Obama once said, “We are people who see our difference as a great gift.” Similarly, I see my diversity as a strength and I am proud to be a part of the Indian community. **I’ve bonded with others over shared beliefs/customs, the dramatics of Bollywood movies, and our favorite Indian meals.** My parents taught me the strength in hard work, to try my hardest and aim to be the best in everything I did. I’ve grown up embracing my tenacity, standing stoak in the face of adversity. I’ve learnt to be grateful for everything that I have, but always continue learn, as that’s the only way I’ll grow. That is exactly the person I became: someone who repeats her dance choreography until she’s able to perform them perfectly, someone who doesn’t back down from a challenge.

My parents also instilled within me the importance of my culture. Every Saturday my family would go to the temple. I understood the power of belief, the ability to let go of my worries/mistakes and move on. I learn from my past instead of dwelling on it. My Indian heritage has also taught me to respect those around me. The notion of respecting my elders, teachers, family, and friends is one that has taken root in the very core of my beliefs. It has made me a more understanding person in regards of other people’s beliefs, personality, and mistakes.

Needless to say, my mother drilled into my head the importance of karma. I’ve always been told that if I do good, the universe will reward with the same. My Indian culture has shown me the power of compassion, of helping others when I can. For this reason, I tutor middle schoolers and volunteer at the senior center.

This is what defines a community: the ability to learn, grown, feel welcome and supported. My Indian community has shown me to never be afraid to pursue what makes me happy and I aspire to encourage others to do the same. My community extends beyond myself, to my interests and culture. For this reason, I hope to expand my community to the BBA Tech Club, the Indian Subcontinent Business Association (ISBA), and the MAYA dance team next year at U Michigan.