



The Crossroads

नित्यं सत्ये प्रतिष्ठितम्
Ever rooted in the truth



The CIRS Effect

Editorial - Rishi Suresh Iyer

Adhyatma Varga

Opening you to yourself

Rohith Chowdary Bellam

To Dream or Not To Dream

Rayan Chatterjee

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Anand Utsav Issue



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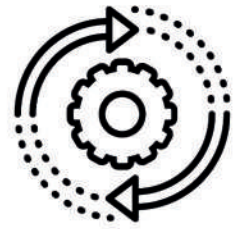
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THE CIRS EFFECT



- Rishi Suresh Iyer

Everyone who's passed from this school, students and their parents all talk about 'The CIRS Effect'. Quite a fancy term, I must say. The story of how I ended up here is well, simply put, short and sweet. Three very simple words: By Complete Chance. No expectations, no legacy, no clue. That was literally how I felt. It's been over 3 years, and now seems like a good time to have a short reflection.

The day before I joined, I remember my mother telling me, "Rishi, this will be a big change for you, but I think you should do it. It will help you in the long run." I don't think I've ever heard truer words in my life. Was it a big change? Yes. Initially, did I struggle? Yes. However, did my life change because of it? YES. So, what is the CIRS effect? For me, the CIRS effect is what made me who I am today.

Before explaining the CIRS effect, I ask you: What is CIRS? Is it just a school? Is it just an environment? Is it just your daily life - from jogging to aarti? Is it just your usual boarding school with a few more perks? NO. Some Mahatma well and truly said, "CIRS is an emotion beyond words." In its essence, CIRS is exactly that. CIRS is that emotion which cannot be felt anywhere in the world but here. It's almost as if you meet life in its truest form. Even I didn't think it to be, true but when I felt that emotion, that is when the CIRS effect struck me - Transformation.

Transformation is not complete in a day. Transformation is a constant slog. Sculpting and moulding your character, until one day, you realise the goal isn't the sculpture, the goal is the process of sculpting. That is the CIRS effect. It sculpts you, day by day, and in the end, you look back and see that this is what growth really means. I went from a nagging young boy who used to be all over the place to the independent individual I am today. I gained respect from my peers; I gained respect from my juniors and most importantly, I gained respect from myself.



Break free from your comfort zone and walk into the world with your head held high. Rise above the expectations you have for yourself. If you don't believe in yourself, no one will. Unmistakable, unbreakable, unshakable confidence in myself - that is what CIRS taught me.

A leap of faith is all it ever takes. One small jump to go beyond your limit. Once your limit is crossed, you realise that you were limitless all along. A limit is just a figment of the mind; the key to conquering it is hidden within the mind itself. Introspect, do not merely expect. Learn from your mistakes, learn from your fights, learn from your successes. Learn. Only when you learn from your life will you learn about your true self. That realization is what CIRS gave me.



I can never fully express the gratitude I have for this institution and the people in it. But I know that the day I walk out of these halls, I will walk out as a proud, independent and strong individual because of those people. Life is not defined by the way you walk; it is defined by the people you choose to walk with. That is the biggest takeaway CIRS gave me.

All of this came into my life by accident. It is because of this place that I met myself. No other place in the world has the capacity to transform a person's life as much as CIRS. All you have to do is wait. One day, it will inevitably come and that will be the day your life will change into something you would have never expected.



Greetings!

I am a typical 15-year-old, navigating the complexities of academia and daily existence. Yet, an extraordinary practice has transformed my life: the act of rising during Brahma Muhurta, the sacred hour before dawn – anywhere between 3:30 A.M. to 5:30 A.M. Allow me to elucidate how this age-old tradition has profoundly impacted my existence especially concerning my scholastic journey, at least till the 10th grade. Of course, I didn't serendipitously stumble upon Brahma Muhurta while perusing any wellness blog, it was my parents who exposed me to this possibility.

My parents, having practised waking up during the sacred hour all their life, wanted me to benefit from the same, but being the person I am, me sacrificing my sleep was no less than an act of a great warrior. Its assertion of being the ultimate time for mental lucidity, and the materialization of desires intrigued me and that's how my parents convinced me to make this effort. As a 10-year-old, I contemplated, "Why not experiment with this concept, and fulfil my dreams of being a business tycoon and go on to become the next Shah Rukh Khan?" Little did I foresee that this decision would utterly metamorphose my approach to studies and life as a whole.

Initially, arising while the world slumbered, posed a formidable challenge. Gradually, however, I began to discern its advantages. I started with waking up at 5 A.M. 4 days a week. The pre-dawn atmosphere was invigorating, bestowing upon me a sense of rejuvenation. My cognitive faculties exhibited unexpected sharpness, rendering my study sessions exceptionally productive on the days I woke up early. Previously enigmatic concepts now appeared comprehensible, especially while studying in the 10th grade.

Examinations and academic tasks were familiar adversaries. Yet, thanks to my parents, I went through a remarkable transformation by studying in the morning. My concentration deepened, and my capacity for retention heightened significantly. It felt as though I unlocked new levels of mental prowess never before experienced academic proficiency.

One of the extraordinary revelations I encountered was Brahma Muhurta's unique ability to manifest desires. The profound stillness of this predawn hour facilitated a profound connection with my inner self, enabling me to articulate clear intentions. My dad, being a daily yoga practitioner, told me that it is the time to create oneself. One has to wake up early in the morning, so he can make himself the way he wants to be. Hence, I began harnessing this time to visualize the materialization of my goals. It was an astonishing revelation that left me in awe.

The practice of awakening during Brahma Muhurta has genuinely exposed me to the multiple possibilities of life. It has redefined my educational journey, elevated my holistic well-being, and furnished me with a potent instrument for the realization of my deepest aspirations. Additionally, it has kindled a profound interest in nature, connecting me more deeply with the greenery around me. To those seeking an advantage in life, I plead you to explore this transformative predawn hour – you may uncover the key to unlocking your full potential and manifesting your dreams.



02

the mahabharata, the
ramayana and the vedas

- K. Devi Preetham

The two most famous epics known to mankind are the great Mahabharata and the Ramayana. Having long yet crucial details, they serve as teachers to mankind. In these epics, Bhagawan takes human form to end Adharma. If it were not for the Adi Kavi, Veda Vyasa, and Ganesh Ji, we would not even have lived to such an extent, knowing the ancient practices of our beloved ancestors.

These famous scriptures act as a guide for our lives, to enlighten us when we need it most. There are four Vedas - the Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Sama Veda and Atharva Veda.

Below them fall the Vedangas, the Vedic aspects that form the roots of our lives. Bhagawan Krishna, the owner of the Sudarshan Chakra, dictated the Bhagawad Gita to Arjuna. It started with "Dharmakshetre Kurukshetre Samaveta Yuyutsavah." The Bhagawad Gita's fourth chapter is currently being taught in our school.



Bhagawan Ram, the handsome avatar of Vishnu, came to Earth in human form because of a curse. He created a legacy that stayed rooted in values and Dharma. Bhagawan Ram faced a tough life. After marrying Sita, he was sent into exile and Sitaji was captured by Ravana. Bhagawan Ram sought help from the Vanaras and eventually, Sitaji was rescued. The Vedas teach us to follow the path of righteousness. The Mahabharata and Ramayana

teach us to destroy the Duryodhanas and Ranas of our lives. The Guru Parampara passes down the ancient knowledge that was given to them by their ancestors.

Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda taught the Bhagawad Gita after translating it into English, so people could understand it better. Further, he explained the meaning of every verse with the help of a small story. The Gita was initially inaccessible to 'untouchables.' In the modern day, it is accessible to everyone. Some say that Lord Narayana himself worked through our Gurudev for the betterment of society.

Let us consider the example of Chakravarti Rajagopalachari, who has authored several books on the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. He was a man who had ideally excelled and succeeded in his life. He was a staunch patriot, an astute politician, an inclusive thinker, an amazing visionary and one of the greatest revolutionaries of all time.

He was close to Mahatma Gandhi and Kulapati Munshi. He was also a freedom fighter, the Chief Minister of Madras, the Governor of West Bengal, the Home Minister of India and the first Governor General of India. His books are popular, and they convey deep messages in a shortened format.

Sadly, Rajaji died in 1972 at the age of 94. Such scriptures must be read by everyone in order to maintain and uphold the legacy of our heritage, in order to keep our spirit alive. On that note, I would like to say that the memory of such epics should never be wiped out.

Jai Hind! Jai Bharat!

MUSIC



- Devika Dhelia

As a child, Maria believed that music was meaningless. What was the point of it when she couldn't even hear? What good could she do by playing a piano in front of a bunch of people? But when she reached her teens, her passion for music started to develop.

Once, she was passing by a street and she saw a band playing. The vibration of the music made her feel overwhelmed. It was then that she discovered her passion for music. With determination and dedication, she started learning the piano, despite her hardships.

After a few days, she received an e-mail which informed her about a solo piano performance in New York. She was on cloud nine. On the day of the audition, her breath became shallow when she entered the room, but she thought about her love for piano and played the song. After a few months, she got to know that she had been selected for the solo performance.



This is the story which inspired me to be more dedicated and passionate towards music. Whenever I play music, my mind wanders off somewhere and my hands just keep going on.

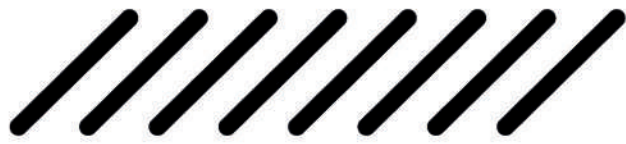
By looking at my brother play the guitar every day, he became one of my inspirations. He is also the reason I started learning guitar. There is a joyful feeling within me whenever I play or hear music. After a busy day, music is the only thing which relaxes my mind. I hope that others also feel inspired by Maria's story and work hard to fulfill their goals and find their passion.

Santvaani

Presenting an Anand Utsav special!

Visit the AV Room to witness a display by our Music Dept. teeming with devotion for Bhagawan Shri Krishna





Imagine being presented with a puzzle, missing pieces scattered across the table. You have some pieces and are eager to solve it, to see the full picture. In our pursuit of knowledge, we often gather fragments, half-truths and incomplete perspectives. We convince ourselves that we know enough to make informed decisions, to forge ahead. But do we truly understand the risk of navigating life's intricate puzzle with some pieces missing?

In the hallowed verses of an ancient epic, is a tale of valour and reckoning. It unravels the story of Abhimanyu and his fateful encounter with Aadha Jnan, the perilous realm of half-knowledge.

In the ancient land of Dwarka, amidst the echoes of clashing swords and resounding war cries, there lived a young and valiant prince named Abhimanyu. His story is one of courage and unwavering determination, etched into the annals of Bharatiya history as a testament to the indomitable spirit of youth. As a child, Abhimanyu displayed an uncanny fascination with the art of warfare. His little fingers would trace the curves of bows and his eyes would light up with the radiance of a thousand suns whenever he would hear his father, Arjuna, recount tales of valour and heroism.



From his early years, Abhimanyu exhibited an insatiable thirst for knowledge and a keen fascination with the art of warfare. Under the watchful eye of his father Arjuna and the divine guidance of Bhagawan Krishna, Abhimanyu mastered the scriptures. He learnt the intricacies of the strategies, ethics and codes of conduct that governed a true warrior.



Abhimanyu was still in his mother Subhadra's womb when he heard his father Arjuna telling his mother about the secret of the impenetrable military formation known as the chakravyuha. The chakravyuha is a very special formation of soldiers used in Vedic warfare. It was so potent that only a few warriors had the ability to penetrate the defensive wall of the chakravyuha. But Subhadra fell asleep while listening to Arjuna's story, and the unborn baby was able to hear only half the secret.



Later on, in the war fought between the mighty Pandavas and the Kauravas, the sun dipped below the horizon, casting long shadows upon the battlefield of Kurukshetra. Abhimanyu's saga illuminated the canvas of history, serving as a reminder of the consequences of venturing into the chakravyuha without complete understanding of its dangers. His partial knowledge became both a boon and a bane, as he knew how to pierce the formation's defence while path to exit remained shrouded in mystery.

As the battle raged on, Abhimanyu found himself ensnared by the chakravyuha's intricate layers. Surrounded by an endless sea of adversaries, the valiant Abhimanyu was outnumbered and cornered on all sides. The painful reality of his Aadha Jnan became evident. Despite his heroic struggle, he could not find a way out. Abhimanyu's incomplete knowledge became a shackle that bound him. The same courage that had propelled him forward found itself confined within the walls of his own limitations. After putting up a valiant fight, Abhimanyu was killed in brutal fashion.

In a world fueled by information and driven by a thirst for instant gratification, the siren song of half knowledge is alluring. It promises quick answers, easy solutions and the illusion of mastery, like a mirage in the desert. In our daily lives, we skim through articles, glance at headlines and form opinions based on sound bites. We embrace the illusion of knowledge without delving into the depths of the subject. This incomplete understanding can lead us to misinterpret and misjudge.

Abhimanyu's story implores us to seek the full spectrum of understanding, to acknowledge that the pursuit of wisdom is an ongoing odyssey, and that courage must be tempered by prudence. So let us embrace the humble curiosity that seeks out the full story. Let us be puzzle solvers, who patiently gather all the pieces before attempting to form a coherent picture. Let us acknowledge that wisdom lies in acknowledging what we do not know.



Issue No. 12

Crossroads

05 DAY ONE

- Nidhi Malani



I open my eyes and bright white light pierces them. My head starts pounding like someone is hammering it from the inside. I let out a loud wail. The pain was unbearable. I couldn't hold it in anymore. I try looking around to find something for comfort, but everything was new and peculiar.

Suddenly, a face pops into my field of view. A lady, maybe in her late 30s, but not someone I know or recognise. She is dressed completely in white. Her hair was tied in a tight bun. The strangeness of this place is driving me crazy. I want to go back to the comfort of my den, so warm and cosy. Just as I am trying to find peace in the memories of my room, I realise I am being lifted and it is terrifying me. I can feel my guts moving around inside me. I look down to see. It's the same lady. Or maybe a monster in disguise who has picked me up. Now, I let out an even louder cry, more like a shriek, so as to scare that wicked witch to put me back down. It does not work, but instead, takes a turn for the worse. She is now smiling and has started moving me, rotating me in her arms as if I were a trophy. She was showing me off to the members of her cult. I try to get loose. I cry, I kick, but nothing seems to work.



As I move around, I see two other people. A man and a woman. I cannot make out their faces clearly, but I can tell that their intentions with me are not pleasant. The ear-to-ear smiles on their faces scream the cruel things they are planning to do with me.

Now, I am more terrified than ever. My mind starts making up situations in my head. What if they cut me into pieces and feed me to the dogs? What if they use me as the sacrifice for a ritual that will end the world? What if... blood... to kill... I start feeling dizzy. My mind can't take this anymore. The hammering in my brain has numbed down. My eyelids have become heavy. I can't keep them open no matter how hard I try. But I am trying. I open-

A sudden jerk brings me back to my senses. This time, I am moving down at an alarmingly high speed. I'm moving towards the other lady, who is laughing wickedly at my fright. I shut my eyes tight. I cannot face my end. Even with my eyes closed, I can feel my body moving, moving, moving and then stopping. That's it. This is my end. It was fun while it lasted. But, nothing seems to have changed. Confusion overpowers my terror now. Is this what it feels like? The ultimate end?

'Families are like the branches of a tree, we grow in different directions but our roots remain one.'

I try to open my eyes and look around me. I am still in that same peculiar room. But now it feels different. The terror in my mind seems to have vanished and is replaced by a comforting happiness. The kind of happiness only certain people can give you. I am at peace more than I have ever been in the 15 minutes of my life. I am dumbfounded by my own emotions.

My eyes are closed, the pounding in my brain has stopped. I feel at ease. I open my eyes only to see the strange lady's face again. Except she is not a stranger this time. Her eyes and face are wet and she has a radiant smile on her face. She turns to look at the man standing next to her, towering over the both of us. He beams as he bears a proud smile on his face. Before I have time to think, my mouth spreads itself into a soft, small smile.

Everything seems to be in place. I know this is where I belong; In this lady's arms. The terror has vanished because I know, my heart and my mind know, that when I am with them, this lady and this man, I will always be protected. Always be safe.

The lady starts cradling me in her arms and I have never felt this kind of love, protection or happiness before. Suddenly, realisation kicks in. I know why this face is no longer a stranger to me. It's because I have known this lady for 9 months. These people are no strangers, they are my home. My safe place, my friends forever, my biggest supporters and my backbone. They are my parents, my mom and dad. This could never be the end, it never was. It is only just the beginning. My beginning.



A special feature!

- Chaitanya V. Ganatra

I **THANK** the stars, the **Sun**, the **Moon** and my **PARENTS** who gave me my life as a **BOON**.

I **THANK** my Gurus and my Teachers, Both are the same but still they **DIFFER**.
I **THANK** the plants for **OXYGEN₂**.
and Bhaiyas for the **-EXTRA-** juice and spring rolls and also my Table Teacher, "Gajar ka Halwa - The **HALF BOWL**".

To conclude, The nature, humans, elements and it **NEVER ENDS**;
The most, my smart, silly but lovely friendly friends

- The **CHAI** 'cup'. (writer)
- **NIYATI (BISKEY)** - calligrapher.

CROSSBUSTERS



Presenting this month's Crossbusters recommendation - a unique angle on the Mahabharata. In Kurukshetra, swords clashed. Here, words go back and forth to determine a victor. Questions are answered, accusations are addressed and Dharma speaks loud and clear



Skydive onto a luxury island, leap the tallest cliff you can think of, and ski down an icy slope with the wind whipping at your hair as you rush past trees at breakneck speeds. Create a house, a car or even a planet with just your imagination. Such is the power of lucid dreaming.

In its essence, lucid dreaming is a part of the 'Rapid Eye Movement' stage of sleep. Typically, the stage at which one experiences dreams. At a certain point, your subconsciousness activates the same parts of your brain during sleep that are usually active while you're awake, and this is about the same time at which one slips into a Lucid Dream.

During a Lucid Dream, one usually realises that they're dreaming, midway through the episode without the common instantaneous reaction of waking up, and this is where the real fun begins. Cities, nations, planets, galaxies, entire universes take birth and die with a single thought. Your most coveted luxury car, home, or even your fictional dreamland can be brought into the blank canvas reality of your dreamscape. Everything you've ever wanted to do, available right at your fingertips. The sheer power of creation and destruction at the command of your thoughts! Does that not sound good?



Such power and creative freedom does not come for free and is most definitely not infinite. There is a psychological barrier that will always stop you in the path of achieving divine levels of power in your dreamscape and perhaps, that is a good thing.

After all, we do need to wake up to actual reality. Dreams may be entertaining but, in the end, you must sustain yourself in the real world, no matter what. You cannot keep dreaming forever.



Certain things are impossible, even in Lucid Dreams. While dreaming, if you create a person, the first thing you'll notice is the creation's lack of a face. Terrifying as it may be, it is quite normal. The human brain is incapable of designing a face. Any face that you've seen in your dreams, you would have seen before, either in person, in a photograph, or online. Another thing you cannot do in a Lucid Dream is read. Amusingly, one of the most common activities is nearly impossible in the dreamscape.

The best part about Lucid Dreams is the creative freedom that one gets. Yet, accidental and runaway thoughts can lead to Lucid Nightmares, which are not fun. So, it is best to leave Lucid Dreaming alone, if you have an overactive imagination for horror.

FRANCHISE CRICKET – THE FUTURE?



What if I told you that Hogwarts was just an imaginary school, and Harry spent his time dreaming of it in the cupboard under the stairs?

That's how itchy it felt when I first learnt about the reality of franchise cricket. The only game on the planet that can last for 5 days and still end in a draw is cricket.

It was a sport played by the British nobility with great pride. The men would take breaks for lunch and tea, and end the day around sunset. It is a pity that the game has become home to tons of controversies. Fast-forwarding to 2023, the T20 format has seen a huge spike in popularity, with franchise cricket coming into the picture.

Our favourite players from all around the world might just play for one team! So what's the problem? The cricketing community expands, more players receive opportunities, businesses enter the sporting sector, and players earn 2 or sometimes 3 times more money than their annual national contracts, just to play for 45 days!



It's a win-win situation for both the sportspersons and corporate biggies! Well, I think that's where we get it wrong. Initially, I too loved franchise cricket. You feel more connected to your home team and even more so if your favourite player plays for the same.

All these mentioned points may seem appealing and ethical, but what happens behind the curtains is jaw-dropping! Adam Gilchrist, a three-time World Cup winner for the Australian national cricket team, claimed that he was asked to fix IPL matches around 2-3 times. English cricketer Jason Roy and Kiwi cricketers Trent Boult and James Neesham withdrew their international contracts to play Major League Cricket in the United States of America, SA20 in South Africa and the T10 in Abu Dhabi respectively. Analysts predict that the rate of players moving from international to franchise cricket is simply going to grow in the coming years, provided the same system is adhered to. Test cricket, the origin of cricket, is played by just 12 countries, whereas more than 15 T20 leagues are held every year.

The United States of America and the United Arab Emirates have launched their own T20 leagues, even though they have failed to even compete in the World Cup since its inception. This results in little activity for the countries' international sides. Just like the football leagues all around Europe, the Indian Premier League was planned as a tournament to be



played perennially with international breaks in between, but fortunately for India, BCCI, the governing body for cricket in India, rejected the plan and cut it down to just 2 months of play to give major importance to the team's international calendar. India, to this date, does not allow its players to play in any franchise league other than the IPL, and if the rule is broken, the penalty is losing the chance to don the Indian blues ever again. I still do love franchise cricket and all the hype around it, but not for what it stands for or the reason that it is played for, but simply because of my love for the sport. All I wish to convey is that you should take a turn, dive into reality and see the truth for yourself.

A FEAT LIKE NO OTHER

- Anandini G. Nangia

Saraswati was born in a small village to poor parents. From the start, she believed that she was equal to everyone else. They were human. So was she. Despite people avoiding her because of her dark complexion and torn clothes, Saraswati stood tall. She was not afraid to do what it would take to earn her place. She faced challenge after challenge. School fees, money, friends; she couldn't even afford proper clothes.



Her father was in deep debt to the bank, so they had to sell their land for a really cheap price. Saraswati's family was forced to move to a homeless shelter. Saraswati thought she had hit rock bottom. But she was wrong. School became even more torturous. The bullies had doubled. It was actually a relief for her to go to the shelter. Then like an angel, her music teacher gave her the chance to audition. She got in!

The next thing she knew, she was going to the annual state-level competition. She worked hard for days on end. The pressure was on. Her happiness depended on this. The spotlight flickered as she walked onto the stage. Her heart raced and her breath became shallow. She closed her eyes, left the world behind... and sang.

The audience roared. Girl after girl went on stage, and finally the winners were announced. "The third place is bagged by Leena. Second place by Ankita. First place goes to Saraswati!", the voice announced.

There she stood, 5 lakh rupees in hand. She was a girl from nowhere, with no place to call home. That girl had achieved this incredible feat, and I will tell you - she deserved every bit of it.



As we embark on this new chapter, we honor and salute the outgoing editorial team for their exceptional contributions, and we are inspired by the legacy they've left behind. Your impact on 'The Crossroads' is immeasurable, and your guidance will forever be cherished. Thank you!

Yours Sincerely,

The Crossroads Editorial Team

Spiritual classes taught me what knowledge really means. Rather than simply listening to the stories of the Mahabharata, we learnt what it actually is. We learnt what God is, what the Bharatiya way of life is and what one's purpose is in the world. We learnt what happiness is, what sadness is, and the cause of both. We learnt how to react to situations. Narayan Sir gave us an insight into what we are learning, what we should be learning, and most importantly, why we should be learning philosophy.

In these classes, we did not directly arrive at the conclusion of the topic, nor did we learn the teaching directly. We had discussions on a topic for several classes and arrived at a concluding statement, which included all the points in the discussion that everyone agreed on. Then, he concluded the topic by teaching us the lesson that can be drawn from it. By the time the conclusion was reached, everyone was clear with the topic, as it was discussed by the students themselves over the course of several classes.

Furthermore, he opened our eyes to the beauty of philosophy, and through it he taught us how to learn from anything and everything around us. Through this process, we came to the conclusion that attachment was the root cause of both happiness and sadness. We then learnt that the best reaction to any obstacle is not to have a reaction. A stable intellect is the fundamental thing required for efficient use of your capability.

**हर देश में तू, हर भेष में तू,
तेरे नाम अनेक तू एक ही है।**

These classes helped me seek joy in each and every small action that I witnessed and performed. They answered all the questions that I had regarding the Bharatiya way of life. Apart from the philosophical teachings and life lessons, we also learnt several chantings with unique tunes. One particular Bhajan is still stuck in my mind. It is called 'Har Desh Me Tu', and it explains one of our learnings. It says that everyone and everything in the world has Bhagawan in it. From the smallest atoms of matter to the clouds that tower above our heads, all have the same essence of Bhagawan in it.



It provoked me to keep cross-questioning my observations about our ancient culture and spurred me on to search for answers to any newfound questions I encountered. These classes transformed me into a person who first understood the reason behind every action he performed, before performing the action itself. After an entire year of several thoughtful, intellectual and valuable discussions, our teacher Narayan sir, taught us two of his most important lessons of life - "Accept what your intellect accepts", and, "I don't care if you understand philosophy or not, but just be happy and make everyone around you happy." This changed me from a person who did only joyous work, to a person who is joyous while doing any work. It changed me into an individual who believes in the process rather than the result.



Celebrating

BHARAT - BEYOND THE SHORES

- Sharanya Kolipaka

When Indians first started to settle in America, our presence, along with our culture, was barely recognized. However, as our population started increasing, our presence became too large to ignore. More and more people began to appreciate our heritage and festivals, realizing the importance and significance behind them.

Gradually, we started coming forward as a culture, expanding our influence. We used this influence to enlarge our festivals and interest more non-Indians. The first festival that included people of all origins was Holi. Holi was seen as a way to come together and enjoy a beautiful country's tradition as a whole. People of all castes and religions came together once a year to enjoy and throw colors on each other. This festival was the very first of many that helped bring our culture into a brighter light. Our festivals started growing more popular and even inspired others to step up for their own religion.

This started an uproar in almost all immigrants and unlocked a hidden confidence in us that we never knew we had. We expanded ourselves and still continue to do today. We started sharing our stories and ancient beliefs with the world, and the world started showing us some interest back. Suddenly, the friendly backyard Diwali party turned into a whole stadium of people coming together to dance and celebrate the festival of lights. People from different places were in harmony and happy to have each other as company. It was a beautiful time for us in America.



Eventually, our festivals even entered in schools. I remember every year in elementary school, a few days before a major Hindu festival such as Holi, Rakshabandhan or Diwali, we would all come together for around one hour a day and learn about these festivals. We were even encouraged to show up to school in our Indian ethnic wear on the day of the festival. As a small child coming from a different background, it gave me so much joy to receive so many compliments and questions about my lehengas and religion.

Festivals inspired me to learn more. They made me and many others to grow up as proud Indians. This moderately led to bigger powers, noticing this sudden unification of Indians and other cultures.

Organizations were formed, and so were projects to unite Indian heritage with others and to spread awareness of our ancient traditions. These organizations are the ones who, in the end, worked the most for our ideas such as 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbkam'. They organized huge celebrations and events specific to each festival all year round and never failed to capture each one. They helped us realize that even though we may be of different origins and beliefs, we are all living under the same sky.

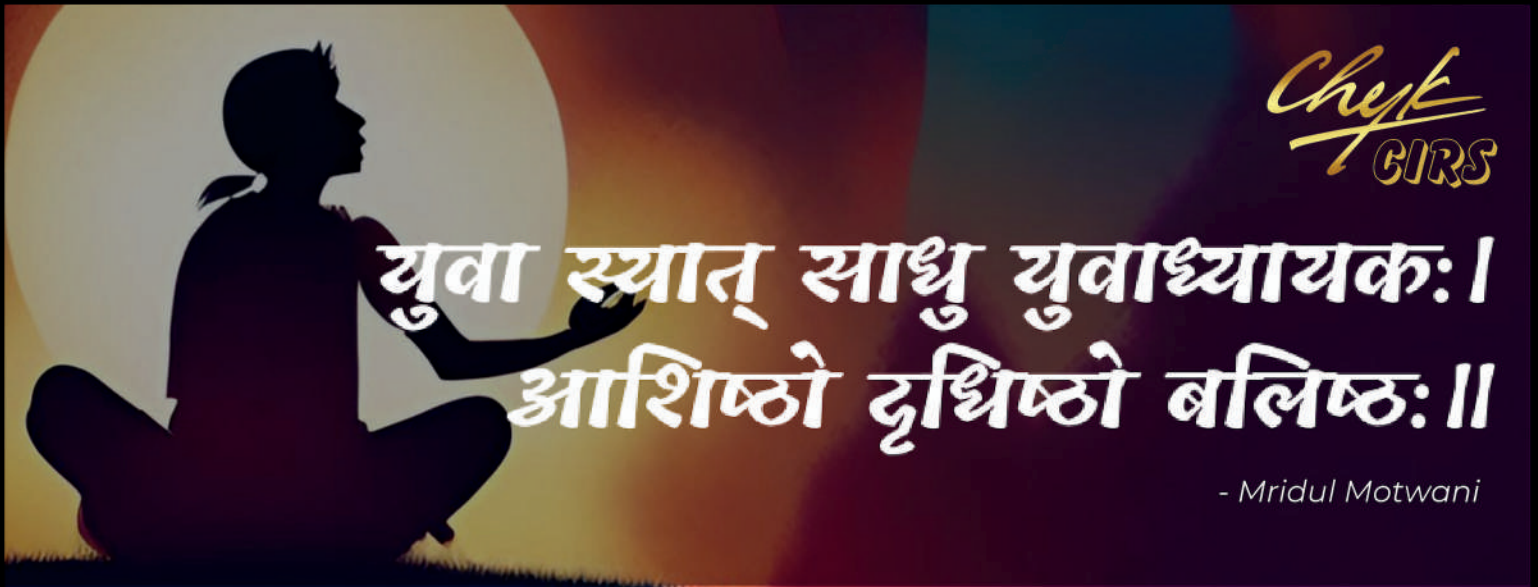
Festivals inspired me to learn more. They helped me and many others to grow up as proud Indians.



I grew up and somehow broke a bone,
And for that you didn't leave a single unturned stone,
People ask "How can i ever repay you?",
Maybe that's impossible but remember there's something to
my left that'll never leave your view.

An illustration of a diverse group of six people (three men and three women) of various ethnicities gathered around a table, engaged in a collaborative discussion. One man is pointing at something off-camera, while others listen attentively or look at documents.

Ayush Kewalramani



The phase of life when vibrancy and exuberance drives you; the age when a plethora of new choices and possibilities lie before you, that golden period is youth. Youth unfurls the curtains of the vast reality of the world to a child. During this period, the premature mind is not fully capable of distinguishing between right and wrong.

This often results in numerous mistakes that are made and learnt from. It is in this phase that one's character and identity is shaped through a culmination of beliefs and behaviour conditioned through experience.

Who is a perfect youth?

One who is focussed. One who aspires.
One who is endowed with determination,
coupled with mental and physical strength.



A youth's mind is very hyperactive. Every second of every day, ideas ricochet around in their heads. Sometimes, youth are unable to harmonize their thoughts and actions, resulting in irrational, impulsive decisions that are later regretted. Adding to this, they are subjected to newfound responsibilities and duties, both in the social and academic spheres. A youth is, at all times, learning, absorbing and processing the world around. But if the mind does not have the will power to eradicate the unnecessary negative aspects of the world, then the youth's descent into delusive desires and self destructive behaviour is imminent.

SO, WHAT DOES A YOUTH NEED TO BE HIS BEST SELF? HOW CAN ONE BECOME THE IDEAL YOUTH?

Correct upbringing is what moulds a child into a youth fit for the world, and the credit for this goes to our parents. Be it a failure or a missed opportunity, parents are always standing by their child. Come what may. It is, of course, a youth's duty to make their parents proud and fulfil their expectations. But most important is letting them know that you are grateful to them. After all, a single 'I love you' said with a wide smile is enough to make their day.

Youth brings with it a lot of new burdens, such as increased pressure in academics. These can only be fulfilled when one understands the immeasurable value of time. When a youth manages time effectively, he can accomplish more in the time assigned. Time management is the basis of a productive lifestyle, and is essential for youth to bring out their potential.

Youth is the time to gain the knowledge necessary to face the trials and storms of life. A youth's personality is fine tuned by learning from experience, as well as keeping an open mind to advice from others.

The youth have several duties and responsibilities in their lives. But primarily, it is the underlying obligation to serve society. We often place ourselves at the centre of our lives, ignoring the fact that we are part of an interconnected society. Youth is what keeps the society together and growing. Therefore, they must utilize their talents and skills to selflessly serve society.



Youth is the crucial and life defining stage which must be undergone in a wholesome and holistic manner. Economic growth, social change, political transformation and cultural evolution all lie in the hands of today's youth. Investing in youth development is therefore imperative and it is the need of the hour. After all, it is the youth of today, who will be the leaders of tomorrow.

Colours of CIRS



Through this work of art, we are transported into the realm of cosmic creation, where Shiva and Parvati perform their divine dance, with which they weave the tapestry of existence. Parvati's unyielding determination to win Lord Shiva's heart shines through, embodying the essence of the Sanskrit quote, "शक्तिमतां स्वयंग्रहः," which signifies that destiny bends to the will of the powerful. The painting inspires us to manifest and embrace our own destinies with strength and perseverance.

Emerging from the shadows of Rishi Vasishtha, this artistic depiction created by the incredible artists of our house impeccably resonates the spirit coursing through our veins. Illustrating arjuna's pursuit of seeking power and prowess from Devi herself, our masterpiece portrays this quest dwelling in every student. To ordain this we proclaim, 'नभःस्पृशं शक्तिम्', Ignite the Skies Ablaze!



Draupadi exemplified resilience throughout her life. Emerging from a sacred fire, the flames symbolize the bravery she displayed and the sacrifices she endured over the course of her lifetime. Guiding us, we derive our quote from the Rg Veda, "एक एवाग्निर्बहुधा प्रभूतः". One fire manifests in many ways, of vigour, of passion, of respect and of zeal. A paragon of these virtues she was, and we strive to uphold these principles.



"HIS REIGN OVER REALMS ECHOES RELENTLESSLY" depicts that Krishna's reign is never ceasing and is everywhere. Like the endless might of the ocean, the Vishwaroopa is an infinite manifestation of Lord Krishna. In our wall magazine, Krishna is seen bestowing his immense knowledge to Arjuna who stands fearlessly at the center of his palms. Krishna's influence reverberates across vast domains, like the unyielding pulse of time itself. He endows valour and strength upon humanity in times of need.





AHAM DEVĪM AVADAM

girlup cirs - Manassa V.



On a sultry April afternoon, a lady was travelling by bus with her 8-year-old daughter. Nothing out of the ordinary. As the bus staggered to its final stop, all the passengers on board clattered about, trying to get out first. The lady observed this scene, smiling at the absurdity before her. Her thoughts were interrupted by the pained scream of a woman at the back who was clutching her extremely pregnant belly. Circumstances suggested that she'd gone into labour. A blank-faced man sat next to her staring into space, unaware of the grave condition of his wife. The lady looked about for help but there was no one around other than the driver who seemed to be more worried about the condition of his bus, given his revolted look. That was when it dawned upon her that she'd have to perform the delivery. With no prior experience and no practical knowledge, distressing thoughts bombarded her head. Gritting her teeth, she stood up and approached the couple. A tiny arm pulled at her saree; she turned around to meet the scared round eyes of her daughter. "Amma idhu vendaam, namma pollaan." The lady replied gently, "Namma help pannanu, it is the right thing to do".

Distracting her daughter with her phone she walked up to the couple. She began a conversation with the husband but very soon understood that both of them spoke different tongues. With a language barrier between them, she somehow conveyed to him using hand gestures that she was able and willing to help. Prepping the woman, the lady's clever hands trembled softly. She could feel her heart lodged in her throat as her brain pulsed in sync with its beat, with her medical knowledge flooding her brain she prepared for the delivery. The process started without complications but soon enough the lady realized that the baby had begun crowning and that she had no contraption to cut off the umbilical cord. She asked the husband to buy scissors, to which he retorted, "I don't have money." Frustrated, she shoved money from her purse into his hands and sent him on his way. Beads of sweat covered her neck as her careful hands meticulously performed the delivery. She tied off the end with her hair clip.

Wiping the infant with her dupatta, the lady proudly presented the euphoric parents with their baby. The mother's weary face was overcome with emotion; joyful tears ran steadily down her cheeks. Worn out but immensely contented, the lady swiftly dialled for an ambulance. A smile of pure fulfilment played across her lips as she held her daughter's hands in hers, smiling at the couple who had just become parents. They repeatedly thanked the lady and embraced their newborn in their arms, as the strobing lights and the distinctive wail of the ambulance neared the bus.

Certain stories are known to make an impact, leaving a lingering mark on your heart. This particular story doesn't disappoint. When I heard it for the very first time, I was overcome with so many different emotions, that my mind could not comprehend the situation. The lady in the story is someone to be revered; such compassion and courage are extremely uncommon. The funny thing is, all of us know this lady, we pass by her in the hallways, and some of us are even taught by her. She is none other than Srimati Rekha, our biology teacher. I remember sitting in her office as she told me about this incident. Her voice overflowed with emotion and her eyes were clouded with tears as she spoke. Listening to it felt like warm honey spilling over. The sudden surge of admiration and respect I had for her is indescribable. She told me "Manassa, when I exited that bus covered in blood, an old lady stood in the station. She folded her hands and bowed to me and said that Devi had incarnated on Earth as me." Silent tears ran down her face and all that could be heard was the faint beating of our hearts. When I told her that I was writing an article about her, the smile on her face reminded me of that of a young kid. It was truly eye-opening to write about this event, about such a remarkable, beautiful being with so much courage. I'm honored.



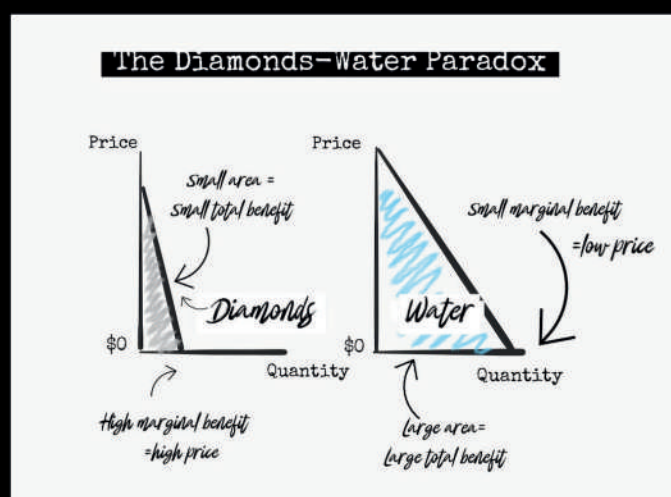
DIAMOND - WATER PARADOX

- Reshmika S. V.



An alluring diamond has absolutely no practical use but, by virtue of its price, it automatically becomes a symbol of status and wealth. On the other hand, water – the earthly panacea – without which life cannot exist, is affordable and mostly free across the globe. This disparity introduces a classic concept in economics: The Diamond - Water paradox, which deciphers the paradoxical relationship between the value of essential goods and their prices. Why do factors, inevitable for survival, like water, have lower prices than non-essential items like diamonds, which are far less important to our existence on this planet?

This question was famously introduced by Adam Smith in *The Wealth of Nations* wherein he determined that value-in-use seemed irrationally separated from value-in-exchange. At first, most economists applied Karl Marx's labour theory of value to this puzzling paradox. That is, the price of a good reflects in the amount of labour and resources required to bring it into the market. In other words, because costs drive prices, diamonds must be more expensive than water because they cost more to bring into the



market. However, the problem with this theory was that it did not apply to items that posed negligible labour. Imagine you randomly discover a natural, finely cut diamond on a hiking trip. Will this diamond cost less than an identical diamond that was mined, cut and cleaned through labour-intensive methods? Most definitely not.

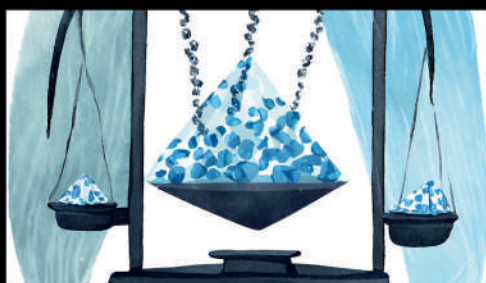
These premises of discussion force us to ask a counter-intuitive question: Do prices drive costs?

This can be logically followed through by the everyday example of a luxury real estate market. The location of the luxury real estate market is often valued in accordance with the prestige and status associated with it. This in turn drives the cost of the land, and also the property maintenance and security costs regarding the property.

Therefore, we arrive at the conclusion that subjective prices drive costs. But how are items valued subjectively? On what basis are diamonds valued higher than water?

The basis for these economic decisions is built upon the classic economic concept of marginal utility as opposed to total utility. Water in total is much more valuable than diamonds on the planet because of its high total utility. However, because it is abundant in availability, the marginal utility of water is quite low. Diamonds, on the other hand, have almost negligible total utility but have high marginal utility by virtue of limited availability. This means that an extra diamond gained would provide higher satisfaction than an extra glass of water drunk.

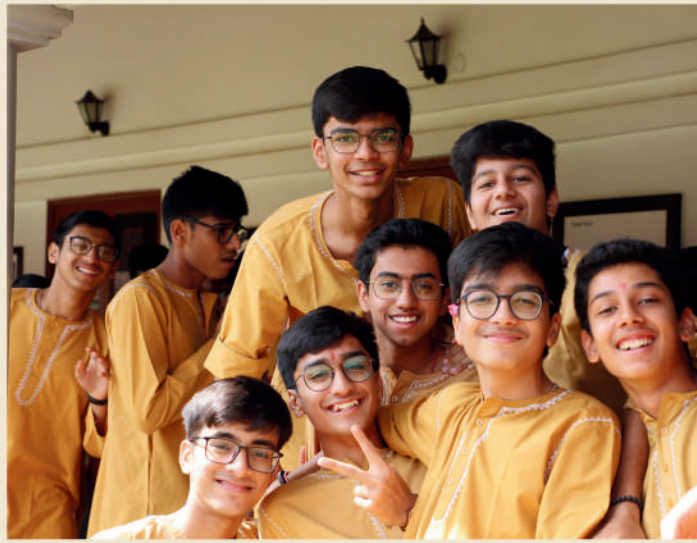
This concept of value derived from utility surely contradicts Marx but explains our conundrum quite well. In essence, the diamond - water paradox, though a very basic one, is an interesting case study that offers a glimpse of economics through the conceptual lens of individual preferences, value, utility and market dynamics.



Captures

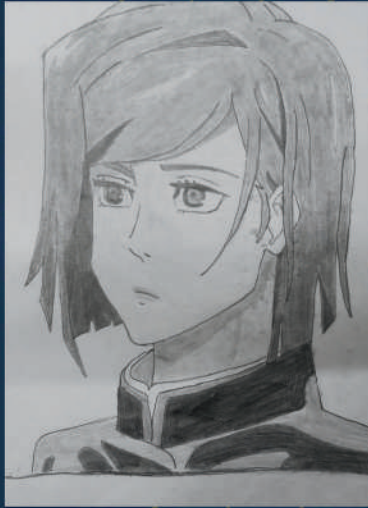
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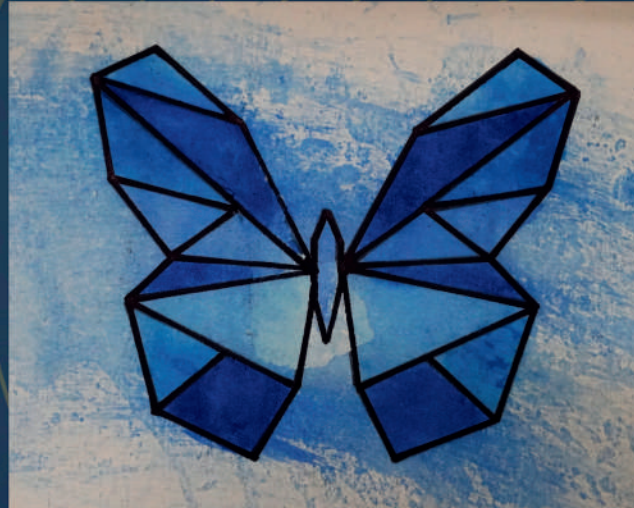




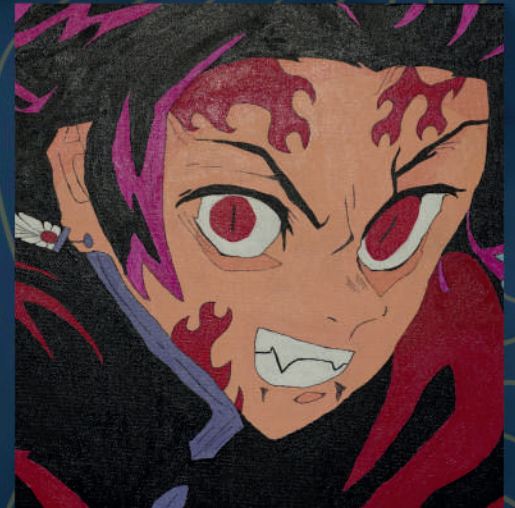
CREATIVE CORNER



Reshmi ~ I IB 



Aarush S. ~ VI 



Yashas M. 



Harinarayan ~ VII 



Samruddhi P. ~ I IB 



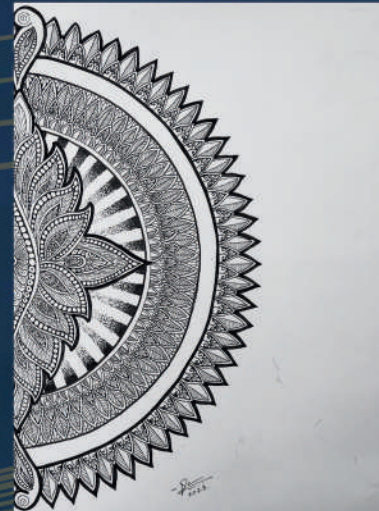
Garvit S. ~ VII 



V. Amrita ~ XI Sci. 



Rayan S. ~ X 



Dhriti S. ~ X 



Aashi K. ~ VIII 



Naitik A. ~ IX 



V. Manassa ~ I IB 



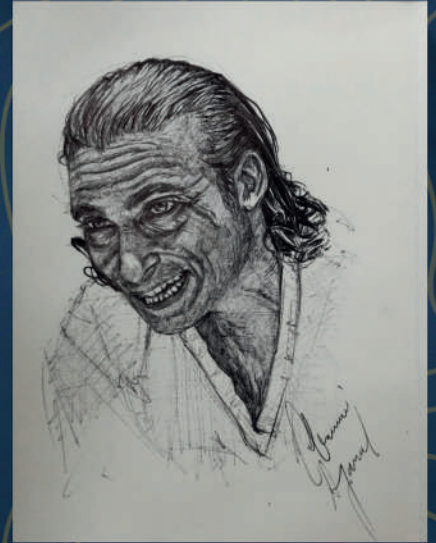
Sanvi S. ~ IX 



Yashwardhan K. ~ X 



Kripa R. ~ XI 



Charuvi A. ~ II IB 



Dhyom D. ~ V 



Tanay L. ~ VI 



Gatik C. ~ X 



Vanshika M. ~ XII 



Rohith C. B. ~ X 



Ritika D. ~ VIII 



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Swami Chinmayananda Lane, Nallur Vayal Post, Siruvani Road
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