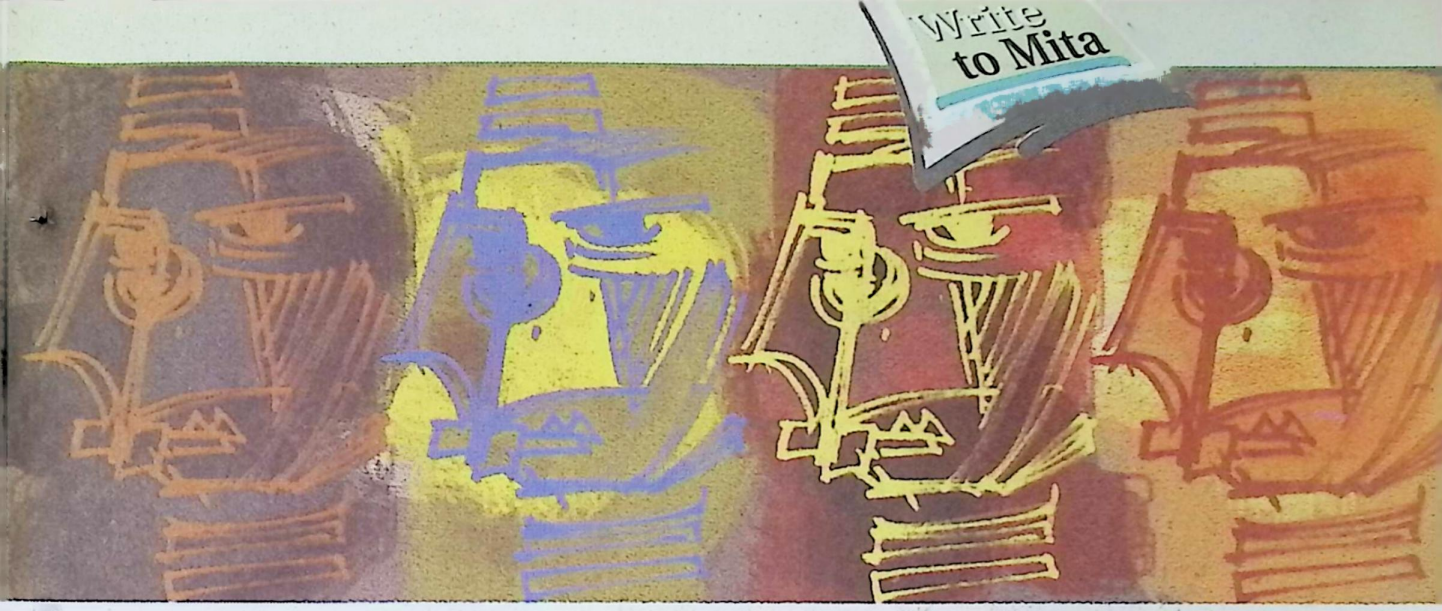


Dear Mita,

I am a fourth year honours student. I do tuition as a part-time job. I have been teaching a girl who now studies in class 11. I like her as my younger sister as I don't have one. I have one younger brother. I toiled hard during her SSC and thus managed to aid her to get A+ in S.S.C. But her parents' attitude towards me started to change after her SSC. I have surmised that they have become suspicious of me and think I have other intentions regarding their daughter. As I have mentioned earlier that I like this girl as my sibling and she also likes me as her elder brother. I have told her that I cannot teach her anymore but she refuses to listen to me and at the same time she cannot convince her parents that we see each other as brother and sister.

Confused

Dear Confused,

Whatever brotherly feelings you might have about your student, you should stop teaching her if her parents do not like it. She is young and at an impressionable age. Her parents fear might be well founded as there is a chance that she will develop feelings towards you in future. I think your interaction will only create more confusion and tension in the family. It is great that you helped get her an A + in the SSC exam. Leave it at that, continuing the relationship might be spoil the good will that you have built.

Dear Mita,

I am a 15-year-old girl and am a little overweight. I just can't stop eating junk food and chocolates. I know that I have to lose weight and have tried diets and exercise but just can't seem to get the will power to stick with them. My friends are all very skinny and stylish and I feel really weird when I am in public with them because I can see that boys look at them with admiration and at me with disgust. I feel very depressed sometimes and end up eating more. My mother keeps telling me I should lose weight but somehow that does not help. Please help me.

Sad

Dear Sad,

I can only help if you help yourself. Knowing full well that eating junk food is not only harmful to your health but also makes you look unattractive you are continuing with this seating habit. I don't think you eat too much, you just eat the wrong food. But you can change if you put your mind to it. You should read storied about people who with their will power have attained the impossible. Losing weight, and that also at your age is will be simple if only you try hard enough. The fact that others look with admiration at your friends because of their figure should be enough motivation. You too can be admired if you want. Just make up your mind and see a nutritionist today. In about two months you will love the new you.

Dear Mita,

My sister-in-law is a nice woman and she has a lovely son who is only 5 years old. She takes good care of him and he just adores her. He is so adorable and like any child is also sometimes a little disobedient. The problem is that she is very frustrated with her life and often takes this out on her child, beating him and being very harsh with punishments. I understand that discipline is necessary to raise kids but I don't think hitting a child is the right way to go. I have tried telling her but she always gets defensive and so I have stopped. How can I make her understand that this is harmful for the child's mental health as well as physical health?

Lost

Dear Lost,

I know it is very difficult to tell any mother that she is not treating her child properly. It is also common for young mothers to take out their frustration on their children. You will have to be very tactful in the way you approach this. Try giving examples of how mothers who are too harsh have ended alienating their children. The more difficult route is addressing her frustrations. Finding out why she is so frustrated and beginning to solve them.