time to think about all of their bad habits which pull them down in some way or the other.

A fruitful quiet time always leads to the right answers, because they are straight from the conscience. The participants opened up about their ugliest habits. The honesty that was displayed was incredible. After all, blood isn't everything. Participants talked about laziness, procrastination, extensive sleeping, unchecked social media majorly. Other bad habits that came out were expectations from others, anger, telling lies, addiction to vices etc. All the participants read out from their diaries, some of their extremely personal bad habits. And that, takes courage. The irony was that there was a healthy discussion on bad habits.

Putting some practicality into the picture, the moderator extended this discussion but made little twist to it. He asked the participants to think of all the good habits they want to replace their old ones with.

And there the participants could be seen, all motivated to conquer over themselves. A lot of thought went into this question. It was evident from the sharing.

The moderator had asked to think of ways to replace bad habits with good ones. Everyone had a few things to suggest; some full proof solutions. After listening to everyone, 4 solutions were written down on the board:

1. Discipline
2. Others' words should not bother you.
3. Learn to say NO.
4. Self Rewarding System

The discussion was tough but necessary. It's difficult to be out loud about one's own weaknesses. But it can only be an act of the courageous. And the way this dull moment was channelized into the right direction was remarkable.

Post discussion, there could be seen a downfall in the moods of the ones present. And why not, it's like sharing about the weaponry in the battlefield before the fight. It makes you doubt your ability to win.

And this discussion furthermore, took even more of a serious path.

Depression.

The moderator pressed on the fact how the aforementioned word was being used so cheaply in today's world. He continued about how people start calling themselves depressed as soon as they hit a low in their lives. And this can be a huge drawback for one. Life is all about highs and lows. And cherishing the lows makes us value the highs. So its important to deal with lows in an unbiased manner, as one deals with highs. The discussion on depression was aimed at making the participants stronger against situations which weren't according to them. The discussion over habits, precisely bad habits and depression had made the ambience gloomy if anything.

So to win over self doubt that all the participants were indulging into, the moderator chose to move uphill.

Bundle of success stories.

That's what the moderator called all the participants. And there you could see the participants faces' lit up. The moderator asked the participants to go down their memory lanes and think of the smallest and the biggest happy moments of their lives which make them bundle of joy, of success stories.

This discussion was a personal favourite of many participants. What was shocking was that the participants highly enjoyed the 'question based' quiet time for this one. They kept on writing memories that went back to when they were really young and those are some moments everyone wants to savour.

The discussion on everyone's happy moments was breathtaking. In other discussions the participants take their own sweet time, but in this one, it was as if they didn't feel like giving anyone a chance.

Sharing of happy moments by the participants, first of transposed the pre-existing vibe. The participants were able to remind themselves that no matter what bad habits define them, they can't ignore the peppy, bundle of joys they are.

Moving on, life isn't a bed of roses after all.

And so, the participants were back at discussing serious things.

Joining the dots: if habits make us, bad habits pull us down, one tries to replace them with good ones, why isn't everyone successful?

World famous excuse: I don't have time.

So let's get this straight, 'I don't have time' is stopping a lot of people from becoming successful. Time plays an important role in everyone's life. We have 86400 seconds every day. And if we utilise them well, well, everything we have ever wanted will start to manifest. One has to have control over his/her time and not the vice versa.

Moderator raised a question that made almost all the participants laugh. How many of you frequently say, "I don't have time" ? And the pack of participants bursted out with laughter. It's a common practice, we all would agree. To demonstrate the same, the Moderator chose a college going participant, did a little postmortem of her daily schedule and announced that she had a good 7 hour bracket extra every day. Which makes it 49 hours a week, 200 hours a month and 2400 hours a year. So basically she was unable to utilise 3 months in a year. And this was daylight time. It is so easy to do something productive and substantial in daylight time. Everyone went into deep shock. All the participants knew where they were slipping and wrote a lot in their diaries about things they have always wanted to do but couldn't because of the very same excuse. The room flourished with this wave of motivation to improve and respect time. A quick quiet time wherein everyone thought a little more on how could they save time. The discussion that followed involved quick tricks and ways to save time. Moderator basically insisted on limiting the use of social media as that was one of the major causes of mismanagement of time.

Towards the end, all could join the dots. The entire sequence of questions rang a bell in everyone's ear. Thus, it was concluded that since our habits make us and contribute to our success and failure, they were suppose to be under check and that we should remember that we are a bundle of joy whenever anything or anyone tries to pull us down and that we should respect time because otherwise we will lose out on all opportunities to do justice to our potential.

PART 3

The workshop focussed on three major questions. Answering these questions could help one sort his/her life to a great extent. Long 'question based' quiet time was given for these questions because they required a lot of focus, listening to conscience and perseverance.

Q1. Who am I?

The moderator introduced this question and shared what he thought about it. This question plays a crucial role in everyone's life. It's important to know ourselves because we spend most of our lives with our own selves. It's important to know our core, our values and principles which we stand for. And for knowing thyself it's important to be able to enjoy one's own company, especially when it's silent, when it's quiet.

After the question was out, all the participants exchanged glances with each other. A long quiet time followed.

Post the quiet time, all the participants gathered but they were still in their own personal space. They sat quiet for a while, Moderator sensed this and extended the quiet time.

Then a discussion followed where the participants spoke about their beliefs about themselves. A participant shared how she thought that she was a ray of hope, motivation and courage. That she was a courageous person, ready to fight the world for fulfilling her and her parents' dreams. That she is a change maker who will relentlessly work for the society.

Such profound and close to the heart sharing helped the bond between participants to strengthen further. Listening to such dear sharing helped

everyone break their walls, come forward and share their own heartfelt things with other participants.

The motive behind this question was clear. One should know himself before knowing or trying to figure out anything else.

All the participants could see a better connection being created with their own selves. They could see that they had come a step ahead.

Q2. What do I want to be?

Almost everyone could join the dots from 'Who am I' to 'What do I want to be?'. After the moderator asked participants to sit with themselves for this question, a long quiet time followed. Participants went to their own personal spots in the property with their mats and pillows and thought to themselves under the warm winter sun.

This is a crucial question for any one who takes it seriously. We all want to be somewhere, we all see ourselves at great heights, but it's easier said than done. It's important to do a SWOT analysis of one's own self, build on one's strengths, win over one's weaknesses, catch the right opportunities at the right time and be alert of the threats. All this helps one to become who they want to be. It's important to know who we are (that's why the first question) to manifest what we want to be.

After a good, focussed quiet time, the participants met again, for yet another deep and profound sharing.

Everyone had their own dreams, aspirations, goals and they shared all of it with the group. Participants shared about wanting to become a pure soul, a confident person, an independent kid etc. It was highly motivating to see the level of goals everyone had for each other. One of the participants shared her road map. It included getting numerous diplomas and degrees, all related to her job profile. She mentioned about wanting to learn foreign languages and a music instrument. The way she had broken down her long term goals into short ones to become who she wants to become was inspiring. Everyone thought to themselves, if she can, why can't they.

Q3. How will I become what I want to become?

Who am I? - What do I want to be? - How will I become what I want to be?

Sounds like a path to some serious realisation.

After realising who one is and what one wants to be, the most important thing that remains is to know how to bridge that gap.

All the participants who had connected the dots so far, connected them further. All of them could understand the track they were on. This question saw the longest quiet time. The participants were asked to have lunch in silence too. Everyone had a serious facade, were in their own thoughts and ideas.

After such long quiet times, in and outside the room, the participants had started to enjoy it. They had started enjoying their own sweet company, in silence, thinking of questions that would make or break them. It was as if they had found a friend in silence.

A participant shared how he would save all the time he tends to waste on video games, binge watching and hanging out with friends and would instead utilise it to get better at his favourite sport. He shared how he would choose learning new things instead of hanging out with his mates unnecessarily.

A variety of plans and road maps were discussed, which gave everyone an insight. It's easy to learn when one has so many opinions and perspectives around.

PART 4

The December Workshop was a smooth flow of well thought questions, if thought about properly, can literally channelize potential of many.

Other than the aforementioned questions and discussions, a few other elements of The December Workshop were as vital.

31st December 2017

As the afternoon of the last day of 2017 was passing by, the participants were asked to write all their bad feelings they'd had for anyone in 2017 on a clean sheet of paper.

The participants looked confused while they were writing all of that down but they knew that the moderator was looking at a bigger picture.

Another activity that the participants were asked to do was to write a prayer for themselves. A prayer that they would read soon.

Post tea, the moderator took the bunch of participants for a trek to the Plateau, to bid goodbye to the last sunset of 2017. The participants were stunned at the idea. They were asked to carry those sheets of papers with them.

The trek to the Plateau was terrific. Everyone felt like a victor when they reached the top. A few happy pictures were taken and then everyone set their eyes on the sun. The moderator asked everyone for their sheets on which they had expressed their ill feelings for others in 2017. And then there was a little ceremony where these papers were burnt. Everyone found this like a cleansing ritual and enjoyed seeing the sun set way more after this activity. The sunset was a feast to the eyes.

New year's was closer and no one had any idea about what was going to happen at midnight. Participants joked about being asked to sleep when the clock strikes 12 and so on. But Moderator had a different plans for this occasion too. When it was past 11:30 pm, all the participants were asked to move to the second lounge. All seemed clueless. But not for long. So when the world was screaming and dancing to rowdy songs, the participants at Asia Plateau embraced 2018 with open arms in complete stillness, silence and peace. Candles were lit and everyone sat in a circle around those candles and prayed, the prayer that they had written with all of their heart.

One of the participants surprised everyone with a delicious cake. New year's was celebrated like never before.

1st JANUARY 2018

On the first morning of 2018, the moderator made all the participants sit together in the open and experience the first sunrise of 2018. What a beautiful thought. That's how everyone welcomed 2018. It was a beautiful feeling to see the first sun rise. It motivated everyone in ways, words cannot express.

Another quirky thing that happened and is worth mentioning in the report, since everyone slept late on 31st night and woke up at the usual time, a power nap was suggested. The participants needed it and the moderator understood that. Participants woke up after a relaxing 1 hour nap and felt like conquering their new selves and inculcating the change that had lately felt the need of.

DISCUSSION ON QUIET TIME & WILL POWER

When the workshop started, it was well understood that it was going to be an intense one and will be based on quiet time if anything. The entire December Workshop was based on long, focussed quiet time, so that one could get in touch with his/her conscience. Quiet time is more about listening than talking to yourself. The moderator firmly believes that if one is a disciplined student of quiet time, his/her conscience will always be a reliable compass. So it's important to practice Quiet time daily, without fail, for it helps in achieving clarity and leads to decluttering of the mess.

Another important quality that one shall work on and develop is his/her will power. Google defines will power as *control exerted to do something or restrain impulses*. The moderator inspired the participants by sharing his own stories where he showed unshakable will power and did not give up. He shared how in his quiet time, his conscious guided him to not become someone he isn't and always choose the right path even if it's difficult, which it usually is. Will power gives

one the perseverance to keep going on while sticking to what's right, legit and genuine.

All good things come to an end and so did the December Workshop. All in all, from 28.12.2017 to 02.01.2018, the participants had surrendered to silence for more than 20 hours. None of them could believe that they were on their way to welcome *quiet time* as a permanent member of their lives.

While leaving, the participants promised each other that they would not let the newly felt determination to drain away and that they will stand by the promises they made to themselves at Asia Plateau.

See you soon Asia Plateau.



