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According to the latest data from Government of India, every year [about 2.5 million Indians migrate overseas](#). This is the highest rate of migration in the world. Not only are average Indians migrating but bright students and high assets Indians are also leaving and taking foreign citizenships.

Discussion with some of these Indians going abroad reveals that they are going because of better prospects, better living standards and environment. Most of the foreign countries discriminate against Indians and yet Indian students and other die to migrate. So, what lures millions of Indians to get out of India?

Not invested in the story of India

The most important reason for the Indians migrating is that they consider India as a useless place with little future, no good jobs, poor environment

and poor quality of life. But *I feel the most important reason is that they are not invested in the story of India.*

For those who come from the economically weaker sections of society, they migrate to earn money and send it back home. After earning enough money, they invariably return to India. However, the real loss is when some of the brightest and the talented students, who can make a difference in India migrate. They do very well abroad, and never return.

Quite a few years ago I gave an Institute lecture at my alma mater IIT Kanpur. I asked the students if I have the power to grant them a US green card then how many would like to migrate. In the auditorium of around 200 students most raised their hands!

I was pained to see this response; the cream of engineering students from the most prestigious IIT wanted to get out of India and wondered if we will ever have good engineers and people who will build this country. Most of these students said that after finishing higher studies and getting work experience, they will come back to India, but the records show that this rarely happens.

One of the main reasons for Indians wanting to leave is that they are not attached to the story of India. They have never felt for India – the only attachment is to their family and feel everything else is bad here. Hence, they want to run away.

It is not the fault of the youngsters since they are constantly reminded by their parents, peers and others that nothing will be achieved here because of lack of good jobs and they should look for greener pastures outside India. This is the story of all developing countries.

Being smart and internet savvy, the youngsters are also aware that there is a lot of corruption in the country, the present politics is very divisive and

polarizing and the general environment is not very conducive for development. Deep down most [Indians somehow do not have confidence in the future of the country.](#)

In all my talks I tell these students that yes this is the situation presently but if they will not rectify it then who will. The youth of the country are its future, and they have a very important role to play in improving the country and making it great. *I also tell them that wherever they go they will not be able to remove India from their system. They will always be attached emotionally to India so why not make every effort to make the country great so that they do not have to leave it.*

All over the world change has been brought by the youth of the country. They are the forebearers of new thinking and change. During our freedom struggle against the British rule, it was the youth of India which provided the main strength to Gandhiji's movement. Naturally youth need to be guided by a great thought so that their latent energies are released for the greater good.

My attachment to the story of India

I also tell in all my talks that [I left a very lucrative career in U.S. in early 1980s and came back to rural Maharashtra](#) since I was too attached to the story of India to stay abroad. [I narrate to them the events and forces in my life](#) that made me do so, in the fond hope that it might inspire the youngsters to live and work in India.

My father [Jagdish Rajvanshi had gone to jail in 1942 Quit India movement.](#) He was only 24 years of age and a large number of his friends of similar age participated in the movement. His idealism and love for the country inspired me and made me understand and read about the [great spiritual traditions of India and its rich history.](#) These are some of the things that helped me get attached to the story of India.

During [my IITK student days](#) we talked about and discussed the events happening in the country. There were no distractions of internet and social media so lots of discussions took place. In the present scenario the whole focus is on “me generation”. So, everything is measured with the yardstick of what is in it for me.

Whenever I talk to the youngsters anywhere in the country, I am pained to note that the affairs of the country somehow do not enter their vision field. They are too focused on getting good paying jobs with excellent packages. So, most of the times their discussions are centered around the jobs.

Greed for money

However, I feel it is not the students' fault only. Society puts too much pressure on them to make money. Somehow in the present society nothing else matters except money. A person's worth is measured on how much money he/she makes.

Most of the world copies the American way of live, hence the [greed which is the hallmark of present American Society](#) has also seeped deeply into the Indian system. Very often students have told me that I am one of the very few speakers who talks about the country and how students can help to make it better. Most of the corporate speakers talk about which is the best job and where you can make the most money.

I also feel that when students do not have any higher thoughts or ideals to achieve then money becomes the important goal. The mass media fuels this idea and projects that one has arrived when one makes lots of money. Thus the [lifestyle of corrupt and super rich is shown as a role model](#).

Very often I have found that bright students want to achieve something in their lives. They have the capability of delivering on expectations no matter how tough they are. Yet they are not expected to or directed towards higher and noble goals and so do not know what to do. If they are made to do hard

work to achieve them, they will do it and feel satisfied. Empty mind is a devil's workshop.

Also, they are not challenged in their college days to strive for excellence. Because most of the professors and teachers themselves are mediocre and do not know better. So, it is like Kabir's *doha* "*Andha Andhe Theliya – dono koop parant*" (Blind leads the blind and both fall into the well).

What needs to be done?

There should be a continuous discussion in all classes and classrooms about [ethics of work](#) and how each student can help the immediate society. So, in schools they should be made to do physical work like keeping school clean and well-maintained. More and more hands-on projects should be included in the curriculum. Also, students should be guided to get involved in local community development.

Students should be exposed to the great historical traditions, arts, and philosophical thought of ancient India. Too often [we do not teach students the greatness of our culture](#). The success stories of how periodically India has given a great thought to the world like Buddhism, Yoga, Jainism, Sikhism, etc. should be taught. It will help students getting inspired and feel proud to be Indians. They should also be taught about the new paradigm of development; [technology guided by spirituality can lead to sustainable development and happiness](#).

Students should be inspired to excel in whatever they do. But for this tradition of excellence to be developed we need excellent and dedicated teachers who will make subjects interesting and then coax students to excel. Today the students are exposed to the world because of internet. They should be encouraged to take up a hobby and excel in it. This DNA of excellence will also spill into their studies.

This pursuit of excellence can be helped by [constant exposure of students to lectures by great people in any sphere](#) and who have helped in the development of this country. Students at that impressionable age once inspired can do wonders in later life. *I feel that there should be a national program of great people visiting schools and sharing their life lessons with the students.*

Once the bug or DNA of excellence gets into the students, they will get junoon and work with passion. In fact, it will become a way of life. This will help them to be creative, will expand their brain and horizon and help them get attached to the story of India. The pursuit of excellence cannot be done in one day but will take years to inculcate this habit. For making India great the efforts are worth it.

[All of us work for our happiness.](#) Different people have different definitions of happiness. I feel a good number of bright students have migrated and are continuing to do so because they think they will have satisfaction and happiness in their work abroad. I am sure if these bright students are exposed to the story of India in their school and college days then after education abroad, they will return to India to use their knowledge. Even if few return it will be great for the country.

[HOME](#)

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A nice [podcast discussion on this topic with Anil Rajvanshi is here.](#)