

Teacher to Student

-Raj Gaurav Verma

Dear Students,

Hope you are doing fine!!!

In this document I have tried to introduce few things. Hope you understand it and try to grasp it and perhaps this will help you in a longer run.

The Idea of Higher Education and University

The purpose of Higher Education, Colleges and University is to make you autonomous. Autonomy means to be independent, to be self-dependent. From class 1st to class 12th teachers train you how to behave, how to make notes, how to write answers, how to face the exam. When you come to a college or University you have to retain this training and not forget it. Because now we will take you ahead from what you have learned so far. So far teachers teach you, they make you mark answers, or dictate and you have specific text books. By the time you enter Higher Education there is a huge change that comes. Now you don't find things in one book. You also go through other books. There is not one teacher teaching one subject. There are many teachers teaching same subject. Hope you understand the difference in approach.

Adults, and not children

Till 12th and even in 1st year of B.A you are likely to be around 18 or sometimes less. By the time you finish it you become an adult. 18 years of age gives you right to decide your government. I hope you understand the gravity of this constitutional power that is given to us. The decision-making-- you decide. When it is believed that citizens of this age will be able to decide their government it also means that they will also be able to decide for their everyday problems and situation. This is the autonomy. This is for everything that you do in life. From the kind of course that you would like to opt, to the kind of profession to the kind of partner for life, to the kind of place you would like to live and how you would like to develop your identity.

Studies and Social Responsibilities

Till your intermediate teachers make you aware about various things. They teach you. By the time you are in graduation there is shift everywhere, not only in you but also in your family, public space, and society. Till 12th there was only one work-- to study, but when you enter Higher education you will also have familial and social responsibilities that you have to fulfill. These responsibilities are not burden but they are part of our lives. Therefore, you have to create a balance in this. You have to look after your parents, grandparents, family, neighbours, friends, relatives but at the same time you have to find a space for yourself to study, to decide, to explore, to introspect.

Deciding what do you want to be

Sometimes doing many things at a time may be helpful. But it is important for you to decide that where do you actually see yourself after 3 years of graduation or 2 years of post-graduation. This is an important exercise. Not expectation, but planning is must. You have to decide the goal and the route; and you have to check often and on that the route that you have decided for that goal will really take you towards that or not. You cannot think of reaching a particular place going in an opposite direction. So Goal and Route and Checking whether you are on a right track become important.

Increase your level

You have written answers from class 1st to 9th, then in High School, then in Intermediate. But can you write those same sort of answers in B.A. or M.A? You can but then what will be the difference between you and a student of High School and Intermediate and you being senior. So you have to find out for yourself --what is the difference in writing till class 12th and writing in Higher Education. Different subjects will have different requirements.

Exposure

Till class 12th you are told to learn. But the purpose of Higher Education is to help you understand how to use that learnt knowledge. Learning is not enough you have to apply it. Your education will lose its important if you do not learn to use it in your everyday life. This will come through practice. History, Geography, Philosophy, Psychology, Defense Studies, Social Work, Sociology, Economics, Maths, Physics, Chemistry, Commerce, any subject, any discipline all have to be used and interlinked and mixed and seen together as related to one another and most of all how they are affecting us, influencing us, our society and environment. That is it.

You do not have to learn it to pass an exam. You have to study them as knowledge to be transmitted in people around you, in places where you go or

live. A book is useless, education is useless if you do not use it. And nothing is useless in the world, even the least important thing is a useful thing. So you are important, and your subject and your knowledge, howsoever little you have learned.

Understanding an Idea

You should understand when you study something. Do not think that you are not getting a point and stop reading the book or text. Read it one chapter, two chapters three, four five... so on. But do not think that you are unable to understand or that it is difficult. When you read any book understand that the first 50 to 100 pages are meant not to be understood. So they will not be clear to you even if you try hard to do it. But after that you will begin to understand the coming chapters and by the time you finish the book the first chapters or pages will automatically be clear to you.

Leave the portions in a chapter that you do not understand. Mark that you understand. Marking is important for revision and highlighting.

Develop an understanding for the subject

This is important that you understand your subject. See how it works. This is the role of teachers in Higher Education that they will explain you functionality of a subject or paper. Try to mark the terminology, terms, keywords, important quotations, lines, topics, writers, theorists, philosophers, formulas, researchers. Develop a vocabulary for that subject.

Develop an understanding of language Regional, Hindi, Subject-Based and English essentially.

University means Vishwavidyalaya for all the people of the world. College means mahavidyalaya a larger college. So Higher Education has universal, global, national, contemporary touch. It is about what is going on in the society or on the globe now. Therefore, it is new and contemporary. The teachers in the universities and colleges are engaged with these researches trying to explore new areas, doing researches and ever expanding knowledge systems. You are the part of this process of expansion of this knowledge system. This is national and global, therefore, you have to be good in your mother-tongue, medium of instruction and English, at least in India. Because without them you cannot get into the global and national set up.

One Subject

Your subjects keep on reducing by the time you join B.A you have only three subjects, by the time you are in third year only two subjects, by the time you take admission in post-graduation only one subject.

Time

So the system makes you move from the bottom of a pyramid to the top where there remains just one block. But do you think that in anyways the time that you give to studies in High School and till B.A. or M.A. should reduce? Or it should remain the same. Therefore, it is important for you to plan and work out a routine “not a time-table but a routine” where you are able to find time for your own studies.

Self-teacher and Self-Study

The strategy that you have to adopt is to teach yourself. To see whether you have understood that idea. If not than you have to clarify it with your friends through discussions and with your teachers.

Develop a spirit of inquiry

Have some discipline

Organize your time

Practice writing

Make notes for your convenience

Broaden your Horizon

Try to link your subject with life

Think that you are important in so many ways for your family, friends, neighbours, relatives, society, our nation, our nature and our world.

That's all from my side

ALL THE BEST!!!!

Raj Gaurav Verma

Department of English and Modern European Languages

University of Lucnow