

# Striking balance

**W**Henever we hear the phrase "opposites attract," we immediately think of romantic attraction. How about the relationship we have with adults? The generation gap in this relationship can sometimes contradict yet if dealt properly it can complement each other to create balance.

"We feel as if we are the total opposites of our parents, but adults who have been through a tough time during their teenage years have more experience in dealing with conflict and the various problems faced by their children," said Associate Professor Dr Mohammad Shatar Sabran, Director of the Centre of Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Student Development, Universiti Putra Malaysia. As a motivational expert and recipient of Anugerah Akademik Negara 2011, Dr Shatar was the best choice to give us insights on and how to survive the teenage years and maximise our relationships with our parents.

Dr Shatar said in Islam for example, the method for parents to educate children is according to their age. Children younger

than seven years old need to be taught through playing games. The learning process must be fun and interactive. For children aged 7 to 13, discipline is necessary.

Teenagers, on the other hand are the most sensitive of all, and it is important for adults to be friends with them. "This is the time when they are most exposed to the world and the negative things in it," added Dr Shatar.

At this stage, a harsh statement about a teenager's decisions may lead to unwanted actions such as the teen running away from home.

Dr Shatar said, "The teenage years are like a crossroads where you can lean towards either the positive side or the negative side. These years are also a crucial part of our life since our choices during this time will determine what we will be when we grow up. What teenagers really need is a balance between fun and studies."

I cannot agree more with him when he says, "But you cannot be studying 24/7! That will make you go crazy. A balanced life is one that allows you to do a lot of things without going overboard on any one thing."

We often see teenagers who study all the time, and then turn into anti-social human beings. You also see people who have fun and go out with friends while neglecting their studies.

"Being a nerd or having a socially active lifestyle is not wrong. But balance is the key to success in life," said Dr Shatar.

"You can hang out with friends during the day, but make sure you



**"Teens**

who can think ahead will lead successful lives."

**Prof Madya Dr Mohammad Shatar Sabran**  
Director, CEISed, UPM

spend almost the same amount of time on studying and doing your homework at night. Then, your life will be balanced, and you will be one step closer to success."

It is just in a teenager's nature to ignore the future. But teenagers who are not able to think ahead will not succeed in life. Therefore, an adult is required to act as a guide.

"Adults such as parents, teachers and other people who are always around teenagers need to guide them towards gaining a better perspective on life." How? Well, teenagers need successful individuals to talk to them. These individuals should talk about their journey and how hard they have worked to become who they are now. In this way, unintentionally, they provide motivation and instil determination and hope in teenagers who want to be successful.

"Teenagers who can think ahead are usually socially active and have been guided by an adult. They will lead successful lives.

"Your life is not only about today, tomorrow and next week. Your life will continue for the next 20 to 30 years or more," added Dr Shatar.

In psychology, it has been proven that there is a higher chance of reaching success after a failure. But not everyone has had the so-called privilege of getting back up after a huge fall. So it is better to be safe than sorry. Thus, teenagers need to be directed towards the correct path in life through the counsel of those around them.

During my interview with Dr Shatar, he made me stop to think about things because he has the ability to view life from the perspective of a teenager and that of a parent. He said teenagers are frequently misunderstood. At this point of time in life, we are just trying to find out who we really are. We have mixed feelings, thoughts and emotions that are always running through our minds, and an adult's guidance is what we need.

This is why we need to embrace opposites. To teenagers, no one can be more of an "opposite" than their parents. But we have to remember

**STUDY**

**FREE TIME**



## Editor's Diary



**Fatin Farieni Faudzilah,**  
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Editor

**HEY** there! This issue is all about opposites. Well, here's the thing: When we first planned this issue, it was the exact opposite of what it is today.

While putting this issue together, I also learnt to love the opposite of me — being a leader instead of the usual immature me.

Let's see what some of our friends have to say about their "total opposite's besties." We will also learn about the symbolism of opposites according to both Japanese and Chinese traditions, and we'll increase our knowledge of antonyms.

There is also a review on vampires — the reality vs. Edward Cullen. And don't forget to check out the photograph section for those who appreciate nature in photography.

Let's not forget our Primary Zone's contributors: One has shared his experience of cross-country running, and another has shared some tips for overcoming stage fright.

While you're at it, why don't you take a rest from all that reading, and test your vocabulary by completing our puzzle. Let's see if you can get all the answers correct.

We certainly hope that this issue will help you to understand and embrace opposites and that it will give you some insight into why opposites attract, both in science and in human nature.

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that the things we think will destroy our dreams, refute our theories or even destroy our projects when we can make those dreams, theories or projects better if we work together.

Parents say, "Did you know that it is not easy to raise a teenager?"

Teenagers say, "Did you know that it is not easy being a teenager?"

So both parents and children need to learn the magic spell of compromise to complete each other. We should understand each other and compromise, and everything will turn out as it should.

By **Muhammad Shakir Shaharuddin,** 15, Selangor

