

# THE BREAKFAST CHATTER

The Weekly Bulletin of the **Rotary Club of Kathmandu Mid-Town** - Volume No. 10/01 for # 825 March, 03<sup>rd</sup> 2006

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## DEAR MIDTOWNERS ► FRIENDS IN **ROTARY**

This week **Niranjan** and **Usha** had their anniversary. Niranjan looked rather surprised when he was reminded having his anniversary, but bet his wife may look even more so, when he surprised her with a small gift of love. Well that's also where Rotary sometimes comes in. We wish the both of them a further wonderful time of togetherness.

Our speaker this time was Muni Sakya, one of the pioneers of information technology in Nepal, who is by inclination someone who always wants to find new and attractive ways of developing new ideas in his area of profession and more so of his inclination. Lucky him, he has a wife who keeps him on the earth.

He gave us an impression on what is going to happen in the area of computerization and especially in the area of robots and robotnics. Like any good speaker he won the heart of his audience by giving the children in us something to play with, means a small sweet obedient robot, showing his abilities. But then he went on into a matter where some of us got shocked by the mind boggling and unlimited possibilities of this sector. While indeed the "intelligence" of future robotnics has a very good chance to surpass the human brain and thus seems threatening, the chances to utilize them in future can also help mankind in a big way. Only think one time that the earth may get overpopulated and we have to start to go "out". Then it will be the possibility to use robotnics to make it real. Or other areas can be medicine and even down to earth mining. Well it was a very enriching subject and those who were absent missed something.

Last time we were mentioning that our picnic will be hopefully on the 18<sup>th</sup> March, but following the information received from insiders it looks as we may have again a political problem during that time. So to try to avoid this we will postpone it for one week hoping that on the new date planned this problems won't arise. But if then .....????

Today we have enclosed a small info on the new incoming President of RI. His new motto means that we should think more on our own vision and mission, because we can lead only if we know where to. In addition we have brought this time an article on the importance of soft skills. While probably most of us know theoretically that hard and soft skills are needed, its nice to have a story which shows how soft skills can work in reality.

We hope you enjoy reading. Until next time  
**Walter**

## **SPEAKER OF THE WEEK ► KARNA SAKYA – KGH GROUP OF HOTELS AND RESORTS**

### **THEME**

On coming **Friday, 10th March** our speaker will take us in the psychological world of positive thinking. which can make life easier especially if we face a lot of problems.

## **UPCOMING SPEAKERS ► PREVIEW**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>SPEAKER</b>	<b>THEME</b>
17 <sup>TH</sup> MARCH	<b>Club Assembly</b>	Topics of general interest
25 <sup>th</sup> March	Our yearly Picnic	Enjoyment and fun
31 <sup>st</sup> March	Combined meeting with Rotaract	Common activities and what we have reached

## THE MIDTOWN CLUB ► NEWS AS THE COME IN

Slowly the preparations for our yearly **Club Picnic**, supposed to take place on the 18<sup>th</sup> of March where starting. Due to some political problems here, we have decided to go the safe way and postpone it to **March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2006**.

This year will be the 4<sup>th</sup> **RYLA in Nepal**. 5 clubs have given consent to be the host club of this year's RYLA. Those clubs are RC.Bagmati, RC Rajdhani, RC.Kashtamandap, RC Kathmandu West and RC Patan. Similarly, the organizing committee has decided to organize this year's RYLA from 26<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2006. The venue will be Little Angel's School, Hattiban, Lalitpur. The age group for the participation should be between 18 to 20 yrs. It is expected that 150 participants can be reached. There will be many topics covered during the training out of which some seem to be especially of interest like Youth & Development, Role of Youth in Nepal's development, Entrepreneurship development, Leadership development etc.

**If you want to name someone to participate hurry up.**

**Ramkot Clinic Visit:** kindly check the **Ramkot Roster** for your turn.

If you have **any question**, contact Rtn. **Rabindra Shrestha** (4469063, email: drrs@wlink.com.np)

The doctor is **Dr. Khagendra Gurung**. Mobile No : 98510- 83044 Phone: 4287899

If you have any question, kindly let our fellow Ramkot Coordinator Rtn. **Rabindra** know.

**Doctor** is **Khagendra Gurung** mobile: 98510-83044 phone: 4287899 call him Friday latest.

## A WORD ON ROTARY ► WE CAN MAKE DIFFERENCE

### The new motto

Rotary International's incoming president, **William B. Boyd**, has chosen "**Lead the Way**" as the theme for the **2006–07** Rotary year to come. "This will be my theme and an affirmation of my belief in the power of Rotarians to change the world, one positive act at a time," he told incoming district governors at the International Assembly in San Diego, California, USA, on 17 February.

Every year at the assembly, Rotary's incoming president unveils a theme for the next Rotary year. The current theme under **RI President Carl-Wilhelm Stenhammar** is Service Above Self, the same as Rotary's longtime motto.

The challenge of finding a theme is that it must be short, inspirational, and translatable. Boyd doesn't remember the moment "**Lead the Way**" popped into his head. All he knows is that "it just felt right."

Since the governors-elect attend the International Assembly to learn more about becoming successful leaders in their districts, Boyd's theme was especially pertinent to the audience.

"In the coming year, I ask each of you to take your places as leaders in your districts and your communities," Boyd told the incoming governors. "I ask each of you to lead in the Rotary way, by living as role models of tolerance, unselfishness, and integrity. And because the best leaders have humility, I ask you to do all of this with friendliness and a smile, so that others will be happy to walk beside you."

Boyd concluded by saying, "As Rotarians, we are not content to let matters stay the way they have always been in our clubs or in our communities. We are not content with the status quo, and we do not look at a problem only to say someone else will solve it. We are the ones who ask, 'Why not us?' We are the ones with the skills and the desire to build a better future. And we are the ones who must Lead the Way."

## OTHER TOPICS

### A Tale of Two Personalities

by Rudra Pandey

If you have a diamond, it is only worth something to you if you recognize its value and put it to good use. If you don't, the precious diamond is as good as a piece of rock. I learned this and many other pieces of proverbial wisdom when I was growing up in a small village about 20 kilometers outside the Kathmandu valley. I remember many small incidents from my village life. Back then, those incidents did not mean anything deep to me. However, now many of those incidents have become management mantras to me.

I am always amazed at how one can relate management theory to rudimentary learning in a village. I would like to recount one such incident that serves as a clear example of the importance of soft skills in our professional careers.

When I was growing up, there were two 13-year-old village boys, Surya and Baadal, whom I knew very well and still do. Even though they were cousins, they had very different characters. In addition to his studies, Surya would spend time playing around, talking, joking, meeting new people, and debating and arguing with others. He would never give up and always wanted to have fun. Baadal, on the other hand, was serious, more focused on his studies, and considered it silly to be talking to people for no reason. Both of them did well in their studies.

I am going to recount an incident, which I vividly remember, that happened about 25 years ago. The two boys were attending a family wedding party, to which I was also invited, when their grandfather asked them to go up to each and every guest and introduce themselves. Surya, the extrovert, loved the opportunity, and did what his grandfather said almost immediately.

Baadal, the introvert, did not like the idea and excused himself after meeting a few guests. The boys' grandfather summoned them after an hour or so and asked them to summarize what they had found out from the conversations with the people they had met.

I, about 17 years old then was watching the whole thing with great curiosity since I enjoyed seeing Surya saying "Namaste" and introducing himself to everyone at the party. I was sort of jealous of him because I did not get the opportunity to say hello. Then I said to myself, "Okay, he is not my grandfather and I am just an invitee here. Also I am not a kid any more!" Surya, the extrovert, summarized his findings in three points:

I do not remember half of their names, but I made sure they remembered mine

2. Some of them thought I was a crazy kid but I still didn't stop

3. They were all having fun and loved being at the wedding party.

Baadal, the introvert, who had hardly met 10% of the crowd, summarized his findings quite differently. Here is what he had to say:

1. The crowd was very noisy

2. Some of them were talking about how bad the food was

3. Some of them thought Surya was a silly kid.

Look at the differences in their analyses. Surya was not only an "extrovert," but also a better observer, positive thinker, and a better summarizer. Furthermore, he had a "don't give up" attitude toward the task. Baadal, on the other hand, picked up a lot of negatives and put all guests in the same category without finishing his work.

Only much later did I realize that these two boys portrayed two very different personalities and attitudes. And it took me several years to understand their grandfather's reply to them. He said "Drishya Dristikon Ma Bhar Parchha," which in English means what you see depends on how you see it.

He went on saying, "I am not trying to pick negatives here, boys. Try to learn from every step you take and learn to make yourself distinct and clear to others, because what is important is how others see you rather than how you see yourselves." I did not understand what he meant then and I am sure those kids didn't either. But the way he lectured his grandchildren was very powerful and left a lasting impression on me. As I think more about those kids I am reminded of two different kinds of skill sets: soft skills and hard skills. Many of us do not worry about soft skills, but are eager to acquire hard skills, which can be quantified.

Before explaining the importance of soft and hard skills, I would like to recount how those two boys are faring today. They continue to reflect and possess their childhood characteristics to a large extent. The 'introvert' is now a medical doctor and the 'extrovert' has made it big after several business failures. It was an easy path for Baadal, the introvert, as he continued to do very well in school and got a scholarship to do his M.D. He opened up a clinic and happily settled down. He now has good earnings, and he still does not care about others. He sees his patients only because he has to earn a living and because it is his job. Overall, Baadal does not like associating with other people and has a pompous nature. He is proud of what he is and his arrogance has not changed. He blames everyone but himself for what is currently happening in Nepal.

Surya, the extrovert, graduated from an average college, but always remained outgoing, soft spoken, and adventurous. At the age of 22, he started a business by borrowing money from his grandfather, but managed to lose it all. However, his grandfather asked him not to give up. After three different failed ventures, he had the bright idea of establishing a western style cleaning service. He started the business by borrowing Rs10,000 (which was then US\$3,000) from one of his friends. It was so successful that in three years he became a wealthy businessman, the owner of a large service company with over a thousand employees. A couple of years ago, I met both of them at a party. Baadal does not like his cousin's business because he thinks his cousin is exploiting workers. I found it hard to believe that he still picks the negatives and complains like he did 25 years ago. Baadal does not like the fact that his cousin, with little success in college, is hundred times richer than him. He blames the system and believes that smart people in this country are undervalued. Again, I was astonished by Baadal's rude comment. After all, who is the smarter one here – the doctor or the entrepreneur? These two cousins reflect two different personalities that we see all over the world today from a little village in Nepal to big and glamorous cities in the US.

We often find people enriched with either soft skills, hard skills, or in select cases, both. There are many with hard skills because that's what we learn at home and in most of the schools. We are used to measuring things up. Parents measure their child by the grades they score rather than by the things they learn that are important in life. Colleges select students based on their SAT/GRE scores and GPAs rather than by the soft skills they possess. We all judge people accordingly because we, too, were once measured like that and are used to such quantitative measurement. What, then, are soft skills? They are very difficult to define, and almost impossible to measure. But, we can instantly recognize a person with great "soft" skills. Some of the soft skills that people appreciate are: the willingness to take risks, positive thinking, a great sense of humor, the ability to step up in emergency and critical situations, effective communication skills (tone and body language), the willingness to participate in discussions in areas outside of core competencies, the ability to mix up and communicate with people other than regular buddies, the ability to get tough, the ability to express frustrations and excitement openly, and so on. These skills are not necessary to get good grades in school, but are of paramount importance in the overall development of a person. How are we to acquire soft skills? Some people have them at birth, some learn from their parents and friends, and some acquire them in their workplaces, whereas some never do. And it is never too late to learn these skills. There are opportunities every minute in our lives to hone our soft skills, starting from a meeting room to the dinner

Recently, I was talking to one of the elder family friends of Surya and Baadal. I took the opportunity to learn more about their childhood. The revelations were interesting.

Surya was raised by his mother because his father passed away when he was five, whereas Baadal was raised by both his parents. Surya was one among five children, while Baadal was the only child of his parents. Baadal had a very protected and pampered childhood. His parents would fulfill his every demand. His parents would not let him hang out with neighborhood kids and would always take pride that their son was a top notch student in his class. The special treatment Baadal got led him to believe that he had access to privileges that others in the village did not have.

Surya, however, always sounded smarter when people outside the school talked to him. Relatives were surprised, that he was not doing as well as Baadal in school. Surya's mother would ask her kids to treat everyone with respect, and loved seeing her kids play with neighborhood children. She also made it clear that she had limited resources and would not be able to fulfill each of their demands. She used to tell her kids that to succeed they had to be a good and likable person. She always reminded them that their father was one of the best in the village when it came to making money and helping villagers, even though he did not have a city education like some of his contemporaries did. She had seen people failing in life because of the lack of social skills in spite of a great educational background. She always emphasized the need of speaking up and trying new and different things because one never knows what one ends up doing in life. Thanks to his upbringing, Surya started to ponder more and more about these things through his adolescence. It became clear to him that there was more out there than what he could learn in school.

Baadal had his entire world inside his text book. This summary made me understand why Surya could not do as well as Baadal in school, though he was smarter than his cousin. This issue of hard skills and soft skills becomes even more relevant among those with a strong technical education (particularly engineers and medical doctors).

In the last 26 years of my career, it has become very clear to me that 90% of technical graduates come out of school lacking significant "soft" skills. Yet, they do not realize their shortcomings since no one reminds them of the need for "soft" skills. These techies are usually singing their own songs and reading their own books. The question is – can they go back to their childhoods and do the kind of analysis I did here for Surya and Baadal? However, you cannot always relate things back to your childhood and adolescence. Many people change during their high school and college education because technical schools tend to carve them up to certain "hard" skills. I have seen this among many of my friends.

We want the best of Surya and Baadal. Surya was an extrovert and Baadal was focused. Can you be both focused and an extrovert? Yes. Surya could have been asked to focus on getting good grades in school while also being told of the importance of knowing things that go on outside of school. Soft skills can be acquired while traveling and eating, while playing and while attending school, and even while reading books. Surya's mother did not have that idea. Surya finally succeeded on the lesson of his grandfather, but he could have failed miserably and never achieved anything. One lesson "never give up" from his grandfather really helped him. "Not to give up" is the equivalent to getting focused. Surya was sort of lost, not knowing how to prioritize, during his adolescence. That problem persisted a few years after college, until his grandfather asked him not to give up, and advised him to take one thing that he had started and see it to completion. Baadal could have done as well as Surya if he had some of Surya's skill sets.

Baadal is too scared to make mistakes and taking chances is not in his book. He continues to follow that lesson even today, and he pretends to be happy about his achievements. But he is not. A happy person always has some appreciation for others and always has good things to say to others. They also always see opportunities for improvement. All these things are sorely missing in Baadal's life. If we shape ourselves to the best of Surya and Baadal, we can not only "enjoy the moment" but also come out as winners every day. There is a battle in every minute of our lives, and winning or losing it depends on one's attitude. There is a saying in Nepali, "Ek Thakkar Chaudha Buddhi," which, in English, means you can learn 14 tricks for every blow you receive. Those 14 tricks are not ready made for us. We have to possess the skills to grasp them. Surya learned from his grandfather how to learn from mistakes. He once mentioned to me that those who have the skill to carefully analyze their mistakes and extract lessons from them will definitely come out victorious.

He also said to me that those who become arrogant after some success eventually deprive themselves from even more success in the future. He further reiterated that the quest for success does not guarantee success if you do not have patience, the willingness to take risks, a strong belief in yourself and in what you are doing, respect and appreciation for others and a determination to

work hard. I constantly refer back to things that I have learned from Surya and Baadal. I have great appreciation for them both for what they have accomplished, and I am grateful to them for sharing their feelings with me. Hats off to Surya for his entrepreneurship and to Baadal for his focus and determination! And let us learn lessons from their lives, mistakes, and careers.

### READY FOR A HEALTY LAUGHTER?

An expedition to Mars came to end. As the Russian crew scrambled aboard, one of the crew members turned out to be missing. After a while the missing man appeared running from behind a tree, followed by a young and pretty Martian woman.

"Why are you late?" the commander demanded.

"You see, I made acquaintance with this lady, and she told me how they make children here on Mars. It turned out they just push a button on a computer, and if they do it once, they get a boy, and if twice, then it's a girl. Then she asked me how we do it on the Earth. I showed her, and now she is running after me and shouting, "Please, sell me your computer."

A French magazine announced a competition for a best short story entitled "My Morning." The main requirement was for the story to be really very short. The first prize was given for the following story, "I wake up early in the morning, have my breakfast, and then go home."

Hymie and Becky are celebrating their 20th wedding Anniversary by going to see a movie, It is hot passionate film, and it arouses the animal instinct in Becky. When they get home that night, she snuggles up close to Hymie, but he ignores her. "Why is it," cries Becky, "that you never make love to me like that hero in the movie?" "Don't be stupid," Snaps Hymie, "Do you know how much they pay those guys for doing it?"

Little Earnie is walking downstairs behind his grandfather one morning. "Grandad," he says "are you still growing?" "Why do you ask that, kid?" inquires his granddad. "Well," replies Earnie, "the top of your head is coming through your hair!"

A burly truck driver sauntered into a tavern in a mean mood, obviously looking for a fight.

"Everybody on this side of the bar is a no-good, dirty bum!" he shouted. "Anybody want to make something of it just stand up!" Nobody stood up.

"Everybody on this side of the bar is a faggot! A fairy!" No one moved, then suddenly a man stood up.

"You wanna fight?" snarled the truck driver.

"No," lisped the man, "it's just that I'm on the wrong side of the bar."

That's for today and see or hear from you soon. **Walter** and **Navyo**

SEE YOU ALL **COMING FRIDAY** ► YOURS IN ROTARY - CSD RTN. **WALTER** DILLER

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