



# Parijñāna Patrikā

Vol 07 | May 2022 | A Newsletter on Experiential Learning for Educators

Dear Teachers



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## *Amrita Launches 'My School My Pride' Events: A Platform For School Talents And Mentors*

The maiden episode of My School, My Pride by Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, an innovative programme focusing student-achievers and their mentors was launched on 25th April. This was conducted on Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham's own virtual event platform by the Director of Admissions, **Br. Maheshwara Chaitanya**. He described it to be a very novel event and the first-of-its-kind platform for outstanding achievers of Schools and their mentors to share the limelight. The event is aimed to be an inspiration for other schools, students and their mentors.



*Br. Maheshwara Chaitanya*, said that the first event of My School, My Pride programme of Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham was being conducted with the awesome support of **SSVM World School, Mettupalayam**. Welcoming the SSVM World School Student, *Flight Cadet, Shriya Sajeev*, the national winner as the best NCC cadet, and her *Mentor, Chandrababu*, Physical Education Teacher and NCC Master of SSVM, the Chairman said that achieving at a young age meant confidence and confidence meant dispelling fear and scaling new heights in life. *"There is huge talent among youth and school students which need to be encouraged. We want them to be inspired. I invite such students and mentors from schools to come forward and talk, sharing their success stories"*, Br. Maheshwara Chaitanya said.

The session that unfolded in the format of questions by the *Mentor, Chandrababu*, and the response by the student, *Shriya Sajeev*, the national gold-medalist, revealed the student's immense resolve, hard work, tolerance and the awesome competitive spirit, besides the school's

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excellent training facilities and support, besides the mentor's grooming role. To *Mr. Chandrababu's* question of how much she could explore from NCC, *Shriya* answered that the School encouraged her in all respects. SSVM has other 'uniform services' like Army Wings, Cubs, Scouts & Guides and Naval Forces. SSVM has in place an intensive training system with all facilities including an Indoor Firing System. To the moderator's question as to who was her inspiration, *Shriya* mentioned *Mathunisha G.Y.*, the winner of All-India best NCC cadet in 2018.



She said that her school was to be credited for her achievements as a cadet. *Shriya's* advantage was her very good experience in the camps, and shared motivation from the school. Apart from NCC the school had Cubs & Scouts etc., at SSVM. From KG-level kids were encouraged in extracurricular activities.

The 30 day RDC camp at the *Cariappa Parade Ground, New Delhi*, not only marked a zenith of her career as an NCC cadet but gave her once-in a lifetime opportunity to get a gold medal as the

year's best national NCC cadet from none other than the *Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi* on 28th Jan. She also recounts her experience with the *Chief Minister of Delhi Mr. Arvind Kejriwal* asked her a special question about the coastal areas of South India, during a sand art presentation in the Flag Area by her team representing Tamil Nadu & Andaman. The Tamil Nadu Government gave her a cash prize of Rs.10,000 as an appreciation of her accomplishment.

*Shriya's* message to the younger students is that there is potential in everybody and one has to work hard with dedication to bring out the full potential. Quoting her training officer, *Dinesh Nair*, *Shriya* says that in testing times, even if one is failing in close sight of, one should not lose hope and courage. "Fake until you make", which means "convince yourself you're the winner, you will win". Giving a pleasant conclusion to the session, *Shriya Sajeev* was congratulated by *Ms. Avantika Duraiswamy, a Sub Lieutenant* with the Indian Navy and an alumnus of the Amrita School of Engineering.

Amrita whole heartedly would handhold such talented pupils from your school in the upcoming *My School My Pride* episodes.

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*Amrita in association with Athos Edusolutions organised 'The Mimasa': The Principal Meet*



Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham in association with Athos Edusolutions, a Pune based education services company organised *The Mimasa*: A Series of Meetings with Principals. It was conducted to thank all the Principals for their contribution to the education world during Covid-19. More than 60 Principals from all across the city participated in this 5-day series.

The meet's aim was to provide a relaxing get-together and activities like fluid painting, tie-dye, standup comedy & motivational talks to de-stress. Mimamsa was also supported by

PhysicsWallah as Knowledge Partner and Kitabi Chai as Venue Partner.

To name a few, Principals from SNBP Group, Lexicon Group, JSPM Group, Army Public Schools, Podar Group, Rims International School & Boston World School, Mansukhbhai Kothari National School & Kothari International School, Pushpa International School, Angel English Medium School, Beacon High School, Akshara International School, The Orchids Baner, The Kalyani School, Abhinav CBSE School, Pawar Public Schools, City International School wanowrie, Sardar Dastur Hoshang Boys High school, Mitcon International School, Dhruv Global School Sus Road, Bharti Vidyapeeth Group, Sinhgad City School, Vikhe Patil Memorial School, Vibgyor International School, Chinchwad, Jog Group of Institutes, Anisha Global School, MIT Vishwashanti Gurukul, The Orbis School & Aditya English Medium School participated in these meets.

Founder of Athos Edusolutions thanked the Principals and the Partners for making the first season of "The Principal Meet : Mimamsa" a grand hit. They also iterated their plans for more such events in near future.

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## Expert Talk



Curated by  
**Dr. Shoury Kuttappa**  
Academic Manager and Counsellor,  
Directorate of Admissions and Academic Outreach  
Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham

### *Generalised Anxiety Disorder: An Overview*



Anxiety disorders are a class of mental disorders that distinguish themselves from other problems with *two key features: fear and anxiety*. *Fear is an emotion experienced in response to an imminent threat (real or imagined)*. *Anxiety, on the other hand, is an emotional state experienced in anticipation of a potential future threat*.

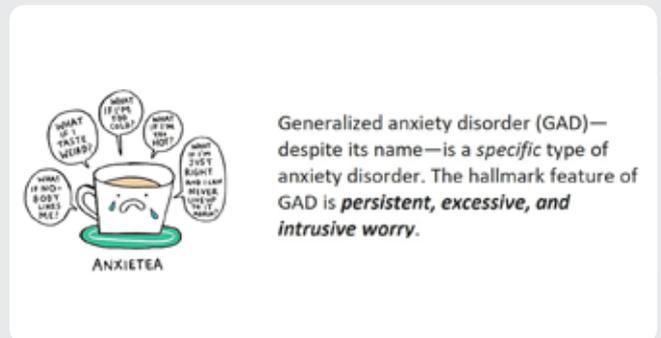
### *Who Gets GAD*

GAD is among the three most common psychiatric problems in youngsters (alongside separation anxiety and social anxiety disorders). However, early detection and intervention can result in significant or full remission of symptoms and may protect against the development of other problems later in life.

GAD is also the most commonly occurring anxiety disorder in older adults. New onset GAD in older adults is commonly related to co-occurring depression. In this age group, GAD has historically likely been underdiagnosed and undertreated for a number of reasons.

### *Signs and Symptoms*

To meet formalised diagnostic criteria for GAD, *excessive anxiety and worry must be present most of the day more days than not for at least six months*.



### **Features of excessive worry include:**

1. Worry even when there is nothing wrong
2. Worry about a perceived threat in a manner that is disproportionate to the actual risk
3. Worrying about something for the majority of your waking hours
4. Asking others for reassurance about your specific concern, but continuing to worry anyways
5. Worry that shifts from one topic to another

For people with GAD, the worry is very difficult to control and is associated with multiple physical or cognitive symptoms such as:



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**For Students, Teachers and Parents**



Many people with GAD also experience *other uncomfortable markers of prolonged anxiety, including sweating, stomach upset, or migraine headaches.*

### Who Gets GAD

GAD can be challenging to accurately identify because anxiety is an emotional state that everyone experiences from time to time in response to the stresses of everyday life. In fact, *moderate anxiety can be quite helpful* in a range of ways—for example, providing us with motivation to get things done or to respond to actual threats to our safety if they occur.

### Causes and Risk Factors

Like many other psychiatric disorders, GAD is thought to emerge in the context of *particular biological and environmental factors.* A key biological factor is a *genetic vulnerability.* It is estimated that one-third of the risk of experiencing

GAD is genetic, but genetic factors may overlap with other anxiety and mood disorders (particularly *major depression*).

*Temperament* is another associated factor with GAD. Temperament refers to personality traits that are often regarded as innate (and therefore might be biologically mediated). Temperamental characteristics known to be associated with GAD include *harm avoidance, neuroticism (or the tendency to be in a negative emotional state), and behavioural inhibition.*

No specific environmental factors have been identified as specific or necessary to cause GAD. However, *environmental features associated with GAD include* (but are not limited to).

Again, *no one factor—biological or environmental—is understood to cause GAD. Rather, the disorder is thought to result from a "perfect storm" of environmental stressors* that occur in an individual with a genetic predisposition for anxiety.

### Treatment

Treatment for GAD typically falls into one of three categories: *medication, psychotherapy, and self-help.* Treatment research is ongoing and encouraging, particularly with regards to the helpfulness of *approaches like yoga and mindfulness.* Because anxiety is a natural part of the human experience and treatments for GAD appear to offer far-reaching benefits on day-to-day

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functioning, even people with low-grade anxiety may benefit from treatment.

### Coping

People with GAD have to cope with a variety of physical, behavioural, and emotional symptoms on a day-to-day basis. There are proven strategies to target each. *Social coping strategies, for example, involve talking to someone and recruiting support, while emotional coping strategies like mindfulness and learning the triggers* can help quell intrusive thoughts and overwhelm. Every person has a unique situation, and not every strategy will work for everyone. *Part of coping involves determining which strategy works best and optimising it to get the most from it.*

### For Loved Ones

Living with someone having anxiety has its challenges, but there are several ways that you can help including *learning about the problem, discouraging avoidance, limiting reassurance-seeking behaviour, and championing successes large and small.* There will, of course, be limits to the ways in which you can be helpful to your loved one with GAD. This is when it is especially useful for your loved one to use the treatment resources (i.e., clinicians) available to them. If your loved one is reluctant to seek treatment for anxiety, or unaware of the severity of the problem, look for a quiet moment to *have a non-judgmental conversation* about how treatment might be a way to feel better, faster.

## Expert Talk

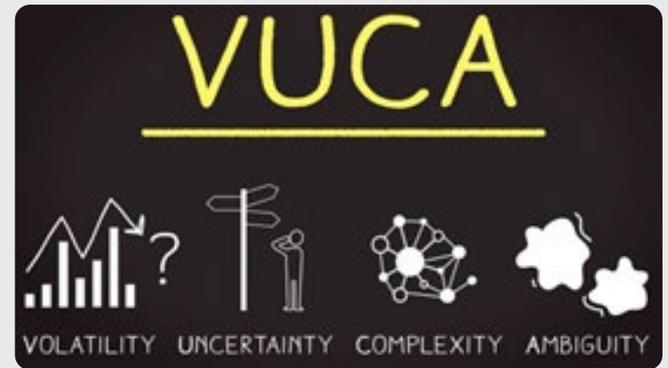


Curated by

Dr. Shoury Kuttappa

Academic Manager and Counsellor,  
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Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham

### *Vuca And Its Relevance: Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity And Ambiguity*



### *What Is Vuca And Its Relevance In Life?*

VUCA is an acronym that stands for *volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity*, a combination of qualities that, taken together, characterise the nature of some difficult conditions and situations. The term is also sometimes said to stand for the adjectives: volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous.

The term VUCA originated with the United States Army War College to describe conditions resulting from the Cold War. The VUCA concept has since been adopted throughout organisations in many industries and even in our lives, *to guide self leadership and planning.* An awareness of the

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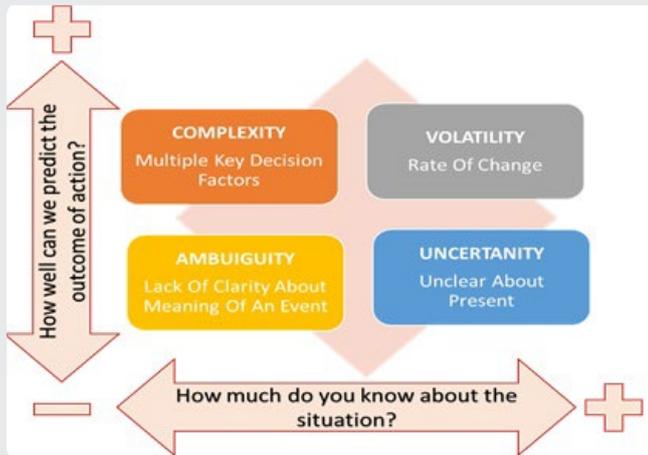
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2022

- WEEKENDS - TAKE THE PRACTICE TEST
- JUNE - CRACK AEEE
- JUNE - ACE JEE MAINS



forces represented in the VUCA model and strategies to mitigate the harm they might cause are integral to *crisis management and planning for difficult times*.



### Volatility

Volatility refers to the propensity for changing from *one state to another*. Under certain conditions, volatile materials can dangerously explode, changing rapidly from stable to disordered. This provides another implication that volatile conditions are dangerous conditions.

The interesting thing about volatility is that even though it might represent danger, it can also represent opportunity. The point is this: *volatility is good if we are seeking opportunities and bad if we like predictability*.

### Uncertainty

Uncertainty refers to the *lack of specific information*, which can be found by answering

specific questions. Asking “What is the probability that it will rain today?” is a question that is an attempt to characterise uncertainty.

### Complexity

Complexity refers to *the number of components, the relationships between the components*. The normal layperson’s usage of the complexity tends to oversimplify the scope of practical problems facing leaders in organisations. Complexity differs from “complicated.” A complicated issue can be understood by analysis and investigation beforehand.

### Ambiguity

The Latin prefix “ambi-” refers to multiple or non-fixed, such as its use in the words *ambiance* and *ambidextrous*. Ambiguous language is language that can be interpreted differently. Ambiguity is a cause of stress for many people (especially those who work in well-structured organisations) as the disorder implied by ambiguity is not comfortable. People tend to avoid, ignore, or minimise ambiguity.

*VUCA is a condition that calls for questions — lots of them*. Penetrating questions that ferret out nuance. Challenging questions that stimulate differing views and debate. Open-ended questions that fuel imagination. Analytical questions that distinguish what we think from what we know. The only thing we know with certainty about our strategy is that it’s wrong. Persistent probing will help us discern if it’s off by 5 percent or 95 percent



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before events themselves swiftly reveal the answer. *Agility is critical because strategic adjustments must be made continually.*

### *VUCA Interpretation*

Of course, each of the four characteristics of VUCA rarely happens in isolation. For example, we might be experiencing volatility and complexity at the same time (A sudden change in leadership at the same time as our competitor launches a new product in a business). We need to think about which of these characteristics, or VUCA combinations, best describes the ecosystem in which we currently are.

### *Which Aspect of VUCA Do You Prioritise?*

#### **Making The 'Shift' Happen**

Once we have identified the characteristics of VUCA that are most relevant to our current situation and before we start thinking about specific strategies and tactics to be effective, it is time to make the mindset shift to ensure we are setting ourselves up for success.

#### **Mindset Shift: From Planning to Preparing**

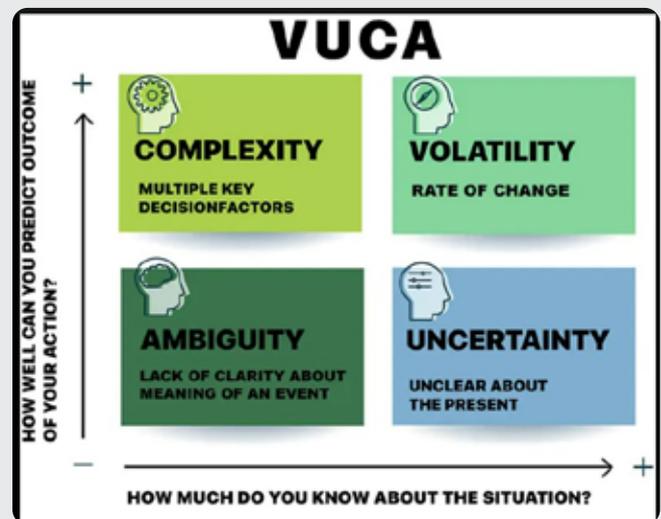
In stable contexts, we can rely on the tried and true practices of planning and analysis. When the future, not to mention the present, is uncertain and unpredictable, we must make a mindset shift toward preparing and enter a state of readiness.

The best practices below fall into two key and interdependent categories:

- 1) Self & talent development strategies., and
- 2) Discipline (Habits & Routines or Systems and Processes)

They are interdependent because we can have the best systems and processes in the world and if we have not developed ourselves to make the necessary mindset and skill set shift, we will be disappointed in the output.

Some best practices for leading through VUCA are as follows. It is important to pay particular attention to those that are within our span of control or influence.



### *Volatility*

Characterised by an unpredictable, unstable situation, though not necessarily complicated. Information is available as events unfold.

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1. Train for **role elasticity** and develop **“generalising specialists”** traits
2. Improve **decision-speed**
3. Build **redundancy & slack** into our routines or system
4. **Leverage technology** and alternative strategies to ensure continuous communication
5. **Regularly train** for various disruptions, and identify needed skills, knowledge, and talent

### *Uncertainty*

Characterised by a lack of key actionable information, such as timing, duration, cause and effect.

1. **Tap your Relational Web** to:
  - Gather **additional information** and insight into the situation
  - Reflect on and share experiences** of successfully working through uncertainty
4. Identify the givens of the current situation and **focus on what is within our span of control**
5. Provide or **seek career-pathing (or life pathing)** and regularly obtain feedback on the situation

### *Complexity*

Characterised by an overwhelming amount of information, interconnected or moving parts and relationships.

1. Improve **communication, collaboration and coordination**
2. Clarify core beliefs and values important for decision making

3. **Identify people** who have strengths and experience in dealing with complexity and seek inputs

### *Ambiguity*

Characterised by a lack of information and precedent, making the ability to predict the impact of actions a challenge.

1. **Create (some) clarity.** Make space for interactions
2. Re-engage and recommit to our purpose
3. Understand and **prioritise needs**
4. Focus on our **core skills/ USP**
5. **Experiment and pilot** to discover what we don't know
6. Make time to **learn the lessons** from experience and carry them forward

### **Limitations:**

*These ideas are not intended as a prescription for the issues and opportunities that are most pressing for us. They will help get the conversation started and lead to thoughtful reflections that help build our competence, capacity, and confidence to effectively lead through VUCA.*



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## Guest Teachers' Corner

### *David and Goliath*

I had my primary education in YWCA School, Madurai. The morning assembly will always have a story to boost the morale of the students. One such story is David and Goliath. This story was a thrill and chill to us because the mighty man Goliath will be defeated by a small boy David. The story revealed that a person with the will to win can win, however mighty the opponent is. It is not the age or experience, but only the will to face the challenge, ability and strategy will take you to the victory stand whatever be the power of your competitor. So when you skip the challenge or exam, because of the fear of failing, you are awarding yourself a zero. Fight unto the last, do or die should be an inborn quality and nurture them with self-motivation.

A 16 yr old Indian Grandmaster Praggnanandhaa defeated Magnus Carlsen in the eighth round of the Airthing Masters online rapid chess tournament. Four years ago, when Praggnanandhaa became the second youngest GrandMaster in the world, he told in an interview that he wanted to defeat his idol, none other than Magnus Carlsen and now he chased his dream and finally his dream was realised. Many times when a high or additional responsibility comes, we avoid it due fear of failure or criticism. Face it without fear and conquer it with your will. It is the determination of the individual to win which made him reach the podium. As Joe Torre said, "Competing at the highest level is not about

winning. It's about preparation, courage, understanding and nurturing your people, and heart. Winning is the result."

T. Sivaram

Librarian,  
SBOA MHSS,  
Coimbatore



### *Some Tips To Remember The Answers For The Exam*

Exam season has begun. All of the students will be focused on their exams and future plans. Some students are late bloomers who must work hard to achieve their objectives. Here are a few pointers for them.

#### **Write down your answers and repeat them louder**

After you have read an answer, jot it down and read it out loud. It will be registered in your mind as you type. It will be remembered if you read it out loud again. The response has been repeated in your head a number of times, which will improve your memory. Repeat until you have a firm grasp on the solution.

#### **Concentrate on one task at a time**

When reading, give your complete attention to your study. While studying for examinations, many people text their friends, check social media, listen to music, and so on. Your brain can't handle all of the information at once. Your mind will only go in the direction of the event that interests you the most. As a result, the remaining operations will be futile. Physically, you can

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perform more activities, but your mind will only store one.

### **Make use of visual data**

For your theme, use diagrams, symbols, and illustrations. Your mind will become more familiar with it each time you see it. As a result, you can easily record that information and recall it during the exams.

### **Educate your mind**

You can exercise your brain by doing puzzles like Sudoku, both of which have been shown to keep the brain cognitively and mentally engaged. Instead of using your phone, do these tasks on paper.

### **Indulge in some physical activity**

By increasing cardiovascular fitness and blood circulation – whether by walking, jogging, or gardening – you are providing the brain with the oxygen and nutrients it needs to function at its optimum.

### **Pay special attention to information that is difficult to understand**

While recalling middle information can be challenging, you can overcome this difficulty by spending extra time rehearsing it. Another option is to reorganise what you have learnt to make it easier to remember. If you come across a particularly tough idea, set aside some extra time to memorise it.

R. Jeyatheerthan

Teacher,  
SBOA MHSS,  
Coimbatore



## *The Era of Online Education*

The coronavirus pandemic and the ensuing lockdown has forced schools to temporarily shut and this has created a big gap in the education system, despite the fact that we are doing our best to provide support for online education. We are now entering a new era — the revolution of online education. The virtual learning makes the students learn at their comfort zone and requirement. Every educational institution has the necessary tools for the formation of a virtual class, as an extension of the real class. The teaching staffs use the teaching methods and strategies virtually, which are not affected by the additional demands generated by the context of the pandemic. The teachers and the students are adapting themselves well to this challenge which is appreciable. The students are able to access different apps for posting their home assignments and online tests. More than 90% of attendance is being reported for the virtual classrooms. Teachers have upgraded their skills and knowledge in technologies- “techno-savvy”. Even though online learning has advantages and limitations it should be considered only as an alternative tool for teaching and learning in the midst of the lockdown. The real classroom teaching should be restored back as it is the real, tangible and touchable place to teach and learn.

Vidhya Johnson S

Faculty,  
National Model Primary School



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