

## Analysing your Answers-2

It is true that you require a coach like that. Let me introduce you to a coach who is easy to find and is trustworthy. But you have to believe in him. I will give you the name of the coach, his address and even his mobile number. But you have to trust in him. I would like to tell you to trust this coach since I do not know any other coach like this one. I also took help from this coach.

After my selection I was amazed to know that 90% youngsters had also taken the same coaching. In fact even today when I ask students, "Whose help did you seek?" most take the name of this coach. Sometimes they take names of other people and some of the names they take belong to a person, community and society. But they do not forget to mention, "This coach is unparalleled." Would you like to know the name and address of this coach? Maybe you have realised by know who this coach is.

If you haven't then try to find out and you will know the answer. Friends, this situation is similar to the one in which a deer smells musk and roams through the entire forest to find it. The deer does not realise that the musk is inside it. Similarly, you are the coach. You can note down your name address and phone number. This is the coach I was talking to you about. I know that my answer may have disappointed you. It may have shaken some of you. You may even be angry at me. That is okay. I can bear with you being angry at me as long as you do not completely dismiss this truth.

Please think about this for a while and try to find yourself. Instead of reacting instantly think about things. There must be some truth in what is being said. The truth is not based on your agreement or disagreement. If you do not believe in something, does not mean that it is false. The truth is not going to wait for you. Friends, we all have our own truth. I respect yours and therefore expect you to respect mine.

Think about this and do it for a while. If things do not seem right in the first attempt do not give up. Give it more time. Maybe you will find a diamond. If you visit a mine, you will see many pits which were dug up but yielded nothing. There may be a few pits that still yield diamonds. But as long as you can find one diamond it will compensate for all the pits that turned up empty. Finding a good coach is like finding that diamond.

We have a natural ability to spot good from bad, right from wrong and ordinary from extraordinary. Just think how many of your decisions are based on this. If you are riding a bike, you wonder which path you should take. Why? When you go grocery shopping you choose vegetables. What is the basis of this choice? After watching a movie you advise others on whether to watch it or not. What is the basis of that advice? In a year, many teachers teach you in an institute. Why do you praise certain teachers and not others? You visit a book shop to buy a book. The store owner hands you five books on the topic. But you have to buy a single book. You ask the owner which one you should buy. He says, buy anyone they are all the same. But you are not satisfied with this answer. You flip through the books and turn them over. After 10 minutes you decide to get one. What is the basis of your decision? The examples I have given are different even though they have the same underlying theme. I have given examples from daily life as well as intellectual instances. The basis of all decisions, big and small, is the fact that nature has given us the ability to predict which decision will be correct. Lack of this ability is called foolishness. Now it is up to you to develop this quality. The only way to do this is to use this ability to the maximum. If you allow others to make your decisions for you, this ability will become so weak that you will feel it was never there in the first place.

But yes when you need expertise, then we allow others this right. We visit a doctor because we cannot diagnose ourselves. Here we are discussing how you should evaluate your answer. This is the field of knowledge. It has experts. But aren't you an expert as well?

The teachers who taught you in classrooms knew the subject well. So if they were experts on the subject who are you to decide whether they were good or not. But you do decide and you decide whether they are good teachers or not. Is this not a decision related to knowledge? If you can take this decision, can you not decide whether the answer you wrote is good or not? I gave the example of a book. You decide whether a book is good or not. You definitely have an opinion after reading the book. The book has written material and you will also write as part of your answer. There are only two differences here. First is that someone else has written in the book and you have written in the copy. The second difference is that the book has stuff printed on it and you have handwritten your answer. Other than this, can you come up with any difference? Both are on the same topic and both are related to knowledge. Both have content, language, writing style. These are the essentials that help decide whether what is written is good.

Do you not agree with me? I know that it won't be easy for you to agree with me. It won't be easy because you haven't tried anything like this so far. In such situations it is difficult to believe what someone tells you. But the first step is to trust that you have what it takes to be an examiner. You have not discovered it yet. I have made you aware of this. Now, you have to nurture it. Let us now talk about how you will do this. I would also like to bring to your notice that we are quick to pass judgement on others yet we feel we are ill-equipped to judge ourselves. Or maybe we do not think it is important to judge ourselves because we assume we are correct. I will discuss in brief a few things because of which we are unable to take the correct decisions and fall short of evaluating ourselves properly. This is what happens when we try to evaluate our answers. First of all there are very few people who doubt themselves. "If I have written the answer, it must be correct." This is what people firmly believe. They do not feel the need to assess their answers. Do you think that if they have a strong educational background then there is no reason for them to doubt themselves. Secondly, we have the best intentions for ourselves. Only a few people have the courage required to be cruel to oneself. While evaluating the answer if I come to the conclusion that the answer is wrong I need immense courage to deal with it. This is only possible when I'm hard on myself. Feeling pity for yourself will be an obstruction. But when it comes to others, we are a tad bit difficult. Since it does not affect us, it is easy for us to declare our decisions. The principle of neutrality works best.

It can guide us to the right decision. While evaluating the answers written by other people, we can be unbiased but extending the same to ourselves is quite difficult. If I take my experience into account, I can say this with full faith that when you are inspired and undertake a task again and again you develop this sense of neutrality. This will have to be done. Once you develop impartiality, you will be able to evaluate yourself.

To be continued...

**NOTE: This article by Dr. Vijay Agrawal was first published in 'Civil Services Chronicle'.**