
NO AGE LIMIT

– Jissy Thomas, Baroda

Teaching is my profession and I love it. I feel that this profession has given me ample opportunity to improve my skills. I try to make learning an interesting experience. Sometimes, my students ask so many questions that they test my patience and knowledge too but it's such a pleasure when they go to another section, meet me in the corridor of the school and tell me that they still remember how well I had taught them.

Over the years, I have learnt that a good teacher is always a good learner also. Two recent instances strengthened my belief that there's still a lot more to learn.

I had accompanied my students to a picnic spot, a health resort in the city. There was a rope bridge. Its height was lower than usual so that even little students could climb. Although the bridge's height was low, there was a possibility of getting injured while climbing or getting down. Many students started climbing under the watchful eyes of the teachers. I was amazed to see how agile some of the students

were! Then came the toughest part; one student insisted that I must also climb that bridge. I told her that I'd surely climb but after all the students had climbed. When it was my turn, I was very nervous because my pulse rate was very high and my hands trembled a lot. I thought if I had to hold the rope of the bridge with trembling hands, how would I be able to cross over to the other side? But then I saw my students looking at me with the hope that I would keep the promise of climbing the bridge. So I said a small prayer and climbed the rope ladder.

As I reached the bridge and took the first few steps, the students started cheering me. Then I lost my balance as the bridge leaned towards the right side. I thought that was the end of it. Then I heard one of the students say "Ma'am, keep your leg in the centre of the bridge. Then you won't fall." I said to myself "How foolish of me to put my leg on one side! How on earth could I forget the simple principle of science that I learnt in school—that of equal distribution of body weight on both the sides?" I followed that

student's advice and reached the other side of the bridge and climbed down. The students were happy to see their teacher perform a great feat and the teacher was happy that she was able to fulfill the promise made.

The second instance too happened in school. During the Sports Day, the Principal assigned the duty of making announcements to me. I had never undertaken that duty before; so I didn't know how to do it. I thought I must give it a try. I took suggestions from the other teachers who had done this duty before. On the day of the event, I was a bit scared because the Principal was sitting in the opposite lane and she could see all my movements. What if I committed a mistake! As the event progressed, though, I regained my confidence, I was able to make some impromptu comments also which were liked by everyone. After the programme got over, the Principal appreciated my efforts. I was happy.

If you keep your eyes and ears open, you can learn a lot from others. There's a saying that you can't teach new tricks to an old dog. But I don't agree. Age is in the mind. As long as you feel young, you are young. And yes, you can always revise the chapters that you learnt in school, as life progresses.