

Pradnya Parisar Prakalp Report

“The greatness of humanity is not in being human, but in being humane.”

-- Mahatma Gandhi

Pradnya Parisar Prakalp is an unique project undertaken by Maharashtra State Faculty Development Academy (MSFDA) in collaboration with Institute for Psychological Health (IPH). The project aims to build an emotion friendly college campuses and thereby create a legacy of institutions which is distinct as well as special. 36 higher education institutions from Maharashtra were selected for this project, one from each district. K.G. Joshi College of Arts and N. G. Bedekar College of Commerce was selected from Thane district.

Training of core team

As first step of the project, each college has made a team of 5 to 6 members that are representative of teaching staff, non teaching staff, management, principal and students. This team has attended a training program conducted by IPH and would be responsible for implementation of various ideas under the scope of Pradnya Parisar. From our college following six members were selected:

1. Dr. Madhuri Pejavar (Management Representative)
2. Prof. Shivaji Naik (Teaching staff representative)
3. Prof. Vedavati Paranjape (Principal Representative)
4. Mrs. Manisha Thanekar (Non Teaching Staff Representative)
5. Ms. Gauri Kulkarni (Student Representative)
6. Mr. Omkar (Student Representative)

The training of this core team was conducted from 1st to 5th August at Savitribai Phule University, Pune. This training has covered the understanding of nature of emotions, thoughts and self-talk perpetuated by them, behavior/actions that are result of emotions as well as self-talk. It also included a drawing of a broad plan of activities to be conducted in respective colleges after the training, in the span of coming 3 years.

Selection and training of team for further implementation of project at college level

Next, a team of various teaching and non teaching staff members as well as students was formulated and a short training program was carried out for them. This training included sessions on Education about Emotions (presented by Prof. Vedavati Paranjape) and From Event to Experience (presented by Prof. Shivaji Naik). The second part of training included taking inputs from participants about which new activities they can plan keeping in mind Pradnya Parisar project guidelines as well as which suitable changes can be made in existing programs/activities. Several ideas were generated in this session (outline below in the section of ‘the way ahead’) and plan for implementation of Pradnya Parisar Prakalp at college level was chalked out. Two sessions of this training program were conducted on 12th and 16th December, 2022.

Activities carried out till now

Various activities were carried out till now which have endeavoured to capture and actualise essence of Pradnya Parisar Prakalp. These can be summarized as follows:

1. A white board was installed in the office, to facilitate expression of emotions and thoughts for non teaching staff. A quote or a thought is written on this board everyday.

2. Bhondla- a traditional Maharashtrian program of singing songs and mingling performed during Navratri was organized by Women's Development Committee on 21st October, 2022 to facilitate feelings of camaraderie and experience joy. The program was open to all teaching/non teaching members as well as students.
3. Informal talks about emotions and self-talk with students of different classes were carried out by Prof. Shivaji Naik.
4. A series of interactive workshops named Restoring Minds was carried out for students of First Year. It aimed to help students learn certain skills in study, goal setting and maintaining discipline. The workshops also included teaching the students self expression and identification of their own thoughts and behavior. These workshops were carried out from 12th to 21st October, 2022 by a group of our own alumni-Unplug.
5. A Self-Talk Event was introduced and conducted in annual college festival- Navrang on 21st December, 2022. This event has encouraged students to identify and express their thoughts and self-talk. 12 students have participated in this event.
6. A session was conducted on Emotions: Awareness and Management by Prof. Surabhi Khare in NSS camp on 12th December, 2022. The aim was to create awareness about emotions experienced by oneself and learn to manage them.
7. Palak Shala- a workshop for parents was conducted by Principal Dr. Suchitra Naik and Prof. Anjali Purandare on 3rd December, 2022. It has helped parents to develop various parenting skills.

The way ahead...

Pradnya Parisar Prkalp is a ground water project and thus does not aim at carrying out too many activities but rather believe in creating fundamental changes that help in broadening of emotional intelligence for all stakeholders of institution. Consistent with this philosophy, some activities are under planning, where some will take shape as the project moves ahead. The plans for these activities include:

1. Support group for parents
2. Activities focusing on developing certain skills as well as addressing some emotions, carried out for student volunteers who work in various events of college.
3. Small projects aiming to incorporate building emotional awareness as well skill development for students.
4. Activities centered around creating new, young role models for students. The first one of these will be implemented in the upcoming seminar on career guidance of Psychology Department and Counselling Cell- Step Forward. The seminar has invited department's own alumni working in various fields to guide the current students.
5. Workshops to address exam and performance anxiety in students.
6. A Dance Movement Therapy workshop for non teaching staff to give way to expression of stress and create more peace.

The college looks forward to be instrumental in bringing about emotional awareness through various activities and thus create a legacy of cultivating emotional intelligence and humanity.