



KOLKATA TOASTMASTER CLUB

NEWSLETTER EDITION - 1st JULY 2014— 31st JUNE 2015

CLUB NO. - 1179292 AREA- G2 Division- G DISTRICT—41

SPARK

Breaking the Ice since 13th May, 2008





EDITOR'S NOTE

Toastmasters talk about fear of Public Speaking. Fear of public speaking is a common phobia. Mark Twain said, "There are only two types of speakers in the world. 1. The nervous and 2. Liars." What Toastmasters don't talk about is that wonderful "ah ha" moment when you realize that you are a Public speaker. This moment may come soon or it may take awhile. Everyone is unique, after all. And the power of the moment is unique too: it redefines us.

On 28th March, 2014, I had the opportunity to step in the Calcutta Chamber of Commerce and attend my first meeting as a guest in Kolkata Toastmasters Club. And since then, I have never looked back. I remember witnessing a speech of a senior Toastmaster on the theme, "Go further." he inspired each and everyone in the room to keep setting goals and achieving them. By "Going further" even one step at a time, we become larger. I got inspired since I met this remarkable individual.

Toastmasters, as individuals, and as a group, truly put "go further" into practice every day. Their desire and dedication to improving their own skills is only surpassed by their dedication in helping their fellow members reach their potential. Whether they have shed the fear, or learned to deal with it, Toastmasters get up and speak. It may be for a Table Topic, a speech, an evaluation, or delivering a report for a role, but with each and every opportunity, Toastmasters "go further."

One day, each Toastmaster has that "ah ha" moment when they realize, "I am a public speaker." They may not say it out loud, but in that moment, they have gone further and changed forever.

But, let this moment be just the beginning of a remarkable Journey. Continually, taking up roles and responsibilities in and outside Kolkata Toastmasters Club is what everyone should strive for. We learn several useful skills unknowingly while cashing in the opportunities which comes our way. What I have also learnt is to never shy away from committing mistakes. Learning from it and never repeating it is the key to Success. Thankfully, members of Toastmaster International are polite, helpful and friendly. We believe in encouraging and growing each other. That's the spirit of Toastmasters International.

I thank everyone who enkindled, evaluated and encouraged me in my journey of Toastmasters so far. Special thanks goes to my mentor Pallavi Poddar. I cannot thank her enough for supporting me in every which way possible. It was because of her hard work, patience and efforts that I have improved in leaps and bounds. She's the heart of Kolkata Toastmasters Club. Truly 'The Queen of Good Times'

Thank you everyone for providing me with the proud privilege of being the Editor for our Newsletter. Thanks to all the members who contributed for our Newsletter. It wouldn't have been possible without them for me to create this beautiful masterpiece. I hope everyone has a good time going through it.

VAIBHAV JHUNJHUNWALA





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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

There is no challenge more challenging than the challenge to improve yourself. For me this sums up my experience at Toastmasters where every time I have challenged myself to be a better leader and better communicator. Last six months were the most exciting period of my Toastmasters journey where I served as the President of the club and what an experience it is to lead a pack of such ignited minds and it has thoroughly been my pleasure.



This journey would not have been the same if there were not the continuous constant support of my dynamic Executive Team and all the advisors. I would extend my heartfelt thanks to Vice President Education – Vinay Bamalwa for whom organizing is a journey not a destination and epically humorous Assist George Matthew they sure made a great team. There were big surprise packets in this EC term – the dynamic dedicated Vice President Membership Priya Agarwal and the girl who packed a punch in every meeting Sergeant at Arms Satrupa Kundu. The impeccable young gentlemen of Secretary Vedant Mehra and treasurer Rachit Banthia flawless in their roles. Last but not the least special mention and thanks to Vaibhav Jhunjhunwala and Narayan Shashi Rathi to save the sinking ship of Vice President Role and they took up the charge and delivered. Not to forget the immense support and hard work of all the members who made each Friday much more exciting, educational and enjoyable.

PALLAVI PODDAR

Last six months we have had some enriching meeting, brilliant speeches and positive evaluations, some of the highlights have been the 350th Meeting and the Chartering Ceremony, the first panel discussion conducted in history of Kolkata Toastmasters Club. Kolkata Toastmasters Club is the perfect platform to let yourself loose, let your mind race, let your heart pace and when you do all of these together you discover new facet of your own personality, once you join toastmasters you never remain the old you, you keep on getting reinvented each time you come to the podium, you never are the same as when you came. But amidst all these one thing that I deeply have felt and have started feeling more strongly about is that Toastmasters is too small a movement to be locked inside the four walls of Calcutta Chambers of Commerce, it demands to be spread like wildfire, it is our responsibility to spread the wings of Toastmasters and make it a household name. Toastmasters is kind of service leadership where the focus also is to serve the members serve the society, it becomes our utmost duty to pay back a little share of what we have learnt and that happens only when we take the name of toastmasters and paint the world red with it. Serve in the club whenever you get a chance, serve outside the club and do more than what is expected out of you!

One thing I am sure of you will be surprised with the results you will receive, never ever set boundaries for your own development

Remember : There is no challenge more challenging than the challenge to improve yourself



VP EDUCATION'S MESSAGE

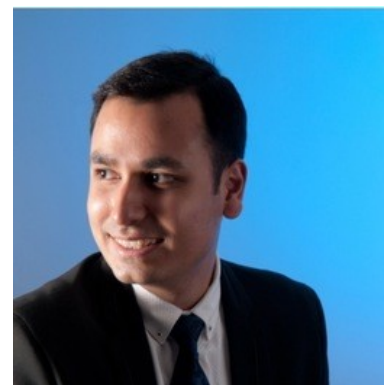
The last 6 months as the VP-Ed have been immensely rewarding as well as challenging. It is a role that requires steering the whole club through effective meetings. Persistence and a sheer 'heads-down-patient-goal-*getting*' attitude are of utmost importance for such an important role in Toastmasters and arguably in any organization.

The high point was probably the workshop we conducted on Mentoring and Evaluation guidelines. One of the first such attempts to improve the whole journey of our members – seniors and juniors alike – it was compiled with the help of senior stalwarts. I sincerely hope it clears the fog of deep-seated doubts inside every Toastmaster. The 7th Chartering Ceremony was hands-down the most entertaining meeting I have been to and a highly educating one also!!

The several E.C. meetings – official and unofficial – were great learning steps to knowing the ins and outs of every Toastmasters Club. I can personally vouch for the E.C. when I say that we have given our best to make the Toastmasters experience as enriching and helpful as possible to all the members. That said major challenges lie ahead – the primary one being encouraging members to take center stage and speak. That's all.

All the resources are there, but it becomes difficult when a healthy and capable horse refuses to run and clinch the gold medal – and you can't do *anything* about it!

Signing off, nowhere would one find a platform full of enthusiastic and positive DOERs. The idea to execution time is really small. Where would you find *seniors* having an open mind and listening and accepting feedback from someone even 20 years younger to them? The answer is an ocean of positivity where applauses rain all year round irrespective of the weather – Kolkata Toastmasters Club!



VINAY BAMA LWA

Keep pushing yourself!



IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By the time you would be reading this the baton would have changed hands BUT the race would still be on, there would have been a change of guards BUT the vigil would not have been tempered down.

For a club that has seen over three and a half centuries of meeting the spirit is of greater significance than who holds office and in which capacity. Herald the advent of women-power as I first welcome our new president – TM Pallavi Poddar.

The club shines not on who attends the meeting but rather on what is delivered by those who attend the meeting. The implication is about how we as the Executive Committee shepherd the members to work towards the goals that we set for the club. This also means that the senior members handhold the new folk and walk the talk. As the seniors perform and deliver not only at the club level but also at the highest platforms of competition, they not only uphold the goodwill, honest intent and purpose of the club but also instill a burning desire amongst the new or growing members to go for the kill. This would mean that there is no dearth of valiant warriors to come forth and quash the enemy – the fear of public speaking, rather they would see wave after wave of good and great public speakers emerge from the humble rustlings of KTM and stand out as shining beacons of communication, I dare say !!



NAVEEN MISRA

This thought encourages me to state my oft repeated desire to see more mentors. If you achieve and rest on your laurels you do no more than be a green leaf waiting to wither away. Come to use and you shall help spread light of one lamp to many more till you illuminate the world itself, rest only then for you know that you served to the best you could. If you improve you do so yourself, when you help one more person you in fact improve two people at the same time – yourself, by repeating what you know and hence refocusing on the subject and your mentee by guidance.

I stand beside the new committee and take the oath of full support, the leaders shall now emerge and TM Pallavi shall inspire and encourage us as her flock to rise and shine. Let us all, as member of KTM, remember that we meet every Friday to push our limits and hence do make it a point to deliver one speech or another, rather than just come over as spectators. Remember applause is free at KTM and comes as a tsunami.. await the next Friday !!!!!



THE CAGE OF REALITY

Standing on the roof, I stared at the sky,
It felt like I was a bird, about to fly.
The sun went over the horizon; the afternoon
ceased to exist, making way for the moon.
I remained immobile as I appreciated the view,
for it was amazing, experienced only by few.
The sky turned to black as evening took over,
But my mind still continued to hover.
It was possible for me to stand there for a decade,
But alas, the wish gradually started to fade..
The feeling of being a bird was replaced by fear
of expectations to fulfill, of responsibilities to bear.
The experience became a distant memory as I fell asleep,
I became a prisoner of reality, where there are many promises to keep.



SHAURYA ROY

—X—X—X—X—X—X—X—X—X—X—

THE PALACE OF ILLUSIONS

The international best seller, "The Palace of Illusions", a novel by Chitra Banerjee Diwakaruni published in the year 2008, is a work of speculative fiction; based on the Hindu epic, Mahabharata. The title is suggestive of the most beautiful and grandest Palace on Earth created by the master architect, Maya which in Hindi means illusion) built by the Pandavas on the arid region of Khandav. However later as the story unfolds it gives the reader a variety of the illusionary world.

For ages the fire born princess of Panchala, Panchali has been pronounced as a 'kritya', one who brings doom to her clan. It was for the first time that an author attempted the feat of transforming the centuries old cultural-icon from a villainess to a controversial character. The usual male-centric portrayal of Draupadi has been challenged. Narrated in the first person, this tale takes the reader through the epic in Draupadi's voice, seeing the world from 'inside her head'. Beginning with her magical birth from the sacrificial fire, to her strange, lonely childhood, her tricky marriage to five men with a persecution problem and a control freak mother, her own lovely home at last, and then the unbelievable traumas that follow that nobody should have to go through. In certain ways she was the catalyst for the Great war- and perhaps the one who suffered the most as a result of it.

Love binds the characters. The marital love Panchali tries to reach with her husbands, the forbidden love with Karna she holds unspoken inside herself all her life, the protective love she feels for her brother, Drishtadyumna, the regretful love she feels towards her sons, the daughterly love she feels for her nurse, Dhai maa and the most magical is the spiritual love she discovers for Krishna, at the end of her life. Still, opposed to love are the vengeance and its portrayal of how it over powers loves and results in a disaster.



The focal point of the story is 'The Palace of the Illusions' which the Pandavas built out of ashes, as it gave Draupadi unlimited power of governance, dominance and fulfilled her ultimate goal to 'change the course of history' as predicted at the time of her birth. She was no angel. With power followed quick temper and arrogance and they made her still rigid. This led to a series of events which triggered the greatest war of mankind.

The secret attraction to the mysterious man, Karna who is her husband's most dangerous enemy has a dramatic yet justifying appearance in the complex plot. The most enchanting is her bond with the enigmatic Krishna whose divine presence is felt almost at the end of the story when she lies cold and deserted on her way to Mahaprasthan, the path of great departure. Their final meeting sheds all her illusions, her worldly attachments, her identity and finally sets her free. She's larger than life but definitely human.



RASHMI SACHDEV

Diwakaruni's interpretation provides a humanistic touch to the epic, making it more realistic, relatable and personal. It provides a complete narrative, sometimes diverging from the original epic, giving a stronger role to the women and portraying them as equals in society. It is a revolutionary take on the Mahabharata and a must read.

—X—X—X—X—X—X—X—X—X—X—X—

DECIDING AT THE RIGHT TIME

Put a frog in a vessel of water and start heating the water. As the temperature of the water rises, the frog is able to adjust its body temperature accordingly. The frog keeps on adjusting with increase in temperature. Just when the water is about to reach boiling point, the frog isn't able to adjust anymore...

At that point the frog **decides** to jump out...

The frog tries to jump but is unable to do so, because it has lost all its strength in adjusting with the rising water temperature. Very soon the frog dies...



What killed the frog?

Many of us would say the boiling water...

But the truth is what killed the frog was its own inability to decide when it had to jump out.

In our lives also, we come across situations when we have to take stern decisions which we think if taken will completely change our lives, may leave us on rocky road, midst of challenges. So we refrain from such decisions and choose to lie there, somehow adjusting with the situation. Gradually, this becomes a habit. We close our ears for every opportunity which knocks our door. But the day comes, when we see everyone flourishing and prospering in their lives and then we squirm to reach their level. But it would be too late then.

PRIYA AGARWAL

So, let us jump while we still have the strength!!



MARDAANI

Yet Again!! A new morning, I am praying to God for keeping me safe for one more day. Yet again one more year has been passed and Nirbhaya case is still pending....Yet again Shiv Kumar Yadav (The Radio Taxi Driver) got the courage to do it again. Why our voices are getting lost somewhere. Why our safety issue is not at all an important issue. Why the Inspirational letter of 'Shenaz Treasurywala' is not at all an inspiration to the so called 'Most Powerful Men of our Country'

Why..?!

You may breakdown our strength, but can't break our courage..!!

You May shut our mouth, but can't stop our feelings to Fly.....!!

And here I have given words to my feelings...

Abhi to main bas janmi hoon, Kuch to karo rehem...!!
 Kyon ho raha hai ye bhi gyat nahi, Kuch aise hain tere karam...!!
 Maar jaungi yun hi dard se, naa karna tak aae vilaap...!!
 Janam Ke pehle marna padd gaya, Kyon mila aesa abhisaap...!!
 Papa ki guria hoon, chalna sikha bas do kadam...!!
 Tum bhi toh ho pita samaan, kyon nahi aata tumhe sharam...!!
 Naa karo aisa ki do kadam aur chalne ki himmat toot jaye...!!
 Jis haseen se khil-khilata tha aangan, woh haseen hi loot jaye...!!
 Itni Samajh aa gai hai, Ki khub janu sparsh ka aantar...!!
 Bhar diya tune mere jeevan mein kyon dukho ka samundar...!!
 Bin Kuch kiye milegi badnaami, samajh ka niyaam yeh kaisa...!!
 Isse acha na hoti santaaan koi, jo paaya beti tujh jaisa...!!
 Hoon main teri maa samaan, socha bhi kaise tumne...!!
 Mujhse zyada to dukhi hogi maa teri, Jo usne aese bete janme...!!
 Ab dekh chuki hoon khub jeewan, mat karo itna aanyay...!!
 Swarg to bhul hi jao, narak mein bhi jagah na mil paye...!!



ABHA BOGI

—X—X—X—X—X—X—X—X—X—X—X—X—

TRAVELING TOASTMASTER



GEORGE MATHEW & VAIBHAV JHUNJHUNWALA visit
 Taktsang Monastery, Paro and Dochula Pass, Thimphu, Bhutan.



THE TIMES OF KTM

Club Level Contest Winners



KTM Evaluation Contest held on 19th of September, 2015 - Winner Naveen Misra with the Division Governor Vishal Churiwal



KTM humorous Speech Contest held on 26th of September, 2015 - Winner Sitendu Roy



KTM Table Topic Contest held on 27th of February, 2015 - Winner Vidwata Mohta



KTM International Speech contest held on 13th of March, 2015- Winner Vinita Dayani with Ex- Area Governor Ashok Gupta & Area Governor Ritesh Osta



THE TIMES OF KTM



CELEBRATING 350TH MEETING OF KOLKATA TOASTMASTERS CLUB
HELD ON 2ND OF JANUARY, 2015 AT CALCUTTA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



7TH CHARTERING CEREMONY OF KOLKATA TOASTMASTERS CLUB
HELD ON 22ND OF MAY, 2015 AT CALCUTTA PUNJAB CLUB

दोहे समझे और समझाए

हिंदी दिवस

हिंदी दिवस से पहले
कोलकाता टोस्टमास्टर्स
क्लब का आयोजन



हिन्दी दिवस पर आयोजित आशुभाषण प्रतियोगिता में उत्सहित प्रतिभागी।

कोलकाता, हिन्दी सीखने के प्रयास करना होगा। व्यवसायिक क्षेत्र में प्रचलन की भाषा अंग्रेजी का वर्चस्व जितना बढ़ रहा है हम हिन्दी से उतने ही दूर होते जा रहे हैं। हिन्दी हमारी संस्कृति है, प्रयास की आवश्यकता है। शुक्रवार को कोलकाता टोस्टमास्टर्स क्लब की ओर से हिन्दी दिवस पर आयोजित कार्यक्रम में संस्था के सभापति नवीन मिश्रा ने यह बातें कहीं। कोलकाता टोस्टमास्टर्स क्लब की ओर से हिन्दी दिवस पर

पहली बार आशुभाषण संस्था आयोजित की गई। महानगर के वाणिज्यिक जगत से वरिष्ठ और युवा प्रतिभागियों ने प्रतियोगिता में हिस्सा लिया। कार्यक्रम का संचालन संस्था के सभापति नवीन मिश्रा ने किया। टोस्टमास्टर्स क्लब के सदस्यों में वेदान्त (भाषा आलोचक), विशाल (सांसद),

स्नेहा (संचालक) और विद्वता मोहता ने विषय-दाता की भूमिका निभाई। कार्यक्रम में रश्मि सचदेव (तैयार वक्तव्य) को रखने और वेदान्त मेहरा (आशुभाषण) के लिए पुरस्कृत किया गया।

हिन्दी हैं हम.....

कार्यक्रम में सभी सदस्यों ने हिन्दी

बोलने का प्रयास किया। प्रतिभागी और सदस्य पहली बार हिन्दी आशुभाषण का हिस्सा बने। प्रतियोगिता में रश्मि सचदेव, सिद्धार्थ चूड़ीवाल, कल्पना सारडा समेत 6 लोगों ने भाग लिया। सदस्यों ने भी खुलकर अपने विचार रखे।

दोहों से पेश किया हिन्दी का हुनर : हिन्दी में आशुभाषण के अवसर पर सभी विषय दोहों पर दिए गए। पोथी पढ़ पढ़ जग मुआ...ढाई आखर प्रेम का पढ़े सो पंडित होय, बड़ा हुआ तो क्या हुआ-- फल लागे अति दूर सहित कई दोहों पर प्रतिभागियों ने हिन्दी में वक्तव्य रखा। प्रतियोगिता में तुलसी, कबीर के दोहे शामिल थे। प्रतिभागियों ने अधिक से अधिक हिन्दी बोलने की कोशिश कर मधुरता बिखेरी। (कासं.)

Kolkata Toastmasters Club took the initiative to organise a Toastmasters meeting in a vernacular language (Hindi) which was called Hindi Sanbhashan Samaroh. It was for the first time in Eastern India, that a Toastmaster Club took a step to promote our National Language on 12th of September, 2014 which was celebrated as National Language Day.

The event was covered by a journalist & a camera man of a prestigious newspaper Rajasthan Patrika.



Congratulations!!
PALLAVI PODDAR
for being Promoted as the
AREA DIRECTOR



Congratulations!!
SIDDHARTHA CHURIWAL
for being Promoted as the
DIVISION DIRECTOR



Congratulations!!
VISHAL CHURIWAL
for being Promoted as
The Club Growth Director



I don't care about fear {OR WHY FEAR My Dear}

"We shall overcome....we shall overcome.....we shall overcome one day....."

Lines from a song popularized by Pete Seegar and well known in India too, what do you need to overcome.... From our young days we have been taught to overcome our FEARS. Everyone who is reading this will know that the greatest fear to mankind is the fear of public speaking. I dispute that!!!! Each one of us has a different fear and that to the particular individual is more compelling than any other fear. I know of a person who is mortally afraid of heights and if given an option would face a thousand people and speak about this fear rather than go up the Petronas Tower and look down to search for his beloved at ground level !!!!!!!

Anyways, since I have been warned not to digress or lure you away from the realms of toastmasters, I would like to specify that I have shortlisted some specific fears that haunt most toastmasters and they would be:-

Getting on the platform

Selecting a topic

Stepping forward to speak on a table topic.

Getting on the Platform- Ask yourself honestly, do you not want to be in the spotlight? Would you be sorry that many a hand rises to applaud you? Would you shirk away from a moment of "celebration YOU"? I am sure that deep within your self – conscious or subconscious – there is the great urge to receive a positive pat on the back, to be the cynosure of a million pair of eyes. It is so for all living being right from the time we attain the feeling of "me". Take the example of a small child, the moment he starts to understand that others are looking – and that it matters – he starts doing things to gain attention and of course to steal a compliment too. The feeling gets enhanced as we grow over time and we indulge in various actions to be noticed and also to get the desired attention. The style we adopt, the swagger we show, the speech we deliver!! So, let the kid within you out, he is the most carefree of all forms that a human being goes through. The child is not bothered about what might be, he is more focused on what it is that he needs, so he does not get disturbed by the presence of people around he focuses on the job that he so needs to do. If he needs to whistle while walking or jump from one stair to another or steal a fruit, then nothing comes between the goal and the child. That is exactly what you should be telling yourself when you look at the podium or the stage. We all need to understand that for every new thing that we do there is a certain "uncertainty about the outcome", we should take this feeling to be a normal one for all human beings and not term it as a fear. A master batsman walking into a freshly laid pitch, a high school pass-out stepping into the college for the first time, Neil Armstrong while stepping on the surface of the sweet satellite and you on the stage for the first time – are all the same. Don't call it fear, call it your small step towards celebrity status and GO AHEAD.

Selecting a topic - All in reading, if you decide to grace the podium or burn the stage you need to be able to do so with the verbal volley that you would indulge in. Hence, you need to choose a subject or a topic on which you would speak while you are under the spot light. I do in a very simple manner, my first choice is to pick up something which is close to my heart. A topic of this nature is good in two ways – first, you are "in" it and hence you have ample thoughts to translate into words and second, the connection with your topic shows to the listeners and gets them so much more interested in your delivery. An example could be my closeness to the canines and hence my topic could be dogs – ---- why have dogs? How to care for dogs? How important is training? The different breeds and there uses? The Indian – local – breeds of dogs and their uses? How dogs are being used for medical care and helping patients recover? Each of the above is a topic on which a speech can be developed and that too without much sweat.



For someone it could be the share market, for another it could be cooking and for someone else the pains of child-labour. I also know of people who prefer taking up a current topic and develop a speech around that. The recent earthquake – why do they happen? Which are the seismic prone areas in India or the world? What do you do when you are in the midst of a trembler? This subject would also include recent movies, sports events, reading materials you laid your hands upon. The other ways of selecting a topic could be based on your experience/s, choose something which connects with the audience in mind – “careers” could be a subject when addressing a high school gang, the role of the media could be spoken upon when addressing an erudite group, the need for a healthy body could be a subject when the listeners are sports oriented or a cross section which can be made to understand “health is wealth”. The toastmasters has a complete workshop in this compelling subject and every one should attend at least one such workshop to be benefitted. I would leave you with one important thought which I consider when selecting a topic – be convinced if you want to sound convincing!!

Stepping forward to speak on a table topic- Put your hand up or put your HANDS up!!!!!! When you are suddenly called upon or should I say “hailed up” to speak on a topic you get the same feeling as that of having a gun held to your temple. If you don’tyou are amongst the lucky few. For the rest of us a table topic is quite like a grenade with the pin unleashed, as you walk up from your seat to the podium you have the same feeling of the countdown and then the blast!! However, you can literally have a blast and enjoy it too. Remember the protagonist in Die Hard initiating a blast and then walking away coolly saying “welcome to the party”? So you need to control your nerves, be cool. Listen to the topic carefully, start thinking about the words in the topic as you get up from your perch and walk towards the stage/podium, take a word or two, which you feel, is/are the most important from the topic, start by focusing on them and weave your speech around them. If I would take a topic like – The pen is mightier than the sword – and were to deliver a quick speech on it, I would focus on the PEN and SWORD and their abilities and shortcoming and by the end of the speech focus on projecting the PEN as having more force of abilities as compared to the sword and bring my speech to an end by concluding affirmatively that “it is indeed true that the words have a much deeper and lasting impact than the wounds inflicted by a blade hence the colour black, in this case, is more powerful than the colour red.” Start talking after the handshake, the first few words should flow out as this gets you out of the inertia of rest and you start feeling better internally. It is at this point that many speakers have the fear of so many eyes peering at you, I suggest that you have a gaze which skims over the scalp of your listeners in a small gathering, as in a large hall you can look above their heads and they would not know, to give them the feeling that you are looking at them but, in fact, you would not be doing so – in this way you don’t have to “fear the peer”. So let the lyrics of Snoop Dogg’s adaptation of the song. Put your hands up. Ring loud and clear!!

I would like to remind each one of you that if you have a heart you will have a fear, as I wrote at the start of this note that for each one of us the fear could be different and of varied degrees BUT being a toastmaster or even being related to or known to a toastmaster is a passport for you to disdainfully dismiss at least one fear– speaking in public. So come forth and conquer it here and now.

Take the stage and burn it !!!!!

NAVEEN MISRA





ARE WE FALLING PREY TO CONFIRMATION BIAS

CONFIRMATION BIAS is the mother of all misconceptions. It is our tendency to interpret any new information in a way so that it becomes compatible with our existing theories/beliefs/convictions. Even if we come to know of any perfect truth, but one which contradicts our own theory/belief, we are more likely to forget it much more quickly. Dangerously, we filter-out from our brain any new information that contradicts our own existing views.

Some common examples of the above may be:

A) You're reading only the positive news about a political party OR you're reading only the negative news pertaining to another political party. You do that because those news match your present set of beliefs.

B) As a Social Influencer, do you have a common notion that monetarily rich people cannot be amongst the most vulnerable.

C) Are you going to keep on believing that the yester years Superstar is still the Superstar of Today and thereby ignore to have a second glance at the new Talents?

More importantly, besides our own thinking tendencies, in this age of information technology, it is an unfortunate coincidence that we have a trusted servant called 'technology' which helps us in pursuing our motive. Hence, it is very important to be conscious about this servant and act with enough care. One of the best example would be that - whenever you surf the internet, advertisements related to the latest branded dress & garments appear - a thing which you cannot resist clicking on! Its no magic! The internet is keeping a record of what you did click upon previously, what you wrote to your friends, what topics did you never have interest about - deriving on a pattern of your likes & dislikes and then serving 'only' those advertisements which you are more likely to like. When we sign up for a new email id, the general terms of service gets a formal nod from us to scan through our private email content and sell that data to the advertisers so that you can be served spicy or salty or sugary as you like it! All these things help us in only one way - taste what we want to taste AND never face situations & information which we do not like or believe. Even children nowadays do have their own way to practice confirmation bias if they do not like their neighbourhood friends! They can come back to home, take up only those roles in a video game which they like and spend the time with their virtual friends. In an age when such smart technology is all-pervasive in our life, day by day, there is a serious possibility of we becoming victims of our own Confirmation Bias.



ABHIJIT SARKAR

But Friends, let us not forget Aldous Huxley -

"Facts do not cease to exist because they are ignored".

Is it time again that we give some Time to those

issues which we never thought we liked or believed?



MEET MY MENTOR

No one has the potential to influence a member's experience like a mentor. Himanshu Awasthi has completed his Competent Communication Manual at a record time. He shares how his mentor Naveen Misra has helped him in his journey of Toastmasters so far.

What prompted you to join Toastmasters?

To enhance my ability as a speaker and as a listener. Also to learn how to give constructive valuable feedback. Also TM provided me an opportunity to interact with people from various background which would help me appreciate the city of Joy.

What were some challenges you wanted to overcome?

Listening skills. I am prone to jumping the gun and putting words in others mouth. I wanted to reduce my speed of generating replies and appreciate other's point of view.



HIMANSHU AWASTHI

What was your first impression about Naveen?

My first impression about Naveen is that he's a bombastic speaker. I felt that his eloquence, delivery, style, panache, & flair is exceptional. He's a top notch speaker. But, the best part was his feet was on the ground. His humility was really that made me feel 'Yes', that's the way a great speaker needs to be.

How did Naveen become your mentor, and how has he helped you?

I requested Naveen to mentor my P2 to which he readily agreed and he has helped me make my speeches emphatic expressive and emotionally connecting with my audience. I must appreciate Toastmaster Pallavi Poddar as well for her support as a mentor in helping me to use rhetorical devices like triads, alliterations and zeugma in my speech.

What is the best advice Naveen has given you?

To look at the mirror and note my faux pas while delivering a speech. This advice worked wonders for me. I understood my mistakes & took a vow to never repeat it.

How has Toastmasters helped you in your job?

Giving a critical evaluation is an area is where I fumbled big time because for me being straight to the point is the only way of judging a situation or a person. Probably, I was judging the person and not the issue. However, I realised that this is not the best manner to judge someone. Toastmasters taught me the sandwich approach to judge a person. Praising, explaining areas of improvement & motivating a person to bring the best out of him. This is really helping me both personally and professionally.

What do you like best about Naveen?

His enthusiasm to help people in improving their communication and leadership skills and his apt examples that are witty whacky and risqué. There is so much to learn from him on or off stage. Woh jahan khade ho jate hai, Public Speaking wahi se shuru hoti hai.



LIFE IS AN OCCASION, RISE TO IT!

My journey as a Toastmaster has been one of self-discovery. Not only did I find out that I loved engaging with an audience, but I also discovered a funny side to myself. Humorous speech contest actually came as a blessing to my parents. It was only after the results of the contest were announced that I actually stopped resenting them for having chosen such an unconventional name. My story on 'What's in a Name', tickled many toastmasters and brought me a second prize at the club.

Even before I joined the club, I was already looking forward to every Friday to come to the meeting of Kolkata Toastmasters Club. It was an amazing experience to see so many people turn up to applaud, encourage and be genuinely interested in helping one another to learn how to become an effective communicator.

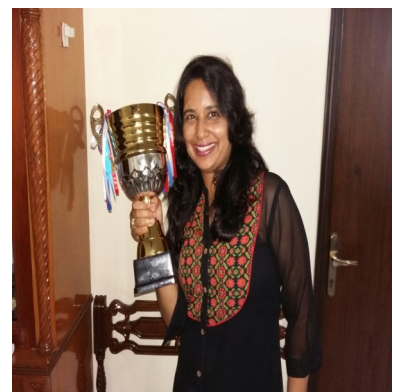
As I became a member, I realized that I was on a methodical path of learning. Every project that I took up gave me one objective at a time to hone my skills as a speaker. Apart from the well written manual, the most impressive part of learning comes from ones mentor. To be able to put across ones thoughts, to ideate and to have a partner who will facilitate you to transform that train of thoughts into a structured speech is a wonderful experience.

While I was riding high on all the applause that the club showers without any holds barred, I got the chance to participate in table topic contest at the club level, area level, division level and finally at the district level. Each contest was a learning in itself. Not only did I get a chance to hear amazing speakers during each contest, but I also got an opportunity to closely see how such programs were being organized. But more than that, the contests brought back the school girl in me who had the zeal to outshine in competitions.

The most beautiful experience so far has undoubtedly been Oration 2015. I felt great pride in having got the chance to represent KTM in the Oration 2015, held in Mumbai. I also realized how my club was rooting for me. It was amazing to have the support of all the fellow toastmasters. My little eyes which once used to hold lofty dreams had begun to get drowsy in the monotony of life, but the table topic contest, gave me a nice stir. And I woke up to those precious moments at Yashvant Rav Chhavan stage, where I spoke to an audience of 700 plus Toastmasters.

As a Toastmaster, my journey has just begin, but it has taught me a lot, but the most important lesson that I have learnt is to celebrate being a speaker, a listener and, an evaluator. In fact as a toastmaster, I really can see life as an occasion. And now I ask you to see it as one and rise to it, like I am trying to!

CONGRATULATIONS TO TOASTMASTER VIDWATA MOHTA ON REPRESENTING OUR CLUB/AREA/DIVISION AT DISTRICT LEVEL IN THE TABLE TOPIC CONTEST. WE ARE PROUD OF YOU.



VIDWATA MOHTA



THE BEAUTIFUL GARDEN

As a seed unaware of its inner potential, I laid on the open ground.
I couldn't have got the drive to grow, Had I not "Toastmasters" found.

Wind picked me up and carried me in its arms,
Life took control of itself and started chanting charms.
Everything remained the same but my life started moving faster,
I never knew that I was destined to be a Toastmaster.

In the beautiful garden of KTM,
Around me, I see beautiful growing trees.
Who make positive influence on other's lives, with ease,
and where Respect (R), Integrity (I), Service (S) and Excellence (E)
is felt in the breeze.



MD AFZAL

The environment of KTM - the beautiful garden, nurtures me well,
It helps me explore the potential that in me, dwell.
Through the "Ice-breaker", it helped me to come out of my comfort shell,
and now I am determined to grow and excel.

Today, Of the KTM - the beautiful garden, I am a part,
To it, is given a part of my heart.
One of its most beautiful fruit-bearing tree, I want to become.
So as to inspire and help every seed which in this garden come.

—X—X—X—X—X—X—X—X—X—X—

THE POWER OF WORDS

"Give them nothing, but take from them everything" These were the very words spoken by the Spartan King who led just 300 men to victory against the mighty Persians who numbered in the thousands. These words had such power in them that it was enough for them to take down any challenge that would confront them. It has been seen in the ancient times the army leaders to motivate their armies just had to speak out the right words with just the right amount of flair and half of the war was won there and then. Words can inspire and words can destroy, it is the selection of the words that shall determine which path you will fall into.

The politicians in the earlier eras just had words as their most powerful tool. Nowadays there are many other factors such as bribes and terrorism that drive the politicians vote bank. Notwithstanding these problems the power of words still does top a politicians list to attain the confidence of the people of the country. It is their ability to use the right words at the right time so as to pursue your audience to believe in you, trust you and also be inspired by you.

"Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country" John F. Kennedy and "Tum mujhe khoon do, main tumhe azaadi dunga" by Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose are regarded as the most powerful quotes in the political history of mankind. These combinations of words can stir up and get the whole country thinking. A chill goes up your spine every time you hear such words, such is the impact they have.



These were just two examples of the power words can have. Words are required to express the right feelings at the right time. The selection of the right words with your loved one could either get you searching for a new loved one or could get you married and making new small loved ones. There are a lot of times when someone's words can hurt your feelings. Perhaps they called you "idiotic," "fat," "four eyes," or "disgusting." It probably felt like someone slapped you.

There are also situations where someone's words may have made you feel great, such as "You're wonderful," "That was an excellent job," or even "I love you" in some cases. Well many a times we can even remember the exact words and tone from each memory in the manner they had been spoken. Words can comfort when we're feeling sad (like when somebody is going through a bad time emotionally or professionally), inspire us to take action (like an army going to attack the enemy does), acknowledge us for a job well done (like when rarely our bosses appreciate our work), humiliate us (like sometimes our teachers did), make us laugh (like some of the greatest comedians in the world do), stimulate our thoughts (like some riddles do), educate us (like our teachers did), or incite violence (like Osama Bin Laden did). Words have created fist fights, divorces, murders, and wars. To "exchange words" has always expressed aggression and conflict. Our words are so much more powerful than we realize. We take our words for granted, because we say so many in a day. Then again a great compliment is "He/she kept their word."

The power of the word we speak can be enhanced and made into a positive one. It can be done by simply following these 3 steps:-

- 1) Proper selection of words (Do not be under the presumption that a vulgar word is a powerful word)
- 2) Proper timing of the word selected being spoken
- 3) Think before speaking as words that are once spoken cannot be taken back.

These may not make sure that you become somebody who speaks out powerful words all the time but it will surely ensure that you are a better person.

Speaking with power also creates a sense of accountability and commitment to get the best from yourself and others. Your challenge is to consciously avoid using words that are power killers. These words sap energy and commitment from your interactions, and ultimately, your actions.

First, eliminate these words from your vocabulary: I can't, If, Doubt, Try, I don't think, I don't have the time, Maybe, I'm afraid of, I don't believe and It's impossible.

Omitting these words is not enough. A sports team needs more than just a good defence to win; it also needs a powerful offense. So, mobilize your own offensive assault with the words you choose.

Build positive mental connections and commitment by using these power builders: I can, I will, Expect the best, Commit, I know, I will make the time, Positively, I am confident, I do believe and All things are possible. The power of your actions is preceded by the power of your words. Speak with power to bring out the best in yourself and others and not just be a powerful speakers but also a good human being. Remember-

"Words do not break bones but they do break hearts".



VEDANT MEHRA



MY SECOND HOME

Another Friday passes by, I come back home as usual by 9:30 pm from the last 3.5 years now. I enter my house and I feel triumphant, without fighting a war, without winning a competition; there is this feeling of accomplishment which enthralls me. I have felt more confident week after week and today as we all did I too bid adieu to the year that went by and start anew at a new place with new people, rather a new me; for I am sure my quest of finding MY new people will be too difficult; and I am sure all Toastmasters at KTM would agree to this.



AKANKSHA NAYGANDHI

After being brought up at KTM I not only find it problematic to join another club at Delhi but also find it difficult to meet people of the same wavelength. The club has given me immense love from the time I joined it as a kid till today when I pursue my post graduation. It taught me what my professors could not teach me, or for that matter something that cannot be taught but can only be experienced. I understood why they never call it a 'class'; because it is about experiences at the spur of the moment which comes with practice.

Communicating when well prepared, communicating impromptu, communicating joy, sorrow, (or even a lie ;)) is learnt naturally here. And me tell u this, it is KTM on Park street and not my college on the same street a few meters away that made my college life happening!

From my 1st speech to being a VP Membership; interactions with so many people from diverse backgrounds to assigning meeting roles and that too to elders; an opportunity you don't get anywhere you work! The post meeting chit chat outside Peter Cat and the unplanned dinners were the cherry on the cake.

All members of KTM, till you are in the city, make sure you visit the club every Friday @ 7 pm. You never know, destiny may take you to different cities where companionship is not understood in its right spirit.

LONG LIVE KTM! All the best, keep shining, keep moving forward! I shall visit you soon.



THE CURIOUS CASE OF WILLIAM POWERS

William Powers was born many years ago, he lives today and will stay alive till eternity.

William Powers had a genius of strengthening men. He imparted power, physical and mental, to every man he worked upon. Their physical and intellectual capabilities were heightened, making them capable of much greater deeds. The magnitude of his effects differed from man to man – from a manifold increase to trifling improvements; but there was always an impact. As he kept working his powers upon people, they always grew stronger and greater.

Thereby, William was acclaimed for the strength he could endow, despite not having any strength himself. However, William had no parents. Unlike mortals who had a creator, William gave birth to his own being. And when he died, he would again engender himself. This could take a long time or no time at all, but he would always emerge out of nowhere, having given creation to himself. None knew how to bring him back, except William himself. He would continuously die, give birth and be born again. This was/is the curious case of William Powers. Abstruse? But the story of William Powers is a true one that plays out today, yesterday and tomorrow, all across the globe: it is the story of *will power*.

Will power is exclusively self-perpetuating. Nothing can create a will to act, except an inherent will to act. Even when we *gradually* force/will ourselves to take a certain step, it's only because of our realisation that deep inside, we *want* to take that certain step. Conversely, if we had not wanted to do something, we would never have the willpower to *build* up a will to do it in the first place. Clearly, will power cannot be brought about – it generates itself. It is concurrent with our desires, which cannot be manufactured or wrought – they are purely felt.

When we lose our will, it is due to a diminishing of our desires. Once we're overwhelmed with our desires again (re-discovery of passion), willpower is born out of these desires (will), which just creates itself. Subsequently, it is very important to possess willpower as this abstract force is crucial to the identity of man. It empowers him and strengthens his capabilities. Willpower grips men onto their paths, pushing them to inch forward when it seems impossible to. It gives them power to overcome obstacles they would have otherwise surrendered to. It nurtures our strength, enhances our capabilities, expands our limits.

Whether we want to climb Mt. Everest or deliver a speech (sometimes there isn't much difference between the two!), we need to harness our willpower if we want to get it done. Even when we're faced with a tough situation at work, we need to be willing to face it and put in the hard work to overcome it. We need it in every part of our lives whenever we want to execute anything.



RACHIT BANTHIA

Will simultaneously fosters power, courage and grit: companions to ambition – the fuel for success.

However, willpower is extremely fickle in its strength, causing it to have variable impacts on men. While some may be inspired onto great heights, others may flatter to deceive. It depends on our emotional and mental psyche. It is clear, however, that all progress has sprung from a firm bedrock of will, the agent of empowerment. And the only way to create a will is to possess a will or a latent desire, i.e. to yearn to yearn. We are what we want to be.

"Tis in ourselves that we are thus or thus. Our beings are our gardens to the which our wills are gardeners."

– William Shakespeare



IT ALL STARTS WITH A PERSPECTIVE

If I were to offer you a full-time job that requires you to work up to 130 hours per week, with no vacation; requires you to work night and day while getting very little sleep; allows you to sleep only after your associate sleeps. And to top it off, it does not pay anything for your efforts. Would you take the job? Hundreds of people were interviewed for this job and without exception, all refused to take it. After the interviews were over, the interviewer revealed that millions of people gladly accepted the position: They are mothers. They are on the job nearly 24 hours a day.

How about if I offer you an adventure that will take you into a forest full of challenges, where I ask you to jump through waterfalls into dangerous waters? It will open many doors for you and present you with lots of opportunities. It will also change the way you perceive yourself and will lead you to take control of your life. The only guarantee is that you will come out of it alive, but you are not guaranteed to remain the same person.

Thousands of people are offered the opportunity to take up this adventure, but over time, about half accept the challenge and reap the full benefits. The other half opt out.

The adventure is Toastmasters.

It's amazing how our perspective determines the paths we take and the perceived value we expect from those paths. I wonder about those who left Toastmasters before gaining a true perspective of the experience, and what their paths would have looked like had they stayed?

Our organization's new mission statement has certainly enhanced our view of what we gain from being Toastmasters. It says, "We empower individuals to become more effective communicators and leaders." It is up to us to ensure that this view is clear to those who are new to the journey, and most importantly, to those who plan to decline it simply because the job description given to them does not reveal the actual benefits.

Mothers nurture and raise future generations, and yet the details, hurdles and challenges of a mother's job are not as important as the end result.

So how about taking up the Toastmasters adventure with a fresh perspective? A perspective that helps individuals become better communicators, and, as a result, better leaders.



MOHAMMED MURAD, DTM

INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT



DR. RALPH C. SMEDLEY

Toastmasters International

October 22, 1924

Dr. Ralph C. Smedley

Santa Ana, California, U.S.A.

Purpose:

To help people learn the arts of
speaking, **listening**, and **thinking**
and gain **personal growth**
through **communications** and
leadership training.

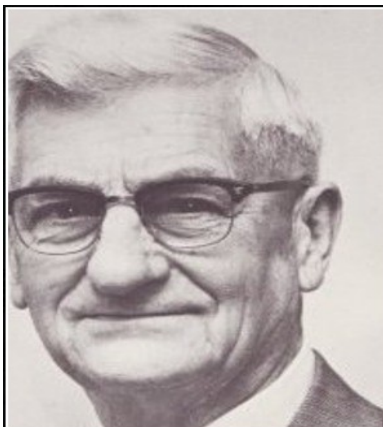


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Shortly before his death in 1965, Dr. Ralph C. Smedley, founder of Toastmasters, wrote these words: "As I look back over a half century of connection with the Toastmasters movement, I am impressed by the fact that a simple idea, put to work in so simple a manner, has grown into such an instrument of service for so many people. It must have met a real need".



Whatever your grade or position, if
you know how and when to speak,
and when to remain silent, your
chances of real success are
proportionately increased.

— Ralph C. Smedley —

AZ QUOTES



WALL OF WISDOM

"**LIFE BEGINS**
at the end of
your **comfort**
zone."

– NEALE DONALD WALSCH

TOASTMASTERS
INTERNATIONAL

"When **presenting a**
speech don't think
about how the audience
will look at you. Think
about what **VALUE**
you can **give them**."

– RADHA TAILOR

TOASTMASTERS
INTERNATIONAL

"Each time we
FACE OUR
FEAR, we gain
strength, courage,
and **confidence**
in the doing."

– THEODORE ROOSEVELT

TOASTMASTERS
INTERNATIONAL

"They **may forget**
WHAT you said
but they will
never forget HOW
you made them feel."

– CARL W. BUECHNER

TOASTMASTERS
INTERNATIONAL

"**Courage** is what it
takes to **STAND UP**
AND SPEAK;
courage is also
what it takes to
SIT DOWN
AND LISTEN."

– WINSTON CHURCHILL

TOASTMASTERS
INTERNATIONAL

"If it doesn't
CHALLENGE
you, it doesn't
CHANGE
you."

– FRED DEVITO

TOASTMASTERS
INTERNATIONAL

"**Words** should be
used as **tools** of
COMMUNICATION
and not as a
substitute for action."

– MAE WEST

TOASTMASTERS
INTERNATIONAL

"Nothing **great**
was ever
achieved without
ENTHUSIASM."

– RALPH WALDO EMERSON

TOASTMASTERS
INTERNATIONAL

"All our **dreams**
come true,
if we have the
COURAGE
to pursue them."

– WALT DISNEY

TOASTMASTERS
INTERNATIONAL

"Seek first to
UNDERSTAND,
then to be
UNDERSTOOD."

– STEPHEN COVEY

TOASTMASTERS
INTERNATIONAL

"The difference
between a **boss**
and a **leader**: a
boss says '**Go!**' –
a leader says,
'LET'S GO!'"

– E.M. KELLY

TOASTMASTERS
INTERNATIONAL

"The best way to
CONQUER
stage fright
is to know what
you're talking about."

– MICHAEL H. MESCON

TOASTMASTERS
INTERNATIONAL

"It is not the
size of the words
that count, but the
CLEARNESS with
which they **represent**
your thoughts."

– DR. RALPH C. SMEDLEY

TOASTMASTERS
INTERNATIONAL

"**KNOWLEDGE**
is **power**, but
ENTHUSIASM
pulls the switch."

– IVERN BALL

TOASTMASTERS
INTERNATIONAL

"**Communication**
WORKS
for those who
WORK AT IT."

– JOHN POWELL

TOASTMASTERS
INTERNATIONAL

"Grasp the
SUBJECT,
the **words**
will **follow**."

– CATO THE ELDER

TOASTMASTERS
INTERNATIONAL

"Behind the **need**
to **COMMUNICATE**
is the **need** to **SHARE**.
Behind the **need**
to **share** is the **need**
to be **UNDERSTOOD**."

– LEO ROSTEN

TOASTMASTERS
INTERNATIONAL

"Eighty percent of
SUCCESS
is
SHOWING UP."

– WOODY ALLEN

TOASTMASTERS
INTERNATIONAL

"The only reason
to **give a**
speech is to
CHANGE
THE WORLD."

– JOHN F. KENNEDY

TOASTMASTERS
INTERNATIONAL

"The most
precious things in
SPEECH
are the **pauses**."

– RALPH WALDO EMERSON

TOASTMASTERS
INTERNATIONAL