Interviewer - You said you are 20 years old? Till what class have you studied and what are you doing now?

Subject – I’m in 12th standard.

Interviewer – So have you completed your 12th?

Subject – No, It’s ongoing.

Interviewer – So when did you join Sneha? When did you start?

Subject – I don’t remember exactly. I think it was around the time I was in 5th or 6th standard.

Interviewer – Can you please speak a little bit louder or it won’t get recorded.

Subject – I was in the 5th or 6th  standard when I joined Sneha. The ColourBox projects were ongoing then and I was interested in drawing.

Interviewer – The ColourBox project? Weren’t there any Ehasaas projects then?

Subject – There were no Ehasaas projects back then. Back then there was PVWC when I joined. There was the ColourBox project and one of my friends told me that I was good and drawing and I should join the project where they’ll teach me different drawing techniques. So I joined there through him. Sitaram sir used to be here back then, whom I met for the first time here. He wrote my name down and made me sit for a while. They took me to play somewhere in Mahim at the hotel Hirani, I think its name was. Back then I had no idea what a street play was. So they just made me stand in the middle of the play in a group and told me “You’ll do a street play”. I followed all the things they said and then soon new skills were added like comic work shop, acting workshop, theatre group, etc.

Interviewer – But all of these were Ehasaas workshops right? The comic and acting workshops were conducted by Ehasaas.

Subject – I wasn’t aware of all of this back then. I only knew about 2 projects, one was the ColourBox and the other was the PVWC project.

Interviewer – So your comic book and drawing projects were done long back?

Subject – Yes. Back then we had Chaitanya sir. He used to take 2 or 3 workshops in a week or a month. I had joined back then. So slowly my skills increased and I got interested in dance. So slowly we started improving at dance. Sitaram sir used to teach us different activities. In colour box, we used to learn drawing, poster painting, wall painting, etc. Back then we had about 20, no 50 members in our group. Now I’ve have been here for about 8 to 9 years, since I joined.

Interviewer – Oh my god! 8 to 9 years is a really long time.

Subject – Yes.

Interviewer – Do you remember how you felt when you came to Sneha for the first time.

Subject – I felt a bit strange. I was unsure what I will get to learn here and what I wanted to learn. I was told that I would be doing drawing but they took me to do a street play on the first day. I was a bit scared and worried about what would happen if my family found out what I was doing here. My mother would shout at me, my father would shout at me, etc. But I practiced. Our first show got over and our second show was in Ambani School.

Interviewer – Ok. In Dhirubai Ambaini High School?

Subject – Yes. The one in BKC. We had our second show there and I had no idea which school this was and how big this school was. There we had a PVWC stall arranged by the students of that school. They took us for dance there. There was a dance in the play. I was told to play a goon who is a rapist and I had a friend along with me. That time the whole group used to go for the show, a team of around 20 to 30 people used to go. We had no idea who all would come there, there would be celebrities and all but we had no idea. So one of us was asked to perform on the spot. All were each asking others to dance. So I got up on the stage and performed my routine. Later I came to know that there were Sonu Nigam, Farah Khan and other celebrities were watching our show from the Ambani School building. Sonu Nigam complimented our play, my dance and the message we were trying to convey through it.

Interviewer – So the story in the show was conveyed through dance?

Subject – Yes. There was an act in the show where we talked about eve teasing and rape through a dance. He (Sonu Nigam) liked it a lot. There he also performed a song for us. There were many different shows there. The show also boosted my confidence level. I thought if I can perform in front of such esteemed people then I can do many other things. Then slowly we started joining theatre and dance workshops. There was also a singing workshop from **NSSA(5:55)** which I also joined where I learned about different musical instruments. My confidence was slowly increasing and by the end of the Colour Box program which lasted a year there were 5 to 10 people remaining in our group. There was Sangini who used to work with PVWC, we were involved with them as well. The last Colour Box project was a 15 day event in which we were asked to volunteer. Volunteering was a new experience for me which showed me there was something else for me. It exposed us to new things and new events. There was one more thing that my English wasn’t very good. I have lot of problems speaking and understanding English. I don’t know much of it. The foreigners who came from outside to see the events, I had to guide them. Take them from one place to another. They also used to ask me questions about things they saw and I had to translate and answer. So I gained another skill and realized I could speak a little bit of English. I realized I could talk to people and my fear of talking to people disappeared. I could talk to anyone on any topic. I learned that we shouldn’t have to fear anyone, that we could speak to anyone about anything. This again boosted my confidence. Then there was the yuvanath(738) event.

Interviewer – Was this a PVWC event as well?

Subject – Yes. Yuvanath(7:46) was started by PVWC. No, it was organized by Ehasaas. We had Sumit sir back then.

Interviewer – ok. So there was no major transition when moving to Ehsaas from PVWC.

Subject – No there wasn’t.

Interviewer – Everything was automatically done?

Subject – Yes it was very seamless. We didn’t even realize when we left PVWC and joined Ehasaas. Back then we had Sumit sir, Sneha ma’am, Sana ma’am and Anjali ma’am. There was new a new event which we had to do called Yuvanath. There was nothing fixed. We had just told our ma’am that we wanted to do this event and these were some of the things which we wanted to do.

Interviewer – So you yourself had asked to do this event?

Subject – Yes. We had made the plan and then Sumit sir said that we should make it a little bit bigger. Then he made a budget for the event and then moved the pushed us to add competitions like poster painting and decided a theme. Back then I must have been around 12 to 13 years old

Interviewer – What was your initial idea regarding the scale of Yuvanath and what all activities did you want it to have? What was the original plan?

Subject - Actually the original plan was to have a small competition.

Interviewer – Only a single competition?

Subject – Yes only one. It would be a stage play, where youth will come and perform but sumit sir suggested that we should make it bigger.

Interviewer – So different competitions?

Subject – yes. So he introduced different competitions. So there were around 15 competitions in the first yuvanath. It was successful event. Back then I had no idea what an event is and how it is conducted. So we got involved. We used to sit day and night at the center and along with Sumit sir used to make posters, pamphlets and schedules for the event. So we did different things along with Sumit sir and came to know this is how events are organized in colleges.

Interviewer – You were in school back then right? Which class were you in?

Subject – Back then, I think I was in the second or third standard. So I learned these things there, about events and how events are conducted in colleges by the students there. We learned one more thing there that there in a group of people in colleges who are responsible for conducting such events. So we came to know that there are many NGOs in our area which do such work. So we got the information about the NGOs, like these all NGOs do this kind of work and those all do that kind of work. World Vision works for children’s education, Magic bus works in football and other sports, **AITT(10:53)** works in education and other skills. Now there’s the **New Turf Foundation(10:57)** works with girls. They provide girls with free courses for beautician, seamstress, mehandi, etc. I gained knowledge about all of these NGOs.

Interviewer – So did you ever go to these NGOs? Did you have any communication with them?

Subject – Actually, we only used to go to these NGOs for events, to invite them. Sometimes we used to go there to get some information regarding our work or sometimes to get feedback. Slowly what happened was we weren’t just working in Dharavi, we had reached Manpur and Vashi.

Interviewer – So what did you do there?

Subject – So whatever we had learned here, we received a proposition that we go and teach that to the kids over there.

Interviewer – So different NGOs used to call you over there?

Subject – Yes. Different NGOs used to call and ask us to come over there and teach. So slowly were started a dance practice for kids over there. In their areas we used to organize contests and shows for them. We also started a theatre workshop in different areas.

Interviewers – so you used to go there to teach children how to perform a theatre?

Subject – Yes.

Interviewer – That’s very nice.

Subject – So we started teaching them. There were around 10, 12 or 15 kids. Most were college students. So we used to teach them there and then they used to take out a rally in different areas and we used to create acts and plays based on various issues faced by them in those areas. So in a rally they used to go to particular places in their area and perform.

Interviewer – You must have had a team which used to teach them?

Subject – Yes.

Interviewer – So were there only kids in the teams or were there COs as well?

Subject – No we started doing all this after leaving. We learned a lot in Sneha which we started to distribute in NGOs which were far away.

Interviewer – So on your own. So the participants here made this group which was being invited by other people.

Subject- The invited us and asked us to come and teach

Interviewer – So are you still teaching now?

Subject – Yes. We have a fixed day when we go and teach kids different things.

Interviewer – So where are you going these days, to which NGOs?

Subject – Mostly these days there is a NGO in Mankhur, Janjagruti Vidyarthi Sangh, we work with them and then there. Plus there is Bal Vikas Kendre which is in Nerul. The kids which come there are from the outskirts, these areas are near the villages so things like drugs are in a greater quantity over there. So we work with them as well.

Interviewer – So how many people are there in the group?

Subject – Around 10 to 12.

Interviewer – Are they from Dharavi as well?

Subject – Yes.

Interviewer – And all of them have been participants in Sneha?

Subject – Yes.

Interviewer – So these NGOs invite you?

Subject – Yes.

Interviewer – And how regularly do you go there?

Subject – We don’t go regularly. We give them a particular time. They make a schedule over there and based on that schedule we are called over there.

Interviewer – Ok. So suppose the event is in December, then you’ll come in November and teach.

Subject – Hmm.

Interviewer – So how many times in a year like this? Once? Twice?

Subject – Once or twice but it could be more as well.

Interviewer- Ok. So is it a paid activity? Do you get any money for this?

Subject – Yes we do get it. We don’t ask for it but they pay us whatever they feel is appropriate.

Interviewer – So it’s honorary, whatever comes to their mind, they pay.

Subject – Yes.

Interviewer – So they pay to cover travel?

Subject – Mostly what they pay is to cover travel and snacks. They say that you guys come from so far away, all the way from Dharavi so we’ll pay for the travel. We say that we have no problem, we are only here to teach the kids. Whatever talent we have, we just want to pass it to the kids. So just like this our group continued to move forward and then within Sneha we joined the Ehasaas team. We released one **evanart(15:03)**, then the second one and like this we did many **evanart(15:07)** where we did street plays and other activities with the Ehasaas team due to which our skills further increased, we could do anything anywhere, there was nothing we couldn’t do. Then we joined Pukaar NGO recently and are doing a 1 year fellowship in Tata institute. There were 12 to 13 groups there for the interview. Their requirement was that there should be at least 8 people in a group. We had 2 groups of 8 people there and every single one of us was selected. They said that our group will be combined to make a big group. Our interviews went so well that all 16of us from 2 groups were combined. We went in different groups but they joined us into a single one. So now our **Ekta(16:07)** course is ongoing.

Interviewer – Earlier you said that when you had joined in the beginning you were afraid what your parents would say if they saw you doing a street play.

Subject – Yes.

Interviewer – So didn’t your parents know that you’ve started coming to Sneha?

Subject – They knew that I was going to an NGO but didn’t know which NGO I was going to. They knew that I was going to an NGO where I was learning drawing.

Interviewer – So the sir you had back then, Sumit sir, did he ever go to your place and tell them what they were going to teach?

Subject – Actually yes. Sitaram sir used to come to our house. So my parents knew that I was learning these all things here. So they started liking it. These are good things whatever he is learning here. So mom dad said nothing back then and even today they don’t say anything or ask me to not go to these places. “Do whatever you are doing” they say.

Interviewer – So they have been supportive throughout?

Subject – Yes.

Interviewer – You had a friend who brought you to Sneha. So all your friends were already in Sneha or were there any which hadn’t joined?

Subject – Actually when I joined they were already in Sneha. It had been one or two months for them since joining. There were some who had been here for 1 or 2 years. So after joining day by day I became better friends with the others in different youth groups. We all became good friends.

Interviewer – Did this ever happen that there were people who didn’t join Sneha or made fun of you saying where do you go and what do you do?

Subject – Those who didn’t come to Sneha didn’t say “What do you do there”. They knew what we did there. Their only problem with joining Sneha was that it would shackle their family income. I mean when I joined they were old enough that they had completed their education by then. So they had jobs and had to take care of their families, so they had a lot of problems. And that friend of mine works at the university, he’s an electrician there. So whenever there was a Sneha event or a competition, he used to take a cab or by any other means he used to reach there. So then people started saying that there is a lot to learn in Sneha but there isn’t much scope, so that we can do something in life. So slowly they started leaving sneha and started their own life journey which they thought they should do.

Interviewer – So in the beginning they were all associated with Sneha, but as their compulsions like job compulsions or family compulsions start getting in the way they themselves separated from Sneha.

Subject – Yes.

Interviewer – And those with flexible jobs like your electrician friend were able to continue for a longer time.

Subject – he managed to do it but later on there were problems in his job family and it was affecting his job. He used to wake up at 4 am and to a small job, he used to deliver milk after getting up at 4am. After that he used to directly go to his second job. So he didn’t get enough time to rest. So he wasn’t getting enough rest and wanted to rest so he said he was leaving Sneha. I said ok, it’s fine. He had to do his job plus he was the eldest amongst his siblings so he had to take care of his family as well.

Interviewer – You’re family has been always supportive but if they hadn’t been do you think you would have been able to come to Sneha?

Subject – Nothing like this has happened till now so I can’t say for sure.

Interviewer – And what has been the community’s reaction? Your neighbors for instance?

Subject – So when they used to see me on the street before the called me names. You know people of lower casts go here and there and perform so they said he is going to a lower cast. “He does this and that and lives like them” they used to say such things. But my family didn’t say anything. My family knew that he is doing something good. Slowly a positive atmosphere was getting built in the house that our son id doing something. What happened was that one of our relatives said something to my dad about what I do. It made my mother so angry that she went to their house and screamed at them. She said “You take care of your family and we’ll take care of ours. Whatever our kids our doing, they are doing the right thing”. We our four brothers and sisters, 2 brothers and 2 sisters and we haven’t done anything that has given grief to our father. So my father believes that his kids won’t do anything wrong. So he never stopped us because of what others said. Later as my journey moved ahead in Sneha doing different activities like plays, dance and other activities, our respect among the community also increased. He is doing good things everyone thought.

Interviewer – Did they ever see your street plays?

Subject – Yes. Whenever there is a street play near our house, in our area we asked ma’am “we should do a street play in the mandal near my house”. So after making a schedule, during Ganpati or Devi we perform our street play there. So like that people watch us and think “Yes he is delivering a good message to people”.

Interviewer – You came to Sneha to learn new things like drawing. Along with drawing, you said your confidence was boosted. Do you think apart from that, you attained any other skills?

Subject – My confidence was surely boosted. Apart from that, I never used to pay attention to anything. Let’s say a potter in Kumbharwada is making a pot. I didn’t want to look at it. I thought “What does that have to do with me”. But after joining Sneha, I have to see that thing, I have to think about it. How it is being made, at what speed is he spinning it, and what is he doing with his hands. Learn such things. How to learn things from others work. I learned how to be interested in other people’s work. So I learned such things. They make pots in Kumbharwada, so I learned how to make a pot there by observing the process like the speed at which the potter is spinning it, how much water is he using, how much clay is required, how he is cutting it, how is he getting it in a shape, etc. So I became interested in things. If there was something, I wanted to learn it. If there is a ladder, how is it made? I wanted to learn that. What materials were required?

Interviewer – So you started to thing. Curiosity within you increased. Questions like “why things are this way” started popping in your head. And you started looking for the answers. And this didn’t used to happen before?

Subject – On weekends, when we had holidays at school my father used to ask me to go to work with him. So I used to go to work with him. Our work involves furniture. A lot of people in our family work in the furniture industry. So my dad asked me to accompany him at work and I did. There was a kind of lethargy in me, I was lazy. I father noticed that this guy is very lazy when it comes to work. But as liked continued learning new things in Sneha, the lethargy within me left. We had to do our work and learn new things. So later on when I used to go with my father to work, my lethargy used to leave me and I would be focused at work

Interviewer – Just a minute, Sorry. The children are making a lot of noise, can we sit over there?........... So you were saying something.

Subject – So the laziness and lethargy left me. If I’ve to do something in life, I’ll have to work hard. So I learned that I have to work hard in my life and move ahead.

Interviewer – So while organizing big functions like yuvanaath or when you go outside to teach, planning must be an important part of it right?

Subject – These things I didn’t know before. How to organize it and all that. Like I gave you the example of Kumbharwada before, Sumit sir thought us how to organize functions. He should a lot of videos of different functions in colleges having different events and how they were organized. So we had a lot of questions. So through the events we tried finding answers to the questions. So we started the struggle. We wanted our events to be a success. So we worked hard day and night for it to happen. We started going to different colleges and NGOs and also inviting.

Interviewer – No, but planning these things. There is yuvanaath. What competitions should it have? Which organizations should we go to? How many children should we invite? What all facilities should be provided? So do think you attained all the skills to plan these things?

Subject – Yes. So if we organize any outside events, let’s say a school event, we have the skills to do that. We need to know what standard kids we should call, what should be their age, where we’ll get the permission. If it’s a government school, where will we have to go for that, who will we have to write the letter to. We learned all these things. How to talk to people, regarding any topic or subject. We got to learn all these things.

Interviewer- So you learned to talk to people during events or did you learn in general how to talk to different people?

Subject – We learned to talk to everyone. Suppose someone has a problem, we learned how to talk to them. If someone if bothered and is not willing to talk about it, we learned how to open him up and bring him within our friend circle. If I need to know what is bothering him, I learned to open him. He isn’t telling anyone and it is causing him to stress out. Someone has a problem and is lost within themselves, so how to make them share. To talk to them, that’s what we learned.

Interviewer- So you learned to talk to other people as well as how to encourage people to talk to you?

Subject – Yes.

Interviewer – So when you work on social issues, do you find success the first time itself?

Subject – As far as I know, there are some communities which do not talk about the prevailing social issues. This is not a good thing. So such communities, while giving feedback say things like “look what kind of things your kids are talking about”. Over there we aren’t able to talk much because our job is to do the show and try to spread our message. So the staff is Sneha used to go later and take feedback from the community and clarify things to them. So even within our friend circle, like college and school kids they believed girls and boys are supposed to do different things. They had no respect for women, and they used to talk in such a way. So I talked with them about the nonsense that they used to speak, about how they didn’t respect women and that each woman is someone’s mother or sister. So they should show them respect and be friendly with them. They have their own problems.

Interviewer – So whatever you learned here, you started teaching it in your college and among your friend circle. But even teaching someone is an art. Performing a street play is one thing but teaching it to someone else is something different altogether.

Subject – Yes.

Interviewer –So how did you develop this teaching skill? Did you learn it here or did you practice it on your own to learn it?

Subject – After coming here we gathered information like if I can convey my message through a street play to a lot of people, I can convey it to one person at a time as well. If I’m talking about sex, if I perform a street play about sex in front of a bunch of people, if I can talk to a bunch of people about sex at once, what’s the big deal in talking about it to one person? What’s there to fear? If it’s there, it’s there. This was my thinking behind it.

Interviewer – And the things you learned in Sneha, how did the people here assist in the endeavor. How did the teachers here help you?

Subject – During learning we received a lot of help from the teachers. Whenever we had a problem, we used to contact them. Even if it was 12 at night, if we had any problem we used to call them. We would call sir saying this is our problem what should we do? Sir used to reply saying “do this and this, do all these things and maybe your problem will be solved”. So we used to talk to him and he used to help us a lot. Chhaya ma’am, **Hansal(31:54?)** sir, if we used to come to Colour Box or Sneha with any problem, if we required counselling or had any other problem, we used to directly talk to ma’am. He used to call us personally and we used to share our problem and she would tell us the solution.

Interviewer –So this personal support you’ve had, the personal relationship, you feel has been the most important thing.

Subject – Yes.

Interviewer –Anything else? All the skills which were taught, did they demonstrate themselves or did they encourage you to do it.

Subject – **illegible**

Interviewer – Did you learn anything else from Sneha’s staff or are there any specialty of the staff due to which you’ve learned so much?

Subject – The staff which was there in Sneha taught us a lot of things. Like Chhaya ma’am, sirs, they used to be with us. Coming here, eating with them and doing other activities. Whatever we did here, they used to give us more information about it. “If you do it like this, it’s wrong”. So like this they continued to teach us different skills. So if we had any problem or if we came here and made some mistake, we would tell them about it.

Interviewer – So what kind of problems did you face and what kind of mistakes were made?

Subject – Mistakes like, after coming here we said something in to our friends, as a joke or in humor. Ma’am used to tell us that it was wrong and we should not say things like that to others and why shouldn’t we say things like this to others.

Interviewer –So if someone used a swear word?

Subject – Yes. It could be a swear word or anything else. Something related to caste or something related to someone’s body structure or any other comment. Ma’am used to say “We shouldn’t say things like that, it’s not a good thing”

Interviewer – And why is it a bad thing she used to tell you that as well?

Subject – She used to explain to us how it negatively affects the other person. How it affects their mindset and their hearts.

Interviewer –So during the personal interaction here you learned all these small things?

Subject – hmmm.

Interviewer – Apart from that there were sessions here. Do you remember what all you learned in the sessions?

Subject – In sessions we did a lot of things like gender equality, sexuality and there were other sessions where like activities many different things were told. Like they used to tell us things about hygine, periods. We didn’t even know what periods were only knew that girls got periods. We only knew this much but had no idea what kind of periods were there, why did it happen, what all happens during them, how women get pregnant, they told us all that. Actually it is related to sex but it was not explained very clearly in our school how it happens. All these things we got to learn here. These things were relevant to our studies as well, so we learned things related to our studies here as well which we could use in our exams.

Interviewer –Did they tell you about things like nutrition and anemia? What you should and shouldn’t eat? Did they tell you about anemia as well?

Subject – Yes.

Interviewer – Citizenship and civic action, were you told anything about that?

Subject – I didn’t understand.

Interviewer – Means your rights as citizens and how should one attain them.

Subject – They told us about different acts. Different acts of our country. They told us about rights of youth. How do we attain our right? What acts do we apply to do that? They told us all these things.

Interviewer –So all these things you learned, how did you apply them in your life? Can you give an example regarding family or friends or personal life?

Subject – Usually all these things, I do them with my friends. If anything is up with the family, we solve it within the family itself

Interviewer – Solve it within the family? Even you are a member of the family.

Subject – I mean my mom dad, my uncles, if there is any problem they figure out the solution amongst themselves.

Interviewer –So your extended family meaning your uncles, aunts, grandparents. You don’t deal with them much, they are mostly handled by your parents. But you immediate family like your parents and siblings, did you use with them any of the things you learnt here? Did you bring any change?

Subject – Yes. Mostly with my sister, I wasn’t able to talk with her openly. Now she is married. So I slowly started talking to my sister.

Interviewer – Elder sister?

Subject – Yes, elder sister. So I started talking to her openly. So we became such good friends that we can talk about everything.

Interviewer –By everything you mean what exactly?

Subject – Sex, etc. We can talk about love, about couples. In my friend circle there is this guy who has this girlfriend, I can tell her about them. If there are girls in my friend circle and I flirt with them and call them “jaanu”, I can tell her about these things how I talk to people in my friend circle. When it comes to things like authority, there was a small issue once. My uncle’s daughter had gotten married and she was pregnant. So my brother in law got some pill and fed her which resulted in some complications for the baby. So mom asked me if anything could be done. So I told her all these things are there and we’ll have to do something about it. So my brother in law was called to our house, me, my sister in law and mother were all sitting there. So we asked him what was he doing and why was he doing it. We tried to bring changes within him. And these changes were successful and now they have a baby.

Interviewer –So he didn’t want a child initially?

Subject – No he did want a child but didn’t have any knowledge regarding it. Like what has to be done during pregnancy, he didn’t know that.

Interviewer – So you taught him that. What should be done during medical care? What is important? You taught him that.

Subject – Yes.

Interviewer –So the things you learnt regarding nutrition and anemia, Did it result in any changes in food habits in your or house or were there any changes in doctor visitation? Were there any changes when it came to sanitation?

Subject – So at home I used to eat anything. Instead of home cooked meals I used to eat outside food. I changed myself, father started getting fruits and brother joined the gym. My mother had been admitted for a week, sometime in the middle. She had eaten something rotten. She had eaten day old food, so he was admitted. So we made changes regarding that as well. We shouldn’t give mother this kind of food and keep it separately. So we didn’t give mom these things. Food like that made mom sick. We had learned about things like acidity and my mother had acidity. So pungent food affected her even more. So we learnt all that and kept those things separately. So because of nutrition we started paying attention to health. Like if someone gets an infection. Everyone in the house has separate soap, clothes and towel. My brother’s two towel are separate, I have my own separate towel, mom has her own an dad has separate soap, etc. So we learned that along with nutrition we should pay attention to our health as well.

Interviewer – You said your mother fell sick because she ate spoilt food. So usually, only women eat the spoilt food?

Subject – Yes.

Interviewer – Did you ever talk about these things here as well? Things like how women are treated or how women consider themselves as someone of a lower statue.

Subject – I never spoke about it, I realized it myself. This is the story of every household. If there are any leftovers, usually mom eats it in the morning because she doesn’t want to waste food. In my house we used to keep food in a fridge so that it doesn’t rot. In the morning, only bhaji and roti are made. Whenever we felt hungry, we used to take out last night’s daal and rice, heat it up properly and eat it together.

Interviewer –Not only regarding food, gender disparities are present in every aspect of life. Had you seen anything like this before and did you try and bring in some change?

Subject – Yes. Dad always likes eating fresh food and fresh food is cooked every night but when evening’s food in served the next day my dad used to shout. “You’re making me eat rotten food”, “I’ve to go out and work so much”, this and that. So these all things now have stopped. That food is eaten by everyone. It’s eaten by dad, brother and everyone else.

Interviewer – So did this change in behavior come on its own or did you have to talk to your father or talk to your mother?

Subject – These things happened slowly over a period of time. As time passed, I slowly noticed that these changes have occurred.

Interviewer –But how did these changes come to be?

Subject – when mom fell ill, my father scolded her that “You eat rotten food”, this and that. So my brother realized that mom eats rotten food and we get to eat fresh food, so what we did was all of us siblings started to fry and added stuff to make the day old meal fresh again.

Interviewer –Can you tell me any 2 or 3 things that changed within your family, friends or community due to your intervention?

Subject – To start with I’ve changed my friends thinking. Like for example I had a friend who was arrogant and thought he knew best. So we had a talk but he wasn’t ready to listen so we made a plan to teach him a lesson. We’ll do something to change his behavior. So we made a plan. One day he was hanging out with us and we started making fun of him. So he became very angry. We made a lot of nonveg jokes on him so he didn’t meet us the next day. The day after when he met us at school, before this he didn’t eat with us, 3 or 4 of us friends used to eat from the same tiffin.

Interviewer – Because of caste?

Subject – Yes. This arrogance broke. Now he even visits the houses of Muslims or people of lower caste during Eid, even eats at their houses and does everything with them. So these changes occurred, he became one of us.

Interviewer – Anything else?

Subject – Another friend of mine, she’s a girl. She used to pass comments on others. If she saw a guy or a girl she used to call them black or say that they are ugly.

Interviewer – She had the habit of passing judgements.

Subject – So one day I made her sit down and asked her “why do you judge other people, why don’t you mind your own business? A person may look like anything but he is good in his own way. Keep this in mind.” So I explained to her for an hour that if he goes on like this her arrogance will never subside and it will cause a lot of problems for her in the future. A day will come when you’ll look like us and others will judge you. So I told her all these things and she stopped judging people and he told these things to her sisters as well. One day her sister said to some guy like “Look how ugly he is and look how all his teeth are broken”. So she told her that we can’t judge anyone and should speak ill of others. He is the way he is. So I felt nice that whatever I taught her she is passing on to others and internalizing it herself.

Interviewer – So all the things we talked about right now like nutrition and gender, these things were taught during regular sessions over here. You must have studied then then itself but what is your role in Sneha at present. Do you attend the sessions or if there are any special events, are you called for those?

Subject – What is currently going on is, the people who were here before, they were very friendly with us. Chaaya ma’am was like an elder sister to us, Hansraj sir was like an elder brother. They were our friends. Sumit sir, Sneha ma’am, they used to love us very much. Anjali miss as well. There was nothing that we couldn’t share with them. Whatever we did we could share with them. Now for us things have become like, we can’t share anything.

Interviewer – Why? The same people are still here. Hansraj sir is there, Chhaya is here.

Subject – When Chhaya ma’am is here we feel nice coming here and talking to her. Because when they were friendly with us, we used to feel nice. We used to feel they are friends with us. We are always asked to fly. There are rules here and we followed them as well but they were never so strict that we felt like we were locked in a room and made to continuously study something and it’s bouncing over our heads. Back then all rules were equal and they were quite simple. And along with enjoying ourselves we had to study in the sessions which we used to learn and apply. It felt nice when ma’am wanted to teach us something or sir was teaching something new. Now our group wants those days to come back, whatever we did in Ehasaas.

Interviewer – So these things aren’t happening now?

Subject- No. Not at the moment.

Interviewer – What are the changes?

Subject – The changes are that our importance here has lessened. We don’t know whether they like our help or not. We, the previous youth are being told that our assistance is not required and they want to set up with new youth. So they are setting up a new youth batch. New youth joining is a very big thing for us, it’s very good that we want to see the new youth. There will be more people, more kids like us who’ll be coming. They’ll come like us, they’ll work like us. We will find ourselves in them. There was a time when we worked like them, struggled like them. So it is a very good thing for us that new youth are coming but for some reason because of this thing we are being ignored like they don’t need us now. So because of this our group has started coming fewer and fewer times. I especially think that we are of no importance here. We are not required here. We are nothing here. So whatever we want to do with our lives now, we will do that. So because of all this our youth has drifted away from Sneha.

Interviewer – There were a few workshops conducted especially for volunteers like the civic action workshop in Kharghar or all the things which Michelle has started like film editing and blog writing. There was something else as well sometime in the middle.

Subject – We are interested in these things but we want certain amount of freedom. We were taught from the beginning that if we have any work we’ve always had freedom to do it our way and if we have the freedom we’ll work with more enthusiasm and do it properly. We gave give them both quality and variety. Now if we work here there is only variety because there are too many rules.

Interviewer – So you believe there are too many restriction now and little freedom?

Subject – Yes.

Interviewer – So you’re not being allowed to work your way. So the workshops I had mentioned, were you called for them and did you attend?

Subject – For some of the wokshops, **Rajiv(51:39)** had called us but because of my college and exams I…

Interviewer – So because of your problems you could not attend?

Subject – Yes. So when we missed a certain workshop, we got to know somethings from the outside, where the kids were taken.

Interviewer – Can you give an example?

Subject – We could suppose, if there were a workshop both our youth and children of the community were called. Now the children from the community are called which is a good thing that the kinds are learning something but if there is an event or a workshop our youth isn’t being called to help. “There is a workshop here and we need your help. Please come here stay with the kids. Don’t perform the work shop but help us”, these things used to happen before but now…

Interviewer – So you are not being involved now.

Subject – Yes. This is the thing.

Interviewer – So before, when your sessions here as a participant were over, after which you were attached to Sneha as a volunteer, you used to do all these things? Helping during workshops?

Subjects – Helping during workshops, distributing food or if there was a Sneha or PVCW event, a small one for women, we were used be called for helping out. We used to go there, do the arrangement, work with the staff and have some fun with them. We used to even observe the events, get to learn new things and we felt good after working there.

Interviewer – Did you ever facilitate a session?

Subject – Yes.

Interviewer – Did you ever teach?

Subject – Yes.

Interviewer – Over here in Sneha as well?

Subject – Yes. In Sneha, the children from the community, whatever we learned in Sneha, we had to go back and teach it to them. We had to go there and take a session with them. So the kids of around 10 to 11 years of age, we used to conduct a session with them and teach them. So we got a nice experience and we got to learn how to interact with children and how to talk with them.

Interviewer – Back then how frequently did you come to the center?

Subject – We used to come frequently and stay for quite some time.

Interviewer – How much exactly? Did you come every day of the week?

Subject – Whenever there was work we came. If we had any free time even then we came and chatted with the staff and hangout with them.

Interviewer – Which isn’t happening now?

Subject – No it isn’t. We don’t come here much anymore. No body from the group comes. At the moment the new youth group that was formed 2 to 3 years ago, even they don’t come much. Even they say that the new staff that has come here, they have respect for us and the work that we do but we don’t get the respect for anything we do. We are just being called here, made to do the work and then that’s that.

Interviewer – So the personal relations, you don’t get that here anymore.

Subject – With the earlier staff the personal relations we had, with Hansal sir, Chhaya ma’am, Sana ma’am, Sumit sir, Anjali ma’am and all the others. The personal relationship we hat with them, the way we were connected with them, we don’t get such things here anymore.

Interviewer – When you stopped being a participant and all your sessions got over, why did you choose to volunteer and continue to be attached with Sneha?

Subject – Actually when I joined I didn’t know what happens here.

Interviewer – No. All your sessions were over. The other participants didn’t come to Sneha anymore but you continued to come. Why was that?

Subject - Because we wanted to learn more things over here. Sneha had given us so much which we wanted to return. We had learnt in Sneha, we’ll work in Sneha, we’ll work for the youth here but we will work. And the children who came here, whatever we have learnt in Sneha we will teach it to them. We have learnt it so now you should learn it as well. So this is why we continued going to Sneha, continued performing shows, continued talking to children. We used to attend as well as participate in different Sneha events.

Interviewer – Do you still feel the same way? That whatever you have received from Sneha, you want to return and for that you want to come to Sneha.

Subject – It’s there but not so much because the things which we used to get to do here, the things which we wished to return, the things which we got to do here through which we wanted to return the favor, the things which we learnt in Sneha and wanted to teach it to others, we don’t get to do those things anymore. Now we just have to come here, attend the session and then go back.

Interviewer – If something happens so that Sneha wont he here anymore, the activities and CO’s are reduced and the idea is that moving forward the youth will do all the work. If that happens whould you like to continue being associated with Sneha?

Subject – Hmm. Yes I would like that. But personally I can’t say till when I’ll continue to be associated with it. Mostly I’ll continue my association but eventually I’ll reach an age when I have to look after my family.

Interviewer – So what are your plans for the future?

Subject – Right now I’ve only one plan for the future that I want to do something.

Interviewer –Have you given any thought to what you want to do, or haven’t thought about it that much?

Subject – I haven’t given much thought to that till now but I know that I want to do something for my family.

Interviewer –So your family is a priority for you right now?

Subject – Yes.

Interviewer – So at that time you won’t be able to give any time to Sneha.

Subject – I will be able to but not much.

Interviewer – In a situation like that what kind of work will you be able to do in Sneha?

Subject – In a situation like that, suppose there is an event, if there is any outside work like work which involves travelling, I will be able to do that. In an event if anything needs to be done I’ll be with them.

Interviewer –So for occasional events you can come and volunteer but can’t take any responsibility on a regular basis.

Subject – No

Interviewer –Regarding marriage, do you have any plans? Or you haven’t thought about it much?

Subject – Excuse me.

Interviewer – Marriage? Choosing a partner?

Subject – I haven’t thought about marriage but partner (Laughs)…

Interviewer –So you have thought about your partner?

Subject – Yes

Interviewer –So you have chosen someone and chosen yourself?

Subject – Yes.

Interviewer –And do your families know?

Subject – No.

Interviewer – So do you think…

Subject – My partner’s family knows to a certain extent but my family doesn’t know about our relationship. We have been friends since the first standard but then slowly slowly we came to be in a relationship in the 12th standard.

Interviewer –So here you must have learnt something about relationships, in Sneha? Did you apply any of it here? Whether you have chosen your partner the right way?

Subject – Yes.

Interviewer –So you have done it. Ok. Was it of any use, what you learnt here?

Subject – Yes. Actually when we chose a partner we first think about hoe this partner will be but some people are like “My partner should be beautiful, she should have a great body, and she should look good”. But they don’t look at the inner beauty. But I got to learn that a person who is beautiful from outside and the inside is a good partner for you. Even if she is beautiful just from the inside she is good for you. Because moving forward she will be able to take care of you and your family.

Interviewer –And tomorrow if your family doesn’t accept her then what will you do?

Subject – We have given that a lot of thought. We haven’t thought of anything bad but we think that we have a lot of time to convince our families. First of all we have to stand on our own feet and after that we’ll see about hoe to convince our families.

Interviewer –Right now in what way does your family look at you? Or your community or your friends?

Subject – I didn’t understand that.

Interviewer –I mean you’ve been in Sneha for so many years, you’ve done so many things, you’ve been teaching other kids. So do you think your family’s and community’s view of you has changed in some way?

Subject – At first in my family, my dad used to say that I’m a hopeless person and there’s no hope for me. In 10th standard I wasn’t interested in school so my dad was like, “you’re hopeless so you have to come to work with me”. My brothers and others said that I won’t be able to pass the 10th. So when I passed my 10th standard with 50%, my brother’s view of me changed and he believed that this boy could do something. And even in my friend circle, the people from youth even they used to say “What are you doing?” and “You aren’t paying attention to your studies”, so even they stopped believing in me. They thought that this guy can’t do anything. So when I passed my 10th with 50% even they said that he’ll so something or the other. Due to the work I do in Sneha, my friends and people in my community appreciate me and say I’m doing some good work. And they look at me in a positive way. My area is such that most people there, most guys are uneducated goons. So in the community people think it is good that this guy instead of doing these things is going out and doing something good.

Interviewer –So they view you with respect?

Subject – Yes. And in my friend circle as well, among my school friends, they said that I **am (1:03:09)**.These all things were there.

Interviewer –Do you have any suggestions for the programs? Moving forward what should the program be like? What changes should be made?

Subject – I can’t say anything about that.

Interview – You haven’t given this much thought? Should more work be done on a certain topic that hasn’t been done till now? Or whether some new strategy needs to be used?

Subject – I think that whatever work Sneha is doing right now with youth, so those doing similar things like in comities organizing street plays, and those who help in their events, they should be welcomed as a part of Sneha. What happened earlier was that we were told that we are a part of our project, our unit, our Sneha. So we were a part of Sneha when were attached to it. Now we feel that we are not a part of Sneha and have totally separated. We were a part of it before but now have been removed.

Interviewer –So in this aspect changes should be made. This shouldn’t happen.

Subject – Yes. Us kids, the youth feel that we are a part of Sneha and the way Sneha helped us, we want to help Sneha as well. What Sneha has given us, we haven’t got from any other place. What Sneha has taught us, whatever work Sneha has done with us, the changes and the confidence it has brought out in us, nobody else does it. In fact even mom and dad aren’t able to give us that. Sneha has given us all this, things which help us move ahead. So even we want to do that.

Interviewer –Thank you.