

Stories from
Yuvakendra



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Stories from Yuvakendra - A Compendium

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FOREWORD

Youth in peri-urban areas of National Capital Region lack proper guidance and skills for a better future. The concept of 'Skills to Livelihood' was implemented in NOIDA region by Development Alternatives (DA) supported by HCL Foundation under their HCL Uday programme. While implementing this programme, the DA team had a fulfilling learning experience on different issues, and also got new opportunities to work with the youth. This programme helped the team in identifying the gaps between employers and employees. This greatly helped in the placement drives.

After primary scouting and interaction with the local youth, three courses: Assistant Beauty Therapist (ABT), Retail Trainee Associate (RTA) and IT (Information Technology) /BPO (Business Process Outsourcing) were introduced. IT/BPO was the course most opted for among the youth. Girls mostly opted for the ABT course. These courses were carefully chosen based on the needs of the local youth.

The programme contributed to catalysing a transformation in the lives of youth who were trained. The investment made through the programme intervention gave economic returns and boosted the confidence of the youth. A big change was observed in the lives of girls in these communities who were earlier unable to move out of their house. Equipped with new skills, they were confident in taking on new opportunities to gain financial independence and economic security. Furthermore, this skill development initiative has helped girls in earning respect in society and among their families. The efforts made in this programme were a learning experience and helped in charting new pathways to work with and impact the youth.

This compendium of success stories will take you through the journey of the youth associated with HCL Uday and Development Alternatives' programme – 'Skills to Livelihood' at the Yuvakendra community training centres in Khoda, Salarpur and Hoshiarpur in NOIDA, India. Through themes of 'resilience', 'dynamism' and 'perseverance', the transformation that this programme has brought in the lives of the youth are explored.





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ABOUT THE INITIATIVE

As India has one of the youngest populations in the world, the benefits of a large work force are leveraged to accelerate economic growth through skill development. However, due to the lack of skills, young people are not able to tap into the job opportunities available in various sectors.

Uttar Pradesh (U.P.), being the largest populated state in the country, has a target of skilling 8 million people. In order to address the skilling needs, the U.P. government has followed a convergence method, by leveraging and aligning with different schemes. The state has about 26% of people below the poverty line of urban population. With rapid industrialisation in U.P., the need for skilling, livelihood enablement and poverty alleviation becomes necessary.

Since NOIDA is experiencing fast development, the demand for a skilled population is also increasing. Being in close vicinity of Delhi, the region has a potential for proactive market linkages and thus creates a suitable location for the programme. The approach of the programme has the component of convergence with various state and non-state institutions.

HCL Uday – ‘Skills to Livelihood’ aims to create sustainable livelihoods for people in peri-urban areas, with a focus on unemployed youth, school dropouts and women. The training not only focuses on imparting skills, but also on the holistic development of a person. This is achieved by training in spoken English, life skills, financial literacy and digital literacy.

Support was also provided to new entrepreneurs by training them on ‘Start and Improve Your Business’ (SIYB) module, which equips them with practical skills that come in handy when one is setting up their business. With the Skill Guru training, trainees who are interested in becoming trainers themselves, are given the chance to follow their interest in this area, also fulfilling the purpose of creating a pool of skilled trainers.

All the trainings and initiatives undertaken till now in the programme have changed the lives of more than 400 young people by linking them to jobs and self-employment opportunities. They are now on their way to become a part of the change that is impacting lives, developing communities, and contributing to the growth of the nation.



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Resilience

Dynamism

Perseverance



Resilience

Resilience is an important quality that the Skills to Livelihood programme aims to build in all its trainees. It is the essence of life that gives people the strength to tackle problems head-on, overcome adversity, and flourish despite failure. Thus, the modules at the Yuvakendra are focused on developing a positive outlook, and taking steps to build one's skills for a brighter and more secure future.

Rediscovering Potential

**Name**

Amit Gautam

Age

21 years

Location

Yuvakendra (Community Training Centre), Khoda, NOIDA, (U.P.)

Educational Qualification

Class 12

Course

IT/BPO

Duration

1 month

Amit was very young when he realised the importance of a stable career; his family endured financial insecurity, which made him determined to support his family when he grows up.

After completing his education from school, Amit worked hard to find a job in the IT sector and was elated to get entry-level work. But the happiness was short lived as he realised that the education he had received at his school was not enough for the work and responsibilities at his new job.

He needed help with the various concepts without which he would fall behind at his work, and ultimately would not be able to form a career that he had always envisioned for himself.

Amit started searching for relevant courses in his community, but they seemed too expensive. One

“The course offered all the modules that would enable me to excel at my job in the IT sector”

day the trainers from the Yuvakendra went to the houses of the youth in the area, they also visited Amit's house. Amit was excited to hear that the course was not only cost effective but also provided career advice.

The very same evening after the visit by the trainers, Amit went to the centre to get himself enrolled. "The course offered all the modules that would enable me to excel at my job in the IT sector."

The following month Amit went to the Yuvakendra every day to learn different modules in the IT/BPO course. His favourite modules were the ones which had elements on personality development - important aspects such as English speaking skills, effective communications, dressing and personal habits as well as interview skills were taught.

"I not only learnt technical skills, I also learnt how to present myself in a polished manner at the workplace." Even Amit's friends and family noticed the change in him and pointed out that his English was fluent and he seemed more confident than before.

Amit also received valuable career advice; every career prospect related to the IT/BPO sector was explained to him and he was guided in making a resume. Guidance was also provided through job drives and preparations for job interviews.



"Often the youth from my community do not get the chance to unleash their potential, but through this course; we too can be part of the larger narrative of development."

Today Amit stands tall with knowledge and skills, he is proud of his skill set and uses it in his profession as a cashier with B.S. Electrical where he is earning INR 8,000.

He also encourages his friends to join the course; he considers the Yuvakendra not just a centre for skill building but a space to learn analytical skills as well as develop one's personality for a successful future.

Chasing Dreams


Name

Meera Kumari

Age

31 years

Location

Yuvakendra (Community Training Centre), Khoda, NOIDA (U.P.)

Educational Qualification

Class 12

Course

IT/BPO

Duration

1 month

As a 19 year old girl, Meera was extremely career driven and she had started working full time as a teacher. At 21 she was married and was barred from working, subsequently she left her job and took on her role as a homemaker.

In the span of the following 10 years, she enjoyed her new role, but the urge to restart her career never left her mind. There were various instances, where she would gather courage to oppose the patriarchal mind set of her family but would soon back down, wondering who would hire her after

such a long gap. She would also rarely go out; and her confidence in herself for holding a job had dwindled. Even the idea of working in an office everyday also seemed daunting to her. The once talented young girl who had always wanted to build her career, had turned into a meek woman devoid of the chance to chase her dreams.

"I used to never leave the house; my life was bound in its four walls, today all that has changed."

Sensing her wife's sadness, Meera's husband started to support her and got his parents blessing for Meera to start working again. He was also on the lookout to find her a course that could enhance the skills of his wife as she would have a ten year gap on her resume, making it difficult for her to get a job.

One day as he was working at this shop in the main market at Khoda, he heard a loudspeaker blaring nearby. It was spreading awareness around the newly opened Yuvakendra which would impart skills through courses like assistant beauty therapist, IT/BPO and retail. Back home, he informed his wife about it and could see her eyes light up instantly. The next day Meera went to the centre to understand all the modules and course structure. She was delighted to find out that the course also provided help with job placements.

Meera started the course the next day and slowly gained back her confidence. Learning computer and communications related skills with other trainees made her feel as if she was a young student again. Her fear of stepping out of the house had also subsided, "I used to never leave the house; my life was bound in its four walls, today all that has changed."

With the help of her trainers Meera learnt the skills for the IT/BPO sector and by the end of the month was confident in giving individual presentations.



"Today I feel so confident when I go to work, I want to prove to everyone, that I have the talent and ability to achieve my goals"

She has also excelled in all the practical and written tests at the Yuvakendra and with focus and dedication has become one of the best students.

She has been placed at AMS BPO after rigorous rounds of tests and interviews. Her job profile is of a customer care executive where her salary is INR 7,000 per month. She is delighted with her success and wants to inspire other women who too were limited to the household because of patriarchy, but always had the will and determination to step out and achieve their aspirations.

Entrepreneur of Tomorrow


Name

Preeti Verma

Age

18 years

Location

Yuvakendra (Community Training Centre), Khoda, NOIDA (U.P.)

Educational Qualification

Pursuing Bachelor of Arts

Course

Assistant Beauty Therapist

Duration

1 month

Preeti had grown up with a certain privilege that young girls around her did not enjoy. Her parents encouraged her to study and have a good career. When many girls in her community were getting married after high school, her parents instead were encouraging her to pursue a college degree. Thus Preeti grew up in a very supportive environment, where a girl's education and her career were given immense importance.

While she was pursuing a bachelor of commerce degree, she decided to become an entrepreneur. She wanted to open her own parlour in her neighbourhood, as she had always loved how a visit

to the parlour could transform women and provide them a safe space to share their lives with one another. To learn the required skills of beauty and wellness, Preeti came to the Yuvakendra. She knew that many of her friends had attended the Assistant Beauty Therapist course and she decided to enrol in it too.

"This course has given a new direction and purpose to my life."

At first she was hesitant because the course was only a month long, “I thought I would not be able to learn a lot of skills in one month, but I was proved wrong.” Preeti learnt various modules at the Yuvakendra and eventually became an expert in makeup.

The beauty and lifestyle modules were her favorite and one could find Preeti revising all the beauty tips and tricks in her spare time. “I am considered to be the most intelligent person in my family now; only yesterday I was telling my family members about the benefits of wearing sun block, something they never knew.”

She enjoyed the practical lessons too, and showed off her beauty and lifestyle knowledge by giving advice to the mock clients in the practical tests regarding beauty creams for wrinkles and natural remedies for pimples. She was also quick to sell a variety of services to the mock clients, for instance, when the client asked for waxing services, she also encouraged her to look at mehendi designs. Everyone complimented her on her confidence with the clients.

Preeti showed true entrepreneurial energy in the mock tests and passed every theoretical and practical test at the Yuvakendra with flying colours. “This course has given a new direction and purpose to my life.”



“I have learnt important skills that will help me open my own parlour, this course has helped me turn my entrepreneurial dreams into a reality.”

Preeti is now focusing on her bachelor of commerce degree, learning important business and management skills. Additionally, she is practicing the various services she has learnt at the Yuvakendra and combining that with business skills from her bachelor’s degree. She is earning INR 2,000 per month through her efforts and plans to advertise and invest her savings to expand her parlour and become the successful entrepreneur she has always wanted to be.

Her Parents' Backbone


Name

Bulbul Kumari

Age

18 years

Location

Yuvakendra (Community Training Centre), Hoshiarpur, NOIDA (U.P.)

Educational Qualification

Pursuing Bachelor of Arts

Course

Retail Trainee Associate

Duration

2 months

Being the eldest daughter, Bulbul always had a strong desire to support her parents and help them out. Though her father had a secure job with the government, his salary was only enough to take care of their needs and thus Bulbul's family of nine, lived a life of small means. Bulbul saw her father struggle with making ends meet and she was determined to work once she finished her education, to help her family with the expenses. "I realised that I had to go out of the house, gain skills and start working if I wanted to help my father." Thus, after completing her education, she enrolled herself in a correspondence course and utilised her time to look for jobs.

After many endeavours, Bulbul decided to work in the retail field as she felt that the timings were fixed and the field had more opportunities to explore and grow. But her father was opposed to her working in jobs apart from jobs in the government. But Bulbul was adamant and persuaded her father that she would be able to make use of her time in earning and also complete her B.A. at the same time. Thus, Bulbul

"I realised that I had to go out of the house, gain skills and start working if I wanted to help my father."

started her first job in Logix Mall. She worked in the mall for six months where she learnt how to handle customers and cater to their needs. She also started building her personality as a sincere and honest worker. However due to salary issues, she decided to leave the job and look for another in the same field. It was after her resignation from her job that Bulbul got to know about the course at the Yuvakendra through her friend who was already enrolled in the IT/BPO course.

When she went to Yuvakendra centre to know more about the courses, she got to know about the Retail Trainee Associate course. This course fascinated Bulbul as she felt it would help her in gaining additional skills and help her in job opportunities. Thus, she decided to join and enrolled herself in the course. "I enjoyed the classes where I got to learn about the theoretical part of working at retail outlets as I could relate with what I had seen and experienced." She was also active in the role plays that happened in the classes where the trainees had to pose as customers and sales person.

It was during her classes that she got to know that there was a vacancy available in Spencer outlet near the Yuvakendra centre. She was asked to give the interview and Bulbul started preparing for it sincerely. When she got selected for the job, she was very happy as it was the kind of job she wanted. She knew that she would get opportunities to excel and grow further in the field. Thus, she joined Spencer near Yuvakendra Salarpur and also managed to attend the rest of the classes in the course.

Bulbul was assigned to work at the cash counter. "I was thrilled with the job and I am thankful to the



"The course at Yuvakendra has helped me grow as a professional in the retail industry, today I have a great job and can support my parents in their old age."

manager who trusted me with such an important duty." With help from her colleagues and supervisor, Bulbul learnt the ropes quickly. Challenges still came her way, but Bulbul was able to pull through the difficulties. She was more open to learning practical things that she had not learnt before.

Since then she has demonstrated her capability in various areas at her workplace. Her supervisor and colleagues are happy with her work. She receives a salary of INR 8,000 which she gives to her mother- "I give the money to my mother to manage the expenses of the household. I feel very happy that I am able to help out my parents now, something I had only dreamt of before."

Energising Possibilities


Name

Hitendra

Age

21 years

Location

Yuvakendra (Community Training Centre), Hoshiarpur, NOIDA (U.P.)

Educational Qualification

ITI, Polytechnic

Course

IT/BPO

Duration

2 months

Hitendra had always been a hardworking student at school. He also went on to study for an undergraduate degree and excelled in all the courses of ITI and Polytechnic. But in the difficult job market, he experienced many obstacles, without any practical skills, he was at a loss and faced unemployment.

Dejected, he questioned what his future would look like. "I had almost given up hope when my mother told me about the Yuvakendra and I joined it immediately"

Before joining the Yuvakendra, Hitendra had joined ITI course in hopes of getting a job. That however turned futile and he had to face joblessness. He then applied for a polytechnic college, but that also resulted in further unemployment. After these courses, Hitendra

"..I was so confused and lost when I did not get a job. I felt I would not be able to support my family and this thought kept me awake at night."

became desperate to find a job as the task of supporting his family was on his shoulders.

"My family was going through tough times. I was so confused and lost when I did not get a job. I felt I would not be able to support my family and this thought kept me awake at night."

When Hitendra first joined the Yuvakendra, he did not have high hopes as he had failed to find a job twice before. "I was impressed by the course structure because it offered placement opportunity and other personality development course, but I still had my reservations as I had faced a lot of failures in my life."

Hitendra joined the IT/BPO course as he found it very relevant to what he was taught in ITI and Polytechnic. Apart from the daily classes in IT-BPO, he also enjoyed the life skills module where topics such as interview skills, personality development and personal grooming were discussed. This module helped Hitendra to develop his personality as a confident, career-oriented individual.

Initially, when placement drives were being launched, Hitendra was often confused about the type of job he should go for. He had long discussions with the trainer as well as his peers. He would often stay back and practice so he could have higher chances of selection at the drives.



"Even after facing many failures, Yuvakendra has brought a ray of light into my life."

All of Hitendra's hard work paid off when he was placed as a Customer Care Executive in Ascent BPO. He was ecstatic when he got the offer letter.

He now earns a salary of INR 8,000, which he plans to use to support his family. He also plans to study and appear for Civil Services examinations as well. Hitendra's strive for success has borne fruits only because of his continuous efforts.

A New Mother, a Newer Entrepreneur


Name

Pavitra

Age

26 years

Location

Yuvakendra (Community Training Centre), Salarpur, NOIDA (U.P.)

Educational Qualification

Bachelor of Arts

Course

Assistant Beauty Therapist

Duration

2 months

Pavitra, a nursing assistant, had to leave her job and stay home to take care of her newly born daughter. However, she still wanted to work to lead a secure life and become financially independent to provide for her daughter. It was during this time that she met with some trainees of the Yuvakendra centre at Salarpur. “I got to know that all courses were free of cost. Thus I was pleased that there will be no financial burden.”

After enrollment, in the initial days of the training, she used to take her daughter with her to the centre. Though everyone was helpful and her

daughter was not fussy, she felt that she would not be able to give her complete attention to the course. When she discussed this with her husband, he suggested her to leave the child with someone else. Thus Pavitra took the help of her sister and with her daughter in safe hands, Pavitra could focus on her training.

“I got to know that all courses were free of cost. Thus I was pleased that there will be no financial burden.”

Unfortunately, Pavitra had not been exposed to makeup and beauty from a young age, and so had no information about the different types of beauty product available in the market, how to apply makeup or cut hair. Thus, the course was an entirely new area for her. However, she found the classes interesting and enjoyed interacting with the other trainees. Slowly she learnt how to apply makeup and do manicures and pedicures. She particularly enjoyed facial scrubs and cleansing.

Her trainer noticed her techniques and praised her for her neat and meticulous work. She also took part in Diwali Celebrations at the centre. When a client service was set up as a part of the celebration, she bought products to be sold at the centre.

After her training, Pavitra was inclined to do home service, where she could meet the clients at their house and offer them salon services. But her trainer encouraged her to set up a parlour instead. This struck a chord with Pavitra. She had a revelation, “by setting up my own parlour, not only could I be with my daughter, but could also take care of her while earning well.”

Pavitra then enrolled in the “Start and Improve Your Business” module of Enterprise Development. With this training, she gained more confidence to open her parlour. Her husband was also supportive and helped her by paying the advance for her shop. He



“The course did not just develop my skill, it has changed my life for the better.”

also told her that he could pay the rent for her parlour for four months till it is stable, but Pavitra managed to pay for the rent herself. She also decided to set up a counter for beauty products in her parlour, which helped her earn.

Now, Pavitra is the proud owner of Angel Makeover and Cosmetics Shop, which is named after her daughter, her inspiration for it all.

Breaking Shackles


Name

Ram Singh

Age

33 years

Location

Yuvakendra (Community Training Centre), Salarpur, NOIDA (U.P.)

Educational Qualification

Bachelor of Elementary Education

Course

Retail Trainee Associate

Duration

1 month

Ram has a younger brother and sister, apart from his mother back home in Madhya Pradesh. His father was a farmer, who toiled every day in the fields to support his family. His father left no stones unturned to give basic education to all his children. Watching his father work tirelessly to meet their needs, fueled Ram's desire to study hard and find a job so that he could help his family financially.

To Ram, excelling in studies seemed like the only way to support his family. He was a brilliant student at school and everybody had high hopes from him.

However, due to his family's financial conditions, he suffered a setback. Due to the excessive costs involved in his sister's wedding, his further studies had to be cancelled as his father could not pay the tuition fee. This depressed Ram but he did not give up hope and continued to study, hoping he could pursue what he wanted the next year.

"My favourite part was the role plays that allowed me to experience customer interaction through a simulated environment."

But disaster struck again, as Ram's father passed away the following year, leaving the responsibilities of the family on him.

This caused him to leave his academic endeavours and take up farming to sustain the needs of the family and pay back the loans taken for his sister's wedding. This took up two to three years of his life. Yet during this time, he did not give up on his studies.

He pursued a Bachelors in Science from a correspondence college and also took examinations for Bachelors in Elementary Education.

Then on a trip to Delhi to meet his relatives, he came to know about the Yuvakendra Centre, Salarpur. On further enquiry, he came to know, that the courses in the centre not only provided training but also connected the trainees to job placement opportunities. In hopes of getting a good job, he decided to enrol in the Retail Trainee Associate Course.

The course gave him practical knowledge on ways to deal with customers, manage customer relationships and how to convince customers to buy more products. "My favourite part was the role plays that allowed me to experience customer interaction through a simulated environment."



"Now I am self-reliant and can help my family break the shackles of poverty."

After completing the course at Yuvakendra, Ram interviewed at Natural Care NGO which works in spreading awareness on HIV. He was successful in getting the job and now earns INR 8,000. He is an outreach worker and his work is focused on reaching out to people, planning campaigns, and also collecting data on HIV.

Through hard work and perseverance Ram has overcome various obstacles in his life and has become a confident and skilled professional. "I have seen first-hand how skill development can improve one's life."

Inspiring Shifts in Mindsets


Name

Sandhya

Age

33 years

Location

Yuvakendra (Community Training Centre), Salarpur, NOIDA (U.P.)

Educational Qualification

Class 9

Course

Assistant Beauty Therapist

Duration

2 months

Sandhya was married at a very young age and had little knowledge about personal grooming and makeup. When she got married, she was often criticised about her darker complexion and was advised to take all types of fairness treatments, from consuming milk to use of popular skin creams, to achieve a fairer complexion. With constant comments on her skin colour, Sandhya started using fairness creams daily. The lack of knowledge on beauty and wellness caused her to make this mistake and her skin deteriorated over time.

Sandhya joined the Yuvakendra in the hopes of learning better skincare and makeup. When she joined the ABT course, she was shy and had low self-esteem. But Sandhya enjoyed the classes and slowly started interacting with her fellow trainees. Her trainer also suggested that Sandhya stop using the fairness creams and invest in treatments to restore

“I wanted to learn these skills to help young girls so that they are equipped to navigate societal expectations.”

her skin. The classes at Yuvakendra gave Sandhya all the practical knowledge of makeup and beauty. She was introduced to facial, bleaching, waxing, pedicure and manicure and more services. Apart from these, she also learnt how one must deal with customers and maintain hygiene and cleanliness.

The trainers also motivated Sandhya to go beyond her initial aspiration which was limited to only learning about beauty skills and soon she started to envision a future where she would be knowledgeable enough to guide other girls about skincare and beauty. “I wanted to learn these skills to help young girls so that they are equipped to navigate societal expectations.”

Sandhya attended the Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) module to make her dream of opening her own parlour into a reality. There she learnt how to make a business plan and discussed the various advantages and disadvantages of renting a place versus opening a parlour at one’s home. Using that guidance, she decided to rent a space in a market space for her parlour.

To maximise her earnings, she also decided to sell beauty products and accessories such as bangles inside her parlour. Her parlour has been running for 2 months now, and she earns around INR 10,000 per month. After the payment of her rent, she gets INR 6,500 as her net earnings which she uses for her



“Yuvakendra has made all my dreams come true.”

family's expenditures and further invests some amount in her shop.

Sandhya now has her own identity, as a successful businesswoman and does not let the words of others about her complexion affect her. Yuvakendra not only enabled her to become skilled and open her parlour, but also has supported her to walk the path of self-love and acceptance.

Never Cease to Learn


Name

Sarvesh Kumar

Age

22 years

Location

Yuvakendra (Community Training Centre), Salarpur, NOIDA (U.P.)

Educational Qualification

Polytechnic Course

Course

IT/BPO

Duration

2 months

Sarvesh's father had passed away when he was very young. Since then he had watched his elder brother, who was only thirteen at that time, shoulder all the responsibilities at home. He knew how hard it was for his brother to work at such a young age. His elder brother had always supported him and Sarvesh strived hard to ensure that he could also be a pillar of strength to his brother.

Sarvesh pursued a polytechnic course and also pursued a undergraduate degree through correspondence, following which he started

searching for a job. He was selected in an auditing company and started working as an auditor. He worked in the company for around a year but had to leave his job due to his examinations. When he looked for other jobs in the same field after his examinations, he was asked for a diploma. "I was asked for a certificate or diploma which showed

"...I realised that I could upgrade my skills in the IT sector through this course at Yuvakendra."

that I had practical experience and knowledge of the IT sector.” Sarvesh tried very hard to get a job with his knowledge and experience but the lack of a diploma was hindering his attempts. It was during this time, he met the mobiliser from Yuvakendra, Salarpur.

“I talked to the mobilisers and trainers regarding my lack of experience. They encouraged me to join the course as it would provide me with a certificate, I realised that I could upgrade my skills in the IT sector through the course at Yuvakendra.”

Thus, Sarvesh joined the IT/BPO training course in Yuvakendra centre and started his training. He realised that after he joined the course he had become more punctual and was able to devote time to skill development. He regularly read newspapers and practised spoken English to gain fluency in the language. He also attended his classes regularly and was an active participant in role play and other activities conducted in the centre.

Sarvesh enjoyed the interaction with his peers. “When I was at home, I could not meet any new people but at the centre, I got to meet people every day and interacted with them, which also improved my communication skills.”

After the course, he gave an interview at Viva One India Private Limited for the post of a Department



“My brother has been my biggest support. Now with my skills I can earn well, and can help him achieve his dreams.”

Monitor. He was selected for the post and would undergo training in the first two months to get accustomed to the work. “There is a lot of workload and many problems which I have never attempted before. But my supervisor is supportive and allow me space and time to learn things.” Currently, Sarvesh is earning INR 12,000, which he uses to support his family and help his brother. He has become a pillar of strength for his family.

Mastering the Art of Multi-tasking


Name

Sumitra Rana

Age

26 years

Location

Yuvakendra (Community Training Centre), Salarpur, NOIDA (U.P.)

Educational Qualification

Class 12

Course

Assistant Beauty Therapist

Duration

2 months

For Sumitra having her own parlour was a distant dream. She wanted to become a successful business owner and become an inspiration for the women in her community. She also made efforts to learn the art by seeking professional courses from beauty institutes in her area. But was dejected when she found that they charge huge fees which she could not afford.

A glimpse of the Yuvakendra poster rekindled Sumitra's dreams; she saw that it offered courses in beauty and wellness sectors that were free of cost. With her enrollment in the course, Sumitra had to juggle between various tasks. In the morning, she quickly completed all her household chores and

dropped her children at school. After that, she went to a company near her house, where she worked as a data entry operator and earned around INR 6,000 per month. By afternoon she went to pick up her children from school, dropped them home and then went to the Yuvakendra to develop her skills in the beauty sector. "I have a dream for myself but I need to manage my time well as I have many household

"I enjoyed every module of the Yuvakendra, the practical skills that it imparted have been invaluable."

responsibilities.” At first, time management seemed to be a problem as juggling between work, home and her classes was a struggle. However she persevered and soon had a good system in place, she woke up earlier to do the household chores, and she made sure that she was never late to any class at the Yuvakendra.

Her favourite part was learning to do manicure and pedicure, and she found the various guest lectures on hair styling and nail art to be very engaging. “I enjoyed every module of the Yuvakendra, the practical skills that it imparted have been invaluable.”

During her training, her dream of opening her parlour finally started taking shape. However, she did not know how to open a shop or run a successful business. She became a part of the enterprise development course in which the module of “Start and Improve Your Business” aimed to develop the entrepreneurial capacity of trainees who were interested in setting up their own enterprise. Sumitra jumped at this chance to foster and enhance her business skills. “My motivation to open a parlour was inspired and strengthened by the training. Before the training, I had no plan, but now I believe I am on the right path.”

After graduating from the course, Sumitra has now opened her own home-service business, ‘Sumitra’s Home Salon Service’ in which she provides various services such as waxing, hair, massages, facials, manicure and pedicure at the client’s home. She has started using advertising mediums such as



“People in my community say I have become an inspiration for other women, I believe it is only through the support of the Yuvakendra that I could achieve this success.”

banners and posters. She is also constantly interacting with potential clients on Whatsapp and attributes these strategies to the enterprise training she took at the Yuvakendra.

Sumitra is still managing her work as a data entry operator, as a mother and now as an entrepreneur. She has also started employing some trainees from Yuvakendra itself to help her in the Home Salon Service. Sumitra has become an excellent role model for women who are striving to achieve their dreams while managing their duties as a mother and a businesswoman.

Turning Aspirations to Reality


Name

Twinkle Saxena

Age

18 years

Location

Yuvakendra (Community Training Centre), Salarpur, NOIDA (U.P.)

Educational Qualification

Class 12

Course

Retail Trainee Associate

Duration

1 month

Twinkle has always been a creative person and loved dancing, she also aspired to be a professional dancer. After graduating from school, she wanted to pursue dance professionally but her family's financial status had deteriorated. She saw her parents struggle for her fees and felt that she could not burden them any longer. So she tried to look for jobs near her area to earn money and save for her dance lessons. But as Twinkle did not have a college degree and did not possess skills for any sector, finding a job was almost impossible. Additionally, at every interview, the interviewers

also judged her by her communication skills. Twinkle was very shy and thus she lost out on many good opportunities.

This problem persisted until she met a trainee from the Yuvakendra, Salarpur who told her that the centre would train her and also assist in job

"When I got the news that I was selected for the job, I felt that it was finally my time to shine."

placements. When she heard that there was no fee for the training she felt that it was an opportunity she could not lose out on. Apart from training, the course also provided industry exposure in the form of talks, visits and guest lectures.

There were also classes to increase fluency in spoken English and develop one's personality. Thus she decided to join the Retail Trainee Associate course which she felt would equip her with the skills she was lacking.

In the beginning at Yuvakendra, Twinkle rarely spoke to her fellow trainees. But the trainers encouraged her to open up and interact with her peers. Additionally, with daily English speaking practice and role-play activities with her peers, she found it easier to speak up, articulate better and no longer felt hesitant to interact with strangers.

To Twinkle, one of the most interesting and enjoyable part of the course was customer service. "Customer service is an art. I enjoyed trying to persuade my peers who acted as customers, to buy products. Guessing their needs and making appropriate suggestions, and getting it right was challenging and fun. I always imagined myself in a real retail setting."

As the training came to an end, she felt confident that she could get a job and tried facing an interview



"I have learnt that skills are the only thing that will help you to become successful and self-reliant."

when the opportunity arose. Now she interacted with the employer without any hesitation and was able to put her best foot forward. "When I got the news that I was selected for the job, I felt that it was finally, my time to shine."

Twinkle is currently earning INR 8,000 per month and is working as a sales employee in Shital Beauty Parlour. She can now support her parents financially and help them out in times of need, as well as save up to pursue her passion, dancing.

Why Settle, When You Can Fly?


Name

Rachna Dubey

Age

19 years

Location

Yuvakendra (Community Training Centre), Khoda, NOIDA (U.P.)

Educational Qualification

Class 7

Course

Assistant Beauty Therapist

Duration

1 month

Rachna gasped as her parents told her, that this was her last day at school. She was 15 years old and had just finished her class 8 exams. Now all her plans had come to a standstill. What was she going to do? What would the future hold for her? Would there even be a future? As her mind raced and she pondered over these questions, she came to the realisation that whatever the future held, that moment in time would change her life forever.

Three years later, she had settled into this life, one that had made her responsible for household duties, a captive of her own house. Due to her family's weak financial condition, only one child

could be afforded the opportunity to study. The patriarchal choice was easy to make because this was a story that had unfolded in numerous households. As her brother went to school, Rachna became more and more distanced from the outside world and began to doubt her abilities. When the Yuvakendra at Khoda opened up, she heard about it through a friend and decided to visit it the next day.

“Young girls should be given the chance to step out of the house and learn different skills, otherwise how will they ever grow?”

She went to the centre to get basic information about the Assistant Beauty Therapist (ABT) course. She talked to the representatives and visited the beauty classroom.

Back home she sat down and thought about what a great initiative it is to impart such skills to young girls! She had always believed “Young girls should be given the chance to step out of the house and learn different skills, otherwise how will they ever grow?” The next day she was passing by the market when the trainers started talking to her, she told them that she admired what they were doing, but she could not be a part of it. The trainers explained that being formally educated was not necessary and that anybody who wanted to learn could enrol. She exclaimed, “Well, that is me!”

Soon she told her mother who supported her decision to enrol for the one-month course. But patriarchy played a cruel card again and her father disagreed sternly. Just as she was about to give up the idea, her mother came to her aid, and said, “Enough with the sacrifices that the women in this family have to make. Go to your classes. If your father has disagreed, he does not have to know”.

What then started was a month of classes where she learned a lot of skills from threading to waxing, hair styling to facials, and massages to manicures. She especially loved to greet and talk to customers in the practical lessons and did not think she was inferior to anyone because of her limited education.

Soon she started reflecting about something she had stopped thinking about, years ago - her own future. As she gained confidence and courage every



“Yes, it is true that I didn’t get to complete my education but the biggest thing I have learned from this course is that my past will not decide my future. When someone supports you, like my trainers here have, you start to believe you can conquer anything.”

day, she began to think, why compromise? She had already compromised in favour of her brother’s education. Her father had also asked her to settle down soon and had started to find her a husband. She wondered why young girls have to bow down to the wishes and commands of men when girls could become independent and fly.

The girl, who had once lost all hope, now envisioned her own parlour in the future. To achieve her dreams, she has started working in a local parlour. Currently, she earns INR 3,000 per month. She wants to save the money that she earns to fulfil her bigger dream of opening her parlour one day.

Crushing Patriarchy


Name

Afroza Parween

Age

17 years

Location

Yuvakendra (Community Training Centre), Khoda, NOIDA (U.P.)

Educational Qualification

Class 8

Course

Assistant Beauty Therapist

Duration

1 month

Afroza grew up in a relatively gender balanced household. Her mother and father both worked in the sewing business, shared equal responsibility and had an equal say in household matters. As she grew up, she noticed that this was not always the case with other families in her community. She cherished her family's progressive attitude and vowed to become self-reliant like her mother. She did well in school and enjoyed her academic life. But life threw a curve ball and the trajectory of her life completely changed.

One day her sister fell very ill. Soon she needed a constant support for daily activities and Afroza sacrificed her dream of acquiring an education to

provide care for her sister. For three years she stayed at home to assist her sister who slowly recovered as time went by. Now Afroza became free to pursue her dream of becoming self-reliant but due to weak financial conditions, her parents could not support her. She had always seen academics as the only way to fulfil her dream. "If I cannot get an education, how will I be able to do anything? I know

"My whole family enjoys my work and it feels good to pamper myself. It makes me very happy to have mastered this skill."

that all my friends are graduating and will start to work soon. What will I do?”

One day as she was returning from the market after buying medicines from the family doctor, she was approached by the mobilisation staff who informed her that the newly opened Yuvakendra not only provided skills, but also taught other modules based on soft skills, interpersonal skills, provided guidance for career prospects and also helped with placements.

This fascinated her. She asked for more information because she saw this course as the beacon of light that would transform the darkness she had felt in the last few years after dropping out. She had always loved taking care of her sister, but now as her health had recovered, Afroza wanted to chase after her own dreams.

The first day she barely spoke to anyone. She was so nervous and doubtful of how she would learn all the new skills. Soon she started practicing every day at the centre and at home. Surprisingly, one of the things she has discovered is her love for grooming. She is ecstatic that from now on she never has to spend money on these services. “Anytime my family members or I have to go out for an event, I am the designated beautician. My whole family enjoys my work and it feels good to pamper myself. It makes me very happy to have mastered this skill.”

The personality development and body language tips have been her favorite. She started applying those to her everyday life and admitted that they made a world of difference. She even started talking



“Dropping out of school for three years has affected me in more ways than one. This course has given me the power to get on the path to self-reliance and helped me break the cycle of poverty and become a beauty therapist.”

to people near her about her new dream of opening a beauty parlour.

Today as Afroza prepares for her first job, she also plans for the future. Soon she will be working and she plans to continue with her education too. She will financially support her schooling on her own, by saving the monthly income from her job as a beauty therapist. She is now working in a local beauty parlour, Aarohi Parlour. She is earning INR 2,000 per month currently. She wants to achieve perfection and observe how a parlour is run so that she can open her own parlour.



Dynamism

Dynamism is essential to lead a happy and fulfilling life. Thus, the Skills to Livelihood programme has designed courses that can help people tread the path of skill development to reach the horizon of a secure life. The trainees at Yuvakendra are encouraged to treat obstacles as stepping stones, and become more focused on achieving their goals. The aim is to guide the youth to display passion for their work, and to take advantage of every opportunity.

Renewing Hope


Name

Kajal Rani

Age

18 years

Location

Yuvakendra (Community Training Centre), Salarpur, NOIDA (U.P.)

Educational Qualification

Class 8

Course

Assistant Beauty Therapist

Duration

1 month

When poverty strikes a family, young girls are often the first ones to have their dreams shattered. In the case of Kajal, the dream were to get an education and pursue a good career, but unfortunately she was forced to drop out.

“Imagine you are studying in high school, and one day all of that gets taken away from you, that feeling is something that I will remember forever.”

Dejected, Kajal spent the next few years at home. Whenever she saw another girl from her school, she reminisced about her school days. But Kajal was not

one to live in the past, instead she started thinking what the future would look like for her. Poverty had once taken all her dreams from her, she could not let it happen again.

She had shared her concerns with her friends for years and they had encouraged her to find ways to

“I knew I had to do something to break out of this cycle of poverty, the course felt like the right one for me.”

start her own career. One of her friends also suggested her to attend a demo class at the newly opened Yuvakendra which had imparted skills to other young girls like Kajal. The community as a whole was also talking about the centre which worked to build capacities of young people.

The next day, she went to look at all the modules and was surprised to find out that they even gave advice on future career prospects as well as linked to job drives and job fairs. “I knew I had to do something to break out of this cycle of poverty, the course felt the like the right one for me.”

With eyes full of hope, she informed her parents of her decision to restart her life by taking skill building classes. Instead of being proud of their daughter’s decision, they protested against it, but Kajal did not back down. “This time I could not let someone else dictate my destiny.” She started learning the basic skills at the Yuvakendra needed for the sector and quickly became an expert and graduated to the advanced modules.

The trainers were always impressed by Kajal’s determination to learn more each day. Her favourite part was the makeup skills she had learnt, which she felt could truly transform a person and make them look their absolute best.

Kajal had started her classes at the Yuvakendra without her parents support as well as a little



“This is the age of women empowerment, we cannot be left behind, I am thankful that this course builds the potential of young girls like me”

hesitation regarding how much could she actually learn in the one month course. That slowly changed as the time went by. With each new lesson, Kajal became more and more confident and her parents also started supporting her. Now she has opened a parlour in her house and earns INR 4,000 per month. She is now shaping herself into the self-reliant, career-driven woman she always dreamt of becoming.

Finding Purpose


Name

Poonam Verma

Age

16 years

Location

Yuvakendra (Community Training Centre), Salarpur, NOIDA (U.P.)

Educational Qualification

Class 9

Course

Assistant Beauty Therapist

Duration

1 month

In a community where not a lot of women are supported to pursue a career, Poonam's mother served as a great example of what career-driven women are like. Hence, from very young age Poonam had decided to walk the path set up by her mother, and become self-reliant by becoming financially independent.

When the Yuvakendra opened up in her area, many young women were encouraged to learn important skills, additionally the centre also provided advice on career prospects and taught techniques to give good interviews. "All these were important skills

that I was not being taught at school, I wanted to learn these skills to get ahead in life." The only thing that bothered Poonam was the duration of the course, she wondered if a month was sufficient to grasp all the beauty related skills taught at the centre. But her worries subsided when she talked to the other trainees, and got a positive feedback.

"All these were important skills that I was not being taught at school, I wanted to learn these skills to get ahead in life."

The next day, Poonam enrolled in the course and started with her classes. She was extremely determined to learn each module perfectly and would often practice at home. The trainers also recognised her zeal and would provide her extra training if she had failed to grasp any concepts.

The goal of the classes was not just to learn these skills on her school's summer break, but to actually perfect them so she would start a career in this field.

Poonam was also extremely clear on her plan; learn the desired skills, find a job in this sector to gain some more experiences and ultimately become an entrepreneur by opening her very own parlour.

As the days went by, Poonam learnt new skills and techniques. "I am actually impressed how all the important skills are taught in a span of only a month, it taught me all the techniques without any wastage of time and money."

When the month came to an end, Poonam was well equipped with all the skills. Not only had she learned manicures, pedicures, facials and makeup, she has also developed her personality. She could confidently talk to mock clients and even persuade them to take up more services than they had initially come to get. The change in her personality



"This course helped me become who I always wanted to be: skilled, confident and self-reliant."

also made her more focused to find a job for herself.

She has started a part-time job in a local parlour where she is brushing up her makeup skills while also continuing with her academic pursuits.

She earns around INR 3,000 which she uses for any expense in her studies and also saves in hopes of opening her own parlour. The courses at the Yuvakendra have provided her a new vision for her future which she is working hard to achieve.

Soaring High


Name

Kumari Priti

Age

22 years

Location

Yuvakendra (Community Training Centre), Khoda, NOIDA (U.P.)

Educational Qualification

Bachelor of Arts

Course

IT/BPO

Duration

1 month

There are always a lot of sacrifices one makes in order to build their future and Priti was no stranger to these. Hailing from a community where not a lot of girls were educated, Priti had to fight societal norms to complete her education at school and get a degree in Bachelors of Arts.

Though her parents were always supportive amidst the patriarchal society, they encouraged her to spread her wings, meet new people and learn new things. With their encouragement, she got a job and was on the path to be self-reliant.

Unfortunately due to a medical condition, Priti had to leave her job. She was devastated and she felt as if her chance to chase her dreams was taken away from her.

After a few months when she felt better, her parents encouraged her to find a job again, but this

".. When you have the burning desire to do something, you will do everything to achieve it."

time around it was much harder as she had a few gap months. To further increase her skills, Priti was on a lookout for training programmes.

She realised that even though she had some work experience in the field, without any training on giving interviews, she would often fumble or lose confidence, this was another area where she wanted to work on herself.

As she shared her concerns with her family, her family members gave her advice. One of her cousins from Khoda encouraged her to go for skills trainings at the Yuvakendra.

Though Khoda was far from her home in Ghaziabad, Priti decided to go. "I had to wake up at 6 am every day to finish my work at home and take a bus to Khoda but when you have the burning desire to do something, you will do everything to achieve it."

One of the main reasons that she joined the centre was that it would give advice on careers and job placements. But as the days went by, Priti realised it was more than that; the classes were also effective in improving communication skills, English speaking skills as well as interview skills.

The trainers would often have mock face-to-face or telephonic interviews which prepared Priti for the real world. "I enjoyed that there was a practical



"I found that the trainers were not merely teachers, they cared about me and my future like no one else has."

aspect to every single module, it helped me understand every detail."

Today Priti is placed in Sewa Bharti NGO as an Office Coordinator, fetching a salary of INR 6,000 per month. With improved skills and new found confidence; she believes in her abilities and in her talent that she has honed at the Yuvakendra.

As this young girl steps out to work, she knows that

Never too Late


Name

Rekha Kumari

Age

22 years

Location

Yuvakendra (Community Training Centre), Khoda, NOIDA (U.P.)

Educational Qualification

Class 12

Course

Assistant Beauty Therapist

Duration

1 month

The world of beauty and makeup had always fascinated Rekha, she and her mother would often visit a parlour for a variety of services. The local parlours were not just a place to be pampered but a wonderful spot for women to come together and bond. An 18 year old Rekha had big plans for her future. She had just graduated class 12 and was passionate to pursue courses in the beauty sector.

Though life took a different turn, and her parents married her off. The wide eyed girl with big dreams had to suddenly take up multiple responsibilities of

the household. Handling these responsibilities for a few years rendered Rekha a different person. She no longer had aspirations like she once did. Though her husband always supported her and wanted to help her become the same hopeful person again. He took it upon himself to find her an opportunity to tread the path to her dreams. When his sister joined

“It was everything I wanted; I got married early and thought I would never get this opportunity.”

the Yuvakendra for the ABT course, he encouraged his wife to do the same.

Even though she was hesitant the first day, Rekha quickly came to enjoy the classes. “It was everything I wanted; I got married early and thought I would never get this opportunity.” She was delighted to learn all the things which had fascinated her as a kid - manicures, pedicures, makeup and facials. But most of all she loved the modules about client management where the trainees were taught how to engage with the clients in a positive manner and how to make them comfortable.

Since learning these skills had always been Rekha’s dream, she made extra effort in every module. She would practice every day on her family members as well as learn the theoretical modules. Over the course of the month, she was not just well acquainted with the different services and their techniques but had become an expert in a few. Her favourite module was about bridal makeup; she was especially interested in what goes behind making a bride glow with makeup skills on her wedding day. She would often ask the trainers to explain these techniques again to get a good grasp on them. “My trainers truly believed in my potential to learn all these skills, they always supported me.” Between her and her sister-in-law, the conversation at home revolved around the different steps to practice for a particular beauty service and they



“I never wanted to depend on anyone financially, and after this course, that can be a reality.”

would also often dream about how they could open their own parlour, right from their house. Rekha has not only become skilled in the services taught at the Yuvakendra, she has also begun to dream of a future for herself.

She is now providing beauty services at her house and earning INR 2,500 per month. The girl, who once thought that her life had become mundane with household responsibilities after marriage, understands that if you have the will and a good support system, it’s never too late to chase your dreams.

Path to Progress


Name

Jeetesh Kumar

Age

22 years

Location

Yuvakendra (Community Training Centre), Hoshiarpur, NOIDA (U.P.)

Educational Qualification

Pursuing Bachelor of Science

Course

IT/BPO

Duration

2 months

When Jeetesh came to Delhi from a small village near Kanpur, he was overwhelmed by the life in the city. Through the hustle-bustle, he still held on to his dream of becoming independent and successful. He had come to Delhi on the persuasion of his uncle who told him that he should pursue courses in the IT sector at the coaching centres in the city. Hence Jeetesh left his home in pursuit of enhancing his skills and knowledge.

In Delhi, he enrolled in a coaching institute which provided training in computers. During this period,

the mobilisers of the 'Skills to Livelihood' programme visited his uncle's neighbourhood to spread information on the various programs of the Yuvakendra centre. Jeetesh was excited to hear of this centre and approached the centre manager. He was informed about the IT/BPO course as well as the Retail Trainee Associate course. Since he was

"...the big city of Delhi overwhelmed me at first, but then I was equipped with skills to take on any challenge."

already enrolled in a computer coaching institute, he decided to enrol in Retail Trainee Associate course which would be a new field for him. He was surprised to find that the course not only provided practical exposure to the retail sector but also conducted industry visits and provided placements.

Jeetesh enrolled in it and was first trained in how to speak to customers and the different processes in the retail sector. Not only did these help Jeetesh grow professionally but it also helped in enhancing his personality. "I got to learn how to behave and speak according to the situation, the big city of Delhi overwhelmed me at first but then I was equipped with skills to take on any challenge."

Jeetesh also learnt more insightful lessons in his course; practical lessons were valuable for his field and the course greatly focused on these. Various activities were also planned for the trainees, his favourite activity was handling mock salesmen where competitions were held to become the best retail associate in the course. Initially, Jeetesh was only interested in training and enhancing his knowledge, but after counselling from the centre manager he also decided to give interviews and apply for jobs.

At the placement drive, Jeetesh got selected for a job in Ascent BPO as a telecaller. "My life has changed since I have started this job, I can handle all



"I am not the scared boy who came to Delhi from a small town, Yuvakendra has given me the confidence in my personal and professional life."

the customers with the skills I gained at Yuvakendra."

Having a steady income has also allowed him to help his younger brother in his village. His father is a farmer with a meagre income, but with Jeetesh's salary, his family is able to afford a better life for themselves.

Jeetesh now dreams to pursue a career in the Air Force. He says his job will be instrumental in providing him with a financial backup to pursue his dreams further and also help his family and younger brother in enhancing their life.

Turning Her Life Around


Name

Nirj

Age

22 years

Location

Yuvakendra (Community Training Centre), Hoshiarpur, NOIDA (U.P.)

Educational Qualification

Class 8

Course

Assistant Beauty Therapist

Duration

2 months

Nirj had always been a hardworking girl. She was extremely studious and had big plans for her future. But life had something entirely different in store for her - she had to grapple with financial and societal restrictions and was barred from studying further after class 8.

Nirj's new life revolved around helping her mother with household responsibilities and learning how to become a good mother and wife in future. The young girl who once had envisioned a bright future for herself was living a life confined to the four walls

of her house. "Even though I had dropped out of school, my dreams had not ended, I wanted to find a way out." She decided to pursue her interests and work in the beauty and makeup sector. Nirj had always loved to apply makeup and style her hair. Even with household responsibilities and burdens of every day, she had not let go of her passions. She

"Even though I had dropped out of school, my dreams had not ended, I wanted to find a way out."

set out to search for a training course that would provide her with all the skills for a good job in the sector. After almost a decade of dropping out of school, Nirj had finally gathered the courage to restart her journey to become self-reliant.

Through a reference from a friend, she landed on the doors of the Yuvakendra, She had heard from her friends and neighbours that the course was free of charge, but she had to see for herself, to believe it. The day she stepped into the centre, she was surprised by the classrooms. It was an interactive space equipped to give theoretical as well as practical lessons. The shelves were stacked with products used in a parlour and the trainees were encouraged to practice using the products even after the classes.

Even though her parents did not support Nirj, she went ahead with the course. The course was free of charge and thus was accessible to girls like Nirj. From the next day, Nirj stopped working at the general store. Slowly she was also able to convince her parents for the course and they gave her their blessing. One of the main reason for a change in heart was that the trainers and staff at the centre had been visiting homes in the neighbourhood and were sensitising the parents on issues of skilling for youth and gender equality.

In the course, apart from work in the beauty sector, valuable lessons were also imparted in personality



“With the constant support from the Yuvakendra, my life has changed for the better. I have become confident in my personal and professional life.”

development. She learnt to be confident and manage her time well. Soon she rejoined her old job at the grocery store and was able to manage her time well between that and the course.

All her efforts have paid off and currently, she is placed in a beauty parlour as an assistant beauty therapist, earning INR 5,000. Her personality has also gone under a complete transformation, she has learnt to speak up for herself and always have a positive outlook towards life. Through this journey a big change can also be witnessed in her parents, they have become more supportive and now want their daughter to achieve all her dreams.

Making His Own Future


Name

Umesh Sharma

Age

21 years

Location

Yuvakendra (Community Training Centre), Khoda, NOIDA (U.P.)

Educational Qualification

Pursuing Bachelor of Computer Applications

Course

IT/BPO

Duration

1 month

Umesh had always wanted to start earning from a young age as he wanted to support his parents. He also wanted to study further but the financial condition of his family did not allow him to pursue academic endeavours. So as soon as he graduated from class 12, he started looking for a job.

He was constantly giving interviews as well as preparing for government examinations but due to his lack of social skills, he was unable to get through any interviews. Umesh recognised that the employers had a certain expectation from an

employee. “I saw that the people who were selected had excellent communication skills and also had additional skills such as computer literacy and fluency in English.” So Umesh started pursuing Bachelor in Computer Applications to increase his chances of landing a job.

“It's not how we make mistakes, but how we correct them that defines us.”

While coming back from his classes, Umesh met the mobiliser from Yuvakendra centre in Khoda. He was very interested when he found that Yuvakendra not only trained students but also provided placement opportunity in the field. This sparked his interest as he realised that his present course would provide him with the theoretical knowledge, but gaining practical skills was still an obstacle.

Out of curiosity, Umesh went to Yuvakendra, Khoda and met with the centre in-charge. After hearing about the various courses, Umesh decided to enrol in the IT/BPO course as he felt that this course would add value to his college degree and he would be utilising his free time efficiently. Thus, Umesh embarked on a new journey in his life.

During the classes Umesh was trained in many IT skills such as making documents and presentations, enhancing typing skills and learning how to use the various applications of Microsoft suite.

He also improved his English and learnt how to interact with customers. To Umesh, this part of the training was very useful, he learnt customer service and how to manage customer relationships. "I grew more confident due to this course, now my communications skills have also improved."

It was during this time that a placement drive was organised in Khoda. Umesh gave the interview and he was one of the only candidates who was selected



"Now when I walk into an interview, I am confident of my skills and myself."

for ICCS BPO. He is now working as a Customer Care Executive and wishes to pursue the field of IT after his graduation. "It's not how we make mistakes, but how we correct them that defines us. Thus mistakes have the power to make us better than before."

For Umesh, mistakes which he made during his interviews, in the beginning, had become his biggest tutor which helped him enhance his personality and land the job he desired.

Redefining Destiny


Name

Shehnaz Begum

Age

27 years

Location

Yuvakendra (Community Training Centre), Hoshiarpur, NOIDA (U.P.)

Educational Qualification

Class 12

Course

Assistant Beauty Therapist

Duration

2 months

When Shehnaz came from Assam to the city of NOIDA, she did not think that her life would change within a year. Shehnaz had great aspirations when she came to the city and dreamt of becoming one of the greatest beauticians. She was fascinated by the art and wanted to train in the beauty and wellness sector. She got to know about the Yuvakendra centre's courses from her friend and was very excited to learn that the courses were free of cost. Shehnaz felt that she would be one step closer to her dreams if she took the training. Thus, she decided to embark on this journey.

Though Shehnaz loved the course, she faced difficulties due to barriers in communication. It was not easy for her to interact with her peers and trainers as she was weak in the Hindi language. She understood her manual but had difficulties while understanding what her trainer was teaching in Hindi. But the trainer were very helpful and

"I like being a part of Yuvakendra. Coming to classes really makes my day."

explained the topics in English as well and gave her additional notes in English. She also encouraged her to learn Hindi from her friends. While it took time for Shehnaz to get used to talking in Hindi, she was persistent in her efforts.

She liked being in the centre and engaging in the various activities. She also participated in the Diwali celebrations held in the centre and client service held for Karvachauth celebrations. This client service helped Shehnaz understand how to cater to the clients. Whenever she had any problems with her training, her trainers guided her to the right path.

She was always happy to meet her batchmates, which is evident from the way her face lights up when she talks about her class. "I like being a part of Yuvakendra. Coming to classes really makes my day." Shehnaz recognises that her training in Yuvakendra has a big role in shaping her personality. The biggest change in Shehnaz is that she is now comfortable in both Hindi and English language. "I am more confident now. Even though I am not very fluent in Hindi, I can converse more easily as compared to before.

Shehnaz was confident enough to appear in an interview and got a job in a parlour in her community. Shehnaz knew that her dream was finally on the way to become a reality. Currently, she



"I am working towards my dream, this has only been possible through the support of Yuvakendra."

is earning INR 7,000 per month. Shehnaz handles her customer very well and has received constant praise for her skill in understanding the needs of her customers. She keeps visiting the centre regularly to meet the trainer and gain more information if she comes across something new in her work.

Apart from becoming a beautician, Shehnaz also wishes to train people in the beauty and wellness field. Currently, she is focusing on her job and getting exposure so that she has enough experience to become a trainer herself.

Businesswoman in the Making


Name

Asha Devi

Age

18 years

Location

Yuvakendra (Community Training Centre), Hoshiarpur, NOIDA (U.P.)

Educational Qualification

Pursuing Bachelor of Arts

Course

Assistant Beauty Therapist

Duration

2 months

“I could not even cross the road on my own as my brothers or parents would always be there to help me” Asha said, remembering the days before she started her training in Yuvakendra.

When she came across an advertisement for the centre, she had not thought that her joining a course would lead her to become a different version of herself.

When Asha learnt about the course on beauty and wellness being initiated in her community, her parents had different plans in store for her- they

wanted to get her married. She knew that after marriage things would change for her and she might not be able to pursue her studies further. She felt this training would be appropriate as it would also help her to set up her parlour.

Since Asha is the only girl child in her family, she was not allowed the freedom to do things she wanted to

“The skills I learn here will be useful when I set up my own parlour.”

do. Her brothers always accompanied her to school and college, thus never giving her the space to explore her strengths and weaknesses. When Asha came to know that she would be married next year, she wanted to take one chance to do what she wanted to do.

She tried to persuade her parents to join the course, which was not successful. So she turned to the trainers and mobilisers at the Yuvakendra. They counselled her parents and convinced them to let her join the course. Thus, after much effort, Asha's efforts were bearing fruits.

With the help of the trainer, Asha finally enrolled in the Assistant Beauty Therapist Course. She was introduced to the art of makeup and beauty.

She found the lessons to be easy as the trainer interacted with everyone and cleared any doubts. Apart from makeup, she also learnt how to do manicure, pedicure and waxing.

With the increase in her skills and ability, she started exploring other options on her own. She slowly realised that hairstyling was something she did better than anyone else at the centre and thus, she decided to learn those as well.

She also took part in the client service event hosted at Yuvakendra where she learnt how to properly interact with the customers. Presently, she is



“Though I might not be able to study further, but soon I will have my own business.”

working in Olia Beauty Parlour in Atta where she earns INR 1,000 per month. Though the pay is not much, Asha considers it as an internship where she needs to polish her skills, so she can become better. “The skills I learn here will be useful when I set up my own parlour.”

She has become more confident and her parents are also proud of the woman she has become. Asha can now hold the reins of her life in her hands.

Leading Change


Name

Varsha

Age

27 years

Location

Yuvakendra (Community Training Centre), Salarpur, NOIDA (U.P.)

Educational Qualification

Class 9

Course

Assistant Beauty Therapist

Duration

1 month

To Varsha, providing for her children is the most important goal in her life. She does not want her children to suffer because of poor education. Thus, Varsha kept on sewing cloths for her clients, even when her back ached from the constant bending. When she went to the doctor to get her medicines, she was told that her bones were weak and that the continuous strain was starting to affect her body. The doctor told her that she must leave her sewing as she would get even more sick if she continued. However, Varsha had no other option to provide for her children and pay for their school fees if she left sewing. Thus she continued

her work but was also on the lookout for other opportunities.

One day she overheard some school girls talking about a training course on beauty. She enquired more about the course and the girls told her about the Yuvakendra centre in Salarpur, where training courses in Assistant Beauty Therapy, IT/BPO and

“The Start and Improve Your Business module started giving wings to my new aspirations.”

Retail are being taught. Varsha thought that the opportunity was very useful as it not only gave training but also provided employment opportunities and thus she enrolled in the Assistant Beauty Therapist course.

She learnt how to thread eyebrows, do facials and also learnt how to give relaxing massages. At first, Varsha did not have much interest in the art of makeup as she had always thought that she did not possess the luxury to think about beauty and makeup. But slowly she got drawn into the art. With every makeup lesson, Varsha began enjoying her classes and began dreaming of making a career out of it.

She got her first opportunity when a client service was held at the centre. There she did makeup and threading of several clients and earned a good amount. When she received more money than she could imagine for a work of only an hour, Varsha began to put serious thought into opening her own parlour. However, because makeup was a new area for her, she had no direction as to how she could open her own business. That was when the Enterprise Development course, comprising of the module for business development became useful. "The Start and Improve Your Business module started giving wings to my new aspirations." The module helped her gain knowledge of business development, sourcing of raw materials and choosing the appropriate location for her parlour.

Varsha opened a parlour at her house. When she started out, she had not expected more than one



"My trainers have guided me to turn around my life. I can now focus on my future, and the future of my children."

customer. However, Varsha's business of sewing gave her more benefits than she could have imagined. Her sewing skills had already ensured her a client base who could be tapped for her beauty parlour. So she informed all her customers who came to her for sewing about her parlour as well. This proved to be a very good strategy. Within a matter of 10 days, Varsha earned around INR 2,000 from her parlour.

Varsha is continuing to learn and enhance her skills so that she can earn money to send her children to a good school. Varsha's story is an example of how a person can find their way out of any problem, if they have the will to fight.

The Torchbearer of Change


Name

Manisha Vaishnav

Age

21 years

Location

Yuvakendra (Community Training Centre), Khoda, NOIDA (U.P.)

Educational Qualification

Pursuing Bachelor of Arts

Course

Assistant Beauty Therapist

Duration

1 month

Manisha had been fascinated with beauty parlours all her life. She loved how the staff could relieve pains with massages or make a person more beautiful with makeup. As a young girl, she had recognised the importance of such places for women and their needs and had always wanted to work in this area. “Opening my own parlour was a dream I had always kept secret.” She had also visited some parlours in her area to scout for teachers but always thought that those courses were not detailed enough and took too much time to impart these skills. Nevertheless, she kept the secret dream in her heart, wishing for a way to achieve it someday.

In a community where the aspirations of girls are limited, due to rampant patriarchy, it is uncommon for the father to be the centre of support for a daughter’s dream of securing a job. But this is exactly what happened with Manisha. One day her father was walking through the market and talking to the mobilisers for Yuvakendra. Realising his daughter’s interest and potential, he went home

“I realised that nothing is unachievable. I should learn and grow in life.”

and encouraged her to take up the course. Other girls in the family were also supported and three other family members also joined the course. Manisha was beyond happy. She had never mentioned her secret dream before and was extremely surprised to see it being manifested through this course.

Even with the support of her father and companionship of her sisters, Manisha was very hesitant on the first day. “We were being introduced to different concepts and I was scared to ask any questions. I think the trainer recognised that and talked to me after class and also gave me some extra lessons to perfect my skills.”

Now she plans to open a parlour with the other family members who have taken up the same course. They have also started dreaming the same dream, and this has become a collective goal. As 10 days of her training are left, she is taking extra classes to prepare for her goal. The girl who was hesitant to even ask a question at the start of the course is now taking control of her destiny. “I realised that nothing is unachievable. I should learn and grow in life.”

Her favorite are the facials, she makes a point to practice on her relatives to perfect her skills for the future. A parlour run by four women from the same family is what the future looks like for Manisha. She has realised that it is important for young girls to resist the cycle of patriarchy and go out and achieve their dreams.

She is now living her dream as she has established a parlour at her home along with her mother and 2



“I have adopted the attitude, of not fearing, not stopping and not giving up on my dreams. This course has brought me closer to my goal.”

sisters. The location of the parlour is along the roadside which gives them the advantage of increasing visibility. They are earning around INR 2500 per month but are hopeful that their work and word of mouth will help them grow their business.

The four women in this family are not only the first ones to work outside their home but are also one of the few women who are striving to change their lives and attitudes of their community. Every time a young girl in their community dares to achieve her goal, she leaves a footprint of a desire to change for all other women.



Perseverance

Perseverance is the secret to success. Without it, there is no chance of greatness. Despite facing failure in previous endeavours in their professional and personal life, the trainees at Yuvekendra are supported to persevere, and not admit defeat. Apart from skill development, the courses in the Skills to Livelihood programme, also impart valuable lessons to build tremendous self-confidence and indomitable determination, which are essential ingredients to lead a successful life.

Path to Self Reliance


Name

Kiran

Age

20 years

Location

Yuvakendra (Community Training Centre), Khoda, NOIDA (U.P.)

Educational Qualification

Pursuing Bachelor of Arts

Course

Assistant Beauty Therapist

Duration

1 month

Kiran was one of the few people to be educated in her family and one of the few women who were supported to pursue a career. Even though she was pursuing her Bachelors in Arts, 20 year old Kiran wanted more out of life. Specifically she wanted to start earning to help out her family in their financial crisis.

She realised the quickest way to a good career would be through skill development. Kiran was academically inclined, but finding a job meant having real world skills. She remembered that a few days ago, she and her mother were stopped in the

market and were given a pamphlet for the Yuvakendra in her area. “I went to find that pamphlet again and read its contents, this time with more focus, almost as if it held the key to my dreams”. And this is how her journey towards self-reliance started.

“My fears went away when the classes started; my trainers were so patient with me through the whole process.”

The next day she enrolled into the programme and was excited to meet her trainers and learn new skills. There was only one problem; she had never really been to a parlour before so all the skills that the pamphlet mentioned seemed foreign to her. All she knew was that makeup was like paint for the face and manicures and pedicures were some sort of massages. Without any understanding of this area, Kiran started worrying and questioning her abilities.

“My fears went away when the classes started; my trainers were so patient with me through the whole process.” Her cousins also joined in the skill building initiative and took the same course. It became a collective goal - all of them went to the Yuvakendra in the morning, learnt skills for the beauty and wellness sector and then in the evening would sit together at home and plan their future. The whole lot was guided by the trainers at the Yuvakendra. Additionally, apart from all the beauty related skills, they were also acquainted with the business side of running a parlour as well as the management of clients.

Through practical lessons and mock clients, the trainees were taught how one should behave and pamper the clients. “These lessons have been invaluable for me; I have truly learnt how a parlour should be run and managed.” After the course



“The course has not just given me new skills, it has given me a purpose in a life and a burning desire to realise my new-found passion for the beauty factor.”

completion, Kiran and her cousins started to work towards opening a parlour together in Khoda. They have started to earn INR 3,000 per month.

The girl who had never even been to a parlour is turning into a budding entrepreneur and leading the way for other young girls in her community. It takes only one torchbearer of change to empower and motivate many other girls to live their dreams despite limitations.

Unleashing Potential


Name

Nisha Kumari

Age

18 years

Location

Yuvakendra (Community Training Centre), Salarpur, NOIDA (U.P.)

Educational Qualification

Class 12

Course

Assistant Beauty Therapist

Duration

1 month

Nisha was no stranger to hard work; she had started working full time as a teacher at 18 years of age, right after high school. Her family's financial conditions restricted her from achieving her true potential. But Nisha decided to teach and save that money to study even further. After a few months, she had saved enough money to enrol herself in the Bachelors of Arts programme. Even though she had achieved what she dreamt of, one of her passions was beauty and wellness. She found the confidence to embark on another journey - becoming an entrepreneur in the beauty sector.

The first step she took towards achieving this dream was getting enrolled to a beauty course. The course was also expensive and she saved for two months to start the course. With high hopes, Nisha religiously went for two weeks only to realise that she had been cheated. The course taught nothing that was advertised and instead kept charging her more

"It is daunting to open my own business but I know that my trainers and fellow trainees have got my back."

money in disguise of training and supplies. By the end of two weeks Nisha had realised that this was a wrong move, not only was she wasting her money, she was also not learning anything valuable at the course. But this obstacle did not deter her, instead she looked for other courses with new vigour. In her search for a good course, she stumbled upon the Yuvakendra; she asked many questions to the centre manager to understand how the course structure. She was happy to hear that its cost was minimal but had another concern; the course was only one month. This worried her as she contemplated if one month was enough. Nisha was even more careful this time around and to cover all the bases, she talked to other people in the course. “I heard wonderful things about the course, and especially heard so many girls say that the course gave them the confidence to dream big.”

A week into her enrollment, Nisha was convinced that this was the type of course she was looking for. The theoretical lessons were complimented by practical lessons, as well as personality development modules. Good behavior towards clients, as well as always keeping a positive mindset was the focus of the personality development modules. The girls had formed a small community within the classes and became friends over the course of the month.

Nisha realised that her life was taking a new turn. Earlier she had all these dreams to open a parlour



“It is one thing to dream and another to actually be confident to achieve it, Yuvakendra has paved the path to achieving my dream”

but now that she had actually gained these skills through the Yuvakendra, it was time to take the next step. “It is daunting to open my own business but I know my trainers and fellow trainees have got my back.” She has started making a schedule to put in time towards the work of her parlour, another skill that she learnt via the modules on time management that she is implementing in real life. With big dreams in her eyes, Nisha has graduated from the course and is now working as a teacher and is earning INR 3,000 per month. She plans to fuel her entrepreneurial dream by investing her savings in setting up a parlour at her home.

Achieving Dreams


Name

Seema

Age

20 years

Location

Yuvakendra (Community Training Centre), Salarpur, NOIDA (U.P.)

Educational Qualification

Class 5

Course

Assistant Beauty Therapist

Duration

1 month

Death is a difficult topic for anyone, but for a young girl, the death of her father is a life-shattering moment. Seema was 18, at the cusp of adulthood. She had a normal life consisting of school, friends and dreams of a college education. On one fateful day, her father came home and told everyone over dinner that the doctors had detected cancer in his body. Seema knew that this was something that would change their lives forever.

Over the next few months, the hospital bills piled up and Seema's family quickly came under debt. Her

father's health also deteriorated and she lost him soon after. Not only did she have to deal with the death of a loved one, but her father was the breadwinner and the reality of their financial situation slowly dawned upon her family. On top of that, there was a debt from her father's hospital

"I am so thankful that someone taught me at a young age that a mark sheet cannot determine your worth."

bills. Under all this economic stress, Seema grew more and more depressed.

Her family noticed these changes in Seema and started to motivate her. They believed in her potential and started to assist her in finding a job. Though in a few weeks Seema and her family realised, that to thrive in the job market, one must be equipped with skills. Since the last few years had been spent in taking care of her father, Seema lacked these essential skills.

Seema decided to use obstacles as stepping stones and started looking for a centre that could impart her skills to build her future. Her search ended with Yuvakendra; she looked at all the modules they were teaching in their assistant beauty therapist course and soon joined it.

Seema learnt important skills that would help her find a job and also learnt how to come out of her shell and engage with the fellow trainees. Slowly, Seema was able to start enjoying her life again by making new friends and learning important skills at the Yuvakendra.

The trainees also acquainted her with various career prospects and her vision for the future became clearer. Her earlier apprehensions about not getting a job, due to dropping out of school proved to be a myth. "I am so thankful that someone taught me at a young age that a mark sheet cannot determine your worth."



"I love coming to the Yuvakendra every day, my trainers and fellow trainees have helped me come out of a very harsh time in my life."

With newfound determination, Seema planned for her next step in life. She aimed to acquire a job in the beauty sector and wanted to start earning to support her family.

She is now earning INR 10,000 per month working as a beauty therapist at a Beauty Parlor which is situated near her house. The girl who once felt like she had lost everything when she lost her father and was deprived of a chance to be educated, today confidently tells other girls in her community of how they too can work towards achieving their dreams.

Grooming Her Personality


Name

Manjusha Gupta

Age

32 years

Location

Yuvakendra (Community Training Centre), Salarpur, NOIDA (U.P.)

Educational Qualification

Class 7

Course

Assistant Beauty Therapist

Duration

2 months

Manjusha's life was determined by the patriarchal forces in her community. As a young girl, she was made to drop out of middle school. This event set precedent for the rest of Manjusha's life; as an adult, she lacked the confidence to go out and achieve her dreams.

Manjusha always had big dreams of owning her beauty parlour. Even as a young girl, she was interested in hair styling and makeup, but due to restrictions from her family, she never gathered the courage to go after her dreams.

Manjusha's friends always supported her and they started searching for courses in beauty and

makeup. They visited various institutions and private parlours, but they all demanded a large amount of money. Manjusha and her friend could not afford the exorbitant fee and decided to give up on their search. But after learning about the Assistant Beauty Therapist course at Yuvakendra, that offered free of cost training, both of them had decided to join the course.

"I assured my family, that I would excel at this course because it was a once in a lifetime opportunity for me."

Initially, her husband, though supportive, was hesitant to let her take the training. He was not certain whether Manjusha was capable of learning the skills. “I assured my family, that I would excel at this course because it was a once in a lifetime opportunity for me.” Manjusha wanted to learn the skills in the ABT course as she had observed that there was a huge business opportunity for parlours in her area. Ladies in her community had to travel a large distance if they wanted to avail the services in a parlour.

Manjusha’s house was also located near the roadside and had a good footfall of people. So there was no need for her to rent a place as she could open the parlour in her house itself. She felt that she had all the pre-requisites that would help her open and sustain her parlour. “This is one job that I could do with my education level. Any other course would at least require a class 10 or 12 class certificate but excelling in this sector was mainly dependent on the skill of the beautician.”

When she started training, Manjusha never expected that she would learn a lot of other things apart from beauty and makeup, such as how to present herself to customers, how to talk to people and how to cater to her clients. “When I met the people at the Yuvakendra, each day I learnt something new which I tried to incorporate in my life.” Manjusha enjoyed all the training on manicure, pedicure, facial and hair cutting. She also received praise for her facial skills from a client she attended to, during the client service training held in the festive season at Yuvakendra, Salarpur. The client said that her facial allowed her to relax and even sleep better. Even her trainer praised



“The training gave me a new ray of hope, I was assisted in setting up my business and now I am confident that I will be able to take care of the expenses of my children in the future.”

Manjusha’s work, and this gave Manjusha more confidence.

Manjusha has now opened her parlour at home and is taking clients in her neighbourhoods. “There is a lot of work in this area. If one is good with her skills, she can continue this job for her entire life.” Manjusha’s plans to upgrade her parlour as her client base increases. She also wants to help her husband in taking care of the household expenditure and her children’s expenses.

Manjusha is now working hard to promote her business and is also upgrading her skills by coming to the Yuvakendra to learn new things from the trainers.

Questioning, Learning, Growing


Name

Nahida Parween

Age

22 years

Location

Yuvakendra (Community Training Centre), Salarpur, NOIDA (U.P.)

Educational Qualification

Bachelor of Arts

Course

IT/BPO

Duration

2 months

Nahida belongs to a family where the financial conditions have always been very weak. Apart from her parents, her family also consists of her sister, her husband and their children. She had seen her father work tirelessly to support the large family on his meagre salary. So she decided to study hard and get a good job so that she could become her family's support. She was very committed to her goal and explored different opportunities through which she could fulfil her ambitions.

It was in her search for a path to career development that she came across the Yuvakendra centre in her neighbourhood, and learnt about their various training programs such as Assistant Beauty Therapist, Retail Trainee Associate and IT/BPO. She became interested in the IT/ BPO course as it was a relatively new subject for her. When she learnt that

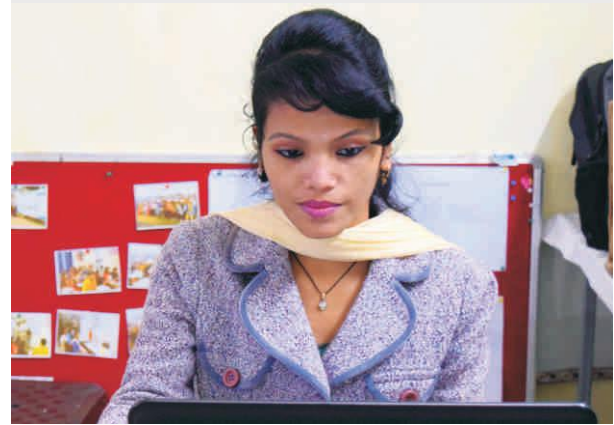
"I was encouraged to ask doubts and the trainers always supported me to become better."

the course not only imparts training in the subject but also gives training on personality development and English speaking, she went ahead to enrol herself in the course. Since no fee was required for it, Nahida found that it was the best option for her.

When she started her training, she was initially very scared and felt that she would not be able to grasp the various technical aspects of the modules. However, her trainer was very considerate and also took pains to make each student understand what was taught. “I was encouraged to ask doubts and the trainers always supported me to become better.”

Nahida enjoyed her training where she was taught how to make presentations in MS PowerPoint, create documents in MS Word and use MS Excel to create databases. Furthermore, she participated in the role-play held in their batches, where the students took turns to act as BPO workers and clients to engage in a conversation that was moderated by the trainer.

There was also a change in her personality; Nahida became aware of how to conduct herself when speaking to the clients and also learned how to work individually, as well as in a team. With her growing confidence, Nahida found it easier to converse with new people and put forth her opinion. As the training drew near an end, Nahida



“My dream of supporting my family has become a reality, with the skills that I have, I know that my future is secured.”

found that she was on the right path to becoming a confident and optimistic person.

When the placement drive was announced, Nahida gave interviews for jobs in the BPO sector and got selected for the position of a customer call executive. Currently, earns INR 10,000 per month. Though it is a challenging job, Nahida is happy that she is able to contribute to her family’s expenses. Now she can look forward to a brighter future as she works hard to create a better life for herself, and her family.

Making the City His Own


Name

Rahul Kumar

Age

20 years

Location

Yuvakendra (Community Training Centre), Salarpur, NOIDA (U.P.)

Educational Qualification

Pursuing Bachelor of Commerce

Course

IT/BPO

Duration

1 month

Belonging to a low-income family, Rahul had a mature mindset from a young age – he had decided to turn around his life and share the financial responsibilities of the household. This led him to look for job opportunities in his village. However, his village in Bihar did not have the job opportunities he wished for. So, Rahul came to NCR to find a job.

However in NCR, even though Rahul interviewed for many companies, nobody would hire him, because of his lack of confidence. Additionally, he also realised that his existing skills were not enough

to get him a job in a city like NCR where many people were more skilled than him. He could also not afford to join other IT courses as the costs were high, and he knew his father would not be able to pay for his classes. Rahul was disheartened and thought of returning to his village.

He stalled his decision when he came to know about the Yuvakendra centre in Salarpur which provided

“When I look back, I see the transformation I have gone through to get this job.”

courses for skill development. “I was impressed by the range of courses and that they were offered free of cost for skill development of youth like me. I never thought that a course like IT and BPO could be taught free of cost in a place like NCR.”

In his initial classes, Rahul found it difficult to interact with his fellow trainees. But the trainer constantly supported him and encouraged him to interact with everyone. Rahul found these classes to be very beneficial for his personality development as they diminished his hesitancy and built his confidence. He became more outspoken in the process of role plays too. He would play the role of Customer Care Executive and would interact with his peers. This encouraged him to get out of his comfort zone.

This change in Rahul’s personality was observed by the centre manager of Salarpur, who knew that Rahul wanted to get a job. So, when news of a vacancy in Axis Bank was given to him, he conveyed the opportunity to Rahul. Though Rahul was hesitant and felt that he might not be able to get the job in such a well-known company, both the centre manager and trainer encouraged him to go for the interview. Rahul was elated when he came to know that he had successfully cleared his interview and was employed in a place where he could not have managed to work some months before. “When I look back, I see the transformation I have gone



“This skill development course has paved the way for a prosperous life for me, and my family.”

through to get this job. Without the help of my trainer, I would not have been able to get a job where I can envision a future for myself.”

Now Rahul is currently employed as a Sales Executive and is looking after the customer relationship in the credit card department. Moreover, he is training four to five people under him for the role of telecaller.

With a salary of INR 12, 500 per month, Rahul is now able to help his family in his village. Today, Rahul is a confident young man who has several ambitions in life, and is working hard to achieve them.

Marking an Era of Change


Name

Varsha

Age

36 years

Location

Yuvakendra (Community Training Centre), Khoda, NOIDA (U.P.)

Educational Qualification

Bachelor of Computer Application

Course

IT/BPO

Duration

2 months

Varsha had completed her studies in computer application, but could not find an appropriate job as there was a lack of opportunity in her village. After her marriage, any hope of pursuing a job was lost too, as she had to manage the household. Thus, when she came to know about the courses at the Yuvakendra, she decided to join it to upgrade her skills, as she had a gap of 10 years on her resume.

Varsha had to put in a lot of hard work as she had always suffered from low self-confidence and did not speak readily. Though she wanted to learn how to speak English fluently, her hesitation held her

back. The trainers at the Yuvakendra noticed this and began to counsel Varsha regularly. He could see that she wanted to move further in life, but her fear was a big hindrance. Nevertheless, the trainer constantly guided Varsha and motivated her to speak up in class.

In the training, Varsha was introduced to various concepts of the IT/BPO sector. At first, she hesitated

"I felt very happy when my children praised me for speaking in fluent English, I became a role model for them."

and felt that she was not capable of learning those skills in a short amount of time. But as days passed by, she became more confident, “even my family has noticed a change in my personality, I have become less shy of talking to people and feel confident in what I am learning.” For someone who had to face many failures in the early years of their life, Varsha felt that she needed this course not only to learn new skills but also to come out of her shell.

For the first time in her life, Varsha felt immense support; she could share things with her trainers that she had never even shared with her family. They guided her in her personal and professional challenges, which for women are often interrelated. By the end of the month, the trainers and the other trainees had become her friends and her constant support. “Coming to class every day has not only provided me skills; it has changed my outlook towards my future.”

Varsha commends her trainer for motivating her. With constant help from her trainer, Varsha’s skills were improved. She had even started conversing in English at home. “I felt very happy when my children praised me for speaking in fluent English, I became a role model for them.”

When the time for job placements arrived, Varsha was apprehensive about her background as a married woman, she feared that it would affect her chances of getting a good job. But her trainer vanquished all her doubts and motivated her to work harder and prove to be more skilled than the opposite sex.



“I feel very proud that I can earn for myself and can contribute to the expenses of the household.”

When she took an interview at ICCS - BPO, she was no longer a timid woman who lacked skills. The woman who was once terrified at the thought of interacting with others, beat the competition to get a job where she has to converse with numerous people each day. Varsha is currently earning INR 10,000 as a Customer Calling Executive. She is finally realising her dream after 10 years. “Yuvakendra is empowering people by changing their lives through skill development. The change in me is not just skill-related; it is the difference between hopeless and hopeful.”

Time to Shine


Name

Yagya Prakash

Age

34 years

Location

Yuvakendra (Community Training Centre), Salarpur, NOIDA (U.P.)

Educational Qualification

Bachelor of Science

Course

Retail Trainee Associate

Duration

1 month

Yagya Prakash has been working since the age of seventeen. Initially, when he started working, he was an operator in the IT/BPO sector.

He changed his career path from IT/BPO to retail, as he recognised that retail was a sector with more opportunities for him. But even though he was passionate, when he started working in the field of retail, Yagya Prakash felt lost and directionless.

However, he recognised his strength which was his power to grasp complex concepts and adapt to

changing situations. From then Yagya has strived to work hard and improve his skills each day.

When he heard about the courses in Yuvakendra, Salarpur he wanted to enrol in the retail course as he felt that his marketing skills were weak as compared to sales skills. “I knew that this course

“I knew that this course would impart skills, and would help me in my job search too.”

would impart skills, and would help me in my job search too.”

Thus, Yagya enrolled in the Retail Trainee Associate course and started his training. Yagya found the training module to be very useful as he found that the lessons added value to his experience in retail. “I had seen the various types of stores mentioned in our training manual, but I did not know the details. I learnt about chain stores and their benefits too. The knowledge imparted to me in the training complemented my prior experience in the retail sector.”

Apart from this, he also found the lessons imparted in Life Skills modules to be useful. “Our trainer taught us things that were not told in other institutes. For example, we were told how to present ourselves in front of employers, and how to introduce ourselves.”

He also felt that the interaction with the HCL volunteer was very insightful as they were trained in modules of personality development.

When Yagya got to know about the interview for Net Ambit, he jumped at the opportunity and appeared for the interview. He got selected as a field officer and is currently earning INR 18,000.

Now Yagya wants to work in the company and move up the ladder in the same field. Though Yagya has



“The modules are designed perfectly to help a person grow their career. The skills are helping me become better in my professional endeavours”

had many jobs, he feels that he has found his calling and wants to continue working hard.

As a young man, Yagya had always been confused about his professional life, but now he is leading with a strong mind. “I have become smarter and more focused through the skills I have gained at the Yuvakendra.” Now he displays confidence to overcome challenges to lead a fulfilling life.

Leading by Example


Name

Saumya Gupta

Age

21 years

Location

Yuvakendra (Community Training Centre), Khoda, NOIDA (U.P.)

Educational Qualification

Pursuing Bachelor of Science

Course

IT/BPO

Duration

1 month

At a young age, Saumya was fiercely ambitious. She excelled at her academics and then also started to pursue work in the IT sector. Even though she had taken up some of the financial burdens at home, her parents encouraged her to continue with her studies. So while she was pursuing her job as a tele caller in Tech Mahindra, she was also pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree.

As she progressed in her career, she realised that there was something missing. People around her had a better grasp of the IT sector and were better equipped to work because of their advanced customer-handling skills. But Saumya did not doubt her abilities. She displayed a winner's attitude and

instead of quitting, decided to go after her dreams with ferocity. Inspired by her resilience, her parents also started to look for a way for her to get additional skills and knowledge.

When she heard about the Yuvakendra from a family member, she immediately went to see it and was impressed by the course structure. Soon she

"I began to notice that every single thing taught in the personality development module has practical applications while working in the IT sector."

began her classes and focused on the soft skills modules. “I began to notice that every single thing taught in the personality development module has practical applications while working in the IT sector.” One of her favorite activities is customer handling role-play. After the theoretical lessons, the class is divided into two, and one half of the class acts as a client, asking questions and the other half gets the role of the customer support staff. The role-play encourages everyone to contribute and use the correct technical terminologies and pronunciations, as well as focus on their speaking skills and behaviour.

As Saumya goes home after class, she excitedly discusses all that she has learned that day with her family. Her father in particular has been very supportive and reminds her to be attentive in class because for him nothing is more valuable than knowledge. He has motivated her to attend all the classes and further inspires her to dream big.

These daily conversations about the Yuvakendra have also brought about a change in her household. As Saumya discussed all the new things that she was learning and how she enjoyed all the activities, her brother also became interested. Now he is very enthusiastic about the idea of learning IT skills. Today both the sister and brother attend the classes, learning together to achieve their goals.

The course has not only led her to learn new skills or develop better interpersonal skills, it has also provided her with an avenue to get a better job. As her training comes to an end, Saumya plans to change jobs for a better salary. She is working hard towards getting a new job with the help of the



“I am so excited for the future because I have learned so many new skills, from technical to personality development. I am very well equipped and I feel invincible.”

Yuvakendra. She is also completing her final year of the degree she is pursuing. One of the ways this course has impacted her is that it has instilled in her a sense of time management. She has always balanced work with studies and now with these new modules, she has started to get even better with managing her time. She is getting better results in both her endeavours.

Her hard work paid off when she was selected in ITPS as a Customer Care Executive after an intensive interview. Currently, she is earning INR 10,000 per month. Her work allows her to interact with customers of different backgrounds and she enjoys solving the queries and problems of her clients.

Overcoming Adversity


Name

Ravi Kumar

Age

24 years

Location

Yuvakendra (Community Training Centre), Khoda, NOIDA (U.P.)

Educational Qualification

Class 12

Course

Retail

Duration

1 month

Ravi had heard numerous stories from his parents of the sacrifices they had to commit for the life that Ravi and his siblings enjoyed. In 1992, his father had decided to leave his village in pursuit of a better life in the city. After living in slums for many years, the family could now afford to live in a rented house in Khoda, Noida. Following his footsteps, Ravi received a good education and started working in the retail sector after his schooling. He started working in various stores like Vishal Megamart, Lifestyle, and Intech. After some years he was awarded a promotion where the role of a senior associate was offered to him.

One of the happiest pieces of news in his life also came with one of the saddest. He was unwell for a while and when he finally got it checked, the doctors told him that he was unwell, and would have to be bedridden for the next one year. “My entire life came crashing down. I had so many questions but the most urgent was, why me?” As

“The fear I had about starting a job again, slowly disappeared and I began to focus on my goals with a renewed sense of self.”

Ravi left his job and the golden chance of a great promotion, he felt as if he was drawing the curtains of his life without any idea of what the next part of his journey would look like.

After that one year, Ravi felt better. He decided that he needed to find a job again. "This one year gap had changed a lot of things for me. Most of all it made me doubt my own abilities." One of the things he had in mind was to join a retail course to catch up on new ideas in the sector as well as gain some practice before starting a new job.

When Ravi met one of the mobilisers for the course, he was beyond delighted. "This was exactly what I was looking for." On the first day, Ravi was nervous. He had been away from most people for over a year, and though now he was surrounded by so many other students, he recounts that the trainers made him feel at home. As time went by, he came every morning with renewed hope, relearning retail work. His favourite part of the course is the role-play for the different departments in retail. They role-play as customers and staff in various departments just like in a real store. He aced all the tests and practical lessons. "The fear I had about starting a job again slowly disappeared and I began to focus on my goals with a renewed sense of self."

Today Ravi is interviewing for positions in the retail sector. He is confident of his abilities and does not



"While training at previous jobs, they always taught customer handling skills but here I learnt about personality development too. Body language sessions have made a world of difference in the way I present myself to others."

focus on the negative aspects like the gap year. Instead, he focuses on all the new knowledge and skills he has gained at the Yuvakendra which have enabled him to become an improved version of himself.

Currently he is placed as a Sales Executive in a Minisoo outlet. He earns a salary of INR 9,500. He enjoys his work and feels that he can finally turn around his life and achieve success.

Leaving Footprints


Name

Kumari Rinki

Age

28 years

Location

Yuvakendra (Community Training Centre), Khoda, NOIDA (U.P.)

Educational Qualification

Class 9

Course

Assistant Beauty Therapist

Duration

1 month

Rinki was married off at a young age but surprisingly found that her husband was very supportive of her aspirations. Even though there were economic problems, she lived a good life with her husband and two little children. She and her husband shared the household responsibilities and she loved their small and beautiful family.

As Rinki found more encouragement from her husband, she realised she could do more and be more. “The last seven years of my life have been dedicated to my family. Now I want to do something for myself”. One day she was approached by a

mobiliser from the Yuvakendra who told her about the Assistant Beauty Therapist (ABT) course. She was excited about this opportunity but there was a problem. Her children were too young to leave home without supervision. At home, she thought about the course all day and finally discussed her concerns with her husband. Her husband supported her and suggested a way out. If Rinki

“The last seven years of my life have been dedicated to my family. Now I want to do something for myself.”

could ask for some help from their landlord, she could then take out time to pursue the course.

The landlord happily obliged and Rinki started to go for the classes. “I love these classes so much. I make it a point to get up earlier in the morning to finish off my work quickly in order to go to the classes.” She also keeps her phone with her older son and calls him twice in breaks from the trainer's phone to make sure they are well. Rinki had never thought that so many people, her husband, landlord and trainers would be supportive and instrumental in her plan to balance her household responsibilities and her dreams. One day, when she was sick, her husband reminded her to take her medicines on time and said, “You should not miss any dosages because you have to go to class tomorrow and you need to be healthy in order to learn more.”

One of the reasons Rinki wanted to pursue this course was its job placement feature. She had always wanted to help her husband by taking on some of the financial burdens they were facing. “It is wonderful that I can now earn money and that too by pursuing my passion for beauty.”

Though her husband is supportive, she worries about her extended family and their reaction when they will eventually come to know of how she wants to become an entrepreneur and open her own parlour. “Like every other family in my community, my family is also conservative. For them a working woman and a married woman, do not go together.”

Rinki has broken many barriers that married women face in her community. Her passion for



“As I bring up my kids in this world, I want them to have equal respect for girls and also remember that they can achieve anything if they have talent and a strong will to learn.”

change and courage to do something different has made her closer to her goals. She is a woman who realised after years of marriage that her life and ambition were as important as her husband's. Soon after this realisation she forged her own identity and became a force to reckon with.

She has now partnered with a local parlour and has helped extend their operations by providing home service to the clients of the parlour. She is earning INR 3,500 per month. She can now work according to her needs through this innovative approach of home-service and has established a name for herself in her community.





HCL Foundation was established in 2011 as the corporate social responsibility arm of HCL, a diversified global enterprise active across varied sectors including technology, healthcare and talent management. It is a gold standard not for profit organisation that matches the national and international development standards, and brings about lasting positive impact in the lives of people through long term sustainable programmes implemented in full engagement with HCL's own employees and partners.

Though HCL Foundation officially came about in 2011, its humanitarian journey pre-dates its inception. As an organisation, HCL's business model has always been aligned with the interests of the society at large. HCL Foundation's overarching mission of 'spreading smiles, touching lives' is thus consistent with its CSR trajectory. Guided by the belief that each one of its 1.1 lakh employees can contribute to a better tomorrow, its CSR efforts commenced with funds received from employees and the organisation. Over the following years, the practice of collective participation matured into one of the core founding principles of HCL Foundation.



Development Alternatives (DA) is a premier social enterprise with a global presence in the fields of green economic development, social empowerment and environmental management. It is credited with numerous innovations in clean technology and delivery systems that help create sustainable livelihoods in the developing world. DA focuses on empowering communities through strengthening people's institutions and facilitating their access to basic needs; enabling economic opportunities through skill development for green jobs and enterprise creation; and promoting low carbon pathways for development through natural resource management models and clean technology solutions.

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