Illusions of Wisdom

Am I audible from both corners? Excellent. Allow me to commence my speech with a question that encapsulates the essence of mentor or Guru. Have you ever given life-changing advice to someone in your family or friends in their education, or in career? Please raise your hand. It's fantastic to see so many gurus or mentors in the room! As renounced novelist once said, “Mentorship is simply learning from the mistakes and mastery of a successful individuals in their respective fields”. Today I stand before you to share my lesson, A journey where I mistook my half-knowledge for mastery.

**Contest chair and my dear friends!**

My younger cousin Rahul and I grew up in a small town in farmers' families. When it comes to academics, I was the brightest boy in my extended family. Rahul used to struggle in school, so my aunt and uncle used to give my example to encourage him, and **they often used to approach me for assistance in his academics.** I did my best to assist him in his studies, but he only managed to complete his plain graduation and due to that he couldn't get a good job and ended up being a farmer along with his parents.

When I started my professional journey, my uncle again approached me for assistance in finding a good corporate job for Rahul, however, my networking connections were only in technology domain, and he lacked an education in that domain. So, I couldn't assist him, and **because of that, there was a sense of guilt in my mind for not being able to help my cousin.**

Later, during covid, I got to know about stocks trading from one of my friends. I have a quick question for everyone. Who are all here who are not familiar with stocks trading? Please raise your hand. It's good for you that you don’t know. But to get you in the context, it has a higher risk and returns as compared to stock investments. I learnt it quickly from the so-called online influencer and I started trading. To my surprise, I won around 55k in that one month.

With that win I felt like a genius in trading, I thought this was piece of cake and with that confidence I started believing I knew everything about trading. **To overcome my guilt** **of not being able to help my cousin Rahul.** I convinced, persuaded and guided him into trading. He also learned it quickly and started earning a good amount, in fact more than me. **I felt proud that I was able to help my cousin.**

There is a famous saying “In the stock market, as in life, unpredictability is the only certainty” Couple months after starting trading, whatever we were predicting, started happening opposite to that. During that time, we both lost a significant amount, in fact double what we had earned earlier. With that setback, I committed and determined to end trading for my good.

In my cousin's case, he falls for a cognitive bias known as the "Gambler's Fallacy". According to that Biase said to me” Somnath Data I have been losing so many times so now going ahead there is high probability of win”. I tried hard to convince him by saying **this is not our piece of cake.** In a contrary, he went ahead by borrowing money from banks for trading.

Fast forward to last year; I got to know that he had stopped trading permanently, but my uncle had to sell a small part of his farming land to pay off all his lenders. **Following that incidents, my uncles and aunts never approached me for any assistance.**

After contemplating it I realized a mentor should be proficient in the area for which they are providing guidance or mentorship. Based on my technical proficiency, last year, I persuaded him to enroll in a six-month Software Testing course. **Today, he is a corporate employee working in the same organization where I work.**

To conclude, as we surf through the sea of online advice. It's easy to get swayed by **fancy words and convincing arguments.** For instance, some 21-year-old graduates share financial wisdom with hashtags like 'How to be financially independent by age 40?', even though he is just 21-year-old. It's like a swimming trainer confidently teaching in a water pool, when he learned all his lessons through a online mobile application" Think of it like this: Just because someone talks so confidently that doesn't mean **they've walked the whatever they talk.**

In your mentorship journeys, let's not fall for the **illusions of wisdom**. Let's be smart while acquiring knowledge and make sure you are learning from those **who've been there, done that.**

Thanks for joining me on this ride. May your journey be filled with real **wisdom.** Back to you, Contest Chair.