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Empowering IT Engineers

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To:

Cc:

Dear All,

It was very nice interacting with you all last week. I regret the delay in getting back to you with this email but as I had already told you, I was planning to spend enough time in order to come up with the most ideal content that can be of further assistance to you. I wanted the lecture to just be a beginning for all the good things that you can start doing from now on. In this email, I hope to detail more ways and opportunities that you can grasp in order to start making your four years at LICET, and further on in the years to come in life too, more fruitful and scintillating.

First of all, I missed stating a point that I always say in my lectures - as to how important the roots of your life are than the shoots. The roots represent the morals, principles and rules that you set for your life and they are often always permanently determined by you (though they may be influenced by many), unless you choose to improvise them based on your own experiences with time. There is also a good chance that these experiences can cause your roots to get deteriorated, but my sincere prayer and hope would be that they never do so in your lives cause we've often always seen, observed and understood the catastrophe that such people, who lose their morals, are capable of causing. The shoots on the other hand, of course, refer to the achievements, success, marks, career and all that you will eventually one day gain but in my honest opinion, there is no point in gaining them without gaining it the right way, because ultimately the latter gives us long-sustaining satisfaction, happiness and joy.

I will also aim to tackle a few questions that were posed to me during and after the lecture through this email. Firstly, I'll try to give you insights about the question of monotony that was asked by one of you - how academics and the activities related to it are in general monotonous. So what does the person who cooks food for you daily, either at your home or at your hostel, do when the main dish (eg. rice, chapathi) is rather repetitive and non-interesting almost every day? They ensure that the side dish (eg. carrot dish, curry) is made more tasty in a unique manner or sometimes they even convert the main dish into a much more enjoyable one (eg. fried rice, noodles, biriyani). I am sure none of you will eat plainly cooked basmati rice as such if somebody tells you that, it is the biriyani that you were asking for. You would only enjoy the same if the necessary spices, ingredients and flavors are added to it, and that too appropriately. So by making the other small entities mouth-watering and interesting, they ensure that you still stick to eating their main dish, which in the first place was considered by you as not very tasty. In the same way, if your academics don't interest you, you should look for other curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities that make sure that the day is worth giving your best shot such that only if you complete the main-task (academics, which is not very interesting to you), you will be able to do the sub-tasks (projects, presentations, sports, indoor games, writing etc.) with satisfaction and encouragement. It is also important that you manage how you are going to juggle between the main and sub-tasks. There may be days when you give more importance to your sub-tasks than your main-tasks, perhaps on weekends and there may even be days you may not get an opportunity to do your sub-tasks but you may have to make up for it on another day. I sincerely request you that your sub-task not be something like playing video-games or spending too much time on social media. Rather, my request would be the contrary wherein you totally get out of such addictive practices that you will opine as being pointless towards the latter half of your life. Of course, if you know how to carry out such activities with discipline in order to bust your stress then you should go forward, but I tell you with experience that what starts-off that way eventually ends up in an addictive manner so its better if you nip it at the bud. I also recommend you all to install very useful apps on your phones, if you have them (I didn't own a smartphone until the final year - though I had already developed a couple of apps before that) -

1) Google Keep -

To take daily notes to carry out tasks on a daily, weekly, monthly and yearly basis. You can create different notes like Personal Tasks, College Tasks, Projects, etc.

2) BBC News and NDTV -

Two news apps to know the current affairs on a National and International level on a daily basis. Do subscribe to daily notifications on that if you feel necessary

I use a Tamil language learning app to learn Tamil since my second language was Hindi / Sanskrit. I am sure you people won't need it but what I am trying to tell you here is that we all have places where we can hope to improve ourselves on a daily basis.

Another one of you asked me what you should do in order to improve your public speaking and language skills. Many of you told me that you like riding motorbikes, and I am sure all of you have had a taste of driving a bicycle. I am sure none of you started off riding either one, the first time, so well that you didn't need any support or training or further attempts in order to make the process smoother and perfect. In the same way, the only thing that can help you achieve anything, not just this public-speaking skill, is your will to keep pursuing towards improving yourself. Never compare yourself with others. Your problems, your weaknesses, your enemies, your experiences are absolutely not going to be the same as the others hence the finish line too ain't going to be the same. So you must have your goal in mind and forget about the achievements and successes of others unless you are going to use it to inspire you. You won't believe, there was a time I was so desperate and down, like I had mentioned to you during the lecture, that a classmate of mine, a girl, who studied in a Tamil medium school inspired me indirectly to get back up and do my work well because she was all the time dedicated and focussed on what she wanted to achieve. I am proud to say today that I am a classmate of a girl who came from a Tamil medium school and yet cleared her four year course at LICET without any arrears. That is truly inspirational for a person like me and I want you all to also be such an inspiration to others and at the same time find inspiration in the smallest entities of this beautiful world that God has created. So start speaking in front of mirrors, start speaking to yourself and also start speaking among groups created among yourselves about why the birds fly in the sky, why the fish swim in the sea and why you walk on two limbs and not four. It can be the smallest of things that you speak about, its okay. Just Do It. That's how the best of us learn, that's how the amateurs become professionals. I'd like to give you a personal example. I am an aspiring writer but I always fear that my content is not worth writing since I am fearful whether the final copy of my writing will turn out to be not so good. But then I stumbled upon this quote -

"You can always edit a bad page. You can't edit a blank page." - Jodi Picoult.

So I started writing, come what may, I decided that even if my initial draft is not too good, I will ensure that when I edit it personally I will make it more stupendous. In the same way, you must start speaking, just talk to yourself and if you are worried about your language, start reading articles on the internet which have very rich vocabulary. I am sure you will agree with me that nobody is born with a good vocabulary. We all improve our skill sets with time and that's how I'd recommend you to go about things as well. I can guarantee you, if you start now, you have imminent success but if you don't then things are going to get harder by the day, to achieve.

I wish to share with you a wonderful quote that I stumbled across a couple of years ago which will give you an insight as to how unimportant achieving things are as opposed to the journey that you are indulged in.

"A goal is not always meant to be reached, it often serves simply as something to aim at." - Bruce Lee

Note: If any of the words I am using are not understandable, then google them. Even I cross-checked many of the words I used in this mail with Google to confirm if the words that I am using are right in the context. That's how all of us perfect our skills and I am sure you will too one day.

If you are not confident of an extempore, then write down what you want to speak in a piece of paper and read it out loud many times and slowly start off speaking each line without seeing them. You won't believe, there will be days when what you didn't prepare for at all, will come out of your minds, just out of an intuitive instinct and that will turn out to be the most exceptional content that you have ever stumbled across ever in your life. Like I told you on that day, be one or two-to-three steps ahead in everything. If you are not ready for one specific thing today, then be ready for it at least from the moment you

experience that your knowledge on that specific thing is inadequate yet essential to have but in parallel there must be something that you know which others don't. If somebody asks all of you to write an essay on 'Morality VS Success' today, then you, with all the collage of thoughts that you have had about it, ahead of time, must fire with full throttle the knowledge, insights, perceptions about the same at the paper that is offered to you.

Whenever you have a tough time, always remember to look at the big picture. My dear friend, Pitambar Sai Goyal from final year IT LICET told me this on the eve of Pongal 2017 when I was recovering from major depression. It means that when you are faced with problems in life, no matter how big the degree, always remember to look at the bigger aspects that lie in front of you and I say bigger because what you are capable of is always greater than what you have achieved in the past and the problems plaguing your present. You'll be able to see forward / ahead if, and only if, you choose to forget the pain, never give up and push forward.

I hope that all of you will pray to God so as to progress well and that at the end of all of this, we gain enough and more in God's eyes. As someone said, **'When we work, we work. When we pray, God works.'** Do trust wholly in God's power, for if he is on our side, no one or no force can win against us. I have experienced it personally, I hope you do too one day so that you can become lights that shine ever so bright in this wonderful creation of His.

Kindly find a few links and content that I wish to share with you which you can check out with footnotes for some -

1) Interesting Prose and Poetry

A part of Abraham Lincoln's second Inaugural Address here -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uFQCygKBa5A>

Though I know this part by heart, I didn't want to explain it because I felt it deviated too much from what was expected of me and that I could just mention it for your further introspection based on your interest. Also try checking out the whole excerpt and its detailed analysis through online sources.

Annie Johnson Flint and her hymns and poems -

https://www.preceptaustin.org/annie_johnson_flints_biography

http://library.timelesstruths.org/music/He_Giveth_More_Grace/

https://www.preceptaustin.org/annies_poems

Charles Bukowski -

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jvv8SK66_Eo&list=LLhC9l8wA6ooNqd5W0jNDJHw&index=27&t=0s

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2IK4LrD8Ii4&list=LLhC9l8wA6ooNqd5W0jNDJHw&index=47&t=0s>

Rudyard Kipling -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sSSqc1qG238&t=0s&list=LLhC9l8wA6ooNqd5W0jNDJHw&index=183>

My Poem - from my first book in the making - 'Philosophy: Glimmers from the crevices of my soul' -

Once you have God,

You don't need anyone else's nod,

To go out into the world and trod;

Bowing down to none but our Lord.

Once you have God,
You don't need to have any frets,
About all that another gets;
And wait till the Almighty lets.

Once you have God,
You don't need to fear any fraud,
Or the unpleasant and mocking horde;
Strengthening 'self by all of God's ode.

Once you have God,
You will learn how to be humble,
When the world tries to make you fumble;
And all in all tumble and crumble

Once you have God,
Christ will be by your side,
To the Spirit you'll abide;
Opening your heart and soul ever so wide

Once you have God

2) Movies and Movie Scenes

The Motorcycle Diaries -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=creV9HQvR1U>

A specific scene from Jason Bourne - The Bourne Supremacy - one of my favorite films -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DyUN2MLFW-0&list=LLhC9I8wA6ooNqd5W0jNDJHw&index=92&t=0s>

The Dark Knight Rises -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aQQKVfxdF1c&list=LLhC9l8wA6ooNqd5W0jNDJHw&index=8&t=0s>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KXxw-zXRqOs>

The A-Team -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6FqUyxVD4qc&t=0s&list=LLhC9l8wA6ooNqd5W0jNDJHw&index=131>

Lincoln -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uFQCygKBa5A&t=0s&list=LLhC9l8wA6ooNqd5W0jNDJHw&index=189>

Sicario -

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JRa_Js-POQA&list=LLhC9l8wA6ooNqd5W0jNDJHw&index=37&t=0s

3) Documentaries

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lgSup_C97Sc&t=0s&list=LLhC9l8wA6ooNqd5W0jNDJHw&index=117

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ca-C3voZwpM&t=0s&list=LLhC9l8wA6ooNqd5W0jNDJHw&index=125>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CVuVlk2E_e4&t=0s&list=LLhC9l8wA6ooNqd5W0jNDJHw&index=180

On the technical front, kindly find a few links and guidelines that you can follow in order to start off with mind-blowing projects -

1) Paper Presentations

Be on the lookout for Conferences, Symposiums and Summits through online sources and websites of Colleges and Universities. Also check out <http://www.twenty19.com/> for Internships and Symposiums

2) Internships and Inplant Trainings

Talk to your staffs and to Mr. Prabhu Shankar from the Mechanical Department who is LICET's Placement Coordinator in order to get opportunities to do Internships. Also, talk to your family members who work in companies that are in the field of your interest so that you can get good Internship and Inplant Training opportunities. Also check out <https://internshala.com/> and <https://www.interntheory.com/> for Internships.

3) Projects

Try occasionally surveying the various sections of the IIT Madras Website and other College and University Websites so as to be updated and participate in the various competitions. Lastly and more importantly, don't forget to check out the Notice Boards for ads on many competitions and conferences happening across various fields. You need not always participate in technical programs as there are loads of non-technical yet Engineering oriented programs that come along. It all depends on your interest. Also, don't restrain yourself from developing Independent Projects that can help you have an added experience in your resume.

Do check out these links to start-off with some of your projects and do get in touch with me if you are stuck somewhere or if need any help to proceed further. After you have the skillset in hand, you need to develop ideas which you can transform into finished products just like I did.

Android App Development -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XgCF58tuo2k&list=PLshdtb5UWjSrOJfpFOE-u55s3SnY2EO9v>

<https://www.scaledrone.com/blog/android-chat-tutorial/>

Website Development -

HTML, CSS, JavaScript, PHP and MySQL - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3xRMUDC74Cw>

Angular 7 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0eWrpsCLMJQ&list=PLC3y8-rFHvwhBRAGFinJR8KHlrCdTkZcZ>

4) Links to a few of my works

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/developer?id=Febin+M+Thomas>

<https://www.edexlive.com/live-story/2017/may/06/the-four-students-might-have-created-a-device-that-solves-a-farmers-problem-by-half-388.html>

5) Links for Aptitude and Programming

<https://www.geeksforgeeks.org/>

<https://www.youtube.com/user/ProgrammingKnowledge>

Also, do ensure that no of these extra-curricular activities come in the way of doing well with your academic progress. I hope you guys will take good care of that as well. All I want to tell you all is that there is always hope for you. Hope for you to be better tomorrow than today irrespective of what you were in the past.

Sisters and Brothers, there's more to life than what meets the eye. Do watch the film 'The Motorcycle Diaries' that I have shared with you above. I always tell people that the experience Guevara had is one of the best in the world because with such an experience and possibility for change, you could do wonders but the decision he made in having to use violence as the only way to victory was wrong. He couldn't put aside his barbarian nature and of course we all know how selfish Fidel Castro was in leaving his comrade after getting freedom from the American Capitalists in Cuba. The reason I want you all to watch that film and not delve too much into his life is because, according to me the experiences in that film are fantastic. How God can turn your lives in the right direction with just one incident and make you forget completely about the past and only perhaps think of the lessons you've learnt from it in order to influence change. But ultimately it is you who have to choose how to get influenced. We all have the mind to decide between good and evil and what part of good and evil are necessary at any point of time.

I have attached a few documents in this mail -

1. The Handout and Feedback of the Career Counseling Session that I had delivered in my School in 2017 - I'll appreciate your personal feedback in this regard too
2. My Detailed and Brief Resume - the reason I attached this is because you could go through the various domains of Projects and works that I have worked on and get back to me if you too are interested in doing some or have any doubts while you work on them

All the very Best for all your future endeavours, may God Bless You All. I'm sure you'll all come out with flying colors. Do keep in touch. You can contact me through my email (mfebinthomas@gmail.com) or my mobile (+91 8056465429), though I prefer an email sent to me. I'll be happy to receive your inputs and make further interactions based on your interest.

Regards,
Febin M Thomas

4 attachments