

# My thoughts on our young adults

It's been 20 long years since I've been dealing with young adults on a daily basis. As a result, I've become more than familiar with their sources of both happiness and agony. Even though it was difficult at first to teach a classroom full of children in their early '20s, I've grown to love them, understand them, and respect them as individuals.

## BE THE EXAMPLE

A child learns from what they see their parents doing, not what they are taught. A child wouldn't want to read books if they see their parents looking at screens all the time. "Ordering" children to do things wouldn't bring about changes parents would want to see – live and let live.

Let us teach our children the difference between right and wrong, and let them learn how to make decisions on their own and face their consequences. What we as parents can do is guide our children into making the "correct" decision, but what may be correct for us may not necessarily be correct for them – they belong to a completely different generation; although accepting change may be difficult, evolution is inevitable.

## RELATIONSHIP WITH PARENT

The relationship between a child and his/her parents is the most sacred. Us, parents, are the closest people in our children's lives. Although it is a part of our responsibility as parents to discipline our children, we must also be their friend. Children aren't perfect, and neither are we. What we as parents can do is treat each child as individuals so that in case, they do something wrong, they wouldn't be scared to come to their parents and end up lying to us.

Instead, we must develop such a relationship with our children where we would be the first people they go to and ask for help – this sort of healthy relationship would not only strengthen our bonds with our children, but may also prevent them from getting the "wrong" kind of help or making "wrong" decisions on their own.

Additionally, although friends are important, children should also understand that friends may not be their "ideal" and peer pressure is not something they should give into – having bad company can very easily create messes in lives.

## IMPORTANCE OF PEACE AT HOME

What is also a vital factor in children becoming confident and having less complexes is the relationship between parents.

Often times, I've seen that children remain very upset because of uncomfortable situations at home due to their parents not having as



good a relationship. When parents fight amongst each other, it negatively affects children more than they can imagine.

Many students have come up to me and said that their state of mind is not good at all since there is "no peace at home." Children who are comfortable in their own skin will only come from homes where parents have respect and love for each other. Even if parents live separately or aren't married anymore, it is extremely important for them to create such an environment around their children where they wouldn't feel unsafe or uncomfortable for them to grow up without any complexes.

## DON'T COMPARE

Each child is unique. Even if they're twins, EACH CHILD IS UNIQUE. From 20 years of experience as a teacher dealing with young adults, the most common reason why I've seen them not reaching their full potential, or be as confident as they could've been, is because they're compared – compared with siblings, cousins, peers, etc.

Comparing them to someone else is extremely detrimental to a child's confidence and mental health, and would only have the opposite effect of what parents are trying to "achieve."

## ACADEMICS IS NOT WHAT THE WORLD REVOLVES AROUND

Having said that, another common problem I've seen amongst the young adults I've dealt with is their academic success. We, as parents, pressurise our children too much to "achieve the highest possible grade" because it would apparently "guarantee success" in life.

It is important to do well in studies, yes; students who do well academically have very important qualities like discipline, focus, responsible, etc. But, as a professor, I've seen that academic excellence has got little to do with success in the professional world. Although academic success is important to an extent, it is not the most important factor.

Two truths I've seen from my experience is that professional success does not equal happiness, and success and happiness are subjective, i.e., the meaning of success and happiness differ from person to person. So, instead of pushing children to be better at

is understandable too. In that case, they would have to groom themselves in such a way where they are able to compete amongst the locals, and still find the happiness they need to live a fulfilled life.

If they do decide to go abroad, they have to go through all the battles very competently and upgrade themselves according to the standards of the international market; they have to survive in this cruel world, facing all global challenges. They cannot expect to have their "success" ready for them, they have to create their own success by working hard and smart, not by taking shortcuts and expect everything to work out exactly according to their plans in the end.

## DREAMS MAY NOT ALWAYS COME TRUE

Children also have to understand that although it is absolutely okay to have big dreams, they may not materialise for some people, so they also have to prepare themselves to deal with failure.

## NEVER LOSE YOURSELF IN THE PROCESS

I am so proud of the newer generations. They are smart, focused, confident, independent and have a bright and promising future ahead of them. If there had to be one thing they could learn from this piece of writing, I'd want for them to never give up. On anything.

Life is a long journey and often times, things may not go as you planned them. But that doesn't mean that it's the end of the world – never stop moving, growing, learning and dreaming.

Remember, dreams without goals are just dreams. To achieve your goals, discipline and consistency are vital. There are no shortcuts in life, so, never stop working hard, even if it seems that things aren't going your way. Don't worry, they will; your time will come.

Reach for the moon; even if you fail, you'll land among the stars. But most of all, never forget to enjoy the process. You only have one shot at life, enjoy to the fullest and never regret. I wish you all the best of luck in whatever you do!

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studies, push them to be better people.

Qualities like confidence, loyalty, honesty, politeness, generosity, integrity, etc. may take someone places where textbooks may possibly never reach. A well-rounded human being will always succeed in whatever they choose to do in life, and at the same time, make the world a better place. Each child should have the vision to conquer the world, be happy in life and be at peace.

## BRAIN DRAIN

On another note, what I've also noticed in the young adults is that they usually settle abroad. Although I do admit that there are more and better opportunities there, it is also important for them to realise how detrimental it is for their own country.

Children settling abroad contributes to 'brain drain,' where intelligent nationals leave the country, whereas they could have stayed back and contributed to the economy. However, many students would still want to go abroad in search for experience, which