

Walk your own footsteps

- in conversation with Dr Kiran Bedi

Dr Kiran Bedi joined the Indian Police Service in 1972, creating history as the first woman to join this elite service. A Magsaysay award winner, she has constantly striven to embody her zeal as a reformist in her mantle of a law enforcer par excellence. She has held several positions of pride and pelf - Deputy Director, Narcotics Control Bureau; Traffic Police Chief, UN Civilian Police Advisor, Inspector General of Prisons, Tihar; Inspector General of Police, Chandigarh to name a few and continues to blaze ahead as an example to many in her present capacity as Director General, Bureau of Police Research and Development.

Aminudh

You have been voted as the most admired woman in the country and the 5th most admired Indian, in two separate polls conducted by 'The Week'. A role model to many, you have mentioned in one of your interviews that 'you are living your mother's dream'. Now, in hind sight what aspects of your nurturing as a child do you accord your phenomenal success to?



Dr Kiran Bedi *Discipline, hard work, excellent time management, healthy food and lots of love and nourishment from my parents and my total faith, based on intense love and respect for them.*

Disha

Nurturing is a life long process. But the present generation of youngsters interpret this as interference. What is your opinion?

Dr Kiran Bedi *This is their loss. Those who do what I did and got, will be in the 4% outstanding, others will be followers....may be rich but may not be leaders for others.*

Aminudh

What do you consider more significant- the nurturing at home or the nurturing in school or is one the natural progression of the other?

Dr Kiran Bedi *Nurturing at home is the foundation. Nurturing in the school is reinforcement. Both build the foundation strong without contradictions hence they are strong to weather any storm.*

Disha

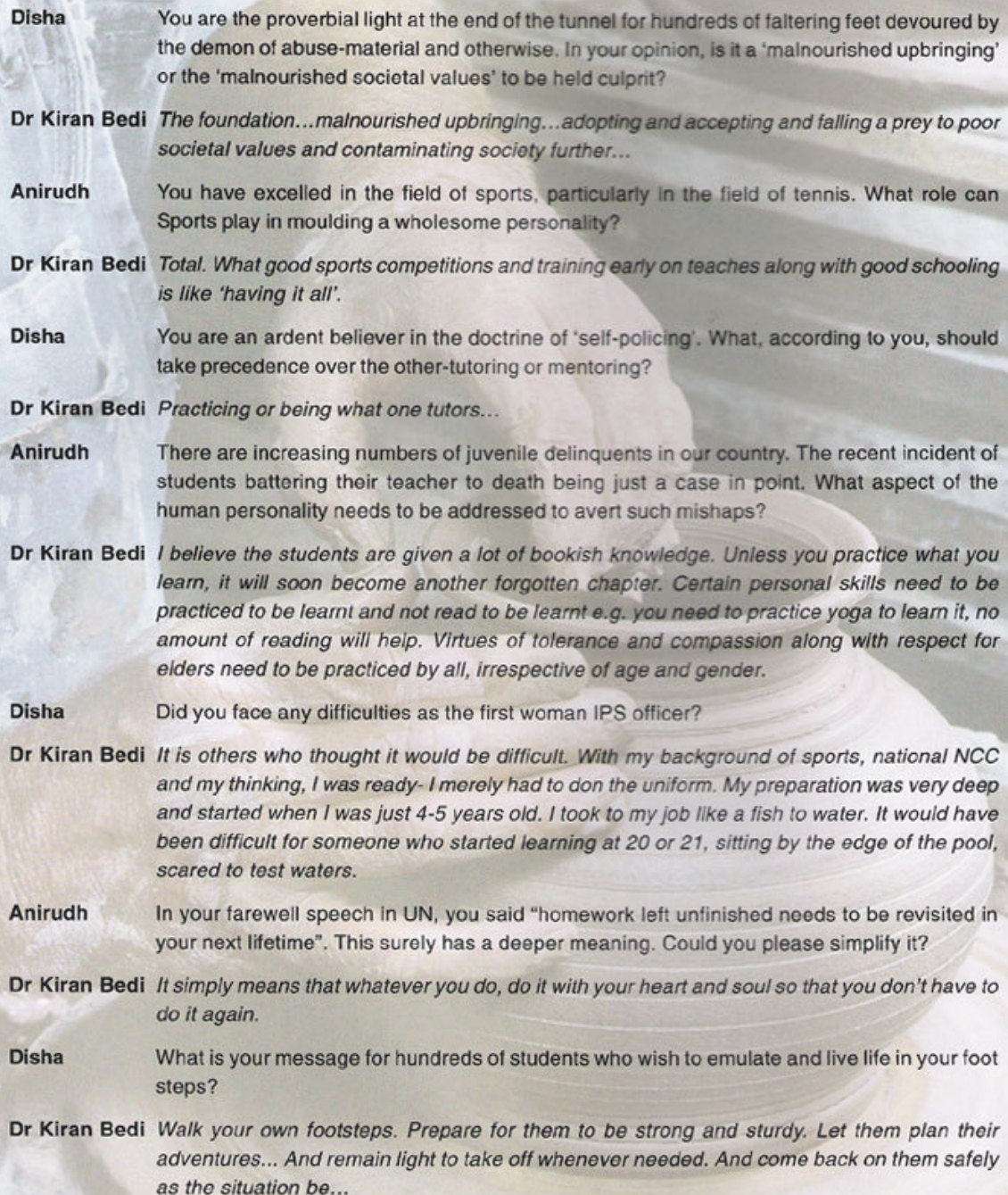
You have been a reformist in more ways than one. Ours is a beleaguered society- dishonesty, corruption, manipulation to name a few vices afflicting us. What values do we need to foster to obliterate these stigmas from our society?

Dr Kiran Bedi *Same which are constant. They are eternal. They bear their own challenges as does the opposite...children need to learn to make right choices early on and not look for quickies for marathons of life.*

Aminudh

'Navjyoti' and 'India Vision Foundation'- the voluntary organizations founded and supervised by you, reiterate your pledge of empowering the down trodden and showing the right path. But if there was one thing that you would like to change/ keep a finger on to remove all shades of grey from our society what would it be?

Dr Kiran Bedi *Equal opportunity for the willing, the deserving, and showing the potential*

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- Disha** You are the proverbial light at the end of the tunnel for hundreds of faltering feet devoured by the demon of abuse-material and otherwise. In your opinion, is it a 'malnourished upbringing' or the 'malnourished societal values' to be held culprit?
- Dr Kiran Bedi** *The foundation...malnourished upbringing...adopting and accepting and falling a prey to poor societal values and contaminating society further...*
- Anirudh** You have excelled in the field of sports, particularly in the field of tennis. What role can Sports play in moulding a wholesome personality?
- Dr Kiran Bedi** *Total. What good sports competitions and training early on teaches along with good schooling is like 'having it all'.*
- Disha** You are an ardent believer in the doctrine of 'self-policing'. What, according to you, should take precedence over the other-tutoring or mentoring?
- Dr Kiran Bedi** *Practicing or being what one tutors...*
- Anirudh** There are increasing numbers of juvenile delinquents in our country. The recent incident of students battering their teacher to death being just a case in point. What aspect of the human personality needs to be addressed to avert such mishaps?
- Dr Kiran Bedi** *I believe the students are given a lot of bookish knowledge. Unless you practice what you learn, it will soon become another forgotten chapter. Certain personal skills need to be practiced to be learnt and not read to be learnt e.g. you need to practice yoga to learn it, no amount of reading will help. Virtues of tolerance and compassion along with respect for elders need to be practiced by all, irrespective of age and gender.*
- Disha** Did you face any difficulties as the first woman IPS officer?
- Dr Kiran Bedi** *It is others who thought it would be difficult. With my background of sports, national NCC and my thinking, I was ready- I merely had to don the uniform. My preparation was very deep and started when I was just 4-5 years old. I took to my job like a fish to water. It would have been difficult for someone who started learning at 20 or 21, sitting by the edge of the pool, scared to test waters.*
- Anirudh** In your farewell speech in UN, you said "homework left unfinished needs to be revisited in your next lifetime". This surely has a deeper meaning. Could you please simplify it?
- Dr Kiran Bedi** *It simply means that whatever you do, do it with your heart and soul so that you don't have to do it again.*
- Disha** What is your message for hundreds of students who wish to emulate and live life in your foot steps?
- Dr Kiran Bedi** *Walk your own footsteps. Prepare for them to be strong and sturdy. Let them plan their adventures... And remain light to take off whenever needed. And come back on them safely as the situation be...*