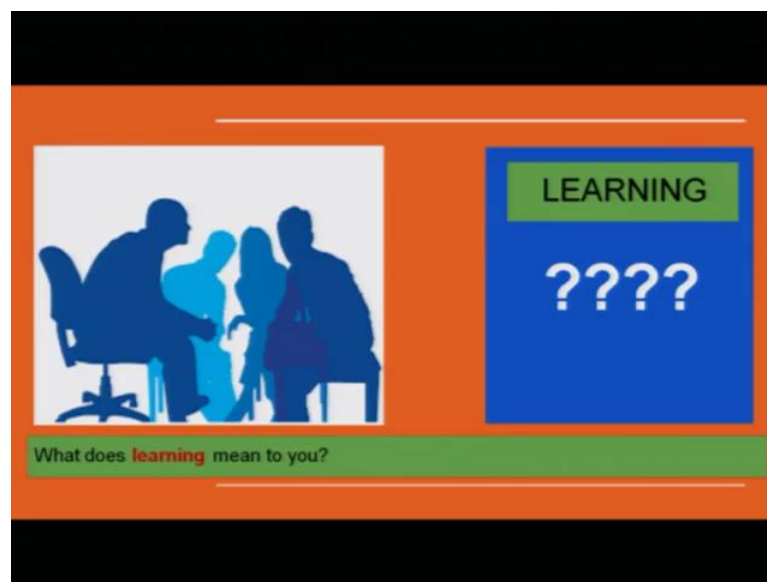


Developing Soft Skills and Personality
Prof. T. Ravichandran
Department of Humanities and Social Sciences
Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur

Lecture - 01
Introduction: A New Approach to Learning

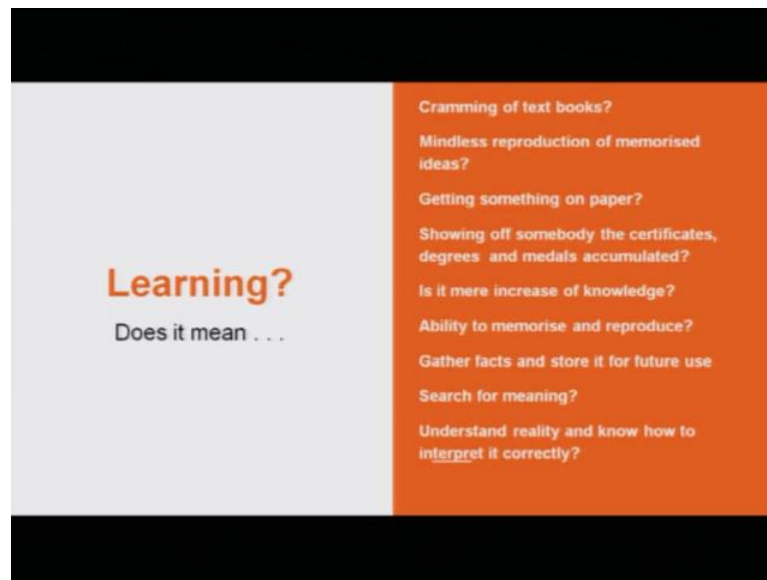
Hello everybody, welcome to my NPTEL MOOC course on Developing Soft Skills and Personality. This is the first week and this is the first module of the first set of lessons that you are going to learn from this course now. In this module, I just want to introduce you to the course and then give you some tips as how you can maximize your gain from the course.

(Refer Slide Time: 00:50)



Now, before I start I just want to ask you one basic question, what is your opinion about learning? How do you like to define learning or what does the learning mean to you? So, you are here to learn from this course, but before you actually start your learning I just want you to have a clear understanding of what learning should mean to you as far as this course is concerned.

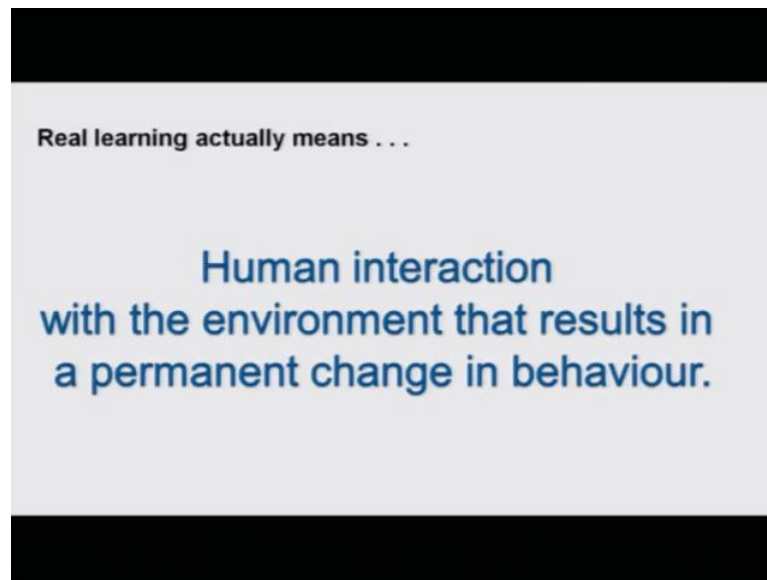
(Refer Slide Time: 01:19)



Now, what are the general conceptions or misconceptions about learning? Let us look at that first and does that mean to you also does learning mean to you mere cramming of text books, what are books are given to you does it mean that you will be cramming those books or does it mean mindless reproduction of memorized ideas. So, you do not bother to understand what is there, but then you just memorize and then reproduce that.

Does it mean getting something on paper in the form of a degree or certificate or does it imply that you show off somebody the certificates degrees and medals accumulated? Is it mere increase of knowledge? Does learning mean that you keep on increasing your knowledge? Is it merely that or is it your ability to memorize and reproduce or does it simply mean that you gather facts and then you store them for future use? What does learning actually mean for some people, learning they say that it is after all a search for meaning a search for purpose and for some it is simply means that your ability to understand reality and know how to interpret it correctly. Now, whatever definitions that you may subscribe to most of which are very conventional the way I want you look at learning.

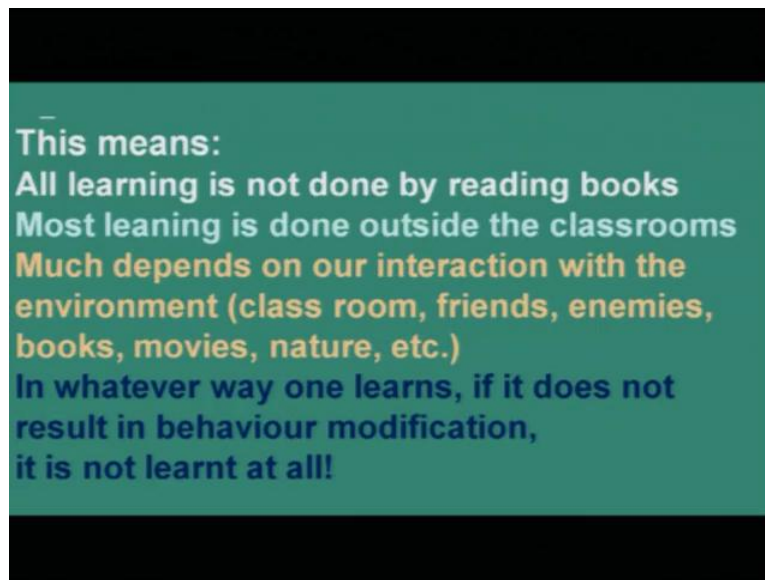
(Refer Slide Time: 02:50)



I want you to understand as what learning really means is this to me real learning actually means human interaction with the environment that result in a permanent change in behavior. Human interaction with the environment that results in a permanent change in behavior this means your ability to transact with the surrounding either using your sensory perception or just observing things with whatever is available in the environment, but learning is not ending there, but letting that affect you and change your behavior and not just temporarily, but making permanent modification of your behavior that should be the real aim of learning.

Now, if that is the real aim of learning, this course is about soft skills and development of your personality, do not you think that in this course mere memorizing of whatever I give you is not going to help and if you understand that it is your behavior that needs modification with whatever is given to you, you would have understood what I mean by learning. Now, if you understand this aspect of learning this means and gives a certain implications.

(Refer Slide Time: 04:13)



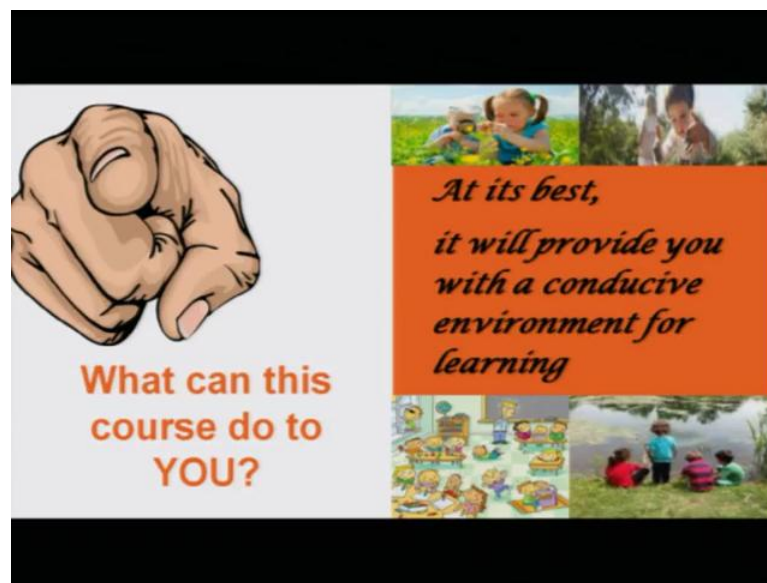
For instance all learning is not done by reading books. In fact, what is in between the books, what is in between the lines, what is the sub text that will tell you more about your ability to develop soft skills not what is literally learnt from the books and interestingly most of the learning is done outside the class rooms it is not done inside the class room, it is done outside the class room then much of your learning depends on your interaction with the environment. The environment could be sometimes classroom, sometimes it could be just friends that is people in various forms, it could be your teachers, it could be your even enemies, it could be your parents, it could be somebody in the neighbor, it could be a religious leader, it could be anybody in the form of human resource from which you can interact and learn, it could be books, it could be very interesting and influential movies, it could be simply nature.

There are so many poets, philosophers, writers and leaders who have gained so much from just watching nature if we have read Herman Hess Siddhartha. So, there is a character by name Vasudeva, who is acting as a ferry man who is just taking people from one bank of the river to the other bank and he says, he learns a lot from the river all his education he says is from the river. So, he is able to learn so much. So, learning first you should understand is not from books only not from that you learn from classroom, you can learn from the environment by interacting with that and in the environment class room could be one of them, but then it goes beyond the class room teaching.

Now, in whatever way one learns if it does not result in behavior modification, it is not learnt at all. This is another interesting implication whatever that you learn if it is not resulting in any change in your behavior. So, you might have heard of people shouting at so called educated youths not giving space to a disabled person a disadvantaged person and then they are not giving space and although the seat it is written that it is meant for people who are disadvantaged and people with some kind of disability and they are not giving space or they are not giving space to elders.

So, people will ask them are not you educated, what is implied is that you look like educated, but then it is not shown in your behavior in your action. Now, it shows that you have actually not learnt the real lessons. So, whatever is affected in the form of your behavior is something that we can say that is the thing that you have learnt.

(Refer Slide Time: 07:30)



If you agree with this then what can this course do to you, at it is best the course will provide you with a very conducive environment for learning.

(Refer Slide Time: 07:38)

What can this course do to you?

- It could change your life, revolutionise your thinking, alter your perspective, develop your career, enrich your personal relationships, enhance your happiness quotient . . .
- BUT . . . IF ONLY . . .

But even if it is giving you this conducive environment there are some ifs and buts, but before I come to that once again, let me ask you this question what can this course do to you it could change your life? It could be that one single course that you did and it changed your life, it could revolutionize your thinking, it could alter your perspective, it can develop your career, it can enrich your personal relationships, it can enhance your happiness quotient.

(Refer Slide Time: 08:20)

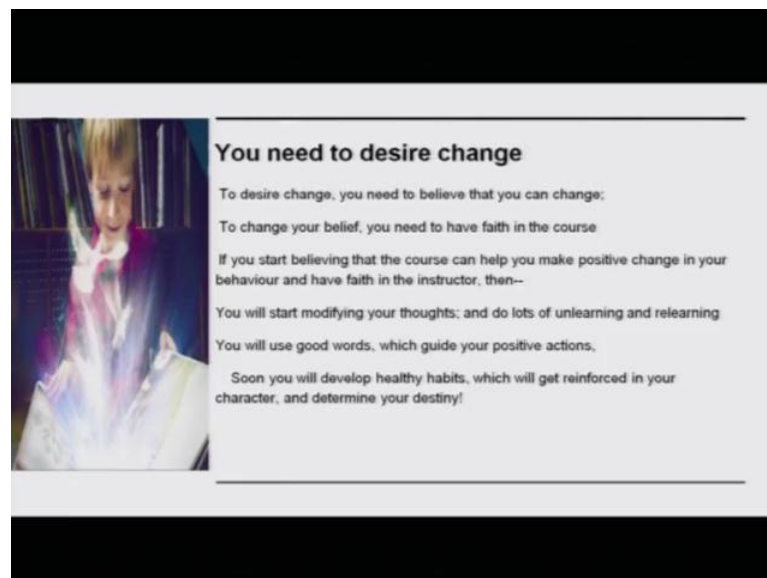
But . . .
Only if . . .

You can lead a horse to water,
but you can't make him drink.

Only if . . . you WANT to change, the course can change you!

Now, it can do all these things, but if only what is that, if only you want to change the course can change you, if only you want that change to happen in you then the course can change you. So, you might have heard of the proverb that you can lead a horse to water, but you cannot make it drink. I as an instructor can provide a conducive environment for learning developing your soft skills and personality, but you as the learner if you are not interested in making change there is no way I can push you to make the change. So, you need to desire, you need to want the change. Now, you need to desire change, you need to believe that you can change because change can occur only if you are able to modify your beliefs.

(Refer Slide Time: 09:07)



You need to desire change

- To desire change, you need to believe that you can change;
- To change your belief, you need to have faith in the course
- If you start believing that the course can help you make positive change in your behaviour and have faith in the instructor, then--
- You will start modifying your thoughts; and do lots of unlearning and relearning
- You will use good words, which guide your positive actions,
- Soon you will develop healthy habits, which will get reinforced in your character, and determine your destiny!

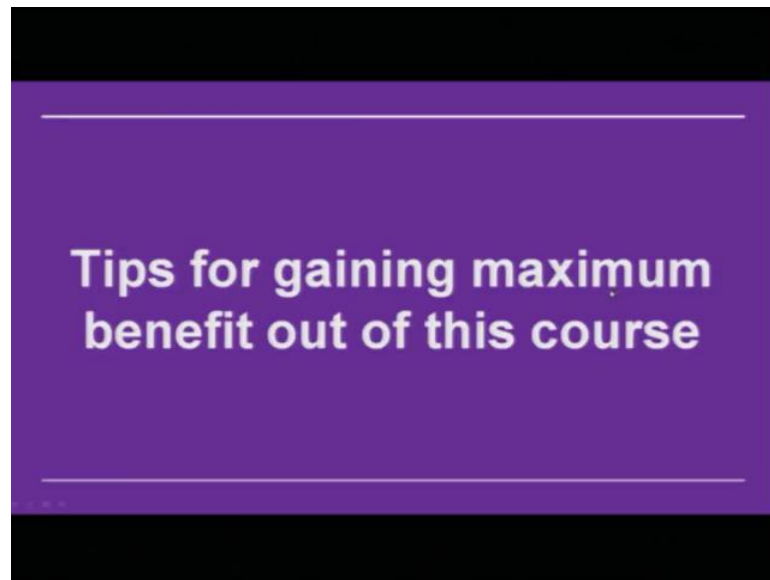
The slide features a photograph of a person with blonde hair, wearing a white shirt, looking down. The text is presented in a list format on the right side of the slide, with horizontal lines above and below the text area.

You need to believe that you can change and to change your belief you should be willing and you should be having faith in the course; faith in the course that the course can change you if you start believing that the course can help you to make positive change in your behavior and have faith in the instructor, then you will start modifying your thoughts.

So, you will start moving your thoughts across the way in which you can change your entire behavior and do lots of unlearning and relearning. You will use good words which guide your positive actions and eventually sooner or later you will start developing healthy habit's which will get reinforced in your character and it will determine your destiny also. So, it is all a flowing process you start by desiring change, you start

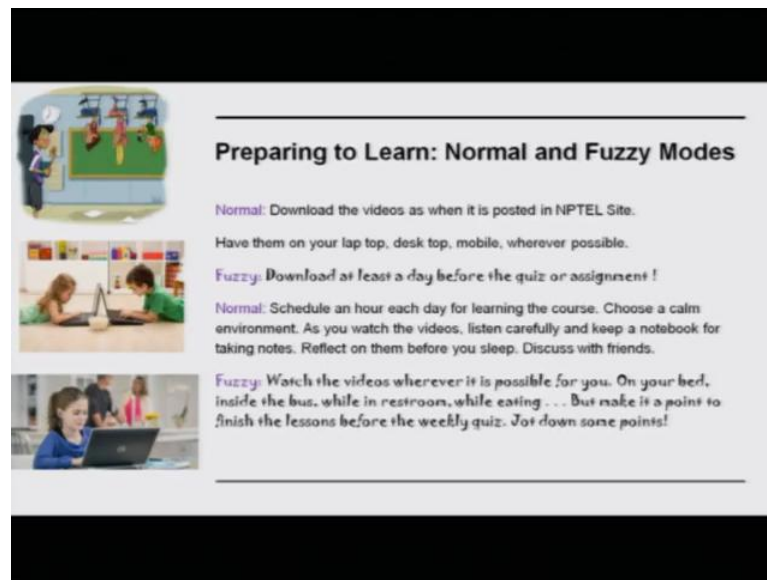
believing that you can change you have faith in the course and then you let your thoughts being modified and then use good words follow up action and then eventually you will be able to develop healthy habit's which will determine your character as well as lead to a good destiny.

(Refer Slide Time: 10:28)



Now, I will give you some quick tips for gaining maximum benefit out of this course because as I said this course is not like any other course that you just read mug up and then reproduce. How can you prepare to learn this course? I would suggest that you can go either the normal mode, the standard mode that is advisable or if you generally believe in chaos theory if you are quite incoherent and then you do not believe in going in a linear mode I would suggest the fuzzy mode also.

(Refer Slide Time: 11:08)



Preparing to Learn: Normal and Fuzzy Modes

Normal: Download the videos as when it is posted in NPTEL Site.
Have them on your lap top, desk top, mobile, wherever possible.

Fuzzy: Download at least a day before the quiz or assignment !

Normal: Schedule an hour each day for learning the course. Choose a calm environment. As you watch the videos, listen carefully and keep a notebook for taking notes. Reflect on them before you sleep. Discuss with friends.

Fuzzy: Watch the videos wherever it is possible for you. On your bed, inside the bus, while in restroom, while eating . . . But make it a point to finish the lessons before the weekly quiz. Jot down some points!

Now, in the normal mode I would suggest that you download the videos as and when it is posted in the NPTEL site and then you store them wherever it is possible, like your laptop, desktop, mobile and wherever you can access it. So, if you are just going to your office, keep a copy in the office. If you are there in your ground floor there is a desktop you put there on the upstairs, you have a laptop you copy it there. So, wherever you are and then whenever you feel like reading just try to make it accessible.

Now, if you are the fuzzy type and then you are lazy to download it. I would suggest that at least download it in 2-3 videos or at least the day before the quiz is to be commenced at least download it and then quickly go through that. So, that you finish the weeks lesson do not postpone one weeks lesson to the next week. So, then it will pile up and then slowly you will lose your enthusiasm. So, do not attempt that in the second stage for the normal one I would suggest that schedule and hour each day for learning the course each day as you download the video. It is about 25 minutes, hardly it will go up to 30 and then you just watch it and then as and when you are watching it. So, you decide that that movement, you will dedicate only to watching that video. It could be like early morning 6 to 7, 8 to 9 or evening 4 to 5 or even before going to bed you can decide that I will devote this one hour for this video.

Now, as you watch if possible try to choose a calm environment, sit in a place where you will not be affected distracted by the TV noise or by the calling bell or by phone calls

even I would suggest that if you can switch off the mobile and then entirely focus on the video. So, it will help now try whether it is possible and as you watch the videos listen carefully and keep a notebook for taking notes, you may think that what is there I can just watch the video and then go back any time, but keeping a notebook and then noting important points, even some words specific ideas will help you to remember them. So, it is an important rule when you put it on paper you actually remembers it, but when you see you do not remember it that much, you have to see that again and again listen it carefully.

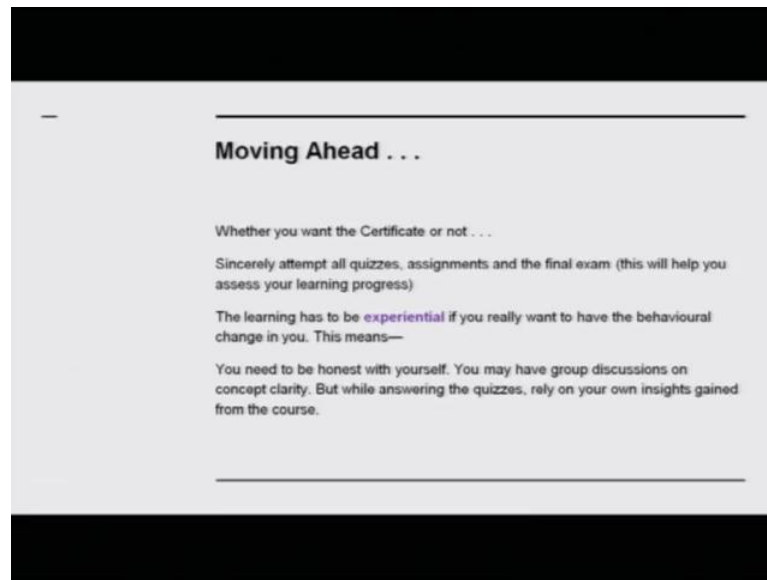
So, listen carefully as you watch it and then keep a notebook to take notes, reflect on them before you sleep. Now, whatever time you choose just before the sleep just quickly recollect whatever has been discussed to you and then see whether you can carry over the points, ideas the next time to somebody whom you know can you discuss with the person or you share your thoughts to the person, if possible you can even form a partner reading, partner somebody who has joined the course along with you. You can even make a group study kind of thing, but then it is important that you reflect on that and then you think a lot or discuss with somebody, so that the concept becomes very clear.

Now, in the other case if you are the fuzzy type that you believe in incoherent things and then you do not believe in the orderly things then what I would suggest you can watch the videos whenever it is possible for you, if you think that you are not able to plan one particular hour, fine. If you think that you are not able to choose a calm place then also it is on your bed, if you want to lay down and read fine, inside the bus fine, even in the rest room, great novelist sometimes say that they have got their ideas when they were there in the rest room either taking bath or just freshening up themselves. So, even if you think that you can use that fine, while eating, munching something you want to watch the video do that, but wherever you are comfortable and whatever you are doing and whatever time that you get even if you are the fuzzy kind. So, utilize the time make it a point finish the lessons before the weekly quiz down some points.

Now, the next step whether you are the normal kind or the fuzzy kind I would suggest that join the discussion forum if you have any doubts. So, you just we have TAS. So, you can ask your doubts to the TAS. It will be cleared, they will also try to collect all your doubts and then try to create this question-answer forum, the frequently asked questions and then we will be giving some common answers very quickly, but the forums are

likely to be quite exiting. So, that is the place where we will ask doubts and then discuss and then debate and then even challenge some of our answers and that is a way you will learn. So, keep that as a point whether you are the fuzzy kind or the standard kind just participate in the forums and then and then enrich your knowledge further.

(Refer Slide Time: 16:30)



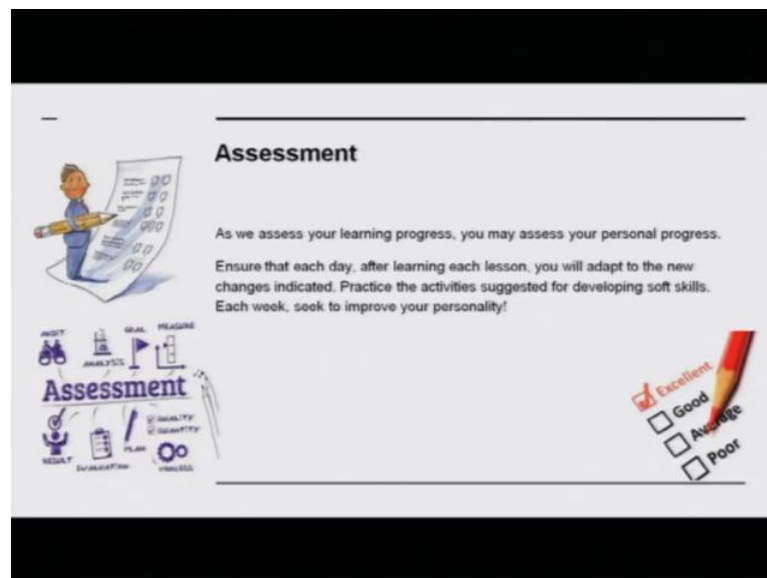
Now, moving ahead once you are done with this whether you want the certificate or not, you know that if you do this course successfully you will be able to get a certificate. Now, whether you want it or not, do not think that if you do not want the certificate you should not participate in the quizzes or assignments, make it a point that whether you want it or not you will attempt all quizzes assignments and the final exam that will be given. The reason is that this will help you assess your learning progress without attempting it. So, you will not know where you stand. So, I suggest that you try to attempt it whether you are interested in the certificate or not, but on the other hand the certificate is going to be very valid especially if you are going for some kind of trainee programs and then you are looking for better job or even a job as such. So, you can show that this is from IIT, Kanpur and then you did a course. So, that is going to give some valid weightage to your C.V.

So, either way I suggest that you attempt all the quizzes do not miss it. Now, the other point is the learning has to be experiential. This means it is not just cramming answers and then trying to fill up the blanks that we give, but you have to reflect on that

understand, if you do not understand clear that using the forums and then if you really want to have the behavioral change make it experiential that you feel it you understand you realize and then respond to that using your instinct using your emotion as well as using your thinking, do not ask anybody, do not discuss with anybody, but rely on what you think is right or wrong.

Now, this means you need to be honest with yourself, you may have group discussions on conceptual clarity, you may talk to your friends or even in our forums we can discuss, but while answering the quizzes I suggest that rely on your own insights gained from the course mind you the insights that you gained or the ones that are going to give you the soft skills that you need most.

(Refer Slide Time: 18:45)



Assessment

As we assess your learning progress, you may assess your personal progress.

Ensure that each day, after learning each lesson, you will adapt to the new changes indicated. Practice the activities suggested for developing soft skills. Each week, seek to improve your personality!

Assessment

Excellent
 Good
 Average
 Poor

Now, in terms of assessment as we assess your learning progress as we tell you how much you are scoring, you may also assess your personal progress. So, ensure that each day after learning each lesson you will adapt to the new changes indicated, practice the activity suggested for developing soft skills each week, seek to improve your personality each week at the end of it, you should ensure that this behavior I have modified this is something that was suggested in the course I made an honest attempt and I could change it. So, keep assessing yourself and then at the end of the course I wish that you completely develop your personality while teaching about this course.

(Refer Slide Time: 19:36)

The slide is titled "Approaches to teaching soft skills". It features a central text area with two main points. The first point, "Others: External factors; physical changes", is accompanied by an icon of a person with a gear on their head. The second point, "My approach: Aims at intrinsic factors and overall development of personality", is accompanied by an icon of a person with a gear on their head. Below the second point, a list of levels is provided: Physical, Mental, Emotional, Psychological, Cultural, and Spiritual. To the left of the list is an image of a spiral staircase leading up a hill, and to the right is an image of a glowing, ethereal figure.

Approaches to teaching soft skills

Others: External factors; physical changes

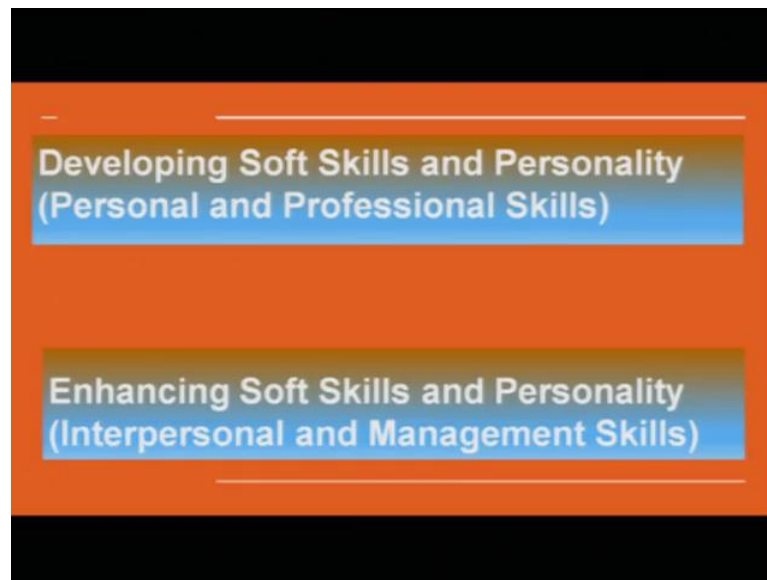
My approach: Aims at intrinsic factors and overall development of personality

Changes that affect at all levels:

- Physical
- Mental
- Emotional
- Psychological
- Cultural
- Spiritual

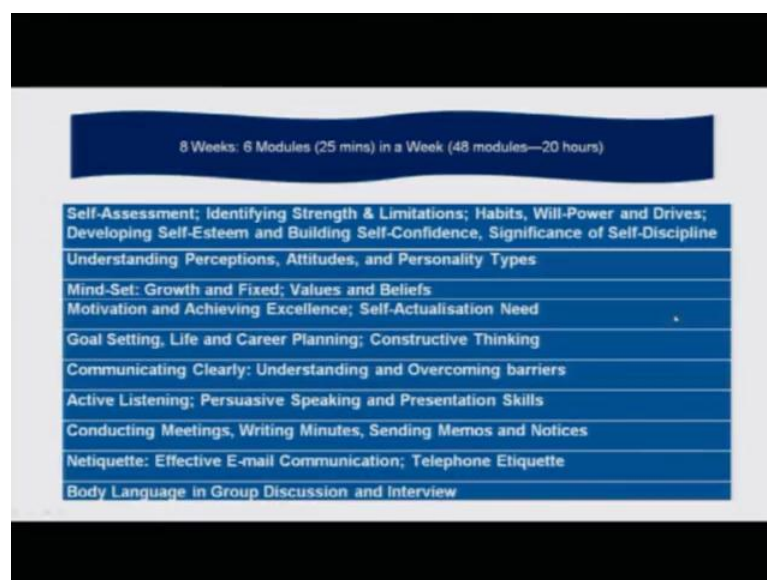
I just want you to know that there are two possible approaches to teaching soft skills, there are crash courses and then especially from the corporate sight they follow the general approach of looking at soft skills as a kind of external factor and then by making some physical changes by telling you that giving you some do's and don'ts. So, you will be able to make changes in your behavior, but my approach it aims at intrinsic factors and overall development of personality and it will deal with changes that affect at all levels that is physical mental emotional psychological cultural as well as spiritual level. In fact, I will talk to you about why emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence is much more important than actual intelligence quotient.

(Refer Slide Time: 20:41)



Now, the course is in two forms the first form that I am giving you that is developing soft skills and personality that is about personal and professional skills. Now, there will be another course after this complete modules are finished, which will be offering after this course that is on enhancing soft skills and personality that will completely deal with the inter personal and management skills.

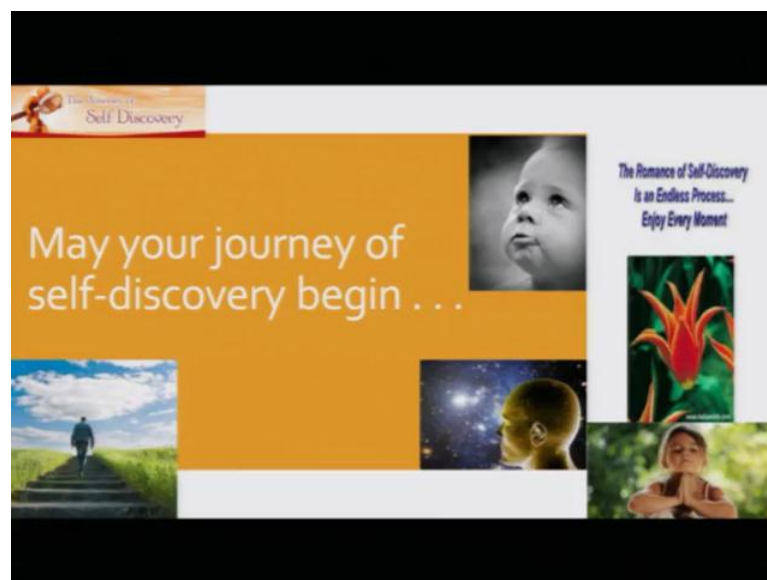
(Refer Slide Time: 21:00)



Now, the course will have 8 weeks. There are 6 modules 25 minutes in a week, totally there are 48 modules about 20 hours. So, imagine it is an amazing that you will achieve

that within 20 hours. So, you will be able to transform your personality completely. The course I have identified both at personal as well as at professional level starting with self assessment and then understanding perceptions, trying to change your mind set giving you something about motivation and then about goal setting life and career planning and then moving slowly towards communication. Effective communication, active listening, persuasive speaking, presentation skills and then later about conducting meetings and then basic norms about dealing in the internet that is netiquette and towards the end I will be dealing with body language particularly with regard to group discussions and interview and in general when you deal with personal and inter personal relationships.

(Refer Slide Time: 22:34)



While I say that this is the planning, but I may be following a different pattern as I start with the first actual module. Now, this is just to give you an overall idea, but then I once again welcome you to the course and I end this first module with a wish that may your journey of self discovery begin and as you know the romance of self discovery is an endless process and I wish that you enjoy every moment of doing this course and let me wish yourself, discovery and complete success in the process. Thank you for watching and let us meet again in the next module.

Thank you.