

An unstoppable force

INTERVIEW

From An Army Veteran To Being A Leadership Coach

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AIS Gurugram 43, XII C

From leading soldiers in uniform to mentoring young changemakers, Major General Balraj Mehta's journey is defined by commitment to service and lifelong learning. A distinguished Indian Army veteran, he did not let life retire him. He went on to be a leadership coach, author, motivational speaker, and NITI Aayog Mentor of Change. In a conversation with GT reporters at the TEDx event hosted by AIS Gurugram 43, he spoke about resilience, leadership, and the younger generation's role.

Lineage of duty

One of the fundamental building blocks of a person's character is family. I come from a military family. Both my grandparents, father, brother, several uncles and cousins served in army. So, I am quite familiar with the army life. I thoroughly enjoyed the 35 years of my service. It never tired me and I was prepared to serve another 35 years. It is the greatest organisation in this world.

Leadership ingredients

To pass the test of leadership, I believe three qualities are essential:

honesty, integrity, and sincerity. If you possess these values, you will naturally be inclined to work for the greater good. Equally important is confidence in yourself and in your knowledge. Another key quality is initiative - the willingness to do the right thing and exercise leadership when it matters most. I also have a personal philosophy: when you die, you should die empty. Whatever experiences, wisdom, and learnings you have gathered through life should be passed on to others. This belief motivates me to keep learning, keep teaching, and keep helping people long after my military service ended.

Dealing with distractions

One of the biggest challenges today is that distractions are increasing and attention spans are shrinking. If we want to progress and contribute positively to society, we must step away from our devices. Technology cannot and should not be wished away. We must embrace advancements such as AI and other emerging technologies. However, we should not become dependent on them. Technology should remain a tool, not a substitute for human thinking and creativity. I also believe that reading books during one's youth is important. Books expand your horizons, improve concentration, and help you develop a deeper understanding of the world around you.



Left, right, and attention with GT

Building resilience

To avoid burnout, you must occasionally pause and reassess your priorities. If you find yourself struggling to cope with challenges, talk to someone you trust. Seeking support is a sign of strength, not weakness. Building resilience also requires sincerity and empathy. You are bound to make mistakes, as every human being does. What matters is that you acknowledge them, learn from them, and continue moving forward. Equally important is the ability to understand others. When you empathise with another person's perspective, you build stronger relationships and become a better teammate and leader.

Message to Amitians

The tagline of the Army Recruitment Directorate is, 'Do you have it in you?'. I believe that question applies not only to soldiers but to every individual pursuing a dream. Be patient, disciplined, sincere, and honest in your efforts. These values will guide you towards success and help you become the best version of yourself.

Pics: Hridika, XI C
& Mehul Joshi, XI A
AIS Gur 43

Major General Balraj Mehta (Retd)



A PG-13 feed flip

Meta Remodels Content Restrictions For Teen Accounts

Aishna Rahi, GT Network

With more numbers of Instagram Teen Accounts in India, Meta has introduced 'digital bodyguards' to provide a space that has in-built safety protection for its users under the age of 18. The updates include revamped and tighter content restrictions, shifting the app's vibe like that of a PG-13 movie theatre. These settings can't be changed without parental permission. Meta is

'reel-y' trying to step up its game to keep the platform wholesome, but what can we actually expect? Let's see what Amitians think...

Double-tapped safety

In today's world, keeping teenagers completely away from social media is neither practical nor effective. It may trigger 'FOMO', ie 'fear or missing out'. In some cases, it may even alienate them from their peers who are more virtually engaged for studies or for hobbies. Thus, a safer plat-

form is better than a complete ban. Instagram's move is a welcome step that gives parents better tools to supervise their child's online activities without invading their privacy. Some of the features promote screen-time control with break reminders and night-time restrictions. There's also the mechanism to protect youth from online threats. While it's not perfect, the feature is a balanced approach to protect teens.

- Jotsaroop Kaur Bhasin
AIS Mohali, XII C

Verified? Not quite

Instagram's new feature sounds quite promising, but will it solve the issue? The system assumes that users will be honest when signing up. But how many would enter their correct birthdate? A single false entry will render every filter and 'parental permission required' wall meaningless. ID-based checks would be better. Right now, honest teenagers end up restricted, while those who bypass the system slip through with ease. Content filters and search



restrictions are reasonable, but it's useless if the platform can't figure out who the person behind an account is. Until then, this 'protection' is just symbolic.

- Guntas Kaur Duggal
AIS Mohali, XII B