

# CONFLUENCE

Daffodils Toastmasters  
More than a club!



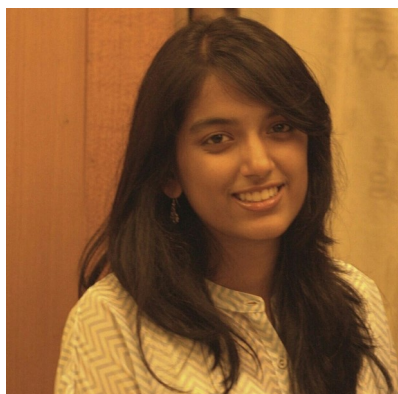
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# Editorial



**Aishwarya Krishnan**

*“ so your dad is from Chennai  
and mom is from Kochi?”  
I am never tired of answering  
such random questions.*

“I speak Tamil at home... with a mix of Malayalam. But my native is Kerala.”

These are the words I repeatedly tell my confused friends over this bizarre identity. I belong to the Palakkad Iyer community - A group of people who migrated to Kerala from Tamil Nadu for business. My ancestors would have been a part of that group and settled in Palakkad. Hence the name ‘Palakkad Iyers’, definition of which is ‘a person whose either parents or both parents belong to Palakkad district in Kerala but were raised away from Kerala in other cities in India’.

We love our math, curd rice and, of course, Carnatic music. And our mornings have to begin with filter coffee, the hindu newspaper and MS Subbalakshmi's Suprabhatam playing from the stereo in the background. A community which is a hybrid of 2 states- Kerala and Tamil Nadu, our culture too is heavily influenced by both states. Our language is a confluence of Tamil and Malayalam, which leaves many people confused.

Celebrating festivals like Onam and Pongal, leave our friends totally perplexed which leads them to asking peculiar questions like, “so your dad is from Chennai and mom is from Kochi?”

I am never tired of answering such random questions. In fact, it makes me happy. When more people ask about our hybrid traditions, we ensure that our identity is not lost. And this hybridism is what sets us apart.

Just as my community, our newsletter too is a confluence. A confluence of intriguing and thought provoking stories from our members and hard and dedication of the newsletter team. The main purpose of releasing this edition of newsletter is to give a chance to the old as well as new members at Daffodils, to show off their writing skills and set them apart from the rest. It also shows how far Daffodilians have come in the last six months and what the club has achieved.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the members who have contributed towards this newsletter. I would also like to express my deepest gratitude to our President Sanjay Khandelwal, VP- Education Siddharth SP, Associate VP-PR Nischal Shetty, Lekha Manjunath and Shweta Shrikant for all their efforts and support in bringing out this newsletter. This newsletter is a confluence of all your efforts.

It has definitely been a wonderful journey and its now your opportunity to experience one.

# President's Address



**Sanjay Khandelwal**

*“While my formal education will help make a living, the education I received from people here will help me have a life.”*

“You will be the same person in five years as you are today except for the people you meet and the books you read.” These words of Stephen Covey describe precisely the reason I got into Toastmasters and what has kept me going - THE PEOPLE.

My life's greatest blessings have come to me in the form of some incredible people, most of whom I met at this beautiful place called Daffodils Toastmasters. They walked in as total strangers; some became friends, some became family and some became unforgettable mentors. However, all of them sprinkled upon me some of the most beautiful lessons and have left an indelible mark on my life.

I walked into Daffodils as a curious youngster wanting to know what really made people sacrifice their precious Saturday evenings. Well, not only did I find the answer, but I also got hooked onto the club myself. Spending time with a doctor, a lawyer, a chartered accountant, an engineer, a trainer and a host of students - all under one roof - made this journey an incredible learning experience. This club has taught me to listen, to understand, to empathize and, most importantly, to have fun in every aspect of life. While my formal education will help make a living, the education I received from people here will help me have a life.

As we now inch close to the culmination of the 25th term and gear up to welcome our new leaders, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the entire Daffodils family, the past presidents and, most importantly, my committee for being a huge source of support and inspiration. Looking back, I am extremely happy about the things we did. But wait! I am not yet content. There are a lot more things we are yet to achieve: most importantly, conquering the District and claiming a place on the international stage. We are a club with great calibre and potential, and it is time we find the place we rightfully deserve. I look forward to working with each one of you and I hope you will join me in fulfilling our collective aspirations.

I wish you all great luck in your journey at Daffodils. Let this place be the confluence of our dreams of being confident communicators.

# What Does it Take to Be a True Daffodilian?

*“A chapter which introduced me to another interesting angle to what I always wanted to be associated with - ‘The Life Coach’.*

It feels like it was only yesterday that I had a Telephonic Conversation with Arjun Sundar Raj. That was the first conversation that I ever had with a Daffodilian. All that I was looking forward for was to talk to a representative of Daffodils Toastmasters Club to check how best Komal and I will fit into Daffodilian scheme of things, so to say.

It's been a little more than a year since that first communication and it appears as if we have come a very long way. Being a part of a young and energetic crowd has left no stone unturned in building a fantastic camaraderie. In no time, this association has promised in full faith to stay true all the way for a long standing relationship.

A genuine sense of contributing to a team creeps in when there are members around you who are dedicated. And I think it is quite natural to have this feeling especially when you have such wonderful Toastmasters surrounding you. Positivity breeds positivity. Taking a leaf out of these inspirational set of hard-working team members, I fancied a thought, a thought of being an integral part of the Working Committee.

This was still the first year for me as a Toastmaster and I had very little idea of how wide the responsibilities would be for a Committee Member. I was not surprised to see assistance and able guidance pouring in from all possible corners. With a few encouraging words and sensible support, here I was 'The Secretary' of Daffodils Toastmasters Club.

One among the many responsibilities of the Secretary that I was made aware of was to record the minutes of Club Meetings. This was one area where I thought I can fine tune the 'writer/blogger' in me. With the sole objective of bringing the Club Meeting experience closer to a reader whilst emphasizing the sense of belongingness, I pitched in with this idea of MOM Photo Blog.

TM Madhusudhan, the then President of our club wholeheartedly encouraged this idea and was instrumental in making this initiative well accepted. Today our MOM Photo Blog has 46 beautifully scripted Meeting-Minutes with eye-catching Photographs, viewed more than 8000 times across

the world covering more than 40 Countries.

Needless to mention again, I must be thankful to every single Daffodilian who has made this possible and has contributed to this success. I then volunteered to be a Mentor for a few upcoming Leaders/Speakers and that was probably the beginning of another whole new chapter. A chapter which introduced me to another interesting angle to what I always wanted to be associated with – 'The Life Coach'.

Knowing the psyche of every new member, understanding and living through their aspirations, their fights against their own fears and helping them to come out with flying colours made me get even closer to the members of the club.

Having a mentor right at the beginning of their journey as a Toastmaster is extremely important and this was probably the best lesson that I learnt being a mentor here at Daffodils. There were times when my mentees came to me with fantastic ideas for their Speeches much before their allotted Speech Slots and that spoke volumes about their enthusiasm. Such outbursts invariably inspired me to run harder with an additional upward thrust without being consciously aware of the efforts.

Getting closer to the mentees opened up a few more gates and this time it was to build a similar kind of rapport with the rest of the Daffodilians. This led to our fun-filled, non-protocol-based, super-ad hoc, absolutely-crazy post Club Meeting experience.

If there is something which is strongly etched in my memories and that is quite capable of bringing a smile on my face wherever I am in years to come, then it has to be all those high-octane laughter experiences that we have enjoyed together. Be it the silliest of jokes or a random act of

madness through twisted accents or a trip down the lane to pull somebody's leg, Daffodilians made me feel that I am still in College - Carefree with an absolutely uncluttered mind. It is always believed that you will remain at peace with yourself only when you are allowed to be who you are from deep within. I could relate to my truest identity while I am along with Daffodilians. And that to me is the ultimate!



**-Kuldeep Vijaykumar.**  
*He is software engineer and a ardent lover of sports lover. Popularly known for his role play session. He recently finished his ACB.*

# I Follow My Religion– Travelism

*“It was featureless and I couldn't see the ground. I saw death there.”*

We have our newsletter coming up. Can you contribute an article for it? Anything from your travel experience will do”, read the message in WhatsApp by Sanjay. Not finding any topic for the rest of the day I asked him for help. “Theme is Confluence”, he replied back. It now became even more difficult for me to come up with a topic. I ran my mind over all the places I had visited over the past year but nothing struck me. Hence I decided to sit down on Saturday, edit one of my blogs, somehow link it to the theme and send it across.

Thursday evening two of my friends messaged me to join them for a trip to hills. Within an hour we had booked 3 tickets to Mandi for the next day. Randomness! Not having any plan in place we googled out for places close to Mandi. Parashar Lake it is! At night while I was in the bus I got another message, “Any update bro?” to which I replied, “Damn, I am on my way to Mandi. Will write there.” I knew the chances of writing an entire article during a short trip with friends were slim. We eventually went to Barot, a village at the valley of River Uhl. After somehow sneaking into the wooden cottage of Barot Guest house, which is actually meant for Government officials (thanks to two girls!), we went around. The gush of river grew louder as we went closer to the edge. There we saw a thin stream joining in to the river. Confluence!

My mind then went to all the places I have travelled to and it hit me that in every place something always merged together. It could be various cultures in Gareeb Nawaz Dargah, Ajmer, Mountains of Dhauladhar ranges in Triund, the streams of Alaknanda and Mandakini in Rudraprayag, Indian and Tibetan food in Dharamshala, various peaks of Himalayan ranges from Chandrashila, different rituals in Manikaran, chaos and peace in Banaras, lakes in Udaipur or various mythological ideas of a temple in Khajuraho. The confluence of aspects was evident if not obvious. I cleared my thoughts and observed the beauty around.

Tableau of dark green fir trees dotted with snow, wispy strands of white fog, and heavy grey clouds up above gave the place a scintillating feel. High altitude trees called Deodar greeted us. The oak and pine forest set the scene with their beauty and grandeur. We just laid down on the well manicured lawn, which had little white flowers all over and butterflies flying from one to another. Lying there in silence I realized how small we and our problems in life actually are. The sheep, cows and horses grazed around lazily, the sun refused to set and leaves rustled slowly. It seemed as if everything suddenly grew lethargic. Whispering of flowers and rustling of leaves and the

murmur of rivulets and the gush of river embraced us.

The wind became more placid, the leaves greener, the sunlight fuller and softer. After having a sumptuous dinner and thoroughly enjoying the star gaze we got up in the morning when sun was stealing into the room, enveloping the space with golden glimpse. I walked out on barefoot, feeling the mist on the grass. Sitting under the soft sunlight I sketched the surrounding in diary and mind to never forget the experience. It was now the time to leave the place. We hugged the grass, rolled ourselves on it multiple times and slowly walked out. Barot unequivocally became the most peaceful place. Leaning my head against the window, I watched the scenery zip by. As we kept moving higher, red blooming buransh called rhododendron greeted us along the trail.

We were absolutely bewildered as to what had transpired. At an altitude of 2750 meters the view from Parashar lake was heart warming. The lake shimmered in the sunlight. The greenery all around was conspicuous. I began trekking to the top of mountain. Due to the steepness I had to hold on myself, gather some courage and move further. After reaching the tip I walked further to sit at the edge. It was featureless and I couldn't see the ground. I saw death there. The depth was treacherous. I was afraid. But the trick is to remain calm despite my heart pounding like a bass drum and seeing death right under the nose. Everyone has fears, conquering it is what matters.

The glistening snow capped mountains shone like gold. After being completely mesmerised the beauty, I began trekking back. The evening's gathering mist gave me a cold sensation. We failed to register the enormity of the dark sky and what was coming. A squall was brewing on the horizon. After a respite of peace, we began our journey back with a heavy heart. By now the confluence of the idea of a busy life in the city and the craving for the valleys and hills had settled in me and that's when I remembered..

*“Then I look beyond the city and meditate  
Upon the wilderness and its revered  
Beauty and its speaking silence; its  
Knolls and valleys and lofty trees; its  
Fragrant flowers and brisk brooks and  
Singing birds.”*

- Kahlil Gibran



**-Nikhil Jain**  
*A former member of Daffodils, Nikhil is a travel enthusiast and an avid blogger. He was selected for the prestigious Young India Fellowship in 2013 and is currently based in Delhi.*

# The Forward

*“For that idea to reach out further, it must discard its authorship. Only when it loses that burden can it be infinitely shared and forwarded.”*

It was roughly seven years ago that I was handed my first cell phone. Soon enough, I had a small circle of friends who used to send me jokes through SMS. Jokes, of course, are those marvelous human inventions that succeed in bringing a smile – often a laugh – on to our faces no matter what time of the day; no matter what frame of mind we’re in. They may involve slight sarcasm, satire, or an alternate way of looking at everyday things, people or events. Most jokes also require our intelligence to decipher their subtle or brazenly cunning content; and the effort involved makes us doubly delighted. We are pleased with the joke and also gladdened at our cleverness in having understood it.

I was, naturally, overjoyed at having such a wonderful bunch of friends who made my life merrier. One day in school, I met a certain friend and remarked on the hilariousness of the joke he had sent the previous evening. I extolled his sense of humour. He replied, “Don’t thank me. It was just a forward.” “What do you mean by forward?” “You know, someone sent me the joke. I forwarded it to you.”

That day, I learned that none of my friends were actually ‘funny.’ They all had been forwarding jokes that someone else had sent them. And that someone else also received the joke from someone else and so on. Moral of the story: Nobody knows who made the joke. Everybody merely shared the joke. This got me wondering if anybody makes jokes at all.

Almost everyone is either recounting or forwarding jokes that he or she has heard or received. I felt sorry for the poor ol’ joke – an orphan which endlessly travelled from one cell phone to another, turning many a frown upside down.

But then, how could jokes have no jokers? Had Evolution and Natural Selection gone that far? Surely not! And so I turned my sorrow to that poor ol’ joker – a faceless chap who had a strange musing and innocently shared it with a friend.

And that witty notion travelled far and wide, without bearing his name and inherited by many an artless father who propounded the orphan joke to win the admiration of his own friends. How would a novelist feel if her novel sold a million copies – none bearing her name? How would an artist feel if his masterful painting were sold for a million dollars, and no one remembered who painted the picture?

Wouldn’t Newton turn in his grave if millions of curious children learned the ‘unclaimed’ Three Laws of Motion in physics class? So why is nobody staking claim to a joke he or she has made? The answer is that we live in an age of connectivity and the Internet. An age where ideas matter and ideators don’t.

A merciless information democracy where all men are made equal and where all people with ideas stand to lose what sets them apart – their authorship. A curious anomaly is the pantheon of celebrities and popular pages on social media. These pages are accorded heroic status. But for most people on the Internet, the reality is different. Their ideas have a limited audience. For that idea to reach out further, it must discard its authorship. Only when it loses that burden can it be infinitely shared and forwarded. The anonymous joke writer must accept this reality. Just like his joke, he must learn to move on and make more men merry.



**-Nischal Shetty**  
*A blogger and a humourist. Nischal is popular for his memes and has a passion for reading, writing and speaking.*

## Little Leaders

*“It seemed to me as if the children were learning a new language without knowing how to create literature with their newly acquired skills.”*

Titles don't drive me. Neither do perks, nor the number of people in my reporting hierarchy. What drives me is relevance -- my relevance in another's life, in this city, in this country, and in this world !

We have been told that what sets us apart , as humans are our abilities to think , choose, judge , love and laugh. To me it is our desire to chase this unique need called relevance!

In order to be relevant, I needed to have something I alone could offer.

During my toastmasters journey, I had three learning : firstly , that anyone can become a good communicator, secondly communication is only effective when purposeful, and lastly that constructive feedback is the key to improvement.

During my IT professional career, I conducted many job interviews and observed that on an average, the candidates from India lack communication abilities in comparison to their American counterparts. It then occurred to me to apply those what I gleaned from Toastmasters to help Indian youth become good communicators. That's what gave rise to my involvement with the Youth Leadership Program, or YLP. After several pilot trials in various school and non-school settings , I had identified most potential obstacles and the path beyond them.

The next step was to scale YLP to benefit college students , who in turn would lead YLP programs in nearby schools.

While working on the scalability model, I felt that something was amiss. It seemed to me as if the children were learning a new language without knowing how to create literature with their newly acquired skills.

While communication and leadership skills are useful for any purpose, couldn't they be applied specifically for nurturing civic leadership, the need of the hour in India?

This realization brought me in contact with Jwalamukhi, an NGO focused on nurturing civic awareness and civic responsibility among school children with assistance from college students. To me it was the perfect match! YLP taught structured organization and communication skills while Jwalamukhi taught civic awareness and responsibility, an ideal combination for nurturing civic leadership!

As we sit down to draw up the civic leadership program structure for the upcoming academic year, I can hardly contain my enthusiasm. My inner compass is indicating that we are heading in the right direction. Of course, there will be challenges to overcome and mid-course corrections to be made, but with faith in the guidance of the inner compass, I am quite sure that the journey is going to be exhilarating and fulfilling.



**- Dr. Tarak Goradia**  
**A business intelligence**  
**Architect by profession .**  
**Dr Tarak is the chief coach**  
**and founder of Daffodils**  
**Youth Leadership**  
**Program designed for**  
**school kids.**



## How to Eat a South Indian Meal

*“Now comes the heroine-the Sambhar. Have her poured into the volcanic hole and using your hand, break the mountain so that she flows like volcanic lava from the rice mountain”*

Savouring a South Indian vegetarian meal has always been a pleasure for me and – I am sure – for many of you. The real pleasure is when we bring Art into the eating of each of those dishes that are served on the plantain leaf. Before we embark on the journey of knowing what this Art is, there is a set of precursors which one has to follow.

While waiting for your turn to sit at the table, be a meticulous observer of other diners and their plantain leaves. The facial expressions of these fellow diners help in judging the quality and taste of the dishes that are being served. In addition to this, pay attention to their whispers and note which dishes are left over when they finish eating. These tips would certainly help you decide which dishes to look forward to and which dishes to avoid.

Now it's time for action. When you sit down at the table, ensure that you have a big plantain leaf without any holes or tears. This is imperative as the leaf forms the platform for the subsequent events.

To begin with, avoid filling up on starters like palya, poriyals, kosambari or chutney. I would recommend that you have just enough to savour the taste. Immediately after these starters comes either poori or roti or, in some cases, dosa. It is advisable to have no more than just one or two.

Now be prepared for the show stoppers; the hero and heroine of the show. Just before you welcome them, make sufficient space on your plantain leaf and wait for their entry. As soon as the Rice arrives, welcome him warmly and make him rest on the plantain leaf. Now there are several ways to rest the rice on the leaf. Personally my favourite is creating a big mountain with a

hole in the middle (like a volcano). Now comes the heroine – the Sambhar. Have her poured into the volcanic hole and using your hand, break the mountain so that she flows like volcanic lava from the rice mountain. It is a real treat to watch the Red Lava oozing from the White Mountain.

Next comes the Sambhar's sister – the Rasam. She is little naughty and an expert in salsa dance. At times, she jumps off the leaf and spills onto your shirt or trouser. So as soon as the rasam is poured inside the volcanic hole, immediately mix the rice with the rasam and squeeze them together till they look like kichadi. Now start eating. I can assure you that when the rasam is consumed in the aforementioned manner, it tastes like Heaven.

The Curd has got its own special place in the entire meal. The real taste of cherishing curd-rice relies on the quality of the curd. If the curd is sweet, it makes you smile. If it is sour, it makes you cringe. So it is better to check with your neighbour about the taste of the curd and accordingly plan for it.

By expertly mixing the right proportions of sambar or rasam with the curd, you can even improve the taste. Sweets – though, personally, I am not a big fan - help end the meal on a sweet note.

Friends! Having narrated the theory behind the Art of eating, I expect readers to invite me to conduct practical session. Until then, do keep practising.



*-Raghu Sidappa*

*A Insurance Consultant and a passionate trainer Raghu loves travelling, meeting new people, and eating South Indian meals. He also loves Humour and never misses an opportunity to crack a joke.*

## Daffodils' Milestone Meeting– 600.

What happens when a bunch of adult youngsters get the freedom to go wild? A meeting so memorable and enjoyable others can't compare. The 600th meeting started well, with a bus journey whose duration went unnoticed by the entertaining games on board. Up next was a sumptuous breakfast, games and activities an amazing lunch and a meeting like no other. Members then showed their sportsmanship and physical prowess in a variety of activities - volleyball, cricket and football. Rounding off was the riff off in the bus journey back - testing the young and the younger, the men against the women, the Tamilians against everyone else. All in all - a day that will be etched in our minds for a long while.

*-Neeti Joshua*

*Pondering on life's mysteries and other  
existential dilemmas when  
not struggling to clear engineering.*





## What Happens Next?

*“I first heard a long silence, then heard her breathe heavily on the other end and finally, I heard the engaged tone.”*

On a warm Sunday night, a very dear cousin of mine called.

Melly: “Hello! Hi Melly here.”

Me: “Hey Melly, how are you?”

Melly: “I’m good. How about you?”

Me: “I’m fine. What’s the update?”

Melly: “I’m leaving Hyderabad now. Will be reaching Bangalore in the morning.”

Me: “sounds good. See you soon!”

The preparation for Melly’s arrival was at its peak. Mom and granny were in charge of food preparation. Dad and I were in charge of the itinerary. Melly was coming over to Bangalore after a very long time. Our excitement knew no bounds.

It was an uneasy night. After a lot of tossing and turning on the bed, I got up and checked the time. It was just 11:55 pm. I got out of bed and took a walk around the house, drank some water, went back to my room and peeped out of my window. I saw two cats fighting and an old man sitting on the footpath, smoking. The leaves rustled due to the breeze. Finally feeling sleepy, I went to bed, pulled on my blanket, switched on the air conditioner and fell asleep. I suddenly woke up to a loud cry. People were screaming downstairs. I peeped outside the window.

The garden lights were on and I could see my granny and mom crying. Dad came out of the house and shouted, “Harsha, throw the car key quickly.”

I fetched the key and threw it towards him. Dad got into the car and zoomed away. I couldn’t understand what was happening. I went down to check what this commotion was all about.

Relatives poured into the house and were all profusely crying. I still couldn’t figure out why. Finally, mom said, “Harsha be strong.” I started to panic. Uncle switched on the television and played the news channel. The headlines read, “TRAIN TRAVELLING FROM HYDERABAD TO BANGALORE HAS COLLIDED WITH A GOODS TRAIN. NOT A SINGLE SURVIVOR FOUND YET.”

Alas, I had lost my dearest cousin Melly. She had died in the accident. I couldn’t come to terms with the situation. I called up Anu aunty, Melly’s mom to tell her about this devastating

accident. As I held the phone, my hands froze and my knees were getting weak. But I mustered all the courage I had. It wasn’t easy breaking the news to her. I told her what had happened. I first heard a long silence, then heard her breathe heavily on the other end and finally, I heard the engaged tone. She had hung up.

Weeping, she came over to our place as soon as possible. By now more relatives and Melly’s friends had started coming in to give their condolences and were consoling each other. It was a huge loss for us all. A loss that was irreplaceable. The loss of a daughter, a sister and a best friend.

By now I had started to feel guilty for having invited her to come to Bangalore. All the childhood memories I had had with her flashed in front of my face. Late night gossips; ice creams; the walks on the deserted, dark alleys; countless family gatherings; movies; girlfriend issues – name it and we had covered it all. Memories that I would cherish for a lifetime.

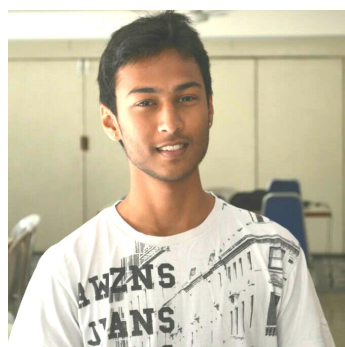
We got into the car and went to the accident site. It was a long and sad drive. On reaching there, we were surprised and shocked. Melly was alive and was lying down on my dad’s lap. She was badly injured and unconscious. We rushed her to a hospital. By now it was around 4:30 am. Her condition was very critical. The doctors asked us to not have much hopes on. Melly’s survival chances. Her mother was inconsolable. Her only daughter was fighting for her life in the operation theatre.

I heard a loud noise. I opened my eyes.....

My phone was ringing. Melly’s name was flashing on the screen. The time was 5:30 am. I answered the call. I heaved a sigh of relief when I heard Melly’s voice. She said she’d reach Bangalore in another 45 minutes. I couldn’t believe this. I wanted someone to pinch me so that I knew I wasn’t dreaming. I ran downstairs and saw everyone busy chatting and enjoying tea.

I still wasn’t quite convinced yet. I dressed up and left for the station. As soon as I saw Melly, I gave her a tight hug. A hug I’ve probably never given her before.

.....Thank god it was just a dream.



**Harsha Tej**  
*An entrepreneur and an adventure seeker, spends most of his free time exploring places.*

# A Chat With the Champs



*Champions with DTM Dr Ram Jayaraman*

## *Siddharth SP (contestant at District Conference- International Speech Contest)*

### **How did you feel while speaking on stage during the contest?**

Gathering the audience attention for 8 minutes is one of the hardest aspects for anyone who aspires to be a Public Speaker and when you know that 400-500 people are investing their time for you, that's the most I could ask for. Going up on stage and speaking to a large audience was the main reason why I had joined Toastmasters. To see that unfold with my very own eyes is something that I would hold dear for years to come.

### **What lessons did you learn from the experience?**

The one lesson that I would take back home after the contest is "Winning is not everything" - This may sound like a clichéd saying that anyone who fails to win, would tell. But that joy, when people come up to you and tell you that they were moved to tears because of your speech - that defines success to me as a Speaker.

## *Nikhil Rao (2<sup>nd</sup> runner up at Division Conference- International Speech Contest)*

### **How did you feel while speaking on stage during the contest?**

It sure has been sensational to speak on the stage. The feeling aroused a sense of Achievement, Acknowledgement and Aspiration. A chievement considering the stage has brought an opportunity to learn, grow. Acknowledging the efforts and support I've received from my mentor, parents, friends, the audience and of course, self-

gratification for a cause I've always believed towards. Aspiration to touch many lives, once again.

### **What lessons did you learn from the experience?**

The lesson that the potential in me is invincible. It's only time, to be victorious.

## *Harsha Tej (contestant at Division Conference- Table Topics Contest)*

### **How did you feel while speaking on stage during the contest?**

It was my first ever contest. I didn't even think I would qualify. All I wanted to do was give it my best. I went on to the stage with a mind-set, I have nothing to lose, let me give it my best. As I got on to the stage and heard the topic, thoughts just ran through my mind and I could convey what I wanted to say. It is a magnificent feeling, when you're able to convey to the audience of what you're exactly thinking.

### **What lessons did you learn from the experience?**

The contest as a whole was my biggest take away. A person like me who would shiver to talk in front of a couple of people a year ago, now I can speak in front of any number of people. The contest has thought me the lesson ,that nothing works out without practice. It also made me realize the potential in me. The last and important lesson, every toastmaster was ready to help all times.

# Educational Session

*Art of story telling by Dr. Rajdeep Manwani*



**Dr. Rajdeep Manwani**

"The story is one that you and I will construct together in your memory. If the story means anything to you at all, then when you remember it afterwards, think of it, not as something I created, but rather as something that we made together." - Orson Scott Card.

Since childhood, I was always fascinated by stories (Seriously, who isn't!?). Stories can make one laugh or cry, visualise, motivate, inspire, so on and so forth! As speakers, it is important to connect with the audience, and one of the easiest ways to do it, is by telling a story.

On April 04, 2015, the VPE team invited DTM Dr Rajdeep Manwani to conduct a session on the "Art of Storytelling". Dr Manwani comes across as the quintessential story teller. With just three simple stories, he gave the the Cs of storytelling, Here's my understanding of the three Cs -

1. The Challenge Plot
2. The Connection Plot
3. The Curiosity Plot

### **1. The Challenge plot:**

When everything is going good in your story, it sounds monotonous. There should be something that has challenged you in your story. This is called a conflict. A conflict is a situation that is out of the usual. A conflict makes the audience lean forward and listen to your story. One obvious question here is, when should you introduce the conflict in your story? Well, the answer is 'as early as possible'.

Establishing conflict early in your story establishes the connection with your audience. As the 1999 WCPS, Craig Valentine says, "conflict is the hook!" A Conflict acts as the challenge plot in your story.

*"The three keys for successful storytelling are - the conflict, the characters and the climax."*

### **2. The Connection plot:**

A story connects with your audience when the audience sees, hears and feels your story. Introducing as few as two or three characters involved in your story helps you connect with the audience better. And fewer the characters in your story, the less confusing it is. Characters expand the scope for using dialogues in your story. And dialogues give a life to your story and brings it live in front of your audience. This way, you connect with the audience better. Hence, Characters become the connection plot in your story!

### **3. The Curiosity plot:**

What makes us sit glued to our seats in a three-hour movie? It's the curiosity plot in the movie, isn't it? Movie scripts are written to keep us guessing as to what happens next in the movie. We become curious to find out what happens next, and hence, sit till the movie ends (except in cases where we're forced to :P) in other words, the movie is built up till its climax. It's the same in storytelling. It is important to build your story till the climax. Bringing out such events in your story increases the curiosity in your audience until you give your climax!

To sum up, the three keys for successful storytelling are - the conflict, the characters and the climax.

As a student of storytelling, this session opened my eyes to these key aspects of this wonderful art and make my stories memorable with conflict, characters and climax!



**Arjun Sundarraj**  
*He is one of the 90 leaders selected from around the world for the StartingBloc, New York. He is also the former President of Daffodils Toastmasters. (Jan-June 2014)*

# Educational Session:

## *Get-Set-Go Spontaneity by Ushy Mohandas*



**Dr. Ushy Mohandas**

*“Down came my mother with a broom. She was kind enough to not scold me, instead gave me the broom to clean the house!”*

As a Toastmaster, each of us would have gone through this typical scenario: Called on stage during Table topics, and given a topic by the Table topics master. Without any clue whatsoever, we stare at the audience for a minute before the green card pops up and the audience start to clap. Not knowing whether we have accomplished a feat, we move back to our seat.

Have you ever been stuck in such a situation, where you have been put in a spot and you are unable to gather your thought? That’s exactly how I felt, each time I was made to think “On my feet!”, until I sat through the Educational session conducted by Dr. Ushy Mohandas on, “Get-Set-Go Spontaneity.”

A session filled with a lot of take home values, “Get-Set-Go Spontaneity”, gave us numerous ways to tackle the common problem that unites all Toastmasters – Table topics! The various ways to tackle it are as follows:

1. Point – Reason – Example – Point
2. Past – Present - Future
3. Cause – Effect – Remedy

### **1. PREP (Point – Reason – Example – Point)**

“Keep it Simple”, said the Just A Minute master as he gave Arnav, the topic to speak on. The smile across Arnav’s face turned into a frown. He took his time and said, “Life is about keeping it simple because the more you try to complicate, the harder it is for you to explain.

Do we remember our teachers for setting an easy question paper or a hard one?”

The biggest challenge for a speaker is to convince the audience. For one to do that one can follow the PREP approach. Stating the point and reasoning it out gives a logical clarity to the audience and to substantiate it with an example gives an easy digestion.

### **2. PPF (Past – Present – Future)**

“Gone are the times when, one had to send messages through pigeons to strike a conversation. With the advent of phones, it is easier to have a conversation with the loved ones. And it’s a matter of time before teleportation kicks in.” Every event has a backdrop to it. A smart way to talk about the event is to tell about it’s past, present scenario and how the future would be affected by it.

### **3. CER (Cause – Effect – Remedy)**

“It was on a Sunday morning when I decided to play Cricket inside my house. The little boy in me told me to smash the ball and I ended up breaking the Flower Vase. Down came my mother with a broom. She was kind enough to not scold me, instead gave me the broom to clean the house!” Every problem has the CER syndrome! Giving the cause, effect and the possible solution to the problem would help the audience understand your point of view.

These were the 3 points that I took back home after attending the session. A session filled with lots of fun and learning it surely made the Saturday evening worthwhile.



**Siddharth SP**  
Pursuing engineering.  
Has a passion for  
kick-boxing and football.  
Represented Daffodils at the  
District Conference- '15.

# Awards



**Madhu Sudan**  
Completed ACB



**Kuldeep Vijaykumar**  
Completed ACB



**Arjun Sundarraj**  
Completed ACB



**Kiran Satya**  
Completed CC and CL



**Aditya Kamath**  
Completed CC and CL



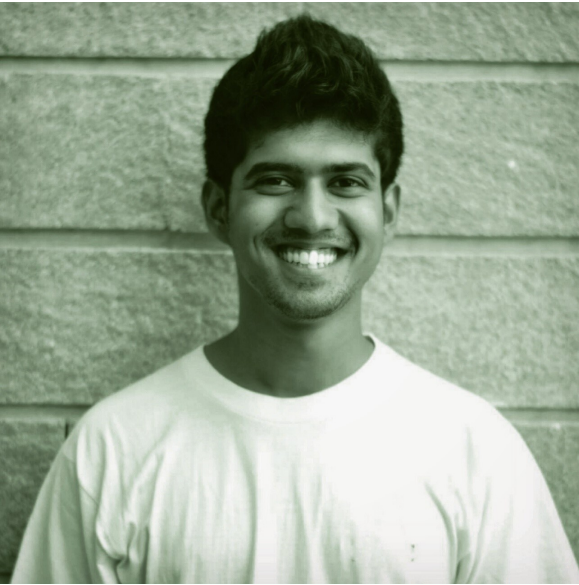
**Toastmaster of the Year 2014-15**  
**Raghu Sidappa**



**Toastmaster of the term**  
**Jan-June 2015**  
**Komal Jayaram**



## Awards



**Siddharth SP**

Contestant at District Conference  
– Coronation '15  
(International Speech Contest)



**Sanjay Khandelwal**

Will be joining the prestigious Young  
India Fellowship at Ashoka University  
for the year 2015-16.



**Prahalad—1st runner up and Sindhu Bharadwaj– Winner of IBM– BETC  
Ice Breaker Contest.**



## Letter From Daniel Rex

Dear friends of the Daffodils Toastmasters Club:

What has the potential to make a Toastmasters club exceptional? I encourage you to increase your familiarity with The Moments of Truth — these moments in time that create and support an environment of success and achievement. When I visited your club I immersed myself in the First Impressions you provided — the welcome, the venue — the amiability that results in positivity for guests and members alike.

I experienced first hand your expertise at Program Planning and Meeting Organization — a beautifully conducted meeting that was clearly put together with much forethought.

Do these continue? I believe I hear a resounding “Yes!” from your enthusiastic members! Please continue to be exceptional — and regularly monitor and measure your club using The Moments of Truth.

Warmest personal regards,

Daniel Rex  
Chief Executive Officer  
Toastmasters International  
Where Leaders Are Made.



Daffodils Toastmasters left a legacy in the minds of students at Kendriya Vidyalaya, Malleswaram (KVM). In August 2013, TM Tarak Goradia with enthusiastic Daffodilians conducted Youth Leadership Program (YLP) for eighth grade students at KVM. After 8 weeks, the program ended with grand finale.

Urged with desire the to continue with Toastmasters, the students contacted Daffodilians to start a Gavel club in their school premises.

Budding leaders took all the initiative, right from persuading their Principal to grant permission to availing venue for the meeting to convincing their parents to attend the meeting.

## Gavel Club

With executive committee elected under President-ship of Gavelier Akanksha Ramakrishnan, the club is christened as Minions Gavel club.

The club is in its nascent stage and in the coming academic year, this club will be officially chartered as Gavel club at Toastmasters International.

Congrats and cheers to all Daffodilians and Gaveliers.



*-Poornima Srinivasan  
Engineer by profession.  
Dance and music is her fascination.  
Imagination through words  
allures her.*

# Toastmasters International



Toastmasters is a non-profit, educational organisation that teaches people public speaking and leadership skills through a world wide network of meeting locations. Head quartered in Rancho, San Margarita, California, the organisation's membership exceeds 2,96,000, in more that 14,350 clubs in 122 countries. Since 1924, Toastmasters has helped people of all backgrounds become more confident in front of the audience. Thus making it a world leader in offering its members the most effective way to practice the art of communication and leadership skills.

## Daffodils Toastmasters Club

Daffodils Toastmasters was officially recognised on 12th June, 2003 by Toastmasters International. The Club is devoted to the improvement of individual communication and leadership skills.

Daffodils had been distinguished ever since its inception and our biggest testimony come from the Executive Director of Toastmasters International, Daniel Rex who termed Daffodils as *"the Best Club in the World."*

We meet every Saturday between 6 pm and 8 pm at  
No 9, Fourth Floor, Dr K.P Nayak's Residence,  
1st Cross, Sampige Road, Malleswaram,  
Bangalore - 560003



### The Committee– January-June 2015.

Top L-R: **Madhu Sudan** ( Immediate past President), **Sanjay Khandelwal** (President), **Ananthnag Eknath** (Treasurer), **Siddharth SP** (VP-Education), **Kuldeep Vijaykumar** (Associate VP-Education), **Nischal Shetty** (Associate VP-Public Relations), **Aishwarya Krishnan** (VP-Public Relations), **Monika** (Associate VP-Membership), **JK Maithili** (VP-Membership), **Komal Jayaram** (Secretary), **Sindhu Bharadwaj** ( Associate Secretary), **Ashwini Kumar** (Sergeant), **Sangeetha Kiran & Guruprasad** ( Associate Sergeants).



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