"Bholu, where did you keep my bicycle keys, I am getting late for school", screamed Manu from his room. Scratching his head, with a dazed look on his face, cousin Bholu emerged from the other room. His nightshirt was buttoned haphazardly, and he had worn his pyjamas front side backwards. Trying to control his irritation, Manu again asked Bholu for his keys, but Bholu being as absent minded as always, just shook his head and said, "I forgot!" Had Bantu mama not come to Bholu's rescue at that time, he would have ended up with a few broken teeth or bones as Manu was getting too furious. Quickly, Bantu mama grabbed his car keys and offered to drive Manu and Rupa to school as it would have taken a lot more time to search for the lost keys.

Later in the evening when Rupa and Manu came back from school, they found Bholu sulking on the couch. He was upset since morning as he could not remember where he had kept the keys and moreover, he was also hurt as he was constantly rebuked for his forgetfulness, wherever he went. Simple village boy at heart, Bholu was looking forward to this vacation in Bangalore and spend some quality time with his favourite cousins Rupa and Manu, but nothing seemed to be going right for him. Blame it on his absent mindedness or lack of concentration, every day was becoming a challenge for Bholu, finding it very difficult to cope up with the fast, metro city life.

Sensing his stress, that night during story time, Bantu mama decided to tell them the story from Mahabharata. "Acharya Dronacharya decided to go for the 'Best Archer' amongst the Pandavas and Kauravas. During the test all archers were asked to hit an arrow in the eye of the bird sitting far off the tree. He started asking a question to everybody before releasing the arrow through stretched bow string as 'What is visible at the point of time'. It was Arjun who replied that he is able to see only 'The Eye' of the bird, unlike others who were enjoying a bird, a tree and perhaps complete surrounding atmosphere at that time. Arjun passed the test even before he releases the arrow through the string and hit the target correctly. Why it was possible for Arjun? The secret of success was 'focused mind' with 'concentrated efforts'".

Bantu mama continued, "tomorrow being a Saturday, go show a magic to your friends wherein you hold a lens in sunlight over a piece of paper and focus your mind by keeping the lens steady and try to concentrate the sun rays to burn the paper. In our daily life we need to practice this magic of collecting diverted rays of mind and focus them on a target which will light up a fire of achieving goals within ourselves". Needless to say, Bholu was impressed as well as inspired. "But how do I focus and learn to concentrate, my mind is like a butterfly, one moment it is here, and the next moment, it is off, flying completely in a different direction", said Bholu with an innocent look on his face.

Sensing his discomfort, Bantu mama went to his room and returned back with a small bottle of his favourite herbal tablets. "This is for you Bholu, take two tablets of this every night for a month, and your memory power will become as sharp as a wise owl", said Bantu mama. Bholu could not have asked for more. He had the remedy for his lack of concentration in his own hands. Grabbing the bottle, Bholu immediately rushed to take two tablets, making a mental note of taking the medicine every night.

"This tablet has a powerful herb for the brain, Shankhpushpi that will help you to concentrate better", said Bantu mama. "Concentration is a mental process rather than stretching your muscles. Everybody has the ability to concentrate more or less. You can strengthen this capacity by various ways. There are many books, literature and methods to increase your concentration power. But to me the simple mantra is: do one job at a time. If you work, work and if you play, play. Do not mix the two. And don't forget to take your Shankhpushpi tablet".

There was a mischievous smile playing on all the three children's mind........
Shankhpushp is a very famous Ayurvedic medicine used to improve memory, intelligence etc. It is also used in other conditions like vomiting and toxic conditions.

Botanical Name- Convolulus pluricaulis
Family- Convolvulaceae

What are my Vernacular names

Hindi Name- Sankhahul, Shankhahuli
Telugu Name- Shankhapusi
Marathi Name- Shankhvel
Gujarati Name- Sankhavali
English name - English speed wheel, Aloe weed
Urdu name - Sankali

Parts Used: Entire plant and juice
Habitat: Found in India and Burma

How do I look like?

Shankhpushp is a perennial herb that seems like morning glory. Its branches are spread on the ground and can be more than 30 cm long. The flowers are blue in colour (5mm) and the leaves, which are elliptic in shape (2mm), are located at alternate positions with branches or flowers. Known as Aloe weed in English, the herb is commonly found in India, especially in the state of Bihar. All the parts of the herb are known to possess therapeutic benefits. It is believed to be the only herb that is capable of enhancing all the aspects related to brain power, such as learning, memory and the ability to recall. However, its popularity stems from its ability to treat insomnia effectively.

What are my Medicinal Uses?

- Primarily, shankhpushp is used as a brain tonic. It is one of the best and prominent natural medicines that help in improving memory. The whole plant of shankhpushp is used in medical treatment. Its consumption also prevents memory loss.
The herb is also used as one of the most important ingredients in the treatment of disorders/syndromes, such as hypertension, hypotension, anxiety neurosis, stresses etc.

- It is also beneficial in rejuvenation therapy and works as psycho-stimulant and tranquilizer.
- The extract from shankhapushpi helps in reducing the level of cholesterol in blood, including triglycerides, phospholipids and fatty acids.
- The herb is helpful in fighting ulcers that are formed in the body due to glycoproteins and mucous secretions, improving the nerve tissues and bone marrow quality.
- The studies on shankhapushpi have also put forward that it is beneficial in remediying hypothyroidism.

- It is also one of the best herbs that are used for enhancing beauty and helps in nourishing all the layers of skin.
- The herb serves to induce a feeling of calm and peace, promotes good sleep and brings relief in anxiety and mental fatigue. It brings a significant reduction in anxiety levels and neuroticism occurring due to varied stress levels.
- Shankhpushpi has an invigorating effect on overall health and promotes health and weight gain.
- It also helps in removing certain types of fatty acids that are harmful for the body.
- Not much research has been published in the western medical literature on shankhapushpi. There is one study on the herb, which throws light on its anti-ulcer properties and its helpfulness in alleviating the symptoms of hyperthyroidism, by reducing the activeness of a liver enzyme.

**Improving memory with Shankhapushpi**

Take 3 to 6 grams of Convolvulus pluricaulis powder with milk early in the morning to enhance the memory power. Fatigue would vanish if you are studying for long hours.

Give 2 to 4 grams of Convolvulus pluricaulis powder with 1 gram of Sweet Flag (yacha) powder to raise intelligence in children and to make them sharp.

For Sharp memory take 3 to 6 grams Convolvulus pluricaulis powder and honey with milk.

For Beauty: Take shankhapushpi powder 2-4 grams, add to honey or sugar and consume daily for 6 months. Wrinkles would disappear from your face in the old age.

Treating Epilepsy: Take 2 grams of Convolvulus pluricaulis juice with honey to cure epilepsy.

Take powders of Convolvulus pluricaulis, Sweet flag and Brahmi in equal quantities. To cure epilepsy, hysteria and delirium take 3 grams of this mixture twice a day.

Dry in the shade 1 kilogram of Convolvulus pluricaulis add 2 kilograms of Sugar and make powder. Sieve it and fill in bottles. Take 5 to 10 grams with milk for better memory.