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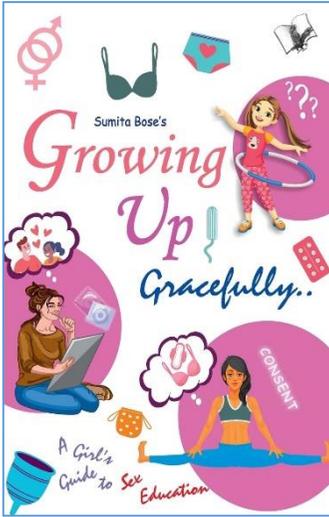
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Book Review of Sumita Bose's Growing up Gracefully by Dr. Anmol

Dr. Anmol is an Assistant Professor of English, Department of English, Govt. Degree College Multhan, Distt Kangra, Himachal Pardesh

Growing up Gracefully has been written by the prominent author and mathematician- Sumita Bose. She is an aficionado of 'Child Psychology' and has appreciative knowledge as well



as understanding of adolescents' world. The book has excellent perspective on the puberty of adolescent girls. It construes rapid psychological and physical transformation during adolescent age of girls. The exhibition and elucidation of such facts and dimensions pertaining to the subject-matter are tremendous. The book takes up the whole concept of puberty for exposition in an empirical way. The first chapter of the book, '[Gender and Sex](#)' explains the difference between the two

concepts Gender and Sex and on the other hand she explains social and biological characteristics of a persona. She bursts the myths and misconceptions related the role of a mother in the determination of biological sex of a child. She further explains that it is not the mother but the father who is responsible for the determination of the biological sex of a child as he is the curator of 'Y' chromosome. [Sumita Bose](#) also elucidates the veracity of 'Gender Identity' that it depends on the person's inner feelings s/he perceives for his/her gender. Gender identity is outside the gender binary of male and female. She also explains the Sexual Orientation with a diagram, Wheel of Sexuality. All the dominating components of sexual orientation- Genes, hormones, environment, and emotions are well explained. Article 377, Gender expression, Homophobia, Serotonin, Testosterone, Estrogens, Problems of LGBTQs and various concerned therapies of Gender Dysphoria are also discussed at a stretch with great deal.

In the second chapter, 'Puberty' [Sumita Bose](#) states that puberty is a period of struggles and strives as teens witness physical, emotional and hormonal changes in profusion. She

further talks about the different stages of life and their effects on human mind and body. She thrashes out how hypothalamus produces Gonadotropin (GnRH) which stimulates pituitary gland to secrete Luteinizing Hormone (LH) and Follicle-stimulating Hormone (FSH) which further stimulate the production of sex hormones estrogens and progesterone to cause sexual maturity during puberty in girls and boys. Bose speaks about the acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, actions and acts in this state of puberty. She highly recommends that amidst this all one must set boundaries to respect oneself and others. On the other hand it becomes palpable to them that they should comprehend the physical and emotional development.

The third chapter, '[Breast Development](#)' describes the physical growth of girls in puberty. The first sign of puberty in girls is the development of their breasts. She also explains the role of glandular and adipose tissues in this corporal development phase; she further adds that Breast development is caused by the estrogen hormone that is released by the ovaries, consequently the fat starts accumulating in the chest and chest starts fill up. Tanner scale is used to scale the development of the breast sometimes the stage is called Tanner stage in puberty. Bose explains the necessity to wear a brassiere and also its different types. The book is incredible in its vindication and disclosure; there will be no embellishment if it is called almanac of sex education. The next chapter, 'Reproductive System' describes the function of the different internal organs of the female reproductive system. This is a natural phenomenon and girls should comprehend to harmonize with it. She further adds that there are numerous causes that bring sexual maturity in girls. She also explains the common medical conditions like Candidiasis and Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS) of the reproductive system during adolescence and steps that should be taken for care and treatment. The most attention-grabbing segment of [the](#)

[book](#) is the 'Myth-bursting' which is appended at the end of every chapter.

[The book](#) takes up all the issues and concerns in an orderly way for the better comprehension of the readers on the subject matter. The succeeding chapter '[Menstruation](#)' deals with the natural biological process of menstruation; its benefits and harmful effects. She also talks about its phases, hormone levels and fertility as well. She explains the regular and irregular menstruation and its symptoms. She also talks about the Premenstrual Syndrome (PMS) its symptoms and remedies. Girls face the problem of bloating, abdomen cramps, sadness, anxiety, irritation, anger, backache, sore breast, food craving, nausea, and headache during premenstrual syndrome. She discusses the concerns related to menopause, spotting and hormonal imbalance etc. The next chapter, '[Feelings and Love](#)' explains that love, attraction, crush, and infatuation are palpable occurrences especially in adolescence.

It is rightly said by William Shakespeare, "Love looks not with the eyes, but with mind, and therefore is winged cupid painted blind." (91) The physical development, hormonal changes and neurological development are responsible for such intense feelings of love, attraction, crush, and infatuation. [The author](#) explains the characteristics of infatuation and love, Erik Homburger Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development of Human Beings, Robert Sternberg's Triangular Theory of love, Bradford Brown's Development Model of Adolescent Love and Love Language Model by Dr Gary Chapman. She also discusses the types of love according to Ancient Greeks - Storge (instinctual love), Philia (affectionate love), Phiautia (Self love), Pragma (Enduring love), Agape (Selfless love), Eros (Romantic Love), Ludus (uncommitted love), and Mania (obsessive love) with proficiency. She further elucidates that Kiss is the common way to express affection; it plays an important role in love making. Peck Kiss, American and

French kisses are most common types of kisses. She accents that there are health benefits of a passionate kiss but on the other hand it brings some harmful effects as well. She explains the Formula of Love that consists of two angles; emotional angle and bio-chemical angle.

Emotional Angle: Love = Trust + Respect + Commitment + loyalty

Bio-chemical Angle: Love = Dopamine + Serotonin + Oxytocin + Alpha endorphin

She also describes the Formula of Trust:

Trust Quotient = Responsibility + Honesty + Empathy/ Self Interest.

The next chapter '[Personal Grooming](#)' deals with the Personal, Physical and Mental hygiene and protection. Bose elucidates that grooming is not just to care physical body but to protect it from abusers. She also talks about the various stages of grooming, warning signs, and tricks used by abusers and strangers to influence the target. The most important part of [this chapter](#) is the account of POCSO Act 2012, India that provides protection to children from sexual offences. [Bose](#) further adds that personal grooming includes hair, skin, hands, feet, dental, body, and genital care. 'Teenage Pregnancy' speaks about Dating and Hanging out; Bose explains the differences between Dating and Hanging out with the help of a diagram.

The diagram exhibits the step by step ascent of emotional sap in a relationship. Bose also talks about the Dating abuse and Dating violence which are very common in present-day relationships. She also talks about the different forms of Dating Abuse and the Abuse Cycle and their dire consequences. Bose explains that sexual desire or urge during adolescent is obvious but a wise decision is prerequisite. She also talks about different types of sexual intercourses, types of

abusers and necessary components of consent for sexual intimacy. The most smouldering concern that has been taken with great precision in this section is the matter of sexual assault/ rape and the preventive measures to avoid it. Teenage pregnancy is a susceptible matter and it must be taken with extensive care as it has many complications followed by sufferings and trauma. [Bose](#) also talks about birth control methods and the myths related to pregnancy.

The preceding chapter is about the 'Internet Safety'. In modern day, technology is an unavoidable chore and has become integral part of our living but the package explicitly comes with virtues and vices as well. One must take care to avoid the harms while enjoying the advantages of internet. Cyber bulling, phishing, sextortion, pharming, and malwares are the common threats to the client. Clients must go through the ABCs of information security awareness and should take care of Do's and Don'ts whilst using social media platforms as we all are vulnerable to cyber crimes and browbeat. She also talks about Digital footprint, pornography and its harmful effects. Digital footprint is one's unique trail of data on the internet which one creates through his online activities; simultaneously it is used by Artificial Intelligence with the algorithm. The book provides marvellous glossary in the end for better comprehension of the contents provided in. The blurb provides the nutshell thematic analysis and brief bio-sketch of the author. The book is highly recommended by the reviewer for school, college and university libraries and it should not be limited to the circle of adolescents but everyone should go through it.

Book Title: [Growing up Gracefully](#)

Author: [Sumita Bose](#)

Available: [Amazon](#)

References

1. Growing up Gracefully. Sumita Bose. V & S Publishers, August 2023.

Author: Sumita Bose

Sumita has a commendable teaching experience of more than two decades in different schools of Delhi. She has authored many popular mathematics textbooks and puzzle books, and has developed numerous mathematics and science based e-learning programmes. She has authored the first autism book as per Indian socio cultural set up. Her name has been placed in India book of records 2016.

Reviewer: Dr. Anmol

Dr Anmol, a juvenile research-scholar of Himachal Pradesh University and presently working as a Lecturer in English in the Department of Higher Education, Govt. of Himachal Pradesh, having 08 years of experience in teaching. He has attended several workshops on Literature & Languages and presented his research papers.

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