Core principles of schooling and new ideas were discussed at Rethinking Education in Conclave, presented by Anshul Educational Services Limited and The Newtown School, Calcutta, at Taj Bengal on September 7. The panel featured bestselling writer Durjoy Datta, designer of online-based learning platforms Gaurav Saklani, and educational technology solutions expert Nitin Balyan. The panelists discussed issues that need to be kept in mind while formulating school curriculums and the urgent need for two-way conversations between students and teachers.

"Today's purpose was to introspect and collaborate on the possibilities of education because, as educators, we have the responsibility of preparing our students for the learning opportunities of tomorrow. We have no room for complacency since we need to be dynamic with our learning and provide better experiences both in and outside," said Sataphel Ghatak, the principal of The Newtown School.

Gaurav Saklani on the importance of experiential learning:
- Experience is the biggest teacher, so learning must be restricted to classrooms. It happens outside students' comfort zones.
- Experiential learning operates on Confucius' principal - I hear and I forget, I see and I remember, I do and I understand.
- Memory is a test for what can be considered a truly enriching experience.
- The Gurukul system advocated this form of learning by increasing population and stipulated time periods resulting in a drop in teaching efficiency in classrooms.
- Learning outdoors adds to exploring life skills and boosting self-esteem and adaptability along with academic subjects. The adventure and uncertainty add to the level of engagement.
- Corporates too can leverage experiential learning by indulging in group activities, with hierarchies getting dissolved within a month of being outdoors.
- Collaborative learning, which is both educational and recreational, is the key to a wholesome experience.

Nitin Balyan on the importance of technology in education:
- Design softwares can change teaching as we know it, as students can now work twice as faster.
- Just like the current generation is Microsoft and Excel savvy, the current students will be adept with design tools as they will be aggressively taught by Silicon Valley, to be able to become their customers in the future.
- Six technologies that are changing the industry are - cloud computing, robotics, artificial intelligence, augmented reality, virtual reality, and Internet of Things.
- We are living in a world of machine-to-machine interaction and instant services.
- We need to equip students with necessary knowledge to study today's service-led industry, which means breaking away from the 20th century curriculum.
- The technology cycle consists of early innovators, early adopters, majority adopters and then late laggards. We have to be the source of raw power who are more advanced and upgrade themselves every day.
- We need to integrate technologies like robotics and 3D printing in our curriculum to be on par with developed countries.

Durjoy Datta on the importance of creative skills:
- My role model was my father who hailed from JTF Delhi and it led me to believe that JTF was the only way of making it. Hence, diversity of role models is very important while growing up.
- I didn't consider writing a serious profession till I was a writer myself, and I think it's a great way of making it. Hence, diversity of role models is very important while growing up.
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