



13<sup>th</sup> February, 2019

**Dear Children,**

You never realise what you have until its gone. A chocolate pastry is a good example, but here we mean the joys of your schooling years. While 18,27,472 of you who are taking the Xth Board exams will continue on your journey of discovery and exploration in school, for 12,87,359 of you who are taking the XIIth Board exams, there are higher institutions of learning awaiting your knock on their doors.

School for sure denotes typical stuff, like a campus, classrooms, teachers, subjects, sports, art, the wall magazine, friends, homework, projects, tests,...and what not. But most of all it is the place where we learn how to learn. The schooling years are the best years for scholarship and education because our **Hard Disc** space (to use a metaphor) is the most receptive in these years. School is the place where you let your mind's **Web Browser** loose and driven by your inquisitiveness, hard work and hunger for knowledge, knowingly or unknowingly, you **Download** several competencies and life skills. There are **Messengers** (mentors) to help you identify the **Spams**, if any, and the **Bandwidth** of learning is fast and vast. School is perhaps the one place in life where the **Auto-correct, Backspace, Pause, Shift or Delete** options are abundant and add value to your education.

At the end of a school level, secondary or senior secondary, it is the rigour of the board exams and the way you prepare for it, that makes you ready to face the multiple challenges that might come your way in your adult life. You are now at exactly that penultimate stage, where you are trying your best to **Firewall** all distractions and concentrating on studying for your exams. However, we can sense in you some apprehensions about whether you will rise up to various expectations – yours and of others. We also feel that you are seeking meaning in what you are doing and are anxious about what the future holds for you, while questioning what exams are all about, and why the fun and games have to temporarily go to **Random Access Memory**.

Well, at this very moment too, while studying hard for the exams, you are actually building your character and weaving meaning into your lives. John Gardner had a way with words and this is what he had to say – *“Meaning is not something you stumble across, like the answer to a riddle or the prize in a treasure hunt. Meaning is something you build into your life. You build it out of your own past, out of the experience of humankind as it is passed on to you, out of your own talent and understanding, out of the things you believe in. The ingredients are there. You are the only one who can put them together into that unique pattern that will be your life. Let it be a life that has dignity and meaning for you. If it does, then the particular balance of success or failure is of less account.”*

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