

Our Visit to Kamshet – Week 5

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Prathamesh, Riya, Shashwata and I have been visiting Kamshet every weekend for the past month to teach underprivileged school girls. Thanks to the collaboration between TOS and the Lila Poonawala Foundation, this made it possible for us to have this experience.

On the first day, we were told that the girls were hand-picked not on the basis of how smart they were, but on the basis of how enthusiastic they were about learning. Still, I had my qualms about whether or not they would be as excited to acquire the knowledge I was sharing, as I was to teach them. The girls did not let me down. In fact, I was pleased to see that they were more eager than I was!

Albert Einstein's quote, "It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy in creative expression and knowledge", until a few weeks ago, was to me just another one of those quotes you hear in those speeches that those famous people give. Only recently have I understood the meaning of these words and tried my best to implement them in the case of the Lila Juniors. The girls have certainly made the sessions mutually interesting and fun by their passionate interactions in the group. The way they perceive learning is just downright joyful! They are extremely brilliant as well. While most of us at school set timers for lunch break, these girls sometimes refuse to have their ten-minute break until their curiosity is sated, at least for the time being.

I think we have all created more of an emotional bond with our students as well. They are extremely sweet and often get me samples of the newly harvested fruits or vegetables from their farms, while I try to reciprocate by baking and cooking few of my special delicacies for them and giving them star stickers on their completed assignments.

As Cesar Chavez rightly said, "Students must have initiative; they should not be mere imitators. They must learn to think and act for themselves- and be free." That is what we all should aspire to instill within ourselves: the learning experiences to be self-reliant and to be the originators, not the mimics.

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