

Maadhyam Youth Forum
Peer Mediation Club
Miranda House

Report: From Conflict To Collaboration

Date : 3 April 2025 (Thursday)

Report by : Pratishtaa Koul

The Peer Mediation Club ,Miranda House under the aegis of Maadhyam Youth Forum held a Session on “**How emotional intelligence and active listening shape smart negotiators**” on Thursday,3rd April 2025 in Miranda House. Through the discussion the speakers- **Dr. Sanaya R Nariman, Educationist, Ms. Amita Sehgal, Advocate & Mediator, Dr. Parnika Sharma, Counselor, and Ms. Nikita Vir, Lawyer**, emphasised on practical strategies for improving interpersonal communication in our personal and professional lives.



The discussion started with discussing the insights from the previous sessions and reflected on how they have helped so far in our lives. Starting off our discussion with a recapitulating session about how to improve our physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional health, we moved forward with how we can move from conflict towards a collaboration and the road blocks on the path.



To get a better understanding of the concepts we were presented with a role play where **Dr. Parnika Sharma and Ms. Nikita Vir** enacted two students from a team working on a group project and start discussing how to go about the project. The act was played in two parts. The first part highlighted how lack of listening leads to miscommunication and the problem of imposition of their respective views. Both of them took positions on how to go about the project whether it should be based more on research or presentation is more important. Hence driving people from a healthy discussion to a heated argument.

The second part further delved deeper into their argument where we got to see how miscommunication turns into personal attacks and diversion from the point of discussion.

We saw how these barriers escalates the conflict and the underlying disagreement remains unaddressed. Highlighting these problems we further discussed the possible solutions for avoiding conflicts which led the discussion towards identifying the barriers to effective listening.



In this part of the session we discussed four obstacles to effective listening which include

- **Bluffing**- pretending to listen.
- **Mind Reading**- assuming others' thoughts without clarification.
- **Happy Hookers**- ones who steer discussions toward themselves
- **Premature Advising** – offering solutions before fully understanding the issue.

This steered the discussion towards addressing the **principles of active listening** in which we got to know about three methods- the first one being **paraphrasing** - restating the speaker's message in a neutral tone to confirm understanding, and the second one was **neutral language**- Avoiding "you or me" phrasing to reduce defensiveness and the last but not the least **empathetic engagement**- balancing understanding with self-respect.



Further the speakers enlightened us about **managing emotional responses** which helps in enhancing effective communication. In the first part they highlighted how strong emotions can hinder rational discussions which can be avoided by recognising the signs of physical reactions such as increased heart rate, restlessness, etc. and mental signs such as mental agitation or impulsive responses. To prevent the escalation of emotions we were taught to **take pause** and **reflect** before responding. We were encouraged to perform **self inquiry**- asking ourselves “Why am i feeling this way?” and try to **understand** where the other person might be coming from. In other words, asking ourselves “why is the other person being this way?” which will make the effect of emotional upsurge and hence de-escalate the tension in the atmosphere. They also shared a few assertive yet calm statements such as “Let's agree to disagree”,



Committee members of Peer Mediation Club.

In this way we got to know the techniques of Active and Effective listening and how they help us to maintain our boundaries and prioritise our mental well being. In the end the speakers held session where student put their queries and shared the problems they face while communicating their thoughts while resolving disagreements and conflict situations. The trainers asked us about our learning's from the session which help us sum up our take away .With this we walked towards the end of an insightful session.



With the Principal of Miranda House, Dr. Bijayalakshmi Nanda in the newly and creatively inaugurated 'Mind Lab'.