**How to be at ease during exams?**

**Dr. Vijendra Kumar SK**

Many students and parents feel uneasy during exams. Students are going through tremendous pressure to get good marks or grades, which helps them to get into good higher education. Whatever the reasons or issues, the reality is exams cause distress and anxiety among some students. Here are some tips for students and parents:

**Relax! You are not in a battleground!**

Many parents tell their wards that exams are like battle ground and they need to study hard, do them well and win. Their intention may be positive; to make students serious and committed to study rather than watching T.V. or playing. But it may have lots of negative repercussions. Exams are no where near to wars or battles! In wars, either you win with effort or die; compromises are rare. No exams are final like battle ground; they are just a way of evaluating students’ academic performance and can be repeated, undone, or even can take a short U turn to study something else!

So say this: It’s O.K. I will do whatever is possible for me.

**Never say: I will do my best!**

Here, you are digging a pit for yourself! What is best? How do you know what is best? None of us know what is best in advance. We are not *Trikala Jnani!* In simple terms,did Sachin Tendulkar know he is going to have a best innings in his life at Gwalior ODI? He has been considering each innings as it comes and has been doing whatever he could do!

**Anxious? What’s wrong with it?**

Many parents, teachers and peers commit this blunder: ‘*Don’t be anxious!’* It is not reality! Anxiety is a natural reaction to the unknown and uncertain future events. To the extent anxiety prepares your body and mind to deal with the event. If you deny it, you will harm more of yourself than when you accept it.

So when you feel anxious next time, tell yourself: I am anxious now. It’s O.K. to be anxious. I will do whatever is possible for me and feel O.K. with it.

**Remember one of your happy moments!**

When you remember your past happy incidents during stressful times, it acts as a booster and pumps lots of positive energy in you and makes your brain work more efficiently. This in turn will enhance your confidence and performance.

**Have adequate food and sleep well**

It is advisable not to have a full stomach before exams. Have nutritious light food. Sleep well on the night before examinations to keep yourself energized.

**Keep your analysis for the end!**

Once you finish your day exam, do not get into analysing your exam with friends and parents. Share your experience of writing the exam and stop. Once you finish all your exams, start analyzing your individual paper performance and calculate expected marks/grades. Share this information and how you feel towards it with your parents.

My suggestion to parents: Listen, appreciate and help your wards to have a future plan of action. Do not get into a blaming mode. If you say: “I have told you to study hard, you didn’t listen to me. See now your grades…” you are no where helping your ward to improve, but are spoiling them. As parents, be sensitive to give constructive feedback during this time.

These are some of general tips. I suggest parents and students seek professional counsellor’s help for expert guidance.