

Coming to this sophisticated metropolitan city from Somnath Jungle, my friends, I feel like Sabu, the elephant boy. Lecturing is not my profession, so to me, speeches, like babies, are easy to conceive but difficult to deliver. I wonder, therefore, how far I will succeed in putting forth to you my present heartache.

You are here to take training to motivate the youth, to awaken their social conscience. You have to deal with a disturbed generation, a generation which is eager to see results. They have waited long enough. It is a volatile, vocal generation, belonging to the present volcanic period. J

You can deal with it only if you know the maxim that, 'unless one is inspired one cannot inspire, unless one is moved, one cannot move others.' So you have first to be inspired for the cause, to be moved for the purpose. You have to conscript your conscience for social good. You have to court voluntary imprisonment. 120 hours is only a minimum term for NSS youth.

NSS is like a cricket pitch where you will coach the youth in the game of social service. But, friends, you have first to train yourselves to be the coaches. It is your work to create harmony out of the present chaos by training youths in the field for social service.

You have to be an artist who finds a challenge in the blank canvas before him. Intently looking at it with a piercing vision, his imaginary lines become alive. His characters start acting. The youth has a blurred vision at present. His mind is

tarnished with prejudices. You have to inspire the youth who is finding in the canvas a convenient place to hide behind and to avoid purposeful action. Like the paints of the artist, therefore, the young mind is your raw material. You too must be able to get an insight into the problem. For this you will have to live with the disturbed and frustrated youth.

In social work, we usually live for the people. That is why you 'adopt' a village. Do you realise that the villagers resent this patronising? I work with the blind, the leprosy patients, the physically handicapped. I live with them. They have stopped being sorry for their deformities long ago. They have stopped being sorry for what is lost and are zealously living with what is left. Your adopted villagers are not even physically handicapped. Nor are they orphans. They know also that they are not responsible for their plight. They do need aid, but they also want to live by their own efforts and with self-respect.

Shri V. S. Khandekar, Marathi Litterateur, has written about an adopted son who could never forgive his real parents for changing his name, his environment. The adopted villagers too, resent the word adoption. They do not really wish to be aid-addicts. They want to live by their own efforts and improve their lot with self-respect.

With them and with the youths you have to build a "fellowship of pain."

**आनंदवनातील माझ्या कुष्ठ रोगी बंधूची जीवने
वेदनेच्या सवान धाग्यात गोवली गेली आहेत.**

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** In September 1971 an Orientation course was organised for NSS Officers at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Bombay. Shri Baba Amate was invited to deliver the valedictory speech. This is a gist of his speech.

वैपल्याची वाकळ पांघरलेली ती जीवने एकदम उठली जेव्हा त्यांच्यात जगण्याची जिद्द निर्माण झाली तशीच ही आजची तरुण मने समाजसेवेचे भ्रमघुद जिद्वन जगण्याची नशा त्यांना चढली पाहिजे.

You, as the coaches, can give the vision. But there must also be passion and compassion. And even before this trinity, there must be conviction.

A carpenter's son was the first man who lived with the people. He lived with them and carried the cross for them. If we cannot carry his cross, let us at least attempt to walk in the shadow of his cross.

Chesterton has said "if we can find sublime inspiration, in the ruins of the old Churches, why can we not find sublime inspiration in the ruins of man? If we find beauty in the ruins of Ajanta, why do we abhor a man's deformity? Ajanta was the creation of man, but is not the man the creation of the Almighty? This recurring question is disturbing and must be solved. If you find the 'why' of it, you will find the 'how' of it.

This is the age of instant effervescent revolutions, because the youth is anxious for instant results. But such revolutions bring in their wake autocrats, dictators. You have to tackle such a hasty generation. So you have to work with the youth. Your work and not talk should be your sermon.

Our Society is stumbling against slogan-stuffed politics. Slogans can never inspire youth for real action. They must be enthused for self help. When you work in the slums or in hospital, you have to inject in their minds enough confidence so that they help you to help them.

One does come across dangers. But youth has the greatest disregard for danger. You have to see that the youth work with devotion, dedication and love. This is the trinity for success. You must be responsive to the sensitivity of the young mind and

must also be responsible for the results. You must be able to say with confidence that "he tested me before he entrusted me!"

Youth organisation must be a University without walls. Like the set books, there is no set path for you to reach the goal. Youth finds his own way. And if he does not find it, he makes a way like the spacemen exploring outer space. In Ethiopia they had organised 'Hammer and Nails squads' of the youths. Thousands of youth went on building houses, schools, hospitals as a crash programme. Joining the squad was compulsory to start with. Later, it was made voluntary. But by then results achieved caught the mind of the youth and the activity went on with equal zeal.

Devotion leads one to complete surrender to one's cause. It is not the same as submission. The starting of an august and noble institute, is always the result of such zeal, devotion and dedication of a missionary.

To a drunkard, it is said, the first peg of wine or liquor is bitter, tasteless and he sips it with effort. Then he takes the second peg and enjoys the drink. But when he has the third peg, the wine drinks the man and consumes him fully. Social service envelopes the youth in the same way. When you start working in the field, you have blisters on the hand, which test your patience, your steadfastness. When you persist the next day, the blisters give way and pus oozes from them. But to you it is really the joy that oozes out of these wounds! You are therefore, unmindful of the pain and thus as the days pass, the work engrosses you, engulfs you. I would like you to be such an addict of social service.

Thus your personality is enriched when you search for the darkest corner of society and dedicate yourself to light a candle there. The confidence that you thus get in the field of social service is more contagious than any disease.

In your work there must be a perfumed embrace of love and co-operation. You have to work in a society, which has lost its sensitivity. How long can you fondle the bow and fiddle with the arrow. You have to act swiftly and act with dedication.

I wish you God speed in your work.