

Value Added Course in 'Life Skills'
Department of English
GDC, Bellampally

To be introduced in the Academic Year 2022-23

- Duration: Courses offered for two weeks for two batches in an academic year
- Class Schedule: 2 hours daily between 3.30 pm to 5.30 pm
- Venue: Department of English
- Total hours: 30
- Eligibility: Final year students of B. Sc/B. Com/B. A (10 students from each group)
- Faculty: Department of English
- Evaluation Procedure: 50 marks (30 for Attendance & 20 for Oral Presentation)
- Certificate: Based on student's attendance and oral presentation certificate will be issued on completion of course.

Course Outcome:

1. Creates awareness among students about the importance of life skills for academic and professional development.
2. Helps students grow individually and socially.
3. Enables employability and workplace environment.

Objectives:

- Students of this region need adequate life skills for sustenance and growth.
 - Students will not only learn about the essence of life but also observe the art of living.
 - They find new ways of thinking and problem solving.
 - They take individual responsibility for the course of their actions.
 - They can build speaking skills at various levels of execution.
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SYLLABUS

UNIT-I

Introduction

Students these days seek out a college education to ensure they are more employable after graduation. Though college graduates may not be unemployed, the reality is that 40% of college graduates are underemployed, meaning they are in jobs that don't require a bachelor's degree. These employment outcomes may result from poor preparation in an area where young adults are often considered lacking 'Life Skills'. They enable adults to function properly in society and include stress management, study habits, financial knowledge, self-care, social awareness, and the general ability to work well with anyone.

"Life skills are abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable humans to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of life". This concept is also termed as psychosocial competency. The subject varies greatly depending on social norms and community expectations but skills that function for well-being and aid individuals to develop into active and productive members of their communities are considered as life skills.

The core cross-cultural areas of life skills are:

1. Decision making and Problem solving
 2. Creative thinking and Critical thinking
 3. Communication and Interpersonal Skills
 4. Self-awareness and Empathy
 5. Assertiveness and Equanimity
 6. Resilience and coping with emotions and coping with stress
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UNIT – II

Areas of Life Skills

Decision making and Problem Solving

The key difference between problem solving and decision-making is that solving problems is a process, whereas making decisions is an action based on insights derived during the problem-solving process. Many people use the terms problem solving and decision making interchangeably, but they are not the same. **Problem solving** is an analytical **process** used to identify the possible solutions to the situation at hand. **Making decisions** is a part of **problem solving**. **Problem solving** is a complex **process**, and judgement calls – or **decisions** – will have to be made on the way. **Decision making** is a choice made by using one's judgement. The art of making sound decisions is a particularly important skill for leaders and managers. You may need to make numerous decisions as part of the problem-solving process. And, of course, leaders and managers will need to use their decision-making skills to determine which solution to pursue. They will also typically need to confirm and set into motion next steps to fix the problem.

Creative thinking and Critical thinking

Critical and **creative thinking** involves students **thinking** broadly and deeply using skills, behaviours and dispositions such as reason, logic, resourcefulness, imagination and innovation in all learning areas at college and in their lives beyond college. **Creative Thinking** is going beyond the limitations and being original and fresh in one's ideas. **Critical Thinking**, on the other hand, is more evaluative in nature and analyses a particular thing. Hence, one can conclude that while **Creative thinking** is generative in purpose, **Critical Thinking** is analytical in purpose.

Critical and creative thinking are the keys to work and economic prosperity in the twenty-first century. There is a long-term trend away from routine-oriented work, which requires people to do the same things every day, and toward **creativity**-oriented jobs that ask people to engage in analysis and to make judgments.

Communication and Interpersonal Skills

Interpersonal skills are the skills we use every day when we communicate and interact with other people, both individually and in groups. They include a wide range of skills, but particularly communication skills such as **listening** and effective speaking. People with good interpersonal skills are strong verbal and non-verbal communicators and are often considered to be “good with people”. These skills are important for success in both career and personal life. Interaction is a part of one’s life. For a successful career with a meaningful friendship, it’s critical to be good at getting along with others. While interpersonal skills are considered to be natural, the truth is that they can be learnt. Students need to be aware of: the importance of interpersonal skills, highlight their skills that helps them get a job and advance their career, assess their interpersonal abilities and develop a plan to improve them.

Self-awareness and Empathy

Thus, **self-awareness** and **empathy** are very intimately connected. ... Once we become more **aware** of what makes us who we are, we are better able to understand the differences between ourselves and others, and what makes them who they are. To better understand others, we must first better understand ourselves. Journal of Cognitive Enhancement titled “Know Thy Selves: Learning to Understand Oneself Increases the Ability to Understand Others.” By recognizing

the different parts of our personalities, we become more aware of our own tendencies and patterns – and this can help us better navigate our relationships and how we connect with others. The skill of inferring the mental state of others is known as ‘theory of mind’ or empathy. Both ‘self-awareness and ‘empathy’ are constituents of ‘emotional intelligence’. ‘Empathy’ is technically ‘other-awareness, literally direct counterpart to ‘self-awareness. Self-awareness can be improved through Personality quizzes, Role-playing, Ask a close friend

Assertiveness and Equanimity

The definition of assertiveness is the ability to stand up for your own personal rights and/other people’s rights. It means using your voice appropriately to speak your thoughts, feelings, and beliefs.

Assertive behaviour includes:

- Being open when expressing wishes, thoughts, and feelings
- Encouraging others to express themselves likewise
- Listening to other people’s views and responding/acting appropriately even when in disagreement
- Accepting, praising, and appreciating others for what they do or do not do
- Admit mistakes and apologizing for any wrong done from your end
- Maintaining self-control
- Thinking and behaving as an equal to others

Assertive people state their views/points without upsetting others, and always take others feelings into consideration- enabling them to respond or act appropriately. Passive people say yes to a lot of things when they really want to say no. They will accept what you want them to do as they explain how it may affect them negatively... but will not say no. An example of a passive response to someone asking if they can get their car fixed would be: *“Yeah, sure, no problem... I will get to it as soon as I pick up the kids from school, fix the kitchen sink, and pay my overdue bills.”* Clearly, they are busy and it would be hectic for them to help their friend fix their car on that day, but they will do it anyway because it is hard for them to say *“No, I got tons of shit to take care of today.”* These people suffer the most at work because they keep saying yes to piles and piles of tasks, which may or may not be part of their job descriptions...

Aggressive people are excellent in undermining people’s rights and self-esteem. Unlike the passives; who tend to victimize themselves, aggressors are basically emotional or physical bullies. They express their points inappropriately, which may provoke people to behave the same way. Examples may include constantly rushing people, bossing around instead of asking, ignoring people, and never considering others feelings. Just like passive people, aggressors suffer from low self-esteem, and that is why they turn to harsher and unkind methods when stating their points.

Assertiveness is an important life skill because it promotes a more composed method when stating your view points and what you believe in, and those who practice assertiveness regularly are more emotionally intelligent than aggressive and passive people. Speaking of *“composure”*, equanimity is all about that.

Equanimity is simply to express calmness and composure, especially during difficult situations. I believe it goes hand in hand with assertiveness, as they both require whoever practices them to maintain the idea of calm expressions.

Equanimous behaviour includes:

- Practicing self-compassion before understanding others
- Empathizing with people and seeing things from their perspective as well
- Asking why things happened the way they did by understanding the reasoning
- Practicing self-care (exercising, meditating, healthy eating habits, taking walks...)
- Doing more of what makes you happy (even if it meant having some chocolate to boost your happy-meter)

Like assertiveness, equanimity is a life skill that can be obtained through regular practice. It is a belief of maintaining composure and calmness and implementing it to actions. Instead of rushing to judge or feel down about certain circumstances, a person who regularly practices equanimity will be able to take on life's hardships with a more collected mindset, which will help them be more thoughtful of things before reacting to them.

Hostile people are at a complete disadvantage when dealing with an equanimous person. They believe that their points can come across effectively by expressing a loud and impulsive behaviour which is what they have in common with aggressors.

It is absolutely impossible to be assertive and equanimous at all times and in every situation, we find ourselves in. However, the more we practice those life skills regularly, the more we levitate and develop as humans, and are able to tackle most of life's hardships wisely.

Resilience coping with emotions coping with stress

Resilience does mean avoided **stress** and adversity; it means having the ability to persevere and continue to function effectively despite failures, setbacks, and losses. This requires developing effective **coping skills**. We all encounter stressful situations and events: death of a loved one, pressure at work or at school, serious illness or accidents, assaults, or any number of other traumatic events. While we all experience these difficult periods of life (sometimes very difficult), we generally find a way to get through them due to our resilience, which we can define simply as the ability to cope and to bounce back from stress and problems. Emotional resilience is partially inborn, but it can (and should) be learned and developed. If you'd like to be able to handle life's challenges (both major and minor) with greater ease, to grow from adversity, and to turn potentially negative events into positive ones, the following steps can help you to become more resilient to stress.

Develop the Right Attitude

Resilient people tend to view life's difficulties as challenges and respond accordingly with action, rather than with fear, self-pity, blame or a "victim mentality." While life can be very challenging, an important step in becoming more resilient is to develop positive self-talk and to remind yourself that you are strong and can grow stronger and wiser as you handle life's challenges.

Become Aware

Part of resilience is emotional awareness; it's important to understand what you're feeling and why. Sometimes people feel overwhelmed with their emotions, and this frightens and immobilizes them. Knowing why you feel upset can provide valuable information about what needs to change in your life.

Develop an Internal Locus of Control

Resilient people believe that they're in control of their lives, and it's true: while we can't control our circumstances, we can control how we respond to those circumstances, and that makes a big difference in our attitudes and in the course our lives take. Fortunately, you can develop an internal locus of control.

Cultivate Optimism

Being an optimist is more than looking on the bright side (though that helps). It's a way of viewing the world where you maximize your strengths and accomplishments and minimize your weaknesses and setbacks. Developing a more optimistic world view can help you become more resilient.

Rally Social Support

While we ultimately face our own challenges, a supportive friend or group of friends can help lighten the load. Those with strong networks of social support tend to stay healthier and happier throughout life and tend to cope well with stress. Conversely, those with little support may find themselves more vulnerable, and those with conflicted and unsupportive relationships tend to fare even worse.

Maintain Your Sense of Humour

If you're able to laugh at life's frustrations, you can have increased immunity, if you will, to stress and adversity. Those with a sense of humour about life tend to experience life as less stressful, are able to bond with others during difficult times, and experience the numerous benefits of laughter. If you can take a step back from difficult situations long enough to maintain your sense of humour, you will be more resilient, too.

Exercise

Exercise has been correlated with stronger levels of resilience. This may be due to the effects of endorphins on one's mood, or the physical health benefits to those who exercise, or both. Regardless, adding a regular exercise habit to your lifestyle can benefit you in more ways than one.

Don't Give Up

While many people know of coping strategies that can help with stress, as with diets and exercise programs, the most successful individuals are those who maintain the effort for the long term. Don't give up on your situation; don't stop working toward getting through it. Trust the process.

Multiple choice questions on 'Life Skills'

1. _____ is a term used to describe a set of basic skills acquired through learning.
 - a) Life skills
 - b) Vocational skills
 - c) Literacy skills
 - d) None of the above

2. The value of life skills is
 - a) Aware of their rights and responsibilities
 - b) Concern about the welfare of others
 - c) Capable of having an influence on the world
 - d) All of the above

3. _____ are defined as psychosocial abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour.
 - a) Recreational skills
 - b) Soft skills
 - c) Life skills
 - d) Vocational skills

4. Time management, getting a job, interview, computer, cooking, driving is the _____.
 - a) Livelihood skill
 - b) Life skill
 - c) Learning skill
 - d) None of the above

5. _____ is the how one person perceives oneself positively/negatively.
 - a) Self-image
 - b) Self-control
 - c) Self-esteem
 - d) Self- talk

6. _____ is the concept that describes the beliefs of an individual or culture.
 - a) Values
 - b) Attitudes
 - c) Behaviour
 - d) Personality

7. Collective qualities or characteristics that distinguish a person _____.
 - a) Attitude
 - b) Personality
 - c) Character

d) Self - image

8. _____ is a balanced curiosity leading to a deeper understanding of another human being.

- a) Empathy
- b) Sympathy
- c) SWOT
- d) Cooperation

9. _____ is defined as the feeling of pity and sorrow for someone else's misfortune.

- a) Empathy
- b) Sympathy
- c) Values
- d) Courtesy

10. _____ thinking enables us to analyse information and experiences.

- a) Critical
- b) Creative
- c) Positive
- d) Negative

11. _____ thinking is not criticism but links positive thinking and creative thinking.

- a) Creative thinking
- b) Critical thinking
- c) Superficial thinking
- d) Self-thinking

12. Critical thinking requires basic qualities such as _____

- a) Open-mindedness
- b) Flexibility
- c) Persistence
- d) All the above

13. Trying to find a solution to a problem is known as _____

- a) Problem-solving
- b) Decision-making
- c) Self-awareness
- d) None of the above

14. _____ is the exchange of information between people

- a) Problem
- b) Communication
- c) Decision
- d) Behaviour

15. Verbal, non-verbal & listening skills come under _____

- a) Effective communication
- b) Self-awareness
- c) Problem-solving
- d) Creative thinking