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The Doon School WEEKLY

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Editorial

"Change is good"

Change is the only constant. And as this year's Editorial Board changes hands, so does one of the key components of creating the Weekly: our software. After years of using Adobe Pagemaker, we have decided to move on and modernize (just like the school has) to CorelDRAW. Now, this may seem insignificant to most of you who read this, but the fact remains that it means a lot. It is a deviation from a system more than half a decade old, and this software has seen more Editors-in-Chief than I have. Pagemaker represented the archaic spirit of the Weekly, but it is time for the 'nouveau et amélioré' softwares to take its place. You may have noticed slight changes in the layout as well; these were a long time coming. It is the way any publication hopes to survive; aesthetically pleasing magazines are the way forward. We also celebrate the end of an era, i.e. the departure of the SC-formers. I call it an era because it seems like an era ago when I first saw the Weekly in 2009, and I joined the Board in late 2010. It also seems that my form-mates and I on the Board have progressed almost parallel to them, yet in a flash they are no longer on the board. Although I am proud to be Editor-in-Chief, I am more proud to have been a part of the Board during the time of my predecessors. Utkarsh's thrilling creative pieces, Madhav's ever-wry cartoons, Vikram's cheeky Roving Eyes and Week Gone By, Kunal's incisive analyses and Raniz's political thoughts have shaped and moulded me through the years, and it's safe to assume that they have molded my fellow Board members as well. We may have had our differences, fights and arguments, but what we'll always remember are the passwords, the 'enti' meetings, the fun in the Room and, of course, a job well done. Au revoir!

There are many things that are left unsaid when one anticipates both a departure and an arrival. It was four years ago that I joined this Board, and I owe it all to Ms Stuti Kutbiala, who transformed me from a bored student scribbling away at his notebook to what I am today. I am equally indebted to Mrs Priya Chaturvedi whose constant critique and appreciation has made me feel proud on many an occasion. I also am grateful to the current managers of the Weekly, SNA, AGS and UDV for never losing faith in me, and for bearing with me every time I had let them down or made a mistake. To conclude, I would just like to thank the only reason anyone, anywhere, writes anything of any worth: the reader. All the LTTEs, the erratas and the feedback I have received during my time on the board have changed my way of writing, editing and even thinking. I am looking forward to a further strengthening of this symbiotic relationship in the months to follow.

The Headmaster's Speech

Looking back over the past twelve months, despite wider anxieties about the state of the economy in particular and the nation in general, it has been a good year for the rising generation of DoscOs. The common feature of that period has been that we are bucking a number of national and international trends.

For a start, just in our continued existence we are defying a global trend. Boys' boarding schools are either disappearing across the world or becoming co-educational or not being built at all, so our sector is a rapidly diminishing proportion of the global educational pie chart – no-one is building boys-only, fully boarding schools for the 12-18 age group on large, beautiful campuses. There is no money in it, it seems, so we are an increasingly rare species: in the UK, there used to be hundreds like us; now there are only six schools of this nature.

In academics, we are bucking the worldwide trend of boys' underachievement. Everywhere, including India, girls are outperforming boys in admissions and attainment at school and university levels. At Doon this year we had record levels of attainment at ICSE and ISC, as well as at the IB level. We are one of the few IB schools, and the only major one anywhere in India, offering a dual curriculum with the same teachers delivering the two systems for the same fee. Our university and college placements at home and abroad are going from strength to strength, with two of our ISC boys going to IITs straight from Class XII under the new rules for admission. Yet, in general, all around the world, while girls' results are improving, boys' results are lagging.

We are also bucking the trend towards a narrower and narrower education for boys and girls; never have there been so many sports and activities at Doon, and for those who have been here over the past two days or in this Rose Bowl last night, you will have seen that the standard is excellent and even outstanding – the latter is a much overused word, but true of a great deal of what our masters and students do in and out of the classroom. There is a good deal of lip service paid to the importance of co-curricular and extra-curricular

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Regulars

GAMES BLAZERS

The following boys have been awarded the Games Blazer: Ishan Sandhu, Raghav Kothiwal, Ashish Rao and Waseefullah Khan
Congratulations!

PT

The following boys have been awarded the **PT Jersey**: Rishabh Chadda, Divij Batra, Zahaan Qureshi, Raghav Kothiwal and Dhruv Prasad
Congratulations!

COLOURS

The following have been awarded **Dramatics Colours**:

Sachin Mehra, Mihir Kiran, Jai Ahuja, Aashim Bansal, Sahir Chaudhary, Ritesh Shinde (re-awarded) and Malini Malaviya (re-awarded).

Pranjal Bhatt and Pritika Sandhu have been awarded **Art Colours**.

The following boys have been awarded **Music Colours for Dance**:

Nayan Manchanda, Vatsal Goenka, Abhishek Kakkar and Agni Raj Singh (re-awarded for the 2nd time)

The following boys have been awarded **Dramatics Colours**:

Arjun Sharma, Devesh Sharma
Congratulations!

IPSC NEWS

The **School Swimming Team** participated in the **28th All India IPSC Swimming Championship for Boys** held at **DPS RK Puram** in New Delhi from October 8 to 10. In the Under-14 Category, Tanay Gopal Agarwal **won** two **silver** medals, Anish Bhide **won** a **silver** and a **bronze** medal and Kshitij Goel **won** a **bronze** medal. The Junior relay team **won** a **silver** in both the medley and the freestyle relay.

The School participated in the **IPSC Visual Arts Festival, 2013**, held at **Welham Boy's School** from October 7 to 10. Amartya Bhowmick was placed **3rd** in the **Digital Manipulation** Category. Madhav Dutt was placed **2nd** in the **Cartoon and Caricature** Category.
Well done!

AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 WORDS

Famous playback singer Manna Dey passed away at 94. US President Obama questioned Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif over the commencement of the 26/11 trials. A report emerged disclosing that the USA allegedly spied on Angela Merkel. A Chinese high court rejected the appeal of politician Bo Xilai, jailed for life for bribery, embezzlement and abuse of power. Peruvian archaeologists found two mummies thought to be more than 1,000 years old at a burial site in a suburb of Lima.

SCRIBES

The following are the new appointments on the **Editorial Board** of the *Doon School Weekly*:

Editor-in-Chief: Aditya Bhattacharya

Editor: Arjun Kamdar

Senior Editors: Husain Haider, Pulkit Agarwal and Vireshwar Singh Sidhu

We wish them a fruitful tenure!

Errata

In Issue no. 2357, Vallavi Shukla's name was omitted from the Editorial Board under 'Hindi Correspondent'. The *Weekly* deeply regrets this error.

UNQUOTABLE QUOTES

Is this how sorry your state is become?

Devansh Agarwal, a sorry state of affairs indeed.

He's the School Kess Chap!

Aditya Bhattacharya, so it seems.

I regret watching my watch.

Vatsal Agrawal, we wish you'd watch your grammar.

I do so, you do so, do so?

Raghav Bansal, yes we do!

I don't want to feel hurt!

Sabhya Katia, painless it is then!

I'm so thirsty that I could drink two glasses of bottle.

Sarthak Gupta, reservoir dog.

He's already buyed an Iphone 5S!

Mihir Kiran, tele-shopping.

He fell unwell!

Karan Sethy, so did your English!

You are the height of irritation.

Ruhaan Dev Tyagi, measures with confidence.

Are we allowed our lappy for MUN?

Devansh Agarwal, begging for laptops, or is he?



Weekly Selects

Confessions of a Drone Warrior

GQ

Facebook Feminism, Like It or Not

The Baffler

Enduring Exile

Guernica

On the Ground With Syria's News Smugglers

The New Republic

Has David Birnbaum Solved The Mystery of Existence?

The Guardian

Embracing The Void

Aeon

The War of Rape

Washington Monthly

Hidden City

New Yorker

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activities in many schools, but fewer and fewer boys and girls are being given a genuine all-round education simply because most educational systems around the world seem to have ceased to believe in it as a vehicle for human progress. Oh, they will talk and talk about it, but do they actually deliver it? There is a tragic obsession with statistical measures of attainment, often for the good and sad reason that attainment in the past was and still is too low for too many children around the world, but it is quite swiftly strangling what I and most of you here today would call a genuinely good education. If you look at what the increasingly widespread model of education around the nation and the world is actually telling us, a huge amount of what we do at The Doon School is a colossal waste of time when the students could be mugging up their books and going for tuitions in the pursuit of marks.

But the question then remains, if much, if not most, of the world of education is turning its back on a Doon School education, does that not mean that what we do here is increasingly irrelevant? Does it not mean that the Doon model of education – satisfying and edifying as it might be – is like our tigers: majestic, beautiful, but ultimately doomed?

To answer that question, I would like briefly to examine an odd phenomenon.

There is a strange paradox loose in the world today, and that is, the more we know, the less we seem to understand, and the more knowledge we accumulate, the less we behave in alignment with that knowledge. “How did this happen?!” seems to be on everyone's lips, whether it is the financial collapse of 2008 or disasters afflicting the human habitat, or the political upheavals and turmoil across the globe. We have vast oceans of what we call knowledge in the form of “big data” and digitally stored material, but the more we have, the poorer we seem to be at using it. Not only are we asking, like the stunned survivors of a plane crash, “How did this happen?”, but we are also still asking, “How on Earth do we get out of this mess?” – this mess that we endlessly discuss and debate and analyze.

The more we know about industrial pollutants, the more we poison the oceans and pump sewage and toxic chemicals into the Yamuna and Ganga and the waves of the Indian Ocean we sing so respectfully about in Doon School's Song No. 1, the national anthem; the more we know about sharks and their vital importance in the health of the oceans and know that only 15-20 people around the world are killed by sharks a year, the more our irrational fears and greed make us justify killing over 100 million of them a year; the more we know about the delicate ecology of the Himalaya, the more we blow them up and blast them and build inappropriately in them; the more we know about the harmful effects of junk food and the addictive nature of sugar, the more we stuff into our faces; the more we know about the serious physical and mental effects of sleep deprivation, the less sleep we take. The more we know about economics, and the more complex are the computer models we create, the more we and the markets lurch around like drunken sailors on the deck of a ship wallowing in stormy seas. Do we ever stop to think how often we see business news that states: “US economy fails to meet forecasts”, “Indian manufacturing sector falls short of forecasts”, “unemployment figures exceed predictions” running across the bottom of our TV screens? Who is making these predictions and forecasts? There should be a permanent ticker tape at the bottom of the TV screen saying: “Economic analysts got it wrong again today” – that's the real story. I have a simple, what I think is a creative solution to a big problem. Have you noticed that every time someone appears on TV these days, a little sign floats on the screen telling you how smoking can kill you? Well, every time an economist appears, there should be a little floating sign saying, “Warning: Economists have a lot of data but can be dangerous to your financial and economic health” - and no economists should be allowed to appear on TV without an extra-large T-shirt printed with their previous predictions on it so that we can see how good they are at forecasting.

The problem, in my view, lies in the rapidly deteriorating quality of the education we are offering, which is largely driven by what it takes to get into the most sought after universities and colleges. Most of you will be aware of the forgery scandal in the admissions office at Delhi University in 2011, and we are all too aware of the cutoff culture which dominates admissions. But even when the students get to institutions which have become the object of worship and almost universal desire, the education on offer can be seriously deficient. Anyone who has spent any time making a detailed enquiry into the Harvard cheating scandal of last year, in which 125 students were accused of cheating on an exam, and what led up to the incident, will be shocked and dismayed by the low academic and ethical standards of those involved on both sides, and how debased undergraduate education has become in some of the world's universities. Before getting carried away about elite universities, every parent should read Tom Wolfe's novel *I am Charlotte Simmons*; it is set at Dupont university, a fictional blend of Ivy League universities which examines a student culture which focuses on acquiring material wealth, on the hedonistic pursuit of physical pleasure and acquiring social status, with academics a mere incidental in achieving those goals. Professor Allan Bloom, a philosophy professor at Cornell, wrote a searing critique of the poverty of modern college education in *The Closing of the American Mind* in the 1980s, but, like most prophets, he was initially a sensation, and then dismissed and forgotten as a crank.

Our own National Knowledge Commission Working Party on Engineering Education reported in 2008: “Engineering education consists of three well-defined aspects knowledge, knowhow, and character... Character is perhaps the most important component but character building processes are difficult to define and implement.” Now, I have selected engineering because conventional wisdom suggests that engineers need technical competence most – but read the report and you will discover a different perspective. So, we know from the Knowledge Commission what our main educational objective should be, building character, but guess what

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we have been doing with this knowledge – and more studies and reports like it? There they are, piling up all over the world, millions and millions of digitally generated words in report after report about creativity and innovation and what it takes to be an effective leader. Guess how most children in the world are spending their days in classrooms and grades factories and tuitions?

My academic studies as a professional historian and professional career in education have directed me to seeing two huge human deficits: foresight and “joined up thinking”. F. Scott Fitzgerald of *The Great Gatsby* fame once opined that intelligence is the ability to hold two apparently contradictory ideas in your head simultaneously. I agree with that up to a point, but I also see intelligence as the ability to go beyond that and to be about thinking in multiple dimensions.

We educators and policy makers, for the most part in the world, are trapping our students in a narrow two-dimensional world of simple memorization – and even then the predominant teaching methodologies make the remembering forgettable within hours. Even at the highest level, I interview science PhDs who have no clue about how to answer the simplest questions one of our boys might ask about the application of knowledge, never mind the rest. So what if you are a topper in what is essentially a memory test? Spelling bees are even worse. Why memorize bizarre and arcane words which the vast majority of normal human beings will never use in anything they do? We talk about the “knowledge economies of the twenty-first century” – but all economies have been knowledge economies since the dawn of human history. What we really mean is “creativity and innovation economies”, and I would add that the most urgent problem of the twenty-first century is to create “wisdom economies”. But instead, unless they are lucky to go to a school such as Doon, we are condemning our children all across the world to educational processes which have turned off the tap of creativity and originality in the pursuit of two-dimensional judgments, which we also know as grades, percentages, marks and cutoffs, on our students.

This is what education has become, and I shall tell you two true stories:

The American Mercury space programme of the late 1950s and early 1960s had sent flies, mice, dogs into space, but did not know what effects space would have on hominids. So they chose the one closest to us, the chimpanzee, which shares 98% of its DNA with us, to see what the effects of space flight and weightlessness would be. The training programme sought to find out what would happen to our ability to think and react in space. Sequences of lights were flashed on the console in front of the chimps and they had five seconds to react by flicking a certain switch for a particular colour of light. The method used was positive punishment; if the chimp got it right, he was given a banana pellet, if wrong little steel plates strapped to his feet - (are you listening boys, this is coming to a classroom near you?) – gave him electric shocks through the soles of his little chimpanzee feet. Not surprisingly, these little fellows became faster than an adrenalin-fuelled company CEO jabbing at his Blackberry keyboard, they were like mad organists on a Casio keyboard the way they played the switches on the console. The problem was that they became depressed and started to have high blood pressure and generally show symptoms of stress. The first one blasted into space was Ham, and he did the business like a champion. His reactions were a little slower. When he came back and the scientists opened the space capsule, there was our tiny hero sitting relaxed in the capsule with his little crash helmet on his head. But when they tried to get him out, he went crazy and tried to bite and kill the white-coated scientists with clipboards who thought he would be glad to see them. Now, you have to have a pretty negative view of your education, training and teachers to prefer being in a tiny metal capsule blasted into space on top of 1,000 tons of highly explosive rocket fuel, whizz round the Earth in weightless conditions, flick the switches like a wizard, and go through re-entry through the Earth's burning atmosphere at thousands of miles an hour.

Boys and girls, this is what we call “Science”.

Meanwhile back on earth... Within the past week, I have heard of a school in this region in which the students have completed their syllabuses and are now mugging up and being tested on past examinations papers every week from now until March. The Principal is known for the liberal use of his hand for slapping boys and girls who get it wrong, but don't tell him about the electric plates on the soles of the feet. So, the question I am asking is, how is that different from the way chimpanzees were trained to flick switches?

I also read an article in *The Hindu* this week about students cramming for the UPSC examinations. “Food, health and recreation are trivialities that UPSC aspirants cannot spare time for”, says the article. The psychiatrist dealing with casualties of these “trivialities” states: “Preparing for civil services affects the students emotionally, socially and psychologically as they are disconnected from the outside world...many of them turn to drinking and smoking.” Like Ham with the scientists, they seek escape from their tormentors, but since they do not have their own little space capsules, they find their peace by plugging in the iPod, drowning their sorrows in alcohol and blissing out on drugs ranging from nicotine in cigarettes to ketamine to crack cocaine. It is no mistake that last year the population of the United States consumed an estimated \$67 billion worth of illegal drugs, never mind all the legally prescribed Xanax and Valium prescribed by doctors.

All across the world, I would opine, we now inhabit an intellectual two-dimensional world. The missing dimensions are reflection, deep thinking and imagination that form the basis of genuine creativity. This is reinforced by the way in which we increasingly interact with the world and with each other. Think about it: I recently saw a picture of an aboriginal man from Australia sitting looking contemplatively out across the world and at a beautiful vista. That is how we once saw and thought about the world, and this contemplation led to a huge intellectual revolution 5-6,000 years ago; then, later, there were Greek amphitheatres like this Rose Bowl, then the Romans put a roof on, then theatres with proscenium stages were made; then came the film screen; then TVs; then desktops; then laptops; then iPads, the iPad mini, and the not very well named “smartphone”. So now

see the world through a screen this big; it is no wonder we walk into lamp posts and trip over , literally and metaphorically.

Am I against progress, technology, innovation? Is this about going “Back to the Future”, a nostalgia for a bygone world we shall never revisit no matter what we do? Is The Doon School really just a museum to a type of education that has outlived its usefulness, a tranquil and beautiful sanctuary for boys to wander around in in pursuit of a dead ideal of holistic education?

Quite the opposite! I am against regression and for revolution. I believe we need an “Arab Spring of the Intellect” in our classrooms and lecture halls, a revolt against the mediocrity of a two-dimensional education system. I would not go as far as philosopher Professor Alan Bloom of Cornell in the 1980s, when he said that we could and should close down the entire liberal arts education system of the United States for a generation and start all over again, but we do need an educational revolution that gives every child everywhere the kind of educational opportunities our boys have at The Doon School. In this sense I am a radical progressive, while at the same time believing that education should take place in as timeless and traditional an environment as Chandbagh. I am trying to live out F. Scott Fitzgerald's concept of intelligence and to hold two apparently contradictory ideas – a progressive education in a traditional setting – in my head at the same time.

The debate on what kind of education our students need to become what we want them to be – leaders who are ethical, creative, autonomous, original and wise - urgently needs some intellectual rigour, but above all it needs action. Leadership is something far deeper than a skill set; it is about self-development and a willingness to enter into the deepest thinking. And to do that, of course you need to study, but you also need to be in a place such as The Doon School.

Is there any hope? Of course, I came into education because I am an optimist and an idealist. As I said earlier, our boys have never been so busy with activities, and also never under so much pressure by the demands of employers and the university system around the world. Is Doon still relevant in this two-dimensional world we inhabit? More so than ever, I would argue. Those things we need so desperately, such as creativity, innovation, originality and collaboration, are all around you at Doon, and this is what we have tried to showcase this Founder's.

And, our boys and masters are producing the grades as well: we have had a world topper at IB, boys into IIT, AIIMS, BITS, the colleges of Delhi University, Princeton, Harvard, Stanford, and on and on. This year for the first time we have had the data on the performance of all schools offering the ISC examination and one publication ranked schools by their results. There is a ranking for the percentage of students gaining above 90% in English and best three subjects. The school I referred to earlier did quite well with violence and endless boring repetition, but, and here is the revelation, who were the top two in the whole country out of all ISC schools? They were two fully boarding schools: Welham Girls and The Doon School! We also offer the IB, so those boys who took that are obviously not in our ISC figures, but I think it is safe to say that Ujjwal Dahuja with his 45 points and a scholarship to read Maths at Princeton would have managed a 90% +! We also had the same IB average points score per student as HMC schools, a club of the top schools in the world to which we belong, and at IB it is the highest achieving group of schools in the world.

So, the message I have drawn from this is, not surprisingly, boarding schools rule, and are not a relic of the past but a signpost to the future!

I spoke earlier about the need for an “Arab Spring of the Intellect”. This is an urgent matter for a very simple reason. If we do not have an “Arab Spring” in the way we carry out the education of our young people in and out of the classrooms and lecture halls in our schools and universities, then we are going to have an “Arab Spring” of a very different kind – and recent events show exactly where that can lead... I shall not wear this prediction on an extra-large T-shirt, but I am quite happy and prepared for you to hold me to it in the years ahead.

Thank you.

The School Captain's Speech

Good Evening, Ex-Air Chief Marshall Major, Chairman and members of the Board of Governors, Headmaster, Ladies and Gentlemen, and my fellow DoscOs. It is indeed an honour to be addressing you on the occasion of the 78th Founder's Day celebrations. My first encounter with Doon was through the flip of a coin. And it was ‘heads’ that sealed my destiny in Tata House and my twin brother Kabir's in Hyderabad House (which happened to be my father's old house). Even though I have cultivated enough T-House Spirit- not to begrudge Kabir -I now realize the merit of my father's idea of leaving this decision to a coin toss. The fact that many of our destinies are shaped by chance, is a part of the ethos that Doon acknowledges. And it attempts to annul this so as to create a fair and level playing field. Within these walls, what your birth has endowed you with means little. What matters is the strain in your muscles, the sweat on your brow, the spark in your mind, and your resolve to push your own limits. Like any human institution, Doon is no perfect society. Indeed, one of the inevitable outcomes of being a meritocracy is also excessive competitiveness, jealousies, peer and other pressures. Yet I believe that Doon today is much closer to the ideal society than it was when I set foot in Chandbagh 5 years ago. And like all healthy communities, it is dynamic and open to change.

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An Old-Boy, who passed out 7 years ago, recently remarked to me that he was shell-shocked to see A, B and C formers sharing a table tennis table in a fair manner. Such an event was unheard of in his time. Many of you Old-Boys in the audience will remember the seemingly authoritarian rule of seniors in your time. We would like to believe that Doon today is a more welcoming place for juniors. At the same time, the senior continues to play a vital role in guiding juniors. Only a senior could spend patient hours teaching you to perfect a cover drive or play power chords on a guitar. Yet for all the ways in which the community has transformed, Doon retains some unique core values. I recently asked an Old Boy studying at an Ivy League college whether he missed something about Doon, something Doon offered that his university could not. I expected a wry smile and a shrug, but received a quiet but empathetic nod. He told me that the respect and genuine concern associated with the student-teacher relationship here is perhaps to be seen nowhere else.

We also spoke about the Dosco's commitment to a cause greater than himself and his ability to collaborate with others to the best effect. The Dosco collaborates with his team mates during a soccer match, with his class-mates on a school project, with his house-mates during a music competition, and with his room-mates to cook Maggi at night without the Housemaster noticing! Truly, a Dosco knows how to mobilize large groups of people to work for a common cause, be it for the House or the School or for humanity through a community service program. A sense of service is one of the first things that a boy learns when he joins school. It becomes an integral part of his life and his value system.

Recently, the Mid-terms for most of us were spent, as is traditional, in the mountains of the state, but with a difference. We associate Mid-terms with the beauty and peace that nature gives us, yet this time we came face to face with the terrible havoc that the natural elements can wreak.

Parties of Doscos, up in the devastated hills, joined hands with villagers to begin the mammoth task of rebuilding what nature had destroyed. We put our heads, our hearts and our hands to the task. We tried to comfort the bereaved and reconnect their lives with the world they had been cut off from and, in doing so, we declared, in over a hundred unspoken ways, that we were ready and willing, to do our duty.

It is a full life that we lead here at Doon. The peace of life at Doon is anything but slow. In a day, a Dosco may juggle activities ranging from P.T , classes, visiting the Panchayat Ghar, soccer practice, getting a fake hospital chit to avoid cheering, preparing for an upcoming debate and, of course, studying. Yet I would like to draw your attention to the words that loom forth each time one crosses the campus gates. 'Slow Down'. It was only this semester that it struck me that this simple-sounding caption is laced with metaphor. For within these gates lies a community that urges one to slow down and rethink the meaning of words such as 'educational establishment', 'learning', 'mentor' and 'camaraderie'. The caption 'slow down' prompts a moment of introspection and awareness. Indeed, as Doscos we are forced to introspect through the feedback we get from masters, peers and seniors. As a community, we reflect on ourselves through the Weekly and School Council. We reflect, and at every front in our school life, we learn. One of the primary lessons I have learnt from Doon is to not be buoyed by the thrill of victory nor be crushed by the humiliation of defeat. One of my favorite poems, 'If' by Kipling, says it best: "If you can meet with triumph and disaster, And treat those two imposters just the same." These were also the words that one of my form-mates gave me when he caught me sobbing uncontrollably after I had lost the badminton championship. 'You'll win it next year,' he said, with a reassuring nod. I slowed down, washed my face, and went my way. Even as I hit the winning shot next year to clinch the championship, the belief in my form-mates' eyes remained firmly imprinted in my mind. Certainly, the ideal man is he who remains unperturbed by the fleeting joys and sorrows of life, and through facing obstacles and defeat I learnt that challenges are what make life interesting, and overcoming them is what makes life meaningful.

As the time draws near for my batch to leave Chandbagh, we have, each one of us, not only gathered memories to last us a lifetime, but also developed, in these six years within this nurturing environment, a vision of what Doon should be in the future. We are the emotional stakeholders in this vibrant venture that is the Doon School. My own vision for this institution is a simple one: to send forth into the world (a world, I need hardly add, of style and conflict), young men who will shine the light of their goodness, young men who have the capability to dispel the darkness, ignorance, hatred and prejudice that they will encounter. My wish for The Doon School is that it has as its foremost priority the creating of such luminaries through every aspect of the education it provides.

It is, ladies and gentleman, a simple, perhaps too idealistic a vision. But then, that is what a Dosco is supposed to do, isn't it? Aim for the highest and the best things possible?

On this Founders day, I think I can be permitted also to express my deep gratitude to all those who have enriched my journey at Doon: the Head Master, Dr Peter McLaughlin, my Housemaster, Mr Skand Bali, my teachers and many friends. It is said that behind the success of every man, there is a woman, but there's no such luck for me! In my case, it has been my brother, Kabir, who is my best friend my constant support and my greatest strength. Thank you, and have a good night!

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