

A TEACHER AFFECTS ETERNITY

It was on April 9, 2014 the day when the new academic session had started. A student of Class XII came to my office to tell me that I forgot to wish him on his birthday i.e. on April 6, 2014. I know how invaluable is my wishes to him on this special day of his life. Yes, it was true that I could not convey my wishes to him and it made me feel bad..... But that's when I decided I should give him something which would be with him forever.

Sometime in June 2011, I found a boy sitting in the last bench when I had been with Class IX during the Mathematics Period. I did not get much time to interact with him in the first few days, but when I felt that he was gradually adjusting to the new school environment, I gradually developed rapport with him. His written work used to be very untidy, always with a chewing gum in his mouth in and outside the class, didn't know how to sit in a class, would argue with teachers, carried a ball in his hand whether inside or outside the class, often became impulsive and would get verbally with his classmates. His teachers used to tolerate his behavior with the hope that he will definitely change his attitude one day. Yes, it is true that he used to show a lot of 'attitude' which at times became difficult for a teacher with low patience level to tolerate.

Repeated complaints against him by all his teachers

made me take a step forward in dealing with this boy. I always remembered that he wanted to be one of my best students. That's when I had decided to write to him and this was my first note to him written on Jan 29, 2012.

Dear _____

Soft Speech

Pure Heart

Peaceful Eyes

Strengthful Hands

Focussed Mind and

Determined Decision always makes you winner in Life. I want you to do these few things so that your dream of being my best student gets fulfilled.

1. As soon as you get into the bus, wish both the conductor and the driver a very good morning.

2. Once you get into the bus, sit in your allotted place – you can talk in the bus but only in English.

3. Whatever you speak should make sense and no nonsense.

4. In the school, don't break the discipline rules. If you've to go in a line then you need to. You should not come out of the class without any reason.

5. While sitting in the class both your legs should be on the floor.

6. No chewing gum in your mouth at any point of time in the school campus.

7. You need to respect all the teachers in the school.

8. All your work should be up to date.

9. No cheating during exams.

10. No usage of slang words. Exert control of your emotions.

11. No bringing of soft drinks, etc., to the school.

12. While in the class, the ball should not be seen in your hands.

13. When going back from school, board the bus in time and do not get down till your stop comes. While getting down at your stop say Thank You to both the driver and conductor.

14. Should not talk with anyone and disturb the class

"Happiness always looks small if you hold it in your hands. But when you learn to share it, you'll realize how big and precious it is."

while the class is on.

15. Lastly and most importantly, I'll trust my own eyes. If I am confident that you are able to follow these rules then I will be the happiest person. All the Best!

"Affection is easy to obtain. But once gained it is difficult to maintain. And once lost it can never be regained. So don't lose the one who is affectionate to you."

I gave this note to him and was hopeful that he'll try his best to follow them. Sometime in March 2012 just after the Annual Examinations got over, we took this batch of students for an outing and he was sitting next to me in the bus. I just told him that all the teachers

were quite happy with the change noticed in his behavior and the way he is performing in Academics. He told me that it was only because of the note which I gave to him. I could not recall which note he was talking about till he took it out from his wallet. I was surprised for a moment and then he told me that he didn't want to lose my affection at any cost and for that he was ready to change.

I was touched and infact proud to have him as a student in my life. But I did not convey him any of my feelings. I just told him to keep up his efforts in sustaining the positivity noticed. Gradually he was into his Class X and things became easier as the

boy remained focused on his studies simultaneously working hard at keeping up his target of becoming a good cricketer. He joined a Cricket Academy and in due course got selected for the Saurashtra Under 16 Team and was doing pretty well. Afterwards there did not exist any need for me to remind him about his behavior or any other thing. He excelled in his Class X Board Exams too, took admission in XI Science and in Sept 2013 he was a part of the team of twenty six boys who took part in the 291st National Adventure Program organized by the National Adventure Institute, Pachmarhi, Hoshangabad District in Madhya Pradesh.

Everything went well and this boy who used to have so many problems with everyone, managed to stay there for seven days without any complaint. I was very happy because he spent most of his time with me whenever we used to go on a trek. Here are a few lines from my second note to him:

Dear _____

Earlier I used to have hundreds of things to tell you, but now nothing is coming to my mind. It may be because of the positivity filled with you. Being closely with you in the Adventure Camp made my understanding deeper. Frankly speaking, I did not even expect that you'll be coming to the Adventure Camp. Anyway, sometimes things happen for a reason which we may not know and only God knows.

Reply from him:

Enjoyed a lot on the tour and sir, my ability to stay there for seven days in the camp was only because of you and your company. Even enjoyed the dinner we had together in a train. Will surely accompany you in any such upcoming tours. Sir, I always wanted to lead my House as a House Captain, but I know I couldn't because of my behavior, but now I know I can make it possible next year. I really thank you a lot sir. You have done a lot. It's because of you and my dad, I got to see such comments from you. Thanks sir! Finally, I am very sure that in the last year of his schooling, he'll be able to lead his House as a House Captain. I want to let him know through this write up that his dream of becoming my best student is fulfilled. I wish him success in all his future endeavours.

"We don't know how high we can fly until we give it a sincere try. If we do our best in each try, even the sky will have no choice but to shift little high."

My humble request for all my teaching fraternity is to go that extra mile to inspire and be inspired. Remember "To Teach is to Touch a Life Forever."



An Educator,
Ahmedabad

The Open Page