



# LITERATURE AND COPING SKILLS

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**PRE-REQUISITES :** There are no such prerequisites. However, a good knowledge of English is preferable.

**INTENDED AUDIENCE :** Students of Engineering, Medical Science, and Management

**INDUSTRIES APPLICABLE TO :** All of the industry that expect their employees to have strong coping skills and resilience will value this course.

### **COURSE OUTLINE :**

This course helps learners explore the power of literary experience as a means to strong coping strategies and resilience, skills that matter the most in our times. Almost all of us are hounded by the uncanny at some point of time in our lives. We continue to bear these mental pangs silently and privately until we are overwhelmed by those weird feelings. The moments of disarray challenge us to either disappear into the dark or fight our way back into life. The point of return lies in our mind, in our will, and in our negotiations. The principal objective of this course is to engage learners with the power of poetic communication through their mind, body, and spirit and to help them experience personal growth by learning to overcome the fatal strikes of fear, anxiety, depression, trauma, and heartbreak. The course modules focus on a range of universally experienced themes, such as doubt and despair, bereavement and grief, love and heartbreak, pain and suffering with a view to discovering the beauty in everyday life and embracing life's lessons gracefully.

### **ABOUT INSTRUCTOR :**

Prof. Ajit K Mishra has been teaching English Literature and Language for the last fifteen years. Through his personal engagements with literature as a powerful medium of communication and simulation, he has explored the therapeutic potential of the expressive and engaging power of words and their healing properties. He has designed similar courses „Leadership through Literature,“ „Literature and Crisis Management,“ and „Literature and Decision Making,“ to keep disseminating the transformational power of literature. He has also been teaching courses that are strategically designed to enhance life and career skills among learners. Besides, he has been training researchers in writing and communication strategies which are vital to the widespread dissemination of complex research findings.

### **COURSE PLAN :**

#### **Week 1: The Power of Literary Experience**

- i. Existential concerns-I
- ii. Existential concerns-II
  - Bhartrihari, “Fear of Death”
  - Rabindranath Tagore, “Give Me Strength”
- iii. Emotional wellbeing- I
- iv. Emotional wellbeing- II
- v. Personality- I
- vi. Personality- II
- vii. Simulation and higher order thinking
- viii. Empathy and emotional intelligence

#### **Week 2: Poetry and Healing**

- i. Poetry therapy-I
- ii. Poetry therapy- II
  - Max Ehrmann, “Desiderata”
  - Danna Faulds, “Allow”
- iii. Verbal imagery and healing-I
- iv. Verbal imagery and healing-II
- v. Rhetoric and prosody- I
- vi. Rhetoric and prosody- II
- vii. Rhetoric and prosody- III
- viii. Rhetoric and prosody- IV

**Week 3: Conquering Fear**

- i. The psychology of fear and anxiety-I
- ii. The psychology of fear and anxiety-II
- iii. John Donne, "Death be not Proud"
- iv. Robert Frost, "The Road not Taken"

**Week 4: Defeating Depression**

- i. Feeling Weird, Losing Touch-I
- ii. Feeling Weird, Losing Touch-II
- iii. Alfred Lord Tennyson, "Break, Break, Break"
- iv. John Keats, "Ode on Melancholy"

**Week 5: Negotiating Trauma**

- i. Unclaimed Experiences-I
- ii. Unclaimed Experiences-II
- iii. Maya Angelou, "Still I Rise"
- iv. Elizabeth Murphy, "The Night That Changed Everything"

**Week 6: Overcoming Heartbreak**

- i. Love, Heartbreak, and Healing-I
- ii. Love, Heartbreak, and Healing-II
- iii. Robert Browning, "The Last Ride Together"
- iv. Derek Walcott, "The Fist"

**Week 7: Taming Substance Abuse**

- i. The Culture of Escape: Elusion or Illusion? -I
- ii. The Culture of Escape: Elusion or Illusion? -II
- iii. Charles Baudelaire, "Be Drunk"
- iv. Charles Bukowski, "The Suicide Kid"

**Week 8: Beating Eating Disorder**

- i. Mimetic Desire and the Possessed Body- I
- ii. Mimetic Desire and the Possessed Body- II
- iii. Carol Ann Duffy, "The Diet"
- iv. Marty McConnell, "Instructions for a Body"