

A Pre-Natal Project in India

Manashakti Research Centre, Lonavla is a famous institute, providing various services to the society. Mr. Gajanan S. Kelkar, M.Tech. (I.I.T., Mumbai), Trustee & Research Director of the centre, is leading the research on prenatal education, under the guidance of Swami Vijnananand (Founder, Manashakti). The concept that, 'right from pre-natal stage i.e. when the child is in the womb of the mother, sanskars [good values] can be imparted to it, has been practically implemented by Swami Vijnananand, some 50 years back. Till date, thousands of couples have participated in this 'pre-natal sanskar experiment' & have had excellent results. In all, on this overall research, Manashakti has published a book namely - 'Fetus Speaks From The Womb : Learn To Listen' [In Marathi]. Alongwith it, programmes like Garbha-Samarthya Study-course, Garbha-Sanskar Workshop, Fetoscope Test, Stroboscope Test are also conducted in the research centre. Recently, the research division has also published a special 'Pre-natal Record-book' for pregnant couples.

APPPAH [Association for Pre-natal & Peri-natal Psychology & Health], an international institute from America, organises international conference on prenatal education every 2 years in America. Mr. Kelkar's research paper - "A Pre-Natal Project in India" has been published in APPPAH's international journal. Another research paper - "Effects of Rational Prayer on the Fetus & Mother : A quantitative Approach" based on 1,850 case studies has also been submitted to APPPAH.

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Abstract

Based on ancient Vedic concepts of prenatal education, an educational community near Bombay has been offering a program for thousands of pregnant parents and their unborn babies for 35 years. The goal of the program is -

1. To welcome the baby with good thoughts,
2. To impart good values to the fetus,
3. To improve the emotional health of parents,
4. To increase the active participation of the fathers during pregnancy, and
5. To increase the courage and confidence of mothers during labor.

Unique to this program is its extensive use of scientific instruments designed to measure the subtle effects of the mind on the body of both parents and babies. This paper briefly describes the program, its historical roots and empirical results.

The Prenatal Program (Sanskar)

The Indian History of Prenatal Sanskar

The story of Abhimanyu is well known in the Mahabharata. Abhimanyu, the son of Arjuna, learned how to enter the Chakravyuha (the strategic arrangement of warriors to entrap and defeat the enemy) when he was in his mother's womb. Abhimanyu had heard and remembered the narration of the technique by Krishna to Subhadra during her pregnancy.

Before the birth of Buddha, his mother Mahamaya had followed certain specific rituals. In the month of Ashadh, she celebrated the seven-day festival and gave alms to the poor. She did penance by giving up some of her pleasures. After the festival, Mahamaya had a dream in which Bodhisatva, by the name of Sumedh, asked permission to take birth in her womb. She happily consented. Later, a brilliant son was born to her in the pleasant environments of Lumbini. He became Lord Buddha.

Before the birth of Krishna, his mother Devaki had a dream that Lord Vishnu had entered her body.

When Pralhad's mother was pregnant with him, she used to listen to devotional songs. Therefore, even though Pralhad took birth in a Rakshasa family, he became a devotee of Lord Vishnu.

The mother of the freedom fighter Savarkar used to read the courageous stories from the Ramayana and Maharana Pratap to her son when he was in her womb.

Rishi Udalak was a great saint, He had an able disciple called Kahod. The rishi gave his daughter Sujata in marriage to Kahod. Once when Sujata was pregnant, Kahod was reciting some shlokas. The baby in the womb realized the recitation was incorrect and asked him to correct it. Kahod was livid with rage. He put a curse on his son so that he would be born bent in eight places. The child Ashtavakra was born bent in eight places. The father's angry thoughts affected the baby.

When tabla maestro Zakir Hussain was in his mother's womb, his father, Ustad Allah Rakha, used to beat lightly with his fingers on his mother's abdomen.

Goals of the Prenatal Project

The goals of the prenatal project are:

1. To welcome the baby with good thoughts;
2. Imparting sanskar (good values) to the fetus;
3. Improve the emotional health of the parents;
4. Increasing the active participation of the father during pregnancy;
5. Increasing the courage and confidence of the mother during labor.

The intention of "The New Way" behind this project is to mould the future generation and society at large. There is no intent of personal gain. This is the work of a nation, of building humanity. Along with the welfare of the child, the parents will be able to reduce tension in their

lives. The project aims at building healthy, intelligent, honest, responsible individuals and a united society.

Tests and Procedures

The above goals are achieved through a series of stages as suggested below.

- Stage I - Temperament coordination test of both partners before marriage.
- Stage II - Post marriage adjustment test.
- Stage III - Three day study course to be taken any time before or during pregnancy (preferably before conception).
- Stage IV - Stroboscope test for improving the concentration of parents (in the first six months of pregnancy).
- Stage V - Fetoscope test (after six months of pregnancy).
- Stage VI - Post delivery personality test for parents.

Stage I: Pre-marriage Temperament Coordination

The efforts are made to have a 'whole child' not only at conception but long before then, at the time of selecting partners. There should be coordination (compatibility) between both partners at the mind plane. Hence, efforts are taken in the New Way program to match the partners aspiring to have a baby. A happy, satisfied pair will definitely have the right temperament during the pregnancy period. Therefore, a psychological test is conducted of aspiring parents and remedial measures are suggested to modify their personalities.

Stage II: Post-marriage Adjustment Test

During the first year of marriage both of the partners are new to their environment, taking time to understand one another and adjusting to this situation. If there isn't proper adjustment for some reason during the first year itself, the gap goes on increasing and even after twenty years of married life the possibility of two minds coinciding with each other gets more remote. This test is useful for the attainment of a happy and contented married life as needed.

Stage III: Three-Day Study Course

A three-day study course on prenatal sanskar is carried out at the main Centre. The schedule of these courses is published at the beginning of each year. The focal points of this course are communication with the fetus, in order to impart good values (sanskar) and the education of parents in regard to their thinking and behavior during the prenatal period. Videos of the development of the baby in the womb, lectures by experienced doctors on nutrition and behavior during pregnancy are also part of the curriculum.

Stage IV: The Stroboscope Test

A stroboscope is an instrument normally used in industry to measure the speed of moving objects. Dr Walter Grey, the famous neurologist, first used it for brain experiments in epileptic

patients. Research revealed that intentional concentration on light can improve the energy potential of an individual. In the prenatal program, the stroboscope is used to increase the concentration of the parents making use of the biofeedback principle.

From the stroboscope, a flickering white light is emitted at a particular frequency in the alpha range (8 to 13 per second). This test is generally done in a group setting. All the participants are told to think about their future child and their goal while concentrating on the light. The Stroboscope emits white light, but when the group looks at it with a particular intention, every participant sees a different color according to his or her goal and inner personality. This is because persons absorb only that part of the light which they require.

Only visible light is used. There is no ultraviolet or infrared radiation emitted from the stroboscope. Individuals who have epilepsy or who suffer from visual problems are not allowed to take this part of this test. Since the inception of the test in 1993, more than seven thousand parents have taken advantage of its benefits.

The Principle Behind The Stroboscope Test.

Flickering seems to alter the brain wave activity of the whole cortex instead of just those areas associated with vision. The brain responds by falling into the same frequency as that of the flickering light. There is a breakdown of some of the physiological barriers between different regions of the brain resulting in better synchronization, mental clarity, and better intellectual functioning.

Each participant gains energy due to the principle of 'resonance' since the objective of each individual is the same. Secondly, the important property of the flicker of light (in the range 'alpha') has the capacity to carry an intention or intelligence that has been modulated by the person.

The resultant color is given for concentration. The color is chosen by each individual subconsciously and is useful for the coordination of logical and emotional thinking necessary to achieve the goal. Color and emotion are closely linked. Concentration on the prescribed color causes optimization of mental energy and improves mental clarity and concentration.

Instructions to be followed at home: Take a 3" by 3" plain white paper. Draw a circle of one centimeter in diameter in the center and color it with the color that you saw during the test. At a fixed time everyday, concentrate on this color point. Follow this practice for a minimum of three months to increase your concentration.

Stage V: Fetuscope Test

This test is taken after six months of pregnancy when development of the main organs is near completion and the fetal heart rate can be measured easily. The thought impressions of Swami Vijnananand are directed to the fetus with the main objective of transmitting good values to the fetus. Also certain questions are asked of the parents regarding their expectations of their unborn child. Variations in pulse rates are recorded.

The intention behind using the fetuscope is as follows. The mind has an effect on the body, and the fetal mind is responsive. The mind itself cannot be measured. We can only measure its effect on the body through various mechanisms such as pulse and heart rate, breathing, skin and brain resistance, etc. Pulse and fetal heart rate measurements are easily recorded. Emotions cause a change in the pulse. The basic emotions of fear, rage, courage and peace (balance) are present in every human being right from conception just as they are present in other organisms of nature in various stages of development. Both parental and fetal emotions are measured in the test.

Heart rate is a good indicator of the fetal personality. By monitoring it we can determine how a particular child reacts to stress and fright, and hence learn something about its personality. In one of our longitudinal research studies a recordings of the fetal heart rate were made and results divided into low and high reactors. Low reactors were ones with a continued steady heart rate; they reacted little to any external noise. When tested fifteen years later, these children were still rarely upset by the unexpected; they remained in control of their emotions and behavior. The babies showing high fluctuations to noise in utero were as teenagers still highly emotional.

Procedure

Any pregnant woman who has completed six months of pregnancy can participate in this test along with her husband, parents and in-laws. The parents are asked certain questions regarding their expectations of the child. The fetus is directly addressed during the test. A tape with the voice of Swami Vijnananand is played in which the fetus is welcomed, encouraged, requested to improve its good qualities, and make a decision to live a well-balanced fruitful life and not to have only small selfish, self-serving motives in its attitude towards life. Resting and pulse rates of the parents and the fetal heart rate, before and after the test, are taken for recording the mental impressions.

The direction of the fetal heart rate variation may be opposite to that of the maternal pulse variation (for example, the maternal pulse rate may increase whereas the fetal heart rate may decrease at the same time or vice-versa). This proves the separate personality of the fetus from that of the mother. Depending on the pulse variation, parents are given color concentration points on which to focus every day. Concentration is suggested on the prescribed color to bring the pulse variation back to normal.

Concentration on the candle flame with an inner wish of improving the qualities of the child is also prescribed. Prayers, chromo-concentration and personal counseling are given to the parents regarding the importance of direct and indirect communication with the fetus. Advice is also given regarding preparation for the delivery and communication of thought impressions by the mother to the child during breastfeeding.

Principle Behind the Test

The main requirement to transmit 'good values' is to establish communication with the baby in the womb. Thoughts and feelings of the parents affect the baby. The researcher (Swami Vijnananand) directs intentional, selfless, good thoughts towards the baby. Even before the thought is expressed, it remains in an unexpressed form in the mind. At that time, its wavelength

is the shortest and its energy is at the maximum level. Intentional, directed, selfless, unspoken thoughts lead to maximum sanskar in the baby.

The thought radiation being imparted to the baby has the following essential points:

1. The baby should know that he or she is wanted in the family and the world. There is a hearty welcome to the baby by the parents and other well-wishers.
2. There is a rational appeal to the baby for choosing a correct path in life, without the imposition of the ideas of father, mother, or other well-wishers. Babies are given freedom to select their own.
3. The researcher or well-wisher is detached and without a specific selfish interest.

The intention-motion-reaction principle is used in this test. Intention is the basis of any motion or action. Intention causes a marked difference in the effect of an action. When the intention is selfless, the ability to transmit energy increases. Thoughts radiated with good intention produce desired effects.

Instructions to be followed at home for the Fetuscope Test. The parents are told to recite a prayer daily for their unborn baby. The prayer includes verbal thoughts welcoming the baby and appealing to the baby to become a 'good personality' or 'ideal child'. Along with this, parents also recite the 'Gayatri Mantra', which empowers parental sacrifices. The mother and father read literature that elevates the emotions of 'courage' and 'peace'. They also concentrate and meditate on the specific color symbol suited to their inner personality.

Prayer For The Parents

'We pray in the name of the Highest Truth. We believe that everyone stands by his own causality, self or karma. To the extent to which the karma of all three of us has conjoined, my prayer should contribute to, and ameliorate the child. Though I do not wish any change in the chosen course of the child, I harbor a natural desire for the good of the child. Little baby we welcome you!'

'Come to enjoy a fruitful and realized life. On our part we would like you to be [In these spaces parents suggest their wish to the baby] and develop...skills, if you have no objection. In pursuance of we shall try to offer facilities for the indication from you, namely..., we shall try to offer facilities for the same. Let this prayer work to that end as much as it can. We submit this prayer for the good of yourself, our family, nation, mankind and the world as a whole. Let this step purify all of us to attend to what we desire and deserve. May the Good Spirit in us help all of us.'

Stage VI: Post Delivery Personality Test for Parents

After birth, in the normal learning process, the temperaments of both parents play a major role in the overall development of the baby. We have observed that the child first acquires the temperamental weaknesses of the parents. Hence a personality test of the parents is conducted after three months of delivery and up to two years.

Summary

This program has been implemented for more than 40 years and we have found many astonishing and positive results. More than a lakh people have taken part in the project and they are quite vocal about their satisfaction with the outcome. Our tests show that in more than 70% cases of babies delivered after adoption of this procedure, the 'courage' temperament has increased. Babies are alert, attentive, receptive and sharp.

This project has become a tool for social revolution, spreading good values in society. Babies in the womb are affected by the thoughts and emotions of their parents. Therefore, it becomes essential for parents to avoid negative thoughts and bad habits, and to maintain a cheerful atmosphere.

The nurturing process continues after delivery. Thus you can expect to find a gradual but steady change in the social environment and, ultimately, a strong coherent society based on unity and sacrifice.