

The value of games and sports

Essay No. 01

We are all familiar with the maxim, Health is wealth. According to the world health organization, Health is state of complete physical, mental, social as well as spiritual well-being of an individual and not merely the absence of disease. Academics serve the purpose of nourishing the mind. But a healthy mind resides in a healthy body. One can develop and maintain a healthy body by actively participating in games and sports.

Games keep our body alert, active, youthful and energetic. They instill in us a spirit of adventure. Games increase the circulation of blood, boost metabolism, burn calories and improve the respiration and digestive system. A healthy person can work hard cheerfully for a long period of time, and can face dangers boldly. Games also instilling the players the spirit so self-reliance, self-confidence, justice, and fair play. They enable them to cultivate other virtues like discipline, honesty, integrity, loyalty and patriotic,

While playing games various exercises are performed automatically and one need not join a gymnasium for this purpose. Brisk walking, running, cycling, skipping, swimming and yoga are common activities to keep oneself fit. They also tone up the body of both the young and the old. Mild exercises are beneficial for patients recovering from heart attack and those who suffer from obesity, diabetes, blood pressure, etc. exercise invigorates the mind and the body and helps to keep one fit.

Games generate a feeling of sportsmanship and broaden one's outlook. They are very essential for the students. In our schools, however, games and sports are not given much importance. some schools cannot afford funds for sports equipment while most schools do not have a playground. Even parents want their children to complete their home assignments after school hours rather than play games. They fail to realize that games make children strong both mentally and physically. Many school children become obese due to lack of participating in games. Obesity puts them in the high-risk category of contracting diseases like diabetes, heart ailments, etc. the educational system needs to be reformed, and equal importance needs to be given to sports and games.

Lack of concern of the general public and authorities for sports and games is evident from our country's poor performance in international sports events. In Beijing Olympics, India's best ever performance of winning one gold and two

bronze medals. We are far behind other countries in a number of games. Moreover, in the absence of funds and facilities, the players are unable to use their talent and energy in a productive manner. For example, hockey is mostly played on grass courts in India. There is also a lack of training of international standard. The players lack motivation. They are unaware of the diet they should follow to keep themselves fit. Cricket is the only game which is given importance.

No doubts sports have plenty of advantage but they also have some drawbacks. Some sportsmen lose their limbs, fracture their legs or get permanently disabled while playing games. Many students take too much interest in games and ignore their studies.

The government has formulated a National Sports Policy, 2001. It promotes a liking for sports among public at large. It aims at the development infrastructure and the provision of better coaching facilities.

Seventy percent of our population lives in villages. To popularize games and tap hidden talent in rural areas, the rural sports programme was launched in 1970-71. The scheme has been revised. Grants to sports have been increased. Sports scholarships are given to talented boys and girls.

Effective measures should be taken to ensure people active participation in games. The government should evolve a long-term national sports policy. Children should be informed about the advantages of games. They should be made to play games regularly. Training facilities for various games should be introduced. The existing training facilities should be upgraded and expanded. The selection of players for national and international games should be fair. The government has introduced a scheme related to talent search and training. Under this scheme, assistance is provided to promising sportsperson for training and training cum competitions in India and abroad, for purchase of equipment and scientists, doctors, masseurs etc. are also assisted for undergoing specialized training and for attending seminar conferences and major international sports events and for appearing in qualifying examinations. Various awards like Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award, Arjuna Award, Dhyanchand Award, Dronacharya Award, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Trophy, Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Award etc. are given for the spectacular and outstanding performance of the sportsperson for higher achievements and to attract the younger generation to take sports as a career. The participation in sports and games will improve the overall health of the nation and its citizens.

Essay No. 02

Value of Games and Sports

The value of games is now being increasingly recognized in India from personal, social, educational and national points of view. Games and sports are essential for the all-round development of a personality. It is by playing games and sports that we can develop and maintain our health. Many of the modern diseases like hypertension, blood-pressure, diabetes, piles, obesity, and indigestion, etc. are the direct results of our current lifestyle, which excludes physical exercise or activity. It is only in a sound body that a sound mind resides. Absence of games has also resulted in many mental ailments and sleeplessness.

Games keep our body alert, active, youthful and energetic. In activities involving games and sports, blood-circulation increases and there is an increased supply of oxygen. Only a healthy person can work long, hard and cheerfully. An unhealthy person may not take as much interest in work as a healthy one. Health can be maintained by exercise alone. But games and sports have some additional benefits as they are played in groups and in healthy competitive spirit. Among many other things, they help develop co-operation, quality of leadership, team spirit and a willingness to submit to, and further, the rule of law. Games instill in the players the spirit of self-reliance, justice, fair play and sporting spirit. They make people bold, adventurous, social, disciplined and more conscious of their responsibilities towards society and nation. Players have been found better equipped to fight superstitions, communalism, obscurantism and narrow approach to issues of national interest.

The kind of excitement, joy, thrill and entertainment games provide is unparalleled. They make the exercise interesting and inspire confidence in one's work. They also teach to take success and failure in one's stride, in a sporting spirit. So, games and sports have all these additional advantages which an exercise taken for physical fitness and health lacks. A player is bound to become broad-minded, tolerant, principled, disciplined, honest, more secular in his approach and tough enough to tackle problems.

It is said that, "The battle of Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton," because the hero of this battle was a student of this famous school. It is here, as a student and player, that he developed the great qualities of leadership, patriotism, heroism, endurance, courage, and team-spirit, etc. which later helped him in defeating Napoleon. These and other qualities of character cultivated with the help of games and Sports are quite essential for success in life. They provide the much needed self-confidence and sense of fair play to the players and sports persons. They widen the mental horizon of players and make them true followers of the rule of law. A player has to follow certain rules and regulations while playing. He is penalized for a foul or transgression of the rule. He or she has to

abide by the decision of the referee. He has to play in a certain place and position, under the captain or skipper of the team. One has to respect and obey their captain. Success in a game depends on co-operative team spirit and combined energetic efforts of all the members of the team. A team has to play as an organized whole in a competitive spirit, against the other team. And this goes a long way in inculcating in the players, both consciously, and unconsciously, the spirit of adventure, discipline, fair play, team spirit, co-operation and taking of quick and right decisions. A sports person may not lose his or her temper and morale even in the face of defeat because he/she would take it coolly, calmly and then would try to perform better the next time. Players know that victory and defeat are the two aspects of the same coin. There is more joy in playing than in its end result. As in games so in life, a good player will never give up or admit defeat, nor would he be demoralized by defeat. In joy and success also he will keep his cool and equipoise. The defeated players and their team congratulate the winning team, shake hands with the winning players, which teaches them to face realities of life with a smiling face in the spirit of detachment and indifference of an onlooker. Games also help in overcoming the sense of violence, arrogance and superiority as these are purged by providing them sufficient outlet.

There cannot be a better training place than a playground for our young men and women preparing to enter the fray and combat of life. It is not success or failure or the length of life that is significant. What is of utmost importance is the quality of life and the spirit in which it has been spent. In the words of poet Grantland Rice:

For when the one Great Scorer comes

To write against your name

He marks not that you won or lost

But how you played the game.

Encouragement of sports and games is also desirable as it helps in decreasing the general incidence of crimes. Games and sports develop character and give health, which are quite essential for improving the quality of one's life, acquiring wealth and success. It is because of these reasons that our government and educational institutions have become so sports-conscious and greater funds are being allocated for the promotion of sports. Sports in India is a state subject, but the Centre helps the states by rendering financial assistance and laying down guidelines for sports activities. Many states have now introduced games and sports as compulsory subjects in schools and some of them have started sports schools and sports hostels, etc. The corporate and 'private sector should also

come forward to help promote games and sports. A beginning has been made, in the sense that many national sports events are now being sponsored by some well-known business houses, firms, companies and establishments. The business and corporate bodies should spend a percentage of their income not only in sponsoring national sports events, but also in providing playing grounds, equipment and other facilities necessary for the promotion of games and sports.