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Adversity Quotient: An Escalator to Rise Above Challenges

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Abstract:

Human beings are understood to be the most intelligent being on earth. They have varying levels of mental capacity. And amongst the varying levels of capacity, IQ (Intelligence Quotient), EQ (Emotional Quotient), SQ (Social Quotient) are most heard about capacities of human beings. These capacities are tested time and again in terms of intelligence quotient tests, emotional quotient tests, social quotient tests, personality tests, achievement tests, aptitude tests and so on. But there is another very important Capacity or Quotient to be considered and tested that is 'Adversity Quotient' of the students. We focus and put a lot of effort for uplifting Intelligence Quotient and Emotional Quotient of an individual. But now it has become crucial to develop Adversity Quotient among the new generations who are vulnerable to adversities of life but fail to face them. There is necessity to focus on Adversity Quotient of students and train and teach them to respond and handle the adversities coming their way. The present paper is knowing more about Adversity Quotient and the ways to develop them and rise above all challenges and overcome adversities of life.

(Key Words: Adversity Quotient, Challenges, Social Quotient, Emotional Quotient, Intelligence Quotient)

Introduction:

'No one can avoid adversities forever, but you can strike back and live a fulfilling life.'

Adversity Quotient is an ability of an individual to handle and solve problems. It helps a person to be strong and determined in the life controversies and problems. There is a generalisation among people that IQ or the intelligence quotient is the best way to measure intelligence. But many real-life stories have proved time and again that a person with high IQ or Intelligence are not always successful in life. People with high IQ may not have done well in their life. This indicates that IQ alone is not enough to do well.

To break this old ideology of superiority of IQ in an individual, a real short story about a person with high IQ and his deterioration in life will make the concept much clear and precise.

This is a story about a man called Ted Kaczynski, an American Terrorist who had an IQ of 167. He entered Harvard University at the age of sixteen. Graduated at the age of twenty. Worked as a Mathematics Professor in one of the leading Universities of the world. But he quit his job within 2yrs. He failed to develop any Social or Emotional skills. Avoided people in the University. So due to all these laid backs or setbacks in his emotional and social nature, he was nick named as Hermit of Harvard. He always preferred to stay alone, did not intermingled with people around. Later, he used his Intelligence to kill three people and injured 22. This is how he used his Intelligence. Hence, this story tells us how IQ falls short as predictor of success.

Since long we are hearing about IQ (Intelligence Quotient), EQ (Emotional Quotient) and SQ (Social Quotient), however we have hardly heard about AQ (Adversity Quotient). Adversity Quotient is how we respond to life especially, during tough times. The more resilient we are, the more effectively and constructively we respond to situation, this is what is AQ or Adversity Quotient is. Now, before we learn more about AQ, lets know in brief what is IQ, EQ and SQ.

IQ is Intelligence Quotient; it is our Mental Potential and our Academic Ability.

EQ is Emotional Quotient; it signifies our ability to understand our own and other's emotions.

SQ is Social Quotient, it is ability to understand and manage people and to act wisely in the human relations we maintain.

Now, over the years researchers have proved that high IQ alone, cannot be the predictor of success. It is always the Interplay of IQ, EQ, SQ and AQ. All four of them are predictors of success. AQ is actually not a new concept. It was coined long back by Sir Paul Stoltz in the year 1997. However, in today's time the importance of AQ stands even more. There are three types of people- Quitters, Campers, and Climbers.

Quitters tend to blame others. They blame situations, blame people, they have a very little capacity for challenges and changes. Campers are the ones who lose hope and faith when Adversity is high. They will work hard; however, they will stop when they achieve safe plateau. And the third category, the Climbers, they have tremendous capacity for challenge and change. Climbers are resilient, tenacious, and always focus on solutions rather than blaming the situations. Climbers are the ones who see obstacles as opportunities and move ahead.

And it is very much imperative for the educators to be aware of these categories of students. Teachers should be aware of the category that a student belong so that they can guide students when needed and give timely counselling to such students.

Adversity means hardships, challenges, or misfortune. The state of adverse conditions; state of misfortune or calamity and a tough period in an individual's life is known as difficulty/hardship (adversity). So, in short Adversity means unfavourable situations and difficulties. Therefore, Adversity Quotient is a person's response to overcoming obstacles or problems. Adverse conditions make one person to learn several things and it also

analyses one's capacity and courage. The more resilient we are, the more effectively & constructively we respond to situations.

Adversity quotient is the broadly accepted measure and technique in the world to evaluate how persons reply to and deal with adverse situations in their life.

AQ is encompassed into four dimensions (CORE):

C= Control

O= Ownership

R= Reach

E= Endurance

C for Control means to what level one can manipulate the condition.

O for Ownership means to what level one can grasp for improving the condition. And to what level one can take charge to play a number of roles in making it superior.

R for Reach means how far one can reach the difficulty level when things are out of control or how far one can condition through art of living.

E for Endurance means for how long adversity can be tolerated by a person.

Role of teachers to develop Adversity Quotient in the students:

- **Teach the student- *Responsibilities***

Let the student fail, let him do wrong and commit mistakes. Allow them to do things they are scared of and most importantly students should know from the core of their heart that their teachers and parents are there for them anytime during their phase of adversity.

- **Listen to students- *Problems***

Sit with them, talk to them, spend free time with them, discuss the best things, ask their plans of tomorrow, motivate and inspire them to open up and teach them to say sorry if they go wrong and these practices will help them to release oxytocin which help in developing trust and bond.

- **Stay- *Calm when they discuss***

Respond maturely. Let them put their point forward. Support or embrace them in all their failures.

- **Never- *Belittle them***

Students need us so be there for them as we are their strongest support.

Suggestions to Improve Adversity Quotient among Students:

- ***Don't compare----- every student is like flower***

Children are basically gifted. Every child has their own potential and identity. No one is alike. They are just like flowers of a garden that looks different, blooms different and smells different but above all they together make a beautiful garden, similarly children should be treated like different flowers of a garden. Parents and teachers should learn to embrace and accept children as they are. We should not tamper their instinct qualities by trying to make everyone alike like any other product similar in size and measure. They should keep a check on their unnecessary instructions that may spoil their natural potentials and development.

- ***'Burn them when they are young then you burn them forever----then Don't***

REGRET (they have a big life AHEAD.....)'

There are instances when children are burdened too much at their tender age by parents and teachers. They develop lot of stress and anxiety at a very tender age due to which they lose all their creativity and potentials within them. They may even lose their natural personality and scared to express and share their feelings even to their parents or teachers. All these negative attitudes may burn the good qualities of a child and regretting later is futile as that may lead them towards a bleak future.

- ***Parents & Teachers are Role Models (they absorb like a sponge)***

Children tend to imitate elders so it becomes imperative for the teachers and parents to correct their behavioural aspects before they expect from their children/ students. They should prove to be a role model for the students. The parents and teachers should set examples before the children in tackling and managing various adversities of life at the same time site examples of real-life heroes of life who faced adversities in their life and came out of it very smoothly with all their will power and determination.

- ***Compete with Yourself (at the end YOU are important)***

Comparisons are the root cause for frustrations and depressions. Children feel frustrated when compared to others and that may develop a sense of inferiority complex in them and when they fail to achieve that expected level, they get depressed and lose all hope to achieve or win their life. Therefore, comparison should be stopped and individual differences of children should be embraced and they should be motivated and inspired time and again to love themselves and find their own potentials and utilise them genuinely for their overall development. Children should be trained to master their qualities and learn to control the negative side of their character. More than competing and focussing on others achievements they should focus on grooming and polishing their qualities. Afterall, what matters is their existence and they themselves.

- ***Take Life as an Indian Thali (combination of all things make full---that's the beauty of life)***

Individual differences of the children should be embraced by everyone. The flaws should be ignored and guided well to proper track while their potentials should be appreciated. Like an Indian thali every item of it relished the same way every child should be celebrated. Their presence should be felt and encouraged to chase their dreams and wishes.

- ***Understand the RELEVANCE OF LIFE***

Children should be taught the real meaning of life. Life is not all about only Academics but there are different spectrum of life where every individual can find their own space, their own taste and preferences and their own interest areas. They should be trained to see the broad spectrum of life with different areas of interests. Children should be aware of the relevance of life and focus on the lighter version of life.

- ***Develop COMPASSION in Students***

Compassion is such an emotion that will develop positive qualities in students. Compassion helps children to develop courage and determination among them. This quality will keep them together to face any kind of adversities in their life. Compassion in students will develop love for life and challenges and adversities in their life and prove themselves.

- ***DISCIPLINE in LIFE***

Discipline helps in creating system in life. Children should be trained to follow disciplined life at home and school which should become a habit to them later. This disciplined habit will encourage them to face adversities of their life with ease.

- ***Everybody must run their own MARATHON***

Children should be aware of different phases of life and the importance of each phase. They should be trained to face the difficulties and challenges each phase of their life may have. They should become their self-guardians. They should take life as a marathon where they have to go a long way and ups and downs, winning and losing is a part of life's game. Falling and rising again and again in life is life skill to face any kind of adversities in life. Their journey of life may be like a marathon where they have to stand alone to face the adversities from time to time with courage and determination.

Implications of the Study:

Now the era of surmounting the adversities of students have emerged. The focus is not only on developing IQ, EQ, SQ of the students but on the AQ of the students. It has become very much imperative for the psychologists and counsellors to focus on the study of Adversity Quotient so as to promote AQ in the students. The growing failures and disappointments of the students are encouraging all sorts of crime and suicides among students. Therefore, it becomes the prime duty of the educational institutions, teachers, and parents to develop Adversity Quotient among children. Though IQ helps to make rational decisions and EQ helps to maintain emotional

balance amidst all stressful issues but AQ plays a very important role to overcome failures of life come back to normal life processes. Adversity Quotient helps to fight challenges and succeed in life. An individual with low AQ will easily experience anxiety, depression, or other mental health and physical health issues. It is normal to experience failure and failure is an opportunity to grow. If one reaches the point of despair while overcoming a setback, reassess and refresh the mindset, get up, and start over. Practice self-awareness. It is one of the pillars of mastering adversity and resilience. Self-awareness allows to understand the triggers, responses, and how to manage them. Mastering the adversity quotient helps to strengthen one's capacity, morale, performance, innovation, and productivity.

Concluding Statements to Overcome Adversity:

- ❖ Develop a positive mindset
- ❖ Use your sense of humour
- ❖ Expect adversity and prepare for it
- ❖ Learn from others who have overcome adversity
- ❖ Choose supportive and caring friends
- ❖ Jot down your thoughts in a daily journal
- ❖ Think about the struggles you've been through/Look to past hardships
You've overcome for motivation.
- ❖ Embrace the adversity
- ❖ Focus on ways to solve a problem/ Don't worry about negative thoughts or anxieties
- ❖ Separate your emotions from a difficult situation/ Remove your emotions so you can see things objectively.
- ❖ Keep your long-term goals in mind/ Remember what you're working towards to stay motivated
- ❖ Never give up

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