

ART OF GIVING

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Giving is the most precious human act. The Art of Giving teaches us to help others, especially those who are less fortunate, without expecting anything in return. For Hindus and Jains, *dana* (giving) is an important part of one's *dharma* (religious duty) . In Christianity, Giving is Worship and Giving is Blessing. In Islam, Charity is an obligation and is also an opportunity given to each of us. Zakat (charity) is one of the 5 tenets of Islam. Sikhism has 3 aspects of positive living - meditating on God, earning by one's own effort and sharing it with others.

Winston Churchill said "We make a LIVING by what we GET. We make a LIFE by what we GIVE ". Albert Einstein opined " It is every man's obligation to put back into the world at least the equivalent of what he takes out of it."

Thus the idea of GIVING is indisputable. But the question is what is the ART of giving. Every letter in GIVING has a criteria to make the GIVING meaningful.

1. **G**enuineness – the cause has to be genuine.

2. Integrity – the receiver/ organisation has to have personal and professional integrity
3. Verifiability – the use of the Giving should be verifiable
4. Impactful – the Giving has to have the desired impact on the receiver/society
5. Necessity – the need must be a necessity and not a luxury
6. Governance - in case charity is done through an institution, there must be an uncompromising governance.

Most deserving causes , normally , meet the first 5 criteria above. In many Non Government Organisations around the world , Governance is a question mark.

In the case of P.S.Educational Society, Governance and professional management are unique hallmarks as explained below:

PS Educational Society is a truly public institution, not belonging to any individual, family, group or organisation (religious/commercial/ corporate/ social). The Society is truly a public institution, for the public, by the public and of the public. It has a good governance structure.

At the grass-root level , every one of the five schools has a School Management Committee headed by an experienced senior professional as President of the Committee. The school has a Honorary Secretary for day-to-day administration of the school . The Honorary Secretary is professionally qualified and an alumnus of PS Schools with emotional connect to improving the quality of education in the school. There are members from the Parent Teachers Association, teachers and non-teaching staff and eminent personalities in educational and other fields. The School Management Committee meets every quarter to review the performance of the school and approve major policy matters.

P.S. Educational Society, the apex body, has fifteen members, 9 of whom are from the 120 years old P.S.Charities and other 6 are from general public. The Society has a President, Treasurer and an Honorary Secretary ,who manages the day-to-day business affairs of the Society. The 15 members, in turn, elect an Executive Committee, for a 3 year term, to manage the Society's strategic and policy matters. The Executive Committee meets, every quarter, to review the performance of the Society and the Schools. There is a Finance Committee to review financial matters. The

general body of the Society meets at least twice a year, once to pass the accounts for the year and the other time to approve the budget for the year. The accounts of the society are computerised and audited by a Large Professional Audit firm.

All the members of the society, including the office bearers, work on honorary basis , as a part of their GIVING to the community and serve the larger cause of providing quality school education to the children of our society to make them responsible citizens of tomorrow.

P.S.Charities was started in 1904 (with P.S.High School in 1905) , based on the benevolence of Pennathur Subramanyam Iyer , who bequeathed his wealth to the cause of educating the future generations. A pioneer in the ART OF GIVING , 120 years ago !

Several alumni and supportive public have contributed, over the years, to build endowments for scholarships for the poor and meritorious children, endowments for prizes in Academics and extracurricular activities.

Many members from the alumni committee, individually and in class groups, corporates, public , NGOs have helped build the infrastructure, facilities and equipment for technological upgradation of the schools to provide

improved quality education to realise Swami Vivekananda's vision "There is only one purpose in the whole of life – EDUCATION".

In summary, one needs to not only GIVE , but also GIVE properly ensuring the criteria for giving (Genuineness, Integrity, Verifiability, Impactful, Necessity and Governance). This Art of Giving will make the charity effective and lead to the desired result of improvement of the less fortunate.